



**Russell R. McMurry, P.E., Commissioner**  
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May 7, 2024

Thank you for attending the Public Information Meeting for the proposed widening and improvements of State Route (SR) 44 between Harmony Road/Old Phoenix Road in Putnam County and Athens Tech Drive/(Proposed) East Greensboro Bypass in Greene County, PI Numbers 0019696, 0019697, and 0006253. We are currently in the final design phase of the projects and are here to share updated information about them.

In this handout, you will find a description of the transportation issues we are attempting to solve, a proposed solution, and a location map for your information.

The project displays and plans seen here at the meeting will be available for review for ten days after this Public Information Meeting at the website noted above. Hardcopies will also be available at the GDOT Madison Area Office located at 1570 Bethany Road, Madison, GA 30650.

Again, thank you for attending this Public Information Meeting. If you should have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact the project manager, Bruce Anderson, at (478) 538-8595 or the environmental analyst, Christopher Baculima, at (404) 631-1362 of the Office of Environmental Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Duff 12W".

Eric Duff  
State Environmental Administrator  
Georgia Department of Transportation

## **Why are we here and what is the issue we are seeking to address within your community?**

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is sharing updates about a proposed solution to improve access and operations on SR 44 from Old Phoenix/Harmony Road in Putnam County and Athens Tech Drive/(Proposed) East Greensboro Bypass in Greene County. A Public Information Open House (PIOH) was conducted in 2020, and at today's Public Information Meeting, the Department is presenting project updates based on your input.

### **Updates since the 2020 PIOH include:**

- The following intersections along SR 44 have been updated to Roundabouts:
  1. SR 44 at Harmony Plaza (Putnam County)
  2. SR 44 at Scott Road (Putnam County)
  3. SR 44 at Merchant Street (Greene County)
  4. SR 44 at Linger Longer Road (Greene County)
  5. SR 44 at Carey Station (Greene County)
  6. SR 44 at Richland Connector (Greene County)
- Enhancements:
  - Phase I: Project would add stamped red colored concrete in the median.
  - Phase II: Landscaping plans are being developed with input from the Counties.
  - Curb and Gutter Sections (Phases I & III): Project would include sidewalk sod beauty strips.

### **Current conditions along the SR 44 corridor:**

- Crash rates in some areas are at or above Georgia's average for this type of road.
- Average Annual Daily Traffic along this segment ranged from 11,000 to 15,900 in 2018, equivalent to a level of service "D" for a two-lane roadway. Based on statewide performance measures referenced in the Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP), Level of Service "D" is considered unacceptable.
- Five to ten-foot-wide rural shoulders are typically grassed and do not accommodate bicycles; some stretches of the roadway contain paved shoulders.
- Urban shoulders include curb and gutter, but do not include sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians.

### **Without this Project (No Build):**

- Projected traffic volumes along SR 44 would greatly exceed the capacity of the two-lane roadway and contribute to excessive delays due to continued growth in traffic volumes.
- An increased rate of crashes would be expected on the already congested roadway when traffic volumes increase as projected. The resulting congestion would likely increase stop-and-go traffic with rear-end collisions.
- The lack of sidewalks would not be addressed along the corridor; sidewalks increase pedestrian safety.

### **Proposed Solution: (Also See Project Location Map attached)**

In order to improve access and operations along the SR 44 corridor, GDOT proposes to widen SR 44 from Old Phoenix Road/Harmony Road in Putnam County to Athens Tech Drive/(Proposed) East Greensboro Bypass in Greene County. The project would be approximately 10.5 miles in length. The project would consist of widening SR 44 from the existing two-lane road to a four-lane road with roundabouts at multiple intersections. Urban sections would contain a 16-foot raised concrete median, 11-foot travel lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks. Rural sections would include 6-foot paved shoulders and either a 32-foot depressed median or a 24-foot raised median.

### **Benefits of Project Implementation:**

- Improve traffic flow between north of Eatonton and I-20 and Greensboro.
- Improve bicycle access and safety.
- Add sidewalks for walkability and safety enhancements for pedestrians.
- Enhance access to area businesses and shorten commute times along the corridor.

**How Can You Assist:** Please provide information about any resources important to you or to the community. Are there events that future construction may affect once it begins?

**Where is this project in the process?** This project is currently in the final design phase. The final design phase begins once the ROW plans for the project are completed and approved. Several activities can occur concurrently during this phase, including the acquisition of required ROW and easements, the acquisition of required permits, and the completion of final construction plans.

**What are the Next Steps?** After this public information meeting is held, the project will continue with the right-of-way acquisition and into final design. After all right-of-way acquisition is complete and the project design is finalized, the project would advance to construction.

### Project Location Map

