

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA**

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

FILE: PI # 122660-
Oconee County

OFFICE: Planning

DATE: July 22, 2014

FROM: 
Cynthia L. VanDyke, State Transportation Planning Administrator

TO: Albert Shelby, State Program Delivery Engineer
Attn: Eric Wilkinson, Project Manager

SUBJECT: Project Justification Statement – SR 24/US 441 Widening, Oconee County

The Office of Planning is providing this Project Justification Statement as defined in the Plan Development Process Manual. If any changes occur to the proposed concept, please notify this Office immediately. If you have any questions, please contact Tom Caiafa at (404) 631-1749.

CLV:tsc

Enclosure

Project Justification Statement

PI # 122660- (Oconee County)

SR 24/US 441 from north of the Apalachee River Bridge to the Watkinsville Bypass

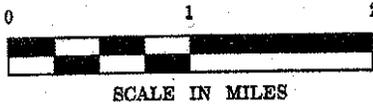
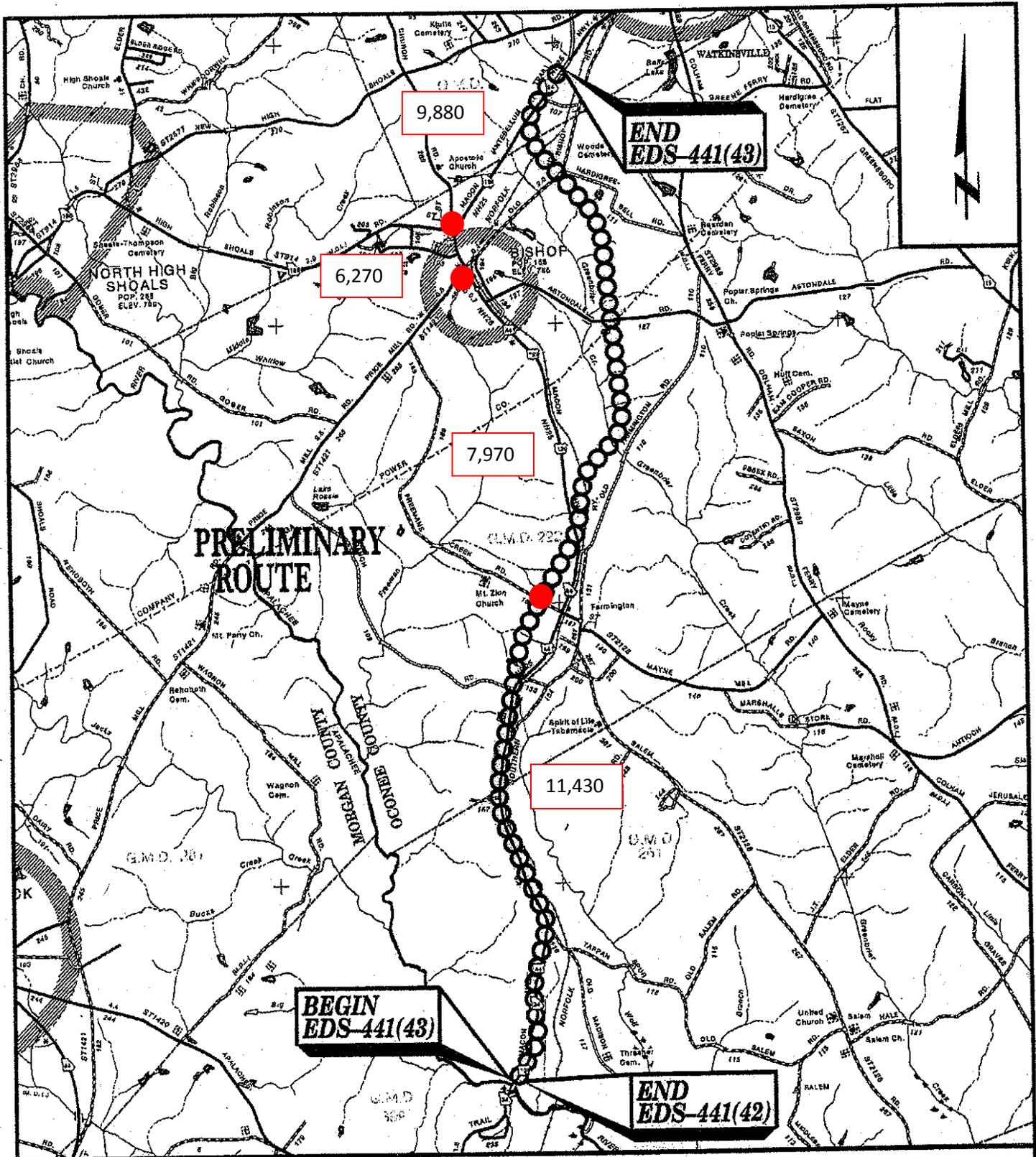
This project originated in the late 1980s as part of the US 441 corridor that was designated as a part of the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP), with the goal of spurring economic development in southern Oconee County and the cities of Bishop and Watkinsville. Additionally, the two-lane, four-mile section of SR 24/US 441 in downtown Bishop between CR 110/Old Farmington Road and CR 107/Thomas Farm Road carries significant through-traffic that intersects 13 local streets and one state highway corridor (SR 186). In 2013, the SR 24/US 441 corridor was included as part of the state's Freight Corridor Network, providing a north-south through route in the east-central portion of the state. The Athens MPO has also added this project to its draft 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan update.

From south to north, current (2011) Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for this corridor is 11,430 VPD (LOS D) on the two-lane segment between the Apalachee River Bridge and Freeman Creek Road; 7,970 VPD (LOS D) on the segment between Freeman Creek Road and Price Mill Road; 6,270 VPD (Level Of Service C) on the segment between Price Mill Road and High Shoals Road; and 9,880 VPD (LOS D) on the segment between High Shoals Road and Thomas Farm Road. Future (2037) traffic volumes are projected (using a 2% annual growth rate) to be 18,730 VPD (LOS E) on the two-lane segment between the Apalachee River Bridge and Freeman Creek Road; 13,060 VPD (LOS D) on the segment between Freeman Creek Road and Price Mill Road; 10,275 VPD (LOS D) on the segment between Price Mill Road and High Shoals Road; and 16,190 VPD (LOS E) on the segment between High Shoals Road and Thomas Farm Road.

Currently, crash data for the SR 24/US 441 corridor is unavailable.

The Office of Planning recommends that the southern terminus for this project tie in with the proposed four-lane divided facility (PI # 222560-) located south of the Apalachee River Bridge in Morgan County. The northern terminus is recommended to be located immediately north of the SR 24/US 441 intersection with Thomas Farm Road, which will allow it to tie in with the existing divided four-lane facility (Watkinsville Bypass) north of this point. Final determination of logical termini will be dependent on the Office of Environmental Services coordinating with FHWA during the NEPA process.

The proposed project is needed to alleviate congestion along the SR 24/US 441 corridor and to better accommodate current and future demand due to the route's inclusion as part of the GRIP System and the state's Freight Corridor Network.



LOCATION

PROJECT LOCATION MAP
 EDS-441(43)
 S.R. 24/U.S. 441 IMPROVEMENTS
 OCONEE COUNTY
 P.L.# 122660

SOURCE: GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP MORGAN CO., GEORGIA
 PREPARED BY THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 1992