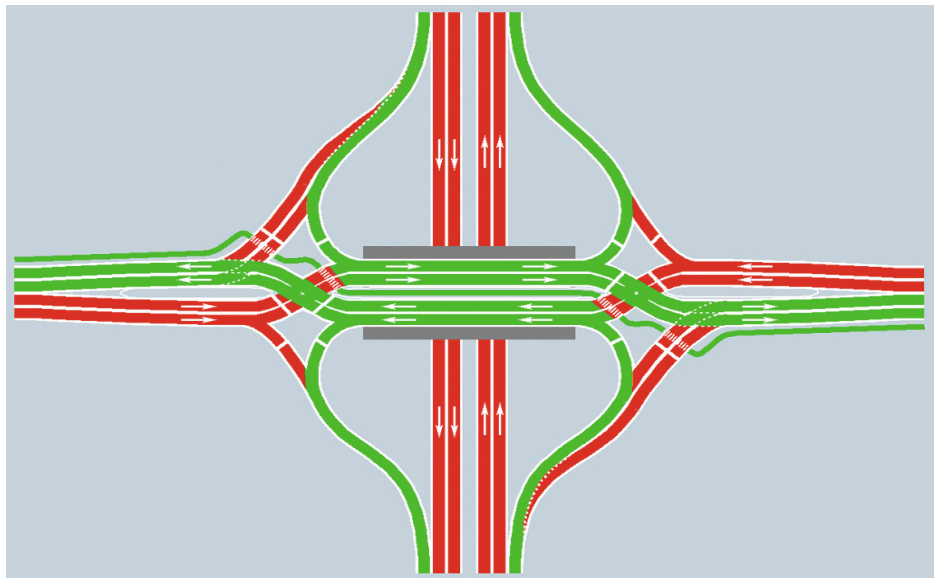


35 Years MIAMI TODAY

Diverging Diamond highway interchanges due for fall debut

Written by Rebecca San Juan on April 10, 2018

It's a delicate balance overseeing several small projects in the grand scheme of State Road 836 improvements for the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX). As a result of shifting priorities, MDX expects to debut its diverging diamond highway interchanges (DDI) on Northwest 27th and 57th avenues in late summer or early fall.



The two interchanges constitute pieces of a \$799 million modification for State Road 836, with improvements dating back to 2005.

“The DDI will open in late summer, early fall as opposed to previously [cited dates] because construction activities on LeJeune, which impact the driving public much more, were placed ahead of opening the DDI,” said MDX public information officer Tere Garcia.

Completion of LeJeune Road, or Northwest 42nd Avenue, remains a priority. The reorganization replaces left lane exits towards Miami International Airport at LeJeune with new exits from the right lanes.

“We want to focus on the core of the job, the 42nd Avenue interchange,” said Claudio Diaferia, MDX assistant director of engineering. “We shifted some of the crew to focus on that because that’s more critical to the traveling community.”

Work on the diverging diamond highway interchanges is moving alongside other components of the modification. Mr. Diaferia says his team is finishing the ramps outside of traffic and installing gantries.

The larger, more traffic-heavy interchange at Northwest 27th will precede the interchange at 57th Avenue by a few weeks, he said.

MDX plans to launch a public awareness campaign a month before debuting its two interchanges. That campaign exceeds the \$20,000 budget that Deputy Executive Director and Director of Engineering Juan Toledo predicted in December.

Mr. Diaferia said, “We have prerecorded all of our media ads and we purchased slots, but we don’t want anything too far in advanced because it loses its impact.”

The campaign is to reach speakers of Creole, English and Spanish through various media, including television and social media. All the while, MDX plans to rely mostly on radio to get the word out.

“We’re buying media for radio mostly,” Ms. Garcia said. “We evaluate what are the stations with the greater amount of ratings and to the various categories – young people, the more mature, etc. That is one way. Usually, TV is very expensive unless we can get public service announcements.”

No matter its numerous media strategies, MDX plans to post a few officers at the two innovative interchanges during their debut.

“We will have officers on the first couple of days to ensure that people slow down and drive safely through the DDIs,” Mr. Diaferia said.

MDX is looking at the bigger picture, the impact that interchanges may have on the community, Mr. Diaferia said, “This project overall is going to significantly improve mobility and safety through the whole [SR] 836. There’s many things that we’re doing on this job, so DDI is just one component of this very large, important project.”

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