

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study



BeltLine

Joint TAC and SAC Meeting

December 8, 2008

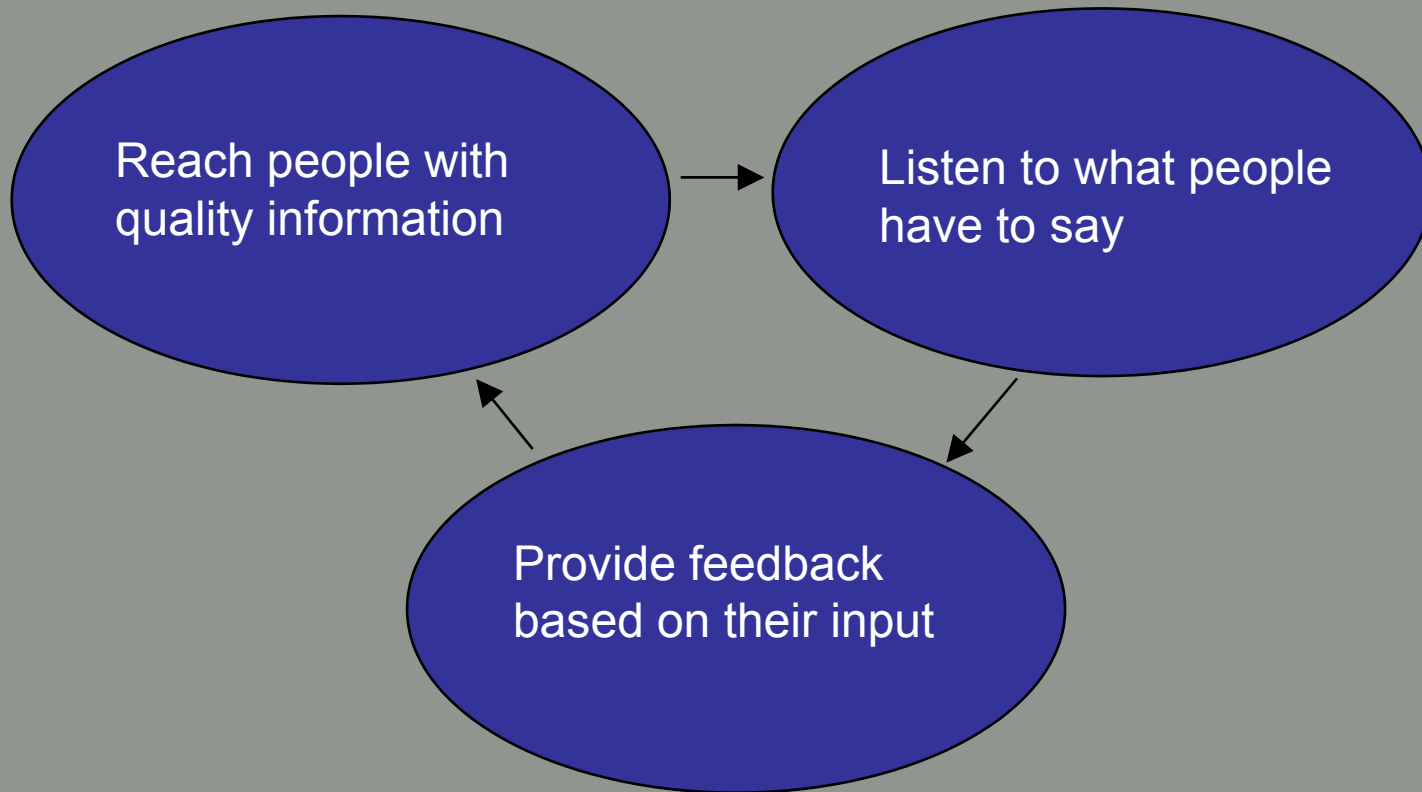
What We Will Discuss Today

- Outreach and Agency Coordination
- Scoping Results
- Existing Conditions
- Historical and Archeological Analysis
- Conceptual Engineering
- Evaluation Criteria
- Next Steps

Outreach and Agency Coordination Plan

Outreach and Agency Coordination

Goals of the Plan



Outreach and Agency Coordination

marta ATLANTA BELTLINE INC. BeltLine

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1 SUMMER 2008

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Continuing to Lay the Groundwork for Transit & Trails

Study to Help Determine Right-of-Way

Linked together by a common goal, MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) and ABI (Atlanta Beltline, Inc.) have initiated a two-year study of the environmental effects of developing a system of transit and trails in the 22-mile Beltline Corridor with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This system will connect Atlanta's downtown to the city's edge.

Atlanta BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study-Update #2

Initial Public Involvement Phase Nearing Completion

The Atlanta Beltline Corridor Environmental Study is being conducted to assess that transit and trails can be constructed in the Beltline Corridor with the least possible impact on the natural and human environment. The study will also address key planning decisions such as whether transit will be light rail or modern streetcar. The Study will be conducted according to Federal guidelines and regulations (the National Environmental Protection Act or NEPA process).

There are four major milestones in the Federal process as depicted in the diagram below. The study will consider impacts in the area of:

- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

MARTA
Attn: Environmental Services
100 Peachtree St. NE
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-524-6070
Fax: 404-524-6133
Email: abi@metrolinkatlanta.net
Website: www.marta.com/metroatlantabeltline.html

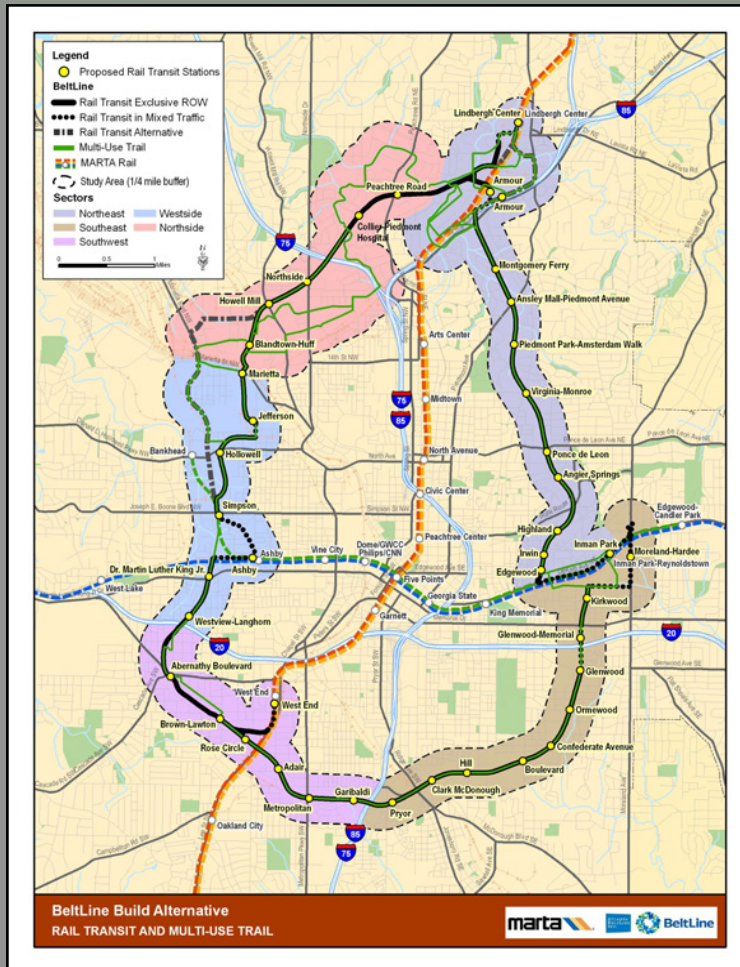
Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.
Attn: Project, Public and Agency Liaison
100 Peachtree St. NE
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-524-6070
Fax: 404-524-6133
Email: abi@metrolinkatlanta.net

- Tools and Techniques
 - BeltLine CEF
 - Study Group Meetings
 - Citywide Briefings
 - BeltLine email blast lists
 - TAC and SAC
 - Public hearings
 - Communications tools
 - Website
 - Project updates
 - Media - radio, television, newspapers

Outreach and Agency Coordination

- Activities - May-September 2008
 - TAC and SAC Kick-off Meetings
 - Project Announcements at 16 neighborhood groups before Scoping Meetings (Public Hearings)
 - Scoping Meetings
 - Distributed Environmental Study Comment Forms at 27 neighborhood groups after Scoping Meetings
- Recap of Public Participation
 - 341 individuals made comments
 - 974 total comments received

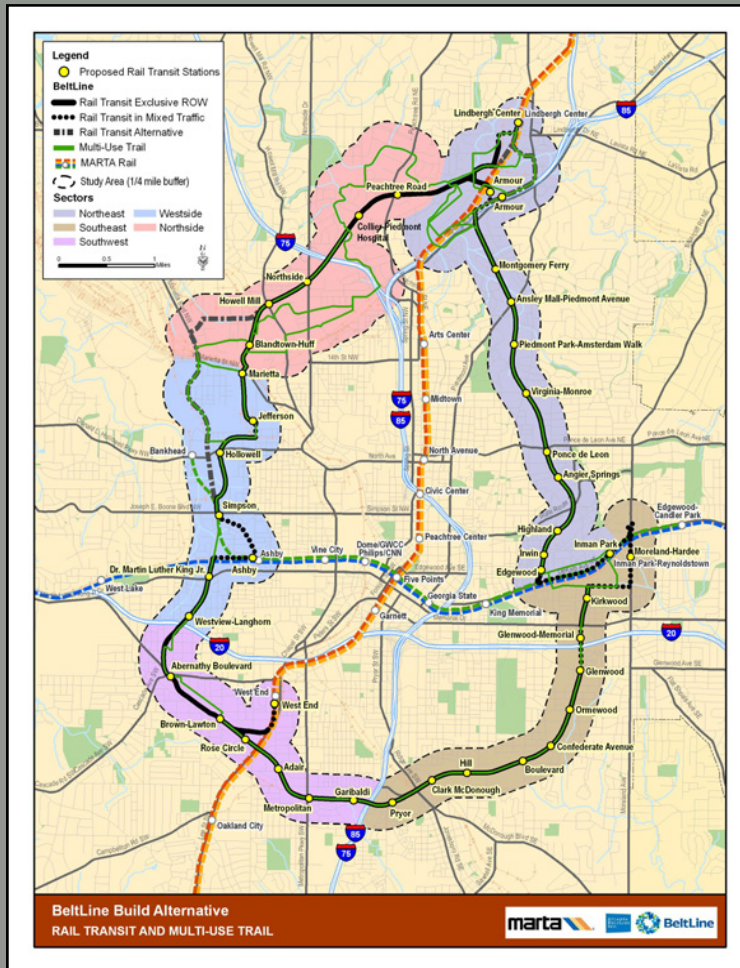
What We Asked – Scoping Meetings



BeltLine Study Area

- What do you think about the BeltLine project in general?
- If you have been involved in previous BeltLine studies, how would you describe your experience?
- Do you have any concerns relative to the environmental effects of building transit and trails in the BeltLine corridor?
- How do you think transit and trails should be funded?

What We Asked – Scoping Meetings



BeltLine Study Area

- Why are transit and trails needed in the BeltLine?
- What are the goals for the BeltLine project? How might we use these goals to evaluate alternatives?
- Do you have concerns about possible harm that the BeltLine could cause to the natural, built, and human environment?

What We Heard – Goals and Objectives

Public Goals

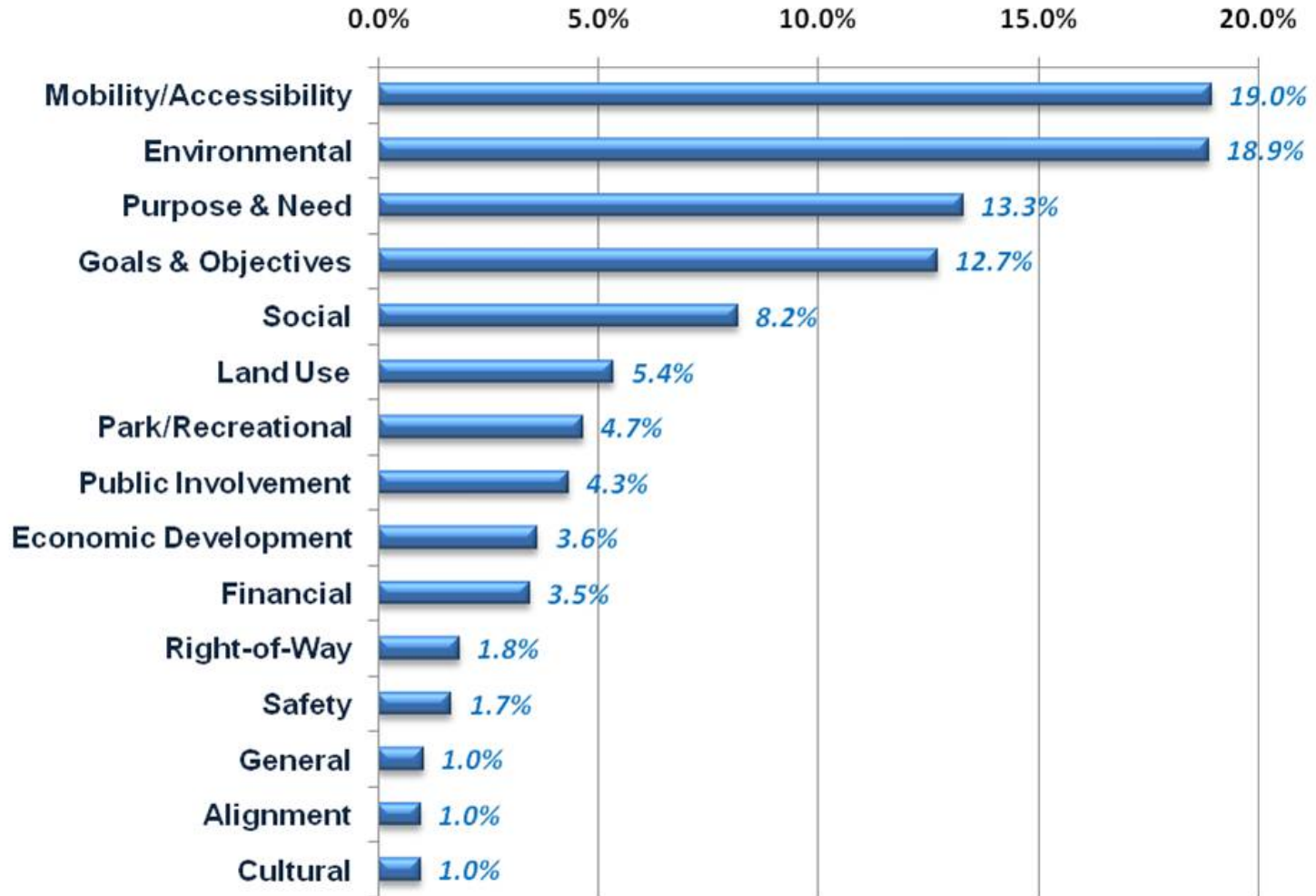
- “Get people out of cars”
- Improve mobility options for transit-dependent
- Coordinate mixed-income development strategies
- Highlight regional service relationships
- Accentuate and enhance (rather than merely minimize impacts to) community and environmental resources

Initial Study Goals

- Increase alternate transportation mode access and connectivity
- Support compatible land use initiatives
- Provide cost-effective and efficient transportation
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment
- Connect communities through trails
- Minimize adverse environmental impacts while fostering positive

What We Heard – Summary

Comments Received by Subject



* Individual comments can fall under more than one subject

Future Activities

Study Process and Schedule

Spring – Summer 2008: Initiate Environmental Review

Tasks:

- Existing Conditions
- Goals and Objectives
- Purpose and Need
- NE Quadrant Feasibility
- Develop Project Website and Hotline
- Develop Public and Agency Involvement Plan

Summer - Fall 2008: ROW Determination NE Quadrant

Tasks:

- Define Environmental Impacts
- Conceptual Design of Transit and Trail Alignments and Stations in NE Quadrant
- Develop Evaluation Criteria
- Refine NE Quadrant Alternative

Winter – Summer 2009: ROW Determination all Quadrants

Tasks:

- Complete Conceptual Design of Transit and Trail Alignments and Stations for all Quadrants
- Identify Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures
- Refine all Transit and Trail Alternatives
- Modify Conceptual Design to Support Environmental Findings
- Refine Rail and Trail Capital and Operating Costs
- Refine Rail Ridership Forecasts

Fall 2009 – Spring 2010: Complete Environmental Document

Tasks:

- Identify Station Locations
- Determine Technology
- Refine Capital and Operating Costs
- Determine Preferred Transit and Trail Alternative

Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

- SAC Meeting
- TAC Meetings
- TADAC Briefings
- Public Scoping Meetings
- Newsletter
- Study Update

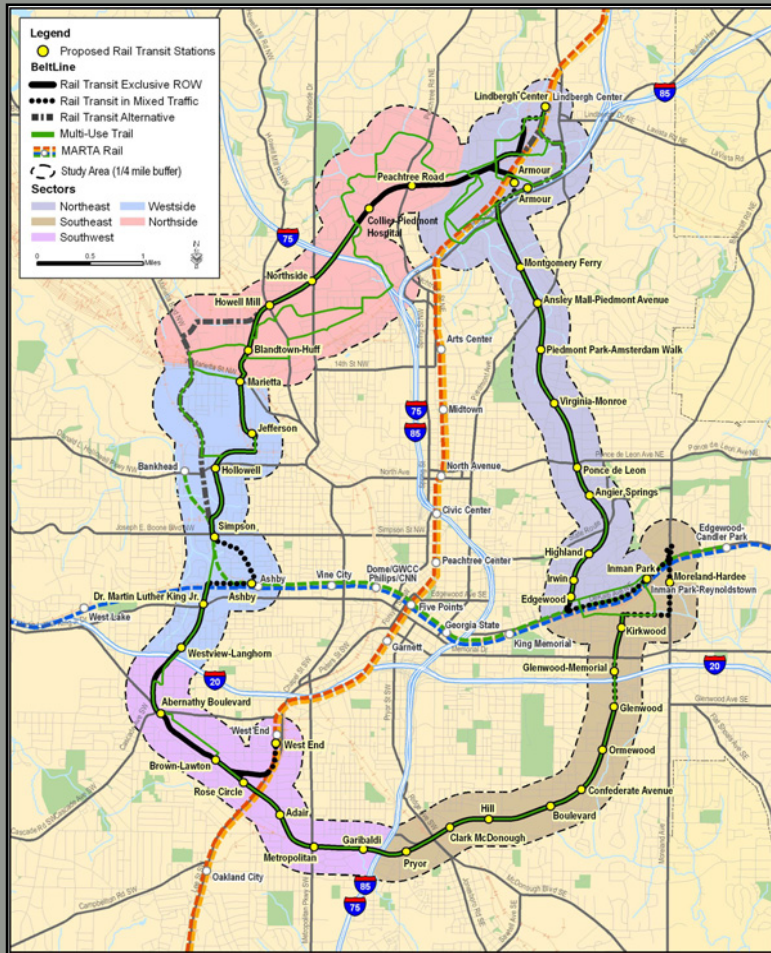
- Joint SAC/TAC Meeting
- SAC Meeting
- TAC Meeting
- TADAC Briefings
- Study Group Meetings
- Newsletter
- Study Update

- Presentations and Briefings
 - TAC
 - SAC
 - TADAC
 - Study Groups
 - Neighborhood Groups
 - Advocacy Groups
 - Faith-based & Business Groups
 - Public Hearing
- Newsletters & Study Updates
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Existing Conditions Report

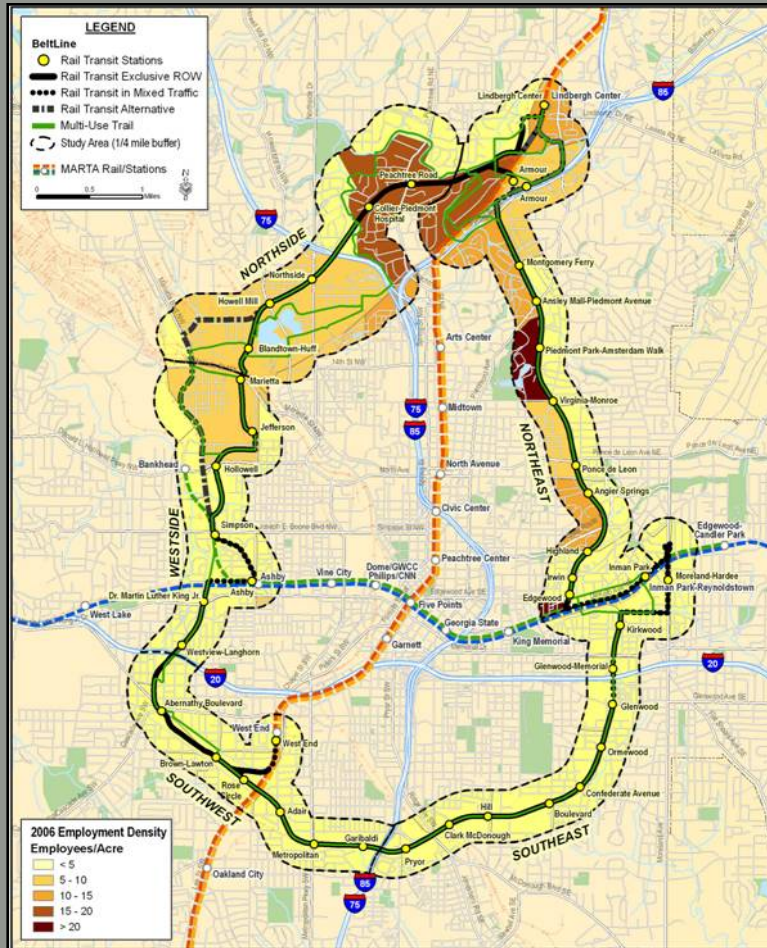
Existing Conditions Report



- Socio-economic Characteristics
- Natural Environment
- Transit and Roadway Conditions
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Conditions
- Related Plans

BeltLine Study Group Areas

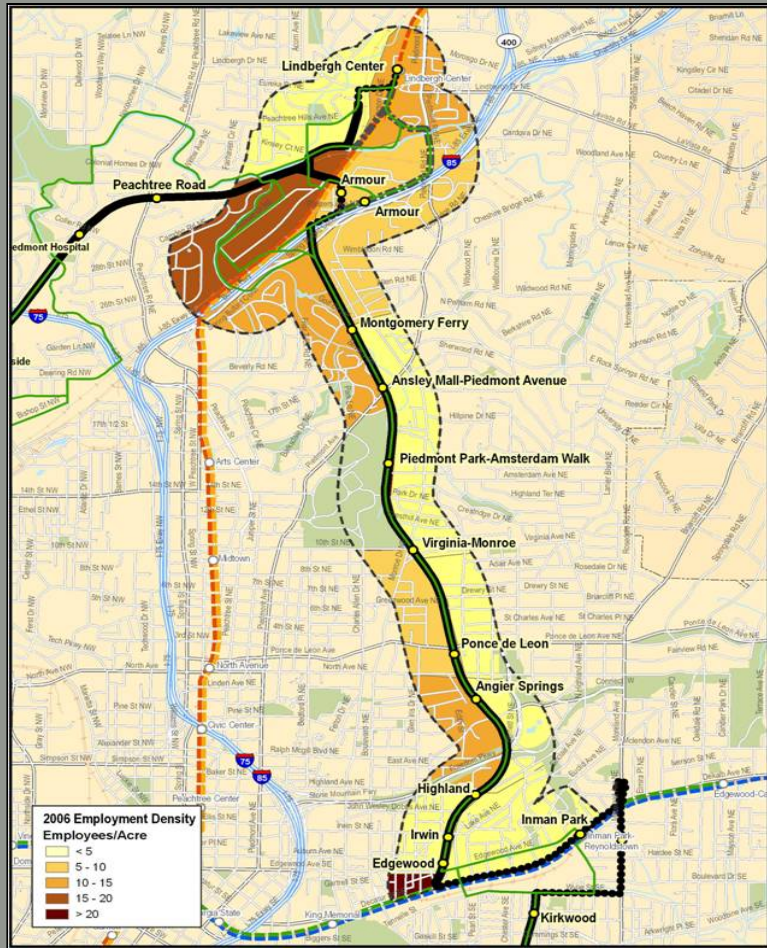
Socio-economic Conditions



Employment Density

- Population is 68,300
- Employment is 51,100
- Environmental Justice Populations:
 - 21% Low Income
 - 59 % Minorities
 - 20% Zero Car Households
- Passes through 59 Neighborhoods
- Connects 413 acres of parkland in 41 Parks

Socio-economic Conditions

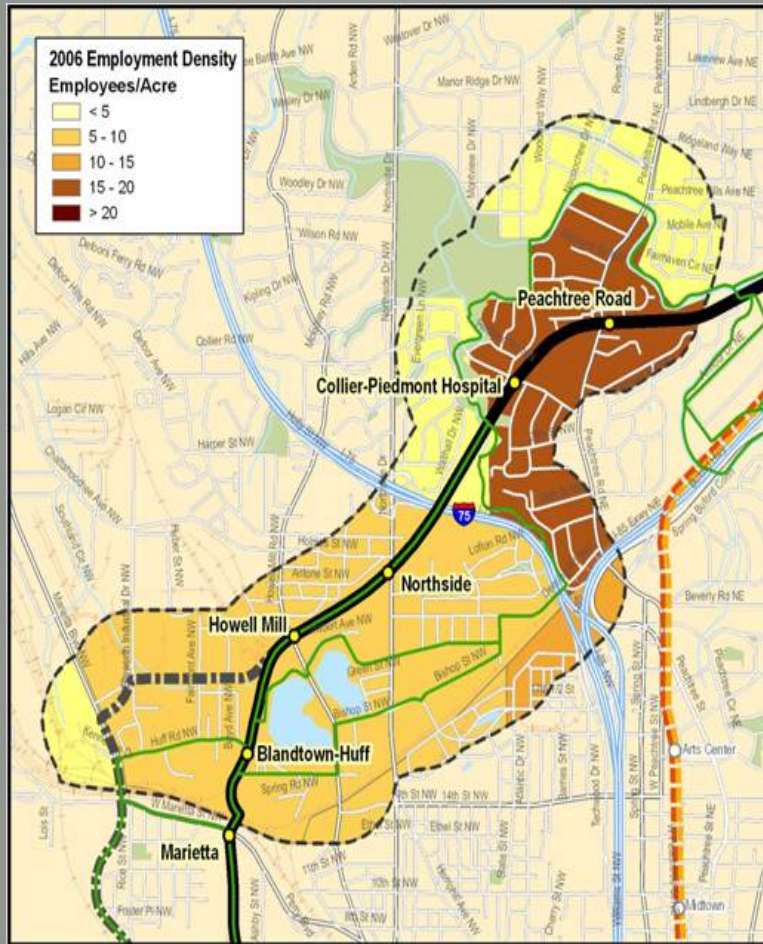


Employment Density

Northeast Study Group Area has the largest employment, about 46% of the total

**Includes BeltLine Subareas 5, 6 and part of 7*

Socio-economic Conditions



Employment Density

Northside Study Group Area has the second largest employment, about 36% of the total

**Includes BeltLine Subareas 8 and part of 7*

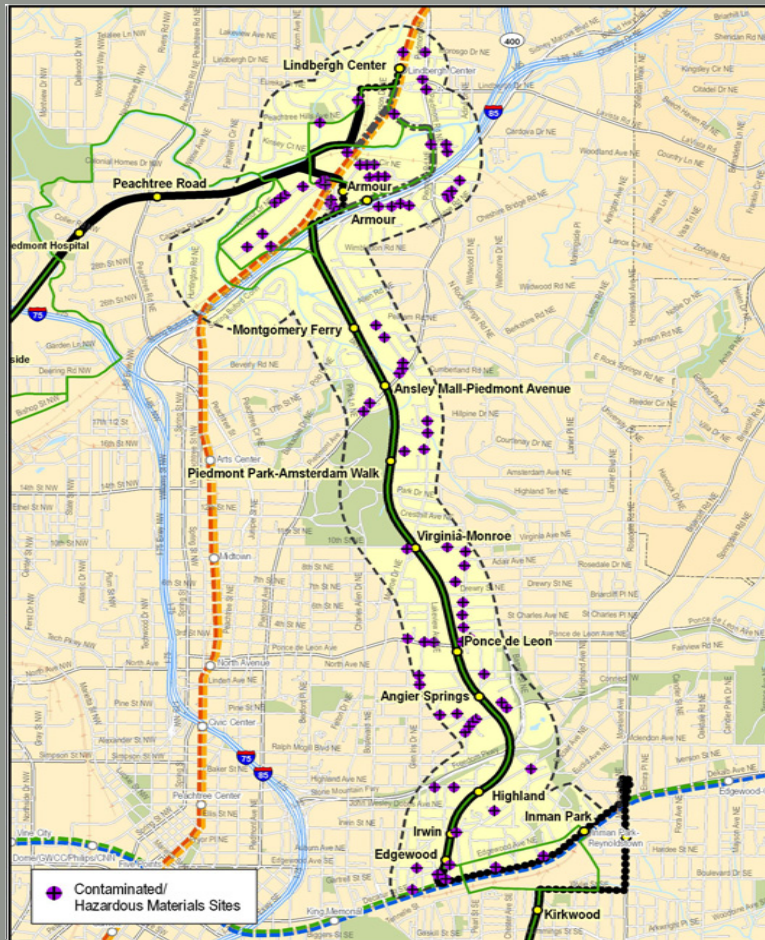
Natural Environmental Conditions



- 428 acres of floodplain mostly along Peachtree, Clear, and Tanyard Creeks
- 95 acres of wetlands
- Numerous water bodies including creeks, ponds, reservoirs and lakes
- 241 listed potential hazardous materials sites

Known Potential Hazardous Materials Sites

Natural Environmental Conditions

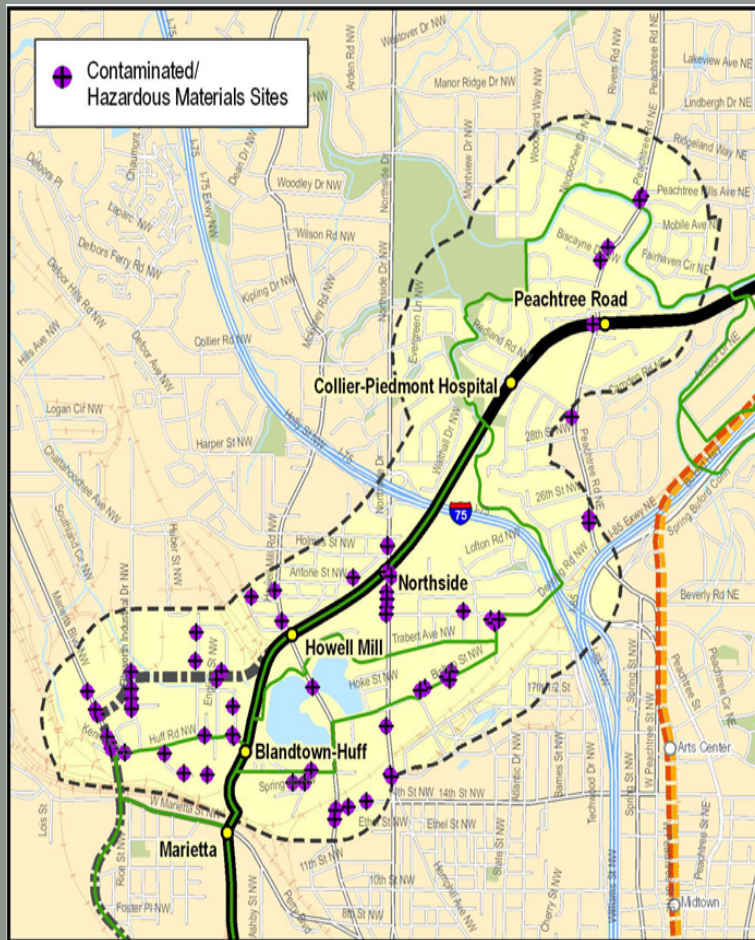


Known Potential Hazardous Materials Sites

Northeast Study Group Area has the largest number (78) of potential hazardous materials sites

**Includes BeltLine Subareas 5, 6 and part of 7*

Natural Environmental Conditions



Known Potential Hazardous Materials Sites

Northside Study Group Area has the second largest number (64) of potential hazardous materials sites

**Includes BeltLine Subareas 8 and part of 7*

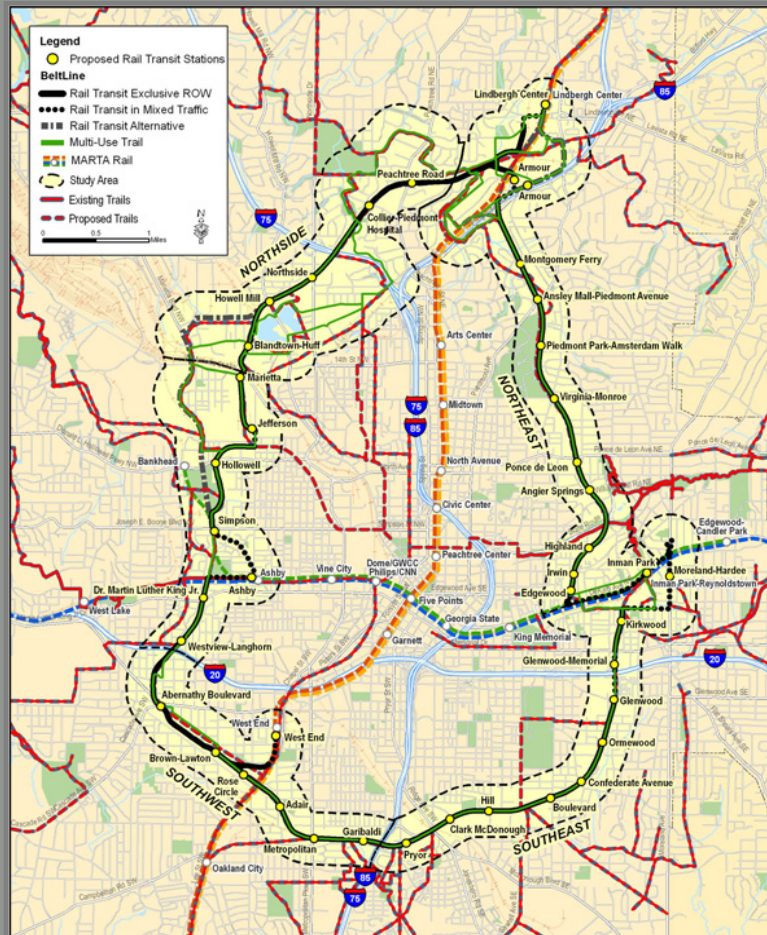
Transit and Roadway Conditions



2030 Congestion

- BeltLine Study Area is served by:
 - 55 MARTA bus routes
 - Five MARTA rail stations along three rail lines
 - One GRTA express bus route
 - Several local shuttle bus services
- About 14% of residents use transit for their daily work trip
- 60% of major roadways to operate at LOS E or worse by 2030

Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails



Existing and Proposed Trails

- 17 core and 32 secondary bicycle routes
- 7 bicycle routes with dedicated lanes
- Trails that are in or near parks with some on-street routes
- About 4% of residents typically bike or walk to work

Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails



Existing and Proposed Trails

Southwest Study Group Area includes the recently constructed West End Trail along White Street and other planned facilities

**Includes BeltLine Subareas 2 and parts of 1*

Historical/Archeological Analysis

NE Quadrant - Cultural Resources



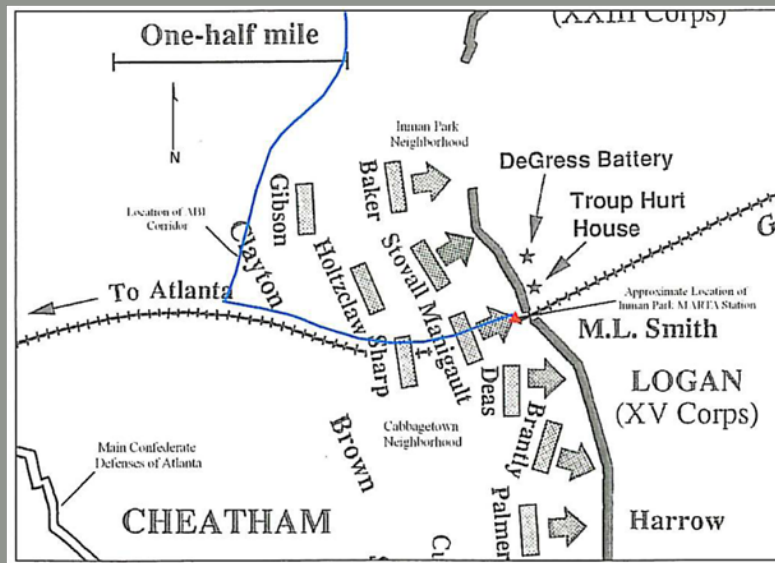
- Supporting Environmental Effects Report
- Historic and archaeological resources surveyed
- Preliminary findings and recommendations subject to State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review
- Questionnaires from August – September public outreach meetings assisted in identifying possible resources

NE Quadrant - Historic Resources



- 41 properties Listed, Eligible, or Recommended Eligible
- “Historic Railroad Resources of the Atlanta BeltLine Northeast Quadrant”
- Piedmont Park
- Oakland Cemetery
- Two (2) additional bridges
- 18 additional Properties or “Multiple Listings”
- 18 Historic Districts

NE Quadrant – Archaeological Resources



- Eight sites near project corridor
 - Seven sites outside of the Area of Potential Effect (No Effect)
 - One site (Battle of Atlanta) in/adjacent to project corridor
- Two (2) isolated finds
 - Low research potential -- Recommended Ineligible for NRHP

Conceptual Engineering

Conceptual Engineering - Goals

- Provide design sufficient to identify potential environmental effects of project
- Develop conceptual “footprint” of project to facilitate right-of-way preservation
- Inform estimates of budget needed to complete and operate project

Design and Operational Features

- Multi-Use trail
- Double-track transit alignment
- LRT or Streetcar vehicles
 - 8-10 minute headways
- Passenger stations: $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile spacing
- Storage and maintenance facility for vehicles

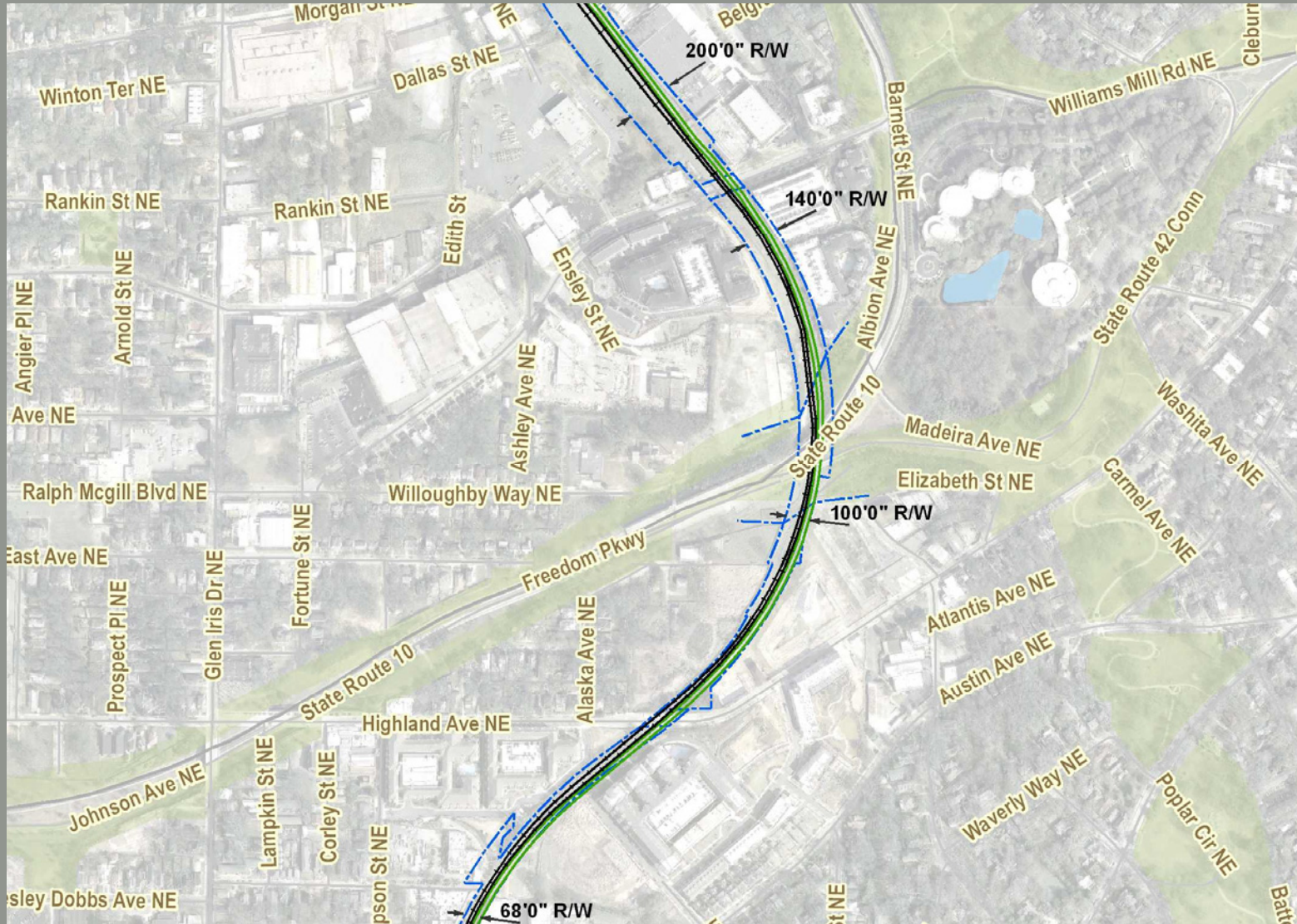
NE Quadrant Conceptual Design

- Northeast Quadrant definition
- Corridor follows existing railroad corridor
- New rail alignment and right-of-way required

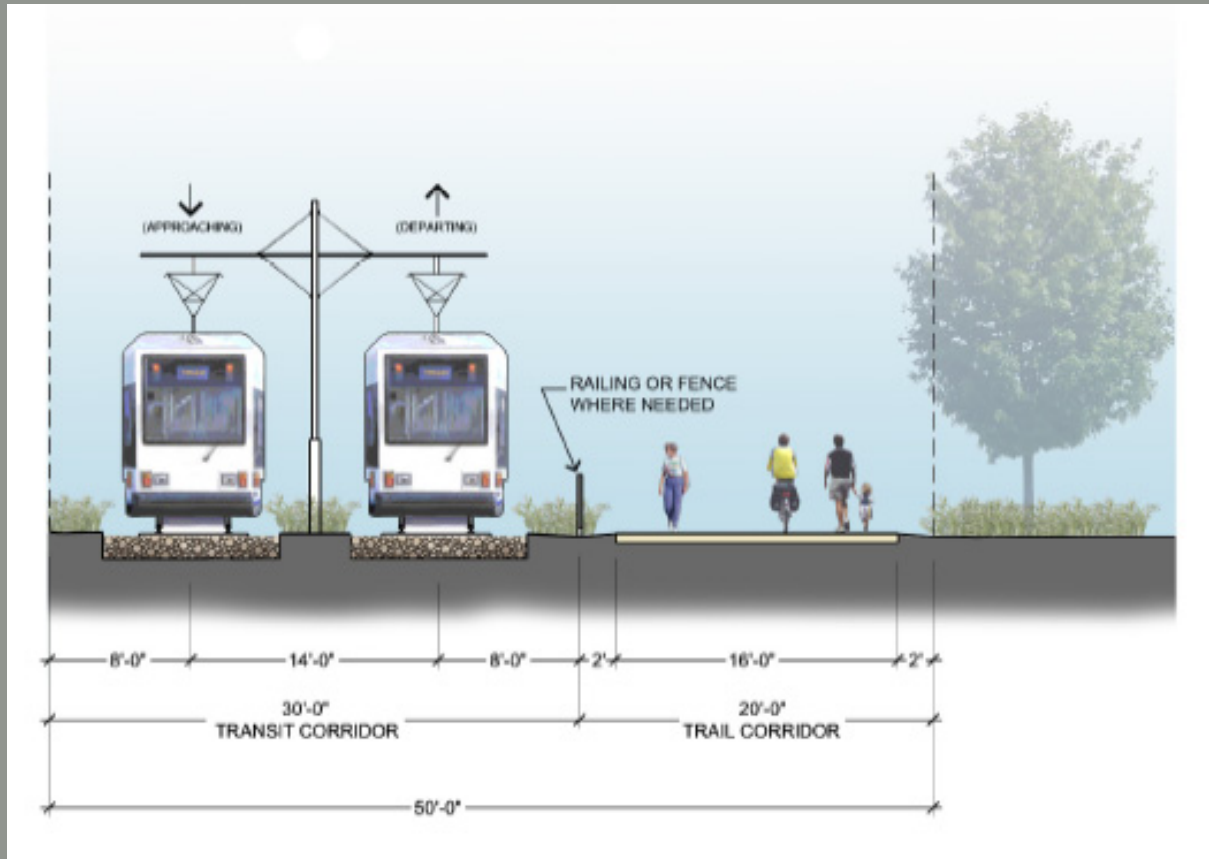
NE Quadrant: Proposed Alignment



NE Quadrant: ABI Right-of-Way between Highland Avenue and Ralph McGill Boulevard

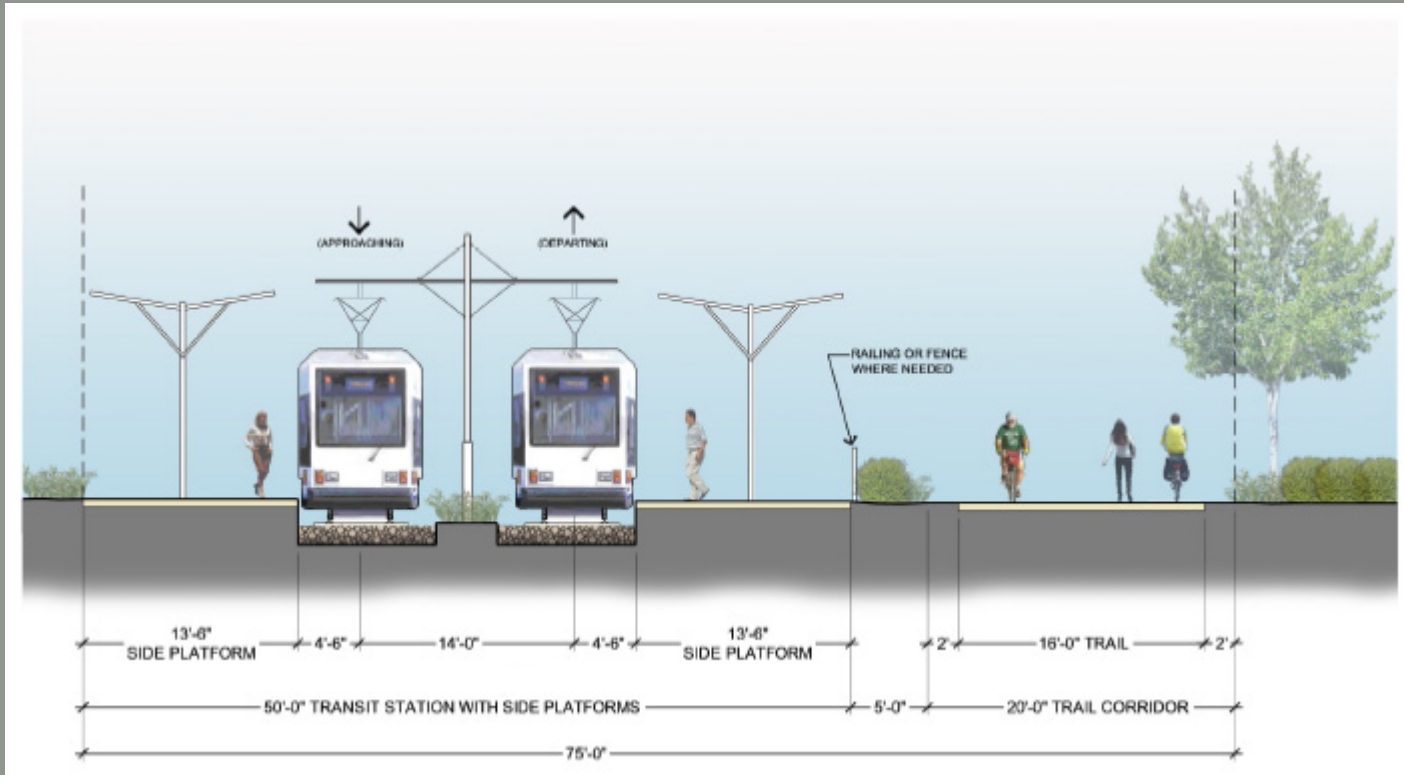


Typical Minimum Section for Transit and Trail*



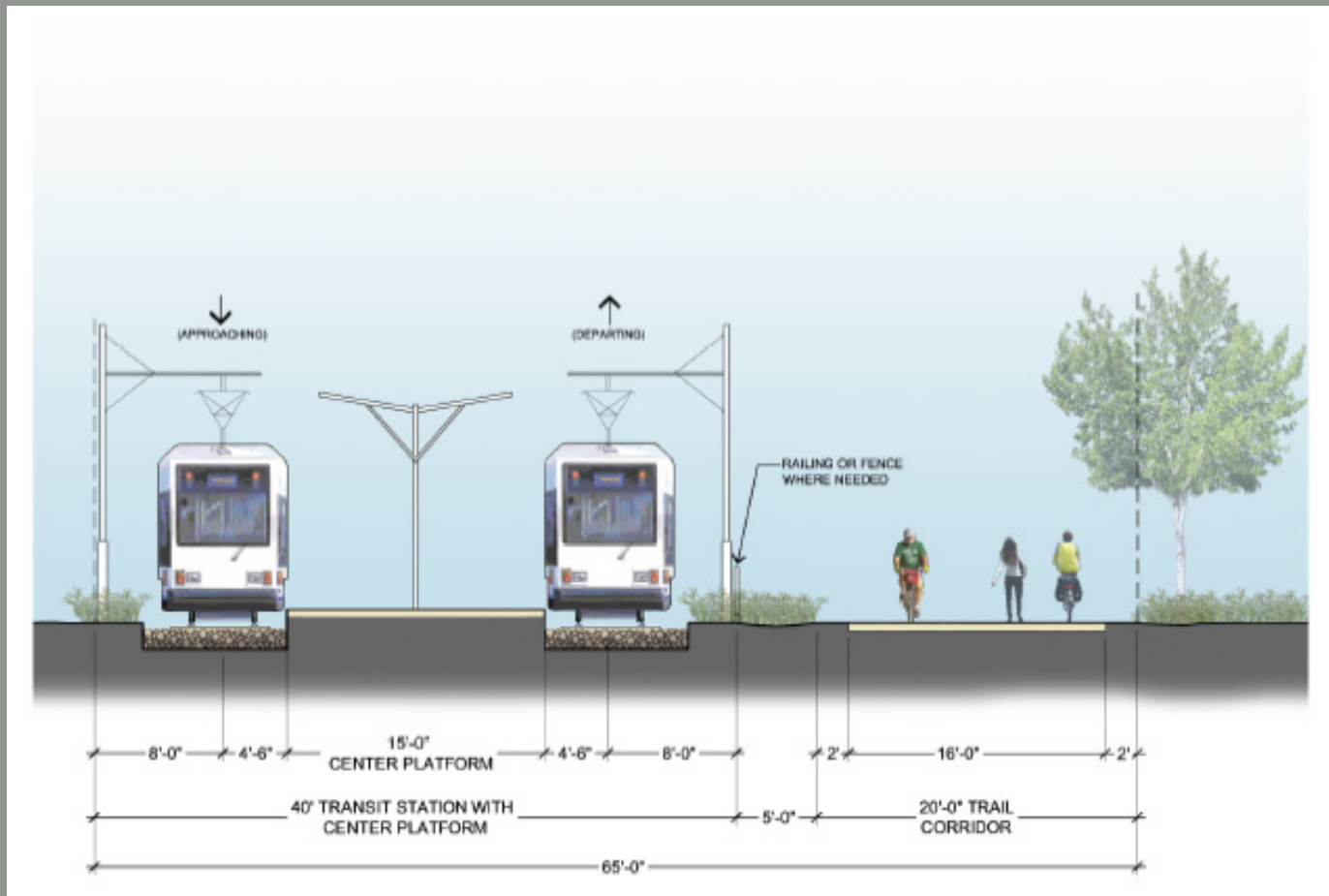
*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment

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



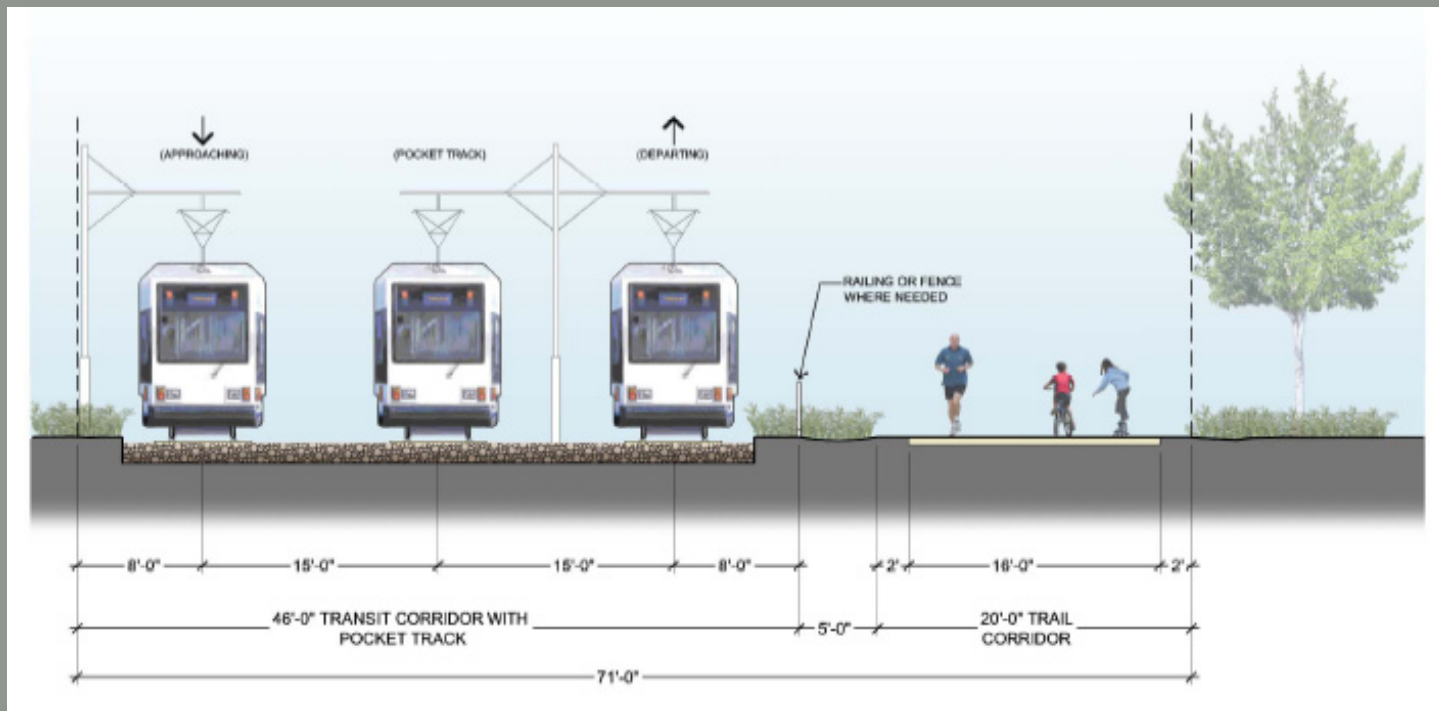
*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment

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



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

Typical Minimum Section for Transit and Trail at Pocket Track*

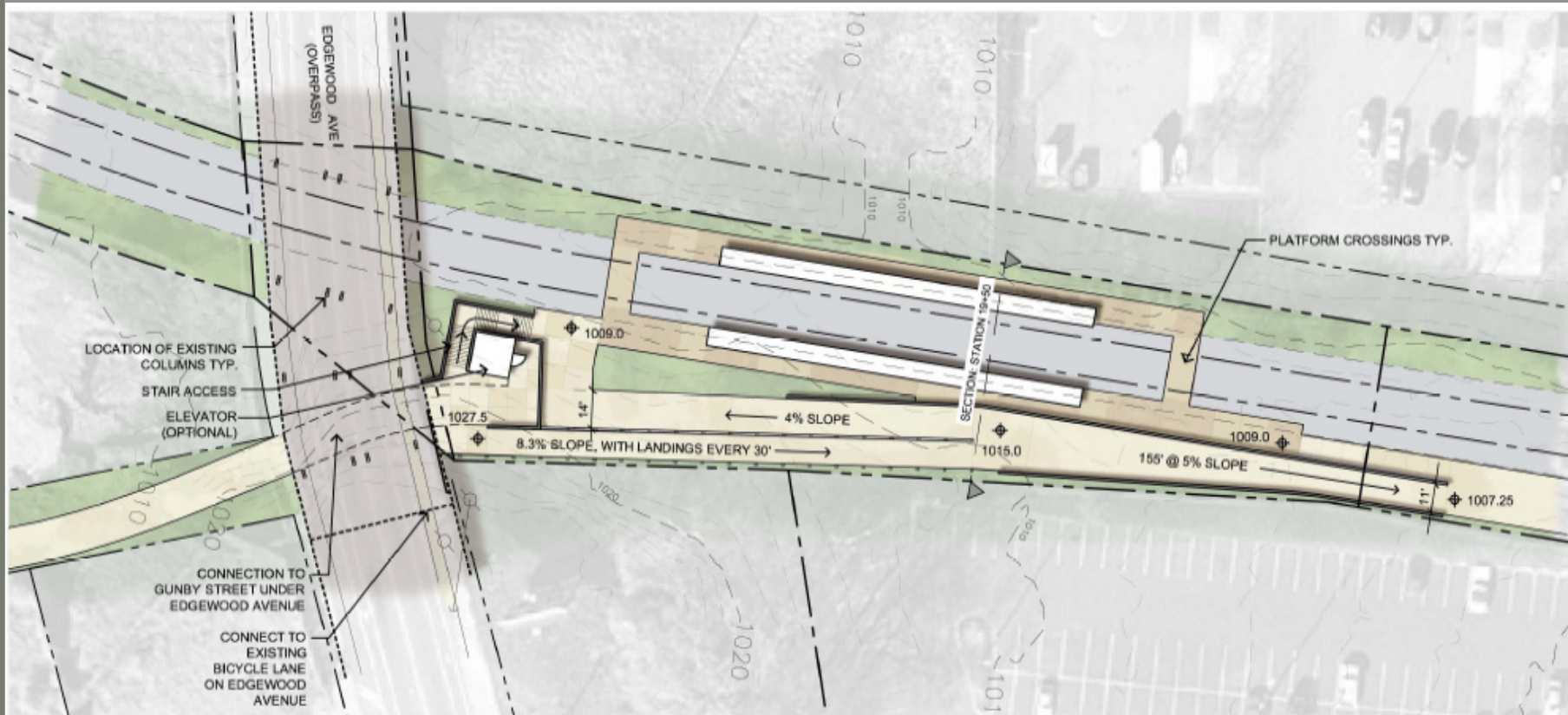


*Minimum dimensions apply only in locations of flat cross-slope and straight alignment

Station Selection Methodology

- Land use and Study Group Area plans, including public input
- Key connection points with surface streets and pedestrian facilities
- Station spacing for passenger access and efficient transit operations ($\frac{1}{4}$ mile to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile)
- Existing topography, built environment, and available right-of-way

Example Connection Detail and Station Access Plan: Edgewood Avenue



Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria



- Based on revised goals and objectives
- Specific measures identified
- Project alternatives (mode & alignment) performance assessed
- Evaluation performance and public/agency comments considered in identifying the preferred alternative

Revised Project Goals

- **Goal 1:** Seamless Intermodal Connectivity
- **Goal 2:** Compatibility with Community Initiatives
- **Goal 3:** Cost-Effective and Efficient Investment
- **Goal 4:** Bicycle/Pedestrian-Friendly Environment
- **Goal 5:** Link Communities and Recreation
- **Goal 6:** Protect and Enhance the Environment

Key Criteria

- **Mobility**
- **Accessibility and Connectivity**
- **Equity**
- **Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency**
- **Travel Time**

Key Criteria

- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Compatibility**
- **Support of Other Planning Initiatives**
- **Land Use and Economic Development**
- **Community Fit**
- **Environmental Quality**

Questions and Comments

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Plan
- BeltLine Community Engagement Meetings
- Environmental Analysis in NE Corridor – March 2009
- Hold Public Hearing or Public Meetings on Environmental Effects Report in NE Quadrant – April/May 2009
- Technical Studies throughout BeltLine Corridor – Ongoing until spring 2010

Next Steps

- **TAC-SAC Meeting** – March 2009 – Review EER Report
- **SAC Meeting** – June 2009 – Comment on alternatives considered and revised purpose and need
- **Public Hearing on Tier 1 DEIS** – December 2009
- **TAC-SAC Meeting** – January 2010 – Review and comment on preferred alternative