

# Murphy Crossing RFP Engagement Public Meetings

## Questions & Answers

### September 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

#### Affordable Housing

1. Q: Atlanta is known to be a city of opportunity for BIPOC professionals. And I wish to live in a Diverse Socio-Economic Area? (including IT professionals, doctors, lawyers etc. along with teachers, city workers, etc.) Are there plans to be inclusive of the huge BIPOC professional class of people in the area? There are 10 Fortune 500 Headquarters and 3 Major Colleges within 5 miles of Murphy Crossing. Is focusing on Affordable housing short cited? Why are we ignoring this group?

A: Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) desires that the Murphy Crossing redevelopment will include mixed-income ranges with a mix of uses that focuses on job creation, economic development, housing, green space and other amenities that will serve a broad spectrum of socio-economic, racial and community constituencies. This includes the BIPOC (which we understand to mean Black, Indigenous and People of Color), so that a variety of both legacy and newer residents can also benefit from the redevelopment of Murphy Crossing.

2. Q: Is there an option to have deeper housing affordability on the site? -We have many households that are below 50% or are at 30% of Area Median Income.

A: Deeper affordability will be sought. It will require strategic partnerships and potential subsidies to address housing needs at 50% of AMI or below.

3. Q: What is meant by and what is 120% of AMI (Area Median Income)?

A: Area Median Income (AMI) families that are buying affordable homes in the City must have higher levels of income in order to qualify for mortgages for the home and ensure that the family can maintain the normal expenses of a home. 120% AMI is \$99,240 for a family of 4 and \$79,440 for a family of 2. This is what accounts for the AMI level to be up to 120% AMI. Even so, these families may still be entitled to down payment assistance and financial counseling which will help the family buy the house that most meets their needs. *Note: that this level is only for homeownership. For rental housing, the AMI level is at 80% or below and in many cases, ≤60% AMI.*

4. Q: What is meant by “minimum affordability period”?

A: The “minimum affordability period” is the minimum amount of time that a developer who receives a public subsidy is obligated to keep the units affordable. This obligation is usually reinforced with a deed restriction. Depending on the source of the public subsidy, the minimum affordability period could range from 10 years to ≥30 years.

5. Q: What kind of development was canceled based on the previous RFP and who was the developer? What did their project include?

A: This article provides a synopsis the project that was cancelled:

<https://saportareport.com/atlanta-beltline-and-invest-atlanta-cancel-200-million-plan-for-murphy-crossing/>

### **Community Initiated Survey**

6. Q: How many of the survey respondents have lived here for a longer time or represent lower income households?

A: The Community initiated survey did not address this question.

7. Q: There's a conflict between what the old goals identified by ABI and the community generated survey. Can someone from ABI comment on the need to reconcile these different preferences?

A: The goal of the RFP engagement process is to ensure that the new RFP to redevelop the site aligns closely with the needs and desires of the community and the Atlanta BeltLine's core requirements of Jobs, Economic Development, and Affordable Housing, so that the selected plan produces outcomes that are both equitable and inclusive. The RFP engagement public process and Stakeholder Advisory Committee will help to reconcile those needs and desires.

8. Q: Is there a way to share the survey results with the community for us to scroll through?

A: Community initiated survey results can be found here: <https://beltline.org/the-project/economic-development-commercial-real-estate/murphy-crossing/#resources>

9. Q: Can you post a link of the current survey?

A: Here is the link to the community initiated survey:

<https://form.jotform.com/202376240524044>

Here is the link to the ABI supplemental survey: <http://beltline.org/murphyfeedback>

10. Q: Hearing your survey descriptions of categories is helpful. It is sometimes different than what I had in mind when looking at the survey. Other residents may feel the same. Do you have plans to supplement your survey with focus groups? I think some residents may not have been clear when filling out the survey.

A: ABI has put together a supplement survey to get more information. Please visit:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/932059384acc41e6aacb34f1e905e709>

11. Q: What sort of accountability does ABI have to honor the wishes of the community, as expressed through the Murphy Crossing community survey?

A: The goal of the RFP engagement process is to ensure that the new RFP to redevelop the site aligns closely with the needs and desires of the community and the Atlanta BeltLine's core requirements of Jobs, Economic Development, and Affordable Housing, so that the selected plan produces outcomes that are both equitable and inclusive. The RFP engagement public process and Stakeholder Advisory Committee will help to reconcile those needs and desires. Master Plans, Neighborhood Plans, the socio-economic indicators via the most recent 2018 American

Community Survey data, the latest Development Trends via Invest Atlanta, the Community Initiated Survey, and the current Development Activity surrounding the project area will help shape the creation of the RFP Components.

## **JOB TRACKING**

12. Q: What previous job creation sites have you done and how did you track how many locals were employed?

A: Murphy Crossing is the first site owned by ABI/IA that will focus on “job creation”. Job creation is usually tracked by analysis of the jobs reported to the Department of Labor, City of Atlanta Business License and other developer information. Local job training and referral programs track the number of local residents that are employed.

13. Q: How do you track this? How did you this before? Regarding jobs.

A: We have not done a development project where we have needed to track jobs. However, we will have a system in place to do so, as we do for our infrastructure projects.

## **MARKET ANALYSIS**

14. Q: Will there be an updated Feasibility Study/Market Analysis? Is ABI using the 2016 data to determine which developer it chooses? Will ABI be presenting the Murphy Coalition survey findings to prospective developers? If no, why not?

A: The developer will be selected based on the RFP program elements and criteria that will be outlined in the new RFP which this Public Engagement Process will help to inform. In lieu of updating the existing Feasibility Study, ABI Staff has updated key components of the study which include the socio-economic indicators via the most recent 2018 American Community Survey data, the latest Development Trends via Invest Atlanta, and Development Activity surrounding the project area. This was presented at the public meeting on September 26, 2020. Meeting materials including a link to the video and presentation can be found here:

<https://beltline.org/the-project/planning-and-community-engagement/?topic=murphy-crossing#community-meetings>

## **POST-RFP**

15. Q: Have you thought about offering a good/fair price for the property based on the development plans instead of “market rate”? I’ve been told by a local developer much of the reasons for the high-end development is price of property is high.

A: We are looking at fair market value for the property. We have some leeway to ensure core priorities are achieved (e.g. housing/commercial affordability, living wage jobs, etc.)

16. Q: Will the deed restrictions mentioned only address affordable housing requirements, or will the deed restrictions include limitations on future land uses, business types, etc.?

A: The deed restriction only addresses housing affordability.

## **PRE-RFP**

17. Q: As I scroll through the questions, it seems that folks' questions are not being answered. That is frustrating. For example, why isn't there someone here today to talk about transit in depth? As I look at the timeline Beth is explaining it seems that it's designed to make it more difficult and time consuming for the public. Why not follow a process like what happened with Hulsey Yard instead? I'm also concerned that ABI is repeating the mistakes of the past.

A: During the Q&A segment of the zoom presentation, staff takes the questions directly from the Q&A Box and sends them to the meeting facilitator. The facilitator is raising the questions from both Zoom and Facebook live, and this approach ensures that the questions are asked in the order received. We recognize that virtual engagement has certain limitations, and to address those we have provided more flexibility by offering a series of public meetings on the same topic at different dates/times, along with surveys to get feedback, mailings, right-of-way signs, etc. We have had to balance the COVID environment with ensuring the community has multiple ways and opportunities to be involved.

18. Q: Will this new community engagement process be fundamentally different than the last one in scope or process and how will it result in more of a dialogue rather than only expression of opinion when it comes to developing the RFP for Murphy Crossing?

A: This is an entirely different process. We've formed a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) comprised of appointees from the impacted neighborhood groups, NPOs and elected officials to help shape the program elements of the RFP. With the help of the SAC and with a series of public meetings, we will develop a scope of work that better meets both the needs/desires of the public and the core priorities of the BeltLine. We are also receiving input from the Murphy Coalition, a neighborhood-initiated group of residents in the area who are also interested in the future of Murphy Crossing.

19. Q: Who sits on the stakeholder committee?

A: The SAC membership can be found here: <https://beltline.org/the-project/economic-development-commercial-real-estate/murphy-crossing/#advisory-committee>

## **REAL ESTATE**

20. Q: Have there been any attempts to procure additional property surrounding Murphy Crossing such as property between the designated boundaries of Murphy Crossing and the Beltline Spur Trail? Most of this property is blighted postindustrial sites that would be great to incorporate into the Murphy Crossing design with ABI control.

A: Yes. Please see this article: <https://beltline.org/2020/10/02/atlanta-beltline-inc-purchases-key-property-in-southwest-atlanta/>

## **RFP PROCUREMENT**

21. Q: What are the requirements for holding a position on the technical advisory committee? Will this these persons live in the local neighborhood?

A: The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be a committee that serves in addition to the SAC to further vet the project before it enters rezoning. The TAC will be comprised of City staff, ABI staff, and related public agencies that are responsible for reviewing development projects for the city.

22. Q: Does procurement consider racial equity - any preference for minority developers or minority participation in proposed development team?

A: Yes. There is a 30% minimum DBE/MBE goal, in accordance with City objectives.

23. Q: Will the community be engaged regarding each proposal submitted? The community needs to be engaged during the selection of the RFP respondents. The community deserves input on what appears to be appropriate. We do not need to a select committee making choices without input. Otherwise, we've just repeated the same mistakes from the last RFP.

A: The goal of the RFP engagement process is to ensure that the new RFP to redevelop the site aligns closely with the needs and desires of the community and the Atlanta BeltLine's core requirements of Jobs, Economic Development, and Affordable Housing, so that the selected plan produces outcomes that are both equitable and inclusive. This includes collaborating with the community to develop the RFP Program Elements and the weighted criteria by which the submitted proposals will be evaluated. We have uplifted the community's desire to be a part of the selection committee process and will provide updates on the feasibility of this request.

24. Q: How do we ensure that the potential development in this area will be as open door as possible? The last time the community had no idea what the \$200 million proposal entailed.

A: Once a developer is selected, they will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will require the developer to host a series of robust community conversations to further vet the project with the community.

25. Q: Will the stakeholder committee be able to advise at points during the procurement process? I understand the issue with transparency in a competitive process, but many people are uncomfortable with the 'black box' aspect of RFP evaluation for something that affects us so much.

A: The goal of the RFP engagement process is to ensure that the new RFP to redevelop the site aligns closely with the needs and desires of the community and the Atlanta BeltLine's core requirements of Jobs, Economic Development, and Affordable Housing, so that the selected plan produces outcomes that are both equitable and inclusive. This includes collaborating with the community to develop the RFP Program Elements and the weighted criteria by which the submitted proposals will be evaluated. We have uplifted the community's desire to be a part of the selection committee process and will provide updates on the feasibility of this request.

26. Q: Will there be RFPs made available to the public to bid on the projects for this site?

A: Yes

## **SITE COMPONENTS**

27. Q: Is the Atlanta BeltLine working with the City of Atlanta Historic Preservation Studio/Atlanta Urban Design Commission about preservation of the historic buildings at Murphy Crossing?

A: None of the buildings at the site have historical protection. It would be the developer's responsibility to meet with these groups if applicable.

28. Q: Where does the sustainability and preservation of our historic neighborhoods merge with historic preservation goals at ABI and specifically at the Murphy Crossing site?

A: ABI is committed to the preservation of single-family neighborhoods, both historic and non-historic. The proposed development is intended to complement the context of the community.

29. Q: Given the ideal location as a transit-oriented location, are there plans to reduce the parking requirements?

A: Parking requirements are set by the city. A developer could ask for a variance. ABI would be in support of a parking reduction.

30. Q: It is about a 16-minute walk from the West End Marta Station to Murphy Crossing (and an estimated 9 minutes on a scooter). This commute is passing by Lee & White and crossing railroad tracks. I would like for that to be a safe and pleasant commute for walkers. Will there be rent-a-bike or scooter stations in this area? Will there be safe passage cross the railroad tracks?

A: It would be up to the developer via conversation with the community to provide scooter or bike rental on the site. It is likely that a major development of this type will trigger a Development of Regional Impact (DRI), and potentially a traffic study which could require intersection improvements. Here is link to the Atlanta Regional Commission guidelines: <https://cdn.atlantaregional.org/wp-content/uploads/lu-dri-alternative-requirements-arc.pdf>

31. Q: It seems like there were some good elements in the original RFP. Why is ABI not trying to work with the original developer about changes that might make that development proposal a winner for the community and the original developer?

A: The original RFP was canceled which requires that a new RFP be created.

## **TRANSIT**

32. Q: How will the new engagement process shape the TOD requirements and guidelines for Murphy Crossing- both as transit node and in how much density of housing and employment developers would need to provide?

A: The objective of this engagement process is to craft a RFP, with the help of the impacted communities, that will outline the framework for a transit-supportive, mixed-use development with livable wage jobs, which accommodates various transportation modes, provides services that meet the daily needs of the residents while also providing retail & restaurant amenities. Its proximity to existing MARTA heavy rail, and the future light rail transit make supportive densities at this location ideal.

33. Q: Why isn't the BeltLine talking about a transit node at Murphy crossing?

A: There is a BeltLine transit station planned for the Murphy Crossing area as part of the BeltLine West Corridor transit.

34. Q: The current timeline for building the BeltLine transit (light rail) takes too long. How do we get BeltLine rail installed sooner? Most of the transit is expected in the 2040s. That needs to be sped up. Please tell us SPECIFICALLY what it will take to speed up construction of BeltLine transit.

A: The current MARTA half-penny tax will run for 42 years and will not fund all of the BeltLine transit. To fund all BeltLine transit faster we will need a funding source that can be accessed on the front end. The BeltLine transit element is largely a MARTA undertaking now within the framework of the [More MARTA](#) program, and ABI is continuing to work with MARTA on the program implementation.

35. Q: Thank you. Will there be a transit expert participating in today's meeting?

A: Yes

36. Q: It was just mentioned that the BeltLine project sunsets in 2030. It's my understanding that there will only be about 1.4 miles of light rail transit at that point, with the majority not happening until the 2040s. Can you help me understand the process needed to get the remaining 20.6 miles of transit in place sooner? Most cities put their transit in place before allowing new development. Why is Atlanta continuing to encourage land development first since improving transit for current and incoming residents would greatly alleviate problems with gentrification and congestion?

A: The current MARTA half-penny tax will run for 42 years and will not fund all of the BeltLine Transit. To fund all BeltLine transit faster we will need a funding source that can be accessed on the front end. The BeltLine transit element is largely a MARTA undertaking now within the framework of the More MARTA program, and ABI is continuing to work with MARTA on the program implementation. The City of Atlanta through its One Atlanta Housing Plan and One Atlanta Transportation Plan continues to work with public and stakeholder agencies to identify solutions to mitigate the impacts of growth and development.

37. Q: Will you be answering questions from BeltLine Rail Now that were emailed in advance?

A: Yes, questions received in advance of the meeting are answered at the top of the Q&A segment of the meeting.

38. Q: The Murphy Crossing site has the potential to integrate more than MARTA and Beltline rail (i.e. extensions of Campbellton Rd LRT and Clayton County Commuter Rail, both of which are scheduled to terminate not far to the south). Will this engagement process address how much transit connectivity can now happen there and how it will become central to both the development and neighborhoods?

A: The BeltLine West Corridor NEPA documentation effort identified a BeltLine transit station at Murphy Crossing. ABI will work with developers at Murphy Crossing to properly provide for interface with the future transit in this area. The broader conversation around Clayton County Commuter rail, as we understand from MARTA, is being planned and will likely tie into MARTA heavy rail at the College Park station.

39. Q: Will this new development coincide with a rethinking of the intersection of where Murphy Ave meets Lee St? That area is constantly confusing for motorists to navigate through and could use some rethinking in order to better attract safe pedestrian and bike travel to the space.

A: It is likely that a major development of the type will trigger a Development of Regional Impact (DRI), and potentially a traffic study which could require intersection improvements. Here is link to the Atlanta Regional Commission guidelines: <https://cdn.atlantaregional.org/wp-content/uploads/lu-dri-alternative-requirements-arc.pdf>

## **ZONING**

40. Q: How is light industrial defined?

A: Here is the link to the City of Atlanta's permissible uses for light industrial:  
[https://library.municode.com/ga/atlanta/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIICOOORANDEC\\_O\\_PT16ZO\\_CH16LIINDIRE\\_S16-16.003PEPRUSST](https://library.municode.com/ga/atlanta/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIICOOORANDEC_O_PT16ZO_CH16LIINDIRE_S16-16.003PEPRUSST) and Industrial Mixed-Use:  
[https://library.municode.com/ga/atlanta/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIICOOORANDEC\\_O\\_PT16ZO\\_CH16AXINMIUSDIRE\\_S16-16A.004PEPRUSST](https://library.municode.com/ga/atlanta/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIICOOORANDEC_O_PT16ZO_CH16AXINMIUSDIRE_S16-16A.004PEPRUSST)

41. Q: Is there a way to express support for small scale, compatible light industrial uses, rather than large industries? Many people don't realize that maker space, glass blowers, artist studios, bakeries, studios, doggy daycare, etc. are classified as industrial by the City. These are very different from big industrial uses.

A: Yes, the objective is to provide a range of light industrial uses that are both innovative, and that in large part provide livable-wage jobs.

42. Q: Will the new proposed zoning be allowed to be approved before plans are made?

A: No. Once a developer is selected, they will be required to host a series of community engagement meetings that will involve vetting the project further with the community prior to submitting any formal zoning plans to the City.