



Public Rural Transit

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC)



Introduction

Where it all started..

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (**SWGRC**) began providing transportation services to clients of the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) in 2000.

In 2003, through a grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), the Regional Commission acquired its own fleet of vehicles and launched the Southwest Georgia Regional Transit (**SWGRT**) program.

SWGRT contracts with Resource Management Systems, Inc. (RMS) to provide the day-to-day transit operations.

Today, **SWGRT** provides the highest number of trips among all rural transit systems in the State of Georgia.

The 14-county program serves rural residents through a demand-response transit system designed to meet a variety of transportation needs.



Benefits of a Regional Transportation Service

Regional versus Local Subrecipients

GDOT partners with local and regional governments to support the development and operation of rural public transportation programs.

Eligible local governments may apply directly for funding through the Section 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program and administer the day-to-day operation of their own local transit service.

In Southwest Georgia, however, all 14 local governments have chosen to participate in a regional transit system administered by the SWGRC. Through this regional partnership, the SWGRC is responsible for planning, developing, implementing, operating, monitoring, and evaluating rural public transportation services across the region.

Operating transit through a regional provider offers several advantages over independently managed local systems, including:

- Greater efficiency by sharing vehicles, facilities, technology, and administrative resources across multiple counties.
- Lower operating costs through economies of scale in purchasing, maintenance, training, and service delivery.
- Expanded mobility by providing seamless transportation across jurisdictional boundaries for employment, healthcare, education, shopping, and other essential trips.
- Professional transit management with dedicated staff experienced in regulatory compliance, grant administration, safety, reporting, and performance monitoring.
- Consistent service standards through uniform policies, driver training, scheduling, customer service, and vehicle maintenance.
- Improved grant competitiveness and the ability to leverage regional resources to maximize state and federal funding opportunities.
- Coordinated planning that aligns transit services with regional economic development, workforce needs, and long-range transportation goals.
- Operational flexibility to deploy vehicles and drivers where demand is greatest, improving service reliability and system performance.

Service Area

The **SWGRT** system serves the following fourteen Southwest Georgia counties:

Baker County, Calhoun County, Colquitt County, Decatur County, Dougherty County, Early County, Grady County, Lee County, Miller County, Mitchell County, Seminole County, Terrell County, Thomas County, and Worth County.



At a Glance:



There are ninety-one vehicles in the **SWGRT** fleet.



All vehicles are equipped with tablets and monitoring equipment (cameras, maintenance, etc.).



Over 3 million miles traveled per year and about 150,000 hours spent transporting clients.



The Transit Program cost approximately \$10.2 million to operate in FY25.

Travel Fares & How to Ride

In-Region Cash Fares

One Way Trip

In County.....	\$3.00
Outside County, less than 50 miles.....	\$5.00
Outside County, 50 -100 miles.....	\$10.00
Outside County, more than 100 miles.....	\$15.00

Rider Discounts

Senior Citizens—50% off (*65 years of age and older*)
Frequent Rider—50% off (3 or more times per week)

How to Ride

Call for a Trip

Call between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM, Mon-Fri, the day before you need a ride.
You may call up to one week in advance to schedule a trip.



Phone Number: 1-833-799-RIDE (7433)

(Services are curb to curb and are on a first come – first serve basis.)

Best Time to Ride

Off peak times are the best times to ride. Try to schedule appointments during the following times to increase your chance of seat availability:

Mon—Fri	10 AM—2 PM & 6 PM – 8 PM
Saturday	8 AM—4 PM

(Last pick up for the day, Mon-Fri is at 7:30 PM and Saturday at 3:30PM.)

Area Coverage

Recipients and subrecipients of Section 5311 funds must serve rural areas. Section 5311 projects include public transportation to or from rural areas. The service area may include destinations across a State line. Operators of interstate service are required to comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations

Out of Region Trips (to include out of State) are not guaranteed and subject to approval by the transit operator. Out of region trips will be negotiated on an individual basis.

The FMCSA is a U.S. government agency that sets and enforces safety rules for commercial transportation that crosses state lines. FMCSA requires interstate commercial vehicle operators to follow rules such as:

- Drivers must have the proper commercial driver's license (CDL), if required.
- Drivers must follow limits on driving hours to prevent fatigue.
- Vehicles must be regularly inspected and maintained.
- Companies must keep required records and comply with safety standards.
- Drivers may be subject to drug and alcohol testing.
- Carriers must carry the required insurance and operating authority, when applicable.

SWGRT: Program Funding Sources

5311 Program

The 5311 grant provides federal funding for capital, planning, and operational support to sustain public transportation in rural areas.



Transit Trust Fund Program (TTFP)

In addition to Section 5311 funds, GDOT provides public transit systems with another funding source through the TTFP. This program uses a population-based formula based on 2020 Census data to support existing transit services, mobility management, and approved regional transit projects.



DBHDD

SafeRide Health

Purchase of Service Contracts

SWGRT increases ridership with Purchase of Service (POS) contracts that support public transit operations. Programs include Department of Human Services (DHS), Medicaid (Verida) & Medicare (SafeRide), Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), employer group contracts, and more.



Local Match

The 5311 grant requires a local match, which SWGRC fulfills using revenues from DHS, Medicaid, Medicare, and other contractual sources. Additionally, any capital costs may require a 10 or 20-percent match.

Transit Trust Fund Program (TTFP)

Program Highlights

Since the implementation of the TTFP, our transit network has been enhanced using the allocated state funding for special transit projects.

Safety Projects

- Informational screens installed in vehicles to display rider policies (advertisements, real-time updates, etc.)
- Employee training program funding to improve overall performance (customer service, ADA training, etc.)
- Safe Driver Safety Rewards Program: rewards program to incentivize safe driver performance and improve overall system health and efficiency. Performance bonuses are awarded to drivers based on stringent metrics and evaluations.
- Vehicle Safety Improvements (back-up cameras, LED headlights, brush guards, etc.)
- Driver Simulator: will strengthen workforce readiness, improve defensive driving practices, and promote consistent service delivery standards.



Service Enhancement Projects

- Installation of AI computing software to enhance operational efficiency of all SWGRT vehicles
- Saturday service hours added to the program
- Marketing projects to include a new logo, complete vehicle wraps, brochures, website redesign, TPO sign upgrades, equipment branded with SWGRT logo, etc.
- Fleet expansions
- Administrative fleet vehicles (four)
- Funds used for vehicle match
- Technology upgrades (computers, monitors, phone systems, etc.)

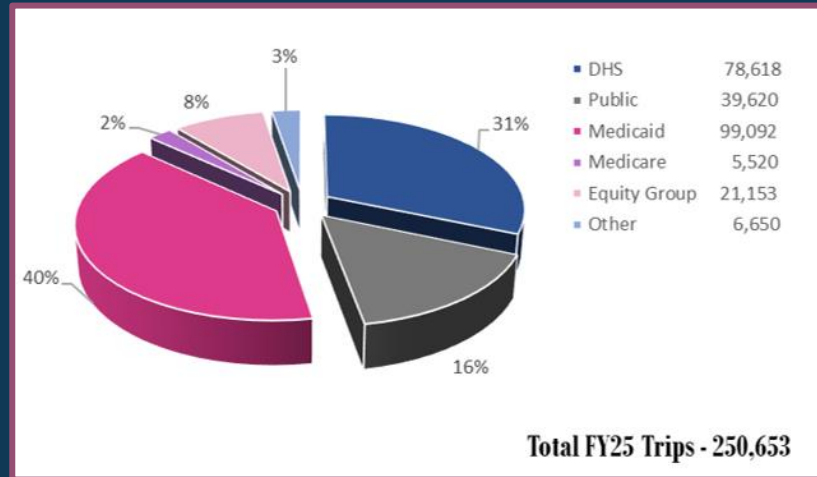


FY25

All about the numbers.

In FY2025, the cost to operate the **SWGRT** system was approximately \$10.2 million. While the transit system does not track ridership by county, performance is measured by the total number of trips provided.

During FY2025, **SWGRT** provided a total number of 250,653 trips.

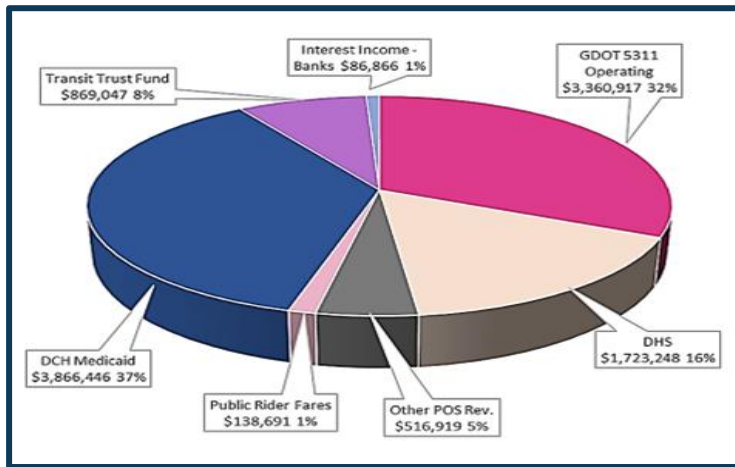


FY25 Trips:

16% of those trips were public trips. The remaining trips were provided through contracted services to include Georgia Department of Human Services and Medicaid and Medicare transportation.

FY26 Trips:

We are projecting approximately **280K+** total trips at an estimated cost of \$11,750,000.



FY25 Funding by Sources:

5311, TTFP, Public Trips, DHS, Medicare/Medicaid, Interest Income- Banks, and Other POS contracts.

Budget Versus the Actual Cost:

The budget considers the previous year's total cost to operate, additional funding sources, and economic factors.

In FY2025, **SWGRT** estimated the program budget at \$10.1 million (see budget to the right).

In FY2025, the actual cost to operate the **SWGRT** system was approximately \$10.2 million.

SECTION 5311 - RURAL TRANSIT BUDGET For Contract period: July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025									
Subrecipient:		Southwest Georgia Regional Commission				District:		4	
Date:		3/20/2026							
State Budget Year:		SFY 2025							
Operating Period:		1-Jul-2024		To: 30-Jun-2025					

Administrative Budget		Cost	Operating Budget		Cost	Capital Budget		Qty	Cost/Each	Cost
5011 A	Director Salary		5011 O	Driver Salary		Ford Transit 150 w/lift		\$0.00		\$0.00
5011 A	Supervisor Salary		5011 O	Dispatcher Salary		Shuttle Van		\$0.00		\$0.00
5011.10	Administrative Salary	\$77,606.43	5011 O	Mechanic Salary	\$25,000.00	Replacement < 30FT Bus		\$135,600.00		\$0.00
5011 A	Secretary Salary		5015 O	Fringe Benefits (Operating)		Replacement Van	14	\$11,784.00		\$164,976.00
5015 A	Fringe Benefits (Administrative)		5015 O	Uniforms		Shuttle Bus / Lift**		\$0.00		\$0.00
5020.08	Marketing	\$43,500.00	5020 O	Maintenance and Repair		3" - 6" Lettering		\$25.00		\$0.00
5020 A	Drug & Alcohol Testing		5031 O	Fuel		Vehicle Striping		\$265.00		\$0.00
5020 A	Audit		5032 O	Tires & Tubes		Mobile Radio		\$2,000.00		\$0.00
5020.02	Legal	\$500.00	5039 O	Auto Parts/Vehicle Supplies		Base Radio		\$7,200.00		\$0.00
5039.01	Printing	\$3,600.00	5060 O	Taxes		Computer Hardware		\$26,000.00		\$26,000.00
5040 A	Utilities/Communications		5090.01	Misc. Fringe	\$48,747.69	Roof Hatch		\$300.00		\$0.00
5050.04	Vehicle Insurance		5090.01	Driver Safety Incentives	\$206,000.00	Bike Rack		\$1,200.00		\$0.00
5060.01	Vehicle Licensing	\$500.00	5090.01	Misc Technical Fees	\$145,000.00	Other Capital		\$150,000.00		\$150,000.00
5090.02	Travel/Meetings	\$1,250.00	5101.01	Purchased Transportation	\$9,090,000.00	Tablets		\$204,000.00		\$204,000.00
5090.01	Dues	\$500.00				Mobility Management		\$204,000.00		\$204,000.00
5090.05	Indirect Expenses	\$105,916.22				Other: Add Description				\$0.00
5090.02	Training	\$38,000.00				Other: Add Description				\$0.00
	Administrative Total	\$271,372.65				Other: Add Description				\$0.00
				Operating Total	\$9,514,747.69	Capital Total				\$544,976.00

Net Operating Summary			
Administrative Total / Ratio		\$271,372.65	2.77%
Operating Total / Ratio		\$9,514,747.69	97.23%
Total Operating Budget		\$9,786,120.34	
4200.1	LESS: NON-Eligible Contract Revenue from other FTA Grants	\$0.00	
	LESS: FAREBOX	\$0.00	
Public Transportation Budget		\$9,786,120.34	
Net Operating Total		\$9,786,120.34	

****Note: Shuttle Buses Require CDL w/passenger endorsement****

6" Lettering is a "MANDATORY" cost per vehicle and must equal total number of vehicles if selected

List below vehicles requesting to be replaced:

Vehicle #	Mileage	Vehicle #	Mileage
3849	201452	3538	135400
3859	149041	3535	141276
3878	178426	3617	142015
3611	133568		

Budget Summary		Totals	Federal	State	Local
Operating Budget Total		\$9,786,120.34	\$3,177,317.00	\$1,026,600.00	\$5,758,203.00
4130	Advertising Revenue				
4300	ELIGIBLE LOCAL TAX AS LEVIED				
4300	OTHER ELIGIBLE FEDERAL CASH GRANTS				
4300	OTHER ELIGIBLE REVENUE				
	5311 Capital	\$164,976.00			
	Mobility Management	\$204,000.00			
	Transit Trust Fund Capital	\$176,000.00			
	Capital Budget Total	\$544,976.00			\$164,976.00
Budget Grand Total		\$10,127,096.33	\$3,177,317.00	\$1,026,600.00	\$5,923,179.00

Program Highlights

Local Match: Community Perks

Under the FTA Section 5311 program, each community is typically responsible for providing a local match and may need to cover approximately 10–20% of additional capital costs. Since the program’s inception, however, SWGRC has assumed this responsibility by meeting the match requirements through revenue generated from contractual and supplemental funding sources. Funds from DHS, Medicaid, Medicare, and other contracts are applied to support the GDOT 5311 program, including operations, vehicles, computers, software, and other equipment.

In addition, a transit reserve fund is maintained to address any funding gaps and to help cover program-related expenses such as fuel, insurance, labor, and service adjustments. As a result of effective use of contract and grant funding, public service trips continue to remain affordable for each community.



SWGRT: All in

Counties and Cities have a choice to provide their own 5311 services, or to collaborate with the SWGRC to provide transit services on their behalf.

For the first time in more than 15 years, all 14 counties are unified under the SWGRT system. Previously, Thomas County operated its own rural transit service, known as Thomas County Area Transit Service (TCATS), while SWGRC retained responsibility for DHS-related service trips.

In September 2025, Thomas County requested to fully integrate into the SWGRT program alongside the other Southwest Georgia communities. SWGRC welcomed the transition, as it improved consistency in invoicing, funding, service delivery, and overall operations.

Since the transition, the Thomas County community has responded positively, noting increased consistency and reliability in transit services.



Potential Program Challenges

Funding

- DHS funding has been limited due to budget constraints in the past
- GDOT funding is contingent upon available funding and may be limited in some years. While funding increased significantly for FY27, available funding may not always keep pace with increases in trip demand.
- Rising operational costs, including fuel, insurance, and labor
- New broker Verida (for GA Medicaid) no longer covers some of the transportation services once covered under the previous broker, Modivcare.



Collaboration: Shortfalls

- In 2024, DHS issued a statewide RFP and awarded the North Region to a private broker, Verida, while the Southern Region was not awarded; DHS plans to contract with each of the Regional Commissions in the Southern Region for FY27 until further notice
- The private brokers for Medicaid/Medicare transportation, results in minimal coordination efforts
- Coordination challenges persist across agencies due to differing policies, payment structures, and reimbursement methods, along with the use of private, for-profit operators



FY26 – Rider Satisfactory Survey Feedback

FY26 REGION 10
PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY SUMMARY:

DATE: July - December



**Georgia Department
of Human Services**

Excellent	4.5 - 5.0
Good	3.6 - 4.4
Fair	3.0 - 3.5
Poor	>3.0

TOTAL SURVEYS SENT:

199

TOTAL SURVEYS RECEIVED:

199

	5		4		3		2		1		0		
	Very Satisfied or Likely		Somewhat Satisfied or Somewhat Likely		Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied or Neither Likely Nor Unlikely		Somewhat Dissatisfied or Somewhat Unlikely		Very Dissatisfied or Very Unlikely		No Response		Total %
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	
What is your overall satisfaction rating with transportation?	137	69%	40	20%	6	3%	5	3%	6	3%	5	3%	100%
How likely are you to recommend transportation to a friend or relative?	131	66%	39	20%	11	6%	6	3%	4	2%	8	4%	100%
How satisfied are you with your driver assisting you on or off the vehicle?	160	80%	24	12%	4	2%	2	1%	1	1%	8	4%	100%
Responsiveness: Responding to your concerns as it relates to transportation.	134	67%	35	18%	10	5%	4	2%	3	2%	13	7%	100%
Professionalism: Maintaining a professional standard and/or character while delivering services.	154	77%	28	14%	6	3%	4	2%	2	1%	5	3%	100%
Understanding My Needs: Providing assistance when needed.	148	74%	32	16%	7	4%	2	1%	3	2%	7	4%	100%
Flexibility with Scheduling: Provider is adaptable to change in trip requests.	138	69%	31	16%	9	5%	10	5%	5	3%	6	3%	100%
Safety: All vehicles are safe while in operation.	168	84%	16	8%	5	3%	1	1%	3	2%	6	3%	100%
Timeliness: Transportation is delivered in a prompt and timely fashion.	120	60%	36	18%	9	5%	20	10%	7	4%	7	4%	100%

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY SUMMARY

Very Satisfied or Likely		Somewhat Satisfied or Somewhat Likely		Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied or Neither Likely Nor Unlikely		Somewhat Dissatisfied or Somewhat Unlikely		Very Dissatisfied or Very Unlikely		No Response		
Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
1290	72%	281	16%	67	4%	54	3%	34	2%	65	4%	100%

4.4

FY26 REGION 10
HUMAN SERVICES PROVIDER (HSP) SATISFACTION SURVEY SUMMARY

DATE: July - December

Excellent	3.0 - 2.5
Good	2.4 - 1.9
Fair	1.8 - 1.3
Poor	<1.3

TOTAL SURVEYS SENT:

40

TOTAL SURVEYS RECEIVED:

37

	3		2		1		
	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		No Satisfied		Total %
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	
What is your overall satisfaction rating with transportation?	9	24%	24	65%	4	11%	100%
Timeliness: How satisfied are you that drivers pickup and drop-off consumers in a timely manner?	8	22%	20	54%	9	24%	100%
Professionalism: How would you rate the friendliness and courtesy of the drivers?	13	35%	21	57%	3	8%	100%
How satisfied are you with your drivers assisting consumers on and off the vehicle?	11	30%	24	65%	2	5%	100%
Safety: How satisfied are you that your clients can access transportation provider vehicles easily?	12	32%	23	62%	2	5%	100%

37

37

37

37

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY SUMMARY

Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Not Satisfied		
Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
53	29%	112	61%	20	11%	100%

2.2

159

224

20

403

185



TRANSIT ONBOARD SURVEY RESULTS - YTD FY2026

Southwest Georgia Regional Transit



	RMS Subregion 1 (Dougherty, Lee, Terrell, Colquitt, Worth)		RMS Subregion 2 (Early, Miller, Calhoun, Mitchell, Baker)		RMS Subregion 3 (Decatur, Seminole, Grady)		TCAT (Thomas)		TOTAL REGION	
Total Surveys Mailed	200		200		200		40		640	
Total Surveys Completed	34		28		27		6		95	
Percent Completed	17.00%		14.00%		13.50%		15.00%		14.84%	
Undeliverable Surveys	30		20		42		3		95	
Percent Undelivered	15.00%		10.00%		21.00%		7.50%		14.84%	
Percent of Delivered Surveys Returned	20.00%		15.56%		17.09%		16.22%		17.43%	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2 Do you use a wheelchair?	5	29	1	25	7	19	1	6	14	79
If yes, did driver assist you properly into the vehicle?	5	0	2	0	6	0	0	1	13	1
3 Was your driver:										
1 Courteous?	27	1	21	3	22	1	5	1	75	6
2 Helpful?	27	1	22	1	20	1	4	1	73	4
4 Did your driver:										
1 Have a clean appearance?	34	0	27	0	27	0	6	0	94	0
2 Assist passengers onboard?	29	4	23	2	23	2	3	2	78	10
3 Make sure passengers seat belts were fastened?	33	1	22	3	24	2	4	1	83	7
4 Assist passengers to exit the vehicle?	28	4	19	5	25	2	3	2	75	13
5 Drive competently?	30	0	18	5	26	0	5	0	79	5
6 Smoke, eat or drink with passengers onboard?	5	28	2	23	1	26	0	5	8	82
7 Text or use phone while driving?	8	23	4	21	3	23	1	4	16	71
5 Did the Transit Service meet your needs/expectations in the following categories:										
1 Hours of Operation	31	3	21	7	21	1	4	1	77	12
2 Frequency of Service	30	3	22	3	21	2	3	0	76	8
3 Timeliness	25	9	21	4	16	7	3	0	65	20
4 Availability of Information	31	3	19	5	17	3	3	0	70	11
5 Announcement of Schedule Changes	18	15	20	5	18	3	2	1	58	24
6 Condition of transit vehicles	29	1	25	1	21	1	3	0	78	3
7 Overall Service	30	0	22	4	22	1	3	0	77	5
6 Did you pay a monetary fare when you boarded the vehicle? If Yes:	7	24	6	18	11	14	1	4	25	60
1 Did the driver collect the proper fare?	7	0	6	0	11	0	1	0	25	0
2 In your opinion, was the fare affordable?	7	0	6	0	10	0	1	0	24	0
7 Please answer the following:										
a Would you use the service again?	31	2	27	1	27	0	6	0	91	3
b Would you recommend the service?	28	3	23	3	25	1	5	1	81	8
Totals	493	101	372	96	386	76	65	20	1316	293

SUMMARY OF REPLIES

Total Replies	594	468	462	85	1,609
Favorable Replies	531	410	431	73	1,445
Unfavorable Replies	63	58	31	12	164
Percent Favorable	89.39%	87.61%	93.29%	85.88%	89.81%

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Website Links:



www.swgrc.org/



www.swgrc.org/southwest-georgia-regional-transit

Thank you



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Any
Questions?