



**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **I-85, GA 400 Northbound Ramps Open to Traffic Governor Deal, Others Mark Historic Occasion**



*Governor Deal speaks at dedication of new GA 400 flyover ramp to I-85 while DOT Commissioner Keith Golden and former Atlanta Mayor Sam Massell frame the city's skyline.*

ATLANTA – Long anticipated by thousands of southbound drivers on Interstate Highway 85 and Georgia State Route 400 – and even more eagerly awaited by tens of thousands living and working in Buckhead – new flyover ramps connecting I-85 south to GA 400 north and GA 400 south to I-85 north opened to traffic late this afternoon.

The \$21.4 million ramps – financed by former GA 400 toll collections – will provide the two heavily travelled corridors (appx. 90,000+ southbound vehicles a day on I-85; 60,000+ on GA 400) with much needed northbound connectivity to one another. More than 32,000 vehicles are expected to use the new ramps every day –

that number increasing to nearly 40,000 by 2035.

And as much as this new direct access will help motorists, it will provide desperately needed relief for those who live and work in Buckhead and whose local routes – Lenox and Cheshire Bridge roads, Sidney Marcus Boulevard, Buford Highway and countless neighborhood streets – have been clogged for years with cars and trucks trying to make the northbound connection as best they could.

“This project is going to help make an already great place to live and work even greater,” Governor Deal commented. “It is important for government to keep its promises. We kept our promise to end the tolls on Georgia 400 and we still managed to work together to construct this wonderful project and several more on this corridor. I want to thank (Commissioner) Keith Golden at DOT and (Executive Director) Chris Tomlinson at the

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## **I-85-GA 400 Northbound Ramps Open to Traffic – pg. 2**

Road and Tollway Authority, their staffs and the good people of the project’s engineering and construction firms for their outstanding efforts. This is a great day for Buckhead and for Atlanta.”

Governor Deal was introduced by former Atlanta Mayor and Buckhead Coalition founder and president, Sam Massell, who has labored and lobbied for this project for decades. “I think we have come full circle now in

Buckhead on this – from dreaming it and advocating for more than 25 years to being here today opening it. It is a wonderful accomplishment and will mean so much, not just to motorists on these two roads, but to the thousands and thousands of us who live and work in Buckhead and travel its streets each day. On their behalf, I thank Governor Deal and all those who helped get us to this proud moment.”

The project was constructed as a component of Georgia DOT’s Design/Build program in which the two phases of work were combined into a single contract to expedite completion, Commissioner Golden noted. Archer Western Contractors, Ltd., of Atlanta, and Heath and Lineback Engineers, Inc., of Marietta, collaborated on the work. Design began in the summer of 2011 and actual construction the following February. The “flyover” portion of the GA 400 to I-85 ramp is nearly 2,800-feet long and stands 52 feet above I-85 and 57 feet above the Buford Spring Connector. Some 15,000 cubic yards of concrete were used in the construction; there are 128 bridge beams – the largest weighing 65 tons – in the five separate spans that constitute the ramps. The project also includes a pedestrian trail landscaped with native Georgia species and being constructed by the Department in partnership with the South Fork Conservancy as a visual mitigation for the Lindridge-Martin Manor neighborhood.

The State of Georgia is a global economic power; only 10 other states and just 27 nations worldwide have more productive economies. And every segment of Georgia’s economy – from agriculture to manufacturing to tourism – depends on the state’s transportation system to thrive. Transportation drives Georgia’s economy. Additional transportation funding is necessary to keep Georgia a national and world leader. For more information on Georgia’s transportation system, please visit [www.dot.ga.gov](http://www.dot.ga.gov) or subscribe to our Press Release RSS feed

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