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I-26 Diverging Diamond Interchange Project Will Require Weekend Closure at N.C. 280/Airport Road

Raleigh – Work on the N.C. Transportation [diverging diamond interchange](#) project at I-26 and N.C. 280/Airport Road in Asheville will require a traffic shift and the closure of Airport Road at that location the weekend of November 13, weather permitting.

If weather allows all of the prep work to be completed on schedule and looks acceptable for the weekend, work will start at 9 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 13, when the contractor will begin converting the current traffic pattern into the diverging diamond pattern.

The work will require the closure of N.C. 280/Airport Road at the bridge over I-26. The detour in both directions will have all traffic approaching the bridge use the appropriate ramps to go onto I-26 [East](#) or [West](#), travel to the next exit in either direction, then get back on the interstate in the opposite direction to return to Airport Road on the other side of the closure.

N.C. 280/Airport Road is scheduled to re-open by 6 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 16, although if the necessary work can be completed earlier, then the road will be re-opened at that time.

Portable message boards will be up in advance of the closure to alert motorists of the traffic detour ahead. It is strongly recommended that drivers plan for the added travel time needed to go around the closure.

The work is part of an \$8.8-million contract to reconfigure the interchange by rerouting Airport Road into the diverging diamond pattern, and build new exit ramps for I-26. Because this is a busy travel area, the contractor has not been allowed to close any lanes on I-26 or N.C. 280/Airport Road between 6:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. with an exception being allowed for the upcoming weekend work.

A [diverging diamond intersection](#), which is becoming more common in North Carolina, calls for two directions of traffic to temporarily cross to the left side of a road, while moving high volumes of traffic through an intersection without increasing the number of lanes and traffic signals. This movement provides easier access to an interstate. It also means traffic entering or exiting an interstate does not have to cross opposing traffic to make a left turn. The project will increase safety for drivers and reduce congestion in the area.

NCDOT