Georgia Department of Transportation

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Construction Traffic Staging Modification

for Project CSBRG-0007-00(128)

Chatham County

P.I. No. 0007128

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT/Department) is proposing a modification to construction traffic staging for Project CSBRG-0007-00(128), P.I. No. 0007128 in Chatham County, Georgia (**Figure 1**). A Public Information Open House (PIOH) was held on April 11, 2011 to show the public a new project concept (Alternative 8) that was developed as a result of the comments and concerns expressed by the public during the May 26, 2005 PIOH. Specifically, the project concept was described as utilizing a reversible lane configuration on the new westbound bridge during the second stage of construction to allow the use of three travel lanes during this period of the construction activities.

Existing Facility

The two bridges currently carrying County Route (CR) 787/Islands Expressway over the Wilmington River are bascule bridges that have to be opened and closed regularly to allow aquatic vessels to pass through the bridge. The eastbound bridge is approximately 800 feet long, with two 12-foot wide travel lanes, while the westbound bridge is approximately 834 feet long, also with two 12-foot wide travel lanes. Each of the bridges is approximately 36 feet wide and has a minimum vertical clearance of 22.3 feet above mean high water when in the down position. The horizontal clearance between bridge piers is approximately 100 feet. The current roadway consists of four 12-foot wide travel lanes, two in each direction, separated by a 30-foot wide depressed median. The existing right-of-way (ROW) varies from 100 to 600 feet in width.

Proposed Facility

The minimum vertical clearance under the proposed new bridges at the Wilmington River channel would be approximately 65 feet above mean high water for vessels using the waterway. The horizontal clearance for vessels would be increased from its current 100-foot width within the existing fender system to a width of approximately 200 feet within the proposed new fender system. The total length of each of the proposed new bridges would be approximately 1,970 feet. The new eastbound bridge would be 36 feet wide between the side barriers (39.58 feet total deck width), providing for two 12-foot wide travel lanes with an 8-foot wide outside shoulder and a 4-foot wide inside shoulder. The new westbound bridge would be 40 feet wide between the side barriers (43.58 feet total deck width), providing for two 12-foot wide travel lanes with a 12-foot wide outside shoulder and a 4-foot wide inside shoulder. The new westbound bridge would be constructed slightly wider than the new eastbound bridge in order to maintain traffic during construction of the eastbound bridge. The roadway would be reconstructed to provide two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction separated by a 44-foot wide median, for a total roadway width of 112 feet. Near the begin and end points of the project, the roadway width would transition from 112 feet to 98 feet to match the existing roadway, including two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction, with the 44-foot wide median tapering down to a 30-foot wide median to match the

median width of the existing roadway. The new roadway segments would provide 10-foot wide outside shoulders, with 6.5 feet paved for bicycle use, and 6-foot wide inside shoulders with 2 feet paved. The bicycle lanes will transition back to the general-purpose lane outside of the project limits. The intersections at Woodhull Road/Causton Harbor Drive and at the Frank W. Spencer Boat Ramp Park would be reconstructed to meet current GDOT design standards. These standards require that the 4-lane roadway be separated by a 44-foot wide depressed median at these two critical locations along the project corridor.

Previously Proposed Traffic Staging

In the first stage of construction, the entire new westbound bridge would be constructed just north of the existing westbound bridge. Eastbound and westbound traffic would be maintained on the two existing bascule bridges during this time. Upon completion of the new westbound bridge, the existing westbound and eastbound bascule bridges would be removed, allowing for the construction of the new eastbound bridge at this location.

During the second stage of construction (construction of the new eastbound bridge), the proposed project would utillize a reversible lane configuration in order to maintain three lanes of traffic (**Figure 2**). The new westbound bridge would be striped to provide for two 11-foot wide outside travel lanes and one 13-foot wide interior travel lane during this stage of construction. This configuration would provide two westbound travel lanes and one eastbound travel lane during the AM peak hours and would provide two eastbound travel lanes and one westbound travel lane during the PM peak hours. Upon completion of the new eastbound bridge, the westbound bridge would be restriped to a new configuration that would provide two 12-foot wide travel lanes, a 12-foot wide outside shoulder, and a 4-foot wide inside shoulder.

Currently Proposed Traffic Staging

There would be no change in the traffic staging for the first stage of construction. The entire new westbound bridge would be constructed just north of the existing westbound bridge. Eastbound and westbound traffic would be maintained on the two existing bascule bridges during this time. Upon completion of the new westbound bridge, the existing westbound and eastbound bascule bridges would be removed, allowing for the construction of the new eastbound bridge at this location.

During the second stage of construction (construction of the new eastbound bridge), the proposed project would utilize a two-lane roadway configuration in order to maintain two lanes of traffic (see **Figure 2**). The new westbound bridge would be striped to provide for two 12-foot wide travel lanes (one in each direction) during this stage of construction. The reversible lane configuration is proposed to be removed in order to simplify the construction staging for the new eastbound bridge. The Department has determined that this traffic staging modification is appropriate for this project because the two-lane configuration has been successfully utilized for previous GDOT projects along CR 787/Islands Expressway.

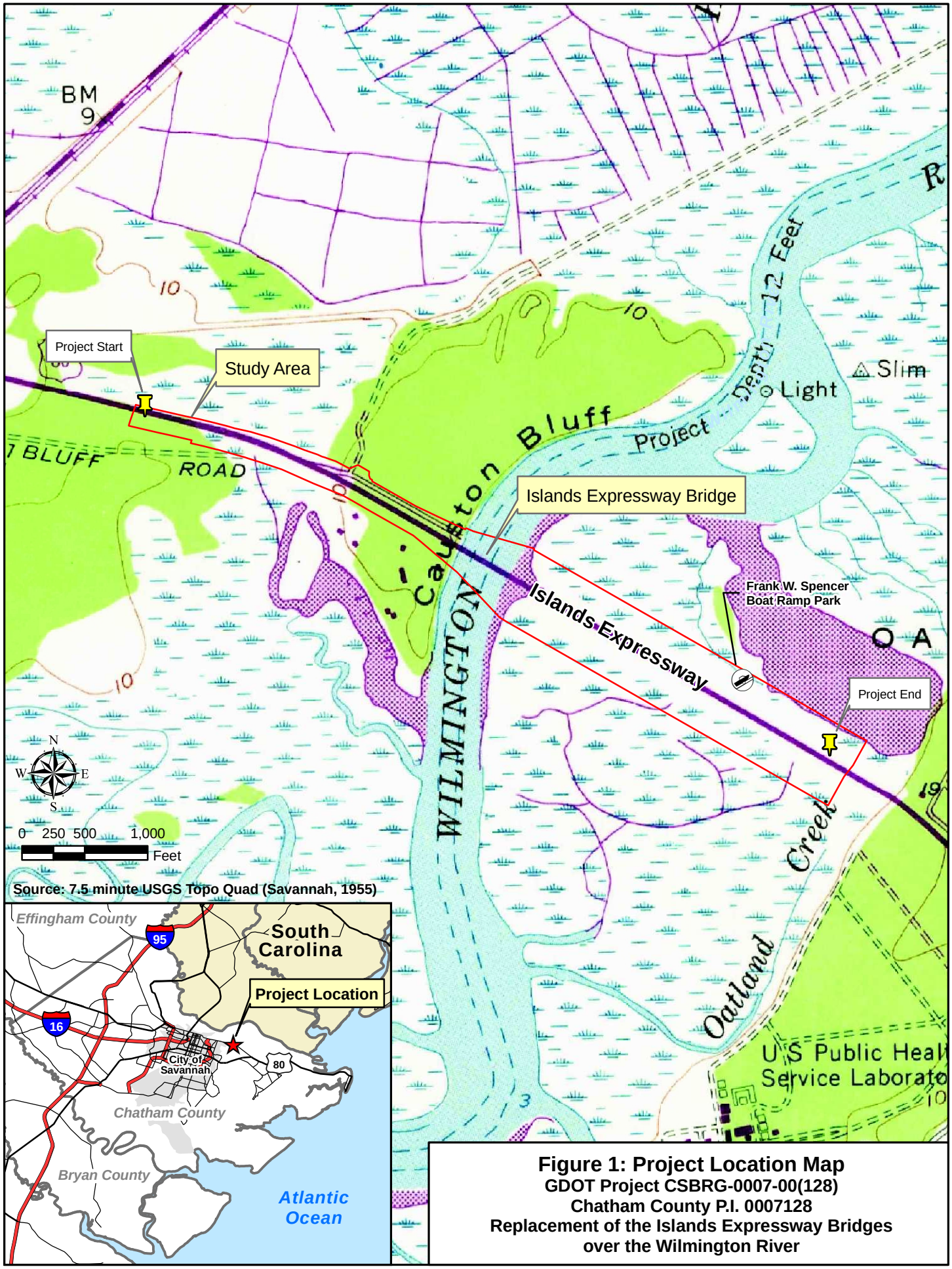
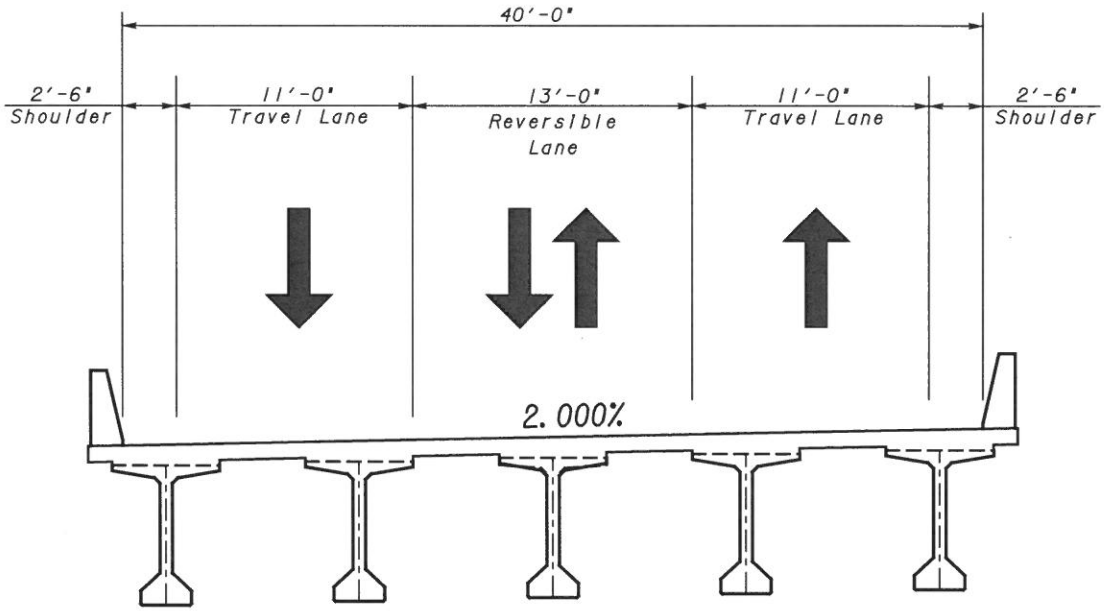
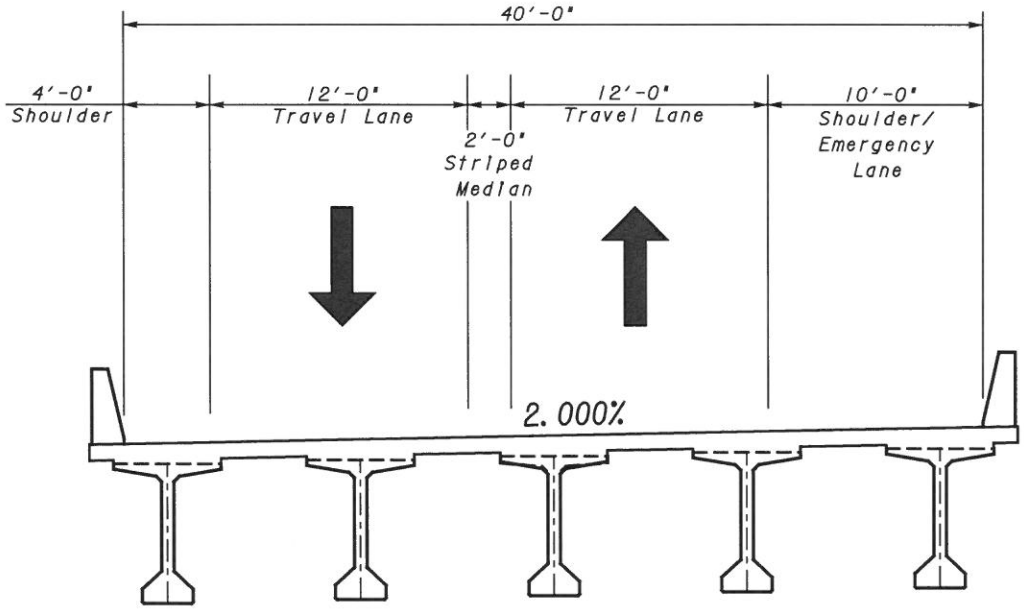


Figure 1: Project Location Map
GDOT Project CSBRG-0007-00(128)
Chatham County P.I. 0007128
Replacement of the Islands Expressway Bridges over the Wilmington River

ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY
STAGING



ORIGINAL



PROPOSED

Figure 2 - Typical Sections
Construction-Phase Traffic Staging
GDOT Project CSBRG-0007-00(128)
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