



Impacts of the Sharing Economy in Transportation

Dr. Kari Watkins, Assistant Professor
Civil and Environmental Engineering
Georgia Tech University

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3:30-4:20
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Bio sketch

Dr. Kari Watkins is an Assistant Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Georgia Tech. She returned to her undergraduate alma mater to become a faculty member in 2011 after completing her PhD at the University of Washington. Her teaching and research interests include multi-modal transportation planning, the use of technology in transportation, traveler information, and complete streets design. Dr. Watkins' dissertation involved co-creating the award-winning OneBusAway program to provide transit information tools and assess their impacts on riders, winning her the Council of University Transportation Centers (CUTC) *Wootan Award* for best dissertation in transportation policy and planning. More recently, she has begun to examine opportunities to crowdsource cycling infrastructure and amenity data through the Cycle Atlanta program. Dr. Watkins was recognized by Mass Transit Magazine as a *Top 40 under 40* and she is a three time invitee to a National Academy of Engineers *Frontiers of Engineering*. Prior to her doctoral studies, Dr. Watkins worked for a decade as a senior transportation engineer.

Abstract

Urban transportation is facing a crisis. The way in which we currently choose to move around cities causes congestion, pollution, inequities, accidents and arguably even a disconnected society. But is a slow, smelly bus ride after an unknown wait time a true option? Is a dangerous bike commute darting around cars while inhaling their fumes a better choice? Fortunately, recent improvements in access and use of information technology have begun to overcome the barriers to increased transit and bike usage. We are now looking toward a future where you can plan a transit trip on the fly using the real-time conditions on the network and you can learn the best bike route based on the collective knowledge of fellow cyclists. This talk focuses primarily on the current work of the Urban Transportation Information Lab (UTIL) to use shared data (open data and crowdsourcing) to create better traveler information tools, but also more broadly on the impacts that the sharing economy will have on transportation.

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