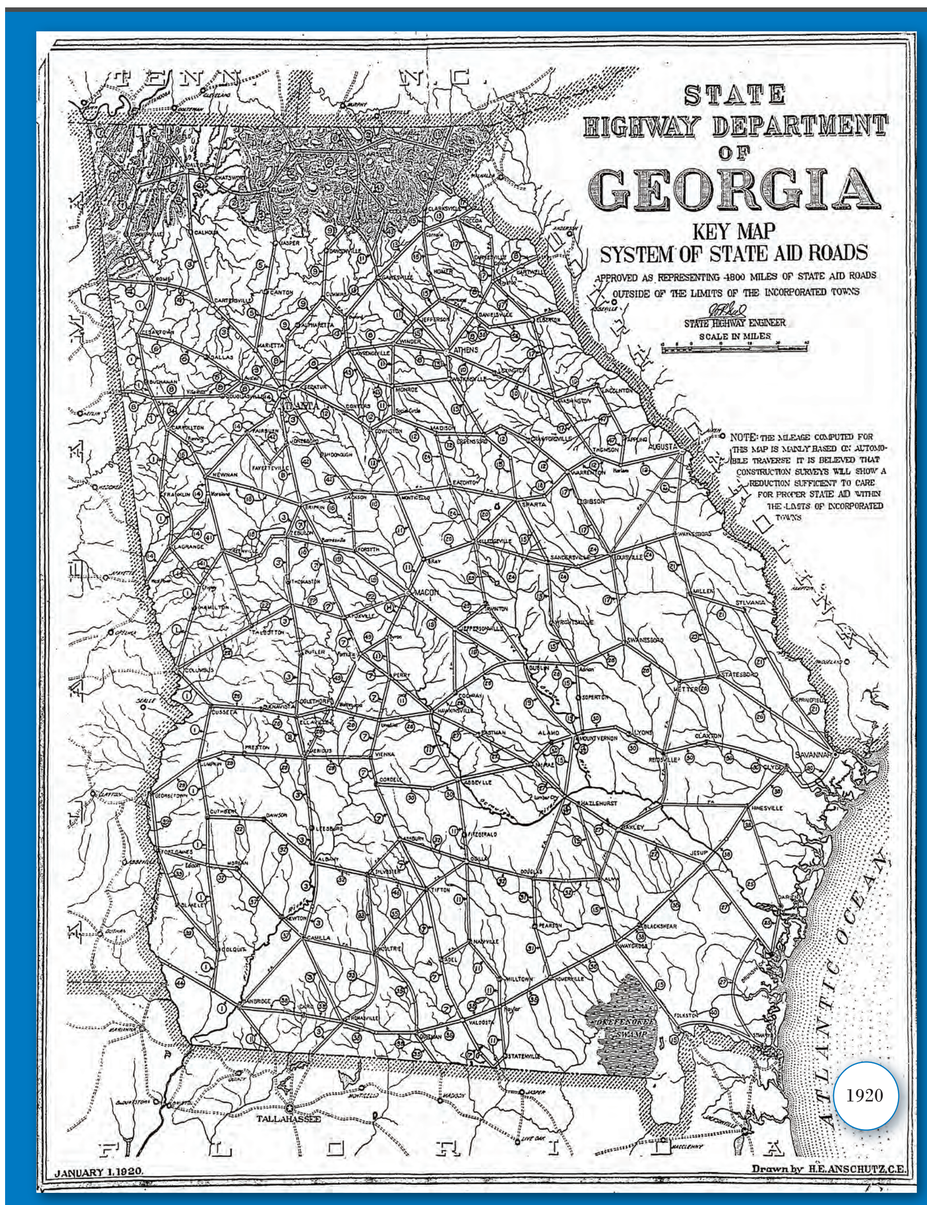
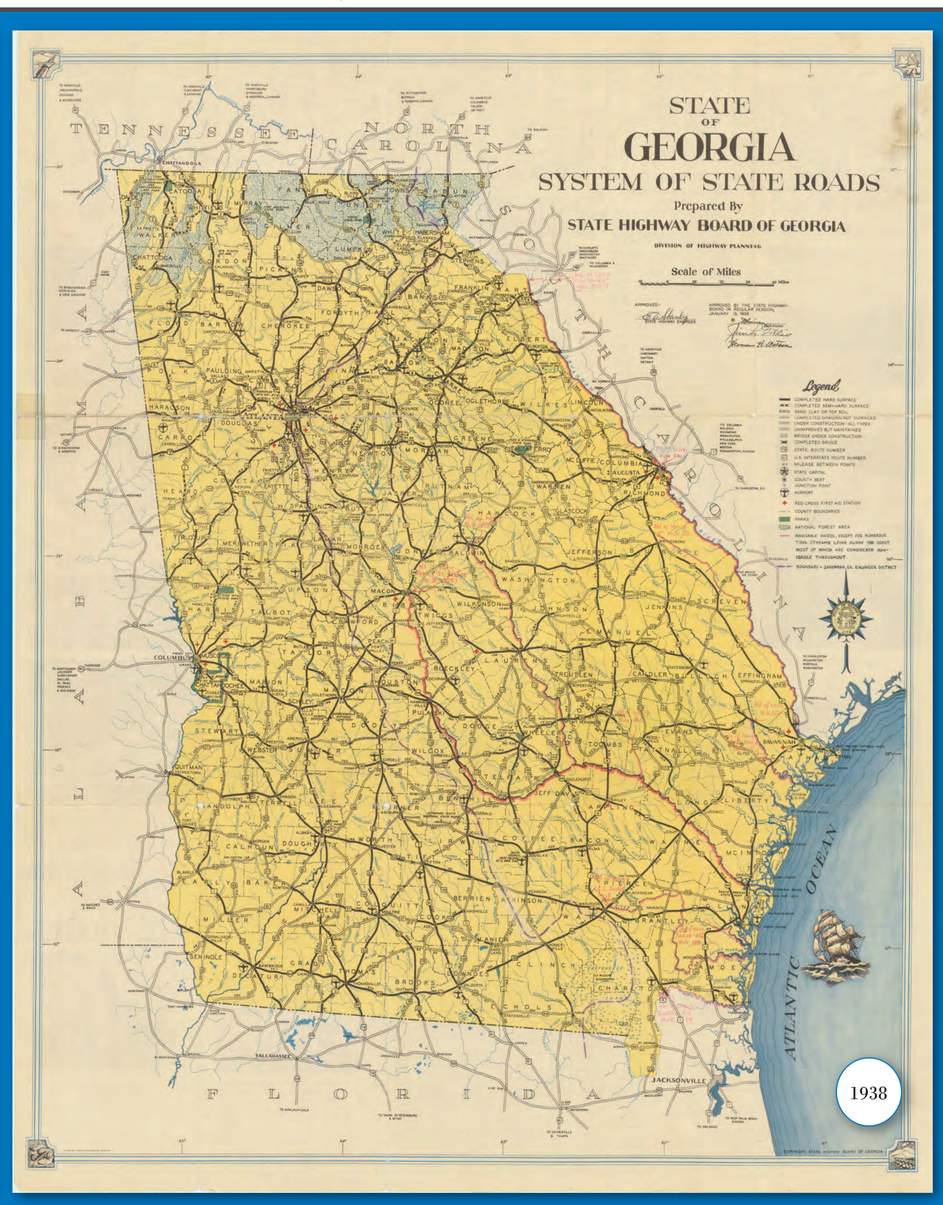
Celebrating a Century of

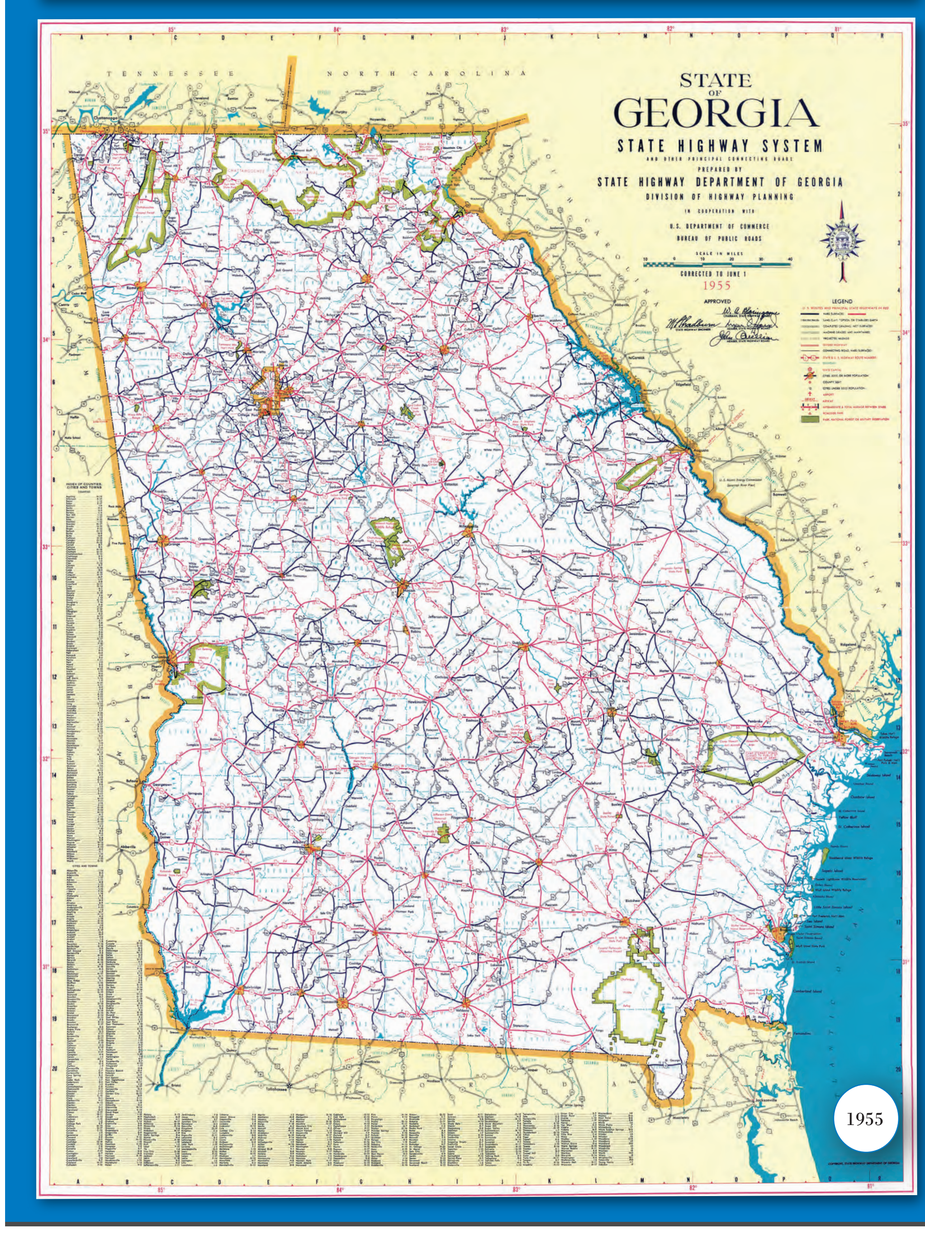
Simply the Best in Safety, Service and Innovation

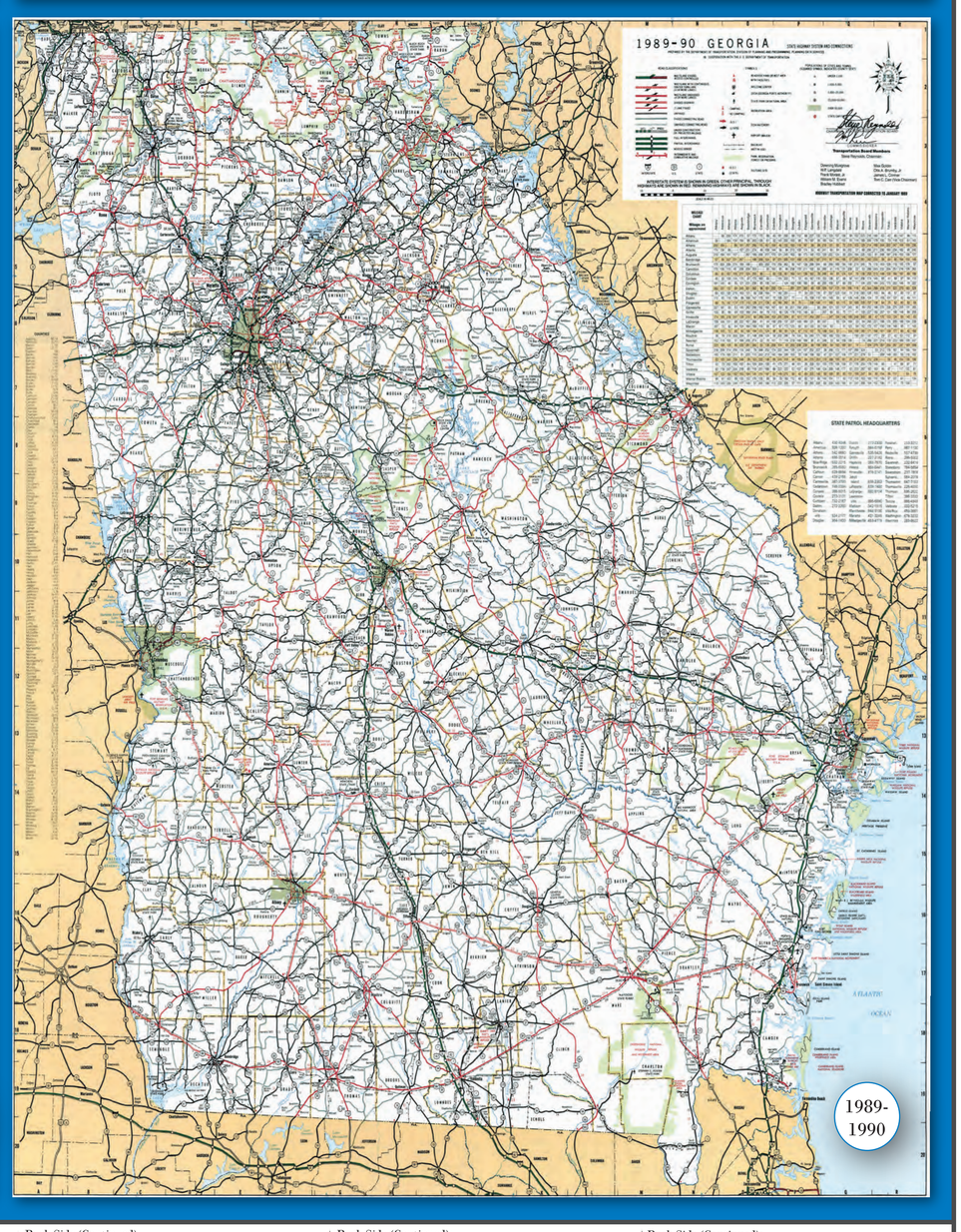
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS 1916 - 2016

1916







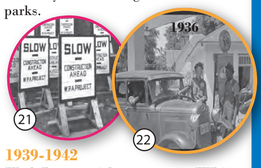


1916
Congress passed the first Federal-Aid to Highways Act. The Georgia Legislature met in an Extraordinary Session and created the State Highway Commission.

1919
The State Highway Board was created and the Commission became a Department. At the time, the first field divisions and the maintenance department were formed. The Board placed 170 miles of paved roads under construction; 673 miles of sand and clay roads, and 34 miles of graded roads.

1926
The American Association of State Highway Officials developed a nationwide standardized highway numbering system called the U.S. Route System.

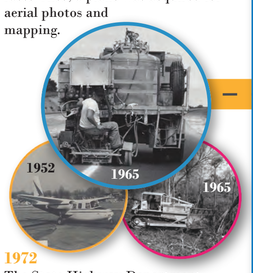
1930
The State Highway Department took its first steps toward highway beautification by constructing roadside parks.



1939-1942
Work Projects Administration (WPA) funds greatly helped Federal-Aid System and Post road building as well as aided the state's economic recovery.

1941-1945
The World War II years saw only essential road work done. The 19th Annual Report said, "The term 'critical' materials emerged from the texts and treatises and became a reality... The common nail, through its scarcity, achieved prominence hitherto unheard of. Pine lumber with which Georgia's forests abound, became available in quantities required for bridge construction only upon the approval of the War Production Board."

1952
The State Highway Department conducted studies to measure road surfaces. Also, a plane was acquired for aerial photos and mapping.

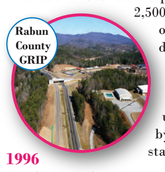


1972
The State Highway Department became the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) with increased responsibilities.

1970-1975
GDOT spent $12 million in safety modifications and improvements. By 1976, Georgia ranked in the top 15 states in overall safety.

1977
Between November 22 and December 23, 1977, Interstates 20, 75, 85, and 95 were finally opened in their entireties, making 1977 the "Year of the Interstate" in Georgia.

1989
The Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP) was launched in 1989. GDOT proposed a 2,500-mile system of "economic development" highways to reach areas of Georgia under served by the Interstate system.

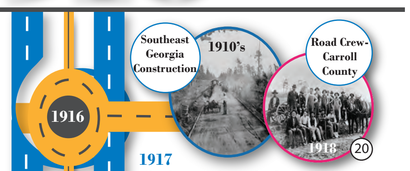


1996
The Summer Olympics were held in Atlanta. It was widely agreed that the traffic and transportation plan was the best managed of any Olympic venue to date.

2009
GDOT received $931 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars for 404 projects. These funds were invested in nearly 2,500 safety, new capacity, maintenance and enhancement projects and bridges.

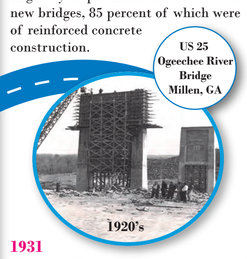
2016
From humble beginnings to the age of intelligent transportation, GDOT has consistently been a steward of taxpayer dollars and wisely invested in improving the transportation system in Georgia. GDOT celebrates a century of **simply the best** in safety, service, and innovation.

1916
1926
1936
1946
1956
1966
1976
1986
1996
2006
2016



1917
The first roads on the State Highway System were designated.

1919-1922
During this time period, the State Highway Department constructed 255 new bridges, 85 percent of which were of reinforced concrete construction.



1931
The State Highway Department moved from East Point to the 2 Capitol Square location.

1939
Four roads running north and south were completely paved. A 1939 Departmental history ended with the quote "Georgia is out of the mud."

1944
The Federal-Aid Highway Act established the need for a system of interstate highways for defense purposes. Also, this act established 19 urban places which became the basis for the state's allocation of urban highway funds.

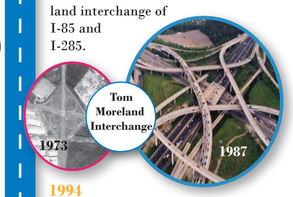
1948
Construction of the Atlanta Expressways began; after 10 years only 17 miles would be open.

1964
The Downtown Atlanta Connector, the junction of I-75 and I-85, was opened.

1969
The State Highway Department increased their emphasis on planning and public hearings.

1974
Governor Jimmy Carter signed into law the new national 55 miles per hour speed limit, and the GDOT's maintenance crews immediately began placing the 55 mph decals on 8,800 signs on the Interstates and primary highways.

1980's
GDOT launched its historic and massive "Freeing the Freeways" program - a $1.5 billion undertaking that doubled Metro-Atlanta's Interstate lane miles to more than 1,800 over the following decade and featured construction of the iconic Tom Moreland interchange of I-85 and I-285.



1994
High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes were introduced to Metro-Atlanta on the east side of I-20. Also, GDOT launched the Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) program.

2002
The Traffic Incident Management Enhancement (TIME) task force was launched to address critical issues related to incident managment in the Metro-Atlanta area.

2003
GDOT funded the state's first Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project in Metro-Atlanta to improve safety and increase the number of children, parents, and school staff who walk to school.

2012
Georgia opened the state's first Diverging Diamond Interchange.

The 21st Century
GDOT will continue to focus on innovation and its development of a comprehensive and fully-multimodal transportation network. GDOT will work with partners to strengthen communities; to expand economic opportunities; and to preserve the environment.

2016

Photo Information

All photos are courtesy of the Georgia Department of Transportation's Office of Communications and District Offices unless specifically noted otherwise.

Front Side:
1. 1910's, Horse-drawn Road Grader - Photo Courtesy of Yancey Bros. Co. Archives (Front Cover)
2. 1941, Road Grader, Augusta, Georgia Airport - Photo Courtesy of Yancey Bros. Co. Archives (Front Cover)
3. 1952, Downtown Atlanta (Front Cover)
4. 2015, Tom Moreland Interchange (Front Cover)
5. 2011, Downtown Atlanta (Front Cover)
6. 2001, Sidney Lanier Bridge (Front Cover)

Front Side (Continued):
7. 1955, Gainesville Square (Back Cover) - Photo Courtesy of Georgia Archives, Vanishing Georgia Collection, hall147

Back Side:
8. 1935, University Avenue, Work Program Assistance (WPA) - Photo Courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries
9. 1936, Macon, Georgia

Back Side (Continued):
10. 1940, Bridge Over the Chattahoochee River, Roswell, Georgia - Photo Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Vanishing Georgia Collection, Ful-478
11. 1950's, Construction on I-20 near the Georgia State Capital - Photo Courtesy of Yancey Bros. Co. Archives
12. 1950s, GDOT District 4 Interstate I-75 Construction
13. 1950's, GDOT District 4 Interstate I-75 Construction
14. 1955, View from the 14 Street Bridge, Atlanta, Georgia
15. 2007, Aerial View of Downtown Atlanta and Stadium

Back Side (Continued):
16. 2013, GDOT Wildflowers Along I-16 - Photo by Cedric Mohr, Project Manager/Creative Director, GDOT
17. 2009, Hogpen Gap, Georgia - Photo by Tom Conrady
18. 2015, Talmadge Memorial Bridge, Savannah, Georgia - Photo by Cedric Mohr, Project Manager/Creative Director, GDOT
19. 2015, Atlanta Skyline - Photo by Cedric Mohr, Project Manager/Creative Director, GDOT
20. 1918, Road Crew in Carroll County, Georgia - Photo Courtesy of Georgia Archives, Vanishing Georgia Collection, car120
21. 1930's, WPA Safety Signs - Photo Courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries
22. 1936, Gas Station - Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress
23. 1940, Snow Plow - Photo Courtesy of Yancey Bros. Co. Archives