Agenda & Introductions

- Introductions
- Environmental Study Process
- Overview of the BeltLine Project
- BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study
- Environmental Study Interface with Subarea Master Planning
- Evaluation Criteria
- Public Outreach Activities
Environmental Study Process
Environmental Study Process

- **Project Objectives:**
  - Environmental review of Northeast (NE) Zone under Georgia Environmental Policy Act (GEPA)
  - Right-of-way requirements identified for NE Zone
  - Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) completed under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for entire corridor
Environmental Study Process

NEPA Tiering

**Present**

**Tier 1 Analysis**
Address broad, overall corridor issues to define Right-of-Way needs:
- Transit and Trails Alignment
- Conceptual Design
- Mode Type (LRT, Streetcar)

**Future**

**Tier 2 Analysis**
Address:
- Site Specific Impacts
- Cost and Mitigation Measures
- Detailed Analysis
Environmental Study Process

Broad Overall Corridor Issues
- Develop evaluation measures
- Identify system-level impacts

Transit and Trail Alignment
- Refine alignments and station areas
- Identity facility locations

Conceptual Design
- Design transit and trails concepts
- Determine right-of-way preservation needs

Mode Type
- Identify service characteristics
- Analyze travel time impacts
Environmental Study Process

Phase 1
Project scoping and initiation of environmental review processes

Phase 2
Complete GEPA for NE Zone

Phase 3
Complete Tier 1 EIS for entire 22-mile corridor
Environmental Study Process

Decision Making Framework

- Scoping
- Coordinating
  - Technical Analysis
  - SAC***
  - TAC**
  - Study Groups
  - Citywide Briefings
  - Small group forums

- FTA Review

- ABI and MARTA
  Boards Approve Tier 1 FEIS

- MARTA submits
  Tier 1 FEIS to FTA

- FTA Tier 1
  Record of Decision (ROD)

- (Future) Tier 2
  Environmental Studies

- Develop Tier 1
  Final EIS (FEIS)*

- Refine DEIS;
  Append public comments & responses

* FTA Administrative Reviews
** Technical Advisory Committee
*** Stakeholder Advisory Committee (includes TADAC)
Environmental Study Process

Accomplishments

- Scoping Meetings and Scoping Summary Report
- Refined Purpose and Need and Goals and Objectives
- Northeast Zone Screening Assessment
- Existing Conditions Assessment
- Evaluation Methodology and Criteria Assessment
Environmental Study Process

Right-of-Way Preservation:
- Map existing conditions
- Develop typical sections for transit and trail components
- Align routes along existing railroad corridor and streets
- Identify additional right-of-way needs
Environmental Study Process

Conceptual Design

- Provide design sufficient to identify potential environmental effects of project

- Develop conceptual “footprint” of project to determine right-of-way preservation
Basic System Components:
- Multi-Use trail
  - 16-foot typical width
  - Connections to major streets, proposed transit stops, and other trails
  - Linear greenways and pocket parks parallel and adjacent to the trail
- Double-track transit alignment
  - Initial operating plan assumes LRT/Streetcar vehicles (8-10 minute headways)
  - Passenger stations: ¼ to ½ mile spacing
  - Storage and maintenance facility for vehicles
Environmental Study Process

Typical Minimum Section for Transit and Trail*

*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment
**Environmental Study Process**

Typical Minimum Section for Transit and Trail at Side Platform Station*

*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment*
Environmental Study Process

Varied Right-of-Way Dimensions
Example: between Highland Avenue and Ralph McGill Boulevard
Transit and Trail within Existing Right-of-Way
Example Cross-Section for Transit and Trail: Near Ralph McGill *

*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment
Overview of the BeltLine Project
BeltLine Project History

- 1999: Georgia Tech Thesis (Ryan Gravel)
- 2000: MARTA Inner Core Feasibility Study
- 2001: Trust for Public Land “Emerald Necklace” Study
- 2002: BeltLine Redevelopment Plan
- 2003: City of Atlanta - Tax Allocation District (TAD) Feasibility Study
- 2004: BeltLine Partnership established by the City of Atlanta
- 2005: Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) established under the Atlanta Development Authority
- 2006: BeltLine Five-Year Work Plan
- 2007: BeltLine Detailed Screening Analysis
BeltLine Project Purpose and Need

**Community Needs**
- Mobility
- Recreation
- Economic Development
- Workforce Housing
- Cultural Resources

**BeltLine Outcomes**
- Transit, Trails & Transportation
- Parks and Greenspace
- Transit Supportive Land Use
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Historic Preservation
Major BeltLine Accomplishments

- Initial Tax Allocation District (TAD) funding
- Master Plan preparation
- Key land parcel acquisition
- Parks and trails construction
The BeltLine is just one piece of a much larger regional transit plan, which includes:

- Heavy Rail
- Commuter Rail
- Light Rail / Street Car
- Express Bus
- Regional Bus
Environmental Study Goals

- Contribute to an integrated regional multi-modal transportation network that promotes seamless intermodal connectivity, increases community access to the existing transit and trails network and improves reliability of personal travel.

- Support local neighborhood preservation and regional land use initiatives, and fulfill emerging demand for transit-adjacent land development.
Environmental Study Goals

- Provide a cost-effective and efficient transportation investment.

- Provide a bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment.

- Provide transit, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between communities and existing and planned recreational opportunities.
- Minimize adverse impacts to the environment and foster positive environmental impacts.

- Ensure consideration of public input throughout project planning and development.
Four distinct zones defined by MARTA rail lines:
- Northeast
- Southeast
- Southwest
- Northwest
Environmental Study Outcomes

- Develop transit and trail alignment and connections
- Identify and preserve station location areas
- Document environmental impacts
- Refine capital and operating costs
- Determine transit service features
BeltLine Corridor Existing Conditions

- Socioeconomics
- Natural Environment
- Transportation
- Bicycle and Pedestrian
- Study of Related Plans and Efforts
BeltLine Corridor Existing Conditions

Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) forecasts:

- **Population**
  - 68,700 (2007)
  - 86,700 (2030 forecast)
  - Growth of 20%

- **Demographic**
  - 58% Minority
  - 21% Low income
  - 14% Transit-dependant
Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) forecast:

- Employment
  - 51,000 (2006)
  - 66,600 (2030 forecast)
  - Growth of 30%

- Serves 59 neighborhoods and over 60 community facilities
**BeltLine Corridor Existing Conditions**

- Floodplains of Peachtree, Proctor, Clear and Tanyard Creeks
- 21 streams and 8 bodies of water
- Over 230 contaminated and hazardous materials sites
- Connects more than 50 parks (400+ acres)

*Georgia Environmental Protection Agency, United States Geological Survey (USGS)*
BeltLine Corridor Existing Conditions

- Over 300 historic buildings/structures and 20 historic districts*

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*Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta Urban Design Commission
Within the BeltLine Study Area there are:
- 5 MARTA rail stations
- 56 MARTA bus routes
- 1 GRTA express bus route
- Several local shuttle buses

- Active and inactive freight rail
- About 14% use transit for work trips
- Approximately 50 bicycle routes planned
Environmental Study Interface with Subarea Master Planning
Environmental Study and Subarea Master Planning

Master Plans
- Parks / Greenspace
- Trail Alignment Alternatives
- Access Points / Transit and Trails
- Street Framework
- Historic Resources
- Development Patterns

EIS Process
- Conceptual Engineering
- Environmental Impact
- Transit and Trail Service Features
- Ridership
- Capital and Operating Cost

Outcome of EIS
- Corridor Design Alignment
- Station Location Areas
- Transit Alignment
- Trail Alignment
- Transit Characteristics
Environmental Study and Subarea Master Planning

Master Planning Provides:

- Basis for refining transit and trail alternatives and station areas
- Land use, open space, and transportation/circulation plans used in the impact analysis
- Information used to evaluate land use and transit-friendly design for project alternatives
Tier 1 Environmental Study Provides:

- Location of project alignment and station areas
- Project right-of-way needs
- A forum for consensus building regarding transit and trails investments that supports community plans
Evaluation Criteria
Evaluation Criteria

- Basis for comparing alternative alignments and technologies
- Performance measures for each evaluation criteria
- Assessment of the range of alternative alignments and technologies through the listed criteria:
Evaluation Criteria

- Breakout discussions of evaluation criteria and performance measures:
  - Mobility
  - Accessibility and Connectivity
  - Equity
  - Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency
  - Travel Time
  - Pedestrian and Bicycle Compatibility
  - Support of Other Planning Initiatives
  - Land Use and Economic Development
  - Community Fit
  - Environmental Quality
  - Public Input
Public Outreach Activities
Upcoming Public Workshops

- Review the transit and trails concept and features
- Refine alternatives considered in Tier 1 EIS
- Identify key concerns to address in the impact analysis
Upcoming Public Workshop

- Open house with video display
- Presentation on purpose
- Breakout groups to review and refine alternatives
- Summary of key results from groups
- Next steps
Upcoming Public Workshop

Five meetings (one for each of the BeltLine Study Groups)

- April 13th Southeast
- April 16th Northeast
- April 23rd Southwest
- April 27th Westside
- May 4th Northside
Upcoming Meeting

- May 14th Public Hearing on the Environmental Effects Report