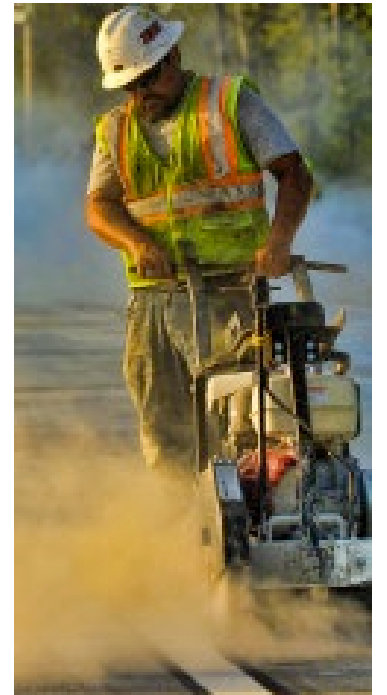




Implementing Managed Lanes in Georgia

August 19, 2019



Communications and Strategic Messaging

Scott Higley

Director of Strategic Communications



Communications Strategies



Robust, proactive, and
research-based
communications and
outreach strategies



Leveraging digital and
social media



Developing and
utilizing program/
project champions



Retail approach: Strong consideration of
location, brand, merchandising, marketing

Proactive Outreach to Date



Over 200 meetings in the past 2 years with:

- HOAs
- Cities
- Counties
- Rotary clubs
- Community Improvement Districts
- Schools

Public Perception

- Focus groups conducted in early 2019
 - Understand intent of the lanes and acknowledge the lanes help alleviate some congestion
 - Users find them essential and appreciate convenience
 - Non-users felt the cost to use doesn't justify the time saved
 - Most are happy to have the choice
 - Majority do not like or understand dynamic pricing

“Yeah, well if there's a wreck, and you see brake lights all the way backed up. I mean, I'm not thinking about four dollars because that's a cup of coffee at Starbucks. So yeah, that'll save me pulling my hair out on the way to work... Let's face it. We throw away \$4 bucks in a heartbeat.”

“But here it's like the price is fluctuating. I don't know how much I'm gonna be paying. It's confusing. That doesn't really register with me. I don't have a standard flat rate to go somewhere at any time. And then I don't feel comfortable with that.”

The Headlines

300-plus properties could be affected by I-285 'top end' toll

Perimeter city officials are building lobby against pricey I-285 toll lanes project

The controversial highway expansion is an effort to curb traffic congestion, state leaders say

FEATURED

Residents: Rail preferred over 285 express lanes project

Letter: No to Ga. 400 toll lanes, yes to MARTA

Officials seek ways to influence toll lanes projects

Mitigating Opposition



JUST THE FACTS

STAY CONNECTED
www.dot.ga.gov/DS/GEL/SR400
400expresslanes@dot.ga.gov (sign up for updates)
 404-558-9816 (voicemail)

Georgia Department of Transportation
 One Georgia Center | 800 West Peachtree NW
 Atlanta, GA 30308



TRANSPARENCY

- Federal laws mandate open communication which includes engaging, informing, and documenting public feedback.
- Five SR 400 Express Lanes Public Information Open Houses (PIOH) were held in early 2019. These open forums answer questions, show project details and impacts, and encourage and accept all public comments.
- Georgia DOT has also responded to requests from civic groups, HOAs, local communities, and school administrations to present information. Over the past two years, 150+ meetings and presentations have occurred – most included open dialogue with attendees who were given the opportunity to ask questions.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Georgia DOT hosts public meetings for projects once a design concept is finalized enough to present a comprehensive plan; however, at that stage it is still only a plan.
- The federally-mandated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process requires public meetings where input is gathered to aid decision-making.
- As part of the NEPA process, both a preferred and “no-build” alternative is presented to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). As one of the primary funding sources, FHWA reviews the document and all public comments from the PIOHs and Public Hearing Open Houses (PHOHs).
- The ultimate project decision, including approval of the preferred alternative or selecting the “no-build” alternative, lies with the federal government.

TRANSIT

- Georgia DOT’s funding is only allocated for surface transportation; however, the Department works with transit agencies to develop solutions that benefit everyone.
- All Georgia Express Lanes offer more reliable travel times for BOTH motorists and bus/transit users.
- \$100 million bond from Governor Deal allows the widening of SR 400 to accommodate four potential bus rapid transit (BRT) stations.
- Transit customers can use express lanes at no additional cost.

RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW) ACQUISITION

- In rare instances, highway expansion requires private property acquisition.
- Georgia DOT makes every effort to design projects to avoid or mitigate these impacts. When acquiring private property is necessary, Georgia DOT follows a federally-mandated process.
- Georgia DOT understands that acquiring property can be stressful for property owners. As a result, the Department keeps the public and property owners informed and adheres to the Code of Federal Regulations Section 49, Part 24, determined by the U.S. Congress regarding ROW acquisitions. This code section was created to protect property owners and tenants in situations requiring government entities to obtain their property.
- Each property is independently appraised and property owners are offered fair market value. A negotiation process can also occur – similar to a typical home/property sale.
- To be respectful of privacy, only property owners who have parcels, or portions of parcels, being purchased are contacted.

Opinion: Ga.’s pushing hard on mobility infrastructure

May 17, 2019

By Russell R. McMurry

Last summer, GDOT and the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) opened what is perhaps the most transformative transportation project in Georgia’s history, the reversible Northwest Corridor (NWC) Express Lanes on Interstates 75 and 575 in Cobb and Cherokee counties. In just eight months of operation, more than 4.2 million trips were registered in the NWC Express Lanes, with speeds 30 percent faster than the general-purpose lanes. The GP lanes, open to all vehicles without a toll, have seen up to a 20 mph speed increase compared to speeds before the opening of the express lanes. As a result, rush hour in the corridor has been reduced significantly. Not only do users of express lanes see a time savings, drivers in the general purpose lanes realize reduced congestion as well.

Transit benefits also abound in express lanes, with bus commuters enjoying a leisurely ride and more-reliable trip times. The SR 400 Express Lanes will include infrastructure supporting Bus Rapid Transit, which can be described as a “train on rubber tires”. GDOT is committed to working closely with our fellow agencies including SRTA, The ATL and other transit partners to realize these transit benefits for commuters.

Developing Champions

RON SIFEN: Managed lanes helping alleviate Atlanta's PCIDs director speaks about support for Ga. 400 toll lanes in GDOT video

Posted by Evelyn Andrews | Mar 20, 2019

Appearing in a new video supporting the proposed Ga. 400 toll lanes is the director of the Perimeter Center Improvement Districts, a self-taxing district of major companies that funds infrastructure projects.

"The new capacity and express lanes on Ga. 400 is really going to be one of the critical steps that helps solve congestion relief and traffic coming into the Perimeter market from lots of other parts of metro Atlanta," said Ann Hanlon, the PCIDs executive director, in the Georgia Department of Transportation's video.

Ron Sifen

by using the managed lanes.



THANK
YOU



@GeorgiaDOT



@GADeptofTrans



@gadeptoftrans



www.dot.ga.gov/MMIP