



**Southwest Study Group – Ralph David Abernathy Access Point  
Design Transcript  
Live Questions and Responses  
1.28.2021**

**Live Questions and Responses**

- 1. Regarding the A & B option: Option B seems like a better option, simply because it adds another connection point (even though the Mobile St. connection point isn't too far away). So, what are the drawbacks of option B?**

A: Please note that a letter recently sent to more than 2000 residents near the Westside trail showed Options A and B only. An additional option was included in tonight's presentation.

- 2. How much of the vision has been accomplished so far?**

A: *The Atlanta Beltline has accomplished the following project goals:*

- *The goal of 22 miles of rail, 80% of the transit corridor has been secure in terms of the BeltLine owning the right of way so far.*
- *The goal to develop 1,300 acres of new parks and green spaces, 30% of new green spaces have been delivered so far.*
- *The goal of creating 33 miles of multi-use urban trails, 33% of multi-use trails have been delivered in full buildout so far.*
- *The goal to develop 5,600 units of housing affordability, 38% of affordable workforce housing units have been delivered so far.*
- *The goal of spurring \$10 billion in economic development, 46% of that goal has been reached.*
- *The goal to create 48,000 construction jobs, 37% of that job creation goal has been achieved.*
- *The goal with regard to public arts, 450 public art installations and performances have been delivered thus far.*
- *The goal with regard to environmental cleanup, 36% of the 1,100 acres have been delivered so far.*

- 3. Can you give orientation (north/south)? Just asking because shade trees are most effective if they block south and west sun. The details of tree placement are particularly beneficial to occupying the plaza during the hotter months.**

A: *The rendering in the PowerPoint is currently oriented north. There are trees at the border of the entire site and what's not shown on the rendering is an existing tree that sits right on our Northern boundary.*

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*But in particular, with concern to the southern and western sun, we've got ornamentals down close to Ralph David Abernathy (RDA), and that's really going to provide that southern sun as well as the trees that we have within the plaza space. As the sun moves west, it really should be providing plenty of shade throughout that plaza area.*

*On the eastern corner, we have a big oak that will anchor that natural space that sits between the ramp and the plaza.*

*Ultimately, we wanted to put trees where we could try to keep them away from the walls, and give them enough space so they can grow full and big.*

**4. What's going to happen with that old Chinese restaurant next to the access point?**

*A: The Atlanta Beltline has a Design Review Committee. Whenever there is a commercial project coming forward, adjacent to our project or within the planning area, they're responsible for presenting their plans to us. We haven't had anyone officially come forward. As soon as we have information, we'll make sure to share it with the community.*

**5. In terms of safety at night, how does the final design incorporate lighting?**

*A: Lighting has been incorporated into the design to include light poles that are along the proposed sidewalk, in the plaza space and on top of the existing wall between the ramp and the wall about midway through the proposed ramp. We're also going to include wall packs, which are flush with that wall to avoid shadows and make sure that visitors feel safe and comfortable. We've also included two security cameras, to ensure that visitors are able to use the area at night without concern.*

**6. For the construction RFP process, is there a focus on using minority owned construction companies?**

*A: We encourage minority owned businesses to bid with the ABI projects, especially construction projects. We're actively recruiting and identifying companies to let them know about this project. If interested in participating in our projects, please join our vendor list and our procurement team will reach out accordingly. Please visit <https://beltline.org/procurement/?highlight=vendor%20registry> in order to register.*

**7. I really do love this, thank y'all so much. A question: aside from the crosswalk at south Gordon, are there any plans to address visibility for drivers at the blind corner just before where South Gordon and RDA meet?**

*A: With the rectangular rapid flashing beacons, we redid all of the signage along Ralph David Abernathy. So, there will be more signs that make drivers aware of that crosswalk and an additional signage at stop bars that are set and back off of the crosswalk. So, in terms of creating greater visibility, they're really outside of the site. What we've done is provide additional signage to make drivers aware as they're coming down Ralph David Abernathy and the*

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*rectangular, rapid flashing beacons should really alert drivers if there are pedestrians in that crosswalk area.*

**8. Is there an entrance to the Beltline across the Clutch Bike Shop?**

A: No, but we have included the breakdown in response to a question above.

**9. Do you have a slide for Whitney's progress report?**

A: No answer provided during live meeting.

**10. First of all, kudos to the entire team for all of your hard work to get this to final design and funded. My question is can you speak to if GDOT has gotten a preview of the final design and if you foresee GDOT pushing back on it from a permitting perspective?**

*A: Ralph David Abernathy is a state road, so it will require GDOT involvement and permitting. GDOT has been provided preview of this concept. We've actually submitted a concept report to GDOT and gotten their initial buy-in. We're moving into finalizing the design as we speak, and then moving into the permitting phase.*

*We also asked for some letters of support from some community members, just to make sure that GDOT was very aware that that although this is an ABI-led project, it's an ABI project that has strong community support.*

**11. Great design and process overall. Can you explain how cyclists access the ramp? It seems like there is a lot of the space allocated to westbound cyclists and potentially some conflict with pedestrians.**

A: The bike plan is southbound on Ralph David Abernathy, so somebody coming in from any of the other businesses on a bicycle would be able to get in the bike lane and travel down. At the bike lane, they can use the crosswalk. This area is actually where they'll pull up and we're going to have signs to ask cyclists to dismount in order to walk their bikes here and mix with pedestrians in order to walk across the street at RDA.

Going northbound, we're going to have two different types of areas. In the same manner, cyclists will be able to make a right turn, hop off their bike, and get into the plaza area, onto the ramp or take the stairs.

Bicyclists continuing to travel northbound would be able to continue in the bike lane. Likewise, someone who would want to enter the bike lane from the plaza would be able to hop on their bike at Ralph David Abernathy and then yield and then hop into the bike lane.

This allows proper mixing, treating dismounted bicyclists as pedestrians crossing the street, but bicycles can continue to travel in the bike lane and not have to slow down.

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**12. Can you describe the intent of the Special Service District proposal which was recently released.**

*A. We are dedicated to fulfilling the vision of the Beltline, and we want the benefits of it to reach all communities, but we're going to need more resources to make it happen. So, the city council is considering legislation right now that would create something called a "Special Services District" or "SSD" for short. It is basically a solution so that commercial and multifamily property owners that are located within the Beltline planning area would invest through a slight increase in the millage rate or property tax rate to provide critical funding that we need to help us complete the entire mainline Beltline trail.*

*We are estimating that we need about \$350 million to complete the trail. The Special Service District would help us get there by raising approximately a \$100 million of that. There are going to be lots of opportunities to talk about this proposal and this funding mechanism. How we make sure we fulfill the promise of the Beltline for all 45+ communities around Atlanta moving forward. We have more information about the legislation on our website [www.beltline.org/special-service-district](http://www.beltline.org/special-service-district).*

**13. Is there permanent seating planned for the plaza space or for it to remain open?**

*A: In the final design, we're not going to be including any seating. However, the plaza area will remain open. We just wanted to really give a lot of shade for the summer months, but also an open area for people to gather.*

**14. What are wall packs? Is that a light set into the wall?**

*A: Wall packs are wall-mounted or wall-inset lights that can provide efficient lighting for the sides of buildings or walls.*

**15. Is there a REQUIREMENT for minority or black owned company participation?**

*A: Please visit <https://beltline.org/faqs/?category=procurement> for more information on the 30% DBE goal set for certain projects. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) can include women-owned, minority-owned, and small business enterprises.*

**16. With the addition of raised sidewalks and median near the Ralph David Abernathy crosswalk, how will school pick up traffic be affected?**

*A: There's an additional crosswalk that we're in over by KIPP, which hopefully students are using that more unless they're trying to access the trail, which then they would stay on the east sidewalk to get down to the Beltline trail.*

*This crosswalk with Ralph David Abernathy is not anticipated to back up traffic.*

**17. My family is direct descendants of the freed slaves who found Reynoldstown, a national historic district and I am hoping to get some of the houses still standing to be declared**

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**national historic landmarks, and some business and greenspace developed all directly on the beltline in Reynoldstown. Whom should I speak with so regarding pursuit of this project?**

A: Please contact: Whitney Fuller  
[Wfuller@atlbeltline.org](mailto:Wfuller@atlbeltline.org)  
(404) 477-3574

**18. Would it be possible to have northbound cyclists just enter and exit the access point through the opening at the crosswalk rather than having so much space dedicated to the sort of off/on northbound bike turn lanes shown in the design?**

A: The key intent is to separate bicyclists from pedestrians and designate space for the cyclists specifically to give them time to get off the bike lane, dismount, and safely access the ramp to the Beltline.

**19. What's a good contact to discuss partnerships with schools (KIPP) in the area?**

A: Please contact: Whitney Fuller  
[Wfuller@atlbeltline.org](mailto:Wfuller@atlbeltline.org)  
(404) 477-3574

**20. If there isn't seating in the initial construction, are there locations identified in the plan for future benches? Would the Beltline allow neighborhoods to make donations for benches?**

A: There is an opportunity for further discussion regarding donations for benches.

**21. It seems like the westside master plan that is posted on your website is date in 2010. Is there a more recent version available?**

*A: There is a current draft update that's planned to be approved by the neighborhoods, NPUs and council this year in 2021. You can find the draft at [www.beltline.org/masterplanning](http://www.beltline.org/masterplanning). You can find the master plan updates for sub-areas 1, 2, 3, and 5, which are areas on the South, Southeast and Southwest side of the Atlanta Beltline.*

**22. What security features are designed for all of the beltline?**

A: At certain locations along the Beltline, we have bollards that prevent vehicles from entering. We also we have security cameras. Lastly, we have incorporated lighting in the design along the Beltline segment, especially where there is not good visibility.

**23. There are some trees (tree-of-heaven) growing on the Lucile bridge and some have died. Is there a contact for who should remove those trees?**

A: This section of the trail is maintained by the city so should be reported to:  
[parkscustomerservice@atlantaga.gov](mailto:parkscustomerservice@atlantaga.gov).

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