



Thursday, Aug. 10 2006  
Contact:  
Ken Haldin  
For the BeltLine Partnership  
(404) 446-4413

**BELTLINE PARTNERSHIP NAMES VALARIE WILSON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
EXPANDS BOARD AND MARKS FIRST-YEAR MILESTONES**

*Significant momentum toward BeltLine development  
occurs over 12 months since Mayor sets Partnership*

ATLANTA — The BeltLine Partnership today announced that Valarie D. Wilson has been named executive director of the Partnership, the public-private organization established last year by Mayor Shirley Franklin to foster advocacy and coordinate private-sector engagement in connection with the City of Atlanta's visionary 25-year BeltLine initiative.

In addition, the Partnership announced the addition of eight new board members. The new members join nine others who have achieved a wide range of BeltLine accomplishments and milestones since the Partnership was initially established by Mayor Franklin in July 2005.

"The BeltLine Partnership has played a crucial role in bringing resources, energy and commitment to a very complex and complicated process that is leading toward full BeltLine development and implementation," said Mayor Franklin. "Through active public-private cooperation over the past 12 months under Ray Weeks' leadership, the Partnership has been pivotal in helping to ensure BeltLine momentum never relented. Largely through the Partnership's efforts, private and public support remains focused today on the larger goal of seeing the BeltLine become a reality."

Since its inception, the BeltLine Partnership has helped to secure a variety of direct private-sector giving and *pro bono* support and provided day-to-day advocacy of the BeltLine through each critical public step, including approval of the BeltLine Tax Allocation District and completion of the BeltLine work plan. It also reached out regularly to thousands of organizations and individuals in Atlanta to provide a grassroots framework for active backing of the BeltLine among citizens, businesses and affiliated groups. While the newly created Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. will be focused on the management and execution of the BeltLine, the BeltLine Partnership will continue to focus on advocacy, expanding the widespread grassroots coalition in support of the BeltLine and delivering private-sector support that complements the overall BeltLine initiative.

In addition, the Partnership has established a close working relationship and recently completed memoranda of understanding agreements with two critical non-profit organizations that are strategically supporting the BeltLine: the Trust for Public Land and the PATH Foundation.

-more-

## WILSON BRINGS NEW CAPABILITIES AND ENERGY TO PARTNERSHIP



Ms. Wilson, a 20-year veteran of county government, will begin her new role as Executive Director leading the Partnership on Aug. 28. Since 1999, Ms. Wilson served as Director - Fulton County Human Services Department, in which she oversaw an annual budget of \$26 million. During her tenure with the department, she developed proposals that secured millions of dollars for service delivery and spearheaded the creation of three non-profit agencies that deliver aging programs throughout Fulton County.

In addition, Ms. Wilson developed a community-based partnership organization recognized for its best practices. Before advancing to become department director, she served as director of the Office of Aging from 1991-96.

"Valarie will bring a strong combination of leadership, administrative skills, community involvement and energy to the Partnership," said Weeks, who chairs the non-profit organization. "Her appointment is another key step in our continuing effort to provide BeltLine support and advocacy to every facet of the BeltLine's future progress."

Ms. Wilson is a graduate of Clark College who holds a bachelor of arts in communications. She also completed graduate studies at Troy State University in public administration and serves on numerous foundations and boards.

## PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXPANDS TO 17 MEMBERS

Effective immediately, the Partnership has added eight additional board members to its originally nine-member board of directors.

Newly added board members are:

- **William C. Fowler**, chairman PATH Foundation, owner and operator of CBF Realty LLC;
- **Samuel G. Friedman**, chairman emeritus PATH Foundation, founder and chairman of AFCO Inc.;
- **Ralph G. Edwards Jr.**, chairman of the Georgia Advisory Council of the Trust for Public Land; Managing Director EBS Real Estate Investments;
- **Henry D. Gregory Jr.**, Member Georgia Advisory Council of Trust for Public Land, CEO and Vice Chairman, IDI;
- **Archibald D. Hill III**, director of Fannie Mae's Atlanta community business center;
- **David A. Hooker**, vice president of community building, The Center for Working Families, Inc.;
- **Kim F. Brown**, partner, Huntley Partners;
- **Joerg Matthiessen**, senior vice president and managing officer for the Atlanta office of the Boston Consulting Group.

“Through increased board membership, we have an opportunity to engage even more deeply with the private sector and with the community at large,” Weeks said. “Our original board members have accomplished much in our first year. We look forward to continuing our mission of generating strong BeltLine advocacy by fostering even greater private-sector and community support in the months ahead.”

One of the most comprehensive economic development efforts ever undertaken in the City of Atlanta’s history and the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment currently planned in the U.S., the Atlanta BeltLine involves 22 miles of railroad right of way that will ultimately connect 45 in-town Atlanta neighborhoods, covers 8 percent of the City’s total land area close to downtown Atlanta and is adjacent to nearly 3,000 acres of underutilized industrial property. Over the next quarter century, the BeltLine initiative seeks to transform transit, grow greenspace with more than 1,200 acres of new parks and 33 miles of trails, and ensure livable communities and an attractive business climate in Atlanta. In addition to parks, trails and transit, among the Atlanta BeltLine’s many visionary components are economic development, the largest affordable workforce housing investment in the City’s history, pedestrian access, historic preservation, public art and environmental remediation.

For more information about the BeltLine Partnership and its support of the Atlanta BeltLine, visit [www.beltline.org](http://www.beltline.org).

###