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Gwinnett County Diverging Diamond Interchange opens

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WINNETT COUNTY, GA (CBS ATLANTA) - The first ever Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) opened in Gwinnett County Sunday morning. It is only the second project of its kind in Georgia.

It is located on Pleasant Hill Road in Duluth, which is one of the county's busiest roadways.

"It's a big change to the operation," said Alan Chapman, deputy director of the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation. "Just take it slow and pay attention to the signage and the striping."

The new configuration shifts traffic to the opposite side of the bridge and makes left turns onto the interstate easier and improves the flow of traffic.

Some are skeptical that drivers will understand how to navigate their way on the diverging diamond.

"It will probably create accidents and all sorts of congestion, especially during rush hour time," said Domonique Griffin, of Duluth. "I'm sure there will be some challenges."

"If they can do it in New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Utah, Missouri and all these other places, I think we can figure it out here in Gwinnett County as well," said Jim Allen, executive director of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District (CID).

The CID is a public-private partnership that works to improve the commercial district.

Many businesses said the traffic congestion along Pleasant Hill Road forces people to avoid the area and means lost revenue.

"As a business owner and a property owner, I'm frustrated with it just like everybody else," said Mark Williams, who owns a print shop. "It's very congested here. We're looking forward to getting this flow going so we don't have that anymore."

Police officers will stage at the diverging diamond Monday morning to help drivers on their morning commute.

"The diamond is going to confuse people," said Maura Weiner, of Lawrenceville.

Construction in the area will continue for the next several months as crews install additional lights and landscaping.

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