



The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

Board Meeting

August 11, 2016

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

6:45 – 8:15 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

	<u>Full Name</u>	<u>Neighborhood/Organization</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
1	Heather Alhadeff	City of Atlanta	halhadeff@atlantaga.gov
2	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
3	Jeff Clark	Garden Hills	jeffbclark@gmail.com
4	Doug Crawford	North Buckhead	DouglasCrawford@gmail.com
5	Brenden Dougherty	DA's Office	Brenden.Dougherty@fultonCountyGa.gov
6	Jim Garcia	North Buckhead	jim.g@reagan.com
7	Ron Grunwald	Loring Heights	Rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
8	Cathy Helms	Collier Hills North	cahelms1@gmail.com
9	Ben Howard	Buckhead Condo Alliance	benhoward@gatech.edu
10	Collin Kelley	Reporter Newspaper	collin@atlantaintownpaper.com
11	Marsh King	Peachtree Battle Alliance	marshbking@gmail.com
12	Walda Lavroff	North Buckhead	waldalavroff@gmail.com
13	Nolan Leake	Peachtree Heights West	
14	Terri Lee	City of Atlanta	telee@atlantaga.gov
15	Robin Leebach	Buckhead Condo Alliance	
16	Francine Lowe	Pine Hills	Francine@lowetravel.net
17	Laurel Lucey	Paces	llucie08@gmail.com
18	Garth Peters	Memorial Park & Buckhead Coal.	gpeters@thebuckheadcoalition.org
19	Jennifer Rose	Mt. Paran-Northside	jenprose@gmail.com
20	Mercy Sandberg-Wright	Tuxedo Park	mercywright@msn.com
21	John Schaffner	Buckhead View	jfschaffner@gmail.com
22	Marie Tvaroch	Pine Hills	marietvaroch@bellsouth.net
23	Anne VonSchlagell	North Buckhead	
24	Alex Wan	District 6 City Council	awan@atlantaga.gov
25	Elie Wantrauls	North Buckhead	
26	Debra Wathen	Paces	6wathens@bellsouth.net
27	Matt Westmoreland	Atlanta Public Schools	MattWestmoreland@gmail.com
28	Fred Wooten	Buckhead Village	fredwooten130@yahoo.com

At least 12 attendees did not sign the attendance sign-in sheet and are not shown above.

Attendance by Neighborhood

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Attendees</u>
1	Buckhead Condo Alliance	Ben Howard, Robin Leebach
2	Buckhead Village	Fred Wooten
3	Collier Hills North	Cathy Helms
4	Garden Hills	Jeff Clark
5	Loring Heights	Ron Grunwald
6	Memorial Park	Garth Peters
7	Mt. Paran-Northside	Jennifer Rose
8	North Buckhead	Certain, Lavroff, Crawford, Garcia, VonSchlagell, Wantrauls
9	Paces	Debra Wathen, Laurel Lucey
10	Peachtree Battle Alliance	Marsh King
11	Peachtree Heights West	Nolan Leake
12	Pine Hills	Francine Lowe, Marie Tvaroch
13	Tuxedo Park	Mercy Sandberg-Wright

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BCN 2015/16 Officers (Executive Committee)

<u>Office</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Email</u>
Chairman	Tom Tidwell	West Paces Northside	tom@tidwell-law.com
Vice-Chairman	Ron Grunwald	Loring Heights	rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
Secretary	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
Treasurer	Debra Wathen	Paces	6wathens@bellsouth.net
Communications	Jeff Clark	Garden Hills	jeffbclark@gmail.com

BCN Standing Committees

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Email</u>
Executive Committee	Tom Tidwell	tom@tidwell-law.com
Education	Tom Tidwell	tom@tidwell-law.com
Development and Infrastructure	Ron Grunwald	rgrunwald@bellsouth.net
Transportation	Debra Wathen Elizabeth Scattergood	6wathens@bellsouth.net betsy.scattergood@gmail.com

Other (Legislative, NPU, Parks, Voter Education/Registration, etc.)

I. Welcome & Introductions

Vice Chair Ron Grunwald called the meeting to order at about 6:45 PM. A quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the April and May meeting were approved.

III. Admit New Member Neighborhoods

No neighborhoods asked to be considered for BCN membership.

IV. BCN Standing Committee Reports

- **Communications** – No report.
- **Education** – No report.
- **Transportation** – Gordon Certain reported a new iteration of plans by BCID for the multi-lane roundabout at the intersection of Wieuca Road and Phipps Boulevard in North Buckhead. A public presentation meeting was expected in late September. [At a stakeholder’s meeting concurrent with this August BCN meeting, the upcoming public meeting was indefinitely delayed because additional design work was needed.]

V. Speakers:

Terri Lee, Deputy Commissioner of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development

Heather Alhadeff, Program and Policy Advisor to Commissioner Keane

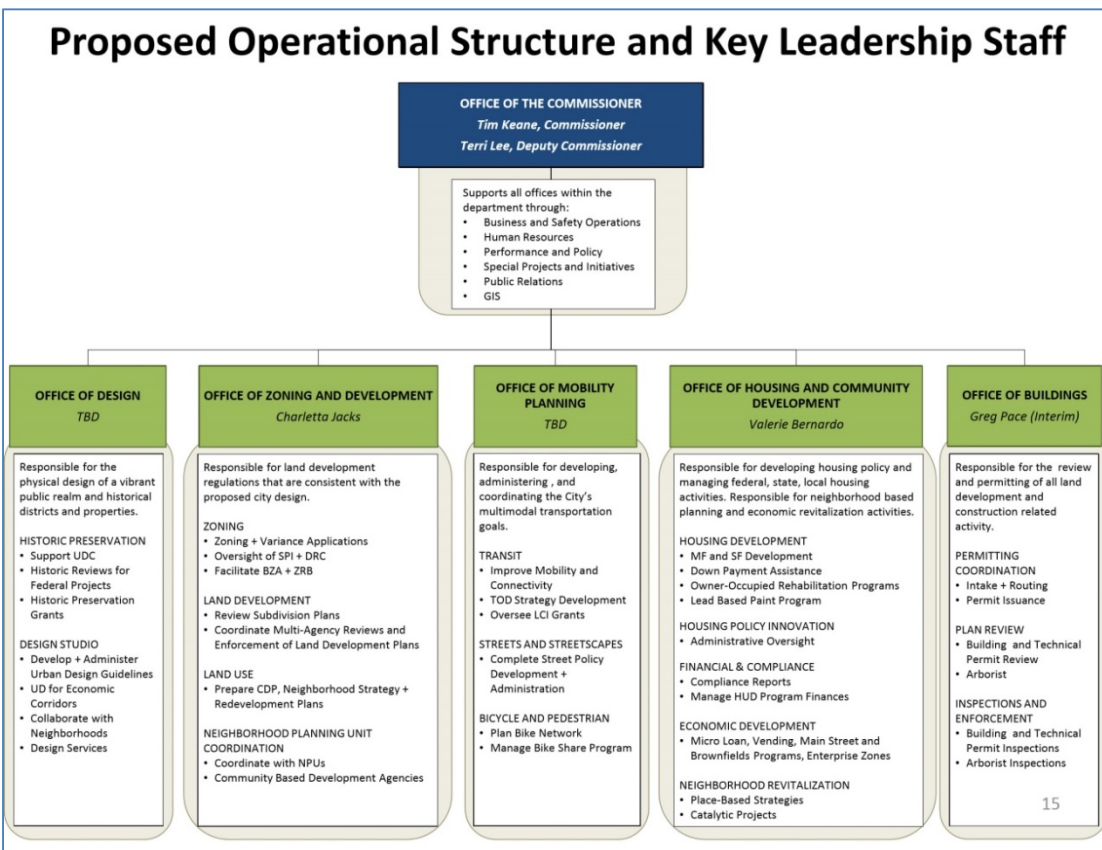
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Commissioner Tim Keane was originally scheduled to be the speaker at this meeting but could not attend because of a death in his family. Ron Grunwald outlined his desire for the discussion tonight to review the re-write of the Atlanta zoning code, the first since 1980 and impact fees.

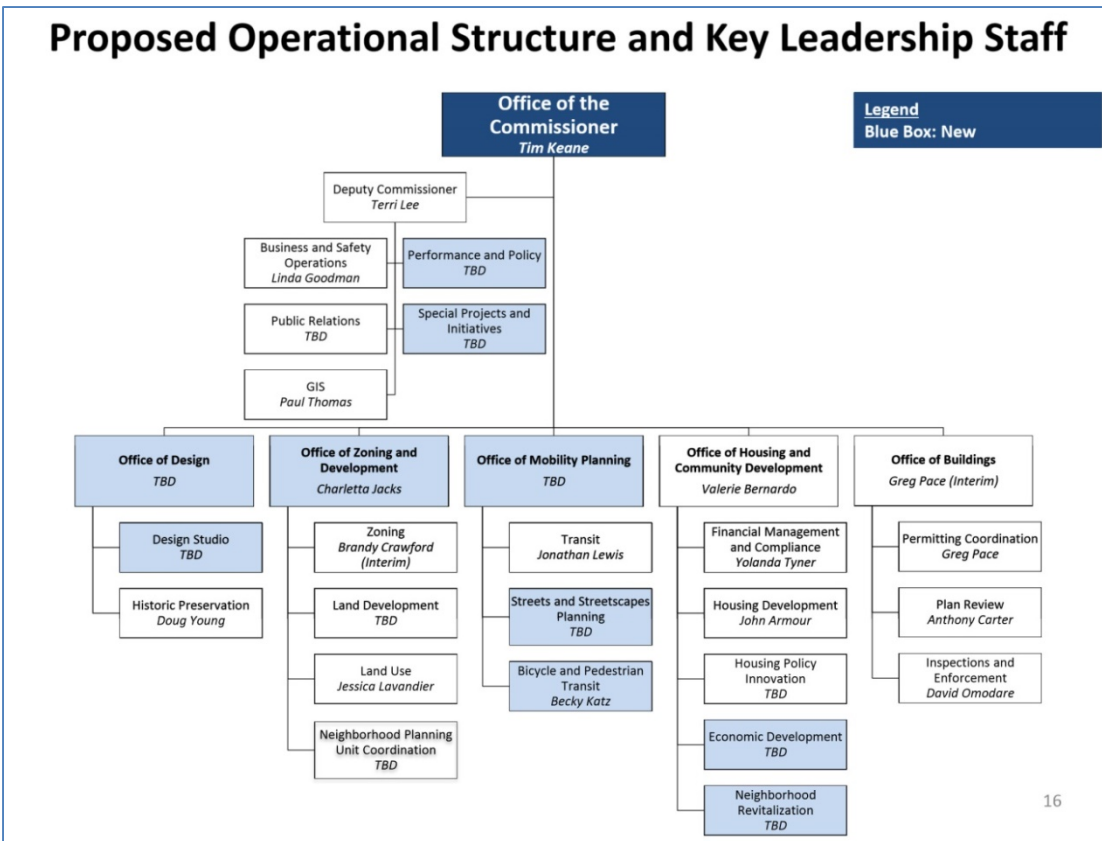
Terri Lee was the first speaker. She said that in addition to the topics Ron asked to be covered, her comments would also describe the reorganization of her department. She said she would also describe her department's "City Design Project"- not just another plan but setting forth a vision for the City of Atlanta – not only how we would grow but what we would look like.

She made a point of complimenting Councilmember Alex Wan, as chair of the Finance Committee as well as chair of the City's budget process, on his critical support which made the reorganization of the Planning department possible. Before the reorganization in July, Planning had three offices: the Office of Planning, Office of Buildings, and Office of Housing. Commissioner Keane, who Terri said likes to be called Tim, felt that the Planning Department had done a lot of good things but he felt that it was necessary to break out of its "silos" in order to meet the operational needs of its residents and citizens. His immediate focus was on customer service. His position was that the customer may not always be right but the customer should always be first. His second philosophy was that it is OK to make a mistake but it is not OK not to try. He wants his department to do everything possible to make government easier and friendlier to its citizens and customers. Last but not least, Tim wants everyone to have fun while doing their job.

Deputy Commissioner Terri Lee was a captivating and extremely knowledgeable speaker. But rather than taking the reader's time reading a narrative recap of her description of the department's revised structure, this chart and the next, presented to the City Council's CDHR committee are more effective. These charts seem to be the same as she was describing, or worst case, very similar. The source is 39-page document entitled "Department of Planning and Community Development: Reorganization Plan CDHR Work Session", dated June 2016 (*on the BCN web site*). It should be noted that not all of this structure is clearly present on the City's web site for the Planning Department.



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Terri pointed out that permitting poses a problem finding the right office and person. So they have set up a “concierge desk” and each person seeking a permit has a personal contact to help them.

As for land use and zoning, she said currently they have two organizations involved: land use and zoning policies in the Office of Zoning and Development and day-to-day interpretation of zoning code in the Office of Buildings. They are seeking ways to combine those functions in one organization. They hope to have that consolidation done in October.

As for the **zoning ordinance rewrite**, Terri said they have a high volume of variances because the ordinance is so old. She said the current ordinance is complicated, requiring experts to understand it – they don’t want that. They want to incorporate “best practices” from other cities, where applicable. One of their goals in the zoning update is to improve urban design.

She said some think Atlanta should be a city of 1.5 million, not today’s 470,000 – if that is the goal, what would that look like and feel like and where would everybody go? What kind of zoning would be proper for that? What kind of transportation system? What zoning should be in place to support better economic development? She said the ordinance hasn’t been updated in over 30 years and it won’t change overnight. The development of the updated zoning ordinance “will be a three to five year process.” But she says there may be some “quick wins”. In particular, she thinks for any building built before 1965, they should be able to limit or eliminate the existing parking requirements (with some exceptions).

As for **impact fees**: she said there was an impact fee study done several years ago but the perception was that nothing ever happened. She said she was the project manager of that study. She said the impact fee ordinance hadn’t been updated since 1993 and fee rates hadn’t changed since then. She said for transportation, the impact fee “service area” was city-wide. She said the state law was changed in 2007, requiring that impact fees be spend in close proximity to where the fees were collected. So, while the service area is city-wide, administratively they have a tracking system to comply with the law. They also hired an impact fee coordinator in 2015. So

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while they didn't formally adopt the study's recommendations, they have made some incremental changes.

Today, they are doing another impact fee study, to be done within a three to six month period. They want to streamline the process, so every project funded or proposed to be funded by impact fees has to be included in their capital improvement element [*her meaning of "element" was not clear*]. They want to accept impact fee applications on an annual basis, though they "aren't there yet". She suggests each neighborhood and NPU to work directly with their councilmember if there's an impact fee-related project proposal. The councilmember would then work with the Department of Planning and Community Development and Department of Public Works "to identify whether the project is eligible for impact fee funding and if it is viable for impact fee funding, because it could be that there is a project that is eligible but maybe the cost exceeds what is available. And so maybe there's an opportunity to find other funding" to support the project. She said they hope to have the "application process" in place by early next year if not sooner. This change will be communicated to the councilmembers and NPUs.

Terri mentioned the "City Design Studio" as being a project to help figure out what the city will look like in the future as we grow. She said the studio "doesn't replace the CDP, but it complements the CDP." She then introduced Heather Alhadeff.

Heather Alhadeff asked if anyone had been to Ponce City Market (the old Sears building on Ponce de Leon) lately and seen the **City Design Studio**. About three attendees indicated they had. The studio, which opened in early July, was requested by "Tim" in an effort "to bring planning, in a creative manner, and the growth and development into a place that is outside of City Hall." She said the studio will be moving around the city, starting in about six months. She said they are open until 8 pm and on Saturdays and she encourages us to come by. She said the studio exhibits projects that are happening in the city. They also take feedback from visitors, something that basically doesn't happen at City Hall. They have a Facebook page: Atlanta City Studio – the picture above is from that page. They don't have a city web page yet.



Q&A – Gordon Certain asked Terri in her impact fee discussion of their current impact fee study why no mention was made of setting variable transportation impact fee rates in different parts of the city to recognize the differences in the costs of accommodating additional development. For instance, land prices vary tremendously and some street grids are already saturated while others weren't. Terri's response suggested that they didn't plan to adjust fees based on the magnitude of the impact. In other words, they seemed to be sticking to a city-wide service area approach. She indicated that if there was an impact, projects to address that impact would be considered. **Alex Wan** agreed that there was currently a disconnect in some parts of the city between the calculation of fees for a project as compared to the money it would actually take to address the project's impact. Terri responded that adjustable fees are something that they could take into consideration in their study.

Ron Grunwald asked, given the city-wide service area and the goal of funding projects locally, if a 17 story building is to be erected on Northside Drive at 17th Street, how do they determine the impacted area and the distance nexus? In other words, is the project being funded by the fee actually close? Terri said the fee collection system records the fees by service area but the tracking system actually has the street address generating each fee. They then work with the Law Department to figure out what that nexus is. Ron said that a traffic study could be needed to determine what the actual impact of the project was and what the solutions might be. Alex

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commented that deployment of the impact fees to specific projects requires City Council action and that those decisions are highly politicized. He added, it is going to take a political will on Council's part if the Department and the study comes back and recommends that we update the transportation impact fee service area to reflect what the state law requires – we're still going to have to pass it. I'm not certain that that is going to happen without significant influence and input from the communities. He noted that if the recommendations on what to do come six months from now, we'll be in the middle of election campaigning.

John Schaffner observed that during tonight's discussion, he had heard very little about the NPU system. While there is little consistency in NPU procedures, it is the only place where communities have a voice how land use decisions impact the look of their neighborhoods. What role will NPUs play in the future? Terri said that even with the restructuring of the department, the NPUs system is a very viable partner and will have a very viable role. She said that the NPU system was previously under the Office of Planning and now NPU coordination will be under Zoning and Development. In the budget approved by City Council there is funding for a leadership program for NPU leaders. She said they are working toward more consistent NPU bylaws that could be used across the NPU system. She said Commissioner Keane has been supportive of citizen and resident engagement.

John Schaffner also expressed concern about the representation of condominiums in city decision making. He said that neighborhood associations, with the exception North Buckhead, don't represent condominiums and as a result they are not represented in the NPU system. He said that BCN is the only organization that recognizes the Buckhead Condominium Alliance. Gordon Certain noted that condos make up 20+% of North Buckhead Civic Association's membership and that condo residents make up 20% of its board. Alex Wan agreed that condo representation is an issue that needs to be explored.

VI. Community Concerns/New Business/Announcements

Brenden Dougherty attended this meeting and spoke to the attendees. He is the new **Zone 2 Community Prosecutor** in the Fulton DA's office. His cell phone number is 518-461-4671 and his email is Brenden.Dougherty@fultonCountyGa.gov.

VII. Next Meeting September 8, 2016

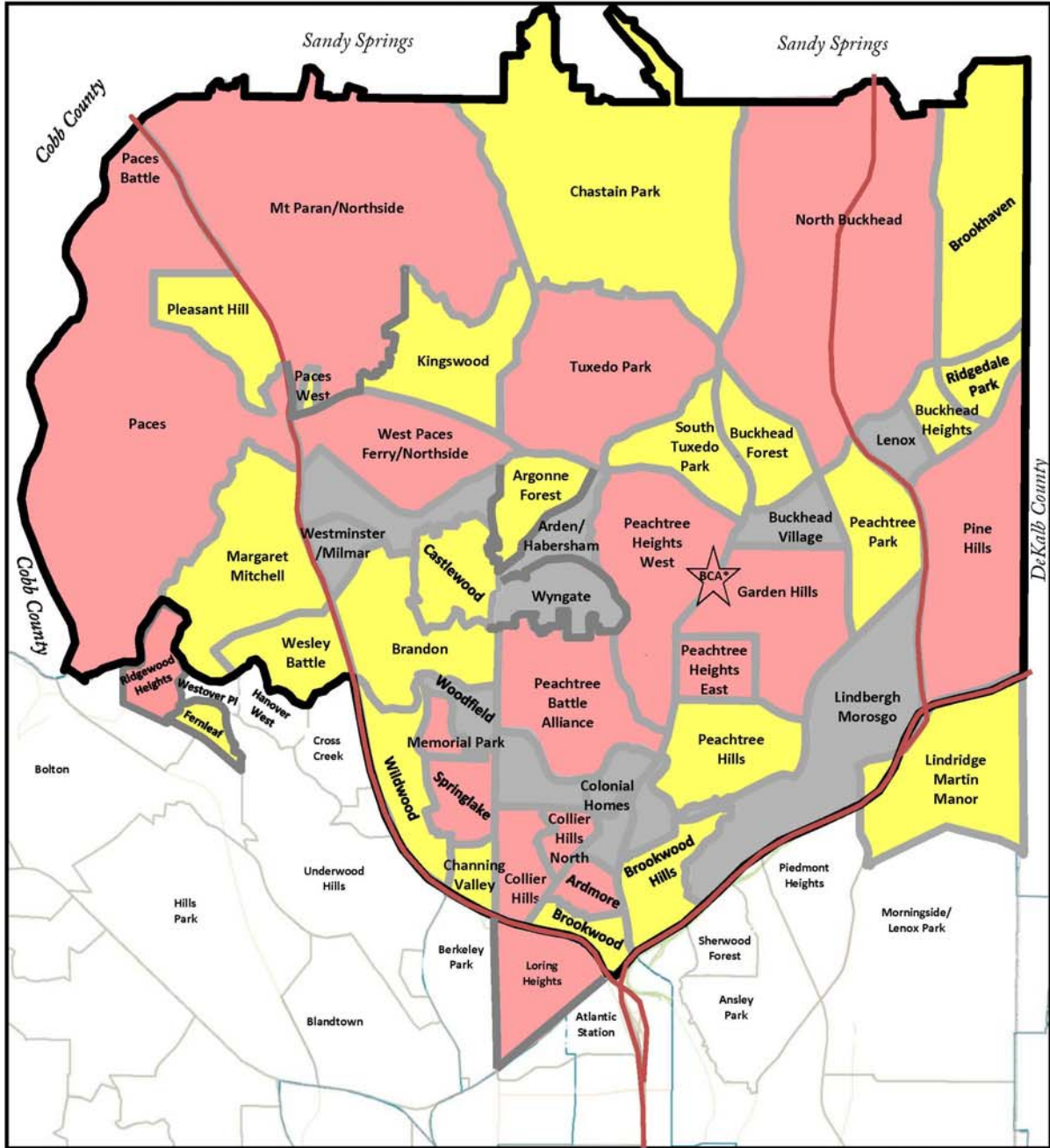
IX. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at about 8:00 PM.

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
September 5, 2016

BCN's web page is at www.BuckheadCouncil.org.
The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization.

Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods



* BCA = Buckhead Condo Alliance

LEGEND

Paid Membership as of 05/07/16

YES

NO

N/A

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BCN Status as of August 11 13, 2016																						
		Dues		Data	Neighborhood Representation at Board Meetings																	
Neighborhood		2015	2016	2016 Census	2014	2015	2016															
					10 meetings	10 meetings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				
1	Arden/Habersham																					
2	Ardmore Park	✓	✓	✓	60%	70%	✓		✓													
3	Argonne Forest	✓			60%	30%																
4	Brandon	✓			50%	0%																
5	Brookwood																					
6	Brookwood Hills				30%	10%																
7	BuckheadCondoAlliance	✓	✓	✓	50%	90%	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓							
8	Buckhead Forest				0%	0%																
9	Buckhead Heights																					
10	Buckhead Village				10%	20%			✓							✓						
11	Castlewood																					
12	Channing Valley				10%	0%																
13	Chastain Park	✓			30%	10%	✓		✓													
14	Collier Hills	✓	✓	✓	20%	30%	✓	✓	✓													
15	Collier Hills North		✓	✓	10%	20%	✓	✓	✓							✓						
16	Fernleaf	✓			10%	0%																
17	Garden Hills	✓	✓	✓	60%	80%		✓		✓						✓						
18	Grant Estates				0%	20%																
19	Historic Brookhaven			✓	30%	10%		✓														
20	Kingswood	✓				20%																
21	Lindbergh																					
22	Lindridge Martin Manor					10%																
23	Loring Heights	✓	✓	✓	30%	70%	✓	✓	✓							✓						
24	Margaret Mitchell	✓			0%	20%																
25	Memorial Park	✓	✓	✓	40%	50%			✓	✓						✓						
26	Mt. Paran-Northside	✓	✓	✓	40%	20%	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓						
27	North Buckhead	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
28	Paces	✓	✓	✓	60%	60%	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓						
29	Peachtree Battle Alliance	✓	✓	✓	30%	40%		✓	✓							✓						
30	Peachtree Heights East	✓	✓		20%	60%																
31	Peachtree Heights West	✓	✓	✓	70%	80%	✓	✓								✓						
32	Peachtree Hills	✓			0%	10%																
33	Peachtree Park				10%	10%																
34	Pine Hills	✓	✓	✓	70%	60%	✓		✓							✓						
35	Pleasant Hill																					
36	Ridgedale Park							✓														
37	Ridgewood Heights	✓				20%																
38	Springlake		✓		10%	20%		✓														
39	Tuxedo Park	✓	✓		50%	50%	✓	✓			✓					✓						
40	Wesley Bohler					10%																
41	West Paces Northside	✓	✓	✓	70%	100%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓											
42	Wildwood																					
43	Wyngate																					
Totals		21	17	15	Avg:10	Avg:10	16	16	13	6	5				13							