

Analysis of March Transportation Poll
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The survey of 426 registered voters in Georgia conducted in the third week of March shows interesting and unusual shifts in the intensity of opinions about transportation.

Let me be blunt. It has been my opinion, having conducted scores of transportation polls both nationally and in Georgia, that transportation has been viewed by the public much like the weather: You can curse it, but you can't really do anything about it. Thus, most surveys over the past decade or so have always suggested that people are interested in improving transportation, but never in overwhelming numbers or with great intensity.

This particular survey reflects the fact that, both on a national and statewide level, roads, highways and other related transportation topics have truly caught the public's attention. Nationally, our polling shows that most Americans still associate the "stimulus bill," which passed out of Congress and was signed by President Obama into law, as a "transportation" and "jobs" bill.

In Georgia, because other issues have not been at the forefront on television, radio and in print media, transportation issues – both the funding and "governance" – have gained the attention of the general public. This is rare, but because of the combination of these two occurrences – media coverage and the economy – it has created a "perfect storm" in which the public now is truly focused on the issue and wants real action.

Specifically:

- With 73% of Georgians saying they describe their general transportation experiences as very negative or somewhat negative, we see a shift towards increasing frustration among the public. I might add that the stress of high gas prices (which have now fallen), followed by the extreme economic downturn, have led to increased frustration and anxiety on the part of those who heavily use highways and roads.
- Past surveys we have taken in Georgia concerning action to be taken by the legislature to improve transportation through increased funding often showed support, but generally was not overwhelming support. This survey indicates that an overwhelming percentage of Georgians now support such an effort. The biggest shift has come from Republican respondents who at one time were far less enthusiastic about such legislation, but now support it at nearly a 60% level.
- Another big change in opinion is that of Metro Atlanta versus the rest of the state of Georgia. The longtime view that "Atlanta receives all of the transportation money," or receives an undue amount, has faded away. Fifty-six percent of all Georgians said that Metro Atlanta either receives not enough of the funding it needs, or about the right amount it needs. With 25% of respondents having no opinion, the so-called "resentment factor" against Metro Atlanta that we have seen in the past has virtually disappeared. Only 19% of respondents felt Metro Atlanta received too much funding. This bodes well for support of some form of

new and additional effort to fund transportation, because in the past resentment towards Atlanta caused elected officials representing non-Metro Atlanta areas to feel the need to represent the views of their constituents and oppose such efforts. Those views among their constituents have changed over the past few years. There is at minimum a willingness to see their legislators pass some form of transportation improvement in Georgia.

In conclusion, this survey, which has a margin of error of +/-5% and is weighted for age, race, gender and political affiliation, contains no “push poll” language, yet shows a marked increase in dissatisfaction over transportation currently, and a stronger desire to see action take place to deal with these issues. This is, in my opinion, a result of the news cycle and the economy, which have allowed transportation to become viewed as an issue of importance—not only for travel, but also as a means of growing and stimulating the economy.

InsiderAdvantage is a non-partisan public opinion research firm. In 2008 the company polled the presidential election for the Washington-based news organization Politico, and locally in Georgia for news organizations such as WSB-TV (Atlanta). In January, the firm was named one of the three most accurate national pollsters for the 2008 presidential contest by polling expert and founder of one of the nation's most admired national political websites during a convocation at Fordham University. The firm provides services to corporations, trade associations, public affairs organizations as well as other private and public entities.

InsiderAdvantage/Majority Opinion Research

Georgia Transportation Poll – 03.23.09

1. How would you describe your experience with traffic and roads in general in Georgia?

	Total	Age				Race				Gender		Party			Metro ATL	
		18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Yes	No
(Base)	(426)	(55)	(128)	(136)	(107)	(290)	(107)	(21)	(8)	(200)	(226)	(170)	(170)	(86)	(160)	(266)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very negative	30.9	29.5	27.4	36.9	28.2	29.7	23.9	83.9	28.5	30.5	31.3	22.2	38.3	33.3	49.4	21.5
Somewhat negative	41.6	49.4	38.2	35.0	50.1	40.3	53.7	.0	34.2	38.8	44.1	43.2	39.7	42.1	32.2	46.4
Somewhat positive	21.4	15.0	22.3	24.0	20.3	23.5	17.1	16.1	16.6	23.9	19.2	26.6	16.1	21.8	11.7	26.3
Very positive	5.5	6.0	12.2	2.3	1.4	6.2	3.9	.0	17.9	6.7	4.5	7.6	4.8	2.8	5.4	5.6
No opinion	.6	.0	.0	1.8	.0	.2	1.4	.0	2.9	.1	1.0	.4	1.0	.0	1.2	.2

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2. Currently the legislature is considering several different plans to increase funding for roads and highways, as well as other forms of transportation, in Georgia. How important is it to you that legislation pass this year to provide for a means of increasing funding to create new and improve existing forms of transportation in the state?

	Total	Age				Race				Gender		Party			Metro ATL	
		18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Yes	No
(Base)	(426)	(55)	(128)	(136)	(107)	(290)	(107)	(21)	(8)	(200)	(226)	(170)	(170)	(86)	(160)	(266)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very important	40.4	32.5	30.0	47.8	47.7	34.2	50.2	73.1	48.1	38.4	42.2	29.8	55.4	31.9	54.4	33.3
Somewhat important	26.1	29.6	28.3	25.5	22.4	26.5	28.2	10.8	22.9	16.9	34.2	29.3	27.7	16.4	25.1	26.6
Somewhat unimportant	15.1	.0	17.4	15.8	19.3	14.0	18.9	16.1	4.5	17.4	13.1	17.6	10.1	20.3	12.4	16.5
Unimportant	14.3	22.5	21.5	9.0	8.1	19.4	2.7	.0	20.8	23.5	6.2	19.5	6.5	19.4	7.4	17.8
No opinion	4.1	15.4	2.8	1.9	2.6	5.9	.0	.0	3.6	3.8	4.3	3.7	.4	12.0	.7	5.8

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3. Do you consider issues of transportation to be primarily a metro Atlanta issue or an issue for the entire state?

	Total	Age				Race				Gender		Party			Metro ATL	
		18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Yes	No
(Base)	(426)	(55)	(128)	(136)	(107)	(290)	(107)	(21)	(8)	(200)	(226)	(170)	(170)	(86)	(160)	(266)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Metro Atlanta	41.9	69.0	43.0	39.1	30.1	48.0	26.3	43.9	21.8	47.9	36.5	46.0	35.6	46.2	58.3	33.5
Entire state	51.4	31.0	52.3	50.1	62.4	46.3	65.4	39.9	78.2	48.7	53.8	46.7	56.6	50.5	39.8	57.3
No opinion	6.7	.0	4.7	10.8	7.5	5.7	8.3	16.1	.0	3.4	9.7	7.4	7.8	3.3	1.9	9.2

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4. Do you believe Atlanta receives too much transportation funding, not enough, about what it needs, or no opinion?

	Total	Age				Race				Gender		Party			Metro ATL	
		18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Yes	No
(Base)	(426)	(55)	(128)	(136)	(107)	(290)	(107)	(21)	(8)	(200)	(226)	(170)	(170)	(86)	(160)	(266)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Receives too much	19.0	22.5	18.4	15.6	22.2	24.8	4.7	13.0	16.0	27.7	11.3	26.8	8.3	24.9	8.9	24.2
Receives not enough	33.0	46.4	33.1	30.5	29.1	30.3	46.6	.0	33.7	27.7	37.6	24.6	42.7	30.3	49.6	24.5
Receives about what it needs	22.7	.0	28.1	26.1	23.6	19.4	22.6	76.2	5.6	29.0	17.1	22.4	24.0	20.7	22.7	22.7
No opinion	25.3	31.0	20.4	27.7	25.1	25.5	26.1	10.8	44.7	15.6	33.9	26.2	25.0	24.1	18.9	28.6

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