

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

# Woodland Brook Dr over Gilmer Creek



**During a recent inspection, it was determined that the outside sections of the Woodland Brook Drive Bridge over Gilmer Creek are in very poor condition. In order to maintain the structural integrity of the bridge until it can be replaced, traffic flow over the bridge is being reduced to one lane running through the center of the bridge.**

### *Is the lane restriction on Woodland Brook Drive because of the trucks?*

No. Staff recently conducted a structural investigation of the bridge. The outermost channels on the bridge were found to have deteriorated significantly due to exposure to water shedding off the bridge when it rains. The structural engineer does not believe the channels on the outside of the bridge are sufficient to maintain existing traffic until the bridge is replaced summer 2020. Therefore, a change is necessary. The inside girders have been insulated from the runoff and are expected to remain serviceable until the project next summer.

### *Can we just prohibit trucks on Woodland Brook Drive?*

Yes. The bridge can maintain two-way traffic for passenger vehicles. However, the condition of the outside channels cannot sustain two-way traffic that includes heavier vehicles, such as school buses, trash trucks, heavier delivery vehicles, and rentals (e.g. loaded U-Hauls). Therefore, the bridge would need a highly restrictive load posting to be enforced. To ensure the safety of the traveling public, the Police Department would need to dedicate significant resources to ensure that the posting is being observed. As they would not be able to weigh vehicles, the effectiveness of the enforcement would be limited and may not sufficiently protect the bridge's structural integrity.

### *How will Cobb DOT handle traffic?*

Cobb DOT staff considered the one-lane bridge on Concord Road in their analysis. On the one-lane bridge, Concord Road carries approximately 2,000 vehicles more daily than Woodland Brook Drive and operates without significant traffic delay. However given that this is a traffic pattern change for Woodland Brook Drive, staff has procured a temporary traffic signal for the bridge. The signal will manage traffic flows across the bridge starting Friday afternoon, August 30. Further, staff will monitor the signal timing to make sure it operates properly based on traffic conditions.

### *Can Cobb DOT just start the bridge replacement project now?*

No. Construction cannot begin until the utility conflicts are resolved. Georgia Power will begin their relocations in November 2019 to facilitate the construction in Summer 2020. Additionally, during construction the bridge will be closed and traffic will be detoured to Paces Ferry Road, which is currently under construction. However, staff is actively pursuing means to expedite the project and will update the community on any schedule changes. To note, the summer period was targeted to limit the impact on traffic by constructing during the lower volume months.