



For Immediate Release:
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Driving Georgia's Economy...

Bridges Among \$56.9 Million In 17 Statewide Project Award Contracts

ATLANTA – The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has announced contract awards for 17 projects totaling \$56.9 million. These include two bridge construction projects to be funded from \$100 million in bonds appropriated by the 2015 General Assembly for surface transportation projects.

In May, the State Transportation Board (STB) adopted a resolution to sell \$111.5 million in bonds representing GDOT's total bond package for fiscal year 2016. This includes \$100 million in one-time 20-year bond financing directed by legislators for repair, replacement and renovation of bridges statewide.

The two awarded bridge bond projects - in Jeff Davis and Elbert counties - are from a priority list of 25 bridges approved by the Board for repair or replacement across the state for FY 2016. Future monthly award contracts will include the other bridges on the list.

“When you look at using bond money, you want something that has a long life. And a bridge has a 75-year life-cycle,” Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell McMurry said. “Obviously \$100 million does not address all bridges, but it greatly helps to advance many necessary projects. GDOT is very appreciative of the Legislature’s commitment to taking care of Georgia’s critical infrastructure.”

Selection criteria for the priority bridge projects were based on existing bridge condition and project readiness. These bridges are currently either posted with signs limiting the weight of trucks that can cross them safely; are structurally deficient - in poor condition or have sub-standard strength; fracture critical - lack redundancy in the main structural elements; or are functionally obsolete - designed to older standards.

With a total of 14,675 bridges in Georgia - including 6,651 GDOT bridge structures and 8,024 local bridge structures - there is a significant need for bridge repair and replacement. The continued uncertainty with federal funding has contributed to a growing backlog of bridge and other maintenance projects and has made the optimal replacement schedule of around 200 bridges a year unattainable. In 2014, GDOT replaced or newly constructed 60 bridges.

“All bridges serve a critical role in Georgia, from our Interstates to rural roads. If a farmer can’t get his crops out of the field and across a bridge because it’s not strong enough, that has a negative impact not only to the farmer, but also to the economy,” McMurry said.

In Jeff Davis County, .6 miles of construction of a bridge and approaches on U.S. 221/State Road 135 over Whitehead Creek is on tap for completion by the end 2016. The cost is \$3.7 million. Work will be done by Southern Concrete Construction, Inc. of Albany.

In Elbert County, a quarter mile of approaches on State Road 368 and a bridge over Pickens Creek will be constructed by E.R. Snell Contractor, Inc. of Snellville, at a cost of \$1.9 million with completion in August 2016.

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Information on schedules, lane closures and necessary detours will be made available in advance of construction activities.

Details on all awarded projects can be found through the Award Announcement Downloads link at: <https://www.bidx.com/ga/letting?lettingid=15061901>.

Georgia DOT advises drivers to expect the unexpected in work zones. Slow down; don't tailgate; obey road crew flaggers; pay attention to signs; stay alert; and minimize distractions.

***DriveAlert ArriveAlive** calls attention to an alarming increase in roadway fatalities across Georgia, many resulting from preventable crashes and distracted driving. **DriveAlert ArriveAlive** implores motorists to buckle up; stay off the phone and no texting; and drive alert. Visit www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA. #ArriveAliveGA*
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