

# Transition Report

2022





**Contents**

**Letter from the Mayor..... 1**

**Letter from Transition Committee Co-Chairs..... 3**

**Summary of Recommendations..... 9**

    Executive Summary ..... 10

**Education and Youth..... 13**

    Background ..... 14

    Methodology ..... 15

    Recommendations..... 16

**Ethics and Procurement Integrity ..... 28**

    Background ..... 29

    Methodology ..... 31

    Recommendations..... 33

**Neighborhood Empowerment..... 38**

    Background ..... 39

    Methodology ..... 40

    Recommendations..... 41

**Safe Streets ..... 63**

    Background ..... 64

    Methodology ..... 68

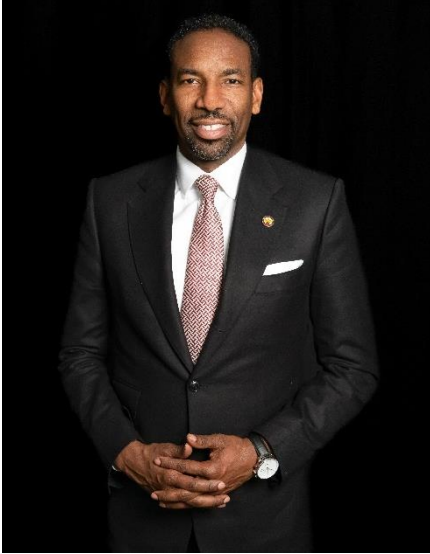
    Recommendations..... 69

**Appendix..... 70**



# Letter from the Mayor





I have the good fortune of governing one of the greatest cities in the world.

When I took office as Atlanta’s 61st Mayor, I asked a group of our esteemed citizens to sit on a transition team and help me as I developed our agenda. I am humbled to have such a talented team of people band together to provide unique insights and key recommendations on how we can continue to make the city of Atlanta the best it can be.

The fine work this team has done to review and provide recommendations on four areas that are integral to our quality of life – Education and Youth; Ethics and Procurement Integrity; Neighborhood Empowerment; and S.A.F.E. Streets – exemplifies our shared commitment to Move Atlanta Forward.

We have had an enormously busy and productive [first 100 days in office](#)<sup>1</sup>. I have visited every corner of the city to speak with constituents, discuss collaborations with stakeholders, and crystalize my vision for the city. Like the phoenix, we will continue to rise to new heights. The strategic recommendations in this report will help inform the roadmap I am developing to take us to where we can be as a united city.

No report could cover all of the critical issues we face as a city. So even as we review the four areas covered in this report, we also continue to be hard at work in other vital areas, such as combatting homelessness, building and preserving affordable housing for people at all socioeconomic levels, investing in vital, connected infrastructure, and infusing arts and culture throughout our daily lives.

I sincerely appreciate my transition team’s contributions, time and knowledge. The recommendations in this document come from citizens from so many of Atlanta’s great communities – academics, faith leaders, corporate professionals, government leaders, neighborhood and citizen activists, nonprofits and philanthropists, legal eagles and law enforcement personnel, and many others. They are indeed a Dream Team.

As I shared in my first [State of the city address](#)<sup>2</sup>, this is my vision for Atlanta:

“One city with one bright future. A city of safe, healthy, connected neighborhoods with an expansive culture of equity, empowering upward mobility, and full participation for all residents, embracing youth development, and an innovative, dependable government moving Atlanta forward. Together.”

I look forward to continue leaning on these experts and others throughout our city for their ongoing counsel and contributions to our vision to improve education, strengthen families and youth, revitalize neighborhoods, apply modern technology, and keep our city safe, throughout my tenure.

As I have stated before, I draw circles. I don’t draw lines. My vision includes and involves everyone. To my transition team: Thank you for helping draw those circles and for all you have done and continue to do to forge one Atlanta where everyone thrives.

Moving forward together,

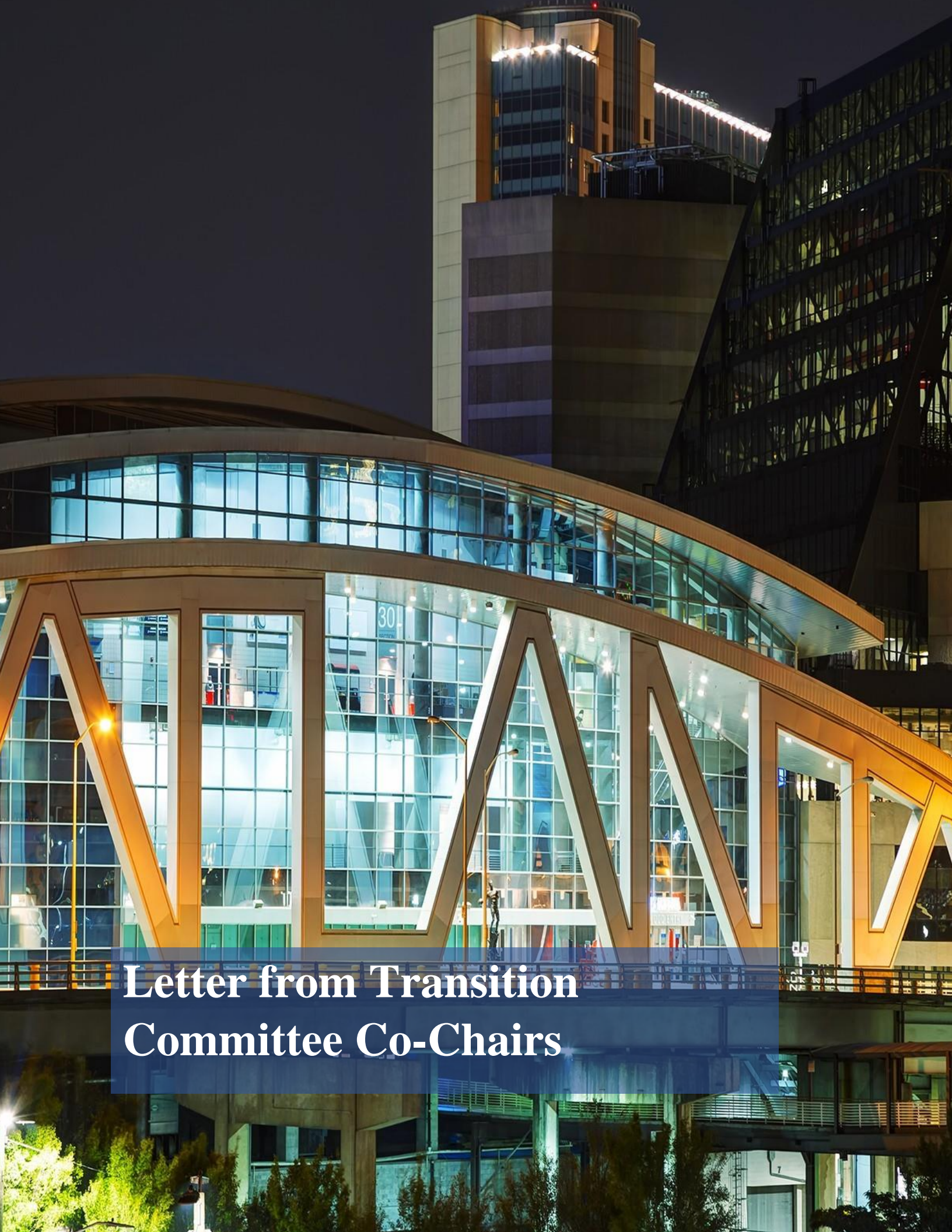
Andre Dickens

Mayor of Atlanta

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.atlantaga.gov/Home/Components/News/News/14131/672>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.atlantaga.gov/Home/Components/News/News/14121/672>



**Letter from Transition  
Committee Co-Chairs**



Dear Mayor Dickens:

As co-chairs of your Transition Team, we are thankful that you entrusted us with this responsibility and honored to present you with a comprehensive set of recommendations developed by thinkers and doers from every sector of Atlanta. We are proud to have recruited a diversity of people, processes, and perspectives that are reflected throughout this report and representative of the entire city.

We also would like to thank the hundreds of community leaders and subject matter experts who volunteered thousands of hours to contribute to Atlanta's roadmap. They are educators and activists, nonprofit and business leaders, industry experts and government officials who represent every station in our great city, and without them, this report would not have been possible.

While our backgrounds are diverse, we all have one thing in common: a burning desire to move Atlanta forward and improve the quality of life for everyone. We took the charge of providing strategic recommendations seriously, and devoted the first 100 days of your administration on four key areas:

Education and Youth

Ethics and Procurement Integrity

Neighborhood Empowerment

S.A.F.E. Streets

Each subcommittee was informed by dozens of reports, years of research and numerous best practices. Members engaged experts, conducted listening sessions, gathered input from the general public, and spent hours synthesizing data to offer recommendations that align with the vision you so eloquently articulated for Atlanta.

As you will see throughout the pages that follow, the themes of transparency, integrity, and strengthening public confidence in government guided our suggestions. Thank you for inviting us to be part of this important initiative, and for crystalizing our hope for a stronger, more united Atlanta.

Yours in service,

Howard Franklin

Sharon Gay

# Special Thank You to the Transition Team

## Honorary Co-Chairs

- Dr. Brian Blake - President, Georgia State University
- Dr. Raphael Bostic - Chairman, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
- Dr. Lisa Herring - Superintendent, Atlanta Board of Education
- Sam Massell (late) - Former Mayor of Atlanta
- Wendy Stewart - President of Global Commercial Banking, Bank of America

## Co-Chairs

- Howard Franklin - CEO, Ohio River South
- Sharon Gay - Former Managing Partner, Dentons

## Transition Subcommittees

### *Education & Youth*

- Jenifer Keenan (Chair) - Attorney and Community Activist
- Qaadirah Abdur-Rahim - Chief Equity Officer, City of Atlanta; Executive Director, One Atlanta
- Leonard Adams - President and CEO, Quest Communities
- Tangee Allen - Executive Director, Raising Expectations
- La'Shawn Brown-Dudley - Deputy Chief Equity Officer, City of Atlanta
- Jason ("Jay") Carter - CEO, One Music Fest
- Lisa Cunningham - Digital Content, Black Women's Health Imperative
- Terrace Herron - Senior Director of Government Affairs, Microsoft
- Dr. Fahamu Pecou - Renowned Artist; College Professor
- Dave Wilkinson - CEO, Atlanta Police Foundation

### *Ethics and Procurement Integrity*

- John Horn (Chair) - former US Attorney; Partner, King & Spalding
- Rev. Dr. William Flippin Sr - Pastor, Greater Piney Grove Baptist
- Jerry L. Gray - President, J.G. Consultants
- Dr. Lakesha "Key" Hallmon - CEO, The Village Market
- Michael Hollingsworth - Managing Partner, Nelson Mullins
- Jason Ingram - Deputy Chief Operating Officer, City of Atlanta
- Veronica Maldonado-Torres - President & CEO, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Phi Nguyen - President, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta
- Norman Radco - CEO, Radco
- Rev. Sean Smith - Pastor, Antioch Baptist North

### ***Neighborhood Empowerment***

- Sarah Kirsch (Chair) - Former Executive Director, ULI- Atlanta and Co-Founder, HouseATL
- Sofia Bork - Hispanic Org. Promoting Engagement, Truist
- Barry Givens - Partner, Collab Capital
- Eunice Glover - Chair, NPU-I and APAB Board Member
- Matthew Hicks - Chief Policy Officer and Senior VP, Grady Health System
- Josh Humphries - Director, Housing and Community Development at City of Atlanta
- Dr. Dan Immergluck - Professor, Georgia State University
- Ben Kamber - Project Manager, Housing and Community Development at City of Atlanta
- Nathaniel Smith - CEO, Partnership for Southern Equity
- Larry Stewart - Commissioner, Atlanta Housing Commission
- Fay Twersky - Senior Vice President, AMB Sports and Entertainment
- Zak Wallace - CEO, Local Green Atlanta

### ***SAFE Streets***

- Anna Roach (Chair) - Executive Director, Atlanta Regional Commission
- LaChandra Burks - Deputy Chief Operating Officer, City of Atlanta
- Pedro Cherry - President, Atlanta Gas Light
- Dr. Carlos del Rio - Professor of Global Health and Epidemiology, Rollins School of Public Health
- Walt Deriso - Senior Vice President, Atlantic Capital Bank
- Minister Abdul Sharrieff Muhammad - Minister, Islam
- Blake Patton - Managing Director, Tech Square Ventures
- Richard Rose - President, NAACP - Atlanta
- Rebecca Serna - Executive Director, Atlanta Bicycle Coalition
- Stephen Valrie - Public Sector Client Partner, Slalom
- Sandra Lee Williams - Executive Director, North GA Labor Council

### **Transition Advisory Group**

- Richard Cox - Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Cox Enterprises
- David Edwards - Former Senior Policy Advisor, City of Atlanta
- Duriya Farooqui - Board Director, Intercontinental Hotels Group, Intercontinental Exchange and New York Stock Exchange
- Shirley Franklin - Former Mayor of Atlanta
- Jabari Simama - Former President, Georgia Piedmont Technical College



## Thank you to our Pro Bono Professional Services Support

### *Education & Youth - Slalom Consulting*

- Bharath Parthasarathy - Senior Director, Slalom
- Nathan Whitmire - Senior Director, Slalom
- Robyn Sobelson - Principal, Slalom
- Brian Watkins - Senior Consultant, Slalom
- Crissy Bruce - Associate Consultant, Slalom



### *Neighborhood Empowerment - Deloitte*

- Lauren Powalisz – Senior Advisor, Deloitte
- Kevin Simmons – Senior Advisor, Deloitte
- Shawn Snyder – Engagement Co-Lead, Deloitte
- Haydn Higgins – Project Manager, Deloitte
- Zack Bodden – Business Analyst, Deloitte
- Jennifer Chung – Business Analyst, Deloitte



### *Safe Streets - Accenture*

- Tiffani Nevels – Accenture Client Account Lead, State of Georgia
- Rob Friess – Accenture Strategy & Consulting Lead, State of Georgia
- Chris Young – Accenture Public Service Strategy Senior Manager
- Lakeisha Sesay – Accenture Public Service Strategy Manager
- Brad Stewart – Accenture Public Service Strategy Consultant
- Tomas Henriquez – Accenture Public Service Strategy Consultant



### *Transition Advisory Group - EY*

- Peter Aman – Principal, EY-Parthenon
- Jackie P. Taylor – Principal, EY Public Sector
- Brandon J. Markey – Senior Director, EY-Parthenon
- Umair Khalid – Director, EY-Parthenon
- Sophie Reiser – Consultant, EY-Parthenon
- Eric Herrera – Consultant, EY-Parthenon
- Victoria Olaogun – Associate, EY-Parthenon
- Euthymia D. Stratakis – Associate, EY-Parthenon



In loving memory of Sam Massell







# Summary of Recommendations

## Executive Summary

---

Immediately after being sworn into office as the 61<sup>st</sup> mayor of the great city of Atlanta, Georgia, Mayor Andre Dickens commissioned a 40-member transition team of thought leaders from every sector of the city to study and provide recommendations about how the city can expound on the good things already underway and offer suggestions on how government can address areas that need improvement.

The charge was to study four key areas that impact the quality of life for all who live within Atlanta's geographic boundaries and reverberate throughout the metro area, the state, and the country. Those are:

- Education and Youth
- Ethics and Procurement Integrity
- Neighborhood Empowerment
- S.A.F.E. Streets

Although there are many other issues that define who Atlanta is and how it takes care of people, such as homelessness, affordable housing, infrastructure, and arts and culture, the strategy was to divide and conquer. While the Dickens administration is collaborating, forming partnerships, and providing a laser focus on these issues, the Mayor sought input on the four topics mentioned above from a cross-section of the public.

The transition team went above and beyond expectations. During the 100-day period in which it worked, that coincided with the Mayor's first 100 days in office, team members left no stone unturned. Collectively, the team:

- Interviewed, held listening sessions, and obtained input from **238 community leaders**
- Met in subcommittees, conducted research, and read reports on best practices, spending a total of **3,927 volunteer hours**
- Obtained support from city managers, departments, and commissioners that consumed a total of **1,260 city staff hours**
- Brought in experts and lent their insight and professional expertise for **5,740 consulting hours**

The result was a total of **10,927 hours spent formulating strategic recommendations** for Mayor Dickens' consideration.

The fruit of the amazing and gratuitous labor transition members provided is evident in the full report of recommendations in this document. The highlights of the four subcommittee recommendations are as follows:

### **Education & Youth**

1. Global Recommendations
  - a. Declare 2023 "Year of Atlanta's Youth" and focus strategic priorities around uplifting city's children



- b. Create "Tiger Teams" of loaned corporate and professional services executives to identify, evaluate, and implement strategic changes
- c. Create an Atlanta digital service to plan and implement technological change through city government
- d. Create an "Atlanta Fellows program" to bring in high-achieving undergraduate, legal and business students from the city's higher education community
- e. Create a centralized, high quality one-stop shop for all early learning centers, afterschool and summer programs, internships, jobs, apprenticeships, college, and technical college information
- f. Identify funds to supplement city budget

**Ethics:**

- 1. Re-emphasize importance of tone-defining leadership to create a culture of ethics
- 2. Support newly created ethics & compliance mechanisms: OIG & Ethics Office independence and resources
- 3. Support maximum transparency and pay-to-play restrictions in procurement
- 4. Ensure city government is acting ethically in providing services

**Neighborhood Empowerment**

- 1. Establish a clear and accessible “front door” to city services for neighborhoods
- 2. Promote eviction mitigation policies through coordination and policy change at the county and state levels
- 3. Develop an office of neighborhoods
- 4. Revitalize structures to elevate neighborhood voices
- 5. Design and implement neighborhood pilot program
- 6. Solidify public-private partnerships for place-based efforts
- 7. Standardize comprehensive community health metrics

**S.A.F.E. Streets:**

- 1. Reduce violent crime
  - a. Develop place-based crime prevention strategies in crime "hotspots"
- 2. Enhance the public's perception of safety
- 3. Transform public safety services, operations, & infrastructure
  - a. Conduct a public safety operational assessment
  - b. Improve transportation & road safety
  - c. Develop fast track procurement program for policing and public safety initiatives
- 4. Improve emergency response times
  - a. Conduct an emergency response time review

5. Commit to 21st century public safety strategies & investments
  - a. Create 21st century police department
6. Address the root causes of crime

**Additionally, a dozen strategic and operational recommendations were echoed by each of the Transition Team’s four subcommittees, and represent foundational initiatives that many of the recommendations were based on. They are:**

### **Strategic Recommendations**

1. Create a platform for organization, processes, and data that is housed outside city government to facilitate collaboration across public, private, non-profit, academic and philanthropic sectors. The platform will help the sectors align strategies, coordinate implementation, and track and measure effectiveness.
2. Create a development and marketing capability, perhaps hosted by an external partner, to centralize the process of securing philanthropic, pro bono, loaned executive support, and other sources of non-traditional revenue.
3. Establish a social and racial equity fund financed by philanthropy that could fund efforts to close racial equity gaps in education, housing, health, and economic mobility.
4. Create a process to publicly track the implementation of Transition Team recommendations and other strategic initiatives of the Dickens administration.

### **Operational Recommendations**

1. Upgrade the city of Atlanta’s digital capabilities by developing and implementing a “smarter cities” strategy in collaboration with external partners.
2. Develop a plan to upgrade the process, technology and talent of the city’s supporting departments, including Finance, Information Technology, Procurement, Human Resources, and Legal, to position the city to successfully implement Mayor Dickens’ strategic and operational agendas.
3. Make improvements in the core, customer-facing, services throughout city government with a focus on streamlining bureaucratic requirements of with working with the city.
4. Upgrade tools for accessing city operations (i.e., 211, 311, and 911 hotlines) to improve customer service.
5. Reduce communication barriers with increased data sharing between city departments and external partners.
6. Improve the completion of infrastructure projects and conduct a process evaluation to accelerate implementation.
7. Eliminate the services backlog in low-income neighborhoods and other areas of special need.
8. Inventory and re-purpose under-utilized city property and facilities.





# Education and Youth

## Background

---

The city of Atlanta’s ability to grow and continue attracting leading companies and organizations is built on its ability to empower, engage, and enrich its families and youth, who are the diverse and talented workforce of the future. However, the city’s past record on supporting families and youth equitably across its boundaries is complicated. On a variety of important measurements – social mobility, economic mobility, racial equality, housing equality, etc. – Atlanta’s families and youth are experiencing less than ideal outcomes. In particular, families and youth in Southwest Atlanta are experiencing the unacceptable outcomes, including low odds of escaping poverty and little chance of social mobility.

This Subcommittee – composed of heterogenous backgrounds but all focused on lifting up the city’s family and youth – anchored its efforts around breaking through the realities set forth above. The Subcommittee commenced its work with the belief that there are a multitude of public sector, corporate, nonprofit, and philanthropic entities fighting every day for our city’s families and youth, and the Subcommittee’s recommendations should not encourage the city to duplicate any of these efforts. The Subcommittee, instead, should offer tactical recommendations to the Mayor’s Administration that bolster these organizations’ efforts utilizing the power of the Mayor’s Administration to convene stakeholders, highlight successful models, remove bureaucracy, and fund initiatives.

The Subcommittee took particular notice of the Mayor’s passion and history of service with education and youth issues. As a product of Atlanta Public Schools (“APS”), a graduate of both Georgia Tech and Georgia State University, and the father of a child who attended APS, the Mayor intimately understands the fabric of educational, cultural, and youth issues in the City. The Subcommittee notes that many of its recommendations dovetail with both the Mayor’s prior work on the Atlanta City Council and those items that he has spoken about in various public setting. From creating a “best in class” relationship with APS to focusing on affordable housing in school zones, the Subcommittee applauds the groundwork laid prior to the Transition process.

The recommendations outlined in this Report, though, are not intended to be comprehensive or to identify any panaceas for the issues being felt across the City. In fact, the Subcommittee specifically notes that education and youth issues are complicated and interdependent on a host of issues not addressed in this document (e.g., affordable housing, food insecurity, mental health, LGBTQ+ identity, homelessness, disability rights, and transportation). It is the Subcommittee’s hope that the Administration bring the collective insights of experts throughout these areas to bear when addressing the particular recommendations identified in this Report.

The Subcommittee is optimistic about the efforts that will result from this process and, ultimately, shares the Mayor’s belief that “by the end of my eight years in office, Atlanta will be the best place in the country to raise a child.”





## Methodology

---

The Education & Youth Subcommittee sought to understand the multitude of complex, interdependent factors that impact the lives of families and youths in the city of Atlanta. During this process, the subcommittee consistently heard the need for the city to lift those groups already engaged in this space and to focus on tactical, tangible ways the Mayor and his administration can create a more opportunities for the city’s families and youths – especially those in marginalized communities – during his term.

In particular, the subcommittee – thanks to assistance from Georgia State University, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and the United Way of Greater Atlanta – conducted 11 input sessions with key stakeholders representing academic faculty, higher education executives, Atlanta Public Schools leadership, the philanthropic community, public sector officials, the nonprofit community, and corporate executives. These wide-ranging conversations identified common “pain points” for sectors working with the city on education and youth matters and concrete ways for the Mayor and his administration to address those challenges.

Additionally, the subcommittee and its professional services support reviewed over 50 white papers, task force reports, and issue briefings, three key data sets, and over five “best in class” peer city reviews and previous transition team reports to identify the current state of issues facing the city’s families and youths, with a focus on where disparities remain, and best practices for addressing them from around the country.

Ultimately, the recommendations presented here are curated to be those that (i) there is broad agreement across constituencies regarding need; (ii) can be achieved during the Mayor’s term; and (iii) can have a significant impact on the upward social mobility of the city’s families and youths.

## Recommendations

---

The subcommittee received consistent input from education and youth stakeholders regarding frustration with the city’s inability to reduce inequities in access to youth early learning, programs, and services across the city and to improve social mobility for the city’s families and youth. Asked to identify root causes of this lack of progress in these areas, the stakeholders identified the city’s lack of modern data structure, its inconsistent messaging and communication about programs and services for families and youth, its decentralized and opaque decision-making structure, and its lack of participation in funding mechanisms.

As a result, the Mayor has a historic opportunity to disrupt these patterns and center his administration around the city’s families and youth, particularly those in marginalized communities. This new vision – anchored around transparency, communication, data, and, most importantly, equity – can focus the city’s resources on fixing broken processes in city Hall, aligning stakeholders around shared programs and services, and creating long-term economic prosperity for all families and youth in the city.

### Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Declare 2023 the “Year of Atlanta’s Youth” and focus strategic priorities of the city around uplifting youth, especially in historically marginalized communities.

Recommendation 2: Create “Tiger Teams” of loaned corporate and professional services executives to identify, evaluate, and implement strategic changes around the city.

Recommendation 3: Create an Atlanta digital service to plan and implement technological change through city government.

### Years 2–4 (medium term)

Recommendation 1: Create an Atlanta fellows program, bringing in high-achieving undergraduate, legal, and business students from the city’s higher education community to build the city as a destination employer for tomorrow’s talent.

Recommendation 2: Create a high-quality one-stop shop for all early learning centers, after-school and summer programs, internships, jobs, apprenticeships, college, technical college information, etc. Underpinning the system should be robust data and metrics.

### Years 4+ (long term)

Recommendation 1: Create “The Phoenix Fund” to fund transformational change in the city – from funding technology upgrades to direct funding of families seeking access to programming to connect with children.



## Early education (birth to pre-K)

Access to high-quality care and early learning opportunities – and quality support services – from birth to the age of 5 is critical to setting up the city’s youth for success in school and lifelong development. Public investment in these programs and services can yield a variety of returns, from increased elementary and secondary school performance and workforce development to better health care and public safety outcomes. Unfortunately, many families lack information about these opportunities, and even if they have knowledge, they grapple with structural challenges that limit their ability to utilize these resources (e.g., transportation, health care, and employment challenges).

The Mayor can be an active participant in supporting early learning opportunities in the city, through both direct payments for services to families with needs and convening early learning and education providers to do more for marginalized communities. It is achievable for the Mayor to set a goal of having every child in the city have access to high-quality early learning activities during his term. Additionally, the Mayor and his administration can integrate early education initiatives into the city’s overall long-term strategy, while also challenging the academic, nonprofit, and business communities to work alongside it.

## Year 1 (short term)

**Recommendation 1:** Partner with GEEARS: The Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students to implement a reimagined omnichannel marketing campaign to increase the visibility



and reach of the Mayor’s Summer Reading Club, which targets children ages 0–5, especially to reach families from historically marginalized communities.

Recommendation 2: Partner with the United Way and Rollins Center for Language and Literacy to formally support literacy efforts from birth through third grade.

Recommendation 3: Amplify the efforts of the Cox Campus courses and resources, which provide free resources to educators, families, and communities to advocate for increased literacy for children from birth through third grade.

### **Years 2-4 (medium term)**

Recommendation 1: Strongly support the recommendations set forth by PAACT: Promise All Atlanta Children Thrive, including: (a) fully funding the PAACT Fund for Quality; (b) expanding learning spaces in libraries and other public gathering spots across the city; (c) expanding Summer Transition Programs (STPs) and KinderCamps for rising pre-K students and rising kindergartners to serve students who need additional instructional time and transition support, and (d) developing an Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute.

Recommendation 2: Encourage the Atlanta Science Festival to add events and programming aimed at birth to age 5, particularly around early math/STEM content, and for those children in historically marginalized communities.

Recommendation 3: Partner with MARTA, rideshare providers, and other stakeholders to underwrite transportation costs for city families with children ages 0–5 (especially those from historically marginalized communities) to attend city-wide events targeting early literacy/STEM.

Recommendation 4: Assign the city’s chief human resources officer and chief financial officer to identify methods to increase access to high-quality early learning centers for city employees (e.g., stipends, creation of a city employee early learning center).



## K–12 education

The city of Atlanta must have a strong partnership with Atlanta Public Schools to continue building economic success in all neighborhoods across the city. In particular, the upcoming academic year will be pivotal as students return to the first full year of school in a COVID-19 environment. The parties must be aligned around providing wraparound services to our youths and their families outside of school hours, but also to support academic success during school hours.

The Mayor has a tremendous opportunity to reset the relationship with Atlanta Public Schools by instituting regular meaningful conversations with the superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools and by institutionalizing a true partnership between the city of Atlanta and Atlanta Public Schools on a wide variety of shared priorities (centered on our city’s families and youth and built on the foundations of trust, transparency, and equity).

## Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Establish regular quarterly meetings between a “Tiger Team” of top decision-makers from the city of Atlanta and APS – e.g., chief operating officers, CFOs, and general counsels – to address ongoing operational areas of coordination.

Recommendation 2: Establish regular monthly meetings between counterpart offices in the city of Atlanta and APS (i.e., Transportation, Police, Facilities, Parks and Recreation/Athletics, Equity and Social Justice Officers). Attendees should have political, budgetary, and decision-making authority so that any open items can be discussed and resolved quickly. Where appropriate, important third parties should be added to this meeting cadence (e.g., Atlanta Housing Authority, the Beltline Partnership, Invest Atlanta, health care and mental health partners, nutrition partners, local colleges/universities, stakeholder advisory groups such as parent advocacy groups, student advisory groups).

Recommendation 3: Coordinate with APS to create an omnichannel media strategy for disseminating mutually identified important content to the city’s families.

Recommendation 4: Coordinate with the APS superintendent to convene applicable stakeholders to discuss the issues and conditions of the transfer of the Hope Hill/MLK Center Gymnasium to Atlanta Public Schools.

Recommendation 5: Convene with the APS superintendent applicable stakeholders to discuss the issues and conditions of the transfer of the remaining 12 Atlanta Public Schools property deeds to Atlanta Public Schools.

Recommendation 6: Convene with the APS superintendent applicable stakeholders (including local colleges/universities) to discuss APS’ ability to use city and/or college/university facilities for the city’s youth (including natatoriums, tennis courts, golf courses, shooting ranges for police, and truck wash bays).

Recommendation 7: Convene the city of Atlanta’s Police Department and APS’ Police Department to increase the number of Police Athletic League participants and increase interaction with elementary and early middle school students.

Recommendation 8: Convene with the APS superintendent applicable stakeholders to discuss streamlining the permitting, stormwater management, and tree ordinance processes for APS.

### **Years 2-4 (medium term)**

Recommendation 1: Support the implementation of APS’ Equity Index (the OTIS System), which tracks a myriad of variables and will inform decision-making at APS.

Recommendation 2: Require the city’s Department of Transportation to work with APS’ Facilities Services to identify, prioritize, and fund improvements to all sidewalks within a 0.5-mile to 1.0-mile radius of every Atlanta Public Schools facility.

Recommendation 3: Expand the initial seed amount for the city’s Child Savings Account and expand the program into adjacent financial products (e.g., 529 plan, child debit card).

Recommendation 4: Partner with civic stakeholders and APS to create a school principals community partners contact information guide to connect wraparound services to all students within APS.

Recommendation 5: Partner with APS to review the use of public school facilities for a variety of community and civic programs and activities for the betterment of neighborhoods, especially in historically marginalized communities.

### **After-school and summer programs**

Youths who participate in out-of-school activities (whether after school or during the summer) experience measurable benefits (including engaging in less risky behavior, achieving greater academic success, and enjoying an overall healthier lifestyle). However, access to these types of activities is highly tied to family income in Atlanta, thereby often shutting out these important experiences to youths in marginalized communities (and trapping those neighborhoods into a cycle of limited social mobility).

The Mayor can utilize the city’s resources to showcase a variety of high-quality, safe out-of-school activities, and encourage the private, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors to find avenues for increasing the capacity for low-income families to engage in these experiences. Moreover, the Mayor and his administration can increase its direct participation in out-of-school activities and make the city’s programs “destinations of choice” for families looking for safe, quality, and fun options for their children. It is achievable for the Mayor to set a goal of having every child in the city have access to safe, high-quality out-of-school activities for all families who desire a spot for their children.



## Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Identify communication channels to distribute information about after-school programs to high-density residential areas with school-age children (e.g., apartment buildings).

Recommendation 2: Partner with private sector companies to incorporate programs that teach kids skills for high-demand industries after school hours.

Recommendation 3: Convene relevant stakeholders to reduce operational inefficiencies and redundancies within the programs, while also streamlining and removing any bureaucratic barriers to granting funds to community stakeholders.

Recommendation 4: Work with Invest Atlanta to audit the “Atlanta hire program platform” to ensure that it serves as a useful tool for those seeking skills.

## Years 2–4 (medium term)

Recommendation 1: Establish partnerships with key stakeholders to ensure that there are communications about after-school and summer programs, coordination about after-school and summer programs, real outreach to at-risk students, and tuition offsets (including transportation and meal offsets).

Recommendation 2: Establish a fund to assist youths in the summer with transportation costs, livable wages, and other support so that they can focus on careers/college instead of providing for their families.

## Years 4+ (long term)

Recommendation 1: Upgrade the summer youth employment programs for low-income students.

Recommendation 2: Establish a Greater Atlanta summer learning fund to create sustainable and equitable access to quality after-school and summer programs for all city youth.

## College and career readiness

The city of Atlanta is a destination for the nation’s top companies due to its diverse workforce. Each day brings headlines of companies moving to Atlanta to fill its workforce with technical and experienced employees in a wide variety of fields. There remain people, though, who have not had the ability to take advantage of this workforce environment, mainly due to a lack of career readiness, college readiness, and soft skill training (e.g., financial literacy).



The Mayor should utilize the administration’s convening power to bring together the technical colleges, universities, and private sector to connect high-quality pathway programs to young people in underrepresented neighborhoods, letting them take advantage of high-demand industries making Atlanta home. The Mayor should specifically bring attention to technical colleges and their practical programs that can quickly get youths into good-paying jobs in high-growth sectors.

## **Year 1 (short term)**

Recommendation 1: Endorse and amplify programs (boot camps, workforce trainings, internships, and apprenticeships) for the city’s youth for high-demand careers.

Recommendation 2: Work with the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to convene stakeholders and the philanthropic community to fully fund programs focused on college training.

Recommendation 3: Establish “best practices” at WorkSource Atlanta so that federal, state, and local dollars can be effectively used for career and college readiness programs.

Recommendation 4: Hire an employment liaison to work with the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to connect the business community to educational opportunities within the city, particularly those opportunities that focus on individuals who overcame barriers to employment (individuals with disabilities, the formerly incarcerated, foster care youth, youth experiencing extreme poverty, etc.).

Recommendation 5: Create a “Hire Atlanta” apprenticeship program that expands the network of the city’s entry-level workforce (16–24 years old) by establishing apprenticeships around the city in the corporate, nonprofit, government, and educational sectors (including the city of Atlanta).

Recommendation 6: Showcase the importance of trade skills and technical education, including through highlighting the business community’s innovative programs attempting to provide career pathways in the trades.

Recommendation 7: Partner with Achieve Atlanta and local colleges and universities to launch a city-wide FAFSA education and completion campaign to ensure that all students in the city are eligible for a range of financial aid at institutions throughout the country.

Recommendation 9: Connect with the Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education, as well as its member institutions and their faculty, to obtain advice, counsel, and recommendations on city issues.

## **Years 2-4 (medium term)**

Recommendation 1: Establish metrics and dashboards to evaluate the city’s educational programs to ensure that the city – and its families and youth – see tangible results for its efforts.

Recommendation 2: Expand Atlanta’s “Hire Atlanta Youth” summer jobs program and expand funding to provide for living wages, access to transportation, health care, and other vital support services.

Recommendation 3: Expand the city’s Youth Entrepreneurship Program to cover more of the city’s youth and expand the financial literacy and child readiness skills.

Recommendation 4: Create a “one-stop shop” (e.g., CareerReady ATL) for information about internships, apprenticeships, jobs, re-skilling and upskilling opportunities, professional development opportunities, financial literacy skills, and other “soft skills” necessary for the city’s youth to be competitive in the workforce.

Recommendation 5: Evaluate the Mayor’s Youth Scholarship Program, and if warranted, expand the program to focus on a broader cohort.

Recommendation 6: Consider merging the operation of the Mayor’s Youth Scholarship Program into the Achieve Atlanta scholarship programs to gain operational efficiencies and streamline city programs.





## Higher education and technical education

The city of Atlanta enjoys a vibrant and innovative relationship with a multitude of amazing technical colleges, world-class research universities, and world-renowned HBCUs. While the city embraces these institutions' – and their students' – energy, there is not a strategic plan for how the city and these institutions can work together to solve some of the city's most pressing challenges. The Mayor should become a chief advocate for not only these institutions and their research, but also for finding new ways for these anchor institutions to be part of the city's fabric. Additionally, the Mayor and his administration should convene these institutions around how they can admit more students from the city and identify pathways of opportunity for high-achieving students from underrepresented neighborhoods to find social mobility through technical and higher education.

### Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Audit all city facilities (including facilities owned and/or operated by the Atlanta Fulton County Recreation Authority (AFCRA)) to identify properties that can be monetized and/or sold to the city's higher education institutions in pursuit of funding affordable housing and education and youth initiatives in the city.

Recommendation 2: Activate the OneAtlanta Card to create a "student pass" that would allow college and technical students one visit a year to all the city's athletic and cultural institutions.

Recommendation 3: Revisit the city's relationship with the Coro Foundation to create a civic corps program, to embed high-achieving, promising young talent into city management.

Recommendation 4: Connect the business community to efforts within the technical college system to endorse pipelines to high-growth jobs in the city, such as cybersecurity, construction trades, green jobs.



## Wraparound services

The subcommittee’s work focused on tangible steps the Mayor and his administration can take to better the lives of the city’s families and youth. However, the subcommittee acknowledges that there are a multitude of other issues occurring in the city of Atlanta that have a direct impact on the social mobility, health, and safety of our youth. These issues – including youth homelessness, commercial sexual exploitation of children, youth mental health, affordable housing, transportation, disability rights and access, LGBTQ+ youth rights, and food insecurity – must be considered comprehensively by the city if true progress is to be made.

## Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Endorse the Trust for Public Lands’ “100% Promise” to ensure a quality park within a 10-minute walk for all residents.

Recommendation 2: Convene stakeholders and sponsors to fund entry fees, transportation costs, meals, and other support services for more targeted children to attend city recreation opportunities and summer programs, including Camp Best Friends.

Recommendation 3: Expand youth programs such as the Police Athletic League’s youth summer camps and after-school programs, especially at the elementary school age groups.

Recommendation 4: Sign onto the U.S. Conference of Mayors’ and Major League Baseball’s “Play Ball” pledge and partner with the Atlanta Sports Council and local stakeholders to encourage the city’s youth to play baseball and become active.

Recommendation 5: Showcase creative youth-focused arts entities and activities, such as reimagATL and the Atlanta Music Project.

## Years 2–4 (medium term)

Recommendation 1: Convene stakeholders and sponsors to fund the continued expansion of the Atlanta Community Schoolyards Initiative.

Recommendation 2: Create a “one-stop shop” for information about the city’s parks, recreation opportunities, public facilities, camps, outdoor activities.

Recommendation 3: Fully fund Camp Best Friends to return to a full employment of 300–700 youths as camp counselors and facilities management during the summer.

Recommendation 4: Establish city Youth Councils and convene other youth stakeholders (e.g., teachers, principals, and parents) around supporting violent crime reduction efforts.

Recommendation 5: Continue supporting the Atlanta Police Foundation and community stakeholders’ At-Promise Centers, including increasing the relationship between the centers and the juvenile court system (to divert more youth to the centers’ resources through the probation process).

Recommendation 6: Increase funding for the Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative.



Recommendation 7: Assess the Centers of Hope and do an audit of current conditions and activities at each location.

Recommendation 8: Create a Youth Creative Arts Corp, a summer program pairing young artists with local arts and culture organizations, showing them real career pathways in the creative media industry.

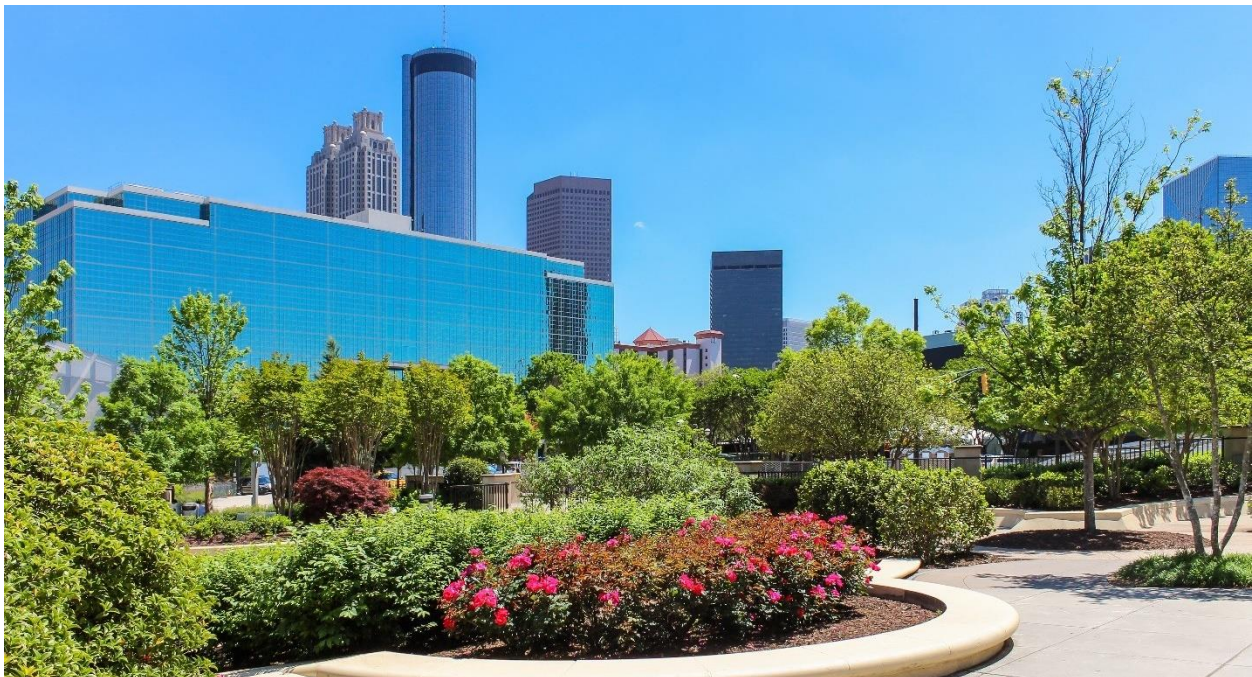
Recommendation 9: Partner with APS to encourage the creation of a “School of the Arts” within the city of Atlanta, focused on traditional and digital creative arts (with partnerships with the Atlanta FinTech Academy, the Atlanta Film Academy, Georgia State University’s Creative Media Industries Institute, etc.).

## **Years 4+ (long term)**

Recommendation 1: Appoint specific task forces (or empower specific city units/departments) to address the myriad other important issues impacting the city’s youth and their social mobility, including youth homelessness, commercial sexual exploitation of children, youth mental health, affordable housing, transportation, disability rights and access, LGBTQ+ youth rights, and food insecurity.

Recommendation 2: Prioritize the creation of new parks and recreation facilities in high-priority areas in marginalized communities.

Recommendation 3: Invest in technology to coordinate all Department of Parks and Recreation activities, track metrics for usage of facilities, allow electronic payments for any use fees and facilities reservations, and omnichannel marketing campaigns to disseminate information to residents and visitors.



## Funding, collective impact model, and data coordination

The subcommittee heard from numerous stakeholders in the city that, while there are lots of initiatives in Atlanta, there is not a focused approach for how the city handles education and youth issues. Accordingly, the subcommittee recommends a “collective impact” model to focus the city’s attention on a core set of strategies – grounded in equity – for the betterment of families and youth.

### Year 1 (short term)

Recommendation 1: Appoint a “chief development officer” for the city of Atlanta to clearly articulate the city’s fundraising needs across education and youth issues and to be accountable for securing federal, state, philanthropic, and corporate support for these initiatives.

Recommendation 2: Adopt a “collective impact framework” for its education and youth initiatives, whereby all key stakeholders are convened in a structured way to achieve measurable, systematic, and holistic social change (centered on equity) for the city’s families and youth.

### Years 2–4 (medium term)

Recommendation 1: Create an “Atlanta data hub,” in partnership with nonprofits, government agencies, service providers, and key stakeholders that collects clean, impactful data on the city’s families and youth to ensure that city services are provided strategically, effectively, and equitably.





A photograph of a city park at dusk. In the background, several skyscrapers are lit up, including a prominent cylindrical tower. A large Ferris wheel with blue lights is visible in the middle ground. The foreground features a paved walkway, green benches, and a tall, perforated metal pillar. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is illuminated by city lights and park lamps.

# Ethics and Procurement Integrity



## Background

---

The challenge of ensuring that government entities function ethically and honestly has existed from the earliest civilizations, and while the city of Atlanta has grown and matured based on the work of countless dedicated public servants over many decades, it also has experienced its own challenges with corruption. Last month, Mayor Dickens correctly pointed out that the “vast majority of city employees ... wake up each and every day to serve the people of Atlanta.” His comment arose, however, after the conviction of yet another city government official for bribery in the municipal procurement process, which itself occurred after more than half a dozen former city officials and vendors were convicted of corruption offenses – including the former Chief Procurement Officer, former Director of Human Services, and former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor (prior administrations). Three more high-profile trials are scheduled in the coming months, including the former Chief Financial Officer and Watershed Commissioner, and a recent trial raised questions of misconduct by several other officials.

Our subcommittee cannot help but be mindful of this backdrop in conducting our review. The stakes could not be higher, as residents and businesses alike are growing fatigued with recurring headlines of government misconduct, especially when juxtaposed against similar convictions that occurred not even 20 years ago. Presently, the city of Atlanta is poised to allocate and spend hundreds of millions of dollars in COVID-19 relief and infrastructure funds and issue multiple contracts at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport – all in addition to its regular cadence of contracting and spending. This flurry of activity offers innumerable benefits to the city, but also presents risks for the same misconduct summarized earlier.

Mayor Dickens highlighted ethics as a central component of his campaign and recently reaffirmed that, “In my Administration, I expect and demand honesty, integrity and the highest level of ethical behavior. Anything less is unacceptable.” Our subcommittee’s work is designed to help Mayor Dickens accomplish this objective, and this report offers our findings and recommendations in that regard.

We note at the outset that our subcommittee is composed of residents with diverse backgrounds, none of which involves municipal governance or procurement expertise. We therefore set out to listen, read, and learn as much as possible during our brief commission, and our review is in no way intended to constitute a comprehensive assessment or gap analysis of city government contracting or other operations. In particular, our scope did not include identifying stopgaps or quick fixes for the specific misconduct underlying the recent criminal cases. Instead, we have endeavored to offer observations and suggestions based on the limited information we could gather with the time and resources before us, which we hope will contribute to Mayor Dickens’ publicly stated goals to establish an administration that governs ethically, honestly, and with integrity.

We have struggled during our review to identify the right balance of oversight and autonomy in the day-to-day operations of city government. Civil servants must be afforded some level of discretion to make decisions, or else government offices become paralyzed and services are constrained. Unfortunately, Atlanta’s city government has shown a repeated pattern of not

simply improper but illegal conduct by officials at all levels of office, prompting an appropriate response of corrections to regulate the discretionary acts that were tainted with impropriety. It is a difficult and regrettable cycle, as increasingly complex overlays of restrictions and compliance protocols often result in unwieldy bureaucracy and logjams in decision-making. At the same time, these complicated processes may hinder the ability of individuals, nonprofits, and companies (both small and large) to participate in contracting, obtain permits, apply for grants, or otherwise access city services.

Scholars and experienced government officials offer varied opinions about the most effective ways to achieve this balance, and, not surprisingly, the guests who spoke at our listening sessions presented valuable insights and guidance but nothing approaching consensus. A definitive path to this balance is well outside of the expertise of this subcommittee. We join Mayor Dickens in recognizing that countless city government employees serve Atlanta's resident each day with dedication and integrity, and for these employees the exercise of discretion and autonomy results in selfless service for our communities. That said, the historical record necessitates a meaningful level of oversight and compliance-focused protocols, not only to deter and prevent additional misconduct but also to reassure our resident that city government will work harder and aim higher to govern with integrity.

We note that Atlanta recently has implemented several best-practice processes to strengthen compliance, including an independent Inspector General and Ethics Officer, as well as a Chief Transparency Officer and web-based platforms designed to boost transparency and accessibility. We encourage this administration's continued commitment to these processes to ensure that they achieve the intended results. In addition, we offer several recommendations that our brief review suggests will further contribute to ethical, honest governance.

In addition to recognizing the support and guidance of the esteemed members of this subcommittee, we would like to thank Chloe Cobb Smith (Associate, King & Spalding) for her invaluable contributions to our review and the drafting of this report.



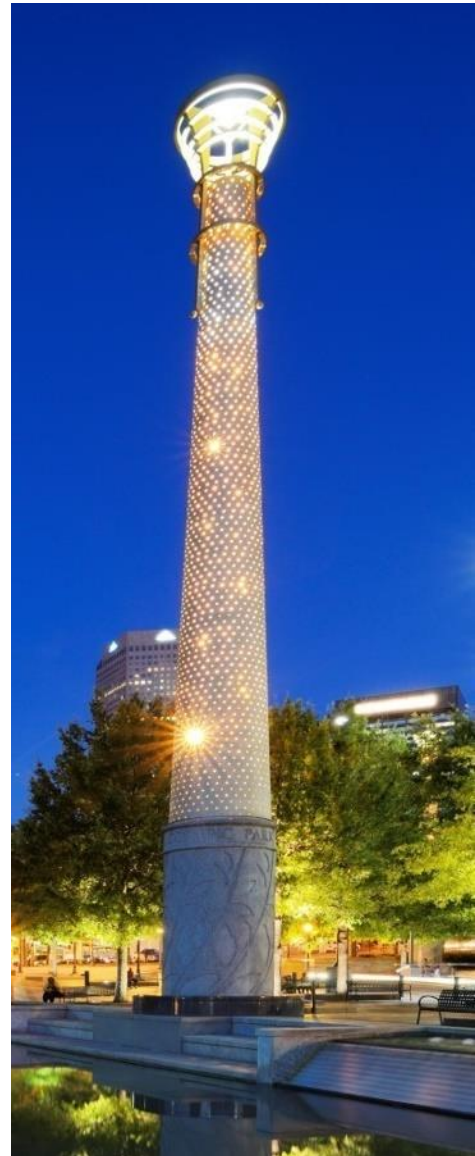
## Methodology

---

To accomplish our goal of understanding the current structure of the city of Atlanta's current ethics and procurement structure, the subcommittee held six listening sessions with city officials and individuals with ethics and procurement experience. The subcommittee also reviewed numerous white papers and prior reports and investigations related to ethics and procurement within the city of Atlanta.

Guests who spoke during our five listening sessions included:

1. city of Atlanta officials
  - a. Martin Clarke, city Procurement Officer
  - b. Kristen Denius, Chief Transparency Officer
  - c. Deborah Lonon, Department of Grants and Community Development
  - d. Shannon Manigault, Inspector General
  - e. Jabu Sengova, city Ethics Officer
2. Business community representatives
  - a. Shan Cooper, Atlanta Committee for Progress
  - b. Artis Johnson, President and CEO of The Johnson Companies
  - c. Benjamin Keane, Partner, Dentons
  - d. Chuck Taylor, CEO of HT Group and Adjunct Professor at Emory
3. Academics and advocacy organizations
  - a. Aunna Dennis, Executive Director of Common Cause of Georgia
  - b. Paul Wolpe, Director of the Emory Center for Ethics
  - c. Professor Clark Cunningham, GSU Law School





- d. Professors from Georgia State University's Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics
  - i. Andrew I. Cohen, Professor of Philosophy and Director of JBB Center for Ethics
  - ii. Andrew J. Cohen, Professor of Philosophy, Founding Director of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Program
  - iii. Peter Lindsay, Professor of Political Science and Philosophy
  - iv. Tiffany Player, Associate Professor of History
  - v. Lauren Sudeall, Associate Professor of Law and Faculty Director: Center for Access to Justice
  - vi. Elizabeth West, Professor of English and African-American Studies, Executive Director: SAMLA, Director of Academics: CSAD



## Recommendations

---

### **Recommendation 1: Leadership team's commitment to ethics and integrity**

Before any discussion of processes or mechanics, we join with prior ethics task forces and governance experts to reinforce the critical importance of tone-defining leadership by Mayor Dickens and his team as a first priority. It is no mistake that the 2017 ethics task force led by former Georgia Supreme Court Justice Leah Sears predicated its final report with a forceful reminder that affirmative messaging and example-setting leadership by Mayor Franklin and her top administrators was an absolute requirement to set expectations that were adopted and enforced at all managerial levels. And the paramount importance of this principle over any compliance-focused regulations is repeated in every white paper we reviewed. The unfortunate reality is that a public servant who is determined to break the rules likely will find a way to do so no matter how many controls are set in place to prevent it. We therefore add our voice in emphasizing that the first and most important step for Mayor Dickens and his leadership team is to adopt an inspirational and unequivocal commitment to, as well as continuous outward displays of, ethics and governance with integrity/ethical and honest governance.

### **Recommendation 2: Continued support for newly created ethics programs**

As recognized earlier, Atlanta city government already has adopted several ordinances and processes that reflect best practices for strengthening government ethics. city government recently created an Office of Inspector General that is commissioned with investigative authority and is just now reaching operational levels after its creation during COVID. It also established an independent Ethics Board and Ethics Officer that together provide increased levels of training, checks for conflicts of interest, and immediately accessible employee guidance. While our review is not exhaustive, additional measures that currently exist to support government ethics include: a clearly defined Code of Conduct and broadly-scoped rules against conflicts of interest; multiple ethics and corruption hotlines; and increased efforts to leverage technology in a way that promotes transparency.

These are positive steps that this administration should continue to encourage by supporting with resources to ensure they are adequately staffed and reaching all the remote corners of city government. Additionally, this administration can enhance ethical decision-making throughout city government by encouraging better coordination between the Office of Inspector General and Ethics Office and all other departments. Fostering those relationships and reinforcing the roles of the OIG and Ethics Office will ensure that ethics-focused objectives remain front of mind in policymaking and the delivery of services to residents.

In addition to the administration's general support for these new programs above, our review identified several more precise recommendations that merit mention here:

- a. Additional resources: the OIG's Independent Office of Procurement Review (IPro) is required to review solicitations valued at or above \$1 million; it also possesses the authority to review solicitations of any value, but so far has been unable to perform those discretionary reviews due to limited resources. Additional resources would also allow

IPro to provide real-time review and possible intervention throughout the procurement process and perform follow-up compliance reviews with vendors who demonstrated compliance risks. Similarly, the Ethics Office reported that additional resources are needed to complete audits of conflict of interest disclosures on a timely basis.

- b. Coordination between OIG and Department of Procurement: The Inspector General noted that real-time access to procurement documents remains a recurring issue. The chief procurement officer stated that all solicitations and contracts are available to OIG through the new Oracle database. This disconnect emphasizes the need for more coordination between OIG and Procurement to resolve this issue.
- c. Support for OIG and Ethics Office investigations: Our review suggests that in some instances ethics investigations are hampered due to a lack of cooperation from city of Atlanta employees. The Inspector General recommended including a requirement to assist with the investigations in the city Charter or in employment agreements. Given the importance of these investigations, the Mayor and his leadership team should also lead by example to ensure that all city employees cooperate with these investigations.
- d. Practical ethics training and requirements: The city ethics officer recommended additional emphasis in explaining policies and incorporating ethics rules across departments. For example, given recent issues with use of city-issued credit cards and travel expenses, employees could benefit from increased transparency requirements for these activities and increased cooperation between Human Resources and the Ethics Office in explaining those rules to employees.
- e. Enforcement capabilities: The Ethics Office has the ability to issue sanctions and fines but lacks the authority to collect fines, thus allowing ethical violations to go unpunished by what appears to be a secondary ethical violation of ignoring the imposed fine. The administration should consider supporting mechanisms for enforcement and funding to complete this process.

### **Recommendation 3: Procurement transparency and “pay-to-play” restrictions**

#### *Enhanced transparency*

Regarding procurement specifically, we first recommend implementing the broadest possible proactive transparency of the solicitation and bidding process. The city’s Procurement Office already has taken affirmative steps toward increased transparency, including the online publication of current solicitations and catalogs of contracts executed in prior years. While these are positive steps, the growing list of criminal investigations involving city procurement shows that, at least as to the contracting activity involved in those solicitations, those processes were anything but transparent. It is perhaps with these circumstances in mind that organizations such as the National Association of State Procurement Officials recognize the benefits of mandated transparency at every stage of the process, even before a contract is awarded, including all vendor proposals, scoring sheets, and communication – as well as hosting post-award debriefing sessions. This expansive transparency should be mandated throughout Atlanta’s procurement



process, including (and especially to) high-risk solicitations such as emergency contracts and purchases with sole-source provisions. While disclosure of such comprehensive bidding information may discourage some businesses from submitting proposals, our review suggests that a significant number of businesses already choose not to participate because of the perceived unfairness with the process. In this regard, assuring the participants and the public that procurement review and decision-making is fair and honest outweighs other concerns.

#### *Adoption of “pay-to-play” restrictions*

We also recommend implementation of “pay-to-play” provisions that restrict campaign contributions by existing and prospective city contractors after the submission of a bid as well as a meaningful period after the execution of city contracts. Our listening sessions included multiple guests representing the Atlanta business community as well as policy advocates who argued forcefully in favor of these restrictions, expressing concerns that donations to political campaigns are perceived to be a prerequisite to future success in city procurement or airport contracting processes. A growing number of state and municipal governments have cited these same concerns when adopting these restrictions, such that “pay-to-play” ordinances are now increasingly common, especially in jurisdictions that have experienced higher levels of government corruption.

Referring to the earlier discussion of balancing the need for compliance vs. discretion and efficiency, we acknowledge that our recommendation here tilts the scale toward regulation and oversight, creating additional processes for vendors rather than streamlining the contracting process. Even so, restrictions are necessary to weaken the links between political donations and successful city contracting and will reduce opportunities for corrupt decision-making in the procurement process. Moreover, adoption will send a strong signal to residents and vendors that this administration is committed to fair and honest contracting.

Those jurisdictions that have enacted restrictions offer a variety of approaches to consider and models to follow, from lighter touches requiring only disclosures to comprehensive regulatory prohibitions. The city of Los Angeles offers a thoughtful approach, imposing limits on the amount a person or business may contribute or otherwise cause to be available to candidates for election to certain offices that play a role in city procurement, as well as requiring disclosure of campaign activities and donations and imposing other restrictions. The restrictions apply to both vendors as well as subcontractors that solicit business of over \$100,000, and also apply from the time a vendor submits a bid to one year after any qualifying contract is signed. Enacted in 2011, Los Angeles’ restrictions have more recently been expanded to apply to developers who require approval by the city of their project applications.

### *Other specific recommendations*

In addition to the two “high-level” recommendations above, our review identified several more precise recommendations regarding the procurement process that merit a mention here:

- a. The city’s current chief procurement officer has leveraged new software applications with the intent of making the process more accessible and transparent, implemented a new training program for procurement employees, and drafted a comprehensive revision of the city’s procurement SOPs. These are encouraging accomplishments that we hope will be the subject of continued improvement by the city’s new CPO.
- b. We recommend a careful review by subject-matter experts and the Office of Inspector General of the newly drafted revision of the procurement SOPs, to ensure that the city’s SOPs reflect a best-practice balance between safeguards against corruption, efficiency, and ease of use. In addition, the draft should be shared for comments by private sector businesses to ensure that the process is readily understood and applied by both large and small vendors, encouraging participation by all segments of the business community.
- c. Multiple speakers at our listening sessions emphasized the importance that the procurement SOPs do not disqualify bids for minor, technical noncompliance with the solicitation requirements, to ensure that the city enjoys the benefits of competition from multiple vendors and, where possible, both large and small businesses.
- d. If not already included in the new procurement SOPs, the Procurement Office should regularly publish a “look-ahead” of 18–24 months of future solicitations at all funding levels to encourage increased participation and competition by large and small businesses.
- e. If not already included in the new procurement SOPs, the protocols should be revised to make the city’s ethics rules applicable to vendors, and ethics affirmations should be submitted by vendors in connection with any proposals.
- f. It was brought to the subcommittee’s attention that manufacturers sometimes assist in drafting a bid that leads to specifications within the bid that are achievable by only certain businesses – often businesses where the manufacturer has a financial interest. This limits competition because the subcontractor with a tie to that manufacturer is able to provide a much lower bid. Safeguards should be implemented to ensure competition is not hindered by such specifications.
- g. The Procurement Office (and OIG) should conduct a regular review of on-call contracts. Senior departmental contracting officers currently have the ability to approve on-call contracts up to a certain amount, but the official can bypass the amount limitation by executing multiple purchase orders.
- h. We recommend creating stricter review processes for sole-sourcing and emergency contracts, including immediate after-the-fact reviews of emergency contracts by senior procurement managers and the OIG.

- i. The Procurement Office should implement the use of 360-degree reviews both internally as to procurement managers and staff, but also as to external sources of feedback, including the business community. These reviews should be conducted regularly and, at least as to the external reviews, the results should be published.

#### **Recommendation 4: Ethical governance considerations**

Our report has thus far looked inward at government employee conduct to encourage compliance and discourage misbehavior – in this sense, “ethics” relates to working with integrity and honesty. However, our review also featured a recurring theme that looks outward at the policymaking and services delivered to residents. In other words, aside from whether employees are serving honestly, city government holds a heightened responsibility for ethical treatment of its residents and for engaging equitably with them, particularly those who lack voice and channels of influence. This is more of a philosophical or attitudinal approach to governance than creating structural controls over individual employees’ behavior for the purpose of discouraging misconduct; the objectives of ethical policymaking are achieved largely by how leadership – starting with the mayor – models ethical governance and makes decisions that are inclusive, fair, and trusted by all members of the community. Leadership and managers also must encourage and reward this type of service from all city employees and offices, with the goal that ethical policymaking and service will become a cultural norm of this and successive administrations.

In terms of actual tools or steps that are available to accomplish this goal, the discussion before our subcommittee was more theoretical than practical, but several paths enjoyed consensus among our members: (1) ensuring that government is accessible on an equitable basis, both in terms of the provision and reach of municipal services and constituents’ ability to connect with government; (2) being mindful of historical lessons, particularly in terms of inequalities and racism, when making policy decisions; and (3) considering the full scope of effects of policymaking to ensure that decisions have the intended (and avoid the unintended) impact.

These are inherently difficult objectives given the city’s diverse constituencies and breadth of city government programs and offices. As discussed above, an affirmative commitment by Mayor Dickens and his leadership team to these principles is a necessary start, and the ethics experts who spoke before our subcommittee frequently returned to the concept of extending this culture of ethics beyond the leadership team to encompass all corners of city government. Atlanta boasts prestigious academic centers of ethics at both Emory University and Georgia State University, and regular consultations with these ethical experts may provide helpful guideposts. In particular, the Emory Center for Ethics offers organizational ethics training with the objective of establishing a broader culture of ethical decision-making, which presents a valuable supplement to the more compliance-focused training programs offered by the CoA Ethics Office.





# Neighborhood Empowerment



## Background

---

“Atlanta thrives when all residents thrive. The best way to achieve higher ‘quality of day’ and ‘quality of life’ for all Atlantans is in people-driven and place-based ways. Neighborhoods are our single best organizing framework for being responsive to resident needs and working across sectors. A better Atlanta is one where all neighborhoods are healthy, thriving, equitable, and accessible.”

Atlanta’s diverse neighborhoods are the backbone of city life. Each contributes to Atlanta’s story through its unique history, built character, and challenges. Yet historical marginalization, coupled with recent growth and rapid gentrification, have exacerbated inequities across the city’s neighborhoods, leading to community instability and placing an undue burden on low-income, vulnerable residents who lack adequate support and clear avenues to meaningfully participate in community development. To elevate community voices and empower neighborhoods to advocate for themselves, the city must **revitalize existing power structures and create manageable governance structures** to provide neighborhoods with a meaningful and accessible seat at the table, creating the conditions for them to better shape their futures and influence change. To do this effectively, the city must **build trust** by providing baseline operational services and fostering a responsive and listening environment to address neighborhood needs.

Neighborhood decisions should be rooted in neighborhood voices, providing neighborhoods agency to enact change within their communities and across the city of Atlanta. City leadership has a responsibility to improve daily life for all residents while empowering neighborhoods to **advocate for themselves** through actionable and sustainable efforts. Neighborhoods and residents must also be active participants in helping solve city-wide challenges. The city also has an opportunity to leverage and cultivate its robust network of **partners, resources, and community leaders** to enact place-based strategies, improve operations, and empower neighborhood voices. Promoting neighborhood empowerment will build trust while elevating Atlanta’s diverse voices, helping neighborhoods and leaders work together to move Atlanta forward.

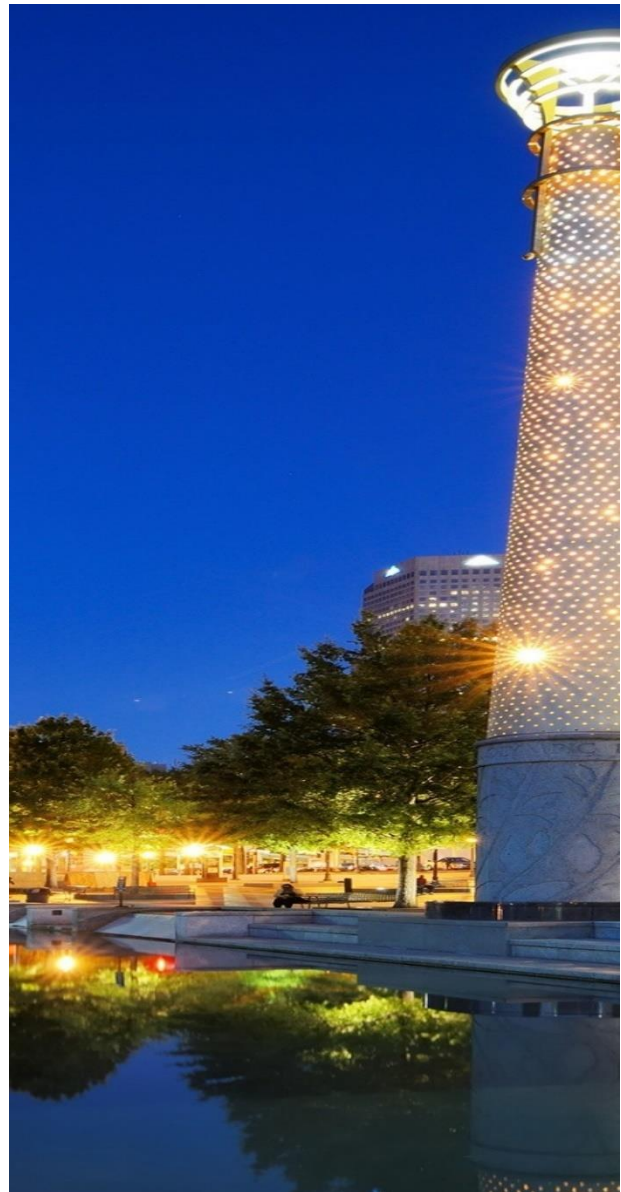


## Methodology

---

This report utilizes a phased approach to understand and analyze the many factors contributing to neighborhood empowerment in the city of Atlanta. The first phase involved a comprehensive review of the academic literature on neighborhood empowerment, including 40 academic journal articles, 16 mayoral transition reports from other major US cities, and local neighborhood planning reports such as the Center for Civic Innovation’s Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) report, and neighborhood change reports from the city of Atlanta’s Department of city Planning. The findings from this outreach informed the subcommittee’s current state assessment, which identified key priority areas that stakeholders agreed need to be addressed to strengthen the city’s neighborhoods.

In the second phase, the Neighborhood Empowerment Subcommittee led 12 stakeholder input sessions with subject-matter experts across key sectors related to community life and neighborhood empowerment and multiple one-on-one sessions with subcommittee members. To ensure the report captured insights from a fully representative group of stakeholders, the subcommittee engaged with representatives from academic, nonprofit, philanthropic, and business communities as well as key leaders from neighborhood and community organizations. Once the key priority areas for recommendations were identified, the subcommittee held two working sessions and multiple focus-area-specific listening sessions to further refine recommendations.





## Limitations

This report balances the simplicity of actionable recommendations against the need for a nuanced and accurate understanding of various factors contributing to neighborhood empowerment, and more specifically how displacement is measured. This report focuses on what the subcommittee sees as the most pressing challenges in Atlanta’s neighborhoods and understands that not all are addressed in the recommendations. The subcommittee took the following considerations specific to neighborhood change into account when formulating recommendations:

- Many of the existing academic articles and community planning reports about neighborhood change utilize US census and American Community Survey data, which only provides a snapshot of a community at a certain place and time. This data does not measure displacement or account for people moving in and out of neighborhoods.
- Flawed methodologies in neighborhood planning reports have the potential to understate levels of displacement pressures in a city. The best available measures of displacement pressures are rising housing costs, either through home prices or rents.
- The many displacement pressures facing Atlanta residents highlight the need for statistically robust longitudinal surveys that collect data from the same respondents over time to account for changes in housing location and status.

## Recommendations

---

As directed by the subcommittee charter, this document includes key actions developed to “give neighborhoods additional influence on how the city government supports them in the development and execution of their plans to guide the vision they have for themselves.” To accomplish this task while accounting for the many facets of city life necessary for neighborhood empowerment, recommendations are grouped into six **interconnected** focus areas as depicted in Error! Reference source not found. **Figure 1** below.

*Figure 1: Focus areas for centering recommendations around neighborhood needs*

All recommendations are centered around increased transparency, accountability, maintaining resident and neighborhood agency, providing community, housing stability, and maintaining improved living conditions across Atlanta’s neighborhoods. Many **recommendations are interconnected, and provide the tools, governance, and platforms** to bolster one another towards the shared goal of neighborhood empowerment.

### Rooting recommendations in foundational issues

Recommendations specific to this subcommittee’s charter must be rooted in the **broad conditions** that support resident and community empowerment, which range from services, to safety, to stable and affordable housing. The Neighborhood Empowerment Subcommittee recognizes that systemic factors such as generational poverty, historic marginalization, and increased housing instability undermine resident empowerment. At the same time, the presence of these challenges in Atlanta underscores the need for government to get closer to the needs of residents and neighborhoods to be responsive and requires **direct oversight and accountability** from designated city staff.

In particular, the subcommittee affirms the Mayor’s deep commitment to **housing affordability** as a key pillar for a healthy city and critical to neighborhood empowerment. Residents and neighborhoods deserve affirmation that a changing Atlanta will continue to hold a place for them. These foundational policies enhance conditions for neighborhood empowerment, where new investment in civic infrastructure can meaningfully engage residents in shaping their own futures and indicate that improvements are for their benefit.

### The path to neighborhood empowerment

The Neighborhood Empowerment Subcommittee recognizes that expansion of and enhancements to civic infrastructure and partnerships are paramount for neighborhood empowerment. Atlanta has a responsibility to **support, cultivate, and engage residents** by providing equal and accessible platforms to elevate community voices and promote civic engagement. Recommendations are focused on improving neighborhood empowerment through securing “quality-of-day” services, enhanced civic infrastructure, partnerships, place-based neighborhood strategies, and standardized neighborhood metrics. The subcommittee recognizes that **ensuring accountability and continued effectiveness requires sustainable attention and oversight from dedicated city staff**. It will also require, in many cases, the need to assess and bolster existing structures, processes, and organizations to ensure strategic plans and place-based strategies can be **implemented** with the support from the city, residents, and partners.

### Cross-cutting recommendations

Many of the subcommittee’s recommendations have been elevated to the cross-cutting list of recommendations as enhanced public safety, greater confidence in core city services and processes, and a city that works for families and youth are all foundational to neighborhood empowerment and will create the conditions to amplify neighborhood empowerment. These recommendations are marked with an asterisk in the report. The costs associated with implementing these cross-cutting recommendations are considered separate from the total

estimated costs associated with implementing the recommendations specific to the Neighborhood Empowerment Subcommittee.

- Prioritize service backlog reduction
- Audit operational service tools and processes
- Streamline bureaucratic requirements
- Reduce communication breakdowns through increased data sharing

## Recommendations pinnacle to success

All recommendations were developed by the Neighborhood Empowerment Subcommittee with inputs from community leaders and experts. All recommendations are **interconnected**, as represented by **Figure 1**. Although all recommendations would positively impact neighborhood empowerment, the **seven recommendations and actions listed below** are critical to providing neighborhoods the tools and agency required to elevate their voices and meaningfully participate in city-wide planning and strategies. Adoption of each of these, **as well as the cross-cutting recommendations**, will bolster impact of all other recommendations and actions included in this document and should be considered critical by the Mayor’s administration. High-impact recommendations and actions are listed below:

- Establish a clear and accessible “front door” to city services for neighborhoods: This “front door” is essential to ensuring neighborhood needs are met and will provide the city with needed dexterity and transparency on types and challenges to service completion within neighborhoods and better anticipate needs, while elevating the collective neighborhood voice and increasing transparency around basic needs.
- Promote eviction mitigation policies through coordination and policy change at the county and state levels: Many of the policies and laws that are leading to increased displacement exist at the state and county levels, and progress made in these jurisdictions will greatly impact those facing housing instability.
- Develop an office of neighborhoods: Create a neighborhood-focused office to provide direct support to neighborhoods, notably through support to neighborhood associations, NPUs, and community leaders and partners (e.g., community quarterbacks and community improvement districts (CIDs)). This office will provide coordinated governance to all neighborhood-focused plans and activities by enhancing existing NPU and neighborhood support functions in city Hall through additional FTEs focused on neighborhood empowerment. Through this office, neighborhoods will have a single coordinating body at city Hall to bring together constituent services, city planning, and other entities to provide focused and effective support to neighborhoods.
- Revitalize structures to elevate neighborhood voices: Develop a strategy and implementation plan to assess and revamp NPU operations and structure to improve operations and accessibility for all voices in the neighborhood while elevating existing NPU and neighborhood association activities to ensure meaningful and quality impact. Execution of this strategy will expand neighborhood civic infrastructure and provide residents with an easily understood model in



which to engage with others in their neighborhoods on local needs and strategies, while also connecting to goals and needs of the city of Atlanta overall.

- Design and implement neighborhood pilot program: Identify three to four neighborhoods to implement people-driven, cross-sector strategies for place-based efforts. These pilots should focus on neighborhoods with pressing needs while leveraging tools and approaches referenced throughout this report. They will provide the city with lessons learned to use in other neighborhoods that are faced with similar issues.
- Solidify public-private partnerships for place-based efforts: Partnerships are essential to funding, developing, and executing place-based strategies and plans, and create conditions to evaluate and elevate representative voices at the table to address community needs.
- Standardizing comprehensive community health metrics: Measuring neighborhood health is important to understand the quality of life across the city, and standard, quality data is imperative to both partnerships and empowerment, a means to defining and making continuous improvement in the city's neighborhoods.



### Detailed Recommendation 1: Build trust through equitable, efficient, and quality city services

Neighborhood empowerment requires key investment in essential city services to improve “quality of day” for Atlantans and build trust through simplified, transparent processes. While Atlanta delivers some essential services well, complex, and siloed operational and governance structures inhibit the city’s ability to perform equitable and efficient operations for all residents and neighborhoods. Atlanta’s existing service models require numerous offices, departments, and agencies to provide standard operations, creating an operational backlog of critical neighborhood and resident services. This structure causes confusion for neighborhoods and residents, who do not have a transparent view of city services or paths for improved engagement.

By streamlining service operations and providing a transparent “front door” for resident and neighborhood operations, Atlanta can promote equitable service provisions to all neighborhoods, providing essential baselines to support “quality of day” and building neighborhood trust. Doing so across every corner of the city would signal that resident and neighborhood voices are being heard.

## Detailed Recommendation 1A: Re-establish trust through rapid improvement

To improve the “quality-of-day” services across Atlanta’s neighborhoods, the city should prioritize a rapid response to address outstanding essential operations and services critical to residential and neighborhood life. The city government is accountable for completing its operational obligations, which allow residents, neighborhoods, and communities the stability and safety required for neighborhood empowerment and enhance the willingness to engage on longer-term and strategic needs for their neighborhood and the city at large. Examples of these services include regular trash pickup and standardized sanitation services, rapid response and proper handling of 911 and safety calls, and key infrastructure updates and maintenance required for neighborhood stability.

### Trust through execution

Mutual trust between neighborhoods, city government, and partners is critical for neighborhood empowerment. A high-impact public works project similar to Mayor Franklin’s “**Pothole Posse**” program that was recently relaunched in partnership with the Atlanta Department of Transportation would allow neighborhoods to provide input on key operational issues and re-establish trust through swift delivery of essential services.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Execute a high-visibility public works project: Conduct a rapid process evaluation and provide focused attention on a single high-visibility public works, infrastructure, or service issue that can quickly improve the daily lives of residents. Although Atlanta should solicit community feedback on which key public works efforts to prioritize, high-impact projects for mayoral consideration include prioritizing the maintenance and installation of city streetlights or expanding bike lanes to improve accessibility throughout the city.
- Prioritize rapid service backlog reduction:\* Conduct a rapid targeted reduction of the existing service request backlog, particularly in low-income and areas of special need. (*Cross-cutting recommendation*)

## Detailed Recommendation 1B: Revitalize service provision and neighborhood response

To provide equitable and efficient essential services across Atlanta’s neighborhoods, the city should streamline operational processes to promote collaboration, bolster resident centricity, and increase transparency. Adoption of recommendations in this area will allow the city to provide clear operational communications while reducing existing service bottlenecks, providing quicker and transparent responses to all residents and neighborhoods who need them.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Establish a clear and accessible “front door” to city services for neighborhoods: Create a neighborhood-specific communications channels, plans, and tools beyond existing resident engagement platforms to provide neighborhoods with a clear understanding of services delivered geographically in their areas. Specifically, Atlanta can focus on providing transparency to resident-centric services (e.g., trash pickup, operational maintenance, and infrastructure updates) to build trust and provide context for neighborhood leaders. As part of

this, Atlanta should develop a comprehensive communications plan to establish clear neighborhood engagement mechanisms for requesting and tracking city services at the neighborhood level.

- Create a service-based public dashboard: Build a public-facing city operations dashboard to showcase the number and types of services provided across neighborhoods, allowing NPUs, neighborhoods, and residents to review and track outstanding services in their areas. The completed dashboard would allow users to filter by neighborhood with published times to complete service requests, thus providing dexterity and transparency on types and challenges to service completion in their neighborhood. The city could consider adopting a pilot program, perhaps in coordination with the rollout of the neighborhood health dashboard in *Focus Area 6*, to implement a prototype dashboard across several neighborhoods with varying geographies and socioeconomic factors to assess effectiveness and identify outstanding requirements.
- Audit operational service tools and processes:\* Assess tools for accessing city operations and services (i.e., 211, 311, 911, and PAD) to review processes and identify efficiencies from a neighborhood perspective. As part of this, the city should consider engaging NPU and neighborhood association leadership to assess service tools in their localities and ensure all areas have equitable access to resources and services. Atlanta can utilize findings from this audit to revitalize front-door service provision from a neighborhood perspective and conduct neighborhood-specific outreach where awareness of service tools is lacking. Atlanta relies on 211, 311, and 911 services, but process challenges and backlogs sometimes hamper efficacy. (*Cross-cutting*)
- Streamline bureaucratic requirements:\* Conduct a rapid audit of key processes critical to communities (e.g., permitting, zoning, transportation project approvals and delivery, watershed management) and develop reduction targets, reduce silos, and take a resident-centric approach to city services that reduces effort and time spent by residents and neighborhood organizations. (*Cross-cutting*)
- Reduce communication breakdowns through increased data sharing:\* Inventory key data sources required to assess and forecast operational needs and create a city service data strategy aimed at reducing silos, ensuring interoperability, and reducing breakdowns in communication between city departments and residents. This data coordination will support the development of the Neighborhood Livability Index recommended in *Focus Area 6*. (*Cross-cutting*)

Leveraging service platforms
<p>Atlanta can continue to <b>leverage and streamline existing service platforms</b>, such as 211, 311 and 911, to provide direct outlets for resident engagement. In particular, Atlanta can rethink provision of its 211 services to bolster efficacy for vulnerable residents through rethinking the tools rollout and operational use case.</p> <p>Atlanta can also reassess 311 services to <b>improve collaboration across city entities</b> responsible for operational service provision and continue to leverage the Policing Alternatives and Diversion Initiative (PAD) to alleviate burden on 911 responders.</p> <p>Atlanta should continue to promote usage of operational service tools and promote to examples of success to <b>improve resident engagement and re-establish trust</b>.</p>



## Detailed Recommendation 2: Improve housing stability and accessibility

Neighborhood empowerment requires residential stability. Many areas across the city have seen a rapid rise in housing costs since 2012, particularly in the past two years. While growth has benefits if managed, it places an increased burden on existing residents, making their neighborhoods and homes increasingly less accessible. In particular, Atlanta's low-income residents are **increasingly displaced** from their neighborhoods and homes, altering community structures. Too many neighborhoods suffer from **high transiency rates** and **high residential vacancy rates** that destabilize their communities and schools. These neighborhoods struggle to maintain the continuity in residential population required to effectively organize and protect neighborhood interests. As Atlanta continues to change and flourish, the city has a responsibility to manage growth to make space for new residents without displacing or placing undue burden on existing people and neighborhoods.

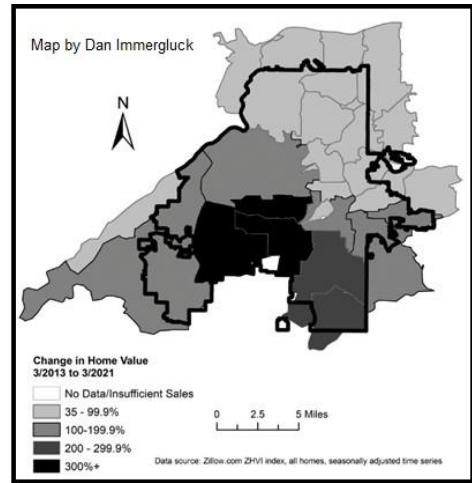


Figure 2: Changes in Home Value 2013 to 2021

The recommendations below represent key considerations for housing policy and practice which the subcommittee believes are foundational to neighborhood and empowerment and livability, particularly around creating conditions for lower-income residents to have greater agency in their communities. Promoting housing stability will reinforce and enhance the subcommittee's other recommendations, as well as cross-cutting recommendations from across the transition team. Some recommendations are implications for citywide policy while others can be evaluated in place-based strategies.



## Detailed Recommendation 2A: Establish governance for housing stability

To promote stability and residential continuity across Atlanta’s neighborhoods – particularly in low-income and distressed areas – the city should develop clear governance structures to provide accountability for housing stability and affordability, alleviating burden on low-income residents in changing neighborhoods and allowing localities to remain anchored in place and focus on strategic development. Adoption of recommendations in this area will allow the city to oversee intentional growth, developing standardized targets with inputs from neighborhood voices.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Centralize housing planning and priorities: Coordinate across all agencies with housing-related responsibilities to provide oversight of policy and operations for all public housing and development efforts (i.e., chief housing officer).
  - Leverage public land for affordable housing development
  - Continue to maintain affordable housing database
  - Implement a cross-sector community housing strategy
  - Identify additional funding to promote affordable housing (e.g., funders’ collectives, bonds, correcting undertaxed commercial property values, reducing excessive property tax subsidies)
- Establish housing-specific growth standards:  
Develop standards and guidelines to help manage neighborhood growth with a focus on equity, minimizing displacement and providing economic opportunities for all as Atlanta’s population increases. This includes setting neighborhood-specific targets for affordable and total housing units based on growth models and predictions, in alignment with the Mayor’s goal of building 20,000 units in the next eight years and removing pressure from the housing market.

**Setting neighborhood-based targets**

Consider [using an app to gather feedback from citizens on where potential housing units could be placed](#) based on existing or altered zoning, creating a simulation-type experience for residents to submit feedback. This type of tool could also be used to gather public feedback on a variety of initiatives and public works projects.

## Detailed Recommendation 2B: Create housing policies to promote neighborhood stability

To combat Atlanta’s very high and growing eviction rate and promote continuity and stability across Atlanta’s neighborhoods, the city should review and enact housing policies geared toward accessibility and affordability. The city should also work with state and county leadership to bolster housing policy and promote stability within these jurisdictions.

Adoption of recommendations in this focus area will allow the city to bolster protections for tenants and lower eviction rates while improving housing development and affordability, elevating voices of residents most impacted by change and guiding place-based, equitable, and intentional growth.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Promote eviction mitigation policies through coordination and policy change at the county and state levels: Spearhead an eviction-focused coalition with state and county leaders, as well as neighboring municipalities, to implement statewide and localized housing stability policy, particularly around tenants' rights, evictions, and tax relief for seniors.
  - Support improved eviction proceedings: Coordinate with Fulton County to provide and fund alternatives to standard eviction proceedings, including a right to counsel through a formalized city to county partnership.
- Bolster tenant support resources: Provide increased representation resources for low-income tenants by exploring strategies for tracking and responding to illegal evictions and providing opportunities to mediate between tenants and landlords. Provide additional resources through the Atlanta Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) and other funding avenues.
- Provide low-income property tax relief: Create and/or extend tax exemptions for low-income renters and homeowners.
- Promote housing type variety: Promote a variety of housing types by providing incentives and assistance for small property owners to finance and build small family units where feasible to preserve historic communities, promote equity, and increase economic mobility.
- Support strategic use of public land for housing and key neighborhood amenities: Assess and capture existing unused public land (e.g., Atlanta Public Schools (APS) property and blighted/abandoned properties to support neighborhoods in repurposing for housing development or other community benefit (improving walkability/transportation access, promoting cultural/recreational spaces, providing houses, or attracting grocery stores and other key businesses).
- Promote deep affordability: Promote and track deep affordability at 30% area median income (AMI) and 50% AMI to provide stability to households most at risk of displacement, instability, eviction, and homelessness.



### Detailed Recommendation 3: Strengthen civic infrastructure to elevate neighborhood voices

Neighborhood empowerment requires strong investment in civic infrastructure which allows equitable, accessible engagement across all neighborhoods, allowing them to advance priorities through neighborhood improvement initiatives. Atlanta’s existing neighborhood support

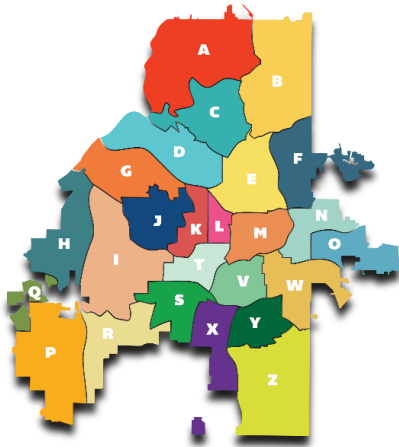


Figure 3: Atlanta NPU Map

infrastructure is a mosaic of different governing bodies advocating for residents, including 242 distinct neighborhoods, over 150 neighborhood associations, 10 CIDs, 6 Police Zones, and 25 Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU). Promoting engagement across all of these entities is dependent on the neighborhood, and each governing body represents different interests of residents, causing confusion and hampering unified planning efforts. This confusion leads to frustrated, unempowered residents who do not have the time or subject-matter expertise to invest in engagement. This deepens inequalities throughout the city, where residents who have the time and resources to navigate these various groups to ensure their needs are met and their

interests are advocated for have become the loudest, or, oftentimes, the only group at the proverbial table. The city has a leadership opportunity to bolster civic infrastructure where there are gaps and elevate the voice of residents throughout the city in place-based decisions.

Additionally, the lack of unified planning districts poses challenges to data collection, making quantitative health assessments difficult. The absence of critical neighborhood data prevents planners from creating a comprehensive picture of neighborhood health, hampering intentional and informed planning efforts.

By bolstering and **revitalizing civic infrastructure and avenues for residents to engage with city Hall**, Atlanta can work to resolve inequities in those represented by various governing bodies and neighborhood groups. The subcommittee believes that “the People” are imperative for place-based neighborhood investments to be successful, and the city has a responsibility to make sure “the People” have an empowered seat at the table. The city can evaluate who speaks for a community and strengthen and modify governance structures to ensure diverse and representative voices from a community – drawing circles around and among our neighborhoods.



### Detailed Recommendation 3A: Develop an office of neighborhoods

Empowered neighborhoods require a dependable, innovative city government. For neighborhoods to function and feel as though they are all on equal footing, the city must remove existing silos at city Hall and coordinate neighborhood needs from a central point. Development of a coordinated unified structure to coordinate neighborhood engagement, constituent services, and city planning will help create a unifying front from the city to address neighborhood needs in one place at city Hall.

Atlanta will require additional staff and resources with a dedicated focus on **supporting NPUs, neighborhood associations, and neighborhood-specific needs** to provide equal attention to the city's diverse areas. This supporting unit would serve to support the 25 NPUs and more than 150 neighborhood associations, tying in the interests of key stakeholders (CIDs, community quarterbacks, etc.) into one cohesive point of contact at city Hall. This cohesive point of contact would also serve as a connector among the various key stakeholders who are leading planning efforts and those implementing neighborhood-based improvement efforts. The city should consider reviewing staffing structures to best support NPU and neighborhood association needs, working with community leaders to determine requisite skill sets to build meaningful relationships with local leaders. This updated structure would provide clarity and simplicity for neighborhoods, while creating additional transparency for residents and neighborhood leaders.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Expand neighborhood engagement staffing at city Hall: Hire additional staff and provide resources for support services to bolster neighborhood engagement, constituent services, and city planning at city Hall to ensure neighborhood needs are met. This will include direct staffing to support the various stakeholders who are orchestrating both long-term strategic and investment planning in neighborhoods and those implementing place-based neighborhood improvement efforts (NPUs, neighborhood associations, CIDs, community development corporations, community quarterbacks, etc.).
- Ensure seamless coordination among city departments for neighborhood needs: Establish a unified governance structure to coordinate neighborhood engagement and constituent services across existing city departments and organizations with a focus on integrated planning and operations.
- Formalize collaboration between NPUs and the Mayor's Office: Establish regular NPU leadership meetings between NPU and city leaders to discuss NPU-specific needs, spearheaded by neighborhood dedicated employees and culminating in regular sessions between NPU leaders and the Mayor.

## Detailed Recommendation 3B: Revitalize structures to elevate neighborhood voices

The existing landscape of entities has led to confusion amongst residents who are unsure of which governing body speaks for them. Some residents live in an area represented by an NPU, a neighborhood association, a CID, and are served by community quarterbacks and other community development corporations. However, only one of these existing structures exists to serve the collective voice of the people, by the people: the NPU. Every resident of Atlanta belongs to an NPU, though inequalities are heavy among NPUs. Many serve exclusively residential areas, while others serve economically prosperous areas with a large corporate presence. Demography of residents within each NPU also vary greatly, leading to an inequality among the voices making decisions for the community. The role the NPU plays within city government has also evolved over time due to changes in the political environment and city resources, and the purpose of the NPU has gotten lost amid the variations in how they all run. Ultimately, the power of the NPU has diminished, with NPUs serving primarily as an administrative body in 2022. There is a need to revisit the current charge given to NPUs and determine if this is sufficient to elevate resident voices. There is also a need to clearly articulate what this role of the NPU is in long-term strategic and investment planning, coordinating with both the city and partners (e.g., community quarterbacks, CIDs, Community Development Corporations, nonprofits, and other partners), and implementing neighborhood-based improvements. The subcommittee believes there is ample opportunity here to elevate the role of the NPUs in keeping with the original governance and design. The recommendations within this area, along with those in *Recommendation area 3A*, will ultimately create a neighborhood structure that works for all Atlantans, and move Atlanta's neighborhoods forward. Effective implementation of this effort will require **dedicated staff devoted to coordinating and assisting with NPU and neighborhood association needs**, such as those suggested in *Recommendation area 3A*

Key actions in this area include the following:

- Clearly define and create a strategic role for NPUs and neighborhood associations in local governance: Develop a neighborhood planning unit (NPU)/neighborhood association revitalization strategy to elevate the NPUs' role in city decision-making processes and to ensure meaningful impact. Execution of this strategy will expand neighborhood civic infrastructure and provide residents with an easily understood model in which to engage with others in their

### Planning snapshot: NPUs\*

*Atlanta's 25 NPUs serve to engage in comprehensive planning matters affecting the livability of neighborhoods\**

- Stakeholders, residents, and experts often express **differing understandings of NPUs' role** in supporting Atlanta's neighborhoods.
- NPUs are **often excluded** from city planning and budgetary processes, disempowering local voices from planning efforts.
- Most NPUs lack clear communication channels to engage with residents. **Less than 50%** maintain an active website and only **50%** maintain social media accounts.
- Most residents are **unaware** of NPUs – and those unaware are **2-3 times more likely** to be low-income renters.

*\*Source: Center for Civic Innovation  
Atlanta, NPU Initiative*



neighborhoods on local needs and strategies, while also connecting to goals and needs of the city of Atlanta overall.

- Develop best practices for NPU and neighborhood association operations: As a part of the revitalization strategy, assess and develop recommendations for geographic placement, resource allocation and budgeting, roles and responsibilities, operations, administrative burden, and strategic place-based planning to create accessible and meaningful residential engagement structures.
- Establish guidance for governance: Establish a common purpose that all NPUs share and establish basic principles for the role all NPUs should play within a neighborhood, allowing for NPUs to customize this for their own place-based needs.
- Coordinate among various stakeholders developing place-based planning and orchestrating place-based improvements within neighborhoods: Establish and sustainably resource communication channels between various groups (e.g., CIDs, NPUs, community quarterbacks, community navigators) developing place-based strategies and actions in neighborhoods to increase synergies among various neighborhood-based advocacy groups, including regular meetings and touchpoints with each other and Neighborhood Engagement staff at the city. Formalize engagement strategies to include these groups in budgetary and fiscal decision making related to public infrastructure.

### Detailed Recommendation 3C: Cultivate Neighborhood-based Civic Leadership

Place-based strategies require strong community leaders. Every community needs leadership, and there should be avenues for all residents to take appropriate leadership positions as they see opportune for their own individual circumstances. The city should work to ensure that all volunteers who are willing to take up these leadership positions within their city have valuable

<p><b>Neighborhood Engagement &amp; Youth and Education</b></p> <p>To build <b>the next generation of civic leaders</b>, the city of Atlanta should continue partner programs with Atlanta Public Schools to build a civic engagement program for you to provide them opportunities to learn how city government works and engage with their communities in place-based efforts.</p>
--

training and the tools necessary to do their position fairly and with the least amount of burden as possible. There also needs to be clear roles and responsibilities for each leadership position within the NPU structure, so resident leaders have a baseline upon which to operate. Neighborhood-based leaders should also encourage further engagement from their fellow residents. Empowered leaders will lead to empowered neighborhoods with agency to make change happen. Effective implementation of this effort will require **dedicated staff devoted to**

**coordinating and assisting with NPU and neighborhood association needs**, such as those suggested in *Recommendation Area 3A*.

Key actions in this area include the following:

*Cultivate and Train Neighborhood Leadership*: Build comprehensive leadership development programs for emerging neighborhood leaders and trainings through assessment of existing

capabilities (e.g., NPU University, UrbanPlan<sup>2</sup>, for Community Leaders, Community Engagement Playbook) in alignment with the NPU/neighborhood association revitalization strategy.

### Detailed Recommendation 3D: Prioritize Communications and Outreach to all Residents

An empowered neighborhood is an informed neighborhood. There is a strong need for targeted outreach from various groups working in Atlanta’s neighborhoods to better inform residents of planning efforts and to make them aware of incoming and completed neighborhood improvements, while also ensuring they are aware of platforms in which to provide feedback and to get more involved within their neighborhoods. A significant challenge of the current NPU structure is the lack of awareness among residents about what an NPU is, let alone how an NPU represents their interests as a member of the community. Each NPU communicates with their residents via different modes, and, oftentimes, NPU volunteer leadership spend money out of their own pocket on printing. Additionally, most communications around neighborhood events and meetings are printed exclusively in English, deepening inequities for non-native English speakers across localities. These inequities in communication result in residents not being engaged in their communities, and do not provide equitable avenues to have a say in what happens in their neighborhoods. Effective implementation of this effort will require **dedicated staff devoted to coordinating and assisting with NPU and neighborhood association needs**, such as those suggested in *Recommendation Area 3A*.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- *Increase Engagement Among All Residents via Bolstered Communications:* Develop and implement a comprehensive and inclusive communications plan and resource toolkit for NPUs and neighborhood associations to conduct targeted and accessible outreach to all residents and community members. Atlanta should consider leveraging various modes of communication (i.e., postal mail, phone calls, social media, e-mail) to promote accessibility to all residents and neighborhoods across the city. *Track Community Feedback and Create Inclusive Forums:* Create a centralized community feedback tool to efficiently track resident and neighborhood input across city and public partners (i.e., MARTA, BeltLine, APS) and build lessons learned from prior community engagements across the city. As part of this, develop a tool which communicates and manages public engagement and comment forums to promote accessibility for NPUs and neighborhood associations. Implementation of such a tool would allow stakeholder groups at the neighborhood level to

#### Revamping Digital Civic Infrastructure

Websites and digital tools are a first stop for civic engagement. Atlanta can revitalize its existing [neighborhood website](#) to provide comprehensive information for residents and leaders looking to engage.

Atlanta can look to sister cities such as [Detroit](#) and [New Orleans](#) to gain ideas on website revitalization.

Atlanta can also consider implementing a tool such as the New Orleans “[Notice Me](#)” tool to **directly engage citizens** on proposed land use changes in a specific locality via voluntary email sign up.

<sup>2</sup> Urban Land Institute <https://americas.uli.org/programs/urbanplan/>

engage with forums while providing access to past questions and comments for city and neighborhood use.

- *Disseminate Tools and Resources:* Develop and socialize a resource toolkit and outreach plan for neighborhood-based organizations to build additional capacity and help deploy city-provided tools across all NPUs/neighborhood associations.

#### Partnership Spotlight: Local University

Consider partnering with **web and graphic design students** at SCAD, Georgia Tech, Clark Atlanta, Morehouse, or Spelman to produce a new, easy to navigate website for neighborhoods.

- *Redesign the city's Neighborhoods Website:* Revamp Atlanta's [neighborhood website](#) to provide working links and clear, accurate and actionable information, including community events and neighborhood planning efforts. A revitalized website would allow NPUs and neighborhood associations to house and collect standardized information separate from Atlanta's 311 website.





## Detailed Recommendation 4: Implement Long-Term Neighborhood Improvement Plans

Neighborhood empowerment requires city support and resources to support neighborhood-level strategies and planning efforts. Although Atlanta has numerous avenues to support strategic planning at the local and neighborhood levels, the city lacks clear structures to support realistic and equitable planning across neighborhoods. As a result, local planning efforts are often narrow and disjointed with no clear avenue to holistically integrate into city-wide goals. Further, plans that are developed without feasible implementation in mind can undermine neighborhood empowerment, unintentionally signaling that it was simply a plan to sit on the proverbial shelf.

The development of clear goals, standards, and targets would allow neighborhoods and NPUs to create actionable strategies to inform healthy growth while allowing neighborhoods agency to shape their own futures. Effective implementation of this effort will require **dedicated staff devoted to coordinating and assisting with NPU and neighborhood association needs**, such as those suggested in *Recommendation Area 3A*.



### Detailed Recommendation 4A: Create a City-Wide Strategic Investment Plan

To provide clear, actionable city-wide strategic guidance, Atlanta should develop comprehensive investment plans which are informed by neighborhood voices and align with localized neighborhood strategies. Adoption of recommendations in this area would provide clarity on city goals to neighborhood associations, NPUs, partners, non-profits, and community leaders, allowing the development of actionable local plans as part of a city-wide strategic objective.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- *Create City-Wide Standards and Guidelines*: Develop city-wide standards and guidelines to help manage neighborhood growth with a focus on advancing equity, minimizing displacement, and providing economic opportunities for all.
  - Support Neighborhood Development Plans: Develop and socialize holistic neighborhood improvement plans that include housing, economic development, education, and health improvement strategies.

- **Create Resident Accessible Tools:** Develop planning tools (i.e., GIS, planning templates, etc.) that are implementable and accessible to neighborhoods, residents, and community leaders. An example of this includes neighborhood-level dashboards which combine strategic information on infrastructure. The city can consider housing updated tools on Atlanta’s revitalized [neighborhood website](#) discussed in *Recommendation Area 3A*.
- **Promote Participatory Budgeting:** Provide clear engagement platforms for community leaders (e.g., community quarterbacks), neighborhood associations, and NPUs to provide input and engage with city capital spending plans through increased participatory budgeting and transparent access to available funding streams.
- **Implement Long-Term Neighborhood Improvement Plans:** Implement a unified, long-term planning strategy and implementation plan to improve the health of all neighborhoods. This plan should codify cross-functional priorities and lay clear groundwork for partnerships and localized engagement. These plans should also be in alignment with the city-wide goals mentioned above.
  - **Support and Bolster Localized Plans:** Support development and implementation of localized plans developed by neighborhood associations and leaders (e.g., community quarterbacks) through resources and city staff dedicated to specific NPUs and neighborhood associations.
- **Design and Implement Neighborhood Pilot Program:** Conduct a comprehensive pilot program to target three or four neighborhoods (including Thomasville Heights) where large-scale systemic issues (i.e., crime and safety, housing and displacement, disparate access to economic opportunities, truancy) exist and develop a comprehensive improvement plan incorporating lessons learned. Implementation of these pilot programs requires collaboration across city governmental departments and entities, as well as coordination with stakeholders and public agencies. The city should give careful consideration for the locations of these pilot programs, taking into account typologies and neighborhood specific needs to maximize impact while collecting lessons learned. As part of these pilot programs, the city can consider leveraging opportunities to pilot enhanced leadership development tools and approaches for local leaders and utilize existing tools such as the Flourishing Neighborhood Index (FNI) to elevate resident voices throughout the process.

**Pilot Program at Thomasville Heights**

In 2022, the city of Atlanta launched a pilot program in the **Thomasville Heights neighborhood** located in southeast Atlanta in partnership with public and private partner organizations. Atlanta can leverage lessons learned from the Thomasville Heights pilot to inform pilot programs for 2-3 additional neighborhoods, capturing strategies and best practices to support localized planning across the city.

**UrbanPlan for Community Leaders**

A leadership development tool that can be leveraged for community leaders in Atlanta is UrbanPlan, a program that aims to generate more positive and informed dialogue about land use at the local level through an open exchange of ideas among public officials, community leaders, and the private sector.

- **Plan for Expanded Implementation:** Identify public and private capital and operating investments required to replicate and execute these plans and replicate across other geographies.

## Detailed Recommendation 5: Solidify Public-Private Partnerships for Place-Based Efforts

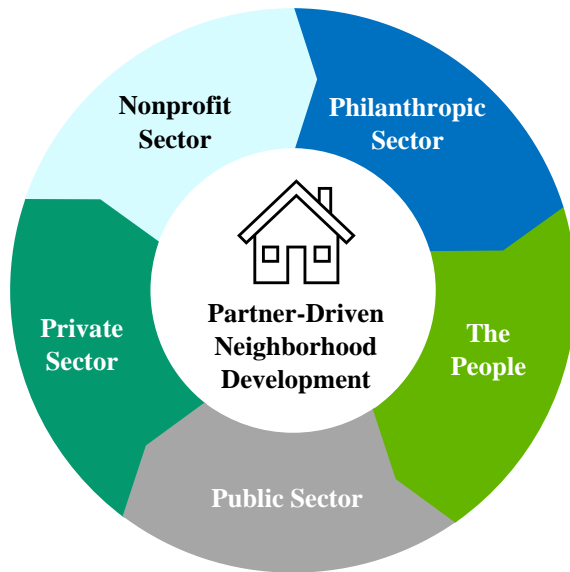


Figure 3: P5 Model

Neighborhood Empowerment requires “The People” to engage with non-profits, philanthropies, and the public and private sector to infuse capital resources and an implementing partner into key initiatives. The subcommittee leveraged the “P5” model shown in **Figure 3** when developing recommendations to help ensure place-based efforts are informed by and accountable to resident needs and voices. Adoption of a partner-driven neighborhood development model provides resident, neighborhood, and partner voices with clear investment avenues for place-based efforts. Through collaborative efforts between community-based entities and the public sector, neighborhoods can work to improve key areas of community impact, including land use, youth

development, utilities and sanitation, safety, transportation, infrastructure, health and wellness, and accessibility. Partnerships are also essential to providing opportunities for economic mobility within neighborhoods. Partnerships are essential to funding, developing, and executing place-based strategies and plans, and create conditions to evaluate and elevate representative voices at the table to address community needs.

## Detailed Recommendation 5A: Harness Strategic Policies and Funding Apparatuses

Neighborhoods require an infusion of braided funding mechanisms consisting of public and private dollars to make progress happen. The city can do its part to infuse capital into communities for place-based interventions by increasing grant funding opportunities and minimizing barriers for non-profits and place-based organizations to apply and receive funds from the city, thus enticing new partners to work with the city to better local neighborhoods and give existing partners greater confidence in the effectiveness of these funds.

Key actions in this area include the following:

- **Increase Place-based Grant Funding and Procurement Opportunities:** Leverage existing grant funding and procurement capabilities to support place-based planning programs and increase



available funding streams efficiently and expediently and ensure neighborhood-based leaders are aware of these efforts.

- *Develop Equity-Focused Partnerships and Funding Opportunities:* Leverage partnerships and resources to develop strategies and policies geared towards building equitable communities

## Detailed Recommendation 5B: Cultivate Stakeholder and Place-Based Partnerships

Atlanta is home to thousands of businesses, churches, non-profits, and community engagement organizations for neighborhoods to partner with to execute strategies and actions laid out in their planning efforts. To foster additional place-based solutions, the city should assist and help facilitate neighborhood-based governance structures in building relationships with local partners. The city should also equip local leaders to seek these partnerships themselves. These partnerships should also extend to other public sector partners making significant investments in neighborhoods (i.e., Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta Parks and Recreation, BeltLine, Georgia Department of Transportation) to ensure neighborhoods and their residents are in alignment with and provide input on major investments others are making in their own backyard. Effective implementation of this effort will require **dedicated staff devoted to coordinating and assisting with NPU and neighborhood association needs**, such as those suggested in *Recommendation Area 3A*.

Key actions in this area include:

- *Solidify Public-Private Partnerships for Place-Based Efforts:* Build new and leverage existing partnerships with CIDs, churches, businesses, local governmental entities (i.e., APS), state government, and non-profits which bolster and strengthen communities and allow for a braided funding system for economic improvement and to advance place-based projects and establish platforms to facilitate on-going collaboration.
  - Support and Collaborate with CIDs: Equip and resource city employees and leadership to best leverage CID capabilities and benefits around key areas (i.e., transportation, maintenance) through working groups, regular touchpoints, trainings, and relationship building. With greater partnership and trust, there is opportunity for greater alignment between CID goals and city-wide goals.

### Potential Equity-Focused Partnerships

- ***Make Advances in Racial Equity through Funded Partnerships:*** Develop a racial equity initiative to raise funds to advance racial equity work being conducted in the city through education, workforce development, housing, and economic development, among other areas
- ***Reduce Poverty through Coordinated Services:*** Coordinate an anti-poverty strategy that integrates the city's efforts around housing and community development with health and human services to boost the impact of agencies working to reduce poverty. Atlanta can look to [Philadelphia, PA](#) for an example of leveraging partnerships across multiple sectors to provide equitable access to resources in the community.

### Partnership Spotlight: CIDs

Atlanta's [Community Improvement Districts](#) leverage private funding to supplement public ventures and initiatives on top of standard city functions across geographic areas. Atlanta has the opportunity to **revitalize its relationships with CIDs** by providing dedicated city staff to bridge the gap between CID and city planning and support operations.

- Formalize Partnerships with Corporate Community: Improve strategic partnerships with incoming and established corporations to promote economic mobility and place-based growth.
- Build Strong Partnerships with Philanthropies: Work with local philanthropies and funders with ties to Atlanta neighborhoods to support place-based organizations and promote place-based improvements and growth
- Support Business Associations: Provide place-based resources, training, and data to business associations to support local small businesses.
- Align Neighborhood Plans: Ensure plans incorporate partnerships and priorities of key stakeholders working to advance various aspects of the health of neighborhoods efforts of key institutional stakeholders including Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta Housing, Fulton and Dekalb County, Grady Health, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce (and other business organizations), the Atlanta Committee for Progress, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Georgia Department of Transportation, community development financial institutions, etc.
- Formalize Foundational Relationships: Schedule monthly foundational stakeholder meeting between APS, APD, Grady Health, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Mayor to signal the importance of and creating a culture of working across agencies and in more collaborative ways, which is essential to place-based work.

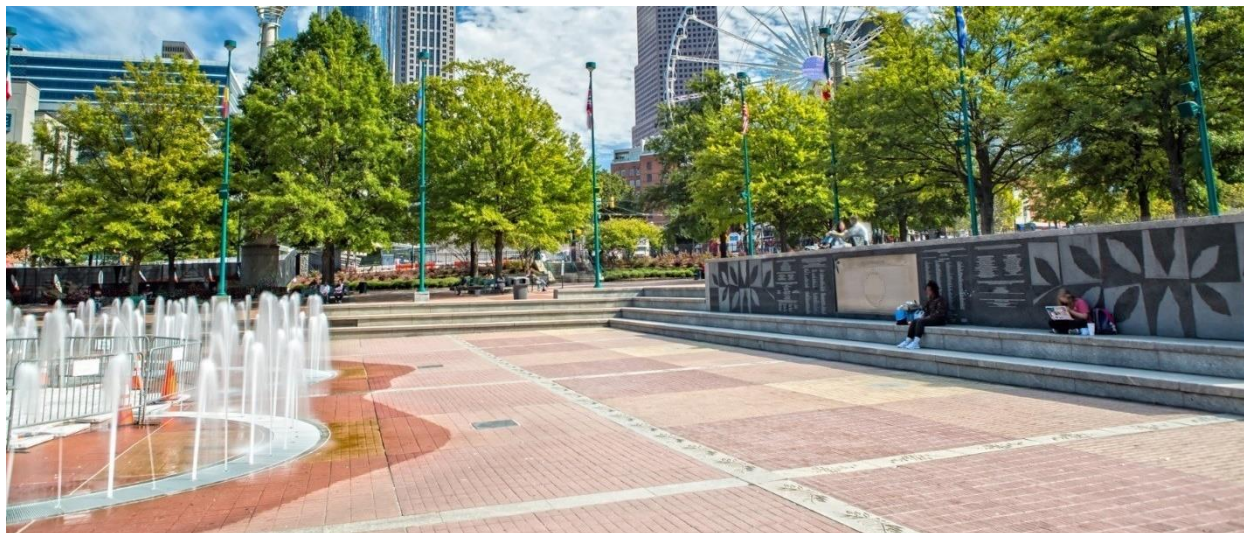
Neighborhood Engagement & SAFE Streets
<p>To ensure residents have a say in crime prevention in their area, the city should foster strong relationships between APD, NPUs, and the Mayor’s Office to <b>solicit community feedback and access to place-based crime preventions, interventions, and enforcement</b>. Atlanta can look to <a href="#">Washington, DC</a> for a model to implement this type of place-based planning.</p>

## Detailed Recommendation 6: Develop Standardized Neighborhood Livability Index

Neighborhood empowerment requires comprehensive, standardized data about neighborhoods and their residents to drive strategic and equitable operating investment decisions. Atlanta’s communities lack equal access to resources, infrastructure, and decision-makers required to make empowered decisions about their neighborhoods. There is currently no single source for data in the city of Atlanta, leading to data inconsistencies and hampering uniform data collection and analyses.

In the absence of consistent and accurate data, residents and neighborhoods lack the requisite tools to make meaningful and informed decisions about the livability and health of their localities. Moreover, multiple groups in the region have expressed interest in these neighborhood data for academic research, nonprofit grant application development, intergovernmental coordination, and commercial development purposes. Academic research and other U.S. cities have demonstrated more effective ways of measuring neighborhood health using a broader set of data.

The following recommendations were developed to prioritize inclusive and equitable resident engagement in the creation of a standardized neighborhood livability index to make place-based decisions. Adoption of recommendations in this area will help Atlantans identify neighborhood assets that speak to a community’s health and wellness. This will invite civic participation by enabling neighborhood residents and partners to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats unique to their neighborhood thus empowering communities to advocate for, prioritize, and fund proposed projects with data. Furthermore, this dashboard will help support long-term neighborhood planning and continuous improvement within the city’s neighborhoods.



## Detailed Recommendation 6A: Standardizing Comprehensive Community Health Metrics

To gain a comprehensive snapshot of neighborhood health and quality of life, the city should partner with residents, academics, and nonprofit leaders **to develop a standardized neighborhood health scorecard.**

Key actions in this area include:

- *Develop an Inclusive and Equitable Governance Process:* Partner with academic institutions, other public institutions, and neighborhood-based organizations to build an inclusive governance process for assessing and measuring neighborhood livability, utilizing [Neighborhood Nexus](#) and refocusing the Neighborhood Change report
  - Develop Data Alignment Strategy: Identify validated data sources (i.e., Zillow, AARP, U.S. Census Bureau) to inform livability index development and promote unified, accurate data. This should also include integrating and ensuring

Reference Existing Neighborhood Health Tools
<p>Tools such as the <a href="#">Flourishing Neighborhood Index</a> (FNI) measure the health of communities across various economic, social, and structural indicators. This index is unique in that community members collect the data for the neighborhood, from the neighborhood. These data are considered more accurate since they are collected at a more granular level than Census, regional, or zip code data and empower the residents to then use their own skills and expertise to identify priorities and objectives, develop a long-term plan, and coordinate next steps.</p>



interoperability with data the city already compiles (i.e., crime data, building permit data, data from 311).

- Expand Data as Available: Include available data and supplement with limited data requests which expand over time to ensure data integrity.
  - Ensure Accountability Through Governance: Establish a governance team of city employees and partners to monitor and expand tool with input from resident and neighborhood voices.
- *Determine Neighborhood Health Measures*: With partners, identify key metrics and indicators and establish a scorecard to paint a picture of comprehensive neighborhood health and quality of life. Sample metrics for Mayoral consideration include (but are not limited to): walkability, accessibility (language, ADA, transportation, broadband, etc.), voter registration and participation, housing quality, air pollution, and education.
  - *Conduct a Scorecard Pilot Program*: Rollout the neighborhood health index scorecard in three to four neighborhoods to solicit targeted feedback on localized needs in the upcoming year. Once these pilots conclude, the promising practices and lessons learned from this initial effort can be used to replicate and scale the pilot program across Atlanta's neighborhoods. If practicable, Atlanta may consider tying to the pilot program in *Recommendation Area 4A*.
  - *Develop a Public-Facing Neighborhood Health Dashboard*: Roll out a public-facing dashboard for residents to better understand and track neighborhood health and livability throughout the city. The city can consider housing updated tools on Atlanta's revitalized [neighborhood website](#) discussed in *Recommendation Area 3A*.
  - *Facilitate Continuous Improvement*: Use dashboard to diagnose place-based issues and inform consistent, focused interventions and continuous improvement within neighborhoods. The city of Atlanta should partner with CIDs, NPUs, and other community organizations to monitor neighborhoods' progress toward health and livability goals



# Safe Streets



## Background

---

At his direction, this document provides Mayor Dickens with a set of recommendations from his Transition Team – “next steps” and beyond, from enhancements to existing programs to suggestions of new ones – to ensure public safety in the city of Atlanta and build confidence among its residents. At its core, these recommendations center on the strategies, programs, services, processes, technologies, and organizational structures that will lead to more effective and lasting public safety outcomes.

The **SAFE Streets** pillar of Mayor Dickens’ agenda is centered on the following:

- **SURGE** the police force by 250 officers during his first year in office; train every Atlanta Police Department (APD) employee in racial sensitivity and de-escalation techniques.
- **ARREST** gang leaders who prey on our children; resolve pandemic-related court backlogs to get violent criminals off Atlanta streets.
- Create a task **FORCE** with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), the FBI, and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to address gun trafficking; simultaneously create a task force to hire and deploy specialists to deal with nonviolent issues such as mental health and homelessness.
- **EMPOWER** the APD to engage in community policing and support it with new technologies to reduce response times (e.g., smart streetlights, ShotSpotters, and software connecting the APD and the Fulton County Sheriff’s Department).<sup>3</sup>

Against this backdrop, members of the SAFE Streets Subcommittee convened over the course of the Transition Team’s work and identified 10 public safety outcome areas that they now forward to the Mayor as critical priorities over the course of his term: **combat violent crime, prevent violent crime, develop strategies to address nonviolent crime, improve public safety operations, enhance the public safety infrastructure, improve street safety, reduce emergency response times, strengthen community policing efforts, improve victim services, and enhance residents’ trust in law enforcement.**

This report is *not* intended to be a comprehensive assessment of the city of Atlanta’s public safety ecosystem or all issues around public safety. Likewise, it is not a fully developed strategic plan. The subcommittee was limited in both time and scope, so the report reflects a *targeted* assessment of public safety considering resident input and expectations, identifying trends that presently drive crime, investigating leading practices for public safety, and detailing successful intervention models.

---

<sup>3</sup> Andre Dickens, *Public Safety: A Letter to Atlanta*, <https://andreforatlanta.com/public-safety/>.



## Current State

Atlanta residents care about crime – reducing and fighting it, what causes it, how it affects their daily lives and the lives of their family and friends, and how it affects local neighborhoods, businesses, and schools. A cursory glance at social media, a local news broadcast, or a website proves this point.

In recent months, residents of Atlanta have held an increasingly negative perception of public safety – whether they are safe as they work, shop, eat, and live in the city, and how the city is combating crime. Although crime remains historically low, Atlanta has recently experienced a measurable spike in violent crime. Crime carries not only a societal cost but an economic one as well. A report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimates that annual costs of crime in the United States range from \$690 billion to \$3.41 trillion.<sup>4</sup>

Against this backdrop, Andre Dickens was elected as Atlanta’s mayor. During his campaign, his transition, and his early days in office, the Mayor has made public safety a centerpiece of his work, and he has already taken steps toward curbing crime and improving public safety.

## Findings from data analysis and literature reviews

Through the effort of the Transition Team, the SAFE Streets Subcommittee identified several public safety challenges to address as well as key findings relevant to this policy area from data analysis and literature reviews:

- **Violent crime in the city is high (relative to recent years):** In 2020, there were 58% more homicides than in 2019.<sup>5</sup> So far in 2022, homicides are up 43% and sexual assaults are up an astounding 236% compared with the same time frame in 2021.<sup>6</sup>
- **Violent crime in the city is location based:** The top five areas for violent crime arrests in the city of Atlanta are the following ZIP codes: 30318, 30311, 30315, 30310, and 30314.<sup>7</sup> These violent crimes in Atlanta occur in a small number of “hotspots” or “micro places” – either street intersections, addresses, or blocks. Atlanta’s violent crime has not been equal across APD zones; for example, when violent crime began increasing in 2020, zones 1, 3, 4, and 5 had the largest increases.<sup>8</sup>
- **Two target groups account for most of the crime – repeat offenders and youths:** For repeat offenders, about 1,000 people are responsible for about 40% of crimes in the city. In

---

<sup>4</sup> *How Much Does Crime Cost*, U.S. Government Accountability Office WatchBlog, <https://blog.gao.gov/2017/11/29/how-much-does-crime-cost/>.

<sup>5</sup> *Atlanta’s deadliest year in decades has city on edge and demanding change*, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, <https://www.ajc.com/news/atlantas-deadliest-year-in-decades-has-city-on-edge-and-demanding-change/WAF3MV7AVBD2BO2RZVANXDI6E4/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Rape in Atlanta soared by 236% and murder by 43% in 2022 compared to the same time last year after a woke city mayor and pandemic lockdowns sent crime soaring*, DailyMail.com, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10536017/Atlantas-crime-wave-spirals-control-rapes-increase-236-murders-spike-43.html>.

<sup>7</sup> *Top 5 Zip Codes by Offense*, APD Tactical Crime Analysis Unit, APD Report Management Systems (RMS).

<sup>8</sup> *Violent Crimes by Zone*, Georgia State University Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, UCR Violent Crime Data.

fact, police arrested 75 people during a four-week period who had a combined 1,800 arrests on their records. On a weekly basis, 30% of the arrests made by APD officers are repeat offenders.<sup>9</sup> For youths, during the period from October 1, 2020, through March 14, 2022, the highest percentages of violent crime arrests were males (80% of arrests by gender) from ages 17-24 years old (22% of arrests by age).<sup>10</sup>

- **Emergency response times are delayed:** The National Emergency Number Association standard is 90% of calls answered within 15 seconds, but Atlanta answers 87% of calls in the same time frame.<sup>11</sup>
- **Residents perceive crime as worse than it actually is:** There is a wide gap between actual public safety conditions and how the public perceives those conditions. Fifty-seven percent of Americans believe crime has increased over the past decade, while only 10% agree (correctly) that crime has decreased.<sup>12</sup>
- **Street safety is a concern and pedestrian deaths are on the rise:** Traffic fatalities in the city of Atlanta have also risen significantly from 2020 to 2021. While traffic fatalities from vehicles rose by 17%, over the same time frame, pedestrian fatalities rose by 88% – over five times the rate of change for vehicle fatalities.<sup>13</sup>

## Findings from stakeholder interviews and focus groups

The subcommittee, with its consulting partner, Accenture, engaged in a series of stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and community input sessions with officials across city departments, leaders from neighborhood groups, and community business organizations. Across the stakeholder groups, the most common public safety themes and priorities that emerged were the following:

### **The most commonly referenced *community concerns* that stakeholders advised the Mayor should address:**

- The increase in gun violence and gang activity
- The minimal employment and economic empowerment opportunities for at-risk youths
- The city's lack of partnerships with Atlanta Public Schools (APS) and community youth programs

---

<sup>9</sup> 'A life of crime': Fulton officials create Repeat Offender Tracking Unit, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime/a-life-of-crime-fulton-officials-create-repeat-offender-tracking-unit/FFQJ5RQVKNBYHKKFVPJEJAC2PA/>.

<sup>10</sup> Arrests by Age Range, APD Tactical Crime Analysis Unit, APD Report Management Systems (RMS).

<sup>11</sup> The Atlanta Voice, APD and city Officials Work to Improve Increasing Response Times Amid COVID-19 Crime Wave, The Atlanta Voice, <https://theatlantavoice.com/apd-and-city-officials-work-to-improve-increasing-response-times-amid-covid-19-crime-wave/>.

<sup>12</sup> Many Americans Are Convinced Crime Is Rising In The U.S. They're Wrong, FiveThirtyEight, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/many-americans-are-convinced-crime-is-rising-in-the-u-s-theyre-wrong/>.

<sup>13</sup> Pedestrian fatalities rise; U.S. DOT announces strategy to eliminate traffic deaths, Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, <https://www.atlantabike.org/usdot-visionzero>.

- The city’s lack of complete and safe infrastructure to support pedestrian and alternate mode transportation safety
- The lack of police interactions, transparency, visibility, and partnerships with community organizations
- The lack of communication between public safety departments within the City
- The city’s outdated policies and city Code of Ordinance that has not effectively evolved to address contemporary public safety concerns of residents within the city

**To address community concerns, this subcommittee collectively identified five *priority areas* for the Mayor to focus on within his term in office:**

- Reduce violent crime
- Enhance the public’s perception of safety
- Address the root causes of crime
- Transform the city’s public safety services, operations, and infrastructure
- Engineer streets to prioritize slow streets and safety of multimodal transportation options

Among the transition subcommittees, we also engaged with a wide array of appointed and civil service leaders within city government. We asked them to identify the challenges to operationalizing the proposed recommendations – e.g., What might prevent success? What would need to happen with the “mechanics” of departments to bring these recommendations to life and to ensure their longevity?

With honesty, candor, and passion, they identified the following obstacles:

- Staffing (lengthy and unwieldy recruitment, turnover due to burnout, etc.) and competitive salaries
- Departmental budget
- Outdated equipment, technology, and infrastructure
- Cumbersome and antiquated procurement processes
- Silos of community-centric work requiring multi-stakeholder input
- Historical norms of overreliance on police, slow service delivery, and outdated policies and processes

Aside from budget increases, that same group identified a number of potential solutions, including a greater focus on customer service (including metrics to measure it), a measured emphasis on internal collaboration and external partnerships, enhanced training, investments in technology, a talent retention plan, and an “emergency” or “fast track” procurement process.



## Methodology

---

Accenture partnered with the SAFE Streets subcommittee to execute a community-centric approach to research, formulate, and recommend public safety policies to the Mayor to address the most pressing *community* issues facing the city of Atlanta. Over the course of the 100-day transition period, the subcommittee worked to identify gaps in the public safety infrastructure, identify leading practices from around the world, and recommend actions to help the Mayor and city of Atlanta prioritize 21st-century public safety strategies and technologies.

From the outset, the SAFE Streets Subcommittee considered “public safety” to mean more than just the Atlanta Police Department, its officers and personnel, and its policies and procedures. The subcommittee believes that public safety is a multifaceted term that includes a broader ecosystem than just policing (e.g., the criminal justice system, code enforcement, youth services, transportation, emergency management services). Additionally, how residents *perceive* their own safety *and* how media outlets *report* on public safety matters – both are integral pieces of that ecosystem. Therefore, the subcommittee’s report and recommendations endeavor to be holistic.

The SAFE Streets Subcommittee recommendations were formulated by the following approach:

- Phase 1 – Discover and Assess (Weeks 1-4)
  - Over the course of Phase 1, we defined public safety in broad terms; conducted 20-plus interviews with public safety departmental leadership and public safety experts; led three focus groups (residents, youths, and the business community) with key stakeholders; hosted five SAFE Streets co-creation sessions; reviewed over 70 reports, white papers, city documents, and fact sheets relevant to public safety; identified issues with the current state; identified global best practices; and crafted a trends analysis and research insights report.
- Phase 2 – Formulate (Weeks 5-6)
  - During Phase 2, we organized findings from Phase 1 into 10 common thematic areas and prioritized the themes with community stakeholders. Additionally, we conducted a co-creation session at city Hall and developed actionable public safety interventions as well as examined the feasibility of the initial recommendations.
- Phase 3 – Recommend and Revise (Weeks 7-9)
  - Through Phase 3, we prioritized the public safety interventions and reviewed them as a subcommittee. We then created an initial draft of the policy recommendations.
- Phase 4 – Finalize (Weeks 10-11)
  - In Phase 4, we finalized findings and policy recommendations into the SAFE Streets Policy Report and distributed the report to the mayoral transition team to consolidate with the other subcommittees.

## Recommendations

---

After its literature review, interviews, focus groups, and internal discussion, the subcommittee determined six key recommendations for the Mayor:

1. Reduce violent crime
2. Improve emergency response times
3. Enhance the public’s perception of safety
4. Transform public safety services, operations, and infrastructure
5. Commit to 21st-century public safety strategies and investments
6. Address the root causes of crime

*Note: These recommendations are not presented in a particular or prioritized order. Many are complementary and would benefit from a side-by-side implementation.*

We present each recommendation separately. Within each recommendation, there are a number of specific subrecommendations we propose to the Mayor and the city for their consideration.

### Recommendation 1: Reduce violent crime

To combat the elevated levels of violent crime, the city will need to combine a variety of approaches and make targeted, rapid investments. The city of Atlanta should adopt targeted tactics that can achieve short-term impacts on crime. To do so, the city should center its focus on repeat offenders, nuisance properties, anti-gang initiatives, gun enforcement, and proactive policing in crime “hotspots.”

#### **Recommendation 1a: Develop place-based crime prevention strategies in crime “hotspots”**

Places (e.g., public residences, public transportation, recreational areas, retail establishments) are all important to crime prevention. However, evidence for place-based crime prevention effectiveness has uncovered that, although crime and disorder are typically concentrated in certain places, when those places have owners who share responsibility for implementing crime interventions alongside the police and other city stakeholders, crime can be reduced, sometimes dramatically.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, we recommend the city enhance its use of data to target micro-geographies and focus crime prevention efforts specifically in places where crime is concentrated. The city’s place-based crime reduction strategy should balance increasing police presence with crime reduction models, such as place-based investigations of violent offender territories (PIVOTs) with community policing efforts that help establish community trust in local law enforcement.

---

<sup>14</sup> Eck, John and Guerette, R.T., *Place-Based Crime Prevention: Theory, Evidence, and Policy*, The Oxford Handbook of Crime Prevention, 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195398823.013.0018.

According to findings from this subcommittee’s stakeholder interviews, the APD is implementing place-based strategies to address crime, but we believe the city has an incredible opportunity to further integrate proven crime reduction strategies and models into their community policing approach by strengthening internal and external partnerships across city departments, regional and nonprofit agencies, and community organizations. We recommend the city prioritize leveraging proven crime reduction models such as PIVOT to enhance communication and information sharing across the stakeholders listed above. We believe improved collaboration with these stakeholders will allow the city to experience the tactical advantages of PIVOTs. We recommend the APD Tactical Crime Analytics Unit prioritize creating a digital analytics dashboard to create and display a *gun violence metric*, a static index weighted by severity, recency, and location of the crime across a city of Atlanta map to identify “micro-geographies” of violent crime more precisely.<sup>15</sup>

### **Recommendation 1b: Deploy effective crime reduction technologies**

The city of Atlanta needs to deploy 21st-century technologies to address crime and ensure public safety services are effective and efficient. Different cities are embracing innovative technologies and applications to address crime. For example, the city of Chicago’s Police Department is now frequently responding to incidents as much as three minutes before a witness reports gunfire to 911 through the ShotSpotter network.<sup>16</sup> The New York Police Department’s Domain Awareness System fuses all the data from several surveillance tools and uses artificial intelligence (AI) to associate data with a person of interest and address.<sup>17</sup>

We recommend that the city of Atlanta invest in technologies like ShotSpotter but explore local partnerships for technology vendors like Flock Safety. The city should also expand the Operation Shield video surveillance network and explore integrating it with operating solutions (e.g., Flock Safety’s machine learning technologies) that embrace AI to more quickly predict and address crime.<sup>18</sup>

### **Recommendation 1c: Prioritize partnerships and investment for violent crime prevention**

Violent crime does not have to be inevitable. Violence intervention programs have been successful in multiple peer cities across the US. Population-based violence interruption models such as the Cardiff Violence Prevention Model<sup>19</sup> have been effectively supporting crime prevention by combining and mapping both hospital and police data on violence.

---

<sup>15</sup> *Expanding the Analytical Toolbox for Evidence Based Law Enforcement: A Comprehensive Metric for Violence at Micro-Places*, city of Cincinnati Police Department, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/sites/police/assets/File/Data/ViolenceScoring.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> *High tech, low tech: Big U.S. cities embrace twin approach to crime*, Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-crime/high-tech-low-tech-big-u-s-cities-embrace-twin-approach-to-crime-idUSKBN1EV011>.

<sup>17</sup> *Domain Awareness System (DAS): Impact & Use Policy*, city of New York Police Department, [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/public\\_information/post-final/domain-awareness-system-das-nypd-impact-and-use-policy\\_4.9.21\\_final.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/public_information/post-final/domain-awareness-system-das-nypd-impact-and-use-policy_4.9.21_final.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Atlanta-based Public Safety Operating System, Flock Safety, <https://www.flocksafety.com/about/meet-flock-safety>.

<sup>19</sup> *What is the Cardiff Violence Prevention Model?*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/fundedprograms/cardiffmodel/whatis.html>.



We recommend that the city invest in developing its first hospital-based violence interruption program in partnership with Grady Memorial Hospital and Emory University Hospital, as well as invest in nonprofits, programs, and initiatives to deploy violence prevention efforts to at-risk populations across the city.

#### **Recommendation 1d: Deploy community tactics to reduce gun violence and support anti-gang efforts**

Gun violence and gang activity are pervasive public safety issues across the nation, including in Atlanta. We recommend that the Mayor work with APD commanders to strengthen strategies for retrieving illegal firearms from the community, support community anti-gun violence initiatives, and work with the state to advocate for gun control laws.

#### **Recommendation 1e: Continue to address the nuisance business issue**

We recommend that the Mayor continue his leadership in this area within the newly formed Nightlife Division in the Mayor's Office. In addition to supporting crime mitigation strategies with business owners and employees, we recommend the city revisit policies that prolong the flagging of nuisance properties and policies that may delay legal processes from taking place when a nuisance business does not comply with crime mitigation procedures in the future.

#### **Recommendation 1f: Continue to address repeat violent offenders**

To aggressively address the 30% of APD's weekly arrests being repeat offenders, other law enforcement agencies surrounding the city of Atlanta must be empowered to share data and information between and among one another as these offenders have no geographic boundary lines.<sup>20</sup> We recommend that the Mayor continue to support partnerships and data sharing with the Atlanta Police Department, as well as county, state, and federal agencies in order to flag the city's most troublesome criminals and share information on repeat violent offenders. Municipal data can be shared with courts and judges to help judges make more informed sentencing decisions.

### **Recommendation 2: Improve emergency response times**

The city's emergency response time remains a significant issue that plays a role in the erosion of public confidence in the capabilities of local law enforcement and public safety broadly. We recommend that the city set a goal to improve its response time to national best practice levels through immediate investments in process improvements and new technologies.

#### **Recommendation 2a: Conduct an emergency response time review**

Efficient, timely emergency management processes save lives. We recommend, with urgency, that the city address process flaws impacting its emergency response times when residents call 911. The city should prioritize executing an emergency response study with all relevant city and external stakeholders (Fire, E911, APD, EMS, etc.) and review key processes analytics, and technology to identify critical areas for improvement to achieve rapid emergency response in the city.

---

<sup>20</sup> *'A life of crime': Fulton officials create Repeat Offender Tracking Unit*, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime/a-life-of-crime-fulton-officials-create-repeat-offender-tracking-unit>

*Note: This particular study was outside the immediate mandate of this subcommittee; however, we heard this particular issue repeatedly in our conversations, both from city staff and from community leaders. We therefore include it and believe it to be imperative to the long-term improvement of public safety in Atlanta.*

### **Recommendation 2b: Modernize critical emergency response technology**

Public safety personnel within the city reported a number of recent outages of the city's critical emergency systems to the subcommittee. We recommend that the Mayor work with the city's procurement and operations departments to expedite the acquisition of new emergency systems and invest in the latest technology for emergency response. The city should explore modernizing critical emergency response technology such as its E911 phone system, APD and Fire computer-aided dispatch system (CAD) and the APD's mobile data terminal (MDT) systems. Modernizing emergency response technology will require significant investment by the city. In the cases where financial investment for new technology is substantial, the city should explore equipment lease-purchase options for financing critical emergency systems.

### **Recommendation 3: Enhance the public's perception of safety**

The mere fear of crime severely impacts the quality of life of residents and visitors and critically stifles the economic and social potential of the city. Whether or not particular statistics bear out as facts, the perceptions held by residents, business owners, the media, etc., take lead. We recommend that the Mayor prioritize enhancing communications around public safety, starting with communities and residents and utilizing a multichannel approach.

#### **Recommendation 3a: Commit to public safety transparency and communication**

We recommend that the city develop and implement a specific targeted communication plan around public safety. We recommend this strategy center on both emergent outlets (e.g., multiple social media platforms) and traditional ones (e.g., television, radio, and print). Instead of focusing its media and communication strategy on reactive queries on crime and investigations, we recommend that the approach be forward looking, proactive, and transparent about both what is happening and where things are headed.

We recommend the Mayor execute a SAFE Streets awareness campaign. Within this campaign, the city should mimic the public health approach around the pandemic – e.g., regularly and openly provide metrics and outcomes, share new approaches and tactics when and where appropriate, and, to address the *perception* issue, include success stories.

#### **Recommendation 3b: Enhance partnerships to address street racing**

The ongoing street racing issue in the city of Atlanta contributes to the aforementioned perception of a decline in law and order within the City. This issue, like others, may require a multi-jurisdictional approach. We recommend that the city prioritize its partnerships with other nearby cities and counties, focusing on leveraging cross-jurisdictional intelligence to better predict where street racing events are planned in order to prevent them in the City.

## **Recommendation 4: Transform public safety services, operations, and infrastructure**

- For many, public safety begins and ends with the police department. And while it is true that APD shoulders a significant amount of responsibility, it is joined by a host of additional city departments that contribute to the public safety ecosystem. We recommend that the city foster a new and bold era of interdepartmental collaboration around public safety. At the core, we recommend that the city examine and adopt a mixture of new technologies, novel approaches, reimagined processes, and redesigned infrastructure.

### **Recommendation 4a: Develop fast-track procurement program for policing and public safety initiatives**

To meet the moment and effectively address violent crime and improve public safety in the city, we recommend that the Mayor advocate for the establishment of a “fast-track procurement program” within the city’s Department of Procurement to expedite the implementation of public safety initiatives within the first half of his first term. The city deployed such a solution during the run-up to the 1996 Olympics, which allowed it to meet critical needs but still have fidelity to the guiding principles and requirements of procurement law. The exact contours of such a program are outside the scope of this subcommittee, but we believe it would be a powerful tool to more expeditiously implement some of these recommendations and see results in a matter that is so serious and, at times, grave. We believe such a program could be limited by certain guardrails (e.g., scope, time period, dollar amount), as are, for instance, backdrop contracts.

Additionally, we recommend that the city explore the creation of a dedicated public safety unit within the procurement department to review all procurement requests that align with the Mayor’s public safety strategic plan. The city should explore requiring additional reporting of projects and purchases approved under the authority to the Finance and Executive committees.

### **Recommendation 4b: Create a comprehensive public safety strategic plan**

Arguably, this recommendation could have been placed first among all actions. Repeatedly, and particularly from city personnel, we heard the need for a written and transparent public safety strategic plan – a full roadmap of goals and aspirations paired with concrete actions, owners of those actions, and a timeline for implementation.

Therefore, we recommend that the city do just that – i.e., draft and adopt a transparent and comprehensive vision and strategy for public safety to which all stakeholders, both internally and externally, can align. This report may serve as the basis for the strategy.

### **Recommendation 4c: Execute a public safety operational assessment**

This action goes hand in hand with Action 4b. A strategy is only successful if implemented, and implementation critically depends on the departments and people doing the work and carrying forth the initiatives.

We strongly recommend that the city conduct a full operational assessment of the Atlanta Police Department and all other relevant public safety agencies. This assessment should include a review of the organizational structure within each individual public safety department, as well as



its data capabilities and utilization, processes, institutional policies, finance, training, and technology.

The goal is to set the city up for success – i.e., ensure that the departments advancing these initiatives are well and appropriately staffed and organized, trained, measured against performance indicators, and supplied with the tools to get their jobs done on behalf of Atlantans.

#### **Recommendation 4d: Restructure public safety departments for the 21st century**

This recommendation is the final complement to Actions 4b and 4c.

The city’s public safety operations, departments and functions are siloed and require reform to better provide emergency and nonemergency services to residents. Siloed city services often contribute to underutilized resources and service delivery impediments.

We recommend that public safety reform in the city be prioritized, starting with the APD but not ending there. The subcommittee recognizes that multiple city departments play a direct role in public safety, including E911, Transportation, Corrections, Violence Prevention, Fire, and Justice Reform. The city should build upon current efforts and momentum and examine reforming the structure of public safety departments and functions to foster more collaboration, centralization, and cohesion of critical safety services in the city.

#### **Recommendation 4e: Develop a blighted property initiative**

Addressing blighted properties in the city of Atlanta is critical. Cities across the nation have taken a variety of approaches to reducing the number of blighted properties. Blighted properties are environmental hazards and contribute to criminal activity.<sup>21</sup> Public safety leaders within the city of Atlanta advised the subcommittee that personnel capacity issues within the APD’s code enforcement unit are contributing to a backlog in addressing blighted properties, despite the department’s focused efforts.

We recommend that the Mayor prioritize targeting blighted properties across the city of Atlanta by creating a transparent blighted property initiative that adds capacity to the city’s current blighted properties *in rem* process, which includes a community review procedure. With the help of private security companies that employ sworn officers, we recommend the city of Atlanta create a blighted property action team to help add capacity to the city’s code enforcement department responsible for issuing citations to property owners who are out of compliance.

Additionally, there is an opportunity for the Mayor to more closely work with the City Council to revisit the code and streamline the two processes currently being deployed within the city to more effectively reduce the number of these properties across neighborhoods.

#### **Recommendation 4f: Invest in barriers, color, and placemaking to enhance road safety**

Street safety is important to public safety and cities have embraced a variety of approaches to ensure pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, and motorists remain safe. Sturdy physical barriers are critical to ensure safe and adequate separation between modes of transportation sharing the road.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Blight & Violent Crime Urban Data Pioneers*, city of Tulsa, <https://www.tulsacouncil.org/media/7007/4-27-17blightcrime.pdf>.

Additionally, aesthetic enhancements to roads, crossings, and public spaces can have a positive effect in both perceived safety and actual safety.

In conjunction with current street lighting initiatives, we recommend that the city prioritize investments in building and repairing adequate sidewalks and Lite Individual Transportation (LIT) infrastructure with appropriate safety barriers to separate vulnerable users from vehicles. When building and repairing infrastructure, we recommend the implementation of environmentally responsible street pavement coatings for pedestrian spaces, bike lanes, and bus lanes in areas across the city. Environmentally responsible, colorful street pavement coating solutions have been used in different cities to color roads, pedestrian, and bicycle spaces to improve street safety by clearly demarking where on and along a road each transportation method belongs.<sup>22</sup> In addition to improving safety, environmentally friendly street pavement coating solutions can also lower temperatures from heat capture, which would allow the city to strengthen its commitment to climate resilience.

#### **Recommendation 4g: Invest in greenspace and urban agriculture as public safety solutions**

Transforming vacant city lots into gardens and greenspaces reduces overall crime. A group in Philadelphia conducted a three-year study in which police reports were analyzed and people in the impacted neighborhoods were interviewed. The report uncovered that in neighborhoods below the poverty line, landscaping vacant lots for gardens reduced overall crime by more than 13% and dropped gun violence by nearly 30%. The study also outlined that those residents living near lots converted to parklike environments perceived less crime in their neighborhoods and reported feeling less fearful of going outside.<sup>23</sup>

As part of any overall neighborhood revitalization strategy, we recommend that the city leverage partnerships within the new Green Advisory Cabinet to address scaling the implementation of greenspaces and urban agriculture projects in strategic locations that are crime hotspots. Additionally, the city should consider expanding the Atlanta “Grows-A-Lot” program, which repurposes vacant city-owned property to start new urban gardens or farms.

#### **Recommendation 4h: Improve transportation and road safety**

Cities are leveraging AI tools to identify road sections and times that are of particularly high risk for crashes. In the short term, this data is being used to strategically station traffic police at the locations and times identified to enforce vehicle speed limits and safe driving behaviors. In the long term, however, the focus becomes utilizing the data collected to engineer streets into safety, rather than relying on enforcement to create safe streets.

We recommend that the city of Atlanta analyze crash and injury data and solidify understanding of the city of Atlanta’s high-injury road network. This network should be leveraged to help the city identify priority locations for public safety improvements and investments. Additionally, we recommend that the city prioritize implementing designs engineered to enforce lower vehicle

---

<sup>22</sup> *Colored bicycle lanes and intersection treatments: International overview and best practices*, Science Direct, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2095756421000416>.

<sup>23</sup> *Can Urban Gardening Be The Answer To Inner city Violence?*, Rootwell, <https://www.rootwell.com/blogs/urban-gardening>.

speeds and safer infrastructure for the city’s most vulnerable users – LIT users, pedestrians, and transit riders.

## **Recommendation 5: Commit to 21st-century public safety strategies and investments**

In the 21st century, cities can no longer simply arrest their way out of public safety issues and concerns. Cities must invest in new technologies and data analytics to work smarter and make informed decisions. Likewise, residents who have committed crimes, particularly nonviolent crimes, must be engaged with anti-recidivism strategies to prevent further criminal activity. The city’s justice system and policies must evolve to ensure that they reflect a 21st-century view of justice.

### **Recommendation 5a: Create a 21st-century police department**

Trust between law enforcement and communities is vital. We recommend that the city set a goal that the Atlanta Police Department will set the national standard for policing ethics and community policing. The city needs an updated Community Policing Plan that builds upon the city’s focus on police transparency, reform, community engagement, and accountability. The plan should be created in partnership with community and neighborhood stakeholders to promote neighborhood engagement and acceptance. Additionally, the city should prioritize the implementation of the technology and analytics recommendations from the assessment of the Atlanta Police Department conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). To commit to resident transparency and trust of local law enforcement, the city should prioritize the implementation of the recommended robust Use-of-Force Tracking Software solution and expansion of the Early Intervention System (EIS).

### **Recommendation 5b: Invest in the data analytics capabilities of public safety departments**

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, predictive analytics built on a data governance foundation is giving police and other organizations practical tools to quickly respond to emerging trends and better carry out their missions.<sup>24</sup> The city of Atlanta has a significant opportunity to invest in a modern data analytics platform to consolidate disparate public safety data sources across the city and make them easier to consume and transform into critical safety insights.

We recommend that the city partner with external consultants to consolidate all data across public safety departments and then identify internal and external public safety metrics to track. For strategic public safety insights, we recommend that the city invest in a fast, agile, and flexible cloud-based platform that allows the seamless collection, storage, processing, analysis, and sharing of real-time intelligence.

### **Recommendation 5c: Invest in anti-recidivism**

The city must define the balance between voluntary diversion programs and mandatory incarceration programs. We recommend that the city of Atlanta define the standards for nonviolent offenders who are eligible for voluntary diversion programs and those who would

---

<sup>24</sup> *How Police Departments Can Leverage Predictive Analytics to Better Serve and Protect*, GCOM, <https://www.gcomsoft.com/blog/how-police-departments-can-leverage-predictive-analytics-better-serve-and-protect>.



attend mandatory reform programs while incarcerated. Suggested standards should be determined by the city (e.g., nonviolent offender with fewer than five misdemeanor offenses should be eligible for diversion programs, nonviolent offender with more than one felony charge or more than five misdemeanor offenses should be incarcerated and join a mandatory reform program). Diversion services can be supported through incentivizing nonviolent offenders to attend programs, check-ins, etc.

#### **Recommendation 5d: Support justice reform efforts**

The city must take a balanced approach to addressing criminality and bolstering strategies for addressing nonviolent crime. We recommend that the city develops a multi-stakeholder approach to reducing mass incarceration at the local level with Justice Reinvestment Initiatives. Annually, 19 times more people are admitted into local jails than into prisons, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities, particularly communities of color and those affected by low incomes, homelessness, and mental illness.<sup>25</sup> In Milwaukee, the city developed reforms to improve early intervention programs to divert individuals of nonviolent crimes into community diversion initiatives rather than jail.

We recommend that justice reform efforts be prioritized within the city's corrections processes. Public safety leaders in the city advised the subcommittee that current logistical inefficiencies associated with transporting nonviolent misdemeanor offenders are causing unnecessary pretrial detention in some cases. We recommend that the city explore supporting the APD with prisoner transportation by utilizing resources within the Department of Corrections and providing more time for officers to patrol the streets of Atlanta. The city can also develop a crisis intervention team (CIT) to create collaborative community partnerships between law enforcement, mental health providers, hospital emergency services, and individuals with mental illness and their families that improve communication, identify mental health resources for those in crisis, and ensure officer and community safety through intensive training.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Recommendation 6: Address the root causes of crime**

According to the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, a root causes approach to crime involves a holistic societal effort and requires affecting large systems, changing cultural norms, and impacting policy.<sup>27</sup> Addressing societal risk factors and protective factors associated with crime will be critical to achieve impactful, *long-term* outcomes for the city. Moreover, the fact that crime is highly concentrated in specific geographies within the city can give insight to root causes. If the city is to return to an era of declining crime rates like it experienced between 1990

---

<sup>25</sup> *One way to reduce mass incarceration: Start local*, Urban Institute, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/one-way-reduce-mass-incarceration-start-local>.

<sup>26</sup> *Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs*, National Alliance on Mental Illness, [https://nami.org/Advocacy/Crisis-Intervention/Crisis-Intervention-Team-\(CIT\)-Programs](https://nami.org/Advocacy/Crisis-Intervention/Crisis-Intervention-Team-(CIT)-Programs).

<sup>27</sup> *Roots of Crimes 2017*, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, [https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime\\_2017.pdf](https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime_2017.pdf).

and 2020 (crime was down nearly 80% during that period<sup>28</sup>), it needs to aggressively address its root causes.

**Recommendation 6a: Create community “innovation challenges” to address individual risk factors associated with crime**

Some well-documented individual risk factors that contribute to criminal behavior and delinquency include graduation rates, mental health, and unemployment.<sup>29</sup> Communities have the capacity to help solve their own issues and develop unique and creative ways to impact a variety of municipal challenges.<sup>30</sup>

To improve graduation rates, address mental health and reduce poverty in an equitable fashion across the city, we recommend that the Mayor deploy a series of community innovation challenges that empower social entrepreneurs across the city to respond to a mayoral challenge to address community and individual risk factors associated with crime. The challenge could be shaped to include city support, grants, or other forms of assistance. Moreover, successful innovations could possibly be scaled for use across Atlanta.

**Recommendation 6b: Prioritize neighborhood revitalization efforts in crime “hotspots”**

Poverty is a well-known risk factor for crime and delinquency.<sup>31</sup> We recommend the city prioritize strengthening its strategic partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta to execute the foundation’s TogetherATL<sup>32</sup> grantmaking strategy. The strategy aims to increase equity and shared prosperity in the city of Atlanta over the next 70 years through investments in place-based neighborhood revitalization efforts.<sup>33</sup> The city should ensure that community grantmaking efforts focusing on place and neighborhood revitalization prioritize micro-geographies across the city that are known crime hotspots.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Atlanta’s crime rate has declined by even greater amounts than that experienced nationally*, APD Tactical Crime Analysis Unit, FBI UCR Crime Reports.

<sup>29</sup> *Roots of Crimes 2017*, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, *Roots of Crimes 2017*, [https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime\\_2017.pdf](https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime_2017.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> *Community (Locality) Development*, Community Tool Box, <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/community-development/main>.

<sup>31</sup> *Roots of Crimes 2017*, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, [https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime\\_2017.pdf](https://preventingcrime.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Roots-of-Crime_2017.pdf).

<sup>32</sup> *TogetherATL: Increasing Equity and Shared Prosperity*, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, <https://cfgreateratlanta.org/togetheratl/>.

<sup>33</sup> *A community approach to crime prevention*, Mennonite Central Committee: Peace and Justice Notebook, <https://mccottawaoffice.wordpress.com/2021/03/25/a-community-approach-to-crime-prevention/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20Waterloo%20Region,peer%20influence%2C%20and%20many%20more.>



**Appendix**



# Appendix – Neighborhood Empowerment

## Timeline and Budgetary Considerations

**Table 1** below includes the various factors associated with each recommendation including priority level, including the estimated timeline and implementation costs, type and timeline of investment.

## Timeline Considerations and Prioritization

Each recommendation includes guidance on implementation timelines, broken into the following categories.

- *Short-Term*: Recommendation can be implemented within six months to one year
- *Medium-Term*: Recommendation can be implemented within two to four years
- *Long-Term*: Recommendation can be implemented in more than four years

Additionally, each recommendation includes a suggested prioritization level, indicating its overall impact on neighborhood empowerment. While all recommendations are critical, those marked as “high” priority are cornerstones of the subcommittee’s efforts and will provide teeth for all other recommendations in this document.

## Budgetary Considerations

Each recommendation also includes an estimated cost associated with implementation, including an overview of the key cost driver and whether or not it is a one-time or ongoing expenditure.

- <\$: Less than \$1 million
- \$: \$1 – \$2.5 million
- \$\$: \$2.5 – \$5 million
- \$\$\$: \$5 million+

*Table 1: Timeline and Cost Considerations*

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Cost Est.</b>	<b>Key Cost Drivers</b>	<b>Investment Type</b>
<b>Cross-Cutting Recommendations</b>				
Prioritize Service Backlog Reduction* (Rec. Area 1A)	Short-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> </ul>	One-time
Audit Operational Service Tools and Processes* (Rec. Area 1B)	Short-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Technology</li> <li>Consulting Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Streamline Bureaucratic Requirements* (Rec. Area 1B)	Medium-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology</li> <li>Consulting Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Reduce Communication Breakdowns through Increased Data Sharing* (Rec. Area 1B)	Medium-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 1: Transformative Responsiveness to Community Needs</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 1A: Re-Establish Trust Through Rapid Improvement</b>				
Execute a High-Visibility Public Works Project	Short-term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Supplies and Materials</li> </ul>	One-time
Prioritize Service Backlog Reduction*	Short-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Supplies and Materials</li> </ul>	One-time
Establish a Clear and Accessible “Front Door” to city Services	Medium-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Technology</li> </ul>	One-time
<b>Recommendation Area 1B: Revitalize Service Provision and Neighborhood Response</b>				
(All Recommendations included as Cross-Cutting)				
<b>Focus Area 2: Improve Housing Stability and Mitigate Displacement</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 2A: Establish Governance for Housing Stability</b>				
Centralize Housing Planning and Priorities	Short-Term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Potential New FTE(s)</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Establish Housing-Specific Growth Standards	Medium-term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Technology</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 2B: Create Housing Policies to Promote Neighborhood Stability</b>				
Promote Eviction Mitigation Policies Through Coordination at the County and State Levels	Long-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Grant Funds for Eviction Mitigation Partnership</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Bolster Tenant Support Resources	Medium-term	\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Grant Funds for Representation Resources</li> </ul>	Ongoing

Actions	Timeline	Cost Est.	Key Cost Drivers	Investment Type
Provide Low-Income Property Tax Relief	Long-term	\$	• Legislative Resources	Ongoing
Promote Housing Type Variety	Medium-term	\$\$	• Funding for Incentives	Ongoing
Support Strategic Use of Public Land for Housing and Key Neighborhood Amenities	Long-Term	\$\$\$	• Funding for Development	Ongoing
Promote Deep Affordability	Medium-term	<\$	• FTE Hours	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 3: Strengthen Civic Infrastructure to Elevate Neighborhood Voices</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 3A: Develop an Office of Neighborhoods</b>				
Expand Neighborhood Engagement Staffing at city Hall	Short-term	\$\$\$	• Hiring New FTE(s)	Ongoing
Ensure Seamless Coordination Amongst city Departments for Neighborhood Needs	Medium-term	<\$	• FTE Hours	Ongoing
Increase Collaboration Between NPU's and The Mayor's Office	Short-term	<\$	• FTE Hours • Meeting Coordination	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 3B: Revitalize Structures Designed to Elevate the Collective Neighborhood Voice</b>				
Define and Add A Binding Role for NPU's and Neighborhood Associations in Neighborhood Revitalization	Medium-term	<\$	• Resources for Assessment and Strategy • Consulting Services	Ongoing
Coordinate Amongst Differing Governing Bodies within Neighborhoods	Long-term	<\$	• FTE Hours	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 3C: Cultivate Neighborhood-based Civic Leadership</b>				
Cultivate and Train Neighborhood Leadership	Medium-term	<\$	• Training • Technology	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 3D: Prioritize Communications and Outreach to all Residents</b>				
Increase Engagement Among All Residents via Bolstered Communications	Medium-term	\$	• FTE Hours • Materials	Ongoing
Track Community Feedback and Create Inclusive Forums	Medium-term	\$	• Technology	Ongoing
Disseminate Tools and Resources	Medium-term	<\$	• FTE Hours	Ongoing
Redesign the city's Neighborhoods Website	Medium-term	<\$	• Web Design Services	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 4: Implement Long-Term Neighborhood Improvement Plans</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 4A: Create a City-Wide Strategic Investment Plan</b>				
Create City-Wide Standards and Guidelines	Medium-term	\$	• FTE Hours	One-time
Promote Participatory Budgeting	Medium-term	<\$	• FTE Hours	Ongoing
Implement Long-Term Neighborhood Improvement Plans	Long-term	\$	• Funded Partnerships • FTE Hours	Ongoing



<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Cost Est.</b>	<b>Key Cost Drivers</b>	<b>Investment Type</b>
Design and Implement Neighborhood Pilot Program	Short-Term	\$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	One-time
<b>Recommendation Area 5: Solidify Public-Private Partnerships for Place-Based Efforts</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 5A: Harness Strategic Policies and Funding Apparatuses</b>				
Increase Grant Funding and Procurement Opportunities	Medium-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Develop Equity-Focused Partnerships and Funding Opportunities	Medium-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 5B: Cultivate Stakeholder and Place-based Partnerships</b>				
Solidify Public-Private Partnerships for Place-Based Efforts	Medium-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation Area 6: Develop Standardized Neighborhood Livability Index</b>				
<b>Recommendation Area 6A: Standardizing Comprehensive Community Health Metrics</b>				
Develop an Inclusive and Equitable Governance Process	Short-term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Determine Neighborhood Health Measures	Medium-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	One-time
Conduct a Scorecard Pilot Program	Short-term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Funded Partnerships</li> </ul>	One-time
Develop a Public-Facing Neighborhood Health Dashboard	Long-term	\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> <li>Technology</li> </ul>	One-time
Facilitate Continuous Improvement	Long-term	<\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE Hours</li> </ul>	Ongoing

# Appendix – Safe Streets

## Recommendation prioritization

The subcommittee has prioritized the recommendations within this report to provide strategic reference for the Mayor based on two factors – “impact” and “level of effort.” We define “impact” as relatively high or low based on the recommendation’s alignment with the mayor’s strategic priorities outlined in the current S.A.F.E Streets Plan *and* based on the priority and outcome areas stated by community members during the discovery phase of this subcommittee’s engagement. We define “level of effort” as relatively high or low based on the following parameters: *Does it require a new or change to an existing city policy or legislation? Does it require significant financial investment from the city? And does it require collaboration with multiple external stakeholders?* We defined “significant” financial investment as any recommendation that will require the city to invest over \$1 million and ranked the recommendations relative to one another as “high or low” based on financial estimates we projected. The parameters for “impact” and “level of effort” we have defined are not intended to be complete nor exhaustive. Our intention is to communicate the prioritization approach this subcommittee used to outline the recommendations and actions referenced within this report by “timeline” and “priority” for the Mayor to consider.

## Recommendations overview

### Time frame

**Short term:** Actions accomplished within 1 year

**Medium term:** Actions accomplished within 2-4 years

**Long term:** Actions accomplished after 4+ years

### Priority

**Low:** Less important in achieving Mayor’s strategic agenda; secondary recommendation

**Medium:** Somewhat important in achieving Mayor’s strategic agenda; impactful but not critical recommendation

**High:** Critical in achieving Mayor’s strategic agenda; core recommendation

Recommendation	Time frame	Priority
	[Short, medium, long term]	[Low, medium, high]
Action 1a: Develop place-based crime prevention strategies in crime “hotspots”	Medium	High
Action 1b: Deploy effective crime reduction technologies	Long	High
Action 1c: Prioritize partnerships and investment for violent crime prevention	Medium	Medium
Action 1d: Deploy community tactics to reduce gun violence and support anti-gang efforts	Short	High
Action 1e: Continue to address the nuisance property issue	Long	Medium
Action 1f: Continue to address repeat violent offenders	Long	Medium
Action 2a: Conduct an emergency response time review	Short	High
Action 2b: Modernize critical emergency response technology	Medium	High

Recommendation	Time frame	Priority
	[Short, medium, long term]	[Low, medium, high]
Action 3a: Commit to public safety transparency and communication	Long	High
Action 3b: Enhance partnerships to address street racing	Medium	Medium
Action 4a: Develop fast-track procurement authority for policing and public safety initiatives	Short	High
Action 4b: Create a comprehensive public safety strategic plan	Short	Medium
Action 4c: Execute a public safety operational assessment	Short	High
Action 4d: Restructure public safety departments for the 21st century	Medium	Medium
Action 4e: Develop a blighted property initiative	Long	Medium
Action 4f: Invest in barriers, color, and placemaking to enhance road safety	Medium	Medium
Action 4g: Invest in greenspace and urban agriculture as public safety solutions	Long	Medium
Action 4h: Improve transportation and road safety	Medium	High
Action 5a: Create a 21st-century police department	Long	High
Action 5b: Invest in the data analytics capabilities of public safety departments	Medium	Medium
Action 5c: Invest in anti-recidivism	Medium	Medium
Action 5d: Support justice reform efforts	Medium	Medium
Action 6a: Create community “innovation challenges” to address individual risk factors associated with crime	Long	Medium
Action 6b: Prioritize neighborhood revitalization efforts in crime “hotspots”	Long	Medium

## SAFE Streets key stakeholders

Public sector	Business/community members	Nonprofits and community organizations	Academia
Atlanta Citizen Review Board	Atlanta Gas Light	Atlanta Bicycle Coalition	Brookings Institute
Atlanta Department of Transportation	Atlantic Capital Bank	Atlanta NAACP Branch	Emory University
Atlanta Fire Department	At-Promise Center's Youth Council	Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council	Georgia State University
Atlanta Planning & Advisory Committee	Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)	Atlanta Police Foundation	John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Atlanta Police Department	idealDesign	Atlanta Regional Commission	Public Safety Experts
Atlanta Code Enforcement (APD)	Little Five Points CID	ATL311	University of Chicago
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	Metro Atlanta Chamber	Chris 180 (Cure Violence)	Vera Institute of Justice
Department of city Planning	Neighborhood Associations	Policing Alternatives and Diversion (PAD)	
Department of Parks & Recreation	NPU Presidents	Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU)	



<b>Public sector</b>	<b>Business/community members</b>	<b>Nonprofits and community organizations</b>	<b>Academia</b>
E911 (APD)	Old 4 <sup>th</sup> Ward Business Association	Southern Regional Representative of the Nation of Islam	
Fulton County Courts	Slalom Consulting		
Grady Trauma Center	Sweet Auburn Works		
Justice Reform	Tech Square Ventures		
Mayor's Office of Violence Reduction	The Coca-Cola Company		
	Youth Leaders		