



Press Release

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Congressman Lewis, State & Local Leaders Hail Obama Administration Decision to Expedite MMPT Permitting

ATLANTA – Long-awaited plans for a mixed-used community and transportation hub in this city’s downtown area have been accelerated onto a “fast track to reality” thanks to a decision by President Obama to expedite the facility’s permitting, Congressman John Lewis said this morning.

The White House announced today that, as a part of its *We Can’t Wait* initiative, the MultiModal Passenger Terminal (MMPT) infrastructure project will be expedited as a nationally and regionally significant infrastructure project, shaving as much as a year off the project’s Federal review and permit decision-making timeline. The proposed MMPT project is one of an initial 43 nationally and regionally significant infrastructure projects that will be expedited, and the second project in Georgia. Last week, the White House announced that the Port of Savannah project would be expedited.

“I thank the President for his confidence in us and his commitment to Atlanta,” Rep. Lewis said. “This is a huge moment for Atlanta and for all of Georgia. This will be a facility that links our state and our citizens even closer; creates hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs; and transforms a forgotten piece of land into a vibrant city center.”

State Transportation Board Intermodal Chairperson Dana Lemon echoed Lewis’ sentiment. “We were here on this same spot almost nine months ago to the day and I said then the work we were beginning that day would ‘resonate and bear fruit through the area for years to come,’” Ms. Lemon commented. “I am even more elated today. To have the President of the United States endorse our MMPT for fast approval is quite an honor.”

The proposed MMPT project will be a new connecting point for people as well as for many of the area’s transportation services, bringing together various ground and rail transit services to a central location to create a vital connection link for the people of Atlanta and Georgia. Built on the historic site known as the “Gulch,” the central and convenient transit station will allow more travelers to take advantage of the state’s existing and future transit services through greater connectivity and reach. The development of the MMPT is in line with the federal government’s increased focus on transit and rail solutions, as proven by its selection for the fast track program.

As a part of a Presidential Executive Order signed by President Obama in March of this year, the Office of Management and Budget is charged with overseeing a government-wide effort to make the permitting and review process for infrastructure projects more efficiency and effective, saving time while driving better outcomes for local communities. The MMPT joins the Port of Savannah as a nationally and regionally significant project that will have expedited reviews and permitting decisions under this

Executive Order. Previous projects identified for expedited consideration include the replacement of Tappan Zee Bridge across the Hudson River in suburban New York City, passenger rail development in the Northeast, and new rail transit projects in Baltimore and Los Angeles.

The MMPT is currently in an extensive planning, design and public outreach process. During a recent public meeting, the master development team presented three concept designs for the station. Additional public meetings are scheduled for later this year. Creation of the MMPT will mark the first critical step in laying the foundation for a rail program that meets the long-term transportation needs of metro Atlanta, the state of Georgia and the Southeastern United States. Beyond servicing existing transit providers, the facility will be designed to accommodate future services that are being developed such as high-speed rail, commuter rail and streetcars.

The proposed Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal will bring together various ground and rail transit services in a centralized downtown Atlanta location to create a vital hub for transportation users in metro-Atlanta and beyond. The Georgia Department of Transportation hired the master development team to develop a plan for the hub and surrounding commercial development on nearly 120 acres of undeveloped land near the Georgia Dome, CNN Center, and Five Points MARTA Station. The goal of the public-private partnership (P3) is to leverage private and commercially-available financing with available public funds to build a modern station that will link all forms of transportation: pedestrians, bikes, high-speed rail, light rail, Amtrak, Greyhound, MARTA and other current and future transit, while recognizing the capacity needs of CSX and Norfolk Southern freight companies. Led by GDOT, the project's stakeholders also include MARTA, the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District and the city of Atlanta. The project has other local and regional partners, as well as the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

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. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit <http://www.dot.ga.gov>; you also may follow the Department on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT) (<http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT>) and [Twitter](http://twitter.com/gadepfoftrans) (<http://twitter.com/gadepfoftrans>).

The master development team is led by Forest City Enterprises (NYSE: FCEA and FCEB), The Integral Group and Cousins Properties (NYSE: CUZ), collectively called FIC. Forest City has a track record as a major developer of transportation oriented developments. Atlanta-based development firms Cousins and Integral both have deep roots and experience in metro Atlanta. Other partners are: Cooper Carry, DLA Piper, FXFOWLE, Huntley Partners, Kimley-Horn, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Sykes Consulting, Thorton Tomasetti, Urban Collage and Red Rock Global.

Learn more about the project at:

<http://dot.ga.gov/informationcenter/p3/projects/mmpt/Pages/default.aspx>

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