



## *Virtual Conference 2020*

### Agenda

#### **Monday, November 16**

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.     **Pre-conference Networking and Virtual Coffee**  
*Grab a coffee with other attendees at a virtual meet-up! Network and earn points for prizes.*

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.     **Welcome and Orientation to GTA New Day 2020 Virtual Conference**  
*Don Masisak, GTA President*  
*Stephen Loftin, GTA Executive Director*

9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.     **Break and Networking**

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.     **General Session: What's Next for GDOT's Statewide Transit Plan?**  
*Kaycee Mertz, Ryan Walker, Ashley Finch, GDOT*

*GDOT Intermodal staff will provide a recap of 2020 outreach activities for the Statewide Transit Plan, including a virtual open house, and preview near-term recommendations including Rural Marketing Toolkit, Regional TDP Guidebook, and a Mobility Management Pilot Project.*

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.     **Break and Networking**

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.     **Concurrent Session: Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) Introduction**  
*Robin Phillips, Executive Director, National RTAP*

*Attendees will be introduced to National RTAP and its resources. RTAP creates transit solutions through technical assistance, collaboration, and free training and transit industry materials. Included will be a discussion of how microtransit can benefit rural, and all, transit systems.*

**Concurrent Session: Lessons Learned in Metro Atlanta Transit Systems**

*Karen Winger, Director, Gwinnett County Transit*

*Jemal Sheppard, Transit Coordinator, Connect Douglas*

*The directors of two Atlanta region transit systems will discuss their experiences and lessons learned as one started the first fixed-route system in the area in 15 years (Douglas), and the other went before the voters twice in two years for a transit expansion funding program (Gwinnett).*

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Break and Networking**

11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **Concurrent Session: Regional Transit Planning Innovations in Metro Atlanta and Central Maryland**

*Aileen Daney, ATL Transit Authority*

*Sandy Brennen, Foursquare ITP*

*The presenters will discuss two innovative approaches to regional transit planning. The new regional transit authority for metro Atlanta, the ATL, has just completed its second annual regional transit plan, and attendees will hear about new concepts incorporated into the project evaluation process. Foursquare ITP recently completed a transit vision plan for Central Maryland that developed a network of 30 corridors, local network improvements, and supporting strategies, offering best practices for others.*

**Concurrent Session: Developing MARTA's COVID-19 Essential Service Plan**

*Olen Daelhousen, VHB*

*Attendees will learn how VHB assisted MARTA in developing an Essential Bus Service Plan that addressed the drastic drop in transit ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic, while accounting for the needs of a vulnerable, bus-dependent population. The quantitative framework developed allowed MARTA to respond to ridership changes and social distancing guidelines.*

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch Break**

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Keynote Session: The Intersection of Social Justice and Transit**

*Moderator: Adelee LeGrand, CEO-designate, Hillsborough Area Transit Authority (HART)*

*Panelists:*

*Dr. Mike Smart, School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University*

*Amy Ford, Director, ITS America Mobility on Demand Alliance*

*Taiwo Jaiyeoba, Charlotte (NC), Asst. City Mgr./Dir. Planning, Design & Development*

*In a year in which dialogue around social justice and equity has been at the forefront, this panel of nationally-recognized experts in the fields of transportation and planning will discuss ways in which transit impacts how we all live, work, and play together. Creating thriving communities that are safer, smarter, more accessible, more connected, and more equitable are common goals of the panel, all of whom are regularly featured speakers on a wide range of topics.*

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. **Break and Networking**

2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **Brief Exhibitor Introductions and Networking**

*Exhibitors will have a quick round-robin to introduce themselves and invite attendees to visit their virtual booths during the Vendor Trade Show on Tuesday.*

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. **General Session: The New T-SCORE University Transportation Center**  
*Dr. Kari Watkins, Georgia Institute of Technology*

*Attendees will learn about a new US DOT-funded University Transportation Center led by Georgia Tech (T-SCORE). Transit ridership in the U.S. had declined for five straight years, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. To turn the declining ridership trend around, transit agencies have been trying many new strategies and searching for more. Over the next 18 months, T-SCORE will define a set of strategic visions to help guide public transit into a sustainable and resilient future, and to equip local planners with the tools needed to translate their chosen vision into their own community.*

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Break and Networking**

4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. **General Session: CEO Roundtable on the Challenges of 2020**

*Panelists:*

*Weldon Dudley, Director, Bartow County Transit*

*Bacarra Mauldin, CEO/Executive Director, Chatham Area Transit (CAT)*

*Andrea Foard, Director, CobbLinc*

*Jami Gaudet, Public Information Officer, Macon Transit Authority*

*Corey McGee, Director, Thomas County Transit*

*The panelists will discuss the challenges faced by transit operators during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted ridership, budgets, and the communities they serve. Attendees will hear both lessons learned in this difficult year, as well as best practices and ideas for their own challenges.*

4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. **GTA Board Nominations**

## **Tuesday, November 17**

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. **Pre-conference Networking and Virtual Coffee**

*Grab a coffee with other attendees at a virtual meet-up! Network and earn points for prizes.*

8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Overview for the Day**

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. **General Session: Updates from FTA Region IV**

*Dr. Yvette Taylor, Region IV Administrator, Federal Transit Administration*

*Dr. Taylor, longtime Region IV Administrator and great friend to GTA, will deliver updates from FTA as the federal government experiences transition.*

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **General Session: What is the National Outlook for Transit?**

*Art Guzzetti, Vice President of Policy and Mobility, APTA*

*Scott Bogren, Executive Director, CTAA*

*Alex Poirot, Dir. of Government and Legislative Affairs, Federal Transit Administration*

*With the beginning of a new period at the federal level, the panelists will offer their perspectives on the potential impacts to transit, and the possibilities of additional legislation focused on transportation and infrastructure.*

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. **Break and Networking**

10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. **General Session: GTA Transit Systems “Report Out”**

*This is an informal opportunity for transit systems attending the conference to take 2-3 minutes to provide some highlights (or challenges) from the year that other attendees may find interesting or informative. No pressure to share, but at least you don’t have to speak in the front of the room!*

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Break and Networking**

11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **Concurrent Session: Innovative Approaches in Improving Bus Infrastructure**

*Butch McDuffie, Rachel Hopkins, Victor Pope, Athens-Clarke County Transit  
David Miller, Foursquare ITP*

*Attendees will hear two presentations that illustrate innovative techniques for improving bus infrastructure and planning. Athens-Clarke County Transit is finalizing a decades-long Bus Stop Improvement and Art Shelter Program designed to make transit service more efficient and enjoyable for everyone, and presenters will outline the process, highlight successes and provide insight on avoiding pitfalls. In the area of bus route planning, Foursquare ITP will discuss its work developing a bus priority program for Washington, DC that creates a toolbox of treatments and a pipeline of bus priority corridor projects.*

**Concurrent Session: ARC Paratransit Coordination Study**

*The Atlanta Regional Commission will discuss its recently completed Paratransit Coordination Study, focusing on the concept of a paratransit brokerage to better coordinate service regionally and how CTAA grant awards (and the regional application process) can benefit these services.*

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch Break**

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Keynote Session: Georgia State Rep. Kevin Tanner**

*Outgoing House Transportation Chair Rep. Kevin Tanner will offer perspectives on his work in the area of transit and transportation in the last few years, and the path forward for transit in Georgia. Rep. Tanner has been the most prominent champion for transit in the General Assembly in many years, and GTA is greatly appreciative for his work to advance the opportunity for Georgians to have more transit options.*

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. **Break and Networking**

2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **GTA Virtual Conference Sponsor Showcase**

*We appreciate our Platinum Sponsors, who have made this conference possible! Spend 10 minutes with them to hear how they contribute to transit in Georgia.*



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3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.     **Break and Networking**

3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.     **Vendor Exhibit Hall Open**  
*Check out our virtual exhibit hall to visit with our sponsors and exhibitors, who are crucial to the success of GTA. We may not have actual buses in the exhibit hall this year, but our partners are excited to spend some time with you! Use the Whova app to make appointments with exhibitors, or just show up in their virtual space to chat.*

4:30 p.m.     **Voting for GTA Board of Directors concludes** (via Survey Monkey)

4:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.     **GTA Virtual Trivia Night!**  
*Since we can't have our traditional Casino Night, we arranged the next best thing – virtual trivia! Join us (with a beverage of your choice!) and compete for great prizes by showing off how much you know about anything and everything. There may even be a few transit-related questions thrown in!*

## **Wednesday, November 18**

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.     **Pre-conference Networking and Virtual Coffee**  
*Grab a coffee with other attendees at a virtual meet-up! Network and earn points for prizes.*

8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.     **Welcome and Overview for the Day**

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.     **Concurrent Session: FTA 101**  
*FTA staff will walk attendees through the FTA grantmaking process and help those who may be new to transit gain a greater understanding of how grants may benefit transit systems.*

**Concurrent Session: Using Technology to Improve Small Urban and Rural Transit**  
*Shana Johnson, Reinaldo Germano, Foursquare ITP*

*Presenters will offer detail on two recently-completed projects that impact the delivery of rural transit. First, Foursquare ITP will discuss its recently released “The Promising Practices Guidebook: Transit Technology Adoption for the National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT),” which aimed to illuminate how small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies have adopted technological solutions and new service delivery models within their service areas and with comparatively limited resources. Secondly, Foursquare ITP also developed a transit service inventory and assessment covering the 420 counties across 13 states (including Georgia) served by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Presenters will discuss best practices learned from both projects.*

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.     **Networking Break and Virtual Meet-ups!**

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.     **General Session: Smart Cities Grant for Connecting Traffic Signals in Valdosta**  
*Dr. Debra Lam, Dr. Baabak Ashuri, Georgia Tech  
Dr. Barry Hojjatie, Valdosta State University*

*The City of Valdosta is using GA Smart Communities Challenge grant funding to pilot a*

*smart traffic management system connecting all 128 city traffic signals, with enhancements to the system including hardware and software upgrades at signals and in the traffic control operations center. This project has potential to illustrate how traffic signal priority technology can be used to benefit transit systems across the state.*

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Break and Networking**

11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **General Session: Transformation Ahead for Transit and Mobility**

*Mitch Skyer, President, Passio Technologies*

*Daniel Walls, ATL Transit Authority*

*Presenters will give attendees some food for thought as transit moves into the future, in light of the pandemic and rapidly advancing technology. PassioTech co-founder Mitch Skyer will discuss how transit can use the present crisis as an opportunity to grow and innovate as it continues to provide essential service. Daniel Walls with the ATL will discuss how that agency is embracing forward-thinking approaches in its three-part strategy to improve transit trip planning in the Atlanta region.*

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch Break**

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Closing Keynote Session: One Man's Journey and How Transit Can Help Save Us All**  
*John Lanier, Exec. Dir., Ray C. Anderson Foundation/Co-Founder, Drawdown Georgia*

*Attendees will learn about a brand-new initiative to implement environmentally sustainable solutions tailor made for Georgia's unique economic, social and natural resources, and build equitable social capital to create a more just economy and a healthier population. Transit solutions play a critical role in this effort, which emerged from one man's realization late in life that his own business career needed a sharp turn. His fascinating story will help us all come together from across multiple social, geographic, and political perspectives.*

2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Conference Wrap-up**

*Join us as we bid farewell to the 2020 GTA Virtual Conference, announce the new GTA Board of Directors, and give out prizes for your networking skills and just for being here!*

***GTA would like to thank our conference sponsors!***

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