Regional Development & Redevelopment Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta
Atlanta, Georgia

Metro Population: 4,708,290 (ranked 9th in U.S.)
City of Atlanta Population: 483,108
Density: 3,162 persons/sq mi.
Sq. Miles of Sprawl: 701.7 (1st in U.S.)
Projected Population by 2030: 6,000,000+
• Integrate regional land use and transportation planning that accommodates the anticipated 6,000,000 by 2030.

• Create a regional growth vision integrating local and regional plans with infrastructure investments facing anticipated growth.
• Smart Growth
• Planning Areas that set Growth Boundaries
  • Metro Area
  • Suburban Area
  • Fringe Area
  • Rural Area
• Government Regulation & Cross Acceptance
Models: Chicago Metropolis Plan

- Investment in “Strong” Regional Centers
- Removal of Restrictive Zoning
- Road Hierarchies
- Better Utilization of Rail Infrastructure
- Pedestrian Friendly Communities
- Protect Regional Resources

Source: Chicago Metropolis 2020 Technical Report
Applicability to Atlanta

Urban Counties: Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton, Gwinnett, Henry, and South Cherokee

- Land Use Issues
  - Center of Job Market & Regional Population
  - Infrastructure Hubs

- Community Issues & Needs
  - Affordable Housing
  - Increased Healthcare & community services
  - Workforce Education

Suburban Counties: Gwinnett, Cobb, Clayton, North Henry, and South Cherokee

- Land Use Issues
  - Bedroom Communities
  - Infrastructure Dependent

- Community Issues & Needs
  - Inclusionary Zoning & Subdivision Development
  - Decentralization of Healthcare & community services

Rural Counties: Douglas, Fayette, Rockdale, South Henry, and North Cherokee

- Land Use Issues
  - Fringe Development, Environmentally Sensitive
  - New Infrastructure that Ruralizes Centers being MADE

- Community Issues & Needs
  - Need for Community Services
  - Application of South Fulton's TDR ordinance
Establishing “Centers”

6 Focus Areas

1. Central Business District
2. Midtown
3. Buckhead
4. Cumberland
5. Perimeter
6. ATL Hartsfield-Jackson Airport
HOV Expansion

Current System

Recommended Expansion
Bike & Pedestrian Paths

- **Goal 1:** A regional system of safe, convenient and accessible bicycling and pedestrian facilities
- **Goal 2:** Promote bicycling and pedestrian travel
- **Goal 3:** Coordinate a continuous bicycle and pedestrian planning and development programs at the regional and local levels.
- **Goal 4:** Provide adequate funding resources quality regional and local bicycle and pedestrian systems.
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Light Rail Transit (LRT)

Heavy Rail Transit (HRT)
**BRT, LRT and HRT**

**Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**
Combines the characteristics of rail with the flexibility of buses & eliminates impediments such as on-board fare collection and traffic signal delays in order to increase bus operating speed and reliability.

**Light Rail Transit (LRT)**
Electric railways with smaller volumes than heavy rail, with average operating speeds generally range from 20-25 miles per hour, depending on location.

**Heavy Rail Transit (HRT)**
As in MARTA’s existing rail system, a high speed, high-capacity system, which operates in an exclusive right-of-way
Goal 1: Improve corridor mobility, reliability, and accessibility to employment centers

Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the environment

Goal 3: Encourage economic development/transit supportive land use
- Northern Corridor: take advantage of the existing GA-400 transportation corridor.
- Central Corridor: generally along MLK Drive
- Southern Corridor: generally along the CSX rail line and Boulder Park Drive
BRT and HRT

- BRT and HRT alternatives that performed best were BRT 1a and HRT 3.

- **BRT 1a** – includes a bus rapid transit system that uses the I-20 HOV lanes between the Hamilton E. Holmes station and Fulton Industrial Boulevard. Bus-only access ramps are assumed at Hamilton E. Holmes Drive as a part of the project. The BRT would also use HOV access ramps (constructed by GDOT) just west of Fulton Industrial Boulevard. The alternative also includes an additional bus-only interchange and proposed BRT station at I-20 and MLK Jr. Drive.

- **HRT 3** – includes a heavy rail extension with an alignment between the CSX railroad and MLK Jr. Drive to I-285, and then generally along the north side of MLK Jr. Dr. to I-20. The alignment then turns west and follows along the south side of I-20 to the end-of-line station west of Fulton Industrial Boulevard. This alternative includes a intermediate station proposed at MLK Jr. Drive/I-285.
The opportunities that would be provided by these alternatives:

- Travel demand modeling estimates that this alternative will yield 80 to 90% of the ridership expected of the highest performing alternative (Heavy Rail along MLK Jr. Drive from Hamilton E. Holmes Station to Fulton Industrial Boulevard) with approximately 40% of the cost.

- The new alternative avoids potential impacts to community resources and neighborhoods along MLK Jr. Drive around Fairburn Road and south of I-20.

- The alternative does not preclude further extensions of fixed guideway transit or BRT some time in the future.

- The BRT portion of the alternative will reduce travel time for passengers accessing employment along Fulton Industrial Boulevard.

- The BRT will further enhance recently expanded service to the Fulton Industrial Boulevard area.

- The project is likely to be more competitive for federal funding due to better cost effectiveness than other alternatives.
• Drawbacks

• the alternative does not reduce travel time to Fulton Industrial Boulevard as effectively as full heavy rail extensions

• There will be less flexibility for parking lot redevelopment at the Hamilton E. Holmes Station since the station will be a primary park and ride for commutes along I-20.
Georgia Regional Transportation Authority

- State of Georgia authority, formed in 1998, to improve Georgia's mobility, air quality, and land use practices

- GRTA sponsors services that are designed to relieve congestion. These services are operated under contract and consist of express commuter bus service and vanpool services.

- Xpress
  - Metro Atlanta's newest public transportation service (2004)
  - Luxury coaches which include plenty of legroom, reclining seats, luggage racks, electrical outlets and reading lamps
  - Funded by rider fares, federal, state and local funds.

Xpress
Commuter Service for Metropolitan Atlanta
Public Transit Providers

- C-Tran
  - Local bus system for Clayton County formed in 2000, linking bus routes to the MARTA, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and major commercial and academic centers in the County.

- CCT
  - Operates 19 bus routes, including local and peak-hour express services. It operates a fleet of 66 buses through a private contractor.

- GCT
  - Local bus system for Gwinnett County formed in 2000 and consists of a mix of local (seven routes), express (six routes) and paratransit service.
  - In addition to its own services, GC Transit operates two express bus routes for GRTA. GC Transit’s services are operated using a fleet of 60 buses and eight paratransit vehicles. All of GC Transit’s services are contracted out to private providers.
Peachtree Corridor

- 14.5 mile span includes
  - Streetcar line system
  - Renewed patterns for cars, bicycles and pedestrians.
  - Wider sidewalk
  - String of parks and plazas
- Funding - $1 Billion over 20 years
- Up and running in 2 – 3 years
Peachtree Corridor

Future Vision
BrainTrain

- Stops at 12 locations
- Connects suburban residential areas to large employers and office campuses in Midtown and Downtown.
- Connects Georgia’s universities
- Potential to be up and running by 2011
• More than 10,000 individuals would use the system every day.

• Removes as many as 5,300 cars from already congested roadways during peak travel times.

• Would generally run alongside existing track and rights-of-way – no need to build new roads.
BrainTrain Funding

- Funding would mainly come from the federal government.
- Need $10 Billion from state government to build train stations.
The BeltLine, a 22-mile loop of historic railroad that encircles downtown and midtown, is a unique opportunity to increase greenspace, improve transit, connect neighborhoods and foster livable communities.

Advantages:
- Greenspace
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing

Runs through 45 of Atlanta's intown neighborhoods, while also touching areas that are abandoned and underutilized.
BeltLine Funding

- Tax Allocation District (TAD)
- Trust for Public Land (TPL)
- Private funding
- Federal funding
- State and local funding sources
• Goal 1 – ARC should take control of all transportation

• Goal 2 - Integrate all rail, buses, trains systems

• Goal 3 – Stronger coordination and connection between all these different transportation modes
Environment & Resources

Land, Air and Water Supply
Environment & Greenspace

Current Issues

- Region loses 54 acres of green space every day
- Accumulates 28 acres of asphalt every day
- More than 350,000 acres of urban land lost since 1973
- 7.8 acres of park space per 1,000 residents
Recommended Actions

- Preserve and improve existing green and open space
- Increase accessibility and connectivity of greenspace
- Encourage infill and Brownfield development
- Protect the region’s environmentally sensitive floodplains
• National Ambient Air Quality Standards
  1. Ozone
  2. Lead
  3. Nitrogen Dioxide
  4. Particulate Matter
  5. Carbon Monoxide
  6. Sulfur Dioxide

• Non-attainment Status
Recommended Actions

- Decrease public works projects during summer months
- Density bonuses to development linking to bikepaths/rail
- Encourage location-efficient mortgages
- Restrict drive-thru services to vehicles of certain heights
- Provide free public transit services on smog alert days
- Decrease parking space requirements in high traffic areas
- Vehicle registration discounts for low annual mileage
- Extend HOV lane usage to low-emissions vehicles
- Reduce vehicle speed within non-attainment areas
- **Finite Supply**

- **Key Water Resources**
  - Chattahoochee River/Lake Lanier 72%
  - Etowah River/Lake Allatoona 12%
  - Ocmulgee River 10%
  - Flint River 3%
  - Oconee River 3%
Environment & Water

- Water Usage
  - Residential
    - Toilet flushing
    - Outside
    - Laundry
    - Showers
    - Baths

- Stormwater Runoff
  - Pollution
  - Flooding
  - Streambank Erosion
City of Atlanta’s Increasing Water Needs

Tri-State Water War

Florida, Georgia and Alabama
  • Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Rivers Basin (ACF)

Georgia and Alabama
  • Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa Rivers Basin
Recommended Actions

**Water Supply**
- Increase municipal water fees
- Increase restrictions on outdoor uses
- Continue water conservation campaigns
Recommended Actions

**Stormwater Runoff**

- Increase pet refuse bags/wastebaskets in public spaces
- Increase developer penalties for onsite stormwater runoff issues
- Increase rivers and streambank buffer zones
- Increase open space development
Housing Goal: To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.

**Our proposed solution:** ARC’s regional plan recommends that each local jurisdiction include a mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance that provides incentives for private developers to construct affordable housing.
Model: Tallahassee Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance

- Applies to all new developments with 50+ residential dwelling units intended for owner occupancy.

- Such developments are eligible for developmental incentives only if they provide at least 10% of units at affordable rates.
Inclusionary units shall be located within primary development or at an alternative off-site location.

OR fee in-lieu of providing inclusionary units.

OR provide 1.5 multifamily rental units per each owner-occupancy unit not otherwise provided.

OR provide the city with one residential lot.
Ordinance Incentives

Developments providing inclusionary units are entitled to receive
- a 25% density bonus
- Design flexibility
- Expedited review (time is money!)
Ordinance Pros & Cons

Pros

- IZ seems within GA’s local gov’ts general right to zone
- Flexibility and incentives should avoid contention that ordinance is a taking

Cons

- Off-site alternative subverts purpose of widespread distribution of affordable housing.
- Fails to address method of resale.
Stakeholder Involvement Program goal: to ensure that the regional plan reflects the full range of regional values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders.

**Our proposed solution:** recommend that all municipalities in metro region adopt a NPU-type citizen participation structure.
Atlanta’s Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) + Birmingham type funding (allocation of CDBG block grants to neighborhood units)
Implementation: Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

To be considered for funding:

- local planning public outreach process that promotes involvement of all stakeholders.
- Diversity of mixed-income residential neighborhoods, employment, shopping/recreational choices
- Access to range of travel modes
Questions?