



I-20 East Locally Preferred Alternative Summary Report



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Following a two-tiered Detailed Corridor Analysis (DCA), which evaluated a variety of transit alignments and modes, the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) I-20 East Transit Initiative has selected and refined a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). After presenting the LPA, the document provides an overview of the study background, DCA evaluation process, and next steps.

The Adopted LPA

The LPA represents the HRT3 Alternative from the Tier 2 Screening with refinements, and consists of Heavy Rail Transit (HRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) components, as shown in **Figure 1** below and **Figure 2** on page 2. The LPA would extend the existing MARTA east-west heavy rail line 12 miles from the Indian Creek Station. The line would extend south parallel to I-285, then east along I-20 to the Mall at Stonecrest.

BRT service would be implemented between downtown Atlanta and Wesley Chapel Road. BRT service would operate in general use lanes and HOV/HOT lanes on I-20, and in the City of Atlanta, BRT service would utilize the Capital Avenue interstate ramps, Capital Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, and Broad Street for access to and from the Five Points Station, or preferably the Multimodal Passenger Terminal (MMPT) if it is implemented.

The following station locations are recommended based on input from the public and stakeholders, existing and future land uses, and projected ridership:

New Stations Served by HRT

- Covington Highway
- Wesley Chapel Road
- Panola Road
- Lithonia Industrial Blvd/Evans Mill Road
- Mall at Stonecrest

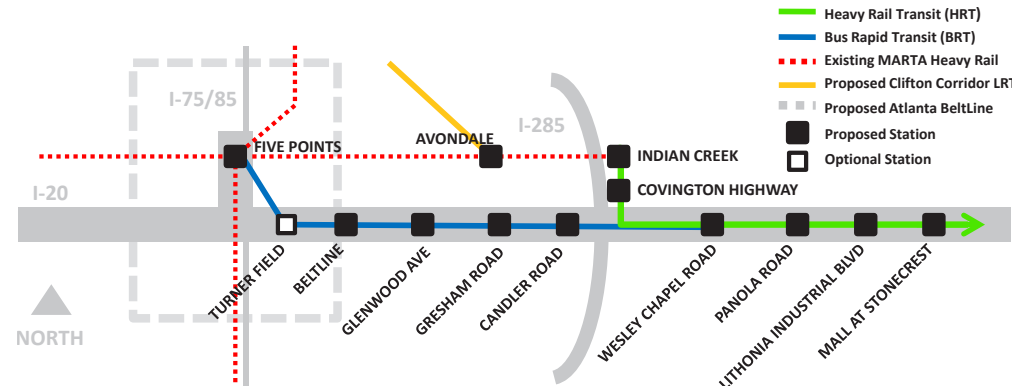
New Stations Served by BRT

- Turner Field (Optional)
- Glenwood Park/Beltline
- Glenwood Avenue
- Gresham Road
- Candler Road
- Wesley Chapel Road

Refinements to the Recommended LPA

Of the six alternatives considered in the Tier 2 Screening of the DCA, HRT3 was selected as the LPA because it would most effectively address the stakeholder-identified needs of the corridor and goals and objectives of the project, as shown in **Table 1** on page 3. Corridor stakeholders, the City of Atlanta, the general public, and other interested parties expressed overall support for

FIGURE 1: ADOPTED LPA (HRT3)



HRT3. However, due to their shared concerns about the nature of BRT service attached to this alternative, HRT3 was refined after its selection as the recommended LPA.

In refining HRT3 as the recommended LPA, its BRT portion was designed to meet premium BRT standards as defined by Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The FTA stipulates that bus service qualifies as BRT when it offers fixed route service that either operates predominantly on fixed-guideways or offers high frequency (15 minute headways, 10 minute headways during peak hours) service separate from mixed traffic with transit stations, traffic signal priority or preemption, low-floor vehicles or level-platform boarding, and separate branding of service. Therefore, the following specific refinements were made to the LPA BRT service:

- BRT service between downtown Atlanta and Wesley Chapel would operate in general use lanes and High Occupancy Vehicle/High Occupancy Toll (HOV/HOT) lanes on I-20 and surface streets as necessary to connect to downtown.
- BRT service would be fixed-route, branded, high frequency, all-day service utilizing transit stations rather than typical bus stops.
- Transit-only interchanges would be constructed at Candler Road and Gresham Road for BRT access to stations at those locations.
- Arterial BRT enhancements such as TSP and queue jumper lanes would be utilized to maximize the efficiency of surface street operations.

FIGURE 2: MAP OF THE ADOPTED LPA – HRT3

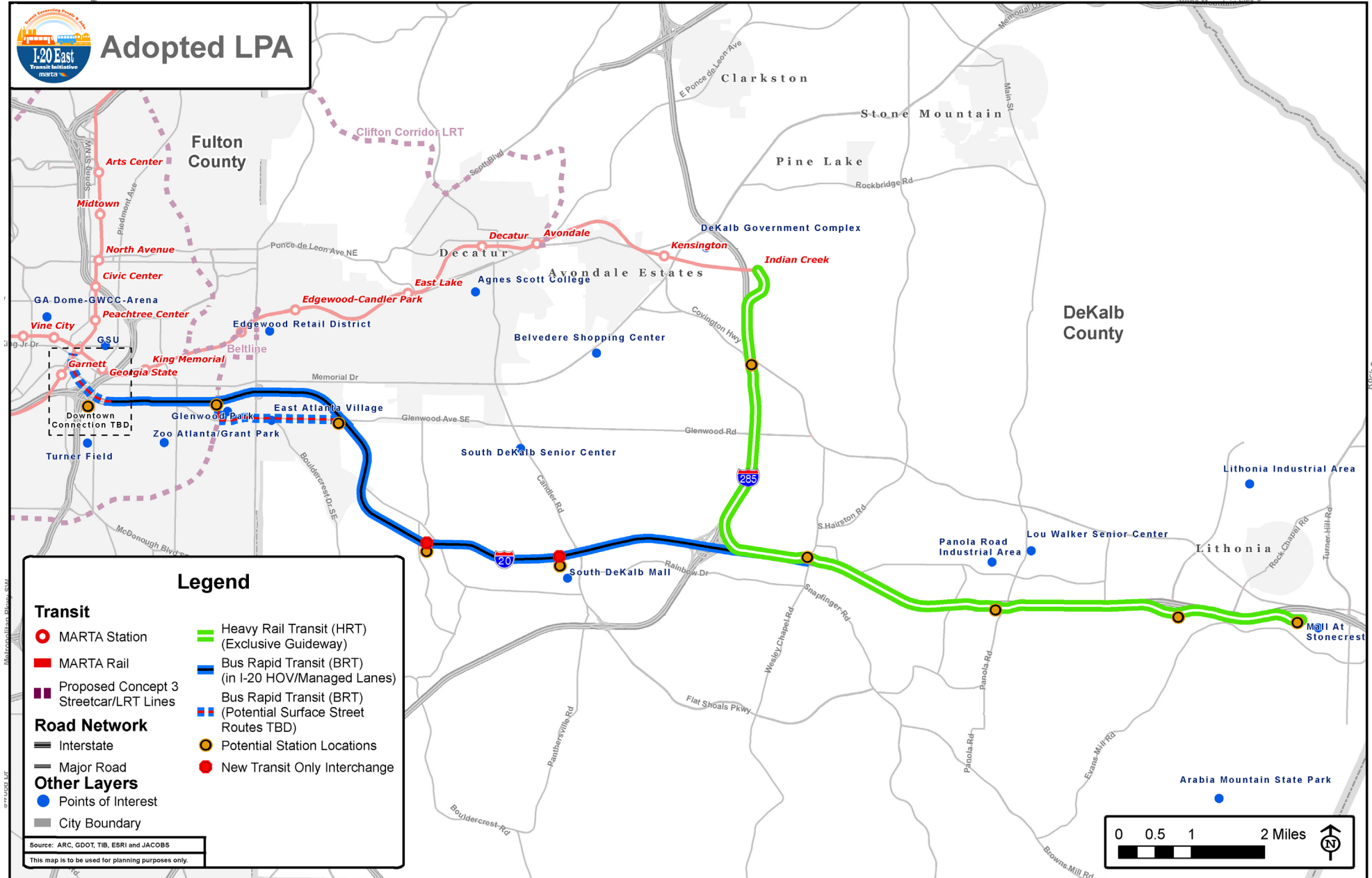


TABLE 1: REASONS FOR SELECTION OF LPA

Project Goal	Reason for Selection of LPA – HRT3
Increase Mobility and Accessibility	<p>Fast Travel Times and High Ridership: HRT3 would provide significant 2030 travel time savings for commuters in the corridor. Compared with automobile travel, HRT3 would save 34.5 minutes for commuters travelling between the Mall at Stonecrest and downtown Atlanta. Additionally, HRT3 is expected to attract 28,700 daily riders.</p> <p>Transit Access to Decatur and Proposed Clifton Corridor LRT Line: HRT3 was the only alternative that would provide a direct connection to both the City of Atlanta and the City of Decatur, the DeKalb County seat. HRT3 would also provide a connection to the proposed Clifton Corridor light rail line which would provide direct service to the employment center containing Emory University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).</p>
Provide Improved Transit Service in the Corridor	<p>Service to Heavily Congested Areas of Corridor First: While all alternatives would need to be constructed in multiple phases due to funding and construction limitations, HRT3 was the only alternative that would serve the congested areas east of I-285 in the first phase of implementation. This is important since the average travel time into downtown is 20-30 minutes longer for those commuters outside the I-285 Perimeter than for those inside the Perimeter. All other alternatives would likely not extend beyond the I-285 Perimeter under the first phase of construction. Thus, HRT3 would more quickly reach those areas of the corridor most affected by congestion and long travel times.</p> <p>Ease of Implementation: No major construction issues are associated with the implementation of HRT3. The other alternatives would all require very complicated and expensive bridges or extensive tunneling to avoid impacts to historic neighborhoods.</p>
Support Land Use and Development Goals	<p>Supportive of Economic Development: In addition to being consistent with existing and future land use plans, approximately 900 acres of underutilized or vacant land are located within ½ mile of HRT3 stations. Therefore, this alternative would provide significant opportunity for transit oriented development and redevelopment in the corridor.</p>
Promote Cost Effective Transit Investments	<p>Low Cost: At \$2.04B, the adopted LPA has the lowest total cost of all alternatives and is projected to cost over one billion dollars less than the most expensive alternative (HRT1). Furthermore, the LPA is \$73.7M less expensive than the next lowest cost alternative (BRT1).</p> <p>Utilizes Existing Infrastructure: HRT3 would utilize existing MARTA East-West line to provide a direct transit connection into downtown Atlanta. By utilizing the existing transit investment, HRT3 avoids the construction of an expensive and complicated connection into downtown Atlanta. Furthermore, HRT3 avoids the construction of 11+ miles of new transit line between downtown Atlanta and I-285, which could be viewed as a second, and redundant, transit line in the corridor. HRT3 would also allow for the use of existing MARTA rail maintenance facilities rather than the construction of new facilities in the corridor.</p>
Preserve Natural and Built Environment	<p>Lowest Number of Displacements: With an expected 13 displacements, HRT3 has significantly fewer residential or commercial displacements than all other alternatives. HRT1, LRT1, and BRT1, all are expected to incur 47 displacements and LRT2 and HRT2 are expected to incur 41 and 35 displacements respectively. With much of its alignment within GDOT right-of-way, HRT3 has the least property impacts of all alternatives.</p>
Achieve a High Level of Community Support	<p>Strong Public Support: HRT3 received strong public support, especially from residents of the heavily congested portion of the corridor east of I-285. In a rating of the six Tier 2 Alternatives, 30 percent of all survey respondents rated HRT3 as “most appropriate for the I-20 East Corridor,” as did 51 percent of those respondents who lived east of I-285 (or outside the Perimeter).</p>

Sources: Travel Demand Model, GIS data analysis, HDR Engineering

Although these refinements altered the costs and ridership projections for HRT3, these changes were not substantial enough to alter HRT3's performance in Tier 2 Screening. The refinements would raise capital costs associated with HRT3 to an estimated \$1,929.6M and right-of-way costs to \$110.4M for a total cost of \$2,040.0M. Operations and Maintenance costs were not affected by the refinements and remained at \$18.0M annually.

Proposed LPA Operations

Currently, MARTA operates two east-west transit lines: the Blue Line, which operates between the Indian Creek Station to the east and the HE Holmes Station to the west; and the Green Line, which operates between the Edgewood/Candler Park Station to the east and the Bankhead Station to the west. As shown in Figure 3 on page 4, the extended Green Line would serve all new heavy rail stations listed above and then operate as an express service along the existing east line, serving only select stations in order to minimize travel times between the Mall at Stonecrest and the Five Points Station.

Future connectivity to the proposed BeltLine and Clifton Corridor was a major consideration in the identification of the LPA. **Figure 4** on page 5 presents a map showing how the I-20 East project would integrate with other existing and planned transit investments.

Adoption of the LPA

On April 9, 2012, the MARTA Board of Directors voted to adopt HRT3 as the LPA for the I-20 East Transit Initiative. The ARC is currently updating Plan 2040, the Regional Transportation Plan, and the regional transportation demand model to include the adopted LPA as a transit mode in the I-20 East Corridor (AR-405, AR-406, AR-407).

FIGURE 3: LPA OPERATION IN MARTA SYSTEM

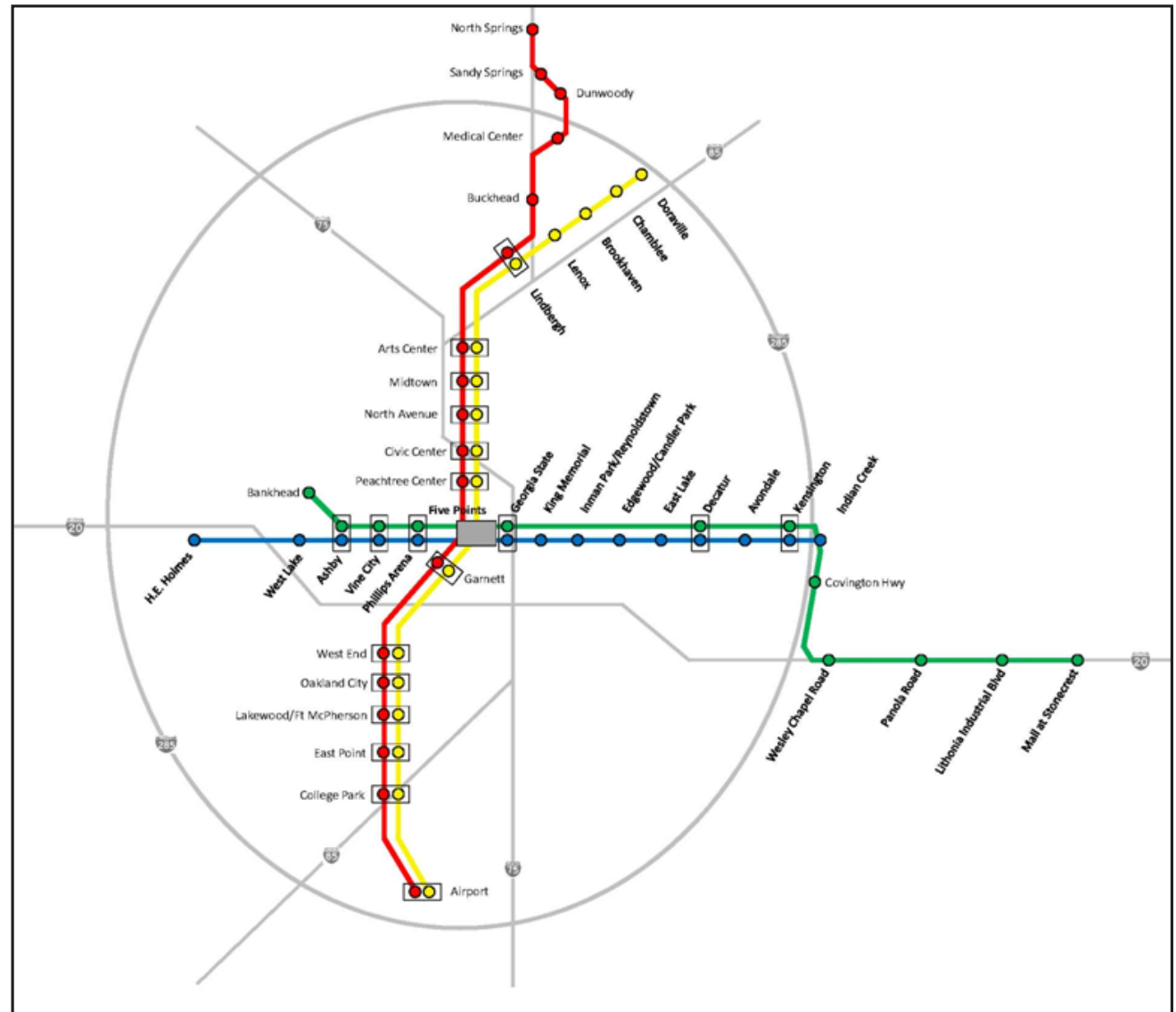
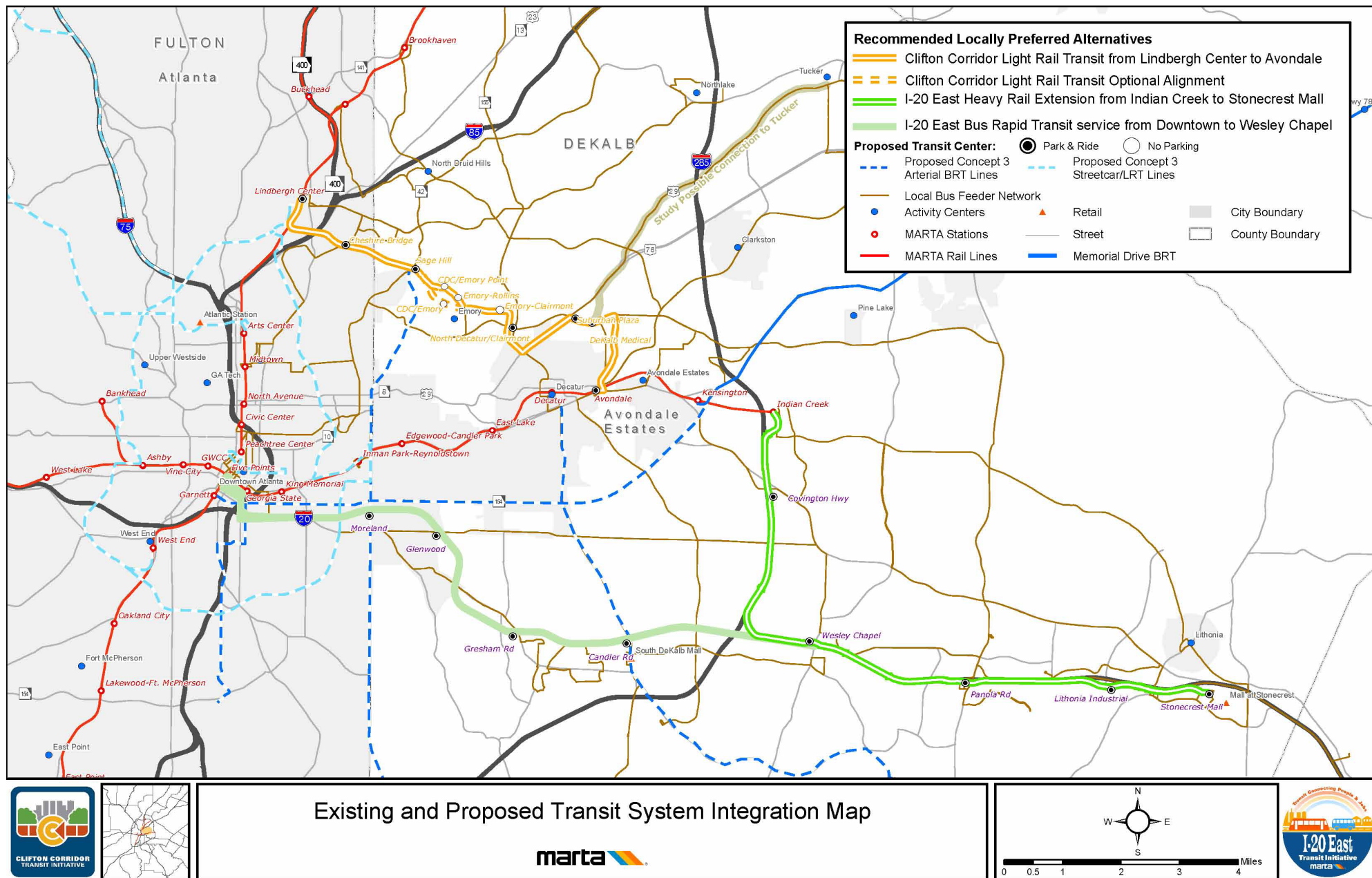


FIGURE 4: SYSTEM INTEGRATION MAP



Project Description and Background

MARTA, in close coordination with DeKalb County, the City of Atlanta, Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and in cooperation with the FTA, is undertaking the I-20 East Transit Initiative. This initiative will identify and summarize the potential transportation and environmental impacts associated with the implementation of new east-west transit service from Downtown Atlanta to the Mall at Stonecrest, in eastern DeKalb County. The initiative is organized in two study phases. The first phase, a DCA, or update of the previously completed Alternatives Analysis (AA), will be followed by an environmental review process in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

The I-20 East Corridor, shown in **Figure 5**, extends more than 20 miles from downtown Atlanta through southern DeKalb County and into the central portion of Rockdale County. Over the past decade, multiple planning studies have been undertaken to address the transportation issues in the corridor (**Figure 6**). The results of these studies indicate that a high capacity transit service, operating predominately in an exclusive right-of-way, is needed to accommodate the increasing transit demands of this corridor.

FTA Project Development Process

A DCA/AA is a required element within the FTA's project development process (**Figure 7**). The DCA/AA examined a range of feasible alternatives and compared the potential costs, impacts, and benefits of each alternative relative to the demonstrated purpose and need for the improvement. The result of this analysis was an LPA for advancement into environmental studies and preliminary engineering.

The second phase of the I-20 East Transit Initiative will be the preparation of environmental documents to satisfy NEPA, which requires the full consideration of environmental effects for any project that receives federal funding. To this

FIGURE 5: STUDY AREA

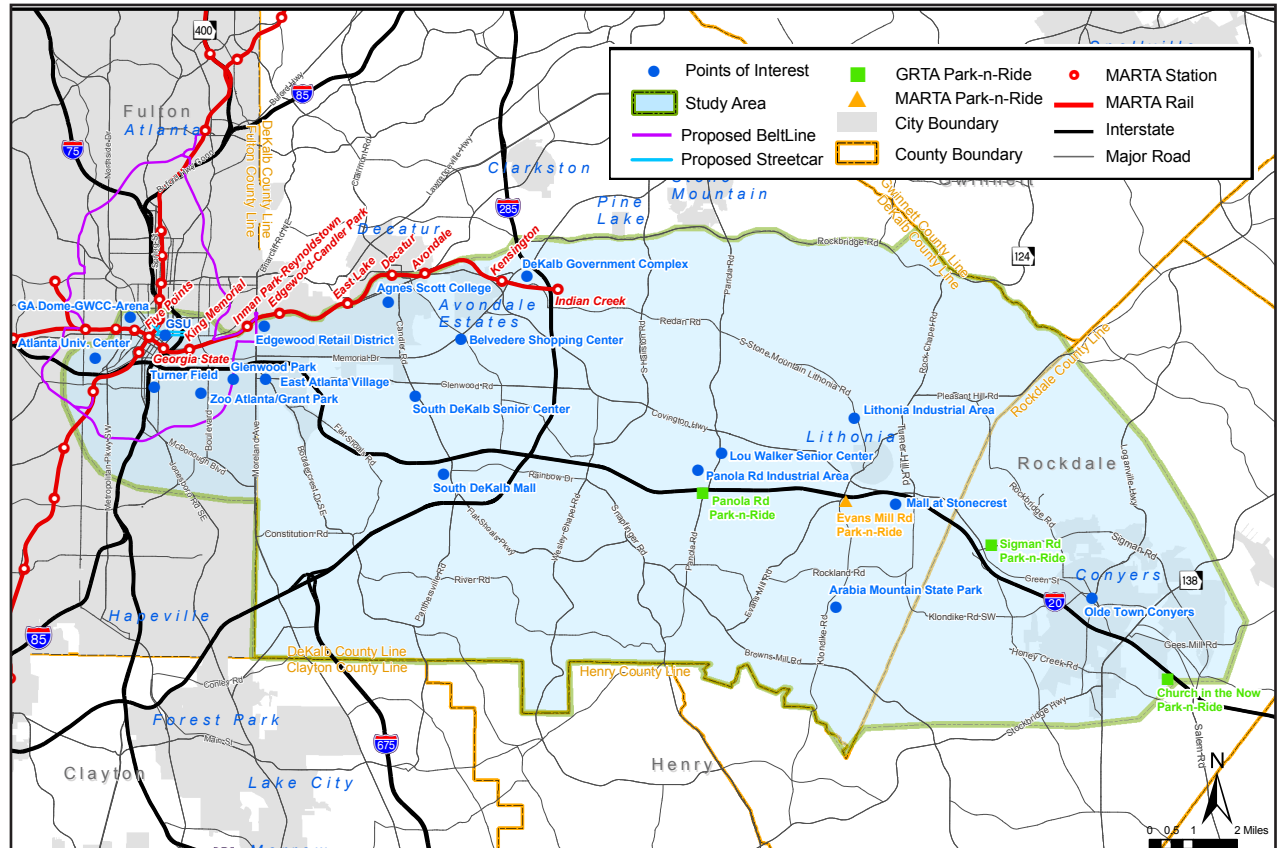
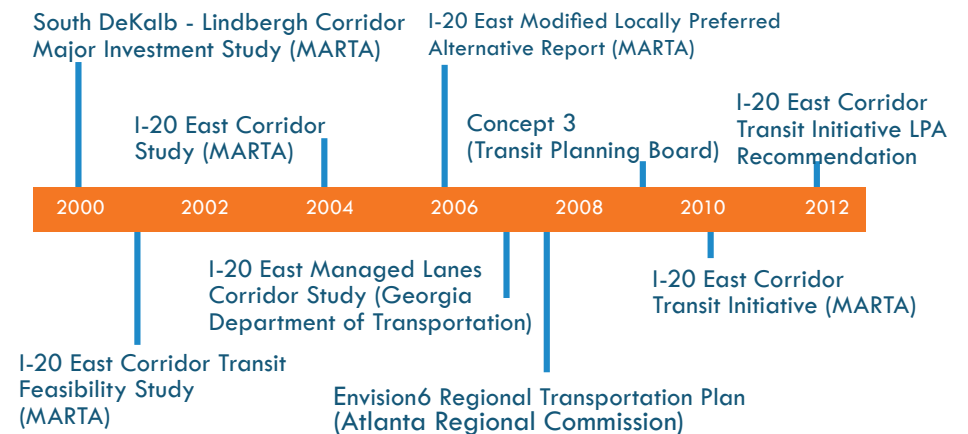


FIGURE 6: TIMELINE OF PREVIOUS STUDIES



end, the I-20 East Transit Initiative is preparing an Environmental Analysis (EA) for the BRT component and an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the HRT component. Both the EA and the EIS are focused on the social, cultural, and physical impacts of potential federal investments, with the EIS documenting these issues in greater depth than the EA. The EIS is completed in two steps, a Draft EIS and a Final EIS that follows the review of the Draft EIS. The EA, if it is determined that no significant impacts will result from the project, results in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

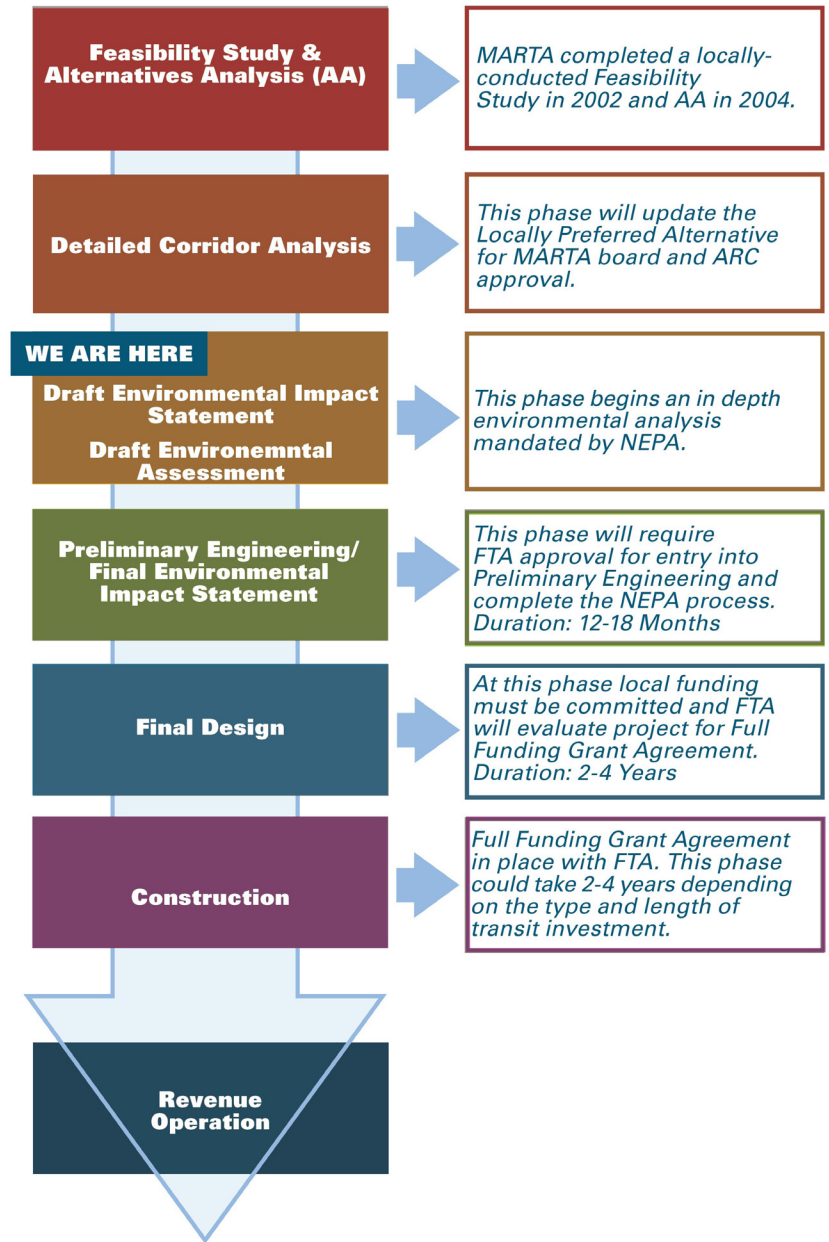
Purpose and Need

The purpose of the I-20 East Transit Initiative is to provide transit investments that enhance east-west mobility and improve accessibility to residential areas and employment centers within the corridor. The existing and future roadway congestion in the I-20 East Corridor will have an increasingly detrimental effect on automobile and bus transit travel in the corridor. The proposed transit investments are intended to improve travel times and travel reliability by providing a rapid transit service for commuters traveling to and from central Atlanta.

Per FTA guidance, the Purpose and Need Statement was developed to clearly and concisely articulate the primary transportation challenges that exist in the I-20 East Corridor. Based on the evaluation of existing and projected conditions, in conjunction with stakeholder input, the major challenges in the I-20 East Corridor that need to be addressed are:

- Traffic congestion causes delay and slow travel times
- There is inadequate transit access to downtown and other employment centers
- There are limited east-west travel options; I-20 is the only real choice
- There are limited planned transportation projects in corridor to accommodate growth
- There is insufficient transit service for a growing demand
- Express bus service operates on congested roadways
- Areas of the corridor are in need of revitalization
- There are limited transportation options for traditionally underserved populations

FIGURE 7: FTA PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Goals and Objectives

Based on the identified challenges and needs within the corridor and stakeholder input, goals and objectives were identified for the I-20 East Transit Initiative to serve as a guide for the development and evaluation of transit alternatives for this study (Table 2).

Alternatives Evaluation Framework

The methodology used to identify and evaluate the proposed transit alternatives was a two-tiered process in which alternatives were evaluated using increasingly detailed data and evaluation criteria (Figure 8).

Tier 1 Screening

The focus of the Tier 1 Screening was the identification of the best performing alignment and connection alternatives, regardless of transit technology, or mode. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) was tasked with identifying transit alignments that would connect activity centers throughout the I-20 East Corridor with central Atlanta and the existing MARTA heavy rail system. The process of identifying transit alignments for advancement into Tier 2 was comprised of three primary segments, as presented in Table 3 and Figure 9.

TABLE 2: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals	Objectives
Goal 1: Increase mobility and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 1.1: Improve travel times for east-west travel Objective 1.2: Improve transit accessibility within the corridor Objective 1.3: Improve connectivity with existing and planned transit investments Objective 1.4: Improve travel options within the corridor
Goal 2: Provide improved transit service within the corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 2.1: Provide transit service with sufficient capacity to accommodate growing demand Objective 2.2: Provide travel time competitive transit service in the corridor Objective 2.3: Provide transit service for traditionally underserved populations
Goal 3: Support regional and local land use and development goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 3.1: Promote economic development/revitalization Objective 3.2: Support adopted local land use plans Objective 3.3: Encourage transit supportive land use and development patterns
Goal 4: Promote cost effective transit investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 4.1: Provide transit service that can be implemented, operated, and maintained with available resources
Goal 5: Preserve natural and built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 5.1: Minimize impacts on environmental resources
Goal 6: Achieve a high level of community support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 6.1: Maintain compliance with stakeholder guidance Objective 6.2: Achieve a high level of public support

FIGURE 8: THE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS PROCESS

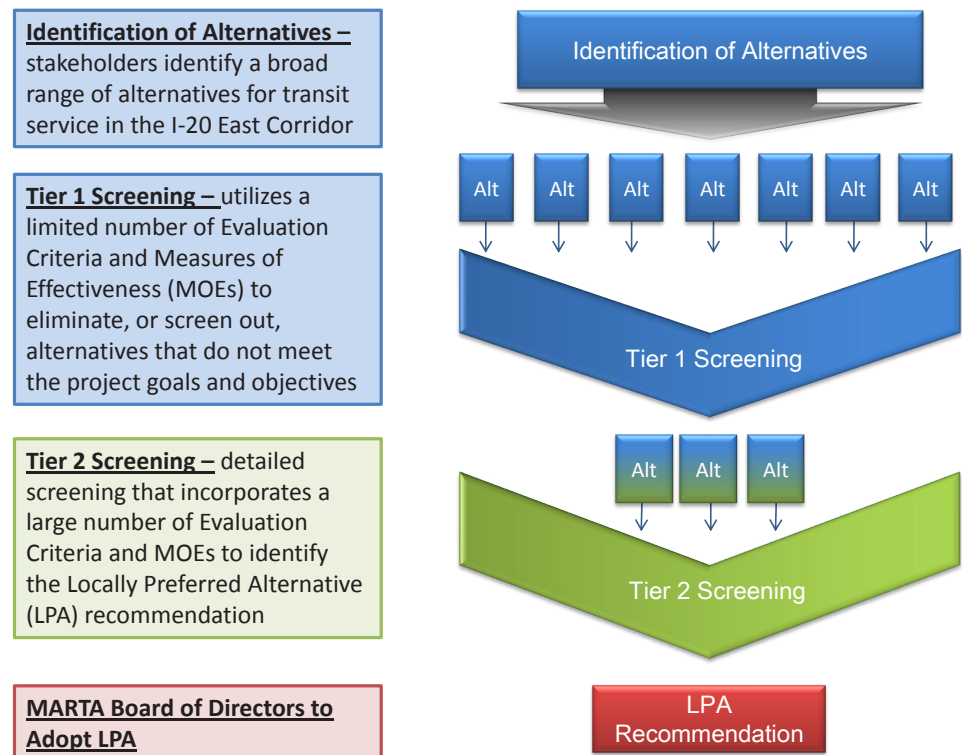
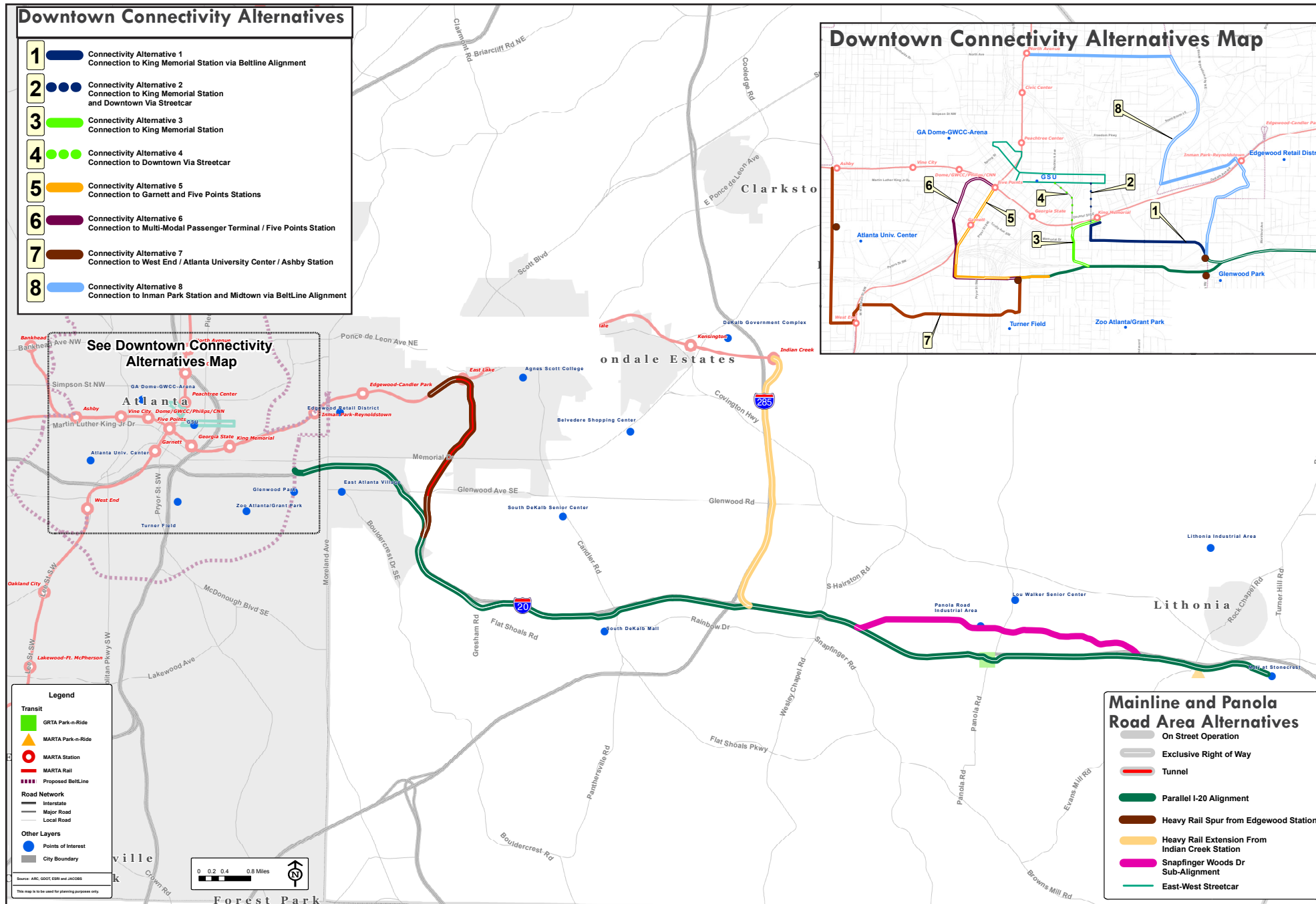


TABLE 3: TIER 1 ALTERNATIVES

Alternative Type	Alternative Name
Mainline Alternatives	1. Parallel I-20 Alignment
	2. Connection to Edgewood Station
	3. Heavy Rail Extension from Indian Creek
Panola Road Area Alternatives	1. Parallel I-20 Sub-Alignment
	2. Snapfinger Woods Drive Sub-Alignment
Downtown Connectivity Alternatives	1. Connection to King Memorial Station via Memorial Drive
	2. Connection to King Memorial Station and Downtown via Streetcar
	3. Connection to King Memorial Station via Hill Street
	4. Connection to Downtown via Streetcar
	5. Connection to Garnett and Five Points Stations
	6. Connection to Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal/Five Points Stations
	7. Connection to West End Station/Atlanta University Center/Ashby Station
	8. Connection to Midtown via Beltline Alignment















































































FIGURE 9: TIER 1 ALTERNATIVES



The Tier 1 Screening utilized a limited number of evaluation criteria and measures of effectiveness (MOEs) to evaluate which alternatives best addressed the identified project goals and objectives. All three Mainline Alternatives were advanced to Tier 2 because they all performed well in the evaluation. The only Panola Road Area Alternative that advanced to Tier 2 was the Parallel I-20 alignment because it performed significantly better than the Snapfinger Woods Drive alignment. Based on the technical evaluation and input from the City of Atlanta, two Downtown Connectivity Alternatives were advanced into Tier 2. These were the Connection to Garnett and Five Points Stations and the

Connection to Midtown via BeltLine Alignment. Despite rating well in the Tier 1 Screening, the Connection to Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal/Five Points Station was not promoted to Tier 2 Screening. First, this alternative was virtually identical to the Connection to Garnett and Five Points Station alternative, but was projected to incur longer travel times and attract fewer daily riders as well as fewer new riders. Second, with the MMPT in its initial planning stages, there are far too many unknowns about the actual facility to pursue a connection at this time. The results of the Tier 1 Screening are presented in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4: TIER 1 SCREENING RESULTS

Project Goal	Mainline Alternatives			Panola Road Area Alternatives		Downtown Connectivity Alternatives							
	1. Connection Directly to Downtown Atlanta	2. Connection to Edgewood Station	3. Heavy Rail Extension from Indian Creek	1. Parallel I-20 Sub-Alignment	2. Snapfinger Woods Drive Sub-Alignment	1. Connection to King Memorial Station via Memorial drive	2. Connection to King Memorial Station and Downtown via Streetcar Alignment	3. Connection to King Memorial Station	4. Connection to Downtown via Streetcar	5. Connection to Garnett and Five Points Stations	6. Connection to Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal/Five Points Stations	7. Connection to West End Station/ Atlanta University Center/Ashby Station	8. Connection to Inman Park Station and Midtown via Beltline Alignment
Increase Mobility and Accessibility													
Provide Improved Transit Service within the Corridor													
Support Land Use and Development Goals													
Promote Cost Effective Transit Investments													
Preserve Natural and Built Environment													
Achieve a High Level of Community Support													
Advanced to Tier 2 Screening	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES

Legend



Performed well



Performed moderately well



Performed poorly

Tier 2 Screening

The Tier 2 Alternatives represented the highest performing Tier 1 Alternatives. The purpose of the Tier 2 Screening was to identify the LPA utilizing a more robust list of evaluation criteria and MOEs. The result of the Tier 1 Screening was a set of feasible transit alignments that would connect activity centers along the I-20 East Corridor with central Atlanta and the existing MARTA heavy rail system. The Tier 2 Screening paired these alignments with compatible transit technologies, or modes. As such, all Tier 2 Alternatives were evaluated with all feasible transit technologies. Thus, if a given alignment was compatible with multiple transit technologies, it was analyzed with each technology. The transit technologies identified as suitable for this project include HRT, light rail transit (LRT), and BRT, as depicted in **Figure 10**. **Table 5** presents descriptions of the six Tier 2 Alternatives that resulted from the technology analysis and **Figure 11** on page 12 provides a map of these alternatives.

The Tier 2 Screening developed cost estimates based on conceptual engineering and realistic operating plans; completed preliminary station area planning; performed land use analysis; assessed right-of-way impacts on adjacent properties; considered impacts to natural and community resources; completed a detailed ridership analysis; and calculated FTA New Starts performance criteria. Key findings from the Tier 2 Screening can be found in **Table 6** on page 13. **Table 7** on page 13 presents the major assumptions considered during alternative development and analysis. **Table 8** on page 14 presents the evaluation matrix for the Tier 2 Alternatives.

TABLE 5: TIER 2 ALTERNATIVES

Alternative	Description
HRT1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy rail transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and downtown Atlanta Ties into the MARTA rail network just south of Garnett station Serves all existing stations on the MARTA north-south line between the Garnett and Lindbergh Center stations
LRT1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light rail transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and downtown Atlanta Provides connections to existing Garnett and Five Points Stations
BRT1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus rapid transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and downtown Atlanta BRT would operate in a dedicated busway adjacent to I-20 Provides connections to existing Garnett and Five Points Stations
LRT2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light rail transit serving stations between the Mall at Stonecrest and Midtown Atlanta Operates next to I-20 to Glenwood Park within the City of Atlanta then follows BeltLine alignment to existing North Avenue station
HRT2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy rail transit serving stations between the Mall at Stonecrest and downtown Atlanta Operates next to I-20 to Glenwood Avenue then runs north in a tunnel to a connection with the existing MARTA east-west rail line Would connect to the MARTA east-west rail line between Edgewood/Candler Park and East Lake stations
HRT3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy rail transit from Mall at Stonecrest to downtown Atlanta along I-20, I-285, and the existing MARTA east-west rail line Would operate along I-20 and I-285 then connect to existing MARTA east-west rail line at Indian Creek Station Would operate as an express service along existing MARTA east-west line, serving limited stations Areas along I-20 inside the Perimeter would be served with BRT

FIGURE 10: TRANSIT TECHNOLOGIES CONSIDERED

Heavy Rail Transit (HRT) operates on electric railway, and is characterized by high speeds, rapid acceleration of passenger rail cars, high platform loading, and grade separated rights-of-way from which all other vehicular and foot traffic are excluded.



Light Rail Transit (LRT) consists of passenger rail cars powered by overhead catenaries. Operating individually or in short trains, service is usually on fixed rails in exclusive right-of-way. LRT and streetcar service can occasionally operate in shared traffic.



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) offers limited-stop service that relies on technology to help speed up travel. BRT operates in shared or exclusive right-of-way. This service usually has dedicated stations, pre-boarding fare payment, and is separated from normal traffic.



FIGURE 11: TIER 2 ALTERNATIVES

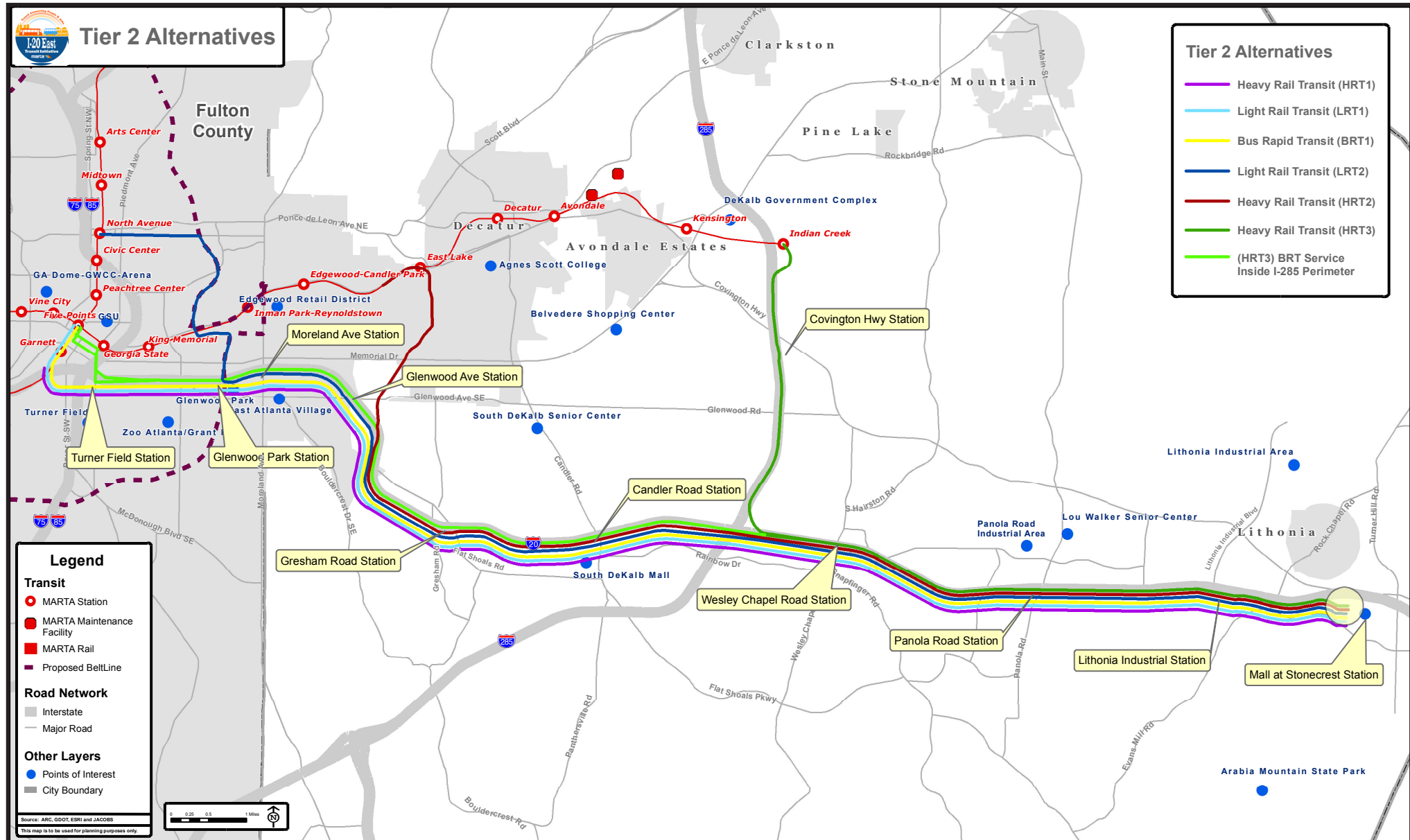


TABLE 6: COST AND PERFORMANCE COMPARISON OF TIER 2 ALTERNATIVES

	Alignment Length (Miles)	Cost Capital/ROW & O&M	2030 Daily Boardings	New 2030 Daily Riders	Travel Time from the Mall at Stonecrest to Five Points Station (in minutes)	Displacements
HRT1	19.2	\$3,281M, \$35.2M	41,900	12,300	35.7	47
LRT1	19.6	\$2,700M, \$10.4M	33,300	8,200	35.7	47
BRT1	19.6	\$2,111M, \$6.4M	27,700	5,200	37.2	47
HRT2	18.2	\$2,729M, \$23.8M	32,200	8,200	54.3	35
LRT2	20.3	\$2,115M, \$10.4M	18,400	5,300	38.6	41
HRT3	12.0 (HRT) 12.8 (BRT)	\$1,840M, \$18.0M	28,700	6,400	39.9	13

TABLE 7: ASSUMPTIONS

Design Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new HRT stations would be smaller, simpler stations that will cost less than traditional MARTA HRT stations No surface street operation or at-grade rail crossings for LRT alternatives with exception of BeltLine alignment for LRT2. Sufficient capacity at existing rail maintenance facilities to maintain HRT vehicles Sufficient capacity at existing bus maintenance facilities to maintain BRT vehicles. Some additional equipment may be necessary A new storage and maintenance facility in the I-20 corridor would be required for LRT alternatives
Capital Cost Estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cost estimates are reported in 2011 dollars Storage and maintenance facilities were only deemed necessary for LRT alternatives. Assumed that HRT and BRT vehicles would be stored and maintained at existing MARTA facilities.
Service Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-minute peak and 20 minute off-peak headways Six train consists for HRT service Four train consists for LRT service
Forecasting Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No HOV or managed lanes along I-20 east of I-285 in year 2030 GRTA express bus service would no longer serve the Panola Road park-and-ride lot.
ROW Cost Estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80' Required ROW assumed for corridor. Property costs based on current assessed value plus escalations factors ROW requirements on publicly owned property assumed to have no cost

TABLE 8: TIER 2 EVALUATION MATRIX

Project Goal	Project Objective	HRT1	LRT1	BRT1	LRT2	HRT2	HRT3	Performance
Increase Mobility and Accessibility	Improve East-West Travel Times							High
	Improve Transit Accessibility within the Corridor							Moderate
	Improve Connectivity with Existing and Planned Transit Investment							Low
	Improve Travel Options within the Corridor							
Provide Improved Transit Service within the Corridor	Provide Transit Service with Sufficient Capacity to Accommodate Growing Demand							
	Provide Travel Time Competitive Transit Service in the Corridor							
	Provide Transit Service for Traditionally Underserved Populations							
Support Land Use and Development Goals	Promote Economic Development and Revitalization							
	Support Adopted Local Land Use Plans							
	Encourage Transit Supportive Land Use and Development Patterns							
Promote Cost Effective Transit Investments	Provide Transit Service that Can be Implemented, Operated, and Maintained with Available Resources							
Preserve Natural and Built Environment	Minimize Impacts to Environmental Resources							
Achieve a High Level of Community Support	Maintain Compliance with Stakeholder Guidance							
	Achieve a High Level of Public Support							

Stakeholder and Public Involvement

Public and stakeholder involvement are an invaluable facet of the I-20 East Transit Initiative. Public and stakeholder input and feedback were critical to the identification of corridor transportation needs, project goals and objectives, the identification of transit alternatives, and the evaluation of these alternatives.



Table 9 presents an overview of public involvement techniques and when they were utilized throughout the study. Further information can be found in Appendix C to the *I-20 East LPA Report*.

Early in the public involvement process, stakeholders identified several common themes, or characteristics, regarding new transit service, which they felt were essential to the success of a transit investment in the corridor. These common themes became the guiding principles for new transit service in the I-20 East Corridor, against which all project alternatives were evaluated. These stakeholder-identified guiding principles are listed below.

Stakeholder-Identified Guiding Principles

- Transit should be a rapid service to downtown serving commuters with few stops
- Dedicated transitway for entire length of project. None, or very limited, operation on surface streets in mixed traffic
- System must have a direct connection to MARTA heavy rail system
- There must be a way for riders to transfer to/from the BeltLine
- It is important to limit the number of transfers to reduce travel times
- The most desirable connection to downtown would be at the Five-Points/MMPT since it would provide a connection to the north-south and east-west MARTA rail lines without additional transfers

TABLE 9: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public Involvement Technique	Audience	Purpose	Frequency
Initial Stakeholder Interviews	Elected officials, business leaders, neighborhood groups, major churches, individual citizens	To allow corridor stakeholders to identify major transportation challenges facing the I-20 East Corridor.	29 stakeholders in 22 interviews early in the study
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)	Interviews with elected officials, business leaders, neighborhood groups, major churches, individual citizens	To provide input on corridor needs, project goals and objectives, evaluation methods, transit alternatives, station areas	4 SAC meetings at major milestones throughout the study
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	Key federal, state, and local agency staff	To provide technical input at key project milestones	4 TAC meetings at major milestones throughout the study
General Public Meetings	The general public	To provide an opportunity for the general public to give input and feedback at key project milestones	3 rounds of public meetings at 3 locations each, for a total of 9 public meetings throughout the study
Project Webpage and Facebook Page	The general public	To provide project updates	6,107 website hits and 140 Facebook "likes" through April 2012.
Online Surveys	SAC members and the general public	To allow SAC members and the public to provide feedback on project alternatives	1700+ surveys taken at key milestones
Project Briefings	Stakeholders, neighborhoods organizations, agencies	To provide updates on the findings of the study	28 briefings in 2011

Moving Forward: Challenges and Opportunities to Implementing the LPA

With adoption of the LPA by the MARTA Board, the I-20 East Transit Initiative has entered into the environmental studies phase of the project. The study will complete an EA and a DEIS in order to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), which requires the full consideration of environmental effects for any project that receives federal funding. The following challenges and opportunities will face MARTA as the project moves forward through the project development process.

Refinement of Station Locations: Although all station areas have been presented to the public, it is anticipated that refinement of the station location, size, access points, parking facilities, and layout will be required. This will likely involve outreach efforts to business owners, residents, jurisdictional staff, and elected officials.

Continued Public Involvement: Public, stakeholder, and agency outreach must continue throughout the life of this project in order to educate the public, identify local issues, and build support. One key issue that arose during public engagement in the fall of 2011 was concern regarding BRT service inside the I-285 Perimeter. While there was overwhelming support for HRT3 from residents outside Perimeter, residents within the Perimeter voiced concern that they would not be served by rail transit. The specific routing and integration of the BRT portion of HRT3 will be continuously refined through future work.

Refinement of Project Costs: It is anticipated that capital, right-of-way, and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs will be adjusted as more detail regarding the transit alignments, operations, and station locations is prepared.

Coordination with GDOT: Since much of the LPA alignment is proposed within or partially within GDOT right-of-way, close coordination is necessary. MARTA has engaged GDOT throughout the study process to ensure the protection of a transit corridor within GDOT right-of-way where possible. As a result of these coordination efforts, the GDOT Board recently adopted a resolution that guides cooperation between the two agencies with regard to implementation of transit initiatives in corridors designated for managed lane projects. The intent of the resolution is to foster thoughtful utilization of existing and planned assets for both highway and transit modes. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed to outline specific commitments for the I-20 East Corridor.

Identification of Project Funding: The identification of possible funding sources is essential to the implementation of the I-20 East project. One possible funding source is the FTA New Starts program. The New Starts program is the federal government's primary financial resource for supporting major transit investments. This highly competitive program evaluates potential New Starts projects based on mobility improvements, cost effectiveness, transit supportive land uses and policies, local financial commitments, as well as other criteria. MARTA is also looking at alternative funding mechanisms for project delivery and implementation. n