TOD at the Corridor Level: The HUD Sustainable Community Program Initiative

The TIGER II – Community Challenge
Grant Application by the City of Macon and Georgians for Passenger Rail

Rail-Volution 2010
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Macon-GPR Goals

• Begin to Overcome Georgia’s Negative Image in Washington
• Begin a Process to Educate the Corridor Region on Benefits of Passenger Rail
• Stimulate the Transition to More Sustainable Development Patterns in the Corridor
• Create an Environment that will Support the Passenger Line’s success
The New Federal Emphasis: Sustainable Communities

- HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership
- Establishes 6 “Livability Principles”
  - Provide More Transportation Choices
  - Promote equitable, affordable housing
  - Enhance Economic Competitiveness
  - Support Existing Communities
  - Coordinate Policies and Leverage Investment
  - Value Communities and Neighborhoods
The New Federal Emphasis: Sustainable Communities

- Multiple Grant Programs
  - TIGER II Construction Grants
  - TIGER II Planning Grants
  - Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants
  - Sustainable Community Challenge Local Planning Grants
  - Combo TIGER II – SCC Local Planning Grants
The Combo Planning Grants

• $75 million available funding
  – $35 million: DOT
  – $40 million: HUD

• Target Housing, Economic Development & Land Use Strategies that make transport systems more efficient and effective

• Focused on localities, districts, not corridors

• 4 Selection Criteria
  – Purpose and Outcomes
  – Work Plan, Performance Metrics & Budget
  – Leveraging and Collaboration
  – Capacity
The Macon-GPR Approach

• Design a campaign, don’t just write an application
  – Credible Application Document—necessary but not sufficient
  – Program Champions and talking points
  – Engage the political process

Macon Terminal Station

Georgians for Passenger Rail
The Macon-GPR Approach

• Connect Local Goals to the Program’s Goals
  – **Economic Development**: heal the gulf between the “Two Georgias”
  – **Livability**: TOD plans and ordinances for station communities
  – **Partnership**: 4 State agencies, 3 non-profits & a city
  – **Sustainable Development**: compact development, walkability
  – **Enhance Transportation System Efficiency**: successful station communities reinforce the rail service’s success
Telling a Compelling Story: The Two Georgias

- The Metro Atlanta Region: 10 Counties
  - 10-County Population: 4,124,300 (42% of State)
  - 3 Interstates
- The Other Georgia: 149 Counties
  - 149-County Population: 5,704,911 (58% of State)

Georgians for Passenger Rail
Telling a Compelling Story: *Reintroduce* Passenger Rail to Connect Georgia’s Past and Future as a “Rail State”

Today: 4,966 Track Route Miles
Central Georgia Railroad Towns Today:
A region on a slow downward slide

- **Hapeville**: Ford Plant closed
- **Morrow**: Bypassed by Interstate system
- **Hampton**: Bypassed by Interstate system
  Stagnant recent development
- **Griffin**: Bypassed by Interstate system
  Textile and food processing industries moved away
- **Forsyth**: Needs Improved access to State training facilities
- **Macon**: once a bustling hub, now struggling
Building a Compelling Partnership

4 State Agencies + 3 Non-Profits + 1 Local Government

Rail Readiness

City of Macon

GDOT

DCA

EPD

GRTA

GPR

GC

LCC

Georgians for Passenger Rail
Central Georgia Passenger Rail Reintroduction

Defining a Credible Process

- Step 1: Upgrade trackage; acquire rolling stock
- Step 2: Finance operations & maintenance locally
- Step 3: Establish a management structure
- Step 4: Market the program & maximize benefits
Central Georgia Passenger Rail Reintroduction

Defining a Credible Process

- Step 1: GDOT working to upgrade system & acquire rolling stock for restored Macon-Atlanta service

- Step 2: GPR commissions Brookings Institution to develop viable O&M financing strategies by localities on the system

- Step 3: Macon & Partners develop passenger rail regional plan and service governance system

- Step 4: Macon & Partners lead a readiness program to obtain local financial commitments & maximize service benefits to localities
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

Rail Corridor Regional Plan

- Regional Vision
- Livability Principles & Best Practices
- Environmental benefits of passenger rail reintroduction
- Partnership opportunities for local capacity building
- System capacity issues and conceptual-level solutions
- Infrastructure projects and policies that can successfully transition Georgia into a “New Economy” leadership position
- Passenger rail role in a Georgia New Economy leadership strategy
- Management Entity to oversee rail corridor service delivery, O&M and financials

Georgians for Passenger Rail
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

Station Area Model Zoning Ordinance

- **Development Standards** to implement the DCA Quality Growth Principles and the federal Livability Principles.
- prevent overt land speculation, improper mix of uses
- mandate balanced uses that promote community interaction along the rail corridor.
- **growth management strategy**
- assure that development and redevelopment is in accordance with Regional Rail Corridor Plan & Local Station Area Plans
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

Station Area Plans for Station Communities

✓ Infrastructure Development Framework
✓ Regulating Plan for Station Area/Downtown Development
✓ Local public & private investment opportunities
✓ Revise & adopt local TOD ordinances
✓ Develop & adopt local rail corridor O&M financing vehicles (TAD, CID, TSPLOST, etc.)
Raising Awareness

• **Identify Champions**
  - Mayor of Macon and other Station Communities
  - State legislators
  - US Congressional Delegation
  - Civic Leadership

• **Develop Talking Points**
  - Everyone says the same thing to everyone else all the time

• **Engage the Political Process**
  - Encourage Champions to convey the message to decision-makers

*My Best Office Ever: The Coast Starlight*
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

The Payoffs – Short Term

- Brings in private funding for State programs
  - GPR investing $600,000 in cash
  - Participation attracts potential Woodruff Foundation commitments
- Brings more Federal funding for State programs
  - Program allocates funding to DCA, GRTA, GDOT for inputs & deliverables
- Complements/supports other GDOT applications
  - Supports GDOT application for $472 million rail system upgrade
  - Will coordinate with GDOT application for MMPT
  - Likely funded primarily by HUD
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

The Payoffs – Long Term

- Regional Economic Development
  - $3.6 billion in new development (15 year outlook)*
  - 4.25 million s.f. new commercial /13,250 new housing units*

- Local sources fund rail operations & maintenance
  - $325 million projected O&M costs (12 year outlook)*
  - $432 million projected local contributions (14 year outlook)*

- Demonstrates to Feds Georgia’s ability to deliver

*Brookings Institution study, 2010
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

The Payoffs- Long Term

- Reduced local government operating costs
  - Provides capacity equivalent to 580 lane-miles of highway - $2 billion value (GDOT)
- Stabilized living costs for families
- Increased travel options
  - Serves at least four cities not on Interstate highway system
- Reduced travel costs
  - Eliminates 58.8 million vehicle miles of travel (GDOT)
- Reduced per capita energy consumption
  - Reduces CO₂ emissions by approximately 27 thousand tons per year. (GDOT)
The Central Georgia Passenger Rail Readiness Program

- In Conclusion
  - Understand the Program’s Goals
  - Connect your Goals to the Program’s Goals
  - Pare Everything Down to the Essentials
  - Explain the Connections to Everyone

Griffin, ca. 1942 FDR Whistlestop
Griffin, ca. 2010 Available Parking
Griffin, ca. 2020 Return to Vitality?