RESOLUTION BY THE ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION
TO TRANSMIT THE REGION'S PLAN DOCUMENTS
FOR REVIEW BY THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, since 1952 the Atlanta Regional Commission has developed and adopted regional plans for the Atlanta region; and

WHEREAS, these plans include the existing adopted "PLAN 2040" and "The Region's Plan" currently under development;

WHEREAS, The Region's Plan must be prepared pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and consistent with Minimum Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA); and

WHEREAS, in November 2008, Georgia DCA adopted revisions to Chapter 110-12-6, Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning, "Regional Planning Requirements"; and

WHEREAS, ARC will develop The Region's Plan as a regional unified plan and specify a strategic vision and will seek comprehensive approaches to accommodate economic and population growth sustainably in the Atlanta region during the next 25 years; and

WHEREAS, ARC will seek to conserve and protect critical environmental resources, rural landscapes, critical habitats, greenspaces, water supply, water quality, air quality and other environmental features while meeting the overall regional needs to manage growth sustainably; and

WHEREAS, The Region's Plan will seek to incorporate and unify both regional and local growth policy as outlined in Local Government Comprehensive Plans; and

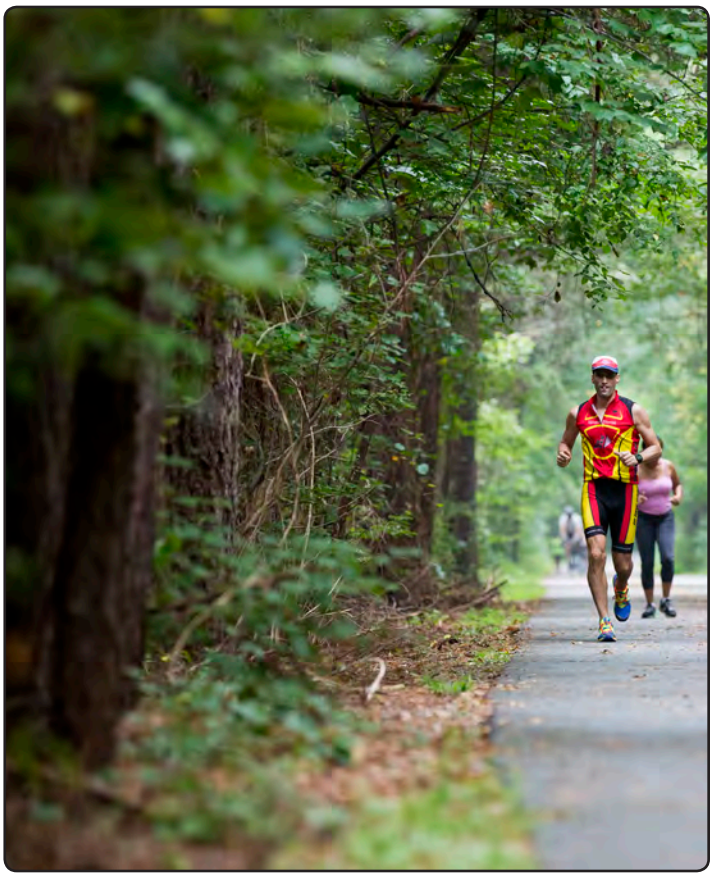
WHEREAS, ARC must submit to Georgia DCA the Regional Assessment document, Stakeholder Involvement Program and Regionally Important Resources Map as the first element under state rules for The Region's Plan development process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission transmits the draft Regional Assessment document, Stakeholder Involvement Program and Regionally Important Resources Plan for review by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

I do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Atlanta Regional Commission on January 28, 2015.

Robin L. Rutherford, ARC Assistant Secretary

THE
REGIONAL
PLAN



The Introduction to the Regional Plan

An Assessment of the Atlanta Region

ARC
ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

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INTRODUCTION TO THE REGIONAL PLAN

The C-130 Production line in Marietta (Image courtesy of Lockheed Martin Corperation)

A Blueprint for a Stronger Region

ACC or SEC; White, Black, Hispanic or Asian; Boomer or Millennial; the residents who call metro Atlanta home have a strong interest in creating a stronger, more vibrant region while protecting the features that have made the region a magnet for people and businesses from across the country and the world.

To build a stronger region, the Atlanta region needs world class infrastructure, which includes a secure water supply and a transportation system for the 21st century; an innovative economy that is recognized as a global hub of technology with a competitive workforce; and healthy livable communities that have art and recreation and provide housing options for all ages and abilities.

With a population projected to grow to 7.9 million people by 2040, the Regional Plan sets the framework for a stronger region to win in the future while continuing to sustain and improve the region's quality of life.

This component of The Regional Plan describes the current state of the region and the its's assets and challenges that will help the Atlanta region win the future. Future documents based upon this data and public outreach will describe the investments, programs and policies that will create a stronger metro Atlanta region.

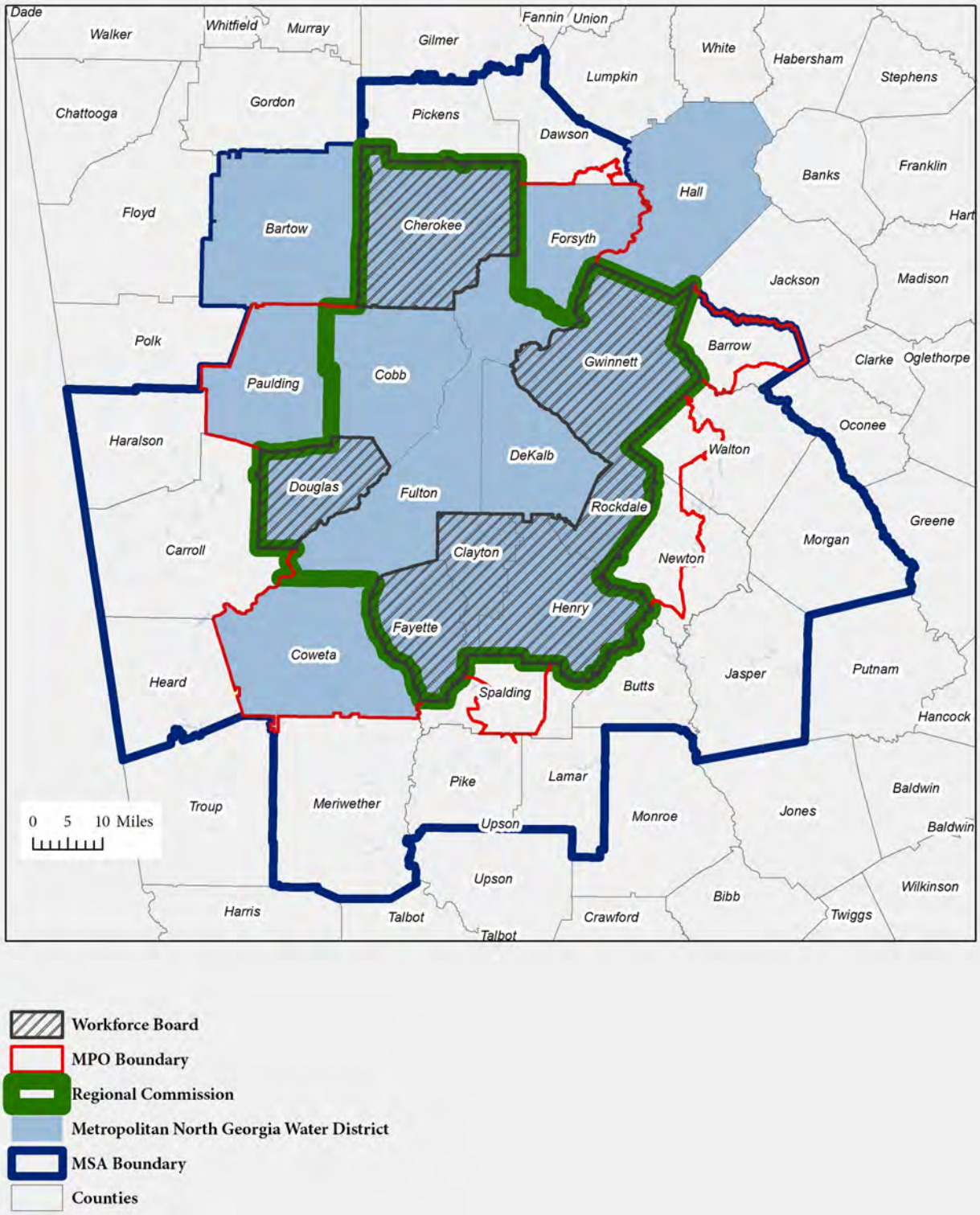
About ARC

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency created by the local governments in the Atlanta region pursuant to legislation passed by the Georgia General Assembly. ARC is not a government, but is the forum through which officials of local governments in the Atlanta region confer to solve mutual problems and decide issues of regionwide importance. ARC engages in a continuous program of research, study, and planning of matters affecting the Atlanta region. As an area of greater than 1,000,000 population, ARC has authority under state laws as a Metropolitan Area Planning and Development Commission (O.C.G.A. 50-8-80).

In addition to being the official planning agency under state law for the 10-county region, ARC is also the transportation planning agency for the Atlanta region under federal law as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the 18-county area. In support of planning for transportation ARC must develop a long-range forecast for population and households for a 20-county area to ensure transportation activities are consistent with efforts to improve air quality in this area. ARC provides planning staff to the 15-county Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD), whose mission is to develop comprehensive regional and watershed-specific water resources plans for implementation by local governments. ARC also serves as the administrative agency for the 7-county Atlanta Regional Workforce Board (ARWB). Aging services and policy guidance are provided by ARC as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

In addition to mandated regional planning, ARC provides technical assistance to local governments as well as leadership programs including the Regional Leadership Institute (RLI), the LINK program, Community Planning Academy (CPA) and the MARC (Model Atlanta Regional Commission) youth leadership program.

The Different Definitions of the Atlanta Metro Area



The Regional Assessment

The Regional Plan is the Atlanta region's long-range plan update for land development and transportation needs, scheduled for completion by March 2016. The Regional Plan will serve as both the Regional Development Plan (RDP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Atlanta region.

The Regional Assessment identifies and confirms the region's needs. In addition to meeting the requirements of the regional assessment for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Assessment also identifies critical findings that will lay the groundwork for policy and program development during subsequent steps of the transportation and regional development planning process.

ARC must prepare and adopt a Regional Plan pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and consistent with minimum standards and procedures for regional planning developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). In 2008, Georgia DCA adopted revisions to Chapter 110-12-6, Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning, "Regional Planning Requirements". The regional plan identifies comprehensive approaches to accommodate economic and population growth that will occur in the Atlanta region during the next 25 years.

The Regional Assessment intends to meet all applicable state and federal requirements while integrating elements of formerly separate regional plans. Additionally, the planning process and subsequent documents will seek to understand and reflect local plans and policies. The Regional Assessment is the first step of the two-year to update The Regional Plan.

Preserving Local Control

The Regional Plan does not mandate any changes to local zoning. Metro Atlanta's cities, towns, and counties maintain decision making authority to adopt plans, zoning and to permit or deny development projects. Similarly, The Regional Plan's forecast does not place controls on development and are developed in collaboration with the regional economists, the development community and local governments.

Resources for The Regional Plan

Here is a listing of the key data resources that are being used in the development of The Regional Plan

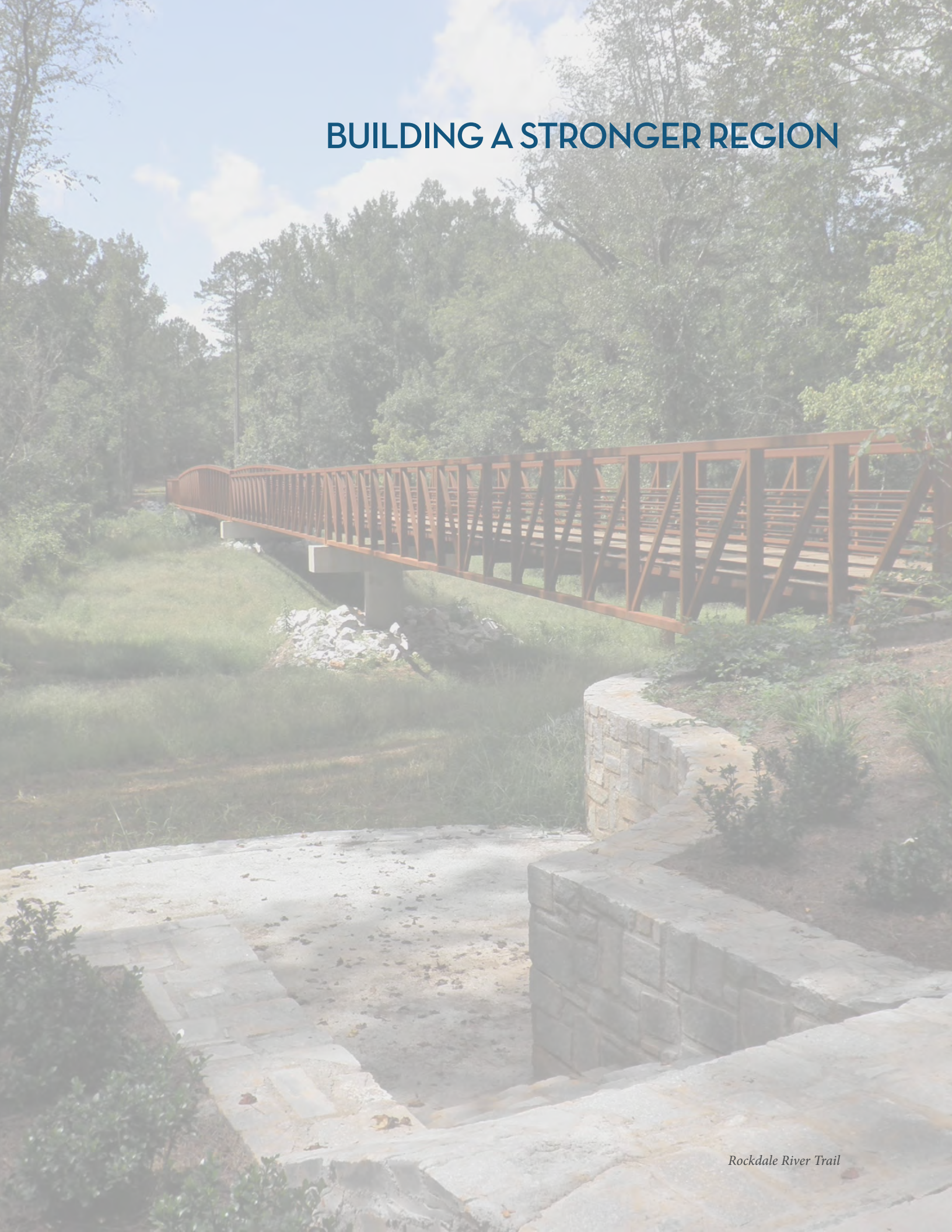
Neighborhood Nexus
http://www.neighborhoodnexus.org/

Regional Transportation Factbook
http://atlantaregional.com/transportation/resources

Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas
http://atlantaequityatlas.com/

Downtown Woodstock

BUILDING A STRONGER REGION



Rockdale River Trail

Gibbs Gardens in Ball Ground, Cherokee County

OUR ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

The process to update The Regional Plan, began in June 2014 with adoption of a resolution and draft aspirations by the ARC Board directing staff to develop a unified plan that encompasses an aspirational agenda. The Board further directed staff to discuss this concept with our planning partners, local governments and the public. It is anticipated that in the current period a commitment to addressing the challenges and building upon the assets outlined in The Regional Plan Introduction will require a rethinking of how ARC addresses regional issues and delivers services to local governments and other stakeholders. The Regional Plan Introduction document serves as the beginning of this dialogue.

The Atlanta region for perhaps the first time in history is experiencing a challenge to the fundamental conditions that have propelled the region to prosperity and growth for the past four decades. The Atlanta region has grown and expanded largely on the basis of national migration trends to the south; federal policies that enabled highway construction and decentralized growth; access to the world's busiest airport and the region's prominence as the economic capital of the south; inexpensive land; low cost of living, business costs and wages. The region also has proximity to major ports, substantial opportunity for higher education, and Fortune 500 business headquarters, as well as national facilities, such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The region is currently emerging from a distressed economy as the result of the Great Recession and it is likely that conditions that were present during that enabled continuous and rapid growth will not return. There is a great deal of uncertainty as to how the federal government will invest in infrastructure in the future. Substantial shifts in federal programs and policies will impact the regional strategies undertaken to support and manage growth in the region.

Atlanta has been one of the fastest-growing regions in the nation in recent years, accommodating large population and employment growth. This growth has brought many benefits to the region, including a change from a small regional center to a major international player economically.

To win in the future, the region needs to build upon its core assets to address the key challenges outlined on the following pages.

Regional Asset- Things the Region can build upon for the future

Regional Challenge-Items that are holding the region back

Downtown Norcross

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is the region's greatest economic infrastructure asset

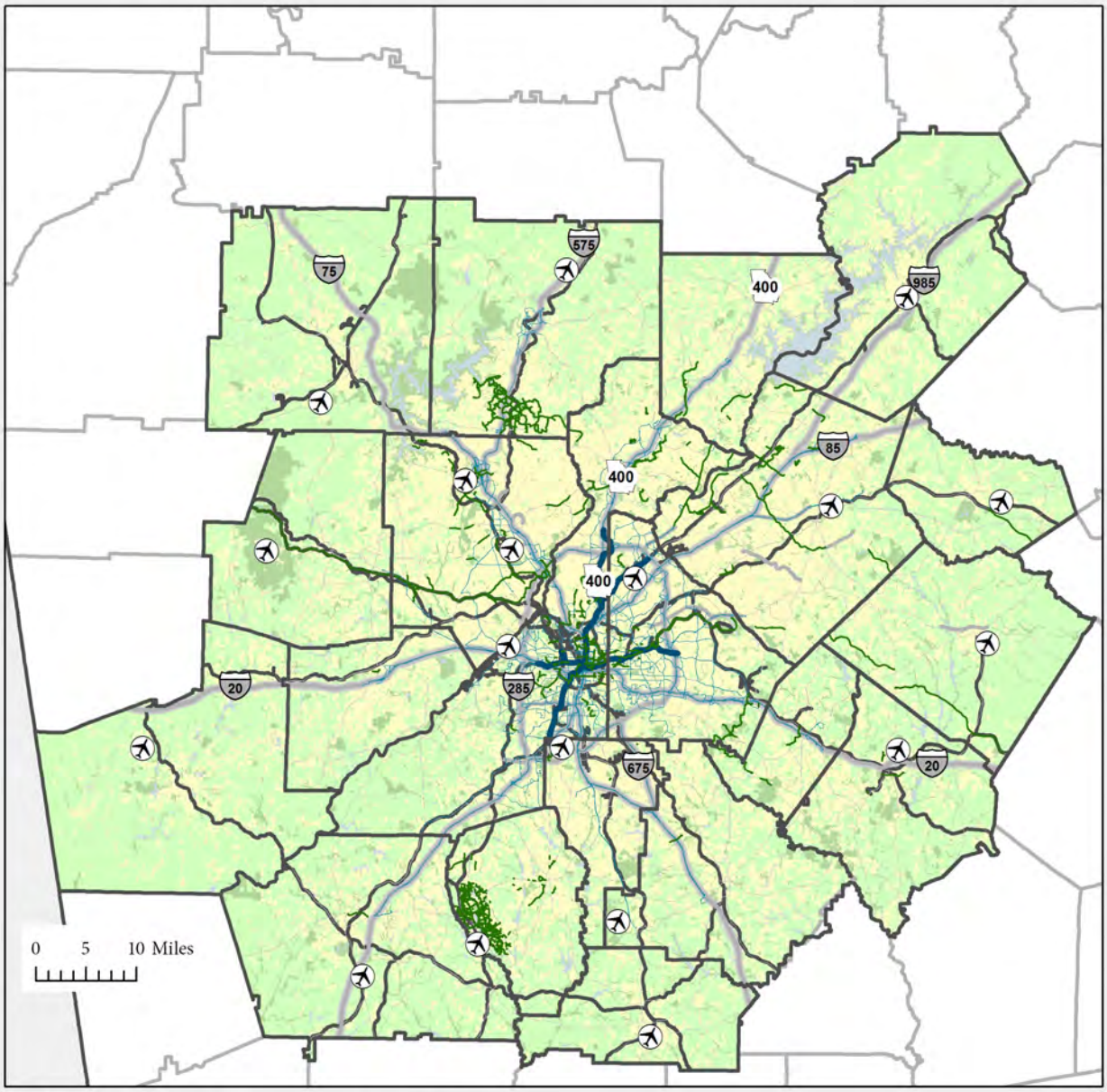
The Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy lists Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport as the region's greatest strength in terms of competitiveness. It is true, that no other region in the world can claim the world's busiest airport. With over 250,000 passengers a day to over 225 destinations, 80 percent of the US population is within a two hour flight.

The airport area is the one of the largest employment centers within the region and is the largest employment center south of I-20. it has a direct economic impact of 32.5 billion to the region's economy.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport ranks fourteenth in the United States in terms of cargo hauled. This is an area that airport is looking to expand upon, which will have an impact on employment and transportation needs in the southern half of the reigon.

A 747 loads for a flight to Tokoyo

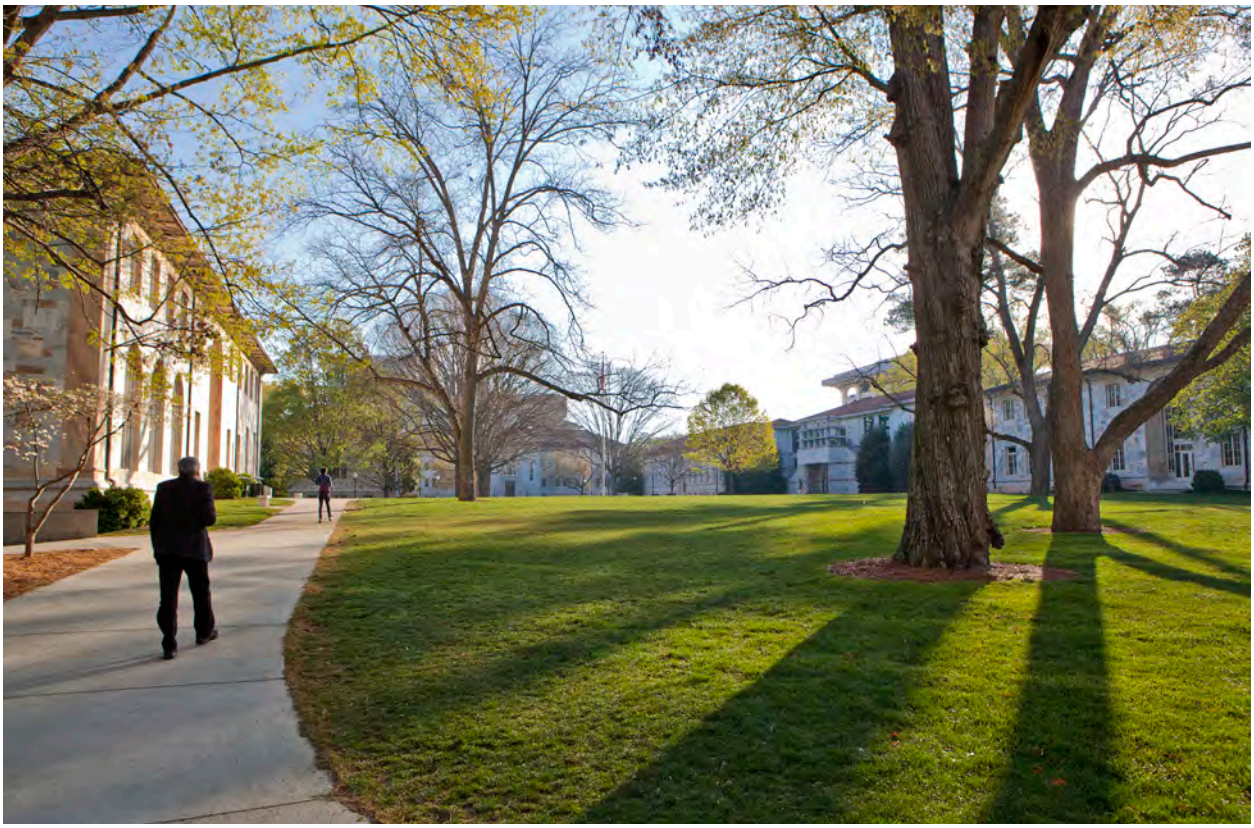
Atlanta Region Transportation Systems



Atlanta Region Transportation Systems

- Airports and Air Bases
- Bike Facilities
- MARTA Rail
- Bus Routes
- National Highway System
- Regional Thoroughfare Network
- State Routes
- Railroads
- Developed Land
- Undevelopable Land
- Undeveloped Land

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, Bureau of Transportation Statistics



Emory University

Our Higher Education Institutions are a beacon that attracts global talent to the region

The region's institutions of higher education are tremendous incubators of innovation in metro Atlanta. The Atlanta MSA has 66 post-secondary institutions, enrolling over 275,000 students. The region is home to top-ranked colleges and universities: US News and World Report rank Spelman College and Morehouse College as the top two Historically Black Colleges and Universities nationally, the Georgia Institute of Technology's undergraduate engineering program is ranked #5 nationally, and Kennesaw State University (#4 Up-and-Coming Schools) has the largest nursing program in Georgia and is nationally recognized for its first-year and international programs.

Additionally, Atlanta's university research and development expenditures rank fifth in the nation. In 2009, colleges and universities in metro Atlanta combined for more than $1.1 billion in academic research and development expenditures. These expenditures were concentrated in the life sciences and engineering fields: life sciences constituted 44.6 percent of all R&D funding while engineering comprised 34.9 percent.

Along with direct spending on research and development, metro Atlanta's higher education institutions contribute positively to the economy by enhancing commercialization opportunities as well as fostering startup companies from researchers at these institutions. Georgia Tech's VentureLab was ranked as the #2 University Business Incubator in the world by UBI Index in July, 2013. Technology graduates spur Atlanta's growing tech community as well, and position the region to grow as an innovation hub.

MARTA Rail is the backbone of our Regional transit system

MARTA rail is only located within a two county service area, yet 15 percent of the 10 county region's jobs are located within a half mile of a MARTA Heavy Rail station. In 2013, ARC estimated that there is current market demand over 53,000 new residential units within a half mile of existing MARTA stations. The region is responding to this demand for the first time in 10 years by opening up development opportunities on MARTA station properties but these projects and stations need infrastructure investments to better connect to the community.

Current rail transit services offer convenient access to less than half of all existing major activity centers in the region. This rail service is important as it reliably trasports workers, residents and visitors to and from these crucial centers, which harbor large concentrations of the region's current employment. While implementation of existing transit capital projects in the long range element of the current RTP, as well as full realization of the region's long-range vision for transit expansion could correct this situation, it may not serve future needs for transit services based upon where chose to live and work.

The Atlanta region is a national leader in water efficiency and stewardship

Our region needs access to quality supplies of water, but also must be good stewards of that supply. TO that end the109 jurisdictions in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (a 15-county area) implement 19 conservation measures in an effort to promote efficiency and responsible stewardship of a shared resource. These efforts have paid off, and since 2000, the region's per capita water use has decreased by more than 20 percent.

Further underscoring the region's commitment to good stewardship, total water withdrawals in metro Atlanta decreased by about 10 percent over the last 10 years, even though our population increased by 1 million people. Over a shorter timeframe, the Atlanta metro area used 512 million gallons per day in 2009, down from 602 million gallons per day in 2006. These statistics highlight the region's commitment to good stewardship of our water resources.

Roswelll Road in the City of Sandy Springs

Transportation options are limited for many residents

Current premium transit services offer convenient access to less than half of all existing major activity centers in the region. These premium services are important as they reliably move large amounts of workers and visitors to and from these crucial centers, which harbor the majority of the region's current employment.

During 2013, these operators moved on average over 475,000 people each day throughout the region, which is about 14 percent less than the average daily ridership estimates for 2009. Much of this decrease is explained by both service cuts by the major transit providers during the recession and the elimination of transit in Clayton County. This shutdown has left a large population of transit riders without reliable transportation options. While transit service and ridership has stabilized somewhat in recent years, funding for transit operations remains an issue, as local sources of funding provide most of the operating funds for these services.

The long term economic success of the Atlanta region is dependent the availability of water.

The Atlanta region relies primarily on surface water from rivers and storage reservoirs as its main source of water supply. In fact, surface water provides more than 99 percent of the water supply in the the areas covered by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD. The Chattahoochee basin accounts for approximately 73 percent of the permitted available water supply in the MNGWPD. Residential water use, including single and multi-family use, accounts for 53 percent of the MNGWPD total water use.

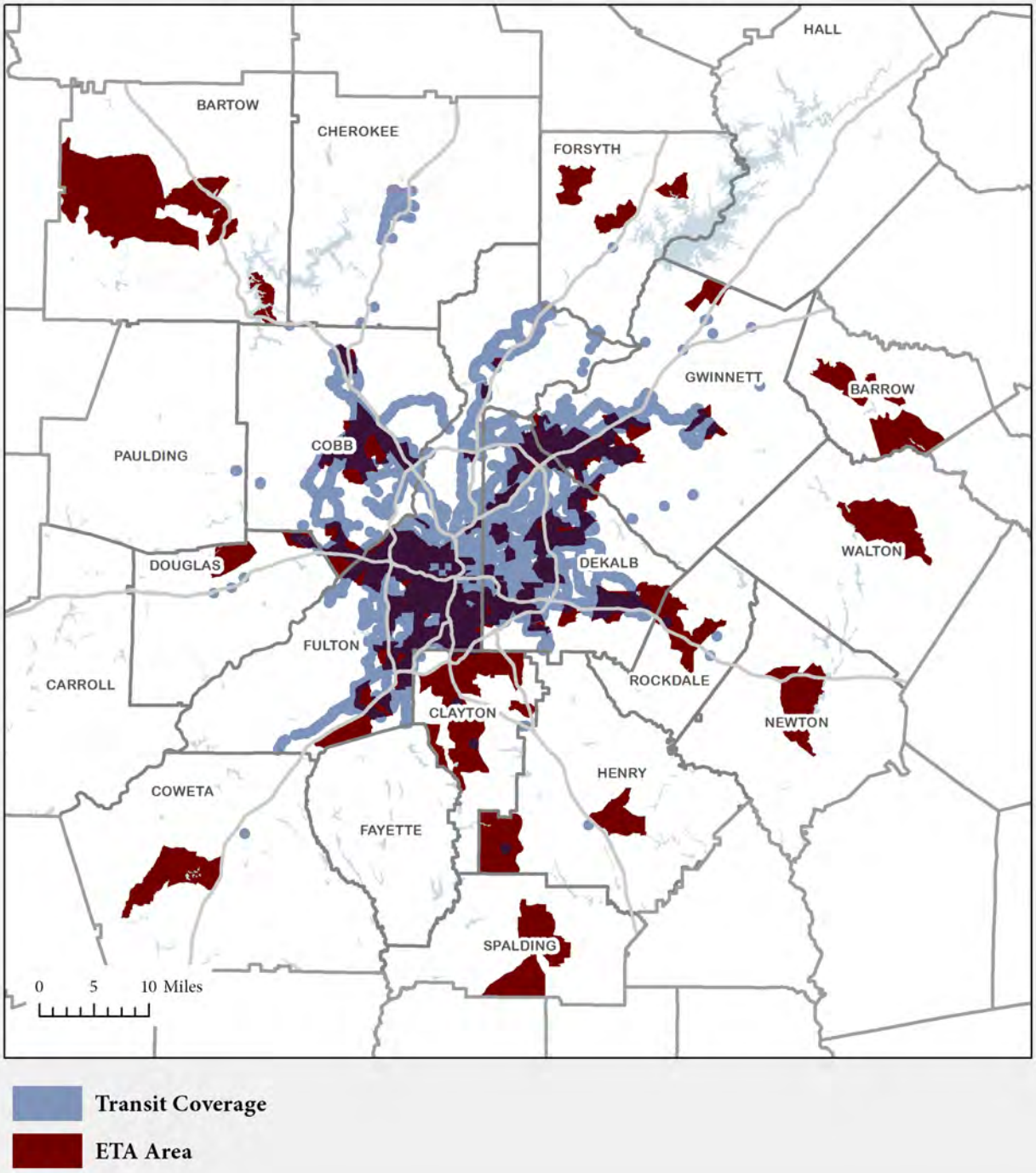
Lake Lanier and Allatoona Lake have played a key role in assuring an adequate water supply for the MNGWPD since their construction by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in the 1950s. Current planning assumes that federal reservoirs will continue to operate to meet the water supply needs of the region. The Metro Water District continues to work with the Corps and other stakeholders to ensure Georgia's long-term water supply while also enabling good stewardship of our resources.

Opportunities for success are limited for too many residents

The Atlanta region is perceived nationally as a place of opportunity for diverse populations. Historically, the city fostered many black-owned businesses in the early 20th century, many of which have grown into national enterprises. Part of this growth is due to the region's relatively affordable housing, attractive quality of life, and breadth of educational opportunity. However, the factors that led to the region's rise are now shifting, and metro Atlanta is in danger of no longer providing a solid foundation for future growth.

Between 2000-2010, the region's suburban poor population roughly doubled – from 350,000 to 700,000 individuals. This sharp increase has taken place in communities with limited transit access, schools that are largely unprepared to deal with this shift, and social support networks that are focused on the inner city. Many have slipped into poverty as a result of the Great Recession, and others due to the rising cost of living while wage growth has stagnated. The way our region addresses these challenges must be coordinated, taking into account the interconnectivity of land use, transportation, education, and economic development.

Equitable Target Areas and Transit Coverage

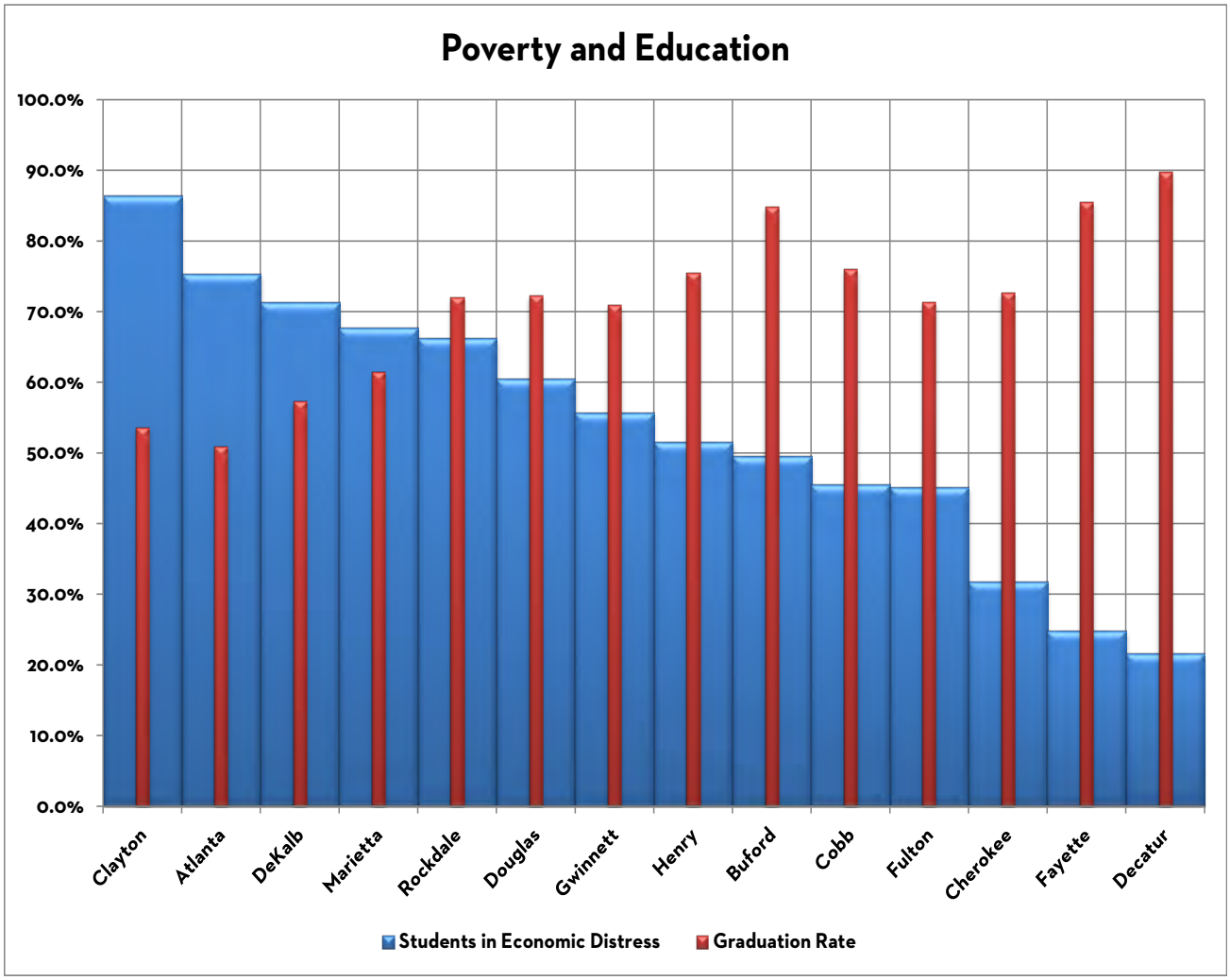


Source: Atlanta Regional Commission,

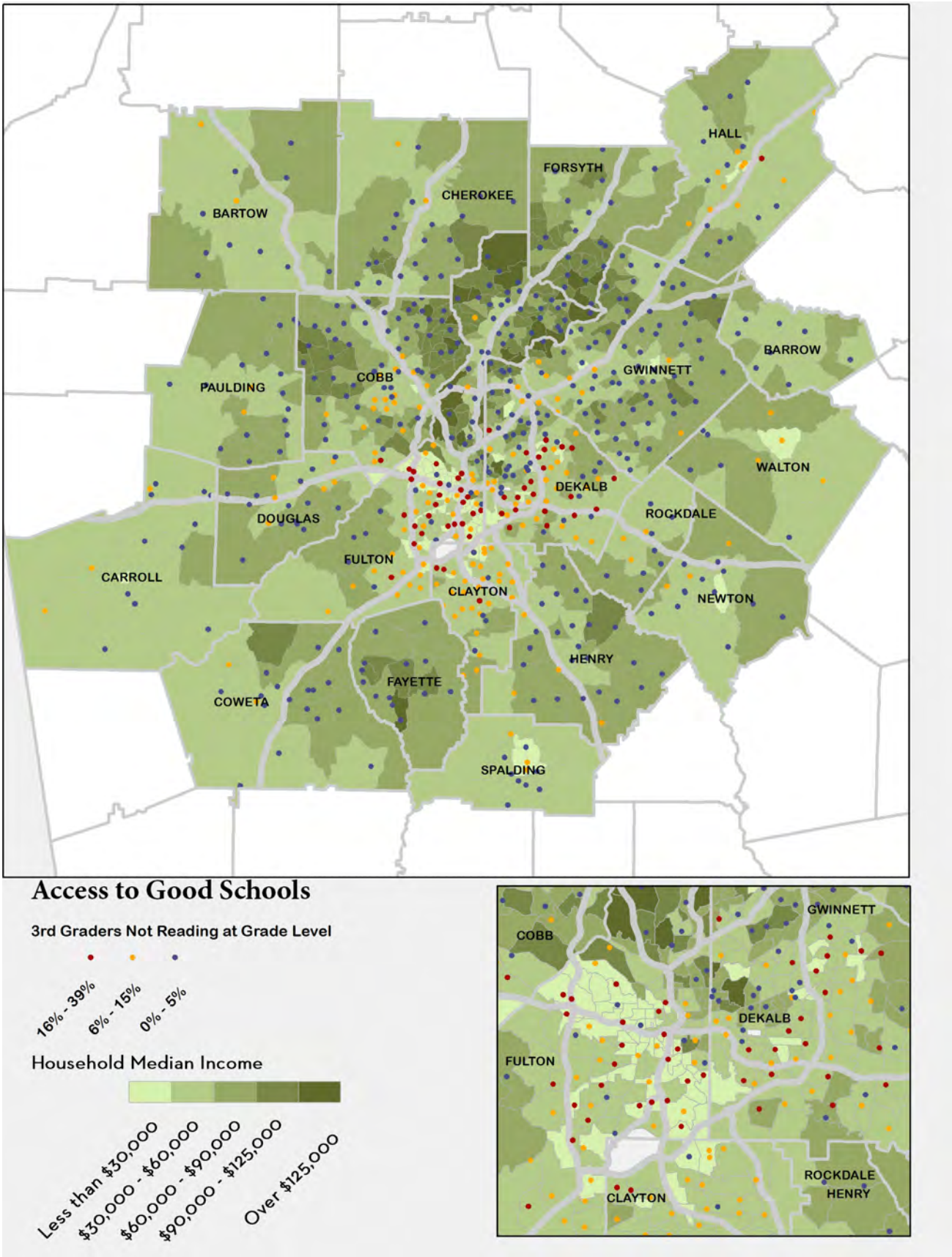
A STRONG WORKFORCE STARTS WITH THE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL.

High quality public education is a key building block for a successful regional economy. As our region rises to the challenge of addressing growing needs and limited resources, we must equip the region's children with a 21st century education that gives them tools to take part in an innovative regional economy. Several school districts in the region have in recent years struggled with the threat of having their accreditation pulled, and the statewide controversy around the Common Core standards continues.

In the 10-county Atlanta region, 56 percent of all public school students are economically disadvantaged (eligible for free or reduced price lunch), and the average high school graduation rate is 68 percent. The graph below illustrates the negative relationship between economic disadvantage and student achievement – children in districts with a higher percentage of economic disadvantaged students graduate fewer students. This trend is alarming, as our region seeks to expand economic opportunity for all residents, and as businesses are drawn to communities that provide a high-quality education for students in a variety of industry-relevant fields.



Source: Education Initiatives in Metro Atlanta, 2013



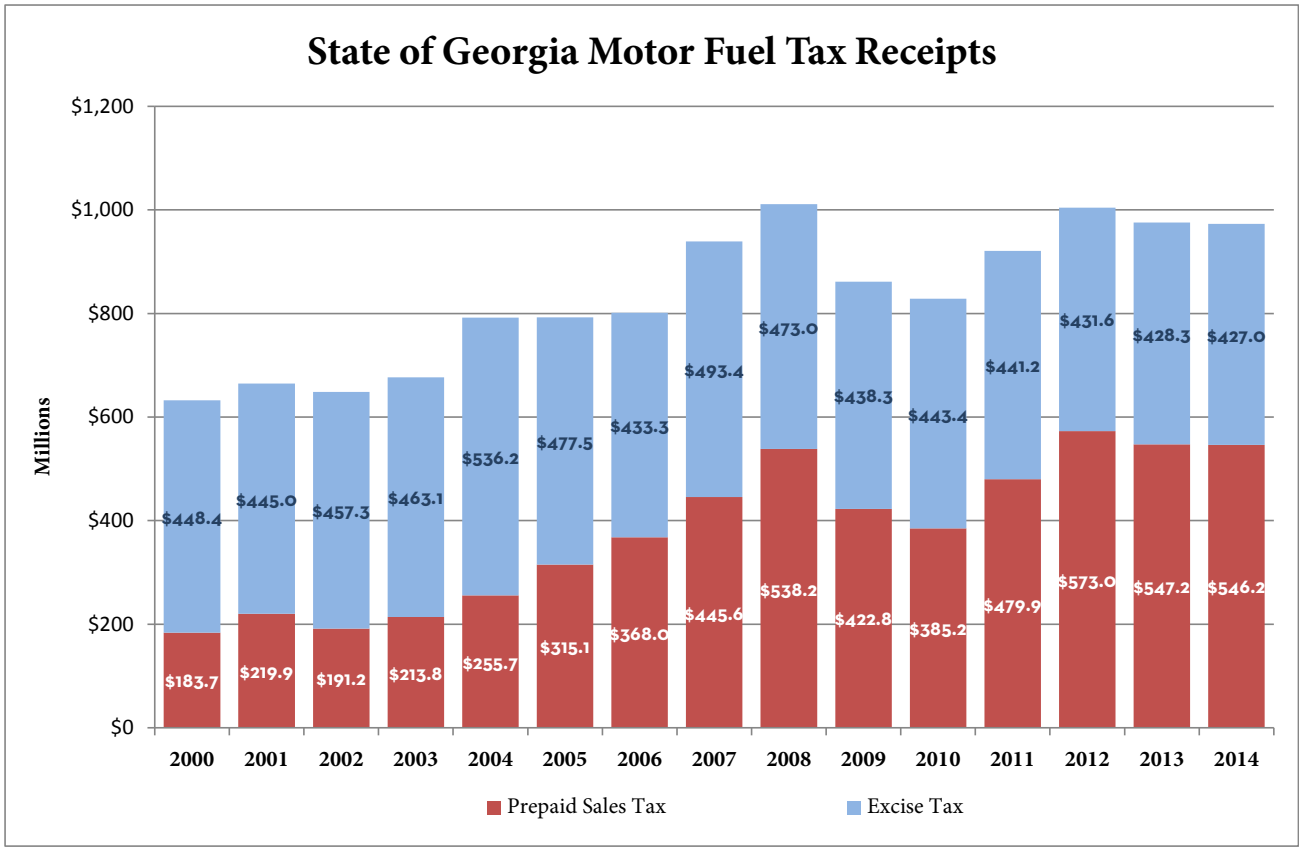
Source: Neighborhood Nexus

The need for transportation investments continues – but there is uncertainty in long-term revenue

The region has experienced a significant decrease in its capacity to implement large-scale projects. The past economic downturn was deep and prolonged, and transportation funding is not at levels needed to maintain and expand the region's infrastructure.

Transportation funding at the state and federal level has been in flux throughout the decade. While overall funding is almost back to pre-recession levels, this is primarily due to the increase in the cost of fuel. The past economic recession and improvements in fuel efficiency have contributed to a drop in fuel consumption. As illustrated below, total fuel tax revenue collected by the state is still at 2008 levels.

Nationally, the funding trends are also ominous. The federal funding crisis is based on declining Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and the vehicle fleets' increasing use of alternative fuel vehicles. Both trends have led to decreased funds flowing into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), the primary source of federal-aid for major transportation projects. Current levels of VMT are at year 2003 levels. The impact is reflected in the HTF's funding deficit. This leads to extreme amounts of uncertainty in planning for long term and large transportation projects.



Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Downtown McDonough

The composition of the region's 8 million residents will be markedly different in 2040

The Atlanta region has been one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation for decades, reaching a population of four million at the turn of the century. The magnitude of growth in the Atlanta region has generated significant economic activity in the region but also has resulted in numerous challenges related to sustaining the economic, environmental and social health of the region.

The Atlanta region will undergo a dynamic shift in its racial and ethnic profile of the region over the next 30 years. Additionally, the region will also experience significant shifts related to the age of the population. The ratio of working age individuals to non-working age will change dramatically as the region will have many more non-working aged residents in 2040. The share of population over the age of 65 will increase dramatically, as will the share of children in the region.

Meeting the needs of a changing population does not fall to social and education systems alone, but also to a built environment and supportive infrastructure that allows these individuals to be independent and active.

OUR REGIONAL ECONOMY

The Google Data Center in Douglas County (Image Courtsey of Google Inc,)

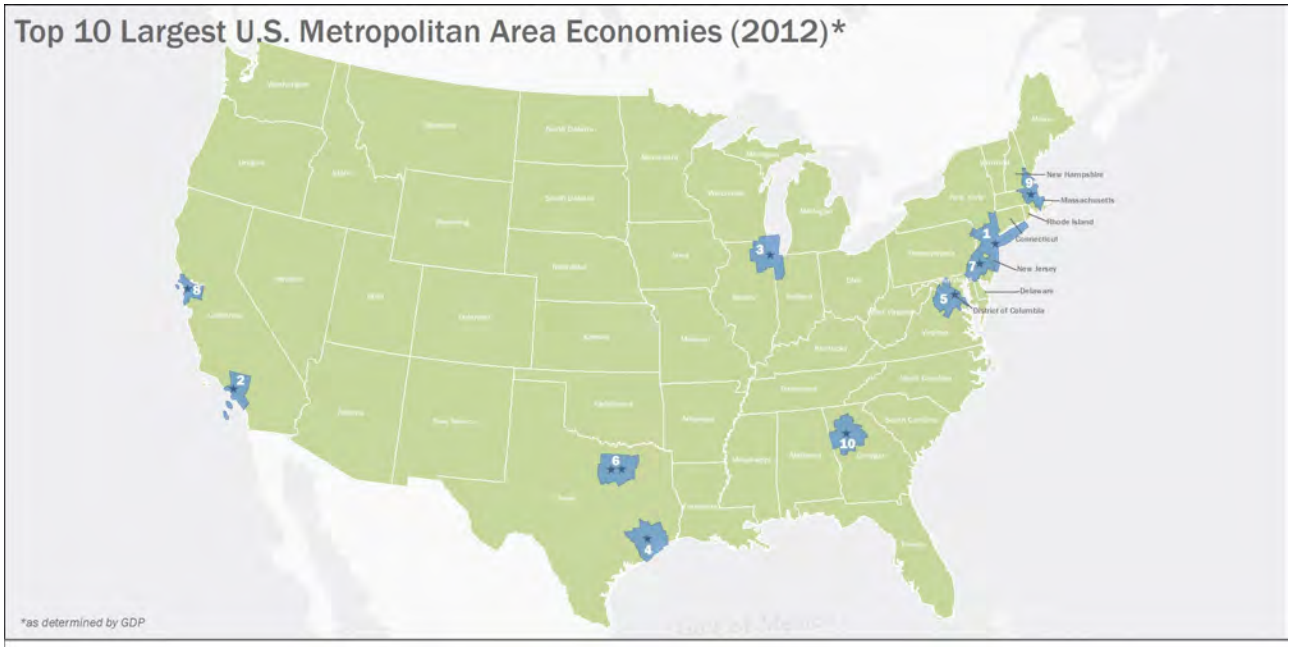
As the global gateway to the south, Metro Atlanta has many essential elements for economic growth. The region has the busiest airport in the world and one of the world's largest airlines using Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport as a primary hub. The region has a well-connected transportation system with more than 80% of the U.S. commercial and consumer market can be reached within two truckload days.

The region is not just well positioned in terms of transportation access, but also has the ability to provide an educated and prepared workforce. The metro area has 48 accredited degree-granting colleges and universities offering more than 400 fields of study serving more than 176,171 full time students.

The Great Recession has been a defining period for the American economy, and while it technically ended in 2009, it took metro Atlanta longer than most other places to emerge from the doldrums, the recovery has taken off quickly. Gross Metropolitan Product is almost back to pre-recession levels and we are the 10th largest regional economy in the Unites States. And, finally, the sectors that the region was strong in prior to the recession – Knowledge and Logistics – are still among our strengths. To be sure, challenges remain – the unemployment rate is still high, and despite good recent growth, patents and exports are still relatively low compared to other areas.

The Atlanta region is often viewed as the capital of the "New South", but the impacts of the region's success (and challenges) haave impacted closer to home. Metro Atlanta is the economic engine of the State of Georgia. This is best illustrated by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measured at the state and metropolitan statistical areas (MSA). GDP is the output of the goods and services produced by labor and property. Using this measure, metro Atlanta currently ranks as the 10th largest economy in the United States.

The economy of the region does not recognize jurisdictional boundaries. People, goods, and services flow across cities and counties in the region everyday contributing to the region's economic success. The region is tied not only to the southeast, and the country but also the world. Individual cities and counties lack the necessary infrastructure and resources (including labor) to compete at that level, however the Atlanta region, as a whole, has those resources and infrastructure.



1 | New York, NY: *8,530,497 Jobs*
Real Estate
Finance
Professional Services

2 | Los Angeles, CA: *5,626,947 Jobs*
Real Estate
Information
Manufacturing

3 | Chicago, IL: *4,255,555 Jobs*
Real Estate
Manufacturing
Finance

4 | Houston, TX: *2,635,329 Jobs*
Manufacturing
Mining
Real Estate

5 | Washington, DC: *2,852,9807 Jobs*
Government
Real Estate
Retail

6 | Dallas-Fort Worth, TX: *2,990,452 Jobs*
Manufacturing
Real Estate
Finance

7 | Philadelphia, PA: *2,681,835 Jobs*
Real Estate
Finance
Healthcare

8 | San Francisco, CA: *2,013,749 Jobs*
Real Estate
Professional Services
Manufacturing

9 | Boston, MA: *2,116,667 Jobs*
Real Estate
Professional Services
Finance

10 | Atlanta, GA: *2,226,309 Jobs*
Government
Manufacturing
Retail

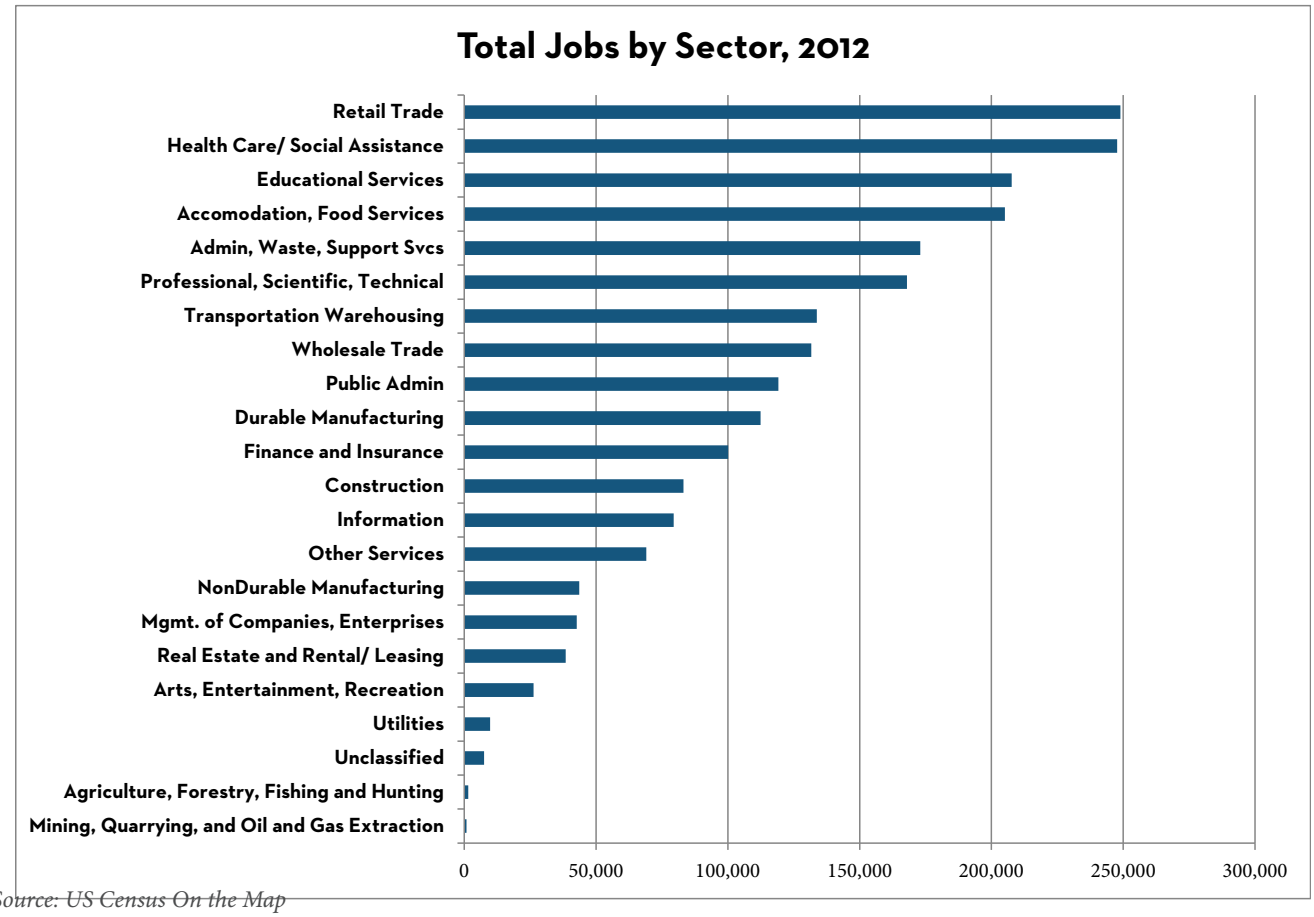
Metro Atlanta has 16 Fortune 500 Headquarters. These corporations include well known American icons such as Coca-Cola, Home Depot, Delta Air Lines and UPS, as well as larger holding companies and specialty manufacturs. In addition to those companies: IBM, Siemens, Cisco, AT&T, General Electric, Koch Industries and Lockheed Martin all have a significant presence in the Atlanta region.

Retail trade continues to be metro Atlanta's largest employment sector, but Health Care/ Social Assistance is gaining as the second largest employment sector. Metro Atlanta is adding jobs but the region still had 106,000 fewer jobs in 2012 than it did in 2008.

METRO ATLANTA FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES

RANK	COMPANY	REVENUES (MILLIONS)
33	THE HOME DEPOT	$78,812.00
50	UNITED PARCEL SERVICE (UPS)	$5,438.00
58	THE COCA-COLA COMPANY	$46,854.00
81	DELTA AIR LINES, INC.	$37,773.00
170	THE SOUTHERN COMPANY	$17,087.00
205	GENUINE PARTS COMPANY	$14,078.00
261	FIRST DATA CORPORATION	$10,809.00
262	AGCO CORPORATION	$10,787.00
293	ROCK-TENN COMPANY	$9,545.00
314	SUNTRUST BANKS, INC.	$8,602.00
317	HD SUPPLY HOLDINGS, INC.	$8,569.00
348	COCA-COLA ENTERPRISES, INC.	$7,657.00
423	NCR CORPORATION	$6,123.00
436	NEWELL RUBBERMAID INC.	$5,887.00
446	PULTEGROUP, INC.	$5,680.00
472	ASBURY AUTOMOTIVE GROUP, INC.	$5,339.00

Source: Metropolitan Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

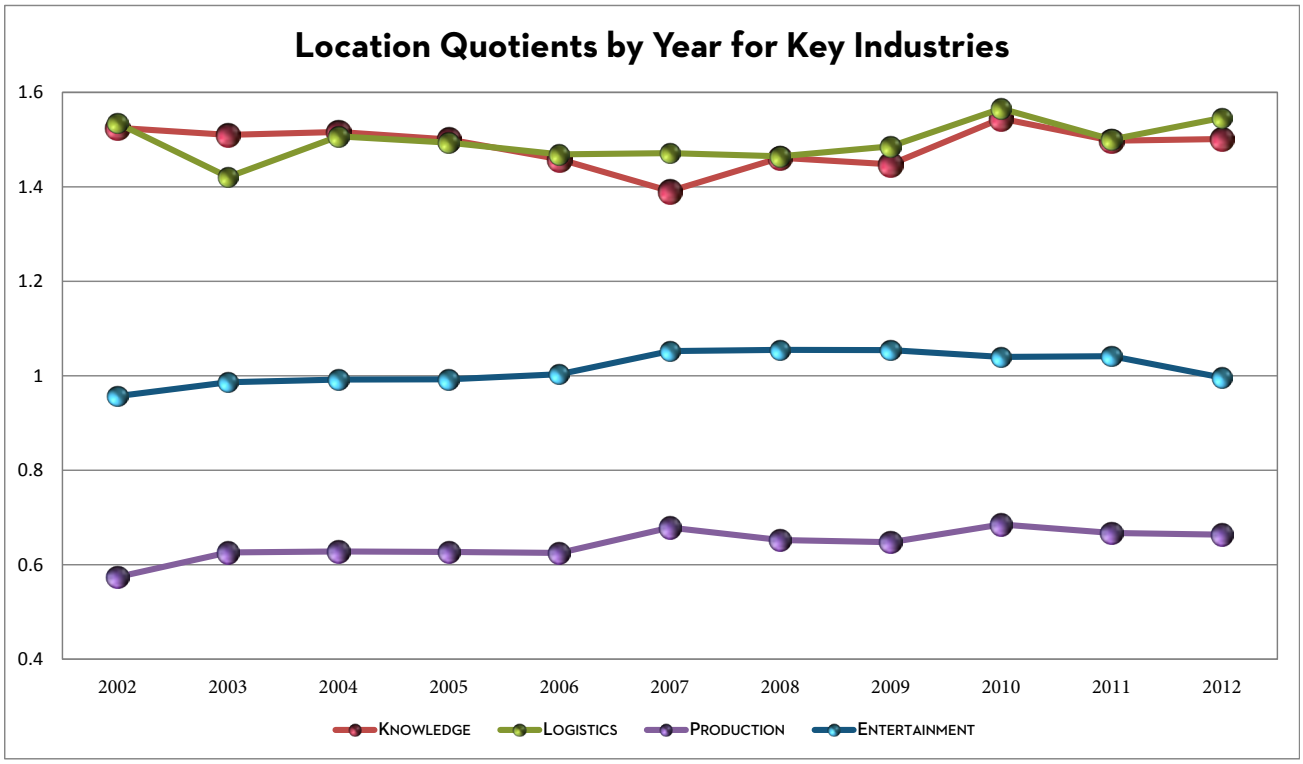


Source: US Census On the Map

In collaboration with numerous partners across the region, ARC underwent a nine-month process to develop a Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy. In the economic cluster review, four strategic business sectors (or "hubs") were identified as being targeted by local, regional and state economic development partners: Knowledge, Logistics, Production and Entertainment.

To understand how metro Atlanta is doing in attracting and retaining jobs in these hubs, "location quotient" (LQ) for each of these sectors is used. This method compares the total share of metro Atlanta's jobs in these industries to the national share of jobs in these industries. If the LQ is greater than 1 in the charts below, metro Atlanta has a higher share of our employment in this industry than the national average, and thus they are deemed an "export" industry for the region.

The metro Atlanta economic devleopment environment is complex with over 50 different local development authorities, chambers of commerce and other related organizations opperating in this space. If this diverse region is to continue to serve as the economic engine of Georgia, it is essential that a coordinated economic development strategy be developed and supported by the region's leaders. If the energies, capabilities and resources of the region can be harnessed, the region can assuredly compete more successfully on an international level.



Source: Atlanta Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy

Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance

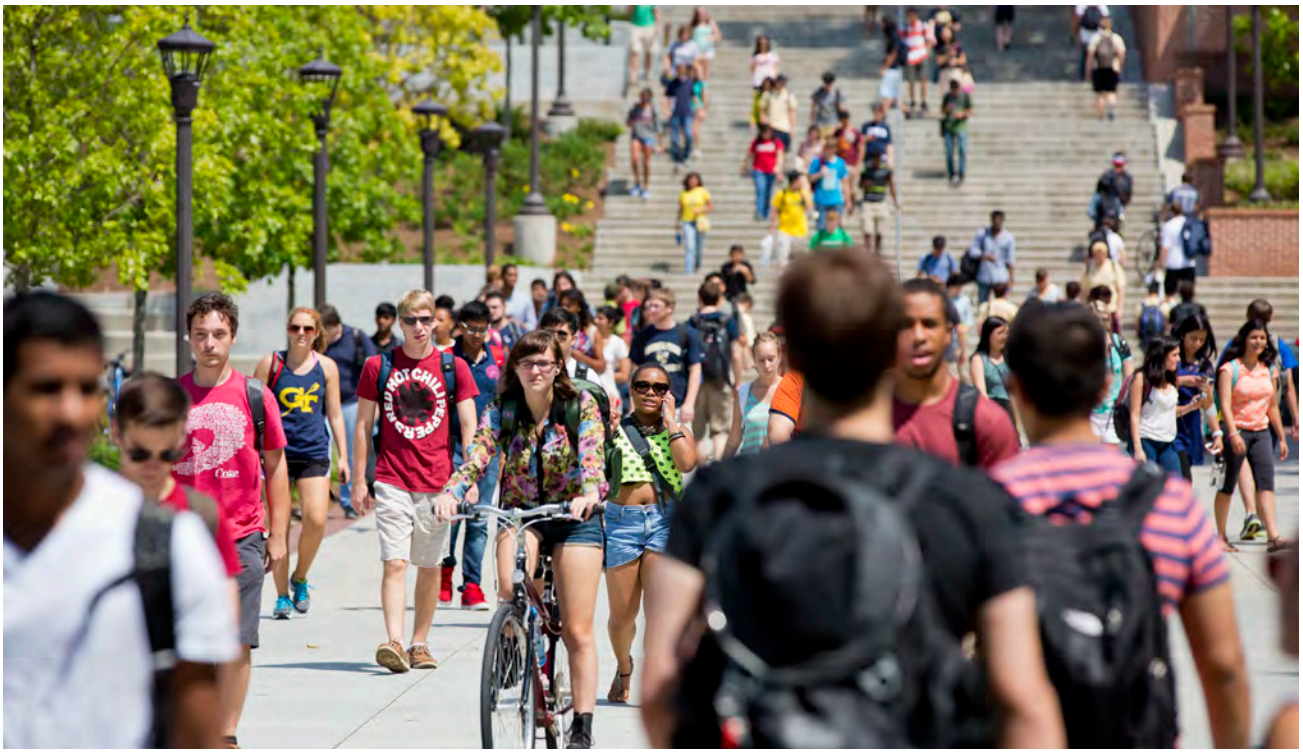
In 2011, after the completion of Fifty-Forward and PLAN 2040, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) convened local governments and private interests around Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in an effort to investigate strategies for increasing economic development in the airport area. ARC hosted several discussions focused on moving the area forward, with the additional aim of improved collaboration and coordination among the involved parties. These conversations included research on national and international trends, examples of successful economic development efforts in the Atlanta region and examples of successful public-private economic partnerships.

The Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance (the Alliance) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit focused on intergovernmental coordination and economic development around Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and is one of the main outcomes of this work and is an example of what can happen when public and private interests come together on a central issue. Founded in 2013, The Alliance will specifically focus on coordination among local economic development and planning efforts, marketing and branding of the airport area, and an increase of private investment in the communities surrounding the airport.

ARC staff assisted in the creation of the Alliance and is providing primary staff support for the first two years of the Alliance's existence. Staff convenes monthly Board of Directors and committee meetings consisting of various public and private stakeholders in the airport area. Additional support includes ongoing assistance with the development of organizational structure, development of a scope and request for proposals (RFP) for the Aerotropolis Blueprint and the attraction and planning of an international conference on developing airports and airport areas to be held in the Atlanta region in April 2015. With an initial group of partners that includes, but is not limited to Georgia Power, Delta Airlines, Porsche Cars North America, Prologis, Duke Realty, several local jurisdictions, four chambers of commerce and ARC, the Alliance is well positioned and substantially supported for the challenge ahead.

WHO WE ARE

Morehouse College



Georgia Institute of Technology 2014 freshman class represents 63 countries and 47 states.

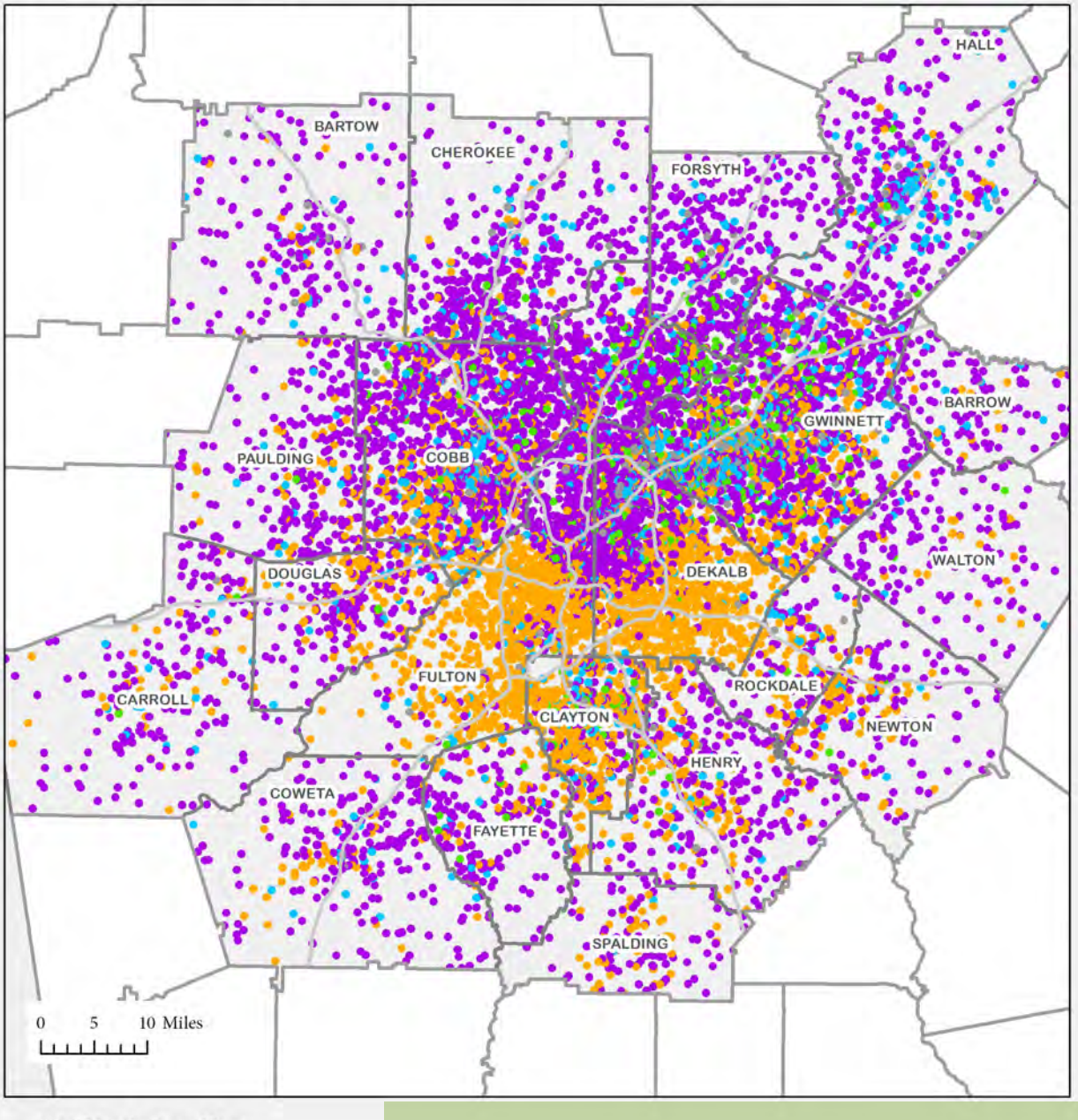
The Atlanta region has been one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation for decades, reaching a population of four million at the turn of the century in the 10-county region. The Atlanta region will undergo a dynamic shift in the racial and ethnic profile of the region over the next 30 years. Additionally, the region will experience significant shifts related to the age of the population. The ratio of working age individuals to non-working age will change as the region will have many more non-working aged residents in 2040. The share of population over the age of 65 will increase, as will the share of children in the region.

The dynamics of growth that will impact this region are not just related to magnitude alone. Over the course of the next 30 years, the Atlanta region will transition from a largely bi-racial region to a region with no ethnic or racial majority. There are three factors that shift population dynamics – births, deaths and migration. All three are working to make the U.S. population more diverse, and subsequently impacting the Atlanta region and also the rest of Georgia.

Education is the primary means through which individuals increase incomes. The Atlanta region attracts graduates from all over the southeast to fill jobs. The skills and level of education of the region's and state residents impact the types of jobs that the region attracts and the incomes of the region's residents.

Millennials are increasingly becoming important as a population cohort. Their housing market choices and buying preferences will have a large impact on the development location and type in the future and cohort is better educated and more ethnically diverse than earlier generations.

2010 Atlanta Distribution of Race



2010 Distribution of Race

1 Dot = 500

- White
- Black
- Asian
- Other
- Hispanic

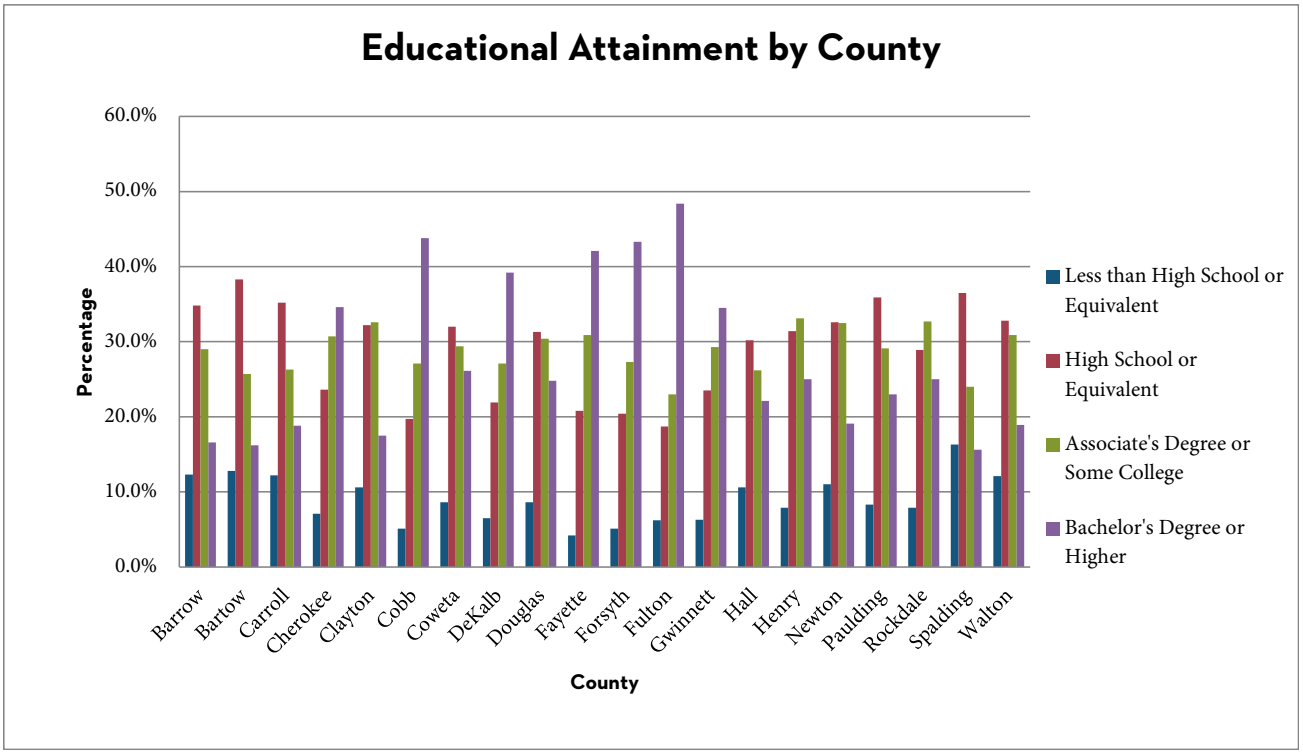
While the Atlanta region is a diverse region, there are still areas where population is fragmented by race. The areas just south of I-20 in Fulton and DeKalb counties are majority African-American, while the areas between I-75 and I-85 on the north are majority white. Also there is a cluster of Asian and Hispanic culture to the northeast.

Source: Neighborhood Nexus

An innovative region is one that provides critical infrastructure and a navigable network for its residents to take advantage of expanding economic opportunity. Whether it's supporting tech-based start ups or investing in workforce training programs to lead high school graduates into careers in growing industries, this goal is one that helps Metro Atlanta stay competitive with its peer regions across the country and around the world.

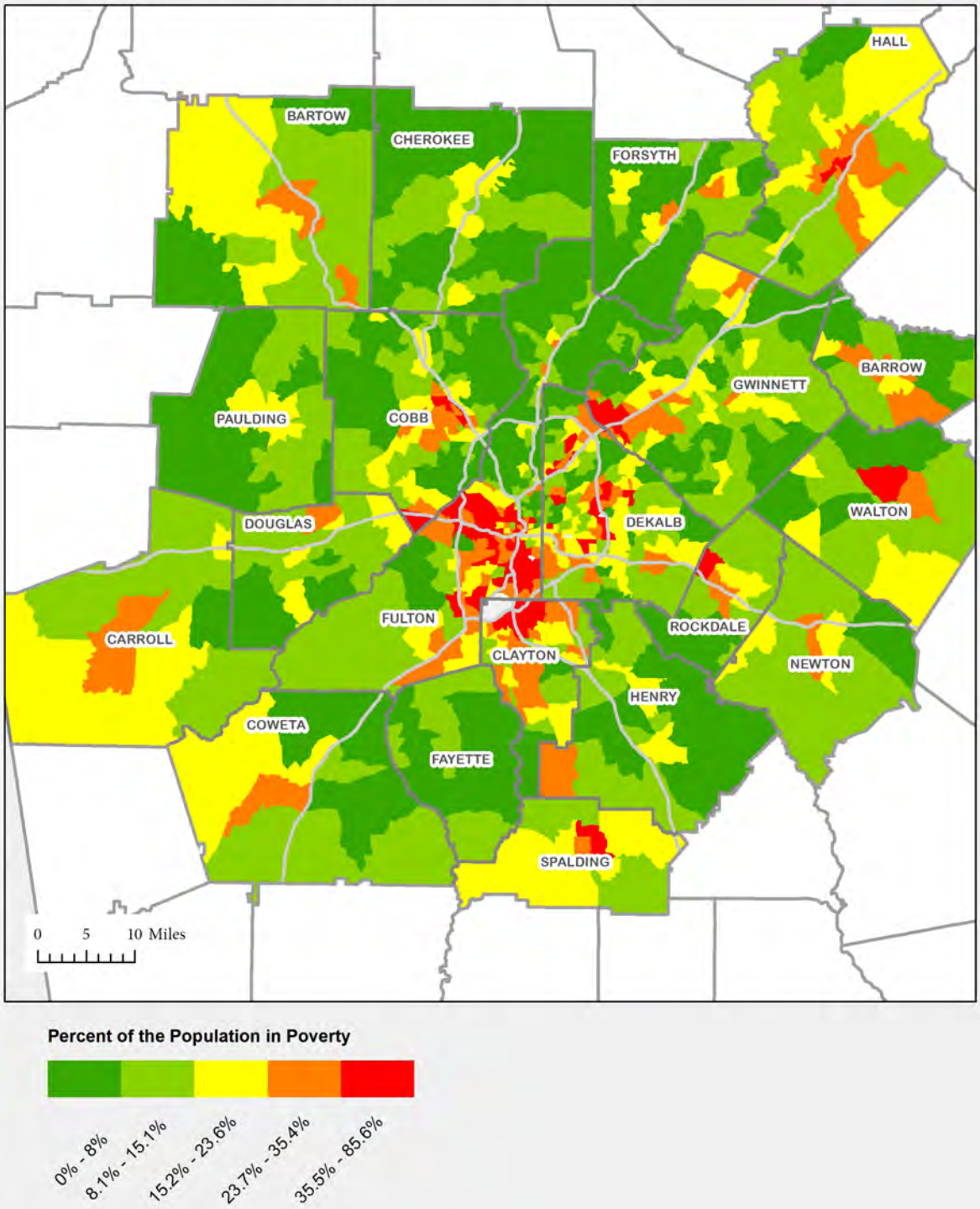
Economic opportunity can be measured in jobs and wages, but also in the narrative of our region's children. In 2013, Atlanta ranked last on a list of 50 Metro areas nationwide in providing opportunity for its children to emerge from poverty. This study took many factors into account, including school systems, housing segregation, social capital indices and family structure. The study sends the message that for our region's economy to boom once again, we must ensure there are pathways to prosperity for all our region's children.

The recent recession caused massive job losses across various sectors in our region, most notably the tech sector (high-wage jobs). As we emerge from the downturn, we see many of the jobs replacing those lost are actually lower-wage retail and service sector jobs. How the region attracts more high-wage positions will be vital to our success.



Source: Neighborhood Nexus

Percentage of the Population in Poverty



Source: Neighborhood Nexus

A region with a larger share of older adults not only impacts long term care services, but will also challenge the built environment and infrastructure in place to serve it. It is not possible to meet the needs of the growing older adult population with supportive programs or innovations in healthcare alone, but rather the places where people live that will determine whether or not it is possible to live an independent, active and engaged life. The region will transition to a region of just over 200,000 persons over 65 in 1990 to having more than 1.6 million older adults in 2040. Any meaningful response to this demographic shift will mean a change to the way the region develops, spends transportation and infrastructure dollars, and deliver services.

The next decade will see massive growth of the senior population, especially in older suburbs unaccustomed to housing older people. Suburban communities built for the baby boomer generation and their families are not well-equipped to accommodate these individuals. Well-designed neighborhoods are becoming more popular and in demand because of changing demographics and desires for more choices, not only among aging Boomers, but also their children. Unfortunately the region has a limited number of areas that include the infrastructure and amenities needed by older adults and individuals without regular access to an automobile.

The map on the right illustrates the current and future challenges the region faces in terms of meeting the travel needs of older adults. The region already includes significant concentrations of older adults that have limited access to public transportation. Lack of public transit options throughout the region places significant strain on County Senior Services to provide transportation for older adults to accomplish daily tasks.

ARC's Aging and Health Services Division has identified three transportation planning areas that need targeted attention to address the issues raised by a population that is growing older and living longer:

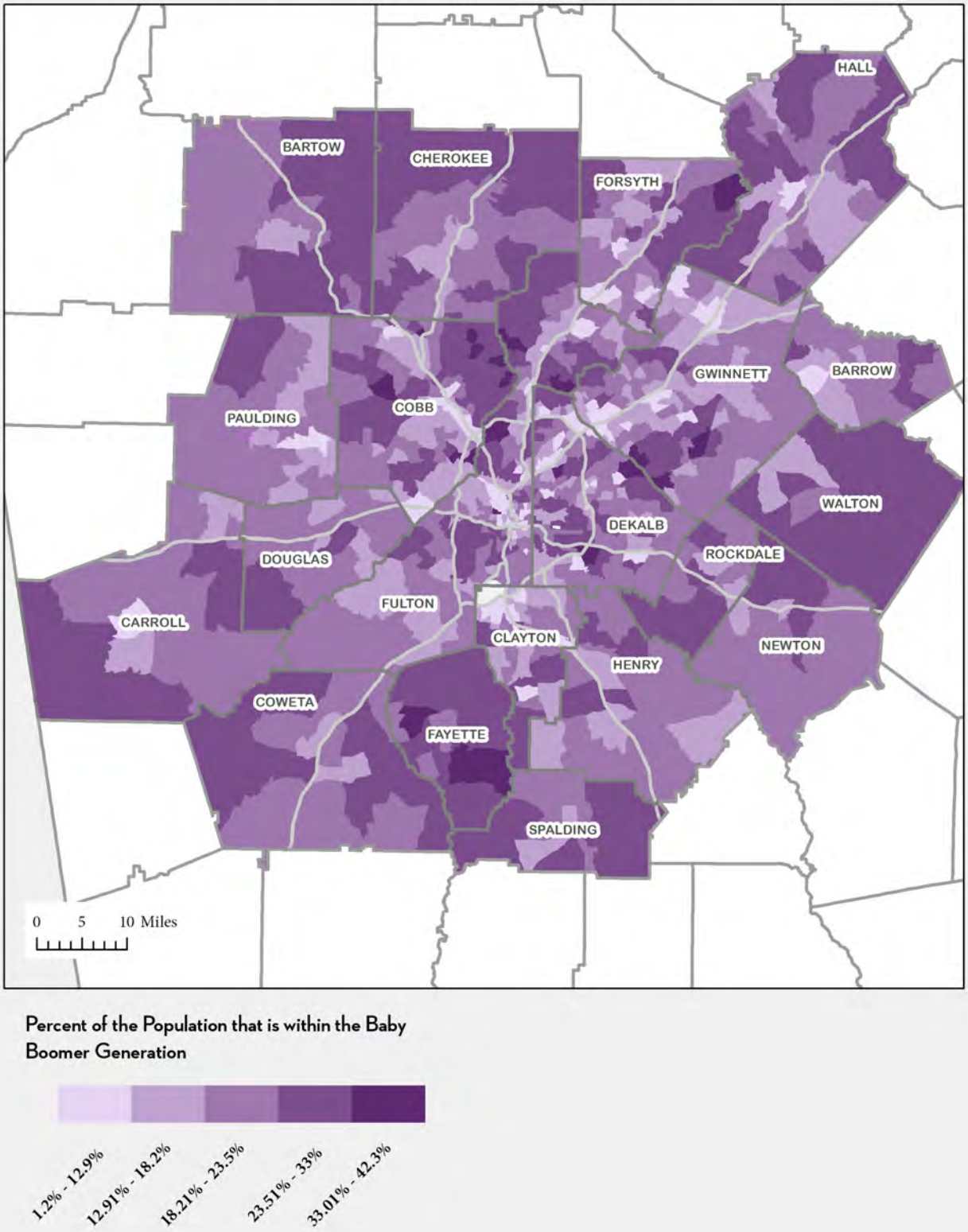
- Developing walkable communities;
- Creating safe roads and safe drivers; and
- Providing a range of alternative modes of transportation for Georgia's older adults.

Taking a more comprehensive approach to transportation in Georgia will benefit people of all ages who do not drive, either through choice or inability. It can reduce fuel consumption and improve air quality. Investing in transportation options now will better prepare the state to manage an increasingly diverse population with increasingly diverse needs.

The transportation needs and concerns of older adults vary by the type of community in which they live—urban, suburban, and rural. The opportunities and choices available vary by the concentration of older adults in these communities and the capacity to coordinate among different services.

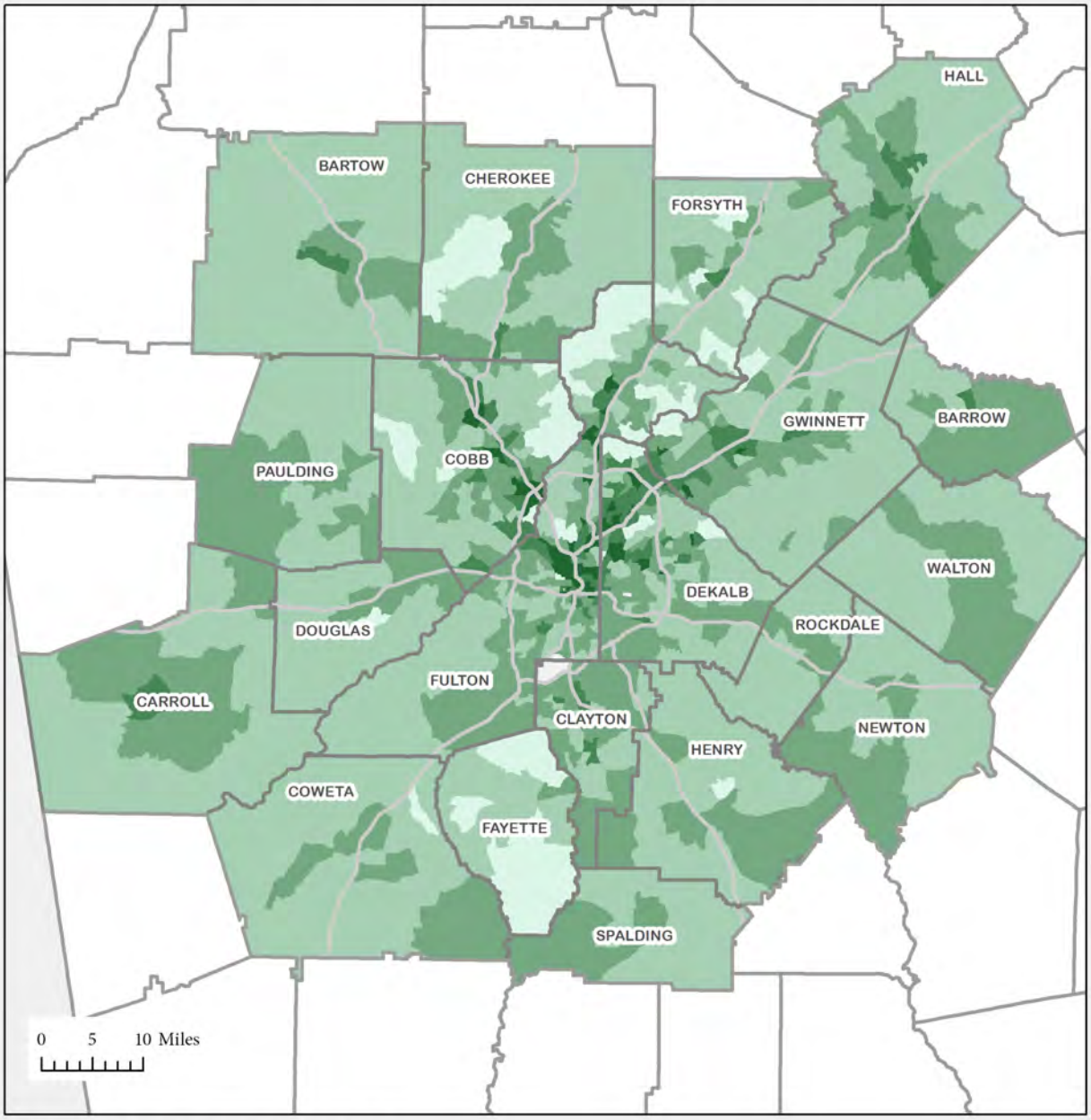
The need to accommodate older drivers and pedestrians in transportation infrastructure design is becoming a traffic safety imperative with the rapid increase in Georgia's aging population. Doing so will increase driving safety for all drivers, not simply older ones. Additionally, providing transportation alternatives to the automobile and promoting walkable communities will provide a fuller range of options to meet the diverse needs of the state's changing population.

Percent of the Population that is within the Baby Boomer Generation



Source: Neighborhood Nexus

Percent of the Population that is within the Millennial Generation



Percent of the Population that is within the Millennial Generation

3% - 10%
10.01% - 20%
20.01% - 30%
30.01% - 40%
40.01% - 73.3%

The popular notion that the Baby Boomer generation is the largest generation is not accurate. The millennials age group numbers almost 1.5 million in 2010 and is the largest demographic group in Metro Atlanta.

Source: Neighborhood Nexus

HEALTH FACTORS

	PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO SMOKE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS	PERCENTAGE OF OBESE ADULTS	PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO ARE PHYSICAL INACTIVE
BARROW	26.1	5.7	32.2	30.7
BARTOW	21.3	11.6	29.4	26.9
CARROLL	21.5	10.7	31.4	27.8
CHEROKEE	16.7	3.9	27.9	22.7
CLAYTON	17.0	14.3	36.1	27.7
COBB	14.1	8.6	23.4	20.1
COWETA	16.1	6.8	29.6	25.9
DEKALB	10.8	8.5	25.5	21.0
DOUGLAS	14.8	10.1	34.6	26.8
FAYETTE	12.3	6.8	25.0	21.8
FORSYTH	12.4	3.6	21.9	17.7
FULTON	13.3	6.4	22.9	19.6
GWINNETT	13.6	7.7	25.3	21.1
HALL	16.6	9.9	29.0	24.7
HENRY	20.7	7.6	28.5	24.6
NEWTON	21.2	9.3	31.7	27.2
PAULDING	19.9	5.9	25.6	25.8
ROCKDALE	11.7	13.3	33.1	29.3
SPALDING	19.6	7.0	34.0	28.6
WALTON	16.4	6.9	28.3	29.4

Source: Neighborhood Nexus

Healthy Communities are a key goal of The Regional Plan. While ARC does not have a direct role in providing health services, its policies, projects and programs play a role in creating Healthy Communities.

Taking Equity into Account

About 35 percent of metro Atlanta's population lives in areas defined by ARC as Equitable Target Areas. Promoting access to quality housing, jobs, and transportation for the people who live within these communities not only advances the Regional Plan but it increases opportunities for all.

Equitable Target Areas are areas within the region that ARC has identified as places with high amounts of poverty and minority population. During the Regional Plan development, ARC will work with stakeholders and the public to develop programs, policies and projects to advance quality housing, jobs and transportation options within these areas.

Woodruff Park in Downtown Atlanta

HOW WE MOVE

Peachtree Rd in Buckhead

I-285 at Ashford Dunwoody Road is an example of some of the innovative infrastructure invesments that region has implemented.

The Atlanta region's roadway network encompasses over 27,000 centerline miles of surface streets and limited-access freeways, accounting for the vast majority of trips in the 18-county Atlanta region. Utilization of this system is measured in average daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Nearly 144 million average daily vehicle miles were traveled over regional roadway facilities in 2012. This figure is down approximately Four percent from the recent high of nearly 150 million observed in 2010. On a per capita basis, average daily VMT in 2012 was approximately 16 percent lower than the observed peak in 1998. Shorter trips associated with more dense development patterns and increased transit usage are partially responsible for this trend.

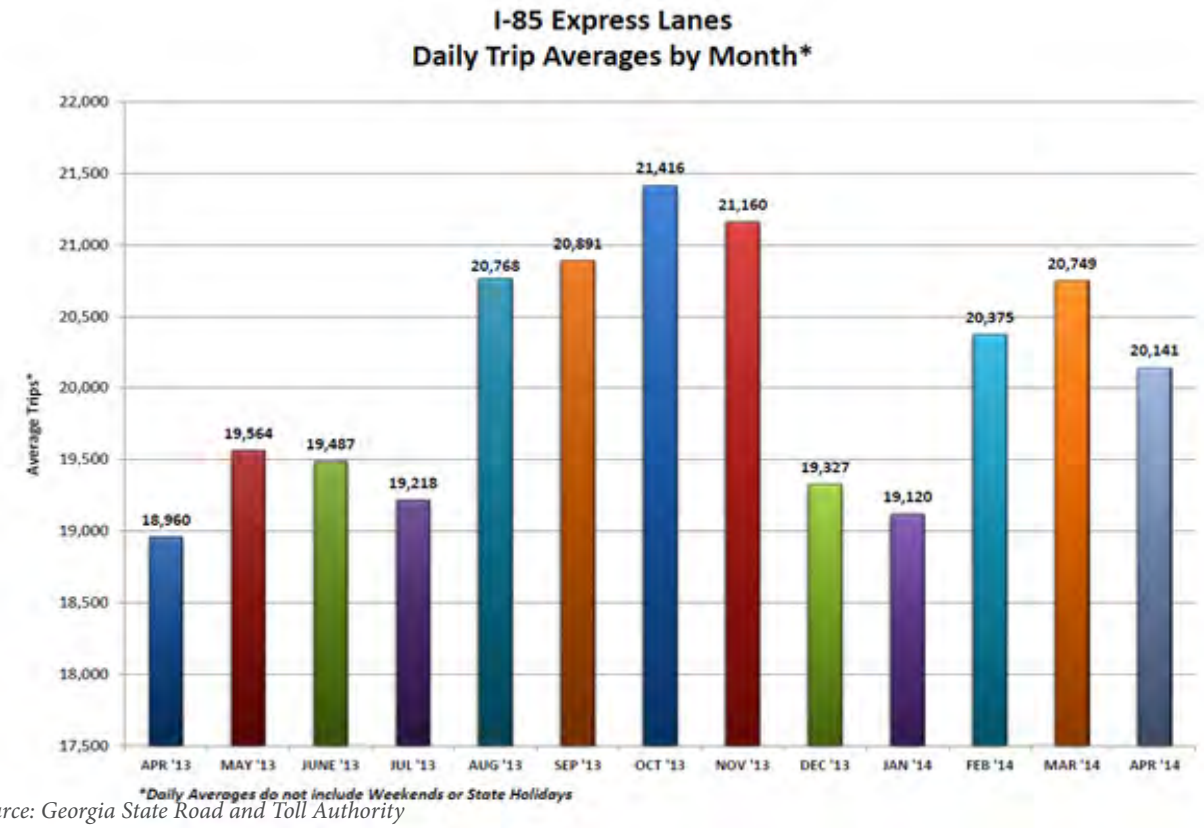
Although VMT has declined in recent years, traffic congestion continues to impact the region's roadways. A measure commonly utilized to quantify the intensity of traffic congestion is the Travel Time Index (TTI). The TTI expresses the average amount of additional time required to travel over a roadway segment or system during peak operational periods ("rush hour") compared to off-peak periods. A value of 1.5, for example, indicates that a trip that normally takes 30 minutes to make over a roadway segment during off-peak, free-flow conditions would take 45 minutes (for a time penalty of 50 percent) during peak travel periods. Utilizing output data from the 2010 Atlanta region travel demand model, ARC estimates the TTI over all regional facilities to be 1.15 (representing a peak period penalty of 15 percent). This finding is below the average TTI of 1.27 amongst the 15 largest

metropolitan areas, as reported by the Texas Transportation Institute's 2012 Urban Mobility Report. ARC estimates that approximately 19 percent of freeway directional miles and 25 percent of non-freeway directional miles in the region exceed this benchmark .

The Atlanta region has employed managed facilities since the 1990's, with the construction of the HOV system and the tolled portion of GA 400. New projects are currently underway on the I-75 north, I-75 south and I-85 north corridors, which will result in 56 miles of new managed facilities constructed during the 2014-2019 TIP period. ARC will continue to work with state and local partners to expand reliable options on our freeways in The Regional Plan.

Strategic capacity expansion on the region's surface streets will continue to be explored as part of the Regional Plan. However, funding shortfalls, right-of-way constraints or public opposition often limit the ability of state and local governments to address congestion through capacity expansion. Uncertainties related to the current lack of a long-term surface transportation authorization have exasperated this situation, prompting transportation officials to "do more with less

Of similar importance is maintaining a state of good repair on the region's existing roadway infrastructure, which will likely be major area of emphasis in the Regional Plan. In the development of the PLAN 2040, ARC analyzed the physical condition of the most significant routes throughout the region. This network, the Regional Strategic Transportation System (RSTS), covers over 3,700 miles and accommodates the region's most critical trip movements. The analysis found that approximately 95 percent of pavement and bridges on the RSTS are currently in good condition, which is above the national average for both of these infrastructure classifications.



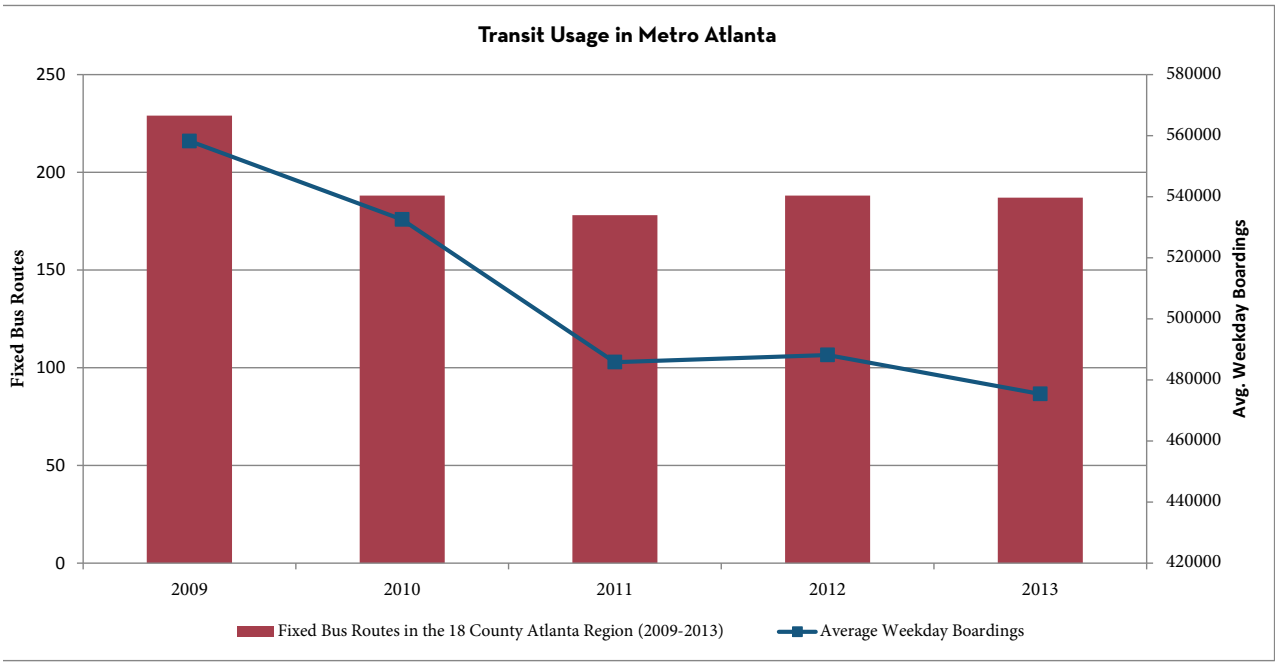
Source: Georgia State Road and Toll Authority

While the current condition of the RSTS is encouraging, future projections of system condition are required in order to ensure adequate resources are allocated in the Regional Plan to maintain this current state of good repair. ARC performed this analysis during the development of PLAN 2040 with two FHWA tools: the Highway Economic Requirements System – State Version (HERS-ST) and the National Bridge Investment Analysis System (NBIAS). The analysis found that for a total of $17.2 billion ($10.1 billion for roadways and $7.1 billion for bridges) would be required in order to maintain current system condition through 2040. The currently adopted plan allocates $13.3 billion in total funding for road and bridge preservation

Transit Services

A robust system of transit is a key component to the transportation system of any large urbanized area. Transit services help mitigate congestion and improve air quality by offering motorists a viable alternative to single occupant vehicle usage. Transit also serves as a critical lifeline between residents without access to a private vehicle and key destinations, such as employment centers, schools and hospitals.

Several issues impact the efficiency of the Atlanta region's transit system. As of 2013, transit services were primarily provided through nine transit operators, serving regional and local public



Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

transportation needs. During 2013, these operators moved on average over 475,000 people each day throughout the region, which is about 14 percent less than the average daily ridership estimates for 2009. Much of this decrease is explained by service cuts by the major transit providers during the recession and the complete shutdown of transit in Clayton County. This shutdown has left a large transportation disadvantaged population without reliable public transportation. While transit ridership and service have stabilized somewhat in recent years, funding for transit operations remains an issue, as local sources of funding provide most of the operating funds for these services.

Current fixed guideway transit services offer convenient access to less than half of all existing major activity centers in the region. These premium services are important as they reliably move large numbers of workers and visitors to and from these crucial centers, which harbor the majority of the region's current employment.

In light of these issues, recent developments regarding transit in the Atlanta region have shown changes in the public's perception of transit. According to a 2013 region-wide, ARC commissioned public opinion survey conducted by the A.L. Burruss Institute at Kennesaw State University, a healthy majority of respondents (71%) believe that improved public transportation is "very important" for metro Atlanta's future.

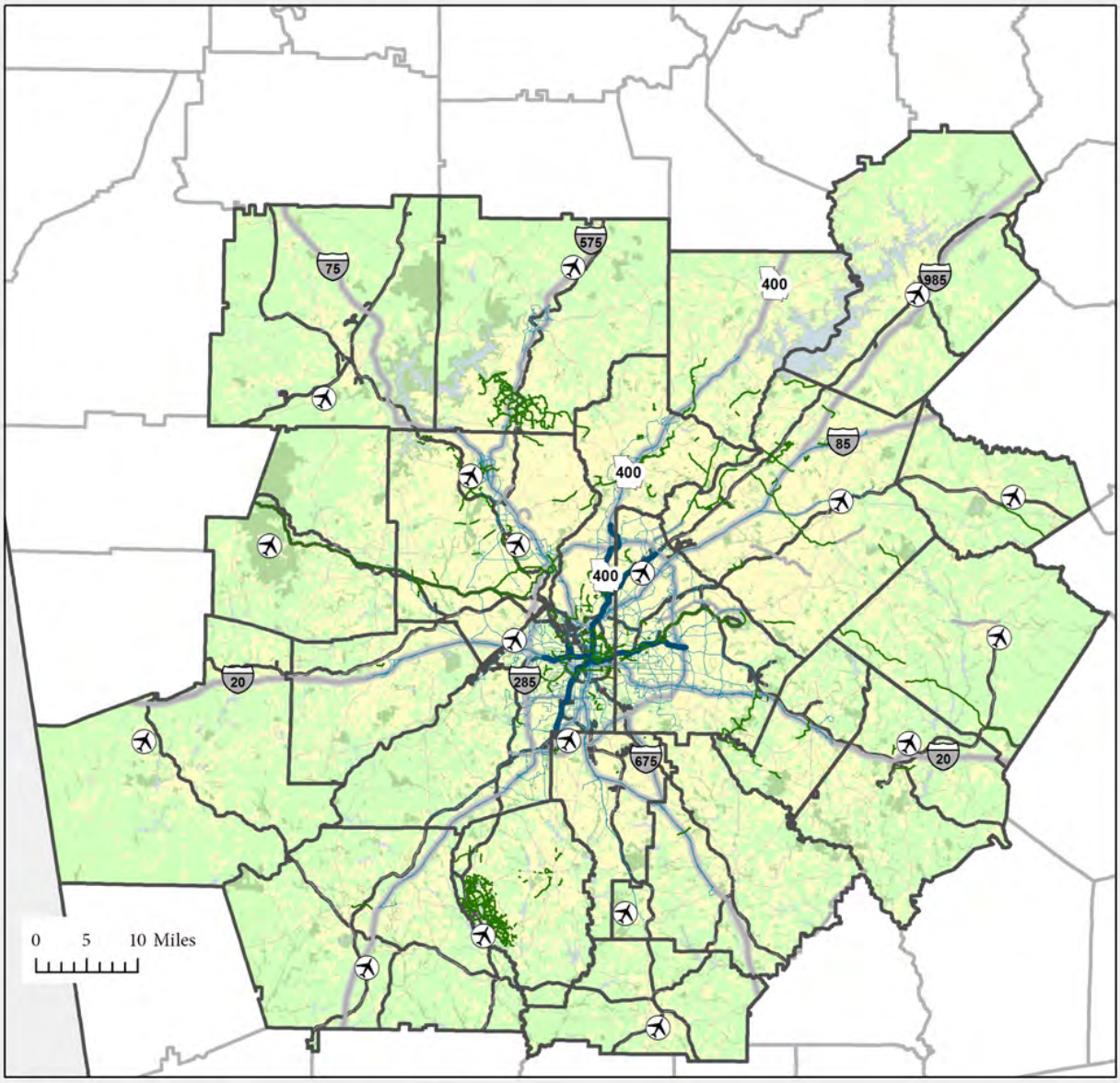
This shift in viewpoints bodes well for Phase one of the Atlanta Streetcar which is opening soon, giving students, employees and visitors a needed circulation option within Downtown Atlanta. Expansion studies for this and other transit options throughout the Atlanta region are now underway.

Active Transportation

Active modes of transportation, such as walking and cycling, are beneficial to both personal health and air quality. Active modes are viable for shorter trips and are often important for people who live near transit stops or lack access to a private automobile. Unfortunately, many existing roadway facilities are not equipped to safely accommodate active transportation trips. These infrastructure inadequacies contribute to a lower percentage of estimated daily active mode commutes and an increased risk for fatal injury for pedestrians per capita when compared to our peer regions.

According to data provided to ARC by local governments, there are roughly 1,295 miles of bicycle

Atlanta Region Transportation Systems



Atlanta Region Transportation Systems

- Airports and Air Bases
- Bike Facilities
- MARTA Rail
- Bus Routes
- National Highway System
- Regional Thoroughfare Network
- State Routes
- Railroads
- Developed Land
- Undevelopable Land
- Undeveloped Land

facilities in the 18-county region. A data inventory for sidewalks is not yet available. Together this infrastructure supports active modes of transportation, which account for roughly 2 percent of all regional commuting trips. While an excellent network for recreational purposes is already in place, knitting the system together to better link people's homes, jobs and shopping destinations could be important to the region's future.

Runners on the Cumberland Connector Trail

THE REGIONAL PLAN IN ACTION

The ARCis responsible for coordinating local, state and federal resources to identify mobility improvements within the vast, 20-county metropolitan area, which is currently home to more than 5.2 million people. These improvements are outlined within The Regionaal Plan which covers a 25-year planning horizon. Developing The Regional Plan would be impossible without close collaboration with local governments. To help make this happen, ARC partners with counties and municipalities across the region through the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) program.

The CTP Program encourages counties and their municipalities to develop joint long-range transportation plans. The goal of the program is to update local transportation plans that are used as input into the regional transportation planning process. The CTP Program assists local governments by clearly defining jurisdiction-wide goals, needs, and priorities. While ARC typically completes needs assessments and transportation plans focusing on regional needs and solutions, a successful local transportation plan and program is also critical. Local transportation plans are a key mechanism in which governments define programs and projects they are prepared to support and assist in funding. No RTP can be successfully implemented without local support for plan goals, programs, and projects. As such, priorities identified through the CTP program form the basis for future funding requests during Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan update cycles. As of September 2014, 18 CTPs have been funded and completed through the program, with an additional six plans currently under development.

Once developed, it is largely the responsibility of the State and local governments to deliver the projects found within the RTP. However, according to the ARC's Breaking Ground project implementation reporting effort, since 2003 the region's annual advancement rate of transportation project phases (engineering, right-of-way, and construction) has ranged from 35% to 68%. Delays in project delivery can adversely impact project costs and erode public confidence in the efficiency of public agencies.

To better understand and address this issue, the ARC Board established the Project Delivery Task Force (PDTF). The PDTF is charged with identifying the institutional and procedural issues that can impact project delivery, as well as formulating solutions to help keep the delivery of projects in the RTP on schedule. The multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency task force have met throughout 2014 to identify strategies which may help accelerate project delivery rates in the Metro-Atlanta region. The PDTF will report to the Transportation and Air Quality Committee of the ARC Board in November 2014, documenting the major barriers to successful project implementation and options to improve delivery.

WHERE WE LIVE AND WORK

The Cumberland Acitvity Center

Street musician in Downtown Marietta

As businesses and workers are more mobile than ever, and as younger generations are increasingly choosing a place to live before choosing a place to work, quality of life and sense of place are critical to understanding a region's economic competitiveness. And although the Great Recession put downward pressure on an otherwise mobile workforce and business community, the long-term implications of quality of place remain unchanged. As the nation pulls into full economic recovery, workers and businesses will continue to "vote with their feet" by choosing to locate in communities with the most attractive characteristics, from housing stock to transit to recreation.

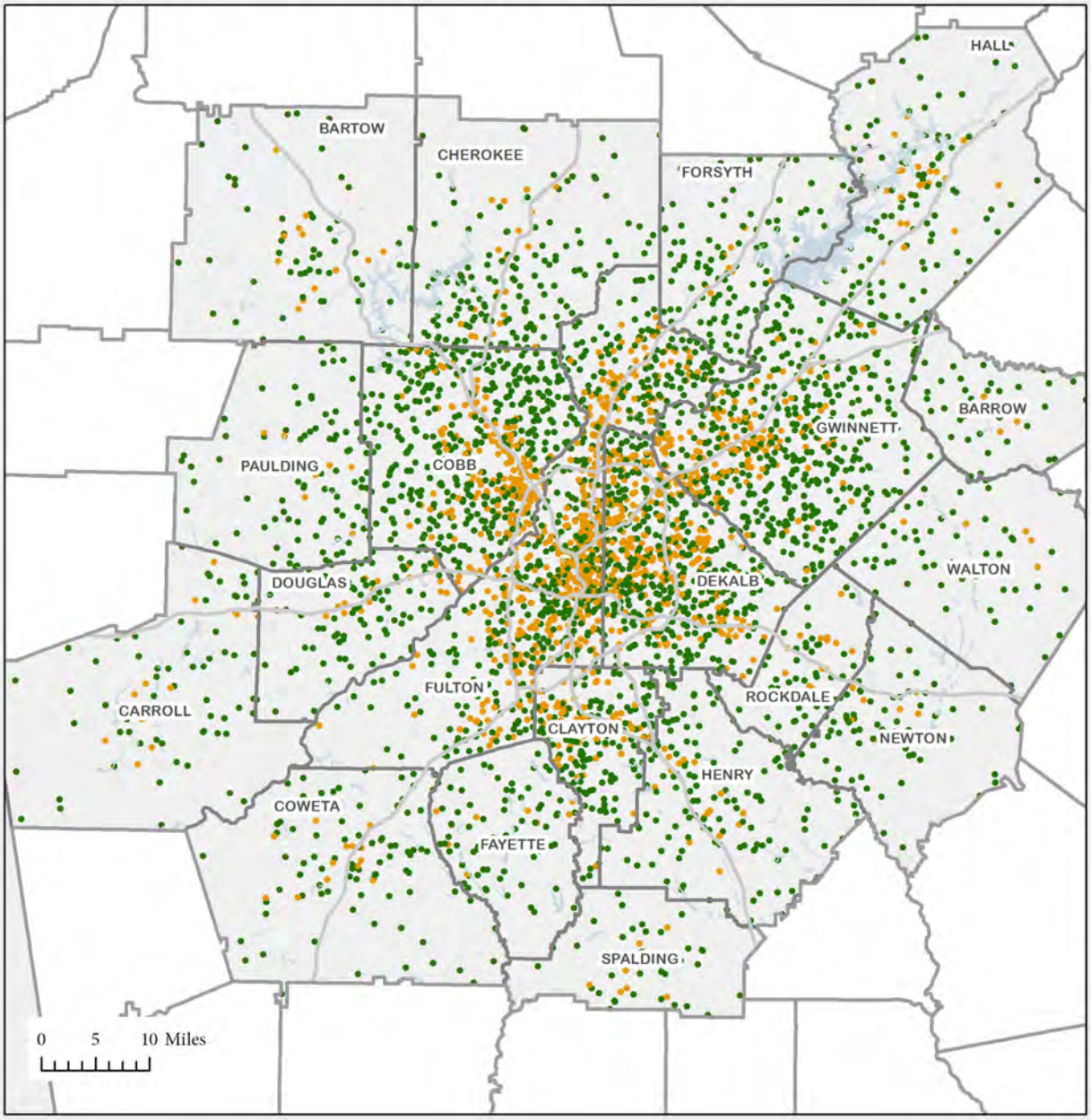
However, a relatively low cost of living, an expanding job market, a pleasant climate, and a variety of amenities are among the many factors that have attracted hundreds of thousands of new residents to metro Atlanta in recent years. In-migrants moving into the region, especially those from the Northeast, Rust Belt, or California, generally found that they could get more house for their money in metro Atlanta. In fact, a household relocating to the region from Greater Boston would find that the overall cost of living in metro Atlanta is 41 percent lower. Metro Atlanta has diverse and affordable housing stock and as the job market continues to enter a more robust recovery and family incomes begin to stabilize and appreciate once again, the attractiveness of the region's single- family housing stock to buyers will undoubtedly improve.

However, things have been changing. Over the past decade, thousands of housing units have been added into the region's traditional employment centers, and we see the number of workers living in these centers growing at a faster rate than workers living outside these centers. A recent study by George Washington University found that 50 percent of income producing properties is located on .5 % of the region's land area, and these properties are achieving higher rents and returns on investments.

As such, the continued development of metro Atlanta is inextricably tied to its economic development. New research reveals how walkable urban places and projects will drive tomorrow's real estate industry and the economy. Atlanta has the ability to create many of those places. Walkable Urban Places are defined as having much higher density, employs multiple modes of transportation that get people and goods to walkable environment to creates many different housing products in the same place. Surprisingly, this research has found that "sprawl in metro Atlanta is approaching an end." The report notes that from 1992-2000, roughly 13 percent of real estate investment in the region went into Current and Emerging Walkable places. From 2001-2008, that number doubled to 26 percent. Since 2009, it more than doubled again, reaching 60 percent. Different public policy and real estate strategies are needed to take advantage of these market trends and build places innovators want to live work and play in more places throughout the region.

Housing in the City of Duluth

2010 Distribution of Housing Type



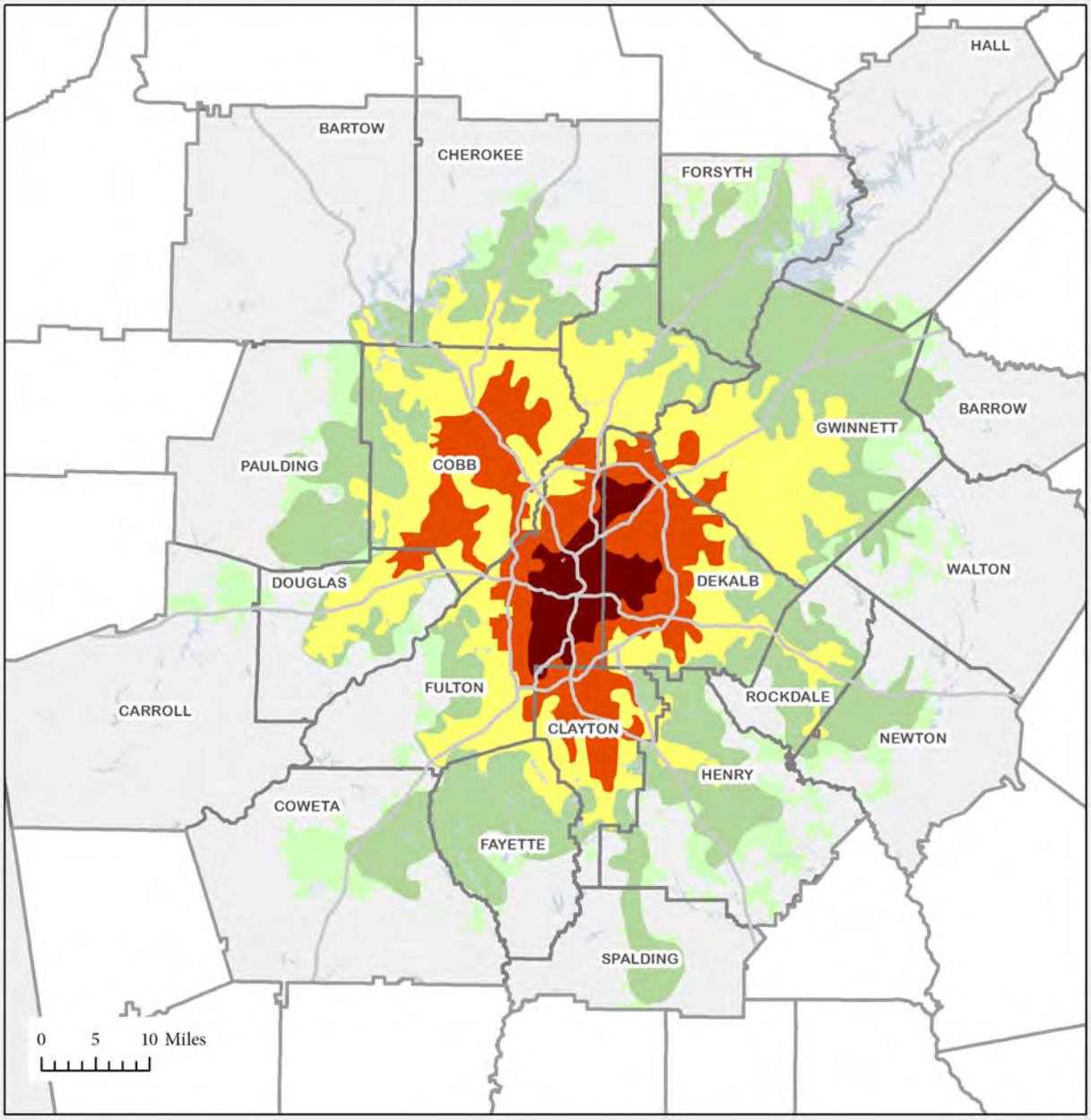
1 Dot = 500

- Single Family Housing
- Multi-Family Housing

While Single Family Housing domintates the Atlanta region, Multi-Family Housing is in all parts of the region, but the concentratrions are developing within job centers along major transportation corridors.

Source: Neighborhood Nexus

Atlanta Urbanized Area Growth

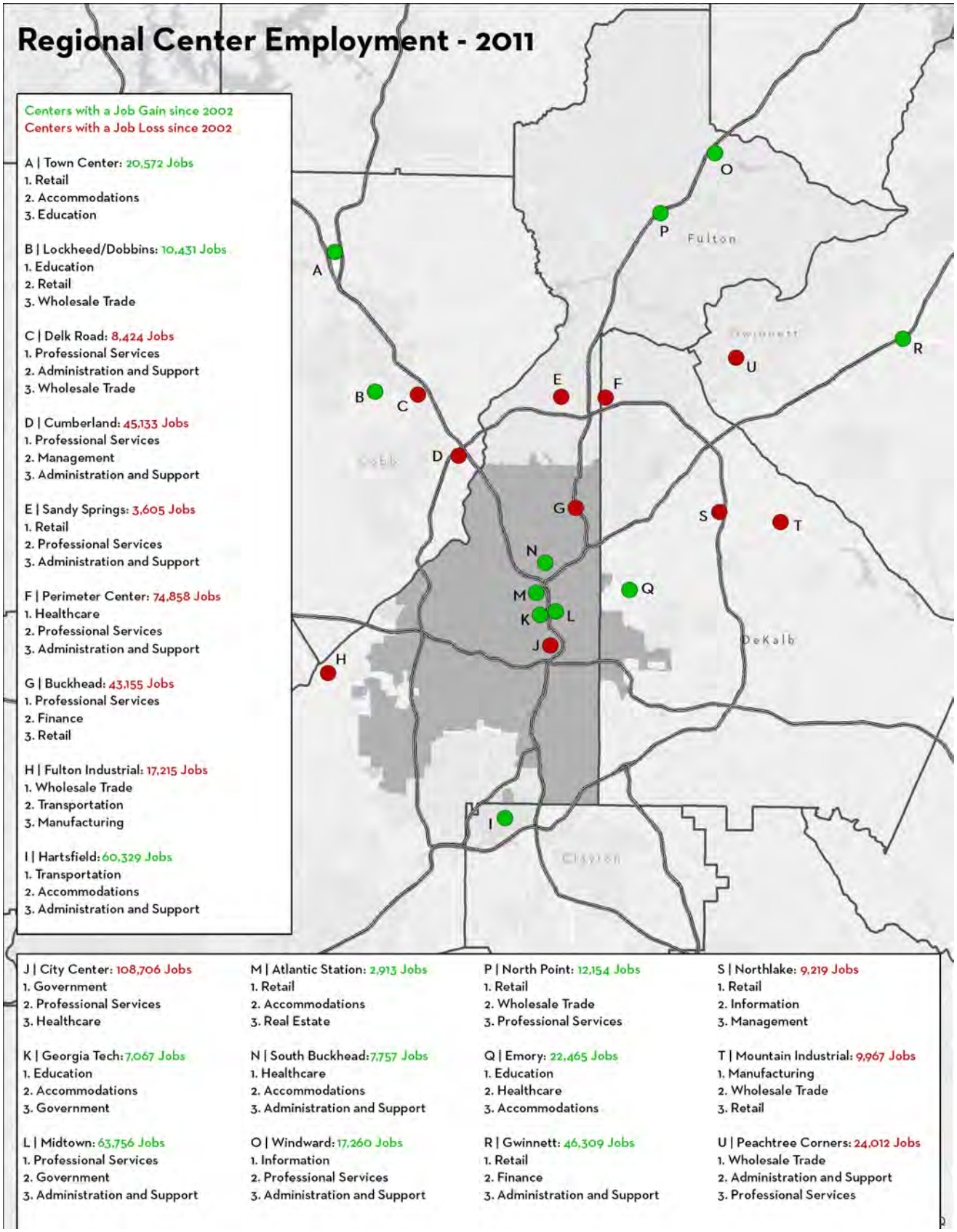


Atlanta Urbanized Area Growth

- 1950
- 1970
- 1990
- 2000
- 2010

The Atlanta region's urbanized area is just over 2,680 square miles, which is the second largest urbanized area in the United States. While this seems large, the region has expanded at its lowest rate since the 1960s. Also areas identified in past regional plans such as the Dog River Watershed and Arabian Mountain have been successfully protected from urban development.

Source: Neighborhood Nexus



Source: US Cenus On the Map

Many other regions are using Atlanta's high congestion level as an economic recruitment tool. Established job centers in the Atlanta region recognize the need to tie economic development and transportation agendas to each other, especially as these areas transition from outlying 'edge cities' to more urban-scaled activity centers that support a wide range of land uses and economic activities. This work has been lead by Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) as they work to encourage investment within their districts.

The region is fourtante to have many regional employment centers throughout the region, but the lack of large employment centers south of I-20 provides a challenge in regards to the region's transportation system as commuters travel through the downtown to access jobs in the northside.

Cumberland Mall

THE REGIONAL PLAN IN ACTION

One of the ARC's principal goals is to support local governments in their efforts to create highly livable and vibrant communities. Few of our programs do that as effectively as the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) . Seen as a cutting-edge program around the country, the LCI program was awarded the American Planning Association's National Planning Excellence Award for Implementation in 2009, and was awarded the Environmental Protection Agency's 2008 National Award for Smart Growth.

The planning process, project goals and deliverables outlined in the LCI program provide an efficient, realistic and effective method for communities to undertake smart-growth planning and implementation. In return, this works to achieve more balanced regional growth by concentrating new development away from undeveloped greenfields and into areas with existing infrastructure, reducing vehicle miles traveled and improving air quality. The LCI program has proven enormously successful as the catalyst to major redevelopment efforts taking place in transit station areas and small and large urban centers and corridors. These investments have spurred new housing and development closer to jobs, and are helping to promote more efficient transportation nodes.

The 2012 LCI Implementation Report indicated that LCI communities are consistently capturing a growing share of the region's new development, especially office and commercial uses. Since the 2006 Implementation Report, the amount of development concentrated into LCI areas compared with the 10-county region has doubled.

All LCI communities are different and face different challenges and opportunities. As a result, LCI plans vary in response to these specific needs. But, as unique as each community is, all LCI plans demonstrate an understanding of the primary goals and policies of the program:

Over the past 15 years, the LCI program has spurred cities, counties and communities of all sizes to undertake planning and create transportation-efficient land use strategies for activity centers, town centers and corridors. The LCI program has been the primary regional program and resource during the past decade in the Atlanta region to spur redevelopment, foster new urban development and implement transit oriented development (TOD). To date, more than $194 million in planning and transportation funds have been allocated to support 111 distinct planning areas in the region.

The Downtown Duluth LCI Project

OUR NATURAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS

The Martin Luther King Historic District

Atlanta Botanical Garden

Throughout its history, ARC has been involved in efforts to increase the amount of protected greenspace in the Atlanta region. As the region grew, along with ARC's planning area, over the years some areas targeted for protection were saved while others were lost to development. The Atlanta region has varied supply of major parks and recreation areas; wildlife management areas; conservation areas; nature preserves and water resources. Currently, however, there is no consistent, coordinated mechanism to ensure the region's inventory of protected lands increases as the region grows through 2040.

Regional green infrastructure, including significant cultural resources, is a framework for strategic long-term land conservation and future land use planning that can ensure the region will continue to grow while protecting irreplaceable natural assets.

With connectivity as the goal, green infrastructure demands a regional approach and perspective. Because of this, green infrastructure planning must take place on local, regional, state and federal levels. All these levels must communicate with one another in order to create an interconnected system. This ensures that the system is greater than the sum of its parts.

ARC has developed a Regionally Important Resource Plan that identifies critical components of the region's green infrastructure that all parties in the region will need to work to preserve and protect. Initial designation as a Regionally Important Resource does not denote that an area is off limits to future development. What it does suggest however, is that these areas should have an enhanced level of protection and management and that careful consideration should be given to new development.

Developing regional priorities for the protection, conservation and/or coordinated management of our region's critical natural and cultural resources is a critical component of The Regional Plan. In order for the potential of this process to be fully realized ARC will need the assistance of stakeholders from around the region including our local governments, state agencies and non-governmental organizations committed to the preservation of the region's resources.

Trails and greenways function for conservation and recreation, but have value as points of connectivity within larger green infrastructure and transportation networks. As advocacy efforts for greenway and trail building have increased, numerous local governments have begun to identify and develop local greenway and trail systems. Non-profit partners, such as the PATH Foundation, have been essential in building a regional trail network.

Though often used interchangeably, "greenways" are generally the areas adjacent to river and stream corridors that are enhanced by conservation measures and/ or recreational use. "Multi-use trails" can be combined with river greenways, but just as often can be found utilizing other corridors such as city streets, public utilities, linear parks, or abandoned rail lines. When planned as apart of a community's larger transportation infrastructure, they become an essential transportation alternative, such as with Peachtree City's 90+ miles of multi-use paths used by pedestrians, cyclists and low speed vehicles (LSVs).

Development of river greenways facilitates conservation and recreational amenities and is closely linked to the protection of river corridors and wetland, enhancing the protection of water quality and water supply sources. Multi-use trails establish connectivity to parks, neighborhoods, commercial centers and other community amenities, providing ancillary economic development and public health benefits.

The Atlanta Beltline is a redevelopment project that includes multiple revitalization elements, including parks, public art, and transit. But its core is a concrete trail that will eventually connect a 22-mile loop of abandoned rail lines through established neighborhoods and commercial centers – many of which include historically and culturally significant resources.

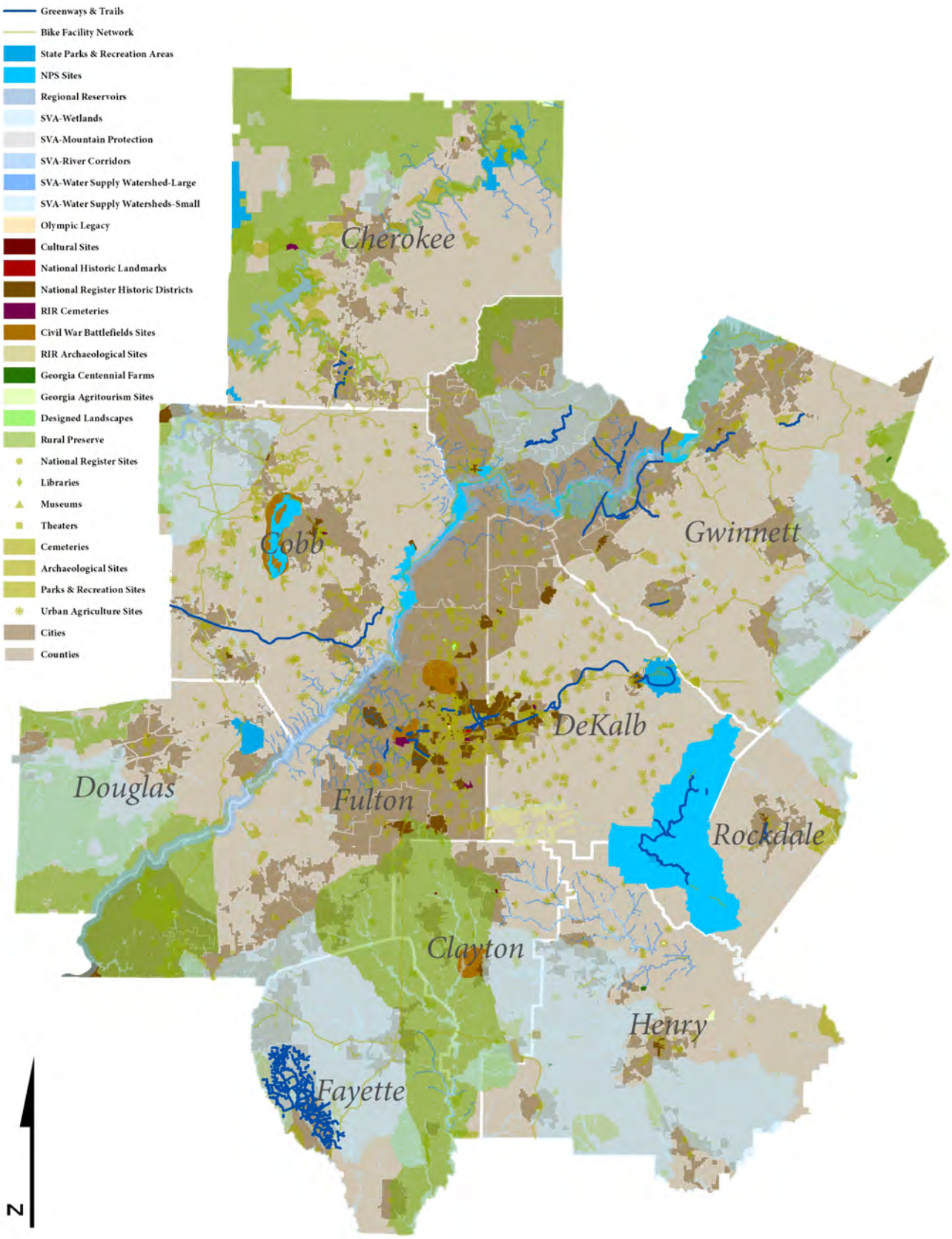
Metro Atlanta's regional park network contributes to the core of a green infrastructure system. The Atlanta region includes thousands of acres of community parks in all forms and sizes. Many parks are the legacy of historic events such as Piedmont Park (City of Atlanta), which was the site of the 1895 Cotton States Exposition, or Kennesaw Mountain (Cobb County), site of a key Civil War Battle in the Atlanta Campaign and one of the most visited National Parks in the country.

Other parks provide both environmental protection and recreation amenities, such as the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (Cobb, Forsyth, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties). The majority are designed to provide recreational value to local communities and commemorate key events or important citizens. Parks are often the most visible elements of a green infrastructure network, but many other pieces come together to form the larger system. These include formal landscape areas such as cemeteries, multi-use trails, public gardens, community gardens and urban farms.

Conservation lands also connect the region's green infrastructure network. Federal, state and local regulations limit the development of wetlands, river corridors and greenways, and areas in proximity to public drinking water intake points. Often these regulations preserve water quality and quantity, essential for our population to survive, thrive and be economically competitive.

A second type of conservation land can be found within Rural and Developing Rural land use areas. Though the Atlanta region is known for its urban and suburban patterns of development, many areas still reflect the character and aesthetic qualities of Georgia's agrarian roots. Therefore, it is still possible to find pasture and forest, hillsides and areas of mountain protection. And communities have enacted conservation mechanisms to preserve rural character, including easements, Transfer of Development Rights, preferential tax assessments and zoning controls.

Parks, landscapes, greenways and forests all have a conservation role in the regional green infrastructure network. As elaborate as any other system in Metro Atlanta, conservation lands collectively occupy approximately 5% of our total land area. As with other infrastructure networks, cooperation among governments and their partnerships with communities and advocacy organizations will be needed to maintain and develop these resources.


Greenways & Trails
Bike Facility Network
State Parks & Recreation Areas
NPS Sites
Regional Reservoirs
SVA-Wetlands
SVA-Mountain Protection
SVA-River Corridors
SVA-Water Supply Watershed-Large
SVA-Water Supply Watersheds-Small
Olympic Legacy
Cultural Sites
National Historic Landmarks
National Register Historic Districts
RIR Cemeteries
Civil War Battlefields Sites
RIR Archaeological Sites
Georgia Centennial Farms
Georgia Agritourism Sites
Designed Landscapes
Rural Preserve
National Register Sites
Libraries
Museums
Theaters
Cemeteries
Archaeological Sites
Parks & Recreation Sites
Urban Agriculture Sites
Cities
Counties
Cherokee
Cobb
Gwinnett
DeKalb
Douglas
Fulton
Rockdale
Clayton
Henry
Fayette
N

The most basic and routine part of our day really involves one of the most complex planning processes in the region: Access to food.

Food is many things. It is culture, embodying ethnic traditions, family recipes and social opportunities. It is wellness – the fuel that we need to stay healthy and provide the nutrients we need to thrive. It is a commodity – it represents job creation, economic development and innovation. And food is sustainability, insofar as we strive to create food security for all residents of metro Atlanta, providing diverse options while minimizing harmful environmental impacts.

Yet even with agriculture as a leading industry in Georgia, we still import the vast majority of our food from outside the region and the state. In recent years, metro Atlantans have become more aware of the need for locally sourced food. By the numbers, we enjoy the harvest from 200+ Urban Farms, 80+ Community Gardens and Urban Orchards, and 90+ Farmers Markets.

We have opportunities to participate in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs that provide for direct investment into the local growing community, as well as options for dining in an assortment of restaurants that purchase directly from local growers. And every year tens of thousands of pounds of fresh produce is contributed by local growers to Plant a Row for the Hungry, with the largest contributions coming from Henry, Fayette and Clayton counties. But the introduction of urban farming into metro Atlanta poses unique challenges as well, such as:

- Access to Water
- Resources and Capital
- Growth Pressures:

Locally-grown food provides fresh, inexpensive sustenance for regional residents. The process of raising it provides jobs, physical activity, community building and business opportunities for citizens. Metro Atlanta has grown strong roots in the area of local food, and is working toward a bumper crop.

White Street Park in Suwanee is Georgia's largest Organic Community Garden

Metro Atlanta has reason to celebrate – hundreds of reasons to celebrate. We celebrate dogwoods, the Fourth of July, the fall harvest and just about anything else you can think of. And when it comes to these celebratory festivals, metro Atlanta comes out en masse to enjoy the arts, culture and history that give this region its colorful heritage.

But Festivals are more than just a good time. They are opportunities to form social and community identity. They provide a market for direct distribution by artists, craftsmen, and musicians. They open up new cultures while preserving old world traditions. And no matter where you go in Metro Atlanta, there is something for everyone.

We have cultural festivals that represent Carribean, Korean, American Indian, Japanese, African American, Celtic, and Latino heritage. We have food festivals for Beer, BBQ, Peaches, Chocolate, Hot Tamales, Grilled Cheese, Lemonade, and Chili, and flower festivals that celebrate Azaleas, Hydrangeas, Geraniums, Jonquils, and Cherry Blossoms. Whether it is Books, Butterflies, Films, Fishing, Hip Hop, Arts, Jazz, Pets, Bluegrass, Zombies, Pumpkins or Cycling…there really isn't much that the region can't find to celebrate.

Douglas County Bicycle Rodeo

THE REGIONAL PLAN IN ACTION

In 2012, the Chattahoochee River was identified by the National Park Service as the first National Water Trail in the United States. This created renewed interest in our regional blueways as a natural resource and recreational amenity. Advocacy groups, such as the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, have spent many years fighting to preserve and protect the quality of the river, as both a recreational amenity and public water resource.

ARC's earliest open space and nature preserve plans going back to the 1960s identified land along the Chattahoochee River as important natural amenities. Reflecting on the success of its plan implementation, the 1976 Proposed Nature Preserves Plan observes, "The next two areas acquired came as a direct result of the increased attention to preserve portions of the Chattahoochee River Corridor in the early 1970. The state acquired 522 acres in the Palisades area in 1974 and 1975 for $5,393,390, averaging $10,332 per acre. In 1974, the State and Fulton County cooperatively purchased 130 acres of the Island Ford Nature Preserve for $2,343,000 approximately $18,020 per acre."

These early acquisitions have grown to include a network of thousands of acres of open space along the Chattahoochee River. With similar planning for our regional blueways, the Chattahoochee River can once again be the catalyst for a new kind of urban recreational and natural resource amenity.

The Chattahoochee River

OUR REGION'S WATER

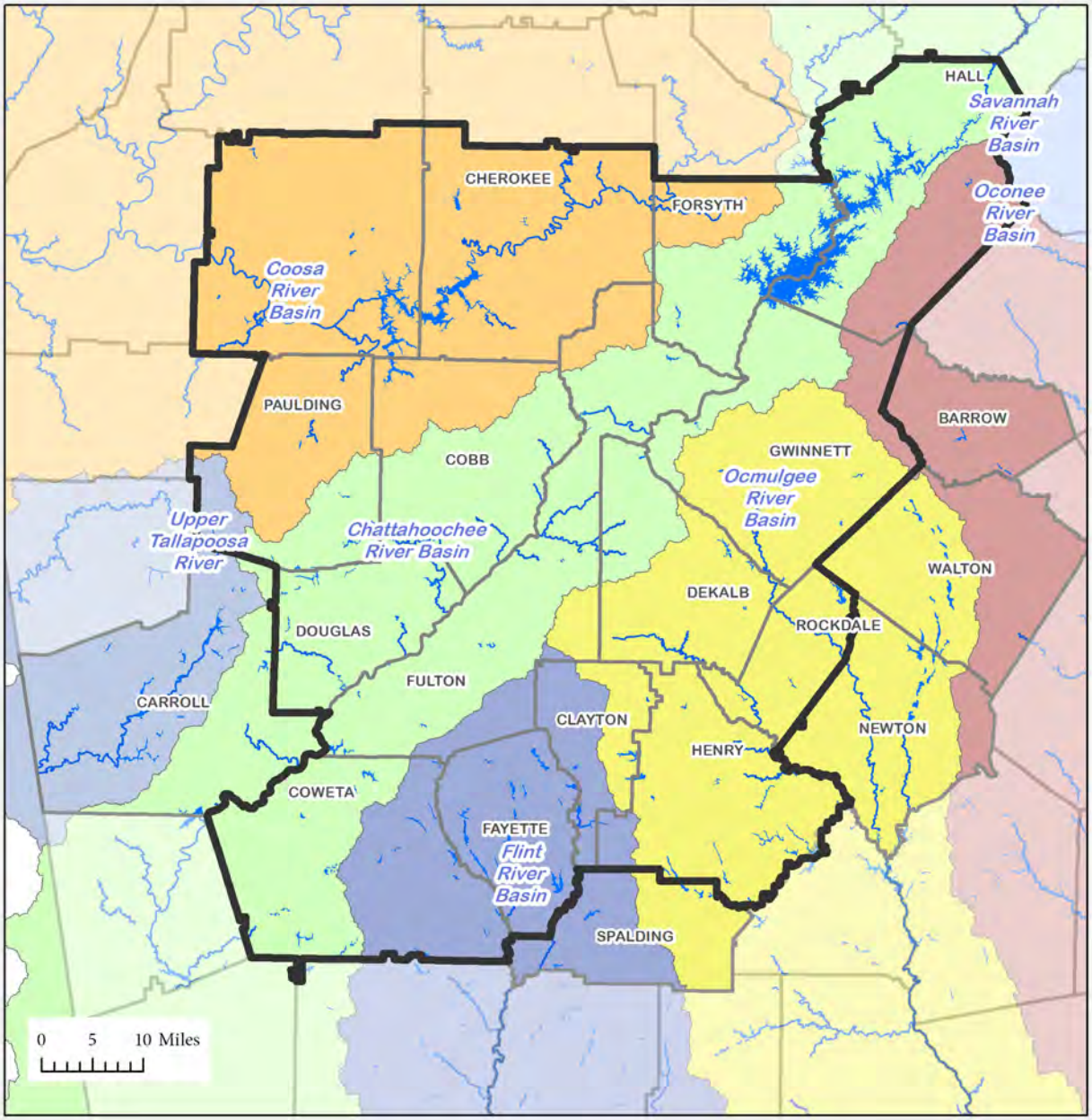
The R.M. Clayton Water Treatment Plant

Lake Lanier

The 10-County Atlanta region sits in the upper reaches of six major river basins. These are the Chattahoochee, Coosa, Ocmulgee, Oconee, Flint, and Tallapoosa. The Atlanta region relies on these surface waters for 99 percent of water needs. A vast majority (73%) of that water comes from the Chattahoochee River alone. While the Atlanta region receives about 50 inches of rain each year. Therefore region recognizes the need to secure and properly steward it's water supplies. As an example of the region's conservation efforts, during the past 10 year period, the metro area saw a 10 percent reduction in water withdrawals despite a population increase of 1 million people. While the region continues to make meaningful strides in the management of it's water resources, some challenges remain.

Water quality is an example of one of the water challenges that lie ahead for the region. The Metro North Georiga Water Planning District (Metro Water District) region has more than 2,100 miles of rivers and streams which have been assessed for their water quality. Based on this assessment, approximately 1,500 miles of the region's steams are "listed" by the state as impaired for not meeting water quality standards. Many local governments are enacting ordinances, policies, and programs designed to balance development opportunities with goals designed to improve and protect water quality.

The Region and its Water Resources



Metro North Georgia Water Planning District Boundary

Water Planning

A myriad of users rely on the region's water supplies. This includes the wide range of in-stream (recreational and ecological) and off stream (human) uses. In addition to region's diverse ecology, many homeowners, boaters, businesses and visitors rely on the region's water resources and enjoy these recreational opportunities. Off stream uses in the region include supplies for drinking water, drought management, power-generation, municipal, industrial, commercial and agricultural needs.

The regional water planning within metro Atlanta is undertaken and coordinated by the Metro Water District. The Metro Water District was created in 2001 by the Georgia General Assembly (O.C.G.A. §12-5-570 Et seq.) to provide water resource planning and implementation support to the 15-County metro area. The Metro Water District includes all 10 of ARC's counties as well as Bartow, Coweta, Forsyth, Hall, and Paulding Counties. The Metro Water District is housed within and staffed by the Center for Livable Communities' Natural Resources Division (NRD) of ARC. While housed within ARC, the Metro Water District differs in important ways such as having its own unique enabling legislation, governing board and bylaws. This allows for coordination and leveraging of respective resources between ARC and the Metro Water District regarding activities indended to secure and enhance the region's water resources.

The Metro Water District is also one of eleven Water Planning Regions established by the Georgia State Water Plan adopted by the Georgia General Assembly in 2008. Upon its adoption, the State Water Plan established the other 10 water planning councils and charged them with developing their own regional water plans. The State Water Planning legislation compliments, but does not supersede the legislation that created the Metro Water District. One of the key differences between the Metro Water District's plans and the plans of all other 10 regions are the action items in the Metro Water District's plans which are required to be implemented by all 109 local jurisdictions within the 15-county area. The other difference is, any local jurisdiction found not in compliance with the Metro Water District's plans may not be eligible for new or upgraded wastewater or drinking water permits.

The Metro Water District's primary responsibility is to provide planning and implementation support to the 15-county area as it relates to matters of waste water, water supply & conservation, and watershed management. This is accomplished via the preparation and five-year updates of long-range integrated, strategic water resources plans. The Metro Water District's water planning is directed by its Board, and guided by its technical and basin advisory committees as well as the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The intent of these planning and implementation activities is to carry out the Metro Water District's mission to "establish policy, create plans and promote intergovernmental coordination of water issues in the District from a regional perspective."

The Metro Water District accomplishes these goals through implementation of the plan's required action items, examples of which include, conservation pricing of residential water use and low flow water fixtures as well as stormwater and stream-buffer ordinances. These actions help to not only protect water availability for the 15-county area and beyond, but also help protect the quality of our water supplies and our overall water infrastructure.

In addition to the plan's requirements, Metro Water District jurisdictions must also request amendments to the plan if certain conditions change. For example, if a local government intends to increase wastewater or water supply capacity in a manner inconsistent with the current plan, they must request a plan amendment from the Metro Water District to do so. Plan amendment requests are reviewed by Metro Water District

staff and are either approved or denied by the Metro Water District Governing Board. This helps to ensure an adequate supply of water for all users in the future and ensures appropriate resource planning.

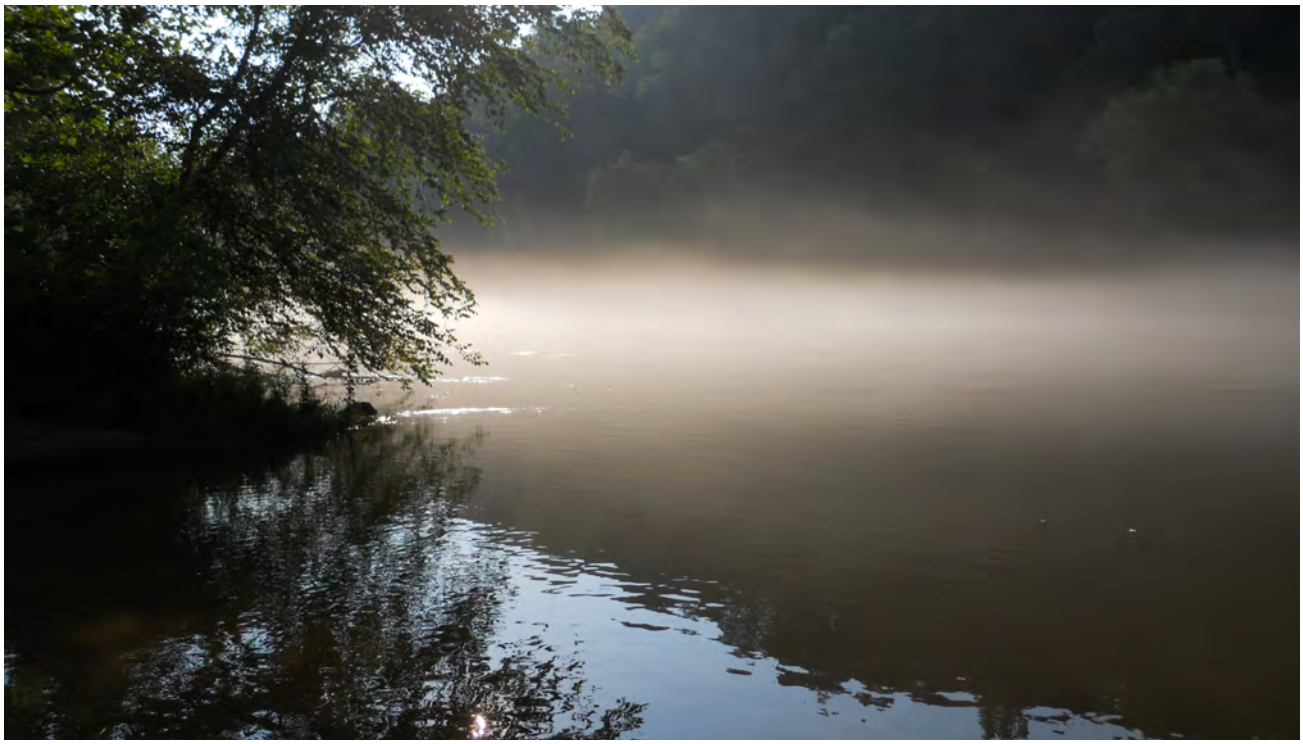
Water Infrastructure

Metro Atlanta's water needs are served through an intricate infrastructure network consisting of pipes, streams, facilities, people, engineered, and natural systems. Within the 10-County area there are 59 publicly owned wastewater facilities and 27 publicly owned drinking water facilities as well as dozens more small and privately owned facilities. Notably, metro Atlanta is home to 22 water supply watersheds. These critical landscape features are the specific areas that drain and terminate at the locations where water is withdrawn from the rivers, streams and lakes for treatment and distribution. The plans and policies that protect these watersheds address both our water supplies and the quality of those supplies.

Water Management

In addition to its long-standing and well-recognized planning responsibilities, ARC and the Metro Water District oversee and coordinate a range of programs and initiatives designed to support and enhance plan implementation activities.

In 1973, in response to growing concerns about the Chattahoochee River, the Georgia General Assembly enacted the Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) (O.C.G.A § 12-5-440). It established a 2000-foot Corridor along both banks of the Chattahoochee and its impoundments for the 48 miles between Buford Dam and Peachtree Creek. The act was amended in 1998 to extend the Corridor an additional 36 miles to the downstream limits of Fulton and Douglas counties (the limit of the Atlanta region).



The Chattahoochee River

This protection is needed because the Chattahoochee River, the largest stream in metro Atlanta, has long been one of the region's most valuable resources:

- It is the region's primary source of drinking water.
- It is a major recreation area.
- It is one of the southern-most trout streams in the United States, and one of the very few located in a major metropolitan area.

MRPA requires the Atlanta Regional Commission to adopt a plan to protect the Chattahoochee River Corridor and to review development proposals for consistency with the plan.

MRPA also requires local governments along the corridor to implement the plan by issuing permits based on ARC findings, monitoring land-disturbing activity in the corridor and enforcing the act and the plan. Under the act, land-disturbing activity in the corridor must comply with the adopted Chattahoochee River Corridor plan to be legal.

Beyond MRPA, the action items in the Metro Water District's plan are required to be implemented by all jurisdictions within the 10-county ARC area. As discussed above, these items include 19 water conservation measures, several ordinances aimed to protect the region's waters from stormwater pollution, and local planning for wastewater infrastructure and maintenance. Many of these same requirements were included as policy and implementation recommendations in ARC's previous comprehensive plan "Plan 2040", showing the degree to which ARC and the Metro Water District work together to protect our water resources.

Beyond the Metro Water District plan's required policies and programs, ARC's NRD also provides extensive customer service, education and outreach support to the region's member governments and citizens though a range of implementation assistance programs. Examples include, My Drop Counts, promoting water conservation opportunities, the Clean Water Campaign, focused on managing and preventing stormwater pollution, and the District's toilet rebate program, which incentivizes the replacement of older, less-efficient toilets with new, low-flow fixtures. These and other NRD local government outreach programs include one-on –one consultation, workshops, preparation of outreach materials such as door hangers and brochures, and essay and video contests. These programs have won ARC and the Metro Water District a range of national and regional awards and recognition.

Given its location and recognized leadership role within the state, ARC's reach sometimes extends beyond its member's jurisdictions. For example, the first Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (GSMM) was completed in 2001 and was coordinated by staff from ARC. Because of this, ARC is seen by many as the go-to for stormwater assistance throughout the state. In 2014, ARC coordinated the update to the GSMM with more current information and approaches to stormwater management. The intent of both the original GSMM as well as the updated manual is to address negative water quality impacts that can be associated with changes in land-use, particularly with urbanization.

ARC's works to secure water and create livable places come together in many different programs, though perhaps none as comprehensively as the NRD's Green Communities Program. Similar to the LEED certification for buildings, this program certifies communities that meet specific sustainability criteria including: water conservation, green space protection, walkability, energy conservation, and alternatively fueled vehicles. As this program grows, it represents ARC's commitment to winning the future in a

sustainable way. More information on the Green Communities Program can be found on page 68.

ARC continues to demonstrate leadership and vision through the adoption of policies designed to secure the region's water supplies as well as the quality of those resources. ARC will continue to work with the Metro Water District, local governments, non-government organizations, and other partners to develop policies, programs, and other tools that allow for flexible and effective approaches to managing our water and other natural resources to support the region's activities designed to win the future.

Old Fourth Ward Park in the City of Atlanta, is an example of using stormwater as a recreational amenity.

THE REGIONAL PLAN IN ACTION

The Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Green Communities Program is a technical assistance and voluntary certification program for jurisdictions in the ARC 10-county planning area. The certification program was the first of its kind in the country seeking to transform a region by promoting local government sustainability. Local governments earn points in 10 categories by implementing specific policies and practices that contribute to overall sustainability. The categories are:

- Green Building
- Green Power
- Trees and Greenspace
- Recycling and Waste Reduction
- Education
- Energy Efficiency
- Water Use Reduction and Efficiency
- Transportation
- Land Use
- Innovation

The Green Communities Program sets an example by conserving energy, investing in renewable energy, conserving water, conserving fuel, reducing waste and protecting and restoring the community's natural resources.

The nationally recognized program spotlights best-in-class examples of sustainability, encourages innovation and salutes cities and counties that make a strong commitment to environmental stewardship. The program is intended to foster greater environmental stewardship in metro Atlanta by providing technical assistance to local governments and recognizing those communities that invest in programs leading to a more sustainable region. e program spotlights best-in-class examples of sustainability, encourages innovation and salutes cities and counties that make a strong commitment to environmental stewardship Since 2009, 18 jurisdictions have been certified by earning points across 10 categories.

Complete information about ARC's Green Communities Certification Program, including the measures each community has implemented, is available on the agency's website at www.atlantaregional.com/greencommunities.

MOVING FORWARD TO 2040

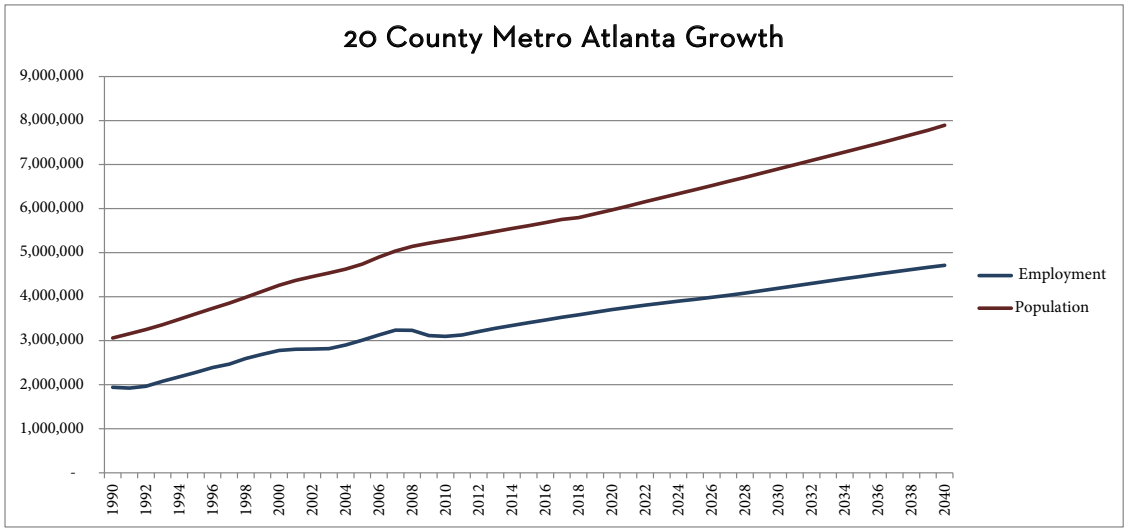
The Marietta Square

The future development at Edgewood-Candler Park MARTA Station

By 2040 the Atlanta region is projected to add an additional 2.3 million people for a total population of 7.8 million. This growth means the Atlanta region will continue to be the State and the Southeast's largest population and economic center. While robust, the projected growth is slower than the growth seen in the 1990s where the Atlanta region's population was smaller than the rest of the state.

Employment growth will continue to 2040, but at a much lower rate then what the region experienced in the 1990s. ARC forecasts that the 20-county region will continue to be the main job center within the State of Georgia, with an employment growing to 4.8 million jobs.

The location of where of all this new growth will be will be determined from the policies, programs and projects identified during The Regional Plan process. Past Regional Plans have identified and built the interstate system, MARTA, emerging centers and Cumberland and Perimeter and the construction of Lake Lanier. The location of this new growth will determine how well people and goods will move through the region.



Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

The Regional Plan Assessment is the first step in the two year The Regional Plan process. Future steps will examine impacts to the regional transportation system by changes to technology, work habits, and different transportation projects. The Regional Plan Assessment provides the groundwork for policy discussions and decisions that the ARC Board, stakeholders, and general public will engage over the next year. At the end of this process the Atlanta region will have an updated regional vision, transportation work program, and policies to guide future growth and to build a stronger region.

The Regional Plan Assessment is intended to prompt public discourse on what assets the Atlanta region has and what challenges the region is facing today and it needs to address to win in the future. It identifies key issues that are challenging policy makers today but it also illustrates on the region's strengths.

The Regional Plan is the blueprint to have the region win the future, but ARC cannot implement the plan by itself. The implementation of The Regional Plan will require the cooperation and commitment of the region's local governments, state partners, nonprofits and other organizations seeking to make the Atlanta region a better region in the future.

The public, local governments, state partners and nonprofit community are strongly encouraged to examine The Regional Plan Assessment and to participate in events and plan development process throughout 2015. The input from these activities will update The Regional Plan Assessment and guide ARC in developing an updated regional vision, transportation work program, and policies.

For the schedule of public involvement activities, ARC has developed a Public Engagement Plan for The Regional Plan. The document lays out the steps that ARC intends to take to involve the public, the ARC Board and planning partners in the development of the The Regional Plan. This document is available on The Regional Plan website. The Regional Plan website is updated regularly with meeting notices and workshops, new data and information and other content.

The Fayette County Courthouse

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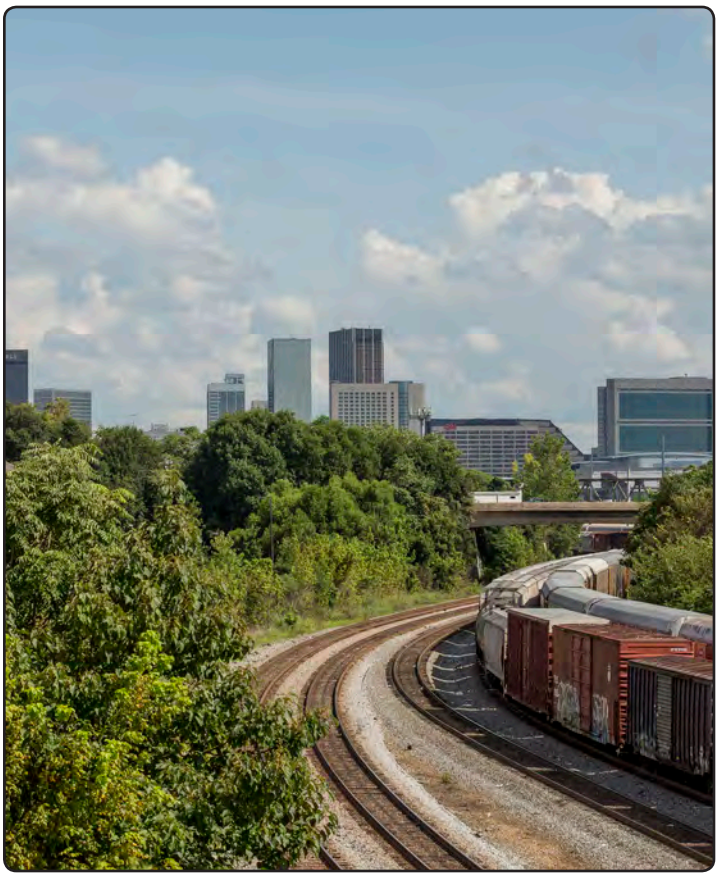
ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

THE REGIONAL PLAN



The Introduction to the Regional Plan

Apendix-Areas Requiring Special Attention

ARC
ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

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AREAS OF ATTENTION

Introduction

Georgia DCA rules require that ARC consider projected development patterns and other sources of information to evaluate the land use trends within the region to identify any areas "requiring special attention". Georgia DCA describes these areas as including:

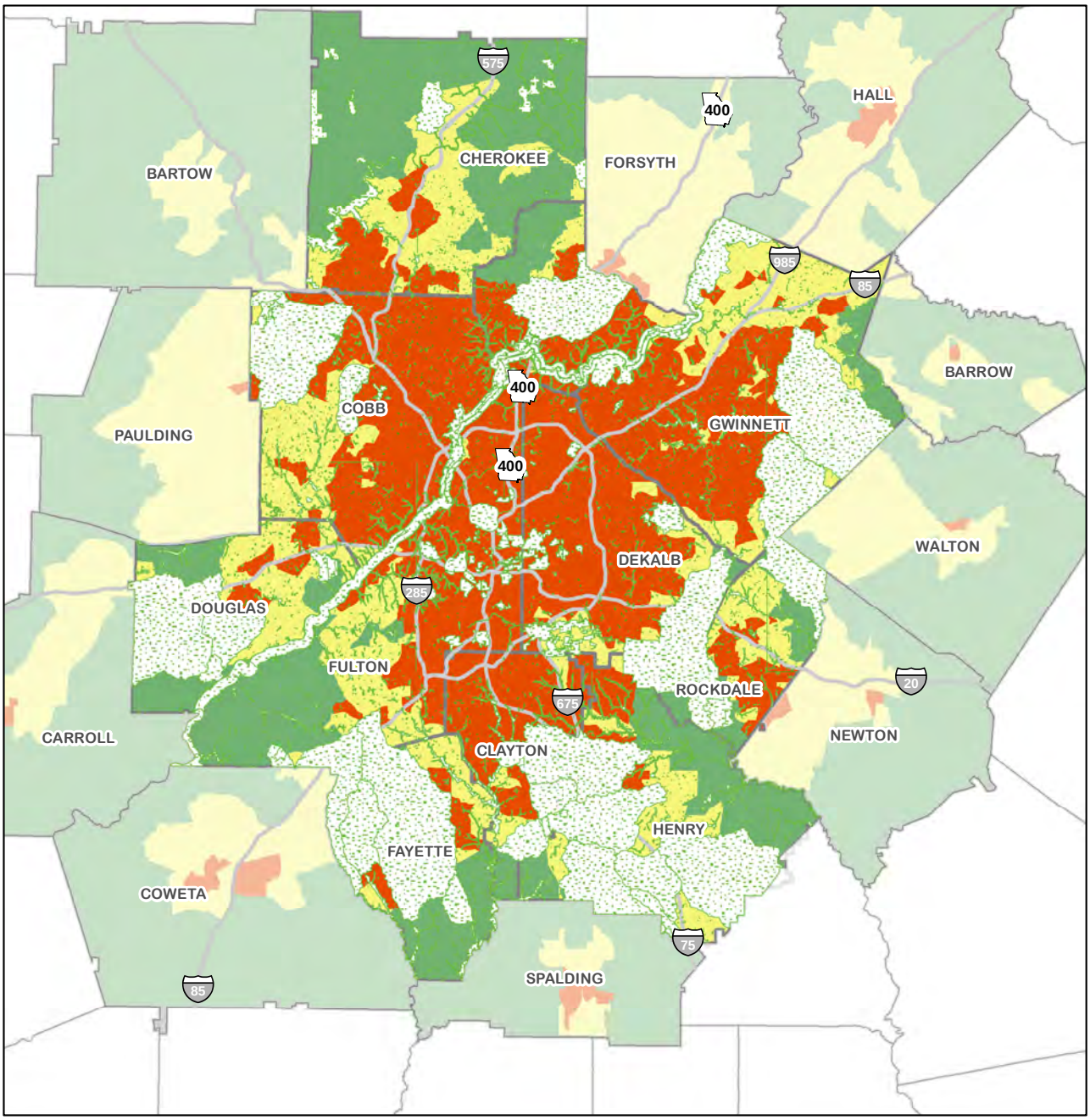
- Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map;
- Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur, especially where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole.

ARC within the Regional Assessment Identified those areas as Areas Requiring Special Attention and added three other areas; transit areas, freight areas and Regional Centers. Within The Regional Plan and other ARC work program items, ARC is working to address issues within these areas.

Projected Development Patterns Map

Based on current trends and existing local regulations, ARC has developed a Projected Development Patterns Map located on the right.

Projected Development Patterns Maps



0 5 10 Miles

- Regional Important Resources
- Rural
- Developing
- Developed

What are these Areas

Many developments within the region are facing the end of their lifecycle. Commercial "big box" developments are becoming vacant. The older traditional commercial corridors within the region are now facing obsolescence both in terms of transportation, and development. Since PLAN 2040, the region has launched construction projects at Ft Gillem, Hapeville Ford, and GM Doraville. Lacking in this as a redevelopment area, is Ft McPherson.

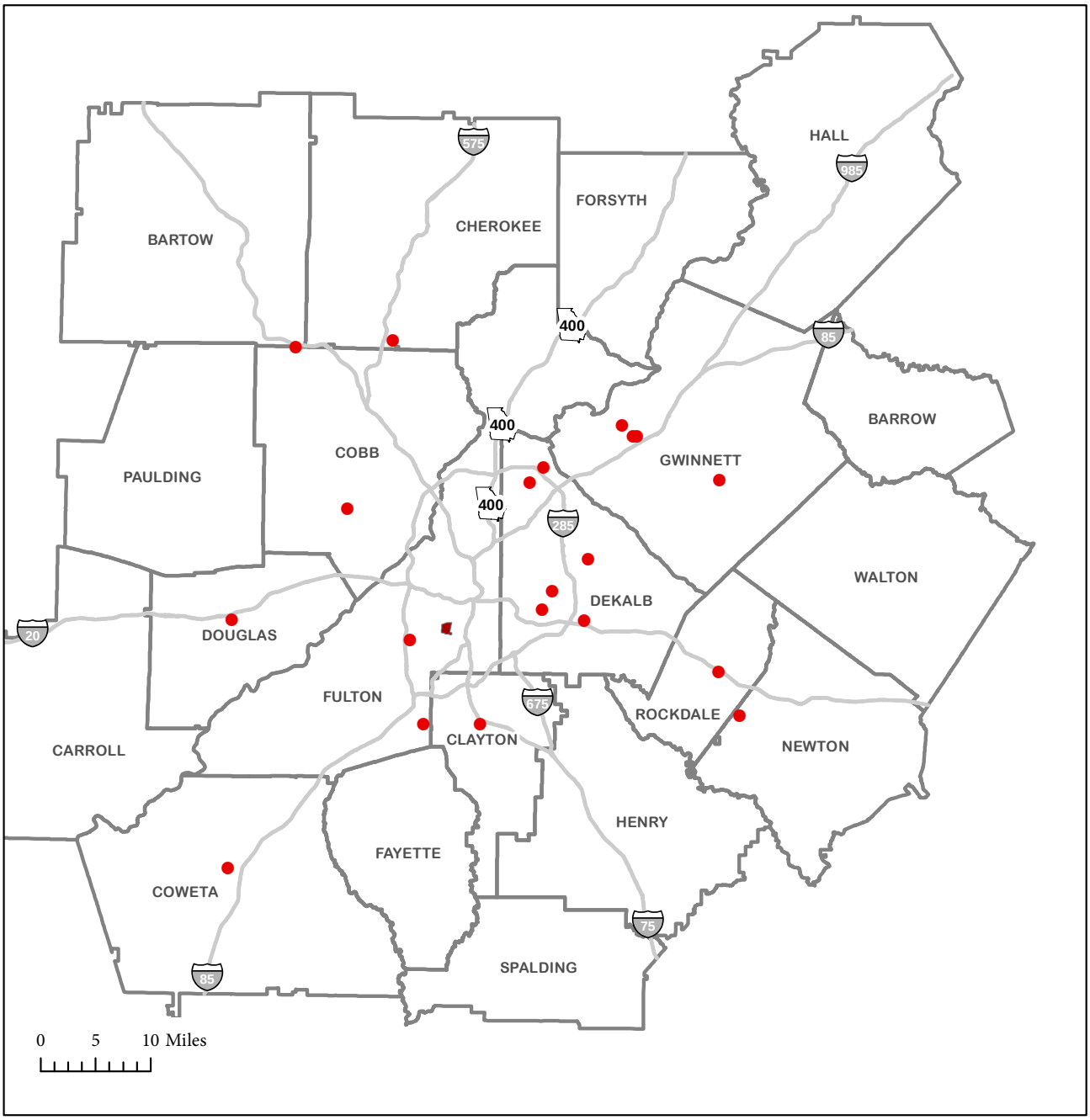
Where are these places

The majority of the vacant retail sites are within the what would be the first generation of suburbs within the region. These are the older commercial sites that are at the end of their lifecycle.

Why are these places special

Policies, tools and infrastructure investments are needed within these areas to encourage redevelopment to place these sites back as tax revenue generating developments for local governments. Large vacancy rates make areas unattractive for new investments for development.

Areas Requiring Special Attention-Areas of Redevelopment



● **Shopping Centers that are 60% Vacant**

Ft McPherson

AREAS OF RAPID GROWTH

What are these areas

By 2040, the Atlanta Region will have increased by 3 million people. Many of these people will be moving towards areas that are already developed or areas that are developed that have limited transportation infrastructure. These areas need policies and projects to handle the increased development pressures or tools to limit growth that do not have supporting infrastructure.

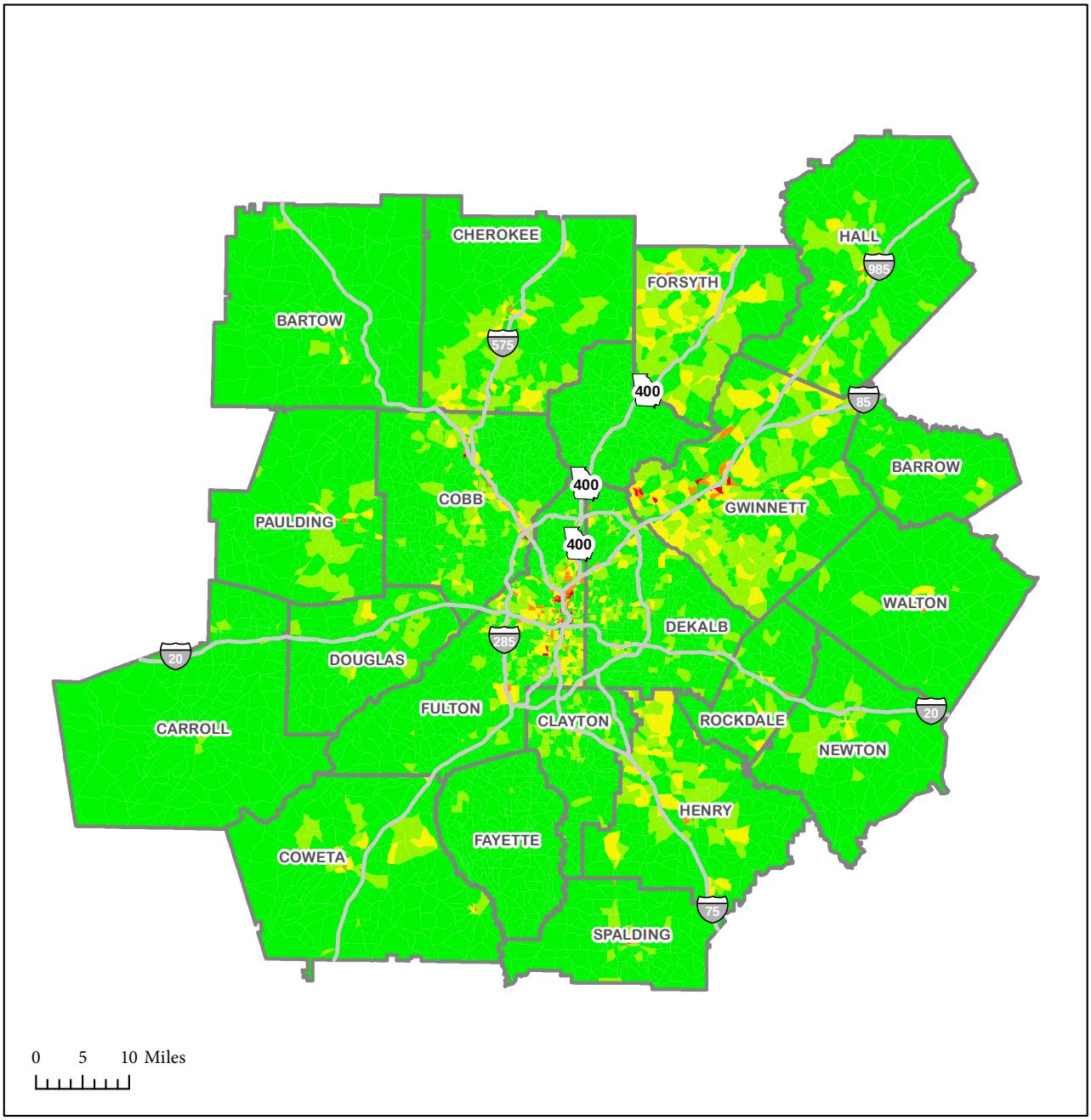
Where are these places

Areas forecasted to receive high levels of growth include the urban core, but also along the 400 corridor in Forsyth County, the 75 corridor in Henry County, and areas in Gwinnett, Douglas, and Cherokee Counties. Activity Centers also are forecasted to receive increased household growth by 2040.

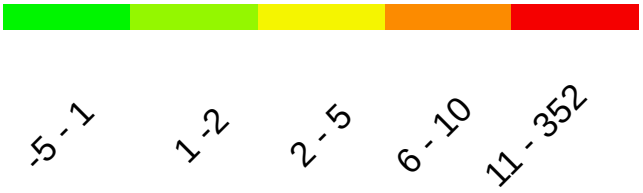
Why are these places special

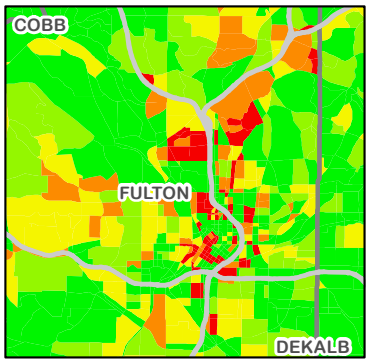
The areas receiving high growth need to have supporting infrastructure, policies and tools, to accommodate, or discourage growth. By identifying and putting in place tools, infrastructure and policies, communities can absorb the growth without taxing existing infrastructure and services.

Areas Requiring Special Attention-Areas of Rapid Growth



Population Density Change 2015-2040





STATION AREAS

What are these areas

The Atlanta Region existing transit infrastructure and planned infrastructure that has funding. These investments need supportive land use and transportation investments to maximize the ridership potential. The Atlanta Region currently has the two fixed guideway systems: The MARTA system, and the Atlanta Streetcar.

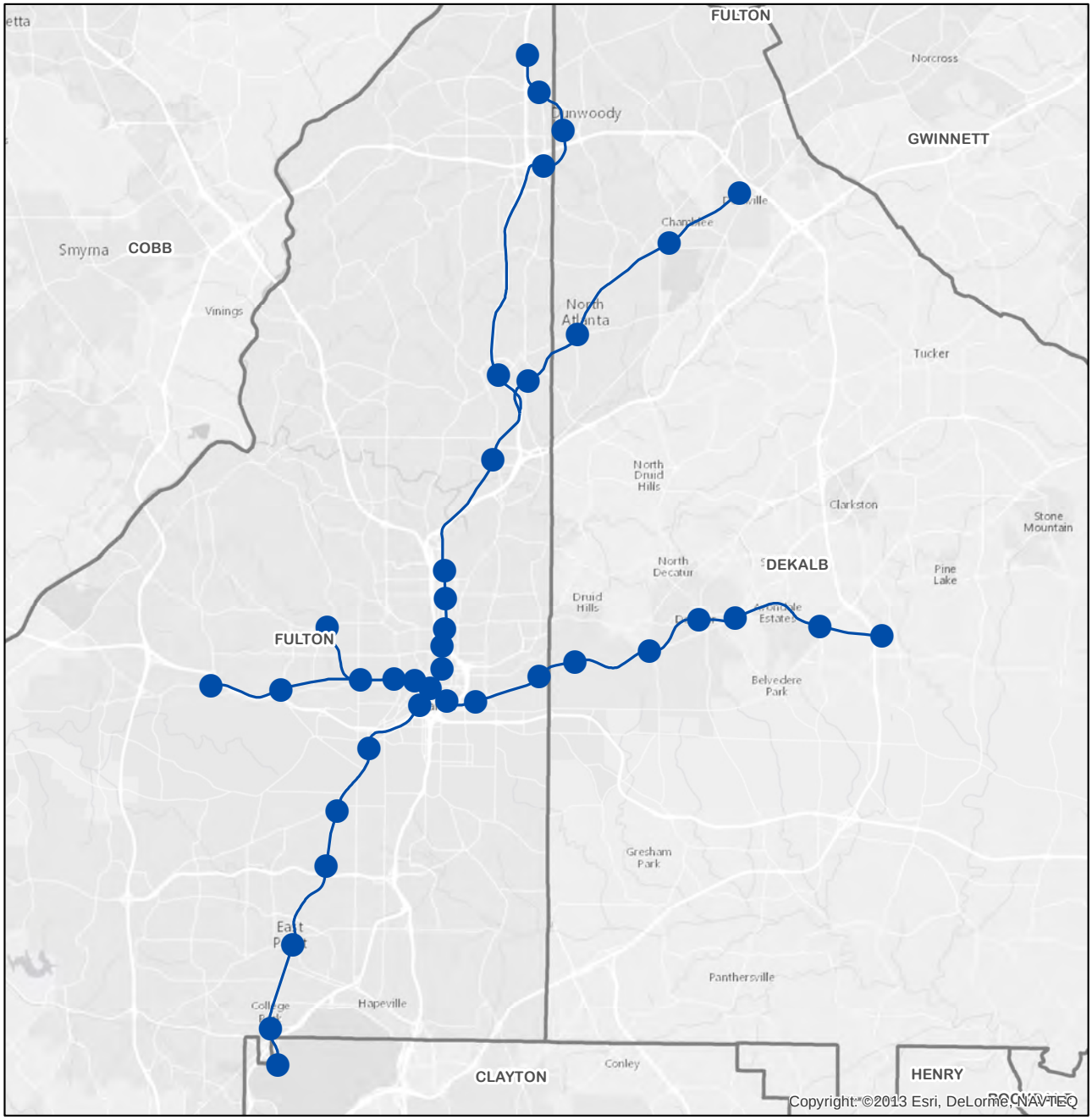
Where are these places

The current system is within two counties, Fulton and DeKalb.

Why are these places special

Transit is a significant regional investment that needs appropriate land use strategies in order to be successful. Density, Land Use Diversity and transit supported design are needed along stations to support transit ridership.

Areas Requiring Special Attention-Station Areas



0 5 10 Miles

Station Areas

Transit Lines

EQUITABLE TARGET AREAS

What are these areas

Equitable Target Areas are areas within the region that ARC has identified as places with high amounts of poverty and minority population. About 35 percent of metro Atlanta's population lives in areas defined by ARC as Equitable Target Areas.

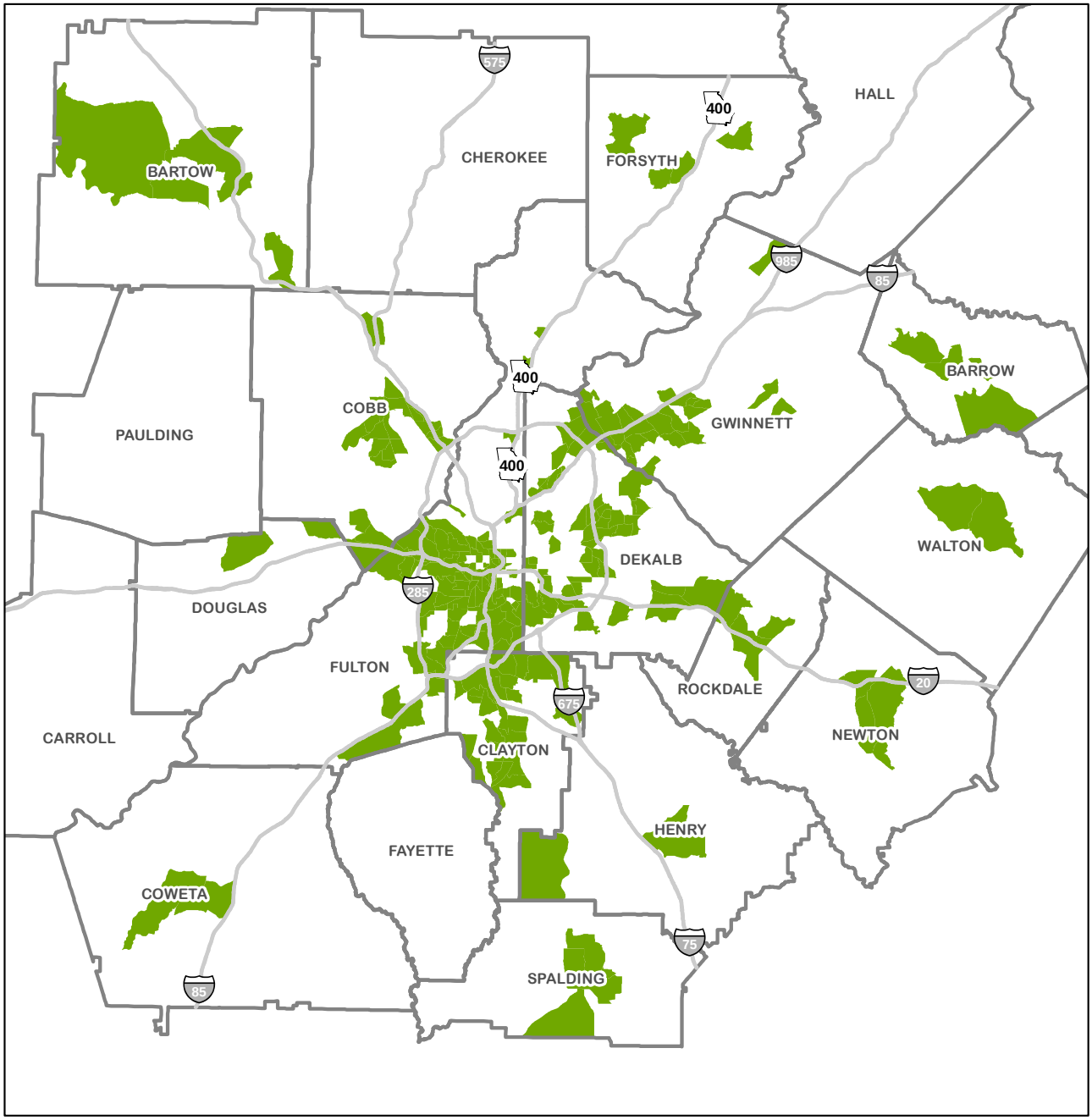
Where are these places

Concentrations of poverty are not only located within the City of Atlanta but also areas in DeKalb, Cobb, Fulton, Clayton and Gwinnett Counties, and the Cities of Chamblee, Marietta, East Point, College Park, and Forest Park.

Why are these places special

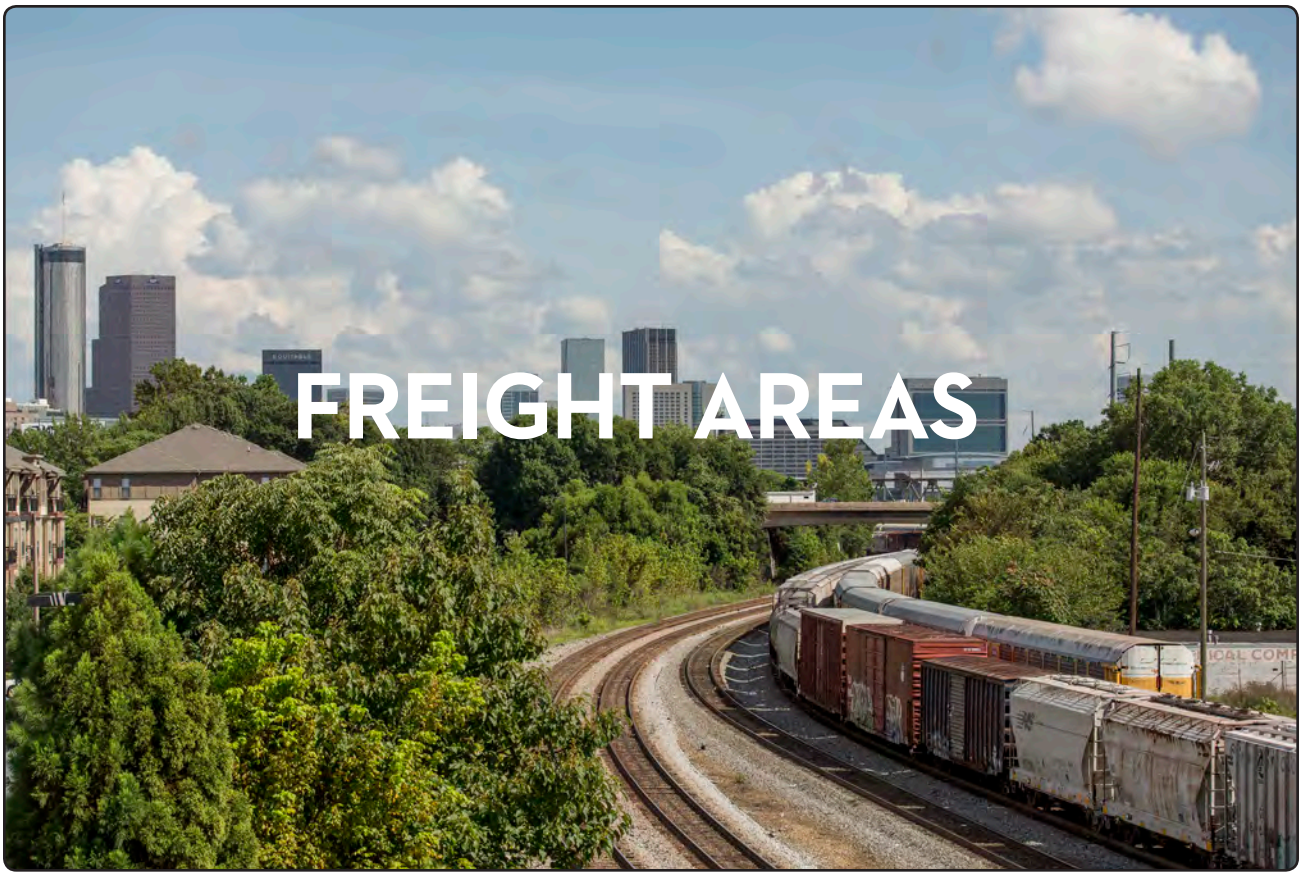
The concentrations of poverty and disinvestment within these areas in the region need special planning, policies, and tools to further limit their decline and to encourage reinvestment to break the poverty cycle to improve health, education, and employment opportunities.

Areas Requiring Special Attention-Equitable Target Areas



0 5 10 Miles

ETA Areas



FREIGHT AREAS

What are these areas

Freight Areas, represent the major intermodal freight facilities and major logistics centers of the region. As a strategic economic sector, the region should strive to protect these areas and ensure they are well served by the regional transportation network.

This area will see increased job growth in the form of industrial and logistics space. Strategies are needed to avoid residential and industrial conflicts while still allowing both uses in proximity to each other, without limiting the operations of industrial land users.

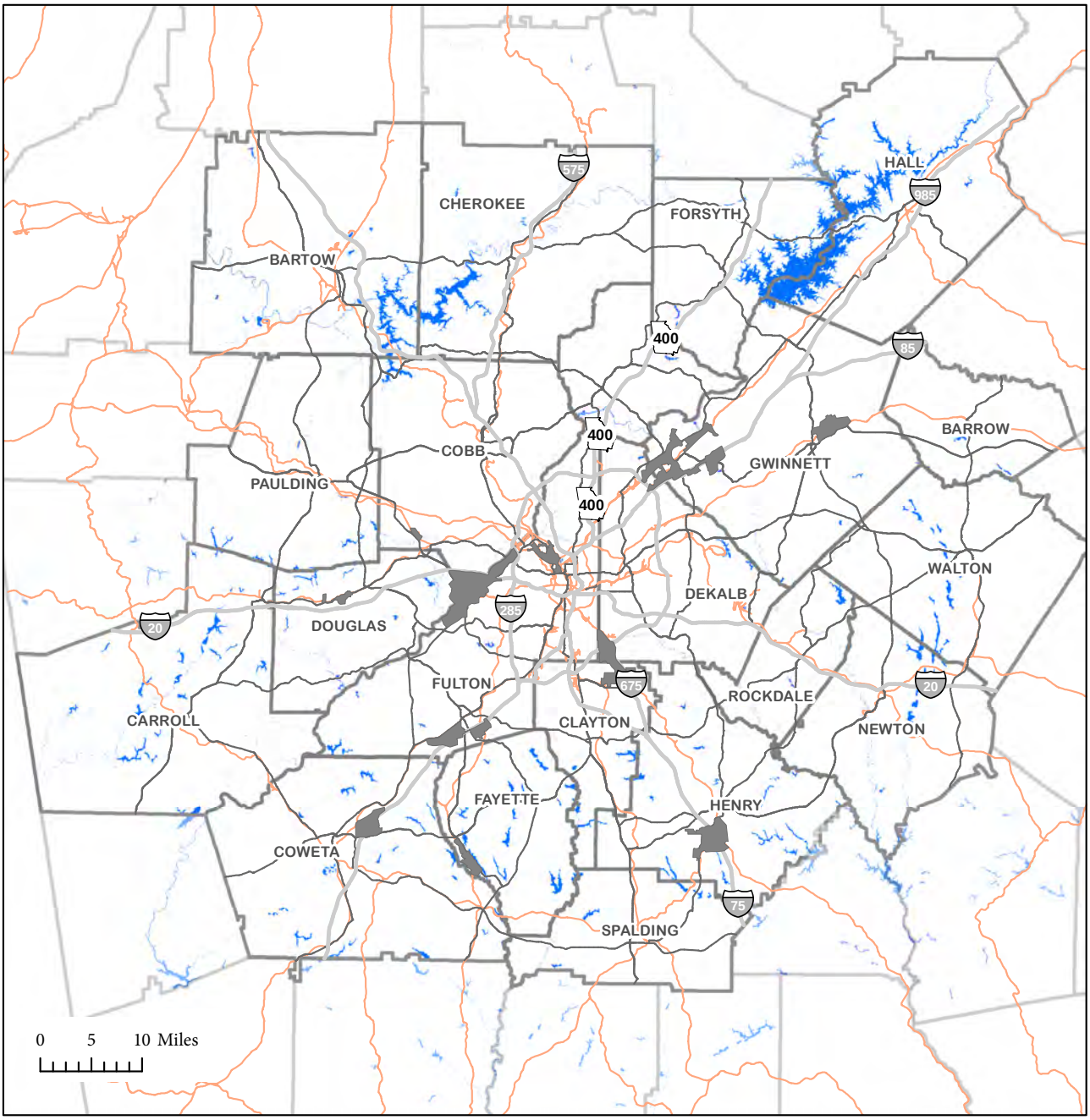
Where are these places

There are multiple different large industrial clusters within the Atlanta Region. These clusters are near the Inman Yards in Northwest Atlanta, the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Area, and the area southeast of the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, the Peachtree Corners area within Gwinnett County, and the GA 155 interchange within Henry County. The majority of these areas are also served by rail infrastructure but they do not have a intermodal yard within close proximity.

Why are these places special

Freight and logistics employment is one of the largest regional sectors of employment in the Atlanta Region, and it has conflicts and challenges in providing regional mobility to those areas and conflict between land uses.

Areas Requiring Special Attention-Freight Areas



Freight Areas

Regional Truck Routes

Railroads

What are these areas

Regional Centers are the major employment and retail centers of the region. Not only are they regional centers but they are also defined places within the region that have their own unique identity. These areas identified make up about 1.45% of the total region's land area but contain over 30% of the region's total jobs. Because of the high concentration of jobs these areas can have higher levels of congestion but they can also support transportation alternatives.

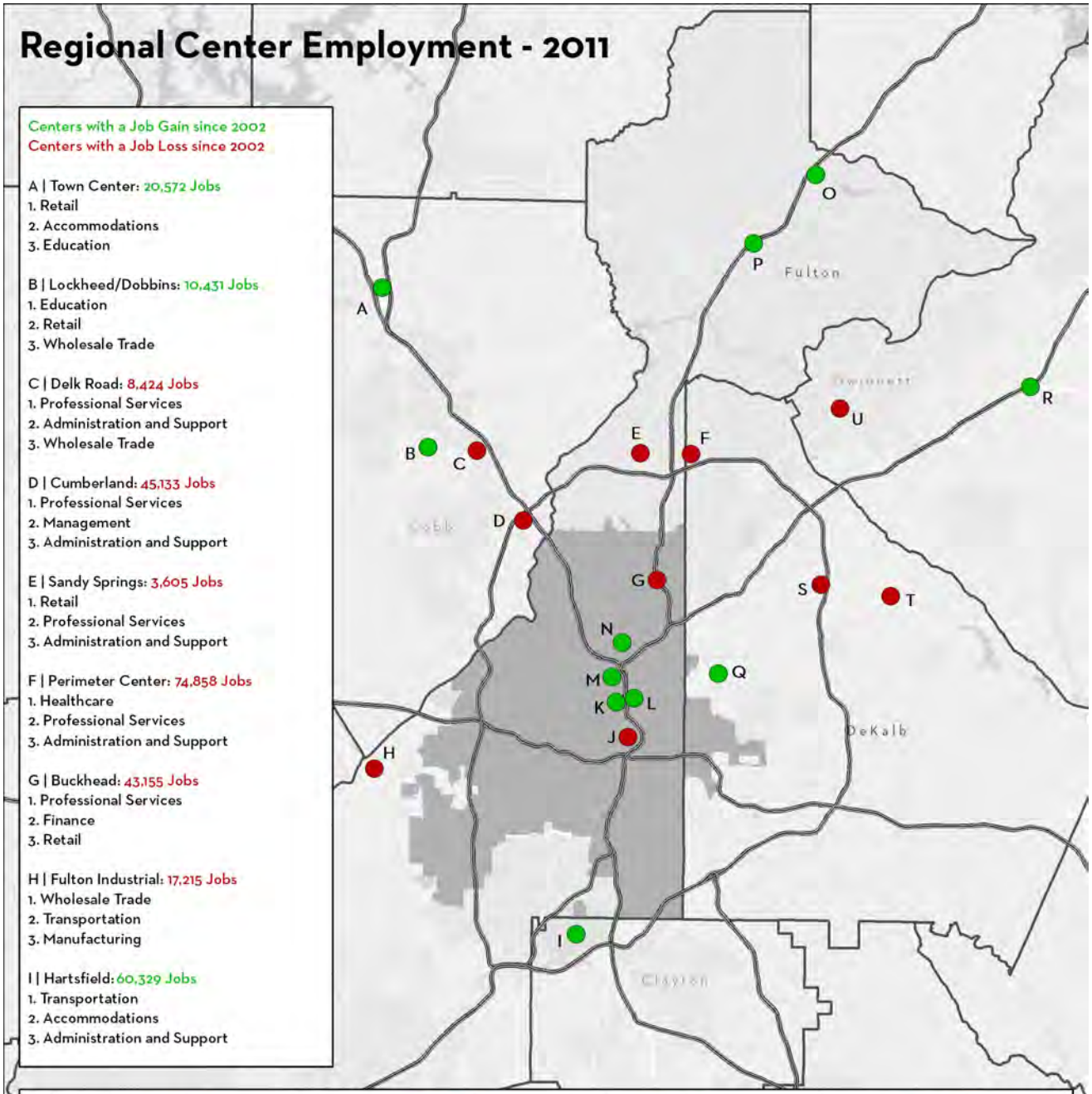
Where are these places

The majority of the regional centers are located along interstates or limited access highways. Regional Malls and shopping centers are included, however some Malls are slowly becoming obsolete and they can be redeveloped.

Why are these places special

Regional Centers are key pieces in the land use transportation connection because of their ability to support transportation alternatives, and higher density of housing. These areas have a high degree of infrastructure to support to density. In addition placing housing closer to jobs limits the strain on the regional transportation network.

Regional Center Employment - 2011



Centers with a Job Gain since 2002
Centers with a Job Loss since 2002

A | Town Center: 20,572 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Accommodations
3. Education

B | Lockheed/Dobbins: 10,431 Jobs
1. Education
2. Retail
3. Wholesale Trade

C | Delk Road: 8,424 Jobs
1. Professional Services
2. Administration and Support
3. Wholesale Trade

D | Cumberland: 45,133 Jobs
1. Professional Services
2. Management
3. Administration and Support

E | Sandy Springs: 3,605 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Professional Services
3. Administration and Support

F | Perimeter Center: 74,858 Jobs
1. Healthcare
2. Professional Services
3. Administration and Support

G | Buckhead: 43,155 Jobs
1. Professional Services
2. Finance
3. Retail

H | Fulton Industrial: 17,215 Jobs
1. Wholesale Trade
2. Transportation
3. Manufacturing

I | Hartsfield: 60,329 Jobs
1. Transportation
2. Accommodations
3. Administration and Support

J | City Center: 108,706 Jobs
1. Government
2. Professional Services
3. Healthcare

K | Georgia Tech: 7,067 Jobs
1. Education
2. Accommodations
3. Government

L | Midtown: 63,756 Jobs
1. Professional Services
2. Government
3. Administration and Support

M | Atlantic Station: 2,913 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Accommodations
3. Real Estate

N | South Buckhead: 7,757 Jobs
1. Healthcare
2. Accommodations
3. Administration and Support

O | Windward: 17,260 Jobs
1. Information
2. Professional Services
3. Administration and Support

P | North Point: 12,154 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Wholesale Trade
3. Professional Services

Q | Emory: 22,465 Jobs
1. Education
2. Healthcare
3. Accommodations

R | Gwinnett: 46,309 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Finance
3. Administration and Support

S | Northlake: 9,219 Jobs
1. Retail
2. Information
3. Management

T | Mountain Industrial: 9,967 Jobs
1. Manufacturing
2. Wholesale Trade
3. Retail

U | Peachtree Corners: 24,012 Jobs
1. Wholesale Trade
2. Administration and Support
3. Professional Services

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

What are these areas

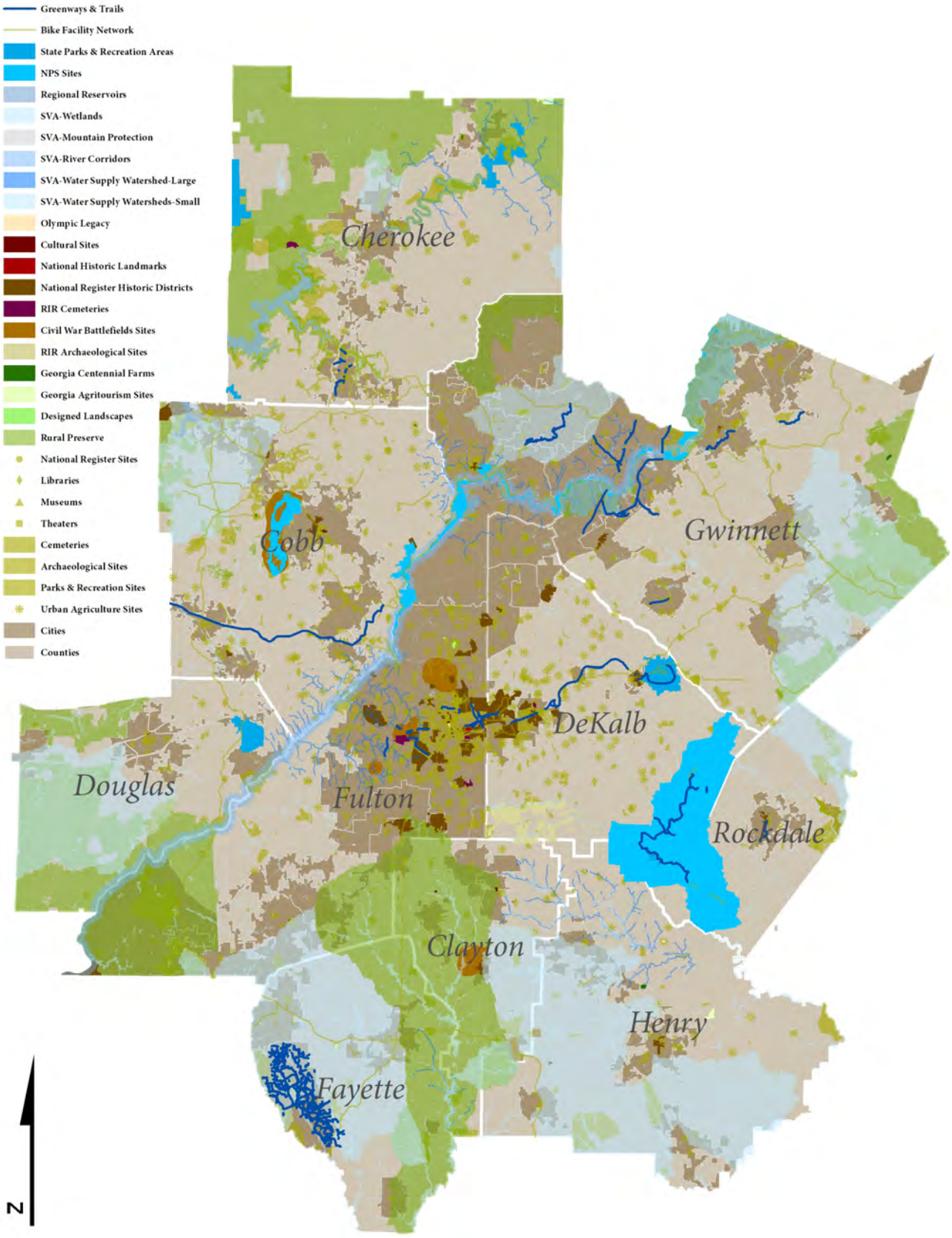
Natural and Cultural Areas are included within the Regional Resource Plan. These areas were identified as areas of regional significance of a cultural, natural, or historic value. The resource plan seeks to coordinate activities and planning of local governments, land trusts and conservation or environmental protection groups' activities in the region, and state agencies toward protection and management of the identified Regionally Important Resources.

Where are these places

These places are located throughout the region at varies scales from a watershed level to a particular building.

Why are these places special

These places provide essential environmental protection or contribute to the history and culture of Metro Atlanta. More detail about these areas is in the Atlanta Region Resource Plan.


Greenways & Trails
Bike Facility Network
State Parks & Recreation Areas
NPS Sites
Regional Reservoirs
SVA-Wetlands
SVA-Mountain Protection
SVA-River Corridors
SVA-Water Supply Watershed-Large
SVA-Water Supply Watersheds-Small
Olympic Legacy
Cultural Sites
National Historic Landmarks
National Register Historic Districts
RIR Cemeteries
Civil War Battlefields Sites
RIR Archaeological Sites
Georgia Centennial Farms
Georgia Agritourism Sites
Designed Landscapes
Rural Preserve
National Register Sites
Libraries
Museums
Theaters
Cemeteries
Archaeological Sites
Parks & Recreation Sites
Urban Agriculture Sites
Cities
Counties
Cherokee
Cobb
Gwinnett
DeKalb
Douglas
Fulton
Rockdale
Clayton
Henry
Fayette
N

ARC

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established statewide planning goals and Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) to provide guidance for Regional Commissions, such as ARC to achieve in developing and implementation of the plan. Pursuant to the Minimum Standards for Regional Planning, ARC must evaluate policies, programs, and development patterns in the Atlanta Region for consistency with these goals and objectives.

ARC has inventoried local plans and regulations twice over the past decade (2000-2010). In June of 2000, the ARC Board adopted the Joint Land Use Strategy, which directed staff to work with local governments to coordinate the Regional Development Plan with the Local Comprehensive Plans of each community, and in 2004 did a smaller inventory of the State of Smart Growth within the Atlanta Region. Both reports found that the region has some strong smart growth principles but there is still room for improvement.

Planning tools like the Livable Centers Initiative are changing the way local governments approach planning. Its combination of funding and technical assistance has stimulated many communities in throughout the region to embrace regional plan policies.

Quality Community Objectives

Regional Identity Objective
Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

The Atlanta Region is fortunate to have a wide variety of programs and resources to promote identity of the region. The Atlanta Convention and Visitor Bureau is the liaison promotes tourism within the region. The Metro Atlanta Chamber promotes economic development within the region. The Atlanta region includes three professional sports teams, the Atlanta Braves, Falcons, and Hawks that promote the regional identity of Atlanta.

Growth Preparedness Objective
Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

ARC ties its transportation infrastructure investments to the Unified Growth Policy Map which allows ARC to explicitly tie investments to planned and forecasted land use growth at a regional level. However implementation of regional plans and visions is a concern as the planned projects are not implemented when planned.

ARC does promote leadership and training opportunities for local officials in preparing for growth. In 2009, 287 people went through a Community Planning Academy (CPA) hosted by ARC. CPA are training for planning and other officials both as basic planning introduction and targeted classes such as Access Management, GIS training, and Economic Development Strategies. Also ARC hosts a Regional

Leadership Institute for leaders across the region expand leaders' knowledge regarding the key issues, opportunities and challenges that face the Atlanta Region.

ARC is the administrator for the Atlanta Regional Workforce Board (ARWB) and is responsible for providing policy guidance for the Workforce Investment Service Area as designated by the Governor. This area includes seven counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Douglas, Fayette, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale. Separate boards serve the City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, Fulton County and Cobb County. The Workforce board provides workforce solutions for dislocated workers, low-income adults and youth and for businesses seeking qualified applicants.

Appropriate Businesses Objective

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the community, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

In 2009 the Atlanta region's strongest sectors are Transportation, Trade and Utilities, Wholesale Trade, Information Services, and Professional Business. Unlike many other metro regions throughout the United States, the Atlanta region's economic base is diverse with strong levels of employment in a variety of fields. The region currently has relatively low levels of employment opportunities in Education and Health Care fields.

Undereducated and less skilled job seekers exist across the region and may be left out of the push toward a technology and information based economy. The region's diversified economy offers a great deal of options to job seekers and the strong growth of the service and retail sectors of the economy provide job opportunities to many of these residents and may mitigate the harshest effects of a transition to a more technological economy.

Despite currently not having any distinct advantage in competing for jobs in the Health Care sector the initial regional forecast for employment indicates this sector will add the most jobs. This is in large part due to the magnitude of overall population growth in the region and specifically the region's transition to a region with a greater share of older adults.

Employment Options Objective

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

The Atlanta region does have a variety of job types within the region but the issue is the spatial mismatch between job location and housing location. Using data from the US Census Bureau on The Map Application, ARC concluded that low-income workers, for example, tend to live south of I-20, while high-income workers live north of I-20 along the GA 400 corridor.

While Retail workers are among the lowest-paid in the region, the spatial distribution of where these workers live is different than that observed for low-earning workers (in general). Retail workers are

heavily concentrated in the suburban and exurban fringes, with a corresponding lack of concentrations inside the perimeter and urban core. In most of the region's suburban and exurban locales, Retail employment comprises a large share of total employment. Retail workers, of course, work in establishments that sell merchandise, but also include non-store retailers who reach customers through direct-mail advertising, catalogs and vending machines.

Accommodation and Food Services workers work in restaurants, drinking establishments and hotels. These workers, on average, are the lowest-paid workers in the region their heaviest concentrations are south of I-20.

Heritage Preservation Objective

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

ARC has funded 34 town center studies as part of the LCI program that encourages reinvestment and compatible development to existing traditional town centers within the region. Historical compatibility is a key component within LCI studies. This unique program allows for the redevelopment of traditional town centers while preserving the uniqueness of each community.

ARC Regional Important Resources Plan will identify cultural, historical and natural resources that define the region's character and history. In addition there is many historical societies and organizations within the region that are working to preserve it's characteristics.

Open Space Preservation Objective

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.

Throughout its history, ARC has been involved in efforts to increase the amount of protected greenspace in the Atlanta region. As the region grew, along with ARC's planning area, over the years some areas targeted for protection were saved while others were lost to development. The Atlanta region has varied supply of major parks and recreation areas; wildlife management areas; conservation areas; nature preserves and water resources. Currently, however, there is no consistent, coordinated mechanism to ensure the region's inventory of protected lands increases as the region grows through 2040.

Many local governments within the region do have Greenspace plans developed in the early 2000s that identify policies and areas that need to have protection. ARC has worked with inventorying to create a regional interactive map of all protected areas that is available on the ARC website.

Environmental Protection Objective

Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

Regional green infrastructure, including significant cultural resources, is a framework for strategic long-term land conservation and future land use planning that can ensure the region will continue to grow while protecting irreplaceable natural assets.

With connectivity as the goal, green infrastructure demands a regional approach and perspective. Because of this, green infrastructure planning must take place on local, regional, state and federal levels. All these levels must communicate with one another in order to create an interconnected system. This ensures that the system is greater than the sum of its parts.

ARC has developed a Draft Regionally Important Resource Map that identifies critical components of the region's green infrastructure that all parties in the region will need to work to preserve and protect. Initial designation as a Regionally Important Resource does not denote that an area is off limits to future development. What it does suggest however, is that these areas should have an enhanced level of protection and management and that careful consideration should be given to new development.

In 1973, in response to growing concerns about the Chattahoochee River, the Georgia General Assembly enacted the Metropolitan River Protection Act (Georgia Code 12-5-440 et seq.). It established a 2000-foot Corridor along both banks of the Chattahoochee and its impoundments for the 48 miles between Buford Dam and Peachtree Creek. The Act was amended in 1998 to extend the Corridor an additional 36 miles to the downstream limits of Fulton and Douglas Counties (the limit of the Atlanta region). The act requires ARC to adopt a plan to protect the Chattahoochee River Corridor and to review development proposals for consistency with the plan.

The Act requires local governments along the corridor to implement the plan by issuing permits based on ARC findings, monitoring land-disturbing activity in the corridor and enforcing the act and the plan. Under the act, land-disturbing activity in the corridor must comply with the adopted plan to be legal.

ARC has incorporated Environmental Concerns within it's Development of Regional Impact Process (DRI). ARC requires all DRIs to be evaluated based on their environmental impact. Questions range from identifying what natural resources that the development will impact to how sensitive the development will be to the natural environment.

Regional Cooperation Objective

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.

On many issues and programs ARC has a key role in implementation, particularly when ARC has been designated as the agency to carry out a federal or state plan or program. In other areas ARC may have an integral role in identifying issues and moving the region toward implementation, but many other parties are more directly linked to implementation activities, particularly the region's local governments.

During development of the Regional Assessment stakeholders and regional leaders consistently stressed the need for closer coordination on many issues facing the region. In this region, as in most regions of the U.S, regional plans are implemented through various programs of incentives, state or regional rules, agreements, technical assistance and collaboration among agencies and local governments.

Transportation Alternatives Objective

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

ARC has many different initiatives to encourage transportation alternatives. The award winning Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), Regional Vanpools, and Regional Express Bus service have been developed or expanded in the past decade. Since 2000, six of the region's twelve transit systems began operations. These six new systems have increased the regional fleet by over 400 buses and vans, increasing the number of regional transit miles traveled from 780 million in 2000 to over 911 million in 2007.

The LCI program has awarded over, over $141 million in planning and transportation funds have been allocated to support 102 distinct planning areas in the region to increase transportation alternatives. The 2009 LCI Implementation Report indicated that LCI communities are consistently capturing a growing share of the region's new development, especially office and commercial uses.

Although there is some success over the past 10 years, there is still a need for more alternatives throughout the region. The location of low-earning workers and accommodating their needs must be a critical strategy in developing a program of transportation strategies that addresses full spectrum of travel needs in the region. These workers are in most need of alternative transportation strategies. The largest concentrations of these workers reside inside of I-285 and south of I-20. Additional areas are found in several areas that are not currently served by high capacity transit, including Monroe, Conyers, McDonough, and Marietta. Most of these areas in the core 10-county region are served by local transit systems, with several exceptions in Henry and Rockdale Counties. A foundation of local bus services exists to build on expanded services can meet the needs of the transportation disadvantaged. The region's long-range transit vision, Concept 3, provides an extensive expansion of regional transit services that meets the transit needs of the region and communities around the region.

Housing Opportunities Objective

Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

The vast majority of housing available in the Atlanta region has been constructed over the past 40 years. In fact over 20% of the housing stock in the Atlanta region was built between 2000 and 2007. The development community, working within local government regulatory environments, has done a remarkable job of delivering substantial quantities of housing to meet historic and recent demands for housing, but it is uncertain if this supply is aligned with future consumer needs.

Data from the US Census Bureau indicates that the top five highest paying job sectors could afford to rent in any of the ten counties, assuming there were rental units available. However, even some of these top five wages fall short of affording a home in any county, when compared to the 2007 median home prices found in the ten counties. For example the highest paying job sector, finance, could comfortably afford a $217,400 mortgage. This wage would still fall short of the median home price in Fulton, Fayette, and Cobb counties.

Looking at the wages afforded to the region's lowest paying job sectors paints a bleaker picture. All five of these sectors fall short of affording the median home price in any of the ten counties. And while education and the administrative support/waste management employment sector should be able to find rental housing within any of the ten counties the remaining three job sector wages fall short of being able to afford rental housing in any of the ten counties, without having to spend more than 30 percent of their monthly income on rent alone.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Infill Development Objective

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Sense of Place Objective

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

One of the ARC's principal goals is to support local governments in their efforts to create highly livable and vibrant communities. Few of our programs do that as effectively as the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program. Seen as a cutting-edge program around the country, the LCI program was awarded the American Planning Association's National Planning Excellence Award for Implementation in 2009, and was awarded the Environmental Protection Agency's 2008 National Award for Smart Growth.

The planning process, project goals and deliverables outlined in the LCI program provide an efficient, realistic and effective method for communities to undertake smart-growth planning and implementation. In return, this works to achieve more balanced regional growth by concentrating new development away from undeveloped greenfields and into areas with existing infrastructure, reducing vehicle miles traveled and improving air quality. The LCI program has proven enormously successful as the catalyst to major redevelopment efforts taking place in transit station areas and small and large urban centers and corridors. These investments have spurred new housing and development closer to jobs, and are helping to promote more efficient transportation nodes.

The 2009 LCI Implementation Report indicated that LCI communities are consistently capturing a growing share of the region's new development, especially office and commercial uses. Since the last Implementation Report in 2006, the amount of development concentrated into LCI areas compared with the 10-county region has doubled.

All LCI communities are different and face different challenges and opportunities. As a result, LCI plans vary in response to these specific needs. But, as unique as each community is, all LCI plans demonstrate an understanding of the primary goals and policies of the program. Analysis of these studies support conclusions that increased housing options and employment concentrated in centers and corridors, with supporting transportation options, reduce per capita VMT even while expanding the population and employment within the study areas.