

I-40 changes won't be complicated, DOT says

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A change in signs along I-40 in Greensboro won't be confusing and is an attempt to help ease driving for those just passing through, an engineer for the Department of Transportation says.

The DOT announced on Friday that it plans to change the signs on I-40 and send drivers through its old route in Greensboro instead of on the newest stretch of the Greensboro Urban Loop.

"Motorists who were not used to the area were having problems," said Mike Mills, a DOT divisional engineer. "It's difficult trying to read all those road signs going as fast as you're going through there."

The DOT had said on Friday that confusion and noise on the new western loop were major reasons for the change, the Times-News reported online and in its Saturday print editions.

Mills said the change won't be as complicated as it could have been because DOT stopped changing original route signs several months ago. That's when officials grew worried that rerouting I-40 had not been a good decision.

"When we started getting complaints from motorists, we put that contract on hold," Mills said.

Many commuters and other drivers familiar with the Triad continued using I-40's original route all along, because it is more direct than the bypass. It's about five miles shorter than taking the Urban Loop around Greensboro, he said.

The signs should be changed - again - before winter. The new section of the urban loop will be designated Interstate 73.

Mills He said drivers on I-73 headed north and south of Greensboro and local drivers using it to get around the city more efficiently will still use that part of the urban loop, which covers 7.7 miles between I-40 and Interstate 85 southwest of Greensboro. It opened in February.