

The Northwest Corridor Express Lanes Project Newsletter



The Georgia Department of Transportation's (GDOT) Northwest Corridor Express Lanes mobility improvement project is well on its way to bringing new transportation options and reliable commute times to Cobb and Cherokee Counties. The project is currently on schedule and on budget since construction began in October 2014.

Georgia DOT is building two reversible managed lanes, known as Georgia Express Lanes, along perpetually crowded I-75 north of Atlanta--nearly 30 miles of new capacity extending along I-75 from Akers Mill Road to Hickory Grove Road and along I-575 from I-75 to Sixes Road. The lanes will accommodate southbound traffic during morning commute hours and northbound traffic in the midday, afternoon and evenings.

According to John Hancock, Georgia

DOT Project Manager, construction is on schedule with approximately 27% of the project complete. "There are four construction sites stretching the length of I-75 from I-285 to Hickory Grove Road and up I-575 to Sixes Road. The project is starting to take shape, and by the summer of 2018, we plan to have traffic on the Express Lanes giving people a choice for a reliable, free-flowing trip," stated Hancock.

So far construction on the project has reached the following milestones:

- 13 out of 39 bridges are currently under construction
- 6 out of 100 retaining walls are currently under construction
- 5 out of 33 new ramps are currently under construction
- 9,500 out 140,000 linear feet of drainage installed

- 47,000 out of 1,000,000 cubic yards of dirt excavation for roadway construction

Motorists can expect an increase of construction activities this summer and should be especially aware of construction at the following locations:

- I-285 Westbound ramp shift at Cobb Parkway

- North Marietta Road ramp shift
- Lane shifts at Cumberland Boulevard and Terrell Mill Road
- I-75 Northbound lane shift at Wade Green
- I-575 Northbound lane shift between Barrett Parkway and Bells Ferry Road



From left to right: steel bars are erected on top of concrete base; a fully poured column; a complete column stripped of its cap form.

Northwest Corridor Project | A Closer Look: Bridge Column Construction

Building columns for the express lanes' bridges is a significant component of construction for this project. Columns are an integral part of a bridge's foundation as they bear the weight of both the bridge and the traffic it carries.

Work on the column begins once a concrete base has been formed and has cured. A vertical cage of steel bars is then erected atop the base, and a steel form is placed around it, based on the width and height of the column,

the column concrete is poured to ensure it dries properly.

Once the column has dried and been stripped of the form, the steel bars and the form for the cap are secured on the top of the column. The concrete is then poured into the cap form and the cap is left to dry. The cap form is then stripped away, which marks the completion of the bridge column.

Safety First!

When it comes to the Georgia Express Lanes, public safety is GDOT's top priority. Safety and incident management features are critical components of the express lanes and safety features are being put in place throughout the Northwest Corridor Express Lanes. All construction activity for the project is guided by a safety program that is based on a commitment to eliminate workplace injury and protect the public.

Safety measures to protect the public and project employees include:

- Traffic message boards and construction signage are in place to inform the public about lane closures and detours.
- Project safety crews are continually on the job site to inspect and monitor work zones and traffic barricades for potential safety hazards and ensure compliance with safety policies.

- All project employees are required to undergo extensive safety training sessions that cover work-site specific safety rules, environmental compliance, and Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

Here are some safety tips for motorists travelling through construction work zones:

- **Stay alert and minimize distractions:** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway
- **Pay attention and use caution:** Watch for work zone signs and obey work zone speed limits
- **Change lanes safely:** Change lanes only where pavement markings indicate and when traffic allows
- **Follow instructions from flaggers:** Their instructions supersede any posted or implied traffic signals

- **Be patient:** remember, construction activity is a temporary inconvenience to improve the roadway and your future ride

Georgia DOT reminds drivers to remain alert and cautious while driving through active construction sites.

Slow down and monitor changeable message signs for the latest information on lanes and shoulder closures.

For more information about driver safety, view Georgia DOT's new campaign [Drive Alert Arrive Alive](#).



Did You Know? In the first three months of 2015, only 38% of traffic fatality victims wore seatbelts



Top: Image of digital project information display on Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre lobby screens;

Center: NWC Project outreach events with the East Cobb Civic Association in May (left), and with Lockheed Martin retirees at the East Cobb Senior Center in April (right);

Bottom: CCT Transit Operations Manager, Jorge Publiones, placing the first NWC Project bus poster on a local route bus

In the Community

Since the start of the year, the Northwest Corridor Express Lanes team has shared project details and construction updates, and we have received feedback and questions from a number of stakeholders, including civic organizations and media outlets. Informational flyers for the project are displayed on Cobb Community Transit (CCT) buses and on Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre lobby screens.

Stay Connected!

To subscribe to weekly traffic alerts and our quarterly newsletter, please email us at northwestcorridor@dot.ga.gov.

Questions? Call us: 678-486-3767

For regular project updates visit: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/DS/GEL>

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Northwest Corridor Project Photos



Ongoing bridge and retaining wall construction at the I-75/I-285 Interchange



Aerial view of construction of mile-long bridge and retaining wall at I-75 and Canton Road