



I-85 EXPRESS LANES Partnership for Progress

www.peachpass.com

SEPTEMBER 2010

I-85 Express Lanes Newsletter

This is the fifth issue of the I-85 Express Lanes newsletter, which is designed to keep our partners and those interested in the project informed on the progress of the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane project. The proposed 16-mile Express Lanes will run along I-85 from Chamblee Tucker Road just south of I-285 to Old Peachtree Road in Gwinnett County.

Readers are encouraged to forward the newsletter to others that may be interested in the project.

Peach Pass Registration Begins Spring 2011 for I-85 Express Lane Users

[New Website Now Live](#)

Peach Pass, a leading-edge toll collection device that can be used on both the new 16-mile stretch of I-85 Express Lanes and GA 400, will be available to motorists in the spring of 2011. The Band-Aid-thin device attaches to a vehicle's windshield or front bumper.

Like the Cruise Card, the Peach Pass will be connected to an account established with the Georgia State Road & Tollway Authority (SRTA) and will automatically deduct tolls when used on GA 400 or the I-85 Express Lanes, which are scheduled to open in the summer of 2011.



www.peachpass.com
A new website, www.peachpass.com, is now providing commuters with detailed information about Peach Pass and the I-85 Express Lanes. Visitors can learn more about this innovative transportation solution and related transit enhancements, view construction updates, and determine if their vehicle would be charged a toll for using the Express Lanes.

"One of our objectives with Peach Pass is to provide motorists with a new transportation choice that uses innovative technology to keep traffic in the Express Lanes moving," said Gena Evans, Executive Director of SRTA. "A major advantage of the system is that registered vehicles with a Peach Pass will be able to use the I-85 Express Lanes without slowing down to stop and pay at a toll booth."

All vehicles using the new I-85 Express Lanes – even those exempt from paying tolls – will need to register for a Peach Pass. Exempt vehicles are carpoolers with three or more occupants, transit vehicles, motorcycles, emergency vehicles, and Alternative Fuel

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Karlene Barron

Director of Communications
Georgia Department of
Transportation
(404) 631-1824
kbarron@dot.ga.gov

Malika Reed Wilkins

Director of Communications
State Road and Tollway Authority
(404) 893-6103
mwilkins@georgiatolls.com



Office of Governor Sonny Perdue



Vehicles (AFV) with the proper AFV license plates (does not include hybrid vehicles).

SRTA will announce Peach Pass sign-up procedures to the public through a variety of outlets, including the Peach Pass website.

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New *Xpress* Park-and-Ride Opens at Mall of Georgia



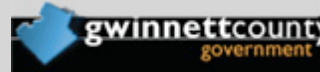
One of the first transit improvements associated with the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Grant Award opened Monday, August 9th, when *Xpress* commuter coach service was initiated from the new park-and-ride lot at the Mall of Georgia (see map below).

The *Xpress* coaches have seven morning departures to Midtown Atlanta and seven afternoon return trips. Routing through Midtown is similar to all other *Xpress* Midtown routes. There are also three reverse commute trips in the morning (from the Civic Center MARTA Station to the Mall of Georgia) and three in the afternoon (from the Mall of Georgia to the Civic Center MARTA Station).

Visit www.XpressGa.com for more information on the Route 411 coaches.



Georgia Department of Public Safety





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Project Construction to Begin in October



Construction kick-off event speakers included (from left to right), Vance Smith (GDOT Commissioner), Gena Evans (SRTA Executive Director), and Jannine Miller (GRTA Executive Director)

Construction work and lane closures on the I-85 Express Lanes project will begin in October following the September 2 construction kickoff event held at the I-985 and State Route 20 Park-and-Ride. The Park-and-Ride lot will be expanded as part of the project. Vance Smith, Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Commissioner, Gena Evans, SRTA Executive Director, and Jannine Miller, Georgia Regional Transit Authority (GRTA) Executive Director spoke at the event. Alpharetta-based World Fiber Technologies, Inc will install many of the project's innovative technologies, including fiber optic cables, cameras, and electronic signs, which should be in place on I-85 by July 31, 2011.

GDOT also hosted a construction information session on September 1 at the Gwinnett Civic Center. Representatives from GDOT, SRTA, GRTA, and the Clean Air Campaign updated the public on construction schedules, tolling and transit enhancements. Additionally, the Clean Air Campaign provided information on commute alternatives and opportunities to find carpoolers.

To minimize inconvenience to the traveling public, construction will occur mostly at night, on weekends, and outside of peak periods. GDOT will make every effort to accommodate special high-traffic weekend events such as University of Georgia home football games and events in downtown Atlanta by only allowing single lane closures in the construction area. A recent two-minute report on project construction aired on FOX 5 and can be viewed by clicking on the image below.



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Gwinnett Paper Reports on HOT Progress

Following is an excerpt from an article by Camie Young that appeared in the Gwinnett Daily Post, Saturday, July 31, the day after the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce hosted its Transportation Summit at its headquarters facility.

Toll lanes on road to reality

Contractor selected to ease I-85 traffic woes

By Camie Young
Gwinnett Daily Post
July 31, 2010

DULUTH — Interstate 85's carpool lanes will soon be converted to high-occupancy toll lanes, after a contractor for the project was awarded Friday.

Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioner Vance Smith announced the bid award Friday at a transportation summit, held by the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, where many new options

for transportation funding were discussed.

"I personally think it's going to give that reliable trip time that people are looking for," Smith said of the technology, which will allow drivers to pay for access to the lane and for prices to change based on traffic in an attempt to guarantee the lane flows at 45 mph.

"I don't know if you'll ever get it to flow freely, but I think you'll get it to flow freer," Smith said, adding that the project also includes a boost to transit and encourages people to carpool with at least three in a vehicle, which will provide free access to the lane. "You put all these others together and I think you'll see relief."

Including more buses and expanded park-and-ride options, the project is being funded by a \$110 million federal grant as a demonstration project.

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Express Lanes in the News*

In recent years, HOT lanes like the I-85 Express Lanes and related projects, such as transit, and tolling technology, have generated local and national news stories and editorial comment around the country, including the following articles in recent editions of *USA TODAY* and the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*.

How two cities take snarl out of commute

By Larry Copeland
USA TODAY
August 3, 2010

[\(Read Article\)](#)

Transit a shot in metro economy's arms

By Chick Krautler
Atlanta Business Chronicle
July 30, 2010

Here's some news from a recently conducted transit survey in our Atlanta region. More than 75 percent of daily transit trips are made by residents going to work or to school. Residents (hopefully you) who ride our trains and buses have an important mission - to fuel our economy today, and gain knowledge to enhance it in the future.

A recent on-board survey of 50,000 transit riders (10 percent of the region's ridership), conducted by the Atlanta Regional Commission and funded by several regional partners, gives us a lot to go on for planning future transit and attracting new funding. The survey, the largest of its kind ever conducted in the U.S., documented results from rail and bus riders on seven transit services and from 20 different counties. The responses provide information that employers, business owners, educators, as well as planners, should pay attention to:

1. Transit is critical to the Atlanta region's economy: 72.8 percent of survey respondents are currently employed. In fact, 45 percent of all transit trips are between a person's home and their workplace.

Without public transit, 64 percent of those surveyed would have difficulties getting to work because they do not have a car or their car is not available. This means that not only do most riders have jobs, many might lose them if they did not have access to transit.

2. Many residents with cars and higher incomes are choosing to use transit instead of driving. While the majority of riders have few other options, some 10 percent have annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more. Among those, 73 percent said they could complete their trip by driving, but choose not to. What's more, roughly 13 percent of these riders are "kiss and ride" passengers, meaning that they are dropped off at the transit stop in the mornings and picked up in the evenings, greatly reducing their carbon footprints and making transit a critical part of their families' daily lives.

**The above links provide information about successful HOT lane implementations in other states. The ideas and concepts discussed are being shared as information only and do not necessarily represent or reflect the policies, practices, plans or operations of Georgia's proposed I-85 Express Lanes project.*

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