



The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

Board Meeting

October 13, 2011

Peachtree Presbyterian Church, Room 2315

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

	Full Name	Neighborhood/Organization	Email Address
1	Amanda Baxter	Brookwood Hills	aczabor@gmail.com
2	Katy Carpenter	Castlewood/Brandon	kcarpenter@mindspring.com
3	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
4	Hannah Chung	Zone 2 Community Prosecutor	Hannah.Chung@FultonCountyGA.gov
5	Leslie Churchill	Margaret Mitchell	lschurchill@bellsouth.net
6	Diane Cox	Brookwood	brookwoodcivic@gmail.com
7	Glenn Delk	Historic Brookhaven	glennedelk@mindspring.com
8	Elly Dobbs	House of Representatives, Dist. 53	Jedobbs10@aol.com
9	Courtney English	Atlanta Board of Education Seat 7	cenglish@atlanta.k12.ga.us
10	Jeremy Faughtenberry	Loring Heights	jFaughtenberry@gmail.com
11	Charlotte Goldfarb	Castlewood/Brandon	egoldfarb@bellsouth.net
12	Tom Gordon	Ardmore Park	tgordon@mindspring.com
13	Anne Green	Fernleaf/Brandon	astonegreen@bellsouth.net
14	Kim Kahwach	Buckhead Forest	kajensen@bellsouth.net
15	Matthew Kallmyer	Atlanta-Fulton Emergency Mgmt	matthew.kallmyer@fultoncountyga.gov
16	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills	bar2010@aol.com
17	Jim King	Chastain Park	jimking@mindspring.com
18	Gloria Love	Northside Neighbor	glove@mdjonline.com
19	Ronnie Martin	West Paces Northside	ronnie@demillo.com
20	Louis Mayeux	North Buckhead/Patch	Louis.Mayeux@patch.com
21	Nancy Meister	Atlanta Board of Education Dist. 4	nmeister@atlanta.k12.ga.us
22	George Mirgorod	Pine Hills	gmirgorod@comcast.net
23	Roger Moister	Collier Hills North	Moisters2@yahoo.com
24	Katie Mori	Hanover West/Brandon	katiermori@yahoo.com
25	Allen Mueller	Atlanta Public Schools	amueller@atlantapublicschools.us
26	Cathy Muzzy	Peachtree Park	muzzy.cathy3@gmail.com
27	Kirk Oppenlander	Chastain Park	oppie@mindspring.com
28	Garth Peters	Memorial Park & Buckhead	gpeters@thebuckheadcoalition.org
29	Tony Peters	BCID / BATMA / LBI	tony@batma.org
30	Elizabeth Pritchard	Peachtree Battle Alliance	eliz@epritcharddesigns.com
31	Buff Quillian	Peachtree Heights West	buffquillianphw@gmail.com
32	Kim Rask	Sandy Springs	krask@emory.edu
33	David Ross	Peachtree Battle Alliance	dross1102@bellsouth.net
34	Mercy Sandberg-Wright	Tuxedo Park	mercywright@msn.com
35	John Schaffner	Buckhead View	jfschaffner@gmail.com
36	Claire Stratton	Memorial Park/Brandon	ccarpstratton@aol.com
37	Tom Tidwell	West Paces Northside	tom@tidwell-law.com
38	Matt Tolleson	Brookwood Hills	matt.tolleson@turner.com
39	Dan Whisenhunt	Buckhead Reporter	danwhisenhunt@reporternewspapers.net

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Representation by Neighborhood

	Neighborhood	Names
1	Ardmore Park	Tom Gordon
2	Brookwood	Diane Cox
3	Brookwood Hills	Amanda Baxter, Matt Tolleson
4	Buckhead Forest	Kim Kahwach
5	Castlewood/Brandon	Katy Carpenter, Charlotte Goldfarb
6	Chastain Park	Jim King, Kirk Oppenlander
7	Collier Hills	Barbara Kennedy
8	Collier Hills North	Roger Moister
9	Fernleaf/Brandon	Anne Green
10	Hanover West/Brandon	Katie Mori
11	Historic Brookhaven	Glenn Delk
12	Loring Heights	Jeremy Faughtenberry
13	Margaret Mitchell	Leslie Churchill
14	Memorial Park	Garth Peters, Claire Stratton
15	North Buckhead	Gordon Certain
16	Peachtree Battle	Elizabeth Pritchard, David Ross
17	Peachtree Heights West	Buff Quillian
18	Peachtree Park	Cathy Muzzy
19	Pine Hills	George Mirgorod
20	Tuxedo Park	Mercy Sandberg-Wright
21	West Paces Northside	Ronnie Martin, Tom Tidwell

BCN 2010/11 Officers (Executive Committee)

Office	Officer	Neighborhood	E-mail
Chairman	Jim King	Chastain Park	jimking@mindspring.com
Vice-chairman	Elizabeth Pritchard	Peachtree Battle Alliance	eliz@epritcharddesigns.com
Secretary	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
Treasurer	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills	bar2010@aol.com
Communications	Bob Schneider	Garden Hills	bschneider@gardenhills.net
Member at Large	George Mirgorod	Pine Hills	gmirgorod@comcast.net

BCN Standing Committees

Committee	Chair	E-mail
Executive Committee	Jim King	jimking@mindspring.com
Communications Committee	Bob Schneider	bschneider@gardenhills.net

BCN Liaisons

Topic	Liaison	E-mail
Education	Leslie Churchill	lschurchill@bellsouth.net
Parks	Gordon Certain	gcertain@comcast.net
Property Taxes	George Mirgorod	gmirgorod@comcast.net
Public Safety	Kim Kahwach	KAJensen@bellsouth.net
Redistricting	Jim King	jimking@mindspring.com
Transportation, Development and Infrastructure	Elizabeth Pritchard	eliz@epritcharddesigns.com
Watershed Department	Kristy Gillmann	phca_kristy@hotmail.com

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I. Welcome

Jim King called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

II. Introductions

The attendees introduced themselves. A quorum was present.

Matthew Kallmyer, Director of Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency

Matt introduced himself as the new director of the agency. He is most recently from New Orleans and has a public health/paramedic background. Matt will be back to BCN for a more detailed presentation.

Tony Peters, Business Development Manager for BCID, BATMA, and LBI

Tony joined BATMA in February and is now also working with BCID and LBI. LBI (Livable Buckhead, Inc.) is focusing its efforts on greenspace and sustainability.

III. Approval of August Minutes

Minutes for the September meeting were approved.

IV. Admit Any New Member Neighborhoods

No new neighborhoods asked for admission to BCN. Twenty-eight neighborhoods had paid 2011 dues as of this meeting.

Elizabeth Prichard noted that Castlewood, Wesley Battle, and Kingswood had previously been BCN members and expressed the hope that those neighborhoods would rejoin and send representatives. The Brandon neighborhood has officially organized and plans to join BCN. Elizabeth has also been encouraging the Channing Valley neighborhood to attend BCN meetings. She noted that Wyngate has no active association.

V. Committee and Liaison Updates

- **Executive Committee** – Jim King reported that the Executive Committee met. It proposed that BCN have a Membership Liaison. It also proposed to split Economic Development from Transportation, Development and Infrastructure Liaison. Jim asked for motions. **The motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to adopt the Executive Committee's recommendations.** Liaisons will be selected at next month's meeting.

Kathy Collura had suggested by e-mail that we have monthly reports on various topics. The Executive Committee suggested that Kathy (or someone else) might select a topic each month for a discussion/presentation each month. We will discuss this more next month.

- **Communications Committee** – No report.
- **Education** – No report.
- **Parks** – **Gordon Certain** reported that an anonymous donor had offered to donate a 1.7 acre rock quarry site in North Buckhead for use as a city park.

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- **Property Taxes – George Mirgorod** said that **Bert Manning** had offered to provide a breakdown by neighborhood of property tax appraisals and averages. **Gordon Certain** asked George if he would ask Bert to plot “neighborhood codes” by BCN neighborhood – North Buckhead has about 15 different neighborhood codes intertwined with each other.
- **Public Safety** – Jim reported that two women were robbed at gunpoint coming out of Twist at Phipps Plaza. John Schaffner commented that people in other zones were reporting that people working on computers in places like Starbucks had had their computers snatched by thieves – same with phones.
- **Redistricting** – Jim reported that Gordon Certain had sent an e-mail to BCN about the City Council redistricting process which started with a meeting on October 13 (same evening as this meeting). Maps are to be available on the city web site on the 14th. A decision will be made in December.
- **Transportation, Development and Infrastructure** – Jim commented that the final TIA/TSPLOST project list has been announced. Gordon Certain reported that North Buckhead and Chastain Park neighborhood representatives would be meeting with the High Point neighborhood in Sandy Springs to try to get something done about the congestion on Roswell Road involving Wieuca Road and Windsor Parkway traffic signals.

During the discussion a number of problem intersections were identified, mainly on roads controlled by GDOT (Pharr at Peachtree, etc.). Jim asked that a combined list be prepared so they could be submitted to Bryant Pool in GDOT.

Barbara Kennedy reported that there is a graffiti problem. She will send a photo of the tag to Gordon to distribute by e-mail.
- **Watershed Department** – No report.

VI. Charter School Panel Speakers

- **Allen Mueller, Charter Schools Director for APS**
- **Kim Rask, Conversion Charter School Parent**

Jim King provided background on why this panel was invited to speak to BCN. There was a meeting at Morris Brandon on a different subject with **Katie Mori**, the Morris Brandon School Council President. Several issues came out of that meeting: charter schools and the education SPLOST. Since we have visited charter schools in the past, we would do it a little differently this time: to educate with no agenda for charter schools. **Kim Rask** has been through a conversion charter in the Fulton County system as a parent in Sandy Springs. There has never been a conversion charter in the City of Atlanta. Jim asked **Allen Mueller** to describe the various kinds of charter schools and provide related information. He asked Kim to describe what the conversion experience was like as a parent.

Allen Mueller: He said that the way Fulton County approached charter schools is probably different than APS and Atlanta parents would want to do it. Fulton wants to be a charter system but that's not the only way to do it.

There are start-up charters which are run from inception by a for-profit or non-profit corporation. There are also conversion charters which start out as traditional public schools and then change to charter schools. Both start-up and conversion charters are public schools. (APS has more start-up charter schools than any system in the state but has no conversion charters at this point.) One difference is that a start-up charter begins with a prescriptive way of creating the school with waivers, asking maximum flexibility with laws and local policies and is nearly autonomous. Conversion charters involve a

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contract that is entered into between employees at the existing school, parents, the local school board and the state Board of Education. The conversion charter may employ the waivers and flexibility used by start-ups to some degree or other. Conversion charters may bring in for-profit or non-profit corporations to operate them. Teachers at conversions may either be employees of the school system or the corporation operating the school, flexibility not possible for start-ups. Waivers sought by a conversion charter might involve things like class size limits. The conversion charter's initial contract is for five years with five or ten year extensions possible.

Charters, both start-up and conversion, involve a negotiation exchanging autonomy and flexibility for accountability. The charter contracts specify targets to be achieved. If those targets are not met, start-up charters are shut down and conversion charters revert to being traditional schools. To begin to design a conversion charter school, proposals would be made for targets, specific education programs, and management structures to be employed. He provided the document "[Charter School Petition Application and Instructions for Conversion Charter Schools](#)", which sets out the guidance on conversion charters, and a copy of the [applicable 1998 state law](#). Once a conversion plan is drafted, it would be the subject of a secret ballot by parents and school employees. A majority of both parents and of employees would need to approve the proposal before it could go to the local board of education. The board of education would review the plan and if it approved, the plan would then go to the state board for a similar review. (A start-up charter, on the other hand, may go for state approval even if turned down by the local board. In that case, it could only receive state funding – about a third of the total.) Charter schools are eligible for federal funding of \$200,000 per year for two years (used to be three years). This federal money cannot be used for fixed purposes like additional teachers or new buildings.

Kim Rask: She was involved in the conversion of Ridegeview Middle School and Riverwood High School. These schools are in the Fulton County system in Sandy Springs. Those involved did not regard these as failing schools. They felt that their schools included a challenging mix of students with a broad range of capabilities, including non-English speaking students. They believed with flexibility and excitement on the part of the parents and staff they could have a school that met those diverse needs. Rather than making fundamental changes, they wanted the flexibility to adapt their schools to function better. They were also interested in going into the International Baccalaureate program – they felt that they needed to link the curricula in the middle and high schools to make this program work well. Both schools had well-regarded principals. By converting to charters they hoped to make rules more flexible, offer enrichment activities and more individualized instruction for those with differing abilities, and get some federal funding. (Their plan included what they would do with the additional federal funding.) They would also be able to say that theirs were not just ordinary public schools, they were *charter schools*. She said that having the support of the school's employees was absolutely needed to have a successful charter – having just 52% support wasn't good enough. They felt like they need 80% to 90% support of both teachers and parents.

In addition to new academic programs, they made uniforms mandatory in middle school. Parents' membership in the PTA was made mandatory as was parent volunteering. They are now in the fifth year of their charters. Each school has a governance council, which in Fulton County has to be chaired by a parent.

Q&A: The question was posed: if the northern cluster wanted to create a new charter or convert an existing school, what kind of funding would be required? **Glenn Delk** said that

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APS spends about \$6,000 to \$8,000 per student in Buckhead schools, their total cost per student is about \$14,000 and the difference is administrative cost that is spent in the central office. He thought that for a successful charter in Buckhead, you will need to “wrest away” some of that difference. Allen didn’t agree, saying that in the law there was a formula that sets out a per-pupil charter amount, which tends to decline with increasing student age. He said for elementary students, it would be around \$9,000 to \$9,500; for middle school, \$8,500 to \$9,000; and high school, ...

Glenn asked if the per-pupil amount would be in cash or in services. Allen said it would depend but that he expects that APS would do things differently than Fulton. In Fulton, there is a budget approval process for conversion charters. Allen expects that in an APS conversion charter, the system would write a check to the conversion charter and it could spend it as it wished. Glenn agreed and said that approach would result in much greater autonomy for an APS conversion charter [if we had one], than a Fulton conversion charter. Glenn added, “that’s why you ask for all the waivers, you don’t have to have X number of teachers”, so you can spend the money as you need to.

Elly Dobbs asked about the differences in hiring and firing processes in charters versus traditional schools. Kim answered that in Fulton County, the policies are very similar to the way they were before. The governance council has the ability to make recommendations to the superintendent, who makes the decision. Allen answered hypothetically: there is some flexibility from No Child Left Behind since the definition for “highly qualified teacher” is different for charter schools. Allen added that a lot of differences between traditional and charter schools aren’t clear since those issues haven’t been litigated yet. In response to Elly’s other question, Allen said that of APS’ schools, 12 (or 13 since 2 are combining) were charters, teaching 9% of students or about 4,000 students. Of the 12, 4 are for-profit and 8 are non-profit.

The question was asked: can charters be used to address school overcrowding? Glenn thought you could use 10% of the \$9,000 per student on financing facilities, so yes. Allen, on the other hand, didn’t think being a charter would be different from being a traditional. He did think that having charters might make attendance rezoning easier. He said that charters can define their student capacities but that, overall, capacity can’t be defined in a way that keeps kids from being served – the law is not going to leave 300 kids without a school to attend. Glenn added that you can include a charter school in a SPLOST – a Savannah charter school got \$18 million. Another attendee suggested that a new northern cluster elementary school could be created as a charter with an attendance district overlying that of other traditional elementary schools; it could attract students based on its curriculum or class size. That would avoid the problems of rezoning all the existing elementary schools.

If the teachers at conversion charters remain employees of the system, Kim warned that they might not be exempt from transfer to other schools even though the conversion charter contract might specify otherwise.

Nancy Meister clarified the APS teacher transfer policy as follows: the top 20% and bottom 20% of teachers are exempt from transfers are new teachers.

Glenn Delk commented that many of us assume our schools are doing well compared to the rest of the world. He said a sobering assessment is available at www.globalreportcard.org. While data are not available by individual school on this web site, APS overall ranks as better than only 23% of the world in math and 35% in reading.

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VII. New Business (if any)

Gordon Certain proposed that BCN take a position to ask OliverMcMillan to find another name for the “Buckhead Atlanta” project. He suggested that the use of a regional name for a project would compound the confusion about what Buckhead is and isn’t. Jon Schaffner suggested the name “Buckhead Avenue”. A **motion** was made to recommend that some other name than Buckhead Avenue be used but there was no longer a quorum needed for a vote. Jim suggested that the BCN vote on the topic be held via e-mail.

VIII. Announcements

The November 8 election will cover two issues: the school SPLOST and Sunday alcohol sales. The Atlanta Police Foundation is having its Blue Jean Ball on October 22. Gordon will send an e-mail.

IX. Next Meeting – November 10, 2011.

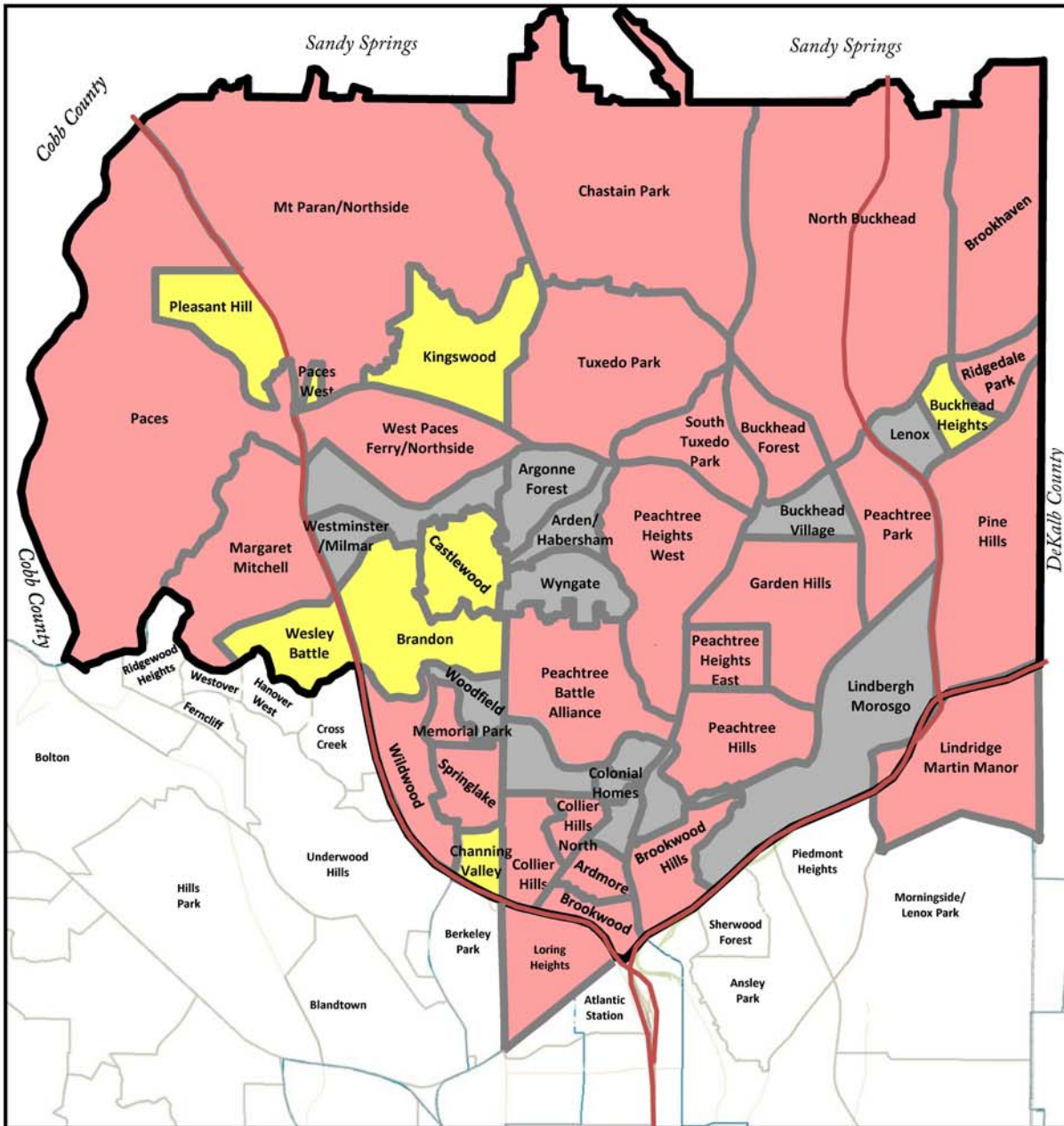
X. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at about 8:55 PM.

***Note:** The opinions expressed by the speakers and individual neighborhood representatives in these minutes do not necessarily represent those of BCN or its member neighborhoods.*

Prepared by Gordon Certain
BCN Secretary
November 6, 2011 (typo “Rusk” corrected 11/11/11)

Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

Paid Membership as of 10/06/11



LEGEND

Paid Membership as of 10/06/11

- YES NO N/A

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BCN Organizational Status as of 10/13/11																						
		BCN Dues			Representation at BCN Board Meetings																	
	Neighborhood	2009	2010	2011	2008	2009	2010	2011														
					3 meetings	12 meetings	11 meetings	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				
1	Arden																					
2	Ardmore Park	✓	✓	✓	100%	67%	91%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
3	Argonne Forest						9%															
4	Brandon																					
5	Brookwood		✓	✓		17%	45%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						
6	Brookwood Hills			✓		8%		✓							✓	✓						
7	Buckhead Forest	✓	✓	✓	100%	75%	100%		✓								✓					
8	Buckhead Heights					8%																
9	Castlewood	✓	✓			17%											✓					
10	Channing Valley																					
11	Chastain Park	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	100%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
12	Collier Hills	✓	✓	✓		67%	82%	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
13	Collier Hills North			✓		8%	9%		✓	✓							✓					
14	Garden Hills	✓	✓	✓		75%	91%		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
15	Grant Estates	✓	✓	✓	100%	83%	82%															
16	Historic Brookhaven	✓	✓	✓	33%	58%	91%			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
17	Kingswood	✓			33%	8%	9%															
18	Lindbergh											✓										
19	Lindridge Martin Manor	✓	✓	✓	33%	25%	55%	✓														
20	Loring Heights			✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
21	Margaret Mitchell	✓	✓	✓		33%	64%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
22	Memorial Park	✓	✓	✓	67%	58%	91%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
23	Mt. Paran-Northside	✓	✓	✓	100%	75%	55%	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							
24	North Buckhead	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	100%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
25	Paces	✓	✓	✓	67%	58%	55%	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓							
26	Paces West	✓	✓			17%																
27	PeachtreeBattle Alliance	✓	✓	✓	100%	83%	64%	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓						
28	Peachtree Heights East	✓	✓	✓	67%	50%		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓							
29	Peachtree Heights West	✓	✓	✓	33%	25%	73%	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓					
30	Peachtree Hills	✓	✓	✓	100%	75%	45%	✓	✓						✓							
31	Peachtree Park	✓	✓	✓	67%	83%	55%		✓			✓			✓	✓						
32	Pine Hills		✓	✓	33%	8%	91%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
33	Pleasant Hill																					
34	Ridgedale Park	✓	✓	✓	100%	58%	73%		✓				✓									
35	Springlake		✓	✓			55%	✓					✓									
36	Tuxedo Park	✓	✓	✓	67%	75%	73%	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
37	Wesley Bohler	✓	✓			17%	9%						✓									
38	West Paces Northside	✓	✓	✓	67%	67%	64%	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
39	Whitewater Creek	✓	✓	N/A	100%	75%	45%		Note: Now reported with Mt. Paran Northside													
40	Wildwood			✓	33%		27%		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Neighborhood Totals		26	28	28	Avg: 16	Avg: 16	Avg: 18	20	19	16	13	20	18	16	20	19						