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Thurmon Tanner Parkway completion draws near

Once finished, the entire road will run 5 miles



Georgia Department of Transportation crews work on a portion of Thurmon Tanner Parkway Monday morning at the intersection of Plainview Road. The extension of the South Hall road may be completed in October.

It's official: Thurmon Tanner Parkway is set for an Oct. 21 completion.

Final construction work is in the home stretch on the last leg of the long-awaited four-lane road between Atlanta Highway in Oakwood to Phil Niekro Boulevard in Flowery Branch.

The work originally was set for a Dec. 31 completion, but paving issues and a mix-up over traffic signals at two intersections along the final stretch, which runs from Plainview Road to Mundy Mill Road, pinched the schedule.

On Monday, a traffic light was flashing red at Plainview Road, and a crew was paving at the intersection.

Workers "still have to install loops, finish striping and test (the) signal," said Teri Pope, a Georgia Department of Transportation spokeswoman. The light "should be operational within three weeks, weather permitting."

Also, crews will be working this week at Thurmon Tanner's Old Oakwood Road intersection, Pope said.

"Signal poles are up," she said, adding that workers "still have to string span wire (and) install signal heads and other equipment."

The progress is a welcome sight for City Manager Stan Brown. "It's all good," he said.

Asked if he has considered a ribbon-cutting or other such ceremony for the road, which was conceived more than a decade ago, Brown said no.

"At this point, we're just so happy to see it get to this point," he said. "Maybe we'll do something after the fact. I don't think we'll want to hold up a day on this thing by trying to schedule something."

Years ago, government officials worked together to put Thurmon Tanner Parkway in place, seeing it as a north-south alternative to Interstate 985, such as Satellite Boulevard is to Interstate 85 in Gwinnett County.

The entire road will run 5 miles when all work is done, Pope said.

Office and industrial development has occurred in spots on the road, but there are several big pieces of available land.

"It's a huge thing to get wrapped up," Brown said.

The final 1.3-mile link, costing \$16 million, is a key part of Oakwood's future plans.

City officials have included it in an area targeted for redevelopment as part of Oakwood 2030. The city has approved development standards for the area, including lighting, setbacks and utilities.

The stretch will feature decorative light poles. The city had hoped for decorative traffic lights, but those plans fell apart in the mix-up and standard poles are being installed.

However, city officials have discussed possibly painting the poles once the road is dedicated to the city.

"I would anticipate we'll want to do something to make it match up with the lighting," Brown said.