ATL DIRECT

ATL.Direct Ad Inventory & Specs

Cheat Sheet

Desktop Ad Units

Ad Unit	Size (px)	Placement	Purpose	Best Use / Tips
Leaderboard	1200×250	Top of page, above the fold	Premium visibility for citywide campaigns	Keep concise, strong CTA, avoid clutter
In-Article Banner	728×90	Within articles (after 2nd or 4th para)	Reinforces messaging in the flow of storytelling	Match campaign to editorial context
Sidebar Tall	350×600	Right sidebar (sticky on scroll)	Sustained presence for ongoing initiatives	Layered content (headline, image, CTA)
Sidebar Square	350×350	Right sidebar (stackable grid)	Flexible unit for events, short promos, spotlights	Strong visuals, minimal text

Mobile Ad Units

Ad Unit	Size (px)	Placement	Purpose	Best Use / Tips
Sticky/Adhesion Footer	320×50 (3:1–6:1)	Fixed at bottom of mobile view	Persistent visibility without disrupting content	Keep simple, high-contrast CTA; must include close button
Inline Rectangle	300×250	Between content blocks	High engagement, breaks up long articles	Strong image or graphic; minimal text
In-Article Banner	320×50, 320×100	Embedded within story flow	Seamlessly integrates with reading experience	Pair messaging with editorial context; keep text bold and legible

Scheduling Guidance

Campaign Type	Suggested Duration	Best Placement
Service reminders	2–4 weeks	Sidebar, in-article
One-day events	1 week before + event day	Leaderboard, mobile banners
Seasonal campaigns	4–6 weeks	Leaderboard + sticky sidebar

Accessibility Reminders

- Provide **alt text** with every image.
- Check **contrast ratio** (WCAG AA).
- Use **12pt+ equivalent font size**.
- Make CTAs **keyboard accessible**.

Design Do's & Don'ts

- Do: Use real resident photos when possible.
- Do: Include the City/Department logo.
- Don't: Use stock art that feels generic.
- Don't: Overuse animation or flashing effects.

Submit Ads to: https://atl.direct/pio-ads

Approval Checklist

Make sure that:

- Correct size + file weight
- Alt text included
- CTA included
- Matches brand standards
- Deadline met (7 or 15 business days)

Deadlines:

7 business days before desired run date
15 Days, for Page Takeover before desired run date

Standard Ad Units (Desktop)

ATL.Direct supports high-impact desktop ad placements designed to integrate cleanly with the site's editorial structure while maintaining a resident-first experience. These units are consistent with modern publishing standards, ensuring maximum visibility for departmental campaigns while preserving site readability.

Leaderboard (1200×250)

- **Placement:** Above the fold at the top of the page.
- **Purpose:** Premium, high-visibility banner designed for broad citywide announcements, initiatives, or priority campaigns.
- **Best Practices:** Keep messaging concise, prioritize strong CTAs, and avoid clutter.

In-Article Banner (728×90)

- **Placement:** Embedded within article content, typically after the second or fourth paragraph.
- **Purpose:** Reinforces messaging directly within stories, ideal for reinforcing resident calls-to-action tied to editorial context.
- **Best Practices:** Ensure relevance to story content where possible and keep design responsive for readability.

Sidebar Units

350×600 (Tall, Sticky)

- **Placement:** Right-hand sidebar with sticky behavior, ensuring visibility while residents scroll.
- **Purpose:** Sustained presence for ongoing initiatives such as service reminders, safety campaigns, or grant programs.
- **Best Practices:** Use vertical layout to tell a layered story—headline, visual, CTA.

350×350 (Square, Stackable)

- **Placement:** Sidebar grid, often below or in combination with tall sidebar units.
- **Purpose:** Flexible, versatile ad unit suited for shorter-term promotions or departmental spotlights. Multiple units can be stacked for rotation.
- **Best Practices:** Strong visuals and minimal text; use for event promotions or resident-facing campaigns.

Premium Inventory

Page Takeovers / Wallpaper (Desktop Only)

Page Takeovers provide departments with maximum visibility through a branded "skin" experience that wraps around the main content area. This premium format is designed for high-impact campaigns, but restricted to departmental category pages to preserve the editorial-first experience on citywide and homepage views.

Background/Wallpaper Specs

- **Dimensions:** 1600×1000 or 1920×1050 (JPG or PNG)
- **Optional sizes for optimization:** 1440×900, 1366×768, 1280×800
- **File size:** ≤300 KB initial load; ≤600 KB polite load

Safe Content Area

- Keep all critical messaging, text, or logos outside the **1200px center column** (the live content zone).
- Left and right background rails should feature supportive branding elements, not core messaging.

Required Ad Package

A Page Takeover must include a coordinated set of units to ensure consistency across the page:

- **Billboard (1200×250)** – header placement
- **Sidebar Unit (350×600)** – sticky placement on scroll
- Optional **Sidebar 350×350** for rotation or additional messaging

Placement Restrictions

- Allowed **only on Department Category Pages** (e.g., Housing, Transportation, Parks & Recreation).
- Not available for the ATL.Direct homepage or citywide landing pages.
- Limited to one takeover per department at a time, scheduled in advance.

File & Creative Specifications

To ensure ads display correctly and meet accessibility standards, all creative must comply with the following specifications:

Accepted Formats

- **Static:** JPG, PNG
- **Animated:** GIF (limited loop) or HTML5 (responsive preferred)
- **Video:** Only permitted as embedded YouTube links in sponsored content (not as standalone ad units)

File Size Limits

- **Static Images:** ≤150 KB
- **GIF / Animated:** ≤300 KB (initial load); ≤600 KB polite load for HTML5
- **HTML5 Ads:** Must adhere to Google Ad Manager / IAB standards; provide backup static JPG or PNG

Animation Standards

- **Length:** Max 15 seconds
- **Loops:** No more than 3 loops; must end on a static frame
- **Audio:** No auto-play; sound must be user-initiated
- **Transitions:** Smooth, non-flashing; avoid strobing or distracting effects

Accessibility Requirements

- **Alt Text:** All static and animated ads must be submitted with alt text describing the image/action
- **Captions:** Required for any video ads submitted as part of sponsored content
- **Contrast:** Must meet WCAG AA standards for text-to-background contrast
- **Fonts:** Use legible sans-serif fonts at minimum 12pt equivalent size
- **CTAs:** Buttons/links must be clearly distinguishable and keyboard-accessible

Submission Guidelines

Deadlines

- Standard Ads (Leaderboard, In-Article, Sidebar, Mobile):
  - Submit creative at least 7 business days before desired run date.
- Premium Ads (Page Takeovers / Wallpapers):
  - Submit creative at least 15 business days before desired run date to allow for review, testing, and scheduling.
- Late or incomplete files may delay or prevent ad placement.

Review & Approval Process

All ads undergo editorial review prior to publication. Each submission is evaluated for:

- **Brand Consistency:** Alignment with City of Atlanta messaging and design standards.
- **Accessibility:** Compliance with alt text, captions, font legibility, and contrast requirements.
- **Messaging:** Must be accurate, resident-focused, and aligned with the Mayor's Four Pillars.
- **Content Restrictions:** Ads cannot include political messaging, personal promotion, or third-party advertising not tied to city services.

Only approved creative will be scheduled for publication.

Placement Priority & Scheduling

- **Editorial Balance:** Ads are placed in a way that complements, not interrupts, civic storytelling.
- **Rotation:** Sidebar and in-article placements may rotate with other approved departmental ads to ensure fair exposure.
- **Premium Exclusivity:** Page Takeovers are exclusive to one department at a time and are limited to **Department Category Pages** only.
- **Scheduling:** Ad ops will confirm start and end dates once creative is approved and slots are available.

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