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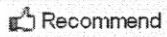
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Study to examine I-85 traffic

A new study will determine if light rail, express buses or other options are the best alternatives to the Interstate 85 commute.

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LAWRENCEVILLE — A new study will determine if light rail, express buses or other options are the best alternatives to the Interstate 85 commute.

Officials approved a \$1.1 million contract last week for the study, which community improvement district leaders hope will carry the transit discussion since a project to create a rail line to the Gwinnett Center is unlikely to be included in a regional sales tax funding list.

“This project has been a major priority for businesses in the CID for the past several years. We can improve the southern core of Gwinnett by increasing transportation options and providing a significant economic development boost,” said Executive Director Chuck Warbington of the Gwinnett Village CID.

The group, along with the Gwinnett Village CID and Federal Transit Administration, are bearing a portion of the costs.

“We’re pleased to collaborate with the county, regional and federal transportation officials to pursue this much-needed transit alternative analysis and are committed to improving access throughout the greater Gwinnett Place area,” Gwinnett Place CID Chairman Leo Wiener said.

According to a press release Atkins North America Inc. is charged with comparing no-build, express bus, bus rapid transit, light rail and commuter rail options. The 18-month study will include cost estimates, proposed operation plans, ridership forecasts and a cost-effectiveness analysis of all the options, as well as their impacts on traffic, travel patterns, the environment and land use.

“Gwinnett’s population has increased so much over the last few decades. Today’s commuters need more transportation options,” Chairwoman Charlotte Nash said. “This study will include public hearings with advisory committees on policies, technical issues and community concerns.”

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