

Dr. Debra Houry, director of the Emory Center for Injury Control, said the grants will fund several projects.

"The purpose of the center is to use the power of prevention research and science to prevent as many injuries as possible and reach in the community."

Grass, litter envelop highways

Roadside upkeep lacking in areas as money is short.

By Patrick Fox
pfox@ajc.com

Highways are showing signs of growing pains amid Georgia's budget crunch.

Along Ga. 316 near Lawrenceville, waste-high grass waves in the wind on state right of ways. While Dekalb and Fulton coun-

ties have kept their roadside mowing schedules, county roads in Cobb and Gwinnett counties are a little more scruffy thanks to reduced roadside maintenance.

The conditions have prompted some Gwinnett community improvement districts to expand mowing programs of their own.

"That's the first thing people see when they're driving through an area," said Chuck Warbington, executive director of the Gwinnett Village CID. "People make decisions based on first impressions."

Gwinnett Village does weekly right-of-way and sidewalk maintenance from April to August, including mowing, edging and litter cleanup. It already maintains 12 miles of state and 14 miles of county right of way, Warbington said. He expects that to increase.

The Gwinnett Place CID maintains all the right of

ways within its boundaries, including 10 miles of county roads, said Joe Allen, executive director. Likewise, the Evermore CID includes a 7-mile stretch of U.S. 78/Ga. 10 in its roadside maintenance, said Jim Brooks, executive director.

Gwinnett County is saving about \$250,000 by reducing its mowing schedule during the spring-summer growing season to twice along road shoulders and three times along sidewalks and medians. Kim Conroy, deputy transportation director, said the agency will save an additional \$25,000 in reduced overtime.

Couroy said crewmen are instructed to drive their areas and report any instances where tall grass impedes safety.

Sugar Hill maintains its state and county right of way through an arrangement forged six years ago. But Snellville Mayor Jerry Oberholzer said his city has its hands full taking care of its own property and can't afford upkeep for state and county right of way.

Lawrenceville Mayor Rex Millsaps said his city is not considering taking on more right-of-way maintenance at this point.

For now, he said, "we're just writing nasty letters if they're violating our quality-of-life ordinance."

Jan. 1 through June 30. They are a key indicator of campaign organization and momentum more than a year out from the July 2010 primaries.

Johnson was going to run for lieutenant governor before incumbent Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle dropped out of the governor's race to seek re-election due to a medical condition. Johnson had to refund the more than \$400,000 he had raised for his lieutenant governor's campaign.

"For the time, I think we have, we're excited, we feel we're just going to be."

DuBose Porter
House minority leader

Expectations are our own internal funding goals, thanks to the generosity of so many Georgians and the hard work of our finance team," Johnson said.

Scott, meanwhile, raised more than \$180,000 in the past two months and has more than \$85,500 in cash on hand.

Scott, considered a long shot for the nomination, had a strong showing at the state Republican Convention in May and is currently on a well-publicized walking tour of the state.

Scott's total has to be considered strong for a candidate with limited name recognition in much of the state.

McBerry reported raising more than \$18,000 for his campaign in the first six months of 2009.

Considered a long shot to win the nomination, he has \$3,400 left in his account after spending more than \$15,000.

Fire chief tested by finances

Cochran
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hearings and, if approved, would likely leave the city by October. Council members expect an acting chief to be named afterward.

City officials declined comment on the nomination Tuesday, directing questions to the White House.

As U.S. Fire Administrator, Cochran would over-

see, coordinate and direct national efforts to prevent fires and improve fire response. Cochran would also lead fire prevention and safety education programs and professional development opportunities for emergency responders.

"Working closely with our state and local partners, Kelvin will lead our nationwide efforts to prepare for and respond to fire emergencies," Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said in a statement.

Since fiscal year 2008, Atlanta Fire Rescue's budget has dropped from \$74.7 million to \$64.2 million for the 12-month budget period that began July 1.

Some of Cochran's

moves were controversial, such as closing Fire Station 7 in west Atlanta in July 2008. Fire Station 23, on Howell Mill Road in north Atlanta, was closed in December but will be reopened later this week. He also ordered brownouts, temporarily closing fire stations when staffing was low.

Daws credited Cochran with "mitigating the damage" of working with a smaller budget.

"He was handed a bad deck of cards," Councilman C.T. Martin said. "But he handled it well."

Said Winstow, half-joking, "Hopefully, [Cochran] will get us some [federal] stimulus money."



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