

**BeltLine Tax Allocation District Feasibility
and
Redevelopment Analysis
Technical Appendix**

Atlanta, GA

March 2005

**EDAW, Inc.
Urban Collage, Inc.
Huntley and Associates
Robert Charles Lesser Company
Grice & Associates
URS Corporation
Troutman Sanders, LLP
Community Housing Resource Center**

Prepared for: The BeltLine Steering Committee

Maps, graphics, text, and analysis contained in this Technical Appendix have been prepared by EDAW exclusively for the Atlanta BeltLine Tax Allocation District Feasibility Study, March 2005. Materials cannot be reproduced without the express permission of the Atlanta Development Authority and EDAW.

**City of Atlanta
BeltLine Steering Committee**

Co-Chairs

Dr. Carl Patton, President, Georgia State University

Barney Simms, Senior Vice President, Atlanta Housing Authority

Members

Renay Blumenthal, Senior Vice President, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

Peggy Harper, President, Atlanta Planning Advisory Board (APAB)

Ed McBrayer, Executive Director, The PATH Foundation

Michael McGwier, Executive Managing Director, Trammell Crow Residential

Charles Palmer, Partner, Troutman Sanders, LLP

Jim Sykes, Vice President, Western Region, Georgia Power

Janis Ware, Executive Director, SUMMECH Community Development Corporation

Cathy Woolard, Exec Dir, Friends of the BeltLine and former City Council Pres

Jim Young, President and CEO, Citizens Trust Bank

Mtamanika Youngblood, Comm Dev Consultant & Vice-Chair of the Historic Dist Dev Corp

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

1.1 Background and History	7
1.2 Overview of Tax Allocation Districts	8
1.3 Study Area Description and Methodology	9
1.4 Previous and Current Planning Efforts	13
1.5 Public Information and Stakeholder Involvement	19

EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 Existing Conditions Analysis Summary	20
2.1.1 Northeast	26
2.1.2 Southeast	33
2.1.3 Southwest	40
2.1.4 Northwest	44
2.2 Demographic and Economic Profile	52
2.3 Development Opportunities	63
2.4 Parks and Recreation	71
2.5 Cultural and Tourism Attractions	81
2.6 Access and Circulation	87

PROPOSED PUBLIC and PRIVATE PROJECTS

3.1 Development Potential	101
3.2 Open Space Projects	110
3.3 Access and other Transportation Improvements	117

TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICT FEASIBILITY

4.1 Principles and Policies	121
4.2 Market Analysis	122
4.3 Financial Analysis	131
4.4 Proposed Eligible Activities	139

BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHIC MAPS	143
Map 1. BeltLine Rail Right-of-Way	143
Map 2. Adjacent and Nearby Neighborhoods	144
Map 3. City Council Districts	145
Map 4. Current Tax Allocation Districts in City of Atlanta	146
LAND USE AND DEMOGRAPHIC MAPS	147
Map 5. Existing Land Use, BeltLine Study Area	147
Map 6. Building Conditions, BeltLine Study Area	148
Map 7. Building Occupancy, BeltLine Study Area	149
Map 8. Blight Conditions, BeltLine Study Area	150
Map 9. Development Opportunities, BeltLine Study Area	151
PARKS AND CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS MAPS	152
Map 10. Parks and Cultural Facilities around the BeltLine	152
Map 11. Connections - BeltLine, MARTA and Trail System	153
ACCESS AND CIRCULATION MAPS	154
Map 12. Rail Lines in BeltLine Study Area	154
Map 13. Transit Systems in BeltLine Study Area	155
Map 14. Level of Service in BeltLine Study Area, 2000	156
Map 15. Sidewalk Inventory in BeltLine Study Area	157
Map 16. Transportation Improvement Projects	158
Map 17. Regional Transportation Plan Projects	159
Map 18. Crash Data in BeltLine Study Area, 2002	160
Map 19. Average Annual Daily Traffic, 2002	161
TAD FEASIBILITY MAPS	162
Map 20. Study Area A	162
Map 21. Study Area B	163
Map 22. Total Taxable Value in BeltLine Study Area	164
Map 23. Land Ownership along BeltLine	165
DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AND FINANCING ANALYSIS	
PRESENTATIONS	

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Existing Land Use, BeltLine Study Area	21
Table 2.	Existing Building Conditions, BeltLine Study Area	22
Table 3.	Existing Building Occupancy, BeltLine Study Area	22
Table 4.	Existing Land Use Analysis, Northeast	29
Table 5.	Existing Building Conditions Analysis, Northeast	30
Table 6.	Existing Building Occupancy Analysis, Northeast	30
Table 7.	Existing Land Use Analysis, Southeast	35
Table 8.	Existing Building Conditions Analysis, Southeast	36
Table 9.	Existing Building Occupancy Analysis, Southeast	36
Table 10.	Existing Land Use Analysis, Southwest	42
Table 11.	Existing Building Conditions Analysis, Southwest	43
Table 12.	Existing Building Occupancy Analysis, Southwest	43
Table 13.	Existing Land Use Analysis, Northwest	47
Table 14.	Existing Building Conditions Analysis, Northwest	48
Table 15.	Existing Building Occupancy Analysis, Northwest	49
Table 16.	Major Parks in the Northeast	73
Table 17.	Major Parks in the Southeast	75
Table 18.	Major Parks in the Northwest	78
Table 19.	Level of Service Criteria for Roadway Segments	90
Table 20.	Build-Out Development Potential and Market Demand	103
Table 21.	Potential Greenway and Green Space Projects	116
Table 22.	Estimated 25-Year Demand for New Housing by Study Area	127
Table 23.	Total Estimated Supportable Retail by Study Area	128
Table 24.	Estimated Residential-Serving 25-Year Office Demand	129
Table 25.	25-Year Office Demand by Area	131
Table 26.	Estimated Net New Flex Space in the BeltLine Study Area	131
Table 27.	Potential TAD Impact under Alternative Growth Assumptions	133
Table 28.	Range of Potential Bond Generation, Conservative Growth	133
Table 29.	Existing City of Atlanta TADs and Value	134
Table 30.	Anticipated Project Development	138
Table 31.	Eligible Activities	142

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Percentage of Deteriorated or Dilapidated Structures	22
Figure 2. Estimated % of Households Willing to Make Trade-offs	125
Figure 3. City of Atlanta Capture of Location Flexible Households	126

1.1 Background and History

BeltLine History

The historic BeltLine freight railroads that now compose the proposed Atlanta BeltLine proposal were built after the Civil War to expand the industrial base of the City, and for the most part, predate the adjacent neighborhoods. The proposed BeltLine route is made up of four segments that form a rough loop around the City, running through early industrial areas and several historic neighborhoods: the Southern Railway (also known as the Decatur Street Belt), the Atlanta and West Point, the Louisville and Nashville and the Seaboard Air Line (Map 1 – BeltLine Rail Right-of-Way). In all the BeltLine affects about 49 neighborhoods in the City (Map 2 - Adjacent and Nearby Neighborhoods). There have been a number of proposals over the years to re-use parts of these railroads for other purposes, including plans in the early 1990s by the City of Atlanta to create a cultural loop. The proposed Cultural Loop, identified as an transportation element for the 1996 Olympic Games was envisioned as a tourist link from Underground Atlanta to various cultural sites such as the King Center, Botanical Gardens and King Plow Arts Center. The concept also included a bicycle path in the southern portion of the loop.

The current Atlanta BeltLine proposal grew out of Ryan Gravel's 1999 graduate thesis in Architecture and City Planning at the Georgia Institute of Technology. It is based on the idea that growth is spurred in part by public investment in infrastructure, and one way to influence growth is through the careful design of infrastructure systems. Gravel's thesis expands the Cultural Loop idea, adding mixed-use redevelopment of the underutilized industrial land adjacent to the rail corridor and detailing a new transit line that has sufficient stops to serve tourists and daily local use. The transit line is extended to also include intown neighborhoods to the south and west and to connect into the MARTA system. Parallel bicycle and walking paths are added to create a 22-mile linear park – an 'emerald necklace' around Atlanta.

Beginning in the summer of 2001, with the support of Councilmember and then City Council President Cathy Woolard, a grass-roots campaign launched the BeltLine to the forefront of transportation projects in the region. In February 2004, Councilwoman Woolard helped Gravel establish Friends of the BeltLine, a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation and responsible redevelopment of the BeltLine as a transit line, trail and linear park. In May 2004, Mayor Shirley Franklin identified the BeltLine as a priority of her administration and formed the BeltLine Steering Committee, chaired by Dr. Carl Patton and Barney Simms. The BeltLine Steering Committee was given the charge to assess the feasibility of a Tax Allocation District (TAD) as a potential funding source for the development of the BeltLine.

In 2004, planning efforts related to the BeltLine expanded into more detailed analysis in three related areas - Development, Transit and Green Space. Transit planning is moving forward in a concurrent effort, the Inner Core Feasibility Study, conducted by the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA.) In addition, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) has established an initiative to assess green space feasibility adjacent to the BeltLine. The Trust for Public Land's study, led by nationally recognized urban planner Alex Garvin, studies the possibilities for creation of a parks and green space network. These two efforts are critical to the success of defining the BeltLine and have been incorporated into the TAD Feasibility Study detailed on the following pages.

1.2 Overview of Tax Allocation Districts

A Tax Allocation District (TAD), which allows what is typically referred to as “tax increment financing,” is a tool used to publicly finance infrastructure and other improvements to stimulate private redevelopment. Once a TAD is established, the tax base of the TAD district is “frozen” at the base-year level and base-year level taxes continue to be collected as before. All additional ad valorem tax revenue levied by the City, Fulton County, and the school system that is generated from the new development in the district is placed in a special redevelopment fund for that specific TAD area. Revenue generated is used to pay directly for the infrastructure and/or redevelopment costs or, more often, to service bonds that are issued to pay for those costs.

Tax Allocation District (TAD) Purpose and Legal Basis

TADs are allowed by Georgia's Redevelopment Powers Law (O.C.G.A 36-44-1, 1981 as amended). It combines basic powers given cities and counties under the **Urban Redevelopment Law** (O.C.G.A 36-61-1) with the additional ability to issue tax revenue anticipation bonds that are secured solely by future “incremental tax revenues” generated within a geographically defined area – the TAD – within the City. The bonds are used to make public and other improvements within the TAD that generate these incremental tax revenues through (1) new tax-generating development and (2) enhanced appreciation of existing tax-generating properties within the TAD.

Key Tax Allocation District (TAD) Bond Advantages as a Financing Tool

- TADs generate funding for a designated area without requiring a tax rate increase on the property owners, such as in Improvement Districts or Special Tax Assessment Districts. Funding is generated from additional tax revenue created by the new development.

- TADs do not reduce the level of tax revenues currently being collected (or in any year immediately prior to a TAD's creation) by the City, County or Schools.
- TADs do not affect sales tax revenues (including SPLOST) in any way, except positively, as when improvements within the TAD actually enhance sales tax-generating activities (such as retail stores and restaurants) and thereby increase the amount of sales taxes being collected by the City, State, Schools, MARTA and any other additional local option sales taxes within the City.
- TAD bonds do not constitute debt of or by the City.
- If the anticipated tax revenues do not materialize and there are subsequent shortfalls in servicing the TAD bonds, there is no legal recourse to the City.
- Under almost all circumstances, the TAD bonds are tax-exempt.
- TAD bonds can be used to pay for a wide range of broadly defined "redevelopment costs," which include not only normal infrastructural and "public" improvements, but also most acquisition, site prep, construction, professional services, financing and other costs for private improvements and facilities usually excluded from tax-exempt bond financing.

How TADs Work

- For tax collection purposes, the City "freezes" the assessed value of property within a defined TAD area as of the day a TAD is created (the last day of the year in which the TAD receives City, County and School Board approvals).
- Throughout the life of the TAD, the City continues to receive property taxes at that "frozen" level, as do the County and School System if they each approve participation in the TAD.
- Property taxes generated on assessed value in excess of the "frozen" incremental tax base are the "tax increment."
- These tax increment revenues come from two sources: (1) appreciation of existing properties within the TAD when it was created and (2) taxes on new development that occurs after the TAD is created.
- These tax increment revenues are received by the City and placed into a special TAD fund.

- Tax-exempt bonds are issued to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible redevelopment costs normally the expense of private development.
- As redevelopment occurs in the given TAD, the “tax increment” generated is used to retire the debt issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs.
- Eligible redevelopment costs are outlined in the Redevelopment Plan, which is prepared and approved as part of the TAD approval process. However, approvals of specific amounts of support for specific development projects are on-going throughout the life of a TAD and are administered by Atlanta Development Authority (ADA), the City’s designated redevelopment agency.
- Neither county nor school system participation is legally required for the City to create a TAD, but financially the participation of both is usually essential in order to generate sufficient “incremental tax revenue” to support bond issues within a given TAD. The approval of the county and school board occurs one time at the creation of the TAD. Given the relative size of property tax millage to the county and school board, it is difficult to achieve much increment without the participation of the two jurisdictions.

Other TADs

- 48 states currently have tax increment financing laws.
- The City of Atlanta has five existing TADs (Map 4. Current Tax Allocation Districts in City of Atlanta):
 1. **Westside:** Created in 1992 and expanded in 1998 to encourage development in Vine City and English Avenue, as well as around Centennial Olympic Park. Results to date: Spurred major redevelopment projects including Centennial House, Museum Tower, 123 Luckie Street, Northyards, and Northside Village. Generated \$678 million in investment. Produced 5,085 construction jobs and 453 permanent positions.
 2. **Atlantic Station:** Created in 1999 to finance infrastructure and environmental remediation activities associated with a major urban mixed-use project that ultimately will include approximately 1.6 million square feet of retail, 6 million square feet of office and entertainment, over 4,000 mixed-income residential units, 1,150 hotel rooms, and 30,000 new jobs.

3. **Perry Bolton:** Created in 2002 to facilitate the redevelopment of Perry Homes and the surrounding community, a public housing development of the Atlanta Housing Authority in northwest Atlanta. The planned redevelopment includes over 1,600 mixed-income housing units and community amenities at a cost of \$430 million.
 4. **Princeton Lakes:** Created in 2002 to support necessary site improvements for a planned \$366 million mixed-use development in southwest Atlanta involving over 1,000 housing units, 800,000 square feet of office, and 600,000 square feet of retail.
 5. **Eastside:** Created in 2003 to spur the creation of an attractive, walkable 24-hour Downtown area; to facilitate the revitalization of the historic Auburn Avenue Corridor and surrounding community, as well as the Memorial Drive/Martin Luther King Jr. Drive corridor. As much as \$1.5 billion in redevelopment and new development is anticipated.
- Several other TADs currently exist in the metro area, including in Cobb County (Smyrna, Acworth and Marietta) and East Point.

1.3 Study Area Description and Methodology

Overall Study Area

A critical part of determining TAD “feasibility” is the testing of various boundaries. In this regard, it is important to recognize that there is not, as of yet, a recommendation for an official TAD boundary. Ultimately, many factors will be taken into consideration in the effort to identify a preferred TAD area (or series of alternatives). These factors include (among others): existing and estimated property tax valuations, estimated development potential, opportunities for developing transit and green space, political tolerances, community preferences and physical conditions.

However, in the effort to begin evaluating the existing physical and demographic conditions in and around the BeltLine, a general study area has been defined. As a preliminary framework, a ¼-mile buffer (¼-mile out from each side – ½ mile total width) was analyzed to determine the number of parcels and their associated tax value. It is expected that these parcels will generally be within a five to ten minute walk of the BeltLine and therefore, will be most affected by its construction. Based on this starting point, parcels were subsequently added or eliminated based on several criteria:

- **Proximity to potential BeltLine stations:** In a few locations the distance was expanded along underutilized corridors into areas roughly designated for future station stops.
- **Proximity to current/proposed activity centers that contain significant development potential:** Given their significant potential for redevelopment (if induced by the construction of the BeltLine), several areas were added beyond the ¼-mile buffer in a few key strategic locations. These include Lindberg, the Ponce de Leon Corridor, East Atlanta Village, Chosewood Park/McDonough Village Center, Joyland Center/ Villages of Carver (Pryor Road), Oakland City, West End, and McDaniel Glenn. In some cases (e.g., McDaniel, Lindberg, West End, Oakland City), these areas also are adjacent to existing MARTA rail stations.
- **Significant open space opportunities:** On the northwest side, the existing quarry, Maddox Park and Atlanta Waterworks represent a massive, albeit challenging opportunity to create a major new “Great Park.” In particular, including the quarry allows for the opportunity to connect an eventual BeltLine TAD to the existing Perry Bolton TAD (without leaving any small gaps in between).
- **Physical BeltLine constraints:** In several areas along the corridor, topography and current uses may dictate that a potential transit line deviate from the actual “BeltLine” corridor. These areas will be described in detail later in the report.
- **Underutilized industrial property:** There are numerous underutilized large industrial sites that are somewhat beyond the ¼-mile buffer, particularly in the northwest and southeast. Based on their potential for short- or long-term redevelopment, these sites have been added to the study area for consideration.
- **Preservation of areas that are residential communities:** Significant portions of the BeltLine are surrounded by extremely stable single-family areas that are to be preserved. Most of these areas were eliminated from consideration.

Based on these criteria, the preliminary study area was identified as the basis for the existing conditions analysis that is presented in this report. The study area excludes historic neighborhoods that are not to be considered for redevelopment. ***It is critical to note that this boundary, as currently defined, is simply a preliminary area of study – it does not necessarily reflect a proposed TAD boundary.*** Inevitably, as the area is studied for physical, social and economic suitability, the boundaries will change. In particular, the overall size of the area will be limited based on TAD restrictions governing the taxable value allowable

within a municipality (there are already five existing TADs in the City of Atlanta; Atlantic Station TAD, Eastside TAD, Perry/ Bolton TAD, Princeton Lakes TAD, and Westside TAD). In addition, and perhaps most importantly, community and political desires have yet to be tested and refined. If the BeltLine TAD is determined to be feasible, more detailed phases of community-based redevelopment planning would occur in 2005 to shape the final TAD boundary.

1.4 Previous and Current Planning Efforts

Previous Land Use and Development Studies

The BeltLine TAD study area (as currently defined) follows the rail corridor through numerous intown Atlanta communities. Many of these communities have completed comprehensive, community-based planning efforts in recent years as part of the City's effort to define a long-term, proactive vision. Almost all of these community plans anticipate and incorporate the BeltLine in one form or another as part of the vision.

In the summer of 2004 the City of Atlanta, in collaboration with MARTA, completed a long-range plan for development of the Oakland City and Lakewood-Fort McPherson MARTA Stations. The **Oakland City-Lakewood Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)** gives comprehensive recommendations for future land use patterns, transportation and circulation options and implementation strategies for the area surrounding the MARTA stations and portions of Metropolitan Parkway. An extensive Workshop Week generated recommendations to increase the accessibility and linkages along Lee Street with a proposed greenway system, increased density at the MARTA stations (i.e., Transit-Oriented Developments), reinvigorating retail nodes along Metropolitan Parkway and the redevelopment of the Murphy warehouse district (called the "Murphy Triangle"). The Murphy Triangle in particular is the most relevant to the BeltLine TAD Feasibility Study in that it defined a new mixed-use district with several adaptive reuse projects, new housing and office development and a centralized open space – all centered around a proposed BeltLine transit stop, including a potential infill Marta station. In addition, the intersection of Dill and Metropolitan is conceived as an important opportunity for new mixed-use development within a short walk of a proposed BeltLine transit stop. The City of Atlanta will adopt this plan in the fall of 2004 and is working with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to grandfather the plan into the Livable Centers Initiative Program, thus making many of the proposed transportation projects eligible for LCI funding.

The **Mechanicsville Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP) Update**, completed in the summer of 2004, is an update to the Mechanicsville Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP) originally adopted by the City of Atlanta in June 1995. The Mechanicsville neighborhood is immediately south of Downtown

Atlanta and has suffered from disinvestment and limited project implementation. Its location has positioned it for rebirth as more residents flock to Atlanta's intown neighborhoods. The CRP update envisions significant quantities of new housing development, housing rehabilitation, and most significantly, the redevelopment of the **McDaniel Glenn** public housing community. These recent planning efforts have led to a successful **HOPE VI** grant application (+/- \$20 million) in the heart of the community. Scheduled to break ground in late 2005 or early 2006, redevelopment of McDaniel Glenn will act as a major catalytic investment. The plan recommends additional investment in the adjacent Dunbar Elementary School, Community Center and Rosa Burney Park. Although Mechanicsville does not physically touch the BeltLine, these efforts as described above will lead to the creation of a new, mixed-use activity center within a ten minute walk of the West End MARTA Station. Throughout the life of the CRP, public and private sector implementation partners will play critical roles in the redevelopment of Mechanicsville. These partners include: Mechanicsville Civic Association, SUMMECH, City of Atlanta, Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta Housing Authority, The Enterprise Foundation and the Atlanta Development Authority.

The **Pittsburgh Community Redevelopment Plan**, led by the Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association (PCIA) and adopted by City Council in 2001, is a long-term, community-wide vision for the Pittsburgh Community. The plan generated 27 distinct redevelopment projects, a future land use plan, civic and transportation improvements and a neighborhood-wide rezoning strategy. These efforts have already resulted in investment returning to this once thriving community. Approximately \$161 million dollars of proposed projects were planned during this community-wide planning process including: the redevelopment/adaptive reuse of the Croghan School as a new multi-family housing development adding 105 units to the community (completed in 2003), residential infill on vacant lots (underway), the redevelopment of Civic League Apartments (demolition begins in 2005), infrastructure improvements, a retail node on McDaniel Street and improvements to Pittman Park. Of particular note, the southern end of the neighborhood (i.e., blocks facing University Avenue) will be within walking distance of the BeltLine. Most of this area (particularly the south side of University Avenue) is envisioned for significant economic development as part of the plan. As a result of the intensive effort of PCIA to move forward with implementation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation has become an integral partner in the Pittsburgh community.

The **West End Historic District Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)** Plan was adopted in 2001 and identifies opportunities for a mixed-use community around the West End MARTA Station. The plan envisions redevelopment of the industrial properties along Whitehall, the Candler Warehouse, and underutilized portions of the West End Mall and Ralph Abernathy retail corridor. These proposed redevelopment opportunities are supported with new zoning regulations that the City of Atlanta is currently implementing. They encourage increased density and design standards that complement the historic character of

this community. The LCI plan also recommends better linkages to the Atlanta University Center (AUC) and increased investment in public improvements surrounding the MARTA station. While not directly on the BeltLine, the West End - like the area around the Oakland City MARTA Station - is an important activity center that may ultimately be connected to transit on the BeltLine through possible links to MARTA rail.

In light of city-wide neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment activity, the **Blueprint for the Greater Atlanta University Center Community (GAUCC) Assessment** details the results of a community development process conducted for a large, interdependent area in southwest Atlanta. The area consists of the Atlanta University Center institutions and seven surrounding, but integrally linked, neighborhoods. The **Blueprint** focuses on the development desires of the community and the AUC institutions and identifies housing, economic development and public improvement projects that the University Community Development Corporation (UCDC) will undertake in ten study areas including Ashby Street, West End, West End/ Holderness, University Homes, transitional growth areas for the AUC institutions, Carter Street, Ashby Street, Lawton Street, and Langhorne Street. The Blueprint envisions single-family infill on vacant lots at the west end of the Ashview Heights community. These homes (and surrounding rehabilitated homes) will have excellent access to the BeltLine.

The City of Atlanta's **Amended Southside Redevelopment Plan**, adopted by City Council in 2000, presents a collective vision for redeveloping five neighborhoods within Southside Atlanta (i.e., all of NPU-Y). To compensate for years of disinvestment and steady deterioration in the area, residents and community leaders took a proactive approach to define a future land use and public facilities plan. The plan preserves existing stable housing, presents opportunities for a variety of new residential development, envisions new/expanded recreational and community facilities, and connects a series of neighborhood parks and trail systems. Within the Southside Plan, there are several key projects that have, or will have, a direct impact on the BeltLine.

First, Pryor Road is envisioned as a new mixed-use "village center." Once fully developed, this center will be within a 5 to 10 minute walk of the BeltLine. Several aspects of the Pryor Road Village Center are already complete or well underway. They include: Highpoint Estates (+/-80 new single-family homes), a 100 unit new senior housing facility, the Villages at Carver (a 700+ unit mixed-income HOPE VI community), Park Place South (a mixed residential community comprised of single-family, townhomes, and condominiums) and a new YMCA (under construction). In addition, Joyland Center, currently in pre-development, may include retail/residential.

Second, Carver High School (which directly abuts the BeltLine) is in the process of complete reconstruction including state-of-the-art classrooms, new athletic facilities, and an upgraded academic approach. Upon completion, the BeltLine,

will provide a connection between many intown neighborhoods and the new high school, thus increasing the school's viability as a city-wide educational option.

Third, the largely underutilized industrial corridor along McDonough Boulevard is envisioned as a significant opportunity for adaptive reuse (including housing and community office space). While the market for these types of projects continues to grow in southeast Atlanta, the BeltLine will be a catalyst to accelerate the viability of this investment.

Fourth, The Southside Plan envisions an extensive array of interconnected greenway trails and bike routes that all tie into an anticipated BeltLine greenway. The first of these trail systems is under construction as part of the Villages at Carver.

The **East Atlanta Village Study**, prepared in 1999, provides a vision for a revitalized mixed-use district in southeast Atlanta. The plan envisions a wide variety of streetscape, gateway and parking improvements within and around the village. Of particular note, the study provides key recommendations for new development that is more "transit-supportive" and anticipates future connections to MARTA/BeltLine. The ideas and concepts in this plan will have particular relevance in the event that a BeltLine transit route follows Moreland Avenue.

The **Reynoldstown Neighborhood Master Plan** (2001) envisions the revitalization of this important intown single-family neighborhood. Given its strategic location in the city, and particularly the way in which it straddles the BeltLine, Reynoldstown is uniquely positioned to benefit from the BeltLine. Most of the single-family areas will be within a 5 to 10 minute walk of the BeltLine, thus providing further impetus for public and private investment in the community. In addition to the emphasis placed on the preservation and rehabilitation of single-family homes, the Master Plan proposes adaptive reuse and economic development of several properties along Memorial Drive, including locations at and near the intersection of the BeltLine. In particular, the Master Plan envisions reclaiming large underutilized industrial sites in the heart of the community (Stein Steel) as a transformational development into a new mixed-use, mixed-income village.

The **Northwest Atlanta Framework Plan** (2000) provides a comprehensive set of recommendations for the entire northwest section of the city. The study contains land use, transportation and public improvement recommendations for a series of corridors, including two which abut the BeltLine - the Marietta Boulevard Corridor and the Chattahoochee Avenue Corridor. Recommendations for these target areas focus on enhancing the location's viability as a destination retail shopping district (outlet stores, etc.) while keeping several areas active for intown industrial and manufacturing uses (i.e., the keeping a large portion of this area as the city's industrial base). The plan also calls for new mixed-use development at key locations within these corridors.

The **Cheshire Bridge Road Study**, completed in 1999, looks at this troubled, strip corridor and provides strategic recommendations for its repositioning. The study focuses on alterations to the city's zoning ordinance in an attempt to reduce the visual blight caused by "strip" development.

The **Simpson Road Redevelopment Plan**, prepared in 1996, takes on the difficult task of redeveloping this deteriorating retail, residential and industrial corridor on the west side of Downtown. Spanning several communities and NPU's, the Simpson Road plan also anticipates complete revitalization of the area in and around the BeltLine and Bankhead MARTA Station. The plan calls for new mixed-use development that is in keeping with the historic character of surrounding neighborhoods, while still taking advantage of increased densities to support transit.

Two pre-Olympic Community Redevelopment Plans (CRPs) prepared by the Corporation for Olympic Development in Atlanta (CODA) are **The Old Fourth Ward CRP** (1994) and **The Peoplestown CRP** (1996). The Old Fourth Ward CRP does not anticipate the development of the BeltLine as a transit system or greenway trail. However, the plan does call for conversion of many of the adjacent and outdated/vacant industrial sites into loft housing. Several successful projects have been completed to date including: StudioPlex (at the end of Auburn Avenue), The Block Lofts (former Blue Circle site), The Glen Iris Lofts, the Glen Iris Dairy and Highland Walk. The plan also anticipated the mixed-use redevelopment of City Hall East, a project that is currently in negotiation with the City and a private development team. The Peoplestown CRP also does not anticipate the BeltLine as a transit system but does envision the BeltLine as a continuous greenway (called the Grant Park Greenway in the plan). Like the Old Fourth Ward, Peoplestown includes several underutilized industrial sites along the BeltLine. However, the Peoplestown CRP places less of an emphasis on conversion to housing and focuses on economic development of the corridor to create additional jobs and commercial services for intown residents.

Lindbergh Center, in the far northeast corner of the BeltLine, has been the subject of various development and community-based studies (1997-2000). All of these plans recognize the opportunity to create a dense Transit-Oriented-Development (T.O.D.) in and around the Lindbergh MARTA Station. The studies focus on the creation of a new walkable activity center including housing, office, storefront retail and transportation improvements to limit the impact of traffic on surrounding neighborhoods. As the primary land owner, MARTA has taken a very active role in the development of this area and to date, a significant amount of investment has occurred. BellSouth has completed its initiative to consolidate its Atlanta offices into three MARTA locations - including Lindbergh (Metro Plan). This move has enabled BellSouth to provide transit access to 80 percent of its Atlanta workforce (approximately 13,000 employees). Given the

numerous remaining development opportunities around Lindbergh, this area's possible connection to the BeltLine will further increase its viability as a major employment and housing center intown.

The newly revised **Georgia Institute of Technology Campus Master Plan** intends to provide facilities, technology and research for the growing enrollment, while being sensitive to the surrounding community. The goals of the master plan include creating a walkable campus, beautifying the campus with landscaping and greenspace, restoring and preserving natural wetlands, as well as implementing stormwater collection and management.

In the summer of 2004, the City of Atlanta initiated the **Upper Westside Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study** to identify strategies for future investment within the northwest section of the City of Atlanta. The two square mile study area contains diverse housing, industry, and retail which the plan seeks to build upon through extensive public engagement and recommendations for housing, economic development, land use and zoning, and transportation to reinvigorate this area.

A City of Atlanta and Atlanta Regional Commission sponsored planning effort, the **Ponce de Leon/ Moreland Avenue Corridors Study – Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)** was initiated in the summer of 2004. The study area includes Ponce de Leon from Peachtree Street east to Moreland Avenue as well as Moreland Avenue from Ponce south to I-20. The intent of the study is to promote a diverse mix of land uses along both corridors, introduce transportation alternatives to support these uses, preserve historic resources, and develop an implementation strategy for future development.

Studies Currently Underway

The City of Atlanta recognizes that Northside Drive plays an important role in the growth and development of the downtown area and adjacent communities. The primary purpose of the **Northside Drive Corridor Study** (Summer 2004 – Spring 2005) is to identify strategies that will enhance transportation, land use and urban design conditions along Northside Drive and surrounding streets. The study area includes the entire Northside Drive corridor from I-75 to I-20. Even though the study specifically focuses on Northside Drive, the effort will consider major travel corridors that are affected by Northside Drive, as well as the major destinations along the corridor including Atlantic Station, Georgia Tech, Atlanta University Center, Centennial Olympic Park, Georgia World Congress Center, Georgia Dome and Philips Arena.

1.5 Public Information and Stakeholder Involvement

Role of the Public in the Planning Process

The BeltLine presents a tremendous opportunity for the City of Atlanta and its communities to shape how citizens and visitors alike will live, work, and travel for years to come. The BeltLine benefits as a “home grown” idea with strong grass-roots support. A concept that is so far reaching will not be successful without the cooperation of the public and private sectors. Collaborative buy-in requires a process that ensures the community is informed and involved. Should the BeltLine Feasibility Study conclude that the City can and should move forward, the next step in the process is an extensive public participation effort. While the feasibility study is a precursor to a full redevelopment planning and public participation effort, it is structured to promote information sharing with the community through several approaches.

The BeltLine Steering Committee established by the Mayor served as the leadership group guiding the feasibility effort and presented final recommendations regarding the feasibility of the BeltLine and the creation of a Tax Allocation District.

In addition, an Advisory Committee for the BeltLine was established in order to include a broader base of stakeholders in the initial planning process. The purpose of this Advisory Committee, which includes representation from Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU), non-profit organizations, government agencies, and the development community served as a sounding board as the feasibility of the BeltLine and TAD was framed and tested.

In order to ensure that the general public remains informed, several information sessions have been held as part of the feasibility study and a webpage hosted by the Atlanta Development Authority provides background information on the BeltLine project, progress of the feasibility study, along with a survey designed to gauge general perceptions of the BeltLine within the community.

The feasibility effort is closely coordinated with other studies and initiatives underway by key stakeholders, including Trust for Public Land, PATH Foundation, MARTA, various City of Atlanta Departments, and the Atlanta Regional Commission. The input from these committees, stakeholders, and the public will help inform the feasibility process and ultimately the final recommendations for the BeltLine.