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STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR WELCOME CENTERS

The Gateways Committee to fund renovation of Welcome Centers across Georgia

ATLANTA –The State Transportation Board’s Gateways Committee voted Wednesday to recommend the renovation of Georgia’s Welcome Centers. The Gateways Committee committed funds to the effort from the revenues collected from the Georgia LOGO program. The full Board approved the initiative today.

“The opportunity to rehabilitate and beautify our Welcome Centers with the funds from the LOGO program is a perfect use of that money. We have worked closely with Governor Deal to identify the best projects to use these dedicated funds on in the state, and nothing reflects that better than improving our Welcome Centers. We are extremely excited about the work and the ultimate positive image of Georgia that will be reflected in the completed projects,” explained Sam Wellborn, Committee Chair.

The Georgia LOGO program offers businesses advertising along highway interchanges through placement of their name and logo on signs approaching exits. The program is currently operated by Georgia Logos under a five year contract, and generates revenue of approximately \$3.3 million annually paid to the Department’s gateway reserves which funds various highway beautification projects statewide. Past projects have included landscaping grants, hardscapes, lighting and more, all at no cost to taxpayers. Current reserves are being set aside to begin the Welcome Center renovations.

“We realized that the LOGO funds were a perfect fit to use in making our Welcome Centers better. Many of these have been here since the 1960s and are in need of updating and beautification,” said Board Chair Johnny Floyd. “I truly appreciate the hard work Sam and the other members have put into this committee - the dedication to finding the right projects – I am very pleased with what they have presented.”

The Gateways Committee was officially established last year and is comprised of Chair Sam Wellborn, Jay Shaw, Don Grantham and Jeff Lewis. Together, the committee worked closely with staff to develop a plan for the Welcome Centers, met with the Department of Economic Development and the Governor’s office to ensure that support for this effort was in place. Specifications for a Request for Proposals (RFP) are being developed at this time. A project to rebuild the Welcome Center in Savannah is already funded through a separate allocation. Long term, the goal is to not only rehab the eight Welcome Centers, but also do additional work to the state’s 16 Rest Areas used by motorists each day.

Each day, hundreds of Georgia Department of Transportation employees and contractors work on dozens of highway, bridge and intersection improvements throughout the state. Their work often brings them and heavy machinery in close proximity to travel lanes. Fifty-seven Georgia DOT personnel and many more motorists, passengers and contractors' workers have been killed in highway work zone accidents since 1973. Please help us prevent these tragedies by slowing down; being especially attentive and cautious as you pass through construction work zones; and always driving responsibly. Safer Driving; Safer Work Zones; For Everyone. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit www.dot.ga.gov or subscribe to our Press Release [RSS feed](#). You also may follow us on [Facebook](#) (www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT) and [Twitter](#) (<http://twitter.com/gadepoftrans>).

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