



Atlanta  
BeltLine®

## ABI Community Survey Key Findings

AUGUST 2018

satisfied  
with the  
Atlanta BeltLine  
overall

satisfied  
with public art  
displays

80%

satisfied  
with the  
Atlanta BeltLine's  
contribution  
to economic  
development

would use transit  
on the loop once  
constructed



6,000+

people took the survey

For more information, visit:  
[beltline.org/2018survey](http://beltline.org/2018survey)



## BACKGROUND

In 2018, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) conducted a community survey in order to better understand how community members and businesses perceive the Atlanta BeltLine project, gauge public expectations, solicit suggested improvements, and more.

Over 6,000 people took the survey via the internet, phone, and paper. This report illustrates the key findings, highlights the public's priorities, and outlines ABI's responsive activities. We place tremendous value on this feedback – we are listening and taking action!

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

*Overall satisfaction is strong, and most feel it has helped both economically and socially.*

- Most sentiments about the Atlanta BeltLine are positive, with almost all believing it is a good use of taxpayer dollars.
- Perceived strengths include the quality of trails, greenspaces, and public art along with contributions to economic development.
- Generally, respondents feel positively about the Atlanta BeltLine and indicated that it builds community; is good for health, fitness, and economic activity; and is a great place to visit.
- The Atlanta BeltLine is most frequently perceived as being a place for outdoor activities, while many do not perceive it as being a place for business or affordable housing.
- Respondents identify the *speed* of trail completion, quality of jobs, *speed* of transit development, and ensuring affordable housing as top areas of concern.
- Three clear priorities for action in the near future have been identified as:
  - Completing the 22-mile trail loop, including parks and greenspaces;
  - Prioritizing affordable housing and helping legacy residents stay in place; and
  - Developing BeltLine transit.



70%

FEEL THE ATLANTA BELTLINE HAS  
IMPROVED THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD  
ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY



88%

ARE  
SATISFIED  
WITH THE  
QUALITY OF  
TRAILS



87%

ARE  
SATISFIED  
WITH THE  
QUALITY OF  
PARKS AND  
GREENSPACES

# STRENGTHS

In this section, we outline key Atlanta BeltLine strengths identified by the survey, paired with ABI's corresponding activities underway for continued success.

## CONTRIBUTING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

80% of respondents rank the Atlanta BeltLine's contributions to economic development as a top strength.

### ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Initiating the advancement of Atlanta BeltLine-owned property for a mix of uses including commercial and light industrial jobs to support new and existing industries.
- Exploring workforce development partnerships to prepare Atlanta BeltLine residents for better job opportunities.
- Working with partners to address commercial affordability for small business.
- Growing number of start-ups, retailers, restaurateurs and companies like Athena Health, Twitter, General Assembly, Monday Night Brewing, Piedmont Hospital and Dick's Sporting Goods among others.

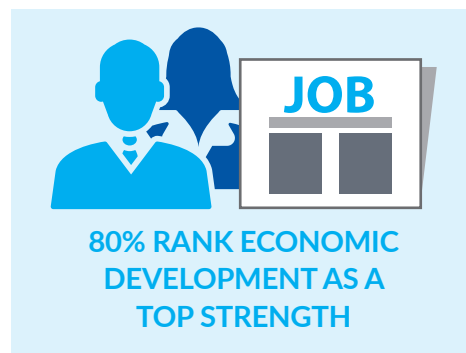


Photo Credit: The Sintoses

## ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Nearly 60% of respondents are satisfied with the BeltLine's efforts at community engagement. 70% of respondents follow Atlanta BeltLine news and information. 70% of respondents indicated that they prefer to receive news by social media and e-newsletters. Facebook is the most popular social media platform, followed by Instagram.

### ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Engaging community task force groups for collaborative solutions to housing affordability and transit challenges.
- Conducting ongoing business outreach to support positive development and growth outcomes that generate new jobs.
- Developing a BeltLine University as a means of re-building grass roots support and activism.
- Uplifting artists, arts, and culture through Art on the Atlanta BeltLine – the largest temporary, outdoor public art exhibition in the South – that has employed nearly 1,000 artists over the years and made hundreds of works of art accessible to all.



Photo Credit: The Sintoses

# OPPORTUNITIES

In this section, we outline some of the leading opportunities to strengthen the Atlanta BeltLine for the near future identified by the survey, paired with ABI's corresponding activities underway.

## COMPLETING THE LOOP

Nearly 6 out of 10 respondents were dissatisfied with the *speed* of trail completion and listed it as the top priority.

## ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Applying for federal grants to support trail construction, when available.
- Working with local and state partners to identify funding opportunities.
- Providing technical support to Atlanta BeltLine Partnership for capital campaign efforts.
- Evaluating interim trail alignments in the northwest corridor, until additional funding becomes available.

## DEVELOPING BELTLINE TRANSIT

More than 80% of respondents indicate they would use BeltLine transit once completed. 75% of respondents are dissatisfied with the *speed* of construction on the BeltLine transit system.

## ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Advancing streetcar transit corridors for the east and west sides of the Atlanta BeltLine by preparing necessary National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation, which allows ABI to qualify for the Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program and other federal grant funding.
- Partnering with the City of Atlanta and MARTA on the More MARTA program implementation strategy.
- Convening a Transit Task Force led by seasoned transit professionals and stakeholders who are already working to reposition the Atlanta BeltLine transit program and make recommendations that will help expedite the implementation.



TRAIL COMPLETION IS THE TOP PRIORITY:

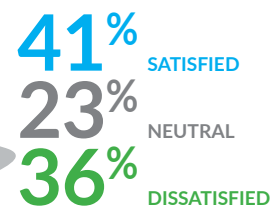
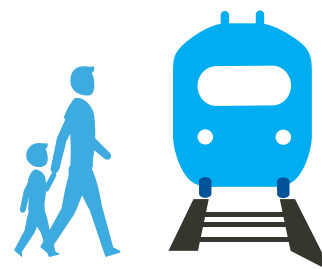


Photo Credit: John Becker



80%

OF RESPONDENTS INDICATE THEY WOULD USE THE TRANSIT ONCE COMPLETED.



## PRIORITIZING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

50% of respondents are concerned about ABI ensuring affordable housing on or near the BeltLine.

## ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Working with Affordable Housing Developers to identify sites and development opportunities to create more affordable housing.
- Identifying current affordable housing near the Atlanta BeltLine and collaborating with owners and other affordable housing funders to upgrade and preserve affordable housing near the Atlanta BeltLine.
- Working with the City of Atlanta, developers and financial institutions to help advance the new Inclusionary Zoning ordinance, which requires a percentage of affordable housing in each new multi-family development on or near the Atlanta BeltLine.
- Continuing to talk with neighborhood, civic and advocacy groups to garner ideas and strategies to help communities maintain and enhance affordable housing opportunities on or near the Atlanta BeltLine.

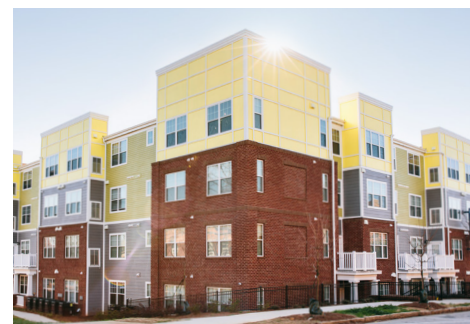


Photo Credit: The Sintoses

## AVOIDING DISPLACEMENT

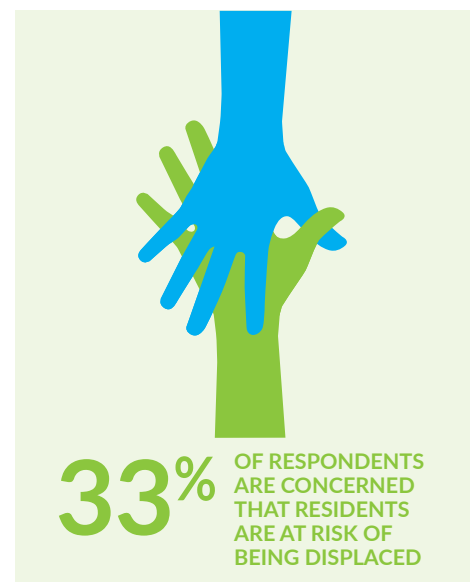
About 30% of respondents are concerned that low-income community residents are at risk of being displaced, while less than 25% ranked affordable housing as their #1 priority.

## ATLANTA BELTLINE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

- Completing an Anti-Displacement Study that focuses on the impact property taxes may have on the displacement concerns of legacy residents in communities around the Atlanta BeltLine.
- Published a Final Report by the ABI Affordable Housing Working Group comprised of local affordable housing experts. Eight recommendations were made for ways ABI and partners can create and preserve more affordable housing around the Atlanta BeltLine and help legacy residents remain in their communities.
- Collaborating more closely with public housing entities in the City of Atlanta to provide more affordable housing resources, and assist legacy residents to remain in their communities around the Atlanta BeltLine. This includes collaborations with the City of Atlanta, Atlanta Housing, Invest Atlanta, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Affordable Housing Developers and other entities interested in creating or preserving affordable housing.



Photo Credit: The Sintoses





## SUMMARY

In closing, the primary objective of this project was to understand perceptions of the BeltLine among residents of Atlanta. The survey results indicate that overall satisfaction with the BeltLine is strong, and most feel it has helped the city, both economically and socially. Most respondents see long-term value in the project, but they also identify concerns about several areas of focus, which are in alignment with ongoing priorities of ABI and the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership (ABP). We greatly appreciate the input from the community, and ABI invites the public to stay informed about all Atlanta BeltLine projects and programs by way of our community engagement process.

To view the full report, please visit: [beltline.org/2018survey](https://beltline.org/2018survey)



Photo Credit: The Sintoses