

STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF GEORGIA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Thursday, December 9, 2010

Contact: Teri N. Pope
404-274-6436

State Transportation Board Funds Right of Way Acquisition on Critical East – West Corridor in Gwinnett and Forsyth

ATLANTA – The State Transportation Board voted today to fund the widening of State Route 20 in Gwinnett and Forsyth counties. The vote approved as much as \$350 million in new spending on statewide infrastructure and maintenance projects to bolster job creation and preservation in Georgia’s struggling transportation construction industry.

“Looking at the Northern Metro Area, we desperately need east-west connectivity, and through the authorization of this money today, we were able to fast track the right of way acquisition on the two lane section of State Route 20 from Buford to Cumming,” Board Chairman Rudy Bowen of Gwinnett County said. “Our goal is to begin construction on this east west artery within the next two to three years. I am certain our action today will benefit North Georgia by creating and saving jobs, as well as, improving mobility.”

Three projects are part of this State Route 20 widening plan:

- From Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to East Burnett Trail in Gwinnett County
- From East Burnette Trail including raising and widening the bridge over the Chattahoochee River to James Burgess Road in Forsyth County
- From James Burgess Road to Samples Road

The projected cost of rights of way needed for these widening projects exceeds \$90 million. Today’s vote provides an additional \$28.5 million for the SR 20 widening project.

“Rights of way acquisition is now underway on all three segments and we are proud to announce that we are moving forward with these projects. They will certainly benefit us all,” concluded Bowen.

Outgoing Congressional District 9 Board Member and Senator Elect, Steve Gooch was thrilled to be a part of the progression of improving State Route 20. “The connection we will have from State Route 400 to Interstate 985 and then Interstate 85 will improve mobility, safety and our economy. It is a win for everyone! All of North Georgia will reap the benefits of this work. Today is a great day for Georgia!”

Gooch was honored with a Resolution of gratitude form the State Board of Transportation. Today was Gooch’s final Board Meeting before his swearing in as State Senator in January.

There were 33 projects – approved unanimously in the Board’s final meeting of 2010 – delineate approximately \$152 million for new capacity projects; \$132 million for maintenance work; and \$117 million for right of way acquisition. The money for these projects is available from the Department of Transportation’s fund balance reserves because Georgia DOT has been extremely conservative in its spending during the economic downturn and at the same time aggressive in maximizing its use of available federal monies. The selected projects were chosen from 270 projects, valued in excess of \$650 million, the balance of which remains ready for immediate letting; but lacks funding

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. Georgia is the 3rd fastest-growing state in the nation, yet 49th in per capita spending on transportation. Additional transportation revenues are imperative to grow and sustain Georgia's economic vitality and quality of life through the 21st Century. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our Web site (www.dot.ga.gov).

###