

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

I-285 Ramps At CR 205/Riverside Drive

Fulton County

PI No. 0010925

February 2015

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS TABLE

PI#: 0010925, County: Fulton

Date Updated: 12/19/2014 | Stage: CE Approval

Transmittal Date for Plans Reviewed by OES (if applicable): 9/12/2014

Review
If no commitments, NEPA may approve for all.

The GDOT project manager (PM) asserts that these commitments are feasible.
GDOT PM: _____
Signature/Date: _____

The engineer of record (EOR) asserts that plans incorporate or will incorporate commitments if applicable.
EOR SHAMIR POWDEL
Signature/Date Shamir Powdel / 12/19/14

Air/Noise: _____ Arch: _____
Eco: _____ Hist: _____
NEPA: _____

A. Resources to be Delineated on the Plans and/or Listed in the Environmental Resource Impact Table (ERIT)

Resource Name	Permitted Construction Activity	Refer to	Name and Date of Report or Transmittal	Correctly Shown?		
				Plan Sheet	ERIT	
A-1	Intermittent Stream (IS) 1	No Impact	C-1	Ecology Report April 4, 2014	Yes	Yes
A-2	IS 1 Buffer	No Impact	C-1	Ecology Report April 4, 2014	Yes	Yes
A-3	Garrison House	Temporary easement approximately 138 feet long and 12 feet wide, tapering to approximately 6 feet wide at the northern property boundary, Removal of granite curbing and replacement of curbing with concrete. Driveway Relocation.	C-1, C-2	May 2014 History Assessment of Effect Report	"	"
A-4	Migratory Birds	Construction activities on the Riverside Drive bridge over Interstate 285 (I-285), such that harm to migratory birds is avoided.	B-1	SP 107.23G March 14, 2014 and April 4, 2014 Ecology Report	"	"

B. Special Provisions (Attach all special provisions with transmittal letters to the commitments table, if available)

Special Provision	Purpose	Est. Cost	SP's Latest Date	
B-1	SP 107.23.G	For the protection of migratory birds and listed species	Negligible	March 14, 2014

C. ERIT Comments and Design Features (Description: For ERIT Comments, provide exact wording for the comments section of the ERIT)

ERIT Comment or Design Feature	Description	Est. Cost	Correctly Shown?	
C-1	ERIT Comment	The contractor shall ensure that no construction-related activities (such as the use of easements, staging, construction, vehicular use, borrow or waste activities, sediment basins, and trailer placement), other than those shown on the approved plans, occur within the boundary of this resource.	\$0	Yes
C-2	ERIT Comment	The American Holly located on the historic Garrison House property is delineated on the construction plans. The contractor shall only prune limbs necessary for relocation of the driveway. The contractor shall ensure this shrub is preserved during construction. A protective zone marked with protective orange barrier fencing will be placed around the American Holly during construction and the contractor shall ensure that no construction-related activities or access occur beyond this orange barrier fencing.	Negligible	Yes
C-3	Design Feature	For noise abatement: Noise walls along the Westbound I-285 off-ramp will be replaced along parcel 7.	\$57,540	Yes
C-4	Design Feature	For noise abatement: Noise walls along the Eastbound I-285 off-ramp will be	\$28,473.	Yes

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		replaced along parcel 3.		
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D. Necessary Permits, Buffer Variances and Mitigation Credits

<i>Permit, Variance, etc.</i>		<i>Add'l Info (permit expiration date, number of credits needed, etc...)</i>	<i>Est. Cost</i>	<i>Acquired?</i>
D-1	Notice of Intent (NOI) for NPDES	The Office of Bidding Administration and Construction Contractor will submit a NOI to the NPDES General Permit following award of the contract but prior to construction.	Negligible	Will be acquired following letting
D-2	MS4	The project area is to be studied for the feasibility of BMPs. If feasible, Georgia DOT and the Construction Contractor will submit the permit following award of the contract but prior to construction.	Negligible	If determined feasible, will be acquired following letting

E. Other Commitments or Requirements (Status: Pre- and Post – Complete or Incomplete; During – Signature Req'd)

<i>Pre-, During, or Post</i>		<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Responsible party</i>	<i>Est. Cost</i>	<i>Status</i>
E-1	During	Any bridge closure is restricted to weekend closure. It will be the responsibility of the Contractor to coordinate with the local governments, school board, and emergency services personnel for any proposed weekend bridge closure and detours.	GDOT Innovative Delivery/Design-Build Contractor	Negligible	Incomplete

<i>Total Estimated Cost</i>	\$86,013
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If Project is Complete or Under Construction, Area or Construction Engineer affirms that all Special Provisions, Plan Notes and During Construction Commitments were or are being adhered to during the project's construction.

Please Print Name and Title: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____ Please provide an explanation if unable to sign.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE OF GEORGIA

Categorical Exclusion

I. General Information

P.I. No. 0010925
County Fulton
STIP/TIP No. AR-118-2015
Funded Years Right-of-Way: LUMP 2015; Construction: LUMP 2015
Funding Codes ROW- MS30F CST-MS30F
Project Name I-285 Ramps @ County Road (CR) 205/Riverside Drive
Project Limits The I-285 on and off ramps at Riverside Drive, the ramp termini along Riverside Drive and along Riverside Drive from approximately Fair Oaks Manor, NW to Heards Ferry Road, approximately 0.5 mile in length.

II. Need and Purpose (See Attachment 1)

III. Project Description

Existing Facility: The proposed project is located on Riverside Drive at the interchange with I-285 in Fulton County, Georgia and is within the city limits of Sandy Springs. The current roadway configuration of Riverside Drive consists of one, 12 foot wide lane in each direction, a 10 foot wide grassed outside shoulder on each side, and traffic signals at the I-285 on and off ramp termini. There are no left turn lanes at the intersections with the I-285 entrance ramps.

The existing bridge consists of one, 12 foot wide lane in each direction, one northbound and one southbound.

The eastbound and westbound I-285 off ramps each consist of a single, 16 foot lane.

There are no existing sidewalks approaching the bridge; however, there are existing five foot wide sidewalks on the bridge itself (both sides). The existing right-of-way (ROW) along Riverside Drive varies from 50 to 100 feet.

Proposed Project: The project consists of safety improvements to the existing interchange of I-285 at Riverside Drive. The project would convert the two existing signalized intersections at each ramp terminal at Riverside Drive with a single lane roundabout.

Each approach to the roundabout would be widened to two lanes, with one lane entering the roundabout and the other serving as a right turn lane. The outside shoulders would remain 10 feet. Construction activity on Riverside Drive would extend approximately 450 feet to the north from the westbound on ramp to I-285 and approximately 325 feet to the south from the

eastbound exit ramp. The proposed project would require approximately 0.03 acre of temporary easement, 0.5 acre of permanent easement and 0.07 acre of additional ROW.

A five-foot wide sidewalk would be added to both sides of the roadway along Riverside Driveway within the limits of the project. The project is approximately 0.5 mile in length.

The project would also include routine rehabilitation of the existing bridge. This work includes replacement of the joints at bent 2 and abutments 1 and 5. All construction joints would be resealed and the bridge deck would be sealed with a two-part polymer overlay. Concrete spalling (areas of concrete that have broken away from the bridge and fallen to the ground) would be repaired on bents 3 & 4 and abutment 5.

IV. Class of Action – Categorical Exclusion (CE)

A. Actions Requiring Concurrences Prior to CE Approval (See Correspondence, Attachment 2)	Yes	N/A	If Yes, Date of Concurrence
Section 106/Assessment of Effects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	June 24, 2014
Section 106/Memorandum of Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Draft Individual Section 4(f) Evaluation (<i>Final submitted with CE</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>De Minimis</i> Acknowledgment/Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Protected Species/No Effect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	April 22, 2014
Protected Species/Section 7 Consultation with USFWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Protected Species/Section 7 Consultation with NMFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Essential Fish Habitat Coordination with NMFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
FWCA/USFWS Coordination for Longitudinal Stream Encroachments, Existing Culvert Extensions (+100 feet), or New Culvert Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PM _{2.5} Interagency Concurrence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	April 9, 2014
USCG Navigable Water Determination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

B. Public Involvement
A public hearing open house is not required. A public information open house was held on March 25, 2014 at Sandy Springs City Hall from 6 pm to 8 pm. The results of this information meeting are contained in Attachment 1 Effects Evaluation and Attachment 4 Public Information Open House Materials.

V. Effects Evaluation

The effects evaluation form categories are defined as follows:

1. Involvement: A resource is affected by the proposed project (e.g., the project impacts a wetland).
2. No Involvement: A resource is within the Area of Potential Effect, but the project would not affect the resource (e.g., a wetland is located in the project area but is not impacted by the project).
3. None: The resource does not exist within the Area of Potential Effect (e.g., no wetlands are located in the project area).

A. Social Environment	Involvement	No Involvement	None	See Attachment
1. Land Use Changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
2. Community Impacts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
3. Relocation Potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Churches and Institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
5. Parks/Recreation Areas/Wildlife Refuges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. Title VI/E.O. 12898	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Public Controversy Potential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
8. Public Involvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 and 4
9. Economic Impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
10. Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

B. Cultural Environment	Involvement	No Involvement	None	See Attachment
1. Historic Sites	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 and 2
2. Archaeological Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2

C. Natural Environment	Involvement	No Involvement	None	See Attachment
1. Waters of the U.S./State Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1, 2 and 3
2. Water Quality/303(d) List	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
3. Wild and Scenic Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Essential Fish Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. Farmlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Protected Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1, 2 and 3
8. Invasive Species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 and 3
9. Wildlife and Habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 and 3
10. Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green Sheet

D. Physical Environment	Involvement	No Involvement	None	See Attachment
1. Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1, 2 and 3
2. Air	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1, 2 and 3
3. Energy/Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Construction/Utilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
5. UST's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. Hazardous Waste Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

E. Permits/Variations/Commitments Required	Yes	No	See Attachment
1. U.S. Coast Guard Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Forest Service/Corps Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. CWA Section 404 Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4. Tennessee Valley Authority Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. Buffer Variance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. Coastal Zone Management Coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. NPDES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
8. Cemetery Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
9. Other Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1
10. Other Commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Commitments Table

F. Section 4(f) Applicability	Yes	No	See Attachment
1. <i>De Minimis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Programmatic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1
4. Section 6(f) Applicability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Prepared By:



Bonnie L. Bynum
NEPA & Natural Resources Dpt. Mgr.
ARCADIS

12-30-14
Date

Reviewed By:



Robin Stevens
Senior NEPA Specialist
ARCADIS

12-30-14
Date

Concurred By:



Hiral Patel, P.E.
State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation

1-6-15
Date

Approved By:



Rodney N. Barry, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

2-3-15
Date

Attachments appear in the following order:

1. Effects Evaluation
2. Correspondence
3. Report Coordination
4. Public Information Open House Materials

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
ATTACHMENT 1 – EFFECTS EVALUATION
PI NO. 0010925
FULTON COUNTY

II. Need and Purpose

In Georgia, nearly a third of fatal crashes occur at intersections, making intersection safety a focus of operational projects. This proposed Design-Build project would enhance safety at the intersections of Riverside Drive and Interstate 285 (I-285) ramps in Fulton County, GA. The project is needed because of the high number of crashes, injuries, and property damage at this intersection. The purpose of this project is to reduce the frequency of crashes and improve driving safety at this interchange. It should be noted that this interchange is subject to further alteration under improvements proposed as part of **revive285 top end**, which may widen or even replace the bridge. However, the proposed installation of roundabouts at this interchange would operate effectively through the design year 2035, with or without any improvements proposed under the long-range **revive285 top end** project.

Safety

The most recent five years of historical crash data show that all of the study area intersections [I-285 eastbound ramps, I-285 westbound ramps, and Heard's Ferry Road (the first intersection south of the interchange)] have experienced crash rates greater than the statewide average crash rates for comparable intersections. The crashes that occur at these intersections not only result in injuries and property damage, but also add nonrecurring congestion to the Riverside Drive corridor, as well as to I-285. As shown in Table 1, between 2008 and 2012, 73 crashes occurred at the intersections of Riverside Drive and I-285 ramps, of which 16 accidents caused injuries. Sixty-seven percent of the accidents were rear-end collisions, accounting for 69 percent of the injuries. This type of incident is most prevalent at signalized intersections.

Table 1. Study Area Intersection Crash Rates vs. Statewide Average Intersection Crash Rates

Riverside Drive		2008 – 2012*	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
		Statewide Average	Actual Crashes				
Eastbound Ramp Intersection	Total	6.1	6	5	7	4	9
	Fatality	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
	Injury	1.4	1	3	3	1	2
	PDO	4.7	5	2	4	3	7
Westbound Ramp Intersection**	Total	10.0	12	10	6	9	5
	Fatality	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
	Injury	2.1	1	0	1	2	2
	PDO	7.9	11	10	5	7	3
Heard's Ferry Road	Total	7.6	1	3	11	11	9
	Fatality	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
	Injury	1.6	0	0	1	2	1
	PDO	6.0	1	3	10	9	8

Source: GDOT Crash Database (2008 – 2012)

PDO- Property Damage Only

*2008 statewide averages were used for years 2009 – 2012; **This intersection was converted from a stop-controlled intersection to a signalized intersection in 2011.

Red boxes indicate actual crash rates greater than or equal to statewide average crash rates.

Roundabouts have been identified by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as one of the proven safety countermeasures in addressing crashes at intersections. The installation of roundabouts at existing signalized intersections has resulted in a reduction in crash frequency. Roundabouts are generally navigated at slower a speed, which correlates with lower impact and less severe crashes. Roundabouts also present fewer conflict points than traditional intersections resulting in fewer collisions.

Studies have shown that the installation of a roundabout at the intersections of Riverside Drive with the I-285 ramp termini could result in a 48 percent reduction in all crash types, including fatal crashes, injury crashes, and property damage only crashes, as demonstrated in tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2. Riverside Drive and I-285 Westbound Ramp Intersection Predicted Crash Rates and Percentage of Crash Reduction (per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled)

Crash Type	Open Year (2015)			Design Year (2035)		
	No-Build	Build	Percent Reduction	No-Build	Build	Percent Reduction
Total Predicted Crashes	9.59	4.99	48%	10.90	5.67	48%
Predicted Injury Crashes	3.08	1.60	48%	3.53	1.84	48%
Predicted PDO Crashes	6.51	3.39	48%	7.37	3.83	48%

Table 3. Riverside Drive and I-285 Eastbound Ramp Intersection Predicted Crash Rates and Percentage of Crash Reduction (per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled)

Crash Type	Open Year (2015)			Design Year (2035)		
	No-Build	Build	Percent Reduction	No-Build	Build	Percent Reduction
Total Predicted Crashes	6.40	3.33	48%	7.27	3.78	48%
Predicted Injury Crashes	1.94	1.01	48%	2.21	1.15	48%
Predicted PDO Crashes	4.47	2.32	48%	5.06	2.63	48%

In addition, traffic queuing analysis for this project showed that the maximum length of the I-285 eastbound off-ramp was approximately 3,700 feet for the afternoon peak hours in 2012. This exceeds the ramp storage length of approximately 1,850 feet. The traffic queuing analysis projects that this maximum queue length would be reduced to approximately 430 feet or less in length through the design year (2035) if the roundabout project is implemented. It should be noted that while this improvement in queuing would occur on the eastbound I-285 off-ramp, additional queuing is expected to occur on the westbound off-ramp. The westbound ramp queues would only affect traffic queued during the afternoon peak hour. However, in this area along I-285 at the exit ramp to Riverside Drive, there is better sight distance for drivers to react to the queue and would therefore not affect traffic for most of the day.

The Level of Service (LOS) at project area intersections was analyzed to compare Build and No-Build conditions, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Intersection Delay and Level of Service:

Intersection	AM Peak					PM Peak				
	Existing Year (2012)	Open Year (2015)		Design Year (2035)		Existing Year (2012)	Open Year (2015)		Design Year (2035)	
		No-Build	Build	No-Build	Build		No-Build	Build	No-Build	Build
I-285 Eastbound Ramps	68.2 (LOS E)	76.4 (LOS E)	10.4 (LOS B)	135.7 (LOS F)	11.5 (LOS B)	221.1 (LOS F)	233.6 (LOS F)	23.2 (LOS C)	292.8 (LOS F)	44.2 (LOS D)
I-285 Westbound Ramps	81.5 (LOS F)	95.2 (LOS F)	7.3 (LOS A)	195.5 (LOS F)	8.1 (LOS A)	101.2 (LOS F)	111.2 (LOS F)	12.1 (LOS B)	210.9 (LOS F)	25.7 (LOS C)
Heards Ferry Road*	158.4 (LOS F)	163.5 (LOS F)	169.7 (LOS F)	211.5 (LOS F)	219.5 (LOS F)	153.8 (LOS F)	160.0 (LOS F)	162.9 (LOS F)	207.2 (LOS F)	209.4 (LOS F)

*This intersection has been included due to its close proximity to the interchange and the effects this intersection has on Riverside Drive at I-285

During the p.m. peak hour, the eastbound ramps intersection is expected to operate at LOS C in the open year and at LOS D in the design year. The delay improvements are primarily due to the fact that the roundabout design greatly improves operations for the heavy eastbound off-ramp left-turn movement.

Under roundabout build conditions, the westbound ramps intersection would improve to LOS A during the a.m. peak period for both the open year and the design year. During the p.m. peak period, this intersection would improve to LOS B in the open year 2015 and to LOS C in the design year 2035. However, as SIDRA (name of the modeling software used) cannot account for impacts from adjacent intersections, queuing from the Heards Ferry Road intersection could result in slightly higher delays.

Under roundabout build conditions, the Heards Ferry Road intersection is expected to remain at an LOS F in all scenarios. Although the Heards Ferry Road traffic signal would no longer be tied to the ramp intersections in the roundabout build scenario, the signal timing at this intersection is expected to remain at its current timing in future years. Therefore, while the ramp intersections are expected to operate more efficiently in this alternative, the Heards Ferry Road intersection acts as a bottleneck for the p.m. peak heavy northbound traffic and no additional capacity is to be added to the corridor. To improve the LOS at Heards Ferry Road, the City of Sandy Springs would need to initiate an improvement. The roundabout project does not cause the failing LOS; this is a result of capacity along Riverside Drive and Heards Ferry Road. The roundabout project is intended to improve crash frequency and severity at Riverside Drive and I-285 interstate ramps. The purpose of this project is not to add capacity.

V. Effects Evaluation

A. Social Environment

1. Land Use Changes

Existing land use within the project area is comprised of mainly residential use. Little to no undeveloped land exists in the project limits with the exception of wooded right-of-way (ROW) associated with the interchange ramps of I-285 or land immediately adjacent to Riverside Drive.

Approximately 0.03 acre of temporary easement, 0.5 acre of permanent easement and 0.07 acre of additional ROW would be required for the proposed project. The overall amount of required ROW would be minor regardless of type and would convert a minor amount of residential land to roadway or road ROW for the construction of the roundabouts at the I-285/Riverside Drive Interchange.

2. Community Impacts

The proposed project is anticipated to have a beneficial impact on the community. Re-construction of the interchange at I-285 and Riverside Drive would introduce roundabouts that are landscaped, lighted, and aesthetically pleasing within the only residential interchange along the I-285 corridor. The roundabouts should enhance safety through the residential areas at the interchange through accident reduction. The project would also increase sidewalks in the project limits, which would increase pedestrian mobility. The project would not change access through the corridor and would require a very minor amount of ROW. The project would not change the residential feel of the project area.

4. Churches and Institutions

One church, Church of St. Andrew Presbyterian and its associated school, the Tabula Rasa School, are located at 5855 Riverside Drive NW, Atlanta, GA 30327. The church is located approximately 325-350 feet south of the interchange in close proximity to the I-285 eastbound on ramp from Riverside Drive. The proposed project would have no impact to the church building, its school, parking areas, or access.

Riverwood International Academy, 5900 Heards Ferry Road NW, and Heards Ferry Elementary School, 1050 Heards Ferry Road, both in Sandy Springs, are located less than one mile from the project area. There would be no construction activities within the two schools. Should the bridge be closed during the school year and/or school day, the Contractor will coordinate any closure and detour with the local governments, school board, and emergency services personnel.

7. Public Controversy Potential

The proposed project should be assumed to have some level of public controversy. This seems to be limited to the immediate residents and neighborhoods along Riverside Drive. The controversy potential was observed during the March 25, 2014 PIOH and through written comments and emails by citizens to GDOT and the City of Sandy Springs. The controversy potential consists of the local residents perceiving this safety improvement as adding capacity to Riverside Drive and attracting additional traffic; doubting that roundabouts would work; that the residents are satisfied with the current signal controlled intersections; and that there is perception that this improvement is being made to accommodate commuters whom use Riverside Drive as a cut-through route to access East Cobb County. This is further discussed in Section V.A.8. below.

8. Public Involvement

A public information open house (PIOH) and detour meeting was held by GDOT in coordination with the City of Sandy Springs on March 25, 2014 between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Sandy Springs City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to present the proposed action to the public. Outreach efforts consisted of:

- Meeting announcement signs placed at the ramp termini of Riverside Drive and I-285, intersections of Heards Ferry Road and Riverside Drive, and Riverside Drive at Mount Vernon;

- The City of Sandy Springs advertised the meeting in their local paper “*The Neighbor*” and the City’s website;
- Television morning and evening news announcement; and
- A notification on the **revive285 top end** project website.

Approximately 60 people attended the meeting. Of the 31 comments received at the meeting and during the 10-day comment period, six comments were in favor of the project, one was conditionally in favor of the project, five were uncommitted and 19 were against the project. During the open house, several attendees spoke out against the project. These verbal comments consisted of doubt that roundabouts would work better than the current signalized intersections, concern that traffic would queue out on the mainline I-285, and that traffic trying to make right or left turns from the exit ramps would not get a break in traffic flow during peak hours from the cars traveling through the roundabout. A comment response letter was distributed on September 4, 2014.

GDOT received an additional 83 comments via email. Of these additional comments, eight were in support of the project, three were uncommitted, and 72 were opposed. These additional comments carried common themes of perception that the project would add capacity and bring additional traffic, that the project was being proposed to assist Cobb County commuters, the public inability to navigate roundabouts, that the project would bring more traffic through neighborhood streets and concern that residents would not be able to safely turn out of neighborhoods. To ensure that all of the comments received were responded to, an additional response letter was developed. This additional letter included the information contained within the original September 4, 2014 response letter, as well as any new comments that were not previously addressed.

The handout material, all comments received and the response letters to citizens has been included in Attachment 4.

Based on public feedback given after the March PIOH, the City of Sandy Springs requested a presentation of the proposed project. During the May 2014 City Council meeting, which was open to the public, representatives of GDOT and its consultant presented the project. Council members asked questions during the meeting, but no official comment on the project was provided.

Additionally, GDOT and its consultant attended a meeting with City of Sandy Springs Council Member Graham McDonald, District 3, on October 9, 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the purpose of the roundabouts and explain to the Council Member that the project would not be adding additional capacity to Riverside Drive because no additional travel lanes or bridge widening would be occurring. GDOT shared the traffic volume development methodology and results. GDOT left the meeting feeling that the Council Member was better informed about the need and purpose of the project, understood the project was intended to improve safety and decrease the severity of incidents, and that it would not be adding capacity.

B. Cultural Environment

1. Historic Sites

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and amendments thereto, the proposed project corridor has been surveyed for archaeological and historic resources, especially those on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The survey boundary and methodology were established using the

Georgia DOT/FHWA Cultural Resource Survey Guidelines. These guidelines were established as a result of past interaction with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and his staff and were agreed upon by FHWA and the SHPO.

Based on the nature and the scope of the undertaking, the guidance in the *GDOT/FHWA Cultural Resources Survey Guidelines*, and past experience with similar projects, the area of potential effects (APE) for the proposed project consists of the proposed ROW and viewshed of the proposed project, within which all construction and ground-disturbing activity would be confined. No potential for indirect effects outside of this APE exists.

In addition to the Georgia SHPO, other potential consulting parties were identified and invited to participate in the Section 106 process by a Notification dated October 23, 2013. These parties included the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Sandy Springs Historic Community Foundation, the Fulton County Department of Environmental and Community Services, and the Fulton County Commission. Responses to the invitation to become a consulting party in the Section 106 process were received from the Georgia SHPO in a letter dated November 1, 2013 (see Attachment 2). No other responses were received.

As a result of the survey efforts, one historic property, the Garrison House, and no archeological sites considered eligible NRHP resources were identified within the proposed project's APE (see Figure 2, Cultural Resources Location Map).

The NRHP boundary corresponds to the legal property boundary, and contains approximately 1.99 acres. The boundary contains all NRHP qualifying characteristics and features of the property and includes the house and the immediate surroundings.

The Historic Resources Survey Report was submitted to the FHWA and SHPO on March 19, 2014. In accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(c)(2), the SHPO concurred that the Garrison House is eligible for listing in the NRHP on April 4, 2014 (see Attachment 2).

A finding of No Adverse Effect was determined for the Garrison House (see SHPO concurrence letter dated June 24, 2014, Attachment 2). In the area of the resource, project implementation would consist of the conversion of the existing signalized intersection of Riverside Drive at the I-285 eastbound on- and off-ramps to a single-lane roundabout with each approach to the roundabout widened to two lanes with one lane entering the roundabout and the other lane serving as a right-turn lane. The existing edge of pavement of Riverside Drive in front of the Garrison House would be maintained and all widening required to implement the proposed project would occur on the opposite (east) side of the roadway. The limits of construction for the proposed project would extend approximately 325 feet south of the I-285 eastbound off-ramp and a 5-foot sidewalk would be added to both sides of the roadway along Riverside Drive within the project limits. The proposed sidewalk on the west side of Riverside Drive would be constructed within existing ROW and inside the NRHP boundary of the resource.

While no ROW would be required from within the NRHP boundary of the resource in order to implement the proposed project, an area of temporary easement approximately 138 feet long and 12 feet wide, tapering to approximately 6 feet wide at the northern property boundary, would be required within the NRHP boundary in order to create a level shoulder surface to construct the proposed sidewalk and to tie the area of the sidewalk into the existing ground surface with a 4:1 shoulder slope.

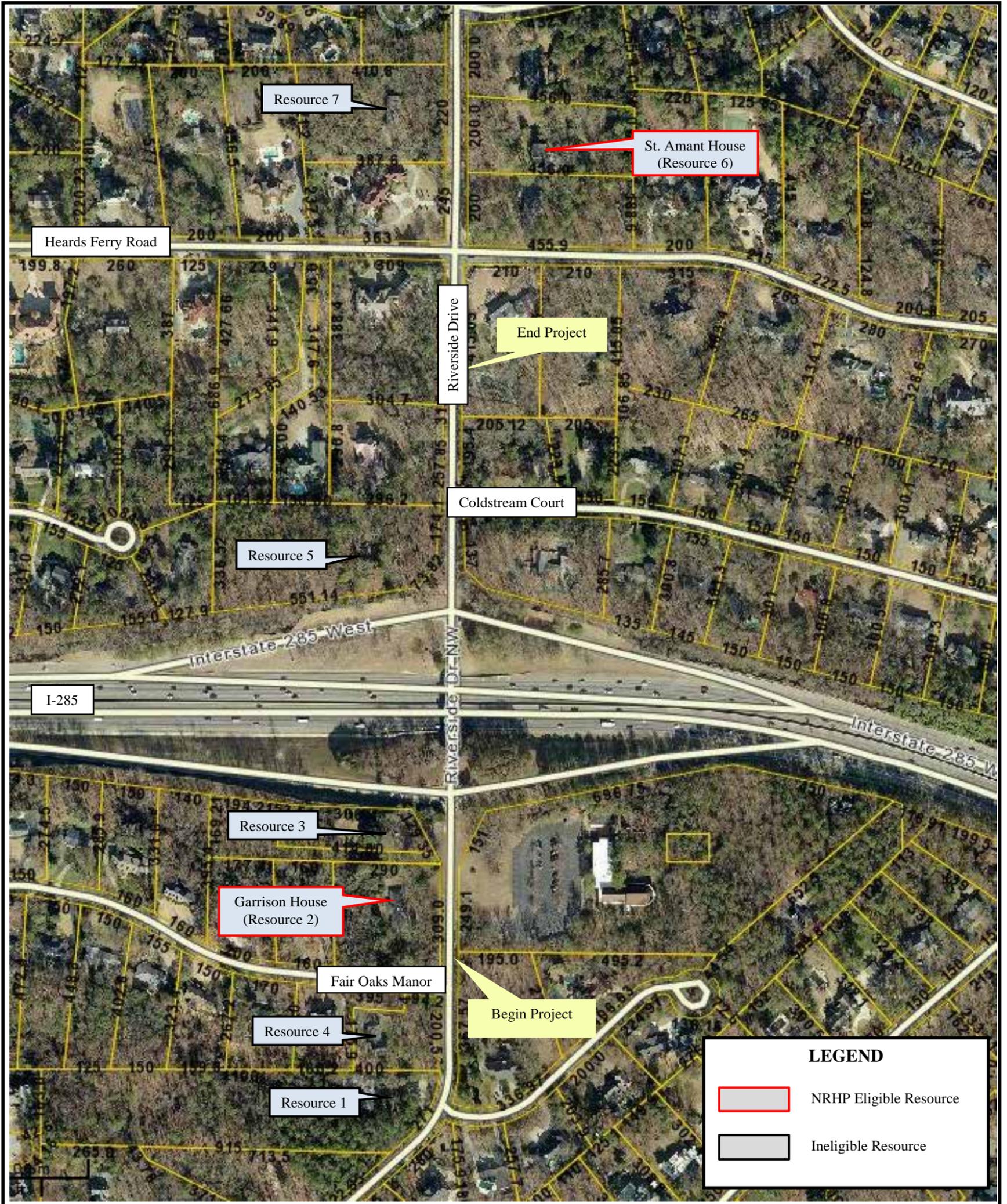


FIGURE 2
Cultural Resource Location Map

Interstate 285 Ramps at Riverside Drive, Fulton County
 P.I. No. 0010925
 HP No. 131031-001



Not to Scale

Source: Fulton County Tax Assessor

With the exception of the trees, large shrub, and the volunteer growth located along the northern border of the NRHP boundary, the only vegetation located within the existing ROW and the area of proposed temporary easement within the project limits is grass. An American holly located at the northern border of the property has grown to the size of a tree and is located west of the sidewalk alignment. The American holly is not a NRHP qualifying characteristic or feature of the resource, but measures have been incorporated into the design of the project to ensure that it is mostly retained and protected, as it is an important part of the vegetative screen between the resource and the proposed roundabout and driveway realignment north of the resource. Some pruning of the tree's limbs would be required.

The driveway to the house located immediately north of the Garrison House currently meets Riverside Drive at the proposed location of the southern roundabout and that driveway would be shifted approximately 90 feet south to a point just north of the northern border of the NRHP boundary of the Garrison House in order to tie into Riverside Drive south of the proposed roundabout.

C. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Waters of the U.S./State Waters

The proposed project corridor has been surveyed for Waters of the U.S. and State Waters under the Clean Water Act, Executive Order 11990, Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, and other federal and state regulations. As a result of the survey efforts, no wetlands, one stream, and no open waters were identified in the proposed project corridor. Figure 3 shows the locations of all identified waters.

a. Streams

One stream (Intermittent Stream [IS1]) was identified in the project corridor during field surveys. This stream exhibited a defined channel and showed evidence of water flow at times other than major storm events. Table 4 describes the stream identified along with the area of impact anticipated from the project.

Table 4. Summary of Stream Impacts

Stream Site	Type	Stream Description	On 303(d) List?	Length of Temporary Impact (feet)	Length of Permanent Impact (feet)
IS1-575 feet east of Riverside Drive	Intermittent	Riverine intermittent stream with streambed consisting of cobble-gravel (R4SB3). Is considered somewhat impaired due to moderate entrenchment with a channel dominated by sand, gravel, and cobble, instead of clay or silt.	No	0	0
Totals				0	0

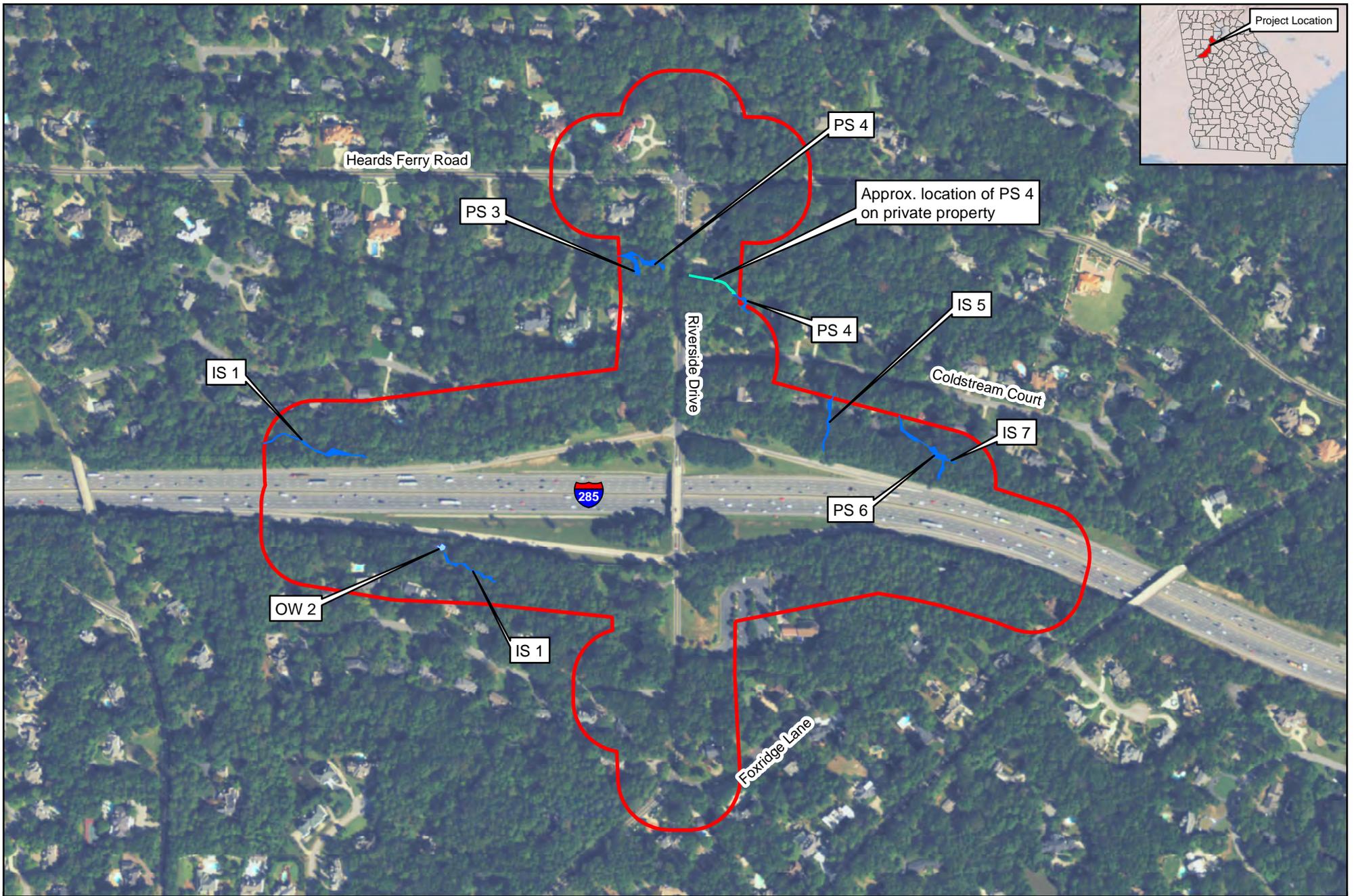
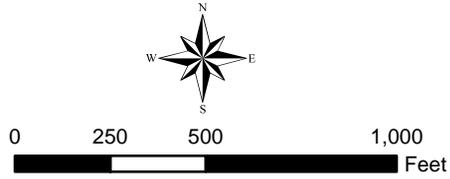


Figure 3: Aerial State and Federal Waters Map
 Interstate 285 Ramps at Riverside Drive
 P.I.No. 0010925
 Fulton County, Georgia



- Project Study Area
- Streams
- Approximate Stream Location
- Open Water

Source: USDA National Agriculture Imagery Program, Fulton County, Georgia 2009

b. Avoidance and Minimization

Measures During Planning

During the planning and design phase, all potential environmental and cultural impacts were considered and attempts were made to avoid or minimize impacts to potentially sensitive areas to the greatest extent practicable. The proposed alignment was planned with environmental considerations based upon aerial photography, traffic studies, topographic maps, soil survey maps, floodplain maps, cultural/historical resource investigations, and a jurisdictional waters delineation. The proposed project has been designed in an effort to avoid impacts to all environmental resources within the project area.

The project would not be expected to produce increased siltation within wetlands during the construction phase as no wetlands were identified during the field survey. Environmental harm would be minimized by standard sedimentation, erosion, and hydrological control measures.

Measures During Construction

1. Preservation of roadside vegetation beyond the limits of construction, where possible;
2. Early re-vegetation of disturbed areas to minimize soil erosion;
3. The use of slope drains, detention/retention structures, or surface, subsurface, and cross drains, designed as appropriate or needed, so that discharge would occur in locations and in such a manner that surface and subsurface water quality would not be affected (the outlets may require aprons, bank protection, silt basins, and energy dissipaters);
4. Inclusion of construction features for the control of predicted erosion and water pollution in the plans and specifications and contract pay items (Georgia Standard Specifications, Sections 161 through 171 and 700 through 715, identify the pollution control measures that may be used);
5. The dumping of chemicals, fuels, lubricants, bitumens, raw sewage, and other harmful waste into or alongside of streams or impoundments, or into natural or manmade channels leading thereto, would be prohibited;
6. Compliance with terms of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction activities to include preparation and submittal of project Notice of Intent and Notice of Termination. The NPDES permit also requires preparation and implementation of an Erosion, Sedimentation, and Pollution Control (ES&PC) Plan and a Comprehensive Monitoring Program. Best Management Practices (BMPs) outlined in the ES&PC Plan must be consistent with, and no less stringent than, practices set forth in the Manual for Erosion and Sedimentation Control in Georgia.

c. Mitigation

No impacts to jurisdictional waters would occur as a result of the construction of the proposed project; therefore, no Section 404 permit or compensatory mitigation would be required.

2. Water Quality/303(d) List

The proposed project is located within the Upper Chattahoochee Watershed (HUC 03130001). Waters in this watershed provide drinking, recreational, industrial, and commercial uses. Portions of waters within this watershed are listed as Georgia impaired waters.

Currently, storm water from the project site is collected and routed to two 36-inch pipes, which both make their way to Heards Creek to the north of the proposed project area. Because this project would be let to construction under a Design-Build contract, the selected Contractor would propose the drainage system or may maintain the existing outfall locations and continue to route storm water runoff to Heards Creek. Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be utilized in conjunction with this drainage system and outfalls.

Precautions would be taken to minimize impacts to water resources and water quality in the project area. Under the provisions of the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, the project is required to include measures to control erosion and sedimentation, including silt fencing, hay bales, check dams, and other measures deemed appropriate. All land-disturbing activities must comply with state and local erosion and sediment control and stormwater management regulations. Provisions in the construction contract would require the contractor to utilize BMPs during construction to prevent the pollution and sedimentation of streams in the project vicinity. Where possible, early revegetation of disturbed areas would be accomplished to minimize soil movement. The use of spill pans on stream crossings to trap runoff pollutants would be analyzed during the design phase. Dumping of chemicals, fuels, lubricants, bitumens, raw sewage, or other harmful wastes into or alongside streams, impoundments, and natural or manmade channels would be prohibited.

According to BMPs, contract provisions would also require the use of temporary erosion control measures as shown on the construction plans or as deemed necessary during construction. These temporary measures may include the use of berms, dikes, dams, sediment basins, fiber mats, netting, gravel, mulches, grasses, slope drains, and other erosion control features insofar as practical to ensure economical, effective, and continuous erosion control throughout the construction and post-construction periods, and to ensure compliance with the Federal-Aid Policy Guide, Part 650, Subpart B.

7. Protected Species

Under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended, federal law requires that actions likely to adversely affect a species classified as federally protected be subject to review by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), as appropriate. Lists of threatened and endangered species potentially occurring in Fulton County were obtained from the Georgia DNR Natural Heritage Program and from USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) System (updated October 2013), also see Attachment 2, Correspondence, Letters dated November 1, 2013 and March 13, 2014). According to the Georgia DNR Fulton County and USFWS IPaC, six federally threatened species and one proposed endangered species are known to occur within Fulton County. Table 5 lists the federal and state threatened and endangered species with potential occurrence within the project area, their status, and the project's effect on each species.

Field surveys were conducted on October 23, 2013 and November 11, 2013 to identify federally and state listed protected species or potential habitat for protected species within the project corridor. No federal-listed or candidate species or their suitable habitats were identified within the proposed study area. On April 9, 2014 GDOT submitted the Ecology Resources Survey Report and Assessment of Effects to FHWA for concurrence on GDOT's recommendation of no effect to any federally listed or candidate species. On April 22, 2014, FHWA requested *made a* ~~concurrence from USFWS on FHWA's determination of no effect to any federally listed or candidate species. To date, no formal response from USFWS has been received and it is assumed that USFWS concurs with FHWA's determination (see Attachment 2).~~ Based on this information, the project would have no effect on federal-protected species and would not require Informal or Formal Section 7 coordination.

Table 5. Protected Species Known to Occur within Fulton County

Species Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	Project Effect on Species Determination
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern long-eared bat	PE	NL	No Effect
<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Henslow's sparrow	NL	R	No Effect
<i>Etheostoma scotti</i>	Cherokee darter	TR	TR	No Effect
<i>Medionidus penicillatus</i>	Gulf moccasinshell	E	E	No Effect*
<i>Pleurobema pyriforme</i>	Oval pigtoe	E	E	No Effect*
<i>Elliptoideus sloatianus</i>	Purple bankclimber	TR	TR	No Effect*
<i>Lampsilis subangulata</i>	Shinyrayed pocketbook	E	E	No Effect*
<i>Elliptio arcata</i>	Delicate spike	NL	E	No Effect
<i>Cambarus howardi</i>	Chattahoochee Crayfish	NL	TR	No Effect
<i>Monotropsis odorata</i>	Sweet pinesnap	NL	TR	No Significant Adverse Effect
<i>Schisandra glabra</i>	Bay star-vine	NL	TR	No Effect
<i>Fothergilla major</i>	Mountain witch-alder	NL	TR	No Effect
<i>Symphyotrichum georgianum</i>	Georgia aster	NL	TR	No Effect
<i>Rhus michauxii</i>	Dwarf sumac	E	E	No Effect

LEGEND: E = Endangered; TR = Threatened; NL = Not Listed;

PE = Proposed Endangered

*Per correspondence with UFWS, a protected aquatic species survey would not be required for these species, as they have been extirpated from the project vicinity.

Habitat for the state-protected sweet pinesnap was identified within the project area. A protected species survey was completed on March 10, 2014, in which no individuals were identified. The proposed project would have no significant adverse effect on the sweet pinesnap. No individuals and no suitable habitat for the remaining state-listed species known to occur within three miles of the proposed project was identified within the project area.

8. Invasive Species

In accordance with Executive Order 13112, a survey for populations of invasive species that may be spread during construction was conducted for this project. The invasive species for which the survey was conducted are those identified by the Department as having the highest priority because of environmental and economic impacts caused by those species. These designated species represent "Category One" invasives by the Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council. Category One species are defined as exotic plants that pose a serious problem in Georgia's natural areas by extensively invading native plant communities and displacing native species. Identified Category One invasive plant species within the project area include: English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*), mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*) and Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*).

English ivy, Chinese wisteria, mimosa, and Chinese privet are all known to occur throughout the southeastern U.S. Locations of these species were recorded in the Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System (EDDMaps) database. No colonies greater than 1,000 square feet were observed within the project area.

Seasonally appropriate measures would be taken during project construction to prevent or minimize the spread of these species. These measures would include removing and disposing of vegetative parts in the soil that may reproduce by root raking prior to moving the soil, burning on site any such parts and aboveground parts that bear fruit, controlling or eradicating infestations prior to construction, and cleaning vehicles and other equipment prior to leaving the infested site. The measures used would be those that are appropriate for the particular species and the specific site conditions on the project as described in Georgia Standard Specifications Section 201, *Clearing and Grubbing of Right-of-Way*.

9. Wildlife and Habitat

A habitat evaluation was conducted during field surveys to determine the quality of migratory bird habitats within the project study area. The majority of habitat throughout the project study area is fragmented by clearings, roads, or land development. No areas of contiguous high-quality forested habitat are present with the project area.

The Riverside Drive bridge over I-285 is the only structure within the project area that could potentially provide migratory bird nesting habitat; however, neither migratory bird species, nor evidence of nesting was observed during field survey. Rehabilitation of the Riverside Drive bridge would be scheduled to take place at a time outside the breeding season of migratory birds or exclusionary measures would be taken to prevent migratory bird nesting within the structure pursuant to the terms of the Georgia DOT's Special Provision 107.23G, which would be implemented during the construction of the project.

Bats

The Riverside Drive bridge over I-285 is the only bridge in the project study area and was surveyed for evidence of bats. No evidence of bats was observed.

Winter habitat, including caves and mines, is not present within the project area. Forested areas within the project study area are highly fragmented (less than 2 acres) with few snags and are within an area of urban development. In addition, only one intermittent water source is present within the project area. Based on this information, forested tracts within the project area are not suitable for bats; therefore, the proposed project would have no effect on bats or their suitable habitat.

D. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Noise

The proposed Riverside Drive roundabouts project is a Type I project as defined in FHWA's Highway Traffic Noise Policy and Guidance; therefore, a noise impact assessment was completed in accordance with the guidelines provided in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 772 (FHWA's Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise). The Noise Impact Assessment prepared for this project is available by contacting the GDOT.

The model used to calculate existing noise levels and predict future noise levels for this project was the FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Model, Version 2.5 (TNM 2.5). Data input into the

model to predict noise levels produced by traffic within the vicinity of the project corridor included existing roadway alignments, number of lanes, receiver locations, vehicle speeds, contour data, and existing peak-hour traffic volumes, including percentage of truck traffic. Field noise measurements were also taken at representative locations along and near the proposed project corridor to help determine existing ambient noise levels and to calibrate the noise prediction model.

Existing land uses within the project area include high concentration of single-family neighborhoods and single isolated residential lots. One church, the Presbyterian of Saint Andrew Church is located near the study area. For the purposes of noise modeling, 18 receivers, representing 18 receptors were included in the study as potentially being impacted by traffic noise (see Figure 4). These receivers capture all of the existing land uses within the project area. Also shown on Figure 4 are three existing noise barriers. These barriers would be replaced after construction.

FHWA has established noise abatement criteria (NAC) for various land uses as part of 23 CFR 772, which include seven land use activity categories (A through G). Table 6 describes lands by activity description and the associated NAC.

Table 6. FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC)

Activity Category	Activity Leq(h)¹	Evaluation Location	Activity Description
A	57	Exterior	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67	Exterior	Residential.
C	67	Exterior	Active sport areas, amphitheatres, auditoriums, campgrounds, cemeteries, daycare centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, parks, picnic areas, places of worship, playgrounds, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, recreation areas, Section 4(f) sites, schools, television studios, trails, and trail crossings.
D	52	Interior	Auditoriums, daycare centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, places of worship, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, schools, and television studios.
E	72	Exterior	Hotels, motels, offices, restaurants/bars, and other developed lands, properties, or activities not included in A–D or F.



Figure 4. Receptor and Barrier Location Map

Table 6. FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC)

Activity Category	Activity Leq(h) ¹	Evaluation Location	Activity Description
F	-	-	Agriculture, airports, bus yards, emergency services, industrial, logging, maintenance facilities, manufacturing, mining, rail yards, retail facilities, shipyards, utilities (water resources, water treatment, electrical), and warehousing.
G	-	-	Undeveloped lands that are not permitted.

¹ Hourly A-weighted equivalent sound level in dBA
 Source: FHWA 23 CFR 772

Seventeen receiver units within the project area fall under FHWA’s NAC Activity Category B (residential) with one receiver falling under Criteria C (the Presbyterian of Saint Andrew church). One undeveloped site was also considered under Category G. [Note: Activity Categories F and G do not have NAC established; therefore, noise abatement was only considered for Activity Category A through E receivers.]

The results of the analysis indicate that noise levels within the project study area under existing conditions range from 54.5 decibel (dBA) to 64.2 dBA (Leq 1[hour]). Future traffic-generated noise levels within the project study area were predicted for 2035 No-Build and Build conditions. For the Build condition, future roadway alignments, future traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, and truck percentages were added to the model. The results indicate that future traffic-generated noise levels within the study area would range from 55.1 dBA to 65.0 dBA Leq under 2035 No-Build conditions and from 54.7 dBA to 65.1 dBA Leq under 2034 Build conditions.

Two methods are used for predicting noise impact. The first is a comparison of predicted noise levels to the NAC established by FHWA and codified in 23 CFR 772. A 67 dBA Leq criterion has been established for schools, libraries, residences, churches, playgrounds, and recreational areas, and a 72 dBA Leq criterion has been established for commercial activities and developed lands such as hotels. Any predicted noise level that approaches or exceeds these criteria is considered an impact. Noise levels within 1 dBA of the noise abatement criteria are considered to be approaching the criteria. The second method of determining noise impacts involves determining the amount of increase from existing noise levels to predicted future noise levels. Using this method, a site is considered to be impacted if there is a substantial increase from existing noise levels. A substantial increase occurs when there is an increase of 15 dBA or more over existing levels.

The existing conditions assessment indicates that the current noise levels at all 18 receiver locations are below the estimated NAC for residential areas and places of worship (Category C). In addition, the results of the analysis indicate that none of the receivers in the study area would exceed the FHWA NAC under future No-Build and Build conditions nor would they experience a substantial increase in traffic-related noise over existing noise levels in the No-Build or Build conditions. Results of the 2035 No-Build condition analysis indicate that the receivers would experience no change in traffic-related noise levels over the existing conditions. Results of the 2035 Build condition analysis indicate that the receivers would experience a change from -0.4 to 0.1dBA compared to the existing conditions. The noise reduction can be attributed to the proposed roundabout interchange that will decrease traffic speeds, which in turn would lower noise levels in the surrounding area.

Additionally, three noise abatement walls currently exist in the project area. Two of the walls (along the Eastbound and Westbound I-285 off ramps, Noise Walls 1 and 3, respectively) would

need to be removed during construction. These walls would be replaced after construction. The third wall (Westbound on-ramp, Noise Wall 2) would not be impacted during construction and would remain in place.

Undeveloped Lands

One area was assessed as undeveloped land without a permit. Undeveloped land area (Study Area A) is represented by noise receivers A1 through A8. The receivers were modeled at 50-foot (from nearest edge of pavement), 100 feet, and then in 100 foot intervals. The location of the receiver was selected based on locations where noise conditions are anticipated to change. Predicted noise levels for undeveloped lands in the 2034 Build condition are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Undeveloped Land Noise Receivers (Land Use Category G)

Receiver Nos. A1-A8	Predicted Sound Level (2035 Build)
50-feet*	65.8 dBA
100-feet	63.1 dBA
200-feet	58.1 dBA
300-feet	56.8 dBA
400-feet	56.2 dBA
500-feet	55.4 dBA
600-feet	55.4 dBA
700-feet**	55.4 dBA
800-feet	N/A***

*From nearest edge of pavement

**Receiver placed at the back of property line

***Property not large enough for analysis

The GDOT Office of Environmental Services sent notification by letter (See Attachment 2, May 22, 2014 letter) of estimated future noise levels for undeveloped lands within the project limits to the local official (City of Sandy Springs Planning Commission) within whose jurisdiction the highway project is located. The information provided included an estimation of future design year noise levels at various distances from the edge of the nearest pavement where future noise levels are within 1 dBA of the corresponding exterior values. Examples of compatible land uses and incompatible land uses were provided and disclosure was made that no Type II program currently exists in Georgia.

Construction Noise

GDOT recognizes that minimizing construction noise is important; however, in the absence of standardized federal criteria for assessing construction noise impacts related to transportation projects (FHWA Construction Noise Handbook, 2006), it is necessary to rely primarily on the standards and requirements developed by local governments to determine the criteria to which contractors must adhere.

In Georgia, contractors of all highway construction projects are required to adhere to GDOT Standard Specification Section 107.01 – Laws to Be Observed, which states in part, “The Contractor shall at all times observe and comply with all such laws, ordinances, codes, regulations, orders and decrees...” unless the necessary variance is obtained.

To further minimize construction noise, GDOT’s Office of Environmental Services would provide the project manager and the design team with noise-sensitive receptor information as early as possible during project development. This information will be used to incorporate construction noise control strategies in the project layout and design. The sequencing of

construction activities and techniques could also be developed to minimize construction noise impacts.

2. Air

This project was evaluated for its consistency with state and federal air quality goals. Results indicated that the project is consistent with the April 30, 2014 SIP for the attainment of clean air quality in Georgia and is in compliance with state and federal air quality standards. The complete Air Quality Impact Assessment conducted for this project is available in the project file by contacting GDOT.

Ozone

This project is in an area where the SIP contains transportation control measures. Therefore, conformity procedures contained in the final Conformity Guidance apply to this project. The CAA, as amended in 1990, requires transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) in areas not meeting the NAAQS to conform to the emissions budget of the SIP for air quality. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2012–2017 TIP is the current adopted plan for the Atlanta region showing the region’s highest transportation priorities. It was adopted by the Atlanta Transportation Management Association (TMA) Board on August 18, 2011 and was approved by the USDOT on September 6, 2011. This project is identified in the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Plan 2040 Regional Transportation Plan FY 2012–2017 TIP by reference number AR-118-2015.

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Georgia is in attainment for CO; however, CO is also a concern in areas where signalized intersections (due to idling vehicles) are operating at a Level-of-Service (LOS) D, E, or F in the project design year (20-year design horizon).

The LOS is a standard means of classifying traffic conditions associated with various traffic volume levels and traffic flow conditions. There are six levels of service at which a roadway can operate, represented by the letters “A” through “F”. Each level is defined by a maximum value for the ratio of traffic volume (V) to facility capacity (C) as shown in Table 8. The LOS for signalized intersections is determined by calculating the average control delay per vehicle for the intersection, i.e., the average amount of time it takes a vehicle to get through the intersection.

Table 8. Level of Service

Level of Service	Definition
A	volume is well below capacity and traffic is flowing freely
B	volume is steady, the presence of other vehicles begins to be noticeable
C	steady traffic flow, speeds and maneuverability are more closely controlled by traffic volumes
D	approaching an unsteady flow in which speed and maneuverability are severely restricted
E	traffic flow is reduced to a slow but relatively uniform speeds, and traffic volume is equal to or nearly equal to capacity and maneuverability is extremely difficult
F	volume greatly exceeds the capacity and lengthy delays occur

The project was evaluated for the potential to result in increased CO concentrations in the project area. Based on project type, it has been determined that this project would not increase traffic congestion or increased idle emissions and CO concentrations; therefore, the project is consistent

with state and federal air quality goals for CO. This project would convert the existing ramp terminal intersections into roundabouts, which are exempt from quantitative CO analysis.

Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM 2.5)

On January 5, 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designated Fulton County as a nonattainment area for fine particulate matter (PM 2.5). This designation became effective on April 5, 2005, 90 days after USEPA’s published action in the Federal Register. Transportation conformity for PM 2.5 standards applies as of April 5, 2006, after the one-year grace period provided by the CAA. Metropolitan PM 2.5 nonattainment areas are now required to have a TIP and long-range transportation plan that conforms to the PM 2.5 standard.

This project has been evaluated by an interagency group consisting of FHWA, USEPA, Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), and the Atlanta Regional Commission, and they agreed on April 9, 2014 that this project does not appear to be a project of concern in accordance with the Transportation Conformity Rule (see concurrence letter in Attachment 2). Therefore, this project meets the statutory and regulatory requirements for PM 2.5 hotspots without a qualitative analysis.

Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs)

MSAT assessments are required statewide for most federal transportation projects. Based on the example projects defined in the FHWA guidance “Interim Guidance Update on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents,” dated December 6, 2012, the construction of the I-285 Ramps at CR 209/Riverside Drive would be classified as a project with *no meaningful MSAT effects*. In addition to the criteria air pollutants that must meet the NAAQS, EPA also regulates air toxics. Most air toxics originate from human-made sources, including on-road mobile sources, non-road mobile sources (e.g., airplanes), area sources (e.g., dry cleaners) and stationary sources (e.g., factories or refineries).

Qualitative MSAT Assessment

For both the build and no build alternative, the amount of MSAT emitted would be proportional to the VMT, assuming that other variables, such as fleet mix, are the same for each alternative. The VMT estimated for the Build Alternative is the same as the No-Build alternative, because there is no additional capacity increase in the transportation network.

Table 9. Vehicle Miles Traveled

Roadway	Roadway Length (mi)	ADT/VMT	Existing 2012	No-Build 2035	Build 2035
Riverside Drive/CR 209 South	0.10	ADT	5,890	6,610	6,610
		VMT*	589	661	661
EB Ramp- WB Ramp	0.09	ADT	12,565	14,095	14,095
		VMT*	1,131	1,269	1,269
Riverside Drive/CR 209 North	0.19	ADT	19,240	21,580	21,580
		VMT*	3,656	4,100	4,100

EB Off-Ramp	0.37	ADT	6,485	7,275	7,275
		VMT*	2,399	2,692	2,692
EB On-Ramp	0.28	ADT	4,940	5,540	5,540
		VMT*	1,383	1,551	1,551
WB Off-Ramp	0.19	ADT	4,940	5,540	5,540
		VMT*	939	1,053	1,053
WB On-Ramp	0.25	ADT	6,485	7,275	7,275
		VMT*	1,621	1,819	1,819

*VMT is calculated by multiplying the roadway length by the total daily traffic

Because the estimated VMT under both of the alternatives is the same, it is expected there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions among the various alternatives. Also, regardless of the alternative chosen, emissions will likely be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce annual MSAT emissions by over 80 percent between 2010 and 2050. Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures. However, the magnitude of the USEPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in nearly all cases.

Construction

All phases of construction operations would temporarily contribute to air pollution. Particulates would increase slightly in the corridor as dust from construction collects in the air surrounding the project. The construction equipment would also produce slight amounts of exhaust emissions. The Rules and Regulations for Air Quality Control outlined in Chapter 391-3-1, Rules of Georgia EPD, would be followed during the construction of the project. These include covering earth-moving trucks to keep dust levels down, watering haul roads, and refraining from open burning, except as may be permitted by local regulations.

The USEPA has listed a number of approved diesel retrofit technologies; many of these can be deployed as emissions mitigation measures for equipment used in construction. This listing can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/technologies/retrofits.htm>

Conclusion

This project was evaluated for its consistency with state and federal air quality goals, including CO, Ozone, PM_{2.5} and MSATs as part of this assessment. Results indicated that the project is consistent with the SIP for the attainment of clean air quality in Georgia and is in compliance with both state and federal air quality standards.

3. Construction/Utilities

Construction of the proposed project would take approximately 9 to 12 months. Construction would create some unavoidable inconveniences to motorists, but construction activities would be conducted in a manner that would maintain access to the existing roadways and minimize conflicts with traffic. Every attempt would be made for the project to be constructed while

traffic is maintained on existing roads. However, there is potential that closing of the bridge and ramps at I-285 and Riverside may become necessary. This would be restricted to weekend closures. During the PIOH held for this project, the public was notified that potential detours and temporary bridge closure may be necessary (refer to Section V.A.8 above and Attachment 4, Project Detour Map). As this project is to be Let to Construction under a Design-Build contract, it will be the responsibility of the Contractor to coordinate with the local governments, school board, and emergency services personnel for any proposed bridge closure and detours. Any detour and closure is restricted to weekend closures. The safety and convenience of the general public and residents of the area would be provided for at all times.

Traffic flow would be maintained throughout construction of the proposed project. Some delays in traffic movement might occur during construction, but delays would be minimized to the extent possible. Roadway construction inevitably creates some inconvenience to motorists and adjacent property owners; however, all construction activities would be conducted so that access to adjacent properties and intersecting roads could be maintained.

Any necessary relocation of utilities (water, sewer, telephone, etc.) would be accomplished with no long-term interruption of services. All other construction functions would be accomplished in a timely and orderly fashion to keep disruptions minimal and to avoid compromising safety

E. Permits/Variances/Commitments Required

4. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The NPDES was created by the federal Clean Water Act to control water pollution by regulating the discharge of pollutants to surface waters. In Georgia, any ground disturbing activities that exceed one acre are covered under the State's NPDES permit. Ground disturbing activities exceeding one acre would occur for the proposed project. Therefore, a Notice of Intent (NOI) for a NPDES General Permit would be submitted prior to construction.

9. Other Permits

In January 2012 the EPD issued the GDOT first Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (General NPDES Permit No. GAR041000 (Permit). The Permit regulates new and existing point source discharges of stormwater from roadways owned and operated by GDOT to waters of the State of Georgia. The Riverside at I-285 project must meet the requirements of the Permit which includes the incorporating permanent water quality control and detention measures (BMPs) into the design where appropriate and where those BMPs have not been determined to be infeasible based on the infeasibility criteria identified in Section 1.4 of the GDOT Guidelines for Design of Post-Construction BMPs (GDOT Guidelines) issued August 23, 2013.

The project area is being studied for the feasibility of including BMPs into the project. Final determination will be made and disclosed in a Re-evaluation of the project if it is advanced to a Design-Build construction contract.

F. SECTION 4(F) APPLICABILITY

Section 4(f) refers to the temporary and/or permanent use and constructive use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site. Section 4(f) does not apply to the temporary occupancy, including those resulting from a right-of-entry, construction, other temporary easements or short-term arrangements, of a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area or wildlife and

waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site where temporary occupancy of the land is so minimal that it does not constitute a use within the meaning of Section 4(f).

The temporary easement and construction activity that is necessary for the removal and implementation of curbing, sidewalk, driveway relocation, and tree pruning within the National Register Eligible boundary of Resource 2, Garrison House will not require a Section 4(f) Evaluation. The activity has been determined not adverse and the area of easement is temporary (see SHPO concurrence in Attachment 2).