City Planning professor is leading candidate to head Georgia Regional Transportation Authority

Shelley Hughes  Institute Communications and Public Affairs

The morning after metro Atlanta registered its smoggiest day of the year, Catherine L. Ross was named the leading candidate to become executive director of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA).

GRTA is a Georgia superagency created by Gov. Roy Barnes to tackle traffic congestion and pollution problems in metro Atlanta’s 13 counties. Ross is a professor of City Planning in the College of Architecture and has extensive experience as a transportation planner and consultant for numerous local, state, and federal agencies.

Speaking at a “State of the Region Briefing” before members of the Regional Business Coalition, GRTA Chairman Joel Cowan said that he expects the board of directors to hire Ross at its next regular meeting on Sept. 8.

Calling Ross “the best among a number of well qualified candidates,” Cowan said that her experience perfectly matches GRTA’s needs. Ross emerged as the top candidate after a search by the firm of Heidrick & Struggles. The firm contacted approximately 150 potential candidates and resources.

“Dr. Ross will bring a combination of professional and academic experience in the two subjects we’ll be dealing with—transportation and land use planning,” said Cowan.

“In a similar vein, Ross said that the GRTA job would be the opportunity of a lifetime for her. “If the board chooses to offer me this position, it will present a unique opportunity to make a contribution addressing what are clearly very important issues for the metro-Atlanta area, the entire state of Georgia, and the rest of the country,” Ross said.

Ross praised Barnes and the Legislature for creating GRTA, saying, “We have a governor who is a visionary and doesn’t mind dealing with very tough issues. This is one of the toughest, and he’s facing it head-on. I admire that greatly."

“We have to find ways to travel that are not as demanding on the environment, on our time, and on the economy. We’re all part of the problem, and we all have to be part of the solution.”

Ross grew up in Ohio, graduated from Kent State University, and received her Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning at Cornell University. She also did post-doctorate work at the University of California at Berkeley.

In addition to teaching at Georgia Tech, Ross founded a consulting company that has conducted research for numerous government transportation agencies. She has been published extensively in the fields of urban planning, transportation planning and public participation.

Ross has served as senior policy advisor at the National Academy of Sciences Transportation Research Board and vice provost for academic affairs at Georgia Tech. She is past president of the National Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning and was recently appointed to the national advisory board of the Women’s Transportation Seminar. She also serves as vice chair of the Atlanta Development Authority.
Editor's note: The following article was submitted by President Wayne Clough.

I would like to welcome everyone back to campus for the start of fall term and the first on the semester system for Georgia Tech since 1946. This year begins as we welcome 2,300 of some of the brightest freshmen in the nation, several hundred talented new graduate students and 60 remarkably able new faculty to campus. The effects of this wave of creative people will energize us for yet another year of accomplishment and achievement.

The changeover to the semester system is one of many eventful developments we have experienced at Georgia Tech over the past four years. This period has been one of progress and change. We hosted the Olympics, mandated a universal computer requirement for our entering students, increased and diversified our research funding, restructured the Ivan Allen and DuPree Colleges, undertook a successful capital campaign that is slated to pass $500 million, added over $200 million in new buildings and facilities, and saw our academic rankings steadily rise.

Throughout, we have been guided by our 1995 Institute Strategic Plan, a document that has served us well. Yet events have over-run this plan, and we have by necessity begun to update our Strategic Plan. As the first step in the process, each of our academic and administrative units has completed, or is near completion, of a draft plan. The planning process is under way at the Institute level as well, and we expect to complete the new plan before the beginning of the next academic year. Only a few weeks ago I spent several days with the Institute administrative staff and academic deans at a retreat to hear about progress on the unit efforts and develop a framework for the Institute effort. The retreat met all of our expectations, and then some, as we heard about the impressive accomplishments of the units and the plans to build on this for the future.

As part of our preparation for the Institute planning effort, this spring I undertook a series of campus visits, beginning with the academic degree granting units. My executive assistant, Dr. Mark Smith, accompanied me on these visits. We continued them this summer visiting the

From the Hill

G. Wayne Clough

August is yellow jacket month

According to an article in the New York Times: Science Times (August 17, 1999) several entomologists have declared August as official yellow jacket month. Given the plethora of outdoor picnics, it’s not hard to see why. The article’s purpose was to create a more complete personality profile of the yellow jacket, which often gets a bad rap for being a middle-of-the-road, painful pest. The article attributes the following personality traits to yellow jackets:

- Proactively defensive. They are family values types that struggle selflessly to support and defend their kin.
- Supreme architects, due to their durable and complex nests
- Having an innate capacity to learn
- Adept at switching roles

Library’s new virtual service

The Georgia Tech Library and Information Center has added another feature to its list of online services. Real Time Reference allows students, faculty and staff to get answers to brief reference questions from a reference librarian while they wait online. To use this service, visit the Library’s web site at www.library.gatech.edu, then click on “Ask a Librarian.” 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays. Real Time Reference uses AOL’s Instant Messenger Software, which can be downloaded for free from www.aol.com.

Did you know

Ask a Librarian, unveiled in 1994, answers about 600 questions per year. The service offers 24-hour e-mail service. The Library’s reference staff responds to questions within one working day, Monday through Saturday.

For complex questions or research projects, please contact the Reference Department at 894-4528.

Reading groups

In keeping with the current book club craze, the Georgia Tech Bookstore is reserving the CyberCafe each Tuesday from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. for reading groups. The bookstore will also provide a free reading guide with suggestions on how to form a book club. The Bookstore’s own reading group will first meet on Sept. 7 at 5:30 p.m. in the CyberCafe to discuss Elinor Lipman’s The Inn at Lake Devine (now available at a 30 percent discount). Reading groups who meet at the CyberCafe receive a 30 percent discount on their chosen books. For more information, contact Gigi Weinrich at 894-1662 or gigi.weinrich@bks.gatech.edu.
Software helps communities weigh incentives to attract new industry

Companies increasingly seek incentives, such as waste treatment, tax abatements or infrastructure enhancements, to locate in communities where their presence will mean more jobs and a better tax base.

Government officials in those communities must weigh the costs against the benefits of granting such incentives. To help with this crucial evaluation, economists at Georgia Tech's Center for Economic Development Services (CEDS) have developed software to provide a detailed fiscal and economic analysis.

LOCI (for Local Impact Model), a fiscal impact model formulated by Bill Riall and Robert Lann, estimates how government costs and revenues will change from adding new investment to a local economy, such as a new manufacturing plant, distribution center, tourist attraction or office headquarters. The model fills a gap left by traditional input-output models that are both unreliable for small economies and invite the all-important cost side of the equation. For example, landing a new firm will stimulate the local economy, but with that growth comes more demand for services.

According to Lann, manager of research services for CEDS, LOCI: 1) provides the information to know how far a community can go in granting incentive demands; 2) supports the community's side in negotiations by supplying data about how government costs may change; and 3) helps communicate how a local economy works.

"We think LOCI levels the playing field by giving communities a tool to estimate the fiscal and economic impacts from a new business location for themselves. They no longer have to rely only on the claims of the prospect," Lann said.

LOCI has become an important instrument in the state's economic development toolbox. Since 1995, Georgia communities have had to conduct a fiscal impact analysis to apply for a Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) grant from the state Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Noted Brian Williamson, director of DCA's Office of Economic Development, "It is imperative for local governments and development authorities to demonstrate that public benefits from an undertaking will exceed public costs. While handling diverse projects of all kinds and complexity, the LOCI model has proven itself very useful in assisting local governments to know 'how much is enough' when granting local incentives."

During the fiscal year ending June 1999, 50 LOCI projects were completed in 44 Georgia counties. If company locations/expansions actually occur from these projects, they would mean a total planned investment of more than $190 million and an estimated 15,689 new jobs.

LOCI, said Riall, also estimates other impacts, such as the increase in new employment, income, households, commercial and industrial establishments and retail purchases. LOCI's calculations are based on two primary sets of data. One is a community profile involving such items as tax rates, government fees, utility usage and demographics. The second contains information about the new investment, including construction and operating costs, inventories and payroll.

Later versions of LOCI, said Riall, will improve how government costs are allocated to residential, commercial and industrial sectors based on the demand each sector exerts on government services. Researchers also are exploring ways to use statistical methods to estimate government costs and revenues based on a community's population, number of businesses and other characteristics. In addition, CEDS researchers are working on an offshoot of LOCI, a state-level impact model using a similar design. It should be completed this fall.

Project seeks users for advanced video-conferencing network

The Video Development Initiative (ViDe), a partnership between 13 universities and high-performance networks, is requesting proposals for use of its Large-Scale Video Network Prototype (LSVPN). The LSVPN project is sponsored by the Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) and IBN Planet, with collaboration from the New York State, Education and Research Network (NYSERNET).

The LSVPN is a distributed system of H.323-based videoconferencing services being deployed by ViDe in the Southeastern United States and New York State.

University researchers involved in projects that could benefit from the use of videoconferencing are invited to apply for use of the network. Projects that involve some universities and researchers from outside the SURA and NYSERNET region are eligible to apply. The deadline for applications is Sept. 15.

Georgia Tech is leading the ViDe initiative: Ed Price, co-director of the Interactive Media Technology Center, is administrative chair of ViDe; Mary Trauner, manager of high-performance computing for the Office of Information Technology is head of the video conferencing working group; and Grace Agnew, assistant director for Systems and Technical Services at the Georgia Tech Library is head of the video-on-demand working group.

For more information on ViDe, or for a copy of the RFP, see the web at www.vide.net, or contact Ed Price at ed.price@oit.gatech.edu.
**Classifieds**

**Sports**

**Sept. 4**

Football. Georgia Tech at Navy, noon. For tickets or more information, call 894-5447 or see www.ramblingwreck.com.

**Sept. 10 - 11**

Women's volleyball, Courtyard by Marriott Classic. Sept. 10: Tech vs. South Carolina, 7:30 p.m.; Tech vs. Santa Barbara, 7:30 p.m. Sept. 11: Tech vs. Virginia Tech, noon; Tech vs. Arizona State, 5 p.m. O'Keefe Gym. For more information, see www.ramblingwreck.com.

**Miscellaneous**

**Sept. 9**

Georgia Licenses on Wheels (G.L.O.W.), mobile driver licensing facility of the Georgia Department of Public Safety Division, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., behind Campus Police Department. Services: Georgia driver's license renewals, lost license replacement, new resident licensing, handicapped parking permits, ID cards. Fees (cash only): $15, $8, $10; ID cards, $10; name of address or name, $10; learner's permit, $10; veteran's license, free. Contact: Linda.wagner@police.gatech.edu.

Fall Volunteer Agency Fair, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Skiles Walkway. Learn about the various volunteer needs in Atlanta. Rain date Sept. 14. Contact: LaDonna Bowen, 894-2805.

**Courses/Workshops**

**Sept. 8**

“Fundamentals of Engineering: Preparation for the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam,” Mondays/Wednesdays through Oct. 25, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., $450. For information, contact 894-2547 or conted@gatech.edu.

**Brown Bags/Lectures**

**Sept. 3**

Cognitive Science Program faculty meeting, noon - 1:30 p.m., CBK, Rm. 303. Lunch provided. RSVP to Susan Jackson, susan@cc.gatech.edu or 894-7865.

**Sept. 7**

Engineering Psychology Colloquium Series presents “Alerting Systems for Pilots—Use and Nonsense,” by Dr. Amy Pritchett, School of Industrial and Systems Engineering. 4 - 5:30 p.m., Psychology Building, Rm. 249. Contact: Wendy Rogers, 894-6775 or wr4@prism.gatech.edu.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

1996 Yamaha Royal StarTour Classic, 6K miles, garage kept, many extras, $11,500 OBO. Contact kim.banks@mse.gatech.edu or call 770-923-1848, 6 - 10 p.m.

1984 Chevrolet Cavalier station wagon, 4-dr, auto, a/c, power steering/brakes, 202,000 miles, but in great mechanical shape, $1,550 OBO. Contact 770-445-2448 (eve) or robin.cubbage@success.gatech.edu.

1990 Ford Taurus GL, white with blue interior, 89K miles, fully loaded, alloys, power everything, great condition, second owner, needs AC work, $2,200. Call 894-4062.

1999 Ford Taurus GL, white with blue interior, 89K miles, fully loaded, alloys, power everything, great condition, second owner, needs AC work, $2,200. Contact 894-4062.

1991 Buick Century, loaded, low mileage, great condition. $400 OBO. Contact John, 770-222-9998.

1993 Geo Metro, 5 speed, 106K miles, $500. Contact 894-9452, 770-478-7617 or lonnie.moore@oca.gatech.edu.

1993 Honda Accord EX, 130K miles, black w/ tan int., 4-dr, 5-spd, sunroof, power everything, A/C, am/fm/cassette, alloy wheels, $6,500. Contact bohnie.mcquagge@icpa.gatech.edu or 894-8089 (day), 577-1289 (eve, weekends).

Contact bohnie.mcquagge@icpa.gatech.edu; thing, A/C, am/fm/tape, alloy wheels. $6,500. w/ tan int., 4-dr, 5-spd, sunroof, power every-

Express line hours: Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

1995 Honda Civic EX Coupe (2-dr), red, all power, am/fm/cassette, sunroof, new tires, new brakes, 69K miles, $11,900. Contact susan.eliot@che.gatech.edu, 894-2865 (day) or 770-944-8580 (eve).

1995 Saturn SL, $7,300 OBO. One owner, 5K miles, am/fm/cassette, starter disable security, a/c, pw steering, dual airbags, 5-spd manual transmission. Contact 770-437-9643 or cheri.bernard@success.gatech.edu.

Macintosh II/3 with extended keyboard, high- resolution monitor, mouse, modem, software, manuals. $150. Contact Raymond, 894-0337 or rg26@prism.gatech.edu.

IBM Thinkpad 365XD, CD-ROM, 3.5 16 bit card, sound, 500 MB Pmtk, 24 MB RAM, 8/10 MB Hdd dev, 10.4" screen. $2,500. Contact 894-6062 or sean.porter@library.gatech.edu.

Storehouse butcher-block kitchen table, round, approx. 3' diameter. Bought new 3 years ago, will take $325. No chairs. Contact stacy.bales@business.gatech.edu.

Newly recovered sofa and loveseat, teal green with multi-colored accents, dark wood frame. Excellent condition. Will e-mail photo on request. $400 OBO. Contact 894-7613 or aine.anderson@scpa.gatech.edu.

**Brown Bags/Lectures**

**Sept. 3**

Cognitive Science Program faculty meeting, noon - 1:30 p.m., CBK, Rm. 303. Lunch provided. RSVP to Susan Jackson, susan@cc.gatech.edu or 894-7865.

**Sept. 7**

Engineering Psychology Colloquium Series presents “Alerting Systems for Pilots—Use and Nonsense,” by Dr. Amy Pritchett, School of Industrial and Systems Engineering. 4 - 5:30 p.m., Psychology Building, Rm. 249. Contact: Wendy Rogers, 894-6775 or wr4@prism.gatech.edu.

**Courses/Workshops**

**Sept. 8**