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Funds to ease traffic on bridges

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LAWRENCEVILLE — The transformations of two of the most congested bridges over Interstate 85 got boosts this week, when Congress tapped money for the projects.

Both chambers of Congress approved appropriations that included the funds — \$1 million for Pleasant Hill Road and \$500,000 for Jimmy Carter Boulevard.

“The business communities at Jimmy Carter and Pleasant Hill have been linchpins in Gwinnett’s economy for decades,” Gwinnett Commission Chairman Charles Bannister said. “I am grateful for the federal assistance for the improvements to both bridges, which will be key to the successful redevelopment of both areas.”

Both spans are key to redevelopment efforts of local Community Improvement Districts.

Gwinnett Village CID officials are working to widen the Jimmy Carter bridge, while the Gwinnett Place CID leaders developed a plan for a single-point interchange at Pleasant Hill to try to reduce traffic.

“This new support greatly enhances the project and puts it in an even better position for completion,” Gwinnett Place CID Board Chairman Mark Williams said. “I am more encouraged than ever that we will bring a newer, better bridge to provide greater access and service to the businesses of Gwinnett Place.”

The Jimmy Carter project would add three more lanes and upgrade signals.

“This project will bring much needed relief to congestion in the area,” Gwinnett Village Executive Director Chuck Warbington said. “We are excited knowing that this project is moving and will be a catalyst for positive improvements in the area.”

Both have received earmarks of local sales tax dollars and the CIDs are chipping in cash.

“The county has shown its commitment to the projects with SPLOST funds, and we look forward to working with both CIDs, the federal government and the state to improve the interchanges so that

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commerce can again flow freely through these important business hubs,” Gwinnett Transportation Director Brian Allen said.