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How the interstates displaced and segregated Atlanta neighborhoods

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Atlanta's rising plant-based restaurant movement



Election Year

A deep dive into the issues that impact
Georgia Tech voters.

34 84

Magazine

FALL 2020



@3484mag

What is 3484?

3484 Magazine is a news magazine focusing primarily on politics and social issues in the Atlanta area. We dive deeply into policies in Atlanta and Georgia to investigate how they impact Georgia Tech students.

34° N, 84° W are the geographic coordinates of the City of Atlanta, rounded. We picked this name because of our focus on the Atlanta area.

When we're not working on publishing a magazine we cover events, like presidential debates and protests, on our social media accounts, @3484mag.

In the future, we will continue to cover issues that impact Atlanta and Tech students. You can expect to see a lot more on the presidential and senate races, healthcare, climate policy, and city planning, as we continue to explore ways policy shapes Tech students' lives.

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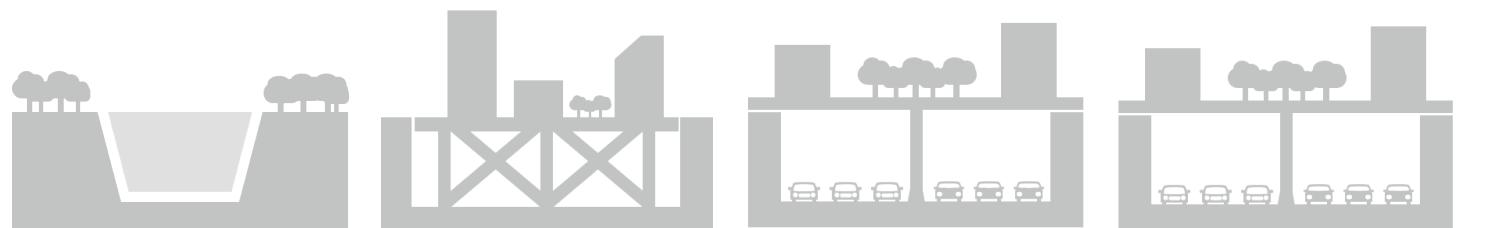
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Changing City

A look at the way we get around and live in Atlanta is changing

SAM BASKIN, creative director



Westside Park 2021

Once it opens, it will be Atlanta's largest park. It is the site of the Bellwood Quarry, which has been converted into a water reservoir. The first section opens in Spring 2021.

Gulch 2035

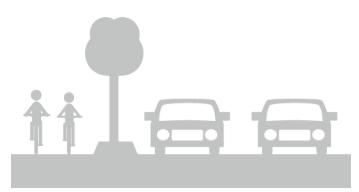
The Gulch is currently a large parking lot in the heart of Downtown below the level of adjacent streets. The lot will be raised, allowing for 12-15 blocks of new development.

The Stitch Unknown

The Stitch aims to re-connect midtown and downtown by capping the downtown connector from W. Peachtree St. to Courtland St.

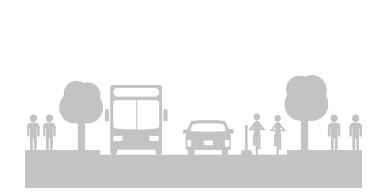
MCTIP Unknown

Midtown Connector Transit Improvement Project is another interstate capping project, this time between North Ave. and 10th St. It is still in the design phase.



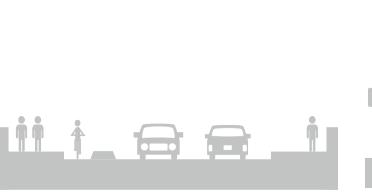
Bike Lanes 2021

There are several new bike lanes being built and planned in Midtown. Spring, W Peachtree, Juniper St, and Piedmont Ave. will all have protected bike lanes.



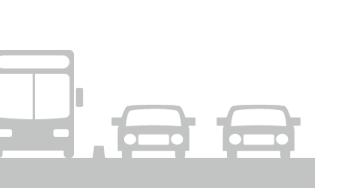
5th Street 2022

5th St will be converted to be a complete street. That means it will be even more pedestrian, bike, and transit friendly.



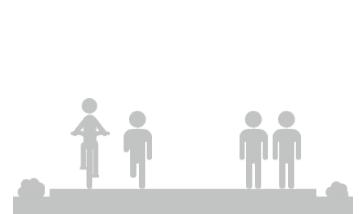
10th St Bridge 2024

10th St Bridge will receive various mobility upgrades. The project is still in the design phase.



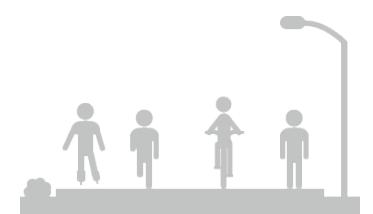
Bus Rapid Transit 2025

Marta is planning a series of new Bus Rapid Transit lines, starting with a Summerhill route. Bus Rapid Transit is when buses have their own dedicated lane to speed up travel times.



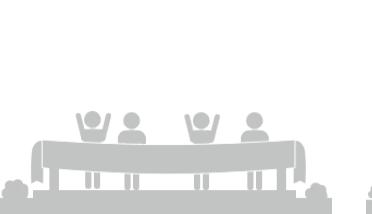
Northeast Trail 2023

A new paved trail section between Monroe and Lindbergh will connect Midtown and Buckhead.



Southside Trail 2024

The new paved Southside Trail of the Beltline. It will connect to the new Summerhill BRT line.



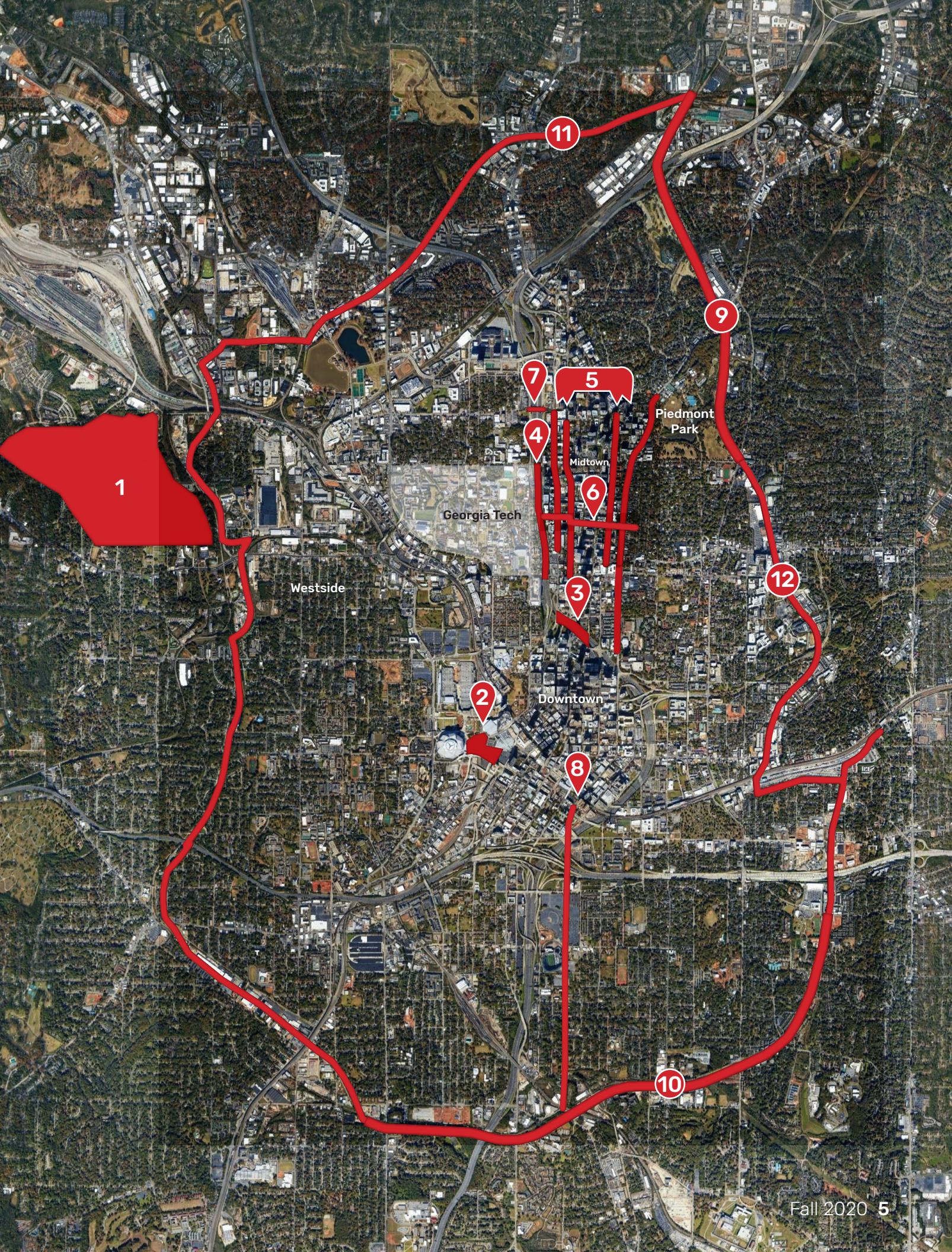
Complete Beltline 2030

Eventually, the Beltline will be a complete connected 22 mile loop around Atlanta.



Beltline Rail Unknown

The Beltline will eventually include light rail, connecting the city. This was part of Ryan Gravel's original thesis that inspired the Beltline.



I'm Just a Bill

Explaining the difficulties passing and stopping bills in Georgia

CASEY BARTON, writer

SAM BASKIN, design

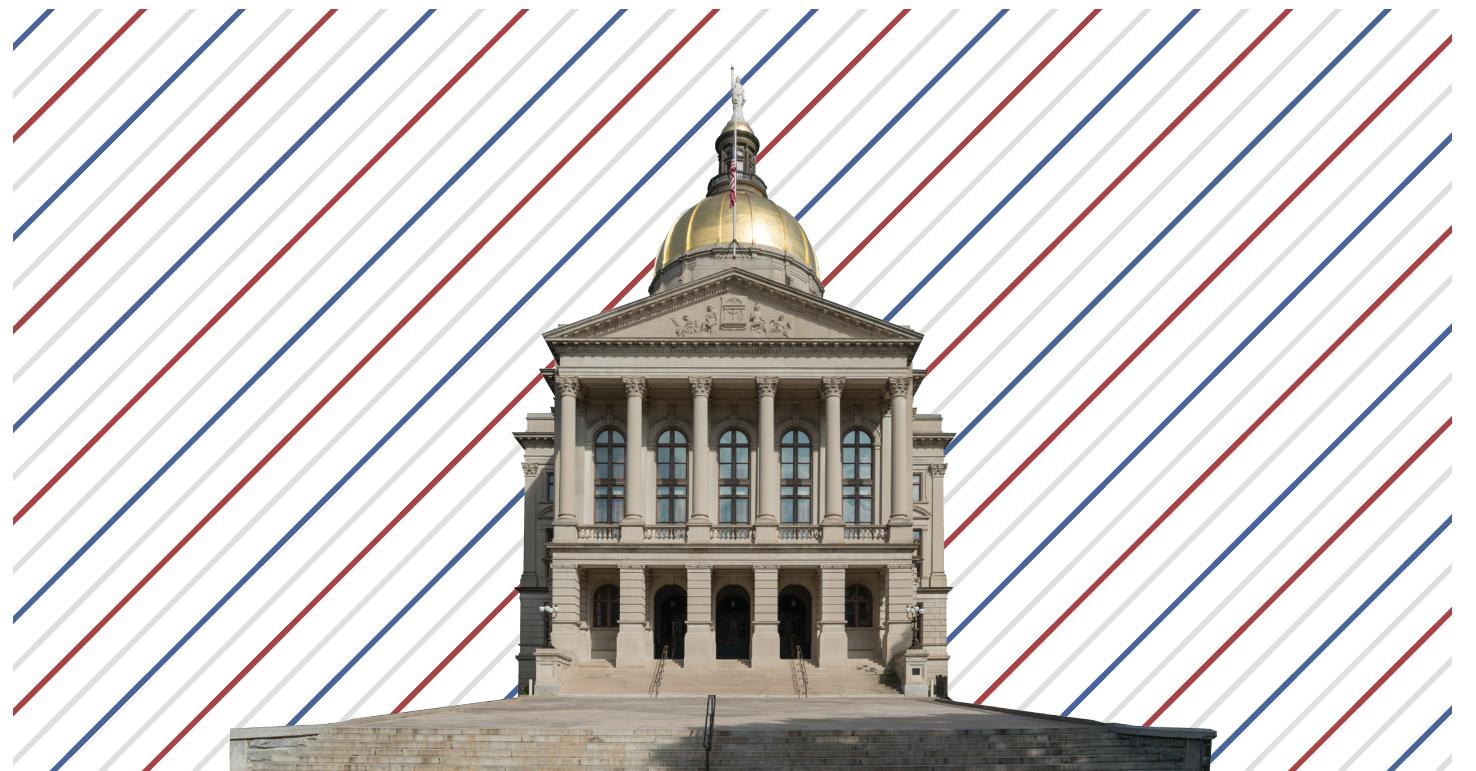


Photo from Wikimedia Commons

Why is it hard to pass bills? And why is it also hard to stop bills?

During this past summer, you may have noticed an uptick in social media infographics asking people to contact their representatives and ask them to vote a certain way on bills going through Georgia's legislature.

We have all learned in government classes how bills are made: first someone has an idea. A legislator composes a bill in response to the idea, and then the bill is filed, read to the legislature, and assigned to a committee. The committee discusses it and then either recommends its passage, recommends its passage with amendment, or kills it. The bills that are not killed are voted on by the full legislature, and then it travels to the other house to undergo the same process. When both chambers of the legislature have passed the same version of the bill, it goes to the governor for either a signature or a veto. The process sounds simple enough - so why is it so hard to get a bill passed? And, conversely, why is it simultaneously so hard to stop a bill from being passed?

1. Volume of bills and time constraints

The legislature files hundreds of bills every session, and each one is important to some group of people. It would be impossible for the legislature to consider every bill within the annual forty day legislative session. Some bills are only a paragraph or so in length, and others are several pages. It takes time to draft bills, consider the wording, and consider how the bill's passage would affect Georgians.

2. Disconnect between voters' behavior and voters' best interests

Voters do not always act in their best interest; they do not always elect the person that will best represent them. For many reasons, the makeup of the legislature does not reflect the makeup of the state of Georgia, and this disconnect affects the decision making process. Even if incumbent legislators actively vote for bills that their constituents are opposed to, the majority of incumbents who run for reelection are elected again. Moreover, the number of voters who contact their legislators and ask them to vote a certain way is small compared to the number who vote in elections. It is rare that constituents will be able to change a legislator's vote on a bill since legislators know the number of people who vote for them

will probably not drastically change. Legislators have to balance other factors when deciding how to vote in addition to their constituents' opinions, like their party's stance, the stance of campaign contributors, their personal beliefs, and what they believe is best for their district.

3. Leadership

Ultimately, bills need the support of leadership in order to pass. In Georgia, the majority in both chambers and the executive branch are controlled by the same party. The majority party also decides which committees bills are assigned to and picks the chairs of the committees. The committee chairs pick which bills they hold hearings on and which bills they send to the floor for voting. Therefore, a bill needs to be at least somewhat popular with some members of the majority in order to receive a vote from the full House or senate. The majority can also easily kill a bill by assigning it to a committee where it will not receive a hearing, or by not putting the bill on the calendar to be voted on. The bill also needs to be signed by the governor. Since the governor and the legislature are controlled by the same party, if the governor vetoes a bill, it is very unlikely that the legislature would decide to overrule it.

4. The Governor

The governor will run a campaign around several issues that he or she hopes to address during his or her term. However, the governor has limited power to enact change by himself. For this reason, the governor appoints different members of each legislative chamber as floor leaders. They will propose and advocate for bills that match the governor's policy goals. Since the governor and the majority in both houses in Georgia are members of the same party, the floor leader's bills will usually receive attention from the legislature. It is difficult to stop a bill that is supported by the governor, since he represents all of Georgia, and has the support of the majority of the legislature.

5. House/Senate Rivalry

The house and the senate are often at odds with each other. The house leadership may purposely ignore a senate bill for this reason. In Georgia, the numbers of majority and minority members in the house are closer than in the senate where there are many more majority members than minority members. A bill popular with the senate may not receive as much support in the house because of the different party makeups.

6. Whips and caucuses

Not every member of the legislature is informed of all of the bills. Before most meetings of the legislature, the Republicans and the Democrats meet in their separate caucuses. A caucus is a group of legislators with some commonality; for example, in addition to party caucuses, there is also a women's caucus and caucuses based on geographical location. In the caucus meetings, the leadership for the party will usually go over the bills that are scheduled to be voted on that day. In this way, each member of the party knows what the party's stance on the different bills is, as well as any amendments or issues with the bill that may be brought up on the floor. Furthermore, each party has a whip, which is a member responsible for compiling the briefings on the bills and encouraging party members to vote in accord with the party's stance.

7. Playing with time

During the legislative session, those who set the calendar can arrange the order of the bills strategically. If a chairman of one committee is waiting to see how another legislator votes before deciding on how to vote on that legislator's bill, he or she may request that his or her bill is placed later in the order. If there is a particularly controversial bill that the majority wants passed, they may schedule that bill for the end of the day, when people are tired and will want to pass it without much debate. Those who are not able to influence the calendar can still influence the way the session unfolds. They can attempt to filibuster until they are certain that their bill will be receiving the votes it needs to pass, they can motion to table a bill for later to see if they can garner more support, or they can motion to remove bills from the table if they think it is a good time to discuss it. The bills'

authors can also limit discussion and how many questions are asked.

8. Follow the money

Oftentimes, companies will work with a legislator to propose a bill that is in their best interest. The company may even draft the same or very similar bills and try to get them passed in several states so that the company can operate more easily around the country. For example, a large agricultural company might try to pass laws that denote a lower property tax rate for land used for agricultural purposes. Companies can have their own lawyers draft bills and then send them to a legislator to file. Large companies that have substantial budgets for campaign contributions and lobbyists can contact and influence several members of the legislature. While outright bribery is of course not permitted, there are softer forms of acquiring votes. Campaign donations, sponsorships of events, and gifts of meals or products can be legally given to legislators. If a legislator wants to continue receiving the support from this company's industry, he or she may continue to vote or even author the bills that the company is in support of. These industry-specific bills generally do not attract a lot of public attention from those outside the industry, as they can be hard to understand if one is not familiar with the concepts or jargon used. Nevertheless, they can have a big impact on industry in the state. Furthermore, companies that operate within the state have a large sway in bills. Companies like Delta, Coca-Cola, and Home Depot operate in Georgia and bring millions to its economy every year. The state has an interest in keeping these companies happy so that they continue to operate and contribute to the economy. Therefore, if several large companies are in favor of or opposed to a bill, there is a good chance the legislature will conform to the companies' opinion. Georgia is consistently ranked as one of the best states to do business in, and the government wants to keep it that way. In some instances, the weight of the companies' wishes outweigh the wishes of Georgia's citizens.

In the 2019-2020 session there were...

4,555
pieces of legislation introduced

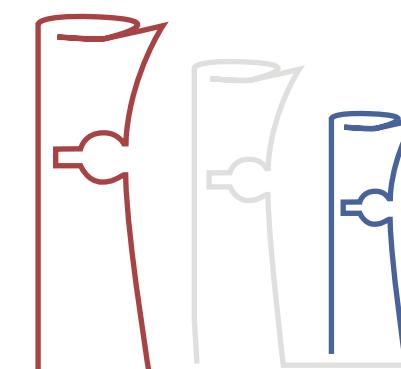
1,257
House bills

1,714
House resolutions

533
Senate bills

1,051
Senate resolutions

2,978
bills and resolutions passed or voted down



DISCONNECTED



Image courtesy of Google Earth

How highways intentionally displaced and segregated Atlanta

Disconnected

How highways intentionally displaced and segregated Atlanta
SAM BASKIN, creative director

The Interstate System was meant to connect the country, and in many ways it did. It was constructed to improve the economy, strengthen defense, and reduce traffic. However, in many urban areas it was designed to purposefully displace or segregate Black communities. According to The Partnership for Southern Equity, “the construction of the interstates in Atlanta, combined with the application of federal urban renewal dollars, decimated Black and low-income white communities that fell in their paths. Some estimates calculated the displacement at approximately 70,000 people, approximately 95% of whom were Black.”

Planners decided to route interstates and highways through downtown districts for several reasons. One reason was to connect the growing suburbs to downtown jobs, allowing people to easily access work. However, highways were also routed through downtown to demolish low-income and Black neighborhoods. According to a Georgia Department of Transportation report on Georgia’s 1947 highway plan, “To the greatest extent possible, the routes were intended to go through ‘marginal neighborhoods’.”

However, “marginal neighborhoods” were often defined poorly, and the label was often used to target Black neighborhoods. Planners at the time used the term “Urban Renewal” to describe using interstates to demolish areas defined as slums.

One area in particular that was unjustly targeted was the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, a wealthy and thriving predominantly Black neighborhood in downtown Atlanta. John Wesley Dobbs, a leader in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, gave a speech before the Metropolitan Planning Committee, in which he stated that Auburn Avenue is home to many Black-owned businesses with millions of dollars in assets as well as important cultural institutions. At the end of his statement, Dobbs said “Your proposed plan

“Many other predominantly Black neighborhoods across Atlanta were targeted with devastating results.”

would destroy this development of ours, which represents two generations of sweat and toil. This attempt, ladies and gentlemen, is fundamentally wrong and unsound.”

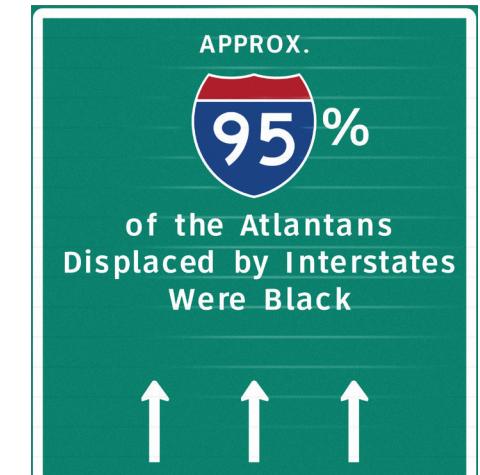
The initial route of the Downtown Connector would have gone through the headquarters of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company on Auburn Avenue, one of the most important institutions in the city’s Black business community during the 20th century.

According to Dr. Calinda Lee, the Vice President of Historical Interpretation and Community Partnerships at the Atlanta History Center, “Not only did the business thrive generally, but it also provided a lot of jobs in the Atlanta area for African-Americans. It provided mid-level and clerical jobs for people who, largely because of discrimination, only had access to blue collar employment.”

After strong political action, the interstate’s route was moved three blocks to the East, instead taking out businesses with less significance. However, the interstate still had a devastating effect on the neighborhood, dividing Auburn Avenue and contributing to its decline.

Many other predominantly Black neighborhoods across Atlanta were targeted with devastating results. Dr. Ronald Bayor, a historian and the author of *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, stated “Highways not only had the intended effect of regulating and confining black residential mobility in the western areas; they also displaced blacks in the downtown section.” The displacement caused by the interstate was often much more harmful than residents simply having to move houses, especially when displacement occurred in poorer neighborhoods.

One key factor is that remuneration for eminent domain only applies to homeowners. In other words, renters have to move out and find a new home without financial assistance. Another factor is the physical separation from the social networks that many people in poor communities rely on. Dr. Lee gave an example. “For people who are more poor, there’s more reliance on social networks. Where maybe the woman who lives two doors down is the person who provides child care for the community because I don’t have the resources to fully participate in a formal



Data from Partnership for Southern Equity

sector for that kind of support. The people at the end of my block might sometimes float me a little bit of food or money when my money runs out for the month. So you have these social networks that are mutually supported in a really fundamental way and when people get displaced, they can’t take those networks with them,” she stated.

“When people get displaced, they can’t take those networks with them”

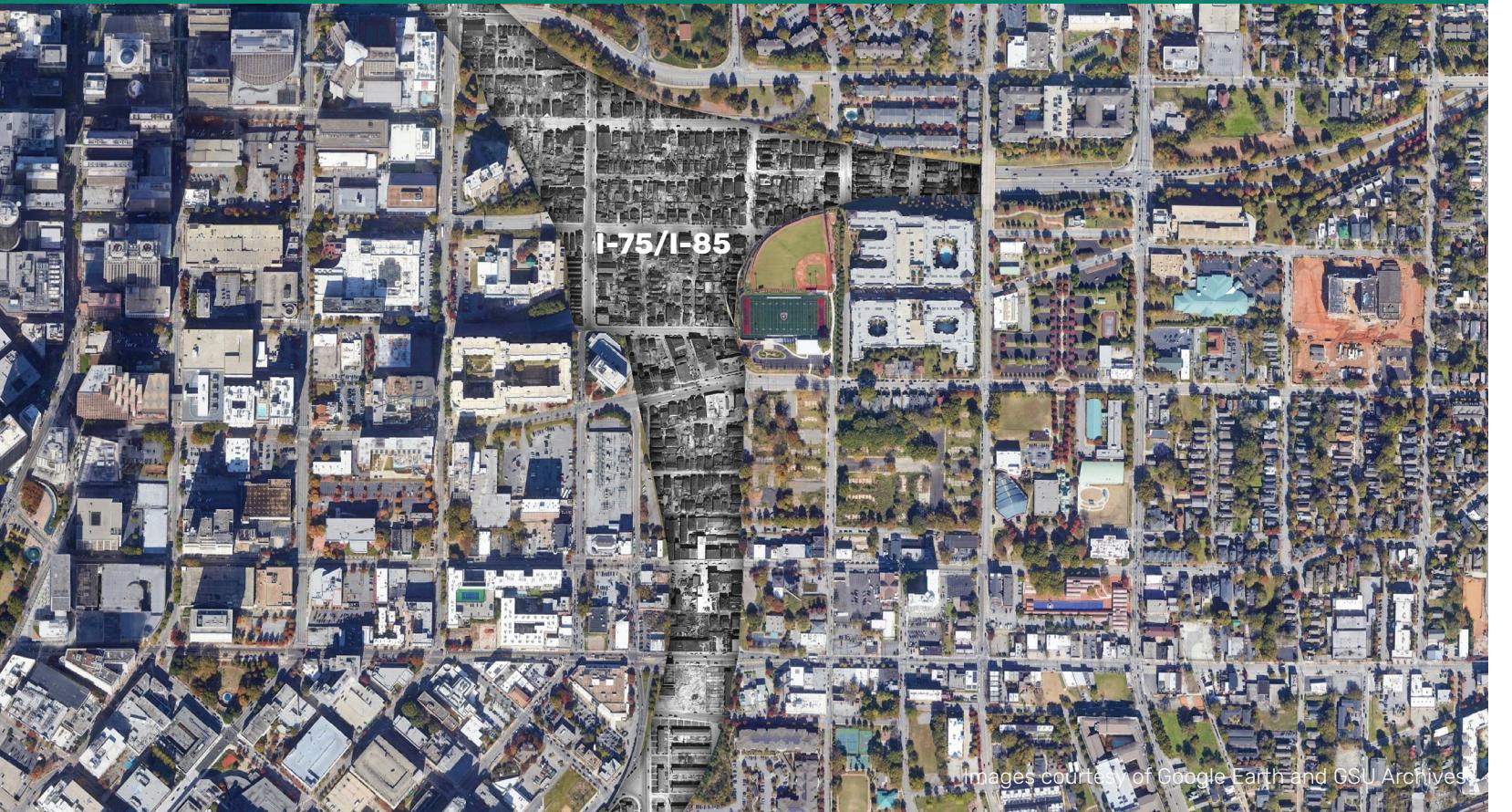
It is important to note that segregation was a very intentional aspect of interstate design. In *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, Bayor wrote “In a 1960 report on the transitional westside neighborhood of Adamsville, the Atlanta Bureau of Planning noted that ‘approximately two to three years ago, there was an ‘understanding’ that the proposed route of the West Expressway [I-20 West] would be the boundary between the White and Negro communities.’” The construction of the highway system was not the first time that roads were used to displace and segregate in Atlanta.

In a less physical sense, names of roads in Atlanta were changed to show the demarcation between white and Black neighborhoods. One notable example is Monroe Avenue and Boulevard,



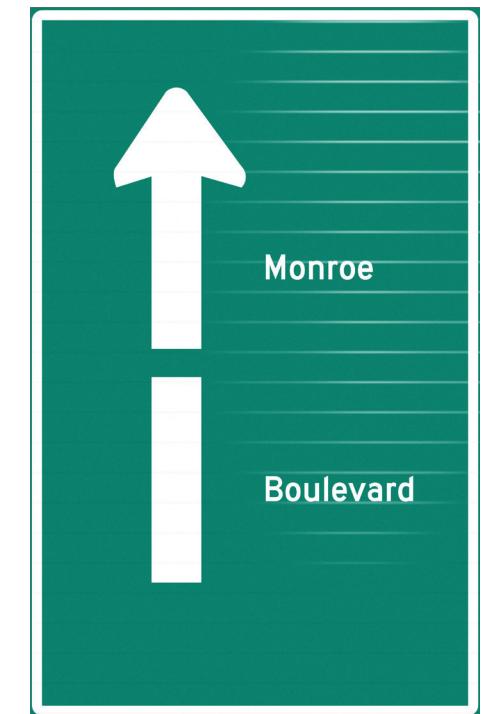


Downtown and Summerhill Neighborhood Sweet Auburn neighborhood



which changes names after crossing Ponce. This was so that white homeowners could feel like they did not technically live on the same street as Black people.

Additionally, some roads were closed off to prevent movement between white and Black neighborhoods. Baylor wrote “One example of this segregation technique was the dead-ending of Willis Mill Road. In the late 1950s the city and county agreed to cut Willis Mill Road five blocks south of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (formerly Gordon Road) so that it would be impossible to drive from that street to Cascade Road. Willis Mill begins again north of Cascade.”



A highway had even been proposed for the purpose of segregation prior to the Lochner plan and Interstate System.

“In 1941 and again in 1947, another highway (the West View Parkway) was suggested as a way of stemming black mobility,” Baylor stated. The techniques used to displace and segregate with the interstate system were not new ideas in Atlanta.

Many long term effects of the racially-motivated infrastructure decisions still exist today. In *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, Baylor wrote “With its downtown deserted at night; its concentrated public housing; its uneven economic development; the distance between jobs and housing for the low income, segregated city neighborhoods . . . Atlanta stands today as the product of decisions substantially based on long-term racial considerations.”

Today, Atlanta is still a very segregated city. According to “Atlanta: Scarcity and Abundance”, “The City of Atlanta is divided by income: high-income households, mostly Whites, live on the north and east sides; low-income households,

primarily Black, live on the south and west sides. It has the highest income inequality of any city in the USA, with a Gini coefficient of 0.57 [19].”

However, there are several projects trying to undo some damage done by the interstate on the city. Two notable examples are the Stitch project and the Midtown Connector Transportation Improvement Project (MCTIP). Both projects plan to cap the interstate, placing a platform over the interstate and reconnecting the two separated sides of the city.

Audrey Leous, the Senior Project Manager at Central Atlanta Progress explains, “[The Stitch project] really is aimed at rebuilding a part of the neighborhood that was ripped apart when the interstate was constructed, so that’s not only restitching together the street network that allows for better connectivity, but really the main goal was creating a neighborhood that can revitalize that particular part of downtown. - Currently you’ve got the area that’s north of the interstate and the south of the interstate and it’s not always seen as a unified area and so this is really meant to catalyze development in that particular part of downtown as well as stitch together the neighborhoods on either side of the interstate.”

The Stitch would cap the Downtown Connector between West Peachtree and Courtland Street. The MCTIP is in earlier stages, but has a similar goal. It plans to cover the Downtown Connector between North Avenue and 10th Street. The tops of each cap would be open for development of green space, parks, or even several buildings. While there are many benefits to these projects, reconnecting the two sides of the city would obviously not undo the full damage of displacement and segregation that has already occurred. Additionally, the projects could end up causing some other buildings to be demolished to make way for the project. Dr. Lee emphasized, “This story of road construction and displacement is not over. The final chapters have not been written. The cap project is really interesting and would help to enliven the midtown area again by connecting the east and west, but even as it seeks to unite those spaces again there are properties that have been targeted for eminent domain.”

However, displacement is still occurring today in modern day Atlanta in many ways other than road construction. One major cause of displacement is the removal of public housing in Atlanta. The

“This story of road construction and displacement is not over. The final chapters have not been written.”

Atlanta Ranks



in The Nation in Income Inequality

HOPE VI public housing program aimed to reduce concentrations of poverty by providing mixed-income housing, but often ended up demolishing public housing without connecting existing residents to new housing. This action resulted in similar displacement patterns to that of interstate construction.

Gentrification, which goes hand-in-hand with a lack of affordable housing, is another cause

“One major cause of displacement is the removal of public housing in Atlanta.”

of displacement. Property values have shot up throughout the city, causing an increase in rent and property taxes which forces out many poorer residents. Today, many people struggle to find affordable housing in Atlanta and are often pushed to the suburbs, particularly to the south of the city. Rental prices tend to be cheaper in those neighborhoods, but there is also less access to jobs and transportation. “If you get displaced south where the rental costs are cheaper, then you also are farther removed from work, and you’re also farther removed from public transportation to get to a job. - Those areas are drawing families, impoverished families in particular. You also end up with areas with school systems that are not as good, and it can lead to a kind of replication of the cycle,” Dr. Lee stated. Displacement is an ongoing problem in Atlanta that did not end when the interstates were completed.

The negative, and often intentional, effects of interstate construction are not unique to Atlanta. Similar scenarios have played out all across the country, and the same is true today for displacement as a result of lack of affordable housing and gentrification. It is important to remember that many injustices of the past still exist in some form today. In 1957, Mayor Ivan Allen coined the phrase “A City Too Busy to Hate,” to describe Atlanta. During the next 10 years, white flight was reaching its peak and planners tried to use I-20 to intentionally segregate Black and white neighborhoods. Even if progress has been made, there is often still work to be done.

Voters' Guide: Presidential Election

A rundown on the two major candidates' stances on key issues.

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief



President Donald Trump

Trump is the current president of the US, and very controversial. He has the Republican nomination. He says he will restore "law and order," but has come under fire for racist, sexist, and xenophobic remarks during his presidency.



Vice President Joe Biden

Biden is the former vice-president of the US. He has the Democratic nomination, and is promising a nation reminiscent of the Obama-era for US voters. He has been criticized for controversial past stances.



Affordable Healthcare

Trump

Trump said he was going to dismantle the Affordable Care Act on his first day in office during his 2016 campaign. He did not, but he has made efforts to weaken it in office. Like most Republicans, he favors a free-market approach to healthcare.

Biden

Biden wants to build on the Affordable Care Act, which was passed when he was Vice President. He says that the expansion will cover more than 97% of Americans and add a medicare-like public option for small businesses. The plan would also automatically enroll millions of uninsured Americans.



Drug Prices

Trump

Trump claims to have significantly lowered drug prices while in office. While he has made some efforts, such as allowing importation of drugs from other prices, there have not been significant reductions in costs. He has also made an effort to cap insulin prices for seniors.

Biden

Biden says he will limit prices on launch drugs that do not have other competition, as well as limit price increases for existing drugs. He will also allow US citizens to import drugs from other countries where prices are cheaper. He will also eliminate drug companies' advertising tax break.



Abortion

Trump

Trump is anti-abortion and has expressed desire to rollback Roe V. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion for up to 20 weeks. He has nominated conservative-leaning judges who have expressed anti-abortion stances.

Biden

Biden is pro-abortion. He said he would like to codify Roe V. Wade into law, which would protect abortion rights even if the decision was challenged. He would likely nominate pro-abortion judges as well. He hasn't specified his stance on late-term abortions.



Clean Energy

Trump

Trump has made an effort to revive the coal industry since he took office. He also rolled back the Clean Air Act, and withdrew from the Paris Climate Agreement. He also placed a tariff on imported solar panels in 2018.

Biden

Biden's clean energy plan aims for the U.S. economy to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. He will also rejoin the U.S. to the Paris Climate Agreement, which Trump left in 2017. He will also invest \$1.7 trillion in renewable energy over the next 10 years, and reverse Trump's environmental rollbacks and tax cuts for corporations.



China

Trump

Trump has promised to be tough on China while in office, including inacting high tariffs in imported goods from China. He has also blamed the COVID-19 pandemic on China. He has also said he will increase tariffs on Chinese goods in the future if China does not hold up their end of the trade deal, which requires them to buy \$200 million in US goods and services.

Biden

Biden has also said that he will keep China in check if he is elected. But, he plans to renegotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade deal that Trump abandoned. He said that he will challenge China's human rights issues, but still "cooperate with Beijing on issues where our interests converge."

Fracking

Trump

Trump has used fracking as a hit against Biden in campaign ads and debates. Trump has been in favor of expanding fracking since he took office.

Biden

Biden is not opposed to fracking. He has stated that he will ban new permits for oil, including fracking, on federal land only. New fracking will still be permitted on private land. The majority of oil does not come from federal land.



Criminal Justice

Trump

Trump is running on a promise of "law and order" in the U.S. His administration has shut down investigations into state and local police departments. He condemned "anti-police rhetoric" in this summer's Black Lives Matter protests, and promises to defend police.

Biden

Biden has said he wants to focus criminal justice on rehabilitation rather than punishment. He will promote investigations into police departments, end incarceration for drug use alone, and create grants for cities with crime prevention programs. He also wants to end minimum sentences at the federal level.



DACA

Trump

Trump has sought to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a program that allows undocumented immigrants to live and work in the US legally. He has not ended the program, but he has unsuccessfully tried to weaken or end it several times.

Biden

Biden supported DACA as Vice President, and is still a supporter of the program. He said he will also allow people protected under DACA to qualify for federal student aid. His website also says he will explore "legal options" to create a pathway to citizenship for people protected by DACA.



College Tuition

Trump

Trump has proposed changes to the higher education act, suggesting limiting federal loan repayment options to a standard 10 year payment plan and an income based plan. The income based-plan would limit payments to 12.5% of the borrower's income and allow eventual loan forgiveness. He would also cap student loans for parents and graduate students, as there is currently no cap. Undergraduate students are already limited.

Biden

Biden adopted several aspects of Bernie Sanders' free college plan, including a plan to make public 4-year college free to families earning less than \$125,000. He would pay for his plan through a tax on Wall Street. His plan also includes student loan forgiveness for Public Servants and investment in community colleges.

\$ Income Tax

Trump

Trump cut taxes for business and individuals while in office. He says he will cut individual taxes even further if he is elected for a second term. But, the majority of his tax cuts for individuals lapse in 2025, according to The Wall Street Journal and it is unclear what his plan is after that.

Biden

Biden would keep the tax cuts Trump enacted for households making less than \$400,000. He has proposed reinstating the mandate that everyone must buy healthcare. He has proposed increasing taxes on high-income individuals, and increasing the top individual rate to 39.6%, up from 37%.

A Historic Election



What's going on with Georgia's Special Senate Election?

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

Former U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson shocked the nation when he announced his surprise retirement in August of 2019. He officially stepped down in December of 2019, citing a long-term battle with Parkinson's disease and declining health.

Businesswoman Kelly Loeffler was selected by Governor Brian Kemp to fill his seat until the next election. Her appointment was not without controversy.

President Donald Trump reportedly favored another candidate: U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He never publicly backed Collins.

"We need Matt Lieberman to understand that he is not called to this moment"

Loeffler is only appointed to fill the seat until November, when Georgia Voters will choose who will occupy the seat for the rest of Isakson's term, which ends in 2022. The winner will serve less than two years in the Senate before having to launch another campaign for reelection. Twenty candidates will be on the ballot.

Several Democrats are also hoping to flip the seat. National Democrats and former gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams are endorsing Reverend Raphael Warnock, a preacher at Ebenezer Baptist Church where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once held the pulpit. Democrats Ed Tarver and Matt Lieberman are also vying for the seat. Lieberman, the son of former Vice President candidate Joe Lieberman, was the first to enter the race. But, he is facing pressure from many Georgia and national Democrats to drop out of the race.

"We need Matt Lieberman to understand that he is not called to this moment," Stacey Abrams said in a September press conference. Lieberman has also faced pushback for a bizarre book he wrote about a modern-day slave owner after the 2017 Charlottesville White Supremacist rallies. The chairwoman of the Georgia NAACP called out the book's racist tropes, but Lieberman claims it



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

is anti-racist.

Democrats are hoping that they can unite voters behind Warnock while the Republican Party is split between Loeffler and Collins. If he wins more than 50 percent of the vote in the primary, he can avoid a runoff with a Republican candidate. Former President Barack Obama also endorsed Warnock.

Trump is much less active in this particular race. He has not endorsed any candidates as of October 18th, 2020. A last-minute endorsement is not out of the question.

"Trump is much less active in this particular race."

Loeffler's short time in the Senate has also been filled with controversy. She came under fire for dumping stocks after a COVID-19 briefing in April, raising eyebrows about insider trading. The Senate Ethics Committee launched a probe into the situation, but dropped it in early June. Loeffler has been a staunch supporter of Trump in office, and is campaigning on that aspect of her career. She says she will continue to back

him if she wins the election. She has also released a series of memes in support of Trump on her social media, and is trying to frame herself as the most conservative candidate. She launched a campaign ad in September claiming to be "more conservative than Attila the Hun." Loeffler also

"Loeffler's short time in the Senate has also been filled with controversy. She came under fire for dumping stocks after a COVID-19 briefing in April"

invested at least \$20 million of her own money into her re-election campaign.

All 19 candidates will face off on the ballot on November 3rd. If no one gets over 50% of the vote, a run-off between the top two candidates will be scheduled for January 5th.

COVID-19 Campaigning



One candidate shares how he campaigns during a pandemic, and how it's different than usual

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

Zan Fort has been involved in political campaigns for most of his life. He grew up watching his father run for Georgia's 39th District Senate seat. Now, he is running for the same seat after State Sen. Nikema Williams vacated the seat to run for U.S. House of Representatives.

Fort is running a campaign unlike any other he has experienced. The COVID-19 pandemic restricted his ability to host in-person campaign events.

"Fort is running a campaign unlike any other he has experienced. The COVID-19 pandemic restricted his ability to host in-person campaign events."

"The most effective way to get somebody to vote for you is to meet them in person," he said. Fort learned that lesson from his father, who made an effort to meet people in the district face-to-face. As an adult, Fort managed his father's mayoral campaign, but he eventually lost to Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms.

Fort has scheduled socially distant canvassing events in several midtown neighborhoods, including home park.

"We're really trying our best to reach people where they are," he continued. "As long as we give people their distance they are more than happy to have a conversation with you."

Groups of no more than two go door-to-door, and keep six feet between the group and the resident to minimize potential COVID-19 exposure.

Fort said it is important to get as much face-to-face interaction with voters as possible for his

campaign, even if it has to be socially distant.

"You can run as many commercials as you want but there's no substitute for that person-to-person interaction," he said.

Fort's campaign is running targeted ads to appeal to different populations. He said that Facebook ads are more successful at reaching older voters, and younger voters tend to respond more to Instagram ads.

Despite restrictions on in-person events, Fort said there is a silver lining to his unusual campaign.

"It's great now because it is a presidential election year," he said. Special elections on the same day as general elections tend to get higher turnout.

Fort is planning on continuing digital and socially distant campaigning. He is not planning an in-person election night watch party, but he said he will most likely have a zoom watch party with some of his supporters.

Fort will be on the ballot on November 3rd to fill the 39th district state senate seat.

"Special elections on the same day as general elections tend to get higher turnout."



Zan Fort / Photo courtesy of Zan Fort

Fort's Background:

Hometown
Atlanta, GA

Education
Duke University

Job
Insurance Agent

Key policy stances

- Raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour
- Pass a comprehensive civil rights law that protects LGBTQ Georgians
- Pass legislation that prevents police officers with complaints from being shifted to other departments

The Pandemic and the Court

The Judicial Emergency and a Conversation with Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice Melton

I PLEAD
THE 6TH



Pandemic and the Court

LOGAN DORRILL, writer
NIKITA GEORGE, design

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State...

For many and arguably most Americans, the pain of COVID has been far more nuanced than just the anxiety or reality of getting sick. Everyday the pandemic exposes ‘frailities and inequalities’ in systems that had already disadvantaged some communities with impunity. Since March, unemployment in the US rose from 3.2% to 10.4% and hiring shrunk by 30%, according to the BBC. Wage workers suffered massively with retail and entertainment being the largest share of the 22 million jobs to disappear. Companies big and small have declared bankruptcy, while watching the net worth of the

“Everyday the pandemic exposes ‘frailities and inequalities’ in systems that had already disadvantaged some communities with impunity.”

billionaire class grow by \$637 million, according to Business Insider. Thousands of their former employees may face eviction or foreclosure in the coming months, while some twelve million have lost their healthcare at the point of its greatest necessity.

Economic hardships have exacerbated social ones. An resurgence of an additional 5.9 million guns has increased violent crime in both domestic and community settings. As compared to 2019, shooting incidents in Atlanta have increased by 19% this year to date, according to CBNC. The twin pandemic of police violence in response to crime and a lack thereof sparked national protests that generated well over 10,000 arrests including 298 in one weekend in Atlanta following the killing of George Floyd. The hardships of the moment are practically



Atlanta Black Lives Matter protest / Photo by SARAH KALLIS

innumerable because they are defined uniquely by the circumstances of the people who have experienced them. However, if there is a commonality it is that those seeking justice have often been pushed into the courts.

The courts, not one to be left out, have also faced substantial dysfunction in the face of the pandemic. Delays and backlogs during this period are the norm. At the onset of the pandemic Justice Harold Melton, the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, issued a judicial emergency saying, “No court may compel the attendance of any person for a court proceeding if the court proceeding or the court facility in which it is to be held is not in compliance with this order, including in particular large calendar calls.”

Since the original order, Justice Melton has extended the original order five times with each growing progressively less restrictive. Now the courts are allowed to meet in person for everything except jury trials - the lack of which limits the courts’ ability to hear criminal and many civil cases. Smaller court proceedings, like depositions, have increasingly been held over video conferencing platforms like Zoom. The judicial emergency as a calculation has



undoubtedly saved lives, but not without a cost. Melton cites delays adversely affecting Georgians in need of legal action across the board. Georgians arrested during protests have often been detained for long stints before being able to see a judge. Some couples seeking marriage licenses have faced delays, just as those who need divorce have had to delay separation.

Melton conceded that the pandemic has lasted much longer than he had originally anticipated. Like many others, legal executives expected the courts to be back to business by the middle of the summer, but that hope has obviously not been the reality.

The road ahead for the courts is uncertain, as it could be months before an official jury is called back into session. A swift reopening could assuage a rush on the legal system, but may only delay the inevitable. Court cases tend to lag behind recessions. In New York City in 2009 local courts closed the year following the great recession with a whopping 4.7 million cases that represented a breadth of financial trouble and associated crime. Experts fear that similar consequences may be ahead once the economic fallout of the impending recession is realized.

The silver lining in court delays is a phenomenon that some experts have called the demystification of the courts. Legal institutions have had to adapt to the situation by approaching cases with greater simplicity and efficiency and as a result have simplified the process.

When asked about adaptations, Melton was clearly excited about the progress. "We've been doing court in the same ways for decades. We have had to give thought to efficiency that we haven't ever been forced to before" he continued, "Video conferencing technology has been used in ways that we hadn't ever thought about.

"Legal institutions have had to adapt to the situation by approaching cases with greater simplicity and efficiency and as a result have simplified the process."

Traditionally, jail transport busses brought inmates to the courts for relatively routine preliminary matters in criminal cases. We learned that setting up video conferencing at the jails makes that process less expensive and more secure for everybody."

This type of technology has the potential to make the legal process less expensive across the board by reducing the amount of travel. The idea of an attorney billing his client to drive across the state for a 15 minute interview may soon be one of the past. In the meantime, Melton promises that judges throughout Georgia are prepared to work overtime to weather what will certainly be a very busy couple of months.

Statistics

10,000+
protest-related arrests
nation-wide

298
arrests in one weekend in
Atlanta

19%
increase in shooting
incidents in Atlanta

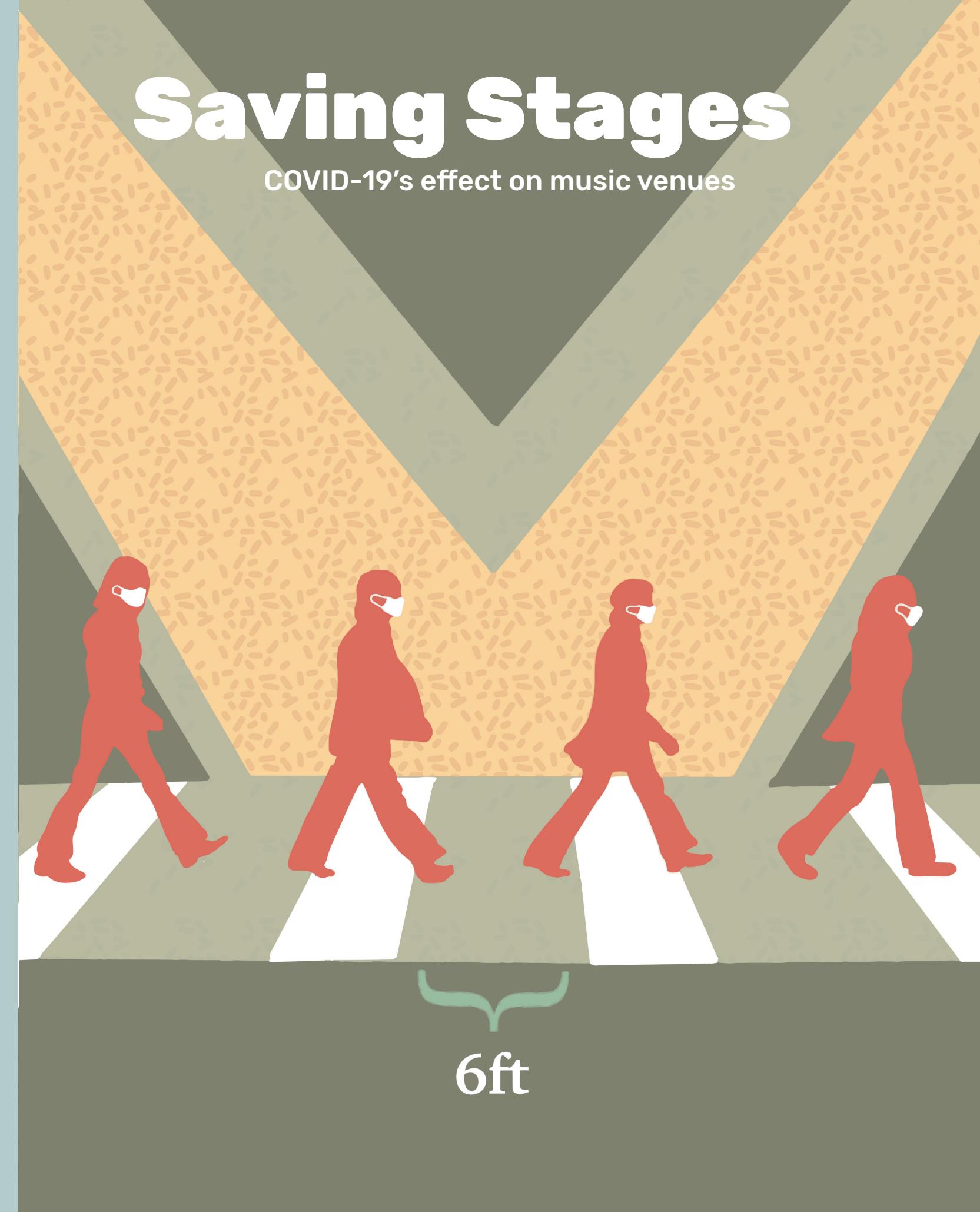
30%
national hiring decrease
since March

7.2%
national unemployment
increase since March

\$637M
increase in the net-
worth of the billionaire
class since March

Saving Stages

COVID-19's effect on music venues



Saving Stages

CAROLINE BREWER, writer
MEGAN MINNEAR, design

With the exception of only rare performers, musical acts generally do not begin their careers selling out venues such as State Farm Arena or the Cobb County Energy Performing Arts Center. Singer-songwriters start out at local joints like Eddie's Attic in Decatur or Smith's Olde Bar in Virginia Highlands working open mic night circuits whereas rap artists try to earn playing time in downtown clubs such as Magic City. The thriving music scene created by these smaller venues has nurtured artists across the confines of genre. From Future to John Mayer and many people in between, these historic venues have launched once struggling artists into superstardom.

"Amid the first great United States wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, concert venues were among the first establishments to close. Live music has managed to pervade via livestreaming services; however, independent venues across the nation have been suffering."

Amid the first great United States wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, concert venues were among the first establishments to close. Live music has managed to pervade via livestreaming services; however, independent venues across the nation have been suffering. Without revenue from events, these venues struggle to pay costs like rent, utilities, and payroll. Whereas other gathering spaces like restaurants, churches, and bars were able to adapt and recover some of their lost costs via streaming services and takeout options, concert venues have not had major success with adapting their services for a virtual world. Given these abysmal numbers, concert



2019 Concert at Terminal West / Photo by SAM BASKIN

industry publication Pollstar predicts that venues could collectively lose close to nine billion dollars if the current conditions of the state do not allow for live entertainment.

"The thriving music scene created by these smaller venues has nurtured artists across the confines of genre."

Even while disregarding the enrichment that live music offers people, live entertainment provides value to the U.S. economy that cannot be understated. According to a report written by the National Endowment for the Arts, arts and cultural sectors enrich the economies of rural states, provide room for rapid growth within the industry, enjoy a surplus in exports, and increase the value of the U.S. economy by more than five times than that of the agricultural sector. Though live entertainment may not classify as an

producer, or talent representative. This grant must be used to cover costs incurred between the beginning of March until the end of December of this year. This bill would also provide for the eligibility of supplemental grants that could be used to offset costs incurred in the first half of 2021. Since its introduction, artists such as Billie Eilish, Bob Weir, and Atlanta's own Zac Brown have vocalized their support of the act. This bill has also garnered support from the left and the right—a feat in a presidential election year. Senators from Kamala Harris to Lindsey Graham have signed a letter of endorsement to both Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell. It is far more than reasonable that this bill would receive little opposition.

"The Save Our Stages act would preserve these independent venues and allow them to continue to provide a space for people to gather and appreciate local art"

Independent venues are the backbone of the arts. Artists pay their dues and find their sound in places like coffeehouses and smaller theaters like Tabernacle before selling out the Infinite Energy Center. The Save Our Stages act would preserve these independent venues and allow them to continue to provide a space for people to gather and appreciate local art, an experience which is not to be dismissed as anything less than essential to experience when the climate allows.

"Even while disregarding the enrichment that live music offers people, live entertainment provides value to the U.S. economy that cannot be understated."

90%
of independent venues will close by the end of 2020 if supplementary funding is not granted

According to the National Independent Venue Association

Fox Theatre will be closed into
2021

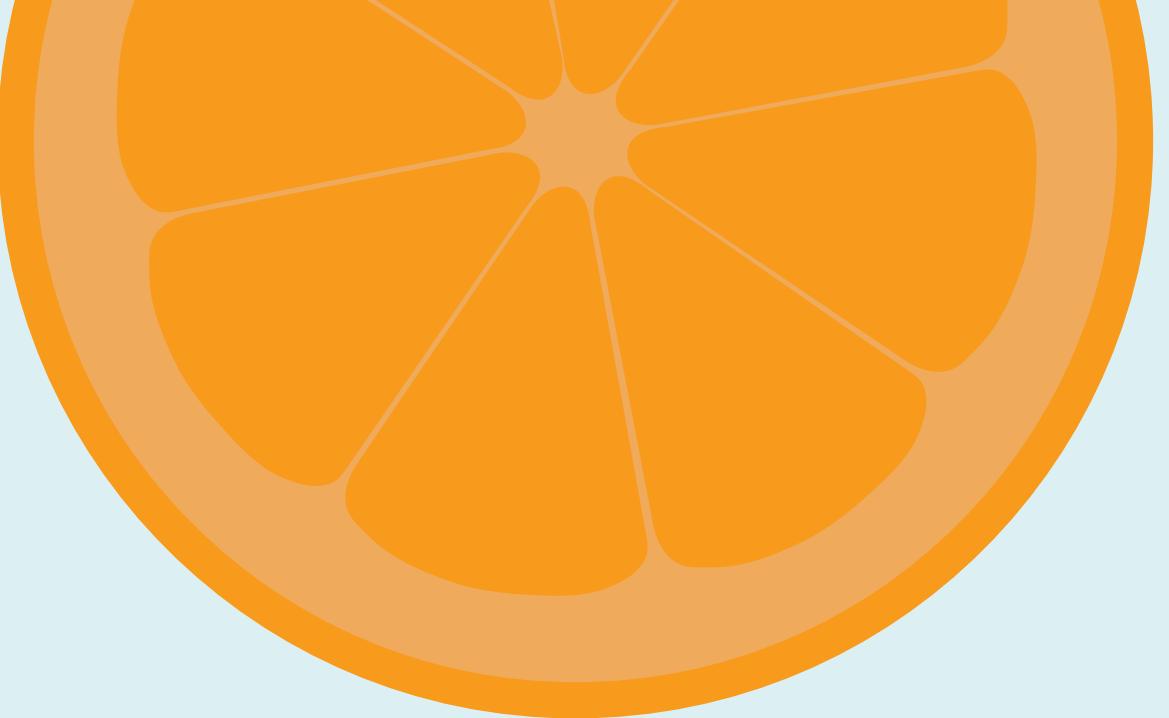
According to the Atlanta Journal Constitution

Creative industries in Georgia earn a combined revenue of

\$37 Billion

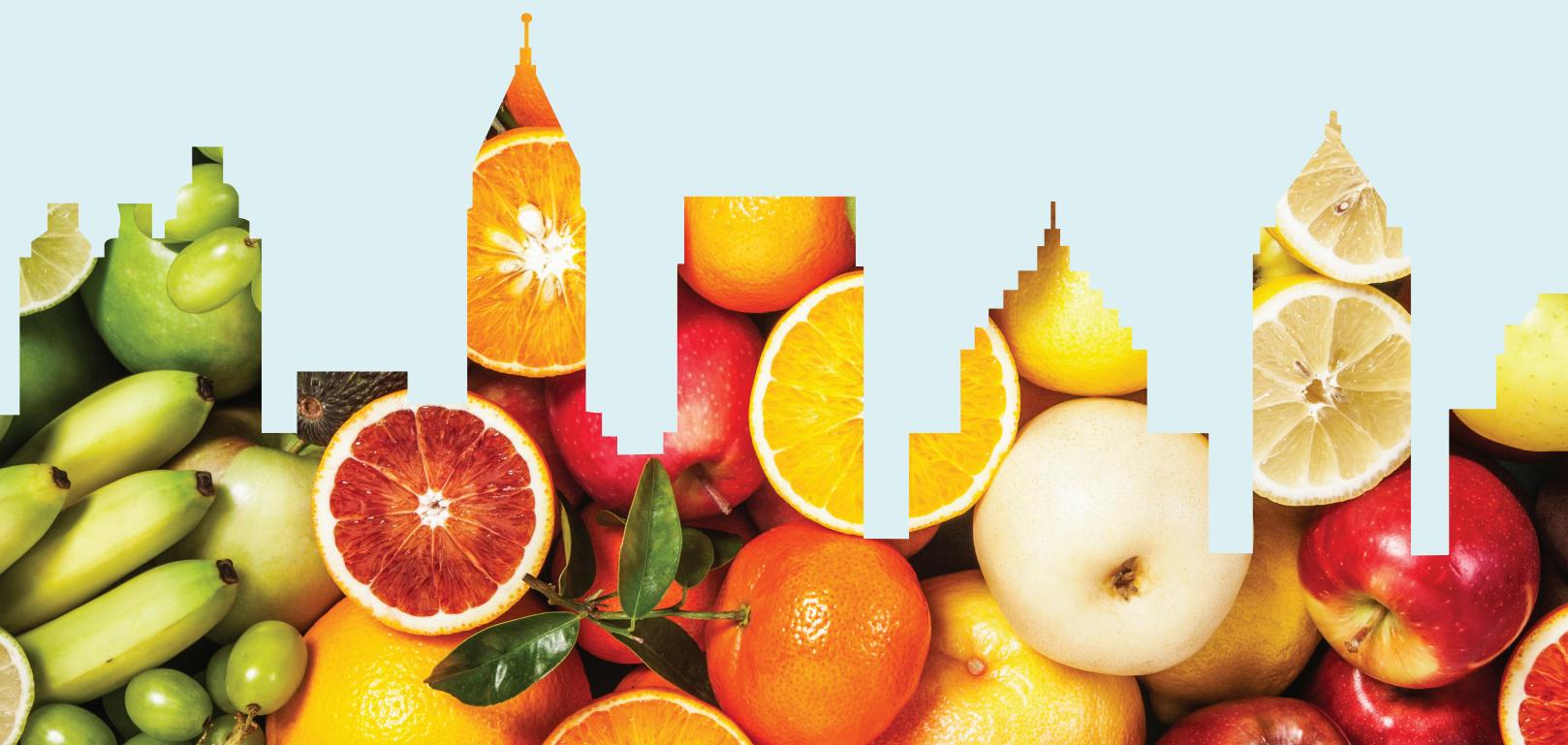
Data from Georgia Council for the Arts





SPROUTING UP

Atlanta's Rising Plant-Based Movement



Sprouting Up

ELLA STEWART, writer
GEHNA CHAUBAL, design

According to a 2020 WalletHub examination, Atlanta, Georgia comes in at #15 in the list of the most vegetarian and vegan-friendly cities out of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. These cities were compared on 16 different veg-friendly indicators, and Atlanta's highest scores were in "Diversity, Accessibility, and Quality". This assessment probably comes as no surprise to Atlanta vegans and non-vegans alike. With delicious vegan restaurants and pop-ups sprouting up all around the city, the plant-based movement has evidently reached the heart of Atlanta.

A 2019 Gallup poll shows that a quarter of U.S. Americans are cutting back on meat, and the number of self-identifying vegans and vegetarians is growing. The major reasons for these dietary shifts are concerns about health, the environment, and animal welfare. According to the poll, people of color are leading this shift towards plant-rich cuisine.

The city of Atlanta is on the cusp of an overwhelming plant-based movement. The COVID-19 pandemic opened up unique business avenues for local vegan cooks and bakers. The animal rights activism in the city is picking up as well. Who are the people behind this multifaceted cultural shift, and how is this shift impacting the people of Atlanta?

Leah, the face behind Flour + Time Bakery, was in a tough spot at the beginning of the pandemic. She has a long-held passion for performance along with a back-burning dream to open her own bakery. At the crux of the pandemic, Leah was dropped from her spot at a bakery and the world of performance went into hibernation. "Alright, we've gotta do something!" Leah said as she was left with no choice but to modify her back-burner bakery concept, get a cottage kitchen license,

and start delivering her own baked goods to locals. Leah started the plant-based bakery Flour and Time out of her home in April, providing nostalgic, classic treats to the Atlanta area. Leah perfected plant-based recipes for croissants, fluffy pain au chocolat, intricate loaves of sourdough, cinnamon rolls, and more with Flour and Time.

"With delicious vegan restaurants and pop-ups . . . Atlanta is on the cusp of an overwhelming plant-based movement."

Christopher "Soul" Eubanks has been an animal rights activist and vegan content-creator for three years, organizing grassroots events, protests, and more to advocate for a vegan lifestyle. Last year, Soul co-organized the first ever Atlanta Animal Rights March, which brought in about 300 people. Soul described the march as a defining moment for vegan activism in Atlanta, largely since this event was a first welcome to animal activism for many attendees. Soul now organizes vigils where activists gather to bear witness to animals headed to slaughter. Lately, Soul has been participating in protests targeted towards everything from fur trade to animal testing.

Left: Leah's Flour + Time picnic in Piedmont Park.
Right: Flour + Time's croissants and pain au chocolat, arranged with toppings, spreads, floral decorations, and Rumours by Fleetwood Mac.
Images courtesy of Leah Parris



Vegan Loca's Street Corn (top) and "Chkn" Chimichimichanga (bottom)
Image courtesy of Vegan Loca

Angelica and Katy started Vegan Loca out of their apartment this August after months of research and daydreams. They moved to Atlanta with hopes of opening a restaurant that makes vegan Latin food accessible and delicious, and they did just that. Vegan Loca serves up dishes from a blend of Central American, Caribbean, and Southern influences. With a shifting menu built on local foods and delicious homemade seitan, Angelica and Katy are cooking up some seriously tasty plant-based meals.

"We want to be an edgier, sloppy vegan fast-food spot."

In December of 2019, Aaron Gossett-Posey and several partners started building a vegan fast-food business, largely in the form of a pop-up spot. From various kitchen spaces in East Village, they started crafting jaw-dropping meals like their vegan Philly sandwich, and thus, Villy's was born.

Max, a co-owner at Villy's, said, "When the pandemic hit, we started cooking out of his apartment. Once business was picking up, we moved into the kitchen space that we are in now, and we're doing everything solely through Instagram."

Villy's has already seen considerable success with their niche, classic vegan eats including hits like their Korean Fried Chick'n Sandwich (\$12) or their Buffalo Chick'n Sandwich (\$10). Max mentioned their ambitions as a vegan fast-food joint. "Many vegan restaurants are more tailored to a sit-down, finer-dining situation -- it's a whole process. We want to be an edgier, sloppy vegan fast-food spot," he said. They plan to operate Villy's at a drive-thru location in the future, with hopes to introduce more people to their familiar alternative to traditional fast-food.

The plant-based demographic in Atlanta is a growing community of supportive people. Soul mentioned some recent developments in vegan activism in Atlanta. More activists are feeling

"Things have exploded in the last couple of years."

"emboldened" to speak up for animals and stand up to systems that exploit animals. Additionally, plant-rich eaters are eager to support these businesses that are bubbling up.



Max from Villy's said, "We honestly didn't even know what the support was going to be like." Even during a pandemic, Villy's was able to find a market for their vegan eats. "Once we got moved into the West end, a lot of people were finding out about us. There are a lot of vegans in the West end in general. If we ever have a restaurant, we would want one here," he said.

Katy and Angelica with Vegan Loca even claimed, "The support in Atlanta is unmatched... Atlanta was definitely a great place to start considering the dense population and growing vegan community."

Leah from Flour and Time mentioned that the Atlanta Vegan Facebook page was particularly welcoming and supportive to her business. Soul noted, "There are a lot of Black-owned vegan restaurants... things have exploded in the last couple of years."

The people behind this movement are serving the community and world at large by changing the way Atlantans look at a meal. In turn, these individuals are walking away with renewed perspectives towards their work and communities.

Max from Villy's described, "Now seeing that there's a huge community of people, vegan or not, that are being put onto our food, it's amazing to be able to offer these people a similar experience as an alternative."

Katy and Angelica at Vegan Loca say that their favorite part of this work is "getting to be a part of such a wonderful vegan movement and spreading our culture through full stomachs." As they chug



Left: Chris "Soul" Eubanks, Atlanta-based vegan and animal rights activist.
Top: Eubanks recently participating in activism in Georgia.
Images courtesy of Christopher Eubanks



Top: Katy and Angelica of Vegan Loca in Berkeley Park.
Bottom: Cornbread Fed, with "beef" crumbles and keso.
Images courtesy of Vegan Loca

thing happen to other activists." Soul said that the most recent vigil in Athens was particularly powerful due to the local activists.

This plant-based buzz in Atlanta is a cross-cutting movement. There is a significant intersection between Atlanta's communities of color and the plant-based movement here. Black-owned restaurants in Atlanta have become a staple in its food culture.

Soul flags that this intersection may partially be the result of education or awareness. He sees that the mechanisms of various systems of oppression are becoming common knowledge. Soul said, "We're starting to become aware of how negative these foods and these systems are. It [vegan diet] is something we agree with dietary-wise and ethically."

Nonetheless, people of color throughout Atlanta are bringing invaluable innovation and creativity to the vegan food game.

"The mechanisms of various systems of oppression are becoming common knowledge."

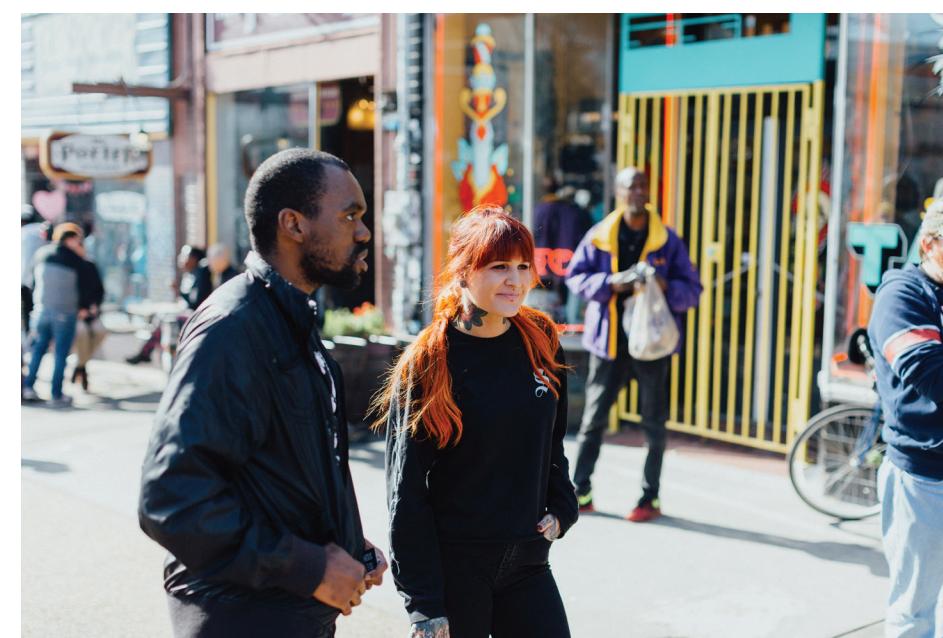
The various landmarks of the rising plant-based movement in Atlanta give insight to the values of many Atlantans: generosity, peace, hard work, and ingenuity. Leah described, "With how excited this community gets to see new companies come up,



Top: Flour + Time's cinnamon rolls.
Bottom: Vegan Loca's tostones, or mini Dominican grilled cheez sandwiches.
Images courtesy of Leah Parris, Vegan Loca



Eubanks with a fellow activist.
Image courtesy of Christopher Eubanks



I feel like this is a community that really wants to help each other grow and thrive. I think Atlanta is a place on the map that vegans will want to come visit because of our strong plant-based community." As the movement continues to grow, both vegans and non-vegans can look forward to much more original Atlanta vegan food for years to come.

"I feel like this is a community that really wants to help each other grow and thrive."



Too Big to Ignore

MAEL-SANH PERRIER, writer
DHRITI NAIDU, design

During periods of civil unrest, symbols of unpopular regimes tend to be among the first casualties. After the Charlottesville car attack in 2017, 34 Confederate monuments and memorials were removed. After the death of George Floyd, upwards of 80 such structures have been removed either by a government authority or by force during protests that lasted through the summer, five of those in Georgia. Despite renewed calls to continue those efforts and get rid of Confederate imagery in the state, Section 50-3-1 of the Georgia Code in fact prohibits the removal of "any publicly owned monument, plaque, marker, or memorial which is dedicated to, honors, or recounts the military service of any past or present military personnel of this state, the United States of America or the several states thereof, or the Confederate States of America," even by the governments of cities where they are located. The only monument to be explicitly in that section of the code as one that "shall never be altered" is one of Atlanta's most popular hiking destinations: Stone Mountain.

"After the Charlottesville car attack in 2017, thirty four Confederate monuments and memorials were removed."

Located a half hour from downtown Atlanta, the Stone Mountain Memorial is the main attraction of a 3,200-acre installation. Stone Mountain Park has only three large roads, and they're named after Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and Jefferson Davis, the three men depicted on the face of the mountain. The carving was completed in 1972, but the idea for it first appeared in 1914. Most controversially, it has long been associated with the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan was revived there in 1915, and it hosted many cross burnings due to its nature as a holy site for the organization.

Its history has led to the Stone Mountain Memorial being a major topic of political debate in recent years. Its mere existence is sometimes seen as an affront to Atlanta and its predominantly African-American population, and its removal was included as a platform point by Stacey Abrams during her 2018 gubernatorial campaign.

As recently as July 4th 2020, members of the Not Fucking Around Coalition, a militia consisting mostly of Black veterans, marched through Stone Mountain, both to respond to threats of violence made by the Ku Klux Klan and to advocate for the removal of the monument. One online petition gained traction in 2016 when it suggested simply adding Atlanta icons, Andre 3000 and Big Boi of Outkast, right next to the three Confederate leaders. Given all these efforts, what makes it so difficult to start the process to at least alter the extremely controversial carving?

Due to the law that's currently in the books, it would take going through the State Legislature to amend the statute and allow for removing the Stone Mountain Memorial. Beyond that, the technical difficulties haven't truly been addressed in the past. Stacey Abrams suggested sandblasting, but this carving is the largest bas-relief in the world, making any attempt to somehow destroy it inherently controversial. That aspect is not

the monument's only claim to fame either, since Stone Mountain Park is Georgia's most-visited tourist attraction and draws more than 5 million visitors a year, as of 2017.

The park and its attractions are run by Herschend Family Entertainment, which also runs Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, TN, and is a regional hotspot for camping, hiking, and seasonal events. The potential economic impacts and lack of support from Republican state legislators make it hard to see a pathway to removing the carving.

"Most controversially, it has long been associated with the Ku Klux Klan: the Klan was revived there in 1915, and it hosted many cross burnings due to its nature as a holy site for the organization"

While Stone Mountain is certainly the largest Confederate monument, it isn't necessarily the most evident one in Georgia. A side-by-side comparison of the Georgia state flag and the first national flag of the Confederacy, commonly known as the Stars and Bars, yields only one difference: the Great Seal of the State of Georgia with the additions of the words "IN GOD WE TRUST." While the first iteration of the Stars and Bars contained only seven stars, six more were



34 streets named
in honor of the
Confederacy

3 streets have
been renamed

In Atlanta...

According to the Atlanta-Journal-Constitution

added over time to account for the total of thirteen states admitted to the Confederacy. This makes it even more eerily similar to the current state flag, which contains thirteen stars to represent the original states that formed the United States.

The Georgian flag has escaped scrutiny at the same time as Mississippi has been pushed to retire their flag due to it depicting the Confederate battle flag, which is now more commonly associated with the Confederacy. However, older

residents of the state may recall that, between 1956 and 2001, the flag of Georgia contained that same battle flag. Years of political pressure pushed former Governor Roy Barnes to incite a change through the Georgia General Assembly. The new flag was widely disliked, and his successor, former Governor Sonny Perdue, organized a referendum that allowed Georgians to choose between the "Barnes flag" and the current version.

"Given the recent unrest and nationwide progress in removing Confederate symbols from all sorts of public entities, the question of when our state's flag will be contested once more."



1861-63 Confederate Flag



Current Georgia State Flag



@3484mag



@3484mag