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GDOT Program Keeps Traffic Moving

The Federal Highway Administration estimates that nearly 300 million vehicle hours of delay on major roadways are caused by poor signal timing.

The Georgia Department of Transportation staff updated the State Transportation Board on progress made in reducing congestion and delays along regional commuter corridors by improving signal operation.

The Regional Traffic Operations Program (RTOP), which was formed less than 2 years ago, has been conducting preventative maintenance, making operational improvements and using technology to improve traffic signal operations. The enhancements have given staff the ability to be more engaged in improving traffic flow.

“We are actively managing traffic flow using the tools we have today to handle each peak period the best we can to try and get people in and out of the city each day,” said Grant Waldrop, RTOP Manager.

RTOP has been using remote communications to build a communication path from traffic signals to the Transportation Management Center (TMC). The technology allows staff members at the TMC to have full control of intersections fitted with the equipment.

“We can make changes to the traffic signal timing in real time in response to incidents along freeways or along other arterials or just changes in traffic demands,” Waldrop said.

GDOT to Use Social Media, Internet for Severe Weather Events

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) unveiled its outreach plan for winter weather events during the State Transportation Board monthly meeting.

The Communications Department showed Board members the new winter weather section of the website, that went live the day of the meeting, and outlined how social media will be used as a new communications tool in the event of severe weather situations.

“The new webpage is a great way to let the public immediately see updates on road conditions,” said Chairman Rudy Bowen. “I am excited to see the Department expanding its reach to different markets by increasing the use of social media.”



GDOT is using remote communications to actively manage traffic signals from the Transportation Management Center.

The active management of traffic signals during morning and afternoon peak travel times has produced measurable results.

“We have tracked the number of stops have been reduced by 5.9% as a result of this program,” Waldrop informed the Board. “We eliminated 1.4 million hours of delay and saved almost 640,000 gallons of fuel. These benefits represent about \$18 million in benefits to the traveling public.”

The program currently has 135 locations online and a goal to have 250 locations communicating to the TMC by January. The RTOP will begin full-time active management next month.

The webpage offers information such as the Department’s priority of clearing interstates first, city and county emergency contact information and safety tips for driving in winter weather. Additionally, a team of Department staff will distribute information and give updates to citizens via Facebook and Twitter.

The Department will continue communicating information through more traditional means of radio and television as well.

Citizens can access the winter weather page at: www.dot.ga.gov/winterweather. For updates via social media, follow GDOT on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT>) or Twitter (<http://twitter.com/gadepoftrans>).

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

Program Delivery: The Committee was given a presentation on the status of the Department’s project delivery process

Legislative: The Committee heard presentations from advocate against the increasing of truck weight limits. Committee members differing views from a variety of organizations and agencies that would be affected by the increase of truck weight limits.

Equal Access: The Committee was given an update on the Disparity Study. The draft report will be presented to the Board in April.

P3: The Committee received and update on the West by Northwest, Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal and Rest Area and Welcome Centers projects.

Did You Know?

STATE FUND COLLECTIONS

Estimated motor fuel collection, fiscal year to date, is \$337,200,138.70 and is 0.91% over budget. This represents an increase of 5.73% over last year’s collections of \$318,931,613.76 for the same time frame.

TOTAL GDOT EMPLOYMENT FIGURE

The total employment figure for the month of October is 4530.

Next Board Meeting: Atlanta, Georgia – December 15th