



STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF GEORGIA

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STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD APPROVES \$512 MILLION IN GEORGIA ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROJECTS

ATLANTA – The State Transportation Board today approved 135 separate economic stimulus projects across Georgia valued at more than \$512 million. They are the first of hundreds of transportation projects throughout the state that will begin during the coming year utilizing \$932 million in federal stimulus funds designed to create and sustain jobs.

In accordance with today's action and pending certification by Governor Sonny Perdue, Georgia DOT and local governments will now solicit bids from private sector contractors to perform the work, estimated in value at \$512,176,975. Contracts for some initial projects may be awarded in April with work likely beginning by early June. A continuous process of bidding and awards will follow expeditiously. All work announced today will be initiated by June 17.

"This is a good day...an important day," Transportation Board Chairman Bill Kuhlke, Jr., said. "Very soon now, contractors across the state will begin putting Georgians back to work. And the work they'll be doing will be important maintenance and improvements to our transportation infrastructure."

"The Board and the Department have been - and will continue to be - methodical, meticulous and totally transparent in the selection of projects," Kuhlke added. "Unlike most states, we're including local city and county projects in the stimulus program. We have far more eligible projects than we have available funds; therefore, we are using established, quantifiable criteria to carefully evaluate and prioritize. We will maximize job creation; spread the program across the breadth of Georgia; and at the same time, focus on 'most-needed' work."

Georgia DOT Commissioner Gerald Ross, who is guiding the Department's stimulus package efforts, stressed the importance of "getting this right."

"We are taking an open, inclusive, responsible approach," Ross commented. "Perhaps we could have followed an easier path. We had identified nearly \$2 billion worth of 'shovel-ready' work on the state system even before the stimulus legislation was approved by Congress and signed by the President. We could have simply selected two or three of those larger projects for the entire \$932 million. But we chose the correct path – the responsible path. We've sought input from Georgia's cities and counties. We've made a conscious decision to focus on smaller projects spread throughout the state so that we'll generate and save more jobs in more places. And we're being careful to select worthy and needed projects. We owe that to the people who use our transportation system and we owe that to the taxpayers."

The transportation stimulus funds are a component of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, a nationwide effort to create jobs and transform America's economy to compete in the 21st century. Nationwide, some \$48 billion in stimulus investments will be made in transportation infrastructure, including highways, public transit, high speed rail and aviation.

Georgia DOT is responsible for 70 percent of Georgia's \$932 million in highway system stimulus funds. The remaining 30 percent goes to the state's 15 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), which are determining projects to be funded from their respective allocations. Of today's total approvals, \$444.7 million represent Georgia DOT projects; \$67.4 million are MPO projects.

The state also is receiving \$144 million in stimulus funds for public transit and is eligible for additional highway, rail and aviation grants from funds totaling \$12.1 billion.

All selected stimulus projects will be fully funded by the federal government; no state or local matching funds are required.

Georgia DOT has created a Web page (www.dot.ga.gov/gastimulus) devoted to stimulus activities to provide specific program information and promote transparency of the process. **The list of projects approved today can be viewed on this page.**

The State Transportation Board determines policy and exercises general governance of Georgia's Department of Transportation. The Board's 13 members, representing each of the state's congressional districts, serve staggered, five-year terms. Board members are elected by those state senators and representatives whose legislative districts fall within all or part of the relevant congressional district.

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).

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