

Georgia State University
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

PMAF 4451: Economic Development Policy & Planning
Fall 2012

“Plan B” Paper Assignment

Transportation is key component of economic development policy, and it ranks especially high as an important issue for the Atlanta region. Despite this, on July 31, 2012, 63% of voters in the ten-county Atlanta region *rejected* a one-percent sales tax to raise approximately \$6.14 billion for a variety of transportation projects to be built over the next ten years. A diverse list of supporters of the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST) referendum included Gov. Nathan Deal (R), Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed (D), the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and several independent citizen and business groups. On the other side was another set of disparate individuals and groups, including state Sen. Vincent Fort (D-Atlanta), the DeKalb NAACP, the Sierra Club, and the Georgia Tea Party Patriots.

Your job will be to explain what the referendum was intended to achieve, why it failed, and to draft the outline of a proposal that you think will both address the region’s future transportation needs *and* get legislative and/or voter approval. Students will form three (3) groups of 10-12 to propose this so-called “Plan B” for the region. Each student will represent one of the several competing stakeholder groups below (or additional ones with instructor approval), including several key stakeholders who must be represented in each group.

The process & products

There will be three (3) 30-minute sessions in class to discuss the project. The first will be informational, focused on the intent of the T-SPLOST, arguments for and against, and the election results. The other two will allow groups to discuss proposals and report back to the class. Groups and key roles will be assigned during Week 2 (after the Add period ends), with other roles filled within each group (no duplicates please).

Each member will contribute a **1-page (single-spaced) policy memo** for their group outlining their position and recommending proposed policies, to be uploaded to uLearn. After reading these memos, each member will then write a **1-page (single-spaced) response memo**, which will also be uploaded to uLearn. Finally, each *group* will then create an **overall policy memo (5-6 pages single-spaced)** combining the best of that group’s proposals. There should be at least a general consensus on these proposals. Grades will be based equally on individual memos and the group memo (50% each), for 10% of the total course grade.

Due: Friday, September 21, 5 p.m. (on uLearn)

Stakeholders:

Each member of your will represent a key stakeholder in the Atlanta regional transportation system. Groups in ***bold italics*** are mandatory members, while students can choose among themselves other roles from the list.

- ***State of Georgia/Georgia Department of Transportation***
- ***City of Atlanta***
- ***Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)***
- ***Metro Atlanta Chamber***
- ***Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)***
- ***Inner Counties (at least one of the following: Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, & Gwinnett Counties)***
- ***Outer Counties (at least one of the following: Cherokee, Douglas, Fayette, Henry, or Rockdale Counties)***
- Sierra Club
- DeKalb NAACP
- Georgia Tea Party Patriots
- Other groups (at instructor discretion)

Some questions to consider and address in your policy memo:

1. What were the key objectives of the T-SPLOST?
2. What were the main arguments in favor?
3. What were the main arguments against?
4. Why did the referendum ultimately fail?
NOTE: Compare the two maps below (by county and by precinct). Does this offer any insight?
5. What are the unique concerns of your stakeholder group?
6. What are your stakeholder group's "deal breakers?"

Some questions to consider and address in your response memo:

1. What is each stakeholder suggesting?
2. Are the claims of stakeholders supported by evidence?
3. Are stakeholders' suggestions legal, feasible, and/or political practical?
4. Who are the stakeholders, and how do their constituencies, agendas, and reputations impact the value of their policy recommendations?
5. What are the points of agreement between you and other stakeholders?
6. What are the other stakeholders' "deal breakers?"
7. Are there "unspoken" or hidden agendas at play? If so, what are they?

Some questions to consider and address in your group memo:

1. What are the points of agreement among all stakeholders?
2. What options can be eliminated because they are "deal breakers?"
3. How do you deal with intransigence among certain stakeholders?
4. Are some stakeholders more important than others? And if so, why or why not?

Selected Resources:

- T-SPLOST official website: <http://www.t-splost.com/>
- AJC coverage: <http://www.ajc.com/news/transportation-referendum/>
- AJC Election Results: <http://www.ajc.com/news/tsplost-results-1483968.html>
 - Atlanta Region County Map:
<http://www.ajc.com/news/tsplost-results-map-1488500.html>
- AJC “Atlanta Forward” Blog: <http://blogs.ajc.com/atlanta-forward/>
- Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC):
<http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/overview>
- ARC TIA/TSPLOST: <http://www.metroatlantatransportationvote.com/>
 - Precinct Results Map:
http://www.metroatlantatransportationvote.com/images/atl_voting_map.jpg