

# District Update

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Information for District Members and Friends



## Kathy Bailey Evermore Community Champion

Kathy Bailey, a professional engineer and Traffic Safety and Design Manager with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), received the second annual Community Champions Award presented by the Evermore Community Improvement District (CID) during the U.S. 78 groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, September 14, 2007.

U.S. Congressman John Linder was the inaugural recipient of the award that recognizes individuals for their dedication, professionalism, and steadfast service to the citizens of south Gwinnett.

Evermore CID Executive Director Brett Harrell made the presentation before nearly 100 that assembled for the groundbreaking beginning the U.S. 78 safety project that will remove the reversible lane and light system. Harrell says, "Our community champions serve in the halls of Congress, the halls of GDOT, and within the corridor itself." He continued, "Kathy Bailey exemplifies

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## U.S. Highway 78 Transportation Improvement Project Underway

*Cut the cord, bring down the lights  
and X-OUT the reversible lanes!*

The Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT), Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, and Evermore Community Improvement District (CID) held the long awaited Highway 78 groundbreaking ceremony for the median project on September 14th. The ceremony was held near the corridor's Park Place Gateway at the corner of Highway 78 and East Park Place Boulevard.

Dignitaries and Public Officials that participated in the ceremony included Representative Melvin Everson - Georgia House Transportation Committee, Commissioner Mike Beaudreau - Gwinnett County District Three, Mayor Jerry Oberholtzer - City of Snellville, Russell McMurry - Georgia DOT District Engineer, Mr. Ken Shiver - Evermore CID Chairman, and Brett Harrell - Evermore CID Executive Director.

Approximately 100 guests attended the event with many Federal, State and County offices represented. The crowd was extremely energetic and excited about the future plans for the commercial corridor. The majority of construction will be done during evening hours, after 7 p.m., so that disruption of business is kept to a minimum and motorists keep moving. Upon completion of construction, the Evermore community will realize safety, mobility, access, and aesthetic improvements. Everyone involved with the "transportation improvement-movement" agrees that the investment in this project will return much greater rewards for our future.

The Georgia DOT and C.W. Matthews Contractors have established their construction offices at the corner of Highway 78 and Bethany Church Road. Significant pre-construction efforts are underway on the corridor, and the day has finally arrived to get started. It's a great time to be an Evermore District business because our future is very bright!

Additional project facts are located on page 4 and updated frequently at the Evermore CID website: [www.EvermoreCID.org](http://www.EvermoreCID.org).

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# South Gwinnett's 'Grand Experiment' is Underway

by Ken Shiver, Chairman,  
Evermore Community  
Improvement District

Can a highway safety project of the kind that usually hurts business be used as a catalyst for improving business, increasing property values, enhancing the quality of life and generally revitalizing an entire community?

Historically, the answer would be "No," but the members of the Evermore Community Improvement District are betting that they can beat the odds.

Four years ago, the stretch of Highway 78 that runs from Snellville to the DeKalb County line was watching a migration of retail and commercial interests to the shiny, new developments of northern Gwinnett. Crime was increasing, and area household incomes were not. Infrastructure was lacking, and the county did not seem to be focused on stopping the erosion. Worse, the Georgia Department of Transportation was preparing to remove the hated reversible lane system, which was a threat to motorists, and replace it with a median, which was equally a threat to area businesses, which live or die on accessibility.

That's when several of the area's property owners decided that if they did nothing, the future was pretty predictable, and the picture was anything but pretty. They launched a strong recruiting campaign, made their case successfully, and in May, 2003 the Highway 78 CID (since re-christened the Evermore CID) was a reality, with its members voluntarily increasing their property taxes by 5 mils to fund the CID's efforts.

With last Friday's official ceremony "cutting the cord" to drop the reversible lane system, we are at the start of construction. But what makes us think anything will be different from what we were facing four years ago?

Because our CID has been very successful in garnering support for change, and finding the funding to help make those changes happen.

Almost from the outset, we have funded increased police patrols in the corridor and contracted to have the shoulders cleaned of litter and mowed regularly. The positive effects were noticed immediately.

Another factor is that the highway project is much different now than originally planned. With GDOT's cooperation, many revisions to preserve access have been made. With funding from a variety of sources, the CID is working to provide inter-parcel access and even parallel access streets, preserving mobility for businesses and residents alike.

And this will be no typical median. Where wide enough, it will be planted. Both shoulders will be landscaped, with extra attention paid to key "node" intersections. Add sidewalks, street furniture, decorative mast arms for traffic signals and street lights and internally lit street signs, and you get a very appealing picture. Add a state-of-the-art Intelligent Traffic System to keep traffic moving in a coordinated fashion, and the picture is nicer still.

Given that our CID is not limited to influencing highway projects, but can continue to work in the areas of public safety, economic development and community involvement, among others, and you can see why we feel we have a good chance to "beat the odds" and have this highway project become simply the first step in a string of positive developments for our part of Gwinnett.

Time will tell, but our bets are on the table, and we don't intend to fold.

*Ken Shiver, an Atlanta native, moved to Gwinnett in 1981. He is the owner of Millennium Kawasaki and Yamaha, and is currently Chairman of the Evermore CID.*

## Kathy Bailey - Evermore Community Champion

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a professional, dedicated public servant. She is an outstanding representative of the Department, our State, and the ideals we hold dear within this community." Kathy Bailey was called away on a family emergency, and DOT officials accepted the award on her behalf.

Kathy Bailey is a native of Montgomery, Alabama. She is a graduate of Auburn University earning a B.S. in Civil Engineering. She began her career at GDOT in 1995 in Athens, served as a Project Engineer in Thomaston, and Assistant Area Engineer in both Athens and Gainesville prior to joining the Traffic Safety and Design Division in Atlanta.

Over the past several years, Kathy has been the point person for the Evermore CID shepherding numerous improvements into the U.S. 78 project. Under her care, the U.S. 78 safety project is greatly improved and is now the single largest project in the history of the Traffic Safety and Design Division of Georgia DOT.

Harrell concluded, "Kathy has invested numerous, tireless hours well beyond the call of duty in this project. Whenever possible, she championed our cause for improvements and enhancements. Whenever our requests were impossible, she professionally and politely said -- no. This project, at completion, will benefit over 60,000 motorists daily and we are all deeply indebted to and grateful for Kathy Bailey for her outstanding service benefiting our community."

The Community Champions award is our way of saying thank you to individuals that have consistently gone well beyond their job description to positively impact the community and the lives of all those that live, work, do business, travel, and play in south Gwinnett.

# Park Place Community Association Formed

## Public Meeting Held October 4th

The recent Park Place Activity Center Study completed by the Evermore CID, is already producing tangible results! The study was completed earlier this year, and several projects and recommendations were identified. With the support of Evermore CID leadership and guidance from Gwinnett County District Three Commissioner, Mike Beaudreau, the recommendation to establish a community association is now a reality.

The Park Place Community Association (PPCA) has been organized and is comprised of homeowners, business owners, clergy and those interested in working as a team toward revitalizing and enhancing the Park Place Community. The PPCA's primary service boundaries include the Stone Mountain portion of Gwinnett County east to Stone Drive and north to Brownlee Road and south to DeShong Road.

The PPCA founding Board of Directors has been appointed and is comprised of individuals and business leaders that participated in the public input process of the recently completed study. PPCA President, Frances Smith, indicated that "Commissioner Beaudreau was extremely persistent when recruiting her to lead the organization." Mrs. Smith added that she is more encouraged than ever now that the Gwinnett County leadership has proven their commitment to revitalizing the area.

Mrs. Smith advised that the primary objective of the PPCA at this point, is engaging the public's attention to the needs of the community. Adopting association by-laws and completing the administrative processes of formation are also at the top of the interim to-do list. Longer-term goals of the PPCA have been discussed and defined to include assisting the Evermore CID with the Park Place Study's implementation plan, publishing a community directory of HOA's, churches, civic organizations and businesses, plan and execute a PPCA membership drive to recruit members, and to establish a communications network for the PPCA members, Evermore CID and Gwinnett County leadership.

Public relations will also play a role in the PPCA's realm of responsibilities. The association will play a key role in promoting Park Place as a renewed place for living, working, shopping and dining for residents and tourists. The PPCA has plans to initiate and foster a working relationship with Stone Mountain Park's public relations staff as an initial step toward the public relations efforts.

The initial public meeting was held Thursday, October 4th at the Mountain Park Aquatic Center

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# Traffic Improvements Coming

## U.S. 78 Median Project Underway

by Jerry Oberholtzer, Mayor  
City of Snellville

On Friday afternoon, September 14, 2007, I had the opportunity to attend the "ground-breaking" for the long anticipated U.S. 78 Median Project. The event turned out to be more than just a few shovels of dirt ... well in this case it was a ceremonial tear down of one of those ubiquitous "X" and arrow string of lights the reversible lane system made famous. This event was literally a who's who of distinguished guests ranging from past Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioners to State Senators and Reps, representatives from U.S. Senators Chambliss, Isakson, and Congressman John Linder, and every other local politician who's district has this seven miles of highway running through it.

This ceremony is not ONLY the beginning of a revitalization in southern Gwinnett, it is the culmination of over twenty years of planning, talking, and designing that involved the cooperation from business owners, the city, state and federal agencies. The Evermore Community Improvement District was created specifically to see this project through and to see to it that it was done in a manner that will not only sustain commercial activity along the highway, but will help the area thrive and grow. Executive Director Brett Harrell has done an outstanding job seeing that this vision becomes a reality.

While this isn't the beginning, it is also no where near the end. The project will take two years of work to complete. As your mayor and a resident who's life has been personally impacted by U.S. 78, I understand just how important this road construction will be to the continued vitality of Snellville, and how its completion will forever impact our city, for the best.

In 1990 I was involved in a serious accident on U.S. 78. At the time I was just over 30 years old, with a good job in Atlanta, and Roxann at home with our three very young children. A man attempted to make a left turn and cut right in front of my path. With no time to stop, my car was instantly totaled and I found myself in the back of ambulance on the way to the hospital. I was lucky, unlike the many lives that succumb to the fate of the reversible lanes each year, I was able to "walk" out of the hospital three days later with a broken sternum and a bruised heart.

So when a citizen comes to me and asks what I am doing about traffic, I take it to heart. I understand what it's like to drive here in Snellville, and that there is no excuse to have to risk lives just to get to the store. The U.S. 78 project is underway, but we also have other projects in development. The biggest is the redesign of the 78/124 interchange. The city and county have both invested one million dollars each into the research and design phase, but now the city faces a fifty million dollar bill to rebuild it as an interchange with grade separation. As a smaller city in Georgia, we face the uphill task of securing funding from both state and federal sources. Our elected officials in Atlanta and Washington are working hard to find the money. As Mayor, I let them know everyday just how important their work is to our community.

As a citizen, you should know that I continue to work hard everyday to improve the safety of our highways. There is no one solution, no one "quick fix", to get things done, and to do them right takes time. It has been seventeen years since my accident on U.S. 78, and I will continue to work for as long as it takes to see that no family ever has to endure anything like the three days of hell ours experienced. There is no substitute for safety in our city, I will see to that.

So as you drive down 78 through the construction, remember that your city and your elected officials spent many years to get to this point, and that we will continue to work diligently until our highways are the best in the state!



## CID Calendar

### October 24, 2007

Board Meeting  
Snellville City Hall  
2:00 p.m. - Public Invited

### November 28, 2007

Board Meeting  
Snellville City Hall  
2:00 p.m. - Public Invited

### December 19, 2007

Board Meeting  
Snellville City Hall  
2:00 p.m. - Public Invited

### 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 U.S. 78 corridor.

[www.evermorecid.org](http://www.evermorecid.org)

# US 78... Open for Business!

Businesses along the Highway 78 corridor from East Park Place to State Route 124 will be open throughout construction.

Construction will begin at the west end of the project at East Park Place. The project has been broken down into four sections for construction. As the reversible lane system is removed, the existing roadway will be restriped with 3 lanes heading west to Atlanta and 2 lanes heading east towards Snellville. At its conclusion, there will be 3 lanes in each direction.

Work begins in each section on the eastbound side of US 78. It will progress from East to West with work occurring only in 2 sections at any one time. Access will always be maintained to each business or residence on US 78.

Work hours are restricted. Most work requiring lane closures will occur week-nights from 9:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. To allow for maximum traffic flow, NO lane closures are allowed weekdays from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. or from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Additional information may be reviewed at Evermore's website: [www.EvermoreCID.org](http://www.EvermoreCID.org)

## PPCA *Continued from Page 3*

at 7:00pm. The public meeting was the first opportunity for the association to bring the community together for the purpose of gathering information and sharing ideas. Mrs. Smith feels positive that most area residents will share a common vision of creating a communal identity, and defining Park Place as a destination, rather than just a pass through for commuters. Mrs. Smith and PPCA leadership believe that once the community really begins to witness the changes, that neighborhood pride and ownership will become more prevalent.

The Evermore CID's Executive Director, Brett Harrell, is extremely pleased with the community initiative and expressed the CID's sincerest gratitude for their willingness to serve the community in such a significant capacity. Executive Director Harrell states, "together we can build a community team of leaders and make a monumental difference for the future of our region of Gwinnett County." Gwinnett County Commissioner, Mike Beaudreau, expressed the same sentiments and added "I am really excited about Frances and the founding PPCA Board of Directors. I am looking forward to seeing their great work in the future."

To learn more about the PPCA, please contact PPCA President, Frances Smith, via telephone (770) 403-7025 or email [franal@usa.com](mailto:franal@usa.com).

*Our goal is to increase your property values and improve your business!*



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