

## TRANSPORTATION

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## TRANSPORTATION

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Study Area: Houston, Bibb, Peach, Jones, Monroe, Crawford, and Twiggs Counties.

The Middle Georgia region includes Robins AFB and is conveniently located near Interstates I-75 and I-16, along with U.S. Highways 129, 247, and 41. This system of roads and highways lends itself to an efficient movement of people and goods from location to location.

Commercial air service is available at the Middle Georgia Regional Airport just eight miles north of Robins AFB. General and business aviation can also be accommodated at the nearby Herbert Smart Downtown Airport in Macon approximately 24 miles away or Perry/Houston County Airport, 15 miles south of Robins AFB. Additionally, international services are available approximately 98 miles from Robins AFB at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

The study area also has easy access to various railways. Specifically, cargo rail is available by Norfolk Southern and Georgia Central Railway. While passenger rail is provided by AMTRAK at various points in Georgia, the most convenient station to Middle Georgia is located in Atlanta.

Middle Georgia has easy access to two deep water ports. Both ports are operated by the Georgia Ports Authority and are within a three-to-four hour drive time. The Savannah port is a cargo container handling facility and is one of the most active ports in the southeast.

Rural transportation needs are funded through the 5311 Rural Transportation Program to nonurbanized areas and small cities with a population less than 50,000. This program provides transit services for its residents to employment, healthcare, education, and other public services. Van service is currently provided in Crawford, Jones, Peach, and Twiggs Counties.

A three-step transportation planning process is in place in Middle Georgia to address local, regional, and state projects in support of infrastructure improvements.

*(Distances from Robins AFB originates with the Headquarters Building at 215 Page Road, Robins AFB, Georgia 31098 – as calculated by miles and time to the destination by [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com).)*

## AIRPORT DIRECTORY

*Several local airports service the Middle Georgia region to meet business and recreational aviation needs:*

### HERBERT SMART DOWNTOWN AIRPORT

<i>Macon:</i>	<i>Herbert Smart Downtown</i>	<b>24.23 miles/</b>
	<i>2725 Herbert Smart Rd</i>	<b>35 min from RAFB</b>
	<i>Macon, GA 31217</i>	
<b>Airside Facilities:</b>	Runways: 2	
	Runway Length (Rwy 15/33) (secondary)	3,600 ft
	Runway Width (Rwy 15/33)	75 ft
	Runway Length (Rwy 10/28)	4,696 ft
	Runway Width (Rwy 10/28)	150 ft
	Approach	Non-Precision
	Taxiway Type	Full Parallel
	Lighting – Runway	MIRL
	Lighting – Taxiway	MITL
	NAVAIDS	Rotating Beacon
	NAVAIDS	Segmented Circle
	NAVAIDS	Wind Cone
<b>General Aviation Landside Facilities:</b>	Hangared Aircraft Storage	12 spaces
	Apron Parking/Storage	20 spaces
	Terminal/Administrative	2,000 sq ft
	Auto Parking	60 spaces
<b>Services:</b>	FBO	Full Service
	Maintenance	Limited/Full service
	Fuel	AvGas
	Fuel	Jet Fuel

*(Source: 2001/2002 Georgia Department of Transportation – Planning, Data and Intermodal, 2001/2002 Airport Directory)*

The Herbert Smart Downtown Airport is located in Bibb County, just 24 miles north of Robins AFB. The Airport can be accessed from the northwest and southeast via U.S. Highways 80/23 and Georgia Highway 19. Owned and operated by the City of Macon, this airport accommodates a variety of aviation-related activities that include recreational flying, corporate/business jets, police/law enforcement, agricultural spraying, experimental aircraft, and ultra-lights.

For 2001/2002 the airport had approximately 19,500 annual aircraft takeoffs and landings divided between the local and itinerant operations. Future plans include extending runway space and installing additional NAVAIDS and hangar space.

*(Source: Georgia Department of Transportation – Planning, Data and Intermodal Division)*

## MIDDLE GEORGIA REGIONAL AIRPORT

<i>Macon:</i>	<i>Middle Georgia Regional Airport</i>	<b>8.22 miles/</b>
	<i>1000 Terminal Dr</i>	<b>14 min from RAFB</b>
	<i>Macon, GA 31297</i>	
<b>Airside Facilities:</b>	Runways: 2	
	Runway Length (Rwy 05/23)	6,501ft
	Runway Width	150
	Runway Length (Rwy 13/31)	5,001ft
	Runway Width	150 ft
	Approach	Precision
	Taxiway Type	Full Parallel
	Lighting – Runway	HIRL
	Lighting – Taxiway	MITL
	NAVAIDS	Rotating Beacon
	NAVAIDS	Wind Cone
	NAVAIDS	VASI
<b>General Aviation Landside Facilities:</b>	Hangared Aircraft Storage	30 spaces
	Apron Parking/Storage	55 spaces
	Terminal/Administrative	4,000 sq ft
	Auto Parking	139 spaces
<b>Services:</b>	FBO	Full Service
	Maintenance	Full Service
	Fuel	AvGas
	Fuel	Jet Fuel

(Source: 2001/2002 Georgia Department of Transportation – Planning, Data and Intermodal, 2001/2002 Airport Directory)

The Middle Georgia Regional Airport is located in Bibb County. The airport, accessible via US 129/Georgia Hwy 247, is approximately eight miles from Robins AFB. The airport is owned and operated by the City of Macon. The airport accommodates a variety of aviation-related activities that include commercial service, corporate/business jets, recreational flying, and police/law enforcement. As with all airports, this airport functions within the local, regional, and national system of airports and airspace.

Currently, the airport is served by one commuter airline, Atlantic Southeast Airlines – a Delta Airlines connection carrier. This airport provides six daily non-stop flights to the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. The airport has approximately 27,771 annual aircraft takeoffs and landings related to general aviation and 4,265 commercial service operations.

(Source: Station Manager, Atlantic Southeast Airlines, Middle Georgia Regional Airport, September 2003; Middle Georgia Regional Airport, Draft Master Plan Update, April 2002; Middle-Georgia Regional Airport Master Plan 1989; www.mga-cleancities.com .).

## PERRY-HOUSTON COUNTY AIRPORT

<i>Perry:</i>	<i>Perry-Houston County</i>	<b>18 miles/25 min</b>
	<i>500 Airport Road</i>	<b>south of RAFB</b>
	<i>Perry, GA 31069</i>	
<b>Airside Facilities:</b>	Runways: 1	
	Runway Length (Rwy 18/36)	5,002 ft
	Runway Width (Rwy 18/36)	100 ft
	Approach	Non-Precision
	Taxiway Type	Full Parallel
	Lighting – Runway	MIRL
	Lighting – Taxiway	MITL
	NAVAIDS	Rotating Beacon
	NAVAIDS	Segmented Circle
	NAVAIDS	Wind Cone
<b>General Aviation Landside Facilities:</b>	Hangared Aircraft Storage	59 spaces
	Apron Parking/Storage	32 spaces
	Terminal/Administrative	2,367 sq ft
	Auto Parking	56 spaces
<b>Services:</b>	FBO	Full service
	Maintenance	Limited/Full service
	Fuel	AvGas
	Fuel	Jet Fuel

(Source: 2001/2002 Georgia Department of Transportation – Planning, Data and Intermodal, 2001/2002 Airport Directory)

The Perry Houston County Airport is located in Houston County, 18 miles south of Robins AFB. The Airport is owned and operated by the Perry-Houston County Airport Authority. A review of the airport's operations shows approximately 18,000 annual aircraft takeoffs and landings divided between local and itinerant operations for 2001/2002. This airport accommodates a variety of aviation related activities that include recreational flying, agricultural spraying, corporate/business jets, police/law enforcement, and experimental aircraft.

(Source: [www.warner-robins.com/visitor/transportation.htm](http://www.warner-robins.com/visitor/transportation.htm); [www.airnav.com/airport/KPX](http://www.airnav.com/airport/KPX); Fact Sheet – from Perry-Houston County Airport, September 2003; [http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/aviation/airportdirectory\\_2002.shtml](http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/aviation/airportdirectory_2002.shtml))

## WARNER ROBINS AIR PARK

<i>Warner Robins:</i>	<i>Warner Robins Air Park</i>	<b>8.86 miles/</b>
	<i>123 Air Park Dr</i>	<b>14 min south of RAFB</b>
	<i>Warner Robins, GA 31088</i>	
<b>Airside Facilities:</b>	Runways: 1	
	Runway Length (Rwy 9/27)	turf
	Runway Width (Rwy 9/27)	2833 x 130 ft
	Approach	/27 outlined with tires
	Lighting – Runway	Low intensity
	Wind Indicator	YES
	Segmented circle	NO
<b>General Aviation Landside Facilities:</b>	Parking	tiedowns

(Source: *Airport Management, Warner Robins Air Park, February 2004*)

Warner Robins Air Park is a privately-owned facility that serves Warner Robins and Houston County (public access is permitted through Airport Management). Located approximately eight miles from Robins AFB, there is one turf runway that extends for 2,833 feet. The facility accommodates predominantly small passenger aircraft.

(Source: [www.ohwy.com/ga/x/x5a2.htm](http://www.ohwy.com/ga/x/x5a2.htm); [www.airnav.com](http://www.airnav.com); *Airport Management, Warner Robins Air Park, February 2004*)

## THE HARTSFIELD-JACKSON ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is conveniently located to Middle Georgia via Interstates 20, 75, and 285. Located approximately 98 miles from Robins AFB, this international airport is a gateway to the world. For December 2003, the year-to-date total passengers were 79,086,792, including domestic and international travelers. With over 2,400 daily flights departing and arriving, it is the busiest passenger airport in the world.

(Source: [www.atlanta-airport.com/Default.asp?url=sitemap/sitemap.htm](http://www.atlanta-airport.com/Default.asp?url=sitemap/sitemap.htm); [http://www.atlanta-airport.com/sublevels/airport\\_info/pdfs/Traffic/200312.pdf](http://www.atlanta-airport.com/sublevels/airport_info/pdfs/Traffic/200312.pdf))

## RAIL (passenger)

*Rail passenger service in Georgia is provided by AMTRAK with four long-distance trains:*

- ? The CRESCENT operates between New York and New Orleans with stops in Atlanta, Gainesville, and Toccoa, Georgia.
- ? The PALMETO, the SILVER METEOR, and the SILVER STAR operate daily between New York and points in Florida with stops in Savannah and Jesup, Georgia.
- ? During FY 2003, Amtrak served the following Georgia locations:

<b>City</b>	<b>Ridership</b>
<i>Atlanta (103.27 miles*)</i>	<i>91,891</i>
<i>Gainesville (149.63*)</i>	<i>4,717</i>
<i>Jesup (151.08 miles*)</i>	<i>6,160</i>
<i>Savannah (160.35 miles*)</i>	<i>41,248</i>
<i>Toccoa (190.25 miles*)</i>	<i>2,434</i>
<b>Total Georgia Ridership</b>	<b>146,450</b>

*\*Distances measured from Robins AFB to AMTRAK station*

(Source: [www.amtrak.com/pdf/factsheets/GEORGIA02.pdf](http://www.amtrak.com/pdf/factsheets/GEORGIA02.pdf); Amtrak Government Affairs: December 2003; [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com))

## RAIL (Cargo)

*Rail transportation provides a cost-competitive alternative to other modes of transportation for many industries in Middle Georgia. The availability of quality rail-served sites in a community makes it possible to compete for those types of industries. Quality rail service also helps existing industries remain competitive in a global market.*

Railroad service in Middle Georgia includes:

### **Norfolk Southern (NS) Railway**

- ? Norfolk Southern currently operates the Macon-Atlanta, Macon-Columbus, and Columbus-Birmingham lines. Norfolk Southern operates sections of the former Central of Georgia Railroad Company, but over the years significant trackage has been abandoned and handed over to shortline operators or sold outright.
- ? According to a Public Relations representative, "Norfolk Southern once served Robins AFB. However, the railroad track was taken up several years ago after years of non-use. NS currently does serve a nearby industrial park, as well as a significant amount of land within the surrounding counties."

(Source: <http://cofg.org/history.htm>; Public Relations Department, Norfolk Southern, December 2003)

### **Georgia Central Railway**

- ? Georgia Central began operations over the lines between Savannah and Vidalia, Vidalia and Macon, and Vidalia and Rhine, Georgia in 1990. These lines were purchased/leased from CSX Transportation. Connections are maintained with CSXT in Savannah, Georgia with NS in Dublin and Macon, Georgia and with the Heart of Georgia (HOG) in Vidalia. As mentioned above, NS operates the Macon-Atlanta, Macon-Columbus and Columbus-Birmingham lines.
- ? Georgia Central's local headquarters is in Vidalia with a local office in Macon.

(Source: <http://rail-management.com/gc.htm>)

## WATERWAYS

### PORTS:

*Georgia has two modern, deep-water Atlantic Ocean ports: Savannah and Brunswick. These seaports with channel depths of 30 feet for the Savannah Harbor and a projected new depth up to 36 feet for Brunswick (to completed in FY 2005) are vitally important to the state's economy. In fiscal year 2001, these Georgia ports handled record levels of cargo for the 14th consecutive year.*

<b>Distance to the Savannah Port</b>	
MACON (Bibb County)	174 miles
BYRON (Peach County)	184 miles
CENTERVILLE (Houston County)	165 miles
PERRY (Houston County)	179 miles
GRAY (Jones County)	173 miles
JEFFERSONVILLE (Twiggs County)	157 miles
WARNER ROBINS (Houston County)	165 miles

(Source: <http://miller.senate.gov/press/2001/09-19-01portsecurity.htm>)



- ? The Savannah Harbor currently extends from the mouth of the Savannah River to approximately 21 miles inland. In addition, the channel extends into the offshore sand bar approximately 11 miles. In the sand bar, the authorized project depth is -44 feet at low tide with a channel width of 600 feet. The authorized depth of the inland portions of the project is generally -42 feet at low tide with a channel width varying from 200 to 500 feet. There is a proposed project to deepen the inland portion of the channel to a maximum of -48 feet at low tide and the sand bar to -50 feet at low tide. The purpose of the project, which is at the planning and environmental analysis stages, is to increase the depth of the channel for transit of the larger ships, particularly container ships.



- ? The Brunswick Harbor currently extends from the mouth of the Brunswick River to approximately 11.5 miles inland on the Turtle River. In addition, the channel extends up the South Brunswick River approximately 1.2 miles, up the East River approximately 1.7 miles, and into the offshore sand bar approximately 9 miles. In the sand bar, the authorized project depth is -32 feet at low tide with a channel width of 500 feet. The authorized depth of the inland portions of the project is -30 feet at low tide with a channel width varying from 300 to 400 feet. There is currently a project underway to increase the authorized depth of the inland portion of the channel to -36 feet at low tide and the sand bar to -38 feet at low tide to allow for larger container ships.

(Source: [www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/waterways/brundmma.shtml](http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/waterways/brundmma.shtml); [www.sysconn.com/harbor](http://www.sysconn.com/harbor); [www.coastalgeorgiadc.org/overview.html](http://www.coastalgeorgiadc.org/overview.html) Waterways; Program Manager – The Georgia Department of Transportation )

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT (Warner Robins)**

### **Report on public transit for Robins AFB and Warner Robins as provided by the City of Warner Robins Community Development Department:**

*In 1993-1994, The Warner Robins Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) through the Warner Robins Transportation Study (WRATS) employed a professional transit consultant to conduct a transit feasibility study for the Warner Robins Urbanized Area including Robins AFB. The baseline results of the study indicated that there was not sufficient ridership potential to warrant further implementation studies for a public transit system. It did suggest that certain specialized populations that were receiving services could benefit from the pooling of transit resources and the efficiency of one agency providing the service. The net result being proper utilization of existing vans and small buses could provide an opportunity to give a minimal service for the few in the general population that would use public transit.*

*The study further noted that the Warner Robins Area had one of the highest vehicles per household averages in the South. The large number of vehicles per household, the availability of adequate parking, and the general pattern of strip development and scattered large lot residential developments combined to make public transit a less desirable alternative mode of transportation.*

*As a result of the 1995 BRAC hearing, the final report on Robins AFB indicated a concern by the military members and their dependents that there was no public transit, especially to various locations in Macon. There seemed to be a suddenly viable number of people associated with Robins AFB that were not found 1.5 years earlier who desired and would use public transit on a regular basis. While being skeptical of the BRAC comments, local officials and community leaders were concerned about the situation and were determined to further review the newly expressed need. It should be noted that the consultant in 1993-1994 had conducted extensive interviews and held public input forums with Robins AFB personnel and their dependents.*

*In 1996-1997, a local group formed under the leadership of the County Commission Chairman to again examine the need and try to coordinate existing services or expand them as appropriate. This group consisted of representatives of local governments, civic organizations, local boards of education, Robins AFB, and State Departments of Human Resources and Transportation. While no*

*formal documentation was produced, the net result was about the same as the 1994 study with an emphasis on coordinating and expanding existing services under one provider and adding a rural transit element. In 1998, the State Department of Human Resources announced a program to combine the services under one agency. This never came to fruition but rural service was added through the Middle Georgia Community Action Agency.*

*In 2000-2001 at the urging of the 21st Century Partnership Committee, the Macon Area Transportation Study, the Warner Robins Area Transportation Study, the Macon-Bibb Transit Authority, and Robins AFB cooperated on a formal transit study to ascertain the potential for public transit between Macon and Robins AFB/Warner Robins. It also examined the potential for para transit options such as van pooling. The results looked promising for van pooling and worker commuter service. The return ridership of military dependents and other Warner Robins residents was not so promising. However, the scenario was dependent upon the buses being allowed to run pick-up/drop-off routes on Robins AFB since they do not have an adequate transit system. The events that occurred on September 11, 2001 changed things as far as Robins AFB's security.*

*The 2000-2001 study also examined making a loop through Warner Robins, but ridership that wanted to commute to Macon for the day was minimal. This could possibly change if train service to Atlanta from Macon begins and if the Terminal Station becomes a transfer station for buses, train,s and other modes of transportation.*

*In 2002-2003, the WRATS in cooperation with the cities of Centerville, Warner Robins, and Houston County employed a professional transportation consultant to conduct an in-depth transit feasibility study for the Warner Robins urbanized area. The study results were delivered in July 2003. Again, the study conducted extensive interviews with Robins AFB work centers, with military dependents, civilian workers, etc. It also did interviews with employers and employees at work centers throughout the area. It involved civic organizations, representatives of special needs clientel,e and general public.*

*The results are still being analyzed; it appears that there will not be substantial ridership by the civilian workers and military member and dependents at Robins AFB. Some ridership can be expected; but again, Robins AFB must participate in any transit system for it to be successful. Routes on Robins AFB would be necessary.*

*The study was inconclusive as to whether or not transit was a viable option. It indicated a greater need than the 1994 study, but still did not project any route with a substantial ridership. It did propose up to four routes which could be implemented over a number of years if the initial one or two routes succeeded. The bottom line seems to be that transit service is needed for a few low income persons and for certain clientele such as handicapped and elderly. Services do exist for the handicapped and elderly, but not all qualify. The study did specifically address expanded services for those persons.*

*From the perspective of, and how the lack of public transit affects Robins AFB personnel and dependents, the issue is not clearly defined. Ten years of study indicate a slowly emerging need but no definitive statement of need or of use if it exists. Until the security issues of Robins AFB are addressed concerning public transit routes or until the Base has its own system that could interchange passengers at a transfer station, public transit is not likely to be viable because the greatest need and benefit would be for workers commuting to Robins AFB from Macon, Warner Robins, and other locales.*

*(Source: The Department of City Development, City of Warner Robins, Warner Robins, Georgia, September 2003)*

## PUBLIC TRANSIT (Macon)

### **Macon Transit Authority (MTA) – Bus Service**

The Macon-Bibb Transit Authority (MTA) was formed in 1981 with a mission to be the primary provider of high quality, affordable public transportation to the Macon-Bibb County Community. The Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority has a website which allows users easy access to information such as schedules, bus and trolley services.

The MTA has a fare structure consisting of:

- ? regular fare (\$1.00),
- ? transfer fare (\$.25),
- ? senior citizens (\$.50 specified hours),
- ? students (\$.60 specified hours),
- ? children (\$1.00 or free for 2 children per paying adult if the child's height is less than the fare box), and
- ? individuals who are disabled (\$.50 with MTA Disability Card).
- ? Passes are also available based on 10 or 20 rides, or 31 days, and a 3-day unlimited rides pass for visitors.

(Source: [www.mta-mac.com/fares.html](http://www.mta-mac.com/fares.html), October 2003)

## RURAL TRANSPORTATION

*Rural Transportation services are provided through the 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program. The purpose of this program is to improve, initiate, or continue public transportation service in nonurbanized areas by providing financial assistance for operating and administrative expenses and for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of facilities and equipment.*

Eligible recipients of the 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program may include state agencies, local public bodies and agencies thereof, nonprofit organizations, including intercity bus service, in rural and small urban areas with a population under 50,000. This program provides transit services using federal and state sources, with the city/county providing local matching funds for operating expenses and a portion of capital expenses. These services, which include wheelchair equipped vans, are currently provided in the outer counties of Crawford, Jones, Peach and Twiggs.

(Source: [www.dot.stat.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/Transit/programs/rural.shtml](http://www.dot.stat.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/intermodal/Transit/programs/rural.shtml))

### **5311 Rural Public Transportation Program Participants:**

- ? **Crawford County** – At this time Crawford County does participate in the 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program. They have four vehicles, two of which are wheelchair equipped. A goal has been set of 500 trips per vehicle for 2004.
- ? **Jones County** – Jones County has three vehicles in their program. They have projected the number of one-way trips in 2004 to be approximately 24,600 including both public and contract trips through Department of Human Resources (DHR) unified programs.
- ? **Peach County** – Peach County is involved in the 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program with three vehicles in their program, including two with wheelchair lifts. The projected number of one-way trips in 2004 is approximately 27,600 including both public and contract trips through DHR programs.
- ? **Twiggs County** – They have a two-vehicle operation which consists of two vans, one with a wheelchair lift. The projected number of one-way trips in 2004 is 12,000 trips including both public and contract trips through DHR unified programs.

(Source: District Three, Public Transportation Office – 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program, August & September 2003, February 2004)

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

*There are four key transportation planning processes conducted in the Middle Georgia area. Two are areawide; one is regional, and one is provided by the State. Each procedure is described below.*

### **Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS)**

*The Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS) was established February 21, 1961, in response to the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962. As a result of this Act, all urban areas exceeding 50,000 people were required to maintain a “continuing, cooperative and comprehensive” transportation planning process (“3 C” process). Initially, the City of Macon, Bibb County, Payne City, Macon-Bibb County Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Georgia Department of Transportation entered into an agreement to establish the Macon Area Transportation Study. Later, Jones County, the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center, and the Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority became a part of the planning process.*

*Participation from the general public, major stakeholders and elected officials in MATS is very important to the development and implementation of the plan. From the beginning, MATS has always had a Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC), a Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), and a Policy Committee (PC). The CAC is used to gauge community values and public attitudes. The TCC brings forward technical knowledge and experience, while the PC is the decision-making body that adopts the long-range transportation plan, transportation improvement program, and any policies necessary to carry the plan and programmed improvements.*

*The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the MATS Area is the Policy Committee (the decision-maker) and the Macon-Bibb County Planning and Zoning Commission (the technical full-time staff).*

### **Warner Robins Area Transportation Study (WRATS)**

*With the completion of the 1980 Census, Warner Robins was identified as an urbanized area. In 1981, meetings were held between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Robins AFB, the Georgia Department of Transportation, and local governmental officials concerning the designation of the MPO for transportation planning in the Warner Robins Area. Pursuant to these meetings*

*and local governmental resolutions, the Governor of the State of Georgia designated the city of Warner Robins as the MPO for the Warner Robins Urbanized Area. Participating bodies in WRATS are Warner Robins, Centerville, Robins AFB, Houston County, Peach County, and the Georgia Department of Transportation.*

*WRATS also has a “3C” process as well as three committees that steer the development of the plan. Like the MATS CAC, they provide a conduit for the public to the planning process. The TCC, accompanied by the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center, makes available technical expertise. The PC is the policy, decision making body.*

### **Middle Georgia Regional Plan**

*The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 created a framework for coordinated, comprehensive state wide planning and development at the local, regional, and state level of government in Georgia. In doing so, it called for the Regional Development Centers (RDC) to prepare and adopt a regional plan.*

*The initial Regional Plan was prepared in 1996 and contains two principal components: (1) Technical Staff Report; and (2) Regional Agenda. The Technical Staff Report (TSR) includes an inventory, analysis, and a preliminary list of regional needs for seven planning elements: population, housing, economic development, public facilities and infrastructure, natural and historic resources, land use and human services. The Regional Agenda consists of a five-year work program that lists specific activities to address the needs identified in the TSR.*

*To assist in the development of the Regional Plan, the RDC Board established task forces for each of major elements of the Plan. The membership of the task forces included citizens, local officials, and other interested parties. The RDC staff held several meetings with each task force to obtain their input and review staff reports.*

*Currently, Middle Georgia RDC is embarking on a major update to the Regional Plan. The basic structure of the Plan will remain the same; however, data from the 2000 Census along with other major events that have occurred in the region in the last eight years will require substantial changes to the inventory and assessment and needs sections of each element. As with the initial Plan, there will be active involvement of the local governments, private sector interests and other special interests in the planning process.*

## **State of Georgia Transportation Plan (STIP)**

*The State of Georgia has a statewide plan and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP is updated annually and includes projects included in the MATS and WRATS Programs as well as the rural communities in the region.*

*(Source: Executive Director, Macon-Bibb County Planning & Zoning Commission, Macon, Georgia)*

## TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

### Warner Robins Area Transportation Study (WRATS) and Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Road Improvement Projects that add capacity to Warner Robins and Robins AFB:

#### UNDER CONSTRUCTION – IN FY 2003-2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- ? Russell Parkway. Extension from Houston Lake Boulevard to I-75. Divided multi-lane thoroughfare that will connect RAFB to I-75 is scheduled for completion in October, 2004.
- ? Houston Lake Boulevard from Russell Parkway to Cohen Walker Boulevard (South of S.R. 96). Divided multi-lane thoroughfare that connects S.R. 247C (Watson Boulevard) via Russell Parkway to S.R. 96 and eventually to Perry By-Pass and Golden Isles Parkway and I-75. Scheduled completion is August/September 2004.
- ? S.R. 96 and I-75 Interchange. The interchange is being enlarged and completely rebuilt; roadway will be widened in vicinity of interchange.
- ? S.R. 96 Intersection Improvements. The intersection of State Route 96 with U.S. 41, Lake Joy Road, Tara Boulevard, Houston Lake Road, Peach Blossom Trail, Tidwell Road, and Old Hawkinsville Road are recently completed, underway, or will be completed by August 2004.
- ? Signal Timing Study and Plan Implementation for Russell Parkway and Watson Boulevard. A study was completed in June, 2003, of the timing of traffic signals on both thoroughfares. The studies examined optimum timing patterns, roadway improvements, and levels of service. The new timing plans are now operational on Russell Parkway. Watson Boulevard will be getting a new signal system in about a year that will use fiber optic lines and that can be instantly changed from the City or GDOT Operations Center. It will be possible to hold all lights on green if necessary (for instance, if an evacuation was necessary).

#### PROJECTS IN NEXT THREE YEARS

- ? Corder Road Widening and Extension from S.R. 247C (Watson Boulevard) to Houston Lake Boulevard. Engineering is underway and right-of-way is being acquired at strategic points. The planned construction let date is July 2005. On the extension of Corder from Russell Parkway to Houston Lake Boulevard, engineering is complete, right-of-way is complete, and construction has begun. It should be

completed in the summer of 2004. The extension is a SPLOST project. Funds are appropriated. STIP Project.

- ? Moody Road Widening from Feagin Mill Road to S.R. 96. Engineering and right-of-way acquisition are in progress. Construction should begin in fall of 2004. This will extend the five-lane section of Moody Road to S.R. 96. Funds are appropriated. SPLOST project.
- ? North Houston Lake Road Widening from S.R. 247C to Thompson Road in Centerville. This will be a five-lane section of highway through Centerville. Engineering is in process. Proposed construction let date is early 2005. Funds are appropriated. SPLOST Project.
- ? Lake Joy Road widening from Hatcher Road to S.R. 96. This will convert a two-lane facility to a multi-lane thoroughfare connecting Russell Parkway. Ext. to S.R. 96. Work between Feagin Mill Road and Russell Parkway is underway. The second phase will begin in 2005-2006. Funds are appropriated. SPLOST Project.
- ? Carl Vinson Parkway from Russell Parkway to Elberta-Centerville Road Widen to multi-lane status. Funds appropriated through SPLOST. No right-of-way required. Estimated completion date is March 2007 and funds are appropriated. SPLOST Project.
- ? Phase II and III of Houston Lake Road widening from Cohen Walker Road to Perry By-Pass. When complete, this will be a divided multi-lane connector to Perry, providing access to the Golden Isles Parkway. and I-75. Right-of-way is in progress. Engineering is mostly completed. The proposed construction let date is July 2004 on Phase II and July 2005 on Phase III. STIP Project.

### **PROJECTS IN THE NEXT 3-6 YEARS**

- ? Feagin Mill Road widening from Moody Road to Lake Joy Road. Funds are appropriated. SPLOST Project
- ? S.R. 96 from near I-75 to Old Hawkinsville Road. Widen to multi-lanes. Right-of-way acquisition schedule for FY07 with construction in 2009. This would provide a third multi-lane roadway between I-75 and Robins AFB.

*(Source: The Department of City Development, City of Warner Robins, Warner Robins, Georgia)*

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

*Discussions are underway regarding the following future Middle Georgia transportation projects:*

- ? Transportation officials will study a new route to connect Robins AFB Air Force Base to I-16. The project could tie into plans to extend Sardis Church Road in south Bibb County and create a new interchange with I-75. The new road could connect to I-16 in Twiggs County, possibly at Sgoda Road.

*(Source: "Transportation Officials to Study New Route Between RAFB, I-16". The Macon Telegraph, by Travis Fain, Saturday, October 4, 2003)*

- ? The Fall Line freeway, a project estimated to cost \$287 million, will provide a direct corridor from Columbus to Augusta. More than half of the 215-mile, four-lane corridor from Columbus to Macon to Augusta is either complete or under construction. The first section, from Columbus to Augusta, is 44% under construction and open to traffic.

*(Sources: [www.holidaydental.com/fallline0627.htm](http://www.holidaydental.com/fallline0627.htm); "Fall Line Route through Macon Gets Boost", from the Macon Telegraph, by Andy Peters, January 2003)*

- ? A rail line is being discussed that would extend from downtown Atlanta for about 35-45 miles along the Macon corridor, linking Atlanta's jobs to the hundreds of thousands of people living in the fast-growing south metro area by 2006. Commuter rail, inter-city passenger rail, and improved mass transit offer a long-term strategy for addressing metro Atlanta's air quality and traffic problems. Macon, Athens, and other Georgia cities will benefit from a wide variety of national and international business opportunities when the planned rail connections to downtown Atlanta and the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport are completed.

*(Sources: [www.ganet.org/gaplanners/dl/strategic\\_plan.pdf](http://www.ganet.org/gaplanners/dl/strategic_plan.pdf); "Macon's Commuters Should be on Track", The Macon Telegraph, by John Lewis, September 2003)*

- ? If Congress passes the 2004 spending plan, Macon's downtown Terminal Station will get almost \$2 million for renovations, which officials would use to turn the facility into a multi-modal unit for Middle Georgia. The plan is to transform the building into a transportation hub for taxis, buses and trains.

*(Source: "Congress May Fund Macon's Terminal Station". The Macon Telegraph, by Mike Donila, December 2003)*