

Providence Road ahead of schedule

By Jason deBruyn
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<i>WEDDINGTON - The Providence Road widening project is ahead of schedule.</i>

Set to be completed no later than Nov. 15, 2010, N.C. Department of Transportation resident engineer overlooking the project said the first traffic shifts traffic driving on the new road, while the existing road is resurfaced might happen as soon as next spring.

"Things are looking really good on the completion of the project," Rick Baucom said.

So far, the project is about 2 percent over the \$18.4 million budget, something Baucom said was normal, especially on a project this size.

"We're still early in the game; there is still a lot that could happen," he said, implying that money could possibly be saved later.

The widening project will bring Providence Road to six lanes between Interstate 485 and Ardrey Kell Road, and to four lanes between Ardrey Kell Road and Rea Road. There will be about 3.5 miles of road widened.

Traffic studies in 2006 showed about 32,780 daily commuters on Providence Road near I-485. Projections for 2030 estimate upward of 43,000 daily drivers for that area.

Commuters can expect to see fewer workers on site during the winter months because road construction is more difficult in lower temperatures.

"It just makes the material a whole lot harder to work with," Baucom said, referring specifically to asphalt but adding that even grading can be more difficult because of frost.

Come March, work will likely pick up and Baucom said he hopes to get the bulk of the project done during the warm months of 2009.



E-J staff photo by Ed Cottingham

Jackie Thompson and Doug Rankin work to add tension to a cable running through core slabs of a bridge under construction on Highway 16 over Six Mile Creek at the border between Union and Mecklenburg counties. This part of the bridge is due to be finished in January. The entire project with five lanes including turn lanes and sidewalks in some areas is expected to be complete by late 2009.

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