

GDOT: Design changes will save over 100 properties from the path of the 286 express lanes

Thanks to some design tweaks, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)'s proposed Interstate 285 top end express lanes project will impact only about 275 properties instead of the about 375 ones in its original path due to right-of-way acquisition.

"We started with over 300 and we've reduced that by over 100," said Tim Matthews, GDOT's major mobility investment program manager. "In some areas we're not touching anybody. ... We were able to remove 100-and-something parcels from the project by going aerial (with the lanes)."

Matthews gave an update on the project at the Sandy Springs City Council's annual retreat at City Springs Jan. 24, one day after GDOT hosted two public information open house meetings there. It was one of seven such meetings the state was hosting in Cobb, DeKalb and Fulton counties Jan. 21 through 30 to give residents an opportunity to see the project's design and give feedback on it.

Under the proposal, GDOT will build one express lane on each side of 285 from Paces Ferry Road in Cobb County northeast to I-75 and then two lanes on each side east from 75 to I-85 before dropping to one lane on each side southeast from 85 to Henderson Road in DeKalb County.

It also includes express lanes north on Georgia 400 from 285 to the North Springs MARTA station, where it will connect to express lanes that go all the way into Forsyth County.

The 285 express lanes will cost at least \$5 billion to build and, due to the price and size, will be split into two parts, with the east one expected to open in 2029 and the west one in 2032.

Scott Higley, a GDOT spokesman, said the project will potentially displace only about 30 property owners out of the 275, with the rest only partially impacted. One man attending the meeting asked Matthews, "How many property owners will need to be talked to and negotiated with? ... What did you learn from that 400 (express lanes project) experience?" Matthews said, "Generally, you don't have to do a lot of dedicated outreach and 99% of the time, we would wait until we had the meetings where their homes were identified with red dots (as being impacted)." Matthews added that as with the 400 project, prior to those meetings, GDOT reached out to a cluster of homeowners in an area that was affected more than others. For the 285 project, the state contacted several homeowners in the Chateau Club in Dunwoody.

[Click Here to Read More](#) ▶

About The GDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on GDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.



About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with GDOT as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program. We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient. Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

Today's New Construction Estimator

For many in my profession, traditional roles and duties have developed into something that “old school” construction estimators wouldn’t necessarily recognize. Maybe a better verb for the previous sentence would be “transformed”, or perhaps even more appropriate, “evolved”. It isn’t uncommon for modern day estimators to wear even more hats than in the past. We’ve always had to have some of the same skills that other professionals have, even those outside of the construction industry. Sharing skills with architects, engineers, lawyers, and accountants has always been critical to the success of the estimator, but what we do with those skills is what has changed, especially in the last 10 years.

It’s not enough anymore to simply review plans and specs, perform takeoffs, and assemble a cost estimate (and eventually a bid, quote, or budget) from the information derived from those processes. The modern estimator is a risk manager, a negotiator ... a “pre-construction specialist”, and often a “post pre-construction manager” as well. Depending on the employer, the type of projects they chase, and the project delivery method, many estimators are involved in projects long before they ever break ground, during construction, and until the owner takes occupancy. This is particularly true in the design-build delivery method

and the construction management method. Today’s estimators are required to negotiate with subs prior to bid day and during buy-out, and managing those subs once construction starts has become a common duty.

These are some of the chores that have been traditionally performed by project managers, but it seems as if project management is the job of the estimator in many companies. Some refer to this as “eating what you kill”, but whatever it’s called, it adds new responsibilities to the job description of the estimator, almost rendering the job title obsolete. “Estimator” has always had a pre-construction connotation to it, but it seems less relevant today.

Why are we seeing this in our profession? Are contractors and CM firms wanting to get by with fewer employees, or is the nature of the business forcing this change? Did the economic downturn of 2007-2010 force employers to learn to do more with less, and now that the construction economy is definitely on its way back up, have they gotten used to smaller staffs? Have they learned that having the same staffers involved all the way through the lifecycle of the project is good for the performance of the whole team, perhaps even leading to safer, better managed, and more profitable jobs?

[Click Here to Read More ▶](#)

Supportive Services Offered:

- Estimating Training
- Building Capacity
- Mobilization Financing
- Bonding Assistance
- Marketing Plan Development
- Creating a Business Plan
- Building a Website
- Plan Reading



Within the past 3 months,
CEI assisted DBEs
in obtaining
**\$6 MILLION
IN BONDING!!**

*Contact CEI for Bonding,
Financing or Insurance needs!*

 (855) 432-1323

 www.gadbesupport.com

 3350 Riverwood Pkwy, Suite 1900
Atlanta, GA 30339



CEI is an educational organization providing the highest quality construction training in the industry. Over 100,000 owners, estimators, project managers, field supervisors, office support staff, foremen, laborers, and key management personnel have attended courses that are offered nationwide. The courses provide students with construction skills training and the critical information needed to be effective within their companies and organizations.