

Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority Annual Report



Client

Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority

Facts

Period 2022

Project Country United States

EBP, in partnership with Foursquare ITP, developed the Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority's (ATL) fourth Annual Report and Audit (ARA) to document transit performance and communicate the value of transit in the 13-county Atlanta metro area.

The ATL relies on the ARA to identify key trends across the region in transit service and performance and to communicate with stakeholders and elected officials about the value of and need for sustained transit investment. Building on work established in the prior ARAs, EBP continued in 2022 to analyze and document the regional benefits and economic impacts of transit in the Atlanta region, including jobs and business activity supported by transit operations and capital expenditures and the environmental benefits of avoided emissions due to transit.

New in the 2022 ARA, EBP evaluated how well transit connects businesses and workers. We found that the average employer in one of the region's business centers could be reached within 45 minutes by 3% of all potential workers and 18% of all potential workers from zero-car households. The region's economic success depends on the ability of businesses to access a qualified workforce. At a time when employers are struggling to hire and maintain workers, further breaking down transportation barriers is key.

EBP also examined how access varies across business centers with different levels of telecommuting potential—based on the occupational composition of each center's workforce. We discovered that business centers with the highest telework potential actually had the greatest transit access, whereas the centers with the lowest levels of ability to work from home had access to 40% fewer workers by fixed-route transit. Examining the impact of telecommuting on transit planning will be important for the region going forward.

Finally, EBP evaluated the impacts of cost inflation in industries that support transit operations. Based on the pace of inflation, the ATL region must increase transit investments to continue the level of service provided today.

ARA findings are published in a [report](#) and as an online interactive [StoryMap](#).

Introduction ATL Region Travel Trends Operator Highlights Economic Impacts Access to Transit **Access to Employment** Rid

Access to business centers by transit is nearly as strong in the early morning and evening hours (5:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.) as during the morning peak commute (8:00 a.m.). **This is especially valuable for workers who work outside of a 9-5 to-5 work schedule.**

The colorful areas on the map represent workers who can reach at least one business center within 45 minutes on fixed-route transit. Click the buttons below to view business center accessibility within 45 minutes on fixed-route transit at different times of day. Zoom in to a business

Atlanta Story Map

HOW CAN TRANSIT REMAIN AFFORDABLE AND COMPETITIVE?

In addition to the workforce shortage, price pressures are also affecting the region's transit operators' ability to deliver projects and services.

IMPACTS OF COST INFLATION

- 16%** Consumer prices increase from May 2018 to May 2022
- 20%** Hourly wages for workers in the transportation, utility, hourly wage, and industries
- 41%** Inputs to construction in sectors that build transit stations and rail costs

TRANSIT WORKER SHORTAGE

- 96%** Transit agencies who are experiencing a workforce shortage, according to a national survey
- 84%** Agencies who say the shortage is affecting their ability to provide service

Enhanced investment in transit will be needed simply to maintain the status quo. Addressing the transit workforce shortage will be critical to maintaining service for customers.

CHANGE IN PRICES BY CATEGORY

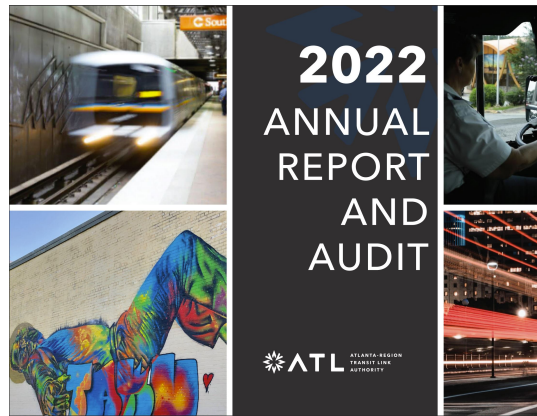
Category	Change (%)
Overall Consumer Prices	16%
Trade/Transportation	30%
Utility Hourly Wage	20%
Transportation Industry	32%
Truck/Bus	34%
Manufacturing Industry	35%
Rolling Stock Manufacturing	10%
Construction Inputs	41%

COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSIT

Transit continues to provide an affordable travel option for thousands of the region's residents to access work and other key destinations. Using transit can save households who reduce their car ownership over \$7,000 per year.

- \$8,000-\$11,000** Total cost of car ownership per year
- \$1,140** A year's worth of 30-day MARTA passes

Transit continues to provide an affordable transportation option that is important for many of the region's residents.



Transit Costs and Affordability

Annual Report Cover

HOW DOES TRANSIT ENHANCE THE ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT?

The money transit operators spend to deliver transit services and projects ripples out through the economy, supporting regional businesses and jobs not just within transit agencies, but throughout the economy.

WHY MEASURE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRANSIT EXPENDITURES?

Measuring the economic impact of transit expenditures helps us convey how investments have multiplicative effects beyond transit operators—creating jobs and supporting business activity throughout the region.

AIR QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

In 2022, transit saved the region \$2.8 million in social costs of emissions, based on estimated avoided greenhouse gases and other hazardous pollutants. The total CO₂ emissions avoided is the equivalent of planting 268,000 trees.

DIRECT IMPACTS

- 61%** Of operating costs allocated to worker salaries, wages, and benefits in FY 2021
- \$257 million** Invested by transit agencies in capital projects in FY 2021
- 13,000+** jobs in FY 2021
- \$1 billion** Nearly Added to the gross regional product (GRP)

Through multiplier impacts of supplier purchases and employee spending: Every \$1 directly invested in ATL Region transit Generates \$2 in regional business sales

METHODS OF TRANSIT'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Directly Supported Activity:** Transit agencies employ workers, pay them wages, and invest in equipment and supplies.
- Supplier Activity (Indirect):** Transit agencies purchase goods and services from companies who in turn employ and pay workers.
- Spending of Worker Income (Included):** Transit agency and supplier employees spend their income, generating additional activity in the regional economy.

Impacts of Expenditures

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