

## ***FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT - Synopsis***

1. As you may recall, following the NE BeltLine property (a.k.a “Decatur Belt Line”) acquisition and as part of the normal transit planning, Norfolk Southern (on behalf of the City/ADA) sought the abandonment of the remaining corridor freight easement by the federal Surface Transportation Board (“STB”). In early January, GDOT and Amtrak intervened to challenge and halt the abandonment process, and claimed they needed this corridor for alternative transportation uses.
2. On January 29<sup>th</sup> City Council’s Community Development/Human Resources committee passed a resolution in support of the ADA/ABI’s position affirming the use of the Decatur Belt Line exclusively for BeltLine purposes and calling for GDOT and Amtrak to withdraw their adverse petitions at the STB. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> the parties directly involved in the STB abandonment proceedings (Norfolk Southern, ADA/ABI, GDOT and Amtrak) convened with several other city, regional and state transportation agencies and the freight rail companies who agreed to jointly work for 30 days to evaluate the feasibility for the BeltLine to co-exist with commuter rail, intercity and high-speed rail in the Decatur Belt Line, and whether viable routing alternatives exist that can accommodate commuter, intercity and high-speed rail service.
3. The parties have now reached a consensus that the Western Trunk line (modified to increase passenger rail capacity) is a viable alternative to the Decatur Belt for commuter, intercity and high-speed rail service. The parties have also agreed to work cooperatively on certain supplemental studies and actions to develop and implement plans to accommodate the BeltLine as well as commuter rail, intercity and high-speed rail service in the region.
4. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, several of the parties jointly informed the STB of the progress made in the negotiations and asked for a 15-day extension to allow us to formally document the consensus and further intentions, and secure any necessary board approvals to withdraw the challenges to the abandonment of the Decatur Belt. The STB granted the requested extension until Monday, March 23, 2009.
5. Amtrak has indicated that its willingness to withdraw its petitions at STB will depend upon GDOT and the City of Atlanta executing the Framework Agreement by the March 23, 2009 STB filing deadline. Earlier today, the GDOT State Transportation Board approved the staff recommendation to withdraw its adverse petitions pursuant to paragraph 1 of the Framework Agreement. Also today, the ADA board authorized its participation in the Framework Agreement.
6. We are asking Atlanta City Council to authorize Mayor Franklin to execute the Framework Agreement, which expresses the City’s intention to continue working in a cooperative, expeditious manner with the other parties on the further studies and plans. This Agreement does not create any current or future financial obligation for the City of Atlanta. Nor does it imply any legal approvals or regulatory entitlements related to land uses or transportation corridors or facilities within the City’s jurisdiction. President Borders has arranged a Special Called Meeting on next Monday to consider the proposed authorizing legislation.