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Milepost

A periodic update from the Peachtree Corridor Partnership

ATLANTA'S POPULATION BOOM COUPLED WITH NATION'S RISING GAS PRICES BEGS FOR MORE TRANSIT

Despite the slowdown in the rest of the region, growth in the City of Atlanta remains robust with its largest single-year population gain in almost 40 years – up 13,100 people, according to the [latest estimates from the Atlanta Regional Commission](#). Between 2000 and 2005, the City of Atlanta added about 5,125 people each year. During the last three years, however, the City added about 12,000 new residents each year.

This, coupled with the fact that Atlanta residents are turning to transit because of its affordability, begs for more transit options in our city's urban core. According to a recent Atlanta Business Chronicle article, transit officials in Buckhead, Midtown and Downtown all reported increases in the purchase of MARTA monthly passes in July.

"People are moving back into the city, and higher driving costs are already forcing behavior changes," said Angie Laurie, vice president for transportation with Central Atlanta Progress. "This reinforces the need for additional transit options, such as a streetcar system."

Streetcars are ideal for short trips along the Peachtree Corridor, Ms. Laurie added. "A streetcar system on Peachtree and surrounding blocks would be an effective supplement to our current system by moving people around the corridor once they have commuted here."

BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME: Streetcars will ignite redevelopment in the Peachtree Corridor

Not only can a streetcar system provide a mobility solution for Atlanta's growing population, it can ignite redevelopment in our city's aging urban center, where more and more people want to live. Cities across the U. S. have experienced this trend with the addition of streetcars to their transit systems. Since Portland, Ore. announced plans for its city-owned system, more than 10,000 residential units have been built and \$3.5 billion has been invested in property within two blocks of the line, according to [Portland Streetcar, Inc.](#), which operates the system.

In today's slowed economy, at least 40 other cities are jumping on board with streetcar plans to spur economic development, according to the Community Streetcar Coalition, a partnership of cities, transit authorities and architectural and engineering firms that supports the development of FTA's Small Starts Program. [As reported in a recent New York Times article:](#)

City officials in Columbus, Ohio are proposing a \$103 million streetcar network along the city's High Street connecting Ohio State University with the downtown business district. "It is directly tied to economic development, and when times are tough in Ohio, we need an additional tool to create jobs," said Mayor Michael Coleman.

Support for the Peachtree Corridor streetcar system can be seen in transportation plans such as the Transit Planning Board's "Concept 3," as well as the City of Atlanta's "Connect Atlanta." Stay tuned for more progress on this initiative.



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