Coordinated
Human Services
Transportation

2025 Plan Update

2025 Coordinated Human Services Transportation
Plan Update

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Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AAA	Area Agency on Aging
ACA	Advisory Committee on Aging
ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	American with Disabilities Act
AERO	Airport Employee Ride Options
AMI	Area Median Income
ARC	Atlanta Regional Commission
ARTP	ATL Regional Transit Plan
ATL	Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority
CCAM	Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility
CHST	Coordinated Human Services Transportation
CTP	Comprehensive Transportation Plans
CTS	Coordinated Transportation Services
DCH	Department of Community Health
DFCS	Division of Family & Children Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation (Act)
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GCO	Georgia Commute Options
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GRTA	Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
HST	Human Services Transportation
LCI	Livable Centers Initiative
MARTA	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NEMT	Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
NOFA	Notification of Funding Availability
OAA	Older Americans Act
PMT	Project Management Team
SMART	Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation
SRTA	State Road & Tollway Authority
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TOG	Transit Operator Group
TSMO	Transportation Systems Management and Operations
UZA	Urbanized Area

Vision

mobility *for* all

Objectives

Awareness
Strengthen regional knowledge of HST options by analyzing existing plans and establishing a sustainable process to ensure information remains accurate and up to date.

Collaboration
Engage with HST providers to create strategies that fill service gaps, evaluate how practical they are to implement, and propose new pilot projects with identified lead partners.

Investment
Define key performance metrics to guide ARC's monitoring of HST planning, update funding sources and new opportunities to sustain and expand future projects, programs, and services.

Vision Statement

Develop strategies, targeted improvements, and innovative concepts through a data-driven approach and engagement with diverse stakeholders to help meet the mobility needs of all communities in the region.

Goals

Goal 1: Identify the mobility needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes

Goal 2: Update and develop strategies for meeting regional **HST needs**

Goal 3: Prioritize HST services and projects for funding and implementation

The Atlanta region is experiencing *rapid growth.* **How is the transportation network handling the** *pressure?*

Background

Every four years, the Atlanta region updates its CHST Plan to meet federal requirements. This plan ensures that projects funded through the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program in the Atlanta Urbanized Area (UZA) are developed locally and include input from older adults, people with disabilities, transportation providers, and the public. The plan identifies transportation needs, strategies to meet them, and priorities for funding.

In Georgia, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is appointed by the governor as the Designated Recipient of Section 5310 funds, which support transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. DHS administers these funds statewide, while the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), leads the planning process for the UZA. Since 2010, ARC has guided efforts to coordinate and fund HST at the regional scale. The most recent plan, Managing Mobility in the Region, was adopted by the ARC board in March 2017.

Introduction

The Atlanta region is experiencing rapid growth. By 2050, the ARC's 19-county transportation planning area is projected to add **1.8 million residents** and **840,000 new jobs**, bringing the total to **approximately 4.8 million jobs across the region**.[1] This growth will bring challenges and put enormous pressure on the transportation network, especially HST, which serves older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with limited incomes getting to and from where they need to go.

Today, **more than 10%** of metro Atlanta residents rely on HST services, including paratransit, non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), volunteer driver, and voucher programs. Mobility demand for HST users is projected to rise quickly as the region ages and grows. According to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Community Health, trips for HST populations could increase by **40-60%** by 2050, creating a critical need for expanded and coordinated services.[2]

This update is intended to discuss the demographic changes in HST populations since the last plan and aims to provide solutions for meeting HST mobility needs now and in the future. Recommendations identified through the plan update process will inform the work plans and strategies of ARC, the Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority (ATL), and the region's transit operators.

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[1] Data Source: Atlanta Regional Commission.
[2] **RHST Needs Assessment**.

Plan Organization

Section 1: Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

This section highlights the outreach and engagement efforts throughout the plan update. It summarizes what the project team heard from stakeholders and partners across the region.

Section 2: Existing Conditions and Inventory

This section outlines key themes from existing plans and documents and provides an overview of HST programs and services operating in the region today.

Section 3: Mobility and Access Needs Assessment

This section explores shifts in HST population demographics, shares findings from the mobility and access needs assessment, and updates county transit profiles since the Managing Mobility in the Region and 2020 Demand Response Plan.

Section 4: Key Recommendations

The final section presents strategies for investing in, coordinating, and improving HST services. These recommendations are based on identified needs and gaps, stakeholder input, and best practices drawn from peer regions and case studies.

Section 1:
Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

This section summarizes what the project team heard from various stakeholders over the course of the plan update. Throughout the study process, the project team worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the plan reflects HST needs and priorities in the region. Engagement and outreach efforts included:

- **Meetings with advisory committees**, including the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA) to incorporate perspectives from aging and disability advocates.
- **Rider Survey and Community Activations** to capture firsthand experiences from those who rely on HST.
- **One-on-one interviews** with transit providers and voucher program administrators to understand operational and administrative challenges and opportunities.
- **Collaborative sessions** with the DHS and the Transit Operator Group to align strategies and share insights.
- **Broad stakeholder input** gathered during the 2025 CHST Summit to inform recommendations feasible for the region.
- **Ongoing updates** through presentations to the Technical Coordinating Committee to maintain transparency and invite feedback.

This comprehensive approach ensured that voices from across the region including HST users, providers, advocates, and decision-makers helped shape the recommendations in this plan.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings

To guide the project management team throughout the plan update process, a TAC was formed and convened regularly to provide guidance in the development of strategies, targeted improvements, and innovative pilot concepts aimed to improve the delivery of HST in the region. The TAC is comprised of stakeholders from ARC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Transportation Planning and Mobility Services, ATL, GDOT, and DHS Section 5310 program leads to ensure broad representation in the plan update process.

The TAC's involvement was essential to developing practical recommendations that can be supported and implemented in the region. Their engagement included:

- **Giving feedback** highlighting current HST gaps and needs
- **Noting key findings** and themes from ongoing planning efforts
- **Sharing challenges** to delivering HST services and programs
- **Vetting solutions** and providing input at major study milestones
- **Participating in 2025 CHST Summit** focused on recommendations and solutions

Survey Engagement

The ARC conducted a rider survey to gather input from HST users across the 19-county MPO boundary area. The survey was offered online via ARC's Community Engagement Hub, known as Public Input. It was also administered in-person at senior centers and community events throughout the region. The survey was available in English and Spanish and other translations upon request. A **total of 388 responses** were received with the highest participation from Henry (91), Fulton (88), and Cobb (46) counties.

Regional Representation

46

88

91
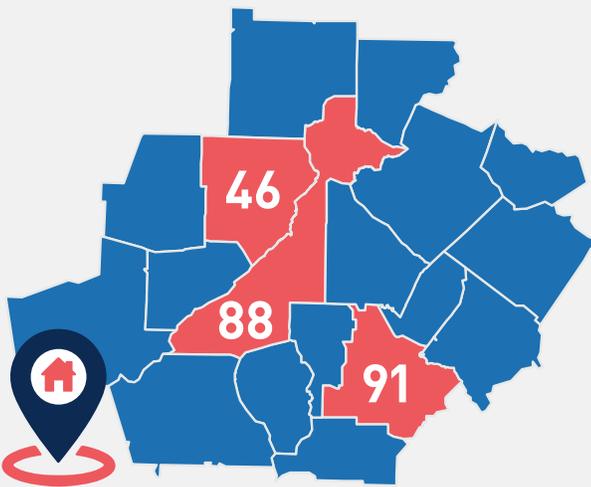
Participation from residents across most (15) counties in the MPO boundary

Responses received from all HST user groups:

Older Adults

Persons with Disabilities

Low-Income Households

Satisfaction & Challenges

114
PEOPLE

Answered their overall satisfaction with HST services was Neutral

Top challenges reported:

Limited Coverage

Limited Service Hours

Transit Service Distance

Service Use & Travel Patterns

30%
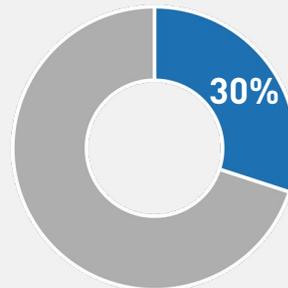
30% of respondents use HST at least:

2-4 days/week

Medical appointments/ hospital was the

#1 DESTINATION
MOST FREQUENTLY TRAVELED TO

HST services generally meet the needs of those who can access them, but gaps remain. Respondents expressed strong interest in greater regional coverage, cost reductions, and expanded operating hours to improve mobility and access.
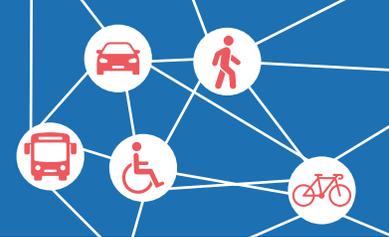
Community Activations

As part of the CHST Plan update, the project team connected with diverse communities across metro Atlanta to understand their transportation needs and challenges. Through four activations, the team achieved 185 in-person touchpoints with HST users and caregivers and facilitated the completion 102 surveys. The project team gathered valuable insights that helped inform the existing conditions, needs assessment, and plan recommendations for investing in future mobility solutions for all communities. The table below provides a brief summary of the four activations and key highlights:

Table 1: Community Activations to Date

Event/ Organization	Date	County Location	Number Engaged	Key Insights
Conyers Latin Festival	10-Nov-24	Rockdale County	68	People want more transit options and easier booking for rides.
Senior Club at the Latin American Association	13-Dec-24	Gwinnett County	30	Older adults face high costs and limited access to transportation.
Douglas County Senior Center	17-Dec-24	Douglas County	21	Shuttle services are helpful, but voucher cuts caused hardship.
North Cobb Senior Center	3-Jan-25	Cobb County	66	Seniors appreciate services but want to travel farther distances.

What We Learned

Across all events, the message was clear: transportation is essential for independence, health, and quality of life and the following needs were highlighted throughout.

- More public transportation is a crucial need in every community
- People want more flexibility to book same day trips
- Improve communication cord make available options more visible
- Seniors and people with disabilities face extra mobility challenges
- Affordable and reliable options is essential and highly desired

Overall Themes

- High demand for accessible transportation
- Limited-service coverage and advance booking restrictions
- Reduced funding for vouchers and lack of communication
- Challenges for older adults and individuals with disabilities
- Community engagement highly valued

What Participants Asked For

- Expand service coverage and flexibility for leisure and quality-of-life activities
- Improve communication and transparency around funding and voucher programs
- Address accessibility issues for riders with mobility and vision impairments
- Continue proactive community engagement to ensure inclusive planning

These insights guided plan efforts to create key recommendations focused on meeting the needs of seniors and others in the Atlanta region who rely on HST.

Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA) Meeting

The Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA) played a vital role in shaping this plan update. As the official advisory body for the Atlanta Area Agency on Aging, ACA provides guidance on services that support independence, health, and well-being for older adults. Throughout the update process, ACA reviewed findings, offered feedback, and helped identify strategies and innovative solutions to improve mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Members also participated in the 2025 CHST Summit, ensuring their perspectives and proposed solutions were reflected in the plan recommendations.

Transit Provider Interviews

To track progress since the 2020 Demand Response Plan and identify opportunities for better coordination, the project team met with key transit providers across the region, including ATL, CobbLinc, Connect Douglas, Henry Connect, MARTA, and Ride Gwinnett. These conversations focused on ADA paratransit eligibility, regional service coordination, data collection for trip patterns and customer feedback, unmet service demand, and best practices for improving connections. Providers also shared priorities for future service expansion, lessons learned from recent projects, and ideas for innovative pilot programs. The team previewed the 2025 CHST Summit agenda and gathered early input on draft recommendations. Insights from these interviews directly informed plan recommendations and updates to county transit profiles.

Voucher Program Staff Interviews

To better understand how local voucher programs support mobility, the project team spoke with staff from six counties across the region. These conversations offered a behind-the-scenes look at how programs operate today and what improvements could make them even more effective in the future. Representatives from Cherokee County Senior Services, CobbLinc, Connect Douglas, DeKalb County Human Services, Fayette Senior Services, and Gwinnett County Senior Services shared their perspectives on topics such as program funding, eligibility requirements, voucher costs, trip types, enrollment processes, provider networks, and marketing strategies. They also discussed the benefits and challenges of managing these programs. The insights gathered helped shape the plan's analysis of existing conditions and highlighted best practices for closing service gaps. County staff later joined the 2025 CHST Summit to ensure their ideas for meeting growing mobility needs were included in the plan recommendations.

Transit Operator Group (TOG) Meeting

In August 2025, the project team hosted a deep-dive session with the Transit Operators Group (TOG) to share key findings from the plan update and collaborate on strategies to improve HST across the region. TOG members provided valuable insights into daily operational challenges and explored ways to create a more connected regional system that offers seamless, reliable travel for riders. The discussion highlighted strong interest in three areas: establishing centralized locations for regional connections, enhancing trip-planning technology, and developing a regional fare product that allows riders to move easily between systems.

Feedback from this session helped shape strategies, targeted improvements, and innovative pilot concepts for further review with stakeholders, forming the foundation for draft recommendations. TOG members also participated in the 2025 CHST Summit, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration to deliver a better travel experience for HST populations. Their input was instrumental in finalizing the plan's recommendations.

ARC 2025 CHST Summit

The CHST Summit brought together regional leaders, transportation experts, and community advocates to discuss strategies for improving mobility for all communities across metro Atlanta. The conversation focused on innovative solutions to address service gaps for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations. Participant feedback was centered on advancing voucher programs, mobility hubs, enhancing digital trip planning, and unifying fare payment.

Key Recommendations

Expand Voucher Programs: Vouchers help to fill service gaps and provide the rider with independence and choice. DeKalb's newly deployed paperless system and dedicated app can serve as a model for other counties.

Develop Regional Mobility Hubs: Critical for integrating multiple transportation modes and enhancing safety, improving cross-jurisdictional travel and service efficiency.

Implement a Regional Trip Planner: Ensure inclusive design incorporating demand response and voucher programs and user education for older adults.

Consolidate Fare Systems: Move toward a regional fare payment solution to simplify travel for residents and visitors.

Takeaways

Mobility hubs can drive economic revitalization and improve connectivity.

Trip planners provide customers with independence, options, and choice.

Regional payment solutions (e.g., an ATL Metro Card) could be implemented sooner than expected.

Outreach programs to educate HST populations on available services can help close access gaps to information.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Training

As part of the CHST Plan update the consultant team was tasked with developing an implementation training for current 5310 Providers in the region. This training included an overview of the FTA Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities – Section 5310 (FTA C9070.1G circular 4.20.15) program to create a more thorough understanding of:

01 FTA Section 5310 transportation program requirements, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021, and any FTA updates

02 The difference between capital versus operational expenditures

03 Methodology to calculate cost of one-way trips using the capital and operational costs

04 Best practices on grants management from a grantee perspective, including data collection, record keeping, and the Uniform System of Accounts

05 Audit requirements and key areas to be adhered to

06 How 5310 funding can be used to address service gaps

07 How to plan for longer-term service scale ups that might use 5310 funding

08 Georgia Program Management Plan requirements

The training also incorporated an interactive, question and answer session which allowed the project team the opportunity to gain more insight into the operational challenges current NEMT providers are experiencing in delivering HST services. Several of them expressed the need for better coordination related to trip booking and payment reimbursement.

The consultant team also provided a training session for ARC staff to create a more thorough understanding of DHS's competitive selection process for program funding and subrecipient requirements:

01
Suballocation considerations and the link between funding and coordinated planning

02
Performance monitoring, reporting and documentation, and contract implementation

03
Grantor best practices for managing grants, including data collection and record keeping

04
Audit requirements and key areas to be adhered to including maintenance and trip logs

05
Review of 2025 NOFA, including application timeline, budget information, and evaluation criteria

Staff training required engagement with ARC's Aging and Services and Resources team members to better understand the challenges of managing their Section 5310 Staff training required engagement with ARC's Aging and Services and Resources team members to better understand the challenges of managing their Section 5310 subrecipients. It also provided guidance on how the statewide implementation of Section 5310 program is documented in the Georgia state management plan and what impact it has on the amount of funding allocated for the Atlanta region as a large, urbanized area.

Section 5310
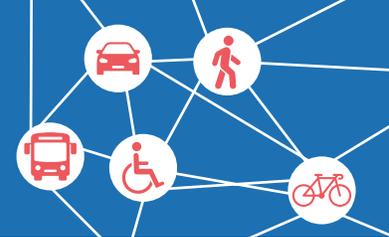
Section 2: Existing Conditions and Inventory

This section provides an inventory of the Atlanta region's current transportation landscape. It lists existing state, regional, and local county plans that guide the delivery of HST and related services. This section also catalogs available transit options, including fixed-route service, ADA Paratransit, Microtransit, Demand-Response, and other NEMT where applicable. Additionally, it summarizes existing funding sources that support the implementation of HST services. Together, this inventory offers a clear snapshot of current plan priorities and resources available to meet mobility needs.

Reviewing Existing Plan

This section provides an overview of key findings from statewide, regional, and county-level transportation plans relevant to HST in the Atlanta region. The review included three statewide plans, 10 regional plans, and 30 county plans, focusing on goals, emerging themes, and recommendations.

Statewide Plans set the overarching framework for transportation across Georgia, emphasizing accessibility, safety, equity, and coordination. Examples include the *GDOT Statewide Transit Plan (2020)*, *SILCGA State Plan for Independent Living (2020)*, and *GDOT 2050 Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan (2021-2023)*.

Regional Plans translate statewide priorities into actionable strategies for the Atlanta metropolitan area, addressing access, connectivity, multimodal options, and equity. Key plans include the *ARC Regional Transportation Demand Management Plan (2013/2022)*, *Managing Mobility in the Atlanta Region (2017 CHST)*, and the *ATL Regional Transit Plan (2020/2022)*.

County-Level Plans provide localized strategies tailored to community-specific needs. These plans often include transit access improvements, microtransit pilots, infrastructure enhancements, and expanded demand-response services. Many counties emphasize flexible service models to address gaps for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations, while also recommending outreach and equity initiatives. Examples include *Moves Cherokee Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, *Cobb Forward Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, and *Ride Gwinnett Transit Development Plan*.

Across all levels of planning, there is a strong emphasis on improving accessibility and mobility, promoting safety and sustainability, fostering coordination among agencies, and leveraging technology and innovation to enhance service delivery. Statewide plans provide the policy framework and funding mechanisms; regional plans focus on connectivity and multimodal integration, and county plans prioritize practical and localized solutions. Together, these efforts create a foundation for a coordinated approach to meeting the transportation needs of vulnerable populations in the ARC region.

Existing Plan Goals and Themes

Transportation planning across statewide, regional, and county levels consistently focuses on five core areas: Accessibility and Mobility, Safety and Sustainability, Coordination and Partnerships, Funding and Innovations, and Evaluation and Prioritization. These areas provide a unified framework for aligning diverse objectives while addressing state, regional, and local needs.

Table 2: Summary of Goals from Existing Plans

Focus Area	Overall Goals
Accessibility and Mobility	• Economic and Mobility Expansion • Local and Regional Connectivity • Mobility Options
Safety and Sustainability	• Safety and Efficiency • Safe and Sustainable Practices
Coordination and Partnerships	• Coordinated Decision-Making • Statewide Coverage • Collaborative Partnerships and Equity
Funding and Innovations	• Strategic Investments • Funding and Financing • Technology and Innovation
Evaluation Prioritization	• Performance/Priority Measures • Implementation Guidance

Despite differences in scope, all plans share common priorities: enhancing mobility, promoting safety and sustainability, fostering partnerships, investing in innovation, and guiding implementation through performance measures. The top four emerging themes shaping HST planning at all levels in the region and across Georgia are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Emerging Themes from Existing Plans

Focus Area	Overall Goals
Public Engagement and Awareness	• Marketing and Education • Safety Campaigns
Mobility Solutions	• Integrated and Multimodal Transportation • Service Efficiency and Regionalization • Partnerships and Coordination • Microtransit and Paratransit
Equity and Social Inclusion	• Equitable Access and Life Expectancy • Socioeconomic Considerations
Technological Adaptations	• Technology and Innovation • Smart Mobility and ITS Deployment • Digital Transformation
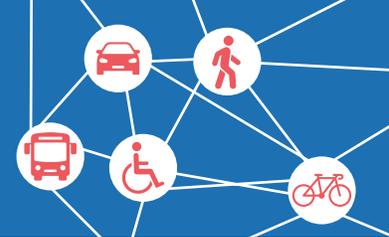
Existing Plan Recommendations

Across statewide, regional, and county-level plans, recommendations consistently focus on five core areas: service enhancements, equity, technology adoption, and funding diversification to improve HST in the Atlanta region. The five core areas and key recommendations are summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Summary of Existing Plan Recommendations

Focus Area	Overall Goals
Service Expansion and Connectivity Improvement	• Enhance and Expand Service Connectivity to Underserved Areas • Establish or Expand Microtransit Service • Expand Demand-Response Service by adding more Vehicles, Geographic Coverage, and Extending Hours
Partnerships and Collaboration	• Establish Strategic Partnerships for Better Service Integration • Explore Additional Travel Options with Existing Local Operators
Equity and Accessibility	• Address Disparities and Promote Equity in Services • Enhance Service Accessibility • Public Awareness and Education About Available Services
Technology and Innovation	• Leverage Technology and Innovation for Service Improvement, Operational Efficiency, and Customer Experience
Marketing and Funding	• Increase Marketing Efforts and Diversify Funding Sources • Establish Strategic Alliances to Secure Funding Sources

Statewide recommendations emphasize connectivity between rural and urban areas, strategic partnerships for shared resources, and leveraging technology for operational efficiency. Regional recommendations focus on multimodal integration, effective collaboration and partnerships, innovative fare systems, and public engagement campaigns to build trust and increase ridership.

County-level recommendations prioritize localized solutions:

- **Microtransit:** Pilots and phased expansions in counties such as Cobb, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale.
- **Demand-Response Enhancements:** Longer service hours and additional vehicles in counties like Forsyth, Fayette, and Paulding.
- **Marketing and Outreach:** Targeted campaigns to raise awareness of senior and specialized transit programs.
- **New Services:** Countywide demand-response implementation in Newton and expanded paratransit in DeKalb.

These recommendations reflect a coordinated push toward more flexible and technology-enabled, public transportation systems. While most initiatives are county-specific, there is a clear opportunity to strengthen cross-jurisdictional coordination to ensure seamless regional travel for HST populations.

Existing Transit Services and Programs within the Region

The Atlanta region offers a diverse network of public transportation services and programs designed to meet the mobility needs of both the general public and HST populations. This multimodal system includes fixed-route bus and rail services, ADA-compliant paratransit, demand-response services operated by public and nonprofit providers, and supplemental programs such as vouchers and nonemergency medical transportation. Private and volunteer-based transportation solutions further enhance coverage, particularly in areas where traditional transit is limited. The HST services listed below don't cover everything, but they show just how many different providers are operating in the same county, each with its own funding, service area, hours, and eligibility requirements. With so much overlap, better coordination can make these services easier for people to access and navigate. Having a clearer picture of what's

available also helps the region focus future funding where it's needed most, as demand continues to grow, moving us closer to one great region with mobility for all.

Transportation Service Descriptions

HST in the Atlanta region is delivered through several service modes that support a wide range of mobility needs. These services fall into five main categories, described below. Costs, hours of operation, and coverage area varies by service type and provider.

Fixed-Route and ADA Paratransit

Fixed-route transit includes buses, rail, and streetcars operating on scheduled routes, provided by agencies such as MARTA, CobbLinc, Ride Gwinnett, Connect Douglas, and CATS. Fixed-route also includes commuter bus services. Complementary ADA paratransit offers door-to-door or curb-to-curb service for riders with disabilities within ¾ miles of fixed routes, requiring eligibility and reservations.

Table 5: Fixed-Route, Paratransit, and Commuter Bus Transportation

Operator	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Cherokee Area Transportation System (CATS)	Fixed Route	Canton	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.	$2 for adults and children 16 and older; seniors 60+, Medicare, Medicaid, and veterans $1, children 15 and under are free
	Paratransit Service	Operate ¾ miles on either side of both Canton fixed routes	Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.	$2.50
CobbLinc	Fixed Route	Cobb and Fulton counties	Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.	Fixed Route
	Paratransit Service	Operate ¾ miles around any fixed route service	Monday through Sunday 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.	$4 for adults and $3 for youth customers
Connect Douglas	Fixed Route	Douglas County	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.	One-way fare is $2.50; a reduced one-way fare of $1 is offered to seniors (60+)
	Paratransit Service	Operates within a 1-mile distance from any point along the Connect Douglas fixed routes	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m	One-day trip $1; 10 trip ticket $10; 31-day pass $31

Operator	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Ride Gwinnett	Fixed Route	Gwinnett County, DeKalb County	Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Weekends 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.	One-way $2.50
	Paratransit Service	Gwinnett County, DeKalb County	Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Weekends 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.	One-way $2.50
Henry County Transit	Fixed Route	Henry County	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.	One-way $2.50
MARTA MARTA Mobility	Fixed Route	City of Atlanta, Clayton, DeKalb, and Fulton counties	Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 1:30 a.m. Weekends and holidays 5 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.	$2.50 for one-way; Atlanta Streetcar $1; children can ride free; senior citizens, disabled riders, and Medicare recipients $1
	Paratransit Service	Clayton, DeKalb, and Fulton counties within ¾ miles of fixed route service	Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.	$4 one trip; $68 - 20 trips discounted pass; $128 - 30-day pass
ATL Xpress	Commuter Bus	Clayton, Cobb, Cherokee, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale	Monday through Friday 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. (peak periods)	$3 per trip

Figure 1: Fixed-route, ADA Paratransit, and Commuter Bus Services

Figure 1: Fixed-route, ADA Paratransit, and Commuter Bus Services

Legend:
- MARTA
- Xpress
- Ride Gwinnett
- CATS
- Atlanta Streetcar
- Connect Douglas
- CobbLinc
- Paratransit Service Area
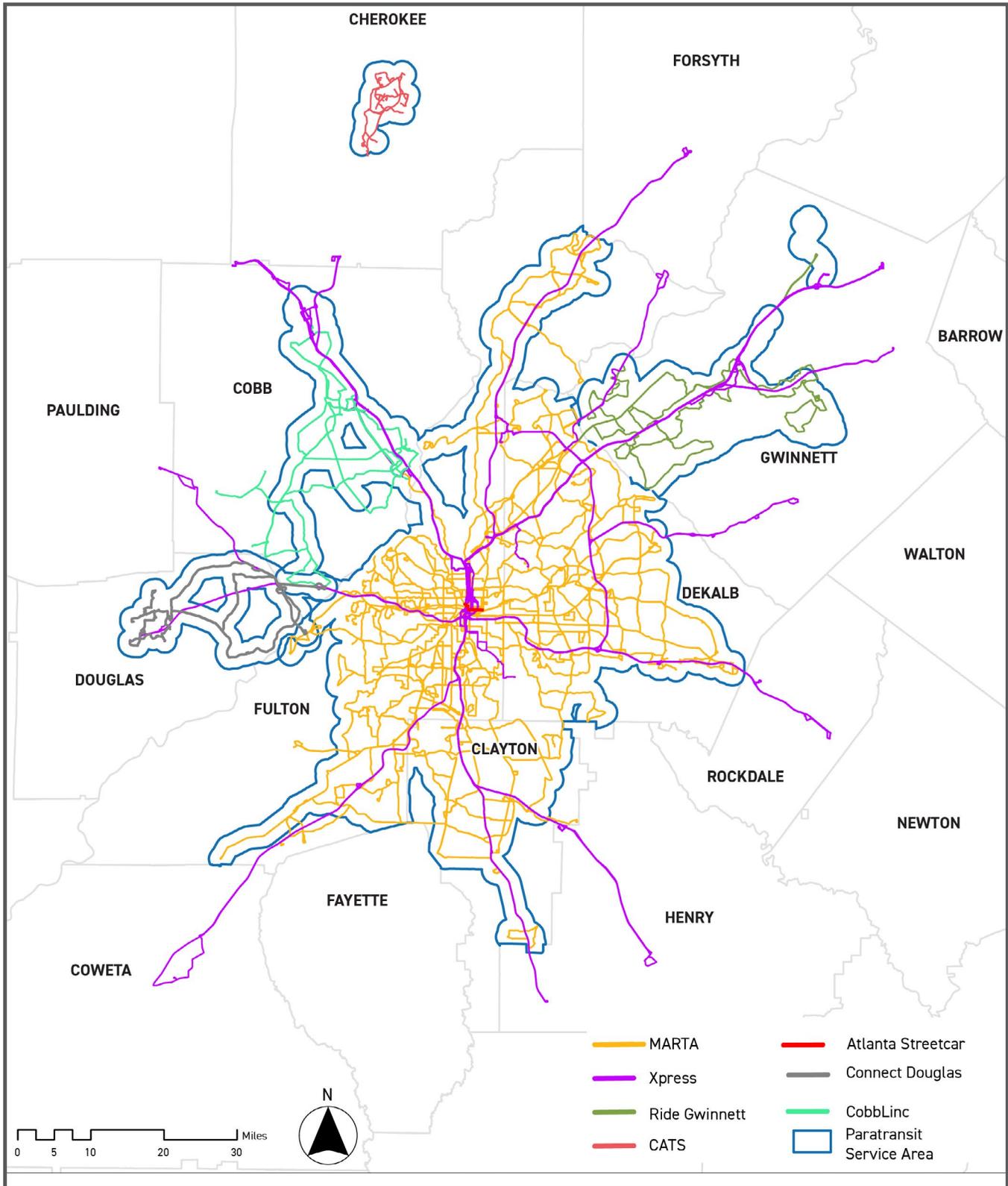
Demand-Response Services

Flexible, non-fixed route services where trips are pre-booked by riders in advance. Includes **microtransit** an on-demand, technology-driven service using smaller vehicles to provide shared rides within defined areas, bridging gaps in traditional transit, offering first-mile/last-mile connections. Services are especially useful in low-density areas and often meet the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities. Curb-to-Curb services are typically available upon request.

Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)

The Georgia Department of Community Health's (DCH) defines NEMT as medically necessary, cost effective transportation for any eligible Medicaid member (and escort, if required) with no other means of transportation available to any Medicaid-reimbursable service to receive treatment, medical evaluation, obtain prescription drugs or medical equipment. NEMT is a ride-share program and multiple members may be riding in the same vehicle.

Source: MARTA

Source: Gwinnett County

Source: Sophie Ralph, Forsyth County News

Table 6: Demand-Response and Microtransit Transportation

Operator	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Buc Ride	Demand-Response[3]	Fulton County	Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	$3
CATS	Demand-Response	Cherokee County	Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	$1.50 for first 5 miles and additional $0.30 per mile for 5 miles
CATS	Microtransit	Cherokee County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. until 4 p.m	$2 first 5 miles, additional $1 over 5 miles, reduced $1 for first 5 miles for seniors (60+), veterans, Medicare/ Medicaid and children 15 and under free
CobbLinc Go	Microtransit	Cobb County	Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	$2.50 one-way
Coweta Connect	Demand-Response	Coweta County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$3
Forsyth County Dial–a–Ride	Demand-Response	Forsyth County	Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	$2
Common Courtesy[4]	Demand-Response, Rideshare Pilot	Forsyth County	Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. 5 p.m.	$2
Ride Gwinnett	Microtransit	Lawrenceville, Norcross, Snellville	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.	$3 per trip
Henry Connect	Microtransit	Henry County	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.	$4, $2 for seniors over 60
Newton County Community Services	Demand-Response	Newton County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Trips (1-5 miles) $3 one-way and $5 round trip. Trips 31-60 miles $20-$37 one-way, and $23-$40 round trip
Paulding County Transit	Demand-Response	Paulding County	Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Free to county residents
Three River's Regional Commission	Demand-Response	Butts, Carroll, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, and Upson counties	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Three Rivers Transit Program $2, Carroll Connection $3, Meriwether Transit Program $3

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[3] The Demand-Response Service Type in this table also includes NEMT.
[4] Pilot Program expires on December 31, 2025.

Figure 2: Counties with Demand Response and Microtransit Services

Legend:
- Demand Response & Microtransit Service*
- Demand Response Services

*Fulton County & DeKalb County- March 2026

N

0 5 10 20 30 Miles
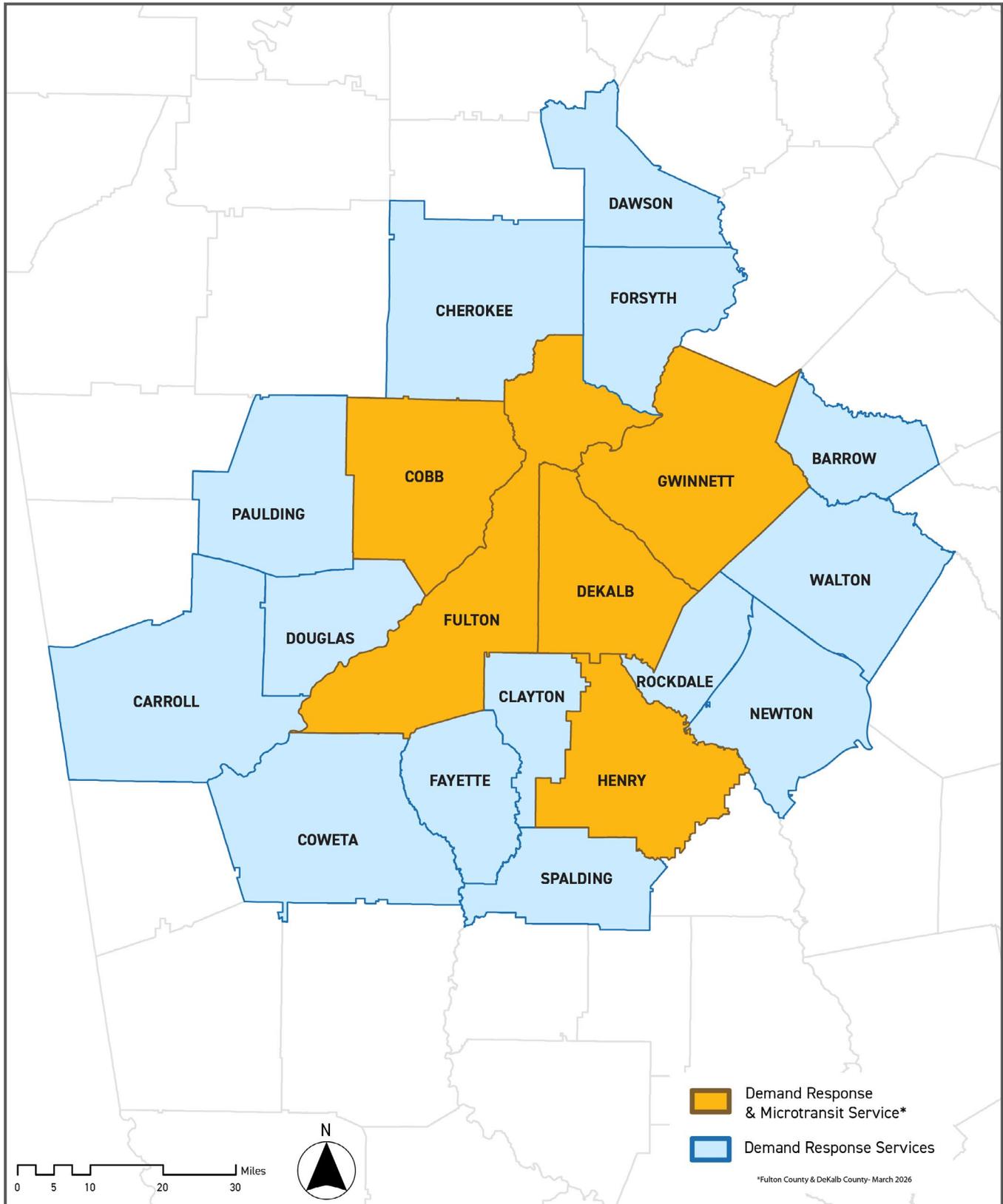
Specialized Transportation Services

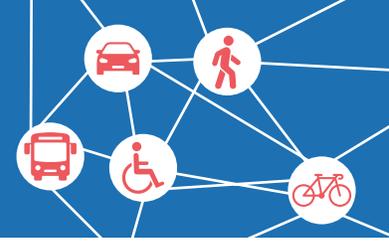Specialized Transportation Services are medical or senior services trips provided for individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of each agency's service. These services typically are not for commuting or other quality of life needs. Senior Transportation Services is accessible transportation options that are often subsidized or volunteer drivers for adults 60+ to access senior centers, medical appointments, and grocery stores provided by counties and nonprofit organizations.

Table 7: Specialized Transportation Services

Agency	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Barrow County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Barrow County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$1 donation suggested
Carroll County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service	Carroll County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$3 per trip for demand-response
Cherokee County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Volunteer Driver, Voucher Program	Cherokee County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	$1 per trip for first 5 miles, additional fees for longer distances
Clayton County Senior Services	Demand-Response, Shuttle Service	Clayton County Senior Centers	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Free
Cobb County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service, Voucher Program	Cobb County	Varies by program, typically Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$1 for demand-response, $2 for NEMT and shuttle service, sliding scale for voucher program
Coweta County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Coweta County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$3 per trip
Dawson County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Dawson County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	$2
DeKalb County Senior Services	NEMT, Voucher Program	DeKalb County	Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	Sliding scale based on income
Douglas County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Voucher Program	Douglas County	Monday–Saturday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	Medical, donation based, Dial-a-Ride, free
Fayette Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Fayette County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Sliding scale based on income

Agency	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Fulton County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service, Uber/Lyft	Fulton County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for demand-response and shuttle service, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for Uber/Lyft, and varies of NEMT by provider	$1 per trip for demand-response, NEMT, and Uber/Lyft, and free for shuttle service
Senior Services Transportation	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service, Uber/Lyft	Forsyth County	Monday through Friday 7 a.m. 6 p.m.	$3 per trip for demand-response, varies by provider for NEMT, $2-$3 for shuttle service, and $5 for Uber/Lyft
Gwinnett County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Volunteer Driver, Voucher Program	Gwinnett County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	$3 per trip for demand-response, sliding scale for NEMT, free for volunteer driver, and varies by provider for voucher program
Henry County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Henry County	Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.	$1 for senior centers, $2 for all other trips
Newton County Senior Services	Shuttle Service	Senior Center at Turner Lake	Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	$2 per day
Paulding County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Paulding County	Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Free
Rockdale County Senior Services	NEMT, Shuttle Service, Veteran Program, Voucher Program	Rockdale County	Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. for NEMT and shuttle service with extended hours to 6 p.m. on Thursday, and 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. for veteran program	$5 per trip for NEMT, and free for shuttle service and veteran program, and free or subsidized cost for voucher program

Agency	Service Type	Coverage Area	Service Hours	Fare
Spalding County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service	Spalding County	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. 5 p.m. for demand-response and NEMT, and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for shuttle service	$2 for demand-response, free for NEMT, and free for shuttle service
Senior Services North Fulton	Demand-Response, NEMT, Shuttle Service, Uber/Lyft	City of Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell, and Sandy Springs	Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for demand-response and shuttle service, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for Uber/Lyft, and varies of NEMT by provider	$1 per trip for demand-response, NEMT and Uber/Lyft, and free for shuttle service
Walton County Senior Services	Demand-Response, NEMT	Walton County	Monday through Thursday, with limited services on Friday and times vary base on the service type	No cost and donations are requested

HST Program Descriptions

Voucher Programs
According to FTA, voucher programs are a method of payment or financial tool used to enable individuals to obtain and afford transportation. These programs are mainly designed to assist transportation disadvantaged populations, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes. Vouchers are used to subsidize the cost of transportation services including carpools, transit, taxis, or volunteer drivers to increase independence for customers who might not otherwise have access to reliable transportation options. As noted in Section 1 above, counties with voucher programs report high usage and customer satisfaction because they provide the user with independence and choice. As highlighted during ARC's 2025 CHST summit there is a high demand for more funding to expand voucher programs in the region.

Travel Training
Personalized instruction to help individuals particularly older adults, people with disabilities, and those unfamiliar with transit learn to use transportation systems safely and independently. Training includes trip planning, reading schedules, paying fares, navigating transfers, and hands-on practice with buses, trains, or paratransit. CobbLinc, Ride Gwinnett, and MARTA all have robust travel training programs.

Funding

Human services transportation in the region is supported by a mix of federal, state, and local funding, with federal programs contributing the largest share. These investments help ensure that older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes can access safe and affordable transportation. As the region continues to grow, service providers will need to coordinate more closely to make the most of existing resources. Because each funding source has its own requirements, understanding how they can work together will be essential for expanding and improving services.

Below is a brief overview of the main Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs and other federal sources that support HST.

Key Federal Programs

- **FTA Section 5310:** Provides formula funding to states to help local agencies and nonprofits meet the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities.
- **FTA Section 5311:** Offers formula grants for rural areas to support public transportation.
- **FTA Section 5307:** Offers formula grants for governors and other recipients for transit capital and operating assistance and transportation-related planning in urbanized areas.
- **Older Americans Act:** Administered by the Administration on Aging, this program funds transportation services for older adults.

Other Major Sources

- **Medicaid:** Through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Medicaid supports NEMT for eligible low-income individuals.
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:** Provides NEMT services for qualifying veterans.

A full copy of the Existing Conditions and Inventory Tech Memo is available on ARC's HST website.

Section 3: Mobility and Needs Assessment

The Needs Assessment underpins ARC's 2025 CHST Plan by establishing a clear, evidence-based picture of who relies on HST, where needs are concentrated, and what barriers limit access. The analysis covers ARC's 19-county profiles with populations most affected by mobility barriers - older adults, people with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, and households with limited or no vehicle access. Using recent ACS demographics, a regionwide rider survey, an inventory of existing services (fixed-route, ADA paratransit, demand-response, and specialized/voucher programs), and access mapping to key destinations (medical, grocery, libraries, activity centers), the report identifies where high-need areas overlap with service and access gaps.

Findings are summarized to inform the next phase of the CHST Plan, guiding strategy development and near-term investments in coverage and span, first/last-mile and ADA conditions, affordability, and information access. The remainder of this section highlights the key observations of the detailed technical report.

Needs Highlighted by Growth Trends and Demographic Changes

This section summarizes where mobility needs are growing and most concentrated across ARC's 19-county region. It profiles key HST cohorts - older adults, people with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, and zero-vehicle households - tracking shifts since 2016. Using the HST Population Index, it pinpoints census tracts with above-average concentrations of need to guide targeting services and investments.
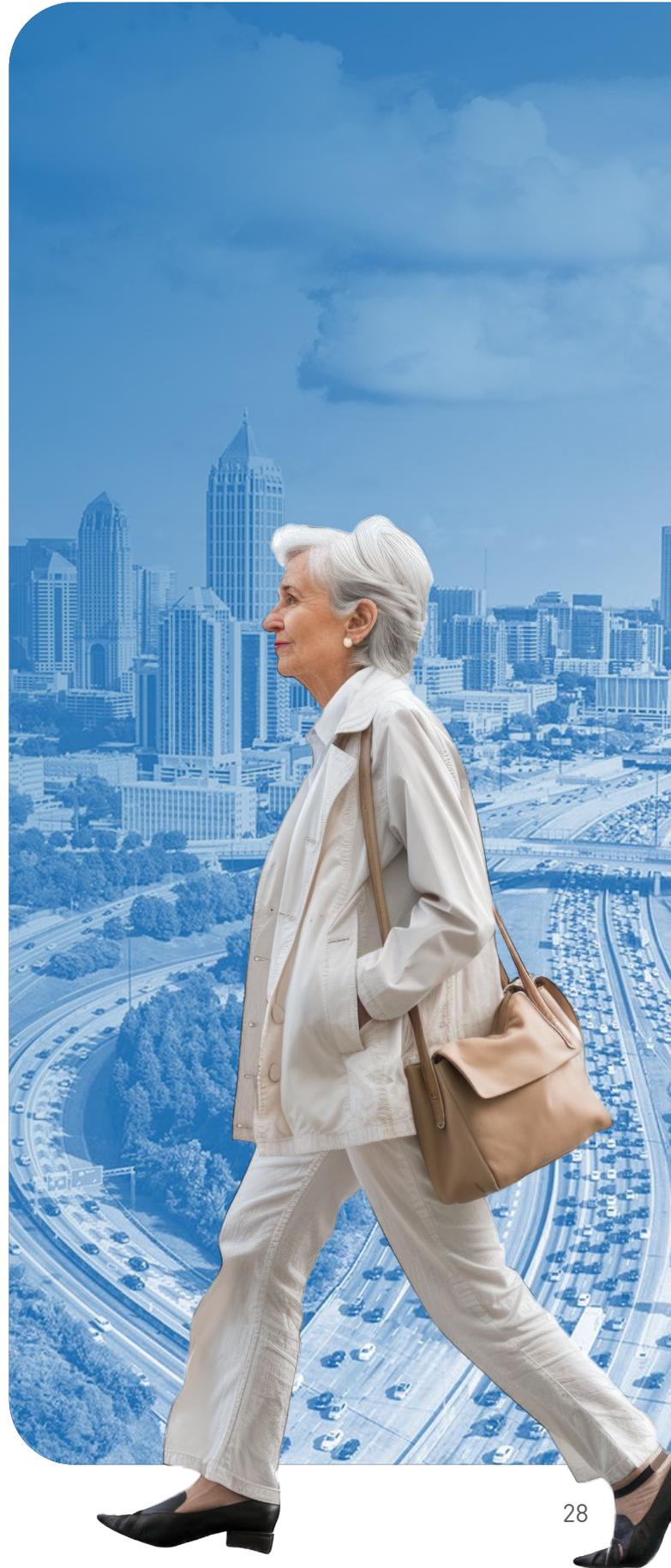
Regional Growth and Shifting Demand

Between 2016 and 2023, the Atlanta region experienced substantial growth, adding approximately 633,000 residents, an 11.9% increase. Forsyth County saw the most growth, with its population rising from about 203,800 in 2016 to roughly 272,800 in 2023. Barrow County followed, growing from 73,300 residents to approximately 92,700, while Cherokee County rounded out the top three, increasing from 230,600 to about 286,600 residents during the same period. The map below illustrates population changes across the entire study area between 2016 and 2023.

Figure 3: Population in the Atlanta Region from 2016 to 2023
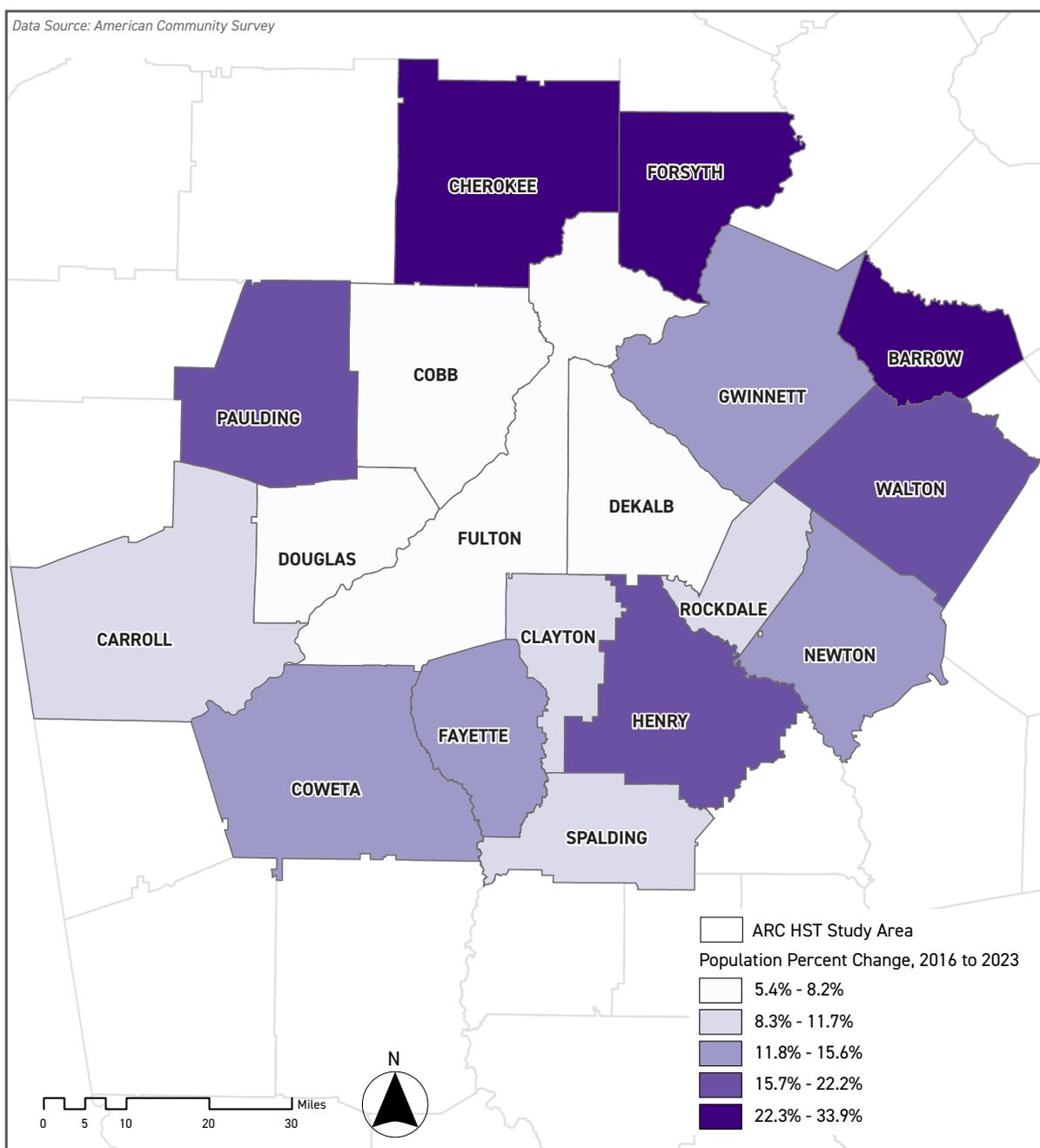
Data Source: American Community Survey

ARC HST Study Area

Population Percent Change, 2016 to 2023
- 5.4% - 8.2%
- 8.3% - 11.7%
- 11.8% - 15.6%
- 15.7% - 22.2%
- 22.3% - 33.9%

Between 2016 and 2023, the Atlanta region experienced substantial growth, adding approximately 322,000 households a 17% increase. Forsyth County saw the most growth, with its household rising from about 66,500 in 2016 to roughly 90,600 in 2023. Barrow County followed, growing from 24,000 households to approximately 32,200, while Cherokee County rounded out the top three, increasing from 80,300 to about 102,800 households during the same period. The map below illustrates household changes across the entire study area between 2016 and 2023.
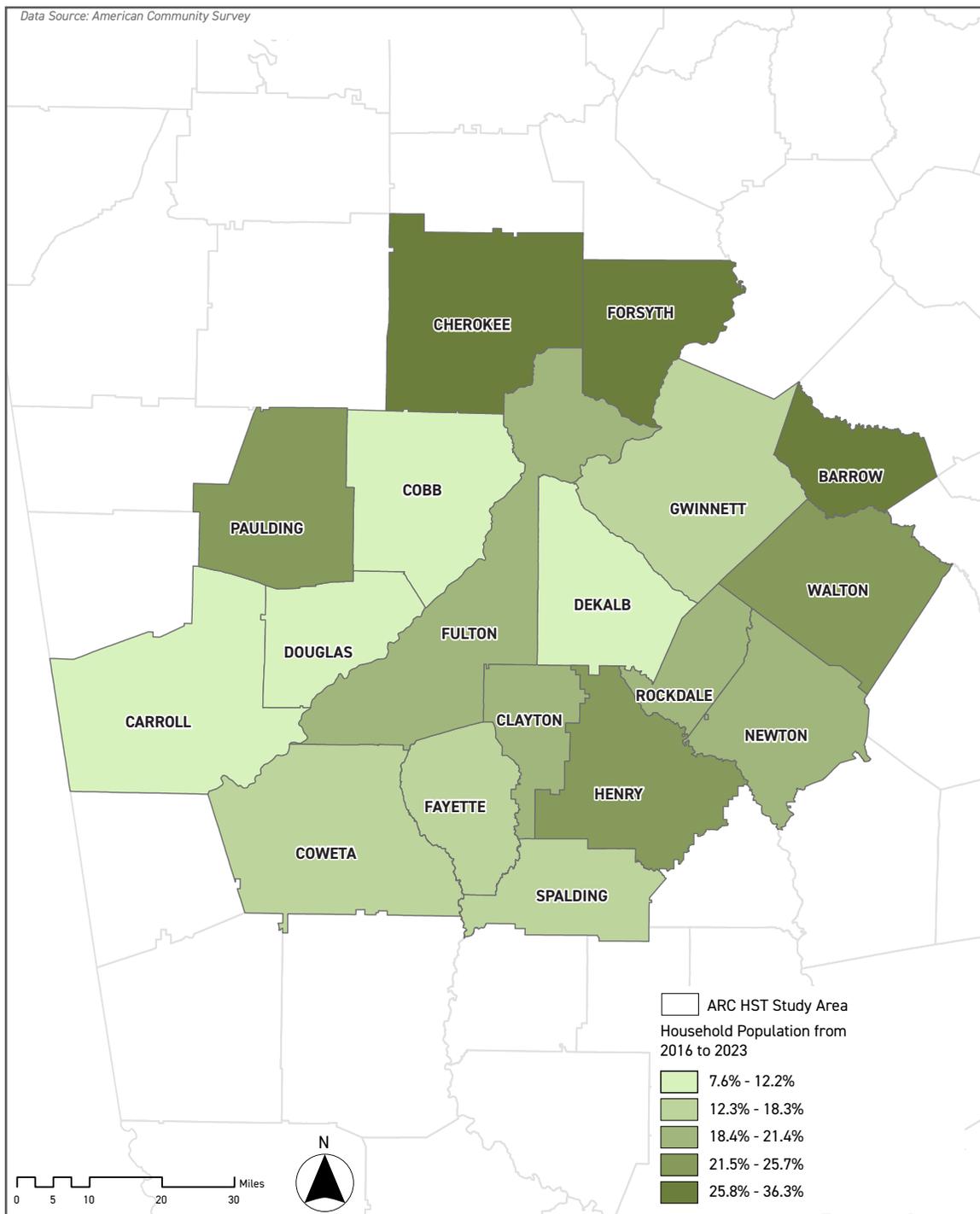
Figure 4: Households in the Atlanta Region from 2016 to 2023

Data Source: American Community Survey

ARC HST Study Area

Household Population from 2016 to 2023

- 7.6% - 12.2%
- 12.3% - 18.3%
- 18.4% - 21.4%
- 21.5% - 25.7%
- 25.8% - 36.3%

People with Disabilities

About 11% of residents reported a disability in 2023, an increase of ~135,000 since 2016. Growth is most pronounced in Gwinnett, DeKalb, and Fulton, implying rising demand for accessible and affordable mobility options, including infrastructure improvements for existing transit services and amenities.

Figure 5: Population of Individuals with Disabilities from 2016 to 2023

Data Source: American Community Survey

ARC HST Study Area

Individuals with Disabilities Percent Change, 2016 to 2023

- -24.5% - 13.8%
- 13.9% - 20.5%
- 20.6% - 40.3%
- 40.4% - 47.4%
- 47.5% - 63.0%
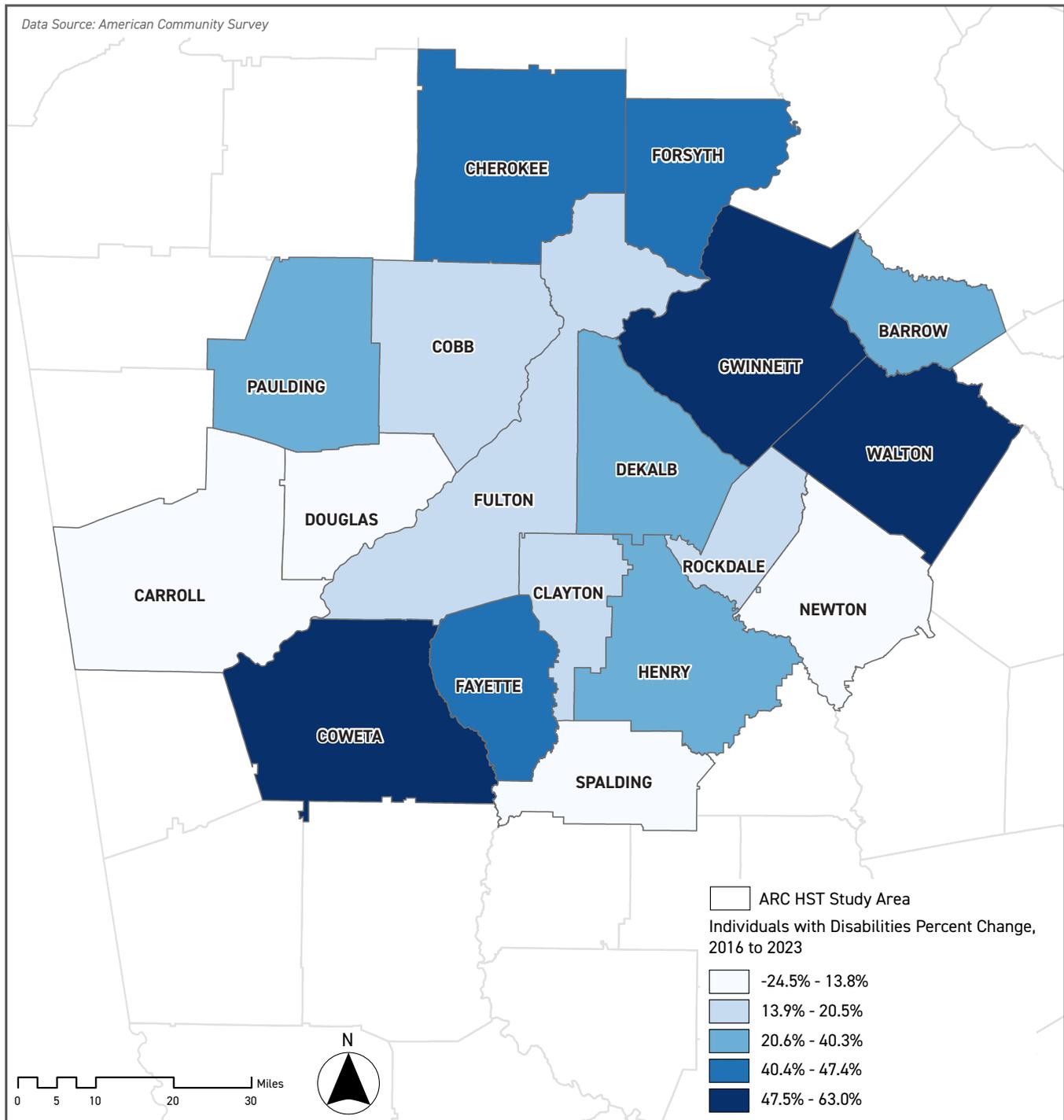
Older Adults (65+)

Between 2016 and 2023, the Atlanta region saw significant growth in its older adult population (ages 65 and older), especially in suburban counties. Cherokee County grew from 27,402 to 47,372 older adults, increasing from 11.88% to 16.53% of its population. Forsyth County rose from 22,609 to 35,887 older adults (11.09% to 13.15%), and Paulding County increased from 14,036 to 21,987 (9.37% to 12%). These trends underscore the need for more thoughtful planning and coordinated services to support a growing number of older residents living outside the region's urban core.

Figure 6: Population of Older Adults (65+ years) from 2016 to 2023
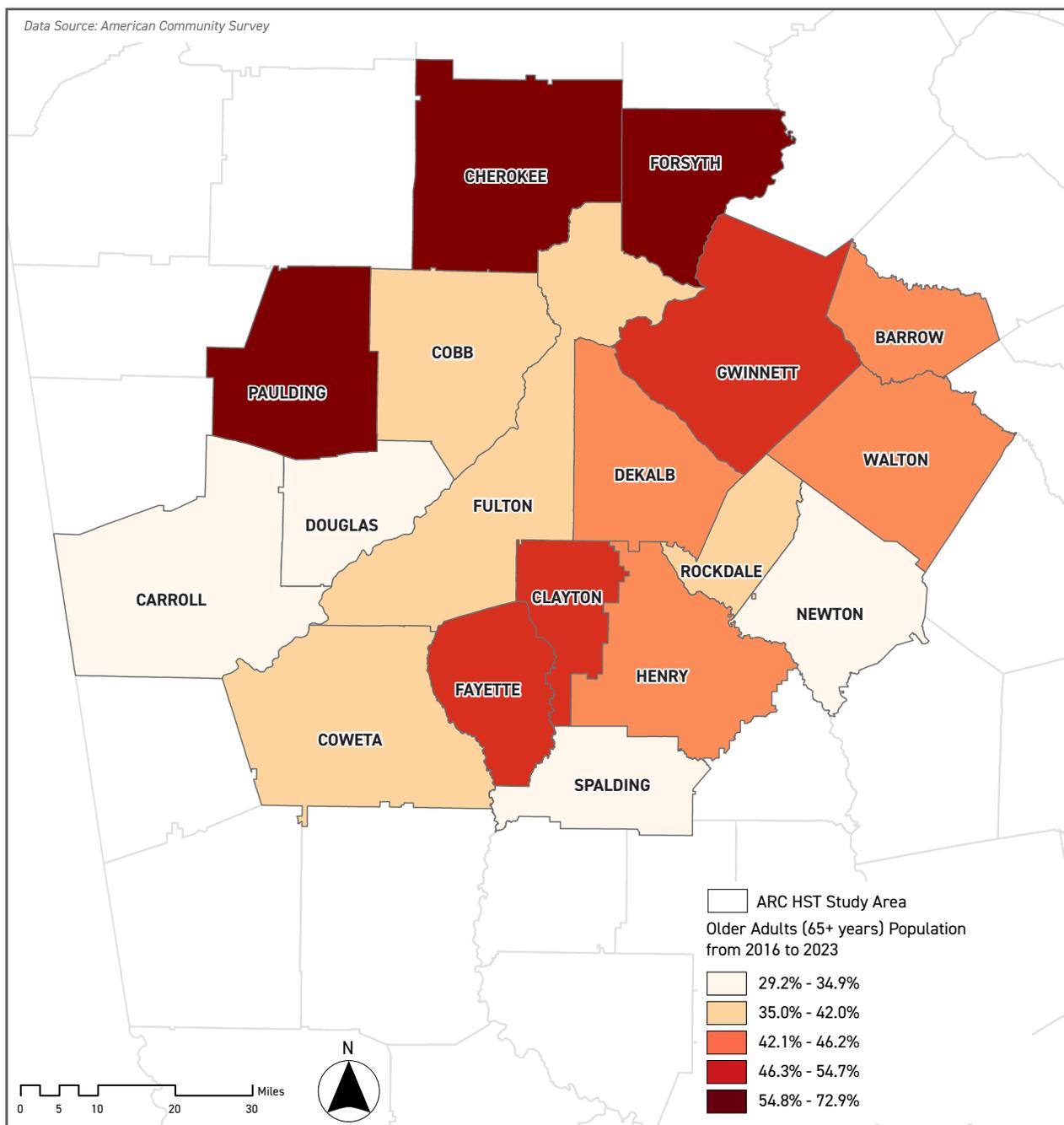
Low Income

Between 2016 and 2023, the Atlanta region saw changes in its low-income population. Barrow County experienced an increase in residents living in poverty, rising from 10,548 individuals in 2016 (14.47% of the population) to 12,609 in 2023 (13.69%). Henry County also saw growth, with its population in poverty increasing from 25,657 (12.08%) to 28,592 (11.32%) over the same period. Forsyth County, while experiencing a slight increase in the number of individuals in poverty from 13,024 to 14,005, saw its percentage decline from 6.42% to 5.16%, reflecting overall population growth. These trends highlight the need for targeted economic development and support services to address poverty across the region.

Figure 7: Low Income Population from 2016 to 2023
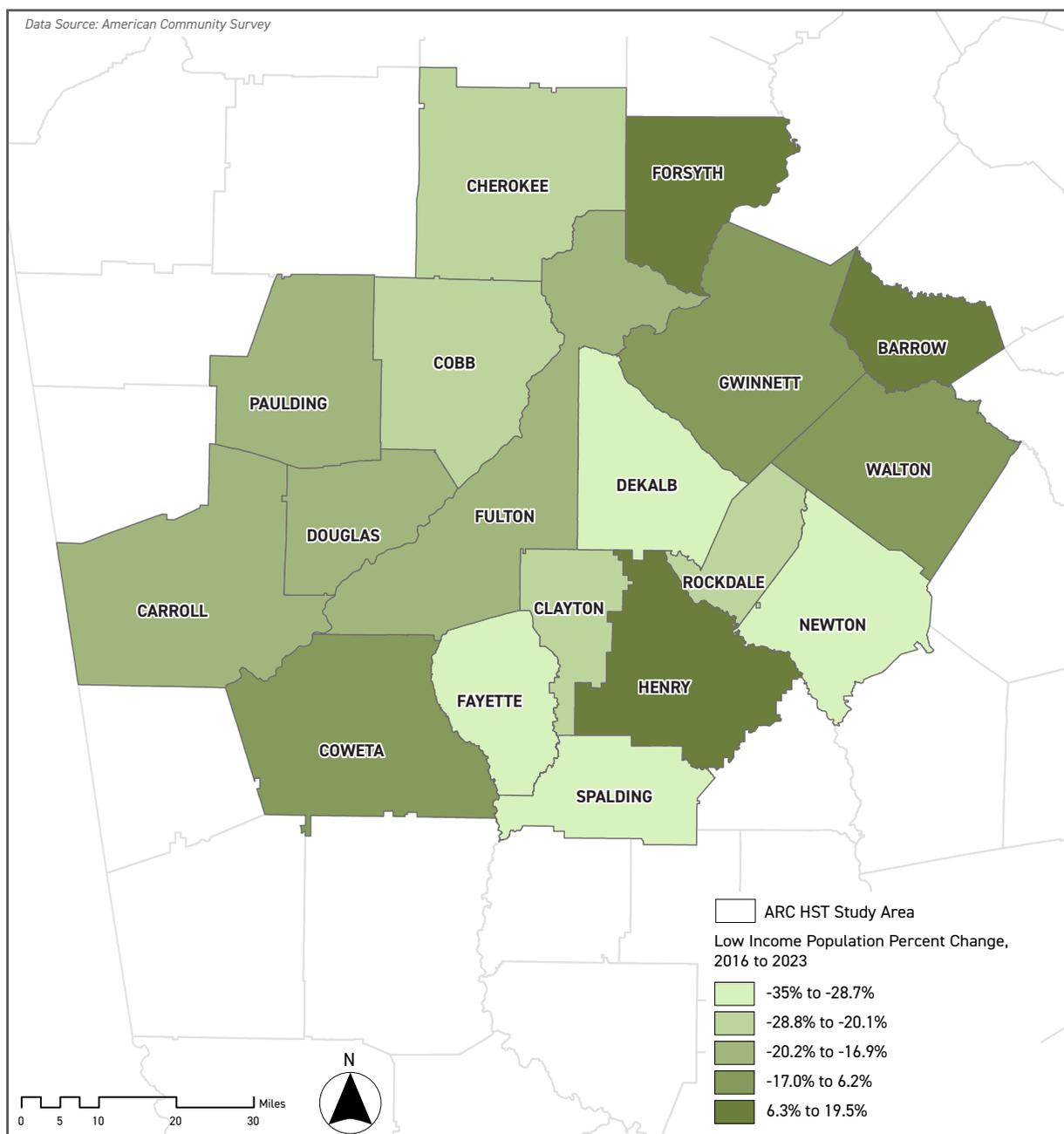
Zero-Vehicle Households

Between 2016 and 2023, the number of households without access to a car increased significantly across several counties in the Atlanta region. Forsyth County saw the largest percentage increase, with households without cars rising from 1,357 in 2016 (2.04%) to 2,421 in 2023 (2.67%), representing a 78.41% increase. Clayton County experienced substantial growth as well, with households without cars increasing from 6,601 (7.32%) to 10,552 (9.87%), a 59.85% rise. Gwinnett County also saw a notable increase, with households without cars growing from 9,232 (3.31%) to 14,298 (4.33%), marking a 54.87% change. These trends suggest a growing need for alternative transportation options and improved transit accessibility across the region.

Figure 8: Zero-Vehicle Households from 2016 to 2023
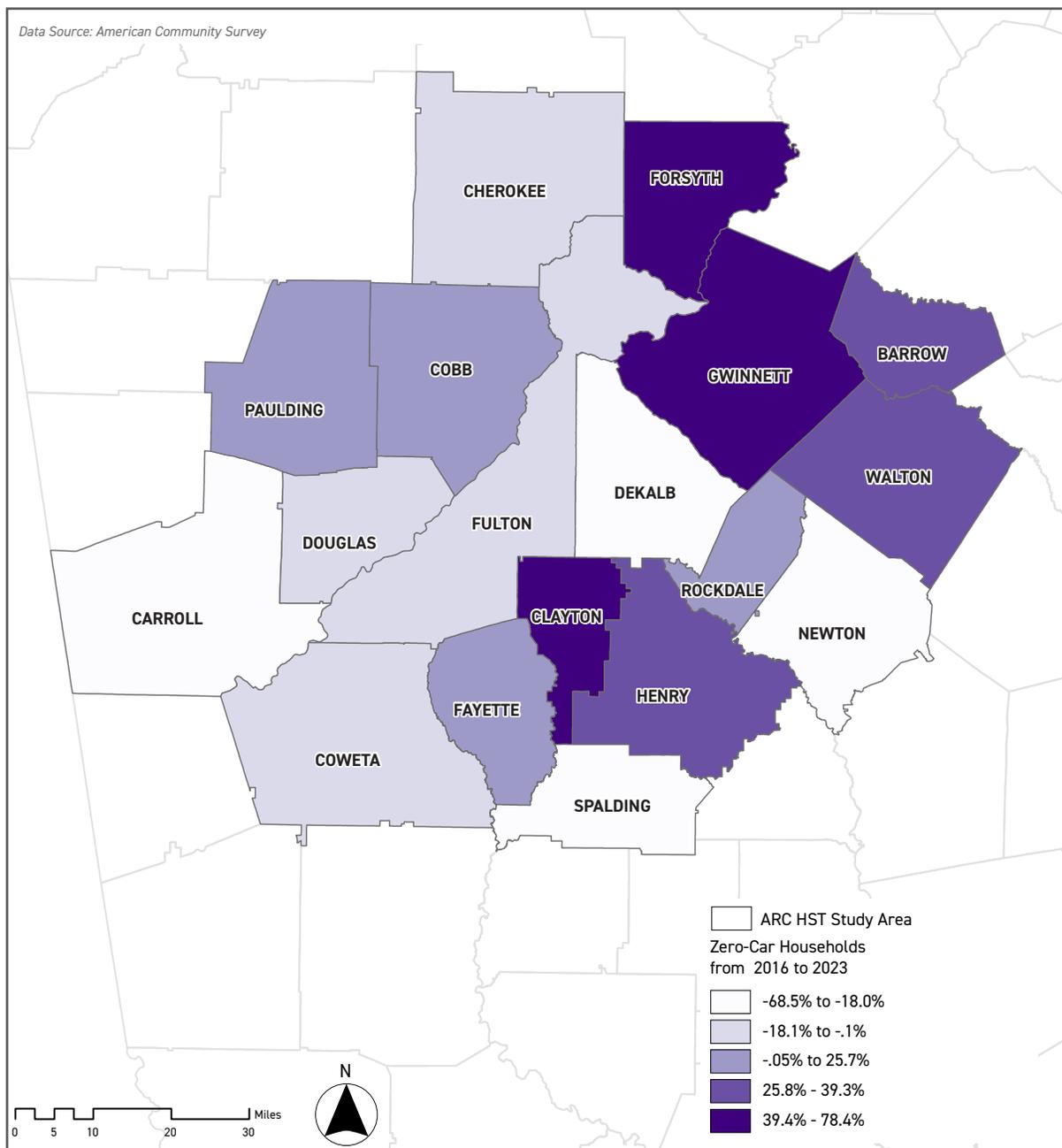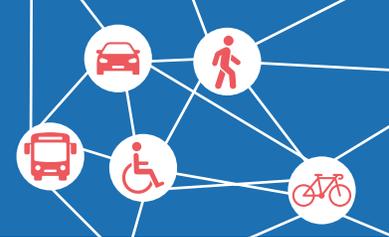
Veterans

Between 2016 and 2023, the Atlanta region experienced growth in its veteran population across several counties. Barrow County saw the largest percentage increase, with the number of veterans rising from 4,553 in 2016 (8.54% of the population) to 5,837 in 2023 (8.42%), an increase of 1,284 individuals or 28.2%. Fayette County also experienced significant growth, with its veteran population increasing from 10,475 (12.71%) to 12,771 (13.42%), a gain of 2,296 individuals or 21.92%. Paulding County followed closely, growing from 9,871 veterans in 2016 (9.21%) to 11,962 in 2023 (8.78%), an increase of 2,091 individuals or 21.18%. These trends reflect a steady rise in the veteran population, emphasizing the need for continued support services and resources tailored to veterans across the region.

Figure 9: Veteran Population from 2016 to 2023
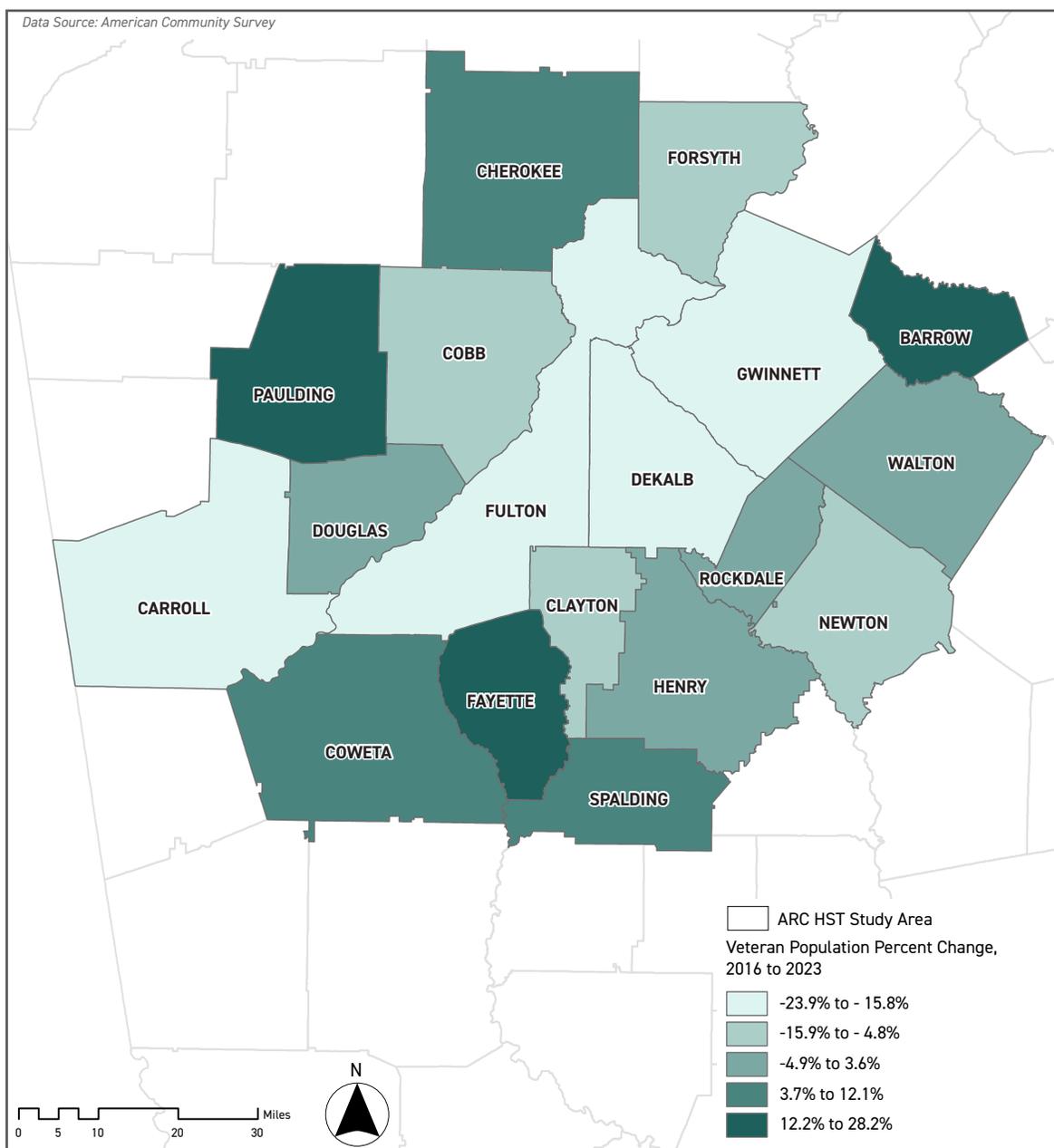
HST Population Index

The HST Population Index combines five indicators - disability, age (65+), low income, and limited/zero vehicle access into a single tract-level score (0–20). Tracts are classified in five categories, ranging from Well Below to Well Above the regional average. The index is used to locate high concentrations of HST populations and compare relative needs across the region, guiding where to prioritize future service expansion and strategic investments.

Table 8: HST Population Index

Index Segmentation	Number of Census Tracts	Percentage of Census Tracts
Well Below Average	388	27.5%
Below Average	380	26.9%
Average	372	26.3%
Above Average	180	12.7%
Well Above Average	93	6.6%

Figure 10: Counties with HST Population Index Below Average to Above Average

Legend:

ARC HST Study Area

HST Population Index by County
- Below Average
- Average
- Above Average
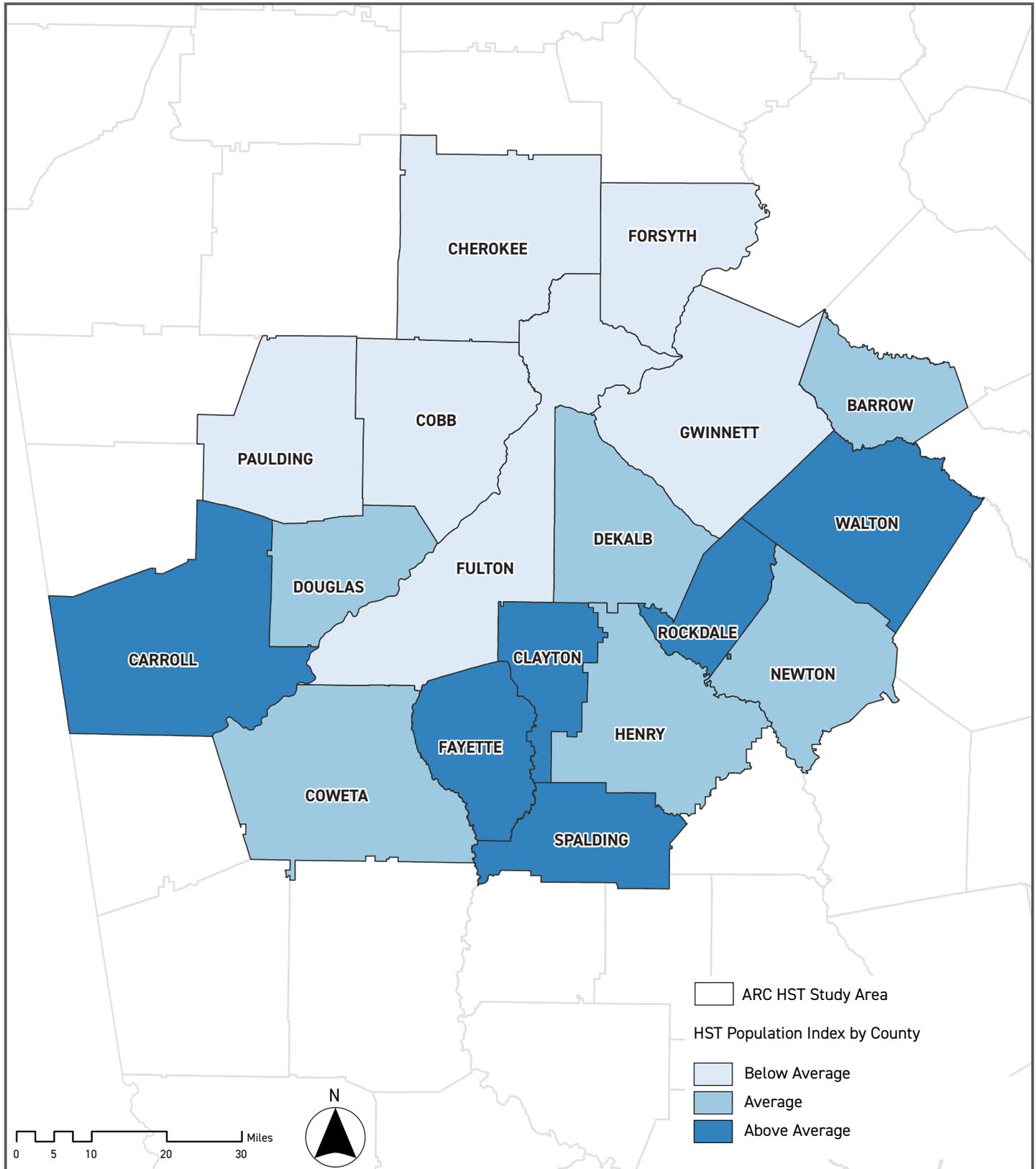
Needs Highlighted from Rider Survey Responses

To better understand the experiences and challenges faced by HST users, ARC conducted a comprehensive rider survey between October 2024 and February 2025. The survey captured feedback from nearly 400 participants across the region, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and low-income households. Responses provide valuable insights into trip purposes, usage patterns, and barriers such as limited service hours, high costs, and long wait times. These findings highlight the importance of expanding coverage, improving affordability, and enhancing communication to ensure access for all to essential destinations.

Who Responded

46% Women

35% Older Adults

58% Household Income less than $50K

13% Reported Disability

5% Veterans

Use Patterns and Trip Purposes

29% of users ride:
2-4 days/week

17% of users ride:
5-7 days/week

Non-users often rely on:

Personal Vehicle

Rideshare

Family

Top Trip Purposes

20% Medical/Hospital

19% Groceries/Pharmacy

14% Shopping

These top 3 trips are

54%
of all trips.

Time

50% of all trips range between
15-30
minutes door-to-door.

Cost

65% of all trips cost
$10 or less

29% of all trips cost between
$11-$30

Issues and Barriers

Reported challenges include:
- Limited resources (money/information)
- Service span constraints (weekends, early/late)
- Long wait times
- Communication/transfer issues

Desired improvements center on:
- Greater coverage
- More affordable rates
- Expand service hours

Limited connections to:

- Hospitals
- Grocery Stores
- Activity Centers
- Libraries

HST Access

Access to key destinations is critical to ensuring mobility for everyone, yet many HST users still face gaps across the region. The Needs Assessment shows that older adults, people with disabilities, and households without a vehicle often struggle to reach critical places like healthcare facilities, grocery stores, and community services. This section looks at current access challenges and highlights opportunities to improve connectivity for these groups.

Access to Essential Destinations

As part of the Needs Assessment, a gap analysis was conducted to pinpoint where access to public transportation falls short in connecting people to essential destinations. The most significant gaps appear in rural areas with large numbers of older adults, people with disabilities, and households without a vehicle. The maps in this section show where HST populations lack convenient access to key places using fixed-route transit or ADA paratransit services, limiting connections to hospitals, grocery stores, activity centers, and libraries for community involvement and quality of life.

Figure 11 shows hospitals and urgent care facilities across the Atlanta region alongside the HST Index. Urban and suburban areas generally have good access, but several exurban pockets do not. In Paulding, Carroll, Coweta, and Spalding counties, facilities are concentrated in one or two city centers, leaving outlying areas with limited or no access. Paulding's western HST cluster has no nearby facilities, with similar gaps in southwest Carroll and Coweta and southeast Spalding County.

Figure 11: Hospitals Accessible by Transit and Paratransit

Hospitals within 3/4 mi. paratransit

Hospitals within 1/4 mi. transit

Hospitals outside transit and paratransit
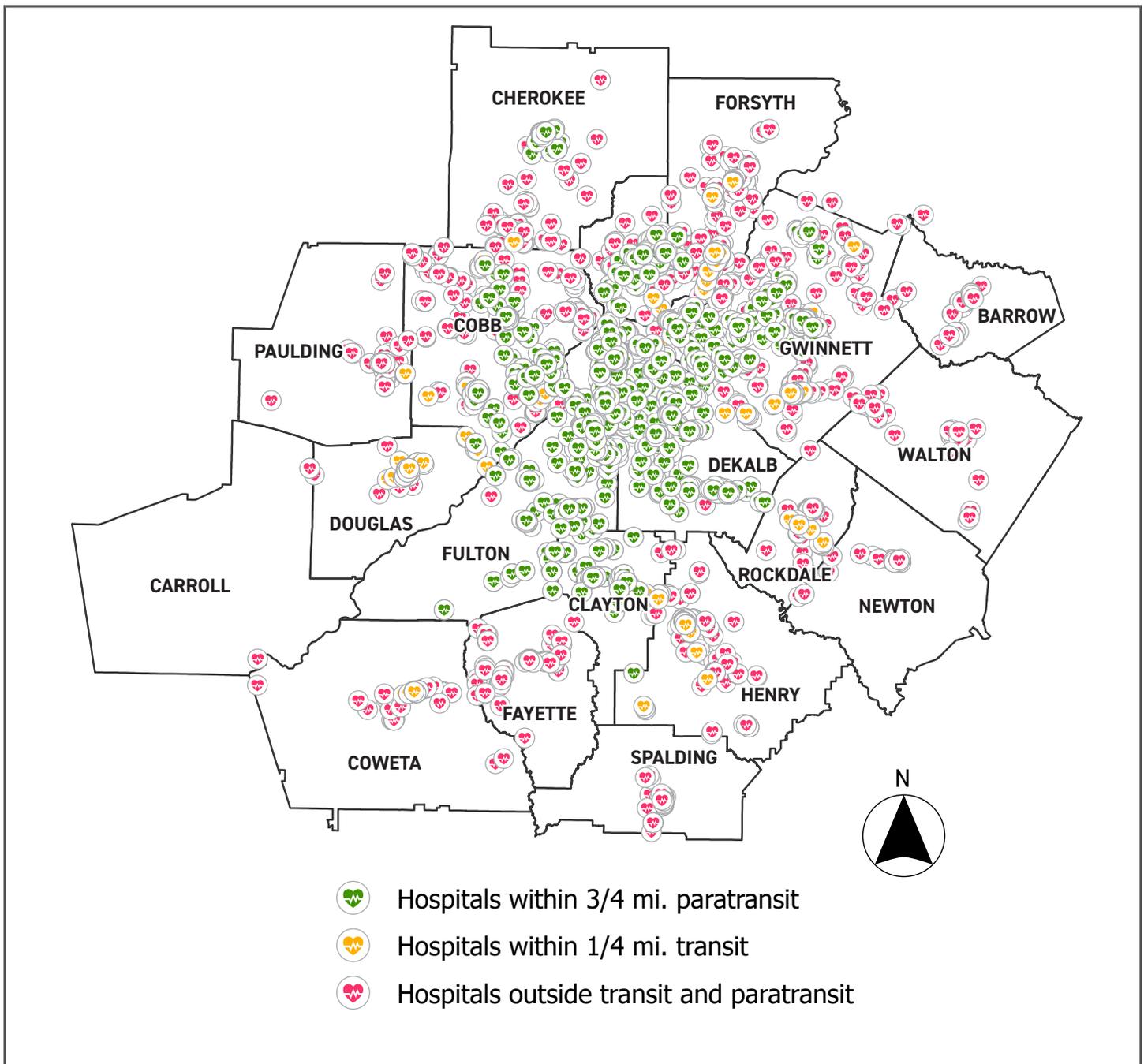
Figure 12 maps grocery and convenience stores across the Atlanta region. While much of the region has good access by public transit and ADA paratransit, several high-HST areas still face significant gaps, including Paulding, northwestern Douglas, southwestern Coweta, and southeast Spalding counties.

Figure 12: Grocery Stores Accessible by Transit and Paratransit

Grocery Stores within 3/4 mi. paratransit

Grocery Stores within 1/4 mi. transit

Grocery Stores outside transit and paratransit
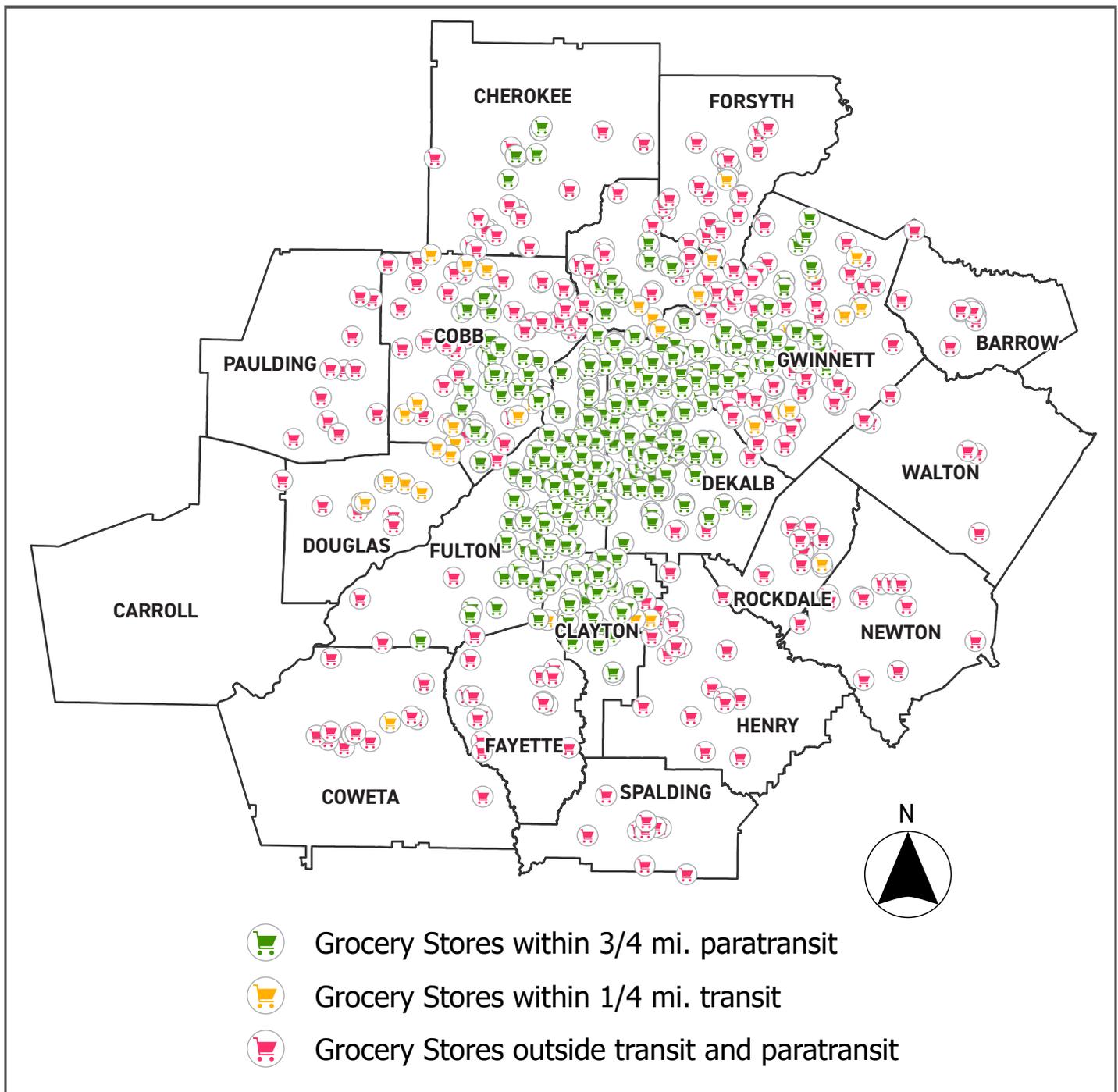
Figure 13 shows activity centers across the Atlanta region, mostly clustered in city and town centers or along major roadways near transit. However, several highly populated HST areas remain far from these centers, including southwest Carroll, southwest Coweta, northwest Douglas, south Rockdale, and southeast Spalding counties.

Figure 13: Activity Centers Accessible by Transit and Paratransit

- 🟩 Activity Centers within 3/4 mi. paratransit
- 🟧 Activity Centers within 1/4 mi. transit
- 🟥 Activity Centers outside transit and paratransit
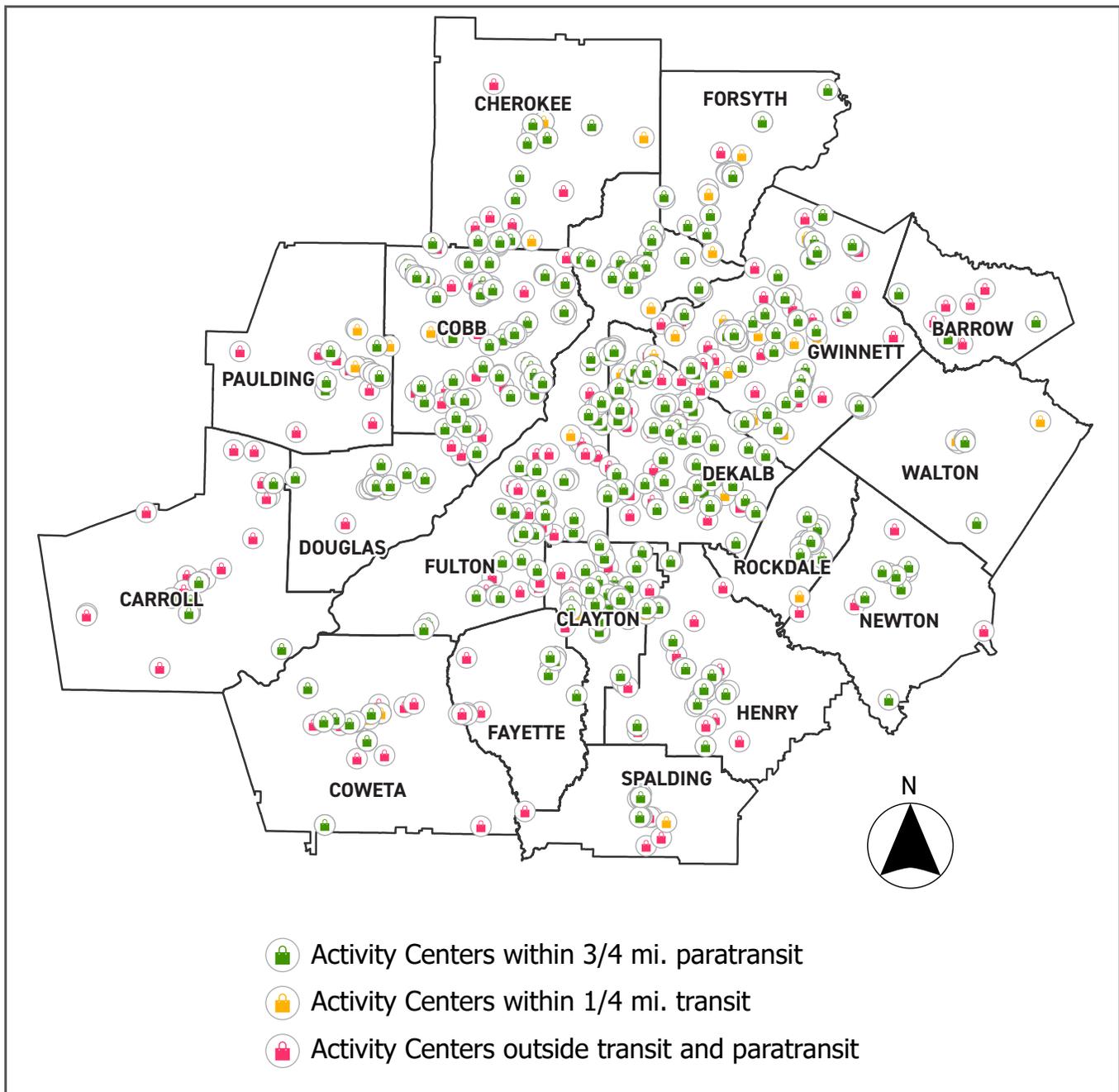
Figure 14 shows library locations across the Atlanta region. Libraries are generally well distributed, with higher concentrations in more populous urban counties like Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett. However, gaps remain in several high-HST areas, including northern Fayette, northeast Forsyth, west-central Paulding, and southeast Rockdale counties.

Figure 14: Libraries Accessible by Transit and Paratransit

Libraries within 3/4 mi. paratransit
Libraries within 1/4 mi. transit
Libraries outside transit and paratransit
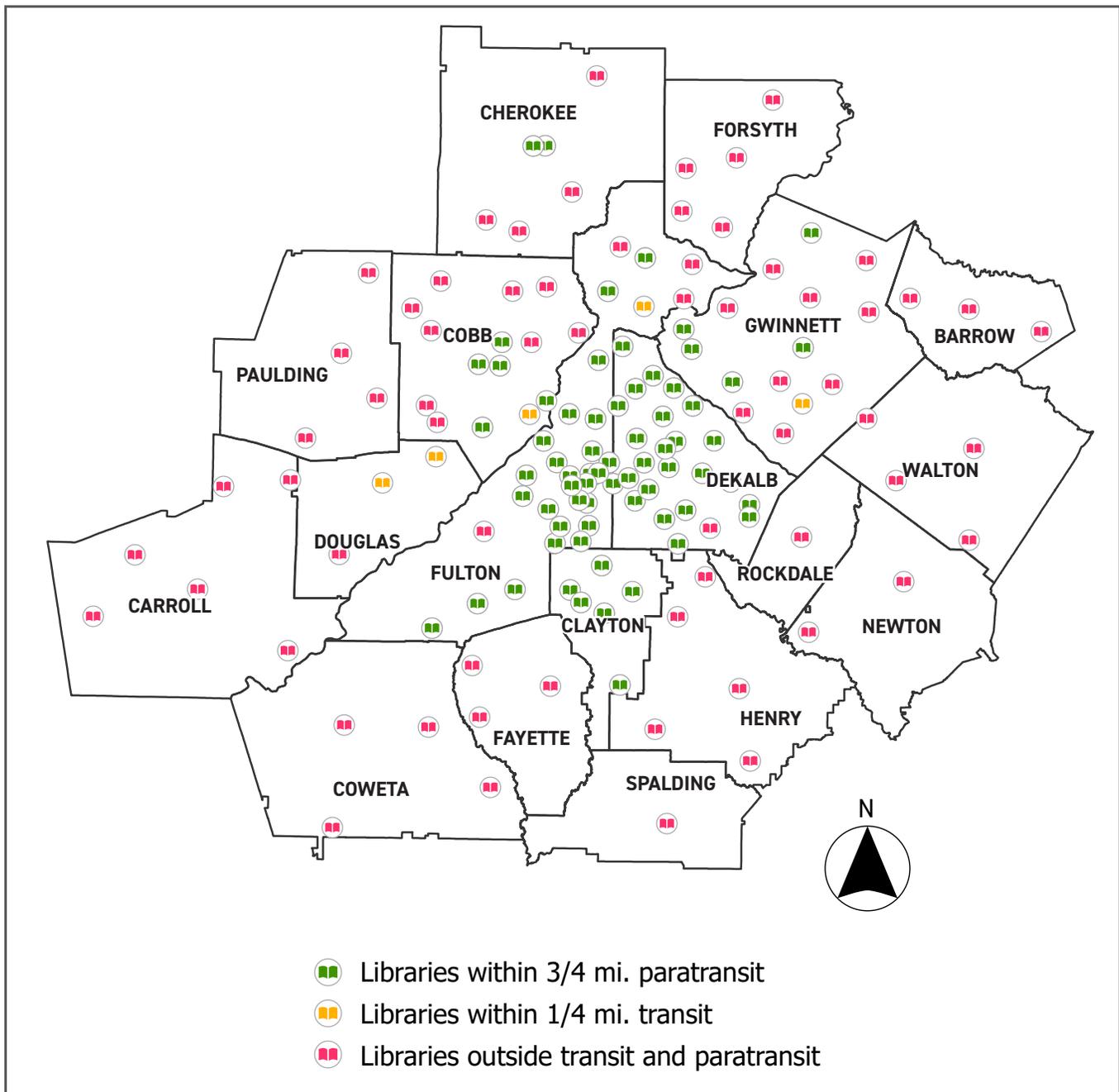
Job Access[5]

Public transit is a cornerstone of workforce mobility and economic development in metro Atlanta, connecting workers especially those without personal vehicles to jobs across the region. Employers rely on transit to broaden applicant pools and to attract and retain talent, often considering transit availability when choosing locations. Yet accessibility to major employment centers remains uneven. Households in transit-accessible areas often include populations with higher transportation challenges, such as older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income residents. These households typically have lower incomes around $56,840 compared to the regional average of $99,211 which increases vulnerability to housing cost burdens. In many areas, nearly half of renter households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, with burdens ranging from 36% to 58%. For these HST populations, affordable mobility options are essential: an annual transit pass (approximately $1,363) costs about one-tenth as much as owning a car ($10,500–$13,800).

Low-income households fare slightly better on frequent access, at 3.8%, underscoring transit's role in supporting economic mobility. Low-wage workers (earning $1,250 per month or less) face particular challenges: residences are widely dispersed, often outside transit service areas, while jobs cluster in hubs like Downtown, Midtown, the Perimeter, and major corridors in Gwinnett, Cobb, and Clayton counties. Only 41% of low-wage workers live within transit service areas compared to 58% of job locations, creating a persistent mismatch between where low-wage workers live and where jobs are located. For those who do rely on transit, evening and weekend service gaps, long first/last mile connections, and limited frequent service make transit impractical for shift-based schedules. Many essential occupations, including food preparation, serving, and building maintenance, cannot be performed remotely; more than 12,000 workers in these roles depend on transit for their commute. Post-pandemic hybrid work trends compound these dynamics daily; commuting is reduced, but midweek congestion spikes, increasing demand for flexible transit options while 69% of Georgia adults reported no telework in the past week, and 83–93% of households earning under $50,000 lack remote work options.

Table 9: Transit Accessibility of Low-Wage Workers by Home and Work Location

	Number of Low-Wage Workers	Percentage of Census Tracts
	Home Location	**Work Location**
Total	540,165	569,915
Within Transit Service Area	220,216	328,387
Percentage with Access to Transit	41%	58%

To close these gaps and improve access, targeted strategies are needed: expand service hours (evenings/weekends), improve first/last mile connections, deploy microtransit and on-demand shuttles in high-need areas, strengthen employer-supported transit programs, and invest in real-time information and rider friendly technology. These improvements will enhance accessibility and reliability, helping businesses attract talent while ensuring low-wage workers can reach jobs affordably and efficiently across the region.

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[5] Source: ATL 2023 Annual Report and Audit.

Figure 15: Low-Wage Workers Home and Work Location

Low-Wage Workers (Home Location)
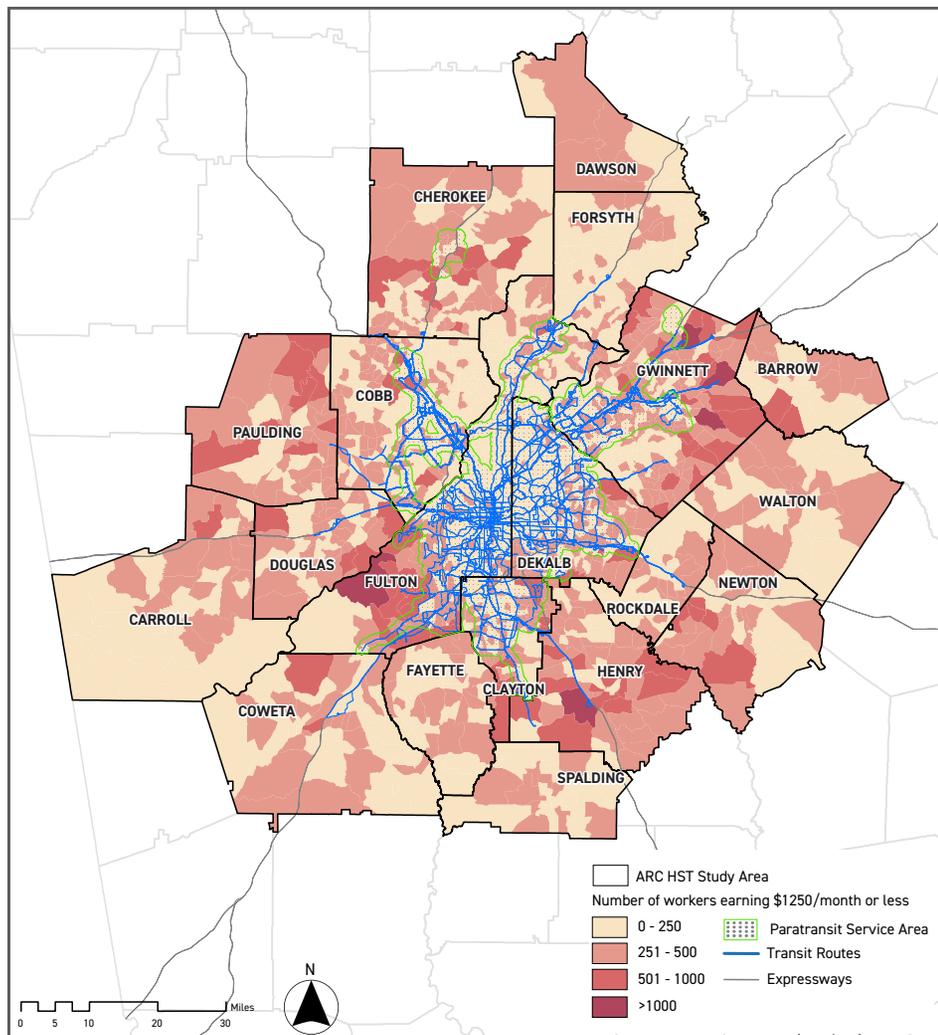
Low-Wage Workers (Work Location)
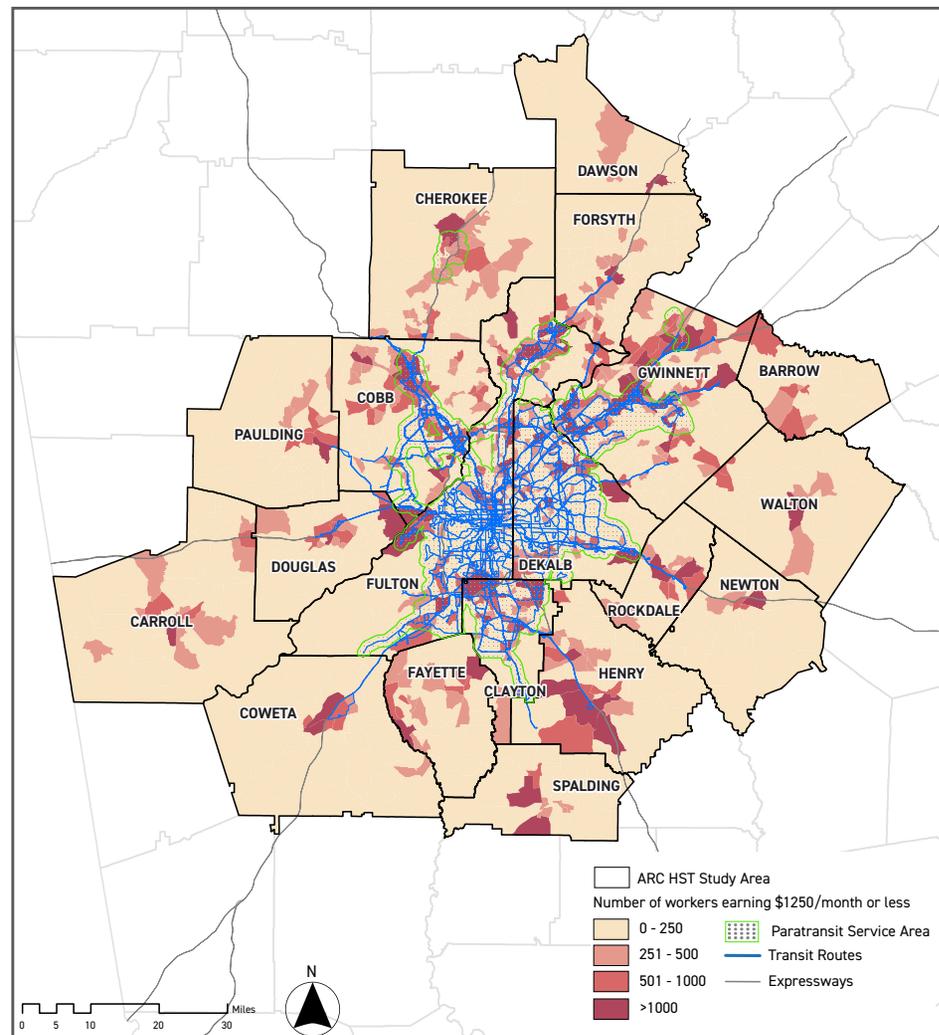
Barriers to HST

Coverage and Span

High-need areas located outside core transit markets frequently face limited or no fixed-route transit coverage, compelling residents to travel considerable distances to access available services. Even where transit exists, restricted evening and weekend service hours, coupled with low frequency, significantly diminish the usability of transit for essential trips such as work, healthcare, and shopping. These constraints create substantial gaps in effective access, leaving many riders underserved despite residing within nominal service areas. Expanding service span and frequency in these areas is vital to advancing equity and ensuring dependable mobility for vulnerable populations.

To deepen understanding of these challenges and capture the lived experiences of Human Services Transportation (HST) populations, the project team conducted comprehensive engagement efforts, including a regionwide survey and targeted outreach at senior centers throughout the ARC study area. The findings from these efforts highlight pronounced geographic and service gaps within the ARC region's HST network, particularly in outlying counties such as Paulding, Barrow, Coweta, and parts of Henry.

Residents in these areas face unmet transit needs due to insufficient service availability, limited coverage, and inadequate service hours. Feedback from these engagements underscores the urgent need to expand transit coverage, increase service frequency, extend operating hours including evenings and weekends, and enhance accessibility and affordability. These insights provide critical guidance for prioritizing investments and developing strategies to close mobility gaps and promote equitable access across the region.

First/Last-Mile and ADA Environment

Despite the benefits of transit, access especially to frequent service remains limited and uneven. Only about 22.6% of the region's population lives within walking distance of fixed-route transit, and just 2.2% has access to frequent service (15-minute headways). Even where service exists, systemwide ADA compliance does not guarantee a fully usable trip. Riders with disabilities often face barriers such as elevator outages, inconsistent stop announcements, and gaps in sidewalk connectivity, making access to and from stops challenging. Active transportation plays a critical role in bridging these gaps and supporting first- and last-mile connections.

ARC's *Walk. Bike. Thrive!* data shows the highest walk/bike propensity in the urban core central Fulton, DeKalb, and parts of Clayton where density and land-use patterns favor multimodal travel. These areas also include many high-need communities, indicating that vulnerable populations may already rely heavily on walking and biking. Conversely, outlying counties such as Henry, Walton, and Paulding exhibit low walk/bike propensity due to limited infrastructure and dispersed land uses. Improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in these areas is essential to enhance connectivity, reduce reliance on personal vehicles, and ensure equitable access to transit. Please see Figure 16 to view the Walk Bike Propensity Map.

Figure 16: Relative Propensity to Walk and Bike
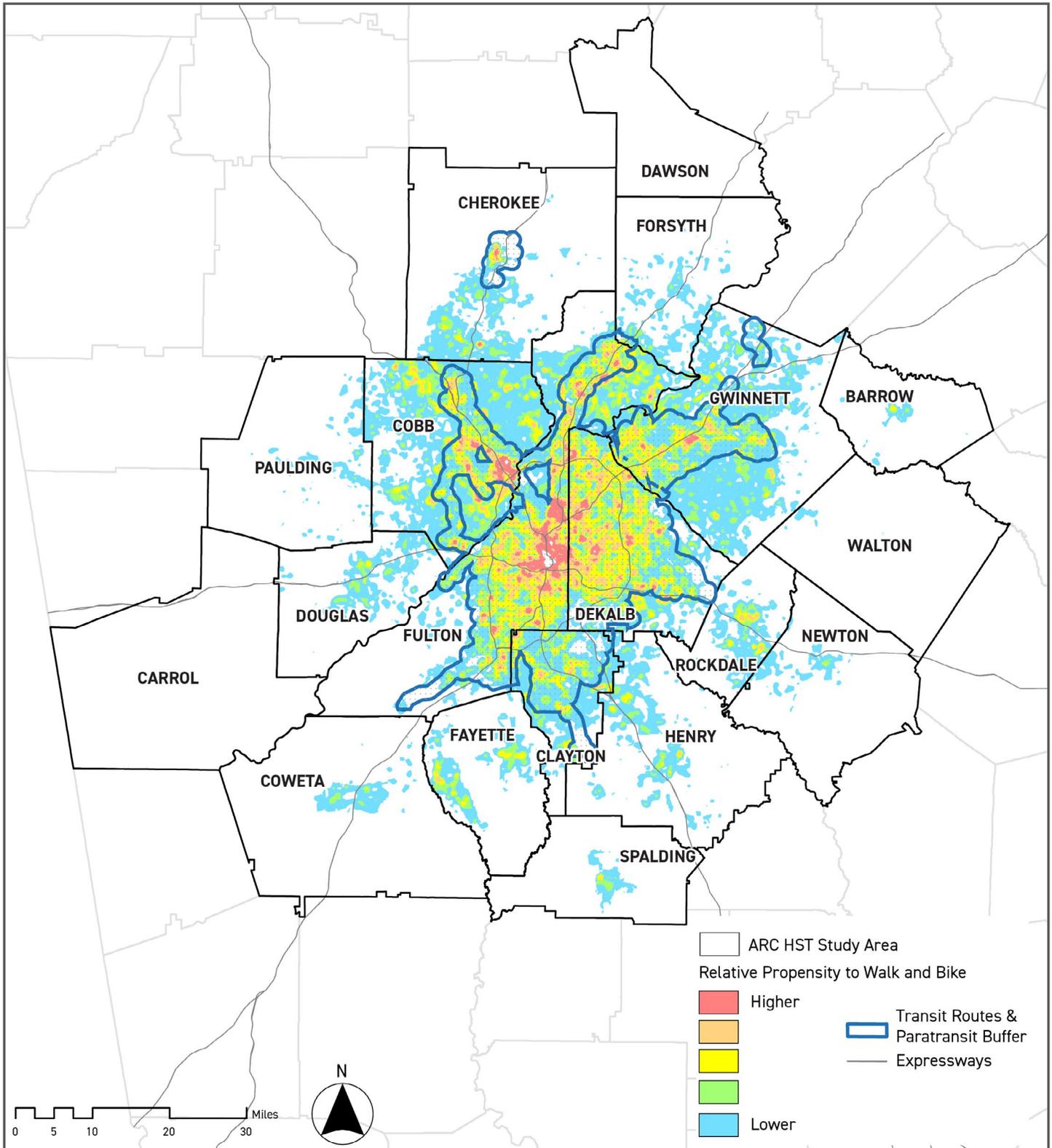
Affordability

Current fare structures create significant cost burdens for riders in high-need areas. One-way, fixed-route fares typically range from $1.50 to $4, but per-person pricing and multi-segment trips across different providers often increase daily expenses for low-income riders. The absence of fare integration compounds these costs, making essential travel less affordable.

Distance-based, demand-response fares highlight this challenge: for example, non-emergency medical trips in Newton County can cost $20–$37 one way for distances of 31–60 miles. These high costs expose riders to financial strain, particularly for longer, unavoidable trips such as healthcare or employment. Addressing fare equity through integrated pricing and cost caps is critical to improving access and reducing economic barriers for vulnerable populations.

Information Access

Education/awareness remains a persistent barrier. Many older adults and people with disabilities learn about transportation from family/friends rather than official channels. Digital-only information excludes residents without internet/smartphones. A coordinated, non-digital, multilingual communication approach is still a missing link.
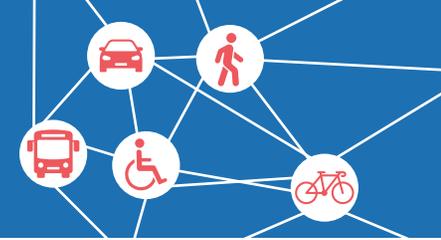
Existing County Transit Profiles

As part of the needs assessment and access analysis, the project team updated the county profiles from the 10-County ARC Planning region included in the 2020 Demand Response Plan. For the purposes of this plan update the profile names are now being referenced as County Transit Profiles. The County Transit Profiles give a snapshot of HST population characteristics, funding for Demand Response Transportation (DRT), existing transit services, 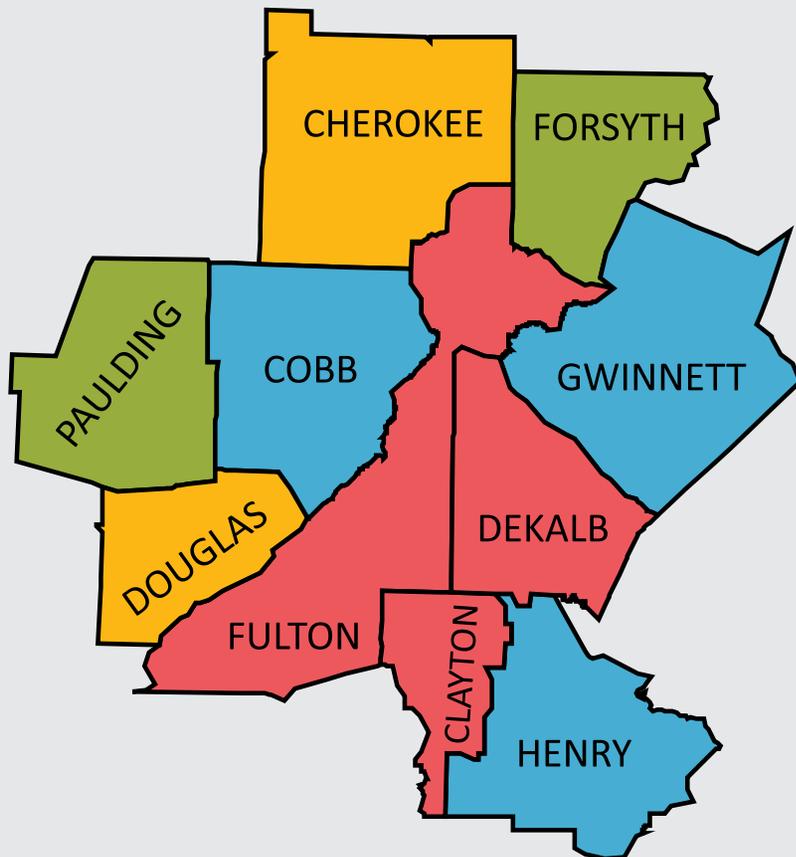projected HST population growth, and transit propensity for each county within the perspective tier. Counties are organized into four tiers as shown in the following County Transit Tier Map and a description of each tier is summarized in detail below.

Figure 17: County Transit Tiers

Tier 1: Fulton, DeKalb, and Clayton Counties

Tier 1 counties provide comprehensive transit—rail, bus, paratransit, on-demand, and soon ART/BRT—linking key destinations. HST DRT serves both as stand-alone trips and feeders, connecting to Tier 2 services and beyond.

Tier 2: Cobb, Gwinnett, and Henry Counties

Tier 2 counties provide local, fixed-route service, ADA paratransit, and commuter buses (Xpress service) connecting to Tier 1 systems. DRT mainly operates within the county as stand-alone or feeder trips, some linking to Tier 1 routes.

Tier 3: Douglas and Cherokee Counties

Tier 3 counties have limited transit—fixed-route, paratransit, on-demand, and Xpress. DRT mainly provides stand-alone trips with some feeder links to Tier 1 and 2 systems.

Tier 4: Forsyth and Paulding Counties

Tier 4 counties have no fixed-route transit; all service is via DRT and Xpress/Commuter. DRT mainly provides stand-alone trips, with few connections to other tiers.
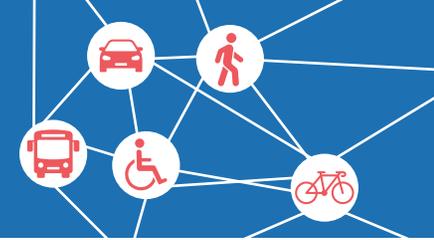
Tier 1 Agencies

All Tier 1 Counties

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
2,140,397	**13%**	**8%**	**13%**	**11%**

Fulton County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
1,079,105	**17%**	**9%**	**14.23%**	**11%**

DeKalb County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
762,992	**13%**	**7%**	**13%**	**12%**

Clayton County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
298,300	**13%**	**10%**	**12%**	**11%**

Figure 18: Tier 1 Transit Propensity
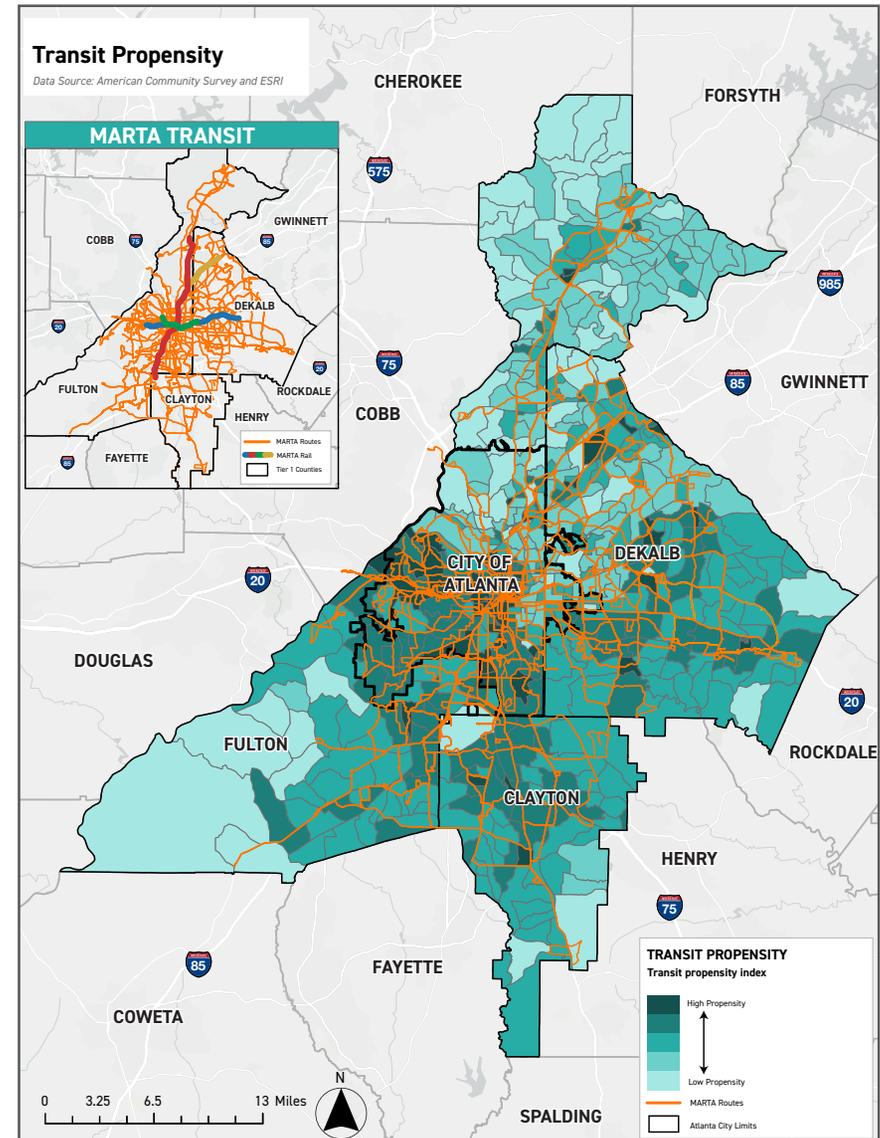
Tier 2 Agencies

All Tier 2 Counties

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
2,014,882	10%	4%	13%	10%

Cobb County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
776,743	8%	4%	14%	10%

Gwinnett County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
983,526	12%	4%	12%	10%

Henry County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
254,613	11%	3%	13%	12%

Figure 19: Tier 2 Transit Propensity
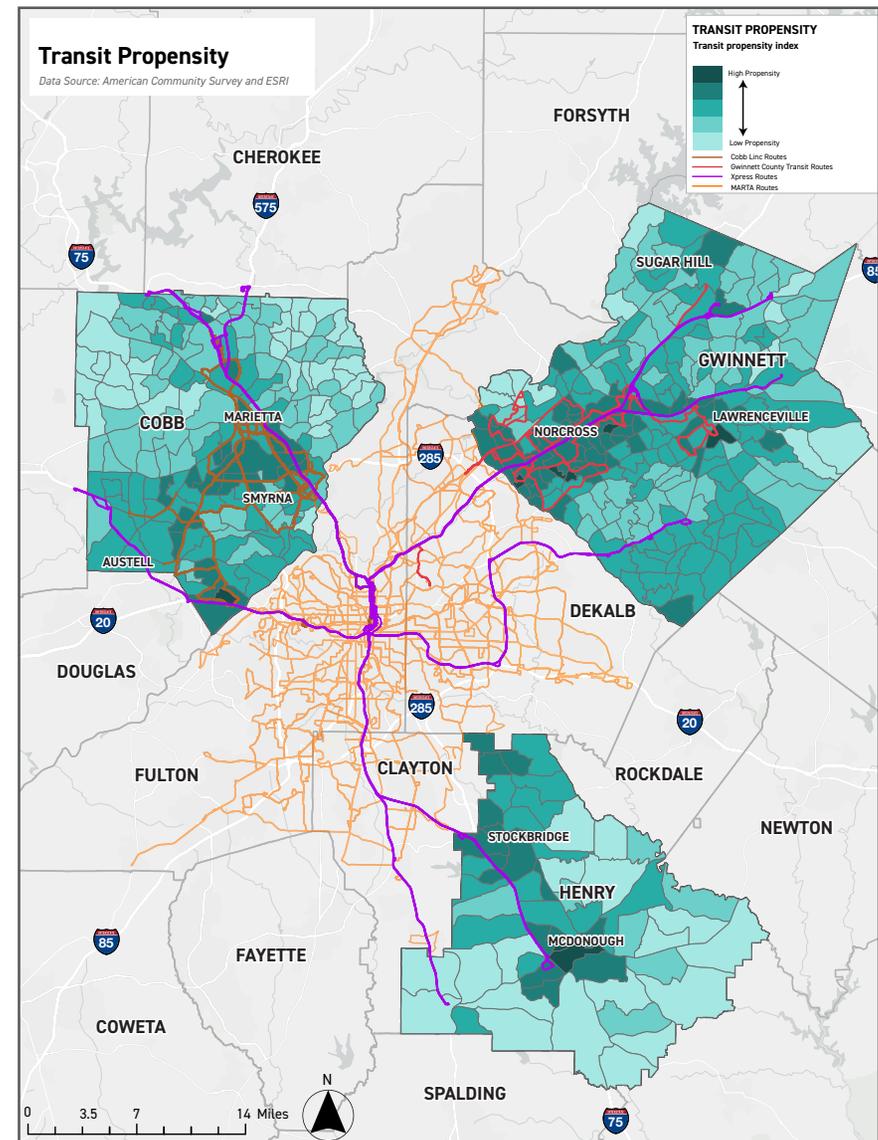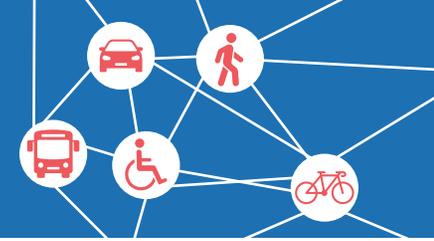
Tier 3 Agencies

All Tier 3 Counties

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
435,762	8%	2%	15%	11%

Cherokee County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
286,602	6%	3%	17%	11%

Douglas County

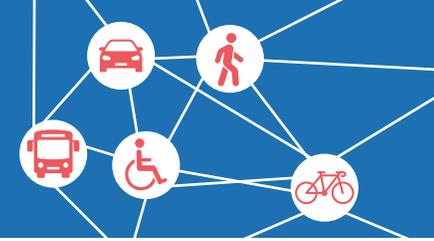| Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
149,160	12%	2%	13%	11%

Figure 20: Tier 3 Transit Propensity
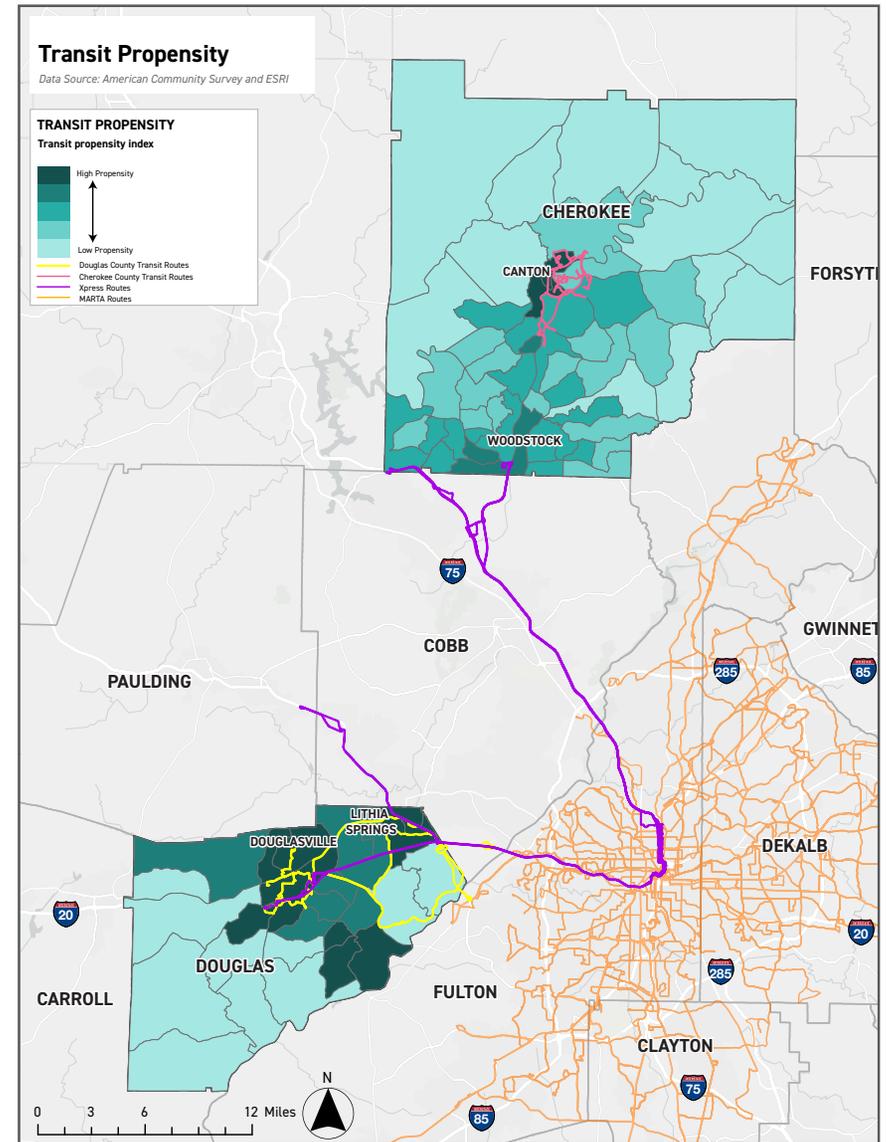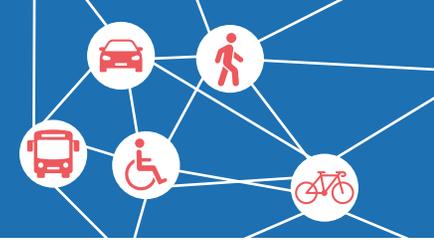
Tier 4 Agencies

All Tier 4 Counties

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
456,051	5%	2%	13%	9%

Forsyth County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
272,887	17%	9%	14%	8%

Paulding County

Total Population	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Old Adults	Population with a Disability
183,164	13%	7%	13%	11%

Figure 21: Tier 4 Transit Propensity
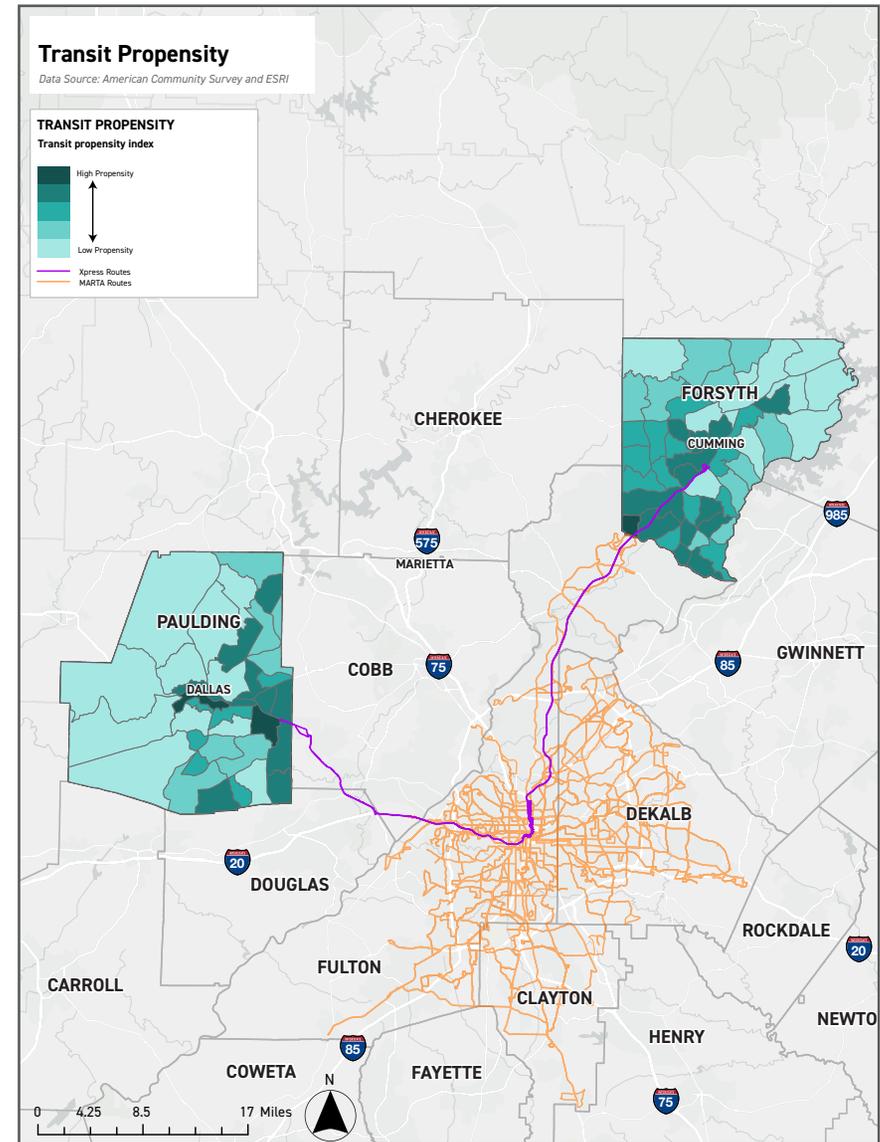
The needs assessment examines key factors influencing transportation access for HST populations across the region. It includes demographic profiles to understand population shifts, evaluates current HST access, and identifies barriers such as limited-service coverage and first/last-mile challenges. The assessment also reviews transit profiles to show how existing services align with essential destinations like healthcare, education, and employment. Findings reveal persistent gaps that disproportionately affect older adults, people with disabilities, low-income residents, veterans, and zero-vehicle households underscoring the need for targeted strategies to improve accessibility.

The next section will outline HST recommendations for the region, focusing on solutions that address these gaps and enhance mobility for vulnerable populations. A full copy of the Mobility and Access Needs Assessment Tech Memo is available on ARC's HST website.

Section 4: Recommendations

This section presents the top five recommendations for enhancing HST across the Atlanta region. These recommendations are informed by best practices research and analysis conducted throughout CHST study, including findings from Task 3 – Existing Conditions and Inventory, Task 4 – Mobility Access and Needs Assessment, and Task 5 – Strategies, Targeted Improvements, and Innovative Pilot Concepts.

The project team engaged a broad range of stakeholders—such as the Technical Advisory Committee, ARC Provider Network, Transit Operator Group, regional transit providers, voucher program administrators, and participants in the 2025 CHST Summit—to ensure recommendations reflect regional HST needs and priorities. Feedback from these interactions, combined with insights from the Rider Survey (Task 2), recurring themes from plan reviews (Task 3), and identified service coordination challenges (Task 4), shaped the strategies and targeted improvements developed in Task 5.

Together, these elements formed the framework for drafting and refining actionable recommendations that advance mobility, improve service delivery, and strengthen coordination across the region. Figure 22 illustrates this process and the foundation for the final CHST Plan recommendations.

Figure 22: CHST Recommendations

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Existing Conditions and Inventory	Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach	HST Demographic Profiles	Mobility and Access Needs Assessment	Strategies, Targeted Improvements, and Innovative Pilot Concepts
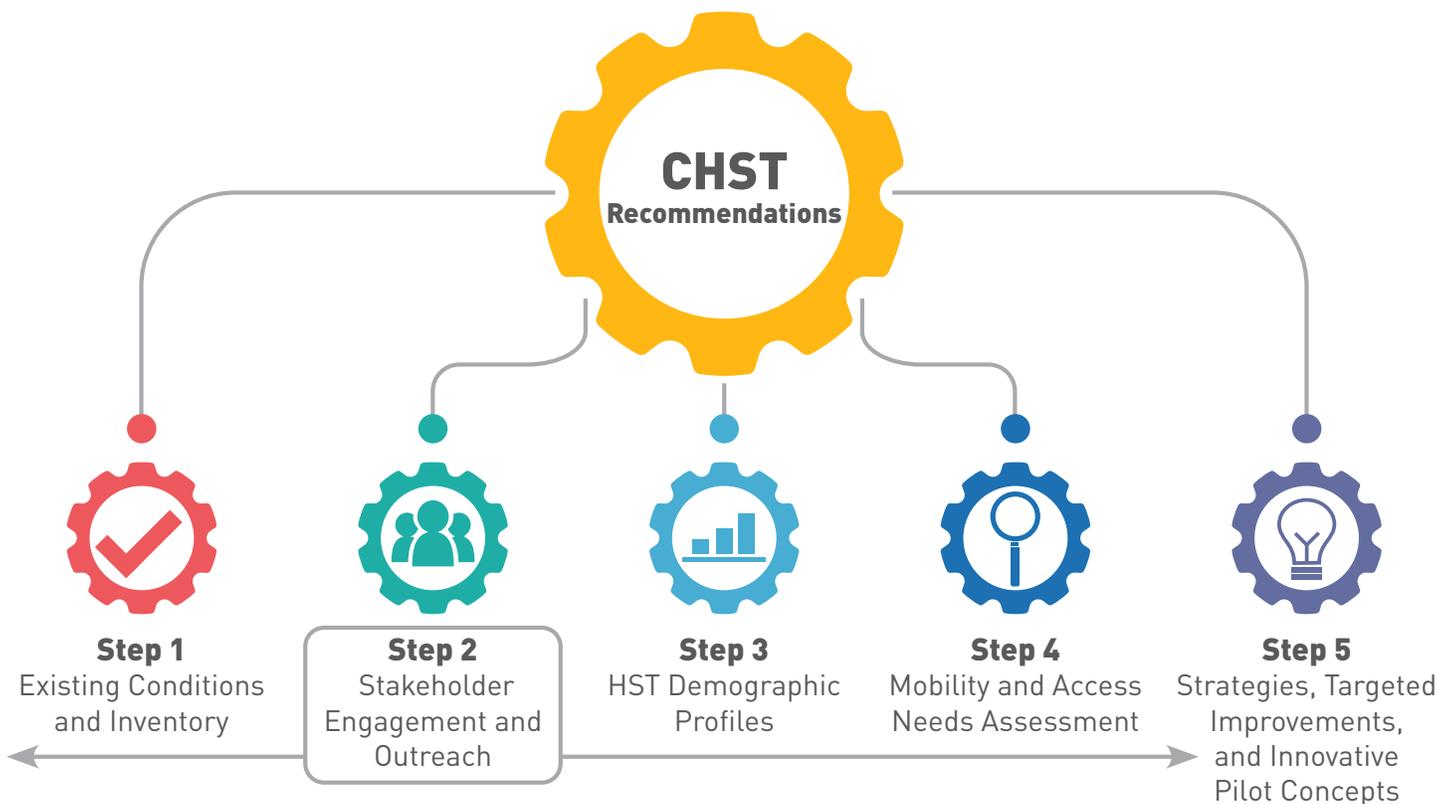
Key Findings

Several themes continually emerged across all task efforts and stakeholder engagement in every phase of the study process with three key findings rising to the top. For this plan update, it is acknowledged that funding or the lack thereof is always a challenge to fully meet or address any transportation need or concern. With this understanding, funding was not included as a key finding. The top three key findings for this CHST Plan update include the following:

Leverage technology to enhance trip planning and transit fare payment
- Incorporate ADA paratransit and demand response services into trip planner
- Reduce administration using technology to perform back-office activities for fare payment
- Provide adequate, real-time arrival information to riders
- Evolve voucher programs in the region to be paperless

Enhance cross-jurisdictional planning efforts and regional service coordination
- Simplify booking and payment process for cross jurisdictional ADA paratransit trips
- Increase agency-to-agency service coordination at key regional transfer locations
- Enable system transfers across microtransit zones

Demand across the region for transit service expansion and facilities improvements
- Expand Dial-a-Ride, fixed-route, and microtransit services to meet current demand
- Improve transit facilities to enhance safety and accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians
- Facilitate more seamless transfers within the region

Building on key findings, stakeholder, input, and best practices research, the project team identified five priority strategies to enhance HST across the Atlanta region. A full copy of the Best Practices Research can be found on ARC's HST website.

01

Regional Mobility Hubs (New Recommendation)
Create centralized locations that connect multiple transportation modes and services, improving access, safety, and convenience. These hubs will serve as physical and digital anchors for regional connectivity and innovation.

02

Regional Trip Planner (Carried Over from 2020 Plan)
Develop a unified platform for planning trips across providers, offering real-time schedules, route options, estimated costs, and ADA-compliant features. This tool will simplify trip planning and reduce barriers for riders.

03

Regional Fare Payment System (Carried Over from 2020 Plan)
Implement a seamless fare system usable across multiple agencies, supporting contactless payments, mobile apps, and reloadable cards to promote ease of use for all communities.

04

HST Data Framework and Analysis (New Recommendation)
Develop a systematic approach for collecting and analyzing HST data at the regional level.

05

HST Integration into ARC Planning programs (New Recommendation)
Fostering a proactive approach to identify innovative solutions for all user needs in the region.

Together, these initiatives provide a practical roadmap for short- and mid-term improvements in coordination, access, and efficiency. They will guide strategic investment decisions by ARC, ATL, and regional transit providers, prioritizing projects funded through Section 5310 FTA grants and other sources. As the region grows, advancing these recommendations will significantly improve mobility for HST users and strengthen the broader transit network.

Each recommendation is detailed in the following sections, including action steps, agency roles, and timelines for implementation. A full copy of the Key Recommendations Report is available on ARC's HST website.
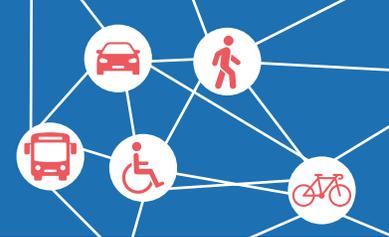
Mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs support a diverse range of transportation options, including:

- **Fixed-Route, Public Transit:** Local transit services, commuter bus service, and rail systems that operate on scheduled routes and timetables.
- **Active Transportation:** Infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, including bike racks, shared bike services, and safe walking paths.
- **Shared Mobility:** Carpool and vanpool programs that reduce single-occupancy vehicle use and promote cost-effective travel.
- **On-demand services:** Microtransit, NEMT, taxis, and transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft, which offer flexible point-to-point travel.
- **Paratransit:** Specialized services for seniors, individuals with disabilities or mobility limitations, often requiring coordination with other organizations for complete trip coverage.
- **Micromobility:** Electric scooters, e-bikes, and other small-scale vehicles that provide short-distance travel options, often integrated with mobile app-based rental systems.

Regional mobility hubs can facilitate smoother transfers between multiple modes of transportation by reducing waiting times and enhancing overall system efficiency. They also offer essential amenities such as restrooms, seating areas, shelter from the elements, real-time arrival information, and wayfinding signage, which improves comfort and access for all users. In addition, mobility hubs can be co-located with community resources, such as health clinics, job centers, grocery stores, and other retail establishments to further support improved access to opportunity for all communities.

Figure 23: Regional Mobility Hub - Transportation Mode Examples
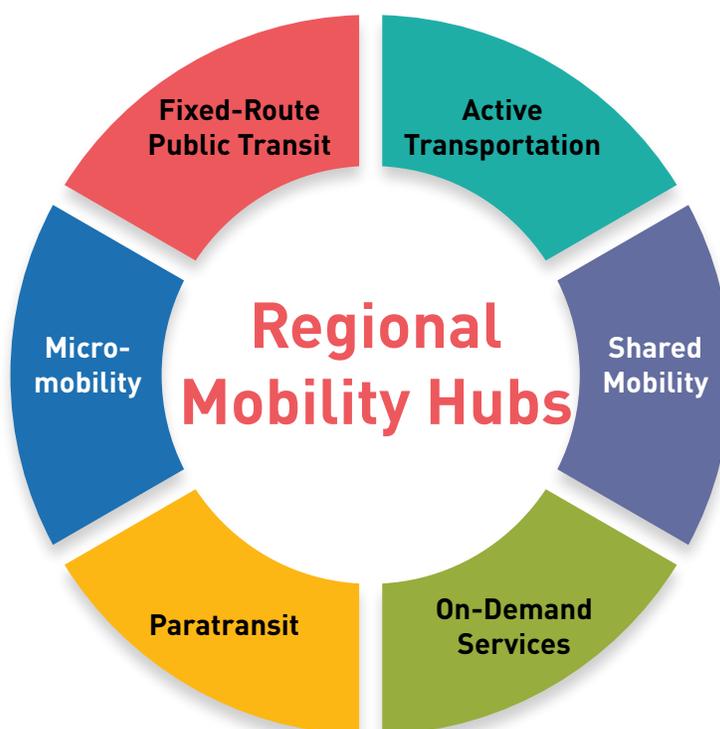
The successful implementation of mobility hubs across the ARC region has the potential to transform the transit landscape by bridging service gaps, fostering collaboration among providers, and creating a more comprehensive and connected transportation network.

Table 10 below summarizes potential agency roles, actions items, and high-level timeline for planning and implementing mobility hubs at the regional scale. As noted in the Best Practices Report, there are existing transit hubs already in the region with several new hubs planned for the future to accommodate growth and demand. This could be an opportunity for the region to leverage existing infrastructure, identify areas for regional pilots, enhance service coordination, and develop design standards.

Table 10: Regional Mobility Hubs - Agency Roles - Actions - Timeline

Recommendation	Potential Lead Agency				Actions	Timeline[6]
	ARC	ATL	Transit Agency	City or County		
Regional Mobility Hubs	X	X	X		Identify existing corridors/locations where mobility hubs are already planned or have been constructed.	**Short-term**
	X				Create a shared definition and types of a mobility hubs in the region (urban, suburban, rural hubs)	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Identify funding sources: Federal and state government, Local funding (ex. Mobility Special Local Option Sales Tax), Foundation/Philanthropic, Public-Private Partnership	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Develop public education and outreach strategy	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Select site and design of a regional mobility hub pilot project	**Medium-term**
	X			X	Work with municipalities to identify and update any zoning or land-use policies that discourage establishment of regional mobility hubs	**Medium-term**
		X	X		Secure funding to support the construction and operation of the pilot project	**Medium-term**
			X	X	Scale regional mobility hubs across the region at key regional connectivity locations	**Long-term**
	X	X	X		Develop long-term and sustainable funding mechanisms	**Long-term**

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[6] For this plan, short-term: 0-12 months, medium-term: 12-24 months, and long-term: 24-36 months.

Table 10 summarizes steps for implementing Regional Mobility Hubs in the Atlanta region. Led by ARC with local transit providers and ATL, short-term actions include identifying hub locations, defining hub types, securing funding, and public outreach. Medium-term priorities focus on piloting a hub, updating zoning policies, and funding construction. Long-term goals are scaling hubs regionwide and creating sustainable funding.

Regional Trip Planner

The Regional Trip Planner is an online platform designed to simplify travel by integrating multiple transportation modes into one unified system. It enables users to plan trips across jurisdictions and providers, addressing challenges in a fragmented regional network. Building on the ARC's 2017 CHST recommendation, this updated approach incorporates demand-response services and practical applications.

Currently, several planners exist, including **MARTA's Trip Planner** and **ATL Rides**. A single, regional tool would deliver key benefits:

- Combine fixed-route, commuter rail, on-demand, walking, and biking options
- Enable cross-jurisdictional trips
- Reduce travel times through optimized routing
- Incorporate real-time data and user preferences
- Provide accessibility features for riders with disabilities

The planner would analyze routes, transfer times, and service frequency to recommend the most efficient options, using real-time traffic and transit data. Users could customize preferences such as minimizing walking or selecting the lowest-cost route. Accessibility features would ensure equitable travel, including wheelchair-accessible routes and vehicles with boarding assistance.

Challenges include high upfront costs, ongoing maintenance, and the need for strong interagency coordination. Successful adoption will require outreach, education, and training for older adults and less tech-savvy users. Despite these hurdles, a regional trip planner offers significant benefits: streamlining travel, improving access, and supporting mobility across the Atlanta region.
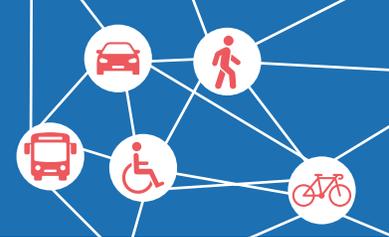
Table 11: Regional Trip Planner - Agency Roles - Actions - Timeline

Recommendation	Potential Lead Agency			Actions	Timeline[7]
	ARC	ATL	Transit Agency		
Regional Trip Planner	X	X	X	Review current regional planner (ATL RIDES) to understand its pros, cons, and how lessons can be learned for a future system	**Short-term**
	X	X	X	Determine the geographic area the trip planner would cover, transportation modes (bus, rail, bike, etc.) and user preferences that should be included in the planner	**Short-term**
	X	X	X	Specify features (real-time information, multimodal routing, fare calculations accessibility filters)	**Short-term**
	X	X	X	Identify and secure funding	**Medium-term**
	X	X	X	Select the outside vendor or in-house agency who will enhance the web and mobile platform	**Medium-term**
		X	X	Integrate transit data including microtransit, NEMT, paratransit, and micromobility	**Medium-term**
		X	X	Test beta version to a limited user group and use feedback to refine features	**Medium-term**
		X	X	Ensure ADA compliance and multilingual compatibility	**Medium-term**
	X	X	X	Market the planner through regional campaigns and placement on transit agency websites	**Medium-term**
		X	X	Add other transportation modes (bike-share, ride-share, etc.)	**Long-term**
	X	X		Evaluate the tool to identify necessary updates and refinements	**Long-term**
		X	X	Integrate links to fare payment systems and other resources	**Long-term**
	X	X		Ensure ongoing management, funding, and technical support	**Long-term**

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[7] For this plan, short-term: 0-12 months, medium-term: 12-24 months, and long-term: 24-36 months.

Table 11 outlines the steps for developing a Regional Trip Planner for the Atlanta region. The ATL will lead, with support from local transit providers and ARC. Short-term actions include reviewing the current ATL RIDES planner, defining coverage area, modes, and user preferences, and specifying key features such as real-time data and accessibility filters. Medium-term priorities involve securing funding, selecting a vendor or in-house team, integrating transit and micromobility data, testing a beta version, ensuring ADA and multilingual compliance, and marketing the tool. Long-term goals include adding more modes like bike-share and ride-share, linking fare payment systems, ongoing evaluation, and establishing sustainable management and technical support.

Regional Fare Product

A regional fare payment structure, first recommended in ARC's 2017 CHST Plan, remains a priority in this update. Such a structure allows riders to purchase one single fare without having to select a specific provider, simplifying the purchasing process for cross-jurisdictional trips.

Currently, the Breeze Card is the most widely used in the region, serving MARTA, CobbLinc, Ride Gwinnett, and Xpress. Breeze users can load fares for each provider or stored value using a Breeze Vending Machine or online. Breeze currently supports smart cards and QR codes for paying fares, however the card can't be reloaded at network or retail locations. Breeze also functions as a clearinghouse, distributing revenue among partner agencies. Expanding Breeze across the 13-County ATL region and developing a fully regional fare product would deliver the following key benefits:

- Improved connectivity for seamless transfers and cross-jurisdictional trips
- Straightforward fare payment reducing confusion and streamlining purchase options
- Increased efficiency optimizing services and enhancing the customer experience

As noted in the Best Practices Report, MARTA is in the process of launching AFC 2.0, which modernizes the existing Breeze system to include the following features:

- **Regional Ready:** The system is designed to support multiple regional fare structures and transfers, while providing advanced tools such as enhanced back-office systems, a modern website, mobile app, and comprehensive reporting capabilities to enable development of a regional fare product.
- **Account-Based System with Open Payment:** Riders can manage fares through a single account and use flexible payment options, including contactless credit/debit cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay, smart cards, smartphones, and wearable devices, ensuring convenience and modern accessibility.
- **Better Retail Network:** An expanded network of retail locations makes it easier for riders, especially unbanked customers, to reload transit accounts, improving access and equity across the region.

Building upon AFC 2.0, after full implementation anticipated for April 2026, Table 12 below reflects additional steps for further advancing a regional fare product across the 13-County ATL region. The long-term goal for this recommendation would be to have a regional fare product that incorporates all HST providers operating with the 19-MPO boundary area.

Table 12: Regional Fare Product – Agency Roles – Actions – Timeline

Recommendation	Potential Lead Agency				Actions	Timeline[8]
	ARC	**ATL**	**MARTA**	**Other Transit Agencies**		
Regional Fare Product	X	X	X		Establish strategic goals, define objectives, identify agency champion(s)	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Conduct Fare Study and existing conditions analysis incorporating remaining 8 servicer providers not part of AFC 2.0 in the 13-County ATL region, establish cost and funding mechanism	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Develop and adopt regional fare policy and fare structure	**Short-term**
	X	X	X		Develop regional fare product and revenue model including administrative cost allocation	**Medium-term**
	X	X	X	X	Launch rider education and outreach	**Medium-term**
		X	X	X	Pilot and launch regional fare product including testing and initial evaluation	**Medium-term**
		X	X	X	Full implementation across the region	**Long-term**
	X	X	X	X	Establish independent and regional evaluation and monitoring mechanisms	**Long-term**

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[8] For this plan, short-term: 0-12 months, medium-term: 12-24 months, and long-term: 24-36 months.

HST Data Framework and Analysis

As part of the plan update efforts, the project team experienced challenges with collecting data during the needs assessment phase especially for gathering origin and destination data and ADA paratransit trip denials. To mitigate this issue for future planning efforts, it's recommended that a systematic approach for collecting and analyzing HST data at the regional level be developed. This framework should focus on HST travel patterns, cross-jurisdictional trips, service reliability, costs, and customer satisfaction to guide future coordination and investment.

As ARC is planning the next regional, on-board transit survey and household travel survey for 2026, a data framework and analysis for HST should also be considered. Having a standardized method for collecting and analyzing HST data will help ensure that information is kept up to date and assist ARC and regional partners with properly measuring service performance. Having a clear understanding of where HST populations need and want to go will also help inform the other key recommendations above for trip planning, mobility hub locations, and regional fare product. Table 13 outlines the next steps to develop a regional data framework and analysis for HST.

Table 13: HST Data Framework and Analysis - Agency Roles - Actions - Timeline

Recommendation	Potential Lead Agency			Actions	Timeline[9]
	ARC	ATL	Transit Agencies		
HST Data Framework and Analysis	X	X	X	Define goals	Short-term
	X	X		Inventory existing data	Short-term
	X	X	X	Establish data governance	Short-term
	X	X		Develop data standards	Short-term
	X	X	X	Identify technology platform for Clearinghouse	Medium-term
		X	X	Test data integration platform and use feedback to refine standards	Medium-term
		X	X	Review and analyze data including service, ridership & demand, performance, and asset	Medium-term
		X	X	Propose regional projects for service efficiency and connectivity	Medium-term

[9] For this plan, short-term: 0-12 months, medium-term: 12-24 months, and long-term: 24-36 months.

HST Integration ARC Planning Programs

To truly shift the region into providing mobility for all and as a service, considerations for HST should be integrated into all ARC planning programs including the following. This provides an opportunity for a more proactive and comprehensive approach to identifying innovative mobility solutions for creating a more resilient transportation system to meet the needs of all road users in the region now and in the future. Discussed below are existing ARC planning programs that address HST populations at some level and can be enhanced by having more emphasis on opportunities for improving HST services.

Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTPs)
Embedding HST needs in local CTPs ensures the needs of older adults, persons with disabilities, individuals with low-income, veterans, and others are addressed as part of long-range planning and project prioritization at the local level. This approach supports regional funding decisions and promotes mobility solutions for all communities.

Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)
Incorporating HST needs into LCI Studies ensures that as local jurisdictions re-envision their communities the mobility options recommended provide improved access to jobs and community services for all including HST populations.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
HST is addressed at a high-level in ARC's 2023 TDM Plan. For the next plan update the region should aim to broaden and strengthen TDM strategies that include HST populations and nontraditional shift workers. Additionally, the plan should identify partnerships and programs to close service gaps and improve amenities that support HST users.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
HST investments are currently incorporated in Volume I of the Atlanta region's 2024 MTP. It's recommended that investments and strategies for HST continue to be considered and reflected in the plan going forward, especially as the region is anticipated to add 1.8 million more residents by 2050 with one in five being older adults. Also, the majority of residents in the region work outside of the county they live in, and mobility across counties within metro Atlanta is critical for ensuring a reliable and resilient transportation network.

Table 14 below summarizes potential agency roles, actions items, and high-level timeline for further incorporating HST into existing ARC Planning Programs.

Table 14: HST Integration ARC Planning Programs - Agency Roles - Actions - Timeline

| Recommendation | Potential Lead Agency | | Actions | Timeline[10] |
	ARC	County/Jurisdiction		
HST Integration ARC Planning Programs	X	X	Include HST in CTP work scope and identified projects in the MTP project list	**Short-term**
	X	X	Incorporate strategies for HST in Catalytic LCI Studies and infrastructure improvements in Tactical LCI Studies	**Short-term**
	X		Identify more programs for HST users as part of the Regional Transportation Demand Management Plan	**Medium-term**
	X		Identify more funding opportunities for implementing regional HST projects including mobility hubs	**Medium-term**

Conclusion

In conclusion, the top five recommendations in Section 4 will go a long way toward improving the delivery of HST on across the region. But as the region's population grows and funding remains limited, closer coordination among the agencies that plan, manage, and deliver HST is essential. ARC and ATL as an immediate next step should move forward with developing and implementing a regional HST data framework. This framework would serve as a clearinghouse for regional HST data collection, ensuring its standardized and accurate for better analysis of HST services and program delivery.

Regional partners including ARC, GDOT, and DHS can benefit from the tools and guidance offered by the federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). CCAM brings together 11 federal departments to improve transportation access for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes. Its resources, such as the Federal Program Inventory, Multisector Partner Directory, and 2025 Federal Funding Braiding Guide, offer practical ways to align funding and strengthen collaboration. Reviewing CCAM's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan can also help regional partners identify new opportunities to advance recommendations in this CHST Plan Update. Working together, the region can make meaningful progress toward safe, reliable, and affordable transportation for all.

[10] For this plan, short-term: 0-12 months, medium-term: 12-24 months, and long-term: 24-36 months.