STATEWIDE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT
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Introduction

The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP) is the official, comprehensive, fiscally constrained transportation plan that includes projects, programs, and other activities to support implementation of the State’s strategic transportation goals and policies. The current SSTP was approved in February 2018, in keeping with the required biennial update cycle. The SSTP Progress Report monitors the execution of the SSTP and the performance of the transportation system throughout the state, including:

1. Measuring the performance of Georgia’s existing services transportation network in order to demonstrate the extent to which the state is making progress toward achieving its transportation goals
2. Ensuring plans for Georgia’s future transportation network support the goals and objectives of the SSTP
3. Monitoring the implementation of Georgia’s transportation plans to ensure the on-time and on-budget delivery of strategic investments

Governor Deal has set strategic goals in support of his vision for a lean and responsive state government that allows communities, individuals and businesses to prosper. Among these goals are:

- Improving the movement of people and goods across and within the state;
- Expanding Georgia’s role as a major logistics hub for global commerce;
- Leverage public-private partnerships and improving intergovernmental cooperation for successful infrastructure development; and
- Reducing injury and loss of life on Georgia’s roads

Building from Governor Deal’s priorities, GDOT’s Strategic Plan also includes goals for:

- Recruit, train and retain a quality workforce
- Invest in safety for Georgians and GDOT employees
- Efficiently take care of what we have
- Deliver all projects on time and on budget
- Invest to improve reliability, congestion, and connectivity
Key Developments

News from around Georgia

Several developments in 2018 continued the state’s progress toward implementing the SSTP and the Governor’s strategic transportation goals. Highlights of this past year include Georgia ranked #1 for business a fifth year in a row, The Atlanta Region now has a higher population than 25 other states in the U.S., Georgia Ports Authority announced a $2.5B expansion plan and the Appalachian Inland Port was opened in Chatsworth, GA. These projects help solidify a top-notch business environment and global infrastructure. The future of economic development in Georgia is incredibly bright and we are looking forward to more big wins.

Georgia Remains the #1 State for Doing Business
Gov. Nathan Deal announced that “Area Development”, a leading economic development trade magazine, has named Georgia as the #1 state to do business. According to Site Selection, Georgia has won this designation five consecutive years, while under our current governor. Usually in November, the new rankings release listing the top states. Georgia ranks amongst the top 10 states according to the magazine’s business climate formula. Georgia has made the list since 2010 and has held the top spot for the last four years.

Atlanta Region Population Growth
The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) released a report for the 10-county Atlanta region. The new population projections added 75,800 residents. According to the study, the Atlanta region’s population increased by 1.7% and now stands at 4,555,900, higher than 25 individual states. The rapid growth in this region of the state corresponds with major job growth in the City of Atlanta and surrounding communities. The yearlong study also references a labor analysis of the 29-county Metropolitan Statistical Area that shows more than 41,000 jobs joined the area during the same period. The city of Atlanta alone, added more than 10,000 with more high density residential construction projects underway.

Georgia Ports Authority Announces $2.5B Expansion Plan
The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) recently announced a 10-year plan to expand the Port of Savannah’s Garden City Terminal. The $2.5 billion plan will increase capacity from 5.5 million to 8 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs). The intermodal industry uses TEUs as the standardized container, used to transfer goods between different modes of freight transportation including ships, trains, and trucks. The project includes several upgrades to key infrastructure such as berth improvements, off terminal road additions to gates, and container storage expansions. The centerpiece of the plan will be the Mason Mega Rail Terminal, a massive project to double the port’s rail capacity to one million container lifts annually by 2020. Other improvements include the purchase of 64 additional rubber-tired gantry cranes and 8 additional ship-to-shore cranes. The investment will solidify the Port of Savannah’s role as the major logistics center of the Southeastern U.S., and servicer of all major eastern inland markets.
Appalachian Inland Port in Chatsworth

Murray County recently opened a new state-of-the-art rail facility. The Appalachian Inland Port will receive freight from the Port of Savannah, and provide logistics solutions for the Appalachian Region. The project will have significant effects on the environment, removing an estimated 50,000 trucks and 15 million truck miles from local highways annually. The intermodal rail and operations provider is CSX Transportation. The railroad operates and maintains 2,700 miles of track in Georgia. The inland port will play a major role in the efficient movement of cargo to and from Savannah’s container port and creating jobs for the Northwest Georgia Region.

Georgia Wins Federal Grant for State Route 316 Interchange

The state will receive a **$24.8 million** Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) for an interchange project at State Route 316 and State Route 11 in Barrow County. The interchange is part of the Georgia Department of Transportation’s long-range plan to convert all of State Route 316 to a limited access highway between Interstate 85 and the Athens area, reducing backups while also addressing safety concerns on the highway. The BUILD Grant is a discretionary program that enables State DOTs to explore ways to deliver projects faster and save on construction costs.

**GDOT Awarded $184M Grant for GA 400 Express Lanes**

The U.S. Department of Transportation announced the Georgia Department of Transportation would receive a **$184 million Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant**. The additional funding was awarded to the GA 400 Express Lanes project in Fulton and Forsyth counties. The INFRA program provided about $1.5 billion nationwide for fiscal year 2017-18 in dedicated, discretionary funding for projects that address critical issues facing our nation's highways and bridges.

The projected cost for this project is $1.8 billion; additional widening of existing overpasses and reconfiguring ramps along the corridor is required in some areas. It will connect to existing Georgia DOT projects once complete. Building the projects in conjunction better enhances mobility and safety while fueling growth. The GA 400 project is a public-private partnership that will add more lane miles and reduce traffic delays.
Northwest Corridor Express Lanes

The $834 million Northwest Corridor Express Lanes opened to traffic September 2018 in the Atlanta Region. The project added approximately 30 miles of reversible express lanes along I-75 continuing up to I-575 in Cobb and Cherokee counties. The first days of operation were free for motorists to become familiar with the lanes. The Tolling Fees are electronically collected using the Peach Pass, a small electronic sticker that drivers put on the inside of their windshields. A safety feature allows first responders to assist motorists quickly using gates along the route. The award-winning project consists of two express lanes to the west of the existing lanes along I-75 between I-285 and I-575.

Project boundaries start at the I-75/I-285 interchange in Cobb County, one express lane travels along I-75 north to Hickory Grove Road and one express lane is along I-575 to Sixes Road. The managed lanes are reversible depending on the morning and evening commute patterns. Motorists access the lanes using the Peach Pass System. Toll rates use a dynamic pricing format, which increases the price during peak travel times and decreases the price during off-peak times. The State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) manages the lanes electronically in real time. These capabilities help avoid traffic delays and provide efficient toll collection. Revenue from the tolls will repay the cost to build the lanes, and fund operational maintenance.
GDOT Widening of I-85 from I-985 in Gwinnett

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) held a ceremonial groundbreaking for the first phase of the I-85 Widening Project on July 25. The project is the first of 11 Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP) projects to break ground. The corridor improvements will provide relief to motorists in this heavily congested area by widening I-85 to three lanes in both directions from I-985 to SR 53. Once completed, I-85 will have an additional ten miles of interstate. Other work related to the project includes replacing three overpass bridges to accommodate the extra lanes in the center median. The $178 million project will expand the existing managed lanes in Gwinnett County to provide a more dependable, free-flow commute option to balance the multimodal approach. The additional lanes will offer congestion relief for more than 263,000 vehicles a day.

GDOT Wins AASHTO Award for PATH 400 Project

The PATH400 trail project recently won the Socrata People’s Choice Award, at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) convention. The award is given to the project that receives the most online votes from the public, and is presented with a $10,000 prize to be donated to a transportation charity or scholarship. Georgia Department of Transportation choose Livable Buckhead, a nonprofit organization that is spearheading construction of PATH400 in Fulton County. The PATH400 trail was one of just 12 projects, from across the country that was vying for the national award.

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1 Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP)
http://www.dot.ga.gov/IS/MMIP
The project team came from different fields of knowledge and worked diligently to deliver a quality of life project to the citizens of Georgia. The approach presented to Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) was revolutionary involving converting existing highway right of way into a multi-use trail, while still able to significantly reduce right-of-way cost for our partners. GDOT along with Livable Buckhead, PATH Foundation and the City of Atlanta contributed to the project’s overall success. The prize money was donated to the foundation for future phases to complete the trail.

South Georgia Region Passes T-SPLOST

South Georgia voters passed a Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST) referendum, this spring. The vote will bring in a significant increase of tax dollars into the South Georgia Region to help fund various road projects. The majority of the region supported the 1 percent transportation special purpose local option sales tax. The results represent numbers supplied by the 18 counties in the South Georgia T-SPLOST region.

The T-SPLOST included 150 transportation projects, all funded by the regional tax. The 1-cent tax is expected to generate more than $500 million across the 18 counties, which consists of Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner and Ware counties. The collection began in October and implementation of smaller projects, such as road resurfacing, could start as soon as 2019.
Valdosta Times

**Hands Free Cell Phone Law**

The Georgia General Assembly recently passed House Bill 673, also known as the “Hands Free Law”, making it illegal to hold your mobile device while driving in Georgia. The law also prohibits other behavior such as shooting video or watching movies while driving. Drivers can still talk on their phones and text using hands-free technology. The enforcement began July 2018. The goal is to curtail distracted driving fatalities in the state. The legislation was inspired by a dramatic increase of nearly a third more people killed on Georgia Highways than this time last year according to data. Georgia already prohibited anyone under 18, or holding a learner’s permit from using wireless devices while driving.

**Hurricane Michael Response**

Hurricane Michael made landfall as a category 4 major hurricane along the Florida panhandle, then accelerated northeast over southwest and into middle Georgia. The storm brought tropical storm and hurricane conditions including torrential rainfall and strong winds that knocked down trees and power lines. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) was prepared on a statewide level in partnership with, Georgia Emergency Management Agency, the National Weather Service, and state and local officials. Governor Nathan Deal would eventually extend the state of emergency declaration for 92 counties requiring a massive effort and coordination of resources.
Managing resources was very important. GDOT positioned 800 workers in southwest and southeastern Georgia to aid in recovery efforts. Equipment was also strategically placed ahead of the storm. Maintaining roads and bridges was essential, during and after the storm. The workers cleared roads of downed trees and other debris, operated traffic signals, inspected bridges and managed traffic as some coastal residents evacuated. The major inland impacts were mostly in southern and coastal Georgia. Special Response Teams consisting of first responders and GDOT employees deployed in the hardest hit regions. Bridge Inspection Teams were also deployed in impacted areas in the state such as middle Georgia, east central and west central Georgia.
Performance of Georgia’s Existing Transportation Network

GDOT is Focused on Safety

Drive Alert, Arrive Alive Program

The Drive Alert, Arrive Alive campaign calls attention to the increasing and preventable fatalities on Georgia’s roads. It educates drivers about specific changes they can make in their driving behavior to save lives. The campaign is a partnership between the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Georgia Department of Public Safety. The general goals include buckling up, eliminating distractions and driving alert. GDOT also has a pedestrian component of Drive Alert Arrive Alive called See & Be Seen. The combined program promotes a shared responsibility between motorists and pedestrians.

The Ray – The World’s First Sustainable Highway

Georgia DOT is committed to enhancing mobility for our growing state while preserving our natural resources through innovation. The Ray C. Anderson Memorial Highway nicknamed “The Ray”, is an 18-mile stretch of Interstate 85 located in West Point. The section of interstate incorporates a number of sustainable initiatives and functions as a test site for these technologies, creating a regenerative highway ecosystem. The World's First Sustainable Highway will feature built in safety features that will provide drivers with real time information about their vehicle performance.
The project and operations will help protect Georgia's environment and natural resources providing important research on how we can minimize negative impacts. The centerpiece of the project, the I-85 visitor center, will include a solar-powered charging station, a tire pressure system and the nation's first trafficable solar roadway. Motorists will receive real time information after cars drive over the system. A kiosk will be available to request a paper ticket or enter their phone number to get a text with information about their tire pressure. A 7,000-square-foot pollinator garden will provide a butterfly and honeybee habitat. The Georgia Department of Transportation is contributing towards the cost of this innovative project.

I-185 Cable Barrier Project

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is installing a cable barrier system on a significant portion of Interstate 185 from Columbus northward. This is a major safety upgrade that will help keep vehicles from crossing the median and crashing into motorists moving in the opposite direction. The project will cover nearly 21 miles of the interstate from the Muscogee County line to the border separating Harris County and Troup County.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends cable median barriers as a cost-effective means of reducing the severity of median crossover crashes. Cable barriers used in medians usually provide softer impacts resulting in less force and redirection. The barriers are more adaptable to slopes typically found in medians, and can be installed through less invasive construction methods. Once installed, Georgia DOT will inspect them and then take over maintenance responsibilities.
GDOT Supports Mobility

**Camp Creek Pkwy DDI**

The Georgia Department of Transportation began construction on a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) to serve Camp Creek Parkway at its intersection with I-285. The project will eliminate the need for left-turn movements, as they are a typical challenge with standard four-way interchanges. The bridge design and landscaping will create a distinctive gateway for the area. The project started construction in September 2018. The centerpiece of the project is the 2.3 million diverging diamond interchange. The interchange will utilize the existing bridge structure and widen it seven feet to provide a total width of just over 100 feet. The bridge will be raised and meet vertical clearance requirements. A Diverging Diamond Interchange allows traffic to cross the opposite side of the road at interchanges allowing unimpeded movement onto the freeway ramps.

![Aerotropolis CID](image)

**Peachtree Road Smart Corridor**

The Georgia Department of Transportation has installed and tested software that communicates the status of traffic signals to equipped vehicles in Fulton County. The Signal Phase and Timing (SPaT) technology was used at 39 intersections along Peachtree Road in the City of Atlanta. The project will work by communicating with autonomous vehicles and automatically adjusting to vehicle speeds. Software systems that optimize and prioritize traffic signal timing will also allow emergency vehicles to avoid congested intersections. The project has a goal of increasing safety and reducing traffic delays within Georgia’s urban centers.
**I-16/I-75 Interchange Milestone**

The Interstate 16 and 75 Interchange Improvement Project in Bibb County is 25% complete as of September 2018. The interchange represents a $500 million investment in the city, region and state’s transportation system. Georgia DOT worked with the Macon Bibb Community Enhancement Authority in the relocation and rehabilitation of homes in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. The I-16/I-75 Interchange reconstruction project will improve the safety of the corridor by widening and reconstructing I-75 from Hardeman Avenue to Pierce Avenue and I-16 from I-75 to Walnut Creek within the City of Macon. Once construction is complete, maintenance of both Jefferson Long Park and Linear Park will be turned over to the Macon-Bibb authorities.

![Image](image_url)

*Georgia Department of Transportation, GDOT*

**I-85 Managed Lanes Extension**

The I-85 Managed Lanes Extension is a part of a network of new optional managed lanes designed to improve mobility and provide more reliable trip times throughout metro Atlanta. The project adds 10 miles of newly constructed express lanes, north of the existing I-85 Express Lanes, entirely in Gwinnett County - one lane in each direction on I-85 from just north of Old Peachtree Road to Hamilton Mill Road. The extension features dynamic pricing, rising as demand increases during peak travel times and falling at off-peak times, giving drivers the choice to pay to bypass congestion. The project opened in November leading to improved traffic flow and increased options for motorists.
Courtland Street Bridge

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) officially re-opened the Courtland Street Bridge to traffic in October 2018. The 111-year old Courtland Street Bridge from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Gilmer Street received a $25 million Design-Build reconstruction. The Courtland Street Bridge is located in the City of Atlanta, near the Georgia State Capitol building. Courtland Street is a major thoroughfare through the downtown campus of Georgia State University (GSU). The bridge was reconstructed using Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) techniques similar to the I-85 bridge replacement last year. The project consists of 28 spans over the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) and CSX Transportation (CSX) rail lines.
The Transportation Funding Act (TFA 2015) provides flexibility between state and federal funding, which aids the Department in maintaining roadways and bridges across the state. In July 2018, CNBC stated that Georgia roads are amongst the best maintained in the country.

As a result of the TFA of 2015, GDOT has sustained funding to focus on deferred routine maintenance activities, including pavement preservation and bridge rehabilitation or replacement. Compare to 2015, funding for roadway resurfacing nearly quadrupled in FY 2016, with similar funding in FY 2017 and FY 2018. This allows GDOT to work toward restoring a 15-year pavement resurfacing cycle, rather than the 50-year cycle in place just a few years ago. Additionally, funding for bridge repairs and replacements nearly doubled in FY 2016, 2017 and 2018, allowing the Department to repair or replace both on-system and off-system bridges. In FY 2018, GDOT invested $447 million in routine maintenance, $400 million in capital maintenance and $301 million in repairing and replacing bridges. This is more than double the investment before the TFA.

Examples of maintenance projects completed by the Department within the past year include:

- PI # M004816: 33.94 miles of resurfacing in Baldwin County along SR 22
- PI # M005028: 15.88 miles of resurfacing in Mitchell County along SR 93
- PI # M004637: 2.3 miles of resurfacing and milling in DeKalb County near I-85 along SR 403
- PI # M004421: 5.69 miles of signage upgrades in Clayton County near I-75 along SR 401
- PI # M005371: 8.96 miles of maintenance and bridge rehabilitation in Carroll County near I-20 along SR 402
- PI # M005307: 2 miles of bridge maintenance in Bartow County near I-75 along SR 401
- PI # M005041: 10.02 miles milling and resourcing in Newton County along SR 20
- PI # M005427: 10.85 miles of maintenance and bridge rehabilitation in Newton County along CR 114