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Thank you for attending this public hearing open house for Project No. EDS-500(5), Bartow County; the proposed US 411 Connector. In this handout package you will find a brief description of the project need and purpose, a description of the alternatives considered, a summary of the environmental evaluation of the alternatives, a description of the preferred alternative, information on right-of-way acquisition, a location map and typical section, and a comment card. As you enter the room, you will notice displays of the project study area, project alternatives and concepts evaluated, and the preferred alternative. Department of Transportation (DOT) representatives, who can be identified by their nametags, are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. Please take this opportunity to discuss the project with a DOT representative. There will be no formal presentation. The maps displayed show the project alternatives, environmental, social and economic constraints that have been identified within the project study area, including the information provided by the public at the previous open houses. At this open house we hope to get public input on the preferred alternative and the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. The public comments will be considered as part of the overall alternatives analysis process.

Also, you will notice that there are two Geographic Information System (GIS) workstations arranged in the room. These workstations will allow you to locate a particular address in the study area (such as your home or business) in relationship to the preferred alternative. All you need to do is give the Department representative at the workstation the address of the property you would like to find. We will not be able to print these map views here at the open house, but we encourage you to visit the project web page for the 411 Connector on the main GDOT web site, www.dot.state.ga.us to view the displays.

A court reporter is available for those persons who would like to make a verbal statement about the project. You may also complete a comment form and deposit it into the box provided here or send in written comments about the project until November 21, 2005. Written comments should be sent to Mr. Harvey D. Keeper, State Environmental/Location Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation, 3993 Aviation Circle, Atlanta, Georgia 30336-1593. Comments can also be made via the web at www.dot.state.ga.us by clicking on Public Outreach from the list of Featured Links or by leaving a message on the project hot line voice mail ((678) 333-0648.) All comments will be made a part of the project record. We hope you will take advantage of one of these commenting opportunities to let GDOT know your view of the project and the preferred alternative.

The displays will be available for review for 28 days after the open house at the Georgia Department of Transportation District Six Office, located at 500 Joe Frank Harris Parkway, Cartersville, GA 30120.

Again, thank you for attending this open house and for giving us your comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Buddy Gratton".

Buddy Gratton, P.E.
Director of Preconstruction

**US 411 Connector
Project EDS-500(5),
P.I. Number 661950, Bartow County**

Project Need

The purpose of the proposed connector is to provide a direct link between US 411 at its interchange with SR 3/US 41, west of Cartersville, and I-75. Traffic currently travels south on the combined route of SR 20/US 41 and SR 3/US 41 to the interchange with SR 61. Depending upon the intended travel direction on I-75 (south or north), there are currently two different routes that may be taken. Traffic traveling south on I-75 follows SR 20 after proceeding through the interchange with SR 61. Traffic to destinations accessed from north I-75 continues on SR 61/US 41.

The US 411 Connector is needed to both provide a direct connection to I-75 and relieve congestion on the existing facilities that currently provide this service. Both SR 20 and SR 3/US 41 are experiencing accident rates that are higher than the state average for this type of road. Although projects have been programmed to improve SR 20 and the SR 61 interchange, no additional capacity is planned for US 41. The new connector is needed to divert traffic away from the SR 3/US 41 corridor. The existing SR 3/US 41 facility has the capacity to meet local travel demands and provide access to commercial and residential development located in the US 41 corridor, assuming through traffic volumes are provided an alternate route.

Project Description

Type of Facility: All alternatives except Alternative A would have fully controlled access only at interchanges. Alternative A would have at-grade intersections and driveway access.

Termini: The US 411/US 41 interchange on the west and an interchange with I-75 on the east

Length: Approximately five to seven miles

Number of Lanes: Four to six

Right of Way Requirements: Approximately 250 to 400 feet

Alternatives Considered

No Build (No Action) Alternative - This alternative is one in which the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) would take no action to construct the proposed project. All alternatives considered, including the No Build, assume that GDOT's Construction Work Program, which includes the widening of SR 20 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes from SR 61 to I-75, would be completed.

TSM Alternative - The Transportation System Management alternative would consist of intersection improvements such as addition of turn lanes, and upgrade and coordination of traffic signals. No construction would occur on new alignment or outside of existing right-of-way.

TSM Capacity Alternative - The Transportation System Management Capacity alternative would include the widening of the existing US 41 facility from 4 lanes to 6 lanes and the widening of SR 20 to 6 lanes, and would also include intersection improvements such as addition

of turn lanes, and upgrade and coordination of traffic signals. No construction would occur on new alignment or outside of existing right-of-way.

Alternative A - Improve the existing US 411 – I-75 connection by (i) widening the existing facilities to six lanes, and (ii) constructing a by-pass of the existing SR 61/US 41 Interchange. Please see the attached **Alternatives Map**

Alternative AB - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by (i) constructing a freeway in the existing SR 3/US 41 alignment (with frontage roads for local access), (ii) constructing a by-pass of the existing SR 61/US 41 Interchange, and (iii) constructing a freeway in a new alignment east of SR 61/US 41 that connects to I-75 at the existing SR 20/ I-75 Interchange.

Alternative AB Hybrid - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by (i) constructing a freeway in the existing SR 3/US 41 alignment (with frontage roads for local access), (ii) constructing a by-pass of the existing SR 61/US 41 Interchange, and (iii) widening the existing facilities of SR 20 to six lanes.

Alternative B - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and the existing SR 20/I-75 Interchange.

Alternative B Minimization Variation - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment (modified Alternative B) between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and the existing SR 20/ I-75 Interchange.

Alternative B Avoidance Variation - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and the existing SR 20/I-75 Interchange that combines Alternative B/AB and D-Avoidance and Minimization Variation (below).

Alternative D - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and existing SR 20 east of I-75, with a new interchange at I-75.

Alternative D-Avoidance and Minimization Variation - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a modified Alternative D alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and existing SR 20 east of I-75, with a new interchange at I-75.

Alternative DA Variation - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and the existing SR 20/I-75 Interchange that follows Alternative D-Avoidance and Minimization Variation and then connects to the A Alternative just prior to intersecting SR 61/US 411.

Alternative DB Variation - Provide a new US 411 – I-75 connection by constructing a freeway in a new alignment between the existing US 411/US 41 Interchange and a new SR 20/I-75 Interchange that follows Alternative D-Avoidance and Minimization Variation and then connects to the B Alternative just prior to SR 61/US 411.

Alternatives A, AB, B, and D each impact cultural (historic and archaeological) resources, so Avoidance and/or Minimization variations were considered for each of these Alternatives. It was determined that

Avoidance/Minimization variations for Alternatives A or AB were not feasible and prudent, because the basis for those alternatives consists of widening the existing roadway, which is the historic resource. The Alternative B Minimization variation still resulted in impacts to cultural resources; and although the Alternative B Avoidance variation avoided impacts to cultural resources, it had substantially greater residential displacements than Alternative B. An Avoidance/Minimization variation was developed for Alternative D that would avoid direct impacts to all cultural resources identified in the project corridor.

The AB Hybrid Alternative was determined not to be feasible and prudent because it had more displacements - including a church, a fire station, and more residences - than the basic AB Alternative. Similarly, it was determined that the Alternative DA and DB Variations were not feasible and prudent because these had substantially greater residential and/or industrial displacements than the D-Avoidance and Minimization variation. The negative effect on industries and businesses in the study area caused by Alternative DA or DB would be detrimental to the economy of the Cartersville area, and the large number of residential displacements would substantially disrupt community cohesion in the project area.

Because the Alternative AB Hybrid, DA Variation, DB Variation, A and AB Avoidance/Minimizations, and the B Avoidance and Minimization Alternatives were all determined not to be feasible and prudent, they were not advanced for further in-depth environmental analyses. The result of these analyses for the remaining alternatives (No-Build, TSM, A, AB, B, D, and D Avoidance and Minimization Alternatives) is presented in the attached Environmental Evaluation Matrix Table. Further discussion of these remaining alternatives follows.

Major Environmental Impacts (Beneficial and Adverse):

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Georgia Department of Transportation has conducted an assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects for the proposed US 411 Connector project. The following information gives a summary of the environmental document.

- a. The proposed project would remove much of the through traffic between the area north of Cartersville and I-75 from the heavily traveled US 41 and SR 20 corridors.
- b. There would be an improvement in travel time and fuel efficiency for motorists using the new facility to travel to and from points within the US 411 corridor.
- c. No added impact to region-wide air quality would occur because the project would relieve existing traffic congestion and improve traffic flow.
- d. In accordance with 23 CFR Part 772 an assessment of highway traffic-generated noise was conducted. There would be noise impacts at 68 receptors under Alternative A; 62 receptors under Alternative AB; 36 receptors under Alternative B; 23 receptors under Alternative D, and 37 receptors under Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization.
- e. Alternative A would displace 15 residences and 22 businesses; Alternative AB would displace 34 residences and 36 businesses; Alternative B would displace 52 residences and 12 businesses; Alternative D would displace 23 residences and 5 businesses; Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization would displace 16 residences and 6 businesses.
- f. Potential disproportionate and adverse impacts to low-income and minority communities could occur under Alternatives A and AB; but no disproportionate and adverse impacts to low-income or minority populations are anticipated under Alternatives B, D, or D Avoidance and Minimization.

- g. In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, a protected species survey was conducted for the project corridor. It is anticipated that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the Cherokee darter. No other threatened or endangered species would be impacted as a result of the proposed project. A formal determination of this effect is presently being coordinated with US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- h. In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the proposed project was surveyed for floodplain involvement. Alternative A would require approximately seven acres of fill in the 100-year floodplain of four streams. Alternative AB would require approximately eight acres of fill in the 100-year floodplain of five streams. Alternative B would require approximately 13 acres of fill in the 100-year floodplain of three streams. Alternative D would require approximately 36 acres of fill in the 100-year floodplain of four streams. Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization would require approximately 36 acres of fill in the 100-year floodplain of four streams.
- i. In accordance with Executive Order 11990, the proposed project was surveyed for wetland involvement. Alternative A would impact approximately 0.12 acre of wetlands and 235 linear feet of streams. Alternative AB would impact approximately 2.34 acres of wetlands and 3,344 linear feet of streams. Alternative B would impact approximately 4.35 acres of wetlands and 4,870 linear feet of streams. Alternative D would impact approximately 5.02 acres of wetlands and 3,353 linear feet of streams. The Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization would impact approximately 5.77 acres of wetlands and 3,247 linear feet of streams.
- j. In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the project has been surveyed for existing and eligible National Register properties. Alternatives A and AB would have an adverse effect to the dualized SR 3/US 41 historic resource, as well as a conditional no adverse effect to the archaeological site 9BR1044 (Civil War trenches). Alternative B would have an adverse effect on archaeological sites 9BR1030 (Civil War trenches) and 9BR1034 (mine and railroad berm), as well as conditional no adverse effect to the Mathison-Ledford-Teague House and archaeological site 9BR1044 (Civil War trenches). Alternative D would have an adverse effect to archaeological sites 9BR1030 (Civil War trenches) and 9BR1034 (mine and railroad berm), as well as conditional no adverse effects to the Mathison-Ledford-Teague House and archaeological sites 9BR1033 (lithic and ceramic scatter) and 9BR1044 (Civil War trenches). Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization would have an adverse effect to the setting of the Ledford House and a conditional no adverse effect to archaeological site 9BR1044 (Civil War trenches).
- k. In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1980, the criteria of 7 CFR, Part 658 have been applied to determine project effects on farmland. It was determined that the proposed project would not have an adverse affect on farmlands.

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is available for review at the hearing and at following locations:

- Georgia Department of Transportation, Office of Environment/Location, 3993 Aviation Circle, Atlanta, GA 30336-1593

- Georgia Department of Transportation District Six Office, 500 Joe Frank Harris Parkway, Cartersville, GA 30120
- Bartow County Library, 429 W Main Street, Cartersville, GA 30120
- Bartow County Commissioners Office, 135 W Cherokee Ave, Suite 251, Cartersville, GA 30120
- City of Cartersville, City Clerks Office, 10 North Public Square, Cartersville, GA 30120
- Georgia Highlands College, Cartersville Campus, Library, 5441 Highway 20, NE Cartersville, GA 30121
- City of Rome, City Clerks Office, Rome City Hall, 601 Broad Street, Rome, GA 30162

Copies of the document on a CD will be available for a cost of \$5.00 (cash only). Copies of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement are available to the public in print format for the cost of reproduction or in CD format by sending your request to the address listed below.

Mr. Harvey D. Keepler
 State Environmental/Location Engineer
 Georgia Department of Transportation
 3993 Aviation Circle
 Atlanta, Georgia 30336

Preferred Alternative

The Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization Variation was identified as the preferred alternative; please see the attached Alternatives Map and Cross Section. As illustrated in the attached Environmental Evaluation Table, this alternative was determined to meet the need and purpose of the proposed project while having the least overall amount of environmental impacts. Compared to the other alternatives considered, the Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization variation was the highest for wetland impacts, second lowest in amount of stream impacts and noise impacts; however, this alternative was lower than all others in regard to relocations of residents and businesses, and properties in the “influence area”, defined as within 500 feet of the project alignment. The number of air quality impacts, cultural resources impacted, low-income and/or minority communities impacted, and community impacts overall for the Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization variation was lower than or equal to others. Alternative D Avoidance and Minimization is the only alternative that does not require the use of property from a resource listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Right of Way Acquisition

GDOT has the responsibility once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing property and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. When purchasing property, GDOT desires to pay full market value for the necessary property. This value will be established by using qualified real estate appraisers who will prepare, for GDOT’s use, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

In making an appraisal, the appraiser will contact each property owner and arrange a convenient time to make an on-site inspection of the property with him or her. After completion of the appraisal, GDOT right-of-way appraisal staff will review and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that all things relating to value have been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. When only a part of the

property is needed, GDOT will purchase that part plus pay for loss of value, if any, to the remaining property. In all cases, when GDOT purchases property, they will make additional payments to property owners for the cost of transferring ownership to the Georgia Department of Transportation. These costs generally include transfer taxes, deed-recording fees, mortgage pre-payment penalties and the pro-rata share of city or county taxes.

GDOT is aware of the problems experienced by individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations when they are required to move. It is GDOT's commitment that no family or individual will be required to relocate until comparable decent, safe and sanitary housing is available or is provided for those occupants.

Additionally, GDOT will provide assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations in relocating to other sites and will encourage them to remain in the community.

The information pamphlet "What Happens When Your Property is Needed for a Transportation Facility" is available at the entrance, and this booklet outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The brochure also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments.

Results of the field inspection by GDOT personnel have revealed that there will be 16 residential and 6 business(es) that will be required to relocate.

It is important to remember that GDOT is committed to the fact that no one will be required to relocate until housing is available, or, if there is no housing available, until provisions have been made by GDOT to provide housing. It is also important to remember that all displacees will be given sufficient advance notice of GDOT's intention to purchase any property in order to allow sufficient time in which to relocate.

The Georgia Department of Transportation District office, located in Cartersville, Georgia, telephone (770) 387-3658 will be in charge of acquiring the necessary right-of-way for this project.