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CITY OF ATLANTA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Atlanta Continues to Lead in Innovative, Sustainable Infrastructure

City completes its second and third road resurfacing projects using rubber-modified asphalt

ATLANTA – In advance of National Recycling Day on Sunday, November 15, 2026, the Atlanta Department of Transportation (ATLDOT) announces completion of two additional resurfacing projects on Fayetteville Road and North Avenue using innovative Rubber Modified Asphalt (RMA) technology.

Building on the City's 2025 pilot along downtown Atlanta's Ellis Street corridor, RMA incorporates recycled tire rubber into asphalt to improve pavement durability and help reduce the urban heat island effect. To complete the projects and evaluate their impacts, the City partnered with Georgia-based non-profit organizations and industry leaders in paving, recycling and research.

Rubber-modified asphalt is an innovative paving technology that incorporates recycled material from end-of-life tires sourced from Georgia. The material has been proven to extend pavement life while providing additional benefits, including reduced roadway noise and lower levels of airborne particulate pollution. Researchers at the University of Georgia are also evaluating the City's expanding network of RMA roadways to study potential overnight cooling benefits during prolonged heat events.

The North Avenue and Fayetteville Road projects repurposed approximately 1,500 end-of-life tires processed into an engineered rubber powder and blended into the asphalt mix. Rubber-modified asphalt has been successfully used on roadway and pavement test tracks across the United States and has been shown to increase pavement lifespan by 30% to 50% compared with conventional asphalt.

"These roads are about more than asphalt" said ATLDOT Commissioner Solomon Caviness. The City of Atlanta believes this technology will create quieter roads, help to keep our city cooler, and save money. Creative solutions that provide environmental sustainability and cost savings are exactly what ATLDOT is seeking to achieve for the betterment of our communities.

The City of Atlanta is strategically deploying RMA in roadway resurfacing projects to enhance infrastructure performance, reduce impacts on surrounding communities, and help address the urban heat island effect. Studies have documented road noise reductions ranging from 1 to10 decibels, depending on roadway conditions and traffic volumes.

In partnership with the University of Georgia, the City is also pioneering research into the temperature performance of rubber-modified asphalt. Led by Dr. Marshall Shepherd, the research will compare

surface and air temperatures above RMA roadways with those of adjacent conventional asphalt roadways. Early findings indicate consistent overnight cooling patterns that may reduce heat impacts to communities in major metropolitan areas.

“Atlanta is reimagining how roads can create better, more resilient communities,” said Allie Kelly, Executive Director of The Ray, a non-profit organization focused identifying and supporting eco-friendly road technologies. “That vision can help shape the future of cities nationwide.”

Rubber-modified asphalt may also help cities adapt their transportation networks to accommodate evolving mobility trends, including electric transit vehicles and increasing volumes of e-commerce deliveries. The weight, travel patterns, and frequent stopping of these vehicles can place additional stress on roadways. Because rubber-modified asphalt offers greater resistance to rutting and cracking, it presents a promising solution for communities preparing for future transportation demands.

Liberty Tire Recycling supplied the recycled rubber for the projects, Blount Construction completed the paving, and The Ray helped bring the partners together. The projects used the Georgia Department of Transportation’s specification for dry-process rubber modified asphalt and further expand Atlanta’s growing network of sustainable roadway infrastructure. Together, these projects advance the City’s efforts to connect infrastructure quality and performance with environmental resilience.

“Atlanta is truly the leader in implementing a vision for how sustainable roads using recycled tire rubber can benefit its citizens and environment,” according to Stratton Kirton, vice president of sustainability at Liberty Tire Recycling.

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