

Overview & Need

The Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) serves as a major commercial activity center and one of the largest employment centers in the state. Located along I-75 in the thriving northwest corridor in the greater Atlanta Region, the Cumberland CID is experiencing tremendous growth, including six class A office towers, 69,000 jobs, 29,000 residents, and the Atlanta Braves' \$1.3b stadium and The Battery Atlanta.

To accommodate the rapid growth taking place along the whole corridor, former Governor Deal and the Georgia Department of Transportation undertook and delivered one of the biggest public infrastructure investments in the state's history; the \$900 million Northwest Express Lanes system. This 29.7 mile reversible toll lane project opened to traffic in September 2018 and has significantly benefited those who travel I-75 and I-575. In the first year, more than 4.2 million trips have been registered posting travel speeds 30% faster than the general purpose lanes. However, the Northwest Express Lanes do not accommodate direct, safe access for the 100,000+ daily commuters traveling to and from the bustling Cumberland market.

As designed, drivers who wish to access the Express Lanes at the closest point in Cumberland are required to quickly maneuver four to five lane changes in I-75 traffic in a very short distance. Given I-75's traffic volumes, this presents an unsafe condition. Drivers in search of a safer alternative are forced to drive to a different access point several miles to the north, south, east, or west of Cumberland, further hampering traffic conditions along the surface streets.

On July 25, 2019, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao announced \$856 million in grants for state and local infrastructure projects through the INFRA discretionary grant program. Through the Congressional release process Cobb County in partnership with the Cumberland CID was awarded \$5 million for the Akers Mill Ramp project. This would be the final funding component for the Akers Mill Ramp.

Concept Rendering



Funding for the Akers Mill Ramp

The estimated total project cost is \$44.2 million. The funding includes:

Phase 1 & 2: Funds completely assembled.

\$6.3m	Cumberland CID
\$15.0m	Cobb County (via SPLOST)
\$3.5m	State Road & Tollway Authority (via GTIB)
\$4.4m	Georgia DOT (via waived fees)
\$10.0m	Atlanta Regional Commission (via STP)
<u>\$5.0m</u>	<u>U.S. DOT (via INFRA)</u>
\$44.2m	Total Commitments & Sources

Akers Mill Ramp Rendering



Conclusion

The Akers Mill Ramp is now completely funded and will begin construction in summer of 2021. The ramp will complete the I-75 NW Express Lanes, one of the most successful infrastructure projects in Georgia's history. The Ramp is scheduled to be open to the public by 2023 providing direct, safe access for more than 100,000 daily commuters.

Total Project Cost: \$44,200,000

Updated: 12/10/2020