



**INFORM  
WOMEN,  
TRANSFORM  
LIVES**

# CITY SPOTLIGHTS

**Atlanta, Georgia**



**Vanessa Ibarra**

Director of the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, Atlanta

Because women often have a harder time than men accessing important public information, The Carter Center is working with 13 international cities to help them get information to women about beneficial city services. Today, we're speaking with Vanessa Ibarra, director of the Mayor's Office of International Affairs in Atlanta.

## What service(s) are you highlighting?

We are utilizing [atlstrong.org](https://atlstrong.org), a COVID-19 response and recovery resource hub for Atlanta residents, and ATL311, the city's one-stop shop for all non-emergency services, to connect women to city services related to gender-based violence, economic mobility, housing, health, community safety, and food access. The resources are available in multiple languages. Residents who do not have internet access can call 311. The city is also promoting SafeSPOTS and Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative.



## Why did you choose to focus on these services?

During the pandemic, we saw a spike in domestic violence that disproportionately impacted women of color. SafeSPOTS (Safe Place off the Streets) provide immediate assistance at Atlanta fire stations to those facing child and/or domestic violence.

Economic mobility is the key to rendering women financially independent. Forty-eight percent of women cite lack of community support as a leading challenge to starting or staying in business. The Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative (WEI) provides access to the human, educational, and financial capital critical to empowering early-stage company-building entrepreneurs. While we recognize and diligently work to break down the economic and social inequities faced by women business owners, we also firmly believe that women can be entrepreneurs. Marginalization based on gender must be minimized for talent to be maximized.

## How are you using the Inform Women, Transform Lives grant to reach more women?

We are working with community partners to promote these services via virtual events, including a weeklong event entitled "Women in the Workplace." We are also using social and paid media, community influencers, direct community engagement, radio ads, and digital signs at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and on our public transit service, known as MARTA.

We are provided information in multiple languages and are also focused on reaching Black and Brown women who have been impacted by COVID-19.

## More generally, why do you think it's important for women to have access to information?

When women have access to information about city services and programs that can benefit them, this can lead to improvements in health and in the overall quality of life for them and their families. That's particularly important as we continue to navigate the pandemic's impact.

