



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Previous Plans & Studies Summary

PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES REVIEWED

Numerous plans and studies have been developed along all or parts of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor in the past 10 years. Each of these documents were reviewed in order to pull forward previously identified priorities, recommendations and strategies into the development of potential concepts for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements project. Previous plans and studies reviewed include:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Corridor Transportation Study, 2005
- West Lake MARTA Station LCI Study, 2006
- Vine City/Washington Park LCI Study, 2009
- Atlanta Beltline Subarea 10 Master Plan, 2010
- Connect Atlanta Plan, 2008 & 2013 Progress Report
- Cycle Atlanta: Phase 1.0 Study, 2013
- Proctor Creek Greenway, 2013
- Atlanta Beltline/Atlanta Streetcar System Plan, 2014

KEY THEMES FROM PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES

Similar project designs, locations, and themes were observed. Locations ranged from particular intersections and nodes to entire stretches of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor. Major themes that are being carried forward include:

Nodal Focus

- Areas around the West Lake and H.E. Holmes MARTA Stations.
- Intersections of Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, Lynhurst Drive and Fairburn Road.
- Project recommendations for these nodes range from pedestrian signals and crossings (including mid-block crossings), traffic signals, and gateways, to transit station and stop enhancements.

Pedestrian-Friendly Recommendations

- Pedestrian-friendly design, complete streets and mobility.
- Updating and completing sidewalks and streetscapes with curb bulb-outs for traffic calming and on-street parking to create a buffer between pedestrians and motorists.

Mobility by Transit & Bicycle

- Promote multiple modes of transportation improve access to transit routes and stops.
- Improve existing and expand transit and bicycle infrastructure along the corridor.
- Expansion of bicycle network in and around the corridor.



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Existing Conditions Summary

Existing conditions along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor were reviewed to better understand the demographic, land use, and transit characteristics and to conduct an environmental screening. The existing conditions information is being used to aid in the development of potential improvements.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Data reviewed was from the Census 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

- Population of the study area is 16,095 (City of Atlanta is 425,931)
- Unemployment rate of the study area is approximately 22.7%, which is 10% higher than the City of Atlanta.
- Households below the poverty level in the study area is 36.2% (City of Atlanta is 20.9%)
- 54% percent of the population in the study area is below the age of 30
- Study area racial makeup is 86.3% black and 6.9% white (City of Atlanta is 52.9% black and 38.3% white)
- 25% of residents in the study area utilize transit as their primary means of transportation to work
- 43.3% of the study area residents travel more than 30 minutes to work

LAND USE

The arrangement of land uses and their proximity to one another support or discourage different modes of transportation. The study area is represented by a wide variety of land uses including residential, commercial, institutional, and parks.

- The western and central portions of the study area are dominated by single family residential with some multi-family residential and commercial also in the western portion of the corridor.
- The area located between I-285 and H.E. Holmes Drive is dominated by multi-family residential and some commercial, with mixed-use located at the intersection of MLK Jr. Drive and H.E. Holmes Drive.
- The portion of the study area east of Joseph E. Lowry Boulevard is zoned as a Special Public Interest District (SPI-11) which is intended to preserve, protect and enhance single-family residential neighborhoods in the area. This area is also heavily represented by institutional uses for the Atlanta University Center.

TRANSIT

MARTA operates heavy rail, local bus and ADA complimentary paratransit service seven days a week.

- There are 4 MARTA heavy rail stations in or near the study area: Vine City, Ashby, West Lake and the H.E. Holmes. These station serve as major transfer locations for bus routes.
- The H.E. Holmes station has the highest weekday station entries of the four stations at approximately 6,487 per day.
- There are approximately 117 bus stops located along the corridor within the study area. Those stops with high numbers of boardings are primarily located west of H.E. Holmes Drive.

Cobb Community Transit (CCT) operates local bus service between Marietta and the H.E. Holmes MARTA station Monday through Saturday providing a connection to employment and services throughout Cobb County.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

Known environmental constraints include: Proctor Creek, 10 churches/religious facilities, Westview Cemetery, 4 universities/schools, several parks & recreation areas, majority of study area could be considered an Environmental Justice area (low-income & minority), 5 historic markers & 3 historic districts, above ground utilities, 15 site potentially containing underground storage tanks and/or hazardous materials or waste.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements Stakeholder Interview – City Departments

November 7, 2014

10:30 AM – 12:00 Noon



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Attendees

- Shaun Green, Atlanta Beltline, Inc.
- Christina Clay, COA-Dept. of Watershed Management
- Flor Velarde, Invest Atlanta
- Doug Voss, COA-Parks
- Amy Phong, COA-Parks
- A. Dodson, COA-Parks
- Stosh Kozlowski, COA-Planning
- Ricky White, COA-DPW
- Rodney Givens, COA-DPW
- Shelley Peart, COA-DPW
- Michael Frierson, COA-DPW
- Matt McDow, ARCADIS
- Regan Hammond, ARCADIS
- Jerry Jones, ARCADIS
- Cheryl McAfee, McAfee³ Architects
- Jay Lawton, McAfee³ Architects
- Arnie Silverman, Silverman Construction Program Management, Inc.

Matt McDow began by providing an overview of the project purpose and status, noting that the project will develop both short-term improvement for implementation by March 2017 and a long-term corridor master plan concept. Shelley Peart reiterated to the group that this project is not just a Public Works project and that input from all departments is needed and that it will take multiple departments to implement the recommendations. McDow then gave an overview of the project corridor, highlighting characteristics such as existing roadway cross sections, land uses, multimodal facilities, bus stop and transit station locations, roadway ownership, etc. He also highlighted possible improvement ideas being discussed and analyzed.

Discussion included:

- Connections to MARTA stations are important – will project address connection north/south from MLK to the stations along the corridor?
- Planning – what are the transit boarding numbers along the corridor?

Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements

Stakeholder Interview – City Departments

November 7, 2014

10:30 AM – 12:00 Noon



- What was GDOT's opinion on bike lanes/road diet? Generally receptive as long as they do not negatively impact parallel corridors' vehicular congestion.
- What is the functional classification of the MLK corridor?
- Can this project address access to Frederick Douglas High School located on H.E. Homes north of the MLK corridor? Also look at pedestrian access to multi-family and apartment communities.
- Boone is going to 2 lanes next year with green infrastructure such as bio swales.
- Look at incorporating green infrastructure; possible implementation assistance if coordinated with Proctor Creek activities.
- Lena Street bike connection desired.
- SR 139 portion is a truck route.
- Historic preservation should be considered.
- Parks – tree code has to be considered for tree removal and for new plantings; consider maintenance costs or landscaping enhancements; zero-scaping desired; ensure there are no line of sight issues with new plantings; if vacant properties along corridor, Parks could review to see if they could be repurposed to enhance project.
- Signal recently installed at Adams Parkway Place.
- Opportunities for wireless technology with ITS, but tree canopy can interrupt.
- Scant signal coordination along corridor now.
- Locating fiber underground preferred.
- Could tie into APD cameras at key locations along corridor, but consider tree canopy for signal transmittal.
- LED street/pedestrian lighting is more efficient, but design of lighting is still TBD.
- Beltline bridge over MLK corridor will widen abutments and make the bridge longer, allowing for wider sidewalks as well as connections from MLK to Beltline. Details on construction staging not yet available.
- Talk to MARTA bus stop planners about potential stop consolidations and crossings to bus stops.
- Is Westlake only location where roundabout being considered? No, at this point, any signalized intersection is a potential candidate.
- Consider needs of visually impaired when selecting locations for and design of roundabouts. Their impairments create unique safety issues when trying to navigate around a roundabout on foot.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements Stakeholder Interview – City Departments

November 7, 2014

10:30 AM – 12:00 Noon



- Solar compactor trash receptacles (big bellies) are working well in other locations across city. Higher initial cost, but lower maintenance costs and can be tracked online.
- Don't create "added rivalry" between 2 high schools along corridor by not considering their school colors and mascots in any possible decorative designs for the corridor. Possibly involve schools in public arts projects.
- Frontage of Adamsville Recreation Center is an issue – not pedestrian friendly and inviting.
- Redesign of Mozley park entrance and internal access is an issue. Currently separate entrances for various portions of the park with little internal connectivity. Entrance to rec center currently looks like residential driveway.

For follow-up

- Provide addresses of vacant properties to Parks (Doug Voss/Dave Davis) to review for possible utilization.
- Coordinate with MARTA bus stop planners about potential stop consolidation.
- Provide project corridor map to Christina Clay for Watershed Management's review of possible problem areas.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements

Senior Stakeholders Meeting

Thursday, November 20, 2014

9:30AM - 11:30AM

Summary of Comments & Questions

Q: Is the road diet on both the current and “new” MLK?

- Yes

Q: How will the population shift in the future impact the road diet?

Q: What input has the commercial district provided to this project?

C: Community doesn't want road diet to prohibit commercial development or future streetcar expansion.

Q: What is being done to address dilapidated buildings and blighted properties?

- **Council Member Young:** The City Council has proposed a change that would provide the city with conservatorship over these properties. This will allow the City to improve the current state of these properties.

C: (NPU- H Chair): Atlanta Business & Community Partnership (501c3) received a grant through GDOT for landscaping improvements at I-285 & MLK. We identified a landscaper and we're currently working with him. We would like to integrate his project with the project being presented.

Q: Is street furniture included in the overall plan?

Yes, furniture will be slated for this project. We will have continuity with placement and ensure that the historical esthetics of the corridor is preserved.

C: Make MARTA stops east of Westlake more representative of historic character of this section of the corridor. Current shelters do not fit the character.

C: We would like to see the use of multicultural themes and images included in this project due to Dr. King's global impact. Also, don't just celebrate Dr. King – there are other cultural ideas and people worth recognizing as well.

Q: (Yvonne Jones/NPU-L, Chair): Is there an outline for other meetings? Can we request/arrange a meeting with the impacted NPUs? What is the short-term timeline for the proposed projects?

- Conceptual plans are scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

Q: (Precious Muhammad): How can local/impacted business owners be included in this process? How has the process gotten to this point without our input?

C: (Cheryl Chatman, NPU-I): Street furniture, landscaping/beautification improvements are needed. Don't keep this process in a bubble. We also need to address littering, crime, etc. Talk to police and fire to fit improvements within bigger picture of community needs.

C: (Pete Hailey- Atlanta University System): We want to ensure connectivity to Northside Drive and MLK for our students. Traffic calming is good, but want people movement and connectivity as well. We want to also bring the economic boost along the MLK corridor and not just at the stadium.

C: (John H. Lewis – West Side Coalition & NPU-L): I believe this project is well intended, but I have guarded optimism. Why weren't the major stakeholders along the corridor included? Those from Vine City, and other historic neighborhoods along MLK, are not here. The timing of this project looks particularly suspicious with the opening of the 2017 new Falcon stadium.

C: Evolving Friendship Baptist Church master plan needs to be coordinated with.

C: Efforts related to "walk by" museum at MLK and Lowery and the Abernathy Center at Brawley and MLK should be coordinated with, particularly for historic markers. Also Ashby Theatre and Amos Drugstore.

C: (CM Young): We are looking at Northside Dr. and the widening at Mitchell Street. We want to provide relief for existing churches. There needs to be adequate street side parking between James P. Brawley Drive & Joseph E. Lowery Blvd...particularly for the benefit of the business owners along this street.

C: (Quincy Springs/GM Walmart): The MLK corridor has hidden treasures that are being revealed. I support CM Young and the need for street side parking along MLK—particularly near Walmart. Limited parking has been an issue. How are people being employed for these projects? Maintaining the beautification and stability of these projects long after they are completed need to be considered and addressed.

Q: Will community have job opportunities in implementing corridor projects?

C: (Friendship Baptist Church Rep): An overall review of the road diet needs to be done in order not to get it wrong....from the looks of it now, it's not looking right. There has to be connectivity to downtown and the existing thoroughfares. Anything that doesn't include the Streetcar doesn't make sense and make use of this historic corridor. Your 2020 plan misses the mark. Calming measures along this corridor doesn't make sense; neither do adding bike lanes support the need in this community, particularly over parking.

Q: How will the city maintain streetscapes and beautification?

C: Walkability over parking – be creative with parking.

C: (Dexter Johnson-Vine City): We didn't understand that MLK would be cut off. The merchants and business owners are concerned about connectivity along the corridor. Don't choke off only major east-west corridor into downtown.

C: (CM Young): There's a concern about connectivity being essential along MLK. Perfecting this road diet is essential along MLK.

C: (Walmart GM): We average about 37K paying customers (daily/wkly?) We only see this increasing with the influx of attendees at the new stadium, particularly with soccer team coming on line. Connectivity is a major concern for us as well.

C: Lack of left turn onto Northside Drive from MLK a problem.

C: (CM Young): Commissioner Mendoza has proven himself to be a man of honor and credibility. We are working to have the major stakeholders involved in this process. It's understood that connectivity is crucial for this corridor project.

C: Must begin talking to community if considering renaming Mitchell Street to MLK.

C: (Charles Bowen- Westview Cemetery): We would like to have a holistic approach taken when looking at connectivity of corridor. We would like to certain better understand the Beltline's involvement. What became of the 2007/2009 detailed traffic study for MLK at Ralph David Abernathy by GDOT? Does this project incorporate some of their findings?

C: (Jack Halpern): Would like to see improvements near Lynhurst, particularly pedestrian crossing at railroad and mid-block crossings to shopping center, in the short-term.

C: (Cheryl McAfee – McAfee3 Architects): We don't want this to be just another study. Connecting neighborhoods is important.

C: (Nathan Soldat – BeltLine): MLK streetcar line being looked at after talks with the Atlanta University Center. There is a Beltline public meeting on December 2nd from 6:30-8pm at the Family Life & Community Center.

C: (Lynette Reid –BeltLine): 3.1 miles of the Westside Trail is incorporated within this area. There's work being done to expand the bridge and keep its present height. Widening of the pedestrian trail is currently being discussed.

C: Unfortunate this study ends at Northside Drive – connectivity all the way to Oakland Cemetery is important.

C: There is a grant from the State Road and Tollway Authority for the two-way conversion of MLK east of Northside Drive.

Q: How does this plan, play with the 2015 Proposed Infrastructure Bond?

C: MLK Blvd. can serve as a hospitality corridor and a staple for the community.

C: Potential historic marker could be places at Westview about Lick Skillet – this was the name of the area before it was called Adamsville.

Q: Who is involved from the community on the LCI funded project? Will there be specific meetings with the largest property owners?

Meeting Attendees

Stakeholder Group	Name
Atlanta Beltline, Inc.	Nathan Soldat Lynnette Reid Carter Coleman
Atlanta City Council, District 3	CM Ivory Lee Young
Atlanta City Council, District 10	CM C.T. Martin
Atlanta City Council, Post 3 At Large	Emil Runge (representing CM Andre Dickens)
Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Assoc.	Kyle Kessler
Atlanta Regional Commission	Byron Rushing Kofi Wakhisi
Atlanta University Center Consortium	Dr. Shery Turner
Central United Methodist Church	Monica Prothro
City of Atlanta	Jim Elgar
Community Resources of Vine City	Tillman Ward
Forrest B. Johnson & Associates	JoAnn Fields
Friendship Baptist Church	Lloyd Hawk Edward Black? Sam Young
Hagar CTM	Precious Muhammad Mary Wilson JoAnn Allen E. Levine
Halpern Enterprises	Daniel Gagne Jack Halpern
Historic Westside United	John ???
MARTA	Willie Walker
Mayor's Office	Jalal Slade
NPU H	Barbara Drake Vernelle Cowan
NPU I	Sharyl Chatman
NPU K	Jerry Riley
NPU L	Yvonne Janis
UCDC	Pete Hayley
Vine City Civic Association	Pastor Dester Johnson
Walmart	Quincy Springs
Westview Cemetery Board of Trustees	Cindy Julian Charles Bowan



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Rev Fletcher			Walking Through Thank

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MEMO

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Copies:
File

From:
Matt McDow

Date:
December 19, 2014

ARCADIS Project No.:
GABPA143.0000

Subject:
Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements
December 2014 Public Meetings Summary

The City of Atlanta Department of Public Works hosted two public meetings in December 2014 for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Improvements project.

- December 9th, 6:00pm-8:00pm, Atlanta City Hall Atrium
- December 11th, 6:00pm-8:00pm, Aviation Community Cultural Center

The purpose of these meetings was to share information about the project, including preliminary concepts, and to obtain feedback from the public on what they feel are the most critical needs in the MLK Jr. Drive corridor and what types of improvements they'd like to see.

The following is a high-level summary of the comments received as part of the public meetings. Themes have been identified based on a review of completed comment forms. The themes are a broad interpretation of the many responses to the questions on the comment forms.

- The first question on the comment form was, "What do you see as the top three transportation challenges in the MLK Jr. Drive Corridor (list in order of importance)?" Pedestrian accommodations were the biggest theme from this category, with 13 of the 31 responses listing it in some form. The next theme from this question was to not remove any lanes (keep 4 lanes along the corridor). This response gathered approximately 8 responses (including one response calling for even more lanes along the corridor). Other responses to this question included (in order of number of responses): traffic, street lighting, resurfacing, transit, parking, bicycle, safety/security, blight, and easy connection to the city.

- The general responses for “Where do you walk or bicycle in the area?” tended to be on the eastern end of the corridor, but there were several on the western end of the corridor including Fairburn Road, Adamsville, Fulton Industrial Blvd., and around I-285. Another popular response was that it is “too dangerous to walk along the corridor.”
- The question, “What ideas do you have to improve the corridor?” received many of the same general themes as the first question, with pedestrian and no lane removal/widening as the top responses.
- The “Any additional comments” section also had many of the themes from the previous questions but also included several new suggestions including adding historical markers/monuments, adding more trash cans to the corridor. Many of the comments include specific locations for fixes along the corridor.
- MARTA related questions:
 - “How can transit services be improved in this community?”
 - All of the above (13)
 - Increase the frequency of existing bus routes (3)
 - Did not respond (15)
 - “Which of the following would you support?”
 - Light Rail/Streetcar (15)
 - Bus Rapid Transit/Express Bus (6)
 - Extension of MARTA’s Blue Line (5)
 - Did not respond (5)

Meeting attendees were also asked to identify where they live by placing a dot on a map. The purpose of this exercise was to get an understanding of where meeting participants were coming from and to ensure that the communities surrounding the corridor were represented.

- City Hall Maps
 - Majority of attendees lived on or close to the corridor study area.
 - The eastern portion of the corridor (Northside Drive to HE Holmes Drive) had majority of attendees. 21 within the map extent and 4 more outside the eastern map extent.
 - 9 lived on the western section of the map (HE Holmes Drive to Fulton Industrial Blvd.), and were more dispersed than the eastern section.
- Aviation Community Cultural Center Maps
 - Majority of attendees lived in western section of the map. 13 were within the map extent and 3 were located outside of it. 2 were located south on Peyton Road and 1 was located west of the map extent.
 - There was a cluster on the western section of mapping between FIB and Fairburn Road.
 - There were 12 attendees from the eastern section of mapping.
 - There were 2 clusters: the far eastern end of the study area, and the area around Willis Mill Road and Larchwood Road.

Accompanying this memo are the following materials that were available at each of the public meetings:

- Public Meeting Announcement
- Public Meeting Agenda
- Project Fact Sheet
- Previous Plans & Studies and Existing Conditions Summary Handout
- Public Meeting Feedback Form (blank)
- Public Meeting Presentation
- Public Meeting Information Boards
- Public Meeting Sign-in Sheets & Feedback Forms (completed)
- “Where Do You Live” Boards



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Project Fact Sheet

December 2014

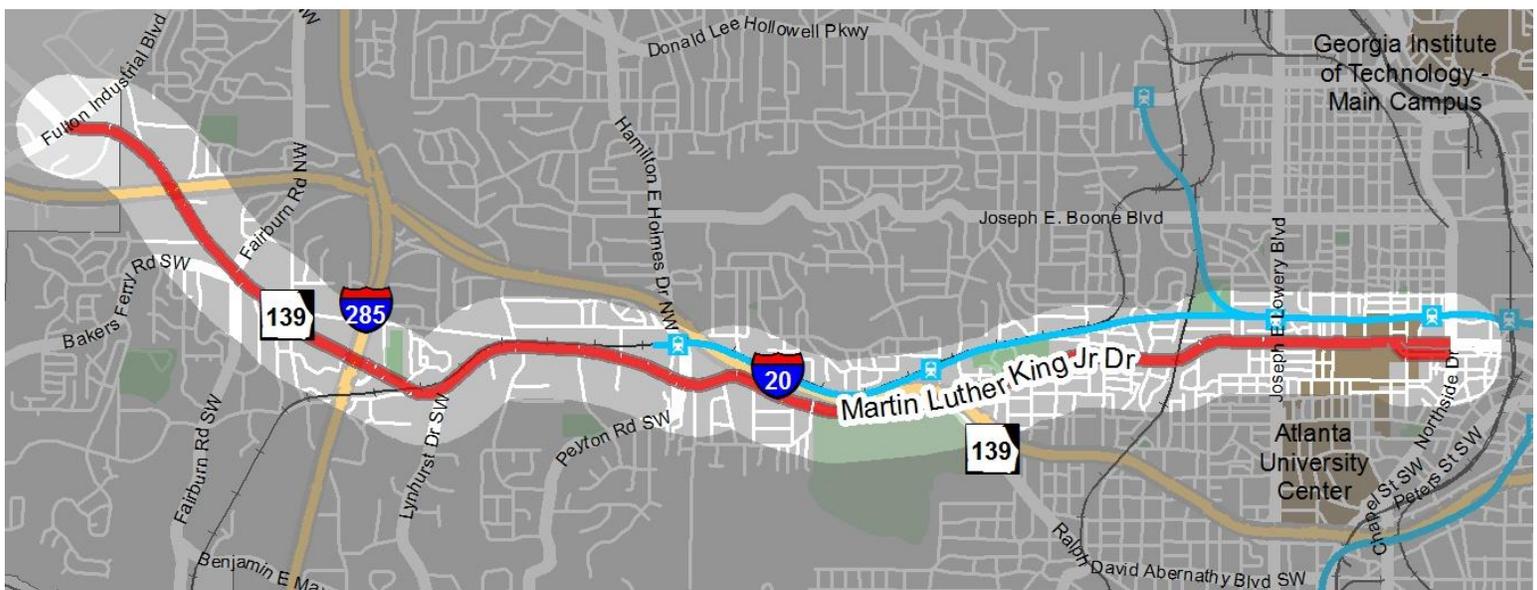
OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Drive Improvements project is to develop a singular strategy, drawing from previous studies and initiatives, to address the transportation needs of the community and corridor users, improve the aesthetics, and stimulate the revitalization of the corridor and surrounding communities.

Guiding Principles

- Provide mobility throughout the entire corridor including accommodating regional trips without degrading local trips
- Incorporate a full range of multi-modal transportation options, address safety issues, and maximize the use of public transportation
- Recognize and preserve the historic and cultural significance of the corridor
- Be consistent with previous and ongoing planning and project development efforts
- Propose improvements that are realistic, feasible and able to be implemented
- Encourage future development and revitalization in the corridor

STUDY AREA



Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive from Fulton Industrial Boulevard to Northside Drive. On the eastern end of the corridor, Tatnall Street/Mitchell Street is also included in the study area; where Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive is proposed to be rerouted along Tatnall Street/Mitchell Street.



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

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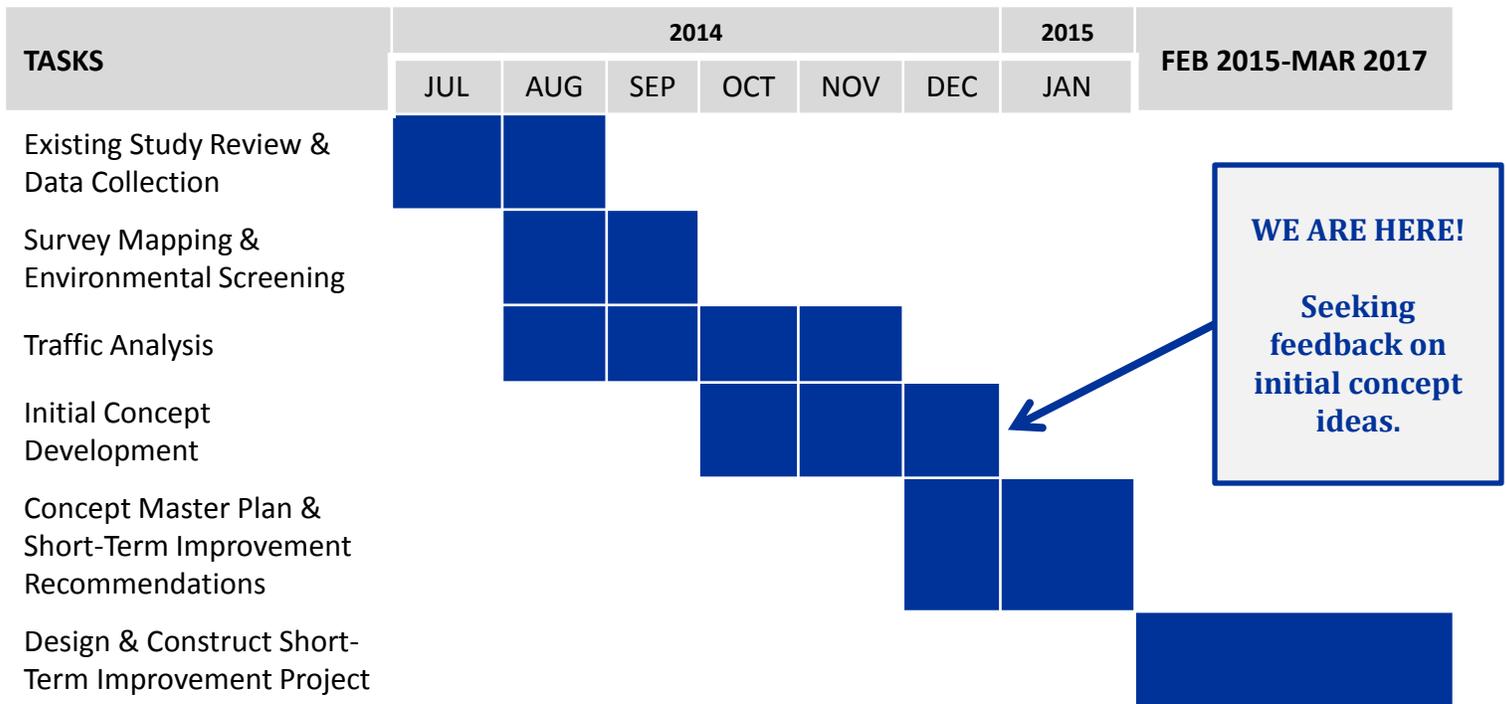
December 2014

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The MLK Drive Improvements project will prepare conceptual designs for both short- and long-term corridor improvements. Possible features may include multimodal improvements (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations), raised medians, landscaping, lighting, aesthetic features, linear parks, historical markers, gateway/way-finding signage, green infrastructure improvements and stormwater management.

A Master Plan Concept will be developed to show the long-term master plan vision for the MLK Drive corridor and will be accompanied by an implementation strategy to articulate proposed phasing and funding options for the implementation of both short- and long-term improvements.

SCHEDULE



QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

publicworks@atlantaga.gov



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Public Meeting
Feedback & Comment Form

December 9, 2014
6:00PM – 8:00PM
Atlanta City Hall Atrium

Thank you for your interest in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Improvements project. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please submit them directly to the City of Atlanta representatives this evening or email them to publicworks@atlantaga.gov.

Please print legibly.

What do you see as the top three (3) transportation challenges in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor? Please list in order of importance.

Where do you walk or bicycle in the study area?

When I go to the Football Games at the Dome, I use the Ashby St. MARTA station and walk down M. L. K. and Northside Drive

How can transit services be improved in this community? Circle one.

- Add more bus routes to serve the community
- Increase the frequency of existing bus routes
- All of the above

Which of the following would you support? Circle one.

- Bus Rapid Transit/Express Bus (higher frequency of bus service with limited stops)
- Light Rail/Streetcar (rail service operating in street)
- Extension of MARTA's Blue Line (existing rail line) to I-285

The Heritage Mile]

Black Businesses can Revitalize The Historic Westside in our Cultural Image

Create Jobs

Retain our Cultural Heritage

Create a Tourist Attraction

Utilize The Unique Talents And Expertise Of The Atlanta Black Business
Community

Concerned Black Clergy

Rev. Frank Brown, President

Joseph Hudson -Coordinator 404-281-9545



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