

# ***The Atlanta Journal-Constitution***

## Atlanta planners seek transit 'solutions'

DAILY ROUNDUP OF NEWS AND EVENTS FROM ACROSS METRO ATLANTA

By Eric Stirgus

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Atlanta planning officials want to encourage residents to get out of their cars and walk or take mass transit.

Their ideas include things like a streetcar or express bus service on busy thoroughfares like Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and Moreland Avenue.

"I think we've come up with some creative solutions for one of the problem areas for the city," said Planning and Community Development Commissioner Steve Cover. "These are realistic proposals. These are doable."

Officials are having four public hearings, starting today, to get last-minute advice from Atlantans before it goes to the City Council in October for approval.

The city spent \$1.25 million on the plan. City officials said \$1 million came from the Atlanta Regional Commission. The remainder came from impact fees.

### TRANSIT

City officials say 13 percent of Atlantans, 69,000 people, live within a 10-minute walk of bus or rail transportation.

The planners say they think that percentage will increase to 63.5 by 2030.

The ideas include extending MARTA west to I-285, building a bus rapid transit line from the Hamilton E. Holmes MARTA station to Fulton Industrial Boulevard and running streetcars along Peachtree Street.

Also considered are rail options in other parts of the city, such as Campbellton Road, Capitol Avenue and Ponce de Leon Avenue.

### STREETS

City officials propose adding 73 new streets and widening 22 roads. Most of the new streets will be extensions of current streets.

Officials say they envision widening Campbellton, Cascade and Huff roads and Cleveland Avenue.

The plan includes changes such as an off-ramp from I-285 to Greenbriar Mall.

At large City Councilwoman Mary Norwood suggests the city consider creating tunnels for pedestrians in some areas, noting that it's difficult to walk in places such as the Buckhead business district.

#### PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES

The plan includes adding 200 miles of bicycle lanes. The city would restripe existing streets and widen some lanes. New sidewalks also would be built.

#### FUNDING

City officials have not come up with a price tag.

MARTA officials say the construction cost for heavy rail, such as their East-West and North-South lines, is about \$215 million a mile.

They say light rail, such as trolley lines used in cities like Denver, costs about \$75 million per mile.

MARTA hopes to get some money from state transportation officials and have suggested other funding sources, such as a parking surcharge, a gasoline tax or impact fees.

#### MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings are 6-8 p.m.

Today: Peachtree Road United Methodist Church, 3180 Peachtree Road N.W.

Tuesday: Cascade United Methodist Church, 3144 Cascade Road S.W., Room 204

Sept. 16: Trolley Barn, 963 Edgewood Ave. N.E.

Sept. 18: City Hall, Old City Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave. S.W.

#### INFORMATION

[www.connectatlantaplan.com](http://www.connectatlantaplan.com) or 404-330-6800