

Proposed Atlanta-Charlotte high-speed rail line could run through Athens

The Georgia Department of Transportation is considering plans for a high-speed railway that would connect Atlanta and Charlotte, possibly through Athens. The public can provide their input on the railway route until Nov. 4 through a [GDOT survey](#).

According to GDOT's railway proposal executive summary, three routes are being considered for the railway: Southern Crescent, Interstate 85 and Greenfield. All three routes would connect Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport to the Charlotte Gateway Station east of Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. But, the Greenfield route is the only one that would run through Athens.

The Greenfield route would stop at five stations in Georgia: Athens, Suwanee, Doraville, downtown Atlanta, and the airport [pg 8]. Athens wasn't a stop on the original plan for Greenfield. The route was altered to accommodate the increase in ridership that Athens would provide and to benefit UGA, which has a large student population from the Atlanta metropolitan area, according to GDOT's alternative developments report.

The estimated capital cost of the Greenfield route is between \$6.2 and \$8.4 billion in 2012 dollars. Greenfield has a projected end-to-end travel time between 2 hours and 6 minutes and 2 hours and 44 minutes, according to the executive summary.

The Atlanta to Charlotte railway would be part of a larger plan to create a network of railways connecting cities in the Southeast known as the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor, according to the executive summary. This railway network would connect cities across the region, including Washington, D.C., Richmond, Virginia, Raleigh, North Carolina, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Atlanta.

The Southern Crescent route would stop at six stations in Georgia: Toccoa, Gainesville, Suwanee, Doraville, downtown Atlanta, and the airport. Southern Crescent has the cheapest price tag at an estimated cost of \$2 to \$2.3 billion in 2012 dollars, but it would have the longest travel time. According to the executive summary, its projected end to end travel time would be between 4 hours and 35 minutes and 5 hours and 34 minutes.

The I-85 route would stop at four stations in Georgia: Suwanee, Doraville, downtown Atlanta, and the airport. I-85 is the most expensive route with an estimated cost between \$13.3 and \$15.4 billion in 2012 dollars. The I-85 route has a projected end-to-end travel time between 2 hours and 42 minutes and 2 hours and 50 minutes, according to the executive summary.

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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.

Tips for Instilling Exceptional Safety Habits in Employees

Your company landed its first job with a local plant that is expanding. The job is important, because — as the plant expands — it will need not just new construction but also electrical testing and maintenance. Providing those services would be a very good arrangement for your company.

The plant engineer is fairly young. He has not worked at another plant, nor has he worked construction. He recently hired Bruce, a young electrical maintenance manager with a similar lack of background. Bruce is your primary contact.

The plant does not have an employee hardhat rule, nor does it provide hardhats for employees. Bruce keeps visiting your work areas to “check your progress.” Even though your crew is running both conduit and EMT overhead and hanging light fixtures, Bruce enters the work area without a hardhat. At first, the solution seemed simple. Just give Bruce a hardhat.

One of your crew used dry transfer lettering to put Bruce's name on the front of a hardhat. The back of it says “Electrical Maintenance.” It's nicely done, and everyone felt Bruce would be proudly wear that hat when visiting the construction area. But he shows up without the hat.

You asked him why, and he said it messes up his hair. When you explained how a stick of EMT or a raceway hanger could mess up his head, he said he'd be OK

because he wasn't actually working in the area. “I'm just supervising.”

In response to this, you asked him if he'd noticed that any time he enters a work area without a hardhat, the crew stops working. “This isn't a time and material job, Bruce. We need you to stop interrupting the crews. All you have to do is wear the hardhat we gave you, and the problem is solved.”

Bruce gave you a look of annoyance and walked off. A few moments later, he walked into another work area without his hardhat, and the crew there duly stopped working — again.

Your boss told you not to make a big deal over this. He said to get Bruce on video stating he chooses not to wear his hardhat, so your company escapes liability. But that is not how the law works. Bruce's youth and inexperience put the burden of “superior knowledge” on you.

You can't follow your boss' directive, and you can't keep allowing the frequent work stoppages. So how do you solve this safety dilemma?

The fact the plant is expanding is a good hint the plant manager is doing a great job and thus is experienced. If that appears to be the case, have a talk with the plant manager. The goal is to get the plant manager to walk out into the work area to see what Bruce is doing.

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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.