

No.	Question	Response
1	What was the main purpose or idea behind the Express Lane?	<p>The Express Lanes project was implemented to help mitigate traffic congestion and provide reliable travel times for motorists who choose to use the Express Lanes. It is important to note that with HOV lanes, nearly 90% of all vehicles in the corridor had no access to the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement. Additionally, the Express Lanes project provided \$122 million in transit investment into metro Atlanta, with 11 new park and ride lots and 21 new motor coaches, with the possibility to add up to 82 coaches. The project covers more transportation initiatives in this corridor than just the Express Lanes.</p> <p>In order to access the grant funds, a change in occupancy was required to comply with the terms of the USDOT Grant Agreement. Further driving the decision to change the occupancy requirement was the current and forecasted travel speeds and times for this section of I-85. Congestion is predicted to continue to worsen in the long run as the economy recovers and growth in the region continues. Based on travel forecast information for 2015, peak morning travel times on the I-85 HOV lanes are estimated to climb to 35 minutes, with an average speed of 26 mph.</p> <p>Thus, carpoolers and transit buses using the I-85 HOV lanes will need to plan for 10 more minutes, or about 30 percent more time for this leg of their trip. To preserve travel times and speeds on the I-85 HOV lanes four options were considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOV2+: No build. • HOT2+: Keep occupancy requirement for two or more passengers in a vehicle to use the lane toll-free and require single drivers to use the lane for a fee. • HOV3+: Increase the occupancy requirement to three or more per vehicle. Two person vehicles or less would not be permitted to use the lane. • HOT3+: Increase the occupancy requirement to three or more and allow two person carpools and single drivers to use the lane for a fee. The toll would be adjusted for two-person carpools and single drivers based on demand in order to maintain reliable trip times in the Express Lanes. <p>By implementing a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane with the three-person carpool requirement (i.e., HOT3+), the lanes will be managed to optimize use and reliability of the travel times. In addition, the Clean Air Campaign will continue to provide resources to encourage carpooling, including assistance in matching carpoolers with one another through RideSmart.</p>

		(1) Based on corridor travel time runs for 2005, 2006 and 2009; and based on 2015 forecast																								
2	I live in Hall County. I am a Veteran US Army Retired. I want my wife to be able to get me to the VA Hospital ASAP via a 2 people minimum. Since the State gives Veterans a free drivers license, the state should give vets a free pass on the Peach Pass Lane. Will this happen?	<p>Presently there are no plans to expand the class of exempt registered vehicles that qualify for toll-free use of the I-85 Express Lanes, but the ability to grant such a designation does exist. Either the State Transportation Board (i.e. the GDOT Board) under Georgia Code Section 32-9-4, or the General Assembly by passing a specific statute, could grant the exemption that you have requested. Currently, exempt vehicles include registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit vehicles • Carpools with three or more occupants • Motorcycles • On-call emergency vehicles • Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFV) with the proper AFV license plate (does not include hybrid vehicles) 																								
3	How many cars were going per day on I-85 HOV Lane and how many are going on the HOT lane per day?	According to the 2009 I-85 HOV to HOT Conversion Traffic Analysis Study, on a typical weekday, approximately 18,500 vehicles travelled in the HOV lane. The I-85 Express Lanes are now seeing a weekday average of 10,509 Peach Passes trips (tolled and toll-exempt combined) with a high of 11,237.																								
4	How many vehicles are driving the whole length and how many are only driving the 5-6 miles that was assumed most people would use the lanes for?	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">MOST FREQUENTED TRIPS November 7 – 13, 2011</th> </tr> <tr> <th>DIRECTION</th> <th>ORDER</th> <th>SECTION</th> <th>WEEKLY TOTAL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="5">NORTH</td> <td>1</td> <td>Chamblee-Tucker Road to Lawrenceville/Suwanee Road</td> <td>3316</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Chamblee-Tucker Road to Steve Reynolds/Pleasant Hill Road</td> <td>3094</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Chamblee-Tucker Road to Sugarloaf Pkwy/Old Peachtree Road</td> <td>2940</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Chamblee-Tucker Road to Indian Trail/Lilburn Road</td> <td>2549</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Chamblee-Tucker Road to 316</td> <td>2262</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	MOST FREQUENTED TRIPS November 7 – 13, 2011				DIRECTION	ORDER	SECTION	WEEKLY TOTAL	NORTH	1	Chamblee-Tucker Road to Lawrenceville/Suwanee Road	3316	2	Chamblee-Tucker Road to Steve Reynolds/Pleasant Hill Road	3094	3	Chamblee-Tucker Road to Sugarloaf Pkwy/Old Peachtree Road	2940	4	Chamblee-Tucker Road to Indian Trail/Lilburn Road	2549	5	Chamblee-Tucker Road to 316	2262
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		Note: Travel times and commute patterns change day to day.																
5	Of all the vehicles using the HOT Lanes, how many are using it for free and how many are paying the tolls?	In the first month of operations 77% of Peach Pass customers using the Express Lanes paid a toll and 23% of Peach Pass customers were toll exempt.																
6	Who made the decision to convert the HOV Lanes to HOT lanes w/o the public's vote?	The decision to convert the HOV lanes to HOT Lanes was made by the State Transportation Board via board resolution on April 16, 2009. Under current Georgia law, there is no provision for a public vote or referendum for toll projects. The SRTA Board set the toll rates for the Express Lanes project on June 20, 2011.																
7	Who is the administrator of the HOT Lane the Federal Government or the State government?	GDOT is the administrator of all Interstates and State Routes, including I-85 and the Express Lanes. Decisions and authority over maintenance, construction and lane designations, including occupancy requirements rest with GDOT, subject to approvals by the USDOT. The State Road and Tollway Authority is responsible for operation of the tolling system for the I-85 Express Lanes as well as any other state roadway that GDOT designates as a toll road.																
8	Who maintains the Roads?	Statutorily, the Georgia DOT is charged with maintaining all Interstates and State Routes within the state.																
9	Why was this only a Gwinnett County project?	Three criteria were the top considerations for determining which corridor would be selected for the HOV conversion project: transit needs in the corridor, level of congestion in the corridor, and having																

	<p>This project places accident victims at risk of their lives, emergency vehicles can't get thru. The people jobs are at risk due to late arrivals. *My commute has increased over two hours I'm leaving home at 7:00am to reach work by 9:30am</p>	<p>an existing HOV lane. The Gwinnett corridor was selected to due to the level of congestion already present in this corridor. On-call emergency vehicles (i.e. fire/safety/law enforcement, including public and private ambulances) are able to use the Express Lanes for free. The potential for faster travel times is viewed as a benefit for emergency services.</p> <p>GDOT, SRTA and Gwinnett county transportation officials are currently looking into commute times for the general purpose lanes to determine if commute times are improving or worsening as drivers adjust to the Express Lanes. Data is being gathered for I-85 as well as surrounding roadways to assess the impact.</p>
10	<p>Why didn't HOT lanes go downtown first?</p>	<p>At the time of the 2009 traffic study, conditions inside I-285 did not demonstrate as compelling a need to convert HOV lanes inside the perimeter to HOT lanes.</p>
11	<p>Are you ready to be voted out of office for allowing the HOT Lanes to happen? And allowing additional taxes on the citizens?</p>	<p>GDOT and SRTA staff who are providing answers to these questions are not elected officials.</p>
12	<p>Does tax dollars subsidize the maintenance of the HOT Lanes?</p>	<p>Federal and state motor fuel taxes pay for maintenance costs of Georgia's Interstates, including I-85 (and the Express Lanes). Tolls collected from the I-85 Express Lanes pay for operations, maintenance and enforcement costs of the Express Lanes.</p>
13	<p>What is it costing the taxpayers to run the HOT Lanes (i.e. cameras, patrol, administration, sensors, etc)?</p>	<p>The operational cost is projected to be \$4.8 million dollars for the first year.</p> <p>The construction budget for the Express Lanes project is \$60 million dollars; however the project is currently operating under budget by approximately \$5 million. The project is funded with federal funds and state funds.</p>
14	<p>What private interests-corporations, campaign donors, contractors and others - have financial interests on HOT Lane revenue, maintenance,</p>	<p>The I-85 Express Lanes is not a public-private partnership project. There are no private parties that have a financial interest in the project's revenues. Both GDOT and SRTA use a number of contractors to provide services related to operations and maintenance of the interstate highway system and the tolling system.</p>

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15	<p>People from out of state traveling through to other states not familiar with Peach Pas and travels in HOV lane (2 persons or more):</p> <p>1) How are they to know? Signs are not well marked</p> <p>2) Will they get a ticket?</p>	<p>The Express Lanes project was developed primarily for Georgia motorists to provide a mobility choice for Georgia commuters; however the lanes are open for all motorists who have a registered Peach Pass account, including out of state drivers. Out of state drivers can open a Peach Pass account online or by calling the Peach Pass customer service center.</p> <p>Out of state motorists will observe the same signage regarding the Express Lanes that shows that the Express Lanes are registered lanes for Peach Pass customers only. We know that the new signage will take some time to get used to as Georgia is one of the first states to implement the new highway signage requirements as outlined in the US Department of Transportation's Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.</p> <p>Any motorist that enters the Express Lanes without a Peach Pass account is subject to receiving a violations notice in the mail.</p> <p>In addition, SRTA is currently working with representatives from Florida (SunPass) and the Northeast (EZPass) to allow customers of those systems to use their accounts on Georgia toll roads.</p>												
16	<p>Please clarify the financing for the HOT Lanes. The federal grant was around \$110 million but I believe the total amount of the project was around \$180 million. Has Gwinnett County taken out any loans for this project: And if so, why would we do this we are expecting budget deficits?</p>	<p>Gwinnett County has not taken out any loans for this project.</p> <p>The United States Department of Transportation awarded a \$110 million grant to the Atlanta region to support a pilot project through the Congestion Reduction Demonstration (CRD) Program. The total project budget is approximately \$182 million.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="642 1016 1432 1263"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="642 1016 1432 1060">I-85 Project Budget</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="642 1060 1224 1101">Federal CRD Grant</td> <td data-bbox="1224 1060 1432 1101">\$110 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="642 1101 1224 1141">GDOT Federal Program Funds</td> <td data-bbox="1224 1101 1432 1141">\$5.6 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="642 1141 1224 1182">20% State Match (required for federal funds)</td> <td data-bbox="1224 1141 1432 1182">\$28.9 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="642 1182 1224 1222">State G.O. Bonds for Transit</td> <td data-bbox="1224 1182 1432 1222">\$37.4 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="642 1222 1224 1263">Total</td> <td data-bbox="1224 1222 1432 1263">\$181.9 million</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Approximately \$122 million of the \$182 million (67 percent of total project costs) will be targeted at transit investments, including expanding GRTA's Xpress bus services. Out of the \$122 million, approximately \$80 million will fund new facilities including 11 new or expanded park-and-rides, while the remaining \$42 million will purchase 82 new passenger coach buses. More specifics on the</p>	I-85 Project Budget		Federal CRD Grant	\$110 million	GDOT Federal Program Funds	\$5.6 million	20% State Match (required for federal funds)	\$28.9 million	State G.O. Bonds for Transit	\$37.4 million	Total	\$181.9 million
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		<p>transit investment include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the I-85 corridor, investments include 36 new passenger coach buses, new park-and-rides at Hamilton Mill and Cedars Road, and expansion of the I-985/GA 20 park and ride lot. • Elsewhere in the region, the CRD funding will be used to construct eight park and ride lots and the South Xpress Operating Center and procure 46 additional passenger coach buses. <p>The remaining \$60 million funded the Express Lanes project.</p> <p>Please note that the \$110 million dollar grant was not available for other uses and as a grant is not slated for repayment from toll revenues or any other state funding source.</p>
17	<p>What is the expected revenue for the state to run the HOT Lanes?</p>	<p>The expected annual revenue is approximately \$3.9 million dollars based on initial projections. This figure will vary based on the variable toll rate, usage of the lanes and levels of congestion in the corridor.</p>
18	<p>HOT Lanes Who gets the money? Why is it charging road we already tax it? Why 3 persons? Veterans should be free. When did we vote for it?</p>	<p><u>Toll Revenues</u> SRTA is responsible for collecting and managing all toll revenues. Tolls collected from the I-85 Express Lanes are used for operations.</p> <p><u>Tolls on Previous HOV Lane</u> Tolls are being charged to manage demand for the Express Lanes in order to deliver more reliable trip times for those who choose to use the lanes. The motor fuel tax that is used to operate and maintain our roadways is steadily decreasing. The benefit of the Express Lanes is that it provides motorists with a choice. Since the Express Lanes is only one lane, motorists have the option to use the general purpose lanes or the Express Lanes. They also have the option to use the Express Lanes free of charge with three or more passengers in the vehicle. Even though roads are constructed, they are never totally paid for because of ongoing operations and maintenance costs.</p> <p>90% of the commuters on the I-85 corridor are single occupant vehicles. Prior to the Express Lanes opening, these single occupant commuters had NO access to the HOV lane, regardless of their tax dollars being used to build and maintain the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement.</p> <p><u>3 People</u> The change from HOV 2+ to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) 3+ was made because, if the lanes remained the same, HOV lane volumes on I-85 were anticipated to grow 6% from 2008 to 2011; 8% by 2012 and 56% by 2031. At this point in time, changing the requirement to HOV3 would result in</p>

		<p>excess lane capacity, so by allowing vehicles with 3 or more persons to ride free and tolling vehicles with fewer than 3 occupants, we hope to provide more reliable travel times for motorists who choose to use the Express Lanes. It is important to note that with the previous HOV lanes, nearly 90% of all vehicles in the I-85 corridor were single occupant vehicles and therefore had no access to the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement – some paying a toll and some utilizing the lane on a toll-free basis.</p> <p><u>Veterans</u> Presently there are no plans to expand the class of exempt registered vehicles that qualify for toll-free use of the I-85 Express Lanes, but the ability to grant such a designation does exist. Either the State Transportation Board (i.e. the GDOT Board) under Georgia Code Section 32-9-4, or the General Assembly by passing a specific statute, could grant the exemption that you have requested. Currently, exempt vehicles include registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit vehicles • Carpools with three or more occupants • Motorcycles • On-call emergency vehicles • Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFV) with the proper AFV license plate (does not include hybrid vehicles) <p><u>Vote</u> The decision to convert the HOV lanes to HOT Lanes was made by the State Transportation Board via board resolution on April 16, 2009. Under current Georgia law, there is no provision for a public vote or referendum for toll projects. The SRTA Board set the toll rates for the Express Lanes project on June 20, 2011.</p>
19	Is the Hot lane nothing more than a way to increase revenue?	<p>No. The Express Lanes project was never intended to be a revenue generating system. High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane tolls such as those on the I-85 Express Lanes are intended to provide reliable trip times by utilizing pricing to meter demand in which the toll price changes according to the level of congestion on the roadway. When HOT start to become too congested, the price increases and this in turn reduces the number of cars willing to enter the lane. Thus, the price will be higher during peak periods when demand is greater and lower during less congested periods.</p>
20	Who decided on the toll charges?	<p>The lane was designated as a High Occupancy Toll lane by the State Transportation Board (i.e. the GDOT Board) and the specific price range for toll charges was established by the SRTA board in accordance with Georgia law. The SRTA Board set the toll rates for the Express Lanes project on June 20, 2011.</p>

21	<p>The "Houston HOT Lane" experience was touted as an excellent example for Atlanta to follow - However Houston added 3 toll lanes- Atlanta took 1 away. How can you in good conscious continue to extol the "Sleight of Hand"</p>	<p>There is no "sleight of hand." In January 1998, Houston's "QuickRide" Pricing program was implemented on existing HOV lanes of I-10, also known as the Katy Freeway. The "QuickRide" Pricing program was also implemented on US 290 in November 2000. The HOV lanes on both roadways were reversible and restricted to vehicles with three or more persons during the peak hours of the peak periods. The pricing program allowed a limited number of two-person carpools to buy into the lanes during the peak hours. Participating two-person carpool vehicles paid a \$2.00 per trip toll while vehicles with higher occupancies could use the lane for free. After the initial conversion, single-occupant vehicles were not allowed to use the converted lane at all. The additional lanes mentioned were added AFTER the initial conversion of the HOV lanes to HOT as part of a \$2.7 billion dollar reconstruction project that was expedited in part by toll revenues pledged to the project by the local toll authority.</p> <p>Georgia studied ten Express Lanes projects across the country to learn from their experiences. Of the ten, eight of these projects were originally converted from HOV lanes. The common goal of these HOT lanes is to provide reliable travel times to all users of these lanes: transit, toll payer, vanpoolers, and carpools. In two of the conversions from HOV to HOT lanes, the HOV lanes were regularly getting congested and did not provide reliable trips and the occupancy levels for carpools was raised from 2+ persons to 3+ persons. Here is a list of the projects we reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR 91, Orange County, CA (newly built) • I-15, San Diego, CA (HOV conversion) • I-10, Houston, TX (HOV conversion) • I-394 and I-35W, Minneapolis, MN (HOV conversion) • I-35W, Minneapolis, MN (new capacity) • I-25, Denver, CO (HOV conversion) • I-15, Salt Lake City, UT (HOV conversion) • SR 167, Seattle, WA (HOV conversion) • I-95, Miami, FL (HOV conversion and new capacity) • I-680, Alameda County, CA (HOV conversion)
22	<p>Mass Transit- When do we vote for bus traffic to be stopped or we stop supporting?</p>	<p>The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and Gwinnett County Transit both provide bus service in the corridor. We are not aware of any upcoming votes regarding bus service in the corridor.</p>
23		<p>The I-85 Express lane is focused on congestion pricing, sometimes also referred to as value pricing,</p>

	Why does the HOT lane appear to be more focused on Revenue than reducing congestion on I-85? (On day 4, after many complaints, the total cost for the entire HOT section dropped)	<p>where the toll charge varies with the level of congestion on the road. The pricing strategy is designed to manage demand for the lane so that traffic in the lane continues to flow giving users of the lane a more reliable trip time.</p> <p>The Governor asked SRTA to prioritize the system parameters and primarily focus on improving Express Lanes usage.</p>
24	What will be done about the nuances associated with HOT lane usage? (example: being "trapped" in HOT lane behind drivers doing less than speed limit)	The Express Lanes system is no different from the current HOV system in that motorists can enter and exit the lanes at the dashed double white lines. If a motorist would like to exit the Express Lanes for whatever reason they can do so at the proper exit locations, just as the HOV lanes. Motorists in the Express Lanes are required to follow the law and travel at speeds designated for that specific area of the corridor, which is typically 55 mph.
25	Why do Motorcycles need a Peach Pass?	Motorcycles need transponders for the same reason as cars – so that the transaction can be properly associated with the correct vehicle. SRTA is exploring other alternatives since not all motorcycles have windshields. SRTA has received customer feedback requesting a less conspicuous transponder and/or transponder mounting choice for motorcycles. SRTA is exploring alternatives utilized for motorcycles in other states.
26	Was the Peach Pass Hot/Lane issue put to a vote(before the General Public, if not, why?)	<p>No, implementation of the I-85 Express Lanes was not put to a vote by the general public. Under current Georgia law, there is no provision for a public vote or referendum for toll projects. However, all significant highway construction projects, including those with tolling involved, go through a substantive environmental assessment phase that includes public involvement/comment. A series of eight Public Information Open Houses and one Public Hearing Open House were conducted prior to the project moving forward. In addition, within the last 12 months, over 70 meetings and community events have been held within the corridor and locations where I-85 Motorists live, work and spend leisure time. The PIOHs were held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 26, 2009 at the Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth; • March 31, 2009 at the Gwinnett Fire Academy in Dacula; • March 31, 2009 at the Senior Connections in Chamblee; • April 2, 2009 at Ashiana’s Banquet Hall/Global Mall in Norcross; and • April 4, 2009 - Discover Mills Mall in Lawrenceville.

The second series of meetings presented the draft concept for conversion of the lane from HOV to HOT along the I-85 corridor and introduced the concept of dynamic pricing and the potential tolling range and were held on:

- **June 23, 2009 at Ashiana's Banquet Hall/Global Mall in Norcross;**
- **June 25, 2009 at the Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth; and**
- **June 27, 2009 - Mall of Georgia/Belk Store Center Court in Buford.**

The public was notified of both rounds of PIOH meetings through legal advertisements in the local newspapers as well as highway signage, flyers, emails, the Department's project website, and additional outreach efforts. At each of the meetings, attendees were provided a project description and comment form. These handouts were also translated into Spanish and specific displays were prepared and presented for each round of meetings. A court reporter was available to record verbal comments or attendees could provide comments through the Department's project website. The project webpage (www.dot.ga.gov/I85HOTlanes), hosted on the Department's website, served as a tool for both informing the public about the meetings as well as providing information for those not able to attend the meetings. The meeting dates, times and locations were posted to the website prior to each round of meetings. All of the materials presented at the meeting were made available for downloading through the website.

A total of 282 people attended the first series of PIOH meetings with 218 comments received. The public's main concerns were focused on consideration of alternate means of transportation; class separation/environmental justice issues; education on the need for the project and why do a conversion; how will we provide enforcement of the lanes; what are the environmental impacts; and concerns about the toll rates. A total of 205 people attended the second series of meetings with 137 comments received. The major concerns mirrored those expressed in the first round of public meetings.

In addition to the environmental process, the I-85 Express Lanes project was approved as a part of the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The TIP and STIP program documents list all projects that are planned to be constructed and federally funded in the Atlanta Metro region. The TIP and STIP are voted on by elected officials in the metro Atlanta region. Also the TIP is approved by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) as a part of the STIP process.

Over 70 community events were held throughout the I-85 corridor to educate motorists on the

		Express Lanes project and Peach Pass. As a result over 108,000 Peach Passes have been issued with 70,000 of those issued before opening.
27	Were studies done on the impact of traffic on State Roads (such as Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Buford Hwy)?	An operations team consisting of USDOT, GDOT and SRTA has been created that will be assessing any potential impact on the arterial routes along the corridor.
28	Why was this project not put before the citizens of Gwinnett for citizen feedback and input?	The project was put before the citizens of Gwinnett for feedback and input. Please see answer #26 above for a detailed description of public input activities. Also, the project was adopted as part of Atlanta Regional Commission's Plan 2040 which had extensive public involvement as well.
29	What were the underlying assumptions which formed the basis for this being a good idea? What research was done?	<p>Three criteria were the top considerations for determining which corridor would be selected for the HOV conversion project: transit needs in the corridor, level of congestion in the corridor, and presence of an existing HOV lane. The Gwinnett corridor met these three criteria easily with an existing HOV lane, growing congestion and a need for different transit options in the area.</p> <p>Extensive research was performed on these types of Express Lanes projects including scanning tours of 9 of the 10 projects with successful implementations of Express Lanes in the United States, review of USDOT data from previous projects of this type, review of academic and industry literature, case study analysis and personal interviews with many of the Express Lane systems operators. Numerous studies were performed on the project before proceeding with implementation. Listed below are the studies conducted on this project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact – Interstate 85 (I-85) HOV to HOT Conversion Project, January 2010 • I-85 HOV to HOT Conversion - Traffic Analysis, November 2009 • Toll Traffic and Revenue Report - I-85 from Chamblee-Tucker Road to Old Peachtree, November 2009 • Georgia Department of Transportation Technical Analysis – TCM Substitution Report, May 2009 (Transportation Control Measure “TCM” for air quality remediation, concluding HOT lanes can substitute for HOV lanes)

30	Who is responsible & ultimately accountable for implementing the HOT lanes? When was the electorate going to be permitted to vote on this?	<p>The decision to convert the HOV lanes to HOT Lanes was made by the State Transportation Board (i.e, GDOT Board) via board resolution on April 16, 2009. The State Transportation Board (STB) designates which lanes will become toll lanes and the corresponding occupancy requirements for managed lanes across Georgia. SRTA is responsible for the operation of the lane once it has been determined a lane will be a tolled facility. We believe this separation of power as to who designates a toll lane and who operates a toll lane is very important. SRTA, as a toll facility operator, cannot alone make the decision to toll a facility. The power to decide to toll a lane is held in another agency and must pass the STB approval before SRTA can operate a facility.</p> <p>Under current Georgia law, there is no provision for a public vote or referendum for toll projects.</p> <p>The specific price range for toll charges was established by the SRTA board in accordance with Georgia law. The SRTA Board set the toll rates for the Express Lanes project on June 20, 2011.</p>
31	Will they change the entry of HOT users and the exit of HOV users going North on I-85 so they don't cross causing a huge backup and daily accidents?	<p>Currently, the Georgia DOT is working to determine if the weave length can be increased to allow more time and room for movement from one lane to another, thus reducing the possibility for crashes along the corridor.</p>
32	How are the out of state cars handled. Most of the cars using the lanes that I have observed are Florida cars?	<p>The Express Lanes project was developed primarily for Georgia motorists to address traffic congestion for Georgia commuters; however the lanes are open for all motorists who have a registered Peach Pass account, including out of state drivers. Out of state drivers can open a Peach Pass account online or by calling the Peach Pass customer service center.</p> <p>In addition, SRTA is currently working with representatives from Florida (SunPass) and the Northeast (EZPass) to allow customers of those systems to use their accounts on Georgia toll roads.</p> <p>Most of the cars in the lane are commuters in Georgia with registered Peach Pass vehicles.</p>
33	Why are we paying to use lanes that have already been paid for with tax money?	<p>The Express Lanes is a choice for motorists. Even though a road is constructed, the costs to operate and maintain the roadway do not end. Unlike a tax, the Express Lanes is a voluntary user fee. Motorists who do not meet the toll-exempt requirements only pay when they choose to use it.</p>
34	How do you expect working people to be able to afford paying when our	<p>The motor fuel tax that is used to operate and maintain our roadways is steadily decreasing. The benefit of the Express Lanes is that it provides motorists with a choice. Since the Express Lanes is</p>

	<p>tax money is already paying for the road now we have to pay to go to work?</p>	<p>only one lane, motorists have the option to use the general purpose lanes or the Express Lanes. They also have the option to use the Express Lanes free of charge with three or more passengers in the vehicle. Even though roads are constructed, they are never totally paid for because of ongoing operations and maintenance costs.</p> <p>90% of the commuters on the I-85 corridor are single occupant vehicles. Prior to the Express Lanes opening, these single occupant commuters had NO access to the HOV lane, regardless of their tax dollars being used to build and maintain the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement.</p>
35	<p>The Executive Director of GRTA. How may employees of SRTA able to patent a methodology of placing tolls on non-barrier hot lanes in their individual names? Do they receive private monies from the contractors who have won the bids for implementing the HOT Lanes?</p>	<p>US Patent law requires that inventors (i.e. individuals who work on the inventions or ideas that are the subject of the Patent) be listed in the patent application. Patent applications were submitted for the electronic barrier methodology used on the I-85 Express Lanes and a second patent application was filed for a commuter credits concept. All individuals named as Inventors in the application were full time employees of either SRTA or Georgia Tech at the time, and thus their work is considered a "work made for hire" meaning that their work belonged to their employer (SRTA or Georgia Tech, respectively) and not to them as individuals. To further emphasize this fact, all the individuals listed on the patent signed over any rights they had whatsoever to SRTA and Georgia Tech. This assignment occurred at the time of filing of the application back in 2008 and was filed with the United States Patent Office along with the rest of the application. One patent has already been issued and is listed with the US Patent and Trademark Office in the name of SRTA and Georgia Tech as the assignees and thus lawful owners of the Patents. The Patents were not filed to make money, but rather to ensure that no industry contractor could ever charge the State of Georgia or any other public tolling entity for such a feature in their delivered solution.</p> <p>The listed individuals did not, nor will they ever receive any personal financial benefit from these Patents.</p>
36	<p>Has anyone investigated how the very people pressing the HOT Lane issue took out patents while working for SRTA? Patent 20090016819 in the name of Janine Miller, et al is for the "Electronic Barrier & Enforcement system & method" is</p>	<p>See answer above. No investigation was necessary as the matter was handled in a routine matter for such Patent filings. Further, the patent application filings were handled by patent engaged by the Attorney General of the State of Georgia.</p>

	specifically taken out by then employees of SRTA in their own names.	
37	You have pushed a lot of traffic with 3 or more passengers on to the regular travel lanes thus increasing congestion. How do you plan to deal with this since they will not be able to use the peach pass lane?	Registered vehicles with 3 or more passengers can use the Express Lanes for free.
38	Why do I have to pay for traveling in lanes that have been free for years? It is not faster in other lanes.	The change from HOV 2+ to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) 3+ was made because, if the lanes remained the same, HOV lane volumes on I-85 were anticipated to grow 6% from 2008 to 2011; 8% by 2012 and 56% by 2031. At this point in time, changing the requirement to HOV3 would result in excess lane capacity, so by allowing vehicles with 3 or more persons to ride free and tolling vehicles with fewer than 3 occupants, we hope to provide more reliable travel times for motorists who choose to use the Express Lanes. It is important to note that with the previous HOV lanes, nearly 90% of all vehicles in the I-85 corridor were single occupant vehicles and therefore had no access to the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement – some paying a toll and some utilizing the lane on a toll-free basis.
39	Why do motorcycles have to have a sticker?	Motorcycles need transponders for the same reason as cars – so that the transaction can be properly associated with the correct vehicle. SRTA is exploring other alternatives since not all motorcycles have windshields. SRTA has received customer feedback requesting a less conspicuous transponder and/or transponder mounting choice for motorcycles. SRTA is exploring alternatives utilized in other states for motorcycles.
40	If the HOT Lanes will be same volume as old HOV lanes then is this solely a revenue issue?	The Express Lanes project was never intended to be a revenue generating system. The Express Lanes' goal is to mitigate traffic congestion in the Express Lane. Research shows that in 2012 the HOV lanes would not have provided reliable travel time for motorists who use them. The Express Lanes are not intended to have the same volume as the previous HOV lane. The intent of the project is to utilize capacity in the Express Lane during peak periods to move as many cars as

		possible through that congested time frame and maintain 45 mph travel speeds.
41	Why can't 2 people car poolers ride in HOT lanes - motorcycles (1) can?	Two-person carpoolers can use the Express Lane with a Peach Pass account subject to a toll.
42	How can you justify changing an HOV lane that the taxpayers already paid for to a HOT lane? Public dollars paid to build and maintain that lane - so why can't the public use it without paying additional fees?	<p>90% of the commuters on the I-85 corridor are single occupant vehicles. Prior to the Express Lanes opening, these single occupant commuters had NO access to the HOV lane, regardless of their tax dollars being used to build and maintain the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement.</p> <p>The motor fuel tax that is used to operate and maintain our roadways is steadily decreasing. The benefit of the Express Lanes is that it provides motorists with a choice. Since the Express Lanes is only one lane, motorists have the option to use the general purpose lanes or the Express Lanes. They also have the option to use the Express Lanes free of charge with three or more passengers in the vehicle. Even though roads are constructed, they are never totally paid for because of ongoing operations and maintenance costs.</p>
43	What did we get in exchange for giving up the old 2 rider HOV threshold and accept a new 3 rider limit mandate from the federal government? Who at GADOT decided this was a good deal? Can that person not be allowed to make any more important decisions?	<p>In order to access the grant funds, a change in occupancy was required to comply with the terms of the USDOT Grant Agreement. Further driving the decision to change the occupancy requirement was the current and forecasted travel speeds and times for this section of I-85. Congestion is predicted to continue to worsen in the long run as the economy recovers and growth in the region continues. Based on travel forecast information for 2015, peak morning travel times on the I-85 HOV lanes are estimated to climb to 35 minutes, with an average speed of 26 mph. Furthermore, if Georgia had not accepted the grant funds, these funds would have been utilized for this same type of project in another region of the United States.</p> <p>Additionally, the Express Lanes project provided \$122 million in transit investment into metro Atlanta, with 11 new park and ride lots and 21 new motor coaches, with the possibility to add up to 82 coaches. The project covers more transportation initiatives in this corridor than just the Express Lanes.</p> <p>The decision to convert the HOV lanes to HOT Lanes was made by the State Transportation Board (i.e, GDOT Board) via board resolution on April 16, 2009. The State Transportation Board (STB) designates which lanes will become toll lanes and the corresponding occupancy requirements for managed lanes across Georgia. SRTA is responsible for the operation of the lane once it has been determined a lane will be a tolled facility. We believe this separation of power as to who designates</p>

		a toll lane and who operates a toll lane is very important. SRTA, as a toll facility operator, cannot alone make the decision to toll a facility. The power to decide to toll a lane is held in another agency and must pass the STB approval before SRTA can operate a facility.
44	I would like to know why you thought removing 2 person carpools from the HOT Lane would "actually" reduce traffic in the regular lanes	By allowing vehicles with 3 or more persons to ride free and tolling vehicles with fewer than 3 occupants, we hope to provide more reliable travel times for motorists who choose to use the Express Lanes. We have not stated that the Express lanes would reduce traffic in the regular lanes. Rather, the Express Lane provides an option to motorists who use the general purpose lanes to use the Express Lanes when they feel the use is of value to them.
45	What is the expected timing for the approval to reduce the carpool requirement from 3+ to 2+?	A request has been sent the USDOT. We do not know the expected timeframe for the USDOT to make a final determination on this matter, but they have indicated that they want more data collected over to time to see how the lanes perform before they make a final determination on the State's request.
46	What can we do (as voters) to expedite the process?	GDOT, SRTA and USDOT have formed an operations team to work together to continue to monitor the Express Lanes and have had numerous meetings already to help expedite USDOT's data collection efforts.
47	Are you going to the HOT Lanes reduced down to 2+ free with peach pass?	Again, USDOT is evaluating our request.
48	How does a 3-person HOT Lane promote car pooling?	<p>One of the primary goals of the Express Lanes project is to promote carpooling in the corridor. Currently through the partnership with the Clean Air Campaign, they are able to match motorists in the corridor with similar travel to form 2-person and 3-person carpools. Whether you are adding more people to your carpool or if you are beginning to carpool for the first time, motorists can earn <u>\$40-\$60 dollars in gas cards</u> every month (3+ person carpools). In addition, carpools of three or more with a Peach Pass account will be able to use the Express Lanes toll-free.</p> <p>There are other transit options such as GRTA Xpress bus service and vanpools in the corridor.</p>
49	Vanpoolers are being inconvenienced as they are required to go 2 to 3	We are working on the design to place another Express Lane access point on I-85 southbound between Old Peachtree and Beaver Ruin road. We believe this additional access will help vanpoolers and cut down on the need to go northbound to enter the lanes.

	exits Northbound to go Southbound. How does this impact the "Go Green: initiative?"	
50	I believe the DOT is misrepresenting or outright lying about travel times. Can we get an independent study?	An independent study is underway by the Georgia Institute of Technology. That analysis will include pre and post Express Lanes traffic comparisons to include travel times. However, the travel times that have been reported by the State Road and Tollway Authority are accurate and are triangulated between data from GDOT's Navigator system, EarthCam systems and the tolling system before its published.
51	Can we change the name from "HOT Lane" to "rich lane"?	The official name for the project is the I-85 Express Lanes. However, the term "Lexus Lane" that has been referred to in the media is inaccurate.
52	What means do we have to fight the HOT lanes? Sue for an injunction? Sue for lost property value?	<p>As with any major public project or program, we encourage you to discuss your concerns with your elected representatives as well as submit any comments or concerns through our website www.peachpass.com. Of course, you may pursue any legal remedies available by law.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the project, the Georgia DOT and I-85 Express Lane partners have made a concerted effort to ensure that the public is well-informed on the project and how it will address congestion within the I-85 corridor. The first series of PIOH meetings illustrated an introduction to the concept of HOT lanes, an overview of travel time reliability and congestion deficiencies within the project corridor and the proposed alternative. The PIOHs were held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 26, 2009 at the Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth; • March 31, 2009 at the Gwinnett Fire Academy in Dacula; • March 31, 2009 at the Senior Connections in Chamblee; • April 2, 2009 at Ashiana's Banquet Hall/Global Mall in Norcross; and • April 4, 2009 - Discover Mills Mall in Lawrenceville. <p>The second series of meetings presented the draft concept for conversion of the lane from HOV to HOT along the I-85 corridor and introduced the concept of dynamic pricing and the potential tolling range and were held on:</p>

- **June 23, 2009 at Ashiana’s Banquet Hall/Global Mall in Norcross;**
- **June 25, 2009 at the Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth; and**
- **June 27, 2009 - Mall of Georgia/Belk Store Center Court in Buford.**

The public was notified of both rounds of PIOH meetings through legal advertisements in the local newspapers as well as highway signage, flyers, emails, the Department’s project website, and additional outreach efforts. At each of the meetings, attendees were provided a project description and comment form. These handouts were also translated into Spanish and specific displays were prepared and presented for each round of meetings. A court reporter was available to record verbal comments or attendees could provide comments through the Department’s project website. The project webpage (www.dot.ga.gov/I85HOTlanes), hosted on the Department’s website, served as a tool for both informing the public about the meetings as well as providing information for those not able to attend the meetings. The meeting dates, times and locations were posted to the website prior to each round of meetings. All of the materials presented at the meeting were made available for downloading through the website.

A total of 282 people attended the first series of PIOH meetings with 218 comments received. The public’s main concerns were focused on consideration of alternate means of transportation; class separation/environmental justice issues; education on the need for the project and why do a conversion; how will we provide enforcement of the lanes; what are the environmental impacts; and concerns about the toll rates. A total of 205 people attended the second series of meetings with 137 comments received. The major concerns mirrored those expressed in the first round of public meetings.

In addition to the environmental process, the I-85 Express Lanes project was approved as a part of the Atlanta Regional Commission’s (ARC) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). These program documents list all projects that are planned to be constructed and funded in the Atlanta Metro region. The TIP and STIP are voted on by elected officials in the metro Atlanta region. Also the TIP is approved by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) as a part of the STIP process.

Over 70 community events were held throughout the I-85 corridor to educate motorists on the Express Lanes project and Peach Pass. As a result over 108,000 Peach Passes have been issued with 70,000 of those issued before opening.

53	Please identify our Representatives/Officials	The following entities approved funding for this project: USDOT, ARC Board, GRTA Board and the
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	who approved this	State Transportation Board. The SRTA Board approved the established toll rates for the project.
54	What is the goal here?	See Response # 1 above.
55	What are the reasons for converting the HOV lanes to HOT Lanes?	See Response #1 above.
56	AT what point in time will the HOT lanes be considered a success or failure?	<p>The USDOT's performance standard for Express Lanes states that vehicles should maintain an average speed of at least 45 mph (90 percent of the time) during peak hours. SRTA and GDOT will submit performance data at 1 year, 3 years and 5 years based on these standards. As part of the project, the State is providing data to USDOT on a regular basis, with defined project checkpoints at 1 year, 3 years and 5 years.</p> <p>In addition, this project's primary goals are to provide choices to commuters within the corridor and an option that will ensure reliable travel times for motorists. Success of the project will be defined through the USDOT national evaluation standards as outlined above and through a compilation of congestion mitigation strategies to include the Express Lanes system, mode shifts to transit and transit ridership.</p>
57	What is the goal# of vehicles per hour in the HOT Lane? What is the current # of xph?	Based on the I-85 HOV to HOT Conversion-Traffic Analysis, we expect that the lane should support 1200-1400 vehicles per hour, per lane during peak periods. However, the lane is already servicing more vehicles than expected. Additionally, handling 1200-1400 vehicles per hour during peak periods do not mean that you can expect 36,000 trips in 24 hours. Attached is a chart graphing how the lane performed by hour as an HOV lane and how it performs now by hour as an Express Lane.
58	What is the average number of cars that used the HOV lane before in a day and the average number of cars that used the express lane today?	According to the I-85 HOV to HOT Conversion-Traffic Analysis, approximately 18,500 vehicles per day travelled in the HOV lanes. As of Wednesday, November 16, 2011, the number of trips reported in the Express lanes was 11,068.
59	I live in Gwinnett and work in Cobb, when additional toll lanes are	Toll prices on the I-85 Express Lanes and the I-75/575 project will be determined according to the market demand. We are unable at this time to say what tolls will be charged on the I-75/575 project that has not been fully designed or has not completed the public involvement process.

	implemented, how much will it cost me to go to/from work?	
60	Why is there no direct bus route to/from Gwinnett/Buckhead Gwinnett/Cobb?	GRTA Xpress currently does not have bus service from Gwinnett to Cobb County. At this point, there are not sufficient funds for this service. For further information regarding bus services in that area, please contact Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) Customer Service 3525 Mall Blvd Suite 5-C; Duluth, GA 30096 770.822.5010.
61	Why are we paying for a lane that we already have paid taxes on?	<p>90% of the commuters on the I-85 corridor are single occupant vehicles. Prior to the Express Lanes opening, these single occupant commuters had NO access to the HOV lane, regardless of their tax dollars being used to build and maintain the HOV lane. This project changed that. Now, 100% of all passenger vehicles have access to that stretch of pavement.</p> <p>The Express Lanes is a choice for motorists. Even though a road is constructed, the costs to operate and maintain the roadway do not end. Unlike a tax, the Express Lanes is a voluntary user fee. Motorists who do not meet the toll-exempt requirements only pay when they use it.</p> <p>The motor fuel tax that is used to operate and maintain our roadways is steadily decreasing. The benefit of the Express Lanes is that it provides motorists with a choice. Since the Express Lanes is only one lane, motorists have the option to use the general purpose lanes or the Express Lanes. They also have the option to use the Express Lanes free of charge with three or more passengers in the vehicle. Even though roads are constructed, they are never totally paid for because of ongoing operations and maintenance costs.</p>
62	Did the fact that SRTA/GRTA personnel have patent applications for the HOT technology play any role in the decision to implement HOT?	No. The Patent applications were filed in 2008 well before the final determination to move forward with the project was made.
63	I have a Peach Pass. I am retired and only an occasional user. Do I need to "notify" through the internet if I decide to use the HOT lane with 3 in the car?	As a Peach Pass customer you have choices. You can change your toll status depending on how you plan to use the roadway at any time. If you are typically a toll paying customer and would like to use the Express Lanes toll free, you can go online or call to change your toll status to toll exempt for designated period of time (i.e. one day, four hours, week days, etc.). Once the time has expired, your toll status will automatically default back to toll so that you do not have to change it back.

64	When should we expect to see Federal involvements?	<p>Since this project is on the interstate system, this project has had constant involvement from federal authorities from conceptual planning, design, construction, implementation and also funding.</p> <p>In addition, on October 28, 2011, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) assigned staff members to work with the Atlanta partners on strategies to increase utilization and adoption of the Express Lanes. Also, the federal government (FHWA) has been receiving copies of performance data from SRTA at the same time as the media receives it.</p>
65	Why do the North counties pay more and get less than the South side?	<p>We recommend you contact your elected official to discuss your comments regarding this question. From a tolling perspective, all tolls are applied uniformly regardless of where a citizen resides in the State.</p>
66	What does Governor Deal, the GA DOT, and our policemen plan to do when I-85 is at a stand-still due to lanes blocked from an accident & we cannot use the HOT Lane if we don't want to purchase a Peach Pass?	<p>Safety is always the priority on the road. As such law enforcement, fire/safety and emergency response personnel are fully empowered to use, as well as to direct traffic into or out of the I-85 Express Lanes as they determine necessary when responding to an incident or other on-duty activities. If these personnel direct you into or out of the Express Lane, a motorist must follow their orders and directions. SRTA and GDOT monitor traffic incidents and have mechanisms in place to waive toll charges and/or double white line violations when warranted and have done so since the Express Lanes opened. If you believe you received a violation incorrectly due to an emergency incident, please contact SRTA's Customer Service center at 1-855-PCH-PASS (724-7277), with the date and approximate time and location information. We will review the incident logs and will provide credits or adjustments where justified.</p>
67	Has anyone considered the fact that our roads and infrastructure are barely used for 50-60% of each 24 hr day? Could it be that the solution to congestion is behavior modification...i.e. move more quickly into a 24 hour business/civic routine?	<p>We totally agree that better utilization of the system is a tool in the toolbox for reducing congestion. Georgia DOT and SRTA are working with the Clean Air Campaign to encourage businesses to provide alternative commute options for their employees. Currently, more than 2,800 businesses around metro Atlanta participate in these alternative commute programs. This program is very successful. Atlanta carpools far more than most urban areas of similar size.</p>