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## **GDOT Establishes Schedule for Demolition of Homes as Part of Mitigation Plan for Macon's Pleasant Hill Community**

**Macon, Ga.** – Moving forward in the effort to complete the Pleasant Hill mitigations and to begin the reconstruction of the I-75/I-16 interchange, the Georgia Department of Transportation, working in partnership with Pleasant Hill and the Macon-Bibb Community Enhancement Authority (MBCEA) led by State Rep. James Beverly, has established a schedule for the demolition of 19 homes in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. Demolition work is scheduled to begin January 3, 2017 and weather permitting, should be completed February 6, 2017.

"The Pleasant Hill Mitigation Plan is a great example of all parts of a local community coming together to partner with a state agency to make great things happen," said State Rep. James Beverly, chairman of the Macon-Bibb Community Enhancement Authority. "I am looking forward to working closely with GDOT and the Macon-Bibb County community at large to help this exciting project benefit the entire region."

The demolition work will include abatement contractors in protective gear removing materials from the houses in a controlled environment. Once materials are properly removed, contractors will then demolish the houses by tearing down with heavy equipment and removal from the property.

"We are pleased that there is an established schedule and that we are moving forward with this very critical project," said Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell McMurry. "This collaboration and partnership with Macon-Bibb Community Enhancement Authority, the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Improvement Group and the community has resulted in our finalizing the mitigation portion of the project and clearing the way to move forward with the interchange project."

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. Within this corridor, there are four interstate/arterial route interchanges (I-16 at Spring Street, Second Street, Coliseum Drive and I-75 at Hardeman Avenue) and a system level interchange between I-16 and I-75. Due to the magnitude and complexity of this project, there will be an impact to the Pleasant Hill community and as such, a mitigation plan is an essential piece of the overall project. The first phase of the I-16/I-75 project is in the December 2016 letting.

Much of the mitigation work focuses on the relocation of homes within the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. Georgia DOT worked with MBCEA—a local community entity that promotes community enhancement and economic development throughout Macon-Bibb County—to

facilitate optimal mitigation success. MBCEA selected seven vacant lots and residential structures for relocation and rehabilitation in Pleasant Hill. In addition, MBCEA will build 17 new residential structures throughout the community with the goal of ensuring that a total of 24 homes are either relocated, rehabilitated or newly built. These houses will be compatible with the context of the historic community and will ensure that the cultural heritage of Pleasant Hill is preserved. Georgia DOT will relocate and rehabilitate the Penniman House, which was the boyhood home of celebrated artist Little Richard.

Cultural resource mitigation efforts captured the oral and visual history of the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. Other mitigation efforts include creating a linear park that with green space and multi-use trail, lighting and information kiosks along the east side of I-75 and the creation of the Jefferson Long Park on the west side of I-75. The Penniman House will be relocated adjacent to the Jefferson Long Park and will serve as a community resource center, where specially created mobile interpretative panels will be displayed.

Mitigation commitments also include constructing noise and visual walls along I-75 within Pleasant Hill; replacing the David Lucas Pedestrian bridge, transforming an existing open drainage ditch into a grass-covered culvert, and streetscaping (resurfacing and sidewalk rehabilitation) throughout the community.

For more information on the project; visit [www.dot.ga.gov/I-16I-75](http://www.dot.ga.gov/I-16I-75) or <http://www.dot.ga.gov/BS/Projects/SpecialProjects/I16I75>.