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Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms Announces Plan to Create Atlanta's First City Transportation Department during State of the City Address

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms today, during her second Annual State of the City Address, announced that she will establish Atlanta's first dedicated Department of Transportation (DOT) to improve the safety and accessibility of city streets and bring new vision and leadership to meet the increasing demands of Atlanta's growing population. The move is a key pillar of Mayor Bottoms' One Atlanta agenda, connecting neighborhoods with each other and with jobs, schools and services, and providing more equitable transportation choices for Atlantans.

"I have publicly spoken about my grandmother, who rode MARTA to work every day for 30 years and the generational impact her ability to simply get to and from work has had on my family. Like my grandmother there are many working families who rely on public transportation. But the importance of transportation extends beyond buses and trains," said Mayor Bottoms at today's State of the City Address. "Today, I am proud to announce the creation of Atlanta's first dedicated Department of Transportation, a one-stop-shop, combining the work of multiple City departments, to better deliver for Atlanta's mobility future."

The Atlanta Regional Commission forecasts that the Metro Atlanta region will add more than 2.5 million people and 1 million jobs by 2040, making forward-thinking transportation strategies critical. The management of Atlanta's more than 1,500 miles of streets is currently dispersed across numerous city agencies. City officials will look to create a one-stop transportation agency that combines the road construction and repair operations of the City's Department of Public Works with the long-term planning capabilities of the Department of City Planning's Office of Mobility. These duties will be integrated with the infrastructure investment program of the Renew Atlanta Bond / TSPLOST, which manages capital roadway projects backed with dedicated, voter-approved funding streams.

The new agency will manage a range of transportation improvements from roadway repair and maintenance to sidewalk and bike lane construction to installing and upgrading streetlights and traffic signals, making streets more accessible to people of every age and ability. Combining multiple functions into a single unit with a common vision will enable the new agency to streamline its funding and project delivery pipelines, and to ensure that all roadway projects meet Atlanta's long-term economic and mobility goals.

"For two years, I've envisioned and worked to establish an Atlanta Department of Transportation because our residents deserve better coordination, effectiveness, mobility and citizen engagement from our transportation network. I would like to thank Mayor Bottoms for her full support and several key members of her cabinet for working with us to plan, design and implement this new department."

Atlanta City Council authorized a study on the creation of a DOT in 2017, and the Mayor's Office began a feasibility review and internal assessment last year. City Council will now review the Mayor's proposal and must enact legislation authorizing the standalone transportation department, the structural

organization of which will be set up throughout the spring. Mayor Bottoms has also authorized the drafting of a strategic transportation plan to establish the vision and set key goals and accountability measures for the new agency.

“A city’s success begins with its streets, and a dedicated department is critical to putting the transportation pieces together,” said Janette Sadik-Khan, transportation principal At Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that will advise on the creation of the DOT. “Atlanta has an unprecedented opportunity to change course on transportation, and Mayor Bottoms is showing the strong leadership that a city needs not just to grow but to make real progress for Atlantans.”

The Mayor’s announcement starts a period of assessing and developing the organizational and reporting structure of the eventual transportation department, a process that will be overseen by Senior Transportation Advisor Jacob Tzegaegbe, whom Mayor Bottoms appointed in December. Once the new DOT is created, the Mayor will appoint a leader, who will be in an effective position to represent the city’s interests for winning and directing federal, state, regional and local funding; developing more effective partnerships with state and regional transportation agencies like Georgia DOT, MARTA/ATL; and collaborating with local partners like Community Improvement Districts.