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Contact: Kim Riddle
Tel: (202) 366-5128

Federal Officials Mark Opening of New Aiken Transportation Resource Center
*Provides enhanced coordinated community transportation service
for 4,000 square mile region*

Peter Appel, Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), and Federal Transit Administration Regional Administrator Dr. Yvette Taylor today joined state and local officials to mark the expansion of a \$2.9 million transportation resource center that will provide enhanced, coordinated, accessible, cost-effective transportation choices for older adults, people with disabilities and low-income populations in a six county region surrounding Aiken, SC.

"The Resource Center here in Aiken is a great example of how Intelligent Transportation Systems technology can make a real difference in the lives of the people who depend on transportation and transit services to meet their most basic needs," said RITA Administrator Appel. "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act-sponsored projects are getting Americans back to work and having a positive impact on the quality of life in our communities."

Funded in part by a \$561,000 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant and \$980,032 in grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation's United We Ride/Mobility Services for All Americans (UWR/MSAA) initiatives, the Lower Savannah Council of Governments Aging, Disability & Transportation Resource Center (ADTRC) will now provide accessible customer-based travel information and trip planning services to a 4,000 square mile rural region with a population of 300,000 people.

The newly enhanced transportation resource call center has added customer-oriented features, such as automated telephone and Internet-based trip reservations and management, and has expanded its transportation resources to four counties that previously had no access to transportation services. In addition to transportation management, callers and those visiting the center's website will also have access to a

searchable database of human service resources information, including utility bill assistance, local food pantries, support groups for health issues, workforce training, and how to contact officials concerning local governmental questions.

The goal of the UWR/MSAA initiative is to improve transportation services and simplify access to employment, healthcare, education, and other community activities through advanced technologies like Intelligent Transportation Systems, and by extending transportation service partnerships with consumers and human service providers at the federal, state, and local levels across various modes of transportation, social welfare programs, and geographic areas. The ADTRC is one of three national demonstration one-call centers funded by the UWR/MSAA initiative.

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