



Atlanta  
BeltLine

2030 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
**FINAL REPORT**

DECEMBER 2013



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## 2.3 ATLANTA BELTLINE PROGRAM ELEMENTS



Elements that will be developed over the life of the Atlanta BeltLine program are discussed in the following sections.

### 2.3.1 PARKS

The Atlanta BeltLine program includes the development of 1,300 acres of new and expanded greenspace. This acreage includes the Atlanta BeltLine Corridor which will be developed into a linear greenway with multi-use trails and light-rail streetcar transit connecting new and existing parks throughout the City. The Atlanta BeltLine will also upgrade approximately 700 acres of existing parkland.

### 2.3.2 TRAILS

The Atlanta BeltLine program includes the development of 33 miles of multi-use trails within, along and near the Atlanta BeltLine corridor including the corridor trail. The system is comprised of the 22-mile Atlanta BeltLine corridor and 11 miles of connecting spur trails linking parks and neighborhoods not currently accessible to each other, creating a series of interconnected public spaces and recreational opportunities across the city. The program will also create interim trails which allow pedestrians to access the Atlanta BeltLine corridor before permanent trails are constructed.

### 2.3.3 TRANSIT

The Atlanta BeltLine program includes the development and construction of a streetcar and light-rail transit system within the 22-mile corridor connecting the neighborhoods and activity centers adjacent to the Atlanta BeltLine. The Tier I Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision determined that the transit on the Atlanta BeltLine would share common technology with the Atlanta Streetcar, so that the Atlanta BeltLine will be integrated into the larger Atlanta Streetcar system. Transit on the Atlanta BeltLine will allow modal interchange with MARTA where the Atlanta BeltLine corridor and MARTA rail lines intersect, utilizing

existing MARTA stations and the construction of additional infill stations along the corridor.

### 2.3.4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Redevelopment Plan contemplated that 28,000 new residential units would be built in the Atlanta BeltLine Planning Area (within approximately ½ mile of each side of the corridor) over the life of the program. Of that, 20%, or 5,600 units, were targeted to be affordable housing units and are included in the Atlanta BeltLine program. Housing units should be spread equitably among all segments of the Atlanta BeltLine planning area.

To support the affordable housing goals, Ordinance 05-0-1733 requires that 15% of net TAD bond proceeds fund the Atlanta BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust Fund (BAHTF). Based on the original TAD projections in 2005, approximately \$240 million was anticipated for use by BAHTF, yielding an average contribution of approximately \$42,000 per unit.

The definition of “affordable” for rental homes has been established as households who earn below 60% of the Area Mean Income (AMI). For ownership, the target households are those who earn below 100% of AMI. Because AMI may change over time, the definition of “affordable” will also change.

### 2.3.5 STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The Redevelopment Plan set out a vision for improving pedestrian accessibility and roadway improvements as a tool for increasing economic redevelopment in the Atlanta BeltLine’s neighborhoods. The SIP reaffirms this commitment to sustainable mobility. Streetscapes are an essential element in making it safer and easier to move around on foot and bicycle and increasing the safety and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment throughout the Atlanta BeltLine. Quality streetscapes, including wide sidewalks, lighting, shade trees, seating, and wayfinding promote



walking and reinforce the viability of affordable housing, transit and mixed use development. Also critical to pedestrian connectivity is the inclusion of sidewalks and pedestrian crossings on secondary streets that link to the Atlanta BeltLine corridor.

The SIP confirms the need from the Redevelopment Plan (citing the Traffic Impact and Roadway Improvement Assessment) for improvements to neighborhood roads in order to manage future congestion, which is expected to increase regardless of the implementation of the Atlanta BeltLine projects. These include capacity improvements, new roads and connections, and strategies to reduce the demand for vehicular travel.

### 2.3.6 ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT

The overall goal of the Atlanta BeltLine is to revitalize the 45 neighborhoods surrounding the Atlanta BeltLine corridor, thereby making economic redevelopment an implicit outcome of all of the Atlanta BeltLine's projects. The Redevelopment Plan included \$100 million in Atlanta BeltLine TAD funding through an Economic Incentive Fund (EIF) to be spent on achieving those targets. This amount was a forecast rather than an explicit commitment, and will be clarified with preparation of the Economic Development Action Plan which will be developed in coordination with Invest Atlanta during Implementation Period 1 of the SIP.

The TAD authorizing ordinance requires that an unspecified percentage of each TAD bond issuance, as described in the Redevelopment Plan, be set aside for the EIF to encourage private development in disinvested communities.

The Redevelopment Plan sets a target supporting the creation of 30,000 permanent jobs and 48,000 one-year construction jobs in the planning area as detailed in Section 3.5. This is a target to be achieved by spending within the TAD and as a result of the private development of retail, office, and other job-generating efforts within the Atlanta BeltLine planning area.

The target for permanent jobs was developed in 2005 by estimating the size and type of developments that were envisioned to be built in the Atlanta BeltLine planning area. Based on this estimate, job creation goals were calculated by applying an average ratio of square feet (sf) of development to jobs (225 sf per job for retail, 250 sf per job for commercial, and 500 sf per job for industrial).

The target for construction jobs was developed by estimating development costs through the life of the TAD, which

included \$6.0 billion in private development and \$1.7 billion in TAD funded projects. Of the \$7.7 billion in total development costs, 25%, or \$1.925 billion, was allocated to labor. The goal of 48,000 construction jobs was established using an average annual salary of \$40,000 for workers.

Furthermore, the authorizing ordinance requires that projects receiving direct Atlanta BeltLine TAD funds follow certain community benefits principles, including prevailing wages, a First Source hiring system to target residents of low-income Atlanta BeltLine neighborhoods, and establishment and usage of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. These sustainable development principles are designed to ensure that residents capture well-paying employment opportunities created by the Atlanta BeltLine.



2.4 ABI AND PARTNERS



**Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.**

Atlanta BeltLine Inc. (ABI) was formed in 2006 by Invest Atlanta as a Georgia nonprofit organization for the purpose of managing the implementation of the Atlanta BeltLine program. Working with partners, including City of Atlanta departments, its functions include specifically defining the Atlanta BeltLine program; leading efforts to secure federal, state and local funding; continuing the community engagement process; managing vendors and suppliers; and serving as the overall project management entity to execute the Atlanta BeltLine program.

ABI is also responsible for tracking and reporting progress on the program to the Atlanta City Council, Atlanta Public Schools, and Fulton County, who authorized contribution of their respective tax increment to the Atlanta BeltLine TAD in 2005 and continue as active partners in the program.

Programs of this size and complexity require input and cooperation from multiple stakeholders to succeed. In addition to ABI, there are a number of other governmental, non-profit, private and philanthropic partners involved in the realization of the Atlanta BeltLine.

Below is a list of some of ABI’s key partners who will continue to play a role in executing the SIP and delivering the Atlanta BeltLine program:



**Invest Atlanta**

The Atlanta Development Authority now d/b/a “Invest Atlanta,” is the redevelopment agent and economic development arm of the City of Atlanta. Invest Atlanta is the authority charged with the creation and management of all of the TADs located within the City of Atlanta. Invest Atlanta formed ABI in 2006 as the implementation agent responsible for managing the delivery of the Atlanta BeltLine vision. Invest Atlanta staff plays an active role in the economic development and affordable housing components of the Atlanta BeltLine. ABI and Invest Atlanta staff work

together on a daily basis to ensure fiscal accountability and good stewardship of TAD funds for the program.



**City of Atlanta**

The City of Atlanta is the sponsor for the Atlanta BeltLine and will ultimately own all components of the program. The City is one of the three sponsors of the Atlanta BeltLine TAD and coordinates with ABI and Invest Atlanta on all aspects of delivery of the Atlanta BeltLine.



**Fulton County**

Fulton County is one of the sponsors of the Atlanta BeltLine TAD. The Atlanta BeltLine lies entirely within the boundaries of Fulton County. It is one of the bodies that appoints members to the ABI Board of Directors and advisory boards. Fulton County also receives Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT payments) from the TAD. The County Commission has designated by separate legislative action that the PILOT Payments will support the Fulton County Central Library.



**Atlanta Public Schools**

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) is one of the sponsors of the Atlanta BeltLine TAD. It is one of the bodies that appoints members to the ABI Board of Directors and advisory boards. APS also receives Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT payments) from the TAD as a part of the TAD ordinance.



**Atlanta BeltLine Partnership**

Funded by the private sector, the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership was created to raise capital, awareness and broad-based support for the Atlanta BeltLine. It accomplishes this, in part, through programs such as: free guided tours of the Atlanta BeltLine; Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine; the Atlanta BeltLine Speakers Bureau and Ambassadors; and the Atlanta BeltLine Running Series.

The Partnership, as steward of the community’s vision



for the Atlanta BeltLine, also works with partners across multiple sectors to support delivery of not only the project's physical components via investments from private donors, but also its social benefits, including affordable housing, employment opportunities, and healthy communities.



#### **Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)**

MARTA is the principal rapid transportation authority within the Atlanta BeltLine area, operating rapid transit and bus transit services within the city. It is anticipated that the Atlanta BeltLine will result in significant intermodal integration of existing and future services. MARTA has to date been involved in the development of the transit component of the Atlanta BeltLine project, including the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement.



#### **Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)**

GDOT owns some sections of rail right-of-way along the Atlanta BeltLine corridor and has partnered with ABI to manage transportation and right-of-way issues. GDOT also administers the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which provides funding for design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the Atlanta BeltLine.



#### **Atlanta Regional Commission**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the State of Georgia. ARC has been a planning partner with ABI and has assisted in securing federal funds for the Program.



#### **PATH Foundation**

The PATH Foundation was set up to preserve and enhance greenways throughout Georgia. The PATH Foundation works with ABI and ABLP to develop the Atlanta BeltLine's 33-mile trail network, including securing private funding. In addition, PATH provides technical and financial resources to advance the design and construction in and around the Atlanta BeltLine.



#### **Trust for Public Land**

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has been involved in the Atlanta BeltLine since its early stages as a concept, including collaborating with urban planners to undertake studies into greenspace opportunities along the corridor before the formation of the TAD and ABI. TPL has acquired and owns a number of key parcels of land for new Atlanta BeltLine parks.



#### **Trees Atlanta**

As part of making the Atlanta BeltLine truly green, Trees Atlanta works with ABI to create the Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum, providing funding and expertise to both plant thousands of new trees and remove invasive species to restore the natural landscape.

#### **Advisory Boards**

The Atlanta City Council legislation establishing the Atlanta BeltLine TAD created two advisory boards comprised of citizens. Each of the city's TADs has a citizen advisory board to provide input on economic development initiatives. Given the Atlanta BeltLine's focus on affordable housing, an additional advisory group was created to support the BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

- Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee (TADAC)**  
 TADAC was established by the City of Atlanta. Its role is to make recommendations to ABI, Invest Atlanta and the City of Atlanta on the issuance, allocation and distribution of Atlanta BeltLine TAD bond proceeds. The Committee is also responsible for measuring the impact of the Atlanta BeltLine and the effective and equitable implementation of the Redevelopment Plan.
- BeltLine Affordable Housing Advisory Board (BAHAB)**  
 BAHAB was set up to make recommendations on the development of policies and strategies associated with the creation of affordable housing within the Atlanta BeltLine TAD. BAHAB also makes recommendations for maximizing the use of the BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

