

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Boulder Park Referendum

May 11, 1966

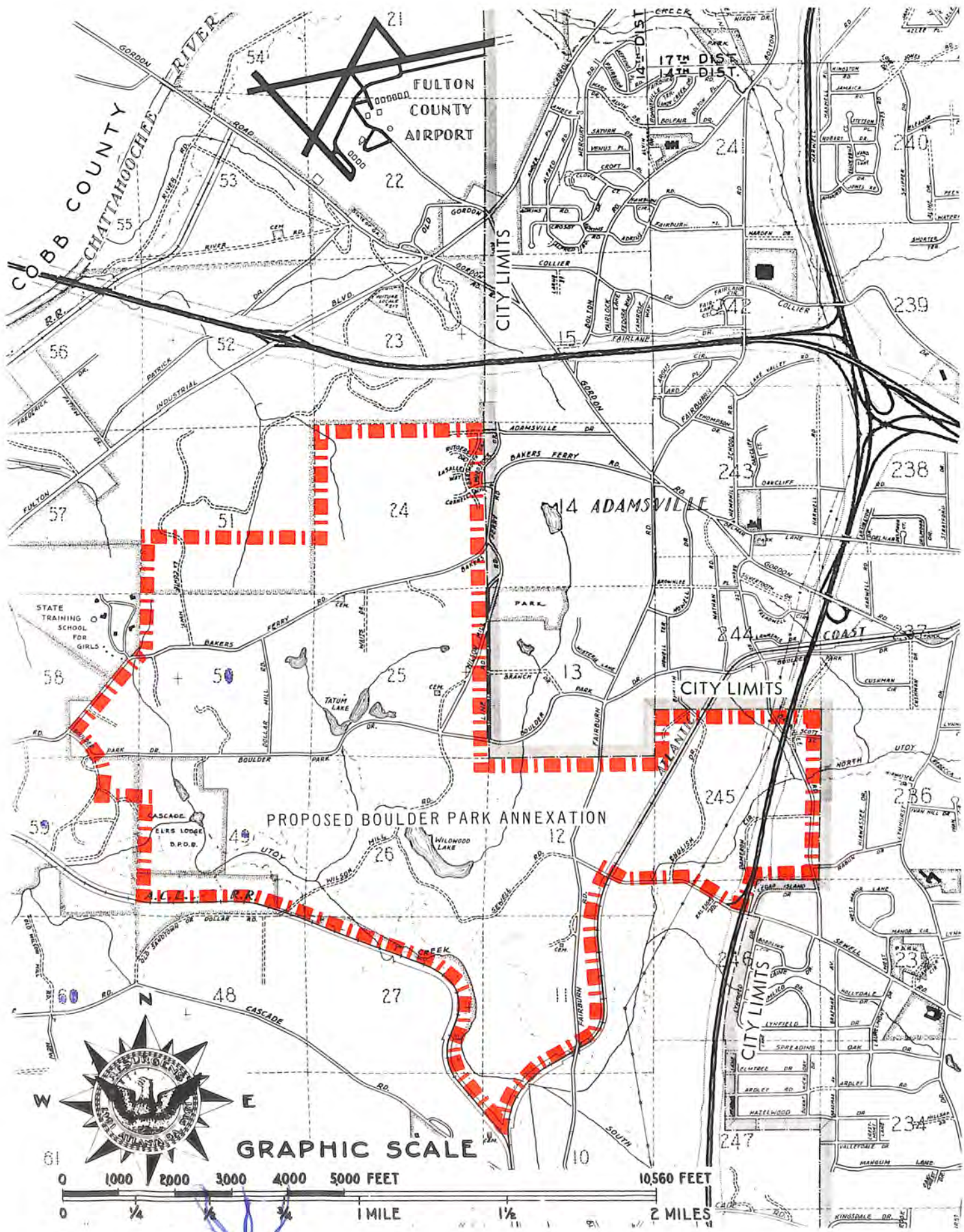
PREFACE

In the referendum to be held May 11, 1966, the people of Boulder Park are being offered an opportunity to join the City of Atlanta and to help make a great city even greater. It will be the first time this question has been considered by the Boulder Park voters.

This booklet contains questions and answers dealing with the main issues involved in the referendum. The information was compiled by the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, with the full cooperation of the City of Atlanta. All the facts herein have been thoroughly checked by the City of Atlanta and their accuracy confirmed.

CONTENTS

	Page
Ad Valorem Taxes	1
A Comparison of Taxes	3
Representation in Local Government	5
Growth and Zoning	6
Fire Protection and Fire Insurance	8
Police Protection	9
Sanitation Service	10
Water Service	11
Schools	12
Sewers	13
Street Lights and Traffic Signals	14
Streets and Sidewalks	15



GRAPHIC SCALE



AD VALOREM TAXES

- Q. -- What would happen to my tax bill? How much more would it cost me to receive the improved services inside the city?
- A. - The ad valorem taxes on your home and personal property would be higher inside the city, but the increase in taxes would be largely offset by reductions in other charges. In almost every case, the net result would be only a moderate increase in the total. In some cases, the homeowner would pay less inside the city.

As an example, consider the effect on one of the homes taken from a random survey of Boulder Park residences. The example is a single-family frame dwelling. Its value, for tax purposes, is \$14,920. The 1965 Fulton County real estate tax bill on this property was \$107.35, and the personal property tax was \$32.33 -- a total tax of \$139.68. If the home had been inside the city, the county and city real estate tax would have been \$191.63 and the personal property tax would have been \$33.25 for a total tax of \$224.88. The increase inside the city would have been \$85.20.

This increase in ad valorem taxes would have been largely offset by lower charges in two areas: Water and fire insurance. The actual water bill for this residence last year was \$80.02, which is very close to the average bill shown in a survey of some 25 homes in the Boulder Park area. Inside the city, the water bill would have been \$40.30, a decrease of \$39.72.

It is more difficult to arrive at the exact saving possible in lower insurance rates for the homeowner, because of the several different types of insurance he might choose. But a good estimate can be obtained by comparing the rates for "straight fire insurance" on his dwelling. Since the value of his lot makes up part of the total value of his property, assume that his dwelling is valued at \$12,000 of the \$14,920 total. Straight fire insurance on this amount would be \$120.60 in Boulder Park, which has a Class 10 rating. Inside Atlanta, which has a Class 3 rating, the same fire insurance would cost \$25.20, a difference of \$95.40.

The sanitary service charge for this home is \$21.00 at present. In the city the charge would be \$22.00 for greatly improved service.

Thus, in the example, an ad valorem tax increase of \$85.20 and an increase of \$1.00 in sanitary service charge would be offset by savings of \$39.72 (water) and \$95.40 (fire insurance). The net difference would be a saving of \$48.92 if the home were inside the city.

Another "intangible" saving will work to the benefit of homeowners when they file federal and state income taxes. Both federal and state income tax procedures allow local tax payments to be claimed as a "deduction". Payments for such items as water and insurance are

not "deductible." This means that the homeowner inside the city — whose property taxes are higher and other charges lower -- can deduct a greater portion of his total payments for income tax purposes.

The net effect on his income tax bill would vary, depending on the income bracket and other factors. But a conservative estimate is that the typical homeowner could reduce his combined federal and state income taxes by about 20 per cent of the additional amount deductible for ad valorem taxes.

In other words, the taxpayer in the example shown above could deduct \$85.20 more if he were inside the city, and the estimated saving on his income taxes would be \$17.04. Considering all aspects of his taxes and charges, the homeowner cited in the example would actually save almost \$70.00 by being inside the city, while enjoying improved services.

A COMPARISON OF TAXES AND CHARGES
FOR SEVERAL TYPICAL HOMEOWNERS

(Boulder Park - City of Atlanta)

In the following examples - all of which are actual residences in a random survey of Boulder Park homes - the ad valorem taxes, water bill and sanitation charges paid in 1965 are compared with what the same items would have been if the homes had been inside the corporate limits of the City of Atlanta. The "net change" shown does not reflect the saving in fire insurance, which would range from a few dollars to a substantial amount, depending on type of dwelling, its value, location, type of insurance, etc. The change also does not include the savings on federal and state income tax deductions. See page 1 and 2.

	<u>Value of Home</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Real Estate Tax</u>	<u>Personal Property Tax</u>	<u>Water Bill</u>	<u>Sanitation</u>	<u>Net Change</u>
Example #1	\$14,800	Co. \$3,700 City 5,180	\$105.76 <u>189.67</u>	\$19.61 <u>20.17</u>	\$60.31 <u>30.31</u>	\$21.00 <u>22.00</u>	
			+ 83.91	+ .56	- 30.00	+ 1.00	+ 55.47
Example #2	17,120	Co. 4,280 City 5,990	136.50 <u>228.64</u>	28.09 <u>28.89</u>	248.17 <u>132.68</u>	21.00 <u>14.00</u>	
			+ 92.14	+ .80	-115.49	- 7.00	- 29.55
Example #3	19,760	Co. 4,940 City 6,920	171.48 <u>273.25</u>	46.64 <u>47.96</u>	77.83 <u>39.19</u>	21.00 <u>22.00</u>	
			+101.77	+ 1.32	- 38.64	+ 1.00	+ 65.45
Example #4	11,600	Co. 2,900 City 4,050	63.36 <u>135.51</u>	21.73 <u>22.35</u>	53.74 <u>26.98</u>	21.00 <u>18.00</u>	
			+ 72.15	+ .62	- 26.76	- 3.00	+ 43.01
Example #5	17,200	Co. 4,300 City 6,020	137.56 <u>230.05</u>	57.77 <u>59.41</u>	50.82 <u>25.50</u>	21.00 <u>18.00</u>	
			+ 92.49	+ 1.64	- 25.32	- 3.00	+ 65.81

	<u>Value of Home</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Real Estate Tax</u>	<u>Personal Property Tax</u>	<u>Water Bill</u>	<u>Sanitation</u>	<u>Net Change</u>
Example #6	18,280	Co. 4,570	151.87	29.15	69.80	21.00	
		City 6,400	248.29	29.98	35.12	22.00	
			+ 96.42	+ .83	- 34.68	+ 1.00	+ 63.57
Example #7	14,920	Co. 3,730	107.35	32.33	80.02	21.00	
		City 5,220	191.63	33.25	40.30	22.00	
			+ 84.28	+ .92	- 39.72	+ 1.00	+ 46.48
Example #8	7,800	Co. 1,950	15.27	4.24	95.35	21.00	
		City 2,720	72.58	4.36	48.07	14.00	
			+ 57.31	+ .12	- 47.28	- 7.00	+ 3.15
Example #9	20,040	Co. 5,010	175.19	63.07	160.32	21.00	
		City 7,010	277.70	64.86	81.00	22.00	
			+102.51	+ 1.79	- 79.32	+ 1.00	+ 25.98
Example #10	19,400	Co. 4,850	166.71	23.32	38.41	21.00	
		City 6,780	266.75	23.98	19.21	22.00	
			+100.04	+ .66	- 19.20	+ 1.00	+ 82.50

REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

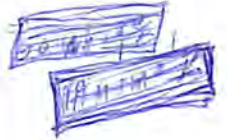
- Q. - What representation would I have in local government? Other than being able to vote in elections involving city offices and city issues, how would my voice in local matters be increased?
- A. - You would have more representation in local government, and you would have a greater voice in matters affecting your community because you would be closer to your representatives.

The legislative act which provides for the referendum in Boulder Park spells out that the area would join the city as part of the present Seventh Ward. The ward is represented by two members of the Board of Aldermen and one member of the Board of Education, plus two members of the City Executive Committee. All of these are elected. Residents of Boulder Park could vote in the next city election in 1969 for these and other offices.

The Boulder Park area presently is governed by, and participates in the election of, a three-man county commission. County commissioners must be responsive to the citizens of all areas of the county, and rightly so, since they represent all the county. The five members of the Fulton County Board of Education, each representing a school district, are appointed by the Grand Jury for five-year terms. The county school superintendent is elected by county-wide vote.

By having two aldermen, both residing in their ward, Boulder Park citizens would have a stronger voice in matters of local government and, in effect, would be closer to their elected representatives. In future elections they would vote in the election of Atlanta's mayor, the president of the Board of Aldermen, all members of the Board of Aldermen and Board of Education, and two members of the City Executive Committee from their own ward. Their ward also would be represented on other boards, such as the Atlanta Public Library Board of Trustees. Additionally, the area's representation would be enhanced by the appointment of its aldermen to various aldermanic committees which would deal with matters pertaining specifically to the Boulder Park area, as well as those affecting the city as a whole.

GROWTH AND ZONING



- Q. - What would happen in the field of zoning and future development of the Boulder Park area?
- A. - You could expect the Boulder Park area to continue to develop as primarily a low density single-family community. Future apartment and commercial development could be expected to take place along portions of the major thoroughfares with emphasis on strong neighborhood commercial centers at appropriate intervals as opposed to continuous strip commercial development.

Property would be reclassified into the City of Atlanta zoning district which most closely resembles the classification under which it is presently zoned in the Fulton County Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning designations as established and use permits as approved by Fulton County prior to January 1, 1967 will be honored by the City of Atlanta, and will remain in effect.

Public hearings for consideration of proposed zoning changes in the area would be held only four times a year, following the area system as is presently being used in Atlanta. These hearings are held only by the Zoning Committee after receiving recommendations by the staff of the Planning Department and the Atlanta-Fulton County Joint Planning Board. The decision of the Zoning Committee receives final action by the full Board of Aldermen and Mayor.

The Atlanta Zoning Ordinance contains district classifications which closely relate to those in the Fulton County Ordinance, although similar classifications in Atlanta generally contain more restrictive requirements. In addition to these similar districts the Atlanta Ordinance contains several new classifications which permit only a highly selective number of uses with regulations which permit and encourage high development standards. These classifications provide for a reasonable use of certain properties while permitting only the best development for the community.

A brief description of these new districts follows:

1. The "R-9 Single-Family Dwelling Group District" provides for the construction of townhouse units for individual unit sale under condominium ownership. Units may not be rented under this district. The district provides for a maximum of twelve dwelling units per acre and a maximum ground coverage of thirty-five percent including buildings, parking and drives. Several fine townhouse developments are presently under construction in Atlanta under the provisions of this district.

2. The "A-L Apartment-Limited Dwelling District" provides for low-density, high-standard apartment developments generally compatible with substantial single-family residential areas. The district permits garden apartments (two story units) at a maximum of twelve dwelling units per acre and permits only thirty-five percent ground coverage including buildings, parking and drives.
3. The "C-L Commercial Limited District" permits primarily office and institutional uses and a few selected retail studios and shops. Signs must be attached to the wall of the building and be only twenty square feet in size. This district provides often for a reasonable use of portions of the major thoroughfare while discouraging all the inherent ill effects of continuous strip commercial retail zoning. It has been found to be generally compatible with certain residential uses as well.

Work would begin immediately to include the Boulder Park area in the comprehensive planning process now underway in the City of Atlanta. This comprehensive planning process is made up of four elements as follows:

1. Projected future land use needs and their location as a guide to future rezoning evaluations.
2. Designation of Major Thoroughfares and their future effect on the adjacent use of land.
3. Plans for needed community facilities such as parks, schools and libraries along with general locations.
4. The programming of improvements and source of funds necessary to implement these future plans.

FIRE PROTECTION AND FIRE INSURANCE

Q. - How would my fire protection be affected? What would this mean in regard to what I pay for my fire insurance?

A. - Your fire insurance rates would be reduced substantially, but, even more important, better fire protection would be afforded to your home or business.

Fire protection and fire insurance rates go hand in hand. The better the protection available to you, the less you must pay for fire insurance. Ratings are assigned to particular areas on the basis of fire protection facilities and other factors. Fire insurance rates, in turn, are determined by a formula based on the rating.

The City of Atlanta has a Class 3 rating, which compares very favorably with other cities of similar size across the nation. Atlanta has kept well within the requirements of its Class 3 rating by building, equipping and maintaining fire stations at key points throughout the city, and by assuring an ample water supply in every area. Fire protection, in short, is excellent and fire insurance rates are as low as the rates in all but a few major cities.

The Boulder Park area, on the other hand, has no fire protection available at the present time. As a result, the area has a Class 10 rating. Rates for straight fire insurance under the Class 10 rating are enormously higher than the rates under Class 3 -- as much as five and a half times greater in the case of a frame dwelling.

The Fulton County Commission has passed a resolution declaring a new fire district, known as the Fulton Industrial Fire District, which encompasses the Boulder Park area. The county has petitioned the City of Atlanta to contract the justified fire protection services for the new district to earn a Class 6 rating. Those in the Fulton Industrial Fire District would pay a special fire tax levy of seven mills to satisfy this contract. It is expected that the contract will be realized during 1966.

Should the citizens of the Boulder Park area voice their desire in the May 11 referendum to become part of Atlanta, thus separating themselves from the Industrial Fire District, they would become part of Atlanta's Class 3 rating and would realize the same fire protection as similar portions of the city.

The City of Atlanta already has plans to construct a new fire station in the Adamsville area during 1966. This station, as well as other city fire units in the surrounding area, would respond to fire calls in the Boulder Park area, thus meeting the requirements of the Southeastern Underwriters.

Thus, by voting to become part of Atlanta, Boulder Park residents could expect their fire insurance rates to be reduced at the time they joined the city (January 1, 1967) and they would not pay the proposed seven-mill fire tax for the additional protection.

POLICE PROTECTION

- Q. - What changes would occur in police protection? Would the city build a new precinct station in Boulder Park?
- A. - Police protection would be expanded and improved -- and the basic concept would change from the type of service provided in rural areas to the "full-service" protection afforded in a heavily populated urban area. No additional stations are contemplated in any area of the city, at present.

Boulder Park presently receives its police service from the City of Atlanta under a contract arrangement with Fulton County. The only laws enforceable are state laws, which are designed, for the most part, for rural areas. Anyone arrested as a violator of a state law must be turned over to the Fulton County sheriff for trial in a state court.

If the area chooses to join the city, it would be necessary to increase immediately the radio patrol service now provided, add foot patrolmen for duty in business districts, and add motorcycle patrolmen for traffic and patrol duty. In addition, the citizens of the Boulder Park area would receive the benefit of all the services and facilities of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Squad and the special squads in the Detective Department, which are not now available to the area. Policemen would enforce city ordinances, as well as state laws, the same as they are enforced in the rest of Atlanta at present.

The City of Atlanta presently has approximately 1.5 policemen for every 1,000 population. The city is striving not only to maintain that ratio but to improve it for the increased protection of all its citizens.

As for adding precinct stations, the trend is away from the precinct concept in these days of two-way radio communications and other modern facilities. A radio patrol car, manned by two officers or even just one, is literally a "traveling precinct station." With radio communications, the patrolman can call for assistance and have other officers at his side within moments. The city has no plans for adding precinct stations, and the emphasis will continue to be on mobility and close communications by radio.

SANITATION SERVICE

- Q. - How would my garbage pickup and other sanitation services be affected if Boulder Park joins the city? Would I have to pay more?
- A. - Your sanitation service would be expanded and improved, and many residents actually would pay less than they pay now. The maximum increase would be a dollar a year, or just two cents a week more.

As a resident of Atlanta, you would begin receiving several services which are not now available to you -- rubbish pickup, street cleaning, dead animal removal, sanitary inspection, and "guttering," which means periodic removal of grass and other obstructions from street gutters. It is the city's responsibility to bring all these services to its citizens, as well as providing two garbage collections each week. You are presently receiving only one garbage pickup each week.

For these additional services, your sanitation charge would be a maximum of \$22.00 a year, as compared to the \$21.00 a year you are now paying for far less service. The \$22.00 charge is figured on a base charge of \$6.00, plus \$4.00 for each 25 feet of lot frontage or fraction thereof, but not to exceed the \$22.00 a year maximum for residences. Some residents would pay as little as \$14.00 a year.

Business establishments throughout the area now pay for garbage collection on the basis of the actual cost of rendering the service. Most businesses would realize a substantial saving by being a part of the city -- and would receive improved service as well.

An estimated 800 homes in Boulder Park are getting garbage collection service (one pickup each week) at this time, according to the City of Atlanta Department of Sanitary Engineering. Full service would be extended to these residents immediately after their area became part of the city. The maximum charge for even the most remote residence would be only \$22.00 per year.

A survey of city sanitary services is being conducted at this time by the Public Administration Service. The findings of the survey, which will be available soon, will result in improved services. Any change in rate schedules will apply to both city residents and county residents receiving city services under contract with the county government.

WATER SERVICE

- Q. - What difference, if any, would there be in the way water is supplied to my home or business? Would my water bill be affected?
- A. - The only difference would be on your water bill, which would be cut in half.

Virtually all the existing homes and businesses in the Boulder Park area already receive their water from the City of Atlanta Water Department under an arrangement between the city and Fulton County. Users outside the city, however, are billed for water at a double rate. The minimum monthly water bill for the City of Atlanta users is \$1.57; for those outside the city, the minimum is \$3.14 per month. Thus, the annual savings for water users inside the city is at least \$18.14.

In reality, savings run much higher than the minimum, however. Atlanta people are accustomed to having a plentiful supply of good water at low rates, and they use it in quantity. Experience has shown that very few homes, inside or outside the city, use little enough water to be billed for the minimum.

An actual survey of some 25 homes in the Boulder Park area, chosen at random, showed that the average water charge paid during 1965 was \$78.32. Only one of these homes was within a dollar of the minimum bill, and three of the larger users paid bills of \$131.12, \$160.32 and \$248.17.

If these same homes had been inside the city, their water bills for 1965 would have averaged \$39.78. The average savings would have been \$38.53 per home.

SCHOOLS

- Q. - What changes would occur in the schools my children attend? What would be done about school bus transportation, since the Atlanta system does not have free transportation?
- A. - Several major differences would occur in the way of advantages: Kindergartens in the Atlanta system schools; a greater emphasis at the high school level on vocational programs, in addition to the college preparatory and general programs; and the benefit of more specialized programs and more technical specialists.

In general, the curricula of the Atlanta system and the Fulton County system are similar, as are the personnel policies, overall operational procedures and financial structures.

However, the salary schedules for teachers are somewhat higher in the Atlanta system. In general, Atlanta teachers are paid 8.9 per cent more than Fulton County teachers. Any teachers who become a part of the Atlanta School System would transfer directly to the city's pension plan without loss of any money or benefits. Atlanta and Fulton school officials agree that pension benefits of both systems are practically the same.

A survey by the Atlanta School System showed that there are 380 pupils in the area included in the May 11 referendum -- 270 elementary school children and 110 in high school. Of these, 69 already are attending Atlanta schools: 54 elementary pupils in Fain, Oglethorpe, Stanton, Towns and West Haven schools, and 15 high school students in Harper, Turner and West Fulton schools. The remaining 216 elementary pupils attend East Point Elementary School, and the other 95 high school students attend South Fulton (in East Point), Thomas (in College Park) and Lakeshore (in College Park).

A 14-room elementary school is under construction in the Boulder Park area and will be available for occupancy in September, 1966. School officials say it is possible this school could help relieve some of the overcrowding in adjacent schools, such as Fain and Towns. Additionally, two other sites in the area have been secured for future construction of an elementary school and a high school.

As for the loss of bus transportation, officials say this problem would be dealt with right away. The Fulton County system provides free bus transportation for pupils who live further than 1-1/2 miles from school, and this expense is covered by local and state funds. On the other hand, the Atlanta Transit System provides bus transportation for Atlanta system pupils on routes determined by pupil need and with pupils paying as they ride. Robert Sommerville, president of Atlanta Transit System, has given assurance that school bus routes would be provided for pupils in areas joining the city.

SEWERS

- Q. - Would there be any major changes in the system of sewer service? Would I be assessed any sewer charges before sewer service is extended to my home?
- A. - If your home is already on a sewer line, or if you have a working septic tank, you probably would see no immediate changes that would affect you. Certainly, there would be no sewer assessment charged until sewer service is provided.

The city already has made a preliminary study of the probable needs of the area, and it would undertake to make the necessary improvements and additions as soon as possible. However, your present situation would largely govern the effect on you and your home.

For example, if your home already is served by a sewer line, you would see nothing different. You would continue receiving the service with no special charges or other changes, except where such might be applied city-wide. If your home is served by a working septic tank in good condition, then you would not be affected until a sewer line is extended to your street. Even when this occurred, you could be granted as long as six years to pay the assessment which is always made for this service.

If sewer service were brought to your neighborhood for the first time -- this is always by petition of the residents -- then your property would be assessed on a front-footage basis for the sewer line in front of your property. This assessment is set by law at \$3.50 per front foot. The connection to your home from the sewer line, if the line were laid on a street that is already paved, would be between \$80 and \$120. And again, if you already have a satisfactory septic tank, you could be allowed up to six years to pay the assessment.

This policy exists in the case of already existing residences and does not apply to vacant property, however.

STREET LIGHTS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS

- Q. - Would the city provide street lights in my neighborhood right away? What would be done about traffic signals?
- A. - As a general policy, the City of Atlanta provides street lights in areas as requested by the residents, and it has kept up with demands since the 1952 Plan of Improvement.

No wholesale program of street light installation is anticipated in any part of the city, because of budget limitations. In other words, a neighborhood that has not expressed a positive desire for this service need not fear that street lights would be forced on them. However, the city, through its Traffic Engineering Department, has been attentive to the requests of those who do want lights and is currently right on schedule in meeting these demands. Additionally, a program of upgrading street lights on major thoroughfares is in progress to bring these facilities up to the latest recommended standards.



A preliminary survey in the Boulder Park area has shown that some 18 street lights are currently in use, all on local streets. The estimated needs for arterial streets include 80 lights, which, obviously, could not be installed all at once. The estimated needs for local streets are for some 221 additional lights, which would be undertaken by the city on the basis of requests by the residents.

In general, the city installs traffic signals at intersections where traffic conditions satisfy the "warrants" set out by uniform national standards, as adopted and prescribed by the Georgia Highway Department. However, Atlanta citizens on occasion have shown a desire for and have provided the necessary funds to have signals installed at some intersections where the "warrants" are not fully met. This can be accomplished at intersections where signals are a help to traffic movement and a convenience to the citizens.

No traffic signals are now in service in the Boulder Park area, but one new signal may be needed in the next two to three years, according to the city survey.

STREETS AND SIDEWALKS

- Q. - What could Boulder Park expect in the way of street and sidewalk improvements, now and in the future? How can we get sidewalks or streets paved, and how much would it cost?
- A. - A survey by the City of Atlanta Department of Construction found two streets in the Boulder Park area in "below average" condition -- Fairburn Road and part of Boulder Park Drive. Both of these will require resurfacing in the very near future, the Construction Department said. The city has pledged to assign a high priority to these projects. The other streets in the area are in "good" or "average" condition and will not require immediate work.

Paving of streets and sidewalks in the City of Atlanta, with two exceptions, requires a petition signed by more than 50 per cent of the property owners involved. Property owners are assessed for the cost of the paving on a front-footage basis. The average assessment for sidewalks in residential areas (six-foot sidewalks) is about \$2.60 per front foot, and property owners are allowed up to four years to pay. Charges for street paving vary with the size of the project, but the assessment generally is between \$6.50 and \$7.50 per front foot for paving and curbing. Property owners are allowed up to 10 years to pay the assessments for street paving and up to four years to pay for curbing.

The two exceptions to the petition method are for sidewalks which are deemed necessary for reasons of safety, and for sidewalks in front of schools. If a sidewalk is required for public safety, the city may put one in without being petitioned and then assess property owners on a front-footage basis. Sidewalks in front of schools are built at city expense, with no petition required.

In line with its policy on school sidewalks, the City of Atlanta would move as quickly as possible to install sidewalks in front of the new elementary school now under construction in the Boulder Park area.

Mr. Hollis
Sen. Johnson
Miss Perkins
Alexander

