



Northridge Area Community Meeting

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014

# Today's Meeting Purpose

- Where We Are
- What We've Heard
- The Screening Process
- Q&A
- Where Do We Go From Here?

# Purpose and Importance of this Study

- Evaluate **feasibility** of increased transit service
- Identify potential for high-capacity transit project **implementation**

## Differentiation Between Past Studies

- Focused investment along GA 400 corridor
- Assessed land development over past decade
- Considered demographic changes in study area
- Advanced planning process from previous studies

## Early Scoping

- FTA recently updated the New Starts funding program, streamlining the environmental review process.
- Early Scoping is an optional community involvement step during the major planning phase of a transit project.
- Input and comments tonight will be considered as part of the Federal NEPA process, should MARTA prepare an EIS for FTA review.

FTA = Federal Transit Administration

NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act

EIS = Environmental Impact Statement

# Where We Are

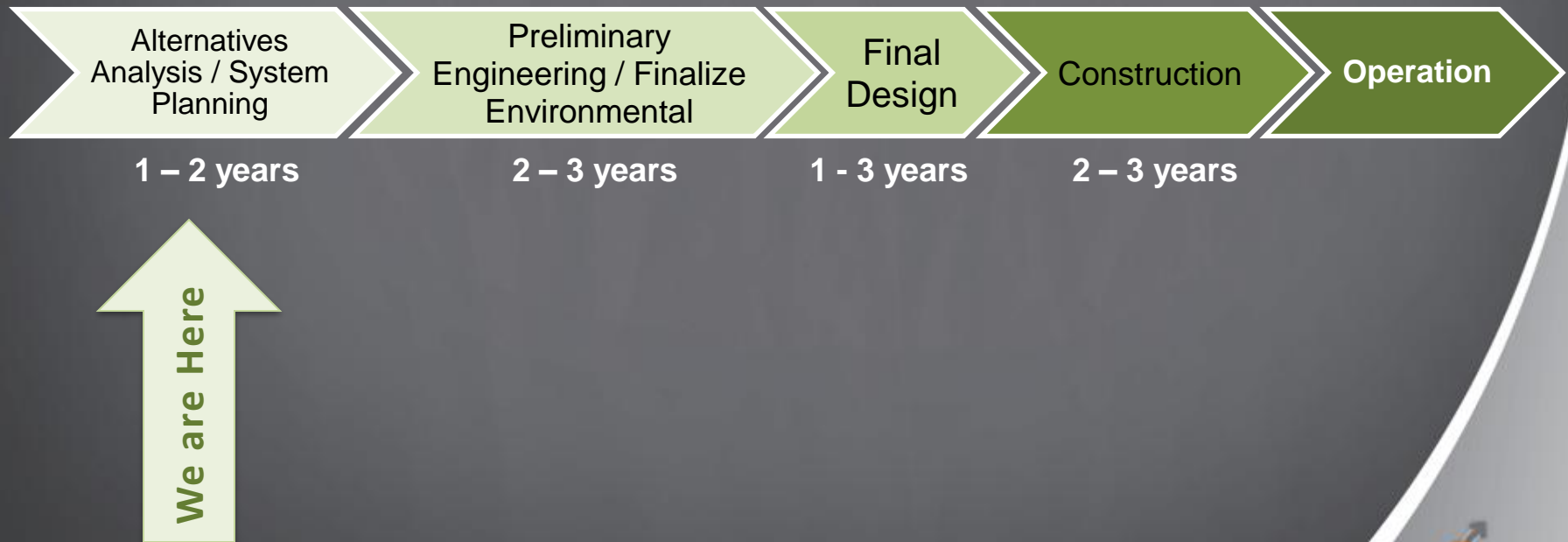
# Connect 400 Alternatives Analysis Schedule



- Re-initiated efforts in Spring of 2014 to:
  - Conduct a second phase of Early Scoping
  - Initiate the preliminary New Starts evaluation
  - Recommend / adopt a Locally Preferred Alternative

# Federal Project Development Process

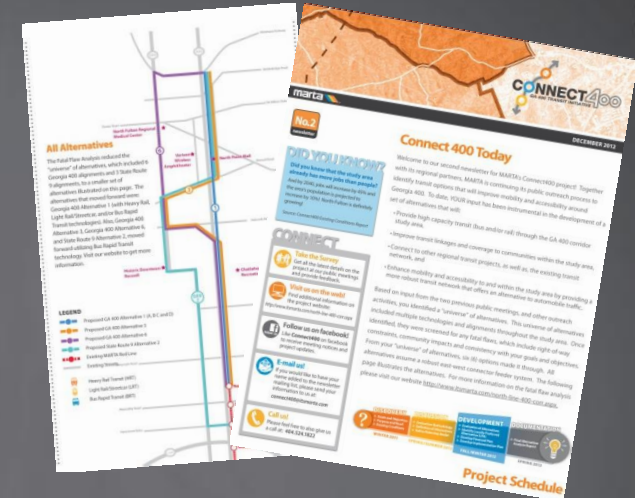
Project Development: Typically 6 – 12 years



# What We've Heard



# Outreach



## Stakeholder Interviews

### Technical Advisory Committee Project Steering Committee

- **Stakeholder:** 30 Meetings
- **TAC:** December 13, 2011; February 28, 2012, October 25, 2012
- **PSC:** January 18, 2012; March 22, 2012; November 14, 2012; February 26, 2013; May 9, 2013; October, 17, 2014; June 12, 2014

## Public Meetings

- **2011:** December 13- Minority and Non-English Speaking Leadership Meeting
- **2012:** January 26; May 22; March 21; August 21-El Banco; August 30- North Fulton Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Forum
- **2013:** March 21; September 26
- **Fall 2013:** City Council Briefings

## Surveys

- December 12, 2012 to January 17, 2013
  - 136 Respondents
- March 2014 - Public Opinion Survey
  - 612 Residents
  - 463 Employees

# General Themes

- Lack of transportation funding
- Need for 'last mile' circulation
- Need feeder system to 400 transit
- Need for transit-oriented development around the stations
- Desire to preserve visual aesthetics, including river buffers and tree buffers
- Phase transit improvements to build market/ ridership
- There is no 'reverse commute' on 400, both directions bad during peak hours
- Need to improve existing MARTA bus routes and add more
- Georgia 400 corridor is preferred alignment
- Community support for Heavy Rail Transit



# Public Opinion Survey Highlights

- Majority of residents believe traffic congestion is a real problem
- Almost 80% of respondents agreed that a better public transportation system is needed
- Over 60 %of all respondents indicated they would use public transportation more often if it could get them to places they need to go
- Ironically, almost 60 % of respondents generally agreed that improving the local roadways is the best way to solve the areas traffic problems
- Almost 80% of respondents indicated they either strongly approve or approve of expansion of MARTA up GA-400 to the Forsyth County line
- Heavy rail preferred by 40% of respondents
- Light rail is preferred by 37%
- BRT in HOT/HOV preferred by 11%; fixed guideway by 6%

# The Screening Process

# The Screening Process

13

**Fatal Flaw Analysis** considers at a high level:

- Purpose & Need
- Constructability & right-of-way impacts
- Generalized Technology Assessment

*Defined alternatives (combinations of alignment & transit technology) for Screen 1*

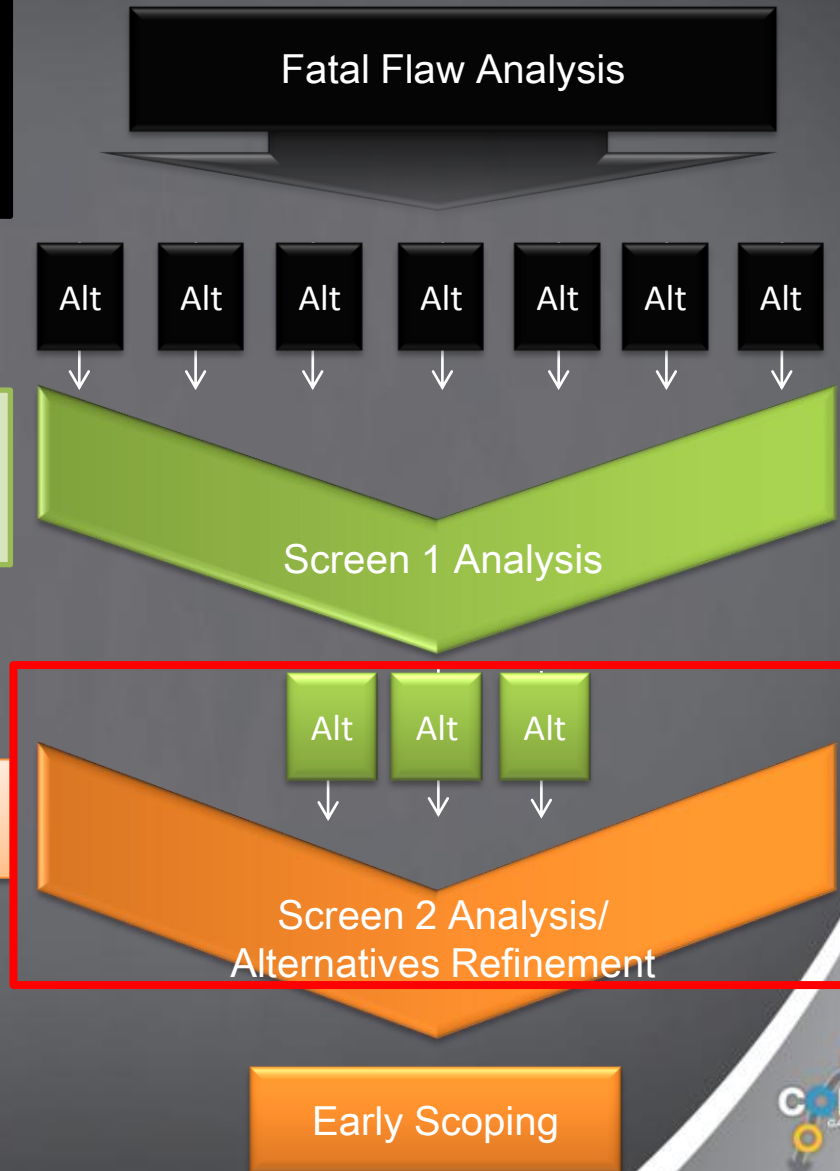
**Screen 1** applies both quantitative & qualitative evaluation criteria to reduce the number of alternatives

*Smaller set of alternatives advance into Screen 2*

**Screen 2** involves a more in-depth analysis using additional performance measures

*Screen 2 refines the alternatives*

**Recommendation to MARTA Board**





# Overview of Potential Alternatives

## Georgia 400 – 1 (A)

### Alignment

- 11.9 miles Long
- North Springs Station – Windward via GA 400

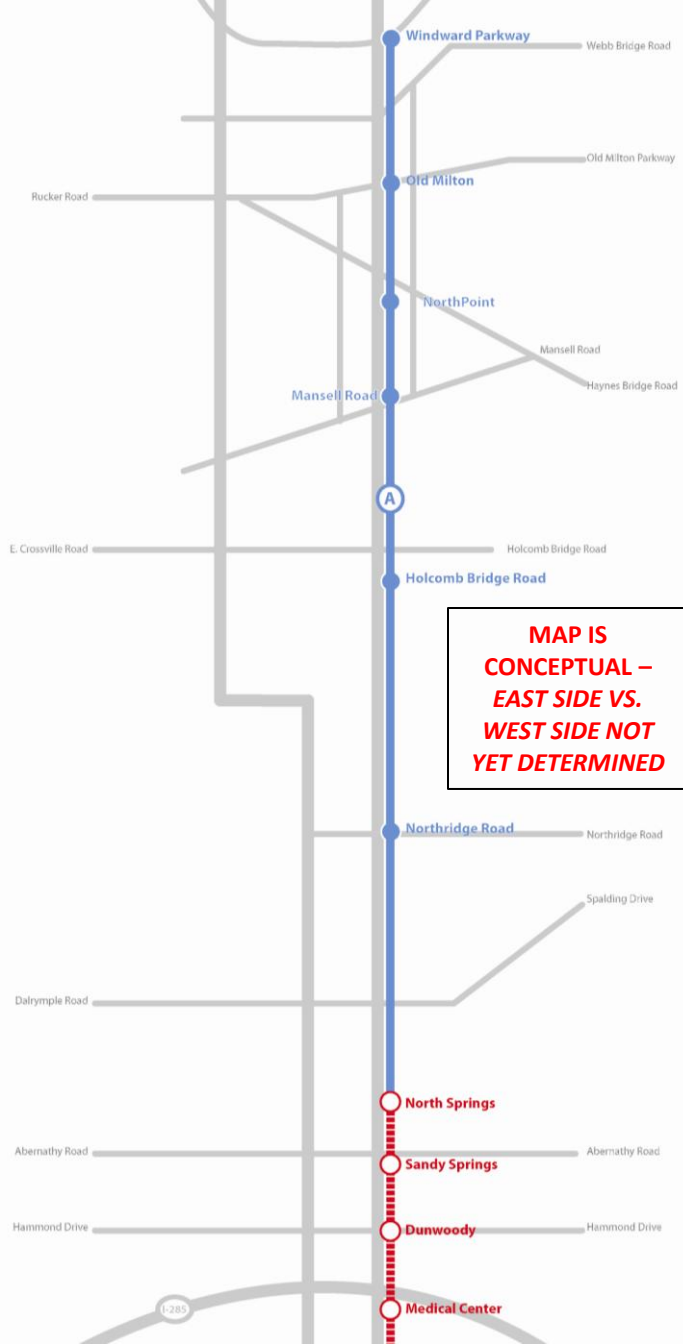
### Transit Technology

- Bus Rapid Transit
- Light Rail/Streetcar
- Heavy Rail

### Potential Stations

- Northridge
- Holcomb Bridge
- Mansell Road
- North Point
- Old Milton (LRT/BRT only)
- Windward Parkway

\* GDOT ROW availability on GA 400 to be determined based on Managed Lanes Study

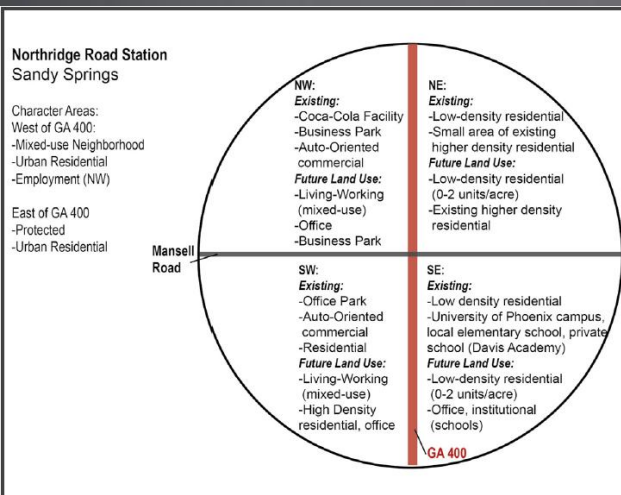
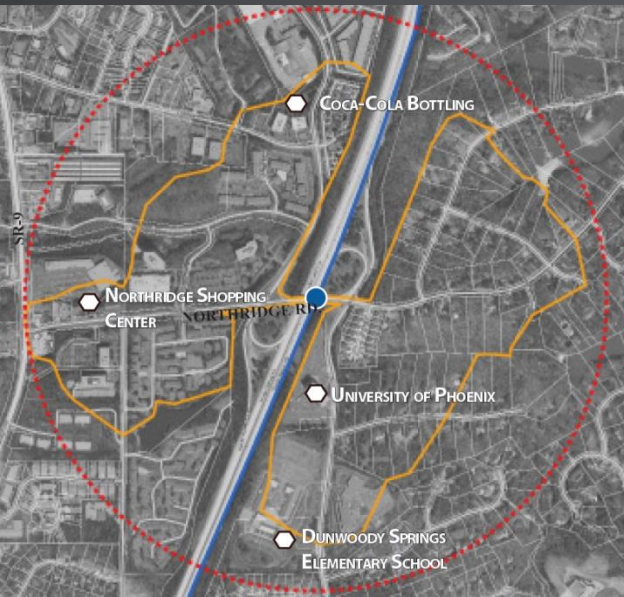


# Northridge vs. Pitts Locations

- **Station Type** – Regardless of location, the Northridge/Pitts location was preferred to be a *community* station
- **What we've heard from the public:**
  - **Public Outreach Meeting 5/22/12** – A majority of respondents stated that the Pitts Road access point should be relocated to Northridge Road
  - **Public Outreach Meeting 3/21/13** – Pitts Station should be eliminated and Northridge Station preferred



# Northridge Area



- **Existing Land Use/Zoning** – Low-density residential east of GA -400 with some institutional and office uses; Office, auto-oriented commercial, high-density residential west of 400
- **Future Land Use** – East of 400 to remain low-density residential with institutional uses. West of 400, mixed-use is planned for Northridge/SR-9, with surrounding areas developing mid-high density residential
- **Vacant/Underutilized Land** – 66 Acres (13% of total land area)
- **Projected 2040 Population** – 2,766
- **Projected 2040 Employment** – 2,736



## Evaluation of Alternatives

		Heavy Rail (HRT)	Light Rail (LRT)	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
Goal 1: Mobility & Access	New Riders by 2040	High	Medium	Low
	Daily Travel Time Savings	High	Medium	Low
	Annual Corridor Crash Reductions	High	Medium	Low
Goal 2: Land Use and Economic Development	Consistency with adopted local/regional plans/development potential	High	High	Medium
Goal 3: Cost-Effective Transit Service	Annual Estimated O&M Costs	Medium	Low	High
	Construction Capital Costs	Medium	Low	High
	Cost per Trip	Medium	Low	High
Goal 4: Minimize Environmental Impacts	Change in VMT	High	Medium	Low
	Reduction in Air Quality Pollutants	High	Medium	Low
	Noise Sensitive Land Uses	Low	Medium	High

# Benefits & Challenges



## Benefits

- Reduction in commute times
- Reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and air pollutant emissions
- Reduction in vehicular crashes
- Increased employment
- Increased property values around station areas
- Reduced impact to environmental and community resources because the alignment utilizes GA 400 right of way



## Challenges

- Encouraging higher density, less auto-oriented development
- Funding challenges for capital costs & system operations/maintenance



# Where do we go from Here?

# Next Steps



# Preliminary New Starts Evaluation

- Analysis underway to determine project performance with respect to:
  - Mobility Improvements
  - Cost Effectiveness
  - Congestion Relief
  - Environmental Benefits
  - Land Use
  - Economic Development
- Will inform selection of preferred technology as well as overall project approach and timing



# Upcoming Community Meetings

- **Tuesday, July 8, 6:30PM-8PM**  
Public Meeting #1 – Johns Creek Environmental Campus
- **Thursday, July 10, 6:30PM-8PM**  
Public Meeting #2 – GSU Alpharetta Center
- **Thursday, July 17, 6:30PM-8PM**  
Public Meeting #3 – Hampton Inn Atlanta / Perimeter

# Questions or Feedback?



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