Fifth Street bridge renovation moving forward

A park-like setting to dampen the interstate effect

Michael Hagearty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Beginning next week, the state transportation project that widens the Fifth Street bridge crosses a milestone.

Beginning April 1, road crews will alter the flow of traffic from the northern half to the south, closing the old route in anticipation of its demolition and reconstruction.

Though still a two-lane road, the project’s scope includes a fully landscaped area unlike any in the city. According to Frank Lamia, the project manager in Facilities assigned as the liaison between Georgia Tech and the state’s Department of Transportation, the idea is to bring collegiate tranquility to an area that is overwhelmed with the cars and noise of the downtown connector.

The project will widen the sidewalks and add roughly 125 feet of elevated green space, creating a park-like setting that blocks out views and dampens the noise of the interstate below.

Completion of the two-year project is still expected on or near its original November deadline. Lamia indicated that construction would go more quickly on the northern side, as crews have nearly completed the necessary foundation work on the span’s east end as well as the structural support at its midpoint.

Some of the work will require lane closures on the interstate, but it should cause a minimal effect on interstate traffic due to a Federal Highway Administration mandate that all such work be done at night.

Architecture building project receives lead gift

Dan Treadaway
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The College of Architecture’s Hinman Building and Architecture East/West renovation project is well on its way to success with a recent lead gift from a Virginia family with strong ties to both Georgia Tech and the state of Georgia.

The $7.5-million renovation project will add much-needed studio, classroom and administrative space for the College of Architecture’s academic programs. The project will include both the addition of a renovated Hinman Building to the College’s facilities inventory as well as renovation of the Architecture East and West Buildings, constructed in 1952 and 1976, respectively.

The project donor, Dolores G. Reinsch, is a native of Brunswick, Georgia, and the grandmother of current Architecture student, Gerald Pierce. Reinsch’s son-in-law, J. Almont ‘Al’ Pierce, who earned degrees from Tech in 1958 and 1959, is founder and principal of Pierce Architecture.

Reinsch’s daughter, Lola C. Reinsch (Pierce), is a commercial real estate developer and CEO of The E. G. Reinsch Companies in Arlington, Virginia. Dolores Reinsch, 92, resides in a retirement community in Arlington, Virginia. She has enjoyed several visits to the Tech campus over the years, including Family Weekend during her grandson’s freshman year.

“The Architecture Program at Georgia Tech laid the foundation for my career nearly 50 years ago, and it’s doing the same for our son right now,” said Al Pierce. “My wife, my mother-in-law and I are true believers in the College of Architecture’s mission, and we know just how important this renovation and expansion project is for the continued success of that mission.”

In recognition of this gift, the Gift continued, page 3

New multidisciplinary research portal goes live

Matt Nagel
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

The Optics and Photonics (O&P) thrust area at Georgia Tech has launched its new interdisciplinary Web portal that highlights the teaching and research activities on campus in this area. Web site organizers say they hope the site will become a valuable tool for students and faculty working in the O&P area to reach out to the rest of the scientific community and society.

“Before I joined Georgia Tech, I did not realize that the Institute had one of the largest and most vibrant optics and photonics programs in the country,” said Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor Benard Kippelen. “Because of the multidisciplinary nature of optics and photonics, these activities span across several schools on campus. As a result, they were not as visible to a visitor or prospective student. This Web site has an integrative function, and when you complete the sum of its parts, the O&P program at Georgia Tech is stunning.”

The portal, created by Tech’s Portal continued, page 3
How do you calculate a student’s grade-point average for admissions?

We use the student’s academic courses in their college preparatory curriculum. We give extra consideration for more rigorous classes like honors, College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.

What happens when a student is waitlisted?

The waitlist is for students who could be academically successful here, but for whom we don’t have enough space in the freshman class. Once we get the deposits in from the students who’ve been accepted, we take a look at the number of students who are planning to attend. That tells us how many spaces have opened up and how many waitlisted students we can offer admission.

Do students who apply to the non-engineering programs have different standards for admission? Do you give special consideration for gender, race or ethnicity?

All applicants are held to the same standard of admission no matter what the student’s intended major, race, ethnicity or gender. He or she is competing with the entire applicant pool.

When should a student begin preparing for college admissions?

It’s getting more and more competitive to gain admissions to Tech, especially in the non-engineering areas. This year, applications for summer admissions fell to the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts are up 30 percent. The College of Sciences is seeing a 22 percent increase in applications, while the College of Management is up about 10 percent. That means students need to chart their course through high school, starting with their freshman year, carefully to ensure they are taking the classes that will make them the most competitive. Typically, students should start visiting colleges during the summer before their junior year to help decide where they want to apply.
Office of Institute Communications and Public Affairs (ICPA) is the second in a series of research portals that highlight interdisciplinary research in strategically critical research areas. Optics is the study and the manipulation of electromagnetic radiation. Optical scientists and engineers work primarily with the part of the spectrum that spans from X-rays to the far infrared. Optical engineers use the discoveries of scientists to design and fabricate optical equipment that advances industry and improves quality of life.

Photons is the technology that deals with the generation, manipulation, transport, detection and use of light energy. Photons carry information through fiber optic cable, retrieve information in laser radar and other sensor devices and can transport light energy. Some of the research areas highlighted in the Web site are biophotonics, diffractive and holographic optics, nonlinear optics, optical communications systems, optical materials, optoelectronics and nanophotonics, quantum optics and ultrafast optics.

"The primary objective of the site is to attract students," said Nippelen. "We hope that the information provided on the Web site will convince them that O&F offers promising careers in a variety of cutting-edge areas of science and engineering, and that they will consider Georgia Tech as one of the best schools to prepare them for these promising careers."

Nippelen says the O&F group also hopes to attract new faculty colleagues to Georgia Tech by emphasizing the quality of science and engineering at the Institute.

Architecture East Auditorium will be named in honor of the Reinsch and Pierce families.

"The College of Architecture is indeed fortunate to have the support of the Reinsch/Pierce family," said Dean Thomas Galloway. "The confidence they have placed in us with this generous gift is both humbling and inspiring. Once our renovation and expansion project is complete and our students and faculty have the state-of-the-art facilities they need, we hope the Reinsch and Pierce names will serve as a permanent symbol of both the hard work and the heartfelt philanthropy that will have made such impressive facilities possible. The entire College of Architecture community is profoundly grateful."

Architecture Parent Supports Facilities Renovation

Alumni are not the only ones doing their part to support the College of Architecture's planned $7.5-million renovation projects.

Dick Goodman, the parent of a current Architecture student, has pledged $100,000 toward renovation efforts that will provide badly needed space through the addition of a modernized Hinman Building to the College's inventory of instructional space, as well as significant renovations of the Architecture East and West Buildings.

"I am a big supporter of the College of Architecture because they are truly committed to their students," Goodman said. "The study of architecture is a very space-intensive enterprise, and the College is at the point now where they simply must have more space that is up to current standards. I am thrilled to be able to give a gift that will help meet the needs of Architecture students."

Goodman and his wife Connie reside in Hanover, Indiana. Their son David, who completed his bachelor's degree in architecture at Georgia Tech in 2004, is currently enrolled in Tech's Master of Architecture program.

IN BRIEF:

CRC repair update

Beginning April 3, the competition pool and diving well at the Campus Recreation Center will be closed for repairs. They will remain closed for two to four weeks in order to repair the damage to the ceiling and acoustical spray from the recent flooding. The leisure pool will remain open, but space will be limited for recreational swim. Visit www.crc.gatech.edu for updates and more information.

Students serve on Spring Break

Forget Padre Island, Destin or even Cancun, this spring break's hot destination for a group of Georgia Tech students is New Orleans. Last week, a group of students helped people whose homes were damaged by hurricane Katrina rebuild their lives. This is the latest in a series of efforts by the students, faculty and staff of Georgia Tech to help those who were displaced by the seasonal storms.

Working with Habitat for Humanity, a total of 44 Tech students traveled to Louisiana for an eight-day trip to help residents of St. Bernard/Parish clean up their storm damaged homes. This is the third such trip Tech students have taken to the areas damaged by last year's storms.

VP Thompson named honorary alumnus

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance Bob Thompson was designated as an honorary Georgia Tech alum by the Alumni Association’s annual Gold and White Honors gala, held earlier this month at the Atlanta History Center.

During the past 11 years, Thompson has been the behind-the-scenes driver of more than $1 billion worth of construction and development on campus. He was recognized for leadership that has made Georgia Tech more cost-efficient and customer-friendly and thrust Tech to the forefront of modern universities.

Alumni Association President Joe Irwin cited Thompson’s dedication to the Institute.

“Bob Thompson has worked tirelessly, leading the effort to enhance the quality of our campus facilities in terms of both new construction and renovation of our historic buildings. He’s led the way in enhancing our business processes as well. It’s most deserving recognition.”

Tech hosts collegiate national championships

The Campus Recreation Center hosted the NCAA men’s national swimming and diving championships last week, a three-day, 21-event competition held at Georgia Tech for the first time.

While the large contingents from programs such as Auburn, Arizona and Stanford competed for team honors, sophomore diver Evan Stowers (above, right) and senior swimmer Sam Morgan represented Tech in their respective events.