



Regional Transportation
Community Engagement Plan

**A Resident's Guide to
Regional Transportation Planning**



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Did you ever wonder “Who decided to build this road here?” or “I would really love to see more sidewalks in my community, but I don’t know who to talk to?” or “Why isn’t there transit around here?”.....if so, then you’ve come to the right place!

Welcome to the Resident’s Guide to Transportation Planning for the Atlanta Metropolitan Region. This quick-reference guide provides an overview of how regional transportation planning works, who makes the decisions, and how you can participate.

Want to know more? This guide is part of a series developed by ARC to demystify the transportation planning process.

Here’s a list of all the guides – check them out!

- [A Resident’s Guide to Regional Transportation Planning](#)
- [A Guide to Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\) Basics](#)
- [Community Engagement: Values, Techniques and Process](#)

Federal law requires all metropolitan areas with populations greater than 50,000 people to designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop transportation plans for the region. It also requires that a Public Participation Plan be created that affords the public a reasonable opportunity to participate in and comment on transportation plans. This plan is intended to fulfill those requirements outlined in 23 Code of US Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.210 and 450.316. The content of this publication reflects the views of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Department of Transportation, State of Georgia, or the Federal Highway Administration. Additionally, as reflected in Section VI of the 2009 Atlanta Quad Party Agreement (Memorandum of Agreement for Transportation Planning Coordination and Cooperation in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area (MPA) between the Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority), this Public Participation Plan satisfies the region’s Program of Transit Projects (POP) public participation requirements for the Urbanized Area Formula Program required in Section 9 of the Federal Transit Act Title 49, U.S. Code Section 5307 (b)(1) through (7) for the Atlanta Regional Commission and transit operators within the MPO area (Cherokee Area Transit, Cobb Community Transit, Douglas County Rideshare, Gwinnett County Transit, Henry County Transit, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, Spalding County, and GRTA (Xpress)). It is the policy of the Atlanta Regional Commission that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any operation of the Atlanta Regional Commission as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes. Any questions or concerns about discrimination may be referred to the ARC Title VI Officer at bzwald@atlantaregional.org or 470.463.1494. Publication is prepared in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

The “Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan” for the Atlanta Metropolitan Region consists of the following modules:

- [Resident’s Guide to Regional Transportation Planning](#)
- [A Guide to Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\) Basics](#)
- [Community Engagement Values, Techniques and Process](#)

RELEVANT ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ARC	Atlanta Regional Commission
ATL	Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority
CAA	Clean Air Act
CDR	Conformity Determination Report
CEN	Community Engagement Network
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMS	Congestion Management System
CTP	Comprehensive Transportation Plans
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
DRI	Developments of Regional Impact
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPD	Environmental Protection Division
ETA	Equitable Target Areas
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GRTA	Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
HST	Human Services Transportation
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
LCI	Livable Centers Initiative
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MARTA	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
POP	Program of Projects
RC	Regional Commissions
RTC	Regional Transit Committee
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
SRTA	State Road and Tollway Authority
TAMG	Transportation Access and Mobility Group
TAQC	Transportation and Air Quality Committee
TCC	Transportation Coordinating Committee
TDM	Transportation Coordinating Committee
TMA	Transportation Demand Management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TOS	Transit Operators Subcommittee
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation

The Atlanta Regional Commission is Planning for Our Future

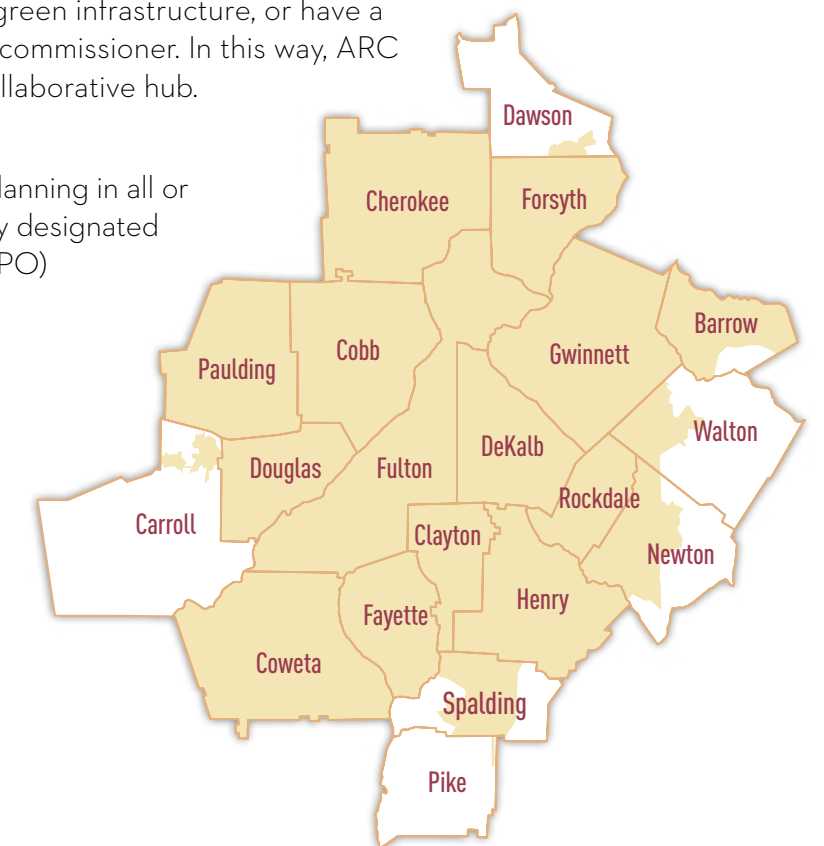
Whether you are zipping along an express lane on I-75, navigating a transfer at MARTA's Five Points Station, biking along the Atlanta Beltline, taking a morning run along the Silver Comet Trail, or awaiting a shipment of the latest new gadget, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is working behind the scenes to help you move around and get the things you need.

As the regional commission and metropolitan planning organization for the Atlanta metro region, ARC's job is to develop, plan, and facilitate a regionally significant, locally relevant, and future-focused transportation vision. Working in a comprehensive fashion, ARC incorporates aspects of transportation, community development, water resources, aging & health services, and workforce development into all of its planning work. Continuous collaboration with communities, elected officials, advocates, subject matter experts, local leaders, and interested parties is the foundation upon which this comprehensive planning happens.

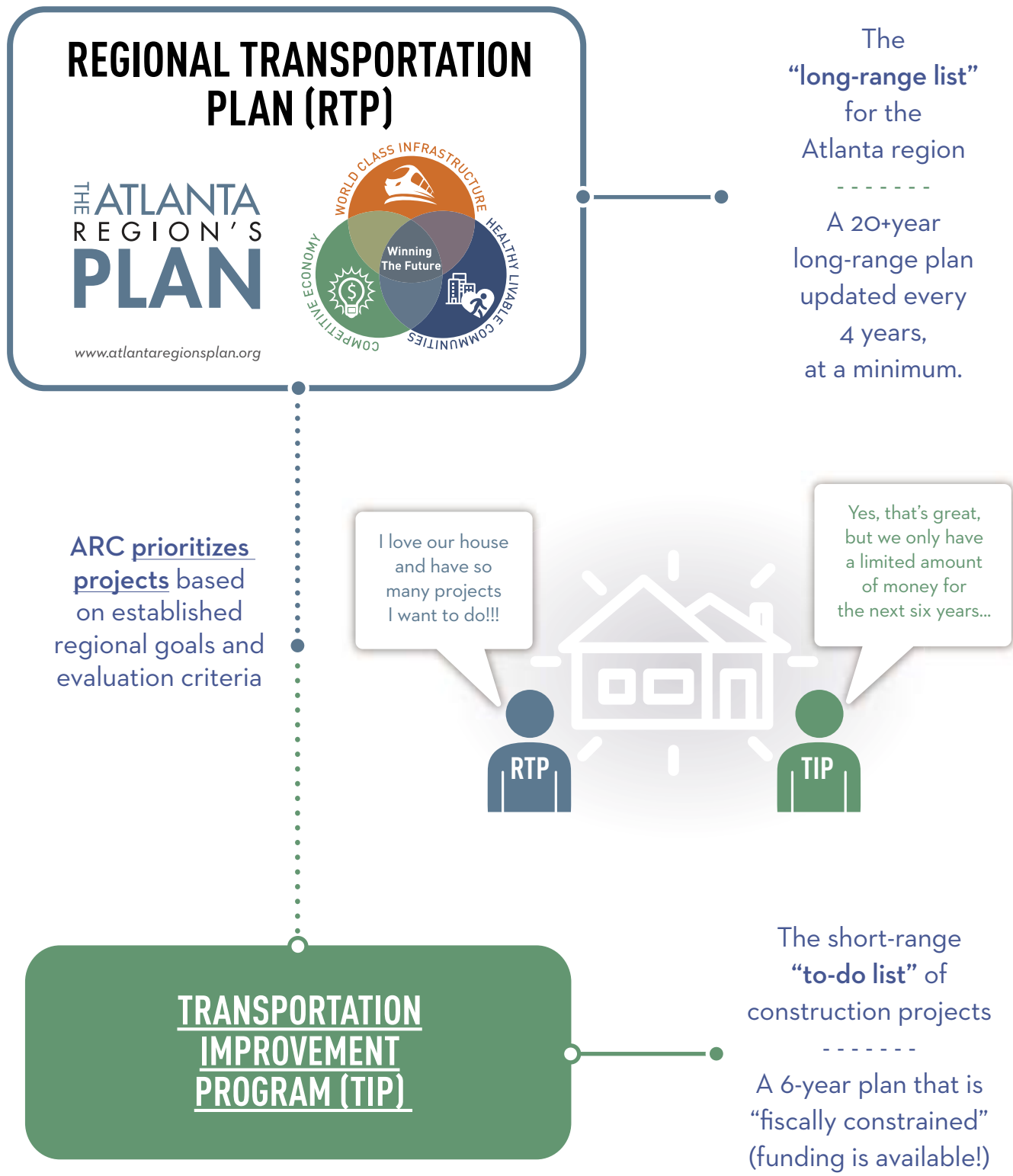
On any given day, you can join ARC for a conversation about rapid technological advancements in transportation, discuss the region's growing and changing population, find out exactly how travel patterns were impacted by a recent event, learn about the latest trends in green infrastructure, or have a face-to-face meeting with your county commissioner. In this way, ARC serves as a regional convener and a collaborative hub.

The Atlanta Region:

ARC is responsible for transportation planning in all or part of a 20-county area, as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this urban region.



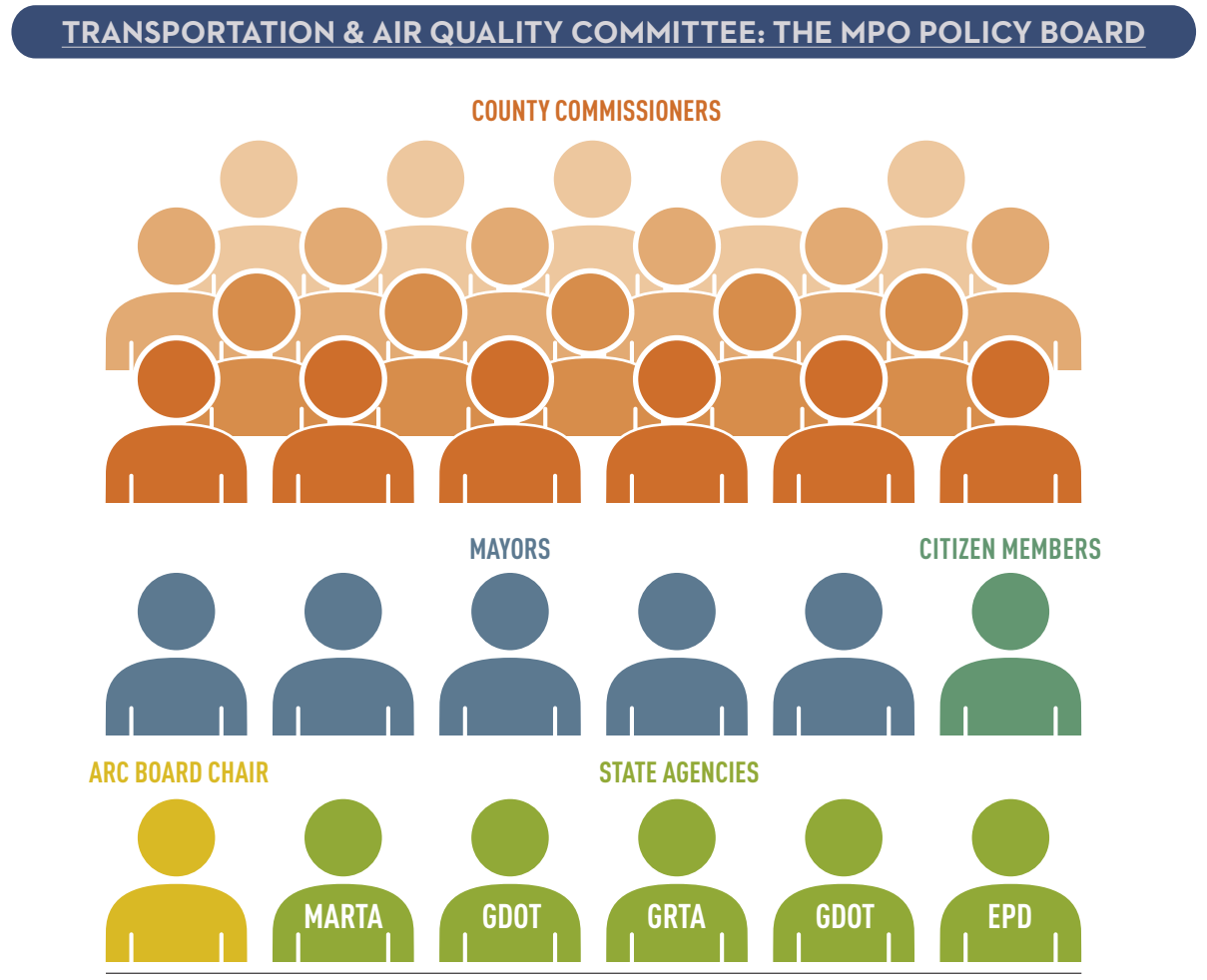
What is the Regional Transportation Plan?



Who Makes the Decisions?

The quick answer...

The official **MPO Policy Committee** is known as the **Transportation and Air Quality Committee (TAQC)** and is made up of elected and appointed officials from a variety of entities:



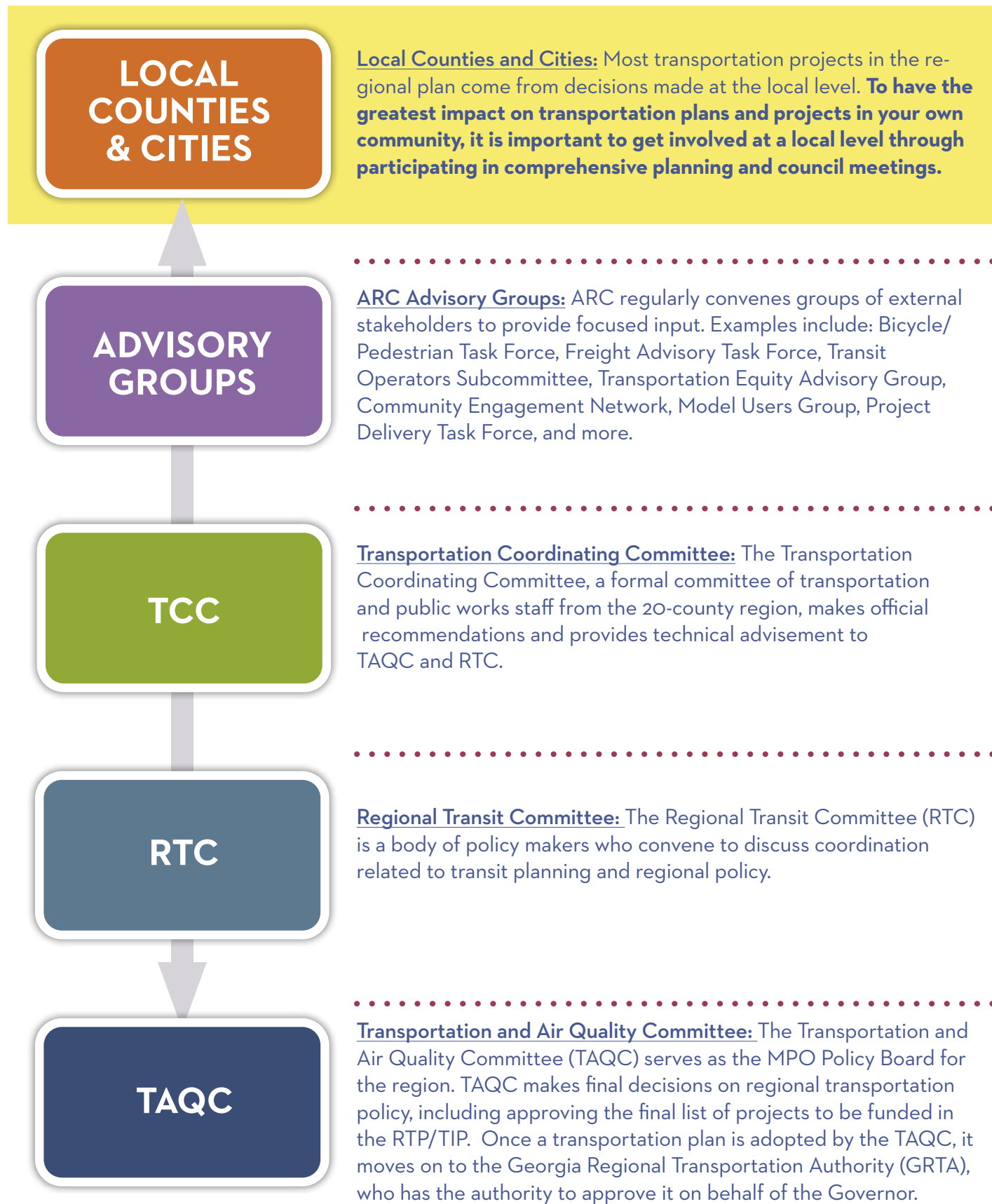
Graphic above is a general representation of membership and is not exact

MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization **ARC** = Atlanta's MPO

i An **MPO** is designated in urban areas with 50,000+ people, to carry out the federally required metropolitan transportation planning process

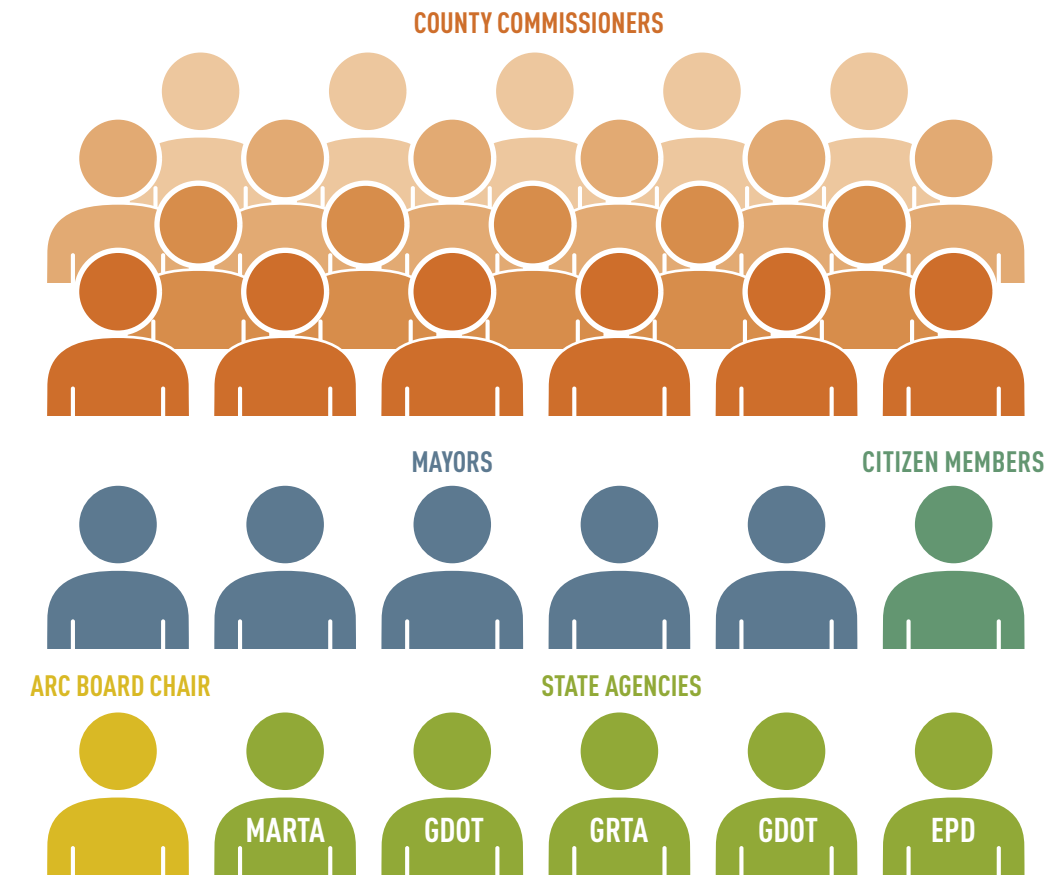
These are the folks who make the big decisions... but they get lots of help!

Who Makes the Decisions?



How Can I Have a Voice?

Remember the **Transportation & Air Quality Committee?**
These are **YOUR** public officials!



Graphic above is a general representation of membership and is not exact

Attend a Meeting! >>> All board and committee meetings are open to the public

Submit Comments! >>> All plans have a public comment period prior to formal adoption

Speak Up! >>> Public hearings are held throughout the planning process

Serve on an Advisory Group >>> ARC has many opportunities for residents to join an advisory group or task force

How Can I Have a Voice?



There's more than one way to be a part of the transportation process. Pick what works best for you!

“FORMAL” ENGAGEMENT

Attend ARC committee meetings, give input at public hearings, submit comments at public meetings

Any written or verbal comments submitted at public hearings or during plan public review periods become part of the written record of the plan's development

Formal engagement is often related to a specific plan or policy

“EVERYDAY” ENGAGEMENT

Attend informational meetings, like open house sessions, forums, or panel discussions

You can visit a meeting one time, take an occasional online survey, or you can find opportunities for sustained involvement and on-going conversations

There are many opportunities for engagement around broad policies and vision setting to guide the specific plans that follow

Connect with ARC via social media or subscribe to an online newsletter for regular information on latest happenings

How Can I Have a Voice?

Where to Share Your Input Locally

Master/Comprehensive Plan Meetings

To find out more about these meetings check your city/county's website for information

City/County Council Meetings

To find out more about these meetings check your city/county's website for information

Neighborhood Associations

Research about your local area to find where these meetings are taking place

Getting Involved with ARC

Attend [ARC Board Meeting](#)

Join [ARC Advisory Group](#)

Sign up for [ARC newsletters and blogs](#)

Submit [Written or Verbal Comments to ARC](#)

Events to Share Your Input

VOTE - in every election!

Open Houses
Check city/county website and social media for events

Local Plans
Check city/county website and social media for events and info

Surveys/Studies
Check city/county website and social media for events

How Are Projects Funded?

Where Does the Money Come From?

FEDERAL

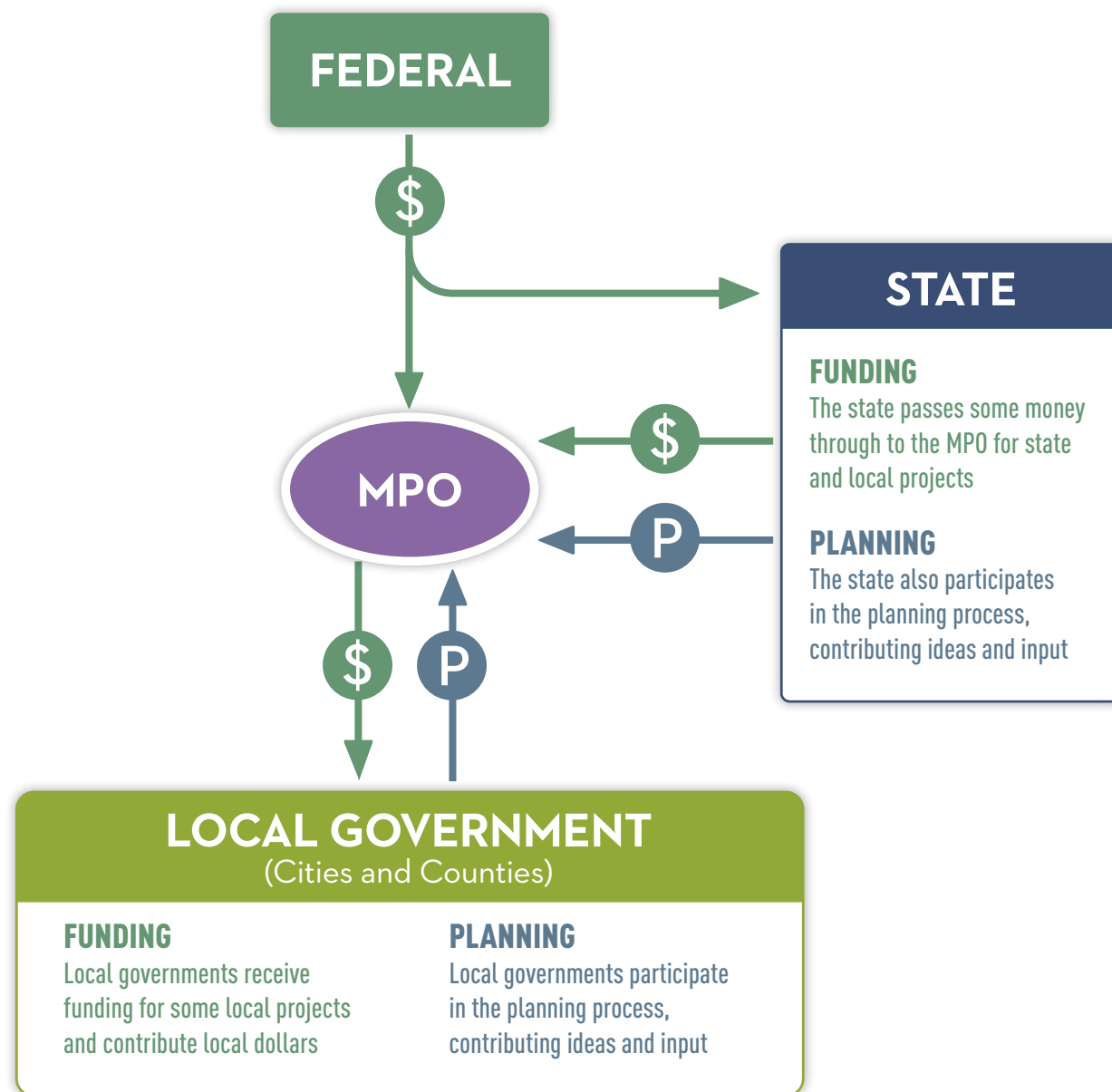
The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 provides federal funding for highway and transit through 2020

STATE

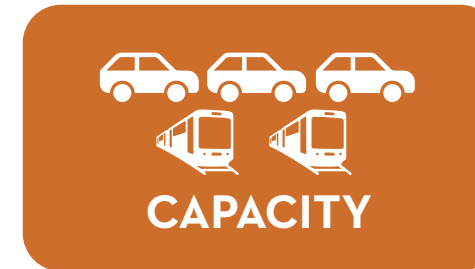
With the passage of the Transportation Funding Act (TFA) of 2015, state funding has increased by almost \$1B each year, effectively doubling the State's transportation budget

LOCAL

Many counties and cities in metro Atlanta host votes to raise additional funds for transit, road, biking, and walking projects



What Are Examples of Projects?



A **project** that increases the ability to move larger numbers of people along a corridor. Capacity projects are often designed for automobile volumes, but should also be complete streets with safe accommodations for all users.

Example: Adding roadway lanes with sidewalks and bikeways or extending rail lines and station walkways



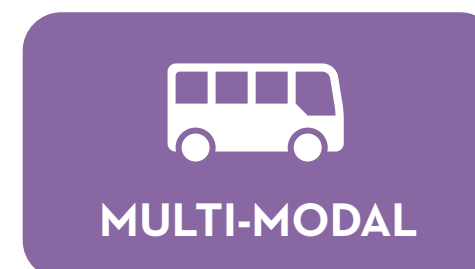
A **project** that addresses a safety concern, such as frequent crashes or conflicts between vehicles and cyclists or pedestrians

Example: Reconfiguration of an intersection



A **project** that provides infrastructure for bikes and / or pedestrians

Example: Construction of a multi-use path



A **project** that provides infrastructure for multiple transportation modes, such as vehicles, transit, bikes and pedestrians

Example: Conversion of a travel lane to a bus-only lane or a bike lane and on-street parking

What Happens After a Project is Built?

Just like a house, after it's built, transportation infrastructure requires routine maintenance and ongoing operational improvements.



- Adding traffic control devices, such as stop signs, traffic lights, etc.
- Addition of turn lanes
- Retiming (synchronizing) traffic signals

Small-scale changes which improve the transportation system



- Filling potholes
- Resurfacing of roads
- Restriping lanes
- Repairing sidewalks

Taking care of what's already on the ground!

TAKE ACTION!

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Keeping track of what needs to be done can be a challenge! If you have concerns about the roads and sidewalks in the neighborhood, you can conduct an audit! This is a great activity for a neighborhood association to raise awareness about transportation. After your audit, be sure to pass the results along to the correct jurisdiction, whether city, county, or state.

Who Maintains What?

In general, it depends on who owns it... **Not sure?** Look for a sign...



INTERSTATE HIGHWAY



U.S. HIGHWAY



STATE HIGHWAY



COUNTY ROAD



LOCAL ROAD/STREET

HOW DO I REPORT A PROBLEM?

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- 1) Determine who maintains the roadway
- 2) Identify the exact location (mile marker, nearest cross-street, etc.)
- 3) Contact the proper entity

Interstate/US/State Highway

Contact Georgia DOT
(404) 631-1990 or visit www.dot.ga.gov

County Road

Contact County Public Works

Local Road/Street

Contact City/County Streets Department/Public Works

** If your request is about operations - rather than maintenance - contact your local city or county engineering department

How Do I...? (Transportation FAQs)

Find out about traffic congestion in real time?

- **Georgia DOT's Navigator**
 - Call 511
 - Visit www.511ga.org
 - Download 511 Georgia & Atlanta Traffic App
- **Google Maps** www.google.com/maps
 - Go to the menu and click the 'Traffic' button. Roads will turn green, yellow, or red, corresponding to congestion levels. Google Maps will also show road closures, construction zones, and traffic incidents.

Find out how to get somewhere via bus or train?

- **ATL Transit** www.atltransit.org
 - Joint pilot project of the major transit agencies in metro Atlanta, working together to provide a unified resource for transit customers in the region.
 - Features an open trip planner, which provides step-by-step directions for using multiple modes of travel, including transit, biking, and walking.
- Regional transit agencies and organizations can also assist with trip planning via telephone and email.

MARTA

(404) 848-5000
schedinfo@itsmarta.com
www.itsmarta.com

CobbLinc

(770) 427-4444
cobbtransit@cobbcounty.org

Gwinnett County Transit

(770) 822-5010
mygctransit.com

Xpress

(844) 977-7742
1-800-255-0056
customerservice@xpressga.com
www.xpressga.com

Atlanta Regional Commission

(404) 463-3100
www.atlantaregional.org/contact-us

How Do I...? (cont.)

Plan a bike trip?

The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition (ABC) and Georgia Bikes! provide resources for bicycle trip planning, including maps, safe cycling guides, and classes.

Atlanta Bicycle Coalition (ABC)

(404) 881-1112
info@atlantabike.org
www.atlantabike.org

Georgia Bikes!

(706) 740-2453
info@georgiabikes.org
www.georgiabikes.org

The **PATH Foundation** has been building a network of off-road trails in and around Atlanta for walkers, cyclists, and skaters for more than 22 years.

PATH Foundation

(404) 875-7284
path@pathfoundation.org
www.pathfoundation.org

Additional Resources

- Google Maps www.google.com/maps
- City and/or County websites

Get a Peach Pass (for use on tolled lanes)?

www.peachpass.com

A Peach Pass is a small, thin electronic toll collection device that adheres to a vehicle windshield or a bumper that mounts to the front of your vehicle. It automatically deducts the proper tolls when using electronic toll lanes within the state of Georgia. The Peach Pass can be used in North Carolina and Florida as well.

How Do I...? (cont.)

Find transportation for older persons or persons with disabilities?

- <http://gacommuteoptions.com/Commuter-Services/Improve-Your-Commute/Transit>
- Public transit providers are required to provide ADA Complementary Paratransit service to anyone unable to ride or disembark from regular transit service, such as older adults and persons with disabilities. This service is offered to people who live within 3/4 of a mile of existing bus routes. Operators like GRTA which do not provide all-day service are exempt from this requirement. Check the Georgia Commute Options website for contact information for your nearest public transit provider.

Additionally, you can find more information from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) or by calling your local county.

Atlanta Regional Commission

(404) 463-3100

www.atlantaregional.com/contact-us

Find a Park and Ride lot?

Visit www.xpressga.com

Xpress buses, which run 27 routes in 12 metro Atlanta counties, provide workers with commutes to and from major employment centers such as Downtown, Midtown, Buckhead, and Perimeter Center.

Find or start a car pool?

Georgia Commute Options: <http://gacommuteoptions.com>

Car pooling can be a great way to save money and reduce stress during your commute. The Georgia Commute Options website has a carpool matching service with more than 50,000 potential carpoolers or vanpoolers interested in sharing the ride.

Find an electric vehicle charging station?

US Department of Energy database of alternative fuel stations:

<http://www.afdc.energy.gov/locator/stations/>

There is also a PlugShare application that can be downloaded to your smart phone for searching on the go.



Atlanta Regional Commission

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