

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Transit in Atlanta – Past, Present, and Future

Electric Railroaders' Association Conference

July 3, 2017



About Me



The Early Years

- 1861** **Atlanta Street Railway** starts first mule-powered street railway. Over a dozen street railways are incorporated in the following 30 years.
- 1889** **Atlanta & Edgewood Street Railroad Co** begins operation of the city's first electrified line.
- 1890s** Major consolidation begins. The **Atlanta Consolidated Street Railway** and **Atlanta Rapid Transit Company** begin the "Second Battle of Atlanta."
- 1901** All streetcar operations are consolidated into the **Georgia Railway & Electric Company** (today's Georgia Power).

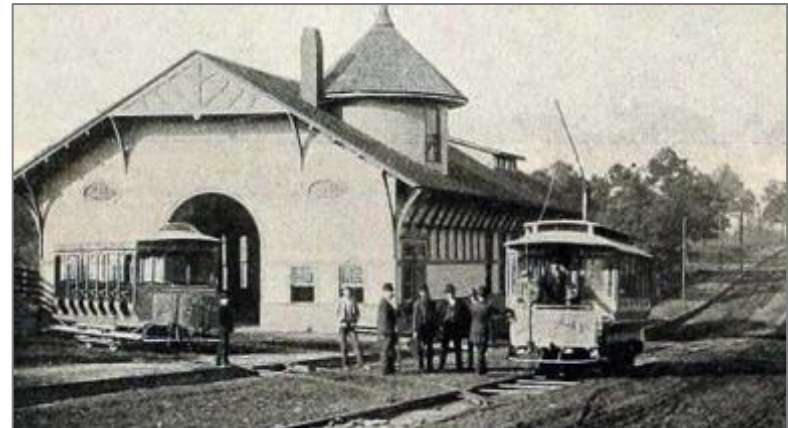
The Early Years



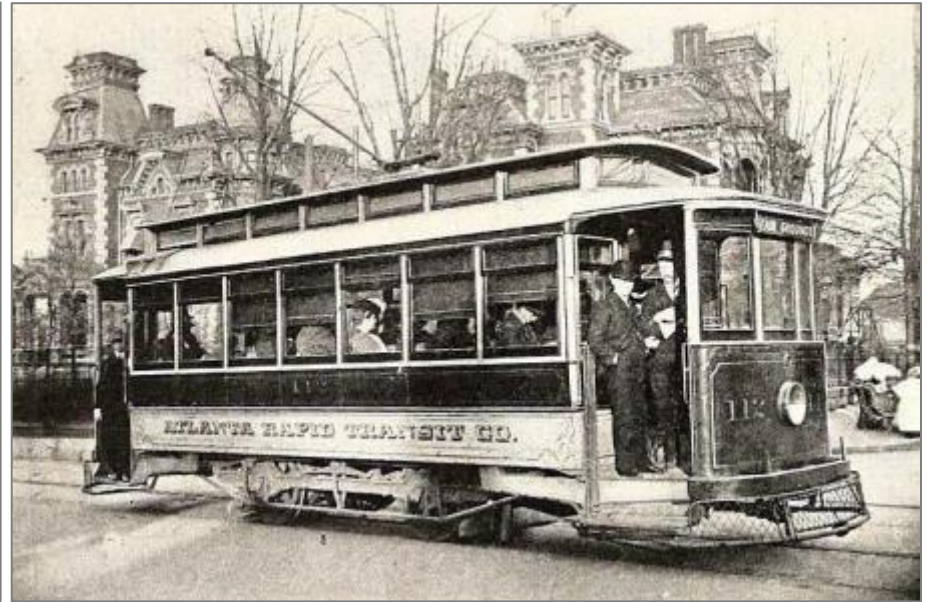
Above: a mule car on Peachtree St in 1872. At the location of today's Five Points Station.

Upper Right: Track construction at Five Points, 1891.

*Right: **Atlanta & Edgewood Street Railroad** car barn on Edgewood Ave circa 1894. The building still stands today as an event facility.*



Second Battle of Atlanta

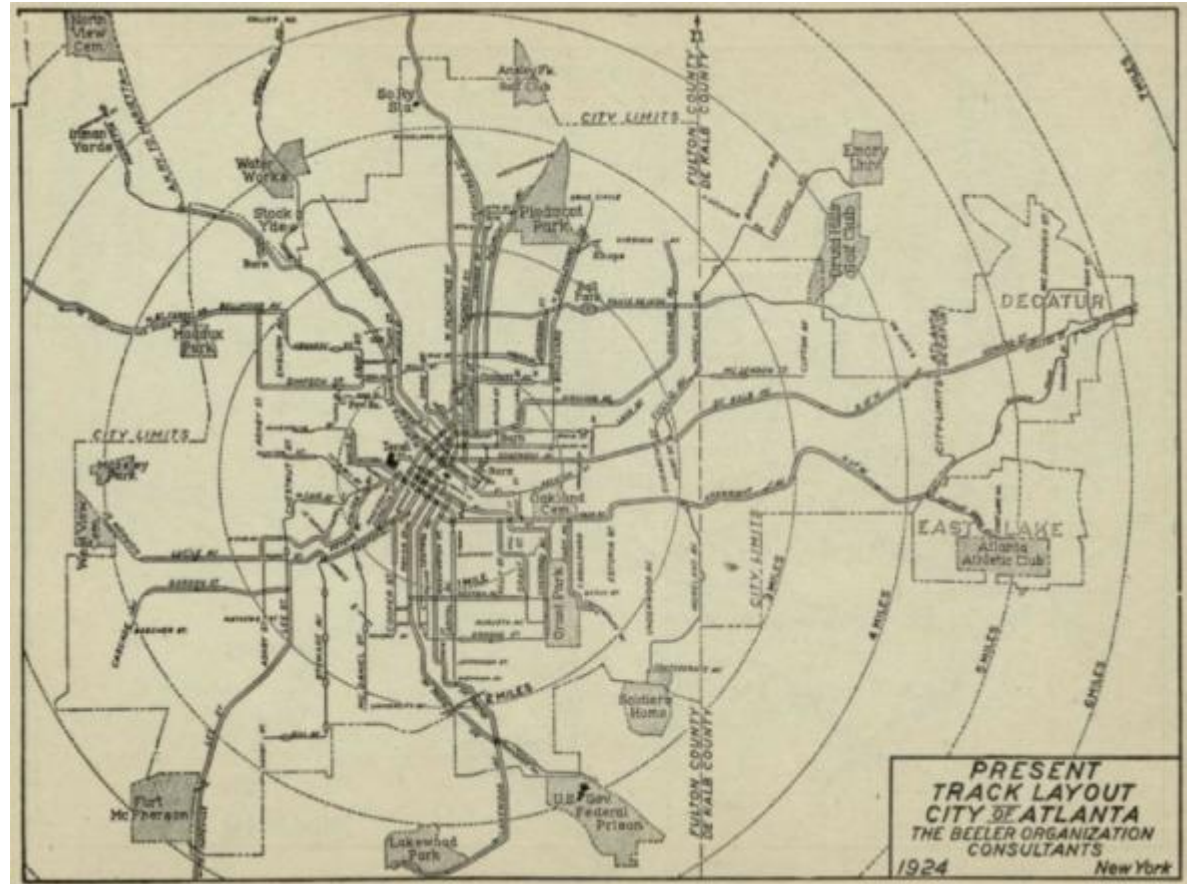


- Two feuding figures: Joel Hurt and Henry M. Atkinson
- Built competing lines blocks away, created legal obstructions, vandalized each other's tracks; even rumors of a duel.
- Hurt's **Atlanta Consolidated Street Ry** ultimately merged into Atkinson's **Atlanta Railway & Power Co**, forming **Georgia Railway & Power (GR&P)**.

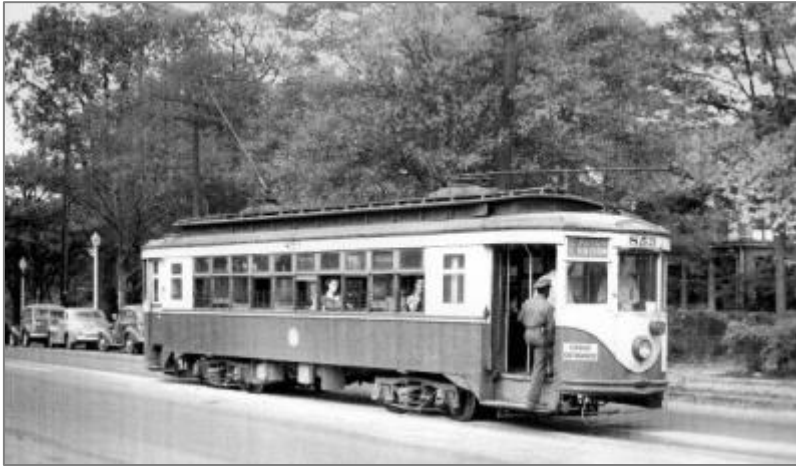
The Georgia Power Years

Period of Expansion and Improvement

- System trimmed after the “Second Battle of Atlanta”
- Profitable routes double-tracked
- New interurban lines to suburbs
- 1924 – 200 miles, 404 streetcars
- 1925 - start of bus operations
- 1930 - start of one-man operations



The Georgia Power Years



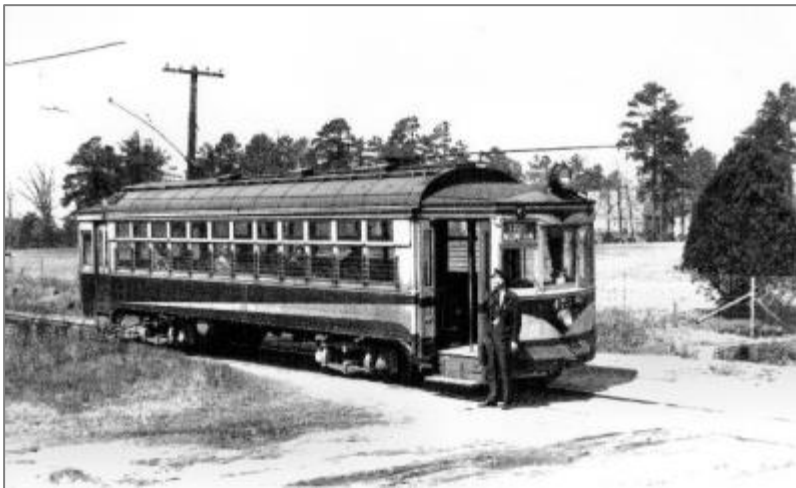
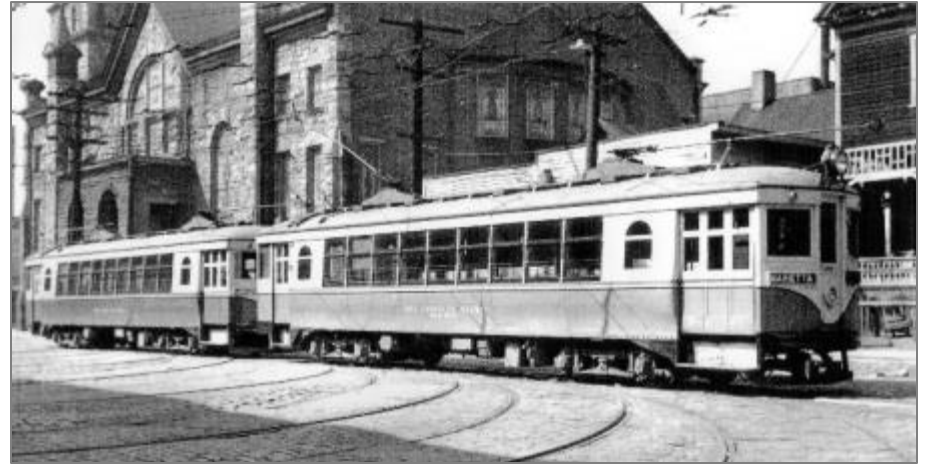
Challenges and Change

- 1936** First bus substitutions
- 1937** Trackless trolleys introduced
- 1940s** WWII delayed trackless conversion plans, cut buses, and increased streetcar use
- 1945** First air-conditioned trackless trolley, ridership of 150,964,244
- 1946** Start of wide streetcar/ trackless trolley conversions
- 1949** Last streetcar run

Top: A streetcar on the #5-Highland/S Pryor line.

Bottom: Trackless trolleys in downtown.

The Georgia Power Years



Above: Georgia Power interurbans signed for Marietta sit in front of the Butler Street car barn.

Top left: A Stone Mountain interurban car boards passengers at a waiting shelter.

Bottom left: Stone Mountain interurban car.

The Atlanta Transit Years

- 1950** 37-day strike. **Georgia Power** sells its transit operation to the new **Atlanta Transit Company**.
- 1951** **ATC** acquires suburban bus company, unifying the system
- 1950s** **ATC** reorganized into the **Atlanta Transit System (ATS)**, expands use of trolleybuses.
- 1960** **ATS** starts promoting rapid transit
- 1961** First proposed rapid transit plan
- 1963** Last trackless trolley run
- 1965** **MARTA** is created

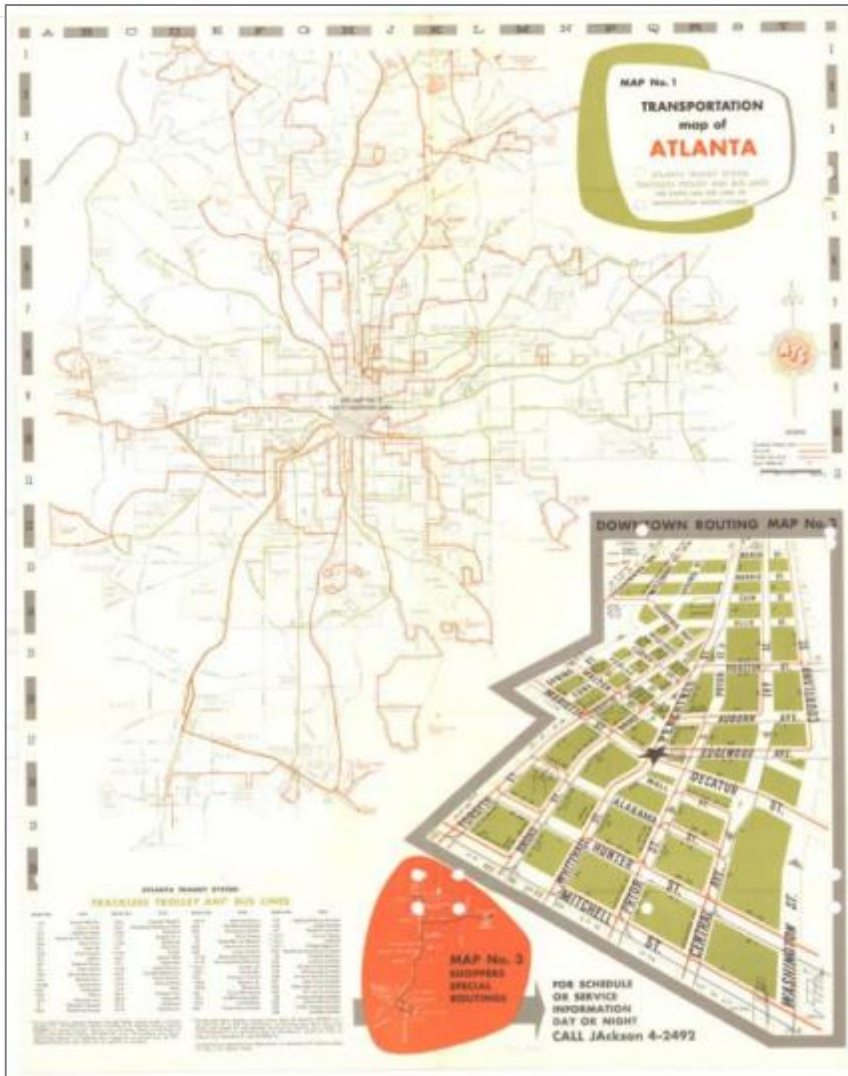


Desegregation

- Followed Montgomery bus boycott
- Civil rights leaders planned to secure a test case in court
- January 9, 1957 – Rev William Holmes Borders leads a group to board a trolleybus
- Notified mayor in advance and took measures to avoid civil unrest
- Ruling delivered on January 9, 1959 – desegregated system citing Montgomery
- January 20, 1959 – first day of desegregated service



The Atlanta Transit Years



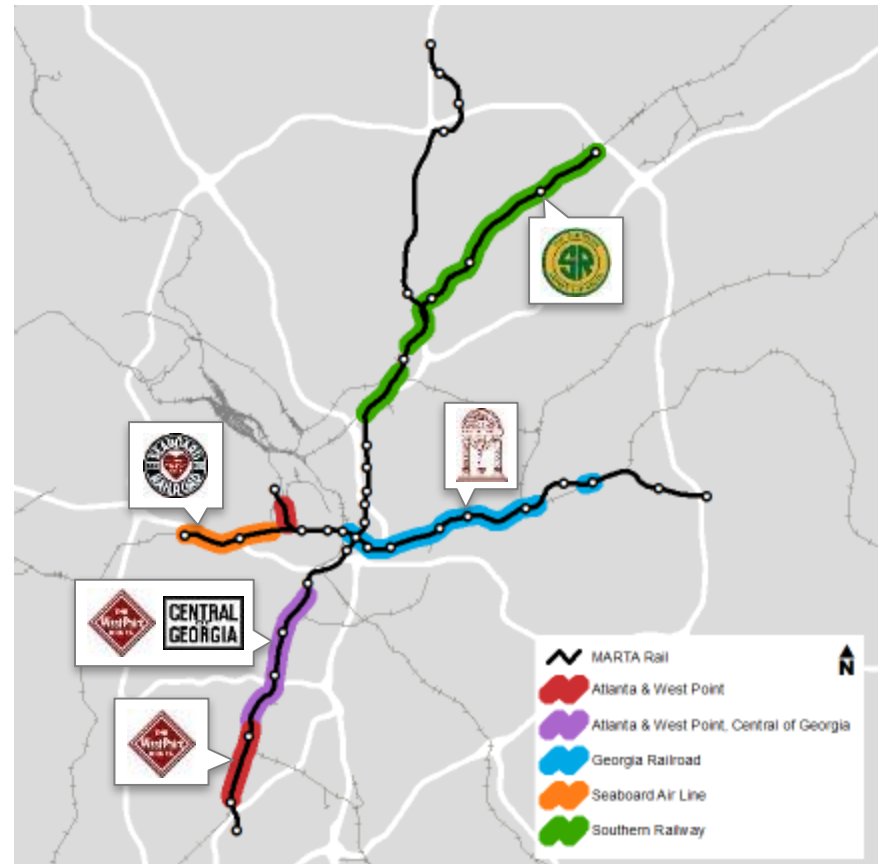
Planning Advances in the 1960s



Maps and illustrations from 1961's "Atlanta Region Comprehensive Plan: Rapid Transit"

Planning Advances in the 1960s

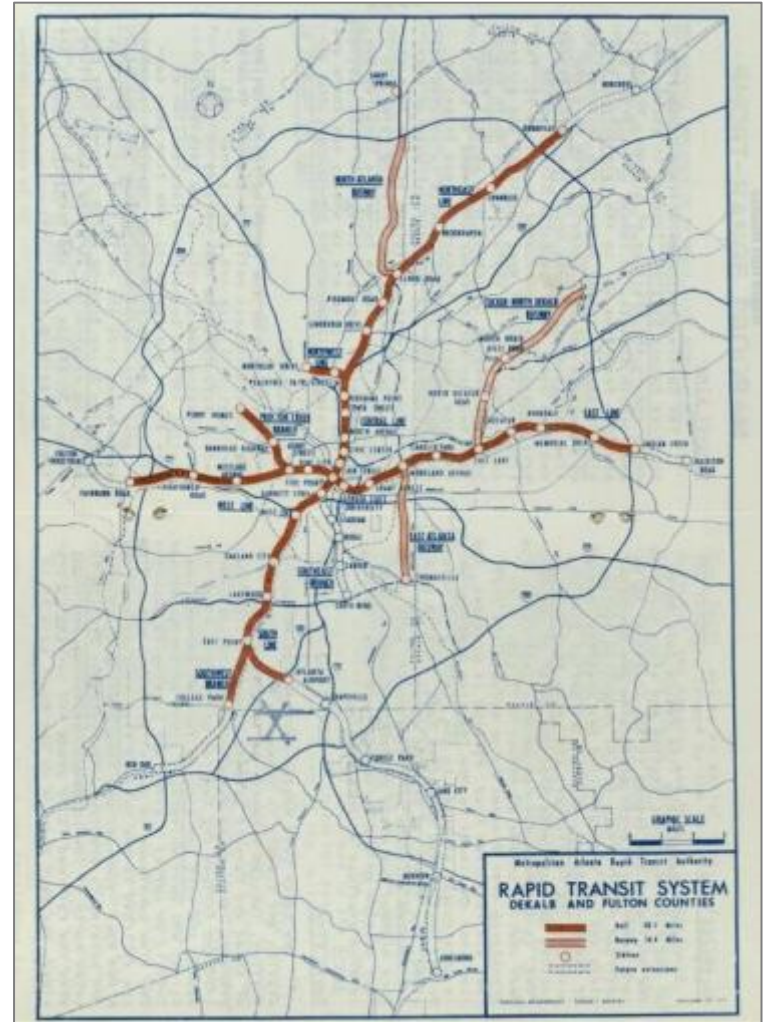
- ATS proposed first rapid transit plan
- Metropolitan planning agency proposed additional plans before MARTA took the lead
- ATS briefly advanced a busway plan in competition with MARTA
- Rapid transit plans generally followed existing railroad corridors



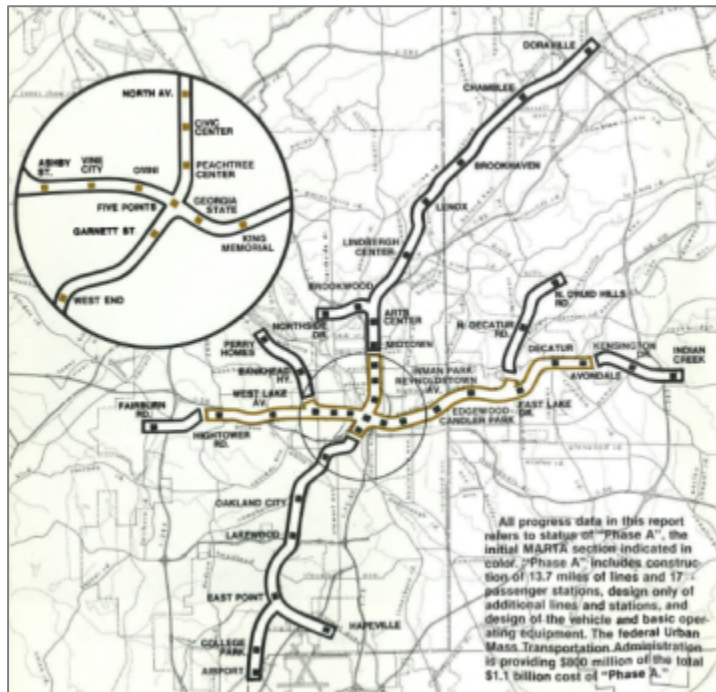
MARTA is Created in 1965

The new authority is charged with a broad mission.

- **MARTA** was created to plan, design, construct, and operate 5-county transit system
- Rapid transit and bus system plans were developed
- Referenda held in 1971; two counties join (Fulton, DeKalb)
- Referendum defeated in Clayton and Gwinnett; Cobb does not vote
- Clayton eventually joins in 2014

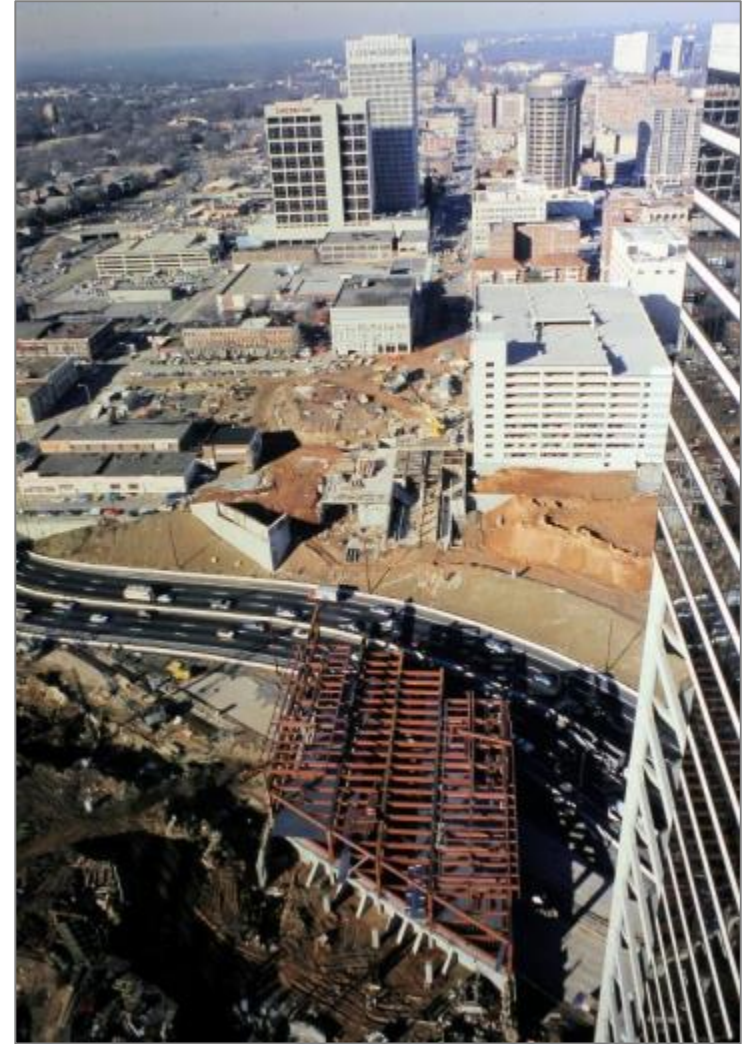


MARTA's Construction Years

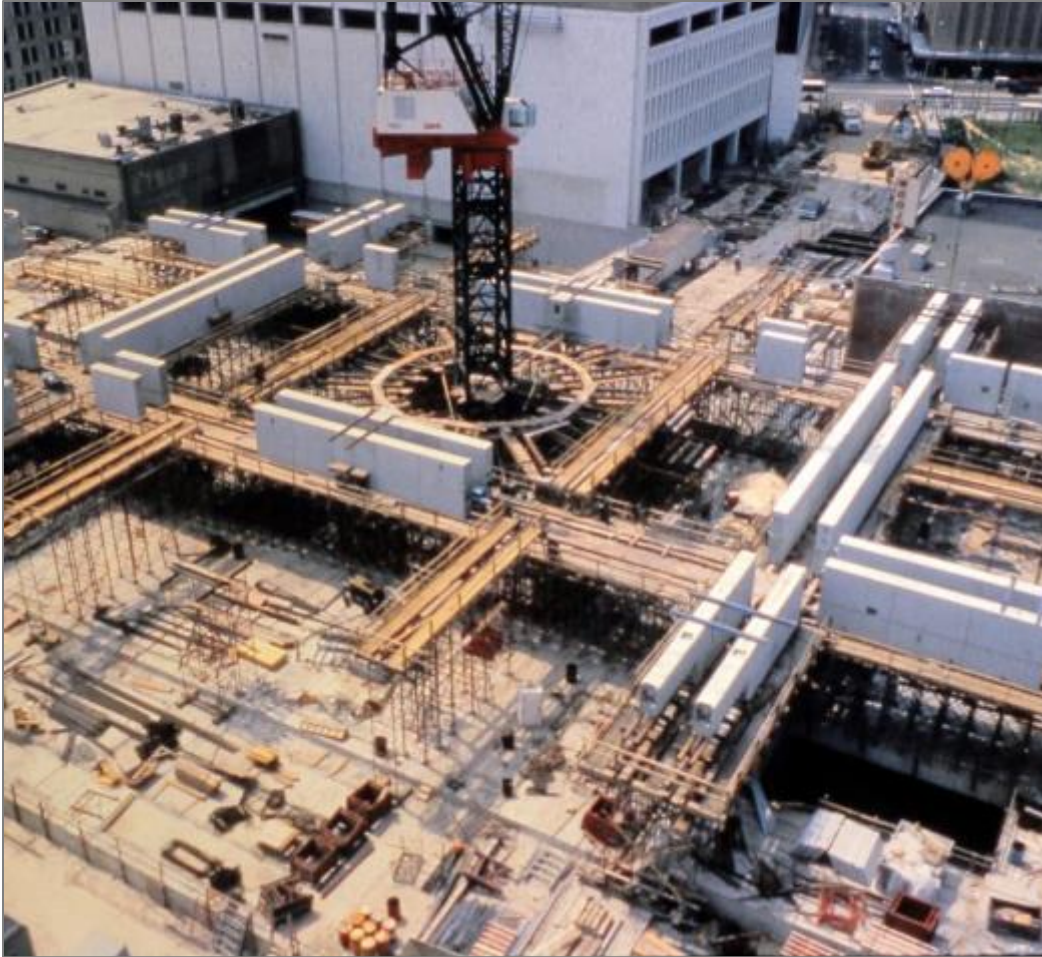


- **MARTA** purchases the **Atlanta Transit System** in 1972 and implements a 5-year bus improvement plan
- Groundbreaking for Phase A in February 1975 on the East Line
- Phase A – Avondale to H.E. Holmes, North Ave to Garnett
- Largest regional public works project in the southeast since the TVA

MARTA's Construction Years



MARTA's Construction Years



MARTA's Construction Years



Startup and Expansion

- Rail service began June 1979
- Reached the airport in 1988
- North Line was planned as a busway, but was built as heavy rail for the '96 Olympics
- Last heavy rail extension in took place in 2000
- Clayton County joined MARTA in 2014, bus service began in March 2015



MARTA Today

Rail System

- 104 track miles
 - 21 miles in tunnel
 - 24 miles elevated
 - 58 miles at grade
- 38 stations
- Automatic train control (ATC)
- 3 rail yards
- 316 rail cars



MARTA Today – Rolling Stock

CQ310 Cars

- 96 cars
- Societe Franco-Belge
- Delivery in 1979
- Beyond useful life
- Contains asbestos
- Below average reliability
- Carshell cracks have been repaired
- Obsolete systems include doors, HVAC



MARTA Today – Rolling Stock

CQ311 Cars

- 120 cars
- Hitachi
- Delivery in 1985
- Below average reliability
- Truck issues
- Carshells beyond useful life
- Obsolete systems include auxiliary power, HVAC, signage



MARTA Today – Rolling Stock

CQ312 Cars

- 100 cars
- Breda
- Delivery in 2002
- Well below average reliability (borders on worst in industry)
- Carshell and truck issues
- Obsolete systems include automatic train control, auxiliary power, signage, doors



MARTA Today – Current Projects

New Rail Fleet

- 250 cars
- Possible new features include:
- Open to alternatives to married pair configuration
- Tri-pod stanchions
- New ADA provisions
- Open to new interior layouts
- New interior signage systems with variable messaging



MARTA Today – Current Projects

Train Control & SCADA Upgrade

- New centralized platform for integrated systems
 - Train control, SCADA, communications, fire systems, audio/visual, and more
- New field equipment installed - SCADA, communication, train control systems
- Upgraded interfaces on trains
- New central office system at the Integrated Operations Center



MARTA Today – Current Projects

Integrated Operations Center (IOC)



- TCSU project required upgraded facilities
- Integrates Rail, bus, Mobility, and police communications
- 27,000 square feet in former railcar maintenance facility
- Raised flooring, display wall, focus on ergonomics and acoustics



MARTA Today – Current Projects

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

- Located in IOC building
- 8,000 square feet
- Dedicated conference space for MARTA management
- Breakout rooms, large display boards
- Shared media room for holding press events



MARTA Today – Current Projects

Signage Transformation

Current Signs

- Total count: 155
- Decommissioning 15
- Provides limited information
- Majority on the platform level



New Signs

- Total count: 320+
- Provides variety of information
- At entrances and on the concourse and platform level



MARTA Today – Current Projects

Audio Transformation



Replace
4,000
speakers

Add
500
speakers



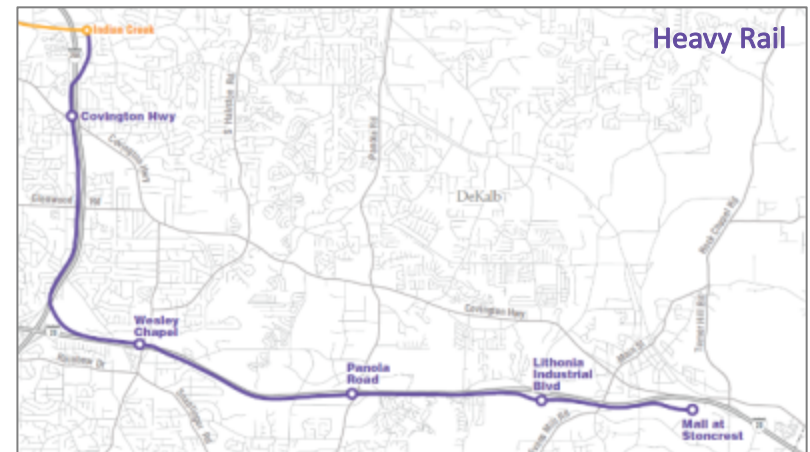
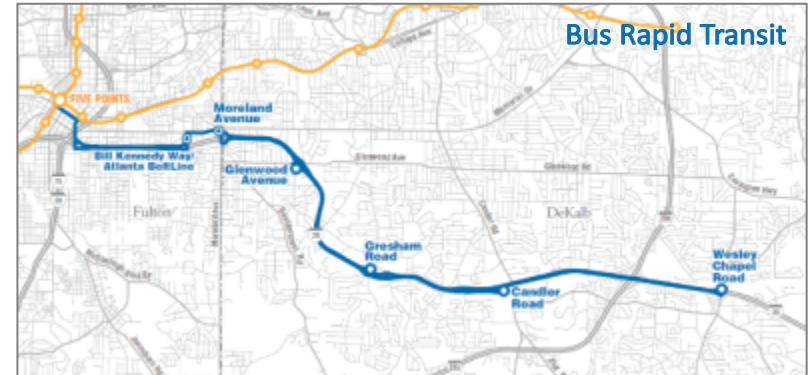
Synchronize
with
signage

Ambient
sensors to
adjust volume

MARTA in the Future

I-20 East Transit Initiative

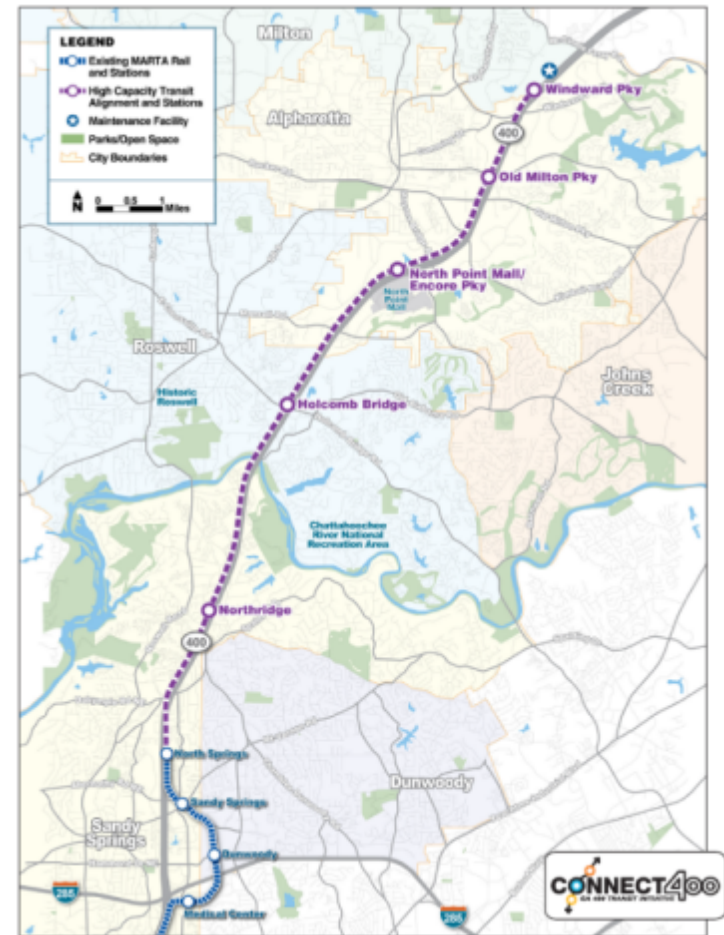
- Provides direct link from south DeKalb County to downtown Atlanta
- Two projects:
 1. Bus rapid transit from Five Points to Wesley Chapel
 2. Heavy rail extension to Mall at Stonecrest



MARTA in the Future

GA 400 Transit Initiative

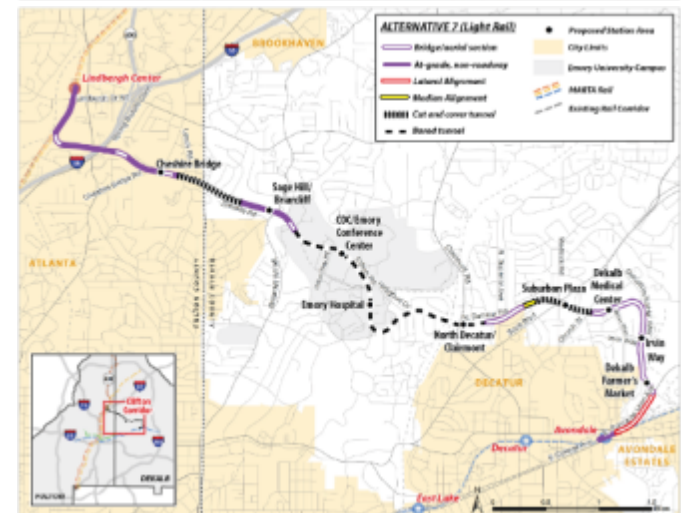
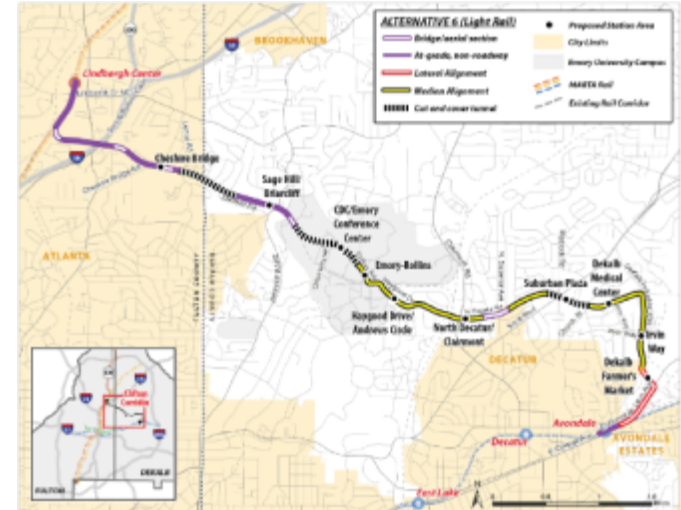
- Expanded high-capacity service along GA-400 into North Fulton County to Windward Parkway in Alpharetta
- Considering heavy rail, bus rapid transit
- 5 new stations



MARTA in the Future

Clifton Corridor Transit Initiative

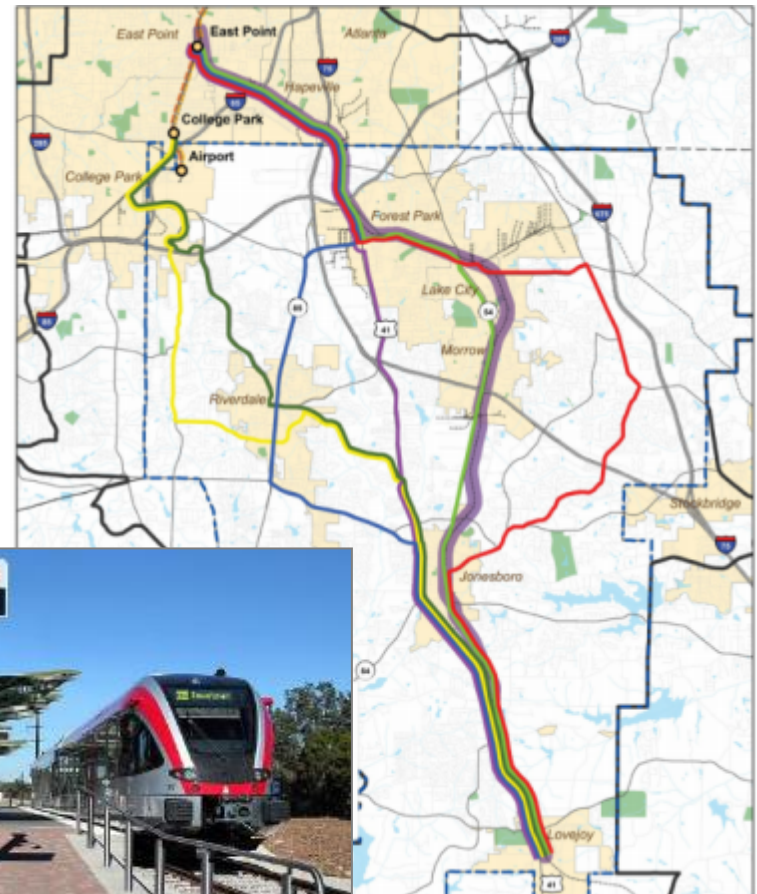
- Provides new light rail service to Clifton Corridor from Lindbergh Center to Avondale
- Emory University and related hospitals, Centers for Disease Control
- New high-capacity transit option for an area without nearby freeway or MARTA rail access
- Several alternatives are under consideration



MARTA in the Future

Clayton County Transit Initiative

- Study initiated after Clayton County joined MARTA in 2014
- Explores different transit alignments and technologies
- Connection between Lovejoy and MARTA rail on South Line at East Point or College Park
- Considering light rail, bus rapid transit

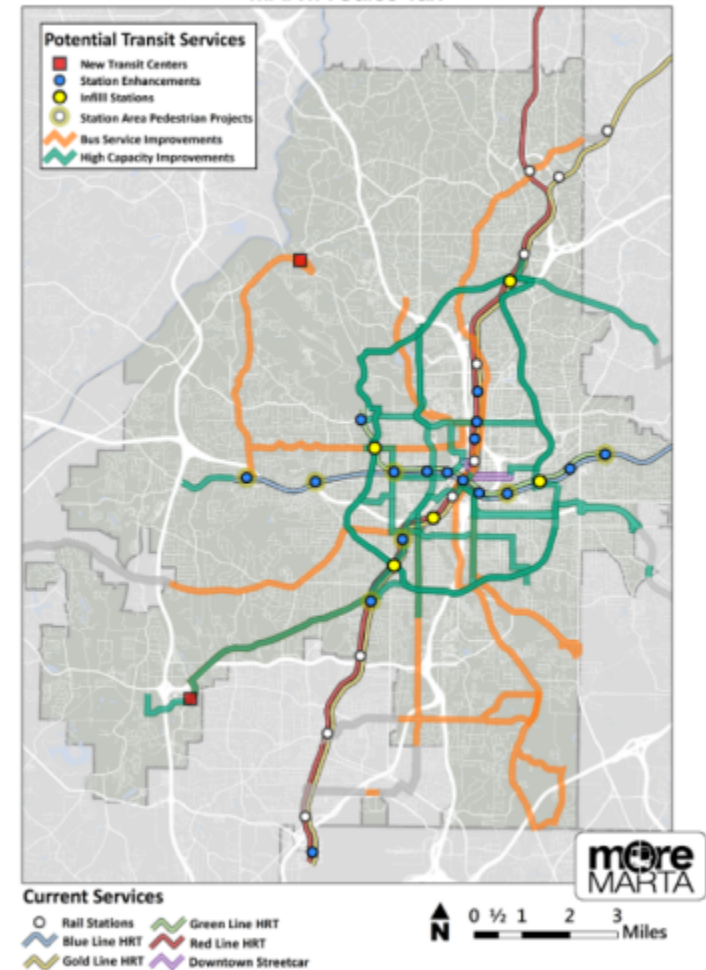


MARTA in the Future

More MARTA

- In 2016, City of Atlanta voted 71% for an addition ½-cent to MARTA
- A mix of high-capacity and bus improvement projects considered:
 - Light rail routes
 - Clifton Corridor light rail
 - Northside Dr, I-20 East BRT
 - I-20 West heavy rail
 - Station enhancements
 - Infill stations and new transit centers
 - 5 arterial rapid transit bus routes
 - Improved bus span and frequency

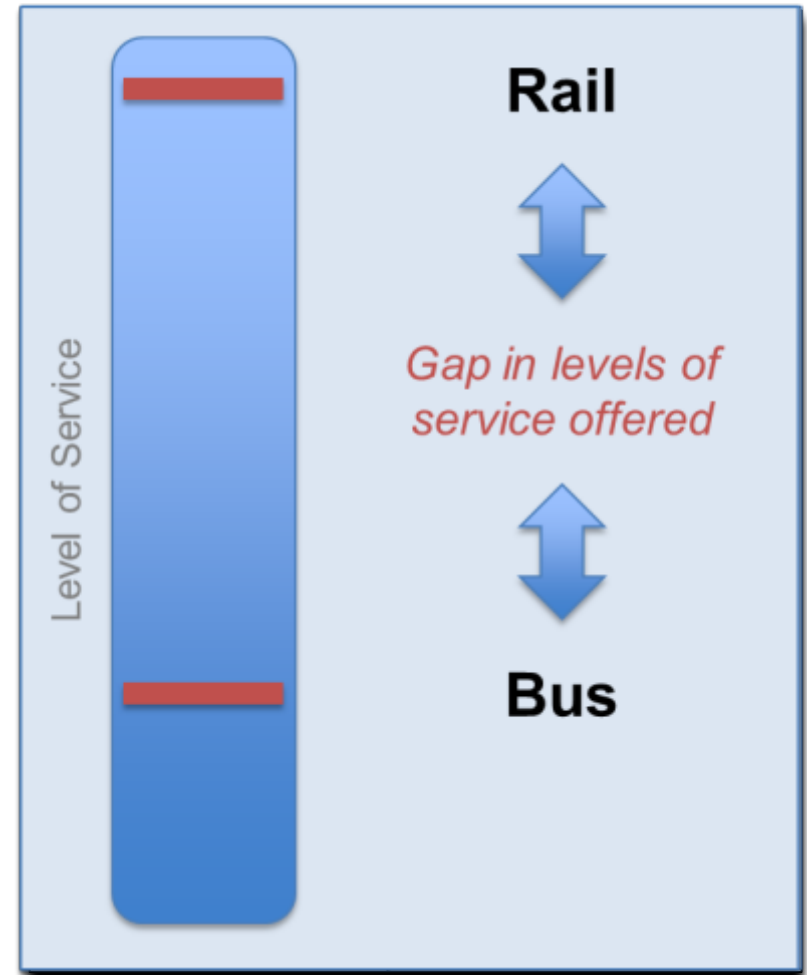
Map of Potential Program Summary
MARTA Sales Tax



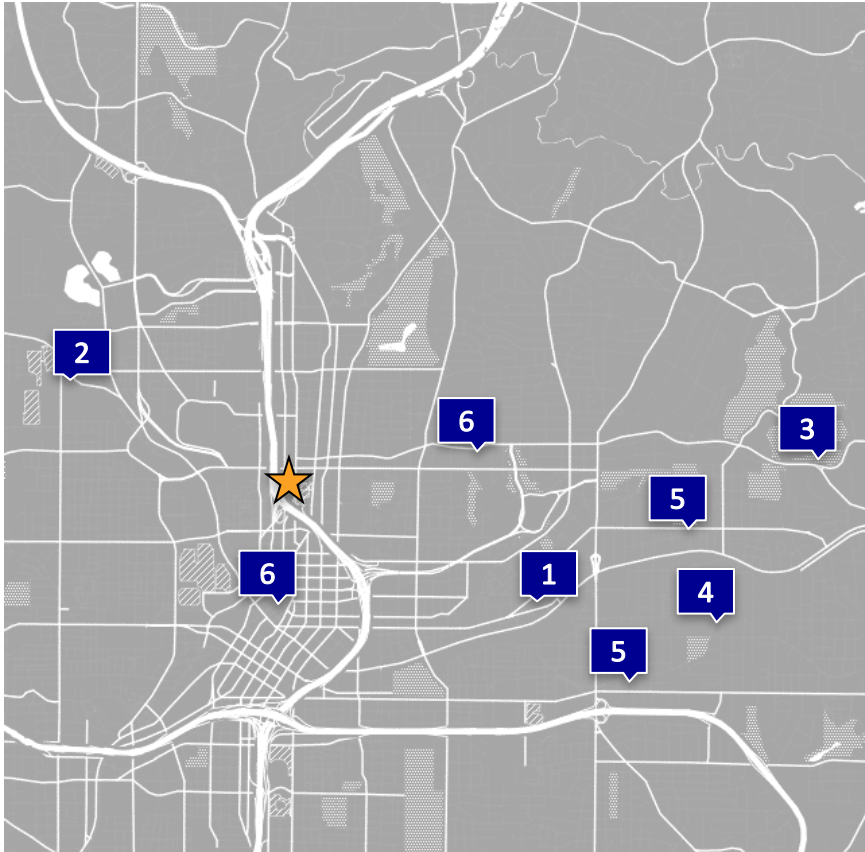
MARTA in the Future

More MARTA

- Implemented already:
 - Frequency improvements
 - Wider hours
 - Circulator routes
- New system design based on different service types
- Goals to improve operations efficiency, attract choice riders, develop sustainable service plans



Historical Sightseeing



Points of Interest

1. Edgewood Ave car barn
963 Edgewood Ave NE
2. Ashby St car barn
981 Joseph E Lowery Blvd NW
3. Streetcar waiting shelter
Ponce de Leon Ave NE & E Lake Rd NE
4. Trolley Line Trail (private ROW)
Woodbine Ave NE & Wade Ave NE
5. Exposed tracks
*Whitefoord Ave SE & Arkwright Pl SE
McLendon Ave NE & Clifton Rd NE*
6. Trolley poles
Downtown, Ponce City Market, all over

References

Books & Magazines

- Mule to MARTA, Vol I & II – Jean Martin, 1977
- The Trolley Titans – O.E. Carson, 1981
- Motor Coach Age Magazine – Jan '97, July '98

Online

- RailGA.com - <http://railga.com/oddend/streetrail/atlantastr.html>
- MARTA Historical Collection at GSU - <http://digitalcollections.library.gsu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/marta>

Questions?

