



City of Atlanta  
 Department of Public Works  
 55 Trinity Avenue, SW, Suite 4700  
 Atlanta, GA 30303



ARCADIS/BPA JV  
 2410 Paces Ferry Road  
 Suite 400  
 Atlanta  
 Georgia 30339  
 Tel 770.431.8666  
 Fax 770.435.2666

**MEETING REPORT  
 RENEW ATLANTA 2015 PUBLIC MEETING**

Subject:  
 Renew Atlanta 2015

Place/Date of Meeting:  
 Atlanta Speech School  
 February 3, 2015

ARCADIS Project No.:  
 GABPA144.0002

Report Prepared by/Date:  
 Isalah Barnes  
 February 4, 2015

This meeting was held to educate the public about the upcoming vote on the Renew Atlanta 2015 Bond Referendum.

**Meeting Attendees:**

City of Atlanta  
 Richard Mendoza (panelist)  
 Jalal Slade (panelist)  
 Rodney Givens (panelist)  
 Mike Geisler (panelist)  
 Charletta Wilson Jacks (moderator)  
 Council Member Mary Norwood  
 Council Member Felicia Moore  
 Council Member Andre Dickens  
 Council Aid to Yolanda Adrean  
 Mayor's Office  
 Department of Law  
 Department of Finance  
 Department of Public Works

ARCADIS/BPA JV  
 Jerry Jones  
 Jed JohnHope  
 Isalah Barnes  
 Alma Jacobs  
 Matthew Olivares

Meeting notes provided by:





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**Attendance:**

Approximately 55 non-city staff attendees

**Questions/Comments from Public and Answers from City Staff**

**Q:** Are the bonds 20-year or 30-year bonds?

**A:** (Paul Kwaw) They are 20 year bonds, callable after 10 years.

**Q:** If the city has a \$1 billion backlog, where did the \$250 million come from?

**A:** (Richard Mendoza) The approach is to tackle the backlog in a few chunks in order maintain our good financial standing.

(Mike Geisler) Initially, the original thought was a \$160 million bond. The efficiency commission was established to identify savings within the city government. One example is the Underground Atlanta. We just authorized a sale of the Underground Atlanta, which was worth \$25 million. This sale also eliminated \$8 million in annual debt payments and \$1.1 million in annual maintenance. In addition, the Underground Atlanta property will generate approximately \$1 million in tax revenue. We are looking at other properties in the city that would generate revenue.

**Q:** How will bond make alternate modes of transportation better?

**A:** (Richard Mendoza) There are no transit projects. However, the projects will make it easier to access public transit services, like safer pedestrian crossing and ADA crossings. The infrastructure for transit services are on the list.

(Mike Geisler) Good roads, bridges, and good connections for MARTA. MARTA is its own separate entity, but the city works very closely with MARTA. We have an integrated relationship. MARTA's financials have been running in the black for the last few years. The city gives them good roads and they give us good transportation.

**Q:** Are there plans to include qualified, minority companies in the bidding process, specifically for lighting improvements?

**A:** (Richard Mendoza) The process will follow the city's policy of procurement, and the city code is 30 percent of work will go to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).

(Mike Geisler) In regards to lighting, please keep in mind that Georgia Power owns two-thirds of the lights, which the city leases from them.

**Q:** Randal Mill Road is curvy and cars tend to race on this street. Are traffic calming measures covered under the bond? There are a lot of walkers in our neighborhood as well, and it is risky to take a walk.



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**A: (Rodney Givens)** We look at sidewalks when assessing resurfacing streets, taking a comprehensive approach. There is room for some traffic calming devices.

(Richard Mendoza) We recommend that you submit that request in writing to us and to your Council member so that it can be viewed for local funding. We can address pedestrian safety as part of the projects.

**Q:** There are not a lot of projects on the north side. The intersection at Randal Mill and West Conway at Mount Paran is troublesome.

**A: (Rodney Givens)** This is a particular project that we spoke to Council Member Adrean about yesterday. We are also looking at resurfacing West Wieuca, a bridge replacement on Powers Ferry which is also on the north side.

**Q:** Will there be bike lanes or sidewalks on Mount Paran?

**A: (Rodney Givens)** We are just showing citywide projects on the map now, but that is something that could come out of a session with Council Member Adrean.

**Q:** Will projects be identified before the vote? What portion of the bond money will be allocated to District 8?

**A: (Richard Mendoza)** Approximately \$5.4 million will be allocated to each Council district for local projects. We will work City Council members and the community on the list of specific projects. We may identify certain pots of money for certain categories. The bond referendum has two questions that only identify the pots of money.

(Rodney Givens) We are also in the process of doing a condition assessment and will talk to Council members about those results.

**Q:** Is it correct that the life of a street is 20-30 years? My street is in excess of 40 years old. I realize it is a small street, but I would like it considered for repairs.

**A: (Richard Mendoza)** Yes, the average life of a street is 20-30 years old. We have a record of the streets we haven't paved that are past their useful life. We are using that as a starting point. I invite you to write down your street name and request on a comment card so that it can be considered. We are currently getting \$3 million per year from GDOT for the entire city, but with this bond we would be able to allocate \$5.4 million per district.

**Q:** Is there money allocated for the acquisition of new land and parks?

**A: (Jalal Slade)** No, this bond would be for the repair of existing facilities.



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**Q:** Is any money supplemented by federal dollars?

**A:** (Mike Geisler) No, this is all city money. We are always paying attention to grant opportunities and will try to get other sources of money any way we can.

**Q:** In earlier meetings there was a lot of talk about fire and police facilities? Where are they now? Are they still part of the plan?

**A:** (Jalal Slade) We are finding other sources to fund these improvements. There is a comprehensive funding strategy, for instance, the sale of surplus property and operational efficiencies.

(Mike Geisler) The Civic Center is another underutilized property that we are looking at.

**Q:** Can you describe the Complete Street plans on Peachtree Road and collaboration with GDOT?

**A:** (Richard Mendoza) This is an opportunity to leverage state/federal funds for improvements. We are looking at ways to make the road user friendly for all modes of transportation (pedestrians, transit, bikes, and vehicles).

**Q:** Will a specific list for local projects be available before the vote? Where can I find the list?

**A:** (Rodney Givens) The list will be as specific as possible, listing specific roads in some cases and categories in other cases. We will do as much as possible before March 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Q:** Is there a quality of workmanship guarantee for 20 years, so that we are assured that the work the contractors complete will last at least the length of the bond term?

**A:** (Mike Geisler) I don't have the best answer for you right now. I am hiring two personal consultants that are industry experts with no stakeholder or gain to be had out of any of these projects. They will help us get the best value for the money. I'm not sure if guarantor for 20 years is possible, but is something I will look into.

**Q:** Has the city looked at a cost benefit analysis of ignoring the contractor minority requirements and opening this up to any contractor? Going with the lowest, qualified bidder? Why not open this up nationally to contractors who are bigger and can do it better?

**A:** (Mike Geisler) Why wouldn't the city want to invest in local businesses and see them grow? Major contractors will take the money out of state. We still vet local companies out and make sure they have the required skills. We make sure that our contractors are qualified to do the job. We create jobs locally and keep money in the local economy and teach skills. That's the way we are viewing it.

**Comment:** The Chastain swimming pool was built in 1940 and the city has been putting Band-Aids on problems since the 1970's. I've worked closely with the city with some repairs. The city has never built a



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swimming pool in North Atlanta, even though there is a strong market for it. The Chastain swimming pool can be looked at as a local and regional facility, because the demand is there. It serves 500-600 children every summer. You can swim for free on weekdays.

**Response:** (Charletta Wilson Jacks) Please talk to Jalal Slade, our Chief Real Estate Officer, when we have our breakout sessions, so he can talk to you in more detail.

**Comment:** Thank you for coming and providing us with answers to our questions.

#### Proposed Projects

- Peachtree Street: Complete Street
- Beechwood Drive and Northside Parkway: Traffic Light and Improvements
- Beechwood Drive: Resurfacing
- Beechwood Hills Court: Resurfacing
- Wieuca Road at Chastain Park: Pave and Sidewalks
- Roswell Road and Phipps Boulevard: Resurfacing, Traffic Congestion, and Sidewalks
- Mt. Paran / Randal Mill / West Conway Intersection: Safety Improvements
- Chastain Park Swimming Pool: Repairs and Improvements

#### Meeting Observations

- Majority of discussion focused on the projects in North Atlanta and funding of bonds.
- Comment card breakdown:



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Meeting number	Comment cards received	Atlanta Infrastructure Bonds			People who felt their questions and concerns where			People who found out about the meeting using the website	People who found out about the meetings using other mechanisms
		People in support	People not in support	People who did not answer	Answered	Not Answered	Did not answer the question		
1	9	7	--	2	4	2	3	2	7
2	9	6	--	3	5	1	3	--	7
3	10	4	--	6	4	--	6	4	2
4	11	4	--	7	3	2	7	1	5
5	7	4	1	2	4	--	3	1	5
6	8	5	--	3	2	2	4	2	4
<b>SUM</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>

Meeting notes provided by:

