
DELIVERING MOBILITY

AN ASSESSMENT OF A STAND-ALONE ATLANTA TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

MARCH 05, 2018





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STAND-ALONE ATLANTA
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT***

CITY OF ATLANTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
WORKS

FINAL REPORT

PROJECT NO.: #185780K
DATE: MARCH 2018

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Your ref.: Task Order 8

Our ref.: PROJECT #185780K

March 05, 2018

Commissioner William M. Johnson
CITY OF ATLANTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
55 Trinity Avenue, SW
Suite 4700
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Subject: Feasibility Study for the Creation of a Single Transportation-Focused Department

Dear Commissioner Johnson:

I am pleased to provide the enclosed report that compiles the information my team and I collected and analyzed as part of our task to determine the feasibility of the City of Atlanta creating a single transportation-focused department. The report contains findings related to what currently does and does not work with the current transportation structure, lessons learned and best practices from peer cities across the U.S., and recommended actions for the City of Atlanta to take to enhance delivery of its transportation services and projects. If Atlanta needs to move in a different direction with regard to transportation, this report provides a roadmap for that new path.

I appreciate the opportunity you provided WSP USA Inc to undertake this analysis. It was a pleasure to interview and understand you, your colleagues in City government, and community and regional stakeholders as part of this study. I thank you for the assistance you and your staff provided and wish you success in taking next steps towards delivering mobility for the City of Atlanta.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Hwang', written over a horizontal line.

William Hwang
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Executive Summary

The Commissioner for the City of Atlanta Department of Public Works (DPW) was requested by Atlanta City Council Resolution 17-R-3003, as amended, to conduct a feasibility study of the creation of a single, transportation-focused department. WSP USA Inc. was hired by the Commissioner to undertake the analysis, which was performed through: 1) collection and review of data and documents to understand the City of Atlanta's transportation portfolio and issues that prompted the study; 2) interviews with City officials and external stakeholders to identify whether there are evident problems that can be ascribed to the current management and governance structure; and 3) interviews with officials from eleven peer cities to ascertain best practices and lessons learned during their own restructurings.

Interviews with city officials, regional partners, and community improvement districts (CIDs) revealed what works well with the current transportation structure in the City of Atlanta, an important foundation for any proposal for structural change. The five strengths of the current City structure for transportation were identified as:

- The establishment of an Office of Mobility Planning in the Department of City Planning (DCP), which marked a philosophical shift for transportation in the City of Atlanta towards viewing roads as public spaces promoting multimodal mobility options;
- Success in acquiring local, state, and federal support for capital funding - over half a billion dollars from 2010 to 2016 - that allows the city's transportation capital program to fund more projects;
- Innovative capital project delivery by both Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and the Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (ABI);
- Effective partners in Atlanta's three CIDs, which have played a very active role in providing transportation investment in key parts of the city; and
- Responsive maintenance by DPW.

The city officials, regional partners, and CIDs who were interviewed for this study also identified problems and challenges that revealed whether there is a case for change in the current transportation governmental structure. The weaknesses with the City's current transportation structure were identified as:

- The need for a clear, singular transportation vision and leadership with a mandate to execute the vision;
- Inadequate resources;
- The need for appropriate expertise and improved overall program management; and
- The need for more effective coordination and collaboration among City departments, regional transportation agencies, and CIDs.

The prevailing sense among City stakeholders interviewed for this study was that the timing is right for change. The success of the 2016 transportation funding referenda, changes in Mayor and City Council as a result of this year's election, relatively new Commissioners for DPW and DCP, DCP's update to the *Connect Atlanta* comprehensive transportation plan, the economic revitalization underway in the city, and the national shift in transportation philosophy towards Complete Streets and a multimodal future all represent a window of opportunity to reassess the current organizational structure for transportation.



The peer city analysis conducted for this study revealed that, while each city has its own unique opportunities and challenges, there are lessons learned and best practices that could be applied to Atlanta:

- Restructuring, by itself, is not the solution for poor transportation outcomes, but can be the catalyst for better outcomes if other supporting actions are used to make the restructuring more effective and efficient;
- Restructuring takes time – often years – to see lasting effects, and should involve a transition period with targeted implementation steps aimed at achieving very specific change objectives;
- Strategic planning can institutionalize changes, guide long-term policy direction and vision, and set a timeline for action;
- In those instances where a phased approach was used for change, hiring a full-time Interim Transportation Director helped ensure the development of a Strategic Plan, hiring of staff, and reorganizing the agency;
- Strong organizations attract and retain talent by establishing clear career paths for engineers and planners;
- Formal interagency coordination processes and entities are present in cities where a transportation or public works agency does not have responsibility for all phases of capital project delivery;
- Deputy Mayors / Assistant City Managers, Mayor’s Offices, policy groups, Commissions and Boards have played important roles in restructuring transportation organizations and/or evolving the transportation policy-setting process;
- During recent restructuring examples, city “transportation” agencies have often been re-branded to include “mobility” in the title as a means of modernizing and covering all modes;
- Solid waste and fleet services are found in separate units as enterprise agencies in other cities, and as such are better able to focus on delivering their core services;
- Perceived successful project delivery agencies tend to house all project delivery responsibilities in one organization;
- Consolidating capital project delivery and transportation operations within the same agency allows for it to design and build facilities that can be feasibly maintained; and
- General Fund agencies suffering from chronic staffing shortages due to budget cuts have been able to establish themselves as self-sustaining organizations.

This study found that, while Atlanta faces transportation challenges that will not necessarily be addressed by the formation of a stand-alone, transportation-focused department, restructuring the way transportation is managed in the City could catalyze, and be the vehicle for, providing transportation leadership, vision, talent and capacity. As such, the study recommends that the City of Atlanta take the following actions to improve its management of transportation and move towards a sustainable, multimodal transportation future:

- In the long-term, set a goal of consolidating all transportation functions in the City into a stand-alone transportation-focused department, led by a new Commissioner. Name the agency the “Atlanta Department of Mobility and Streets” (ADMS). “Streets” is in the proposed title to minimize confusion to constituents as to who has responsibility for such an important City asset (this was adopted by some of the peer cities for this very reason).



- In the near-term, consolidate transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW's Office of Transportation, led by a new Deputy Commissioner for Transportation hired from a national search, who directly reports to the DPW Commissioner. The goal of the near-term DPW organizational structure is to create as robust a transportation office within DPW as current law allows to test whether the issues of leadership, vision, resources, capabilities, and coordination can be addressed by creating a functional transportation unit within DPW. A rebuilding period of no less than two years is recommended. After the two-year period, the City should measure and test the structure against the goals set out for this initiative and determine whether ADMS would take the form of a completely new entity or possibly use Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, DPW's Office of Transportation, or DCP's Office of Mobility Planning as its foundation for the next evolutionary stage.
- Strengthen and expand policy-setting and coordinating bodies through the Chief Operating Officer (COO), including a Transportation Policy Group to provide oversight of and set policy, an Interagency Group to formalize coordination among local, regional, and state partners; and the existing CID Coordinating Committee for CIDs and City agencies to consistently coordinate and collaborate on projects and program delivery.
- Develop a Strategic Business Plan to help deliver the principles and strategies set out in DCP's *Connect Atlanta Plan*, define the mission and vision of the new, near-term DPW transportation office and any successor to it, and provide one- and three-year benchmarks that agencies can use to guide their efforts in the near-term.
- Undertake workforce, financial and recruitment and retention assessments that identify additional skills, operating budget, and FTEs needed for the near-term DPW transportation office, a funding strategy, whether the office could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise, strategies to attract and retain talent, and a change management plan.
- Carry out an assessment of DPW's Solid Waste and Fleet Services to determine whether they should stay within DPW, merge with another department, or separate into their own stand-alone departments.

1 Introduction

1.1 Study Background

This study was initiated by the Commissioner for the City of Atlanta Department of Public Works (Commissioner) in response to the Atlanta City Council Resolution 17-R-3003, as amended (Resolution), on March 6, 2017. The Resolution, sponsored by At-Large Councilmember Andre Dickens, called on the Commissioner to conduct a feasibility study of a single transportation-focused department, an Atlanta Department of Transportation (DOT), that would “design, operate, manage and maintain the City of Atlanta’s transportation system and transit projects and infrastructure.”¹ The Resolution provided that the study, at a minimum, consider the need for a single transportation-focused department, the organizational structure of the department, the scope and responsibility of the department, funding resources, best practices from other municipalities of similar size, the cost associated with creating a single transportation-focused department, the pros and cons of having a single transportation-focused department, and the funding for a proposed single transportation-focused department.

The Resolution cites many reasons for the study. While the City of Atlanta (City) “has made major strides to administer its public transit services in a manner that establishes an effective and safe public transportation system and provides the public and businesses access, mobility and enjoyment ... currently, the City's transit needs are not clearly consolidated under any single Department of the City.” Instead, the “primary responsibility for transportation infrastructure design, construction, and maintenance” falls within the Department of Public Works’ (DPW) purview, which also oversees “issues unrelated to transportation such as sanitation, recycling and fleet services.” According to the Resolution, lacking departmental transportation focus is further exacerbated by the fact that “the City has historically underfunded its transportation infrastructure investments with the exception of special bond and tax investment initiatives which provide unsustainable temporary funding to offset long term funding shortfalls” and “sporadic funding allocations.” The Resolution states that this study is needed because City and community partners depend on the City for transportation funding,² needed alignment with the Department of City Planning’s updates to its comprehensive plans,³ recent voter approvals for transportation funding initiatives,⁴ the investment in and

¹ The Resolution refers to “transit” projects and needs interchangeably with “transportation” needs and projects. The authors of this study understood its references to “transit” not as public transportation – typically encompassing passenger bus and rail projects and services – but as “transportation” covering all modes of transportation but primarily roads and transit.

² “... multiple City agencies, quasi- City Agencies, and community partners ... routinely seek the cooperation of the City in securing and utilizing State and Federal [transportation] funding to support their respective project initiatives ...”

³ “... The Department of Planning and Community Development's [Office of] Mobility Planning manages updates to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan/The Connect Atlanta Plan...”

⁴ “... on November 8, 2016, City of Atlanta residents overwhelmingly voted to authorize a four-tenths of a penny Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for Transportation to help generate approximately \$300 million to fund significant and expansive transportation projects citywide, over a five-year period ...” and “...Atlanta residents also voted to authorize a half-penny sales tax for transit expansion and enhancements for the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority ... to generate \$2.5 billion ...”

expansion of City-initiated transit projects,⁵ and finally, “many leading cities have single transportation-focused departments.”

WSP USA was selected to support the DPW in conducting a feasibility study to determine the benefits and costs of creating an Atlanta DOT to manage the City's multimodal transportation projects and infrastructure. The activities and requirements of this study included: (1) collect and review of data, documents, budgets, and plans related to the City's transportation portfolio and issues that prompted the Feasibility Study; (2) assess whether there are evident problems that can be ascribed to the current management and governance structure; (3) compare the current state of management of the City of Atlanta's transportation program to best practices from municipalities with similar characteristics around the nation; and (4) compile the information collected, documented, developed, and created into a single document, including a set of recommended actions for the City to enhance delivery of its transportation services and projects and manage its transportation funding most effectively. This report is the single document deliverable.

1.2 Previous and Concurrent Studies

The concept of forming a city transportation agency has been studied in Atlanta and other cities for many years. Most recently, the concept of establishing an Atlanta DOT was the topic of a December 2016 student project at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech). The project report, *Reimagining Atlanta's Transportation Governance: A Report on the Possibility of Creating a DOT for the City of Atlanta* did not advocate for any certain type of structure or organizational chart, but recommended “the pursuit of a better transportation governance structure” by “commission[ing] a report to discuss the city's needs and look at structures that can best address those needs.”⁶ The student project relied heavily on a study prepared for the City of Pittsburgh by Harvard Kennedy School student Sam Salkin, in collaboration with the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). The Pittsburgh study based its findings and recommendations on interviews with stakeholders inside and outside City of Pittsburgh government, as well as with other peer cities.⁷ Published in spring 2016, *Rethinking Transportation in Pittsburgh*, found circumstances in that city resonant with the issues cited in the Atlanta Resolution, among them:

- No one person or agency had clear responsibility for transportation in Pittsburgh;
- Communicating about and coordinating transportation was a challenge;
- Evaluation of transportation effectiveness was not performed;
- Executive vision and leadership matter, and there was little evident in Pittsburgh, and
- Agency structure should facilitate project delivery, collaboration, and coordination.

⁵ “... the City has invested in several major transit initiatives designed to alleviate traffic congestion and improve the City's transportation infrastructure ...” and “... the City is also in the process of expanding the Atlanta Beltline and the Atlanta Streetcar to connect additional neighborhoods and other popular designations throughout the City ...”

⁶ *Reimagining Atlanta's Transportation Governance: A Report on the Possibility of Creating a DOT for the City of Atlanta*, p. 25.

⁷ Peer cities included Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Cincinnati, District of Columbia, Denver, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Seattle.



The report’s recommendations included that the City of Pittsburgh reorganize its city government to create a standalone transportation-focused agency.

In addition to the City of Atlanta, the question of whether a city should establish a single transportation-focused department was considered by the City of Denver this year. Similar to the findings and recommendations of this study, Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock announced in July 2017 that the Denver Public Works Department would be reorganized “to elevate and better address the city’s growing transportation and mobility needs” and “serve as a precursor to the proposed new cabinet-level Department of Transportation and Mobility.”⁸

NACTO is also working on an organizational best practices survey. The NACTO study is expected to take 6 months to complete with findings anticipated in winter 2017.

1.3 Study Process

The Atlanta feasibility study first reviewed data, documents, budgets, and plans provided by the DPW and other City agencies in order to gain an understanding of the City’s transportation portfolio and issues surrounding transportation project and service delivery. This included a review of the City Charter and Code of Ordinances, current organizational charts and personnel data, current capital and operating budgets, grant funding applications and performance data.

The study then sought to identify whether there were evident problems that could be ascribed to the current management and governance structure. This was done through interviews with leaders within and outside of City government, including leaders of the Department of Public Works, Department of City Planning, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, Department of Law, and Department of Parks and Recreation, all of whom provided valuable insight into the City’s transportation knowledge, capacity, finances, and operations. Interviews were also conducted with regional partners, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA); along with two quasi-governmental entities - Invest Atlanta and its subsidiary, Atlanta Beltline Inc.; and Atlanta’s three Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), the Buckhead Community Improvement District, Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID), and Midtown CID/Midtown Alliance. The interviewees are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Atlanta Interviewees

Agencies Interviewed for the Study
Buckhead Community Improvement District
Central Atlanta Progress / Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID)
Midtown CID/Midtown Alliance
City of Atlanta Department of City Planning
City of Atlanta Department of Public Works
City of Atlanta Department of Law

⁸ <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/mayors-office/newsroom/2017/mayor-hancock-announces-major-reorg-of-public-works-to-emphasize.html>

City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation
Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST
Atlanta Beltline, Inc.
Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)
Atlanta Committee for Progress
Atlanta Chief Operating Officer

In addition to officials in Atlanta, executives from 11 “peer cities” and NACTO were interviewed in order to compare how the City of Atlanta currently manages its transportation program with best practices from municipalities around the nation. These peer city interviews identified best practices and strategies for enhancing delivery of transportation projects and services, and the pros and cons of having a single transportation-focused department responsible for a city’s transportation system, projects and improvements.

Table 2. Peer City Interviewees

Jurisdiction/Organization	Department	Interviewee Title	Interviewee Name
City of Baltimore	Department of Transportation	Acting Director	Frank Murphy
National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)		Director of Policy and Special Projects	Corinne Kisner
City of San Francisco	Municipal Transportation Agency	Director of Sustainable Streets	Tom Maguire
City of Dallas		Assistant City Manager	Jill Jordan
City of Seattle	Department of Transportation	Director	Scott Kubly
City of Oakland		Policy Director of Infrastructure & Transportation	Matt Nichols
City of Houston	Department of Public Works and Engineering	Deputy Director for Transportation	Jeffrey Weatherford
City of San Antonio	Department of Transportation and Capital Improvements	City Engineer & Department Director	Mike Frisbie
City of Denver		Deputy Chief of Staff	Evan Dreyer
City of Miami	Department of Public Works	Director	Juvenal Santana
City of Nashville		Director of Transportation and Sustainability	Erin Hafkenschiel
City of Philadelphia	Department of Streets	Deputy Commissioner for Transportation	Richard Montanez

All the interviews informed the findings and recommendations of this study, which are described in Chapter 6 of this report.



1.4 Report Structure

The following four chapters provide an overview of how transportation is managed in the City of Atlanta, what functions well within the City's current transportation structure, the challenges that may be addressed through a change in organizational structure, and best practices and lessons from other cities. These chapters lead to the findings and recommendations presented in Chapter 6. The specific topics covered by each chapter include:

- Chapter 2 describes the current transportation institutional structure in the City of Atlanta. The overall City government structure is described, as well as the local and regional agencies engaged in transportation and that serve as key partners to the City in delivering transportation programs and services.
- Chapter 3 explains what works well with the current transportation structure in the City of Atlanta, which is an important foundation for considering any proposal for structural change. Such proposals should be mindful of disruption to the employees and systems that support the City's transportation program, and build off of existing strengths and potential growth potential or scalability.
- Chapter 4 identifies the issues a transportation-focused agency could and could not address in Atlanta, as identified by City leaders during interviews conducted for this study.
- Chapter 5 describes the peer city review based on interviews and responses to a survey distributed to NACTO members.
- Chapter 6 offers the study's findings and recommendations, including a discussion of the feasibility of creating a single transportation-focused department and the advantages and disadvantages of doing so.

2 Current Transportation Structure

2.1 Governance Structure for the City of Atlanta

As in many other cities, the Mayor of Atlanta executes and enforces provisions of the City Charter, supervises the administration and day-to-day operations of City departments, and submits to the City Council the recommended annual budget. The Mayor of Atlanta is also authorized, at his or her discretion, to initiate administrative reorganizations within City government.⁹

The City Council develops legislation, establishes policies and parameters for the administration of City government, and adopts the annual budget by ordinance.¹⁰ It also has approval authority over administrative reorganization plans submitted by the Mayor.¹¹

The City Charter provides that the mayor “may appoint such staff to aid in the discharge of the mayor's duties, including a chief of staff,” but must appoint a Chief Operating Officer (COO).¹² As Figure 1 shows, the current City organizational structure shows the Chief of Staff and COO as the two primary senior staff reporting directly to the mayor.

Though they are “under the direction and supervision of the [M]ayor,”¹³ all department heads – with the exception of the Departments of Finance and Law - report to the COO, who provides policy direction and executive management to these departments. Among the COO’s powers and duties are to provide both “liaison, coordination, and communications between and among City departments and agencies and the various agencies of the federal, state, and local governments and other public and private agencies concerning the affairs of the City” and “direction on participation in federal and state grant-in-aid programs, monitoring and evaluation of grant contract programs, and communication of program policies and priorities.”¹⁴

⁹ *Atlanta City Charter* §§3-104, 3-302

¹⁰ *City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget*, p. 31.

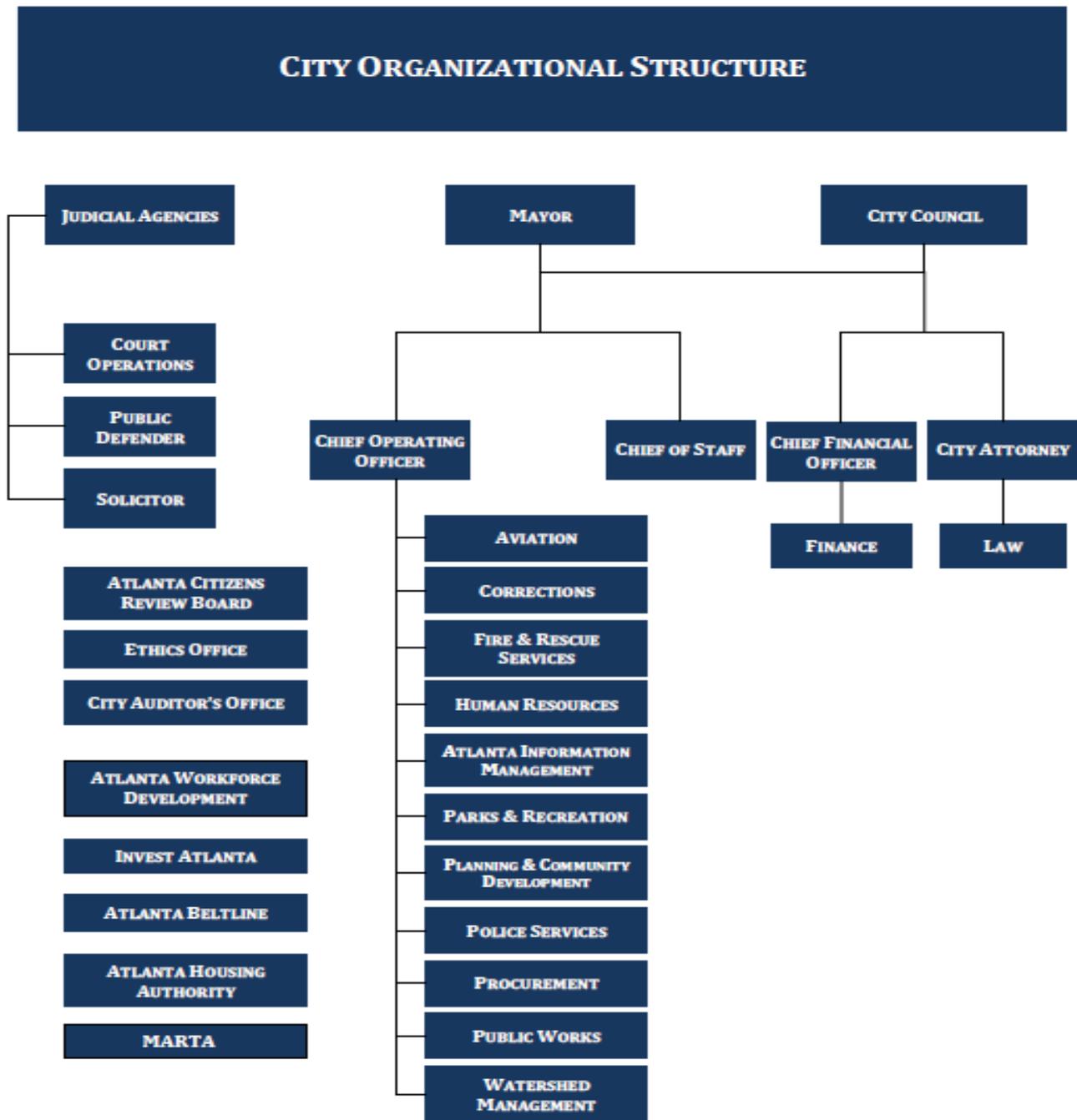
¹¹ *Atlanta City Charter* §3-302

¹² *Atlanta City Charter* §§3-106, 3-201

¹³ *Atlanta Code of Ordinances*, Chapter 2, Article III, §2-183

¹⁴ *Atlanta City Charter* §3-202

Figure 1. Organizational Structure of City of Atlanta Government



Source: City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Proposed Budget



2.2 Transportation-Related City Agencies

The City Charter provides the general authority over the City’s transportation facilities and rights-of-way. As such, the City has the power to “acquire, lease, construct, operate, maintain, regulate, control, sell, and dispose of” and “lay out, open, extend, widen, narrow, establish or change the grade of, vacate, abandon, or close, construct, pave, repave, curb, gutter, adorn with shade trees, otherwise improve, maintain, repair, clean, prevent erosion of, and light” the streets, alleys, sidewalks, and walkways within the corporate limits of the City.¹⁵ Other powers are provided by the City Charter related to City streets and roads, including acquisition of right-of-way,¹⁶ grading and drainage,¹⁷ and the regulation of traffic control, vehicles, parking, and use of the right-of-way.¹⁸

The Atlanta Code of Ordinances specifies the agencies engaged in transportation. The Departments of City Planning (DCP) and Public Works (DPW) are established as executive agencies with each containing transportation divisions – the Office of Mobility Planning in DCP and the Office of Transportation in DPW.¹⁹

2.2.1 Department of Public Works

The DPW Commissioner has authority and responsibility over the regulation of activities within the City’s right-of-way. As shown in Table 3, the FY 2018 adopted budget for the City of Atlanta allocates 924.33 full time equivalent positions (FTEs) to the DPW, an increase of 156.33, 54.0, and 27.33 FTEs over FY 2015, FY 2016, and FY 2017 levels, respectively. The current number of budgeted FTEs is higher than it was ten years ago in FY 2009 when the DPW was allotted 853 FTEs, and is 194 FTEs greater than the ten-year low in FY 2012.

Table 3. DPW Operating Budget and FTEs: FY 2009 to FY 2018

	Dept. of Public Works		Office of Transportation	
	Annual Op. Budget	Authorized FTEs	Annual Op. Budget	Authorized FTEs
FY 2009*	\$77,845,830	853.00	\$23,168,735	281.00
FY 2010*	\$83,000,289	749.00	\$25,740,567	236.00
FY 2011*	\$87,445,786	745.00	\$27,516,745	224.00
FY 2012*	\$95,220,239	730.01	\$27,209,660	216.51
FY 2013*	\$91,575,381	756.01	\$26,088,985	216.51
FY 2014*	\$107,856,048	785.00	\$36,787,246	222.68
FY 2015*	\$101,942,433	768.00	\$33,518,859	216.88
FY 2016*	\$115,220,278	870.33	\$40,739,393	235.21
FY 2017**	\$115,487,439	897.00	\$37,585,495	259.44
FY 2018**	\$119,487,439	924.33	\$46,083,786	278.99

* Actual Expenditures

** Adopted

¹⁵ Atlanta City Charter, §§1-102(c)(9), 1-102(c)(11)

¹⁶ Atlanta City Charter, §§1-102(c)(11)

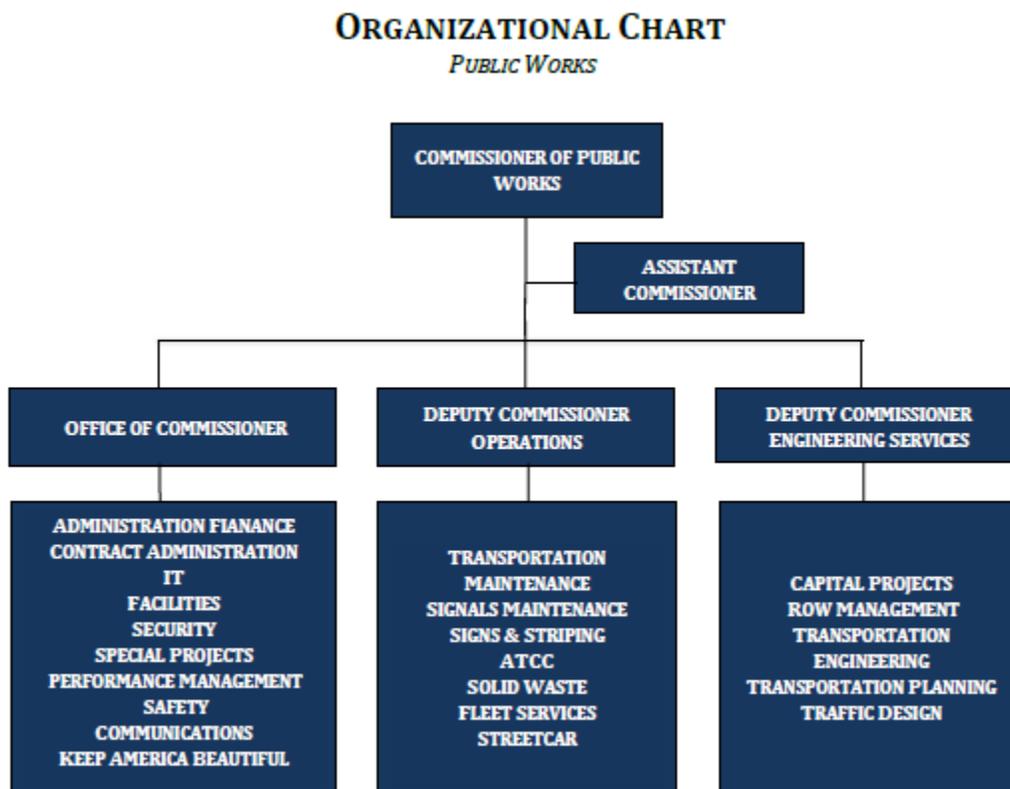
¹⁷ Atlanta City Charter, §1-102(c)(13)

¹⁸ Atlanta City Charter, §§1-102(c)(20), 1-102(c)(37), 1-102(41)

¹⁹ Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article V, §2-222

The Code of Ordinances organizes the City DPW into three offices: Office of Transportation; Office of Solid Waste Services; and Office of Fleet Services. Figure 2 shows DPW’s current organizational structure as indicated in the City Budget. An Assistant Commissioner is assigned under the Commissioner and each Office is managed by a Program Management Officer. Under statute, the Office of Transportation (OOT) has broad functions and duties, including design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the City’s transportation assets, which include streets, alleys, sidewalks, bridges, and the traffic management system of traffic signals,²⁰ streetlights, markings, signs and other traffic control devices.²¹ It is also authorized to conduct traffic engineering and safety studies, traffic planning research and evaluations, regulate rights-of-way as it pertains to the movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and managing uses in the right-of-way, and develop parking initiatives, policies and programs.

Figure 2. DPW Current Organizational Chart



Source: City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget

OOT is the only unit within DPW that is not covered by an Enterprise Fund (i.e., its budget comes from the General Fund). Its FY 2018 adopted budget is \$46.08 million. There has been an increase in recent years in annual authorized FTEs for OOT. In 2009, OOT had 281.0 authorized FTEs, which was reduced to a ten-year low

²⁰ Signals are the focus of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and GDOT as well as CIDs rather than DPW at this time.

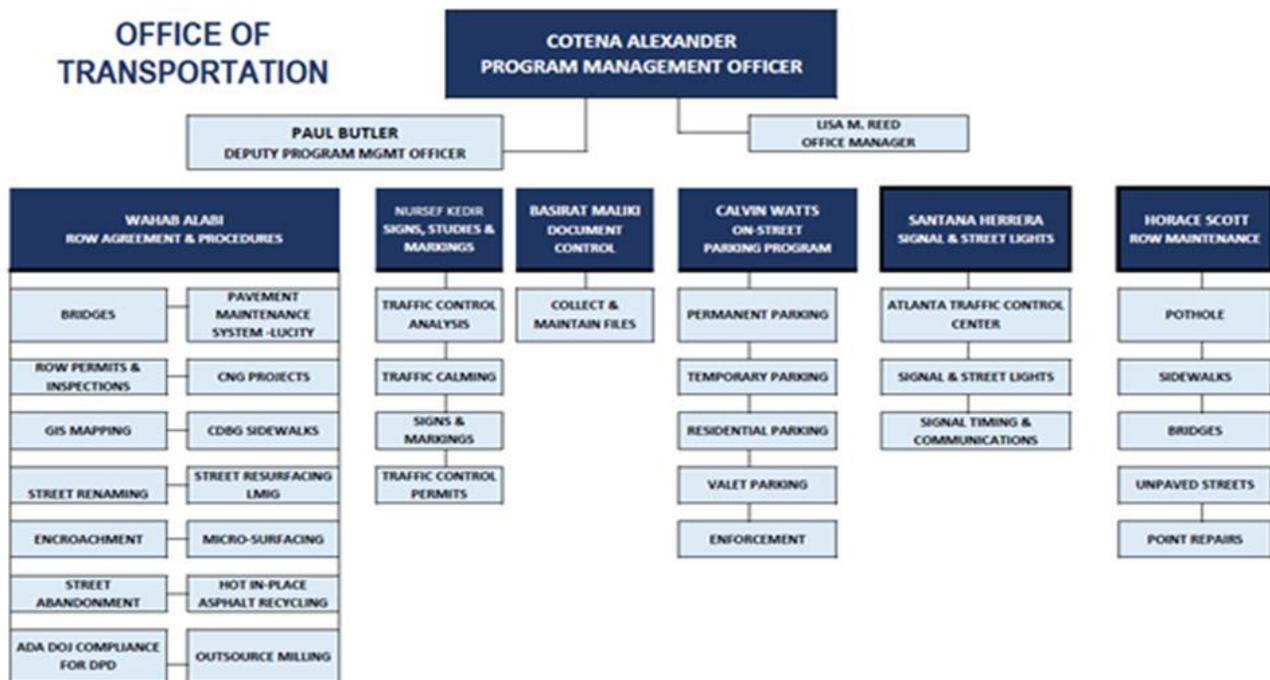
²¹ Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article V, §2-263



of 216.5 FTEs in FY 2012 and FY 2013, and currently stands at 278.99 FTEs. Today, OOT accounts for 38.6 percent of the total FY 2018 adopted DPW operational budget and its personnel comprise 30 percent of DPW’s total workforce. By comparison, in FY 2009, OOT accounted for 30 percent of DPW’s operational budget and 33 percent of its workforce.

Figure 3 shows the actual organizational structure of OOT. In practice, OOT currently does not include several functions it is authorized to carry out, including capital projects (transportation planning, engineering, and construction) and streetcar operations.²² Instead, it focuses on retaining right-of-way, streetlight maintenance, traffic operations, parking, traffic safety, and right-of-way permitting and regulation.

Figure 3. Office of Transportation Organizational Chart



Source: DPW

Since being appointed DPW Commissioner on February 15, 2017, William M. Johnson has planned a reorganization of the Department independent of this report and Resolution 17-R-3003. His proposed structure, provided in the City of Atlanta FY 2018 Adopted Budget forms two separate units within DPW – an Operations unit and an Engineering Services unit, both managed by a Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner for Operations would be responsible for day-to-day maintenance of the public right-of-way, streetlights, streetcar operations, fleet services, and solid waste-/recycling services. The Deputy Commissioner for Engineering Services would oversee capital project delivery, transportation planning, traffic engineering, right-of-way management (permitting and regulation), and contract administration (focusing on federally-compliant and

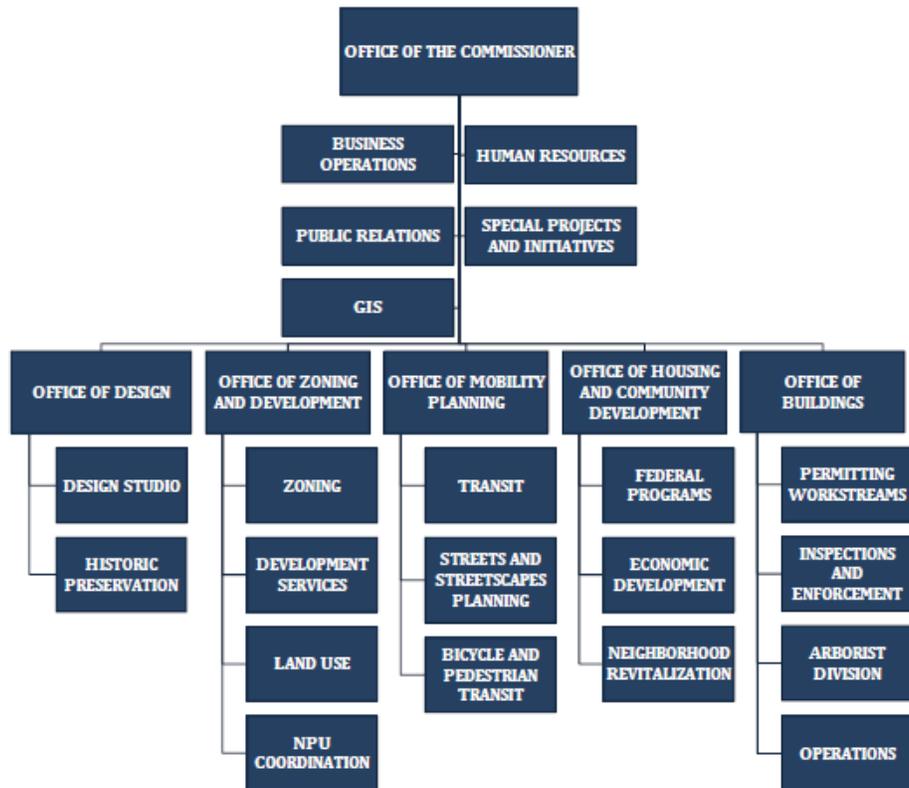
²² DPW currently manages operations of the Atlanta Streetcar, a 2.7 mile system with 12 passenger-station stops, and maintenance facilities. The Atlanta Streetcar represents a cooperative effort by the City of Atlanta, Central Atlanta Progress / Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID), and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), linking the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site on the east to downtown and to Centennial Olympic Park on the west. In FY 2017, the City finalized a settlement agreement to terminate its contract for the Atlanta Streetcar’s operations. In September 2017, the Atlanta City Council approved an ordinance that transfers all operations and assets of the Streetcar system to MARTA.

innovative delivery contracts). While the structure has not yet been implemented, it proposes a transportation-focused structure for DPW similar to Departments of Transportation in other cities across the nation.

2.2.2 Department of City Planning (DCP)

Under the leadership of a new commissioner, DCP, formerly the Department of Planning and Community Development, was reorganized and renamed under Ordinance Numbers 2016-21 (16-O-1346) and 2017-14 (17-O-1157), adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2016 and April 17, 2017, respectively. Figure 4 shows the five offices created within DCP under the reorganization. DCP’s FY 2018 adopted budget totals \$23.36 million.²³ DCP gained a significant number of FTEs between FY 2016 and FY 2017, from 160.5 to 213.47 FTEs (213.97 FTEs in FY 2018). The increase in FTEs and increases in budget are attributable to DCP’s reorganization, and the demonstrated support from the Mayor and City Council.

Figure 4. DCP Organizational Chart



Source: City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget

As part of the restructuring, DCP created an Office of Mobility Planning, which includes transportation planning functions that encompass congestion mitigation, streetscape planning, and active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian programs).²⁴ The Office of Mobility Planning is also charged with collaborating with

²³ City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget, p. 383.

²⁴ Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article V, §2-242



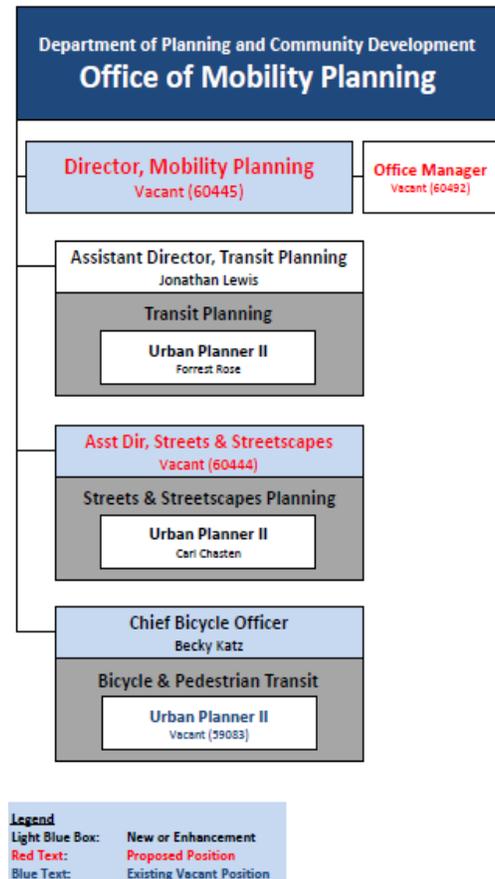
DPW in the coordination of local and regional transportation planning, including transit planning, design, construction and operations.²⁵

Part of the intent behind the Department reorganization and the creation of the Office of Mobility Planning was to establish a “purposeful new transportation strategy for the city and put a structure in place that will facilitate urban streets and mobility.” The Office of Mobility was established to implement “Complete Streets”²⁶ policies, and bicycle programs, in furtherance of the goals of the comprehensive transportation plan. It is managed by a Director for Mobility Planning who oversees an Assistant Director for Transit Planning, an Assistant Director for Streets and Streetscapes, a Chief Bicycle Officer, as well as an Office Manager, as shown in Figure 5. Of the eight positions within the Office of Mobility Planning, three, including the Director of Mobility Planning, were created as part of the reorganization and funded through the annual budgeting process.

The Transit Planning Division develops and maintains the City’s transportation plan, promoting sustainable transportation and mixed-use, transit-oriented development through innovative policy solutions.²⁷ The Streets and Streetscapes Planning Division promotes Complete Streets design and projects through its Complete Streets planning policy and ensures that projects address pedestrian access and safety. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Transit Division facilitates citywide planning of bike routes as part of the City’s transportation network and manages Relay, the City’s bike share program.

DCP’s reorganization took advantage of a “unique window of opportunity” during which updates to the City’s transportation plan and a comprehensive vision for Atlanta’s future were taking place.²⁸ DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning is currently in the process of updating the *Connect Atlanta Plan*, the comprehensive transportation plan last adopted in 2008. This plan is intended to “support the long-term vision of the Atlanta City Design effort and provide policy and project recommendations to build a world class, sustainable transportation system that addresses congestion in a growing and evolving city.”²⁹ The

Figure 5. DCP Office of Mobility Planning Organizational Chart



Source: Department of Planning and Community Development Reorganization Plan, CDHR Work Session

²⁵ Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article V, §2-242(4)

²⁶ Recognizing that streets comprise more than 80 percent of public space in cities, Complete Streets acknowledge the need for the public right-of-way to serve users of all modes – drivers, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists – delivering social, economic and environmental value and providing safer streets for all.

²⁷ Department of Planning and Community Development Reorganization Plan, CDHR Work Session, June 2016, p. 24.

²⁸ Department of Planning and Community Development Reorganization Plan, CDHR Work Session, June 2016, p. 13.

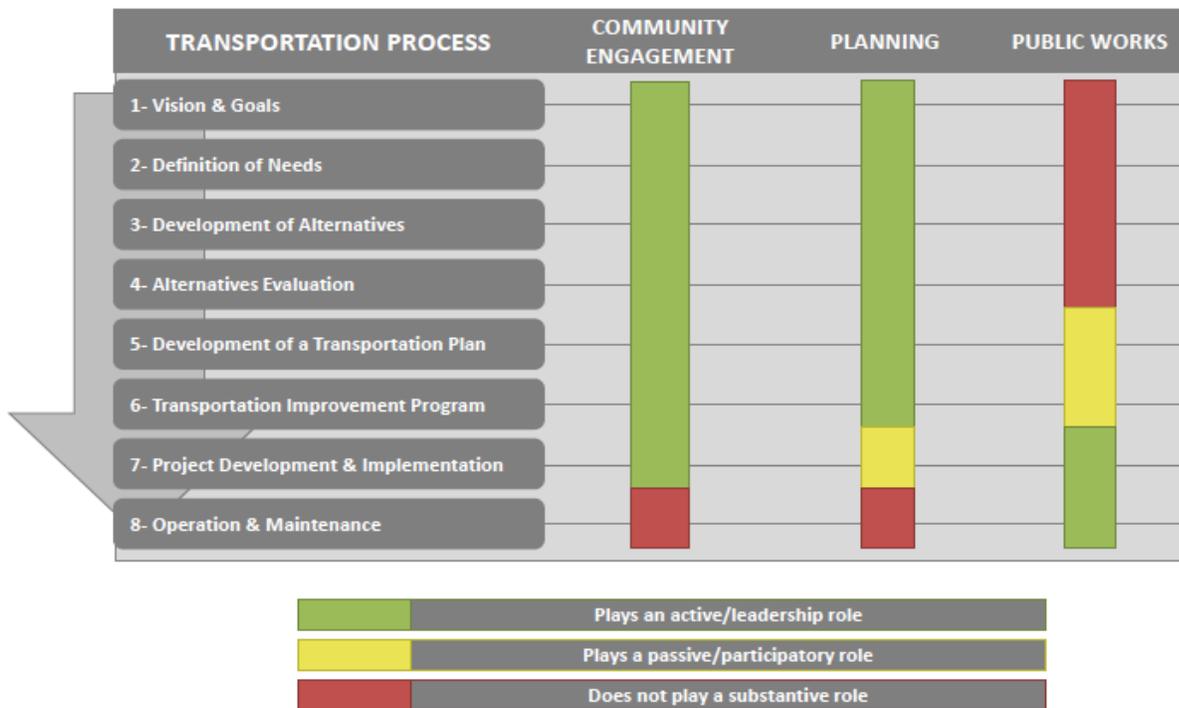
²⁹ <http://www.atlantastransportationplan.com/index.html>

updated *Connect Atlanta Plan* will lay out a citywide multimodal mobility strategy for the City. While it will still address vehicle capacity, the *Plan* will provide a larger framework and system for Complete Streets projects, demonstrating that the future of mobility in the City is shifting away from a focus on autos and single-occupant vehicles towards assuring a balance in the use of the public right-of-way among all modes of transportation, including transit, rideshare, bicycling, and walking. The *Plan*, to be finalized by fall 2017, will also inform and leverage regional and federal funding opportunities through the Atlanta Regional Commission, as well as local bond and sales tax revenue funding sources “to guide Atlanta’s transportation decisions to make Atlanta one of the most livable cities in the country.”³⁰

As with the Office of Mobility Planning, DPW’s Office of Transportation is given similar authority to coordinate the City’s transportation planning with other City departments and local, regional, state and federal agencies.³¹ Figure 6 provides a graphic used as part of DCP’s reorganization to define the different roles DCP and DPW play regarding transportation in the City. While DPW has a role by statute in transportation planning, it is limited in practice and does not involve policy-making or vision-setting, both of which are led by DCP.

Figure 6. Roles of DPW and DCP in Transportation

Stages in the Transportation Process and the Roles Played by Planning, Public Works, and the Community



Source: *Department of Planning and Community Development Reorganization Plan*, CDHR Work Session

³⁰ <http://www.atlantastransportationplan.com/index.html>

³¹ Ibid.



2.2.3 Department of Watershed Management

Two current, standalone City organizations were once part of the DPW. The first, the Department of Watershed Management (DWM), was separated from the DPW in September 2002 to manage the City's drinking water, wastewater and stormwater utility operations. It is a large organization with 1,096 budgeted FTEs and an FY 2018 budget of over \$199 million.³²

Today, DWM manages one of the largest water capital improvement programs in the country at an estimated cost of approximately \$4 billion, with a wastewater component largely controlled by two federal consent decrees that have stringent and demanding schedule and performance requirements. The Consent Decrees were ordered by the Federal Court in 1998 and 1999 to compel the City of Atlanta to address the conditions of the wastewater system that had been significantly underfunded and seriously under-maintained for decades. DWM completed all construction for the first consent decree in 2008.³³ In 2003, DWM resumed operational control of the city's drinking water system that had been managed by private contractors since 1998, and was in a state of significant disrepair and potential failure and subject to two state consent orders.

DWM is considered by its sister City agencies to be a well-functioning agency that has made significant improvements in both the physical state and performance of the City's water utilities. It operates pursuant to its Strategic Plan, resulting in the successful implementation of rate increases, a dedicated municipal sales tax, bond issues, improved budgeting processes and effective cost controls.

2.2.4 Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST

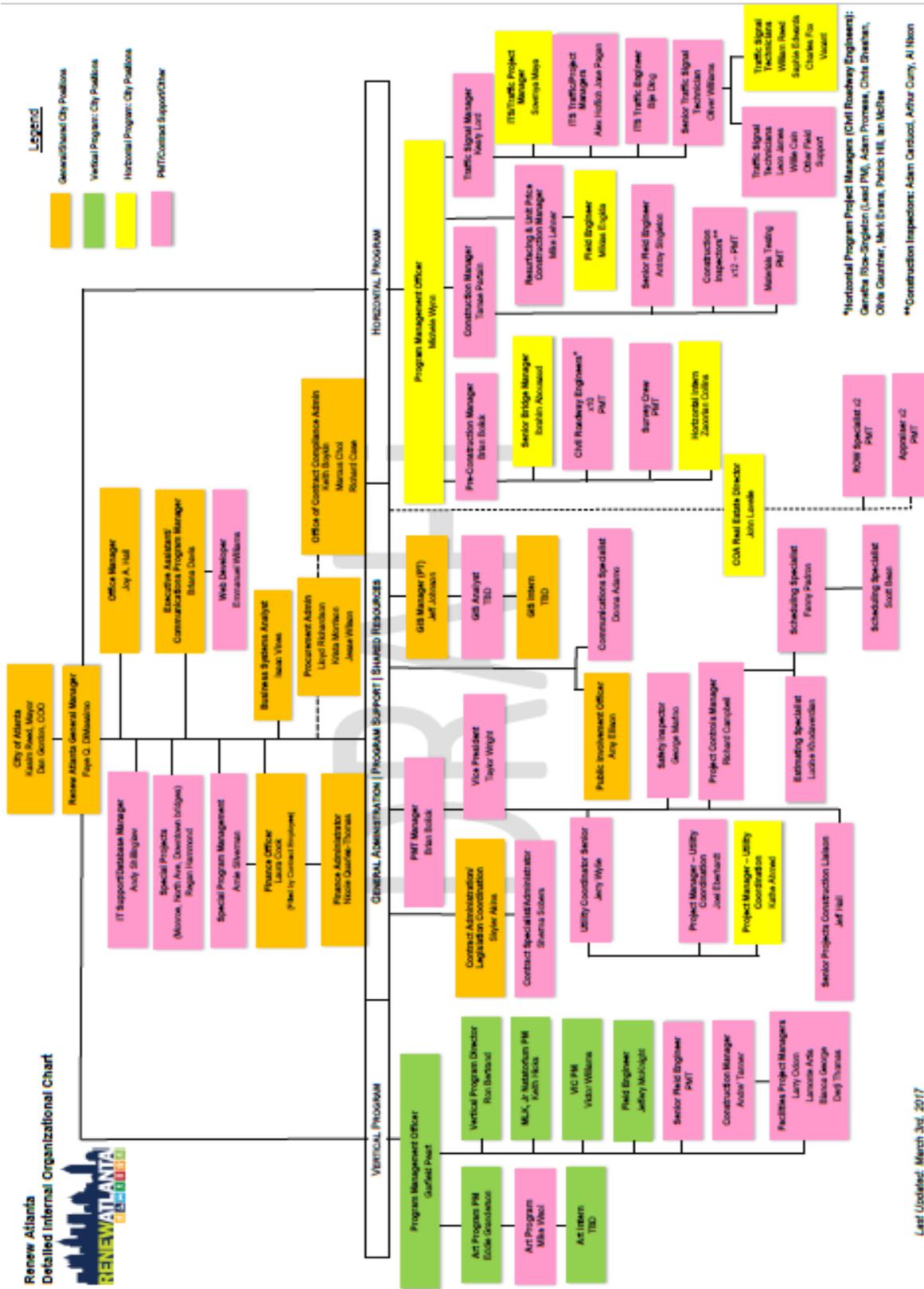
Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST is another City unit whose functions were once under DPW. Its history is rooted in a study conducted by the City's business community and other leaders that examined the delivery of projects under the voter-approved Quality of Life Improvements bond program in 2000, which found that the DPW was not able to deliver bond-funded capital projects in a timely and efficient manner. City leaders determined that the best strategy for addressing this issue would be to create a new, stand-alone City entity based on a project delivery-oriented structure intended to last decades. The independent group also recommended that the new entity's activities and spending be transparent to City leadership and the public.

On November 3, 2015, Mayor Kasim Reed introduced a new General Manager responsible for the delivery of projects funded by the Renew Atlanta bond program. The General Manager oversees 22 authorized City personnel and numerous program management team (PMT) consultants (Figure 7) who, as of September 2017, manage the planning, design and construction of 482 transportation and municipal facility projects under the 2015 bond program, as well as additional projects funded from the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) that voters approved on November 8, 2016. PMT staffing is advantageous because it is

³² *City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget*, p. 284.

³³ <http://www.atlantawatershed.org/inside-dwm/history/>

Figure 7. Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST Organizational Chart



Source: Renew Atlanta



scalable. In fact, for the additional TSPLOST effort, which more than doubles the City's portfolio, project delivery is accomplished with only a 25 percent increase in PMT staffing. Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST has \$131.8 million in Renew Atlanta projects and \$5.1 million in TSPLOST projects under contract with a goal of having \$167.5 million under contract by the end of 2017.

The Renew Atlanta Bond Program is a City-wide \$250 million infrastructure improvement program. The program, developed through years of study with extensive community input, includes resurfacing, signal modernization,³⁴ Complete Streets, sidewalks and ADA improvements as well as building improvements undertaken in the Departments of Public Safety, Parks and Recreation, other City facilities, and restoration of public art.

TSPLOST will generate \$265 million over five years (\$53 million each year from FY 2018 through FY 2022)³⁵ from the addition of four-tenths of a penny in sales tax that began in April 2017. In parallel with MARTA's implementation of a separate half-penny sales tax to expand transit, TSPLOST will implement high priority projects from the *Connect Atlanta Plan*, the *Atlanta Streetcar System Plan*, *Concept 3*, the Atlanta region's transit plan, and more than a dozen neighborhood and community plans that have been adopted in the last six years. Projects include right-of-way and lighting for the Atlanta Beltline, Complete Streets, multi-use trails, sidewalks and streetscapes, neighborhood greenways, street, capacity and vehicular improvements, signal coordination, project scoping and engineering studies, and *Relay* bike share.

While not a formal City department yet, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST functions autonomously, reporting directly to the Chief Operating Officer, without specific statutory authority.³⁶ It has its own planners, engineers, and technical support, as well as its own public relations and community outreach, budget and fiscal management, information technology, contracts and procurement, performance management, and legislative affairs resources. Further, the Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST office is not funded by an annual operating budget; rather, staff charge to capital projects.

Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST is subject to oversight to ensure accountability and transparency. It meets regularly with the business community (Atlanta Committee for Progress, on a quarterly basis), communities, and City Council, and is internally audited every six months. All projects are subject to review and approval by a Project Control Board, which includes the DPW Commissioner.

2.2.5 Department of Parks and Recreation

The Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) role in transportation involves its maintenance responsibilities for trees and some other assets within the public right-of-way. DPR's Bureau of Parks is

³⁴ Signals are the focus of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and GDOT as well as CIDs rather than DPW at this time

³⁵ *City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget*, p. 443.

³⁶ This would change under [Ordinance 17-O-1794](#), introduced on November 20, 2017, which creates an Office of Renew Atlanta Infrastructure Bond/TSPLOST Program, reporting to the COO and led by a General Manager.

statutorily charged with maintaining all trees on City property and rights-of-way.³⁷ Thus, any tree in public ROW or a park is reviewed, planted and maintained by DPR.

In addition, DPR maintains non-traditional “parks,” such as triangle parks (medians with green space within them) and sidewalks surrounding parks. DPR management has acknowledged disputes between DPR and DPW in the past over these responsibilities since it is not clear where DPR’s maintenance responsibilities end and DPW’s begin. An ongoing debate is whether DPR or DPW is responsible for sidewalks surrounding parks in addition to interior park paths, trails, and walkways. This was not always the case, as DPW in the past maintained all sidewalks in the City. However, due to its shrinking capital funds and expanding backlog of maintenance requests, DPW has adopted an approach of not replacing sidewalks adjacent to a park when it improves a road bordering the park. DPR’s stated preference is that it be responsible for maintaining the interior of parks, but not exterior sidewalks.

DPR undertakes capital projects, including the \$23.5 million Renew Atlanta infrastructure bond-funded, 63,000-square-foot Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation and Aquatic Center, which was delivered under a design-build procurement. DPR delivers transportation projects as a component of its projects, including sidewalks, access roads, and parking facilities. DPR also works with the DCP’s *Relay* bike share program and constructs bicycle parking facilities in parks.

A new Commissioner in 2015 led a restructuring of the agency and worked to improve its capital project delivery through building in-house staff capacity. DPR’s FY 2018 adopted operating budget totals \$36.6 million with 430 authorized FTEs. Its operating budgets have remained steady in recent years. However, its authorized FTEs in FY 2018 increased by 84 FTEs, over 24 percent from FY 2015 levels.³⁸ As with DCP, this increase in FTEs is a testament to the perceived effectiveness of the reorganization of the agency for better outcomes and demonstrates support from the Mayor and City Council.

The Commissioner’s reorganizing efforts drew from experience prior to her appointment where she served as Chief Service Officer for the City of Atlanta and in the non-profit and private logistics/supply chain operations sector. She gave DPR directors leeway to hire and make their own decisions. Through the agency’s restructuring, DPR’s management considers itself lean, with the internal staff capacity to perform many functions that were formerly outsourced, which, in its own words, provides for a more “efficient, savvy” agency. DPR’s reorganization continues as DPR’s capital projects unit is being refreshed to replace generalist project managers with experts in architecture, planning, site review, and other technical fields so that DPR has

Figure 8. Woodruff Park Art



³⁷ *Atlanta City Code of Ordinances*, Ch. 110, Art. II, §110-34.

³⁸ *City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Adopted Budget*, p. 271.

additional in-house talent and relies less on outside consultants (a different approach from that taken by Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and Atlanta Beltline). In doing so, DPR believes it has produced better project delivery without burdening itself with additional overhead costs.

2.2.6 Support Agencies

Several City agencies provide support functions to the Departments engaged in transportation activities.

DEPARTMENT OF LAW

The City of Atlanta Department of Law holds exclusive authority and jurisdiction in all matters of law relating to the executive and legislative branches of City government and every department, office, division, bureau, institution, commission, committee, board and other City agency.³⁹ It provides counsel to DPW through its Infrastructure Practice group, which also provides legal counsel and representation to the License Review Board, Office of Contract Compliance and other boards and authorities, and serves as the legal liaison with the City of Atlanta's three Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) as well as the Atlanta Development Authority and the Atlanta Beltline, Inc. Currently, the Department of Law supports DPW with two attorneys. These attorneys are not dedicated to DPW; they also counsel Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and other agencies as designated by the City Attorney.

The Department of City Planning is supported by another unit within the Department of Law – the Finance Practice Group. This unit also provides counsel to the Mayor, City Council, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Finance, Department of Procurement, Atlanta Information Management, the Urban Design Commission, and the In-Rem Board, providing expertise on commercial transactions, including bond deals, municipal financing, and tax matters.

DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT

The City of Atlanta Department of Procurement (DOP) is responsible for guidance in the purchasing of all goods and services. It is directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services greater than \$20,000 for all departments, including architectural and engineering and construction contracts for DCP, DPW, DPR and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST.

Generally, DOP engages in procurements compliant with local laws and regulations. Some of those interviewed felt that DOP is not very well-versed in handling procurements that use federal funds, and DOP staff are not conversant in federal procurement rules. It was noted that several projects have lost millions of dollars in potential reimbursements because contractors and consultants were performing work under contracts that were not federally-compliant.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The City of Atlanta Department of Finance manages and accounts for the City's financial resources. The Department of Finance supports agencies, including DPW, DCP, DPR, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST with the

³⁹ Atlanta City Code of Ordinances, Ch. 2, Art. VI, §2-396

preparation and monitoring of their portion of the annual budget. The Department of Finance is the key decision maker regarding financial resources needed for departmental reorganizations, as well as the creation, elimination, or alteration of enterprise funds.

Agencies rely on the Department of Finance's Office of Grants Services for acquiring and managing state and federal grants. The Office of Grants Services is a statutorily-authorized unit that manages "state pass thru grants, other applications and the allocation process," and "coordinates and applies for new grants from federal and state foundations and private entities."⁴⁰ All grant applications, with the exception of DPR's, must go through a statutory process that involves City Council approval by resolution or ordinance before they are submitted and the Chief Financial Officer's receipt of approval of funding by the grantor before there can be any commitment or expenditure of funds in connection with the grant.⁴¹ The challenge of grant coordination and acquisition capacity within City agencies engaged in transportation and the process by which applications are to be submitted and grant funds received may explain the relatively little amount of federal investment in the normal transportation infrastructure that is within the City's purview.

However, the City has been successful attracting special purpose federal transportation grants. For example, the City of Atlanta was awarded a total of \$75.7 million for three projects during Mayor Reed's tenure from the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program:

- A \$47.67 million TIGER II (FY 2010) grant, the largest of those awarded in this round, to fund the construction of the 2.7-mile Atlanta Streetcar System, including the purchase of light rail vehicles, which opened to passenger service in December 2014. This grant was matched with \$21.6 million in City and private (Central Atlanta Progress/ Atlanta Downtown Improvement District) funds.
- An \$18 million TIGER V (FY 2013) grant to support development of 2.5 miles of the Atlanta BeltLine corridor. The grant supported construction of the Westside trail, including shared use trails, trailheads and access points, and the preservation of the future streetcar transit corridor. The grant was matched with approximately \$25 million in non-federal funds.
- A \$10 million TIGER VIII (FY 2016) grant to fund the Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Corridor Improvement Initiative, a project that includes resurfacing of roadways with improved lane configurations, upgrading and widening Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant sidewalks, installing multi-use trails, a cycle track, bicycle lanes, and raised medians, upgrading signals and historic signage/markers, and implementing green infrastructure improvements and stormwater management. The TIGER grant was matched with nearly \$13 million in non-federal funds, including Renew Atlanta bond and general fund reserves, as well as private contributions.

During the previous eight rounds, USDOT received more than 7,500 applications requesting more than \$152 billion for transportation projects across the country, but awarded only 421 projects with \$5.1 billion in available funds. The City's success with the TIGER program is impressive when compared to other cities.

⁴⁰ Atlanta City Code of Ordinances, Ch. 2, Art. VI, §2-374

⁴¹ Atlanta City Code of Ordinances, Ch. 2, Art. VI, §2-910



Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST has been especially successful at leveraging local funds with state transportation dollars, including a \$98 million commitment from GDOT through an extraordinary funding partnership.

2.3 Key Partners in Delivering Transportation

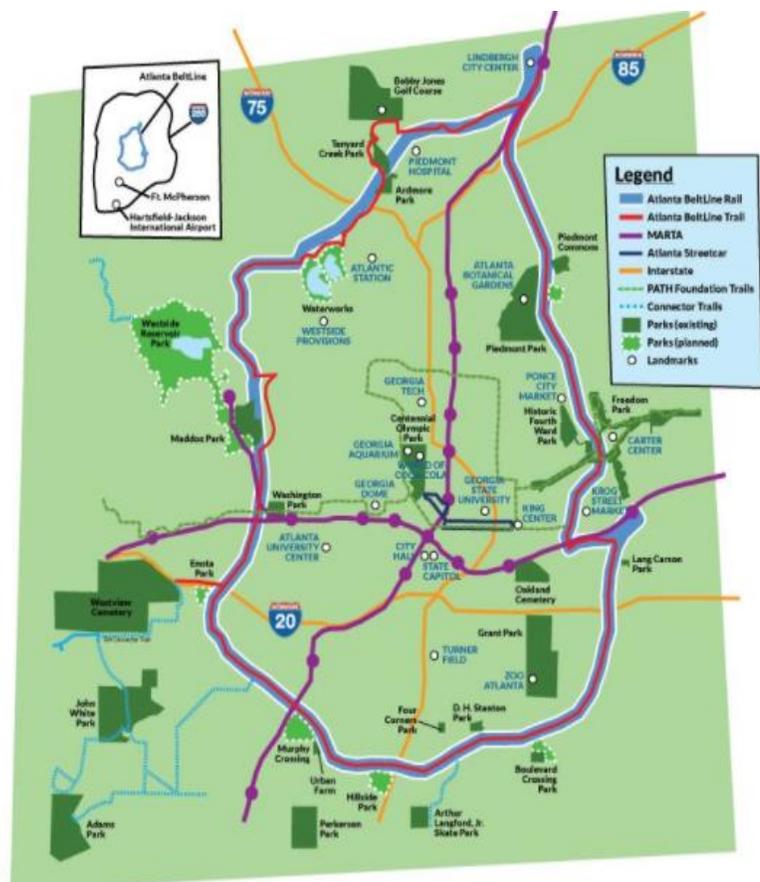
City agencies engaged in transportation interact with private, regional, and quasi-governmental entities to deliver transportation projects and services. Some of these relationships have been formalized while others remain ad hoc.

2.3.1 Atlanta Beltline, Inc.

Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI), formed in 2006 by Invest Atlanta (formerly the Atlanta Development Authority) as a non-profit development corporation, manages the implementation of the Atlanta BeltLine program. Its functions include defining the Atlanta BeltLine plan; leading efforts to secure federal, state and local funding; spearheading all design and engineering; constructing trails, parks, transit, streetscapes, affordable housing and art; continuing the community engagement process; managing all vendors and suppliers; and serving as the overall project management office to execute the Atlanta BeltLine program.

ABI is also responsible for tracking and reporting progress on the program to the City Council, Atlanta Public Schools, and Fulton County, the three taxing authorities that authorized the Atlanta BeltLine Tax Assessment District (TAD) legislation in 2005. The Beltline TAD was created with the intention of providing incentives and initial funding to catalyze the rehabilitation and redevelopment of areas with the Beltline TAD redevelopment area. Generally, TADs are established to catalyze investment by financing redevelopment activities in underdeveloped or blighted areas using public dollars. Redevelopment costs are financed through the pledge of future incremental increases in property taxes generated by the resulting new development. In this way, tax allocation bonds are issued by the City to finance infrastructure and other redevelopment

Figure 9. Atlanta Beltline Map



Source: <https://beltline.org/about/the-atlanta-beltline-project/atlanta-beltline-overview/>

costs within the Atlanta Beltline TAD. The TAD’s annual budget in FY 2018 is proposed to total \$122.54 million, dropping to \$34.58 million in FY 2019, \$36.2 million in FY 2020, \$37.87 million in FY 2021, and \$39.59 million in FY 2022 for a five-year total of \$270.8 million. The TAD receives no general revenue funds from the City unless it is tasked with special City projects; its funding comes from TAD bonds, grants, and private funding.

The Atlanta Beltline TAD was established to “assure that the City of Atlanta maintains its historical position as the commercial center of the region and provides an alternative to the continued sprawling patterns of development in the region.”⁴² The backbone of the ABI program is transportation, involving a planned loop of 22 miles of bi-directional streetcar service (an expansion of the Atlanta Streetcar) along an abandoned rail right-of-way, 33 miles of multi-use trail, and 46 miles of designated Completed Streets. Figure 9 provides a map illustrating the planned improvements.

On December 8, 2015, the City Council approved the *Atlanta BeltLine /Atlanta Streetcar System Plan (SSP)* that ABI created as an amendment to the City’s *Connect Atlanta Plan*. The trail component of the overall Beltline program is opening in phases through its anticipated completion in 2030 and is intended to address issues related to

Figure 10. Patrons Enjoying the BeltLine Trail



aging and incomplete street networks and hundreds of square miles of industrial land that are now being redeveloped generating a need for streets to service the new developments. Non-transportation projects in the program include 2,000 acres of parks, as well as Beltline-spurred growth and amenities, such as private economic redevelopment, 28,000 housing units (mixed-income with 20 percent affordable and workforce housing), free fitness classes, a linear arboretum and urban farm, and a temporary public art exhibition.

ABI undertakes special projects (e.g., Complete Streets) outside the BeltLine TAD that will affect the BeltLine. In these cases, ABI acts as a

consultant to the City under service agreements that provide ABI the legal authority to work outside the TAD. Currently, ABI has four such agreements with DPW, DWM, DPR, and DCP. ABI assists Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST on projects funded by the bond proceeds, acting as Renew Atlanta’s agent through the DPW service agreement. ABI conducts transit (streetcar) planning for DCP under its service agreement with ABI, including a streetcar expansion strategy that the City authorized in 2011 and adopted in 2015, providing a roadmap for how the streetcar system, the operations of which are currently managed by DPW, will expand.

Like Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, ABI’s creation as a separate entity to deliver high-profile, priority capital projects was seen by some interviewees as reflecting a lack of confidence in DPW’s ability to deliver capital

⁴² *City of Atlanta Fiscal Year 2018 Proposed Budget*, p. 440.



projects. According to its current management, ABI was created because DPW did not have the capacity to deliver the Atlanta Beltline program. As a single-purpose entity, it operates more efficiently than City agencies like DPW that have a broad scope of duties and responsibilities and exposure to the annual politics of budgeting. Instead, ABI generates its own funds and can also raise funds from the private sector; in fact, it has acquired \$54 million in private philanthropic donations. Due to ABI's unique structure and funding, it is able to dedicate resources as needed and avoid capital project delivery issues that often characterize some City agencies. However, there was a sense of some of those interviewed that ABI could do more in being a collaborative partner with City agencies.

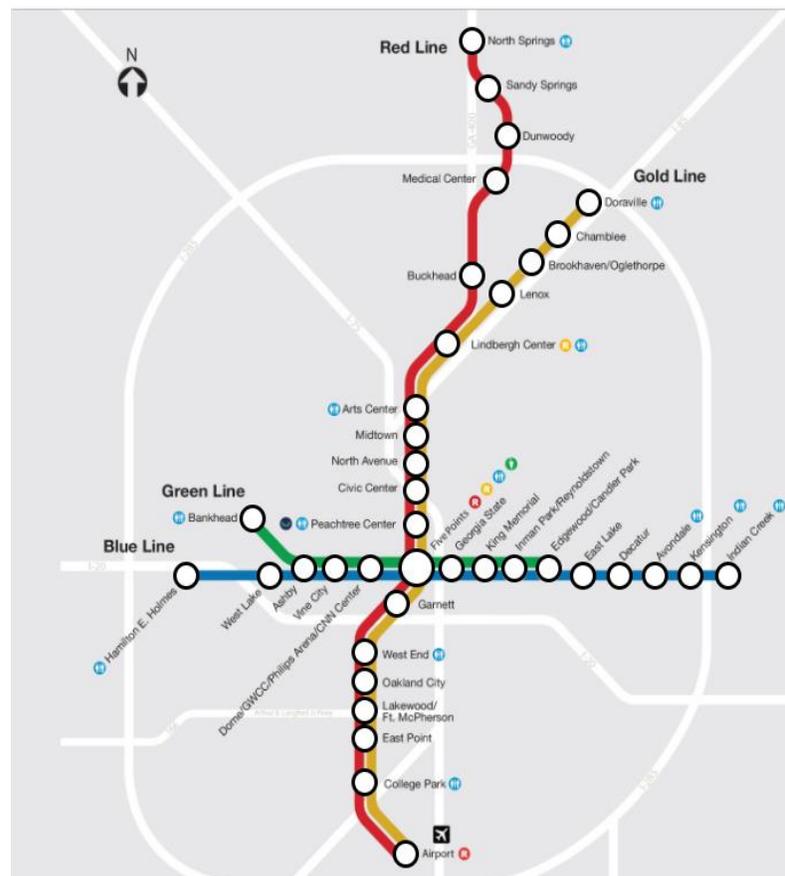
2.3.2 MARTA

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) is the regional public transit provider with rail, bus, and mobility services serving the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, DeKalb County, and Clayton County (which joined via referendum in 2014). Figure 11 shows MARTA's regional rail service. MARTA is led by a General Manager / Chief Executive Officer and overseen by a 13-member Board of Directors appointed by the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, DeKalb County, Clayton County, and the Governor (two ex-officio members are the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Executive Director of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority).⁴³

In FY 2017, MARTA generated \$458.2 million in operating revenues with anticipated operating expenses of \$453.3 million. Its capital budget that year of \$402.5 million was supported by \$403.1 million in revenues.⁴⁴

Revenue sources include passenger revenue, ad valorem tax revenue, federal operating assistance, federal and state grants, capital bond revenue (Floating Rate Notes), and local sales

Figure 11. MARTA Regional Rail Transit System Map



Source: <http://www.itsmarta.com/train-stations-and-schedules.aspx>

⁴³ <http://www.itsmarta.com/bod-overview.aspx>

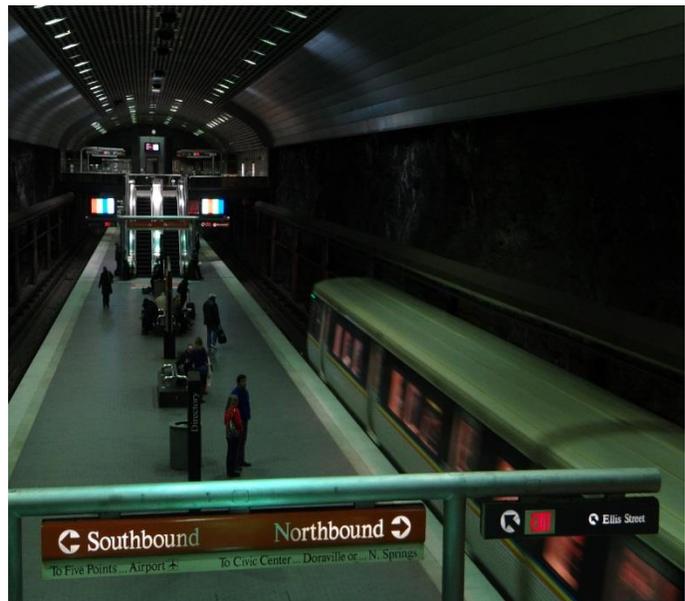
⁴⁴ MARTA FY 2017 Adopted Budget Book, pp. ii-iii.

tax revenue.⁴⁵ The latter revenue source recently received a boost in the form of a referendum question on the November 8, 2016 ballot that allowed City of Atlanta voters to approve a 0.5 percent (half-penny) sales tax dedicated to expanding and enhancing MARTA transit service inside the City of Atlanta. The new sales tax took effect on March 1, 2017, and is anticipated to generate an estimated \$2.6 billion over a period of 40 years for major transit investments, including 48 miles of new light rail and streetcar rail transit, new infill rail stations within the city, new bus purchases, addition of more frequent service and new bus routes.

MARTA plays a significant role in transportation for the region and thus its relationship with the City of Atlanta is important. Both MARTA and City officials recognize a need for close coordination and collaboration. While the Board of Directors provides a means of formalized coordination between the City and MARTA, no formal processes exist for coordination between MARTA and the City agencies engaged in transportation. However, the City and MARTA collaborate on certain issues and efforts from time to time, such as emergency management during ice storms, providing transit services to the disabled and seniors, planning for joint development opportunities and when closing deals with major film production companies.

A recent example of such coordination was the effort to place the half-penny sales tax referendum before City voters. MARTA officials interacted closely with the Mayor, his staff, and the City Council. According to some, this collaboration unified the City behind the transportation initiatives – the TSPLOST and MARTA referenda – for the first time in recent history, so much so that other jurisdictions noted the way the endeavor was so well-organized and executed. The initiative started with MARTA working with the Mayor’s Office to devise a list of the priority transit improvements that focused on regional balance. The Mayor adjusted the list, which MARTA then sent to the City Council’s Transportation Committee for feedback. Concurrently, MARTA held public briefings to receive input from different constituencies, including input from DCP and ABI.

Figure 12. MARTA Peachtree Center Station



2.3.3 Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county Atlanta region, including the City of Atlanta and Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale Counties. ARC is responsible for developing and updating

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*



the Atlanta Region’s Plan, a 25-year long-range plan that details \$85 billion regional transportation infrastructure investments through 2040 “to ensure metro Atlanta’s future success and improve the region’s quality of life” and “to ‘Win the Future’ by providing world-class infrastructure, building a competitive economy and ensuring the region is comprised of healthy, livable communities.”⁴⁶ Transportation investments under the plan are aimed at “improv[ing] mobility in the region and provid[ing] commuting alternatives” with key elements comprising a network of managed toll lanes, an expanded transit network, improved arterial roads and highway interchanges, and improved bicycle and pedestrian options.⁴⁷

Funding for ARC’s plans and programs comes from federal, state, local and private sources. This includes federal (USDOT) and state (the Governor’s Office, Georgia Departments of Community Affairs, Transportation, Human Services, and Labor) grants, enterprise income, private sector funding, and contributions from member local governments (\$1 per resident annually for ARC operations, as stipulated by Georgia law).⁴⁸ These funds are used to match federal and state funding dollars.

ARC is governed by a 39-member board that consists of Atlanta’s mayor and a city council member, the county commission chair from each of the 10 member counties, one mayor from each of the ten member counties (except Fulton Co., which has two mayoral representatives), a representative from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and 15 citizen members.

ARC is designated as a Metropolitan Area Planning and Development Commission and a Regional Commission under the laws of the State of Georgia, and serves as the federally-designated Area Agency on Aging for the Atlanta region and the local administrative agency for the Atlanta Urban Area Security Initiative (IASI). It is also the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and is responsible for developing a multi-modal, financially constrained transportation plan that meets all federal transportation and Clean Air Act planning requirements.

The City of Atlanta is involved in ARC activities through its Board and Committee representation. ARC has several transportation-related Board Committees, including the Transportation and Air Quality, Transportation Coordinating, and Regional Transit Committees. The DCP Commissioner acts as the Mayor’s representative on the Board’s Committees. The Director of DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning represents the City on the MPO’s technical committees. DCP also prepares the City’s list of

Figure 13. ARC Atlanta Region’s Plan Focus Areas and Goals



Source: <http://atlantaregionsplan.com/>

⁴⁶ <http://atlantaregionsplan.com/>

⁴⁷ <http://atlantaregional.org/about-arc/>

⁴⁸ <http://atlantaregional.org/about-arc/> and ARC 2017 Strategy Annual Work Program & Budget, p. 9.

priority projects for inclusion in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list, which is used to obligate federal funds for such projects.

2.3.4 Georgia Department of Transportation

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has jurisdiction over the interstate system and state highway network in Georgia, including that portion of the network in the City of Atlanta. Because these roadways are located within the City and impact residents and the City's economy, it is in the City's interests to coordinate and collaborate with GDOT on the operations, maintenance, and improvements of these assets.

GDOT is governed by a 14-member State Transportation Board that is entrusted with powers, including designating which public roads are within the state highway system, approving long-range transportation plans, overseeing the administration of construction contracts, and authorizing lease agreements. Board Members are elected by a majority of a General Assembly caucus from each of Georgia's fourteen congressional districts.

GDOT and the City coordinate with each other through formal and informal means. A recent example was in the aftermath of the I-85 bridge deck collapse and rebuilding in April 2017. Close coordination was needed to respond to the disruption of traffic flow as the incident had direct impact on City roads that handled detoured traffic. The City coordinated with GDOT to represent the City's perspective with regard to local road capacity, signalization, and signage.

GDOT offers a Local Administered Project Certification program that covers uniform practices for authorizing qualified Local Public Agencies (LPA) to manage core activities for federal-aid funded projects. GDOT assumes the responsibilities of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation for all federal-aid projects and must assure local projects meet or exceed all applicable federal and state laws, standards and requirements. The City of Atlanta holds two valid certifications, so it is in a position to manage federally-funded transportation projects.

DPW relies on GDOT to provide formula-based grants, such as the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program. The LMIG formula is based on the local government's population and its local road centerline miles, with more weight given to the latter. Atlanta's FY 2017 apportionment totaled \$3.74 million and required a 30 percent local match. These funds may be used for pre-construction and construction activities on local roads, but not for right-of-way acquisition, street lighting, beautification and streetscapes, walking trails and tracks, landscaping, and administrative services.

Figure 14. GDOT's I-75/I-85 in Downtown Atlanta, known as the "Downtown Connector"



As previously noted, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST has acquired additional state transportation funding through a \$98 million funding partnership with GDOT by leveraging local infrastructure bond revenues to create a larger capital transportation program than would otherwise exist today. This is in contrast to DPW, which currently does not have the capital budget to leverage additional state resources.

2.3.5 Community Improvement Districts

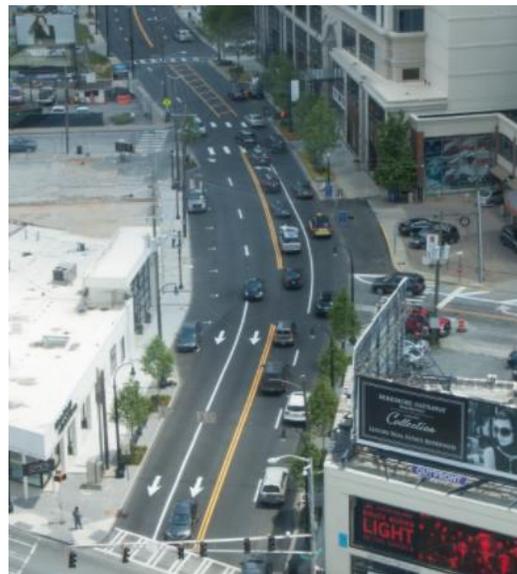
Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), a type of business improvement district, serve as an organizational mechanism for commercial property owners to address certain problems in their districts by levying an additional property tax or other fees on members to support services such as landscaping, street cleaning, public safety, and transportation infrastructure improvements.⁴⁹ The Georgia Constitution authorizes CIDs in the state and among their enumerated functions are the provision of street, curb, sidewalk, streetlight, and traffic control device construction and maintenance, and public transportation projects and services. As such, CIDs can manage the planning, design and preliminary engineering for capital projects, including road reconstruction, streetscaping, pedestrian bridges, traffic signal optimization, and sidewalk and trail construction.⁵⁰

Three CIDs are located entirely within City limits: the Buckhead CID, Central Atlanta Progress / Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID), and the Midtown Alliance.

The mission of the Buckhead CID is to “create and maintain a more accessible and livable urban environment.”⁵¹ The CID has the authority to collect 3 dollars per \$1,000 in assessed property value from commercial property owners. It invests these taxes in local projects; \$61.5 million has been collected and spent in the 2.5 square mile (1,549 acre) CID since 1999.

The CAP/ADID geographic area currently contains 220 blocks. CAP/ADID is responsible for the *Downtown Atlanta Master Plan*, launched in the fall of 2016 and currently under development, which will include a *Comprehensive Transportation Plan*. Its *Downtown Atlanta Platform* advocates for the creation of an Atlanta Department of Transportation with the staffing and project management expertise to plan, design, and implement projects, a direct line of communication to Executive leadership, a leadership role in the governance and administration of the implementation

Figure 15. East Paces Ferry Road Restriping Project



Source: <http://www.buckheadcid.com/projects/restriping-project/>

⁴⁹ *Georgia's Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)*, Georgia State University Center for State and Local Finance, p. 2.

⁵⁰ *Id.*, p. 6.

⁵¹ <http://www.buckheadcid.com/about-us/mission-statement/>

of TSPLOST and MARTA sales tax programs, and support for strong Atlanta streetcar operations.

The Midtown Alliance is the CID for the booming Midtown area of Atlanta. It is governed by a 71-member board with a mission to improve and sustain the quality of life for those who live, work and play in Midtown. The Alliance is guided by *Blueprint Midtown*, a community-based master plan, and has delivered over \$66 million

in capital improvements, including revitalization of 13 miles of sidewalks, the addition of 25 new traffic signals, and the completion of a pocket park.

Figure 16. Midtown Alliance Traffic Operations Map



Source: http://www.midtownatl.com/files/docs/traffic_signalization24x36_opacity-new-small.pdf

Coordination with the City government is important to the CIDs for several reasons. First, the CIDs depend on DPW to respond to requests for sidewalk and road repairs in their districts. Second, CID-initiated projects depend on support from and coordination with City agencies. This support ranges from inclusion of such projects in the regional TIP for federal and state funding -- which must be proposed by the City on the CID's behalf -- to the design and construction of the projects.

For certain projects, the CIDs rely on the City for project delivery (though this is less so with the Buckhead CID and more the case with the other two Atlanta CIDs). For example, while most of the Buckhead CID's capital projects are delivered by GDOT, the City's Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST unit is delivering the Wieuca Road at Phipps Boulevard roundabout project. Most CID-initiated projects are delivered by the CIDs, but need the City to participate through local funding contribution, pass-through of federal or state funds, or project approvals. For example, the Buckhead CID had the City participate in the East Paces Ferry Road restriping project (Figure 15) by contributing funding, giving the City a means to have ownership of the project, which will be up to DPW to maintain.

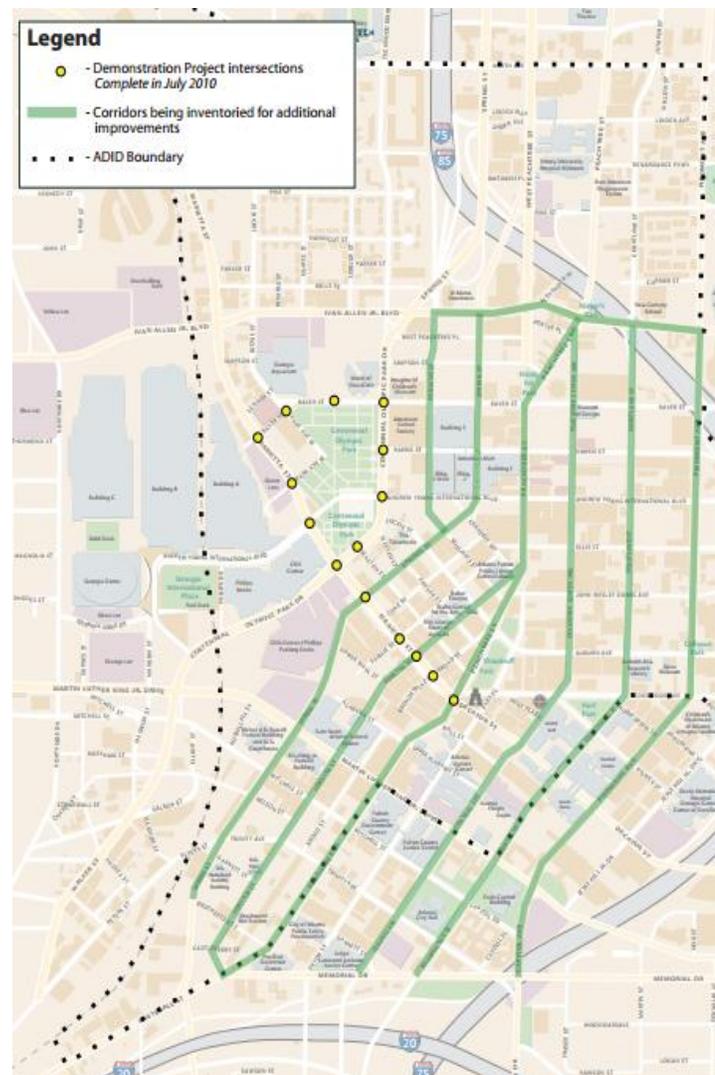
According to some CID officials, they have assumed the responsibility for project delivery for other projects because they do not have confidence in the City's capacity to prioritize and complete the projects on time. In these situations, the CID develops the projects' design and uses applicable standards, so it prefers to hire its own consultants to oversee the contractor, which it feels advances overall delivery timelines. CAP/ADID and Midtown Alliance recall project schedule delays due to receiving conflicting comments on submitted plans from DCP, DPW, and other agencies. One CID reported that DPW lacks familiarity with federal procurement and contract administration, so the CID's projects have languished and fallen behind schedule. The CID finds itself stuck with funds it cannot spend because of this lack of procurement expertise within DPW. Similarly, another CID reported that a federal grant was held up due to a project delivery manual that DPW had to develop as part of its Local Administered Project Certification to administer federal funds. Some have suggested that GDOT prefers to work directly through the CID to administer state-funded projects in the CID boundaries.



An example of a project undertaken by a CID that was well-within the City's purview to implement, operate, and maintain is the Midtown Alliance's Midtown Traffic Operations Program (MTO) (see Figure 16) In 2013, Midtown Alliance launched the three-year, \$3 million project that sought to reduce traffic congestion and improve access and safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists through traffic signal improvements. Funded by GDOT, MTO has improved peak travel times on average by 28 percent in the ten major corridors at the end of year one (2013) simply by fixing malfunctioning signals, optimizing the existing signal timing and conducting regular maintenance. In 2014, Midtown Alliance re-timed every signalized intersection in the district to further improve traffic flow, efficiency and safety. GDOT worked directly with the CID on this project. Similarly, CAP/ADID's Traffic Signal System Upgrades & Retiming Project addressed traffic signal improvements within downtown Atlanta, including equipment modernization and development of new timing and optimization plans. A 16-intersection demonstration project concluded in July 2010, followed by downtown-wide improvements within key downtown corridors improving up to 65 additional intersections (Figure 17).

In recent years, a formalized coordination process with all three CIDs has been established with the City, including the DPW and, at times, representatives of the Mayor's staff and cabinet, to discuss projects that the CIDs are working on. Monthly meetings between CID leaders and City agency commissioners were described by CID officials as being very helpful because they provided a means of consistent face-time with the Commissioners and opportunities for coordinating actions, but could stand to be more effective. It was suggested by some that monthly meetings with the CIDs and City transportation agencies could be expanded to routinely include other departments, including units within the DPW, for the discussion of projects and program delivery. During the interviews, there was a strong consensus among CID officials that they should be viewed by the City agencies as partners in furthering transportation goals, providing capabilities that the agencies themselves might not be able to provide.

Figure 17. Central Atlanta Progress / Atlanta Downtown Improvement District Traffic Signal System Upgrades & Retiming Project Map



Source: <http://www.atlantadowntown.com/files/docs/signalization-upgrades-map-6-30-10-updatev3.pdf>

3 What Works Now

Interviews with City officials, regional partners, and CIDs revealed what works well with the current transportation structure in the City of Atlanta, an important foundation for any proposal for structural change. Such proposals should be mindful of disruption to the employees and systems that support the City's transportation program, and build off of existing strengths when considering growth potential and scalability.

Five strengths of the current City structure for transportation that any structural reorganization should be sensitive to are described in this chapter, and include:

- Mobility planning in the Department of City Planning;
- Public support for capital funding;
- Innovative capital project delivery methods;
- Effective partners; and
- Responsive maintenance.

3.1 Mobility Planning in the Department of City Planning

The Department of City Planning (DCP) reorganized to include an Office of Mobility Planning, and in doing so, signaled a philosophical shift for transportation in the City of Atlanta. The shift is a movement away from thinking of roads in terms of a single modality - drivers and cars - towards a transportation philosophy viewing roads as public spaces that should accommodate and promote sustainable, multimodal mobility options, including active transportation (bicycles and pedestrians) and transit. By so doing, the City's transportation system can be one that over time minimizes vehicle miles traveled and single-occupancy vehicles, and reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

This shift in transportation philosophy aligns with the direction that many metropolitan and city transportation agencies across the nation are moving toward, led by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), of which Atlanta is a member. NACTO has published an *Urban Design Guide*, *Urban Bikeway Design Guide*, *Transit Street Design Guide*, and most recently, an *Urban Street Stormwater Guide*, which provide tools and tactics for designing safer, more livable, active, efficient and economically vibrant modern urban streets that address resiliency and climate change.⁵² This view is premised on the fact that streets comprise more than 80 percent of public space in cities, but often fail to provide the surrounding communities with space for people to walk, bicycle, drive, take transit, and even socialize. The goal is to provide Complete Streets that benefit users of all modes - drivers, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists - thereby delivering social, economic and environmental value and providing safer streets for everyone.

⁵² <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/>

DCP's Office of Mobility Planning (OMP) is currently updating its transportation plan (*Connect Atlanta Plan*) and, in it, will lay out a citywide strategy to make the shift to a multimodal mobility focus for the City. The current plan has a particular focus on serving the mobility and accessibility of an Atlanta expected to continue its rapid growth in the coming decades. OMP is coordinating closely with the Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST unit, which has deferred several projects to allow the City government to provide an approved citywide framework (the transportation plan) for a multimodal future that has prioritized non-driving modes while still planning for vehicle capacity. In this way, Renew Atlanta/ TSPLOST-funded Complete Streets projects will fit into a larger plan, strategy, and system.

As a result of OMP's formation and its role in promoting a vision for transportation, the City has been able to recruit talent with transportation planning expertise and experience. A new director of OMP is combining existing DCP staff with other new talent she is bringing in from outside City government to provide fresh perspective and advance the City's evolution towards streets that are safer, more livable, active, efficient and economically vibrant for all users.

3.2 Successful Support for Capital Funding

Under Mayor Reed's administration, the City of Atlanta has been successful in acquiring local, state, and federal transportation funds for special purposes and projects. Voters have approved local transportation revenue referenda, GDOT has provided funding commitments through partnership with the City, and the federal government has awarded transportation grant funds that allow the City's transportation capital program to fund more projects.

Renew Atlanta was approved by voters on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. More than eight in ten Atlanta voters approved the referendum for a program that focuses on repairs and upgrades to streets and sidewalks, citywide traffic signal optimization and construction of more than 30 miles of Complete Streets.

The TSPLOST and MARTA referenda on the November 8, 2016, ballot were approved by 68 percent and 72 percent of city voters, respectively. The two programs were presented to voters as a means of implementing high-priority projects from the *Connect Atlanta Plan* being updated by OMP, the *Atlanta Streetcar System Plan*, Concept 3 (the Atlanta region's transit plan), and more than a dozen neighborhood and community plans that have been adopted in the last six years.

As noted earlier, Atlanta was also awarded \$98 million from GDOT and a total of \$75.7 million for three projects from the USDOT TIGER discretionary grant program.

Through the six-year period of the initiatives mentioned above, Atlanta will raise well over half a billion dollars for improvements to its transportation system. This success may be due to the fact that a specific set of projects were tied to each request for funding. The Renew Atlanta, TSPLOST, and TIGER programs involved a detailed



multimodal program of Complete Streets, local streetcar and trail system, as well as system preservation⁵³ projects. This investment strategy also has leveraged additional funds from state, federal, and private sources, with Renew Atlanta and TSPLOST revenues serving as local match to non-local funds, a feature that makes Renew Atlanta and TSPLOST-funded projects attractive to state and federal grant reviewers.

The success could also be attributed to the creation of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST within the City government as a unit solely responsible for the delivery of bond-funded capital projects. Established following a review of best practices and recommendations by an independent panel of advisors, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST is a stand-alone city entity reporting directly to the COO with a delivery-oriented structure intended to last decades. The unprecedented level of public oversight over its activities and spending provides the voting public with confidence in the City to manage additional infrastructure dollars.

The key observation from this record of success in attracting funding for transportation projects is that the citizens of Atlanta support efforts to improve the City's transportation system, and the state and federal governments have provided their support for selected projects. In some ways, Atlanta transportation officials find themselves with a window of opportunity to make changes to the transportation system that could have a long-lasting effect on the quality-of-life of the City's residents.

3.3 Innovative Capital Project Delivery

In Atlanta's recent history, City government has established two stand-alone units to deliver capital projects that serve a special purpose or receive special funding. The Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST unit is a mechanism to deliver the bond and sales tax revenue-funded programs that City officials were successful in having voters approve in 2015 and 2016. The Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (ABI) was established as a single-purpose entity to deliver a specific program of street, park, and transit projects from revenues generated from a tax assessment district (TAD), grants, and private funding. Both deliver projects that the DPW could have designed and constructed, but at the time Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and ABI were formed it was perceived that the DPW did not have the capacity to deliver such capital programs. Both Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and ABI also drew praise from those interviewed as models for achievement and innovation in project delivery.

Atlanta's CIDs were very supportive of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and its leadership. The CIDs suggested that City government should institutionalize and formalize the processes, staffing, and systems that have been adopted by Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST.

Looking at some of the steps Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST has taken to establish credibility and competence provides some indication of efforts that might be needed for a new organizational structure for transportation in City government. Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST has worked to manage expectations of the program and to identify what was actually going to be delivered under the program. To improve project delivery, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST took a fresh look at the City's contract terms, specifications and management. As an example, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST opened up competition for the City's street resurfacing contracts by performing

⁵³ System preservation refers to projects that bring transportation assets to a state-of-good-repair, including resurfacing and restriping of roadways, rebuilding of sidewalks and walkways, sign replacement, and streetlight rehabilitation.

outreach to vendors that had been shut out of resurfacing as one contractor won all the work for seven years. The outreach revealed that certain contract terms and specifications, as well as contract management practices, discouraged competition; after changes were made, a new solicitation resulted in four competitive bids.

Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST also attributes its ability to deliver capital projects to the authority it was given to hire new staff who were motivated to “make a difference.” The Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST staff is composed of City employees and a program management team (PMT) of embedded consultants, all who have what they refer to as a “fire in the belly” or excitement about public service and delivering something important for the City.

The advantage of a Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST approach that relies heavily on consultants to manage projects is that the general manager has the ability to adjust staff capacity and capabilities based on the volume of work at any given time -- given the ebb and flow of project delivery schedules and funding availability.

3.3.1 Atlanta Beltline, Inc.

Established in 2006, the Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (ABI) was created because the City government at the time did not have the capacity to deliver the Atlanta Beltline program of projects. ABI attributes its success with capital project delivery to its status as a single purpose entity, as well as the special funding from the tax allocation district (TAD), grants, and private sources. As a single purpose, quasi-governmental, non-profit entity, ABI benefits from having a well-defined goal and purpose. Its projects, programs, and budgets are purpose-driven so ABI stays solely focused on the targeted work, and not on other issues, problems or needs that would arise if it were a regular City department (or part of one). Like the CIDs, ABI is smaller and thus better at reacting to changes and challenges to its program, with a narrower focus than DCP, DPW, or any other City agency engaged in transportation. In addition, because it does not rely on the City’s General Fund, ABI is not as exposed to the annual funding process and resulting budget trade-offs.

Like Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, ABI staff is composed of employees and embedded private consultants. According to ABI, performing all of its work in-house would not be effective due to the ebb and flow of project schedules rendering certain staff redundant at times. In addition, there is a sense that such a model would require a management-heavy structure, which is perceived as inefficient and not likely to be well-received by the public and funders of ABI activities.

ABI is considering project delivery of the Beltline Streetcar expansion through a public-private partnership (P3), an innovative finance and delivery mechanism used to finance a project and transfer risk to a private concessionaire.⁵⁴ While work remains to grant the City legal authority to structure the project as a Design-

⁵⁴ Generally, two general forms of public-private partnership (P3) structures are common: availability payment and concession-based P3s. In availability payment-based P3s, the public authority contracts with a private sector entity to provide a public good, service or product at a constant capacity for a given payment (capacity fee) and a separate charge for usage of the public good, product or service (usage fee). In concession-based P3s, the government grants the private sector the right to build, operate and charge public users of the public good, infrastructure or service, a fee or tariff which is regulated by public regulators and the concession contract.



Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM) P3, the City programmed the acquisition of right-of-way for the Beltline Streetcar project into the referenda, and ABI is moving forward with environmental review for the system. Whether ABI is successful in planning for, and executing, P3 delivery of the Beltline Streetcar expansion, ABI has at least furthered the discussion of P3s as a new and innovative tool that the City will need to become familiar with as it looks to finance and deliver more projects and leverage its success in acquiring capital dollars with private financing.

3.4 Effective Partners

Many different organizations are active in transportation planning and projects in the City of Atlanta. Not only are there public agencies with legislative authority over the transportation infrastructure of the City, but many private and non-governmental organizations provide important transportation services and functions. This is certainly true in other cities as well, but Atlanta is unique in that it has several community improvement districts (CIDs) that have played a very active role in providing transportation investment in key parts of the City. Three CIDs, in particular, have invested heavily in transportation infrastructure and services—Buckhead CID, Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID), and the Midtown Alliance.

Many of those interviewed suggested that City government has historically hesitated to try new approaches to transportation design or adopt new philosophies when it comes to the public realm (i.e., “the city has become conditioned to fear failure”) with certain exceptions, e.g., the current Mayor’s leadership in providing bicycle lanes and cycle tracks on City streets. Atlanta’s CIDs have taken a leadership role with regard to a movement toward Complete Streets, transit prioritization, and a multi-modal future (the new City transportation plan being developed by DCP promises such a vision). For example, the Buckhead CID’s Peachtree Transformation project is taking a pedestrian-unfriendly suburban arterial and creating a sophisticated, attractive Complete Street by adding granite curbing and medians, hardwood trees, seasonal color landscaping, bike lanes, wide sidewalks, modern lighting, buried utility lines, street furniture, and dedicated left turn lanes at signalized intersections. Another example is the work CAP/ADID is doing as a component of its 2016-17 Downtown Atlanta Master Plan (DAMP). It is developing a multimodal transportation plan for downtown Atlanta, which will capitalize on completed multimodal projects in the downtown, such as the Atlanta Streetcar and protected, two-way bicycle lanes (cycle tracks), and is expected to conclude in fall 2017.

As will be discussed in Chapter 4, CID officials felt that the relationship between the City and their organizations could be more effective. Working as a team, the City and CIDs could accomplish much more. The CIDs have already invested heavily in transportation projects, and have led the development of active transportation and Smart Street projects on City streets. City transportation agencies thus have strong partners

There are a number of P3 contractual arrangements, such as Design-Build-Operate-and-Maintain, Design-Build-Finance, and Design-Build-Finance-Operate-and-Maintain (DBFOM), which reflect the different appetites for risk and the role of the project proponent.

The benefit of private sector engagement through P3 delivery of capital projects is that P3 projects deliver enhanced capital and operating performance through a whole-lifecycle management approach to project execution, mitigating for public sector risks such as lack of up-front, near-term capital funds and technical expertise to deliver the projects. P3 delivery also increases the likelihood of schedule and cost certainty through appropriate transfer of such risks from the public to the private sectors.

that can help them improve the City’s transportation system. Any change to the transportation organizational structure in the City should recognize the benefits of having strong partnerships with the CIDs and other organizations that could support the agencies’ mission.

3.5 Responsive Maintenance

DPW receives both criticism and praise for its ability to deal with quick fixes – praise that it responds well to service requests, and criticism that its focus on operations and maintenance leaves it little capacity to do much more. It is responsible for maintaining and operating a transportation network of over 1500 center line miles of streets, which makes it challenging to deliver transportation capital projects, in addition to the solid waste, fleet, and streetcar services it is authorized to perform.

As Figure 18 shows, the DPW holds itself to a 90 percent performance goal for performing reactive bridge inspections, bridge repairs, pothole repairs, asphalt point repairs, concrete repairs, and emergency traffic sign repairs within certain timeframes. In FY 2015, it met this goal for only one measure (emergency traffic sign repairs completed within 24 hours of receipt/report), which it exceeded again in FY 2016, along with all but two of these measures (asphalt point repairs completed within 24 business days of work order creation and concrete repairs completed within 32 business days of work order creation). This improvement in service delivery is likely to continue with the proposed reorganization and increased funding for infrastructure maintenance projects anticipated in FY 2018.

Figure 18. DPW Performance Metrics

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	FY2015 ACTUAL	FY2016 ACTUAL	FY2017 TARGET	FY2018 TARGET
<i>Transportation</i>				
<i>Sustainability</i>				
% of reactive bridge inspections completed within 10 days of report or request	79%	90%	90%	90%
% of bridge repairs completed within 12 business days of work order creation	87%	93%	90%	90%
% pothole repairs completed within 5 business days	83%	91%	90%	90%
% of asphalt point repairs completed within 24 business days of work order creation	87%	64%	90%	90%
% of concrete repairs completed within 32 business days of work order creation	75%	89%	90%	90%
% emergency traffic sign repairs completed within 24 hours of receipt/report	96%	98%	90%	90%

Source: City of Atlanta FY 2018 Adopted Budget

DPW tracks its performance on a variety of operations and maintenance tasks related to service requests received through its ATL 311 platform. Figure 19 on the following page shows the volume of repair requests DPW received in FY 2014, FY 2015, and FY 2016. The majority of requests are for asphalt/street repairs, sign repair, and traffic signal repair. However, the volume of requests in a given fiscal year is difficult to predict. In FY 2014, DPW received more service requests (18,709) than in the two years that followed, with a surge in non-emergency sign repair and replacement, emergency traffic signal repair, and non-emergency signal repair requests. In the two years that followed, the number of signal repair requests declined, while asphalt/street



repair requests increased. In FY 2016, DPW received a surge of pothole repair and street name sign requests. The reactive nature of transportation operations and maintenance makes it difficult to spot trends and plan ahead.

Considering that DPW is also responsible for servicing over 96,000 single family homes with residential solid waste, recycling, and yard waste curbside collection, providing maintenance and repairs to over 5,000 pieces of City vehicles and other moving equipment ranging from dump trucks to fire trucks, maintaining clear passage of major bridges and roads during snow & ice events, and – for now – operating the Atlanta streetcar system, it is easy to see why DPW is focused more on responding to immediate requests rather than planning and capital project delivery.

Still, the responsiveness to identified immediate transportation asset maintenance needs that DPW currently demonstrates is a strength that should be preserved in any potential government reorganization.

Figure 19. DPW Service Request Data

PROBDESC	PROBCODE	FY14	FY15	FY16	Grand Total
Asphalt Point Repair	ST921	253	316	421	990
Loose Metal Plates in the Right of Way	ST300	93	74	10	177
Major Street Repair	ST922	345	149	37	531
Potholes	STPH	2,269	2,438	3,732	8,439
Removal Of Graffiti In The Row	ST307	48	39	31	118
Shape And Gravel	ST950	353	363	318	1,034
Asphalt/Street Repair Total		3,361	3,379	4,549	11,289
Bridge Extensive Repairs	ST941	11	6	2	19
Bridge Routine Repairs	ST940	231	489	244	964
Bridge Maintenance Total		242	495	246	983
Concrete/Sidewalk Permitted Work	ST931	81	20		101
Concrete/Sidewalk Small Repairs	ST930	577	752	1,136	2,465
Concrete/Sidewalks Large Repairs	ST932	169	58	9	236
Concrete Repair Total		827	830	1,145	2,802
New Streetlight Study	SL951	142	105	156	403
New Street Light Study Total		142	105	156	403
Emergency Repair Replacement Signs	SM901	435	331	392	1,158
Non-Emergency Repair Replacement	SM902	3,029	466	619	4,114
Other Mutcd Signs (City Of Atlanta And Gdot)	SM905	34	176	389	599
Specialty Signs	SM904	176	246	395	817
Street Name Signs	SM933	974	882	1,112	2,968
Warning Signs And Object Markers	SM903	407	248	463	1,118
Signs Repair Replacement Total		5,055	2,349	3,370	10,774
Bulb Replacement	SL911	468	367	502	1,337
Minor Street Light Repair	SL910	383	304	437	1,124
Traffic Study Inspection	ST951	1			1
Wire And Pole Repair	SL912	169	213	205	587
Street Light Repair Total		1,021	884	1,144	3,049
Colored Pavements	SM932	1	20	56	77
Markings For Preferential Lanes	SM930	91	41	72	204
Other Markings	SM931	22	33	107	162
Pavement Markings	SM920	255	178	505	938
Street Markings Total		369	272	740	1,381
Emergency Traffic Signal Repair	TC901	3,429	2,813	2,069	8,311
Non Emergency Signal Repair	TC902	3,642	2,023	1,990	7,655
Traffic Signal Repair Total		7,071	4,836	4,059	15,966
Traffic Study	SM951	435	628	765	1,828
Traffic Study Total		435	628	765	1,828
Snow and Ice	ST603	186	93	21	300
Weather Emergency Total		186	93	21	300
Grand Total		18,709	13,871	16,195	48,775

Source: DPW

4 Issues a Transportation-Focused Agency Could Address

Chapter 3 described some of the strengths in the way transportation planning, projects and services are currently delivered by the City. This chapter examines the weaknesses cited as reasons for change in Resolution 17-R-3003 and by the stakeholders interviewed as part of this study. The chapter concludes with a consideration of which of the cited issues a stand-alone transportation department would address or might address under certain circumstances, and which would not be addressed by a structural change alone.

4.1 Reasons for a Transportation-Focused Agency Cited in Resolution 17-R-3003

The Resolution that initiated this study does not identify any specific reasons for establishing a stand-alone transportation-focused department. Instead, its problem statement notes that “currently, the City's transit needs are not clearly consolidated under any single Department of the City,” and the issue is that the “primary responsibility for transportation infrastructure design, construction, and maintenance” falls within the purview of the DPW, which also includes “issues unrelated to transportation such as sanitation, recycling and fleet services.”

A hypothesis posed by the Resolution is that a stand-alone transportation-focused department would remedy transportation funding issues related to “historic underfund[ing of the City’s] transportation infrastructure investments with the exception of special bond and tax investment initiatives which provide unsustainable temporary funding to offset long term funding shortfalls” and “sporadic funding allocations.”

Other stated arguments for a stand-alone transportation-focused department include: City and community partners depend on the City for transportation funding and such funding should be managed by a central agency,⁵⁵ desired alignment with the Department of City Planning’s updates to its comprehensive and transportation plans,⁵⁶ recent voter approvals for transportation funding initiatives,⁵⁷ the investment in and expansion of City-initiated transit projects needs strong agency guidance,⁵⁸ and finally, “many leading cities have single transportation-focused departments.”

⁵⁵ “... multiple City agencies, quasi- City Agencies, and community partners ... routinely seek the cooperation of the City in securing and utilizing State and Federal [transportation] funding to support their respective project initiatives ...”

⁵⁶ “... the Department of Planning and Community Development's [Office of] Mobility Planning manages updates to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan/The Connect Atlanta Plan...”

⁵⁷ “... on November 8, 2016, City of Atlanta residents overwhelmingly voted to authorize a four-tenths of a penny Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for Transportation to help generate approximately \$300 million to fund significant and expansive transportation projects citywide, over a five-year period ...” and “...Atlanta residents also voted to authorize a half-penny sales tax for transit expansion and enhancements for the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority ... to generate \$2.5 billion ...”

⁵⁸ “... the City has invested in several major transit initiatives designed to alleviate traffic congestion and improve the City's transportation infrastructure ...” and “... the City is also in the process of expanding the Atlanta Beltline and the Atlanta Streetcar to connect additional neighborhoods and other popular designations throughout the City ...”

4.2 Summary of Issues Identified by Interviewees

The City of Atlanta faces a number of transportation issues that have been defined clearly by the City officials, regional partners, and CIDs interviewed for this study. These issues include: (1) the need for a clear, singular transportation vision; (2) leadership with a mandate to execute the vision; (3) improved capital program management and coordinated delivery; and (4) appropriate expertise and adequate resources. None of these problems would necessarily be fully addressed by agency restructuring; however, creating a stand-alone transportation-focused organization could help catalyze and provide the focus to address them concurrently.

The following sections describe in more detail issues and problems with the current government structure that would need to be addressed.

4.3 What Does Not Work Now

Local stakeholder interviews revealed concerns about Atlanta's current delivery of transportation projects and services, and expressed caution concerning the need for a new approach. Many of the concerns (and recommendations for change) focused on the Department of Public Works (DPW). External stakeholders are frustrated with project delays and what was perceived as (their own) inefficient spending on uncoordinated project approvals and right-of-way permits. Many officials questioned the DPW's ability to proactively and strategically manage the public right-of-way it is authorized by law to regulate given staff capabilities and funding constraints. The variety of weaknesses with the City's current transportation structure as identified by those interviewed can be categorized into four common issues:

- Lack of centralized leadership and vision;
 - Lack of resources;
 - Lack of appropriate capabilities, and
 - Lack of coordination and collaboration.
-

4.3.1 Lack of Centralized Leadership and Vision

Many of those interviewed noted that the City currently has many talented and effective leaders in transportation roles, but that the City has lacked a clear and sustained vision and goals for how its transportation system can and should support the economic vitality of the City and improve the quality of life for its residents. In particular, there was a need for centralized leadership to champion such a transportation vision and achieve the transportation goals.

Those interviewed were unanimous in their opinion that one of the keys to successful public agency performance is strong leadership. Many noted that prior DPW Commissioners were not focused on transportation per se and lacked transportation expertise, nor could they recruit and retain talented managers and staff, particularly staff with needed transportation capabilities (e.g., registered professional engineers). Instead, DPW focused on maintaining the status quo, which only served to exacerbate a negative public



perception of the Department as being reactive, operations-focused, and antiquated. When potentially effective leaders did join the agency in the past, they often did not stay long enough to have a lasting impact. A downward spiral for the agency was reflected in less trust, reduced funding, and eroded authority for the DPW.

Both the DCP and DPR provide potential models of leadership and vision for what is needed in a transportation department. Both agencies have been led recently by new commissioners who were hired to bring about change in their organizations. For the DCP, the new commissioner reorganized the agency and developed a strong vision for the role of planning in City government. He moved forward in the transportation area by hiring a new Director of Mobility Planning and charged the Office with delivering a comprehensive transportation vision for Atlanta. For the DPR, the new commissioner, who had served as the Mayor's Chief Service Officer and worked in logistics operations prior to her appointment, focused on customer service with special attention given to citizens, the Mayor and City Council. By delivering on priority requests from elected officials and celebrating milestones with Council members and communities when parks were improved, she established credibility in the Parks program, which led to additional resources and leeway in managing the agency.

To increase excellence and efficiency in transportation, those interviewed suggested that the City's transportation effort needs a leader and "voice" who can unify the disparate transportation units within City government and inspire and recruit talented transportation staff with a vision for what a modern urban transportation agency should be accomplishing – a city with streets that are multimodal and public spaces that are active and appealing. An influential, visionary leader is needed to carry forward the new transportation vision that will be articulated in the updated *Connect Atlanta Plan* and prepare the City for the future that will include connected and autonomous vehicles, Smart City applications, and other advanced transportation technologies. As one of those interviewed noted, the City's transportation program needs someone who is "a wildly creative talent with an innovative mindset who is willing to try something and fail" and who can provide leadership with "a strong backbone to deal with the uphill battle" of a shifting transportation philosophy towards right-of-way as a public space, promoting bicycling and pedestrian access, and strongly advocating the Complete Streets approach.

The current DPW Commissioner, in this position for less than one year, is working to restructure an agency that **must** adapt to changing expectations, work in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders, and execute a clear, unified transportation program consistent with DCP's transportation plan and aligning Renew Atlanta's 5-year mission, TSPLOST's 20-year vision, the Beltline's streetcar plans and MARTA's transit plans.

4.3.2 Lack of Resources

Most of those interviewed noted that, over the years, the City has not provided a consistent amount of adequate resources for transportation maintenance and repairs, whereas periodic bond programs have provided funding for new capital investment. A large backlog of streets maintenance is now one of the major challenges facing the DPW. Only recently has the DPW engaged in a more system-focused approach toward preserving streets.

The problem, as seen by key stakeholders, is that DPW programs are underfunded and the staff are at capacity with workload. The agency is trying to do too much with too little. However, despite these issues, given the problems with the existing institutional structure, it is difficult to justify additional General Fund dollars and

FTEs without a strategic approach to a bolstered multi-year City capital improvement program (CIP) and new capabilities in asset maintenance and rehabilitation. Renew Atlanta and TSPLOST are short-term revenue sources for a specific program of projects, both very important initiatives, but interviewees noted that the DPW needs to think more in terms of higher levels of reliable, long-term funding sources that support its portion of the CIP.

Moreover, DPW needs a strategic approach to further leverage the City’s partnership with GDOT, local money, access to federal grant and formula funds, and augment its share of state transportation funds on a consistent basis in order to create a pipeline of funds that can increase what is already available through the bonding programs.

4.3.3 Lack of Appropriate Capabilities

Interviewees pointed to DPW’s performance in completing street resurfacing projects as an example of the limited Department capability to provide routine, proactive maintenance of its primary asset. While it deals better with responses to short term problems (e.g., fixing potholes), DPW’s transportation unit is not providing anywhere near what is needed for preserving the most important existing asset, the city’s road network. As shown in Table 4, over the past five years, DPW has resurfaced less than 25 center-line miles each year of the total 1,500+ center-line miles of road, except for 2015 when it resurfaced 33 center-line miles. If DPW were to boost its performance to resurface 50 center-line miles of streets per year, it would still need 30 years to resurface all City roads. At the current rate, each resident’s street would be resurfaced just once every 2.5 generations. This points to, among other issues, a lack of capability to actively oversee and implement an asset management program, which would look to as many funding sources as possible, including federal and state funding, to maintain roads before they deteriorate.

One of the issues with DPW staff capabilities is the lack of appropriate professional background. City officials reported that most project managers do not possess engineering degrees or licenses. Not having engineering expertise in a program that is largely engineering oriented was pointed to by many as one of the reasons for DPW’s poor track record in project delivery.

One factor that erodes the ability of DPW to attract and retain capable staff to deliver projects is the relatively low pay offered in OOT. As Table 5 shows, the maximum salary for a Civil Engineering Manager is \$91,900, and the maximum salary for a project manager is \$98,000. The middle salary for entry-level civil engineers is only \$54,600, which is no longer competitive with neighboring jurisdictions and consulting firms. However, DPW might be more likely attract smart, talented, and passionate entry-level engineers to work at lower salaries if they were convinced that they would have the opportunity to work under great leadership and a team of skilled managers from whom they could learn, inspired by a driving transportation vision. These junior engineers could be mentored by senior engineers who are close to retirement and who are also motivated by the opportunity to create a new agency legacy. Absent these qualities, and with the inability to pay competitive

Table 4. DPW Street Resurfacing Performance

Center Line Miles of streets resurfaced	
Year	Total
2007	78
2008	-
2009	33
2010	13
2011	17
2012	5
2013	21
2014	12
2015	33
2016	24

Source: DPW



rates for entry-level and senior engineers, attracting and retaining the needed capable staff to deliver transportation projects will be difficult.

Table 5. DPW – Transportation Positions and Salary Ranges

Position Title	Grade	Min. Salary	Mid. Salary	Max. Salary
Civil Engineer	G.19.	\$41,000	\$54,600	\$68,300
Data/Reporting Analyst, Sr				
Electrician Supervisor (D)				
Field Engineer, Sr				
Management Analyst				
Traffic Engineer				
Civil Engineer, Sr	G.20.	\$44,000	\$58,700	\$73,400
Construction Inspector Supervisor				
Desk Top Support Technician				
Community Outreach Specialist	G.21.	\$47,300	\$63,100	\$78,900
Installation Chief				
Traffic Engineer, Sr				
Business Manager I	G.22.	\$50,900	\$67,800	\$84,800
Financial Analyst, Sr				
Management Analyst, Sr				
Public Relations Manager, Sr				
Public Works Manager				
Civil Engineering Manager	G.23.	\$54,700	\$72,900	\$91,100
Construction Project Manager				
Financial Manager				
Traffic Engineer Chief				
Bridge Engineer	G.24.	\$58,800	\$78,400	\$98,000
Project Manager, Sr				
Public Works Manager, Senior				
Public Works Manager, Sr				
Program Management Officer Deputy				
Compliance Manager, DPW	G.27.	\$74,800	\$99,700	\$124,600
Program Management Officer				

Several interviewees noted that other deficiencies in current staff capabilities relate to financial management, contract administration, and federal procurement. An example was provided of where a contractor informed DPW halfway through a project that it could not perform the work under its contract. DPW's response was to ask how much more money it needed to finish the job, rather than enforcing remedies existing in contract clauses. In another instance, the City's (not only DPW's) lack of familiarity with federal procurement rules cost it \$8 million in potential reimbursements on two projects because of work being performed with contracts that were not procured consistent with federal requirements.

One should note that these issues above are not tied to the creation of a new transportation-focused agency; dealing with leadership, vision and salary issues could be handled within the existing structure. However, experience in Atlanta, such as with DCP and DPR, has shown that such issues are often more easily addressed when part of an initiative to restructure and reinvigorate organizations and programs.

4.3.4 Lack of Coordination and Collaboration

Almost all of those interviewed noted the need for improved formal coordination processes or collaborative policy-setting structures for transportation in City government. Particularly with respect to project reviews, interagency coordination and collaboration does not seem to be occurring systematically. It was noted that often the respective commissioners themselves have to meet on issues when there are disagreements among City agencies, even though such issues could have been easily handled among respective staff had there been jointly prepared positions. For example, an interviewee noted that DCP is not often consulted by DPW when streets are to be resurfaced. This would be useful to DCP, which could ensure that streets along the City's bike network are repaved appropriately and have the appropriate bicycle signs and markings installed. CID officials also noted that on several occasions project reviews were received from City agencies for the same project that recommended exactly the opposite action be taken, which left them in a quandary on how to respond. Disagreements among agencies are not resolved because there is no designated committee or "tie-breaking" process.

As noted in Chapter 3, a lack of interagency coordination is also evidenced in sidewalk repair needs and an on-going dispute between DPW and DPR regarding who is responsible for sidewalk maintenance. The dispute is whether sidewalks near a park are DPW or DPR's to maintain. Meanwhile, without a person or process that serves as a "tie breaker" between the agencies, these broken sidewalks remain in need of maintenance.

Interagency coordination and collaboration is a prerequisite for effective capital project delivery because many projects need to be handed off from the DCP, which manages planning and preliminary engineering, to DPW and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, which manage engineering/final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Closer coordination would help ensure each agency knows a given project's status so that all parties are prepared to manage their part of the work on schedule or can communicate on progress, and providing a smooth and efficient hand-off processes throughout the delivery pipeline.

The absence of a "tie breaker" between agencies speaks to lack of a central transportation focus in City government, and particularly to a lack of a "go to" person or advocate for transportation in the City who could provide overall coordination and oversight of mobility issues. When asked who spoke for the City with respect to transportation, most interviewees responded "no one." A few identified Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST's General Manager and others pointed to the Deputy Chief Operating Officer/DPW Commissioner. Several of the external stakeholders who needed project-related issues addressed noted that responsiveness to their needs was not the rule, but rather an exception. They often then resorted to elevating the issue to the Commissioner or Mayor's Office.

This lack of a City "voice" for transportation and central focus is particularly acute in emergency situations where the City must make important decisions quickly and decisively, such as the April 2017 I-85 bridge deck collapse. During that event, it appeared that without leadership from Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and eventually the DPW Commissioner, DPW senior staff lacked the foresight to take the initiative during the crisis and a proactive mindset needed to collaborate with other agencies and GDOT, in particular, to protect City interests. (This might also indicate the lack of a protocol within DPW to handle emergency situations, which, if so, should be rectified).



Collaboration is also needed with ABI and MARTA to align their respective transit visions with the City's transportation plan and vision. Some noted that the City's relationship with MARTA could be improved, although DCP coordinates with MARTA officials more than any other agency, primarily on bicycle and pedestrian station access issues. It was suggested that the City and MARTA should be working together to cohesively plan transit services and transit-oriented development (TOD) to improve mobility in the city. As a step in this direction, the City and MARTA have recently executed intergovernmental agreements for delivery of the MARTA referendum and Atlanta Streetcar operations, accomplishing some of the collaboration needed. Coordination would also help Invest Atlanta, the city's economic development entity, set a tone that transportation serves economic development and that the two go hand-in-hand, which would elevate the City's competitiveness nationally.

Some noted that formal coordination procedures are needed between DPW and utilities that place their cables within the right-of-way (e.g., Google Fiber, Georgia Power, Comcast, AT&T) -- although it was suggested that, in reality, the City needed to simply enforce the requirements and specifications that already exist for utility access to the right-of-way. For example, private projects occurring in the right-of-way are given permission to block sidewalks, sometimes on both sides of the street, effectively prohibiting safe pedestrian movement.

4.4 Creating a Stand-Alone Transportation-Focused Department

When faced with institutional or managerial challenges, it can sometimes be tempting to move immediately to considering "reorganization" or "restructuring" as the solution, whereas most organizational "disconnects" are attributable to issues of business process and communication, cultural or other issues in the organization independent of how it is functionally structured. Many of the "problems" identified in the course of this study are of that nature.

That said, an organization and its component business units that are properly structured are generally better able to fulfill their functions efficiently and effectively. However, reorganizing or redefining institutional relationships can be disruptive and requires strategic and thoughtful consideration of how the problem is to be solved, the need for viewing such change from the perspective of all those affected, the implementation steps that are necessary, and the change management strategies to accompany the change and make it successful.

As noted earlier, even though a reorganization might not be necessary to achieve improvement in some aspects of organizational performance, Atlanta's experience with other City functions suggests that changes that occur within the context of a restructuring can facilitate making needed business process and other improvements. A reorganization also has the benefit of making a statement that "something is new and different."

The lack of a clear, singular transportation vision and of a central leadership to execute the vision, inadequate financial resources, inappropriate staffing capabilities, and challenges in the cooperation and collaboration among City agencies and between the City and external stakeholders are all issues that may not necessarily be fully addressed through the creation of a new stand-alone, transportation-focused department. Transportation leadership and vision will be needed no matter how transportation is structured as a City governmental function. A stand-alone transportation agency provides a greater chance of providing the focus necessary to attract sustainable, long-term transportation funding resources, as well as formal coordination and

collaboration processes and partnerships. Nevertheless, the success of such an agency depends on the willingness of other parts of City government (e.g., Department of Finance, the Mayor's Office) to support and champion a new agency's mission and activities.

The creation of a transportation agency will do very little to improve the capacity and capability of transportation staff to deliver projects or proactively manage its assets by itself, or to make staff pay competitive enough to attract and retain talent. These issues are dependent on better middle management, a career ladder system, an overhaul of City position classifications and salary scales, and increased operating budgets and FTEs for the transportation agency (or DPW) to hire skilled project managers and contract administrators.

Consolidating DPW's transportation functions, DCP's Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST also comes with the caution to not diminish the effectiveness of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST project delivery. In addition, it also calls attention to the need for decisions on whether the remaining functions at DPW (Solid Waste and Fleet Management) be split off into their own stand-alone agencies or stay in a differently mandated DPW.

The creation of a stand-alone, transportation-focused department could catalyze and provide the focus to concurrently address the need for transportation leadership, vision, talent and capacity. As Table 6 shows, there are issues raised in this study that would or possibly could be addressed or improved with the formation of a stand-alone transportation agency.



Table 6. Issues that May or May Not be Improved with the Formation of a Stand-alone Transportation Agency

Issue	DOT would improve	DOT could improve	DOT would not change/improve
Leadership and vision		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to establish ROW priorities, mobility strategy, or clear transportation mission 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspirational leaders who could recruit and retain talented managers and staff 		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior management focus and expertise on transportation 		✓	
Lack of resources	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated transportation program (5-Year CIP, 5-Year Renew Atlanta, 20-Year TSPLOST, MARTA referendum, Beltline) 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term transportation funding source and coordinated federal grants / state funding strategy for transportation 	✓ (acknowledge Code restriction/reliance on Dept. of Finance for grant funding)		
Lack of appropriate capabilities			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate salaries to attract and retain the right people with the right skills 			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System preservation focus/ asset management program (roads, sidewalks) 			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent delivery of capital projects on-time and on-budget (lack of project management skills, contract administration skills) 			✓
Lack of coordination and collaboration	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single, go-to transportation champion/advocate 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal coordination among city agencies responsible for the ROW (DPW, DCP, DPR, Renew Atlanta), e.g. formal project delivery handoff process, a “tie-breaker” to settle interagency disputes 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External coordination and collaboration with CIDs, ABI, MARTA, utilities 	✓		

5 Peer Cities

5.1 Peer City Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 11 peer city officials from cities of similar size and economic scale as Atlanta, other cities of any size that are considering restructuring or have recently restructured their city governments to form transportation agencies, and others who have maintained their structures for managing transportation for years. The consultant team also interviewed a NACTO representative to gain a broader understanding of restructuring efforts among its member cities, and utilized the NACTO member listserv to distribute a broader web-based peer city survey. For some interviews, the team spoke directly with the directors of agencies responsible for transportation, and in other cases, the team spoke with higher-level policy makers in mayors' offices that managed recent restructuring efforts. The following cities participated in this study via interviews (see Table 7).

Some cities, such as Philadelphia, Houston, and Nashville, do not have stand-alone transportation agencies, but strong transportation units within a larger department that is also responsible for services such as sanitation, solid waste, and water and waste water. Some cities, such as Dallas, have large transportation agencies responsible for all transportation activities and delivery of transportation and non-transportation capital projects, while others, like San Francisco and Oakland, have smaller specialized departments focused on transportation policy, planning, and operations (e.g., on- and off-street parking program) and depend on other city departments for capital project delivery.

A snapshot of these cities' lead transportation departments' structural position and history within city government is presented in Table 8, followed by a brief overview of each of department's structure, capabilities, challenges, lessons learned, and best practices. Next, this chapter presents an overview of the survey results from the 14 participating cities, highlighting key findings related to past and present organizational change and the current state-of-the-practice for transportation departments nationwide. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the key lessons learned and best practices that emerged from this research, which may help to shape the future of Atlanta's transportation and mobility efforts.

Table 7. Peer Cities Interviewed

City	Transportation Agency	Name, Position/Title	Population Served (2013)	Land Area (sq. mi.)
Atlanta, GA	NA	NA	447,841	133.2
Baltimore, MD	Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT)	Frank Murphy, Acting BCDOT Director	662,104	92.28
Dallas, TX	City of Dallas Department of Mobility and Streets (DMS)	Jill Jordan, Assistant City Manager (Mayor's Office),	1,258,000	385.8
Denver, CO	Denver Department of Public Works	Evan Dreyer, Deputy Chief of Staff (Mayor's Office)	649,495	155
Houston, TX	Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering (DPWE)	Jeffrey Weatherford, DPWE Deputy Director	2,196,000	627
Miami, FL	City of Miami Department of Public Works (DPW)	Juvenal Santana, DPW	417,650	55.25
Nashville, TN	City of Nashville Department of Transportation and Sustainability (DTS)	Erin Hafkenschiel, Director of Transportation and Sustainability (Mayor's Office)	678,889	526
Oakland, CA	City of Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT)	Matt Nichols, Policy Director of Infrastructure & Transportation (Mayor's Office)	406,253	78
Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia Streets Department (PSD)	Richard Montanez, Deputy Streets Commissioner for Transportation	1,553,000	141.7
San Antonio, TX	San Antonio Department of Transportation and Capital Improvements (DTCI)	Mike Frisbie, City Engineer & DTCI Director	1,409,000	465
San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Municipal Transit Agency (SFMTA)	Tom Maguire, SFMTA Director of Sustainable Streets	837,442	46.87
Seattle, WA	Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)	Scott Kubly, SDOT Director	652,405	83.78



Table 8. Peer City Overview

Jurisdiction	Standalone DOT?	Timing of Restructuring	Strategic Transportation Plan	Formal Interagency Coordination / Oversight	Bond Issuance / Separate Capital Project Delivery Unit?
Atlanta, GA	No (DPW, Planning)	Restructuring being considered	Yes (Connect Atlanta Plan update in progress)	No	Yes (2015, 2017) / Yes (Renew Atlanta)
Baltimore, MD	Yes	DOT re-established in 2004	No	No	No / No (Planning, Engineering, Construction, ROW under DOT)
Dallas, TX	Yes (DMSS)	DMSS created in October 2016	No	Interagency Group	Yes / No (Project Delivery under DMSS)
Denver, CO	No (DPW, Planning)	Restructuring being considered	Yes (SMART Denver Public Works Annual Action Plan)	No	Yes (2007) / No (DPW has planning and capital projects)
Houston, TX	No (All transportation functions within DPWE)	Restructuring in process (2 months)	No	No	No / No (DPW will have planning and project delivery)
Miami, FL	Yes (Dept. of Transportation Management)	Department of Transportation Management established in Oct. 2016	No	No	No / Yes (Office of Capital Improvements)
Nashville, TN	No (Div. of Transportation within DPW)	Restructuring proposed in Moving the Music City, released in May 2017	Yes (Moving the Music City)	Mayor's Office of Infrastructure, Transportation, and Sustainability and COO convene regular meetings.	No / No
Oakland, CA	Yes	Interim Director in place in 2015; DOT established in 2017	Yes (DOT Strategic Plan)	Ped/Bike Commission - to be upgraded to full Transportation Commission - formalizing staff to staff interaction	Yes (2016) / Yes (DOT hand off to DPW for construction)
Philadelphia, PA	No (Dept. of Streets)	1953	Yes (Update in progress)	Mayor's Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems	Yes / No
San Antonio, TX	Yes (DTCI)	TCI created in January 2014, consolidating the functions of the former DPW and CIM	Yes (SA Tomorrow: Multimodal Transportation Plan)	No	Yes (2007, 2012, 2017) / No (Project Delivery under TCI)
San Francisco, CA	Yes	SFMTA established in 1999	No	SFMTA board legislates most any agency actions through board approval & monthly capital planning, monthly troubleshooting meetings	Yes (2014) / Yes (SFMTA hands off to DPW for construction)
Seattle, WA	Yes	DOT established in 1996	Yes (Move Seattle)	No	No (2015 property tax levy) / No (Planning, Engineering, Construction, ROW under DOT)

5.1.1 Peer Cities with Stand-alone Transportation-Focused Agencies

OAKLAND - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

In 2014, Councilmember Libby Schaaf included the creation of a stand-alone transportation department in her Mayoral campaign. After being elected Mayor, she hired the city's first-ever transportation policy director to start the process of organizational restructuring that created a new Department of Transportation (OakDOT) and restructured portions of the existing Department of Public Works (DPW). Today, OakDOT is comprised of 270 city staff, including units from the previous DPW and the Police Department, and is in charge of transportation policy, planning, funding and programming, ROW management, parking enforcement, capital projects, and more (see capabilities). The newly defined DPW included 590 full time employees responsible for parks and tree services, sewer and drainage, engineering and maintenance, street lights, and facilities services.

The key strategic goals of the newly formed OakDOT were to accelerate repaving schedules; provide more convenient and affordable access to jobs and services; lower transportation costs; adopt a “vision zero” traffic fatality policy; expand communication between the agency and the public; launch a bicycle master plan process; and create a citywide public space program for new plazas. By creating a separate agency focused on transportation, with non-transportation related infrastructure services remaining in the DPW, Oakland was able to better focus on the future of mobility with dedicated staff and a strong transportation champion working alongside the mayor.

In July 2016, OakDOT engaged a private sector transportation consultant as an Interim Director while a national search for a permanent director was underway. In October 2016, OakDOT published its *Department of Transportation Strategic Plan* through a process that engaged the staff that would be assigned to OakDOT. A permanent director was appointed in March 2017, and OakDOT is now fully operational.

Oakland Department of Transportation Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Bus Transit
 - Planning
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Streetlights
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Policy & Governmental Affairs (incl. tracking federal/state/regional funding opportunities)
- Parking
 - Policy/Programs
 - Enforcement
 - Towing
- Communications & Public Information



Table 9. Oakland - Lessons Learned/Best Practices

Topic	Oakland's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Strategic Plan	The key to Oakland's success was its <i>Department of Transportation Strategic Plan</i> . Any skepticism from staff about the new Mayor's initiative was quelled by the process used to put the Strategic Plan together. Staff were engaged early and often; the Plan was not formulated by an outside advocate, but by staff putting their own thoughts on paper. In this way, the Strategic Plan fostered a growing sense of ownership of the OakDOT formation.	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department, through a process led by existing staff that identifies the agency's major goals and strategies for achieving each goal, as well as one- and three-year benchmarks the agency will use to guide their efforts.
Timeline	The creation of OakDOT and its operationalization took Oakland two years to complete. This was not by design, but was longer than anticipated.	Prepare for lengthy process. A full restructuring and the creation of a new organization can take longer than expected, so it is best to create a concrete timeline for a restructuring, as well as a detailed organizational chart, early in the process. The timeline should address key milestones, such as when the Interim Director will be brought in, how long their tenure will last, when staff will be brought together, and when accounts will be created.
Interim Director	The Interim Director of OakDOT was not a part of the initial Strategic Plan development, which caused a delay in the formal creation of OakDOT. However, he was brought in before the DOT was formally established, which tremendously helped pull the Strategic Plan and department creation together.	Bring in an Interim Director immediately before the new transportation-focused department is formally created to work full-time on developing a Strategic Plan and creating the new agency.
Transition Period	During a 6 to 8-month transition period, staff, while still housed in their original agencies, reported to the Interim Director and functioned under the new organizational chart with a separate budget and its own funds.	A transition period is needed. During the transition period, be clear on the steps needed to fully operationalize the new agency. Have all units proposed to be placed under the new transportation department report to him or her and function under the new structure with its own budget and funds.

Table 9. Oakland - Lessons Learned/Best Practices (Continued)

Topic	Oakland's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Capital Funding	In the 2016 election, Oakland ran a bond measure largely focused on transportation. Having a DOT helped to sell the bond to voters, which passed the measure, and focused OakDOT staff on better project delivery.	A stand-alone transportation-focused department helps make the case for raising additional capital dollars
Operating Budget	The creation of OakDOT added to the overall operating budget of the city because of the additional overhead required for a new Director, administrative assistants and other personnel that had been shared by one department in the past. The Mayor included these costs in her biennial FY 2015-2017 budget, including funds to hire a Director and senior leadership.	If a stand-alone transportation department is created from another agency (i.e., two departments are created from one), additional operating budget will be needed to account for the additional cost of leadership and personnel that are no longer shared.



BALTIMORE CITY- DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

In Baltimore City, transportation vision and policy are set by the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT), which is solely responsible for delivery of street improvements. BCDOT manages the streets, rights-of-way, bridges, streetlights, traffic signs, and signalized intersections, as well as seven miles of interstate highway within the city. As such, it operates and maintains improvements that it plans, designs, and constructs. BCDOT also operates a bikeshare system and the Charm City Circulator bus and water taxi transit systems. Its primary goals are to restore deteriorated alleys, sidewalks, and roadways; rehabilitate bridges and roads; establish intermodal transportation hubs; improve traffic signage; enhance the city's lighting to decrease crime; streamline transportation construction processes; and spur economic growth through transportation.

While BCDOT is the primary transportation leader in the city, it also collaborates with other agencies to ensure that a holistic transportation approach is being applied across all city departments. For example, BCDOT has an internal planning division that focuses solely on transportation; however, Baltimore also has a separate Department of Planning that is responsible for general planning practices and is charged with setting the citywide Capital Improvement Program (CIP). BCDOT coordinates carefully with the Department of Planning to present its capital needs each year for CIP inclusion.

BCDOT was re-established in 2004 after the Baltimore City Department of Public Works was broken up into three separate agencies – BCDOT, DPW, and the Department of General Services (DGS) - through a voter-approved Charter amendment. In 2014, another voter-approved Charter amendment moved the City's Right-of-Way Services (permitting, disposition/acquisition, regulation) function from DGS to BCDOT, which is now solely responsible for the care of public rights-of-way.

BCDOT is on the same level as DPW in the city's organizational chart, and both are directly under the mayor's jurisdiction. However, they report to separate chiefs under the mayor - DPW reports to the Mayor's Chief of Operations and BCDOT reports to the Chief of Strategic Alliances. BCDOT's reporting relationship to the Chief of Strategic Alliances is deliberate, reinforcing the direct relationship between transportation and economic development.

Baltimore City Department of Transportation Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Bus Transit
 - Planning
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Streetlights
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Contracting & Procurement
- Budget & Finance
- Parking
 - Policy/Programs
 - Enforcement
 - Towing
- Communications & Public Information

Table 10. Baltimore - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Baltimore's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Transportation & Economic Development	BCDOT reports to the Chief of Strategic Alliances, a means of reinforcing the direct relationship between transportation and economic development.	Establish formal coordination and collaboration channels between transportation and economic development agencies so that transportation has a direct, active role in community revitalization.
Funding	BCDOT has internal capacity and expertise that have led to great success in applying for and being awarded federal transportation grant funds, and receiving and managing a share of the State of Maryland's federal highway formula aid. These federal funds are matched by their General Fund dollars and allow for completion of more capital projects than if they solely relied on local capital funds.	Build internal capacity and utilize in-house staff expertise to secure and manage federal transportation funding.
Consolidation of Transportation Functions Under One Roof	BCDOT is solely responsible for delivery of street improvements and the city's rights-of-way. Having all transportation capital project delivery, operations and maintenance, and right-of-way management functions in-house allows it to take full ownership of maintaining improvements after it completes them.	There is tremendous value to having all transportation functions under one roof and not being at the mercy of other agencies that must respond to more than one agency.



SEATTLE - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

In Seattle, transportation policy and vision are set by the Seattle DOT (SDOT), which is responsible for transportation policy, capital project delivery, transportation and maintenance operations and the management of the city's right-of-way. SDOT manages nearly 4,000 center-line miles of streets, 135 bridges, 1,600 signalized intersections, 35,000 street trees, 2,150 pay stations and parking meters, and 47 miles of bicycle trails.

SDOT, along with the Mayor's Office, created the city's 10-year transportation plan, *Move Seattle*, and led the effort to pass a \$930 million voter-approved levy to implement the plan. The level of concentrated effort required to create a citywide transportation policy and to pass such a large ballot initiative are indicative of the focused capabilities and transportation-related expertise that lay within SDOT.

SDOT is not a new department, but it did undergo a major internal restructuring a decade ago to better define individual roles and to clarify internal processes for more efficient delivery of services. Since the arrival of the current Director in 2014, additional restructuring occurred that integrated modal planning and is working to eliminate siloed decision-making driven by "modal advocacy."

SDOT's March 2017 organizational chart shows that the Director has three Deputy Directors, one overseeing maintenance operations, another managing capital project delivery, and a third supervising policy, planning, and mobility (see Figure 20). This effort housed all capital project groups under one Deputy Director, in an attempt to have them work collaboratively and follow a standardized process. As such, the restructuring was paired with process improvements. For example, a Project Development unit was created, responsible for developing concept plans, which are then handed over to the Capital Projects unit. Each project has a kick-off meeting, during which planners and engineers talk about the purpose and need for the project. A Project Definition Steering Committee then takes the project to 10 percent design and formulates scope, schedule and budget. A Change Order Control Board,

Seattle Department of Transportation Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Rail Transit
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Street Trees / Urban Forestry
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Policy & Governmental Affairs (incl. tracking federal/state/regional funding opportunities)
- Contracting & Procurement
- Budget & Finance
- Performance Management
- Parking
 - Policy/Programs
 - Enforcement
 - Towing
- Communications & Public Information
- Legal/Counsel
- Human Resources
- Information Technology

housed within the Capital Projects unit, reviews every change order.

The restructuring also sought to integrate modal planning. Formerly, paving projects were planned out of one group, signals were planned out of another, and bicycle facilities were planned out of yet another, which resulted in what some in Seattle called “sub-optimal” outcomes. A single intersection improvement project had three separate teams working on it at the same time without much coordination among them.

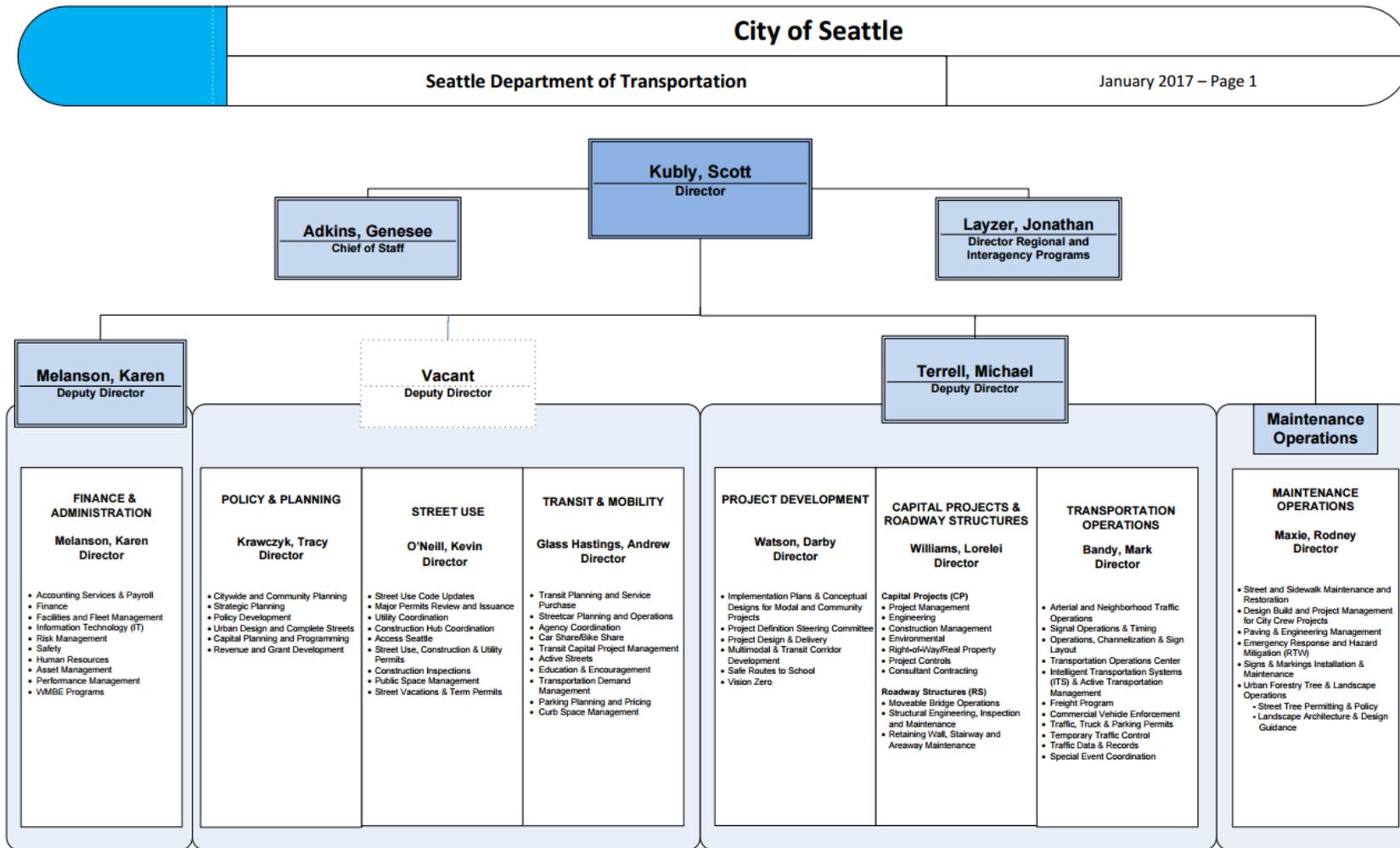
Another change made with the recent reorganization was placing the Urban Forestry unit into the Maintenance Operations Division. This created staffing efficiencies, such as when arborists and gardeners were made available to assist with incident response.

Table 11. Seattle - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Seattle’s Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Project Delivery	SDOT has a single Deputy Director overseeing all project delivery units – a Project Development group, a Capital Projects & Roadway Structures group, and a Transportation Operations group.	To mitigate siloed decision-making, house all project delivery units – planners, engineers, and construction managers – under one project delivery manager.
Project Development	SDOT’s Project Development unit is responsible for developing concept plans, which they hand over to the Capital Projects unit. They are comprised of planners and engineers – or “plangineers” – who host formal kick off meetings. The Project Development group contains a Project Definition Steering Committee, which takes projects to 10 percent design and formulates scopes, schedules, and budgets before project hand off.	Establish processes that formalize the initial phases of project development, including kick off meetings and a project definition unit, to have all project delivery staff agree on the purpose, need, budget, scope, and schedule for every project. This minimizes conflicts that may occur later in the project’s life that can cause delays and increase costs.
Integrated Modal Planning	SDOT’s integrated planning units, formerly segregated by transportation mode, were integrated into multi-modal project teams in its Project Development group.	Unify planners specializing in a particular mode under one functional unit to approach the same project holistically.
Change Order Control	SDOT has a Change Order Control Board within the Capital Projects group. The Board approves change orders after projects are re-baselined. This has the effect of mitigating scope changes, schedule delays, and cost increases.	Establish an oversight body that regulates change orders to contracts that are adversely impactful to agency budgets.
Incident Response	SDOT moved its Urban Forestry group into the Maintenance Operations Division, which has helped with incident response.	Have all units responsible for maintenance under one manager who leads incident response. If an Urban Forestry unit is available, have it report to the maintenance division.



Figure 20. SDOT Organization Chart (March 2017)



DALLAS – MOBILITY AND STREETS SERVICES DEPARTMENT

In the mid-1990s, Dallas’ stand-alone transportation department was disbanded, in part, due to its strict adherence to traffic warrants and reputation for denying requests. It was then absorbed into the city’s Department of Public Works whose capital project delivery functions were funded through bond proceeds, while its planning and traffic control and operations budgets came out of the General Fund. The DPW planned and executed bond programs about once every five years.

Over the years, as economic conditions caused Dallas to cut agency budgets funded through the General Fund, transportation planning and traffic control and operations at DPW suffered, such that signals, signs, and markings degraded to the point that they would have great difficulty recovering once General Fund revenues were restored. Eventually, the traffic control and operations unit was moved to the city’s Department of Streets, which performed street maintenance activities and depended on General Fund dollars. Through lack of investment in the Department of Streets, the city’s transportation assets degraded further, while the DPW, not dependent on City Council budgetary actions, maintained its ability to adequately deliver projects.

In October 2016, the Departments of Public Works and Streets merged into a singular new entity, the Mobility and Streets Services Department, so that the same agency would build and maintain the public right-of-way. The restructuring was intended to enhance accountability and ease of customer service, and provide a unified transportation vision and goals. The DPW Director was named the Director of Mobility and Street Services, a deliberate attempt at placing all transportation activities under a civil engineer with technical expertise and project management experience who would deliver quality projects. DPW staff, such as building architects and drainage engineers, were sent to separate existing agencies. Solid waste was housed in its own enterprise-funded agency, as was fleet management in Equipment and Building Services.

Because of this restructuring, staff who were formerly DPW engineers and Department of Streets managers regularly engage with each other, and federal grant funding is strategically targeted and prioritized. In addition, the city realized \$800,000 in savings in the first year of the new agency’s operations from merging two

Dallas Department of Mobility and Streets Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Streetlights
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Street Trees / Urban Forestry
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Budget & Finance
- Performance Management
- Parking
 - Policy/Programs
 - Enforcement
 - Towing



departments with separate overhead and administrative costs. The savings were used to create a Forestry Division to maintain street trees.

Table 12. Dallas - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Dallas' Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Renaming Transportation	Dallas chose to name its new transportation agency the "Mobility and Streets Services Department" because it wanted a name easily understood by the public that conveys that it is a modern, multimodal agency, and still managers of the city's streets. The term "Public Works" is difficult for the public to understand and does not represent what the agency now does.	Name a stand-alone transportation-focused agency as the Department of Mobility and Streets to brand it as a modern, multimodal organization with the continued mission of managing city streets.
Project Delivery & Maintenance Under One Roof	In creating the Mobility and Streets Services Department, Dallas housed its transportation project delivery and maintenance units under one roof. As such, the same agency that improves a street must maintain it.	There is tremendous value to having all transportation functions under one roof. In addition, an agency that has to maintain the street improvements it installs is more likely to design and construct infrastructure it can feasibly maintain.
Technical Expertise	The Director of Mobility and Street Services is a licensed civil engineer with technical expertise and project management experience who is expected to deliver quality projects.	Hire capable, competent technical engineers - not generalist administrators - whose priority is public safety. Executives with no technical expertise are likely to struggle with delivering quality work and take on too many initiatives that do not enhance core services.
Urban Forestry	The Mobility and Street Services Department was able to create a Forestry Division from savings it realized with the restructuring. Prior to its creation, no city agency was responsible for maintaining street trees.	Establish an Urban Forestry unit within a transportation agency to maintain street trees.
Savings	The City of Dallas realized \$800,000 in savings through the elimination of duplicative office/administrative functions across two agencies.	Consolidating separate agencies into a single agency has the benefit of reducing overall costs related to overhead and administration. However, this assumes that the separate agencies were fully-staffed and its overhead and administrative functions were effective.

Table 12. Dallas - Best Practices/Lessons Learned (continued)

Topic	Dallas' Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
<p>Coordination and Oversight</p>	<p>Dallas has an Interagency Group that is composed of senior level city employees. The Group focuses on complex interagency (local, regional, state) projects, some of which require matching funds and are delivered by the City, by the County or by others.</p> <p>A new creation under the current City Manager is a Citizens Advisory Committee, which advises on bond-funded projects.</p>	<p>Establish an Interagency Group to formalize coordination between local, regional, and state partners that need to collaborate to fund and deliver complex projects of regional significance. In addition to ensuring coordination and collaboration, this also helps to strategize for and acquire federal grant funds.</p> <p>Create a Citizens Advisory Committee to formalize coordination and collaboration between external stakeholders and the city in the delivery of capital projects.</p>
<p>Sanitation & Fleet</p>	<p>Dallas has a separate Sanitation Services Department, an enterprise agency that operates under the revenues it generates. As such, it is not as impacted by reductions in revenues that go into the General Fund and has consistently been able to purchase better equipment.</p> <p>Fleet services for Dallas are housed in the stand-alone Equipment and Building Services department.</p>	<p>Sanitation and Fleet Services functions can survive in their own separate, stand-alone agencies. If they are not saddled with functions that are not enterprise-funded, like transportation, they are better able to focus on delivery of their core services.</p>



SAN FRANCISCO – MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) was established in 1999 with the passage of Proposition E, which consolidated the Department of Parking and Traffic with the city's transit operator, the Municipal Railway, known as Muni. Today, SFMTA is responsible for most of the public transportation provided within San Francisco. SFMTA operates buses, light rail, cable cars, and historic streetcars, in addition to managing city roads, public parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the city's Taxi Commission.

The ballot measure that consolidated the two agencies in 1999 was, in part, aimed at creating a sustainable cross modal funding system to help Muni meet its operational needs, while streamlining the collection of transit and parking revenues and improving the general operations of the city's overall transportation system. Figure 21 shows the numerous capabilities and divisions within the agency.

Prior to 1999, Muni was funded as a part of the city's overall budget using General Fund appropriations, but is now an enterprise-funded agency using parking revenues to cross-modally fund its operations, including transit. SFMTA is a direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration funds, which fund transit projects and operations. It is also the recipient of bond and sales tax revenues. As such, SFMTA operates relatively autonomously and is able to pay its staff competitive salaries.

SFMTA is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the mayor. The SFMTA Board has the authority to appoint the Executive Director, approve the budget and set agency policy.

SFMTA has survived three ballot measures over the past ten years that sought to break it up and have it focus more on traffic and parking than on bicycles and transit. SFMTA has faced some public backlash from its efforts to provide Complete Streets and remove on-street parking in order to install bicycle and transit lanes.

SFTMA has a number of in-house capabilities that increase efficiency, including staffing in procurement and transit project delivery, but relies on coordination with other



agencies for its program delivery success. The city's DPW delivers street projects that SFMTA's Sustainable Streets Division hands off to them after planning and engineering. Current Sustainable Streets Division leadership describe the relationship as fluid and is pleased with DPW's delivery. SFMTA also works with the city's Planning Department and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (CTA) on long-term transportation planning, policy, and visioning that, in part, seeks to align transportation investment with economic development (e.g., devising a development impact fee structure to support additions of bus stops before new housing is approved). Formal processes for coordination exist in the form of monthly capital planning and troubleshooting meetings with DPW and the Planning Department, as well as regular meetings on priority programs such as traffic safety's Vision Zero.⁵⁹

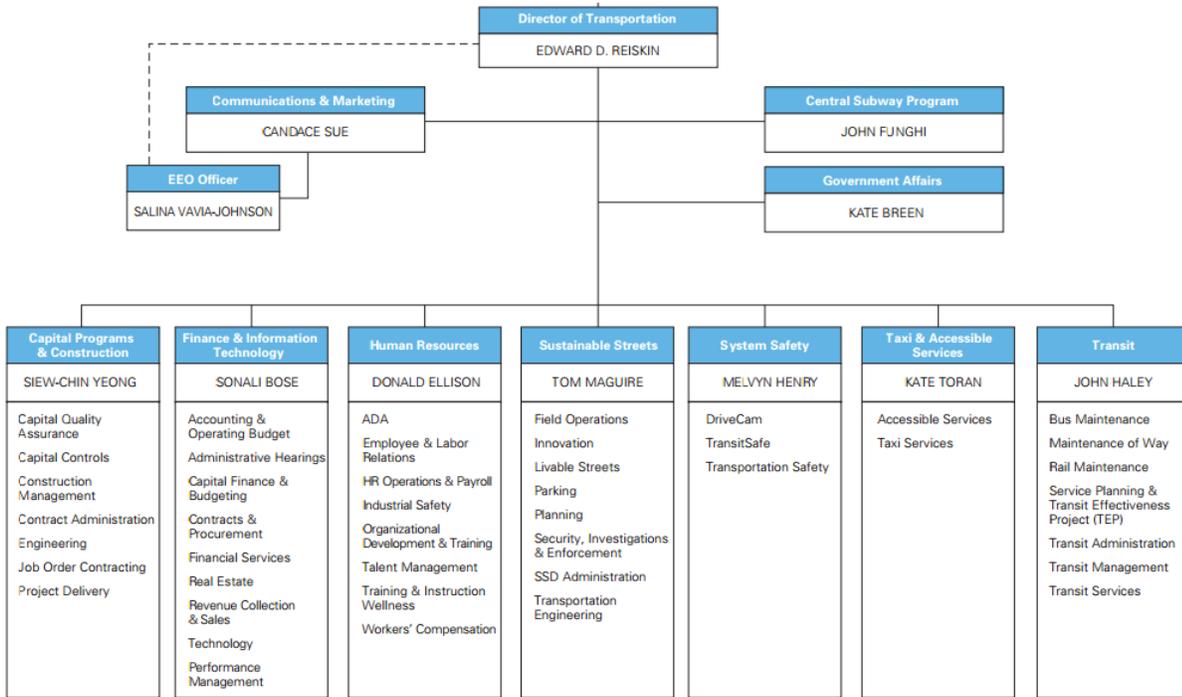
⁵⁹ Vision Zero is a program being adopted by cities across the world that devises strategies aimed at eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. First implemented in Sweden in the 1990s, Vision Zero has proved successful across Europe and is gaining momentum in major American cities, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Seattle, and the District of Columbia.



Table 13. San Francisco - Lessons Learned/Best Practices

Topic	San Francisco's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Policy-setting	SFMTA is governed by a Board of Directors, appointed by the Mayor, which sets agency policy, legislates agency actions, and approves its budget.	Establishing a Board over a city transportation agency can serve as a means of oversight and ensuring that the agency is guided by an overarching policy agenda.
Interagency Coordination	SFMTA's Sustainable Streets Division plans and engineers Complete Streets projects that the city's DPW delivers and maintains. It also works with the city's Planning Department on transportation process and policy reforms with regard to development impacts and Transportation Demand Management. These relationships have the potential to suffer from siloed agency priorities, but instead are described as collaborative and functional. Part of this can be attributed to the formal processes for coordination, including monthly meetings between the agencies.	Establish formal coordination processes between separate planning, transportation, and project delivery units, such as regular meetings where disagreements or issues about capital projects can be resolved, especially if these functions are in separate agencies.
In-House Capabilities	SFMTA has in-house capabilities, including procurement and transit project delivery so the agency can perform necessary rail system maintenance, street median work, and station work.	Having in-house capital program capabilities can increase efficiency of project delivery. SFMTA has made it a priority to attract young, talented engineers and planners and, due to their funding structure, is able to offer them competitive pay.
Funding and Autonomy	SFMTA is an enterprise-funded agency using parking revenues to fund its operations. It is also a direct recipient of Federal funds, as well as bond and sales tax revenues. As such, SFMTA operates autonomously and is able to pay its staff competitive salaries. However, SFMTA has also had to weather backlash from the public and elected officials who have tried to limit the agency's autonomy and reverse its policy priorities.	Setting a transportation agency up as a self-sustaining enterprise is in the best interest of maintaining it as a healthy organization that is able to continually meet the vision set out for it. However, with this comes the potential for public and elected official backlash who will seek to limit the agency's autonomy or set its policy if they do not agree with it.

Figure 21. SFMTA Organization Chart 2017



SAN ANTONIO – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

BACKGROUND

By 2006, San Antonio's Department of Public Works had been having trouble completing long-term capital projects, which were funded through relatively small bond programs (approximately \$100 million). In May 2007, voters approved a \$550 million bond program, which prompted the City Manager to create a new department – Capital Improvement Management Services (CIMS) – to handle project management for all capital projects. CIMS delivered capital projects for its city agency clients, including transportation infrastructure, parks, libraries, fire stations, aviation facilities, parking garages, and police stations. CIMS' success in delivering projects centered on having city staff serve as a core project management team and hiring consultants to design projects and contractors to build projects.

In 2013, the DPW Director position was vacated and the City Manager determined that she would combine DPW and CIMS to create a Department of Transportation and Capital Improvements (TCI), TCI was formally established in January 2014 and is responsible for operations and maintenance of stormwater, streets, and traffic, transportation planning, and capital project delivery. The Capital Project Delivery Division still handles all capital projects for the city, and delivers projects funded under periodic bond programs. Accordingly, TCI has its own contract, fiscal resources, real estate acquisition, and environmental capabilities and does not rely on other city agencies to carry out its mission. It sees its client departments as customers who it is building for.

August 2016 marked the end of an 18-month process for the development of SA Tomorrow, three growth plans for the City of San Antonio. TCI led one of the plans, the Multimodal Transportation Plan, which set the course for transportation for 25 years. The Plan, for the first time in decades, provided a holistic look at the city's multimodal transportation needs, communicated the city's transportation strategy and provided a method of prioritizing projects. The Plan was used to identify and prioritize projects, which were rolled into a new bond program in 2016.



Table 14. San Antonio - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	San Antonio's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Capital Project Staffing and Management	<p>TCI, and CIMS before it, dedicates talented staff (200 at the peak, 150 at minimum) to capital projects who do not get distracted with day-to-day operations and maintenance. The capital project staff charge to projects, and are thus not subject to cuts in annual operating budgets and the city's General Fund.</p> <p>When TCI was formed, it worked with consultants to reform contracts and the design process. In partnership with the consultant community, CIMS created a design guidance manual that defined the city's design process and cleaned up contract provisions that discouraged bidding. These actions provided a more competitive marketplace that enhanced quality delivery of consultant and contractor services.</p>	<p>To encourage quality delivery of capital projects, dedicate talented staff to capital project management and nothing else and have them charge to capital projects, which may increase the overhead cost of such projects but relieves staff capacity issues due to operating budget and General Fund constraints. Also, work with the private sector to provide a competitive marketplace for consultants and contractors by reviewing and revising contract provisions and creating processes where none currently exist.</p>
Project Delivery and Maintenance Under One Roof	<p>TCI's Project Delivery team, system and processes had been established and refined at CIMS in the ten years preceding its formation. Over the years, it had all the project delivery capabilities under one roof, from real estate acquisition to environmental permitting. Once TCI was established, the same agency that improves a street now maintains it.</p>	<p>There is tremendous value to having all project delivery functions under one roof and not being at the mercy of other agencies that must respond to more than one agency. In addition, an agency that has to maintain the street improvements it installs is more likely to design and construct infrastructure it can feasibly maintain.</p>
Transparency	<p>TCI created a bonds project status dashboard for public and elected officials to view on its website, showing the progress of capital projects funded under the bond program. The dashboard is directly linked to scheduling and project management systems that TCI project managers update monthly. Projects status is shown in terms of green, yellow, or red colors based on their earned value and actual v. baseline schedule. In addition, TCI provides quarterly updates to elected officials on its delivery of the bond program.</p>	<p>Transparency can go a long way to maintaining public and elected official support of bond programs and transportation agencies responsible for capital project delivery. Establish a web-based tool directly linked to project management systems to reduce staff burden and show progress on projects. Also, establish a system of regular elected official updates.</p>



Table 14. San Antonio - Best Practices/Lessons Learned (Continued)

Topic	San Antonio's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Strategic Planning	San Antonio's <i>Multimodal Transportation Plan</i> set the course for transportation for the next 25 years, and identified and prioritized projects that were included in a voter-approved bond program.	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department that provides a holistic look at the city's multimodal transportation needs, communicates the city's transportation strategy and provides a method of prioritizing projects.

5.1.2 Cities without Stand-alone Transportation-Focused Departments

PHILADELPHIA - DEPARTMENT OF STREETS

BACKGROUND

The Department of Streets was established in 1953 and has a sanitation and a transportation unit, both of which are managed by separate Deputy Commissioners and operate as two separate agencies, with the exception of financial and administrative matters, which a third Deputy Commissioner manages for the agency. The Department of Streets reports to the Deputy Managing Director for Transportation and Infrastructure Systems who is responsible for setting the policy direction for the Department of Streets, the Philadelphia Water Department, and the newly created Office of Complete Streets, and coordinating with internal and external agencies. The Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems also works to incorporate ideas outside the agency (e.g., from bicycle advocates) into the Transportation Division of the Department of Streets, and operates the Philly Bikeshare program.

The Transportation Division of the Department of Streets has engineering, paving, striping, bridge maintenance, survey, transportation planning, street and bridge design, construction management, right-of-way administration, and traffic engineering and operations capabilities. Thus, it has all capital project functionalities in-house to carry a project from concept to operation maintenance. Because project planning and engineering staff are under the same Division, disagreements are settled by the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation. The Transportation Division recently added bicycle and pedestrian safety and ADA units and has internal capacity to acquire federal grants and funding, as well as capital programming.

The Department of Streets is in the process of developing an update to its Strategic Plan, continuing the theme of “Clean, Safe Streets.” This update will likely incorporate the Department’s Vision Zero program.

Capital projects in Philadelphia benefit from bond measures, which form the basis of the city’s annual capital budget. The last measure passed in November 2016. The Transportation Division admits to delays in delivery of the capital program. Its staff is at capacity, delivering \$80 million worth of projects a year when the goal is completing \$105 million of work per year. To solve this problem, on-call consultants were hired to manage the demand, which increases overhead costs of projects but prevents project delays.

Philadelphia Department of Streets Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Streetlights
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Policy & Governmental Affairs (incl. tracking federal/state/regional funding opportunities)
- Contracting & Procurement
- Budget & Finance
- Performance Management
- Fleet Services
- Communications & Public Information
- Human Resources
- Information Technology



Table 15. Philadelphia - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Philadelphia's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Transportation and Sanitation Under One Roof	The Department of Streets has both Sanitation and Transportation Divisions within it. There have not been calls to restructure the agency or split the department because the two Divisions are each managed by a Deputy Commissioner who is given autonomy and authority to run their Divisions like separate departments, yet has access to administrative support functions within the Department's Administrative Division. An advantage of this structure is that transportation functions and operations remain stable and insulated from drastic changes from turnover of Mayoral administrations. While the Department of Streets Commissioner changes with each Mayoral administration, the Deputy Commissioners tend to withstand the administration changes and can provide stable and reliable leadership.	Sanitation and Transportation units can co-exist functionally within one department if each unit is allowed autonomy and authority to operate as separate units. Consistent transportation leadership is possible under this structure if the overall manager for transportation (Deputy Commissioner for Transportation in Philadelphia's case) is not a political appointee but a technical professional providing steady leadership over many administrations.
Winter Weather	An advantage of having sanitation and transportation in the same department is that all sanitation and transportation personnel, equipment and facilities are within one agency. So, during snow events, all sanitation staff and vehicles report to the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation, conveniently providing additional resources for more efficient snow removal.	Incident response systems benefit from having sanitation and transportation units within a single agency because the resources of the entire department are made available to the incident management team.
Policy Setting	The Department of Streets reports to the Deputy Managing Director for Transportation and Infrastructure Systems who is responsible for setting the city's transportation policy, and works to incorporate ideas outside the agency (e.g., Complete Streets) into the department.	Mayor's Offices that oversee a city transportation agency can serve as transportation policy-setters and guide the agency's policy agenda.

Table 15. Philadelphia - Best Practices/Lessons Learned (Continued)

Topic	Philadelphia's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Capital Project Delivery	The Transportation Division has a backlog of capital projects to deliver because its staff lack the capacity to keep up with the demand. To address this problem, consultants were hired to manage the demand, which increases overhead costs of projects but prevents delays from the time it takes to hire additional staff.	To address the issue of understaffed project delivery units, utilize on-call consultants to deal with surges of projects that need to be delivered under bond or other large capital programs.



DENVER – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

BACKGROUND

Denver’s Department of Public Works (DPW) manages the city’s transportation, policy planning and sustainability, capital projects and maintenance, solid waste, and wastewater functions. Like Atlanta, Denver recently assessed the possibility of creating a new, stand-alone transportation agency. Through consultant support, the DPW is considering reorganization change options, including:

- No change;
- Adjusting the division of duties between departments as they relate to transportation (currently, mobility functions are spread across DPW, the Department of Planning, the Regional Transportation District, and others);
- Creating a new DOT out of the existing DPW and elevate it so it is equal to DPW in the city’s organization chart; and
- Renaming the DPW to be more inclusive of transportation activities and elevate the transportation and mobility unit within the department.

Similar to Atlanta, Denver is dealing with a hierarchy of issues – a need to fix leadership, establish a clear vision for transportation, figure out sustainable funding and capacity solutions, and coordinate and collaborate between agencies and with external stakeholders. Similar to the findings and recommendations of this study, Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock announced in July 2017 that the Denver Public Works Department would be reorganized “to elevate and better address the city’s growing transportation and mobility needs” and “serve as a precursor to the proposed new cabinet-level Department of Transportation and Mobility.”⁶⁰

Denver Department of Public Works Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Design
 - ROW
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Contracting & Procurement
- Budget & Finance
- Performance Management
- Fleet Services
- Parking
 - Policy/Programs
 - Enforcement
 - Towing
- Wastewater
- Solid Waste & Sanitation
- Buildings and Facilities

⁶⁰ <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/mayors-office/newsroom/2017/mayor-hancock-announces-major-reorg-of-public-works-to-emphasize.html>

DPW currently has three divisions:

- **Engineering**, which includes capital program management and major projects; right of way services and surveys; and transportation and mobility.
- **Operations**, which includes waste water management; solid waste management; street maintenance; right of way enforcement; parking operations; traffic operations; traffic operations; fleet management; and safety and industrial hygiene.
- **Planning and Administration**, which houses policy, planning & sustainability; finance and administration; and communications.

DPW publishes an annual strategic action plan, the SMART Denver Plan, which outlines objectives and actions centered on achieving five goals: sustainable, multi-modal, attractive, resilient and transparent public infrastructure, services and facilities. The Plan documents where DPW will invest its resources and focus for the coming year. DPW also benefits from a capital improvement program supported by federal transit grants for a Bus Rapid Transit line and other funding sources, which has helped identify all but \$350 million of a \$2 billion need over 12 years to address deferred maintenance.

Table 16. Denver - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Denver’s Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Strategic Planning	Every year, DPW publishes its annual strategic action plan, the <i>SMART Denver Plan</i> , which outlines goals, objectives and actions and documents where it will invest its resources.	Update the Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department regularly to provide a roadmap of the work to be done over the next year and where the agency will deploy resources.
Capital Programming & Deferred Maintenance	Denver has a functional capital improvement program process supported by federal and non-federal sources, which identified the funding need for deferred maintenance and funds to cover most of the estimated amount.	Use the CIP process to identify the full cost of deferred maintenance and funds to address the need.



HOUSTON - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING

BACKGROUND

The Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering (DPWE) is a large agency made up of over 4,000 employees. DPWE is responsible for the administration, planning, maintenance, construction management and technical engineering of the city's water, waste water, and transportation infrastructure, and manages traffic operations, traffic plan review and permitting, plan reviews, and right-of-way permits. Solid waste and fleet management have their own standalone departments.

In the past several months, DPWE has started an internal reorganization process intended to centralize transportation functions within the department. Currently, transportation functions are dispersed across separate departments and several sections within DPWE, including its Building and Development Services, Capital Projects, and Transportation and Drainage Operations sections, resulting in duplication of effort and unnecessary interference.

The restructuring will create a transportation department within DPWE managed by the current Deputy Director of Transportation and Drainage Operations. Traffic operations and street and drainage units will be merged to integrate overall street operations. A long-range planning unit will be formed, and project purpose and need identification and prioritization will be housed within the consolidated transportation section under DPWE. In addition, with capital projects and transportation operations housed within the same section, DPWE's goal is to address the issue of the engineering and construction groups designing and building a facility that is handed off to operations teams who have no idea what was constructed.

It is possible that Houston will have a Department of Transportation again (a prior DOT was dissolved decades ago), and that this restructuring is an interim step to transition to a stand-alone transportation agency. However, DPWE intends with the present reorganization to remain a Public Works agency, but be home to everything having to do with transportation.

Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering Capabilities

- Roadway
 - Planning
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Traffic (safety studies, signs, signals)
 - Engineering
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Streetlights
 - Planning/Design
 - Operations / Maintenance
- Utilities / Public Space Regulation
 - Permitting
 - Inspection/Enforcement
- Budget & Finance
- Water

Table 17. Houston - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Houston's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Transportation and Water/Wastewater Under One Roof	DPWE has both Water/Wastewater and Transportation functions within it. The reorganization will merge traffic operations and street and drainage units for more integrated street operations.	Water/Wastewater and Transportation units can co-exist functionally within one department and more holistically operate and maintain streets and drainage and water/wastewater systems together.
Interim Reorganization	DPWE is being restructured to create a new Transportation unit. A Deputy Director was named to lead the new Transportation unit.	Different functional units, including transportation, can co-exist functionally within one department during an interim period to determine whether the structure, which includes a senior manager reporting directly to the executive and overseeing all transportation units, supports desired outcomes.
Capital Project Delivery	DPWE's reorganization will merge capital project delivery and operations units under the new Transportation section.	Consolidate capital projects and transportation operations within the same section to address the issue of the engineering and construction groups designing and building a facility that is handed off to operations teams who cannot easily maintain it.
Sanitation & Fleet	Houston has separate Sanitation and Fleet Management agencies.	Sanitation and Fleet Management functions can survive in their own separate, stand-alone agencies. If they are not saddled with functions that are not enterprise-funded, like transportation, they are better able to focus on delivery of their core services.



MIAMI

BACKGROUND

Transportation functions in the City of Miami are dispersed across three agencies. In 2016, the City of Miami restructured city government to form a Department of Transportation Management that manages traffic operations and studies, the city's red light camera program, the Citi Bikeshare program, and the local trolley system. Though Miami-Dade County has jurisdiction over traffic facilities in the city, pavement markings, signs, signals, and traffic calming, the City of Miami has an existing agreement with the County to install traffic calming devices in reduced speed zones.

These functions had formerly been housed within the city's Office of Capital Improvements (OCI), which plans, designs, and manages construction for transportation, parks, and other city infrastructure. It generally undertakes large scale projects and reconstruction, working with the Department of Public Works (DPW), which is responsible for the maintenance and regulation of the city's public rights-of-way, transportation and water/wastewater infrastructure, with Development Roadways and Plans, NPDES/Stormwater, Right-of-Way Construction, Survey, and Maintenance Operations sections. While OCI finds funds, programs, designs, bids, and constructs capital projects, DPW is involved in plan review and permitting, subdivision and surveys, and must approve OCI's plans and designs. In addition, DPW performs maintenance of transportation infrastructure designed and constructed by OCI, as well as reactive maintenance (e.g., pothole repairs, sidewalk repairs, street tree maintenance, mowing, and drainage).

Table 18. Miami - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Miami's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Transportation and Water/Wastewater Operations Under One Roof	Miami's DPW has both Water/Wastewater and Transportation operations functions within it, which allows for more integrated street operations and maintenance.	Water/Wastewater and Transportation operations units can co-exist functionally within one department and more holistically operate and maintain streets and drainage and water/wastewater systems together.

NASHVILLE

BACKGROUND

One of the main issues during the 2015 campaign of Nashville Mayor Megan Barry was multi-modalism and creating a multimodal future for the city. As such, in May 2017, she released *Moving the Music City*, a three-year action agenda that calls for the creation of a Division of Transportation within the city's Department of Public Works (Metro Public Works) and increased staff capacity.

Like Atlanta, Nashville had suffered from a lack of centralized transportation leadership, no multimodal vision, and lack of coordination among Metro Public Works, the city's Planning Department (Metro Planning), and its transit agency (Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority). Project delivery was not undertaken with a mind towards Complete Streets/multi-modalism, transit, and active transportation. Due to budget cuts necessitated by the economic recession during the early 2010's, funding for Metro Public Works's core services was reduced significantly. However, even with Nashville's recent economic growth and increased investment in schools and police, transportation budgets have not been restored to pre-recession levels.

In 2015, the mayor created the Mayor's Office of Infrastructure, Transportation, and Sustainability, led by the former chief development officer for the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority and who had been involved in every major infrastructure project in Nashville for several decades. In August 2016, he was named Interim Director of Metro Public Works, where he assessed the possible need for organizational restructuring, consolidation of disciplines and functions, and whether Nashville should establish a city department of transportation.

With the release of *Moving the Music City*, Nashville is taking DPW in a new direction with regard to transportation, aiming to reorient city departments around delivering better transportation over the long-term. The plan sets out goals and action items related to them in the realms of Public Transit, Vision Zero, Streets for People, and Connected Transportation. To ensure it implements priorities quickly, the plan calls for a new Division of Transportation to be created within Metro Public Works in 2017. The new Division is intended to streamline decision making and project implementation on streets, and closely coordinate efforts with other agencies.

Under the reorganization, DPW will be split into two divisions: a Division of Transportation and a Division of Administration, Solid Waste and Beautification. The Interim Director has hired a Deputy Director of Transportation to provide transportation leadership, and will benefit from two new positions included in the new budget for a multimodal engineer and a multimodal planner.

Creating a stand-alone transportation department would require a voter-approved Charter amendment, so the City's plan is to test the new Metro Public Works structure against the stated goals of the action agenda. If a stand-alone transportation department is warranted, a Charter amendment to create it could be included in a voter referendum that is planned for 2018 that seeks to boost transit funding for the city.



Table 19. Nashville - Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Topic	Nashville's Experience	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Strategic Planning	While not labeled a strategic plan, <i>Moving the Music City</i> provided a plan of action for the next three years that are intended to deliver quickly on multimodal transportation goals.	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department that provides a short-term action agenda tied to expedited delivery of multimodal goals.
Interim Director	The Interim Director of Metro Public Works was brought in and went to work on assessing the need for a city department of transportation, facilitating the <i>Moving the Music City</i> action agenda, hiring a Deputy Director for Transportation, and shifting the culture to one that prioritizes multimodal transportation.	Bring in an Interim Director immediately to work full-time on development of a Strategic Plan/Action Agenda, hiring staff, and reorganizing the agency to prioritize multimodal transportation.
Interim Reorganization	Before making a final decision on creating a standalone transportation-focused department, Metro Public Works is being restructured to create a new Transportation Division and a Division of Administration, Solid Waste and Beautification. A Deputy Director for Transportation has been hired to lead the Division of Transportation.	Sanitation and Transportation units can co-exist functionally within one department during an interim trial period to determine whether the structure, which includes a senior manager reporting directly to the executive and overseeing all transportation units, supports achievement of goals set out in a strategic plan.

5.2 Peer City Survey

The study team, through NACTO, distributed a web-based survey that asked city transportation officials questions regarding the current state-of-practice for transportation management in their city. The survey also asked respondents to elaborate on any organizational changes that may have occurred in the past, or organizational changes they would like to see to best serve their city.

The following cities participated in this study via survey:

- Pittsburgh, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Louisville, KY
- Detroit, MI
- Chattanooga, TN
- Philadelphia, PA
- Orlando, FL
- San Francisco, CA
- Indianapolis, IN
- Charlotte, NC
- Palo Alto, CA
- Seattle, WA
- Nashville, TN
- Santa Monica, CA
- Boston, MA

5.2.1 Peer City Survey Results

Key takeaways from the survey are summarized on the following pages.

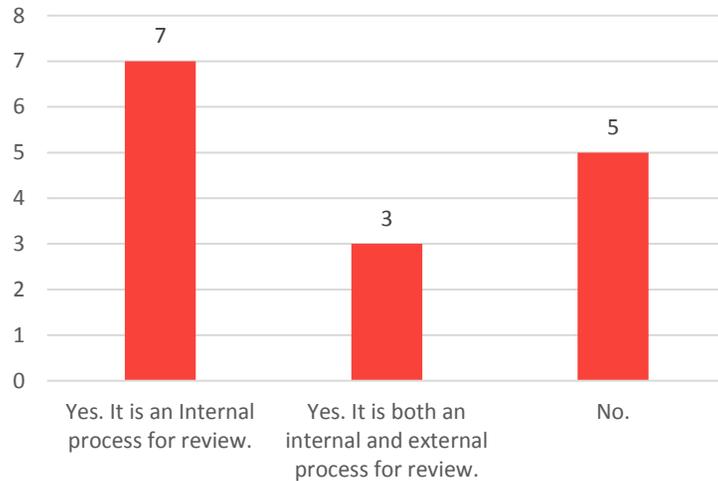


1. A majority of respondent cities' lead transportation agencies report to the Mayor of their cities, and coordinated with two or more other agencies on transportation issues.

Table 20. Peer City Survey Respondents

City	Lead Transportation Agency	Agency Executive	Other Agencies Involved in Transportation
Pittsburgh, PA	Department of Mobility and Infrastructure	The Mayor, Mayor's Staff - Chief of Staff	Department of City Planning, Department of Public Works, Office of Management and Budget, Urban Renewal Authority, state DOT, Department of Innovation and Performance
City of Phoenix, AZ	Street Transportation Department	Deputy City Manager which reports to the City Manager	Phoenix's Street Transportation Department also oversees the city's function of the City Engineer. All vertical projects (citywide departments) and horizontal projects (Street Transportation Department) work through the City Engineer's Procurement Section to deliver projects. Public Transit Department is a separate city department that delivers bus service and also reports to the same Deputy City Manager as the Street Transportation Department.
Boston, MA	Boston Transportation Department	Chief of Streets	Departments of public works, parks, neighborhood services
Louisville, KY	Louisville Metro Public Works	Metro Public Services Chief	Louisville Forward; Transit Authority of River City; Parking Authority of River City; Metro Parks
Detroit, MI	Department of Public Works	Mayor's Staff - Operations Chief / Deputy Mayor	Planning, DPW, DDOT, Water & Sewerage, Police
Chattanooga, TN	Chattanooga Department of Transportation	Mayor's Staff - Operations Chief / Deputy Mayor	Department of Economic and Community Development (Land Development Office), Department of Public Works (Sewer, Stormwater, All Maintenance/Operations except for Traffic)
Philadelphia, PA	Mayor's Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems	The City of Philadelphia's Managing Director	Streets Department. Planning Commission. Water Department.
Santa Monica, CA	Municipal Planning and Community Development	City Manager	Public Works, Finance, Client departments
City of Orlando, FL	Transportation Department	Mayor's Staff - Administration Chief / Deputy Mayor	Public Works, Economic Development, Downtown CRA
San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency	Board of Director/Commissioners	Departments of public works, public utilities, planning
Indianapolis, IN	Department of Public Works	Mayor's Staff - Administration Chief / Deputy Mayor	Department of Metropolitan Development, Business and Neighborhood Services
Charlotte, NC	Charlotte Department of Transportation	City Manager	Charlotte Planning Department, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (the MPO), Charlotte Engineering and Property Management Department, Charlotte Water, Charlotte Economic Development Department, Charlotte Housing and Neighborhood Development Dept., Aviation Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Solid Waste Services Dept.
Palo Alto, CA	City of Palo Alto	City Manager	Public Works Department, Utilities Department
Seattle, WA	Seattle DOT	The Mayor	Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle City Light, Office of Planning and Community Development
Nashville, TN	Mayor's Office	Mayor's Staff - Operations Chief / Deputy Mayor	Metro Planning, MTA (Transit Agency), Mayor's Office, MNPDP

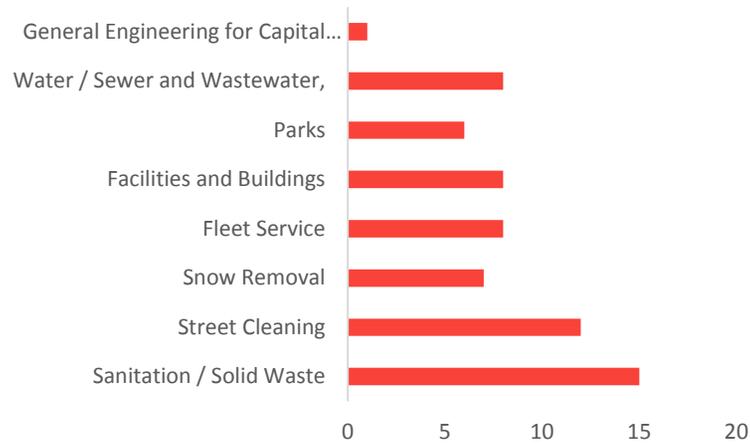
- Of the 15 respondent agencies, seven have the internal capacity to apply for grants to pursue federal transportation dollars, three use both an internal and external review process, while five lack the capacity and technical expertise all together.



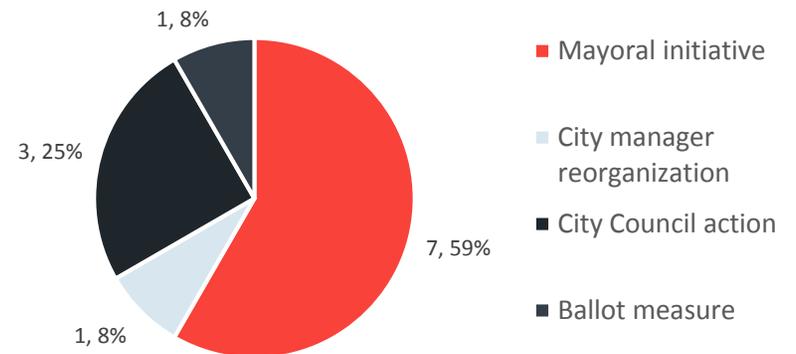
- The following figure shows how many of the 15 respondent transportation entities tackle various transportation capabilities. A majority of transportation leads tackle items such as active transportation street/highway design, planning, and construction, while fewer operate or design transit or maintain urban forestry.



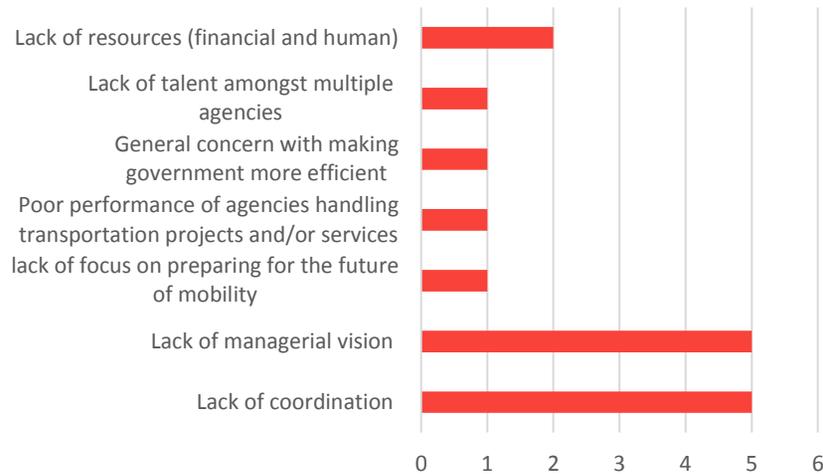
4. All respondent cities state that their DPW (or equivalent agency) is responsible for sanitation and solid waste, and a majority are responsible for street cleaning. Only one DPW provides general engineering services for capital projects in other departments.



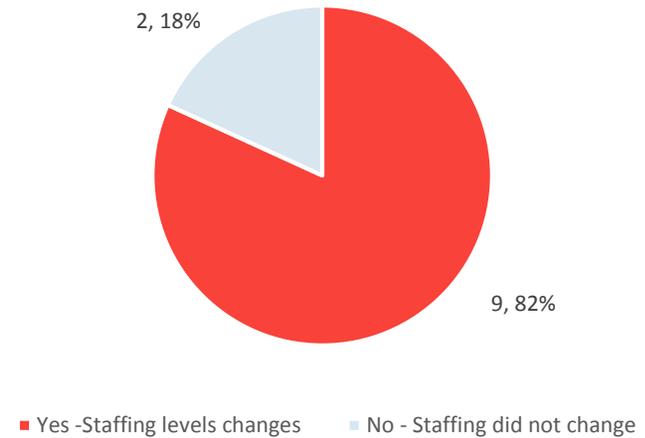
5. Eleven of the 15 respondent cities state that their city at some point changed how transportation is governed. Of the 11, seven were led by Mayoral initiative, three by City Council, and one each were restructured due to a ballot measure or City Manager's initiative. One respondent stated that the city's effort was led by both City Council action and a Mayoral initiative.



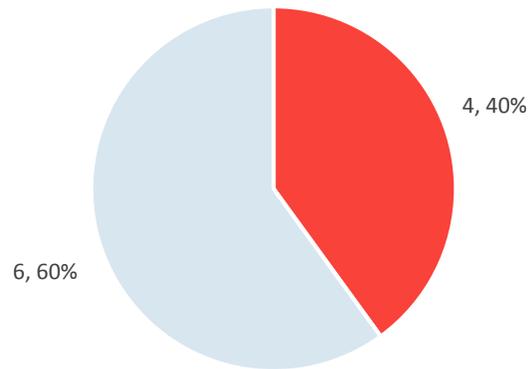
- 6. A majority of agencies who underwent a change cited the lack of coordination between multiple agencies handling transportation and a lack of managerial vision as the primary reason for restructuring.



- 7. Nine out of 11 cities that restructured saw a change in staffing levels at the lead transportation agency.

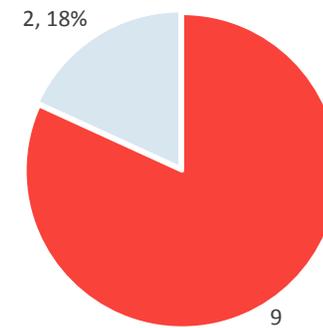


8. Only four restructured departments experienced a change in pay.



■ Yes - Pay level changed ■ No- pay levels remained the same

9. An overwhelming majority of agencies that restructured believe the transportation-related role and responsibilities of agencies are clearer now than they were before



■ Yes - Roles are clearer ■ No- roles have not become more defined

10. Six of seven respondents believed that the reorganization had made transportation better than it had been before in their city; only one was uncertain.
11. When asked **what made the management of transportation better or worse** than before, respondents answered that the management was better because of:
- Easier decision-making process rather than a pyramid management structure that was controlled by one individual;
 - Increased transportation focus;
 - More refined sensibility to land use and development patterns, as well as integration of public spaces, economic development, more context-sensitive design, and stronger vision;
 - New executive level strategic direction;
 - More responsive to changing customer mobility desires seeking alternative transportation
 - Identified both the gaps in the services being previously provided and the lack of a single source of accountability for responsiveness and setting direction for the city's transportation efforts.

One respondent did not feel the management had drastically improved and felt that the system can be planned and managed in a more coordinated, integrated way.

12. When asked what **lessons learned from their experience would be useful** to other cities considering a restructuring of their transportation programs, respondents offered:
- Change management is essential. Creating a new department (if that is what Atlanta wishes to do) is hard. It requires a change in culture, change in regulations, change in budgeting authority, and generally redirecting all partners. It should not be an automatic conclusion that a new agency is needed.
 - Focus department funding away from General Funds and establish a dedicated funding source separate from General Funds. Establish a short, mid-, and long term strategic vision with performance metrics that are understandable by the general public. Focus on the core mission of the department.
 - Do more re-organization and shuffling of staff-members at the Mayoral level and not leave so much detail up to the individual departments. There is inherent resentment and insecurity from a Public Works Department that formerly led the city on transportation efforts, and that resentment - even if subconscious from within the department - is a huge barrier for efficiencies and interdepartmental collaboration and coordination.
 - Specify and clearly differentiate planning functions.
 - Specify and clearly differentiate land development functions.
 - Consider instead a department of public space that covers planning, design, engineering, implementation, and O&M, of parks, streets, and greenways.



- Further consolidation of the traffic function, i.e. streetlighting and street paving would be useful
- Transportation Department should take projects through planning and design, and then operate the system. It would be fine for Public Works to oversee construction of the projects with Transportation Engineering still involved.
- Have clear goals and timelines for implementation.

5.3 Lessons Learned / Common Themes

While each city has its own unique sets of opportunities and challenges, common themes emerged from the 11 interviews and the survey responses.

- Restructuring is not the solution to poor transportation outcomes. However, restructuring can be the catalyst for better outcomes if changes are made to other factors (e.g., leadership personality/management, procurement/contract administration, funding, formal coordination) that are necessary to make the restructuring effective and efficient.
- Restructuring takes time, years often, and should involve a transition period especially if project delivery, operations and maintenance, policy and funding all end up under one agency. Different functional units, including transportation, sanitation, and fleet, can co-exist functionally within one department during an interim period to determine whether the structure, which includes a senior manager reporting directly to the executive and overseeing all transportation units, supports desired outcomes and achievement of goals set out in a strategic plan.
- Recent restructurings have been preceded by multi-year Strategic Planning efforts involving staff from all affected agencies that begins to institutionalize changes, guides long-term policy direction and vision, and sets a timeline for action. Such plans are likely to succeed if they are approved by a commission or City Council and follow a substantial public engagement process before adoption.
- Recent restructurings have also been preceded by bringing in Interim Transportation Directors immediately to work full-time on development of a Strategic Plan, hiring staff, and reorganizing the agency.
- Strong transportation organizations attract and retain talent by establishing clear career paths for engineers and planners through competitive pay, teaming opportunities, and a work environment that rewards collaboration and innovation.
- Formal interagency coordination processes and entities are present in cities where a transportation or public works agency does not have responsibility for all phases of capital project delivery (e.g., when planning is separate from design and construction, or separate capital project delivery units are created to deliver bond-financed programs) to serve as “tie-breakers” and improve project delivery.
- City transportation agencies are being re-branded as “mobility” agencies as a means of modernizing and covering all modes in terms that the public understands.
- Solid waste and even fleet services are found in separate units as enterprise agencies in certain cities with Fleet Services often placed in with Buildings and Facilities/General Services or as its own unit under a Deputy Mayor/Assistant City Manager for Operations. Not saddled with functions that are not enterprise-funded, like transportation, they are better able to focus on delivery of their core services.
- To mitigate siloed capital project delivery decision-making, effective agencies house all project delivery units – planners, engineers, and construction managers – under one project delivery manager. In addition, transportation agencies that consolidate capital project delivery and transportation operations within the same department minimize issues related to engineering and construction groups designing and building facilities that are handed off to operations teams who cannot easily maintain them.



- General fund agencies suffering from chronic staffing shortages due to budget cuts can build capacity and deliver quality projects and services by setting themselves up as self-sustaining enterprises if they have a source(s) of revenue generation (e.g., utilizing parking or conduit lease revenues).

A compiled list of lessons learned / best practices is provided in Appendix A.

6 Findings and Recommendations

6.1 Findings

The previous three chapters provided this study's findings on what works and does not work well with the current transportation structure in Atlanta, concerns and cautions relating to the need for a new approach in transportation project and service delivery by the City, and lessons learned and best practices from peer cities. This section summarizes these findings.

6.1.1 What Works Now

The intent of identifying what works well with the current transportation structure was to provide a foundation for further analysis of the need for structural change and clearly define those items that any reorganization of City government resulting from this study should be mindful of disrupting on the one hand or leveraging on the other. The five strengths of the current City structure for transportation are:

- **Mobility Planning in the Department of City Planning:** DCP's reorganization and the creation of an Office of Mobility Planning marked a shift and update of Atlanta's vision for its transportation system toward viewing the street right-of-way as public space that should accommodate multimodal mobility options. This shift aligns with the direction that metropolitan and city transportation agencies across the nation are moving toward. As a result, the City has been able to recruit new talent with transportation planning expertise and experience.
- **Successful Support for Capital Funding:** The City's success in acquiring local, state, and federal transportation funds - well over half a billion dollars from 2010 to 2016 - allows its transportation capital program to fund more projects. Atlanta transportation officials find themselves with a window of opportunity to make changes to the transportation system that could generate long-lasting effects on the quality-of-life of the City's residents.
- **Innovative Capital Project Delivery:** Both Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and the Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (ABI) deliver projects that the DPW could have designed and constructed, but for which the DPW was perceived to not have the capacity to deliver. Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and ABI are models for achievement and innovation in project delivery.
- **Effective Partners:** Atlanta's three community improvement districts (CIDs) have played a very active role in providing transportation investment in key parts of the city. Any change to the transportation organizational structure in the City should recognize the benefits of having strong partnerships with the Buckhead CID, Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District (CAP/ADID), and the Midtown Alliance, as well as other organizations that could support the City agencies' missions.
- **Responsive Maintenance:** DPW receives praise that it responds well to service requests, and criticism that its focus on traffic operations and reactive street maintenance leaves it little capacity to do much more. Considering that the DPW is also responsible for solid waste, recycling, and yard waste curbside collection; providing maintenance and repairs to city vehicles and other moving equipment; maintaining clear



passage of major bridges and roads during snow and ice events; and – for now – operating the Atlanta streetcar system, it is easy to see why the DPW has been limited in its capacity to support transportation policy, planning and capital project delivery.

6.1.2 A Case for Change

The study identified problems and challenges that could be ascribed to the current transportation and governance structure. By describing whether such problems can be fairly considered a result of the existing structure, the study sought to answer whether there is a case for changing the current structure. The weaknesses of the City’s current transportation structure were categorized as four issues:

- **Lack of Centralized Leadership and Vision:** Atlanta’s transportation system and programs require a leader who can unify the disparate transportation units within City government and inspire and recruit talented transportation staff with a vision for what a modern urban transportation agency should be accomplishing – multimodal streets, and active and appealing public spaces. The interviews found that a visionary transportation leader was needed to develop a cohesive “21st century” mobility department, but also strong senior management leaders to deliver capital transportation projects.
- **Lack of Resources:** Over the years, the City has not provided adequate resources for staffing levels needed to keep up with the demand for transportation maintenance and repairs, whereas periodic bond programs have provided funding for capital investment. DPW programs are underfunded and the staff are at capacity with workload. The City needs a strategic, innovative approach to further leverage local money, access to federal grant and formula funds, and its share of state transportation funds in order to create a pipeline of funds that can augment what is already available and leveraged through the bonding programs.
- **Lack of Appropriate Capabilities:** One of the issues with DPW staff capabilities is the lack of appropriate professional background, as well as deficiencies in in-house financial management, contract administration, and federal procurement capacity. An overarching factor that erodes the ability of DPW to attract and retain capable staff to deliver projects is the relatively low pay offered by DPW, and the lack of opportunities to work under strong leadership aiming at an inspired transportation vision.
- **Lack of Coordination and Collaboration:** Disagreements among agencies are not resolved because the mechanisms that exist in City government for coordination and collaboration are not working and/or inadequate. As a result, there is no designated committee or “tie-breaking” process. This absence speaks not only to a lack of a central transportation focus in City government, but more so, to a lack of a “go-to” person or advocate for transportation in the City who could provide overall coordination and oversight of mobility issues. Better coordination is also needed with CIDs in the planning, design, and construction of projects in their areas, and with ABI, ARC and MARTA to align their respective visions with the City’s larger transportation vision.

These four issues will not necessarily be addressed by the creation of a new transportation-focused agency. Leadership, vision, and salary issues could be addressed within the existing structure. However, a transportation-focused restructuring would likely help in identifying and implementing a strategy to acquire adequate, reliable, and long-term transportation funding and improve interagency and external coordination and collaboration. Experience in Atlanta has shown that issues are often more easily addressed when they are part of an initiative to institute change and reinvigorate organizations and programs. Tying the change



necessary to address all these issues to a restructuring may provide the opportunity to more easily make improvements, as part of “something new and different.”

6.1.3 Lessons Learned and Best Practices

This study found that many municipalities in the U.S. have either had stand-alone departments of transportation for many years, have recently established stand-alone transportation agencies or consolidated transportation functions into their Public Works agency, or are considering restructuring to enhance transportation delivery. Very few have long-standing organizational structures that have not undergone some form of reorganization in recent years (Philadelphia being the only example in this study’s 11 peer cities). While each city has its own unique sets of opportunities and challenges, lessons learned and best practices emerged that could be applied to Atlanta:

- Restructuring is not the solution for poor transportation outcomes. However, restructuring can be the catalyst for better outcomes if changes are made to other factors that are necessary to make the restructuring effective and efficient.
- Restructuring often takes time to see lasting effects, often many years, and should involve a transition period with targeted implementation steps aimed at achieving very specific change objectives. Different organizational units can co-exist functionally within one department during an interim period to determine whether the structure supports desired outcomes and achievement of goals set out in a strategic plan.
- Strategic planning efforts can develop an approach to institutionalize changes, guide long-term policy direction and vision, and set a timeline for action together with change management strategies tailored to the specific agencies and context.
- One city hired a full-time Interim Transportation Director to help ensure the development of a Strategic Plan, hire staff, and reorganize the agency.
- Strong transportation organizations attract and retain talent by establishing clear career paths for engineers and planners through competitive pay, teaming opportunities, and a work environment that rewards responsiveness, collaboration and innovation.
- Formal interagency coordination processes and entities are present in cities where a transportation or public works agency does not have responsibility for all phases of capital project delivery to serve as “tie-breakers” and improve project delivery.
- Deputy Mayors / Assistant City Managers, Mayors’ Offices, policy groups, Commissions and Boards have played important roles in restructuring transportation organizations and/or evolving the transportation policy-setting process.
- During recent restructuring examples, city “transportation” agencies have often been re-branded as “mobility” agencies to reflect a broader, multimodal perspective.
- Solid waste responsibilities in most of the case study cities were found to be enterprise organizations, either in a separate agency or as part of a department of public works. Fleet management responsibilities were also often found as part of a public works department, but in some cases these responsibilities were housed in the Mayor’s Office given its cross-cutting function for all city departments.

- Perceived successful project delivery agencies tend to house all phases of the project development and delivery pipeline in one organization.

Consolidating capital project delivery and transportation operations within the same department minimizes issues related to one agency providing the scope and conceptual design that is then handed off to another agency (for final design and construction) that may not be committed to the guiding design principles of the originating department. It also minimizes issues related to one agency designing and building facilities that are then handed off to operations teams that cannot easily maintain them.

With the right combination of transportation, including revenue-generating, functions, general fund agencies suffering from chronic staffing shortages due to budget cuts can build capacity and deliver quality projects and services by establishing themselves as self-sustaining enterprises.

6.2 Structural Analysis

Our analysis has concluded that the City of Atlanta's transportation service and project delivery will not improve without some form of restructuring. Almost all of those interviewed (representing key stakeholders) agreed that Atlanta needs to move in a different direction if it is to be prepared for future mobility challenges. (Those who did not reach such a conclusion felt they did not know enough to make a recommendation.)

There was a sense among stakeholders that the timing is right for change. The success of the 2016 TSPLOST and MARTA referenda, GDOT and TIGER grants, the changes in Mayor and City Council that will occur with this year's election, the new Commissioners for DPW and DCP, DCP's update to the *Connect Atlanta* comprehensive transportation plan, the economic development and revitalization underway in the City, and the national shift in transportation philosophy towards Complete Streets and a multimodal future all represent a window of opportunity to reassess the standing organizational structure for transportation. Especially with the new funds, it is important that the City have strong, visionary leaders and teams focused on connecting local mobility needs with regional and statewide transit, goods movement (freight), and economic development goals and initiatives.

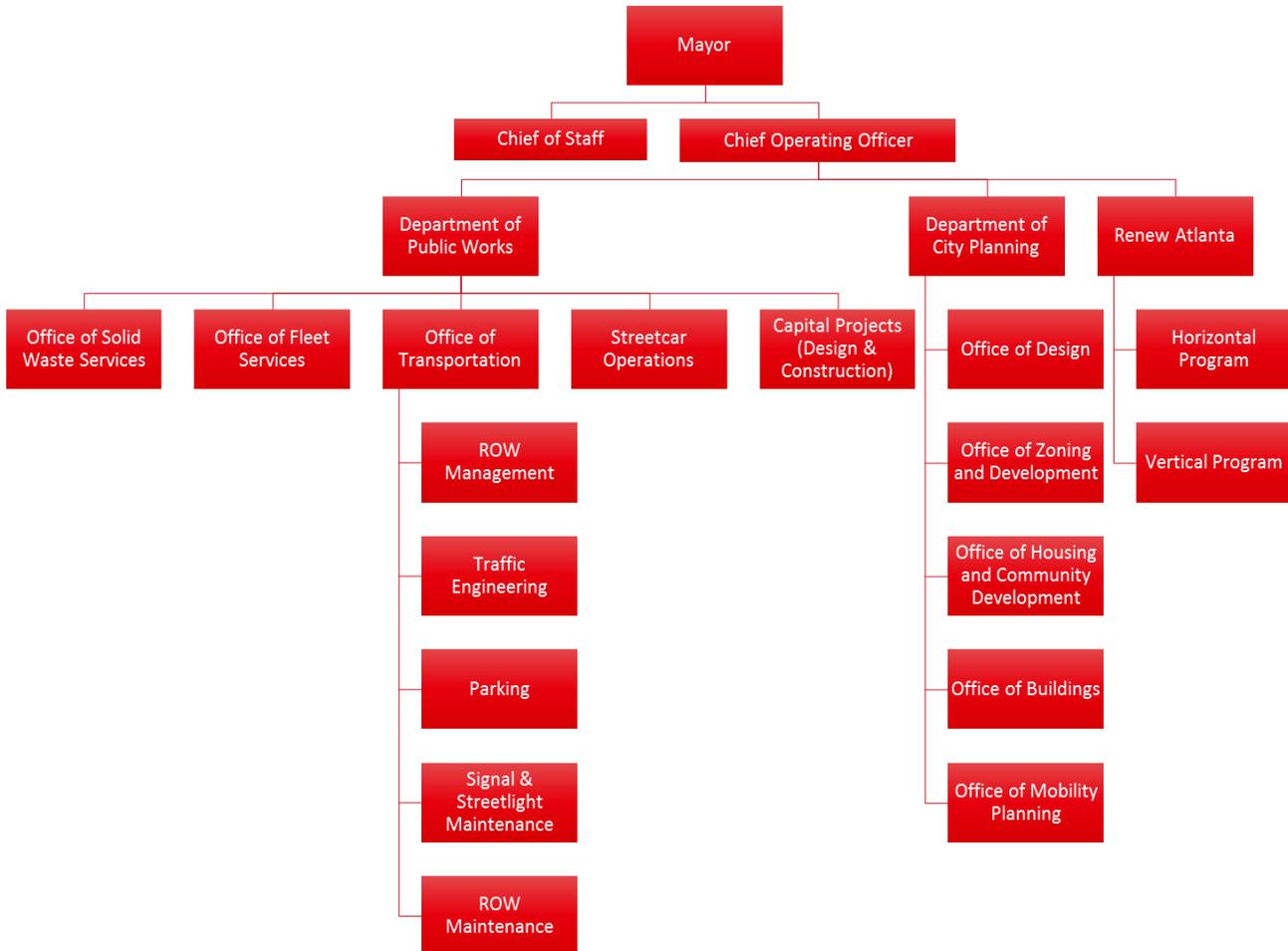
The question is, what type of change will best suit the transportation needs of Atlanta? While Atlanta faces transportation challenges that will not necessarily be addressed through the formation of a stand-alone, transportation-focused department, the reorganization of transportation functions could catalyze and provide the vehicle to address the current lack of transportation leadership, vision, talent and capacity.

The various structures for managing transportation in the peer cities studied for this report provide a range of potential models in answering this question. They range from maintaining the status quo to the wholesale consolidation of all transportation functions into a single city department. The alternatives for managing transportation are:



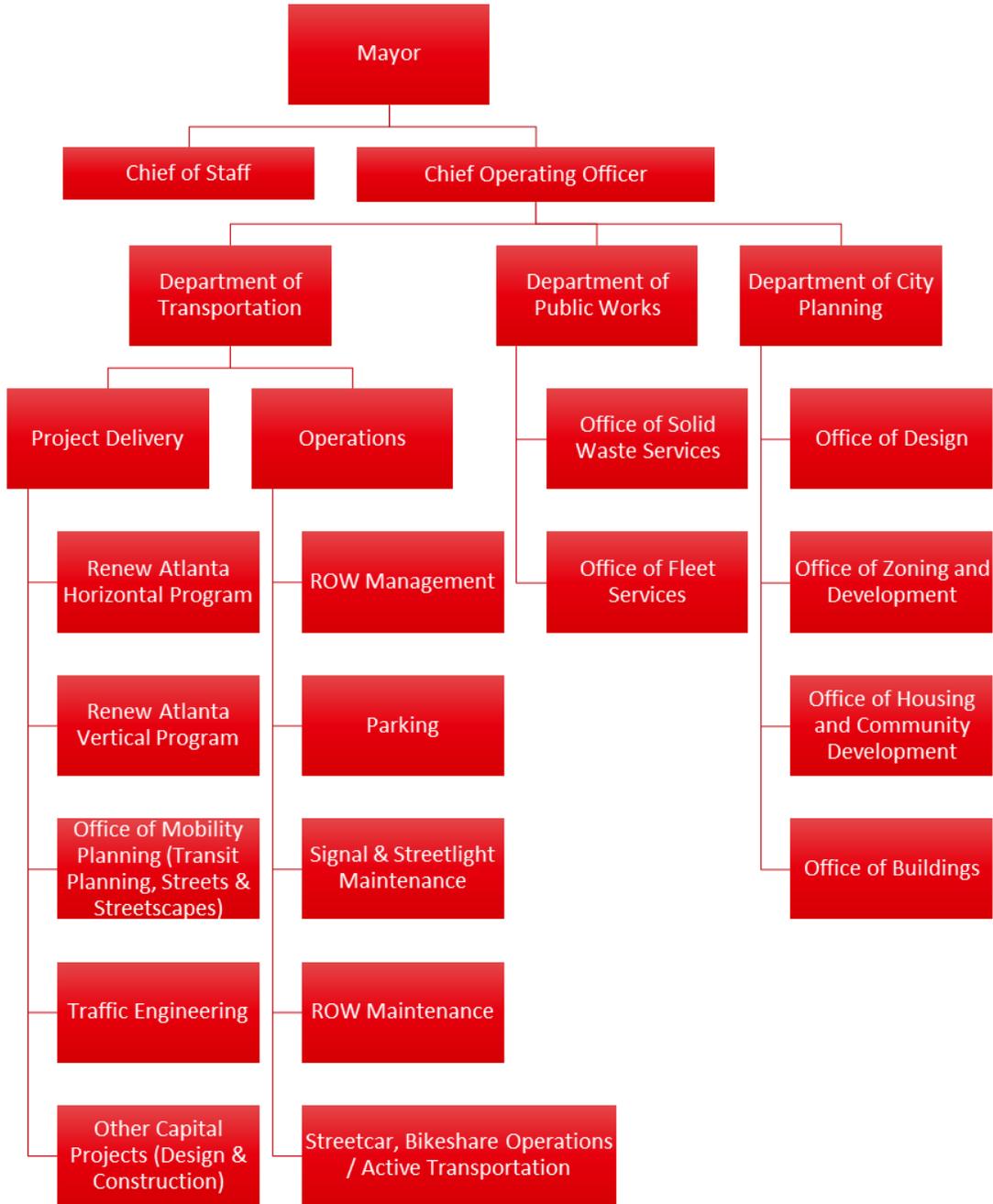
- Alternative 1 - No structural change:** The City could maintain the status quo (see Figure 22). As noted above, the consensus among stakeholders within and outside of government is that change is needed and the time for change is now.

Figure 22. Current Organizational Structure of Transportation-related Agencies



- Alternative 2 – Stand-alone Transportation Agency:** Establish a stand-alone transportation-focused department, separate from DPW and DCP, under a new Commissioner that absorbs DPW’s transportation units, DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST. Similar to the departments of transportation/mobility in Baltimore, Seattle and Dallas, this structure consolidates all city transportation functions into one stand-alone agency that is focused on transportation (see Figure 23).

Figure 23. Stand-alone Transportation Agency



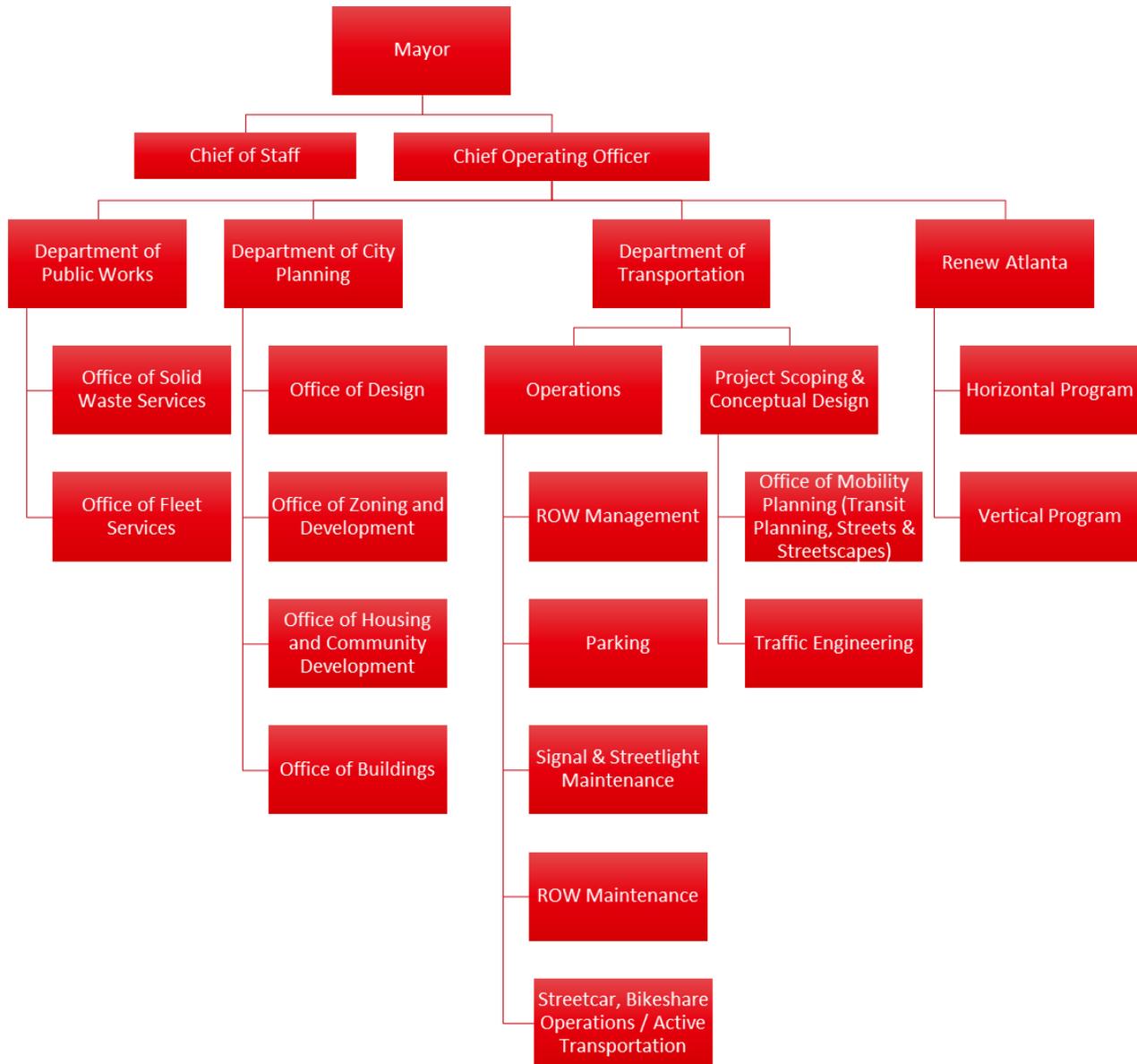
- Alternative 3 – Rebrand Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST:** Rebrand Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST to formally establish it as a transportation and capital project delivery department, and have it absorb DPW’s transportation units and DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning: Similar to San Antonio’s structure, all transportation functions within City government are consolidated under Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST such that other City agencies (e.g., Fire, Police, DPR) become or continue to be clients of its project delivery unit (see Figure 24). The primary focus of the agency would remain capital project delivery as Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST focuses today, but it would also be responsible for planning, operation and maintenance of the transportation system.

Figure 24. Rebrand Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST as Transportation Agency



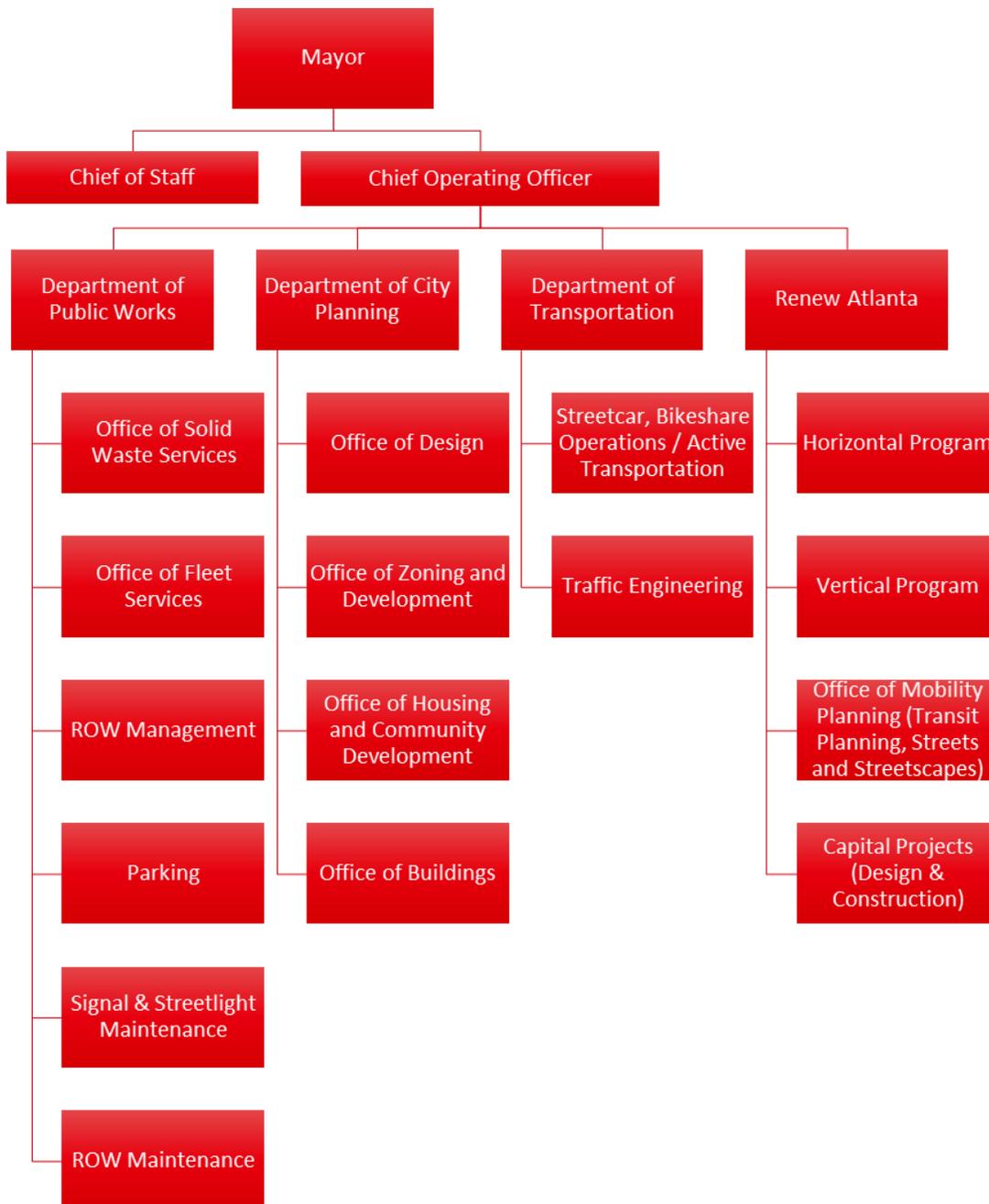
- Alternative 4 – Stand-alone Transportation Agency and Separate Project Delivery Agency:** Merge DPW’s transportation units and DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning into a separate stand-alone, transportation-focused department under a new Commissioner, and establish Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST as a separate project delivery-focused City agency: As in San Francisco and Oakland, transportation functions in DPW and DCP are consolidated into a stand-alone transportation agency and that becomes a customer of Renew Atlanta/TSLOST for project delivery (see Figure 25).

Figure 25. Stand-alone Transportation Agency and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST as Separate Agency Focused on Project Delivery



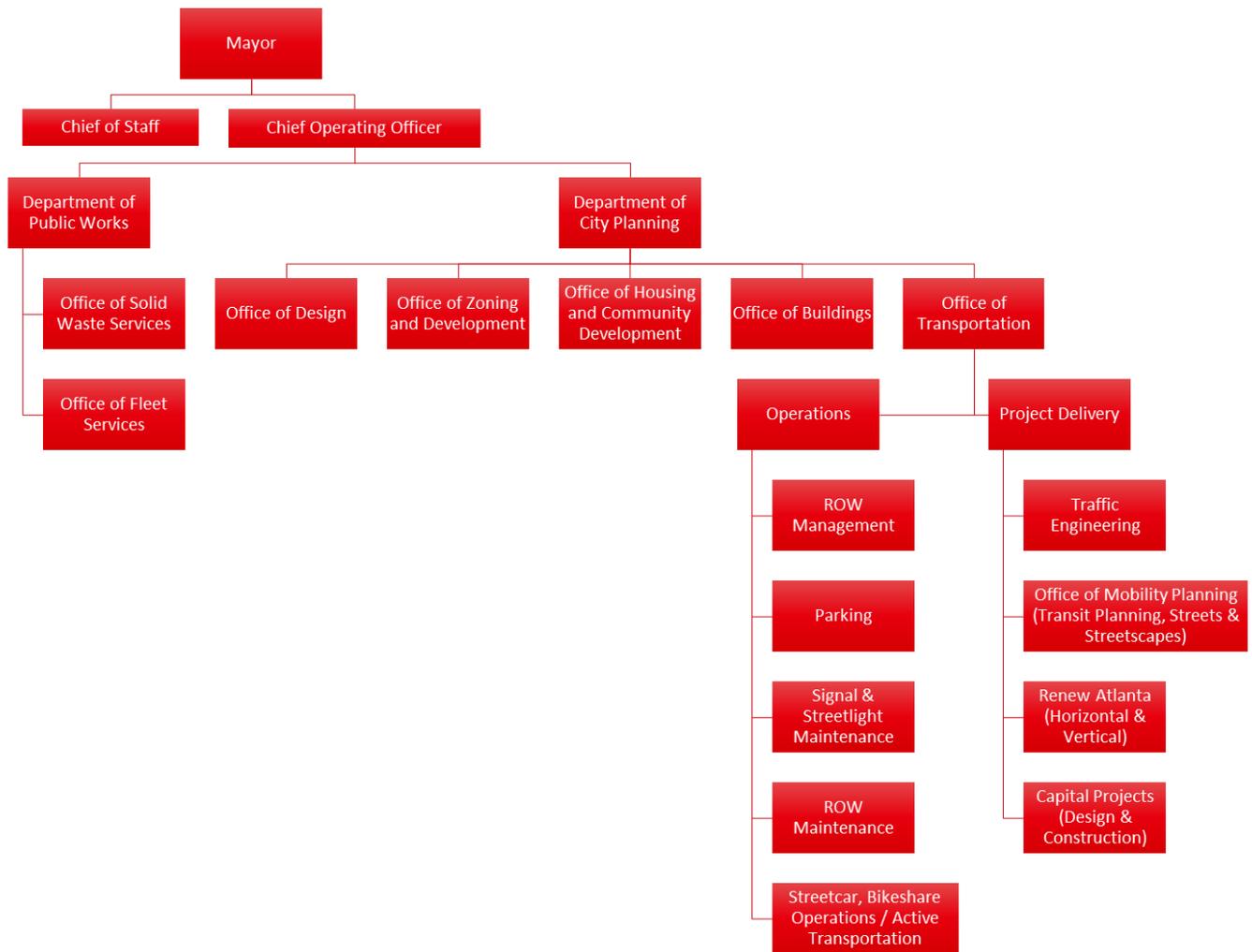
- Alternative 5 – Stand-alone Transportation Agency and Separate, Expanded Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST:** Merge DPW’s traffic engineering and operations, and DCP’s active transportation functions into a stand-alone, transportation-focused department under a new Commissioner, and transfer DPW’s capital project and DCP’s transportation planning and streets and streetscapes functions to Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST: Replicating Miami’s structure, DPW would retain some transportation functions and shed some to the new transportation agency, while DCP sheds its Office of Mobility Planning, which is dispersed to the new transportation agency and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST (see Figure 26).

Figure 26. Stand-alone Transportation Agency and Separate Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST with Expanded Responsibilities



- Alternative 6 – Office of Mobility in DCP:** Establish an Office of Mobility and Streets within DCP under a new Deputy Commissioner, absorbing DPW’s transportation units and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST: Under this alternative, DCP would house all the city’s transportation functions, which would reduce the total number of City agencies (see Figure 27)

Figure 27. Office of Mobility in DCP



- Alternative 7 – Office of Mobility in DPW:** Establish an Office of Mobility and Streets within DPW under a new Deputy Commissioner, absorbing DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSP/LOST: Under this alternative, DPW would house all the City’s transportation functions, which would reduce the total number of City agencies (see Figure 28).

Figure 28. Office of Mobility in DPW



- Alternative 8 – Consolidated Transportation Functions in DPW:** Consolidate transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW’s Office of Transportation (OOT), hire a manager over OOT directly reporting to the Commissioner, and formalize coordinating relationships with DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST: This alternative involves change, but would not trigger the need for legislative action (see Figure 29). Changes would include building internal capacity and capabilities at DPW, the hiring of a new leader over DPW’s transportation office, and strong collaboration with DCP and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST. It is the least disruptive of all the alternatives and could be considered a near-term structure

Figure 29. Consolidated Transportation Functions in DPW



- **Alternative 9 - Combination of alternatives:** This alternative is a combination of the prior alternative, which could be implemented in the very near-term, and one of the longer-term structures proposed.

Note that some alternatives that propose consolidated transportation departments or offices result in functions divided into two units - operations and project delivery. This aligns with Commissioner Johnson's proposed reorganization of the Atlanta DPW (see Chapter 2), and replicates structures seen in peer cities such as Seattle and Baltimore.

Also note that, while some of the alternatives place the Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST under a Project Delivery unit, the exact placement of the various sections under the Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST warrants further examination. Not all units within the two entities serve project delivery purposes - the Office of Mobility Planning provides policy and active transportation functionalities and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST undertakes vertical, as well as horizontal, infrastructure development.

To help determine which alternative(s) to recommend, all the alternatives were compared against the ten key criteria listed in Table 21:

- **Singular focus on mobility:** This criterion aligns with the need for transportation vision and capabilities. Having all transportation functions under one roof has proven valuable to peer cities in fostering a common vision and mitigating delays due to dependence on other agencies for support.
- **No further dilution of departmental focus:** An alternative should not exacerbate an existing problem by taking on additional roles and responsibilities that further dilute an agency's mission and overall effectiveness.
- **New senior transportation leadership, bringing in ideas and talent from outside:** Undertaking a national search and bringing in new senior leadership from the outside has proven successful in peer cities and provided restructuring efforts the focus, energy and vision necessary to carry them out. New leadership from outside city government also provides fresh perspective and helps recruit other talent from outside city government.
- **All capital project delivery functions under one roof:** Identified as a best practice by peer cities, housing all project delivery units, from planners to engineers to construction managers, under one project delivery manager has the benefit of mitigating the challenges of hand-offs between different agencies or business units along the project development and delivery pipeline and the consequences of siloed decision-making.
- **Capital project delivery and operations under one roof:** A best practice identified by peer cities is having all transportation functions, including project delivery and operations, under one roof, which expedites an agency's response to transportation-related requests. An agency that has to maintain the street improvements it installs is more likely to design and construct infrastructure it can feasibly maintain.
- **Supports access to reliable funding sources:** The likelihood of an alternative to facilitate the ability of an agency to formulate a strategy for successful acquisition of additional transportation funding is greater in structures that consolidate transportation functions, which can often better articulate the value of investing in transportation systems.
- **Improves coordination and collaboration:** The likelihood of an alternative to improve interagency coordination and collaboration with external stakeholders is greater in structures that consolidate transportation functions.

- **No additional resources required:** This criterion relates to ease of implementation in that a reorganization is more financially feasible and quicker to implement if it does not require additional operating funds or FTEs. Only the baseline status quo alternative met this criterion because the other alternatives, at minimum, required the creation of one new leadership position, whereas most would likely require some changes in staff position descriptions and the addition of new positions.
- **Maintains or reduces total number of city agencies:** By maintaining or reducing the overall number of agencies through restructuring, the City could minimize the cost of change or, in the case of reduction, realize savings in overhead and administrative costs (which was found to be the case in several peer cities).
- **No legislation required:** This criterion speaks to ease of implementation. If no legislation is required to create this structure, it will take less time and be less disruptive to implement.

The alternatives that met more criteria scored higher and thus were considered more suitable for Atlanta City government. Table 21 shows that the alternatives that best meet Atlanta’s needs are: (a) the creation of a stand-alone transportation-focused department under a new Commissioner, separate from DPW and DCP, that absorbs DPW’s transportation units, DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST; and (b) the combination of alternatives, one serving a short-term purpose (consolidation of transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW’s Office of Transportation, hiring a new manager over OOT directly reporting to the Commissioner, and formalizing coordinating relationships with DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST), with a more long-lasting alternative implemented in the longer-term (the creation of a stand-alone transportation-focused department, separate from DPW and DCP, under a new Commissioner that absorbs DPW’s transportation units, DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, using one of the units, for example, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST as the foundation for the new agency).



Table 21. Comparison of Structural Alternatives

Criteria → Structural Alternatives ↓	Peer city using model	Singular departmental focus on mobility	No further dilution of departmental focus	New senior transportation leadership, bringing in ideas and talent from outside	All capital project delivery functions under one roof	Capital project delivery and operations under one roof	Supports access to additional reliable funding	Improves coordination and collaboration	No new additional resources required	Maintains or reduces total number of city agencies	No legislation required	No. of Criteria Met
1. Establish a stand-alone transportation-focused department, separate from DPW and DCP, under a new Commissioner and absorbing DPW's transportation units, DCP's Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta	Baltimore, Seattle, Dallas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		8
2. Rebrand Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, formally establish it as capital projects and transportation department, and have it absorb DPW's transportation units and DCP's Office of Mobility Planning (other city agencies - e.g., Fire, Police, DPR - become clients)	San Antonio	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		6
3. Merge DPW's transportation units and DCP's Office of Mobility Planning into a separate standalone transportation-focused department under a new Commissioner, and establish Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST as a separate project delivery-focused city agency (ADMS becomes a customer of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST)	San Francisco, Oakland	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				5
4. Merge DPW's Streetcar operations, capital projects, and traffic engineering and operations, and DCP's active transportation functions into a stand-alone transportation-focused department under a new Commissioner, and transfer DPW's capital project and DCP's transportation planning and streets and streetscapes functions to Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST	Miami		✓	✓	✓							3

Table 21. Comparison of Structural Alternatives (Continued)

Criteria →	Peer city using model	Singular departmental focus on mobility	No further dilution of departmental focus	New senior transportation leadership, bringing in ideas and talent from outside	All capital project delivery functions under one roof	Capital project delivery and operations under one roof	Supports access to additional reliable funding	Improves coordination and collaboration	No new additional resources required	Maintains or reduces total number of city agencies	No legislation required	No. of Criteria Met
5. Establish an Office of Mobility and Streets within DCP under a new Deputy Commissioner, absorbing DPW's transportation units and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOSOT	--			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		6
6. Establish an Office of Mobility and Streets within DPW under a new Deputy Commissioner, absorbing DCP's Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST	Philadelphia, Nashville, Houston			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		6
7. Consolidate transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW's Office of Transportation (OOT), hire a new manager over OOT directly reporting to the Commissioner, and formalize coordinating relationships with DCP's Office of Mobility Planning and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST	--	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
8. Combination of alternatives (Alt. 7 in near term; Alt. 1, in longer term)	--	✓	✓	✓	✓ (1/2)	✓	✓	✓	✓ (1/2)	✓	✓ (1/2)	8.5



6.3 Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study and alternatives analysis, it is recommended that the City of Atlanta take the following actions to improve its management of transportation and move it towards a sustainable, multimodal transportation future:

Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Long-Term	Set a long-term goal of consolidating all transportation functions in the City, currently within DPW, DCP, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, into a stand-alone transportation-focused department, led by a new Commissioner hired from a national search. Have the restructuring plan approved by the City Council following a substantial public engagement process before adoption.	The new transportation agency should be established to catalyze and provide the vehicle to address the need for transportation leadership, vision, talent and capacity. As such, it should house all project delivery units under one project delivery manager, consolidate project delivery and transportation operations, and be led by a new Commissioner who can provide fresh perspective and vision. However, restructuring takes time, years often, and should involve a transition period and development of a change management plan and strategies that allow for communication with and feedback from impacted staff and stakeholders, formulation and approval of a reorganization plan, legislation, and a strategic plan for the new agency, hiring of the new Commissioner and staff, and creation of accounts and budget for the new agency. This should follow the best practice that restructuring plans are likely to succeed if they are approved by a commission or City Council and follow a substantial public engagement process before adoption.
Long-Term	Name the agency the “Atlanta Department of Mobility and Streets” (ADMS).	Rebranding transportation agencies as “mobility” agencies is a means of modernizing and clarifying the role of the agency as covering all modes in terms that the public understands. We include “streets” in the recommended name because the city’s street network is a major responsibility of the new agency, and several of the peer city officials noted to the importance of making sure the public understands what the new agency is responsible for.

Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale (Continued)

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Near-Term	<p>In the near-term, consolidate transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW’s Office of Transportation, led by a new Deputy Commissioner hired from a national search, who reports directly to the DPW Commissioner. Assess the consolidation after 2 years to determine whether to proceed with the creation of ADMS.</p>	<p>The City should not have to wait years for change, so it should do everything short of any action that triggers the need for legislation. Thus, it should proceed with a reorganization and capacity-building effort within DPW to give it a more robust transportation office. Different functional units can co-exist functionally within one department during the near-term to determine whether the structure supports desired outcomes and achieves the goals to be set out in a strategic plan. In addition, bringing in a new full-time Deputy Commissioner for Transportation is an effective means of ensuring the development of the Strategic Plan, hiring staff, and reorganizing the agency. This reorganization should be paired with other actions, listed below, that are necessary to make the restructuring effective and efficient.</p>



Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale (Continued)

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Near-Term	<p>Strengthen and expand formal policy-setting and coordinating bodies through the Chief Operating Officer, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chief Operating Officer’s Transportation Policy Group to provide oversight of and set policy for DPW’s Office of Transportation, DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST ▪ An Interagency Group among local (DPW, DCP, Department of Finance, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, ABI), regional (MARTA), and state partners (GDOT) to coordinate funding and delivery of complex projects of regional significance, and to strategize for the pursuit of project funding ▪ The existing CID Coordinating Committee for CIDs and the City (DPW, DCP, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST) to coordinate on projects and program delivery (ask the CIDs to recommend the structure of such a committee) 	<p>Policy-setting by the Mayor and City Council, and as laid out for the long-term in the transportation element of the city’s comprehensive plan, provide the direction for what transportation agencies are expected to achieve. In addition, formal interagency coordination processes and entities are present in cities where a transportation or public works agency does not have the responsibility for all phases of capital project delivery to serve as “tie-breakers” and improve project delivery. Existing coordination processes with CIDs, ABI and MARTA should be strengthened to align transportation plans, visions, and project delivery. In Atlanta, the Chief Operating Officer is responsible for coordination and communication between and among City departments and agencies and the various agencies of other levels of government and other public and private agencies. Therefore, the COO is responsible for coordination and serving as an interagency tie-breaker. One limitation to be overcome, however, is that the COO does not oversee the Department of Finance, which is a key component of the needed cooperation.</p>

Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale (Continued)

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Near-Term	<p>Have DPW transportation staff work with Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST and DCP's Office of Mobility Planning staff to develop a Strategic Business Plan for the delivery of improvements consistent with the principles and strategies set out in DCP's <i>Connect Atlanta Plan</i>. The Strategic Business Plan should define the mission and vision of the new, near-term DPW transportation office and any successor to it, and provide one- and three-year benchmarks the agencies will use to guide their efforts in the near-term. The plan should identify ways to unify staff and processes involving the three agencies. It should also identify the outcomes by which the near-term DPW transportation office, DCP Office of Mobility Planning, and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST will be measured after two years to help City leaders determine whether to proceed with creation of a stand-alone transportation department.</p>	<p>Strategic planning efforts will define the vision and missions for the agencies, goals and measurable objectives, define the strategies to be undertaken to achieve the goals, and set a timeline for action. It is also a way to mitigate skepticism from staff about the new initiative if staff are engaged early and often, and it is deliberately used as a vehicle to foster a sense of ownership of the direction the City is taking in regards to transportation.</p>



Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale (Continued)

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Near-Term	<p>Undertake an assessment that defines baseline capabilities and performance outcomes for transportation in Atlanta, and the additional budget and FTEs needed for the new, near-term DPW transportation office, and any successor to it, to meet them. The assessment should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine changes that need to be made (e.g., to city position classification and salary ranges, benefits, employee development opportunities, rewards and recognition programs, personnel performance review requirements, and trainings and mentorships) that will attract and retain talent; ▪ Determine to what extent the existing workforce has the adequate skills, licenses / certifications, and capacity to respond to organizational needs and changes, what the new department will need more of, less of, or completely new in relation to talent, and how it will strategically meet its workforce needs ▪ Recommend a change management plan and strategies. 	<p>Reorganizing DPW in the near-term and creating ADMS in the long-term will not address many of the issues that hinder the city's ability to deliver transportation services and projects. Stakeholders observed that DPW currently lacks capital project delivery, right-of-way enforcement, federal procurement, contract administration, and compliance expertise and capabilities. DPW and any of its successors will need to attract and retain talent by establishing clear career paths for engineers and planners through competitive pay, training and mentorship opportunities, and a work environment that rewards and recognizes performance, collaboration and innovation.</p>
Near-Term	<p>Examine whether the DPW transportation office could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise, and identify a funding strategy for pursuing, acquiring, and administering state and federal grant and formula funds.</p>	<p>General fund agencies suffering from chronic staffing shortages due to budget cuts can build capacity and deliver quality projects and services by requesting and receiving more General Fund dollars and positions or establishing themselves as self-sustaining enterprises, and having a funding strategy for long-term, consistent delivery of transportation services and projects.</p>

Table 22. Recommendations - Timing and Rationale (Continued)

Timing	Recommendations	Rationale
Near-Term & Long-Term	Carry out an assessment of the future for Solid Waste and Fleet Services that determines whether they should stay within DPW, merge with another department, or separate into their own stand-alone departments.	In the long-term, given the enterprise-funded nature of solid waste and using DWM as a model, it currently appears that it would make sense to create a separate Solid Waste agency. Fleet Services could be housed in a separate office under the Mayor’s Office. Solid waste is often found as a separate unit and as an enterprise agency in other cities. Such an agency is better able to focus on delivery of its core services.

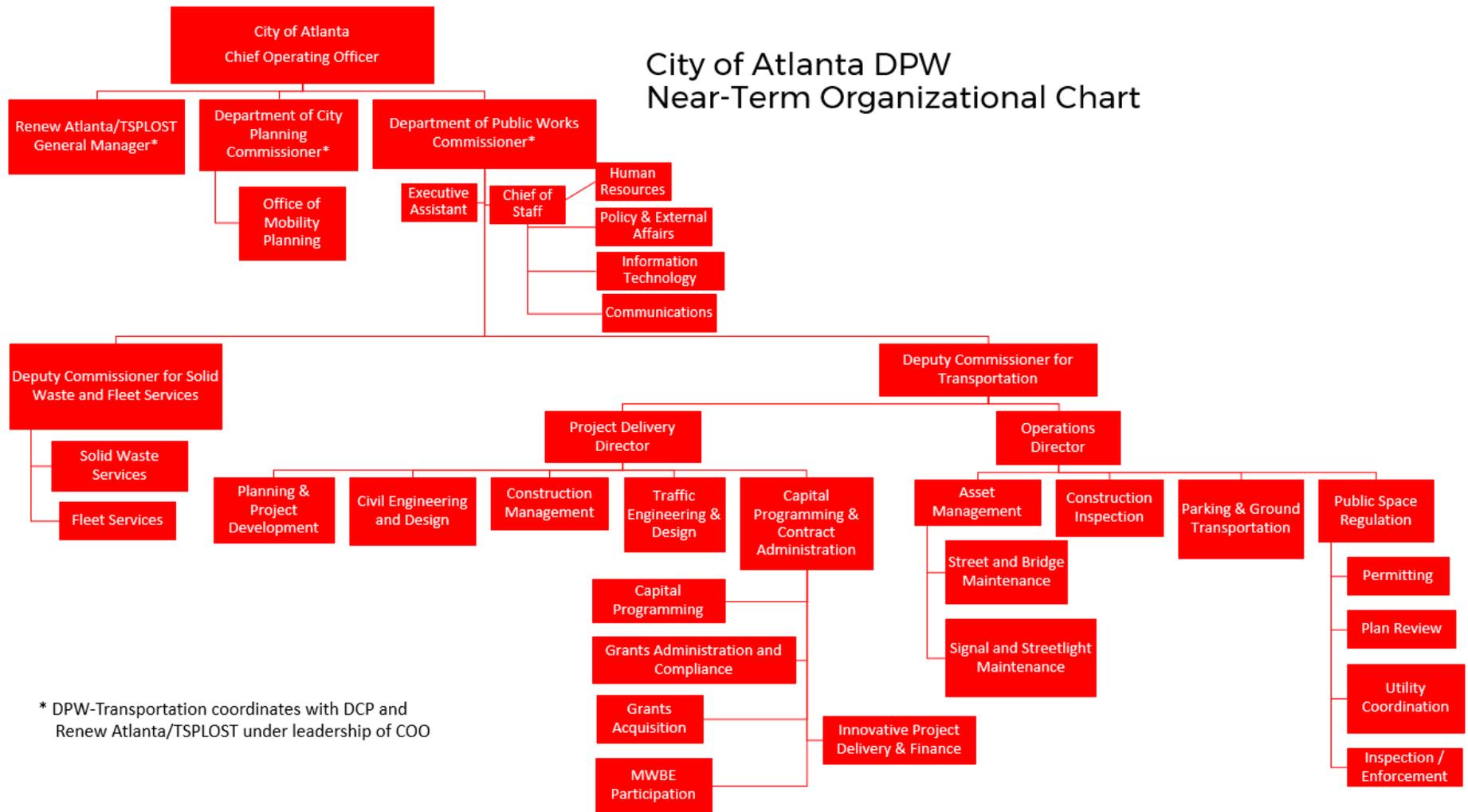


6.4 Organizational Structure

Two organizational structures are recommended as part of this analysis – a near-term structure and a long-term structure. The near-term structure shown in Figure 30 reorganizes all DPW’s current transportation functions under a Deputy Commissioner for Transportation and would pave the way for a more robust transportation unit within DPW, but not trigger the need for any legislation. Another Deputy Commissioner would be responsible for the DPW’s Solid Waste and Fleet Services units. During this rebuilding period, the reorganized Office of Transportation within DPW would operate as its own “agency within an agency,” much like the transportation units within Philadelphia’s Department of Streets and Nashville’s DPW.

The goal of the near-term DPW organizational structure is to create as robust a transportation office within DPW as current law allows to test whether the issues of leadership, vision, resources, capabilities, and coordination can be addressed by creating a functional transportation unit within DPW.

Figure 30 City of Atlanta DPW - Near-Term Organizational Chart



The near-term DPW structure proposes that the Office of Transportation be divided into two sections, one responsible for operations and the other managing project delivery, each managed by a Director and reporting to the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation. The project delivery director would supervise pre-construction and construction activities, traffic safety and engineering, and capital programming and contract administration functions. Not all of these functions exist currently within the DPW, including the capital programming and contract administration unit, which is needed to develop and pursue a capital funding strategy, and provide staff capabilities for contract administration and management, federal procurement, and innovative project delivery and finance practices (e.g., public-private partnerships, design-build procurement).

The Operations Division would be responsible for asset management,⁶¹ streetcar operations,⁶² and parking. It would also manage construction inspection, typically under project delivery units, but a best practice to ensure that capital projects are feasibly maintained by DPW, and any successor to it, as well as public space, or right-of-way, regulation.

Rebranding right-of-way management functions as Public Space Regulation reflects a function that is understandable to the public and signals a shift to thinking of roads and sidewalks as public spaces. As Public Space Regulation, the unit also can convey that it is the protector of the public interest for public spaces, especially if it includes a stronger inspection/enforcement arm that can enforce right-of-way requirements and specifications under approved permits and existing laws and regulations (e.g., to cite violators that perform utility street cuts that are not in compliance with the City's Right-of-Way Manual or block sidewalks or bicycle lanes endangering bicycle and pedestrian movement). In the near-term, the Parking function under the Operations Director should be rebranded the Parking and Curbside Management section and be responsible for managing and monetizing curb access for parking purposes, but also ridesharing, transit, freight and delivery vehicles, as well as the connected and automated vehicles Atlanta is likely to see in the future.

On top of providing more transportation focus to DPW and new senior transportation leadership to bring in ideas and talent from the outside, benefits of starting with this near-term DPW structure are that it:

- Is consistent with Atlanta's recent experience with DCP and DPR's recent reorganizations and leadership initiatives, which provide models for using a departmental structural reorganization to provide the necessary focus and commitment toward greater investment, and ultimately improvement in the delivery of services;
- Supports continuity from the DCP Office of Mobility Planning's efforts to update its comprehensive transportation plan (*Connect Atlanta Plan*), active transportation planning and bikeshare operations, and guide the city's shift to a multimodal mobility focus; and
- Supports continuity of Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST's capital project delivery initiatives, which include both transportation and non-transportation projects ("vertical" projects – parks and buildings).

As described throughout this study, the problem of a lack of transportation vision and leadership is not directly attributable to DPW or its structure. However, the Resolution and some interviewees have put a lot of weight

⁶¹ Asset management refers to the strategic and systematic process of acquiring, operating, maintaining, upgrading, replacing and disposing of physical **assets** effectively throughout their lifecycle at lowest lifecycle cost, or in other words, efforts to maximize the value received from existing roads, signs, and streetlights.

⁶² This will transition out of DPW as a result of a September 2017 ordinance transferring Streetcar operations and assets to MARTA.

behind having a new transportation department and Commissioner as a “magic bullet” solution. Leadership at the executive levels of City agencies like DPW is important for realizing the vision, but policy direction and vision can be set at other levels: both at DCP in terms of the Connect Atlanta plan that links transportation goals to the City’s economic, land use, and quality of life goals, and by elected policy-makers (the Mayor and City Council).

In this transition period, the City’s focus should be on recruiting the right talent to lead the various divisions and sections in the DPW transportation office, acquiring additional budget and FTEs to effectively perform baseline capabilities for a transportation agency, developing a Strategic Business Plan, and establishing and utilizing standards and procedures. As Oakland’s example demonstrated, these activities will take time to complete and achieve lasting effects from. Thus, a rebuilding period of no less than two years is recommended.

Throughout this two-year period, the City should keep its mind open to maintaining this structure if, through it, the perception and performance of the DPW Office of Transportation meets the expectations of the public, stakeholders, and elected officials. After the two-year period, the City should measure and test the near-term structure against the goal of delivering more effective transportation leadership, vision, funding strategy, capabilities, coordination, and collaboration, as well as the stated goals of the Strategic Business Plan. It should also assess whether the near-term structure and the potential movement towards more extensive restructuring diminishes the effectiveness of DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning transportation planning, active transportation management, and Complete Streets initiatives, Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST’s project delivery, and/or DPW’s Solid Waste and Fleet Management functions.

If, after this two-year period, expectations and goals are not met and the City decides to proceed with the formation of a stand-alone transportation agency, it should establish a new Atlanta Department of Mobility and Streets (ADMS), structured as shown in Figure 31. The new agency could generally retain the structure of the near-term DPW Office of Transportation, except that:

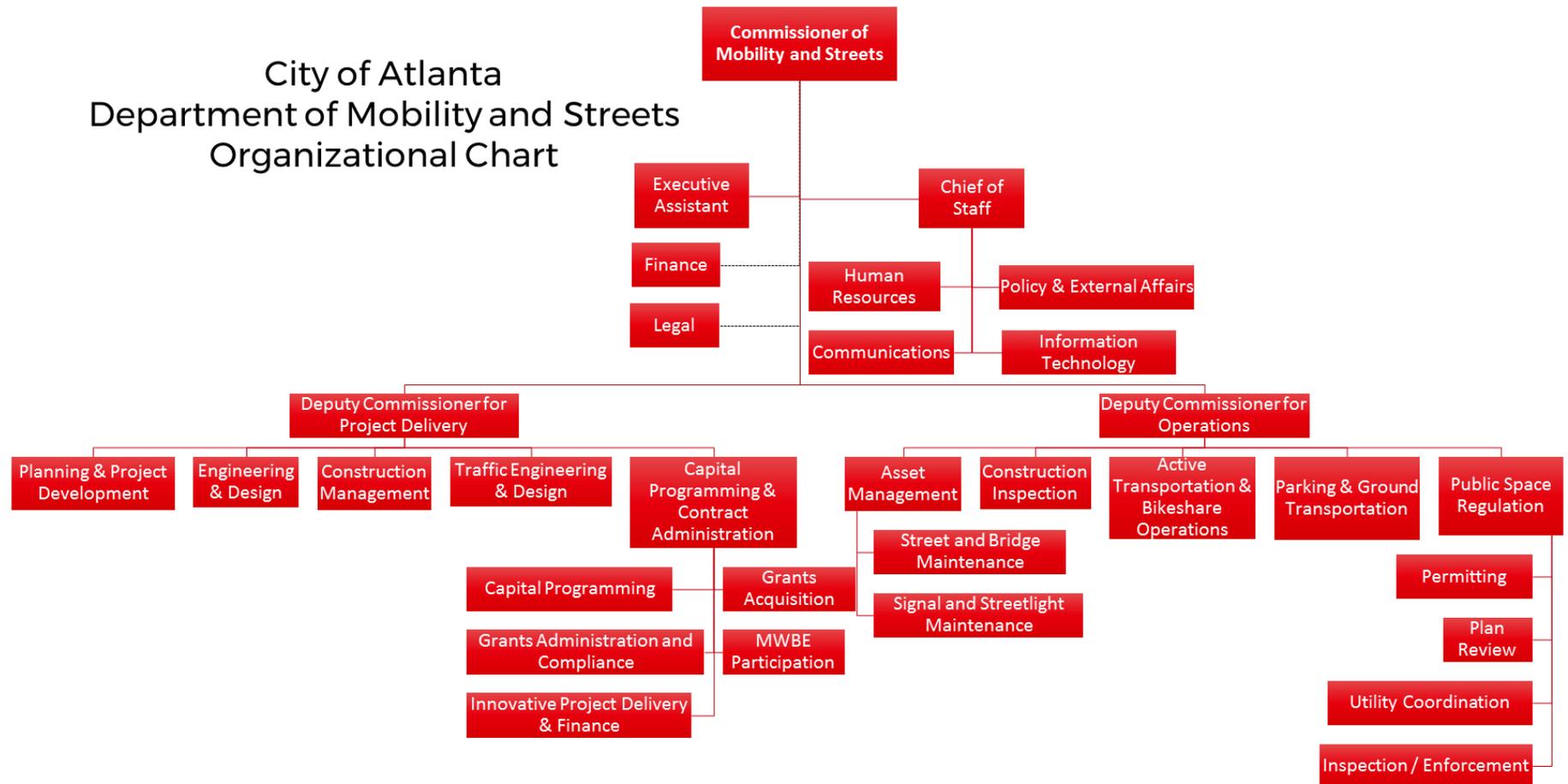
- The Department is led by a Commissioner for Mobility and Streets with his or her own administrative staff to oversee human resources, communications, policy and external affairs, and information technology;
- The managers of the Project Delivery and Operations units are Deputy Commissioners;
- The Operations unit includes Active Transportation and Bikeshare operations functions to cover what the DCP Office of Mobility Planning’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Transit unit is responsible for currently; and
- The Transit Planning and Streets and Streetscapes functions currently in the DCP Office of Mobility would be housed within the Planning and Project Development unit under the Deputy Commissioner for Project Delivery and would coordinate with the Atlanta BeltLine, among other tasks.

While the creation of a new agency in the long-term is the most advantageous alternative from a city mobility perspective, it may be difficult to practically implement due to financial and political reasons. Therefore, the City’s assessment at the end of the two-year period should include a determination as to whether ADMS would take the form of a completely new entity or, for ease of implementation, use Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, DPW’s Office of Transportation, or DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning as its foundation.

To establish this new department, a reorganization plan will have to be completed and approved by the City Council, as well as legislation that defines the agency, its roles and responsibilities, the qualifications of the Commissioner, and the offices within the department and their functions. A timeline for action is presented in the next section that includes this and other recommended steps towards implementation.



Figure 31 ADMS Organizational Chart



6.4.1 Action Plan

The recommended approach to restructuring transportation in Atlanta is intended to improve the performance and delivery of transportation projects and services through focused leaders who formulate a unified transportation vision, an approach that acquires additional resources and staff capabilities, and new processes that enhance collaboration. An implementation action plan is recommended below in Table 23 that roughly outlines a timeline of next steps the City will need to take to realize the long-term goal of establishing a standalone transportation-focused department.

Table 23. Next Steps / Action Plan

Year	Quarter	Actions
1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The DPW Commissioner to discuss findings and recommendations of this study with the Mayor, Chief Operating Officer and City Council. ▪ If the recommendations are accepted, the DPW Commissioner would hold a meeting with DPW management to explain the decision to reorganize DPW, hire a Deputy Commissioner for Transportation, and establish formal coordination between agencies and with external stakeholders. ▪ The DPW and DCP Commissioners and Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST General Manager to choose lead staff, identify resources for and kick off the Strategic Business Plan process. ▪ The DPW Commissioner to identify resources for and undertake: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A workforce assessment that measures current capabilities, defines the desired baseline capabilities and performance outcomes for transportation in Atlanta, and the additional skills, operating budget, and FTEs needed for the near-term DPW transportation office, and any successor to it, to meet them. ○ A financial assessment that examines whether the office could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise and identifies a funding strategy for pursuing, acquiring, and administering state and federal grant and formula funds. ○ A recruitment and retention study that determines strategies to attract and retain talent, including changes to city position classification and salary ranges, benefits, employee development opportunities, rewards and recognition, personnel performance review, and trainings and mentorships. ○ Drafting of job descriptions for the Deputy Commissioner of Transportation and other new positions, and a detailed near-term organizational chart for DPW. ○ A change management plan. ▪ The Chief Operating Officer to establish formal COO Transportation Policy Group and Interagency Group, and strengthen the existing CID Coordinating Committee and hold meetings. ▪ By the end of the quarter, the DPW Commissioner to hire a Deputy Commissioner for Transportation, following a rigorous national search and vetting process.



Table 23. Next Steps / Action Plan (Continued)

Year	Quarter	Actions
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DPW Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for Transportation to brief new elected officials (City Council and Mayor) and their staff on progress made to date and next steps towards the restructuring. ▪ The DPW Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for Transportation to finalize a detailed near-term organizational chart for DPW and begin to implement consolidation of transportation functions currently within DPW into DPW's Office of Transportation. ▪ City Council approves FY 2019 budget. ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings. ▪ Continued Strategic Business Plan development with Deputy Commissioner for Transportation involved. ▪ By the end of the quarter, the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation to hire an Operations Director and Project Delivery Director, following a rigorous national search and vetting process.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings. ▪ Completion of financial and human resource assessment with a determination of: (1) baseline capabilities and performance outcomes for transportation in Atlanta and the additional budget and FTEs needed for the DPW transportation office, and any successor to it, to meet them; (2) whether the office could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise; and (3) a funding strategy for pursuing, acquiring, and administering state and federal grant and formula funds. ▪ Continued Strategic Business Plan development. ▪ During the quarter, the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation and Operations and Project Delivery Directors to hire Assistant Directors for each of the sections under the Operations and Project Delivery Divisions.
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DPW Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner for Transportation, and City CFO to decide whether ADMS could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise agency. ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings (assess effectiveness and identify any needed changes). ▪ Finalize and publish the Strategic Business Plan. ▪ By the end of the quarter, the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation and Operations and Project Delivery Directors to hire Assistant Directors for each of the sections under the Operations and Project Delivery Divisions.

Table 23. Next Steps / Action Plan (Continued)

Year	Quarter	Actions
2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings. ▪ During the quarter, the Operations and Project Delivery Directors and their Assistant Directors to aggressively recruit for and fill staff vacancies. ▪ DPW Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for Transportation to propose FY 2020 budget for DPW’s Office of Transportation that includes recommended level of funding and FTEs from financial and human resource assessment, and determination of whether it could be set up as a self-sustaining enterprise agency.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The DPW Commissioner to identify resources for and initiate an assessment of the future for Solid Waste and Fleet Services, determining whether they should stay together as a smaller DPW or separate into their own enterprise-funded departments. ▪ City Council approves FY 2020 budget. ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings. ▪ During the quarter, the Operations and Project Delivery Directors and their Assistant Directors to aggressively recruit for and fill staff vacancies.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings.
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DPW Commissioner to identify resources for and initiate a formal assessment of the effectiveness of the near-term transportation structure to determine whether there is a need to proceed with establishing the Department of Mobility and Streets. ▪ Complete assessment of the future for Solid Waste and Fleet Services, determining whether they should stay together as a smaller DPW or separate into their own departments. ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings (assess effectiveness and identify any needed changes).
3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete assessment of the effectiveness of the near-term transportation structure and determine whether to proceed with establishing the Department of Mobility and Streets and what to do with Solid Waste and Fleet Services. As part of this assessment, determine whether ADMS would take the form of a completely new entity or use Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST, DPW’s Office of Transportation, or DCP’s Office of Mobility Planning as its foundation utilizing existing leadership and absorbing the other units. ▪ If the COO determines that there is a need to proceed with establishing the Department of Mobility and Streets, move forward with formulating a reorganization plan to be submitted by the Mayor to the City Council, introduction and enactment of legislation creating the Department of Mobility and Streets, and preparing resource needs to be included in the FY 2021 proposed budget. ▪ The COO to hold Interagency Group, Transportation Policy Group, and CID Coordinating Committee meetings.



7 Conclusion

Resolution 17-R-3003 provided that this study, at a minimum, consider the need for a single transportation-focused department, the organizational structure of the department, its scope and responsibility, funding resources, best practices from other municipalities of similar size, the cost associated with creating a single transportation-focused department, the pros and cons of such a department, and how to fund it. The only item that was not covered in this report is a summary of the costs associated with and the funding for creating a single transportation-focused department, which can and should constitute a follow-on study, requiring more time and data than were available for the performance of this review. In addition, it would be more appropriate to conduct this assessment closer to the time that a new transportation department is established (after two years if the recommendations of this study are followed). In the near-term, a proposed next step and recommended action item is to perform an assessment of financial and human resource needs for a robust, functional DPW Office of Transportation.

The Resolution framed this study as a feasibility study of the creation of a single transportation-focused department that would design, operate, manage and maintain the City of Atlanta's transportation system, projects, and infrastructure. The findings and recommendations provided in this section and throughout this report demonstrate that establishing a transportation agency in Atlanta is feasible, but only if a phased, thoughtful approach is taken. A hasty restructuring without a clear strategy is bound to face opposition and not achieve the beneficial effects it was intended to have. Reorganizing or redefining institutional relationships is disruptive and impacts the lives of city staff and residents. As such, careful consideration will need to be given to a change management plan and strategies, including communication and engagement with impacted staff and other stakeholders, devising a plan for the physical and organizational placement of each employee, including those involved in solid waste and fleet services, under the reorganization, and securing budgetary and financial needs.

The essential question underlying this report is not so much whether the creation of a transportation department is feasible, but whether it addresses the weaknesses with the City's current transportation structure and practices. What this study found was that these problems would not necessarily be fully addressed by agency restructuring; however, restructuring could help catalyze and provide the focus to concurrently address them. The stakeholders as part of this project unanimously agreed that Atlanta needs to move in a different direction with regard to transportation. This report provides a roadmap for moving forward on that new path.

Appendix A – Lessons Learned/ Best Practices



Topic	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Capital Funding	A standalone transportation-focused department helps make the case for raising additional capital dollars
	Build internal capacity and utilize in-house staff expertise to secure and manage federal transportation funding.
Capital Programming & Deferred Maintenance	Use the CIP process to identify the full cost of deferred maintenance and funds to address the need.
Capital Project Delivery Structure and Process	To mitigate siloed decision-making, house all project delivery units – planners, engineers, and construction managers – under one project delivery manager.
	Establish processes that formalize the initial phases of project development, including kick off meetings and a project definition unit, to have all project delivery staff agree on the purpose, need, budget, scope, and schedule for every project. This minimizes conflicts that may occur later in the project’s life that can cause delays and increase costs.
Capital Project Delivery & Maintenance Under One Roof	There is tremendous value to having all transportation functions under one roof and not being at the mercy of other agencies that must respond to more than one agency. In addition, an agency that has to maintain the street improvements it installs is more likely to design and construct infrastructure it can feasibly maintain.
	Consolidate capital projects and transportation operations within the same department to address the issue of the engineering and construction groups designing and building a facility that is handed off to operations teams who cannot easily maintain it.
Capital Project Staffing and Management	To encourage quality delivery of capital projects, dedicate talented staff to capital project management and nothing else and have them charge to capital projects, which may increase the overhead cost of such projects but relieves staff capacity issues due to operating budget and General Fund constraints. Also, work with the private sector to provide a competitive marketplace for consultants and contractors by reviewing and revising contract provisions and creating processes where none currently exist.
	Having in-house capital program capabilities can increase efficiency of project delivery.
	To address the issue of understaffed project delivery units, utilize on-call consultants to deal with surges of projects that need to be delivered under bond or other large capital programs.
Change Order Control	Establish an oversight body that regulates change orders to contracts that are adversely impactful to agency budgets.



Topic	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Coordination and Oversight	Establish an Interagency Group to formalize coordination between local, regional, and state partners that need to collaborate to fund and deliver complex projects of regional significance. In addition to ensuring coordination and collaboration, this also helps to strategize for and acquire federal grant funds. Create a Citizens Advisory Committee to formalize coordination and collaboration between external stakeholders and the City in the delivery of capital projects.
Funding and Autonomy	Setting a transportation agency up as a self-sustaining enterprise is in the best interest of maintaining it as a healthy organization that is able to continually meet the vision set out for it. However, with this comes the potential for public and elected official backlash who will seek to limit the agency's autonomy or set its policy if they do not agree with it.
Incident Response	<p data-bbox="418 642 1406 737">Have all units responsible for maintenance under one manager who leads incident response. If an Urban Forestry unit is available, have it report to the maintenance division.</p> <p data-bbox="418 737 1468 831">Incident response systems benefit from having sanitation and transportation units within a single agency because the resources of the entire department are made available to the incident management team.</p>
Integrated Modal Planning	Unify planners specializing in a particular mode under one functional unit to approach the same project holistically.
Interagency Coordination	Establish formal coordination processes between separate planning, transportation, and project delivery units, such as regular meetings where disagreements or issues about capital projects can be resolved, especially if these functions are in separate agencies.
Interim Director	Bring in an Interim Director immediately to work full-time on development of a Strategic Plan/Action Agenda, hiring staff, and reorganizing the agency to prioritize multimodal transportation.
Interim Reorganization	Different functional units, including transportation and sanitation, can co-exist functionally within one department during an interim period to determine whether the structure, which includes a senior manager reporting directly to the executive and overseeing all transportation units, supports desired outcomes and achievement of goals set out in a strategic plan.
Operating Budget	If a standalone transportation department is created from another agency (i.e. two departments are created from one), additional operating budget will be needed to account for the additional cost of leadership and personnel that are no longer shared.
Policy Setting	<p data-bbox="418 1503 1321 1577">Mayor's Offices that oversee a city transportation agency can serve as transportation policy-setters and guide the agency's policy agenda.</p> <p data-bbox="418 1577 1443 1692">Establishing a Board over a city transportation agency can serve as a means of oversight and ensuring that the agency is guided by an over-arching policy agenda.</p>
Renaming Transportation	Name a standalone transportation-focused agency as the Department of Mobility and Streets to brand it as a modern, multimodal organization with the continued mission of managing city streets.



Topic	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Sanitation & Fleet	Sanitation and Fleet Services functions can survive in their own separate, standalone agencies. If they are not saddled with functions that are not enterprise-funded, like transportation, they are better able to focus on delivery of their core services.
Savings	Consolidating separate agencies into a single agency has the benefit of reducing overall costs related to overhead and administration. However, this assumes that the separate agencies were fully-staffed and its overhead and administrative functions were effective.
Strategic Plan	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department, through a process led by existing staff that identifies the agency's major goals and strategies for achieving each goal, as well as one- and three-year benchmarks the agency will use to guide their efforts.
	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department that provides a holistic look at the city's multimodal transportation needs, communicates the City's transportation strategy and provides a method of prioritizing projects.
	Update the Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department regularly to provide a roadmap of the work to be done over the next year and where the agency will deploy resources.
	Develop a Strategic Plan for a new transportation-focused department that provides a short-term action agenda tied to expedited delivery of multimodal goals.
Technical Expertise	Hire capable, competent technical engineers - not generalist administrators - whose priority is public safety. Executives with no technical expertise are likely to struggle with delivering quality work and take on too many initiatives that do not enhance core services.
Timeline	Prepare for lengthy process. A full restructuring and the creation of a new organization can take longer than expected, so it is best to create a concrete timeline for a restructuring, as well as a detailed organizational chart, early in the process. The timeline should address key milestones, such as when the Interim Director will be brought in, how long their tenure will last, when staff will be brought together, and when do accounts get created.
Transition Period	A transition period is needed. During the transition period, be clear on the steps needed to fully operationalize the new agency. Have all units proposed to be placed under the new transportation department report to him or her and function under the new structure with its own budget and funds.
Transparency	Transparency can go a long way to maintaining public and elected official support of bond programs and transportation agencies responsible for capital project delivery. Establish a web-based tool directly linked to project management systems to reduce staff burden and show progress on projects. Also, establish a system of regular elected official updates.
Transportation & Economic Development	Establish formal coordination and collaboration channels between transportation and economic development agencies so that transportation has a direct, active role in community revitalization.



Topic	Lessons Learned / Best Practices
Transportation and Sanitation Under One Roof	Sanitation and Transportation units can co-exist functionally within one department if each unit is allowed autonomy and authority to operate as separate units. Consistent transportation leadership is possible under this structure if the overall manager for transportation (Deputy Commissioner for Transportation in Philadelphia's case) is not a political appointee but a technical professional providing steady leadership over many administrations.
Transportation and Water/Wastewater Operations Under One Roof	Water/Wastewater and Transportation operations units can co-exist functionally within one department and more holistically operate and maintain streets and drainage and water/wastewater systems together.
Urban Forestry	Establish an Urban Forestry unit within a transportation agency to maintain street trees.

