Food access in Atlanta
- Atlanta is home to the worst income inequality in the United States, further exacerbating poor access.
- Many populations in Atlanta are disproportionately affected, including:
  - Low-income populations
  - The elderly
  - Those using anti-retroviral therapy

Urban agriculture in Atlanta
- Urban agriculture is experiencing a significant increase in support in recent years.
  - Mid-2014: New zoning ordinances are approved to allow urban gardens and market gardens
  - Late 2015: The first Director of Urban Agriculture is appointed within the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability
- Additionally, the Atlanta BeltLine’s first pilot farm began in early 2015.

Project objectives
This work seeks to develop and understand the utility of an integrated and holistic urban farm action plan for the Atlanta BeltLine. Combining a review of case studies and best practices with interviews with major stakeholders, recommendations are made for capitalizing on Atlanta’s unique landscape and opportunities.

Case studies
- Farmland conservation and building an AFN in Barcelona, Spain
  - Using state-mediated planning measures, a farmland zone was created. AFNs developed as a consequence are active in metro Barcelona, with products being eligible for special FRESC labeling, a marketing campaign designed to highlight fresh, local products.
- Awareness of urban agriculture in Savannah, GA
  - Limited ability to advertise and lack of strong local leadership lead to a lack of public awareness of urban agriculture programs in Savannah.
- Urban agriculture in Cuba
  - By providing land, education and training, and resources, urban farmers are capable of true subsistence farming.
- The emergence and future of urban agriculture in Sydney, Australia
  - Grassroots groups, with the support of the government and other funders, developed a powerful group to represent the interests of local food. Additional long-term outreach and planning investments from the government have lead to increased attention to urban agriculture.

Interviews
Informal interviews were conducted in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the current state of urban agriculture in Atlanta.
- Interviewees include:
  - Rashid Nuri, CEO of Truly Living Well
  - Mary Yetter, manager of the Green Market at Piedmont Park
  - Mario Cambardella, Director of Urban Agriculture for the City of Atlanta
  - Alice Rolls, Executive Director of Georgia Organics
  - Mindy Goldstein, Director of the Turner Environmental Law Clinic
  - Andrea Ness and Andy Friedberg, Farmers at Aluma Farm
  - Meghan Cambardella, Landscape Architect at Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

Recommendations
- Stand behind and coordinate efforts with Food Well Alliance
  - Pursue meetings with potential partners identified
- Create a BeltLine branding scheme
- Establish a land trust in conjunction with the City of Atlanta
  - Focus on undevelopable floodplain parcels
- Frame future agriculture efforts as civic agriculture
- Analyze potential incentive programs for active gardens inside the BeltLine overlay
  - Encourage developers to use gardens as an amenity

Frameworks
- Alternative food network (AFN)
  - Focuses on bringing local and sustainably food directly to consumers
- Community supported agriculture (CSA)
  - Allows consumers to purchase shares in a farm that entitle them to a portion of the farmer’s product
- Community gardens
- Farm-to-school programming
  - Lunchrooms get fresh produce from local farms or gardens at the school. This model usually has a strong nutrition education component
- Farmers Markets

Acknowledgements:
Special thanks Beth McMillan, Nathan Soldat, Lynnette Reid and all the staff at Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. This project also could not have occurred without the willing participation of the interviewees who shared their time and expertise.