



# WHAT IS REGIONAL FORECASTING FOR POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT?

## What is regional forecasting?

The Atlanta region has been one of the fastest growing areas in the nation for decades. According to the latest ARC forecasts, it will continue to grow over the next 25 years. To accommodate this growth, ARC periodically develops future land use and transportation plans for the metro Atlanta area. These plans must be based on solid forecasts predicting the number of people and households to be expected, as well as where residents will live and work.

Regional forecasts are updated at the beginning of each long-range planning process to reflect the latest social and economic trends. These trends are quantified and entered into a computer forecasting model that studies the entire metro Atlanta system, linking land use, transportation and the economy.

## Why is regional forecasting important?

Regional land development and transportation plans constitute the basis for official regional policy. These long-range plans allocate where development and transportation resources should be provided, where funding will originate and what impacts the growth will have on air quality and the environment. The basis for this planning is the population and employment forecast.

In support of its long-range planning efforts, ARC forecasts future population and employment conditions as base data for these plans. Population and employment forecasts are updated by discussing future growth assumptions with local governments, private companies, economic forecasters and policy analysis developers.

Based on these projections, land use and transportation planners can make assumptions about where housing, business and transportation services should be located and what policies should be in place to make this happen. The probability of ARC's assumptions and its resulting forecasts are reviewed through a committee of economic advisors.

## WHAT IS PLAN 2040?

**PLAN 2040** is metro Atlanta's long-range planning process for land development and transportation needs through the year 2040. It will guide growth by addressing not only land use and transportation issues, but economic, environmental, housing and human services challenges, as well.



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## How is regional forecasting done?

ARC uses a two-step process to produce forecasts. Population and employment are first forecast for the region as a whole. A second set of models then distributes the regional forecast of jobs and people within local jurisdictions within the region.

The first step establishes area-wide control totals – the total number of jobs and people for the new 20-county planning area. This step assumes that certain groups, identified by race, gender and age, have similar birth, death and migration patterns. Based on historical patterns, employment trends in some industries are determined nationally, while others are determined locally. The number of people moving here is determined by the need to balance the forecast number of jobs with the population necessary to fill those jobs.

The second step takes the control totals and “allocates” the jobs and people to county and sub-county areas within the 20-county planning area.

## How can someone participate in developing Plan 2040?

Metro Atlanta residents can participate in ARC’s Plan 2040 activities in several ways:

- Regularly visit the Plan 2040 Web site at [www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040](http://www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040) for the latest information about the planning process. Check the “Get Involved” section of the site for discussions, meetings and other ways to share thoughts and ideas.
- Email comments to ARC at [plan2040@atlantaregional.com](mailto:plan2040@atlantaregional.com)
- Share ideas at ARC’s group page on LENS on Atlanta at [www.lensonatlanta.org](http://www.lensonatlanta.org)
- Call ARC with comments or questions:
  - 404. 463. 3272
  - TTY number is 404. 463. 3272

## Helpful links for more info

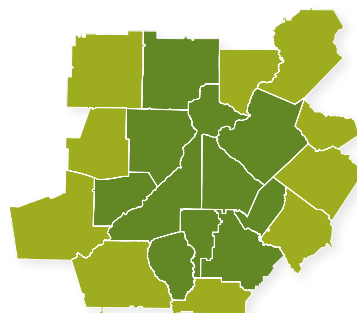
- [Latest Forecasts for Population and Employment](#)
- [Regional Snapshots](#)
- [Population and Housing Report: A Primer](#)
- [Cities and Towns: 2008 Yearbook of Growth and Change](#)
- [Population Estimates Methodology](#)

This document can be found on ARC’s Web site at [www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040](http://www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040). For assistance in viewing this document, contact [plan2040@atlantaregional.com](mailto:plan2040@atlantaregional.com) or 404.463.3272.



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40 COURTLAND STREET, NE  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303  
[ATLANTAREGIONAL.COM](http://ATLANTAREGIONAL.COM)



## WHAT IS THE ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION?

ARC is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the **10-county** metropolitan area. For transportation planning, ARC’s area of responsibility includes all or parts of **20 counties** and the City of Atlanta.