

# FACTSHEET

Date: Thursday, June 20, 2013

## Project Name: Reconstruction of the I-95 South Bound Welcome Center

**Project Number:** IM000-0000-00(690)

**PI Number:** 0000690

**Brief, general description:** The Georgia Department of Transportation is in the preconstruction stages of a project to replace the existing southbound I-95 Welcome Center with a new 22,000 square foot facility to address the substandard parking, structural and space deficiencies.

**Project Location:** The project is located on southbound I-95 in the Savannah region, two miles south of the South Carolina state line, near the SR 21 interchange.

**Proposed Project Description:** The project consists of the demolition of the existing 5,520 square foot Welcome Center and construction of a new 21,000 square foot facility. The entrance and exit ramps from I-95 to the 30-acre property will not change; however, the parking lots and circulation around the new building will be revised. The new facility will accommodate approximately 160 regular parking spaces and 20 ADA parking spaces, versus the existing 140 total spaces. To accommodate the nearly 2.2 million visitors that now stop at the facility, there will be approximately 4,250 square feet of exhibit area for information on attractions and accommodations in Georgia and additional restrooms to accommodate the increase in travelers. There will also be new vending and updated picnic areas.

**Preconstruction or Construction Info:** During construction the site will remain open, using the existing entrance and exit ramps. There will be a small temporary restroom and information center located in the semi-truck parking lot to accommodate travelers.

### Project Schedule:

<b>Public Involvement Phase:</b>	Underway
<b>PIOH Dates/Locations:</b>	None planned
<b>PHOH Dates/Locations:</b>	None planned

<b>Let Date:</b>	January 2014 (tentative)
<b>Construction Start Date:</b>	March 2014 (tentative)
<b>Construction Duration:</b>	13 months (estimated)

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**Detour Info:** none required  
**Richard B. Russell Detour Start Date:**  
**Detour Duration:**  
**Proposed Detour Routes:**

## Background:

The existing welcome center opened in 1979 and is no longer able to accommodate the increase in visitor traffic which has reached over two million visitors per year.

- In 2007, a renovation and addition to the existing facility was proposed.
- The renovation/addition project was put on hold in 2008.
- In 2011, discussions were held regarding whether or not to restart the project.
- The project was re-started again in the beginning of 2012, and through a re-evaluation of the need and purpose (and due to new building regulations) it was found that a totally new facility was now a better solution than an addition/renovation.
- At the re-start of the project the decision was made by GDOT to partner with GSFIC (Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission) for the execution of the project.
- The existing septic system was not designed for, and cannot accommodate 2 million visitors per year. Therefore the decision was made in 2012 to connect to the City of Port Wentworth's sanitary sewer system.

## Contact:

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