



FY 2018 - FY 2021 Strategic Plan



FY 2019 Strategic Plan Update

Summer 2018

Executive Summary

The Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) develops its agency-wide Strategic Plan every four years. Its content is updated annually to reflect the Department's current priorities and is reported to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). Strategic planning establishes a framework that explains what the agency does and why, outlines the agency's overall direction, supports its actions, and promotes accountability.

Building from Governor Deal's safety and mobility goals, Georgia DOT is committed to deliver the most effective and efficient transportation system – one focused on innovation, safety, sustainability, and mobility. The Department's vision is to boost Georgia's competitiveness through leadership in transportation.

In addition to defining the agency's goals and objectives, the Strategic Plan identifies the challenges, risks, and opportunities that Georgia's transportation system will face in the coming years and the strategies the Department will implement to maintain a safe and connected transportation system.

The Strategic Plan guides the Department's priorities for the next four years. It provides a broad roadmap, outlining where the agency currently stands, where it wants to be in the future, and what actions it must take to get there.



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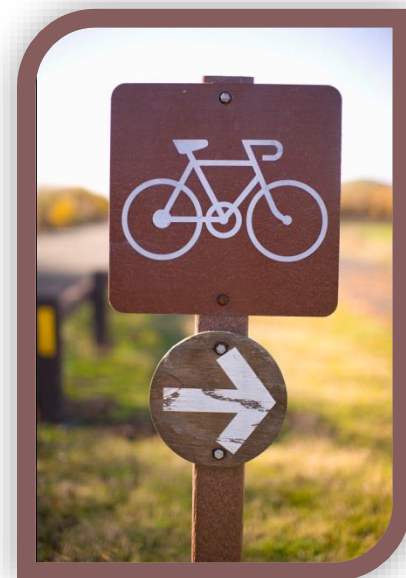
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Linking Georgia DOT's Strategic Plan to Georgia's SSTP/SWTP

The Georgia DOT Strategic Plan has been prepared to be consistent with the State's Strategic Plan. The vision for the Georgia State Strategic Plan, developed by Governor Nathan Deal, is "A lean and responsive State government that allows communities, individuals and businesses to prosper." The State plan identifies six strategic goals in the areas of: education, mobility, economic growth, health, safety and responsible and efficient government.

Georgia DOT, like all State agencies, has a role in implementing the State's strategic priorities and linking them to the Georgia DOT's Strategic Plan. Building from Governor Deal's priorities, Georgia DOT's goals focus on delivering all projects on time and on budget, making safety investments and improvements for Georgia DOT's employees and the traveling public, taking care of the transportation infrastructure to ensure mobility and safety, identifying and planning the best transportation projects, and recruiting, training and retaining a quality workforce.

The Georgia DOT plan also aligns with the State mandated Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP) and federally required Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP) for Georgia. These two plans (SSTP and SWTP) are combined in one policy document that provide a comprehensive look at all transportation issues facing Georgia now and through the year 2040.



Strategic Planning Process

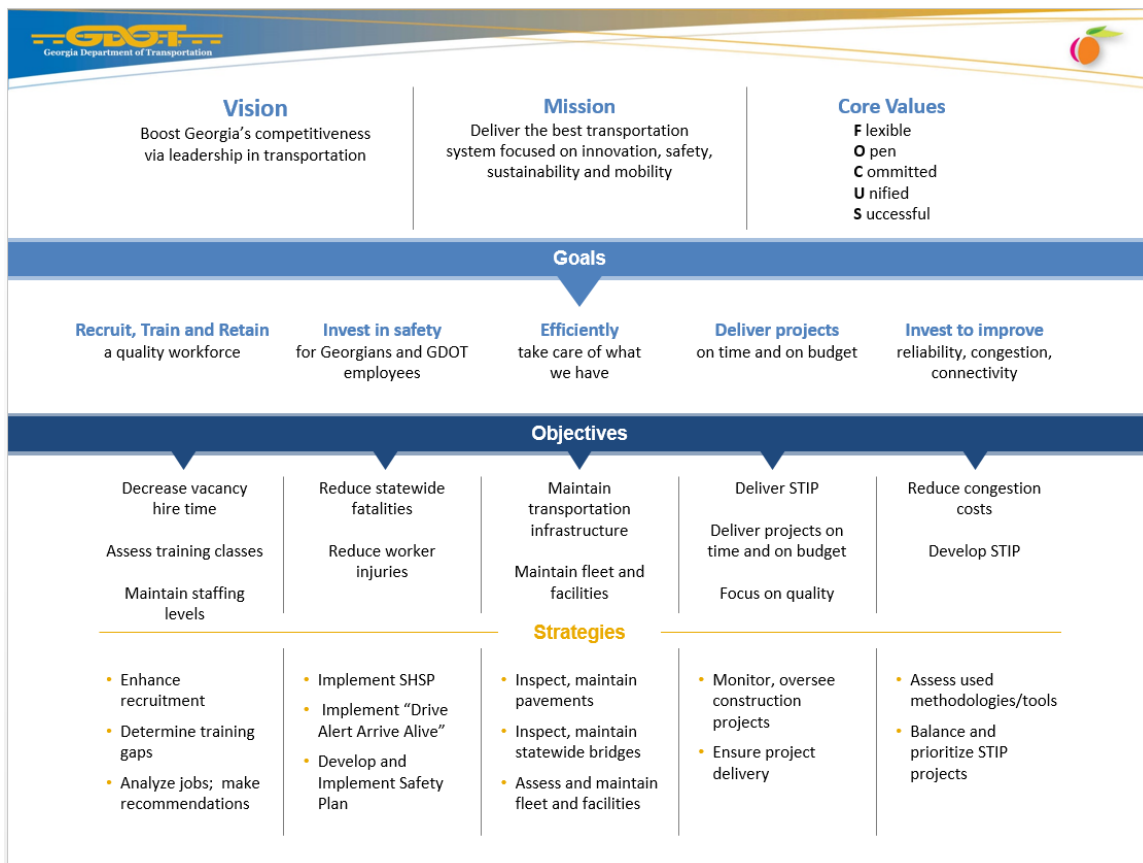
The FY 2018-2021 Strategic Plan was developed by considering the Department's current and future priorities and goals and existing resources and needs. The members of the Georgia DOT leadership team reviewed and agreed on the Department's vision, mission and goals. While modifying existing and adding an additional goal, the leadership team revised the Department's mission to better reflect its focus on innovation as well as excellence in the delivery of all of its products.

Demographic and economic data as well as information about the Department were gathered, analyzed and reviewed to gain an understanding of the external and internal factors that impact Georgia DOT. This analysis informed the process of selecting objectives and strategies to accomplish the goals established in the Strategic Plan as Georgia DOT's top priority. The strategies in this plan are directly tied to objectives that will help the Department achieve its established goals.

Strategic Plan

The strategy map (Figure ES-1) summarizes Georgia DOT’s vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives – the core elements of the Strategic Plan. The plan recognizes the primary responsibility of the agency to plan, construct and maintain the Georgia State transportation network while making Georgia DOT a better agency that is committed to serving the public. This plan focuses on customers as Georgia DOT’s top priority. The strategies in this plan will help the Department achieve its established goals.

Figure ES-1 – Georgia DOT Strategy Map



1.0 Introduction

Through the strategic planning process, Georgia DOT sets its overall direction and goals, measures its progress towards goal achievement, and makes necessary adjustments to its targets and resource allocation. Strategic planning helps Georgia DOT be a better steward of Georgia’s transportation system, focusing the Department’s attention on moving people and goods safely and efficiently throughout the State. Strategic planning establishes a framework that explains what the agency does and why, outlines the agency’s overall direction, supports its actions, and promotes accountability. A Strategic

Plan is an important tool to help make Georgia DOT both transparent and effective.

The Department undertakes strategic planning to:

- meet statutory requirements,
- establish common goals and objectives for the agency, and
- prepare for the long term.

Fundamentally, Georgia DOT’s Strategic Plan focuses the vision and priorities of the agency for a four year period. The current plan is for fiscal years 2018-2021. It is revisited annually to ensure that the strategic direction remains relevant and consistent with the vision of current State and agency leadership, and to track progress towards Georgia DOT’s goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan is comprised of five goals, each with objectives, strategies, and performance

An Effective Strategic Plan Will:

- Align with the State’s goals and priorities
- Align organizational units
- Increase the time spent on core business activities
- Manage expectations
- Make the best use of resources
- Enable the agency to conduct business in a transparent and accountable environment

measures. The goals support the agency’s commitment to the ongoing stewardship of the State transportation system.

Benefits of Strategic Planning

The real value of strategic planning does not only come from complying with statutory requirements, but also from using the plan to set a direction for the agency and focusing the agency’s resources (people, equipment and funds) on the highest priority actions.

The Georgia DOT Strategic Plan provides a broad roadmap for the Department. At its core, the Strategic Plan answers the following questions:

- What do we do?
- For whom do we do it?
- How can we maintain a safe and reliable transportation system?

Developing and updating the Strategic Plan also serves as an effective staff development activity. Georgia DOT’s Strategic Plan is intended to engage employees to help shape the agency’s direction and culture. An effective strategic planning process provides the opportunity to help employees understand the goals of the agency and how they can contribute to accomplishing the agency’s goals.

GEORGIA DOT TRANSPORTATION FAST FACTS

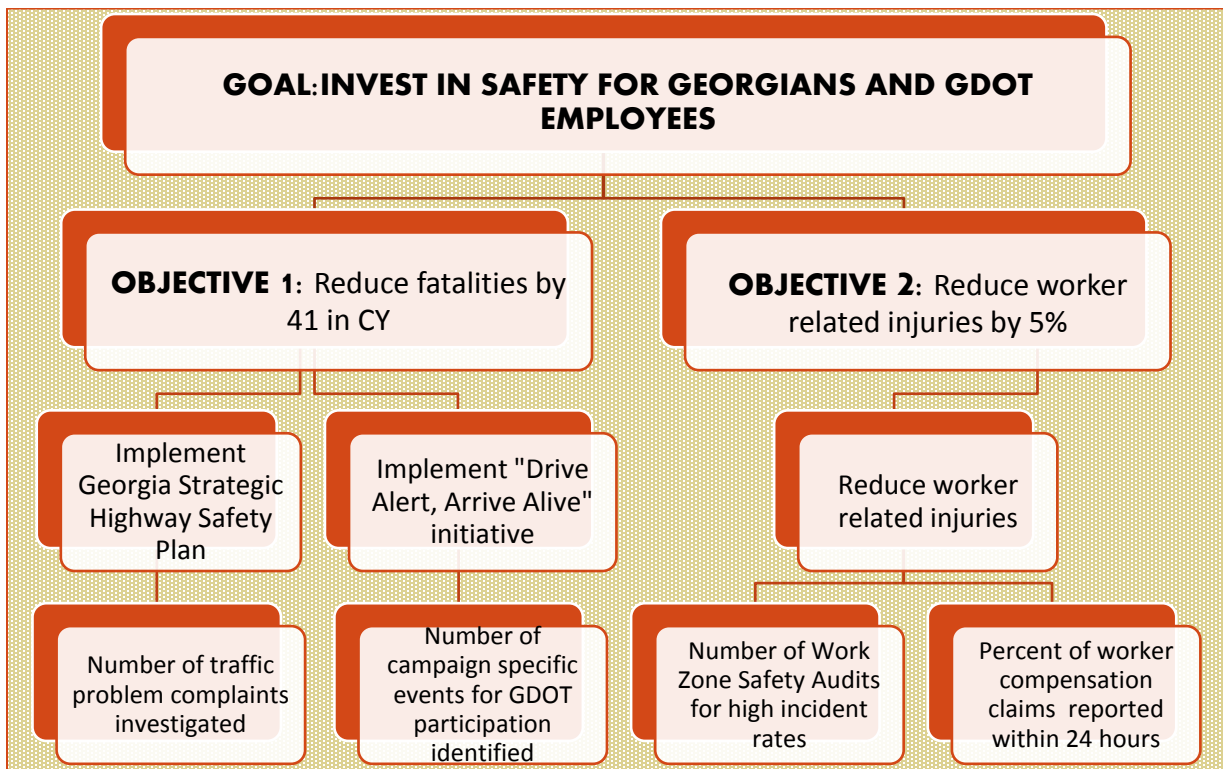
7 District Offices
31 Area Offices
17 Rest Areas
9 Welcome Centers
3,899 Employees
17,912 State Highway System Miles
6,729 State-owned Bridges
87,369 County Road Miles
20,005 City Street Miles
110 Certified HERO Operators
16 Urban Transit Programs
113 Rural Transit Programs
540 Miles of Short line Rail
54 Active Park & Ride Lots
103 Publicly Owned Airports

From Strategic Planning to Performance Management

Georgia DOT has a robust performance management system in place. As a main component of strategic planning, performance management serves as a tool to evaluate whether the Department is moving towards meeting Georgia DOT's goals and objectives.

After the Department defines its mission, it 'translates' it into set of Department-wide goals. Since goals are broad statements of purpose, they are further divided into specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives. The divisions and districts are usually responsible for achieving objectives. These objectives are further divided into smaller action steps, which are accomplished at the office or unit level. Action steps are directly tied to employees' individual job responsibilities and are part of their performance reviews. This is depicted in the graph below (*Figure 1.1*).

Figure 1.1 Georgia DOT Performance Management Process



An important part of the Strategic Planning Process is the review of progress, which supports decision making regarding the allocation of resources and adjusting/changing targets. Georgia DOT’s executive leadership reviews the performance metrics belonging to each Division and Office on a quarterly basis, which helps drive a culture of continuous improvement.

From Performance Management to Asset Management

Transportation asset management is defined as:

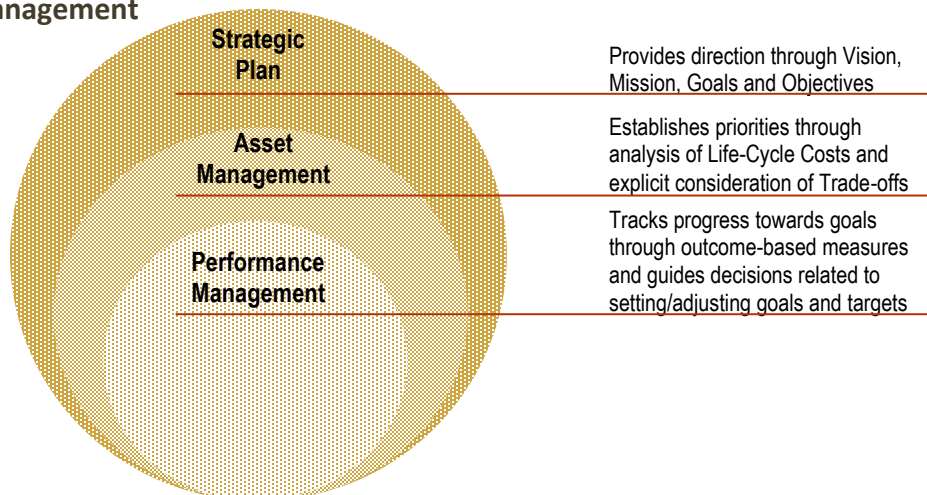
“... a strategic process of operating, maintaining, upgrading and expanding physical assets using sound business and engineering practices for resources allocation.”

Strategic planning is part of an overall effort to manage Georgia DOT. The Strategic Plan sets the overall direction for the agency, establishes goals and objectives, and identifies short-term business strategies. From there, Georgia DOT uses performance management and asset management to help deliver the goals and

objectives set by the agency.

Figure 1.2 demonstrates the relationship between strategic planning, performance management, and asset management. Performance management is a tool utilized to make investment decisions by tracking progress towards the agency’s goals through the use of outcome-based performance measures. The measuring of actual outcomes are important because they reflect customer priorities compared to the inputs (labor and materials) and outputs (amount of work delivered) that drive these outcomes.

Figure 1.2 Relationship between Strategic Planning, Performance Management and Asset Management



Asset management is an approach to delivering those inputs and outputs, while minimizing the life-cycle cost of investments (from planning to construction through operation and maintenance).

The Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) is a federally mandated document that is updated every 4 years and outlines the steps and strategies utilized to cost effectively manage Georgia’s pavement and bridge assets. The TAMP supports the Department’s approach to cost-effectively manage the transportation system by examining the relationships between inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

Linking to Georgia’s Strategic Priorities

In Georgia, the State and its agencies are required by OCGA¹ 45-12-73 and 175 to develop a Strategic Plan. The Georgia strategic planning process has two components. The first component is a State Strategic Plan that provides the vision, direction, and priorities of the State. The second component is an agency Strategic Plan that aligns with the State Strategic Plan and contributes to achievement of State goals.

¹ OCGA: Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

Figure 1.3 Georgia Strategic Planning Process



The Georgia State Strategic Plan identifies six strategic goals:

- **Educated** – Developing life-, college-, and work-ready students;
- **Mobile** – Transporting people and products in a 21st century Georgia;
- **Growing** – Creating jobs and growing businesses;
- **Healthy** – Accessible care and active lifestyles;
- **Safe** – Protecting the public’s safety and security;
- **Responsible and Efficient Government** – Fiscally sound, principled, conservative.

“A lean and responsive state government that allows communities, individuals and businesses to prosper.”
- Governor Nathan Deal

Agency Goals

Georgia DOT, like all State agencies, has a role in implementing the State Strategic Plan. In particular, Georgia DOT has a prime role in implementing the *Mobility, Safety, Growing, and Responsible & Efficient Government goals*. Georgia DOT's five goals are:

1. Recruit, train and retain a quality workforce
2. Invest in safety for Georgians and GDOT employees
3. Efficiently take care of what we have
4. Deliver all projects on time and on budget
5. Invest to improve reliability, congestion, and connectivity

2.0 Strategic Plan Development

The 2018-2021 Strategic Plan was developed by gathering input and feedback from GDOT's executive and senior leadership teams. The Department's strategic planning meeting took place in the spring of 2017. The Department's executive leadership team (the Department's Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Chief Engineer, and Treasurer) and senior leadership team (Division Directors) attended the meeting.

After carefully reviewing the Department's vision (which was developed in 2013 with the help of GDOT Board members), it was decided that the vision still clearly represents the Department's aspirational goal to boost the State's competitiveness by providing leadership in transportation.

However, the team decided to make the Department's mission clearer, shorter, and more in line with Georgia DOT's aim for excellence in delivery of its products and services. The demographic and economic data were reviewed, along with Department's data and information to gain an understanding of the external and internal factors that could impact Georgia DOT as it seeks to implement this plan. This analysis informs the process of selecting objectives and strategies to accomplish the goals established in the Strategic Plan.

The senior leadership team is responsible for communicating the strategies the Department will implement to achieve its goals and objectives and to hold division directors and office managers accountable.

Every employee of the Department plays a role in accomplishing the goals identified during the strategic planning process.

Executive and Senior Leadership teams revised the Department's Mission and Goals to better reflect the Department's current priorities and focus on excellence in delivering the best products.

3.0 Mission, Vision, Core Values

VISION

The purpose of the vision is to state where the agency wants to be in the long term. Connecting transportation's role in the economic success of the State of Georgia is an important aspiration. Therefore, the Department's vision statement captures the Governor's vision to enhance Georgia's competitiveness.

Georgia DOT's vision statement:

Boost Georgia's competitiveness via leadership in transportation

MISSION

At its simplest, the mission statement answers why the Department exists. The best descriptors of why the Georgia DOT exists include the Department's role in providing a transportation system that is focused on innovation, safety, sustainability and mobility.

Georgia DOT's mission statement:

Deliver a transportation system focused on innovation, safety, sustainability and mobility

CORE VALUES

The agency's core values guide its employees in how to conduct their day-to-day business. Core values drive the culture of an organization and remind employees of what is important. As such, core values provide a way to underscore the agency's desired culture.

During the strategic planning discussion, *FOCUS (Flexible, Open, Committed, Unified, Successful)* was adopted as the overall critical core value. A focused agency will know why strategic and investment decisions are being made and will be prepared to respond when challenges emerge.

Georgia DOT's core values:

Flexible, Open, Committed, Unified, Successful

4.0 Goals and Objectives

Once goals and objectives are identified, there are often challenges that must be addressed if they are to be met. *Table 4.1* identifies critical success factors or actions the Department must take to succeed in accomplishing its goals and identifies the potential risks that might prevent it from accomplishing them.

Table 4.1- Georgia DOT Objectives

GOAL 1: Recruit, train and retain a quality workforce		
Objective	Critical Success Factors	Risks
In FY 2019, decrease the number of days to fill a vacancy to 45 days or fewer	Timely job advertisements Timely HR hiring processes	External issues could distract the agency High turn-over rates Competition for candidates from the private sector
In FY 2019, review and analyze critical training classes for at least 50% of the overall workforce	Adequate training funding	Lack of adequate resources to perform the task
In FY 2019, maintain the number of full time employees to within 10% of the authorized staffing level	Adequate funding Management of staffing levels	Increased turn-over rate Competition from the private sector

GOAL 2: Invest in safety for Georgians and GDOT employees		
Objective	Critical Success Factors	Risks
In CY 2019, decrease fatalities by 41	Support from and coordination with various State and local agencies involved in safety and incident response	Funding limitations Driver and pedestrian behaviors
In CY 2019, decrease the number of preventative, worker-related injuries of GDOT employees by 5%	Training classes and manuals Adequate safety training Implementation of Department's Safety Program	Time and resource constraints

GOAL 3: Efficiently take care of what we have		
Objective	Critical Success Factors	Risks
In FY 2019, maintain Georgia's Interstates such that 90% or more are in Fair or better condition	Adequate preservation funding	Failure to maintain adequate funding for preservation
In FY 2019, maintain 85% of State-owned bridges to meet or exceed GDOT standards (strength and condition)	Adequate preservation funding	Failure to maintain adequate funding for preservation
In FY 2019, improve the facilities condition index (FCI) by 5% as compared to the previous year	Complete facilities assessment Inventory asset management system	Failure to maintain adequate funding for facilities' maintenance and preservation
In FY 2019, improve the replacement process for GDOT vehicles	Fleet asset management system	Failure to maintain adequate funding for fleet maintenance and preservation

GOAL 4: Deliver all projects on time and on budget		
Objective	Critical Success Factors	Risks
In FY 2019, authorize Right of Way (ROW) and construction phases, per the approved STIP	An enterprise asset management system Adequate preservation funding	Failure to maintain adequate funding for preservation
By the end of FY 2019, complete construction of 80% or more of all projects within the original contract time and 90% of all projects within budget	Environmental compliance	Failure to maintain adequate funding
In FY 2019, maintain a quality focus on all projects such that the average FFPR deliverable score is 85 or better	Consistent quality guidelines A robust QC/QA program	Inadequate training Time and resource constraints

GOAL 5: Invest to improve reliability, congestion, and connectivity		
Objective	Critical Success Factors	Risks
In FY 2019, re-examine the existing project prioritization methodologies for possible updates and enhancements	Employee knowledge and expertise	Loss of institutional knowledge
On an annual basis, develop and/or amend a financially constrained and prioritized program of projects	Employee knowledge and expertise Intra-Departmental coordination Funding availability	Projects not authorized timely Time and resource constraints

5.0 Strategies

The Department has identified strategies that, when implemented, will help the agency achieve its established goals and objectives. Georgia DOT has also identified performance measures to assess how well the agency is implementing these strategies. Each of the strategies has been assigned to a Division or an Office for implementation and tracking. The 2019 strategies for each goal are identified in *Table 5.1*.

Table 5.1 Strategies

GOAL 1: Recruit, train and retain a quality workforce			
Objective	Action Step/Strategy	Measure (Target)	Division (Office) Responsible
In FY 2019, decrease the number of days to fill a vacancy to 45 days or fewer	Enhance recruitment strategies for positions with high turn-over rates	Average number of days to fill a vacancy (from time position is posted until acceptance of an offer). <i>(Target: 45days or fewer)</i>	Administration <i>(Human Resources)</i>
In FY 2019, review and analyze critical training classes for at least 50% of overall workforce	Review the courses Identify training gaps Create and deliver relevant training courses	Percent of relevant job courses reviewed per CY <i>(Target: 50% or greater)</i>	
In FY 2019, maintain the number of full time employees to within 10% of authorized staffing level	Identify job categories to be reviewed Analyze jobs Make recommendations to leadership	Percent of Department end strength per authorized staffing level per CY <i>(Target: 90% or greater)</i>	

GOAL 2: Invest in safety for Georgians and GDOT employees			
Objective	Action Step/Strategy	Measure (Target)	Division (Office) Responsible
In CY 2019, decrease fatalities by 41	Implement the GA Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)	Number of fatalities in CY (<i>Target: 41 fatalities or fewer from previous CY</i>)	Permits and Operations (<i>Traffic Operations</i>)
	Monitor and execute the “Drive Alert Arrive Alive” campaign Develop and implement a new Department-wide Safety Plan	Number of outreach activities held in CY (<i>Target: FY 2018 is baseline year</i>)	Administration (<i>Communications</i>) Districts
In FY 2019, decrease the number of preventable, worker-related injuries of GDOT employees by 5%	Develop and implement a new Department-wide Safety Plan Draft and publish a Safety Manual Conduct regular District safety meetings	Number of preventable work related injuries in FY (<i>Target: 5% reduction from baseline year</i>)	Human Resources (<i>Safety</i>) Districts

GOAL 3: Efficiently take care of what we have			
Objective	Action Step/Strategy	Measure (Target)	Division (Office) Responsible
In FY 2019, maintain Georgia's Interstates such that 90% or more are in Fair or better condition. 'Fair' condition for Interstates is defined as an average COPACES rating of 75 to 80.	Maintain and preserve Interstate Pavements by conducting annual inspections	Percent of Interstates in 'Fair' or better condition (<i>Target: 90% at COPACES rating of 75 to 80</i>)	Permits and Operations (<i>Maintenance</i>)
In FY 2019, maintain 85% of State-owned bridges to meet or exceed the GDOT standard (strength and condition)	Maintain and preserve State-owned bridges by conducting annual bridge inspections	Percent of State-owned bridges that meet or exceed GDOT's standards (<i>Target: 85%</i>)	Engineering (<i>Bridge</i>)
In FY 2019, improve the facilities condition index (FCI) by 5% as compared to the previous year	Complete the building assessment study and report the facilities condition index Perform facility inspections Perform maintenance activities	Percent of GDOT facilities meeting GDOT standards (<i>Target: 2018 is the baseline year</i>)	Deputy Commissioner (<i>Office of Equipment Management</i>)
In FY 2019, improve the replacement process for GDOT vehicles	Establish replacement schedules for each fleet category	The percent of GDOT fleet that exceeds 10 years and/or 135K miles per fleet category (<i>Target: 2018 is the baseline year</i>)	

GOAL 4: Deliver all projects on time and on budget			
Objective	Action Step/Strategy	Measure (Target)	Division (Office) Responsible
In FY 2019, authorize Right of Way and Construction phases per the approved STIP	Monitor Right of Way (ROW) and Construction (CST) authorization phases	Percent of ROW phases authorized on schedule (Target: 75%) Percentage of CST phases authorized on schedule (Target: 80%)	Program Delivery (Engineering)
By the end of FY 2019, complete construction of 80% or more of all projects within original contract time and 90% of all projects within budget	Monitor and oversee construction projects	Percent of projects constructed on schedule (Target: 80%) Percent of projects constructed on budget (Target: 90%) Percentage of construction projects that have supplemental agreements (SA) for time extensions (Target: ≤ 20%)	Construction
In FY 2019, maintain a quality focus on all projects such that the average FFPR deliverable score is 85 or better	Maintain a quality assurance and quality control program	Average quality assurance score of all FFPR deliverables completed within the FY (Target: 85% or better)	Engineering (Office of Roadway Design)

GOAL 5: Invest to improve reliability, congestion, and connectivity			
Objective	Action Step/Strategy	Measure (Target)	Division (Office) Responsible
In FY 2019, re-examine the existing project prioritization methodologies for possible updates and enhancements	<p>Conduct an internal review regarding the methodology and metrics currently being used to prioritize projects</p> <p>Thoroughly vet the existing process and determine if revisions or wholesale changes are warranted</p> <p>Validate the methodology/tool currently in use or revise the methodology/tool for future use.</p>	<p>Percent of project prioritization methodologies/tools reviewed for possible enhancement <i>(Target: 100%)</i></p>	Planning
On an annual basis, develop and/or amend a financially constrained and prioritized program of projects	<p>Incorporate a balance of maintenance, safety, operational and capacity projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)</p>	<p>Percent of STIP document approved by FHWA by October 2019 <i>(Target: 100%)</i></p>	

The strategic objectives identified in this plan will be used as a specific, measurable, and time-bound guide for the Department. By adopting strategic objectives for each goal, the agency can track progress being made towards accomplishing them. Progress is tracked and reported to the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) upon request in order to create a transparent process and to provide accountability to the public.

6.0 Environmental Scan

There are demographic, political, and economic trends that both shape the need for the services provided by Georgia DOT and influence how Georgians perceive the Department. Prior to determining the optimal strategies to achieve the goals, a scan of Georgia's

The environmental scan provides context for Georgia DOT strategic planning

current environment was conducted to build a context and help guide Georgia DOT's strategic planning towards the preferred future. This information can be used to select realistic and feasible strategies that will effectively address the State's transportation needs.

The following section analyzes high-level demographic and economic indicators to illustrate the current economic and demographic climate in which Georgia DOT operates.

DEMOGRAPHICS

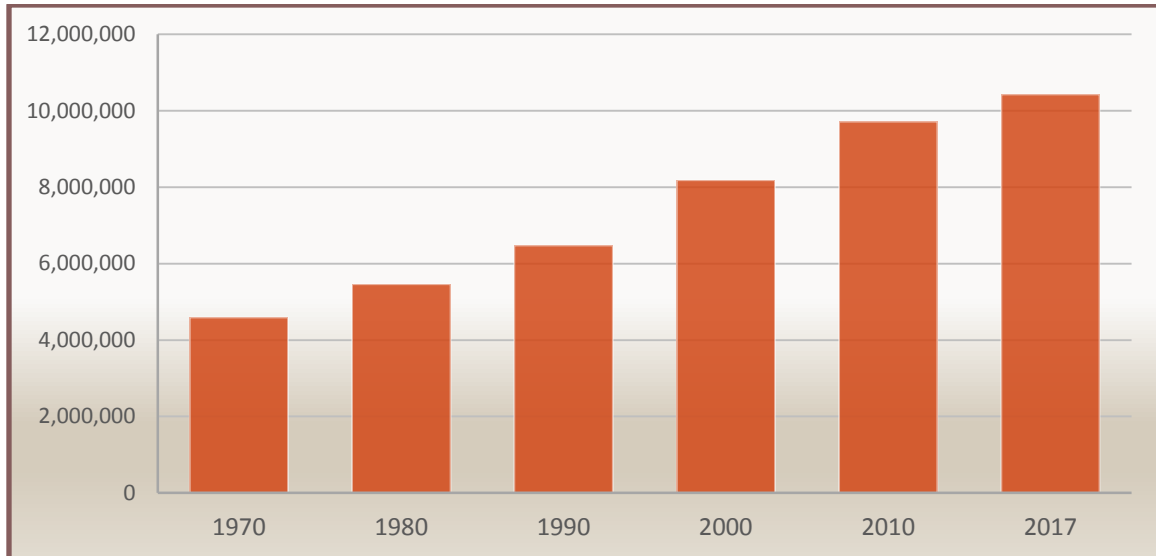
Demographics play a fundamental role in determining the size and extent of transportation demand and the types of transportation services required to accommodate the needs of Georgia residents.

Population Growth

Today, Georgia ranks among the fastest growing states. Georgia's population more than doubled between 1970 and 2017 adding more people than all but five states in the last year. Even though the rise in population has recently slowed, Georgia has maintained higher growth than the U.S. average. The State's transportation system must accommodate the needs of an increasing number of

residents, retirees, businesses, and workers, and do so reliably, safely, and efficiently.

Figure 6.1 Georgia’s Population Growth

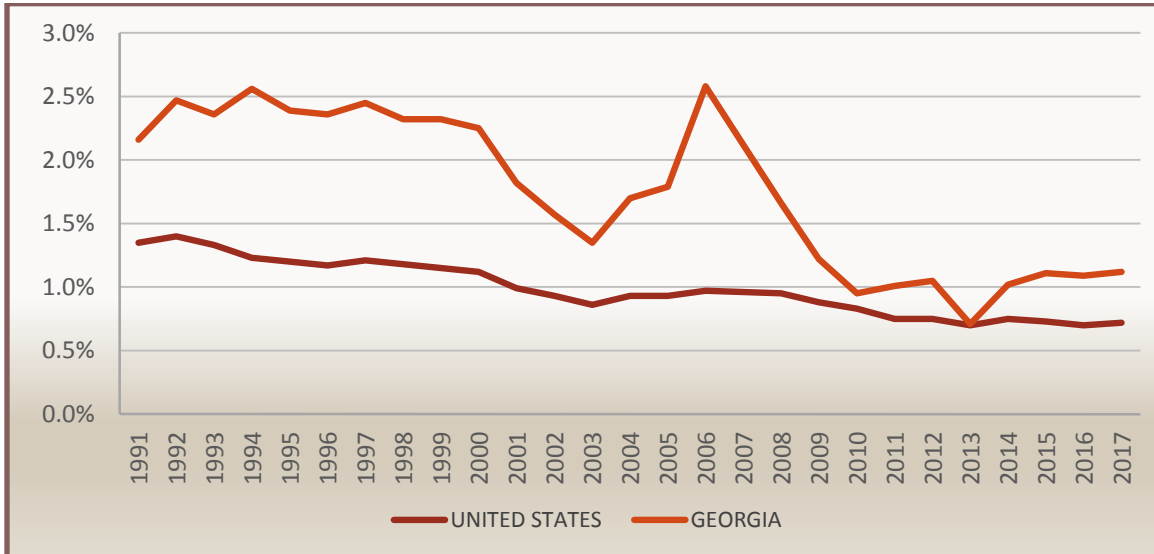


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population growth also has a direct bearing on transportation demand. Georgia’s population reached an estimated 10.4 million in 2017. It ranks as the eighth most populous state in the country.

Figure 6.2 compares the annual population growth rates over the past 26 years for both Georgia and the United States. Indications are that despite Georgia’s recent population trends slowing, the state’s population growth outpaces the nation’s. Consequently, demand on the State’s transportation system continues to increase as a growing population translates to more drivers taking more trips.

Figure 6.2 Annual Rates of Population Growth
Georgia compared to the U.S.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017

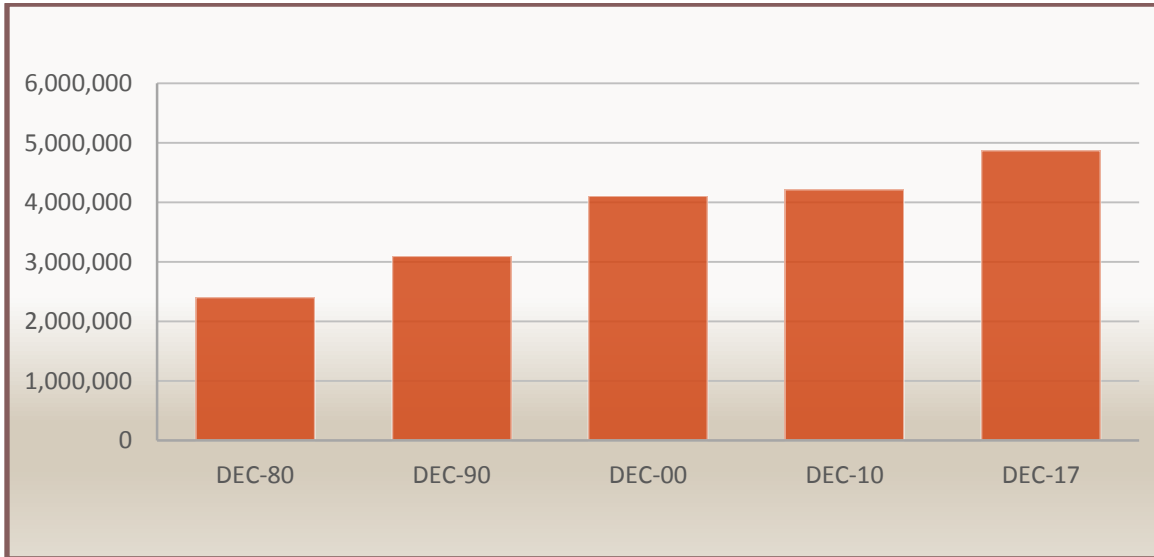
ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Besides population, Georgia’s economy also directly drives demand for the movement of people and goods. During five consecutive years (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017), Georgia was identified by *Site Selection Magazine* as the most competitive state in the nation. Economic growth, similar to population, increases trips and volume for all transportation modes.

Employment and Unemployment

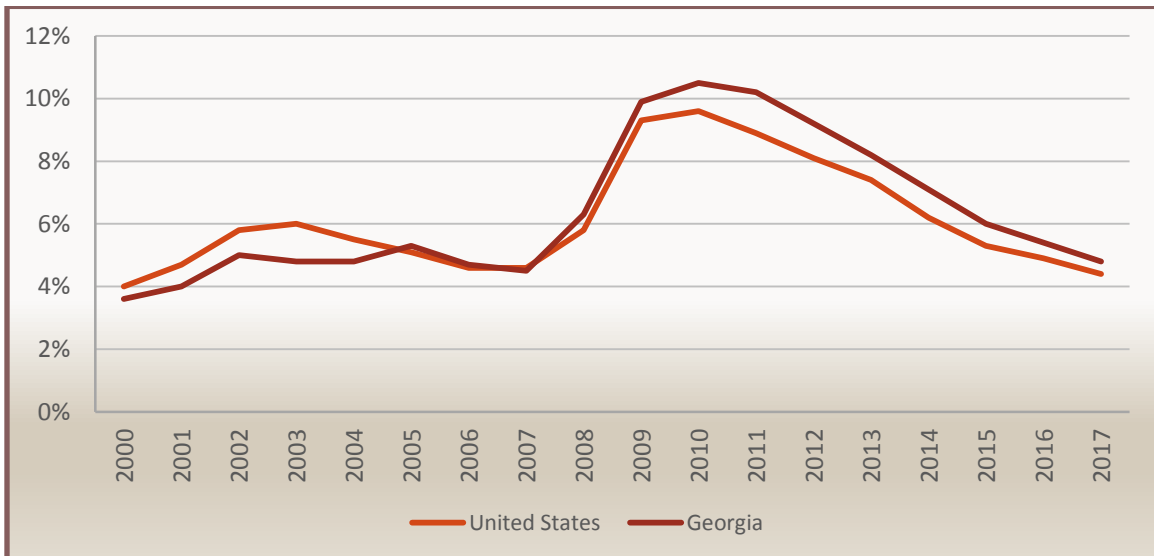
Similar to population, Georgia has also experienced substantial long-term increases in jobs which almost doubled between 1980 and 2017 (see *Figure 6.3*). According to the Department of Labor, the Georgia economy employed approximately 4.87 million people in December 2017. Job growth translates into more transportation activity as more people commute, shop, and buy services. It also impacts the overall demand on freight transportation modes.

Figure 6.3 Georgia’s Employment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Figure 6.4 Annual Average Unemployment Rate Georgia compared to the U.S.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Georgia’s unemployment rate has exceeded the nation’s since 2008 (*Figure 6.4*), and resulted in a higher loss of its total jobs during the recession compared to the

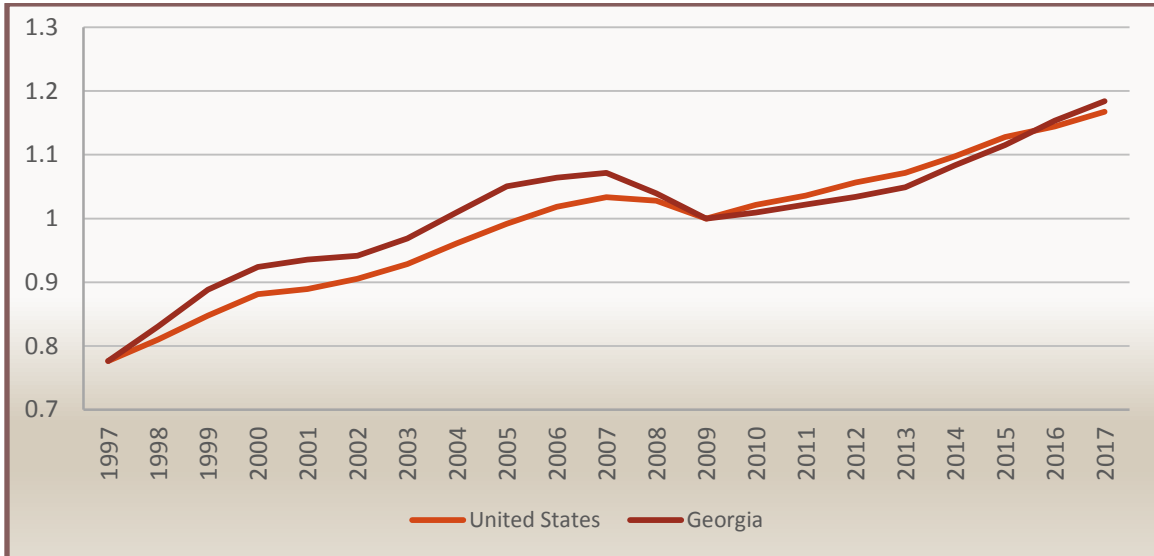
job loss for the U.S. While the recent recession and today's slower growth may temporarily relieve some pressure points on Georgia's transportation network (e.g., highway congestion and bottlenecks), existing and new problems will likely emerge as jobs and the economy continue to grow.

Gross Domestic Product

Georgia's transportation system underpins the State's approximate \$554.3 billion economy (an economy roughly similar in size to South Africa and Argentina). Even though Georgia's gross domestic product (GDP), a universal measure of economic size and activity, has been growing at a lower rate than the nation's since 2009 (*Figure 6.5*), it exceeded the nation's in 2017.

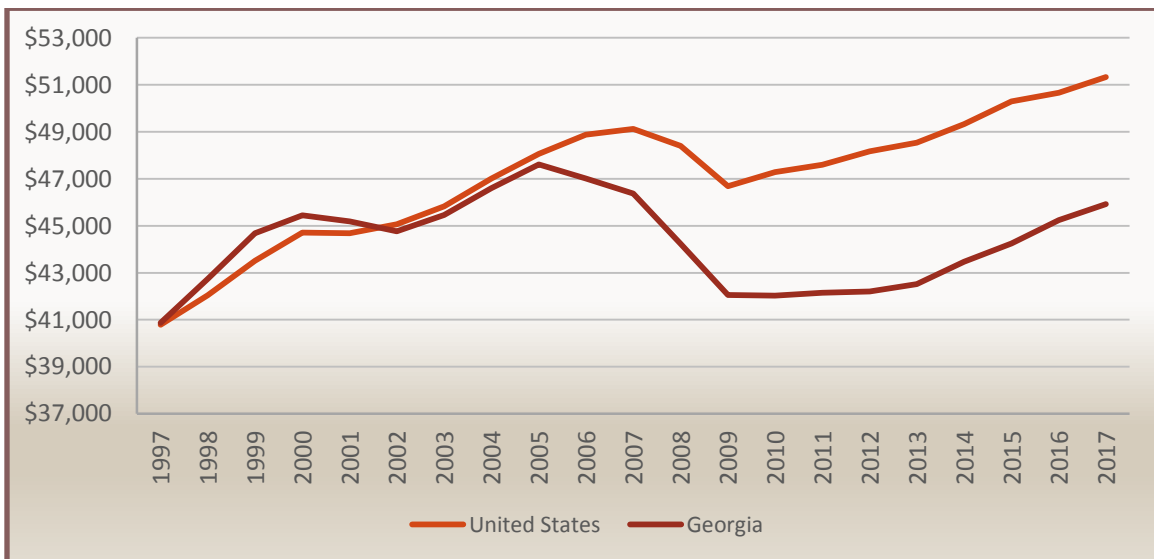
Georgia's economy is dynamic, and its competitiveness in the world market is fostered by the efficient movement of goods to keep costs down and customers supplied. The transportation network also brings people together for face-to-face meetings and links businesses to opportunities in distant markets, both global and domestic. All businesses need Georgia's transportation network and services to provide safe and reliable travel for workers. Georgia's transportation network provides the foundation upon which industries crucial to the State economy can grow.

Figure 6.5 Real GDP Growth
Georgia Compared to the U.S.
(GDP Growth Index, 2009 = 1.00, Chained 2009 dollars)



GDOT Analysis using the data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Last updated: May 14, 2018 – revised statistics for 2010-2016

Figure 6.6 Per Capita Real GDP Growth
Georgia Compared to the U.S. (Chained 2009 dollars)



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Last updated May 4, 2018; revised statistics for 2010-2016

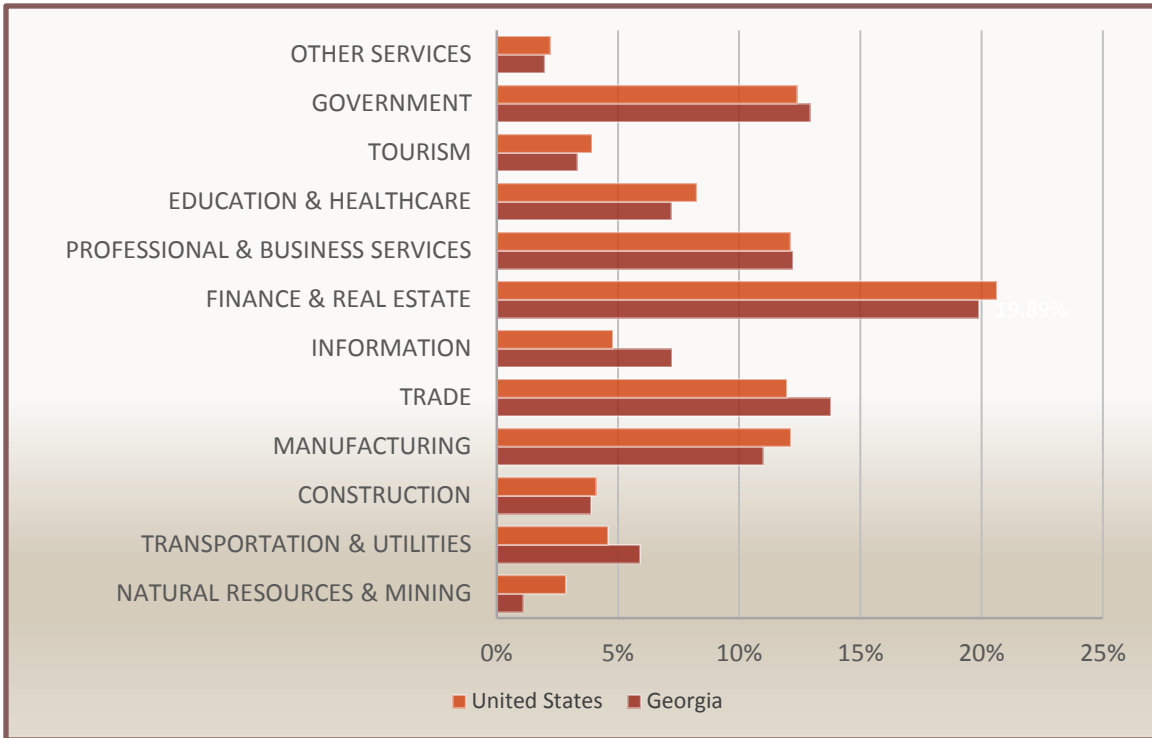
Industry Mix – Georgia’s Economic Structure

Georgia’s economic structure helps to define transportation needs in the State. Several “freight-intensive” industries (mining, agriculture, manufacturing, energy, construction, trade, transportation and utilities, etc.) have a significant impact on trucking, rail, air cargo, and deep sea shipping needs. The tourism industry has clear transportation needs, both for freight (deliveries to restaurants and hotels, for example) and visitor access and mobility.

Compared to the nation, defining characteristics of the Georgia economy include industry concentrations in finance, insurance and real estate, which accounted for 20 percent of Georgia’s GDP. The other significant contributors to Georgia’s economy were wholesale and retail trade, professional services (including engineering, architecture, scientific research, accounting, and marketing), government, and manufacturing sectors. The service sectors, including professional services, continue to be the largest contributors to Georgia’s overall economic output. Freight service industries tend to move more time-sensitive goods (e.g., overnight parcel post). The trucking and air modes have historically dominated parcel shipments, but railroads have responded by offering scheduled services and improved reliability to handle these types of shipments (*Figure 6.7*).

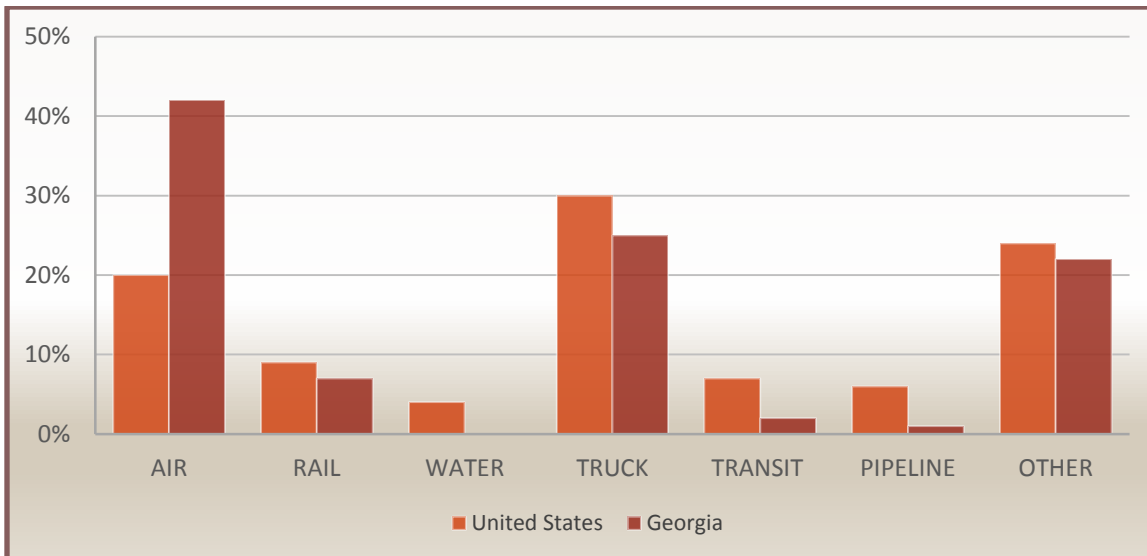
Figure 6.7 shows the contribution of each major industry sector to Georgia’s GDP compared to the U.S.

Figure 6.7 Structure of the Georgia Economy Compared to the U.S.
Industry Share of the Economy



Source: GDOT analysis using the 2017 data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis; Last updated November 21, 2017

Figure 6.8 Georgia's Transportation Sector Compared to the U.S.



Source: GDOT analysis using the 2017 data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis; Last updated: November 21, 2017

Economic Impact on Transportation

Transportation is strongly impacted by the economy. A thriving economy creates more demand throughout all transportation sectors. The trends indicate that Georgia remains one of the largest economies in the Southeast. Therefore, it is critical that Georgia DOT pursue strategies that will provide efficient movement of goods and people to keep pace with Georgia's growing economy.

LEGISLATION - 2018 Session Highlights

Passed Legislation:

S.B. 445 – (GDOT’s House Keeping Bill) - This bill makes camping on State owned roads, GDOT property, welcome centers, and rest areas illegal. In cases of parcel disposal, this bill allows GDOT to negotiate a price no less than 15 percent under the appraised fair market value. It allows sales to be advertised in newspapers, online, or in magazines. It also changes the property listing time from three months to 30 days.

H.B. 684 – The FY19 budget allocates roughly \$1.9 billion to the Department, the same amount allocated for FY18. The Department’s budget redistributions of \$6.6 million reduce spending in construction administration, Department administration, and payments to SRTA. These dollars were reallocated to data collection, planning, and traffic management.

H.B. 930 – This bill creates a new regional governance authority, the Atlanta-region Transit Link “ATL” Authority, and authorizes counties within the region to pursue (via referendum and subject to ATL Authority and its regional transit plan) up to 1% transit Special Purpose Local Tax (SPLOST) for up to 30 years. Counties outside the jurisdiction of the ATL Authority would be able to levy the same Transit SPLOST by partnering with a neighboring county. Federal and State transit funds will flow through the ATL Authority for those counties and transit providers in its jurisdiction.

H.B. 673 – This bill replaces the current no-texting law with a hands-free law. Drivers may not physically hold a phone while operating a vehicle. The law allows drivers to use only a single button to initiate or terminate a phone call.

H.B. 735 – This bill creates an income tax credit for Class III railroads, or short line railroads. The legislation was recommended by the Rural Development Council to allow for safer and more reliable short line railroad services. The credit amounts to 50 percent of the railroad track maintenance expenditures and is capped at \$3,500 for each mile owned. The credit is set to sunset January 1, 2024.

H.B. 899 – This bill changes current law so that bidders cannot be disqualified from a bidding process because of lack of experience.

H.B. 918 - This bill incorporates federal tax changes into Georgia law. The final measure signed by the Governor includes a variety of tax cuts.

S.B. 324 - This bill allows municipalities to contract with abutting counties for construction and maintenance of bridges within the limits of both municipalities.

S.B. 391 - This bill exempts transit buses, rapid rail systems, and any other transit vehicle from motor vehicle identification and regulations.

S.B. 402 – “Achieving Connectivity Everywhere” (ACE) Act - This bill gives GDOT, in consultation with the Georgia Technology Authority, the ability to create and implement a long-term policy with regard to deploying broadband services on the right of way of interstate highways and State owned roads. All net revenue will go to the State general fund, with a portion of the amount appropriated to a State broadband expansion grant program administered by DCA.

HR 444 – This bill consolidates 18 of the road dedications from the House and Senate.

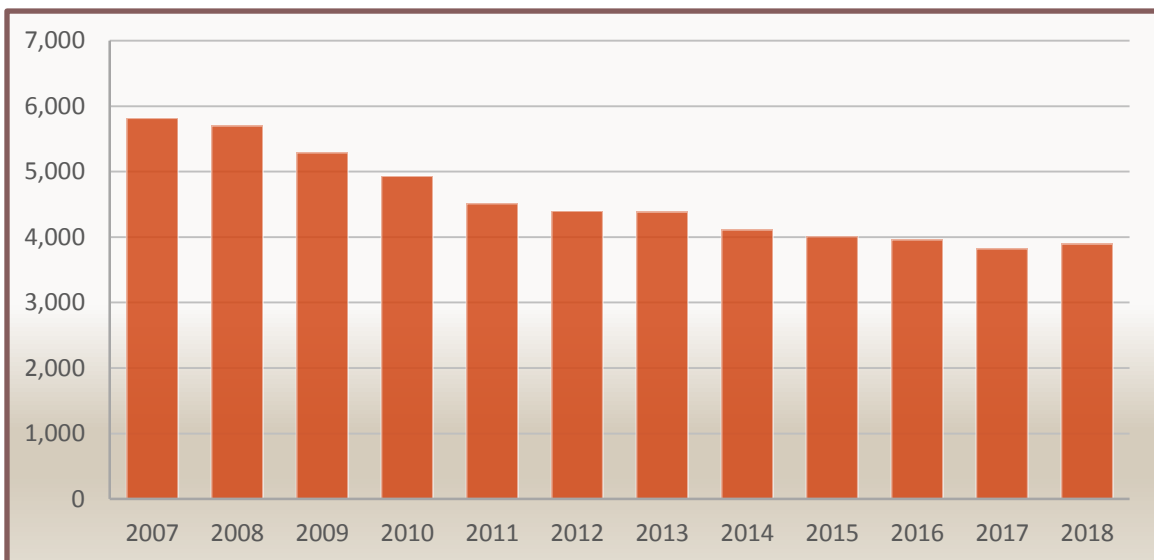
SR 745 – This bill consolidates 25 of the road dedications from the House and Senate.

WORKFORCE TRENDS

Georgia DOT considers its workforce one of its most valuable assets. In order to carry out its mission, the Department must recruit and maintain a skilled and experienced workforce. Georgia DOT’s operations are supported by a diverse workforce of men and women who serve in a variety of functional areas including engineering, environmental, administration, planning, technical and manual labor expertise. In addition, the Department supplements its workforce with consultants and contractors to provide project development support including design and construction.

The number of Georgia DOT employees has been decreasing since 2007. As of April 2018, Georgia DOT has 3,899 full-time employees.

Figure 6.9 Georgia DOT Employees



Source: GDOT Office of Human Resources; April 2018

Age of the Workforce

The average age of the Georgia DOT workforce is 44 years old, and approximately 25 percent of the workforce is eligible to retire within five years. In recent years, the Department has seen a shift in the generational makeup of its staff as Millennials (born between roughly 1980 and 1995) have begun to enter the workforce. As older generations continue to retire, this group of employees will continue to make up a larger portion of the Department's workforce.

Workforce Challenges

Over the last several years, the largest turnover has been in the area of maintenance, specifically for the Equipment Operator positions. In addition to having high turnover, these positions have also been challenging to fill. Some factors impacting the Department's ability to fill these positions include the limited applicant pool in certain rural areas, competitive entry salaries and the inability of the entry level maintenance personnel to obtain their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) within the required timeframe.

In early 2018, the Department implemented the Maintenance Skills Development Program. This program encourages maintenance employees to: upgrade their existing skills to facilitate more career advancement opportunities at GDOT, receive necessary training on safety, technical and other internal policy issues, receive incentives for completing training activities and obtaining their CDL, and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to proficiently perform their jobs.

The Department is reviewing turnover data to help analyze causes and to develop strategies to address hard to fill areas, including exploring alternative recruitment strategies to aid in filling positions. In addition to Equipment Operator positions,

other hard to fill areas include: engineering, environmental, traffic operations (HERO), and mechanics.

Compensation plays a major role in the Department's ability to attract and retain well qualified employees for critical positions. The Department is constantly reviewing market data to ensure Georgia DOT's salaries remain competitive.

Addressing Workforce Challenges

Workforce Planning, Targeted Recruitment and Specialized Training Programs

As a result of Georgia DOT's workforce planning initiative, the Department continues to seek innovative strategies to work more efficiently with the current staffing levels while closing the resulting skills gap. The purpose is to ensure minimal impact to operations while always keeping safety a priority. As a part of this initiative, each office and district identified the minimum number of employees required to meet their strategic objectives and to re-evaluate their business operations.

The Department has implemented targeted recruitment initiatives to address hard to fill positions. This includes hiring regional recruiters for targeted job areas, partnering with external organizations like the Department of Labor, Good Will and technical colleges as well as utilizing Veterans Career Fairs to fill entry level maintenance and Highway Emergency Response Operators (HERO) positions.

Georgia DOT is also revamping the training program for entry level engineers to provide a more enriching learning experience for the employees as well as to give them exposure to various areas within the Department. The goal is to ensure that operational needs are met while creating an educational program tailored to today's workforce. This will enable the entry level engineer to have a more focused training and the ability to freely move into different areas of interest within the Department and help fill skill-gaps where needed.

Team Georgia

The Department is utilizing the new Team Georgia Careers applicant tracking system. This platform will allow the Department to streamline the prescreening process and track the recruiting and onboarding of applicants, especially those in critical job areas. This information can be used to set realistic metrics, to streamline Georgia DOT's hiring processes, and to focus more on employee development and retention strategies.

Workforce Development

To address the current workforce challenges, the Department is providing training and professional development activities to enhance the skill and knowledge levels of its current workforce. Employee development (training, mentoring and job shadowing), knowledge transfer, and re-structuring of programs or positions are just some of the initiatives that Georgia DOT is offering to address the loss of experienced employees. These programs aid in closing skill and competency gaps and allow employees interested in career advancement to enhance their skills and apply for higher-level positions when they become available.

In addition, the Department is always exploring new ways to recognize its employees through non-monetary rewards.

Employee Survey

In order to assess the needs of its workforce and to make improvements, the Department conducts employee surveys. The surveys are used as a management tool to better accommodate the needs of Georgia DOT's current workforce. To improve intra-departmental communications and transparency, the latest (2016) employee survey results were disseminated not only to upper management, but were also made available to all Georgia DOT employees.

7.0 Summary

The Strategic Plan establishes the primary responsibility of the agency to plan, construct and maintain the Georgia State Highway System and also acknowledges that making Georgia DOT a better agency ultimately better serves the public. This plan identifies the core beneficiaries of Georgia DOT services and keeps the focus on the customers making their priorities a primary concern.

The plan also recognizes Governor Deal’s goals for a mobile and safe Georgia, and, when implemented, will help realize the Governor’s vision for “A lean and responsive state government that allows communities, individuals and businesses to prosper.”

Even with committed agency participation in implementing this plan, the value of the plan will not be fully realized if the outcomes from plan implementation are not reported periodically. A progress report that captures the key outcomes expected in this plan will be reported once a year to the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.

The success of strategic planning depends on the participation, understanding and acceptance of the plan by employees throughout the agency. This plan will be provided to Department employees in multiple ways to ensure broad awareness of the plan. It is a living document that will be modified and revised as conditions change.

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