

Introduction

In 2012, a Georgia Institute of Technology planning studio, led by Michael Dobbins, analyzed and proposed design changes for the Northside Drive corridor. While the studio made recommendations for intersections and nodes all along the corridor, their major resolution was to reconfigure the terminus point of Northside Drive. This proposal is based on the resolution of Northside Drive's connection to I-20 and to the West End MARTA station. It would reroute Northside Drive to flow directly into the I-20 access road system and into the West End district by shifting it to Peters street and then West Whitehall.

This reconfiguration establishes a precedent for the 2014 spring studio by establishing the West End Station as a transit oriented development (TOD), creating an enhanced link to the Atlanta University Center and creating opportunities for revitalizing the historic district of West End in Southwest Atlanta. What follows is a report on the background of the West End district, a summary of previous studies, and our studio's proposals for how to capitalize on this new continuation of the Northside Drive corridor into the West End historic district.

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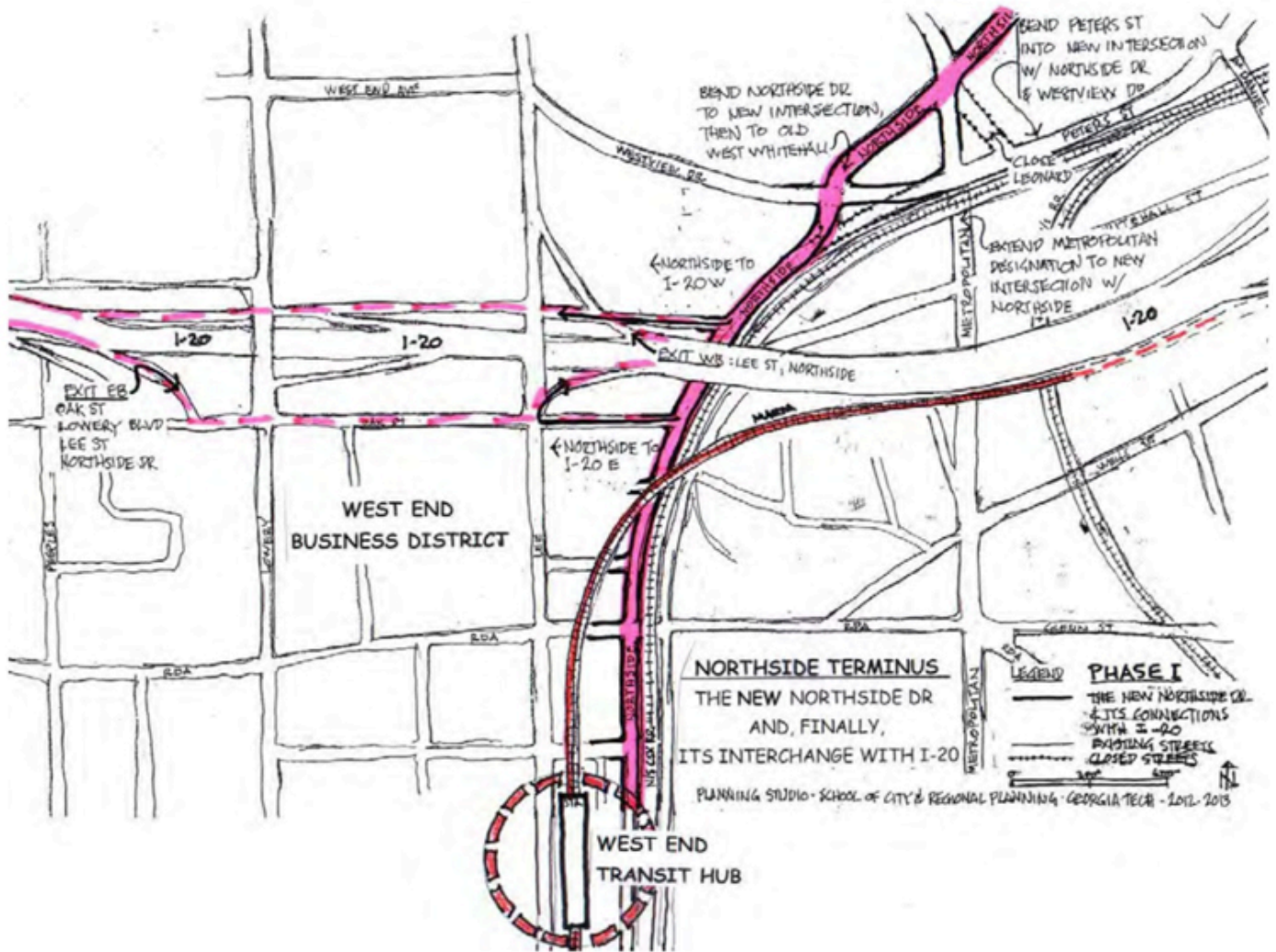


Figure 39. New Northside Drive

Context and Surrounding Neighborhoods

Introduction

The West End neighborhood is located southwest of the Downtown core of Atlanta, Georgia. The neighborhood is recognized by the National Register of Historic Places and is a strong community with vitality and a rich history. The historical center of the neighborhood lies at the intersection of Lee Street and Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard, once the location of the former historic White Hall Inn. The neighborhood was named by its founders, John Thrasher and Thomas Alexander, after the West End theater district in London, England. The West End's proximity to Downtown Atlanta made the community an ideal residential neighborhood during the post-Civil War Reconstruction era. The West End was connected via streetcar and grew rapidly to a population of 22,000 by 1930. Notable residents of the community during this era were Mayor of Atlanta E.P. Howell, author Frank L. Stanton, and folklore writer Joel Chandler Harris.

The Atlanta University Center (AUC), composed of Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, and Spelman University serve as cornerstones to the community. By the 1930's, many of the AUC students resided in West End, and were influential in its development. The population peaked in the 1930's, and what was once a slow population decline, accelerated in the 1960's and 1970's. This decline can be primarily attributed to transportation projects that were intended to increase the connectivity of the community, but rather caused isolation from surrounding neighborhoods. Regardless, West End has retained many of its historic structures, a strong community base, and a vibrant small business climate, maintaining West End's importance to the urban fabric of Atlanta.

The historic structures of West End include a diverse housing stock, characterized by styles such as Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman Bungalows, Colonial Revival, American Foursquare, and Neoclassical Revival. A number of the historic homes have been preserved as museums or landmarks through the restoration of owners. Remaining, is still a large stock of historic homes that are prime candidates for restoration and preservation.

In support of community improvement initiatives, the West End Community Improvement District (WE-CID) is a recent initiative to bring together stakeholders, community residents, and business leadership to promote the revitalization of the community.

Characteristics

The Atlanta University Center, Ashview Heights and Castleberry Hill represent the West End's neighboring communities to the north. Downtown Atlanta is located to the northeast and is two heavy rail stops from the central business district and one from the government center. The neighborhoods of Adair Park and Mechanicsville are located to the east of West End, however, the neighborhoods are separated by a network of freight and commuter rail lines, diminishing their connectivity. Bush Mountain and Oakland City are south of West End, as well as the decommissioned

military base of Fort McPherson. Located west of West End is the community of Westview, also a neighborhood rich in historicism. Figure 1.0 shows the West End community and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Compared to its neighbors West End has a significantly higher crime rate of 238.7 incidents per 1,000 people. This is compared to Capitol View (77.4), Westview (91.1), Vine City (150.8), and Downtown (197.1). However the proportion of crimes that are classified as violent, 16.7%, was more consistent, if not better, than many of its surrounding communities. Comparable shares of violent crime were higher in communities such as Fort McPherson (22.2%) and English Avenue (25.7%). As crime rate is considered to be strongly correlated to unemployment rate, the increased non-violent crime rate of West End is likely related to the elevated unemployment rate of 20.7%.

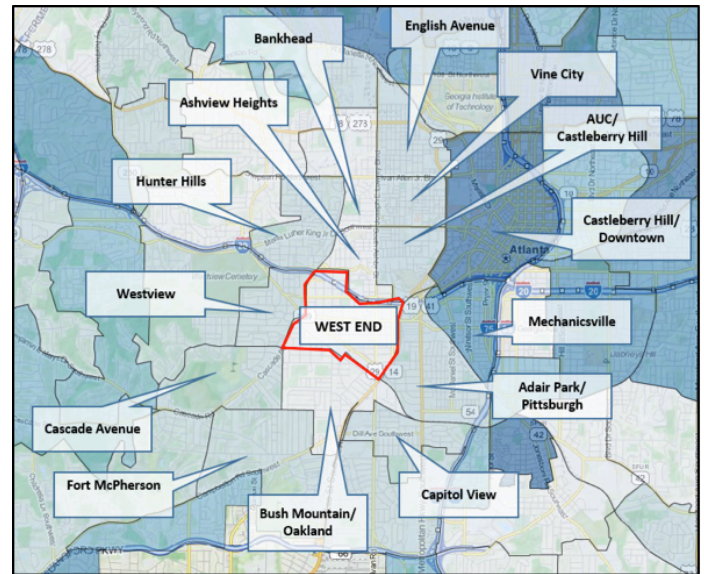


Figure 1.0 - West End Neighborhood and Surrounding Communities

Key Infrastructure and Areas of Interest

Significant roadways in the West End community include Interstate 20, Northside Drive, Whitehall Street, and Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard (RDA). While these thoroughfares are capable of having moving significant volumes of traffic through the community, they create connectivity issues, discouraging other modes of transportation (walking, cycling, etc.). The West End MARTA rail stop is located along the eastern edge of the community and services the north and southbound rail lines, providing direct connectivity to the airport, Downtown, Midtown, and other important employment centers on Atlanta's north / south axis. West End's transit connectivity and network of vital roadways creates the potential of West End serving as an important southwest hub to the urban core of Atlanta.

The Mall at West End is located at the intersection of Lee Street and RDA Boulevard, an area of significant pedestrian and automobile traffic. While this intersection, and the mall, serve as the commercial core of West End, it currently

favors automobile traffic only, making minimal concessions for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Additionally, the composition of the Mall at West End and its immediately surrounding area, are more consistent with suburban strip center and shopping malls, and less of an urban multi-modal community.

The Atlanta BeltLine has proposed a multi-use trail southwest of the neighborhood. This project is currently in the planning stage, but the BeltLine has established a foot path along White Street, the southern boundary of West End. This proposed trail should be given appropriate consideration in the development of transportation alternatives and land use proposals. As such, the City of Atlanta anticipates extensive redevelopment of the parcels south of the neighborhood, with the WE-CID including the BeltLine proposal in their redevelopment programs.

Zoning

The zoning in the West End includes the following:

- Special Public Interest: SPI-21
- Residential, Multi Family: RG-3-C, RG-4-C
- Residential, Limited Commercial: R-LC
- Residential, Duplex: R-5
- Industrial: I-1
- Commercial: C-3, C-1-C, C-1

This zoning configuration gives the West End significant potential for community redevelopment and economic investment. The WE-CID, in conjunction with redevelopment along the proposed Southwest Beltline initiative, offers a

bold strategy and challenge to both increase connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods of Atlanta and reverse the trend of population loss to build the community.

Boundaries

The West End faces infrastructure boundaries which have reduced connectivity to the North, East, and South. The Northern impediment is Interstate I-20 running East to West. There is a potential to redesign the exit/on-ramp system to improve access to and from the West End to better serve the Atlanta University Center to the North and the community of the West End. The Eastern barrier is a network of rail lines. The MARTA Gold Line is an elevated rail track which both connects passengers to the West End, as well as preventing further expansion. The CSX and Norfolk Southern rail lines pose the greatest challenge to improving connections to Adair Park and Mechanicsville. The Southern boundary is the Beltline Trail. With proper vision and investment, this barrier can become a connecting line to other parts of the city, and bring in outsiders to the many features that the West End has to offer.

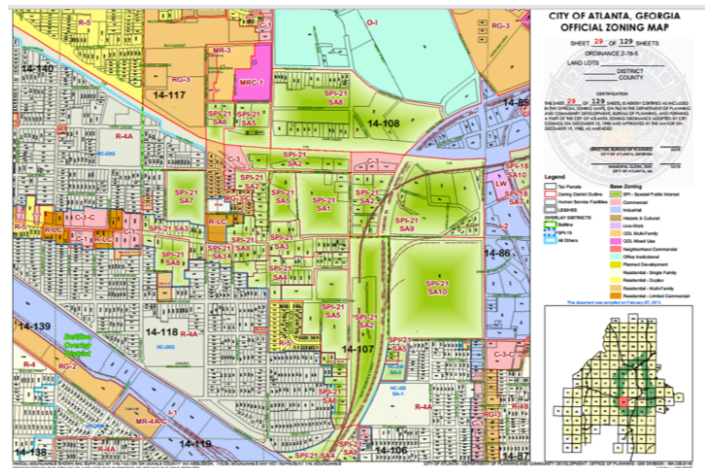


Figure 1.1 - Area Zoning Map (Source: City of Atlanta)



Figure 1.2 - The Mall at West End Facing Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard



Figure 1.3 - Retail Spaces Along Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard

Demographics

The study area for the plan experienced a 21.3% decrease in overall population between 2000 and the 2008-2012 American Community Survey. The largest drops in population during this time were seen in Census Tracts 41 and 58.

During the same time period, the area experienced relative gains in residents in the older age groups. The share of residents aged 45 to 64 increased from 16.4% to 24.3%, and the share of residents aged 65 and over increased from 7.6% to 9.0%. The area maintained a disproportionately large share of residents aged 18-24; 26.5% were in this age group during the 2008 to 2012 period, much larger than the 9.3% share in the Atlanta metro area as a whole for the same time period. This age group is mainly concentrated in Census Tract 43, near the Atlanta University Center colleges. Similarly, the area has seen an increase in the relative share of non family households, from 46% of all households in 2000 to 56.6% of all households in the 2008-2012 survey.

The racial composition of the neighborhood changed minimally between 2000 and 2010. The African American population decreased slightly, while maintaining a majority share of the population at 87.8%. The proportion of the white population increased slightly from 3.2% to 8.2% and the proportion of the Asian population decreased from 3.6% to 1.6%

Over the past decade, the educational attainment of the study area's residents has generally increased. 2008-2012 data shows that 20% of the area's residents had at least a bachelor's degree, a marked increase from 9.5% in 2000. Similarly, 80.2% of residents surveyed between 2008 and 2012 had at least a high school diploma, a significant increase from 57.9% in 2000. Most of the increase in college-educated residents occurred in Census Tracts 42 and 43, which are adjacent to the Atlanta University Center and include the West End core and Castleberry Hill areas, respectively.

Despite a population decrease during the 2000s, the study area saw growth in housing units. Total units increased from 4,583 to 5,736, a 25.2% gain. In the absence of population growth, this led to a drop in the area's occupancy rate, from 85.6% to 66.6% during the same time period. The share of housing units that were owner-occupied fell slightly as well, from 29.2% to 26.5%. The study area has a significantly lower proportion of owner-occupiers than the Atlanta metro area as a whole, which had an owner-occupancy rate of 66.2% for the 2008-2012 period.

Incomes in and around the West End area also tend to be significantly lower than the metro area as a whole. Median household income and median family income in the study area for the 2008-2012 period were \$22,980 and \$25,980, respectively; these figures are well below the medians for the metro area (\$57,470 and \$67,451, respectively). Median household income and median family income increased 15.6% and 9.5% respectively between 2000 and 2010.

Property values and rents saw larger increases than incomes in the West End and surrounding neighborhoods during the 2000s. Median value of owner-occupied housing units more than doubled, from \$71,016 to \$147,843. This increase in median values is likely driven by new units in Census Tracts 42 and 43, respectively the core of West End and Castleberry Hill; these tracts had respective median values of \$195,000 and \$253,200 in the 2008-2012 survey. Median rent, while not growing as quickly as home values, significantly increased as well; it rose 77.9% during the decade to \$815 for the 2008-2012 period.

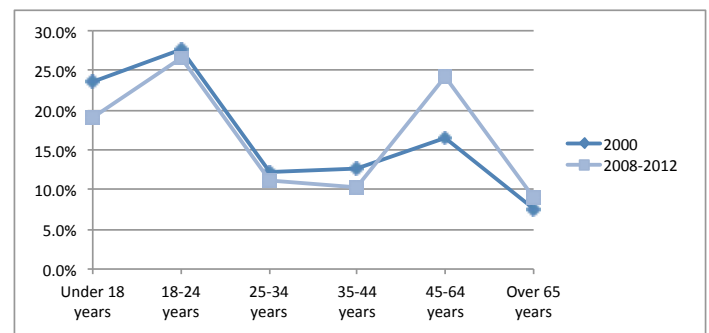


Figure 1.4 - Population Distribution by Age Cohort (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

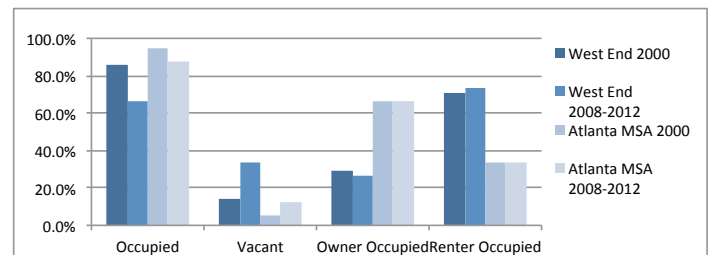


Figure 1.5 - Housing Status (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

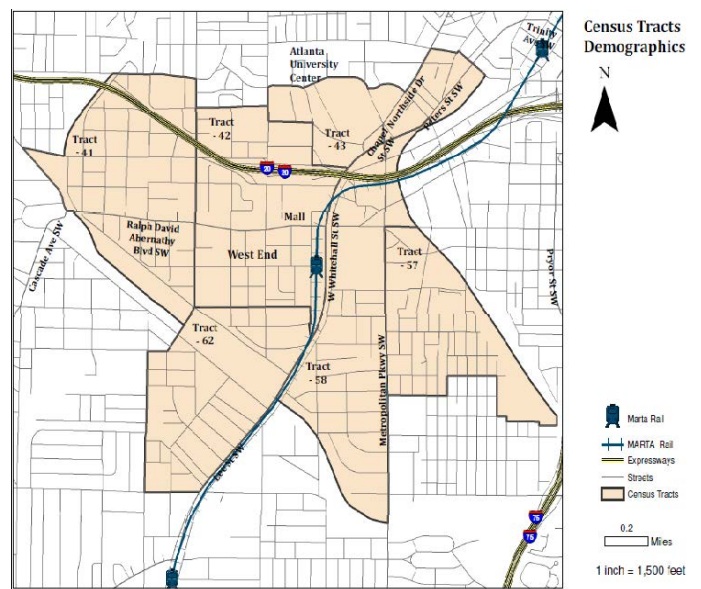


Figure 1.6 - Census Tracts of Considered Area (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Education

Despite the shrinking child population, residents under the age of 18 remain a significant population cohort in West End. Down 25% from 2010, children remain 20% of the local population. The area is currently served by M. Agnes Jones Elementary School, located north of I-20 and is not a central fixture to the West End community, with limited walkability as it is a better integrated with the Ashview Heights community. Students at M. Agnes Elementary perform well English, Reading and Social Studies when compared to the state average for the Georgia Competency Test Results. Where the school is challenged is in the subjects of Math and Science.

Brown Middle School, which serves and is located in the heart of the West End community, is similar in academic performance as Jones Elementary. While the students excel and are comparable to state averages in reading and the language arts, the students perform significantly below the state average in math in science.

Booker T. Washington High School, also located in the Ashview Heights community, demonstrates the culmination of the underperformance in the math and sciences subjects as they score significantly lower than the state average. The performance trend of students from grade school through high school demonstrates that the students are not acquiring the appropriate foundation in math and science as their performance on state exams continues to decline. This could present tremendous opportunities for the schools, given their proximity, to partner with the Atlanta University Center for mentoring and tutoring to improve academic performance and ultimately their potential for higher education.

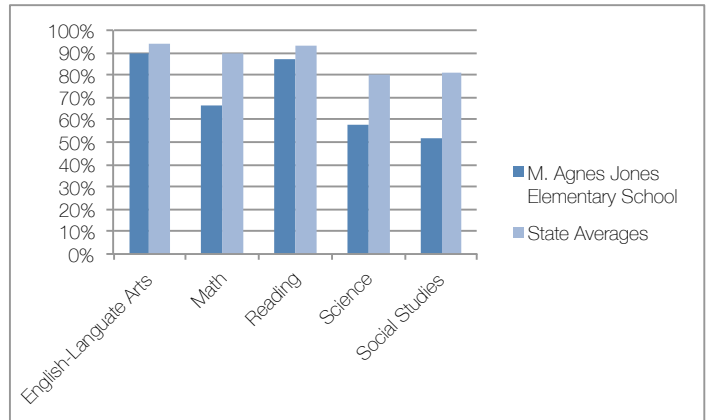


Figure 1.8 - Academic Performance of M. Agnes Jones Elementary School (5th Grade Only - Source: Great Schools)

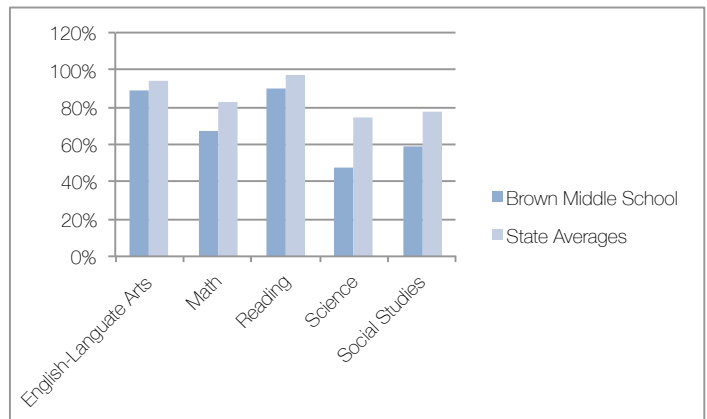


Figure 1.9- Academic Performance of Brown Middle School (8th Grade Only - Source: Great Schools)

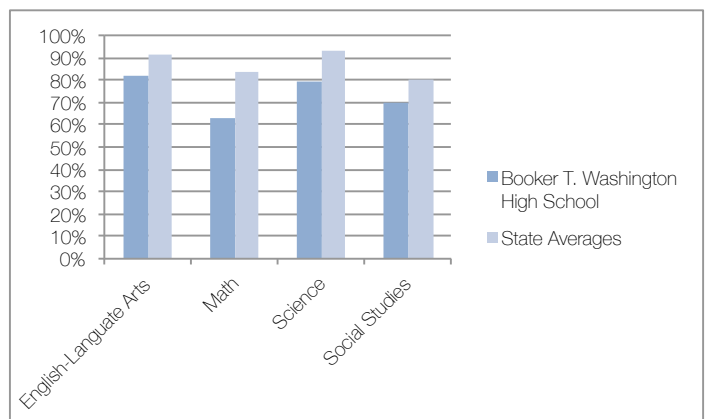


Figure 2.0 - Academic Performance of Booker T. Washington High School (11th Grade Only - Source: Great Schools)

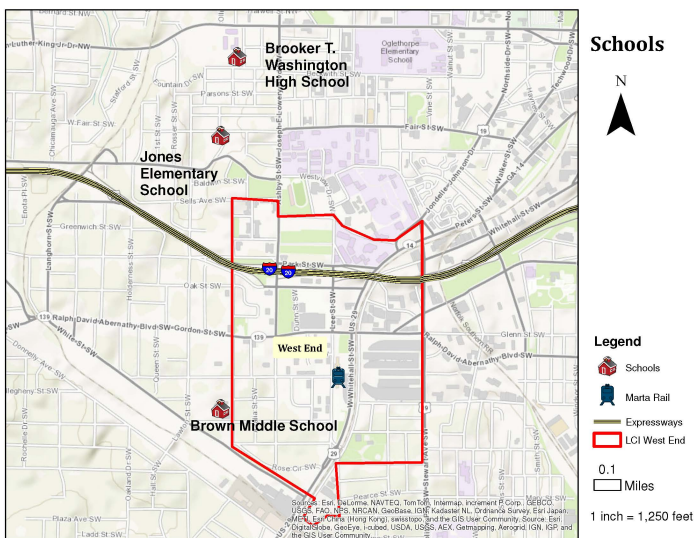


Figure 1.7- Schools That Serve the West End Community

Land Use

Overview

The West End contains a variety of land uses within a relatively small area. These uses range from single family residential to light industrial. The layout of these uses is fairly complementary within the study area, creating a fluid network of land uses.

A large percentage of the single family residences lie on the western portion of the study area. The majority of these residences are historic in character and are subject to the conditions of the Historic West End district. Despite a majority of these residences being renter occupied, they are considered to be in good condition and capable of encouraging “life cycle housing.”

The center of the study area contains the majority of the commercial uses. The main commercial district in the area exists along Ralph David Abernathy Blvd between Lee Street and Joseph E Lowery Blvd. This area includes the Mall at West End and higher density residential. The other commercial strip exists along White St. This commercial strip abuts a proposed section of the Atlanta BeltLine and is subject to the overlay district that is associated with the BeltLine. This area includes a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses.

In addition to the traditional uses, the study area also contains many civic and historical uses, including museums and schools. The historical character also radiates out into the surrounding impact areas that include the Atlanta University Center, Adair Park, and Mechanicville. The opportunity for these areas to complement the existing land uses in the study area despite connectivity issues. There is also opportunity for these areas to help support redevelopment/infill in the study area – particularly around the MARTA Station (one of the busiest in the city) and the Mall at West End superblock. This may also help development radiate out into the impact areas.

Zoning

Since the last LCI plan, the City has updated much of the non-historic district from C-3 to SPI-21. Further, the BeltLine overlay district has also been added to sections of the study area. Both of these zoning districts should help the area achieve a better density and mix of uses going forward. These zoning districts in conjunction with the West End Historic district should help create a mixture of uses that allow for a continuously vibrant and active community. These districts will also help improve the aesthetics of the built environment and encourage the growth of a pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive neighborhood.

Residential Housing Analysis

Residential housing in the West End community offers a wide-variety of housing types, from historic Queen Anne homes to modern live/work warehouse lofts. Similarly, residential housing statistics from the last 2010 census show a wide range of values across the study area. Table

2.1 provides a more detailed view of 2010 residential housing statics for the census tracts and block groups that are primary residential areas within the West End study area. In terms of occupied units, 2,622 of the 3,763 housing units are occupied, providing a housing occupancy rate of roughly 69.68%. Of the 2,622 housing units in the West End study area, an estimated 22% are owned occupied. Median housing values range from a low of \$93,800 (Census Tract 60, Block Group 4) to a high of \$227,600. Additionally, median monthly rent ranges from \$547 to \$1,070. Of particular note is Block Group 2 within Census Tract 41 and Block Group 2 within Census Tract 42. Both of these sub-areas have significantly higher median housing values and are on the lower end of owner occupancy rates.

Census Tract/Block Group (West End Study Area)	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	Renter Occupied Units	Year of Construction	Median Housing Value	Median Monthly Rent
Census Tract 41, Block Group 1	182	102	39	63	1954	115600	547
Census Tract 41, Block Group 2	470	232	42	190	1956	227600	772
Census Tract 41, Block Group 3	511	382	118	264	1954	122200	898
Census Tract 42, Block Group 1	386	333	0	333			496
Census Tract 42, Block Group 2	1144	890	194	696	1988	195000	780
Census Tract 60, Block Group 4	564	426	87	339	1961	93800	753
Census Tract 62, Block Group 1	506	257	94	163	1946	110200	1020
Total/Average	3,763	2,622	574	2,048	1960	144,067	752

Table 2.1 - Data obtained from Social Explorer and 2010 Census

Single-Family Residential

The West End community contains a unique collection of 19th and early-20th Century single family homes that help illustrate the neighborhood’s age and historic status. Architectural styles within the community include the Craftsman bungalow, the most common style found in the neighborhood, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Stick Style, Folk Victorian, American Foursquare, and Neoclassical Revival (National Park Service, n.d.).



Figure 2.2- Typical House in West End

Multi-Family Residential

In addition to the historic single family homes that populate the neighborhood, West End boasts a growing number of multi-family housing options. These apartments range from bungalow-style duplexes to large mixed-use, multi-family complexes. (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2001) In recent years, several of the newer multi-family were built along the major arterial roads and cater to college students enrolled in the neighboring Atlanta University Center. The centerpiece of the West End neighborhood's multi-family residential housing mix is the Ashley Collegetown Apartments, a multi-phase, mixed use development currently under construction. Envisioned as a live, work and play destination for surrounding college students, the development will provide rental townhomes, apartments, single family homes, large green spaces, a lake, walking trails, senior housing, commercial retail, condos, and a hotel. As of now, Phase 1 has been completed and offers 800 Earthcraft-certified, mid-rise and garden-style apartments ranging from \$500 – \$850 along with several acres of green space (Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA), n.d.).



Figure 2.3 Ashley Collegetown Multi-Phase Site Plan (Source: Ashley Collegetown)

Commercial

Commercial
The majority of the commercial land uses within our study area are concentrated around the Mall at West End, which serves as the community's commercial hub. The mall is an estimated 158,000 sq. ft. neighborhood shopping center with several shops along the perimeter of the mall. While the mall does not have a traditional anchor store, it is 95.8% leased with a mixture of independent commercial suites and established chain stores (e.g., Foot Locker, Radio Shack).

Further, Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard is located along the south entrance of the mall and serves as the neighborhood's historic commercial corridor. In recent years, however, several arterial roadways such as Lee Street, Lowry Boulevard, and Oak Street have begun to increase their commercial activity, mixing older independent, strip mall units with newer chain stores and mix use developments with ground level, retail and restaurant suite-style units.

Industrial

Industrial properties in the study area are mostly light industrial uses. Many of these properties are under-utilized, including those warehouses along Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard. These properties, however, present an opportunity for adaptive reuse. These industrial properties could offer an opportunity for live/work, multi-family loft style development, and office uses while still maintaining the historic character of the West End community. One such example of industrial reuse in the area is The Metropolitan along Murphy Avenue. Other properties could potentially be used for technology industries.

Office

Currently, the West End community is experiencing growth in office land uses. While existing traditional office space is still extremely limited within the study area, converted live/work office uses are significantly increasing. The aforementioned Metropolitan offers 40 acres of flexible space that has been converted into art studios, galleries, lofts, and office spaces.

Educational/Community Facilities/Parks

The West End has a wide-variety of educational centers and resources, highlighted by the Atlanta University Center Consortium (AUCC). The AUC is a collective of six colleges and universities (Morehouse College, Spelman College, Clark Atlanta University, Morris Brown College, the Interdenominational Theological Center and the Morehouse School of Medicine) that represents the world's largest consortium of African American private institutions of higher education. (Atlanta University Center Consortium, n.d.)

Institutional/Cultural

The West End's origins date back to before the City of Atlanta was founded, and the community is populated with several architecturally and culturally noteworthy landmarks. The following is a brief list of historic and culturally significant buildings/locations in the West End:

- The Shrine of the Black Madonna (a cultural center, museum, book store)
- The Wren's Nest (a museum and learning center based out of the home of Joel Chandler Harris – the author of the Uncle Remus Tales)
- Hammonds House Museum (a an art museum and resource center focusing on the African Diaspora)
- The West End Performing Arts Center
- The West Hunter Street Baptist Church (where the Reverend Ralph David Abernathy served as senior pastor)

Transportation

The important role of transportation in the development of West End is undeniable. The area has access to multiple modes of transportation, including MARTA bus and rail, pedestrian facilities, bicycle infrastructure, access to I-20, four major arterials, and freight rail lines. More transportation improvements are planned for the area in the future.

MARTA's West End station serves as a major transportation hub in the area. MARTA's Red and Gold rail lines run north and south from the station, providing an important transit connection to Downtown Atlanta and the Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. Five MARTA bus routes use West End station as a hub: 67, 68, 71, 81, and 95. An on-call shuttle from the Atlanta University Center also serves the station. On a typical weekday, the station sees 6,923 entries. The area around the West End station is generally classified as transit-dependent. The walkability of the station, demonstrated by its high WalkScore of 85, provides a link between this transit-dependent community and its connection to the rest of Atlanta.

Street	Location	Volume (AADT)
I-20	Between Joseph E. Lowery & Metropolitan	115,210
Metropolitan	Between Pearce & Lillian	11,570
	At I-20	6,800
West Whitehall/Peters	At Lee	50,270
	At Northside	4,090
Ralph David Abernathy	Between Grady & Queen	13,450
	Between Joseph E. Lowery & Lee	13,060
Joseph E Lowery	Between Murphy & Metropolitan	10,390
	Between RDA & I-20	14,890
	Between Oglethorpe & Beecher	10,760

Figure 2.4 - Traffic Counts on Area State Roads (GDOT Stars, 2012)

The condition of pedestrian infrastructure in the area is fair to good, though there are some features of the infrastructure that do not emphasize the safety and accessibility of pedestrians. Streetscape improvements along Ralph David Abernathy Blvd between Joseph E. Lowery Blvd and Lee St are currently in progress, addressing concerns of disrepair from the earlier West End Historic District LCI Study. Pedestrian connections are plentiful throughout the study area, but at two locations, Lee St crossing I-20 and Ralph David Abernathy Blvd crossing under the freight rail corridor, the narrow sidewalks along busy roads that link two immediate areas with limited development are discouraging to pedestrian use. Pedestrian connectivity across the rail corridor is limited to two streets, Ralph David Abernathy Blvd and the intersection of Lee St, and West Whitehall St, both of which are highly trafficked by automobiles and potentially dangerous to pedestrians.

Bicycle improvements have been planned for West End since the 1995 Atlanta Commuter On-Street Bike Plan, but to date implementation has been limited. Ralph David Abernathy Blvd has narrow bike lanes east of the railroad corridor, but other primary and secondary bicycle routes identified in the Connect Atlanta Plan have yet to see improvements. The 2013 Cycle Atlanta Phase 1.0 Study has many improvements, including a wide multi-use path running from Downtown along West Whitehall St into West

End, along Ralph David Abernathy Blvd, and south along Lee St down to the Atlanta BeltLine corridor. This multi-use path would be complemented on the eastside of the rail corridor with bike lanes along Murphy Ave. In the southern end of West End, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will be improved in the Atlanta BeltLine corridor, with construction being partially funded by a recent TIGER grant.

I-20 provides the highest amount of roadway capacity to West End, serving as the backbone of a network of well-used arterials including: Metropolitan Ave, West Whitehall Street, Ralph David Abernathy Blvd, Lee St, Joseph E Lowery Blvd, and White St. However, heavy vehicular traffic on these corridors, combined with poor signal timing, bottlenecks, and heavy pedestrian traffic, has pushed cut-through traffic and large vehicle traffic onto neighborhood streets.



Figure 2.5 -Lee Street Bridge to the AUC



Figure 2.6 -Lee Street

Transportation Issues

- The AUC has an on-call shuttle and pedestrian connection to the West End MARTA station, but land uses around Mall at West End and current pedestrian infrastructure have not improved to encourage their use.
- Cut-through traffic and large vehicle (trucks and buses) on neighborhood streets are common due to slower traffic conditions on arterials caused by poor traffic signal timing, bottlenecks, and pedestrian traffic.
- The Mall at West End has an overabundance of parking, which is inaccessible to other businesses and residents in the area who have inadequate parking.
- Traffic signaling is not synchronized.
- Dangerous intersections exist.
- Railroad corridor limits connectivity for streets and pedestrians.
- Multiple curb cuts create vehicular and pedestrian conflicts in commercial core.
- Overly wide neighborhood streets encouraging speeding and cut-through traffic, endangering pedestrian safety.
- Truck routes not specified, which is a potential strain on existing infrastructure capacity.
- Bus traffic routed onto narrow residential streets.

Transportation Opportunities

- Transportation improvements funded through Livable Centers Initiative exist.
- West End Commercial Improvement District is being formed and may provide a source of funding for pedestrian improvements and greater cooperation between business owners on issues such as parking and vehicular access.
- Existing pedestrian scale provides excellent context for transportation improvements.
- West End MARTA station, situated in a potentially highly walkable residential and commercial core, already functions as a transit oriented development opportunity.
- Near-future development of the Atlanta BeltLine and Atlanta Streetcar provides the opportunity to integrate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure as a tool for tourism and economic development.
- Proximity to Ashby MARTA station north of the AUC provides access to rail transit to both East-West rail lines and North-South rail lines through West End MARTA station, linking the area to all Metro Atlanta areas served by MARTA rail.
- Land is available for mixed-use development, which could provide both shared structured parking for businesses with inadequate parking and a more pedestrian-friendly distribution of commercial activities and job opportunities.

Summary of Potential Stakeholders

Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)

Established in 1965, MARTA is the regional transit agency operating bus and rail service in the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and DeKalb Counties. Additionally, the agency provides connecting service to Cobb, Gwinnett, and Clayton Counties. In September of 1982, the agency opened the West End rail station (MARTA, 2009). Since then, the agency has considered developing the surrounding area of the station as a transit-oriented development (TOD)

Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA)

Established by act of the Georgia State Legislature in 1999 (Georgia Regional Transportation Authority Act § 50-32-1), the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) was issued with the task of improving “Georgia’s mobility, air quality and land use practices” (Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, 2012). One means by which the organization attempts to accomplish this is through its commuter bus service, GRTA Xpress, a partnership between 12 metro Atlanta counties that provides 33 routes from suburban locales to the Downtown, Midtown, Buckhead, and Perimeter business districts (Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, 2013). While this program does not service the study area, there is interest to extend a GRTA Xpress line to the West End MARTA station.

Cobb Community Transit (CCT)

Cobb Community Transit (CCT), which began operating in 1989, is the second largest transit system in Georgia behind MARTA (Cobb County). The system currently consists solely of bus lines, some of which operate in cooperation with GRTA Xpress to bring passengers from suburban Cobb County to metropolitan Atlanta centers (Cobb County). As a result, there is also interest to extend a CCT-operated GRTA Xpress line to the West End MARTA station.

Atlanta Regional Commission

In 2001, the URS Corporation completed a Livable Communities Initiative grant study for the West End via funding from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). Among other issues, the study looked at the possibility of a TOD in the area and found that necessary elements existed to make such a development a reality (City of Atlanta, 2001). It has come time to update this LCI study, and this studio is expected to produce this update.

HT Group, LLC

HT Group, LLC is the leasing agent for West End Mall, the commercial center of the proposed West End transit oriented development (HT Group).

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

Based on a previous studio completed by the City & Regional Planning, Architecture & Urban Design, and Transportation Engineering master’s students at the Georgia Institute of Technology, recommendations were made to realign Northside Drive to service the West End community and MARTA station. The Georgia Department of Transportation exhibited interest in the initial findings of this studio and has since begin its own feasibility study. If Northside Drive were re-routed, CCT, MARTA, and GRTA Xpress buses could more efficiently serve the area and increase likelihood of a transit-oriented development occurring

City of Atlanta

The City of Atlanta is divided into 25 Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU), which are citizen advisory councils that make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues. The NPU system was established in 1974 to provide an opportunity for citizens to participate actively in the Comprehensive Development Plan, which is the city’s vision for the next five, ten, and fifteen years. It is also used as a way for citizens to receive information concerning all functions of city government. The system enables citizens to express ideas and comment on city plans and proposals while assisting the city in developing plans that best meet the needs of their communities (City of Atlanta, 2014).

Neighborhood Planning Unit T

Neighborhood Planning Unit T (NPU-T) is a citizen advisory council in Southwest Atlanta that makes recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues. NPU-T consists of seven Atlanta neighborhoods: Atlanta University Center, Ashview Heights, CollegeTown (formerly Harris Chiles), Just Us Neighbors, The Villages at Castleberry Hill, West End, and Westview (NPU-T, 2014).

NPU	Chairperson	Location	Date of Meeting	Planner	Zoning Contact
T	Claiborne White 1347 Beecher St. SW Atlanta, GA 30310 404-424-9931 chair@nputatlanta.org	KIPP Strive Academy 1444 Lucile Ave SW Atlanta, GA 30310	Second Wednesday 7:00pm	Brandy Crawford 404-330-6522 bcrawford@atltaga.gov	Mark Malaguerra 481 W Ontario Ave Atlanta, GA 30310 mark@nputatlanta.org

Figure 2.7 - NPU-T Contacts

Westside Communities Alliance

The Westside Communities Alliance is a communications network for communities west of the Connector to partner on issues of common concern. Launched jointly in 2011 by the neighborhoods of English Avenue and Vine City, and Georgia Tech’s Westside Task Force, the Westside Communities Alliance works to build relationships between these constituencies. The Alliance seeks to serve as a nexus point for area communities and institutions to tackle local challenges and find points of unity. The Alliance also seeks to be a model for multi-institutional engaged scholarship and service for Atlanta, as well as a resource for communities in need of partners and expertise. Through an exchange of knowledge, innovative and effective projects, and by developing sustainable partnerships between their collaborators to assist the City with revitalization and development of Atlanta’s West Side, the Alliance envisions strong, vibrant communities as the West Side’s urban future (Westside Communities Alliance, 2013).

Atlanta University Center (AUC) Consortium

The AUC Consortium, Inc. is a nonprofit organization composed of Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, and Spelman College. It is considered to be the oldest and largest association of historically Black colleges and universities. The Consortium seeks to foster collaboration and leverage resources to offer services and programs that benefit its students and the surrounding communities (Atlanta University Center Consortium, 2013).

West End Merchants Coalition

Formed in 2006, The West End Merchants Coalition, Inc. is a nonprofit community business organization representing business throughout the 30310 zip code. Members of the West End Merchants Coalition (WEMC) assist in identifying issues that influence business, affect the community’s economic viability, and the quality of life in the West End. Member meetings are held the last Thursday of every month (West End Merchants Coalition, Inc.).

West End Community Improvement District (WE-CID)

The proposed West End Community Improvement District (WE-CID) representing Historic West End Atlanta is a self-taxing district that will use additional property taxes from commercial and industrial property owners to augment local, state, and federal dollars for projects that improve the quality of life for residents, students, business owners, and visitors of the West End community and improve public infrastructure. At the helm of the WE-CID, community partners will lead the charge in promoting economic development, smart growth and safety within the district to promote a live, work, and play community (West End Community Improvement District, 2012).

H.J. Russell & Co.

Founded in 1952, H.J. Russell & Co are a development firm responsible for the SkyLofts development in West End. The brothers that run the company, Michael and H. Jerome Russell, have an expressed interest to continue development in the area and therefore could be considered stakeholders (Shaw, 2010).

West End Historic District

The West End Historic District received local, state, and national historic designations during an eight-year span in the 1990s, from 1991 to 1999 (City of Atlanta, 2001). The area represented in this district is largely residential, with Craftsman bungalow, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical Revival homes (National Park Service), and consists of Land Lots 117, 118, 139, 140 (City of Atlanta, 2014). The original 2001 ARC Livable Communities Initiative study was performed with a focus on this site.

Westview Community Organization

Founded in 1974, the Westview Community Organization (WCO) grew out of collaboration between street clubs in the area to deal with stormwater runoff and flooding issues. Since then, the WCO has grown to represent the Westview neighborhood, which borders West End to the northwest. The mission of the organization follows its motto: “Working together to make our neighborhood a better place to live – one that is beautiful, safe, and secure” (Westview Community Organization, 2014).

The Metropolitan

What once was a GMC wholesale truck and coach parts warehouse, has in recent years been transformed into a creative space for both residential and commercial purposes. The Metropolitan warehouses are located to the east of the Mall at West End, just beyond the MARTA and commercial rail tracks, and are currently home to such wide-ranging industries as metal workers and massage studios, painters and personal trainers, wood workers and ballroom dance studios, among others (The Metropolitan Business and Arts District).

URS Corporation

URS is an engineering, construction, and technical services firm that is headquartered in San Francisco, CA (URS Corporation, 2014). In 2001, the firm was hired to assist with the creation of the ARC’s Livable Centers Initiative report. The firm aided in the urban design and transportation portion of the analysis in addition to drafting an Economic Development and Market Analysis as well as a Land Use and Quality of Life Analysis (City of Atlanta, 2001).



Council Member Clea Winslow

Clea Winslow has represented the City of Atlanta’s Council District 4, of which the West End community is a part of, for over 16 years (Council Member Clea Winslow District 4). Her work experience also includes stints as the Housing Director for the Atlanta Urban League, the Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) Coordinator for the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning, and a leader in the West End Neighborhood Development Organization (Atlanta City Council). Winslow contributed in the original TOD study funded by the Livable Communities Initiative and may show interest in the update to the LCI study as well.

Sustainable Atlanta

Sustainable Atlanta is a local nonprofit organization that seeks to assist communities in promoting social equity, environmental stewardship, and economic development. In January 2014, the organization announced that the Atlanta University Center would be one of three eater Atlanta EcoDistricts and suggested that the program would aid Spelman College and Clark Atlanta University in reducing their power bills 20 percent by 2015 (Gay, 2014).

Atlanta BeltLine Inc.

The Atlanta BeltLine is a multi-billion dollar project set to redevelop 22-miles of unused rail corridor encircling the City of Atlanta into a series of parks, trails, and eventually transit lines. The southwestern portion of the redevelopment borders the southern portion of the West End Historic District along White Street and also captures parts of the West End in the BeltLine Tax Allocation District (TAD), funding from which is allocated toward construction of the rail. The second phase of the West End Trail was opened to the public in June of 2010 (Atlanta BeltLine, 2010).

Atlanta Housing Authority

The Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) is assigned the task of developing, acquiring, leasing, and operating housing for low-income individuals in the City of Atlanta. The AHA is the largest housing agency in Georgia, serving around 50,000 people (Atlanta Housing Authority, 2014). The Ashley Terrace at West End is an AHA gated community located on Lee Street, directly across from the West End MARTA station (Atlanta Housing Authority, 2014).

Atlanta Department of Public Works

The City of Atlanta’s Department of Public Works consists of two offices: The Office of Solid Waste Services and the Office of Transportation. The mission of the Department is to deliver services to improve the City’s infrastructure and ensure the public health, safety, and wellness of its citizens (City of Atlanta, 2014).

Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development

The City of Atlanta’s Department of Planning and Community Development is comprised of three main offices: The Office of Buildings, Office of Housing, and Office of Planning. The Department is currently conducting a cargo and freight study to develop policies that balance the needs of communities and freight movement (City of Atlanta, 2014). Semi-truck traffic is of major concern to the West End area, as it disincentives pedestrian traffic on the major thoroughfares surrounding the Mall at West End.

Atlanta Public Schools

Atlanta Public Schools:
The Atlanta Public School (APS) system serves the West End Neighborhood with three schools: Brown Middle School, which is located in the immediate vicinity, and Jones Elementary as well as Booker T. Washington High Schools, which are found to the north of the area across Interstate 20 (Atlanta Public Schools). Current demographic patterns suggest that although the population is fairly static, children will comprise a larger percentage and affect current APS strategies.

Atlanta BeltLine Strategic Implementation Plan 2013

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Created by:

Atlanta BeltLine, Inc

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Overview

The Atlanta BeltLine Strategic Implementation Plan defines the timeline for the elements that make up the Atlanta BeltLine program through the life of its Tax Allocation District. These elements include short-term and long-term projects of parks, trails, and transit. All of the Atlanta BeltLine projects are divided into three periods, with the last period ending in the year 2030. In the area surrounding West End, the projects should be completed and open by the end of the second period, ending in 2023.

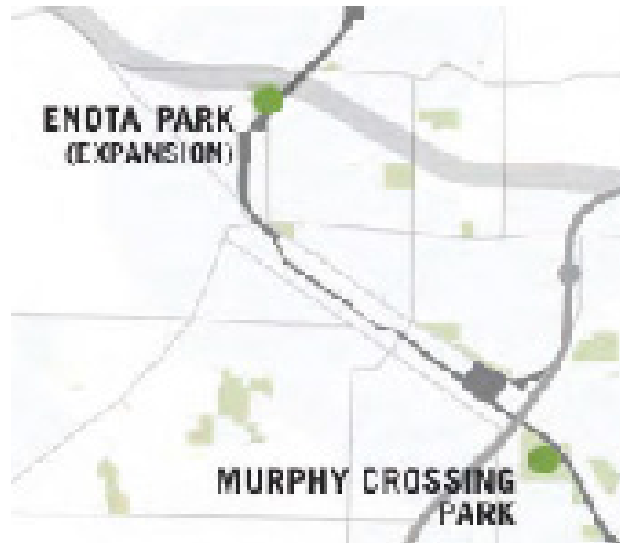
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Focus in Our Study Area:

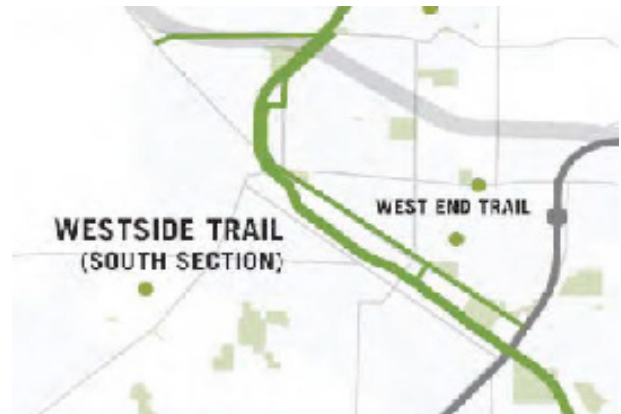
- **Parks:** Project Readiness, Development Impact, Equity, Consistency with City Goals, Financial Options
 - **Trails:** Leverage Greenspace, Project Readiness, Development Impact, Equity, Financial Options
 - **Transit:** Ridership, Project Readiness, Development Impact, Equity, Financial Options
-

Suggested Improvements:

- Phase 1 (FY 2014-2018): Construction of Murphy Crossing Park (rated highest in terms of equity, project readiness, and development potential), Construction and Completion of Westside Trail from Washington Park to University Ave (except section between RDA and Lawton, still under construction), Construction of West BeltLine Transit
- Phase 2 (FY 2019-2023): Murphy Crossing Park completed, Westside Trail completed (connected all the way to Eastside Trail), West BeltLine Transit completed and connected to expanded Atlanta Streetcar system



Proposed Atlanta BeltLine Parks by 2023



Proposed Atlanta BeltLine Trails by 2023



Proposed Atlanta BeltLine Transit by 2023

Mixed Industrial: Will Blurple be the New Green 2011

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Created by:

Charles Whatley (Atlanta Development Authority)
 Jeff Williams (Georgia Tech/Perkins+Will)
 Ryan Gravel (Perkins+Will)
 Audrey Plummer (Georgia Tech)
 Ailien Vuong (Georgia Tech)

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Overview

When creating a comprehensive plan, planners often are faced with a trade-off: To zone for industrial use (blue) or to zone for high density residential (purple). This study suggests that these two zoning types can coexist, coining mixed-industrial areas as 'blurple' zoning. To be successful, blurple-zoned areas require both heavy and light infrastructure, good land uses, and targeted regulation. Ultimately, however, how we divide up our land is more important than what we do with it.

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Focus in Our Study Area:

- "Since 2004, there has been a 12% reduction in the number of acres zoned for industrial use in the City of Atlanta." (2009 Industrial Land Study, N. Green Leigh, et. al.)
- There is a dangerous 5-point intersection at Ralph D. Abernathy Blvd., Metropolitan Pkwy., and Glenn St.
- The area is also bounded to the north by an interstate highway, I-20, and to the west by rail, both commercial and MARTA.
- Finally, the area is fragmented and lacks a framework.

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Suggested Improvements:

- Realign Ralph D Abernathy Blvd to resolve the 5-point intersection
- Infill street grid in industrial superblocks
- Develop larger blocks front rail corridors to accommodate light industry



The area surrounding the intersection of Metropolitan Parkway and Ralph D. Abernathy Boulevard, a site evaluated in the Blurple study.



Master plan proposed for the Ralph D. Abernathy Boulevard/Metropolitan Parkway corridor by the Blurple study.

Connect Atlanta Plan 2008

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Created by:

City of Atlanta
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Overview

The Connect Atlanta Plan is the City of Atlanta's first Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Its goals were to insure mobility, economic growth, and desired quality of life for the citizens and visitors of the City. Within our study area, the plan aimed to improve the street grid, through intersection improvements, new streets, bicycle infrastructure, and land uses, while implementing new transit connections.

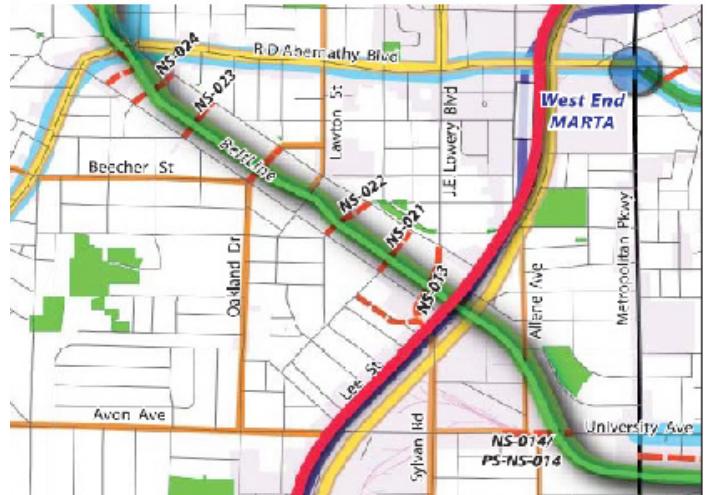
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Focus in Our Study Area:

- Introducing safety and aesthetic enhancement to street projects on Atlanta's Westside.
 - Streamlining and integrating important intersections of local and collector streets, transit options, and community land uses.
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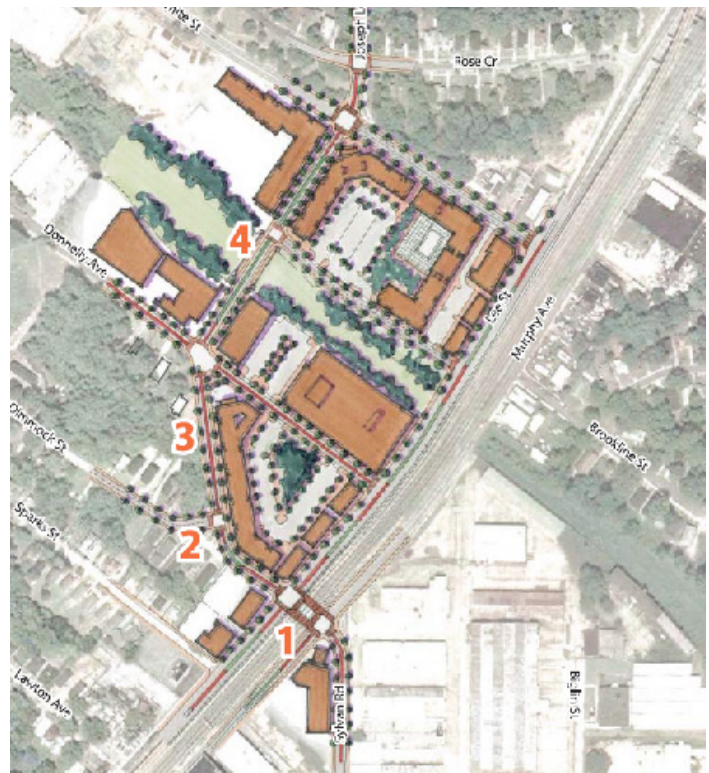
Suggested Improvements:

- Realignment of RDA/Metropolitan intersection (IR-004), Peachtree Streetcar (TR-009), BeltLine Transit (TR-001), extension of Sylvan Rd to White St (NS-013), new streets connecting White St to Donnelly Ave (NS-022, PS-NS-095, NS-023, NS-024, NS-026).
- Primary Bicycle Routes planned for White Hall St/ Murphy Ave, Ralph David Abernathy Blvd, Joseph E Lowery, and Sylvan Rd.
- Secondary Bicycle Routes planned for Greensferry Ave, Westview Rd, Lawton St, Hall St, Beecher St, Avon Ave, Oakland Dr, Allene Ave.



Proposed Projects around West End in the Connect Atlanta Plan

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Proposed Realignment of Joseph E Lowery and Lee St

Cycle Atlanta Phase 1.0 Study 2013

Created by:

City of Atlanta
Alta Planning + Design

Overview

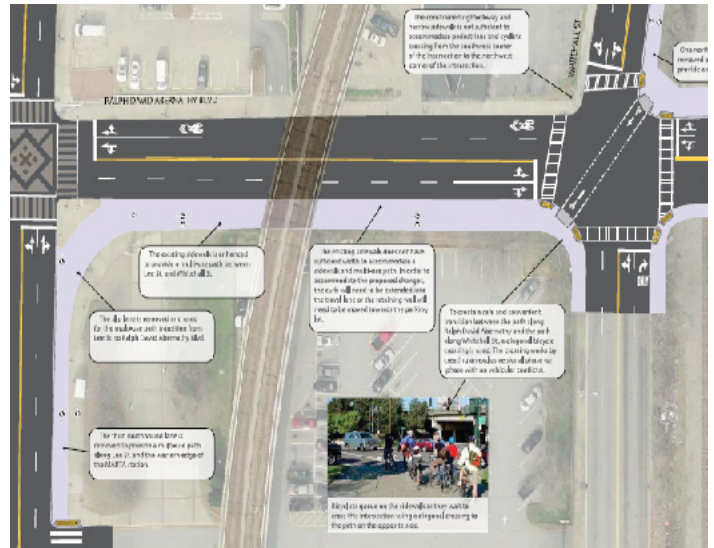
The Cycle Atlanta: Phase 1.0 Study is a supplement to the Connect Atlanta Plan, which is the adopted transportation plan for the City of Atlanta. While the Connect Atlanta Plan includes a city-wide network strategy to improve cycling routes, it does not provide specifics related to facility types and alignments along the five corridors that are the focus of this study. This study was developed to address the growing demand for better cycling conditions and provide more specific details for implementation. In short, the Cycle Atlanta: Phase 1.0 Study is an implementation strategy to develop dedicated, high-quality bikeways in the core of the City.

Focus in Our Study Area:

Southern end of "Peachtree Corridor" is split by rail corridor, resulting in a need multiple options for travel parallel to rail corridor, since the number of rail crossing are limited. Traffic volumes and size of right-of-way on Peters Street and Lee Street could accommodate a larger bicycle facility, while Murphy Ave/Whitehall Street have limited space.

Suggested Improvements:

- In Castleberry Hill: Multi-use Path on Peters (A34), Buffered Bike Lanes on Whitehall (A33)
- South of I-20: Multi-use Path on Whitehall crosses to the southside of RDA at West End MARTA then continues along the eastside of Lee St (with reduction of travel lanes to 4), Bike lanes along Murphy Ave to BeltLine, Buffered Bike Lanes along Murphy from BeltLine to Sylvan.



Multi-use path on Peters Street, Ralph David Abernathy, and Lee Street near the West End MARTA Station



Multi-use path (in purple) west of the railroad tracks and bike lanes (in red) east of the railroad tracks

Atlanta BeltLine Master Plan Subarea 1 2010

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Created by:

Atlanta BeltLine, Inc
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Overview

The BeltLine is a multi-faceted, multi-decade effort to integrate parks, mobility, land use, and circulation along a 22-mile loop of historic railroads that encircle downtown Atlanta. At completion, it will connect 45 neighborhoods and more than 100,000 people that currently live within half a mile of the corridor. Due to its size and impact, the BeltLine is divided into ten subareas for more detailed planning and evaluation. This document provides the recommendations for Subarea 1.

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Focus in Our Study Area:

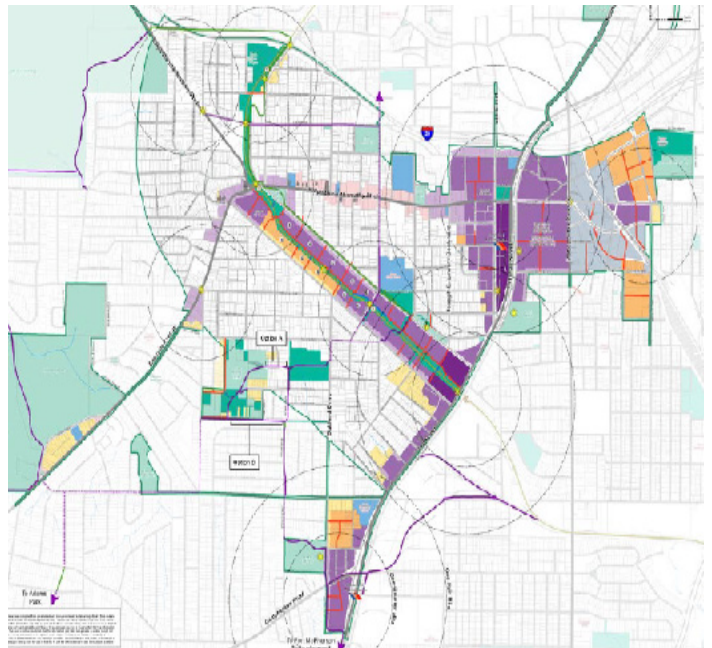
Encourage economic development; preserve historic resources; connect neighborhoods across existing barriers; seek balanced, connected, continuous, and redundant transportation system; ensure appropriate urban form; provide a balanced mix of compatible land uses; expand housing options; provide a variety of public spaces; promote sustainable living; increase public safety through appropriate design; reuse existing buildings and focus investment on redevelopment; enable incremental change.

.....
Suggested Improvements:

- Land Use: Build out Enota Park, encourage build-out of Kroger Citi-Center as dense mixed-use development, development of 6 to 9 story mixed-use development along Warehouse Row. High-density mixed use development encouraged around West End MARTA. Zoning change from commercial to low-rise mixed use along RDA from Lee St to Lawton.
- Mobility: Intersection improvements at Muse/Langhorne/Cascade/RDA, road diet on Langhorn, extension of Hopkins St, Greenwich Ave, and Bridges Ave, connect Peoples St, White St and the other White St through Rose Circle Park, pedestrian improvements on White St, Donnelly St, Peoples St, and on west side of Lee St from BeltLine to city limits. Increase residential density to improve need for BeltLine transit.



Artist rendering of development at Ralph David Abernathy and Cascade Avenue
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Recommended land uses in Subarea 1

Atlanta BeltLine Master Plan Subarea 2 2010

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Created by:

Atlanta BeltLine, Inc
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Overview

The BeltLine is a multi-faceted, multi-decade effort to integrate parks, mobility, land use, and circulation along a 22-mile loop of historic railroads that encircle downtown Atlanta. At completion, it will connect 45 neighborhoods and more than 100,000 people that currently live within half a mile of the corridor. Due to its size and impact, the BeltLine is divided into ten subareas for more detailed planning and evaluation. This document provides the recommendations for Subarea 2.

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Focus in Our Study Area:

Encourage the economic development of Heritage communities; identify and preserve historic resources and the local sense of place; utilize redevelopment to mend the urban fabric; provide a safe and balanced transportation system; provide connectivity, continuity, and redundancy among various modes of transportation; connect neighborhoods and public facilities with transportation; provide adequate parking facilities; provide a balanced mix of compatible land uses; expand housing options; provide a range of safe parks and open space.

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Suggested Improvements:

- Land Use: Development of Murphy Triangle, including park space, light industrial, restored historic structures, loft-style housing, and medium-density mixed use infill. Linear park along Catherine St in Adair Park after road diet.
- Mobility: Connect Avon Ave to University Ave, Connect Avon Ave across railroad tracks, Signalization at Sylvan Rd and Murphy Ave, pedestrian improvements along Avon Ave, Sylvan Rd, and Murphy Ave (from Sylvan to Avon).



Concept Plan for development at Murphy Triangle

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Artistic rendering of potential development at Murphy Triangle

Area Analysis and Future Recommendations: Southwest Atlanta 2013

Created by:

Travis Voyles, Georgia Institute of Technology School of City and Regional Planning

Overview

The Area Analysis and Future Recommendation report on Southwest Atlanta focuses on the neighborhoods of Castleberry Hill (southern portion), West End (eastern portion), Mechanicsville (western portion), Adair Park (northern portion), Pittsburgh (northern portion) and corridors in the area. The report summarizes major studies conducted in the study area, outlines the current socioeconomic and economic conditions and recommends industrial revival and reuse, safety enhancements, and greenspace network expansion.

Focus in Our Study Area:

- The Area-Wide Brownfield Planning Program report commissioned by the City of Atlanta provides information on the current condition of brownfields the West End and recommendations for brown-field improvement for several areas including the Metropolitan Yards redevelopment node.
- The Beltline Subarea 1 Master Plan encourages connecting the West End to the BeltLine.
- The report, Northside Drive as a Multimodal Development Corridor: Transformation from a Utilitarian Auto Route to Grand Transit Boulevard, envisions Northside Drive from I-75 to the West End community as a multimodal corridor.

Suggested Improvements:

- Improve brownfields in the Metropolitan Yard node by encouraging the development of studio, loft, and mixed-use opportunities, enhancing connectivity and access, and maintaining the current industrial character.
- Improve street connectivity through the Metropolitan and salvage yards and a BeltLine spur to the West End MARTA Station.
- Reroute Northside Drive to flow directly into the I-20 access road system by shifting Northside Drive into Peters Street and onto West Whitehall. This allows a straight connection with the West End MARTA and Lee Street.



Area-Wide Brownfield Planning Program Northern Node of Analysis Source: Leigh, et. al (2012)



Area-Wide Brownfield Planning Program Northern Node of Analysis Source: Leigh, et. al (2012)

West End Historic District Livable Center Initiative Report 2001

Created by:

City of Atlanta

Overview

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program provides grants to local governments and nonprofits to create and implement plans to help the communities improve urban areas consistently with regional goals and improve transportation infrastructure to reduce congestion and improve air quality. The LCI program was founded in 1999 and is managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Metropolitan Planning Agency for the Atlanta region. The West End Historic District Livable Center Initiative Report assessed existing conditions in the area, created goals through a visioning process with community, and set out an implementation strategy.

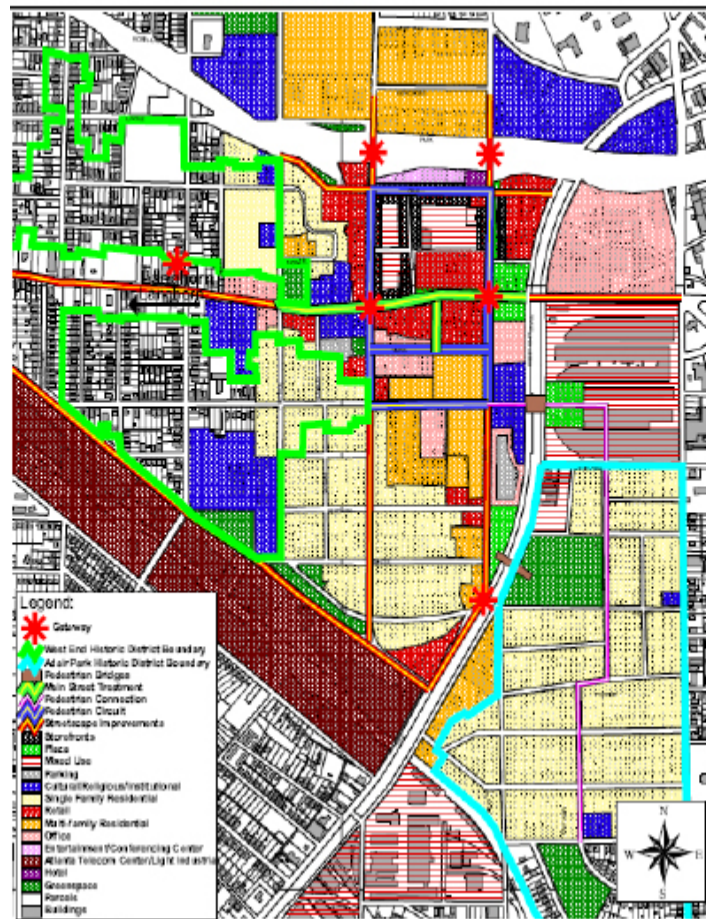
Focus in Our Study Area:

- Strengthen the historic districts
- Encourage development of vacant property with a diversity of medium-density development
- Encourage infill and redevelopment
- Increase multimodal connectivity
- Connect the transportation system to other areas and expand transportation goals
- Enhance community identity
- Create civic space
- Increase employment opportunities

Suggested Improvements:

- Create development standards which strengthen the historic district
- Re-classify land use for appropriate parcels and market concept plan to developers
- Identify appropriate sites for redevelopment and market sites to developers
- Increase pedestrian and bicycle network connectivity and increase vehicle connectivity through improved intersection design
- Implement a comprehensive transportation improvement program which includes traffic calming and truck traffic measures
- Market existing historic identity through gateways, sign markers, banners, etc.
- Create a series of parks and plazas which frame the neighborhood
- Encourage the development of office space in conjunction with retail.

West End Historic District LCI Concept Plan



Concept Plan for West End Historic District LCI improve-

Lancaster BLVD Transformation

Lancaster, California

Stakeholders

Lancaster Redevelopment Agency (LRA)
Local Merchants
Various Public/Private Partnerships

Overview

In order to improve the central business district of Lancaster, California the city used public investment and public/private partnerships to invest in the local merchants to create a sense of ownership to the community. Investing public money, the city initially made small changes to the street scape, and later investing in housing and civic amenities to create and thriving mixed use, pedestrian oriented district.

Critical Issues:

- The central business district of Lancaster had suffered from disinvestment due to suburban sprawl and a main street that was oriented for high speed automobile traffic.
- Recruiting new businesses and keeping existing was difficult due to competing suburban shopping centers.
- An abundance of unused parking space created an unfriendly pedestrian environment.
- Private investment was unlikely without public investment in civic functions and businesses to support the transformation.
- Residences were needed to enliven the district and support the commercial market.

Initiatives:

- The center lanes of the primary arterial were removed and converted to a flexible space for pedestrians, activities, and parking on an as needed basis.
- The parking was made to blend in with the surrounding environment
- Existing sidewalks were repaired and replaced while being enhanced with new materials such as brick pavers at crosswalks.
- New street lights made, street trees, and furniture a more inviting pedestrian space.
- To increase the livability and vibrancy of the community, a 13.5 acre park with amphitheater and athletic facilities was added.
- Following the completion of the artist housing, the city added a new museum of art and history.
- The city sold \$5.1 million in low income housing tax credits to reinvest into the improvements and civic amenities.

- Partnerships were established with several local financial institutions and larger businesses to assist in funding the improvements and establishing the fund for rehabilitating the commercial spaces.
- To establish a permanent resident base to support the revitalized commercial district, over 800 units were added or rehabilitated.
- Affordable housing was incorporated to enhance the art and culture of the community that the city was attempting to cultivate.
- During the street improvements the city appointed Block Captains (merchants) that would be responsible for disseminating information to fellow merchants, creating a sense of local ownership while ensuring that all merchants were aware of the changes and how they would be affected.
- A fund was established that would assist new merchants to rehab existing space and improve spaces for existing merchants, minimizing the financial impact on each business while enhancing the community.

The Numbers:

- \$11 million in street scape improvements (LRA)
- \$41 million in additional public investment (LRA)
- \$130 million in private investment
- Property values increased 9.5% (2011-2012)
- 800 Permanent Jobs
- 50 New businesses
- Sales tax revenue increased by 100%
- 44% increase in merchant revenue
- 20% reduction in water usage
- 110,000 square feet of rehabbed commercial space
- \$273 million in economic output

Source: LRA

Applicability to West End

- Improvement of pedestrian environment.
- Enhancement of local merchants and perception of community.
- Establishment of smaller changes that lead to much greater changes.
- Public/private partnerships.
- Improvement of existing commercial facilities.
- Re-branding the community was a central focus to change its image.



Conceptual Plan
(Source: Moule & Polyzoides Architects & Urbanists)



View at Night
(Source: Moule & Polyzoides Architects & Urbanists)

Mariposa District Denver, Colorado

Stakeholders

Denver Housing Authority (DHA)
City of Denver
Denver School District
Denver Department of Health
Local Art Organizations
Multiple Financial Institutions

Overview

To capitalize on its expanding light rail system, the City of Denver and a multitude of other stakeholders made a large scale investment to improve a struggling community while providing transit access to job centers. The project incorporated elements of education, public health, and job training in addition to the built improvements. Additionally, the project was invested heavily in community involvement and input.

Critical Issues:

- The low income district of Mariposa was in need of greater investment without driving away its existing residents through gentrification.
- In order to break the cycle of poverty issues of education and job training needed to be incorporated.
- To truly address the needs of the community, and not the perceived needs, the stakeholders needed to substantially involve the existing community.

Initiatives:

- Total housing units in the district will have increased from 270 to 800 by 2018.
- All existing low-income units were preserved and rehabilitated.
- Existing residents were closely involved for relocation and temporary housing locations during the rehabilitation.
- The local health department conducted a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to determine the needs of the community.
- The analysis from the HIA resulted in the proposal of bicycle lanes, walking trails, and improved sidewalks to encourage physical activity.
- Partnerships were established with local educational institutions to promote healthy eating and physical activity recommendations and guidance.
- New buildings are anticipated to achieve LEED platinum ratings. Playgrounds, courtyards, parks, and green spaces will be dispersed throughout the development. Traffic calming will be a central fixture to each street.

- The city and DHA made use of existing educational institutions to provide new resources in health and education to existing and new residents.
- The inclusion of the local health department and education system transcended to all elements of the plan to provide a holistic approach to the physical environment and overall quality of life.
- Partnerships were established with a multitude of financial institutions to provide capital that would have proven to be more difficult to obtain.
- Over 120 community meetings involving the citizens of the community and other organizations to ensure that their concerns were heard and incorporated.
- The plan included a youth culinary training program and a youth media studio to provide community resources and career training.

Applicability to West End

- Extensive list of stakeholders, involving several public and private organizations in order to create a truly comprehensive plan.
- Focus on improving transportation infrastructure, particularly through transit, pedestrians, and bicycle.
- Preserved existing housing and affordability to prevent a complete gentrification of the community.
- Incorporated elements of education and health into all aspects of the plan.
- Extensive community involvement to ensure that the needs of the community were sufficiently met.

HDMT Healthy City Elements	Community Priority Issues	Plan Response
 Healthy Housing	HH.4: Healthy, quality housing Median income is \$38,000 compared to \$55,000 citywide.	800 High Performance Units
 Sustainable Transportation	ST.2: Affordable, accessible public transportation options 67% of residents say transportation is an obstacle to employment.	Coordinated Shuttles
 Social Cohesion	SC.2: Promote personal safety Neighborhood crime rate is 15.2 per 1000 compared to 5.7 per 1000 citywide.	Active Streets + Open Space
 Environment	ES.3: Affordable, high-quality food access Only 13% have recommended servings of high fiber food.	New Community Garden
 Healthy Economy	HE.2: Increase jobs and equity in income and wealth 75% of residents are unemployed.	Job Training Space + Partners
 Public Infrastructure	PL5: Park, open space, rec access 55% of residents are obese or overweight, 77% have high blood pressure.	Variety of Open Spaces

Planning Process
(Source: Mithun Architects and Planners)



Plan
(Source: Mithun Architects and Planners)



Section Through Typical Street
(Source: Mithun Architects and Planners)

Jackson Square Redevelopment Initiative Boston, Massachusetts

Stakeholders

Boston Redevelopment Authority
 Jackson Coordinating Group
 Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority
 Boston Department of Housing and Community Development

Overview

The Boston Redevelopment Authority and the Jackson Coordinating Group wanted to better connect the City of Boston, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury through redeveloping Jackson Square with affordable housing and access to employment centers. Additionally, the Jackson Coordinating Group wanted extensive involvement with the execution of the plan to ensure that all points of agreement were executed.

Critical Issues:

- How do the stakeholders ensure that the developed property is done according to the agreed upon plan and appropriately phased?
- Data and information needed to be obtained for every street and potential development opportunity.
- The stakeholders needed parcels belonging to the MBTA to ensure that the redeveloped area had optimal access to transit.
- The stakeholders wanted to ensure that community needs would be met.

Initiatives:

- Housing served as the focal point of the plan, by creating new affordable units near an existing MBTA station, that provided efficient access to employment centers and surrounding communities.
- Specific criteria was established for the building design and the overall design of the units to ensure that they met particular standards and served as adequate housing units.
- A street by street analysis was conducted to assess what improvements needed to be made to improve the overall walkability and bicycle capacity of the streets.
- A criteria was established that will be utilized for any new streets in the community to ensure that they are cohesive with the renovated street scapes.
- Improvements to streets included lighting, traffic calming, and improved surfaces.
- The first phase of the project (103) units was completed using a multitude of state tax credits and grant opportunities.

- The Jackson Coordinating Group and Boston Redevelopment Authority worked with the MBTA to have an electrical substation relocated to make available optimal land for transit accessible housing.
- JCG partnered with potential developers, while establishing a requirement that they are thoroughly involved in any design and planning process to ensure that the original plan is executed appropriately.
- JCG and the BRA established development phases to ensure that the parcels that represented the greatest opportunity for change were developed first.

Applicability to West End

- Usage of local and state tax credits and grant opportunities.
- The coordination between the development parties and the MBTA to have access to more desirable properties.
- The long term control of ensuring that the plan is executed appropriately and providing the fluidity to make necessary changes and circumstances change.
- The identification of priority development opportunities to ensure the greatest potential for change is accomplished.



Jackson Square
(Source: Google Earth)



Jackson Square Rendering
(Source: Boston Redevelopment Authority)

Pop Up Oakland Oakland, California

Stakeholders

Local Businesses
Commercial Property Owners/Managers (Peter Sullivan Associates)
Oakland Office of Economic & Workforce Development
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Overview

Small business retailers are given the opportunity to locate to vacant spaces in a commercial district and provided 6 months free rent. The businesses “pop up” simultaneously with the goal of becoming a network of permanent, mutually supportive small businesses. Rather than requiring the upfront capital usually expected for small business launches, participating businesses could instead use start-up capital for tenant build-out, cooperative marketing, and inventory to help grow the business during the initial states of development. After six months, the retailers have the option to stay permanently and sign a long-term lease.
.....

Critical Issues:

- How do you foster opportunities among independent local small businesses while simultaneously increasing investment in struggling retail districts?
.....

Initiatives:

- The incubator approach has created an opportunity for businesses to decrease costs by establishing a network and community of shared resources and to avoid duplication in operating and start-up costs.
- The program has seen three of the first five businesses launch, sign long terms leases, and maintain their presence in the community.
- Initial grant of \$30,000 through the City of Oakland’s Tenant Improvement Program.
- Additionally the City of Oakland subsidizes approximately \$100,000 of free office space rent for one year (4,000 square feet of space at \$2 per square foot - \$8,000 rent per month).
.....

Applicability to West End

- Public/private partnership to support a small business incubator and help revitalize struggling commercial districts (e.g. building relationships with property owners).
- The city’s redevelopment agency provides guidance in regards to permits, marketing, publicity, and grand opening.
- Implementing a pop up network of businesses rather than an individual store to foster pooling of resources and cooperative marketing.

- Small business ownership opportunities that lead to permanent leases for small businesses while filling vacant spaces with potential long-term retail tenants, and increasing retail options to meet the needs of local residents and surrounding communities.



Pop up shop network in Oakland, CA
(Source: Popuphood-Oakland)

Decatur Station Renovation Decatur, Georgia

Stakeholders

MARTA
City of Decatur

Overview

To support the 1982 Decatur Town Center Plan, the MARTA Decatur station was renovated to better compliment the goals of the plan and to create a more fluid pedestrian environment. As central element to downtown Decatur, it was essential that the station did not create a physical or visual barrier within the square. Ultimately, the Decatur Station renovation resulted in arguably the largest single change, as part of several other smaller changes that has created one of the great neighborhoods of not only the Atlanta region, but the country as well.

Critical Issues:

- How can a transit station be renovated or modified to be better integrated into the community and less of an obstruction?
- How can a project of this scale be funded and coordinated?
- Can a transit station serve a multitude of functions as the centerpiece of a community master plan?

Initiatives:

- Coordination was required between the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority and the City of Decatur to ensure that the needs of both parties were adequately satisfied.
- The two parties used an outside consultant to produce the design, requiring extensive coordination to ensure that the vision shared by both parties was executed.
- The Atlanta Regional Commission provided a \$4.4 million grant to complete the design and the construction.
- The city spent over \$10 million in infrastructure improvements immediately surrounding the station.
- The station renovation was part of an even larger urban initiative that included reduced lane widths, widened sidewalks, more than 400 trees planted, upgraded street furnishings, and improved public art.
- The scale of the station was reduced to be more cohesive with Church Street and the surrounding businesses.
- Planters were removed to increase pedestrian traffic flow and improve sight lines around the station.
- A plaza over the station was established to extend the performance area and pedestrian gathering spaces.
- ADA accessibility was improved at both entrances.

Applicability to West End

- Streetscape improvements that created a better sense of community and improved the pedestrian environment.
- Renovation of the MARTA station that better integrated it into the community rather than serving as a barrier.
- Partnered with MARTA to complete the work
- Utilized grants (ARC) to assist in funding the work.



Church Street Entrance
(Source: FTA)

Evergreen Cooperatives Initiative Cleveland, Ohio

Stakeholders

Local Hospitals, Universities, and Government Offices
Regional Businesses
Public/Private Funding Partners
City of Cleveland Department of Economic Development
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Overview

The Evergreen Cooperatives Initiative is a network of mutually supportive cooperatives that meet the sustainability and procurement needs of local Cleveland institutions while simultaneously offering employees and owners training in life skills, business operations, and cooperative ownership.

- Evergreen Cooperative Laundry provides affordable, green laundry service for local institutions.
 - Ohio Cooperative Solar offers residential weatherization services. Additionally, they install, service, and maintain solar arrays on commercial buildings.
 - Green City Growers Cooperative is a hydroponic food production greenhouse that provides sustainable, high-quality produce for local consumption.
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Critical Issues:

- How do you create sustainable wealth-building prospects and living wage jobs in low-income communities characterized by long-term disinvestment, fleeing capital, and a lack of economic opportunities.
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Initiatives:

- Evergreen Cooperative Laundry currently employs 21 people.
- Annual revenue of \$1.1 million.
- Washes approximately 2 million pounds of laundry per year.
- Green City Growers Cooperative currently employees 25 people, most of whom are from the surrounding area.
- The cooperative currently produces 65,000 heads of lettuce per week.
- Ohio Cooperative Solar has weatherized more than 200 homes and installed three large scale solar arrays.
- The cooperative has annual revenues of \$1.3 million
- Employs 25 workers.

- **Evergreen Cooperative - Initial Capitalization of \$5.5 million**

- Sources of Financing - \$5 million leveraged New Market Tax Credit
- \$1.3 million - U.S. Bank CDE
- \$1.4 million - Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund Loan
- \$1.5 million HUD 108 loan
- \$0.8 million Shorebank loan
- \$500,000 from non NMTC sources

- **Ohio Cooperative Solar - Initial Capitalization of \$10 million**

- \$3 million Federal Energy Tax Credit
- \$1 million syndicated sale of accelerated depreciation of renewable energy equipment
- \$4.5 million in longer term financing
- \$1.5 million Ohio Stimulus Fund
- \$3 million New Market Tax Credit Loan - Key Bank
- \$1.5 million 10 year loan from Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund

- **Green City Growers Cooperative-Initial Capitalization of \$15 million**

- Leveraged NMTC financing that will leave the cooperative with \$4 million in equity at the end of seven years
 - \$8 million HUD Section 108 Loan
 - \$2 million HUD Brownfield Economic Development Initiative grant
 - \$1 million from the Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund
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Applicability to West End

- Leverage the procurement needs with local institutions, hotels, and businesses.
- Creating a network of worker-owned, green cooperatives that offer ownership, life skill, and operational training opportunities.
- The opportunity to provide wealth building, living wage jobs, long-term workforce and ownership training, while meeting the sustainable and procurement needs of local institutions.



Green City Growers Cooperative
(Source: City of Cleveland)



Ohio Cooperative Solar
(Source: City of Cleveland)

5th Street Bridge Atlanta, Georgia

Stakeholders

Georgia Institute of Technology
 Georgia Department of Transportation
 City of Atlanta Department of Planning
 Midtown Alliance
 Ivan Allen College
 Local Midtown Businesses and Corporations
 Federal Highway Administration
 Centergy
 Technology Square

Overview

To better connect the Georgia Institute of Technology campus and Midtown Atlanta, the 5th Street Bridge was proposed to create an enhanced pedestrian experience. The bridge was to offer a seamless connection between the campus and Midtown Atlanta that was original separated by the Downtown Connector. Ultimately the bridge created opportunities for new businesses and to create Tech Square which has arguable become the heart of the Georgia Tech campus.

Critical Issues:

- Utilizing existing structures, how does Georgia Tech and Midtown Atlanta enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly connectivity while creating opportunities for future investment?

Initiatives:

- The original 4 lanes, at a total width of 48', was reduced to two automobile lanes and bicycle lanes.
- Sidewalk widths were increased from 8' to 24'
- A 125' wide (75' northbound, 50' southbound) of landscaped areas created an enhanced walking experience while establishing a visual and sound barrier to the Downtown Connector.
- A shuttle was established to connect the campus to Technology Square and the MARTA Midtown Station.
- Investment was placed into local retail, national chains, and commercial office space.

Applicability to West End

- Reduction of automobile capacity to create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Improvement of street amenities (lighting, vegetation, etc.)
- Connection of the commercial center to the school.
- Provision for a shuttle service connecting transit, the commercial center, and the campus



5th Street Bridge Before Improvements
(Source: Aspire Magazine)



5th Street Bridge After Improvements
(Source: Georgia Institute of Technology)

Problem Statement and Critical Issues

Following our examination of the community and its many attributes the following problem statement was created:

How can the economic potential of the West End be fully realized by improving transportation, land use, and the environment in the study area?

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Critical Issues:

In order to address the problem statement we used our research and field analysis to establish the following critical issues that we will craft resolutions for:

Economic Development and Land Use:

- How do we stimulate business and economic growth?
 1. Business incubators
 2. Community Business Fund
 3. Popup Shops

- 1. How do we use aesthetic improvements to enhance economic growth and community involvement?
 - a. Enlist the local community (residents and businesses) to take a part in the improvement (street improvements, etc.)
 - b. Rehabilitation of existing buildings to entice new buildings
 - c. Marketing and branding
 - d. Enhancing the entry points to West End to be more inviting (Lee Street Bridge, Ralph David Abernathy tunnel, West End Station)

Transportation

1. How do we use Lee Street to connect the AUC and West End?
 - a. Improved Bridge over I-20
 - i. Shading devices
 - ii. Wider sidewalks
 - iii. More narrow street width
 - iv. Improved lighting, landscaping, furniture
 - b. Lee Street Improvements
 - c. Branding/marketing

2. How do we integrate West End Station into the community
 - a. Lee Street Improvements
 - b. Renovation of the existing station (see Decatur Station renovation)
 - c. Improvement to the traffic flow, parking, and empty smaller parcels surrounding the station.
 - d. Improve the pedestrian scale of the station at street level.

3. How do we connect the communities to the East and South of West End?
 - a. Can the Beltline play a role?
 - b. Is there a way to connect across the existing freight rail lines?
 - c. How can the tunnel under the rail lines on Ralph David Abernathy be more inviting?