

# THE FACTS ABOUT T-SPLOST

ARC CLAIM	FACT																					
T-SPLOST is a temporary sales tax that will expire in 10 years.	The initial 10-year tax will only raise enough for studies, surveys, and initial-phase completion of projects in some instances. Two examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TIA-GW-031 for the I-85N corridor states that the <b>\$95 million</b> project pays for studies and reviews with “possible initial right-of-way acquisition and construction elements”. Construction completion unknown; “funds will be used throughout the 2013 – 2022 timeframe.”</li> <li>• TIA-CL-002 for Atlanta to Griffin rail states the <b>\$20 million</b> project pays for planning, preliminary engineering, and rail readiness activities. The project construction is not currently planned.</li> </ul>																					
T-SPLOST pays for transit operating & maintenance costs.	There is no identified source for on-going operation (and possible completion as referenced above) for the projects identified after 10 years.																					
There is no Plan B.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Transportation Investment Act, which authorized the T-SPLOST, provides that if the voters in any region vote down T-SPLOST, that region can put together another projects list to bring back to the voters in 2 years. That’s a <b>Plan B</b>.</li> <li>2. Another <b>Plan B</b>: Localities can impose their own local T-SPLOST.</li> <li>3. Georgia law (Code 32-5-30 Congressional District Balancing) calls for equal distribution of all state and federal tax dollars to be distributed equally across all Georgia congressional districts. The Georgia Legislature can change the law so that the funds are used where they are <i>needed</i> to alleviate traffic congestion and make necessary improvements across the state. That’s <b>Plan B+</b></li> </ol>																					
Rail & transit takes cars off the road.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The latest GDOT commuter survey states that only 2% of commuters ride buses; 3% ride trains. ARC’s “Travel Impacts of the Transportation Referendum, 2013-2040” estimates that ALL proposed new transit projects will only carry less that 2% of regional commuters. Yet, 52% of the T-SPLOST taxes collected are earmarked for new transit.</li> <li>2. The 2010 U.S. Census reported a 20% population increase in metro Atlanta. Yet, MARTA’s own 2011 financial report states that, ridership <b>declined</b> as follows: <b>Train: -7% Bus: -23%</b></li> <li>3. The 2010 Atlanta Regional Commuter Survey reflects that teleworking is on the rise with 27% of respondents stating that they telework on a regular basis, up <b>+7% from 2007</b>.</li> </ol>																					
Rail & transit reduce emissions.	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Per Passenger Mile</th> <th style="text-align: center;">BTU</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Pounds CO2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bus – metro Atlanta</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5,800</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bus – GRTA region</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3,370</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.54</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bus – Buckhead</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13,419</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paratransit</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17,848</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.88</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rail</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1,697</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Auto</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3,514</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.55</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At first glance, this info appears to show that rail is lower in energy consumption and emissions. However, these facts are <u>only true at full occupancy</u>. The average transit bus in Georgia fills only 22% of its seats; counting standing room they operate an average of about one-sixth full. The Atlanta rail system fills an average of 39% of its seats; counting its ample standing-room capacity it operates only about one-eighth full. Additionally, these figures do not include the energy costs required to build it.</p>	Per Passenger Mile	BTU	Pounds CO2	Bus – metro Atlanta	5,800	1.02	Bus – GRTA region	3,370	0.54	Bus – Buckhead	13,419	2.37	Paratransit	17,848	2.88	Rail	1,697	0.23	Auto	3,514	0.55
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The average commuter pays a “congestion tax” of \$924 per year in “wasted fuel and lost time as a result of traffic congestion.	Fulton & DeKalb residents have been paying additional 1% sales tax for MARTA since 1971. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Atlanta households spend \$45,941 on consumer expenditures. The current 1% sales tax amounts to \$459 per year BEFORE you take your first ride. An additional 1% amounts to a total of <b>\$918 per year BEFORE</b> you take your first ride. Then add the cost to ride: \$2.50 each way: \$25 per week or \$1,250 per year per person (allowing 2 weeks of vacation / year). Cost per person = \$2,168; Two-person working family = \$3,418. <b>“Congestion Tax “ without T-SPLOST = \$924</b> <b>True Cost with T-SPLOST = \$2,168 (“wasted time” excluded)</b>																					

## OTHER KEY FACTS ABOUT T-SPLOST

### LOSS OF “HOME RULE”

Home rule is just local self-government. The Constitution of the State of Georgia advocates home rule. The core principle is that local authorities or populations seek a measure of freedom from the state legislature.

If T-SPLOST passes, the new era of regional governance and taxation will curtail the autonomy local counties have possessed to control their own taxes and destinies.

If the 2012 TIA referendum passes this July 31<sup>st</sup>, a brand new layer of government is likely to be formed to govern the multitude of separate bus & train authorities that now exist. This passage will mean that **problems created by another county** will become **your** county's financial burden.

### SALES TAX INCREASES BY COUNTY

ARC-Member	Current Sales Tax	Percent Tax Increase w/TSPLOST Passage
Cherokee	6%	17%
Clayton	7%	14%
Cobb	6%	17%
DeKalb	7%	14%
Douglas	7%	14%
Fayette	6%	17%
Fulton	7%	14%
Gwinnett	6%	17%
Henry	7%	14%
Rockdale	7%	14%
City of Atlanta	8%	13%

### IMPORTANT QUOTES

*“Passed by the Legislature to relieve traffic congestion in metro Atlanta, the heavily Atlanta Regional Commission-influenced project list allocates more than 50 percent of the region’s \$6.14 Billion to fund transit projects that by objective accounts will do little to relieve traffic congestion.”*

**State Representative Ed Setzler, AJC, January 23, 2012**

*(Rep Setzler voted in favor of TIA in 2010)*

*“Proponents are campaigning hard. Unfortunately, the plan barely translates into improved regional mobility. Operating in an if-you-build-it-they-will-come fugue, regional leaders allocate more than half the expected funds to expensive transit projects, most of which would not offer congestion relief within 10 years, if ever.”*

**Benita Dodd, Vice President, Georgia Public Policy Foundation**