

I-285 Express Lanes

Fact Sheet

Overview

As part of the ongoing efforts to deliver the best and most impactful, much-needed transportation infrastructure projects in Georgia, the Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) and the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) are taking a new approach to the Public-Private Partnership (P3) procurement process for express lanes on I-285.

The new approach expands the project scopes for the I-285 Westside and I-285 Eastside Express Lanes and shifts many of the financial obligations of all the I-285 Express Lanes projects from the State to the private sector partner(s).

What's the Current Status?

In February 2022, Georgia DOT announced updates to the project packaging. Initial segments for I-285 East and West will be procured as separate 'hard bid' private revenue contracts. The initial segment for I-285 Express Lanes East will begin procurement in 2023 and the initial segment for I-285 Express Lanes West will begin procurement in 2024.

Due to the delivery model change, each project's federal environmental document must be updated reflecting the changes which includes a public involvement process. More information will be provided in 2022.

5 Things You Need to Know

1. There will be increased capacity with two, new, barrier-separated, dedicated express lanes in each direction across the northern half of I-285 from I-20 to I-400 on the east and west sides.
2. There may be additional access points included.
3. The future public funding commitment for the projects is anticipated to be reduced.
4. Motorists will continue to use a Peach Pass to access and pay for using the express lanes.
5. The private-sector partner will set toll prices on I-285 within the contractual limits set by the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA).



Benefits to Private Revenue Model

There will be increased capacity with two, barrier-separated, dedicated express lanes in each direction across the northern half of I-285's entire project corridor. Under the previous plan, Georgia DOT would only build one express lane in each direction for the I-285 Westside and I-285 Eastside Express Lanes projects.

The project may extend further with interchange access points all the way to I-20 on both the east and west sides of I-285. Under the previous plan, the express lanes would stop short of these interchanges.

The entire project will be barrier-separated, with concrete barriers separating traffic in the express lanes from traffic in the general purpose lanes. This change brings measurable safety benefits to motorists in the express lanes.

There may be additional access points to the express lanes. The private-sector partner(s) will evaluate the potential to expand the number of access points for express lanes users and transit, which could include Stone Mountain Freeway and I-20 in both Cobb and DeKalb counties.

The I-285 Express Lanes are intended to be a multi-modal option, supporting opportunities for existing transit services and inclusion of new transit opportunities. The private partner(s) will be required to be responsive to the potential for Express Lanes Transit (ELT) infrastructure/investment in support of the transit MOU between Georgia DOT, the ATL, MARTA, and Fulton, Cobb, and DeKalb counties.

With an expanded express lanes project, there will be even greater time-savings benefit for motorists in the existing general purpose lanes on I-285. Following the 2018 opening of the Northwest Corridor Express Lanes, traffic congestion decreased in the general purpose lanes of that section of I-75 by approximately two hours each day, reducing commute times and improving reliability for cars and buses alike. On-time performance of Xpress buses traveling through the Northwest Corridor Express Lanes improved by 12%.

The private partner(s) will be required to place a strong emphasis on customer service under this new model. The private-sector partner is incentivized to ensure superior performance of the project and an exceptional motorist experience, since the partner is relying on motorist usage and the resulting revenue to pay for the project.

The updates will shift more financial burden from the State, expand project scope, increase benefits the public will enjoy from the projects, and will result in a reduction in public funding commitments for the projects over future decades.

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