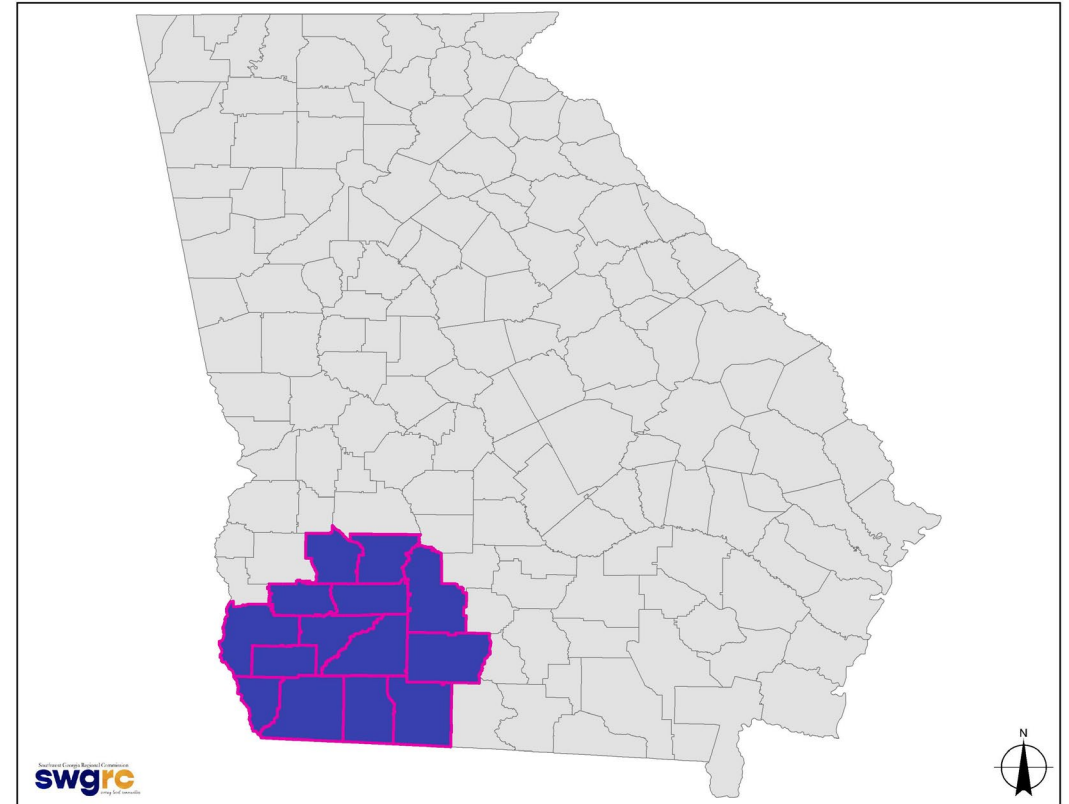


Southwest Georgia Aging and Disabled Population

ACCESS TO TRANSIT

The Rural Transportation Plan for Southwest Georgia will focus on development of a strategy to provide increased public transit services to aging and disabled populations in Southwest Georgia. This plan will inventory current ridership and working with strategic partners, will develop a strategy for intentionally increased ridership. This plan will be enveloped into the Southwest Georgia Regional Transportation Plan and strategies assessed annually. This plan will focus on data collection to find gaps in transportation, solutions to fill the gaps, including increased access to ADA compliant vehicles and marketing of services and work with future funding sources for rider sponsorships.



Access to Transit Planning Process:

- Planning Committee
- One on One Conversations
 - Surveys
- Community Conversations
- Goal Setting and Workgroup Assignments

Planning Committee

Megan Ridenhour, Director First Option Care

Lee Wright, Innovative Senior Solutions Administrator

Tim Hester, Regional Services Administrator GDBHDD

Regina Watts, Disability Services Albany Technical College

Heather Smart, Area Manager Georgia DCA

Cathe Hoskins, Pelham City Schools

Angela Hobby, Colquitt County School System

Holly Pollock, Resource Management Systems Inc. Area Manager

Dawn Taylor, Resource Management Systems Inc.

James Eubanks, Mayor City of Pelham

Azalee Vereen, Councilwoman City of Camilla

Rhonda Busbee, Hairdresser

Shelia Williams, Seminole County Commission

Marcie Lu, Transit Rider

Jami Harper, SWGA Council on Aging

Izzy Sadler, SWGA Council on Aging

Rev. Kathy Isreal-McLoud

Dr. Bonita Richter, Dentist

Sheena Stephens, Board Chair, Southwest Georgia Housing Taskforce

Willie Allen, Educational Coordinator of Innovation, Southern Regional Technical College

Markesha Grooms, Family Nurse Practitioner, Hospital Authority of Miller County

Nikki Palmer, Transit Rider

Oliver Floyd, Transit Rider

Samantha Helton, SWGA Council on Aging



Georgia
Department of
Behavioral Health
& Developmental
Disabilities



Hospital Authority of
**MILLER
COUNTY**



**COLQUITT COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
ESTD. 1873

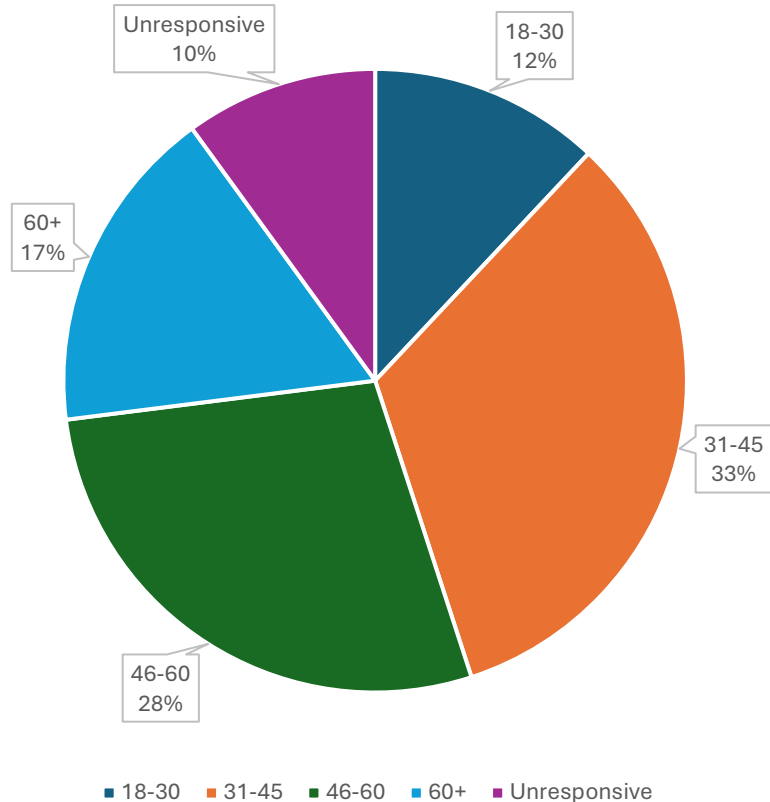


Sowega **Council on Aging**





Findings:



- 36% of respondents could not drive
- 21% of respondents who were unable to drive due to age-related issues
- Less than 10% of respondents stated cost was not an issue to using transit
- Rural nature of the region is the largest barrier to accessing transit
- Of those who did not have access to personal/borrowed transportation over the past 3 months have ALL missed one or more medical appointments
- 75% of respondents stated missing social and/or religious activities over the last three months due to lack of transportation
- Accessing transit for work is an issue for many

Lessons Learned

- One on One Conversations were the best source of information gathering
- Four versions of the surveys was great in theory; not in practice
 - Planning Committee meetings best conducted virtually
- “Organic Community Conversations” produced the best results
 - Buy-In is best with riders/care-giver involved discussions

Goals and Work Groups

1. GOAL: Increase Awareness of Services
Work Group: SWGRC + Partners
2. GOAL: Increase Participation in Community/ Quality of Life Events
Work Group: Buddy System + SWGRC + Partners + Local Governments
3. GOAL: Discover and Aid other Providers
Workgroup: SWGRC + Partners + Church/Non-Profits
4. GOAL: Increase Transit Funding
Work Group: SWGRC + Providers + Schoos + Industry
5. GOAL: Envelope Aging and Disability Transportation Planning in Local Plans
Work Group: SWGRC + Local Governments

Next Steps:

- increased public transit services to aging and disabled populations in Southwest Georgia.

