



Cobb County Communications Department

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Information from Cobb County Department of Transportation: Windy Hill-Terrell Mill Road Project

Cobb Department of Transportation and Cumberland CID have been working on adding a connection from Windy Hill to Terrell Mill Road, between I-75 and Powers Ferry Road, for almost 20 years.

Originally planned as an extension of Leland Drive, a Tier 2 project in the 1994 SPLOST program, would have provided engineering funds for improvements at Windy Hill Road interchange and the Leland Drive extension project. In the 2005 SPLOST, also on Tier 2, construction funding was provided for the Leland Drive Extension project. In anticipation of this, Cumberland CID hired a consulting firm in 2005 to develop plans for the Leland Drive extension. However, the revenues in the 2005 program never allowed the County to move forward with Tier 2 projects, so the project was put on hold. The idea of a connector road was also included in the Powers Ferry Master Plan, adopted by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners in 2010.

When GDOT moved forward with the I-75 managed lanes project (Northwest Corridor), the project became even more important. As the Northwest Corridor project stands now, the primary exit from the managed lanes that will serve the Cumberland job market area is at Terrell Mill Road. We want to provide a connection between this exit and the job market area in Cumberland that will not further stress Powers Ferry Road and I-75 at Kennedy Interchange. On weekdays, during evening rush hour, the Northwest Corridor managed lanes will be northbound. Therefore, for weekday games at SunTrust Park, the managed lanes will not be useable for ballpark patrons. They will provide some relief to I-75 northbound, but we expect this exit and this connection to primarily serve the northbound commuters, not southbound Braves patrons.

In early 2014, Cobb DOT studied the Leland Drive extension but also studied numerous other potential corridors for this project. Leland Drive is very close to the I-75@Windy Hill interchange, and the original project would have put additional traffic in this area. Commuters from Cumberland would presumably come up Interstate North Pkwy or I-75 and have to turn onto Windy Hill to access Leland Drive. The connection at Terrell Mill had sight distance challenges due to the curvature of Terrell Mill at the original location. We also looked for routes that will avoid impacts to Rottenwood Creek. In the end, the alignment of the Windy Hill Terrell Mill Connector was chosen to begin at Spectrum Circle/Interstate North Pkwy on Windy Hill and at Bentley Drive on Terrell Mill Road. This project was added to the 2016 SPLOST list, approved by voters in 2014, with \$20M allotted to the project in Tier 1. GDOT has also committed \$12M to this project through state funding.

The project is in engineering phase. We presented the preliminary alignment at a Public Information Open House on Tuesday, Nov. 15. We will take all the comments into consideration as we continue to develop the plans. We will send a letter to all the attendees and commenters summarizing all the comments we receive and provide a response to each. **The official comment period is open until Nov. 29**, so citizens and affected homeowners are encouraged to send us their comments on the project. Please email Karyn.Matthews@cobbcounty.org or call 770-528-3685.

At this time the schedule for the project is to continue developing the plans through this winter, begin right-of-way acquisition by summer 2017 and begin construction in late 2019. The Department will offer fair market value for the properties being acquired, based on independent appraisals. All owners and tenants displaced by the project will receive relocation assistance in accordance with federal and state law.

Timeline of Proposed project:

1994 – Extension of Leland Drive. 1994 SPLOST project Tier 2. Possible route identified to alleviate traffic.

2005 – SPLOST Tier 2. Study by Cumberland CID. Progress on hold due to economic recession, not enough money raised.

2010 – Connector road identified as part of Powers Ferry Master Plan.

2014 – Construction began on the Georgia DOT NW Corridor with a Terrell Mill exit.

2014 – Part of SPLOST 2016 Traffic Improvement Plan. Voter-approved in 2014.

2016 – Engineering phase of plan.

2017 – Right-of-way acquisition.

2019 – Construction to begin.

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