

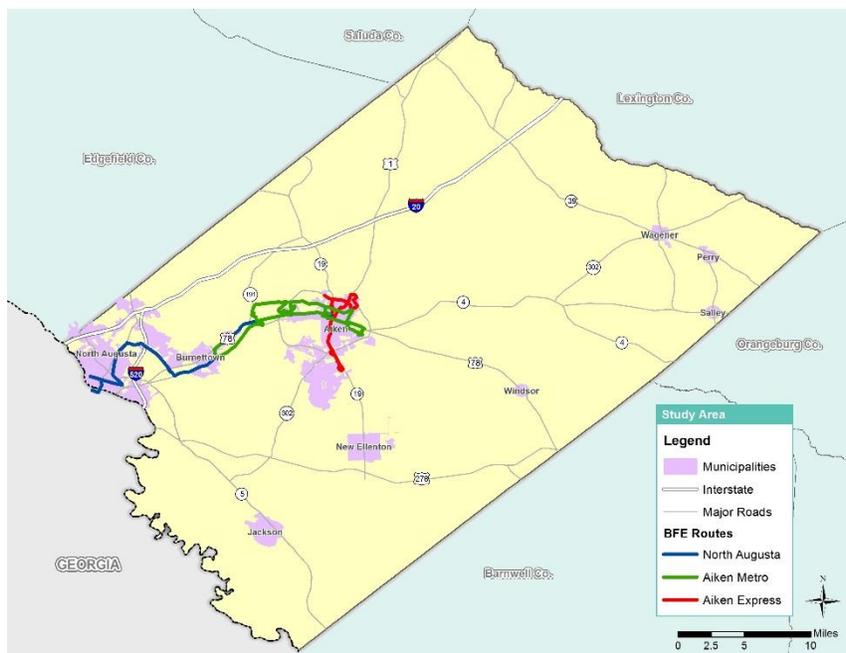


March 2, 2017
For Immediate Release

Re: Lower Savannah Council of Governments Preparing Public Transit Plan

Aiken– The Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) is preparing a transit plan to guide the future of public transportation services in Aiken County. The local community is invited to participate in an online community survey at www.bestfriendexpress.com/transitsurvey/ and to participate in upcoming Public Transit Workshops. The three meetings will cover the same information.

- **Tuesday, March 28 3:30-5:00 pm; Presentation at 3:45**
Aiken Technical College – Community Room
2276 Jefferson Davis Highway
Graniteville, SC 29829
- **Wednesday, March 29 4:30-6:30 pm; Presentation at 5:00**
North Augusta City Council Chamber – Third Floor
100 Georgia Avenue
North Augusta, SC 29841
- **Thursday, March 30 11:00 am- 2:00 pm; Presentation at Noon**
Aiken Municipal Building
214 Park Avenue, SW
Aiken, SC 29801



Aiken County has three primary public transit services available to the public. The LSCOG Aging, Disability and Transportation Resource Center (ADTRC), operating under the state Lt. Governor's Office, administers the Federal Transit Administration large urban public transportation and specialized paratransit services for Aiken County. The large urban system



is the Best Friend Express which provides fixed-route service on two hour circular routes throughout 170 miles of the Aiken urbanized area every Monday through Friday, 7:00 am through 7:00 pm with service connecting to Augusta Public Transit. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant paratransit service is also available through Dial-A-Ride. The Dial-A-Ride service operates within a three-quarter mile buffer area around the Best Friend Express fixed route to serve members of the community who have a disability that prevents them from being able to access the fixed route service directly. Both Best Friend Express and Dial-A-Ride vehicles are equipped with wheelchair accessible lifts. Best Friend Express fixed route vehicles are also equipped with bicycle racks. For additional information, call a LSCOG mobility manager at 803-508-7033 who can assist with transportation needs. In addition to the Best Friend Express fixed route and Dial-A-Ride services, the Aiken Area Council on Aging operates the Pony Express serving rural areas in Aiken County including Wagener, Jackson/Beech Island, and New Ellenton. The Pony Express buses operate Monday through Saturday with a deviated fixed route service and a demand response reservation based service. For additional Pony Express information and schedules call (803)648-6493 or visit their website www.aikensenior.org

The Transit Development Plan (TDP) is a ten-year planning document outlining the structure of the current comprehensive public transit system. The plan will evaluate the performance through objective data analysis; outline a strategy for decision-making to address identified shortcomings; review existing public transit services; evaluate commuting patterns to and from major employment and activity centers; and explore system enhancement opportunities for maximizing public transit service in the community. Public outreach activities are a key element of the study used to identify the values, needs, and vision of the public related to public transportation services. The TDP will extend the ten-year planning horizon to include Fiscal Years (FY) 2018-2027.

“We are excited for this opportunity to take a comprehensive look at current public transit services offered in Aiken County. We know there are opportunities to enhance the system to better serve the needs of the community. We encourage Aiken County residents to participate in the plan development by completing our online survey and attending one of our upcoming public workshops scheduled during the last week of March,” said LSCOG Transit Manager, Rhonda Mitchell. “We hope the public will participate in the process to ensure we are developing the best plan possible to serve the transportation needs of Aiken County.”

“We are looking forward to receiving valuable input from members of the community and community leaders throughout the study. Final study recommendations will be available in Summer 2017. We are looking forward to the future of public transit in Aiken County.” said Ms. Mitchell.

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PUBLIC TRANSIT WORKSHOP FOR Best Friend Express

Transit Development Plan

Lower Savannah Council of Governments is preparing a transit plan to guide the future of public transportation services in Aiken County. **We want your input!**

Please join us for a public workshop and let us know what you think the future of transit looks like in your community.

Choose from one of the three following dates:

Public Workshop Details

- **When:** Tuesday March 28, 2017
Where: Aiken Technical College – Community Room
2276 Jefferson Davis Highway, Graniteville, SC 29829
Time: 3:30pm – 5:00pm*
**Doors open at 3:30pm and a brief presentation will begin at 3:45pm.*

BFE Aiken Metro - Green Route stops at Aiken Tech at 3:18pm and 5:18pm.
- **When:** Wednesday March 29, 2017
Where: North Augusta City Council Chamber
100 Georgia Ave, North Augusta, SC 29841 – 3rd Floor
Time: 4:30pm – 6:30pm*
**Doors open at 4:30pm and a brief presentation will begin at 5:00pm.*
- **When:** Thursday March 30, 2017
Where: Aiken Municipal Building – Conference Center
214 Park Ave SW, Aiken, SC 29801
Time: 11:00am – 2:00pm*
**Doors open at 11:00am and a brief presentation will begin at 12:00pm.*

For more information contact: Rhonda Mitchell, LSCOG Transit Manager at (803) 649-7981 or rmitchell@lscog.org

Please take our online survey!

www.bestfriendexpress.com/transitsurvey/

