

Intergovernmental Coordination

The purpose of this section is to inventory the existing intergovernmental mechanisms and processes between DeKalb County, the eight (8) municipalities within the county, and the City of Atlanta. Programs of potential impact that affect the Community Agenda will be highlighted.

Adjacent Local Governments

DeKalb County is one of ten counties in the Atlanta region, and the most dense county in the state, by population. The County is bordered by Fulton, Gwinnett, Rockdale, Clayton, and Henry Counties, and the City of Atlanta. Eight cities are located within the County, and they are: Avondale Estates, Chamblee, Clarkston, Decatur, Doraville, Lithonia, Pine Lake, and Stone Mountain. The Service Delivery Strategy is designed to serve as a primary mechanism to coordinate services between DeKalb County and the eight (8) municipalities within the County, including the City of Atlanta.

Planning Coordination

DeKalb County does not have a formal and consistent coordination mechanism for land use planning with adjacent local governments. Some land use coordination takes place through the Atlanta Regional Commission and planning studies that cross jurisdictional lines, but these activities do not provide a consistent and formalized coordination process. The Atlanta Regional Commission's Land Use Coordinating Committee (LUCC) and the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) provide the opportunity to communicate with regional jurisdictions on similar regional studies and other planning topics around the region. Attending these meetings provide the opportunity to coordinate on regional issues and studies, but does not provide a formal coordination process with adjacent local governments.

Major development projects around the region have a formalized coordination mechanism through the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) process coordinated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The DRI process requires all proposed development projects that meet a predetermined size threshold to undergo a review by the appropriate Regional Development Agency, such as the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), and the local jurisdictions that are impacted by the proposed development. These major projects must undergo a review of its land use, transportation and infrastructure impacts. Because the DRI review process is only initiated for major development projects, it does not provide a consistent coordination mechanism for all land use activities.

School Board

The DeKalb County Board of Education oversees the DeKalb County Public Schools, which serve the entire county and the majority of municipalities. It is the official policy-making body of the DeKalb School System. As of January 1, 2005, there are nine members elected from individual districts.

Currently there is no consistent coordination mechanism between the Department of Planning and Development and the Board of Education. Due to the close relationship of development and school planning and impacts, a formalized and consistent coordination mechanism is needed.

Regional and State Entities

- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
- Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Private Entities

DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce: A non-profit membership organization, the DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce provides assistance to new businesses wishing to locate their establishments in the county. The agency's activities are focused in the areas of business recruitment and retention.

Georgia Power Company: Georgia Power is a utility company servicing customers throughout the State of Georgia. There is little coordination required between the County and Georgia Power except for issues related to electric utility hookups and economic development.

DeKalb County Greenspace Program: In 2001, voters in unincorporated DeKalb County approved more than \$87 million for acquisition of parkland and greenspace. In addition, to further expand the greenspace program, the County has leveraged an additional \$15 million from public and private grants. Since 2001, DeKalb has acquired more than 2,220 acres of land to enhance and make connections to existing parks, secure areas of natural beauty, safeguard water sources, preserve cultural and historical resources and create new parks and greenways.

Regional Transportation Plans - Existing Coordinating Mechanisms

Regional Transportation Planning for DeKalb County is primarily coordinated through the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the DeKalb County Department of Planning and Development. The county serves on the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC), which is responsible for providing technical advice regarding multi-jurisdictional transportation related matters that will ultimately affect the Atlanta Metropolitan Region. Some of the regional partners are listed below:

- Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
- Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA)
- Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) along with the DeKalb County Departments of Public Works and Planning & Development participate in bi-monthly coordination meetings where local project scopes are defined and discussed for finalization and implementation.

The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) in conjunction with other agencies works to improve:

- regional mobility by coordinating public transit services between the various transit providers,
- air quality through the reduction of ozone and particulate matter levels, and
- coordination between land use and transportation infrastructure through the developments of regional impact (DRIs) review process.

Intergovernmental Coordination is of the utmost importance for service delivery without service duplication. It is the goal of DeKalb County to ensure that there is no service duplication, overlap, and competition.

Transportation and Land Use Connection

As discussed in the *Analysis of Existing Development Patterns, Development Outpacing Facilities /Services*, the entire county is experiencing significant traffic congestion. The congestion is largely caused by the historic development patterns and the imbalance in the locations of jobs and housing found throughout the entire region.

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) identified roads that have or are projected to exceed their volume to capacity (v/c) ratio. The v/c ratio estimates the capacity that a given road can handle. A ratio less than 1.0 indicates that the road can handle more capacity while a ratio of 1.0 indicates that the road is at capacity. As it approaches 1.0, the road is reaching its capacity and congestion will be a result. Roads over 1.0 are over capacity. These ratios were calculated for the existing and projected (2030) peak AM and PM rush hour periods. As shown on the attached maps, congestion is found throughout the county, but is worse on the northern side of the county as well as on the interstates.

The county as well as the region's predominately decentralized suburban development pattern has put a strain on the county's roadways due to the inability to keep up with the pace of development and the design of the street network. Roadway improvements have not always taken place in close correlation to new development. The result has been new residential development that feeds onto small streets that were originally designed as rural roads. The common suburban residential design consists of curvilinear streets with many dead end cul-de-sacs that concentrate subdivision traffic to single or few exits leading onto roadways that are often over capacity. The low densities and disconnected street networks make pedestrian and transit options impossible or highly inefficient.