

Georgia vs. Downtown Atlanta: The Issues

GROWTH IN THE ATLANTA REGION

Too much growth, development, and opportunity concentrated in one area of Georgia is bad for the whole state. There are natural barriers to growth and development defined by the affected populations, the necessary infrastructure and services, and the availability of land and water resources to sustain growth. It's time growth slowed in the Atlanta region, and some of the suburban counties have started taking action on their own while Downtown Atlanta's leaders continue scheming to bring more people, more corporations, more growth to Greater Atlanta.

GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (GRTA) & MARTA

MARTA is the local transportation system for metro Atlanta presently limited to Fulton and DeKalb counties----adjoining counties have declined offers to be part of it. GRTA was enacted in 1999 by Roy Barnes and the legislature on the recommendation of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Its purpose was to induce the expenditure of billions of dollars to build MARTA type services in metro counties at state expense----whether the people wanted them or not-----and to open the way for the state taxpayer to take liability for MARTA from Fulton and Dekalb counties -----all for the purpose of furthering the economic and population growth of Atlanta. Current law prevents a state takeover of MARTA, but the potential remains. The law could be easily changed. Short of an outright takeover, Atlanta is already pushing for state funds to help operate MARTA. Georgians should just say no to MARTA and GRTA.

WATER RESOURCES

Since 1998, the downtown establishment and Atlanta Chamber of Commerce have promoted their water initiative, which is meant to seize control of the water resources of Georgia and adjoining states for Atlanta's use, to make sure rapid growth will continue in greater Atlanta for decades to come. Much of the legislation has already been enacted to make the suburbs and possibly the rest of Georgia in part responsible for Atlanta's water and sewage infrastructure, and to give downtown Atlanta access to virtually every water basin in Georgia. This year the Governor and legislature are in the process of allowing the City \$500,000,000 in state bonds for water and sewage repairs. Atlanta has mismanaged its infrastructure and should bear the financial responsibility for its repair and maintenance-- --NOT the people of Georgia.

THE 'GEORGIA' AQUARIUM

It's really the *Atlanta Aquarium*. Originated by Bernie Marcus (Arthur Blank's Home Depot partner), and ostensibly a \$200,000,000 gift by Marcus to Atlanta (Blank donated the land), it was hatched up by Marcus and Barnes at the Governor's mansion. From the beginning, state involvement was undoubtedly planned, and it's located near the World Congress Center. Sonny Perdue supports "some street construction" for the aquarium that could amount to tens of millions of dollars. The Aquarium is intended to promote Atlanta, and should be paid for and operated by Atlanta, without state funds. It will, incidentally, be a huge water guzzler in a region which is supposed to run short of water *if rapid growth continues*.

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THE ATLANTA SYMPHONY HEADQUARTERS

The Atlanta Symphony is one of Atlanta's leading elitist arts organizations. It just announced the purchase of a California Ticket Selling company for more than \$1,000,000. They want a new headquarters, a "knock your socks off" architectural "monument to Atlanta". The Symphony is a private organization, but it wants public money to help build this \$240,000,000—yes, more than two hundred and forty million dollars—bandstand. It wants state money, and Roy Barnes promised it. Sonny Perdue has made friendly comments about the project, also. Most Georgians will be most upset if state taxes are spent on this Elitist Atlanta Ego Trip.

IMMIGRATION

Both legal and illegal immigrants are flooding our country. Statisticians claim that if we do not quickly and dramatically slow immigration, Americans of European descent will make up barely half the population by 2050. Only the federal government can change that. However, the state can discourage immigration, particularly illegal immigration. The problem, once again, is with Atlanta's leaders, who encourage immigrants to the city and oppose policies that might reduce the flow. The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce favors "guest worker" policies that encourage corporations to bring cheap foreign professionals to Georgia and displace local employees. Applicants for HOPE scholarships are not required to be U.S. citizens. The Georgia legislature should do what's best for the people of Georgia despite the wishes of Atlanta's elitists.

EXPORTING JOBS

Many of Georgia's communities and towns outside Atlanta are in decline because of the export of jobs and import of manufactured and agricultural commodities into the country. Others are barely maintaining a semblance of prosperity. Corporations and even state agencies are contracting services with firms overseas, exporting more jobs. The federal government is responsible for these policies through trade deals like NAFTA and GTT, which are supported by the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Once again, the interests of downtown Atlanta elitists are favored above the best interests of most Georgians.

THE GEORGIA FLAG

The confederate emblem was put on the flag in 1956 to commemorate Georgia's part in the War Between the States and to observe its centennial. The flag flew over our state during our most progressive and prosperous years. Governor Barnes and the legislature changed the flag in 2001, to satisfy the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and some pressure groups--against the wishes of most Georgians. The adoption of the Sonny Perdue flag in 2003 and the recent rigged referendum have left the issue unresolved. Only 14.8 percent of Georgia's voters voted for the Perdue flag. Let's deal with the issue; let the people decide with a Fair Vote.

NEW SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Our public schools are supposed to provide our students with the kinds of knowledge and skills to prepare them for life. The schools also should give them an understanding of western civilization, from which our history and culture spring. Under Georgia's proposed new curriculum standards, our kids will learn practically no history in school; instead,

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promoting diversity and multiculturalism will be the major focus of social studies. The state department of education went to places like Massachusetts and Washington D.C. corporate think-tanks for these curriculum changes. It's more Roy Barnes style education "reform," which means conforming curriculum to fit corporate views on education.

THE MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

The family is the basic building block of society, and marriage is its legal and social framework. It is so fundamental to social organization that defining the individuals that constitute marriage should be unquestioned: a man and a woman. Judicial rulings and government actions now threaten the integrity of the institution which has led to calls for federal and state constitutional amendments to define marriage as the legal union of a man and a woman. It's hard to see how the issue can be settled without constitutional safeguards. Once again, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce opposes the wishes and best interests of most Georgians. They are actively promoting a propaganda campaign to convince Georgians that such an amendment is "bad for business."

SUMMARY

THESE TEN ISSUES are only the most visible examples of how downtown Atlanta elitists are looting and pillaging the state's treasury, that is, the people of Georgia, for their own selfish purposes and to fulfill their vision of Georgia. They consider downtown Atlanta the "Big House" and they expect the rest of Georgia to stay "down on the plantation" to line the elitist's pockets with loot. Now that the people of Georgia are awakening to the looting in progress, we expect the people of Georgia to end it and to become their own masters.

[Georgia vs. Downtown Atlanta: An Overview](#)