PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Changes in Regional Transit Program

Effective December 2, 2013

Daily Bus Hours will be
7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tybee Shuttle will only run on
Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

Questions: 866-543-6744

Transit Conference
By Donald J. Masisak, Transportation Director

The Georgia Transit Association is holding its annual conference Monday, December 2 through Friday, December 6, 2013 at the Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. Agenda items that impact the delivery of transit services in the Coastal Region include: Mobility Management, Technology Usage and the Rider, Medicaid Transportation, MAP-2, associated training on drug & alcohol testing and safety sensitivity recognition.

Updates by the Georgia Department of Transportation relative to the status of new capital projects are to be provided as well. To attend and/or make reservations for the conference call 1-478-747-7820 or email ed@gatransit.org

There is no CRC Council meeting scheduled for December 2013. The next scheduled meeting is January 8, 2014.
Let's Ride!
By: Colletta S. Harper, Administrative Services Director

To celebrate the Holidays this year, and the spirit of giving back that comes with them, the District 15 Chapter of ABATE (American Bikers Aiming Toward Education), is having their 2nd Annual Poker Run to benefit the Coastal Area Agency on Aging. If you have a passion for the open road, see the flyer below for more details and come join us for a great cause. (And yes, my husband and I will be participating on the ride!)

Transportation Technology Update
By: David Dantzler, Mobility Manager

The Transportation Department is currently working on several technological updates that will work towards higher efficiency and better customer service for Coastal Regional Coaches riders. These advances include the implementation of an automated customer notification system as well as the rollout of a new generation of mobile devices in the buses.

The Transportation Department is currently working with RouteMatch Software to implement a customer notification system that will place a phone call to system users to verify or cancel their scheduled trip. The automated system can be configured to call riders at any scheduled time, typically the evening before their scheduled trip. This system queries the trip schedule for the next day and cross references the user data for those trips to call only the customers that are scheduled to ride on that date. If the rider no longer plans to utilize the bus service for the scheduled trip, they can choose to cancel during this process. This will serve to reduce no shows and trips that are cancelled at the door as well as reduce the work load on the scheduling and dispatching call center. The gained efficiencies of utilizing the notification system will help to reduce the operating costs of the Coaches program.

Another improvement that is underway for the Coaches is the rollout of second-generation mobile data terminal/automated vehicle locater devices. The devices that are currently in place are being phased out and updated with new tablets that operate on a more advanced platform and have faster data connection abilities. The drivers rely on the mobile devices to receive their manifest for the day including all passenger information and their pickup and drop off locations and times with a mobile version of the RouteMatch software. The tablets also serve to direct the drivers to those stops via GPS navigation software.

Coordinated Transit Plan
By Donald J. Masisak, Transportation Director

The framework of the Coastal Regional Commission's transportation effort was basically to develop a plan for a coordinated regional transportation system within the 10-county region to serve both the general public as well as the human service agencies with their transit needs.

Since July 2013 the Transportation staff has actively identified and pursued opportunities for greater coordination and the delivery of services. Most recently, the staff was invited to participate in a project being initiated by the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission to address the potential of expanding opportunities for enhancing the use of ride and park lots.

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The Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) Council met on October 9th and November 13th at the Richmond Hill City Center in Richmond Hill, GA.

October Action Taken by the Council Included:
- Approval of Minutes from September 11, 2013 meeting;
- Approval of Resolution to establish a Commercial Credit Card Account Relationship with SunTrust Bank; and
- Approval of Proclamation designating October as Community Planning Month.

Other Items to note:

Major General Murray, Commander, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, provided an update on activities at Fort Stewart and how a government shutdown would affect them. They now have a wellness campus devoted to the emotional and physical well-being of soldiers and their families.

Katherine Moore, Sustainable Growth Manager, Georgia Conservancy, educated members on: who the Conservancy is, their mission, and, the services that they provide. The non-profit organization advocates the use of sound environment policies and can provide educational training and technical assistance to help communities make smart land use decisions.

Mr. Bill Massey, Mr. Jeff Morris and Ms. Lauren Hand, Dewberry, provided an overview of the Georgia Hurricane Evacuation Study. Using various study components, GEO data has been built using GIS and has been saved in PDF format so everyone can use; this information has been provided to local EMAs for their use.

November Action Taken by the Council Included:
- Approval of Minutes from October 9th meeting;
- Approval of FY13 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report;
- Approval of Revisions to Flexible Benefit Plan; and
- Approval of Changes to Hours of Operation for Transit.

Other Items to Note:

Mr. Bill Massey and Mr. Chris Zambito, Dewberry, provided a PowerPoint presentation explaining the Biggert-Waters Reform Act of 2012. The purpose of the legislation is to make the NFIP financially sustainable by changing components of the program including flood insurance, flood hazard mapping, grants, and management of floodplains.

The next meeting of the Coastal Regional Commission Council will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Richmond Hill City Center.

Coordinated Transit Plan (continued from page 2)

As a stakeholder in the region’s transportation needs and with the advent of a new regional vanpooling program in FY 14, the Transportation staff has committed to work with the MPO in sharing information and resources to improve access to transportation services for all types of riders.
Sidebar Conference “Local Authorities: Partners in Economic Development”
Held at the CRC
By Lauren Robesky, Economic Development Director

On November 1, 2013 the CRC partnered with Seyfarth & Shaw, Stifel and Southern States Regional Center to host an all-day Sidebar Conference “Local Authorities: Partners in Economic Development” at the CRC office in Darien. The Conference was open to practitioners and partners of economic development such as bond issuers, local and community economic developers, and government officials and their staff.

After a brief welcome from CRC Executive Director Allen Burns, and a short conference overview from Dan McRae of Seyfarth & Shaw, CRC’s Economic Development Director, Lauren Robesky, delivered a presentation regarding a holistic approach to “Unified Economic Development.” Tom Woodward of Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, spoke about the usefulness of Tax Allocation Districts and Bruce Nicely, Partner with Southern States Regional Center, discussed the intricacies of “EB5 Funding.” Dan McRae gave a primer on Development Authorities and followed that enlightening discussion with “Financing, Deal Structures, and State Programs: Making Them Work Together” and “Community Development & Redevelopment.” Kevin Brown, also with Seyfarth and Shaw, rounded out the illuminating afternoon with his seminar on “Open Meetings, Open Records, Ethics, Conflicts, & Liabilities” replete with relevant and timely information.

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) Presented to CRC Council
By: Lena Geiger, Finance Director

On November 13th, Chris Edwards, with the accounting firm of Clifton, Lipford, Hardison & Parker, LLC presented the 2013 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) to the CRC Council. It was a good report and the auditor’s opinion was that the financial statements of the CRC, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013, presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the CRC. Due to changes in accounting standards, it is now called an “unmodified” opinion, rather than an “unqualified” opinion. The auditor’s report also noted that the CRC complied with the requirements of major federal awards and that no deficiencies in internal control over compliance were identified. It should also be noted that there were no findings or questioned costs. A copy of the report can be viewed on our website at www.crc.qa.gov.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the CRC for its CAFR for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, the CRC has to publish an easily readable and efficiently organized CAFR that satisfies both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. We believe that our current CAFR continues to meet the Certificate of Achievement Program’s requirements and it will be submitted it to the GFOA to determine its eligibility for another certificate.
The first meeting of the Committee was held October 9th at the Richmond Hill City Center. A partnership was formed between the College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia (UGA) and the CRC. The partnership was formed to assist the CRC in providing research, performing technical analysis and identifying strategies by which the CRC can integrate hazard mitigation into the Regional Plan.

Ms. Lupita McClenning, Planning and Government Services Director, introduced the UGA planning team and partners, described the planning area, participating jurisdictions, and the organizational structure to facilitate inter- and intra-governmental coordination.

Dr. Rosanna Rivero, Assistant Professor, College of Environment and Design University of Georgia, traveled to the region and conducted several site visits to collect data and information applicable to the Regional Plan and resilient communities. Students also attended the Georgia American Planning Association (GAPA) conference on Jekyll Island, October 9-11.

The first step toward planning a more resilient region is to understand the region’s current situation. Students are reviewing the six coastal counties capabilities (existing plans, reports, programs, comprehensive land use plans, capital improvements programs, transportation plans, small area development plans, disaster recovery and reconstruction plans, and emergency preparedness and response plans); conducting a risk assessment by describing the hazards, identifying community assets, analyzing the risks or impacts of the hazards to those assets, and summarizing the results and overall vulnerability of each community.

The CRC 2014-2019 Work Program identifies amending the Regional Plan to include Resilient Communities as a topic of importance with the aim of integrating hazard mitigation planning into the Regional Plan.

For more information, contact Lupita McClenning at lmcclenning@crc.ga.gov

CRC Partnership with Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve

By: Lupita McClenning, Planning & Government Services Director

The CRC and its partner, the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve, were awarded a 2013 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation for the CRC Practicum Series.

Ms. Lupita McClenning, CRC Planning Director, presented Ms. Suzanne VanParreren, Coastal Training Program Coordinator with the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve, the NADO Award.

The CRC Practicum Series helps to advance policy reforms; share knowledge of effective strategies and tools; build the capacity of key constituencies; and raise awareness about the interdisciplinary nature of issues.
Coastal AAA Hosts Advocacy Training and Public Hearing
By: Pamela Rogers, Contracts Administrator

On November 14th advocates for Georgia’s elderly gathered in Richmond Hill to participate in an advocacy training hosted by the Coastal Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Aging Services Director, Dionne Lovett, invited members of the Georgia Council on Aging to the Coastal region to engage training attendees in meaningful dialogue and “sharpen their advocacy skills.” Patti Lyons, Co-AGE Chair and Executive Director of Senior Citizens, Inc. was center stage offering the basics about the state and federal legislative processes. Ms. Lyons encouraged the training attendees to “speak out” and gave examples of advocacy tools that could be used to reach out to local representatives.

The advocacy training was followed by a public hearing used to gather input from Coastal residents on the needs of the older adults and individuals with disabilities in their communities. Ms. Lovett shared information with the group from a community needs assessment conducted in the Coastal region in 2010 that focused on individuals 55 and older identifying their needs and interests. Some of the findings of the needs assessment include:

- 13% face obstacles to maintaining good mental health
- 22% can not afford key healthcare needs
- 24% have emotional problems (depression, lonely, isolated, financially exploited, abuse)
- 12% feel bored
- Many people would like to volunteer - 43% say they will volunteer 5+ hours/week
- Of the caregivers in Coastal region, 50% are stressed 100% of the time

Public Hearing attendees were asked to identify the services and programs they feel are most important to older adults and individuals with disabilities. Transportation, nutrition services, adult day care, personal care, Alzheimer/ dementia services and Options Counseling were all identified as essential services. One gentleman stated that “seniors should not have to choose between eating and taking a bath.” Others emphasized the importance of a “hot meal” to older adults. Some of the service providers in attendance offered a business perspective to the dialogue underlining the hardship on services providers dealing with shrinking budgets and tough discussions about who to serve.

Information gathered during the public hearing will be used by the Area Agency on Aging in the area planning process to develop goals and objectives for aging services in the Coastal region. If you have input that you would like to share with the Coastal AAA, please visit the agency website at www.crc.ga.gov/departments/aaa/aaa.html and click on the “contact us” tab.

Coastal AAA Director Elected President of Georgia Association of AAAs
By: Pamela Rogers, Contracts Administrator

Dionne Lovett, Aging Services Director for Coastal AAA, is the newly elected president of the Georgia Association of Area Agencies on Aging (G4A). Ms. Lovett accepted the position of Aging Services Director for the Coastal AAA 2 years ago and has been working diligently to sustain the local aging services delivery system while adding new programs and initiatives that will help move Coastal AAA forward. This has been no easy task with continuous budget cuts, staff reductions and the demands of operating a multi-million dollar agency. However, Ms. Lovett’s leadership skills seem to be a perfect fit for these trying times, and they have not gone unnoticed. Area Agency on Aging Directors around the state have placed their trust in Ms. Lovett to lead the association of AAA’s to the next level.

“G4A is excited to announce that Dionne Lovett will serve as our President for the term 1/1/2014-12/31/2015. As a newly appointed AAA Director, she has provided tremendous input to our association on aging and disability program issues. In her role as G4A President, Dionne will excel in providing statewide leadership regarding these same populations throughout Georgia,” commented Gail Thompson, previous G4A President and AAA Director of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission.
Coastal RCI REACH Program Spotlighted at National Caregiver Conference

By: Pamela Rogers, Contracts Administrator

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving hosted their annual national caregiver summit in late October on the campus of Georgia Southwestern State University. Former first lady Rosalynn Carter opened the summit by welcoming all attendees and introducing keynote speaker former U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole. Honoring the Mission: Supporting Caregivers Through Education, Skill-building and Hope was the event theme, and all of Coastal AAA’s REACH Interventionists were present to learn new skills, share ideas and receive recognition for their excellent work with the RCI REACH Program. Coastal AAA also made it possible for members of the Coastal CARE-NET, a local coalition for family caregivers, to attend the RCI national summit.

Pamela Rogers, Contracts Administrator for Coastal AAA spoke at the Summit along with representatives from other community agencies implementing evidence based programs for family caregivers with help from RCI. Ms. Rogers talked about the benefits and challenges of carrying out the program and praised the outstanding work of the Coastal RCI REACH Interventionists who have helped more than one hundred family caregivers in the Coastal region.

Ms. Rogers had this to say about the summit, “I can’t tell you what an honor it was to shake Ms. Carter’s hand while she thanked Coastal AAA for our good work with the REACH Program. This program is changing lives, and I feel privileged to be a small part of it.”

REACH (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer’s Caregiver Health) is an evidenced based program designed to empower, educate and support family caregivers caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease, dementia or a related disorder. If you would like to learn more about Coastal’s RCI REACH Program or if you would like to refer someone for services, please call us at (800) 580-6860.
Upcoming Events and Meetings:

CRC Council Meeting
January 8, 2014
10:00 a.m.
Richmond Hill City Center

Aging Services Advisory Council Meeting
January 28, 2014
10:00 a.m.
Richmond Hill City Center

If you currently receive Coastal Regional Commission’s newsletter by mail and prefer to receive it via email, please contact Teresa Townsend at 912-437-0813 or at ttownsend@crc.ga.gov.