



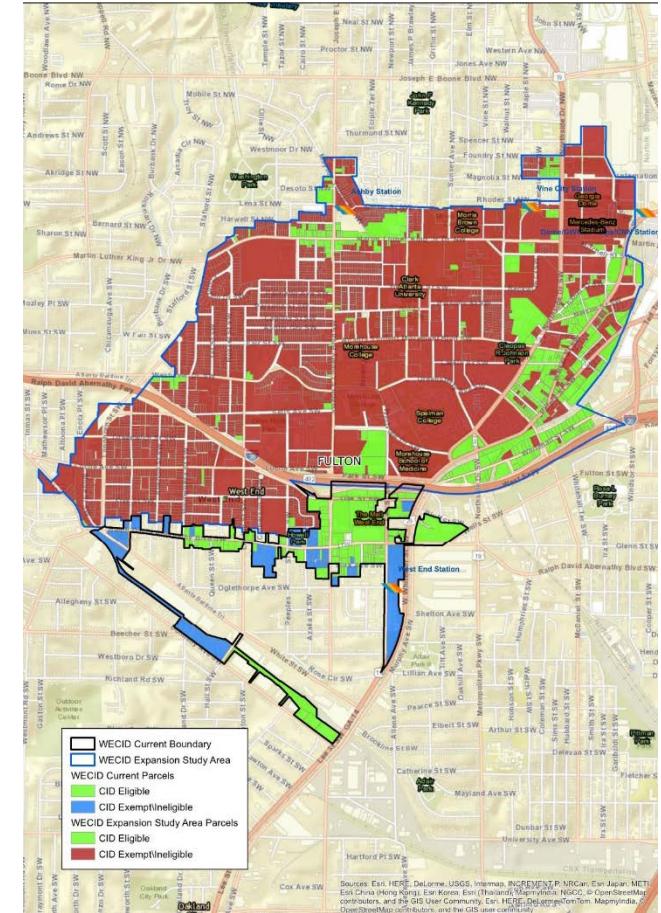
# West End, Atlanta: Hip, Happening & Historic

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# West End mTAP

- Identify client, goals, data/ resources provided
- What we know about the area
- High level objectives
- Find “quick wins” to build momentum



# Engagement Framework



# West End **Vision**

- A district that is **hip, happening, and historic** for residents, business owners, and visitors.
- Create a **vibrant area** where people are **proud to live** and happy to visit because of its cherished identity as **Atlanta's oldest neighborhood**, welcoming pedestrian infrastructure and exciting business community.



# Big Ideas



**Public Safety**



**Pedestrian  
Orientation**



**Infrastructure  
Improvements**



**Community  
Identity**

# Public Safety

## Opportunities and Challenges

- Crime rate much higher than the City as a whole
- Crime or perception of crime hinders revitalization
- Consensus on addressing crime as a top priority
- Current crime risk in West End is six times higher than national average\*

## Survey Feedback

- This the most important area for improvement identified by community stakeholders and CID members

\*Courtesy of KSU School of Architecture study

# Public Safety

## Interventions & Recommendations

- Cameras & License Plate Readers
- Private Security Patrol
- Work with APD and MARTA Police for increased patrols
- More “Eyes on the streets”



# Pedestrian Orientation

## Opportunities and Challenges

- Rated a high walkability corridor
- Poor conditions of facades/blank walls/lack of visual interest.
- Facelift to existing structures could make an immediate impact
- Proximity to Colleges
- Beltline
- Busy roads with small sidewalks
- More foot traffic = more safety

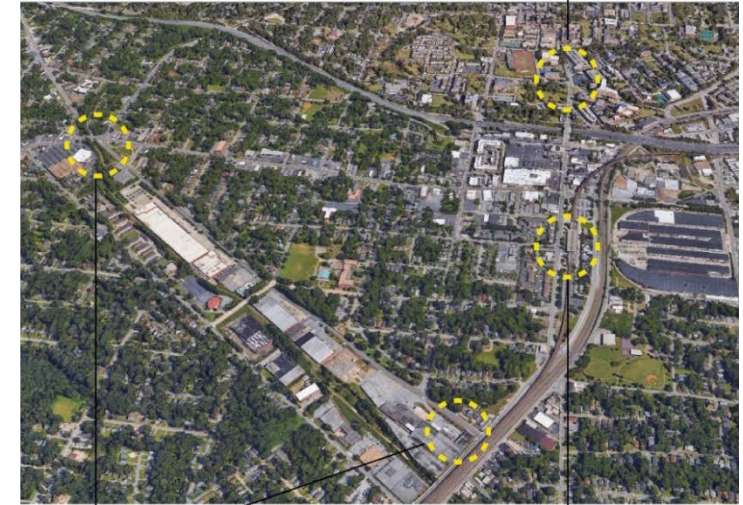
## Survey Feedback

- Improved pedestrian experience was the second most important issue identified by survey respondents.
- The corridor is walkable corridor but **do people want to walk it?**



1. Atlanta University Center

Containing Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, and Spelman College; there are around 9,000 college students in the area.



3. Beltline's West End Trail

Connected to Adair Park, the Beltline's West End Trail is being revitalized with new businesses, restaurants, and breweries.



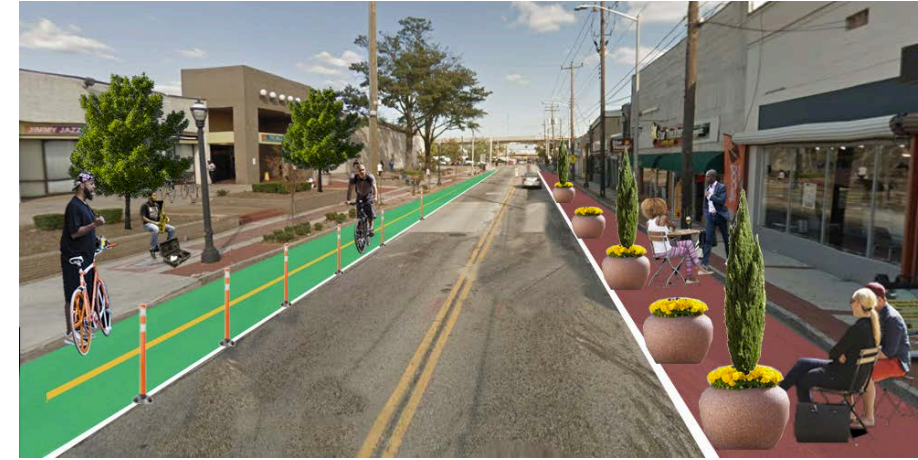
2. West End Marta Station

West End Marta Station is on the north-south line of Marta connecting West End directly with the airport, downtown, midtown, and buckhead.

# Pedestrian Orientation

## Interventions & Recommendations

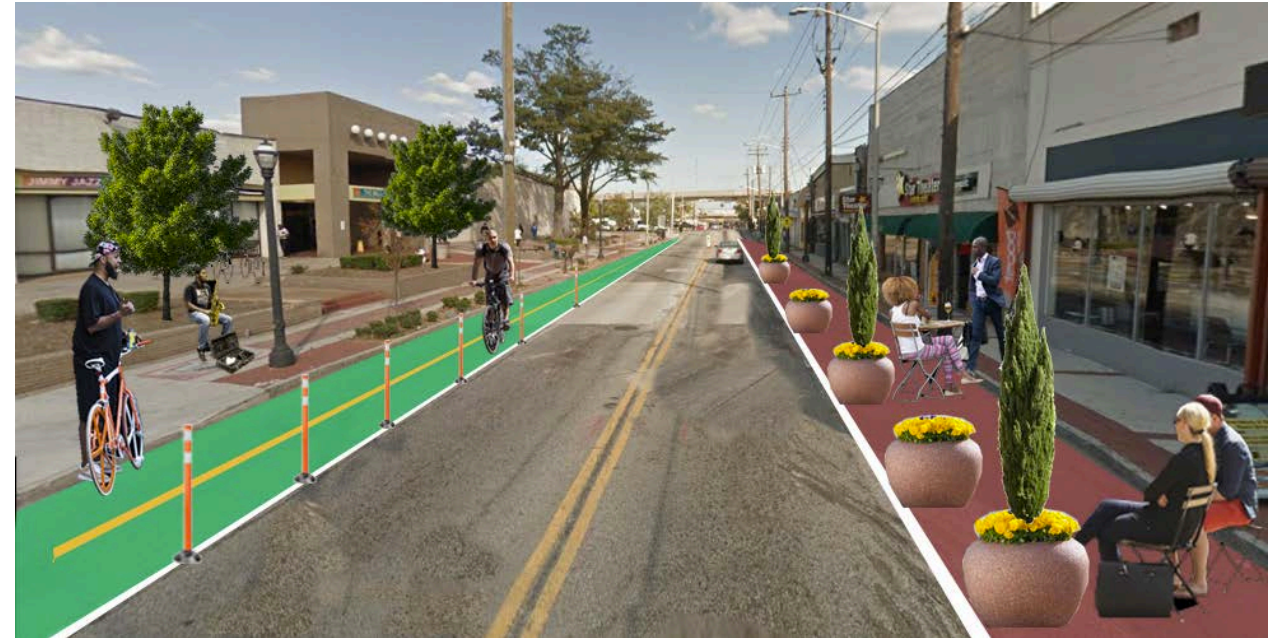
- Bike path loop to activate area and encourage foot and bike traffic from Colleges to Beltline and through West End
- Improve getting from Marta to West End
  - Pedestrian Crossing Signals (short term)
  - Pedestrian Bridge (long term)
- Planters on sidewalks to make sidewalks more pedestrian friendly
- Historic walking path (recommended by KSU)



# Improved Pedestrian Infrastructure



Current Condition: Ralph David Abernathy Blvd  
Inadequate sidewalks along storefronts  
No space for bicycles



Immediate Intervention – road diet  
Painted pedestrian and bike zones  
Delineators and potted plants  
Outdoor chairs and tables  
Estimated \$50K for blocks between Lee St and Joseph Lowery Blvd

# West End Infrastructure

## Opportunities and Challenges

- Infrastructure is dated and car-centric.
- Lack of connectivity to beltline.
- No unique features or community identifiers.
- Opportunity to do quick, cost-effective, and transformative interventions.
- Improved lighting reduces crime and increases appeal.
- Traffic study and signalization upgrades are needed.

## Survey Feedback

- Facelift of commercial corridors was a priority for CID members
- Survey respondents cited a desire for improved roads, more parks and greenspace
- Desire to attract businesses that would attract new and more patrons to area
- Existing infrastructure rated as either average or low quality



# Infrastructure Interventions

## Immediate Interventions (<5 years)

- Ralph David Abernathy road diet (paint, planters, and posts)
- Lee Street Cycle Track from RDA to Beltline
- Re-open alley between York Avenue and Ralph David Abernathy

## Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Streetscape on Oak, Evans, York Streets
- Lee Street Bridge at I-20
- PATH spurs along RDA and Lee Street
- MARTA bridge over RR. tracks



Image courtesy of Dr. Mine Hashas-Degertekin  
Kennesaw State University

# West End Bike Path Loop

- Connects Beltline, West End MARTA, and Atlanta University Center
- Activates area through increased ridership.
- Serves as critical connection of nodes.



# West End Bike Path Loop



Current Condition – Lee Street At Beltline  
Inadequate pedestrian connection to West End District  
No Directional Signage



Immediate Intervention – Cycle Track to Westside Beltline  
Painted bike zones offer additional pedestrian protection along sidewalk.  
Delineators separate cycle track from cars  
0.9 miles - Estimated \$75,000 for Lee Street Corridor

# Shared Street



Current Condition – Alley Between York Av and Ralph David Abernathy  
Closed alleyway, lack of pedestrian activity  
No Directional Signage



*Image courtesy of Dr. Mine Hashas-Degertekin  
Kennesaw State University*

Immediate Intervention – Alley Between York Avenue and Ralph David Abernathy  
Add “shared street” - invite slow vehicle traffic and pedestrians to mix.

# Gateway Feature



Lee Street Bridge  
Lack of visual appeal or iconic gesture  
Poor connection to Atlanta University Center.

## LEE ST OVERPASS

- 1 BRIDGE EXPANSION
- 2 KIOSK
- 3 LANDSCAPING
- 4 MUSEUM PATH
- 5 CANOPY DESIGN
- 6 PUBLIC ART



*Image courtesy of Dr. Mine Hashas-Degertekin  
Kennesaw State University*

Lee Street Bridge  
Create an iconic gateway to West End.  
Provide dedicated cycle lanes to AUC.  
Courtesy of Kennesaw State University Department of  
Architecture

# Community Identity & Character

## Benefits of community identity

Stronger feelings of safety and security, increased participation in community affairs and are more likely to vote, recycle, help others and volunteer (Schweitzer 1996).



WolfPack ATL performing in the West End



# Community: Inside vs. Out

What people are saying about the West End  
From the internet...

- Sketchy gas stations, but fine during the day
- Restaurants are OK, but not like\_\_\_\_\_
- Terrified of gentrification and displacement
- Crime and safety
- Dangerous pedestrian experience
- Beltline is amazing

What three words would you like for  
visitors to use when they describe the  
west end?

- Safe, beautiful and thriving
- Historic, Forward, Trending
- Eclectic, destination, walkable
- Hip, cool, accessible

# Community Identity

## Opportunities and Challenges

- Strong historical context
- Balancing gentrification and displacement
- Unique retail offerings
- Zoning and development challenges
- Tilting mainstream without stereotyping blackness

## Community Feedback

- Maintain community identity amidst change
- Improved retail offerings (big box, restaurants)
- Crime
- Beautification

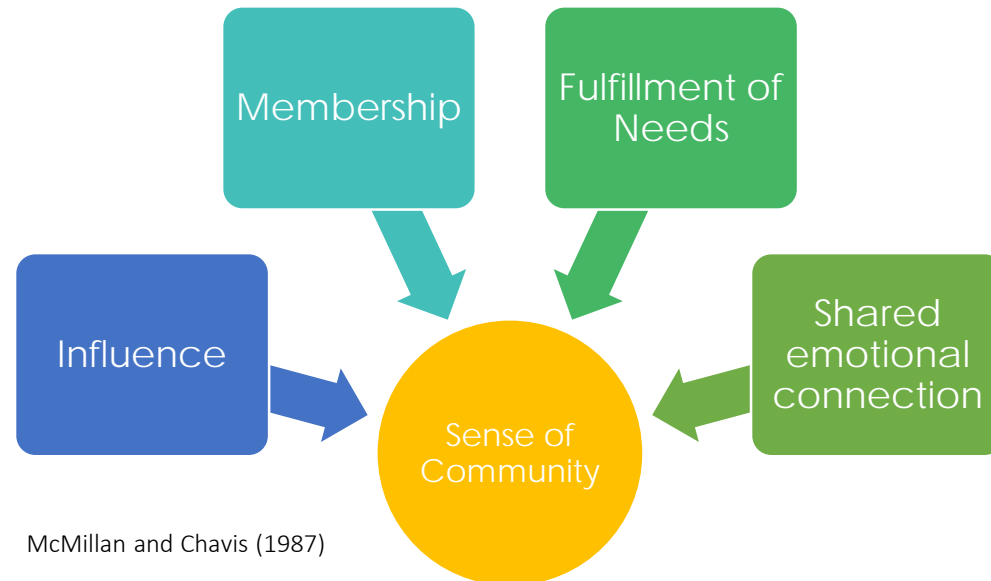




# Community Identity

**Objective:** To articulate The West End's character so that its residents and businesses have a renewed sense of pride that attracts visitors.

The first step is to create a sense of community among existing residents and businesses.



McMillan and Chavis (1987)

# U Street, Washington, DC

- Once nicknamed "Black Broadway,"
  - U Street was once the center of entertainment for the African-American community before being destroyed by the 1968 riots.
  - It has since emerged from the challenges that followed the riots
- 
- **Interventions & Milestones**
  - Street banners
  - Small business development
  - Commercial activations (pop ups)



Ben's Chili Bowl founder Virginia Ali in front of her iconic restaurant

# Bronzeville, Chicago

- Popular destination during Northern Migration
- Likened to Harlem Renaissance
- Extreme depopulation and blight left architectural gems abandoned
- Considered dangerous by outsiders
- Large cottage industry

## Interventions & Milestones

- Resurgence of festival culture
- Partnerships to support home based entrepreneurs
- Revival of Arts and Music legacy



Bronzeville's Art District Trolley

# Community Identity: Recommendations

## Short Term: Internal messaging

*0-6 months*

- Engagement
- Community Branding
- Social Media
- Promotion of West End community flag



## Mid Term: Attracting visitors

*6-24 months*

- Business-oriented Festivals
- Community Newsletter
- Streetscaping & Wayfinding Signage
- Partnership with AUC



## Long Term: Regional Visibility

*24 months+*

- Community Gateway
- Small business development
- Retail leakage study



# Community Identity: Key Stakeholders & Resources

## Community Engagement Partners



## Implementation & Financing Resources



THE ARTHUR M. BLANK  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



REINVESTMENT  
FUND



KPMG FOUNDATION



INVESTATLANTA



Georgia®



Georgia Department  
of Transportation



ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR ENTREPRENEURS

# Summary:

- **Community engagement** is important
- Area rated as very “walkable,” but **no one wants to walk it**
- West End is **positioned** very well for future **success**
- There is already positive **momentum** building at West End
- Focus on some **quick wins** to help **build momentum** – especially infrastructure

