

**Need and Purpose**  
**Project NH-85-2(153), Fulton County**  
**PI No. 762380**  
**SR 400/I-85 Connector Ramps**

**Background**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) adopted the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the 13-county Atlanta Metropolitan area in April 2000. The Plan addresses travel needs through the year 2025. The RTP is the direct result of a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuous planning process conducted by ARC, local governments and the Georgia Department of Transportation in cooperation with the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/RTP recommends roadway improvements that add two ramps at SR 400 and I-85.

**Proposed Improvement**

The project proposes construction of two ramps at the intersection of SR 400 and I-85. I-85 southbound traffic will have direct access to SR 400 northbound. SR 400 southbound traffic will travel directly to I-85 northbound. The total length of the project will be approximately 1.0 miles.

There are currently no ramps for southbound I-85 traffic to access northbound SR 400, and no ramps for southbound SR 400 traffic to access northbound I-85. The posted speed limit for both facilities in this area is 55 mph. The proposed typical section for both ramps will be a single 16' wide lane with 10' wide shoulders.

**Projects in the area in the 6 years Construction Work Program**

- CM-056-1(56), PI # 721960, SR 400 from south of I-85 to north of I-285 in Fulton County, Preliminary engineering (PE) is authorized and Construction is scheduled for 2004. This is an ITS project.
- CM-00BK(31), PI # 762518, Lindbergh Drive from Peachtree Street to Cheshire Bridge Road in Fulton County – Preliminary engineering (PE) is authorized. This project is construction of sidewalks.

**Travel Demand and Operational Characteristics**

The projected AADT for I-85 and SR 400 is 248,000 and 89,000 in 2008 respectively. It is anticipated that the AADT will increase to 320,000 and 115,000 respectively in the design year of 2028. This is an increase of approximately 29% for these sections of roadway. I-85 is classified as an Urban Interstate Principal Arterial and SR 400 is classified as an Urban Principal Arterial. The projected Level of Service on both I-85 and SR 400 in design year 2008 is LOS E.

**Community Issues**

Fulton County is part of the Atlanta metropolitan area and is a rapidly growing residential area. The 2000 Census listed the population in Fulton County as 816,006. During the 1990 Census year, Fulton County had a population of 648,951. Between 1990 and 2000, Fulton County gained 167,055 residents, a 25.7 percent increase which ranked second in

the region in net population increase. Fulton County is the largest county in Georgia in both land area and population and is the region's most densely populated area. The 2010 population projection for Fulton County is 860,797. In the area of the proposed project approximately 8% of the population lives below the poverty level and approximately 27% are minority. These factors would not impact the proposed project. The land uses in the vicinity of the project is a mix of high density commercial and low and medium residential property.

**Safety**

In 2000 and 2001, the last two years accident data is available, there were 768 accidents reported along I-85, 218 accidents reported along SR 400, and 643 accidents along SR 13, in the project limits exceeding the statewide accident rate per million vehicle miles traveled (MVMT). For 2000, the total number of accidents on I-85 was 390, with 133 injuries and two fatalities, and the total numbers of accidents on SR 400 was 102, with 31 injuries and no fatalities, and the total number of accidents on SR 13 was 306, with 92 and 1 fatality. For 2001, the total number of accidents on I-85 was 378, with 133 injuries and four fatalities, and the total numbers of accidents on SR 400 was 116, with 37 injuries and no fatalities and the total number of accidents on SR 13 is 337, with 106 injuries and 2 fatalities. Below are accident data and comparable statewide averages.

**I-85**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
Total Accidents	390	378
Accidents Per 100 MVMT	575	523
Statewide Accidents Per 100 MVMT	*	197
<b>Accident Ratio ( &gt;&lt; statewide avg.)</b>		265 % >

**SR 400**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
Total Accidents	102	116
Accidents Per 100 MVMT	281	327
Statewide Accidents Per 100 MVMT	*	172
<b>Accident Ratio ( &gt;&lt; statewide avg.)</b>		190 % >

**SR 13**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
Total Accidents	306	337
Accidents Per 100 MVMT	291	384
Statewide Accidents Per 100 MVMT	*	172
<b>Accident Ratio ( &gt;&lt; statewide avg.)</b>		223 % >

\* This information should be available by October of 2003.

The accident data indicates I-85, SR 400 and SR 13, for the proposed project, experiences accidents at a rate exceeding the statewide average for similar classified facilities. The

majority of the accidents were classified as “sideswipe” and “rear end” on I-85 and SR 400, and “angle” and “rear end” on SR 13. The addition of connector ramps will reduce traffic on surface streets in the project area and meet driver expectancy on the interstate. Neither I-85, SR 400 nor SR 13 are on a designated state bike route within the project limits.

### **Need and Purpose**

Currently motorists must exit from I-85 and SR 400 and use surface streets to transition from I-85 south to SR 400 north and from SR 400 south to I-85 north. The proposed ramps will provide vastly improved connectivity through a seamless connection between these two regionally significant facilities. These ramps will relieve the heavily congested surface streets in the area that currently serve as the only connection from SR 400 south to I-85 north and I-85 south to SR 400 north. Also, these ramps will improve the operations of these facilities thereby providing a safer driving environment for the traveling public on SR 400, I-85 and the surface streets in the area. The ramps will reduce driver indirection and delay experience at surface streets which will reduce VMT thereby potentially reducing emissions. The project will provide local and through traffic with a facility that will serve current and future travel demand and provide the public with a safer driving environment.