BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Fall Workshop Series

November 2009

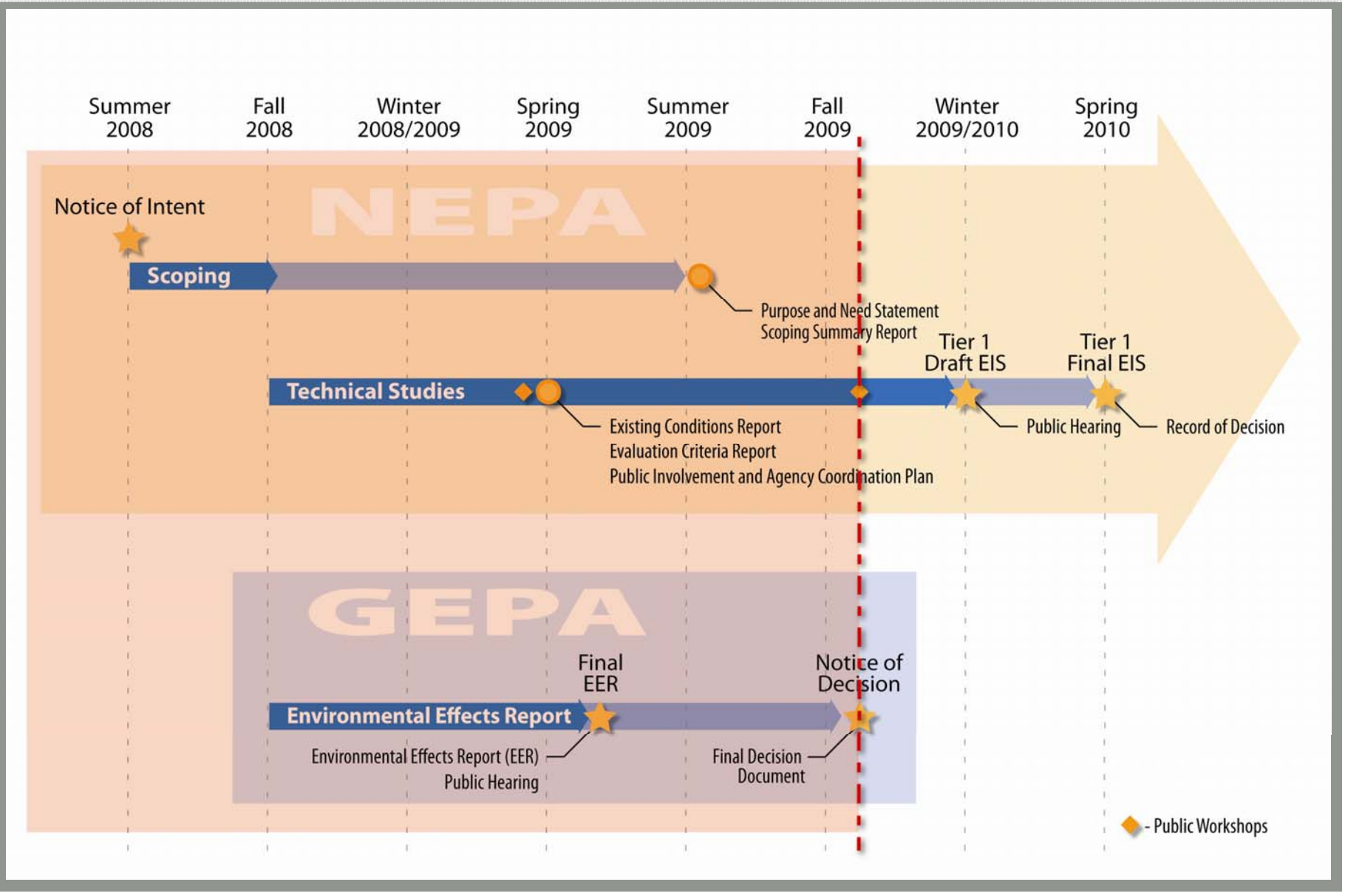
Agenda & Introductions

- Environmental study process and update
- Alternatives considered in the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Alternative evaluation results
- Discussion of alternative evaluation
- Next steps

Study Process and Update

Environmental Study Process

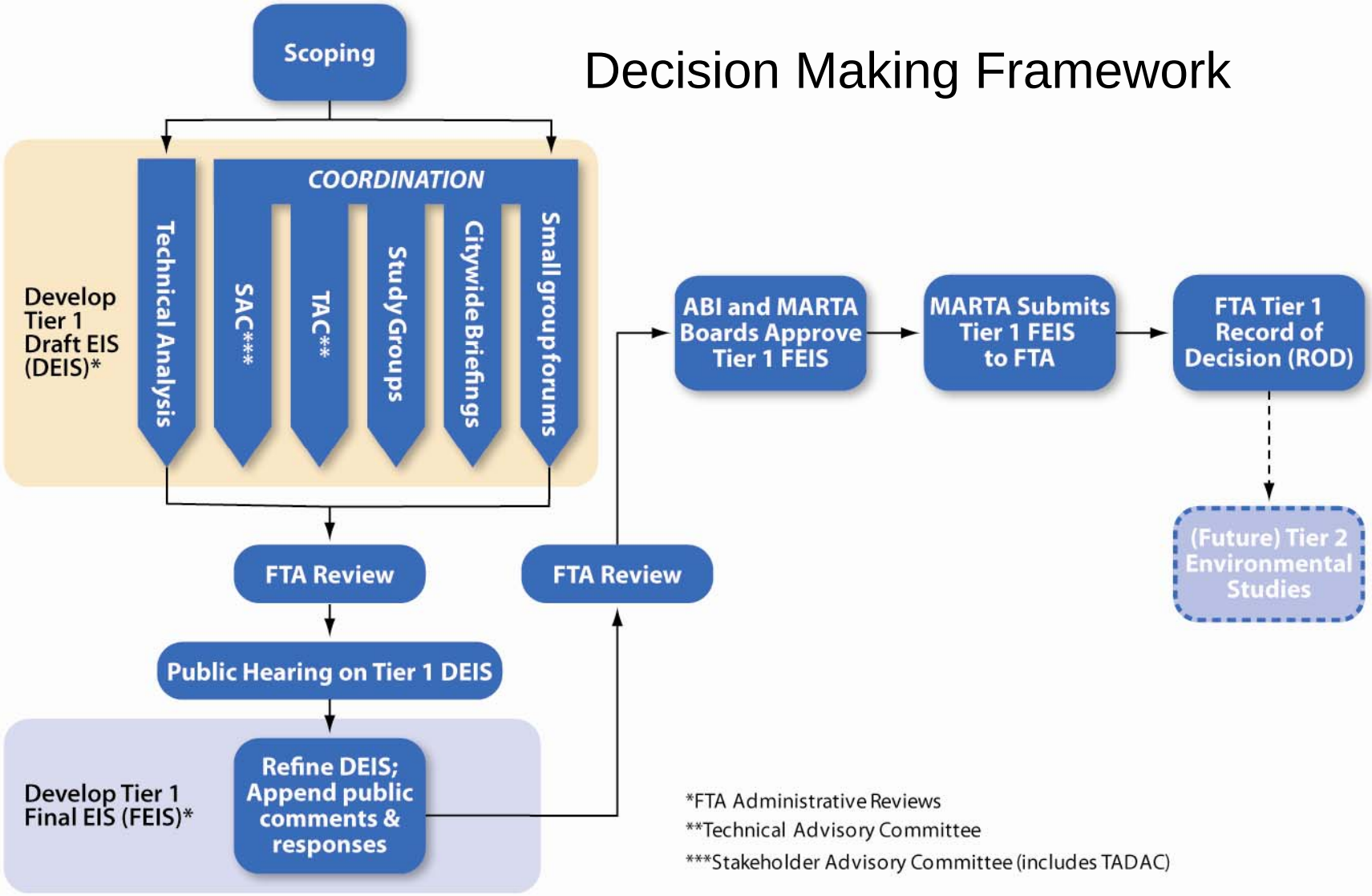
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study



Environmental Study Process

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Decision Making Framework



*FTA Administrative Reviews

**Technical Advisory Committee

***Stakeholder Advisory Committee (includes TADAC)

Environmental Study Process

Accomplishments

- Scoping Meetings and Summary Report
- Purpose and Need
- Northeast Zone Reports
- Existing Conditions Report
- Evaluation Criteria Document
- Public workshop series
- Initial alternative evaluation findings

Development of Alternatives

Development of Alternatives

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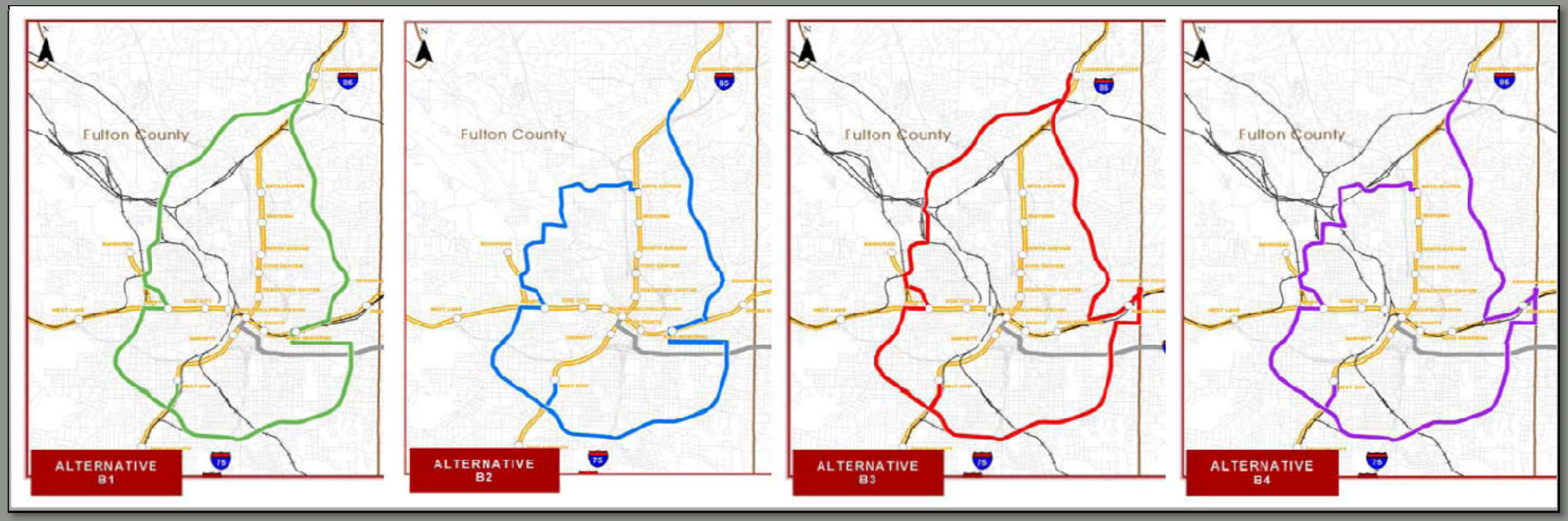
Detailed Screening Analysis and Recommendation (2007)

Two basic configurations, two connection points

- Northwest segment: Bankhead to Lindbergh or Arts Center
- East Connection: King Memorial or Inman Park via Moreland Ave.

Technologies considered

- Light Rail Transit; Modern Streetcar; Bus Rapid Transit



Development of Alternatives

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Public workshop feedback

- Local service for BeltLine transit emphasizing neighborhood accessibility to stations
- Transit & trail alignments should run parallel to maximum extent possible
- Transit should connect to MARTA rail & buses, and Peachtree Streetcar

Development of Alternatives

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Public workshop feedback

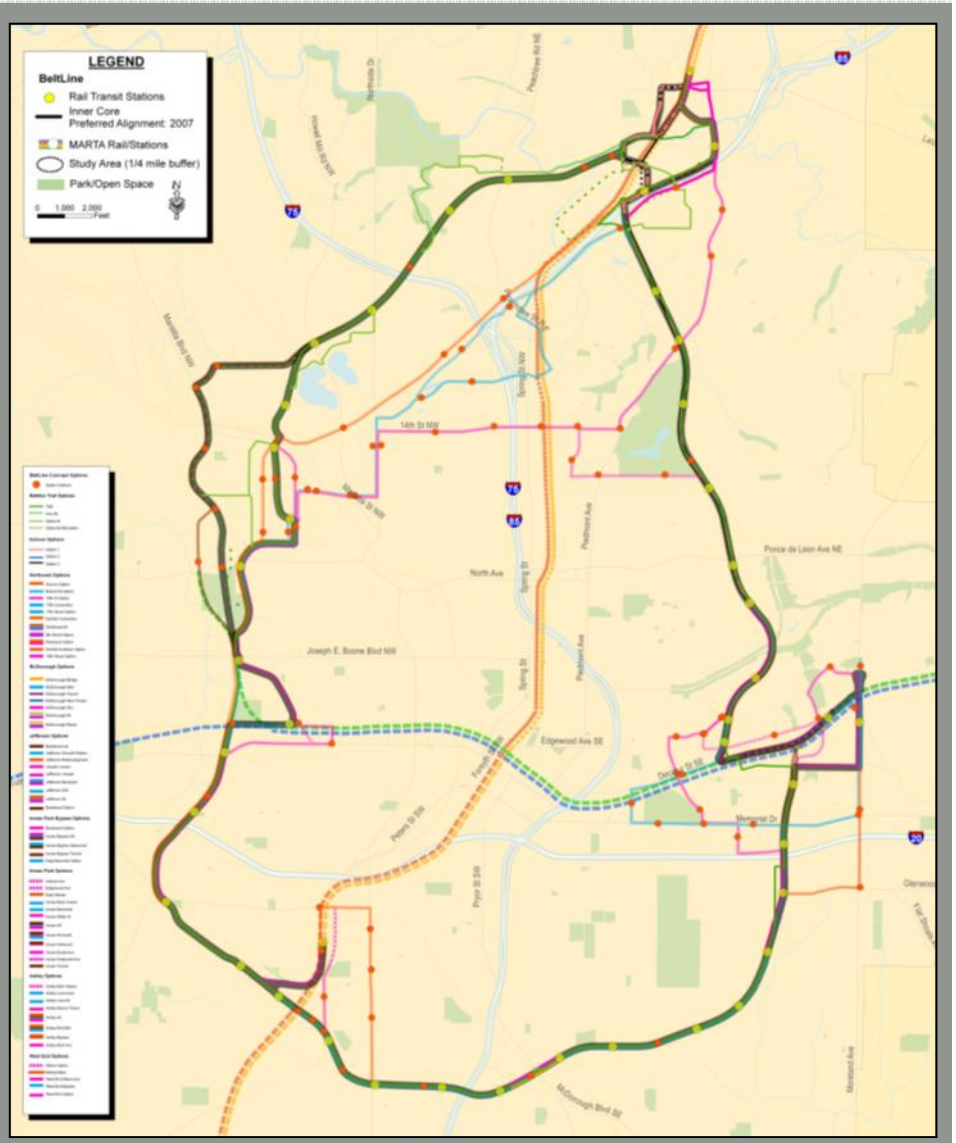
Complementary planned transit services:

- TPB Concept 3 Regional Transit Vision
- Connect Atlanta Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Development of Alternatives

Highlights of alignment input

- Alignment south of I-85/ Buford Highway
- Tunnel connection between Inman Park & Reynoldstown
- Alternative connections to West End
- Other streets to connect to Ashby MARTA station
- Alignment serving Atlantic Station and Amtrak



Initial set of alternatives

Development of Alternatives

Feasibility screening factors

- Public and stakeholder input
- Physical constraints, utilities, & right-of-way
- Service effectiveness and efficiency
- Environment and community impacts
- Cost
- Traffic and parking conflicts
- TAD & Redevelopment Plan
- Safety and security

Alternatives

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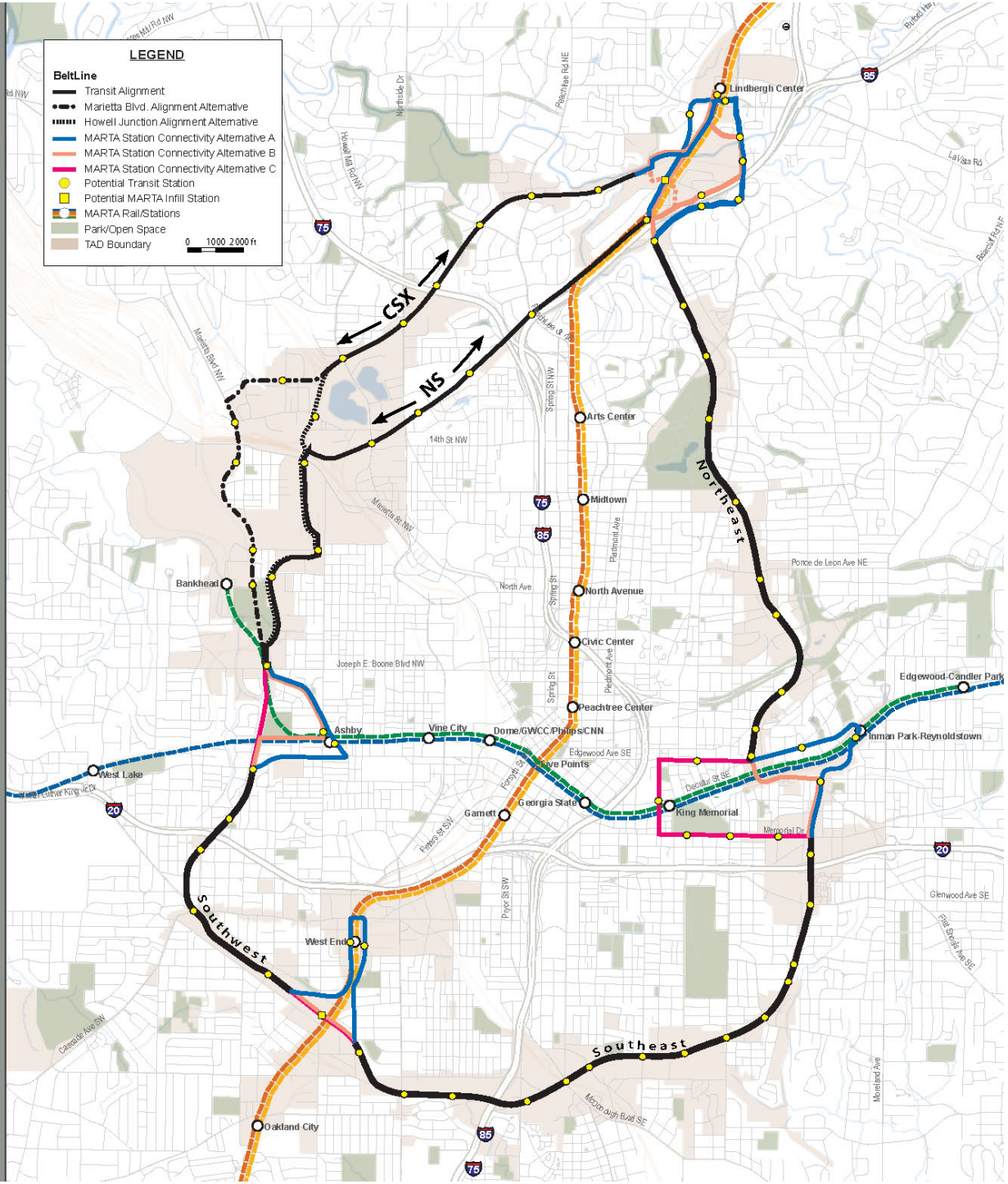
Transit Alternatives



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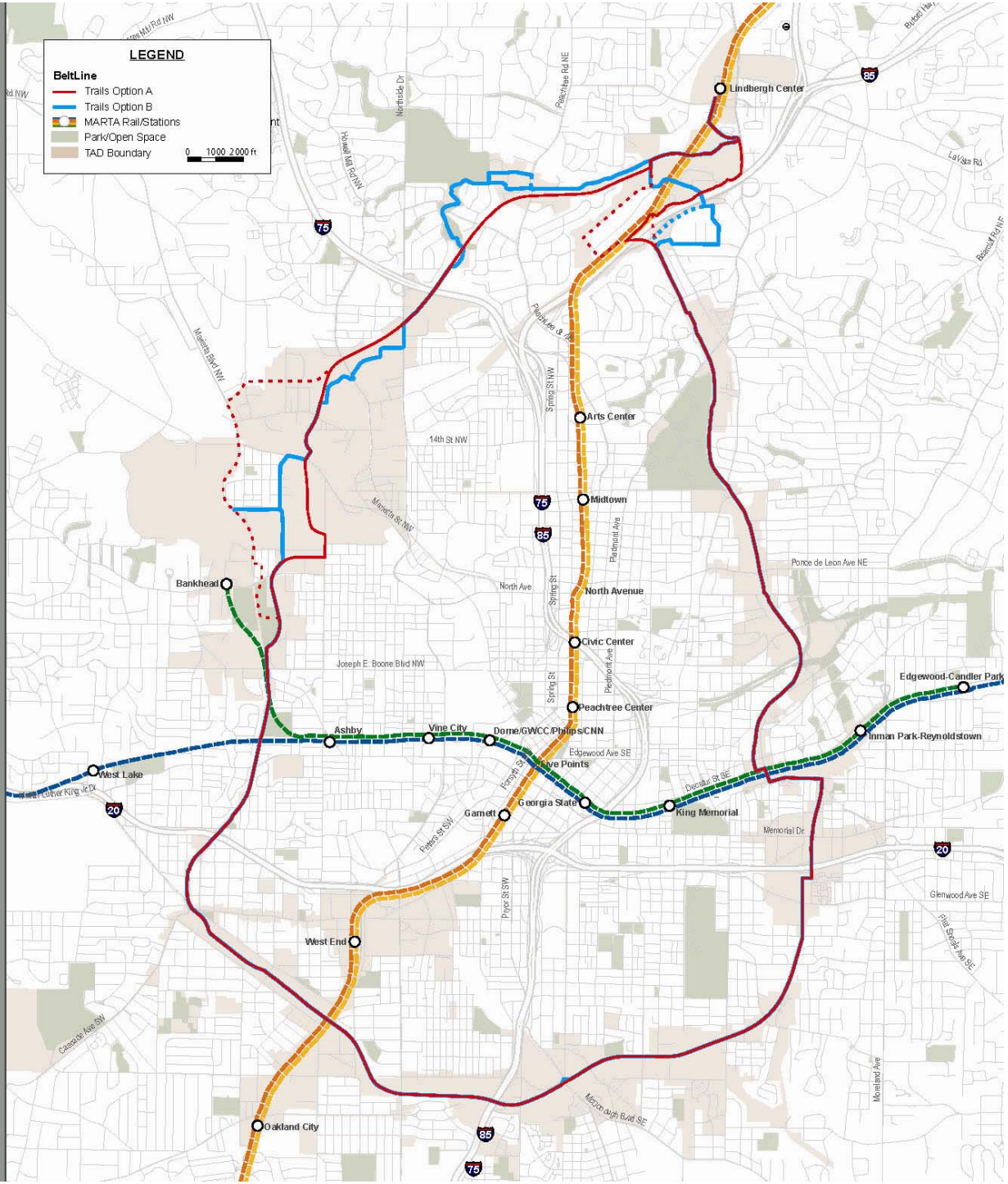
Trails Alternatives



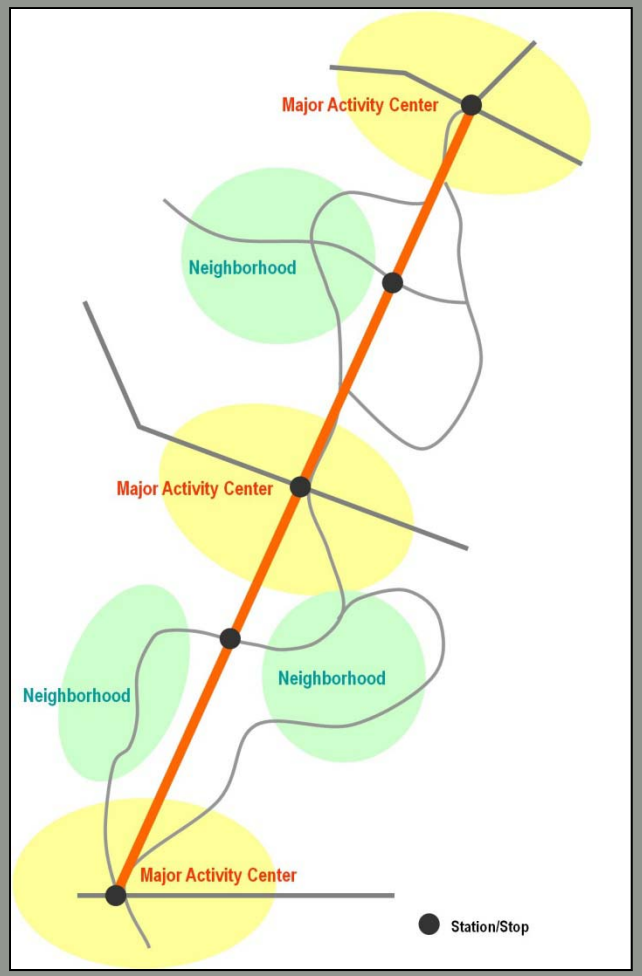
Transit Technology

- Light Rail Transit
- Modern Streetcar

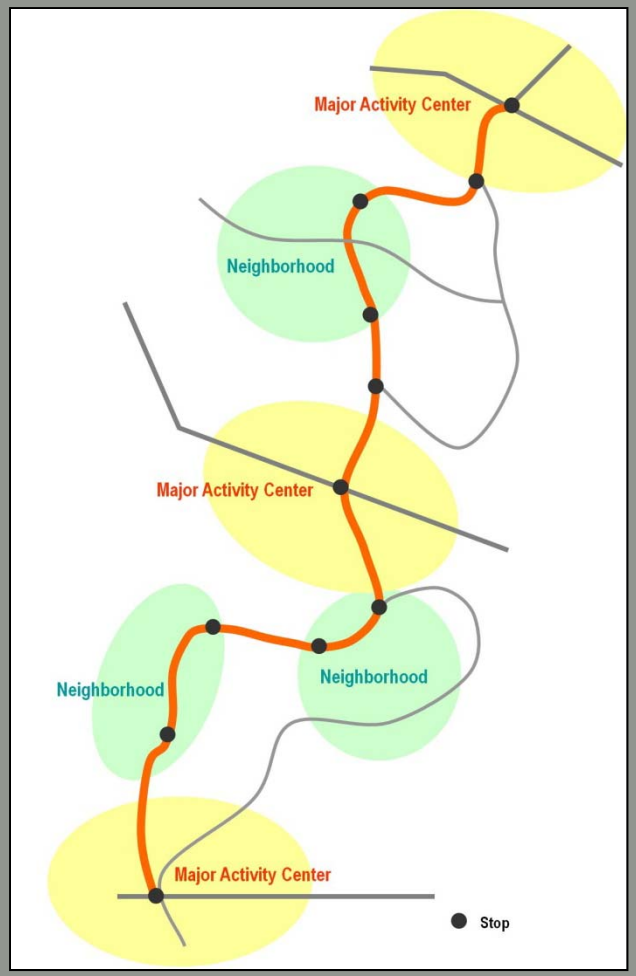
Service Characteristics

What Type of Transit Service is Best for the BeltLine?

Express service



Expanded service



Freight Railroad Issues

Issues:

- Need for additional freight capacity
- Shared ROW
- Regional solution needed

Alternative Evaluation

Method:

- Assesses alternatives against goals
- Applies performance measures (over 50)
- Evaluates transit and trails alignment alternatives
- Evaluates transit technology

Results

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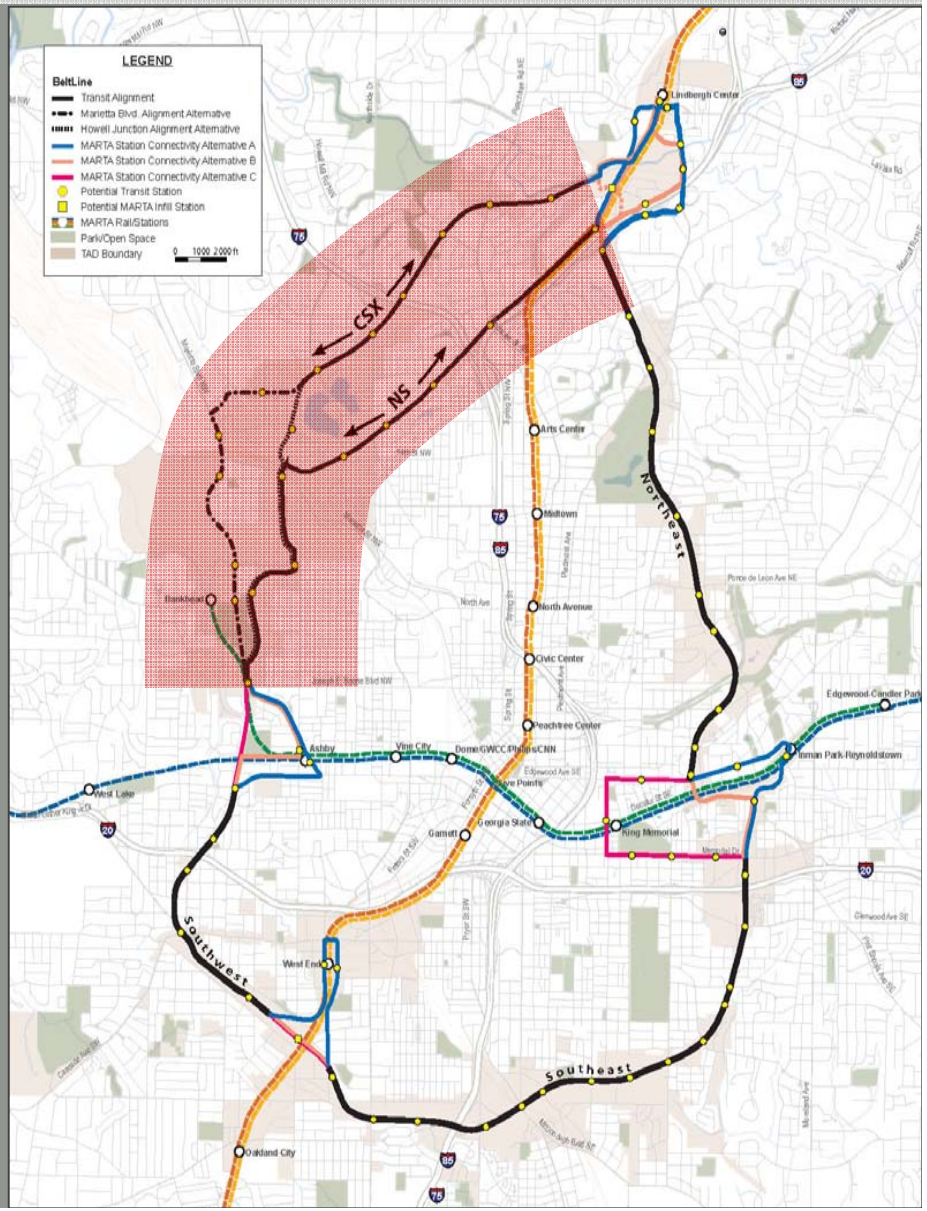
Distinguishing Performance Measures for Transit

Evaluations focus on northwest area

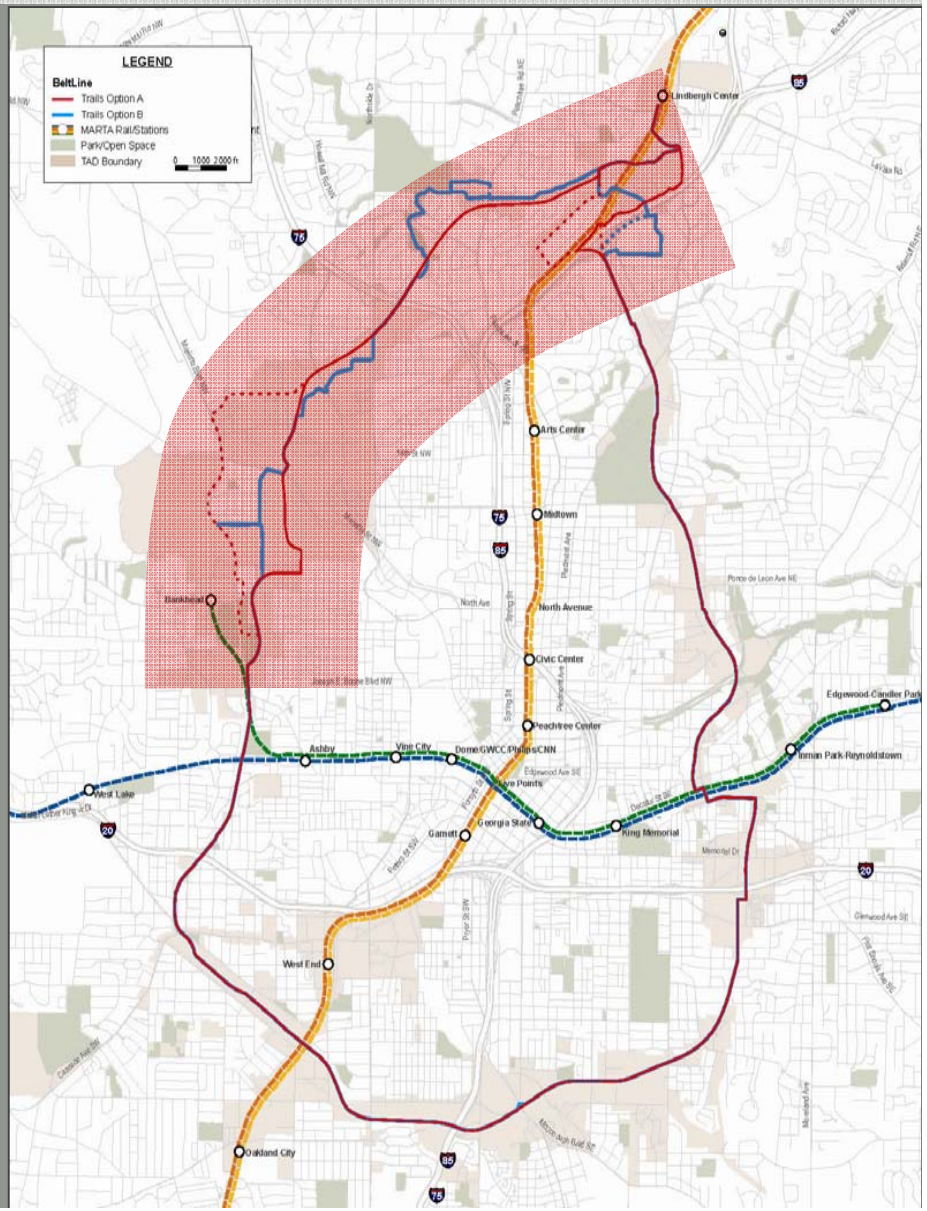


Results

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Trails

Evaluations focus on northwest area



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 1: Contribute to an integrated regional multi-modal network

- Increase transit ridership
- Increase access to existing regional transit system
- Improve transit and trail connections to existing transit system*
- Minimize travel times to points accessible from existing transit system
- Improve accessibility and connectivity among neighborhoods and to major destinations / employment centers*
- Minimize transfers and mode changes per trip
- Increase transit options for transit-dependent, low-income, and minority populations*

* Indicates a distinguishing performance measure with more in depth discussion to follow

Transit Alignment

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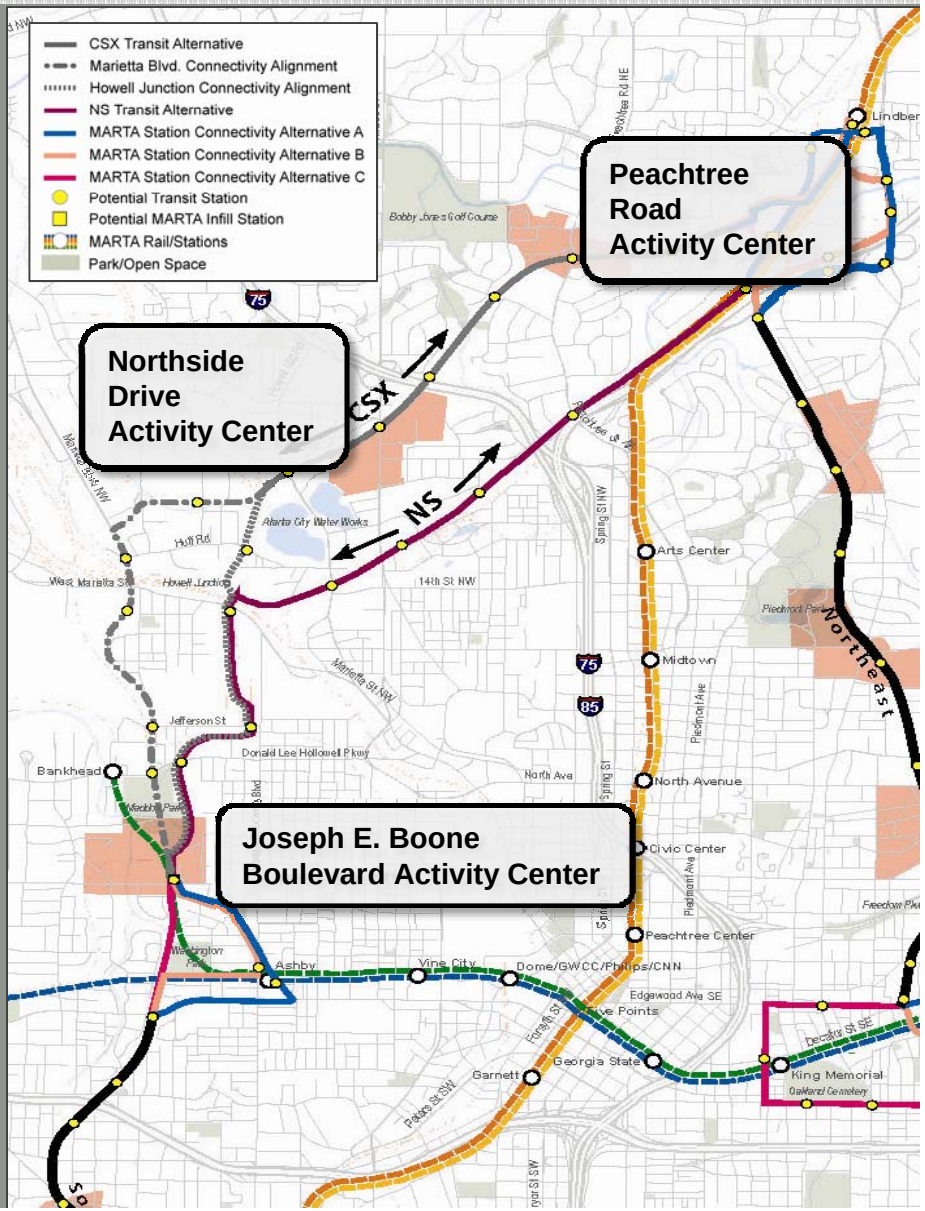
Performance Measure

Maximize number of activity centers within ½-mile of proposed transit stations

- ✓ CSX - Marietta Blvd.
- ✓ CSX - Howell Junction

NS



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 2: Manage and encourage growth and economic development through transit and transportation improvements

- Support redevelopment and revitalization efforts in the BeltLine TAD*
- Support regional and local economic development initiatives / growth management policies*

* Indicates a distinguishing performance measure with more in depth discussion to follow

Transit Alignment

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

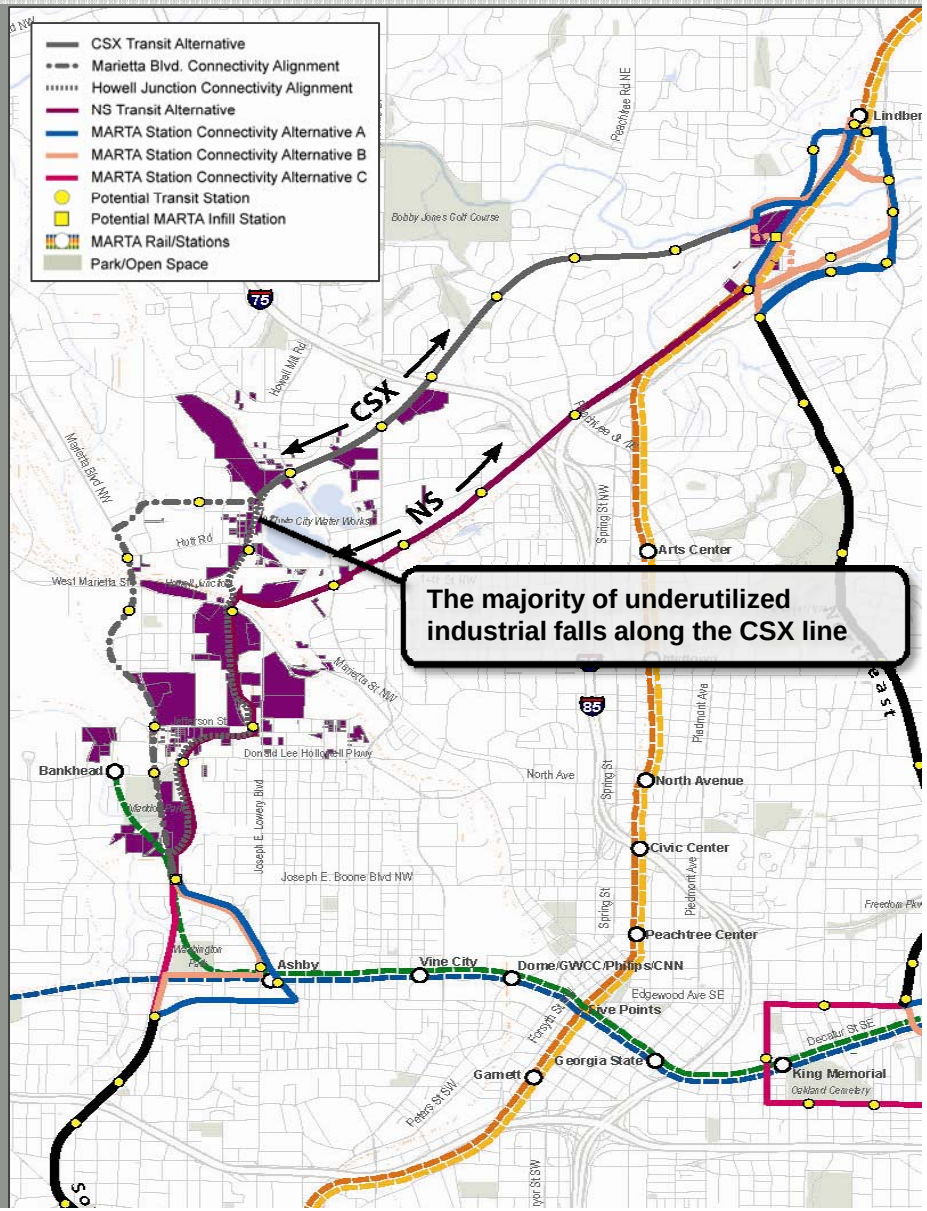
Performance Measure

Maximize service to acres of underutilized industrial land within ½-mile of proposed stations

CSX - Marietta Blvd.

✓ CSX - Howell Junction

NS



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 3: Preserve and revitalize neighborhoods and business districts through design, accessibility, and affordable housing

- Minimize displacement of existing residents and businesses
- Encourage high quality, dense, and sustainable residential mixed-use and mixed-income development*
- Enhance human and natural environment through context sensitive design*
- Maintain or enhance the character/cohesion of neighborhoods and historic districts*

Transit Alignment

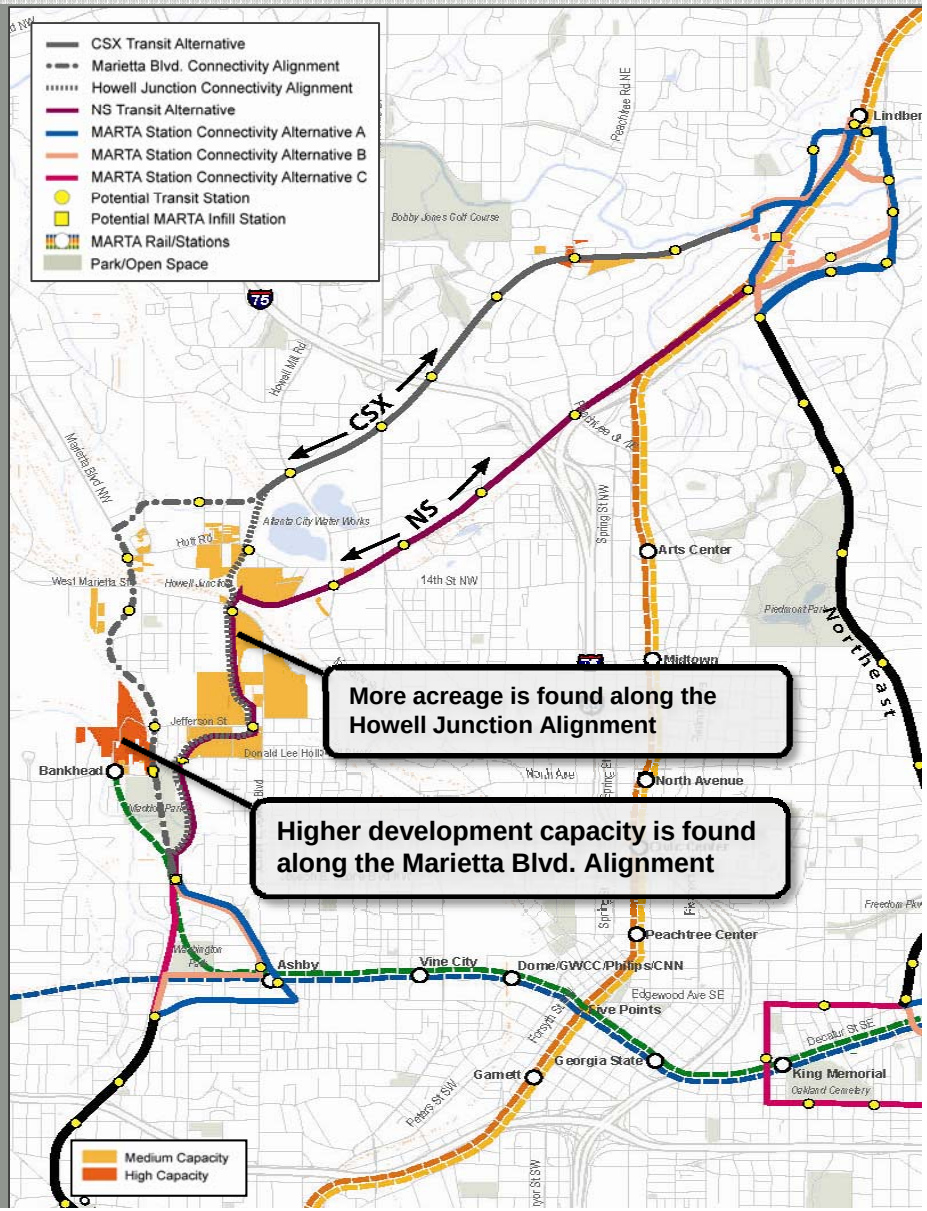
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Performance Measure

Maximize service to TAD areas with higher development capacity of underutilized or undeveloped land as defined by Subarea Master Plans/Redevelopment Plan within ½-mile of proposed transit stations

- ✓ CSX - Marietta Blvd.
- ✓ CSX - Howell Junction

NS



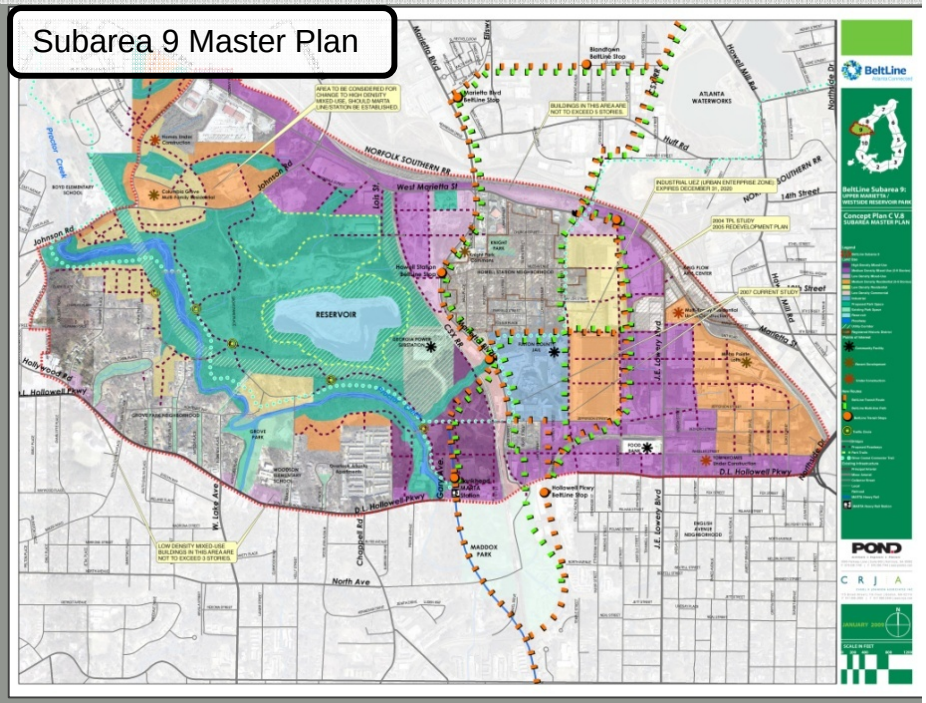
Transit Alignment

Performance Measure

Maximize compatibility with the Subarea Master Plans/ Redevelopment Plan

- ✓ CSX - Marietta Blvd.
- ✓ CSX - Howell Junction
  (the most compatible with the Subarea 7 Master Plan)

  NS
  (harder to compare as it deviates the most from the Redevelopment plan alignment)



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 4: Provide a cost-effective and efficient investment

- Minimize project costs, but not at the expense of quality design and materials
- Support existing and planned transit infrastructure investments
- Maximize operating and cost-efficiency

Alternative Evaluation

Goal 5: Provide a bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly environment

- Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians with links to activity centers and recreational resources*
- Develop transit and trails that are safe and attractive*
- Provide bicycle amenities at transit stations in the project corridor

* Indicates a distinguishing performance measure with more in depth discussion to follow

Trail Alignment

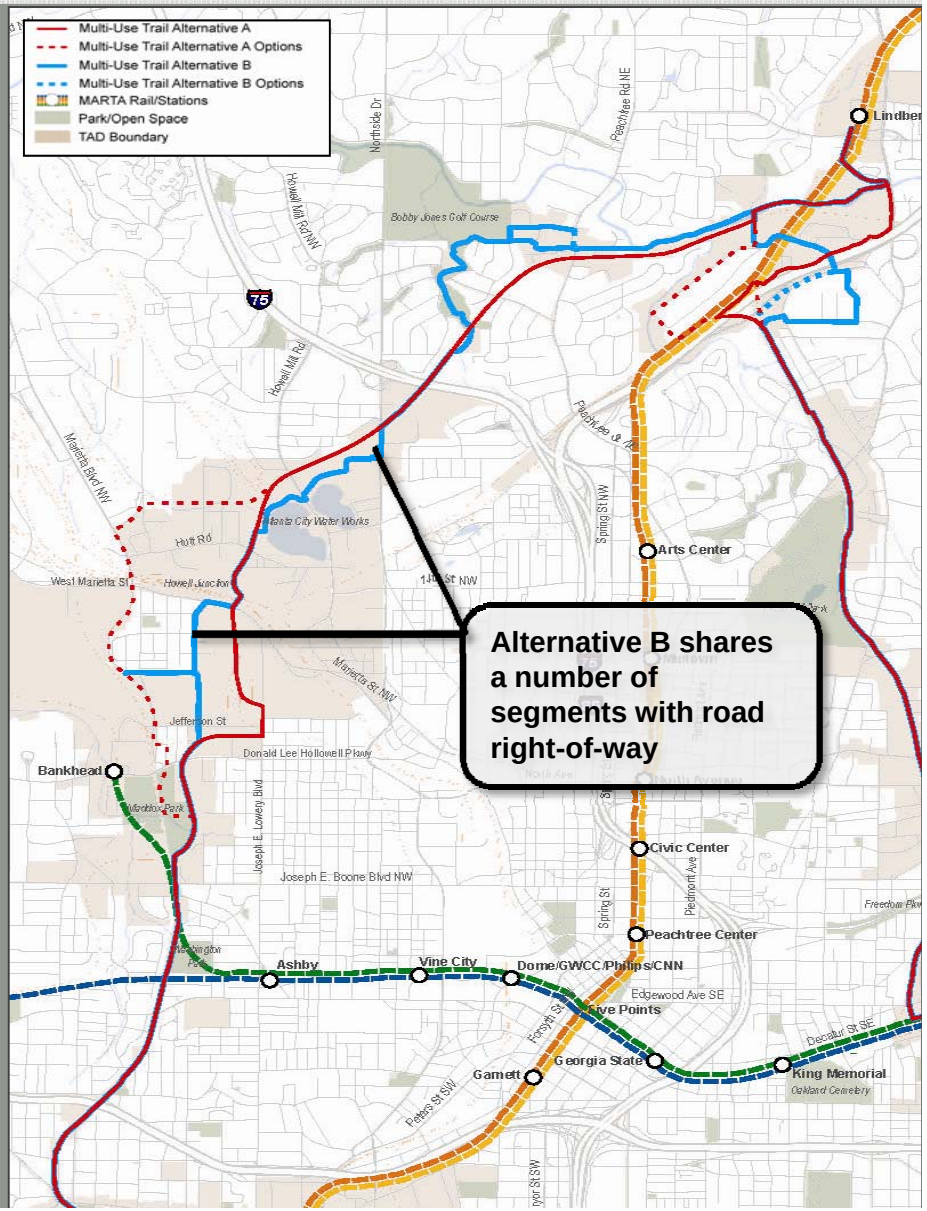
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Performance Measure

Maximize miles of exclusive trails separated from automobile traffic

✓ Alternative A

Alternative B



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 6: Provide connectivity between communities and recreational opportunities

- Enhance connectivity between communities separated by historic rail corridor*
- Support existing and planned park programming*
- Provide connectivity to schools, community facilities, and cultural/historic destinations*

* Indicates a distinguishing performance measure with more in depth discussion to follow

Trail Alignment

Performance Measure

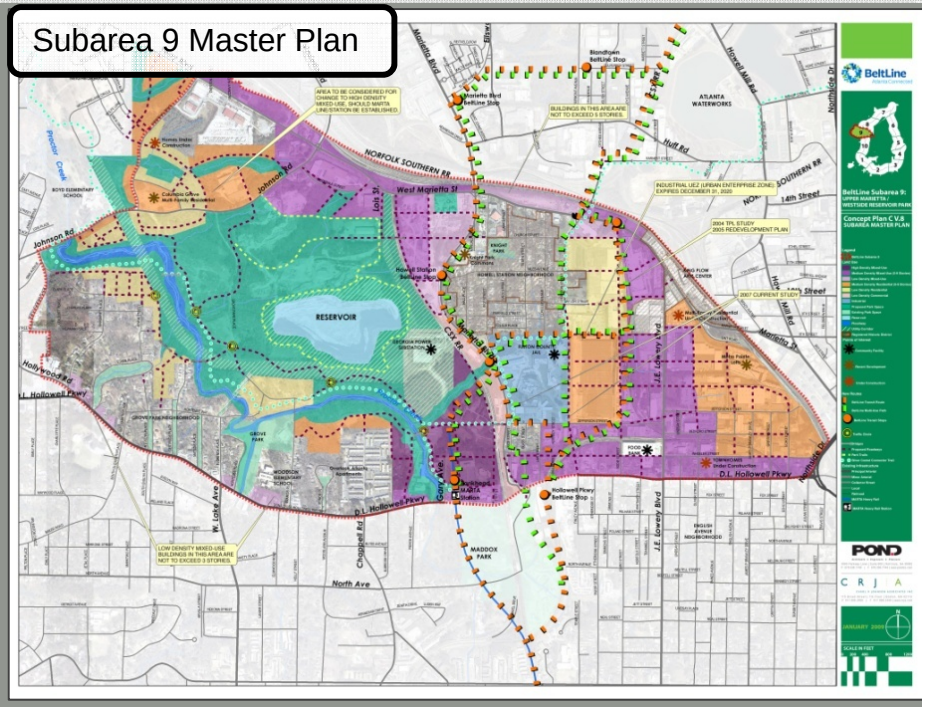
Maximize compatibility with the Subarea Master Plans/ Redevelopment Plan

(Both subareas use Trails Alternatives A and B as options)

Alternative A

✓ Alternative B

Subarea 9 Master Plan



Trail Alignment

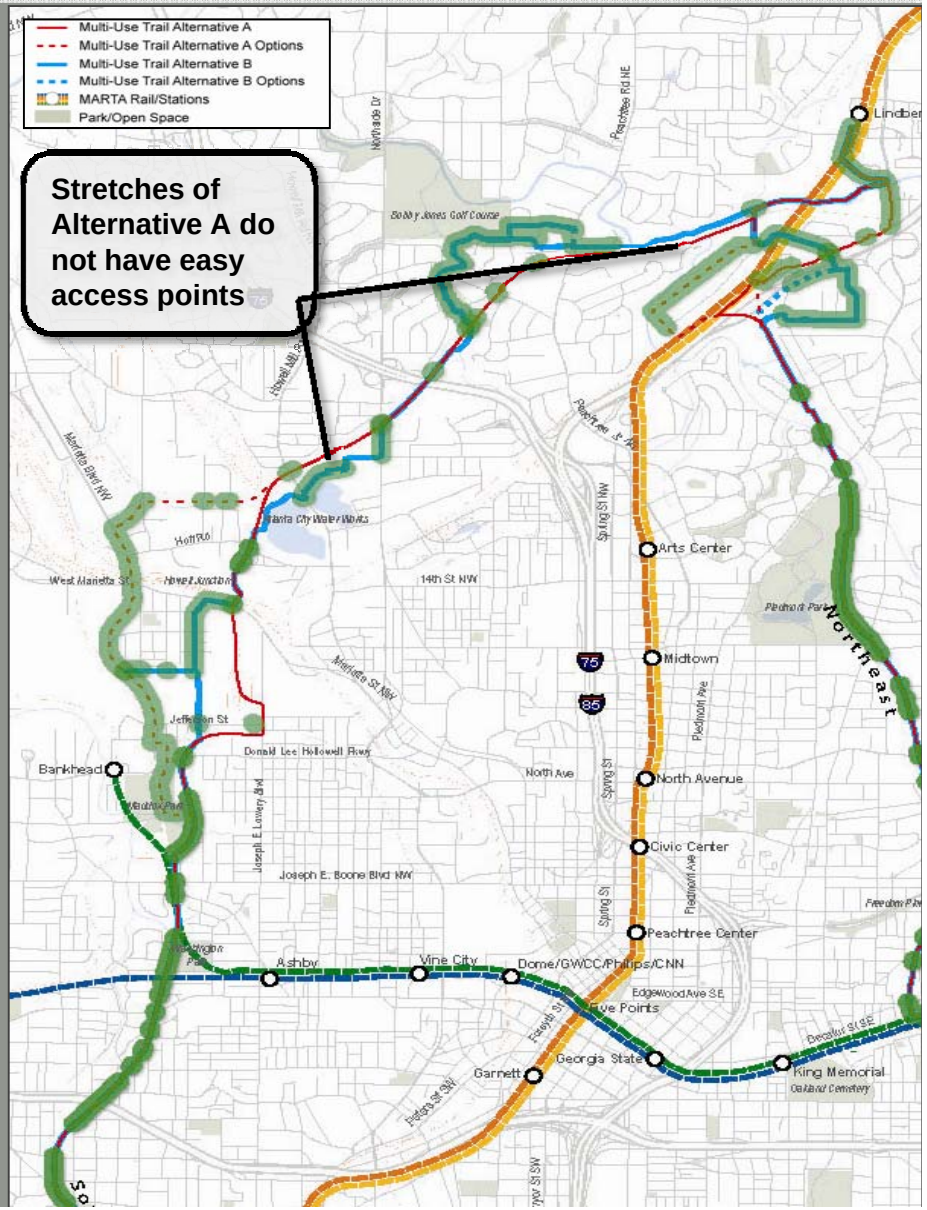
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Performance Measure

Maximize number of trail access points

Alternative A

✓ Alternative B



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 7: Minimize adverse environmental effects

- Avoid or minimize impacts to cultural/historic resources*
- Avoid or minimize impacts to water resources, protected species, critical habitats and other sensitive resources*
- Provide opportunities to improve the quality of the natural environment*
- Offer a balance between transportation needs and environmental quality
- Develop viable transportation alternatives to the use of cars
- Avoid or minimize impacts to existing park lands*

* Indicates a distinguishing performance measure with more in depth discussion to follow

Transit Alignment

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

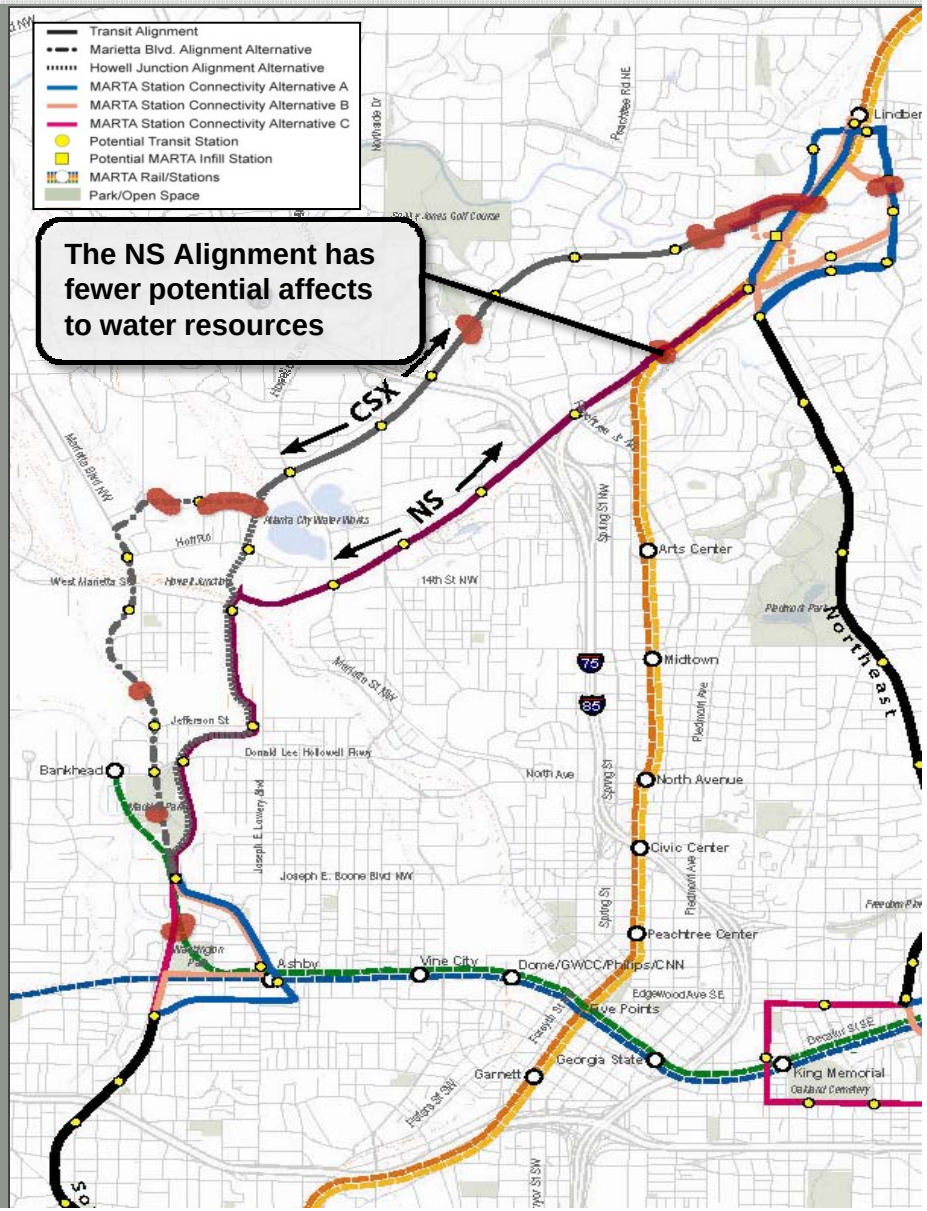
Performance Measure

Minimize number of stream crossings and size of wetlands potentially affected

CSX - Marietta Blvd.

CSX - Howell Junction

✓ NS



Trail Alignment

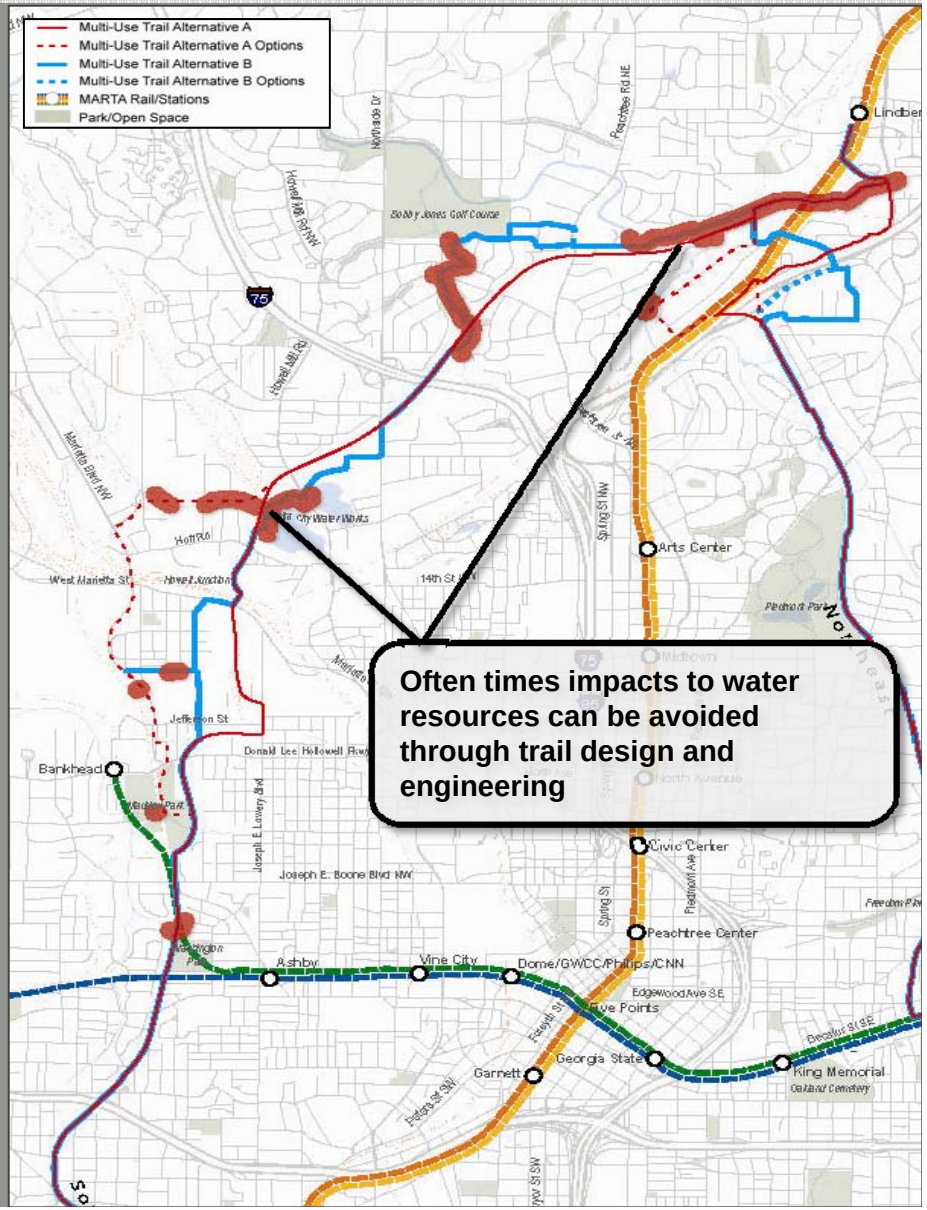
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Performance Measure

Minimize number of stream crossings and size of wetlands potentially affected

✓ Alternative A

Alternative B



Trail Alignment

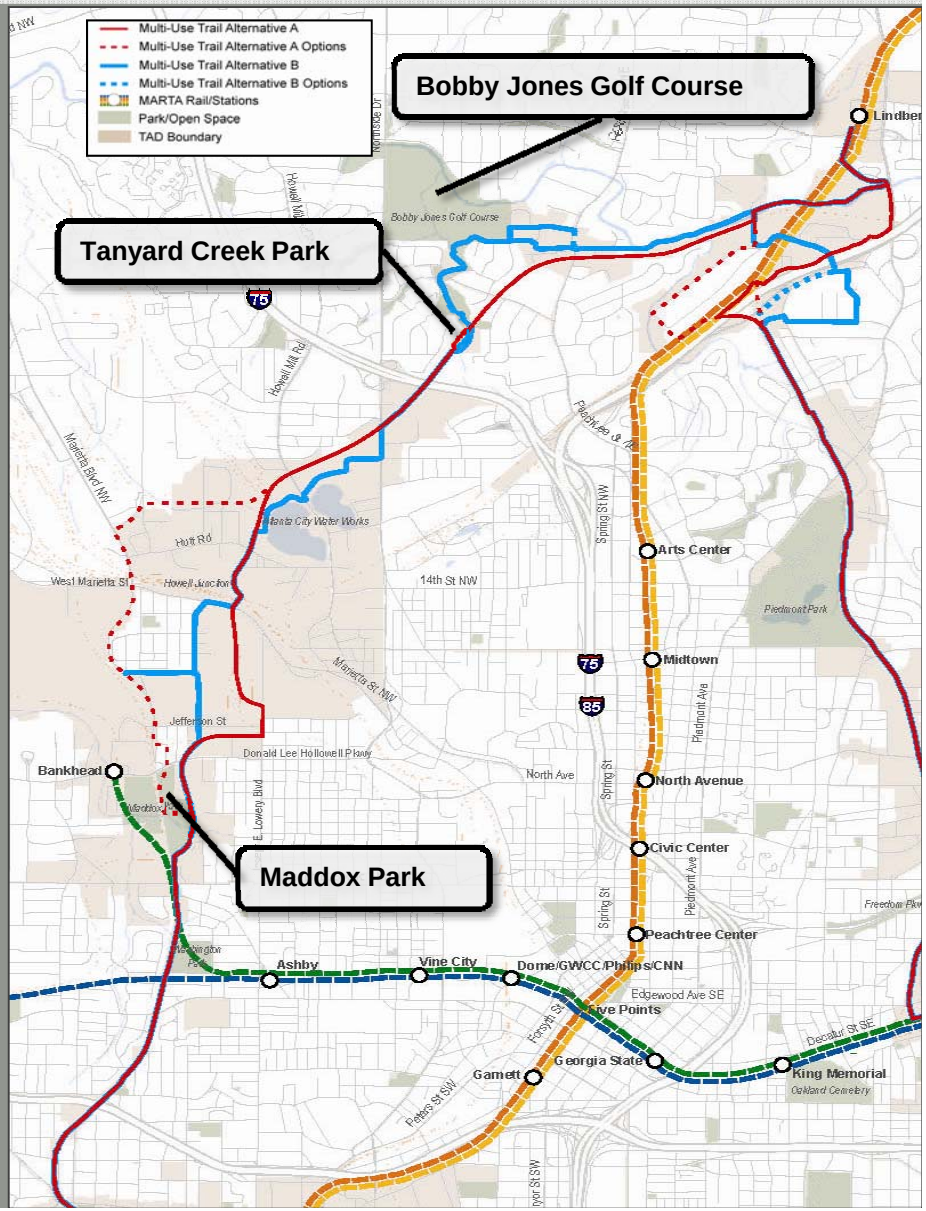
BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Performance Measure

Minimize acres of existing park land used for transit and multi-use trails facilities

✓ Alternative A

Alternative B



Alternative Evaluation

Goal 8: Ensure public input in planning and development

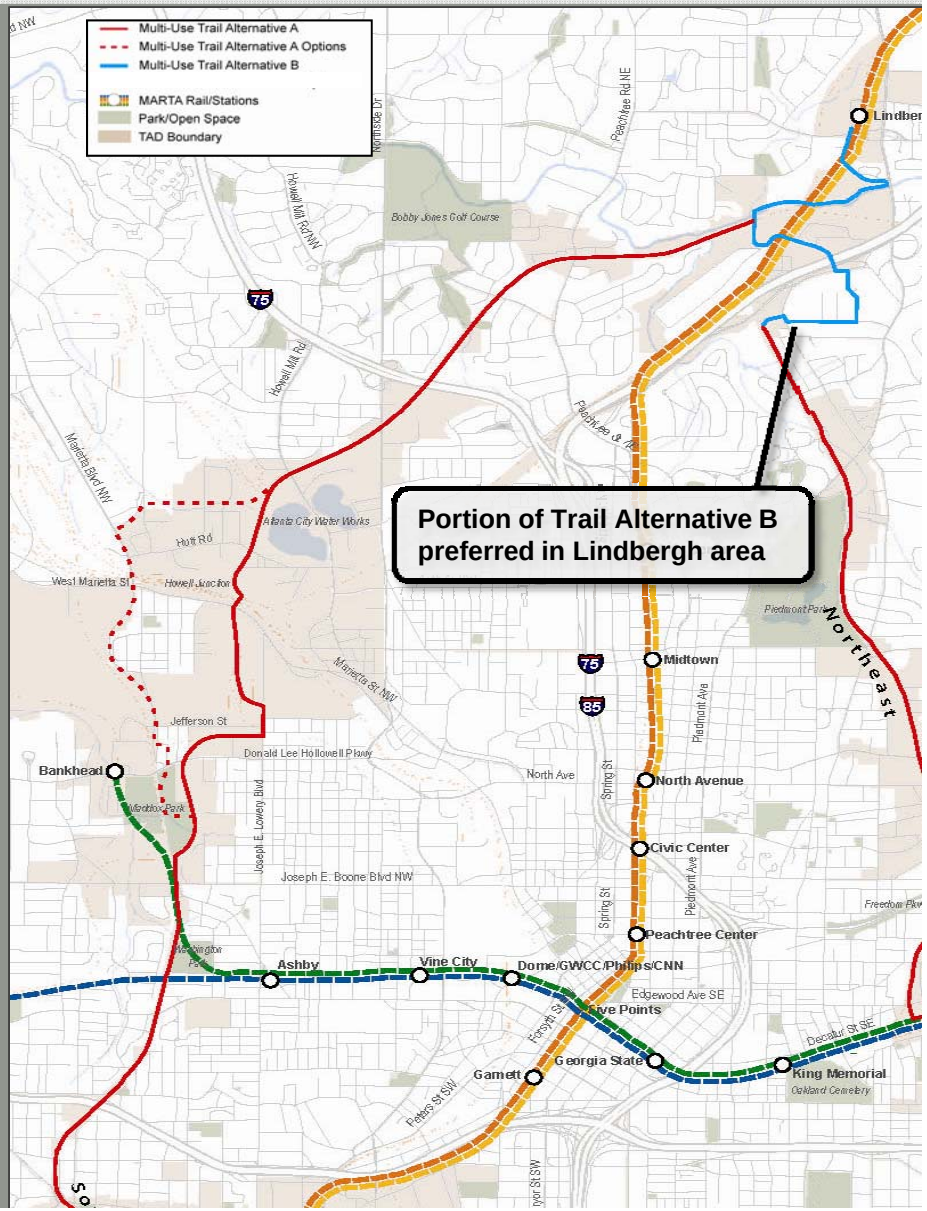
- Consider comments pertaining to the proposed alternatives*

Trail Alignment

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

Public comments showed a preference for:

- ✓ Alternative A
- Alternative B



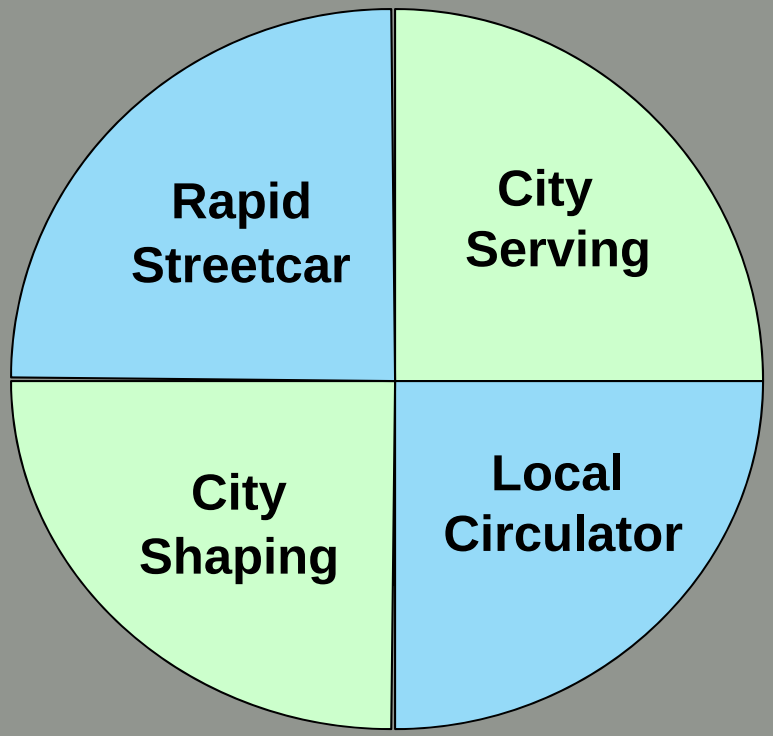
Results

Results

Transit Technology measures:

	Modern Streetcar	Light Rail Transit
Neighborhood context	✓	
Capital costs	✓	
Operating costs	✓	✓
Connections with planned transit		✓
Noise	✓	

Types of Modern Streetcar Service



Types of Modern Streetcar Service

- **City Serving**
  - » **Focused on serving existing development**
- **City Shaping**
  - » **Focused on managing and creating redevelopment and economic development**

Summary Findings

Transit Alignment

- CSX alternatives score higher than NS
- CSX - Howell Junction scores highest

Trails Alignment

- Alternative A scores higher than B

Transit Technology and Service Type

- Modern Streetcar scores higher for all CSX and NS alignment alternatives
- Modern Streetcar scores higher than LRT Overall
- Modern Streetcar service type provides balance between non-work trips and commuter trips needs and economic development goals

Summary Findings

BeltLine Corridor Environmental Study

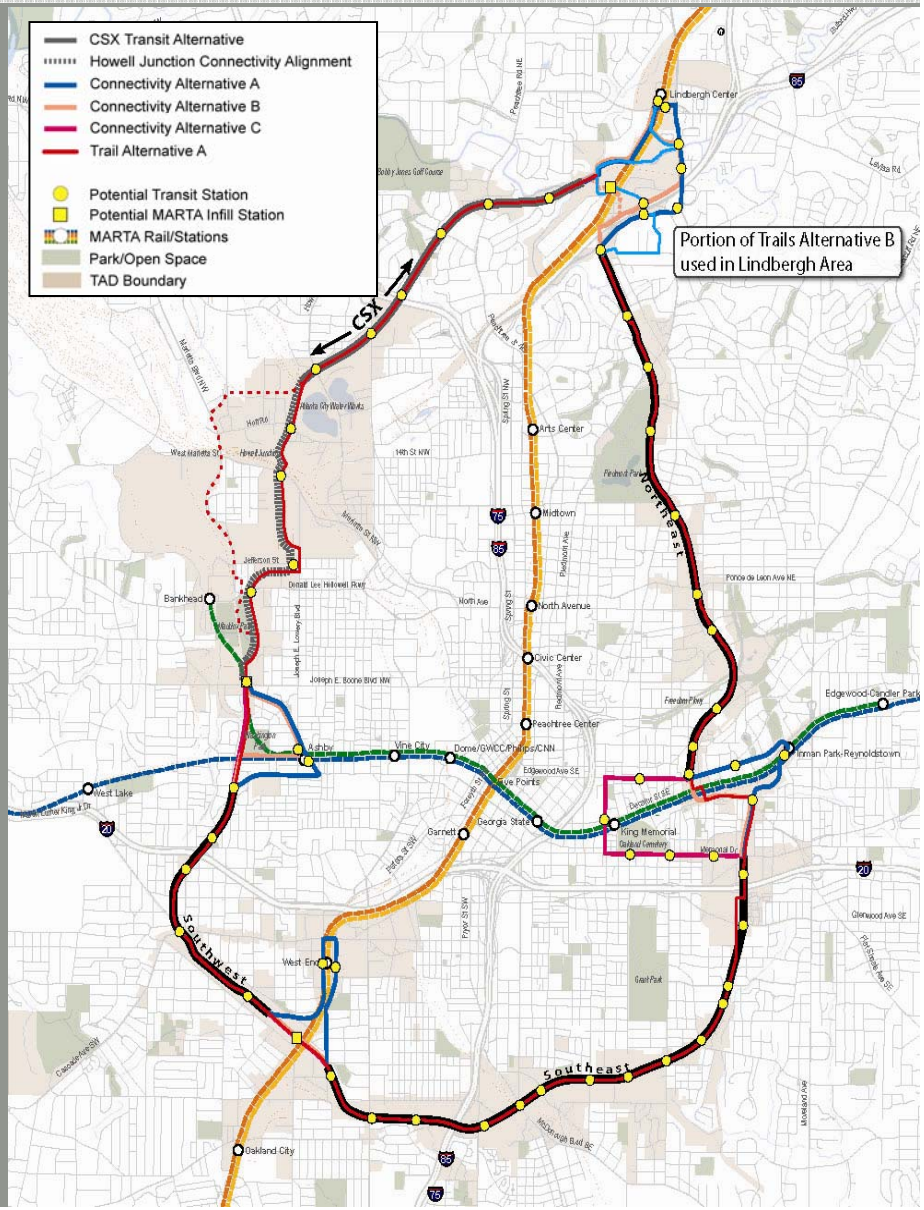
Best Performing Alternatives for the northwest zone

Transit

- CSX alternatives
- CSX - Howell Junction Connectivity Alignment

Trails

- Alternative A



Types of Modern Streetcar Service

Information Session

Discussion of results:

- Transit alignments
- Trails alignments
- Transit technology
- Streetcar service types

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Complete Tier 1 DEIS
  - Measures
  - Documentation of connectivity alternatives
- Public & agency review of DEIS
- Public hearing – February 4, 2010