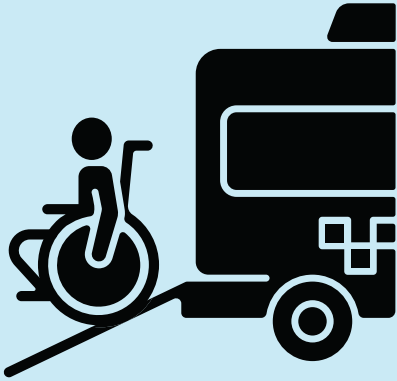


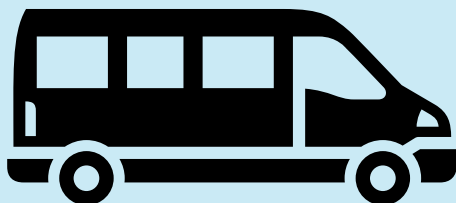
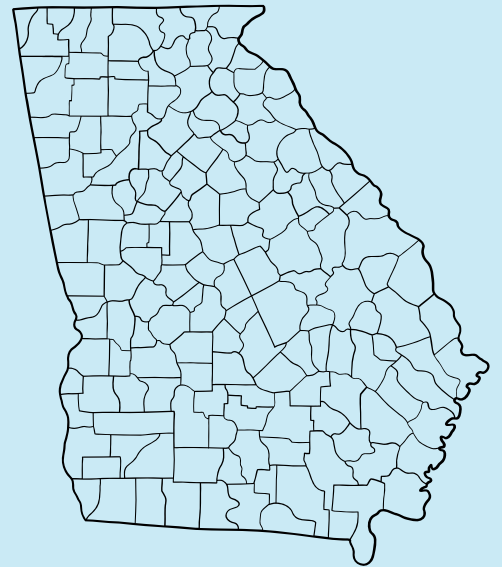


Accessible Transit



It could be argued that mobility and transportation are the building blocks for economic development for several reasons. Mobility can be defined as the ability to safely navigate around one's community with various means of assistive devices; if/when necessary. Mobility is a necessity for allowing individuals with disabilities and seniors to live equitable & independent lives. Persons within aging and disability communities need accessible and reliable transportation in order to complete the majority of activities of daily living, especially employment. However, in Georgia there are 36 counties that do not have any public transit options that often fall short of ADA compliance and are not consistent in terms of reliability.

Unfortunately, rural areas face extreme scarcity and, in some cases, non-existent transit and mobility options. Most rural transit providers also have very strict county line boundaries, which makes it more difficult to accommodate individuals with disabilities. An example is the city of Augusta; one of the largest cities in the state, and yet there are only nine bus routes. The few areas that do have transit, also have very limited hours of operation and prolonged trip times. Consumers from the area have reported trips that would normally take 40 minutes driving, can extend up to nearly 4 hours on public transportation. This overwhelming process is too much for any individual to endure both mentally & physically.



SILCGA Continues to advocate for transit expansion legislatively, statewide, and locally. One of the solutions we support and work toward collaborating to ensure community access is micro-transit. Micro-transit will provide flexibility and inclusivity. We also want to move the legislative conversation towards direct transportation beyond freight and logistics. We also provide feedback through many of our partnerships including GDOT, ARC, GTA, and many others.



Community Accessibility

Rural areas are particularly difficult to navigate because of the absence of walkability. An accessible and walkable sidewalk will include curb cuts, sidewalks that don't end abruptly, uneven sidewalks, and a path that is free of tree roots, utility poles, pot holes, and driver caution signs. The presence of any of these are serious safety concerns and pose potential governmental liability. According to the 2023 Governors Highway Safety Association Pedestrian spotlight, Georgia is ranked number 4 in the nation for pedestrian deaths.

To revitalize Georgia's infrastructure, not only should transit options expand and sidewalks improve, so should the rehabilitation of existing buildings. Overall, there is a consistent need for improved accessibility within "grandfathered" public buildings. This applies to the interior and exterior of buildings. Information received through consumer feedback; the major complaint is the lack of accountability when planning to ensure that public entities are ADA compliant.

The mobility and transit barriers described are relevant to all Georgians, within the aging and disability communities. Mobility is a key component to independent living. We hope that this summary leads to insight into the barriers all communities face continuously and asserts the need to act. Failure to make immediate inclusive improvements, has the potential to stagnant Georgia's economic growth and opportunities for more diverse and inclusive communities.