



UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

THE HEAT IS ON!

**FTA REGION IV - 2008 GRANTEE CONFERENCE
LOUDERMILK CENTER
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
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IN THE BEGINNING

- Transit has existed in Greensboro community since 1925
- Bond Referendum passed by voters in 1988
- City “take-over” of transit service from Duke Power in 1990



GREENSBORO TRANSIT AUTHORITY

- Established in 1991
- Public Transportation provider for the City of Greensboro
- Classified as Urbanized area over 200,000 (2000 Census)
- A medium size Urban Transit System



A GROWING TRANSIT SYSTEM

- Fixed-Route Service

- 14 Weekday/Saturday routes
- 7 Extended Evening/Sunday routes
- Provided over 3.7 million passenger trips (FY 07)
- Represents a 22% increase over FY 06
- Averaging 15% ridership growth over the past three years
- Currently, GTA has four (4) connector routes that are timed to connect with a big bus at the end of the route
- Partner with PART on Career Express and regional transit services
- Provided over 30,780 passenger trips (FY 07)



A GROWING TRANSIT SYSTEM

Operates city-wide ADA paratransit service

- Provided 150,000 annual trips in FY 07

- Represents a 2% increase over FY 06

J. Douglas Galyon multi-modal depot opened in 2003



RIDERSHIP GROWTH

- GTA experienced double digit percentage increases in ridership in each fiscal year over the period from 2003 to 2007, with FY 2007 ridership totaling over 3.7 million
- In December 2008 GTA will meet “doubling of ridership” goal from 2 million to 4 million
- Even with the pressures that this type of growth brings, GTA has continued to explore new markets to serve, and innovative ways to expand and improve services



THE "HEAT" IS ON

- The Greensboro community has a strong presence of colleges and universities
- HEAT service initiative represents a partnership between the GTA and multiple institutions of higher learning
- GTA benefits include a broadened ridership base and increased revenues
- Institutions of higher learning benefits include improved mobility for students and reduced need for expensive new parking facilities



THE FIRST TIME AROUND

- Transit Services Study in 2000 recommended a university pass program
- GTA led an effort involving six colleges and universities
- Pilot program with a small private college for evening service (August – November 2002)
- Service less than successful

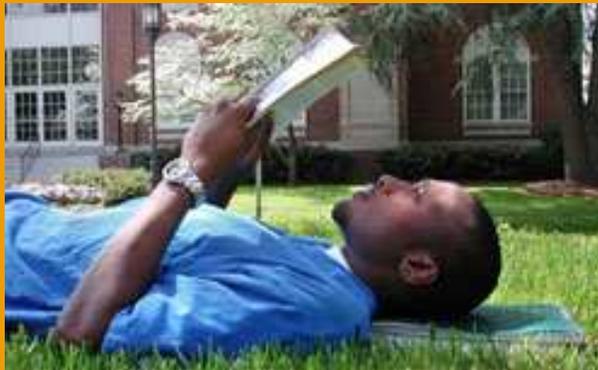


A NEW OPPORTUNITY

- Mobility Greensboro - Blueprint / master plan for public transportation in Greensboro
- Double transit ridership from 2002 to 2008 (from 2M riders to 4M riders)
- Key recommendation – partnering with local colleges and universities

NEW TARGET - NEW CHALLENGES

- 60,000+ Students
- Small Percentage are Current GTA Riders
- Three Major Goals:
 - A Service Plan To Meet Wide Range of Needs
 - A Strategic Plan To Get The Schools On Board
 - A Financial Plan To Fund The Service



A TALE OF TWO COMMITTEES

- Steering Committee

- Co-chaired by Greensboro City Council Member and GTA Board Chair
- Create a Shared Vision
- Set the Tone
- Create Big Community Picture



- Technical Committee

- Leadership from Colleges and Universities
- Responsible for analyzing options and developing the plans for implementation
- Operations and Marketing Subcommittees

COLLEGE TRANSIT 2.0 - A NEW APPROACH

- Invite The Right Players To The Table
- Blank Slate Approach – Not a GTA Plan
- Deliberate Process (colleges do not make decisions quickly)
- Don't Worry About The Money (Yet)
- Focus on building consensus and support of the Service Initiative

SERVICE PLANS

- Connect the Campuses Together
- Connect Campuses To The Community
- Provide Late Night Service
- Initial Implementation Target – Six Months (August 2004)



THE DETAILS

- Six Institutions (Now Seven)
- Multiple Agendas and Needs
- What Do Students Want?
 - Not many committee members under 30
 - Establish mechanisms for student input
 - Don't assume other plans will work in your community

THE DETAILS

- East and West Routes connecting all campuses with downtown and retail centers
- Downtown Circulator
- Shuttles to connect off-campus housing with largest universities (NC A&T and UNCG)
- Enhanced service to community college (GTCC)
- Limited-stop services with stops on campus
- FARE FREE FOR STUDENTS!

FUNDING/FINANCING

- City used FTA/NC DOT funds to support initial planning costs
- GTA/City would fund capital costs
- Colleges and universities to fund operating costs
- Student fee of \$15 per semester reasonable to most students
- But still a substantial sum to invest in “untried” service



CMAQ TO THE RESCUE

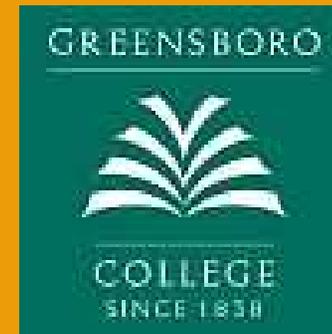
- City of Greensboro applied for CMAQ grant
 - \$6.5 Million (Federal) \$1.6 Million (Local)
- Colleges and universities signed letter of support indicating willingness to fund
- Grant would result in a three-year trial period
- Approved late in 2005



CMAQ TO THE RESCUE

- Institutions pay 20% match for operating costs during the first three years - \$2.50 per student per semester
- Increased trust (City true to its word)
- Chance for students to experience benefits before voting on fee increase

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



SERVICE BRANDING AND MARKETING

- Marketing Committee Obtained Student Input
- HEAT – Higher Education Area Transit
- Independent Web Site – www.rideheat.com
- Vehicle Design Contest for Students



SERVICE LAUNCH



- Service Began August 8, 2006
- Year 1 Ridership over 362,000 total student boardings on HEAT routes
- Another 30,000 HEAT trips by fare paying passengers
- Over 265,000 student trips on GTA routes



MOVING AHEAD



- Listen To Our Customers
- Adapt Service Plan To Maximize Ridership
- Enhance Marketing Campaigns
- Prepare Now To Fund Service Beyond CMAQ

OUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

- Steering Committee was essential to gain community and school support
- An Aggressive goal – focused committee participants on the process of making the program happen
- No preconceived plans – involve everyone
- Student input and support
- Patience and persistence
- Responsiveness



THANK YOU

