



Spring 2008

The Progress

The official newsletter of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District

New opportunities flourish at GPCID

DISTRICT SEES INCREASED BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Greater Gwinnett Place finds itself flush with new businesses, expansions of existing locations and the opening of unique educational options.

While virtually every community is struggling with economic downturns, the Gwinnett Place CID has seen recent rising interest with new ventures coming to parcels already in use or in need of revitalization.

"We are more than pleased with the influx of new business activity," says Joe Allen, Executive Director of the Gwinnett Place CID. "Our mission is to help maintain the economic attractiveness of this area, and we welcome the opportunity to support the efforts of these many fine corporate and educational entities."

NEW ARRIVALS AND PROPERTY RENOVATIONS

Here is a look at some of the many new ventures and property additions taking place throughout the District:

- The new Holiday Inn Gwinnett Place will open this summer as Premier Hotel Corp. completely remodels a building on Day Drive near Pleasant Hill Road. When complete, the location will include 129 custom-appointed rooms, 700 feet of meeting space and a restaurant with lounge.

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Our Mission:

"Enhance the economic vitality of Gwinnett's central business district by strengthening the area's role as the center of commercial activity."

INSIDE:

- Ongoing Projects Update
- Work on Redevelopment Ordinance Progresses



- International business leader, Rhee Brothers Inc., formerly announced their plans at a CID-hosted press conference to introduce a new Assi Plaza that promises to be one of the largest indoor international food markets in the U.S. The Assi location will occupy the former Wal-Mart east of I-85, and the project represents a \$12 million investment and 300 jobs.
- Atlanta developer George Thorndyke announced that Korean-giant Megamart is opening its first U.S. location in the former Macy's at Gwinnett Place Mall. The new M Department Store, which joins more than a dozen others open in Korea and China, promises east-meets-west shopping opportunities and a unique, upscale experience.
- A newly remodeled and expanded McDonald's is opening on the site of the former location on Pleasant Hill Road near I-85. The new store is patterned after the corporation's recently unveiled high-end



concept, making it one of the trendiest stops for the well-known brand.

- The new Plaza at Breckinridge development is bringing in more than 24,000 square feet of Class-A retail condominium units, including an end unit with a drive-thru, to Breckinridge Boulevard.
- Telecom firm Xicom Wireless now occupies 37,000 square feet at Gwinnett Center on Pleasant Hill Road. Xicom is a leading provider of comprehensive metro-grade wireless services, and the move into the District marks the relocation of the company's headquarters.
- Other sizable and noticeable upgrades or additions underway or recently completed include the new Hyatt Place, Hennessy dealerships, Atlanta Toyota, Sam's Club, United BMW, Sears prototype at Gwinnett Place Mall, McDaniel Square and Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place.

NEW EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Gwinnett Place is also developing a reputation as a place for continuing and higher education with the addition of two new locations:

- Gwinnett Technical College will soon occupy 30,000 square feet on two levels of Gwinnett Place Mall's Belk wing with classes beginning this fall. The Gwinnett Place CID took the lead to facilitate meetings between Simon Property Group and Gwinnett Tech's leadership.
- Saint Leo University is now conducting classes in the Clarkston Building at the Gwinnett Center on Koger Boulevard off Pleasant Hill Road.
- These locations joined the Keller Graduate School of Management of DeVry University located at the Gwinnett Center complex.

CID gets much-needed traffic signal



Through the cooperation of the Gwinnett Place CID and Gwinnett County, a much-needed traffic signal is making area travel considerably safer.

The CID funded the equipment costs for county DOT crews to add a new signal at the intersection of Mall Boulevard and Market Street. Businesses and drivers familiar with the crossing have sought such an upgrade for years.

The CID went a step further to enhance the area with the installation of new landscaping at the intersection's median, corners and islands.



Driving tip – new Interstate lanes offer better access

The Georgia Department of Transportation has opened new collector-distributor lanes along I-85 north between Pleasant Hill Road and Boggs Road and the exit ramp from Highway 316 east to Boggs Road.

Drivers can now drive from Pleasant Hill Road to Boggs Road, Sugarloaf Parkway or Highway 120 without ever entering Interstate traffic.

However, the new lanes require commuters to commit sooner to access Highway 316, Boggs Road or Highway 120.

Maps and other navigation resources are available from the Georgia Department of Transportation online at www.dot.state.ga.us.

Work on redevelopment ordinance progresses

A plan formally supporting redevelopment in two CIDs is now in the hands of county and regional leaders.

A proposed redevelopment ordinance, jointly composed and submitted by the Gwinnett Place and Gwinnett Village CIDs, is under evaluation with the staff of county government. The ordinance was also submitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), which helped fund the initiative.

Gwinnett Place CID Executive Director Joe Allen and his Gwinnett Village CID counterpart are meeting county leadership to discuss the plan.

“At the end of the day, we believe this to be a good

ordinance with the built-in flexibility necessary to spur redevelopment,” Allen says. “We have working in conjunction with numerous stakeholders to complete this proposal, and we anticipate this proposal will meet with success.”

The ordinance is intended to offer design standards and density incentives, among other tools, to bring new life to key areas. Input was gathered from business owners, property owners, real estate professionals and those working directly with redevelopment projects.

Revisions to the plan will be made according to feedback gathered during the official review processes.

Gwinnett Place CID – Ongoing Projects Update

Here is a quick look at some of the many continuing enhancement efforts...

PLEASANT HILL ROAD BRIDGE: The lengthy process continues for the interstate modification report (IMR), a crucial first step toward reconstructing the Pleasant Hill Road bridge. Portions of the IMR already completed include field reviews during peak travel periods and area traffic counts. Other research continues to test the suitability of seven possible interchange configurations, including a single-point urban interchange (SPUI).

SIGNAGE AND WAY-FINDING: The CID is working with the Gwinnett Department of Transportation to place illuminated street name signs and distinctive medallions in the District. The additions will assist drivers and accentuate the branding of the CID area at the following locations:

- Steve Reynolds Boulevard at Shackleford Road
- Steve Reynolds Boulevard at Venture Drive
- Steve Reynolds Boulevard at Satellite Boulevard
- Pleasant Hill Road at Venture Parkway
- Pleasant Hill Road at Gwinnett Station
- Pleasant Hill Road at Gwinnett Prado

As part of the same project, the CID will add new gateway markers and 10 vehicular directional signs at various locations in the District.

STREETSCAPING: The Georgia Department of Transportation has approved the Phase 1 concept plan to add streetscape enhancements along both sides of Pleasant Hill Road. The plans also have been sent to the Federal Highway Administration for their review. In the meantime, the CID is working with the Gwinnett Department of Transportation to address other details to initiate the streetscape project.

SIDEWALKS: Plans are in the works to add new sidewalks connecting Steve Reynolds Boulevard, Old Norcross Road and Pleasant Hill Road as well as Ring Road, Old Norcross Road and Satellite Boulevard. The CID will work in cooperation with Gwinnett County to complete these sales-tax funded sidewalk installations.

PARKING: The CID was recently awarded a grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to complete a major parking management study for the District. Identifying current and future parking infrastructure needs is part of the CID's mission of supporting redevelopment and is in keeping with long-range goals established by its Board of Directors.

AREA PROMOTION: The CID is working with the Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau (GCVB) to produce a new map guiding area visitors to key hospitality destinations. The maps will focus on Gwinnett Place area amenities and will be distributed to surrounding hotels and motels. Funding for the project was provided by the GCVB.

GPCID, Chambers partner for first-of-its-kind networking event



The Gwinnett Place CID was host to the Gwinnett Chamber, Korean-American Chamber and Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at a first-of-its-kind Network Gwinnett Special Edition at Santa Fe Mall in early April.

More than 130 chamber members turned out for this event designed to expand the business networks for the businesses located in the Gwinnett Place CID.

“This special event is the first of what we hope will be many more events where the Gwinnett Chamber partners with our peer organizations to promote and grow the businesses and entrepreneurial spirit in the Gwinnett Place CID,” says Vince DeSilva, Gwinnett Chamber Vice President of Membership.

Similarly, the CID was host to the Gwinnett Chamber’s inaugural “hYPe: Gwinnett Young Professionals” program, which brings together professionals ages 21-39 for relationship building, career development and community involvement.



Gwinnett Young Professionals

The Gwinnett Chamber was recently named one of the top three large U.S. chambers, in part, because of efforts to grow small business, support economic development and partner with organizations like the Gwinnett Place CID.



GPCID key supporter of TAD legislation

The Gwinnett Place CID took a leading role to support the passage of state legislation regarding redevelopment.

The CID’s Board of Directors approved a resolution urging lawmakers to provide a legal remedy following a State Supreme Court ruling that local board’s of education cannot participate in tax allocation districts (TADs).

The CID also joined other entities to hire Massey and Bowers LLC for governmental consulting and advocacy in the General Assembly relative to TADs.

As a result of these and other efforts, voters will consider redevelopment ballot questions during this year’s upcoming elections.

Nonprofit foundation to support CID

Working to form the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement Foundation, the Gwinnett Place area is closer to obtaining a key financial status necessary to receive certain kinds of project funding.

The Foundation has received its certificate of incorporation as a first step to establishing a nonprofit. With the process underway, the Foundation is able to initiate grant applications and requests for which the CID could not

qualify. The nonprofit standing is required to be considered for a number of available funding sources, including special foundations supported by national businesses boosting local improvement efforts.

The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement Foundation is in the process of completing the nonprofit application procedures to obtain full recognition from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Keeping up the District's appearance

Crews working on behalf of the Gwinnett Place CID recently refreshed pine straw around the landscaping planted along Interstate 85. Crews are present throughout the week to remove trash and maintain clean roadways.



GPCID bridging real estate resources

CID officials have placed a special emphasis on bringing together real estate professionals for the benefit of addressing available retail and office space in the District.

To that end, the CID was host to a unique brainstorming session featuring 25 of the District's prominent brokers, property owners and other real estate professionals. Attendees helped provide insights into ways the CID can better promote the area for reinvestment tied to available properties.

It is possible the CID may add an economic development

component to its Web presence in the near future, offering access to real estate information related to available commercial properties.

Additionally, representatives with the Partnership Gwinnett initiative as well as Gwinnett County's economic development offices have offered to conduct a special property owners/brokers meeting centered on the CID. A meeting date will be announced soon at www.GwinnettPlaceCID.com.



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