Environmental Review Process and Alignment Refinement
Atlanta BeltLine East and West and North Avenue/Luckie Street

Study Group Meeting
Kickoff Meeting
What will we discuss today?

• Introductions

• Today’s Agenda:
  - Review project background
  - Introduce environmental review process
  - Introduce Alignment Refinement (AR) process
  - Discuss next steps

• Adjourn
Project Background
Project Background
Transit Plans/Studies/Initiatives

Connect Atlanta Plan
November 2008

Draft Atlanta BeltLine/Atlanta Streetcar System Plan (SSP)
March 2014

Atlanta Streetcar Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
April 2011

Record of Decision (ROD) for Tier 1 EIS
August 2012
Project Background

Atlanta BeltLine/Atlanta Streetcar System Plan

A Supplement to the Connect Atlanta Plan and the ABI Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP)

Phasing of transit in SIP based on this strategy

Includes all streetcar lines in the Connect Atlanta Plan including Atlanta BeltLine

Project evaluation based on Equity, Readiness, Value Capture, Finance, Ridership

Significant stakeholder and public input garnered to date

Integrates Atlanta Streetcar lines and Atlanta BeltLine into a unified system
Project Background
Projects in Environmental Review Process

• Phase 1 and part of Phase 2 of the Draft Atlanta BeltLine/Atlanta Streetcar System Plan (SSP) represents the near-term priorities for the City of Atlanta

• Streetcar Projects currently in Environmental Review Process:

- Atlanta BeltLine East
- Atlanta BeltLine West
- North Avenue/Luckie Street
Local Funding Partners

City of Atlanta

- Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.
- Invest Atlanta
Environmental Review Process
Environmental Review Process

What is the Environmental Review process?

- Required for all actions seeking Federal funding as regulated by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1972

Diagram:
- Social Equity
- Natural Environment
- Built Surroundings

Environment
Environmental Review Process
What documentation is required?

- Categorical Exclusion (CE) – Class 2
- Environmental Assessment (EA) – Class 3
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – Class 1
Environmental Review Process
Which corridors are involved?

- Atlanta BeltLine East and Irwin Street connection
- Alignment Options
- North Avenue/Luckie Street
- Alignment Options
- Atlanta BeltLine West
- Alignment Options
- Atlanta Streetcar*
- MARTA Red/Gold Line*
- MARTA Blue/Green Line*

* Shown for Reference
Environmental Review Process

Timeline

- **PROJECT INITIATION**
  - Identify goals and objectives
  - Review previous planning work
  - Evaluate existing conditions

- **ALIGNMENT REFINEMENT**
  - Review concept drawings
  - Field review and surveys
  - Identify environmental resources

- **TECHNICAL STUDIES AND EVALUATION**
  - Initiate community engagement and agency coordination
  - Evaluate alternatives
  - Document technical work

- **COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION**
  - Achieve final decision from Federal lead agency

BEGIN ENGINEERING

We are here
Alignment Refinement
Alignment Refinement: Hulsey Yard Example

Why are we doing alignment refinement (AR)?
# Alignment Refinement

## Preliminary Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Principle</th>
<th>Alignment Refinement Focus Areas and Alignment Options</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Alignment Refinement Measures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Readiness</strong></td>
<td>• Amount of Right of Way (ROW) acquisitions required</td>
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<td>• Amount of time needed for agency coordination/political and public acceptability – effects on project cost effectiveness and implementation schedule</td>
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<td>• Cost to overcome significant engineering/design constraints – effects on project cost effectiveness and implementation schedule</td>
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<td><strong>Practicality / Ridership</strong></td>
<td>• Population served – existing and projected in areas served by streetcar</td>
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<td>• Potential ridership from transfers – connections to high-capacity transit</td>
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<td>• Convenience – transfer requirements to destinations</td>
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<td>• Mobility and access options for all potential riders</td>
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<td>• Travel time from Atlanta BeltLine neighborhoods to regional job centers</td>
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<td>• Effect of potential delays on mode choice – exclusive guideway compared to mixed traffic</td>
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<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>• Will use Atlanta Regional Commission’s Equitable Target Area (ETA) data</td>
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<td>• Mobility and access options for potential riders from EJ communities</td>
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<td>• Travel time from EJ communities to regional job centers</td>
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<td><strong>Financial Options</strong></td>
<td>• Long-term operating and maintenance (O&amp;M) costs for each option</td>
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<td>• Effect on TAD/Funding Partners/Effects on potential Federal funding</td>
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<td>• Amount of commercial land and multi-family land available per alignment that could be used for a Local Improvement District assessment</td>
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<td><strong>Development Impact</strong></td>
<td>• Effect on land value/improvement ratio</td>
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<td>• Effect of existing and proposed development density on rail investment</td>
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<td>• Consistency/compatibility with land use, zoning, neighborhood character</td>
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<td>• Market potential for implementing subarea master plan development (Atlanta BeltLine East and West)</td>
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<td>• Amount of new development per mile</td>
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Alignment Refinement

Where does AR fit in the planning process?

Five Guiding Principles

Alignment Refinement

- Narrows alignment options
- Evaluates MARTA connectivity options

Environmental Assessment

- Evaluates environmental impacts of alignments

We are Here
Alignment Refinement
What are the focus areas for AR?
Milestone Schedule

Alignment Refinement
March 2014 to June 2014

Technical Studies and Evaluation
June 2014 to February 2015

Project Development (PD) Entry Request
January 2015

Complete Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)
March 2015

Public/Agency Review and Public Hearing
April 2015

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
May 2015

= Community Check In

5/5/2014
Atlanta BeltLine // © 2014
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Community Engagement Overview

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<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)</th>
<th>Meets at Project Milestones</th>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)</td>
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<td>Study Groups</td>
<td>Follows SAC/TAC Meetings</td>
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<td>Citywide Conversation</td>
<td>When Necessary</td>
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<td>Public Hearing</td>
<td>Draft EA Document</td>
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Questions or Feedback?

- Project Background
- Environmental Review Process
- Alignment Refinement
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Alignment Refinement: Hulsey Yard Example

What are we doing during the alignment refinement (AR) process?

Community Engagement Check Points

Screen 1  
Project Readiness  
Development Impact

- Review concept drawings
- Identify Preliminary Impacts
- Review previous planning work and approved plans and documents
- Identify and document environmental resources
- Identify existing and anticipated population and employment areas
- Evaluate alignments

Screen 2  
Practicality/Ridership  
Equity  
Financial Options

All Hulsey Yard Alternatives

Two Hulsey Yard Alternatives

Time (in Weeks) for AR Process

5/5/2014