



PRESSRELEASE

For Immediate Release: **Contact:** Mohamed Arafa
Monday, June 12, 2017 770.359.9523

Public Encouraged to Attend Meeting

Georgia DOT Unveils Revised Plans to Improve State Routes 5 in Fannin County

BLUE RIDGE, Ga. - A public information open house to discuss the Georgia DOT's proposed projects to improve Georgia Highway 5 in Fannin County is scheduled for Thursday, June 22, 2017 from 4 until 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at the West Fannin Elementary School, located at 5060 Blue Ridge Drive in the city of Blue Ridge, Georgia.

Fannin County's residents interested in learning more about the proposed projects are encouraged to attend the meeting and express their thoughts and preferences.

"We would like to hear the viewpoints and concerns of all area residents," says DeWayne Comer, district engineer at the Georgia DOT office in Cartersville.

The proposed plans call for improvements to Highway 5 from Highway 515 just north of Blue Ridge to Old Flowers Road and the construction of a truck bypass around the city of McCaysville from Old Flowers Road to Tennessee Highway 68 just north of the Tennessee State line. These proposed improvements are included in two projects. The first project would widen State Route (SR) 5 from two to four lanes, beginning just north of Blue Ridge at SR 515/Appalachian Development Highway and extending to Old Flowers Road, where SR 5 would transition back to the existing two lane roadway.

The second project would start at Old Flowers Road and end at Tennessee Highway 68. Starting at Old Flowers Road, the proposed project would maintain the existing two 12-foot lane roadway with 10-foot shoulders. From Holly Lane to Kingstown Street, the project would maintain the existing two 12-foot lane roadway, add curb and gutter and construct 5-foot sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. From Kingstown Street, the project proposes to construct a new location two lane truck bypass to the west of downtown McCaysville. The proposed bypass would bridge over the Ocoee River and

Highway 68 before tying into Tennessee 68 at approximately Colonial Avenue. The project proposes to make pedestrian improvements on the existing SR 5 shoulders from approximately School Street to West Tennessee Avenue.

“The Georgia DOT strongly believes that since these improvements are intended to serve the people of Fannin County, the ideas and preferences of these people are important and can make a difference in our planning process,” Comer explains. “This meeting will provide the public with another opportunity to review the proposed projects, ask questions, and express their preferences.”

Georgia DOT held a public information open house on its proposed improvements to SR 5 back in October 2016. That open house was attended by 447 area residents and elected officials, including the Speaker of the House David Ralston, Senator Steve Gooch, McCaysville Mayor Thomas Seabolt and Blue Ridge Mayor Donna Whitener.

In that meeting, Georgia DOT made it clear to the public that it had not had a “locked down” alignment. It just had some ideas that could be changed as the Department moved forward and based on what the Department staff heard at that meeting. Georgia DOT also promised to come back with another public information open house and a more defined concept of the proposed improvements to the highway. Georgia DOT is now delivering on that promise with the public information open house to be held on Thursday, June 22, 2017.

The upcoming open house will be informal and the public is invited to attend anytime between 4 and 7 p.m. The meeting site is accessible to persons with disabilities. Accommodations for people with disabilities can be arranged with advance notice by calling Amanda McGill at (770) 387-3619.

Written statements will be accepted concerning this project until Thursday, July 6, 2017. Written statements may be submitted to:

Mr. Eric Duff, State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation
Office of Environmental Services
16th Floor, One Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree Street, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

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