The BeltLine Health Impact Assessment: public perceptions of health and the built environment

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IMAGE CREDITS: BeltLine Partnership, Atlanta Development Authority
The BeltLine: redevelopment

6,500 acre Tax Allocation District
Figure 6.9  Maddox Park Before and After

Figure 6.36  Ralph McGill Boulevard Before

Figure 6.37  Ralph McGill Boulevard After.

Figure 6.46  Ansley Mall Before

Figure 6.47  Ansley Mall After

The BeltLine Numbers

**Parks:** 700 acres of park improvements and 1,300 acres of new greenspace and parks

**Trails:** 33 miles of new multi-use trails

**Transit:** 22 mile loop of transit service

**Redevelopment:** 6,500 acres of redevelopment, 10 redevelopment nodes
  - 29,000 housing units (5,600 affordable units)
  - 5.3 million square feet of office space
  - 1.3 million square feet of retail space
  - 5.2 million square feet of industrial
  - 407,000 square feet of institutional space
  - 30,000 new jobs

**Other improvements:** sidewalk, streetscape, road, and intersection improvements
What is a Health Impact Assessment?

A combination of procedures or methods by which a policy, program or project may be judged as to the effects it may have on the health of a population.

– Gothenburg Consensus
### BeltLine HIA Steps

- **Screening**: is an HIA necessary?
- **Scoping**: possible consequences, boundaries, management
- **Appraisal**: nature and magnitude, affected population
- **Decision Making**: reporting results to decision makers
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**: review affects of HIA

An iterative process
BeltLine HIA Study Area

0.5 mile buffer around the Tax Allocation District
## Outreach Goals

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<tr>
<th>Goals of outreach</th>
<th>Stakeholder groups</th>
<th>Form of outreach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Announce project</td>
<td>Decision makers, Implementers/experts, Public, Academics, Practitioners</td>
<td>Letters to Officials, News release to local media, Print materials, Web site, Online and paper survey, Time on agenda of the meetings of the City Council, County Commissioners, School Board, Zoning Commission, BeltLine Partnership, Neighborhood Planning Unit Delegates, One-on-one contacts, Journal articles, Conference presentations</td>
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<td>2. Educate on HIA and health</td>
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<td>3. Identify health impacts</td>
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<td>4. Get information (data, deadlines, decision points, work plans, etc)</td>
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<td>5. Identify recommendations</td>
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<td>6. Provide information to make informed decisions</td>
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<td>7. Share lessons with academics and practitioners</td>
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BeltLine HIA Survey

- CQGRD conducted a survey of those who live, work and play near the BeltLine

- Purpose: Ensure that the health concerns of those that will be most affected by the BeltLine were considered in the HIA
BeltLine HIA Survey

- Administered online (446 respondents)
- Paper Surveys (over 1,000 copies distributed through Neighborhood Planning Units, 43 respondents)
- Total – 489 respondents
### Population/Respondent Characteristics

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<th>Study Area</th>
<th>Survey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
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Most (34.5%) survey respondents had >$80,000 household income.

Median household income for City of Atlanta was $39,752 (2005; margin of error +/-3,034).
Respondents by Zip Code
> 70% believe that the BeltLine will have a positive effect on their health

Potential Negative Health Impacts (out of 77 respondents) were listed as:
- Increases in congestion (42%)
- Increased Density (36%)
- Air Pollution (32%)
- Noise (18%)
Preliminary Survey Findings

- 74% (out of 463 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree that their community currently has good air quality and . . .

- 63% (out of 455 respondents) agree or strongly agree that the BeltLine will improve air quality in their community
Preliminary Survey Findings

- Of the 74% of respondents who currently travel to work by car, 51% will travel to work by car after the BeltLine is completed.

- Of the 91% of respondents who currently travel by car to run errands, 54% will travel by car to run errands after the BeltLine is completed.
Value of Survey Results

- Potential gentrification or residential displacement in the BeltLine area was not seen as a concern.
- Air Quality was a very important health issue for the survey respondents.
Lessons Learned

- ???