

With the region's growth and projected growth, we need to take a look at expansion of all modes of transportation.

- JONATHAN H.



We still don't have sidewalks. We still don't have bicycle lanes and I haven't noticed ramps for people with disabilities. I have a problem with that because I'm disabled. Building sidewalks and bike lanes would help people get out and exercise more.

- JODIE C.



I would put money into multi-use paths so you're taking people off the main road. Plus you're helping the environment, you're saving a lot on gas and emissions

- TRACEY M.



PROCESS

The RTP is developed around state, regional, and local priorities and informed by a project evaluation analysis to create balanced investments in the transportation system for the next 30 years.

THE RTP APPROVAL PROCESS

ARC does not develop the RTP in a vacuum. In order for the recommendations of the RTP to be implemented, it must be approved through five sequential actions.

The first three approval steps are internal to ARC, with the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) acting first to confirm that the plan meets all technical requirements and has produced recommendations acceptable to practitioners and stakeholder agencies. TCC's recommendation is then considered by the Transportation & Air Quality Committee (TAQC). Finally, the ARC Board takes action to approve the RTP. Actions taken by the officials and agency executives that comprise TCC, TAQC, and the Board represent the MPO's official position.

Following these three ARC actions, federal law requires that the short-range component of the plan, the TIP, be approved by the Governor. In Georgia, this responsibility has been delegated to the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). No state action is required on the long-range portion of the plan.

The final action involves issuance of a conformity determination by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ensure the Plan is consistent with federal air quality goals.

A positive conformity determination means that the RTP meets all federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements, including being fiscally constrained, multimodal in nature, and developed through a rigorous stakeholder engagement and outreach process.

In areas where air quality does not meet EPA-established standards, EPA works with USDOT during the review process to verify that the RTP will do its part to help the region attain those standards. Three separate technical documents, Activity Based Model Specification Report, Activity Based Model Calibration Report, and Conformity Determination Report (CDR), are used to present ARC's technical analysis methodologies and results for consideration by USDOT and EPA in issuing conformity determinations.

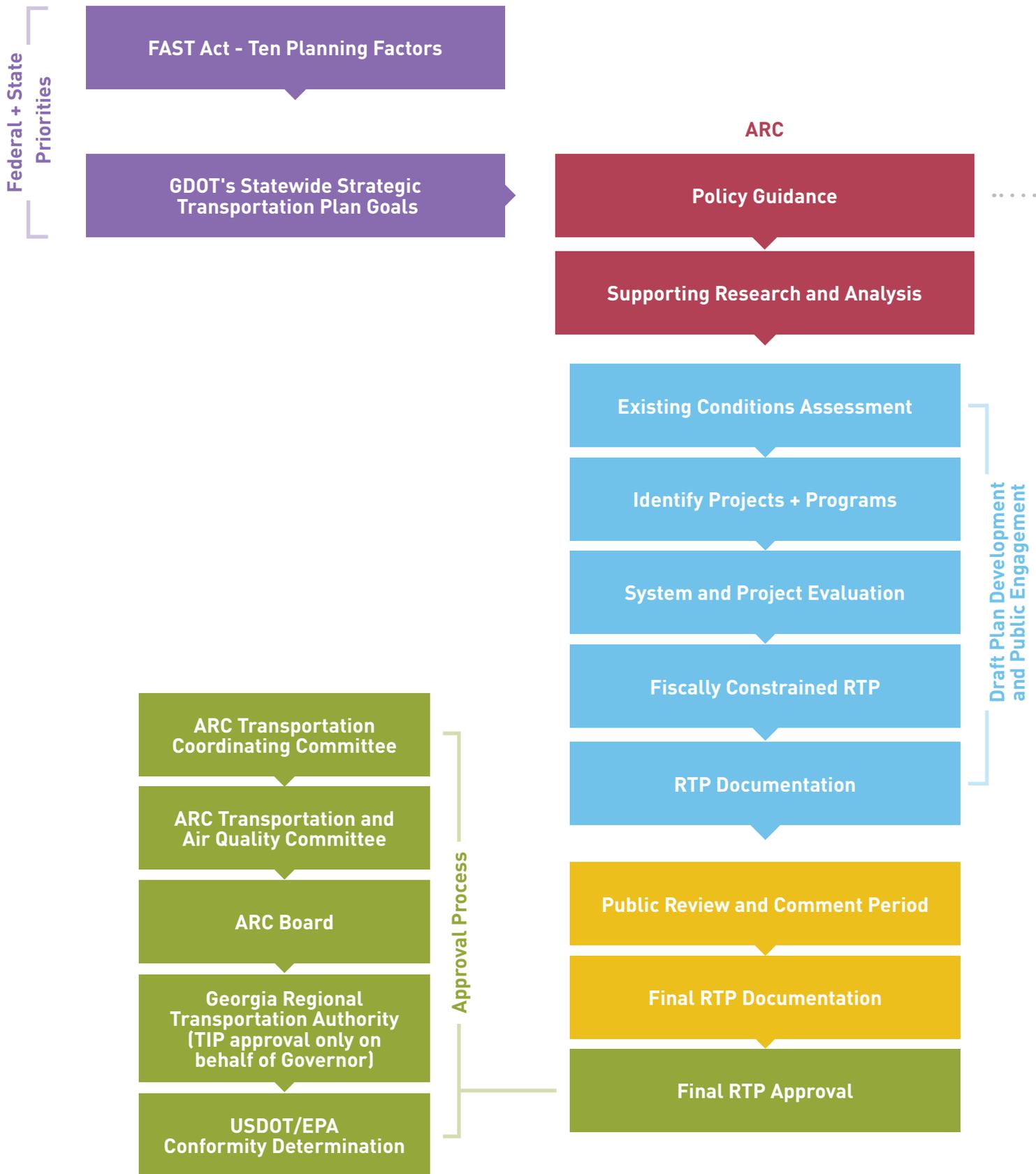
The flowchart on the following pages outlines the overall RTP development and approval process.

LEARN MORE:

- [Activity Based Model Specification Report](#)
- [Activity Based Model Calibration Report](#)
- [Conformity Determination Report](#)

Figure 3

ARC'S RTP PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESS



The Policy Framework
Winning the Future

Competitive Economy

World-Class Infrastructure

Healthy Livable Communities

Transportation Objectives:

- Improve quality of life at the neighborhood, city, county, and regional levels
- In partnership with local communities, equitably and strategically focus resources in areas of need and importance
- Improve public health through the built environment
- Integrate sound environmental principles that ensure the region's sustainability



Transportation Objectives:

- Maintain and operate the existing transportation system to provide for reliable travel
- Improve transit and non-single-occupant vehicle options to boost economic competitiveness and reduce environmental impacts
- Strategically expand the transportation system while supporting local land use plans
- Provide for a safe and secure transportation network
- Promote an accessible and equitable transportation system
- Support the reliable movement of freight and goods
- Foster the application of advanced technologies to the transportation system

STATE PLANNING COORDINATION

ARC works with several state agencies to develop regional transportation project recommendations and ensure the programs developed by each agency are complementary. All state agencies work to achieve six transportation goals:

- Improve safety,
- Improve the environment,
- Maintain and preserve the current system,
- Relieve congestion,
- Improve reliability, and
- Improve freight and economic development.

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) builds, maintains, and operates much of the region's roadway network, and is the conduit through which all federal transportation funding to the State of Georgia flows. The State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) operates toll facilities in coordination with GDOT and is an important financial partner due to their bonding capabilities under state law. SRTA operates Atlanta's regional Xpress bus system and provides oversight of the TIP, the short-range component of the overall transportation plan, on behalf of the Governor.

Federal legislation requires states to have a multimodal long-range transportation plan, called a Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP), that outlines general investment policies over a minimum 20-year plan horizon. Additionally, Georgia legislation requires a short-range transportation investment plan, called the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP), that outlines specific investment strategies. GDOT develops both the SWTP and the SSTP for the state of Georgia.

GEORGIA'S STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (SWTP)

The SWTP assesses the current and future performance of all major transportation modes in the state. It is the technical and programmatic guide needed to meet the transportation demands of the state. The SWTP is updated every four years.

The SWTP does not enumerate specific projects, but rather identifies general approaches and strategies the state will follow clustered around three core investment categories: (1) statewide freight and logistics, (2) people mobility outside of the Atlanta region, and (3) people mobility within the Atlanta region. This structure provides key direction in the development and prioritization of projects and strategies included in the RTP.

This RTP was developed based on the SWTP that was completed in 2016, with a horizon year of 2040. In 2021, GDOT developed a new SWTP with a 2050 horizon, in conjunction with a new SSTP (see below). Changes to those plans will be integrated into this plan during the next major RTP update due in early 2024.

The SSTP provides specific performance metrics and targets designed to guide the appropriate selection and funding of projects to advance the state's strategic transportation goals. Tracking and monitoring of key investment strategies occurs annually through the annual progress report.

GEORGIA'S STATEWIDE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN (SSTP)

The SSTP is the official, intermodal, fiscally constrained, comprehensive transportation plan which includes programs and other activities to support the implementation of the state's strategic transportation goals and policies. The SSTP is updated every two years and requires an annual performance monitoring update.

The transportation goals and objectives defined in the SSTP address four key questions:

- What do Georgia's citizens and businesses expect and need from their transportation network?
- What levels of performance will attract and keep businesses and talent in Georgia's economy?
- What characteristics or features in a transportation system will make Georgia an attractive place to live?
- What will it take in terms of investment to drive growth across the State?

LOCAL PLANNING COORDINATION

In order to ensure that the local perspective is represented in regional planning efforts, ARC coordinates with local governments regularly through a variety of programs. These programs include the following:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

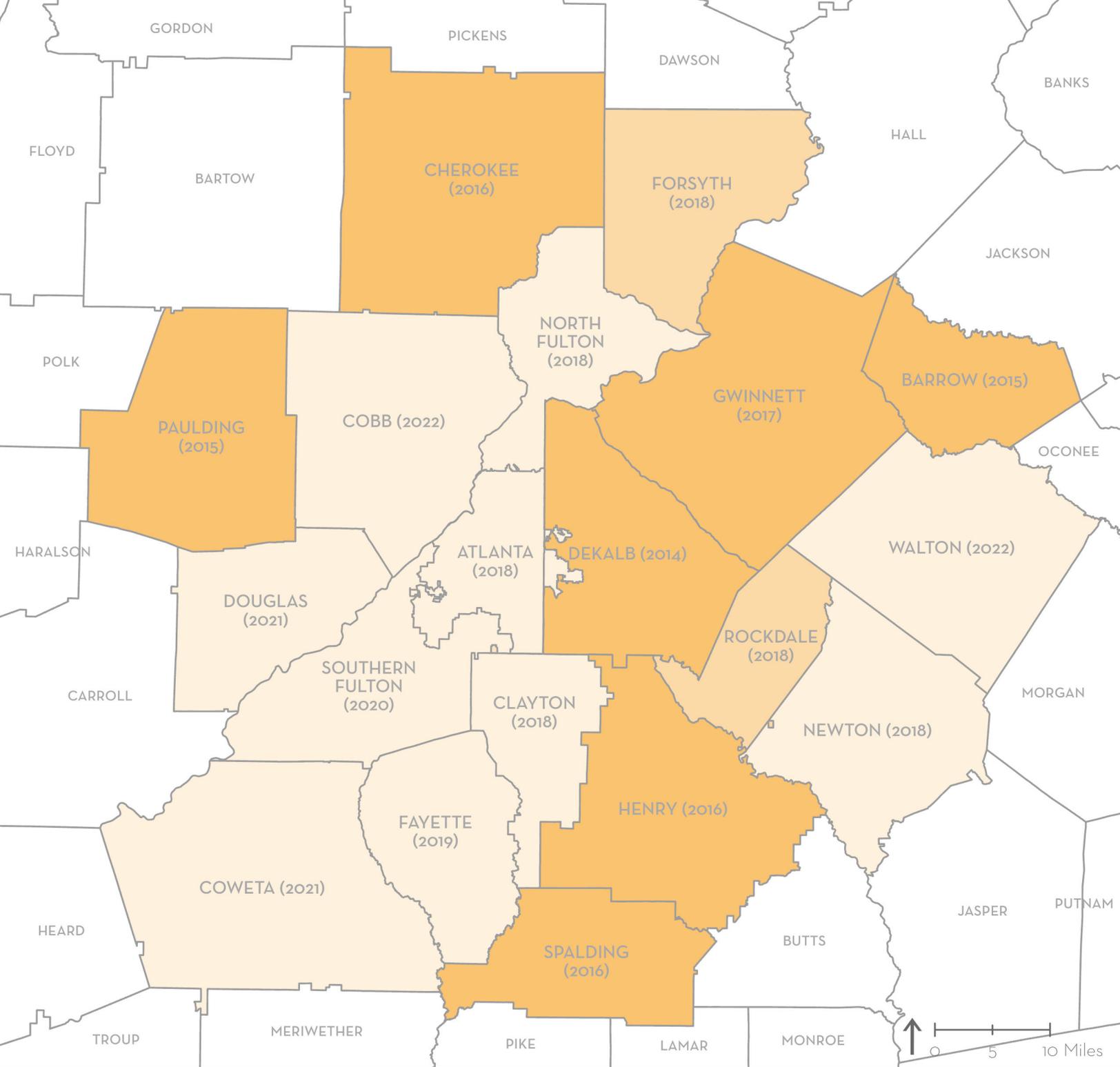
Through the Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP), ARC offers planning and technical support to metro Atlanta communities on issues related to housing, creative placemaking, green infrastructure, and food access, among others. This program is led by ARC's Community Development Group, with staff assistance from across the agency depending on the project subject. CDAP provides opportunities to work closely with communities in the region, allowing ARC to gain a stronger understanding of local needs regarding infrastructure, economic development, and community identity.

COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROGRAM

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) program was established to ensure that transportation infrastructure has a positive impact on strengthening our economy and communities at both the local and regional levels by providing financial incentives for counties and their constituent municipalities to develop joint long-range transportation plans. Since 2005, ARC has made federal funding available to assist

counties and cities in developing joint long-range transportation plans. These plans serve as the foundational building blocks of regional transportation planning efforts and are updated on a rotating cycle. The basic expected outcomes of a CTP are:

- Prioritized list of transportation investments necessary to support visions for economic development and strong communities established by cities and counties.
- Five to ten year fiscally constrained action plan which reflects currently available funding sources and feasible policy actions that can be taken at the city or county level.
- Recommendations that have been vetted through a robust community engagement process that is formally adopted by local government policy officials.
- Recommendations that leverage regional facilities, services, and programs to address local needs and priorities.
- Recommendations that can knit together previous plans and projects identified at the community level through Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) studies, Community Improvement District (CID) work programs, county or city Capital Improvement Programs (CIP), corridor studies, and other initiatives.



MAP 5: COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROGRAM

Legend

CTP Update Schedule

- Underway
- Update Pending in 2022
- Next Update in 2023 or Later
- Counties

Note: As of December 2022, updates have been completed in DeKalb County and Henry County. Final approval is pending for plans in Cherokee County and Spalding County. Updates are ongoing in Paulding County, Forsyth County, Gwinnett County, Barrow County and Rockdale County. An update in 2023 is pending in Newton County.

FREIGHT ADVISORY TASK FORCE

The Freight Advisory Task Force was established nearly 20 years ago as a forum for dialogue between the freight community and the public sector on freight and goods movement issues. The task force works to address the following goals:

- Improve goods and services movement in the region
- Improve reliability of goods movement
- Minimize the cost of goods movement
- Improve characteristics of transportation system for freight movement

FREIGHT CLUSTER PLAN PROGRAM

The 2016 Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan Update identified a lack of planning for local needs in manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution activity, resulting in the start of the Freight Cluster Plan program. Freight clusters have been identified as areas with the most intense industrial development in the region, and planning for these areas will provide guidance for project and policy implementation in the coming years. More information on the program can be found in the Recommendations Chapter of this plan.

LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) funds studies at the local level to focus growth in established communities, particularly those with a connection to regional transit or those

that are traditional main street communities. The goals of the program include encouraging a diverse mixture of land uses, enhancing access to a range of travel modes, and fostering public-private partnerships and sustained community support. More information on the LCI program is in the Recommendations Chapter.

REGIONAL SAFETY TASK FORCE

In 2019, the Regional Safety Task Force (RSTF) was established to guide the region's goal of eliminating fatal and serious injuries and crashes. Consisting of a multidisciplinary group of professionals, including local planners, policy-makers, and advocates, the RSTF will help ARC:

- Establish a regional safety vision,
- Identify actionable strategies and resources,
- Track our progress toward meeting regional safety targets,
- Promote better transportation project development, and
- Promote a culture of safety.

The Recommendations Chapter contains more information on ARC's safety goals and strategies.

LEARN MORE:

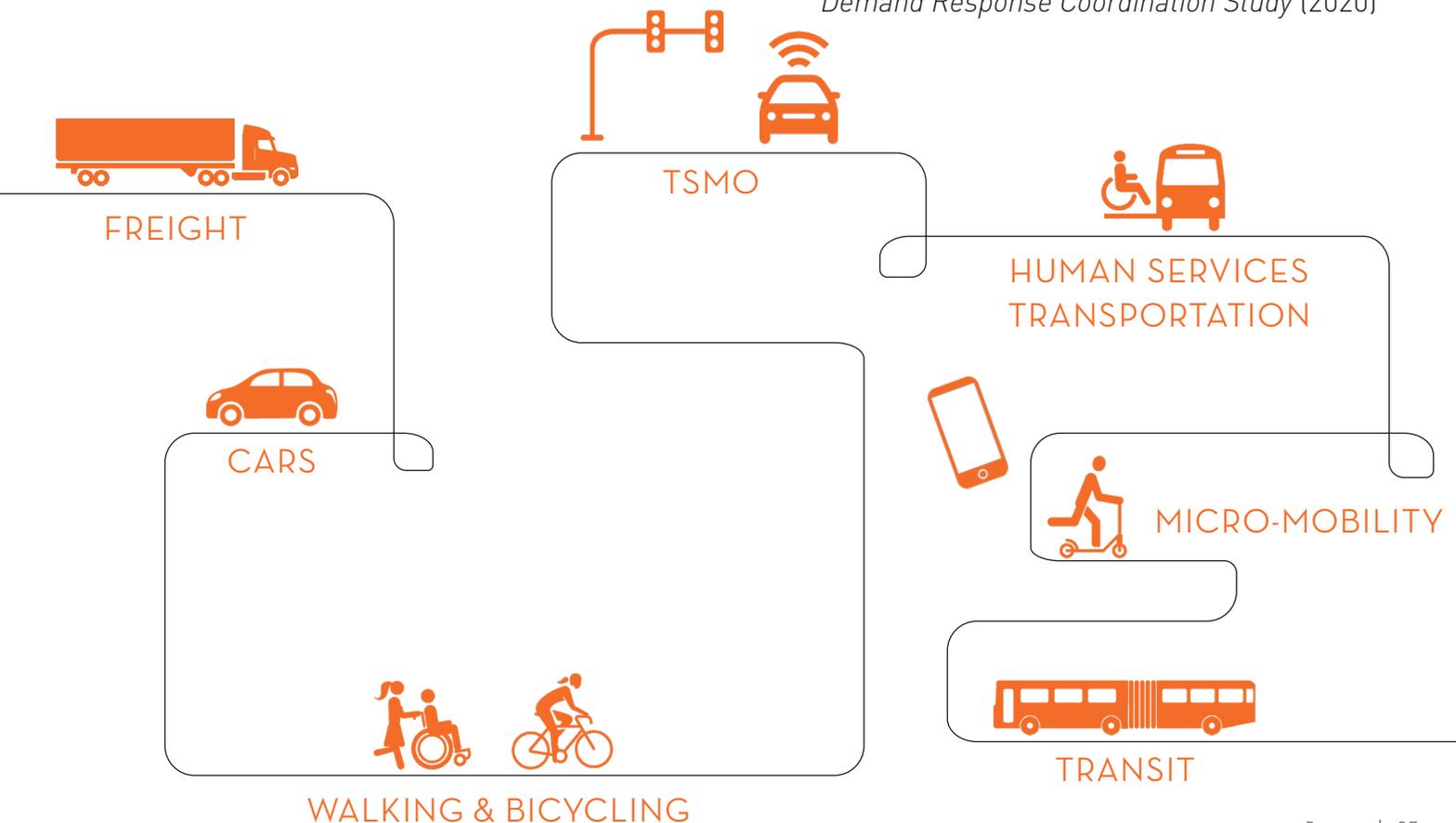
- [Community Development Assistance Program](#)
- [Comprehensive Transportation Plan Program](#)
- [Freight Advisory Task Force](#)
- [Freight Cluster Plan Program](#)
- [Livable Centers Initiative](#)
- [Regional Safety Task Force](#)

MODAL PLANNING COORDINATION

In addition to the comprehensive transportation planning activities which occur at the state and local levels, the recommendations of the RTP also incorporate findings of various studies and plans which focus on the needs of residents and visitors and their ability to move about the region. ARC's modal plans typically do not focus on a specific geography, unlike place-based efforts like LCIs or CIDs, but rather have broad applicability to the entire region. They recognize the pieces of the transportation network that serve the huge diversity of the region. The plans act as extensions to the RTP where more detailed information on modal data, analysis results, and recommendations can be obtained.

The following list summarizes recent multimodal plans since the 2016 quadrennial RTP update:

- *Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan* (2016)
- *Atlanta Region Truck Parking Assessment* (2018)
- *Safe Streets for Walking & Bicycling: A regional action plan for reducing traffic fatalities in metropolitan Atlanta* (2018)
- *Managing Mobility in the Atlanta Region: Human Services Transportation Plan* (2017)
- *Concept 3: Regional Transit Vision* (2018)
- *Regional ITS Architecture Update and Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Vision* (2020)
- *Regional Human Services Transportation: Demand Response Coordination Study* (2020)



SYSTEM AND PROJECT EVALUATION

ARC takes a multi-step approach to integrate projects into a network of rigorously evaluated investments that advance the transportation goals and objectives of the region. There are dual goals of this evaluation process – to understand how individual projects perform (project-level evaluation) and to understand how all projects work as a system, collectively serving the region (system-level evaluation). Project- and system-level evaluation are the primary levers ARC has to relate the RTP's recommended project list to the broader regional goal of Winning the Future.

In some instances, project sponsors like GDOT and MARTA have gone through their own evaluation process, as well as their own stakeholder and community input process. ARC takes this into account, ensuring those performance standards achieve the RTP's vision, goals, and objectives.

Both project and system evaluations incorporate quantitative and qualitative findings. The Performance Chapter describes those measures and metrics in detail.

See the adjacent graphic which depicts a simplified version of this process.

OVERVIEW OF ARC'S EVALUATION PROCESS

1

INTEGRATE PRIORITIZED PROJECTS FROM PROJECT SPONSORS LIKE GDOT + MARTA

2

INTEGRATE UNPRIORITIZED PROJECTS FROM OTHER PROJECT SOURCES LIKE CTPs

3

EVALUATE UNPRIORITIZED PROJECTS USING ARC METHODOLOGY

4

CONDUCT SYSTEM EVALUATION OF ALL PROJECTS USING ARC METHODOLOGY

5

COMPARE SYSTEM RESULTS AGAINST PERFORMANCE MEASURES + TARGETS

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.324(4)(10) – Potential Environmental Mitigation Discussion, the MPO shall facilitate a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities that can be leveraged by the long-range transportation plan. ARC facilitates this discussion among the applicable Federal, State, wildlife, and other regulatory agencies and planning partners. The discussion associated with this plan update is centered around ARC’s in-house geospatial analytical process that screens all proposed RTP projects, including those already programmed in the TIP. This process will be explained further in this section.

SHRP2 IMPLEMENTING “ECO-LOGICAL”

ARC relies on FHWA’s Eco-Logical process to direct high-level environmental screening of RTP and TIP projects. The Eco-Logical approach is an initiative established by FHWA as a component of the Environmental Review Toolkit, intended to accelerate project delivery, while strengthening agency partnerships, reducing permitting processing times, and ultimately achieving better environmental outcomes. This nine-step approach encourages local, regional, state, and federal agencies to collaborate at the beginning of the transportation planning process; identify environmental priority areas; and include conservation and mitigation strategies in their respective infrastructure plans that correspond to the priority areas.

The most pertinent step in this process is the development of the Regional Ecological Framework (REF), which is the geospatial database used to screen transportation projects. The REF is evaluated for potential updates to existing datasets, or integration of new datasets, during each RTP update. There are no updates recommended to the REF dataset during this plan update. The current REF consists of 15 datasets or layers to be used as inputs into the REF analysis of transportation projects:

- Draft 2014 Clean Water Act §§ 305(b) & 303(d) List of Waters (TMDL - Total Maximum Daily Load)
- Brownfields
- Darter Habitat
- Endangered Species
- Floodplains
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Hazardous Sites Inventory
- Trout Streams
- Small Area Supply Watersheds
- Wetlands
- Georgia Metropolitan River Protection Act Corridor
- Historic Resources
- Current Land Use Map (“Landpro”), Agricultural and Forest Categories
- Existing Greenspace
- Undeveloped Land

RTP/TIP ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING PROCESS

ARC developed a Project Environmental Screening Tool, a customized ArcGIS Desktop application that calculates the acreages of proposed transportation project footprint overlays, relative to the 15 key environmental resources in the REF. The acreage estimates are used to screen projects for potential impacts, project deliverability, potential scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, and to proactively identify potential mitigation strategies. This screening occurs during the regional transportation planning process, prior to the proposed project being programmed in the RTP/TIP with federal funding. The results of this screening are displayed on Map 6 and can be found online by following the link below.

ARC convened the RTP Environmental Consultation Group twice during this update process. The meetings were used to present information on the scope and scale of the RTP update, as well as the latest efforts on linking planning with NEPA to accelerate project delivery. During the second meeting, the methodology and results of the Project Environmental Screening Tool were discussed.

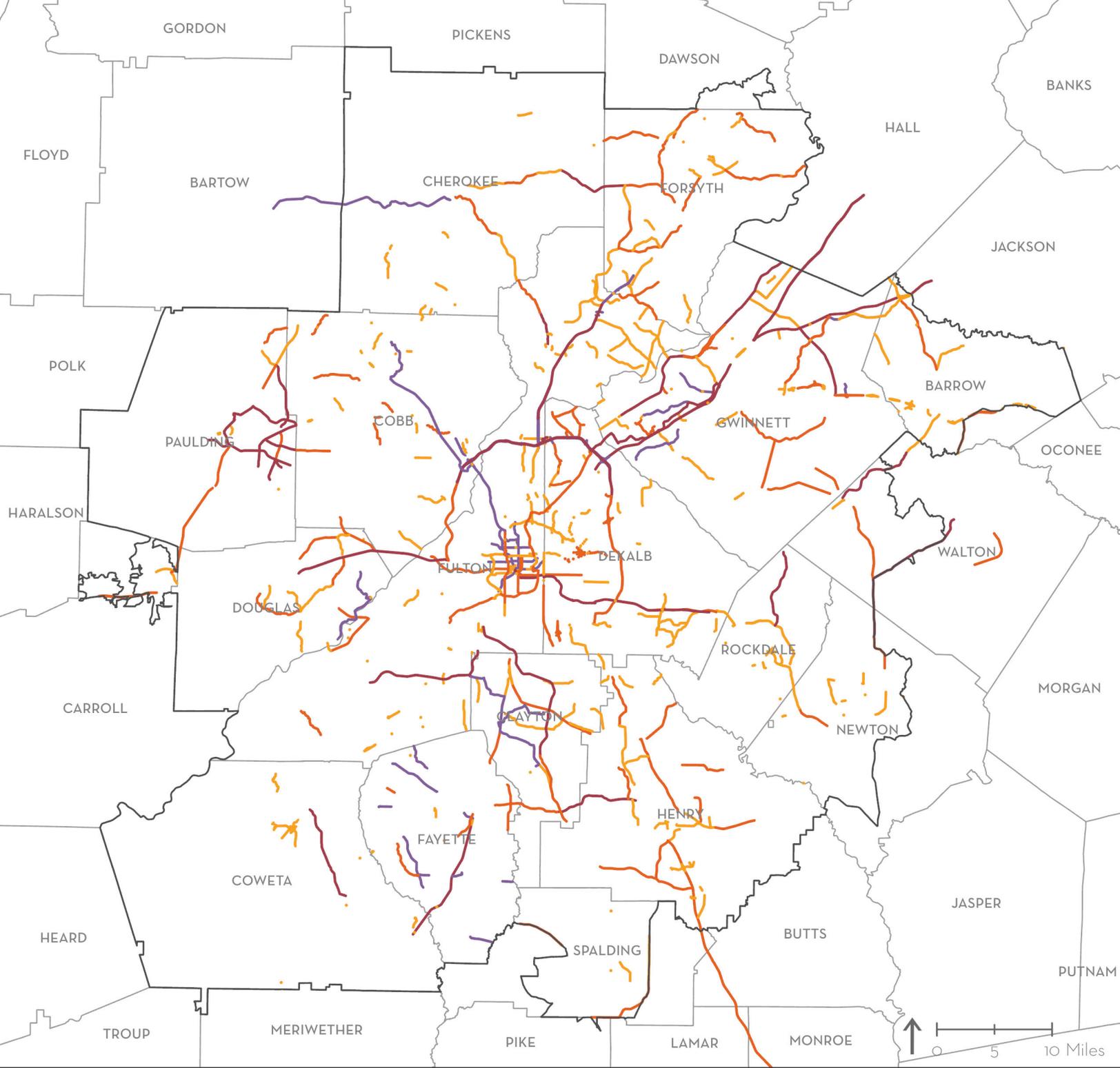
TIP PROJECT EVALUATION FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

ARC has developed a performance-based TIP solicitation prioritization methodology and process that includes a cultural and environmental resources component in the ranking criteria for all projects seeking federal funding. A full description of the criteria, metrics, and weighting, by project type, is documented in ARC's 2019 TIP Project Evaluation Framework document.

LEARN MORE:



- [SHRP2 Implementing Eco-Logical](#)
- [Online Map of Project Environmental Screening Tool Results](#)
- [TIP Project Evaluation Framework](#)



MAP 6: PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING TOOL

Legend

Total Acreage Impacted

- Less than 136 acres
- 136-372 acres
- 372-739 acres
- Greater than 739 acres

Counties

MPO Boundary

Note: Reflects project list as of original plan adoption in February 2020.

FHWA INVEST IMPLEMENTATION

In 2017, FHWA allocated funding to ARC to implement the Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST), and gather lessons learned. The general objective of this scope of work was to conduct a thorough comparison and analysis of different ARC decision support tools with the INVEST – Project Development (PD) Module criteria.

Upon completion of the comparison, ARC recommended developing a new sustainability analysis tool, rather than incorporating the INVEST-PD criteria into ARC's pre-existing decision-support tools. Through this research, ARC also recommended "front loading" its planning process by leveraging INVEST-PD criteria to identify priority areas and corresponding sustainability project types that would be most effective towards achieving sustainability.

RESILIENCE PLANNING

Planning for extreme weather is of growing national importance. FHWA has recognized that the climate is changing and we should expect more extreme weather events. Assessing and mitigating our transportation vulnerabilities from extreme weather enables ARC to make conscientious investments and improve the lives of all of our residents. Through a grant from FHWA's Resilience Pilot Program, ARC has been building a GIS-based tool to assess system vulnerability. The results of this assessment will aid in future funding decisions. Integrating resilience in the decision-making process as a data-driven evaluation measure allows ARC to continue to protect particularly threatened transportation assets, while also promoting projects that help to mitigate climate risks, in order to ensure system resiliency.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Water Resource Management Plan update also supports ARC's Eco-Logical work program. This regional water plan identifies three areas of focus:

- Water Supply Planning and Water Conservation
- Watershed Management
- Wastewater Generation and Treatment

The Watershed Management section details strategies and recommendations for effective stormwater management and water quality protection. It includes specific tasks and milestones for implementing these recommendations for local governments as well as regional and state agencies.

Transportation infrastructure has significant, cumulative impacts on water quality and watershed conditions. For example, transportation asset management practices can control stormwater runoff from linear facilities like roads, highways, and trails in support of the objectives of the plan. Transportation infrastructure is also susceptible to and often a contributing factor to moderate and severe flooding, and the plan includes floodplain management guidelines and policies that can guide transportation investments to benefit floodplains.

GNAHRGIS EXPANSION PROJECT

Georgia Natural, Archaeological, and Historical Geospatial Information System (GNAHRGIS) is an interactive web-based registry and geographical information system designed to catalog information about the natural, archaeological, and historic resources of Georgia.

In 2017, ARC partnered with GDOT and the University of Georgia – Carl Vinson Institute to carry out peer research on best practices for maintaining and exchanging environmental resource data among state and regional agencies. The research identified two leading models - Florida and North Carolina - that will likely influence the way Georgia enhances the GNAHRGIS and associated environmental consultation.

LEARN MORE:

- [INVEST](#)
- [Resilience at ARC](#)
- [Water Resource Management Plan](#)
- [GNAHRGIS](#)

PRIORITY NETWORKS

ARC identified four priority networks to focus limited funding on strategic projects in order to maintain and improve essential parts of the overall regional transportation system. Their denotation as a priority network stems from their connection to achieving the vision, goals, objectives, and policies established in the Policy Framework. The four priority networks are:

- Regional Strategic Transportation System (RSTS)
- Regional Thoroughfare Network (RTN)
- Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Network (ASTRoMaP)
- Regional Transit Vision

These regional and national priority networks are policy filters of the TIP project evaluation process, stipulating that roadway capacity projects must be located on a priority transportation network. Additionally, transit expansion projects should be consistent with the Atlanta Region Transit Plan (ARTP), which is derived from the Regional Transit Vision. Future iterations of the RTP will demonstrate a more direct linkage with the ARTP once that plan is finalized.

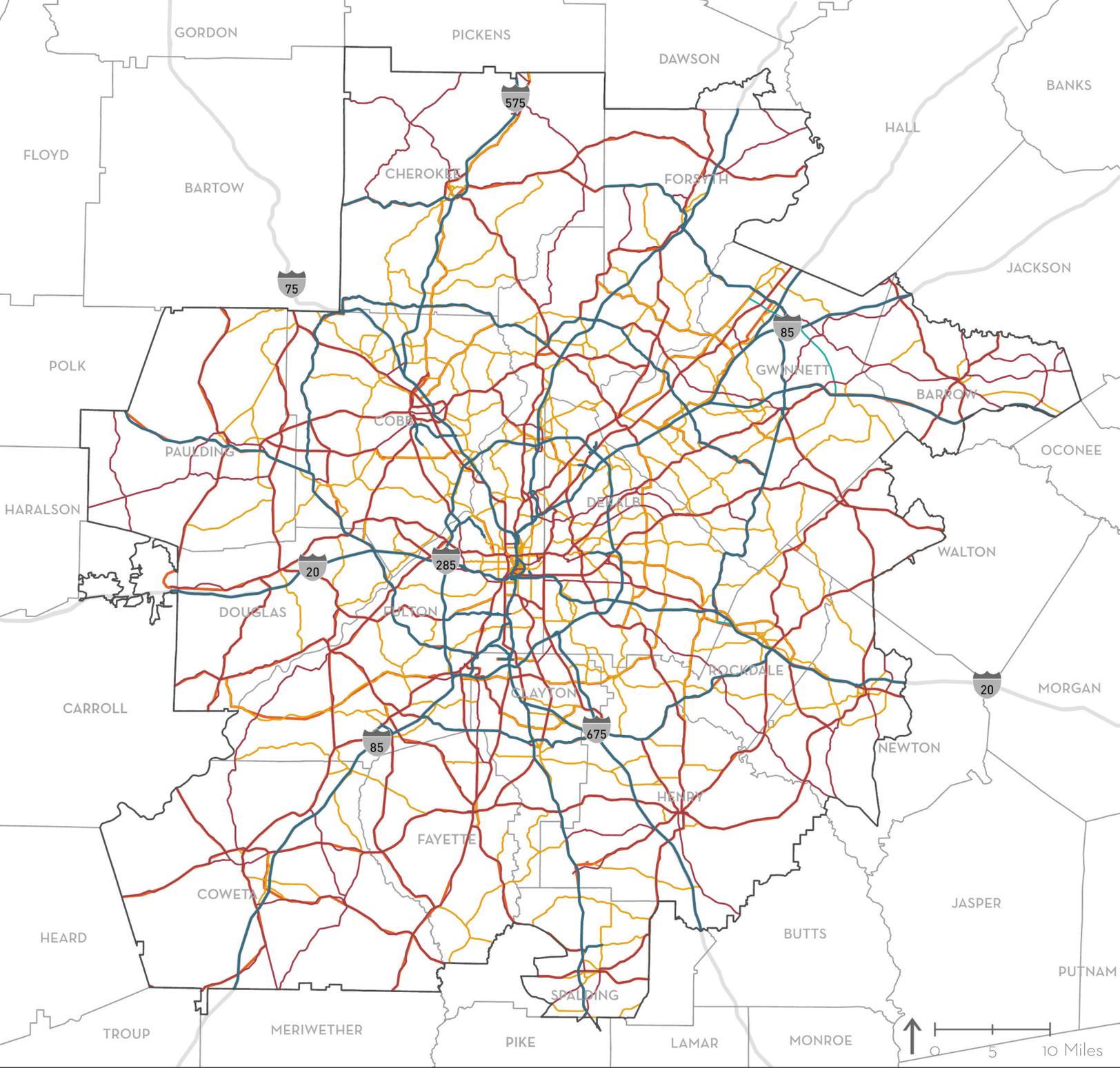
The remainder of this section defines each of the aforementioned four priority networks and how ARC utilizes each in its planning and decision-making processes.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The RSTS is an ARC-identified network of regionally significant roadways and transit routes that are eligible for large-scale federal funding investments. This network was originally defined in 2006 and updated during development of the 2012 long-range plan. It was not reassessed as a component of this plan update process. The RSTS network is made up of the region's highest volume trip-making patterns, including:

- Interstate highways and freeways
- National Highway System (NHS) classified facilities
- State highways, including intermodal connectors for freight facilities
- Existing and future regional transit services
- Principal arterials
- Critical minor arterials
- Other facilities that provide continuous, cross-regional mobility by ensuring adequate spacing of major roadways that connect regional activity centers, town centers, and freight corridors

This plan continues the strategy of focusing limited federal transportation funds on the RSTS. One benefit of focusing the region's limited transportation funding on these corridors in particular is that ARC can strategically select increasing roadway and transit capacity projects to only those on the RSTS, and therefore only those that would have true regional impact. The RSTS also furthers the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, including addressing current and future transportation demand.



MAP 7: REGIONAL STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Legend

- National Highway System
- State Routes
- Arterials
- Future Routes
- Expressways
- Counties
- MPO Boundary

REGIONAL THOROUGHFARE NETWORK

The RTN is a subset of roadways within the RSTS which serve the region's most critical mobility needs. Thoroughfares are a high-volume transportation corridor that serve mainly vehicular traffic, but also serve high-capacity transit as well as people walking and bicycling. They are our most critical connections between people, goods, and important places in the region. As such, ARC considers the RTN the highest priority for federal funding consideration.

While the RSTS defines those facilities which the Atlanta region has determined should be eligible for large-scale federal funding investment, the RTN reflects a refinement and narrowing of that system to those which are of highest priority for funding consideration, including:

- Highlight non-freeway corridors that promote regional commute patterns
- Accommodate Concept 3 premium transit services such as light rail and bus rapid transit
- Serve as a priority network for performance monitoring reporting initiatives
- Serve as the basis for selecting future locations for multimodal corridor studies with emphases on safety and connections to transit, employment, and essential services

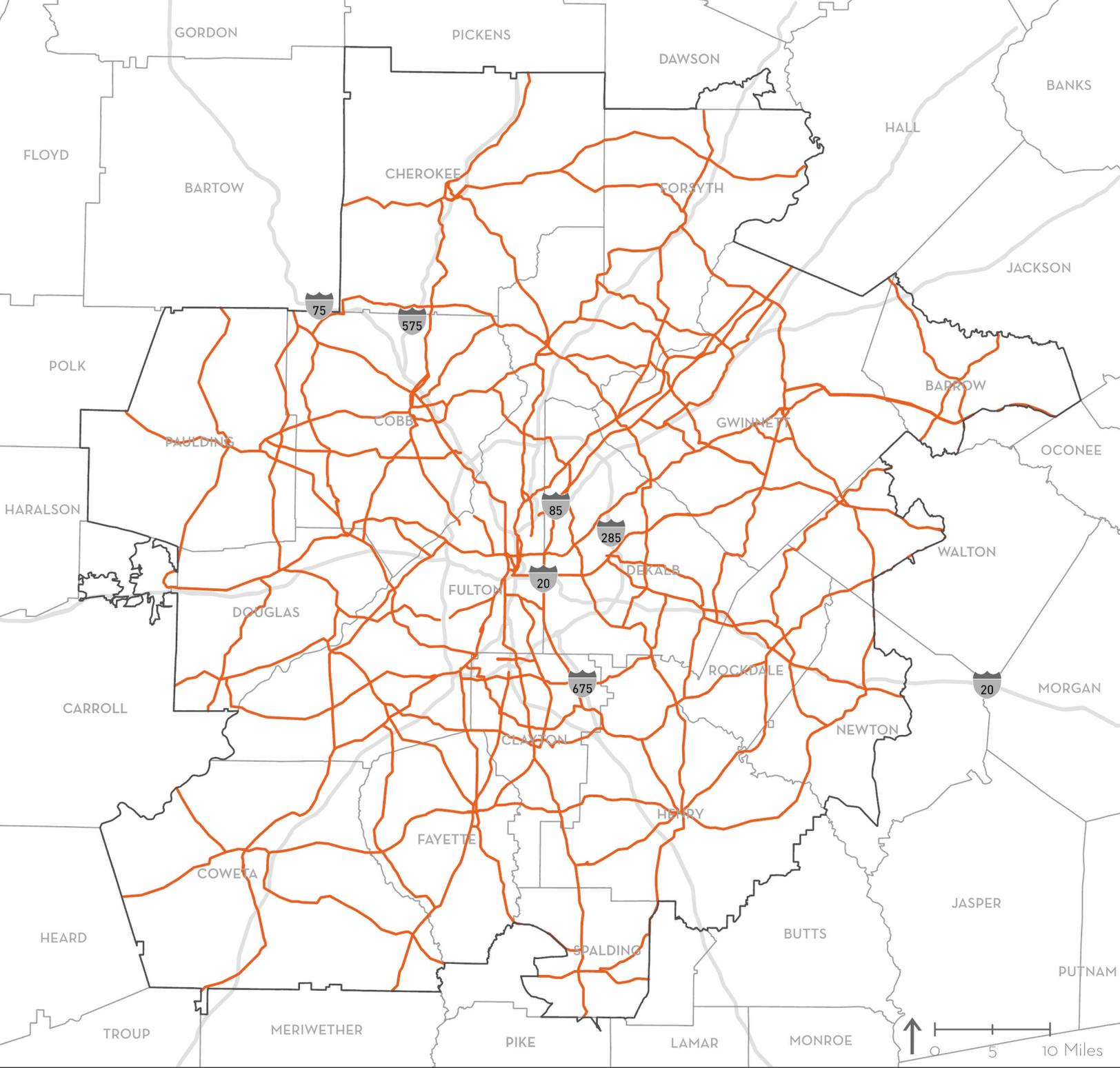
The following established regional networks comprise the RTN:

- National Highway System
- Principal Arterials
- Regional Mobility Roadway Segments
- Regional Truck Routes
- Premium Transit Roadway Alignments
- GDOT Regional Traffic Signal Operations Program Corridors

Since the RTN was identified to promote mobility, connectivity, multi-modal, and freight travel at the regional scale it also acts as the Congestion Management Process (CMP) network.

LEARN MORE:

- [Regional Thoroughfare Network Identification and Classification Report](#)
- [ARC's Congestion Management Process](#)



MAP 8: REGIONAL THOROUGHFARE NETWORK

Legend

- Regional Thoroughfare Network
- Expressways
- Counties
- MPO Boundary

ATLANTA STRATEGIC TRUCK ROUTE NETWORK

The Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan (2008) found that the region has discontinuous routes serving freight truck traffic. Many truck routes are not logical in that they stop at jurisdictional boundaries or conflict with restrictions placed in adjacent communities.

ARC recognized the need for an additional study pertaining to truck routing and operations, and thus developed the Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan (ASTRoMaP). This project, in cooperation with state and local government bodies and agencies, produced a truck route system designed to provide regional access and also guide current and future decision making on regional transportation priorities. The ASTRoMaP truck route system, represented in dark yellow

in the adjacent map, strategically feeds into the national expressway system, represented in gray.

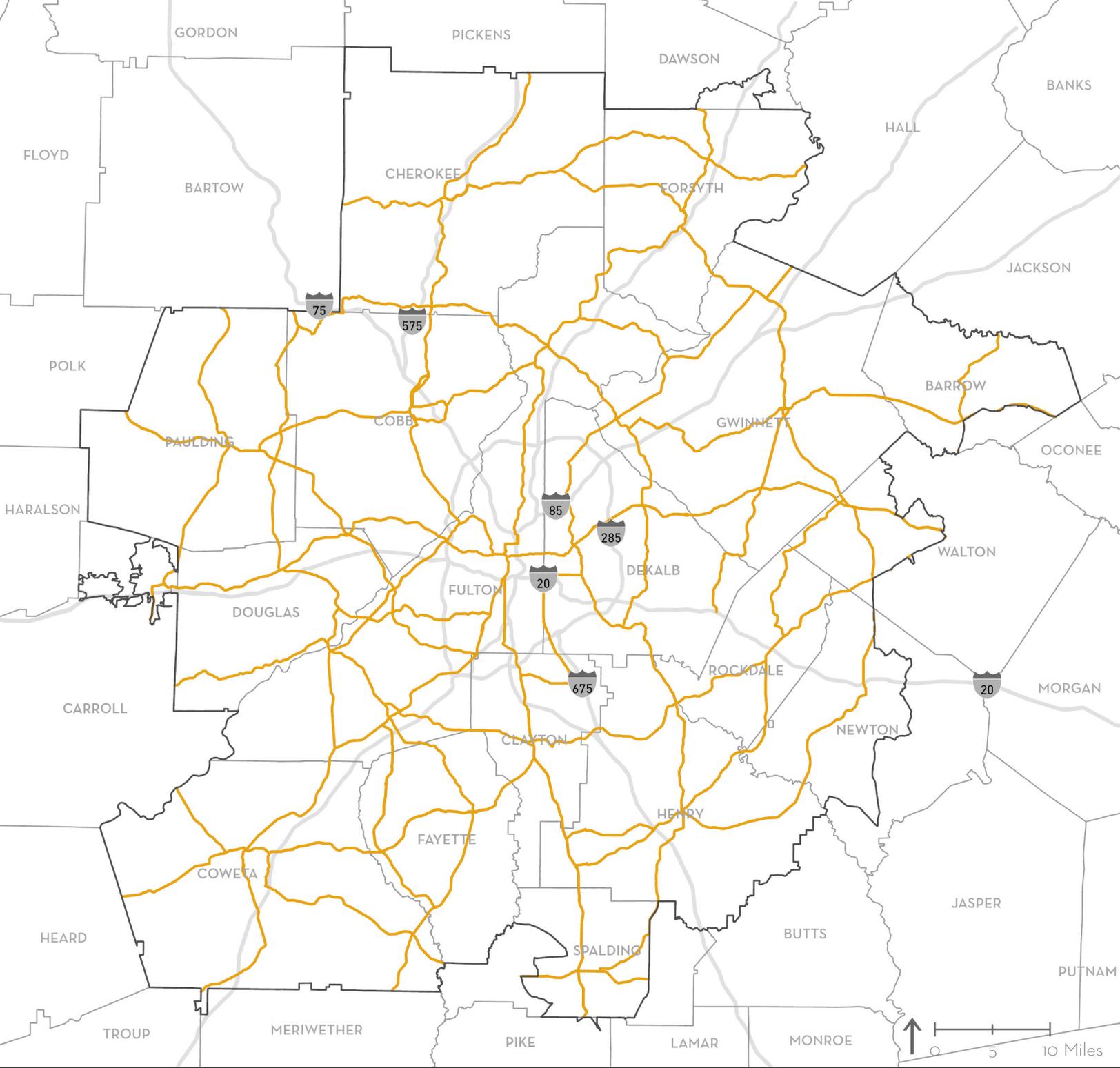
ARC developed ASTRoMaP-specific policies, guidelines, and design strategies relevant to freight planning, with specific emphasis on improving at-grade rail crossings and intersection geometrics. ASTRoMaP also served as the foundation for an update to the Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan.

▶ LEARN MORE:

- [Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan](#)



Workers loading boxes onto a truck



MAP 9: REGIONAL TRUCK ROUTES

Legend

- Regional Truck Routes
- Expressways
- Counties
- MPO Boundary

REGIONAL TRANSIT VISION

In 2018 ARC created the long-range, fiscally unconstrained vision for transit expansion in the Atlanta region. This plan, known as Concept 3, updated the transit planning and transit project evaluation process, using analytical tools and data-driven measures to create an objective and prioritized project list that advances regional goals and objectives. A subset of these projects is funded in the RTP, but not all projects have secured funding.

Each of the 50 projects, depicted in the adjacent map, were evaluated on seven measures that correspond with regional planning priorities. The seven measures are described in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4

CONCEPT 3 PROJECT EVALUATION MEASURES



Reliability // On-time performance expectation based on MARTA's current services by mode.



Social Equity // Population within 1/2 mile who are non-white or under the poverty line.



Connectivity // Number of connections between the project and existing high-frequency transit services.



Compatibility // Ratio of jobs and population within 1/2 mile.



Efficiency // Jobs and population within 1/2 mile of station areas divided by weekday service miles.



Job Accessibility // Built-in Conveyal measures weighted by total population and social equity factors.



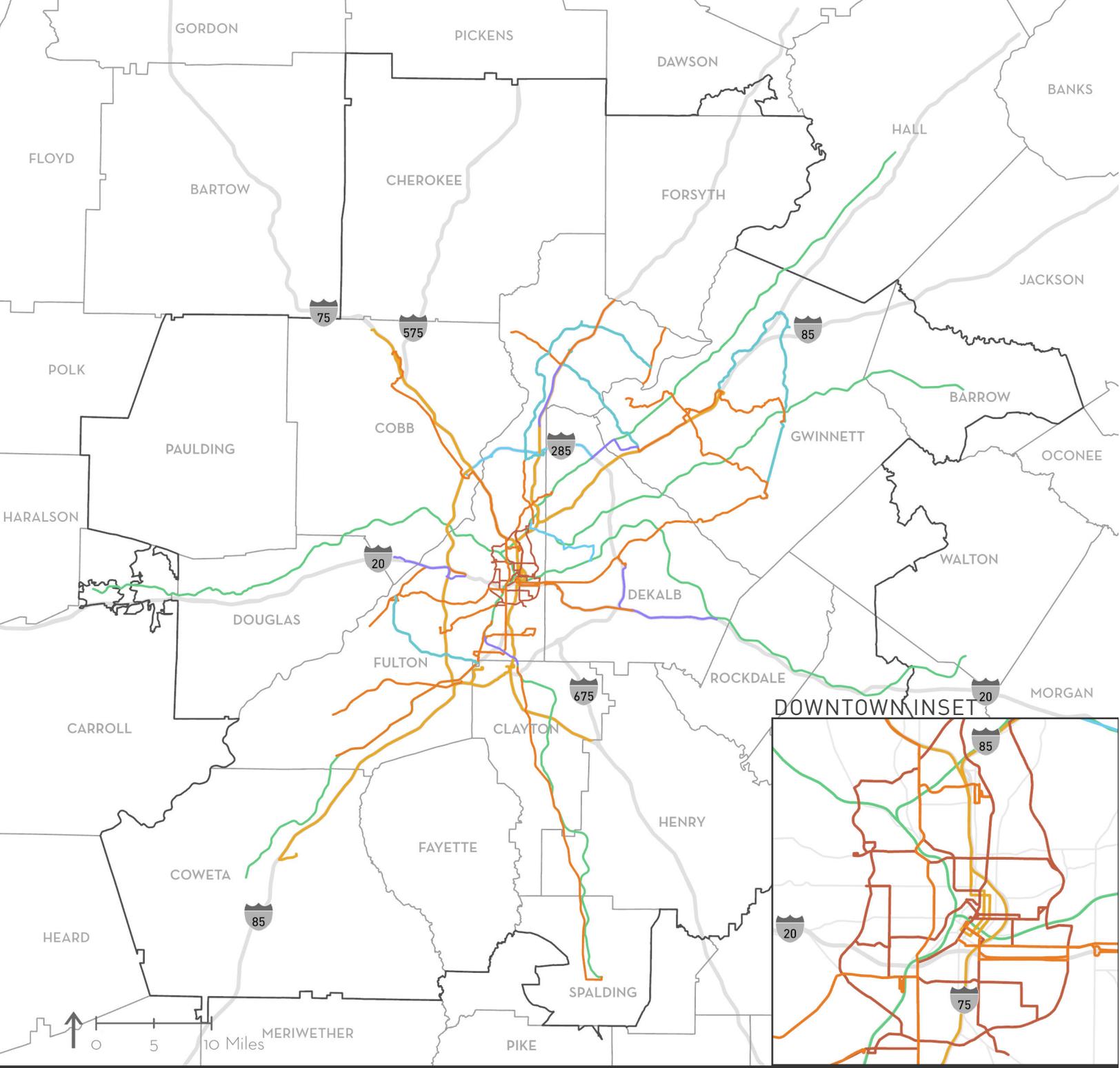
Sensitivity // Intersections with culturally and environmentally sensitive land uses, weighted by project length.

The 2018 Concept 3 Update also included a supplemental Data Management Plan which is included in Appendix B of that document, which describes the needs, challenges, and opportunities for improved data management in the regional transit planning process, and details the current and potential data flow for different data sets and sources relevant to Concept 3 and related transit plans.

Concept 3 laid the groundwork for a Regional Transit Plan and the work of the Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority.

➤ [LEARN MORE:](#)

- [Concept 3: 2018 Update](#)



MAP 10: CONCEPT 3 PROJECTS

Legend

- Heavy Rail
- Commuter Rail
- Light Rail
- Streetcar
- Express Bus
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Arterial Rapid Transit
- Expressways
- Counties
- MPO Boundary

UNIFIED GROWTH POLICY MAP

The Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM) provides direction for future growth. The UGPM represents local plans as well as the Atlanta Region's Plan policies and forecasts. A large portion of the region is developed, but opportunities for redevelopment and new investments remain.

The UGPM is comprised of Areas and Places. Areas describe predominant land use patterns throughout the region. Areas also directly influence the future forecasted growth of the region by describing future land use patterns in each part of the region. Places reflect concentrated uses that have generally defined boundaries and provide greater detail within Areas. The Development Guide, an online map with policy guidance, provides the following for each Area and Place identified on the UGPM:

- A detailed map showing the specific location in the region
- A written description that includes a defining narrative and issue summary
- Guidelines for recommended building height and development density
- Pictures that characterize development patterns that are typical and desirable
- Implementation priorities that identify measures to achieve desired development patterns

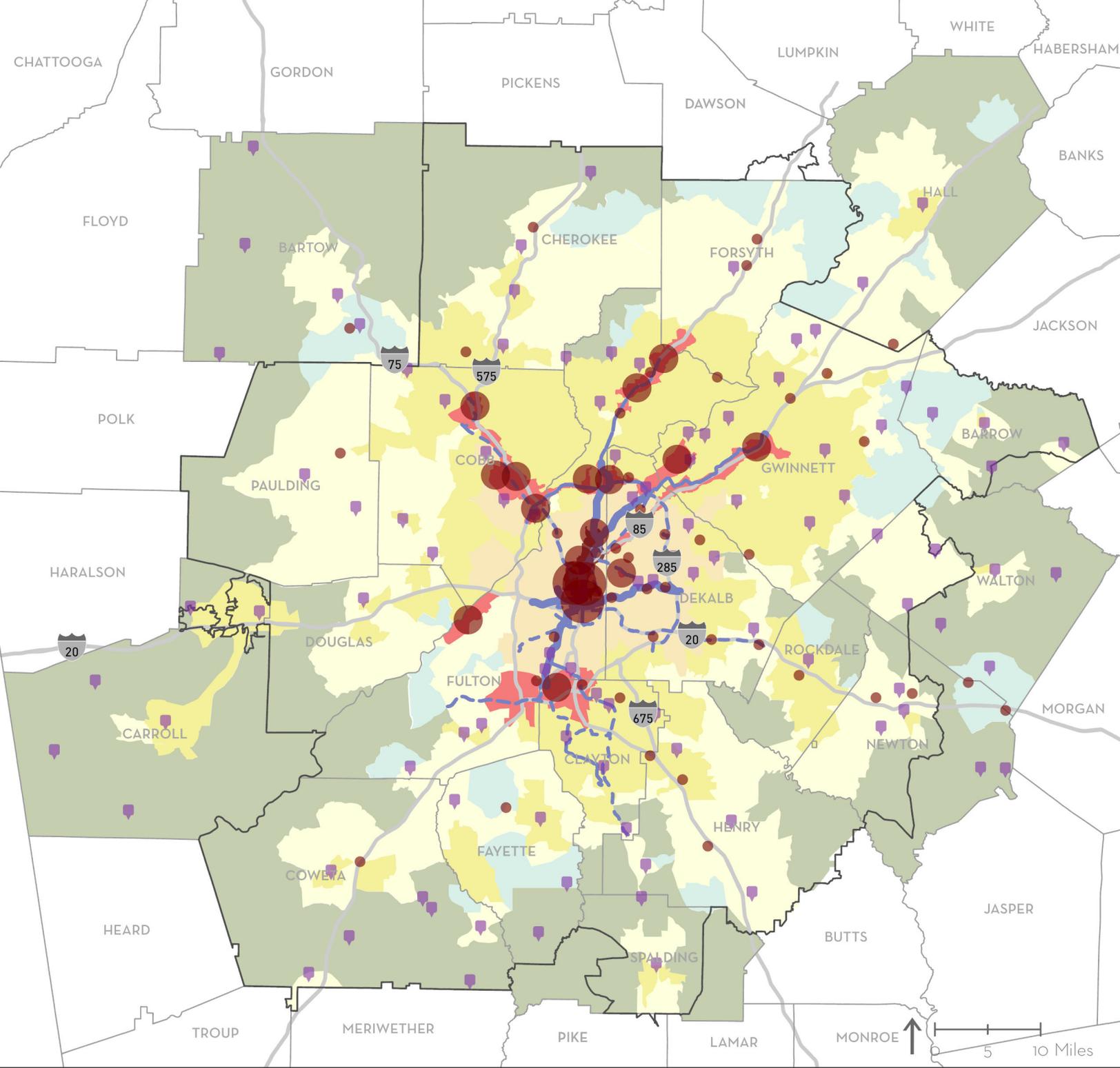
The UGPM and Development Guide support the RTP recommendations through:

- **Evaluation of Potential Transportation Investments:** The specific policies and outcomes identified in the UGPM and Development Guide were applied in evaluating potential projects for inclusion in the RTP. Transportation investments that were inconsistent with regional growth objectives were not recommended for federal funding.
- **Identification of Transportation Programs:** Based on the vision articulated in the UGPM and Development Guide, existing transportation programs were extended and modified to support desired outcomes. This program helps support core regional vision objectives such as fostering growth in transit-supportive communities and Complete Streets focus areas.
- **Determination of LCI Eligibility:** Only those communities identified on the UGPM as Places are eligible for funding under LCI.

The UGPM provides a coherent vision for the future development of the region, and the RTP investments discussed in the Solutions section support this vision.

LEARN MORE:

- [UGPM Online Map and Development Guide](#)



MAP 11: UNIFIED GROWTH POLICY MAP | Updated: 11.01.19

Legend

Regional Areas

- Developing Rural
- Developing Suburbs
- Established Suburbs
- Maturing Neighborhoods
- Region Core
- Region Employment Corridors
- Rural Areas

Regional Places

- Central City
- Regional Center
- Small Regional Center
- Town Centers

- Existing Rail Transit
- Planned Premium Transit
- Expressways
- Counties
- MPO Boundary

DEVELOPING RURAL AREAS

Developing Rural Areas are areas in the region where little to no development has taken place, but where there is development pressure.

These areas are characterized by limited single-family subdivisions, individual large single-family lots, agricultural uses, protected lands, and forests. The region should strive to protect these areas by limiting infrastructure investments to targeted areas. Limited existing infrastructure in these areas will constrain the amount of additional growth that is possible. Some transportation improvements may be needed in Developing Rural Areas, but care should be taken not to spur unwanted growth.

DEVELOPING SUBURBS

Developing Suburbs are areas in the region where suburban development has occurred, and the conventional development pattern is present but not set. These areas are characterized by residential development with pockets of commercial and industrial development. These areas represent the extent of the urban service area, and the region's first attempts at suburban smart growth can be found in these areas. There is a need in these areas for additional preservation of critical environmental, agricultural, and forest resources. Limiting existing infrastructure in these areas will constrain the amount of additional growth that is possible.

Transportation improvements are needed within these Developing Suburbs, but care should be taken not to spur unwanted growth.

ESTABLISHED SUBURBS

Established Suburbs are areas in the region where suburban development has occurred.

These areas are characterized by single-family subdivisions, commercial development, and office, industrial, and multi-family development in limited locations. With few remaining large parcels for additional development, these are the areas in which the region may see the least amount of land use change outside of retail and commercial areas. Preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods is important, and wholesale change will most likely not occur in those single-family subdivisions that make up a majority of these areas. However, infill and redevelopment will occur in the limited commercial areas.

MATURING NEIGHBORHOODS

Maturing Neighborhoods are areas in the region characterized by older neighborhoods that include both single- and multi-family development, as well as commercial and office uses at connected key locations. These areas represent the largest part of the region that is facing infill and redevelopment pressures. In many cases, infrastructure is in place to handle additional growth, but in some areas, infrastructure is built out with limited capacity for expansion. This may constrain the amount of additional growth possible in certain areas. Many arterial streets in this area are congested due to their use as regional connections for commuters. Limited premium transit is available in these areas. The demand for infill

development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings in this area should be balanced with the preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods, as well as the need for additional public greenspace, including trails and sidewalks.

REGION CORE

The Region Core is the major economic, cultural, and transportation hub of the region. This area is the densest in terms of employment, residential, and cultural offerings throughout the region, with the most developed transit service. The Region Core can handle the most intense development; however, this infrastructure continues to need improvements as it ages and the lifestyles of metro Atlanta residents change. With a growing regional population and growing congestion, this center must maintain accessibility for all by expanding housing and multi-modal transportation options.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CORRIDORS

Regional Employment Corridors represent the densest development outside of the Region Core, connecting several Regional Centers with the Region Core via existing transportation facilities. These areas contain a large share of the region's jobs within a relatively small land area. As they increase in both housing and job density, they are experiencing greater redevelopment and new uses in traditionally employment-focused areas. There is a lack of

accessible public greenspace within Regional Employment Corridors, which affects quality of life for residents and workers.

RURAL AREAS

Rural Areas are areas in the region where little to no development has taken place and where there is little development pressure. These areas are characterized by sporadic large single-family lots, agricultural uses, protected lands, and forests, and they represent the limits of the urban service area in metro Atlanta. There is a desire by many residents and elected officials in these areas to keep them rural in character. Increased development threatens existing rural economic uses. The region is striving to protect these areas by limiting infrastructure investments to targeted areas. There will be a continued need to maintain existing transportation infrastructure, but care should be taken not to spur unwanted growth by inappropriate expansion of infrastructure capacity.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE ATLANTA REGION'S PLAN

The Atlanta Region's Plan continues to build upon ARC's track record of outstanding public engagement, reflecting input and feedback gained from policy makers, regional leadership, stakeholders and the general public. Throughout the development of The Atlanta Region's Plan, ARC sought to ensure that it reflected the full range of regional values and desires by involving a diverse spectrum of opinion and discussions in development of the plan.

The outreach efforts to support this effort were guided by The Atlanta Region's Plan Stakeholder Involvement Program as well as the Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan, which together outline a robust program of activities with local governments in the Atlanta Region as well as other stakeholders to ensure that broad input and support for plan goals, policies, transportation investments and programs are achieved. Targeted outreach activities, highlighted below and described in detail in the Public Involvement Appendix, are supplemented by the existing ARC committee and task force structure. The stakeholder and public outreach efforts meet the requirements of both the Georgia DCA and USDOT for developing and sharing regional plans.

The Atlanta Region's Plan participation process involved any person expressing interest in its activities and outcomes as well as targeted participants for plan development. For planning purposes, three broad audiences were identified within the jurisdictions served by ARC:

- Policy-making elected/appointed officials from local, regional and state jurisdictions. This also included interaction with federal officials who establish and review rules and regulations in the planning process.
- Public planning partner staffs, which prepare their jurisdictional plans, provide background information on local issues and advise officials, were targeted within this audience.
- State and local private sector leadership and interested people within special interest groups that consistently engage in issues related to The Atlanta Region's Plan.
- Individuals or groups that participate in ARC activities based on short-term, issue-driven concerns.

How to Get Involved: Where do I share my input about transportation?



There's more than one way to be a part of the transportation process. Check out this overview and pick what works best for you!

“FORMAL” ENGAGEMENT

Attend ARC committee meetings, give input at public hearings, submit comments at public meetings

Any written or verbal comments submitted at public hearings or during plan public review periods become part of the written record of the plan's development

Formal engagement is often related to a specific plan or policy

“EVERYDAY” ENGAGEMENT

Attend informational meetings, like open house sessions, forums, or panel discussions

You can visit a meeting one time, take an occasional online survey, or you can find opportunities for sustained involvement and on-going conversations

There are many opportunities for engagement around policies and vision-setting to guide specific plans

Connect with ARC via social media or subscribe to an online newsletter for regular information on latest happenings

Additionally, ARC considers needs of the transportation disadvantaged and environmental justice communities in every step of the regional planning process, forming a core consideration in policy and investment decisions. Environmental justice public policy seeks to ensure that harmful human health or environmental effects of government activities do not fall disproportionately upon those with low income and minority populations living and working within the community. To best address these concerns, an environmental justice program was an integrated facet of the plan development process, closely aligned with technical analysis. This multi-faceted and sustained environmental justice program was supplemented with support of ARC's Transportation Equity Advisory Group, which includes members from environmental justice communities.

The robust engagement program used during the development of The Atlanta Region's Plan included a variety of techniques which sought to match various stakeholders with the best venue to seek, discuss and gather input. The range of techniques varied from the use of direct conversation to large group meetings. The goal of the techniques was to have meaningful two-way dialogue on issues and potential solutions on a continuous basis throughout the planning timeframe.

Specific techniques used for stakeholder and public participation included, but were not limited to:

- ARC Board and Committee meetings and mini-retreats
- Workshops
- Demonstration projects
- Online surveys
- Discussion forums/panels
- Stakeholder group discussions
- Telephone polls
- Open houses
- Meeting-in-Box style dinner parties

Information on The Atlanta Region's Plan was distributed in many formats:

- The Atlanta Region's Plan website (primary vehicle for information distribution)
- Printed brochures and handouts
- Large infographic style display boards
- The Atlanta Region's Plan Policy Framework
- Broadcast conversations
- Media outreach
- Presentations
- Face to face discussions with staff planners and citizens

The official public review and comment period for the draft of the Atlanta Region’s Plan Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), draft FY 2020-2025 Atlanta Region Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the draft Conformity Determination Report (CDR) opened on November 11 and closed on December 13, 2019. Public comments were received in writing via email or mail, over telephone, and orally at a public hearing scheduled during the regularly scheduled Transportation and Air Quality Committee meeting on November 14, 2019 at 10:30 am, as well as other regularly held technical, policy, and ARC Board committee meetings.

A formal legal notice was posted in the Fulton County Daily Report, the Spanish language paper, Mundo Hispanico, and on ARC’s website. Notice of the official public comment period was also emailed to ARC’s transportation specific listservs, and was included in ARC e-newsletters, blogs, and social media. Additionally media advisories and press releases were shared to local tv, radio, and newspaper outlets.

A highlight of key and targeted engagement activities to support The Atlanta Region’s Plan participation process is described below, with much further detail in Appendix (K). More specific information on the outreach conducted for updating the RTP element is included, along with a report detailing the 660+ comments and responses provided during the official review period.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES SINCE 2016

During the development of The 2016 Atlanta Region’s Plan, ARC incorporated more than 25,000 interactions with regional stakeholders through a series of online and telephone surveys, discussion groups, large-scale forums, and more. This feedback continued to inform the development of the 2020 TARP Update. In addition, ARC continued to engage stakeholders through various activities including summits, leadership panels, workshops, committee meetings, advisory groups, ongoing program and more. A high-level listing of key outreach activities follows, along with more detailed description of a Future Focus targeted outreach program.

KEY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES TIMELINE (2016 - 2019)

In addition to regularly held committee, task force, and advisory meetings, as well as close coordination with local and regional communities, ARC hosted the following targeted engagement efforts:

2016

- Regional Active Transportation Summits
- SHRP2 Future Exploratory Scenario Workshops
- Millennials Advisory Panel
- Updates to Atlanta Region’s Plan website

2017

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- ConnectATL Technology Summit
- Regional Active Transportation Summits
- Freight Planning Workshops
- CATLyst Economic Strategy Development
- SHRP2 Future Exploratory Scenario Workshops
- Transportation Equity Advisory Group
- Global Atlanta Advisory Panel
- Managed Lanes Investment Open Houses

2018

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- Civic Dinners on Mobility, Livability, and other policy issue areas
- Transportation Equity Advisory Group
- ConnectATL Technology Summit & Quarterlies
- Intelligent Transportation Systems & System Management Stakeholder Engagement
- ARC Community Engagement Regional Citizen Survey
- ARC Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Plan Development

2019 Jan-Mar

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- Joint policy committee meeting – Transportation & Air Quality Committee and Community Resources Committee
- Local jurisdiction meetings
- Internal working groups for plan development and coordination
- Transportation Camp South focus group with grad students/entrepreneurs

2019 Apr-Jun

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- Regional Community Engagement Plan Update (transportation resident guides)
- Resilience story map and crowd-sourcing
- Future Focus tool outreach (board, youth, focus groups, online survey, etc.)
- Online tool promotion: www.futurefocusatl.org
- Special features on ARC and partner social media and What's Next ATL site/podcasts
- Outreach to local media
- Civic Dinner Future Focus launch party

2019 Jul-Sept

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- June/July stakeholder coordination RTP projects
- ConnectATL quarterly/ITS/TSMO workshops
- Civic Dinner Future Focus partnership events and parties
- Future Focus tool outreach (board, youth, focus groups, online survey, etc.)
- Online tool promotion: www.futurefocusatl.org
- Special features on ARC and partner social media and What's Next ATL site/podcasts
- Outreach to local media

2019 Sept-Dec

- Updates to Atlanta Region's Plan website
- Pop Up Open House - public meetings – a series of 6 meetings throughout the region featuring project list, high level planning information, interactive living infographics, and a gallery of exhibits
- In person community meetings
- Civic Dinner Future Focus partnership events and parties
- Future Focus tool outreach (board, youth, focus groups, online survey, etc.)
- Online tool promotion – www.futurefocusatl.org
- Special features on ARC and partner social media and What's Next ATL site/podcasts
- Outreach to local media
- Official public review period, November 11 – December 13
- TARP 2020 Update Public Hearing – November 14

TARGETED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

WHAT WILL THE YEAR 2050 BE LIKE?

FUTURE FOCUS ATL – HOST, PLAY, LAUGH, VISIT

Since the adoption of the 2016 Atlanta Region's Plan, ARC began a concerted effort to explore the potential impacts of changing and advancing technology on the regions infrastructure and communities. As the 2020 Atlanta Region's Plan began to explore these themes, ARC conducted a targeted community engagement effort to bring the public into the dialogue and to hear their perspective on the direction they wish the Atlanta region to move towards.

This effort, branded "Future Focus ATL" asked regional residents to "Imagine the year 2050". ARC asked stakeholders a series of thought provoking questions:

- What do you think metro Atlanta will be like three decades from now?
- Will advanced technology (self-driving cars and other gizmos yet to be invented) bring solutions to age-old problems? Or will today's challenges only grow as the years pass, leaving us in crisis?

Reflecting on these questions will help local leaders, planners, and regional communities to look decades ahead in order make smart decisions and investments today.

In response, ARC put together an innovative outreach program that features several ways to get involved in the Atlanta Region's Plan update:

- HOST or attend a Future Focus-themed Civic Dinner: dig into a structured discussion about the region's future with 6-10 people over a meal. Raise a glass to the future, whatever may come. Salud!
- PLAY Future Focus ATL online game: an interactive online game exploring nine big trends that a panel of national experts convened by ARC say will impact the future – things like environmental change and “smart” infrastructure – and making choices about where the region is headed. Based on individual answers to the game, players are navigated to one of four alternate 2050 scenarios, kind of like those Choose Your Own Adventure books from childhood.
- LAUGH along with the Dad's Garage teen improv group, which will perform a show that dares to envision metro Atlanta in 2050, when these fresh-faced teens will squarely be in middle age. So, why does this matter?
- VISIT a pop-up open house: attend an immersive, interactive, planning themed gallery highlighting projects and plans from The Atlanta Region's Plan. Residents were able to review and provide feedback on the Atlanta Region's Plan update, including a list of proposed transportation projects.

Feedback from each of these activities was compiled to help regional leaders and planners understand the kind of future that residents think we'll face, as well as their biggest concerns – input that's critical to supporting this 2020 update to the long-range plan.

EQUITY ANALYSES

Equity is important to ARC. We know that a diversity of safe and efficient transportation options is essential to provide residents with improved job access, especially higher income jobs; access to essential services such as hospitals, educational facilities, grocery stores, commercial centers, and greenspace; as well as other opportunities needed to maintain a high quality of life. We also know that policies, structure, and systems have sustained and contributed to inequities in the Atlanta region. ARC recognizes that the Atlanta region must be a place where all people have equitable opportunities to thrive. This section details the “upstream” policies, practices, and structures related to transportation that ARC has influenced in an effort to create more equitable outcomes.

QUANTITATIVE EQUITY ANALYSIS

Federal guidance, such as Environmental Justice and Title VI, protects specific populations and requires planning organizations to address disproportionately high health or environmental burdens affecting these communities. As a first step in equity planning, federal guidance advises identifying where specific populations live. ARC maintains two equity analyses – the Protected Classes Model and the Environmental Justice Model.

THE PROTECTED CLASSES MODEL

This model analyzes concentrations of the nine populations protected under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and considered within the Executive Order on Environmental Justice (1994). Those populations are:

- Ethnic minority
- Female
- Foreign born
- Limited English proficiency
- Low-income
- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- Racial minority
- Youth

Additional considerations were added based on FHWA’s Environmental Justice recommendations (2017), FTA’s Environmental Justice policy guidance (2012), and FTA’s Title VI requirements and guidelines (2012). The results indicate population concentrations relative to the region. ARC uses the results of the analysis to demonstrate compliance with this guidance and demonstrate fair treatment of those population groups.

LEARN MORE:

- [Regional Equity and Inclusion Page](#)

THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MODEL

ARC examines racial minority, ethnic minority, and low-income populations in an analysis distinct from all federally protected classes because these three inputs are considered indicators of the greatest inequality in the Atlanta region. ARC previously analyzed these three inputs and referred to the results as Equitable Target Areas (ETA). The environmental justice (EJ) model supplants the ETA index methodology and nomenclature.

The results of the EJ model guide regional transportation and land use planning investments. In particular, the ARC TIP Project Evaluation Framework utilizes the results of this analysis to score and rank proposed projects. The regional analysis results are not the end-all for identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects, but rather one tool to leverage in our regional environmental justice efforts. This technical perspective is further refined and calibrated by qualitative knowledge, community engagement, and policy and program development.

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

The Transportation Equity Advisory Group (TEAG) was created to connect equity advocates with transportation planners and agencies from around the region so that they (equity advocates, transportation planners, and agencies) will all be able to better understand and influence transportation planning process and outcomes while being a voice for the needs of the most disenfranchised. The goal of TEAG is:

To create a more balanced ecosystem with representation from groups throughout the region to providing space for advocates, community leaders, and ARC staff to come together and learn from each other.

TEAG envisions an Atlanta region where:

- There is a transportation system that is efficient, accessible, and equitable;
- There are equity strategies that improve outcomes for the most disenfranchised people in our region;
- And the region's disenfranchised populations are an asset who bring their talents and skills to the region.

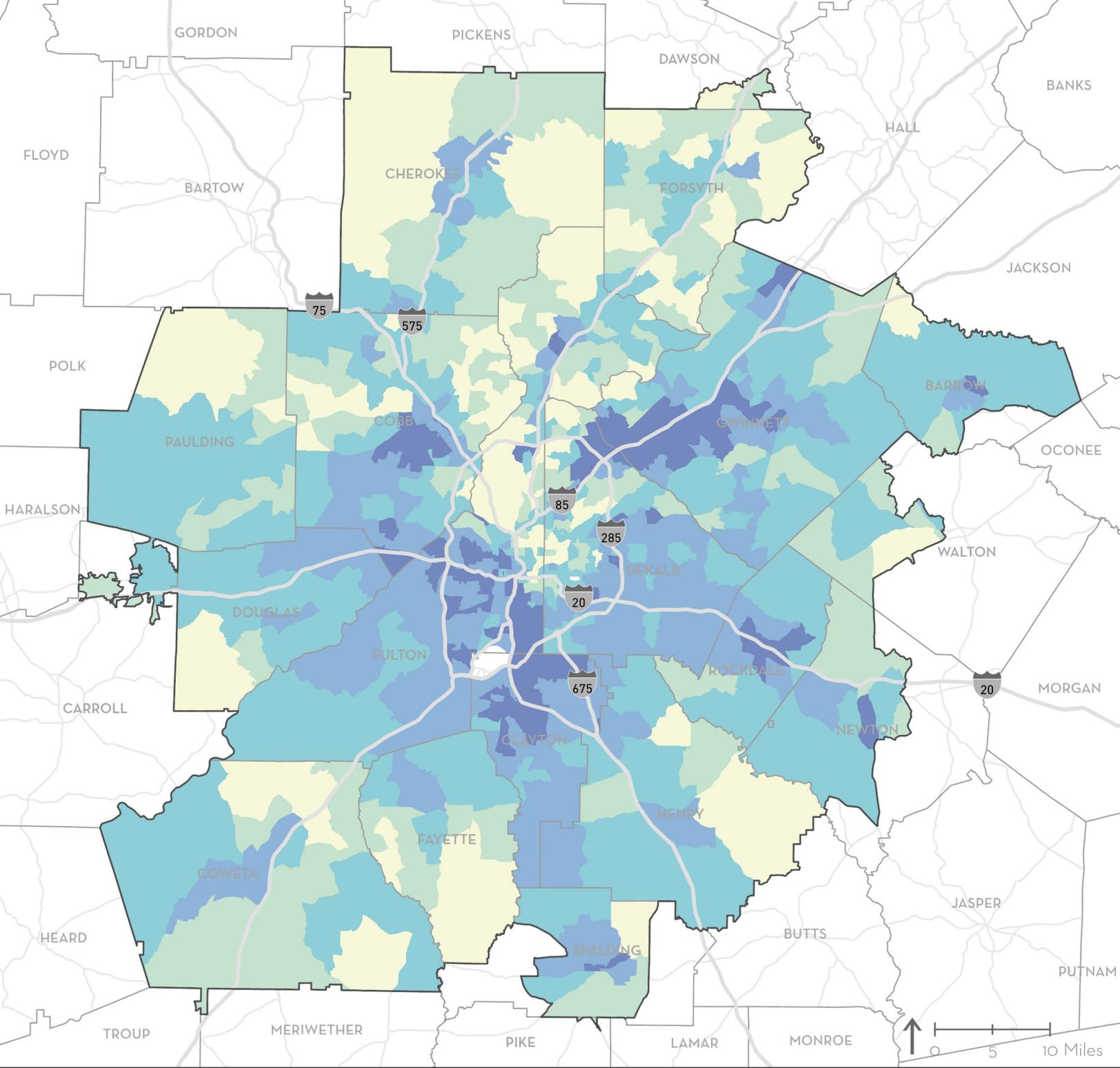
Since first convening in 2018, TEAG has already shifted the engagement and planning process of the Atlanta Regional Commission. The advisory members consistently generate ideas and work tasks based on their expertise and priorities. ARC staff have been able to respond to these thoughts and questions via additional research and refinement of regional planning processes.

In particular, TEAG has influenced:

- How ARC defines equity
- How the definition of equity is manifested in ARC's quantitative analyses
- How DASH displays and relays equity information in approachable terms
- The ARC Transportation Community Engagement Modules
- How projects are evaluated in the TIP Project Evaluation Framework criteria, moving away from a binary measure to a more granular measure
- How crash data is reported in ARC's Plans, specifically disaggregating by race and age in *Safe Streets for Walking and Bicycling*

TEAG has also provided input on:

- The engagement tool for ARC's Resilience and Durability Project
- The RTP transit project list
- How to measure benefits and burdens of transportation projects at the local-scale
- ARC's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise procurement requirements
- Future work tasks for ARC staff, including membership expansion and engagement and developing stronger connections with our planning partners at GDOT



MAP 12: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MODEL

Legend

Concentration of Racial Minorities, Ethnic Minorities, and Low-Income Populations

Least Concentrated



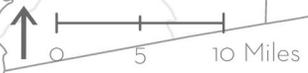
Most Concentrated

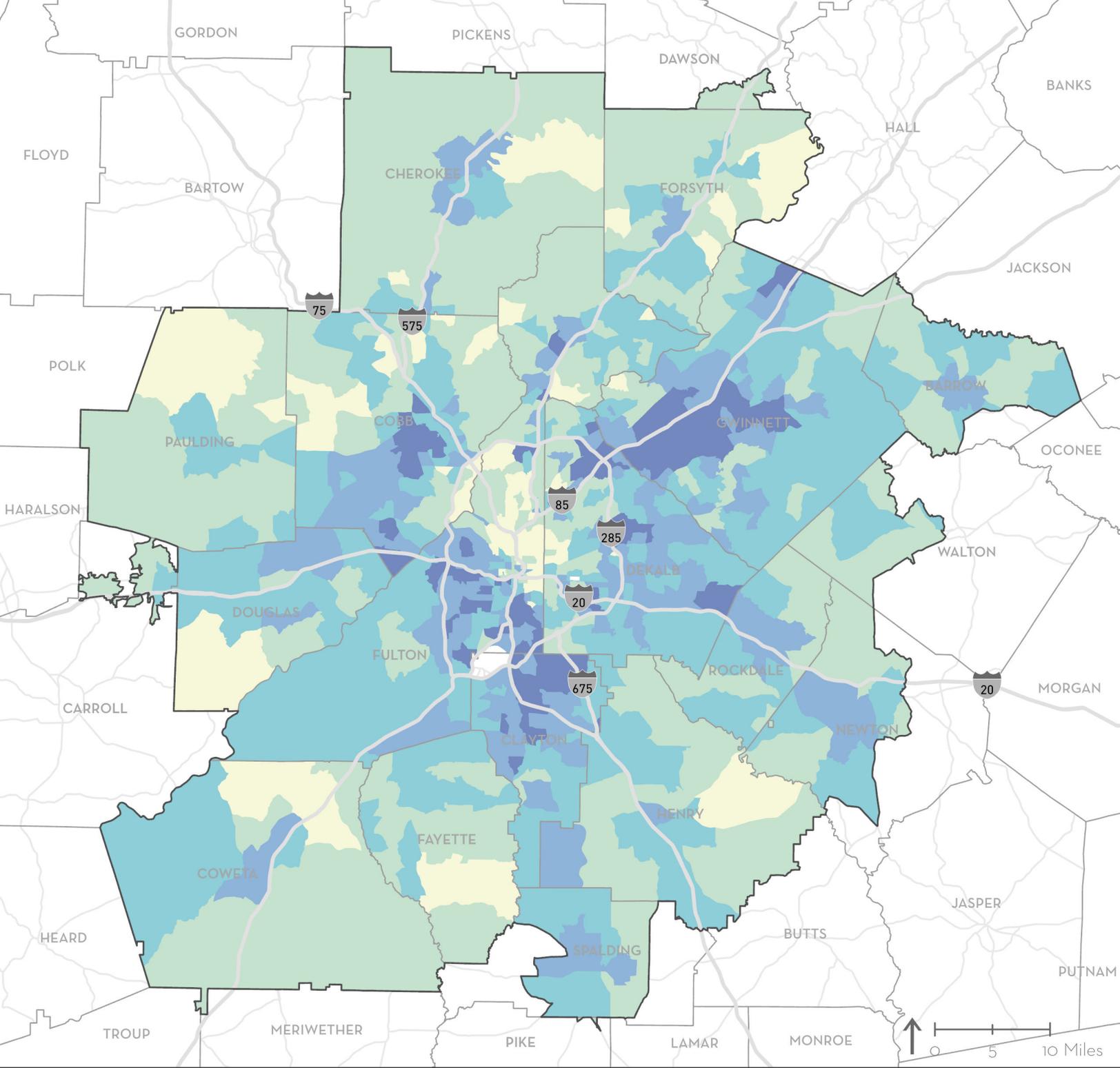
Major Roads

Expressways

Counties

MPO Boundary





MAP 13: PROTECTED CLASSES MODEL

Legend

Concentration of Protected Classes

