

Transportation Assistance Group

# Tuskegee Alabama

## Observations, Considerations and Recommendations

August 2012



*Paul S. Sarbanes  
Transit In Parks*

Technical Assistance Center

UNDERSTANDING

RESOURCES

SOLUTIONS

*This document was prepared for the Federal Transit Administration  
by the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Technical Assistance Center*

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## AUTHOR

This document was authored by the Interagency Transportation Assistance Group (TAG) of the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Technical Assistance Center (TRIPTAC).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is the result of many dedicated individuals interested in furthering alternative transportation options in and around Federal lands. The individuals who made preparations, logistical arrangements and participated in meetings offering facilitation skills and expertise are listed in Appendix A. TAG team members thank these individuals for their time and contributions that greatly facilitated this work. A special thank you goes to Sandy Taylor, Deanna Mitchell and Tim Sinclair from the National Park Service (TUAL) for preparations, logistical arrangements, and local expertise. The TAG team also thanks the National Park Service and the Federal Transit Administration for providing staffing and other support to this effort. Thank you to Vester Marabel ("Mr. Tuskegee") for his tour of the Oaks, and his insight on all the other historical sites in the area. Finally, thanks to Steve Lowe (NPS-HAFE) who acted as the team's "official photographer."

## NOTICE

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ATS	Alternative Transportation Systems
DOT	Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
HAFE	Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NPS	National Park Service
SEMO	Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail
SERO	National Park Service's Southeast Regional Office
TAG	Transportation Assistance Group
TAC	Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program Technical Assistance Center
TRIPTAC	Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program Technical Assistance Center
TUAI	Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site
TUIN	Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
USFS	United States Forest Service
VA	Veterans Administration



# 1. INTRODUCTION

A Transportation Assistance Group (TAG) is an early planning activity that is conducted in advance of pursuing an alternative transportation plan and implementation, and is conducted by a multi-agency team of professionals who assist agencies and/or communities to identify transportation issues and alternative transportation opportunities in and around public lands. Alternative transportation systems (ATS) provide alternative travel modes to the private automobile and may include bicycle and pedestrian networks, intelligent transportation systems, rail, trolleys, shuttle buses and/or trams. A TAG team visited Tuskegee, Alabama from April 24-26, 2012, to listen to local representatives' thoughts on ATS needs and to observe transportation conditions in Tuskegee and surrounding public lands.

Results of the site visit are documented in this report which is organized as follows. Section 2 contains background information including area description, existing alternative transportation facilities, recent planning studies and a list of the April 23 meeting participants. Section 3 describes TAG team observations including what is working well and opportunities for ATS in the Tuskegee area. Section 3 describes existing partnerships, stakeholders and Tuskegee's community vision and public interest in alternative transportation. Section 4 presents considerations, findings and recommendations from the TAG team's analysis. Appendix A provides a list of relevant resources. Appendix B contains a list of meeting participants and their contact information by agency.

## 1.1 APRIL 2012 TAG MEETING PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals participated in the April 24-26 Tuskegee TAG meetings. The three-day meeting agenda and additional stakeholders are noted in Appendix A.

### **Transportation Assistance Group (TAG)**

- Robert Buckley, FTA Region IV, Community Planner
- Clarence Cobb, Groome Transportation (Auburn, Alabama)
- Lee Edwards, National Park Service, SERO
- Rex Huffman, Auburn University Transportation Manager
- David Kack, Research Associate, TRIPTAC
- Steve Lowe, NPS, HAFE
- Deanna Mitchell, Site Manager, TUAI
- Phil Shapiro, Deputy Director, TRIPTAC
- Tim Sinclair, Chief of Interpretation, SEMO/TUAI/ TUIN
- Sandy Taylor, Superintendent, SEMO/TUAI/TUIN

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

The National Park Service's (NPS) Southeast Regional Office contacted the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit In Parks Program Technical Assistance Center (TAC) to explore ATS opportunities primarily at the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (TUIA), but also to explore how ATS could link the Airmen site with the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site (TUI). It is noted that several staff, including the Superintendent, have responsibilities for both the TUIA and TUI sites, with several having responsibility for the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, as well. Representatives from TUIA, TUI and the TAG participated in a teleconference call on April 10, 2012 to discuss the ATS needs for the NPS sites in Tuskegee. Key discussion points during this call included moving persons with limited mobility (including persons with disabilities) from the new parking lot at TUIA to the historic sites at the airfield, and also how ATS could possibly connect the TUIA and TUI sites, which are approximately 5 miles apart.

### 2.1. TUSKEGEE AREA DESCRIPTION

The City of Tuskegee, with a population of 9,865, is located in east-central Alabama and is 40 miles east of Montgomery, the State Capitol. Atlanta, Georgia is approximately 125 miles to the northeast; Columbus, GA is about 45 miles to the east, and Auburn, Alabama is 19 miles to the northeast. Tuskegee is the largest community (and County Seat) and one of four incorporated towns in a predominantly rural county (Macon County, with a population of 21,452). As shown in Table 1, the population in Tuskegee had grown from the 1960's to the 1980's and declined since the 1980's. While it is not the purpose of the TAG to focus specifically on the causes for the changes in population, it is noted that many in the area believe completion of the TUIA site could increase visitation to the area, and perhaps lead to an increase in population in the area.

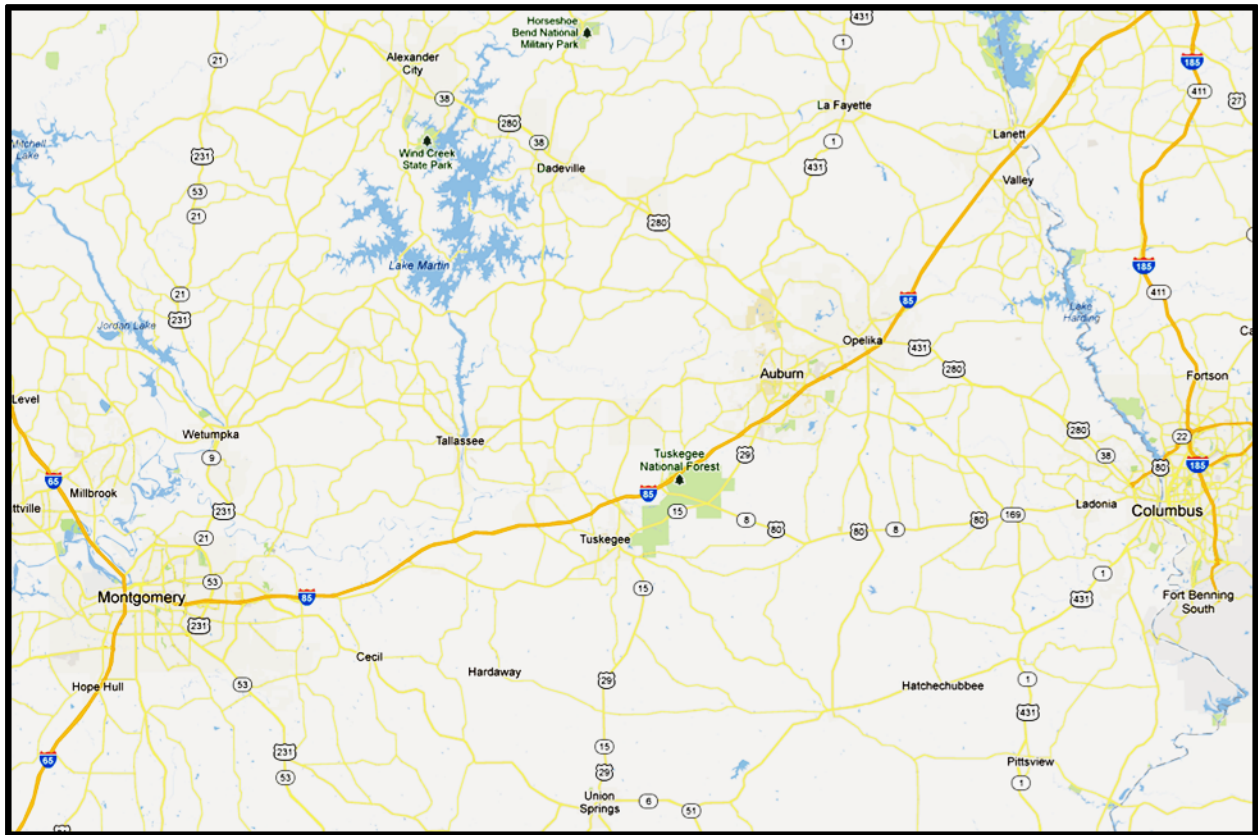
*Table 1: City of Tuskegee Population*

Year	Population
1960	7,240
1970	11,028
1980	13,327
1990	12,257
2000	11,846
2010	9,865

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

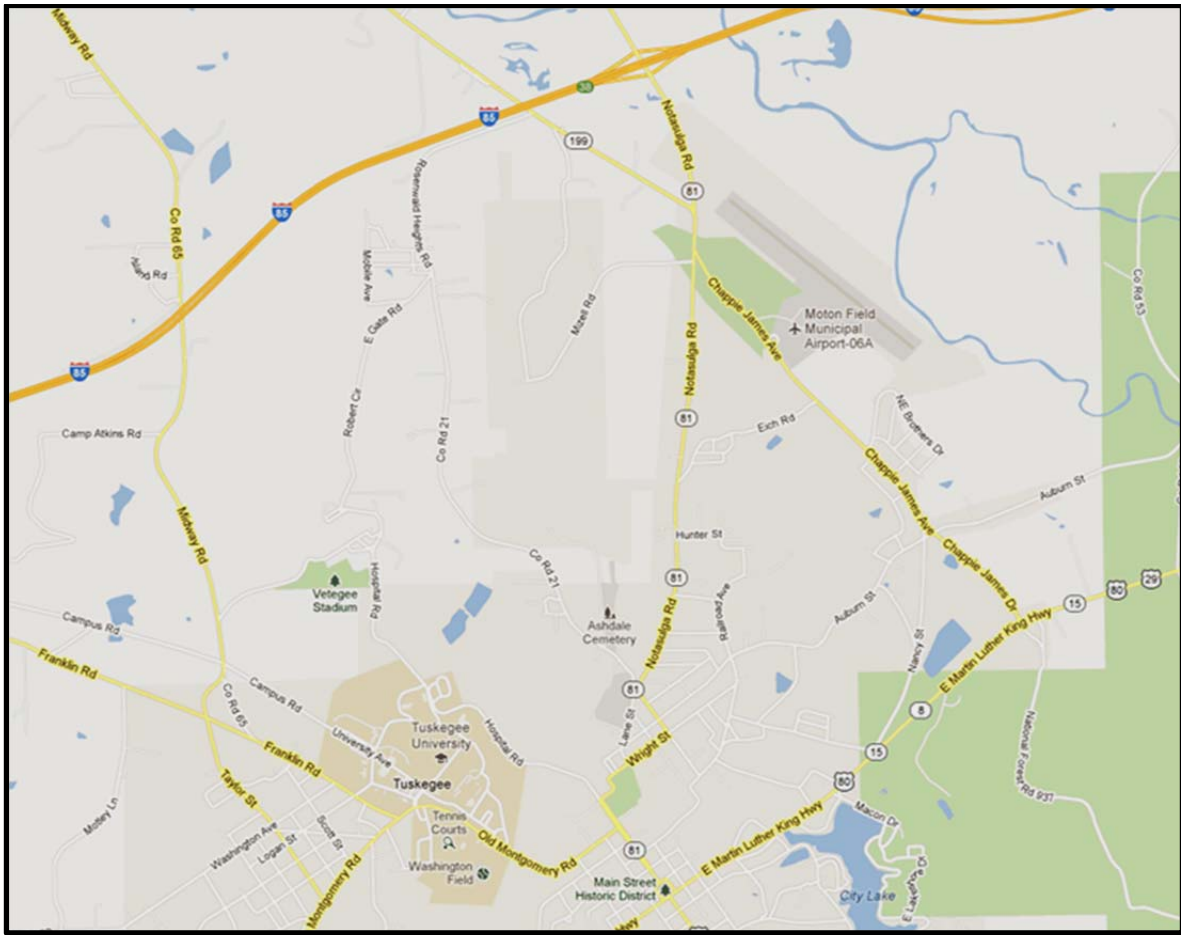
### 2.2. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Interstate 85 is approximately 3 miles north of Tuskegee and connects Montgomery, AL to Atlanta, GA. U.S. Highway 80 runs approximately east/west connecting Montgomery, AL to Columbus, GA; and U.S. Highway 29 runs north/south, connecting Auburn, AL to Union Springs, AL (approximately 23 miles south of Tuskegee). Figure 1 shows the main roads in the area.



**Figure 1: Tuskegee Area Roads**

Source: Google Maps



**Figure 2: Greater Tuskegee Area**

Source: Google Maps

### 2.2.1. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation in the Tuskegee area is provided by the Macon Russell Community Action Agency. The service is available to anyone, regardless of their age. Rides are available Monday-Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm. The service is a demand response service, which means that an individual must call the agency 24 hours in advance to schedule a ride.

The cost of the service is \$10/roundtrip for a ride within Tuskegee, and \$25/roundtrip for a ride outside of the area. Trips are restricted to destinations (towns) that are within Macon and Russell Counties.

### 2.2.2. SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION

There are several services that provide transportation along the Interstate 85 corridor. Express 85 is an airport shuttle that provides services from the Atlanta, GA to Montgomery, AL, with a stop in Tuskegee at the Kellogg Conference Center on the campus of Tuskegee University. Reservations are required 24 hours in advance, and there are five departures, seven days per week, from Tuskegee to the west (Montgomery) or east (Atlanta Airport).

Groome Transportation, which provides transportation services on the Auburn (Alabama) University campus, also offers a shuttle service to the Atlanta airport. The current airport shuttle service has

twelve roundtrips per day. While the service currently does not provide service to the Tuskegee area, there has been some discussion of extending the airport shuttle service to Tuskegee. If this were to happen, there is the possibility that the service could also be used to move passenger between the TUIAI and TUIN sites in Tuskegee.

A shuttle service for the students of Tuskegee University was implemented this past fall (August 2011). The impetus for the shuttle was a fire in one of the dormitories on campus. Tuskegee University initially implemented the service to shuttle students between campus and the off-site housing area (an apartment complex) to be used due to the fire. The shuttle service grew, however, to include service on the campus, service within Tuskegee, and trips between Tuskegee University and Montgomery. The service to Montgomery is primarily on the weekends for shopping purposes.

Tuskegee University owns the vehicles (buses); however, the system is actually operated by Sodexo, which is a contractor that operates the facilities, food services, etc. for the University.

### **2.2.3. RECENT PLANNING EFFORTS**

On April 25, a stakeholders meeting was held at the Skyway Club (TUIAI) to discuss transportation issues (and other issues in general) in regards to the TUIAI & TUIN sites. During the Stakeholders meeting the Mayor of Tuskegee noted that the City was finalizing an update to its comprehensive plan. The Mayor noted that he would share the plan with the TAG to distribute to all participants, given the caveat that everyone understood that the plan (City of Tuskegee Alabama Comprehensive Plan Update 2011) had not been adopted yet by the City Council.

As noted within this document, there are several elements in the Comprehensive Plan that are similar to observations made by the TAG participants.



### 3. OBSERVATIONS

Tuskegee is a community rich in historical sites, and the National Park Service manages two of the most significant sites, the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site at Moton Field, the Oaks (Booker T. Washington's home) and the George Washington Carver Museum, both of which are part of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site. Other museums, historical and cultural sites within ten miles includes: Tuskegee Army Airfield, Veterans Administration Hospital, Shiloh-Rosenwald School, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee Human & Civil Rights Multicultural Center, Tuskegee Heritage Museum, Macon County Courthouse, and others.

While all these sites exist, there is little signage (wayfinding) that allows people to easily find all these locations, and there is little cross-promotion between the sites. Observations are further detailed in the remainder of this section.

#### 3.1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

On the first day of the TAG meeting the TAG team developed a series of goals and objectives to define what the local community is trying to accomplish and how transportation improvements could contribute to achieving that condition.

Five goals were identified by the TAG team including:

1. Revitalize Tuskegee Community (economic development)
2. Promote parallel visitation among sites in Tuskegee (integrate sites)
3. Enhance visitor experience (satisfaction)
4. Supporting access to the sites (people w/limited mobility, lack of parking)
5. Create a financially sustainable transportation system by 2020

A number of objectives related to transportation facilities and services to accomplish these goals were identified including the following:

1. Provide mobility-impaired access to 85% of sites by 2020
2. Provide multi-modal facilities (bike racks, etc.) by 2015
3. 90% of the spaces in the NPS parking lots should be utilized by site visitors, and signed properly by 2015
4. Have a plan for group & educational visitors (field trips) by 2015
5. Have an access plan for large vehicles (RV's) by 2015
6. 50% of TUAJ visitors should go to Tuskegee community by 2020
7. 75% of visitation should be shared between TUAJ & TUIN

The full set of goals and objectives are included in Appendix C. The Tag team used these goals and objectives to identify future transportation activities that the NPS should pursue for the area.

#### 3.2. TUSKEGEE AIRMEN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE (MOTON FIELD)

The Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site located at Moton Field is likely to be the first stop for visitors to the Tuskegee area, as it is the closest site to Interstate 85. During the time of the TAG visit, the site wasn't fully operational, as Hangar 2 was still being completed (Figure 3), and a temporary

office space was to be demolished (Figure 4). Once completed, Hangar 2 will include a large theater, historical exhibits, and “classrooms” that will be used by partner organizations including Tuskegee University and Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. Hangar 2 also includes access to the historical control tower that will be part of the exhibits.



*Figure 3: Inside of Hangar 2 (Under Construction)*



*Figure 4: Temporary Office and Interpretive Space to be demolished*

One of the main transportation issues was having people with limited mobility and/or disabilities access the main site from the parking lot. The parking lot is at an elevation 25-30 feet higher than the main buildings (Figure 5, Figure 6, and Figure 7).





*Figure 5: View of Parking Lot and TUAL Site from Chappie James Avenue*



*Figure 6: Parking Lot Area with Roof of Hangar 1 and Control Tower Visible in the Distance*

Note: The Hangar and Control Tower set lower than the parking lot in this photo.



*Figure 7: View from parking lot down toward Hangar 2 and Skyway Club*

While there are adequate paved trails that would ease the walk (there are no stairs to climb), the distance of 1,500 feet with an elevation change of approximately 30 feet may be too much for someone with a mobility impairment.

Another issue is to ensure that people walking down from the parking lot enter the site as planned. The path from the parking lot to the main buildings (Hangar 1 and Hangar 2) splits, and most people would tend to walk down toward the hangars along the walkway as shown in Figure 7. However, the desire is to have people walk down Chief Anderson Road, and walk through the historic entrance gate and past the guard gate (a “ghost structure”) as the Tuskegee Airmen would have entered the area (Figure 8).



*Figure 8: Original Entrance Gate to Site*



### 3.3. TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE (TWO SITES)

There are two facilities (buildings) that comprise the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site (TUIN), the Oaks and the George Washington Carver Museum. Both of these buildings are on the campus of Tuskegee University (formerly the Tuskegee Institute) as shown in Figure 9.

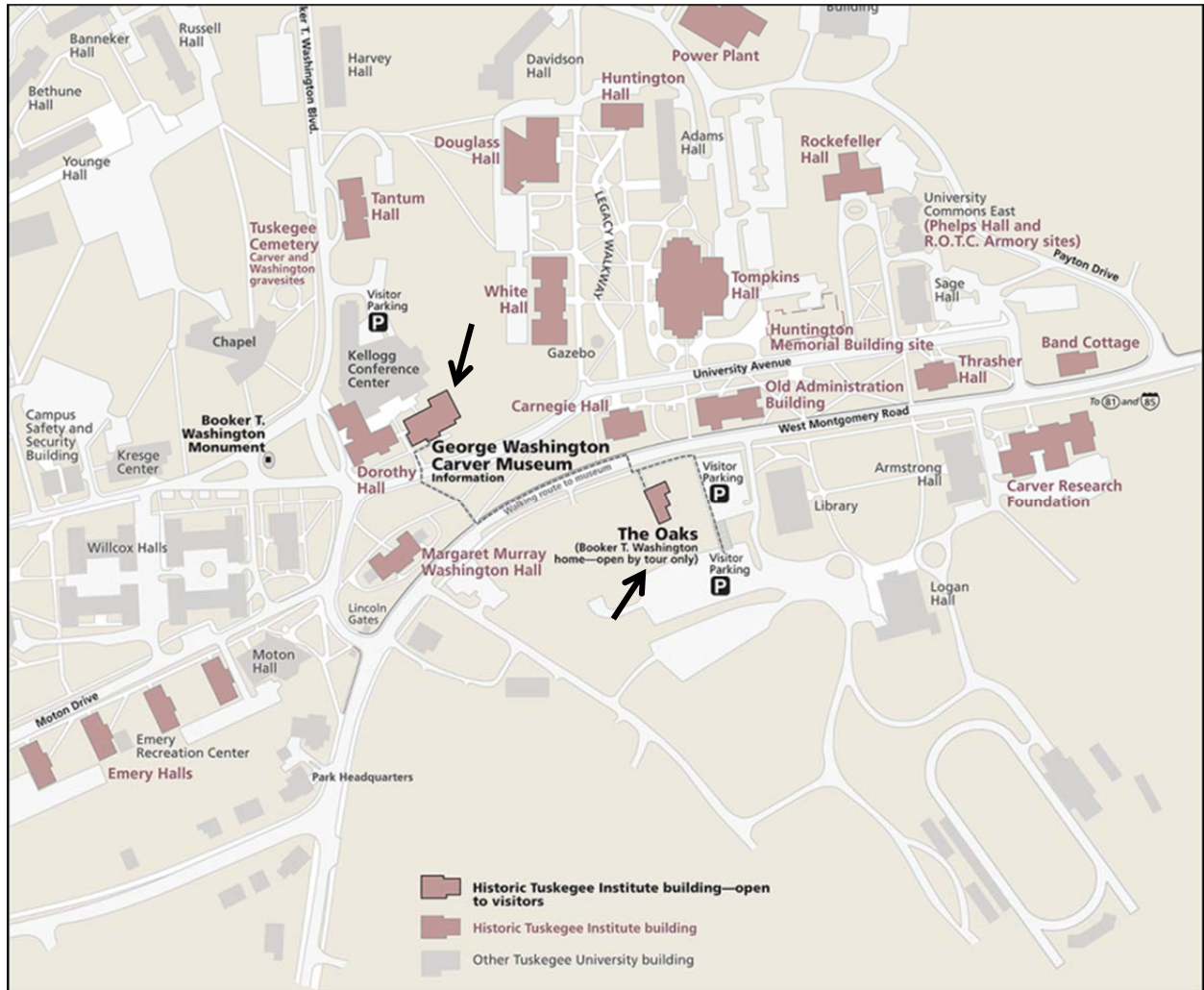


Figure 9: Map of Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site

Source: National Park Service

As noted in Figure 9, there are other historic buildings on the campus, but only the two buildings operated by the National Park Service are open to the public. As shown in Figure 10, there are two parking areas by the Oaks that are for visitors. These NPS controlled parking lots are primarily used by Tuskegee University staff and not the intended visiting public (Figure 10 & Figure 11).



*Figure 10: NPS Parking Lot near The Oaks*



*Figure 11: Parking Space in NPS Lot*

It was noted during discussions that there is an opportunity to review and perhaps develop a new agreement between Tuskegee University and NPS that governs the use of the parking lot. Part of the TAG's discussion was also focused on how visitors and others could travel between the TUAJ and TUIN sites without the need for a car.

### 3.4. OTHER HISTORIC SITES

As noted in Section 2 (Table 2), there are many other historic sites in the area that are not managed by the National Park Service. However, these other sites could play a role in attracting more people to the Tuskegee area, and ultimately increase visitation to TUAJ and TUIN. Most of these additional sites are relatively close to Tuskegee, with the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail being the most distant, with the trail beginning approximately 35 miles from Tuskegee, and extending nearly

54 miles westward to Selma. Information on how these sites may be tied into TUAJ and TUIN is discussed in Section 4.

There are numerous historical sites in Tuskegee, including:

- Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site
- Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
- Tuskegee Army Airfield
- Shiloh-Rosenwald School
- Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church

Approximate distances of some attractions from the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (Moton Field) are shown in Table 2.

*Table 2: Distance between TUAJ and other Historical Sites and Attractions*

Attraction	Miles from TUAJ	Direction from TUAJ
Tuskegee University (Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site)	4	South-Southeast
Tuskegee Army Airfield	6	Northwest
Shiloh-Rosenwald School	6	North
Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church	6	North
Tuskegee National Forest	0.5	West-Northwest
Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail	35	West

### 3.5. AIRPORT ACCESS/PUBLIC & SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION

Moton Field is located approximately four miles from downtown Tuskegee, and is the site of the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site. Moton Field has a 5,000 foot runway, but does not have any commercial air service. It is unlikely that Tuskegee will get commercial airline service, as airports with commercial service are close by: Montgomery, AL (47 miles from Tuskegee) and Columbus, GA (57 miles from Tuskegee). Tuskegee does benefit from having Atlanta, Georgia's Hartsfield – Jackson International airport a relatively short 125 miles away. The Atlanta airport is the busiest airport in the world (based on passenger counts), is a major hub for Delta Airlines, and provides the possibility for strong national and international tourist opportunities.

Public transportation is available on a limited basis within Tuskegee, although there are possibilities for partnerships that could dramatically increase opportunities. As noted in Section 2, there are several existing local and regional systems: Express 85 and Groome Transportation provide regional service that extends all the way to the Atlanta airport. Within Tuskegee, the Macon-Russell Community Action Agency provides public transportation on a demand-response basis, and Tuskegee University recently started a shuttle service within town, as well as service to Montgomery. It is possible that through a partnership between two or more of these agencies, an improved public transit service within Tuskegee is possible.



### 3.6. PARTNERSHIPS/STAKEHOLDERS

There are numerous individuals and organizations that have a stake in increasing tourism activities in the Tuskegee area. This was evident from the Stakeholder meeting that took place on April 25, as part of the TAG visit. During that meeting, a list of potential stakeholders was drafted (Appendix B).

There is a desire to have a stronger partnership between NPS and the local community as well. As noted in the Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update, one Priority Action was “Pursue stronger relationship with the National Park Service to continue attraction development and promotion.” Other partnership opportunities were noted in that document and include improved partnerships with Tuskegee University.

As noted in Section 3.4, there are partnerships that could be initiated to improve public transportation in the area. This is an important point, as the Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update noted a Priority Action of “Improve and increase public transit.”

### 3.7. COMMUNITY VISION/PUBLIC INTEREST

The Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update highlighted many issues that were similar to issues noted by the TAG including increased partnerships, wayfinding and signage issues, and public transportation opportunities. There are many groups working to increase visitation to the Tuskegee area, and to redevelop the area to attract new people to Tuskegee. By working together, it is more likely that this will occur.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The TAG recommends pursuing planning and implementation activities in parallel. There is a sufficient planning base to move forward with some site specific planning and implementation initiatives while a unified, long-term cooperative regional planning framework is finalized. It should be noted that many plans are in place, or are being finalized. By working cooperatively, most of the issues in the area should be able to be addressed. Advancing implementation activities is viewed as essential to sustaining the momentum and cooperative spirit among the stakeholders, who are interested in pursuing near term results than further longer range planning. Opportunities exist to provide alternative transportation access and “area wide” historical experiences in Tuskegee and elsewhere in the region.

After considering issues and facts discussed during the TAG, team members agreed on short-, medium- and long-term recommendations that should be considered by NPS and other stakeholders in the Tuskegee area:

### 1. Short-Term Recommendations (One Year or Less)

- a. Create and implement a circulation/wayfinding plan at TUAI
- b. Develop and implement a comprehensive Tuskegee area wayfinding and signage plan
- c. Create a stakeholder group (subcommittee) to facilitate the implementation of the “Tuskegee Experience”
- d. Implement an “information sharing portal”
- e. Implement an auto/pedestrian/biking “Tuskegee Experience” tour

### 2. Medium-Term Recommendations (One to Three Years)

- a. Pilot a bus “Tuskegee Experience” tour
- b. Implement a parking pass/permit process for the NPS parking lot at the Oaks
- c. Plan and construct an augmented “kiosk” to create a “Tuskegee Gateway”
- d. Create a survey to analyze transportation issues/needs in area

### Long-Term Recommendations (Three Years or Longer)

- a. Develop a Greater Tuskegee Transit Plan
- b. Implement the Transit Plan
- c. Update Comprehensive Interpretation Plan

The recommended activities are based on conditions that existed during the TAG visit. Changing conditions and further input and support by stakeholders, may change the importance of these activities, and some items may be implemented on a timeline different than noted below. The recommendations are discussed in more detail in the remainder of this section.

#### 4.1. SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are such that they could be conducted in the time span of a year or so.

##### 4.1.1. CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A CIRCULATION/WAYFINDING PLAN AT TUAI

The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that visitors to the TUAI site circulate from the parking lot to the buildings (primarily Hangar #1 and Hangar #2) as proposed. The steps for this recommendation include: Review the existing plan; Investigate path treatments or other concepts to aid in direction; Finalize the plan; and Implement.

##### 4.1.2. PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE PARKING NEAR HANGAR 1

One of the main transportation issues was having people with limited mobility and/or disabilities access the main TUAI site from the parking lot, which is situated above the main buildings. These individuals might have difficulty walking from the lot to Hangars 1 and 2. The TAG team recommends that at least five parking spaces are reserved next to hangar #1 for individuals with handicapped parking privileges.

##### 4.1.3. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE TUSKEGEE AREA WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE PLAN

This recommendation not only includes signage and wayfinding to get people to the TUAI site, but to the TUIN and other historical sites as well (Figure 12). A similar recommendation was made in the Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update, as a considerable discussion was on Corridors and Wayfinding. Any changes made to wayfinding and signage should be reflected in the Park's website/webpage, maps and brochures. Steps regarding this recommendation include: Review existing plans; Update and create plans as necessary; and Implement.



*Figure 12: Signage on Chappie James Avenue*

Signage must be placed in the proper location, as well, so that visitors get the information they need, when they need it. For example, the sign in Figure 12 is after the entrance to Moton Field/Golden Eagle Aviation (Figure 13).



*Figure 13: Sign for Moton Field/Golden Eagle Aviation*

Source: Tuskegee Macon county community Development Corporation

#### **4.1.4. CREATE A STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SUBCOMMITTEE) TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “TUSKEGEE EXPERIENCE”**

The “Tuskegee Experience” is a term used to describe all the historical, cultural, natural, recreational and other activities/sites in the Tuskegee area. A comprehensive marketing effort would leverage all activities/sites, including those managed by NPS. The tasks to implement this recommendation include: Identify existing organizations and their missions; Determine which organization is best equipped to take on the task; Identify funding for accomplishing the marketing effort, and and Transition the “work plan” to the new organization.

#### **4.1.5. IMPLEMENT AN “INFORMATION SHARING PORTAL”**

The purpose of this recommendation is to create or implement technology that will allow stakeholders to easily share information with one another. Whether it is a draft plan, or information on a tour group visiting the area, a platform that would easily allow information to be shared is valuable. As noted, tasks include: Discuss the issue with Tuskegee University (the most likely partner to implement the portal); Identify alternative technologies and methods; Select and implement the best alternative/solution.

There are existing software/sites such as Google Docs and Basecamp that allow collaboration on documents, etc., so an off the shelf solution is highly likely.

#### 4.1.6. IMPLEMENT AN AUTO/PEDESTRIAN/BIKING “TUSKEGEE EXPERIENCE” TOUR

This follows on previous short-term recommendations as a way to market the “Tuskegee Experience” without a major investment in new infrastructure. With the TUAJ site being the most likely starting point of a Tuskegee tour (given the sites proximity to Interstate 85), it is likely that with improved marketing materials and wayfinding (signage), visitors to the TUAJ site would learn of all the other sites to visit in the area. Initially, most of the travel between sites would be by private vehicle, although there are walking (and biking) options in downtown Tuskegee. The distances between most sites in the downtown area are such that bicycling is an option.

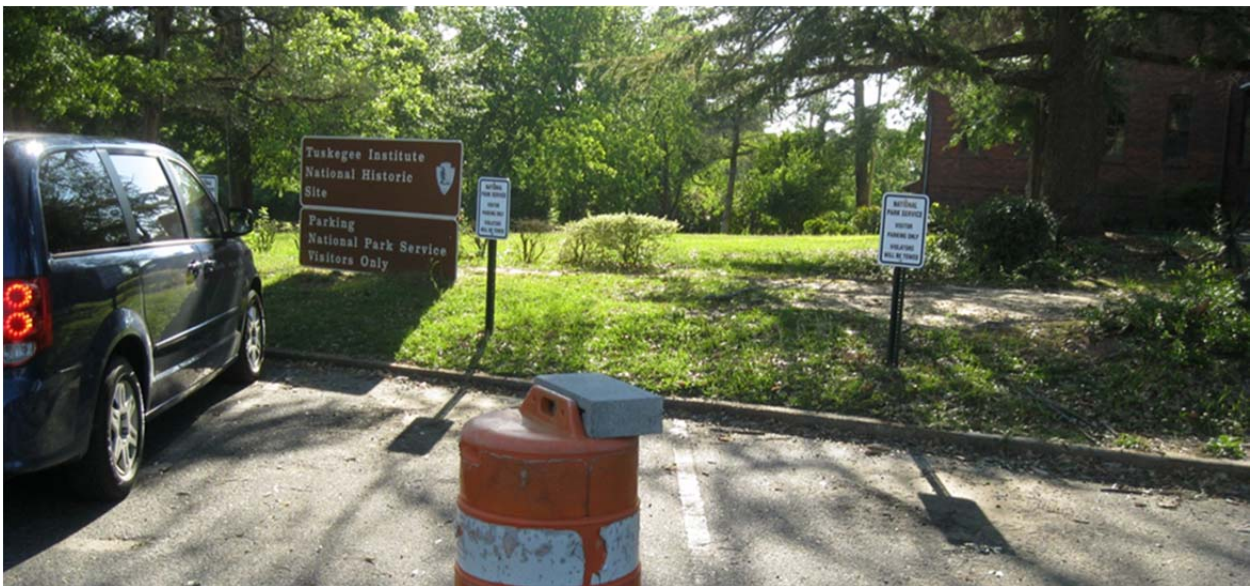
#### 4.2. MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of these recommendations could take from one to two years, or slightly longer depending upon the resources available.

##### 4.2.1. PILOT A BUS “TUSKEGEE EXPERIENCE” TOUR

Using the TUAJ parking lot as a starting point, implementing this recommendation would provide a test of the viability of an interpretive tour of the Tuskegee area. Whether interpretation is provided by NPS staff or private tour guides, the bus tour would allow visitors to see all the sites via a bus or shuttle. There would still be plenty of walking involved with this tour, but transportation between sites such as TUAJ and TUIN would be by a larger vehicle, and not private automobiles.

##### 4.2.2. IMPLEMENT A PARKING PASS/PERMIT PROCESS FOR THE NPS PARKING LOT AT THE OAKS



*Figure 14: Parking Lot near the Oaks*

As shown in Figure 14, there is parking near the Oaks, one of two historical sites at TUIN that is managed by NPS. The parking lot has an upper and lower section, with the upper section being closer to the NPS sites. Currently Tuskegee University uses the upper lot for employee parking, which leaves few spaces for visitors to the NPS sites. The arrival of a new president at Tuskegee University allows NPS an opportunity to review the current parking agreement and to implement any changes



as may be necessary to increase tourist visitation. The tasks to carry out this recommendation include: Identify existing agreements; Review the needs of NPS and Tuskegee University; Modify existing agreements or create new agreement(s) as necessary to provide more visible and convenient parking for the NPS sites, designating the parking spaces closest to the Oaks reserved as accessible (handicapped) parking.

#### **4.2.3. PLAN AND CONSTRUCT AN AUGMENTED KIOSK TO CREATE A “TUSKEGEE GATEWAY”**

Exit 38 off of Interstate 85 is the closest exit to the TUA site. It is likely that most visitors to Tuskegee would use this exit. This recommendation, therefore, is to construct a kiosk or other informational structure just south of I-85 on either the west or east sides of the Notasulga Road at Exit 38 so the visiting public would have an opportunity to be educated of the historically significant sites that exist in the area. NPS (TUA and TUIN) would be a partner in this process, which includes: Review Existing Plan(s); Recruit Partners; Locate Site; Create a Design; and Construct the kiosk.

#### **4.2.4. CREATE A SURVEY TO ANALYZE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES/NEEDS IN AREA**

While a medium-term recommendation from the TAG, as discussed earlier in this document, the Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update includes an immediate priority action to improve and increase public transit. The first step would be to collect data from locals and visitors to determine exact needs. There are some policies related to NPS surveys, so it may be advantageous to work with partners to implement this recommendation. Tasks associated include: Identify stakeholders; Identify partner(s) to design and conduct survey (Tuskegee and/or Auburn Universities are potential partners); Implement survey; Analyze results; Use results to design/implement services and/or facilities.

### **4.3. LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations would likely take two to five years to implement. However, based on stakeholder input, and resource allocation, these recommendations may be implemented sooner.

#### **4.3.1. DEVELOP A GREATER TUSKEGEE TRANSIT PLAN**

As noted earlier, there is a desire to improve and increase public transit in the Tuskegee area. Any transit planning efforts could take advantage of information collected through a survey (see 4.2.4). While the City, County or Regional Development Authority would likely hire a consultant to complete the plan, ALDOT would likely provide funding for the project. Therefore, the tasks to implement this recommendation include: Contact Alabama DOT about resources available for a planning project; Identify key stakeholders to oversee the development of the plan; Initiate a Request for Proposals to solicit contractors; Select contractor to create plan; Complete the plan.

#### **4.3.2. IMPLEMENT THE TRANSIT PLAN**

Given the emphasis on public transportation, it is likely that transit could be improved in the Tuskegee area and region. As noted earlier, there are several potential partners in the area including: Tuskegee University/Sodexo, Macon-Russell Community Action Agency, Express 85 and Groome Transportation. Tasks to implement the transit plan include: Review recommendations from the

plan; Work with partners; Identify funding sources; Implement the plan; Analyze outcomes (learn); and Modify as necessary (adapt).

#### **4.3.3. UPDATE COMPREHENSIVE INTERPRETATION PLAN**

The Long Range Interpretation Plan for the TUIAI site (October 2003) is currently the only interpretation plan for the site. Even though the TUIAI site is not yet completed; based on the wayfinding and signage recommendations noted here, an update to, or creation of, a comprehensive interpretation plan for the TUIAI site is recommended.

#### **4.4. CONCLUSIONS**

The TAG's original purpose was to identify alternative transportation issues and opportunities at the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, in and around Tuskegee, and to discuss options for transit systems. As noted from the recommendations herein, there is no immediate need for transportation improvements, other than improved wayfinding/signage and the creation of accessible (handicapped) parking near Hangar 1. Many of the transportation related improvements noted herein that will help accomplish NPS and area objectives are more comprehensive, area wide improvements, than improvements to any specific site (TUIAI, TUIN, etc.).

Tuskegee is an area rich in history, with many historical, cultural, natural and recreational sites in the area. In addition to those sites managed by NPS are the Tuskegee Army Airfield, Shiloh-Rosenwald School, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, Veterans Administration Clinic and other sites, many in downtown Tuskegee (the Square). A plan to link all of these sites through marketing, wayfinding and improved transportation modes should increase visitation to all sites, and be a positive influence on tourism and economic development in the area.



## 5. APPENDIX A – APRIL 2012 TAG AGENDA AND MEETING PARTICIPANTS

### Tuskegee Airmen Alternative Transportation

#### TAG Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 8:30 – 8:45   | Welcome – Introductions/Overview of meeting (SERO and TRIPTAC)   |
| 8:45 – 9:00   | Overview of Tuskegee area public lands (Park Unit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• History/Background and status of component sites, with emphasis on Tuskegee Airmen NHS</li></ul>  |
| 9:00– 9:15    | Alternative Transportation in National Parks (TRIPTAC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Types</li><li>• Business Models (and Preferred Approach)</li><li>• Case Studies</li><li>• Transportation Assistance Group (TAG)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Purpose</li><li>○ Possible Outcomes/Measurable Results</li></ul></li></ul> |
| 9:15 – 10:00  | Discussion of transportation issues (Park Unit)  |
| 10:00 10:15   | Break  |
| 10:15– 10:30  | Discussion of Stakeholders/Potential Partners (Park Unit)  |
| 10:30 – 12:00 | Goals and Objectives Work session (Led/Facilitated by TRIPTAC)   |
| 12:00 – 1:00  | Lunch  |
| 1:00 – 5:00   | Field Tour of public lands (Park led field tour for TAG Team)  |

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 8:00 – 9:00   | Field Visit Review/Sharing of Observations and Discussion of Transportation Issues following field tour (TRIPTAC Led meeting of TAG Team) |
| 9:00 – 10:00  | Stakeholder prep session (Led by TRIPTAC with Park Participation)   |
| 10:00 – 12:00 | Stakeholder Meeting (Park Unit opens up meeting, Park to Lead and TRIPTAC to facilitate meeting with SERO participation).                 |

- Partnering Opportunities
- Opportunities for Meeting Park Transportation Needs (Capital and O&M)
- Case Studies

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 4:00 TAG Work Session to develop outline of preliminary recommendations (TRIPTAC led meeting of the TAG Team. Park participation requested for final hour of this 3 hr. session).

#### Thursday, April 26, 2012

9:00 – 12:00 TAG Work Session (Continued) to discuss/come to a consensus on recommendations and create an annotated outline for the TAG report (Meeting of the TAG Team Led by TRIPTAC)

12:00 -1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 2:30 Outbrief to Park Management and staff (Led by SERO and TRIPTAC with Presentation to the Park)

- Preliminary Recommendations
- Next Steps

#### Core TAG Participants

Name	Organization
Robert Buckley	FTA-Region IV
Clarence Cobb	Groome Transportation
Lee Edwards	NPS-SERO
Rex Huffman	Auburn University
David Kack	TRIPTAC
Steve Lowe	NPS-HAFE
Vester Marable	NPS-TUAI/TUIN
Deanna Mitchell	NPS-TUAI
Phil Shapiro	TRIPTAC
Timothy Sinclair	NPS-TUAI/TUIN/SEMO
Sandy Taylor	NPS-TUAI/TUIN/SEMO

#### Stakeholder Meeting Participants

Name	Organization
Jeanette Alexander	Tuskegee Senior Citizens Center
Rosalyn Butler	Sodexo-Tuskegee University
Deborah Grey	Tuskegee Human & Civil Rights Multicultural Center
Louis Maxwell	Macon County Commission
Stanley Maxwell	Tuskegee Resident
Edwin Morgan	Sodexo-Tuskegee University
Omar Neal	Mayor, City of Tuskegee
Donna Roberts	Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.
Maggie Thomas	Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.
Charles Thompson	Friends of Tuskegee Airmen
William Wheat, Jr.	Central Alabama Veterans Administration

Note: All of the Core TAG Participants, with the exception of Vester Marabel, took part in the Stakeholder meeting.

## 6. APPENDIX B - STAKEHOLDERS

The list below includes stakeholders that participated in the Stakeholder Meeting, as well as potential stakeholders. This list, while comprehensive, should not be considered as a “final” list.

Alabama Congressional Delegation  
Alabama Department of Tourism  
Alabama Department of Transportation (Public Transportation Office)  
Alabama State Legislature (local Legislators)  
Auburn University (History Department, other Departments)  
Banking Community  
Chamber of Commerce  
City of Tuskegee (Mayor’s Office and City Manager)  
Express 85 (airport shuttle)  
Friend of Tuskegee Airmen  
Groome Transportation  
Historical Aviation Groups (Commemorative Air Force, etc.)  
Macon County Commissioners (Lewis Maxwell)  
Macon County Economic Development Authority  
Macon County School District  
National Park Service  
The Tuskegee News (local newspaper)  
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.  
Tuskegee Army Airfield (Owner)  
Tuskegee Human & Civil Rights Multicultural Center  
Tuskegee National Forest  
Tuskegee University (numerous departments and organizations)  
U.S. Military (Active Duty and Guard units)  
Veterans Administration (local hospital)

Other potential stakeholders include individuals such as George Lucas (Lucasfilm produced the movie Red Tails about the Tuskegee Airmen), Lionel Richie (the singer was born in Tuskegee), and Pastor Bill Winston (born in Tuskegee and a supporter of the Legacy Flight Academy). Local and near-by businesses may also be stakeholders, and include: Golden Eagle Aviation, Kia manufacturing plant, Boeing.

## 7. APPENDIX C – DRAFT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following goals and objectives were drafted during the TAG meetings. There are included herein for informational purposes and to aid future planning and implementation efforts.

1. Revitalize Tuskegee Community (economic development)
  - a. 50% of TUIAI visitors to Tuskegee community by 2020
  - b. 75% shared visitation between TUIAI & TUIN
  - c. 25% of TUIAI or TUIN visitors spend one night in Tuskegee
  - d. Work with the community to increase lodging options (includes campgrounds, RV Park, etc.)
  - e. 50 University students volunteer at TUIAI or TUIN by 2015
  - f. Establish quarterly meetings to improve coordination among local groups
2. Promote parallel visitation among sites in Tuskegee (integrate sites)
  - a. 75% shared visitation between TUIAI & TUIN
  - b. 60% of visitors to TUIAI or TUIN visit at least two other historic sites in community
3. Enhance visitor experience (satisfaction)
  - a. 50% of visitors have personal contact by staff/volunteers by 2020
  - b. 85% of visitors satisfied with ability to locate historical and other significant sites (opportunities) by 2015
  - c. Increase # of special events by 25% by 2020
  - d. Increase visitation to special events by x% by 2020
  - e. Determine visitor needs (unofficial visitor survey) by 2013
  - f. Have 80% of visitors aware of all historic opportunities
  - g. Have 50% of TUIAI/TUIN visitors frequent a local business
4. Supporting access to the sites (people w/limited mobility, lack of parking)
  - a. Provide mobility-impaired access to 85% of sites by 2020
  - b. Provide multi-modal facilities (bike racks, etc.) by 2015
  - c. 90% of parking use at Park facilities used by visitors by 2015
  - d. Have a plan for group & educational visitors (field trips) by 2015

- e. Have an access plan for large vehicles (RV's) by 2015
- 5. Create a financially sustainable transportation system by 20??
  - a. No more than 10% of transportation operational costs contributed by TUAI/TUIN
  - b. Obtain a substantial of financial support from local sources for transportation operations by 2020

Obtain at least five grants to support transportation capital and planning efforts by 2020.

## 8. REFERENCES

KPS Group, 2011. Tuskegee Comprehensive Plan Update (ARC Project No. AL-16431-09).

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2006. Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site Enabling Legislation. Public Law 105-355: Title III – Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, Alabama. November 6, 1998.





