

HISTORY AND COMMISSION COMPOSITION

Brief History of the Atlanta Regional Commission: 58 Years of Regional Cooperation, Leadership and Planning

Cooperation among local government, business, and civic groups in the Atlanta Region is not a new phenomenon. Atlanta Region leaders recognized the need to come together to solve common problems that transcended jurisdictional boundaries long before the federal government recognized the need for metropolitan planning and metropolitan planning agencies.

Based on a recommendation from a study commissioned by the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce in 1938, the first publicly supported multi-county planning commission in the United States was created in Atlanta in 1947 by the Georgia General Assembly and known as the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC). The MPC served DeKalb and Fulton counties and the City of Atlanta.

In 1957, the legislature passed an act allowing all counties in the balance of the state to form area planning and development commissions, or APDCs.

In 1960, the General Assembly amended the MPC legislation to expand the membership of the agency to Clayton, Cobb and Gwinnett counties, to reconstitute the structure of the agency and to rename the five-county agency the Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission (ARMPC). During the decade of the sixties, however, three additional areawide planning organizations were also created: The Metropolitan Atlanta Council for Health (MACHealth), the Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Local Governments (MACLOG) and the Atlanta Area Transportation Study (AATS). Each organization had its own board of directors and work program. This fragmentation became burdensome for local officials and made coordination among the agencies difficult.

During this same decade, Congress passed the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act which stated that: (1) the welfare of the Nation and of its people is directly dependent upon the sound and orderly development and the effective organization and functioning of the metropolitan areas in which two-thirds of its people live and work; (2) the continuing rapid growth of these areas makes it essential that they prepare, keep current, and carry out comprehensive plans and programs for their orderly physical development with a view to meeting efficiently all their economic and social needs; (3) metropolitan areas are especially handicapped in this task by the complexity and scope of governmental services required in such rapidly growing areas, the multiplicity of political jurisdictions and agencies involved, and the inadequacy of the operational and administrative arrangements available for cooperation among them; and (4) present requirements for areawide planning and programming in connection with various federal programs have materially assisted in the solution of metropolitan problems, but that greater coordination of federal programs and additional participation and cooperation are needed from the states and localities in perfecting and carrying out such efforts.

In 1970, the Georgia legislature passed a law (Georgia Laws 1970, Act No. 1066) which required that by June 30, 1972, APDC boundaries in Georgia be redrawn so that every county in the state would fall within the boundary of an APDC.

In 1971, to alleviate the problems caused by the proliferation of regional agencies in the Atlanta area, special legislation was passed (Georgia Laws 1971, Act No. 5) allowing local governments to create a single new areawide-planning agency which consolidated the work of the previous four. The local governments called the new agency the Atlanta Regional Commission.

In 1972, pursuant to Act 1066, the boundaries of Area Planning and Development Commissions were drawn in Georgia, and the counties of Douglas and Rockdale were added to the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Effective June 15, 1989, APDC boundaries were redrawn to add Henry County and on July 1, 1991, to add Fayette. On July 1, 1993, Cherokee County became the 10th county to join the Atlanta Region.

Effective July 1, 1989, Area Planning and Development Commissions were renamed Regional Development Centers (RDCs).

With the passage of H.B. 215, or Georgia's Growth Strategies legislation in 1989, Georgia entered a new era of planned growth and development. The legislation confirms the critical importance of planning for Georgia's economic future and quality of life. It maintains home rule and local autonomy over local matters while recognizing the need for regional cooperation and planning.

Over the past fifty years, the Atlanta Regional Commission has worked with local public officials and civic and community leaders in developing plans and programs that helped the Region improve its quality of life, "retain its national distinction and ensure global prominence."

Commission Composition

The Commission is composed of 23 local elected officials, 15 private citizens, and one member appointed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

The public membership of the Commission is as follows:

The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of each of the ten counties within the Area.

The Mayor of the City of Atlanta.

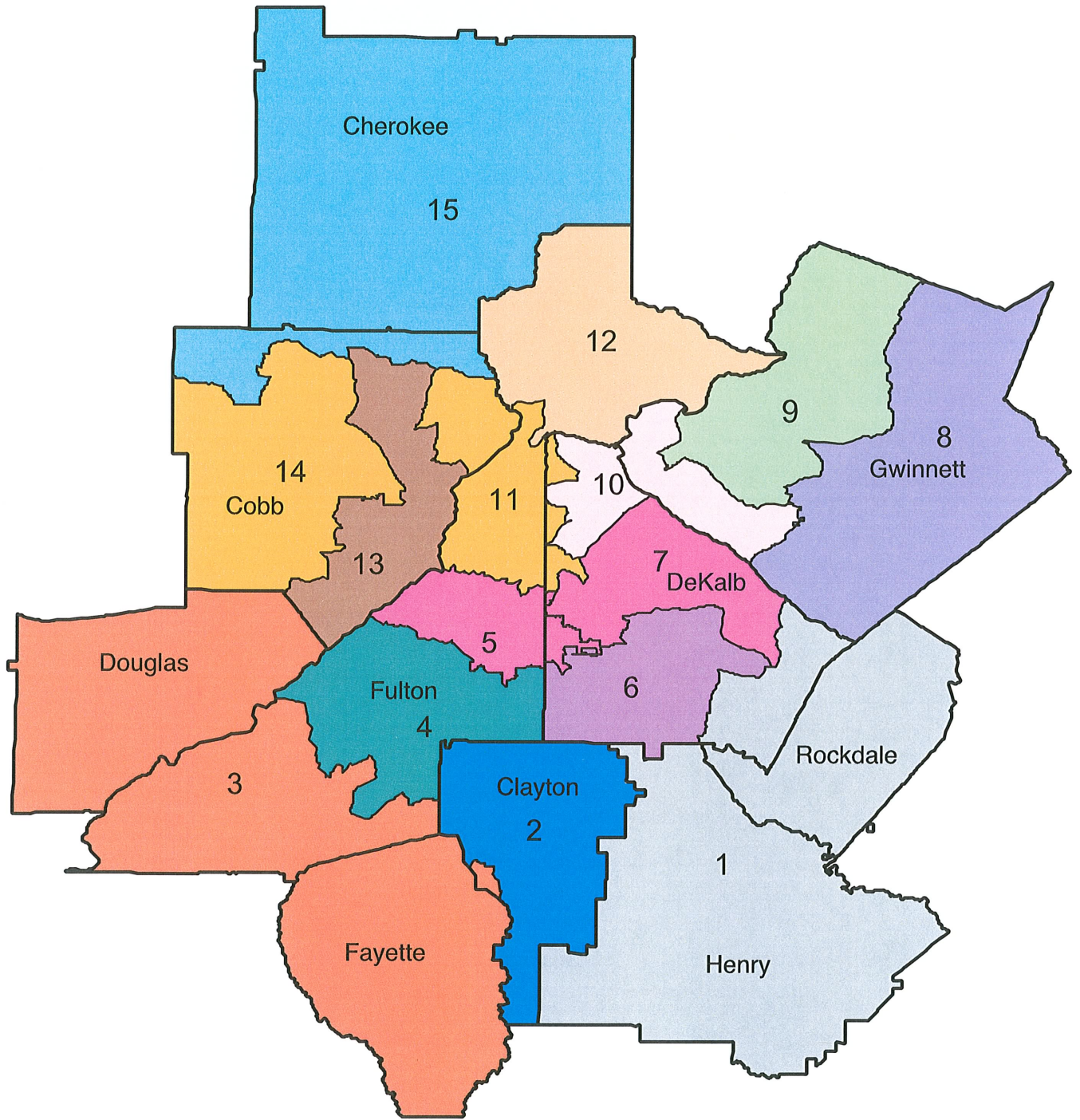
The Mayor of one municipality in each of the ten counties (other than the Mayor of the City of Atlanta), elected by a majority vote of all the mayors of that county; except in Fulton County where the Mayor of a municipality located within the northern half of such county elected by majority vote of the mayors of all municipalities located within the northern half of such county serves along with the Mayor of a municipality located within the southern half of such county elected by a majority vote of the mayors of all municipalities located within the southern half of such county.

A member of the Atlanta City Council, elected by a majority vote of the members of that body.

Public members serve terms of office on the Commission concurrent with their respective terms of public office.

The public members elect one citizen member-at-large from each of fifteen districts of equal population. These citizen districts (shown on the next page) are drawn by a caucus of State Legislators from within the Region. These members-at-large serve staggered four-year terms and may be re-elected. Through amendment of the ARC bylaws in July of 1994, provision was made for a member to be appointed by the Board of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Code Section 50-8-86 specifies that each of the 39 members have an equal voice in Commission decision-making.

ARC Citizen Districts



STAFF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

ARC Staff Organizational Structure

www.atlantaregional.com

Office of the Director

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Legislative Liaison
Community Outreach

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Community Involvement
Graphic Services
Information Center
Marketing
Media Relations

Community Services

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Mary Margaret Garrett, Workforce Development
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Cathie Berger, Aging Services
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Aging Services
Georgia Region 3 Advisory Council
Governmental Services
LINK Program (Leadership, Involvement, Networking, Knowledge)
RLI (Regional Leadership Foundation)
Workforce Development (The Workforce Development Division provides staff support to the Atlanta Regional Workforce Board)

Comprehensive Planning

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Jane Hayes, Transportation Planning
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Bart Lewis, Data Research
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Dan Reuter, Land Use Planning
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Pat Stevens, Environmental Planning
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ARC Review Processes
Data Research
Environmental Planning (The Environmental Planning Division provides staff support to the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District)
Land Use Planning
Transportation Planning
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Support Services

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Accounting
ARIS(Atlanta Region Information System)
Budget
Contracts & Grants Administration
Facilities Management
GIS (Geographic Information Systems)
Human Resources
Information Technology
Purchasing
(The Department provides staff support to the Area 7 All Hazards Council)