



ARC's Regional Assessment will provide the region with a current snapshot of issues and opportunities around the region. From May to June 2009 ARC convened over thirty meetings of local planners and other local staff from around the Atlanta region. All twenty counties in ARC's forecast area were included. Input from jurisdictions that participated in these meetings will be critical to developing initial small-area forecasts for households and employment that are used in estimating the long-term travel needs of the region. These meetings were also used to catalog and understand current and future local infrastructure and development challenges. The following are the major findings from this initial outreach:

- Construction around the region has basically stopped.
- The current downturn in residential construction has impacted all parts of the region – Many communities are dealing with the challenges of 'dead' subdivisions.
 - Shrinking local government budgets are compounding these problems.
 - New retail and office buildings have begun to struggle around the region as well.
- ARC's Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM) provides a reasonable starting point for understanding current and future densities in many areas around the region.
 - However, actual housing densities in many of the suburban and exurban parts of the region are overestimated by the UGPM.
- Very few communities are actively seeking or willing to accept the most intense types of residential development (e.g. more than 40 dwelling units per acre).
 - Some jurisdictions are not currently willing to approve any multi-family developments in their areas.
- Age-targeted developments have become a primary development type that local governments are comfortable with approving (typically at densities similar to standard multi-family developments).
 - Local planners expressed some concern that this product may already be overbuilt.
- Redevelopment of existing retail and commercial areas is a major focal point of local plans and policies. Many local governments were expecting redevelopment to become more of the norm prior to the current economic struggles.
- Hospital and higher-education campuses are often key components to the establishment or strengthening of suburban activity centers.
- Expected residential densities in exurban (and rural suburban) counties are extremely low – Overall infrastructure strategies do not suggest investment that would support any other development model.
- There are significant numbers of speculative, large warehouse and distribution facilities in the region that are currently vacant.
- In isolation, anticipated development patterns in most counties make intuitive sense.
 - However, there are several areas that would benefit from multi-jurisdictional planning
 - Some local development patterns are likely to be influenced by the actions of adjacent local governments.
- Overall there was less demand than expected for new, major roadway investments
- However, many communities expressed interest in the region investing in rail transit.
 - Important for local redevelopment efforts.
 - There is an ongoing struggle to promote transit-supportive densities without assurance of investment and few examples of current densities that warrant upgraded transit service.