



GEORGIA STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

For Immediate Release:

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STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ESTABLISHES CATEGORIES FOR STIMULUS FUNDS ALLOCATION; ALSO CALLS FOR TEMPORARY STAFF FURLOUGHS

ATLANTA – The State Transportation Board voted today to delineate how the Georgia Department of Transportation will allocate the approximate \$932 million the state will receive in federal economic stimulus highway funds.

Per the Board’s direction, up to 50 percent of the funds will be dedicated to maintenance activities (30 percent for resurfacing; 20 percent for interstate rehabilitation work) on the state’s highway system; as much as 26 percent to congestion relief and new capacity projects; up to 10 percent on bridge replacement and rehabilitation; as much as 10 percent for various safety projects; and 4 percent on enhancement projects.

In other action, the board voted unanimously to mandate that Georgia DOT implement an employee furlough program for the last three months of Fiscal 2009 (April, May and June). All department employees will be furloughed for one day of each month, which will save \$2.4 million over the course of the three months. “This is an extremely difficult step; no one works harder than the men and women of this Department,” Board Chairman Bill Kuhlke, Jr., noted. “But our economic circumstances simply leave us no alternative.”

As to the stimulus fund allocations, Kuhlke said he believed it a “fair and equitable methodology. We have tremendous maintenance needs throughout Georgia and also must meet the federal requirement to spend a significant amount of stimulus funds in a short period of time. Maintenance, bridge and safety projects lend themselves to quick starts. On the remaining balance of the funds, we can look at projects that will help move the needle on congestion relief and added capacity. With respect to projects requested by local governments, a great deal of the work assigned in the other categories will be on roads, bridges and intersections that essentially are localized community projects. In addition, the stimulus funds will pay for a portion of what we otherwise would have had to spend normal program funds for; those program monies can now be re-directed.”

Today's decision will allow Georgia DOT Interim Commissioner Gerald Ross and his staff to begin selecting specific projects in each of the five categories. The Board is expected to begin reviewing those specific projects in March.

In keeping with the stimulus package's primary goal of creating and preserving jobs, some \$326 million of Georgia's transportation funds must be used for projects on which work can begin in 120 days. Approximately \$175 million of the remainder will go to the state's 15 metropolitan planning organizations, such as the Atlanta Regional Commission. Georgia DOT is working with these organizations and believes their allocations will, on balance, approximate those set by the Board.

Georgia DOT is governed by the State Transportation Board. Board members, representing each of the state's congressional districts, exercise general control and supervision of the Department. Each member serves a five-year term and the terms are staggered. Board members are elected by the state representatives and senators whose legislative districts fall within all or part of the 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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