

# MARTA South DeKalb Transit Initiative

Virtual Open House

October 10, 2024



# South DeKalb Transit Initiative Public Meeting

## Virtual Meeting Housekeeping

- Event Time: 6:00 – 7:30 PM
- Please use the Q&A Section to submit your project specific questions or comments. We will address as many questions and comments as time allows.
- Your input is welcome! Please participate in the polling question. Instructions will be provided.
- The presentation will be posted on the MARTA project website, along with additional information and past meetings. Please visit: [www.southdekalbtransit.com](http://www.southdekalbtransit.com).
- For other service questions, you can always reach MARTA customer service at 404-848-5000 or [custserv@itsmarta.com](mailto:custserv@itsmarta.com)

# South DeKalb Transit Initiative Project Team

Tracie Roberson, MARTA Project Manager

Shelley Peart, MARTA AGM of Planning

Marcus Arnold, MARTA Director of Federal Corridors and Hubs

Michael Rafshoon, MARTA Manager of External Affairs

Kaycee Mertz, WSP Project Manager

Vida Mannings, The Collaborative Firm, Public Involvement

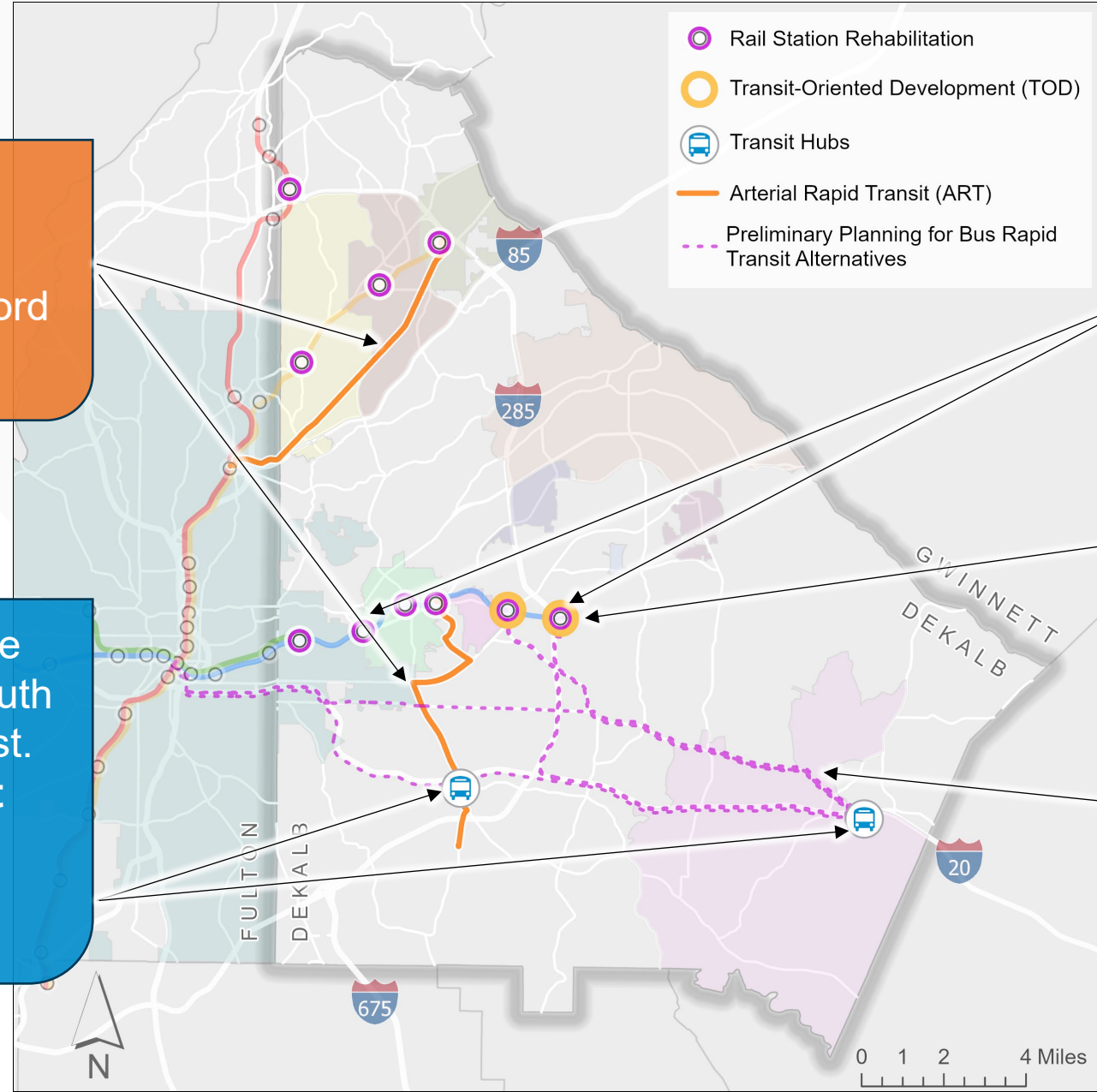
Sinan Sinharoy, WSP Deputy Project Manager



# MARTA in DeKalb County

**Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) on Candler Road and Buford Highway**

**Transit Hubs:** two are moving into design, South DeKalb and Stonecrest. **\$25 M federal grant awarded for South DeKalb Transit Hub**



**\$300M+ Station Rehabilitation Program** – all 38 rail stations; Indian Creek and East Lake are near term

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** at Indian Creek and Kensington Stations

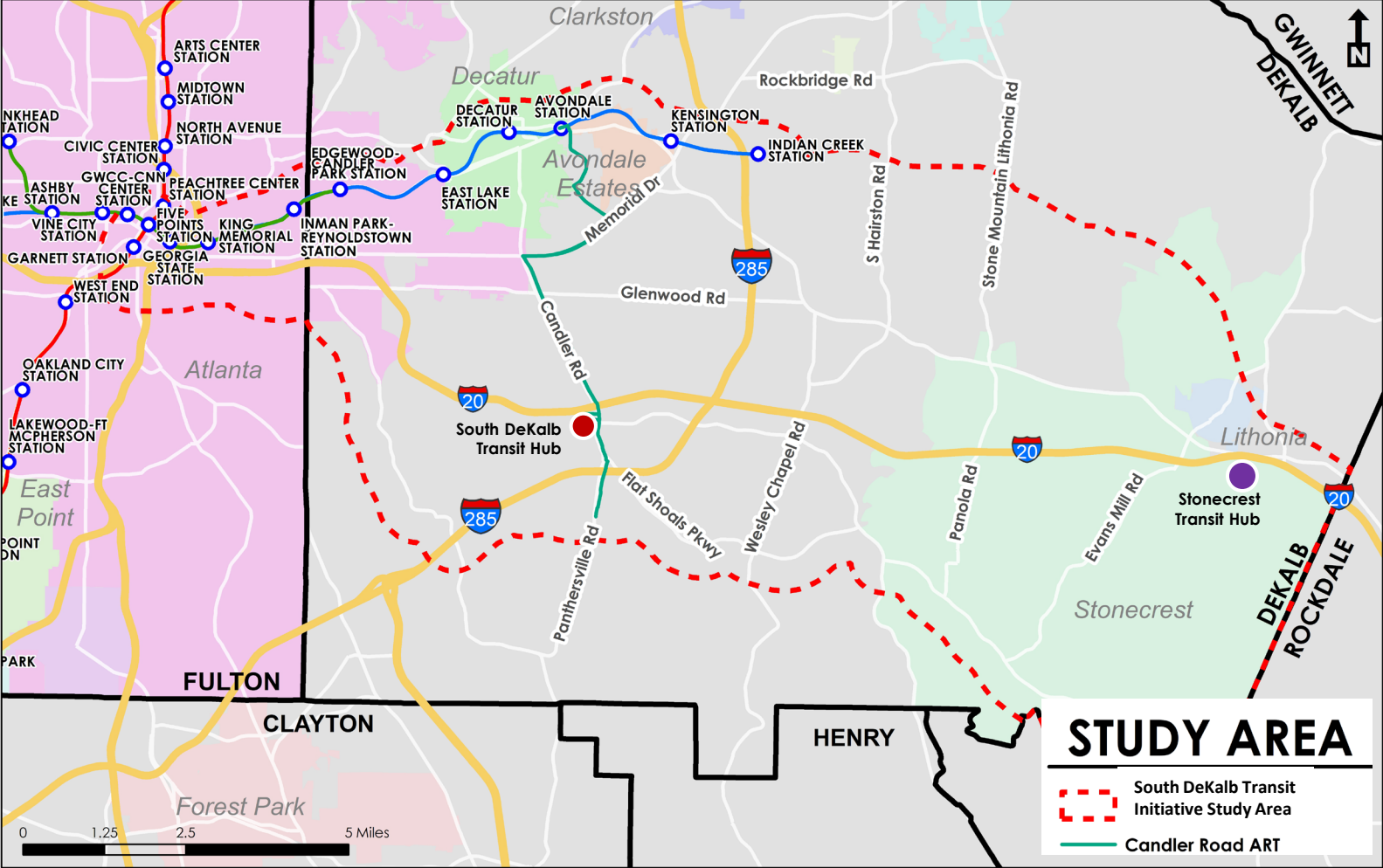
**South DeKalb Transit Initiative** Planning underway (unfunded)

# South DeKalb Transit Initiative

## Agenda

- 1 Project Overview
- 2 Transit Screening Process
- 3 Tier 1 Screening Results
- 4 Tier 2 Screening Results
- 5 Next Steps

# South DeKalb Transit Initiative Project Overview



- NEED & PURPOSE**
- Provide transit investments that enhance east-west mobility
  - Provide rapid transit service to access major employment centers
  - Accommodate growth and catalyze revitalization.
  - Improve travel time and travel reliability and connect South DeKalb to the greater Atlanta region.

- STUDY AREA**
- Downtown Atlanta to DeKalb/Rockdale county line
  - Includes cities of Atlanta, Decatur, Avondale Estates, Lithonia, and Stonecrest

# Transit Screening Process

2022

Data Analysis and Existing Conditions

2022

Identify Screening Criteria and Range of Alternatives

2023

Tier 1 Screening

2024

We are here

Tier 2 Screening

Early 2025

Locally Preferred Alternative



Public and Stakeholder Outreach

# **Tier 1 Screening Recap**



# Tier 1 Screening: Ten Alternatives


## Two Western Terminus Options

- 1 Kensington Station
- 2 Indian Creek Station



## Two Route Types

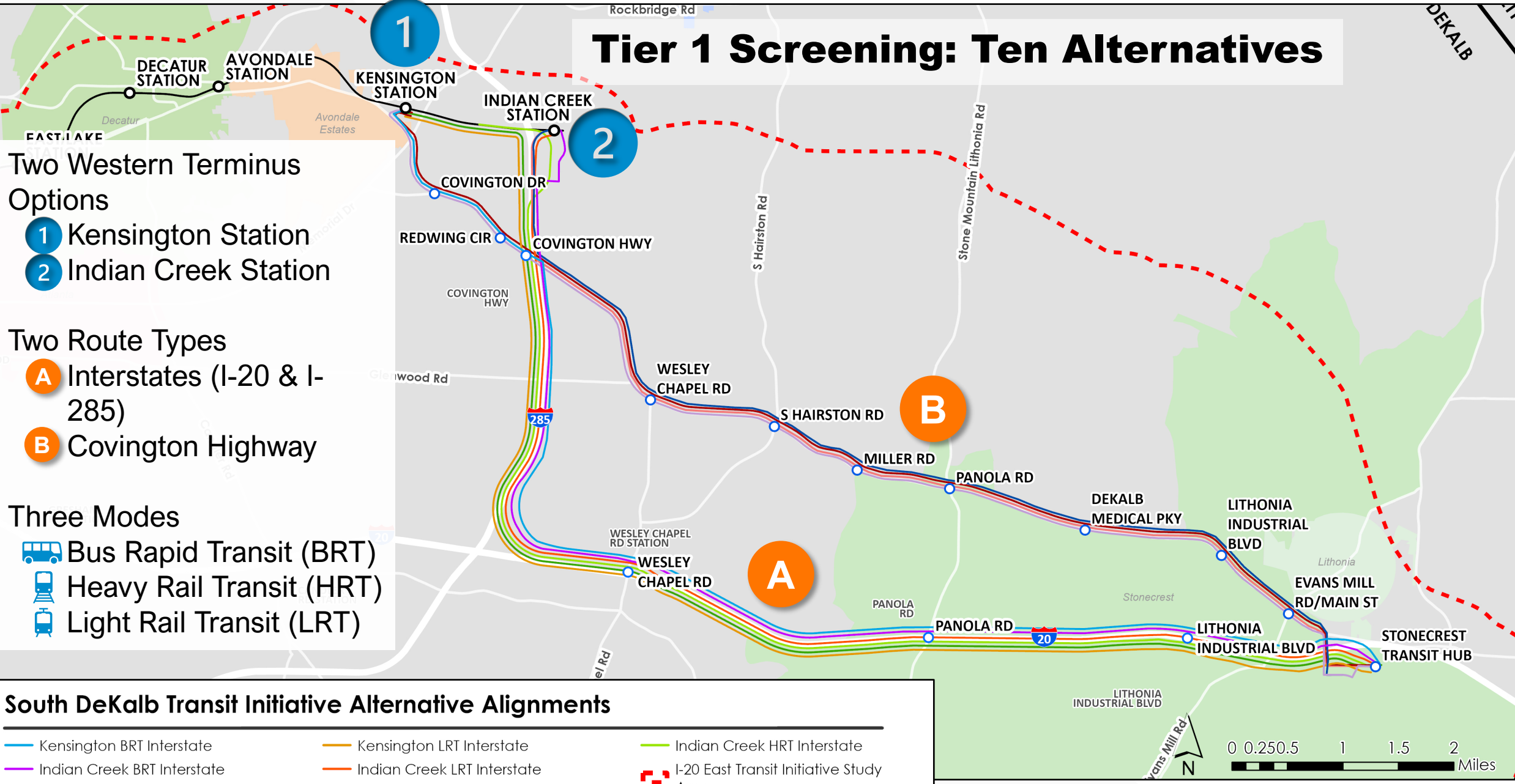
- A Interstates (I-20 & I-285)
- B Covington Highway

## Three Modes

-  Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
-  Heavy Rail Transit (HRT)
-  Light Rail Transit (LRT)

## South DeKalb Transit Initiative Alternative Alignments

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





# Evaluation Criteria for Tier 1 Screening

Criteria	Measure(s)	Criteria Weight
<b>Connectivity</b>	Transit Connections	25%
	Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections	
<b>Potential Ridership</b>	Population Density	20%
	Number of Jobs Served	
<b>Schedule</b>	Time to Implement	15%
<b>Equity</b>	Socioeconomic Indicator Score	20%
	% of Stations Serving Historically Disadvantaged Communities	
	% of Stations Serving Areas of Persistent Poverty	
<b>Cost</b>	Capital/ROW Cost	10%
<b>ROW Impacts</b>	Acreage Required	10%
	Potential Displacement	

- Weights based on stakeholder feedback and project goals
- Prioritizes ridership and increasing mobility/access

# Tier 1 Outreach Recap

**1,014** SURVEY RESPONSES

**6** POP UP EVENTS

**3** OPEN HOUSES

**2** FOCUS GROUPS

**2** PUBLIC MEETINGS

**1** PEER CITY VISIT

**MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDER  
INTERVIEWS and BRIEFINGS**



**Outreach 2023**



**Peer City Visit 2022**

## Tier 1 Community Survey Results



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



**54%** willing to make 1 transfer during a MARTA trip



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



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

## Tier 1 Open House Feedback



Participants asked for a more direct route to downtown Atlanta

# Tier 1 Screening Results

Six BRT alternatives ranked highest and advance to the Tier 2 screening.

This includes two new alternatives to Five Points added based on Open House feedback.

Alternatives			Weighted Score
BRT	Kensington to Stonecrest	Interstate	Higher Alignment with Goals
		Covington Highway	Higher Alignment with Goals
	Indian Creek to Stonecrest	Interstate	Higher Alignment with Goals
		Covington Highway	Higher Alignment with Goals
	Five Points to Stonecrest	Interstate	Higher Alignment with Goals
		Glenwood Avenue	Higher Alignment with Goals
LRT	Kensington to Stonecrest	Interstate	Lower Alignment with Goals
		Covington Highway	Moderate Alignment with Goals
	Indian Creek to Stonecrest	Interstate	Lower Alignment with Goals
		Covington Highway	Moderate Alignment with Goals
	Five Points to Stonecrest	Glenwood Avenue	Moderate Alignment with Goals
HRT	Kensington to Stonecrest	Interstate	Lower Alignment with Goals
	Indian Creek to Stonecrest	Interstate	Lower Alignment with Goals

● Higher Alignment with Goals    
 ● Moderate Alignment with Goals    
 ● Lower Alignment with Goals

# What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-capacity transit system with the following characteristics:

## 10-Minute Peak Frequencies or Less

## Dedicated Operating Lanes

- Includes at least 50% of the route operating in fully dedicated transit lanes.

## Unique Transit Line and Vehicle Branding

- Branding helps differentiate BRT service from local buses.

## Station Amenities

- Shelters, seating, real-time arrival screens, off-board ticketing, bike racks, level boarding, and more.

## Transit Signal Priority

- Technology to connect transit vehicles to traffic signals, reducing the time at red lights.



# **Tier 2 Screening Review**

# Tier 2 Screening: Six BRT Alternatives



**Three** Western Terminus Options

- 1 Kensington Station
- 2 Indian Creek Station
- 3 Five Points Station

**Two** Route Types

- A Interstates (I-20 & I-285)
- B Surface Streets (Glenwood Road, Covington Highway)





# Evaluation Criteria for Tier 2 Screening

Criteria	Measure(s)
<b>Land Use</b>	Proportion of affordable housing within station areas, compared to surrounding counties
<b>Cost Effectiveness</b>	Average Annual Capital Cost and Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Cost per trip
<b>Mobility Improvements</b>	Estimated Annual Transit Trips
<b>Congestion Relief</b>	New Weekday Transit Trips
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>	Benefits from changes in air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and safety
<b>Transit Reliability</b>	Exclusive transit lanes
	Total Travel Time Needed to Plan for On-Time Arrival
<b>Economic Development Potential</b>	Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Readiness
	Connectivity to Activity Centers



# Tier 2 Scoring Results

Criteria	Kensington to Stonecrest		Indian Creek to Stonecrest		Five Points to Stonecrest	
	Interstate	Covington Highway	Interstate	Covington Highway	Interstate	Glenwood Avenue
Land Use	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cost Effectiveness	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mobility Improvements	●	●	●	●	●	●
Congestion Relief	●	●	●	●	●	●
Environmental Benefits	●	●	●	●	●	●
Transit Reliability	Guideway Lane Exclusivity	●	●	●	●	●
	End-to-End Travel Time	●	●	●	●	●
Economic Development Potential	TOD Readiness	●	●	●	●	●
	Activity Centers	●	●	●	●	●

● Higher Alignment with Goals    
 ● Moderate Alignment with Goals    
 ● Moderate Lower Alignment with Goals    
 ● Lower Alignment with Goals

# Takeaways and Tradeoffs: Interstate vs. Surface Streets

## Interstate Alternatives

*I-20/I-285 and I-20 Routes*



Fewer stops: shorter end-to-end travel times



More new transit trips



I-20 Express Lanes are currently unfunded



Greater level of TOD readiness



Greater potential reduction in car travel

## Surface Street Alternatives

*Covington Hwy and Glenwood Rd Routes*



More stops in South DeKalb resulting in better coverage



Ridership draws from existing local routes



Exclusive lanes dependent on widening surface streets



More opportunities for pedestrian safety improvements

# Takeaways and Tradeoffs: Terminal Stations

## Stonecrest to Five Points

*via I-20 or Glenwood Rd/Covington Hwy*



Fewer stops: higher average speed



More direct access to Downtown and Red/Gold rail lines



Greater transit-dependent ridership



Connections to Candler Road ART and MARTA Rapid Summerhill

## Stonecrest to Kensington & Indian Creek

*via I-20/I-285 or Covington Hwy*



Transfers to local buses serving other parts of DeKalb



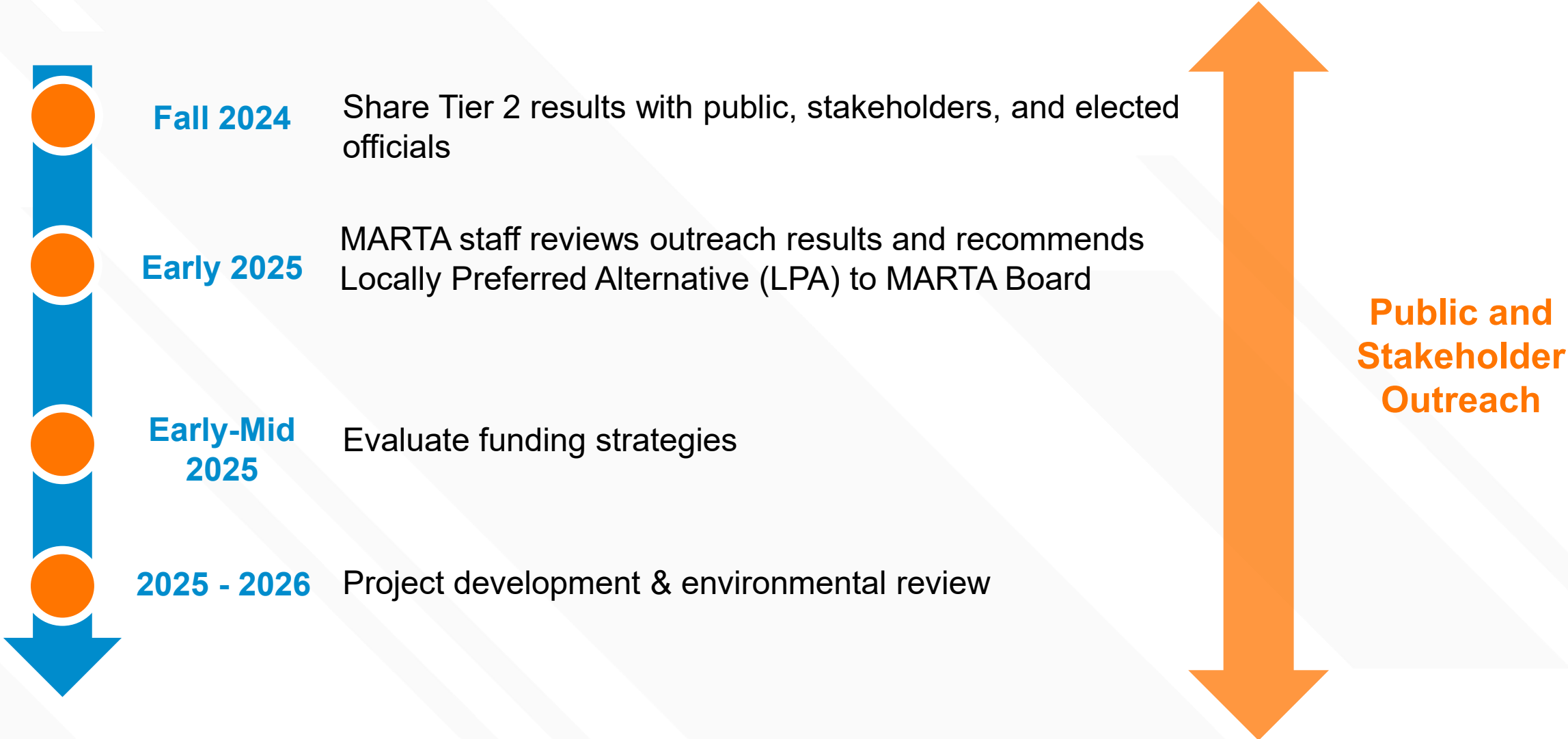
Requires transfer to access Downtown Atlanta



Connections to future development at Kensington & Indian Creek stations

# Next Steps

# Next Steps to Advance Planning



## **Project Contact:**

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Project Manager  
Planning & Project Development  
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## **Questions:**

Enter your questions and comments in the Q&A Section in Zoom.

The presentation will be posted on the public website along with all other previous meetings: [www.southdekalbtransit.com](http://www.southdekalbtransit.com)



Thank You