

**In Atlanta**, the impacts of rail transit were tested in an area of DeKalb County along the East Line of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority. This study area was chosen because the neighborhood types served by the line to the north and south of the line are dramatically different enough to demonstrate if there are relative differences due to neighborhood types. The east line follows the right of way of freight railroad tracks stretching to the east from downtown Atlanta. As such, industrial uses lie on both sides of the rail transit line, generally adjacent to the right-of-way. These industrial uses, the railroads, and the MARTA East Line form a buffer between the neighborhoods to the north and south of the right-of-way.

**The areas to the north of the line comprised predominantly middle class neighborhoods with some prominent affluent sections. The areas to the south of the line are predominantly lower income, lower middle class neighborhoods.** In 1980, the average value of housing on the north side of the tracks were more than twice the value on the south side of the tracks. At the same time, the mean family income on the north was close to twice that on the south side. The fact that these two dramatically different neighborhood types were served by the same transit line presented the opportunity to examine if the impacts of rail transit on property values depend upon the characteristics of the neighborhood.

Examination of the effects of proximity to rail transit for these two neighborhoods showed that proximity to rail showed a positive effect on property values on the south side, but a negative effect in the neighborhood on the north side. In the neighborhood on the south side, property values increased close to \$1045 for every 100 feet a property was closer to the East Line. The opposite occurred on the north side. **For every 100 feet a property was closer to the East Line, property values dropped by \$965. This negative effect may be due to such factors as noise, perceptions of crime, and visual intrusion.** The pattern of rising property values as one travels to the north of rail tracks may also have to do with the general pattern of rising incomes as one travels to the north. **In addition, proximity to the industrial uses and the freight railroad right-of-way may also be deterrents to high property values.** In the case of the south side, the value of accessibility provided by the rail line more than compensated for these nuisance effects. **On the north side, the value accessibility was not enough to compensate for the nuisance effects. (\*)**

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(\* ) Arthur C. Nelson, "Effects of Elevated Heavy-Rail Transit Stations on House Prices with Respect to Neighborhood Income," Transportation Research Record 1359, pp. 127 – 132, 1992.