

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Press Release

For Immediate Release:
Monday, August 8, 2011

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GA DOT INTRODUCES ITS INAUGURAL I-285 INNOVATIVE INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

ATLANTA – The Georgia Department of Transportation has launched a project to radically redesign the busy Interstate Highway 285 interchange at Ashford Dunwoody Road in DeKalb County to a configuration expected to significantly improve safety and traffic flow and perhaps become a model for congested interchanges throughout the state.

In this new “diverging diamond interchange” (DDI), traffic on Ashford Dunwoody across I-285 will be switched from (traditional U.S.) driver-side right lanes on the bridge to driver-side left lanes, providing simpler, safer ingress to and egress from the interstate. DDI originated in France; this will be its first application in Georgia and only its 7th in the United States, the first coming in Missouri in 2009 with others following in Utah, Tennessee and Louisiana. Several states are implementing DDIs; GA DOT plans DDI projects at select Interstate Highway 85 interchanges in Gwinnett County.

Details on DDI are available at: <http://www.divergingdiamond.com/>

“We think this is going to be something that, once motorists become accustomed to, they will really embrace,” Georgia DOT Commissioner Vance C. Smith, Jr., said. “We believe DDIs are going to enable us to make meaningful, relatively inexpensive, improvements at clogged interchanges without having to expend huge amounts of money and time rebuilding the entire structures. We can do DDIs faster and cheaper. And where they have been done, crashes have declined and traffic movement across interchange bridges has improved markedly.”

The Perimeter Community Improvement Districts (PCID) and DeKalb County provided funding for project design work. PCID President/CEO Yvonne Williams said the work is critical to the busy area’s economy. “And this economic health is important not only to our businesses, but also to local and state governments that depend on the tax revenues generated in the Perimeter area,” she noted.

The \$4.6 million reconfiguration – to be done by E.R. Snell Contractor, Inc., of Snellville – was one of 18 projects awarded by the Department, totaling more than \$34 million. Also awarded were:

- A \$4.7 million contract to resurface 11 miles of U.S. Highway 41 in Cobb County from Barrett Parkway to the Bartow County line; to C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc., of Marietta;
- A \$3 million resurfacing of 18 miles of State Route 30 in Marion and Sumter counties; to Reeves Construction Company, of Macon; and,
- \$2.2 million for the construction of a new bridge on U.S. Highway 1/State Route 4 over Swift Creek in Toombs County.

Information on construction and lane closure schedules for awarded projects will be forthcoming before work begins.

Further details on these projects and others awarded in the Department’s July letting are available via this link: <http://tomcat2.dot.state.ga.us/ContractsAdministration/uploads/A110722.pdf>

Awards of two major projects – \$37 million in interchange improvements on State Route 316 in Gwinnett County and a \$29 million segment of the Fall Line Freeway GRIP (Governor’s Road Improvement Program) corridor in Baldwin and Washington counties – were deferred pending further consideration.

There’s more to the Georgia Department of Transportation than roads and bridges – much more. In fact, Georgia DOT is one of the state’s largest, most active environmental protection agencies. Each day, Department specialists work to insure its projects do not harm our drinking water, cultural resources, streams, endangered species, wetlands, historic sites, rivers, air quality, harbors, threatened species, floodplains, special architecture, fish populations, wildlife habitats, noise levels, important archaeological features, disadvantaged communities, native peoples, farmlands, migratory birds and more.

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 our Web site (www.dot.ga.gov).