



I-20 EAST TRANSIT INITIATIVE

Public Involvement Plan

**Prepared for:
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority**

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Atlanta, GA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Plan (PIP) is intended to provide a framework for completion of public engagement and agency coordination activities undertaken during the I-20 East Transit Initiative. Therefore, the purpose of the PIP is to describe in full detail the overall goals of the public involvement program, the strategies to be employed throughout the project, the policy framework that guides these activities, the committee structure for the study, and a description on how these activities are tied to the major project milestones.

The PIP is also consistent with Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) public involvement strategy, relies on the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) regional policy framework and guidance, utilizes the long-standing policy and practice of extensive public participation of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), and aligns with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) program to ensure maximum public participation. Public involvement activities will be coordinated through the MARTA's External Affairs Department as appropriate.

1.0 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

MARTA, in close coordination with DeKalb County, and in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is undertaking the preparation documentation for the I-20 East Transit Initiative. This initiative will identify and summarize the transportation and environmental impacts associated with the implementation of new east/west transit service from downtown Atlanta to the Mall at Stonecrest, in eastern DeKalb County. The project seeks to identify transit investments that would improve east/west mobility and accessibility to jobs and housing within the corridor, provide convenient and efficient transit service to accommodate the increasing transit demands within the development and revitalization. The initiative is organized in two study phases, the first being a Detailed Corridor Analysis (DCA); the second, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The DCA phase of the project will build heavily upon work conducted through a previous study of the corridor completed in 2004; the DEIS is necessary to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is intended to provide a guideline and framework for completion of public engagement activities undertaken during both phases of the I-20 East Transit Initiative.

Public involvement is a large part of the NEPA process for both the DCA and the DEIS. Therefore, the purpose of this PIP is to describe in full detail the overall goals of the public involvement program, the strategies to be employed throughout the project, the policy framework that guides these activities, the committee structure for the study, and a description of how these activities are tied to the major project milestones.

The major public involvement tasks associated with the I-20 East Transit Initiative include, but are not limited to:

DCA Phase:

- Environmental Justice Outreach and Analysis



- Stakeholder Interviews
- Development of Committee Structure: Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committees
- Public Outreach Opportunities
- Branding/Web/Social Media/Traditional Media
- Documentation

DEIS Phase:

- Agency Scoping
- Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings
- Public Outreach Opportunities, including Environmental Justice outreach
- Branding/Web/Social Media/Traditional Media
- Documentation

The focus of the public engagement strategy is to capitalize on committee input to guide the process and to have the public participate at key technical milestones throughout the project development process. This PIP will detail the final set of strategies, methodology and timeframes in which the public outreach activities will occur.

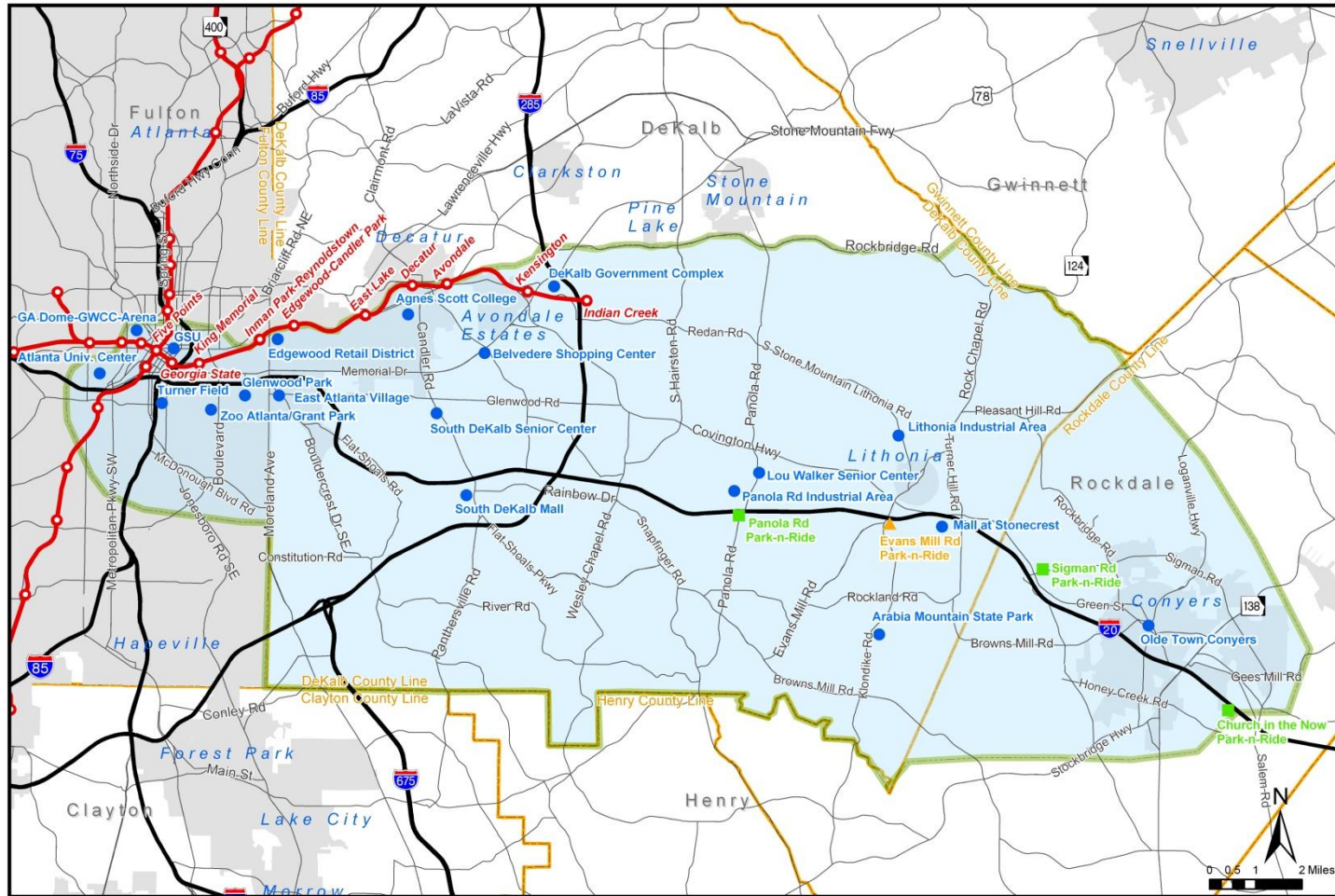
1.1 Project Background and Study Area

Over the past decade, multiple planning studies have been undertaken to address the transportation issues facing the I-20 East Corridor. The results of these studies indicate that a high capacity transit service, operating predominately in an exclusive right of way, is needed to accommodate the increasing transit demands of this corridor.

The study area for the I-20 East Transit Initiative extends from central Atlanta eastward along I-20, through DeKalb County, and into Rockdale County. While the study corridor for the proposed transit service follows I-20 from downtown Atlanta to the Mall at Stonecrest in eastern DeKalb County, the area of influence extends well beyond the corridor. A map of the study area is provided in **Figure 1-1**.



Figure 1-1: I-20 Corridor Study Area



Study Area

marta

Points of Interest	GRTA Park-n-Ride	MARTA Station
Study Area	MARTA Park-n-Ride	MARTA Rail
City Boundary	County Boundary	Interstate
Major Road		



2.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Federal Regulations

Adopted in August 2005, Section 6001 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)[23 USC 139] provides guidance on both metropolitan and statewide planning processes, as well as new approaches for linking planning activities with the overall project development process, including National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and associated implementing regulations.

Implementing regulations under SAFETEA-LU, published in the Federal Register on February 14, 2007, provide guidance on metropolitan and statewide planning processes in 23 CFR 450. Specific reference to public involvement for transportation planning studies and project development is made in Section 450.318, which states that, to the extent practicable, development of transportation planning studies shall involve consultation with, or join efforts among, the MPO, state, and public transportation operator(s). In addition, these studies may now be used as part of the overall project development process consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and associated implementing regulations, provided that there is:

1. Involvement of interested state, local, tribal, and Federal agencies;
2. Public review;
3. Reasonable opportunity to comment during the development of the corridor and/or subarea planning study;
4. Documentation of relevant decisions in a form that is identifiable and available for review during subsequent NEPA scoping activities; and
5. The review of FHWA and FTA, as appropriate.

All public involvement techniques anticipated under this public involvement plan are designed to comply with these regulations.

2.1.1 Environmental Justice

In addition to providing guidance for metropolitan and statewide planning, there are Federal regulations concerning environmental justice. U.S. Executive Order 12898 defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or education level – in transportation decision-making. Environmental justice programs promote the protection of human health and the environment, empowerment via public participation, and the dissemination of relevant information to inform and educate affected communities.

All environmental justice outreach activities anticipated under this public involvement plan will meet these regulations. At the onset of developing the PIP, the project team will identify concentrations of environmental justice populations throughout the study area through an evaluation of Census and other data, interviews with stakeholders, and, if necessary, windshield surveys. Based on the characteristics within the corridor, the PIP will contain specific strategies (listed in Section 4.8) to ensure full participation of traditionally underserved populations.



2.1.2 New Starts Program

The FTA New Starts Program is the Federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally planned, implemented and operated transit guideway capital investments. As such, two primary means to ensure conformance with New Starts are through agency coordination and public involvement.

2.1.3 Agency Coordination

The study approach for the I-20 East Transit Initiative is designed to capitalize upon the previous work completed in the corridor with the objective of formally orienting the study into the required steps of the FTA project development process. In order to ensure consistency with their project delivery process, FTA coordination will occur at critical milestones for comment and overall guidance in continuing the I-20 East Transit Initiative through the FTA project development process.

2.1.4 Public Involvement

Projects seeking New Starts funding must emerge from a locally driven, multimodal transportation planning process. Public values will be incorporated into the transportation planning and project development process by: 1) collaboratively defining the problem to be solved with a wide range of stakeholders; 2) identifying the public and agency issues to be considered; 3) developing possible alternative solutions to the problem; 4) translating public and agency issues and objectives into evaluation criteria; 5) evaluating and comparing alternative solutions; and 6) selecting a locally preferred alternative.

2.1.5 MARTA and Regional Practices

MARTA has a long-standing policy and practice of extensive public participation in all service related decisions. Modifications to service and changes in fees require public involvement. The I-20 East Transit Initiative is consistent with these policies and practices. Thus, public involvement activities undertaken as part of the I-20 East Transit Initiative will be coordinated through MARTA's Office of External Affairs as appropriate.

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) defines its commitment to public engagement in the transportation planning process in its Transportation Public Involvement Plan. ARC has several policy goals for public involvement. The ARC aims to include opportunities for citizens to engage in early, open and accessible decision-making which includes seeking advice and guidance from low-income and ethnic communities. The I-20 East Transit Initiative public involvement plan is based significantly on this regional policy framework and guidance.



3.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FRAMEWORK

The mission of the public outreach efforts for the I-20 East Transit Initiative is threefold: to inform, invite and communicate. First, it is important to inform the public of the purpose and progress of the I-20 East Transit Initiative – local issues, alternatives to be considered and potential consensus for conclusions and recommendations of the study. Second, it is essential to invite potentially impacted communities to participate in the planning process. Local input and knowledge leads to a shared vision and consensus for the final plan recommendations and is essential for this project to move forward. Third, communication must occur between the project team, the general public, agencies, and elected officials. Their ideas, perceptions, and opinions need to be heard, shared and documented throughout the course of the planning process.

The known cooperating and participating agencies, as well as other key stakeholders for the I-20 East Transit Initiative are listed in **Table 3-1**. This list includes the universe of stakeholders we will coordinate with in some way throughout the public involvement effort. Coordination can take the form of individual stakeholder interviews and briefings; agencies/groups that can be utilized for information dissemination; or potential members of the TAC and SAC. This list will continue to grow as the project progresses and each entity listed below will be included in the project database.

Table 3-1: Potential Stakeholders

<p>MARTA Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors Planning External Affairs and Media Equal Opportunity Operations Engineering 	<p>Environmental/Special Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Air Campaign Georgia Conservancy Georgians For Better Transportation MATEC Atlanta Bicycle Coalition PATH Foundation NAACP, DeKalb County Branch Livable Communities Coalition PEDS
<p>Planning Partners/Govt. Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APAB Transportation Committee Atlanta Beltline, Inc. Atlanta Development Authority Atlanta Regional Commission Atlanta NPU O Atlanta NPU V Atlanta NPU W Central Atlanta Progress City of Atlanta Board of Education City of Atlanta Planning Bureau City of Atlanta Public Works City of Lithonia DeKalb County Planning & Development DeKalb County Planning Commission DeKalb County Community Council #3 DeKalb County Community Council #5 DeKalb County Transportation DeKalb County Board of Education Environmental Protection Agency Federal Transit Administration Federal Highway Administration Fulton County Public Works Georgia DOT 	<p>Elected Officials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed Atlanta City Council Members Natalyn Archibong Carla Smith Kwanza Hall DeKalb County Board of Commissioners CEO Burrell Ellis Larry Johnson Lee May Kathie Gannon Stan Watson (Commissioner Elect) Fulton County Board of Commissioners John Eaves Rockdale County Board of Commissioners Richard Oden, Chairman Georgia House of Representatives/Senators Margaret Kaiser Simone Bell Stacey Abrams Stephanie Stuckey Benefield Rahn Mayo Pam Stephenson Dee Hawkins Haigler



Georgia EPD Georgia Regional Transportation Authority Lou Walker Senior Center MARTA Elderly and Disabled Access Advisory	Nan Orrock Emanuel Jones Ronald Ramsey Vincent Fort US Rep. Hank Johnson US Rep. John Lewis
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Table 3-1: Potential Stakeholders (continued)

Planning Partners/Govt. Agencies	Elected Officials
Rockdale County SPLOST Committee Rockdale County Public Works	
Libraries	Schools
DeKalb County Gresham Scott Candler Flat Shoals Wesley Chapel Salem Panola Lithonia-Davidson Atlanta/Fulton County Mechanicsville Kirkwood East Atlanta	DeKalb County Schools Atlanta Public Schools Rockdale County Schools Everest Institute – Decatur Campus Georgia Perimeter College Strayer University Gupton Jones Mortuary School
Business/Neighborhood/Community Groups	Print/Media Outlets
Cadillac Fairview LLC Greater Lithonia Chamber DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce DeKalb County Civic Coalition DeKalb Medical Center at Hillandale East Lake Family YMCA East Atlanta Community Association Emerald North Homeowners Association Fairington Commons Homeowner Association Glenwood Park Condo Association Glenwood Park Neighborhood Association Grant Park Neighborhood Association Hidden Hills Civic Association Kirkwood Neighbors Organization Lithonia Neighborhood Coalition Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce North Ormewood Park Panola Industrial Park Rainbow Creek Homeowners Association South DeKalb Business Association South DeKalb Mall South DeKalb Neighborhood Coalition South DeKalb Senior Center Spring Valley Neighborhood Association The Mall at Stonecrest Mall Wesley Chapel Overlay Coalition Windsor Meade Homeowners Association	Atlanta Journal Constitution DeKalb Neighbor The Champion Creative Loafing Fulton County Daily Report Atlanta Daily World Atlanta Business Chronicle Decatur Dispatch Decatur Focus Crossroads News Front Porch Press WABE
	Churches
	Big Miller Grove Baptist Church Cathedral of the Holy Spirit at Chapel Hill Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church Green Pastures Christian Ministries Greater Traveler’s Rest Baptist Church Greenforest Baptist Church New Birth Missionary Baptist Church New Life Baptist Church New Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church Ray of Hope Christian Church St. Phillips AME Church Salem Baptist Church Wesley Chapel UMC, Inc.



3.1 Public Involvement Plan Goals

The primary goals of the public involvement for this study are:

- **To educate the different groups on the federal process and the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 (HB277) Process.** This process will serve as an excellent opportunity to educate the public on the federal process for funding of projects (New Starts) as well as the environmental coordination (NEPA). Additionally, the public will learn of the House Bill 277 and how it provides a funding mechanism for transportation projects as well as an excellent opportunity for local governments to maximize their assets and spur economic development and competitiveness.
- **To consult with local officials, agency representatives and staff to gather their ideas for transportation solutions.** This process will rely heavily upon the knowledge and experience of local officials, agency representatives and staff. It is recognized that these individuals who interact with the community on a regular basis will be a key source of information and insight.
- **To consult with community stakeholders and gather their ideas for issue identification and the creation of solutions.** This process is an opportunity for the community to voice their concerns and opinions about the current state of transportation in the study area. Coordination with primary users and residents will provide invaluable insight to this process.
- **To inform and involve the public throughout the process.** Public involvement tools will be utilized to: 1) educate, 2) listen to, and 3) learn from the public early and often throughout the project schedule. The success of this planning process depends on the cooperation and support of the public. It is our goal to ensure that anyone affected by transportation in the study area has an opportunity to provide input at key technical milestones during the Plan's development.



4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TECHNIQUES

A variety of public involvement techniques are anticipated in this PIP. The PIP, however, is a living document. Periodically, the techniques utilized will be evaluated and revised, if needed, to more effectively reach out to the public.

4.1 Stakeholder Identification and Interviews

A stakeholder interview is a one-on-one discussion with an individual recognized as a community leader, elected or appointed official, agency staff member and/or neighborhood activist from across the region. For this effort, the study team conducted stakeholder interviews with nearly 40 representatives from various organizations, businesses, churches and homeowner associations and local elected officials. Held during May, June, July, and August 2010, these interviews were consistent in a format that utilized a prepared questionnaire that included a range of discussion points. The process is ongoing throughout the study and will be updated to reflect additional participants from businesses, homeowner associations and organizations.

Deliverable: Stakeholder Interview Report

4.2 Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Following the aforementioned stakeholder interviews, a subset of stakeholders was appointed by MARTA to comprise the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC). The committee met on September 9, 2010 and December 9, 2010 and may meet up to four additional times at key study milestones to provide input at key milestones in the I-20 East Transit Initiative process.

The Project Manager and members of the Public Involvement (PI) Team, along with other appropriate members of the project team, depending on the information to be presented, will participate by attending and documenting the SAC meetings.

The purpose of the SAC is multi-faceted:

- Allows MARTA to build partnerships and share information with its major planning partners and stakeholders. The SAC provides a continuing forum for direct input into the planning process and is a known opportunity for people to participate. It is a forum of education, exchange, understanding, questioning and clarification.
- Acts at the punctuation points of the technical planning process. By meeting at key project milestones, SAC meetings will serve as a check and balance on plan development in terms of political consensus and meeting the diverse needs of a broad-based constituency.

Prior to each committee meeting a detailed agenda will be developed as part of a working facilitation plan. Meetings will emphasize consensus building during the development of system alternatives and evaluation phase.

DCA Phase

- SAC Kickoff Meeting (September 9, 2010) – This meeting consisted of an overview and background of project, role of SAC, initial study findings, review and discussion of identified transportation needs within corridor. Also, times, locations, and purpose of the 1st public meeting were discussed along with a



discussion/confirmation of the project Purpose and Need and input needed for the study goals and objectives.

- SAC Meeting #2 (December 9, 2010) – This meeting consisted of a review/confirmation of study goals and objectives, review the findings of the 1st public meeting, discussion of the evaluation framework, and input on initial study alternatives (technologies, station locations, alignments).
- SAC Meeting #3 (January 2011) – Review/confirm final alternatives for evaluation (technologies, station locations, alignments), discuss times, locations, and purpose of the 2nd public meeting
- SAC Meeting #4 (March 2011) – Provide results of Alternatives Analysis, input from 2nd public meeting, and recommendation for LPA.

DEIS Phase

- SAC Meeting #5 (June 2011) – Overview of DCA findings and LPA, discussion of alternatives to be studied in DEIS (no-build, baseline, LPA), findings of scoping meetings, findings of Affected Environment (Existing Conditions) chapter of DEIS.
- SAC Meeting #6 (October 2011) – Findings of DEIS analysis and recommendation for preferred alternative to be presented at Public Hearing.

All meetings will be conducted as facilitated workshops and will include technical presentations as appropriate. On occasion, the committees will be requested to brainstorm and discuss findings and recommendations.

Deliverables: SAC Meeting Summaries

4.3 Technical Advisory Committee

During the development of the PIP, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was identified through the previous efforts and coordination with MARTA, FTA, GDOT, ARC and other regional agencies that may be identified through this process. The TAC will be utilized throughout the study to ensure technical proficiency during the process. There have been two meetings so far, October 7, 2010 and December 14, 2010 with the possibility of having two additional meetings.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was developed to guide the project team on key technical components of the study, ensuring technical proficiency during the process. The TAC has been instrumental in conducting interagency coordination, utilizing the collective expertise of this committee to develop and analyze study alternatives. The TAC has allowed planning partners an early opportunity to provide input and weigh in on study issues and solutions .

DCA Phase

- TAC Kickoff Meeting (October 7, 2010) – This meeting consisted of an overview and background of project, role of TAC, initial study findings, a review and discussion of identified transportation needs within corridor, a discussion of times, locations, and purpose of the 1st public meeting, a discussion/confirmation of project Purpose and Need, and input into study goals and objectives.
- TAC Meeting #2 (December 14, 2010) – This meeting consisted of a review/confirmation of study goals and objectives, a review of the findings of the



1st public meeting, a discussion of the evaluation framework, and input on initial study alternatives (technologies, station locations, alignments).

- TAC Meeting #3 (January 2011) – Review/confirm final alternatives for evaluation (technologies, station locations, alignments), discuss times, locations, and purpose of the 2nd public meeting.
- TAC Meeting #4 (March 2011) – Provide results of Alternatives Analysis, input from 2nd public meeting, and recommendation for LPA.

DEIS Phase

- TAC Meeting #5 (June 2011) – Overview of DCA findings and LPA, discussion of alternatives to be studied in DEIS (no-build, baseline, LPA), findings of scoping meetings, findings of Affected Environment (Existing Conditions) chapter of DEIS.
- TAC Meeting #6 (October 2011) – Findings of DEIS analysis and recommendation for preferred alternative to be presented at Public Hearing.

Though participation has not yet been confirmed, it is anticipated that the following agencies and associated staff will be asked to participate as members of the Technical Advisory Committee. Since this project consists of two distinct phases, the TAC for the DEIS will include significantly more agencies than the TAC for the DCA. **Table 4-1** presents the list of agencies that are likely to be involved in DEIS. As noted, DCA TAC members will be asked to remain on the DEIS TAC. These agencies include:

- Atlanta Regional Commission
- City of Atlanta
- DeKalb County Public Works
- DeKalb County Planning
- DeKalb County Transportation
- Fulton County
- Rockdale County
- GDOT Urban Design
- Georgia DOT Planning
- Georgia DOT Intermodal
- FHWA
- Georgia EPD
- US EPA
- US FTA
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
- MARTA Engineering
- MARTA Transit Oriented Development
- MARTA Architecture
- MARTA External Affairs
- MARTA Transit System Planning
- MARTA Operations



Table 4-1: Proposed TAC Membership for DEIS Phase

Agency	Type of Agency	Type of Participation
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Federal	Cooperating
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Federal	Cooperating
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Federal	Cooperating
U.S. Department of the Interior/ National Park Service	Federal	Cooperating
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Federal	Cooperating
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fisheries Service	Federal	Cooperating
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Regional Office of Environment	Federal	Cooperating
National Center for Environmental Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Federal	Participating
U.S. Geologic Survey, Environmental Affairs Program	Federal	Participating
Federal Emergency Management Agency - Mitigation Division	Federal	Participating
Federal Railroad Administration	Federal	Participating
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	Federal	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Office of the Commissioner	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division (SHPO)	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Floodplain Management Office	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) – Planning	State	Participating
Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) – Intermodal	State	Participating
Georgia Forestry Commission	State	Participating
Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA)	State	Participating
Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA)	State	Participating
Georgia Natural Heritage Program	State	Participating
Georgia Regional Transportation Authority	State	Participating
Atlanta Regional Commission	Regional	Participating
DeKalb County Community Development Department	Local	Participating



Table 4-1: Proposed TAC Membership for DEIS Phase (Continued)

DeKalb County Public Works Department	Local	Participating
DeKalb County School System	Local	Participating
DeKalb County Planning and Development Department	Local	Participating
City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development	Local	Participating
Atlanta Development Authority	Local	Participating
Atlanta Housing Authority	Local	Participating
Atlanta Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs	Local	Participating
City of Atlanta Public Works Department	Local	Participating
Atlanta Public Schools	Local	Participating
City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management	Local	Participating
City of Lithonia	Local	Participating
Rockdale County Department of General Services and Engineering	Local	Participating
Rockdale County Public Schools	Local	Participating
City of Conyers Public Works and Transportation Department	Local	Participating
City of Conyers Economic Development Department	Local	Participating
City of Decatur Public Works Department	Local	Participating
City of Decatur Planning, Zoning and Inspections Department	Local	Participating
City of Decatur Community and Economic Development Department	Local	Participating
City Schools of Decatur	Local	Participating

"Cooperating agency" is defined in NEPA regulation and "participating agency" is defined in 23 U.S.C. 139(d). According to CEQ regulation (40 CFR 1508.5), "cooperating agency" means any Federal agency, other than a lead agency, that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project or project alternative. A State or local agency of similar qualifications or, when the effects are on lands of tribal interest, a Native American tribe may, by agreement with the lead agencies, also become a cooperating agency.

Participating agencies, as defined by SAFETEA-LU, are those with an interest in the project. The standard for participating agency status is more encompassing than the standard for cooperating agency status described above. Therefore, cooperating agencies are, by definition, participating agencies. But not all participating agencies are cooperating agencies. The lead agencies should consider the distinctions in deciding whether to invite an agency to serve as a cooperating/participating agency or only as a participating agency.

The roles and responsibilities of cooperating and participating agencies are similar, but cooperating agencies have a higher degree of authority, responsibility, and involvement in the environmental review process. A distinguishing feature of a cooperating agency is that the CEQ regulations (40 CFR Section 1501.6) permit a cooperating agency to "assume on request of the lead agency responsibility for developing information and preparing environmental analyses including portions of the environmental impact statement concerning which the cooperating agency has special expertise." An additional distinction is that, pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.3, "a cooperating agency may adopt without recirculation of the environmental impact statement of a lead agency when, after an



independent review of the statement, the cooperating agency concludes that its comments and suggestions have been satisfied." This provision is particularly important to permitting agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who, as cooperating agencies, routinely adopt USDOT environmental documents.

Deliverables: TAC Meeting Summaries

4.4 Public Meetings

A series of public meeting opportunities are scheduled at key milestones throughout the I-20 East Transit Initiative. A combination of traditional open house events and workshops will be utilized as appropriate in order to get the most out of each opportunity. Each round of public meetings will be held at three locations along the study corridor to ensure convenient access for residents and businesses along the 20 mile corridor. Public meetings are proposed as follows:

DCA Phase

- Public Meeting #1 (October 2010) – For this initial round of public meetings, the study team provided an introduction, overview, and background of the project, presented initial study findings, solicited input on the transportation needs within the corridor, presented initial project Purpose and Need, and solicited input into study goals and objectives. There were three meetings held for this round at the following locations:
 - Tuesday, October 26, 2010
DeKalb Medical Center Hillandale – Community Room
2801 DeKalb Medical Parkway
Lithonia, GA 30058

 - Wednesday, October 27, 2010
East Lake YMCA Community Room
275 East Lake Boulevard
Atlanta, GA 30317

 - Thursday October 28, 2010
South DeKalb Mall Community Room
2801 Candler Road
Decatur, GA 30034
- Public Meeting #2 (March/April 2011) – Present the findings of the Alternatives Analysis and recommendation for LPA.

DEIS Phase



- Scoping Meeting (June 2011) - Overview of DCA findings and LPA, present alternatives to be studied in DEIS (no-build, baseline, LPA), solicit input regarding natural, social, cultural, and physical environment within the corridor.
- Public Hearing (December 2011) – Present findings of and solicit input on the DEIS and preferred alternative. All public meetings will be advertised to the public through newspaper display ads, email blasts, coordination with the SAC and TAC, Facebook posts and coordination with the ARC's Public Involvement Advisory Group, in addition to other methods.

Informational boards and/or posters can also be developed and placed in locations where people frequently visit along the corridor such as libraries, senior center, and government buildings. Boards/posters will include project information such as the study's website, purpose/objectives, and details on how the public can become informed and involved in the project. Public meetings will also provide residents and businesses with an opportunity to ask questions to members of the project team. Comment forms will be provided at the meetings to generate feedback on specific project-related issues.

Deliverables: Public Meeting Summaries



4.5 Web Page and Social Media

The project team will develop a project web page that will be published as part of the MARTA web site. The web page will be used to update the public on public meetings and the progress of the project; provide visual images of the technologies being considered, proposed alignments, proposed station area plans; and provide a means for the public to provide input or submit inquiries regarding the project. Additionally, a presence on Facebook and use of other technologies will be established, whether through an active or passive effort, depending on the level of comfort of the client.

4.6 Newsletters, Fact Sheets, and Other Outreach Materials

Newsletters, fact sheets and visual presentations are essential public information materials that will provide straightforward information to the public about the I-20 East Transit Initiative. The newsletters will contain up-to-date project information allowing the reader to follow the technical steps of the study and to understand how decisions are being made. The newsletters will be written in a clear, concise, and user-friendly format and will be widely distributed to the study mailing list. The newsletters will contain information on what to do to respond, comment, get more involved, or get on the mailing list for the I-20 East Transit Initiative. Renderings, simplified diagrams and other visual tools may be included in the newsletters to communicate the various alternatives under consideration. The target audience of the newsletters is the broader public and goes beyond those who attend public meetings. Ultimately, the newsletters will demonstrate that MARTA understands and values communication with the public. Newsletters will be published to coincide with key milestones:

- Newsletter #1 – Introduces the project; bridges information from previous studies to the I-20 East Transit Initiative; presents schedule and outreach activities
- Newsletter #2 – Presents the DCA Alternatives and public input received to date. Also notifies the public of upcoming activities.
- Newsletter #3 – Presents LPA and informs the public of the upcoming Scoping Meetings and describes the DEIS process and schedule.
- Newsletter #4 – Presents the initial findings of the DEIS and informs the public of the upcoming Public Hearing.

Other brochures and fact sheets will be prepared as necessary to support public involvement and education needs. A stakeholder contact database of mailing addresses, email addresses, and electronic list serves will be maintained as the primary list for the distribution materials.

4.7 Other Public Outreach Efforts

Throughout the course of the study, members of the project team will be available to participate and conduct speakers bureau activities, set up kiosks, and visit various interested groups within the study area which could include churches, business associations, community groups, events at local shopping malls, etc. All outreach effort presentations and the information presented will be approved by MARTA. It is assumed that a maximum of six engagements will be conducted throughout the course of the project.

Deliverables: Outreach Effort Documentation



4.8 Environmental Justice Outreach Strategies

The I-20 East Transit Initiative public involvement plan includes an Environmental Justice program that is designed to build and sustain meaningful participation for all stakeholders. Specifically, the technical approach will include:

- Coordination with area organizations that represent the interests of environmental justice populations of concern, including the ARC Environmental Justice Planning Team, the DeKalb Branch of the NAACP, and the Metropolitan Atlanta Transportation Equity Coalition (MATEC);
- Distribution of project information via minority publications, faith organizations, schools, social and community organizations;
- Translation services to ensure suitable communication (if necessary);
- Benefits and Burdens Analysis of the LPA; and
- Accessible formats to ensure appropriate communication media for the disabled.

4.9 Final Public Involvement Report

At the completion of the I-20 East Transit Initiative, the AECOM/Jacobs Team will submit to MARTA a report documenting all public outreach activities and input received from community leaders, SAC/TAC members, other interested parties, and the general public. The report will include an executive summary, overview of the project and public involvement strategies, implementation methods, findings and recommendations gathered from public outreach efforts. The report will include an appendix of all public outreach materials (i.e., fact sheets, notices, and public comments, correspondence) and supporting materials from all meetings and hearings.

Deliverable: Public Involvement Report



5.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TEAM AND EVALUATION

The roles and responsibilities for the public involvement program are shared between MARTA, Jacobs, and Sycamore Consulting, Inc., while the day-to-day activities will be conducted by Sycamore, PEQ and Jacobs. Coordination between the project consultant team and MARTA, as well as their government and/or community affairs departments will be key to the success of the public engagement plan.

Table 5-1 outlines the major public involvement tasks and team members responsible for development and implementation of these tasks and the key performance measures that will define success. It should be noted that other members of the study team, based on the technical nature of the information being presented, will also participate in public involvement activities. At the completion of each milestone or task, the study team will evaluate the success of each task based on the plan performances listed below. Based on plan performance, existing communication and outreach techniques may be modified and new techniques added to ensure plan success. Thus, any modification to the PIP will be approved by MARTA.

Table 5-1: Public Involvement Responsibilities

Task	Team	Evaluation Measures
Project Branding	MARTA, Jacobs	None
Stakeholder Interviews	MARTA, Jacobs, Sycamore, PEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of interviews Stakeholder feedback
Corridor Database/Mailing List	MARTA, Sycamore, Jacobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of contacts Number of mailings
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)	Sycamore, PEQ, Jacobs, MARTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants Number of meetings SAC feedback
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	Sycamore, PEQ, Jacobs, MARTA,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants Number of meetings TAC feedback
Public Meetings	Sycamore, PEQ, Jacobs, MARTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of meetings Number of attendees Number of comment Number of responses
Project Website	Jacobs, MARTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of hits Number of comments received Number comment responses
Newsletters	MARTA, Jacobs, Sycamore, PEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of newsletters distributed
Social Media	MARTA, Sycamore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Friends/followers Number of updates Number of comments
Final Public Involvement Report	MARTA, Sycamore	None