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Finding the right way Gwinnett Place CID rebrands with a new sign system

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DULUTH - The central business Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District will soon be easier to get around.

That was the announcement from Joe Allen, the CID's executive director, as he laid out a variety of coming changes that will help achieve the group's continued goal of enhancing the economic vitality of the area. First on the list - new signage and a wayfinding system with implementation coming later this summer.

"These specially crafted directional methods have proven to boost driver awareness of alternative routes," Allen said. "Any extra assistance that we can offer to drivers will help ease congestion as they learn how to reach destinations more efficiently."

Staff photos: Su Anderson

A sign with the Gwinnett Place logo sits at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road and Satellite Boulevard. The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District is placing signs around the area, which ranges from Old Norcross Road and Pleasant Hill south to Club Drive.



A gateway monument sits in front of the Gwinnett Prado plaza on the corner of Old Norcross Road and Pleasant Hill Road. The gateway is part of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District's plan to use

Besides assisting drivers with finding their way, the 10 directional signs and four gateway monuments will also help with a continued branding of the CID area. He cited the city of Norcross and the Perimeter CID as having similar signs and monuments, which have helped brand those areas.

"Most long-term Gwinnettians know about it (CID area) already, but at the same time 30 percent of newer residents don't know about it," Allen said. He said the signage idea stemmed from a decision made by the 2004 revitalization task force and was then implemented by the CID board in 2006.

Drivers can expect the signs at Steve Reynolds Boulevard at Shackelford Road, Venture Drive and Satellite Boulevard, Pleasant Hill Road at Venture Parkway, Gwinnett Station and Gwinnett Prado.

Allen said the signs should be installed in time for the holiday shopping season beginning in November.

He also said two more sidewalk projects are getting ready to launch - one on Old Norcross Road and the other at Old Norcross Road at Steve Reynolds Boulevard. Both are part of a larger, three-year, \$1.6 million sidewalk installation project. He said the additional sidewalks will fit in largely with the CID's 21st century vision of making the district more of a business and residential or mixed-use area.

"We're seeing a lot of resurgence in this area," he said.

branding so residents and visitors can identify the area.

As for future projects, Allen said the CID is considering installing adaptive technology at traffic lights to better improve traffic flow and is also now funding a conceptual plan to redesign the dangerous intersection of Gwinnett Place Drive at Venture Drive. He also said a potential \$15 million reconfiguration of the bridge at Interstate 85 and Pleasant Hill Road to a single-point urban interchange is still in the pipeline, but also said the bridge probably wouldn't be completed until 2015.

"Traffic is the number one issue for this area, more so than crime, more so than vacant buildings," Allen said. "We did a study and found out that the number one reason why people don't come to Gwinnett is because of the traffic."

Kim Conroy, the deputy director of the Gwinnett County Transportation Department reiterated Allen's views.

"We see this as a very positive thing," he said. "We've worked very close with all the county's CIDs on programs like this and we know that revitalization is the key."

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