

Legislature Passes Historic Transit Bill

The 2018 Session of the Georgia General Assembly produced landmark transit legislation in the form of [H.B. 930](#). This comprehensive bill creates an umbrella transit authority — currently named “The ATL” (Atlanta-region Transit Link) — to oversee planning, governance and funding of transit across a 13-county region covering the Atlanta metro area.

The ATL Board of Directors will consist of one representative from each district in the 13-county region (10 districts total), plus representatives appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, and Georgia DOT Commissioner. Operationally, the bill mandates that the Board be up and running by January 1, 2019.

To fund transit in counties not currently paying sales tax for MARTA service, voters will have to approve an up-to \$.01 transit SPLOST. Individual counties may choose to hold referendums to approve such funding, making it a purely “opt-in” system.

What does this mean for MARTA? MARTA remains intact in its existing footprint, and any of its remaining tax options must be voted on by Cobb, Gwinnett, and Fulton Counties by November 2018. After that deadline, any future votes on those funding contingencies will instead be for ATL-related governance and funding. Cobb County in particular has only until the end of 2019 to act, or the options outlined in the bill will be automatically repealed.



from right to left: Rep. Calvin Smyre (D-135, Columbus), Scott Haggard, Linda Hamrick, Rep. Kevin Tanner (R-09, Dawsonville), GTA President Rhonda Briggins, John Bayalis.

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