



**BeltLine**

# BELTLINE CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

## PUBLIC AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS November 2009

**Prepared for:**

**Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority  
and  
Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.**

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## Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>FALL MEETING SERIES .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	EVENTS .....	1
1.2	COMMENTS AND ISSUES RAISED .....	3
1.3	HOW COMMENTS ARE ADDRESSED .....	3
1.4	NEXT STEPS .....	10

## List of Tables

Table 1: Alternative Evaluation Comments – All Meetings .....	5
Table 2: Performance Measure Comments – All Meetings .....	7
Table 3: Other Related Project Comments – All Meetings .....	9

## Appendix

Appendix A – Meeting Notes .....	12
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## **1.0 FALL MEETING SERIES**

The purpose of this report is to summarize the feedback received during a series of meetings and presentations held in November 2009 as part of the BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study. The meetings and presentations provided the project stakeholders, technical advisors, agency staff and the public with an update on the study's overall progress including the development of project alternatives and preliminary results of the alternative evaluation. These activities provided an opportunity for the participants to provide their input on the study's progress as part of the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

### **1.1 Events**

The Fall 2009 series of meetings included: Technical Advisory Committee, Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting, five public meetings and a meeting of the Atlanta Development Authority and Economic Development Sub-Cabinet. Approximately 179 individuals participated in these outreach events.

#### **1.1.1 Technical Advisory and Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings**

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and agency staff participated in a meeting on November 2, 2009 to review the results of the analysis of the transit and trail alternatives, to review how public comments were incorporated into the analysis and to garner additional comments and issues from attendees. The TAC is composed of representatives of organizations and agencies that have a specific interest and/or responsibility in the BeltLine Corridor or have shown special interest in the redevelopment of the corridor. Twenty-eight TAC group members attended.

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting followed later that day at Piedmont Hospital's McRae Auditorium to allow SAC members the same opportunity to provide input. The SAC is composed of representatives from a variety of area organizations including MARTA's network of citizen and business organizations, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations and advocacy groups. The SAC provides input and comments on study findings and plays a key role in generating participation from the public at large. Ten committee members attended the SAC meeting.

The first portion of each of the public meetings provided an opportunity for the participants to view a series of display boards and videos that described and demonstrated the various transit and trail improvement options. Given below is list of boards that were on display during the open house:

- Purpose of Workshop
- Trails Alternatives
- Transit Alternatives
- Constraints to Transit Alternatives
- Performance Measures – BeltLine Activity Center
- Underutilized Industrial Land
- Development Capacity of Underutilized/Undeveloped Land
- Potential Impacts to Water Resources for Trails

- Potential Impacts to Water Resources for Transit
- Alternative Evaluation by Goal – Trails
- Alternative Evaluation by Goal – Transit
- Performance Measures – Best Performing Alternatives
- BeltLine Transit and Trail Elements – Transit Feature
- Regional Transit Vision

The video presentation highlighted potential transit and trail features and provided a “birds-eye view” of the corridor. Also included was the evaluation of alternatives and the resulting recommended alternatives for the BeltLine. A presentation followed describing the meeting purpose, overall study process and results of the evaluation process. After the presentation, the participants broke into smaller discussion groups for an interactive exercise to obtain feedback on the evaluation results for the BeltLine. Each breakout group included two consultant team members: one to facilitate the discussion and the other to document group feedback. The following maps were provided for each breakout group to use as resource material in the discussion:

- Transit Alternatives
- Trails Alternatives
- Alternative Evaluation by Goal – Transit
- Alternative Evaluation by Goal – Trails
- Best Performing Alternatives

The breakout discussion solicited comments on the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input on the evaluation of those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of alternatives with project goals

Following the breakout session, each group’s facilitator presented a short summary of the key points raised by their group.

Appendix A provides additional details of these meetings.

### **1.1.2 Public Meetings**

A series of public meetings, one in each of the five BeltLine Study Group areas, took place between November 2, 2009 and November 17, 2009. The meetings were promoted throughout the study area to involve the public; some of whom were previously involved in various BeltLine planning efforts through MARTA and Atlanta BeltLine Inc.’s (ABI’s) outreach methods. Others participated because of a host of outreach strategies designed to reach community, transit and trail users, and stakeholders of the future transit and trails project. The content, format and structure of these meetings were similar to

the TAC/SAC meetings described in the previous section. Approximately 71 individuals attended these meetings.

In addition, ABI held a BeltLine Quarterly Briefing on November 23, 2009. The BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study was one of the agenda items. The project boards were on display during the Open House segment of the briefing, with staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. ABI staff presented an abbreviated version of the Fall Meeting Series presentation. Approximately 57 individuals attended the meeting.

Appendix A provides additional details of these meetings.

### **1.1.3 Atlanta Development Authority Economic Development Sub-Cabinet Meeting**

A project meeting held on November 12, 2009 provided an opportunity for the City of Atlanta Development Authority Economic Development Sub-Cabinet to review and comment on the alternatives considered for the BeltLine project and the evaluation process. The Sub-Cabinet includes representatives from various City of Atlanta departments including Department of Public Works, Department of Planning and Community Development, Police, Fire, Watershed Management, Parks, etc. The structure of this meeting was identical to those described above.

Thirteen attendees participated and provided comment.

Appendix A provides additional details of this meeting.

## **1.2 Comments and Issues Raised**

During the group exercises, each comment, suggestion and issue of concern expressed by meeting participants was documented by a staff recorder on flip charts placed at each of the breakout discussion tables. The following tables (Tables 1, 2 and 3) summarize all of the comments received. Table 1 includes the comments and suggestions that specifically relate to the alternative evaluation process and results. Table 2 presents comments specific to individual project Goals or Performance Measures. Table 3 provides a summary of general comments on other project-related issues.

## **1.3 How Comments are Addressed**

Some comments resulted in immediate action. The project team debriefed after meetings to review lessons learned and decided on actions to enhance the deliberation process. For example, a suggestion made at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> SAC meeting regarding the need for more detailed visual material on the alignments resulted in the Google Earth video providing a “bird-eye view” of the alignments added to the Open House segment of subsequent meetings.

Further, the series of freight related comments noted in Table 1 led to an expanded discussion of freight issues in the presentation and to an accelerated examination of alternative alignments outside of the CSX and NS railroad corridors. Also, a series of comments relating to access to the proposed Westside Park and overall region accessibility led to adding the “Regional Transit Vision – Concept 3” display board to the Open House segment and more targeted discussions in the breakout sessions on how the BeltLine would connect to the regional transit system. Another series of questions regarding service characteristics and transit

technology led to enhancements to the presentation on these subjects and an expanded discussion of the role of modern streetcar services in urban design and development.

The information presented in the tables below will inform the refinement and selection of a recommended alternative. Appendix A presents this information for each meeting. In summary, meeting participants generally expressed the following:

- Acceptance of the transit and trail alignment alternatives presented and support for moving them forward in the study process.
- Acceptance of the alternative evaluation methodologies with minor refinements.
- Support for the alternative evaluation results indicating higher ratings for the Concept 1 – Howell Junction transit alternative and multi-use trails Alternative A.
- Preference for modern streetcar over light rail transit (LRT) technology.

**Table 1: Alternative Evaluation Comments – All Meetings**

<b>Implementation</b>	
<b>Freight-Related Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the ability to implement the project based on challenges relative to CSX and NS</li> <li>• Consider daily freight activity in the evaluation of the CSX and NS corridors</li> <li>• Consider what happens if there is no compromise with the freight railroads</li> <li>• Determine if sharing the tracks will create on-time issues for the BeltLine when the freight operations result in delay problems, as is often the case with SEPTA (commuter rail) in Philadelphia</li> <li>• Consider that CSX interest will wane between now and 2019 in Howell Junction area</li> <li>• Consider the use of three tracks</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the creation of possible water storage locations along the BeltLine</li> <li>• Determine if any prehistoric impacts exist within the corridor (including Peachtree Creek)</li> <li>• Quantify other environmental impacts</li> </ul>
<b>Property-Related Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine locations for affordable housing</li> <li>• Determine property impacts</li> <li>• Consider the feasibility of requiring residents and businesses in the NW zone that might be selling their properties to provide full disclosure to the buyer so that the buyer would be obligated to allow future easements, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Operation</b>	
<b>LRT versus Modern Streetcar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a need for flexibility and integration with other systems for both modern streetcar and LRT</li> <li>• Determine the cost difference between modern streetcar and LRT</li> <li>• LRT seems to provide the greatest and most efficient connections to other proposed transit systems</li> <li>• Determine how modern streetcar is affected by street traffic</li> <li>• Consider using a different vernacular than “stations” when referring to streetcar, as they are a smaller scale than MARTA heavy rail stations</li> <li>• Decide between dedicated lanes or shared lanes (along Marietta Blvd)</li> </ul>
<b>Relation to Existing MARTA Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine if the potential for 24-hour MARTA rail service (including the BeltLine) would affect freight railroad negotiations</li> <li>• Improve connectivity to MARTA, including MARTA’s bus service</li> <li>• Weigh the financial advantage for ABI constructing BeltLine transit versus expanding MARTA heavy rail services in the corridor, and determine if funding and operations for the BeltLine would be different from MARTA</li> <li>• Think about the projected customer of the BeltLine</li> <li>• Think about the client (FTA) and its funding sources</li> </ul>

<b>Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider involving Atlanta Police Department to monitor crime along the BeltLine</li> <li>• Identify solutions to rail transit &amp; bicycle street traffic potential conflicts and safety issues</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment Preference</b>	
<b>Transit Alignment Preference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference for tunnel alignment alternative under Hulsey Yard</li> <li>• Consider alternatives and conceptual station locations that support projected population growth, including students</li> <li>• General satisfaction with Best Performing Alternative</li> <li>• Consider having both trail alignment options</li> <li>• Preference for CSX alternative – it connects well with Howell Station and provides greater opportunity for development, and aligns well with the trail alignments</li> <li>• Preference for a connection to MARTA, which would improve access to employment centers, boost MARTA ridership, and serve transit-dependent riders</li> <li>• Emphasize manner in which BeltLine connects with MARTA and how it promotes connectivity/mobility in Atlanta (good connections to Lindbergh Center, King Memorial, Inman Park/Reynoldstown, West End, Ashby and Bankhead MARTA stations)</li> <li>• The current eastern alignment hits closer to existing population; however, the western route would stimulate development where the amphitheater and mixed-use housing is currently planned</li> <li>• Preference for BeltLine connection to King Memorial – provides better accessibility to landmarks such as the King Center, etc.</li> <li>• An infill station at West End is less of a priority over the BeltLine serving the West End MARTA station directly</li> <li>• The Marietta alignment provides better access to Westside Park (consider parking issues) than Howell Junction alignment</li> <li>• The NS alignment has fewer environmental impacts than the CSX alignment</li> <li>• Consider a second BeltLine or another transit service in the other corridor (NS or CSX, whichever is not picked)</li> </ul>
<b>Trail Alignment Preference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider advancing both Trail Alternatives A and B</li> <li>• Build Trail A first, but follow up with Trail B to provide multiple levels of connectivity</li> <li>• The alignment on the Westside along Lena Street would improve visibility in the area in comparison to the existing wooded area along the former railroad corridor</li> <li>• Trails align better with CSX alignment</li> <li>• Trail A appears to have issues in utilizing the active freight corridor, while Trail B has better neighborhood connectivity</li> <li>• Consider mixing and matching trail alternatives</li> <li>• Determine if trails are designed for recreational purposes or work trips</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Performance Measure Comments – All Meetings**

Goal/Objective	Implementation
General Scoring/Methodology Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider use of a 10-point scale rather than a 25-point scale</li> <li>• Consider weighting performance measures</li> </ul>
Goal 1: Contribute to an integrated regional multi-modal transportation network that promotes seamless intermodal connectivity, increases community access to the existing transit and trail networks and improves reliability of personal travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to link parks (emphasize access to Westside Park)</li> <li>• Improve connectivity among neighborhoods</li> <li>• NS alignment's proximity to Atlantic Station should be valued and scored higher under Goal 1</li> <li>• Consider Infill MARTA stations versus MARTA station connectivity alternatives</li> <li>• Consider trip purposes as a performance measure (i.e. work/tourist/recreation)</li> <li>• Consider using ¼ mile versus ½ mile buffer when assessing activity center connectivity</li> <li>• Be mindful not to mask employment or job centers as "economic development"</li> </ul>
Goal 2: Manage and encourage the growth and economic development of the City, region and state by providing transit and transportation improvements to areas designated for growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSX alignment presents more land redevelopment potential than NS alignment</li> <li>• Since the TAD boundaries are somewhat based along the CSX alignment, determine if the measure necessarily favors CSX versus the NS alignment</li> <li>• Provide actual data for "underutilized areas"</li> </ul>
Goal 3: Preserve and revitalize neighborhoods and business districts through context sensitive design of transit and trails, increased accessibility to mobility options and provision of affordable housing and transportation, and other community benefits.	
Goal 4: Provide a cost-effective and efficient transportation investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that cost effectiveness takes into consideration existing and planned transit services</li> </ul>
Goal 5: Provide a transit, bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separating the trails from auto traffic is not as important as getting people to where they are going</li> </ul>
Goal 6: Provide transit, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity among communities, and between communities and existing and planned recreational opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to schools and libraries</li> </ul>

<b>Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
Goal 7: Minimize adverse impacts to the environment and foster positive environmental impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why are there factors minimizing effects to parks when part of the BeltLine concept is to improve access to existing and planned parks?</li><li>• Lessen impact to those areas identified on water resources maps</li><li>• Consider the impact of vibration and noise with the addition of BeltLine transit along with CSX</li><li>• Revise “minimizing acres of existing park land...” to make it more affirmative, i.e. “maximize use of BeltLine trails or new trails...” or “maximize use of new park land as well as connectivity to existing park land...”</li></ul>
Goal 8: Ensure consideration of public input throughout project planning and development.	

**Table 3: Other Related Project Comments – All Meetings**

<b>Transit Alignment</b>	<b>Transit Stations</b>	<b>Trails</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further address concerns raised in northwest (Tanyard Creek/Bobby Jones Golf Course area) and southwest zone</li> <li>• Needs easy connectivity to transfer from one system to another</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider MARTA Infill station along East/West Line at Krog Street</li> <li>• Consider church as possible station site along the Southside overpass at Metropolitan Parkway</li> <li>• Consider station at the Atlanta University Center (a major trip generator)</li> <li>• Consider station at Lucille Street and Adena Park</li> <li>• Consider station at the Bankhead MARTA station</li> <li>• Define decision for station locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid trails that are secluded and may present safety and security concerns, specifically trails that diverge from transit</li> <li>• Connect BeltLine to other trails such as Washington Park trail and Freedom Parkway</li> <li>• Take into account that trail connections are safer running alongside transit and not crossing over roadways and driveways</li> <li>• Concern with pedestrian safety at transit crossings</li> <li>• Consider pedestrian access at multiple points</li> <li>• Minimize curb cuts when traveling near or on-street</li> <li>• Consider flattest bicycle trail possible</li> <li>• Consider how current and recent construction of trails fit into EIS process</li> <li>• Gain input from PATH and bicycle community</li> </ul>

## **1.4 Next Steps**

The information included in Tables 1-3 and the summaries of meeting and presentation results, as shown in the Appendix A of this document, will inform refinement of the Alternative Evaluation technical process, selection of a recommend project alternative, and the completion of the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Following review by the Federal Transit Administration, a Public Hearing will occur in the spring of 2010 to present the DEIS to the public.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A – Meeting Notes

### MARTA GENERAL PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES BELTLINE CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

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<b>MEETING GROUP:</b>	Public Meetings (5)	<b>WORK ORDER NO:</b> #2008-07
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	BEL	<b>TASK NO:</b> 7.9 – Phase 3 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

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**Meeting Group:** Northside Study Group

**Meeting Location:** Piedmont Hospital McRae Auditorium  
1984 Piedmont Road NW, Atlanta, GA 30309

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 2, 2009; 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**Attendance:** One (1) Breakout Table – 10 participants

The meeting kicked off in an Open House format with project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief PowerPoint presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

A breakout session followed the PowerPoint presentation. The facilitator led group discussions to encourage participation and focus on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout session concluded with the group presenting the discussion as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### General

1. Need to evaluate ability to implement project - CSX challenges relative to NS. Ongoing and future conversation needed.  
**Response:** ABI and MARTA have in the past and will continue into the future, engaging the railroads in dialogue regarding the BeltLine project. Challenges exist with both railroad alignments.
2. Consider advancing both Trail Alternatives A & B as recommendations.  
**Response:** Input accepted as stated. Future spur trails of the main trails may serve the additional connections provided by Trail Alternative B. After Tier 1 and selection of preferred alternative, corridor design will consider feasibility of other trail connections.
3. Preference for tunnel alignment alternative (transit at Inman Park/Reynoldstown).  
**Response:** Input accepted as stated and we will consider within context of public input.

### Performance Measures

1. Need to link parks with emphasis on access to Westside Park.  
**Response:** The evaluation does consider Westside Park access. It balances the benefits of accessing Westside Park with the redevelopment capacity and existing land development intensity along Howell Junction alternative.  
*Note: Performance Measure 1.5.2 tallies the number of recreational facilities within ½ mile of trail access points. It includes larger parks, but does not appreciate acreage or anything else relative to size of parks.*
2. Modern Streetcar and Light Rail Transit (LRT)
  - Need for flexibility
  - Need for integration with other systems**Response:** Integration is considered within the evaluation process and during various stages of planning.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the “next steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

**Meeting Group:** Southeast Study Group

**Meeting Location:** Trees Atlanta, Inc., 225 Chester Avenue SE, Atlanta, GA 30316

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 9, 2009; 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**Attendance:** Two (2) Breakout Tables – 17 participants

The meeting kicked off in an Open House format with project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief PowerPoint presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the Beltline Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

A breakout session followed the PowerPoint presentation. The facilitators led group discussions to encourage participation and focus on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout sessions concluded with the groups presenting their comments as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### General

1. Consider alternatives and conceptual station locations that support projected population growth, including student populations.  
**Response:** Growth in the study area and region is a component of the purpose and need supporting the goals and objectives.
2. Include surface (pervious and impervious) and lighting among design considerations.  
**Response:** Such design considerations will be a function of detailed design following Tier 1.
3. Avoid trails that are secluded and may present safety and security concerns, specifically those BeltLine trails that diverge from BeltLine transit (example Stone Mountain trails).  
**Response:** BeltLine design standards will be refined during detailed corridor design and emphasize measures to enhance visibility and safety. Those BeltLine trails, which may travel through less visible areas to connect to parks and neighborhoods outside the primary BeltLine Corridor, will incorporate design considerations to enhance visibility and safety.
4. General satisfaction with the Best Performing Alternative, although there was interest in considering the construction of both trails.  
**Response:** After Tier 1 and selection of preferred alternative, corridor design will consider feasibility of other trail connections.

### Performance Measures

1. Ensure that cost effectiveness takes into consideration existing and planned transit services and facilities.  
**Response:** Consideration included in Objective 4b (maximizing connections).
2. Improve connectivity among neighborhoods.  
**Response:** Indicated this measure did not produce a significant difference in impact by transit technology. Planning efforts consider opportunities to add new crossings across the BeltLine to connect neighborhoods.
3. Why are there factors minimizing effects to parks when part of the BeltLine concept is to improve access to existing and planned parks?  
**Response:** The goal is to balance the need for access with minimizing the reduction of parkland and the introduction of adverse noise and visual impacts, etc.
4. Provide access to schools and libraries.  
**Response:** Included in Objective 6c (maximizing access to schools and community facilities near conceptual BeltLine stops).
5. Were concerns raised in the northwest (Tanyard Creek/Bobby Jones Golf Course area) and southwest zones?  
**Response:** Concerns raised in these zones included the incorporation of safety considerations during design, sensitivity to parks, water resources and aesthetic values and ensuring equity in the provision of services and amenities.

**Table 2**

**General**

1. How many freight trains run in each corridor per day (CSX vs. NS)? When choosing between alternatives, this should be a factor in the decision-making.  
**Response:** Both lines experience a significant amount of train volume. The planning process has been and will continue to consider train volumes.
2. Evaluation and planning must emphasize BeltLine connections to MARTA and how this promotes connectivity/mobility in Atlanta, particularly connections to Lindbergh Center, King Memorial, Inman Park/Reynoldstown, West End, Ashby and Bankhead stations  
**Response:** The study's planning and evaluation activities have and will continue to recognize and consider the BeltLine connections to existing and planned transit.
3. Why is there no Infill station (potential) shown along East/West Line at Krog Street?  
**Response:** Based upon screening assessments of this area, it was determined that providing alignments that connect to the existing King Memorial and Inman Park/ Reynoldstown stations are more cost effective and feasible in terms of engineering challenges, etc. relative to a new MARTA Infill station.
4. Build Trail Alternative A first but then also Trail Alternative B to provide multiple levels of connectivity.  
**Response:** Input accepted, as stated. Future spur trails of the main trails may serve the additional connections provided by Trail Alternative B.

**Performance Measures**

1. NS alignment's proximity to Atlantic Station (should be an activity center) should be valued and should have scored higher under Goal 1.  
**Response:** The BeltLine Redevelopment Plan defined the activity centers for this analysis and Atlantic Station was not included as one. However, the revised analysis will consider Atlantic Station as an activity center.
2. CSX alignment presents more land redevelopment potential than the NS alignment.  
**Response:** Agreed, and this is supported by the alternative evaluation process specifically within those performance measures that compare the alternatives to current Subarea Master Plans and the BeltLine Redevelopment Plan.
3. Are we considering Infill MARTA stations versus MARTA station connectivity alternatives?  
**Response:** The planning process has and will continue to consider MARTA Infill stations.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the "next steps" in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

**Meeting Group:** Northeast Study Group

**Meeting Location:** Hillside, Inc., 690 Courtenay Drive NE/1301 Monroe Drive NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 12, 2009; 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**Attendance:** One (1) Breakout Table – 15 participants

The meeting kicked off in an Open House format with project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief PowerPoint presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the Beltline Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

A breakout session followed the PowerPoint presentation. The facilitator led group discussions to encourage participation and focus on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout session concluded with the group presenting their discussion as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### Scoring/Methodology

1. Why use a 25-point scale versus a 10-point scale or something to include “dimes and nickels”?  
**Response:** The decision was to split the scores into four categories while providing separation between the categories, therefore the 25-point scale was adopted.
2. How did you determine the scores for each measure?  
**Response:** The team based most of the scores on a quantitative analysis, such as GIS buffers. The best performing alternative(s) for each performance measure scores highest – 100. The basis for assigning scores to lesser performing alternatives relies upon the percentage by which their figures differ from the best performing alternative(s). Alternatives with results from 0 to 10% lower than the highest performing alternative(s) score 100, 10 to 20% lower score 75, 20 to 30% lower score 50 and more than 30% lower score 25.

### Howell Junction vs. Marietta

1. Westside Park access is very important. There will be potential parking issues (as with Piedmont Park) if the Howell Junction alignment is chosen over Marietta Blvd. alignment.  
**Response:** A decision must be made based on the performance measures and overall project purpose and need. Access to existing and planned parks and recreation areas is among many performance measures applied to the evaluation of alignment alternatives.
2. Why can't we have both alignment options?  
**Response:** Mainly due to cost. Where project development is limited in terms of local financing and reliant upon competitive federal financing, our potential federal funding agencies rely upon a sound local evaluation of environmental considerations, consistency with purpose and need, and other factors to determine which options should proceed with federal financing.
3. Did you consider trip purposes as a performance measure (i.e., work/tourist/recreation)?  
**Response:** Yes, overall access for all trip types will be a deciding factor.
4. What is the cost difference between light rail transit versus streetcar?  
**Response:** Generally, streetcar is less expensive due to the smaller cars and stations; however, a detailed cost estimate is not available at this time.
5. Other proposed transit connections are important. It appears that light rail transit would provide the greatest most efficient connections.  
**Response:** Comment noted.
6. What input has been provided at other public meetings regarding the alternatives presented?  
**Response:** Generally, similar comments as tonight. Access to Westside Park is a common theme.
7. What other avenues exist to provide input?  
**Response:** Website, comment cards and hotline.

**Trails**

1. Are you going to provide pedestrian access at multiple points (regarding option A, which follows the rail corridor)?

**Response:** Yes, there will be several opportunities along the route (referred to map).

2. When traveling near or on-street, curb cuts should be minimized.

**Response:** Comment noted.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the “next steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

**Meeting Group:** Westside Study Group

**Meeting Location:** Atlanta Community Food Bank,  
732 Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard NW, Atlanta, GA 30318

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 16, 2009; 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**Attendance:** Two (2) Breakout Tables – 14

The meeting kicked off in an Open House format with project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief PowerPoint presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the Beltline Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

The breakout session followed the PowerPoint presentation. The facilitators led group discussions to encourage participation and focus on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout sessions concluded with the groups presenting their discussion as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### General

1. Consider involving Atlanta Police Department in the area of transit and trails to monitor crime.  
**Response:** It is likely that standard APD and MARTA police protection will serve the BeltLine project. Security measures will also be a part of the design criteria to ensure safety and security.

### Alignment

1. Preference for the CSX option over Norfolk Southern; Atlantic Station is a good activity center and expected to fill-in more in the future.  
**Response:** This input will be considered in subsequent project planning.
2. The current eastern alignment is closer to existing population; however, the western route would stimulate development where the amphitheater and mixed-use housing is currently planned.  
**Response:** This input will be considered in subsequent project planning.
3. The alignment on the Westside along Lena Street would improve visibility in the area in comparison to the existing wooded area along the former railroad corridor; we must be concerned with safety and security given the wooded conditions.  
**Response:** During the design of the system, safety and security measures will be taken to ensure visibility and safety.
4. Along the Southside overpass at Metropolitan Parkway, the church is a good site for a station. Consider the impact of vibration and noise with the addition of BeltLine transit along with CSX operations.  
**Response:** A station is currently proposed at the BeltLine's intersection with Metropolitan Parkway. Noise and vibration is being evaluated as part of the environmental study.

### Transit Connections

1. The CSX alignment provides greater opportunity for land development and aligns well with the trail alignment.  
**Response:** This input will be considered in subsequent project planning.

### Trail Connections

1. Connect BeltLine to other trails such as Washington Park trail and Freedom Park's trail.  
**Response:** Connections to other existing and planned trails is a goal of the project. Specific connections will be pursued and included in the future design process. We will consider this input during subsequent project planning.
2. Perception that trail connections are safer running alongside transit and not crossing over roadways and driveways.  
**Response:** This input will be considered in subsequent project planning and design.

Concern with pedestrian safety at transit crossings; it is safer in parks than mixing with automobile and transit vehicle traffic.

**Response:** This input will be considered in subsequent project planning and design.

## Table 2

### General

1. Are there any prehistoric impacts throughout corridor including Peachtree Creek?  
**Response:** Areas with prehistoric resources exist throughout the BeltLine Corridor, particularly in the northwest zone and near streams. Definitions of potentially impacted areas will result from coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
2. Quantify other environmental impacts.  
**Response:** Preliminary impacts will be identified and quantified where possible in the Tier 1 EIS, with more detailed, site-specific impacts quantified in future Tier 2 documents.
3. Creeks are a primary source of flooding and paths could help to alleviate some of the problems. There is probably no wildlife. Will the BeltLine use the existing crossings or will changes be required along trails for better connection to neighborhoods?  
**Response:** The BeltLine will use existing crossings where sufficient width is available to support transit and/or trails.
4. What is Industrial Land?  
**Response:** Industrial land is property that is zoned industrial that has been cleared or considered for economic development. The main concern is potential economic development areas that need additional cleanup, i.e. a cleared field needing additional cleanup, known as a Brownfield.

### Transit and Trails

1. What is the preferred alternative?  
**Response:** Among alternatives considered in the Tier 1 DEIS, CSX-Howell Junction performs best among transit alternatives, given existing performance measures, while Trail Alignment A outperforms Trail Alignment B.
2. What are the yellow dots?  
**Response:** Potential BeltLine stations
3. Is there a BeltLine stop at the MARTA Bankhead station?  
**Response:** There is not a BeltLine stop on the station property. The CSX-Marietta Boulevard alternative provides the closest distance to the Bankhead MARTA station.
4. What is the best of the three alignment alternatives for biking, walking and transit, considering at-grade crossings and street level?  
**Response:** Relative to the CSX-Marietta Boulevard option, Norfolk Southern and CSX-Howell Junction alternatives require less interaction with existing roadways and related traffic, although both include at-grade crossings, and the Norfolk Southern corridor is not suitable for walking and biking via trails. The CSX-Howell Junction option (similar in alignment to the primary Trail A) would perform better in terms of separation from automobile traffic than the CSX-Marietta Boulevard option.

5. Will the speed of the streetcars be the same as cars?  
**Response:** Yes, but with additional signalization. Light rail and streetcars both interact with regular traffic with transit signal priority. However, the design details are not part of this Tier 1 study.
6. In what phase will the decision be made as to the type of transit, i.e. light rail or streetcar?  
**Response:** The Tier 1 EIS will identify a preferred technology and means of operating the BeltLine service.
7. Was rapid rubber-tired transit (wheels operating inside and guided by existing track guideway) considered?  
**Response:** We have not explored that type of bus service for this area. The 2007 Inner Core Study determined light rail or streetcar for this corridor.
8. I would like an update on Westside Park – is there presently access for the general public?  
**Response:** ABI responded that a final decision is yet to be made and no action is anticipated until next year. The participant's name was provided to ABI for contact directly.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the “next steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

**Meeting Group:** Southwest Study Group

**Meeting Location:** West Hunter Street Baptist Church  
1040 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard SW, Atlanta, GA 30310

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 17, 2009; 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**Attendance:** Two (2) Breakout Tables – 15

The meeting kicked off with an Open House, project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief power point presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the Beltline Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

The breakout session followed the power point presentation. The facilitators led the groups to engage in participatory discussions focusing on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout sessions concluded with the groups presenting their discussion as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### General

1. Consider involving Atlanta Police Department in the area of transit and trails to monitor crime.  
**Response:** Security measures will be a part of the design criteria to ensure safety and security. The team will give additional attention to safety and security during future design processes.
2. Are areas along the BeltLine primarily industrial?  
**Response:** The land uses along the BeltLine Corridor are a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, etc. uses. There are numerous nodes of industrial areas along the corridor including the Armour Yard, small areas along the northeast, southeast and southwest zones and large areas within the northwest zone.
3. Regarding water, is it possible to create water storage locations along the BeltLine?  
**Response:** Yes, Westside Park is the largest water storage location along the BeltLine. Additional water storage and features (ponds, etc) may be included within certain areas and the team may address during Subarea Master Planning efforts.
4. MARTA's feeder bus service is poor; hopes are that the BeltLine will improve connectivity to MARTA.  
**Response:** The BeltLine is intended to work in coordination with MARTA rail and bus services for a better-connected service. Frequent and effective connections to existing MARTA rail stations and bus routes are the goal.
5. Where will affordable housing be located? There is less incentive for the Norfolk Southern alternative since more of it is outside of the TAD area relative to the CSX alternatives.  
**Response:** Affordable housing is desired and planned throughout the study area. The creation of affordable housing opportunities is also dependent on associated City of Atlanta and Atlanta BeltLine Inc. initiatives.
6. The study is moving forward in a good direction.

### Alignment

1. How is streetcar affected by street traffic?  
**Response:** Street traffic may adversely impact transit vehicle operations in certain places. Primarily, transit is planned along a dedicated/exclusive route and be minimally impacted by street traffic (at-grade crossings). In select locations; however, transit is not within a dedicated lane and may be required to run along shared streets.
2. Where in the local area is there a model for light rail and streetcar transit similar to that of the BeltLine?  
**Response:** There is not a local model; however, a similar system exists in Charlotte, North Carolina and Portland, Oregon.
3. Preference for CSX alternative; it connects well with Howell Station.

### Transit Connections

1. Preference for a connection to MARTA to improve access to employment centers, boost MARTA ridership and to serve transit dependent.
2. A well connected system improves the usefulness of the system.
3. An Infill station at West End is less of a priority relative to the BeltLine serving the West End MARTA station directly.
4. The more connected the systems, the better the usefulness of the system and opportunity to improve MARTA's utility.
5. Need for connectivity to transfer from one system to another.
6. The CSX alignment provides greater opportunity for development and aligns well with the trails alignment.
7. Preference for BeltLine connection to King Memorial – provides better accessibility to landmark such as the King Center, etc.

### **Transit Stops**

1. Place station at the Atlanta University Center; this area generates many trips.
2. Desire for station at Lucille Street and Adena Park.

### **Trail Connections**

1. Trails align better with CSX.
2. Preference for flattest bicycle trail possible.

### **Table 2**

### **General**

1. What happens if there is no compromise with the freight railroads?  
**Response:** Through public outreach, we identified and assessed in-street options that circumvent the freight lines. However, in this early conceptual design stage, we are pursuing the freight railroad corridor alternatives as these were found to support the purpose and need. After Tier 1 at more detailed design stages, we will continue to negotiate with the appropriate railroad(s), based on the optimal connection. Such negotiation will support future decision making at the Tier 2 stage.
2. What was the length of the scoping process?  
**Response:** The scoping process was one month long from August to September 2008.

3. How many phases is the Environmental Study for the evaluation of water resources?

**Response:** There are two (2) tiers and this Tier 1 study encompasses the entire BeltLine. Tier 1 identifies water resources – wetlands, floodplains, creeks/streams – and the study identifies where the BeltLine intersects with these types of properties. Tier 2 will offer more site-specific detail, with continued coordination from county and state agencies to minimize impacts.

### Transit

1. Will the BeltLine use the CSX tracks?

**Response:** The study is examining the potential for sharing the railroad corridor with separate BeltLine tracks. There are planned buffers for freight, transit and trails to function within the corridor.

2. Will sharing the tracks create on-time issues for the BeltLine when the freight operations result in delay problems, as is often the case with SEPTA (commuter rail) in Philadelphia?

**Response:** Yes, but present plans are to minimize the freight-transit crossings, which in turn minimize the delays associated with freight issues.

3. If the MARTA rail service becomes 24-hours, as desired, will the BeltLine operation be the same? Would that affect freight railroad negotiations?

**Response:** MARTA is not 24-hours and the BeltLine has no control over existing MARTA services. No decision has been made at this time about the service hours. Prioritizing spatial separation over temporal (time-based) separation in freight corridors allows for greater flexibility with future daily service-hour decisions in the BeltLine Corridor.

4. Is there a financial advantage for ABI constructing BeltLine transit versus expanding MARTA heavy rail services in the corridor? Will funding and operations for the BeltLine be different from MARTA?

**Response:** The BeltLine Tax Allocation District (TAD) offers a mechanism for supporting transit service development as well as other related supportive activities, including support for trails, workforce housing and Brownfield redevelopment, among others. Dedicated funding can help to leverage other public and private sources of funding to support BeltLine Corridor goals. The BeltLine will connect with existing services, such as MARTA bus and heavy rail. MARTA and ABI are in negotiations regarding their relationship beyond the Environmental Study.

### Trails

1. Will trails be along the entire corridor?

**Response:** Yes.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the “next steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

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<b>MEETING GROUP:</b> TAC Meeting	<b>WORK ORDER NO:</b> #2008-07
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b> BEL	<b>TASK NO:</b> 7.9 – Phase 3 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

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**Meeting Group:** Technical Advisory Committee

**Meeting Location:** ABI, 86 Pryor Street SW, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30303

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 2, 2009; 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

**Attendance:** Two (2) Breakout Tables – 28

The meeting kicked off with an Open House, project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief power point presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

The breakout session followed the power point presentation. The facilitators led the groups to engage in participatory discussions focusing on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout sessions concluded with the groups presenting their discussions as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

Table 1

### General

1. In terms of scale, are streetcar stations smaller (than MARTA heavy rail stations) or not even stations? Should we use a different vernacular when referring to them?  
**Response:** We will include that detail in the Tier 2 analysis.
2. Is this evaluation based on the northwest (NW) zone only?  
**Response:** Yes, the alternatives differ in the NW zone only; therefore, the alternative evaluation focuses on the NW zone. The EIS addresses the entire BeltLine corridor.
3. Since the NS alignment has fewer environmental impacts than the CSX alignment, how does that fit into the overall EIS analysis?  
**Response:** The natural environment is one of many project components assessed.
4. When will you decide on dedicated lanes or shared lanes (along Marietta Blvd)?  
**Response:** Started at a broad level in Tier 1. In Tier 2 an operating concept will be developed.
5. What about a second BeltLine or another transit service in the other corridor (NS or CSX, whichever is not picked)?  
**Response:** The BeltLine is part of an overall regional transit concept. It will connect many planned projects. The other corridor may be served by these projects.
6. What about the active freight? How do you resolve those conflicts?  
**Response:** This is under discussions now and we are working on a sharing agreement with the railroad operators. There will still be freight movement in the proposed corridors. The team will look at operating next to existing lines in parallel and cost will be a major factor in determining the outcome.
7. Trail Alignment A appears to have similar issues in utilizing the active freight. Trail Alignment B has better neighborhood connectivity.  
**Response:** This statement is a fair summation.
8. Will the Marietta Blvd. option use the existing road? How do you determine the effectiveness between shared versus exclusive lanes? What about BRT? Traffic studies?  
**Response:** In street operations will be considered in a later phase. Rail technology was chosen as preferred technology in previous studies and BRT was eliminated. The Marietta Blvd. option will provide better access to the Quarry Park and other centers. Tier 2 will detail operating plans and stop characteristics.

### Performance Measures

1. Since the TAD boundaries are somewhat based along the CSX alignment, does that measure necessarily favor CSX versus the NS alignment? It seems like the project team is not comparing apples to apples.  
**Response:** The NS alternative does serve the Atlantic Station TAD, but that is not part of the study. The TAD was created based upon the original Preferred Alternative, so the CSX alter-

native will perform better in that measure. However, it is only one measure and each measure is weighted equally.

**Table 2**

**General**

1. Are the performance measures weighted?  
**Response:** No.
2. Look at mixing and matching alternatives for trails.  
**Response:** This is being considered for the trails alignment near Monroe Drive.
3. CSX interest will wane between now and 2019 in Howell Junction area.
4. Are trails designed for recreational purposes or work trips?  
**Response:** Both, there is no predetermined preference.
5. Defining transit as local vs. regional service types may be better accomplished by describing trip type and purpose.  
**Response:** This will be considered.

**Performance Measures**

1. Consider using a ¼ mile vs. a ½ mile buffer when assessing activity center connectivity.  
**Response:** The CSX and NS alternatives either traverse the activity centers included in the northwest zone (Joseph E. Boone Boulevard, Northside Drive and Peachtree Road) or miss them altogether. The CSX alternatives either traverse the three activity centers or are immediately adjacent to them. Scoring would not be sensitive to this change. The NS alternative misses the Northside Drive and Peachtree Road activity centers.
2. Underutilized area – at some point actual data will need to be provided.
3. Water resources – Will actions be taken to lessen impact for those areas identified on the maps?  
**Response:** Yes. Environmental documentation and later design processes will seek to mitigate impacts to water resources.
4. Separating the trails from auto traffic is not as important as getting people where they are going.  
**Response:** Performance measures that assess connections to schools, parks, employment, etc. are included in the analysis.
5. Overlay the two Trail Alternatives with the Connect Atlanta Plan (planned bicycle infrastructure).  
**Response:** The current performance measures do not include this analysis and would require modifying an existing performance measure or creating a new one. However, the project team will perform the overlay exercise.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the next steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

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<b>MEETING GROUP:</b>	SAC Meeting	<b>WORK ORDER NO:</b>	#2008-07
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	BEL	<b>TASK NO:</b>	7.9 – Phase 3 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

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**Meeting Group:** Stakeholder Advisory Committee

**Meeting Location:** Piedmont Hospital McRae Auditorium  
1984 Peachtree Road NW, Atlanta, GA 30309

**Meeting Date & Time:** November 2, 2009; 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

**Attendance:** One Breakout Table – 10

The meeting kicked off with an Open House, project boards on display and staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. A brief power point presentation followed the Open House providing an overview and update on the status of the BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation, and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

The breakout session followed the power point presentation. The facilitator led the group to engage in participatory discussions focusing on the findings of the alternative evaluation. The discussion solicited comments pertaining to the following topics:

- Definition of alternatives and evaluation process
- Overall reaction to the scoring of the alternatives
- Input to the evaluation for those performance measures that most distinguish between alternatives
- Consistency of the alternatives to the project goals

The breakout session concluded with the group presenting the discussion as follows:

## Group Discussion Comments

### General

1. There needs to be more detailed pictures (Google/aerials) of alignments.  
**Response:** The team will prepare additional material that will help attendees understand the context.
2. Current and recent construction of trails – how do they fit into EIS process?
  - Sequence
  - Core vs. spur trails**Response:** The EIS is based upon a ½-mile buffer around the transit and trail alignments. If recently constructed trails fall within that area, they will be assessed.
3. Property impacts
  - Level of design needed to determine more refined impacts is upcoming
  - CSX railroad coordination
  - Active railroads– Challenge to cross and access – solutions needed to mitigate challenge of being a barrier**Response:** These issues are apparent during planning and will continue to be considered and refined during subsequent planning and design stages.
4. Station Locations – What are they based upon?  
**Response:** They are based upon past planning and public involvement feedback, Subarea Master Plans, the Inner Core Study and project team input.
5. Railroads and trails that are adjacent present design challenges.  
**Response:** This issue is apparent during planning and will continue to be considered and refined during subsequent planning and design stages.
6. Rail transit & bicycle street traffic – solutions needed to address potential conflicts and safety issues.  
**Response:** Issues with mixing rail transit and bicycles are apparent during planning and will continue to be considered and refined during subsequent planning and design stages. Potential mitigation measures are currently being assessed.
7. What is the trail width and what is needed?  
**Response:** Sixteen (16) feet is the current proposal and greater widths may be required in certain locations. This will be determined in later phases of study.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the “Next Steps” in the study process that includes a public hearing tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2010.

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<b>MEETING GROUP:</b>	ADA Sub Cabinet	<b>WORK ORDER NO:</b> #2008-07
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	BEL	<b>TASK NO:</b> 7.9 – Phase 3 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

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**Meeting Group:** ADA Economic Development Sub Cabinet  
**Meeting Location:** ABI Offices, 86 Pryor Street SW, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Meeting Date & Time:** November 12, 2009; 9:00 am – 11:00 am  
**Attendance:** 13 participants

Nate Conable opened the meeting and asked everyone to review the project boards on display. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. He then introduced Henry Ikwut-Ukwa, Project Manager, MARTA. Henry and Nate presented the PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview and update on the status of the BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study, including work accomplished since the last meeting, review of alternatives for evaluation and highlights of the findings of the alternatives evaluation.

The questions/comments and responses made during the presentation follow:

1. Since the BeltLine will connect to regional service and serves the city (local service), we need clarification on the definition of regional and local including the difference in speeds and number of stations. Local service will score lower on some of the federal guidelines' criteria and that would affect its chances for funding. Therefore, we must balance the types of service to ensure funding for "New Starts service".  
**Response:** For clarity, the project team will change "regional service" to "express service" and "local service" to "expanded service".
2. Has the potential for three (3) tracks been considered?  
**Response:** Yes, but it would be very expensive. However, that decision is not part of the Tier 1 scope.
3. Who is the customer of BeltLine?  
**Response:** Regional and local communities
4. Are there projections for ridership?  
**Response:** Not at this stage. Previous studies included ridership forecasts, but we do not use them at this point. The next phase of the study, Tier 2, includes modeling.

5. Who is the client?

**Response:** The client is FTA, but FTA does not dictate the selection of a locally preferred alternative. The project sponsor knows the funding available for each type of service that enables us to focus on our strongest measures that will maximize funding.

6. Is there a standard for FTA funding?

**Response:** Currently, FTA is not set-up for a project like the BeltLine. The current FTA New Starts criteria favor an express-like service because it solves mobility needs versus economic development or accessibility. However, FTA has the BeltLine Project on its radar. The BeltLine is considered a “New Age Development”. Consequently, there is an opportunity for the BeltLine to be on the forefront to bring economic development and land use into transit evaluation, which will be the “New Best Standard”.

7. Economic development means different things to different people. One of the things that we all know is that there is a critical need for employment centers. We are very mindful that we can no longer rely on creating construction jobs. Be mindful not to mask employment or job centers as “economic development”.

**Response:** Agreed. The BeltLine is planning a mixed-use corridor with job centers that coincides with the Redevelopment Plan. The Master Planning process promotes mixed-use development and housing with some level of retail/commercial jobs, but it has not incorporated the Employment Center Concept. However, some level of job density is needed to support transit and operations. Piedmont Hospital and Pryor Road Corridor are two examples where opportunities exist to increase jobs. Further, more local offices are needed to serve residents.

8. You may want to reword the performance measure relating to the trail alignment so as not to focus on issues and constraints. Revise “minimizing acres of existing park land...” to make it more affirmative with “maximize use of BeltLine trails or new trails...” or “maximize use of new park land as well as connectivity to existing park land...”

**Response:** The project team will consider.

9. Does the public perceive the trails on the street as a commuter amenity or as recreational exercise?

**Response:** Both. Public input has not been strong regarding either option.

10. What about PATH?

**Response:** PATH tends to have a more recreational view of trails historically. They seek to separate trails from auto traffic to make them very safe for a wide cross-section of users.

11. Has the cycling community weighed in?

**Response:** Yes, feedback has been received from the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition. The bike community's major concern is that BeltLine planning considers the Connect Atlanta on-street system so that the BeltLine plans support and enhance the bicycle recommendations made in the Connect Atlanta plan.

12. The northwest zone requires cooperation from CSX in order to minimize property impacts.

**Response:** We are working with the engineering team to complete an analysis of property impacts that could range from temporary construction easements and/or partial/entire property takes.

13. How many properties will be impacted?

**Response:** We do not have enough engineering at the Tier 1 level to know specifically, but we are working with our engineering team to develop a range.

14. What has been the attendance at the public meetings?

**Response:** Attendance has averaged approximately 15 participants per meeting.

15. We need to get people to support our going into the railroad corridor. If we are outside of the corridor, there will be impacts. However, the issues to be resolved in the northwest zone are bigger than just the BeltLine.

**Response:** Comment noted.

16. What is the feasibility of requiring residents and businesses in the northwest zone that might be selling their properties to provide full disclosure to the buyer so that the buyer would be obligated to allow future easements, etc?

**Response:** We are not sure. That could be dealt with by the overlay-zoning district.

17. Add a slide that highlights the freight issues in the northwest zone.

**Response:** We will add a freight issues slide.

18. What do we tell people when asked, "When will construction begin"?

**Response:** Construction could begin in three to five years depending on the funding source.

19. What is the community sentiment on streetcar and light rail?

**Response:** There appears to be a general preference for modern streetcar. However, at this point, we try to get the community to understand that the type of vehicles is not as important as "type of service". We try to get them to understand the service types provided as being local or regional connectivity. Ridership determines the operation of the BeltLine, i.e. five versus fifteen-minute headways, which cannot be determined at this time. The video gives the public an image of what to expect with the various types of service.

**MARTA GENERAL PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES  
BELTLINE CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY**

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**MEETING GROUP:** BeltLine Quarterly Briefing      **WORK ORDER NO:** #2008-07  
**PROJECT CODE:** BEL      **TASK NO:** 7.9 – Phase 3 Public  
Involvement and Agency Coordination

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**Meeting Group:** BeltLine Quarterly Briefing  
**Meeting Location:** Atlanta Public Schools Auditorium  
130 Trinity Avenue SW, Atlanta, GA 30303  
**Meeting Date & Time:** November 23, 2009; 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
**Attendance:** 57 participants

The BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study was one of the agenda items at the November 23<sup>rd</sup> ABI Quarterly Briefing. The project boards were on display during the Open House segment of the briefing with staff available to discuss the project. The display boards highlighted the alternatives evaluated and the findings. ABI staff presented an abbreviated version of the Fall Meeting Series presentation. The following topics were discussed after the presentation:

- BeltLine northeast zone – Georgia Environmental Policy Act (GEPA) work activities
- Federal, state and local funding coordination
- Brownfield sites and analysis
- Citizen Engagement Process