



Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods (BCN)

Gena Eyans, Ph.D., Executive Director

November 12, 2009





The State Road & Tollway Authority (SRTA) is a state-level independent authority created by the Georgia General Assembly to:

- Operate tolled facilities within the state
- Act as the transportation financing arm for the State

SRTA is governed by a five member board of directors

- The Governor serves as Chair





- Constructing, erecting, acquiring, owning, repairing, maintaining, adding to, extending, improving, operating and managing projects (as defined in O.C.G.A. § 32-10-60(5));
- Issuing revenue bonds for the purpose of paying any part or all of the costs of any one or a combination of projects;
- Collecting tolls on each and every project it causes to be constructed or acquired;
- Accepting and administering any federal highway or federal transit funds; and
- Operating the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (GTIB).



- Through SRTA, user fees have been successfully utilized to build :
 - Sidney Lanier Bridge across the Brunswick River in Glynn County
 - GA 400 Extension completed in 1993

- Through its GARVEE and guaranteed revenue bond (GRB) program, SRTA finances needed infrastructure and supporting innovative transportation solutions to address the future needs of metro Atlanta and the state.

SRTA At- A-Glance

Cruise Card Accounts	151,621
Total Traffic	38,989,542
Average Daily Traffic	106,848
Highest Traffic Count (4/16)	131,438
Service Calls	75,576
Average Hold Time	3 mins
Service Level	41.9% in 30 seconds



- All tolls collected are used to pay down bond debt, operate and maintain the road and assist in financing SRTA's overall operations.
- The SRTA Board annually adopts a budget allocating all revenue and reserves, if necessary, in order to ensure safe and efficient operations of the system as well as meet all obligations of the Authority.

FY 2009 Revenue (all sources)	\$20,060,677
Automatic Coin Machine (ACM) Revenue and Manual Lane	\$11,831,746
Cruise Card Revenue	\$ 7,631,800
Toll Violations	\$ 591,927



- Policy on excess toll revenues from the Georgia 400 Extension project effective November 7, 2003.
- Excess toll revenues shall be used for congestion abatement, capacity enhancement, traveler information, or other transportation uses that benefit the Georgia 400 corridor.
- Projects meeting this criteria must further be consistent with purposes for which Federal funds may be obligated by a State under Title 23 United States Code. In general these types of projects include construction, operation, administration, and maintenance of roadway, traveler information, transit, sidewalk, and other transportation projects.
- The Authority may solicit input from others to aid in identifying potential uses of excess toll revenues from GA 400.
- A public notice of intent to expend excess toll revenues along with a formal public comment period shall be issued at least 30 calendar days prior to the Authority allocating excess toll revenues to projects.



Case Studies

Issues to consider based on case studies:

- If tolls are removed, traffic may be increased along the corridor creating severe congestion.
- Air pollution in the corridor could increase with heavier traffic along with travel time's costs.
- The public's acceptance of any tolling alternative must be gained through education, public outreach and political leadership.
- If tolls are continued to fund needed improvements, the state must answer the public's questions of why this is needed, what is gained, and why the pro of removal in 2012 is not being fulfilled.
- Although other states have considered retolling by producing studies and analyses in support of retolling, only one facility has accomplished retolling.

18 facilities studied:

- 12 were detolled and of those, almost half experienced increased traffic as a result.
- 6 facilities continued tolling to pay for improvements.
- Only 1 facility has had success in retolling and 1 other facility is considering retolling.



3 Scenarios



Given these alternatives, the State of Georgia leadership has a complex decision to make regarding the GA 400 corridor before the expiration of the lease agreement in 2012.



Base Scenario

Provides tolls are removed January 2012

Pros

- 1988 and 1989 Letter and Resolution with GDOT/ City of Atlanta is upheld.
- State would be keeping the promise made to the public to remove the tolls once bonds are paid.

Cons

- According to the GA 400 VPPP, after toll removal there will be an 18.2% increase in motorist demand resulting in congestion.
- Future maintenance and corridor improvements would be provided through GDOT, competing for limited funding.
- Removal of tolls may develop a public expectation of toll removal, even for facilities that are managed through pricing, such as HOT lanes, which could have system wide ramifications.

Additional Information regarding Base Case

- No new agreements needed
- Any remaining funds can be expended in multiple ways by statute, including being transferred to GDOT.

Base Scenario Facts:

- Toll plaza demolition is anticipated to cost \$6.1 M
- Final 1998 GRRB Bond debt service payment will be made on July 1, 2011.
- No need for road resurfacing since it was last resurfaced in 2005, which will last 10+ years





Continuation Scenario

Tolls extended through 2023 to address necessary improvements

Pros

- By keeping tolls, additional congestion that would be enticed by toll removal is avoided along with the negative air quality impact.
- If future improvements are made to the corridor based on the bonding capacity over the 20 year period, approximately \$100 million could be made available based on anticipated revenues if tolls are continued.
- Facility will be returned to GDOT in excellent condition after \$17.2 M in resurfacing is done in 2020, reducing the burden of resurfacing for the state for 20+ years.

Cons/ Additional Requirements

- An extension of the current lease and operating agreements with GDOT Board would need to be approved.
- GDOT Board/ City of Atlanta would need to determine a new operating resolution/agreement.
- Potential for public backlash from not keeping the promise of toll removal in 2012 is great.
 - Bonds could be sold immediately and continued tolling would be in place. Will new agreements be needed if bonds are sold prior to the defeasance of original bonds?



Continuation Scenario Facts:

- Assumption that the current toll of \$0.50 is continued for 20 years for the purposes of reducing congestion, reducing negative impact on air quality, or addressing needed corridor improvements.
- Local community groups and jurisdictions have shown interest and support for specific improvements in the corridor.
- As shown in the case studies, six of the eighteen states have successfully carried out continuation of tolls, but improvements have to be made to a facility to justify the continuation of tolling.



Retoll after Toll Removal

Tolls removed as scheduled and retolled to address necessary improvements

- Extension of the GDOT lease on S.R. 400 would need to be approved.
- A new maintenance agreement between SRTA and GDOT would need to be developed.
- GDOT/ City of Atlanta operating agreement would need to be resolved.
- If the tolls are removed, they become general purpose lanes. If retolling occurs at a later date, GDOT would need to change the policy on tolling general purpose lanes.
- A public outreach campaign would need to be conducted to educate the public on the benefits of retolling to prevent public backlash.
- New toll price would need to be developed.
- Retolling has occurred in conjunction with improvements in the corridor, bridge or roadway.
- Increased congestion and possibly degrading air quality while tolls are lifted; maintenance would be provided through GDOT, competing for limited funds.

Retolling Scenario Facts:

- As shown in the case studies, one of the eighteen states have successfully carried out retolling, but improvements do need to be made to a facility to justify retolling.
- The case study retolled after a twenty year period in which the bridge had no toll.



Questions?