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STB learns key to economic development

For many years philosophers have pondered over the question of whether the chicken or the egg came first. A fellow of the Brookings Institution who focuses on research, strategy and management of “walkable urban” places was brought in by the Intermodal Committee to bring clarity to what has seemingly been a perplexing topic. Does transportation or development come first?



By Beau Cabell, The Telegraph
Christopher Leinberger, with the Brookings Institution, gives a presentation to the Intermodal Committee of the State Transportation Board.

“Transportation,” Christopher Leinberger responded emphatically to what he called a “chicken or egg” question. “Transportation drives development. We first build our transportation system and then it molds our metro regions.”

The freight lines of the 19th century and freeways and airports of the 20th century helped Atlanta become a viable place to live, according to Leinberger. The key to furthering the economic development of Georgia will be rail transit investments.

“Rail transit is the most important infrastructure investment of the 21st century,” said Leinberger who is the founding partner of Arcadia Land Company, a New Urbanism/transit-oriented development and consulting firm.

Leinberger shared the strategies and trends that are making communities in several parts

of the country vibrant and competitive. He also told the Intermodal Committee how Georgia can see similar results.

Georgia has an opportunity to exploit a twin city dynamic, according to Leinberger, also a professor and founding director of the graduate real estate development program at the University of Michigan. Building a rail line that connects Atlanta and Macon would make the areas in between more valuable to businesses and residents. “It would also connect Atlanta to the rest of Georgia,” Leinberger said.

While the chicken or egg debate may still cause grief for many, Leinberger has cut through the yolk of confusion for the Transportation Board. The way to grow is by providing the infrastructure that will be the impetus for development projects.

Several Board committees met in advance of the full Board Meeting. Meeting highlights are below:

Public Private Partnerships (P3): Status updates on the North by Northwest, Multi Modal Passenger Terminal (MMPT), Rest Areas/Welcome Centers projects were given.

Administrative: Overview of changes to the oversize/overweight permitting Board rules were shared. A motion was filed to present the rules opened for consideration of changes to the full Board for approval.

Legislative: Update on the status of SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization Bill was given. There will be an extension for the current bill which expires in September. Congress is still weighing out the option of a bill that is set in place for two or six years.

Partners: Presentation on P3 project screening process for transit projects was delivered. Individuals in attendance were given the opportunity to share innovative ways to pull in more funds from existing taxes and programs.

Did You Know?

STATE FUND COLLECTIONS

The estimated motor fuel collections, fiscal year to date, are \$920,501,774.35 and is 1.46% over budget. This represents an increase of 10.47% over last year's collections of \$833,241,421.99 for the same time frame.

TOTAL GDOT EMPLOYMENT FIGURE

The total employment figure for the month ending June 30th is 4,606.

GDOT EMPLOYEES EARN PE LICENSE

Four GDOT employees received their professional engineer licenses.

1. Justin Lott — District 1 Design
2. Sam Samu — District 6 Design
3. Robert Elam — Roadway Design
4. Beau Quarles — Roadway Design

Next Board Meeting: Atlanta, Georgia – August 18th