



APPENDIX D PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DETAILS



Stakeholder Interview Summary Report September 2005

In order to gain a better understanding of the views towards transit and transportation improvement issues within the corridor, face-to-face interviews with key community partners were conducted. The interviews will allow the Public Involvement Team (PI Team) to better understand the specific attitudes, perception, concerns and understanding of transit and transportation issues within the corridor.

There have been 16 interviews to gain information about the Inner Core Corridor with citizen, political, business, civic and media representatives, including:

- Debbie McCown, Executive Director of the Piedmont Park Conservancy
- Robb Pitts, Fulton County Commissioner-Elect, At-Large Post 2
- Phil Cuthbertson, Grant Park Conservancy
- Pete Hayley, Chief Operating Officer of University Community Development Corporation
- Shannon Powell, VP of Planning and Development for Midtown Alliance
- Richard A Dent, Vice President and General Manager of The Mall West End
- Ed McBrayer, Executive Director of the PATH Foundation
- Scott Selig, Vice President of Selig Enterprises
- Brian Leary, Atlantic Station
- Laura Keenan, Senior Vice President at Bank of America
- Nancy Boxill, District 6 Commissioner, Fulton County
- Jeffrey Swanagan, Executive Director of Georgia Aquarium
- Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney 4th District, Georgia, U.S. House of Representatives
- Congressman John Lewis, District 5, Georgia, United States House of Representatives
- Bill Miller, Director of Administrative Services for the Georgia World Congress Center Authority
- Freedom Park Conservancy Board Members of Freedom Park Conservancy

Each stakeholder gave their insight and perspective on the condition of their respective area as well comments and concerns on the proposed project.

Views of MARTA

Several of the stakeholders agreed that changes needed to be made to sustain future growth and were advocates of the Beltline project but were not happy with the current state of MARTA as a whole. Many of the stakeholders felt that MARTA was not competent enough and too bureaucratic to aptly complete the project. Many also expressed MARTA's inability to react to the needs of the Atlanta community. Some of their comments are below:

- Unhappy with MARTA's slow response to the changing Atlanta community and its needs. MARTA was very bureaucratic and instead of bringing about change, it seems like a barrier to effective transit and land use planning.
- MARTA is not more agile, more forward thinking.
- One stakeholder felt that a different agency should spearhead the transit element, because MARTA and the federal process were so bureaucratic.



Tax Allocation District (TAD)

Commissioner Robb Pitts had concerns with the Tax Allocation District (TAD):

- Concern that a TAD would be created, and that commercial and upscale residential development would occur without the necessary transit enhancements in the area. Expressed a reluctance to support the City of Atlanta's possible TAD at the county level unless there was assurance that the transit improvements would take place.

Convenience, Reliability, Accessibility

- How the transportation connects will be important.
- Frequency of getting the people to where they want to go is important especially for folks in town because a lot of people in town would use public transportation more
- For the areas of focus for the Beltline, is it convenient and accessible for the encompassing neighborhoods. Currently, MARTA service does not go into neighborhoods enough to provide effective accessibility.
- Some of the transit stops are still not feasible when thinking of the transit's patrons, such as families. When considering transit stops that cater to Atlanta landmarks and tourist attractions, consider the convenience and accessibility (i.e. walking distance) for families with children. For example, the stop nearest to the Zoo is 4-5 blocks away, not a feasible distance for a family with children.

Focus of the Project/Service Area of the Beltline

Many of the stakeholders were concerned about the focus of the Beltline project and specific service areas. Stakeholders questioned whether or not the Beltline would focus primarily on the city of Atlanta or would it extend into other metro areas of the city. There were also concerns that there are still areas that are being neglected and should be addressed. Some of the major concerns/comments of the stakeholders are listed below:

- East-west connections are still very weak even with the proposed beltline.
- Target the city of Atlanta and don't focus on the suburban areas surrounding the city. Even with the new proposed alternatives, the transit still doesn't hit major parts of the city
- A major problem with transit use is that MARTA is restricted to DeKalb and Fulton Counties.
- Questioned the current focus on development along the Beltline, stating it was premature and that some areas of the Beltline are severely blighted. Without the transit portion in place, its doubtful development will happen there. Also those areas that are attractive to developers would be developed anyway regardless of the Beltline project.



Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meetings Summaries

Inner Core SAC Meeting Summary

August 18, 2005

4:00-6:00pm

All Saints Episcopal Church

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order. She thanked everyone for coming and welcomed the new members. She explained that this was the first meeting of the SAC for the Alternatives Analysis phase of the Inner Core project. She stated that the purpose of the SAC is to serve as advisors to the project team on issues such as development and modal choices. In addition, the study team relies on those SAC participants that are members of neighborhood associations to share information with their organizations and relay concerns back to the SAC.

Ms. Kennedy informed the group that the SAC is anticipated to meet five times during the next year at key project milestones. She reminded the group that in addition to the meetings, there is always opportunity to provide comments including suggestions for SAC meeting places and times. She added that the project team will be moving around the community over the next few months with appearances at NPU meetings and Inner Core public meetings.

Ms. Kennedy introduced MARTA staff and asked the consultant team and attendees to introduce themselves. She then turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager.

Through handouts of a Power Point presentation, Mr. Dunning reviewed the findings of the Inner Core Feasibility Study, the framework and timeline of the Alternatives Analysis, the project's Problem Statement/Purpose and Need, and the public involvement plan.

Following the presentation, Mr. Dunning invited attendees to ask questions and make comments. Below is a summary of those questions and comments with discussion from project staff noted in italics.

Question: Is there specific set of guidelines to work from in defining the purpose and need?

Answer: *Yes, the FTA employs specific criteria. Project justification and local financial commitment are two areas that the project is graded on. In addition to its own criteria, the FTA advocates the development of local goals as well.*



Question: In defining the problem, it would be helpful to have some data on how people move around. Do we have such data, and can we look at it?

Answer: *Yes, we do have the data. We are currently working on the analysis, looking at baseline year 2000 trips and projecting the numbers of future trips. We can get it to you once we've completed the work.*

Question: I thought we developed an outline of the purpose and need as part of the Feasibility Study? We don't need to redo the work, do we?

Answer: *Transit projects are usually corridors. The Inner Core is an area. As a result, the purpose and need we developed in the Feasibility Study was very general. For the Alternatives Analysis and New Starts process, we need to define a problem that is more specific. The Beltline is not your typical project; it is hard to justify a loop as a solution to a transportation problem because people don't ride in a circle from an origin to a destination as you might along a corridor.*

Comment: I suggest you look at the results of the Metro Atlanta Chamber's Quality Growth Task Force Report. It calls for strategies to increase the quality of life in the City of Atlanta in order to attract people in town and help solve congestion. You can justify the project by its impact on quality of life.

Question: How does this fit in with all these other efforts like those conducted by the Trust for Public Land and Atlanta Development Authority? You do not talk about them; they don't talk about you.

Answer: *We are included in these other efforts, but to qualify for federal funds, the transit portion must go through a separate process. TPL and ADA are looking at the parks and economic development aspects of the Beltline concept only. We cannot prejudice the alternatives by just focusing on the Beltline. It's just one alternative that we are considering, but we also have three others we must look at as part of our analysis. We must be very objective. We do recognize that it is important to help the community distinguish among the studies to avoid confusion. We will do our best to incorporate, where possible, all the efforts.*

Question: ADA is so eager to identify the transit component of the Beltline that they even have their own transit task force. I am afraid that what they come up with will not match this study's LPA. The public needs to know that this AA is the real study. This follows the federal process, despite what the ADA Transit Panel identifies. The City of Atlanta needs to make decisions based on this AA and not on the panel's results.

Answer: *If federal dollars are to be utilized in the implementation of transit for the Atlanta area, the funds must be applied for and coordinated through MARTA. We are*



the transit agency for the region. We are working closely with the City of Atlanta and the ADA.

Question: I understand the East Line is ahead of the Inner Core in terms of priorities for the MARTA board. Could that be changed? What if this project secures federal funds?

Answer: *As it is now, the East Line performs better in the analysis and DeKalb County has taken steps to facilitate its implementation. If funds are awarded for the Inner Core, the Board will take into account all the factors and make the right decision on what project moves forward.*

Comment: This is about getting money in a competitive environment. Atlanta has always been an experimental place in North America. We have a very special opportunity with this project. We need to come up with a new paradigm when we apply for the funds; we need to be outrageous to get noticed.

Answer: *FTA mandates that we follow a strict process. The focus is less on innovation and more on demonstrated need and a defined purpose. Instead of emphasizing the 'out of the box' aspects, we need to make our project fit 'in the box'. It must meet a defined set of criteria to be eligible for federal funding. The FTA will be grading our project on how well it meets their requirements compared to other projects in the nation.*

Question: Who are you working for, who is your client?

Answer: *The project team is working for the MARTA Board. Our result, the LPA, is also for the Atlanta Regional Commission, the regional planning agency responsible for transportation programming. Once the LPA is included in the Regional Transportation Plan, MARTA can apply for New Starts Funding.*

Question: Aren't you (MARTA) the transportation czar of Atlanta? Do you see any value in working with the highway builders (GDOT)?

Answer: *GDOT, GRTA, ARC, and MARTA all work together as planning partners for the region. We have included representatives from these agencies on our Technical Advisory Committee. We coordinate projects wherever possible.*

Question: We do have a project that fits in the box – the C-Loop! My neighborhood group wants this project. We have a corridor that fits in very well with the New Starts process. Is there a chance we can break this segment off from the Inner Core project? We have a real defined project and a chance for the money!

Answer: *The C-Loop is very important to us. As far as breaking it off as a separate piece, we need to keep the entire Inner Core project intact for the AA. You're right,*



there is a defined need in the Emory to Lindbergh corridor and that need will bolster the justification for the entire project.

Comment: There is a rush to get the TAD approved this year. Is that a problem considering the AA's timeline?

Answer: *No, it's not a problem that the efforts are on two different speeds. As I stated earlier, our process is separate from the other studies. Keep in mind, the Beltline is more than a transit project; it's about parks and economic development as well. The other components are on their own tracks and are more easily influenced by factors like politics and private development. MARTA has to follow the federal process.*

Question: What are you going to do with us at the next meeting?

Answer: *We will be discussing the Purpose and Need in greater detail and finalizing a draft. We will also define the alternatives we'll be evaluating in the study.*

The meeting concluded at 6:00pm. Ms. Kennedy thanked everyone for attending.



**MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis
Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting
All Saints Episcopal Church
August 3, 2006**

Overview

Introductions from meeting attendees – MARTA staff, consultant team, neighborhood representatives, advocacy groups, and concerned citizens

Inga Kennedy then welcomed the group and introduced Johnny Dunning with MARTA's planning staff.

Mr. Dunning welcomed the group and began his presentation of the Beltline Alternatives Analysis technical results. Copies of the presentation were handed out to the meeting attendees. Mr. Dunning began by reviewing the up-coming public meetings in August 2006.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: Will the meetings address overlapping NPU boundaries?

Answer: All the meetings will have the same content. Ms. Kennedy invited everyone to attend the meeting that was most convenient.

Mr. Dunning continued by outline the proposed Beltline route alternatives, including the TSM baseline alternative. He points out that the TSM is required to maximize the current system. MARTA has evaluated the bus lines along the route and examined several routes to meet the current Beltline demand. He then continues to outline the four Beltline route alternatives that have been determined in technical studies. Alternatives B1, B2, B3, and B4 combine two basic alignments and two connection points. In addition, all four alternatives have three possible transit technologies: light rail, streetcar, or bus rapid transit. Mr. Dunning outlined all these alternatives on maps.

Question: Why is Interstate-20 east of Atlanta highlighted on each map?

Answer: Emphasizes the C-loop project route, a priority project for MARTA

Question: Why does the Beltline route jog eastward along Dekalb Avenue?

Answer: To get around Hulsey Yard.

Question: What if Hulsey Yard becomes available?

Answer: That can be addressed in the environmental impact phase and the plan can be changed to reflect that change in property and route.



Question: Please address the MARTA board's priority projects.

Answer: Mr. Dunning lists the top priorities, including the C-loop and Beltline projects; Ms. Kennedy also touches on how the priority planning process has progressed.

Mr. Dunning then continued to discuss travel demand modeling considerations.

Question: Has the plan taken into account the new lofts being built in the area?

Answer: Yes, the model has accounted for changing demographics along the Beltline route.

Question: If infill stations aren't considered in this planning phase, can they be considered later?

Answer: Yes, they can be included in the environmental impact phase.

Mr. Dunning then began discussing the capital cost estimations and the relevant transit technologies. Of particular interest to the crowd were the specifics of Bus Rapid Transit technologies.

Question: How do BRT compare in weight to current buses?

Answer: They will be heavier, bigger capacity of 60-90 people, potentially larger.

Question: Have these heavier buses been considered for the effects on surrounding houses?

Answer: This applies not only to buses, but to all forms; the EIS will get in to further specific details about the direct impacts and potential mitigation measures.

Question: Will the fuel type be detailed in the EIS?

Answer: Yes, with a preference for clean fuels (such as CNG or clean diesel)

Mr. Dunning then moved on to specific details about street cars, outlined on the presentation slide.

Question: Why will bridges be redesigned for BRT but not light rail?

Answer: Bridges are already designed for rail travel, buses and asphalt have different engineering requirements.

Question: Why limited signaling?

Answer: Differences between speed and mobility of rail or streetcar

Question: Will streetcars and light rail have a train horn?

Answer: Depends on the option – both BRT and LRT will have subdued horns, not much different than current street traffic; neither will have a freight-rail type horn.

Question: Will the alternate with dog-legs pose intersection redesigns?



Answer: Yes, two alternatives have been blocked out because of the engineering challenges posed by turning radii with light rail transit.

Question: Will the alternatives be reinstated if Holsey yard is acquired?

Answer: Depends on the timing, but there have been no indications so far that that property will be sold.

Mr. Dunning then proceeds to operating and management estimations for each mode type, as referenced in the presentation slides.

Question: What are the capacities of each mode option?

Answer: 60-90 riders on average, with some over 100 riders

Question: Why are some numbers negative (in comparative O&M cost table)?

Answer: With these alternatives, some bus service can be eliminated to save the existing system money.

Question: Assumption that the same number of people will be moved?

Answer: Yes, so BRT is still cheaper even with more buses, drivers, and frequency of service.

Mr. Dunning and the MARTA staff then handed out detailed technical matrices for discussion.

Question: Will King Plow area be covered?

Answer: Yes, both alternatives B2 and B4 are close to King Plow and Marietta Street corridor.

Discussion of the technical analysis matrix.

Question: Has rider preference been taken into account?

Answer: That is a very difficult preference to account for, many items in the matrix reflect market preference – such as developer propensity for rail – but rider preference has not been directly measured.

Comment: Studies along 75/85 have shown that BRT is significantly different than buses, people respond better to BRT and the dedicated BRT right of way.

Answer: Mr. Dunning says that MARTA is focused on the best moving option for mobility, not just the cool factor of which is the best looking.

Question: Has O&M costs been included also?

Answer: Yes, these have been incorporated into the technical matrix.



Question: Has a low bid been requested for this project?

Answer: Yes, MARTA does that for all vehicles – though that phase will not start until a mode has been chosen and construction actually started.

Further detailed discussion of matrix and evaluation options.

Question: What does the incremental cost for each new rider work out to?

Question: Will you pick from the best four alternatives or go with the number one option as designated by the technical analysis?

Answer: Currently picking the LPA from all the options that will be decided by the board with staff technical input.

Question: Cost of new equipment should be incorporated.

Answer: It is, both in the capital cost and O&M cost where appropriate.

Question: How does cost per new rider compare to other regional programs?

Answer: Very competitive.

Question: Will BRT be natural gas or diesel? Or is it an electric motor? How will the modes be affected by fuel type?

Answer: That will be reviewed later in the EIS phase; currently this assumes studied technology in practice in peer areas.

Question: Have revenue from bus advertisements been incorporated?

Answer: MARTA has to demonstrate that it can run this on current funding; other options for funding or revenue can be considered in the future.

Question: Stakeholders would be better informed with some information about how MARTA is currently funded and how this project will be funded.

Answer: Both Mr. Dunning and other MARTA staff spent several minutes describing the intricacies of federal and regional transportation funding – also provided some resources for more information.

Question: Will the preferred alternative be selected from the comparative results? How will the public be able to influence the process?

Answer: The public preferences will be consulted by the board before any decision is made on technical results.

Question: Will other surveys be accepted?

Answer: No, not as they are outside of MARTA's decision making process – the current technical analysis is being conducted by agency staff for the agency board; outside surveys and studies are not part of the internal MARTA process.



Question: Will bicycles be accommodated on the bus track?

Answer: No, maybe just to the side on a parallel track. The goal is transit with adjacent bike paths for the accommodation of other modes.

Question: How does the Mason property affect federal funding?

Answer: Depends on how the transaction proceeds.

Question: Which map is the best?

Answer: Provided in the handouts and the staff will be glad to discuss afterwards.

Summary of Written Comment Forms

Comment: Good work, impressive analysis, clear presentation, excellent handouts. I now understand all the considerations much better. I prefer streetcar as a technology, but realize the cost concerns may be paramount. So I can live with Alt B1- BRT or Alt B1-Streetcar.



MARTA Inner Core Public Meeting Summary
Senior Citizens Services
September 20, 2005
6:00-8:00pm

The meeting was attended by 14 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts, which included a project newsletter, comment form, copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and the project goals and objectives. A MARTA video, created for a previous study, explaining light rail technology was also handed out. Ms. Kennedy reminded the attendees that all handout information would be available on MARTA's website www.itsmarta.com after the meeting. She then asked the consultant team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning reviewed the Feasibility Study findings, the Alternatives Analysis framework and timeline, the project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and the next steps/on-going activities. Following the presentation, Mr. Dunning invited attendees to ask questions and make comments.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: Could you clarify your statement about population? You mentioned there are four million residents in Atlanta now and there will be six million in 2030. You are talking about the whole region right? What is the population for the study area?

Answer: The study area has about 220,000 residents now and approximately 400,000 are projected.

Question: All you (Beltline) studies say different figures for population! At a meeting last night, I heard 150,000 as a current population.

Answer: Our study is looking at the C-Loop concept as well, so the South DeKalb Mall area is included in our population figures.

Question: We are congested now, and this project won't start until 2011. What is going to be done between now and 2011?

Answer: Unfortunately we cannot build projects like this overnight. There is a lengthy federal process that we must follow. Through this study we will identify some potential improvements to the MARTA system that do not require major investments and can be implemented in the interim.

Question: How do you feel about Wayne Mason's announcement that he is leading his own study looking at transit in his corridor?

Answer: We will coordinate with him on the study. He has stated that he will be sharing his findings with us.

Question: If he picks trolley would that force the hand of the other studies?

Answer: No, our process must look objectively at all technologies. We will certainly try to connect with whatever technology is selected.

Question: This project is so many years out from completion. You really need to make an effort to make this real to people. People can't imagine 2030 plans!



MARTA Inner Core Public Meeting Summary
Georgia Hill Neighborhood Facility
September 22, 2005
6:00-8:00pm

The meeting was attended by 22 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts which included a project newsletter, comment form, copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and the project goals and objectives. A MARTA video, created for a previous study, explaining light rail technology was also handed out. Ms. Kennedy reminded the attendees that all handout information would be available on MARTA's website www.itsmarta.com after the meeting. She then asked the consultant team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning reviewed the Feasibility Study findings, the Alternatives Analysis framework and timeline, the project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and the next steps/on-going activities. Following the presentation, Mr. Dunning invited attendees to ask questions and make comments.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Comment: There are 800 news homes in the southeast area. Most of the concepts don't serve this area.

Question: The beltline concept is so popular. Its even on the cover of Creative Loafing this week. It has huge community support. Why do you have this process. Just pick the beltline.

Answer: There is a specified process to obtain federal funds. We are following the new starts process.

Comment: Connectivity to East Atlanta village is my issue. It's a destination for people on this side of town. We need transit to connect our neighborhoods to the village.

Question: Why are you going for new money and a new project instead of focusing on repair and rehab of the existing system. I think adequate bus service could serve the need.

Answer: We are focusing resources on the existing system. In addition, the beltline/c-loop would set the stage for future system expansion.

Comment: There is defensiveness in the southeast because we were hard hit in the last round of budget cuts. Boulevard and Moreland Avenue are highly congested and we need transit service.

Comment: Don't eliminate the beltline; the c-loop is not as critical. We need to balance and link growth with investment in transportation. We need to do a cost effectiveness study.

Question: How will you get people to the beltline? Can you park at the station?



MARTA Inner Core Public Meeting Summary
The Mall at West End
September 26, 2005
6:00-8:00pm

The meeting was attended by 19 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts which included a project newsletter, comment form, copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and the project goals and objectives. A MARTA video, created for a previous study, explaining light rail technology was also handed out. Ms. Kennedy reminded the attendees that all handout information would be available on MARTA's website www.itsmarta.com after the meeting. She then asked the consultant team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning reviewed the Feasibility Study findings, the Alternatives Analysis framework and timeline, the project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and the next steps/on-going activities. Following the presentation, Mr. Dunning invited attendees to ask questions and make comments.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Comment: You say that we need to “quantify problem to receive federal funds”. Please look at the existing system and ask the same questions. People just can't get to where they need to go.

Question: How much will it cost to use the new system?

Answer: We don't know the answer to that question yet.

Question: C-Loop. Where did it come from? Also, what if the C-Loop is the LPA that emerges? What will ADA do?

Answer: C-Loop was a concept developed to connect activity centers, including Emory. Your other question is challenging.

Comment: I work at the museum. The train system doesn't serve very many patrons.

Question: It is hard to visualize this project. We need to speed things up around the city but what are you hearing from the neighborhoods.

Answer: We have a lot of support for the idea.

Question: Which concept is light rail? I rally for that.

Answer: We don't have modes selected yet.

Comment: I am from the Vinings City Civic Association. We've always complained about east-west connectivity and support concept 4.



MARTA Inner Core Public Meeting Summary
North Avenue Presbyterian Church
September 27, 2005
6:00-8:00pm

The meeting was attended by 45 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts, which included a project newsletter, comment form, copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and the project goals and objectives. A MARTA video, created for a previous study, explaining light rail technology was also handed out. Ms. Kennedy reminded the attendees that all handout information would be available on MARTA's website www.itsmarta.com after the meeting. She then asked the consultant team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Ted Williams of DW&A. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Williams reviewed the Feasibility Study findings, the Alternatives Analysis framework and timeline, the project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and the next steps/on-going activities. Following the presentation, Mr. Williams invited attendees to ask questions and make comments.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Comment: I have a concern about putting the cart before the horse. The Atlanta Development Authority and developers are moving forward with the Beltline project. They are announcing plans for the project without the necessary buy-in from appropriate agencies.

Question: I was told by the ADA that we could get partial funding from FTA. Is this true? Can we pick and choose portions of each concept?

Answer: FTA does not pick and choose. It is very unlikely that any system would be implemented at one time. We would identify a minimum operating segment – with its own utility. Over time, the entire locally preferred alternative could/would be built.

Question: Can we phase from a BRT system to a Light Rail system over the course of a long project.

Answer: Yes, it is possible. This idea is a major consideration on the I-20 East segment. At a later time, BRT might be upgraded to light rail to meet ridership demands.

Question: Do we need a TAD to move forward?

Answer: We started our project without a TAD, but it does make the project more feasible and appealing. Regardless, we will have to do a specific financial plan to outline funding for the project.

Comment: Short-term financial problems should not impact our long-term vision.

Response: There is a desire by some to streamline funding sources for all transit providers – not just MARTA, but all transit providers throughout the region (Clayton, Cobb, Gwinnett, etc.).



MARTA Inner Core Public Meeting Summary
Rollins School of Public Health
Emory University
September 29, 2005
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was attended by 40 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Kristine Hansen-Dederick, Sycamore Consulting, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Hansen-Dederick reviewed the handouts, which included a project newsletter, comment form, copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and the project goals and objectives. A MARTA video, created for a previous study, explaining light rail technology was also handed out. Ms. Hansen-Dederick reminded the attendees that all handout information would be available on MARTA's website www.itsmarta.com after the meeting. She then asked the consultant team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Hansen-Dederick turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr. of MARTA. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning reviewed the Feasibility Study findings, the Alternatives Analysis framework and timeline, the project purpose and need, project goals and objectives and the next steps/on-going activities. Following the presentation, Mr. Dunning invited attendees to ask questions and make comments.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: With the local backing for a TAD and other development pressures, what happens if you come up with a locally preferred alternative that is not the Beltline? It seems as if the TAD decision will be made before the alternatives analysis is complete.

Answer: It's a difficult issue. We have a federal process we have to follow. The federal process is set forth to meet an identified transit need. The process we are going through is required to compete nationally for New Starts funding. If the LPA is something other than the Beltline, there may be other funding sources out there that could look toward implementing transit within the proposed TAD.

Comment: There is a White Paper published by the Transit Panel that indicates the Beltline transit concept may not work for the complete 22-mile loop, but that the green space effort still makes sense.

Response: The White Paper came out in response to the current need, but did not comment on future ridership because that information has not yet been provided. The projection of ridership will have to be taken into consideration.

Question: Will there be ways to link key points of living, employment, entertainment, connectivity between Emory, Georgia Tech, Midtown, etc.?

Answer: We can look at ways to improve connectivity. Please provide specific comments /requests for connectivity on the comment form.

Comment: There is a need to get people out of their cars, but it needs to be convenient. I would like to be a transit rider, but it takes me twice as long as it does to drive my car.



**MARTA Inner Core Alternatives Analysis
Joint SAC/Public Meeting
All Saints Episcopal Church
December 8, 2005
6:00-8:00pm**

The meeting was attended by 109 participants. Attendees were greeted by project staff and asked to sign-in. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and group exercise followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. She explained that this evening's meeting was a joint session of the project's Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the general public. The purpose of the meeting was to present the different aspects of potential transit technologies and get the group's feedback on station locations. She gave a brief overview of the project and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager.

Using the project display boards, Mr. Dunning briefly reviewed the Feasibility Study findings and the four concepts under consideration in the Alternatives Analysis. He then explained each of the origin-destination trend maps for the SE, SW, NE and NW quadrants of the Inner Core study area. These maps visually display the amount of trips to and from and within the Inner Core. Mr. Dunning explained that this information is key in evaluating alignments as well as in the consideration of transit technologies and station locations.

After Mr. Dunning's presentation, the attendees broke into groups and were asked to participate in a station location exercise. Ten groups were asked to mark aerial maps with their station preferences. Immediately following the group exercise, Ms. Adelee LeGrand, URS, gave a short presentation on transit technology types, which included visualizations of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU), trolley and streetcar.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: How did you get the origin/destination data?

Answer: We used data from the Atlanta Regional Commission's Regional Travel Demand Model. The data itself comes from Census information, household surveys and a variety of other sources.

Question: Did you ask me where I wanted to go?

Answer: Yes, in the Feasibility Study, we asked attendees at public meeting series about their travel patterns. We also involved the NPU's as they are members of Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

Question: Is there cooperation between you and the Peachtree Streetcar Study?

Answer: Yes, we will incorporate studies like that into our findings. The impact of such projects will be considered. However, the Peachtree Streetcar will not be included as part of our alternatives as it is not currently in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).



Question: In the 'light rail mixed with traffic' scenario, would a lane be taken away and used for transit?

Answer: No, the transit vehicle would operate in the same lanes with the cars.

Comment: I would hope that whatever technology is chosen, that it's compatible with the corridor!

Answer: That's correct. For example, in existing neighborhoods, streetcar, light rail or BRT is appropriate.

Question: I noticed on the streetcar slides, the vehicles run with overhead wires. On a lot of Atlanta streets, the utilities have been buried. Are you going to have to add light poles?

Answer: That's a good point and we will have to consider that when we evaluate the technologies.

Question: Are you considering any subway or over the street facilities?

Answer: No, because of cost, we are not considering those options.

Question: Would increasing the number of technologies utilized in the project increase the number of transfers?

Answer: Yes, that is a possibility.

Question: If a technology that shares the road with cars is selected, then the transit vehicle runs the risk of getting stuck in the same traffic?

Answer: That's correct.

Question: How fast would the trolleys be?

Answer: The speed depends on the number of stops in a route.

Comment: I would like to see a technology selected that utilizes a fixed, exclusive guideway.

Comment: There seems to be a concentration of proposed stations on the northeast side, and only a few on the south. It's important to utilize a technology that will allow the addition of stations, in a cost-effective manner, as needs change.

Comment: In our group, we still had a lot of dots on our map. That says to me that connectivity is important; it's not all about the speed of the system.

Question: Is there a technology that is better suited for making frequent stops?

Answer: Frequency of stops will be decided in the operations plan. Different technologies have different capacity types. The goal is to move people as quickly as possible. The technology that best meets that goal will be selected.

Question: Are existing operations and maintenance facilities going to be taken into consideration?

Answer: Yes, ideally we would like to utilize the Armour Yard and other existing MARTA facilities. When we get more into the analysis, we will address that.

Question: What happens if MARTA is not the entity chosen to operate the system?



Answer: In the current RTP, MARTA is the sponsor of the project. We are currently taking this project through the federal process. That being said, there are a number of ways to get the project implemented, such as public-private partnerships. If that route to implementation is selected, MARTA will position itself to be among the partners.

Summary of Written Comments

Many MARTA stations are big chunks of cement and take up too much space with the Beltline stations, let's keep them small it make land use effective. (Think the efficiency of NYC subways), Also, coming from Japan I can tell you that they are light years ahead in terms of rail technology. A very nice trolley system can be found for example right outside the Nagoya station it is something to mimic. Finally let's make square outside the stops like NYC, Washington Square. We need more space for ppl. Thanks.

Need to be sure there is connectivity between lines. Consider express routes between major points of interest. We need to have one system is MARTA isn't working fix it rather have another entirely run the new lines.

Think of it not as rapid rail but more of a circulator/distribute to heavy rail MARTA. Consider new station between E2 & E3 thereby eliminate double loop to E3.

Consider future land use for trip generation around Beltline we want density. Use Streetcar or Light rail.

Whatever technology is chosen on combine I want it to be efficient and quick. I am for light rail, streetcars or DMU's. People in Atlanta will not ride a bus. I am in favor of the Beltline concept with some of the parts of the C-Loop and other's added on. T also want the system to be on. I also want the system to be flexible and be able to add on or take away as areas ground or patterns change. The most important thing is what will make most people get out of their cars? Thanks

P.S. What can we do to get more people involved? All I really see here is people with some special interest here, and not really the general public.

(1) It is critical that you provide ease of access to the airport. (2) Trolleys are a poor choice because of pedestrian embark and disembark safety issues and because the overhead wires are aesthetically disastrous. (3) Stay on top of major development/redevelopment plans and be able to site or add stations accordingly. (4) A big redevelopment is underway in the SE corner of I-75 & Howell Mill Rd- it needs service.

I'd like to see the trolley cars run all over town, Also to places outside of Atlanta such as Roswell, Cobb County as well as Gwinnett and places where they have vans now.



With respect to the 3 station in the Emory area. The East station is away from most of the student and further away from where the new Hospital will be.

The CDL stop and an end stop on the Clifton Rd side of Emory would be more convenient for students and patients. The CDL does need a schedule stop.

I Hope streetcars. Beltline may have 43 stops but this is less than any one MARTA bus line-Plus it is not 100%. Dependent on surface street traffic I do not see 43 neighborhood Beltline stops as a deterrent it may allow MARTA to reduce some bus line and their noise and maintenance. The Beltline may not bring people to every attraction, but many neighborhood platforms will bring people to MARTA heavy rail, which bring people to other alternative. Help MARTA heavy rail ridership. Look at where you are taking people from that's our homes and where we derive to get into our cars.

If light rail is used be sure to add bikeways that travel along the rail paths. Ideally, these are smooth enough to skate on too.

Please keep the Beltline proposal alive. The C-Loop does not connect the heart of the city.

Has anyone considered using traffic signal preemption for vehicles that operate in the right of way (including the Current buses)?

Look mostly at peak hour traffic-most likely to attract mass transit riders during heavy traffic.

Charrette Exercise- Map Overlay should have been streets rather than aerial (use aerial for visual perspective). Excellent presentations by Inga, Johnny and Adelee. Lots of interest in East-West travels.

I'm very glad you had the meeting. I learned a lot and very interested on seeing this project succeed. I'm especially interested in the C-Loop.

This is all very exciting. The faster the Beltline transit component can be implemented the better. I will certainly be using it. Please feel free to remove BRT as an alternative.

The maps showing were difficult for me to understand. I wish the documentation to the meeting had contained links to those maps and the suggestion that participants prepare by studying them. I arrived 5:50- the meeting did not begin until 6:20 or later. One explanation that presenter used suggest the need to anticipate such delays. The collection of information/suggestion for where to place stops worked best at the table were I was, where the suggestions came from each person's



knowledge of a specific neighborhood. The big question: Who are the anticipated users of new transportation?



MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis Public Meeting Summary August 7, 2006

Monday, August 7, 2006
Peachtree Branch Library
6:00-8:00 pm
Attendance: 72

Summary: Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts and explained that the purpose of the evening's meeting was to present the final alternatives and to receive public input. She highlighted the ways in which the public could provide input, including completing a hard copy of the comment form before leaving the meeting, or by submitting it via fax or postal mail. She mentioned that the comment form may also be emailed to the project team and that public comment can be provided throughout the evening's presentation. Ms. Kennedy introduced Richard McCrillis, General Manager of MARTA.

Mr. McCrillis thanked the public for attending their meeting and encouraged public input and comments.

Ms. Kennedy then asked that the MARTA representatives introduce themselves, which included staff and board member Ed Wall. Ms. Kennedy also recognized the members of the project consultant team.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager. Mr. Dunning announced that questions and comments will be allowed throughout and at the conclusion of the presentation. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning recapped the history of the study, the status of the BeltLine project, a description of the alternatives, the parameters of the evaluation, technical results, and the next steps. Comments expressed and questions asked are summarized below.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: Does the model used to project demand allow for adjustments and growth in household size and income?

Answer: The data used for this analysis represents a current snapshot of household size and income.

Question: Is potential development due to the BeltLine project included in the model?



MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis Public Meeting Summary August 8, 2006

Tuesday, August 8, 2006
7:00-9:00 pm
East Lake YMCA
Attendance: 59

Summary: Welcome from Inga Kennedy, director of public involvement for the MARTA Inner Core study. Overview of the presentation and handouts – including visual pamphlet of potential modal technologies for discussion purposes, not to indicate a preferred technology. Ms. Kennedy asked for a show of hands about new participants to the MARTA Inner Core and Beltline planning processes. She then reviewed the handouts and future public meetings. She invited everyone present to fill out a comment form and submit to the MARTA staff.

The MARTA staff and consultant team then introduced themselves.

Ms. Kennedy then introduced Johnny Dunning of the MARTA planning staff. Mr. Dunning welcomed the crowd and gave a brief presentation overview. He began by recapping the Inner Core planning process and discussed the project's dynamics.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: How to resolve the redundancy between the C-loop and Beltline along the west side.

Answer: The C-loop is also under study and both studies will be submitted to regional decision makers for the final decision.

Mr. Dunning continued to review the Beltline project dynamics. He outlined the alternative routes, including the Transportation System Management option.

Question: I participated in a workshop in December and none of the alternatives came out of these meetings. How did these alternatives come about?

Answer: They developed once the C-loop project split off. Mr. Dunning explained that he would get to the details of each alternative and the specifics of each alternative developed largely from engineering constraints.

Question: Are pedestrian & transit routes linked, or will trails follow a different route?

Answer: MARTA is working closely with the city of Atlanta and will try to make the bike and pedestrian trails follow the transit route as closely as possible.

Question: MARTA should make an alternative plan about Hulsey Yard and a potential deal in that area.

Answer: Changes can be made during the EIS phase.

Question: Why did MARTA bypass Reynoldstown?

Answer: Dependent on Hulsey Yard and engineering feasibility of that area.



MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis Public Meeting Summary August 9, 2006

Wednesday, August 9, 2006
7:00-9:00 pm
Mozley Park Recreation Center
Attendance: 37

Summary: Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in, and presented with meeting handouts. Attendees were invited to review project information boards and speak with staff. A presentation and question and answer session followed.

Ms. Inga Kennedy, PEQ, called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Ms. Kennedy reviewed the handouts and explained that the purpose of the evening's meeting was to present the final alternatives and to receive public input. She highlighted the ways in which the public could provide input, including completing a hard copy of the comment form before leaving the meeting, or by submitting it via fax or postal mail. She mentioned that the comment form may also be emailed to the project team and that public comment can be provided throughout the evening's presentation.

Ms. Kennedy then asked that the MARTA representatives introduce themselves, which included staff and board members including Ed Wall, Juanita Abernathy, and Clara Axam. Ms. Kennedy also recognized the members of the project consultant team and a representative of the MARTA Breeze Program promotions team.

Ms. Kennedy turned the meeting over to Mr. Johnny Dunning, Jr., MARTA project manager. Mr. Dunning announced that questions and comments will be allowed throughout and at the conclusion of the presentation. Through a Power Point presentation (see attached) Mr. Dunning recapped the history of the study, the status of the BeltLine project, a description of the alternatives, the parameters of the evaluation, technical results, and the next steps. Comments expressed and questions asked are summarized below.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: Does alternative B3 go around the Edgewood/Memorial Drive area?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Has a decision been made on the type of technology that will be used?

Answer: Not yet. This is currently being evaluated.

Question: Have the numbers for the ARC travel demand model been run yet?

Answer: Yes, though all of this information is not yet available.

Question: What is the ARC's perspective on the type of technology that should be used?



MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis Public Meeting Summary August 10, 2006

Thursday, August 10, 2006
7:00-9:00 pm
North Avenue Presbyterian Church
Attendance: 47

Summary: Welcome from Ms. Inga Kennedy, director of public involvement for the MARTA Inner Core study. Ms. Kennedy introduced the MARTA and consultant staffs. She then turned the meeting over to MARTA board chairman Ed Wall.

Mr. Wall thanked everyone for attending. He then asked for a show of hands from people who preferred a light rail or streetcar transit option – the crowd strongly favored these options. He also asked for a show of hands from people who preferred a bus rapid transit option. This response was much less enthusiastic. Mr. Wall noted the responses and emphasized the importance of public input in the Beltline planning process. He conceded that bus rapid transit was significantly more cost effective, but reminded everyone that no transit option has been selected and all three will be reviewed by the board. Neither is a foregone conclusion and MARTA will rely on public input for the final decision. He then thanked everyone again and excused himself to attend another meeting.

Johnny Dunning then introduced himself and began his presentation. He first re-capped the Inner Core planning process – a discussion of the history of the process, the decision to split the Beltline and C-loop projects, and the direction that has been taken to this point. He then moved to a discussion of the Beltline build alternatives, including the TSM and four build alternatives.

After discussing the build alternative routes, Mr. Dunning began discussing the evaluation parameters used to examine the build and transit alternatives – as outlined in the presentation slides.

Summary of Oral Questions and Comments

Question: How do the ridership numbers take into account user preference for different technologies?

Answer: The model does not. User preference surveys cannot be submitted for federal funding. The technical analysis process uses rider surveys to get the demand, but other planning phases will take into account public input and public preferences.

Question: What is an infill station?

Answer: A new MARTA rail station on Beltline crossing points.

Question: Do you include info about speed of implementation for each mode?

Answer: Not in this phase, but will be accounted for later in the process.

Question: What is the communication system used for these modes?

Answer: Location sensors for operation of the system, in addition to radios in each cab.



MARTA Beltline Alternatives Analysis Email Comments from Public Meetings August 7th – 10th 2006

- I have recently heard about the new proposed plans for the beltline. I am a future resident on the home park area and would be interested to see the beltline become a reality. Since it is in the planning stages I wanted to let you know that I support the B4 plan. I feel that it would bring people to the area of Home Park and be the most convenient plan for getting around town. I just wanted to let you know my thoughts when it comes time for you to make a decision on this project.
- Light-rail is my choice
- I was very disappointed after reading recently that a rapid bus was the preferred mode for the beltline, rather than trains. I could rattle off a litany of reasons why such a decision is so short sighted; however, I wish my frustration to come out as something other than a rant. Simply, this city needs to be thinking long term and buses in any form are not long term. Sometimes the answer isn't "the cheapest" or "the least expensive" from a today perspective. Sometimes you have to pay more today to set up a more viable long-term solution. This city currently has transportation spine that is road based...interstates to primaries to secondary. Public transportation needs its own spine...commuter rail to subway to bus. MARTA is the beginnings of a spine with plenty of bus nerves.

We need to build the more spine, more rail for MARTA remain/become viable and for this city to break the "road" cycle that has kept public transportation from expanding for last 15-20 years. Please do not disturb the original beltline vision of rails and trails and parks. It was the original vision of rails that created the excitement and the drive to make this happen. People are behind the rails and are willing to spend the money now to make life better over the long haul.

- Just wanted to give my opinion on the Belt Line Project. I live in Grant Park and think this would be a fantastic addition to transportation options in Atlanta! I am strongly opposed to having the Belt Line use busses and hope the city doesn't go that way just because it may be cheapest option initially. As a long-time city resident, I've seen the legacy of always doing things the cheapest way possible - crumbling infrastructure (water and sewer), over head power lines that topple during storms (instead of putting them underground), gridlock traffic (because roads are cheaper to build than rail), and on and on. I hope the city does it right this time - invests in light rail and biking trails for the Belt Line.
- I am adamantly opposed to Marta's recommendation to replace the proposed rail line with buses and the ROADS they will require. The beltline is about greenspace. Look around. The buses are always empty. Nobody wants to ride the bus.
- I cannot attend a meeting and would like to weigh in with my experience in Portland, Oregon. I really liked the streetcar free transit system throughout the city and would



like to see a similar approach here in Atlanta. It was very user friendly and fun to use as a visitor to the city there for a conference.

- I would like to voice my overwhelming opposition to a BRT style transport mode for the Beltline. I favor light rail or streetcar. Bus transit would in my opinion be no improvement to the current and growing transportation infrastructure problems in Atlanta. I urge MARTA to solve the problems associated with the "dog leg" turn in Reynoldstown and near the Hulsey Yards.
- I am an Atlantic Station resident and wanted to give my comments. I would much rather prefer the rail transit being implemented for Atlantic Station residents. Matter of fact I am strongly against any other transit system implemented by Marta. This is because the rail is a much smoother and efficient ride compared to any other method (e.g., bus, street-car). The bus or street-car would have to use the same roads as any other vehicles, and will have to go through major traffic during rush hour, or when there's an accident, or for no reason at all when there's just too many cars on the road. Whereas, the rail would be used only for the people commuting on the rail, and for no other reason, making it a much faster, user-friendly, efficient, streamlined, clean, environmentally-friendly, and preferable method for a public transit system.
- I attended the public meeting held August 8th at the East Lake YMCA. As a professional planner myself, I wish to commend the MARTA staff and contractors for presenting a thorough overview of the technical analysis of alternatives for transit. There was a lot of information to absorb, and many good questions came from the audience.

I would like to offer the following comments regarding the alternatives analysis:

The Technical Results displayed in the presentation should be fine-tuned to reflect more weight toward environmental effects. The criterion of "Change in Pollutant Emissions" should be expanded to include the effects from additional electricity generation needed to power the rail-based systems, instead of simply focusing on tailpipe emissions. Also, rather than measure the change from TSM, you should measure the change from the status quo (total emissions from all vehicles on roads and rails plus electricity demand).

The patronage estimations (daily transit ridership) should play a greater role in the analysis of transit technologies. You displayed a table showing different patronage estimates for the different route alternatives, but it wasn't clear if these were held constant across technologies, or were allowed to vary. As several people testified at the meeting, rail systems are inherently more attractive to riders and would be expected to draw higher patronage than the bus-based systems.

Based on what I know today, I would support the adoption of Alternative B3 -Streetcar. The Reynoldstown area needs to be served (and the alternatives that route through King Memorial are too close to the existing north-south MARTA lines to justify their construction). B3 generated the highest estimated patronage, both in regional and



beltline-only boardings. I also support rail technologies, and the streetcars are more cost-effective than light rail.

- I attended the Marta Beltline Meeting on 8/10/2006 and wanted to give my thoughts regarding the options presented. Regarding the type of transit to use (BRT, LRT, Streetcar) after investigating BRT more on the Internet, if the BRT were implemented I would hope to see a system that looks and has the feel of LRT. That would include these capital costs considerations:
 - Buses that look like trains with the wheels covered.
 - Instead of having paved roadways for portions of the transit not on existing roads consider using bumpers with a grass median between the tires.
 - Consideration should be given to buses that use hybrid power so the system is not as depend on gas.
 - Build basic infrastructure for a future LRT up-grade (if demand for transit increases) This would include appropriate right of way areas and ensuring bridges that are build could support buses and trains.

While I am not a fan of BRT, I understand the capital costs and implementation issues with installing rail and would not have a problem if it were installed. I feel that if a world class BRT was build it might be more accepted. However, I would hope that if this system is implemented that Marta would make the recommendation that if rider ship increases over time that the system be up-graded to a LRT. Regarding the routes listed in the presentation, I am very torn with the northern arc of the loop. While the complete loop would open up the Brookwood area various transit options, I like the idea of having transit from the Arts Center Station passing through Atlantic Station (other than the horrible bus ran by Atlantic Station)

For the route on the southeast side, I would favor the transit going to the King Memorial Center instead of Inman Park Station for cost considerations. Because those neighborhoods are so close to existing transit it would not be hard for someone at the Inman Park Station to ride Marta to King Memorial and transfer to the Beltline. I also feel that a link to the Inman Park Station would cause more disruption to neighborhoods than to King Memorial.

- Dear MARTA,

I live in Reynoldstown which is at the junction of your east side beltline alternatives. I attended the Aug 8th East Lake Public Meeting; these are my comments:

Whether you decide to run the line towards the King Center Station or towards the Inman Park/Reynoldstown Station, I believe there will be a positive effect on Reynoldstown so my comments aren't heavily weighted by my neighborhood bias. I've lived in the area for years so I think I know what I'm talking about. (1) like everyone else I favor a street car alternative. I don't care for the bus alternative. (2) I prefer the path towards the Inman Park/Reynolds Town Station for several reasons (I wish you would run that line another 1/2 mile up Moreland and further into L5P). First reason, there is nothing on Memorial of interest for the beltline ridership if the line turns towards the King



Center. Take a drive yourself and you will agree. There is nothing there. Nothing! How many times do you think I want to visit Oakland Cemetery? The fact that there is nothing there is reflected by your proposed lack of stops on that route until you join back up with the original beltline proposed route. Why on earth make that turn? If you turn towards Inman Park/Reynoldstown Station you come close enough to L5P to ride the Beltline there. There is development there that would welcome the service: restaurants, shops, etc. That development would increase ridership from noon to night. Also the Inman Park/Reynoldstown Station route would provide access to the Freedom Park trails. There are also people in Candler Park and L5P that would use the service. The same isn't true on Memorial towards the King Center. I don't understand why you don't run the line out Memorial until you hit Moreland, then go north on Moreland. That was one of the original alternatives and also opens up East Atlanta the beltline as well. I feel that you are trying to run to the King Station for political reasons and I think that is a mistake.

Thanks for you ear,

- I support the light rail option as transit along the Atlanta Beltline. It is more efficient and much more park friendly than a bus line. It also has a charm that busses do not have.
- Rail is what I understood would be used along the beltline. A bus is just a different animal. The pavement required is hot, the fumes smell bad, and their path is less confided making them more of a danger to foot traffic. The dream of the beltline included rail because that form a transit is more compatible along side walkers, runners and people enjoying the shade of a tree. I lived in New Orleans for a time and enjoyed the green space created by the "neutral ground" served by trolleys. It is fun for a tourist to see a trolley - have you ever heard a tourist say "cool a bus is coming"? The beltline is a way to make Atlanta a more attractive place to live and visit. Buses are a dealt nail to that dream.

Thanks for your consideration,

- The Southern Environmental Law Center is pleased to provide the following comments on MARTA's Beltline Alternative Analysis, the Technical results of which were presented at public meeting August 7-10,2006. We strongly support the proposed redevelopment of the Beltline corridor. The Beltline presents a unique and priceless opportunity to improve neighborhood connectivity, encourage transit-oriented development in currently underused areas, expand Atlanta's parks system, and address Atlanta's chronic air quality problems.

SELC believes the transit component of the Beltline project should use Streetcar or Light Rail Transit ("LRT") technology rather Than Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT"). While BRT may be less expensive to install initially, in the long run it is likely to prove an expensive failure and missed opportunity.



BRT WILL HAVE LESS RIDERSHIP

As several commenters have noted, buses have a stigma that reduces ridership among discretionary passengers. Multiple studies have shown that rail-based transit projects spur significantly higher ridership than bus-based projects. See, e.g., Lyndon Henry & Todd A. Litman, *Evaluating New Start Transit Program Performance; Comparing Rail And Bus* (2006) (available at http://www.vtpi.org/bus_rail.pdf). BRT, while it offers some of the benefits of a rail and avoids some of the pitfalls of traditional bus services, nonetheless remains a bus technology and will be subject to substantial stigma.

MARTA's analysis, as presented in slide 20 of the presentation at the August public meetings, does not differentiate among the three modes in its patronage estimation. There, because BRT will attract fewer riders the analysis overestimates the benefit of BRT relative to the other technologies. In turn, because cost-effectiveness is based at least in part on passenger miles, the analysis overestimates the cost-effectiveness of BRT.

1.4 Rail-based Technologies Offers Greater Air Quality Benefits

Electric rail-based technologies also offer greater air quality benefits than buses. In light of Atlanta's ongoing non-attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and particulate matter, this factor is particularly significant in Atlanta. "Change in Pollutant Emission" received a weight of only 0.03 in the technical analysis, tied for the lowest weight given any factor considered. In light of Atlanta's continuing failure to attain National Air quality Standards for ozone and particulate matter, this low weighting is particularly inappropriate. Air quality impacts should be weighted at least as heavily as other factors, if not more so.

1.5 Rail-based Technologies Will Spur More Transit-Oriented Development

Rail-based technologies also create a greater spur for transit-oriented development in their paths. The increased ridership and increase stability of rail provides greater incentives for developments to plan around rail-based transit. Simply put, underutilized area likely to remain underutilized if BRT technology is chosen.

1.6 BRT Will Not Ensure Continued Commitment to Transit

Finally. BRT is less likely to receive the ongoing resources necessary to insure its success. Because the initial investment is lower, buses can more easily be rerouted, and it is relatively cheap to expand or alter uses of asphalt corridors, it will be easy to "pull the plug" on the Beltline transit if political winds shift or initial ridership is not as robust as projected (a likely occurrence given the stigma associated with buses described above). It also is likely that there will be substantial pressure to open up the currently exclusive portions of right-of-way for other traffic if BRT is chosen, which would reduce the effectiveness of the transit system.



Conclusion

For all these reasons, we strongly urge that MARTA adopt a Streetcar or LRT option for the proposed Beltline transit corridor.

- Hello Marta,

I am writing you to express my ideas about the MARTA Beltline Public Meeting at Mosley Park Recreation Center 1565 MLK Drive on Wednesday August 9th, 2006 7PM to 9PM. My name is Angel Luis Poventud and I live at 711 Piedmont Avenue N.E. Apt 68 Atlanta, Georgia 30308-1422. My cellphone number is 404-892-8306 and my e-mail address is anotherloudperson@yahoo.com

I am very interested in the Beltline. I use MARTA only about twice a month. I ride my bike around town a lot. I also own a car. I am also a freight train conductor for CSX. I work at Tilford Yard on the West side of Atlanta. I am not interested in the BRT option for the Beltline. I would like to see light rail. I have traveled to Amsterdam ten times in the last seven years and I am very impressed with the flexibility of the vehicles that they use there. I am also interested in the option that would be the complete loop to and from Lindbergh Station and that would travel to the Edgewood shopping district.

- Please do not black top the transit corridor for BRT. It would be a shame to add to the heat island of the city, as well as having to demolish all of the rail bridges that are in place and that could be used with the light rail option. As you know rail is more efficient for moving passenger from an energy point of view, than rubber on pavement. Also, the rail would be quieter. If you have a question, please contact me. Thank you for your time.

- Hello,

The way I envision the Beltline (in order for it to be truly successful) is that it should include both some train tracks and a multi-use trail. The train tracks are for some type of light rail that will operate on the Beltline. There are some rumors that busses are being considered, however, I think using busses would be a big mistake. Part of the charm of the Beltline has always been the fact that trains would be used. Everybody loves to ride on a train. We also need a multi-use path to promote cycling, running, walking, and roller blading. If the Beltline is to function as a park, we definitely need that path. In addition, to give the entire project a park-like atmosphere, we need some green space to separate the trail/path from surrounding roads and if all of these components are implemented, the Beltline will really be a project that Atlantans will be proud of!

Thanks,

- My family is opposed to busses on the Beltline. Living in Chicago and New Orleans, the Beltline is a fixed path, and trolley / light rail is the safest, less polluting, and most cost effective (in my opinion) for the Beltline. Busses are designed to travel down any surface street. Also, pedestrians walking the beltline would also encroach or even use



the paved path for busses, hence creating many safety issues. The pedestrian paths and the vehicle paths need to be separate and very different. Paving for busses is also less desirable than pervious or even greenscape between rails.

Thanks for listening,

- As a prospective user of the Beltline I would be much more likely to use a rail based transit than a bus or a bus that looks like a train.

Thank you,

- Dear MARTA, **(Received 302 Submittals of the Following Letter)**

I am excited about BeltLine transit in Atlanta. Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to this pressing problem and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

I strongly support rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. Rail-based electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint. Bus rapid transit would be gasoline powered and emit more pollution into Atlanta's already problematic air, and with the rising cost of oil, it would be counterintuitive financial investment. Additionally, paved bus routes are impermeable and more problematic for runoff and water pollution. A rail system such as street car or light-rail could be the TRUE greenway Atlanta has envisioned with grass running up to and in between the tracks. An environmentally sound greenway is in the best interest of public health for joggers, bikers, and community residents around the BeltLine.

The BeltLine has energized and captured Atlanta's imagination and it will impact millions of residents and visitors for a long time to come. While bus rapid transit might cost less to build in the short term, rail-based transit is more appropriate for a project which will redefine the way people live, work and play in Atlanta. Our city deserves a world class transit system. Let's keep the BeltLine on track as it was originally envisioned.

Thanks!

- Dear MARTA,

We are an international city. We need to think on a global scale. We don't need more emissions! We need more rail transit to more areas of the metro area to ease our traffic and pollution problem.



It is amazing that we have a world class baseball team yet we don't have easy transit to the stadium! This keeps many fans away due to awkward train/bus travel to stadium or the heavy traffic and parking from driving.

Having a rail system would ease travel and bring commerce to other areas of the metro area. Not to mention reducing the stress on the commuter and avoiding high gas prices. IT ONLY MAKES SENSE.

PLEASE VOTE FOR RAIL-BASED TRANSIT!

- Dear MARTA,

Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Toronto have excellent systems, let's have Atlanta now lead the way with rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. We now have to consider not only the environment, but rising cost of fossil fuels.

I am excited about BeltLine transit in Atlanta. Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to these pressing problems and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

I strongly support rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. Rail-based electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint. Bus rapid transit would be gasoline powered and emit more pollution into Atlanta's already problematic air, and with the rising cost of oil, it would be counterintuitive financial investment. Additionally, paved bus routes are impermeable and more problematic for runoff and water pollution. A rail system such as street car or light-rail could be the TRUE greenway Atlanta has envisioned with grass running up to and in between the tracks. An environmentally sound greenway is in the best interest of public health for joggers, bikers, and community residents around the BeltLine.

The BeltLine has energized and captured Atlanta's imagination and it will impact millions of residents and visitors for a long time to come. While bus rapid transit might cost less to build in the short term, rail-based transit is more appropriate for a project which will redefine the way people live, work and play in Atlanta. Our city deserves a world class transit system. Let's keep the BeltLine on track as it was originally envisioned.

Thanks!



- Dear MARTA,

I am excited about BeltLine transit in Atlanta. Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to these pressing problems and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

Please allow me a couple points in favor of steel and not rubber:

Rail adjusts to increased ridership more easily than buses. If ridership increases on a train system, cars can be added to a train without hiring a new operator. If a bus fills up, you need a new bus and pay a new operator to keep up with new ridership.

At high ridership levels (higher than were used in MARTA's technical study), rail is cheaper to operate per person than bus rapid transit. MARTA's technical staff used low ridership projections to comply with federal and ARC requirements.

Rail creates a more permanent, tangible, and visible transit route than bus rapid transit. Rail routes are less subject to route changes than bus routes. Therefore developers are more likely to invest money along a rail route than a bus route. The more development, the more riders to help pay operating costs.

Rail will run on electricity, which will come either from coal, hydro, or nuclear power produced here in the U.S. The buses used in MARTA's projections will run on fossil fuels largely imported from politically unstable portions of the world. Even without political instability, oil is nearing peak production while demand for oil continues to rise. Technology dependent on an increasingly unstable oil supply is not a wise investment.

The transit line will run alongside multiuse exercise paths. Exhaust fumes from the buses would make the recreation/exercise less pleasant.

Using a bus means building a road. Although there may be legal constraints on opening Bus Rapid Transit routes to car traffic, nothing prevents car traffic better than not building a road.

Pavement on the Beltline would create more of a heat island than rails. It would be an impermeable surface with more water runoff than rails.

Rail is quieter and less polluting than buses. This will be better for people who live and work near the Beltline.

Rail simply catches people's imagination and inspires better than buses on roads. It sends a message to visitors that the people in our community are willing to invest in the highest quality public transportation. It is a point of pride for the city.

Thanks!



-
- Such a phenomenally bad idea that it's boggling that's it's being considered. Will literally kill interest in transit on the Beltline and make the project a laughingstock. A bunch of buses is the future of Atlanta's great initiative????!!!! Show me a poll where people don't say they HATE BUSES.
 - Just wanted to my opinion on the Belt Line Project. I live in Grant Park and I think this would be a fantastic addition to transportation potions in Atlanta!
 - I am strongly opposed to having the Belt Line use busses and hope the city doesn't go that way because it may be cheapest option initially. As a long-time city resident, I've seen the legacy of always doing things the cheapest way possible – crumbling infrastructure (water and sewer), over head power lines that topple during storms (instead of putting them underground), gridlock traffic (because roads are cheaper to build than rail), and on and on.

I hope the city does it right this time_ invests in light rail and biking trails for the Belt Line.

- There needs to be a public comment for Beltline/Inner Core Study on the website.
- I am an Atlantic Station resident and wanted to give my comments on the MARTA Beltline meeting. I would much rather prefer the rail transit being implemented for Atlantic Station residents. Matter of fact I am strongly against any other transit system implemented by Marta. This is because the rail is a much smoother and efficient ride compared to any other (e.g., bus, street-car). It would make commute so much easier if the rail system was able to accommodate more people within and outside the perimeter. The traffic would be much less and as a result would cause less accidents and /or pollution. The bus or street-car sort of defeat the purpose of having public transportation system because these methods would have to use the same roads as any other vehicles and will have to go through major traffic during rush hour, or when there's an accident, or for no reason at all when there's just too many cars on the road. Not to mention a bus or street-car would be a slower method of transportation than driving in one's vehicle. Whereas, the rail would be used only for the people commuting on the rail, and for no other reason, making faster, user-friendly, efficient, streamlined, clean, environmentally-friendly, and preferable method for a public transit system. The rail system should be optimized by making it more accessible to the people of Atlanta.
- Please carefully consider all the options for the transit system on the Beltline. Atlanta is a great city, but it is a great city with a very outdated transit system because it has not been able to keep up with the population, nor has the existing transit been able to convince many people to actually use the system. The Beltline is considering using a bus system because it is the least expensive. Please be cautious about trading a cheap short-term solution for a long-term solution that actually uses the rail system that exists and goes away from depending on gas-powered, exhaust-spewing,



pavement dwelling buses. We have too much of all of that in Atlanta and we really need a light rail or trolley system to make the Beltline attractive enough to be a core aspect of improving our great city.

Thank you.

- Please do NOT use buses for the beltline. You must use rail or light rail so people will use it. There are other operational benefits to using rail (cost to operate, number of drivers needed etc.). Please don't make a short-sighted decision or you may doom this promising transit opportunity. Thank you,
- I live in Midtown and am 3 blocks from the proposed beltline. I am looking forward to its positive impact on the City of Atlanta.

I have been following with great interest the status of the "Locally Preferred Alternative" study and it appears that most Atlanta residents (Myself and all my neighbors that I have discussed this with) desire a rail-based mode of transit.

The cities that have shifted to this mode, e.g. Portland and San Diego, have become models of what the nation's cities can and should become. (The big Bus cities, such as LA, are the ones that have been looked down on.) I walk the 10 or so blocks to get to the MARTA train station, and I have NEVER walked the 1/2 block from my home to take a MARTA bus. With metro Atlanta topping the list of longest commutes, anything close to tires on pavement should be avoided like the plague. Rail is definitely SMARTA regardless of the cost. As I near retirement, the city I live in will have convenient rail transportation - hopefully it will be Atlanta, but if BRT is adopted, I will be looking at forward looking cities such as Portland and San Diego. Please, let Atlanta become a model city we can be proud of for decades to come, and choose RAIL!

- I have recently heard about the new proposed plans for the beltline. I am a future resident on the home park area and would be interested to see the beltline become a reality. Since it is in the planning stages I wanted to let you know that I support the B4 plan. I feel that it would bring people to the area of home park and be the most convenient plan for getting around town. I just wanted to let you know my thoughts when it comes time for you to make a decision on this project.
- I attended the presentation this evening at North Avenue Presbyterian. Thank you all for the work that has gone into this process. I am writing with my recommendations for the locally preferred alternative, and my reasons for these recommendations:

Route: B4 (Lindbergh to Arts Center via Inman Park)

My reasons for this recommendation include:

- Alignment via Inman Park
 - Alignment via Inman Park will, as described, provide two additional stations (Morningside/Hardee and Kirkwood) as opposed to the alignment via King Memorial (Memorial Drive/Blvd). (I am ignoring the connections to existing MARTA stations, as each alternative includes one.)



-
- The Morningside/Hardee station would serve the increasingly busy and important Edgewood Retail District (Target, Kroger, Lowe's, Barnes & Noble, etc.).
 - Other plans that are likely to be developed serve the same areas targeted by the branch via King Memorial: The east-west line of the Atlanta Streetcar is planned to run down Auburn and/or Edgewood, very near the King Memorial Beltline station; the I-20/Memorial Drive BRT corridor could be configured to have one or more local stops near the planned Memorial Drive/Blvd station. By contrast, no planned development could be modified to serve the Morningside/Hardee and Kirkwood stations if they are not part of the Beltline development.
 - The alignment via Inman Park lends itself to expansion into Little Five Points and East Atlanta.
 - Alignment via Arts Center
 - The alignment to the Arts Center serves Atlantic Station and the burgeoning restaurant environment along Howell Mill.
 - The only people for whom this alignment would be less convenient would be those who entered the Beltline on the southwest side and whose final destination was Lindbergh. If they entered in the northwest quadrant, they could take the bus to Lindbergh. If they were going to a different station, they could wait for the train as easily at Arts Center as at Lindbergh. I offer that this is a very small portion of the ridership, and that alignment via Arts Center, through Atlantic Station, will be a tremendously more advantageous routing.
 - **Vehicle:** Streetcar
My reasons for this recommendation include: From a wheelchair access standpoint, trains are friendlier than buses because the wheelchair can roll directly on and the distance from the vehicle to the platform is uniform. My sense of bus rapid transit is that this distance is not necessarily uniform because the driver must gauge the distance visually, and that a ramp would therefore be necessary to bridge the distance. This creates a longer load time and makes the person with a disability an object of attention. From this standpoint, I think streetcar or light rail are preferable.
 - The Beltline will also be used as parkland, so a technology must be chosen that melds well with a park environment. Light rail is completely unsuitable for this purpose. Bus rapid transit or streetcar, however, will suit the park environment.
I am, by the way, the person who spoke in the meeting about disability access. I understand there are pictures of access to bus rapid transit; I would be very interested in seeing those.

Thank you again for your time.

- Sirs and Madams:

I commute daily by MARTA. I favor light rail or trolley rather than bus service for the proposed BeltLine transit system.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.



- Dear MARTA,

I am excited about BeltLine transit in Atlanta. For the importance and impact on public health and economic investment, your decision is critical... and should, by all means, be a unanimous vote for rail transit. Every focus group, NPU, community meeting, AIA meeting, and academic gathering of which I have been a part, voices a desire for rails not more pollution emitting bus routes in our city. The petroleum products used to pave the route alone should be a mitigating factor to BRT line if the buses themselves are not.

PLEASE:

Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to these pressing problems and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

I strongly support rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. Rail-based electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint.

Purchasing green blocks of energy from GA Power would set a precedent for residents in the city of Atlanta to follow and would push Atlanta into the forward thinking city that it can become. You are a key part in this. Think beyond instant investment and think of the TRUE INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE. We have the TAD and other federal sources for funding available. Let's go for the most sustainable and environmentally friendly option we possibly can... for our children and all future generations. Primarily...bus rapid transit would be gasoline powered most likely and emit more pollution into Atlanta's already problematic air, and with the rising cost of oil, it would be counterintuitive financial investment.

Additionally, paved bus routes are impermeable and more problematic for runoff and water pollution. A rail system such as street car or light-rail could be the TRUE greenway Atlanta has envisioned with grass running up to and in between the tracks. An environmentally sound greenway is in the best interest of public health for joggers, bikers, and community residents around the BeltLine.

The BeltLine has energized and captured Atlanta's imagination and it will impact millions of residents and visitors for a long time to come. While bus rapid transit might cost less to build in the short term, rail-based transit is more appropriate for a project which will redefine the way people live, work and play in Atlanta. Our city deserves a world class transit system. Let's keep the BeltLine on track as it was originally envisioned.



-
- Dear MARTA,

Finally a plan to help solve part of the unbelievably bad air in Atlanta: The belt line is a wonderful way of starting that process.

I am a public school teacher and have seen a giant increase in severe asthma attacks by my students. Did you have to do your physical education class outside when the official air index states "unhealthy" and "moderate" for at least six months out of the year? What a crime to sit by idly and not help improve the disgustingly polluted air in Atlanta!

Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to these pressing problems and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

I strongly support rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. Rail-based electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint. Bus rapid transit would be gasoline powered and emit more pollution into Atlanta's already problematic air, and with the rising cost of oil, it would be counterintuitive financial investment. Additionally, paved bus routes are impermeable and more problematic for runoff and water pollution. A rail system such as street car or light-rail could be the TRUE greenway Atlanta has envisioned with grass running up to and in between the tracks. An environmentally sound greenway is in the best interest of public health for joggers, bikers, and community residents around the BeltLine.

The BeltLine has energized and captured Atlanta's imagination and it will impact millions of residents and visitors for a long time to come. While bus rapid transit might cost less to build in the short term, rail-based transit is more appropriate for a project which will redefine the way people live, work and play in Atlanta. Our city deserves a world class transit system. Let's keep the BeltLine on track as it was originally envisioned.

Thanks!

- Dear MARTA,

Thank you so much for your work to establish the Beltline in the Atlanta metropolitan area. It is a very important step in the right direction, and a great coup for our fine city's reputation. Please stick to the original idea for the Beltline, using rail-based streetcars or light rail. Electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable



resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint. Buses add emissions and roads cause more runoff. Not to mention the increasing cost of fuel! A rail system such as street car or light-rail could make a lovely greenway. That's in the best interest of the entire affected community.

Thanks for considering my input, and again thanks for making this possible!

- Dear MARTA Planners,

Please consider NOT paving the new Beltline Transit loop. Light rail would be a more attractive and cost-effective option. Plus, studies show more people are likely to ride rail public transit than buses. This is our opportunity to have something totally unique and very cosmopolitan. Please don't ruin the concept with paved streets and fuel-guzzling, polluting buses. You may save a little money at first, but in the long run buses will cost our city much much more.

Thanks!

- Dear MARTA,

I support light rail for the Beltway, not buses. Buses contribute to the existing urban blight. Give us something to be proud of, like the San Francisco street cars. And one more thing; think "simple." Don't over engineer it. Create a plan that can come to fruition in much less time than a more complicated plan, and will allow you to adjust if you learn that the initiate plan wasn't perfect.

Read "The Innovator's Dilemma" if you want to understand why it is CRITICAL that you do it simple and provide room in your budget and in your timeline to go down some paths that don't work out. Plan the first part of this project; don't plan the entire thing, take 10 years to build it, and find out it didn't make sense after all.

Thanks for listening!

- I don't know if it is true, but I heard that MARTA had decided bus transit was the way to go for the Beltline. I OPPOSE. Please rethink the streetcar or electric trolley. I would personally much rather ride a nice open streetcar than in a bus. Don't do busses!!! currently live in East Atlanta Village, and am about a 3 year total public transit commuter.
- The bus rapid transit (BRT) mistake in Honolulu was costly in terms of time and money. They fell for the same hokey claims put out by BRT promoters, and now, 3 years later, they are planning a belated light rail to correct the error. BRT did not pique the interest of the public, so ridership was low. I, for one, will not give up my vehicle to ride a bus, and I am anxious to see Atlanta get a system as good as the public transport system in poorer eastern European countries. If they can do, we can.



- Dear MARTA,

Train transit is fundamental to the plan and success of the Beltline! Atlanta already has bus routes running these areas; the city needs a new train transit service!

I am excited about BeltLine transit in Atlanta. Atlanta needs expanded transit options to help reduce vehicle emissions in an area now ranked with some of the nation's worst air pollution. Along with a rapidly growing population, Atlanta also has one of the longest and most expensive commutes in the country. These problems will only intensify if left unchecked. The BeltLine is a practical solution to these pressing problems and will expand transit options while creating sustainable development within Atlanta's urban core.

I strongly support rail-based streetcars or light rail as the best mode of transit for the BeltLine. Rail-based electrically powered transit could come from clean, renewable resources and makes more sense from both an environmental and financial standpoint. Bus rapid transit would be gasoline powered and emit more pollution into Atlanta's already problematic air, and with the rising cost of oil, it would be counterintuitive financial investment. Additionally, paved bus routes are impermeable and more problematic for runoff and water pollution. A rail system such as street car or light-rail could be the TRUE greenway Atlanta has envisioned with grass running up to and in between the tracks. An environmentally sound greenway is in the best interest of public health for joggers, bikers, and community residents around the BeltLine.

The BeltLine has energized and captured Atlanta's imagination and it will impact millions of residents and visitors for a long time to come. While bus rapid transit might cost less to build in the short term, rail-based transit is more appropriate for a project which will redefine the way people live, work and play in Atlanta. Our city deserves a world class transit system. Let's keep the BeltLine on track as it was originally envisioned.

Thanks!

- To Whom It May Concern,

I am a 21 year old student at Georgia State and support rail-based transit on the Beltline. I take MARTA trains to/from class everyday of the week and from my experience as a train commuter, I have learned that it is a faster and easier mode of transportation as opposed to a bus.

Trains operate on their own system whereas buses rely on our road system which can be very congested thus causing delays. I believe that rail-based transit is more modern, convenient, and environmentally friendly than bus-based transit. My family and I are Atlanta natives and I am incredibly enthused about the creation of the Beltline. Through rail-based transit, it is exactly what Atlanta needs to connect our inner city communities and make us the metropolitan capitol of the New South.



- As an Atlanta resident for the past 24 years I am thrilled at the opportunity to have another transit option to relieve our city's severe traffic problems. Although as I understand it the MARTA is leaning towards a BRT system for the proposed Beltline transit system. Please don't let this happen for a plethora of reasons.

Buses may be cheaper, but have far worse of an environmental impact than rail-based transit. A gas powered bus emits more pollution into the air than electric street cars or light rail systems. The last thing this city needs is another paved road. The environmental impact of paving over the Beltline right-of-way to run a fleet of buses that could spew exhaust is a big concern.

In addition to trying to address our poor air quality due to an increase in health related problems such as Asthma; we need to reduce our dependence on oil. This dependence is fueling many of our and the worlds problems. Therefore anything we can do to move away from this, such as choosing light rail or streetcars vs. BRT will help people everywhere.

Take MARTA's own system. Your buses are twice as expensive as trains to operate per rider, and operating costs are what riders and taxpayers will be footing the bill on.

As for strong ridership, all you need to do is compare ridership on MARTA trains with that of their bus routes. Which they cut back on. Because of poor ridership, a bus-based system is a short-sighted solution that could backfire. People prefer trains over buses. While the cost of fuel could skyrocket by the time the Beltline is built.

"This emphasis of taking the cheapest short term route to get there is not the way to go for something that's going to define this city for the next 100 years,"not to mention the higher costs (environmental, health, & financial) over the long term.

The Federal Transit Administration's review process favors projects that promise a cost-effective means of addressing severe traffic problems. Cost efficacy will be realized in the long term by not using a BRT system.

Rail vehicles last about 25 years, twice as long as buses. MARTA officials said their analysis factored in maintenance costs, though they used current gasoline prices. We all know that it will steadily rise and probably never fall again.

Modern streetcar: Uses smaller vehicles and has more frequent stops than light rail. More stops will make it more rider friendly thus increasing patronage and funding. This option in my opinion is the way to go. Hopefully I've echoed the sentiment of fellow Atlantans. Thanks for your time and consideration.



September 07, 2006

To The Board of MARTA,

As the co-chair of the Midtown Neighbors' Association Traffic Committee, I've talked traffic with an array of Midtown residents for years. When the Beltline first surfaced as a viable project, I lobbied to have Beltline-associated organizations come speak at our Annual member meeting. Residents have been thrilled with the possibilities of having a PATH with green space come near their homes, and with the dream of a light rail system to help with ever-worsening congestion encircling the neighborhood.

The option of buses elicits an immediate and very strong **NEGATIVE REACTION**. Residents do not ride the bus as it is, as the existing bus routes do not go where they want to go in a timely fashion, and that the buses are noisy, uncomfortable and do not provide a satisfying commuter ride.

If MARTA's goal is to get folks out of their cars, buses (BRT) will be a financial disaster. More affluent, better traveled in-town residents have ridden rail rapid transit in other cities, have loved the experience, and are expecting to finally have the same high level of service in Atlanta. The possibility of buses is to them a cheap way out, and one they have no interest in patronizing.

If one of the critical problems with the Beltline is the lack of long-term funding for operating the transit component, offering the potential ridership a transportation mode they will not ride will only serve to doom the transit service, and become a self-fulfilling prophesy for the nay-sayers.

September 11, 2006

In my opinion, Atlanta has demonstrated over the last 30 years they will not and do not ride a bus, not even The Loop. Buses are lumbering, lunging, smelly, and bulky. MARTA needs to make the ride attractive, glamorous, an event in and of itself. For example, Michael Robison is not putting rapid buses down Peachtree. He is putting the **STREET CAR**. MARTA, please wake up, slowdown, and smell the roses for goodness sake. I believe the neighborhoods along the Beltline want the old fashioned streetcar, and that is what will guarantee success.

September 13, 2006

Atlanta's transportation needs more rail and non-gasoline based vehicles.
Don't destroy a great idea for parks and walkable land with buses.

Thanks!