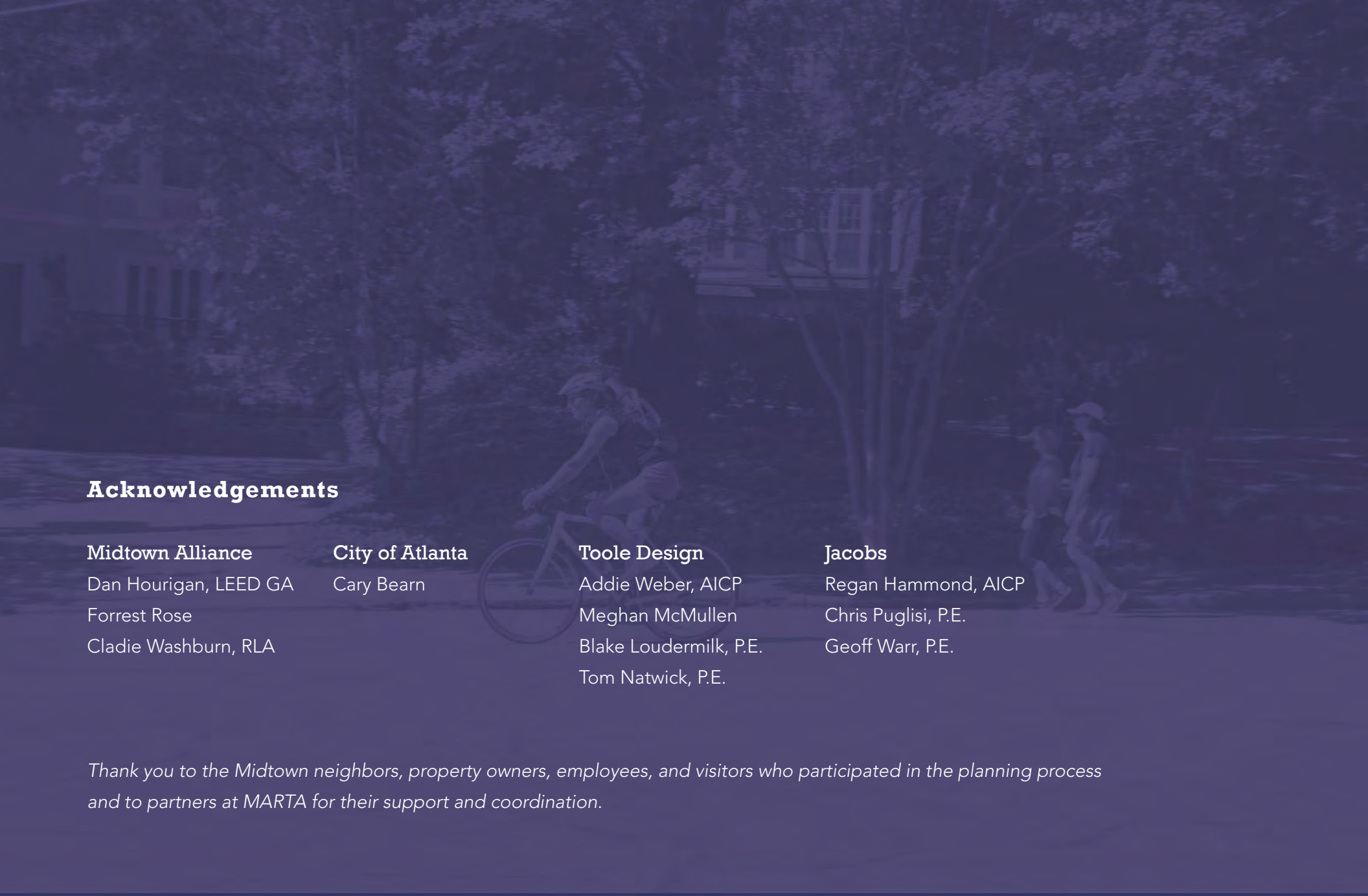
15th Street Area LIT Lanes and Pedestrian Connections

Existing Conditions Report

May 2020

MIDTOWN Alliance TOOLE DESIGN Jacobs



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Meghan McMullen
Blake Loudermilk, P.E.
Tom Natwick, P.E.

Jacobs
Regan Hammond, AICP
Chris Puglisi, P.E.
Geoff Warr, P.E.

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Existing Conditions Report | May 2020

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Reimagining a safe, convenient east-west connection for everyone in Midtown.

Arts Center MARTA Station

Piedmont Park

Introduction

Micromobility is rapidly changing the way people move and engage in cities all over the world. In many ways, the surge of scooters, e-bikes, and the like, highlights the deficiencies that many cities have in providing safe and comfortable transportation systems for the most vulnerable users. Midtown Alliance and the City of Atlanta have taken a proactive approach to balancing the area's transportation system and protecting these vulnerable users. The 15th Street Light Individual Transportation (LIT) Lane and Pedestrian Improvement Study was identified in the 2017 *Midtown Transportation Plan* (project BK-05) as an opportunity to provide a much needed low-stress, east-west connection between the Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park, which ties into the BeltLine Eastside Trail.

This project builds on several initiatives underway within Midtown: the 15th Street Extension, the Piedmont Avenue Lane Repurpose— including a multi-use trail between 14th Street and 15th Street— and the West Peachtree Street/ Spring Street "Quick Build" Protected Bike Lane Project.

A key factor in determining a preferred route for this study is the ability to use the **"quick build"** method

What are LIT Lanes?

Light Individual Transportation (LIT) lanes provide right of way for emerging personal transportation modes. E-bikes, electric scooters, and a host of other rolling devices, along with traditional bicycles, fall within the speed criteria for LIT Lanes. The LIT Lane is design for people and goods that move faster than a pedestrian, but slower than a car. They are generally designed with some level of protection between the LIT Lane and the vehicle lane.

Study Purpose

- Identify a preferred east-west LIT lane corridor with enhanced pedestrian facilities to major destinations in Midtown between Piedmont Avenue and the proposed 15th Street extension.
- Improve comfort, safety, and access for pedestrians, cyclists, and scooter riders in Midtown between Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park.
- Connect seamlessly to the new 15th Street extension and the future multi-use trail planned to terminate at the intersection of Piedmont Avenue and 15th Street.
- Propose design features to enhance safety and visibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and scooter riders and facilitate slower vehicular speeds.
- Study a potential signal at Arts Center Way and 15th Street.
- Make recommendations for wayfinding signage and potential place making opportunities.

for implementation. This method is being used by many large cities in an effort to balance the transportation system and increase the comfort and safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. The quick build process seeks to reduce the amount of pre-construction and construction time by working closely with partner agencies upfront and with the expectation that the project may undergo changes after installation, and by using materials that allow such changes. These projects are generally installed within a year of the start of planning.

The urgent need to implement this project aligns with citywide initiatives to improve safety for all roadway users, like the **Mayor's Action Plan for Safer Streets** and the recent adoption of a **Vision Zero** policy, which aims to reduce traffic-related fatalities in the City of Atlanta to zero. This project is bookended by two target corridors from the Action Plan for Safer Streets: West Peachtree Street and Piedmont Avenue. By connecting these routes, this project will expand Atlanta's network of safe LIT facilities and create meaningful access in the heart of the city.

Study Area

The study area includes the broader area surrounding the 15th Street corridor to consider potential alternative alignments, identify nearby destinations with high volumes of users, and examine multimodal traffic patterns within the network. It extends from the Interstate 75 (I-75)/Interstate 85 (I-85) Connector to the west to Piedmont Park to the east and approximately a quarter mile north and south of 15th Street, from 17th Street to the north to 12th Street to the south.

The Corridors

Three corridors are being considered for LIT lanes and enhanced pedestrian facilities to create a high-quality route between Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park:

15th Street

16th Street/Arts Center Way

14th Street

This report provides a review of major trip origins and destinations in the area, an overview of each of the alternative corridors, multimodal traffic analysis, preliminary survey, stakeholder input, and recommendations for a preferred alternative route.

Cyclists often ride on narrow, uneven sidewalks within the study area to avoid mixing with vehicular traffic

Figure 1. Alternative Project Corridors

Community Outreach

Members of the Midtown community and partner entities like the City of Atlanta and MARTA were invited to weigh in on the route selection, opportunities, concerns, and design considerations as part of the planning process. The initial round of engagement conducted at the time of this publication included a virtual site tour and stakeholder interviews. Additional activities will extend to the broader public and will take place after the publication of this Existing Conditions Report, which will provide a basis for discussion.

Activities

Virtual Site Tour

Project team members from Midtown Alliance, the City of Atlanta, and the consultant team held a walking audit to review the alternative corridors, identify key challenges and opportunities, and brainstorm potential solutions and tradeoffs at the beginning of the project. It was held virtually due to social distancing requirements in response to COVID-19. A detailed summary is available in the appendix.

Stakeholder Interviews

The project team interviewed several major stakeholders as part of the initial round of public engagement. These included representatives from the Woodruff Arts Center, Ansley Park Civic Association, MARTA, Cousins Properties, Colony Square, Colony House and Hanover House condos, City of Atlanta, and First Church of Christ, Scientist. Overall, these stakeholders were supportive of the LIT lanes project. A detailed summary of these interviews is available in the appendix.

Opportunities and Challenges

The table below summarizes the major opportunities and challenges for each of the streets within the study area, according to participants in initial stakeholder activities. Additional detail is available in the appendix. In addition to street-specific feedback, stakeholders also emphasized the need to maintain ADA-compliant access to bus stops throughout the study area.

Table 1. Key Stakeholder Opportunities and Challenges

Street	Opportunities	Challenges
14th Street	Holistic review of state corridor capacity needs underway by GDOT	GDOT coordination required High existing traffic volumes and turning movements Corridor was recently repaved and restriped
15th Street	Consolidate bus stops near Peachtree Street to Peachtree Street Expansive right-of-way between Peachtree Street and Piedmont Avenue for some type of buffered LIT facility Direct route between Piedmont Park and Arts Center MARTA Station	Retain on-street residential parking Identification of an alternative location for Woodruff Arts Center bus staging Visibility issues from steep slope between Peachtree Street and Arts Center Way High volume of traffic from Promenade garage Conflict point at Peachtree Circle intersection Sidewalk improvements needed outside Midtown CID boundary
16th Street	Fewer MARTA bus stops	Active on-street passenger loading Periodic lane closures for filming
Arts Center Way	Scheduled for repaving in 2020	Conflicts from Woodruff Arts Center loading dock and garage
Peachtree Circle	Existing 4-foot bicycle lanes (narrow and fading)	Conflict point at 15th Street intersection Sidewalk improvements needed outside Midtown CID boundary
Piedmont Avenue	Connect to designed multi-use trail on the east side of the street	N/A - project underway to address
West Peachtree Street	Connect to potential future bike lanes Install full signal at 16th Street intersection to allow buses to use the north MARTA station exit	On-street commuter bus and school bus staging No known timeline for quick build protected bike lane funding

Origins and Destinations Analysis

Installing LIT lanes and high-quality pedestrian connections along corridors with high levels of activity increases the potential utility of the facilities and expands mobility choices for a greater share of the Midtown community. All three alternative alignments capture two key trip origins and destinations: Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park. As their routes diverge between these end points, each picks up a different set and intensity of potential trip origins and destinations.

This section identifies existing and upcoming destinations within the study area, which spans from the I-75/I-85 Connector to the west and Piedmont Avenue to the east and from 17th Street to the north to 12th Street to the south. This area includes destinations within approximately a quarter mile north and south of the core 15th Street route within the natural barriers of the highway and Piedmont Park.

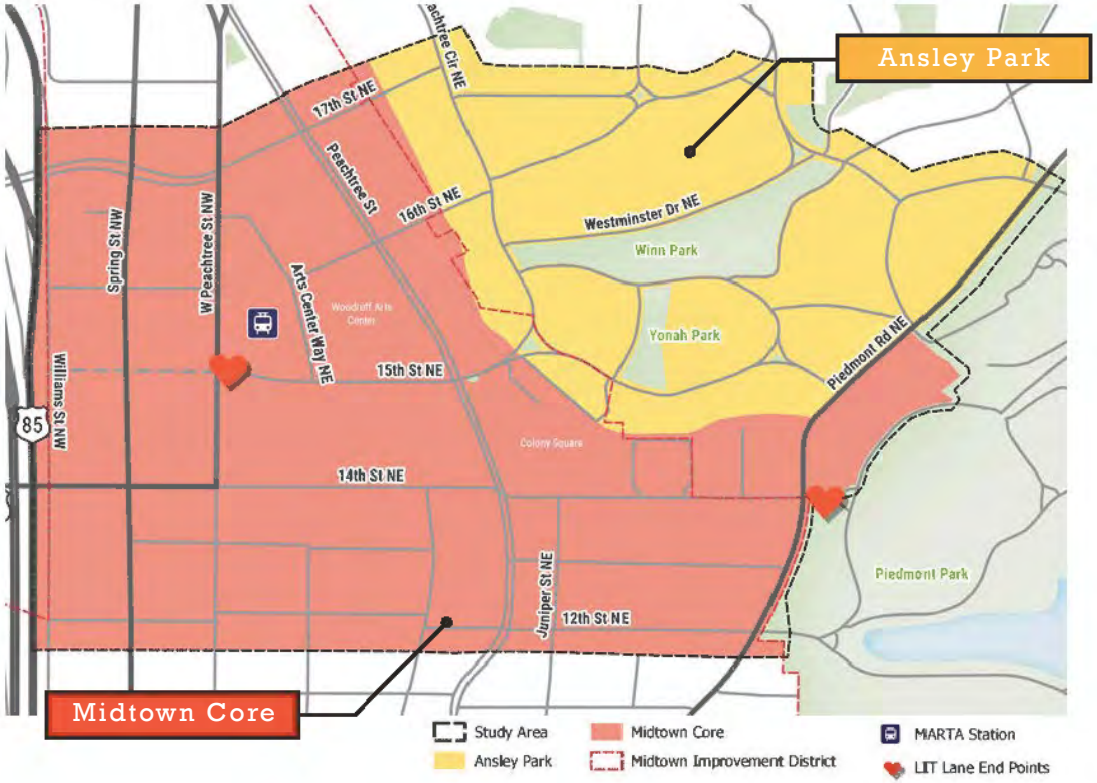
Neighborhoods

The study area includes two neighborhoods with differing levels and types of development: Midtown Core and Ansley Park.

Midtown Core

The Midtown Core area is the higher density, mixed-use portion of the study area, generally located west of Peachtree Street and south of 15th Street. It includes mid- and high-rise residences, office towers, hotels,

Figure 2. Study Area Neighborhoods



retailers, restaurants, and cultural facilities. The western portion of the Midtown Core has a higher concentration of commercial uses, transitioning to a higher concentration of residences toward Piedmont Park to the east.

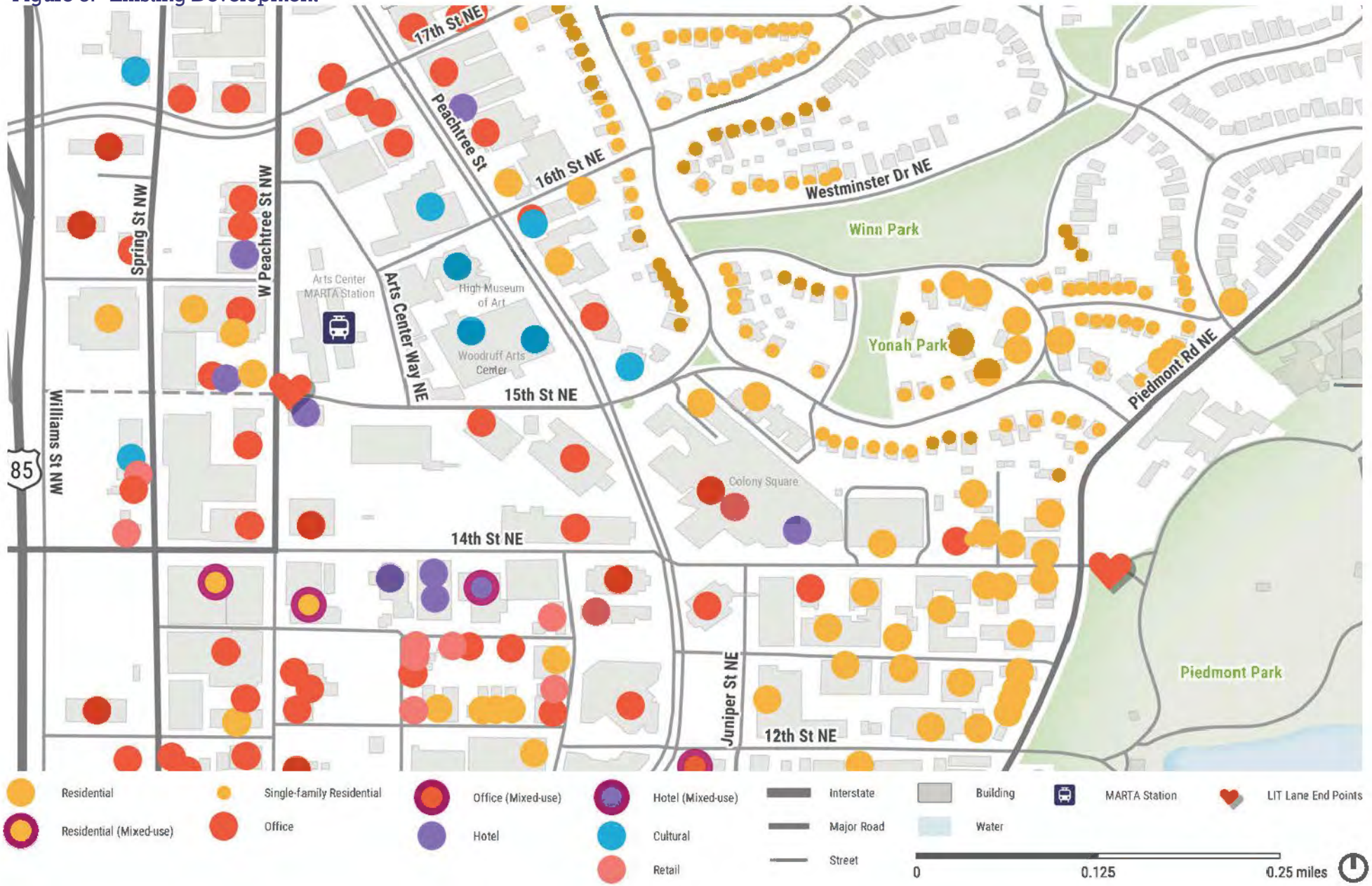
Ansley Park

The Ansley Park residential neighborhood is located east of Peachtree Street and north of 15th Street. It is comprised of large single-family homes, with a limited number of townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and small multifamily buildings.

Existing Development

Figure 3 illustrates the types of development within the study area. To illustrate the relative intensity of development served by each alternative, Table 2 on page 10 categorizes existing development according to proximity to each of the three alternative corridors. It includes existing development within 1/8-mile of each alignment. In some cases, the same development is within 1/8-mile of multiple corridors and is included in the count for each corridor. As a result, the sum of the development totals for all the alignments is greater than the actual total for existing development within the study area. Similarly, some developments in the study area are more than 1/8-mile from any of the alignments and are not included in any of the alignment counts. Because square footages for retailers and restaurants within the study area were not consistently available, they are not quantified in the table.

Figure 3. Existing Development



Highest concentration of development

Table 2. Existing Development within 1/8-mile of Alternative Alignments*

Alignment	Residential (Units)	Office (SF)	Hotel (Rooms)
14th Street			
#	4,802	5,862,844	1,580
%	81%	68%	73%
15th Street			
#	1,933	4,085,603	798
%	33%	48%	37%
16th Street			
#	2,312	4,877,080	958
%	39%	57%	44%
Total	**5,930**	**8,588,076**	**1,655**

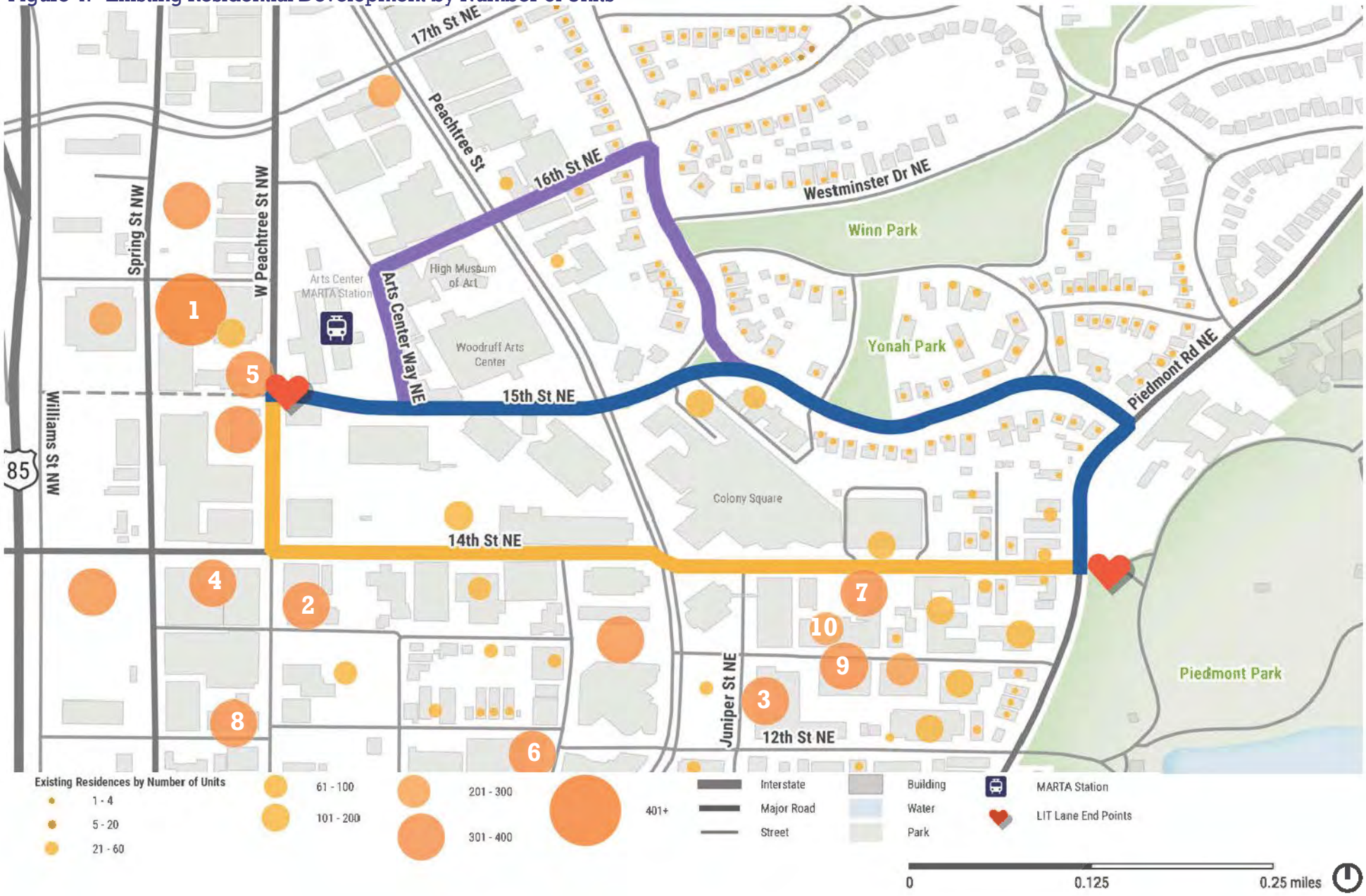
* Estimate based on available data; exact figures may vary

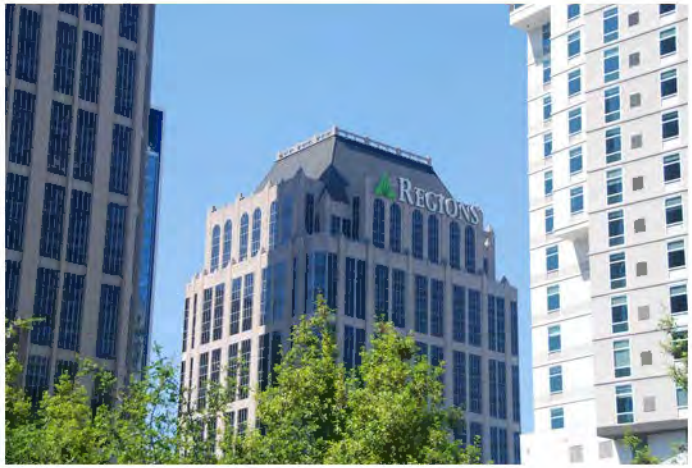
Residential

There are nearly 6,000 residential units within the study area. The highest concentrations of residences are along the Spring Street and West Peachtree Street corridors to the west and between Juniper Street and Piedmont Avenue from 12th Street to 14th Street to the east. As shown in Figure 4, the developments with the most residential units are:

1. 1280 West (432 units)
2. Atlantic House (400 units)
3. Park Central (397 units)
4. Icon Midtown (390 units)
5. AMLI Arts Center (350 units)
6. 77 12th Street (330 units)
7. Mayfair Tower (323 units)
8. Skyhouse Midtown (320 units)
9. Vireo (308 units)
10. Mayfair Renaissance (296 units)

Figure 4. Existing Residential Development by Number of Units



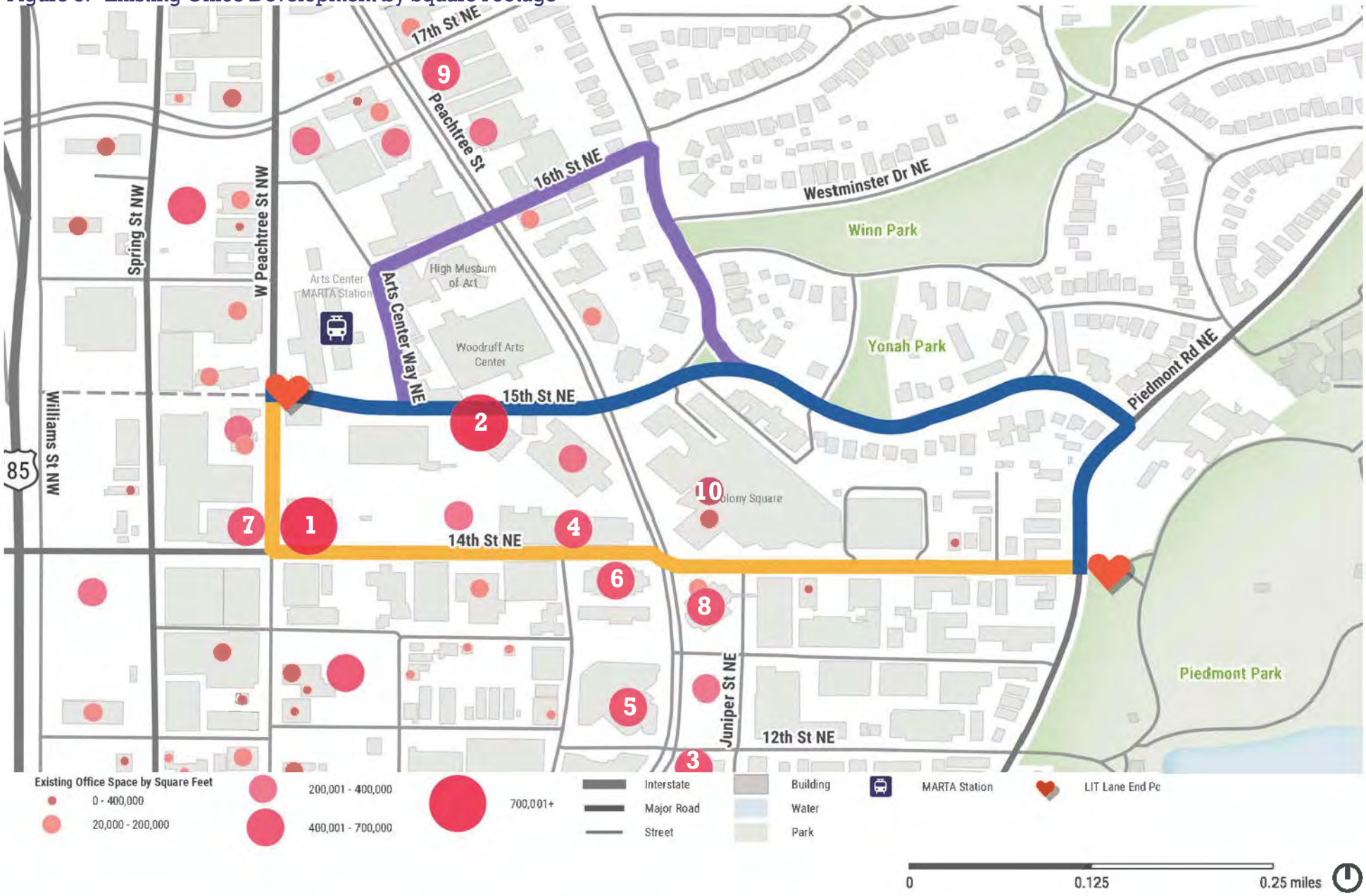


Office

The study area is home to major corporations and small local offices, with more than 8.5 million square feet of existing office space. Peachtree Street and 14th Street have attracted the highest volumes of office space of the corridors within the study area. As shown in Figure 5, the developments with the most office space are:

1. One Atlantic Center (1,079,310 SF)
2. Promenade II (774,344 SF)
3. 12th and Midtown Phase 2 (697,677 SF)
4. 1180 Peachtree Street (670,443 SF)
5. 1100 Peachtree Street (581,833 SF)
6. Proscenium (533,135 SF)
7. Regions Plaza (499,601 SF)
8. Campanile Plaza (446,626 SF)
9. Pershing Point Plaza (410,000 SF)
10. Colony Square (394,072 SF)

Figure 5. Existing Office Development by Square Footage



Hotel

Midtown welcomes visitors with its luxury hotels, affordable accommodations, and local stays, including 2,154 rooms within the study area. Like major office developments, most hotels are located along Peachtree Street and 14th Street, along with a smaller cluster directly around the Arts Center MARTA Station. As shown in Figure 6, area hotels include:

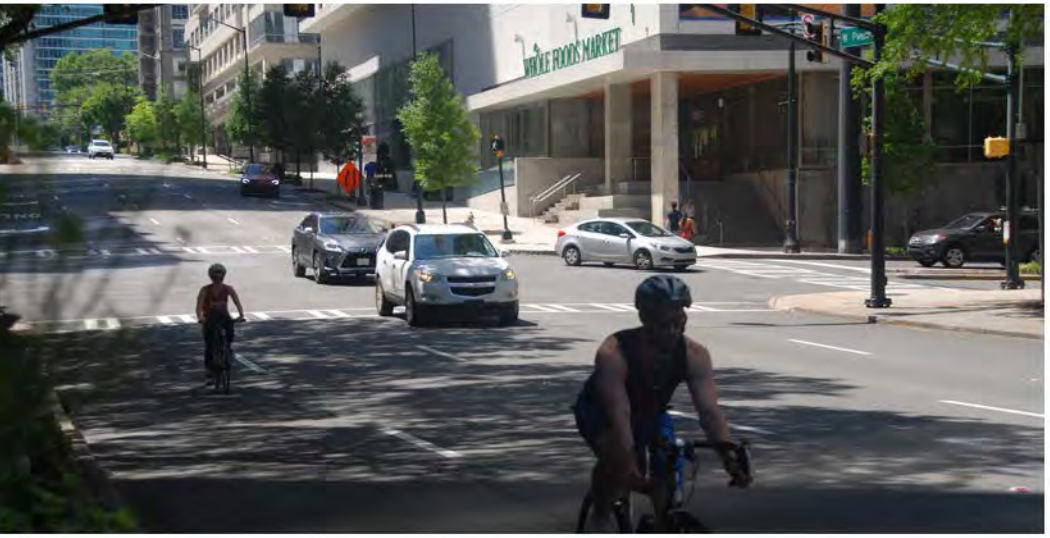
1. W Atlanta – Midtown Hotel (499 rooms)
2. Loews Atlanta Hotel (414 rooms)
3. Marriott Suites (250 rooms)
4. Four Seasons (244 rooms)
5. Hampton Inn and Suites (186 rooms)
6. Moxy Hotel (155 rooms)
7. AC Hotel by Marriott (133 rooms)
8. Artmore Hotel (103 rooms)
9. Chic Collection by Nohotel (10 rooms)

Figure 6. Existing Hotel Development by Number of Rooms

Retail and Restaurants

Retail spaces within the study area are typically restaurants or smaller, neighborhood-serving shops and services like banks, hair salons, and fitness studios. Most are located on the ground floor of mixed-use developments, with a limited number of freestanding buildings, often converted historic homes. Major retailers are not common in the study area. The newly opened Whole Foods at the corner of 14th Street and West Peachtree Street is the only full-service grocery store in the area. Clusters of retailers and restaurants include Colony Square with its atrium food court and signature restaurants; ground floor storefronts on Peachtree Street; and Crescent Avenue, which is known for its restaurant and nightlife scene.

1175
P
PARK


WHOLE FOODS MARKET

EST 1979 SKATE ESCAPE
Skate Escape

Clockwise from top: 1) Woodruff Arts Center; 2) First Church of Christ, Scientist; 3) MODA and public library

Cultural and Civic Destinations

Midtown is the cultural center of Atlanta and home to destinations like the Woodruff Arts Center, SCADshow, and the Atlanta Botanical Garden that draw crowds from throughout the region for exhibits and live performances.

Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is one of the premiere cultural destinations in the Southeast and has anchored north Midtown for more than 50 years. Its campus is home to three arts organizations: the High Museum of Art, Alliance Theatre, and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. It occupies the entire block between 15th Street, Arts Center Way, 16th Street, and Peachtree Street. The campus attracts high volumes of visitors, with more than 850,000 patrons visiting in 2019. Arts education is central to the Woodruff Arts Center's mission, and it serves more than 200,000 students annually, including many field trips to its campus.

Guests can access the campus by MARTA, park at its garage on Arts Center Way, use on-street parking on Peachtree Street, or be dropped off at one of its drop-off areas at the corner of Peachtree Street and 15th Street (Callaway Plaza) or on Arts Center Way.

Woodruff Arts Center Buses

Bus drop-off and staging for field trips at the Woodruff Arts Center is a critical issue in selecting the preferred LIT lane route, as they often occupy a travel lane on multiple streets in the area for extended periods of time. Drop-offs for the High Museum occur on 16th Street near the ramp and drop-offs for the Alliance Theatre and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra occur in Callaway Plaza. Most drop-offs occur on weekdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. during the school year. On a typical day, there are 11 to 15

buses. On days when all three facilities have events, there can be up to 60 buses. There is not a designated area for bus drivers to wait while the field trips are in progress. They regularly park and wait on nearby streets, including 15th Street, 16th Street, Arts Center Way, and West Peachtree Street in front of the MARTA Station.

Woodruff Arts Center Filming

The facility is regularly used as a film set, typically one to two times per month. Film crews often get permits for lane closures on 16th Street and in some cases on all four streets surrounding Woodruff Arts Center.

Public Library

The Peachtree Branch of the Atlanta-Fulton County Library System is located at the corner of Peachtree Street and 16th Street. Patrons can check out books and media from its physical and digital collections, as well as participate in its programming activities. There is limited public parking available in the on-site garage.

Museum of Design Atlanta (MODA)

MODA occupies 9,000 square feet next to the public library. It is the only design museum in the Southeast and hosts exhibits featuring architecture, industrial and product design, fashion, and other design professions. There is a small parking garage on site.

SCADshow

The SCADshow theater is operated by the Savannah College of Art and Design. The 13,300-square-foot facility has a 560-seat capacity and hosts live performances, movie screenings, and private events. Its main entrance is at the corner of 14th Street and Juniper Street and attendees generally park at the Campanile Parking Garage.

Whole World Improv Theater

Whole World Improv Theater on Spring Street produces multiple live ensemble shows every week and offers improv classes for the public. Guests use a surface parking lot behind the theater.

Atlanta Botanical Garden

The Atlanta Botanical Garden is located in the northeast corner of the study area on Piedmont Avenue. It features 30 acres of outdoor gardens and major exhibitions that bring more than 500,000 visitors annually. There is a parking garage on-site for visitors; guests regularly park on the streets in nearby neighborhoods when the garage is full during major events.

Clockwise from top:
1) 14th Street gate to Piedmont Park;
2) People biking, running, and walking around Piedmont Park;
3) The Active Oval near the 14th Street gate has a running track and fields used for group sports

Parks and Recreation

The study area features a regional park (Piedmont Park), two neighborhood parks (Yonah Park and Winn Park), and private recreation at the Piedmont Driving Club.

Piedmont Park

Piedmont Park is Atlanta's premiere park, offering a green retreat in the heart of the city. The 185-acre park features open lawns, sports fields and courts, a pool, picnic areas, playgrounds, dog parks, and event venues. It also hosts major festivals and events throughout the year, like Music Midtown and the Peachtree Road Race. The Piedmont Park Conservancy estimates more than 4 million people visit the park annually. The proposed project will terminate at the park entrance at the intersection of Piedmont Avenue and 14th Street, the closest entrance to the Arts Center MARTA Station. As a regional park, it attracts visitors from all around Metro Atlanta, some of whom park on-site in the garage near the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

Yonah Park

Yonah Park is one of several public parks in the Ansley Park Neighborhood and is located directly on the 15th Street alignment. This quiet neighborhood park is a relaxing alternative to Piedmont Park, offering natural areas and a playground. There is no designated parking area; visitors can walk, bike, or park on nearby streets.

Winn Park

Winn Park is also located in the Ansley Park neighborhood just north of Yonah Park and shares its wooded character. Like Yonah Park, there is no dedicated on-site parking.

Piedmont Driving Club

The Piedmont Driving Club is a private social club whose Midtown clubhouse is located on Piedmont Avenue near the intersection of 15th Street. It hosts regular member activities and can be rented as a venue for special events. There is a drop-off area on Piedmont Avenue with limited surface parking and valet parking service, as well as a loading area north of 15th Street.

Clockwise from top: 1) Yonah Park; 2) Piedmont Driving Club; 3) Winn Park

End-of-trip Facilities

Many trips within the study area begin and end at end-of-trip facilities like the MARTA station and bus stops, bike share stations, or parking garages. From these locations, people walk the remaining distance to their final destination.

Arts Center MARTA Station

See Transit Operations beginning on page 29 for information on the Arts Center MARTA Station.

Bus Stops

See Transit Operations beginning on page 29 for information on area bus stops.

Bike Share Stations

Relay bike share stations are likely origin and destination points for cycling trips. There are four existing bike share stations located within the study area:

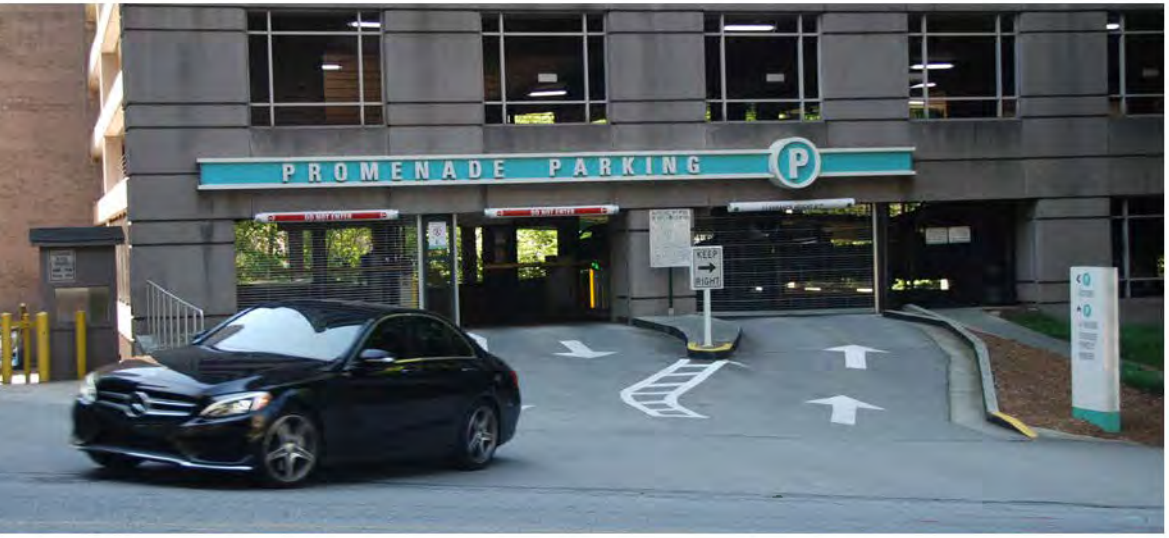
- Arts Center MARTA Station
- SCADshow (14th Street and Juniper Street)
- Piedmont Park (14th Street Entrance)
- Piedmont Park (12th Street Entrance)

Figure 7 shows the locations of existing bike share stations; existing and planned bicycle facilities within the study area are shown in Figure 11 on page 36. Each of the corridors connects with at least one other existing or planned bicycle facility and at least one bike share station. 14th Street has the highest concentration of bike share stations nearby, with three located within 1/8-mile of the corridor.

Garages

Parking garages are the endpoints for many vehicular trips and their entrances create conflicts for pedestrians and cyclists. There are more than 25 garages within the study area, including 16 with direct access to one of the alternative alignments. Figure 7 illustrates garage locations in the area, including those directly facing the corridors.

Figure 7. Bike Share Stations, Vehicle Parking, and Drop-off Zones



14th Street

- Atlantic House Garage
- SP+ Parking Garage
- Marriott Suites Garage
- 1180 Peachtree Garage
- LAZ Parking Garage
- AC Hotel by Marriott Garage
- Colony Square Garage
- Windsor at Midtown Garage
- Mayfair Garage

15th Street

- Hampton Inn and Suites Garage
- Promenade Garage
- Colony House Garage

16th Street/Arts Center Way

- Promenade Garage
- Woodruff Arts Center Garage
- 1315 Peachtree Street Garage
- First Presbyterian Church Garage

The 14th Street alignment has the highest concentration of parking garages, with nine garages that have entrances along the 0.8-mile corridor.

On-street Parking

Garages in the study area provide high-capacity vehicle parking. They are complemented by on-street parking, which offers convenience parking for a limited number of vehicles. Along the alternative alignments, on-street parking is located along:

- 15th Street (south side in front of Proscenium and the Castle)
- 16th Street (north side from Arts Center Way to Peachtree Street – Sundays only)
- 16th Street (south side from Peachtree Street to Peachtree Circle)
- 15th Street (north and south sides throughout Ansley Park)
- Peachtree Circle (east and west sides throughout)

Drop-off Zones

Some vehicle trips end at drop-off zones, either for rideshare pick-up and drop-off or for valet service. The most common drop-off zones within the study area are at the Woodruff Arts Center and at hotels, which often receive guests at a porte-cochere and offer valet parking.

Future Development

Significant additional development is currently under construction or proposed within the study area, which will create additional origins and destinations for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as generate additional vehicle trips. Table 3 outlines upcoming development as of April 2020, which includes 1,990 residential units, 2,543,575 square feet of office, 303,070 square feet of retail, and 641 new hotel rooms within the study area. The locations of these upcoming developments are illustrated in Figure 8.

Table 3. Upcoming Development

	Address	Name	Residential (Units)	Office (SF)	Retail (SF)	Hotel (Rooms)
Under Construction						
1	1295 Spring St	Midtown Union	355	610,800	33,500	210
2	1150 Spring St	14th and Spring Street	338	312,000	5,500	-
3	1105 W Peachtree St	1105 West Peachtree and 40 West 12th	64	675,000	20,000	178
4	1197 Peachtree St	Colony Square Building 500	-	172,000	160,000	-
5	1155 Peachtree St	Campanile Expansion	-	95,675	30,288	-
6	208 12th St	208 12th St	13	-	1,000	-
7	98 14th St	Opus Place	195	213,000	22,000	-
Total Under Construction			**965**	**2,078,475**	**272,288**	**388**
Proposed						
8	1382 Peachtree St	1382 Peachtree Street	284	-	6,182	-
9	1230 W Peachtree St	1230 West Peachtree Street	328	258,000	8,600	-
10	Crescent Ave	Crescent Ave and 13th St	40	-	-	-
11	1138 Peachtree St	1138 Peachtree	317	-	10,000	-
12	1125 Peachtree St	1125 Peachtree St	56	207,100	6,000	253
Total Proposed			**1,025**	**465,100**	**30,782**	**253**
Total Upcoming Development			**1,990**	**2,543,575**	**303,070**	**641**

Figure 8. Upcoming Development

Left to Right: 1) Opus construction site on 14th Street; 2) Colony Square expansion at 14th Street; 3) Colony Square expansion at 15th Street

Table 4 considers the location of upcoming development relative to the alternative alignments, showing the amount of upcoming development within 1/8-mile of each alignment. In some cases, the same development is within 1/8-mile of multiple corridors and is included in the count for each corridor. Similarly, some developments in the study area are more than 1/8-mile from any of the alignments and are not included in any of the alignment counts. The total development is not equal to the sum of development within 1/8-mile of each corridor. The 14th Street alignment has the greatest amount of upcoming development within 1/8-mile, including 40 percent of residential units, 55 percent of office, 78 percent of retail, and 67 percent of hotel rooms.

Table 4. Upcoming Development Within 1/8-mile of Each Corridor

	Residential (Units)	Office (SF)	Hotel (Rooms)	Retail (SF)
14th Street				
#	805	1,407,775	431	234,888
%	40%	55%	67%	78%
15th Street				
#	523	643,000	-	190,600
%	26%	25%	0%	63%
16th Street				
#	523	643,000	-	190,600
%	26%	25%	0%	63%
Total	**1,990**	**2,543,575**	**641**	**303,070**

Transit Operations

Midtown is served by multiple transit operators who help make the area accessible for people throughout the Atlanta region. The focal point of transit activity within the study area is the Arts Center MARTA Station, which serves as a multimodal facility allowing riders to transfer between modes, routes, and service providers. It is supplemented by local bus service with stops along most streets in the study area.

Arts Center MARTA Station

The Arts Center MARTA Station serves the northern part of Midtown and is located on 15th Street between West Peachtree Street and Arts Center Way. The station offers service to MARTA's Red and Gold rail lines; local bus service; regional commuter bus service; ZipCar; a Relay bike share station; scooter drop zones; and a shuttle to Atlantic Station. As of 2017, there were 6,612 average daily entries to the station. There are three station entrances: West Peachtree Street at the main level; 15th Street at the main level; or Arts Center Way at the upper level. Users can take the escalator or elevator down to the main level when entering at the plaza on Arts Center Way. There is a small

parking lot on the southeast corner of the lot with 33 spaces available to riders.

There is a bus bay at the station; commuter buses also load along West Peachtree Street. Currently, bus ingress and egress are restricted to the 15th Street driveway due to limited signal operations at the northern bus loop access point, which is located at the intersection of 16th Street and West Peachtree Street. There is an opportunity to reexamine bus operations at the 16th Street entrance and potentially improve route efficiencies by coordinating with GDOT, MARTA, and Midtown Alliance to install a full traffic signal.

MARTA has identified Arts Center Station as a future transit-oriented development (TOD) site and is actively considering proposals to redevelop the 9-acre site into a high-

Figure 10. Transit Operations

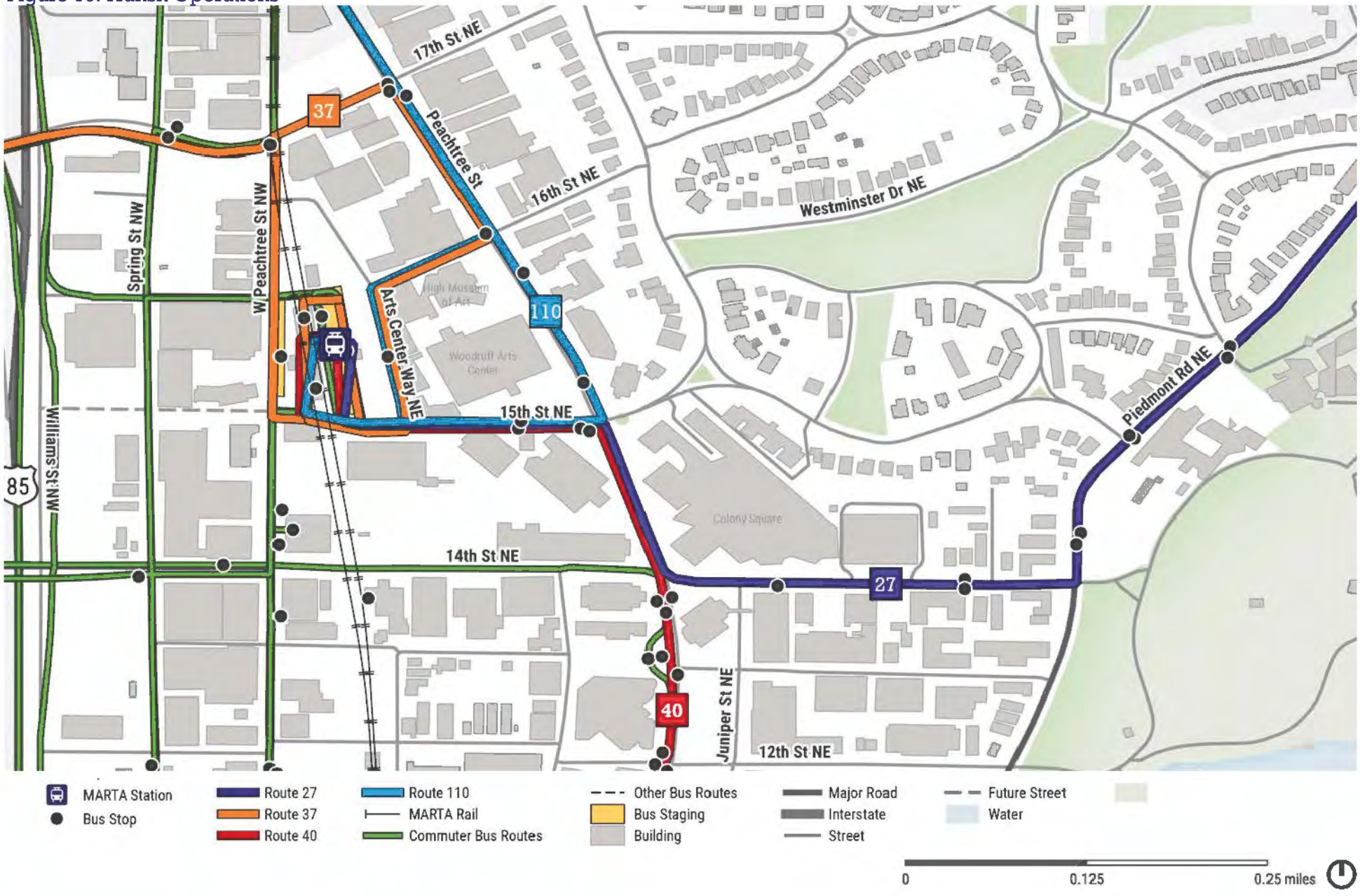
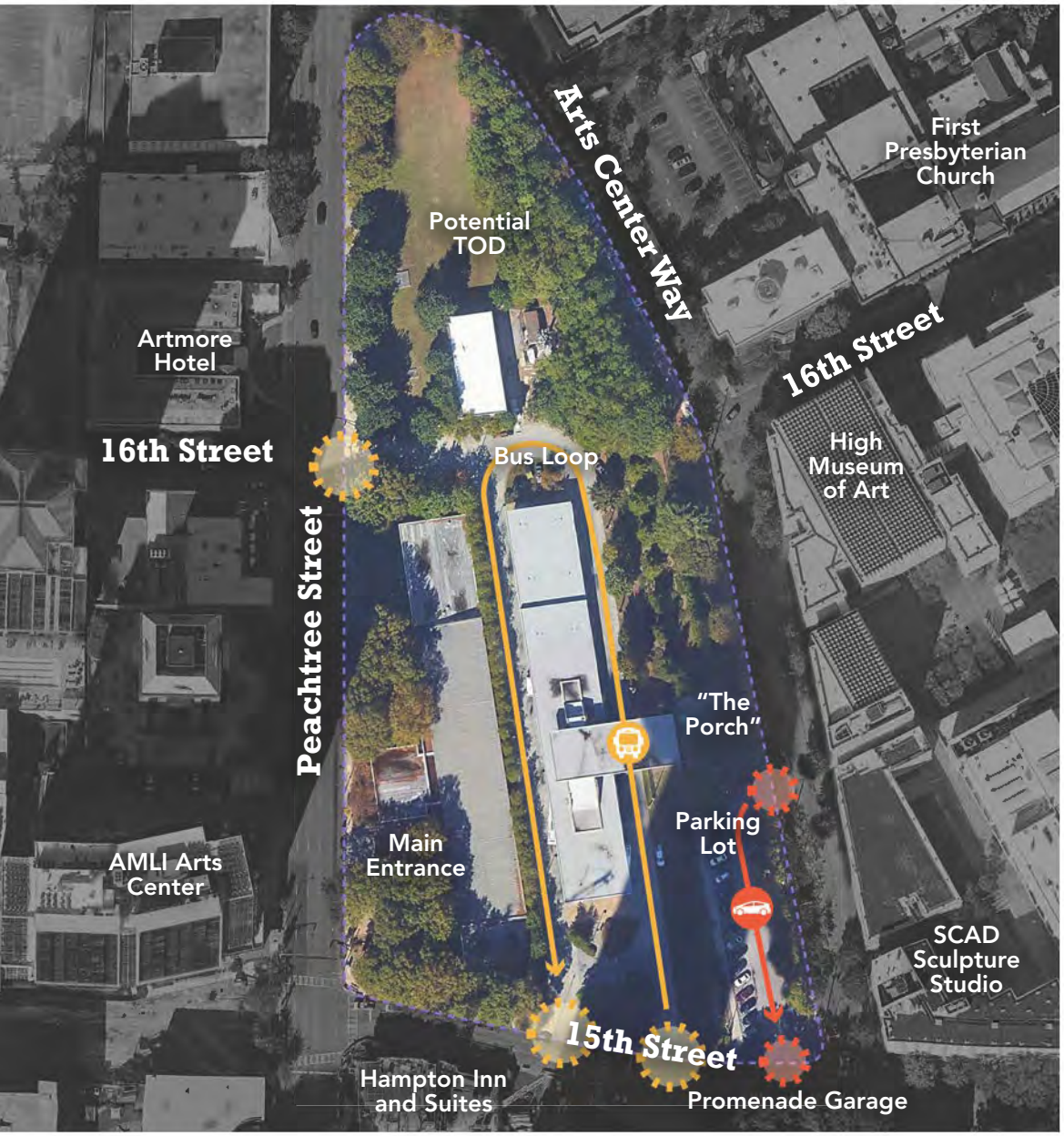


Figure 9. Arts Center MARTA Station Aerial



density destination. MARTA owns 6.1 acres on the north side of 15th Street, where the station is located, as well as 3 acres south of 15th Street. Two areas have been identified as TOD opportunities: a 0.95-acre area on the north end of the site and the 0.68-acre surface parking lot, illustrated in Figure 9. According to MARTA's TOD Guidelines, Arts Center is classified as an "urban core" station. This means that as development proposals are considered, appropriate densities are defined as those with floor area ratios of 8.0 to 30.0, residential densities of 75 dwelling units per acre or more, and heights between 8 and 40 stories. Strong pedestrian connections are essential for urban core stations. It is typical for urban core stations to have no park-and-ride facilities and for bus connections to occur at street level without any special provisions like bus pullouts.

Local Bus Routes

MARTA operates four local bus routes within the study area: Routes 27, 37, 40, and 110. Figure 10 on page 31 illustrates route and stop locations. Route 110 has the highest ridership of all routes in the area, with more than three times as many average weekday passenger trips as any other route, as shown in Table 5.

Route 27: Cheshire Bridge Road

This route runs between the Arts Center and Lenox MARTA stations. Within the study area, it operates on 15th Street, Peachtree Street, 14th Street, and Piedmont Avenue, then heads north to Buckhead.

Route 37: Defoors Ferry Road

Route 37 operates between Arts Center Station and the Moores Mill Shopping Center in the Bolton neighborhood. Approaching the station, it runs along Peachtree Street, 16th Street, Arts Center Way, and 15th Street. As it departs, it runs along West Peachtree Street and 17th Street, then heads west with stops at Atlantic Station and Howell Mill Square.

Route 40: Peachtree Street/ Downtown

Route 40 runs between the Arts Center and West End MARTA stations. Within the study area, it operates on Peachtree Street and 15th Street, then turns around at the station and returns along the same route.

Table 5. Local Bus Routes

Route	Average Weekday Passenger Trips
27	856
37	874
40	1,050
110	3,568

Table 6. Top 10 Bus Stop Average Weekday Boardings and Alightings

	Stop Name	Stop ID	Average Weekday Boardings (On) and Alightings (Off)	Applicable LIT Corridor	Routes Served
1	15th Street at Arts Center Way	68056	131	15th Street, 16th Street	27, 40, 110
2	Peachtree Street at Spring Street	68067	90	N/A	110
3	Peachtree Street at Spring Street	68032	59	N/A	110
4	14th Street at Juniper Street	69356	33	14th Street	27
5	Peachtree Street at 16th Street	68044	31	16th Street	37, 110
6	17th Street at Spring Street	999795	30	N/A	37
7	Peachtree Street at 14th Street	81144	24	14th Street	40
8	15th Street at Peachtree Street	68050	22	15th Street	27, 40
9	14th Street at 14th Place	99972304	22	14th Street	27
10	Peachtree Street at Peachtree Circle	68066	20	N/A	110

Source: MARTA, December 2019

Route 110: Peachtree Road/Buckhead

Route 110 operates between three MARTA stations: Arts Center, Buckhead, and Lenox. Within the study area, it runs along Peachtree Street, 16th Street, Arts Center Way, and 15th Street. This route is slated to become an Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) route as part of the More MARTA plan, with implementation expected by 2022. This may involve major stop improvements, quarter-mile stop spacing, and a review of routing into Arts Center Station. If ridership increases, it could warrant increasing the vehicle size from 40-foot buses to 60-foot buses.

Local Bus Stops

Bus stops in the study area are typically located on the sidewalk and do not have amenities like benches, shelter, or trash bins. Table 6 on page 33 highlights the 10 most actively used stops within the study area. Along the alternative alignments, the most actively used stops are located at 15th Street at Arts Center Way, 14th Street at Juniper Street, and Peachtree Street at 16th Street. Arts Center MARTA Station serves significantly more bus riders than any of the bus stops in the area. It averages 3,395 weekday boardings and alightings—more than 25 times the volume of activity at the most popular bus stop.

Maintaining easy, ADA-compliant access to these stops is essential and must be a design consideration for the LIT lanes project. In some cases, nearby bus stops may be consolidated to both streamline bus operations and reduce the number of potential conflict points between bus riders and LIT lane users. Opportunities exists for the consolidation or relocation of stops along 15th Street near the Peachtree Street intersection, to Peachtree Street.

Commuter Bus Operations

Many suburban commuters arrive in Midtown by bus, using CobbLinc (Routes 10, 10C, and 102), Gwinnett County Transit (Route 10A), or SRTA Xpress (Routes 431 and 440) service. Commuter buses either pick up in the MARTA station bus loop or at the staging area on West Peachtree Street in front of the station. Within the study area, routes operate along West Peachtree Street, 15th Street, Peachtree Street, and 14th Street. These operators typically use coach buses, which may be larger than local buses and require wider turn radii. Commuter bus service is generally limited to peak morning and evening periods and occurs primarily on weekdays.

Corridors

This section examines the three potential corridors that are being considered as part of this study. It includes an overview, feedback from the virtual site tour, maps, typical street section diagrams, and photographs for each corridor. In many cases, the character of these streets changes significantly on either side of Peachtree Street, with higher intensity uses to the west of Peachtree Street and a calmer, residential quality east of Peachtree Street.

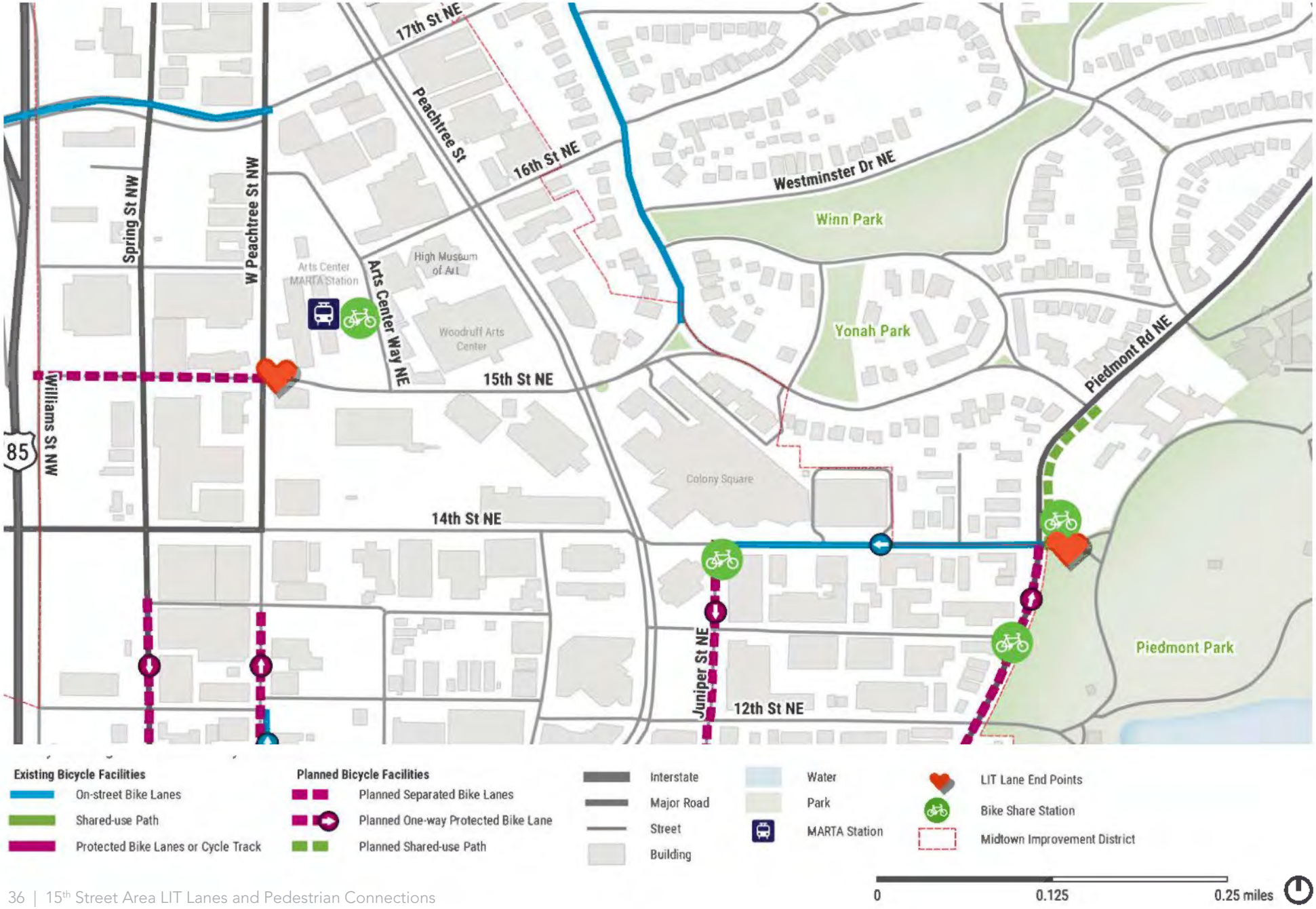
Supporting Connections

To complete the connections to the end-point destinations, portions of north-south streets will need to be redesigned with quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These connections will likely be included regardless of which east-west alignment is selected and include:

- Piedmont Avenue
- West Peachtree Street
- West Peachtree Street Midblock Alternative

On Piedmont Avenue and West Peachtree Street, projects are currently underway to install bicycle facilities and upgrade pedestrian facilities, which will improve connections to this project. Planned projects that relate to each corridor are discussed in the following section and illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Existing and Planned Bicycle Facilities



Corridor 1: 15th Street

Overview

15th Street is the primary corridor in consideration for the LIT lanes and pedestrian connections project. It connects directly to the Arts Center MARTA Station at the intersection of West Peachtree Street and terminates at Piedmont Avenue to the east, just a block north of the 14th Street gate entrance to Piedmont Park, as shown in Figure 12. This route provides connections to the Woodruff Arts Center, Promenade I and II office towers, Colony Square, and the Ansley Park neighborhood. There are relatively few major garage entrances along this route. Existing parallel parking on the south side of 15th Street in front of Promenade and the Castle, as well as on both sides of the street throughout the Ansley Park neighborhood, creates conflict points for cyclists along this route and must be considered in any recommendations. Frequent on-street bus staging around the Woodruff Arts Center would likely need to be relocated to accommodate LIT lanes. Most of the route has moderate topography, though a relatively steep hill between Arts Center Way and Peachtree Street may be challenging for some cyclists. Within the Midtown Core area, right-of-way is constrained and would likely require the street to be reduced from three to two travel lanes to accommodate protected LIT lanes. Within the Ansley Park neighborhood, the unmarked street is very wide and could likely accommodate protected LIT lanes within the right-of-way without reducing vehicular throughput or on-street residential parking. The triangular intersection of 15th Street and Peachtree Circle may need to be redesigned to accommodate a LIT lane and streamline vehicular operations. West of Peachtree Street, many of the sidewalks along 15th Street are in poor condition and need to be replaced. Because the Ansley Park neighborhood is not a part of the Midtown Community Improvement District, this would require cooperation from the City of Atlanta and/or the Ansley Park neighborhood.

Figure 12. 15th Street Corridor

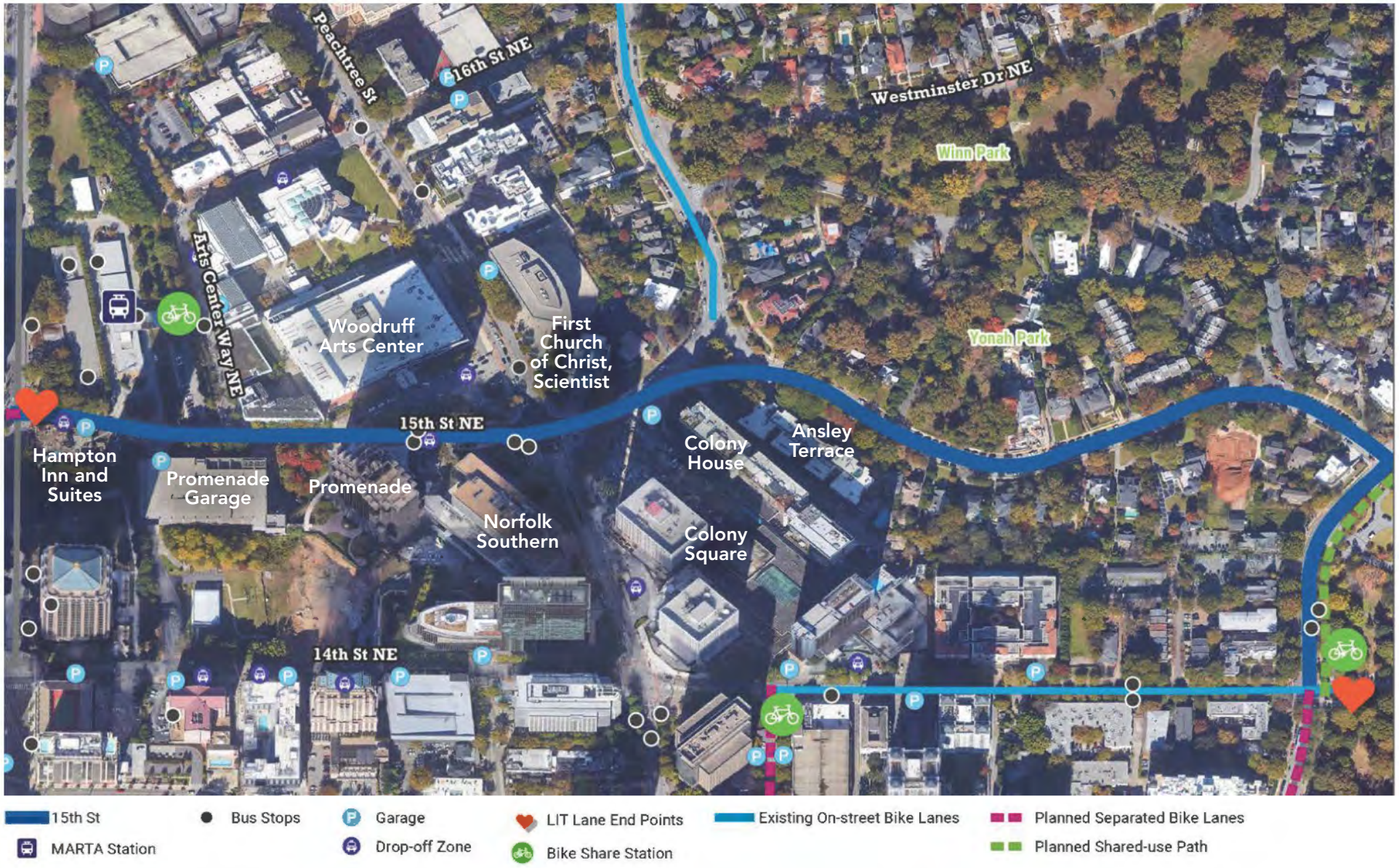
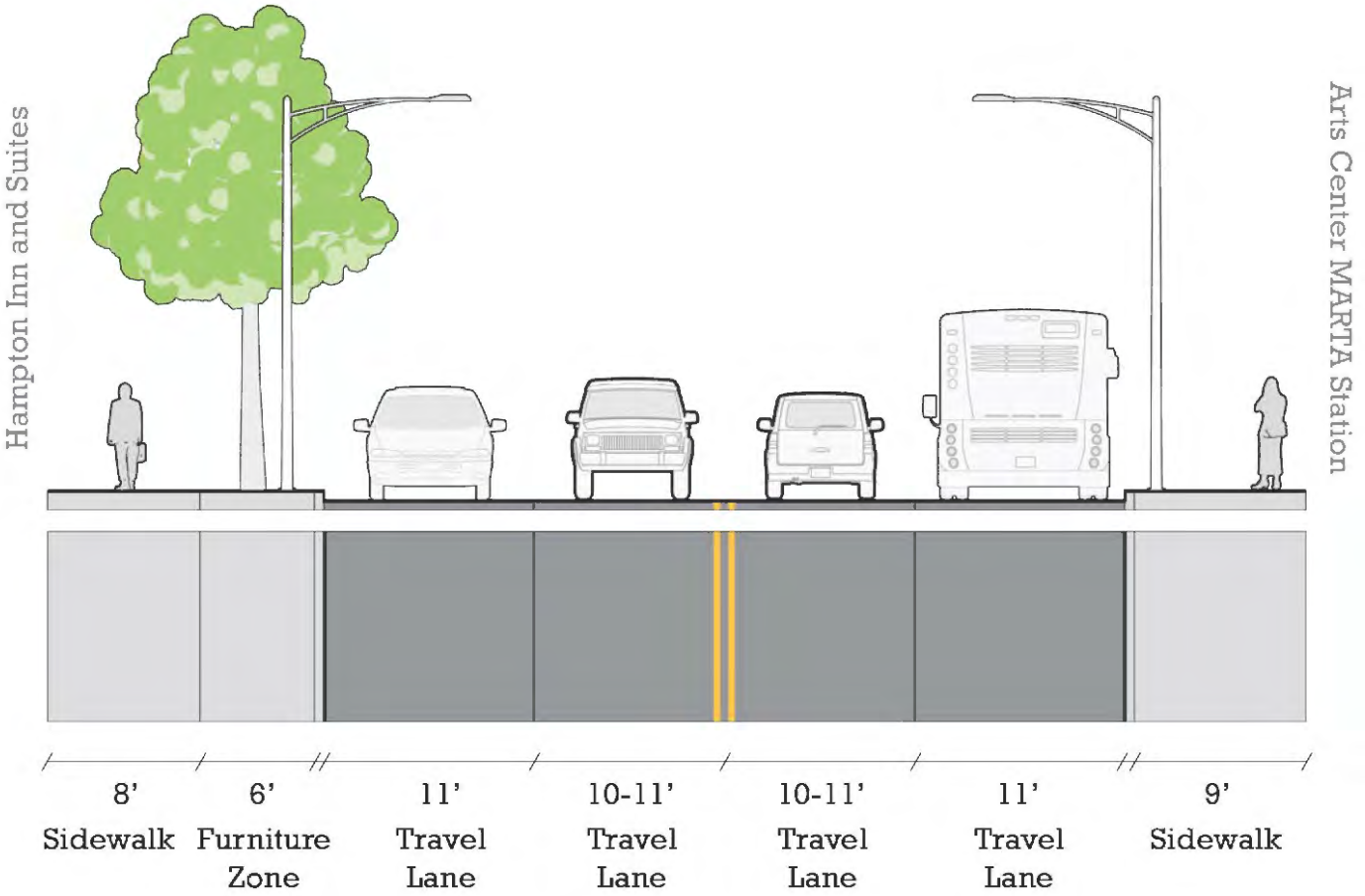


Figure 13. 15th Street Typical Section at West Peachtree Street Facing West



Top to bottom:
1) School buses parking on 15th Street for a field trip at Woodruff Arts Center;
2) Slow speeds yard sign on 15th Street;
3) Parallel and perpendicular parking on 15th Street near Piedmont Avenue

Stakeholder Insights

- The Woodruff Arts Center routinely uses a lane on 15th Street for bus staging
- An off-site waiting area for buses would need to be identified if this route is selected
- The downhill slope limits visibility for drivers exiting the Callaway Plaza driveway
- Consolidating the two bus stops near Peachtree Street would help reduce conflict points
- The Promenade parking garage is busy and would be an active conflict point during peak hour
- Retaining on-street parking is a priority for Ansley park residents
- Traffic calming features would be a bonus
- Some crosswalks need to be repainted and updated with ADA-accessible sidewalk ramps

Preliminary Survey

Lighting

Adequate lighting exists west of Peachtree Street with street lights and pedestrian lighting on both sides of the street. East of Peachtree Street, street lighting was sparse which could pose visibility issues at night.

Street Design

An earlier redesign of the 15th Street and Peachtree Street intersection narrowed turning radii to reduce speeds. As a result, the available right-of-way at that intersection is relatively deep, as shown in Figure 14. ADA ramps and crosswalks are missing at some intersections along 15th Street between Peachtree Circle and Piedmont Avenue. Sections of sidewalks were observed to have uneven hexagonal pavers that pose hazards for pedestrians with mobility issues. Large turning radii at intersections along 15th Street between Peachtree Circle and Piedmont Avenue facilitate higher vehicle turning speeds. If a bicycle facility crosses these intersections, it is recommended that these turning radii be reduced with pavement markings and vertical treatments to reduce turning speeds.

Drainage

Drop inlets exist on both sides of 15th Street, west of Peachtree Street, which could pose as a hazard for cyclists if a bicycle lane was to be installed adjacent to the curb. On the north side of 15th Street, drop inlets should be brought to grade if a bicycle facility is to be installed adjacent to the curb. East of Peachtree Street, drop inlets exist alongside the curbs on both the north and south side of the street. Some drop inlets extend out from the curb approximately 8-feet. Some drop inlets were not at grade and should be brought to grade if bicycle facilities are to be installed across them.

Grade

There is a steep uphill grade (approximately 10 percent) along 15th Street eastbound between Arts Center Way and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra building. The remainder of the route has estimated grades of 5 percent or less.

Figure 14. 15th Street and Peachtree Street Intersection Right-of-Way

Midtown Art Walk route

Connecting Project: Midtown Art Walk

One of Midtown Alliance's signature cultural projects is the Midtown Art Walk, a pedestrian experience punctuated by creative landscape, lighting, and interactive artistic elements along a half-mile walk between the Arts Center and Midtown MARTA Stations. Some installations are already in place, and Midtown Alliance is working with private property owners to bring in additional permanent and temporary pieces along the walk. The route intersects with the alternative LIT lanes alignments in mid-block locations on 14th Street and 15th Street and continues north along Arts Center Way, terminating at the "The Porch" at the MARTA station entrance across from Woodruff Arts Center. New infrastructure in these locations should incorporate artistic elements to contribute to the Art Walk experience.

Connecting Project: 15th Street Extension

Midtown Alliance has proposed an extension of 15th Street from West Peachtree Street two blocks west to Williams Street. The extension would interface directly with the new LIT lane at the intersection of 15th Street and West Peachtree Street. The proposed design is a three-lane section with one through lane in each direction and dedicated turn lanes approaching Spring Street and West Peachtree Street. It will include 10-foot sidewalks, and 5-foot sidewalk-level bicycle lanes on both sides of the street. Construction is expected to begin in 2021.

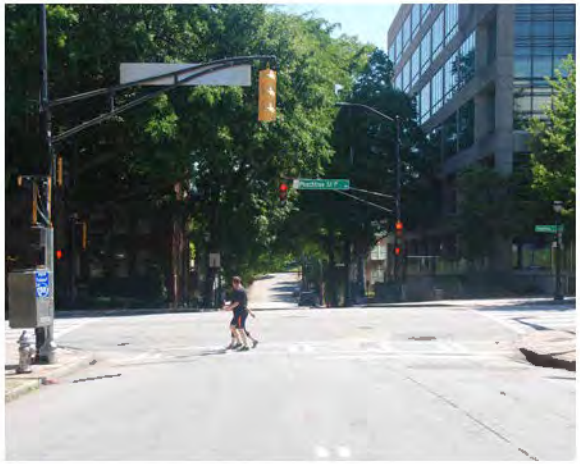
Rendering of the 15th Street extension design (March 2020)

Corridor 2: 16th Street/Arts Center Way/Peachtree Circle

Overview

Arts Center Way, 16th Street, and Peachtree Circle provide an alternative to the 15th Street route that avoids steep slopes and conflict points on 15th Street between Arts Center Way and Peachtree Circle, as shown in Figure 15. Portions of this alignment are the same as the 15th Street route, using 15th Street from West Peachtree Street to Arts Center Way and from Peachtree Circle to Piedmont Avenue. There are existing on-street, unbuffered bicycle lanes adjacent to parallel parking on Peachtree Circle. Of the three alignments, this one is the least direct route between the Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park and would make the trip slightly longer for riders. The topography is relatively moderate and would be comfortable for many riders. This route is surrounded by lower intensities of development than the other two alignments, meaning it has fewer conflict points but also provides less utility for riders. Other than the end point destinations, the only major destination along this route is the Woodruff Arts Center.

Parallel parking and on-street drop-off zones are prevalent along this route, including portions of one side of Arts Center Way and 16th Street, as well as both sides of Peachtree Circle and 15th Street from Peachtree Circle to Piedmont Avenue. Buses for field trips at the Woodruff Arts Center currently use 16th Street and Arts Center Way to drop off and wait for students. Some of these functions may have to be relocated if this route is selected. The Woodruff Arts Center has its main loading dock on Arts Center Way and a secondary loading dock on 16th Street, which would create additional conflict points. A lane on 16th Street is closed for film crew staging for film shoots at Woodruff Arts Center up to two times per month; Arts Center Way is closed for filming less frequently.



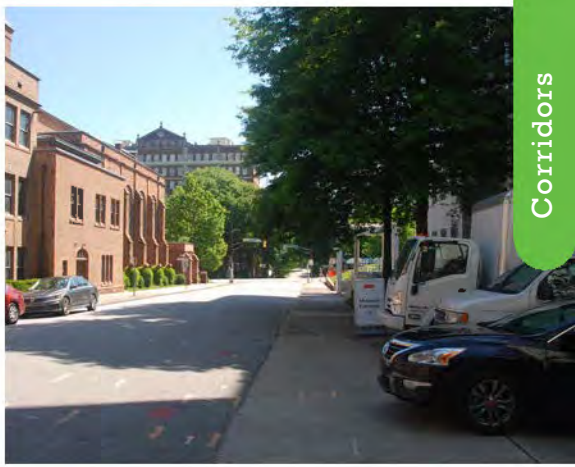
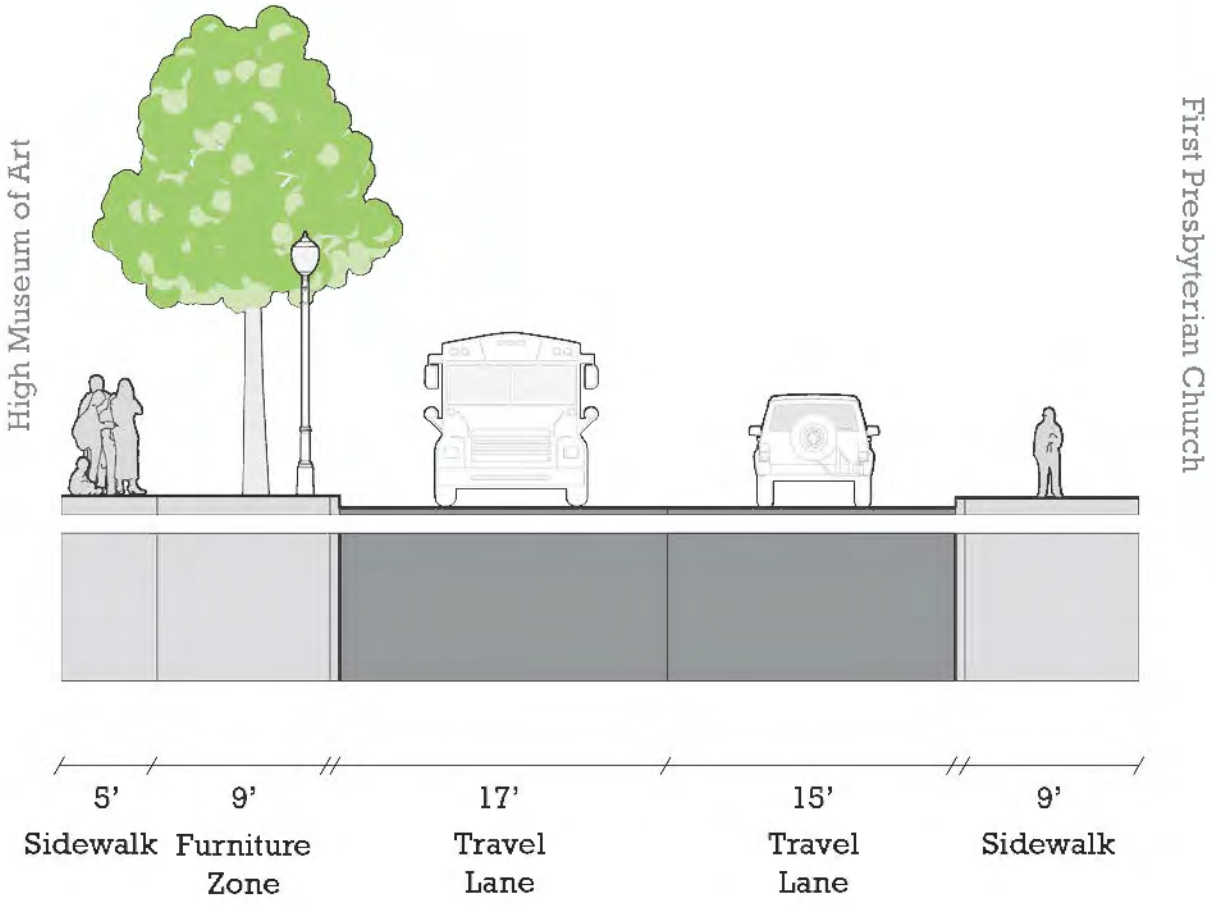


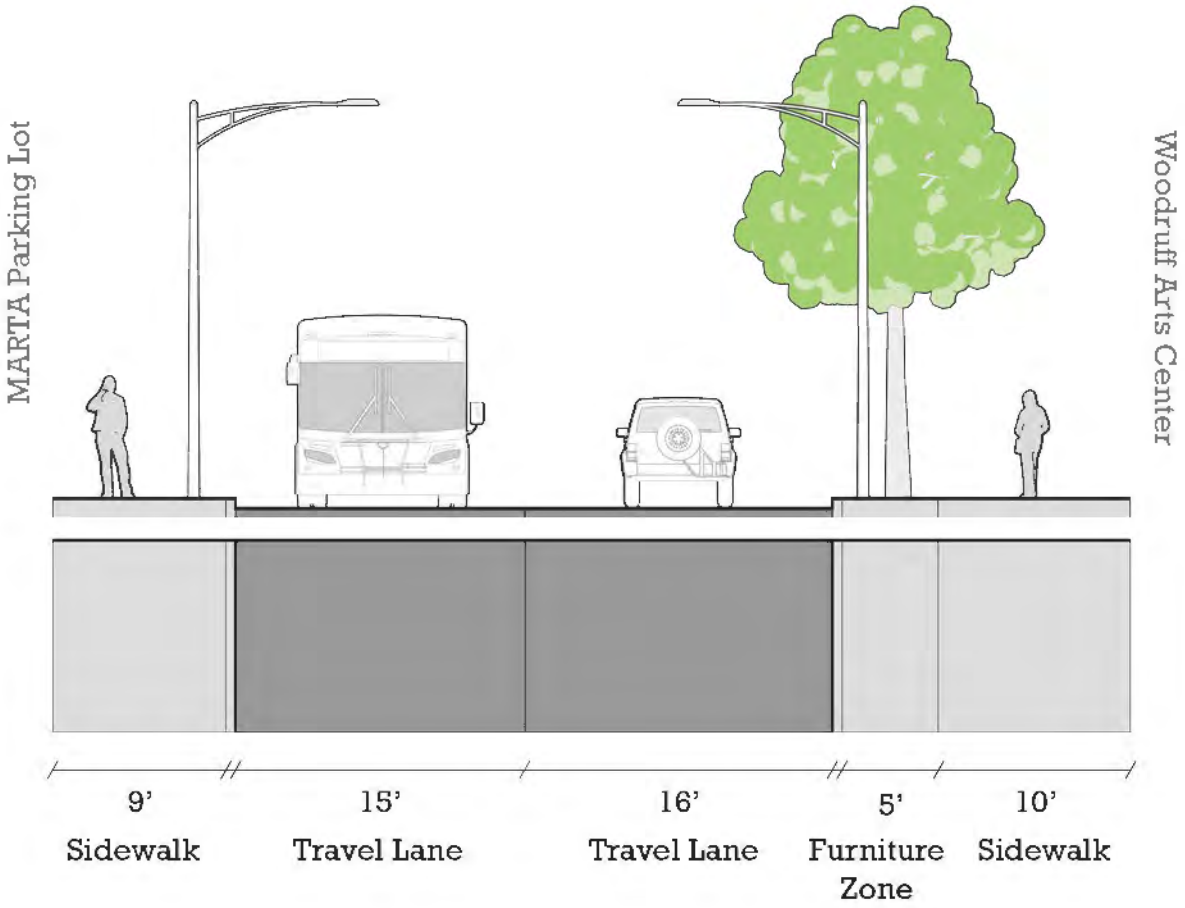
Figure 15. 16th Street Corridor

Figure 16. 16th Street Typical Section at Arts Center Way Facing West



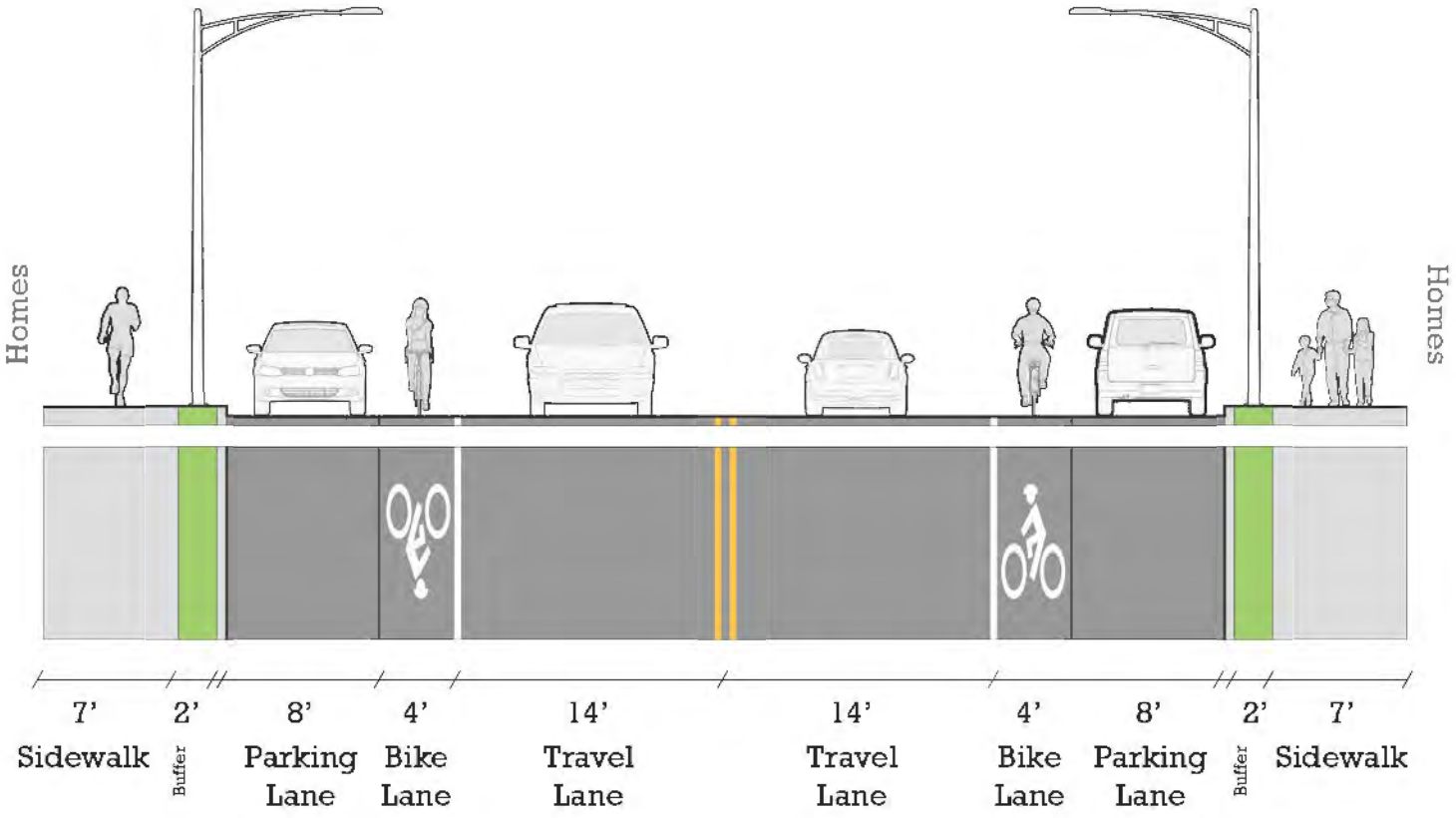
Top to bottom:
1) High Museum carpool drop-off area and handicapped access ramp;
2) On-street residential parking and narrow lanes east of Peachtree Street

Figure 17. Arts Center Way Typical Section at 15th Street Facing North



Top to bottom:
1) Woodruff Arts Center main loading dock;
2) "The Porch" plaza and upper level entrance at Arts Center MARTA Station;
3) Wayfinding sign for Woodruff Arts Center visitors

Figure 18. Peachtree Circle Typical Section at 15th Street Facing North



Top to bottom:
1) Poor pavement condition and fading bike lane markings;
2) Expansive pavement at triangular intersection;
3) Active route for recreational cyclists

Stakeholder Insights

- Arts Center Way is used heavily for Woodruff Arts Center operations, including bus staging and loading dock deliveries.
- 16th Street is also used for activities requiring direct access, like bus drop-off, deliveries, carpool, handicapped access, and lane closures for film crew staging up to two times per month.
- For the Woodruff Arts Center, maintaining direct access to these functions is the highest priority when considering tradeoffs between the corridors.
- The Woodruff Arts Center garage exit on Arts Center Way has poor visibility.
- Condo residents on 16th Street do not have off-street parking, so maintaining on-street parking is a must.
- 16th Street is tight between Peachtree Street and Peachtree Circle and may be risky for cyclists.
- The City is planning to resurface Arts Center Way in the near future

Preliminary Survey

Lighting

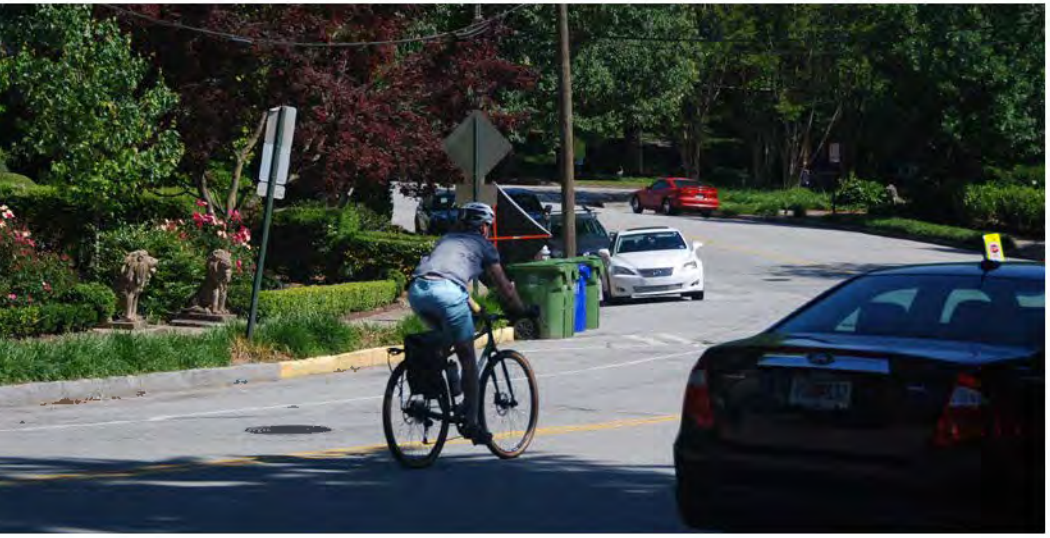
Adequate lighting exists along Arts Center Way and 16th Street with street lights and pedestrian lighting on both sides of the street. Along Peachtree Circle, street lighting was sparse, which could pose visibility issues at night.

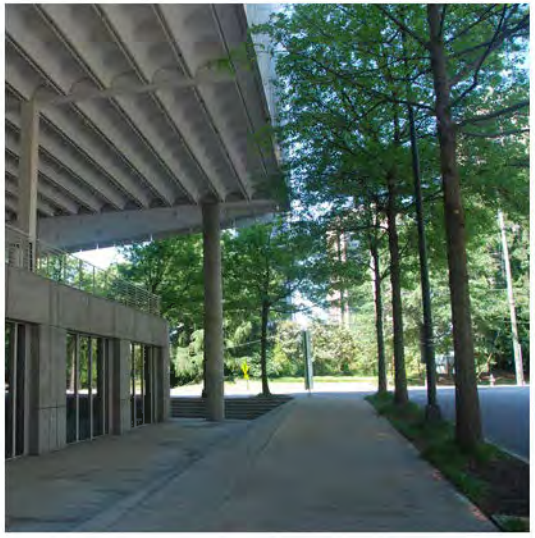
Street Design

Bicycle lanes exist along Peachtree Circle between 15th and 16th Streets in between the on-street parking and travel lanes; however, pavement markings appeared worn and may not be visible to motorists. ADA ramps were observed to be missing at many crosswalks along Peachtree Circle between 15th and 16th Streets. Sections of sidewalks have uneven hexagonal pavers that pose hazards for pedestrians with mobility issues. Large turning radii at intersections along Peachtree Circle between 15th and 16th Streets facilitates higher vehicle turning speeds. If a bicycle facility is to cross these intersections, it is recommended that these turning radii be reduced with pavement markings and vertical treatments to reduce turning speeds. Because Peachtree Circle and part of 15th Street are outside the Midtown Improvement District boundary, addressing these issues will require coordination from the City and/or the Ansley Park Civic Association

Drainage

Drop inlets exist on both the east and west side of Arts Center Way and should be brought to grade if a bicycle facility is to traverse them. Drop inlets exist on both the north and south side of 16th Street. Some drop inlets were not at grade and should be brought to grade if a bicycle facility is to traverse them. No drop inlets were observed within the striped bicycle lane along Peachtree Circle.





Grade

The northernmost section of Arts Center Way, between West Peachtree Street and 16th Street, bends around the Arts Center MARTA Station property with a steep grade (approximately 10 percent). The combination of both these horizontal and vertical alignments pose sight distance issues. Additionally, the sidewalk on the east/north side of Arts Center Way around this curve is discontinuous with no ADA ramps crossing the parking garage access point.

Clockwise from top left: 1) Cyclist heading north onto Peachtree Circle from 15th Street; 2) Covered waiting area on 16th Street at the High Museum; 3) Arts Center Way facing north at 16th Street, where a steep slope limits visibility; 4) Woodruff Arts Center main loading dock on Arts Center Way; 5) 16th Street and Arts Center Way signs

Connecting Project: Midtown Union Arts Center Way Extension

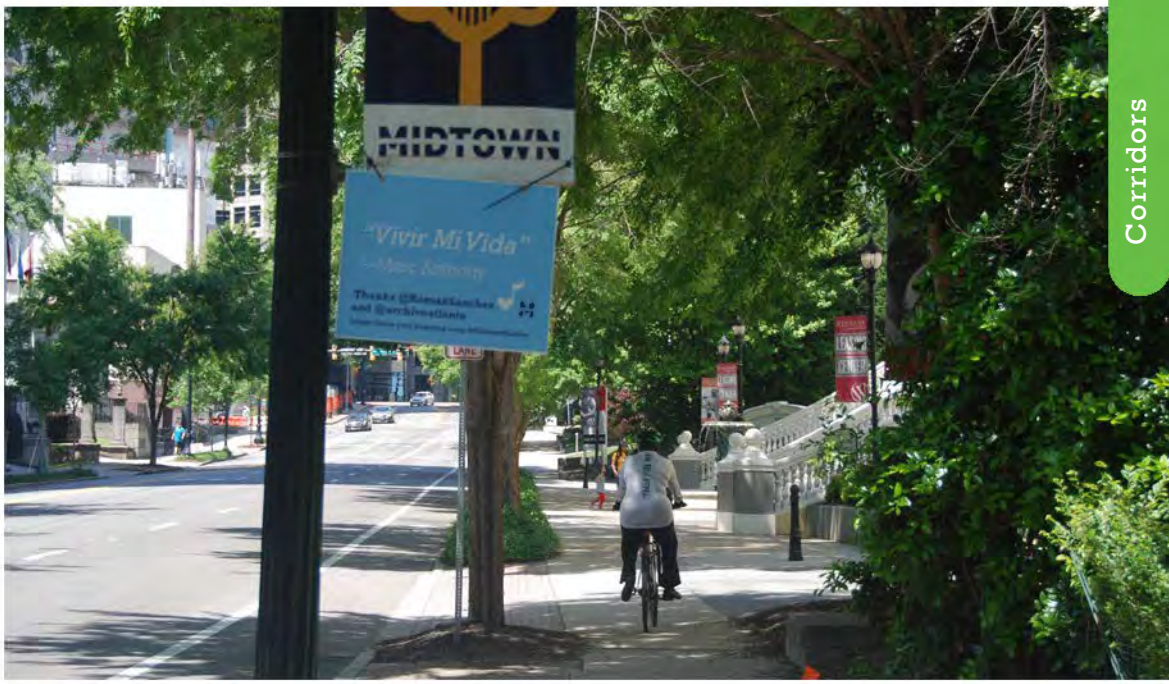
The Midtown Union mixed-use development is currently under construction at the corner of 17th Street and Spring Street. The 3.8-acre site will feature 606,000 square feet of office, 355 apartments, 205 hotel rooms, 1,909 parking spaces, and 30,000 square feet of ground floor retail. The project will include the extension of Arts Center Way from its current terminus at West Peachtree Street west to Spring Street. This new street will increase the utility of Arts Center Way. Renderings show the extension will have a boulevard design with two-way traffic separated by a generous landscaped median, drop-off zones, and wide sidewalks on both sides of the street; bicycle lanes are not included in the design. It is expected to be complete by late 2022.

Rendering of Midtown Union showing the planned extension of Arts Center Way

Corridor 3: 14th Street

Overview

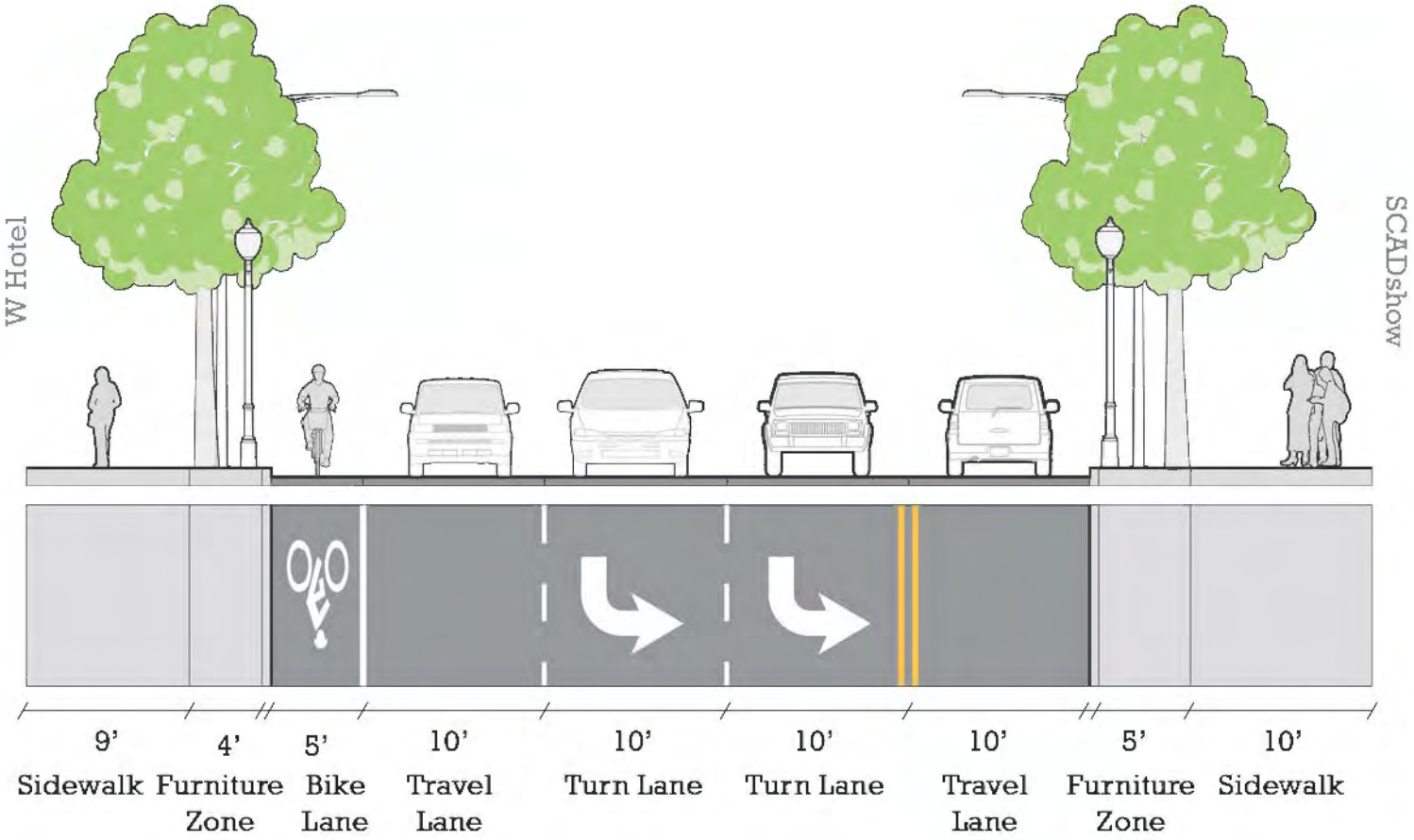
14th Street was initially considered as an alternative east-west connection between the Arts Center MARTA Station and Piedmont Park. It has a high concentration of existing development, including major office towers, major residential towers, and hotels. Although this high level of existing activity makes the route a useful one for potential riders, it will also creates conflict points. This route has frequent driveways and a higher volume of vehicular traffic than the alternative routes, which can both increase the level of stress for riders and make it more difficult to reduce vehicular travel lanes to accommodate LIT lanes. There is an existing one-way, unprotected bike lane on the north side of 14th Street between Piedmont Avenue and Juniper Street. The topography along this route is moderate and would be comfortable for many riders. Of the three routes, this is the only alignment that falls completely within the Midtown Community Improvement District boundary, which could aid in implementation. An access ramp to I-75/I-85 is located on 14th Street on the west end of the study area and 14th Street is a state route west of West Peachtree Street, meaning any alterations would require coordination with GDOT. Beyond the study area, 14th Street terminates at Howell Mill Road in West Midtown, an area with a high concentration of residential, retail, and restaurant development. Long term, adding LIT lanes along this corridor could help build out a direct connection from Piedmont Park to West Midtown.

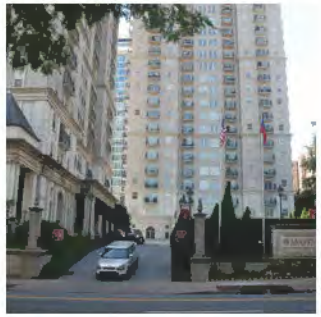


Cyclist rides on sidewalk next to unprotected on-street bike lane on 14th Street facing west near Piedmont Avenue

Figure 19. 14th Street Corridor

Figure 20. 14th Street Typical Section at Juniper Street Facing East





Top to bottom:
1) Active pedestrian intersection at Peachtree Street;
2) Mayfair residential tower driveway;
3) Relay bike share station at SCADshow;
4) Ongoing construction at Juniper Street

Stakeholder Insights

- GDOT is conducting a study of its routes— including 14th Street west of West Peachtree Street— to determine if there is excess capacity and think more holistically about street design
- One Atlantic Center property is a MARTA ground lease, which may make a mid-block connection more feasible
- The W Hotel stages coach buses on the street

Connecting Project: Juniper Complete Street

The proposed project will transform Juniper Street into a complete, multimodal street beginning at Ponce de Leon Avenue and terminating at the potential 14th Street LIT lanes alignment. The design includes wider sidewalks and a one-way 6- to 7-foot separated bicycle lane that will be protected by a wide, raised, planted barrier at intersections. It will retain one-way operations, add permanent parallel parking and loading areas in some locations, and reduce Juniper Street to two through-lanes in most places with dedicated turn lanes at major intersections. The double left turn from 14th Street onto Juniper Street will remain. Construction is expected to begin in 2020.

Connecting Project: West Peachtree and Spring Quick Build Bike Lanes

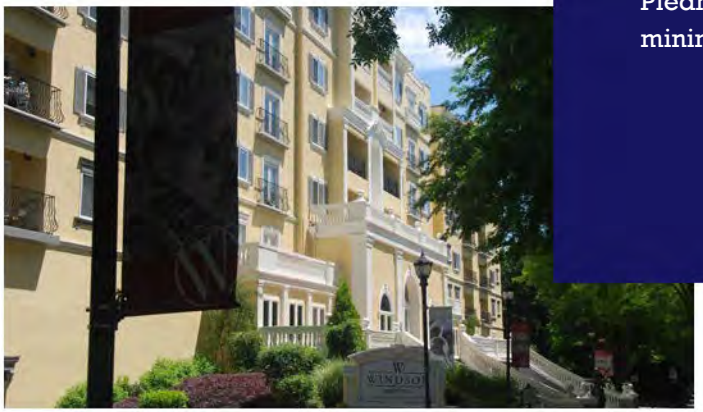
See page 61 for information on this project, which terminates a block south of 14th Street.

Based on the preliminary analysis and conversations with the project team, it was determined that 14th Street is not a viable route for this quick build project, largely due to:

- GDOT route west of West Peachtree Street
- High vehicular traffic volumes
- Constrained right-of-way
- High concentration of conflict points

While a LIT lane facility on 14th Street is still desired, these factors make implementation more complex than the alternative routes and make it unlikely to be constructed within the one-year target timeframe for a quick build project. Should opportunities with partner agencies emerge, a protected LIT lane facility between Piedmont Avenue and Juniper Street, at minimum, would be strongly encouraged. Because this route was determined not to be viable for this project, a preliminary survey of the corridor was not conducted.

Top to bottom:
1) Whole Foods at the corner of 14th Street and West Peachtree Street;
2) 14th Street gate to Piedmont Park



Based on conversations with the Project Team,

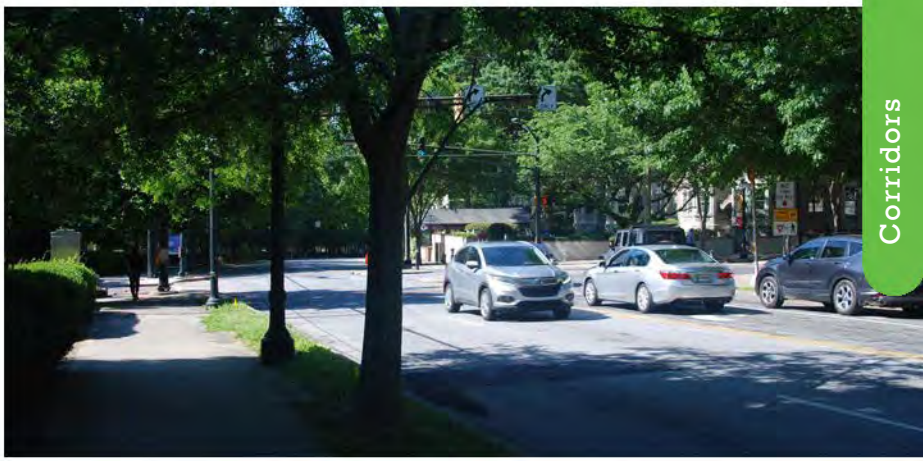
the 14th Street alignment was determined to be a long-term goal and should *not* be included in this "quick build" effort.

Should opportunities emerge with partner agencies, a protected LIT lane facility between Piedmont Avenue and Juniper Street, at a minimum, would be strongly encouraged.

Supporting Connection: Piedmont Avenue

Overview

A portion of Piedmont Avenue from 15th Street to the 14th Street gate of Piedmont Park will be included in the project if either the 15th Street or 16th Street/Arts Center Way corridors are selected. Today, this segment is a two-way road with sidewalks on both sides and no bicycle facilities. Southbound traffic must turn right onto 14th Street, as Piedmont Avenue becomes a northbound one-way street south of 14th Street. Development on the west side of the street consists of garden apartments and condominiums. On the east side, the Piedmont Driving Club has its main entrance and drop-off zone to the north, with Piedmont Park to the south.



Connecting Project: Piedmont Avenue Complete Street Project

The City of Atlanta and Midtown Alliance are redesigning Piedmont Avenue as a complete street from Ponce De Leon Avenue to 15th Street. Between 14th Street and 15th Street, the design will retain a standard sidewalk on the west side; reduce vehicular lanes to two southbound turn lanes and one northbound travel lanes; and add a buffered, 12-foot-wide multi-use trail on the east side.

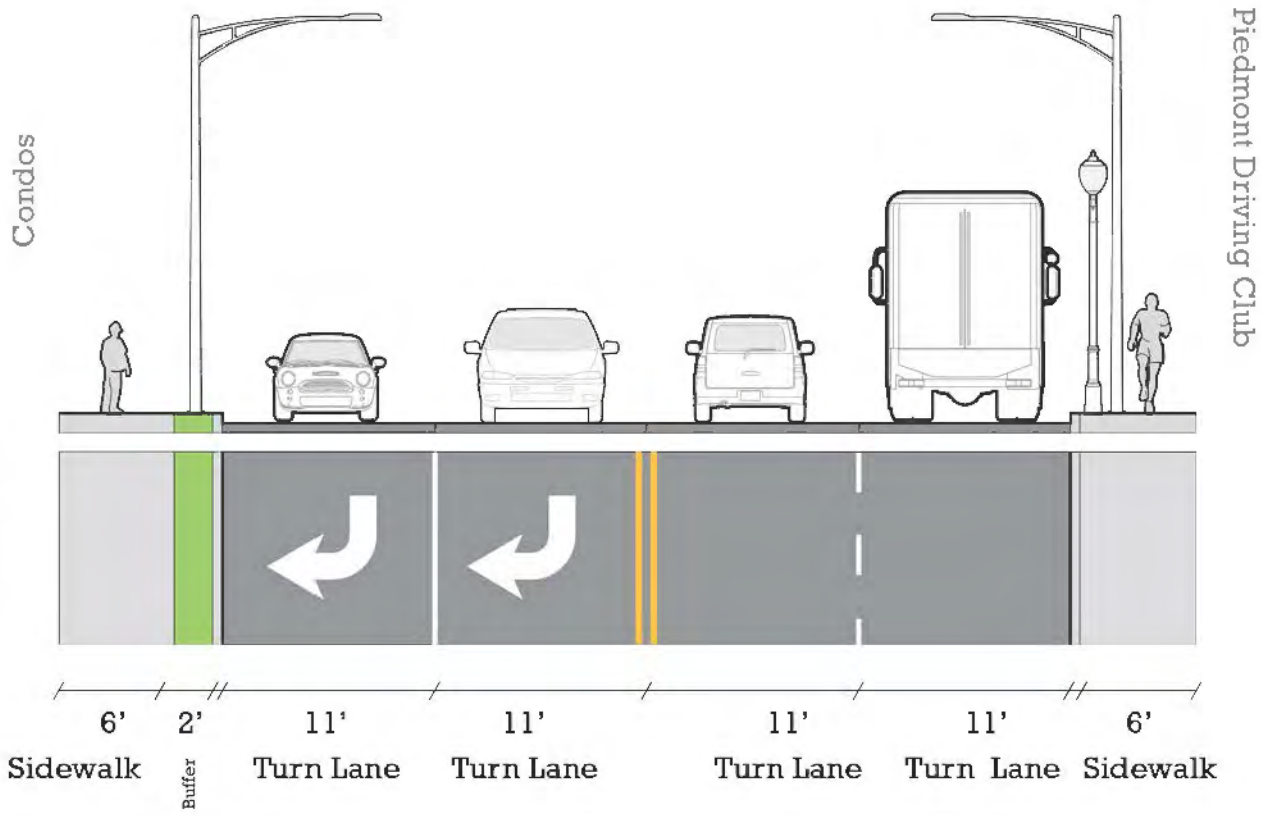
Rendering of the Piedmont Avenue Complete Street Project, which features a multi-use trail on the east side between 14th Street and 15th Street

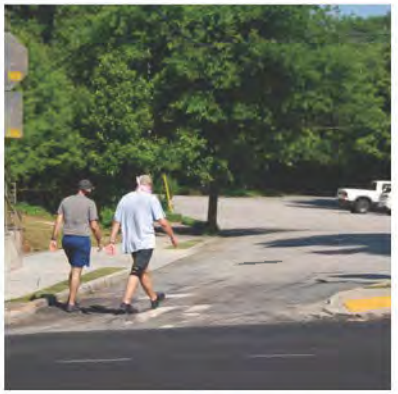
Connecting Project: Midtown Atlanta Regional Activity Center - Pedestrian Mobility and Safety Improvements

A pedestrian hybrid beacon will be installed on Piedmont Avenue at 15th Street as part of this districtwide project.

Figure 21. Piedmont Avenue Corridor

Figure 22. Piedmont Avenue Typical Section at 15th Street Facing North

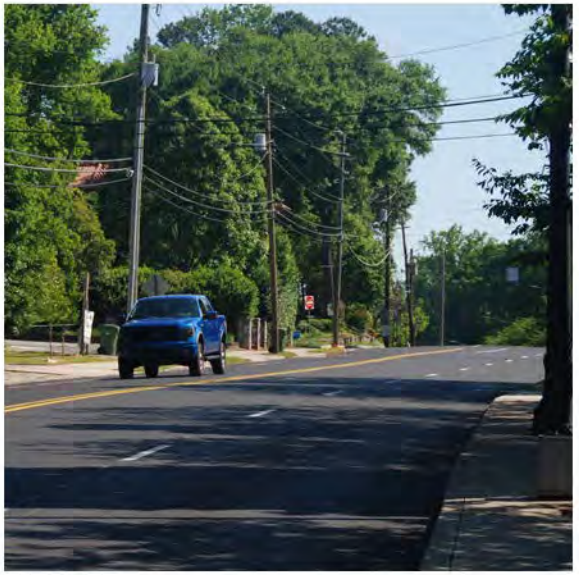


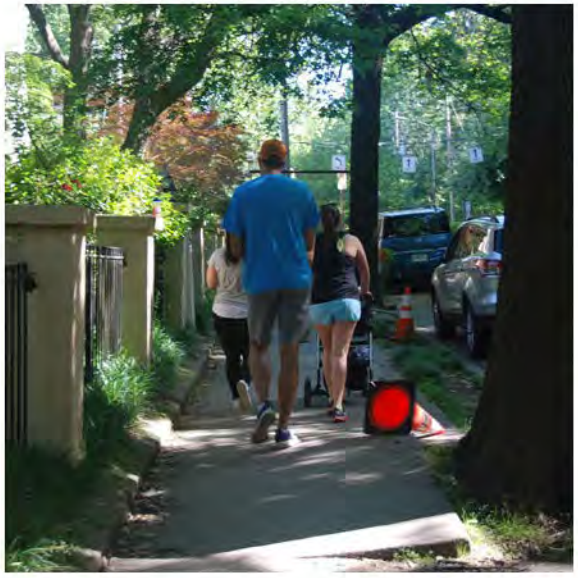


Left to right: 1) Pedestrians crossing Piedmont Avenue at 15th Street; 2) Landscaped island at the intersection of Piedmont Avenue and 15th Street; MARTA bus stop on Piedmont Avenue

Stakeholder Insights

- The new trail on Piedmont Avenue will cross at 15th Street and continue along the landscaped island, terminating adjacent to existing perpendicular parking





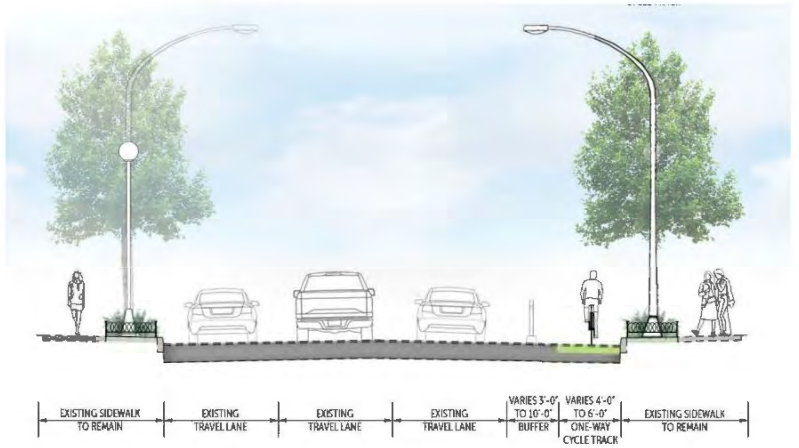
Supporting Connection: West Peachtree Street

Overview

A portion of West Peachtree Street from 14th Street to 15th Street would be included in the project route if the 14th Street alignment is selected. Today, it is a one-way road with four northbound lanes and no bicycle facilities. A mid-block north-south connection through the One Atlantic Center property or the proposed Opus development may be considered as an alternative route.

Connecting Project: West Peachtree and Spring Quick Build Bike Lanes

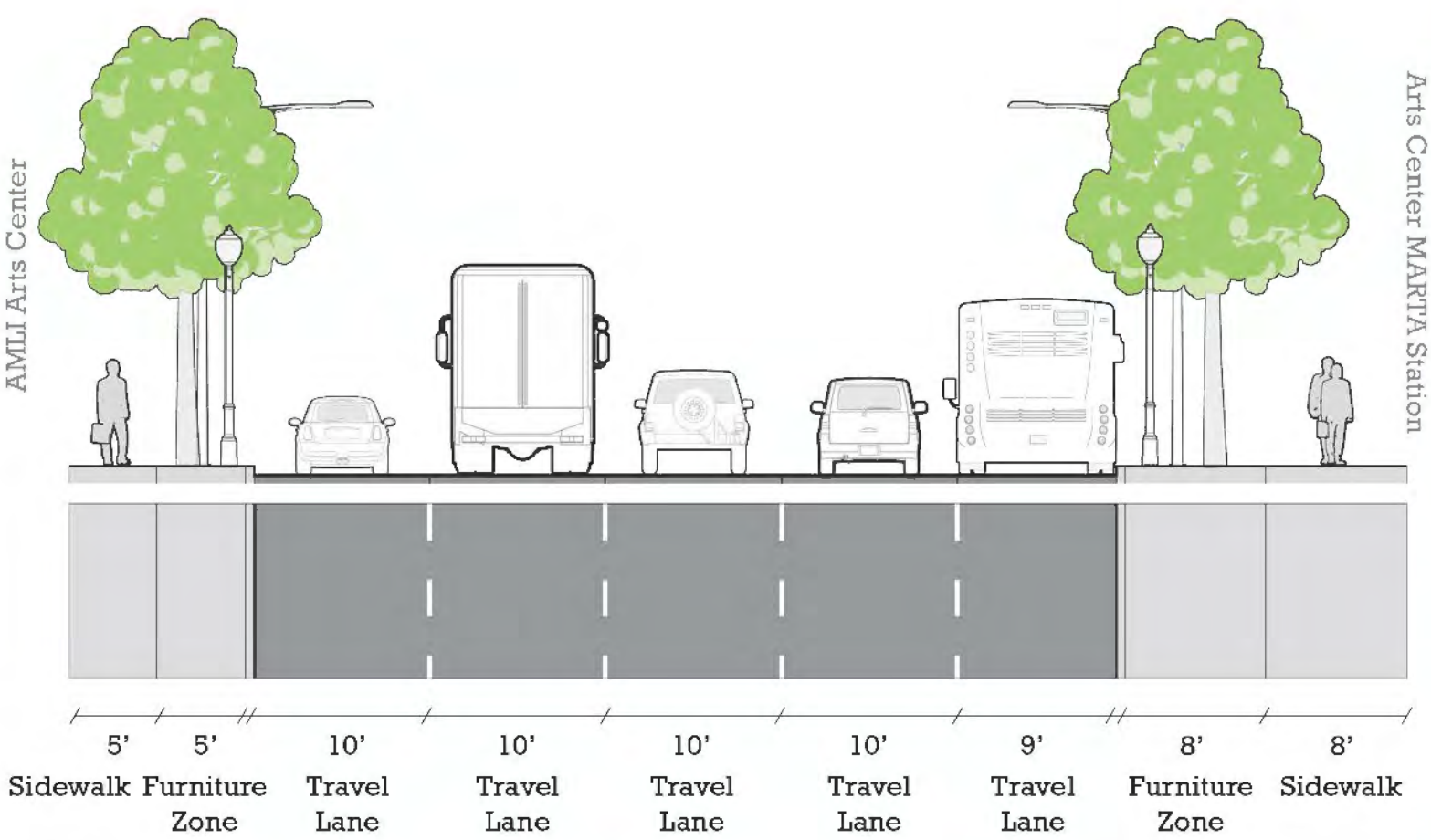
Midtown Alliance and the City of Atlanta are planning improvements to the West Peachtree Street and Spring Street pair. The quick build project is part of the Mayor's Action Plan for Safer Streets and will run from North Avenue to 13th Street, stopping one to two blocks short of the 15th Street Area LIT Lanes and Pedestrian Connections project. It will retain the existing one-way traffic operations, repurpose one travel lane and several on-street parking spaces for a protected one-way bike lane, and spot fix the roadway surface where the bicycle facility will be installed. The City plans to construct the bike lanes by the end of 2020.

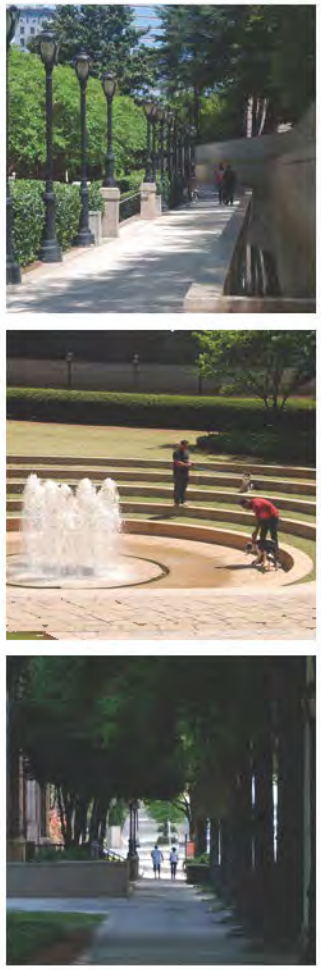


Typical section for the West Peachtree Street Quick Build Bike Lane project, which will terminate at 13th Street

Figure 23. West Peachtree Street Corridor

Figure 24. West Peachtree Street Typical Section at 15th Street Facing North

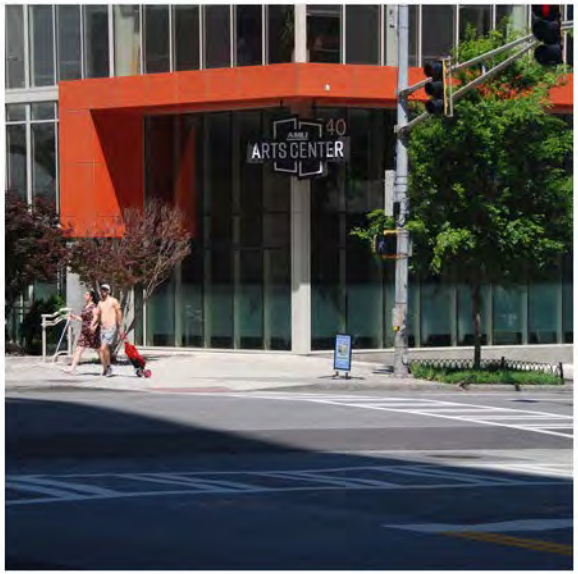


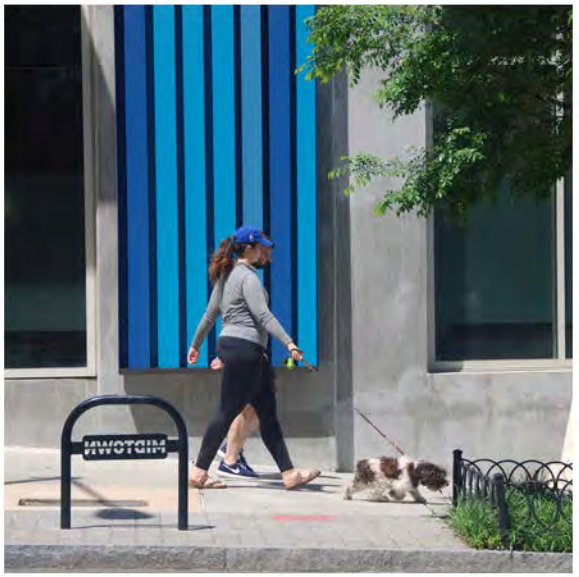


Top to bottom: 1) Midblock pedestrian connection at One Atlantic Center; 2) One Atlantic Center fountain and greenspace; 3) West Peachtree Street sidewalk next to One Atlantic Center

Stakeholder Insights

- There is a desire to extend the West Peachtree Street and Spring Street bicycle facilities north of Arts Center Station in the future, as proposed in the original scope.





Multimodal Traffic Analysis

A multimodal traffic analysis provides insight into how users of all modes are using the study area network today, with an emphasis on identifying locations where LIT riders and pedestrians may be particularly vulnerable. It includes a crash analysis, travel time estimates for each alternative alignment, a bicycle level of service analysis, and signal warrant and left turn analyses for select intersections.

Crash Analysis

To understand if any safety deficiencies exist along the viable corridors (15th Street, 16th Street and Arts Center Way) for the LIT lane connection from West Peachtree Street to Piedmont Avenue, crash data was pulled for the area bounded by 14th Street to the south, 17th Street to the north, West Peachtree Street to the west, and Piedmont Avenue to the east. Crashes were pulled for the three most complete years of data, 2016 through 2018. Figure 25 on page 66 illustrates the density of crashes along certain corridors (West Peachtree Street, 14th Street, and Peachtree Street) and specific intersections with higher concentrations of crashes:

- Peachtree Street at 14th Street
- West Peachtree Street at 14th Street
- West Peachtree Street at 17th Street

Figure 26 plots the location of all crashes in the years 2016-2018, while Figure 27 and Figure 28 display the locations of all crashes resulting in an injury and all crashes involving a LIT vehicle (bicycle or scooter), respectively. Because the use of scooters in Midtown did not become widespread mid-2018 and reliable crash data for 2019 was not available at the time of this publication, the LIT vehicles represented in this data were most likely bicycles and may underrepresent the current level of LIT activity in the area.

Figure 25. Crash Intensity Map

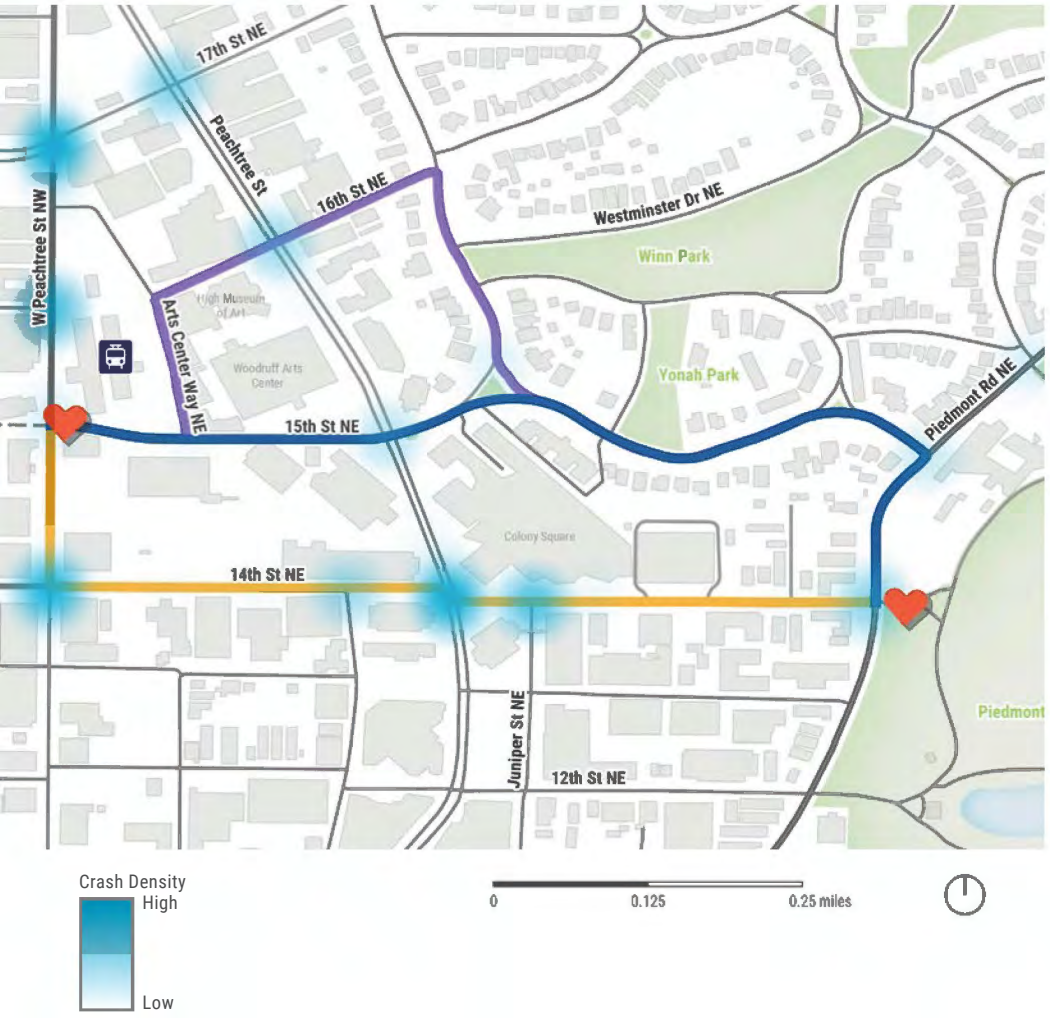


Figure 26. Crash Location Map

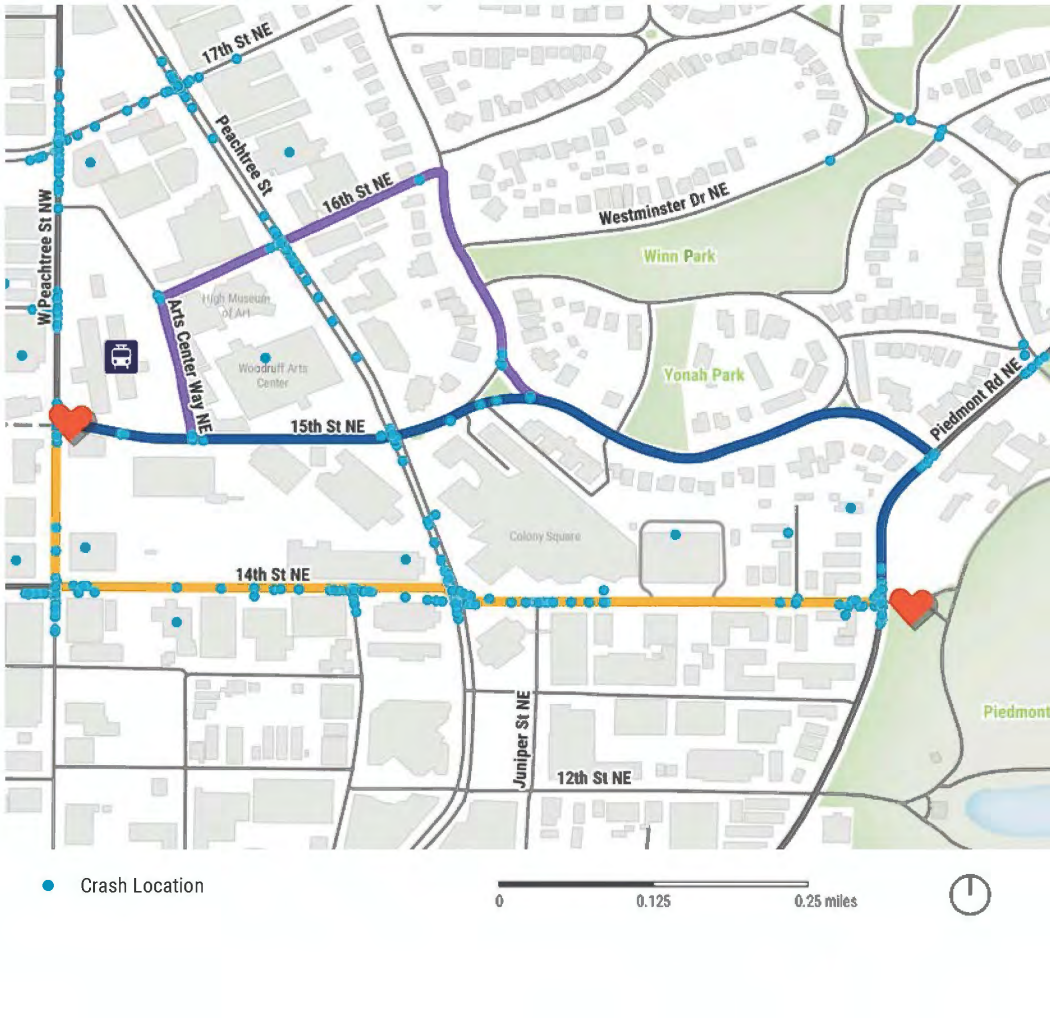
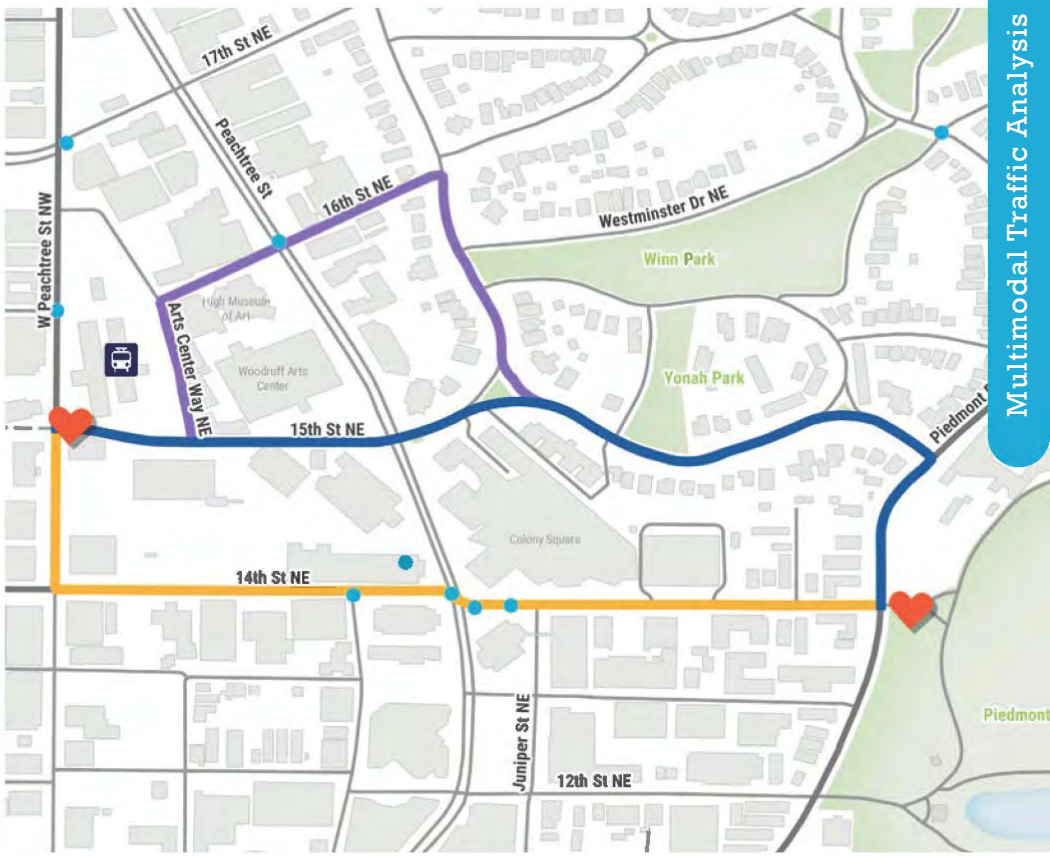


Figure 27. Locations of Crashes Resulting in Injuries

Injury Location

0 0.125 0.25 miles

Figure 28. Locations of Crashes Involving LIT Vehicles



LIT Vehicle Crash

0 0.125 0.25 miles

Table 7. Summary of Crashes Along 15th Street (West Peachtree Street to Peachtree Circle)

Manner of Collision	2016	2017	2018
Angle	8	3	8
Head On	1	--	1
Not A Collision with Motor Vehicle	2	1	1
Rear End	5	6	9
Sideswipe-Opposite Direction	1	--	--
Sideswipe-Same Direction	6	7	7
Total	**23**	**17**	**26**

While most crashes involving LIT vehicles are concentrated around the periphery of the study area, 15th Street (between West Peachtree Street and Peachtree Circle) was further analyzed to quantify any safety deficiencies. The data shows the number, manner, and severity of collisions along the project corridor. No fatalities were found at these intersections. These data may not fully reflect current conditions, as LIT vehicle use in Midtown was not prevalent until mid-2018.

It is notable that injuries occurred at the intersections of 15th Street with Arts Center Way, Peachtree Street, and Peachtree Circle. The triangular intersection of Peachtree Circle with 15th Street experienced 7 crashes with 2 resulting in injuries. This is a nonstandard intersection and may be difficult to navigate for drivers who are not used to the area. Unlike 15th Street, 16th Street experienced too few crashes during the analysis period to discern a pattern.

Traffic Analysis

Historic data (traffic volumes) was referenced from adjacent projects, such as the 15th Street Extension and signal maintenance programs (MTOP and RTOP). To supplement the compiled current and historic data available through traditional sources, StreetLight Insight data (which provides a database of traffic patterns based on cellular location data) was used extensively to further understand and estimate directional volumes and speeds in and around the study area. The following figures show average daily and hourly volumes and travel speeds throughout the study area as reported from Streetlight's Single Factor Calibrated Index, which scales the data to actual historic counts. Data was pulled as an average of weekdays in March 2019 and September 2019.

Figure 29. Daily Volumes and Speeds

Source: StreetLight Calibrated Index

Figure 30. Average Morning Peak Period (6-10 am) Volumes and Speeds

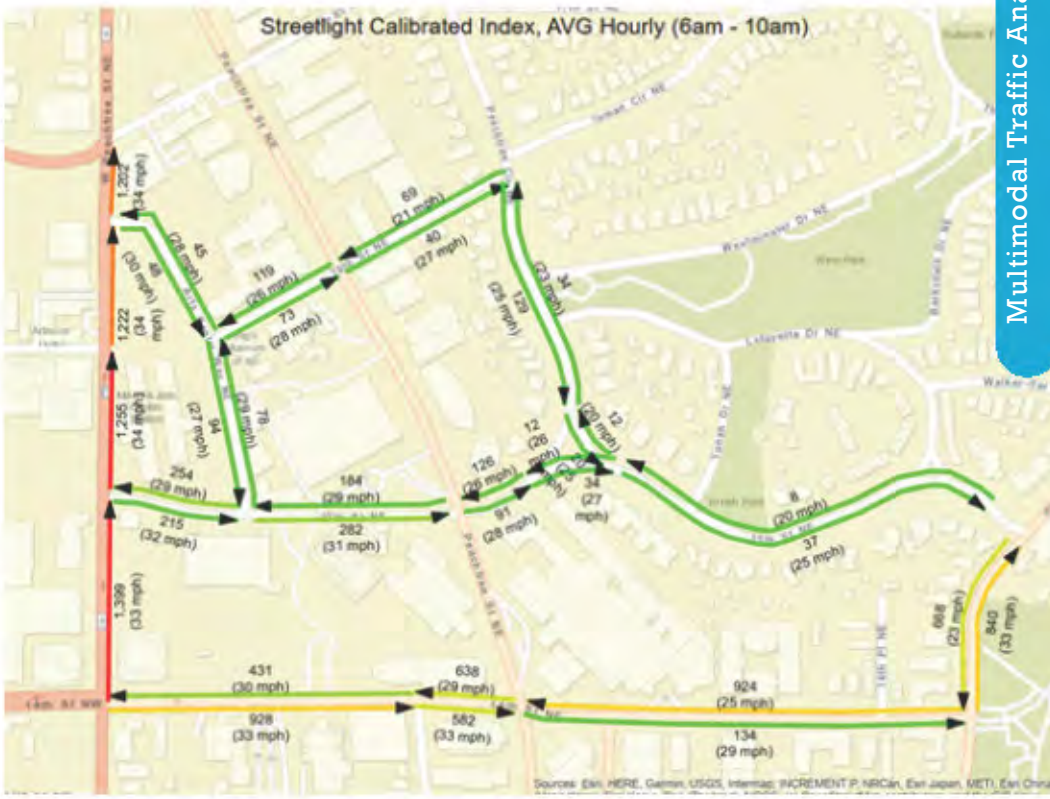


Figure 31. Average Evening Peak Period (3-7 pm) Volumes and Speeds

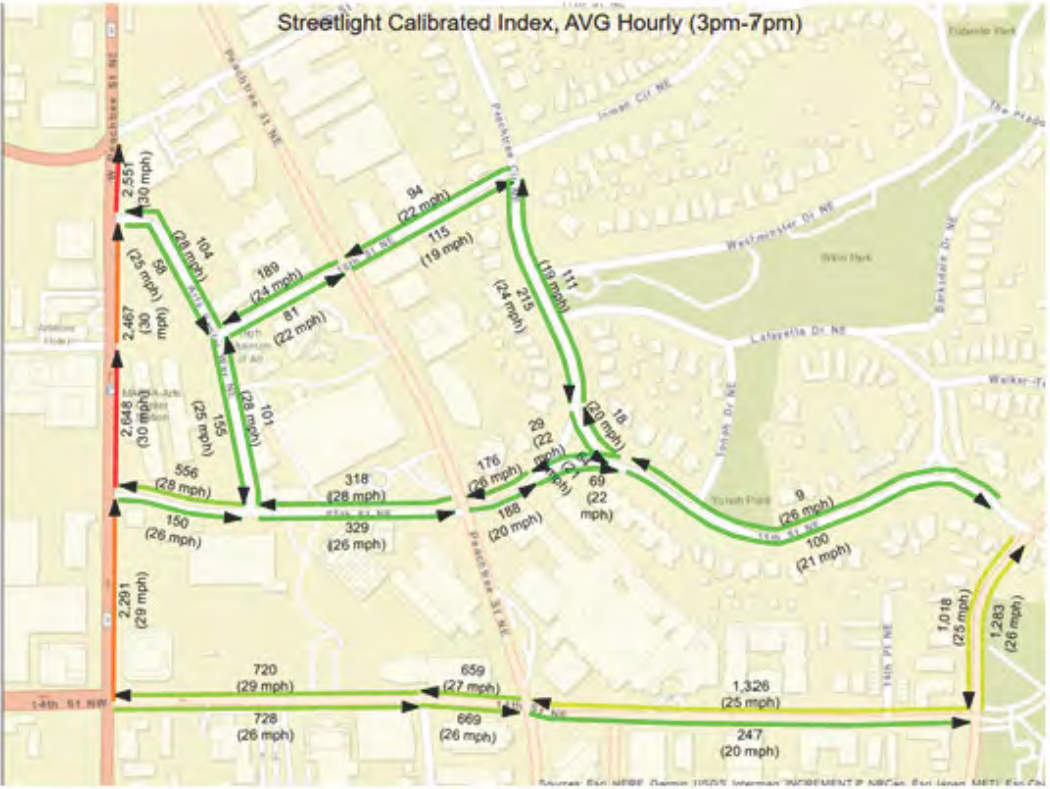


Figure 32. Average Off-peak (12-6 am) Free Flow Speeds

Source: StreetLight Calibrated Index

Figure 29 through Figure 32 illustrate traffic volumes and speeds in the study area. 15th and 16th Streets carry fewer vehicles than 14th Street and travel speeds typically range between 25 and 35 miles per hour (mph). The portion of 15th Street through Ansley Park carries fewer vehicles with somewhat lower travel speeds than the portion of 15th Street west of Peachtree Street; however, vehicles tend to travel faster along the network during off-peak hours, when traffic volumes are lower and speeds are somewhat free flow. According to StreetLight data, average off-peak speeds on 15th Street are around 40 mph east of Peachtree Street and around 35 mph west of Peachtree Street.

Travel Time Estimations

Shorter, more direct routes are more useful for LIT riders and pedestrians, making trip length an important consideration when selecting the best corridor for this project. Travel Time Estimations were calculated to compare trip lengths for each corridor. For example, different routes have different elevation profiles, traverse different control treatments at intersections, and have different travel distances. Travel times were estimated based on and average range of cyclist speeds at various grades . Estimates for average stop-controlled delay (25 seconds) and signal delay (30 seconds) were also made base on Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) Level-of-Service (LOS) thresholds. Field visits and Google Earth road profiles, such as the one for 15th Street shown in Table 8 on page 72, were used to determine average slopes along each road segment.

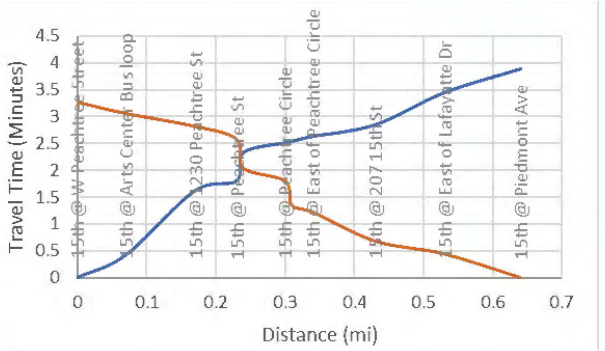
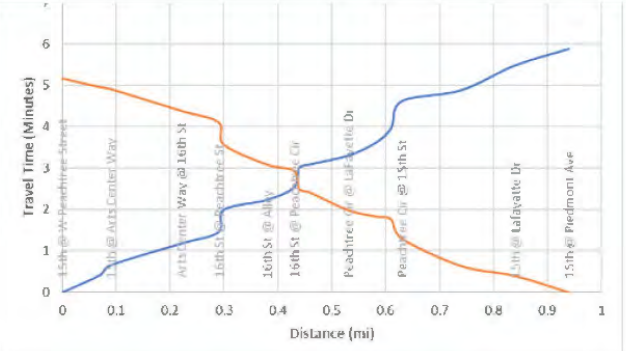
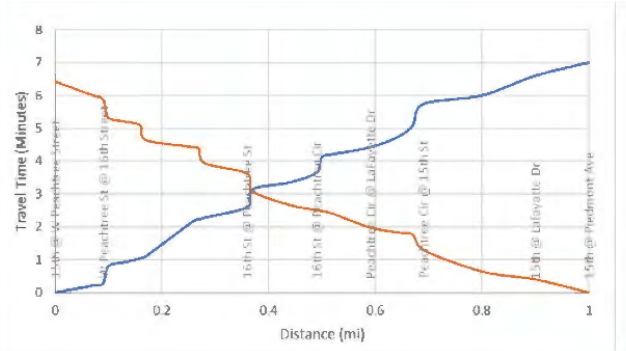
As shown in Table 10 on page 73, Corridor 1 (15th Street Only) has an estimated travel time that is 50 to 60 percent shorter than the other alternatives. The following travel time profiles also indicate that Corridor 1 has fewer potential stops at either traffic signals or stop signs.

Bicycle Level of Service

Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) is used as a collective summary representing the bicyclist's perception of the quality of service on the facility. Quality of service indicates a bicyclist's perceived degree of satisfaction with the urban street under prevailing demand and operation conditions, rather than a function of volume and capacity. BLOS is one aspect that may be considered for route selection, in addition to other factors – such as accessibility, safety, cost, environmental effects, and alignment with local goals and objectives.

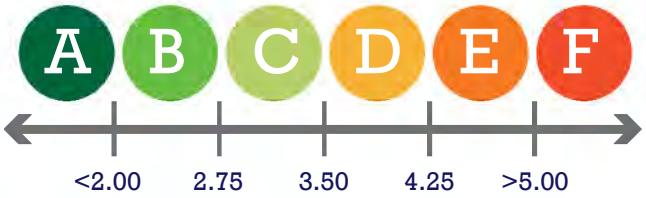
The BLOS model outlined in National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 616 combines the bicyclist's experiences on roadway segments and at the downstream intersection for that segment. Bicycle Segment LOS is a function of the perceived separation between motor vehicle traffic and the bicyclist, parked vehicle interference, and the quality of the pavement. Higher vehicle volumes, higher percent heavy vehicles, and higher vehicle speeds decrease the perceived separation. The Bicycle Intersection LOS is calculated according to lane widths, volumes, and crossing distances for the cyclist.

Table 8. Travel Time Estimates Summary

Corridor 1	Corridor 2A	Corridor 2B
15th Street Only	15th Street – Arts Center Way – 16th Street – Peachtree Circle - 15th Street	W Peachtree St – Arts Center Way – 16th Street – Peachtree Circle – 15th Street
Distance: 0.6 miles Eastbound Travel Time: 3.9 min Westbound Travel Time: 3.3 min	Distance: 0.9 miles Eastbound Travel Time: 5.9 min Westbound Travel Time: 5.2 min	Distance: 1.0 miles Eastbound Travel Time: 7.0 min Westbound Travel Time: 6.4 min
		

Eastbound Westbound

Table 9. BLOS Model Outputs and Grading



Other factors considered in the calculation include speeds, proportion of heavy vehicles, pavement condition, utilization of on-street parking, and number of driveway conflicts. BLOS A is considered the most comfortable for cyclists and BLOS F is the least comfortable.

The weighted BLOS for the route alternatives are shown in Table 10, along with computed travel times.

While all the route alternatives have similar weighted BLOS scores, the individual segments along each alternative vary from LOS A to LOS E, as shown in Figure 33 and Figure 34. The detailed segment input data and scoring tables for each corridor, which are reflected in those maps, are available in the appendix.

Table 10. Weighted BLOS by Corridor

	Route	Distance	Direction	BLOS AM		BLOS PM		Travel Time
1	15th Street Only	0.6 mi	Eastbound	2.6	B	2.7	B	3.9 min
			Westbound	2.7	B	2.7	B	3.3 min
2A	15th Street – Arts Center Way – 16th Street – Peachtree Circle - 15th Street	0.9 mi	Eastbound	2.4	B	2.6	B	5.9 min
			Westbound	2.4	B	2.5	B	5.2 min
2B*	W Peachtree St – Arts Center Way – 16th Street – Peachtree Circle – 15th Stree	1.0 mi	Eastbound	2.3	B	2.5	B	7.0 min
			Westbound	2.3	B	2.4	B	6.4 min

*Alternative 2B includes distance of one-way segment along W Peachtree Street in both directions

Figure 33. BLOS Map - AM Period

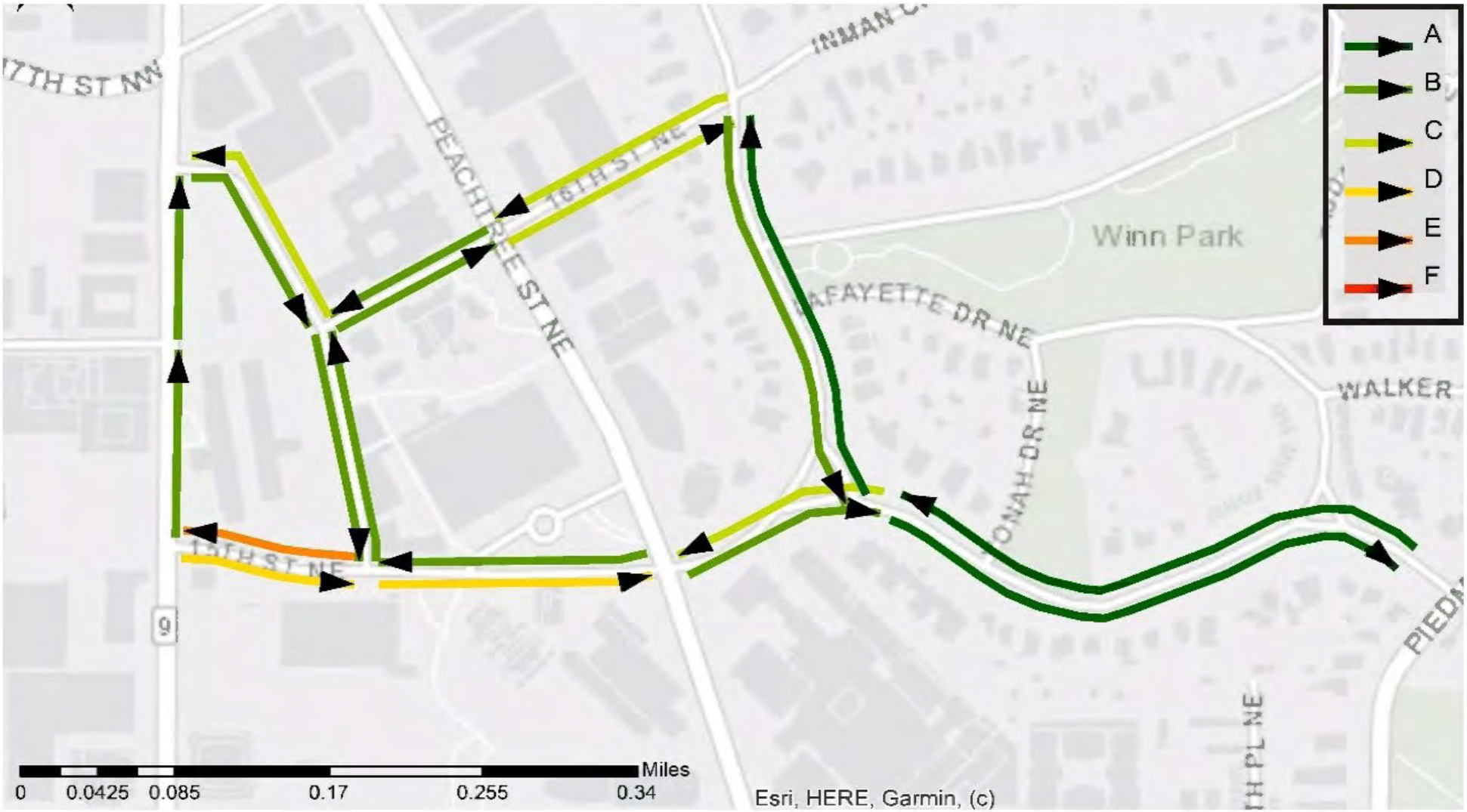
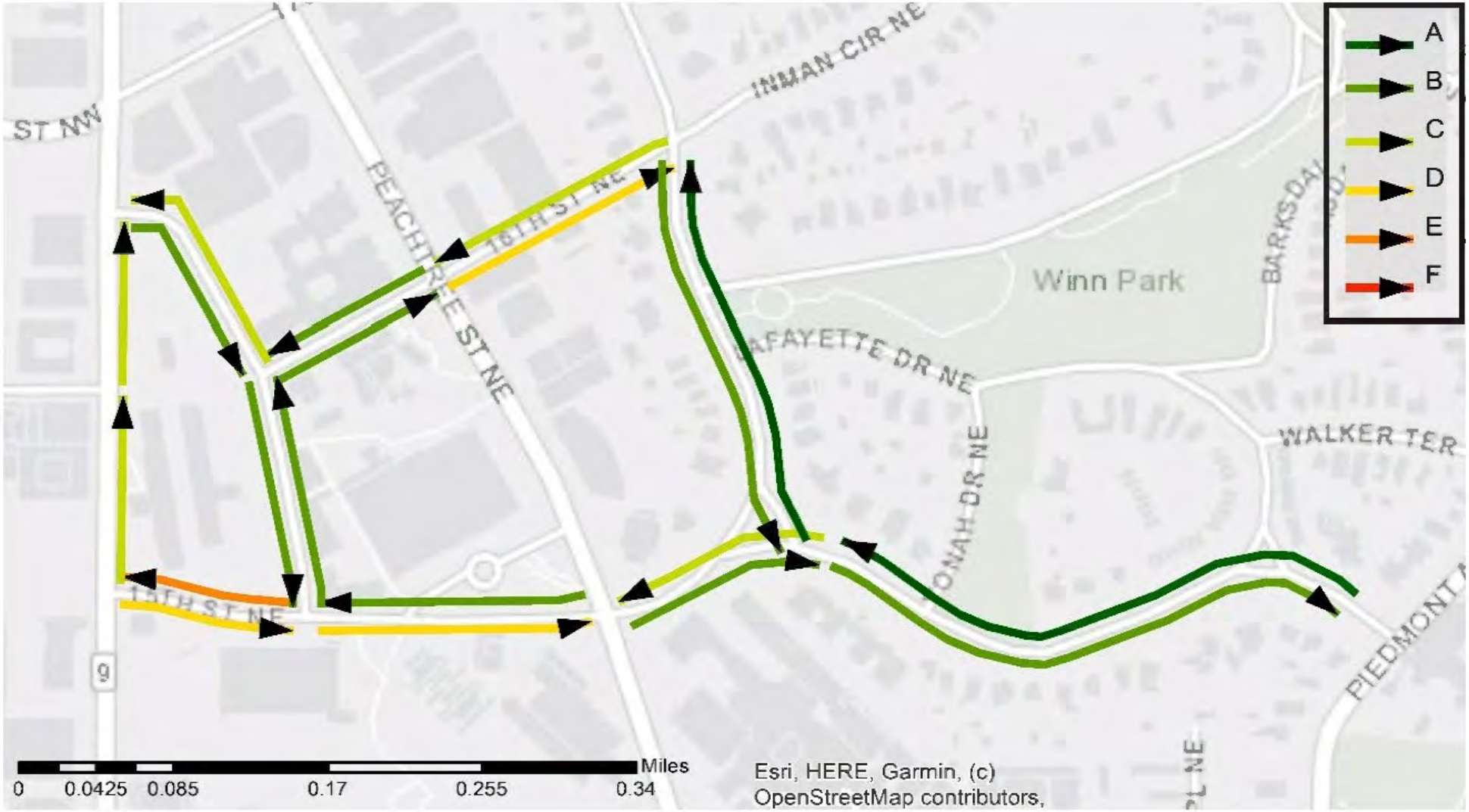


Figure 34. BLOS Map - PM Period



15th Street

The segment of 15th Street with the poorest BLOS is between West Peachtree Street and Arts Center Way. The high density of conflict points caused by driveways in this segment are what contributes most to lowering the BLOS grade to "D" or "E". The segments that include crossing of Peachtree Street have a BLOS grade of "C" or "D", due to the wide crossing distance of 85 feet. The most comfortable segments for cyclists are between Peachtree Circle and Piedmont Avenue. The 23- to 30-foot lane widths and relatively low vehicular traffic result in a BLOS grade of "A".

Cyclist riding on the sidewalk on 15th Street approaching Peachtree Street

As BLOS calculation methods do not account for steep grades, it should be noted a portion of 15th Street between W Peachtree Road and the Atlanta Symphony building has a steep uphill grade in the eastbound direction, which could lessen its appeal for bicyclists. BLOS calculations also do not account for cyclists accessing the facility from side streets, such as Peachtree Street. BLOS does not factor in control delay at intersections, but this is incorporated into the travel time analysis beginning on page 71. 15th Street also serves MARTA buses, and the BLOS methodology is not designed to adequately represent bicyclist perceptions of LOS where there is frequent bus service and/or frequent stops requiring bicyclists to swerve left to pass stopped buses.

West Peachtree Street

West Peachtree Street scores a BLOS grade of "B" in the AM peak period but degrades to a "C" in the PM peak period due to a more significant volume of traffic. Though there is a significant volume of traffic, it is spread across five lanes with little or no conflicts from unsignalized approaches. It should be noted that this part of West

Peachtree Street has a high volume of MARTA and commuter buses, which may create stress and conflicts for LIT riders. The BLOS methodology is not designed to adequately represent bicyclist perceptions of LOS where there is frequent bus service and/or frequent stops requiring LIT riders to swerve left to pass stopped buses.

Arts Center Way

Most of Arts Center Way operates at a BLOS of "B" with low traffic volumes and wide lanes. The density of side street conflict points in the northbound/westbound direction between West Peachtree Street and 16th Street are the only factor limiting the BLOS to a "C" for that segment.

As BLOS calculation methods do not account for steep grades, it should be noted a portion of Arts Center Way between West Peachtree Street and 16th Street has a steep uphill grade in the eastbound/southbound direction which could lessen its appeal for bicyclists. It should also be noted that Arts Center Way serves several MARTA buses, and the BLOS methodology is not designed to adequately represent bicyclist perceptions of level-of-service where there is frequent bus service and/or frequent stops requiring bicyclists to swerve left to pass stopped buses.

16th Street

16th Street shows a BLOS of "B" or "C" on all segments except for the eastbound approach to Peachtree Circle, which has a BLOS of "D". The eastbound approach to Peachtree Circle has narrow lanes with frequent on-street parking.

Peachtree Circle

Peachtree Circle has some of the best BLOS scores in the network, operating at BLOS "A" or "B" in both the AM and PM peaks. Some of the underlying reasons for the good BLOS scores are the relatively low traffic volumes, wide lanes, and buffered parking.

BLOS was not calculated for 14th Street segments, as that was determined not to be a viable corridor for the quick build scenario.

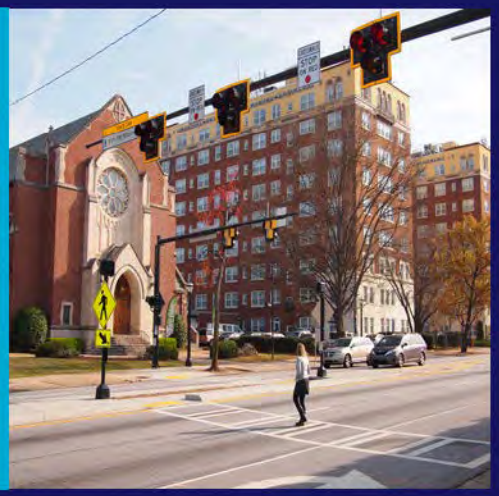
Arts Center Way Signal Warrant Analysis

The potential to signalize the intersection of 15th Street at Arts Center Way was explored to help control some of the conflict points between travel modes (bike, pedestrian, scooter, vehicle, and bus) that exist along this stretch of 15th Street. Controlling the conflict points at the intersections of Arts Center Way and tying in one of the access points to the Promenade Parking Garage would help mitigate some of the safety deficiencies identified through the crash analysis. A signal at this intersection would also support an alignment of the LIT lane connection that uses 16th Street and may require cyclists to navigate a turn at this intersection.

Local examples of a full signal at West Peachtree Street and 15th Street; a PHB on Ponce De Leon Avenue; and a RRFB on Tech Parkway.

Full Signal

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon

Based upon the results of the existing conditions analysis, several different types of signal warrant analyses were explored to improve pedestrian and bicycling safety, including a Full Signal Warrant Analysis, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) Warrant Analysis, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) Recommendation.

Full Signal Warrant

For the City of Atlanta to approve installation of a traffic signal, a traffic analysis is often required to show that the demands for that signal exceed one or more thresholds detailed in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). A preliminary signal warrant analysis was performed to look at average daily traffic (ADT) along 15th Street and Arts Center Way to determine if a detailed analysis would feasibly meet warrants. Forecasted volumes from the 15th Street Extension Project (Opening Year 2023), with additional vehicle trips generated from the newly opened Hampton Inn and Suites, did not indicate that the more critical signal warrants (8-Hour and 4-Hour) would be met. It was assumed the proposed 15th Street LIT facility may repurpose a vehicle travel lane and a two-lane cross-section was assumed for this analysis. As shown in Table 11, the projected volumes with the 15th Street Extension were shy of triggering MUTCD Signal Warrant 1 (8-Hour); however, the preliminary analysis was close enough to merit a more detailed study, as shown in Table 12.

Table 11. Preliminary Signal Warrant Analysis Results

Preliminary Signal Warrant Calculation [1]						
	Street	Number of Lanes	Warrant Volumes	Approach Volumes [2]	Volume Shortfall	Warrant Met?
Standard 1						
Case A	Major	1	350	476	-126	✗
	Minor	1	105	81	24	
Case B	Major	1	525	476	49	✗
	Minor	1	53	81	-28	
Standard 2						
Case A & B	Major	1	420	476	-56	✗
	Minor	1	84	81	3	

1) Used 5.6 percent of daily traffic volume to calculate the eighth highest hour for major and minor movements
2) Approach volumes estimated for the eighth highest hour of the day as a portion of daily traffic volume

Table 12. Full Signal Warrant Requirements

Name	Description	Result	Requirements Met
Warrant 1	8-Hour Warrant	✗	2 out of 8 hours
Warrant 2	4-Hour Warrant	✗	2 out of 4 hours
Warrant 3	Peak Hour Warrant	✓	1 out of 1 hours
Warrant 4	Pedestrian Volumes	✗	3 out of 4 hours
Warrant 7	Crash Experience	✗	1 out of 5 crashes

16th Street facing west at Arts Center Way

A more detailed analysis provided further insight into how likely the intersection is to warrant a signal in the future. The summary of the signal warrant, using projected 15th Street Extension volumes (Opening Year 2023) and assuming 1 vehicle approach lanes, is shown in Table 11 for different criteria an intersection may meet to warrant signalization.

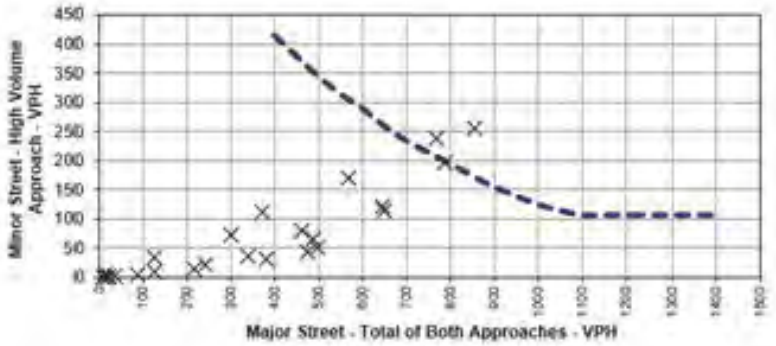
While the results of the signal warrant analysis indicate that a signalized intersection meets peak hour warrants, critical warrants will likely not be met with existing projects; the shortfall is largely predicated on the side street volume (Arts Center Way) being too low and not the mainline (15th Street). The MUTCD reserves Warrant 3 (Peak Hour) for unusual cases that "attract or discharge large numbers of vehicles over a short time," which doesn't necessarily apply to this situation but is provided for context. Additionally, if the proposed alternative for the bicycle facility maintains two approach lanes at the intersection with Arts Center Way, the signal warrant shortfalls become larger and are less likely to meet in the future. The pedestrian warrant, however, is not impacted by the number of approach lanes and is close to meeting warrants in the future with projected traffic volumes along 15th Street. With the Midtown Art Walk connecting Arts

Center MARTA Station, this could induce additional pedestrian demand outside of peak hours, further driving this warrant. Additionally, the nearby Midtown Union development currently under construction may induce both additional pedestrian and vehicle demand along Arts Center Way towards 15th Street. However, without a protected crossing at the intersection of West Peachtree Street with Arts Center Way, it is difficult to project what additional pedestrian and side street traffic on Arts Center Way would be created at the 15th Street intersection. The 15th Street LIT lane project may also benefit from a full signal here depending on the final design of the facility.

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB or HAWK) Warrant

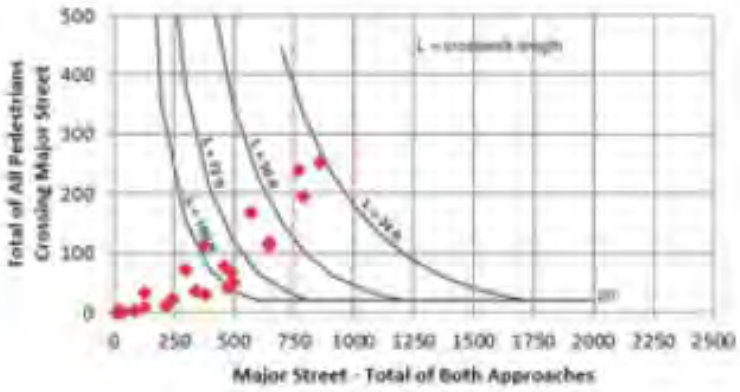
Similar to the full signal warrant analysis, the PHB fell short of meeting its warrant. It is likely that if a PHB is warranted in the future, MUTCD Signal Warrant 4 for a full signal will also be warranted. Shown in Figure 35, there are currently 3 of the required 4 hours above the warrant threshold for Signal Warrant 4 (4-Hour pedestrian volumes) and approximately 3 points above the MUTCD PHB Warrant threshold for a crossing distance of 43 feet.

Figure 35. MUTCD Signal Warrant 4 (Pedestrian Volumes)



Source: MUTCD Figure 4C-5

Figure 36. MUTCD PHB Warrant



Low Speed, 35 mph or less - Source: MUTCD Figure 4F-1

Pedestrians crossing and vehicle turning left at the intersection of 15th Street and Peachtree Street

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

A RRFB is recommended at this location even though ADT along 15th Street is relatively low. FHWA guidance recommends additional treatment for marked crosswalks be considered along roadways with ADT less than 9,000 vehicles-per-day if travel speeds are greater than 35 or 40 mph. While travel speeds during peak periods are less than 35 mph, outside of peak periods travel speeds are recorded to be greater (exceeding 35 mph westbound and exceeding 40 to 45 mph eastbound on 15th Street). Depending on the time of year, these speeds might be occurring outside daylight hours, when there is a decrease in pedestrian visibility. **It should therefore be considered that an RRFB be installed at this location (in the absence of a signal warrant) to provide additional pedestrian visibility and protection.** Future developments may trigger a full signal to be warranted (15th Street Extension, Opus One, Midtown Union, Midtown Art Walk, and a possible Midtown Arts Center MARTA Station Mixed-Use Development), but the RRFB could provide safety benefits in the near term.

15th Street at Peachtree Street Left Turn Phase Warrant

Left turn phase warrants were also analyzed for the intersection of Peachtree Street at 15th Street. During stakeholder engagement, neighbors expressed concerns that the addition of a LIT lane would exacerbate left turning vehicles queuing on 15th Street at Peachtree Street. Using traffic volumes from the 15th Street Extension Project (both existing and projected), only the westbound left turn (exiting Ansley Park) warrants a left turn signal (green arrow) using either set of volumes. **It is therefore recommended that a left turn signal phase be considered for the westbound approach on 15th Street at Peachtree Street to assuage community concerns of potential left turn queues.**

Recommendations

Each of the alternative alignments has its own set of considerations for improving mobility and safety for LIT riders and pedestrians. Table 13 summarizes the biggest opportunities and constraints for each corridor, which are also graphically represented in the matrix on page 84.

Table 13. Summary of Corridor Opportunities and Constraints

	14th Street	15th Street	16th Street/ Arts Center Way
Opportunities	High concentration of destinations Connect to Juniper Complete Street Project bike lanes	Connect to 15th Street Extension bike lanes Wide right-of-way between Peachtree Street and Piedmont Avenue Direct access to MARTA Arts Center Station Most direct route between MARTA station and Piedmont Park	Connect to 15th Street Extension bike lanes Wide right-of-way between Peachtree Street and Piedmont Avenue
Constraints	Higher vehicular traffic volumes High volume of garage driveways Limited available right-of-way	Steep slope between Arts Center Way and Peachtree Street Woodruff Arts Center field trip on-street bus parking Retain on-street residential parking	Narrow right-of-way on 16th Street between Peachtree Street and Peachtree Circle Passenger and cargo loading for Woodruff Arts Center

Figure 37. Corridor Comparison Matrix

Preferred Alternative

This section will be added following additional stakeholder engagement.
A preferred alternative has not been selected at this time.

Figure 38. Preferred Alternative Composite Opportunities and Constraints Map

This section will be added following additional stakeholder engagement.
A preferred alternative has not been selected at this time.

Key Design Considerations

The following should be considered to develop a design that is context-sensitive, enhances the sense of place, and balances the needs of adjacent properties with the need to expand mobility and improve safety for users of all modes.

Consolidate bus stops where possible.

Coordinate with MARTA to identify locations where bus stop consolidation may be feasible, such as the two nearby stops on 15th Street just west of Peachtree Street. This will help reduce the number of conflict points between LIT and transit riders.

Maintain ADA-compliant access to bus stops.

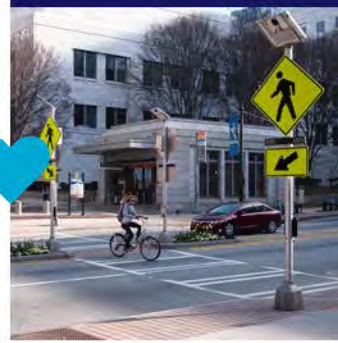
Where a LIT facility crosses a bus stop, accommodations must be provided to ensure direct, ADA-compliant access between the passenger waiting area and the bus boarding location. Treatments such as floating bus stops or sidewalk-level LIT facilities may be considered.

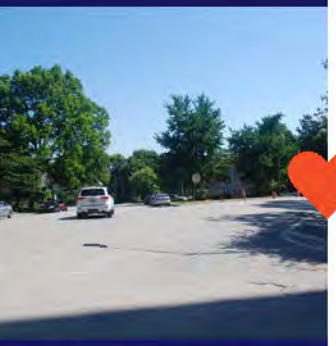
Enhance LIT lane visibility at driveways with sight line limitations.

Some driveways along the corridors have limited visibility of approaching traffic, such as the Callaway Plaza exit at the downhill slope 15th Street or the Woodruff Arts Center garage exit on Arts Center Way. Design features to maximize LIT visibility should be included at these locations.

Install an interim RRFB at 15th Street and Arts Center Way.

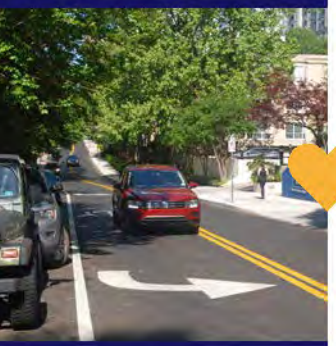
Based on the results of the signal warrant analysis at the intersection of 15th Street with Arts Center Way, an RRFB should be considered at this location (in the absence of a traffic signal warrant) given proposed projects that could induce additional pedestrian demand at this intersection, particularly the Midtown Art Walk. The 15th Street LIT lane project may also benefit from a full signal here, depending on the final design of the facility.





Simplify the intersection of 15th Street and Peachtree Circle.

Based on the results of the crash analysis, and the high concentration of crashes around the triangular intersection of Peachtree Circle with 15th Street, it is recommended this intersection be simplified to a standard condition, such as a one-way stop-controlled T-intersection, or similar.



Where possible, retain left turn lanes.

Right-of-way acquisition is often a time-consuming and expensive process and would likely delay project implementation beyond the targeted quick build timeframe of one year. To accommodate LIT facilities within the existing right-of-way, the elimination of a vehicular travel or turn lane may be necessary. However, if it is possible to retain existing left turn lanes, such as by shifting to a sidewalk-level LIT facility at intersection approaches, stakeholders would prefer to keep those operations.

Work with Woodruff Arts Center to identify alternative bus staging areas, as needed.

Because school buses regularly park in travel lanes on 15th Street, Arts Center Way, and 16th Street for extended periods of time while students visit the Woodruff Arts Center, any change to the design of these streets would impact their operations. If this space is needed to accommodate a LIT facility, Midtown Alliance and the City of Atlanta will coordinate with Woodruff Arts Center to identify alternative bus staging locations and procedures that will continue to allow access to the center while also maximizing city streets for broader mobility needs.

Add a westbound left turn phase at 15th Street and Peachtree Street.

Based on the results of the left-turn warrant analysis, it is recommended a westbound left turn phase (4-Section Flashing Yellow Arrow) be added to the intersection of 15th Street with Peachtree Street. The addition of the protected-permissive left turn movement will help mitigate queueing concerns extending into the Ansley Park community. If a 4-Section FYA is installed (with an opposing 3-Section permissive-only FYA) it provides the opportunity to allow for lagging left turn operations which could prioritize bicyclists

and pedestrians at the intersection by providing leading pedestrian and leading bicycle intervals across 15th Street.

Retain on-street residential parking.

The primary design consideration for the Ansley Park neighborhood is to retain existing on-street parking for residents and their visitors. They are open to reconfiguration, if a comparable number of spaces is retained.

Incorporate traffic calming features in the Ansley Park neighborhood.

Although it is not the neighborhood's primary concern on the affected streets, opportunities to slow vehicular travel speeds by installing traffic calming features as part of the design are welcomed by neighbors.

Partner with property owners to install bicycle and scooter parking.

The availability of high-quality LIT facilities may increase bicycle and scooter use in the area. Midtown Alliance should work with adjacent property owners to install bike racks and scooter drop zones at popular destinations along the selected route. These may include a combination of Midtown's standard metal bike racks, as well as artistically designed racks and bike lockers to enhance the area's creative cache.

Contribute to the Midtown Art Walk.

The Midtown Art Walk intersects each of the alternative alignments. Artistic streetscape elements should be included in these locations where feasible.

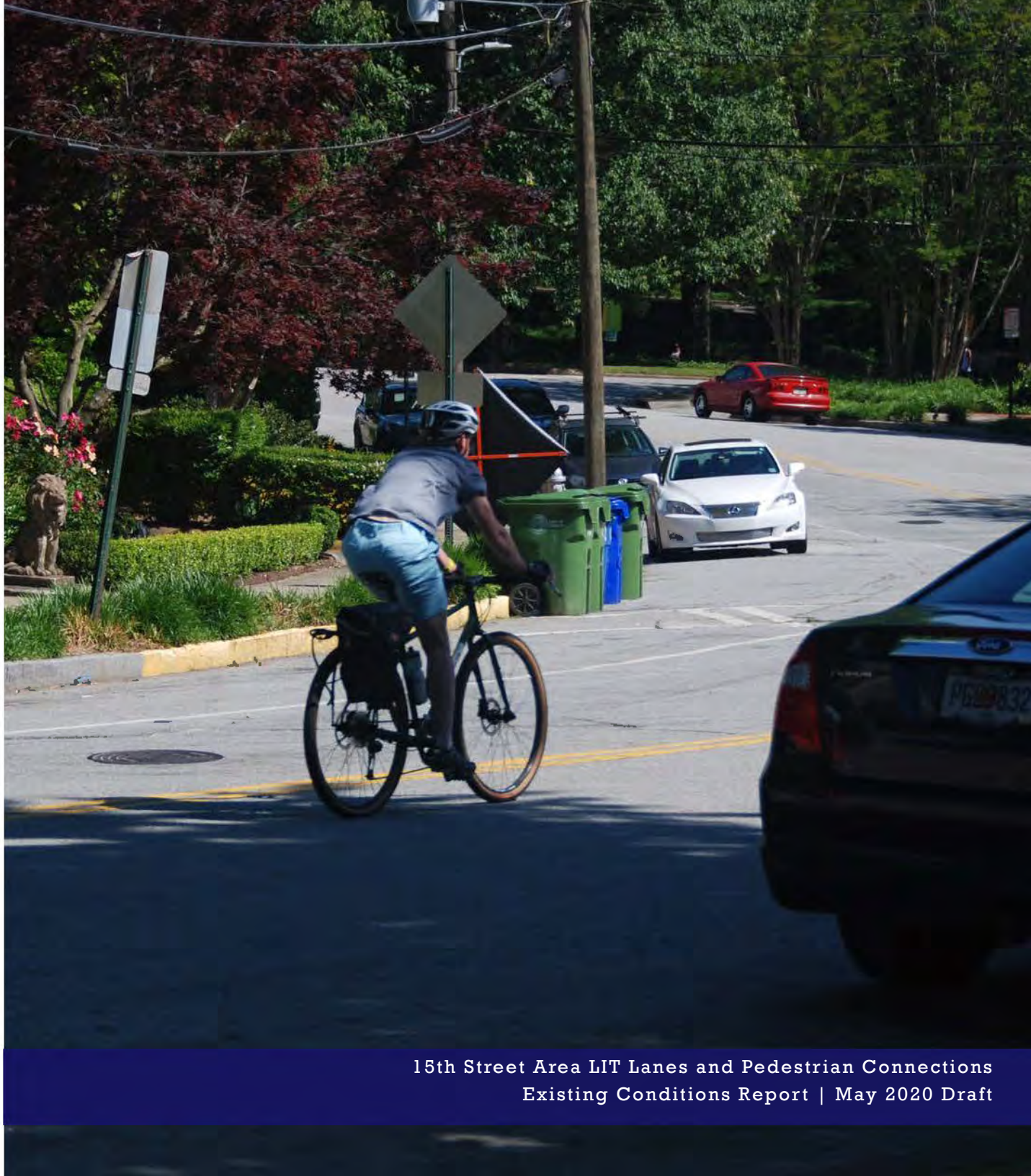
Install wayfinding signage and coordinate with wayfinding application developers to maximize awareness of the route.

Bicycle route signs should be updated or installed to make LIT riders aware of the new route and relevant destinations. This will be particularly important if the 15th Street or 16th Street routes are selected, as these streets are less visible to the general public than 14th Street. Piedmont Park visitors unfamiliar with the area may be unaware safe facilities exist nearby if signs and digital wayfinding applications do not inform them. "Bike lane ends in 1/4 mile" signs may also help riders understand that the existing bike lanes on 14th Street only cover a short distance and it is not the safest route to get to Arts Center MARTA Station.

Alliance

999 Peachtree Street, Suite 730
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
404-892-0050

MidtownATL.com



15th Street Area LIT Lanes and Pedestrian Connections
Existing Conditions Report | May 2020 Draft