

Enhancing Public Transit in Portsmouth: Shuttle Loop, Microtransit, Or....?

Presentation to the Citywide Neighborhood Committee

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PORTSMOUTH
transportation & climate action group

Purpose

Explore opportunities to expand public transit

- Are there important unmet needs – now and future?
- Use case for more public transit?
- Are there relevant models for innovation – best practices?
- Are there promising options for Portsmouth?

=> What do you think?

=> Help refine ideas

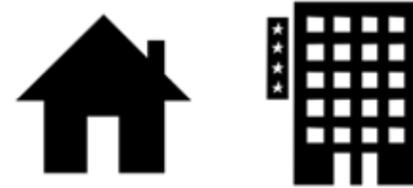
Sustainable Transportation Principles

- What is Sustainability?
 - Environment, Economy, Equity (3Es) – **Balance all 3!**
- Focus on **Co-benefits**, e.g., for Portsmouth transportation:
 - Improve accessibility (housing, jobs, school, health care)
 - Address climate crisis -- reduce GHG emissions in CAP
 - Support local economy – car free tourism, access to jobs
 - Reduce parking demand and congestion
 - Support Livable Community
- TCAG Approach – transportation ideas for CAP
 - Shift to “green modes” => reduce Vehicle Miles
 - Systems approach – improve multimodal connectivity
 - Public engagement and political will for mode shift

A BALANCED APPROACH TO TRANSPORTATION: GHG REDUCTIONS FOR THE Climate Action Plan

Community Engagement

Land Use



Reduce travel distance between home and work, shopping, dining, etc.; align low-carbon mobility and development

Electric Vehicles



Replace fossil fuel cars and trucks with battery electric vehicles

Bike & Pedestrian



Safe paths for bikes, e-bikes and pedestrians; promote human powered transport

Shared Mobility



Expand bus routes; promote ride sharing; culture shift

Shared Mobility/Public Transit

- What is the opportunity for shared mobility/public transit?
 - 1.7% bus mode share – low hanging fruit?
 - Underfunded – 49th of 50 states for funding public transit operations
- **Could innovative Shared Mobility attract riders, reduce car trips, GHG?**
 - Fixed route – Shuttle Loop?
 - Flexible routes and scheduling – Microtransit?
 - Single seamless platform/app: routing, scheduling, fares, pass. info.
 - Public-private partnership (developers, tourist industry, operators)
 - Future connected system: bus, first mile/last mile bike/ped, other
 - Connect and complement COAST, UNH Wildcat, C&J?

SHARED MOBILITY – SHUTTLE LOOP

BEST PRACTICES - SAVANNAH GEORGIA “DOT”



fare free
VISITOR TRANSPORTATION
DOWNTOWN SAVANNAH

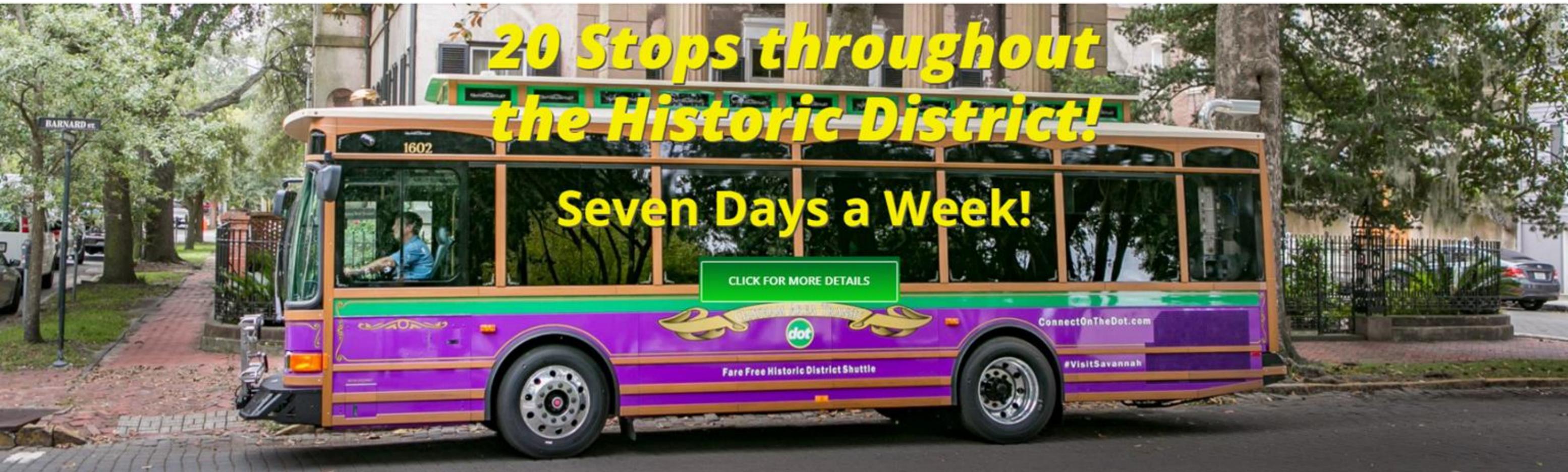
HOME

ROUTES & SCHEDULES

RIDER TOOLS

PLAN YOUR VISIT

ABOUT US

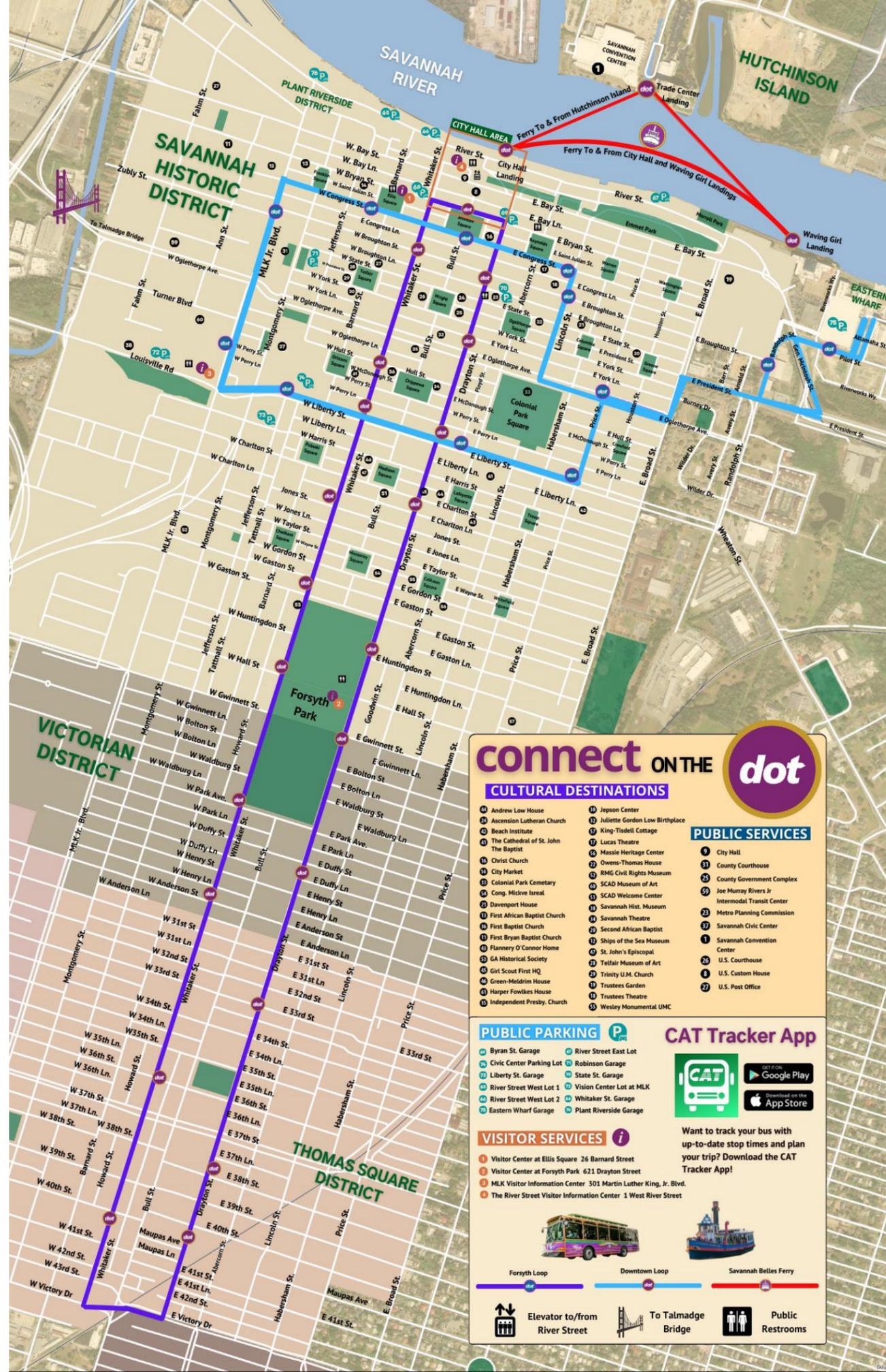


Source: Savannah Mobility Management, Inc. connectonthedot.com

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Savannah dot

- “To enhance Savannah experience for visitors and residents by reducing traffic and parking congestion”
- “A Walking City”
- Serves historic, residential, business core
- Free fares
- Car free visits for tourists
- 15 minutes, 12 hours, 7 days
- Public Private Partnership
- Board of city, public transit, business/hospitality members
- 501(c)6 non-profit, funded thru Convention District Ordinance
 - Hotel tax



Microtransit

Flexible:

- * Schedule
- * Route
- * Pick-up/Drop-off



- **Middletown XtraMile (CT) – a pilot**
- **On demand, smartphone app to request, and schedule a ride**
- **Replaces costly fixed route (empty buses?)**
- **2 zones: downtown & Wesleyan University**
- **Federal, state, local, university cost sharing**
- **Thursday-Saturday, noon-8 pm, \$1.75/trip, free for college students**
- **Connects to scheduled bus and rail**

What about Portsmouth? What's the use case?

- For visitors
 - Car free trip – Logan to C&J to Hotel/restaurants, etc.?
 - Partner with hotels and restaurants?
- For residents
 - Reduce parking strains & cost (\$2-5/hour Red Zone vs. \$1.50/\$0.75 for bus)
 - Reduce traffic congestion
 - Improved accessible/affordable options (enhance the connected multimodal system)
- For affordable housing – access to jobs, education, health care
 - Transportation + housing = 50% of household cost
- For businesses – workers for hotels, restaurants, etc.
 - Amenity for developers to provide to residents, tenants
- For the environment
 - Transport is largest source of GHG emissions (and reductions)
 - Proposed transportation strategies in new Climate Action Plan

SHARED MOBILITY for PORTSMOUTH

- **Shuttle Loop:** fixed scheduling and routing
 - Direct links: historic district, tourism, parking, jobs, housing, , parking
 - Complement and expand existing bus service
 - Possible Feasibility Study and "Proof of Concept" pilot
- **Explore partnerships:** Bus operators, developers, business, schools, tourism industry
 - Align with improved first mile-last mile bike/ped connectivity
 - Focus on priority corridors, development (affordable housing, development)
- **Long term vision:**
 - Downtown Mobility Hub: connecting all modes
 - Sustainable Mobility Plan: long range multimodal vision
- **Climate focus - CAP:** build support for options to reduce car trips, GHG

Food for Thought: What do you think?

- Why don't we use public transit?
 - Better use of what we have - outreach and marketing?
- Is there a role for:
 - Shuttle Loop(s)?
 - Microtransit?
 - A Hybrid – Shuttle in the peak, microtransit in-between?
- Partnering with COAST, UNH Wildcat, C&J
 - Complement and expand service
- Partnering with business and developers (affordable housing)?
 - Hospitality tax – state restrictions? Voluntary for “green branding”?
 - Developers – amenity, in lieu of parking fee, affordable housing?
 - Development district? Parking revenue?
 - Federal infrastructure and climate programs/funding (for pilots)
- New Climate Action Plan
 - Shared mobility feasibility study, other transportation
 - CAP=>Master Plan=>Capital Budget

Thank you! For more information

- ▶ wm.lyons@comcast.net
- ▶ **Portsmouth Transportation and Climate Action Group (TCAG) new member welcome**
 - ▶ <https://www.seacoastnhcan.org/sustainabletransportation>
 - ▶ portsmouthtcag@gmail.com
- ▶ **Portsmouth's Climate Future (new Climate Action Plan)**
 - ▶ <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/planportsmouth/portsmouths-climate-future>
- ▶ **Portsmouth Housing Dialogue (January-February 2024) Sign-up now!**
 - ▶ <https://portsmouthlistens.org/2024-portsmouth-housing-dialogue/>
- ▶ **COAST Bus**
 - ▶ <https://coastbus.org/>
- ▶ **Commute Smart (NH Public Transit advocacy)**
 - ▶ <https://commutesmartseacoast.org/about>