

LETTERS

For the Journal-Constitution

Published on: 02/10/08 Streetcars

Transit needed for a livable city

Many major cities without comprehensive subway systems are using streetcars to get citizens where they want to go without more gridlock. Boston, Toronto, Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles, to name a few, utilize streetcars to connect urban areas and tie together heavier rail systems.

San Diego, Charlotte, Pittsburgh, Miami and other cities are building and expanding light rail systems. These "super streetcars" are a quiet, clean and comfortable way to travel. I won't even mention European cities that rely on this form of transportation in the urban core almost exclusively.

What has Atlanta done, since MARTA was approved, to expand its rail system? Absolutely nothing! We will soon lose the economic future of our city because of this inertia, if we haven't already. It's time for expanding such systems and getting more people onto the sidewalks, just like in the picture the AJC published ("Streetcars on Peachtree," @issue, Feb. 4). Streetcars will return us to a walkable and vibrant city once again.

ROBERT J. AUGUSTINE, Atlanta

State's need for transit is desperate

It was comforting to see reader responses to Georgia's transportation dilemma ("Trolley a fine idea, with some tweaking," "Government lacking in vision," "A little raillery," Letters, @issue, Feb. 4). Concern about the Peachtree streetcar, the need for comprehensive funding and the low cost of commuter rail all point to one thing: immediacy for a balanced, world-class transportation system.

Georgia needs transit yesterday; our opportunity to get it is now. We have over \$87 million in federal funds about to expire; this money could put trains on the tracks. It is up to our legislators to establish a fair, balanced funding source to keep those trains moving.

ERIN GLYNN

Glynn, of Atlanta, is an organizer for Sierra Club RAIL, Regional Action to Improve Livability.