



Board Recap – May 2021

### **ARC Board Approves New Citizen Members**

The ARC Board approved the following citizen members to serve on the ARC Board:

- Murphy Talmadge, Citizen District 1 (portions of DeKalb/Henry)
- Alisha Sanders, Citizen District 6 (portions of DeKalb/Gwinnett/Rockdale)
- Lynette Howard, Citizen District 10 (portions of DeKalb/Gwinnett)

### **Adoption of Open Records Policy and Appointment of Open Records Officer**

The ARC Board voted to approve an Open Records Policy for the agency and to appoint Brittany Zwald, staff legal counsel, as Open Records Officer, and Malika Reed Wilkins, Director of Strategic Relations, as Alternate Records Officer to act in the absence of the Open Records Officer. The policy creates a simplified document for ARC staff and the public to understand open records requirements.

- [Resolution and Issue Summary](#)

### **Regional Transit Safety Targets – First Read**

John Orr, Managing Director of ARC's Transportation & Mobility Access Group, presented a first read on an update to the Regional Transit Safety Performance Targets, which is federally required. The update considers four main factors: fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability. The update sets a range of safety performance targets for the following modes: fixed

route bus, demand response, commuter bus, light rail, and heavy rail. Final approval expected in July.

- Presentation: [Regional Transit Safety Performance Targets](#)

### **Atlanta Regional Demand Response Implementation Plan – First Read**

John Orr, Managing Director of ARC's Transportation & Mobility Access Group, presented a first read on the Atlanta Regional Demand Response Implementation Plan, which covers Human Services Transportation (HST). The goal of the federally required plan update is to develop a menu of local and regional tactics that will work in coordinated manner to improve mobility in the Atlanta region. The plan's key findings include: populations of those in need of services is increasing; lack of financial resources; lack of qualified drivers; and lack of opportunities to learn and gain assistance. Key recommendations include: establish consistent ADA eligibility and rider policies; better coordinate ADA transfers; integrate DRT into regional trip planning; regionally coordinate microtransit services; and sustain regional coordination and collaboration. Board adoption will be sought in July.

- Presentation: [Atlanta Regional Demand Response Plan](#)

### **Water Update: A Win in the Supreme Court, and What's Next**

Katherine Zitsch, Managing Director of ARC's Natural Resources Group, provided an overview of the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling in favor of Georgia in the Fla. v. Ga. water case. She noted that the ruling said Florida did not prove that Georgia's water consumption played more than a trivial role in the collapse of the oyster population in Apalachicola Bay. She also gave updates on the two cases still pending, in which various entities are suing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for how they manage multi-state water systems in Georgia, Alabama, and Florida.

- Presentation: [A Water Win](#)

### **Meeting the Needs of Older Adults During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Becky Kurtz, managing director of Aging & Independence Services, delivered a presentation about ARC's response to the pandemic to help older adults. Highlights include:

- Older adults in metro Atlanta saw a disproportionate number of deaths from COVID this past year.
- Through Empowerline, EmpowerlinePRO, social media and information counseling, ARC helped fill information needs.

- Social isolation was a problem during Covid. To connect people, ARC created a new service (one2one telephone reassurance program), shifted some services online (AmeriCorps Seniors educational presentations and Living Well workshops), and expanded its behavioral health coaching service to residents in designated low-income housing. ARC also shifted programming at senior centers to virtual and called clients for wellness checks.
- ARC distributed over 1 million meals in 2020; saw a 21% increase in meals distributed and 13% increase in clients served over 2019.
- Last, COVID has prompted much discussion on the need to promote home and community-based service options in our federal policies.
- Presentation: [Serving the Regions Older Residents During Covid-19](#)

### **Regional Snapshot: Growth in Older Population in Metro Atlanta**

Maria Sotnikova presented a [Regional Snapshot](#) that highlighted regional trends in the older population in metro Atlanta. Highlights include:

- The proportion of the population 65 and older has been increasing for decades in metro Atlanta. But the region is still relatively young compared to the rest of the state.
- The median age of metro Atlantans has been growing fast, faster than the nation and all metro peers except for Washington, DC. In 2020, the median age in metro Atlanta was 36.8; by 2050 it's expected to rise to 39.4.
- The 65+ age cohort will grow faster than all other age cohorts combined, growing by over 200% between 2015 and 2050.
- Life expectancy across metro Atlanta varies, depending on where people live. In metro Atlanta, zip codes tell a tale of inequity. People living just 7 miles away can have a gap in life expectancy of 23.8 years (30339 vs 30314). There are population-level factors that cause, contribute to or correlate with changes in population-level life expectancy.
- Over the next 5 years, ARC is implementing Live Beyond Expectations Regional Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to address these inequities in life expectancy.
- Presentation: [Regional Trends in Metro Atlanta's Older Adult Population](#)