

I-285 Top End Express Lanes

A Major Mobility Project — P.I. Number: 0001758

Fact Sheet

Where is the Project?



What is the Project?

I-285 Top End Express Lanes will improve mobility along the northern portion of I-285 in metro Atlanta, one of the most heavily traveled and congested interstate highways in America. More than 240,000 vehicles travel across this stretch of highway every weekday.

This project focuses on adding two new, barrier-separated express lanes in both directions of I-285 and State Route (SR) 400, alongside the existing general purpose lanes. Some sections will be at-grade and others will be elevated. Procurement, final design, and construction of the proposed project will be in multiple phases.

5 Things You Need to Know

1. The new express lanes are optional and will be managed by market-based pricing that reflect traffic congestion in real-time.
2. Travel times are projected to be reduced by 39% for those using the express lanes and over 8% in the general purpose lanes.
3. The express lanes will provide an option for more reliable trip times and free access for transit vehicles and vanpools.
4. A Peach Pass is required to use the current and future express lanes.
5. A private sector partner(s) will design, construct, finance, operate, and maintain the proposed express lanes in exchange for future toll revenue.

What are the Project Benefits?

The proposed express lanes offer regional benefits including:

- Providing more reliable trip times
- Creating more consistent travel speeds
- Reducing congestion
- Increasing transit options and opportunities
- Positively impacting regional economic growth
- Providing toll-free trips for transit riders and registered vanpools
- Potentially reducing state funding by leveraging more private capital

What's the Project Status?

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) was published in June 2024 and remains available to review on the project website. The Draft EIS includes environmental studies, updated project concept displays, and a proposed Mitigation Plan as well as other information. Georgia DOT hosted the Public Hearing Open House (PHOH) meeting series in July of 2024 which was part of the larger public comment period. All comments received during the public comment period have been addressed in the PHOH Comment Response Letter which was published in June 2025.

The PHOH Comment Response Letter is available to review on the project website, under the Resources

section. The project team continues to refine the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) document which is required for the proposed project to advance in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The Final EIS will also incorporate any updates to the proposed project or environmental studies that would have occurred between its publication date and that of the Draft EIS (June 2024). Once the Final EIS is complete, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will issue a decision on whether to permit the proposed project.

What is the MMIP?

The Major Mobility Investment Program, or MMIP, is a grouping of projects expected to yield a significant reduction in congestion along key freight and passenger corridors. The projects will create additional capacity, improve the movement of freight, provide operational improvements and efficiencies, enhance safety, and decrease travel times. More information on the MMIP is located at <https://majormobilityga.com/>.

Express Lanes

What are express lanes?

Express lanes are designed to offer drivers a choice to bypass traffic congestion and provide more reliable trip times. Motorists must pay to use the express lanes, while transit riders and state registered vanpools can utilize the express lanes at no additional cost.

Who will be able to use the Express Lanes?

All drivers will be able to use the optional express lanes if they register and obtain a Peach Pass. Freight vehicles and trailers are not allowed. Regardless of the number of occupants in the vehicle, motorists who wish to access the express lanes will be required to pay a fee. Transit vehicles, registered vanpools, and emergency vehicles can use the express lanes for free.

Information on obtaining and using a Peach Pass is available at www.PeachPass.com or by calling the Peach Pass Customer Service Center at 855-PCH-PASS.

How much will it cost to use the express lanes?

To maintain a flow of traffic, toll rates will be set in real time depending on the level of congestion in the lanes, as well as market conditions. Toll rates will be set within a contract framework agreed with the state.

Where will motorists be able to access the express lanes?

The proposed access points can be seen on the map on the first page of this document. The private sector partner(s) will reexamine whether there is the potential to adjust the number of access points to expand

opportunities for motorists and transit vehicles to access and utilize the express lanes.

Transit

What transit operators will be able to use the express lanes?

Public transit providers that operate in this corridor including Xpress, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), and state-registered vanpools will be able to use the express lanes free of charge. Transit and registered vanpool riders will only need to pay their standard transit rider fee. Georgia DOT is collaborating with the Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority (ATL), MARTA, Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and four metro Atlanta counties to advance Express Lanes Transit (ELT) to create more regional connectivity.

Will transit riders be required to pay anything beyond normal fares on routes that access express lanes?

No, there will be no additional costs to access the lanes for public transit riders, state-registered vanpools or public transit providers. For more information about the Georgia Express Lanes network, please visit <https://www.dot.ga.gov/GDOT/Pages/ExpressLanes.aspx>.

Project Funding

How is the project being funded?

The project will be delivered through a Public-Private Partnership (P3) model, where the private sector partner(s) will design, construct, finance, operate, and maintain the express lanes in exchange for future toll revenue from the express lanes. This delivery method allows the state to better allocate resources by leveraging private sector innovation and capital, which also accelerates project delivery and reduces public cost and debt requirements.

Stay Connected

All current project layouts and alignments are available on the project webpage.

<https://i285topendexpresslanes-gdot.hub.arcgis.com/>

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