



CARROLL COUNTY

**TRANSIT
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

2022 - 2042

PREPARED BY
THREE RIVERS REGIONAL COMMISSION
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Special thanks for the opportunity to meet with city and county staff for input.

Plan Purpose, Vision and Process

Purpose

This Transit Development Plan (TDP) is a strategic planning document for Carroll County to determine transit needs and goals for current and future conditions over the next 20 years. A TDP is required to be in place and updated every 5 years in order for jurisdictions to stay eligible for state and federal funding. Although it is difficult to predict how communities will change over the next two decades, it is almost certain that they will be faced with critical needs and limited resources.

A multimodal public transportation system, including transit, provides benefits at both the individual and community level through improved mobility, safety, sustainability and equitable options for vulnerable residents. This plan analyzes current and projected data to capture regional and local opportunities and needs, and determines transit strategies to achieve county-wide goals. Most importantly, this plan establishes a vision for transit over the planning window and provides a basis to build a transit system that meets the community's vision.

Vision

The stakeholder committee worked together to create the following consensus vision statement:

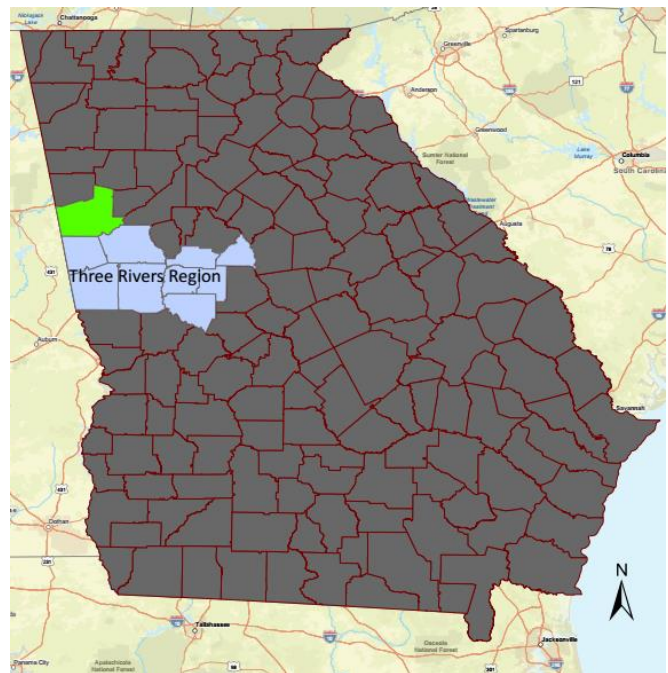
To provide a safe and dependable transit system for the citizens of Carroll County that offers economical high-quality transportation and mobility options for all county residents. This will be accomplished using public-private partnerships.

Scope of this Plan

The scope of this TDP is at the county level, though regional and state data were a key part of the analysis. Carroll County is located in the western central portion of Georgia and shares a border with Alabama. Carroll County is part of the Three Rivers Regional Commission service area.

Steering Committee

This TDP was developed through the guidance of a steering committee made up of local public officials and local leaders representing both public and private organizations from the economic, educational, human services, and real estate community. The steering committee met in-person three times during the six month plan preparation period. This committee was integral in assisting with data collection and input on the vision, perceptions, realities, challenges, and opportunities of transit in Carroll County.

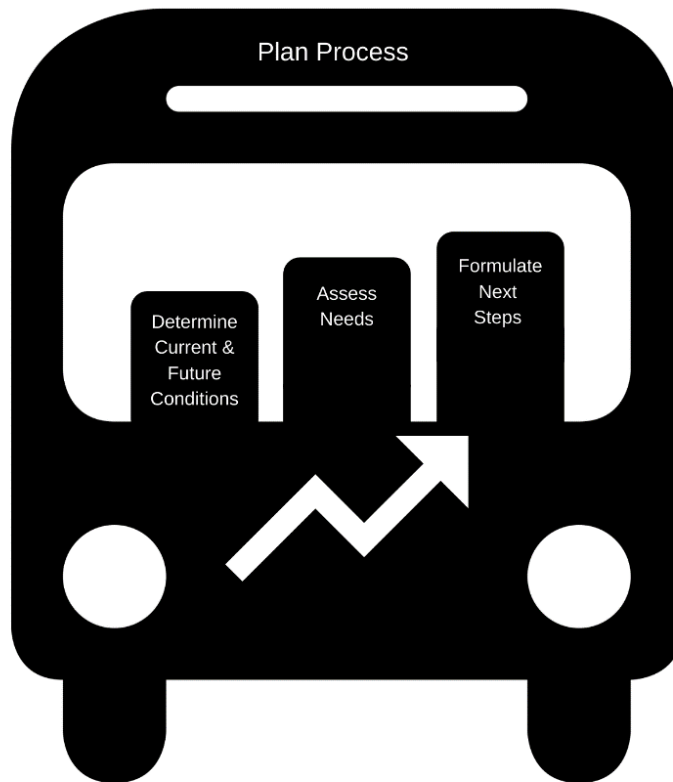


Public and Stakeholder Involvement Plan

The steering committee created and implemented the Public and Stakeholder Involvement Plan (PSIP). This PSIP connected the team to the individuals and community representatives that are affected by transportation decisions. The PSIP also focused on inclusion of all jurisdictions in Carroll County, including the seven municipalities of Bowdon, Carrollton, Mount Zion, Roopville, Temple, Villa Rica, and Whitesburg. Input from these stakeholders is included in the project analysis and recommendations.

Data Collection and Analysis

This report uses an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to determine existing conditions, conduct a needs assessment, and form recommendations to bridge existing and projected transit demand. Primary data is from the US Census Bureau, Carroll Connection records, the Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, and Esri (for geospatial analysis). As will be discussed in more detail, many existing plans were also consulted for relevant information, including comprehensive plans, transportation and transit plans, and economic plans. Finally, stakeholder input was captured to ensure all analysis and recommendations build upon local perspectives and knowledge.

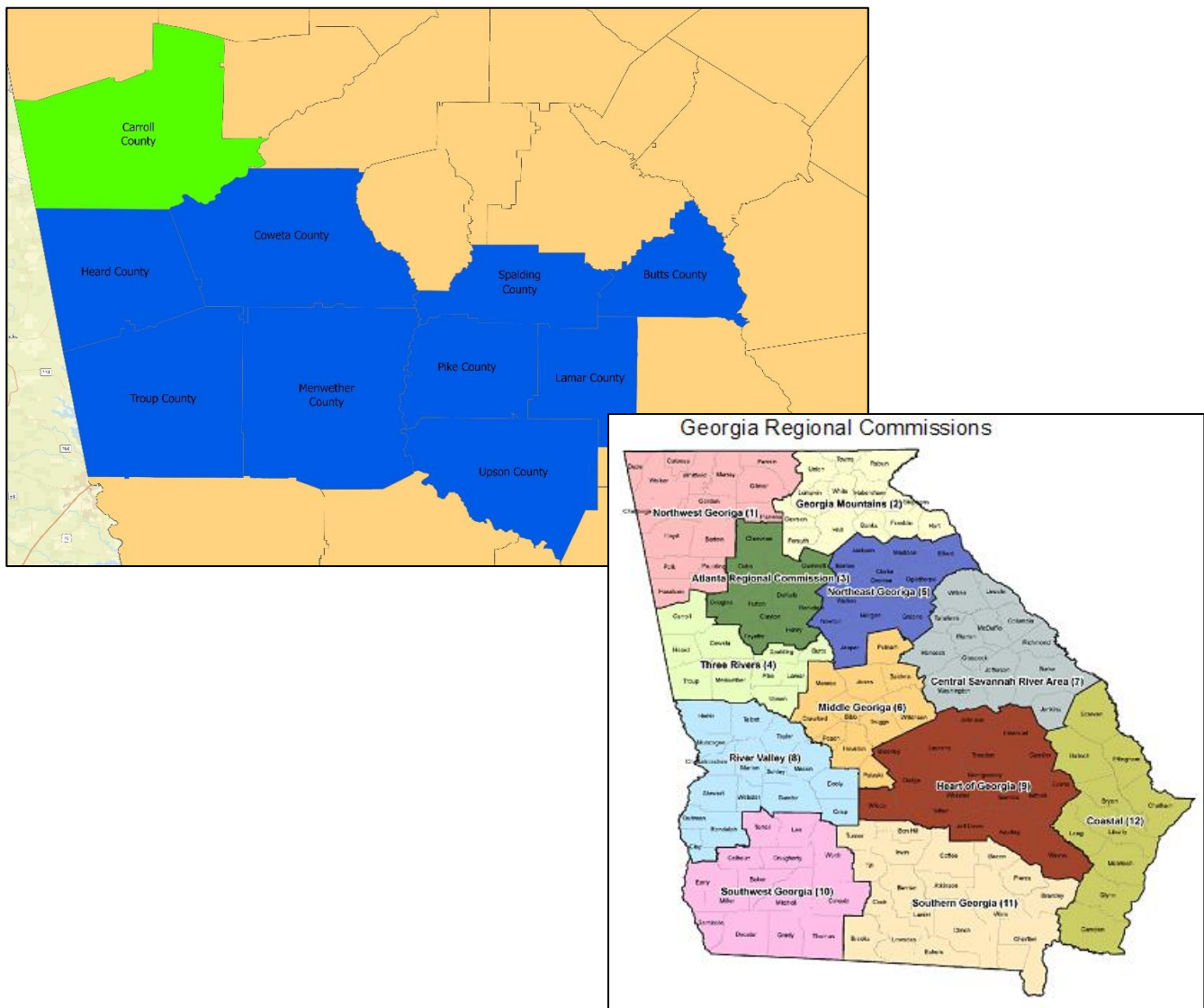


Service Area Existing Conditions and Trends

A key step to planning for Carroll County transit is to get a snapshot of the service area’s current conditions to understand the people and places that create a need for transit now and in the future. This component will provide an overview of what and who is on the ground in Carroll County, with a focus on demographics, socioeconomics and land use. Trends will also be discussed to provide a fuller picture of how the community may change over the next 20 years to set a framework for transit needs.

Service Area and Regional Context

Carroll County has a total geographic area of 504 miles and is adjacent to Haralson, Paulding, Douglas, Fulton, Coweta, and Heard Counties in Georgia, and Cleburne and Randolph counties in Alabama. For the purpose of regional planning, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has divided the state into 12 regional commissions. Carroll County, and its seven municipalities, are member governments of the Three Rivers Regional Commission.



Current Transit in Carroll County

Current Transit: Carroll Connection

Carroll County has provided Carroll Connection as an initiative of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners since 2018. Carroll Connection is an on-demand service administered by the Three Rivers Regional Transit System, with operations contracted to a third party operator. This system’s service area is all of Carroll County, and does not extend past county borders. The county pays an annual amount into the Three Rivers Regional Transit System.

With a demand response model:

- Residents call in and order a trip at least 24 hours in advance.
- Daily trips are generated based on the requested capacity and destinations.
- Carroll Connection is available to all residents, with current service focused on the needs of the local senior and disabled population.
- This system provides subscription-based transportation funded through the Georgia Department of Human Services for eligible persons to travel to community agencies and to apply for and receive services that aim to strengthen families and protect vulnerable children and adults.
- Each county pays a cost-share to be part of the Three Rivers Regional Transit System, determined by the county’s percentage of the system’s vehicle fleet.

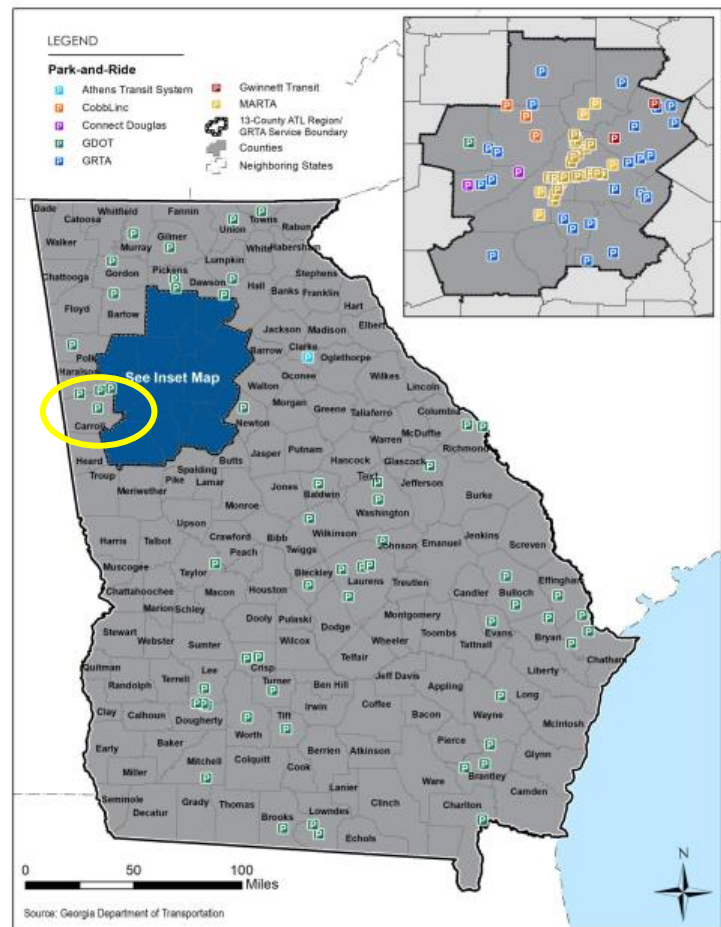
Current Transit: Park-and-Ride Lots

Carroll County has three Georgia Department of Transportation Park-and-Ride lots as can be seen in the associated map. These lots are located in Villa Rica, the north side of Carrollton, and Temple.

Carroll Connection

Overview of Carroll Connection Operations	
Service Area	504 square miles
Vehicles in Fleet	6
Hours	Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
Total Trips in 2019	30,520 (Department of Human Services only)
County Expenses	\$35,000*
*County share FY23 estimate: \$70,000	

Park and Ride Lots in Georgia



Source: GDOT Statewide Transit Plan 2020, Figure 10, Section 3-5

Current Transit: Rail and Inter-City Bus Service

Public Rail

Carroll County does not have any current commuter rail stops, however the 2021 Georgia State Rail Plan notes a planned commuter rail station in Villa Rica. This route is proposed to be from Atlanta and traverse the northern part of Carroll County to the city of Bremen on the Haralson County side.

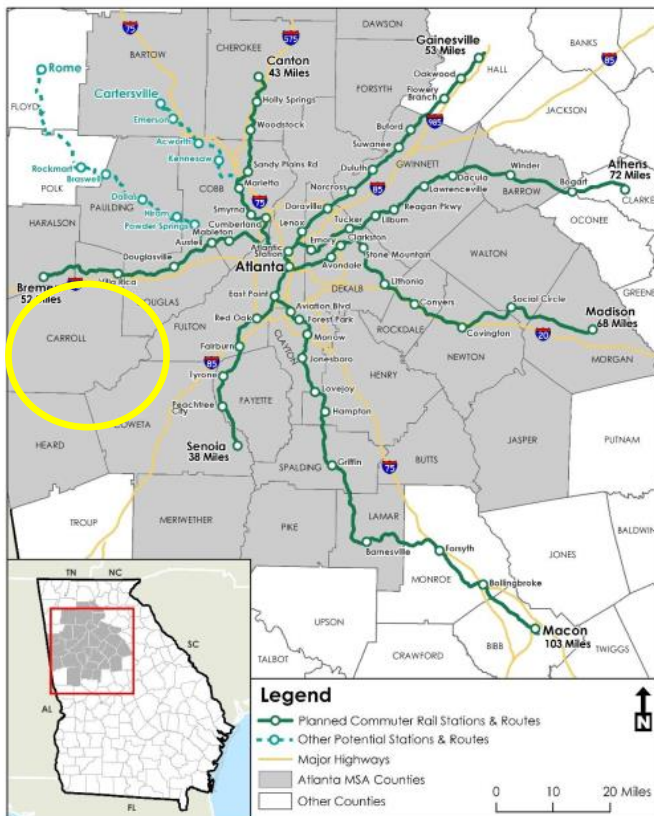
Public Buses

Carroll County does not have an inter-city bus route that stops inside the county, though a Greyhound bus traverses through the I-20 highway corridor in the north section of the county from Atlanta to Alabama.

Current Transit: College and Veteran Shuttles

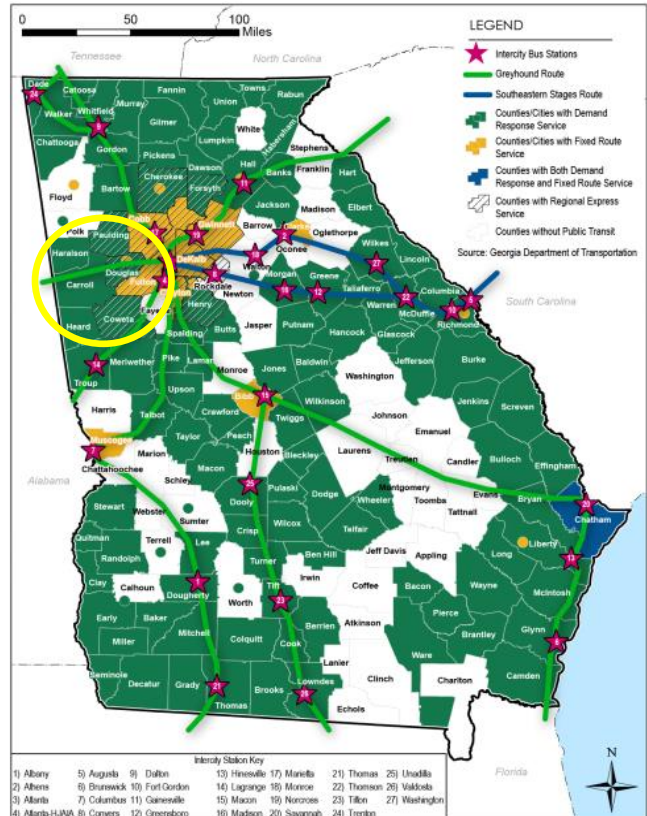
Carroll County has other transit accessible to certain populations. The University of West Georgia has a bus system for students and staff, including routes to Newnan Center, a weekly shopping shuttle, and a Thursday evening late-night shuttle (per the Spring 2022 schedule). The nonprofit organization Impact West Georgia provides the DESERVE Van, a free van to Carroll County veterans for transportation to the Trinka Davis Veterans Village Clinic in Carrollton. Although these shuttles are not available to the general public, these systems may be valuable partners in terms of local transit planning.

Proposed Commuter Rail in Metro Atlanta



Source: GDOT State Rail Plan, Figure 3-3, Section 3-12

Intercity Bus Stops in Georgia



Source: GDOT Statewide Transit Plan 2020, Figure 7, Section 3-2

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Growth

Carroll County, as a whole, grew by 32,724 persons over the last two decades, from 87,268 persons in 2000 to 119,992 persons in 2020 according to the US Census. This two decade growth rate of 37.50% is higher than the state’s growth rate over this time period. Carroll County’s seven municipalities are included in the above county population numbers, but should also be assessed individually. Over the last 20 years, each city has had different growth rates than the county’s rate, ranging from decreasing numbers in Whitesburg to a nearly quadruple increase in Villa Rica.

Current and Historic Population of Carroll County

Area	2000 Population	2020 Population	% Change 2000-2020
Carroll County Total	87,268	119,662	37.50%
Carroll County Unincorporated	57,007	67,050	17.62%
Bowdon	1,982	2,089	5.40%
Carrollton	19,986	27,450	37.35%
Mount Zion	1,326	1,888	42.38%
Roopville	196	235	19.90%
Temple*	2,428	5,044	107.74%
Villa Rica**	4,377	16,795	283.71%
Whitesburg	630	615	-2.38%

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, 2020 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates, US Decennial Census 2000-2010

Note 1: Georgia grew from 8,186,453 people in 2000 to 10,711,908 people in 2020, a 31% increase

Note 2: The total population numbers for Temple and Villa Rica include people living in both Haralson and Douglas Counties, respectively. The full number is given to indicate city growth rates.

*Temple’s current population is estimated to have 63 people living in Haralson County, and 5,026 people living in Carroll County (source: 2020 US Census)

**Villa Rica’s current population is estimated to have 7,264 people living in Douglas County and 9,706 people living in Carroll County (source: 2020 US Census)

Population Density

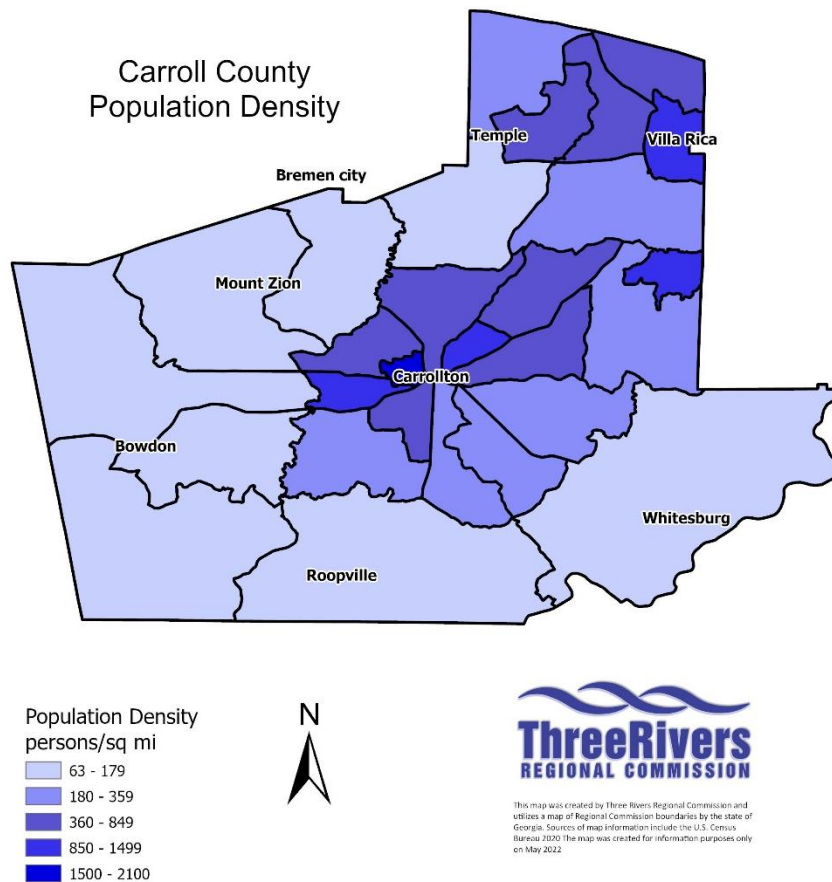
Carroll County has a total area of 504 square miles and is overall more dense than the rest of the state, with more people per mile than other counties in Georgia (238 people per square mile versus the Georgia average of 180 people per square mile). The unincorporated areas of Carroll County are less dense, with an average density of 152 people per square mile.

However, the seven cities have substantially higher densities than the unincorporated areas, with Carrollton having the most people per mile. Carrollton also is home to the University of West Georgia and has higher amounts of students and multi-unit housing developments than the county and other cities. These denser population areas can impact transit planning due to higher concentrations of potential transit riders living closer together. The varying concentrations of population density are illustrated in the following map.

Population Density

Population Density (people/square mile)	
Carroll County	238.08
Unincorporated Carroll	151.54
Cities Only	879.49
Bowdon	614.77
Carrollton	1190.89
Mount Zion	192.44
Roopville	296.68
Temple	731.01
Villa Rica	1136.33
Whitesburg	219.64

Source: 2020 Decennial Census



Projected Population

As previously noted, Carroll County’s population has grown over the last two decades, and this growth rate is projected to continue. The Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget releases annual population projections up until 2065 for the state and counties. Based on the 2020 release of data from projections for the years 2022 to 2042, Carroll County is expected to grow another 23.09%, gaining over 13,000 more persons. This projected rate is higher than the gains expected in the Three Rivers Region and state. In addition to total numbers, the population will also have shifts in characteristics that inform future transit needs and opportunities, such as changes in age groups.

Projected Population over Planning Horizon

Area	Estimated Population 2022	Estimated Population 2042	% Change 2022-2042
Carroll County	123,393	136,597	10.70%
Three Rivers Region	535,414	639,694	19.48%
Georgia	10,820,919	13,106,620	21.12%

Source: GA Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, Series 2020

Median Age

The ages most widely represented in a population can determine the level of transit needs. Carroll County has a median age of 35.5 years, which is younger than the state median age of 37.2 years (source: 2019 American Community Survey). This number has increased from the median age of 33.2 in 2010 (source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010).

Projected Age Cohorts

The below table illustrates the projected age characteristics for specific population cohorts over the planning horizon. GDOT encourages the 15-19 youth age group and 60 years and over senior age group to be highlighted as these cohorts can be more vulnerable in terms of mobility and economic stability. Current projections show that the Carroll County youth population ages 15-19 will not grow, but rather will decrease, while the senior population will continue to increase to a quarter of the county population. This rate of seniors becoming a higher percentage of the population is consistent throughout the region, state, and country as the large baby boomer generation ages and the birth rate trends lower.

Projected Age Distributions over Planning Window in Total Numbers and Percent of Population

Projected Year	2022	2032	2042	% Change 2022-2032	# Change 2022-2042	% Change 2022-2042
Total Population	123,393	136,597	146,654	14.64%	27,506	18.85%
Ages 0-14	23,157 (18.77%)	23,809 (17.43%)	23,957 (16.34%)	2.82%	800	3.45%
Ages 15-19	11,044 (8.95%)	9,031 (6.61%)	9,288 (6.33%)	-18.23%	-1,756	-15.90%
Ages 20-59	64,403 (52.19%)	72,057 (52.75%)	76,538 (52.19%)	11.88%	12,135	18.84%
Ages 60 and above	24,789 (20.09%)	31,700 (23.21%)	36,871 (25.14%)	27.88%	12,082	48.74%

→ Carroll County’s senior population is projected to be over a quarter of the total population in 20 years.
Source: Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget 2020 Series

Population Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

Carroll County is less diverse than Georgia in terms of the percentages of white and non-white residents in the population, as well as the percentages of Hispanic or Latino residents. However, all populations need to be taken into account in terms of transit needs.

Three Rivers Regional Commission has a current Title VI Plan in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to confirm that the transit system shall not exclude any person from any program activity on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

Population Racial Characteristics

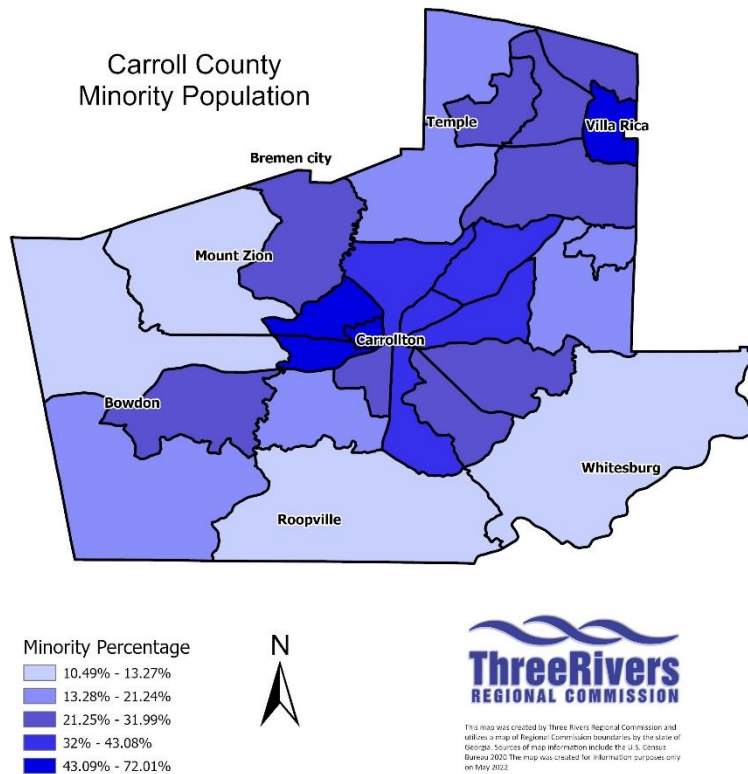
Area	White	Black	Asian	Native American/ Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Multiple Races	% Non- White
Carroll County	74.69%	19.34%	0.77%	0.09%	2.48%	2.48%	1.66%	25.31%
Georgia	58.62%	31.61%	3.98%	0.36%	0.06%	2.81%	2.56%	41.38%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Population Ethnicity Characteristics

Area	Hispanic or Latino Population	Non-Hispanic Population	% Hispanic or Latino
Carroll County	8,075	109,108	6.89%
Georgia	992,394	9,411,453	9.54%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019
 Note: Federal policy defines “Hispanic” as an ethnicity. Persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity can identify as any race.



SOCIOECONOMICS

Unemployment and Household Income

The population in the service area of Carroll County has a low unemployment rate, but these workers are not earning as much as other parts of the state and country. The median household income for this area is lower in comparison to both the state and country, possibly due to fewer high paying jobs available in the county.

Carroll County Income and Unemployment

Area	Median Household Income	Unemployment Rate	Carroll County households make \$2,757 less than the state median and \$6,519 less than the country's median despite low unemployment.
Carroll County	\$59,193	2.3%	
Georgia	\$61,950	2.4%	
United States	\$65,712	3.7%	

Sources: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021-October and US Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2019

Low-Income Households

The service area also has a higher number of individuals living in households with incomes below 125% and 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, which can affect access to health services, food, and other factors for individuals and families to have a stable quality of life. Other low-income indicators are the high percentages of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and children eligible for free lunch. People living at or below the Federal Poverty Level will be discussed in a separate section.

Low-Income Households in Carroll County

Area	% Population with Income at/below 200% Federal Poverty Level	% Population with Income at/below 125% Federal Poverty Level	% Households Receiving SNAP Payments	% Children Eligible for Free Lunch
Carroll County	36.93%	22.36%	16.04%	49.0%
Georgia	34.26%	19.88%	12.80%	54.2%
United States	30.86%	17.77%	11.74%	42.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Veterans

Per the American Community Survey 2015-19 5-year estimates, Carroll County's adult population has 6.69% categorized as veterans. This rate is not as high as the state rate of 8.02% and national average of 7.29%. The highest cohort of veterans is males over the age of 65, followed by males ages 35-54.

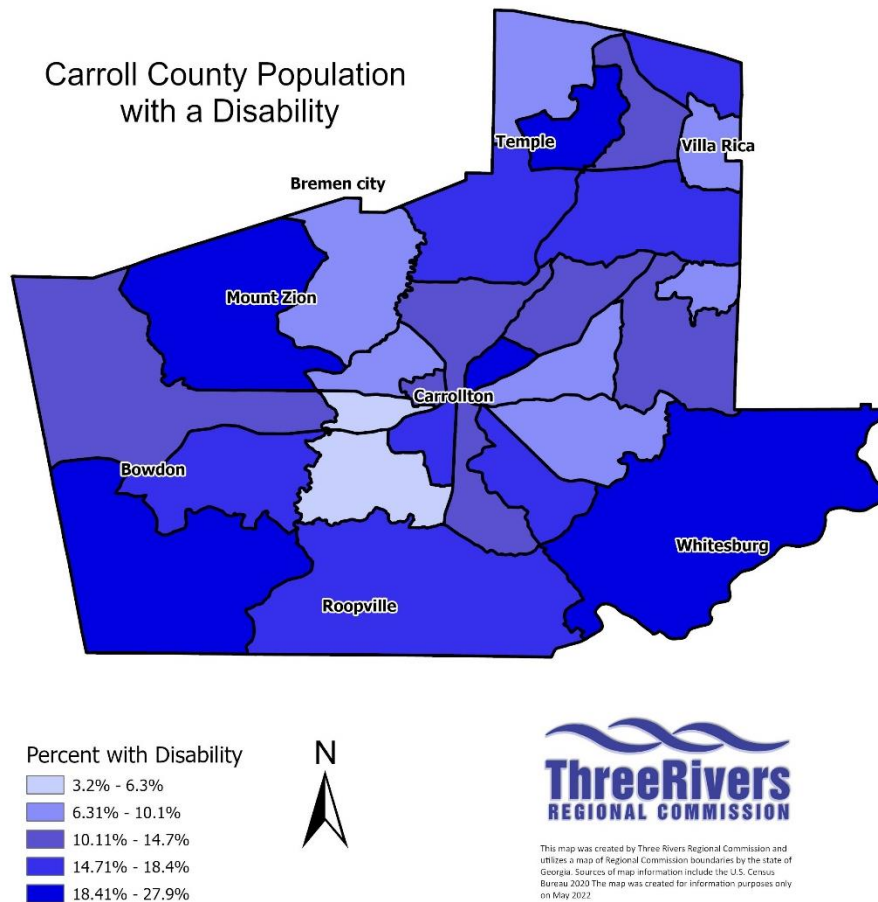
Persons with Disabilities

Disabled persons may have unique mobility needs and a higher propensity for transit. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) includes any kind of impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities, including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, working, and mental and emotional processes such as thinking, concentrating, and interacting with others. The Carroll County disabled population is almost 17% of the total civilian non-institutionalized population, a higher rate than the state and nation.

Carroll County Population with Any Disability

Report Area	Total Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	Population with a Disability	% Population with a Disability
Carroll County	117,487	17,267	14.7%
Georgia	10,321,846	1,286,329	12.5%
United States	321,525,041	40,786,461	12.7%

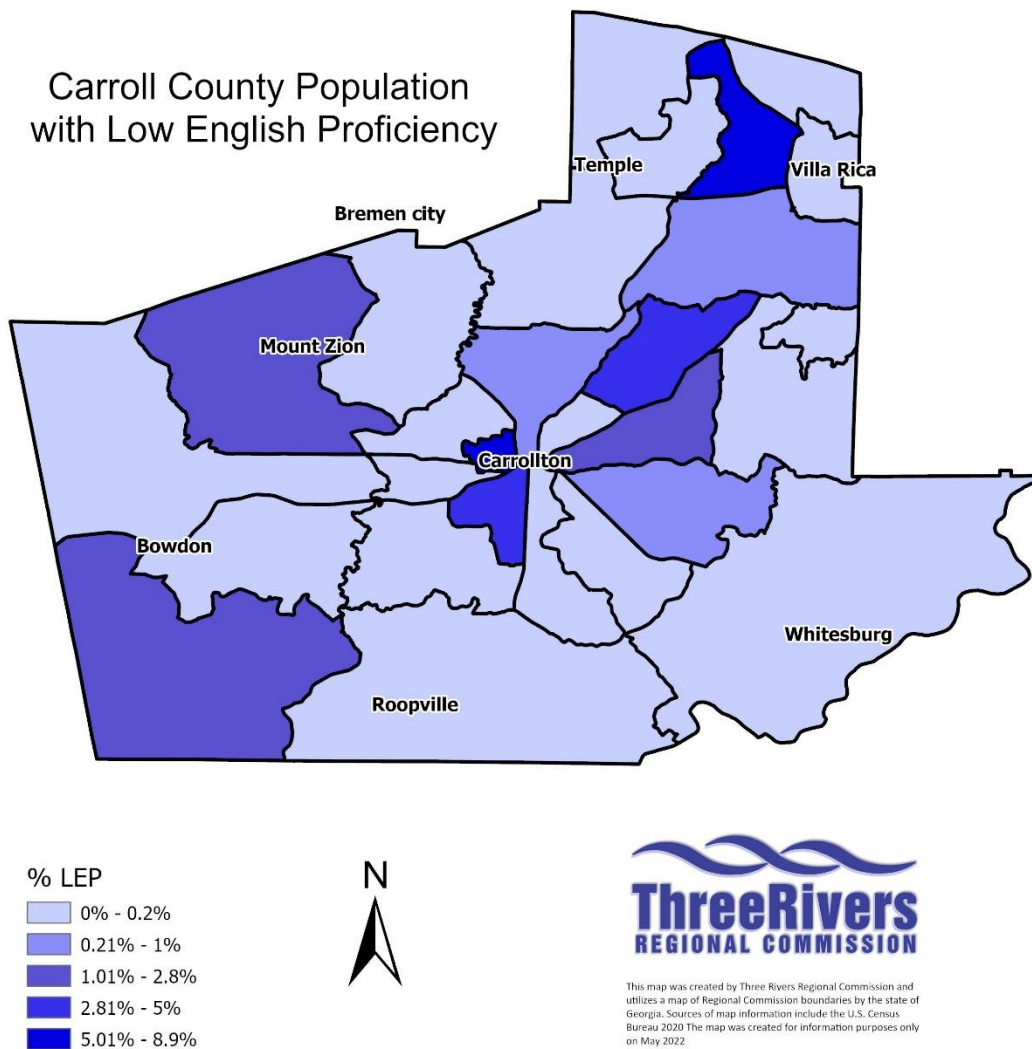
Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2020



Persons with Limited English Proficiency

The US Census Bureau assesses individuals aged 5 and older who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well” as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This indicator is relevant to economic and social stability because an inability to speak English well can create barriers to daily life resources, including transportation. Per the 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Carroll County has a total of 3,450 persons with LEP.

This 3.14% of the population is a lower LEP rate than Georgia (5.54%) and the United States (8.40%). Certain Carroll County Census tracts have higher concentrations of LEP households than others, and could be areas where transit materials and information may need to be prepared in languages other than English. The highest number of languages spoken other than English at home are Spanish and other Indo-European languages, followed by a small number of Asian and Pacific Island speakers.



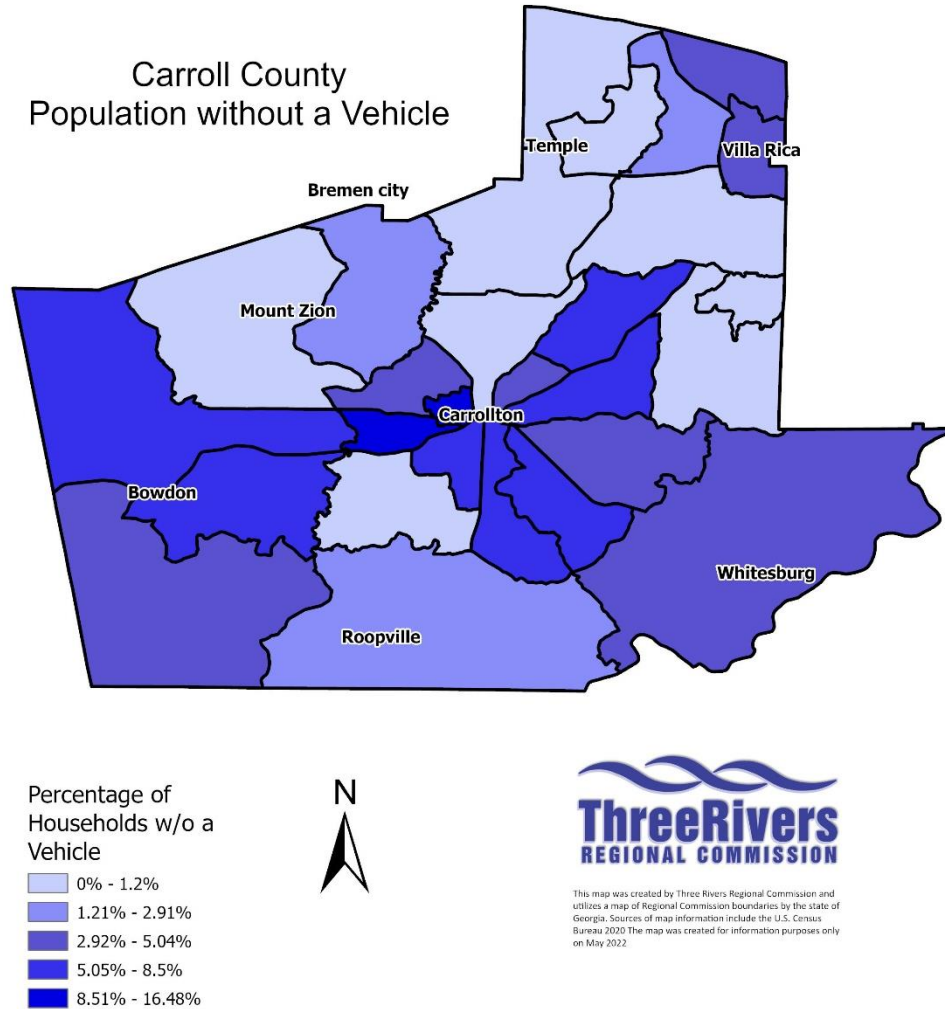
Households without a Vehicle

Carroll County residents do not all have access to a personal vehicle either due to resources or mobility challenges. Overall, 3.86% of the county’s households have no vehicle available, which can be a barrier to connecting people to daily needs such as employment, child care, and health care. Although this rate of households without cars is lower than the rest of the state, certain Census tracts have higher rates than the county and state averages.

Households with No Motor Vehicle

Area	Total Households	# With No Vehicle	% With No Vehicle
Carroll County	42,196	1,630	3.86%
Georgia	3,830,264	242,123	6.32%

Source: American Community Survey 2020



People and Households Living in Poverty

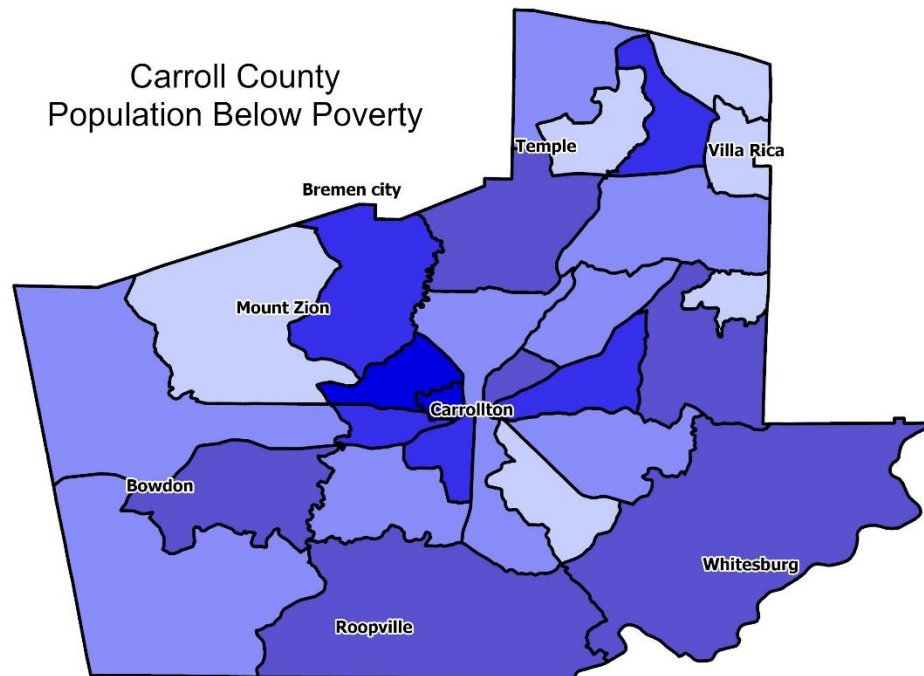
Carroll County has a higher percent of households in poverty at 16.3%, compared to the state rate of 14.2% and the United States rate of 12.9%. These households may be challenged affording food, shelter, healthcare and transportation that could provide a stable quality of life. The below table shows the rates for the youth and senior age-groups that may be more vulnerable in terms of income and resources, including mobility. The below map shows the areas of Carroll County with the highest concentrations of people living below the poverty level as determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Population in Poverty

Area	Total Population	Number In Poverty	Percent In Poverty	% Children in Poverty (ages 0-17)	% Seniors in Poverty (ages 65+)
Carroll County	113,379	19,618	17.30%	24.06%	9.5%
Georgia	10,130,335	1,528,558	15.09%	21.51%	10.2%
United States	318,564,129	40,776,208	12.8%	18.52%	9.3%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Note: Total population is for whom poverty status is determined



Percentage Below Poverty Level

- 2.5% - 6.8%
- 6.81% - 11.8%
- 11.81% - 21.8%
- 21.81% - 30%
- 30.01% - 55.2%

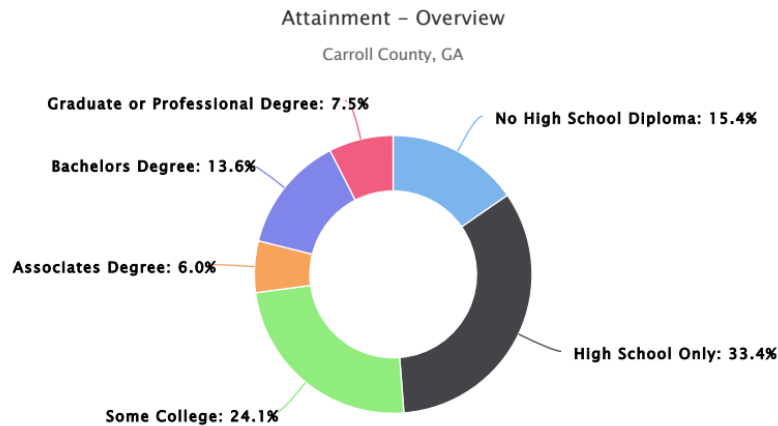


This map was created by Three Rivers Regional Commission and utilizes a map of Regional Commission boundaries by the state of Georgia. Sources of map information include the U.S. Census Bureau 2020. The map was created for information purposes only on May 2022.

Educational Characteristics

Educational Attainment

Carroll County has comparatively lower levels of educational attainment than the state or country. The county's level of residents without a high school diploma is 15.37%, which is three percentage points higher than Georgia or the United States. The highest cohort of persons over the age of 25 have obtained a high school diploma only. The second highest cohort has attained some college education.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Graduation, Dropout and Literacy Rates

The 4 year Cohort Graduation Rate for Carroll County is 95.1%, which is higher than the Georgia graduation rate of 83.3% and United States rate of 82% (Georgia Department of Education, 2020 Four-Year Graduation Rate All Students). The dropout rate of 1.9% for students grades 9-12 is also lower than the state average of 3.1% (Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement K-12 Public Schools Report Card).

Youth Not Working and Not in School

Approximately 5.62% of the population age 16-19 in Carroll County is not in school and not employed per the American Community Survey for 2015-2019. This rate is lower than the state and country, but does represent an age-group that the Georgia Department of Transportation has identified as having a propensity for transit needs.

Employers and Employees

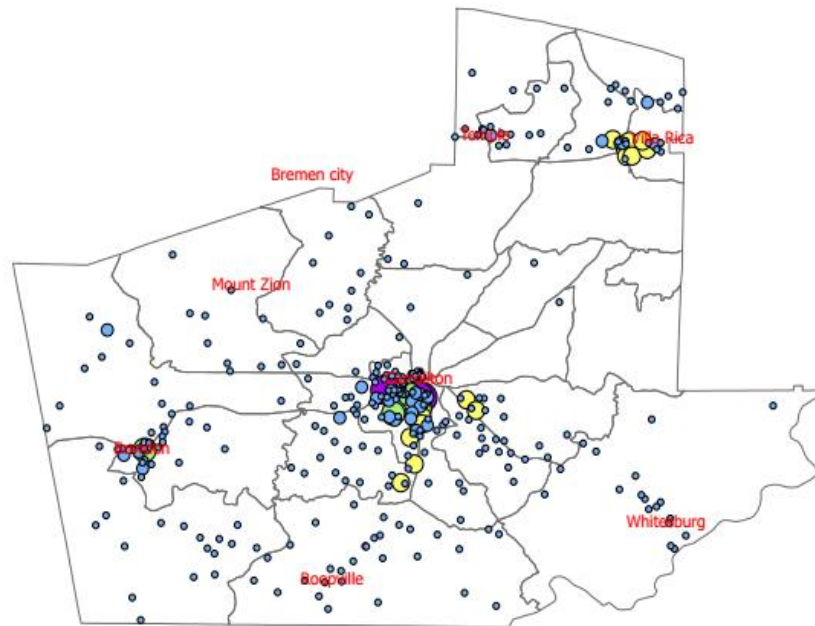
Employment Density

Per the Georgia Department of Labor and US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Carroll County has a total of 51,178 residents who are employed or actively seeking employment. Per the US Census On The Map tool (2019 data), there are 42,321 jobs in the county, creating less than a one-to-one ratio for jobs to people. Carroll County has several large companies, with the top 10 shown in the following table. These employers create denser areas of employment that can inform transit planning.

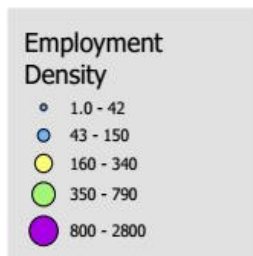
Top Employers

Carroll County Top Ten Largest Employers
Aubrey Silvey Enterprises, Inc.
Decostar Industries, Inc.
Janus International Group PPC
Pilgrim's Pride Corporation
Printpack, Inc.
Southwire Company
Sugar Foods Corp
Tanner Medical Center, Inc.
University of West Georgia
Walmart
Source: GA Dept of Labor 2nd Quarter 2021 Note, Updated May 2022

Carroll County Employment Density



Jobs per acre



This map was created by Three Rivers Regional Commission and utilizes a map of Regional Commission boundaries by the state of Georgia. Sources of map information include the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=408301&g=0500000US13385%24400000&tid=AC301512020.808301> and DataVenus-Neighborhood Nexus <https://neighborhoodvexus.org/maps-and-data/maps/>The map was created for information purposes only on May 2022: name="Carroll County All Arc Maps" property="name"/>

Current Industry and Employee Education

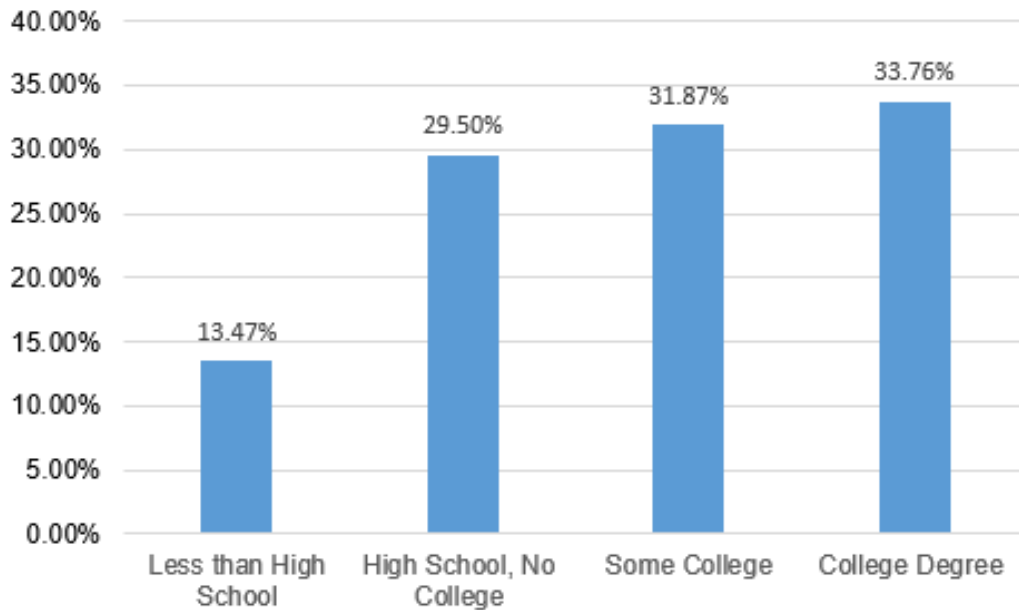
Just as many southeastern counties have a rich manufacturing history, Carroll County’s highest sector continues to be manufacturing. The following table shows the top ten industrial sectors in the county. Based on available US Census Data, the highest number of jobs have workers that attained a college diploma, followed by workers with some college. However, almost 30% of the jobs are filled by workers with a high school diploma only.

Top Ten Industries

Carroll County Top Ten Industrial Sectors	
Manufacturing	15.0% (7,673 jobs)
Health/Social Care	11.9% (6,095 jobs)
Retail Trade	10.6% (5,428 jobs)
Education*	9.8% (5,010 jobs)
Accommodation & Food Services	8.9% (4,549 jobs)
Construction	7.4% (3,777 jobs)
Administration & Support	6.1% (3,120 jobs)
Wholesale Trade	4.9% (2,533 jobs)
Public Administration	4.5% (2,284 jobs)
Transportation & Warehousing	4.3% (2,194 jobs)

Source: On The Map 2019
 *Note: does not include public education below college/university

Educational Attainment of People Working in Carroll County Jobs



Source: US Census On The Map Tool, 2019 Data

Notes:

- Based off of 38,260 workers with available data
- 25% of educational data is not available

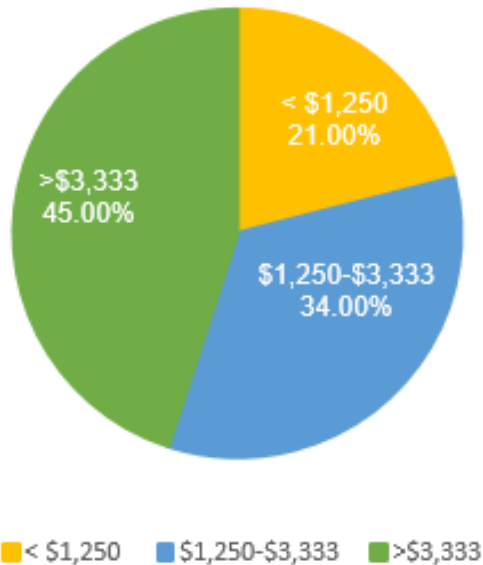
Employee Earnings

The following chart illustrates the average monthly wages for people working Carroll County jobs. Over half of the jobs in Carroll County do not pay more than \$3,333 per month, equating to \$19.23 per hour (for a fulltime job), or approximately \$40,000 per year. The current minimum wage in Georgia for 2022 is \$7.25 per hour, totaling approximately \$1,250 per month or \$15,000 per year for a full-time schedule. Approximately 21% of Carroll County jobs pay minimum wages.

The table below lists the 2022 Federal Poverty Guidelines. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, in Georgia the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,010. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$3,366 monthly or \$40,398 annually. This level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of \$19.42 per hour. Source: Out of Reach 2021 Report, www.nlihc.org/oor.

The 45% of Carroll County jobs that pay less than \$40,000 per year may be inadequate for many residents that work in their county of residence to afford daily needs and impact economic mobility. As will be discussed in the transportation burden section of the Needs Assessment component, private vehicle ownership can be a large part of an individual’s or family’s budget.

Average Monthly Wages for Carroll Employers



Source: US Census On The Map 2019

2022 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$13,590
2	\$18,310
3	\$23,030
4	\$27,750
5	\$32,470
6	\$37,190

Source: US Department of Health and Human Services Federal Register Volume 87 Number 14

Travel Patterns

Although the county has less jobs than the number of working-age residents (as defined by the US Census as people aged 16 and over), a large amount of the county’s jobs are held by people commuting in from other counties. As can be seen in the below inflow/outflow graphic, there are more people that commute into Carroll County to work than residents who live and work in Carroll. Meanwhile, more residents leave Carroll County for work than stay, indicating that this area is a “bedroom community” where people sleep in Carroll County homes but commute (often long distances) for work.

Where do Carroll residents commute for work?

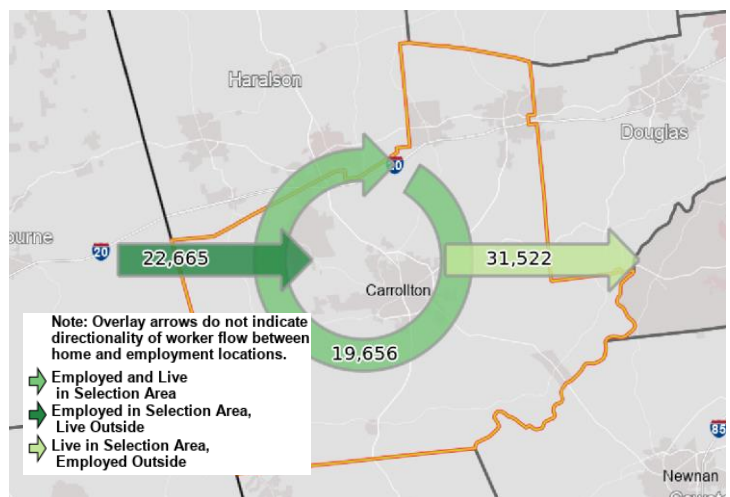
The majority of residents that work and live in Carroll County work in Carrollton (23.5%) and Villa Rica (5.7%). The second highest destination, which is outside of Carroll County, is Atlanta (6.6%). However, the US Census On the Map tool shows 53% of workers going to “other locations”, which leaves some unknowns about where so many other residents go to work.

Where Carroll County Residents Commute to Work

Job Destination	# of Carroll Residents	% of Carroll Residents
Carrollton	12,051	23.5%
Atlanta	3,372	6.6%
Villa Rica	2,914	5.7%
Douglasville	1,3510	2.6%
Bremen	857	1.7%
Marietta	841	1.6%
Sandy Springs	770	1.5%
Newnan	696	1.4%
Bowdon	563	1.1%
Tallapoosa	480	0.9%
All Other Locations	27,284	53.3%

Source: US Census On The Map, 2019

Inflow and Outflow of Working-Age People in Carroll County



Source: US Census On The Map Tool, 2019

More of Carroll County’s 42,321 jobs are filled by Non-Carroll Residents

- 46% of county jobs are filled by Carroll County residents
- 54% of county jobs are filled by non-Carroll residents

Well over half of Carroll’s 51,178 working-age residents leave the county to work

- 62% of residents work outside of Carroll
- 38% of residents live/work in Carroll

Source: US Census On The Map, 2019

How do Carroll County residents commute for work?

The vast majority of residents (79.62%) drive alone to work, often with substantial commutes. As seen in the chart, the highest number of people have commutes under 10 miles or less each way, though the next highest group is workers commuting over 25 miles each way (29%). Almost 12% of the working-age residents are listed as carpoolers, which is a cohort that can inform the need for Park-and-Ride lots.

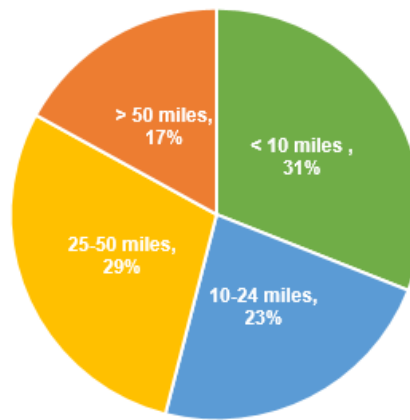
Carroll County Commute Modes

Mode of Transportation to Work	
Drove alone	79.62%
Carpooled	11.84%
Public transportation	0.44%
Worked from home	5.01%

Source: American Community Survey 2020

Commuting patterns may continue to change based on worker dynamics from the Covid-19 pandemic and other shifts in employment patterns (e.g. more working from home). As noted earlier, Carroll County is a bedroom community with people choosing to live in the county but commuting to jobs outside of the county, often with lengthy travel times and distances.

Average One-Way Carroll County Resident Commutes



Source: US Census On The Map 2019

Future Industry and Workforce

The job universe continues to evolve with changes in technology, trade patterns, work formats (e.g. more telework), varying resources, and demand. The Georgia Department of Labor provides the data below on occupations with the fastest job growth, with two out of the top five jobs not requiring a college degree. Transit services may need to be planned into this future outlook, such as potential supportive programs that connect people in workforce training or already in the workforce to jobs. Many of these industries also tend to be located in centralized locations, such as business parks, which can increase future needs and potential success of transit in those areas.

Occupational Outlook

The following table provides data on the long term occupational projections for the 10-county Georgia Local Workforce Development Area Region 8 during the period 2018 to 2026. This region is the same as the Three Rivers Region and includes Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, Troup, and Upson counties. Several of these occupations with fast job growth do not require a college degree, which could be an important factor for connecting out of school youth or unemployed/underemployed people to regionally needed jobs.

Top 20 Fastest Growing Occupations for Region, 2018-2028

Description	2018 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018-2028 % Change	Annual Growth Rate	Typical Education
Personal Care Aides	2,630	3,930	49.20%	4.08%	High school diploma or equivalent
Tool and Die Makers	90	120	44.19%	3.73%	Post-secondary non-degree award
Nurse Practitioners	280	400	43.26%	3.66%	Master's degree
Respiratory Therapists	220	310	42.33%	3.59%	Associate's degree
Physical Therapists	160	220	40.76%	3.48%	Doctoral or professional degree
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretaker	120	170	39.52%	3.39%	High school diploma or equivalent
Engineers, All Other	120	170	37.10%	3.21%	Bachelor's degree
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	520	710	37.14%	3.21%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	40	60	35.71%	3.10%	Doctoral or professional degree
Purchasing Managers	50	70	34.00%	2.97%	Bachelor's degree
Medical Assistants	680	900	33.43%	2.93%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Agricultural Equipment Operators	190	250	33.33%	2.92%	No formal educational credential
Operations Research Analysts	50	70	32.00%	2.82%	Bachelor's degree
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	100	130	30.39%	2.69%	Associate's degree
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repair	80	100	30.26%	2.68%	Postsecondary non-degree award

Source: Georgia Department of Labor Office of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research Long-Term Occupational Projections for Workforce Region 8 (West Central Georgia)

Industrial Outlook

The following table lists potential industries that will locate to the Three Rivers region, including manufacturing and warehouses that might be located in central industrial locations that could be connected to future transit, such as business parks.

Top 20 Fastest Growing Industries for Region, 2018-2028

Description	2018 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018-2028 % Change	Projected Annual Growth Rate
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	9,650	12,250	26.90%	2.40%
Educational Services	16,870	19,450	15.30%	1.40%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	7,070	9,210	30.60%	2.70%
Hospitals	8,620	10,740	24.50%	2.20%
Food Services and Drinking Places	15,570	17,610	13.10%	1.20%
General Merchandise Stores	5,580	6,710	20.10%	1.90%
Social Assistance	3,170	4,210	32.70%	2.90%
Crop Production	3,680	4,670	26.80%	2.40%
Administrative and Support Services	13,010	13,980	7.50%	0.70%
Warehousing and Storage	2,650	3,340	26.10%	2.30%
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	7,120	7,760	9.00%	0.90%
Primary Metal Manufacturing	3,000	3,630	21.10%	1.90%
Professional Scientific, and Technical Services	2,820	3,380	19.60%	1.80%
Food and Beverage Stores	4,110	4,630	12.60%	1.20%
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	2,160	2,440	11.80%	1.10%
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	2,280	2,560	12.20%	1.20%
Construction of Buildings	1,650	1,910	15.70%	1.50%
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	1,970	2,230	13.80%	1.30%
Support Activities for Transportation	990	1,240	26.10%	2.30%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,310	2,550	10.80%	1.00%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research, Long Term Industry Projections for Workforce Region 8 (West Central Georgia)

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

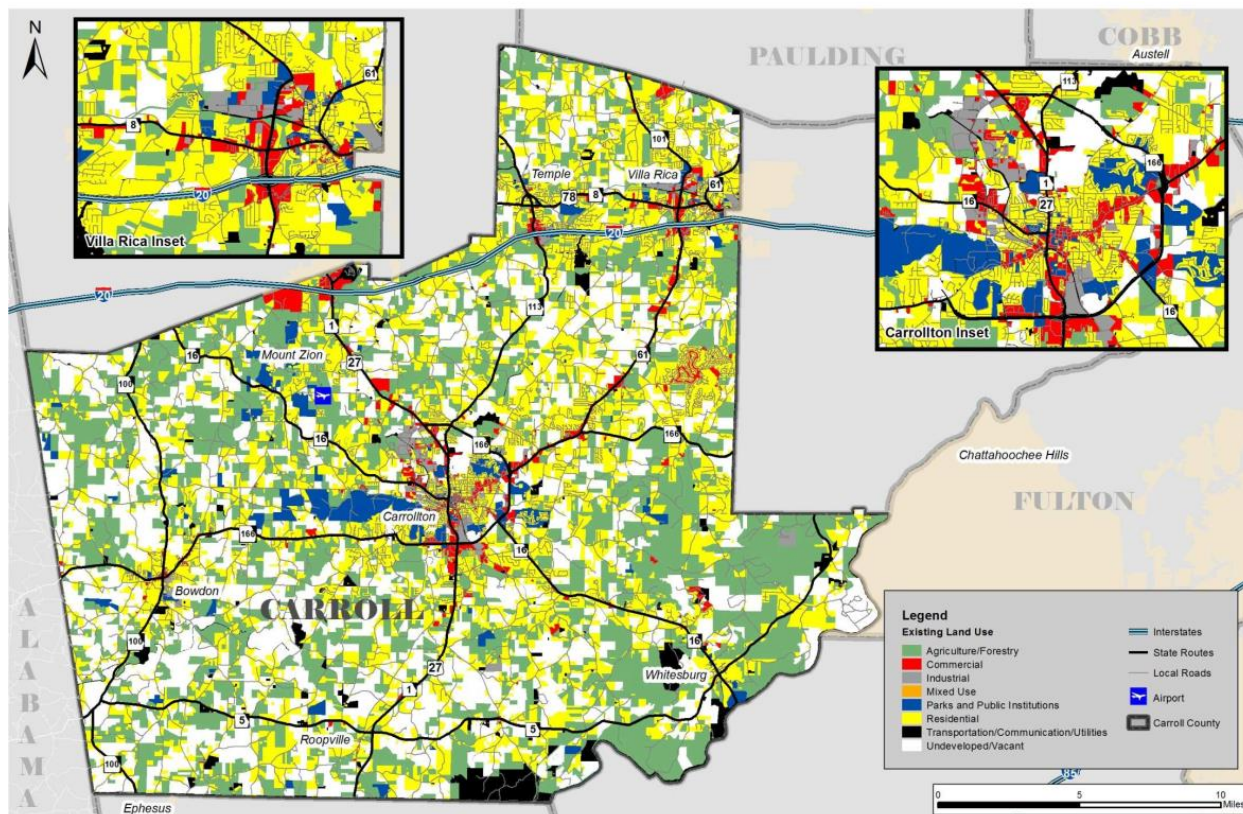
Existing and Future Land Use

The existing and future land use overview for Carroll County is illustrated in the Existing Land Use map from the 2014 Long Range Transportation Plan. A substantial amount of the land use is agricultural and residential, with commercial and industrial areas closer to the municipal boundaries of Carrollton, Mount Zion and Villa Rica.

The county has several community resources and activity centers including:

- Education Centers (e.g. University of West Georgia)
- Industrial Parks/Employment Centers
- Libraries
- Commercial centers
- Medical and social service facilities
- Government facilities
- Tourist attractions (e.g. parks)

Carroll County Existing Land Uses



Source: Carroll County 2014 Long Range Transportation Plan, Three Rivers Regional Commission

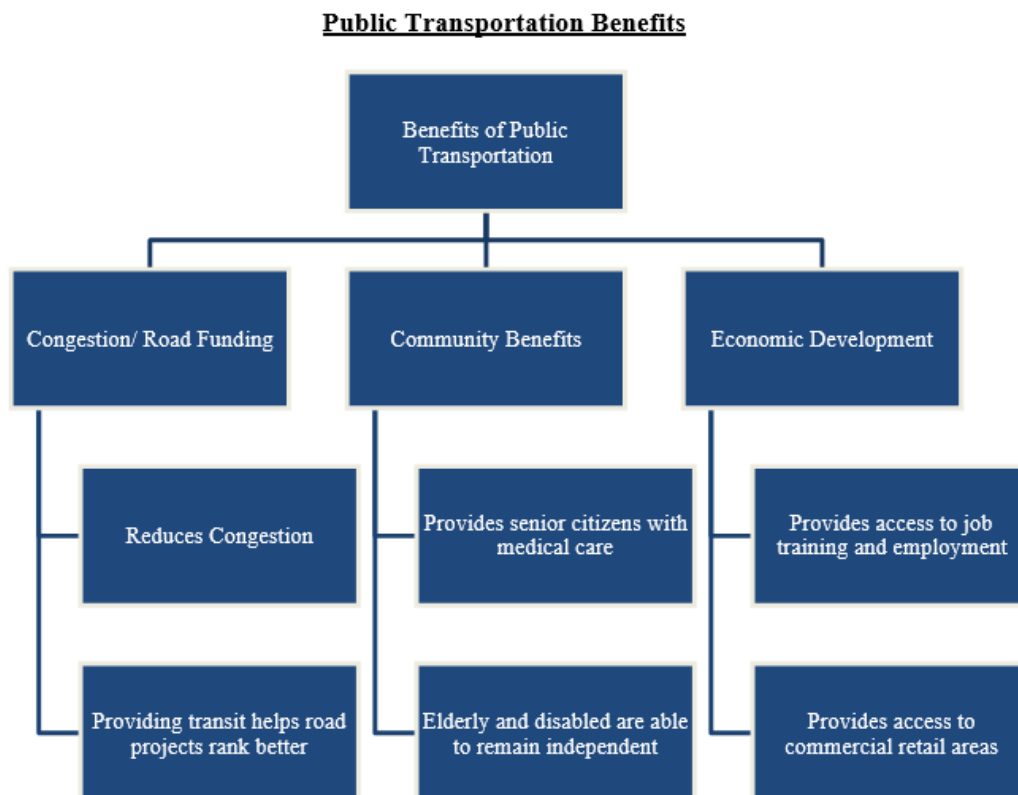
Transportation Network

As described in the current conditions section for residents' commuting patterns, the majority of Carroll County residents commute to work via private vehicle. As with most other rural and suburban areas, Carroll County's development tends to be connected by roads, not trains or multi-modal corridors. Thus, most connections must be made by a private or public vehicle.

Needs Assessment

Assessing the Need for Transit

Every community has different needs that inform public transportation and transit goals. This assessment aims to explore Carroll County’s unique and specific transit needs over the next 20 years. An important first step is to reaffirm the benefits of public transportation in order to validate the underlying need for transit in a community. As seen in the below chart, public transportation provides benefits to individuals and the general population.



This component of the plan will identify Carroll County’s transit needs both quantitatively and qualitatively to develop project recommendations and work toward maximizing the benefits of transit in this service area. This assessment will determine needs based on analyses of: 1) existing conditions and trends, 2) current planning documents, and 3) public and stakeholder input.

Analysis of Existing Service Area Conditions and Trends

As shown in the previous component of this plan, Carroll County has existing demographic, socioeconomic, and land use conditions and trends that validate a continued and increased need for transit. Specific populations and associated transit demands will be calculated in this section, including the Transit Dependent Population and other vulnerable populations.

Quantitative Analysis of Rural Transit Need

The GDOT TDP guidebook provides a spreadsheet to help quantify the need for rural passenger transportation. Below is the output for Carroll County.

Forecast Rural Transit Demand for Service Area

Required Information	Input	Notes/Reference
Service Area Population	119,662	American Community Survey, 2020
Number of households with no vehicles	1,630	Note: weighted by # of people in household, from 1-person households to 4-or-more
Number of persons in households with income below poverty level	18,724	American Community Survey, 2020
Georgia Mobility Gap Calculation	Georgia’s multiplier is 1.3	This number is automatically provided and embedded in the spreadsheet
Population age 60+	22,558	American Community Survey 2019
Population age 18-64 with mobility limitation	9,955	American Community Survey, 2020
Persons living in households with no vehicle available	2,593	American Community survey, 2020
Output for General Public Rural Passenger Transportation: Estimate of Demand for Total Rural Non-Program Demand	105,400	Annual 1-Way Passenger-Trips (Carroll provided 30,520 trips in 2019)
Source: Rural Transit Need/Demand Estimation Spreadsheet from Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 161		

Transit Dependent and Vulnerable Populations

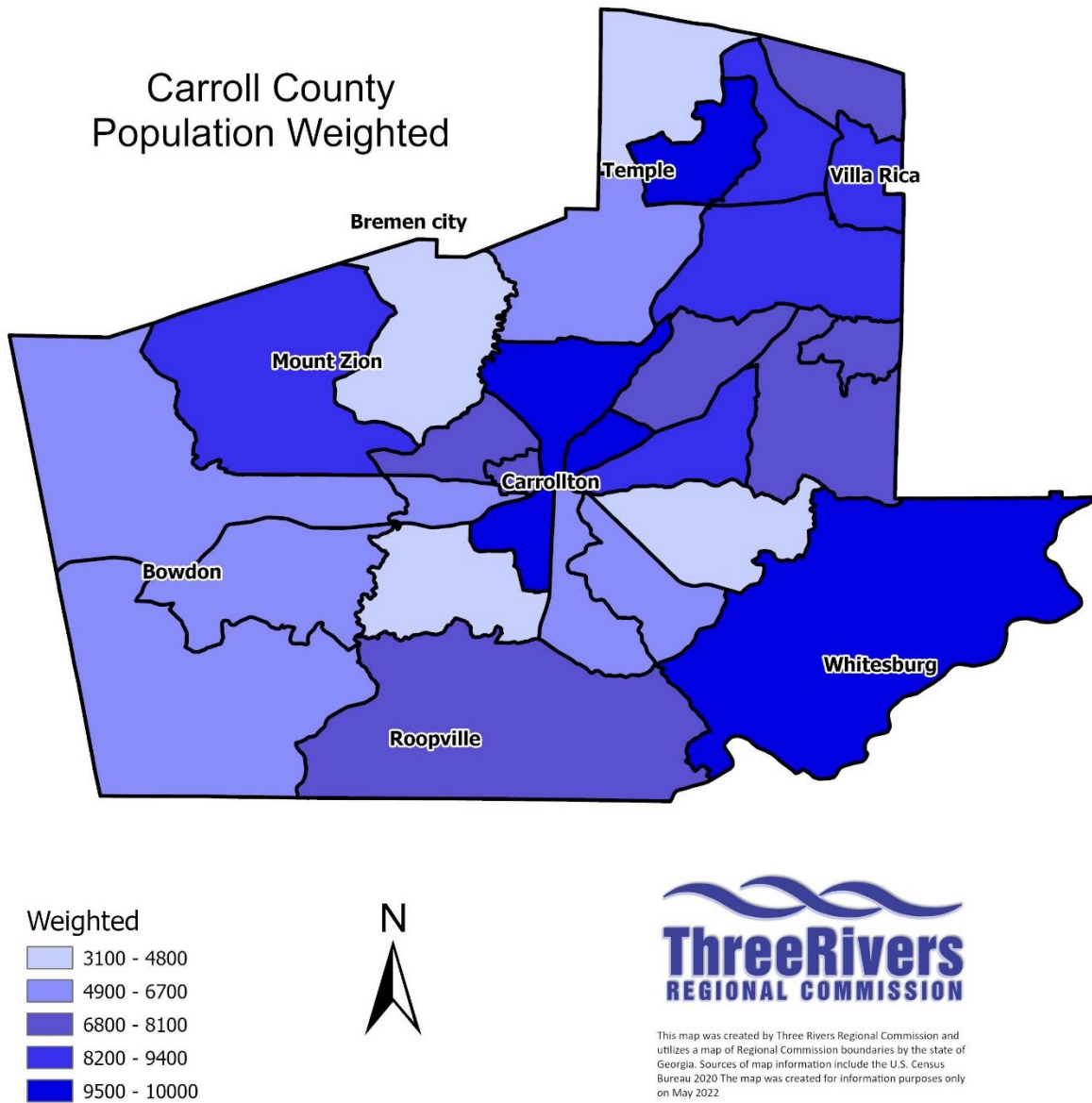
Carroll County is a community that works to meet the needs of all residents, including how people with varying resources and mobility capabilities can be connected to everyday needs for stable lives. When planning for transit in Carroll County, a priority is to ascertain the population most in need of transit. This analysis looks at the persons and populations with certain socioeconomic factors that may have a stronger propensity for using or needing transit.

Weighted Data Methodology

GDOT Methodology for Determining Transit Need by Weighted Average	
Category	Multiplier
Minority	1
Low-Income	1
LEP	1
Zero-car	1.5
Disabilities	5.2
Elderly	2.2
Youth	1
Source: Georgia Department of Transportation TDP Guidebook, 2021, pg 44	

Transit Dependent Population

Per the GDOT guidebook for Transit Development Plans, the Transit-Dependent Population includes low-income households, senior and youth populations, people living with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency (LEP), non-white populations, and zero-car households. Each of these populations is documented in detail in the Current Conditions section of this report, including age demographic projections over the planning window. The GDOT guidebook provides a weighted matrix to aggregate these populations and calculate where the county has the highest concentrations of transit-dependent people. Based on these calculations, the distribution of the transit-dependent population by Census tract in Carroll County is illustrated in the weighted population map.



Vulnerable Populations

In addition to the transit-dependent population, other populations have characteristics that may create more challenges in accessing stable education, employment, healthcare, and food security. These vulnerable populations can include veterans and people that did not yet obtain high school diplomas. The below overview details the rates that Carroll County has for these vulnerable populations that could need transit to connect to stabilizing resources.

Potential Transit Needs: Vulnerable Populations

Percent of population	Carroll County	Georgia
Living in poverty	17.30%	15.09%
Living with a disability	14.36%	12.36%
With no vehicle	4.67%	6.45%
With limited English Proficiency	3.14%	5.54%
Veterans	6.69%	8.02%
Ages 65 and over	13.36%	13.52%
No high school diploma	15.37%	12.86%
Youth out of school and not working	5.62%	7.86%
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019		

Transit-Supportive Densities and Development

This section looks at the concentrations of where people live and work to determine the most meaningful type delivery method for getting people where they need to go. Carroll County’s census tracts were analyzed by household density (households/acre) to determine the most appropriate delivery method to get people where they need to go, depending on how many people are in one general origination and destination point. The table below shows the suggested thresholds for different transit models.

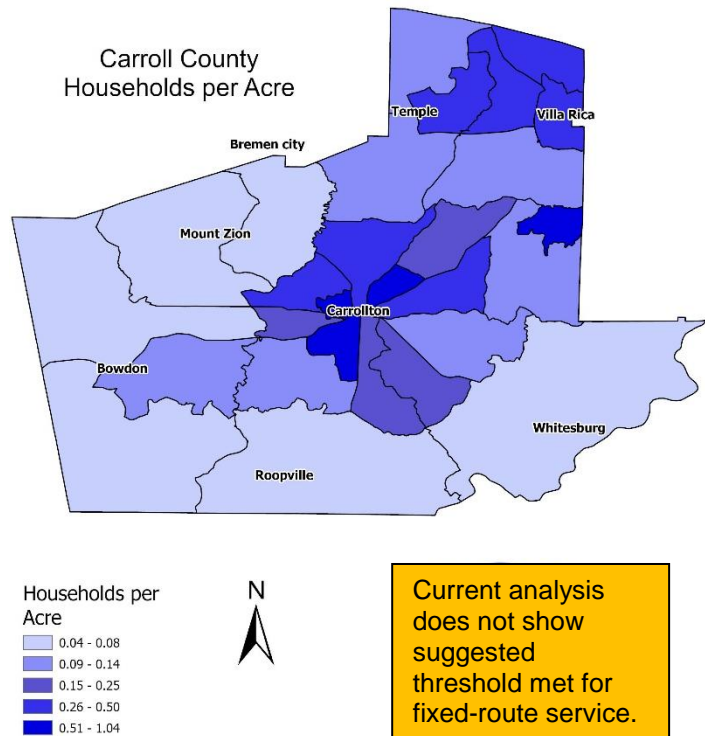
Suggested Transit-Supportive Density Thresholds

Density Within Service Area	
Demand-Response	Up to 6 households/gross acre
Density Within Walking Distance of Station	
Local bus, 60-minute peak headway	4 households/gross acre
Local bus, 20 to 30 minute peak headway	7 households/gross acre
Local bus, 10 to 15 minute peak headway	15 households/gross acre
Source: Table from GDOT TDP guidebook, which lists Federal Transit Administration as original source	

Fixed-Route Analysis

The GIS map provided here is used to analyze geospatial data of household density in Carroll County’s census tracts to determine what transit thresholds are met. Currently, tracts illustrate densities up to about 1.5 households per acre, far below density of at least 4 households/gross acre that could be considered the threshold to have a fixed-route bus. Indeed, Carroll County aligns with this threshold table and is currently providing demand-response transit.

Carroll County does have areas with greater concentrations of households, some of which may be low-income families or public housing. This analysis does not have a block-by-block density analysis, but that level of analysis may reveal areas that meet the 4 households/acre for density that could meet fixed-route thresholds. Additionally, the county may be permitting higher-density residential land uses over the planning window that could put certain areas at higher household densities. Meanwhile, the county has rural areas that will never meet the fixed-route threshold but have transit needs.



As discussed in the service area overview, Carroll County has a higher population density than other counties (235 people/mile compared to Georgia’s average of 180 people/mile), but much of the population is still widely spread over the entire jurisdiction. The current demand-response rural transit service model is in place to respond to residents living far from services, but the system can be challenged by meeting the transit demands of a widely dispersed population in a cost-effective and full capacity way. This demand-response model may still need additional capacity and associated funding in order to strive toward meeting demand.

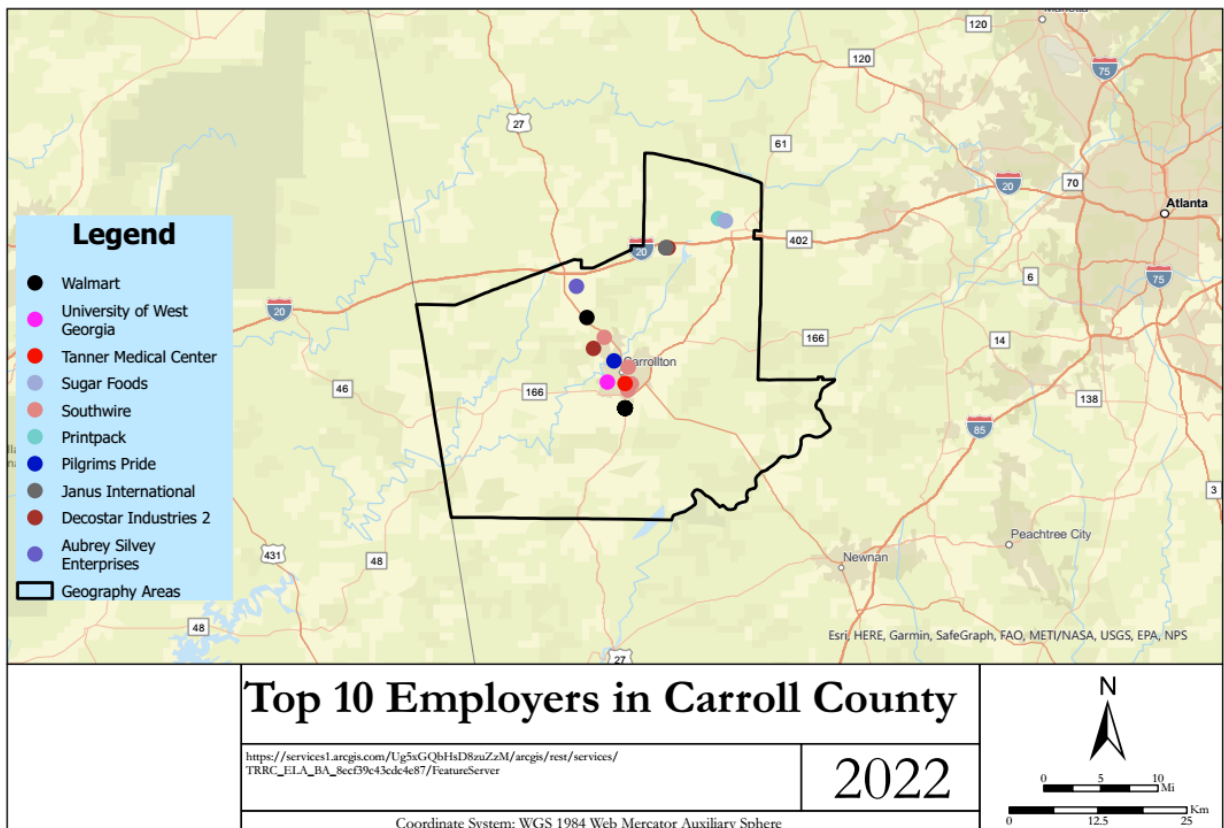
Transit-Supportive Development

Although the previous census tract analysis of household densities does not show that Carroll County meets the threshold for fixed-route bus service, the county does have development that has logical connections to transit.

These transit relevant types of developments include:

- Community Facilities
- Public Housing
- Multi-family developments
- Employment Centers
- Retail centers

As documented in the current conditions section of this report, Carroll County has land uses that include all of the above development that can create a need for transit. As exhibited in the employment density map, Carroll County has concentrations of employers and employees that could be a transit focus. Residents of public housing and multi-family housing may also have a need for transit to employment, retail centers, or community facilities. The current demand-response transit model is in place to meet these needs but may not always have the capacity for all needs at once. These transit-supportive land uses need to be routinely considered for potential origination/destination points for additional or fixed-route service. Additionally, it is important for all future land use decisions to be integrated with transportation planning, including transit, to ensure the county can proactively meet additional local mobility needs. The map below of the top 10 largest employers in Carroll County (not including educational institutions below college level) illustrates development areas that could support transit as places to connect residents to jobs.



Transit System Evaluation

Current Transit: Carroll Connection

The current on-demand response service model provided by Carroll Connection was put in place to meet the need for public transportation in Carroll County and the Three Rivers Region. Carroll Connection is a supportive initiative of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, which provides an accessible method of transportation for essential needs of citizens of Carroll County and gives priority to elderly adults and those with disabilities. Passengers call in at least 24 hours in advance with dispatch services looking at routes and capacity in order to add as many people as possible.

Transit Operations

Overview of Carroll Connection Operations	
Service Area	504 square miles
Vehicles in Fleet	6
Hours	Monday-Friday 8am – 5pm
Fare (one-way)	\$3.00
Total Trips in 2019	30,520
County Cost FY22	\$35,000 (Estimated to increase to \$70,000 for FY23)

Carroll Connection provides the following types of trips:

1) Purchase of Service (POS)/Subscription Trips

Any government agency or local business group can buy trips on the rural public transportation as a “purchase of service” (POS) type trip. POS trips bring in additional revenues, and help to buy down the local government’s cost to provide public transportation. The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) is the primary agency that pays for trips through a coordinated transportation program. DHS provides programs to assist seniors, families, children, youth, people living with disabilities, and unemployed or underemployed people with maintaining and improving self-sufficiency. Carroll Connection provides DHS customers with transportation to senior centers, social service programs, and vocational programs. Please see the appendix for a more detailed description of the most common types of human service trips.

2) Public Trips

Although priority is given to elderly adults and people living with disabilities, Carroll Connection is open to the general public for trips anywhere within the county at a fare of \$3.00 one-way. These trips are not subsidized by any state agencies and tend to be more expensive for the transit system due to the trip costing more than the revenue box fare charged.

Operations

Carroll Connection is operated by a third-party operator through a contract that is renewed each year. The existing fleet has been sufficient to handle most current subscription and public trips that are requested, though trip requests for peak hours may have to be turned away due to capacity. Current operating hours are sufficient for senior citizen trips, but do not match with general workforce hours. Carroll County’s high number of industrial jobs has an even broader range of workforce duty hours, as many local plants have 3 shifts, including overnight. Carroll Connection operates entirely within county borders and cannot take customers outside of the service area. Currently, the Carroll County Training Center has a separate bus service for Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities clients, which has affected this system’s subscription revenue.

Ridership

The majority of the system’s trips are purchase of service trips through DHS. The top destinations for the most recent fiscal year were for medical, senior, and shopping needs. Currently, Carroll Connection does not have the same level of senior citizen ridership as before the Covid-19 pandemic, though subscription numbers are climbing back up.

Top Carroll Connection Destinations

Top Trips FY2021
Fresenius Kidney Care
Carrollton Senior Center
Kroger
CVS Pharmacy
Southern Therapy Services
Walmart

Other Transit: Park-and-Ride Lots

Carroll County has three Georgia Department of Transportation Park-and-Ride lots, located in Villa Rica, the north side of Carrollton, and Temple. Per the Carroll County 2018 Comprehensive Plan, these range in utilization rates, never reaching more than one third full. Stakeholder input indicates that these lots do not always seem very welcoming and tend to be mainly used by Atlanta airport staff. These lots may need upkeep or changes to encourage use to broaden the county and state’s transit opportunities for the large commuter and potential ridesharing population.

Park-and-Ride Lot Utilization

Lot Location	Lot Name	Number of Parking Spaces	2017 Average Count	2017 % Utilization
Villa Rica	I-20 & SR 61	160	44	28%
North Side Carrollton	SR 166	65	13	20%
Temple	I-20 & SR 113	15	2	13%

Source: Carroll County 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Other Transit: College and Veterans Shuttles

As noted in the existing conditions component, Carroll County has other transit accessible to certain populations. The nonprofit organization Impact West Georgia provides the DESERVE Van, a free, wheelchair accessible van to veterans living in Carroll County for transportation to and from the Trinka Davis Veterans Village Clinic in Carrollton. This van service is staffed by volunteer drivers. According to this organization’s website, Impact West Georgia would like to extend capacity to veterans living outside of Carroll County. The University of West Georgia has a bus system for students and staff, including routes to Newnan Center, a weekly shopping shuttle, and a Thursday evening late-night shuttle (per the Spring 2022 schedule). Although these shuttles are not available to the general public, these systems may be valuable partners in terms of local transit planning.

Trends in the Broader Population and in Transit Needs

Trend: Transportation Cost Burdens

Carroll County is part of a broader growing need for transit throughout the country due to vehicle-centric development, demographics and socioeconomics. People’s individual and household transportation costs can be a large part of limited budgets, as can be seen in the AAA Your Driving Costs study for 2021. Household transportation costs can also be an even higher part of rural residents’ budgets due to more fuel needed for longer trips.

Annual Driving Costs

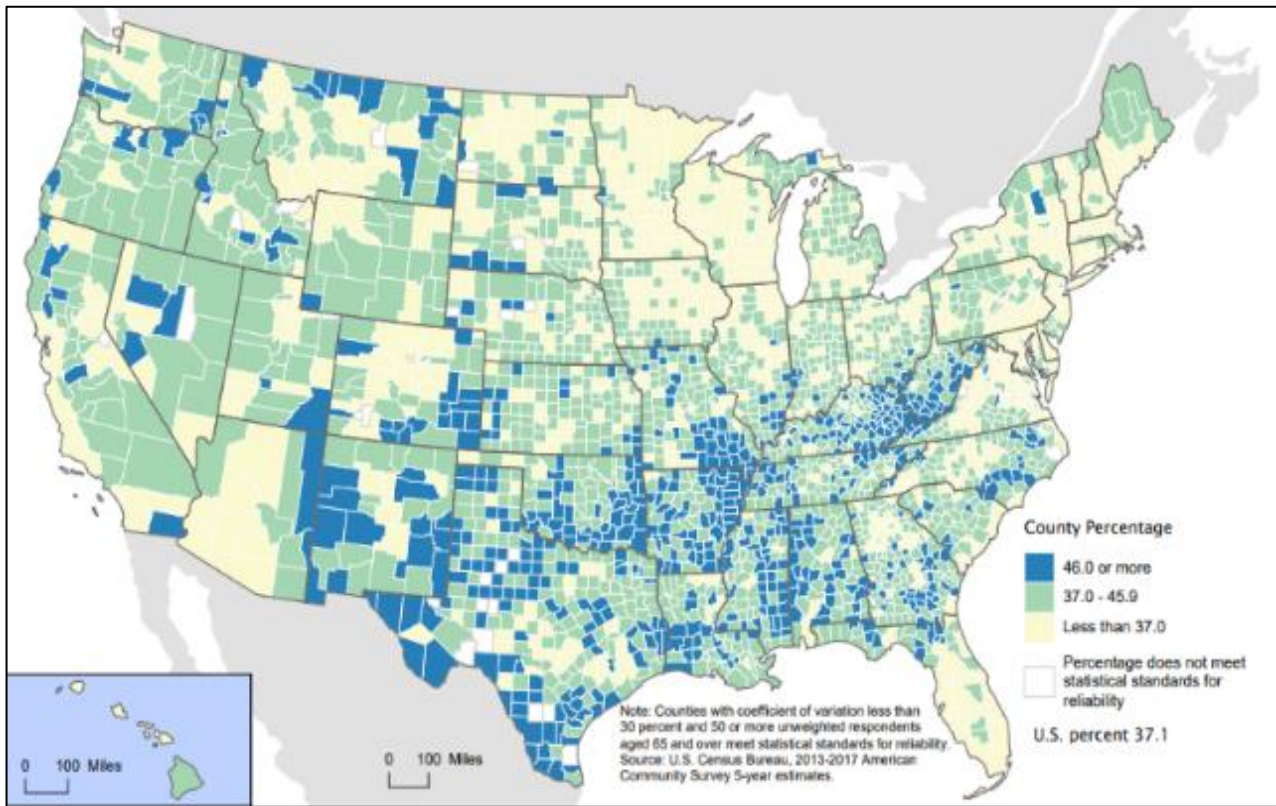
Note: this chart is re-created from the Your Driving Costs study by AAA

	Midsize Pickup	½ Ton Crew-Cab Pickup	Hybrid Vehicle	Electric Vehicle	2021 Weighted Average
Operating Costs					
Fuel	11.64¢	15.81¢	5.93¢	3.66¢	10.72¢
Maintenance	9.94¢	9.15¢	8.78¢	7.70¢	9.55¢
Cost per mile	21.58¢	24.96¢	14.71¢	11.36¢	20.28¢
Ownership Costs					
Full-coverage insurance	\$1,313	\$1,379	\$1,365	\$1,381	\$1,342
License, registration, taxes	\$715	\$889	\$649	\$155	\$669
Depreciation (15k mi/yr)	\$3,405	\$4,630	\$4,108	\$5,362	\$3,900
Finance charges	\$746	\$945	\$681	\$692	\$712
Cost per year	\$6,178	\$7,844	\$6,803	\$7,589	\$6,624
Cost per day	\$16.93	\$21.49	\$18.64	\$20.79	\$18.15
Total Cost – 10k mi/yr					
Operating cost	\$2,158	\$2,496	\$1,471	\$1,136	\$2,028
Ownership cost	\$6,178	\$7,844	\$6,803	\$7,589	\$6,624
Depreciation	-\$394	-\$453	-\$298	-\$370	-\$344
Total cost per year	\$7,942	\$9,887	\$7,975	\$8,356	\$8,307
Total cost per day	\$21.76	\$27.09	\$21.85	\$22.89	\$22.76
Total cost per mile	\$0.7942	\$0.9887	\$0.7975	\$0.8356	\$0.8307
Total Cost – 15 mi/yr					
Operating cost	\$3,237	\$3,744	\$2,206	\$1,704	\$3,042
Ownership cost	\$6,178	\$7,844	\$6,803	\$7,589	\$6,624
Total cost per year	\$9,415	\$11,588	\$9,009	\$9,293	\$9,666
Total cost per day	\$25.79	\$31.75	\$24.68	\$25.46	\$26.48
Total cost per mile	\$0.6277	\$0.7725	\$0.6006	\$0.6196	\$0.6444
Total Cost – 20k mi/yr					
Operating cost	\$4,315	\$4,992	\$2,941	\$2,272	\$4,056
Ownership cost	\$6,178	\$7,844	\$6,803	\$7,589	\$6,624
Depreciation	\$428	\$496	\$324	\$400	\$374
Total cost per year	\$10,922	\$13,332	\$10,068	\$10,262	\$11,054
Total cost per day	\$29.92	\$36.53	\$27.58	\$28.11	\$30.28
Total cost per mile	\$0.5461	\$0.6666	\$0.5034	\$0.5131	\$0.5527
Notes: The figures in each vehicle category are the average costs for five top-selling 2021 models selected by AAA for this year’s Your Driving Costs study.					

Trend: Growing Senior Population

The senior citizen population is also growing, and with age can come disabilities and a decrease in driving capabilities. People want to age in place but not become isolated or add chauffeuring burdens to family members and friends (Source: Lydia Morgen and Mildred Warner, Planning for the Aging Population: Rural Responses to the Challenge (2011)). As can be seen in the US Census map for people with disabilities aged 65 and over, many aging people are in rural areas that have the added challenges of disabilities and geographic separation from medical, social, and economic resources. These factors create a need for mobility options that are not reliant on personal vehicles.

Percentage With a Disability Among Population Aged 65 and Over: 2013-2017



Source: US Census Bureau https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/time-series/demo/nia_county_maps.html

Needs Assessment

Trend: Dangers of Isolation

The broader population is at an increased risk of isolation and loneliness due to aging, settlement patterns (e.g. families living further apart), and other physical, mental and resource issues that prevent people from being able to regularly connect with other people and places. The Covid-19 pandemic has confirmed how social isolation can impact people. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is strong evidence that many adults aged 50 and older are alone in ways that put their health at risk. Transit may be part of meeting the public health need to prevent social isolation and loneliness.

Findings of Need from Existing Conditions and Trends

Carroll County has current and trending demographic, socioeconomic, and land use trends that indicate transit needs now and in the future. Carroll County has a transit-dependent population that will need to be prioritized, as transit is critical to connect these residents to daily needs. As with much of the state and nation, the population is aging overall, and many more people will eventually outlive their ability or access to driving. Carroll County has vulnerable populations (e.g. youth that are not in school nor working) that may need transit as part of supportive intervention. The county has employment centers and residential areas that transit could help connect residents to jobs, including residents that do not have ready access to a vehicle or have limited budgets that could benefit from shared transportation. Currently, the county has a transit system in place that is currently meeting the majority of needs for senior center trips, but does not have the capacity for meeting workforce needs. Additionally, the Park-and-Ride lots are not fully used and may need changes to increase appeal. Carroll County will need to continue finding ways to maximize transit for employers and employees in order to strengthen local economic development. Finally, Carroll County is affected by the national trend of higher transportation cost burdens for individuals and families, as well as a large cohort of people that are aging and need support from the challenges of isolation, disabilities, and geographically/socially fragmented communities.

Review of Existing Plans

Many plans have been developed in previous years that remain relevant today to Carroll County's public transportation goals. These plans have already been created through stakeholder input, approved by elected officials, and can be assessed for transit needs. The plans included in this assessment range from a state level to a local government scope. The following observations have been drawn from a review of these plans to inform Carroll County's transit needs:

County and City Scope Plans

The **Carroll County Long Range Transportation Plan** (2014) has several goals and policies relevant to public transit that can inform this plan's needs, including:

- Improve safety, accessibility and mobility options for people and goods movement.
- Accommodate users without access to automobiles and promote health and quality of life by providing a range of mobility options.
- Coordinate with transit entities to explore commuter bus service.
- Promote park and ride on the county website.
- Partner with Georgia Commute Options.

The **comprehensive plans for Carroll County** (2018), **City of Bowdon** (2019), **City of Carrollton** (2018), **City of Mount Zion** (2018), **Town of Roopville** (2018), **City of Temple** (2018), **City of Villa Rica** (2018), **City of Whitesburg** (2019), as well as the strategic plan for **Carroll Tomorrow** (2022) documented the following transit-related needs and opportunities:

- Improve multi-modal connectivity and create transportation alternatives.
- Several cities have existing and planned multifamily and mixed-use zones and character areas.
- Local jurisdictions, community agencies and business organizations are committed to economic development and public-private partnerships to create better paying jobs, support the workforce, and strengthen youth-focused employment programs.
- Jurisdictions are committed to intergovernmental coordination.
- Many jurisdictions provide senior centers in order to accommodate the current and increasing senior population.
- Fixed-route transit service should be considered over the planning horizon in certain municipalities.
- The population wants to age in place, more senior housing and other resources will be needed.
- Downtown revitalization could include higher density and mixed-uses.
- Industry is expanding in certain places (e.g. Tanner Health).
- There is a desire to foster tourism, promote the small-town character and high quality of life.

The **Pike County Rural Transit Development Plan** (2021) was also consulted as a local model for a transit plan in this region. The following goals could also inform this plan's needs:

- Achieve or exceed all Section 5311 service criteria as outlined in the GDOT administrative guide.
- Contract with the Department of Human Resources and other interested local groups to provide purchase of service trips in order to reduce the operating cost required by local governments.

Regional Scope Plans

The **Three Rivers Regional Transit Development Plan (2018)**, the **Three Rivers Comprehensive Development Strategy (2020)** and the **Three Rivers Workforce Development Board Local Plan (2020)** have the following goals:

- Provide cost effective and affordable public transportation to all citizens within the service area.
- Implement existing transportation plans.
- Aim to be a business-friendly community.
- Expand access to rural healthcare.
- Provide supportive services to individuals, including assistance with transportation.

State Scope Plans

The **GDOT Statewide Transit Plan (2020)** is also relevant to informing Carroll County's needs, including the following needs, vision, goals, opportunities and strategies:

- Ensure public transit coverage across the state to support mobility and access for all.
- Connect rural transit to regional and urban centers.
- Leverage technology and innovation to support public transit ridership and performance.
- Rural transit demand is expected to grow, millions of rural trips per year are estimated to go unmet.
- Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$4 in economic return.
- 71% of public funding for public transportation flows to the private sector, creating and supporting jobs.
- An emerging trend to address needs and gaps is to increase ridership and use regional coordination.
- To increase ridership, extend use of current fleet, ensure service hours meet the needs of all potential riders, coordinate with the educational and business community, increase marketing and promote transit security, consider fare changes for youth and seniors (even fare-free rides), implement vehicle technology and equip all rural vehicles with wheelchair lifts.

Findings of Need from Existing Plans

These existing plans confirm a continued need for public transportation in Carroll County, including the continuation and potential expansion of transit. These plans also confirm the need to accommodate people without access to vehicles and provide a multimodal system. Based on the high level of commuters, the Carroll County Long Range Transportation Plan's need to advertise its Park-and-Ride lots continues to be relevant, and also should to be expanded to include more consistent maintenance. Many local plans discuss the need to strengthen economic opportunity for businesses and residents, which could be supported in part through transit projects such as vanpools or expanded demand-response service. The Three Rivers Workforce Development Board Local Plan explains the need for transportation as "an essential component of workforce development and that transportation in west central Georgia is a significant barrier to successfully completing training and obtaining employment." The GDOT Statewide Transit Plan affirms the need to increase transit ridership to meet community goals, with the potential to grow capacity through the use of the existing fleet and extended operating hours. This need to maximize the current transit system and find incremental, cost-effective and creative ways to meet workforce, rural, and transit-dependent ridership carries forward in this transit development plan.

Review of Stakeholder Input

As discussed in the Public Involvement and Stakeholder Plan, this planning process was guided by a Steering Committee that represented Carroll County transit stakeholders. This committee also coordinated a meeting with the seven municipalities' staff and elected officials in order to align with city and town transit planning technical information and goals. The following input on needs and opportunities was collected through this series of meetings and interviews:

Challenges/Needs Identified:

- Carroll Connection has successfully been meeting the needs of connecting senior citizens to appointments, but the workforce population has a critical need for employment transportation.
- Carroll County has a daily population of transient and unhoused residents that are living in hotels. This vulnerable population needs connections to school, work, daycare, and shopping.
- Many people are in survival mode, such as a car suddenly breaking down or having a sudden mental/physical health challenge. The 24-hour advanced booking system does not work to meet these immediate needs.
- Employers say a top obstacle for recruiting/retaining workers is reliable transportation.
- It is challenging for residents to pay for private on-demand transit, such as Uber/Lyft.
- Current industrial shifts are a challenge to match with transit, as many places have 24 hour operations. Additionally, different companies in the same industrial parks have different shifts, making it challenging to align for carpooling, vanpooling, or transit.
- Certain industries, such as the hospital and healthcare industry, have significant openings in some of the entry-level positions. These jobs can be difficult to fill, partially because of the low-pay, especially if people are burdened by other costs such as transportation.
- Medical patients often have appointments at more than one office in one day, which is challenging for the patient, caregivers, and transit providers.
- Veterans can be challenged getting to appointments at Veterans Administration facilities.
- People generally cannot walk or bike to work due to road designs and proximity to employment.
- Some people who can work, such as living with disabilities or low-income, simply can't drive.
- People are moving to Carroll County and bringing aging parents. These older residents need to be connected to medical appointments, but grown children have jobs and other responsibilities that can be challenging to meet everybody's needs.
- The general public wants fellow residents to "get to work", but might not realize the challenges some hard-working people face with affording a reliable car.
- The word "transit" can have a negative perception among the general public and decision-makers, especially with people who do not use public transportation. Often transit is associated with cities, specifically, MARTA, and this misconception can be an obstacle to further discussion. Carroll Connection was initially challenging to get started due to lack of political support.
- Some residents push back on the idea of fixed-route buses due to concerns about traffic congestion from buses making stops, as well as the safety, attractiveness and need for dedicated space of fixed bus stops.
- Housing is becoming unaffordable in Carroll County, making it even harder for low-income people to make ends meet there.
- Some of the Park-and-Ride lots are not very welcoming. Certain industries, such as airport employees, are more apt to use these lots due to location. These lots may need more maintenance or advertising to increase use and encourage carpooling, vanpooling or transit.

Needs Assessment

- Some city leadership is not as aware of Carroll Connection as others, especially with the county paying for the local cost-share. There is a need for inter-governmental communication.
- There is a need to collaborate with the business and economic development community.
- There is a need to extend the age range of youth allowed to ride local transit to ages 14 and up.
- There is a need to have pre-paid vouchers or purchase of bulk trips.
- There is a need to hear from transit users about their experiences/needs.
- Some customers may need to go to appointments outside of the service area (e.g. to Bremen).

Opportunities Identified:

- Providing consistent transportation for people that want to work, but cannot afford a reliable car or only have one car in a family, can be life changing and have a domino effect in their lives. In turn, communities have an opportunity to increase local levels of household income by finding innovative ways to connect residents to jobs and reduce low-income people's transportation budget burden.
- Employers are starting to think differently about incentives to keep up workforce, they have an opportunity to put resources into employee transportation.
- The low-income and housing authority community is interested in using Carroll Connection more, possibly through buying or partnering to buy bulk trips. This vulnerable population would be served by having scheduled rides available to places such as a grocery store on a certain day of the week.
- There is interest in having a monthly pass or pre-paid vouchers available for residents. Technology also could provide an opportunity for people to pay for tickets on phones.
- There is an opportunity for transit to help provide critical healthcare needs for rural residents. During the pandemic, Carroll Connection was able to keep people going to dialysis.
- The exteriors of transit vehicles can be used to promote a sponsoring company or advertise jobs. The message can be as specific as needed, including "we can pick you up and bring you to work" to help solve the staffing challenges at many employers.
- Some places have eliminated fares for youth and seniors, could provide more benefits than costs.
- There is an opportunity to increase employer transit potential if shifts are scheduled to better align with neighboring companies and transit hours. One suggestion is a 7am to 3pm shift that could almost be met by current transit operating hours. Employers could help with cost-share for employee transit, which would offset transit system costs.
- The hospital could benefit from a vehicle that circulates employees and patients to campus offices.
- Pilgrim's Pride could be a helpful local resource to learn about current vanpool programs.
- Tanner Medical Center has an electric vehicle charging station, which could provide an opportunity for electric transit vehicles.
- Extending the transit hours from 7am to 7pm could provide many more opportunities.
- Carroll County has a framework for bringing economic and community development stakeholders and leaders together through the Chamber of Commerce, Carroll Tomorrow, business roundtables, and other initiatives. Public-private partnerships can create more transit opportunities for economic development and human services.
- Carrollton could benefit from a trolley system on Maple Street.
- Allowing youth ages 14 and up (instead of 16 and up) to ride alone on Carroll Connection would open up job and other opportunities for high-school aged residents, who may not have a driver's license or vehicle.
- There may additional state and federal funding for workforce transit in the near future (e.g. the state of Georgia has discussed releasing workforce transportation "Workforce Connect" funds).
- Certain employers and displaced employees are relocating to the area that would benefit from employee transit incentives for a smoother transition.
- Georgia Commute Options and Commute With Enterprise could be good resources when working toward employer transit, such as vanpools. Transit can allow people to age in place despite not being able to drive anymore. Transit also enables caregivers to stay as contributing members of the economy because people do not have to leave or drastically adjust jobs in order to accommodate driving loved ones to appointments.
- Another important aspect is that transit can be another "set of eyes" for caregivers to

Needs Assessment

have routine check-ins on loved ones. Another success story is that a transit driver once recognized that a customer needed a wheelchair and helped initiate that process.

- The general public places a high value on people with a strong work ethic. Programs that assist people that “want to work”, such as through transit, might have strong support.
- Carroll County has areas with higher density that could have a neighborhood service route that connects a few stops to Walmart and laundromats.
- A fixed-route system or door-to-door service with a lot of stops is not necessary, as people can walk to a few centralized locations to benefit from a transit route, as long as that route is predictable.
- Technology is creating an opportunity to electrify some of the transit fleet in the future to reduce fuel and maintenance burdens.
- Carroll County has major businesses and industrial locations that would be promising starting points for collaboration and pilot projects, especially with Chamber of Commerce support.
- There is an opportunity to educate the public and decision-makers on the community needs and benefits of transit, such as through media and sharing success stories. Local transit has provided positive impacts for families, such as one stakeholder’s recounting of a single dad who was able get his kids to school and himself to work thanks to assistance from the local public school bus system. These impacts can be highlighted to validate public transportation programs.
- The University of West Georgia is an opportunity for another transit partnership to reduce “pinch points” for students and others that need to get around without a car in the community. Additionally, it has models, such as “shopping shuttles” that could inform local transit planning.

Transit Alternatives and Trends

This section outlines other transit and mobility systems to provide an overview of options that could be considered over the planning window. Some of these options have varying levels of implementation authority that are not all within the control of local government’s jurisdiction and require broader collaboration, education, and public-private partnerships. However, it is important to compile other measures for potential future innovations.

Option ↓	Pros +	Cons -	Results/Successes =
<p>Flexible Work Schedules and/or Telework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can assist with employers recruiting and retaining employees in an effort to support work/life balance. Can reduce number of times employees need to come into the office, reducing vehicular demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not an option for all occupations and industries Often requires employees have internet access Does not necessarily cut down on vehicular travel, just less to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More employers have shifted to more flexibility during the Covid-19 pandemic
<p>Walking/Biking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal health/financial benefits, requires no car Investments in walking/biking infrastructure creates positive community impacts Can aid people with “last mile connectivity” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe bike/pedestrian infrastructure often not available Might not be conducive for shift-work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some communities are working toward Complete Streets Some communities are creating multi-use trails, often through public-private partnerships
<p>Vanpool</p> <p>Concept: a group of people share a van to travel from a common location. Van may be employee owned, employer owned, or operated through a leasing company.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential employee cost savings through not needing a vehicle and/or employer incentives Could help recruit & retain employees Could assist people with night shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depends on individual cooperation Challenging if employees spread out in community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private companies, such as Commute with Enterprise or Via, are in operation
<p>Rideshare</p> <p>Concept: employees carpool through a matching service or individual actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables people to carpool, saving vehicle costs Potential for employer incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires individual and possibly corporate coordination and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Georgia Commute Options has assisted employees and employers in the metro Atlanta area with creating carpools
<p>Flexible Public Transit</p> <p>Concept: A hybrid of a fixed-bus system where a vehicle is assigned to a route or area, and customers request trips within this area (also known as microtransit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces inefficiencies from fixed-route system Can be scaled more quickly than traditional fixed-route Does not require all ADA vehicles, but that type of trip needs to have accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Might not be as efficient in less-dense areas Reservation/dispatch system requires technology Might have more demand than capacity, slower or non-available trips may deter people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some cities are starting to use vans and on-demand software to replace fixed-route service

Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Through the needs assessment and other components of this plan, this planning process has resulted in the following goals and objectives.

- 1. Continue Carroll Connection's success in connecting senior and disabled citizens to appointments and services through on-demand scheduling.**
 - Support capital and operating needs and enhancements.
 - Share success stories and highlight service benefits.
- 2. Prioritize transit for the workforce and addressing all residents' mobility needs to improve individual and community economic stability.**
 - Maximize Carroll Connection's fleet and system to create reliable transit options.
 - Use off-peak scheduling to serve more people and implement pilot programs.
 - Consider expanding system hours to align more with workforce needs.
- 3. Build public-private partnerships to create community transit solutions.**
 - Educate local business and community leaders on transit needs and opportunities.
 - Work toward pilot projects that can meet employer, employee, and agency needs.
 - Incorporate transit as part of economic development.
- 4. Collaborate with county and municipal jurisdictions on transportation initiatives.**
 - Support county and municipalities' individual transit needs and resources while also working toward collaborative initiatives.
 - Strive to implement and update existing transportation and transit-related plans.

Recommendations for Implementation

Short-Term (0-5 Years)

- Continue to support existing Carroll Connection.
- Conduct a survey of transit users, or people in need of transit, to get opinions and experiences.
- Analyze capacity and customer service of current on-demand system to determine gaps.
- Implement pilot projects using current transit fleet at non-peak times to connect more people.
- Explore adapting the on-demand response system to a hybrid mobility system that could include microtransit, deviated trip routes, and shuttles.
- Strengthen voucher or pre-paid ticket program to increase access.
- Develop public-private partnerships through meetings, roundtables, and events.
- Work with one or more of the county's large employers to initiate a vanpool program.
- Work with local plants and/or industrial parks to standardize shifts for ridesharing.
- Explore extending transit system hours to increase ridership and meet more demand.
- Share transit success stories with the community and local leaders.
- Navigate transition from 5311 funding to include 5307 funding.
- Stay engaged with innovative transit programs and technology and consider for local potential.
- Connect with Georgia Commuter Options.
- Increase awareness and use of Park and Ride lots.
- Explore ways to reduce price options for seniors or others with limited transportation budgets.
- Maximize public-private cost-sharing for transit, including creative funding mechanisms such as corporate sponsorships and advertising to meet increased demand and offset system costs.

Mid-Term (6-10 Years)

- Consider electrifying some of fleet and infrastructure to reduce fuel and maintenance liabilities.
- Continue to implement and scale transit pilot projects.
- Support and implement local transportation planning related to transit.

Long-Term (11-20 Years)

- Navigate transit funding if Census creates more urbanized areas and requires a larger shift from 5311 funding to 5307 funding.

Appendix

- 1) Resolution
- 2) Meeting Dates
- 3) Carroll Connection Outreach and Media

Resolution

10. CONSENT AGENDA

Items under this action were discussed at the public Work Session on Thursday, June 30, 2022 (now available for view on www.carrollcountyga.com) and will be presented for consideration as a single item. Only one vote will be taken.

On a motion by Commissioner Chance (with removal of Postponed items 10.IV and 10.V) and a second by Commissioner McClendon, the Commission unanimously **approved** the four (4) items on the Consent Agenda.

10. I. Georgia Indigent Defense Services Agreement

Consideration of an Agreement between the Public Defender Office and the County to enter into an agreement to implement the provisions of the Georgia Indigent Defense Act of 2003 and to authorize the Chairman to execute the Agreement

10. II. Parks Department - Equipment Purchase

Consideration to Purchase one (1) New Holland POWERSTAR 75 tractor and one (1) Rhino Implement 2150 mower priced at \$71,950.00 from Agrimerica for the Parks Department

10. III. Recreation Department – Construction of New Multi-Purpose Field

Consideration to construct a new multi-purpose field to be paid for by SPLOST funds up to the amount of \$513,500

10. IV. Solid Waste – Agreement with Waste Industries Atlanta, LLC

POSTPONED

10. V. Solid Waste – Agreement with ETC of Georgia, LLC

POSTPONED

10. VI. Solid Waste – Restructure for Personnel

Consideration to formally restructure a position from Temporary/Full Time to Permanent/Part Time status

11. BUSINESS SECTION

11. I. Juvenile Court – Byrne Grant Renewal

On a motion by Commissioner McClendon and a second by Commissioner Reynolds, the Commission unanimously **approved** an Application for the Byrne Grant Renewal in the amount of \$16,088 to be used for psychological evaluations and counseling.

11. II. Transit Development Plan prepared by Three Rivers Regional Commission

On a motion by Commissioner McClendon and a second by Commissioner Chambers, the Commission unanimously **approved** the Strategic Planning Document to determine transit needs and goals for future conditions and provide safe and dependable transit for the citizens of Carroll County through public-private partnerships. Commissioner Fuller highlighted that this is not a Mass Transit System plan, but rather a way to help employers get workers to the workplace.

Transit Development Plan Meeting Dates

Date	Meeting Participants
March 22, 2022	Stakeholder Committee
April 19, 2022	Stakeholder Committee
May 24, 2022	City/County Elected Officials and Staff
May 24, 2022	Stakeholder Committee
June 30, 2022	County Commission



The Carroll County Board of Commissioners realizes the importance of getting you where you need to go as efficiently as possible. That is why the board is working closely with federal, state, and regional officials to make Carroll Connection, a transit service, available to everyone. Carroll Connection is part of the Three Rivers Regional Commission's transportation service.

**Carroll Connection
Transit Service
Available Anywhere
in Carroll County**

Monday - Friday
Except Holidays

RIDING REQUIREMENTS

- **SAFETY** is our first priority; therefore, seat belts are to be used at ALL times.
- **CHILDREN** under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- **CAR SEATS** are required for children aged 5 years and younger. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing and securing the car seat prior to the trip.
- **NO SCHOOL BUS** service is provided.
- **PETS**, other than Service Animals, are not allowed.
- **LIMIT PACKAGES** to no more than what the passenger can carry. Packages must be stowed under the seats or in the back of the vehicle to avoid any unsafe hazardous exiting or entering by others. Aisle must remain clear at all times.
- **NO SMOKING/EATING/DRINKING** allowed in vehicles.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, OR WEAPONS** are allowed. Riders who appear to be intoxicated may be denied transportation services.
- **NO HAZARDOUS**, combustible, or flammable chemicals allowed at any time.
- **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR** which presents a danger or nuisance to other passengers or transit staff will not be tolerated; this includes, but not limited to, verbal or physical abuse, offensive language, gestures, or threats.
- **DRIVERS WILL WAIT FOR FIVE (5) MINUTES** at the scheduled pick-up point. Riders should make every effort to be ready and waiting at the scheduled pick-up time. *Note: Driver will not be sent back once vehicle is in route after the five (5) minute wait time has passed.*
- **RIDERS WITH THREE (3) NO-SHOWS** without prior notice or cancellation will be suspended from ridership for a two (2) week period and may result in the denial of future public transportation services.



ACCESSIBLE SERVICE

- Carroll Connection is an accessible service. Please inform your scheduler if you need access to the wheelchair lift so we can adjust your pick-up time to accommodate boarding and alighting.
- All wheelchairs must be properly secured in the vehicle.
 - Individuals using respirators or portable oxygen must be able to safely stow those items.
 - Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are permitted.

It is the policy of Three Rivers Transit that no individual shall solely by reason of race, age, sex, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal funds. For additional information regarding the discrimination policies and/or procedures in filing a complaint, phone Three Rivers Regional Commission Transportation: 678-692-0510.

CONNECTING you where you need to go!

- Medical Appointments
- Bank
- Employment (Limited)
- Senior Centers
- Educational Facilities
- Social Outings
- Shopping

SCHEDULE YOUR RIDE
Call 1-844-RSVP-VAN
(1-844-778-7826)

Call toll free, at least 24 hours in advance, to schedule a trip. All stops must be scheduled when appointment is made. Rides are scheduled on a "First Come, First Service" basis.

CARROLL CONNECTION FEES
\$3.00 One-Way Trip
\$6.00 Round Trip
Fees must be paid at time of boarding or prior to pickup. Drivers cannot make change or extend credit.

1-844-RSVP-VAN



Become a FAN of the VAN!

Carroll Connection
Transit Service Available
Anywhere in Carroll County
Monday - Friday
Except Holidays

For more information, please visit:

www.threeriversrc.com
www.carrollcountygga.com
or call 1-844-778-7826



THIS BROCHURE WAS PRODUCED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION www.CARROLLCOUNTYGGA.COM 6/2018

1-844-RSVP-VAN



**CARROLL COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
SERVICES**

When you need transportation To or From

- Medical Appointments**
- Hospital (non-emergency)**
- Employment (limited)**
- Senior Center**
- Bank**
- Educational Facilities**
- Shopping**
- Social Outings**
- And many other places...**

Three Rivers Regional Commission Transit Provider: RMS, Inc.
 Times: Monday - Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm (Except Holidays)
 Contact: (770) 683-7433

Fares (One Way)

Butts Co.	\$2.00
Carroll Co.	\$2.00
Lamar Co.	\$2.00
Meriwether Co.	\$3.00
Pike Co.	\$2.00
Spalding Co.	\$2.00
Upson Co.	\$2.00



Heard County Transit
 Times: Monday - Friday, 7:00am to 4:00pm (Except Holidays)
 Contact: (706) 675-1410
 Website: www.heardcountyga.com

Fare (One Way) - City of Franklin \$3.00
 Fare (One Way) Countywide \$1.50
 To Carroll, Coweta, or Troup Co. \$5.00



Coweta County Transit
 Times: Monday - Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm (Except Holidays)
 Contact: (770) 683-7433
 Website: www.coweta.ga.us

Fare (One Way) \$3.00





Troup County Transit
 Times: Monday - Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm (Except Holidays)
 Contact: (706) 883-1670
 Website: www.troupcountyga.org

Fare (One Way) \$2.00

Thank you

for choosing

Three Rivers Regional Commission

and

our Transportation Providers to provide you With your transit needs!

It is the policy that Three Rivers Regional Commission Transit Program, as well as its partnering County Transit Programs, that no individual shall solely by reason of race, sex, age, color, religion, national, origin, political affiliation, or disability be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal funds.

For additional information regarding the discrimination policies an/or procedures in filing a complaint:

Three Rivers Regional Commission Transit Program
 Contact: (678) 692-0510

Avery Robertson, Jr.
 Transit Mobility Manager
 Three Rivers Regional Commission

Tommy Kennedy
 Transit Program Director
 Three Rivers Regional Commission





10 County Rural Transit Program



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CARROLLTON

A long-anticipated low-cost transit service for Carroll County residents begins operation

By Julianne Foster



Carroll County Commission Chairman Marty Smith stands by the six Carroll Connection vans that are ready to roll. Service will begin Monday, July 2.

A long-anticipated low-cost transit service for Carroll County residents will begin operation July 2.

Carroll Connection will provide one-way or round-trip transportation for county residents to any location within the county. The cost is only \$3 for one way or \$6 for a round trip, no matter the distance.

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners is partnering with the Three Rivers Regional Commission to offer the service, a program similar to others operated in most counties in the state. It is primarily federally funded through a rural transportation grant that requires a local match. Carroll County's anticipated annual cost will be about \$35,000.

"This is a way for citizens of Carroll County to have affordable travel to doctor's appointments, the grocery store, work or school," said District 4 Commissioner Michelle Morgan, who is chairing the county's transit advisory committee. "The Board of Commissioners is proud to provide this service."

Commission Chairman Marty Smith said he anticipates the service to be fully embraced by the community, especially by those who are in dire need of such a program.

"I think people will be surprised how much the vans will be used," he said. "While most citizens in our county do have a dependable mode of transportation, we still have a large population that does not. This service will fill that void."

Described as a "door-to-door" instead of a mass-transit operation, the service will be available Monday through Friday, except holidays. Morgan said there are no set routes; travel is determined by the needs of the day. Because of the fluid nature of the service's daily operation, participants must make an appointment for pickup at least 24 hours in advance. Six vans have been purchased to ensure timely travel within the county. They all will seat up to 10 people and are equipped with wheelchair lifts to accommodate all riders.

The Carrollton van's tour will begin and end at the courthouse parking garage at Tanner Street. The Bowdon, Mt. Zion and Temple tours will have pickup/dropoff at the communities' senior centers. In Ropoville, the tour pickup/dropoff will be at the post office. In Villa Rica, pickup/dropoff will be at the Mill Amphitheatre.

A second celebration will take place in Whitesburg Saturday, July 7, from 1:30 to 3 p.m., held in conjunction with the city's annual Fourth of July festivities.

"This is going to make such a difference being able to connect people with resources and places they need to go to," said Michelle Kuhlman, a local pastor and community member who is a strong advocate for the transportation service. "It's really going to be a lifeline for people who don't have a car or they can't find someone to help give them a ride."

Temple resident Gail Morris said the transit service would be a great benefit for seniors in Carroll County.

"For folks at my age, I'd use it because I don't have anyone around. I need a way to see my eye doctor and primary doctor."

To learn more about Carroll Connection or to schedule a ride, call 1-844-RSVP-VAN (844-778-7826). Details are also available on Carroll County's website: www.carrollcountyga.com.

[Carroll Connection Informational Brochure – Click Here](#)

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Three Rivers Regional Commission

April 1 · 🌐

Our regional transit system offers transportation services for a variety of reason. Some of our most popular are to/from doctors appointments, senior centers, shopping and social outings, non emergency hospitals, and banking.

For information on how to schedule a trip in your county, please visit <https://www.threeriversrc.com/transportation-services.php>

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