



Russell R. McMurry, P.E., Commissioner
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March 19, 2019

Thank you for attending the Public Information Open House for the proposed US 441 Improvements from the Madison Bypass to the Watkinsville Bypass, PI Numbers 0013613, 0013617, & 0015925. Our goal is two-fold: 1) to provide you with information on the proposed projects and 2) to provide an opportunity for you to give us your comments on the proposed projects. In this handout package, you will find descriptions of the projects, location maps, and a comment card.

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

We hope you will take the opportunity to tell the GDOT what you think. Listed below are several ways to comment on the projects. 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 projects' official records.

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 **Tuesday, April 2, 2019** by using any of the following methods:

- Online at www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Public/PublicOutreach.
 1. From the menu, select the county in which the proposed projects are located (Morgan or Oconee) and click Go;
 2. Then select *3/12 & 3/19/19-US 441/SR 24 Widening*;
 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, 16th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.

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 GDOT District 1 Athens Area Office located at 450 Old Hull Road, Athens, Georgia 30601. 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 GDOT project manager, Bruce Anderson, at 478-538-8595 or the environmental analyst, David Borchardt, NEPA planner at 404-631-1184 of the Office of Environmental Services.

Sincerely,

Eric Duff
State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation

Why We Are Here: The projects are needed to alleviate truck congestion on the corridor to better accommodate current and future demand due to the route's inclusion in both the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP) System and Freight Corridor Network. The two-lane facility carries high volumes of truck traffic. Approximately 20 percent of traffic on US 441 in Morgan County - or one out of every five vehicles - is a truck. In addition, congestion on the corridor is projected to increase over time.

The need for improvements to the US 441 corridor in Oconee and Morgan Counties was identified in the 1980s. The projects were initially programmed as part of the GRIP when it was adopted by the Georgia General Assembly in 1989. US 441 was among the 12 original corridors included in the GRIP network, a system of proposed economic developmental highways in Georgia. When the GRIP network is complete, it will connect 95 percent of Georgia cities with populations of 2,500 or more to the Interstate Highway System. It will also place 98 percent of Georgia's population within 20 miles of a four-lane road. The projects are programmed for construction with state funding.

It is envisioned that Morgan County project (PI # 0013617) will have its southern end at the US 441 intersection with SR 12/US 278, where it will tie in with the existing four-lane divided facility (Madison Bypass) located south of this point, and that the Oconee County project (PI # 0013613) will tie in with the existing four-lane divided facility (Watkinsville Bypass) located north of this point.

Project Description: The proposed projects would consist of the widening and reconstruction of State Route (SR) 24/United States Highway (US) 441 from the Madison Bypass in Morgan County northward to the Watkinsville Bypass in Oconee County and construction of a bypass around the Town of Bishop in Oconee County (see Project Location Map).

P.I. No. 0013617 would begin in Morgan County just north of the intersection of SR 24/US 441/US 129 and SR 12/US 441 BUS/US 278 (Madison Bypass) and end north of the Apalachee River in Oconee County. P.I. No. 0013617 proposes a five-lane typical section for approximately 1,900 feet before transitioning to a four-lane typical section with a 32-foot depressed grass median for the remainder of the project. The approximate project length is 8.46 miles.

P.I. No. 0013613 begins at the northern terminus of PI No. 0013617 and includes road widening to the Watkinsville Bypass (south of the City of Watkinsville). This segment would not include widening improvements through the Town of Bishop from approximately Astondale Road to SR 186 (High Shoals Road). P.I. No. 0013613 proposes a four-lane typical section with a 24-foot raised median from the beginning of the project to just south of the Town of Bishop, and north of SR 186 (High Shoals Road) the proposed facility would return to a four-lane typical section with 24-foot raised median as the continuation of P.I. No. 0013613. The approximate project length is 8.20 miles.

P.I. No. 0015925 would construct a two-lane bypass to the east of the Town of Bishop downtown area that would connect SR 24/US 441 at Astondale Road to SR 24/US 441 at SR 186 (High Shoals Road). Beginning just south of the Town of Bishop, P.I. No. 0015925 proposes to construct a two-lane facility on new location east of existing SR 24/US 441 from approximately Astondale Road to SR 186 (High Shoals Road). Minor improvements to the existing two-lane facility through Bishop are anticipated. The approximate project length is 0.82 miles.

With the exception of the two-lane bypass at Bishop, the projects would follow the existing SR 24/US 441 alignment with the widening shifting from one side of the existing road to the other side to avoid and minimize impacts. Existing right-of-way (ROW) is approximately 130 feet. Additional variable ROW and easements would be required to construct the proposed projects, but the exact amount of additional ROW and easement is not known at this time. The total length of the three projects is approximately 17 miles.

Project Location Map:



