



March 8, 2016

Thank you for attending the Public Hearing Open House for the proposed I-985 New Interchange North of the State Route 13 Crossover near Martin Road, PI Number 0000425 and the widening of Martin Road, Gainesville Hall Metropolitan Organization Number GH-024. Our goal is two-fold: 1) to provide you with information on the proposed project and 2) to provide an opportunity for you to give us your comments on the proposed project. In this handout package, you will find a description of the project, a location map, summary of environmental study statement, right-of-way acquisition statement, and a comment card.

As you enter the room, please take a look at the project display. Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) representatives, wearing nametags, are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. There will be no formal presentation.

We hope you will take the opportunity to tell Georgia DOT what you think. Listed below are several ways to comment on the project. Your comments are important to us and, should you provide comments by one of the methods noted below, we will respond to you in writing usually within 30 days of the close of the comment period. All comments will become part of the project's official record.

While you are attending the open house, you can **provide your comments today** by filling out the comment card provided with this handout and dropping it in the comment box or you may choose to provide your verbal comments to the court reporter who will transcribe your comments.

You can also **provide your comments by Friday, March 18, 2016** by using any of the following methods:

- Online at [www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Public/PublicOutreach](http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Public/PublicOutreach).
  1. From the menu, select the county in which the proposed project is located and click *Go*;
  2. Then select *I-985 New Interchange North of State Route 13 Crossover Near Martin Road*;
  3. Lastly, click *Comment* and follow the instructions to leave your comments.
- Mail in your comment card to Mr. Eric Duff, Georgia Department of Transportation, 600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.
- Email your comment to: [ProjectComments@dot.ga.gov](mailto:ProjectComments@dot.ga.gov). This is a general mailbox so be sure to include the County, PI Number 0000425 and meeting date in the Subject line so that the email gets to the right project team.

The project displays and plans will be available for review for ten days after this open house at the website noted above. Hardcopies will also be available at the Georgia DOT District One Gainesville Office located at 2505 Athens Highway SE in Gainesville, Georgia. Following the ten-day public comment period, a copy of all comments received will be available by request at the Atlanta address listed above.

Again, thank you for attending this open house. If you should have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact the project manager, Mr. Charles Robinson, at (404) 631-1439 or the environmental analyst, Mr. Paul Alimia, at (404) 631-1353 of the Office of Environmental Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Duff / mon".

Eric Duff  
State Environmental Administrator  
Georgia Department of Transportation

**Why We Are Here:** The purpose of the proposed projects is to provide a direct connection between I-985 and the surrounding growing industrial areas and to provide added capacity along Martin Road between SR 13/Falcon Parkway and SR 53/Mundy Mill Road. The projects are needed to provide direct access to the existing and anticipated future development along SR 13/Falcon Parkway, Thurmon Tanner Parkway, H.F. Reed Industrial Parkway and McEver Road and to improve traffic flow on Martin Road. It should be noted that the need to widen Martin Road only emerges due to construction of the proposed interchange. Therefore, the widening of Martin Road has been included as part of the Environmental Assessment. Though not a primary need, the proposed interchange project would also have the benefit of improving traffic flow at the adjacent I-985 interchanges at SR 53/Mundy Mill Road and Spout Springs Road which are currently utilized to reach the industrial area. The new interchange would also provide the associated benefits of enhanced emergency response and coverage and enhanced economic development opportunities.

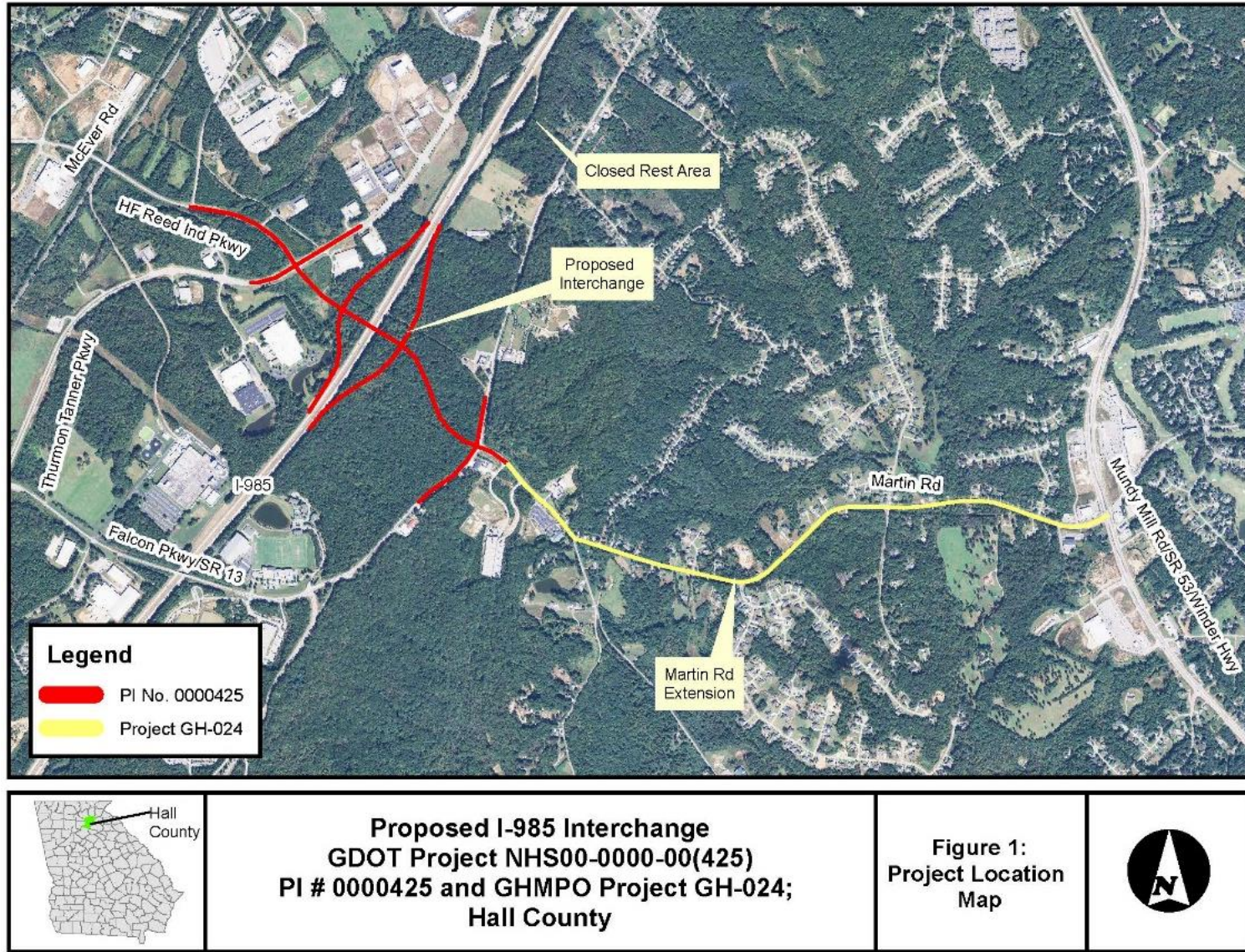
**Project Description:** Proposed project **P.I. No. 0000425** would provide a new diamond interchange on I-985 near Martin Road between Exit 12 (Spout Springs Road/Flowery Branch) and Exit 16 (Mundy Mill Road/SR 53/Oakwood), approximately 0.75 mile north of the SR 13/Falcon Parkway overpass. The interchange would connect Martin Road on the east with H.F. Reed Industrial Parkway on the west via a new location, four-lane divided roadway (Martin Road Extension). Project GH-024 would widen Martin Road from SR 13/Falcon Parkway to SR 53/Mundy Mill Road from the existing two lane section to a four lane section. The proposed typical section of Martin Road Extension and the widened Martin Road would consist of 12-foot travel lanes (two lanes in each direction), a variable width (24 feet to 32 feet) raised median, and 12-foot urban shoulders with curb, gutter and sidewalk.

**Project GH-024** is included in the current Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Program. The current schedule shows preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction scheduled to begin in 2025, 2027, and 2032, respectively. However, as noted above, the need to widen Martin Road emerges due to the construction of the proposed interchange (i.e. traffic on Martin Road is expected to increase once the new interchange is constructed and open to traffic). Because the need for GH-024 is related to GDOT P.I. 0000425, both projects were required to be evaluated together in the Environmental Assessment. To assess the potential environmental impacts resulting from the widening of Martin Road, a conceptual alignment was developed, which consisted of the widening of Martin Road that ties in with the proposed interchange project on the west and the existing five-lane section at SR 53/Mundy Mill Road on the east. It should be noted that the conceptual layout displayed at tonight's meeting was developed based on a number of constraints. These constraints include:

- Continuing the typical section of Martin Road Extension (proposed section of Martin Road to be located west of SR 13/Falcon Parkway) which includes four, 12-foot travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) with a variable width raised median (12 – 32 feet), 12-foot urban shoulders with curb and gutter, 4-foot bike lanes, and 5-foot sidewalk.
- Maintaining the existing edge of pavement in the area of the Bailey Farm, a National Register of Historic Places eligible resource.
- Keeping all proposed improvements within the area studied for archaeological resources.
- Avoiding major impacts to existing utilities.
- Minimizing displacements where possible.

Please note that the conceptual alignment displayed at tonight's meeting is very preliminary. The primary purpose of the conceptual layout was to assess the potential environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the widening of Martin Road to four lanes. Because of this, the elements of the proposed widening of Martin Road and the potential resulting impacts will likely change once preliminary design begins in 2025.

**Project Location Map:**



## Summary of Environmental Study

In compliance with the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, the Georgia Department of Transportation has conducted an assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects for the proposed I-985 New Interchange North of State Route 13 Crossover Near Martin Road (PI 0000425) and the widening of Martin Road from SR 13/Falcon Parkway to SR 53/Mundy Mill Road (GH-024). The following information gives a summary of the environmental document.

As a result of the construction of PI 0000425, **no** residential units and **no** businesses would be displaced. As a result of the construction of GH-024, **15** residential units and **no** businesses would potentially be displaced by the proposed project. However, owners would be compensated for these losses. Please see the right-of-way acquisition statement on the next page for more information.

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, the proposed projects were surveyed for wetland and stream involvement. Among both PI 0000425 and GH-024 combined, **14** jurisdictional wetlands and **28** jurisdictional streams were identified within the projects' area of potential effect (APE). For PI 0000425, it is estimated that **0.67** acre of wetlands and **997** linear feet of streams would be impacted by the proposed project. For GH-024, it is estimated that **zero** acre of wetlands and **221** linear feet of streams would be impacted by the proposed project.

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the proposed projects were surveyed for floodplain involvement. The proposed projects would not significantly encroach upon floodplain or floodways within the project area. The projects would not have an adverse effect on water quality within the project corridor. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit *would be* required for this project.

The proposed projects would not exceed state and federal air quality standards, and they are consistent with the State Implementation Plan for the attainment of clean air quality in the state.

For PI 0000425, the construction of the project would result in a **4.1 dBA** decibel increase in traffic generated noise by the design year 2040, and **no** houses would approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria. For GH-024, the construction of the project would result in a **1.7 dBA** decibel increase in traffic generated noise by the design year 2040, and **one** house would exceed the noise abatement criteria. *No feasible noise abatement measures were identified for this house.*

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the projects have been surveyed for existing and eligible National Register properties. For PI 0000425, no eligible historic or archaeological resources were located within the project's area of potential environmental effect. For GH-024, **one** eligible historic resource was found to be located within the project's area of potential environmental effect.

The proposed projects *would* affect threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species. While **no** protected species were observed, habitat was identified for **three** protected bat species. Special provisions will be implemented during project construction in an effort to protect bat species.

In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the criteria of 7 CFR, Part 658 have been applied to determine the project's effects on farmland. Based on the assessment of these effects, the projects *would involve farmland* and no additional alternates need to be examined.

The proposed projects have been surveyed for potential sites where contaminated soil and/or water from leaking underground storage tanks may exist. The **five** potential sites that were identified were further investigated by the GDOT Office of Materials and Testing. None of the sites identified had recognized environmental concerns.

Copies of the environmental document are available at this hearing for your review or by request to the Atlanta office on the first page of this handout.

## Right-Of-Way Acquisition

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has the responsibility, once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing property and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. When purchasing property, we desire to pay full market value for the necessary property. This value will be established by using qualified real estate appraisers who will prepare, for GDOT's use, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

In making an appraisal, the appraiser will contact each property owner and arrange a convenient time to make an on-site inspection of the property with him or her. After completion of the appraisal, the right-of-way appraisal staff will review and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that all things relating to value have been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. When only a part of the property is needed, we will purchase that part plus pay for loss of value, if any, to the remaining property. In all cases, when GDOT purchases property, we will make additional payments to property owners for the cost of transferring ownership to GDOT. These costs generally include transfer taxes, deed-recording fees, mortgage pre-payment penalties and the pro-rata share of city or county taxes.

Georgia DOT is aware of the problems experienced by individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations when they are required to move. It is our commitment that no family or individual will be required to relocate until comparable decent, safe and sanitary housing is available or is provided for those occupants.

Additionally, GDOT will provide assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations in relocating to other sites and will encourage them to remain in the community.

The information pamphlet "*What Happens When Your Property is Needed for a Transportation Facility*" is available at the greeter's table. This booklet outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The brochure also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments.

Results of the field inspection by GDOT personnel have revealed that there would be fifteen residences and no businesses that would be required to relocate.

It is important to remember that GDOT is committed to the principle that no one will be required to relocate until housing is available, or, if there is no housing available, until provisions have been made by GDOT to provide housing. It is also important to remember that all displacees will be given sufficient advance notice of GDOT's intention to purchase any property in order to allow sufficient time in which to relocate.

The GDOT District One Office, located in Gainesville, Georgia, (770) 531-5784 will be in charge of acquiring the necessary right-of-way for this project.



### Comment Card

Please print responses.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you support **GDOT Project P.I. 0000425** (proposed interchange with I-985)? (check your response)

- For**
- Against**
- Conditional**
- Uncommitted**

General Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you support **Gainesville-Hall MPO Project GH-024** (proposed widening of Martin Road)? (check your response)

- For**
- Against**
- Conditional**
- Uncommitted**

General Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about this Open House? (check)  **Newspaper**  **Signs**  **GDOT Website**  **Radio**

**Word of Mouth**  **Social Media**  **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

Was the location of the Open House convenient for you to attend?  **Yes**  **No**

If no, please suggest a general location that is more convenient to your community.

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the time of the meeting convenient for you to attend?  **Yes**  **No**

If no, please suggest a time frame that is more convenient for you.

\_\_\_\_\_

Were your questions answered by GDOT personnel?  **Yes**  **No**

Do you understand the project after attending this meeting?  **Yes**  **No**

Please share your suggestions on improving the ways GDOT conducts Open Houses:

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Mail to:  
 Mr. Eric Duff, State Environmental Administrator  
 Georgia Department of Transportation  
 600 West Peachtree Street, NW – 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30308  
 Email to: ProjectComments@dot.ga.gov