CAT makes ridership

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Clemson Area Transit first shift Manager David Poag accesses the CAT bus Web site on Thursday. CAT recently unveiled a new Google mapping system that will allow riders to plot out their routes prior to boarding the bus.

easier through Google

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — Clemson Area Transit riders will have the opportunity to plot out their routes prior to boarding the CAT bus as a result of a new mapping system unveiled at City Council this week.

CAT Executive Director Al Babinicz said his transit operation is the first and, so far, only facility in the state to offer Google Maps. Babinicz said the Google Maps site provides those with Internet access information that is currently not available with the more traditionalschedules.

While the Google Maps site lists bus stops and times, it also informs riders of the time required to walk to the bus stop. In addition, riders can see the route and approximate time to each destination.

"It's going to become better over time and we'll benefit from Google Transit," Babinicz said, adding, "We just made riding CAT easier and more fun."

Babinicz said 10-12 states use Google Transit. The Tiger Route system, which serves the Clemson University campus, was also recently added.

Riders also have the option to key in a departure and destination address to find the closest bus stop at those locations. The service is free and available on smart phones that have the Google application.

"We have Twitter and Facebook accounts and now have Google maps," Babinicz said. "We're using technology anyway we can."

The CAT director said he also plans to market the service through the print and electronic media and in student orientation sessions at Clemson University, Southern Wesleyan University, Tri-County Technical College and Anderson University. Babinicz plans a hard launch of the new system in time for the fall semester.

Clemson City Council member Jeremy Wright said he feels the Google Maps system will be a big hit among students.

"I could see some students using this to get to class and finding out where their next stop is without having to use a map," Wright said.

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