



## Third Quarterly Briefing of 2020 Questions & Answers 9.10.2020

### Design & Construction:

#### General

1. Q: Design and Construction Overview slide, there is a dark grey segment of trail along the Lee and White area. What does that mean? The key for that visual does not define grey segments.

A: The section of the corridor that you are referring to is very narrow between Lawton & White streets. When we were constructing the Westside Trail, our CEO at that time directed that we do not build our trails except in their permanent locations. In that section, the trail would be very close to the adjacent apartments which would have required us to purchase property. As there was an acceptable temporary alternative in the West End Trail that PATH Foundation constructed in 2008, we elected to utilize that route.

#### Parks

2. Q: Any updates on Boulevard Crossing Park?

A: The design is progressing forward with an anticipated completion in 2021. You can view the [Boulevard Crossing Park final design concepts](#) as presented in a public meeting on December 12, 2019.

3. Q: If possible, I would appreciate hearing more detail about the plans for Boulevard Crossing Park.

A: See above.

4. Q: Is a skatepark still being put at Westside Park as seen in the master plan?

A: We have no information regarding what site elements will be part of future phases of the park. You may want to reach out to the Department of Parks and Recreation as they are currently overseeing that project.

5. Q: Any idea when the westside reservoir park area will be open to the public?

A: The City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation is overseeing that design and construction. Our understanding is that Phase I will open later this year and Phase II in early summer 2021.

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6. Q: Are any other skateparks being planned for parks near or on the Beltline? Also how do we push the idea for more skateparks?

A: Not at this time. The only other skatepark currently in the Subarea Master Plans is the one for Subarea 9 - Westside Park. We recommend that you reach out to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

### **Westside Trail**

7. Q: Is the purple section (in design) from MLK to Westside park an interim trail yet?

A: No.

### **Southside Trail (all segments)**

8. Q: What is the status of the Federal Transportation Grant that's meant to fund construction of the Southeast Trail? When should we hear something? Given that last year these grants were given ONLY to automobile-related projects, what is ABI's PLAN B?

A: The City and ABI were not awarded the BUILD Grant in 2020. Only one project in Georgia received a grant.

9. Q: My apologies, but what does "in design" mean for that part of the southside trail? Paving?

A: The process that analyzes the area and determines the best route for the trail. Later, the design team will create Construction Documents (plans, specifications, etc.) that will be used to build the project.

10. Q: As the Quarry park project gets closer to completion and funding for the Southside Trail lags, is there a chance that another Westside Trail extension could leapfrog the Southside Trail? Those of us along the Southside Trail want an assurance that our place in the "queue" won't be superseded.

A: There is currently no construction funding identified for any section of trail. ABI is currently working to formulate a long-term source that will enable us to move forward. Funding is allocated based on budget(s) and we are not able at this time to say when a given segment will be built.

11. Q: When will the Southside Interim trail be maintained? It is in really bad shape. It no longer is appealing to access. It looks like a path in the woods and is uncomfortable to walk on due to all the exposed pointy large rocks. The width of the trail is as narrow as 2 feet in sections and social distancing is impossible. Weeds are encroaching on both sides of the trail especially Section 2 between Pryor down to Pratt Stacks.

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A: Please take images of the areas of your concern and email them to [info@atlbeltline.org](mailto:info@atlbeltline.org). We will respond after we review the area and issue(s) in question.

### **Southside Trail (segment 1)**

12. Q: Will the Southside Trail bridge over Metropolitan include access points to the BeltLine from both sides of the bridge? There's concern over this in the Capitol View community, as the sidewalk beneath this bridge is quite narrow.

A: As part of the current project, only the access on the SE corner will be constructed. There will be a HAWK signal installed on Metropolitan as we did at Boulevard, and pedestrians/bikers will be able to push a button to stop traffic and safely cross the street as needed.

### **Northeast Trail**

13. Q: When will the entrance onto the beltline from the newly built portion at Montgomery Ferry Rd be opened?

A: The construction of this access point should be complete by the end of the year.

14. Q: When do you expect to complete the NE trail hairpin down to Westminster? And then close the Westminster to Monroe "gap"? How long until the Beltline crosses the connector to the other side of Pryor?

A: The design for the NE section will be complete early in 2021. There is currently no construction funding identified for this section. The area south of Westminster is currently not in design so we are unable to give you a construction completion date. The section across Pryor currently does not have construction funding identified so we are unable to provide you with a completion date.

### **Transit**

15. Q: Can you please clarify that 2026 date for Transit on the east side Trail? What exactly would be the deliverable by then?

A: MARTA is leading transit implementation through their More MARTA program. Their current schedule is to begin revenue service between 2026 and 2027. At that point, you would be able to ride the streetcar between downtown Atlanta and Ponce de Leon Avenue, with multiple stops along the way.

16. Q: I am super excited to hear about the Beltline rail project moving forward. It seems to me that the roads the streetcar would have to take to the trail are narrow. What is being done about planning a right of way from downtown to the trail?

A: The MARTA project team, with City and ABI input, is looking at how to potentially reallocate space along the city streets to provide appropriate space for sidewalks, bike lanes, parking lanes,

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and vehicle lanes. The effort is in its early stages, but it is assumed that the streetcar would operate in mixed traffic in city streets.

17. Q: What steps will ABI take to ensure Murphy Crossing lives up to its transit and TOD potential? Will there be a MARTA train station at M.C. or nearby?

A: The Murphy Crossing site is actively being discussed with the community right now so the final approach and steps to take are not yet known. The BeltLine corridor runs adjacent to Murphy Crossing and crosses under MARTA's Red/Gold rail line about halfway between two existing stations: West End station and Oakland City station. Rail transit on the BeltLine would not preclude an infill MARTA station.

### **Housing:**

18. Q: How does the city define "affordable housing"?

A: The City, other housing agencies and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (i.e., the department that administers the low income housing tax credit program) define affordable *rental* housing as housing designed for individuals who make 80% or less of the Area Medium Income ("AMI")(for a family of 3 - ≤\$59,600; for a family of 4 - ≤\$66,160). Most of these agencies, including ABI, emphasize providing rental housing for families making 60% AMI or below (i.e., family of 3 - ≤\$44,700; family of 4 - ≤\$49,620). Generally, with for sale workforce housing units, the AMI is usually between 80% AMI – 120% AMI. These higher levels recognize the increased costs and responsibilities for home ownership.

19. Q: In SWATL the BeltLine is considering affordable housing as 80% AMI. This is above market rate housing for this part of town and seems to defeat the purpose of affordable housing requirements if that housing is still inaccessible. What are you doing to address this issue as development in SWATL grows?

A: ABI is aware of this dynamic and this is one of the reasons ABI is so focused on a land acquisition strategy. If ABI is the landowner, it can incentivize and support higher levels of affordability. Also, ABI works with developers, City of Atlanta, Invest Atlanta and Atlanta Housing to determine if a project is eligible for AH vouchers. If vouchers are available, this allows the project to serve families making up to 30% AMI (i.e., family of 3 - ≤\$22,350; family of 4 - ≤\$24,810).

20. Q: 80% AMI falls short of affordable in SW Atlanta what those below 80%? what's planned?

A: See answer to question 19.

21. Q: These slides don't show the percentage of affordability. Some of these require an income of 50k or higher to be able to afford. Some require more than that. Considering we don't have enough units for those that qualify for HUD, we need to be clear that most of the units produced are not going to have much of an effect on homelessness

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A: This is one of the reasons partnerships between the City's housing agencies are so important. Such partnerships allow a combination of efforts from each of the agencies to be pooled for the benefit of homeless and low-income families. For example, Partners for Home is the agency specifically focused on homelessness and it has the ability to partner with Atlanta Housing to provide vouchers specifically directed toward homeless families and families that need selected supportive services. When vouchers are available, this allows the project to serve families making up to 30% AMI (i.e., family of 3 - ≤\$22,350; family of 4 - ≤\$24,810).

22. Q: What percentage of affordable housing being planned for the entire Beltline is going to be located in Southwest and South Atlanta? Is there any effort toward locating affordable housing in the East/Northeast section of the Beltline?

A: ABI does not have a planned percentage of affordable housing in any area of the City, including Southwest and South Atlanta. There is a lot of private development activity in the Southwest, West and South Atlanta driven, in part, by the cost and availability of land. Even so, ABI is actively looking for developments or acquisition sites that could provide affordable housing in the East/Northeast section of the BeltLine.

23. Q: Are there any goals surrounding affordable housing units by floorplan? For example, the Memorial Dr building in Reynoldstown appears to be co-living units which is great for density but may not be suitable for a family.

A: ABI continues to encourage a broad full range of affordable housing options to meet the varying needs for affordable housing for individuals and families. For example, the co-living units on Memorial Drive are directed primarily toward individuals or small families. ABI is helping to sponsor another new development on Memorial Drive and Chester that will have 116 affordable units, many of which will be available for families. Also, many of the developments announced for the Westside, Southwest, and South sides of the City will have units more suitable for families.

24. Q: Is ABI considering any policies or developer incentives to mitigate against involuntary displacement of renters?

A: In many neighborhoods, rental units are owned by smaller or family-based landlords who are using rental real estate as a wealth building tool for their families. Sometimes when market forces begin to enter the neighborhood, these smaller landlords see opportunity to sell their units for a profit or rehabilitate their properties, raising rents and making it more difficult to maintain affordable rents. ABI is also encouraging more partnerships with job training and economic development agencies to help renters enhance job skills and raise income levels. Also, ABI encourages developers to offer deeper levels of affordability so there may be possibility for low income renters to remain in the neighborhood. Lastly, ABI seeks to link residents to other organizations that have tools that help displacement and eviction-related concerns. Even so, ABI is working with the other City housing agencies to strategize how we can address this difficult challenge.

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25. Q: There's a great project in place to help long-time westside residents to be able to keep their homes in this project. But the eastside seems to have been forgotten about: people are being displaced in O4W rapidly now; displaced already or soon to be because of their property taxes way out of affordability. Appreciate the westside measures; but what about the eastside?

A: ABI is pleased to see the efforts made for westside homeowners using the robust private and charitable funds directed toward the Westside. Unfortunately, there are not currently similar place-based funds directed toward the Eastside. ABI is looking at a potential charitably funded anti-displacement tax fund. That fund, if resources are raised, will be directed at the most vulnerable subareas around the BeltLine. Hopefully, once that fund expands, we can include other areas including the Eastside.

### **Other:**

26. Q: What's the status of Murphy's Crossing?

A: The Murphy Crossing site is actively being discussed with the community right now in an effort to collaboratively create a Request for Proposals to redevelop the site.

27. Q: Is there any news to share regarding the Microsoft/ Quarry Yards project?

A: This is not an ABI project.

28. Q: How will the recent rulings by the Fulton Co Development Authority to provide tax breaks for key Beltline-adjacent projects affect revenue for trail construction? What can ABI (or anyone else) do to ensure that these and other projected funding sources are kept intact?

A: The Fulton County Development Authority uses its tax abatement incentives to provide the catalyst to a number of projects throughout Fulton County including some developments within the BeltLine Tax Allocation District (TAD) and BeltLine Planning Area. When these projects are incentivized, they produce a higher level of property tax revenue than what the tax base was frozen at when the tax allocation district was created. This additional tax revenue is part of what funds Atlanta Beltline programmatic elements including trails, housing, parks, transit, etc.

29. Q: Atlanta Beltline recently posted job openings for two high-level Economic Development positions. Are these new positions? If so, what impact is expected that can't be achieved with current staff?

A: These are replacement hirings and not new positions.

30. Q: Are there any plans to include development of public works (libraries, schools, etc.) projects or building near Beltline property? Asking specifically as a Subarea 8 resident.

A: The development of libraries and schools is not something ABI implements. When this does occur, we work with the City, County and School District to create connectivity to the BeltLine.

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31. Q: Are there any grocery stores the likes of Publix, Sprouts or Whole Foods planning to open in the South or SW trail neighborhoods?

A: ABI is not aware of any at this time, but development is always changing.

32. Q: What can Atlantans do to prod City of Atlanta to step up and provide funding? They're reaping the benefit of higher taxes based on just the PROMISE of the Beltline - when are they going to invest in the redevelopment that's already being done for them?!?

A: The City of Atlanta has been and continues to be an important partner for the BeltLine. It never hurts to let your elected representative know that you are supportive of the BeltLine.

33. Q: Has anyone approached Google for funding? They could easily find the entire trail element.

A: The Atlanta BeltLine Partnership continues to pursue fund raising opportunities.