



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DeKalb County and Metro South CID Receive a \$460,000 Federal Planning Grant to Eliminate the Feasibility of a Grade-Separated Constitution Road at Norfolk Southern Railroad**

DeKalb CID receives one of only 63 RCE grants provided to projects in 32 states

**Atlanta – June 12, 2023** – As part of the federal Railroad Crossing Elimination program (RCE), Metro South CID (MSCID) and DeKalb County were awarded a \$460,000 grant for a planning study to evaluate the feasibility of a Constitution Road Underpass at the Norfolk Southern Railroad crossing. The grant was issued from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration. The RCE program provides funding for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. This RCE planning grant award is part of \$3.2 million in Federal funding to help Georgia eliminate blocked rail crossings and one of only 63 grants provided to 32 states across the U.S. This federal grant will fund 80% of the planning costs with the MSCID providing 20% in project matching funds; with a total planning study amount of \$575,000.

The proposed scope of work will include public participation, formation of committees to assess the equity, environmental and cultural impacts, conceptual design, and limited surveying as part of the assessment in planning for a potential grade separation at the existing Constitution Road at-grade Norfolk Southern crossing. According to MSCID Executive Director Larry Kaiser, "This crossing currently blocks traffic approximately 45 times a day, which creates a dangerous situation for all modes of transportation". According to Kaiser, "A grade separation would improve local crossings, enhance regional safety and mobility benefits by eliminating conflicts and delay for vehicles, public transportation (buses), freight operations, bicyclists and pedestrians, including providing for more efficient public safety emergency response from both the fire and police departments."

According to Senator John Ossoff, "After hearing from communities statewide about railroad crossing blockages that are not just inconvenient, but downright dangerous, Senator Warnock and I elevated this as one of our highest priorities. Resources through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are now flowing across the State of Georgia to plan and begin construction to address this crisis. We've listened, we've heard, we've acted, and help is on the way."

In the preparation of the grant package, the MSCID received 10 support letters from businesses in the district, as well as from presidents of the East Conley Zoning Committee, Bouldercrest, and Southwest DeKalb homeowner associations.

On behalf of the MSCID Board of Directors, Executive Director Larry Kaiser, P.E., extends his thanks to DeKalb County Commissioners Larry Johnson and Ted Terry for their project support and to Transportation Director David Pelton for his submittal of the grant on behalf of the MSCID.

“This RCE planning grant will go towards evaluating this railroad crossing and studying construction alternatives to address safety, connectivity and environmental sustainability,” said Kaiser. “We are grateful to Senator Ossoff and Senator Warnock for recognizing the importance of this project and their steadfast support in obtaining funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.”

### **About Metro South CID**

The Metro South Community Improvement District was organized for the purpose of assisting commercial, industrial, and manufacturing business owners to promote common interests in enhancing the safety and general appearance, as well as developing partnerships with local, state and federal governments to leverage resources for improvements to roadway infrastructure in Conley, Georgia. Metro South CID, formerly the Greater Conley CID and formed by the Conley Area Business Association (CABA), is known as Truckers Alley and is home to some of the largest logistics and transportation companies in Georgia. In addition, the opportunities for the growth of logistics-related companies attracted Shadowbox Studios (formerly Blackhall Studios), one of the larger film and entertainment studios in metro Atlanta, to the CID. For more information, visit [www.metrosouthcid.org](http://www.metrosouthcid.org)

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