



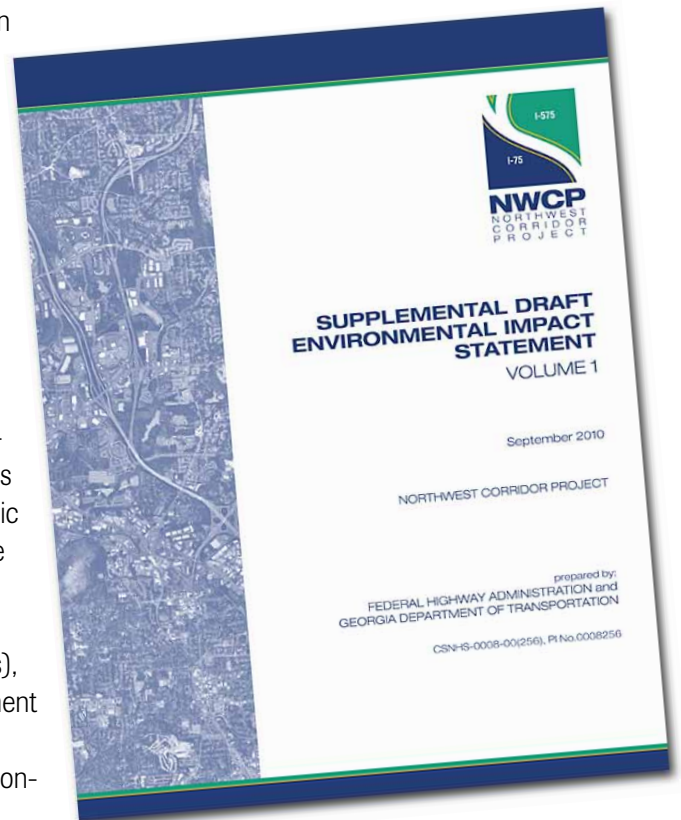
NORTHWEST CORRIDOR PROJECT NEWS

Northwest Corridor (I-75/I-575) Project Newsletter

Supplemental Draft Impact Statement is Complete!

This September, the Georgia Department of Transportation (the Department), in collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) completed the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Northwest Corridor Project. The SDEIS documents the technical analyses, agency consultation, and public involvement activities for the highway improvements proposed for I-75 and I-575 in Cobb and Cherokee Counties.

The SDEIS is the latest effort in the continuation of the environmental process for the Northwest Corridor Project, which began in early 2004. The SDEIS was prepared as a supplement to the May 2007 Alternatives Analysis/ Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS) to evaluate the environmental impacts of a new project alternative. This new alternative was developed in response to public comment on the AA/DEIS, the national economic recession, updates to the regional travel model (used for traffic analysis), and results of several Department sponsored studies, including a statewide truck study and regional managed lanes system plan.



To review the SDEIS document, as well as view project displays, speak with project staff, and comment on the project, the public is invited and encouraged to attend the following Public Hearings Open Houses. Both meetings are from 4:00-7:00pm.

October 21, 2010

Woodstock High School (Cafeteria)
2010 Towne Lake Hills South Drive
Woodstock, GA 30189

October 26, 2010

Doubletree Hotel (Ballroom)
2055 South Park Place
Atlanta, GA 30339

Both Spanish and Portuguese translators will be available at the public hearings. Persons with disabilities, a hearing impairment, or limited-English proficiency can call for assistance in either attending the public hearings or making comments on the SDEIS by calling (404) 377-4012.

To view the SDEIS online, please visit www.nwcproject.com and follow the link on the homepage.

To view a hard copy of the document, please visit the following area libraries and Department offices:

- Atlanta-Fulton County Library, One Margaret Mitchell Square, Atlanta GA 30303
- Cobb County Library, 266 Roswell St, Marietta GA 30060
- Sequoyah Regional Library, 116 Brown Industrial Pkwy, Canton GA 30114
- Georgia Department of Transportation, Office of Environmental Services, 600 West Peachtree Street, NW., Atlanta, GA 30308
- Georgia Department of Transportation District Six Office, 500 Joe Frank Harris Parkway, Cartersville, GA 30120
- Georgia Department of Transportation District Seven Office, Cobb Area Engineer’s Office, 1269 Kennestone Circle, Marietta, Georgia 30066

The public comment period will extend to Wednesday, November 3, 2010. All comments must be received by the last day of the comment period for consideration in the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The New Project Alternative



I-75 Managed Lane Interchange (South of I-575) – Simulation Looking North at Roswell Road

The SDEIS evaluates the potential effects of a new project alternative – the Two-Lane Reversible Alternative, also known as the Build Alternative, and compares it to the No-Build Alternative as required by the environmental process.

The Build Alternative would extend the existing two I-75 managed lanes (high occupancy vehicle lanes, one in each direction) that currently terminate at Akers Mill Road south of the I-75/I-285 interchange. Two new managed lanes would be on elevated structures or walls on the west side of I-75 between Akers Mill Road and I-575. Along this segment, the managed lanes would be elevated on structures over existing roadways that cross the highway. The managed lanes on I-75 would connect to proposed managed lanes on I-285 in the future when the Department’s revive285 top end project is implemented. In the interim, the managed lanes would tie to I-285 general purpose lanes to the east and west of I-75 and allow connection to I-75 as well.

The proposed new managed lanes on I-75 would be reversible managed lanes that would only serve the peak period main direction of traffic flow. During the morning peak commute period, both lanes would accommodate southbound traffic. During the evening peak commute period, the directional flow of the traffic would be reversed to accommodate northbound traffic. At the I-75/I-575 interchange, the two reversible lanes would split and a single reversible lane would continue northwesterly on I-75 to north of Hickory Grove Road and northeasterly on I-575 to Sixes Road.

Vehicles would use both managed-lane interchanges and slip ramps to access the reversible lanes. A total of six managed-lane interchanges would be constructed on I-75. These would be at the following locations: I-285, Terrell Mill Road, Roswell Road, I-575, Big Shanty Road and Hickory Grove Road. On I-575, three pairs of slip ramps would be constructed. These would generally be located near existing general-purpose interchanges at Barrett Parkway, Shallowford Road and Sixes Road. The exact location, however, differs for southbound and northbound.

For the Build Alternative, two types of managed lanes are being considered: high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes and express toll lanes (ETL). For the HOT lanes, those vehicles with three or more occupants could access the lanes without paying a toll. With the ETL, all vehicles regardless of occupancy would pay a toll. For both options, vanpools and transit would use the lanes for free. It has not yet been determined which tolling option will be used. Toll rates have not been determined yet.

As part of the SDEIS, impacts to the environment are carefully identified and considered. The project, as proposed by the Build Alternative, would largely be constructed within the existing highway rights-of-way of I-75 and I-575. Along the 27-mile corridor proposed for transportation improvements, only 12 full and 59 partial land acquisitions (mostly narrow slivers of land) would be required. The new managed lanes would be located along the west side of I-75 south of the I-75/I-575 interchange to avoid impacts to streams, wetlands, two cemeteries and historic resources. In addition, the managed lanes would be elevated on structures, where necessary. Noise levels would likely increase along the corridor and noise walls would be constructed where appropriate.

Traffic analysis for the NW Corridor Project uses the current travel demand model developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission and forecasted traffic for the year 2035. Results of the analysis show that the managed lanes on the I-75 segment from Akers Mill to Hickory Grove Road are forecasted to save travelers more than half their average travel time in the morning and evening peak periods. For those travelling the Akers Mill to Sixes Road segment, a similar time savings of over half the average travel time are also forecasted. Transit could also benefit, as revised transit routes could bypass congested general purpose lanes and take advantage of the travel time savings in the managed lanes. Travel time in the managed lanes will also be more reliable as a result of the operation of the managed lane system.

The Project and the Community

On August 19, 2010 at the CCT Marietta Transfer Center, the Northwest Corridor project team hosted a staffed kiosk event, providing transit users with an opportunity to learn more about the project. While waiting for buses, citizens could review a project area map and typical sections, pick up a newsletter and a fact sheet, leave a comment, and speak with project staff about the project. Spanish and Portuguese interpreters were available. Project staff distributed over sixty newsletters and fact sheets. Comments heard from the public included “The reversible lane is a good idea to reduce the land needed” and “Great idea. Get it built soon”.



Project staff and citizen at CCT Transfer Center kiosk

The project staff is looking forward to sharing the details of the SDEIS with the public and hearing comments at the upcoming public hearings. Please plan to attend! If you cannot make it, please visit the library locations or the project website to review the SDEIS and provide a comment.



What's Next?

Following the circulation of the SDEIS and the 45-day public review and comment period, FHWA and the Department will review the agency and public comments received on the SDEIS. After careful consideration of the comments, the Department will select a recommended preferred alternative for the Northwest Corridor Project. The technical information included in the SDEIS, and input from agencies and the public will provide the basis for this decision.

If a decision is made to advance the Northwest Corridor Project to the preliminary engineering and FEIS phase, the recommended preferred alternative and the No-Build Alternative will be carried forward for evaluation in the FEIS. In addition, this evaluation of alternatives will also address agency and public comments received on the SDEIS. All comments received on the May 2007 AA/DEIS as well as the SDEIS, and responses to all of the comments, will be included as an appendix to the FEIS.

Consultation and coordination with government agencies, stakeholders, and members of the public will continue through the completion of the environmental review process for the Northwest Corridor Project and will continue through project construction and operation.

Thank you for your continued participation! 

Get Involved!

For project updates and to join the mailing list or provide feedback:

Voice Mail Hotline: (404) 377-4012

Email: nwcpcomments@projectsolvemail.com

Website: www.nwcproject.com

To submit written comments, or for more information please contact:

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ACRONYMS

- DEIS:** Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- ETL:** Express Toll Lanes
- FEIS:** Final Environmental Impact Statement
- FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration
- GDOT:** Georgia Department of Transportation
- HOT Lanes:** High Occupancy Toll Lanes
- HOV Lanes:** High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
- LPA:** Locally Preferred Alternative
- MARTA:** Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
- PPP:** Public Private Partnership
- RFP:** Request for Proposals
- RFQ:** Request for Qualifications
- ROD:** Record of Decision
- SDEIS:** Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- TOL:** Truck Only Lanes