

## PROJECT UPDATE

### Federal Environmental Review Process

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process was formally initiated when the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and the city of Savannah, will serve as the Lead Agency for the federal environmental review process. The lead federal agency retains decision-making authority over issues relating to the completion of the EIS.



Major milestones that comprise the EIS process include NOI, Scoping, Draft EIS (DEIS), Public Review, and Final EIS (FEIS) / Record of Decision (ROD). These major milestones, as well as the anticipated time frame for when these activities will take place on Project DeRenne, are illustrated below.

#### Notice of Intent

The NOI to prepare an EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on July 18, 2017 (82 FR 32913).

#### Scoping

Scoping refers to a formal exchange of information for projects requiring an EIS. Agency and public scoping will continue throughout the NEPA process and will be accomplished through a variety of techniques, including public meetings, stakeholder meetings, press releases, and project website updates.

#### DEIS

The EIS is a decision-making tool and will document decisions made throughout the project development process. The DEIS will discuss the following:

- problems that the proposed project is intended to solve,
- environment in which the project would occur (affected environment),
- range of alternatives (possible solutions),
- likely impacts of the proposed action on a variety of environmental factors (impacts shall be discussed in proportion to their significance),

- coordination with project stakeholders and interested parties, and
- mitigation strategies.

### **Public Review**

The DEIS will be published and made available for public review. NEPA requires that federal agencies consult with other agencies and the public prior to making any final decisions on the proposed action. Members of the public and agencies will have an opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS during a 45-day review period. A Public Hearing Open House (PHOH) will also be held during this 45-day review period. This meeting will allow the public an opportunity to review project plans, discuss concerns and questions with project representatives, and provide comments. Comments received during the public review period may help resolve any unresolved issues that need to be considered before any final decisions are made.

### **Final EIS and ROD**

Following public review of the DEIS and PHOH comment period, a Final EIS and ROD will be prepared. The Final EIS/ROD will include the following:

- disclose the outcome of the public review period,
- provide any revised information or data since the publication of the DEIS,
- present any modifications to the proposed action;
- identify a “selected alternative”, and
- disclose the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) decision on the proposal action.

Once finalized, copies of this document will be sent to resources agencies and public parties. The FEIS/ROD concludes of the federal environmental review process. A decision to continue moving forward with the proposed action would allow the next project phases to begin, including acquiring right-of-way and final design.

**Project Website**

[www.ProjectDeRenne.com](http://www.ProjectDeRenne.com)