



UNDERSTANDING REGIONAL PLANNING

What is regional planning?

Changes in population, jobs and economic growth impact us all — regardless of where we live, work or recreate.

How do we deal with issues of traffic congestion, an aging population, a shrinking workforce, air quality and water quality across community and political boundaries?

The **Atlanta Regional Commission** (ARC) and its planning partners develop and track growth-related data in order to develop plans for metro Atlanta.

The process for accomplishing regional land use and transportation plans is a collaborative effort between local, state and regional agencies, as well as the community at large. Through regional collaboration, infrastructure and human service needs and strategies across city and county boundaries are anticipated and studied for impact. The outcomes of the plan are meant to provide people access to services required for a better quality of life — including education, healthcare and retail, to name a few.

Why regional planning?

On a regular basis, it is good for communities (both local and regional) to consider their current status and re-examine their goals. This helps them better determine where they want to be in the future, both economically and in terms of quality of life.

Regional plans help public agencies identify issues so they can determine policies and investment strategies to guide the future direction of their communities and the region. Even though different planning functions have different regional boundaries, joining together collectively helps individual jurisdictions develop policies targeted at the overall common good.

Planning in Georgia

While regional planning is critical to the health and continued prosperity of the Atlanta region, it is also required by law. The federal government requires a regional transportation plan to be in place before the region can receive transportation funds.

The **Georgia Planning Act** requires local governments to develop plans for their future and stipulates how their plans should be developed. Those plans are taken into account in the regional planning process.

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.



ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION



How are regional plans created?

City and county governments set local priorities based on the needs of their constituencies. However, the resulting policies may impact neighboring communities. When a regional plan takes local planning efforts into consideration, collective impacts can be measured and considered.

Regional planning includes:

- Assessing where the region is currently
- Determining a vision of the region's desired future
- Developing measures of progress toward the vision
- Developing different paths to achieve the vision and testing them
- Settling on a preferred path of action
- Developing policies to achieve that path
- Adopting the plan formally
- Evaluating periodically the progress made.

Throughout this process, public agencies are sharing planning data and ideas. They are also gathering input from citizens, community organizations, businesses, property owners and others. This input is considered in each step of regional plan development.

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 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
- Share ideas at ARC's group page on LENS on Atlanta at www.lensonatlanta.org
- Call ARC with comments or questions:
 - 404.463.3272
 - TTY number is 404.463.3272

Helpful links for more info

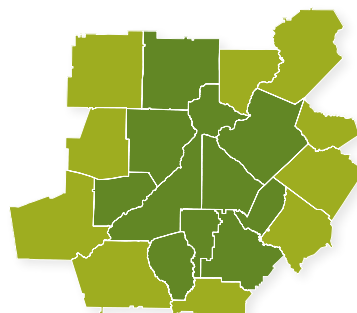
- [ARC's activities and planning initiatives](#)
- [National Association of Regional Councils](#)
- [Georgia Department of Community Affairs](#)
- [Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations](#)

This document can be found on ARC's Web site at www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040. For assistance in viewing this document, contact plan2040@atlantaregional.com or 404.463.3272.



ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

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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.