

June 2018 Amendment Comments and Responses

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the mechanism by which federal, state and local funds are approved for all significant surface transportation projects and programs in the region. The FY 2018 -2023 TIP comprises the first six years of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Atlanta region. As the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a 20-county region, ARC is responsible for developing and amending/updating the TIP and RTP to meet federal planning requirements and address local needs.

This amendment to The Atlanta Region's Plan RTP and associated FY 2018-2023 TIP was developed to:

- Program remaining non-exempt funding commitments from the 2017 Project Solicitation under the Atlanta Urbanized Area sub-allocation of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Urban (STBGP) , Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program (CMAQ).
- Address project cost estimate and programmatic changes that are of a time sensitive nature or cannot be handled administratively.
- Incorporate changes to the travel demand model coding.

Due to changes to the travel demand model, a new regional emissions analysis was conducted for this amendment. The most recent prior analysis was approved by FHWA and EPA on September 15, 2017.

The review and comment period occurred from March 26, 2018 to April 24, 2018. An email was sent to ARC's interested parties distribution list indicating the TIP/RTP Amendment was open for public review. Details regarding the amendment project list, process, and timeline were posted on ARC's website. Additionally, the request for review was advertised via newspapers and various ARC newsletters and presentations.

ARC received a total of 72 public comments. All but one comment related to a proposed funding recommendation for transit services in Douglas County.

The breakdown by mode of delivery was:

- Letter (41)
- Email (25)
- Verbal at TAQC meeting (5)
- Phone transcription (1)

The comments, as well as responses from ARC, are presented on the following pages.

This document, along with specific comments were shared with ARC's Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC), the Transportation & Air Quality Committee (TAQC) and the ARC Board in advance of action being taken, as well as all appropriate regional transportation project sponsors. Additionally, it was shared with respondents who submitted public comment, via a link to the Amendment webpage at www.atlantaregional.org/amendment.

Douglas County Transit***ARC Note***

A single consolidated response by ARC is provided at the conclusion of this section.

ARC Note

Comments #1 through #16 were received by email and express opposition to the proposed bus services.

Public Comment #1

Hi,

We did not vote or approve a bus system in Douglas County. This needs to be voted on and passed through the correct channels of legislation. It is your job to make sure the laws are followed properly.

Please email me back as soon as possible with your solution and course of action to fix the problem.

Thank you for your time,

Rett Webb
Douglasville, Ga resident

Public Comment #2

As a citizen of Douglas County I wish to express my opinion on the bus service that is being proposed by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.

The BOC has NOT voted on the two routes that were added by the urging of the ARC. In addition, a feasibility study was NOT done, so the county has no idea how much it will cost them and doesn't even have a price for fares. This is not acceptable, as they have no way to inform the citizens of what they would be voting on.

I and many of my fellow citizens request that you deny them the CMAQ.

Charles Garvin

Public Comment #3

We say NO to buses in Douglasville, Ga (Douglas County)!! We don't need additional taxpayer expense as well as additional traffic and people! Please! We say NO!!!

Kim Vegas

Public Comment #4

Deny Douglas County the CMAQ!

Brian Moyer

Public Comment #5

As a Douglas County, tax paying citizen, I am strongly against the CMAQ approval and request it be denied.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Myra Garland

Public Comment #6

To Whom It May Concern:

As a long time resident of Douglas County, I implore you to deny the CMAQ to Douglas County. This whole process with our County Board of Commissioners has been totally underhanded and sneaky to relation to the citizens of our county. I attended the BOC meeting where this was discussed and I was totally disgusted with our representation and their attitude toward the people that entrusted this county into their hands.

These busses are something that we definitely DON'T need and it seems to me that one of the Board members must have something financially to gain by pushing this through.

After 47 years we have been considering leaving Douglas County because things are going down hill rapidly.

AGAIN, PLEASE DENY THE CMAQ.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Linda Smith

Public Comment #7

Please deny the Douglas County CMAQ. I have been a citizen of Douglas County for over 40 years. It is of great concern to me that the current Board of Commissioners has not done due diligence re a proposed local transit system.

Rebecca Dessell

Public Comment #8

Dear Mr Orr, or to Whom it May Concern:

I am a Douglas County resident, and I would like to express my opposition to the inclusion of Douglas County in the new Atlanta regional transit scheme. Douglas County is ill prepared, nor has the available funding needed for any proposal involving mass transit in Douglas County, while most residents of the County are opposed in principle due to the unknown future costs, as well as many other factors that have not been fully studied or investigated.

I am requesting that this letter of opposition may be added to the record.

Thank you,

Joseph Kalcso

Public Comment #9

Please take into consideration my bore and request of NO transit system in Douglas County.

I am a native of Douglas County and even though we have grown and developed in my past forty something years we have paid the price with

incoming negativity as well. I used to commute to Atlanta everyday and used our van pool and express bus system. It is a great aspect . These services are still intact and a great value.

I have heard various stories of how this system would work. If it is only for local need , we don't need this. Our young people should still be taught how to grow, save their own money, buy a car, home etc... and make their own way.

We already have a senior services program that is wonderful for needs and transportation of senior and or disabled citizens. When I did take our van pool downtown I noticed several times that a person had chosen to " camp out" in our bus depot waiting on the next bus, and sometimes would ask for monetary assistance to those of us departing . We don't need this!

Thank you for the consideration and reading my views.

Loren Reynolds

Public Comment #10

Dear TAQC Board Members:

As a concerned citizen of Douglas County, I am writing to you in regards to the TIP/CMAQ application the Douglas County Board of Commissioners has submitted, in hopes of funding the proposed bus system.

A supplement to the original application was submitted by Douglas County Director of Intermodal Transportation Gary Watson, on October 13, 2017. This supplement was never approved by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson received permission from the Douglas County Transportation Committee on October 10, 2017 to supplement the original application, changing the system from 2 routes to 4. The Transportation Committee is only a suggestive committee with no authority to approve the submittal nor submit the TIP/CMAQ application supplement to ARC.

When the Transportation Committee did not present the supplement to the Board of Commissioners for a vote, they violated the trust of the

citizens and they nullified any semblance of fair representation of the people. Additionally, they disrespected and ignored lawful process and procedure that governs their position. For these reasons, I am asking you to reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for rule of law.

In addition, Douglas County has not performed a feasibility study regarding the proposed bus system. This is a gross irresponsibility on the Douglas County Board of Commissioners' part to make sound fiscal decisions for our county.

Our current transportation systems are experiencing a 45% decline in ridership.....shouldn't we fix what is broken before adding to it?

Sincerely,

Kathy Beveridge

Public Comment #11

Dear TAQC Board Members:

As a concerned citizen of Douglas County, I am writing to you in regards to the TIP/CMAQ application the Douglas County Board of Commissioners has submitted, in hopes of funding the proposed bus system.

A supplement to the original application was submitted by Douglas County Director of Intermodal Transportation Gary Watson, on October 13, 2017. This supplement was never approved by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson received permission from the Douglas County Transportation Committee on October 10, 2017 to supplement the original application, changing the system from 2 routes to 4. The Transportation Committee is only a suggestive committee with no authority to approve the submittal nor submit the TIP/CMAQ application supplement to ARC.

When the Transportation Committee did not present the supplement to the Board of Commissioners for a vote, they violated the trust of the citizens and they nullified any semblance of fair representation of the people. Additionally, they disrespected and ignored lawful process and

procedure that governs their position. For these reasons, I am asking you to reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for rule of law.

Sincerely,

April Streetman

Public Comment #12

To whom it may concern:

As a 43 year resident of Douglas County Georgia, I am writing urging you to rescind the grant application for public transportation in this county. My request is made because of the following items:

- 1) A supplement to the original application was submitted by Douglas County Director of Intermodal Transportation Gary Watson, on October 13, 2017. This supplement was never approved by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson received permission from the Douglas County Transportation Committee on October 10, 2017, to supplement the original application, changing the system from 2 routes to 4. The Transportation Committee is only a suggestive committee with no authority to approve the submittal nor submit the TIP/CMAQ application supplement to ARC. When the Transportation Committee did not present the supplement to the Board of Commissioners for a vote, they violated the trust of the citizens and they nullified any semblance of fair representation of the people. Additionally, they disrespected and ignored lawful process and procedure that governs their position. For these reasons, I am asking you to reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for rule of law.
- 2) Douglas County is not able to carry the tax burden this will cost after the 3-year grant is complete.
- 3) No studies have been conducted to ascertain the feasibility of a public transportation system in this county.

As mentioned in #1 above, this whole process has been pushed through without due process and the liability to this county and its citizens is undeniable.

Please reconsider your position on this grant.

Thank you,
Debbie Swafford
Douglasville, Georgia

Public Comment #13

Deny Douglas County public transportation. It is not needed.

Sonya

Public Comment #14

I don't think that Douglas County needs any more bus service than it currently has. I am opposed to the additional service being proposed by the Board of commissioners.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Bobby Peavy

Public Comment #15

GA House Bill 930 has been approved which means a regional transit authority will be formed, which includes Douglas County. However, in order to get funding, citizens will need to vote on whether the county can add a 1% sales tax. This new transit authority makes the transit system that Douglas County is trying to propose, well, useless. Please understand that the BOC has NOT voted on the two routes that were added by the urging of the ARC. In addition, a feasibility study was NOT done, so Douglas county has no idea how much it will cost them and doesn't even have a price for fares. We do not need this useless and unnecessary waste of our tax dollars. Please Deny Douglas County the CMAQ!

Rulon Stucki

Public Comment #16

WE DON'T NEED BUS ROUTE IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, GA!!!

Don

ARC Note

Comments #17 through #23 on the following pages are scanned copies of letters received by mail and express opposition to the proposed bus services.

Public Comment #17

Received 3/5/2018



J. COLLINS
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 68
206 SOUTH CARROLL ROAD
VILLA RICA, GEORGIA 30180
770-295-8143
EMAIL: j.collins@house.ga.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 404
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
404-656-0109
404-656-0250 (FAX)

STANDING COMMITTEES
JUVENILE JUSTICE
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY

February 28, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree St NE, Suite 100
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Commissioner:

I am writing this letter with great concern over the proposed bus system routes currently being reviewed for grant application in Douglas County.

Over the past weeks, I have met with and listened to the constituents I represent in House District 68. After speaking with the citizens I represent, it is evident their opposition to this proposed measure stems from the lack of clarity regarding the financial impact this system could impose on the taxpayers of Douglas County.

It is evident there is major opposition in my district to the proposed four route bus system in Douglas County. Additionally, two of the proposed new routes traveling outside Douglas County were added without the knowledge or approval of the majority of the BOC.

At this time, I would ask the Commission to please consider the breadth of opposition this proposed bus system has received and the concerns of locally elected officials alike; both of whom have brought forth serious financial apprehensions regarding Douglas County's proposed bus system. With an extensive transit package currently being discussed in the legislature, I believe any locally proposed bus systems in Douglas County should be tabled until a more in depth study on the financial impact and long-term sustainability can be performed.


Thank You,



J. Collins

Public Comment #18

Received 3/1/2018



MICAH GRAVLEY
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 67
94 BRIDGE PLACE
DOUGLASVILLE, GEORGIA 30134
(404) 759-5876 (C)
E-MAIL: micah.gravley@house.ga.gov

House of Representatives
18 CAPITOL SQUARE, SW
COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, SUITE 401
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0137

STANDING COMMITTEES:
CODE REVISION – Vice Chairman
JUDICIARY NON-CIVIL – Secretary
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY
APPROPRIATIONS – Public Safety
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE

February 20th, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree St, NE
Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303

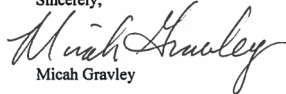
I am writing today with great concern over the proposed bus system routes currently being reviewed for grant application in Douglas County. Over the course of the past several weeks I have met with, and listened to, the constituents I represent in House District 67 (western portion of Douglas County.) After speaking with the citizens I represent, it is evident their opposition to this proposed measure stems from the lack of clarity regarding the financial impact this system could impose on the taxpayers of Douglas County. Additionally, I share the concerns of my constituents that both a short and long term feasibility study outlining the county's budgetary requirements for this proposal has not been performed.

I have spoken publicly at a county town hall meeting regarding my concerns about the financial burden my constituents will be forced to incur once the CMAQ grant expires. It is evident there is major opposition, in my district, to the proposed four route bus system in Douglas County. Additionally, two of the proposed new routes traveling outside Douglas County were added without the knowledge or approval of the majority of the BOC.

Douglasville City Councilman Michael Miller has also reached out to me to express his opposition to the proposed bus route system, as well as Douglas County Commissioner Ann Jones Guider, who represents a large portion of my House District on the County Commission. Their opposition echoes that of my constituents and brings to light the disapproval of locally elected officials who share the same financial concerns and budgetary uncertainty this bus system would pose on the citizens we represent.

At this time, I would ask the Commission to please consider the breadth of opposition this proposed bus system has received from the citizens I represent and the concerns of locally elected officials alike; both of whom have brought forth serious financial apprehensions regarding Douglas County's proposed bus system. With an extensive transit package currently being discussed in the legislature, I believe any and all locally proposed bus systems in Douglas County should be tabled until a more in depth study on the financial impact and long-term sustainability can be performed.

Sincerely,



Micah Gravley

Public Comment #19

4-4-18

Atlanta Regional Commission
 Transportation and Air Quality Committee
 229 Peachtree Street, NE
 International Tower, Suite 100
 Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear TAQC Board Members:

As a concerned citizen of Douglas County, I am writing to you in regards to the TIP/CMAQ application the Douglas County Board of Commissioners has submitted, in hopes of funding the proposed bus system.

A supplement to the original application was submitted by Douglas County Director of Intermodal Transportation Gary Watson, on October 13, 2017. This supplement was never approved by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson received permission from the Douglas County Transportation Committee on October 10, 2017 to supplement the original application, changing the system from 2 routes to 4. The Transportation Committee is only a suggestive committee with no authority to approve the submittal nor submit the TIP/CMAQ application supplement to ARC.

When the Transportation Committee did not present the supplement to the Board of Commissioners for a vote, they violated the trust of the citizens and they nullified any semblance of fair representation of the people. Additionally, they disrespected and ignored lawful process and procedure that governs their position. For these reasons, I am asking you to reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for rule of law.

In addition, Douglas County has not performed a feasibility study regarding the proposed bus system. This is a gross irresponsibility on the Douglas County Board of Commissioners' part to make sound fiscal decisions for our county.

Our current transportation systems are experiencing a 45% decline in ridership.....shouldn't we fix what is broken before adding to it?

Sincerely,



Kathy Beveridge

Public Comment #20

Date: 4-4-18

Atlanta Regional Commission
 Transportation and Air Quality Committee
 229 Peachtree Street, NE
 International Tower, Suite 100
 Atlanta, GA 30303

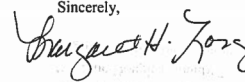
Dear TAQC Board Members:

As a concerned citizen of Douglas County, I am writing to you in regards to the TIP/CMAQ application the Douglas County Board of Commissioners has submitted, in hopes of funding the proposed bus system.

A supplement to the original application was submitted by Douglas County Director of Intermodal Transportation Gary Watson, on October 13, 2017. This supplement was never approved by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson received permission from the Douglas County Transportation Committee on October 10, 2017 to supplement the original application, changing the system from 2 routes to 4. The Transportation Committee is only a suggestive committee with no authority to approve the submittal nor submit the TIP/CMAQ application supplement to ARC.

When the Transportation Committee did not present the supplement to the Board of Commissioners for a vote, they violated the trust of the citizens and they nullified any semblance of fair representation of the people. Additionally, they disrespected and ignored lawful process and procedure that governs their position. For these reasons, I am asking you to reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for rule of law.

Sincerely,



THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN
 DECIDED WITH NO TRANSPARENCY
 FROM OUR COMM:
 NOT EVEN A FEASIBILITY STUDY

PLEASE DO NOT APPROVE THIS GRANT FOR
 DOUGLAS COUNTY! WHY SHOULD WE INVEST
 FEDERAL, COUNTY TAX DOLLARS IN SOMETHING
 THAT WILL SOON BE REPAIRED BY THE STATE'S
 PLAN FOR LINKING 13 COUNTIES? WASTE OF \$\$\$

Public Comment #21



April 12, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree Street NE
International Tower, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear TAQC Members,

Thank you for allowing our team to address our concerns during your public hearing, today. Once again, your board was gracious and hospitable; it was much appreciated. We certainly feel that you have heard us, and we hope that our local officials have heard us, too.

We anxiously wait to see the progress the next month will bring for your projects. Of course, you know our position and what we desire. However, we respect your decisions and will in either outcome continue our mission to hold our Douglas County officials responsible to transparency, wise financial planning, good stewardship of county resources, and fair representation of the people.

Thank you again for your time and ear.

Sincerely,

Heather Denis
Committee Chair, DCPAC

infodcpac@gmail.com | P.O. Box 1442, Douglasville, GA 30133

Public Comment #22



March 16, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree Street NE
International Tower, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear ARC TAQC,

Thank you for allowing our committee Douglas County Peoples' Action Committee to visit your meeting Thursday morning and for allowing us to speak during the public comments portion of the agenda. We recognize time is valuable and appreciate your being willing to share yours with us.

It is my hope that our concerns were clearly conveyed and were received with our full intention of respect for your committee. Our aim is that our local leaders will recognize the concern the citizens in their county have over the matter of the proposed bus system and the manner in which it has been handled. Buses/transportation is not the issue; the issue is respect for lawful procedure and fair representation of the tax payers. For this reason we came to you in an effort to help hold local government accountable to the truth. We greatly appreciate any support or advice you may have to offer.

Again, thank you for allowing us to visit your team and for hearing our concerns.

Sincerely,

Heather Denis
Committee Chair, DCPAC

infodcpac@gmail.com | P.O. Box 1442, Douglasville, GA 30133

Public Comment #23

Dear ARC Board Members:

My name is Jane Weeks
and I have lived in Douglas
Co since 1975.

I would like to express
my concern regarding the housing
issue.

Please consider denying the
grant that has been applied
for. My feeling is that the
housing in Douglas Co has been
thrown together (budget) and
ultimately will fall on the

Even though one commissioner
says there is no opposition
please take on those
who oppose. It is wished
that the true feeling toward
housing is not being represented.

Thank you
Jane Weeks

ARC Note

Comments #24 to #28 were made verbally in opposition to the proposed bus services at a meeting of ARC's Transportation and Air Quality Committee on April 12, 2018.

Public Comment #24



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
8700 Hospital Drive • Douglasville, GA 30134 • Telephone (770) 920-7266 • Fax (770) 920-7357

ANN JONES GUIDER
District IV

April 9, 2018

Distinguished Committee Members:

My name is Ann Jones Guider, and I am Commissioner of District 4 in Douglas County. Back in 2015, the then Board of Commissioners (BOC), called for a transportation study to help determine our transportation needs. The study came back with 3 tiers of actions from which the BOC could choose, and in 2016 the BOC passed a resolution to start with the LOWER level recommendation with a cost estimate of \$500k capital and \$100k m & o cost. Following the model of Floyd County, who had one looping in-county bus system, our BOC felt this was what Douglas County could afford to operate

We presently have several GRTA routes that originate in Douglas County during the peak hours and over 40 Rideshare vans traveling to the Metro Atlanta area and west of Douglas County. The ridership of both programs has fallen around 30% since 2014.

Up until August, 2017, the BOC's discussion for the Douglas County transit system has centered on 2 looping routes INSIDE the boundaries of our county, and focusing on the needs of the senior and disabled population. The original CMAQ grant application reflected these two routes.

The original CMAQ grant application included only the two looping routes. The City of Douglasville would not sign off on the application because there was division on the Council. After submission, ARC came back later suggesting adding two out-of-county routes; one travelling into Cobb County and another DIRECT line from Douglas County to H E Holmes. Although this was approved by our Transportation Committee, who is a recommending body, the entire Board never approved this amendment. Three Commissioners were upset as was a large segment of the public after having been told for over two years there would be two looping routes inside the county. I have been told that Douglas County would be obligated to operate the 4 routes if we accept the CMAQ grant.

Although I cannot speak for the other commissioners, under these restrictions I would not vote to accept this grant, if it is awarded to Douglas County. I believe it was amended illegally and does not follow the original intent of the Douglas County BOC.

Sincerely,

Ann Jones Guider
District 4 Commissioner

Public Comment #25

First of all I would like to say thank you to the ARC for allowing us to come speak with you today. Your hospitality is very much appreciated.

We are new to this governmental web and we are learning as we go. Often times we look to others for guidance, and sometimes the people

we need to assist us elude us. In our quest for the truth, we found that we have a Citizens Rep for the ARC. Several of us have reached out

to him numerous times, and eventually he did contact one of our DC citizens. He advised that he was doing his own investigation into the

proposed bus system and would call back after his meeting with Mayor Robinson and Chairwoman Jones, but offered no guidance.

Initially, he was unaware of the opposition to the buses in Douglas County. I want to ask him how he could know so little about what's going

on with the proposed bus system, when he has served so many years as the citizens rep with ARC. He was surprised that we know all of the

facts, figures and the overall issue facing Douglas County, but offered no assistance except to speak with our BOC to

Appendix (K)

Public Comment #25 (cont'd)

let them know

our concerns.

He stated multiple times that the ARC Transportation Committee wasn't going to stop the grant, that they are all about transportation. That the

CMAQ grant has a life of its own, that it's a done deal, and that our only hope is for the DCBOC to stop the grant. But, as you can see,

we are a passionate and persistent lot. We won't roll over.

Mr. Berry, I'm not quite sure what you feel your responsibilities are to the people you represent, but when they call on you, it is your

duty and responsibility to act. There is a very high level of frustration in Douglas County at present over this proposed bus system,

and we look to you assist those you were chosen to serve.

Our BOC needs to stop wasting the taxpayers money and focus on the framework of HB930. Today, as in the past, we

implore The Atlanta Regional Commission to deny Douglas County the CMAQ grant.

Thank you.

Comments by Dawn Rae Leonard

Public Comment #26

April 12, 2018

Heather Denis, Douglas County citizen

Good morning. I am Heather Denis a resident of Douglas County and the Chairperson for Douglas County Peoples' Action Committee. I'm here, again, to ask you to recall the approval of the CMAQ Application for the proposed bus system in Douglas County.

In May of 2017, the Douglas County BOC submitted an application to ARC for the CMAQ grant. This was for a 2 route intra-county bus system as voted on and approved by the BOC in June of 2016. As noted in the application, there was no opposition by the public to this small transportation plan.

On October 10, 2017, the Douglas County Transportation Committee, which is a suggestive committee, approved supplementing the original CMAQ application by adding 2 routes to the system, with one going to HE Holmes Marta Station. The Committee led by Commissioner Robinson agreed in that meeting that this did not have to go back before the BOC for approval and that Director Gary Watson was granted permission by the committee to move forward with the recommended supplement and submission to ARC. The submittal was made via email on October 13th, thus violating lawful process of the BOC whose responsibility it is to vote on such changes.

In the BOC Work Session on October 16, the possibility of changes to the proposed bus plan was discussed. However, it was not divulged that the new plan had already been submitted three days prior with no vote by the Board.

Now, there IS opposition by many Douglas County citizens to this proposed bus system. The Transportation Committee sidestepped due process, to push through the supplement to ARC without BOC approval. By doing so, the commissioners, who represent the tax payers, have not had the opportunity to speak on behalf of their constituents, thus nullifying any semblance of fair representation. For this reason, I implore you again to please reject Douglas County's CMAQ application for the proposed bus system based on lack of regard for lawful procedure.

Appendix (K)

Public Comment #27

Hello, My name is Kelly Honey. I am a resident of Douglas County and a member of the Douglas County People's Action Committee. I am here today to express my opposition to the proposed bus system in Douglas County and to ask all of you to recall the approval of the CMAQ Application.

First of all I would like to bring to your attention that the city of Douglasville never sent a letter of support to be included in the CMAQ Application. On May 16, 2017 the City of Douglasville was identified as a major stakeholder in the project. A letter of support was requested from the county the day before the CMAQ application was submitted and the city REFUSED to send that letter. Since the city is a major stakeholder you would hope they would have some input on the project.

There is growing opposition to this bus system. We even have opposition from some of our State Representatives. Micah Gravely asked Ramona Jackson-Jones during her walk the talk meeting in February, for information regarding the cost to the taxpayers. To my understanding that information has never been given. Jay Collins has written a letter of opposition. Senator Mike Dugan has come out and said that since House bill 930 and Senate bill 386 have passed, it would not be a good idea for Douglas County to proceed with the proposed bus system.

The bills going through the capital right now should have the ARC hesitant to proceed. It is a waste of time and TAXPAYERS money. The grant received from CMAQ is not free money, it is paid by American taxpayers and all of you should **NOT** take that lightly.

Since there has been NO feasibility study conducted, no written support from the city of Douglasville and the passage of two major transportation bills at the state level, I and my neighbors ask you to reject the CMAQ Grant for the proposed bus system in Douglas County.

Thank you

Public Comment #28

Atlanta Regional Commission Committee Meeting

April 12, 2018

Roy Sparks from Douglas County

The proposed 4 route bus system and CMAQ Grant application that was submitted on October 13, 2017 to the Atlanta Regional Commission was done through an act of ultra vires with a guise to malfeasance.

Two wrongs don't make a right. Today, I am requesting that you reject the amended application and deny the CMAQ Grant to Douglas County.

There has not been a feasibility study done to know whether the proposed 4 route bus system will be viable and work. Please don't waste 4.3 million dollars of grant money on stubbornness.

Award this money to a county that has done their homework.

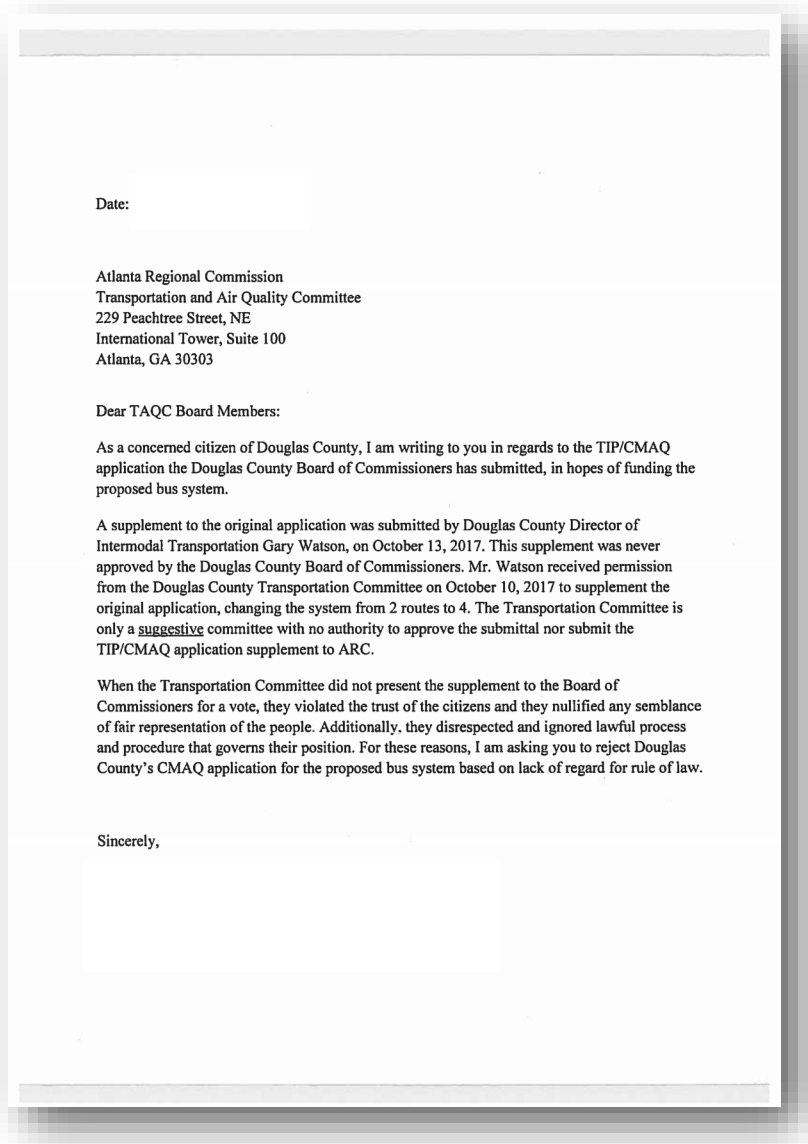
Today it's not about who wants buses or who doesn't want buses. It's about fiscal responsibility. You have heard over and over how the later part of this process was done without full board approval; the reason today for you to say NO to the CMAQ Grant for Douglas County.

Thank You.

ARC Note

On this page is a representative copy of one of 34 form letters received in opposition to the proposed bus services. The text of each letter was identical. The signatories of the letters are provided separately.

Public Comment #29 to #62



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Katherine Stichee</u> | <u>Walter D. Rildson</u> |
| <u>Cheryl N. Warner</u> | <u>Larry + Bonnie Gippson</u> |
| <u>Hubert W. Saubio</u> | <u>Richard Ross</u> |
| <u>Wayne Phillip</u> | <u>Jimmy C. Palmer</u> |
| <u>Christie A. Bordell</u> | <u>Melinda Marie</u> |
| <u>Grace Marshall</u> | <u>Skather Halmer</u> |
| <u>Robert L. Bell</u> | <u>Danny S. Johnson</u> |
| <u>Noyt A. Marshall</u> | <u>Tracy Johnson</u> |
| <u>Quintel L. Brown</u> | <u>Michael L. Pittell</u> |
| <u>Al Leusch</u> | <u>Neherah Keers</u> |
| <u>Lynnda Baker</u> | <u>Pat Hammon</u> |
| <u>William E. Abney Jr.</u> | <u>Kay Allen</u> |
| <u>Sherry D. McKindley</u> | <u>Judy Jacobs</u> |
| <u>L.B. Cannon</u> | <u>D.D. Cannon</u> |
| <u>Vickie Mitchell</u> | <u>Myrtice Ash</u> |
| <u>Damon Stichee</u> | <u>Teresa Phillips</u> |
| <u>George G. Richardson</u> | <u>Dale S. Haygood</u> |

ARC Note

Comments #63 through #70 were received by email and express support for the proposed bus services.

Public Comment #63

My name is Robin Zuniga and I am a resident of Douglas County. I am writing to express my strong support for the Douglas County Connect bus service.

I have been excited about the possibility of a public van service in Douglas County since I first heard about it at a community meeting. There is a need for this service by young and old.

Everyday as I leave my neighborhood on my way to work, I see a young mother walking across Bill Arp and down Stewart Mill with her young son to day care. I assume she then walks back to work and does the same trip in the evening. Young people without cars would benefit from the van service and it would make it possible for them to take jobs at the companies on the van routes.

I have a friend who is a senior who, due to health problems, can no longer drive herself. The van service would give her mobility that she currently doesn't have. Several older adult acquaintances have told me how difficult it is to travel back and forth to the doctor and hospital without public transportation.

I would be very interested myself in taking the bus to the Holmes MARTA stop; to shop downtown and perhaps to even go to my job in Decatur.

I am confident in our County leaders reports on the health of our county finances and the responsible way in which they are financing and planning for this public transportation service.

Sincerely,
Robin Zuniga

Public Comment #64

Dear Atlanta Regional Transportation:

Please support the initiation of an internal Douglas County bus system. Positive growth for the county and the welfare of many of our citizens may depend on it.

1. Unless one is able-bodied and has a functioning car, getting around Douglas County is an almost insurmountable obstacle. And that problem can hit anyone at any time. Car troubles and medical difficulties can lock an active resident in their home. A dependable bus service for the able bodied and a dial-a-ride program for those with disabilities would be a huge benefit for residents and a great advantage to the tax base of the County since employees would be more plentiful and dependable.
2. Millennials are less likely to own a car and are seeking homes where secure transportation exists. Douglas County's affordable housing stock makes it of interest, it's lack of transportation currently makes it less attractive. Connect Douglas will make the County more desirable for relocation purposes.
3. Once bus routes are established planning and zoning can concentrate new housing developments around planned bus hubs, maximizing smart growth and decreasing suburban sprawl.
4. Limited transportation service already exists to transport residents to Atlanta for work. Connect Douglas would mesh well with that existing program once residents are at home in Douglas County.
5. The initial reliance on grants to implement the flex service will provide services without raising taxes or placing additional burden on the county budget. Also, starting with small 12-

passenger vans will require a more moderate initial investment and give the county financial flexibility.

As a Douglas County resident I urge you to support a program that will enhance the lives of citizens today and simultaneously lay the groundwork for organized and positive growth for the County in the future.

Give your support to implementing Connect Douglas.

Sandra Campagnone
Douglasville, GA

Public Comment #65

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like to express my unwavering support for the CMAQ grant in Douglas County. As a 28-year resident of Douglas County, I feel that there is a legitimate need for small-scale transit.

I would have like to come to the meeting to express my support in person, but my schedule would not permit me to do so.

Sincerely,
Deborah Brons

Public Comment #66

TO: ARC Transportation and Air Quality Committee
FROM: Ingrid Landis-Davis, Property-Owner and Resident of Douglas County

I want to voice my SUPPORT of the Douglas County public transportation service proposal for our citizenry. The group that is opposing this plan is small but very vocal and politically active; that does not mean that they are the majority. When this plan was being formulated and public hearings were going forth, it was very well received in as a service that is sorely needed in this community for various very valid reasons, that I won't go into here but is well known.

Thank you for servicing the people of this community and not letting a small handful of self-centered people dictate the program and go against the will of the majority.

Public Comment #67

Hello I'm a resident of Douglasville and work downtown. We need to maximize our residents' ability to get to work and to travel to perform essential tasks. I attended the meeting that was held earlier this year and was upset at the number of people, with cars, I might add, who want to make it more difficult for others to get around. Their loud voices are not reflective of the residents in surrounding areas. Additionally, this area is growing and for the sake of our children and grandchildren's environment, we need to reduce the number of cars on the road.

This is a very important issue and I hope that the voices of a few, even though they are loud, don't deny others the ability to get to work and to perform essential tasks.

thank you
Mona Matthews

Public Comment #68

To Whom It Concerns:

I am a long time resident of Douglas County and support the leaders in this county for transit transportation. We can no longer live as though we are in the 19th century. The transit system is very much needed for all ages, gender and races.

If we want jobs all over the State, we need transit.

Thanks,
Barbara J. Smith
Concern Citizen
Lithia Springs, Georgia

Public Comment #69

Dear TAQC Board Members,

I support the Connect Douglas Bus Service. Positive growth for the county may depend on it.

As a resident of Douglas County, I believe that there is lost potential in Douglas County. Although this proposal is small in scale, I think it's an important beginning that is long past due. The service should help the county's senior citizens and others without a car get to work, shop and/or tend to other important matters.

In the long term, it's unlikely MARTA will provide transit services in Douglas County, if the county doesn't even operate bus services. So we must start at the beginning. The Atlanta Regional Commission can't help foster livable communities, promote smart growth, and build competitive economies in the region which includes Douglas County, if Douglas doesn't even have public transit options.

The argument I've heard against Connect Douglas is a tiresome, archaic and untruthful one: that investing in public transportation brings in a bad element. The racial undertones of this argument are obvious and offensive.

I urge this committee to approve the funding for Connect Douglas, a valuable public service that is in the interest of the citizens of Douglas County and the region. This proposal will enhance the lives of citizens today and simultaneously lay the groundwork for organized and positive growth for the County in the future.

Sincerely,
Susan Berryman-Rodriguez

Public Comment #70

Douglas County Transportation

Planning for the future is critical. The baby boom generation is transitioning through life, work into retirement. People are living longer, i.e. First Lady Barbara Bush, into her 90's. In addition there are other factors such as economic and medical problems that are also associated with aging. Therefore making sure there is viable transportation in order for older adults to be able to continue to "AGE IN PLACE." Older adults may also go without because they do not want to burden family members, after having to give up their independence, their cars, etc.

According to AARP, "Aging in Place, Stuck without Options," the dollar amount for Social Security Benefits is quite low, and represent a large percentage of low income retirees, household. The median Social Security benefit for low income adults is less than \$10,000 a year. Equally important, other individuals' economy well-being is greatly increase when they are able access cheaper transportation. When looking for a job, they can now broaden their search because they do not have to worry about the high cost of transportation. As incomes increase, the more individuals tend to spend, oftentimes in their own communities.

Henceforth, I implore you to consider 10,000 baby boomers who turned 65 today, and according to Pew Research Center, about 10,000 more will cross that threshold every day for years to come. This will dramatically change the composition of this area. Giving individuals the opportunity to access shopping areas, groceries, medical facilities and jobs, ultimately help their wellbeing and a vision for their future. According to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "in a few years, if nothing is done, 90 percent of metro Atlantans over the age of w 65 will be living in neighborhoods with little or no access to bus or rail lines, says Transportation for America." In addition, there are over 1.3. Million baby boomers in the metro Atlanta area, and if you are 80 years or older, you have the biggest transportation hardship. A transportation system is vital to residents without access, to become a thriving community through wholesomeness, gratification, and hopefulness.

Connecticut's U.S. Rep. John Larson said, when speaking at a House Session,

“Do What is Fair for the American People.”

I would add, “Do What is right for the Citizens of Douglas County.”

Nobie Mitchell --Concerned Citizen

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ARC Note

Comment #71 was transcribed by ARC staff based on a telephone call and expresses support for the proposed bus services.

Public Comment #71

I am in support of Douglas County receiving the CMAQ grant because we have a lot of people who live in bedroom communities, but still live, work, and play in the entire region. There are certain people who live in Douglasville, but may not have the income to own a car or take an Uber ride up Riverside, or to get to the mall, or to the Government Center, or to downtown Douglasville.

When it comes to the sustainability part, we must remember that people who live in the downtown center part of Douglasville should have the option if they like to be able to get to Cobb County, Atlanta, or even the rest of Douglas County.

I've been to meetings where there are companies in Douglasville and Douglas County who say they are unable to employ some people because they do not have reliable transportation. I've been told there are many vacancies. The proposed system will provide the reliable transportation necessary for economic development.

We are a growing community and we understand there is a rural part and a business part of this county. We must find a way to move people around Douglas County and to Atlanta, no matter where they live within the County. We already have GRTA, so we have regional transportation. We just need transportation for people who live in other areas of the County and/or need transportation when GRTA is not running .

David (last name withheld on request)

ARC Response

The requested Douglas County transit system operating assistance application has generated significant public comment. Many of the comments received follow common themes. ARC's response to these comments is grouped together in the following paragraphs. One area that generated significant comment relates to process questions, specifically route changes that occurred between May and October 2017.

The need and purpose for expanded community transit services was identified in the Douglas County Transportation Services Study, with approval by the County Commission on June 21, 2016. On May 17, 2017, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution in support of 1) the filing of a bus system start-up operations application with ARC and 2) identifying a maximum project cost of \$8,000,000. ARC requires a local government resolution in order to determine 1) the policy support for the request and 2) demonstrate the local government's commitment to provide the required 20% local funding match.

Based on an ARC staff review of the project application details, questions were raised regarding the number of routes and expected costs of the system. While the application identified two fixed routes to begin service in 2018, a third route was identified as being planned for 2019. A review of costs associated with the proposed services indicated that the application's forecast operating costs were above industry norms. ARC asked Douglas staff to reassess the application, including the expected services and routes, and refine it prior to ARC staff making draft recommendations to policymakers.

On October 13, 2017, Douglas County staff provided ARC with supplemental information for the proposed funding request. This supplemental information reflected a proposed four-route start up concept. Furthermore, the total funding cost decreased from \$8,000,000 to \$6,000,000. Because the 1) project purpose (start-up of a bus system) did not change and 2) the cost did not increase (decrease of \$2,000,000), ARC staff did not require an updated resolution from the local government.

Several comments assert that local government procedures were not followed as the system concept was refined. ARC understands that the Douglas County Commission's Transportation Committee reviewed the adjusted route assumptions and that staff briefed the Commission. Each jurisdiction in the Atlanta region has a different internal process to arrive at funding request decisions. ARC inquired of local staff if local processes were followed and received an affirmative response.

Additional questions were raised related to potential adverse impacts resulting from increased transit service in the community, including funding and community impact concerns. Douglas County currently operates the 2nd largest transit vanpool program in the state of Georgia—with 52 vehicles operated in maximum service. The proposed local system expansion anticipates an additional 8 van-type vehicles to be added to the County system. The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) currently operates multiple express routes—from two park and ride lot locations—to and from the City of Atlanta. As part of the acceptance of the funding, the federal government will also require more detailed information on the longer-term operational funding for the system.

ARC also received several comments in favor of the proposed transit services, for reasons ranging from increasing accessibility options for people who cannot drive, expanding job and educational opportunities for lower income individuals, and increasing the county's economic competitiveness.

As it relates to local community review and local Commission actions in the future, several steps remain if the application is approved by ARC. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will require the Douglas County Commission to approve final routes and their associated fare levels. Adjustments to both routes and fare levels can also occur as part of this process and public input will be required. Also, the Commission will be required to take a vote to accept the grant. These procedural steps will provide additional opportunities for the residents of Douglas County to express their viewpoints on the proposed services with local elected officials and staff.

Other

Public Comment #72

I only learned of today's meeting moments ago. While my questions/concerns may not be raised today, I nevertheless wanted to provide some thoughts and hopefully a reply will be provided or the issues placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

- I would strongly agree that a light rail solution is desirable by most citizens that support/supported the Beltline initiative and voted for the half penny sales tax increase. A BRT solution is not value added and would not build upon investments (Atlanta Streetcar) already made.
- The ARC and City of Atlanta have already developed proposed expansion efforts for the streetcar which includes:
 - Expanding the system down to the Ponce City Market area,
 - Expanding the system over to the Atlanta University System, and
 - Expanding the system around the Beltline.

Have these project proposals been considered and prioritized as efforts that may be closer to being "shovel ready", and if not, why?

- A Light Rail system around the Beltline would make good on a long time plan to creating a loop around the city much like the 285 loop. It also creates an opportunity for future growth to underserved areas in the western and southern parts of the City and metro areas.

MARTA presented a Light Rail project that would run on Campbellton Road and touted the previous efforts under previous Mayor's Campbell's administration to widen the road as a great place for light rail. Why hasn't this project been discussed? It would certainly serve as a long needed investment of transit on the south side of Atlanta.

I look forward to your reply and/or having these topics placed on the next agenda.

Regards,
Monty Montgomery

ARC Response

ARC is currently working with the City of Atlanta and MARTA to determine which transit investments will be funded using proceeds from the 2016 More MARTA referendum. Many of the projects you reference are under consideration. Once final recommendations are agreed upon, those projects will be added to the TIP/RTP via a future referendum.

We encourage you to remain engaged and express your opinions at any future community engagement events sponsored by either the City of Atlanta or MARTA on their transit expansion plans.