



TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ACT

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## PRESSRELEASE

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## Local officials break ground for improvements to South Georgia Tech Parkway

A soggy day in Americus did little to dampen the festivities surrounding the ground breaking for improvements to the South Georgia Tech Parkway. Officials and guests gathered on the campus of the South Georgia Technical College to celebrate the project that will utilize \$15 million in funds provided by the Transportation Investment Act (TIA).

Mayor of Americus, Barry Blount, explained that while many entities had a part in making the project possible, the real credit goes to the voters whose decision in favor of TIA has provided the much-needed infusion of funds that are necessary to keep Americus and Sumter County moving forward.

“By passing the TIA in 2012, our residents decided to take the bull by the horns and become responsible for their own progress, instead of waiting for the money to come from somewhere else,” said Blount. “Everyone here has contributed a little to these {transportation} improvements and everyone will receive even more in return for their pennies.”

Part of what residents will get in return is better experience for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians alike, but on a broader scope, improvements to the Parkway are expected to have a significant impact on the area’s ability to capitalize on the truck routes that originate from the Cordele Inland Port. According to Randy Howard, the District 4 Sumter County Commissioner, the upcoming widening and realignment will make the route more attractive to truck drivers, which in turn, will help the County make the industrial-zoned property lining the route more attractive to investors.

“{Currently} Tech Parkway is a little too narrow and has difficult turns for truck traffic, which can account for drivers finding other routes to travel. We’re hoping that the new construction will make drivers more comfortable, and allow for new supply and transport possibilities that will not only be beneficial for existing businesses, but new investors as well,” Howard said.

More trucks on the Parkway, also means less trucks travelling through Historic Downtown Americus. The loud roar of the trucks can be heard at all hours and have caused ire with local residents. Mayor Blount thinks decreasing this traffic will be a welcome relief to residents and help boost the Downtown economy.

“We have a lot of folks making a home Downtown, and a lot more that would if the environment were more conducive to getting a good night’s sleep. The Parkway updates should reduce heavy truck traffic Downtown and create a more peaceful ambience in the area where residential and business interests can thrive,” said Blount.

The project corridor totals 5.1 miles and is broken down into three segments. The Western Segment, between

the intersection with US 19 and the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks located just east of the intersection with Old Andersonville Road/Southerfield Road, will include resurfacing the existing pavement, widening the shoulders, and adding right and left turn lanes at intersections.

The Central Segment, from the railroad tracks to about ¼ miles east of Career AVE, will see the widening the existing two-lane facility to a five-lane section with two through-lanes in each direction, bike lanes and a center two-way left turn lane.

The Eastern Segment, from ¾ miles east of Career AVE to the intersection with SR 49 will include the widening of the existing two-lane facility to accommodate a center auxiliary lane and rural shoulders. The project will also realign South Georgia Tech Parkway and District Line Road to create a new intersection with a roundabout at SR 49 in between the existing intersections.

Howard believes that residents will be pleased with the Parkway improvements, since they've already experienced other area improvements funded by TIA. Sumter County has used the 25% of funds that have been allocated back to community to use at its own discretion to repave over 30 miles of aging neighborhood roads and purchase machinery and equipment to help aid in transportation maintenance.

"We've already seen what these funds can do in our own neighborhoods, so I think we're all ready to see the Parkway construction get underway so we can start enjoying it soon," Howard said.

The scheduled completion date for all work on the project, less landscaping, is April 30, 2017.

***Forty-six counties and their respective cities comprise the three regional districts that approved the TIA referendum in July 2012. Cumulatively, they are expected to self-generate approximately \$1.6 Billion in new revenue dedicated to local transportation improvements. All projects were selected by regional commission roundtables of local elected officials after much public input. Seventy-five percent of the revenues will be utilized for the construction of these roundtable pre-selected projects while the remaining 25 percent will be disbursed to the regions' governments each month on a predetermined formula basis for discretionary use on local transportation-related efforts. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit [www.dot.ga.gov](http://www.dot.ga.gov) or you also may follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/transportationinvestmentact](http://www.facebook.com/transportationinvestmentact)) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/TIAatGDOT>).***