



Athens-Clarke County Multimodal Transportation Center

The Athens-Clarke County Multi-Modal Transportation Center has earned national recognition since opening in the fall of 2006 and has help to transform our community's perspective on Public Transportation in many positive ways. The Multi-Modal Transportation Center (MMTC) has received several national awards. The Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Atlanta recognized the MMTC with one of its most prestigious honors – the 2007 “Development of Excellence” award, the American Institute of Steel Construction 2007 award for “Innovative Design in Engineering and Architecture with Structural Steel”, the 2007 Brick Institute of America Brick In Architecture Award and the 2006 Athens Grow Green Coalition “Best New Development”.

Because the Multi-Modal Transportation Center enhances the comfort and convenience of our citizens’ daily commute, the entire community benefits. The Athens Multi-Modal Transportation Center serves as a hub for a variety of transportation modes, linking transit riders, pedestrians and bike travelers with the Athens Transit System/University of Georgia Campus Transit System, the Oconee River Greenway, and a downtown parking deck. The facility is also located adjacent the railway line that is envisioned to provide commuter rail service between the Atlanta Metro Region and the Athens Urbanized Area in the future. Further, the design of the facility anticipated and will accommodate this rail service. The facility is designed in anticipation of the integration of inter-city bus service, a new near-by “Park-N-Ride” and a “Rails to Trails” connection to the facility.

The Multi-Modal Transportation Center serves approximately 4000-5000 passengers a day. The Transportation Center features a bus transfer facility including 17 covered bus bays; a climate controlled waiting areas, administrative offices, public restrooms, passenger drop of area, ticket/information booth, and bicycle storage. A pedestrian bridge connects the bus transfer facility to downtown via a parking deck and the Classic Center Convention and Performing Arts Theater Complex. The 646-space deck was design to meet the parking needs of both the Multi-Modal Transportation Center and the Classic Center. The facility was constructed utilizing local funds only. Typically, federal grants would pay 80 percent of the costs for public transit facilities. However, in this instance citizens of Athens-Clarke County approved a local referendum to pay a one cent “Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax” (SPLOST) to fund the project. The special purpose tax also paid for an additional 2200 feet of roadwork, infrastructure and an aerial pedestrian bridge to improve access to the facility.

In designing the Center, the Unified Government sought to take a contemporary approach to the classic train station aesthetic, and to reflect upon the historic downtown area. The MMTC has an appealing combination of architecturally exposed structural steel, brick, cast stone and glass. Building on the idea of the project as a bridge, the design serves to tie in both the historic and transportation elements of the Center. The result is a transportation center serving the Athens community extremely well, while providing an example of what can be achieved when designing and constructing projects with forward thinking, vision and citizen's in mind. These actions serve as a public and local governmental commitment to the importance of public transportation infrastructure in this community.

Lastly, it is noted that in addition to the MMTC been a huge success as a transportation facility, and has also served as a catalyst for the redevelopment of a former warehousing area to in town multi- family residential developments that desire close proximity to the MMTC, the Greenway, and the Central Business District.

Athens Transit, a department of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, operates thirty-one buses, which provides 8000 – 9000 trips per day and just over 1.9 million passenger trips per year to the citizens of Athens-Clarke County.



Athens Area Arts Council
You, Me and the Bus
An Art in Transit Initiative in Partnership with
the Unified Government of Athens Clarke County

LOCATION-ATHENS, GA: Athens is a rapidly growing university town with a population of 110,000, located in Northeast Georgia. A spirited and energetic community, the town offers visitors and residents a unique blend of Southern heritage along with avant-garde entertainment. Athens boasts a wide array of award-winning restaurants, historic districts, innovative local artist initiatives, as well as world-renowned art and music. For more information about Athens-Clarke County, visit: www.athensclarkecounty.com.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT- YOU, ME AND THE BUS- In 2005, Athens Area Arts Council (AAAC) partnered with the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County and the Athens Transit System to launch "YOU, ME AND THE BUS" a national design competition for artist designed bus shelters. The project aimed to enhance the public transportation system and improve quality of life in Athens by integrating utilitarian public services with artistic ingenuity and inspiration. AAAC sought design proposals that served as both functional shelters for Athens bus riders and quality works of public art. Round 1 designs conveyed themes of movement, transportation and people. Round 2 designs honored the musical heritage of Athens. Both rounds focused on bus and riders' activity, incorporating site context and serving to define the areas in which they were located. Shelters had to hold a minimum of 3 people as well as provide enough space for a wheelchair. The competition was open to designers, artists, architects, and art students who reside in the United States. Winners were selected by a jury of 13 people composed of bus riders, bus drivers, artists, citizens, engineers, architects and members of the Athens Clarke County Commission and the Manager's office. Exhibitions of the winning designs were held in May of 2006 and April 2009 at the county art gallery in the historic Lyndon House Arts Center in downtown Athens.

FUNDING- The project was funded through Athens-Clarke County SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Taxes) as well as contributions raised by AAAC from grants, corporations and private citizens. The city contributed the cost of a manufactured shelter (\$9,160) and the Council raised the artists' fees and additional fabrication costs (\$5,000) per shelter.

GOALS AND OUTCOME-YOU, ME AND THE BUS was originally conceived as a small project of four shelters to perk up the profile of the Transit System and enhance bus ridership. Now in its 5th year, there will be a total of twelve bus shelters, installed along major transportation arteries in Athens and in or near neighborhoods dependent upon public transportation. To date, nine shelters have been installed. Public response has been overwhelmingly positive and the Transit System reports that bus ridership is up and the bus shelters are well cared for by users. In addition, the process of mingling artists, volunteers and county workers has also resulted in additional art collaborations across the city and the launching of a formal public art program for Athens.