

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Press Release

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Georgia DOT Makes Strides on new Public Private Partnership Program

Series of workshops under way as P3 program information is unveiled...

ATLANTA – The Georgia Department of Transportation today held a workshop for the State Transportation Board on the Department’s new Public Private Partnership (P3) program. At the workshop, the Board received an update on the status of the program and learned more about a list of 18 projects being considered for pursuit as P3 projects.

Additionally today, the Board opened a 30-day public comment period on the set of rules that will serve as the framework under which the state’s new P3 program will operate. These rules and accompanying guidelines provide the Department, its private sector partners and those seeking to work with the Department a clear understanding of how the P3 program is to be executed.

Input on the rules has already been sought from members of Georgia House and Senate Transportation Committee members and transportation partner organizations and agencies. This allowed for comments to be considered before the State Transportation Board opened the official rule-making process and public comment period. Following any revisions, the Department will submit the rules to Georgia’s House and Senate Transportation Committees for approval during the 2010 legislative session. The State Transportation Board will then provide final approval for the rules to be implemented.

“We are developing a P3 program that will be among the best, if not the very best, in the nation,” Georgia DOT Commissioner Vance C. Smith, Jr., said. “We are moving forward aggressively, but at the same time being very deliberate to bring together all of the people, organizations and members of the private sector that must be part of the process to ensure the people of Georgia a premier P3 program.”

The list of projects shared today with the Board has been put through a rigorous screening process. That process determines their viability as P3 projects by taking into account factors such as project maturity, financial feasibility and project scope. Based on the results of the screening process, an initial group of projects is being advanced for further consideration.

Those projects include:

- The Northwest Corridor on Interstate Highways 75 and 575 which contemplates a set of two reversible managed lanes along the length of the corridor. The project was advanced by a private sector consortium under a previous public private initiative, but will now be pursued through a solicited approach, as will all future P3 projects. The Department will consider including a west-side section of Interstate Highways 285 and 20 as part of the Northwest Corridor project.
- Interstate Highway 285 top end corridor between Interstate Highways 75 and 85 is also being advanced for consideration. This corridor is currently undergoing an environmental evaluation, and the type of solution to be implemented is still under review.
- The Gwinnett Connector, also known as the Sugarloaf Parkway Extension (Phase II) which would include new construction between State Route 316 and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard is also being considered.
- A 21-mile section Georgia State Route 400 in north Fulton and Forsyth counties being considered for managed lane implementation.

This list will be updated periodically to reflect adjusted priorities and additional projects that will address transportation throughout Georgia, such as improvements to heavily-used corridors serving the state’s ports and urban corridors like Interstate Highway 75 on Atlanta’s south side.

“It’s impressive to see the amount of work done thus far to advance our P3 program,” said State Transportation Board Chairman Bill Kuhlke, Jr. “We’ve gone from the Governor signing a bill in May that called for the Department to create an entirely new P3 program to having a prioritized list of projects and a procedural framework that is nearly complete. I’m confident we’ll see our first project go to solicitation by June 30, 2010.”

The Department is planning to host an industry workshop on December 3, 2009, at the Georgia Freight Depot in Downtown Atlanta. The event will bring together organizations that have the potential to deliver real value to the citizens of Georgia.

Georgia DOT also has launched a new P3 section on its website. Beyond accessing the site through the traditional web address (www.dot.ga.gov), the site can be viewed directly at www.georgiaP3.org. The site includes an overview of the program, the full list of projects that have been considered thus far and the set of rules for review. A public comment section is available as well.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia’s economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. Georgia is the 3rd fastest-growing state in the nation, yet 49th in per capita spending on transportation. Additional transportation revenues are imperative to grow and sustain Georgia's economic vitality and quality of life through the 21st Century. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our Web site (www.dot.ga.gov).

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