

Answered During Live Q&A Session

1. **What's to say that a future mayor doesn't punt the whole Beltline rail idea in the name of some other and unplanned projects?**
 - Ultimately, I can only control the engineering side, not political decisions.
2. **Although you don't have a specific timeline, do you have a general order that you think the sections will be completed?**
 - The mayor has stated Beltline Rail will start on the south side. Beyond that, I need to advance the implementation plan further before giving a definitive sequence.
3. **What are the anticipated ridership numbers per quadrant for Beltline rail?**
 - Updated ridership projections are being developed and will be shared in the next meeting alongside the final implementation plan.
4. **Why is there a large gap in stops between Boulevard and Glenwood? If having too many stops is an issue why not design a way to request stops?**
 - Two possible sites were considered near the two Trestletree Apartments on United Avenue and Ormewood Avenue. Because those properties remain under affordability deals and redevelopment isn't imminent, neither floated to the top in our metrics. We've heard this concern before, but the analysis did not justify adding a stop there.
5. **Do you feel like you will miss ridership at Atlantic Station with the Northwest alignment?**
 - Atlantic Station is a large activity center that is still being built out, so yes, there will be ridership to/from Atlantic Station that would not be served by the draft recommended alignment.
6. **For the table with all the time estimates (it was around 20 minutes), were those for the full loop or just the north side? Do you have any other insights on travel time estimates for other sections?**
 - The example shown was simplified to illustrate the draft CSX recommendation. We have full travel time estimates for the full 22-mile loop as well as the northern and southern loops.
7. **Why are we not showing a stop at 10th and Monroe on the Beltline?**



- That was an oversight in the graphic. A stop there should have been shown and will be reflected in future materials.
8. **Can we clarify whether Hank Aaron/BRT connection location will or will not have a light rail stop?**
- Yes, it's a critical transfer point between bus rapid transit and light rail. The exact platform location still needs design work, but it will be near the Hank Aaron ramp.
9. **Do you know the cost difference between these numbers and the 2016 numbers?**
- I can't quantify that directly. In 2016, fewer segments were analyzed, and costs were lower, as overall everything is more expensive today.
10. **Will some of this be single line rail where narrow?**
- Yes. Most will be double track, but pinch points (like the McDonough tunnel or Ralph David Abernathy bridge) may require single track.
11. **What would the top speed for the transit be under the recommended alignments?**
- Maximum speed depends on the corridor. Adjacent to trails (southeast and southwest), speeds would be capped at 25 mph to align with the city's Vision Zero policy. In the northwest, speeds could reach up to 50 mph alongside freight rail, but actual operating speeds depend on station spacing.
12. **Are funding sources already identified?**
- Not yet. The implementation plan will help to define the possible funding stack. It will take time to assemble the necessary funds.
13. **Are there similar trade-offs between stop placement and travel times in Southeast/Southwest segments as in the Northwest?**
- Yes. Station sites were chosen using a rigorous process balancing land use, demographics, and access.
14. **Can we commit to no more pilot projects like autonomous pods just for the World Cup?**
- The referenced pilot is not just for the World Cup—it's a 12-month project with service planned to start in January, using minibuses of about 19 passengers.
15. **Is the west/east crosstown apart of the existing streetcar line?**
- Yes. The current streetcar line would become part of the crosstown alignment through Downtown.



16. You presented dollars for capital cost to build it but where would the dollars for operations and maintenance come from?

- Operations would likely be funded by MARTA's half-penny sales tax, as with the existing streetcar.

17. What's happening on Allene between Metropolitan and Murphy, where transit moves off-corridor?

- Because of grade changes, two alternatives are being considered: crossing diagonally with potential street regrading or briefly routing along Allene Avenue before rejoining the Beltline corridor. Further engineering is needed before making a final decision.

18. Is there a contingency plan if MARTA infill stations are delayed?

- Beltline transit is not contingent on the infill stations. The forthcoming implementation strategy will focus on Beltline transit. Murphy station is likely to be the first infill station, as indicated by the mayor.

19. Can you describe the footprint size of a light rail station so we understand the amount of land needed?

- Existing downtown streetcar stops provide a good comparison. Platforms are typically 100 feet long; center platforms are about 18–20 feet wide, side platforms about 12–15 feet. However, Beltline stations would differ in architecture from current streetcar stops.

20. Were other alternatives reviewed for connecting Southeast and Northeast transit, like using Inman Park or Memorial Drive? Did it impact the plan for the SE trail at all?

- MARTA reviewed multiple alternatives in its Northeast study, including Memorial and Inman Park connections. No single option was recommended, and more work is needed in partnership with MARTA and the city.

21. What are the planned train frequencies?

- The effective headway will be about 10 minutes between trains.

22. Will all in-street rail share lanes with traffic, and will it have signal priority at lights?

- Most of the southeast and southwest alignments are dedicated guideways with limited crossings. Where the rail is in-street, transit signal priority or traffic control will be implemented to keep trains moving, similar to improvements already being considered for the existing streetcar.



23. For comparison, what were the costs of the other two primary alternatives for the northwest segment?

- The CSX alignment is estimated at ~\$800 million. The Armour–Ottley alignment is a little over \$900 million, and the Peachtree alignment is just over \$1 billion. CSX was chosen based on multiple evaluation criteria.

24. Have any studies been conducted on the Westside Streetcar Extension from downtown Atlanta?

- Yes, work was done in 2016-ish, but that information is outdated and predates major Gulch developments. The extension will need to be reevaluated.

25. What's the next step—will the implementation plan just go back on the shelf?

- The next meeting will be around Halloween (probably later). Final recommendations, ridership projections, and the implementation plan will be presented then.

26. Why does the transit alignment in the northwest follow CSX instead of other routes?

- CSX alignment scored better on multiple criteria, including cost (~\$800M vs. higher for other options), feasibility, and ridership potential.

27. How will this project interact with freight rail along the CSX corridor?

- Coordination will be required, but the transit alignment is adjacent to CSX and intended to coexist without interfering with freight operations.

28. Will light rail on the Beltline connect to MARTA heavy rail?

- Yes. Trail connections have been planned to connect MARTA rail stations at Bankhead and Lindbergh. There is already a streetcar connection at Peachtree Center station. In addition to increasing community access to the MARTA heavy rail, another goal behind the infill stations is to make the connection between the two transit modes as easy as possible.

29. How will you handle grade changes where the Beltline crosses major roads?

- Engineering solutions may include bridges, underpasses, or regrading, depending on location. Specific solutions will be refined during detailed design.

30. How will equity and affordability be ensured in station planning?

- Equity was one metric in determining station locations. When design efforts progress, station area planning will include similar ideals.

31. How does this project align with the city's sustainability and climate goals?



- Beltline transit is designed to reduce car dependency, cut emissions, and support sustainable, walkable development.

32. Will the Beltline rail disrupt existing trails or green space?

- The design prioritizes coexistence. While there will be some disruption during construction, we will work to minimize and mitigate that. With a grass track guideway, Beltline transit will operate parallel to the trail without disruption nor subtracting from the green space.

33. Will there be noise concerns for neighborhoods along the corridor?

- Modern light rail vehicles are quieter than freight rail. Noise mitigation will be addressed in design where needed.

34. How will safety be ensured where light rail and trails run side by side?

- Physical barriers, horizontal separation, and safe crossing designs will be incorporated to protect trail users and transit passengers.

35. What are the estimated timelines for construction?

- Implementation will be phased. Initial construction is expected within the next few years, with full build-out requiring long-term funding and planning.

36. How will the Beltline rail be funded beyond MARTA sales tax?

- A mix of federal, state, local, and potentially private funding sources will be pursued. The potential funding stacks will be better defined in the implementation plan.

37. Will stations include multimodal connections (bikes, scooters, buses)?

- Ideally, yes, but there will need to be some critical design thinking and probably some enforcement as well. For example, the transit platforms cannot become parking lots for rental scooters, taking space from transit customers. Platforms and vehicles are intended to be ADA accessible, and trains will be able to accommodate bikes and scooters onboard. Connections to buses would be via trail connections to the public street network.

38. How will accessibility be addressed?

- All stations and vehicles will meet ADA standards, ensuring accessibility for all riders.

39. Will construction impact existing businesses and neighborhoods?

- Some disruption is inevitable, but outreach and mitigation strategies will minimize impacts. Transit would support long-term economic vitality.

40. What's being done to coordinate with MARTA's broader transit expansion plans?

- MARTA is a partner in this process, and Beltline rail planning has been coordinated with MARTA.

41. How will technology (like real-time tracking) be integrated into the system?

- This is beyond the scope of the current effort. Ideally, the system will use modern transit technology, including real-time arrival info and integrated payment systems.

42. Will light rail vehicles be the same as the current downtown streetcars?

- The current thinking is to move to a hybrid vehicle, which allows for some amount of battery-powered propulsion in addition to on-wire running. The existing streetcar must have a connection to the overhead catenary wire for power.



Unable to be Answered During Live Q&A Session

1. Why do you believe any of this can happen if the first small segment can't? Won't this all just get mired in politics and NIMBYist lobbying by the Atlanta developer-class like the Eastside Trail rail project did? Won't the next mayor just follow the tradition of scuttling it right before construction starts?
 - To deliver transit infrastructure, there is a general phased process that needs to be followed...
 - Planning Phase: Defines the project is at a high level
 - Engineering Phase: Develops construction drawings and specs
 - Construction Phase: Physically implements the project
 - Service Phase: Operates the service, maintains the infrastructure
 - This Beltline Transit Study is an early step in the Planning Phase, but without its completion, nothing would follow.
2. How does something like this get approved and what can we do to support that happening?
 - You can submit an email note to engage@atlbeltline.org and/or you can attend our engagement meetings and make public comments as well. You are also welcome to contact City Council and the Mayor's Office to make your thoughts known.
3. Excellent selection for the location of the Northwest rail segment! It is directly adjacent to my neighborhood and will be perfect for commuting around town. Please make the trains come more frequently than 20 minutes.
 - With the interlining (overlapping) of the loop service, each loop would operate on 20-minute headways, but a train would arrive at each platform every 10 minutes.
4. I would like to better understand the Eastside trail project status as it's funded and shovel ready. Can you please comment on the current priorities or reality for that first phase? Shaun has been fielding questions about the Eastside streetcar since the Mayor announced his personal preference in March. When will the ABI President and the Mayor address the public about the cancellation?
 - The Beltline Transit Study provided significant technical information from which we are basing these draft recommendations, with final recommendations coming in Fall 2025. These recommendations define the Beltline transit program at a high-level and will be refined with further engineering through the design process. There are also political criteria, such as prioritization, associated with delivering public works projects. The Mayor's Office has said that Beltline rail transit would first be implemented on the Southside corridor.



5. **For the Milton Ave stop, would it be possible to move it closer to the Summerhill BRT southern terminal?**
 - There is significant housing density at Milton Ave and there is a BRT station at Hank Aaron Drive. Milton Ave is at-grade with Beltline corridor. Hank Aaron Drive is roughly 30' above Beltline corridor, requiring a significant ramp system. The engineering phase will be when the platform location is finalized and designed. The station needs to be sited sufficiently east of the McDonough Tunnel to allow for the second track to fully turn-out from the forced single-track condition within the McDonough Tunnel.
6. **Are the Armour Yard and Krog Street Infill stations realistically feasible given that Armour Yard is on the approaches to MARTA's rail yard and Krog Street is on a curve an one of the highest parts of the MARTA system?**
 - At the idea level, both sites should be feasible, though we readily admit that these sites will be challenge to design and involve very complex construction. The infill station idea has figured into Beltline Transit Study, and previous transit planning efforts, but Beltline has not performed any engineering for the Armour and Krog Street potential infill stations to definitively determine feasibility.
7. **Better Atlanta Transit came out and specifically said that they are completely against ANY transit on the Beltline at last year's meeting with CCI. This sentiment is likely to extend to other parts of the city.**
 - The Mayor's Office has said that Beltline rail transit would first be implemented on the Southside corridor.
8. **How does NIMBYism factor in the preferred alternative for the Northwest segment? I doubt the folks in Buckhead in their lower density neighborhood will be jumping on board with the idea.**
 - The Beltline Transit Study is a technical document, based on technical analyses. As a standard process, we present technical findings and seek feedback from the public.
9. **Given the \$3.51 billion projected cost – modest in historical terms – what's being done at the state level, including through lobbyists, to bring Georgia funding into the Beltline Rail project? What is the funding model going forward for the build out of this transit infrastructure?**
 - A mix of federal, state, local, and potentially private funding sources will likely be pursued. The final funding stack will be better defined in the implementation plan.



10. Transit should target areas of density first to build ridership and financial viability and then expand to other areas to tie in more riders to established locations.
 - Thank you for your comment.
11. What sort of timeline is there for the development of the implementation plan after completion of the proposals?
 - We are compiling the implementation strategy and will present it as part of the final presentation after Halloween.
12. How much work does the Beltline need to complete before passing the “project” to MARTA?
 - MARTA is a partner in this process, and Beltline rail planning has been coordinated with them. We need to wait for the BTS implementation strategy to help us determine how the program gets delivered.
13. Who actually will make these decisions? Why is the mayor calling the shots? If the mayor / leadership was to abandon rail in favor of some other form of “transit”, would ABI need to start from scratch with all the studies presented today?
 - Beltline Transit Study is the technical effort to inform the political process. It is premised on the assumption of a light-rail network. The high-level design work performed as part of BTS is based on light rail transit design guidelines. To accommodate a mode other than LRT, new design work would be required.
14. Why can this team not move faster and more quickly? In France and other countries, they do transit a lot more quickly and a lot more cheaply. Why do we need 2 years of studies when Eastside rail is shovel ready? This is unacceptable for the citizens of Atlanta. It's not what we voted for, it's not fair, it's not equitable. Frankly it shouldn't even be legal to the taxpayers and voters who voted for this. It has the appearance of a bait and switch.
 - Public infrastructure takes time to deliver. Part of the time requirement is to present project information along the way to educate the community and obtain feedback through planning, engineering, and construction. Beltline Transit Study is a beginning step and was never intended to deliver construction documents. From BTS, we have about 10% design to define future Beltline Transit and inform follow engineering work.
 - France and other countries (and other cities in the USA) have significantly different cultures of public transit investment and transit usage/integration into the urban landscape.



- France and other countries also have different tort law and liability limits that are derived from their culture (or reinforce the culture you reference). In USA, management of liability is one aspect that causes projects to take longer to implement and cost more.
- Though it is farther along than other segments of Beltline or crosstown light rail, the Eastside is not yet shovel ready at 30% plans.
- We appreciate your eagerness for Beltline transit and we aim to deliver infrastructure as quickly as possible.

15. I worry that if the southside is first to receive rail first, ridership will be minimal, and the project will be deemed a failure.

- Thank you for your comment.

16. I'm sure you guys don't have too much control over the construction of the new stations, but I think it would be a good idea to have color-coded tile paths on top of traditional signage to help with station navigation. Perhaps red tiles = northbound platform, gold/yellow = southbound, blue = eastbound, forest green = westbound, black = street, silver/grey = bus bay, purple = streetcar/tram, lime green = bike/walk way, and cyan/pink for restrooms?

- Thank you for your comment.

17. All four quadrants put together... how many Beltline transit stops... plus the four infill stations.

- Four infill stations along the existing MARTA rail are contemplated
 - Armour, Krog, Murphy, Joe Boone
- Beltline Loop: 28 stop locations
 - NW: 7 stop locations
 - SW: 6 stop locations
 - SE: 8 stop locations
 - NE: 7 stop locations
- Crosstown Downtown: 24 stop locations
 - Includes the 12 existing stops

18. The 3-loop network is a great solution to reducing wait and travel times while providing good connectivity. Really good thinking on that one!

- Thank you for your comment.

19. On the Peachtree St alignment, why can't the trains take the ROW from the existing car lanes instead of elevating the trains? I believe having a grocery store directly alongside a



transit corridor is invaluable, even if it's more expensive; Not to mention all the other businesses/offices/homes alongside 17th and Atlantic station!

- Transit-only lanes are a possibility, but if the most recent history of bike lanes on Peachtree is any indication, it is unlikely that the community would support a traffic capacity reduction for dedicated transit lanes. Our concept tried to solve for this by putting transit on an elevated guideway.

20. Has ABL investigated where you will have to declare imminent domain?

- No. For the current level of precision and the amount of design performed, it is premature to even consider Eminent Domain condemnations. Significantly more design needs to be performed to determine and quantify property impacts and to first negotiate required right-of-way where needed.

21. What is the required minimum width for the rail Right of Way along the Beltline?

- The typical section reflects double-track transit on 14' track centers, with an out-to-out of about 40'. This idealized typical section does not take into account the side-to-side elevation changes of the Beltline corridor, though design efforts will. Detailed engineering will determine how the transit guideway ties into the Beltline corridor and adjacent land uses, whether with graded slopes, walls, or bridge structures. More grading typically reduces the amount of wall or bridge structure but could require additional right-of-way acquisition.

22. Why not start out with 15 cabs vs. the 25 cabs you are proposing?

- I cannot answer as I do not understand the question.