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Editor [Faye Edmundson](#) faye.edmundson@patch.com



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DDI Construction Contract Awarded

Diverging Diamond Interchange at Interstate 85 and Pleasant Hill Road in Duluth designed to alleviate traffic congestion, improve traffic flow.

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Work on the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) at Interstate 85 and Pleasant Hill Road in unincorporated Duluth is scheduled to begin this summer following approval Tuesday (June 19) by the Gwinnett County Commission of the contract for its construction. Completion is anticipated in May 2013.

The Diverging Diamond Interchange design allows drivers to cross over to the "opposite" side of the road on the interstate bridge to make turns onto I-85. The project also includes a new walkway in the median for pedestrians to use. The DDI is a collaborative project by the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District (GPCID), Gwinnett Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Transportation.

The contract was awarded to Snellville-based E.R. Snell Contractor Inc., according to a press release issued by Gwinnett County. Snell was the lowest of three bidders at just under \$4.3 million. The project involves widening a half-mile of roadway plus new retaining walls, curb and gutter, sidewalks and traffic signals. The timing of other signals approaching the intersection will also get adjustments to ensure smooth traffic flow.

The DDI is located near Gwinnett Place Mall. "The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District has worked closely with our traffic engineers on the new design, which is similar to the diverging diamond that opened recently on Ashford-Dunwoody Road at I-285 near Perimeter Mall," Gwinnett Transportation Director Kim Conroy said in the press release. "We estimate this will extend the useful life of the existing bridge by about 10 years with no widening needed."

"Construction begins this summer and continues to mid-November," according to Joe Allen, executive director of the GPCID. "Work will be work halted during the holiday shopping period. Construction resumes in early January with completion probably in May 2013, but a lot depends on weather and other factors."

The cost of the DDI project is being covered by SPLOST and GPCID funds.

A DDI is also planned at I-85 and Jimmy Carter Boulevard in the Gwinnett Village CID.

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