

MARTA South DeKalb Transit Initiative

Public Meetings | July 17 and 18, 2023



Purpose of Today's Meeting

1

Introduce the Alternatives Screening Process

2

Introduce transit alternatives that can be delivered with existing funding sources

3

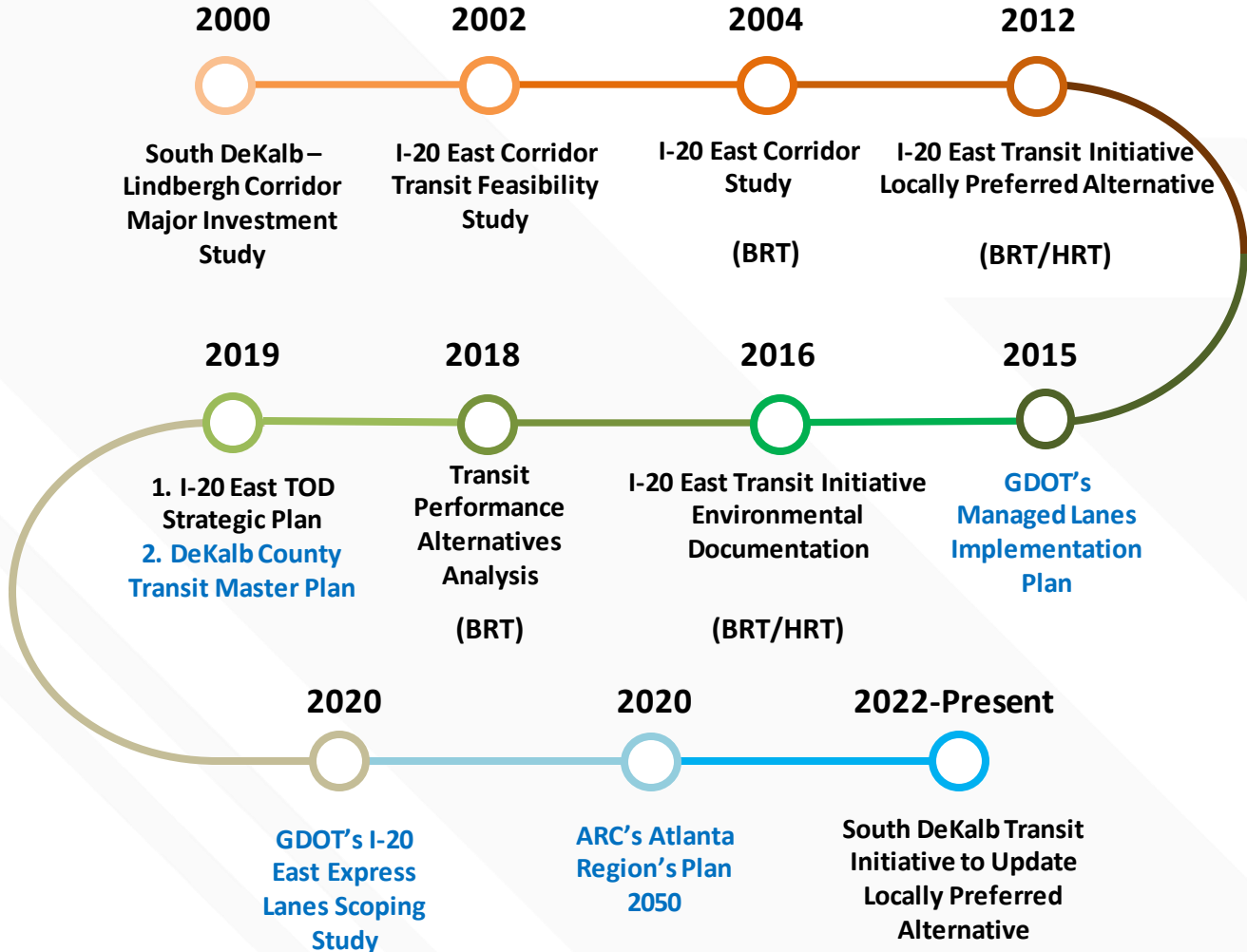
Collect feedback on the process and the alternatives considered



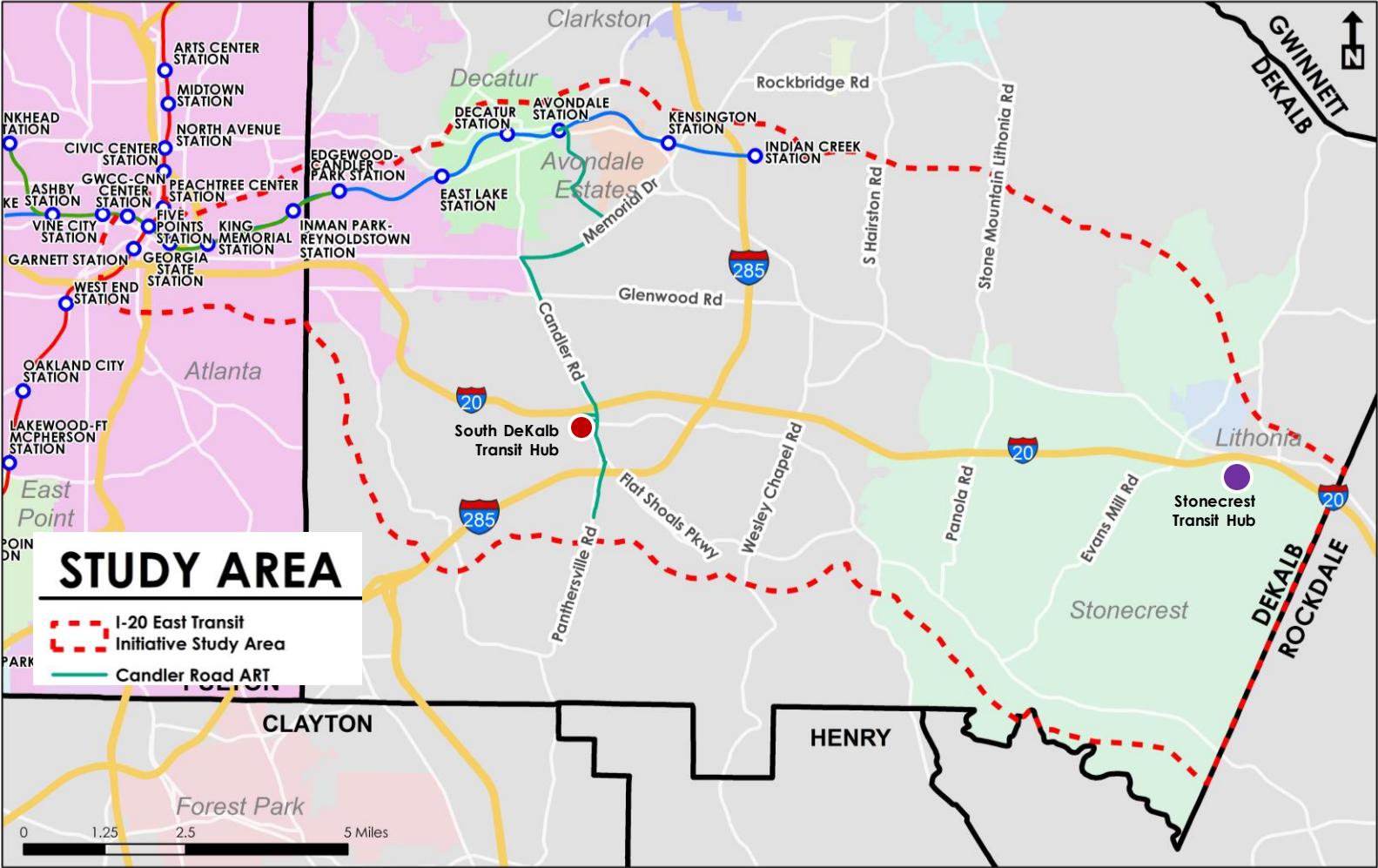
Project Introduction



South DeKalb Transit Initiative History



South DeKalb Transit Initiative Purpose & Study Area



- PURPOSE**
- Identify more immediate solutions to meet needs in South DeKalb
 - Implement the financially constrained recommendations of the **DeKalb County Transit Master Plan** along with these underway projects:
 - South DeKalb Transit Hub
 - Stonecrest Transit Hub
 - Candler Road ART
 - Buford Highway ART

- STUDY AREA**
- Broader study area to evaluate more corridors in addition to I-20
 - Broader scope of transit modes that can be implemented in the nearer term

2019 DeKalb County Transit Master Plan



DeKalb County
TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

Financial scenarios evaluated what could be afforded with a potential new DeKalb County sales tax

Existing MARTA Penny Scenario

- No new transit expansion

Additional Half Penny Sales Tax Scenario

- Bus Rapid Transit along I-285/I-20

Additional Full Penny Sales Tax Scenario

- Bus Rapid Transit along I-285/I-20
- Arterial Rapid Transit on Covington Highway

Greater than Full Penny Scenario

- Heavy Rail Transit along I-285/I-20



Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Update Process + Timeline

Existing Conditions/ Confirm Purpose & Need

- Document changes in demographics, land use, travel trends, and market assessment
- Identify GDOT managed lanes corridor impacts
- Analyze purpose & need to confirm current transportation problem

Winter/Spring 2022

Re-evaluate Previous Locally Preferred Alternative

- Update Heavy Rail/BRT project definition to reflect GDOT managed lanes concepts
- Understand cost, performance, and impacts

Summer 2022

Develop & Evaluate Other Alternatives

- Develop 10 High-Capacity Transit alternatives
- Revise purpose & need statement.
- Compare Heavy Rail/BRT alternative against other alternatives

Fall 2022 – Spring 2023

Update Locally Preferred Alternative

- Based on evaluation results and community support, identify an updated Locally Preferred Alternative and funding strategy for adoption by the MARTA Board

Summer 2023 - Dec 2023

 WE ARE HERE

On-going Public & Stakeholder Engagement 

Project Goals & Objectives

1	2	3	4	5	6
Increase mobility, accessibility, and safety	Provide improved transit service within the corridor	Support regional and local land use and development goals	Promote cost effective transit investments	Preserve natural and built environment	Achieve a high level of community support
Improve travel times for east-west travel	Provide transit service with sufficient capacity to accommodate growing demand	Promote economic development/revitalization	Provide transit service that can be implemented, operated, and maintained with available resources	Minimize impacts on environmental resources	Maintain compliance with stakeholder guidance
Improve transit accessibility within the corridor	Provide travel time competitive transit service in the corridor	Support adopted local land use plans			Achieve a high level of public support
Improve connectivity with existing and planned transit investments	Provide transit service for traditionally underserved populations	Encourage transit supportive land use and development patterns			
Improve travel options within the corridor					
Improve safety within the corridor					



Alternatives Screening



Screening Approach

Data Analysis and Existing Conditions



Identify Screening Criteria and Range of Alternatives



Initial Screening



Secondary Screening



Locally Preferred Alternative



Public and Stakeholder Outreach

Public & Stakeholder Engagement Timeline

2022

JUNE
ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS WITH:
 • Elected Officials
 • Business/ Economic Development Organizations

JULY
 • Community Stakeholders
 • Emergency Responders
 • Educational Institutions
 • Partner Agencies

AUGUST
 • Transit/ Transportation Stakeholder groups

SEPTEMBER
PEER CITY TOUR: San Diego

OCTOBER
POP UP EVENT: South DeKalb Mall

NOVEMBER
POP UP EVENT: Georgia State, Decatur Campus

DECEMBER

2023

JANUARY
POP UP EVENT: Stonecrest Mall

FEBRUARY

MARCH
POP UP EVENT:
 • Art at the Park
 • UMBL Preseason Classic
 • Stonecrest Senior Citizen Healthcare Fair.

APRIL
COMMUNITY SURVEY
STAKEHOLDER MEETING

MAY
FOCUS GROUP:
 • Transit Riders
 • South DeKalb Residents

JUNE

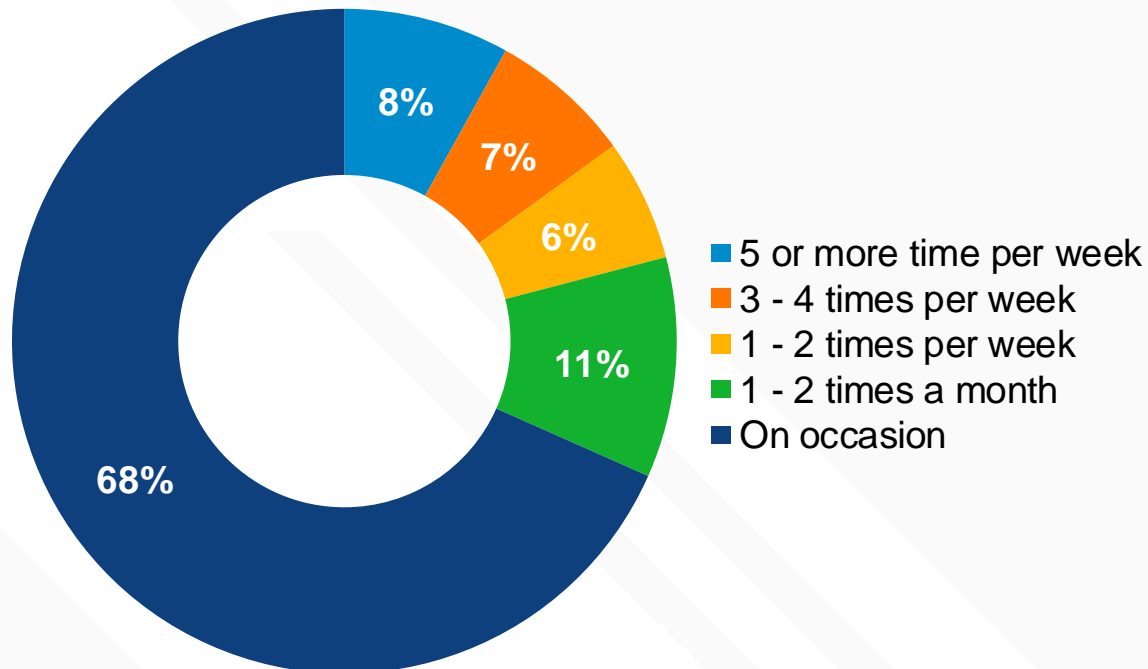
JULY
WE ARE HERE

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH: ONLINE SURVEYS SOCIAL MEDIA LITERATURE DROPS

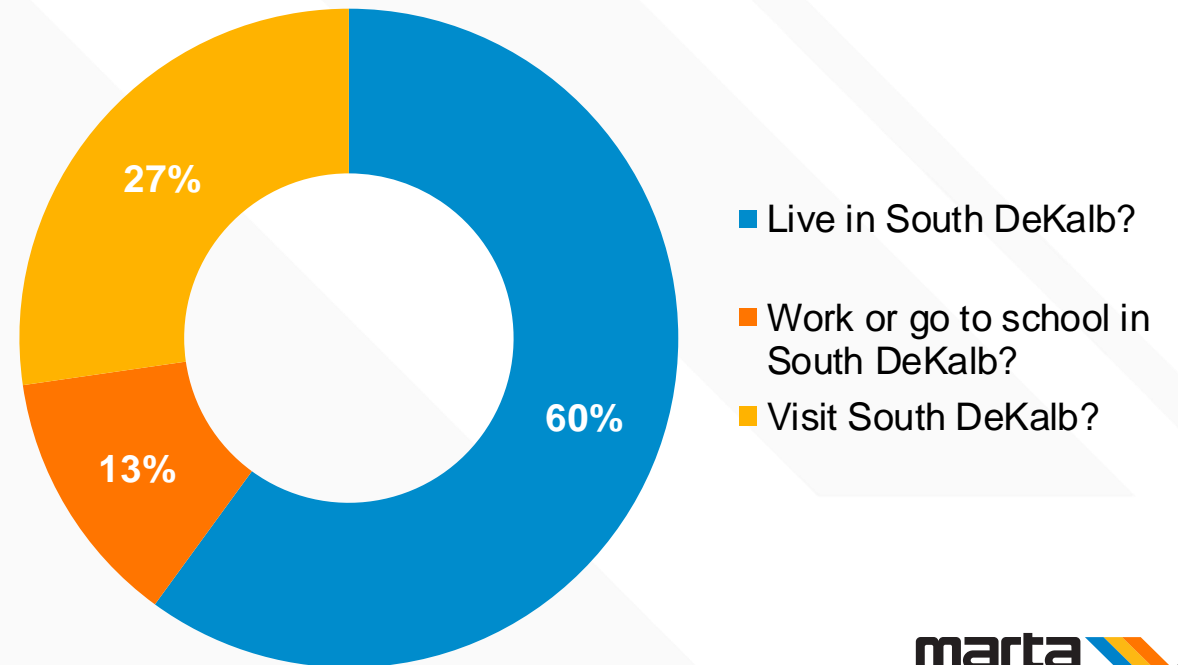
Community Survey Respondents

- 1,014 total respondents from November 2022 to May 2023
- 73% of respondents live, work, or attend school in South DeKalb
- 68% of respondents ride MARTA occasionally
- 21% of respondents ride MARTA with weekly frequency

How often do you ride MARTA?



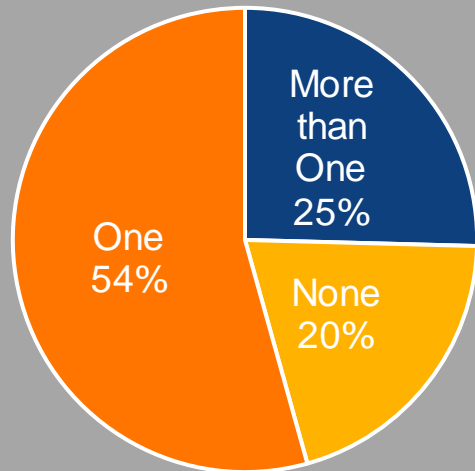
Relationship to South DeKalb



Public Feedback

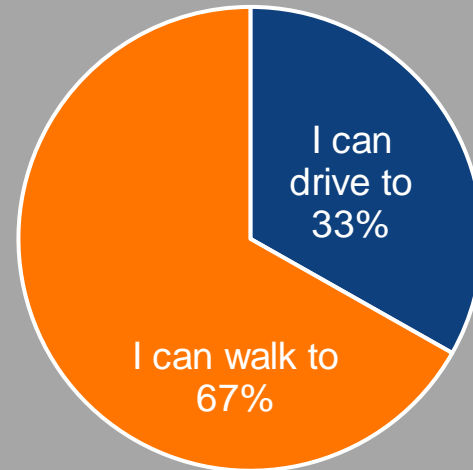
Community Survey Results on Service Preferences

How many transfers are you willing to make during a single journey?



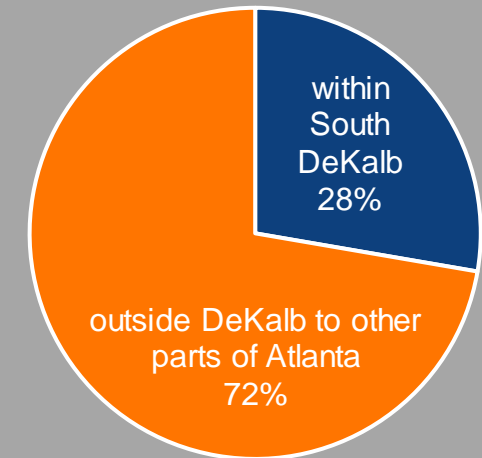
54% willing to make 1 transfer during a MARTA trip. Drops to 25% for more than one.

I prefer transit that...



67% prefer transit that picks riders up near home or that is accessible without driving a car.

I prefer transit that moves people...

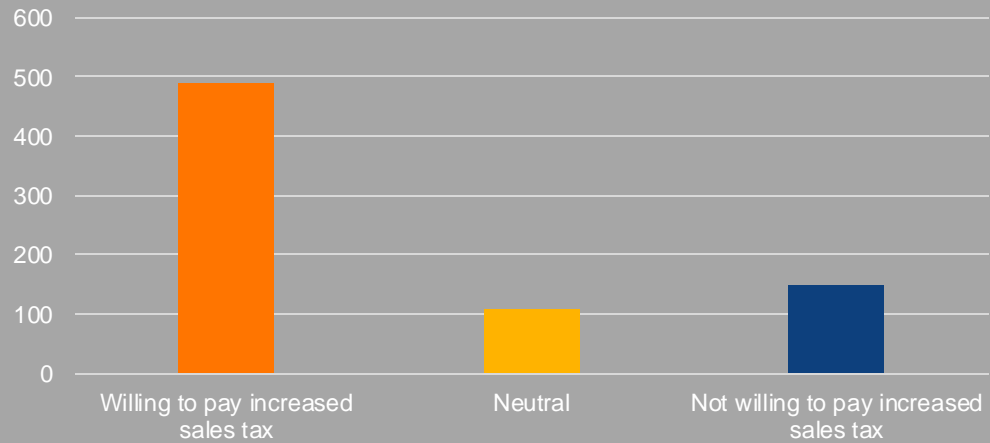


72% prefer transit options that connect riders outside of DeKalb to other parts of Atlanta.

Public Feedback

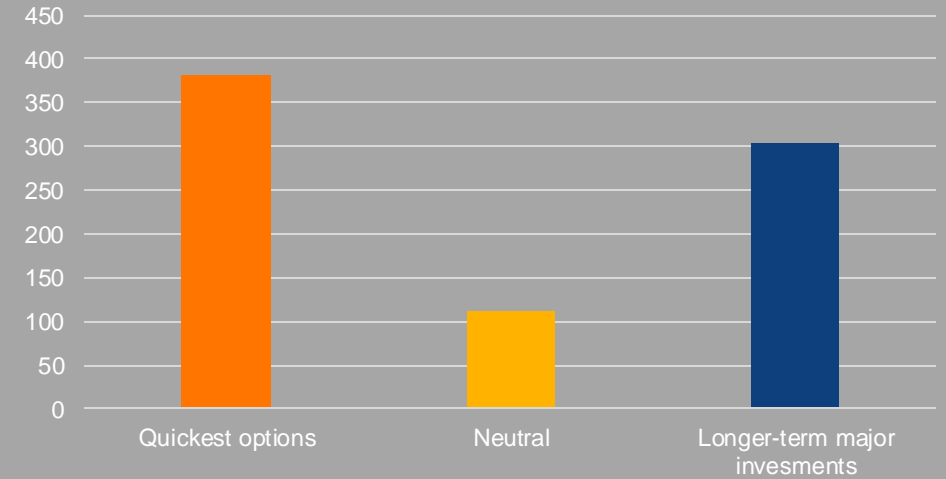
Community Survey Results on Project Trade-offs

Funding



65% willing to pay increased sales tax
to support transit expansion.

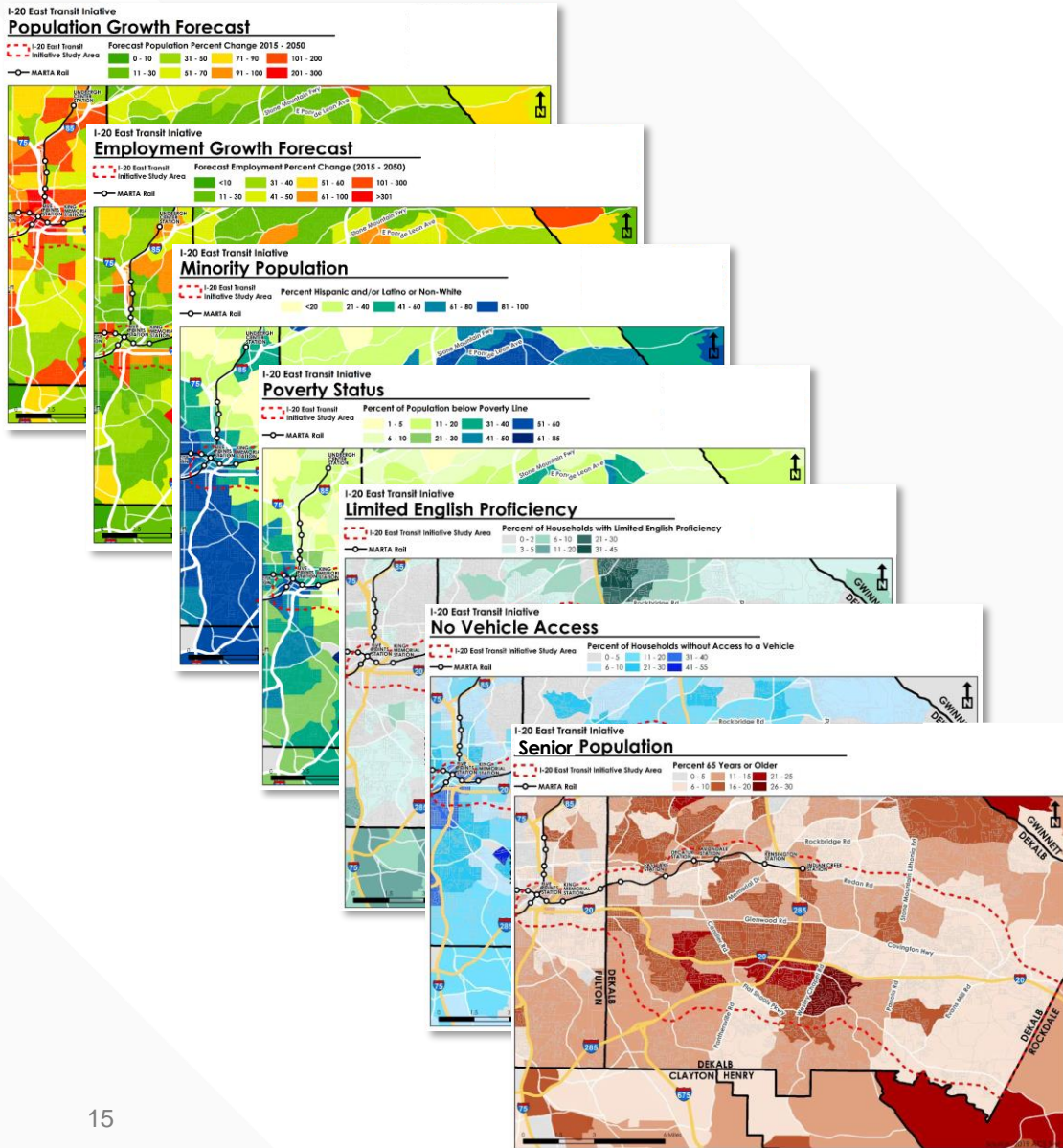
Timing



48% prefer transit
projects that can be
built the **quickest**.

38% prefer major
transit investments
with longer timelines.

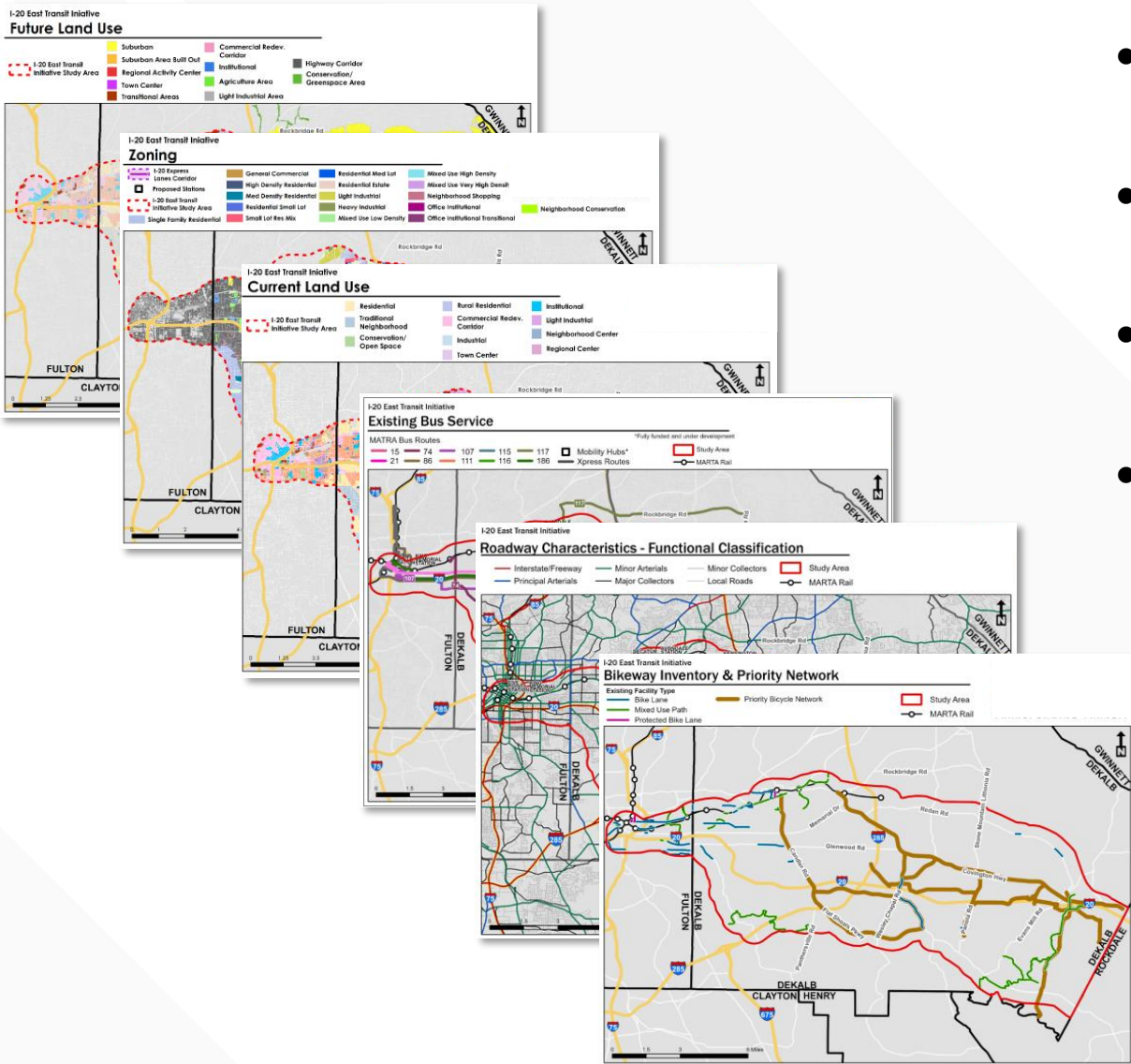
South DeKalb Transit Existing Conditions Demographics & Equity Considerations



- Study area is 78% residents of color.
- 17.5% of the study area population is below the poverty line.
- Within the study area, 12% of households do not have vehicle access.
 - North of I-20 between Panola Road and Evans Mill Road, the rate is 24%.
- Sections of the corridor, particularly within I-285, are projected to increase in population and employment.
- Employment is projected to grow by 25% by 2050.
- Population is projected to grow by 33% by 2050.

South Dekalb Transit Existing Conditions

Land Use and Infrastructure



- Predominantly suburban with pockets of commercial and mixed-use around interstate interchanges.
- Mall at Stonecrest area is the largest commercial area in South Dekalb.
- Potential for transit-oriented development (TOD) at station areas.
- High bus ridership locations include:
 - Route 15 at Panthersville
 - Route 115 at Stonecrest Mall
 - Panola Park & Ride
 - Route 186 at Rainbow Drive/Snapfinger Road

Transit Mode Definitions

NOT ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

High-Capacity Transit (HCT) comes in many different shapes, sizes, and costs. Three of the most common HCT modes are Heavy Rail, Light Rail, and Bus Rapid Transit. Each of these provide a high-frequency, premium transit service, but all have different design features and requirements.

MODE CHARACTERISTICS

STOP/STATION AMENITIES

STATION SPACING

VEHICLE CAPACITY










RECOMMENDED DENSITY

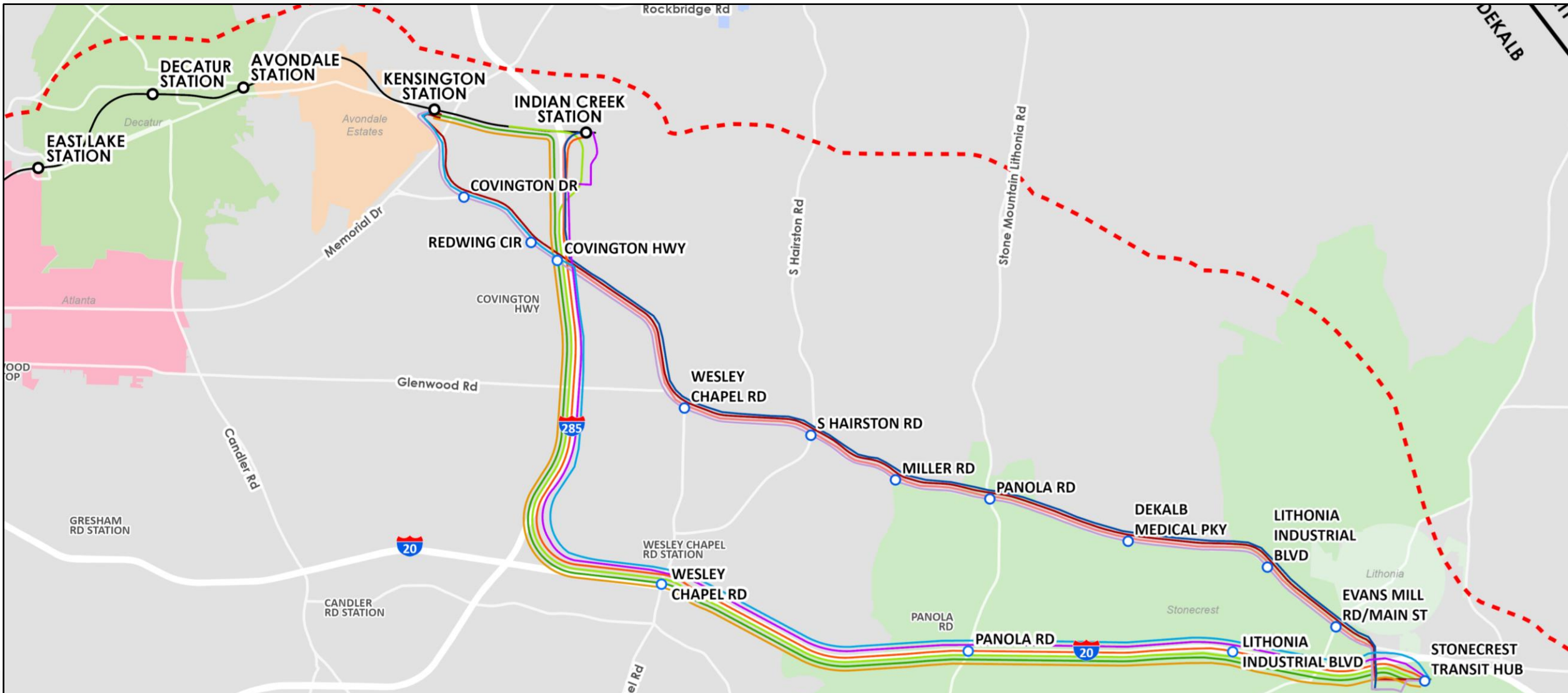
TCRP Transit-Oriented Development and Joint Development in the United States: A Literature Review, 2002

CAPITAL COST***

Based on review of national transit projects in 2022

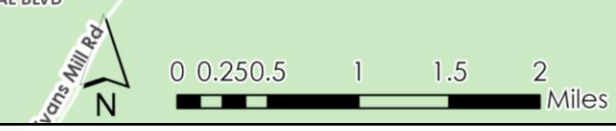
DELIVERY

	BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)	LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT)	HEAVY RAIL TRANSIT (HRT)
	 <p>San Diego Rapid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most flexible high-capacity transit option • Separated guideway optional • Can run in street  <p><i>Dedicated and Mixed Lanes</i></p>	 <p>San Diego Trolley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent infrastructure • Overhead power system • Separated guideway optional • Can run in street  <p><i>Dedicated guideway optional</i></p>	 <p>MARTA Heavy Rail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent infrastructure • Separated guideway required • Third rail technology  <p><i>Dedicated guideway required</i></p>
	ADA-accessible station shelters, wayfinding, real-time information, raised platforms, off-board fare payment, first/last mile connections	Similar to BRT amenities: raised platforms, off-board fare payment, first/last mile connections	Fixed stations with elevated platform and pre-boarding payment. Park & Ride where appropriate, bus loop for local route connections
	Every 1/2 mile or more	1/2 mile or more	>1 mile (20 min. walk)
	60 seated 95-105 total	40-80 seated 180 total	65-75 seated 100-120 total
	 > 15 dwelling units/acre 20-25 jobs/acre	 > 20 dwelling units/acre 25-50 jobs/acre	 20-30+ dwelling units/acre 50+ jobs/acre
	>\$20M/mile	>\$155M/mile	>\$350M/mile
	5-7 Years	8-10 Years	10+ Years



South DeKalb Transit Initiative Alternative Alignments

- Kensington BRT Interstate
- Indian Creek BRT Interstate
- Kensington BRT Covington Hwy
- Indian Creek BRT Covington Hwy
- Kensington LRT Interstate
- Indian Creek LRT Interstate
- Kensington LRT Covington Hwy
- Indian Creek LRT Covington Hwy
- Kensington HRT Interstate
- Indian Creek HRT Interstate
- - - I-20 East Transit Initiative Study Area
- Potential Stops



Evaluation Criteria



EVALUATION CRITERIA



CONNECTIVITY

- Transit Connections
- Bike-ped Connections



EQUITY

- Socioeconomic Analysis
- Underserved Communities.



COSTS

- Construction and Right of Way Cost



SCHEDULE

- Time to Implement



ROW IMPACTS

- Acreage Required
- Potential Displacements



CONSTRUCTABILITY & DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Compatibility with MARTA design guidelines
- Barriers to construction



POTENTIAL RIDERSHIP

- Population Density
- Number of Jobs Served

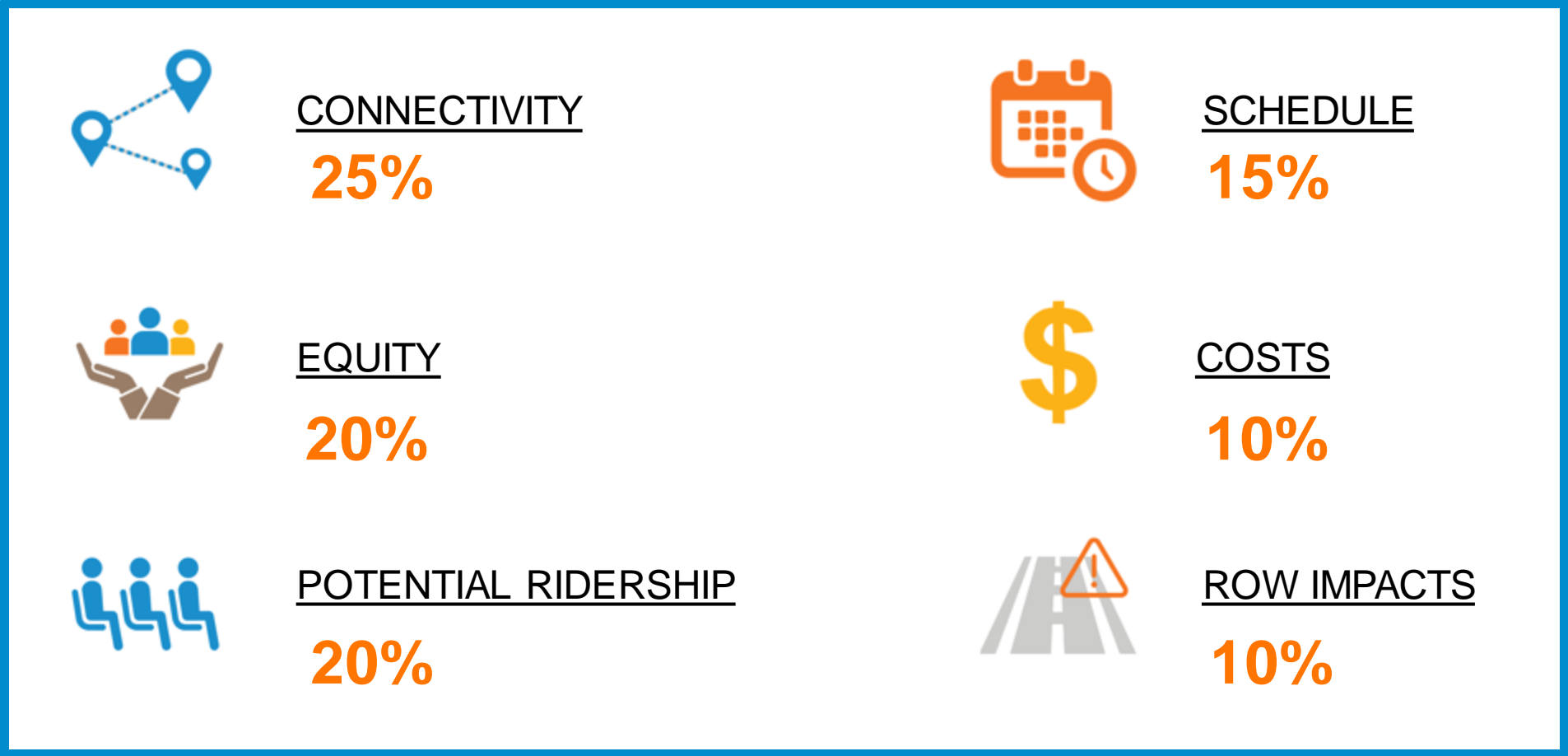


LOCAL FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

- Compatibility with funding scenarios specified in DeKalb Transit Master Plan

Initial Screening Criteria Weights

Community survey results directly informed initial screening criteria weights.



Initial Screening Filters



Design & Construction Filter

- Gauges physical feasibility
- Compatible with MARTA design guidelines

- ✓ Can be implemented without significant issues
- ✗ Has construction or design constraints that make implementation difficult



Local Funding Filter

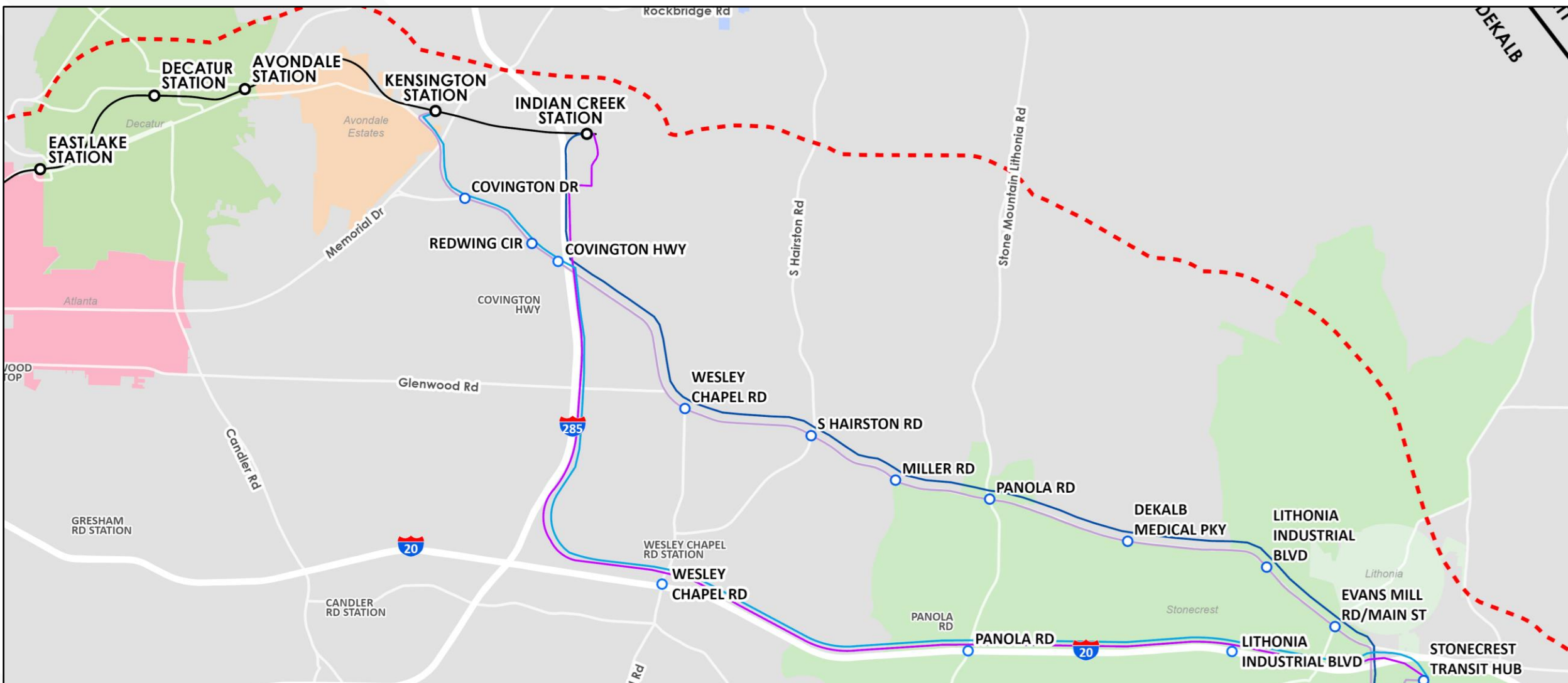
- Compatible with fiscally constrained projects in the **Dekalb Transit Master Plan**

- ✓ Estimated cost fits fiscally constrained budgets of the TMP
- ✗ Estimated cost exceeds fiscally constrained budgets of the TMP

Initial Screening Results

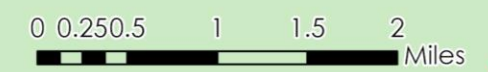
Criteria	Measure	BRT Alternatives				LRT Alternatives				HRT Alternatives	
		Kensington to Stonecrest		Indian Creek to Stonecrest		Kensington to Stonecrest		Indian Creek to Stonecrest		Kensington to Stonecrest	Indian Creek to Stonecrest
		I-20 and I-285	Covington Highway	I-20 and I-285	Covington Highway	I-20 and I-285	Covington Highway	I-20 and I-285	Covington Highway	I-20 and I-285	
Connectivity	Transit Connections	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Potential Ridership	Population Density	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Number of Jobs Served	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Schedule	Time to Implement	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Equity	Socioeconomic Indicator Score	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cost	Capital/ROW Costs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
ROW Impacts	Acreage Required	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Potential Displacement	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Weighted Score		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Design & Construction Filter		X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	X
Local Funding Filter		✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X

● Higher Alignment with Goals
 ● Moderate Alignment with Goals
 ● Lower Alignment with Goals
 X Does not meet criteria
 ✓ Meets criteria



South DeKalb Transit Initiative Alternatives for Secondary Screening

- Kensington BRT Interstate
- Indian Creek BRT Interstate
- Kensington BRT Covington Hwy
- Indian Creek BRT Covington Hwy
- - - I-20 East Transit Initiative Study Area
- Potential Stops





Next Steps



Secondary Screening

Refinement and Further Analysis of Highest-Scoring Alternatives



Service Planning, Ridership Forecasts, and Stop Locations



More Detailed Cost Estimates for Construction, Operations, and Maintenance



Continued public and stakeholder participation



Recommend updated LPA by end of year 2023

Questions & Comments?



Project website QR code



Thank You

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www.southdekalbtransit.com