

How Much We Pay To Get Around

By Ariel Hart

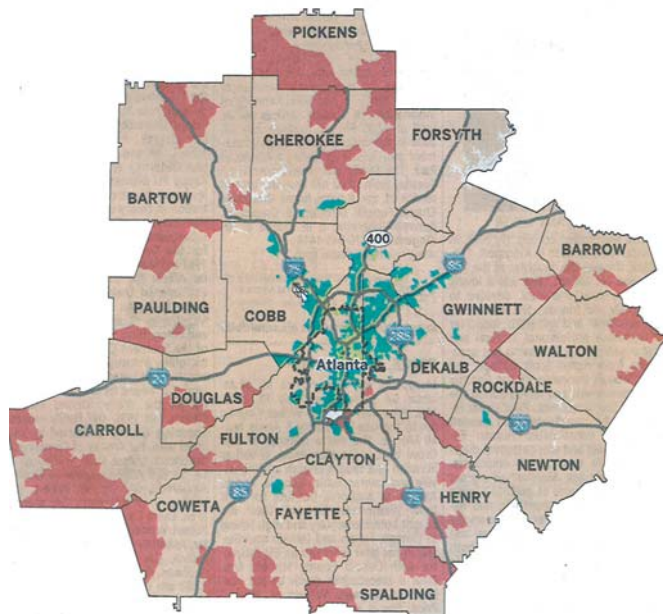
Here's a stark snapshot of what's happened to metro Atlanta household budgets since gas prices skyrocketed; maps produced by the Center for Neighborhood Technology tell the sorry tale.

On the image from 2000, green, yellow and blue patches show where transportation costs consumed less than 20 percent of household budgets. CNT's data have gas at about \$1.50 per gallon of unleaded then. In the map on the right, for this year, those places have all but disappeared. Instead, the red places where transportation costs are 28 percent and more of household income now dominate.

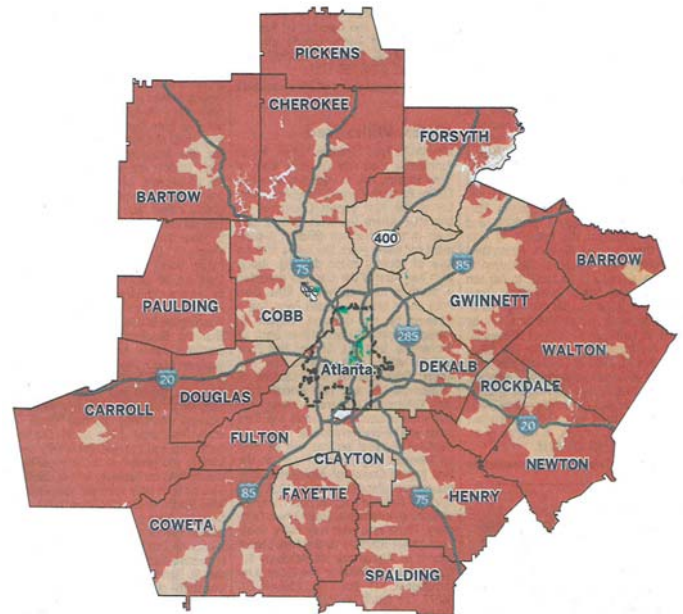
Household wealth in an area undoubtedly affects the data, but the CNT says its research shows that transportation savings from living closer to jobs actually makes living in the city or inner suburbs a cheaper lifestyle option even with higher housing costs. In any case, this research seems to show something a little more fundamental about life with \$4-a-gallon gas in metro Atlanta:







If there ever was a shelter from high transportation costs, it's shrinking fast.

Monthly household transportation cost as a percentage of household income, 2000



Monthly household transportation cost as a percentage of household income, 2008



-  28% or more
-  20% to 27.9%
-  18% to 19.9%
-  15% to 17.9%
-  0 to 14.9%
-  Data Not Available