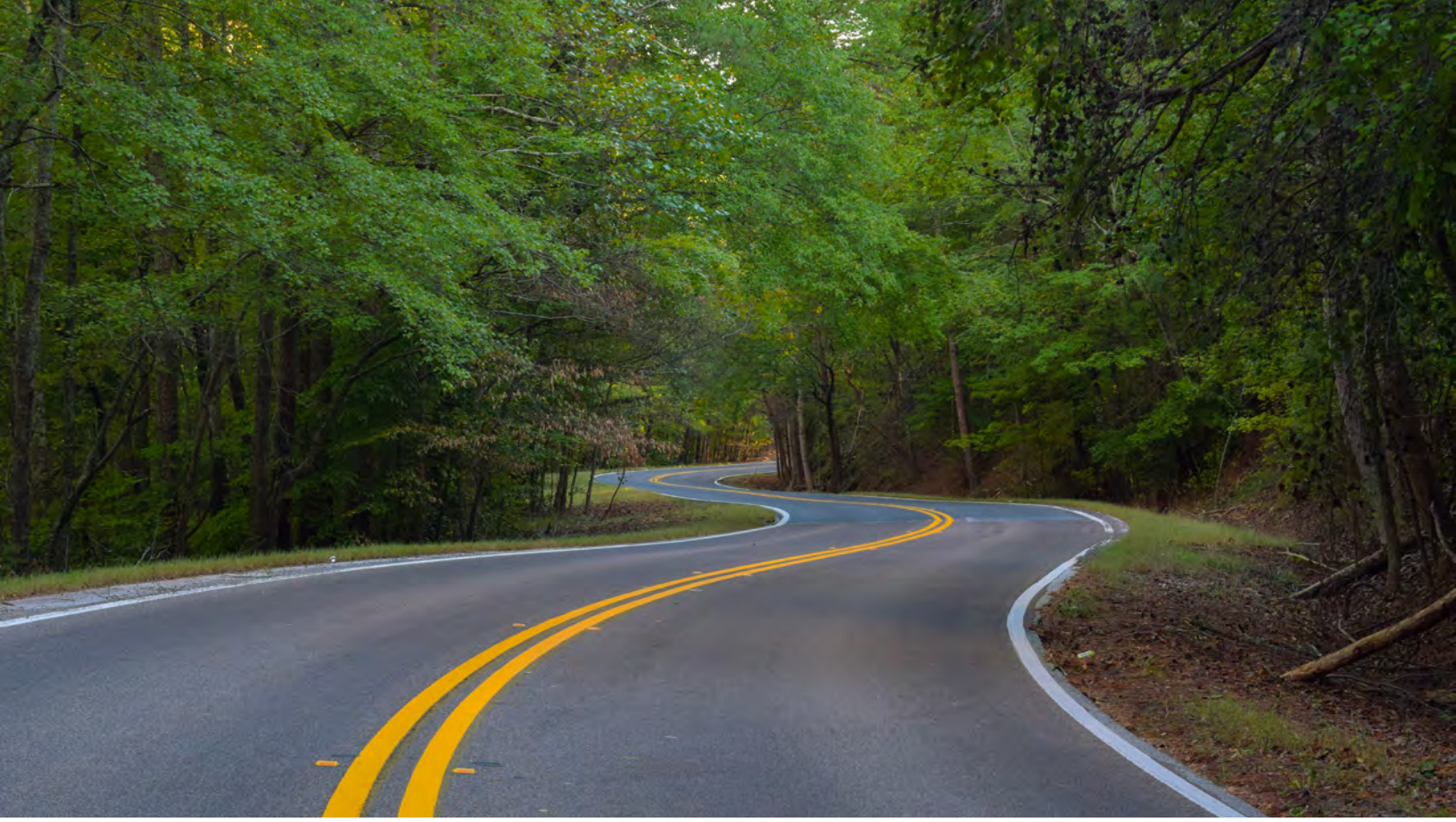

Cartersville-Bartow MPO

Trip Distribution

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cartersville-Bartow MPO (CB-MPO) is one of the youngest MPOs in the state of Georgia. Despite being constructed in 2013, CB-MPO covers a high-growth area in North Georgia.

In the time since its inception, CB-MPO officials have overseen an area that continues to steadily grow. This is due in large part to the area's close proximity to Atlanta — with a direct line down Interstate 75 — and its ability to house large-scale industrial developments — including factories for EV batteries and solar panels.

With all the industry creeping north from metropolitan Atlanta, CB-MPO sought a solution to help facilitate smart growth.

Officials at the MPO were in search of a way to both monitor and concisely report on all the activity happening in their growing community. They required a solution that would give their team the bandwidth to address community concerns of today, while also being able to deliver long-range plans of the future. The challenge officials sought to overcome was finding a holistic way to report on their jurisdiction.

After meeting with Urban SDK, CB-MPO found the holistic solution they needed: a platform that supplemented their current data sources, upon which they could report out to the community.

Officials have used Urban SDK's platform to overlay census data on roadway metrics to understand where, and how fast, people in the community are traveling. Cartersville-Bartow MPO stakeholders also use Urban SDK's origin-destination data and reporting platform to understand trip distribution in their region.

Trip Distribution Analysis

Methodology

As a relatively young MPO, officials had found itself tasked with limited bandwidth and an increased need for holistic reporting as more industrial and commercial growth has pushed north of Atlanta. Commitments from EV battery and solar panel plants have spurred the labor force, while the pending sale of a 14,000-acre wildlife management area added uncertainty to the future makeup of the region.

Shifting demographics. Increased volumes on the road. New development. Officials began investigating ways to capture activity on their roadways. Interactive dashboards and maps that community members could reference would save officials time in their communications; supplemental data sources would help present a greater deal of understanding.

CB-MPO officials conducted a thorough vetting process. They required that all Census data could be pared down to the TAZ to ensure a granular understanding of the community. They then vetted the amount of historical data — going back seven years — that Urban SDK was able to provide. Once officials were confident in the data's validity, they began onboarding the platform.

Findings

The lightbulb moment for CB-MPO happened almost immediately after onboarding to the platform. After training with Urban SDK's Customer Success Team, officials were able to see the full breadth of their new data and reporting platform.

Not only had they filled all reporting gaps in Census and roadway data, they were able to broadcast it on interactive charts and maps. This provided stakeholders with greater transparency to the community, while increasing engagement. From there, it was off to the races.

CB-MPO worked with Urban SDK to automate their performance measures, PM 1-3; display speed data for FUN Class 1-5; construct a map around the federal government's Justice40 Initiative; and create a trip distribution study for the region's 14,000-acre Pine Log Wildlife Management Area.

With the study, stakeholders were able to clearly visualize how the wildlife preserve impacts travel, and forecast how a sale of the land would change patterns.

From the data to the dashboards to the white-glove service, CB-MPO has experienced a partnership that transformed its operations.