

WSBTV.com



Related Stories/Links

Scott MacFarlane Reports

-  [VIDEO: Scott MacFarlane Reports - Atlanta Shortchanged In Traffic-Solving Road Money](#)
- **EXCLUSIVE RAW INTERVIEWS: What Local Traffic Problems Are On Congress' Wish List?**
-  [VIDEO: Rep. David Scott - New "Commuter Rail Projects" To Help Frustrated I-75 Drivers](#)
-  [VIDEO: Rep. David Scott - "Shovels Ready To Go" On New Projects To Help Douglas County Drivers](#)
-  [VIDEO: Rep. Lynn Westmoreland - "Bottleneck" In Henry County is #1 Priority](#)

WEB EXCLUSIVES!

- [See For Yourself: Who's Getting "Earmarked" Federal Transportation Money?](#)
- [Read For Yourself: Personal Letters Written By Congressmembers Asking For Money For Road Projects](#)

Washington Considers Funding, Projects To Ease Atlanta Congestion

Road Remedies Being Sought

Scott MacFarlane

Posted: 2:14 pm EDT September 18, 2009 Updated: 4:52 pm EDT September 18, 2009

WASHINGTON -- Despite concerns Atlanta is getting woefully shortchanged, local roads are set to receive at least *some* federal money to ease traffic and gridlock.

WSBTV.COM reviewed thousands of pages of federal spending requests in the U.S. House of Representatives and confirmed about \$3 million worth of so-called "earmarks," money specifically set aside, for local projects. Those projects include:

\$1,000,000 - I-85 Interchange Modifications - at Pleasant Hill Road, Gwinnett County

\$500,000 - I-85/Jimmy Carter Boulevard Bridge Replacement, Gwinnett County

\$750,000 - I-75/Third Army Road Interchange Construction

\$500,000 - Hammond Drive Roadway Upgrades - Sandy Springs

\$500,000 - Commerce Crossing Bridge over I-20 - Rockdale County

Metro-Atlanta's share of the recently-approved House Transportation Appropriations bill, which includes \$2.486 billion in earmarks, is criticized as too small.

U.S. Senators, who last week debated their own transportation funding bill, included \$4 million to help MARTA purchase new, clean-fuel buses. They also approved \$2 million for US 41 /Cobb Parkway expansion and bridge replacement.

Georgia's Congressional leaders, citing Atlanta's explosive population growth, are lobbying for tens of millions of dollars for additional projects. A spokesman for Rep. Lynn Westmoreland, a Republican from Newnan, told WSBTV.COM that the bottleneck on Interstate 75 in Henry County is the "Congressman's top priority for his term." Though no earmarks are listed for the project in 2010, several Georgia Congressional staffers and a spokesman for the Georgia Department of Transportation said I-75 is atop most "wish lists" for future funding from the federal government.

VIDEO: Scott MacFarlane Reports - Atlanta Shortchanged In Traffic-Solving Road Money

The need for federal funding for local roads is growing, according to multiple sources. WSBTV.COM has learned GDOT's state revenue is down 15 percent, nearly \$150 million, from 2008. What's more, GDOT has a laundry list of pressing road needs, as traffic and population continue to rise in Metro Atlanta. A spokesman said GDOT is still devising plans for lane work on Interstate 285, including lane-widening and the development of bus-only lanes. GDOT confirms it's also considering major expansion of GA-400 and Interstate 85 on the northeast and southwest sides of Atlanta.

The GDOT spokesman described the cost of its wish list as "enormous." None of the projects is slated to be funded by earmarks in 2010, according to WSBTV.COM's review of Congressional spending plans.

Copyright 2008 by WSBTV.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.