



# More MARTA Public Engagement Summary:

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May – August 2018



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# 1. More MARTA Public Engagement Summary: May – August 2018

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Since the November 2016 passage of the More MARTA Atlanta sales tax, MARTA staff has been working collaboratively with the city of Atlanta to develop a program of projects to expand and enhance MARTA service in the city. A proposed project list was presented to the MARTA Board of Directors on May 3, 2018. The proposed More MARTA Atlanta program includes 15 new transit projects, improvements to transit stations and increases in frequency and span of MARTA fixed route bus service<sup>1</sup>. The proposed More MARTA Atlanta program was culled from a larger list of 73 projects that had a total budgeted cost of \$11.5 billion. The revised program proposes to spend \$2.5 billion, which aligns with the 40-year forecasted revenue of the sales tax approved in November 2016.

The More MARTA team has been actively conducting community engagement activities since late May to receive valuable public input on the proposed project list. This is MARTA's third round of public engagement for More MARTA Atlanta since 2016. The purpose of this public engagement process was to communicate the spectrum of project options under consideration, review those options with the public and stakeholders, and assess public opinion about the proposed program.

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the public input received between May 3, 2018 and August 31, 2018, offer an analysis of the public input results, and recommend refinements for a final project list for consideration and approval by the MARTA Board.

## 1.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The More MARTA Atlanta proposed project list, introduced to the public in May 2018, was developed through technical analysis and public input as described in the *More MARTA Atlanta, Summary of Technical Analysis*.<sup>2</sup>

The public input process conducted by the More MARTA team between May 26, 2018, and Aug. 31, 2018, serves to provide MARTA and the Board confidence in directing the More MARTA Atlanta sales tax spending. This period of public input on the proposed project list is part of an overarching More MARTA Outreach Strategy.

The goal of the More MARTA Outreach Strategy is to educate city of Atlanta residents on the proposed project list, possible modes of transportation and other pertinent details. Additionally, the strategy includes engaging a cross-section of city of Atlanta residents and key stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the More MARTA Atlanta program. Ultimately, the project team seeks to obtain informed input on the proposed project list to best serve the community.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.itsmarta.com/uploadedFiles/MARTA\\_101/Why\\_MARTA/Moremarta/Expansion%20Scenarios%20062718-tabloid-for%20web.pdf](https://www.itsmarta.com/uploadedFiles/MARTA_101/Why_MARTA/Moremarta/Expansion%20Scenarios%20062718-tabloid-for%20web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.itsmarta.com/uploadedFiles/MARTA\\_101/Why\\_MARTA/Moremarta/More%20MARTA%20Atlanta%20Technical%20Summary%20\(appendices%20included\).pdf](https://www.itsmarta.com/uploadedFiles/MARTA_101/Why_MARTA/Moremarta/More%20MARTA%20Atlanta%20Technical%20Summary%20(appendices%20included).pdf)

The public input phase helped MARTA:

- Evaluate whether the proposed projects would meet the transportation needs of City of Atlanta residents;
- Assess support for the proposed projects;
- Assess effectiveness of the proposed projects' fulfillment of the Guiding Principles (Exhibit 1.1) approved by the city of Atlanta and MARTA; and
- Identify opportunities for refinements to projects to address public input and meet the Guiding Principles.

## EXHIBIT 1.1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

	Balance portfolio of transit projects using multiple transportation modes.
	Increase mobility for workers to and from major job centers.
	Enhance commute predictability with dedicated and managed lanes, and other technology.
	Create a layered, integrated transportation network.
	Prioritize city investments while integrating into regional transit networks.
	Enhance safety and access to transit centers and MARTA stations.
	Enhance ease of use and transfers within the network of transit options.
	Create last-mile connectivity via circulators, multi-use paths, and sidewalks.
	Partner with neighboring jurisdictions to leverage transit projects.

The process was structured to ensure direct, authentic engagement to “meet people where they are,” listen to understand, share information about the projects and collect input in a consistent manner. The More MARTA Atlanta Outreach Strategy engages at multiple levels and through various mediums to reach a diverse mix of stakeholders. The team leveraged the outreach map (Exhibit 1.2) to collect public input on the proposed More MARTA program.

## EXHIBIT 1.2: OUTREACH MAP



The More MARTA Atlanta team used a survey as the primary tool for collecting public input. The survey was available online at <https://www.itsmarta.com/moremarta.aspx>, between May 26, 2018 and August 31, 2018. In addition, the team offered the survey via electronic tablets and paper at public meetings, community forums, community festivals and events, and farmers markets. The survey was made available in several different languages. The team also promoted the program at Neighborhood Planning Unit meetings and various neighborhood meetings and delivered presentations to stakeholder groups and in public speaking engagements conducted by MARTA staff and employees. Furthermore, the public engagement team executed a “blitz,” with two days of intensive outreach at high-volume MARTA stations in the city of Atlanta. Information about the proposed program and direction to the survey was distributed via various social media platforms and through proactive communications with news media organizations.

MARTA established an email address ([MoreMARTA\\_atlanta@itsmarta.com](mailto:MoreMARTA_atlanta@itsmarta.com)) and phone number (404.848.4135) specifically to provide communications options for those uncomfortable with completing the survey online. This email and phone number are still active and open for continued stakeholder engagement.

The survey was driven by individual desires and preferences to complete. Survey respondents were not asked to provide race, ethnicity or age, and the survey was not intended to be statistically representative of the city of Atlanta. Respondents were asked to provide location information. The results show that 57% of respondents live in Fulton County, 41% live in DeKalb and 2% live in Clayton. Of the 7,024 surveys completed, 5,240 (74.6%) identified themselves as residents of the City of Atlanta.



### EXHIBIT 1.3: MORE MARTA OUTREACH MAY 3, 2018 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2018

The communications program for More MARTA Atlanta will continue as a part of the ongoing communications strategy of the Authority, beyond the Board's adoption of the final projects and will utilize a variety of methods to ensure diverse, comprehensive and effective engagement.

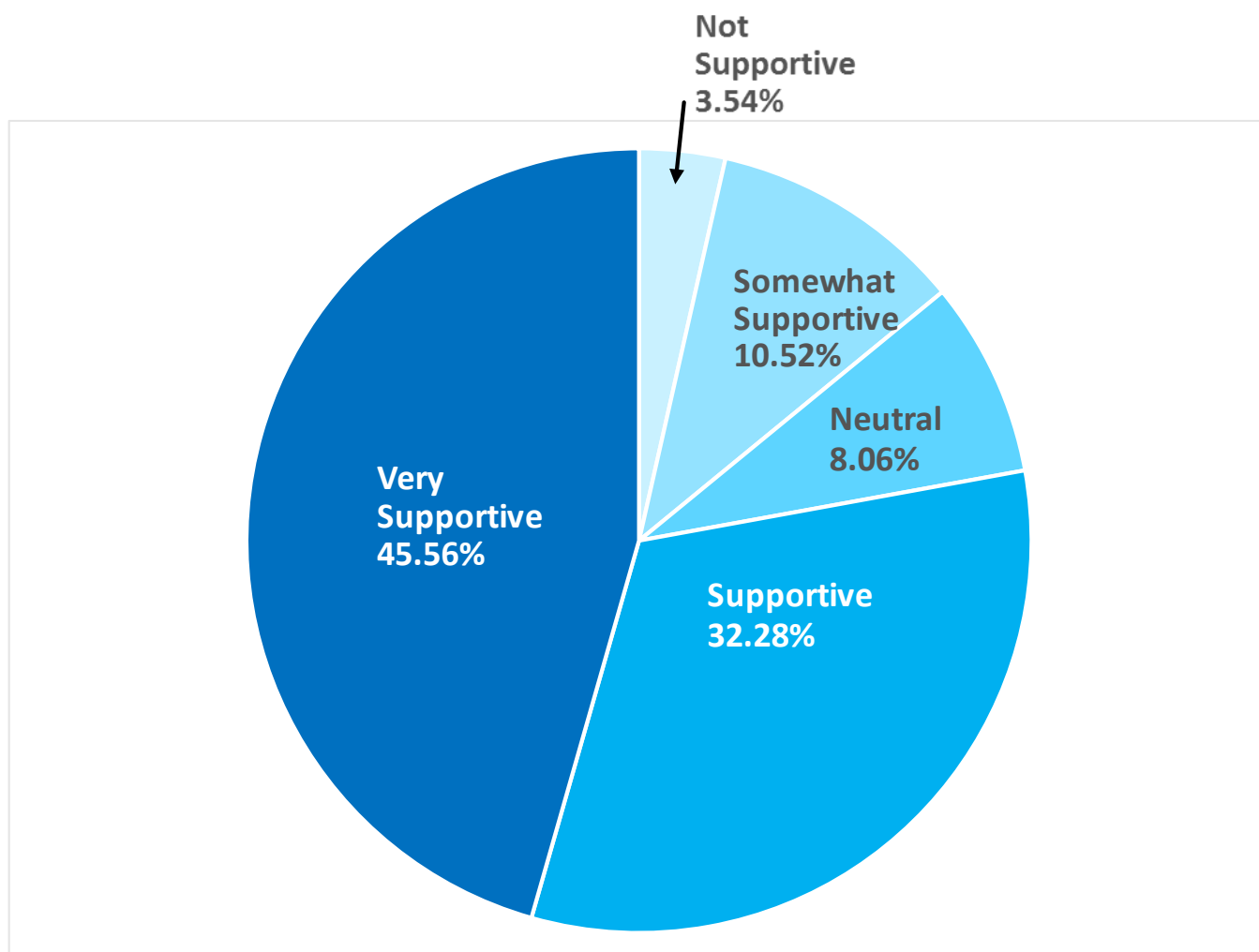
## WHAT DID WE HEAR?

Throughout the engagement process, the survey results were compiled and analyzed by the project team. Every survey response and open-ended answer to the questions was considered in the analysis and the reported results will be used to identify major themes that provide insight the recommendation to the MARTA Board. The totals for survey responses are found in Appendix A, and the compilation of the open responses to the survey is in Appendix B.

Distinctions between the totality of survey respondents and those identifying as being from Atlanta are noted. There are five primary takeaways from the public input received:

1. More than 75% of survey respondents are supportive or very supportive of the proposed More MARTA Atlanta projects (Exhibit 1.4). Greater than 75% support from City of Atlanta respondents; greater than 77% of total survey responses.

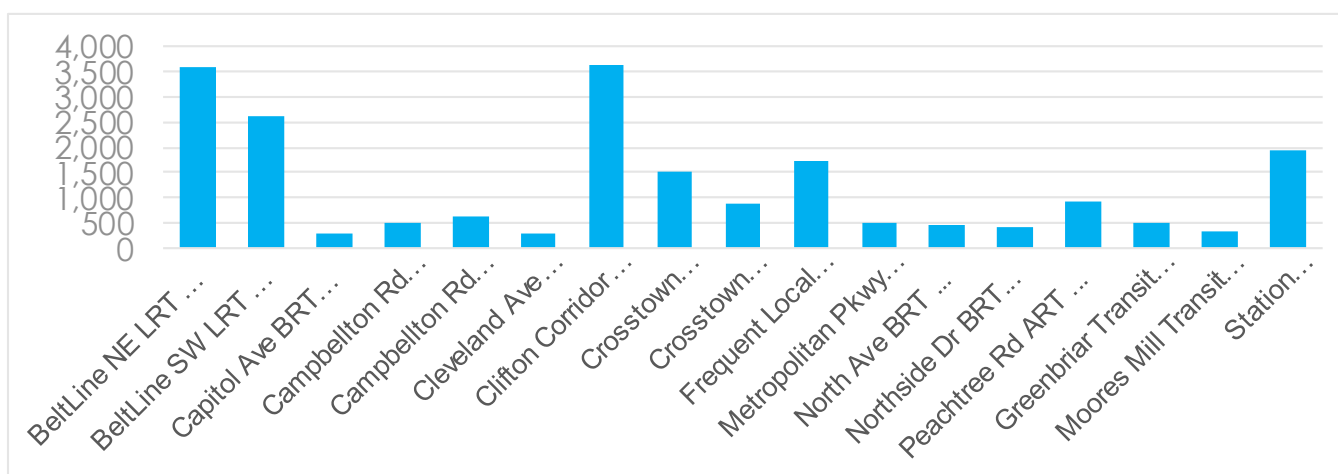
### EXHIBIT 1.4: PERCENT OF TOTAL SURVEY RESPONDENTS SUPPORT OF PROPOSED MORE MARTA ATLANTA PROJECTS



These results indicate an overall positive support of the plan and the proposed project list.

- Based on the project rankings and comments received in the open responses, there is a strong constituency that believes More MARTA revenue should be used to build rail on the entire BeltLine.
- Survey respondents' top project preferences in the proposed program are segments of the BeltLine and Clifton Corridor. Additionally, there is consistent, strong support for increased investments in frequency and span of local bus service and station improvements (Exhibit 1.5).

### EXHIBIT 1.5: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' TOP 3 PRIORITY PROJECTS

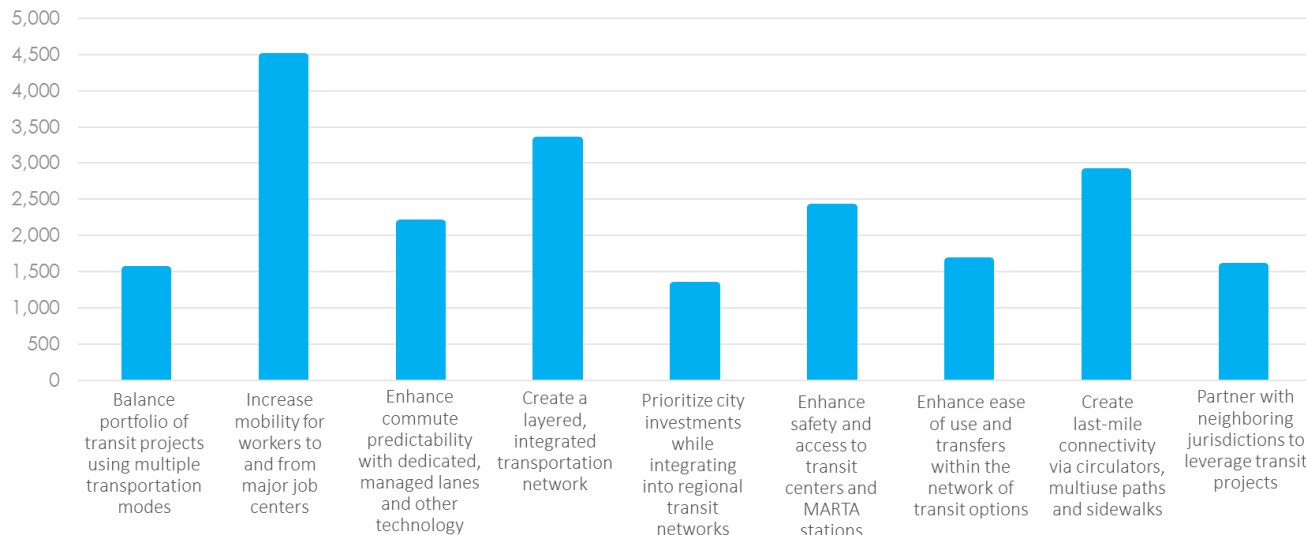


### EXHIBIT 1.6: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' TOP 5 PRIORITY PROJECTS BY ATLANTA AND TOTAL SURVEY RESPONSES

Atlanta Survey Respondents		Total of Survey Respondents	
Percent of Count	Project Name	Percent of Count	Project Name
53.40%	BeltLine Northeast LRT	51.35%	Clifton Corridor LRT
46.51%	Clifton Corridor LRT	50.85%	BeltLine Northeast LRT
40.32%	BeltLine Southwest LRT	37.02%	BeltLine Southwest LRT
25.34%	Station Improvements	27.53%	Station Improvements
23.03%	Frequent Local Bus Service	24.62%	Frequent Local Bus Service

- Survey respondents would like to see refinements to better serve southeast Atlanta and the northwest side.
- Survey respondents value transit investments that increase mobility to and from major employment centers; create a layered, integrated transportation network, and create last-mile connectivity with circulators, multi-use paths and sidewalks.

## EXHIBIT 1.7: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' RANKING OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES



### 1.2.1 Summary

Overall, survey respondents want more transit within the city of Atlanta. This aligns with the overwhelming approval of the ballot measure in 2016 and is a driving force in implementing the projects going forward.

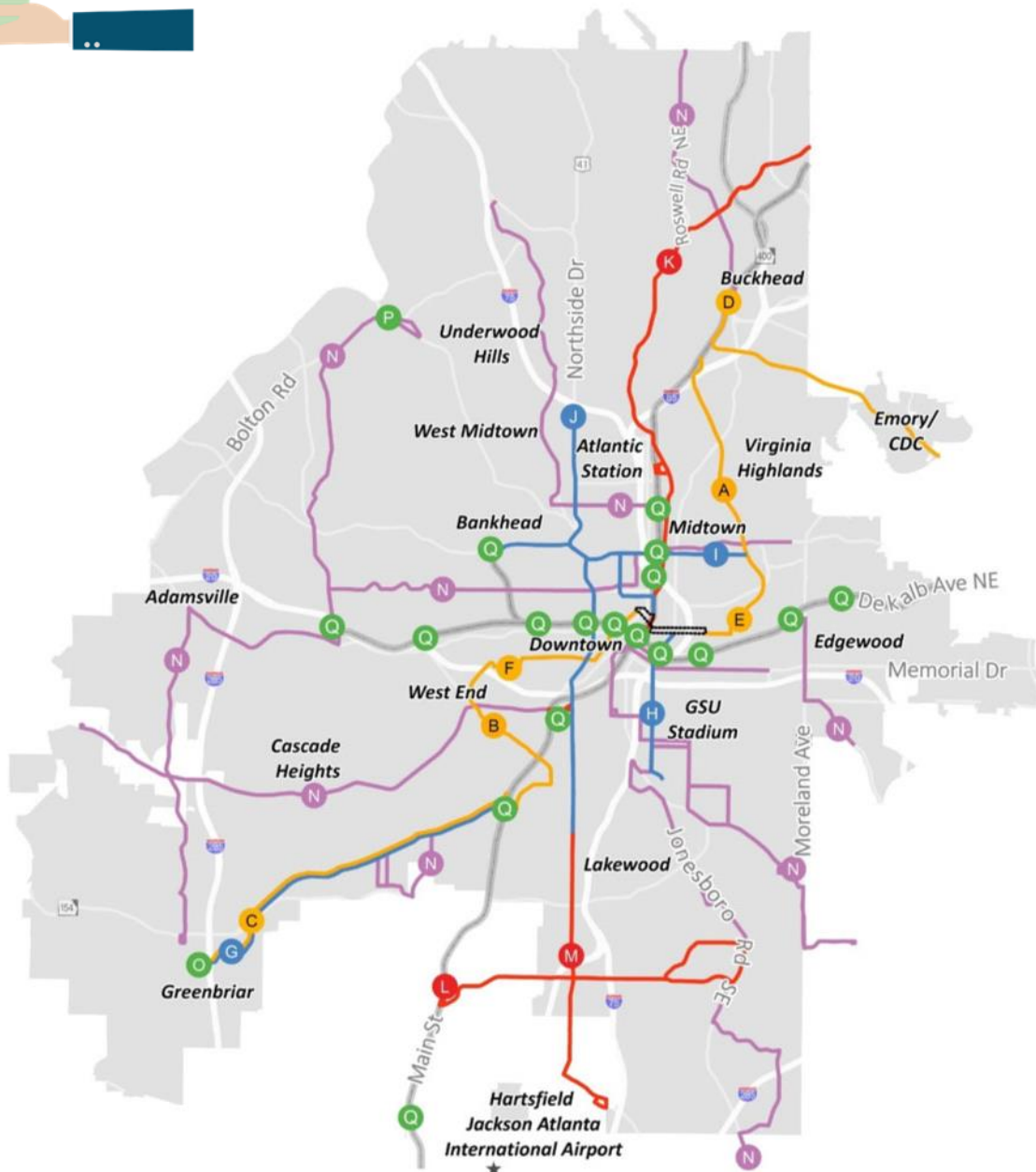
The survey found that people are supportive of the proposed More MARTA Atlanta program. They are supportive of different components of the plan and would like to see new transit services that serve their community.

The project team recognizes that funding availability will ultimately drive a specific list of projects, which have been selected based on an informed planning process.

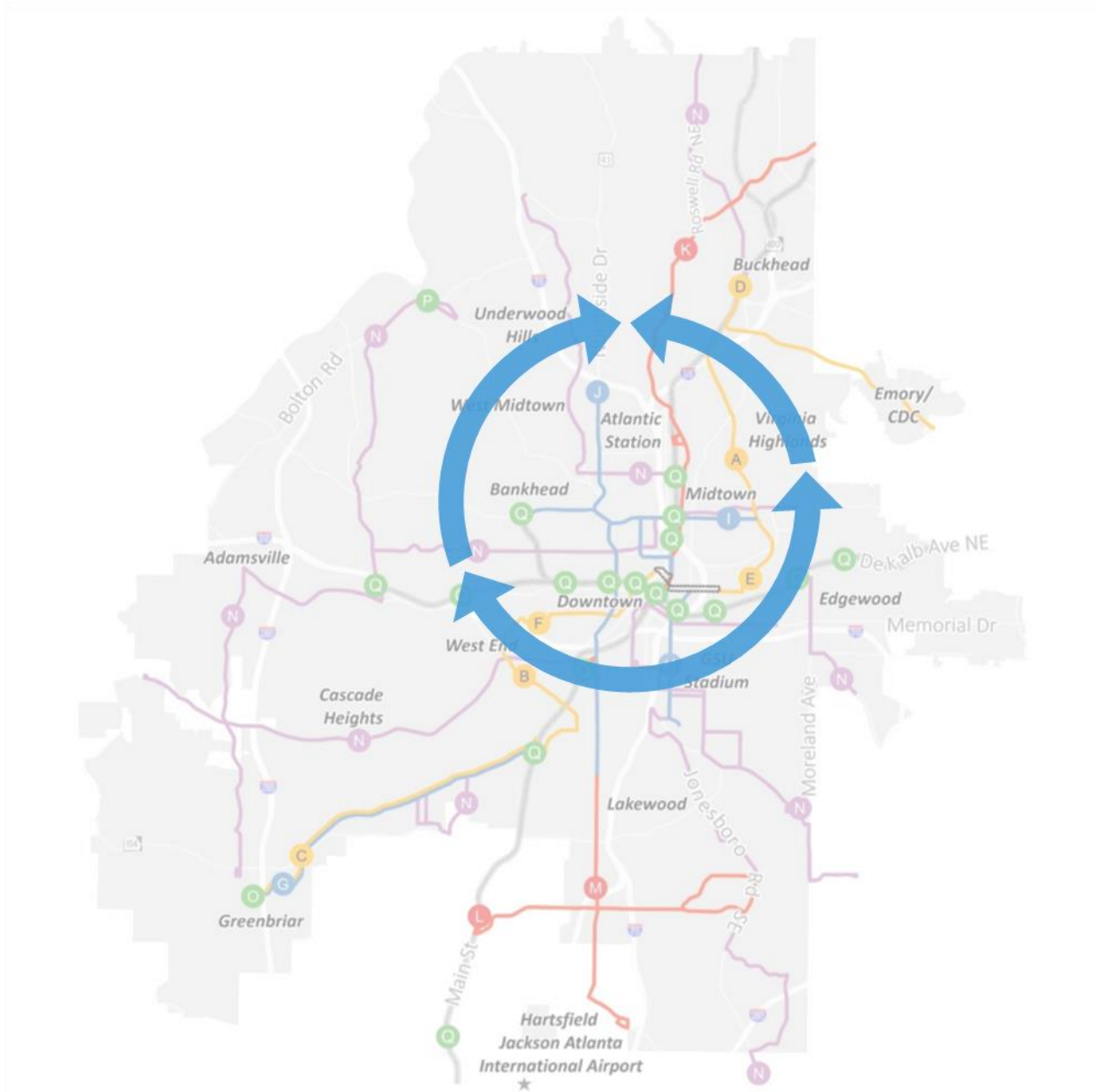
## SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the survey and public engagement culminate into four different concepts, or “big ideas.”

1. **Build more of everything from the original project list.** Make investments in the initial 70-plus project list, totaling more than \$11 Billion. The More MARTA Atlanta sales tax produces \$2.5 Billion. This idea requires identifying additional funding and expanding the focus of More MARTA beyond the proposed program.



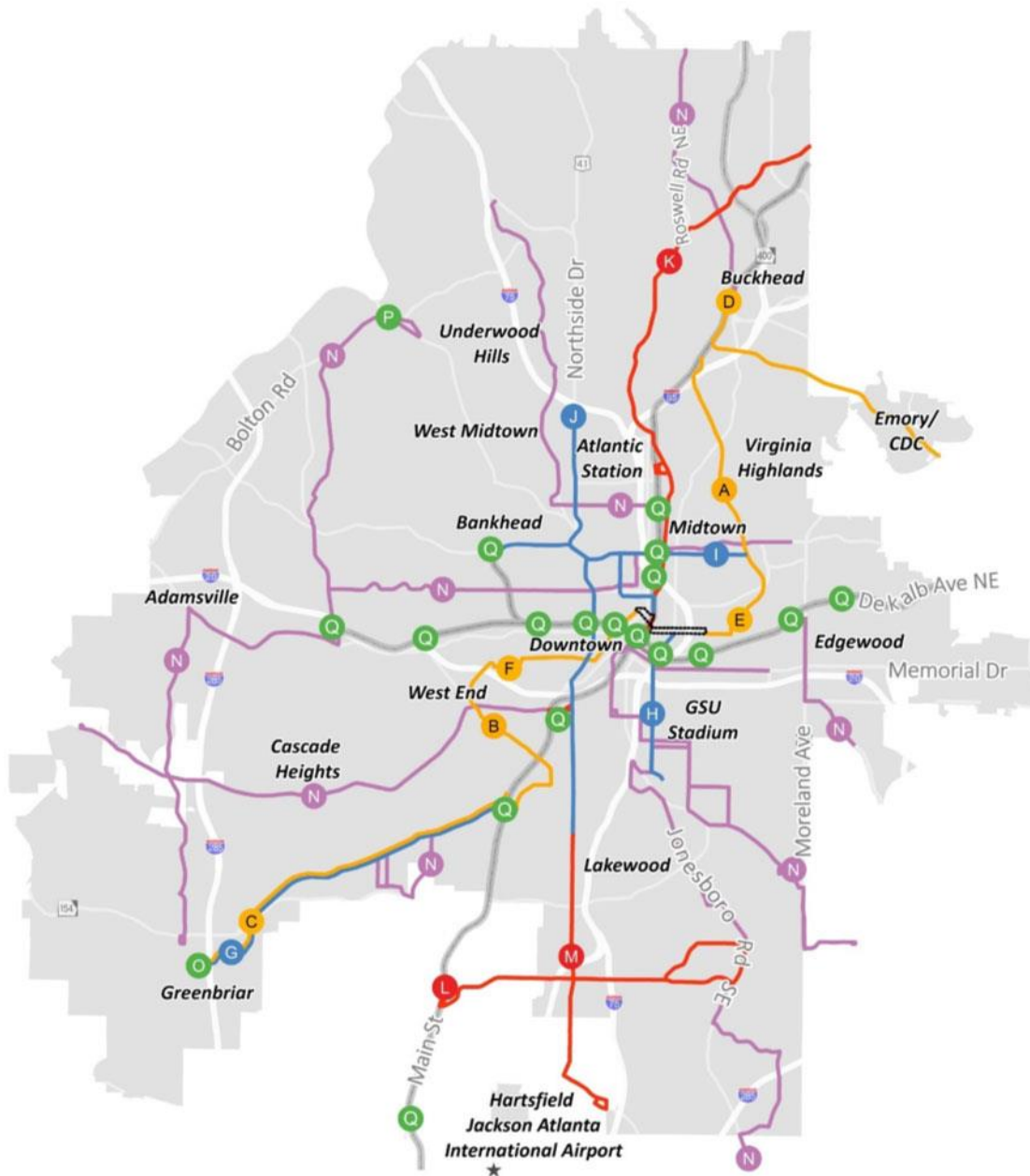
2. **Build all of the BeltLine.** Requires the vast majority of the More MARTA funding would go to the BeltLine, which is not supported by the survey results. This would prevent investment in any other proposed project.



3. **Build more of the BeltLine.** This requires reallocating funds from other projects, such as Campbellton Rd. BRT or Clifton LRT, to provide more miles of the BeltLine. Reducing funding from Clifton Corridor (local match) puts federal funding and overall project at risk.



4. **Refine the proposed project list.** More than 77% of survey respondents support the plan and its ability to meet their transportation needs. Implement one project on Campbellton Road and shift second project funds elsewhere. Some ideas include to improve services on the near northwest side with a Bankhead circulator, extending ART west of Bankhead, upgrade the Route 51 to ART, and additional station enhancements.



The “big ideas” will be carried forward until October 2018; the More MARTA project team will then make final recommendations to the MARTA Board.