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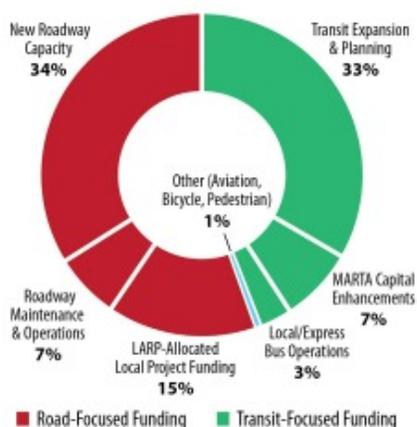
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Footnotes Issue #58: April 30th, 2012

## Metro Atlanta Can Do Better: Why Voters Should Say No to the T-SPLOST and Yes to 'Plan B'

On July 31st, Georgians will vote on a series of 12 regional referenda concerning the imposition of a Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST). [After much deliberation, the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club is recommending a "no" vote on the T-SPLOST in all 12 regions.](#) The Metro Atlanta required the most debate, because unlike the other eleven lists, a significant portion of the projects involve transit.

**T-SPLOST Funding Breakdown By Project Type**



Many of you responded to our survey ([results here](#)), which helped us ensure this position is representative of our membership's views on these issues. The Georgia Chapter Executive Committee concluded that the project list is too heavily focused on sprawl-inducing road expansion and will have a negative overall impact from an environmental perspective. While no plan is perfect, we have concluded that the T-SPLOST's flaws are significant to the point of outweighing its positive benefits. For the full list of our concerns, [click here](#). Some highlights include:

- The project list does not present a cohesive transportation vision, offering a hodgepodge of conflicting priorities when what is needed is a bold and consistent vision for a sustainable transportation future.
- The necessary institutional context is not in place, with the 2012 legislative session having failed to address serious questions about equitable regional transit governance and the ongoing second-class treatment of MARTA.
- Passage will likely kill commuter rail for another decade, taking off the table one of the most promising strategies for providing commute alternatives and promoting sustainable development.
- The transit component has too many flaws, including vaguely defined project descriptions, underfunded capital expansions, and uncertainty about long-term operational support.

T-SPLOST supporters urge passage because "there is no Plan B" for transportation in Georgia. The Sierra Club rejects this notion, and believes that there is indeed great potential for an alternative plan that achieves meaningful progress on commute alternatives for Georgians without needlessly subsidizing another wave of sprawl. Elements of a truly visionary and

transformational "Plan B" should include:

- A workable institutional framework that provides an equitable regional transit governance structure and de-politicizes transportation decisionmaking.
- Effective and innovative financing for commute alternatives such as a restructured multimodal gas tax, a parking tax, and other mechanisms that tie funding to travel behavior.
- A vision that enables Atlanta and Georgia to lead the 21st-century economy by moving beyond business-as-usual sprawl development and towards a truly sustainable and forward-looking future.

Even if you disagree with our position, we hope you will take the time to read our [position paper](#), which explains our thinking in detail.

## Quick Links



Check out Sierra Club's "[Coal will say Anything](#)" campaign. And in case you missed it, CNN did a story on health concerns of residents around [Plant Scherer](#).

## Sierra Club Meetings

**Fundraising Committee**, Wednesday, May 2, 7:00 p.m. at Noni's on Edgewood!  
Clay Tucker - Chair, [tuckerwf12@aol.com](mailto:tuckerwf12@aol.com)

**Smart Energy Team Meeting**, Monday, May 7, 7:00 p.m.  
Mike Walls - Chair, [mwalls@ellijay.com](mailto:mwalls@ellijay.com)

**Wildlands and Wildlife Committee Meeting**, Wednesday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.  
Mike Murdock - Chair, [murdock1@mindspring.com](mailto:murdock1@mindspring.com)

**RAIL**, Monday, May 28, 7:00 p.m.  
David Emory - Chair, [david.emory@gmail.com](mailto:david.emory@gmail.com)

**Beyond Factory Farming**, TBD, 7:30 p.m.  
Leah Garces - Chair, [leah.garces@ciwf.org](mailto:leah.garces@ciwf.org)

## Upcoming Events

### Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper River Revival - May 4



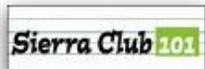
Support our friends at the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper at their biggest and most fun party of the year! Modern-rock cellist Ben Sollee, whose musical prowess is matched only by his passion for environmental activism, will be honored with the River Rock Star Award and also will perform as this year's headliner along with many other talented, environmentalist musicians! Click [here](#) for tickets and more information.

### Creative Loafing Panel Discussion on Metro Atlanta T-SPLOST - May 10

Join Creative Loafing Staff Writer Thomas Wheatley as he leads a panel discussion about the transportation tax voters will decide on July 31. Featuring Colleen Kiernan, Georgia Chapter Director, and other regional leaders and transit advocates who will ponder the proposal, which could help build the Atlanta Beltline, new MARTA rail, and roads galore. Thursday May 10th at 7:30pm at CL's offices Atlantic Station 231 18th St., Suite 8150.



### Sierra Club 101 - May 12



You want to work with Sierra Club to help protect the environment but you're not sure what you can do? Come learn about the Sierra Club and how to get involved in our local efforts. Participation is power! By working together -- sharing what we know and talking to others one at a time -- we can help build environmental community in

Georgia. Open to members and non-members, 10:30 a.m. - Noon, breakfast provided.

**Savannah Gardens EarthCraft Community Grand Opening May 19**

The Savannah Gardens Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan addresses conditions of blight in the neighborhood formerly known as Strathmore Estates and is designed to develop and implement strategies that improve the physical and social conditions of the neighborhood. Grand opening from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. at Pennsylvania and Crescent Avenues in Savannah.



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