

## Responses to PLAN 2040 Winter 2010 Survey (January – March, 2010)

1. *Some reports indicate that there will be many more older adults in the Atlanta area over the next 30 years, leading to smaller household sizes. This will result in an increasing need for apartments, condos and townhomes being built in metro Atlanta. What is your opinion of more emphasis being put on planning for and around these multi-unit dwellings, such as changing zoning laws to allow more of these type of dwellings?*

63% Approve  
23% Somewhat approve  
3% Somewhat disapprove  
6% Disapprove  
6% No opinion/undecided

- Atlanta needs high-density development, and if there is adequate transit options planned around high-development, people are afforded more livable communities.
- I would like to see the zoning focus more on mixed-use rather than just high-density multi-unit. This would be a better solution to provide services that are available via accessible routes from multi-unit housing.
- I approve as long as these developments are not all age restrictive. Seniors should be integrated into the community as a whole. Also, please make sure these developments are walkable.
- I support building up instead of out and having a minimal environmental impact. A high concentration of condos or townhomes is much better than individual houses that would take up a tremendous amount of land. Making these areas pedestrian-friendly, and not just appearing to be pedestrian-friendly, is ideal.
- Even without a growing population of seniors, the Atlanta area must have more higher density multi-unit development. For far too long, we have concerned ourselves by building outward, encroaching further and further on rural areas. This method of growth is unsustainable. As for zoning laws, they are largely antiquated and Corbusian and should be changed. We must further integrate our communities by combining higher density mixed-use development with transit and transportation infrastructure.
- Smart growth is necessary for Atlanta to regain its footing as a power-player city. If there is going to be a need for such housing, it should be built, however, it should be built in areas where it is mixed with other kinds of housing, as well as retail and green spaces.
- We should put more emphasis on flexible housing types, rather than narrow market niches. An example would be to make incentives for elevators in townhomes, so they could continue to serve residents that have difficulty climbing stairs. "Elderly" people in their 60's may rarely need this, but people in their 80s will often need it. I've seen townhomes that have elevator shafts that are used as closet space until such time as an elevator is needed. I've been told it takes about \$20K to install an elevator. Elevators could even make it easier to convert a big single unit townhome into a multiple unit. Attention to details like this will make a lot of difference.

- We have way too many apartment, townhomes, and condo communities in the city. Need to invest in more neighborhood (homes) living. More people are moving into the city and Atlanta does not have enough viable cost effective options for people of all tax brackets.
- I would be very interested in downsizing from my detached single-family home to a condominium, but prefer to stay in the northeastern suburbs. The availability of condominium housing in the more suburban metro counties seems minimal.

2. *Metro Atlanta's high traffic congestion level may be causing potential business and industry to locate in other areas of the country. What is most the important thing include in a congestion relief strategy for the region?*

- 3% Special lanes for buses
- 57% Trains
- 6% Interstate toll lanes for cars
- 6% Improved traffic management, including traffic signals
- 26% More bike lanes, sidewalks and transit options
- 0% General bus service
- 3% Nothing needs to be done
- 0% No opinion/undecided

- Atlanta is falling behind. Dallas and Charlotte are spending millions on rail-based transportation projects while Atlanta wants to a road underneath the city. Where do you think the jobs will go? Atlanta is also missing out on an opportunity to spur transit oriented development. Time and time again cities that invest in rail-based transit options reap the benefits of development near rail development. Moreover, why would any business want to relocate to a city that is filled with traffic and pollution? Creating a healthy, livable city will not only benefit citizens of Atl, but it will also create an attractive business climate.
- We are one of the few large metro areas with no commuter rail. Many people are traveling to the same business centers with no rail option.
- A comprehensive plan is necessary. Making public transportation available to the communities around Atlanta will help the congestion. Most importantly, promoting concentrated growth inside Atlanta and nearby cities and around public transportation portals will help prevent a further mess. The more cars taken off the road the better. Bike lanes and sidewalks are ideal yet mostly only realistic in the more concentrated areas.
- For the Atlanta region to move forward we must make a commitment to commuter rail and other transit options. If we fail to do this, we will have no place in the modern economy. Listen up ARC, we are sick and tired of traffic. More lanes, toll or otherwise, compounds our already massive problem. More interstate lanes are a completely futile waste of our tax dollars. We must have innovative solutions to our traffic problems, including, but not limited to: commuter rail, light rail, regional high speed rail, urban streetcars, efficient arterial street network (Not Interstates), and better sidewalks and dedicated bike lines.

- Through laws and codes companies should be incentivized to locate inside the city center. In order to so, schools, transit, and desirable housing must in place.
- I checked "improved traffic management" because I think it's underemphasized, not because it's necessarily more important than transit options. I think projects like the Beltline will be very important for intown Atlanta, and MARTA extension important for areas along the interstates, but traffic management and smarter use of existing roads will be important for other huge areas in the region where lots of people live.
- Shuttles, trains, and more van pools made available for all areas in the Atlanta Metro Area. This will reduce the amount of people on the roads. Also charging a monthly fee to those that do not car pool or use public transportation.
- NO MORE ROADS!
- Connecting the outlying counties to MARTA rail is critical.
- How about build more roads or expand them? Why is that not an answer? Looks like you only included the answers you liked and left out the typical answers.
- It wasn't an option, but developing in dense nodes where multiple land uses (homes, work, services) are within walking/biking/bus circulator distance is paramount.

3. *The money available for funding future transportation projects has been declining. In your opinion, which funding strategy would be best to address this problem?*

- 15% Finding more private sources of funding
- 18% Limiting funding to a few major transportation projects
- 41% Raising more money through a transportation sales tax, with specific projects approved by public referendum
- 24% Raise state and federal gasoline tax
- 0% No change is needed
- 3% No opinion/undecided

- Get away from the fuel tax and go to a VMT-based system.
- Raising taxes in general would be good (whether sales tax or state/federal gas tax).
- No one like taxes, but GA spends nothing on transportation compared to other states. It's embarrassing that GA doesn't give MARTA one penny and that it doesn't even have a source of funding dedicated to transit projects. Raising the gas tax will do nothing to help Atlanta's transportation woes because the GA Constitution does not allow money from the motor fuel tax to go to anything but roads and bridges. Georgia's love affair with roads and bridges is exactly what got us here in the first place.
- Raising taxes provides revenue for improvements but also provides an incentive to carpool, teleworking, and/or use alternative forms of transit.
- I am very skeptical about using private sources of funding. Toll roads are themselves a tax. Raising gasoline taxes is a sensitive issue for consumers. Limiting funding to a few major projects is irresponsible. A public referendum seems to have the best luck for success.

- We must raise our gas tax and create a constitutional amendment to allow those funds to be used for transit. However, this will not nearly raise enough money to solve our problems. We should impose fees on businesses with over 100 parking spaces, excluding civic/government/religious institutions, and dedicate this money towards building a modern transportation network. We should also look into fees on 18-wheelers. They destroy our roads, clog I-285, and are nearly completely unnecessary due to our advanced freight network.
- If the result of higher taxes was tangible and understood by Atlantans, I don't believe they would disapprove of higher taxes. The higher price of gasoline would also decrease its affordability, creating a greater need for public transit, biking, and pedestrian transportation, all good things.
- For those who do not show proof of carpooling, public transportation, etc a monthly fee should be applied to force more people to drive or ride with someone and not by themselves. This would raise money as well as get more people to ride with someone.
- This was also not an option, but user fees! Tolls, higher gas tax, or other methods to assure that those that use the transportation network more pay more. Seems to make a lot of sense to me...

4. *What is your opinion of your local government having development policies encouraging communities and neighborhoods to have a variety of nearby choices for housing, transportation, shopping and other services?*

- 83% Approve
- 9% Somewhat approve
- 3% Somewhat disapprove
- 3% Disapprove
- 3% No opinion/undecided

- More local power, less state power.
- I don't see any problem with the promotion of diverse communities. Punishing those that don't is probably not a good idea.
- Governments should do all within their power to advance the cities, counties, and districts they represent. This includes providing incentives for better transit infrastructure and mixed use development.
- Zoning should not only allow but encourage multi-use neighborhoods with a variety of options in housing, retail, commercial spaces as well as transportation options.
- If we want to have people build loyalty to a community, it will have to be possible to stay there through different stages of life and different financial circumstances.

5. *Some studies indicate that it may be too costly for most of the future growth of metro Atlanta to occur in the outlying suburbs, which may too far from jobs, medical care and*

*other essential services. What is your opinion of planning for more growth to occur in more concentrated urban areas?*

- 66% Approve
- 17% Somewhat approve
- 9% Somewhat disapprove
- 3% Disapprove
- 6% No opinion/undecided

- Atlanta has become the epitome of sprawl. We don't need more. We already have way too much traffic and way too much air pollution.
- A higher concentration of growth tends to signify a lesser impact on the environment. Greenspace and pedestrian-friendly planning is absolutely necessary to attract and sustain the growth.
- Concentrating our growth in our urban core is the only viable solution. One day, we will look back upon our endless sprawl and realize what a tremendous waste of resources we have committed to it. Of course we should concentrate our growth in urban areas, the entire idea of suburbs, exurbs, Edge Cities, etc., has been thoroughly proven unsustainable. I have seen the pastures and woods of my childhood being destroyed for too long. I love Atlanta, and am devoted to its best interests, however I live 50 miles away. It is incomprehensible to me that anyone would desire to live so far from their jobs. We need to keep Atlanta in Atlanta, I'm sick of sprawl eating away at my community.
- It is necessary! It should be incentivized.
- This goes beyond just planning for infrastructure- issues of public safety, school quality, and perception that a residence is a good investment have to be dealt with.
- Outlying suburbs wouldnt be an issue if again other transportation options were made available.
- The Atlanta metro areas has been starved since the inception of MARTA for an agency that is smart and uses predictable analysis regarding population, where people work, where business are moving there offices. Has anyone notice the number of business relocating to Alpharetta? Why hasn't MARTA made a long term plan or vision to help that shift? Complete lack of planning. But you also need commuter rails NORTH up 75 and 85 to N. DeKalb/Gwinnett and Cobb/Bartow counties. MARTA should no longer be left up to the voters - as you see the longer your wait, the more of an investment you have to make to get things right - net present value.
- I generally agree, however the growth that will occur in suburban counties should be geographically concentrated, self-sustaining and transit oriented.
- You are leading the reader by feeding them information about it being too costly.

6. *Forecasters expect the Atlanta metro area to grow by 3.2 million people by the year 2040. What area would be best to accommodate the housing needs of this expected population growth?*

- 12% Inside I-285
- 59% Around public transportation stations
- 24% Around the centers of cities anywhere in the metro region

0% No change is needed  
6% No opinion/undecided

- Along Interstate corridors, within town centers and activity centers, and around mass transit stations.
- Atlanta has one of the lowest population densities in the country and we wonder why traffic is so terrible.
- Because they built transit stations in illogical locations, we should as planners endeavor to build high-density housing and/or mixed-use developments around these stations.
- Public transit gives people options. Give business options too. That will reduce traffic on the roads.
- Public transit, mainly train lines need to be expanded and around large transit stations should be large, concentrated areas of mixed-use development providing numerous types of housing.
- Ideally, the growth in dwelling units would be close enough to be serviced by transit, with all kinds of creative housing suitable to all phases of life.
- Having multiple urban centers would allow people to live, shop, work, and provide recreation in a concentrated area where they would not have to travel long distances. Not just within the perimeter, but also in suburban communities in surrounding counties.

7. *What is your opinion of having a metro area priority to protecting greenspace; for example, local governments generating revenue locally for the acquisition of parks and other protected land?*

77% Approve  
17% Somewhat approve  
3% Somewhat disapprove  
0% Disapprove  
3% No opinion/undecided

- Isn't this already in place?
- Greenspace will make the city more livable and thus, more attractive to businesses.
- We should worry about our transportation network first. After that is fixed we can move on to other pressing issues like greenspace.
- I think this is fine unless the electorate sees that as a symptom of a government unresponsive to their immediate needs.
- Yes, but greenspace acquisition should be based upon a regional master plan, so that it is not scattered tracts purchased for reasons unrelated to the plan.

8. *Some studies and reports suggest that new schools are built on the least expensive tracks of land. This can lead to population growth farther away from the areas where people must travel to get work, and to have access to medical care and other essential services. What is your opinion of this trend?*

7% Approve  
17% Somewhat approve  
20% Somewhat disapprove  
43% Disapprove  
11% No opinion/undecided

- Tough question, schools are expensive and have declining revenues if costs and taxes will increase then no it should not be supported.
- Stupid studies/reports and poorly worded #8 question/answers. It is not a trend, so I can't approve or disapprove of it.
- I am not sure this is true, since the schools seem to acquire land through eminent domain quite often; or at least strong-arming.
- Schools need to be integrated into communities so that children can walk to school.
- Building schools on inexpensive land means less tax money used for the purchase. Schools are still built within an area where growth have already occurred. It might spur further housing growth in a particular area but it doesn't seem to be that significant of a factor.
- Schools should be centrally located, within walking distance of most homes. Raise my taxes if you need to.
- The government should subsidize the cost to make it not only affordable, but more cost effective for school to be built within the urban center.
- Schools, especially high schools, need very large areas to function in, mainly because of parking and sports facilities. Areas of this size will seldom be affordable or even available in densely inhabited areas. Schools will have to be done differently, with structured parking, multistory buildings and less emphasis on sports, if they are to fit in already developed areas. Shopping centers and office parks could be redeveloped into schools.

9. *Water resources for the metro area continue to dominate the news, especially concerning the possibly of getting less water from Lake Lanier in future. Do you think the metro area should have strong water conservation measures in place for current and future housing and business development?*

94% Yes  
3% No  
3% No opinion/undecided

- 'some' water conservation measures, strong is a little 'strongly' worded, again #9 a poorly worded question/answers
- We have historically had several droughts; there is no reason to think that they will end regardless of the water wars. We should at least be guaranteed the water required for a water conservation minded society.
- Water conservation is part of the answer but new reservoirs are needed similar to the way Dallas funded 11 reservoirs 20 to 30 years ago and is now reaping the benefits and is outpacing Atlanta

growthwise. When studied, the legal argument for tapping into the Tennessee River is actually pretty sound, as desperate and obscure as it sounds.

- We can save water far more cheaply through conservation than would be generated from needless, expensive new reservoirs. However, often these efforts are focused on consumptive use. This is a flawed strategy because consumptive use has a basically neutral impact on our water resources. Instead of focusing on this, we must focus on golf courses, lawns, and other wasteful non-consumptive uses of water.
- Yes, that's pretty obvious. Wastewater re-use is something that may be in our future.

*10. Recent projections for the metro Atlanta area show that there will be a large increase of people over the age of 60 over the next decade. What is your opinion of the idea of communities providing access to basic needs and services that allow an individual to stay in their community throughout their lifetime?*

63% Strongly support  
26% Support  
0% Do not support  
3% Strongly do not support  
9% No opinion/undecided

- It depends on how this access is created. Will it be mass expansion of public transit that will cost communities millions of additional dollars to support or allowing commercial uses in residential areas, which may cause commercial sprawl. It all depends on the program not the idea.
- Another poorly worded question, communities provide the access? Is that meaning free transportation for anywhere the elderly need to go?
- These people have a lot to offer a community. Why shouldn't we want to encourage them to stay here?
- As opposed to entering a housing community for the elderly somewhere else? I do support having options available for those 60 and over in their own communities.
- Your answers are not in 'ranked' order for this question. That confuses readers and skews the results.

*11. Thank you so much for taking your time to consider our questions. Please stay in touch with ARC as we proceed with this planning process and add your thoughts whenever you can. If you can have any further thoughts you would like to share with us now, please feel free to do so below.*

- Give me a call to join the team in helping to make Atlanta more livable.
- Transportation and transportation funding are the BIGGEST issues facing metro Atlanta. We don't need more roads, we need transit. Every year Atl congestion costs the city millions. Every year Atl has to spend millions on the direct and indirect effects of car accidents. Every year people die of drunk



driving. Every year Atl gets more bad press about its air quality (this year Forbes named Atlanta the most toxic city in america ). Unfortunately, every year nothing changes.

- I feel a commuter train that follows I-75 up to Chattanooga, TN would help lessen the congested traffic in Atlanta and Chattanooga alike. Both cities are struggling to keep up with the growing population and the roads to meet the population demand. Further, both cities would benefit from the commuter train as business men and women could readily travel between the two cities. The interstate is three lanes wide in both directions and remains congested at times, illustrating the high volume of commuters who would benefit from such a development.
- I wish I had the funds to provide every city official and elected official a copy of The Smart Growth Manual. It is an excellent book that takes an intelligent and well-rounded approach to smart growth. It provides a step-by-step system for development within urban centers.
- Get moving now on expanding MARTA, the longer you wait, the higher the price tag, and your residents will not be happy.
- It's clear you are pushing for everyone to live in a condo inside 285.