# 2023 STATE OF FE BELTLINE Atlanta

Atlanta BeltLine

**DIGITAL PROGRAM** October 24, 2023

COUNCIL

for QUALIT GROWTH

#### 7:30 AM **REGISTRATION OPENS**

8:00 AM WELCOME & SPONSOR RECOGNITION Michael Paris, President & CEO, Council for Quality Growth

BeltLine

#### **OPENING REMARKS** 8:05 AM

The Honorable Andre Dickens, 61st Mayor, City of Atlanta

#### 8:10 AM **EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION: CELEBRATING MOMENTUM & PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Clyde Higgs, President & CEO, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. Rob Brawner, Executive Director, Atlanta BeltLine Partnership Anna Roach, Executive Director, Atlanta Regional Commission

#### 8:30 AM **PANEL: ENHANCING EQUITY & MOBILITY** WITH TRANSIT

Ambrish Baisiwala, Chairman & CEO, Portland Holdings Lisa Benjamin, Chief Operating Officer, City of Atlanta Collie Greenwood, General Manager, MARTA Jim Irwin, President, New City Properties Moderated by: Clyde Higgs, President & CEO, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

- **AUDIENCE LIVE POLLING** 9:10 AM
- 9:15 AM **CONCLUDING REMARKS & ADJOURN**







Atlanta BeltLine Partnership

Thank You to our 2023 Sponsors:

**PLATINUM SPONSORS** 



# **GOLD SPONSORS**

# EMPIRE marta POND \\\\

## **SILVER SPONSORS**

Astra Group, LLC | AtkinsRéalis Hammond & Associates Heath & Lineback | Kimley-Horn Reeves Young | Truist United Consulting

# **BRONZE SPONSORS**

CERM | The Collaborative Firm | HDR Kaiser Permanente | Smith Real Estate Services Verizon | VHB

# **CELEBRATING MOMENTUM & PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

## CLYDE HIGGS

#### President & CEO, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

Clyde Higgs is the President and CEO of Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. where he leads the executive team in overseeing the design and construction of transit, trails, and parks; affordable housing; economic development; real estate; external affairs; procurement; etc. He establishes and expands strong working relationships with private and public partners across the region,

state, and nation. Prior to joining ABI in 2015, Higgs served as the Executive Vice President of a collaborative, multi-billiondollar revitalization and economic development effort led by the state of North Carolina and real estate developer Castle & Cooke. Higgs brings 20 years' experience in economic development, real estate, intellectual property, technology, strategic planning, design, real estate development, grant and donor funding, and government relations, with a diversity of projects including those that specialize in urban innovation, science and technology. Higgs graduated from the University of South Alabama. He holds a graduate degree in Public Administration from East Carolina University. He has served on numerous boards and professional organizations, including the Board for Trees Atlanta and, formerly, the Board for Big Brothers Big Sister (Charlotte, NC). Higgs' personal passions are young male mentorship and education.

### **ROB BRAWNER**

#### Executive Director, Atlanta BeltLine Partnership

Rob Brawner is the Executive Director for the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership. Leveraging the Partnership's staff and consultants, and working closely with the Board of Directors and other stakeholders, Brawner leads the Partnership in its broad-based, collaborative focus on ensuring the promise of stronger communities and equitable, sustainable benefit to the 45 Atlanta BeltLine neighborhoods and beyond.

His responsibilities include the development and implementation of the Partnership's strategic plan, as well as capital and operational fundraising – and stewardship of the private and philanthropic funds that support the construction of the project. Prior to joining the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, Brawner built his operations and management expertise during an eight-year career at McMaster-Carr, which included roles as Director of Sales and Marketing and Director of Physical Distribution. He graduated with honors from Princeton University in 1996 with a degree in Economics and two NCAA National Championships in lacrosse. He received his MBA from the Goizueta Business School at Emory University in 2006. Brawner has been actively engaged with many local non-profit organizations since moving to Atlanta in 1996. He enjoys living, working, exercising, and playing on the Atlanta BeltLine.

#### ANNA ROACH

#### Executive Director, Atlanta Regional Commission

Anna Roach is executive director of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), which facilitates community and development strategies to enhance the Atlanta region's growth and quality of life. Prior to joining ARC in 2022, Roach served as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Strategy Officer of Fulton County, where she oversaw 4,500 employees in 38 departments with a budget of \$1.2 billion. Roach also served as Fulton County's Chief Strategy Officer and

Assistant County Manager. A lawyer by training, Roach has held several key legal leadership positions during her career, including Assistant Deputy General Counsel for the government of the District of Columbia and administrative law judge in the City of New York. Roach is a current member of the Rotary Club of Atlanta and the American Bar Association, serves as an advisory board member at Tyler Technologies and Avenu Insights and Analytics, and was past board chair of the March of Dimes, Atlanta market. She holds a Juris Doctor from St. John's University and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the State University of New York, College at Cortland.

# **CREATING EQUITY & MOBILITY THROUGH TRANSIT**



#### AMBRISH BAISIWALA

#### Chairman & CEO, Portman Holdings

Ambrish brings over 27 years of global real estate experience to his role at Portman where he is responsible for the overall management and performance of the firm. His broad geographic and work exposure brings a strong corporate strategy and property development skillset to Portman. Prior to joining Portman, he was Development Director of ALDAR Properties PJSC in Abu Dhabi, UAE, where he was responsible for a multi-billion dollar development portfolio. Earlier in his career, he was Development Manager for the Greater Union Organization for the Middle East and India. Prior to that, Ambrish held various senior positions with Coopers & Lybrand Consulting and

the TATA Group. Ambrish has worked in the USA, China, India, the Middle East, South East Asia and Australia, across a broad spectrum of property types and responsibilities. Ambrish has a Bachelor of Commerce (Honors) degree from the University of Rajasthan, India, and an MBA from the Melbourne Business School, Australia. He is active in the community and participates on the boards of Central Atlanta Progress, Midtown Alliance, Atlanta Police Foundation, Leadership Atlanta, Atlanta Beltline Partnership, Piedmont Park Conservancy, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber.



#### LISA BENJAMIN

#### Chief Operating Officer, City of Atlanta

Lisa Y. Benjamin is the Chief Operating Officer for the City of Atlanta. She joined the Dickens administration in February 2022. Benjamin is the former President and Chief Executive Officer of Atlanta Habitat for Humanity where she led one of the highest producing and impactful affiliates in the country. Benjamin is a strategic leader and consensus builder who enjoys working on complex business issues and creating opportunities for success. She is a financial expert and has a strong

acumen for complex transactions, public-private partnerships, and extensive experience with audit committees and financial reviews. Benjamin serves on the Global Governing Trustee Board and the Americas Executive Committee of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). She was the first person of color to Chair the ULI Atlanta Board and is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. She also serves as expert adviser for national strategy initiatives commissioned by the U.S. Congress. She has a graduate degree from The Maxwell School at Syracuse University, is a Georgetown University graduate and received her second master's degree from Nova Southeastern in Accounting. She is an avid golfer who lives in Atlanta and enjoys spending time with her family.



#### **COLLIE GREENWOOD**

#### General Manager, MARTA

MARTA General Manager and CEO Collie Greenwood is a 35-year transit veteran with experience ranging from frontline operations to executive leadership. As Chief Service Officer at North America's third largest transit system, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Greenwood oversaw bus, rail, accessible transit, station services, transit security, and a structured maintenance program for all modes. Greenwood joined MARTA as the Chief of Bus

Manager of Operations and Urban Planning in 2020. In January 2022, the MARTA Board of Directors named him Interim General Manager and CEO. In this role, Greenwood leads MARTA's largest and most ambitious expansion and modernization program since its founding over 40 years ago. Greenwood works closely with his senior leadership team to develop and deliver major capital projects to enhance the customer experience, including the addition of new railcars and electric buses to the MARTA fleet. Greenwood is Vice Chair of the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Standards Development Oversight Council, and is a founding Board Member of Georgia's Fulton Technology and Energy Enhancement Authority (FTEEA).

## **JIM IRWIN**



#### President, New City Properties

Jim Irwin is the President of New City, LLC and directs the company's real estate development and consulting operations, as well as new business pursuits. Over the course of his career, Jim has been responsible for nearly \$2 billion of new investment around the United States. Prior to founding New City, Jim served as a Senior Vice President at Jamestown Properties, leading the development of Ponce City Market, a 2.1 million square foot former Sears, Roebuck & Co.

distribution facility that was originally constructed in the 1920's. During its redevelopment, the project was one of the largest and most significant historic renovations underway in the United States. Jim earned a Bachelor of Arts from Dartmouth College, where he played football for four years. After college, he served as a legislative aide to two U.S. senators and a U.S. representative before returning to Atlanta to pursue a MBA with a concentration in real estate finance at Emory University's Goizueta Business School. Jim and his wife, Elisabeth, live in Atlanta with their three children.

### Moderated by:



## **CLYDE HIGGS**

President & CEO, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

