



HB 930 - Transit Governance and Funding

Overview:

- Provides for transit governance and funding options for the Metro Atlanta region (a designated nonattainment area currently consisting of Cherokee, Clayton, Coweta, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale counties) and the rest of the state.
- Creates the Atlanta-region Transit Link (ATL) Authority, a new regional governing board that will lead the planning and coordination of transit in the Metro Atlanta region and will control state and federal transit funding.
- Any county in the Metro Atlanta region would be able to call for a referendum to levy a Transit SPLOST up to 1% (and may be in .05% increments) for up to 30 years.
- Any county outside of the Metro Atlanta region would have to partner with a neighboring county in order to be able to call for a referendum that would have to be approved in all of such counties to levy a Transit SPLOST up to 1% (and may be in .05% increments) for up to 30 years.

Details:

Atlanta-region Transit Link (ATL) Authority

The Atlanta-region Transit Link (ATL) Authority, a new regional governing board that will lead the planning and coordination of transit in the Metro Atlanta region as well as controlling state and federal transit funding for the region.

The ATL Authority will work with counties, municipalities, and operators of transit services within the jurisdiction of the authority to provide a consistent and integrated vision for transit. The authority will consult with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to develop, annually review, and amend, as necessary, a regional transit plan. Such plan shall include, but not be limited to, transit projects based upon a region-wide approach and at a minimum, a six year and 20 year component. The plan will also provide that MARTA is the sole operator of heavy rail in the Metro Atlanta region. The authority is vested with bonding capabilities as well as the power of eminent domain.

A board of directors will oversee the authority and is comprised of 16 members:

- 10 appointments from authority districts ([Transit Authority District Map](#))
- 2 appointments from Lieutenant Governor
- 2 appointments from Speaker of the House
- 1 appointment by the Governor who serves as the Chairperson
- Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation (ex-officio)

The members appointed from the authority districts shall be appointed by a majority vote of a caucus of the members of the House of Representatives and Senate whose respective districts include any portion of such authority district, the chairpersons of the county board of commissioners whose counties are located within such authority districts, and one mayor from the municipalities located within such authority districts who shall be chosen by a caucus of all mayors from the municipalities located within such authority districts.

No later than December 1, 2018, the respective caucuses appointing board members from the authority districts shall meet and appoint their respective board members of said board of directors. Such meeting shall be called by the chairperson of the board of commissioners from the county with the largest population represented in the authority district. ([Population Per Authority District/County](#))

Transit SPLOST – Metro Atlanta region

Any county in the Metro Atlanta region (a designated nonattainment area currently consisting of Cherokee, Clayton, Coweta, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale counties) has the option to levy a Transit SPLOST, the proceeds of which shall be used only for transit projects. Transit SPLOST can be levied up to 1% and may be in .05% increments for a maximum period of 30 years.

A formal meeting must be called by the County Board of Commissioners to discuss the possible projects for inclusion in the referendum and the rate of the tax. At the meeting, the county and all qualified municipalities may select transit projects from the regional transit plan to be funded by the proceeds of the tax.

Following the required meeting, the county shall deliver a written notice to the Atlanta-region Transit Link (ATL) Authority of the intent to call for a referendum. The notice should include a list of transit projects and the proposed operator (if one is required) of the transit projects. Upon receipt of the notice, within 20 days, the ATL Authority will approve or deny any or all projects within a submitted transit project list and the proposed operator of any transit projects.

After notice from the authority, a resolution (as passed by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners) can be called for the referendum. The resolution must then be submitted to the County Election Superintendent and include the following:

- The specific transit projects to be funded which have been selected from the regional transit planned approved by the ATL Authority;
- The approximate cost of such transit projects;
- The operator selected for any transit project or projects proposed if such project or projects are services which require an operator; and
- The maximum period of time, to be stated in calendar years, for which the tax may be imposed and the rate thereof.

Transit SPLOST – Neighboring Counties Outside Metro Atlanta Region

Any two or more neighboring counties which are not located within the Metro Atlanta region (defined above) may impose a Transit SPLOST, the proceeds of which shall be used only for transit projects. Transit SPLOST can be levied up to 1% and may be in .05% increments. Unless the referendum is approved in each of the participating counties, the tax shall not be imposed.

A formal meeting must be called by the County Boards of Commissioners to discuss the possible projects for inclusion in the referendum and the rate of the tax. At the meeting, the two or more neighboring counties and all qualified municipalities may select transit projects to be funded by the proceeds of the tax. Each county planning to participate in the selected transit project or projects shall enter into intergovernmental agreements. The Resolution for the call for the referendum must then be submitted to the County Election Superintendents in each county and include the following:

- The specific transit projects to be funded;
- The approximate cost of such transit projects;
- The operator selected for any transit project or projects proposed if such project or projects are services which require an operator; and
- The maximum period of time, to be stated in calendar years, for which the tax may be imposed and the rate thereof.

Multicounty Community Improvement Districts (CID)

Under new Code Section 36-80-26, multicounty CIDs are authorized to be created by local Act of the General Assembly for any counties in the state to provide transit projects that are included in the official multiyear plan for transit services adopted by the ATL Authority.

Specific Provisions for Cobb, Fulton, & Gwinnett counties

Specific provisions are authorized in the bill for Cobb, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties.