



Highway 78 Community Improvement District District Update

July 2006 ~ Vol. 5, No. 3
Info for District Members and Friends

MAKING 78 GREAT!

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Our Mission:

To establish a vibrant, upscale destination area; improve business development opportunities; and enhance property values by developing and promoting coordinated transportation and community character improvements to benefit property owners, business owners, and residents along the Highway 78 corridor.

Partnership for progress

Hwy 78 CID joins City, County, and Georgia DOT to begin design and engineering of improved intersection at US 78 and SR 124



The intersection where Scenic Highway, also known as State Route 124, meets U.S. Highway 78 in Snellville is targeted to receive major safety and traffic-flow improvements. Construction could begin by late 2011.

On Tuesday, June 6, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners voted to provide a million dollars from 2005 SPLOST transportation funds as its share of the pre-construction engineering and design work for the project. The City of Snellville previously authorized the same amount as its share of the local matching funds. The Hwy 78 CID is also committed to participating financially should design fees exceed the funds allocated by local government.

The state Department of Transportation will contribute up to 20 percent of the cost of the project and will manage the design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocations and construction. The federal government will pay the 80 percent of all remaining costs including land acquisition, construction and additional engineering. Georgia DOT estimates the total project cost at \$48 million.

The intersection of U.S. 78 and S.R. 124 is one of the busiest in Gwinnett County with over 65,000 vehicles per day passing through. The intersection is a regional thoroughfare handling traffic from Walton, Gwinnett, Rockdale, and DeKalb Counties. As yearly volume continues to increase, so have the number of accidents and the length of delay caused by congestion at the intersection.



Chairman
Charles Bannister

"This project demonstrates what can be accomplished by a concerted effort of cooperation among all the agencies involved, and the use of SPLOST funds from both the county and city that makes these types of large projects possible," said Commission Chairman **Charles Bannister**.

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County acquires 23 acre park along Hwy 78

South Gwinnett Athletic Association now a county facility

The South Gwinnett Athletic Association (SGAA) approached county officials recently with an offer to sell their 23.1 acres on McGee Road in Snellville in order to preserve the land and facilities for future generations. On Tuesday, June 6, the Board of Commissioners agreed to play ball.

The County paid \$1,143,500, which is “considerably below the fair market value for the land and improvements,” according to Community Services Director **Phil Hoskins**. Facilities include baseball fields, a football stadium, indoor roller hockey rinks, and a maintenance building plus concession stands and picnic pavilions. The non-profit, volunteer-based SGAA formed in 1966 to provide supervised youth sports programs. Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation currently works with 22 youth associations throughout the county to provide similar programs at public parks. SGAA continues to provide these services after the new South Gwinnett Park became official on July 1.

District 3 Commissioner **Mike Beaudreau** said, “The South Gwinnett Athletic Association has provided quality services for the youth of Gwinnett County for the past 40 years. SGAA volunteers have worked tirelessly to get to this point and this partnership between the association and Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation will allow these programs for the children of the South Gwinnett area to continue. I’m pleased that the SGAA legacy will be preserved.”

SGAA President **Jim Fellers** agreed that making the facility a county park is in the best long-term interests of area residents. Chairman **Charles Bannister** said the Board’s action shows “our commitment to revitalization of established areas” and is consistent with the Parks and Recreation master plan.

Former Hwy 78 CID Board Member **Emory Morsberger** said, “Gwinnett’s purchase of the SGAA is an incredible win/win for the county, the dedicated volunteers of the SGAA, the City of Snellville, the 78 corridor and most of all, the kids that play there!” Mayor **Jerry Oberholtzer** echoed that sentiment saying, “The kids continue to be the big winners at SGAA and the City appreciates all that the volunteers have done over the past 40 years and all the county will do over the next 40.”

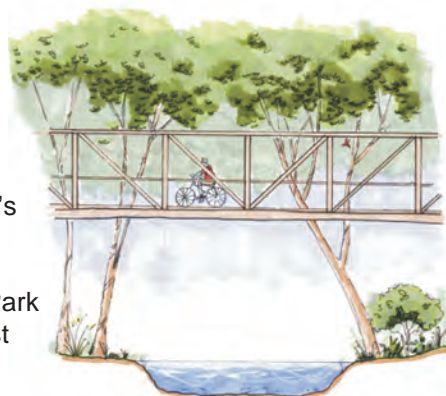
Hwy 78 CID requests sidewalks

96 potential projects improve pedestrian safety

Gwinnett County allocated funding through the 2005 SPLOST for sidewalks and multi-use paths within the three previously identified revitalization areas encompassed by Gwinnett’s CIDs. **Chris Lindsey**, Hwy 78 CID summer intern from the University of Georgia, recently completed an inventory of potential sidewalk projects and identified 96 projects that total over 157,000 linear feet.

On July 1, the Hwy 78 CID submitted for consideration 21 of the highest priority sidewalk projects including a pedestrian bridge crossing the Yellow River. Each CID-suggested project will connect to and expand the 14 miles of sidewalks that will be installed by the Georgia Department of Transportation along U.S. 78 with construction of the median next year.

Lake Lucerne community leader **MB Strickland** says, “Our community is entering a new era of pedestrian friendly connectivity with the addition of the sidewalk projects on Lake Lucerne Road and Highway 78 and we look forward to the CID’s vision for a pedestrian bridge at the Yellow River. Linking families to the Yellow River Game Ranch, Starbuck’s, Mountain Park Park and at least six area schools is a real boost for revitalization in our area. We’re thrilled.”



CID Security Team

Major Activity Summary

Jan – June 2006

Alarm Investigations	13
Area Checks	3437
Business Visits	347
Traffic Pullover	9
Burglary, Robbery, Theft	7
Total Incidents	3568
Total Citations Issued	4
Total Patrols	170

We’re making 78 great!

We’re Safe on 78

CID joins DDA supporting City

Economic Development Manager's focus is building business

Yet another partnership will soon benefit the Hwy 78 corridor. The City of Snellville is seeking a full-time Economic Development Manager to market our community, assist existing business, and attract new, quality development.

The Mayor and Council authorized the new position in the FY 2007 budget, encouraged by the support of the Snellville Downtown Development Authority and the Highway 78 CID. The DDA has pledged \$10,000 and the CID will add another \$5,000 toward creation of the staff position.

Mayor **Jerry Oberholtzer** says, "Our City has enjoyed great success over the past several years addressing vacancies and redevelopment. The addition of an Economic Development Manager will sharpen our focus on insuring longevity with existing businesses and attract the high quality developments we desire."

Jimmy Norton, DDA Chairman and CID Board Member added, "Snellville's popularity now, as in years past, has greatly increased the number of businesses we enjoy. Three or four decades ago most business owners and developers knew each other. Today, these relationships need to be reestablished and invitations extended to other new companies that will benefit our community. I think that's one critical and exciting task for an Economic Development Director."

For additional information, contact the City of Snellville Planning Department at 770-985-3514 or visit the city's website at www.snellville.org.

Partnership for progress

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Snellville Mayor Jerry Oberholtzer, Gwinnett County District 3 Commissioner Mike Beaudreau, and CID Executive Director Brett Harrell at the intersection of U.S. 78 and S.R. 124

"As the area continues to grow, unique solutions like this one will help us upgrade our major roads and intersections to handle the increased traffic," said District 3 Commissioner **Mike Beaudreau**. "I appreciate the support both the City of Snellville and Highway 78 Community Improvement District leaders have shown for improving this key part of our transportation network."

Mayor **Jerry Oberholtzer** stressed the importance of this project saying, "We cannot leave the 78/124 intersection to chance. The future viability of Snellville is at stake and working with all levels of government we will provide transportation solutions for our community sooner rather than later."

"At over 65,000 cars a day, it's roundabout time this intersection received the cooperative attention of all our transportation partners," said 78 CID Executive Director **Brett Harrell**. "The CID is confident that working together a solution is possible that will preserve Snellville's downtown community while providing congestion relief and improved safety."

County selects planning committee

Hwy 78 CID Board Member Gary Custar included

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners named citizen members to the Comprehensive Planning Committee on June 26. Gary Custar, the County's representative on the Highway 78 Community Improvement District Board, was among the citizens selected to serve.

Over the course of the next year to eighteen months, planning consultants will conduct research and meet quarterly with committee members to update the County's long-range growth and transportation plan. **Custar** says, "It is an honor to be included in the core committee that will take citizen's input and make recommendations for creating a brighter future for our County."

Forrest Adair CID Chairman



Forrest Adair
Board Chairman

Continuing the Highway 78 CID Board's tradition of rotating members as chairman, **Forrest Adair** assumed the role of Chair of the Community Improvement District during the

April 26, 2006 Board Meeting. Forrest will serve until April 2007, at which time the recently elected Vice Chair, **Ken Shiver**, will take on the Chairman's duties.

Adair is an Atlanta native and principal in Williams-Adair Realty. He is active in the Council for Quality Growth and the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce among other civic associations.

CID awarded County funding

Revitalization grant will
enable sewer capacity study

Continuing support for redevelopment efforts, Gwinnett County Chairman **Charles Bannister** included funding for CID-sponsored revitalization projects within the recently adopted county budget. The County awarded the Hwy 78 CID \$60,000 toward a small area sewer capacity study.

The CID will provide an additional \$65,000 to determine capacity and expansion feasibility of sewer service in the area east of the Yellow River to Jessica Daron Court. Pending the outcome of the study, property owners may have an opportunity to participate in expanding sewer service in the vicinity to encourage revitalization and redevelopment of existing parcels.

Georgia DOT approves technology

Hwy 78 CID requested enhancements will reduce congestion

The Georgia Department of Transportation has incorporated into the upcoming median safety project numerous technology enhancements requested by the Highway 78 Community Improvement District. These enhancements will result in reduced congestion, improved mobility, lower maintenance and repair costs, and a more attractive corridor.

Marion Waters, Director of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Traffic Engineering at Gresham Smith & Partners, the consulting firm working with both the Georgia DOT and Hwy 78 CID says, "The realistic foresight, progressive vision and community leadership provided by your organization (the Hwy 78 CID) is evident by the many improvements being made along the corridor for a thriving and viable community. The economic benefit to the businesses along the route is just one of the many successes being experienced as a result of your efforts."

Among the technology enhancements included along the corridor are decorative support poles and mast arm assemblies for thirteen signalized intersections. Each intersection will also include lighted street signs that will improve motorist's perception of cross street names, reducing confusion and improving nighttime visibility. (conceptual image - not an approved plan) >



Another technological upgrade is the inclusion of video detection traffic sensors rather than traditional in-pavement loops. The use of video detection will result in lower maintenance costs for Gwinnett County and fewer disruptions to traffic for installations and repairs. Further, reprogramming of the detection zones to accommodate new traffic patterns and specific detection needs for changes to signal operations can be made with no disruption to traffic.

As another benefit of the efforts of the Highway 78 CID, the Georgia Department of Transportation has made the decision to upgrade the interconnection of the traffic signals along the 78 corridor to a fiber optic cable system. Fiber optic cable interconnects will provide more reliable service, and enable the use of a permanent traffic monitoring system supplying real time traffic volumes and congestion information to both Gwinnett County for the traffic signal operations and to the Georgia NaviGator Intelligent Transportation System. The enhanced system will include the replacement of the existing obsolete and mostly non-functioning traffic surveillance cameras and the installation of several new cameras for critical areas. It will also include permanent traffic monitoring systems for volume and average traffic speeds. The new systems will provide both Gwinnett County and GDOT the ability to dynamically adjust signal timing for the optimization of traffic progression and to advise motorists of traffic conditions via the internet and other communications methods.

Hwy 78 CID Board Chairman **Forrest Adair** says, "Though many of these technological enhancements are invisible, seamless improvements, this investment will result in a noticeable reduction in congestion for the traveling public and lower operating and maintenance costs for the county and state."

Thanks and Congratulations

The Hwy 78 CID extends congrats to Senator **Don Balfour** recognized as a "Champion of Cities" by the Georgia Municipal Association.

We also offer sincere thanks to **Dwight Harrison** for his year of service as our Chair and to retiring Board Member and founding Chair **Emory Morsberger** for his guiding vision and we welcome our newest Board Member **Jim Corcoran**

Need A Speaker?

The Hwy 78 CID has several speakers available for civic groups, home owner associations, school gatherings, or church meetings. Want an update on planned road improvements, landscape enhancements, revitalization, or any of the activities of the Hwy 78 CID?

Sign Up Today

The Highway 78 CID has launched a new e-Newsletter that details the plans for the U.S. 78 median safety project as well as other activities of the CID. Visit the Hwy 78 CID website today and sign up to receive our e-News!
<http://www.78cid.org>

Contact Us

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Another Perspective

Shiloh grad shares his view of U.S. 78



Chris Lindsey

As many local news organizations have reported, the Highway 78 corridor will soon be a construction zone. The Georgia Department of Transportation is going to install a median which will replace the "suicide lanes" - the dangerous reversible lane system that stretches for seven miles through Snellville. As a local resident who grew up in the area, I can tell you the median is long overdue. I graduated from Shiloh High School in 2004, and for most of my high school career my parents refused to let me drive on Highway 78 because of the lane system.

There are many worries, though, that the median construction will bring thriving business along 78 to a rapid halt. The Highway 78 Community Improvement District (CID) was formed in 2003 to work with the Georgia DOT to insure that business along the corridor would continue to grow. The CID is a tremendous asset for the businesses along the 78 corridor.

What about those of us that don't own property within the Highway 78 CID? We will all have to suffer through the agonizing traffic during the construction period. Is the 78 CID doing anything beneficial for those of us that live, work, and shop along Highway 78?

Yes! The 78 CID is working hard to make sure that you and I are able to continue about our lives with minimal interruption by construction and the median. The CID has assembled an e-newsletter for traffic updates, so we will all know ahead of time when and where delays will be so we can plan accordingly. Displays will be placed on either end of the corridor to notify drivers of construction delays, and the system will be updated throughout the day. The CID is currently working on several projects to connect business entrances along 78 so that when the median is completed, people can use one break in the median to access many businesses. The CID is also helping fund a state of the art system known as Intelligent Traffic System to make sure traffic flows through the intersections in the quickest and safest manner possible.

The Highway 78 CID is also helping plan sidewalk projects that will increase pedestrian access to parks and businesses along the 78 corridor. When any of us wishes to save a little gas money, we will now have sidewalks that provide enough connections to get us where we need to go. And what if we want to exercise or play in and around the Highway 78 corridor? Gwinnett County is expanding more parks in our area and adding parks at Vecoma on the Yellow River and South Gwinnett Park on McGee Road!

Although the 78 CID was created to help business in the area, its job does not stop there. During construction the CID will help keep commuters informed of construction areas and delays. When construction is completed, the corridor will have a newer, safer lane system and businesses will be more accessible to shoppers. The 78 CID is working to improve business along 78, as well as working to improve the lives of commuters, shoppers, and residents in the area.

Chris Lindsey grew up in Gwinnett, graduated with honors from Shiloh High, and currently attends the University of Georgia seeking a degree in Political Science and Pre-Law. He has worked with the Highway 78 CID each of the past two summers and recently completed an extensive sidewalk inventory of the corridor for use in gaining construction funding.

CID Calendar

July 26, 2006

Board Meeting
Snellville City Hall
2:00 p.m. – public invited

August 23, 2006

Board Meeting
Snellville City Hall
2:00 p.m. – public invited

September 27, 2006

Board Meeting
Snellville City Hall
2:00 p.m. – public invited

Shop 78

Georgia DOT approves plantings

Hwy 78 CID requested median plans receive green light

The Georgia Department of Transportation has approved a design variance request by the Highway 78 Community Improvement District to permit plantings within the landscaped medians along U.S. 78. Landscape enhancements have been a major focus of the CID since inception.



Brett Harrell, CID Executive Director, said, "Georgia DOT continues to be an outstanding partner with the Hwy 78 CID. We are sincerely appreciative of their positive review of our land-

scape plans and we also thank PBS&J, our consulting firm that has worked tirelessly to implement the vision our Board has established for the corridor."

The six mile stretch of U.S. 78 from East Park Place Boulevard to the intersection of State Route 124 will contain approximately 28 planted medians. Most medians will be planted with low growing groundcover and ornamental shrubs. Five of the wider medians will include crape myrtles as an added focal point.

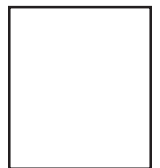
Photo illustration above prepared by PBS&J as a conceptual image and is not an approved planting plan.

"Our goal is to increase your property values and improve your business"



Highway 78 Community Improvement District

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**Key intersection improvement
at US 78 / SR 124 advancing**

County acquires 23 acre park

**CID supports City's Economic
Development Director**