

shift under way



Javier Vega with CW Matthews Contracting Co. moves barrels blocking Hwy. 141 as traffic shifts to a new section of road Tuesday.

Photos/Jim Dean

on Hwy. 141 will affect Big Creek

upgrade the old lanes of Hwy. 141," said Teri Pope, spokeswoman for the state transportation department. "This will also allow us to work at Hwy. 141 and Majors Road because there is major work that needs to be done there."

Begun in 2006, the \$50.7 million project to widen Hwy. 141 to four

"Even though it's not all four lanes open, it really will help traffic run a lot smoother."

- DOT spokeswoman Teri Pope

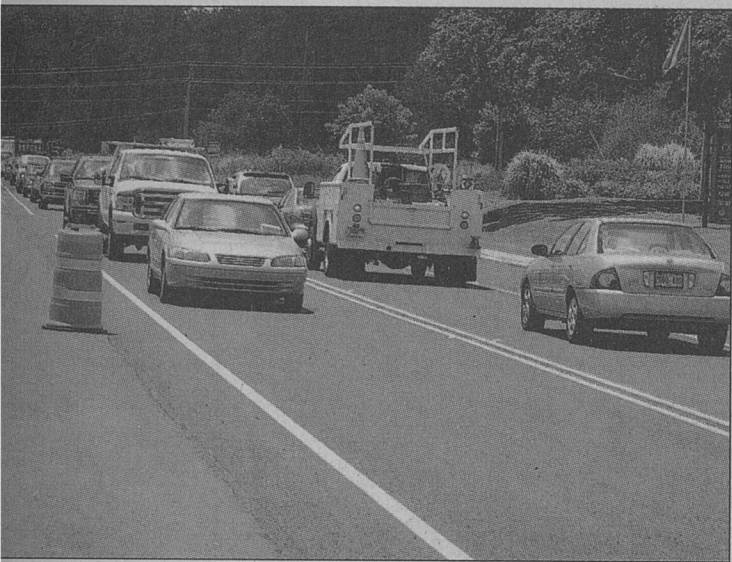
lanes between Hwy. 9 and the Fulton County line is 67

percent complete.

Construction will continue daily, with the exception of the July Fourth holiday weekend, when it will halt from midnight July 2 to 6 a.m. July 6.

Beginning July 1, Pope said traffic will shift to the right side of the highway,

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With traffic shifted to a new part of Hwy. 141, workers will begin rebuilding the northeast side between Ronald Reagan Boulevard and Sharon Road.

owner faces long recovery

Man hit by car in north Forsyth

apt. Frank Huggins said Todd Muller, 34, of Riviera Drive was traveling north on Hwy. 9 ahead of a 1991 Honda Accord driven by 27-year-old Christian Lopez of Jackson Place.

Huggins said Muller was about to turn left onto Mountain Road when Lopez crossed the double center-line and attempted to pass him on the left-hand side.

Lopez then tried to stop, but collided with Muller. He was charged with passing in a no passing zone.

Muller was taken to Northside Hospital-Forsyth

before being transferred to Kennestone Hospital in Marietta.

Muller, the owner of Reality Bikes in Cumming and a recently opened bike-sizing business in Vickery Village, said Wednesday he will have to have surgery for a broken hip. He won't be

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Feds may look into office of elections

Official: Invitation 'political vendetta'

By Frank Reddy

Staff Writer

The Forsyth County commission wants the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate the county's elections department in response to issues raised in a countywide audit.

The internal controls review, begun last year by Sawyer & Co. of Dawsonville, was made public at Tuesday's commission work session.

Chief Financial Officer Bill Thomas recommended commissioners "refer issues related to the voter registrar's office to an appropriate outside agency to bring closure to these issues and to further fact find."



Smith

Sawyer & Co. looked at expenditures and revenues in all county departments. Thomas referenced two "weaknesses" found in the elections office. Those included consulting agreements between then elections director Gary J. Smith and outside agencies.

"Those being in Cherokee County and with a company referred to as ESI," Thomas said, referencing the report by Sawyer & Co. "Those issues suggested the elections director was paid by those agencies while being paid by [Forsyth County] for the same hours," Thomas said.

Chairman Charles Laughinghouse suggested the justice department could "conduct any additional fact finding they deem appropriate, that they be invited into the county to conduct this review ... that they be given full cooperation and they take whatever follow-up action they believe necessary."

The decision to contact federal authorities, which passed by a 5-0 vote, "shocked" Smith.

"That's absolutely the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard," Smith said after the meeting. "I think this is an absolute attack on my credibility, and I am shocked the chairman would do something like this."

Smith, who currently serves as chief registrar and elections board chairman, said the report's allegations were inaccurate.

"It's an absolute fabrication," he said. "It's not true ... I worked at Cherokee County on compensation time — period. There was no time

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