FHWA-NC-EIS-2015-1-D

# ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# I-40 TO US-19-23-70 NORTH OF ASHEVILLE
# BUNCOMBE COUNTY, ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

**FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO: MA-NHF-26-1(53)**
**STATE PROJECT NO: 34165.1.1**
**TIP NO: I-2513**

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## VOLUME 2 OF 2 - APPENDICES

**U.S. Department of Transportation**
**Federal Highway Administration**
**and**
**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

Submitted Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)

Cooperating Agencies:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

10/13/2015
Date of Approval

Richard W. Hancock, PE
Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation

10-13-15
Date of Approval

for John F. Sullivan, III, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

John F. Sullivan, III, P.E.
Federal Highway Administration
310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410
Raleigh, NC 27601-1418
(919) 856-4346 ext. 122

Richard W. Hancock, PE
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
(919) 707-6000

The documented needs for the transportation project in Buncombe County are presented in the report. The existing conditions of the study area are described and the alternatives are assessed in terms of environmental impacts, compatibility with local planning goals, relative cost-effectiveness and public opinion.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# I-40 TO US-19-23-70 NORTH OF ASHEVILLE
# BUNCOMBE COUNTY, ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

**FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO: MA-NHF-26-1(53)**
**STATE PROJECT NO: 34165.1.1**
**TIP NO: I-2513**

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## VOLUME 2 OF 2 - APPENDICES

**October 2015**

Prepared by:

**URS Corporation – North Carolina**

10/14/15
Date — Jeffrey C. Weisner, AICP
Project Manager

10/14/15 Christopher M. Werner
Date — Christopher M. Werner, P.E.
Project Engineer

NORTH CAROLINA PROFESSIONAL SEAL 030911 ENGINEER CHRISTOPHER M. WERNER
Christopher M. Werner 10/14/15

For the:
**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

10/13/15 Derrick Weaver
Date — Derrick Weaver, P.E.
Consultant Engineering Unit Head

10-13-2015 Michael Wray
Date — Michael Wray, P.E.
Project Manager

# Appendix A

# Correspondence

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# Appendix A1

# Correspondence from Federal Agencies

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# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Asheville Field Office
160 Zillicoa Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801


January 24, 1996

Mr. H. Franklin Vick, P.E., Manager
Planning and Environmental Branch
Division of Highways
North Carolina Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-5201

Dear Mr. Vick:

Subject: Proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina, T.I.P. No. I-2513

In your letter of January 16, 1996, you requested information regarding potential environmental impacts that could result from the subject project for your use in preparing an environmental document. The following comments are provided in accordance with the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 661-667e), and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (Act).

According to information provided in your letter, this project will involve the construction of the Asheville Connector from I-26 at the interchange of I-40 and I-240, south of Asheville, to the current I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue, west of the French Broad River. The Asheville Connector will be a multi-lane freeway with limited access. Construction of the Asheville Connector will likely involve impacts to wetlands and floodplains, most likely in association with the crossing of the French Broad River.

As you are aware, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has been involved throughout the various phases of the Asheville Urban Area Pilot Project, which includes the Asheville Connector. We submitted written comments on preliminary corridors for the various components of the Asheville Urban Area Pilot Project on June 8, 1993, and May 17, 1994, and attended the meetings in Asheville (May 1989) and in Raleigh (May 1995). Thus, the Service is familiar with the general project area.

As stated in an earlier letter to you (June 8, 1993), our records indicate that there are no known occurrences of federally listed endangered or threatened species within the general corridor areas, including the Asheville Connector. However, thorough surveys for

federally listed species have not been conducted for the Asheville area and Buncombe County. Thus, there is a possibility that federally listed species may occur with the project area for the Asheville Connector.

The enclosed pages identify federally protected endangered and threatened species known from Buncombe County that may occur within the area of influence of this proposed action. The legal responsibilities of a Federal agency or their designated non-Federal representative under Section 7 of the Act are on file with the Federal Highway Administration. The enclosed pages also contain a list of Federal species of concern that are currently under status review by the Service and which may occur in the project impact area. Federal species of concern are not legally protected under the Act and are not subject to any of its provisions, including Section 7, unless they are formally proposed or listed as endangered or threatened. We are including these species in our response to give you advance notification. The presence or absence of these species in the project impact area should be addressed in any environmental document prepared for this project.

The Service's review of the environmental document would be greatly facilitated if the document contained the following information:

(1) A complete analysis and comparison of the available alternatives (the build and no-build alternatives).

(2) A description of the fishery and wildlife resources within existing and required additional rights-of-way and any areas, such as borrow areas, that may be affected directly or indirectly by the proposed climbing lanes.

(3) Acreage and description of wetlands that will be filled as a result of the proposed road improvements. Wetlands affected by the proposed project should be mapped in accordance with the Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands. We recommend contacting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Asheville Regulatory Field Office, to determine the need for a Section 404 Clean Water Act permit (704/271-4854).

(4) Acreage of upland habitat, by cover type, that will be eliminated because of the proposed project.

(5) Description of all expected secondary and cumulative environmental impacts associated with this proposed work.

(6) Mitigation measures that will be employed to avoid, eliminate, reduce, or compensate for habitat value losses associated with any of the proposed project.

(7) Linear feet of any water courses that will be relocated as a result of the proposed project.

(8) An analysis of the crossing structures considered (i.e., spanning structure, culverts, etc.) and the rationale for choosing the preferred structure(s). The Service requests

consideration of spanning any wetland or floodplain areas associated with the crossing of the French Broad River.

(9) A discussion as to the extent to which the project will result in loss, degradation, or fragmentation of wildlife habitat from direct construction impacts and from secondary development impacts.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these scoping comments and request that you continue to keep us informed as to the progress of this project. In any future correspondence concerning this project, please reference our Log Number 4-2-93-081.

Sincerely,

Brian P. Cole
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

cc:
Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611
Mr. Cecil Frost, North Carolina Department of Agriculture, Plant Conservation Program, P.O. Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611

## BUNCOMBE COUNTY

### FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES

**MAMMALS**
Carolina northern flying squirrel (Glaucomys sabrinus coloratus) - Endangered
Eastern cougar (Felis concolor couguar) - Endangered

**FISHES**
Spotfin chub (Hybopsis monacha) - Threatened

**CLAMS**
Appalachian elktoe (Alasmidonta raveneliana) - Endangered

**PLANTS**
Mountain sweet pitcher-plant (Sarracenia rubra var. jonesii) - Endangered
Bunched arrowhead (Sagittaria fasciculata) - Endangered
Rock gnome lichen (Gymnoderma lineare) - Endangered
Spreading avens (Geum radiatum) - Endangered
Virginia spiraea (Spiraea virginiana) - Threatened

### OTHER SPECIES OF FEDERAL CONCERN

**MAMMALS**
Eastern small-footed bat (Myotis subulatus leibii)
Southern water shrew (Sorex palustris punctulatus)
Southern Appalachian woodrat (Neotoma floridana haematoreia)

**BIRDS**
Cerulean warbler (Dendroica cerulea)
Appalachian Bewick's wren (Thryomanes bewickii altus)

**REPTILES**
Bog turtle (Clemmys muhlenbergii)

**AMPHIBIANS**
Hellbender (Cryptobranchus alleganiensis)

**FISHES**
Longhead darter (Percina macrocephala)
Paddlefish (Polyodon spathula)

**CRUSTACEANS**
French Broad stream crayfish (Cambarus reburrus)

INSECTS
Diana fritillary butterfly (Speyeria diana)
Eastern beard grass skipper (Atryone arogos arogos)
Tawny crescent butterfly (Phyciodes batesi)

PLANTS
French Broad heartleaf (Hexastylis rhombiformis)
Butternut (Juglans nigra)
Gray's lily (Lilium grayi)
Cain's reedgrass (Calamagrostis cainii)
Gray's saxifrage (Saxifraga caroliniana)
Divided-leaf ragwort (Senecio millefolium)
Mountain catchfly (Silene ovata)
Fraser's loosestrife (Lysimachia fraseri)
Mountain heartleaf (Hexastylis contracta)
Piratebush (Buckleya disticophylla)
Glade spurge (Euphorbia purpurea)
Sweet pinesap (Monotropsis odorata)
Pinnately-lobed black-eyed susan (Rudbeckia triloba var. pinnatiloba)

Westbrook

Tennessee Valley Authority, 400 West Summit Hill Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902-1499

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DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL BRANCH

February 12, 1996

Mr. H. Franklin Vick, P. E., Manager
Planning and Environmental Branch
North Carolina Division of Highways
Post Office Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Dear Mr. Vick:

PROPOSED I-26 CONNECTOR IN ASHEVILLE, BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, STATE PROJECT NUMBER 8.U843701, STATE T.I.P. NUMBER I-2513, FEDERAL NO. MANHF26-1(53)

TVA has received your January 16, 1996 letter requesting scoping comments on the proposed I-26 connector in Asheville. The environmental document prepared for this action should note that approvals under Section 26a of the TVA Act would be required for crossing of the French Broad River.

The following are typical conditions that TVA attaches to Section 26a approvals for highway relocations and upgrades. The document may wish to include these as mitigation measures:

1. Best Management and Best Engineering Practices will be used to prevent the introduction of soil or any other pollutants into surface or groundwaters, including but not limited to the following:

   a. Installing cofferdams and/or silt control structures between construction areas and the streams prior to any soil-disturbing demolition/construction activity, and clarifying all water that is trapped or accumulates behind these devices to meet water quality criteria before it is returned to the stream. Cofferdams must be used wherever construction activity is at or below water elevation.
   b. Removing demolition products and construction by-products from the site for recycling, if practicable, or proper disposal outside of a 100-year floodplain.
   c. Minimizing removal of vegetation.
   d. Keeping equipment out of streams (i.e., performing work "in the dry").
   e. Keeping equipment off stream banks to the degree practicable.
   f. Using erosion control structures around any material stockpile areas.

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g. Removing, redistributing, and stabilizing (with vegetation) all sediment which accumulates behind cofferdams and silt control structures.

h. Using vegetation (versus shot rock or riprap) wherever practicable and sustainable, to stabilize streambanks and floodplain areas. These areas will be stabilized as soon as practicable, using either an appropriate seed mixture that includes an annual (quick cover) as well as 1 or 2 perennial legumes and 1 or 2 perennial grasses, or equivalent sod. In certain periods of the year, this will require initial planting of a quick cover annual only, to be followed by subsequent establishment of the perennials. Seed and soil will be protected as appropriate with erosion control netting and/or mulch, and provided adequate moisture. Streambank and floodplain areas will also be permanently stabilized with native woody plants, to include trees wherever practicable and sustainable and consistent with other regulatory agency specifications.

i. Applying clean/shaken riprap or shot rock (where needed at water/bank interface) over a water permeable/soil impermeable fabric or geotextile and in such a manner as to avoid stream sedimentation or disturbance.

j. Avoiding spilling concrete, or other substances or materials, into the streams.

k. Designing/constructing any instream piers in such a manner as to discourage river scouring or sediment deposition.

l. Bank, shoreline, and floodplain stabilization will be permanently maintained in order to prevent erosion, protect water quality, and preserve aquatic habitat.

m. Culverts are constructed in phases, and adequate streambank protection measures are employed, such that the diverted streamflow is handled without creating streambank or streambed erosion/sedimentation and without preventing fish passage.

2. Culverts (and any culvert extensions) must allow for the creation and maintenance of natural streambed substrate, or natural substrate and pool areas, throughout the culvert; and must create/maintain velocities and flow patterns which offer refuge for fish and other aquatic life, and allow passage of indigenous fish species under all flow conditions. Where new culverts are planned, or where existing culverts are to be extended, culvert floors (bottom slabs) must be buried at least one foot below natural streambed grade, and natural streambed material placed on the culvert floor.

3. All natural stream values (including equivalent energy dissipation, elevations, and velocities; riparian vegetation; riffle/pool sequencing; habitat suitable for fish and other aquatic life) must be provided at all stream modification sites. This must be accomplished using a combination of rock and bioengineering, and is not accomplished using solid, homogeneous riprap from bank to bank.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Should you have any questions, please contact Harold M. Draper at (423) 632-6889.

Sincerely,

Harold M. Draper

for Dale V. Wilhelm, Liaison
National Environmental Policy Act
Environmental Management

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

July 5, 2000

IN REPLY REFER TO
HO-NC

Mr. William Gilmore, P.E.
Manager of Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
Division of Highways
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina

Subject: I-26-1(53), I-2513, Asheville Connector Project, Buncombe County, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Gilmore:

In recent months, Chris Gatchell has been participating in the public involvement meetings on this project. During that time, there have been many discussions concerning the design speed and the number of lanes for this proposed project. We would like to clarify the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) position on these issues.

The proposed project involves existing Interstate 240 and the proposed extension on Interstate 26. In designing an Interstate facility, safety is a major concern and the design speed must be consistent with driver expectancy. For this project, it is FHWA's position that a design speed of 60 miles per hour (signed for 55 MPH per NCDOT Policy) is appropriate. Also, since the project will be part of the Interstate System, it should be designed to accommodate the types and volumes of traffic anticipated for the twenty-year period from the time construction begins. Any improvement with less than six lanes on existing I-240 is considered a "no-build " alternative and should be treated as such. It may be possible to provide for stage construction for six to eight lanes but the proper lane balance would need to be provided to make the Patton Avenue Interchange function properly.

Since our Washington Office will be ultimately responsible for the approval of the extension/addition of I-26 to the Interstate System and the modifications to the existing Patton Avenue - I-240 interchange including the design geometrics, we have coordinated the contents of this letter, including design criteria, with appropriate staff. They agree with the position stated in this letter.

We hope this clarification will be beneficial in further project development. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Donald S. Voelker

For Nicholas L. Graf, P.E.
Division Administrator

cc: Len Hill, P.E., NCDOT
Debbie Barbour, P.E., NCDOT
David King, NCDOT
Bob Schlicht, FHWA

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**
**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**
**310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410**
**Raleigh, North Carolina 27601**
July 7, 2004

IN REPLY REFER TO
HDA-NC

Mr. Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D.
Environmental Management Director, Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
Division of Highways
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina

Subject: Federa-Aid No. I-26-1(53), TIP No. I-2513, Asheville Connector Project, Buncombe County, North Carolina

Dear Dr. Thorpe:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) position on the number of lanes for the subject project.

The proposed project involves existing I-240 and the proposed extension of I-26. In designing an interstate facility, safety is a major concern and the number of lanes for this project is required to meet AASHTO standards. Since the project will be part of the Interstate System, it should be designed to achieve Level of Service D or better for the types and volumes of traffic anticipated for the twenty-year period beyond the time construction is authorized by FHWA.

Again, FHWA requires that the project be designed to meet AASHTO standards. The project should be designed with a sufficient number of lanes to achieve a Level of Service D or better through the design year. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this correspondence, please contact Clarence Coleman of this office at (919) 856-4350, Ext. 104.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence W. Coleman, Jr.

For John F. Sullivan, III, P.E.
Division Administrator

cc: Drew Joyner, P.E., T.I.P. Program Manager
Vincent Rhea, P.E., Project Manager

DF0004

**Tennessee Valley Authority**, 400 West Summit Hill Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902-1401

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Project Develop
Environmental Analysis Br

May 6, 2008

Dr. Gregory J. Thorpe, Manager
Project Development and Environmental
Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548

Dear Dr. Thorpe:

SUBJECT: FEDERAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR NEW I-26 ROUTE, ASHEVILLE CONNECTOR ALONG I-26 FROM EXISTING I-26 TO US 19-23-70, BUNCOMBE COUNTY, STATE PROJECT NO. 8.U843701, F. A. PROJECT NO. MANHF-26-1(53), TIP PROJECT I-2513

This is in response to your letter of March 24, 2008, to Jon Loney requesting comments on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. We have reviewed the EIS and note that all of the action alternatives would require permits issued under Section 26a of the *TVA Act* for new bridges and widened bridges across perennial streams and fills in floodplains. This should be noted in the "Required Permits and Actions" sections in the EIS Summary and Chapter 4. We are not prepared to identify a preferred alternative at this time. 9-5

Mr. Loney has retired from TVA, so please send future correspondence related to this EA to me. Should you have any questions, please me at (865) 632-3582 or cpnicholson@tva.gov.

Sincerely,

Charles P. Nicholson
Program Manager, NEPA Resources
Environmental Services and Programs
Environmental Stewardship and Policy

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

RECEIVED
Division of Highways
MAY 30 2008
Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch

May 19, 2008

Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D.
Environmental Management Director
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548

Subject: I-26 Connector, Asheville
Buncombe County, North Carolina
Draft EIS; TIP Project No.: I-2513
CEQ No.:20080125; FHW-E40820-NC

Dear Dr. Thorpe:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4 has reviewed the subject document and is commenting in accordance with Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA). The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing to construct a multi-lane freeway from Interstate 26 to US 19-23-70 that also includes the I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange in Asheville, Buncombe County. The project is divided into 3 sections, including Section A widening for 2.1 miles on existing I-240, Section B that includes 2.6 miles of new location across the French Broad River, and Section C which includes approximately 5 miles of improvements for the I-26/I-40 Interchange.

The proposed project was placed in the NEPA/Section 404 Merger process and EPA has been an active participant in the team process. According to EPA's records, Purpose and Need (Concurrence point 1) was concurred upon on January 23, 2002, Detailed Study Alternatives (Concurrence point 2) was re-signed on July 24, 2007, and the Bridging Decisions and Alignment Review (Concurrence point 2A) was signed on September 7, 2006.

There is currently 1 detailed study alternative under consideration for Section A, three (3) alternatives for Section B (i.e., Alternatives B-2, B-3 and B-4) and four (4) alternatives for Section C (i.e., Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1 and F-1). In addition, the DEIS also identifies an additional local alternative developed by the Asheville Design Center (ADC). In January of 2008, the ADC presented a revised concept to NCDOT through the Asheville City Council. This alternative is also under consideration by NCDOT (Pages 1-8 and 8-27 of the DEIS).

The environmental impacts for Section B offer a reasonable range of difference and EPA considers Alternative B-2 to be the environmentally preferred alternative at this time (i.e., Least overall stream impacts). For Section C, EPA considers Alternative F-1 to be the environmentally preferred alternative at this time for similar reasons as Section B (i.e., Alternative F-1 has the least number of residential and business relocations and stream impacts). However, EPA is interested in comments and concerns from other agencies and will work with other Merger team agencies on the identification of the Least Environmental Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). EPA has attached specific environmental review comments to this DEIS (See Attachment "A"). 9-1

Based on EPA's review of the DEIS, all of the alternatives and the overall DEIS received an "EC-1" rating, meaning that some environmental concerns exist that need to be further addressed. Specifically, further information should be included in the FEIS regarding avoidance and minimization measures for streams, mitigation plans, potential measures to minimize impacts to historic properties, invasive plant species issues, relocations and noise receptor impacts. EPA has attached a copy of the DEIS rating descriptions (See Attachment "B"). 9-2

EPA plans to continue its Merger process involvement in this proposed project including the Concurrence Point 3 "LEDPA" and Concurrence Point 4A avoidance and minimization decision points. EPA will also be involved through the hydraulic and permit review stages, including the detailed avoidance and minimization efforts for stormwater management and the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Ms. Kathy Matthews of EPA's Wetlands Section should also be contacted during these phases of the Merger 01 process. Should you have any questions about EPA's comments on the DEIS, please contact Mr. Christopher Militscher of my staff at (919) 856-4206 or by e-mail at: militscher.chris@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Heinz J. Mueller
Chief, NEPA Program Office
Office of Policy and Management

Cc: K. Jolly, USACE Wilmington District
J. Sullivan, FHWA-NC
B. Wrenn, NCDENR-DWQ

ATTACHMENT A
I-26 Connector, Asheville, Buncombe County
TIP# I-2513

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE DEIS

Stream and Wetland Impacts

Considering the project setting, there are relatively little impacts to jurisdictional wetlands. For Section A the estimated impact is 0.01 acres. For Section B alternatives the estimated impact ranges from 0.06 to 0.17 acres with Alternative B-2 with the highest impact. For Section C alternatives the estimated impact ranges from 0.79 to 1.45 with Alternative F-1 having the least impact.

Section B has stream impacts that range between 1,864 linear feet to 2,767 linear feet. Alternative B-4 has the least direct impact to jurisdictional streams. However, Alternative B-2 has 3 fewer bridged stream crossings, and less potential indirect and cumulative impacts to streams in the watershed. Alternative B-2 has one less interchange than Alternatives B-3 and B-4. For Section C, Alternative F-1 has 850 linear feet of stream impact while the other three alternatives have more than a 1,200 linear feet of impact. 9-1

The impacted streams are located in the French Broad River (HUC 06010105) watershed and its tributaries are classified as 'Class B' waters of the State. Hominy Creek is listed on the 303(d) list of impaired waters due to urban runoff and agricultural discharges. Efforts should be made to avoid and minimize impacts to Hominy Creek through the use of steeper-grade side slopes, retaining walls, stormwater retention basins, planting of vegetative buffers and other Best Management Practices (BMPs). 9-1

Additional Avoidance and Minimization Measures and Mitigation for Streams and Wetlands

NCDOT and FHWA should consider additional avoidance and minimize measures for stream and wetland impacts beyond what is typically proposed. Because of the potential for large cut and fill heights due to the mountainous topography, NCDOT and FHWA should consider the use of "PAM – Polyacrylamide" and other potentially successful soil erosion and sediment control applications (e.g., Absorbent fiber logs) that can greatly reduce turbidity on steeper slopes. This would be in addition to the stone check-dams, silt fencing, and other BMP soil erosion and sedimentation practices that NCDOT typically employs on a project. NCDOT has funded research with the North Carolina State University (NCSU) and has supported the application of these more 'aggressive' soil erosion and sediment control measures in mountainous environments. 9-3

Section 3.5.1.2 of the DEIS does not address the potential presence of acidic rock. Western North Carolina contains areas with acidic rock formations that when exposed to atmospheric conditions can result in stormwater runoff that exhibits very low pH values 9-4

and can further impair water quality. This acidic runoff can be very detrimental to aquatic environments. EPA recommends that geotechnical investigations be conducted as soon as possible after the selection of a LEDPA in order to identify the potential presence of acidic rock formations. Specific avoidance and minimization plans should also be developed and proposed where exposed rock formations may impact water quality of receiving streams and wetlands. 9-4

Compensatory Mitigation

EPA notes the information on proposed compensatory mitigation on Page 4-36 of the DEIS for wetland and stream impacts through the Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP). It should be noted that while opportunities for compensatory mitigation are limited in the project study area, NCDOT and FHWA should consider 'enhancement' activities to correct existing 'down-cutting', eroded drainage features and improved streambank measures. 9-3

EPA notes the comment in the DEIS that almost the entire stream and wetland areas in the project study area are invaded by exotic invasive plants. Removal of these invasive plant species along with other riparian buffer enhancements may constitute potential on-site enhancement/restoration opportunities. Any specific plans for on-site restoration/enhancement activities or detailed mitigation plans should also be coordinated through Ms. Kathy Matthews of EPA's Wetlands Section. 9-3

Terrestrial Forest Impacts

The DEIS summary impact table (S-1) does not include the terrestrial forest impacts for the different Sections or the Alternatives. Table 4-12 of the DEIS provides a breakdown of impact based upon vegetative community type. According to Table 4-12, Section A has 20 acres of impacts to Mesic Mixed and Alluvial Hardwood forests. For Section B, Alternatives B-2, B-3 and B-4 have comparable impacts to these same community types and range between 21 and 23 acres. For Section C, Alternative F-1 has the least impact to terrestrial forests with 16 acres. Alternatives A-2, C-2, and D-1 have 32, 36 and 25 acres of impact, respectively. Because of the proximity of Hominy Creek to some of these terrestrial communities, EPA strongly prefers Alternative F-1 for Section C. For Alternatives A, B-2 and F-1, there is a total impact of 59 acres of impact to terrestrial forests. The FEIS should include these impacts in the summary table. 12-1

Invasive Plant Species

The DEIS does not specifically address the requirements under Executive Order (E.O.)13112 on Invasive Species or FHWA's guidance on addressing the potential problems associated with roadside invasive plants. The DEIS does cite there are extensive urban land and disturbed areas covered in exotic invasive plant species within the project study area (Pages 3-54, 4-36, et al.). Species such as Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Japanese [Stilt] grass (*Microstegium vimineum*) and Oriental bittersweet 12-2

(*Celastrus orbiculatus*) are listed in the project study area. EPA's records also indicate the presence of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*, syn. *Polygonum cuspidatum*, *Reynoutria japonica*) in the project study area, including right-of-way areas along I-240, I-40, and NC 25.

EPA has previously provided NCDOT information on this problematic invasive plant species that can be spread extensively through construction activities and long-term can potentially impact riparian buffers and water quality. EPA requests that NCDOT consider the use of the draft BMPs for Japanese knotweed (as well as some of the other aggressive invasive plant species) that was provided to NCDOT's Roadside Environment Unit and Natural Environment Unit in October of 2007. The FEIS should also specifically address compliance with E.O. 13112 and FHWA roadside guidance on controlling invasive plant species. 12-2

Human Environmental (Relocations) and Environmental Justice

There are a substantial number of residential and business relocations for the proposed new location and widened roadways. For Section A, there are 79 residential relocations and 14 business relocations. For Section B, Alternatives B-2, B-3 and B-4 have 44/55, 61/17, and 37/19, residential and business relocations, respectively. For Section C, Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1 and F-1 have 15/1, 10/1, 15/2 and 5/0 residential and business relocations, respectively. Based upon the table and information on Environmental Justice (i.e., Section 3.1.5, Table 4-1, et al.), only Alternative B-3 appears to have a substantial percentage of residential relocations to minority and low-income residences. There are 61 residential relocations and 26 are to minority and low-income residences (43%). Alternatives B-2 and B-4 have much lower percentages at approximately 16% and 14%. 26-4

Noise Receptor Impacts

The DEIS summary impact table does not include the number of noise receptors impacted by the proposed project. Noise receptor impacts are addressed in Table 4-4 of the DEIS. Section A has 120 impacted residences (receptors). Section B has between 137 and 182 impacted receptors, with Alternative B-2 having 134 impacted residential receptors and 3 impacted business receptors. Alternative B-2 has the least number of total impacted receptors for this Section of the project. For Section C, only Alternatives A-2, C-2 and D-1 are listed as having noise receptor impacts (i.e., 43/2, 51/2, and 48/2). It is unclear if Alternative F-1 has impacts to noise receptors. This issue should be clarified before the next Merger 01 concurrence meeting. Furthermore, impact tables should be revised to include 'totals' for each of the Alternative combinations for Sections A, B and C. EPA notes that Table 4-5 includes the potential for noise barriers at approximately 16 possible locations for the various alternatives. Section A of the project could have 2 cost effective noise barriers. Section B Alternatives could have 1 or more noise barrier. For Section C, a noise barrier for 18 impacted properties is being constructed under TIP project I-4401. (The FEIS should provide additional details regarding Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1 and F-1 and if there is any difference in alternatives 3-2 3-3 3-4

and the potential requirements for noise barriers depending upon which alternative is selected. The FEIS should also total noise receptor impacts for the Sections, list the number of receptors which will be benefited from noise barriers and include them in a summary impact table. 3-5

Areas of Controversy and Unresolved Issues

The DEIS includes information on unresolved issues on Pages S-18 and S-19 and controversial issues on Pages 8-26 and 8-27. Section 1.9 addresses the issue of the traffic model updates and project level forecasts in Section 1.9 and the justification of 8 lanes on I-240 versus 6 lanes. Based upon the CORSIM Analysis provided in Section 1.9.2.2, there appears to be little traffic benefit between 6-lanes and 8-lanes along I-240. Table 1-4 does not fully demonstrate any substantial traffic benefit in average travel time and average speed between the 8 and 6 lane options for I-240 (e.g., Six lane AM Peak at 388.7 seconds versus Eight lane AM Peak at 363.6 seconds). For this example, there is less than a 6% travel time benefit between the two options. Moreover, EPA is concerned that NCDOT proposes to provide updated traffic forecasts using a new traffic model (Page S-18). The new traffic model forecast should have been conducted prior to the issuance of the DEIS. EPA requests that this updated traffic analysis be conducted prior to the Merger 01 Concurrence point 3 meeting. 27-8 27-9

The NCDOT is currently reviewing the proposed and revised ADC conceptual alternative. As soon as NCDOT completes its traffic analysis, this alternative needs to be formally presented to the Merger 01 team for potential consideration, if relevant and appropriate. EPA acknowledges the other unresolved issues concerning Section 4(f) properties, environmental justice coordination, the cumulative effects assessment, hazardous material investigations, and the review of the Aesthetic Advisory Committee recommendations by the City of Asheville. EPA notes that there is a 'high' severity impact anticipated for the landfill along the eastern bank of the French Broad River (Page 4-17). Sampling and analysis may need to be conducted prior to the selection of a preferred alternative and this information should be presented with respect to the alternatives currently under consideration. 29 8-2

Under Sections 4.3.1.2 and 4.3.1.4, both entitled 'Economic Effects', a duplicate (verbatim) discussion is provided where one does not appear to be necessary. One of the sections should be eliminated in the FEIS. 5-5

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 455
Cherokee, NC 28719
Ph: 828-554-6852 Fax 828-488-2462

DATE: 13 - June - 08

TO: FHWA, NC Division
Donnie Brew
310 New Bern Ave., Suite 410
Raleigh, NC 27601-1418

PROJECT(S): **Proposed I-26 Asheville Connector Project, Buncombe County, North Carolina.**

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI THPO) is in receipt of the notification to act as a consulting party for the above-referenced project information and would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed Section 106 activity. The EBCI THPO accepts the invitation to act as a consulting party on the above referenced Section 106 undertaking(s) as mandated under 36 C.F.R. 800.

The project's location is within the aboriginal territory of the Cherokee Middle / Out Towns. Potential Cherokee cultural resources important to the Cherokee people may be threatened due to adverse effects expected from the level of ground disturbance required for this project. As such, the EBCI THPO offers the following comments: 11-1

According to the information provided in the 2007 draft *Archaeological Survey and Evaluation for the I-26 Asheville Connector* report conducted by TRC, prehistoric sites 31BN825, 31BN826, 31BN828 are recommended eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion D. Furthermore, sites 31BN867, 31BN868, 31BN870, 31BN873, and 31BN823 are considered potentially eligible for inclusion on the NRHP under Criterion D.

**31BN825**

This large Archaic period site is located "on a long, low ridgetop north of I-40 in the western part of Section C." The EBCI THPO recognizes that approximately 66% of the archeological deposits were discovered within Stratums II and III, "indicating that substantial archaeological deposits are present beneath the A horizon." The EBCI THPO also recognizes the potential for buried features to be present, including hearths. The cultural material present suggest the possibility for both buried features, and the potential for human remains at this site. 11-2

As such, the EBCI THPO concurs with the archeologist's recommendations that site avoidance should be the first choice in choosing a preferred alternative. If this is not feasible, this office concurs with the recommendation that "data recovery excavations are recommended to mitigate any impacts caused by construction of the I-26 Connector."

**31BN826**

This small probable Middle to Late Archaic lithic scatter is located on a hilltop in Section C. While the majority of prehistoric artifacts were discovered within Stratum II or II/III, the EBCI THPO recognizes that, "Given the site's upland location . . . there is no potential for deeply buried deposits."

The EBCI THPO concurs with the archeologist's recommendations that "additional work at 31BN826 could provide important information regarding Archaic period activities in upland settings." The cultural material present lends to the possibility for both buried features, and the potential for human remains at this site. As in 31BN826, site avoidance is the first suggestion from this office. However, if this option is not feasible, this office agrees with the recommendation that data recovery may be an option to mitigate adverse impacts caused by I-26 construction activities. 11-2

**31BN828**

This small Middle to Late Woodland site is located along a meandering bend of Hominy Creek, "a short distance north of the I-26 / I-40 / I-240 interchange in Section C." This site is doubly interesting to this office due to the potential for a Qualla component to the site. The presence of 63 ceramic sherds, fire cracked rocks, and identifiable cultural features such as pits, and possible small post holes also lends to the possibility for both buried features, and the potential for human remains at this site.

The EBCI THPO concurs with the archeologist's recommendations that site 31BN828 could "yield crucial data concerning late Middle to Late Woodland occupations in the area." Moreover, the potential presence of Qualla ceramics could yield exciting data concerning the presence of Cherokee occupation well to the east of the historic Cherokee Out Towns. Additionally, Hominy Creek was used by Griffith Rutherford as a means of accessing the Cherokee Middle Towns in the fall of 1776. The historic importance of Hominy Creek as an entrance junction into the Cherokee Middle Towns is documented in the historical record. If data recovery is agreed upon to mitigate the impacts from the proposed undertaking, research questions reflecting the historic events along Hominy Creek may be warranted. 11-2

As in 31BN825, and 31BN826, the EBCI THPO first suggests site avoidance for this site. However, if this option is not feasible, this office agrees with the recommendation that thorough data recovery may be an option to mitigate adverse impacts caused by I-26 construction activities.

**31BN867**

This multicomponent Late Archaic to Mississippian site is located on a "gently sloping Pleistocene terrace immediately north of I-40 . . . ." The EBCI THPO recognizes that 127 prehistoric artifacts were recovered during the phase I archeological field survey. As such, the EBCI THPO recognizes that NRHP eligibility has not been determined at this time. This office concurs with the archeologist's recommendations that "limited mechanized stripping . . . (especially in the eastern part of the site, in the vicinity of TUs 1 and 4)" should be employed before NRHP eligibility is determined. 11-3

**31BN868**

This multicomponent prehistoric and 20th century historic site is located "on the floodplain immediately east of the French Broad River, south of I-40 on the Biltmore Estate." The EBCI THPO recognizes that the majority of artifacts collected during the phase I archeological field survey were associated with the 20th century historic component. As such, this office will differ to the NC SHPO those portions of site 31BN868 which reflect the historic occupation of the site. However, the EBCI THPO is interested in commenting on the prehistoric component of the site. This office concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that the presence of prehistoric artifacts "coupled with the site's alluvial setting, suggests that additional intact deposits could be sealed beneath the alluvium." As such, the EBCI THPO concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that "mechanized deep testing would be necessary to search for and evaluate such deposits prior to deriving a NRHP-eligibility" for the site. 11-3

**31BN870**

This multicomponent prehistoric and 20th century historic site is located "on the French Broad River terrace west of 31BN869, north of and across I-40 from 31BN867 on the Biltmore Estate." The EBCI THPO recognizes that the majority of artifacts collected during the phase I archeological field survey were associated with the 20th century historic component. As such, this office will differ to the NC SHPO those portions of site 31BN868 which reflect the historic occupation of the site. However, the EBCI THPO is interested in commenting on the prehistoric component of the site. This office concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that the presence of prehistoric artifacts "coupled with the site's alluvial setting, suggests that additional intact deposits could be sealed beneath the alluvium." As such, the EBCI THPO concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that "mechanized deep testing would be necessary to search for and evaluate such deposits prior to deriving a NRHP-eligibility" for the site. 11-3

**31BN873**

This large probably Late Archaic through Middle Woodland site is "situated east of a small drainage in the uplands south of I-40 . . . within a former tree nursery or plantation on the Biltmore Estate." The EBCI THPO recognizes that 177 prehistoric artifacts, and 27 ceramic sherds were recovered during the phase I archeological field survey. The 11-3

EBCI THPO also recognizes that intact features may be present at 31BN873. As such, this office concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that "limited mechanized stripping is recommended prior to establishing a conclusive NRHP-eligibility recommendation."

**31BN823**

This Woodland site "is situated on a terrace north of the French Broad River and south of the Amboy Road exit on I-240, near the southern end of Section A of the I-26 Connector" project. The EBCI THPO recognizes that the level of previous ground disturbance is high due to the presence of "parked automobiles and RVs," gravel parking areas, and buried cables at the site. However, this office concurs with the archeologist's recommendation that deeply buried deposits might exist, thus "mechanized deep testing will be necessary to search for such buried deposits prior to establishing a conclusive NRHP-eligibility recommendation." 11-3

At all times, the main concern for the EBCI THPO is the possibility for human burials. According to the information provided, the presence of human remains is a potential throughout all the sites, but especially 31BN825, 31BN826, and 31BN828.

If we can be of further service, or if you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at (828) 554-6852.

Sincerely,

Tyler B. Howe
Tribal Historical Preservation Specialist
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

C: Jesse Zinn

# Appendix A2

## Correspondence from State Agencies

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E. Lewis

# North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

James B. Hunt Jr., Governor
Betty Ray McCain, Secretary

Division of Archives and History
William S. Price, Jr., Director

July 11, 1994

RECEIVED
JUL 13 1994
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL BRANCH

Nicholas L. Graf
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Department of Transportation
310 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, N.C. 27601-1442

Re: Relocation of NC 191 to I-240, U-2902, Buncombe County, ER 93-7690, ER 94-9085

Dear Mr. Graf:

Thank you for your letter of June 15, 1994, transmitting the archaeological survey report by Thomas J. Padgett concerning the above project.

We concur with the finding that the proposed project will affect site 31BN623** if Alternative 1 is selected. However, if Alternative 1 is selected, the site is not significant for preservation in place. Thus, data recovery will be considered appropriate mitigation if the site is determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. If Alternative 2 or 3 is selected the project will have no effect on significant archaeological resources.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106, codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763.

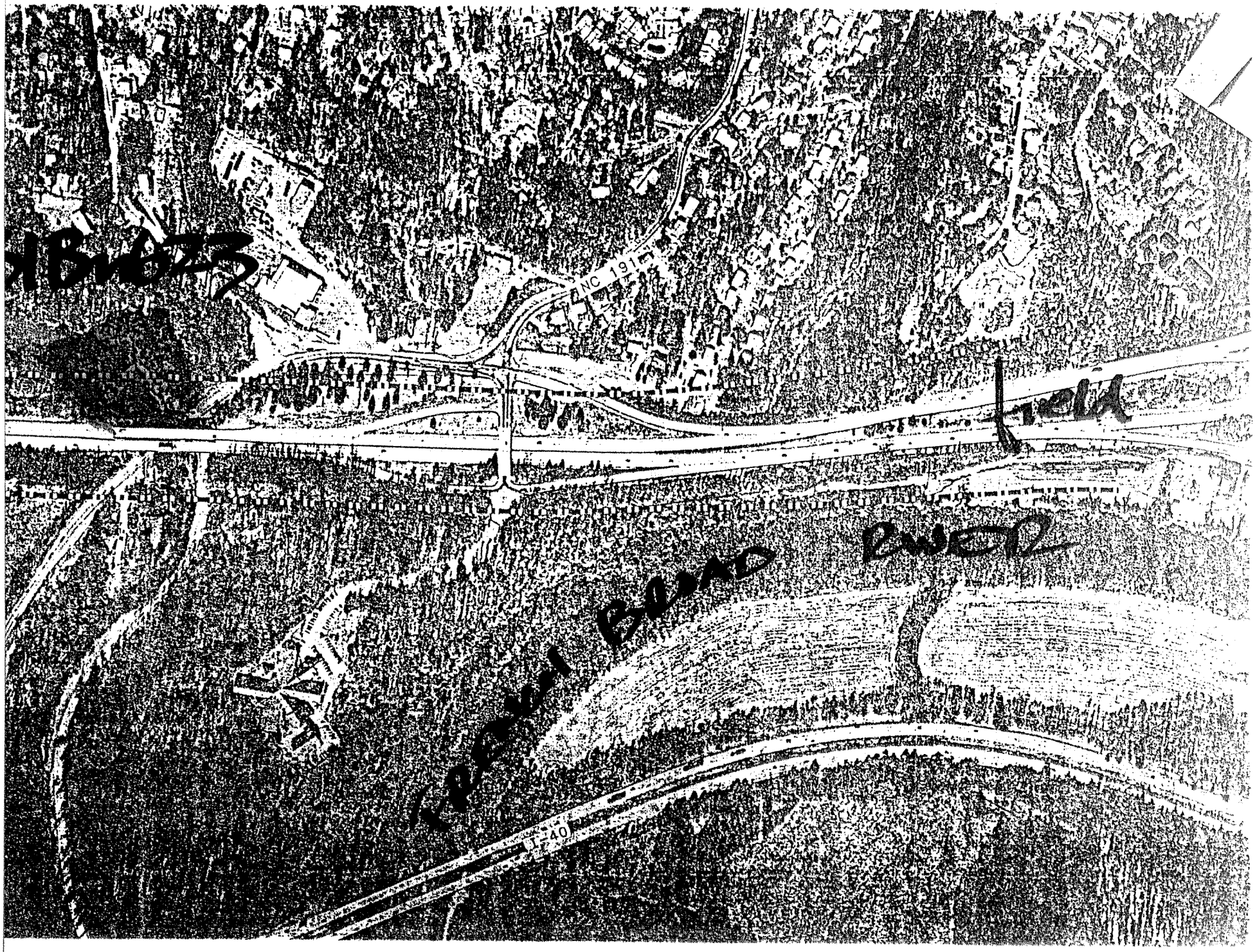
Sincerely,

David Brook

David Brook
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DB:slw

cc: H. F. Vick
T. Padgett


NC 191
I-40

STUDY LIST UPDATE - JUNE 15, 1995

| Name | Added to Study List |
|---|---|
| ** County: BEAUFORT | 04/13/95 |
| Ada Mae Sh[illegible] Ro[illegible] (Washington) | |
| ** County: BLADEN | 10/13/94 |
| South River Presbyterian Church (Garland vic.) | |
| ** County: BUNCOMBE | 07/15/94 |
| (former) Buncombe County Boys' Training School (Asheville) | 01/12/95 |
| Shadrick Guthrie Farm (Democrat vicinity) | 07/15/94 |
| Dr. Cicero M. McCracken House (Fairview) | 07/15/94 |
| Monte Vista Hotel (Black Mountain) | |
| ** County: CABARRUS | 01/12/95 |
| Old Concord Tribune & Times Newspaper Building (Concord) | |
| ** County: CALDWELL | 04/13/95 |
| Mary's Grove (Lenoir) | |
| ** County: CARTARET | 07/15/94 |
| Shelley Point Archaeology Site 31CR-53 (Bogue vicinity) | |
| ** County: COLUMBUS | 01/12/95 |
| Cerro Gordo Colored School (Cerro Gordo) | |
| ** County: CRAVEN | 04/13/95 |
| Ebenezer Presbyterian Church (New Bern) | 04/13/95 |
| First Missionary Baptist Church (New Bern) | 04/13/95 |
| Rue Chapel A.M.E. Church (New Bern) | 04/13/95 |
| St. Peter A.M.E. Zion Church (New Bern) | |
| ** County: CUMBERLAND | 04/13/95 |
| Eastover School (Eastover vicinity) | |
| ** County: DARE | 04/[illegible]/95 |
| Creef-Jones House (Manteo) | 04/13/95 |
| Cricketwood (Manteo) | 04/13/95 |
| Manteo Historic District (Manteo) | 04/13/95 |
| Manteo Boatyard Boathouse (Manteo) | 04/13/95 |
| Manteo High School Gymnasium (Manteo) | 04/13/95 |
| Susan Midgett House (Manteo) | |
| ** County: DAVIDSON | 04/13/95 |
| St. Stephens United Methodist Church (Lexington) | |
| ** County: DAVIE | 10/13/94 |
| John Edward Belle Shutt House (Advance) | |
| ** County: DUPLIN | 07/15/94 |
| Bryan Whitfield Herring House (Calypso vicinity) | |

# *North Carolina*
# *CENTURY FARMS*

*100 Years of Continuous*

*Agricultural Heritage*

COPY — NCDOT

North Carolina Department of Agriculture

## ALAMANCE

| | |
|---|---|
| James Phillip Aldridge | Burlington |
| George C. Allen | Graham |
| Emma B. Allen | |
| C.K. Bailey | Snow Camp |
| Howard T. Braxton | Snow Camp |
| Bobby E. Coggins | Graham |
| Mr. Ray Coon | Graham |
| Mrs. Ray Coon | |
| William F. Covington | Mebane |
| Mrs. Jesse J. Danieley | Burlington |
| Lucy Sharpe Davis | Burlington |
| Edward Kerr Freshwater | Haw River |
| Robert W. Gibson, Jr. | Mebane |
| Koy C. Ingle | Burlington |
| Grover Russell Isley | Burlington |
| Ralph K. Isley | Snow Camp |
| Mr. James P. McPherson | Snow Camp |
| Mrs. James P. McPherson | |
| Howard A. Pickett | Burlington |
| George O. Rogers, Jr. | Graham |
| Earl M. Sartin, Jr. | Burlington |
| Grover C. Shaw | Graham |
| George N. Zachary, Jr. | Snow Camp |

## ALEXANDER

| | |
|---|---|
| Atwell Alexander | Stony Point |
| Albert Hubbard | Taylorsville |
| Rowena Hubbard | |
| J. Woodrow Payne | Taylorsville |
| Coy Reese | Taylorsville |
| Dale Reese | Taylorsville |
| Mrs. Lelia T. Wagner | Taylorsville |
| Helen M. Wike | Taylorsville |
| Walter D. Doughton | Sparta |
| Philip Martell | Marinette, WI |
| James Martell | |
| Elizabeth M. Moxley | Laurel Springs |

## ANSON

| | |
|---|---|
| Bertha Carpenter | Wadesboro |
| Mary Elizabeth Carpenter | |
| Nancy I. Landen | |
| T.J. Ingram, Jr. | Lilesville |
| Elizabeth I. Little (heirs) | Wadesboro |
| Cecil F. Steagall | Peachland |
| Marvin L. Tyson | Wadesboro |
| Annie L. Tyson | |

## ASHE

| | |
|---|---|
| G. Earl Blevins | Crumpler |
| Virgle Brown | Crumpler |
| Lorene Brown | |
| Clyde Cox | Laurel Springs |
| Mary Sue D'Alcamo | Grassy Creek |
| Sara S. Fisher | Laurel Springs |
| James Gwyn Gambill | West Jefferson |
| Elizabeth R. Graybeal | West Jefferson |
| Linda G. Hahn | West Jefferson |
| Alfred B. Hurt, Jr. | Crumpler |
| Bruce Miller | Lansing |
| Robert J. Osborne | Creston |
| Clara D. Perkins | Lansing |
| Joseph Phipps | Jefferson |
| Katherine Phipps | |
| Mrs. Eleanor B. Reeves | West Jefferson |
| J. Breece Spencer | Lansing |
| Martin Sturgill | Creston |
| Wilma Sturgill | |
| John E. Woodie | Sparta |

## AVERY

| | |
|---|---|
| William W. Avery | Plumtree |
| Jason P. Hughes | Linville |

## BEAUFORT

| | |
|---|---|
| Jane Latham Dilday | Belhaven |
| I.P. Hodges | Washington |
| R.R. Leggett, Sr. | Washington |
| Ada L. Mizell | Greenville |
| Arthur S. Perkins | Robersonville |
| Joseph E. Ratcliff | Pantego |
| Timothy Sanderson | |
| Alice Sanderson | Bath |

## BERTIE

| | |
|---|---|
| Mrs. Mary E. Barnes | Kelford |
| Joseph M. Browne, III | Kelford |
| Johnna R. Browne | |
| Lindsey Chamblee | Aulander |
| Lula Mae Chamblee | |
| Olga Butler | |
| Wm. Hoggard | |
| Melvin R. Cobb, Sr. | Merry Hill |
| Robert Holley | Colerain |
| Sallie Holley | |
| Cecil S. Holloman, Sr. | Ahoskie |
| Mac W. Lawrence | Colerain |
| Edwin M. Parker | Windsor |
| Mrs. Harold R. Sessoms | Ahoskie |

## BLADEN

| | |
|---|---|
| Ottis Lee Cain | Elizabethtown |
| Thelma Cromartie | Elizabethtown |
| Sophia K. Floyd | Kelly |
| Eugene R. Floyd, Sr. | |
| Mrs. John F. Freeman | Bladenboro |
| Jabe T. Frink | Bladenboro |
| William L. Frink | Bladenboro |
| Fleta L. Harrelson | Clarkton |
| Ida Irvine | Tar Heel |
| Edna Robeson | |
| W.H. Taft McCall | Clarkton |
| Dorothy Burney | |
| Rose G. McDougald | Clarkton |
| F.D. McLean (heirs) | Lake Waccamaw |
| Robert F. Melvin | Fayetteville |
| Mary B. Odom | Clinton |
| James M. Gibson | |
| Annie R. Parker | |
| Margaret G. Watts | |
| Nellie Ray Parker | Elizabethtown |
| Mr. Henry Layton Ross | Elizabethtown |
| Mrs. Henry Layton Ross | |
| Albert Roy Shaw | Clarkton |
| Issac W. Singletary | Bladenboro |
| Sarah K. Singletary | |
| Julius M. Suggs | Elizabethtown |

## BRUNSWICK

| | |
|---|---|
| Glenn E. Carpenter, Jr. | Supply |
| Edwin S. Clemmons | Supply |
| T.J. Gilbert | Bolivia |

## BUNCOMBE

| | |
|---|---|
| Carter F. Brown | Leicester |
| Thomas William Cochran | Arden |
| Craig MacKenzie Coggins | Black Mountain |
| Jesse L. Israel, Jr. | Candler |
| F.M. Miller | Candler |
| Clyde Parker | Weaverville |
| Sandra Parker | |
| Irene E. Peeke | Weaverville |
| M. Catherine Peeke | |

## BURKE

| | |
|---|---|
| Vernon Guy Huffman | Connelly Springs |
| Ivey E. Lowman | Valdese |
| Norman E. Lowman | Valdese |
| James H. Martin | Hickory |
| David McGimsey | Morganton |
| Margaret E. McGimsey | |
| Robert B. Sisk | Morganton |
| Albert G. Wilson | Connelly Springs |

## CABARRUS

| | |
|---|---|
| George Barnhardt | Mt. Pleasant |
| Margie Barnhardt | |
| Eugene W. Cochrane, Sr. | Charlotte |
| J. Vigil Hahn | Mt. Pleasant |
| W. Reid Honeycutt | Gold Hill |
| Amanda K. Miller | Concord |
| Mrs. J.F. Moose | Mt. Pleasant |

NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS BY COUNTY
AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 1995

Palmer-Marsh House (NHL) (Bath) 02/26/70
Pantego Academy (Pantego) 10/25/84
Rosedale (Wharton vicinity) 04/29/82
St. Thomas Episcopal Church (Bath) 11/20/70
Washington Historic District (Washington) 02/09/79

BERTIE

Bertie County Courthouse (Windsor) 05/10/79
Elmwood (Watson-Mardre House) (Windsor vicinity) 06/08/82
Freeman Hotel (Windsor) 09/09/82
Garrett-White House (Trap vicinity) 06/28/82
The Hermitage (Merry Hill vicinity) 06/08/82
Hope Plantation (Windsor vicinity) 04/17/70
Jordan House (Windsor vicinity) 08/26/71
King House (King-Bazemore House) (Windsor vicinity) 08/26/71
King-Freeman-Speight House (Republican vicinity) 12/02/82
Liberty Hall (Grabtown vicinity) 06/08/82
Oaklana (Roxobel vicinity) 04/15/82
Pineview (Browne House) (Roxobel vicinity) 06/28/82
Rhodes Site 31Br90 (Archaeology) (Hamilton vicinity) 08/28/86
Rosefield (Windsor) 08/26/82
Scotch Hall (Merry Hill vicinity) 04/29/82
St. Frances Methodist Church (Lewiston) 04/29/82
Windsor Historic District (Windsor) 07/29/91
Woodbourne (Roxobel vicinity) 08/26/71

BLADEN

Brown Marsh Presbyterian Church (Clarkton vicinity) 09/02/75
John Hector Clark House (Clarkton vicinity) 05/20/87
(former) Clarkton Depot (Clarkton) 12/23/86
Desserette (White Oak vicinity) 10/07/87
Harmony Hall (White Oak vicinity) 03/24/72
Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Church and Cemetery (Council) 05/13/87
Oakland Plantation (Carvers community) 04/25/72
Purdie Place and Purdie Methodist Church (Tar Heel vicinity) 04/13/77
Trinity Methodist Church (Elizabethtown) 09/14/89
Walnut Grove (Robeson Plantation) (Tar Heel vicinity) 05/29/75

BRUNSWICK

Bald Head Island Lighthouse (Bald Head Island) 04/28/75
(former) Brunswick County Courthouse (Southport) 05/11/79
Brunswick Town Historic District (State Historic Site) (Southport vicinity) 09/01/78
Cape Fear Lighthouse Complex (Baldhead Island) 08/29/78
Fort Johnson (Federal Nomination) (Southport) 06/07/74
*T.B. McClintic* Vessel (Shallotte Point) 06/03/94
Orton Plantation (Southport vicinity) 04/11/73
Southport Historic District (Southport) 11/25/80
St. Philip's Church Ruins (Southport vicinity) 02/26/70

BUNCOMBE

Alexander Inn (Swannanoa vicinity) 05/31/84
Mrs. Minnie Alexander Cottage (Asheville) 12/21/89
All Souls Episcopal Church and Parish House (Asheville) 11/15/79
Arcade Building (Grove Arcade) (Asheville) 05/19/76
Asheville City Hall (Asheville) 11/07/76
Asheville Transfer and Storage Company Building (Asheville) 04/26/79
B & B Motor Company Building (Asheville) 04/26/79
Clarence Barker Memorial Hospital (Asheville) 11/15/79
Battery Park Hotel (Asheville) 07/14/77
Bent Creek Campus, Appalachian Forest Experiment Station (Federal) (Asheville) 04/29/93
130-132 Biltmore Avenue (Asheville) 04/26/79
134-136 Biltmore Avenue (Asheville) 04/26/79
140 Biltmore Avenue (Asheville) 04/26/79
Biltmore Avenue Amendment to Downtown Asheville HD (Asheville) 05/25/89
Biltmore Estate (NHL) (Asheville) 10/15/66
Biltmore Estate Office (Asheville) 11/15/79
Biltmore Industries (Asheville) 02/01/80
Biltmore Shoe Store (Asheville) 11/15/79
Biltmore Village Commercial Buildings (Asheville) 11/15/79
Biltmore Village Cottage District (Asheville) 11/15/79
Biltmore Village Cottages (Asheville) 11/15/79
Biltmore-Oteen Bank Building (Asheville) 11/15/79
Black Mountain College Historic District (Black Mountain vicinity) 10/05/82
Blue Ridge Assembly Historic District (Black Mountain vicinity) 09/17/79
William E. Breese, Sr. House (Cedar Crest) (Asheville) 04/28/80
William Jennings Bryan House (Asheville) 06/23/83
Buncombe County Courthouse (Asheville) 05/10/79
Camp Academy (Leicester vicinity) 09/19/85
Carter-Swain House (Democrat vicinity) 07/02/87
Chestnut Hill Historic District (Asheville) 03/17/83
Church of St. Lawrence (Asheville) 03/24/78
Church of the Redeemer (Asheville) 09/19/85
Claxton School (Asheville) 06/04/92
Conabeer Chrysler Building (Asheville) 04/26/79
Demens-Rumbaugh-Crawley House (Asheville) 06/01/82
Downtown Asheville Historic District (Asheville) 04/26/79
Eliada Home (West Asheville) 04/22/93
Douglas Ellington House (Asheville) 10/16/86
First Baptist Church (Asheville) 07/13/76
Grove Park Historic District (Asheville) 04/13/89
Grove Park Inn (Asheville) 04/03/73
Rafael Guastavino, Sr. Estate (Black Mountain vicinity) 07/13/89
Gunston Hall (Asheville) 10/24/91
INTHEOAKS (Black Mountain) 04/10/91
Thomas Jarrett House (Asheville) 01/21/94
Kimberly Amendment to Grove Park Historic District (Asheville) 12/18/90
John A. Lanning House (Asheville vicinity) 09/23/82

# NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS BY COUNTY
## AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 1995

E.D. Latta Nurses' Residence (Asheville) 04/26/79
The Manor and Cottages (Asheville) 01/26/78
McGeahy Building (Asheville) 11/15/79
George A. Mears House (Asheville) 04/26/79
Montford Area Historic District (Asheville) 11/25/77
Oteen Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District (Asheville) 11/20/85
Ottari Sanatarium (Asheville) 10/16/86
Overlook (Seely's Castle) (Asheville) 10/22/80
Ravenscroft School (Asheville) 12/12/78
Ravenscroft Amendment to Downtown Asheville HD (Asheville) 08/23/90
St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Asheville) 12/23/94
Samuel Harrison Reed House (Asheville) 11/15/79
Reynolds House (Asheville) 09/13/84
Dr. Carl V. Reynolds House (Albemarle Inn) (Asheville) 08/19/82
Richbourg Motors Building (Asheville) 04/26/79
Richmond Hill House (Asheville vicinity) 08/16/77
S & W Cafeteria (Asheville) 03/28/77
Sawyer Motor Company Building (Asheville) 04/26/79
Sherrill's Inn (Fairview vicinity) 04/16/75
Smith-McDowell House (Asheville) 08/01/75
Southern Railway Passenger Depot (Asheville) 11/15/79
St. Matthias Episcopal Church (Ashville) 05/10/79
Thomas Wolfe House (NHL) (Asheville) 11/11/71
Young Men's Institute Building (YMI) (Asheville) 07/14/77
Zealandia (Asheville) 03/14/77

BURKE

Avery Avenue Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Avery Avenue School (Morganton) 11/09/87
Alphonso Calhoun Avery House (Morganton) 07/12/84
Bellevue (Morganton vicinity) 12/04/73
Broughton Hospital Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Old Burke County Courthouse (Morganton) 04/17/70
Creekside (Morganton vicinity) 02/01/72
U.S.B. Dales Market (Morganton) 11/09/87
Jacob Forney, Jr. House (Morganton vicinity) 10/14/76
Gaither House (Morganton) 04/23/76
Gaston Chapel (Morganton) 10/11/84
Gilboa Methodist Church (Salem vicinity) 10/11/84
Hunting Creek Railroad Bridge (Morganton) 11/09/87
Jonesboro Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
John Alexander Lackey House (Morganton) 11/09/87
Magnolia Place (Morganton vicinity) 06/04/73
Morganton Downtown Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Mountain View (Samuel Greenlee House) (Morganton) 10/11/84
North Carolina School for the Deaf Historic District (Morganton) 04/20/89
North Carolina School for the Deaf Main Building (Morganton) 12/12/76
North Green Street-Bouchelle Street Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Quaker Meadows (Morganton vicinity) 10/03/73
Quaker Meadows Cemetery (Morganton) 11/09/87
Dr. Joseph Bennett Riddle House (Morganton) 12/20/84
South King Street Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Swan Ponds (Morganton vicinity) 04/24/73
Tate House (Morganton) 05/25/73
Franklin Pierce Tate House (Morganton) 05/21/86
Valdese Elementary School (Valdese) 10/25/84
Waldensian Presbyterian Church (Valdese) 10/25/84
West Union Street Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87
Western North Carolina Insane Asylum (Broughton Hospital) (Morganton) 10/05/77
White Street-Valdese Avenue Historic District (Morganton) 11/09/87

CABARRUS

Barber-Scotia College (Historic District) (Concord) 02/28/85
Bost Mill Historic District (Georgeville vicinity) 01/13/86
Cabarrus County Courthouse (Concord) 06/05/74
First Congregational Church (Mount Pleasant) 01/09/86
John Bunyan Green Farm (Midland vicinity) 06/02/88
Lentz Hotel (Mt. Pleasant) 06/14/82
McCurdy Log House (Concord vicinity) 01/21/74
Mill Hill (Concord vicinity) 09/10/74
Robert Harvey Morrison House and Pioneer Mills Gold Mine (Midland) 12/31/90
Mount Pleasant Historic District (Mount Pleasant) 05/12/86
Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute Historic District (Mount Pleasant) 11/15/78
North Union Street Historic District (Concord) 04/15/86
Odell-Locke-Randolph Cotton Mill (Concord) 03/28/83
The Reverend John E. Pressly House (Bethpage vicinity) 01/06/86
Reed Gold Mine (NHL) (Concord vicinity) 10/15/66
Rocky River Presbyterian Church (Concord vicinity) 03/06/86
South Union Street Historic District (Concord) 04/10/80
Spears House (Concord vicinity) 08/07/89
Stonewall Jackson Training School Historic District (Concord vicinity) 03/15/84

CALDWELL

Caldwell County Courthouse (Lenoir) 05/10/79
Clover Hill (Patterson vicinity) 05/25/73
Fort Defiance (Patterson vicinity) 09/15/70
William Hagler House (Grandin vicinity) 12/28/82
Lenoir High School (Lenoir) 08/02/90

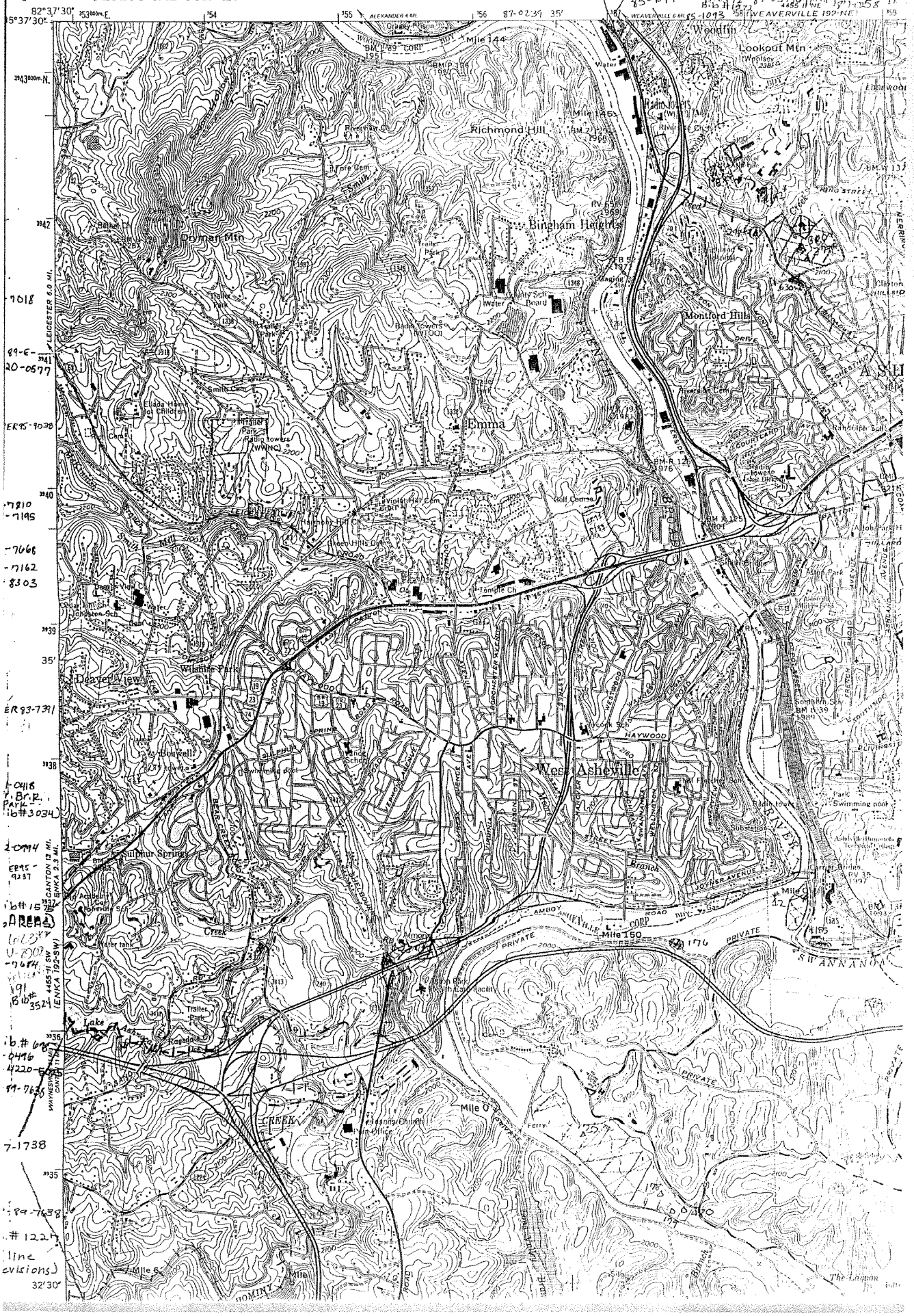
CAMDEN

William Riley Abbott House (South Mills vicinity) 08/11/78
Camden County Courthouse (Camden) 02/01/72
(former) Camden County Jail (Camden) 05/03/84
Dismal Swamp Canal (Federal Nomination) (South Mills vicinity) 06/06/88
Caleb Grandy House (Belcross) 04/29/82
Lamb-Ferebee House (Camden vicinity) 09/22/80

Asheville 7.5

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

UNITED STATES
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHO
MAPS AND SURVEYS DEPARTME



State of North Carolina
Department of Environment,
Health and Natural Resources
Division of Forest Resources

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary
Stanford M. Adams, Director

Griffiths Forestry Center
2411 Old US 70 West
Clayton, North Carolina 27520

January 29, 1996

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Melba McGee, Office of Legislative Affairs

FROM: Don H. Robbins, Staff Forester DHR

SUBJECT: DOT EIS Scoping for Proposed I-26 Connector Road in Asheville, Buncombe County, NC

PROJECT: #96-0472 and TIP # I-2513

DUE DATE: 2/22/96

We have reviewed the above subject scoping notice dated January 16, 1996, and have the following comments:

1. This project will impact woodland, especially the portion that will be on new location. We would hope that existing road locations and ROW's will be used to the maximum to cut down on the amount of new locations needed.

2. The EIS document should address impacts to woodland to include -
   a. The total forest land acreage by types and merchantability aspects that would be taken out of forest production as a result of new right-of-way purchases and all construction activities.
   b. The productivity of the forest soils as indicated by the soil series that would be involved within the proposed project.
   c. The impact upon existing greenways within the area of the proposed project.
   d. The provisions that the contractor will take to sell any merchantable timber or woody material that is to be removed. Emphasis should be on selling all wood products first, including energy chips. If wood products cannot be sold, then efforts should made to haul the material off or run through a tub grinder and turned into mulch. This practice is encouraged to accomplish the following -
      1. Minimize the need for piling and burning debris during construction.
      2. To reduce the danger of escaped fires and smoke on the highways.
      3. Reduce smoke management problems to the traveling public.
      4. Reduce smoke particles which can cause more fog to cover the highway when fog may not have formed otherwise.

      If any burning is needed, the contractor should comply with all laws and regulations pertaining to debris burning.
   e. The provisions that the contractor will take during the construction phase to prevent erosion, sedimentation and construction damage to forest land outside the right-of-way and construction limits. Trees outside the construction limits should be protected from construction activities to avoid:
      1. Skinning of tree trunks by machinery.
      2. Soil compaction and root exposure or injury by heavy equipment.
      3. Adding layers of fill dirt over the root systems of trees, a practice that impairs root aeration.
      4. Accidental spilling of petroleum products or other damaging substances over the root systems of trees.

We would hope that the improvements would have the least impact to forest and related resources in that area.

pc: Warren Boyette - CO
Tommy Thompsn - Re
Keith Jenkins - D1
File

# North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

512 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27604-1188, 919-733-3391
Charles R. Fullwood, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Melba McGee, Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs
Dept. of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources

FROM: Stephanie E. Goudreau, Mt. Region Coordinator
Habitat Conservation Program

Stephanie E. Goudreau

DATE: February 6, 1996

SUBJECT: State Clearinghouse Project No. 96-0472, Scoping comments for I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County, TIP No. #I-2513.

This correspondence responds to a request by you for our preliminary review and comments regarding the proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to upgrade existing I-240 and interchanges from the current northern terminus of I-26 at the interchange with I-40 and I-240, south of Asheville, to the current I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue, west of the French Broad River. From this interchange northward, a freeway on new location will be considered that will cross the French Broad River and tie into existing US 19-23-70. In addition, the NCDOT will consider providing the movements from I-40 west to existing I-240 east and from I-240 west to I-40 east. The proposed route will become I-26, which will continue northwest from this project along the existing US 19-23 corridor towards Tennessee.

Biological staff of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) prefer that as much existing alignment as possible be utilized for the I-26 Connector to minimize impacts to fisheries and wildlife resources. In order for us to provide a meaningful review, the environmental document to be prepared for this project should include the following:

1) Description of fishery and wildlife resources within the project area, including a listing of federally or state designated threatened, endangered, or special concern animal and plant species. Contacts are the Asheville Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (704/258-3939) and the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (919/733-7701).

2) Description of waters and/or wetlands affected by the project.

3) Project map identifying wetland areas. Identification of wetlands may be accomplished through coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. If the Corps is not consulted, the person delineating wetlands should be identified and criteria listed.

4) Description of project activities that will occur within wetlands, such as fill or channel alteration. Acreages of wetlands impacted by alternative project designs should be listed. Project sponsors should indicate whether the Corps has been contacted to determine the need for a 404 Permit under the Clean Water Act. Contact is Mr. David Baker (704/271-4856).

5) Description of project site and non-wetland vegetative communities.

6) The extent to which the project will result in loss, degradation, or fragmentation of wildlife habitat.

7) Any measures proposed to avoid or reduce impacts of the project or to mitigate for unavoidable habitat losses.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at 704/652-4257.

cc: Ms. Janice Nicholls, USFWS, Asheville

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW — PROJECT COMMENTS

| Reviewing Office: ARO | |
|---|---|
| Project Number: 96-0472 | Due Date: 2-22-96 |

After review of this project it has been determined that the EHNR permit(s) and/or approvals indicated may need to be obtained in order for this project to comply with North Carolina Law.

Questions regarding these permits should be addressed to the Regional Office indicated on the reverse of the form.

All applications, information and guidelines relative to these plans and permits are available from the same Regional Office.

| | PERMITS | SPECIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS | Normal Process Time (statutory time limit) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Permit to construct & operate wastewater treatment facilities, sewer system extensions, & sewer systems not discharging into state surface waters. | Application 90 days before begin construction or award of construction contracts On-site inspection. Post-application technical conference usual | 30 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | NPDES - permit to discharge into surface water and/or permit to operate and construct wastewater facilities discharging into state surface waters. | Application 180 days before begin activity. On-site inspection. Pre-application conference usual. Additionally, obtain permit to construct wastewater treatment facility-granted after NPDES. Reply time, 30 days after receipt of plans or issue of NPDES permit-whichever is later. | 90-120 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Water Use Permit | Pre-application technical conference usually necessary | 30 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Well Construction Permit | Complete application must be received and permit issued prior to the installation of a well. | 7 days (15 days) |
| ☒ | Dredge and Fill Permit | Application copy must be served on each adjacent riparian property owner. On-site inspection. Pre-application conference usual. Filling may require Easement to Fill from N.C. Department of Administration and Federal Dredge and Fill Permit. | 55 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | Permit to construct & operate Air Pollution Abatement facilities and/or Emission Sources as per 15A NCAC 21H.0600 | N/A | 60 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | Any open burning associated with subject proposal must be in compliance with 15A NCAC 2D.0520. | N/A | 60 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | Demolition or renovations of structures containing asbestos material must be in compliance with 15A NCAC 2D.0525 which requires notification and removal prior to demolition. Contact Asbestos Control Group 919-733-0820. | | |
| ☐ | Complex Source Permit required under 15A NCAC 2D.0800. | | |
| ☐ | The Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 must be properly addressed for any land disturbing activity. An erosion & sedimentation control plan will be required if one or more acres to be disturbed. Plan filed with proper Regional Office (Land Quality Sect.) at least 30 days before beginning activity. A fee of $30 for the first acre and $20.00 for each additional acre or part must accompany the plan | | 20 days (30 days) |
| ☐ | The Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 must be addressed with respect to the referrenced Local Ordinance: | | (30 days) |
| ☐ | Mining Permit | On-site inspection usual. Surety bond filed with EHNR. Bond amount varies with type mine and number of acres of affected land. Any area mined greater than one acre must be permited. The appropriate bond must be received before the permit can be issued. | 30 days (60 days) |
| ☐ | North Carolina Burning permit | On-site inspection by N.C. Division Forest Resources if permit exceeds 4 days | 1 day (N/A) |
| ☐ | Special Ground Clearance Burning Permit - 22 counties in coastal N.C. with organic soils | On-site inspection by N.D. Division Forest Resources required "if more than five acres of ground clearing activities are involved. Inspections should be requested at least ten days before actual burn is planned." | 1 day (N/A) |
| ☐ | Oil Refining Facilities | N/A | 90-120 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Dam Safety Permit | If permit required, application 60 days before begin construction. Applicant must hire N.C. qualified engineer to: prepare plans, inspect construction, certify construction is according to EHNR approved plans. May also require permit under mosquito control program. And a 404 permit from Corps of Engineers. An inspection of site is necessary to verify Hazard Classification. A minimum fee of $200.00 must accompany the application. An additional processing fee based on a percentage or the total project cost will be required upon completion. | 30 days (60 days) |

PS 105

Continued on reverse

| | PERMITS | SPECIAL APP[illegible]CATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS | Normal Process Time (statutory time limit) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Permit to drill exploratory oil or gas well | File surety bond [illegible],000 with EHNR running to State of N.C. conditional that a[illegible] well opened by drill operator shall, upon abandonment, be p[illegible]gged according to EHNR rules and regulations. | 10 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Geophysical Exploration Permit | Application filed w[illegible] EHNR at least 10 days prior to issue of permit. Application by lett[illegible] No standard application form. | 10 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | State Lakes Construction Permit | Application fee ba[illegible]d on structure size is charged. Must include descriptions & dra[illegible]ngs of structure & proof of ownership of riparian propert[illegible] | 15-20 days (N/A) |
| ☒ | 401 Water Quality Certification | N/A | 60 days (130 days) |
| ☐ | CAMA Permit for MAJOR development | $250.00 fee must [illegible]mpany application | 55 days (150 days) |
| ☐ | CAMA Permit for MINOR development | $50.00 fee must a[illegible]tion | 22 days (25 days) |
| ☐ | Several geodetic monuments are located in or near the project area. If any monu[illegible]ed to be moved or destroyed, please notify: N.C. Geodetic Survey, Box 2768[illegible] N.C. 27611 | | |
| ☐ | Abandonment of any wells, if required, must be in accordance with Title 15A, Sub[illegible]2C.0100. | | |
| ☐ | Notification of the proper regional office is requested if "orphan" underground st[illegible]ks (USTS) are discovered during any excavation operation. | | |
| ☐ | Compliance with 15A NCAC 2H.1000 (Coastal Stormwater Rules) is required. | | 45 days (N/A) |
| * | Other comments (attach additional pages as necessary, being certain to cite com[illegible]iority): | | |

## REGIONAL OFFICES

Questions regarding these permits should be addressed to the Regional Office marked below.

☐ Asheville Regional Office
59 Woodfin Place
Asheville, NC 28801
(704) 251-6208

☐ Fayetteville Regional Office
Suite 714 Wachovia Building
Fayetteville, NC 28301
(919) 486-1541

☐ Mooresville Regional Office
919 North Main Street, P.O. Box 950
Mooresville, NC 28115
(704) 663-1699

☐ Raleigh Regional Office
3800 Barrett Drive, Suite 101
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 733-2314

☐ Washington Regional Office
1424 Carolina Avenue
Washington, NC 27889
(919) 946-6481

☐ Wilmington Regional Office
127 Cardinal Drive Extension
Wilmington, NC 28405
(919) 395-3900

☐ Winston-Salem Regional Office
8025 North Point Blvd.
Suite 100
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
(919) 896-7007

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment,
Health and Natural Resources
Division of Environmental Management

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary
A. Preston Howard, Jr., P.E., Director

DEHNR

February 23, 1996

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Melba McGee, Legislative & Intergovernmental Affairs

FROM: Monica Swihart, Water Quality Planning

SUBJECT: Project Review #96-0472; Scoping Comments - NC DOT Proposed Improvements to I-26 Connector in Asheville, TIP#I-2513, French Broad Subbasin 04-03-02

The Water Quality Section of the Division of Environmental Management requests that the following topics be discussed in the environmental documents prepared on the subject project:

A. Identify the streams potentially impacted by the project. The stream classifications should be current.

B. Identify the linear feet of stream channelizations/ relocations. If the original stream banks were vegetated, it is requested that the channelized/relocated stream banks be revegetated.

C. Number of stream crossings.

D. Will permanent spill catch basins be utilized? DEM requests that these catch basins be placed at all water supply stream crossings. Identify the responsible party for maintenance.

E. Identify the stormwater controls (permanent and temporary) to be employed. DEM recommends that no weep holes be installed in bridges that drain directly into surface waters.

F. Please ensure that sediment and erosion and control measures are not placed in wetlands.

G. Wetland Impacts
   1) Identify the federal manual used for identifying and delineating jurisdictional wetlands.
   2) Have wetlands been avoided as much as possible?
   3) Have wetland impacts been minimized?
   4) Discuss wetland impacts by plant communities affected.
   5) Discuss the quality of wetlands impacted.
   6) Summarize the total wetland impacts.
   7) List the 401 General Certification numbers requested from DEM.

P.O. Box 29535, Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0535 Telephone 919-733-7015 FAX 919-733-2496
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H. Will borrow locations be in wetlands? Borrow/waste areas should avoid wetlands to the maximum extent practicable. Prior to approval of any borrow/waste site in a wetland, the contractor shall obtain a 401 Certification from DEM.

I. Did NCDOT utilize the existing road alignments as much as possible? Why not (if applicable)?

J. To what extent can traffic congestion management techniques alleviate the traffic problems in the study area?

K. Please provide a conceptual mitigation plan to help the environmental review. The mitigation plan may state the following:

1. Compensatory mitigation will be considered only after wetland impacts have been avoided and minimized to the maximum extent possible.
2. On-site, in-kind mitigation is the preferred method of mitigation. In-kind mitigation within the same watershed is preferred over out-of-kind mitigation.
3. Mitigation should be in the following order: restoration, creation, enhancement, and lastly banking.

Please note that a 401 Water Quality Certification cannot be issued until the conditions of NCAC 15A: 01C.0402 (Limitations on Actions During NCEPA Process) are met. This regulation prevents DEM from issuing the 401 Certification until a FONSI or Record of Decision (ROD) has been issued by the Department requiring the document. If the 401 Certification application is submitted for review prior to issuance of the FONSI or ROD, it is recommended that the applicant state that the 401 will not be issued until the applicant informs DEM that the FONSI or ROD has been signed by the Department.

Written concurrence of 401 Water Quality Certification may be required for this project. Applications requesting coverage under our General Certification 14 or General Permit 31 will require written concurrence. Please be aware that 401 Certification may be denied if wetland or water impacts have not been avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

11168.mem
cc: Eric Galamb

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment,
Health and Natural Resources
Legislative & Intergovernmental Affairs

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary
Henry M. Lancaster II, Director

DEHNR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chrys Baggett
State Clearinghouse

FROM: Melba McGee
Environmental Review Coordinator

RE: 96-0472 Scoping for Proposed I-26 Connector Road in Asheville, Buncombe County

DATE: February 26, 1996

The Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources has reviewed the proposed information. The attached comments are for your consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to review.

attachments

RECEIVED
FEB 2 1996
N.C. STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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# North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

James B. Hunt Jr., Governor
Betty Ray McCain, Secretary

Division of Archives and History
Jeffrey J. Crow, Director

February 29, 1996

MEMORANDUM

TO: H. Franklin Vick, P.E., Manager
Planning and Environmental Branch
Division of Highways
Department of Transportation

FROM: David Brook
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

SUBJECT: Proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County, I-2513, Federal Aid Project MANHF26-1(53), State Project 8.U843701, 96-E-4220-0472

RECEIVED
MAR 04 1996
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL BRANCH

We have received information concerning the above project from the State Clearinghouse.

We have conducted a search of our maps and files and have located the following structures of historical or architectural importance within the general area of the project:

Montford Area Historic District (BN 22). This property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 25, 1977.

Montford Hills Historic District (BN 1152). This property is located northwest of the Montford Historic District and was placed on the state study list on July 8, 1993.

Richmond Hill House (BN 13), 45 Richmond Hill Road. This property was listed in the National Register on August 16, 1977.

Since the survey of historic architectural resources in Buncombe County is over fifteen years old, we recommend that a qualified architectural historical survey the area of potential effect and report the findings to us.

The new location corridor north of the current I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue includes some areas that are considered to have a high potential for the presence of significant archaeological resources. We recommend that a survey be conducted in this area to identify significant archaeological resources prior to construction activities.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763.

DB:slw

cc: State Clearinghouse
N. Graf
B. Church
T. Padgett
Historic Resources Commission of
Asheville and Buncombe County

M208 Westbrook

NORTH CAROLINA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
116 WEST JONES STREET
RALEIGH NORTH CAROLINA 27603-8003

03-14-96

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW COMMENTS

MAILED TO:

N.C. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
FRANK VICK
PLANN. & ENV. BRANCH
TRANSPORTATION BLDG/INTER-OFFI

FROM:

MRS. CHRYS BAGGETT
DIRECTOR
N C STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

SCOPING - PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE I-26 CONNECTOR IN ASHEVILLE; TIP# I-2513

SAI NO 96E42200472 PROGRAM TITLE - SCOPING

THE ABOVE PROJECT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE NORTH CAROLINA INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS. AS A RESULT OF THE REVIEW THE FOLLOWING IS SUBMITTED: ( ) NO COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED

( X ) COMMENTS ATTACHED

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL THIS OFFICE (919) 733-7232.

C.C. REGION B

RECEIVED
MAR 18 1996
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL BRANCH

# North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

## State Historic Preservation Office

Peter B. Sandbeck, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History
Division of Historical Resources
David Brook, Director

July 11, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Thorpe, Ph.D., Director
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Peter Sandbeck for Peter Sandbeck

SUBJECT: Phase II Architectural Resources Survey Report, New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector, I-2513, Buncombe County, CH96-0472

Thank you for your letter of June 7, 2006, transmitting the survey report by Frances P. Alexander of Mattson, Alexander, and Associates, Inc., for the above project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is a National Historic Landmark, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and remains eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:

- Biltmore Estate (boundaries revised in 2004)

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and remain eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:

- Asheville School
- Mrs. Minnie Alexander Cottage
- Whiteford G. Smith House
- Montford Area Historic District

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following properties have previously been determined eligible for National Register of Historic Places and remain eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:

- Buncombe County Bridge No. 216
- Friendly Grocery Store
- C.G. Worley House

- Proposed Montford Area Historic District Expansion (includes Montford Hills, State Study-listed).
- Great Smokey Mountain Park Bridge No. 323 (Determined an Exceptionally Significant Feature of the Federal Interstate Highway System, 2006).

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following properties are listed in the State Study List and remain eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:

- Montford Hills (included in the proposed Montford Area Historic District Expansion, previously determined eligible for the National Register).
- East Haywood Road Commercial Historic District (in process of National Register listing and renamed the West Asheville – Aycock School Historic District.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

- Freeman House, 516 Westwood Place, Asheville, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture, as a well-preserved example of the restrained, Queen Anne farmhouses that once appeared around the rural outskirts of Asheville during the 1890s and early 1900s. The property's hilltop setting enhances its significance and it is one of the last remaining farmhouses in West Asheville, an area transformed into a streetcar suburb in the early twentieth century.

  We concur with the proposed National Register boundaries as described, justified, and delineated in the report.

We request further information regarding the Haywood Street United Methodist Church, 297 Haywood Street, Asheville. We concur that the church is one of the finer examples of Asheville's neighborhood churches. However, the recently enclosed metal and glazed, main-arched entrance appears to have compromised its integrity. We would like to know if the original entry doors remain behind the new metal and glass entrance, the extent of the 1967 wing, and the present state of the church's interior. Please provide this information with supporting photographs in a report addendum that further elaborates upon the "Physical Description and Evaluation of Integrity of the Haywood Street United Methodist Church."

Please note that the Riverside Industrial Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, roughly bounded by Clingman Avenue, Lyman Street, Roberts Street, and Riverside Drive, is close to the Area of Potential Effects for this project. Should the project limits change to include this area, the Riverside Industrial Historic District will need to be evaluated for potential impacts.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

cc: Frances Alexander, Mattson, Alexander, Inc.
Mary Pope Furr
Courtney Foley

1-2515

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT UNIT
SEP 2 2006
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# North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

## State Historic Preservation Office

Peter B. Sandbeck, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History
Division of Historical Resources
David Brook, Director

September 22, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gregory Thorpe, Ph.D., Director
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Peter Sandbeck PBS for Peter Sandbeck

SUBJECT: Haywood Street United Methodist Church, Addendum to Phase II Architectural Resources Survey Report, New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector, I-2513, Buncombe County, CH 96-0472

Thank you for your letter of August 16, 2006, transmitting the additional information we requested concerning the above project.

We have reviewed the supplemental physical description and photo documentation of the church entry and interior, and find that the church retains very good integrity. Therefore, for purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under the criterion cited:

Haywood Street United Methodist Church, 297 Haywood Street, Asheville, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture and under Criteria Consideration A, as one of Asheville's finer neighborhood churches and a well-crafted example of the Romanesque Revival Style.

We concur with the proposed National Register boundary as described, justified, and delineated in the Phase II survey report.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-733-4763, ext. 246. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr
Courtney Foley
Vince Rhea, P.E., Project Engineer
Frances P. Alexander, Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

October 3, 2006

Mr. Peter Sandbeck, Administrator
NC Department of Cultural Resources – SHPO
515 North Blount Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

Subject: New Route, Asheville, NC, I-26 Connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13, NC TIP No. I-2513, BSIP WBS Element 34165.1.2, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Dear Mr. Sandbeck:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is writing a Draft Environmental Document for the I-26 Connector in Asheville. The project will include widening and improvements to exiting I-240, improvements to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange and a new location freeway across the French Broad River tying into existing US 19-23-70 south of Broadway.

An assessment of effects determination and concurrence from your office regarding Section 106 has been obtained for the historic properties for this project. Per section 4F requirements, this letter is to inform your office that the FHWA intends to make a *de minimis* finding regarding the potential impacts on the following historic properties based on the concurrence of your office with the "no adverse effect" determination.

Asheville School for Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1 and F-1
Haywood Street United Methodist Church for Alternative B-5

The following additional historic properties also received concurrence from your office with the "no adverse effect" determination. The proposed preliminary plans require no constructive use of these properties and therefore they are not subject to Section 4(f) requirements.

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
1548 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1548

TELEPHONE: 919-733-7844
FAX: 919-733-9794

WEBSITE: WWW.DOH.DOT.STATE.NC.US

LOCATION:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

Buncombe County Bridge No. 216 for Section A
Friendly Grocery Store for Section A
Whiteford Smith House for Alternative B-5

The NCDOT looks forward to working with you and your staff to minimize any effects on these historic properties with the proposed project. If I can provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely:

Vincent J. Rhea, PE
Project Planing Engineer

Cc: Jake Riggsbee, PE, FHWA
Mary Pope Furr, HEU
Files

DS-0010

NCDENR

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Michael F. Easley, Governor

William G. Ross Jr., Secretary

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April 16, 2008

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Melba McGee, DENR Environmental Coordinator

FROM: Harry LeGrand, Natural Heritage Program

SUBJECT: Proposal of a Multi-lane Freeway, part on new location, from I-26 to US 19-23 (for the I-26 Connector); Asheville, Buncombe County

REFERENCE: Project No. 08-0293

The Natural Heritage Program has no record of significant natural communities, significant natural heritage areas, or conservation/managed areas in the project area nor within a mile of the project area. Our Program has several records of rare aquatic species from the French Broad River; however, all of these are of historical occurrence, none having been seen in recent decades. The only rare species that could potentially be impacted is the State Special Concern mole salamander (*Ambystoma talpoideum*) (see enclosed maps and material). This species was found sometime between 1997 and 2006, at the pond at hole #3 of the golf course at Crowne Plaza Golf Resort. This location appears to be slightly to the west of the proposed new route/location as shown in Figure 2-14. Nonetheless, its proximity to a possible alignment could involve sedimentation into creeks that might impact any pond(s) where this salamander might occur. Though a survey by a Wildlife Resources Commission staff was negative in 2006, our Program recommends that NC DOT staff conduct a survey of the golf course ponds, or at a minimum contact the initial observer, Dr. James Petranka at UNC-Asheville, about the project and the salamander location. We would like to be notified of any updated information about the status of this salamander population.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 919-715-8697 if you have questions or need further information.

Enclosures

1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1601
Phone: 919-733-4984 \ FAX: 919-715-3060 \ Internet: www.enr.state.nc.us/ENR/

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One NorthCarolina Naturally

25198 **Scientific Name** *Ambystoma talpoideum* **Principal EO** **EO Number** 29

## ıary

US **State** NC

**ɔn Name** Mole Salamander **Global Rank** G5 **State Rank** S2

**l Protection Status** **State Protection Status** SC **ELCODE BCD** AAAAA01120

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## ors/Directions

**Quad Name** **Margin Num** **County Name**

ille Buncombe (NC)

**shed**

105 - Upper French Broad

**de** 353545N **Longitude** 0823450W

**ame** **Survey Site**

Crowne Plaza Golf Resort

**tions** Golf course pond at hole #3, at Crowne Plaza Golf Resort; located about 0.58 mile NW of the US 19 bridge over the French Broad River.

## ey Information

**EO Rank** F - Failed to find **EO Rank Date** 2006

**ank Comment**

**ata** Dr. James Petranka found at least one larva at this pond, sometime between 1997-2006. However, Lori Williams (WRC) visited the site in summer 2006 and failed to find the species here or at several other ponds on the golf course.

**ey Type** Qualitative ground survey **Surveyor** Dr. James Petranka

**ey Date** 2006-summer **First Observation Date** 1997-2006 **Last Observation Date** 2006-summer

**Sensitive Element** Y **Comments**

**itoring Needs Comments**

**arch Needs Comments**

**itional Inventory Needed** N **Comments**

## cription

**eral Description** Man-made pond on golf course; floodplain, forested seep habitat; pond covered in duckweed.

**. Elevation** 2,000 **feet** **Max. Elevation** 2,100 **feet**

**Observed Area** **acres**

**Accuracy** High **Separation Comments**

**neral Comments:**

## vnership/Protection

**ner Name** Crowne Plaza Golf Resort **Note**

**ner Comments**

**nagement Comments**

**ıtection Comments**

**ditional Topics**

## ıcumentation/Version

**ference Code** **Citation**

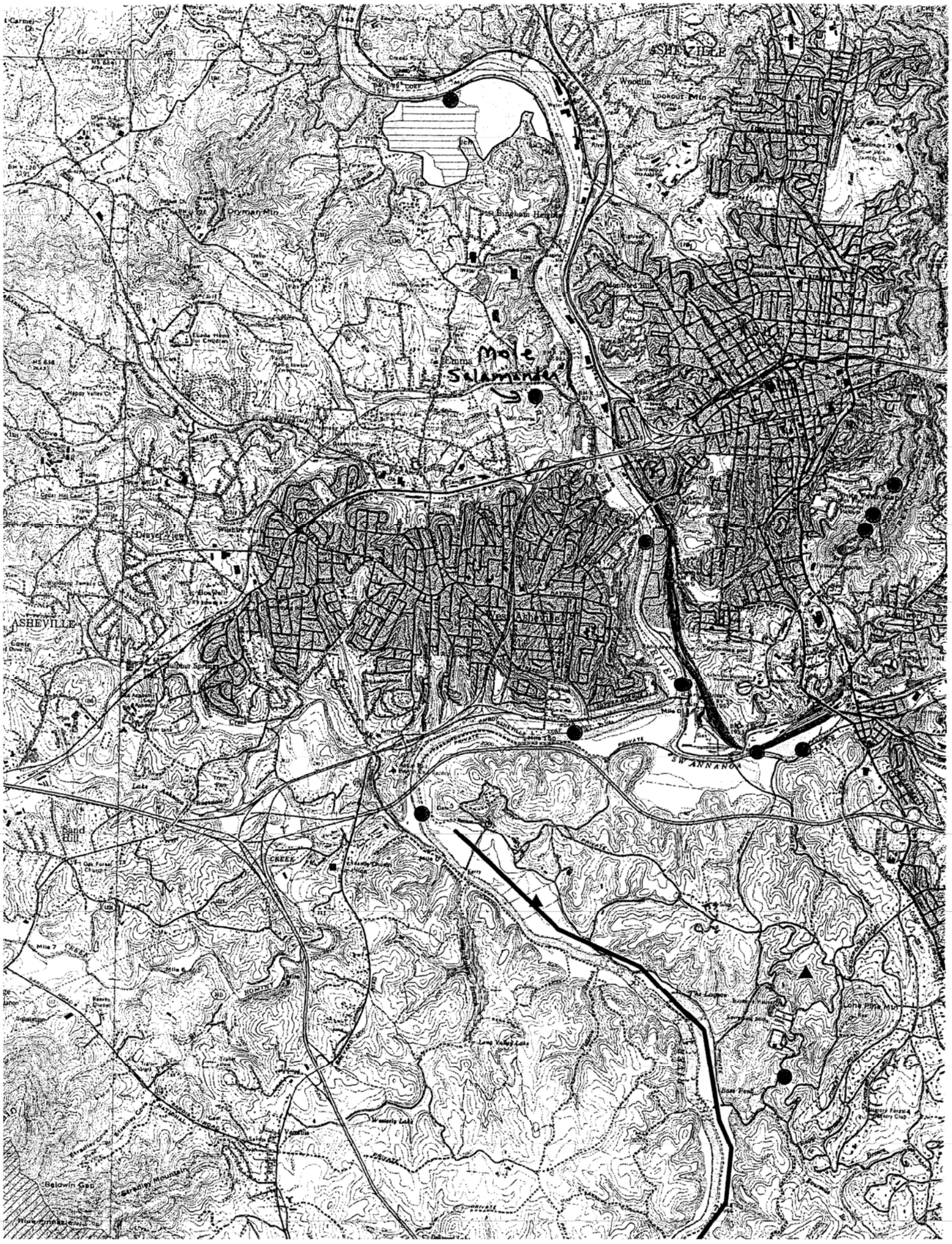
7WIL01NCUS Williams, Lori. 2007. NCNHP Special Animal Survey Form.

**ecimen**

**ad Responsibility** USNCHP **Version Date** 2007-08-16 **Transcription Date** 2007-08-16

**rsion Author** LeGrand **Transcribed By** LeGrand

Montford Hills
DRIVE
Riverside Cem
Trailer Park
Emma
BM A 39
1981
BM R 126
1976
Mole Salamander
Golf Course
COURTLAND
Radio tower
Isaac Dickson Sch
BM X 125
1991
2000
Smith Bridge
Temple Ch
Gas
Res
Aycock Sch
HAYWOOD
West Asheville
Hall Fletcher Sch



Mole
Salamander
ASHEVILLE
Woodfin
Lookout Mtn
Dryman Mtn
Bingham Heights
Emma
Denver View
West Asheville
Sulphur Springs
Sand Hill
Lake Ashnoca
Mile 7
Mile 6
Mile 0
Mile 150
SW ANNANOA
RIVER
CREEK
HOMINY
Long Valley Lake
Westerly Lake
Lone Pine Mtn
Bass Pond
Stradley Mountain
Baldwin Gap

) 21150 **Scientific Name** *Alasmidonta raveneliana* **Principal EO** **EO Number** 69

## nary

1 US **State** NC

ion Name Appalachian Elktoe **Global Rank** G1 **State Rank** S1

al Protection Status **State Protection Status** E **ELCODE BCD** IMBIV02060

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## tors/Directions

S Quad Name **Margin Num** **County Name**

ville Buncombe (NC)

rshed

105 - Upper French Broad

ude 353432N **Longitude** 0823405W

Name **Survey Site**

FBR/French Broad and Swannanoa rivers P

tions FBR/French Broad and Swannanoa rivers P: The site is located in central Buncombe County in the vicinity of Asheville, NC and consists of the French Broad from I-40 to I-240 and the Swannanoa River from US 25 West downstream to its confluence with the French Broad River.

## vey Information

: EO Rank H - Historical **EO Rank Date** pre1981

Rank Comment

Data Length of occupied habitat: 8.5 km
Number of survey sites: 2
Number of sampling events: 2+
Range of CPUE:
Multiple size classes:
Impoundments: none
Predominant adjacent land use: urban

rce Feature USNMNH 30072 J.F.E. Hardy

criptor

Observer J.F.E. Hardy **Date**

Observation Data USNMNH 30072, collected by J.F.E. Hardy (Clarke 1981, Gordon pers. comm.).

rce Feature USNMNH 679199 Ravenel

scriptor

Observer Ravenel **Date** 1981

Observation Data Paratypes - USNMNH 679199, collected by Ravenel (Clarke 1981, Gordon, pers. comm.).

urce Feature USNMNH 86254 Ravenel

scriptor

Observer Ravenel **Date**

Observation Data Holotype - USNMNH 86254, collected by Ravenel (Clarke 1981, Gordon, pers. comm.).

urce Feature French Broad/Swannanoa River population

scriptor

rvey Type **Surveyor**

rvey Date 1981-Pre **First Observation Date** 1981-Pre **Last Observation Date** 1981-Pre

ta Sensitive Element N **Comments**

onitoring Needs Comments

search Needs Comments

ditional Inventory Needed N **Comments** Element was documented from one location along the French Broad River and one location along the Swannanoa River, but since all of the bottom substrate has not been searched throughout the entire site, it is unknown what portion of the EO is occupied by the species.

## escription

eneral Description

in. Elevation feet **Max. Elevation** feet

) Observed Area acres

ep Accuracy Medium **Separation Comments**

eneral Comments:

21150 **Scientific Name** *Alasmidonta raveneliana* **Principal EO** **EO Number** 69

## ership/Protection

**Name** Public Waters **Note**

**Comments**

**ement Comments**

**tion Comments**

**onal Topics**

## mentation/Version

| **nce Code** | **Citation** |
|---|---|
| LA01NAUS | Clarke, A.H. 1981. The tribe Alasmidontini (Unionidae: Anodontinae), Part I: Pegias, Alasmidonta, and Arcidens. Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology, 326: 1-101. |

**nen**

NH 30072, collected by J.F.E. Hardy

NH 30072, collected by J.F.E. Hardy

pes - USNMNH 679199, collected by Ravenel

ype - USNMNH 86254, collected by Ravenel

**Responsibility** USNCHP **Version Date** 2007-03-07 **Transcription Date** 2005-10-05

**on Author** Ratcliffe **Transcribed By** Ratcliffe

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Reviewing Office: ARO

# NTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW - PROJECT COMMENTS

Project Number: 08-0293 Due Date: 4/28/08

After review of this project it has been determined that the ENR permit(s) and/or approvals indicated may need to be obtained in order for this project to comply with North Carolina Law. Questions regarding these permits should be addressed to the Regional Office indicated on the reverse of the form. All applications, information and guidelines relative to these plans and permits are available from the same Regional Office.

| | PERMITS | SPECIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS | Normal Process Time (statutory time limit) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Permit to construct & operate wastewater treatment facilities, sewer system extensions & sewer systems not discharging into state surface waters. | Application 90 days before begin construction or award of construction contracts. On-site inspection. Post-application technical conference usual. | 30 days (90 days) |
| ☑ | NPDES - permit to discharge into surface water and/or permit to operate and construct wastewater facilities discharging into state surface waters. | Application 180 days before begin activity. On-site inspection. Pre-application conference usual. Additionally, obtain permit to construct wastewater treatment facility-granted after NPDES. Reply time, 30 days after receipt of plans or issue of NPDES permit-whichever is later. | 90-120 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Water Use Permit | Pre-application technical conference usually necessary | 30 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Well Construction Permit | Complete application must be received and permit issued prior to the installation of a well. | 7 days (15 days) |
| ☑ | Dredge and Fill Permit | Application copy must be served on each adjacent riparian property owner. On-site inspection. Pre-application conference usual. Filling may require Easement to Fill from N.C. Department of Administration and Federal Dredge and Fill Permit. | 55 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | Permit to construct & operate Air Pollution Abatement facilities and/or Emission Sources as per 15 A NCAC (2Q.0100 thru 2Q.0300) | Application must be submitted and permit received prior to construction and operation of the source. If a permit is required in an area without local zoning, then there are additional requirements and timelines (2Q.0113). | 90 days |
| ☐ | Permit to construct & operate Transportation Facility as per 15 A NCAC (2D.0800, 2Q.0601) | Application must be submitted at least 90 days prior to construction or modification of the source. | 90 days |
| ☐ | Any open burning associated with subject proposal must be in compliance with 15 A NCAC 2D.1900 | N/A | 60 days (90 days) |
| ☐ | Demolition or renovations of structures containing asbestos material must be in compliance with 15 A NCAC 20.1110 (a) (1) which requires notification and removal prior to demolition. Contact Asbestos Control Group 919-707-5950. | | |
| ☐ | Complex Source Permit required under 15 A NCAC 2D.0800 | | |
| ☐ | The Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 must be properly addressed for any land disturbing activity. An erosion & sedimentation control plan will be required if one or more acres to be disturbed. Plan filed with proper Regional Office (Land Quality Section) At least 30 days before beginning activity. A fee of $65 for the first acre or any part of an acre. An express review option is available with additional fees. | | 20 days (30 days) |
| ☐ | Sedimentation and erosion control must be addressed in accordance with NCDOT's approved program. Particular attention should be given to design and installation of appropriate perimeter sediment trapping devices as well as stable stormwater conveyances and outlets. | | (30 days) |
| ☐ | Mining Permit | On-site inspection usual. Surety bond filed with ENR Bond amount varies with type mine and number of acres of affected land. Any arc mined greater than one acre must be permitted. The appropriate bond must be received before the permit can be issued. | 30 days (60 days) |
| ☐ | North Carolina Burning permit | On-site inspection by N.C. Division Forest Resources if permit exceeds 4 days | 1 day (N/A) |
| ☐ | Special Ground Clearance Burning Permit - 22 counties in coastal N.C. with organic soils | On-site inspection by N.C. Division Forest Resources required "if more than five acres of ground clearing activities are involved. Inspections should be requested at least ten days before actual burn is planned." | 1 day (N/A) |
| ☐ | Oil Refining Facilities | N/A | 90-120 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Dam Safety Permit | If permit required, application 60 days before begin construction. Applicant must hire N.C. qualified engineer to: prepare plans, inspect construction certify construction is according to ENR approved plans. May also require permit under mosquito control program. And a 404 permit from Corps of Engineers. An inspection of site is necessary to verify Hazard Classification. A minimum fee of $200.00 must accompany the application. An additional processing fee based on a percentage or the total project cost will be required upon completion. | 30 days (60 days) |

| | PERMITS | SPECIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS | Normal Process Time (statutory time limit) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Permit to drill exploratory oil or gas well | File surety bond of $5,000 with ENR running to State of NC conditional that any well opened by drill operator shall, upon abandonment, be plugged according to ENR rules and regulations. | 10 days N/A |
| ☐ | Geophysical Exploration Permit | Application filed with ENR at least 10 days prior to issue of permit. Application by letter. No standard application form. | 10 days N/A |
| ☐ | State Lakes Construction Permit | Application fees based on structure size is charged. Must include descriptions & drawings of structure & proof of ownership of riparian property. | 15-20 days N/A |
| ☑ | 401 Water Quality Certification | N/A | 60 days (130 days) |
| ☐ | CAMA Permit for MAJOR development | $250.00 fee must accompany application | 55 days (150 days) |
| ☐ | CAMA Permit for MINOR development | $50.00 fee must accompany application | 22 days (25 days) |
| ☐ | Several geodetic monuments are located in or near the project area. If any monument needs to be moved or destroyed, please notify: N.C. Geodetic Survey, Box 27687 Raleigh, NC 27611 | | |
| ☐ | Abandonment of any wells, if required must be in accordance with Title 15A. Subchapter 2C.0100. | | |
| ☐ | Notification of the proper regional office is requested if "orphan" underground storage tanks (USTS) are discovered during any excavation operation. | | |
| ☐ | Compliance with 15A NCAC 2H 1000 (Coastal Stormwater Rules) is required. | | 45 days (N/A) |
| ☐ | Tar Pamlico or Neuse Riparian Buffer Rules required. | | |

* Other comments (attach additional pages as necessary, being certain to cite comment authority)

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## REGIONAL OFFICES

Questions regarding these permits should be addressed to the Regional Office marked below.

☒ **Asheville Regional Office**
2090 US Highway 70
Swannanoa, NC 28778
(828) 296-4500

☐ **Mooresville Regional Office**
610 East Center Avenue, Suite 301
Mooresville, NC 28115
(704) 663-1699

☐ **Wilmington Regional Office**
127 Cardinal Drive Extension
Wilmington, NC 28405
(910) 796-7215

☐ **Fayetteville Regional Office**
225 North Green Street, Suite 714
Fayetteville, NC 28301-5043
(910) 433-3300

☐ **Raleigh Regional Office**
3800 Barrett Drive, Suite 101
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 791-4200

☐ **Winston-Salem Regional Office**
585 Waughtown Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27107
(336) 771-5000

☐ **Washington Regional Office**
943 Washington Square Mall
Washington, NC 27889
(252) 946-6481

Bill Wagner, Waste Management Specialist

The Solid Waste Program regulates safe management of solid waste through guidance, technical assistance, regulations, permitting, environmental monitoring, compliance evaluation and enforcement. Waste types handled at these facilities include municipal solid waste, industrial waste, construction and demolition waste, land-clearing waste, scrap tires, medical waste, compost, and septage.

**DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

**PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SECTION**

**Jim Adams**, Environmental Regional Supv
**Mike Orbon**, Environmental Engineer
**Ray McCall**, Environmental Engineer
**Allen Gaither**, Environmental Engineer
**Vacant**, Environmental Engineer
**Andrea Keller**, Environmental Engineer
**James Emory**, Env Sr Specialist
**Buddy Melton**, Environmental Specialist
**Wade Knox**, Environmental Specialist
**Al Slagle** - Hydrogeologist
PWS staff work with the operators of public water systems to ensure that our water supply is safe to drink. This is accomplished by a review of the plant site and plans and specifications, a routine review of water sample reports, training and consulting plant operators and owners with regard to proper construction and treatment, and investigating contamination complaints.

**On-Site Waste Water Protection Section**
**Terrell Jones**, Regional Supv.
**Chuck Cranford**, Env. Senior Specialist
**Stephen Brinson** Env. Health Specialist
The WaDE Program specifically targets the elimination of improper discharges of on-site wastewater to the surface water and land surfaces of western North Carolina. The On-site Water Protection Section (OSWPS) is responsible for providing a comprehensive program for control of sub-surface on-site wastewater treatment and disposal as a joint effort among the local health departments and the On-site Water Protection Section. To carry out this mission, the OSWPS provides statewide regulatory and consultative services related to the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater to local health departments and numerous other clients, including builders, developers, land owners, system installers, system operators, engineers, soil scientists, geologists, environmental health consultants and others.

**DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION**
**Dwayne Stutzman**, Regional Trails Specialist
**LuAnn Bryan**, Parks & Rec Consultant

The program originated in 1973 with the North Carolina Trails System Act and is dedicated to helping citizens, organizations and agencies plan, develop and manage all types of trails ranging from greenways and trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding to river trails and off-highway vehicle trails.

**OFFICE OF CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**
**Judy Francis**, Western Regional Field Officer

The **One North Carolina Naturally** initiative promotes and coordinates the long-term conservation of North Carolina's threatened land and water resources. NC DENR's Office of Conservation & Community Affairs manages the program by leading the development and implementation of a comprehensive statewide conservation plan involving government agencies, private organizations, landowners and the public.

**DIVISION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**
**Jeff Young**, Environmental Engineer

This Division assists Soil and Water Conservation Districts with programs and planning. It also assists other local, state, and federal agencies with land use determination (including waste application recommendations), storm water control, wetland delineation, and educational programs, as well as interpretation of soil surveys.

***CENTER FOR GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION & ANALYSIS (CGIA)***

**Tom Tribble**, Field Office Supervisor
**John Derry**, Applications Developer / GIS Analyst
**Frank Obusek**, Geospatial Imaging Specialist
**Bill Flynt**, GIS Technician
**Michele Trantham**, GIS Technician

CGIA, a receipt-funded agency, is the lead organization in state government for geographic information systems (GIS) and image processing. CGIA offers a variety of products and custom services to help clients use the power of GIS to organize and analyze geospatial data and to improve the client's ability to solve problems and make better decisions. CGIA serves as staff to the NC Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC), a legislatively established body that represents NC's GIS community and fosters cooperation among government agencies, universities and the private sector involving issues related to geospatial information and GIS.

## OTHER DENR REGIONAL OFFICES

Raleigh RO
3800 Barrett Drive
Raleigh, NC 28778
VOICE: 919-791-4200
FAX: 919-571-4718

Fayetteville RO
225 Green St. Suite 714
Fayetteville, NC 28301
VOICE: 910.433.3300
FAX: 910.486.0707

Mooresville RO
610 E. Center Ave.,
Suite 301
Mooresville, NC 28115
VOICE: 704.663.1699
FAX: 704-663-6040

Washington RO
943 Washington Sq. Mall
Washington, NC 27889
VOICE: 252-946-6481
FAX: 252-975-3716

Wilmington RO
127 Cardinal Dr. Ext.
Wilmington, NC 28405
VOICE: 910-7967215
FAX: 910-350-2004

Winston-Salem RO
585 Waughtown St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27107
VOICE: 336-771-5000
FAX: 336-771-4631

NCDENR

# ASHEVILLE REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF DIRECTORY


Mailing & Physical Address
2090 US Highway 70
Swannanoa, NC 28778

Voice: 828-296-4500
Fax: 828-299-7043


*William G. Ross, Jr., Secretary*
*William G. Laxton, Chief Deputy Secretary*


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The Asheville Regional Office service area covers: Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, and Yancey Counties

## ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES UNIT

**Pat Crawford**, Administrative Office Mgr.
**Lucy Smith**, Office Assistant IV (lead worker, Parks & Rec. Geodetic Survey & CGIA)
**Sharon Frizzell**, Office Assistant III (Customer Service Representative)
**Linda Stamey**, Office Assistant III (Land Quality)
**Carol Lagace**, Office Assistant III (UST Section & Aquifer Protection)
**Marsha Thompson**, Office Assistant III (Air Quality & Soil & Water Conservation)
**Magdalene Briggs**, Office Assistant III (Solid Waste , Geological Survey & Switchboard relief)
**Gwen Camp**, Office Assistant III (Surface Water Protection)
**Brenda Anderson**, Office Assistant III (Public Water Supply)
*This section provides a logistical and office support base to all program elements in the regional office.*

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

**Jeff Sawdy**, Technology Support Specialist
*ITS provides regional office staff with connectivity to both the LAN and WAN. This enables staff to share resources, software, databases, etc. to facilitate the completion of our mission - to help the people of North Carolina and to protect our environment.*

### CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER

**Alison Davidson**, One-Stop Permit Coordinator
*The CSC is a single source of information for all of DENR"s programs. The CSC offers a toll free telephone line (877-623-6748) that customers can call for information and assistance. The CSC also provides express permitting information, one stop permit coordination, and environmental assistance for small business.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISIONS

### DIVISION OF AIR QUALITY

**Paul Muller**, Env Regional Supervisor

**Keith Bamberger**, Information's Communications. Spec
***PERMITTING UNIT:***
**Patrick Ballard**, Environmental Engineer
**Melanie Pitrolo**, Environmental Engineer
**Chris Scott** Environmental Engineer
**Harold Brady**, Environmental Engineer
***COMPLIANCE UNIT:***
**Mike Parkin**, Environmental Engineer
**Brendan Davey**, Environmental Engineer
**Vacant**, Environmental Specialist
**Angela Bell**, , Environmental Specialist
**Bob Graves**, Environmental Specialist
**Terri Davis**, Environmental Senior Technician
***AMBIENT MONITORING UNIT:***
**Steve Ensley**, Environmental Chemist
**Pam Vivian**, Environmental Sr Technician
**Sheila Ledford**, Environmental Sr.Technician
**Jeff Menzel**, Environmental Sr.Technician

### VISTA Program

**Pat Brewer**

The DAQ has the regulatory responsibility to issue permits, inspect air pollutant emission sources, conduct ambient air monitoring within the region, and investigate complaints. Environmental initiatives affecting air quality are the adoption of air toxics regulations and the Title V permitting program.

### DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCES
### LAND QUALITY SECTION

**Janet Boyer**, Environmental Regional Supervisor
**Laura Herbert**, Environmental Engineer
**Kristin Hinklin**, Environmental Engineer
**Charles Koontz**, Environmental Engineer
**vacant**, Environmental Specialist
**Shawna Riddle**, Environmental Specialist
**Bill Beck**, Environmental Specialist
**Wayne Watkins**, Environmental Specialist
**Vacant**, Environmental Specialist
**Catherine Rosfjord** Environmental Spec.
**Rick Allred** - Environmental Specialist
**Vacant** - Environmental Specialist

Land Quality staff administer the NC Sedimentation Pollution Control act of 1973, the Dam Safety Act of 1967, and the state's streams and lands from degradation by soil eroding from mining and construction sites. Rules also address potential property damage and loss of life associated with dam failures. Staff review plans, conduct compliance inspections, investigate complaints, and initiate enforcement actions.

### GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

**Carl Merschat**, Senior Geologist
**Rick Wooten**, Senior Geologist
**Jennifer Bauer**, Geologist
**Nick Bozdog**, Geological Technician
**Bart Cattanach**, Project Geologist
**Tommy Douglas**, Project Geologist
**Stephen Fuemmeler**, Geologist
**Ken Gillon**, Project Geologist
**Rebecca Latham**, Project Geologist
**Anne Witt**, Computer Consultant

The North Carolina Geological Survey (NCGS) examines, describes and maps the geology, landslide hazards and mineral resources of North Carolina and publishes these findings in NCGS reports and maps. The NCGS administers cooperative geologic mapping agreements with the US Geological Survey, other federal agencies such as the National Park Service, and other state and local government agencies.

### GEODETIC SURVEY SECTION

**James Gay**, Program Supervisor
**Mark Boothe**, Survey Technician
**Larry Dale**, Survey Technician

The purpose of the Geodetic Survey section is to establish precisely located monuments on the North Carolina Grid System and Bench Marks referenced to a vertical datum (NGVD 1929 and NAVD 1988).

### DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
### SURFACE WATER PROTECTION SECTION

**Roger Edwards**, Environmental Program Supervisor
**Roy Davis**, Environmental Engineer
**Starr Silvis**, Environmental Engineer
**Mike Parker**, Environmental Senior Specialist
**VACANT**, Environmental Senior Specialist
**Keith Haynes**, Environmental Specialist
**Wanda Frazier**, Environmental Specialist
**Janet Cantwell**, Environmental Specialist
**Cathy Tyndall**, Environmental Specialist
**Linda Wiggs**, Environmental Specialist
**Barnett, Kevin**, Environmental Chemist
**Don Price**, Wastewater Consultant
**VACANT**, Environmental Technician
[illegible] Senior Specialist

The SWPS has regulatory authority to issue was water treatment permits, approve storm wa plans, and certify dredge and fill applications. P mitted plants are inspected for compliance and forcement action may be taken if needed. T SWPS also conducts ambient water monitor throughout the region, investigates fish kills, spills, and other water quality complaints. T SWPS is solely responsible for all aspects NPDES permitting. Environmental initiatives affe ing water quality are watershed protection, bas wide studies and permitting, and aquatic toxicolog

### AQUIFER PROTECTION SECTION

**Landon Davidson** – Env. Regional Supervisor
**Ted Campbell**, Hydrogeologist II
**Brett Laverty**, Hydrogeologist II
**Bev Price**, Environmental Specialist II
**Ed Williams** Environmental Specialist II
**Vacant**—Senior Environmental. Tech
The APS has regulatory authority to assure pro well construction and protection of groundwater sources. Staff investigate groundwater contami tion agricultural operations, permitted facilities, responsible for all aspects of non-discharge perm ting and associated compliance activities, and ha regulatory oversight of animal waste activities. A reviews and comments on applications for was water treatment systems, landfills, and hazardo waste sites. Environmental initiatives affect groundwater are new well regulations and grou water standards.

### DIVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT
### UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK SECTION

**Jan Andersen**, Environmental Reg.Supv.
**Dan Murphy**, Hydrogeologist
**Mike Streeter** Hydrogeologist
**Diane Eskenasy**, Hydrogeologist
The UST Section has the regulatory authority garding UST installation and operation, investi tion of leaking USTs, and cleanup of releases. vironmental initiatives affecting this section are UST regulations, State Trust Fund regulations, new groundwater standards. This Section also vestigates and oversees clean up of non-UST troleum releases.

### SOLID WASTE SECTION

**Deborah Aja**, Waste Management Specialist
**Vacant**, Regional Engineer
**Larry Frost**, Regional Engineer
**Troy Harrison**, Waste Management Specialist

DS0009

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# North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

TO: Melba McGee, Environmental Coordinator
Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DENR

FROM: Marla Chambers, Western NCDOT Permit Coordinator Marla Chambers
Habitat Conservation Program, NCWRC

DATE: April 30, 2008

SUBJECT: Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for NCDOT's proposed I-26 Connector project from I-40 to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville, Buncombe County. TIP No. I-2513. OLIA Project No. 08-0293, due 4/28/2008, extended.

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has submitted for review a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the subject project. Staff biologists with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) have reviewed the information provided and are participating in the Merger 01 process for this project. These comments are provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661-667d).

The NCDOT proposes to construct a multi-lane freeway, part on new location, from I-26 to US 19-23-70 that includes the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. The project was divided into three sections and includes one alternative for Section A, three alternatives for Section B, and four alternatives for Section C. The project will include at least one new crossing of the French Broad River. The document indicated the French Broad River and its associated tributaries are Class B waters. One tributary, Hominy Creek, is on the 303(d) list of impaired waters.

9-16

NCWRC is concerned about direct and indirect impacts to area waterways and water quality. A number of local groups have weighed in on the project and we support their efforts to encourage implementation of the City's "smart growth" principles, protection of aesthetic amenities and greenways (existing and proposed), and development of opportunities for public access and recreation. Context Sensitive Solution principles should be employed to compliment and benefit the local community and natural environment important to the community and region. 33-1

**Mailing Address:** Division of Inland Fisheries • 1721 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-1721
**Telephone:** (919) 707-0220 • **Fax:** (919) 707-0028

The project is located in a highly developed setting. Numerous studies have shown that when 10–15% of a watershed is converted to impervious surfaces, there is a serious decline in the health of receiving waters (Schueler 1994) and the quality of fish habitat and wetlands are negatively impacted (Booth 1991, Taylor 1993). We encourage NCDOT and local officials to protect water quality and habitat through the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques, growth management, and other mitigation efforts. Information on Low Impact Development practices and measures can be found at www.lowimpactdevelopment.org, http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/lidnatl.pdf and http://www.stormwatercenter.net/. Measures to mitigate secondary and cumulative impacts can be found in the Guidance Memorandum to Address and Mitigate Secondary and Cumulative Impacts to Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Resources and Water Quality (NCWRC 2002).

9-14

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this project. We look forward to continued participation in the Merger 01 process for the development of this project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (704) 984-1070.

cc: Marella Buncick, USFWS
Brian Wrenn, NCDWQ
Christopher Militscher, USEPA
David Baker, USACE
Mike Parker, NCDWQ

Literature Cited:

Booth, D. 1991. Urbanization and the natural drainage system-impacts, solutions, and prognoses. Northwest Environmental Journal. 7(1):93-118.

NCWRC (North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission). 2002. Guidance Memorandum to Address and Mitigate Secondary and Cumulative Impacts to Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Resources and Water Quality. NCWRC, Raleigh. Available: http://www.ncwildlife.org/pg07_WildlifeSpeciesCon/pg7c3_impacts.pdf. (February 2003).

Schueler, Tom. 1994. The Importance of Imperviousness. Watershed Protection Techniques. 1:3 (pp100-111).

Taylor, B.L. 1993. The influences of wetland and watershed morphological characteristics and relationships to wetland vegetation communities. Masters thesis. Dept. of Civil Engineering. University of Washington. Seattle, WA.

# NORTH CAROLINA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE
## DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

RECEIVED
APR 8 2008

STATE NUMBER: 08-E-4220-0293 F02
DATE RECEIVED: 04/02/2008
AGENCY RESPONSE: 04/28/2008
REVIEW CLOSED: 05/02/2008

MS RENEE GLEDHILL-EARLEY
CLEARINGHOUSE COORD
DEPT OF CUL RESOURCES
ARCHIVES-HISTORY BLDG - MSC 4617
RALEIGH NC

Document addresses our concerns. LGH/BJS 5-1-08
OSA
PYE - NC on DEIS 4/30/08

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Ref CH 96-0472

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DEPT OF AGRICULTURE
DEPT OF CUL RESOURCES
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

PROJECT INFORMATION
APPLICANT: NCDOT
TYPE: National Environmental Policy Act
ERD: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DESC: Proposal of a multi-lane freeway, part of new location, from I-26 to US 19-23-70 that includes the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange (I-26 Connector, Buncombe County). TIP # I-2513.

The attached project has been submitted to the N. C. State Clearinghouse for intergovernmental review. Please review and submit your response by the above indicated date to 1301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1301.
If additional review time is needed, please contact this office at (919)807-2425.

---

AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW THE FOLLOWING IS SUBMITTED:

[X] NO COMMENT

[ ] COMMENTS ATTACHED

SIGNED BY: Renee Gledhill-Earley

DATE: 5-1-08

APR 10 2008

Michael F. Easley, Governor
William G. Ross Jr., Secretary
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Alan W. Klimek, P.E. Director
Division of Water Quality

DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
DWQ

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DOA

DS-0008

May 5, 2008

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Melba McGee, Environmental Coordinator, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

From: Brian Wrenn, Division of Water Quality, Transportation Permitting Unit

Subject: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement related to proposed I-26 Connector from existing I-40 to Existing US 19/23-70 North of Asheville in Buncombe County, Federal Aid Project No. MA-NHF-26-1(53), State Project No. 34165.1.1, TIP No. I-2513.

This office has reviewed the referenced document dated March 25, 2008. The Division of Water Quality (DWQ) is responsible for the issuance of the Section 401 Water Quality Certification for activities that impact Waters of the U.S., including wetlands. It is our understanding that the project as presented will result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands, streams, and other surface waters. The DWQ offers the following comments based on review of the aforementioned document:

**Project Specific Comments:**

21-6 1. This project is being planned as part of the 404/NEPA Merger Process. As a participating team member, the NCDWQ will continue to work with the team.

9-6 2. Hominy Creek is class C; 303(d) waters of the State. Hominy Creek is on the 303(d) list for impaired use for aquatic life due to agriculture and urban/storm sewer runoff. DWQ is very concerned with sediment and erosion impacts that could result from this project. DWQ recommends that the most protective sediment and erosion control BMPs be implemented to reduce the risk of nutrient runoff to Hominy Creek. DWQ requests that road design plans provide treatment of the storm water runoff through best management practices as detailed in the most recent version of NC DWQ *Stormwater Best Management Practices*.

9-7 3. In Section 4.1.5.4, Surface Water, the document states that the expected effects on surface water of the proposed action will be similar among the alternatives. This is not an accurate statement. The expected impacts, especially for streams, vary significantly depending on the alternative. This statement should be removed or revised to accurately reflect the expected impacts.

9-4 4. Section 3.5.1.2 Geology, does not mention the potential presence of acidic rock. The western portion of North Carolina contains acidic rock formations that when exposed to atmospheric conditions can result in stormwater runoff with extremely pHs. This acidic runoff can be very detrimental to aquatic environments. Prior to completing the avoidance and minimization phase of the project, geotechnical investigations should be conducted to identify the presence of acidic rock. Impacts to areas identified as having acidic rock should be avoided and minimized as much as possible.



Transportation Permitting Unit
1650 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1650
2321 Crabtree Boulevard, Suite 250, Raleigh, North Carolina 27604
Phone: 919-733-1786 / FAX 919-733-6893 / Internet: http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/ncwetlands

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**General Comments:**

5. The environmental document should provide a detailed and itemized presentation of the proposed impacts to wetlands and streams with corresponding mapping. If mitigation is necessary as required by 15A NCAC 2H.0506(h), it is preferable to present a conceptual (if not finalized) mitigation plan with the environmental documentation. Appropriate mitigation plans will be required prior to issuance of a 401 Water Quality Certification. 14-1

6. Environmental assessment alternatives shall consider design criteria that reduce the impacts to streams and wetlands from storm water runoff. These alternatives shall include road designs that allow for treatment of the storm water runoff through best management practices as detailed in the most recent version of NC DWQ *Stormwater Best Management Practices*, such as grassed swales, buffer areas, preformed scour holes, retention basins, etc. 9-8

7. After the selection of the preferred alternative and prior to an issuance of the 401 Water Quality Certification, the NCDOT is respectfully reminded that they will need to demonstrate the avoidance and minimization of impacts to wetlands (and streams) to the maximum extent practical. In accordance with the Environmental Management Commission's Rules {15A NCAC 2H.0506(h)}, mitigation will be required for impacts of greater than 1 acre to wetlands. In the event that mitigation is required, the mitigation plan shall be designed to replace appropriate lost functions and values. The NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program may be available for use as wetland mitigation. 14-2

8. In accordance with the Environmental Management Commission's Rules {15A NCAC 2H.0506(h)}, mitigation will be required for impacts of greater than 150 linear feet to any single perennial stream. In the event that mitigation is required, the mitigation plan shall be designed to replace appropriate lost functions and values. The NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program may be available for use as stream mitigation. 14-2

9. Future documentation, including the 401 Water Quality Certification Application, shall continue to include an itemized listing of the proposed wetland and stream impacts with corresponding mapping. 14-3

10. DWQ is very concerned with sediment and erosion impacts that could result from this project. NC DOT shall address these concerns by describing the potential impacts that may occur to the aquatic environments and any mitigating factors that would reduce the impacts. 9-8

11. An analysis of cumulative and secondary impacts anticipated as a result of this project is required. The type and detail of analysis shall conform to the NC Division of Water Quality Policy on the assessment of secondary and cumulative impacts dated April 10, 2004. 9-9

12. NC DOT is respectfully reminded that all impacts, including but not limited to, bridging, fill, excavation and clearing, to jurisdictional wetlands, streams, and riparian buffers need to be included in the final impact calculations. These impacts, in addition to any construction impacts, temporary or otherwise, also need to be included as part of the 401 Water Quality Certification Application. 32-1

13. Where streams must be crossed, the DWQ prefers bridges be used in lieu of culverts. However, we realize that economic considerations often require the use of culverts. Please be advised that culverts should be countersunk to allow unimpeded passage by fish and other aquatic organisms. Moreover, 28-8

in areas where high quality wetlands or streams are impacted, a bridge may prove preferable. When applicable, DOT should not install the bridge bents in the creek, to the maximum extent practicable.

9-10 14. Sediment and erosion control measures should not be placed in wetlands or streams.

15. Borrow/waste areas should avoid wetlands to the maximum extent practical. Impacts to wetlands in borrow/waste areas will need to be presented in the 401 Water Quality Certification and could precipitate compensatory mitigation.

14-3

16. The 401 Water Quality Certification application will need to specifically address the proposed methods for stormwater management. More specifically, stormwater shall not be permitted to discharge directly into streams or surface waters.

32-2

17. Based on the information presented in the document, the magnitude of impacts to wetlands and streams may require an individual permit application to the Corps of Engineers and corresponding 401 Water Quality Certification. Please be advised that a 401 Water Quality Certification requires satisfactory protection of water quality to ensure that water quality standards are met and no wetland or stream uses are lost. Final permit authorization will require the submittal of a formal application by the NCDOT and written concurrence from the NCDWQ. Please be aware that any approval will be contingent on appropriate avoidance and minimization of wetland and stream impacts to the maximum extent practical, the development of an acceptable stormwater management plan, and the inclusion of appropriate mitigation plans where appropriate.

32-3

9-4 18. Bridge supports (bents) should not be placed in the stream when possible.

19. Whenever possible, the DWQ prefers spanning structures. Spanning structures usually do not require work within the stream or grubbing of the streambanks and do not require stream channel realignment. The horizontal and vertical clearances provided by bridges allow for human and wildlife passage beneath the structure, do not block fish passage and do not block navigation by canoeists and boaters.

9-4

20. Bridge deck drains should not discharge directly into the stream. Stormwater shall be directed across the bridge and pre-treated through site-appropriate means (grassed swales, pre-formed scour holes, vegetated buffers, etc.) before entering the stream. Please refer to the most current version of NC DWQ *Stormwater Best Management Practices.*

28-9

21. If concrete is used during construction, a dry work area should be maintained to prevent direct contact between curing concrete and stream water. Water that inadvertently contacts uncured concrete shall not be discharged to surface waters due to the potential for elevated pH and possible aquatic life and fish kills.

9-11

22. If temporary access roads or detours are constructed, the site shall be graded to its preconstruction contours and elevations. Disturbed areas shall be seeded or mulched to stabilize the soil and appropriate native woody species shall be planted. When using temporary structures the area shall be cleared but not grubbed. Clearing the area with chain saws, mowers, bush-hogs, or other mechanized equipment and leaving the stumps and root mat intact allows the area to re-vegetate naturally and minimizes soil disturbance.

28-10

23. Placement of culverts and other structures in waters, streams, and wetlands shall be placed below the elevation of the streambed by one foot for all culverts with a diameter greater than 48 inches, and 20 percent of the culvert diameter for culverts having a diameter less than 48 inches, to allow low flow passage of water and aquatic life. Design and placement of culverts and other structures including temporary erosion control measures shall not be conducted in a manner that may result in dis-equilibrium of wetlands or streambeds or banks, adjacent to or upstream and down stream of the above structures. The applicant is required to provide evidence that the equilibrium is being maintained if requested in writing by DWQ. If this condition is unable to be met due to bedrock or other limiting features encountered during construction, please contact the NC DWQ for guidance on how to proceed and to determine whether or not a permit modification will be required.

28-11

24. If multiple pipes or barrels are required, they shall be designed to mimic natural stream cross section as closely as possible including pipes or barrels at flood plain elevation and/or sills where appropriate. Widening the stream channel should be avoided. Stream channel widening at the inlet or outlet end of structures typically decreases water velocity causing sediment deposition that requires increased maintenance and disrupts aquatic life passage.

8-12

25. If foundation test borings are necessary; it shall be noted in the document. Geotechnical work is approved under General 401 Certification Number 3494/Nationwide Permit No. 6 for Survey Activities.

7-4

26. Sediment and erosion control measures sufficient to protect water resources must be implemented and maintained in accordance with the most recent version of North Carolina Sediment and Erosion Control Planning and Design Manual and the most recent version of NCS000250. .

7-12

27. All work in or adjacent to stream waters shall be conducted in a dry work area. Approved BMP measures from the most current version of NCDOT Construction and Maintenance Activities manual such as sandbags, rock berms, cofferdams and other diversion structures shall be used to prevent excavation in flowing water.

7-13

28. While the use of National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, NC Coastal Region Evaluation of Wetland Significance (NC-CREWS) maps and soil survey maps are useful tools, their inherent inaccuracies require that qualified personnel perform onsite wetland delineations prior to permit approval.

32-5

29. Heavy equipment should be operated from the bank rather than in stream channels in order to minimize sedimentation and reduce the likelihood of introducing other pollutants into streams. This equipment shall be inspected daily and maintained to prevent contamination of surface waters from leaking fuels, lubricants, hydraulic fluids, or other toxic materials.

9-4

30. Riprap shall not be placed in the active thalweg channel or placed in the streambed in a manner that precludes aquatic life passage. Bioengineering boulders or structures should be properly designed, sized and installed.

28-10

31. Riparian vegetation (native trees and shrubs) shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible. Riparian vegetation must be reestablished within the construction limits of the project by the end of the growing season following completion of construction.

9-15

The NCDWQ appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on your project. Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact Brian Wrenn at 919-733-5715.

cc: David Baker, US Army Corps of Engineers, Asheville Field Office
Clarence Coleman, Federal Highway Administration
Chris Militscher, Environmental Protection Agency
Marla Chambers, NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Marella Buncick, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike Parker, DWQ Asheville Regional Office
File Copy

Michael F. Easley, Governor

William G. Ross Jr., Secretary
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Coleen H. Sullins, Director
Division of Water Quality

I-26 Connector
A/95 EIS Review

9-17

If the project goes through the site of any existing wells, the wells should be abandoned in accordance with 2C regulations (15A NCAC 02C.0113).

Ed Williams
ARO APS

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North Carolina Division of Water Quality – Asheville Regional Office 2090 U.S. Highway 70 Swannanoa, NC 28778 Phone (828) 296-4500
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*Federal Aid #:* **MANHF26-1(53)** *TIP#:* **I-2513B** *County*: **Buncombe**

**CONCURRENCE FORM FOR ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS**

*Project Description*: Proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville

On 16 February 2010, representatives of the

- ☒ North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- ☒ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- ☒ North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)
- ☐ Other

Reviewed the subject project and agreed on the effects findings listed within the table on the reverse of this signature page.

Signed:

Courtney Foley — 27 APRIL 2010

Representative, NCDOT — Date

Donald W Bruce — 4-27-10

FHWA, for the Division Administrator, or other Federal Agency — Date

Representative, HPO — Date

Renee Gledhill-Earley — 4.27.10

State Historic Preservation Officer — Date

# North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

**State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

April 24, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mary Pope Furr
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Updated Historic Structures Eligibility Report for I-26 Connector, I-2513, Buncombe County, CH 96-0472

Thank you for your April 10, 2015, letter transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the re-evaluation and concur with its findings that thirteen (13) properties previously identified by Mattson, Alexander and Associates and listed on page 4 remain eligible for listing in the National Register. **We concur that Calvary Baptist Church (BN4921) is eligible for listing**. The Southern Railroad Bridge (BN5928), which was determined eligible as part of the Wilma Dykeman Riverway project also remains eligible for listing. The criteria for listing and boundaries appear appropriate.

For future ease in addressing potential effects on these properties, it would be very helpful to have a listing of the eligible properties with their name, survey site number, evaluation determination and criteria for listing presented in a chart format.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PAT MCCRORY
GOVERNOR

ANTHONY J. TATA
SECRETARY

July 7, 2015

Ms. Ramona Bartos, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
4617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Dear Ms. Bartos:

SUBJECT: No Adverse Effect Determination for Archaeological Site 31BN623. TIP I-2513, State Project No 8.U843701, Federal Project No. MANHF 26-1(53), Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13.

Archaeological site 31BN623, the remains of a hydro-electric plant, was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in June, 2008 as part of NCDOT's ongoing investigations related to TIP I-2513. On June 30, 2015 a meeting was held with HPO and FHWA staff to discuss effects to archaeological site 31BN623. Fill associated with the project (see the attached maps) will cover a small portion of one wall feature associated with the site. NCDOT plans to drive iron markers on each end of the fill adjacent to the wall to mark its extent prior to the placement of fill in this location. Based upon review of the current project design plans, the subject project was determined to have no adverse effect upon site 31BN623.

TIP I-2513 proposes to take a minor amount of land from site 31BN623, a Section 4(f) resource. As you are aware, Section 4(f) protects the use and function of publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges and historic properties. A transportation plan can only use land from a 4(f) resource when there are no other feasible or prudent alternatives and when the planning minimizes all possible harm to the resource.

This letter serves to inform you, as the official with jurisdiction over the property, of FHWA's intent to make a *de minimis* impact find on this section 4(f) property. This is based upon the concurrence with the "no adverse effect" determination reached during the June 30, 2015 effects meeting. Please contact me at (919) 707-6089 or mtwilkerson@ncdot.gov if you have questions regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Matthew Wilkerson, Archaeology Group Supervisor
Human Environment Section

cc: Michael Wray, Project Development Engineer (with attachments)
Mary Pope Furr, Historic Architecture Supervisor (with attachments)
Donald Brew, Federal Highway Administration (with attachments)

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PDEA – HUMAN ENVIRONMENT SECTION
1598 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC, 27699-1598

TELEPHONE: 919-707-6000
FAX: 919-212-5785

WEBSITE: WWW.NCDOT.ORG

LOCATION:
PDEA – HUMAN ENVIRONMENT SECTION
CENTURY CENTER, BLDG. B
1020 BIRCH RIDGE DRIVE
RALEIGH NC, 27610

*Federal Aid #:* **MANHF26-1(53)** *TIP#:* **I-2513B** *County*: **Buncombe**

| Property and Status | Alternative | Effect Finding | Reasons |
|---|---|---|---|
| Buncombe County Bridge No. 216 (DE) | Section A All alternatives | No Adverse Effect | The bridge will remain in place and protective measures will be utilized during construction. |
| Friendly Grocery Store (DE) | Section A All alternatives | No Adverse Effect | There will be no direct impacts to the structure and NCDOT agrees to seek comments from HPO on the final plans of the retaining wall and/or the sidewalk as well as the drainage plans. |
| West Asheville/ Aycock School Historic District (DE) | Section A All alternatives | **Adverse Effect** | Project requires direct impacts to the property of the Aycock School as well as potential impacts to the existing stone wall, arrowhead monument, and several trees at the school. Additional right-of-way will need to be acquired within the district's boundaries. |
| Asheville School (NR) | Section C All alternatives | No Adverse Effect | There are minimal right-of-way acquisitions. Taken as a whole, they do not significantly diminish the integrity or significance of the property. |
| Biltmore Estate (NR, NHL) | Section C All alternatives | **Adverse Effect** | Each alternative requires widening existing Interstate 40 within the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark. |
| Buncombe County Bridge No. 151 (Great Smoky Mountain Park Bridge) (DE) | Section B Alternatives 3, 4, & 4B | No Effect | There will be no construction activities that directly impact the bridge on the listed alternatives. |
| C. G. Worley House (DE) | Section B Alternatives 3, 4, & 4B | No Adverse Effect | Each alternative will require some right-of-way acquisition and a permanent underground easement for a soil-nail retaining wall will utilize top down construction. Clearing will only occur to the right-of-way limits. |

Initialed: NCDOT CPF FHWA DB HPO PYE

FHWA intends to use SHPO's concurrence as a basis of a "de minimis" finding for the following properties, pursuant to Section 4(f): Asheville School

C.G. Worley House

*Federal Aid #:* **MANHF26-1(53)** *TIP#:* **I-2513B** *County*: **Buncombe**

| Property and Status | Alternative | Effect Finding | Reasons |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mrs. Minnie Alexander Cottage (NR) | Section B Alternatives 3, 4, & 4B | No Effect | There will be no construction activities that directly impact the house on the listed alternatives. |
| Haywood Street United Methodist Church (DE) | Section B Alternatives 3, 4, & 4B | No Effect | There will be no construction activities that directly impact the property on the listed alternatives. |
| Whiteford G. Smith House (NR) | Section B Alternatives 3, 4, & 4B | No Effect | There will be no construction activities that directly impact the house on the listed alternatives. |
| Freeman House (DE) | Section B Alternative 3 | No Adverse Effect | There will be a change in noise levels but not enough to adversely affect the property. No construction activities will directly impact the property on this alternative. |
| Freeman House (DE) | Section B Alternatives 4 & 4B | **Adverse Effect** | Alignment is not within the property boundary but four new elevated bridges will be constructed that will be visible from the house. |
| Montford Area Historic District (NR) and Boundary Expansion (DE) | Section B Alternatives 3 & 4 | No Effect | There will be no construction activities that directly impact the district on the listed alternatives. Alternatives are on the other side of the French Broad River. |
| Montford Area Historic District (NR) and Boundary Expansion (DE) | Section B Alternative 4B | **Adverse Effect** | Permanent easements will be needed for construction of earth retaining walls, although there is no right-of-way acquisition. Retaining walls create visual impacts to historic district. |

Initialed: NCDOT CPF FHWA DB HPO RSE

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PAT MCCRORY
GOVERNOR

NICHOLAS J. TENNYSON
ACTING SECRETARY

July 30, 2015

**Memorandum**

**To:** Mr. Kevin Moore, PE
Project Engineer
Roadway Design Unit

**From:** James B. Harris, PE
State Railroad Coordination Engineer
NCDOT Rail Division

**State Project:** I-2513
**F/A Project:** MANHF 26-1 (53)
**County:** Buncombe
**Description:** I-26 Asheville Connector

**Subject:** Railroad Involvement Information

---

The NCDOT Rail Division recently received notice of the upcoming July 31, 2015 Public Hearing Map Review meeting. Upon review of project files, it was noticed that the Rail Division does not have any information on this project or ever provided any comments on it in regard to potential rail impacts.

After review of project information recently received, this office finds that the project will involve some rail-related matters. Only Sections B and C of I-2513 have rail impacts with no impacts in Section A.

Below are comments in regard to railroad involvement on the project:

The project study area shows two Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) and one former NS line will be impacted. See attached map from the environmental document for identification of the various rail lines. The rail lines impacted are as follows:

- The NS S-line which runs from Salisbury/Asheville/Knoxville is located in Section I-2513B. This rail line is considered oriented 'railroad' east/west (geographically northward) with mileposts increasing from east to west.

**MAILING ADDRESS:**
NORTH CAROLINA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
RAIL DIVISION
1553 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1553

TELEPHONE: 919-707-4707
FAX: 919-715-6580

*WEBSITE: www.bytrain.org*

**LOCATION:**
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH, NC 27611

Right-of-way (R/W) width is 200 feet wide with two mainline tracks in the area being impacted. Approximately 10-15 freight trains operate over this rail line per day, with no passenger trains, with maximum speed of 30 mph. The study limits and alternatives cross the S-line from milepost S 141.9 to S 143.0.

- The NS Craggy Mountain spur line is also located in Section I-2513B but was not shown on the map. It has been added and is shown in purple. It runs northward parallel to and between the east side of the French Broad River and the west side of Riverside Drive for several miles and dead-ends north of Woodfin. At the north end of the line is an unofficial tourist railroad operation with vintage railroad equipment. The turnout (switch) for the Craggy Mountain spur line is located on the NS S-line at milepost S 141.9 which is just north of I-240. R/W width is not known. This spur line only sees several freight trains per week at speeds of 10 mph.
- The former NS T-line is also located in Section I-2513B. It runs from Asheville to Dillsboro and is considered oriented east/west with mileposts increasing from east to west. It was recently sold to Watco Corporation and is operated now as a shortline railroad known as the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU). The turnout (switch) for the T-line is located on the NS S-line at milepost S 142.3, which is also milepost T 0.0, and is known as “Murphy Junction”. R/W width is 200 feet wide with a single track located in the area being impacted. This rail line sees 2-4 freight trains per day, with no passenger trains, with maximum speed of 25 mph. The study limits and alternatives cross the T-line from mileposts T 0.0 to T 0.4.
- The former NS T-line, now owned and operated by the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU), is impacted again in Section I-2513C. I-40 crosses over the T-line at milepost T 4.77 by way of a grade separated structure. The structure is NCDOT Bridge #313 (Buncombe County). The rail line is still considered oriented east/west with mileposts increasing from east to west. R/W width is also 200 feet wide with one track located under the bridge. There is also a spur track that serves a rail customer on the south side of the T-line just east of the bridge. 2-4 freight trains, with no passenger trains, operate over this segment of the T-line per day at a maximum speed of 25 mph.

**<u>Section I-2513B rail impacts:</u>**

For Section I-2513B where new crossings of the NS S-line, Craggy Mountain Spur, and the BLU T-line will occur, it is a given that any crossing of these rail lines will be grade-separated considering the classification of highway being constructed. As information, however, and for future reference in support of grade separation of rail lines, the Department of Transportation has developed guidelines for the treatment of highway-railroad intersections on new construction projects. The grade separation guidelines are based on the use of an exposure index which is a product of the number of trains per day and the projected average daily highway traffic. Grade separated structures should be constructed in rural areas when the exposure index is 15,000 or more and in urban areas

when the exposure index is 30,000 or more. Attached you will find a copy of the guidelines.

New structures over the S-line, T-line, and Craggy Mountain Spur in Section I-2513B should provide a minimum of 23'-0" of vertical clearance. Also, railroads typically like to preserve enough space under any new bridge to add a future track. In the Rail Division's opinion, any new structures in this section should not need to allow space under the structures for future tracks. The S-line is already double-track and the terrain probably doesn't allow space for a future track anyway. The T-line and Craggy Mountain Spur are low-density lines in regard to rail traffic and the existing single track at each location is sufficient for the present and any future rail traffic. There may be a need to allow room for a maintenance roadway for any structures that cross over the Murphy Junction area (connection point of the T-line with the S-line) due to the track/signal maintenance work required at that location. Horizontal clearances to bridge bents should therefore be 25'-0" plus any additional length for a maintenance roadway (if required by NS or BLU) in order to avoid the use of crashwalls on the bridge bents.

From other information recently received on Section I-2513B, it is understood there may be some roadway improvements, such as realignment/widening, and possibly a trail along Riverside Drive and the French Broad River, that could impact and encroach upon the R/W of the Craggy Mountain Spur line. Any improvements to the roadways parallel to the Craggy Mountain Spur may also require existing -Y- line at-grade crossings over that spur line to be upgraded as well. Improvements required at any -Y- line at-grade crossings could include changes to the roadway profile, widened crossing surface, relocation of crossing, and relocation/addition of crossing signal gates

Any parallel encroachments on railroad R/W or changes to crossing surfaces should be discussed/coordinated with David Hinnant, Surfaces & Encroachments Manager for the NCDOT Rail Division, at 919-715-8804. For new, modified, or relocation of crossing signals, Richard Mullinax, PE, Rail Signals Manager, would be involved. He can be contacted at 919-733-8015. To gain information regarding the type of protection at any existing at-grade crossings or upgrades that may be required to existing crossing protection for design or detour routes, please contact A. R. (Drew) Thomas, Inventory & Data Analysis Manager, at 919-733-5564.

**Section I-2513C rail impacts:**

Existing NCDOT Bridge #313 (Buncombe County) on I-40 is currently grade-separated over BLU's T-line in this section. If this bridge is replaced, it is a given that only a grade-separated crossing would be pursued considering the classification of highway. It is the Rail Division's opinion that the existing single track at this location is sufficient to accommodate existing and future freight traffic and space for a future track is not needed if the bridge is replaced. It was also previously noted that there is a spur track on the south side of the mainline that

serves an industry to the east that the bridge span would also need to accommodate. The bridge bents should be placed 25'-0" from the centerline of track to avoid the use of crashwalls. Vertical clearance should be 23'-0" if the bridge is replaced. Increased vertical clearance requirements (over what may exist today) may also cause the existing roadway profile to be raised significantly, resulting in greater impacts to adjacent properties.

If the existing bridge is retained and only widened, the existing horizontal and vertical clearances need to be maintained and not reduced.

The Rail Division was also asked to comment on the possible replacement of the bridge on Sandy Hill School Road (SR1224) over the BLU T-line which is just south of the above I-40 overpass. This is NCDOT Bridge # 87 (Buncombe County) and is located at BLU milepost T 5.1.

Being that the highway (SR1224) is currently grade separated from the railroad by a bridge, this office highly recommends, for safety reasons, that only a grade separation be considered in order to maintain the grade separation between the roadway and the railroad. With the limited possibility of additional freight traffic (and no passenger service) in the future, it's the Rail Division's opinion the existing single track at this location is sufficient. Space under a new bridge for a future track is therefore not required. Bents should be placed 25'-0" from centerline of the existing track to avoid the use of crashwalls. Increased vertical clearance requirements (over what may exist today) may also cause the existing roadway profile to be raised significantly, resulting in greater impacts to adjacent properties.

Also, the removal of any existing overhead bridges, or any portion of it if only widened, should be performed in a manner that prevents debris from falling onto the existing tracks.

**General comments for I-2513B and I-2523C:**

Modification/replacement of existing, or construction of new, highway bridges over NS or BLU would require coordination, review, and approval with the affected railroad. For assistance in that regard, Kevin Fischer, PE of NCDOT Structures Management Unit should be contacted at 919-707-6514. Any information associated with a new structure such as track alignment, any proposed future tracks, the location of such tracks, horizontal and vertical clearance requirements related to a new bridge, necessity for maintenance roads, presence/location of any fiber optic cables, and flagging protection requirements should be obtained prior to any preliminary design work. The Rail Division can also assist, through coordination with Structures Management Unit, with determining if future tracks are needed/justified for freight train operations.

If an off-site detour route is required to make any crossing improvements or bridge modifications/replacements, selection and preference should be given to detour routes that provide grade separation of the highway and railroad tracks if possible. If a grade-separated route is not available, traffic should be detoured

over a route that avoids rail interaction or, if no other alternative is available, provides an at-grade signalized crossing.

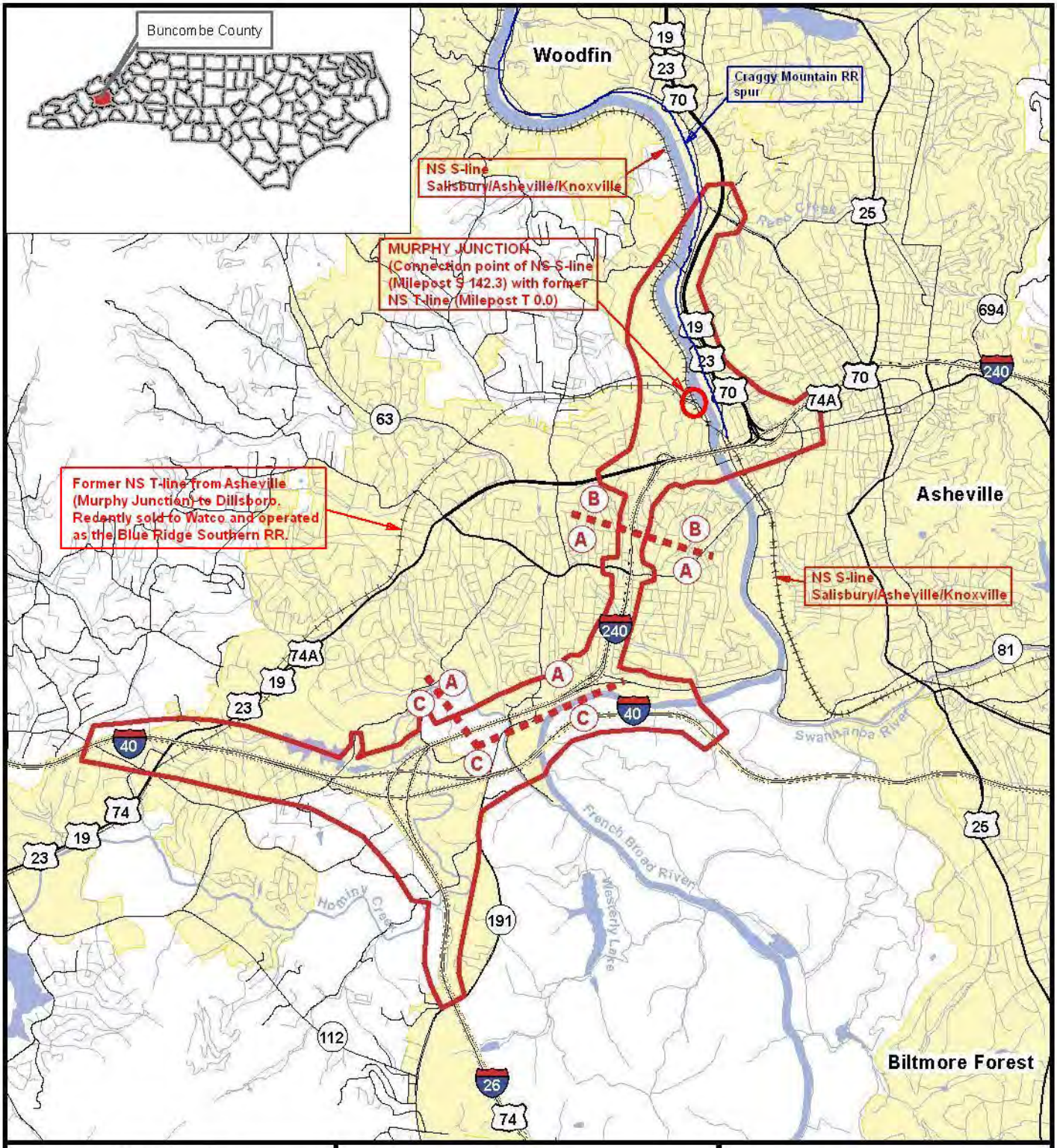
The existing roadway profile on any railroad at-grade crossing that may be located on an alternate route must also be considered in selecting the detour route. Detour routes should be chosen that offer the railroad crossing with the best profile rather than a route that would require traffic to use a ‘humped’ crossing. Flatbed trailers or other low riding vehicles may get stuck on a ‘humped’ crossing.

The data provided in this letter is for information only and should be verified, or any additional information obtained, during the preliminary design process.

Thank you for keeping the Rail Division involved in the early project planning stages. Please call me at 707-4707 if you have any additional questions or need any additional information.

Attachments

Richard Mullinax, PE
David Hinnant
Drew Thomas, PE
Brian Hanks, PE
Kevin Fischer, PE




**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Project Study Area
- Municipal Boundary
- (A) Section

Date: January 2015

0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

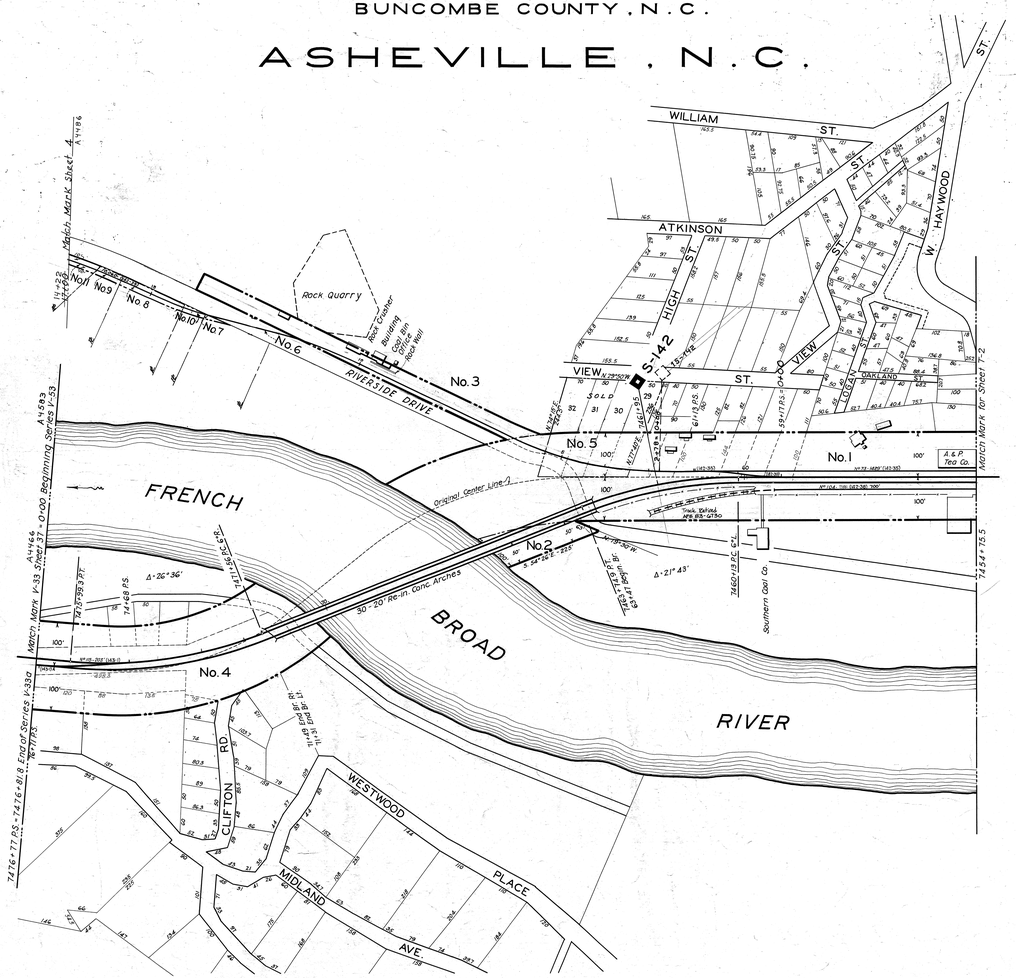
**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 2**

**Project Study Area: Sections A, B and C**

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N.C.

# ASHEVILLE, N.C.




## STATION MAP

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY**

Operated by the

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY**

ASHEVILLE DIVISION

**STATION** 7454+75.5 TO **STATION** 7476+77

**SCALE:** 1 IN. = 100 FT. **DECEMBER 31, 1927**

Office of Special Engineer

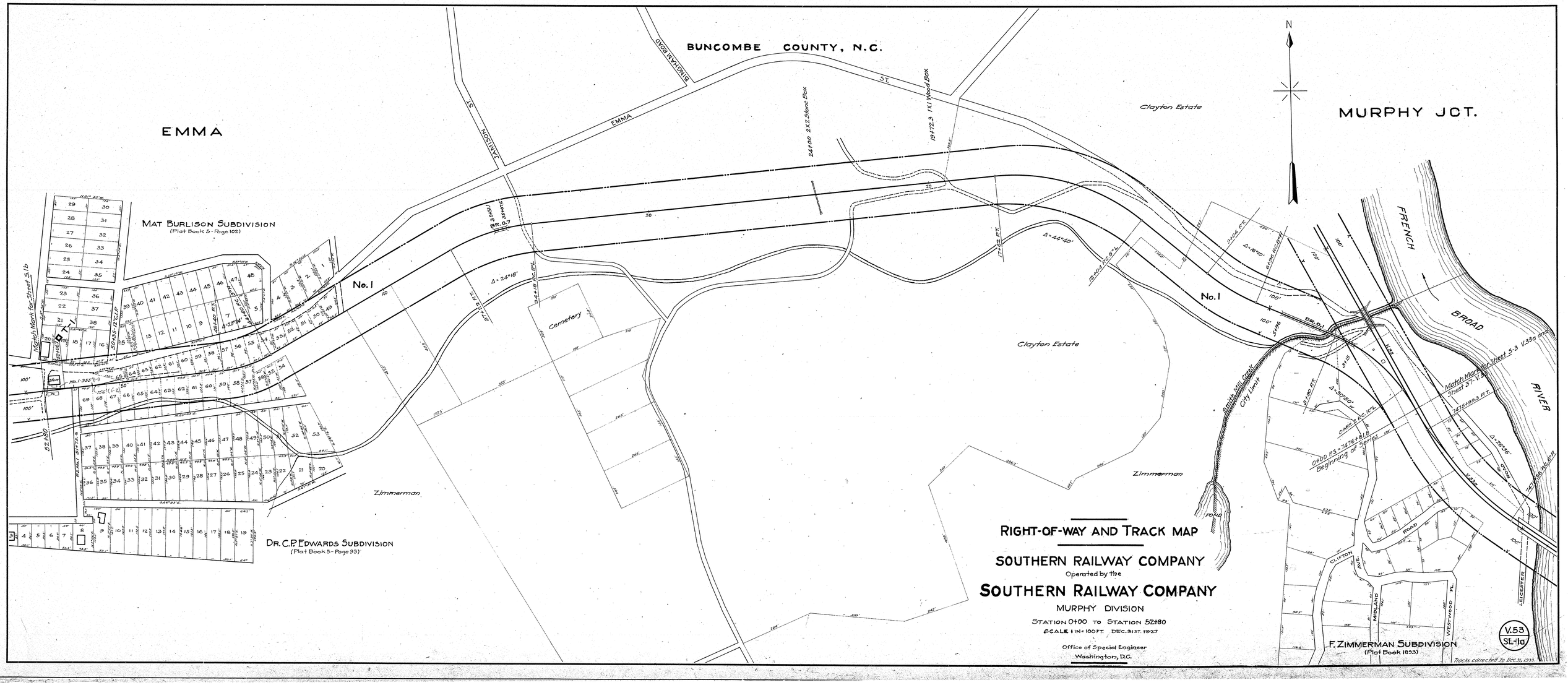
Washington, D. C.

STATIONING REFERS TO I.C.C. INVENTORY CHAINAGE-1916
(CORRECTED BY 1929 S.OU. RY. SURVEY.)

Tracks corrected to Dec. 31, 1931

V-33a
3

04485




# RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TRACK MAP

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

Operated by the

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

MURPHY DIVISION

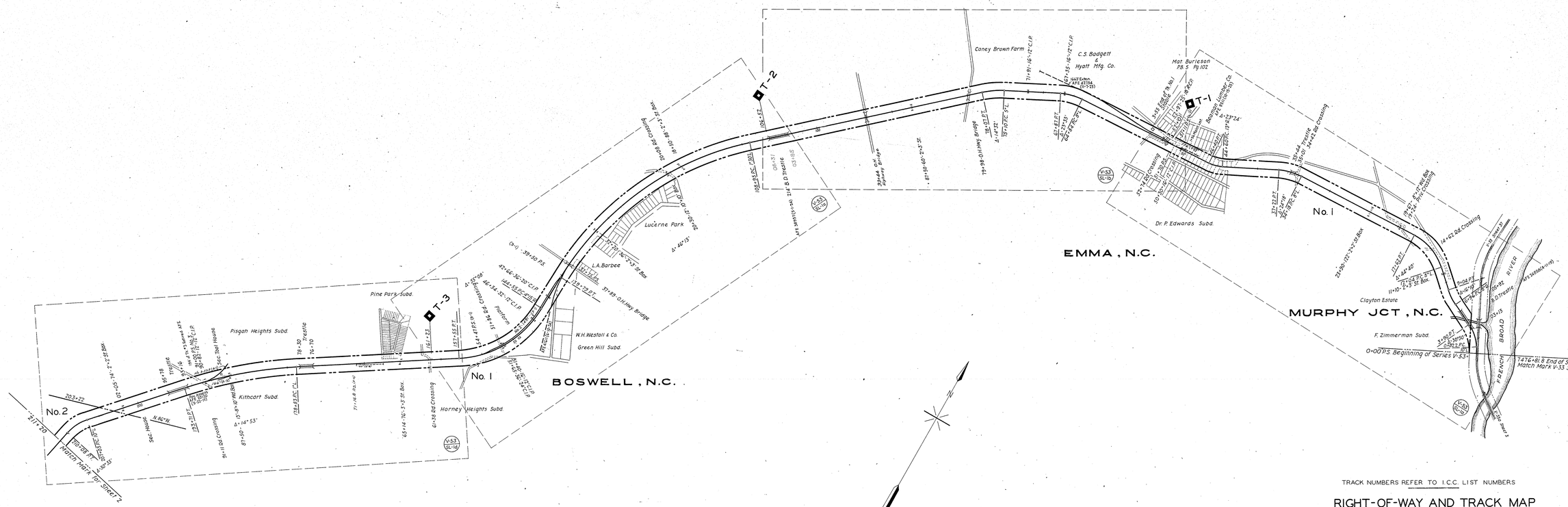
STATION 0+00 TO STATION 52+80

SCALE 1 IN = 100 FT. DEC. 31ST. 1927

Office of Special Engineer

Washington, D.C.

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N.C.




TRACK NUMBERS REFER TO I.C.C. LIST NUMBERS

# RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TRACK MAP

SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

Operated by

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

MURPHY DIVISION

STATION 0+00 TO STATION 211+20

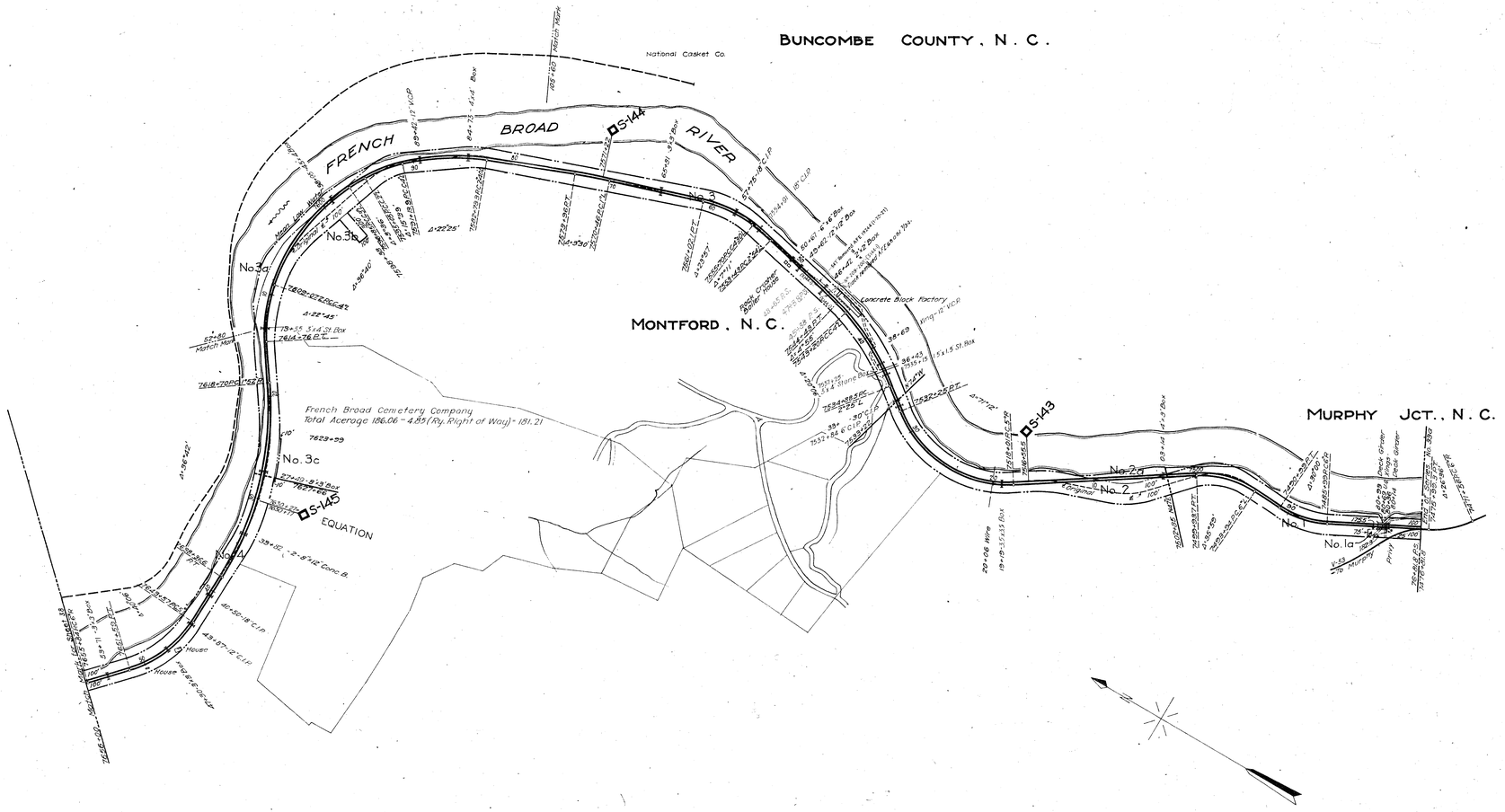
SCALE: 1 IN. = 400 FT. DECEMBER 31, 1927

Office of Special Engineer
Washington, D. C.

STATIONING REFERS TO I.C.C. INVENTORY CHAINAGE - 1916

Tracks corrected To Dec. 31, 1929

V-53
1




TRACK NUMBERS REFER TO I.C.C. LIST NUMBERS

# RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TRACK MAP

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY**

Operated by the

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

KNOXVILLE DIVISION

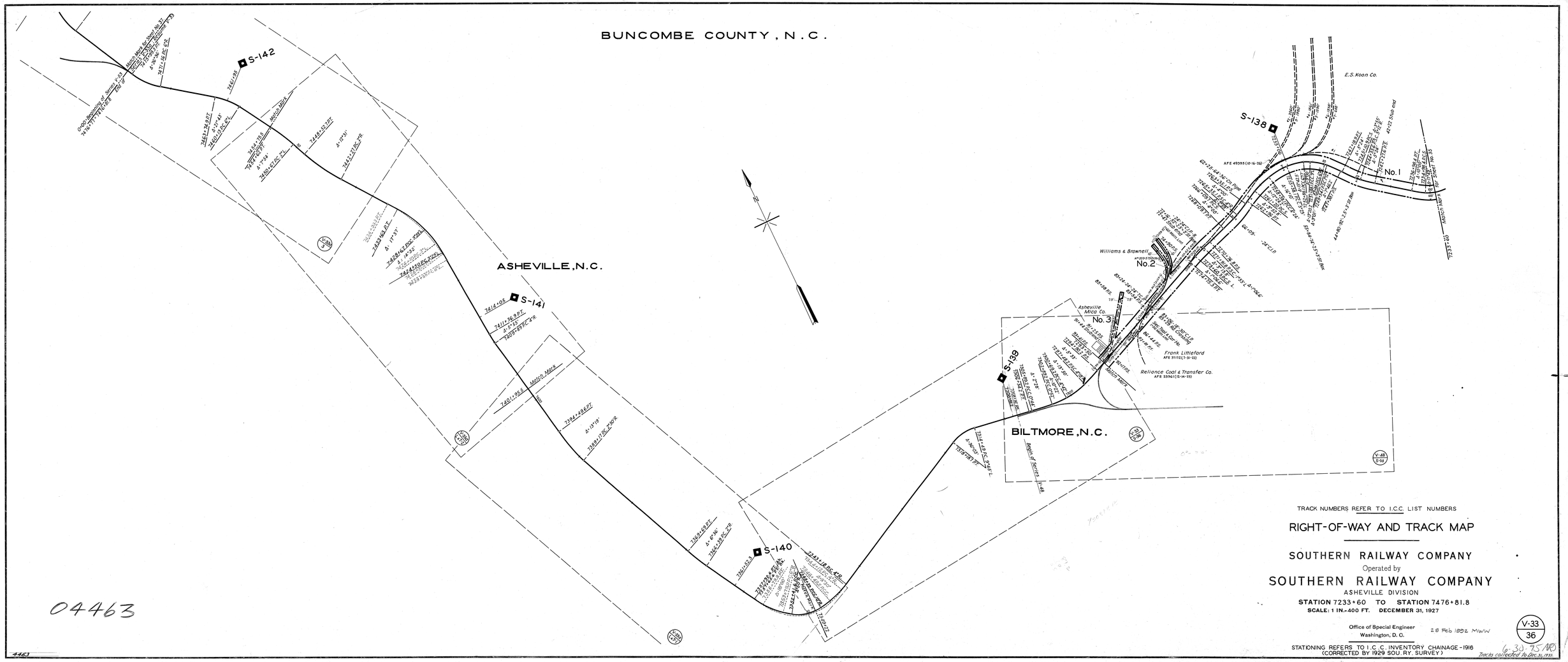
STATION 7444 + 80 TO STATION 7656 + 00

SCALE 1 IN. = 400 FT. DECEMBER 31, 1927

Office of Special Engineer
Washington, D.C.

STATIONING REFERS TO I.C.C. INVENTORY CHAINAGE - 1916
(CORRECTED BY 1929 SOU. RY. SURVEY)

V.33
37




TRACK NUMBERS REFER TO I.C.C. LIST NUMBERS

# RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TRACK MAP

SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

Operated by

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

ASHEVILLE DIVISION

**STATION 7233+60 TO STATION 7476+81.8**

**SCALE: 1 IN.-400 FT. DECEMBER 31, 1927**

Office of Special Engineer
Washington, D. C.

28 Feb 1932 MWW

V-33
36

STATIONING REFERS TO I.C.C. INVENTORY CHAINAGE-1916
(CORRECTED BY 1929 SOU. RY. SURVEY)

Tracks corrected to Dec. 31, 1933.

6-30-75 MD

04463

4463

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# Appendix A3

## Correspondence from Local Agencies and Organizations

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# Western North Carolina
# Corridor Association

**OFFICERS**

**Louis Bissette, Jr.**
Co-Chairman, Asheville
**Mac McGough**
Co-Chairman, Weaverville
**W. Otis Duck**
Vice-Chairman, Mars Hill
**Jake Grigg**
Secretary, Mars Hill
**Ed Broadwell**
Treasurer, Clyde

**DIRECTORS**

**Max Abbott,**
Bryson City
**James Banks,**
Asheville
**Fred Bentley,**
Mars Hill
**Bruce Briggs,**
Mars Hill
**Patricia Brinkley,**
Asheville
**John Dickson,**
Asheville
**Ernest Ferguson,**
Asheville
**William Forsyth,**
Murphy
**Phil Frye,**
Spruce Pine
**Jack Harmon,**
Marion
**Harvey Haynes,**
Asheville
**Jeanne Hoffman,**
Mars Hill
**Ed Israel,**
Brevard
**Allen Jobe,**
Rutherfordton
**Fred Kilstrom,**
Brevard
**James Ledford,**
Mars Hill
**Oscar Ledford,**
Franklin
**Steve Miller,**
Asheville
**Sara Morris,**
Asheville
**Hugh Morton,**
Linville
**Jerry Plemmons,**
Marshall
**Wanda Proffitt,**
Burnsville
**Rolan Smith,**
Bryson City
**Richard Stiles,**
Asheville
**Charles Von Canon,**
Banner Elk
**Dan Waddell,**
Hendersonville
**David Wyatt**
Mars Hill
**Ralph Young,**
Asheville
**John Youngblood,**
Fletcher

## MEETING NOTICE

TO: Directors and Members/Other Leaders

FROM: W. Louis Bissette, Jr. and Mac McGough, Co-Chairmen

DATE: November 15, 1995

SUBJECT: Annual Meeting on **December 6**

The annual meeting of the US 23/I-26 Corridor Association will be held on Wednesday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m. in the auditorium at the Madison County Campus of Asheville-Buncombe Tech. This building is located at the intersection of US 25-70 N and N.C. 213 (Mars Hill Road) near Marshall. Map is enclosed.

We hope you can join us for a complete update and status report on the I-26 project - current progress, schedule of construction contracts to be let (one moved up), etc. Also, hear about planning for the Asheville Connector and associated I-26 projects.

Gordon Myers, Member, N. C. Board of Transportation (13th Division) and Bill Smart, Division Engineer, DOT (13th Division) will be with us to give the reports. We will also elect officers and directors.

We have come a long way on "The Road to Sams Gap" - and Tennessee - but it is important that we keep the Corridor Association strong and continue to push early completion of I-26 as hard as we can. In the words of the late poet, Robert Frost, *"we have miles to go and promises to keep."*

This will not be a long meeting and we will have light refreshments available to "tide you over."

P.S. It's time to pay dues again. Please see dues schedule and payment form enclosed. We will appreciate your help!

js

Enclosure

25 Heritage Drive Asheville NC 28806 (704) 254-8131

MAR 1996
RECEIVED
SECRETARY'S OFFICE
DCA

# Land-of-Sky Regional Council

Buncombe • Henderson • Madison • Transylvania Counties

FEB 1996

Regional Clearinghouse

N.C. Intergovernmental Review Process
Review and Comment Form

The Land-of-Sky Regional Council has received the attached information about a proposal which could affect your jurisdiction.

If you need more information, contact the applicant directly.

If you wish to comment on this proposed action, complete this form and return it with your comments to this office by 3/8/96. Comments received after this date cannot be included in our response to the State Clearinghouse.

If you need additional time in order to obtain more information about the application or to formulate your comments, please call Jean Sluder at 251-6622 as soon as possible. An extension of the review period may be possible.

A NOTE to Reviewers - Projects with a "C" in the State Application Identifier (below) is a funding proposal review. Comments should focus on the acceptability or unacceptability of the project. Projects with an "E" in the identifier are environmental or site reviews. Comments for these projects should focus on the adequacy of the environmental document or site selection process.

If no comment is received by the above date, it will be assumed you have no comments regarding this proposal.

State Application Identifier # 96-E-4220-0472 Regional No. 21-96

Commenter's Name James A Crain Title Chairman

Representing Madison
(local government)

Address Box 579
Marshall NC 28753-0579

Phone 704 649 2854 Date 2-12-96

Comment (or attach): Agree that this project be approved. It will be necessary that a connector be built in ashevilla to allow for traffic passing through this area.

25 Heritage Drive•Asheville, NC 28806-1998
Telephone 704-251-6622•Fax 704-251-6353•E-Mail: LANDOFSKY@mailbox.ioa.com

MAR 1996
RECEIVED
SECRETARY'S OFFICE
DOA

# Land-of-Sky Regional Council

Buncombe • Henderson • Madison • Transylvania Counties

Regional Clearinghouse

N.C. Intergovernmental Review Process
Review and Comment Form

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If no comment is received by the above date, it will be assumed you have no comments regarding this proposal.

State Application Identifier # 96-E-4220-0472 Regional No. 21-96

Commenter's Name Robert E. Shepherd Title Executive Director

Representing Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Executive Committee
(local government)

Address

Phone 704/251-6622 Date Feb. 28, 1996

Comment (or attach): Project was presented to the Executive Committee at its meeting on February 28. No comment was given.

25 Heritage Drive•Asheville, NC 28806-1998
Telephone 704-251-6622•Fax 704-251-6353•E-Mail: LANDOFSKY@mailbox.ioa.com

Stroud / news

ASHEVILLE

RECEIVED
JUN 19 1997
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

I-2513

June 11, 1997

Mr. H. Franklin Vick, P.E.
NCDOT - Manager - Planning and Environmental Branch
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Dear Mr. Vick:

My apologies for the delay in getting this letter to you concerning road closures related to TIP Project U-2902. City staff looked at the options outlined by Ken Burleson and have determined that the cul-de-sacing of Fairfax is the most logical. Please proceed with design taking this into consideration. Should any circumstances change, we will deal with them as they arise.

Sincerely,

Ron Fuller, AICP
Transportation Planner
Asheville Urban Area MPO

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CITY OF ASHEVILLE
POST OFFICE BOX 7148
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802
(704) 259-5830

CHARLES H. TAYLOR
11TH DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, JUSTICE, STATE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHAIRMAN

# Congress of the United States
## House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3311

22 SOUTH PACK SQUARE
SUITE 330
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801–0000
(704) 251–1988

231 CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515–3311
(202) 225–6401

HENDERSONVILLE OFFICE
(704) 697–8539

MURPHY OFFICE
(704) 837–3249

RUTHERFORDTON OFFICE
(704) 286–8750

SHELBY OFFICE
(704) 484–6971

INTERNET ADDRESS
REPCHARLES.TAYLOR@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV

April 20, 1998

The Honorable Norris Tolson
Secretary
North Carolina Department of Transportation
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-5201

22 [illegible]

Dear Secretary Tolson:

Enclosed is a copy of correspondence I have received from my constituent, Roger Derrough, CEO Earth Fare, Inc. I believe you will find the letter self-explanatory.

I have explained that the matter is entirely within the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina, but that I will bring it to your attention for whatever action you feel is appropriate.

I would appreciate your providing me with any information which may help address my constituent's concerns. Please send your response to my Asheville District Office, 22 South Pack Square, Suite 330, Asheville, North Carolina, 28801.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Charles

Charles H. Taylor
Member of Congress

CHT:rf

Enclosure

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER
ESSE QUAM VIDERI: "To be rather than to seem"

JESSE HELMS
NORTH CAROLINA

26/Buncombe

29408

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3301

April 20, 1998

Mr. Norris Tolson
Secretary
Department of State Transportation
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611

Dear Mr. Tolson:

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter I have received from Mr. Roger Derrough, Chief Executive Officer, Earth Fare, Inc., 40 Westgate Parkway, Suite S, Asheville, NC 28806, as to his concerns regarding the future of Westgate Shopping Center because of proposed actions by the North Carolina Department of Transportation as it relates to the I-26 Extension.

Certainly, I would appreciate your looking into this situation and advising me of your findings. Please correspond with me about this matter through my Hickory Office, P. O. Box 2944, Hickory, NC 28603.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jesse Helms

JESSE HELMS:jks

Enclosure

May 7, 1998

Mr. Richard B. Davis, P.E., Assistant Manager
NCDOT - Planning and Environmental
Post Office Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Dear Mr. Davis:

It has been brought to our attention, as a result of a recent scoping meeting on TIP Project I-2513, that the City of Asheville should officially comment on a couple of issues related to that project. We welcome the opportunity to do so and would encourage you to keep us informed of the progress of our recommendations.

The first issue concerns the pedestrian access across I-240 in light of the removal of the Stewart Street pedestrian bridge. Since that facility is proposed to be removed, it is critical that State Street be improved to provide pedestrian access. The City currently has sidewalks on the south side of State Street to the bridge. Although there is not a sidewalk under the bridge, there is adequate room for a sidewalk to be constructed. It is the City of Asheville's request that NCDOT provide a sidewalk under the new State Street overpass that will link to the existing sidewalks.

The second issue concerns lighting on the new alignment portion of the Connector. The City of Asheville would strongly urge NCDOT to investigate the installation of appropriate lighting along this section of the project. This will become a major entrance way into our city and the safety and illumination that good lighting provides is important.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

James L. Westbrook, Jr.
City Manager

pc: Mr. Bill Smart, NCDOT - Division 13
Mr. Gordon Myers, NCDOT - BOT
Mr. Robert Parrish, TAC Chair, Town of Fletcher
Mr. Ken Burleson, TGS Engineers

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802
(704) 259-5604
FAX: (704) 259-5499

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# Congress of the United States
## House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515–3311

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ASHEVILLE, NC 28801–0000
(828) 251–1988

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(828) 697–8539

MURPHY OFFICE
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RUTHERFORDTON OFFICE
(828) 286–8750

SHELBY OFFICE
(828) 484–6971

INTERNET ADDRESS
REPCHARLES.TAYLOR@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV

October 14, 1998

RECEIVED
OCT 15 1998
DIV. 13
DISTRICT ENGINEER

Mr. Kenneth Wilson
District Engineer
N.C. Department of Transportation
PO Box 3279
Asheville, North Carolina 28802-3279

Dear Ken:

My constituent, Meg Anderson, 279 Mag Sluder Road, Alexander,NC, has contacted me about the route for the I-26 Connector in Asheville. It would be helpful to Ms. Anderson and others who contact me for information, if you could send me some maps of the proposed routes and anything else. Also, Ms. Anderson would like to know if any public hearings have been scheduled or when the next hearing will be scheduled.

I have explained that the matter is entirely within the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina, but that I will bring it to your attention for whatever action you feel is appropriate.

I would appreciate your providing me with any information which may help address my constituent's concerns. Please send your response to my Asheville District Office, 22 South Pack Square, Suite 330, Asheville, North Carolina, 28801.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Charles

Charles H. Taylor
Member of Congress

CHT:rf

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UNCA
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

North Carolina
Center for
Creative
Retirement

October 15, 1998

Tom Kendig, Project Coordinator
Planning and Environmental Branch
NC DOT
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Dear Mr. Kendig:

On behalf of the planners Marylyn Seyler, John Hancy, Dennis Hodgson, Dick Esperon, and Doug Lowery and the entire class of *Leadership Asheville Seniors*, thank you for being part of the program and making the October 14 session so special.

Your presence sent a significant message; the information presented was helpful. As I mentioned to you yesterday, hearing the facts is important particularly when an issue, like the connector, is potentially emotional and susceptible to hearsay. I know that this group of citizens is better informed as a result of your visit and clearer about the role of DOT and the responsibility of our local community with certain issues.

The day was stimulating and informative allowing us to make connections between river development and reclamation, greenways, and highway and other economic development.

*Leadership Asheville Seniors* thrives on the commitment and contributions of community leaders like you; we hope the community will benefit from the contributions of this group of senior leaders as well.

Sincerely,

Denise Snodgrass

Denise Snodgrass
Director, Leadership Asheville Seniors

NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR CREATIVE RETIREMENT
116 Rhoades Hall, CPO #2420
The University of North Carolina at Asheville
One University Heights
Asheville, NC 28804-8511

828/251-6140
Fax 828/251-6803
State Courier 12-61-01

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Metropolitan
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*Asheville Urban Area MPO*
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Phone: 828-259-5842
FAX: 828-259-5428
ronf@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us

February 24, 1999

REC'D MAR 24 1999

Mr. Bill Gilmore, P.E., Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Dear Bill:

The City of Asheville would like to submit the following concerns to your office regarding the I-26 Connector Project. I have met with Tom Kendig and Ken Burleson and they have reviewed the items. We pass them on to you for consideration as this important project continues.

**I-26 Connector Project Concerns from staff of the City of Asheville**
December 15, 1998

Attendance:
Ron Fuller (Planning and Development), Suzanne Molloy (Public Works), Carl Ownbey (Planning and Development), Bruce Black (Planning and Development), Alan Glines (Parks and Recreation), Gerald Green (Planning and Development), Stacy Merten, (Planning and Development) Elizabeth Teague (Land of Sky Regional Council), Samantha Lefko, (Planning and Development) Dan Baechtold (Planning and Development)

The above staff met on December 15, 1998 to review and generate discussion concerning the I-26 Connector project within the City of Asheville. The following concerns resulted from this meeting.

The general consensus among staff was that the corridor chosen was the most reasonable and less intrusive considering the adverse impacts an outer loop would create.

Beginning at the westernmost terminus of the project, the following issues were noted:

1. The NC 191 project (U-2902) should be modified to include an asphalt bicycle/pedestrian path from the existing NC 191 bridge over Hominy Creek to link up with the new alignment at both NC 191 and Shelbourne Road. Also, signage is important to ensure that crossings are safe and bicycle/pedestrian traffic is directed away from dangerous intersections.
2. The City will continue to coordinate with NCDOT Bike and Ped staff regarding planning and design of the Amboy Road off-road facility to Hominy Creek Park to ensure crossings are safe and bicycle/pedestrian traffic is directed away from dangerous intersections. This will require that the fill slope on the Southside of Sheet 1 or 2 of project be wide enough to accommodate trail. Could design bike trail linking to new speedway property
3. Due to projected traffic on Amboy Road and proposed planning efforts, the City requests a full access interchange be designed at I-240/Amboy Road. While it is recognized that there will be considerably more costs and disruptions to the adjacent neighborhoods, it is short-sighted to neglect the pending transportation needs in that area.
4. Any designs for improving Amboy Road should be limited to a three-lane cross section or a four-lane, divided and landscaped median cross section. With either, all efforts should be made to ensure it be designed as a gateway to the City and be complimentary to the park and recreational amenities planned

along the river, including bikeway and pedestrian concerns. (Designed with transition into Parkway type road)

5. The existing pedestrian overpass at Stewart Street that is slated for removal and non-replacement can be offset by improvements to the State Street underpass. It should be designed with sufficient width to include sidewalks and bikelanes, preferably with traffic separation on both sides. Lighting under the bridge should be installed, particularly since it will be an even longer span.
6. Any efforts to salvage some of the existing housing stock, particularly if it is historic, by coordinating with NCDOT to move them rather than pay for demolition, should be strongly considered. The loss of affordable housing units is injurious to the community and if available land is within moving distance, then it would be beneficial.
7. Construction of noise barriers and/or retaining walls should be considered on both sides of widening project near neighborhoods and be sensitive to the retention of community character and, if possible and practical, should be constructed of materials indigenous to our area, or in a manner so as to look indistinguishable from, materials indigenous to our area. Additionally, landscaping and earthen berms should be strongly considered where possible for noise barriers rather than tall concrete walls.
8. Rather than raise the Haywood Road bridge at I-240, thereby affecting additional businesses, the existing road bed of I-240 should be lowered. The existing businesses are both occupied and historic parts of the community's fabric. This is a key issue and there should be no consideration whatsoever to raising the deck of Haywood Road bridge if any existing businesses are threatened simply to start a grade.
9. The bridge at Haywood Road and I-240 should be constructed to ensure the safety of bicyclist and pedestrians in the area. If possible, the sidewalk should be separated from the traffic flow with landscaping on the bridge. The design of the bridge itself should be compatible with the corridor planning efforts underway for Haywood Road. If no landscaping is possible, a wider sidewalk design on the bridge (8-10') which would allow for comfortable passage may be acceptable.
10. Overall, the alignment of Alternate Two appears to be the most reasonable and efficient, if it could be merged with some of Alternate Three's intersections. It would create a cleaner, better flowing design. The possibilities of creating an efficient pedestrian flow appears more doable with this alternative. Efforts should be made to ensure that there can be pedestrian movements from all corners of the intersection with preference to using ROW away from the roadway, rather than through it. There are certain elements of both Alternate Two and Alternate Three that are desirable. Alternate Two indicates two traffic signals within approximately 150 feet of one another at Regent Park on Patton Avenue. This is currently a dangerous intersection and a combination of the alignment in Alternate Three that would consolidate those two lights into one would be safer and more conducive to good traffic flow. It is understood that this may entail encroachment into Regent Park and possibly the residential neighborhood in the Fayetteville Street area. Also, consideration should be given to removing the traffic signal at eastbound Patton Avenue/Regent Park and replacing it with median barriers that would allow unimpeded traffic flow on Patton Avenue headed east, a dedicated left turn for traffic desiring to enter Regent Park and a protected merge for traffic coming from Regent Park onto eastbound Patton Avenue.
11. There may be a possibility of a considerable amount of open space that would become available between the alignment and the river. If this is indeed purchased as part of the ROW, then perhaps an arrangements could be made to allow that land to become part of a linear park long the river. Also, this alignment brings the junction of US 19/23 and I-26 closer to Broadway and farther away from the historic Riverside Cemetery and Montford proper.
12. The City should investigate the possibilities of utilizing the new bridge structure to suspend a bike and pedestrian structure linking one side of the river to the other or the possibility of using Pearson Bridge and adjacent lands to link the Broadway corridor to future open spaces. During project design, concern should be given to ensure bike and pedestrian traffic can get from one side of I-26 to the other near the Broadway corridor. Specifically, bicycle traffic coming across the new bridge would need to be able to get to Riverside Drive (NC 251) since it is a designated bike route.
13. Access from I-26 to the river should be maintained. Whether this connection remains near the Craven Street location or utilizes some of the existing neighborhood roads adjacent to the eastbound exit ramp to Patton Avenue remains to be seen.
14. All overpasses should be designed, if practical and possible, with indigenous materials and with aesthetics in mind.

Ron Fuller, AICP
MPO Coordinator

xc: Tom Kendig; Ken Burleson; Bill Smart

March 16, 1999

Mr. Gordon Myers, Board Member
North Carolina Board of Transportation
Division 13
2140 Emmas Grove Road
Fairview, NC 28730

Dear Mr. Myers:

Please find attached a copy of a resolution concerning the I-26 connector that was passed by City Council on March 9, 1999. Council asks that you please share this resolution with whomever you feel would be most beneficial in the North Carolina Department of Transportation in order to assist in funding the connector as soon as possible.

Should you have any questions about this resolution or the City's commitment for funding of the connector, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

James L. Westbrook, Jr.
City Manager

JLW/pc

Attachment

pc: William D. Smart, Division Engineer, NCDOT

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802
(704) 259-5604
FAX: (704) 259-5499

**RESOLUTION NO. 99-45**

**SUPPORTING THE COMPLETION OF THE I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the I-26 interstate project will be completed by the year 2002; and

WHEREAS, the completion of this section of I-26 will complete a missing link in the interstate system; and

WHEREAS, as the economic and cultural center of Western North Carolina, Asheville needs the completion of the I-26 interstate system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The Asheville City Council requests that the North Carolina Department of Transportation reevaluate its recent decision to postpone funding of the I-26 connector in Asheville. After reevaluation of the connector project, the City Council requests that immediate funding for the I-26 connector be contemporary and coordinated with the completion and opening of Interstate 26.

Read, approved, and adopted this 9th day of March, 1999.

Magdalen Burleson
City Clerk

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

**Subject: Fwd: FW: I-26 CONNECTOR AWARENESS GROUP**
**Date:** Sun, 01 Aug 1999 19:28:13 -0400
**From:** Elizabeth Teague <et@landofsky.org>
**To:** tkendig@dot.state.nc.us

Hi Tom:
The day I said I'd forward this on to you is the day our email went down...So here is the post (finally) which showed up on our local "smart growth partners" listserve. Roger Derrough is the owner of Earthfare, a grocery store - really the anchor store - of Westgate.

I got your voice mail and will work with Ken to help arrange any bike/ped focused meetings he needs. My two primary concerns for the MPO Bikeways and Pedestrian Task Forces however are:

1) a review with the task forces of our list of recommendations and the I-26/240 Connector plans as they stand now. We can hold this meeting at Land-of-Sky Regional Council or at Quality Forward downtown (where we often have task forces meetings).

2) a chance to discuss the Amboy road/240 interchange and the Hominy Creek-Amboy Road Bike trail designs and how that will work. From what we discussed before, and with Ken earlier, this should include the local land owners as well as the City Parks and Rec Department (Al Kopf), the County Parks and Rec Dept (Annette Wise), a representative from RiverLink (Karen Cragnolin) and our Metropolitan Sewage District (Peter Weed). Dave Donnell, owner of Southern Waterways -- which is right there at the current Amboy road/240 exit -- has offered to host already. Again, if you prefer we can use the Council's conference room as well.

Let me know possible dates and what I can do from my end. I will be out of the office on Monday but back again on Tuesday.

Thanks-

ET

*>-----Original Message-----*
*>From: rogerderrough@earthfare.com [SMTP:rogerderrough@earthfare.com]*
*>Sent: Friday, July 23, 1999 12:54 PM*
*>To: scott@newcontext.com*
*>Cc: jprice@buncombe.main.nc.us*
*>Subject: I-26 CONNECTOR AWARENESS GROUP*
*>*
*>*
*>Dear Scott,*
*>*
*>I am with the I-26 Connector Awareness Group. We are a coalition of*
*>concerned Western Carolinians dedicated to promoting a alternative design*
*>to the NCDOT I-26 Connector proposal. During Bele Chere we will be at booth*
*># 584 located between the police station and Max's Celebrity Deli.*
*>Following is information about the project and our position.*
*>*
*>Please post this on the smart growth listserve or contact Roger Derrough to*
*>discuss.*
*>*
*>Thanks*
*>*
*> I-26 CONNECTOR AWARENESS GROUP*
*>*
*> 40 Westgate Suite S*
*> Asheville, NC 28806*

> (828) 281-4800 Ext. 75
>
> Asheville is being confronted with a massive superhighway project. The
> North Carolina Department of Transpor-tation (NCDOT) proposed route will
> alter the face of Asheville unlike any road project since the Beaucatcher
> open-cut. The Connector will take 5 years to build while disrupting
> traffic for the entire period. It will also result in the relocation and
> demolition of an extensive number of local businesses and neighborhoods.
>
> NCDOT wants you to believe that their over-designed proposal is the
> best and only solution for completing I-26 through Asheville. The I-26
> Connector Awareness Group recognizes the need for a new bridge to reduce
> hazardous congestion on the Smoky Park Bridge. However, we oppose the
> scale of the current proposals?specifically the widening of I-240 through
> West Asheville.
>
>
> The Project
>
>
> As proposed by the NCDOT the I-26 Connector would run from US 19-23
> (just south of the Broadway exit at UNCA) to the I-40 intersection
> just south of Asheville. It involves building a bridge over the
> French Broad River and widening I-240 through West Asheville to eight
> lanes (13 lanes with exit and entrance ramps at Haywood Rd.) at a
> cost of $140-200 million.
> NCDOT officially has two alternative routes proposed for the
> connector (route 1 was recently eliminated)
> Route 2 would follow a course through Westgate Shopping Center and
> require the demolition of 108 residences and Westgate Shopping Center
> along with the relocation of 61 businesses.
> Route 3 would follow a course between Holiday Sun Spree Resort and
> Westgate and require the demolition of 117 residences and relocation
> of 25 businesses along with 4 holes of the Holiday Sun Spree golf
> course.
> NCDOT prefers Route 2
> The first stage of the project will widen I-240 between I-40 and the
> Patton Avenue interchange. The second phase will be construction
> section between Patton Avenue and 19/23 North, including a new bridge
> over the French Broad River.
> Construction is scheduled to begin in 2003 and completed in 2008.
> Traffic will be disrupted for the entire period.
>
> The History
>
>
> In 1985 Tennessee committed to building the final leg of the an
> interstate-standard highway that would run south from I-81 (north of
> Johnson City) to the North Carolina line.
> WNC development interests formed the I-26 Corridor Association. In
> 1988, through their lobbying efforts, North Carolina committed to
> connect the current I-26 south of Asheville to the Tennessee highway
> with an interstate-standard highway.
> In 1992, the NCDOT and Federal Highway Administration established a
> pilot citizen's committee (Asheville Connector Advisory Committee) to
> decide the best route for I-26 through Asheville/Buncombe County. In
> 1993, The Connector Committee unanimously approved the building of a
> new bridge across the French Broad River, but never discussed
> widening I-240 to 8-10 lanes.
> Tennessee opened their portion in 1995. North Carolina?s portion from
> the NC/Tennessee border at Sam's Gap to Mars Hill is under
> construction and scheduled for completion in 2002.

> In November, 1998, NCDOT announced that the I-26 Connector Project
> along with several other statewide road projects would be delayed two
> years (to begin in 2003) due to lack of funding and NCDOT/Board of
> Transportation mismanagement.
>
> NCDOT's Recent History
>
>
> In 1997, scandals involving the NCDOT and Board of Transportation
> members made front-page headlines in major NC newspapers revealing
> mismanagement and political patronage with diversion of funds for
> political pet projects.
> In 1997, a Democracy South Report showed that Gov. Hunt received
> $652,428 of campaign contributions from the development-interested NC
> Board of Transportation, their families and a few key development
> interests. Gov. Hunt appoints most Board members and Board members
> make all road decisions.
>
> The Facts
>
>
> Despite current rumors, the plans are not finalized and the community
> can still have an impact on the design and scale of the project.
> Adding lanes encourage more traffic. This phenomena is know as
> induced traffic. Current transportation studies have shown that, over
> the long-run, adding lanes does not relieve congestion.
> The model NCDOT used to predict the traffic flow is 40 years old and
> is referred to as Tran Plan. A new transportation model is available
> called SMITE. This model clearly identifies the induced traffic
> dynamic created by widening highways.
> NCDOT now says that 90% of the increase in traffic will be local.
> Increased traffic will increase air pollution and runoff into streams
> and rivers.
>
> Our Position
>
>
> We agree that a new bridge needs to be constructed to reduce hazardous
> congestion on the Smoky Park Bridge. However, we oppose the scale of the
> current proposals.
>
> We oppose widening of Interstate I-240 south of Patton Ave.
> We oppose the demolition of Westgate Shopping Center and other
> properties that need not be destroyed for an over-designed highway.
> We call for an independent transportation consultant to evaluate
> NCDOT?s design and traffic projections.
> We believe that a scaled down project would:
> safely and adequately serve traffic for decades
> minimize destruction of homes and businesses
> be built faster with less expense
> result in minimizing traffic disruption
>
>
> We need you to take a stand!
>
> Volunteers are needed for research, writing, speaking, fund raising,
> graphics/layout, organizing, phone calls and letter writing. Call (828)
> 281-4800 Ext. 75 and let us know how you want to contribute.
>
> Get involved by attending I-26 Connector Awareness Group organizational
> meetings. The next meeting is Tuesday July 27th, 6-7:30 pm at Westgate
> Shopping Center?two doors down from the NOC Outdoor Shop. To be contacted

> for future meeting times and dates call (828) 281-4800 Ext. 75.
>
> Write a letter to let your representatives know your feelings concerning
> NCDOT's plans. Key people to contact are:
>
>
> Gordon Myers
> NCDOT Board Member
> Ingles Market Inc.
> P.O. Box 6676
> Asheville, NC 28816
>
> David McCoy, Secretary NCDOT
> P.O. Box 25201
> Raleigh, NC 27611
> DmcCoy@dot.state.nc.us
>
> Leni Sitnick, Mayor
> City Hall
> P.O. Box 7148
> Asheville, NC 28802
> LSitnick@buncombe.main.nc.us
>
>
>==========
>To subscribe to this list, send mail to: majordomo@main.nc.us
>with the following command in the body of your message.
>
> subscribe smartgrowth

Elizabeth Teague
Land-of-Sky Regional Council
25 Heritage Drive
Asheville, NC 28806
(828) 251-6622
FAX: 251-6353

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
JAMES B. HUNT JR. P.O. BOX 25201, RALEIGH, N.C. 27611-5201 DAVID McCOY
GOVERNOR SECRETARY

August 4, 1999

Mr. Ron Fuller, AICP
City of Asheville - Planning Department
P.O. Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Subject: Asheville MPO TAC concerns about the new I-26 Route, Asheville Connector NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Dear Mr. Fuller:

The Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch of NCDOT has investigated the concerns and issues for the I-26 Connector Project as submitted in the attached correspondence from the Asheville MPO. We have attended several meetings to discuss these issues and offer the following responses to the concerns in the order they were submitted.

**1. Bike facility under I-240 at Hominy Creek.** This request for a modification to Project U-2902 is a direct result of the planning for the project replacing the NC 191 bridge over Hominy Creek and is not considered as part of the subject project. Project U-2902 is currently under construction and therefore, any additions to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles should be requested from the NCDOT Bicycle program or the Division Construction Engineer.

**2. Bike Path to connect Amboy Road with Hominy Creek Park.** This concern is for NCDOT to provide R/W with the I-26 Connector project that will contain a proposed bike trail. This trail is part of TIP Project E-3608 to link Hominy Creek Park along the French Broad River to the former speedway property along Amboy Road. The I-2513 project plans will include bike accommodations from Amboy Road westward to the end of the access road serving the properties along the French Broad River. However, no additional right of way is available west of this area to extend the proposed bicycle path. The I-2513 plans will be coordinated with the property owners including City Parks and Recreation.

**3. Full interchange at Amboy Road (SR 3556).** Ko and Associates, who are designing the project for NCDOT, are looking at project revisions to include a full interchange at Amboy Road and I-240, adding moves from Amboy to I-240 eastbound, and to Amboy from I-240

westbound. These plans have been provided to you for City comments.

**4. Improvements to Amboy Road (SR 3556).** The NCDOT Program Development Branch is conducting a feasibility study (FS 9913D) considering improvements to this route. These improvements are not included in the limits of Project I-2513.

**5. Improvements to State Street crossing under I-240.** Since this crossing must be replaced by Project I-2513, a bridge length to accommodate anticipated improvements to State Street can be provided. The I-2513 project will provide a bridge over State Street of sufficient length to allow a future 32-foot face to face typical section with berms sufficient to accommodate 5-foot sidewalks and a 5-foot separation along both sides. This will allow wide lanes to accommodate bikes. However, no improvements to existing State Street are planned as part of this project. If the City agrees to construct sidewalks along State Street in conjunction with the project, the project will connect them beneath the bridge. We are currently investigating the addition of lighting beneath the crossing.

**6. Salvaging Existing Housing.** Since no historic houses are anticipated to be impacted, moving houses will be addressed with owners at the R/W procurement stage of the project.

**7. Noise and Retaining Walls to be of Materials Indigenous to the Area.** Noise and retaining walls will be considered in eligible areas where they are desired by property owners. Construction materials other than concrete can be considered after wall sizes and locations are determined. Construction materials other than the most cost effective can be provided only if the City agrees to provide the additional costs. Earth berms requiring additional R/W cannot be considered in areas where they would require additional relocations.

**8. Lower I-240 at Haywood Road.** Due to the existing I-240 grade and clearance beneath Haywood Road, I-240 cannot be lowered while maintaining 4-lanes of traffic during construction. A longer and wider bridge needed along Haywood Road will require raising the elevation of Haywood Road at the crossing. Efforts are being made to reduce this elevation as much as possible.

**9. Separated sidewalks along Haywood Road Bridge.** Separating the sidewalks with planting strips along the Haywood Road bridge would require widening the structure. Widening the Haywood Road bridge to the south is not possible without raising Haywood Road due to the vertical clearance requirements over the Interstate. However, additional width can be considered if the City agrees to provide the additional associated costs.

**10. Design Revisions for Alternate 2**. TGS Engineers, our consultant for the planning phase of this project, has prepared a preliminary alignment revision to Alternates 1 & 2 to consolidate traffic signals along Patton Avenue. They are analyzing the design to determine the lanes required and the intersection capacity. Pedestrians would be accommodated within R/W. No plans are currently underway to serve pedestrians along the southern side of Patton Avenue since there are no current accommodations in that

area.

**11. Available Open Space between Project and the French Broad River.** Lands not used for highway purposes cannot be condemned and purchased for non-highway use.

**12. Bike and Pedestrian Crossing over the French Broad River near Broadway Street.** Bicycle and pedestrian traffic will not be allowed on the deck of the I-26 bridge over the French Broad River. With no connecting parks or potential bike/pedestrian facilities on either bank of the River, it is not likely that a bike and pedestrian structure suspended from the crossing will be included as part of this project. If the City acquires facilities along the river for bike and pedestrian use, such a structure could be considered.

**13. Access to the French Broad River from I-26 in the Craven Street area.** Design revisions have been made to Alternate 2 to allow motor vehicle access to the French Broad River in the Craven Street area from the proposed I-26.

**14. Overpasses to be of Materials Indigenous to the Area with Attention to Aesthetics.** Any special designs and materials on overpasses other than the most cost effective can be considered if the City agrees to provide the additional costs.

At a meeting on Monday, April 26 discussing these concerns, Janet D'Ignazio indicated she desired the City's position on these issues since they may be asked to provide the costs of betterments. If I can provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

J. A. Bissett, Jr.

for William D. Gilmore, P.E., Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch

cc: File

REC'D SEP 29 1999

ASHEVILLE

September 20, 1999

Mr. Bill Gilmore, P.E.
Manager
NCDOT - Planning and Environmental
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Subject: Amboy Road Access - TIP Project I-2513

Dear Mr. Gilmore:

It has been brought to our attention, as a result of recent meetings on TIP Project I-2513, that the City of Asheville should officially comment on NCDOT's proposed plans for a full interchange design at NC 191. As I'm sure you are well aware, the City of Asheville has a number of topographical limitations that prevent us from having a traditional grid system. Therefore, it is important to have the most efficient use of each of the major roads serving our city. Amboy Road is critical to the future planning efforts of the city and as such, city staff strongly endorses the proposed plans for providing full access. It is our understanding that this change in the project will require additional right-of-way and the relocation of some individuals. The City trusts that NCDOT will continue to make every effort to minimize the impact and provide all necessary assistance to every citizen requiring relocation.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed design. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

James L. Westbrook, Jr.

James L. Westbrook, Jr.
City Manager

xc: Mr. Gordon Myers, NCDOT - BOT
Mr. Bill Smart, NCDOT - Division 13
Mr. Tom Kendig, P.E., NCDOT
Mr. Ken Burleson, TGS Engineers
Mr. Robert Parrish, TAC Chair, Town of Fletcher

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
POST OFFICE BOX 7148
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802
(828) 259-5604
FAX: (828) 259-5499

# Smart Growth Partners

## of Western North Carolina, Inc.

19 Ridge Terrace
Asheville, North Carolina 28804
T 828 258 8810
F 828 258 [illegible]
[illegible]


December 15, 1999

23

David McCoy
Secretary, NCDOT
P.O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611

Dear Secretary McCoy:

We are writing to express our opposition to the state DOT's proposed widening of I-240 to 8 lanes. Instead we favor reconfiguring the proposed connector during an intensive, community-based design process undertaken with the twin goals of (1) providing a workable solution to the area's traffic congestion and (2) creating transportation corridors that do not diminish the quality of life for the citizens of Asheville and the surrounding region. The arguments against turning the stretch of I-240 between US-19/23 and I-40 into an Atlanta-style superhighway are numerous and compelling.

(1) Health. Asheville is already dangerously close to entering into non-compliance with Federal air-quality standards. Any road project that accommodates a vast increase in traffic levels will only contribute to a dangerous deterioration in our air quality.

(2) Destruction. DOT's plan calls for 108 homes and 61 businesses to be razed, along with wide swaths of natural areas. Hundreds of people will be displaced, many of them from neighborhoods they have lived in for years.

(3) Traffic Increase. In the wake of numerous reports—including the highly respected Surface Transportation Policy Project, which tracked 70 metropolitan areas over a 15-year period—it is now known that increasing road capacity DOES NOT REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION. Because of the phenomenon known as "induced traffic," within 5 years a widened highway is just as congested as the original road was. And since the road is wider, there is that much more traffic.

(4) Cost. The DOT projects that the widening will cost 200 million dollars. It is probably worth pointing out that the cost for this one road project is therefore 10 TIMES more than DOT spends annually on public transportation for the entire state. For 200 million dollars we could probably buy a fleet of electric buses and have them run into every corner of Asheville every fifteen minutes for free for the next 10 years. Spending 200 million dollars on a single, unnecessary, unwanted road project is an irresponsible misuse of public funds.


**Board of Directors:**

David Stewart
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Smart Growth Partners of Western North Carolina promotes development that strengthens the economy, fosters a healthy environment, and builds community

(5) Process. No committee of citizens EVER approved an expansion to 8 lanes. The approved road was 6 lanes, and that approval was made before the ample evidence demonstrating the futility of road-widening projects was available. It is unlikely that ANY proposal to widen I-240 would win approval today.

(6) Scale. Asheville is a city of 70,000 people. It already has 2 interstates, an urban loop, and a 3rd interstate nearing completion. Isn't that enough? We're not Atlanta or Charlotte. And most local residents would probably agree that we don't want to be. An 8-lane interstate is entirely out of scale for such a small city.

(7) Economy. Tourism is a major component of Asheville's and the surrounding region's economy. People come here because it's a nice place to visit. Lacking the economic power and diversity of larger cities, Asheville relies on quality of life factors to draw people. If it becomes a place of congested superhighways, or is permanently shrouded under a haze of smog, people will no longer care to visit and the local economy will be irreparably damaged.

The arguments for widening I-240 to 8 lanes, on the other hand, are slight and rely on outdated data and failed approaches to solving transportation problems. Across the country it is becoming all but impossible to build urban highways. Why? Because they do more damage than good and people are sick (often literally) of the myriad negative consequences they bring. And there is now abundant evidence that they don't even solve the one problem they're supposed to: traffic congestion. As Lewis Mumford wrote, "Trying to solve traffic congestion by widening roads is like trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt."

We urge you to oppose the widening of I-240 to 8 lanes and to lend your support to a community-based design process that will provide a real solution to traffic congestion and improve the quality of life in Asheville. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Smart Growth Partners of Western North Carolina

ASHEVILLE

December 22, 1999

Mr. Thomas Kendig, AICP
NCDOT - PDE & A
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-5201

Dear Mr. Kendig:

The City Council would like to formally request the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) participation in a community design forum for the I-26 Connector project (TIP # I-2513). As you are aware, this is a large scale project that has many implications to not only Asheville, but to the region as a whole. We realize that much has been accomplished to date with staff and neighborhood groups. We believe that a concerted effort to bring interested parties together for a community design forum will do much to bring all of us into more common ground.

The City of Asheville is cognizant of the time constraints NCDOT and the consultants are under to complete all of the required documentation and plans related to this project and do not wish to delay the project. We would like to hold our community design forum in the early February timeframe. Prior to the actual design forum, we plan on consulting you with regard to logistics, format and facilitation. In addition, it may be beneficial to have NCDOT present the existing plan-to-date to provide us and the community with some of the history and rationale behind current alignments and designs.

Again, we appreciate all the efforts you have undertaken to meet with staff, neighborhood groups, business leaders and others. We continue to look forward to working collaboratively with you to make this project one that serves our transportation needs as well as being an asset to out community. Should you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Leni Sitnick

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
[illegible]
[illegible]

ASHEVILLE

Mr. Bill Gilmore, P.E.
Manager
NCDOT - Planning and Environmental
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

January 3, 2000

Dear Mr. Gilmore:

The City of Asheville has reviewed the proposed bridge design for Haywood Road over I-240 (TIP # I-2513) and offer the following comments and suggestions:

- A corridor plan for Haywood Road was recently adopted by the City of Asheville. A copy of the pertinent pages are attached.

- Basically, the plan stipulates that Haywood Road will be re-striped for consistency throughout its entire length. Although this will not be accomplished during a single phase, it is understood that it will be, at most, a two lane facility with parking on one or both sides where feasible. A center shared turn-lane will also be striped from Beechum's Curve to Sulphur Springs Road.

- The section of Haywood Road as it crosses I-240, on the current plans, is shown as having two through lanes in each direction. As indicated above, these two lanes would be transitioning into single lanes in both directions, under the proposed corridor plan.

With the above considerations, the City would strongly recommend that the design for the Haywood Road bridge over I-240 be redesigned, providing a single through lane in each direction, in addition to the appropriate turn lanes. This will also enable the design of the bridge to be more pedestrian and bicyclist friendly.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you again for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Ron Fuller, Transportation Planner
City of Asheville

xc: Tom Kendig, Ken Burleson

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF ASHEVILLE
POST OFFICE BOX 7148
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802
(828) 259-5830

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JAMES B. HUNT JR.
GOVERNOR

1501 MAIL SERVICE CENTER, RALEIGH, NC 27699-1501

DAVID MCCOY
SECRETARY

January 21, 2000

MEMO TO: W. D. Gilmore, PE
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Manager

ATTENTION: Tom Kendig, PE

FROM: Cathy S. Houser, PE Cathy S. Houser
Project Engineer - Design Services

SUBJECT: State Project: 8.U843701 ( I-2513A ) Buncombe County
F. A. Project: MANHF-26-1(53)
I-240 from SR 3413 (Bear Creek Road) near Hominy Creek to North of SR 3548 (Haywood Road)

Amboy Road Interchange

In response to Mr. Ron Fuller's letter of December 28,1999 we offer the following:

1) The first three comments concern the two lanes on Amboy Road from the I-240 Interchange to Brevard Road. We have investigated providing an off ramp(Ramp3A) from I-240 WB to Brevard Road and it was determined that the maximum weave distance (approximately 315m) that could be achieved between Ramp 4B and Ramp 3A would be considerably less than the desirable minimum distance of 460m. Also, the LOS for the weave maneuver is projected to be "E" in the design year of 2025. Based on this conclusion we will need the two lanes on Brevard Road to properly handle the proposed traffic volumes. We decided to put the Intersection at Shelbourne Road to give the feeling of a city street and to keep bicycles out of the Brevard Road/I-240 Interchange.
2) Comment no.4 requested full access at Ramps 4C and 4D. This has been incorporated into the plans.
3) Comment no.5 requested roundabouts in lieu of a signalized intersection at NC191bridge and associated ramps. There is not enough room to physically build a roundabout at this location.
4) Comment no.6 requested a lower design speed. We are using an 80km/h-design speed, which is required for this type of road.
5) The last three comments refer to the connections from Fairfax and Virginia to Amboy Road. As recommended, the base map shows no connection to Amboy Road. 81/2"x11" sheets that show alternatives relative to terminal ends of Fairfax St. and Virginia Ave. at -Y4- (Amboy Road) has been generated for meetings with the neighborhoods.

If you need additional information concerning this project, please contact David Scheffel Project Design Engineer or me at 250-4128.

CSH / dhs

cc:
Tom Kendig, PE
Ken Burleson, PE
File

**Subject:** **I-26 property owner**
**Date:** Tue, 6 Jun 2000 08:12:41 -0400
**From:** Scott Shuford <ScottS@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>
**To:** "'djoyner@dot.state.nc.us'" <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us>
**CC:** Ron Fuller <RonF@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>

I met yesterday with Mr. Nick Apostolopoulos (828-254-2983H; 828-236-4565B) who has obtained property on Burton St from Buncombe Co. He was interested in how the project would affect future developability of his site. From maps we have on hand, it appears he will have a significant residual, although I stressed that any plans were preliminary until an alternative was selected and design complete. I encouraged him to attend the June 15 Edu. Mtg., especially the ROW breakout.

If you're in town (or even if you're not), it might be a good idea to give him a call. FYI.

7/12/00

To: Drew Joyner
From: Betty Lawrence
Re: I-26 Connector
Traffic modeling

**I-26 Connector Awareness Committee**
**c/o The Western North Carolina Alliance, Inc.**
**70 Woodfin Place, Suite 326**
**Asheville, North Carolina 28801**

July 12, 2000

Ms. Janet D'Ignazio
Chief Planning & Environmental Officer
NCDOT
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Re: I-26 Connector Traffic Modeling

Dear Janet:

Thank you for calling me this afternoon. I'm using this opportunity to state as specifically as I can our questions and concerns concerning traffic modeling for the I-26 Connector in Asheville. The first topic here we spoke of, and you kindly agreed to check with Statewide Planning and have you or someone get back to me. The second I neglected to mention on the telephone, but I would much appreciate your checking on that as well..

PAIRED MODELING

The first involves an attempt to get paired traffic models for the project. It is our understanding that this technique has been producing very interesting results in different places around the county. Walter Kulash, alone, has seen in five separate projects, very different projections with differing numbers of lanes. He says the models are sensitive enough that the show what the traffic will do if the lanes are not added. As the project road fills up, some of the traffic uses other roads. As those roads fill up, some of the traffic on those roads uses still other roads. And some of the traffic simply disappears. In no case have the models shown a traffic breakdown, or a reduction in level of service beyond acceptable levels. A couple of weeks ago I asked Drew Joyner to determine whether or not paired models had ever been run for this project, or whether a model had ever been run for four lanes on I240/I26. If he found that such models had not been run, I asked him to either get them run, or let me know what we had to do to get them run. (I have been told that simply changing the one variable and running the model through again is about an hour's work). He consented to do this. After talking to him yesterday, this is my understanding of the current situation.

Drew talked to Blake Norwood in Statewide Planning, and was told, as best I understand, the following: NCDOT cannot do paired modeling. NCDOT's models are not sensitive enough to respond to putting in different lanes on a segment. That is not the way NCDOT does traffic modeling. NCDOT runs the model without restraints and sees what number of vehicles come out, and then determines what number of lanes should be built. Rerunning the model with four lanes or six lanes cannot be done or wouldn't do any good.

I have heard in the past that NCDOT has a good modeling program, and I do not understand why NCDOT cannot do the same sort of paired modeling that other agencies across the country can do. I am also very concerned because Chris Gatchell, of FHWA, is under the impression that a four lane model was run, and that it showed a traffic breakdown, which

according to Mr. Joyner and Mr. Norwood, is not the case. Especially given that NCDOT has solicited a letter from FHWA concerning the number of lanes the project should have, it seems crucially important that FHWA have accurate information concerning what models were run and what the results were.

As you know, at least one court has held that a preferred alternative and a no-build alternative cannot be compared using the same traffic projections; that land use and population data must be modified to fairly compare the two. We are concerned that NCDOT might find itself unable to comply with this requirement during the EIS.

I know that traffic modeling is a complex subject, to say the least. But we cannot permit it to remain a black box, not knowing what goes in, only what comes out. Thanks for agreeing to try and confirm my understanding of what has been said to date, and please arrange to have paired models run for the project for four, six and eight lanes.

THE MODEL AND THE LOOP

In the early nineties, the Asheville Connector Committee, NCDOT and FHWA determined that the Asheville Connector should be in the corridor currently planned, through Asheville. All recommended against a loop in northwest Buncombe County. I personally, and the I26 Connector Awareness Committee, agree with this conclusion. Nonetheless, when Asheville's Thoroughfare Plan was updated in the mid-nineties, a loop was included in the Thoroughfare Plan. Although this loop is not on the Transportation Improvement Plan of funded projects, its inclusion in the Thoroughfare Plan means that it is planned to be built withing the next twenty years. Therefore it should be included in the traffic modeling for the current connector project. At the breakfast meeting the morning after the Educational Meeting for the Connector Project last month, I asked all present whether this northwest loop had been included in the traffic model, and no one knew the answer. I asked generally if this could be determined. When Greg talked to Drew Joyner, Drew referred Greg to Blake Norwood for an answer to this question. I ask you now to find out if the northwest loop was included in the traffic model, and if it was not, I ask that the model be rerun including the loop, since it would very likely affect the results.

Please call me with any questions. My number is 828 254-9672, and my own address is 142 Hillside Street, Asheville, N.C. 28801, e-mail btlawrence@juno.com.

Sincerely,

Betty Lawrence

Betty Lawrence, for I-26 Connector Awareness Group

cc: Hon. Leni Sitnick, Mayor of Asheville
Drew Joyner, NCDOT
Chris Gatchell, FHWA

ASHEVILLE

July 31, 2000

Ken Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511

Dear Ken:

I am writing to thank you for your incredible efforts on the behalf of the City of Asheville at the recent I-26 Connector Design Forum. It is very evident from the standing ovation that the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration received that your efforts have been greatly appreciated by our community.

This has been a project which has been controversial at times, and I realize that you have been frustrated on occasion. I hope that the recent Design Forum has made that effort worthwhile. I think that we are all convinced that this type of public involvement is the wave of the future for both the City of Asheville and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

On behalf of the Asheville City Council, I commend you for your outstanding efforts in achieving the success of the recent Design Forum. We look forward to working with you as this project continues.

Sincerely,

Leni Sitnick

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

cc: Asheville City Council
David McCoy, NCDOT
SS/bh

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
POST OFFICE BOX 7148
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802
(828) 259-5600
FAX: (828) 259-5499

RESOLUTION NO. 00-113

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE I-26 CONNECTOR

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration and the North Carolina Department of Transportation currently plan to connect the new and existing portions of Interstate 26 through the City of Asheville in project I2513; and

WHEREAS, the design of this road project is of critical importance to the City of Asheville and Western North Carolina, in terms of traffic safety, traffic management, air quality, affordable housing, economic consequences, and other areas; and

WHEREAS, the Asheville City Council resolved in December, 1999 to hold a community design forum for the purpose of obtaining further public input on the design of said project and developing alternative design(s) which can then be further evaluated during environmental studies for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Community Design Forum has been planned by City Planning Staff, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and a Community Coordinating Committee, and has been preceded in June, 1999 by an educational meeting attended by several hundred citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Community Design Forum is currently scheduled for July 20th, July 21st and July 22nd, 2000;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE:

That the Asheville City Council commends the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration for participating in the Community Design Forum and supports and requests the consideration and evaluation of all feasible possibilities resulting from the Community Design Forum.

Read, approved and adopted this 11th day of July, 2000.

Magdalene Burleson
City Clerk

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

**Subject:** Questions
**Date:** Tue, 1 Aug 2000 15:15:57 -0400
**From:** Ron Fuller <RonF@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>
**To:** Scott Shuford <ScottS@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>, "'Lou Bissette'" <lbissette@mwbavl.com>, "'Brownie Newman'" <brownie@wnca.org>, Robin Nix <RobinW@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>, "'Tom Kendig'" <tkendig@mail.dot.state.nc.us>, "'Drew Joyner'" <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us>, "'Ken Burleson'" <tgsengr@aol.com>, "'Chris Gatchell'" <chris.gatchell@fhwa.dot.gov>

Gentlemen,

Lou, Brownie, Scott, Ron Ainspan, Robin Nix and myself met today and would like your comments on a few issues. We are primarily interested in whether any of these cause NCDOT, FHWA and TGS any extreme heartburn. We will be working on information to take to the CCC and on to City Council and ultimately to the MPO and want to make sure what we recommend is within the "realm of possibilities". The CCC meets on August 16 at noon. We wouldn't go to council until early September and the MPO on September 21.

Here goes:

The separation of interstate and local traffic is a major issue. Have you been able to look at the proposal that came out of the meeting that tries to accomplish that?

We propose to form a "Committee on Visual Design" to look at bridge design, general aesthetics, etc.

Can you examine engineering and signage options that will:
improve the north to east connections (Amboy and Haywood, specifically)
address the residents concerns that there will not be a full interchange at I-26/I-40 thereby forcing all eastbound exiting traffic onto Amboy to Brevard

Will a new model or updates to the existing model be available in time to use for this project and will it be one where constraints can be added?

General consensus that the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity be restored to link neighborhoods while exploring simutaneouly traffic calming measures to reduce the impact on residential streets.

Ensure that the Haywood Road interchange design is community sensitive. It would be helpful to provide an artist's rendition of what the bridge could look like if only five lanes are utilized and the other two lanes are used for additional landscaping, separation from traffic (peds and bikes), etc.

Give us your thoughts,

Thanks, Rom

**Subject: RE: Draft I-26 CCC Statement**
**Date:** Tue, 15 Aug 2000 10:51:37 -0400
**From:** Ron Fuller <RonF@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>
**To:** Scott Shuford <ScottS@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>,
"'djoyner@dot.state.nc.us'" <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us>
**CC:** "'Ken Burleson'" <tgsengr@aol.com>, "'Tom Kendig'" <tkendig@mail.dot.state.nc.us>

You asked.

> -----Original Message-----
> From: Scott Shuford
> Sent: Monday, August 14, 2000 1:15 PM
> To: 'djoyner@dot.state.nc.us'; Ron Fuller
> Subject: FW: Draft I-26 CCC Statement
> Importance: High
>
> Just got this - any burning concerns?
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Brownie Newman [SMTP:brownie41@hotmail.com]
> Sent: Monday, August 14, 2000 11:31 AM
> To: Scott Shuford
> Subject: Draft I-26 CCC Statement
>
> Scott.
>
> I sent you this from another email account as well, but its been acting
> weird so I am sending it through hotmail also. This is a draft of a
> statement for consideration by the CCC. A starting point for discussions
> of
> the statement we will issue to City Council and DOT. Can you forward this
> to
> the rest of the CCC? Lou already has a copy of it.
>
> Thanks! Hope you had a great weekend.
>
> Brownie
> _____
>
> REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE DESIGN OF THE I -
> 26
> CONNECTOR THROUGH ASHEVILLE
>
> Purpose of Report
>
> The purpose of this report is to document issues identified by public
> input
> at the I-26 Connector Design Forum held July 21-22, 2000 in Asheville and
> to
> recommend that these issues be thoroughly studied as a design alternative
> in
> the project Environmental Impact Study.
>
> The issues described are generated from official records of discussion
> table
> comments at the forum and summaries of citizen-developed mission
> statements
> at the forum wrap-up session. They provide the foundation for a
> community-based design alternative to be given engineering and
> environmental
> study both preliminarily and through the EIS. They also provide

> recommended
> criteria for EIS evaluation of all alternatives in a
> costs/benefits/impacts
> analysis format.

[Ron Fuller] This was not a "community-based" design alternative process. It was an embarassingly small representation of the community and was not indicative of the community. Granted, they were the ones that bothered to show up and they are to be congratulated, but that is poor reason to recommend any drastic changes on an interstate of regional significance.

> Section 1 -- Design Forum Overview
>
> The I-26 Connector Design Forum was incorporated by NCDOT into its public
> involvement program in January 2000. It was seen as an opportunity to
> enhance community-wide input from Asheville area citizens to the design of
>
> the I-26 Connector. It would expand on recent efforts to solicit
> neighborhood-based involvement.
>
> In April 2000, NCDOT and the City of Asheville agreed to create a
> Community
> Coordinating Committee to guide this public participation in the design
> process. In addition to planning the design process format, the
> composition
> of the CCC would help achieve community consensus in the identification
> and
> interpretation of key issues. Representatives from a broad base of
> community organizations as well project stakeholders were chosen to
> comprise
> the CCC. The design process they selected took place in two stages.
>
> During mid-June, an education forum was held to inform the public about
> project design issues. This was attended by over 300 people who listened
> to
> expert presentations and participated in project component breakout
> sessions.
>
> In late July, an intensive two-day design forum was scheduled to draw from
>
> the public both general design concepts and specific design ideas. This
> forum attracted 500-600 community residents. It was staffed by
> representatives of the Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina
> Department of Transportation, City of Asheville, the American Institute of
>
> Architects and several independent consulting engineers and community
> mediators. Fred Craig, transportation engineer from Parsons Brinkerhoff
> Ohio, acted as overall forum facilitator.

[Ron Fuller] There were not that many people there, for Pete's sake. You can't double count the same folks. It is misleading to make such a representation.

> The overwhelming sense from participants was one of appreciation for the
> privilege of taking part in the process. Repeatedly stated was the fact
> that this highway project could either impose negative impacts or provide
> beneficial opportunities for the community. Continuing citizen input to
> defining design criteria was seen as central to maximizing project
> benefits
> while minimizing the costs. This report by the CCC contributes to its
> ongoing function - that of translating community concerns into achievable
> integration with the project design.
>
>
> Section 2 - Critical Issues Identified by the Design Forum
>

>
> Many facets of the project were discussed at the forum. The themes listed
>
> below summarize the most prominent concerns of area citizens. They
> provide
> a set of recommended criteria by which we believe all project design
> alternatives should be evaluated. An underlying assumption in all of these
>
> areas is their compatiability with completing the project in a timely
> fashion. While some additional time may be required to analyze and
> consider
> these issues, the community feels strongly that the ultimate
> completion-date
> for the project should be maintained. We are hopeful that building
> community
> consensus around the design alternative which best addresses these
> critical
> issues will ultimately help expedite the project. Due to the inter-related
>
> nature of the issues raised and immediate proximity of areas to be
> affected,
> and the need to expidite completion of the work, the strong preference of
> the Citizens Coordinating Committee is for these issues to be addressed as
> a
> single project rather than multiple "phased projects."

[Ron Fuller] Lots of "double speak" in this paragraph. They are "mamby-pambying" around the political smokescreen of keeping the project on schedule while making recommendations that cannot be accomplished without affecting the schedule. The project is already years behind schedule and every little thing just lengthens it. The CCC needs to be up front with folks and say what they mean..."Delaying the project is preferable to us, because we stand to get a better facility. We don't think the problems to be encountered, with delays, will be as bad as the road originally proposed by NCDOT." If they are going to speak for the community, then they should be truthful.

> Critical issues:
>
> 1) Separation of local and interstate traffic
> 2) Matching scale of project to character of community
> 3) Reunification and connectivity of community
> 4) Minimization of neighborhood and local business impacts
> 5) Use of updated traffic modeling software and data
> 6) Maintenance of compatibility with community's design vision and
> plans
> 7) Creation of full interstate movements between I-26 and I-40
> 8) Consideration of air quality impacts and other environmental
> concerns
> 9) Emphasis on safety - during construction and in the design of
> the
> final product
> 10) Incorporation of design features that are aesthetically
> pleasing
> and complementary to the community

[Ron Fuller] All very good points.

> Section 3 -- Explanation of Evaluation Criteria
>
> This section formulates the issue summary of Section 2 as a set of
> criteria
> by which the costs and benefits of particular design alternatives are
> determined. Each issue is broken into its community and transportation
> aspects.
>

> The community aspect is a translation of each summary issue its into
> physical manifestation. The transportation aspect provides a basis for
> measuring the resolution of issue in terms of its transportation
> consequences. Each project component should be evaluated for its ability
> to
> address these aspects.
>
> 1) Separation of local and interstate traffic
> A) Community issues
> 1. Reclamation of land for community use (including expansion of taxable
> base) [Ron Fuller] I fail to see the "land" that will be reclaimed. The
> alternate from the community meeting just does not remotely come close to
> accomplishing any appreciable land saving. There are "missing links"
> between I-240 and Patton Avenue that were not addressed. When addressed,
> in conjuction with the encroachments into Montford and Hillcrest, any
> "land savings" gets less. 2. Creation of Patton Avenue gateway
> possibilities (which complies with
> City of Asheville 2010 plan) [Ron Fuller] What am I missing here? The
> Patton Avenue they are talking about is the bridge proper and the environs
> around an interchange at both ends. Neither of these are "gateway"
> material. The artist rendering they produced for the "new Patton Avenue"
> are new bridges. Show me how you can maintain traffic during construction
> and not lengthen the project by designing and building five bridge
> structures (including a tunnel under current facility) and I'll take my
> marbles and go home. Folks should not be misled into thinking that
> references to a Patton Avenue "gateway" don't even address any portion of
> roadway that the general public considers to be Patton Avenue.
> 3. Generation of redevelopment possibilities in Corridor in
> compliance with
> City's "smart growth" principles [Ron Fuller] An admirable point, but one
> that is on the City's back, not NCDOT. All of our other efforts to look
> at corridors have been rather lengthy. This one could be a show stopper.
> 4. Shrinkage of highway footprint through simplification of
> interchanges [Ron Fuller] NCDOT's plan is vastly more simple and
> smaller than that proposed by the design alternative.
>
> B) Transportation issues
> 1. Reduction of weaving and merging movements in the area of the
> Smoky Park
> bridges [Ron Fuller] NCDOT's plan addresses the weaving and merging. The
> design alternate is a nightmare of weaves and merges. And it doesn't even
> have all the links in place.
> 2. Provision of convenient and safe interstate-to-interstate
> movement
> between I-26 and I-240 [Ron Fuller] Again, the NCDOT plan does so, much
> more effectively than the design alternate. 3. Provision of acceptable
> capacity for traffic flow
>
>
> 2) Matching scale of project to character of community
> A) Community issues
> 1. Sensitivity to visual offensiveness (prominence)
> of highway on
> landscape [Ron Fuller] The design alternate is a monstosity. It's scale
> is much larger and closer to town.
> 2. Retaining of the "feel" of a small city in the mountains
> [Ron Fuller] Asheville is not a "small city" in the mountains. Some may
> envision us to be and some may want us to go backwards, but this is a
> growing urban area serving all of WNC. The City, the Chamber, and others
> continue to market us as a great place to live and work. As I pointed
> out, Asheville has already achieved the population projected in the 2010
> Plan for the year 2010. There is a distinction between reality and

> fantasy that some folks don't seem to grasp. It is exceedingly apparent
> when the meetings are filled with folks that have moved here from
> somewhere else that now want to prevent others the same luxury.
>  B) Transportation issues
>  1. Selecting lowest design speed compatible with
> functioning of highway
> facility [Ron Fuller] Amen
>  2. Subjecting highway widening and alignment
> decisions to their impact on
> neighborhood division and property takings [Ron Fuller] Amen
>
>  3) Reunification and connectivity of community
>  A) Community Issues
>  1. Provision of well-defined pedestrian/bicycle
> facilities throughout
>  the project corridor [Ron Fuller] Such connections across the
> corridor are appropriate, but not along. That point needs to be
> clarified.
>  2. Improved river access from Patton Ave. and
> neighborhoods to French
> Broad River [Ron Fuller] Valid point, but topography is the limiting
> factor. How would others propose it to be accomplished in a manner better
> than NCDOT has already proposed?
>  3. Accessibility for Hillcrest community [Ron
> Fuller] Is providing more vehicular access in the best interst to the
> residents? Much of what has been "ballyhooed" has tremendous impact on
> the residents of Hillcrest. There needs to be much more inclusion of them
> into the process with real factual evidence of the impacts. Could this
> delay the project? Just think of the additional governmental agencies
> involved and the local, state and federal involvement that would have to
> be orchestrated to accomplish encroaching into Hillcrest.
>  4. Opportunities for reconnecting the Montford
> Neighborhood and Riverside
> Cemetary with the French Broad Riverfront. [Ron Fuller] This is a much
> bigger issue than just saying how nice it would be. There are already
> connections planned (Riverlink's Emerald Necklace concepts) at strategic
> locations. There is an interstate, a railroad and a state road to cross.
> These are in addition to some very challenging terrain.
>
>  B) Transportation issues
>  1. Creation of better local street network
> (including linkages between
> West Asheville and downtown, within downtown and within West Asheville) to
>
> relieve interstate traffic pressure [Ron Fuller] Hello? Are we talking
> creating some new streets or widening existing streets? It seems that it
> has to be one or the other. Let's see on paper what they are talking
> about so we can go out to the public and get their comments on increasing
> traffic in their neighborhoods. It will be an easy sell. This community
> loves increased density and traffic. They thrive on it.
>  4) Minimization of neighborhood and local business impacts
>  A) Community Issues
>  1. Minimization of residential property acquisitions
> [Ron Fuller] Amen  2. Limitation of impact on
> neighborhood connectivity [Ron Fuller] The connectivity they propose has
> much greater impact than does the highway. Kinda ironic, ain't it?
> 3. Preservation of Westgate and minimization of number of businesses
> needing to be closed or relocated [Ron Fuller] On the surface...very
> noble and commendable. Why are they not concerned with impacts to the
> hotel that brings considerable tourist dollars, provides the only indoor
> soccer facility in WNC, host a number of conventions per year, etc? What
> about Jackson's? They ain't purty, but auto salvage yards provide a

> valuable service, especially when the economy takes a nose dive (and it
> will) and we no longer have the disposable income to drive "disposable"
> cars. Are they not even willing to look at the viability of the offer
> from NCDOT to provide additional assistance in relocating businesses? I
> believe they are being very short-sighted.
>
> B) Transportation Issues
> 1. Effect of minimum impact alignment on feasible
> engineering [Ron Fuller] Huh?
> 2. Impact of minimum lane-building on traffic flow
> [Ron Fuller] Excellent point. The analysis could surprise us all.
>
> 5) Use of updated traffic modeling software and data
> A) Community issues
> 1. Achievement of least (or no) widening which
> maintains safe and
> adequate traffic flow [Ron Fuller] Good point...but, really, does any
> reasonable person see the possibility of NO widening?
> 2. Analysis of impacts on other area streets and
> highways from:
> a) I - 26 widening through West Asheville
> [Ron Fuller] Why do they feel these impacts have not be analyzed? Now,
> the other things the public has come up with...there's some impact for
> you.
> b) completion of full I-26/I40 interchange
> [Ron Fuller] This will be studied per the draft TIP that just came out.
> A good point.
> c) alternate Patton Ave. interchange designs
> [Ron Fuller] Whatever else can work, achieve the goals, maintain
> traffic, etc....go for it!
>
> B) Transportation issues
> 1. Evaluation of service level of I-26 through West
> Asheville at 4, 6 or
> 8 lanes [Ron Fuller] Good point
> 2. Adoption of modeling which factors all
> improvements on current
> thoroughfare plan [Ron Fuller] Good point
> 3. Inclusion of impacts from improved alternate
> transportation service
> (transit, bike/ped, park and ride, etc.) on need for highway capacity [Ron
> Fuller] The next model will be able to do that. In all honesty, even
> the most optimistic projections of such alternate modes, coupled with our
> abysmal history of using such modes, don't appreciably affect the volumes
> projected over 20 years.
> 4. Evaluation of effect of improved local street
> grid [Ron Fuller] Again, what exactly are they proposing...new streets,
> new connections or widening of existing streets?
> 5. Assessment of induced traffic phenomenon and
> interrelationship of
> highway capacity and development patterns [Ron Fuller] How did Fred so
> succinctly put it? "Induced traffic...that's foo-foo dust".
>
> 6) Maintenance of compatibility with community's design vision and
> plans
> A) Community issues
> 1. Compatibility with riverfront use and development
> plans [Ron Fuller] Give me a break! NCDOT's plans are considerably more
> compatible and less intrusive to the riverfront than the design alternate.
>
> 2. Compatibility with "smart growth" direction of
> city planning [Ron Fuller] In my estimation, a dangerous and misleading

> new buzzword. You can dress a pig in a fancy evening gown, high heels and
> make-up...but it is still a pig. I see "smart growth" as yet another
> cyclical movement of the planning world to "spin" land use controls,
> zoning, etc. in a new light. After all, if you don't embrace the "smart
> growth" philosophy...does that make you a "dumb growther"? It's kinda
> like the abortion question...is the opposite of "pro-life"..."pro-death"?
> Some planner I is, huh?
>
> 3. Reclamation of land for non-highway use [Ron
> Fuller] Where applicable, I say go for it. Good point.
>
> B) Transportation issues
>
> 1. Feasibility of restricting through-traffic on
> I-240 [Ron Fuller] What kind of "through traffic" are they proposing to
> restrict on this interstate facility we've all paid for? And how are they
> proposing to restrict it?
>
> 2. Potential of traversing highway right-of ways to
> create river access [Ron Fuller] Huh? Has anyone bothered to walk along
> the railroad tracks (I have) and look up at steep, rocky bluffs on one
> side and down to the river on the other? What connections are feasible in
> that area. I would argue...none. On the other side, it's not an issue of
> the I-26 route, rather Riverside Drive. If what they mean is traversing
> existing US 19/23 from the Montford side...again, look up at the terrain
> and down at all the obstacles in the way. Riverlink has addressed this
> issue in a more rational manner.
>
> 7) Creation of full interstate movements between I-26 and I-40 [Ron
> Fuller] Good point and again, one that is proposed to be studied
> A) Community issues
>
> 1. Reduction of through-traffic volume (especially
> trucks) in Asheville
> central district [Ron Fuller] A noble cause and one I would like to see
> accomplished. However, it is an enforcement nightmare that would
> dramatically affect the level of service of the facility more than the
> presence of the trucks, i.e., law enforcement stopping semis to determine
> if they have a valid reason to be on the road. Do trucks make deliveries
> to businesses off of I-240?
>
> 2. Enhancement of driving safety in low design speed
> areas of I - 240 [Ron Fuller] Huh? I don't get it.
>
> B) Transportation issues
>
> 1. Impact on highway capacity needs in central
> Asheville [Ron Fuller] Good point. Needs to be addressed
>
> 2. Feasibility of including full interchange plans
> into project scope [Ron Fuller] Does it create a delay in the project as
> this is analyzed? It is much bigger than just providing the missing
> linkages. As the Draft TIP indicates, there is a need for additional
> lanes on I-40 from that point to Exit 44. Where do you stop the Connector
> project?
>
> 8) Consideration of air quality impacts and other
> environmental
> concerns [Ron Fuller] Good point
> A) Community issues
>
> 1. Effect of highway design speed on speed of
> traffic and congestion [Ron Fuller] Easier said than done. It is much
> easier to create an ideal driving world on paper and in models. Reality
> is usually much more difficult to grasp.
>
> 2. Effect of highway widening on volume of vehicular
> traffic [Ron Fuller] Again, good point, but tough to address.
>
> 3. Influence of highway capacity on development of
> alternate modes of
> transportation [Ron Fuller] On the surface, it would appear that the
> more traffic we can get on the improved interstate and off our local

> roads, the better for all alternative forms of transportation. Am I
> missing something here?
>
> B) Transportation issues
> 1. Impact of air quality levels on environmental
> study standards for
> highway
> project approvals [Ron Fuller] A no brainer. We
> are an attainment area. We get no additional funding to monitor air
> quality, i.e. CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funds. Those
> are available only to areas that have become non-attainment or maintenance
> areas. I've argued the point to no avail. "Attention all passengers.
> The ship has struck an iceberg. We are sinking, fast. However,
> government regulations require us to issue life jackets only after you
> have been legal declared...drowned" Maybe it's not a no brainer, huh?
>
> 9) Emphasis on safety - during construction and in the design
>
> of the final product
> A) Community issues
> 1. Simplicity of design for weaving, merging and
> diverging [Ron Fuller] Again, NCDOT's design does much to address these
> issues. The alternate design does much to make such issues worse.
> 2. Segregation of local and through truck traffic
> [Ron Fuller] Again, a very worthy cause. However, it is an enforcement
> nightmare.
> B) Transportation issues
> 1. Provision for incident management [Ron Fuller]
> Critical and very valid issue
> 2. Effectiveness in alleviating complexity and
> safety risks of current
> road and ramp configurations [Ron Fuller] Again, NCDOT's design does
> much to address these issues. The alternate design does much to make such
> issues worse.
>
> 10) Incorporation of design features that are aesthetically
> pleasing and complementary to the community [Ron Fuller] Good
> points
> A. Community issues
> 1. Recognizability of community character in design
> features [Ron Fuller] Amen. Who pays the extra?
> 2. Uniqueness and attractiveness of bridge design
> [Ron Fuller] Amen. Who pays the extra?
> 3. Inclusion of gateway elements [Ron Fuller]
> Amen, where appropriate. Who pays the extra?
> 4. Inclusion of local artists and craftspeople in
> creating design
> features5. [Ron Fuller] Amen, in moderation. Art is too subjective.
> What one person considers art, another may consider a tremendous waste of
> taxpayer dollars. I say keep art in the museums and on your personal
> walls at home. That does not mean that we should not want an attractive
> and aesthetically pleasing design. That can be accomplished without
> artist's involvement.
> 5. Use of quality materials [Ron Fuller] Amen.
> Who pays the extra?
>
> B. Transportation issues
> 1. Cost of desired features [Ron Fuller] Is the
> City willing to go the extra mile?
> 2. Allocation of costs among governmental entities
> [Ron Fuller] Who, besides Asheville, stands to contribute? Who, besides
> Asheville, is complaining?

>
>
> _____
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September 19, 2000

ASHEVILLE

The Honorable David McCoy
NC Department of Transportation
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611

Dear Secretary McCoy:

I am writing to forward to you the attached resolution and report regarding the I-26 Connector project here in Asheville.

As you are aware, we recently conducted two major public involvement forums concerning this important road construction project. These forums were planned and organized by a citizen's group called the Community Coordinating Committee with the assistance of City, NCDOT, & FHWA staff.

The Community Coordinating Committee presented its report and recommendations to the Asheville City Council on September 12, 2000. This report was enthusiastically received and the attached resolution was unanimously adopted by the City Council.

Please give the attached report due consideration as you evaluate the Connector project. The report represents the consensus of our community on key project issues, as well as summarizing the result of countless hours of public participation. We want the project built on time and in a way that respects our community's interests.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to thank you and your staff for your invaluable assistance in our public participation process. We could not have done this if you had not heard our voices and responded so quickly.

Thank you again for helping us with this project and for considering the recommendations contained in the enclosed report. We await your response with hopeful anticipation.

Sincerely,

Leni Sitnick

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

cc: Asheville City Council
James L. Westbrook, Jr., City Manager
Drew Joyner, NCDOT, I-26 Connector Project Manager ✓

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF ASHEVILLE
POST OFFICE BOX 7148
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802
(828) 259-5600
FAX: (828) 259-5499

# CERTIFICATE

I, Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk of the City of Asheville do hereby certify that the attached is a true and accurate copy of: Resolution No. 00-168 adopted by the Asheville City Council on September 12, 2000, & found in Resolution Book No. 26 at page 171.

Magdalen Burleson
Magdalen Burleson
City Clerk

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

I, Janet M. Rhodes, a Notary Public of the aforesaid County and State do hereby acknowledge that Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution by her of the foregoing Certificate.

Witness my hand and notarial seal this 18th day of September, 2000

Janet M. Rhodes
Notary Public
My Commission Expires: 10-3-2003

RESOLUTION NO. 00-168

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE REGARDING THE I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

---

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are developing a highway improvement project known as the I-26 Connector; and

WHEREAS, in response to considerable public desire for constructive input into the design of this critical highway project, the City of Asheville and the Asheville Metropolitan Planning Organization requested additional opportunities for this input to occur while simultaneously maintaining the construction schedule for the I-26 Connector project; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has partnered with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in a major public education and involvement project for the I-26 Connector; and

WHEREAS, a steering committee for this public education and involvement has been formed from a wide segment of the Asheville area community and has been constituted as the Community Coordinating Committee; and

WHEREAS, during the summer of 2000, the Community Coordinating Committee, in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, held two extensive public meetings – the Education Forum and the Design Forum – to educate and involve the public regarding the necessity and the design of the I-26 Connector project; and

WHEREAS, the Community Coordinating Committee has presented its report and recommendations emanating from this public input and involvement to the Asheville City Council on September 12, 2000; and

WHEREAS, said report and recommendations have the potential to offer extremely important benefits to the City of Asheville in the form of improved highway design, neighborhood reunification and connectivity, improved roadway safety, better urban design and improved land use adjacent to and in the vicinity of the project, minimization of neighborhood and local business impacts, improved compatibility with our community's design vision and character, minimization of air quality and other environmental impacts, and other important benefits articulated in the report and recommendations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The report and recommendations of the Community Coordinating Committee are hereby endorsed and supported and, further, this resolution of support shall be immediately transmitted to the Asheville Metropolitan Planning Organization, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration for their review and action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are hereby commended for their cooperative spirit and willingness to participate in this critical public participation effort.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT the Community Coordinating Committee is hereby congratulated and commended for their dedication of countless hours of effort, for their openness to public input, for the effectiveness of their approach in receiving, evaluating and communicating this input, and for their willingness to seek compromise and consensus on an issue of such profound importance to the Asheville community.

Read, approved and adopted this 12th day of September, 2000.

Magdalen Burleson
City Clerk

Leni Sitnick
Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REPORT AND RECOMMENTATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE REGARDING THE I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT**

---

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are developing a highway improvement project known as the I-26 Connector; and

WHEREAS, in response to considerable public desire for constructive input into the design of this critical highway project, the City of Asheville and the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization requested additional opportunities for this input to occur while simultaneously maintaining the construction schedule for the I-26 Connector project; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has partnered with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in a major public education and involvement project for the I-26 Connector; and

WHEREAS, a steering committee for this public education and involvement has been formed from a wide segment of the Asheville area community and has been constituted as the Community Coordinating Committee; and

WHEREAS, during the summer of 2000, the Community Coordinating Committee, in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, held two extensive public meetings – the Education Forum and the Design Forum – to educate and involve the public regarding the necessity and the design of the I-26 Connector project; and

WHEREAS, the Community Coordinating Committee has presented its report and recommendations emanating from this public input and involvement to the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization on September 21, 2000; and

WHEREAS, said report and recommendations have the potential to offer extremely important benefits to the Asheville Urban Area in the form of improved highway design, neighborhood reunification and connectivity, improved roadway safety, better urban design and improved land use adjacent to and in the vicinity of the project, minimization of neighborhood and local business impacts, improved compatibility with our community's design vision and character, minimization of air quality and other environmental impacts, and other important benefits articulated in the report and recommendations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASHEVILLE URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION THAT:

We, as a community, want a thorough, full and proper study of an alternative design which will accomplish these goals. At the same time, the community feels strongly that the ultimate completion date for the project should be maintained or expedited, if possible

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ASHEVILLE URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION THAT:

The report and recommendations of the Community Coordinating Committee are hereby endorsed and supported and, further, this resolution of support shall be immediately transmitted to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration for their review and action.

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The North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are hereby commended for their cooperative spirit and willingness to participate in this critical public participation effort.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED BY THE ASHEVILLE URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION THAT:

The Community Coordinating Committee is hereby congratulated and commended for their dedication of countless hours of effort, for their openness to public input, for the effectiveness of their approach in receiving, evaluating and communicating this input, and for their willingness to seek compromise and consensus on an issue of such profound importance to the Asheville community.

Read, approved and adopted this 21th day of September, 2000.

Charles Grimes, Chairman
Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

35169

**Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**Transportation Advisory Committee**

Interim Chair
**Charles W. Grimes**
*Town of Biltmore Forest,*

**Gordon Myers**
*Board of Transportation*

**Nicholas Graf**
*FHWA*

**Mike Begley**
*Town of Black Mountain*

**Charles Cloninger**
*City of Asheville*

**David Gantt**
*Buncombe County*

**Eddie S. Henderson**
*Town of Fletcher*

**Coy Rice**
*Town of Woodfin*

**Leni Sitnick**
*City of Asheville*

**Bett Stroud**
*Town of Weaverville*

**Letta Jean Taylor**
*Town of Montreat*

**Technical Coordinating Committee**

Chair
**Michael J. Morgan**
*Town of Weaverville*

Vice Chair
**Jim Coman**
*Buncombe County*

MPO Coordinator:
**Ron Fuller**

NCDOT MPO Engineer:
**Vacant**

*Asheville Urban Area MPO*
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Phone: 828-259-5842
FAX: 828-232-4517
ronf@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us

September 25, 2000

29

Mr. David McCoy
Secretary of Transportation
North Carolina Department of Transportation
PO Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611-5201

Dear Mr. McCoy:

Please find enclosed a resolution from the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) concerning the I-26 Connector (TIP # I-2513). At the MPO meeting on September 21, 2000, the TAC heard a report from the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC).

The CCC is a group assembled by the City Council of Asheville to provide an additional means of public input to this important project. Their main charge was to broaden the base of community input while not impeding the project schedule. A copy of their report is enclosed. The TAC, upon a recommendation from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), accepted and endorsed the report of the CCC with one addition. A major concern of the TCC and TAC was that the project be kept on schedule, at a minimum, and expedited, if possible. That is reflected in the first "Therefore" on page two of the resolution.

> *"We, as a community, want a thorough, full and proper study of an alternative design which will accomplish these goals. At the same time, the community feels strongly that the ultimate completion date for the project should be maintained or expedited, if possible"*

We look forward to the NCDOT utilizing the goals and recommendations from the CCC report as they continue to analyze this project. Our desire, of course, is that we get the best road for our community. Safety, aesthetics, congestion relief, improved air quality, minimal disruptions to residences, businesses and the environment are critical issues. They must be balanced with the need to complete the project in a timely manner.

Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact us. The citizens of our community applaud and thank you for your attention to our transportation needs and the willingness of the NCDOT to take the time to listen.

Sincerely,

Ron Fuller
MPO Coordinator

*Serving the Transportation Planning Needs of Asheville, Biltmore Forest Black Mountain, Fletcher, Montreat, Weaverville, Woodfin and Buncombe County*

**Subject: Comments to Draft TIP**
**Date:** Fri, 10 Nov 2000 13:20:13 -0700
**From:** Tanya Davis <tdavis@buncombe.main.nc.us>
**To:** "Mike Begley" <wbegley@buncombe.main.nc.us> , "Coy Rice" <ronnalley@charter.net> , "Leni Sitnick" <lsitnick@buncombe.main.nc.us> , "Letta Taylor" <b62854h@aol.com> , "Gordon Myers" <gmyers@ingles-markets.com> , "David Gantt" <commissioner@davidgantt.com> , "Chuck Cloninger" <ccloninger@mwbavl.com> , "Oliver Gajda" <OliverG@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us> , "Ron Fuller" <RonF@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us> , "David McCoy" <dmccoy@dot.state.nc.us> , "Dan Martin" <dmartin@dot.state.nc.us> , "Calvin Leggett" <cleggett@dot.state.nc.us> , "James Westbrook" <jimw@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us> , "Bruce Black" <BruceB@mail.nc.asheville.nc.us> , "Michael Moule" <MichaelM@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us> , "Drew Joyner" <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us> , "Len Sanderson" <lsanderson@dot.state.nc.us> , "Scott Shuford" <ScottS@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>

Here are Smart Growth Partners' comments to the draft TIP for the Asheville Urban Area. We hope you will have the chance to read them before Monday's TAC meeting:

To: Technical Advisory Committee of the Asheville Urban Area MPO
From: Smart Growth Partners of WNC
Date: November 10, 2000
Re: Comments to the Draft 2002-2008 TIP

Smart Growth Partners of Western North Carolina is an Asheville-based non-profit organization, working to promote sustainable patterns of development. Because we recognize that current transportation planning encourages sprawl and its many destructive consequences, we advocate for a healthier policy that supports safe, walkable and bicyclable streets; creates compact, mixed-use neighborhoods; promotes public transit; integrates local land use planning; and includes local communities in the decision-making process.

In addition to supporting the specific comments submitted by the I-26 Connector Awareness Group, we would like to recommend that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) not approve the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the following reasons:

1. NCDOT has consistently ignored the MPO's transportation planning recommendations.

The important function of MPOs is to ensure that local governments maintain adequate authority over transportation planning decisions that directly impact local regions. Because state transportation improvements affect, and often conflict with, local governmental land use planning, the NCDOT must accord MPOs more decision-making power in planning transportation improvements. In North Carolina, transportation decision-making has primarily been a state function. Metropolitan areas, however, are the real economic and cultural units. For areas such as Asheville to remain viable, state transportation planners need to coordinate with local housing, land use, transportation, and economic development planners. Effective coordination will only happen if local powers play a more active role in transportation planning and decision making.

Regarding the proposed TIP, The NCDOT has repeatedly ignored your staff's pleas to not five-lane TIP #R-2813 and has thus far ignored your recommendation that the NCDOT reconsider five-lane facilities as the

design of choice in our urban area. Because the NCDOT has not sincerely considered your well-informed recommendations in the planning process, we recommend you exercise your right to not approve the TIP.

2. NCDOT continues to rely on five-lane roads as its design choice, despite objections from the MPO.

We would like to commend the TAC for strongly voicing its concerns over the NCDOT's outdated and detrimental reliance on five-lane, undivided roads as the means for "facility improvement." As you outlined in your letter, these five-lane roads are extremely dangerous, conflict with local governmental land use planning, and destroy communities by encouraging sprawl along violent, asphalt corridors. Moreover, as NCDOT engineers should be well aware, widening roads actually induces more traffic and does not alleviate congestion. Thank you for expressly asking the NCDOT to stop the unnecessary and dangerous proliferation of these five lane "facilities" in our urban and urban fringe areas.

Despite your objections, the NCDOT has included multiple five-lane improvements in the TIP. Because the NCDOT has not heeded your concerns in planning its road improvements, we recommend you not approve the TIP.

3. The TIP does not include a range of transportation choices.

Our federal transportation law, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21), encourages communities to create transportation plans that support a full range of transportation choices, not merely subsidize the automobile. Transportation policy in North Carolina has blindly focused on highway and road expansion to the exclusion of alternative transportation choices. This road-centered mentality is detrimental to the Asheville Urban Area, as we witness our quality of life and tourist economy diminish under traffic congestion, experience horrible air quality, and irresponsibly pave our precious farmlands and scenic landscapes. Moreover, the exclusive reliance on the automobile effectively excludes the accessibility of children, the handicapped, the elderly, and the poor. A lack of public transportation options limits their opportunities for working, socializing, and performing necessary daily errands, and greatly constricts their access to health care and education.

Public transit can provide an efficient and desirable alternative to the automobile in the Asheville Urban Area. The employment of a full range of transportation choices is a responsible approach to managing the demands of growth in our region. For a public transit system to succeed, transportation and land use planning must be integrated. The NCDOT and the MPO need to work together to encourage the city and county to develop in more compact ways so that there is sufficient residential and commercial density to support transit.

Approximately $1.7 billion of state funds are invested in North Carolina's highway system each year. Only 1 percent of that amount ($20 million) is spent on public transit. (See http://www.dot.state.nc.us/transit/transitnet/Activities/T2001/TechReportSec2.2.html). Of $808 million available in North Carolina for transfer from federal highway programs to transit projects, less than $10 million or 1.2 percent has been used since 1992. Only five percent of federal funds were spent on all alternative modes in North Carolina from 1998-1999. (See Brookings Institution, "Adding It Up: Growth Trends and Policies in North Carolina," (Brookings: July 2000). Why hasn't NCDOT used available federal resources to improve public transit?

The proposed TIP funds $750,000,000 for road construction and only allocates a mere $36,000 a year to the countywide rural transportation system. Because the NCDOT has irresponsibly failed to support a full range of transportation options in its transportation planning for the Asheville Urban Area, your staff should not approve the TIP.

4. The TIP should reflect the recommendations of the Pedestrian and

Bicycle Task Forces.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Task Forces are charged with creating transportation facilities that are safe and effective for those facility users who walk or cycle, instead of drive. Our local roads are not high-speed auto raceways, but necessary conduits for various modes of travel. In order to insure that pedestrians and cyclists may safely use our local facilities, the TIP should include the necessary recommendations of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Task Forces. The MPO should accord particular weight to the Task Forces¹ opposition to five-laning U-4013 (Merrimon Avenue). As recommended, Merrimon Avenue should be a 3-lane facility able to safely support bicycle and pedestrian traffic. This avenue provides an important link between downtown Asheville and its walkable residential neighborhoods. The residents, business owners, and students who live and work off of Merrimon need a safe, integrated transportation facility.

The MPO should not approve the TIP until the NCDOT incorporates the Task Forces¹ findings into the TIP.

In order to protect the quality of life we enjoy in the Asheville Urban Area, local authorities, such as the MPO, must play a more active role in transportation planning and decision making. As the populations of Asheville and Buncombe County continue to grow, the necessity of coordinating transportation and land use policies becomes logically apparent. Our rising gas prices, deadly air, and disappearing farmland testify to the failure of our current transportation system. The Asheville MPO must have the courage to exercise its legal authority to just say ³NO² to NCDOT¹s destructive and irresponsible policies. After the state road crews return to Raleigh, we are left with the consequences of state transportation ³improvements.² Please ensure that these ³improvements² will actually benefit our region. Because the NCDOT has not recognized your ability to plan for our metropolitan area, we ask that you not approve the proposed TIP.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Tanya Davis

**********

Tanya Davis
Managing Directer, Smart Growth Partners of WNC
P.O. Box 8563
Asheville, NC 28814
(828) 236-1282
tdavis@buncombe.main.nc.us

**********

**Subject: FW: Support I-26 Connector Awareness Group**
**Date:** Fri, 16 Mar 2001 12:55:05 -0500
**From:** Scott Shuford <ScottS@mail.ci.asheville.nc.us>
**To:** "'Drew Joyner'" <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us>

Funny you should send me info about this - I just received this separate message today - FYI

> -----Original Message-----
> From: Tanya Davis [SMTP:tdavis@buncombe.main.nc.us]
> Sent: Friday, March 16, 2001 2:02 PM
> To: smartgrowth@main.nc.us
> Subject: Support I-26 Connector Awareness Group
>
>
> Hello, all.
>
> Please make your reservations now for the I-26 Connector Awareness Group
> fundraising dinner. The dinner includes great food from Laughing Seed
> Cafe,
> live entertainment, and an update of the I-26 Connector design. The Group
> is working hard to assure the best design for the I-26 Connector which
> will
> be constructed right through Asheville. The Group really needs the
> community's support. See below for more information.
>
> Call Ruth Chaet at (828) 281-3238 to make reservations and/or donations.
>
>
> FEED THE GRASS ROOTS BENEFIT
>
> FOR THE I-26 CONNECTOR AWARENESS GROUP
>
> Tuesday, March 20
> Laughing Seed Cafe in Downtown Asheville
> $25/person
> Choice of two sessions:
> 1. Dinner at 5:45 (cash bar, entertainment, information 5:15)
> 2. Dinner at 8:00 (cash bar, entertainment, information 7:30)
>
>
> Dear Friends,
>
> As a city and region, we have pulled together for over two years to find
> the
> best design for the I-26 Connector. Many of you have responded to our
> postcard alerts and have contacted city and state officials, and have
> participated in MPO, TIP, and NCDOT meetings as well as the very
> successful
> I-26 Connector Design Forum.
>
> Together, our efforts have been effective. New alternatives that would
> enhance the character of our community will be included in NCDOT's
> upcoming
> evaluation process. One design feature would eliminate interstate traffic
> from Patton Avenue, which would create an attractive gateway boulevard
> into
> downtown Asheville. Meanwhile, we continue our active involvement in the
> Community Coordinating Committee and in local, state and NCDOT meetings
> and
> hearings.

>
> During this time, we have spent over $40,000 primarily to hire traffic
> engineers. Thanks to generous contributions, we have raised nearly
> $30,000.
> But we still owe the engineering firm $12,000 and we need at least $3,000
> to
> continue the work ahead. NOW IS THE TIME FOR EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE!
>
> Come wine, dine, and have some fun. Bring your friends. And if you can't
> attend the event at Laughing Seed, please show your support by sending us
> a
> donation. Help retire the debt so we can continue to work for our
> community,
> city and environment!
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Organizing Committee,
> I-26 Connector Awareness Group:
>
> Ron Ainspan, Alan Basist, Ruth Chaet, Roger Derrough, Greg Gregory, Jeff
> Kelley, Philan Medford, Angela McPhee, Betty Lawrence, Whit Rylee, Rusty
> Sivils, and Carol Stangler
>
>
>
>
> http://main.nc.us/i26group/
>
> ==========
> To subscribe to this list, send mail to: majordomo@main.nc.us
> with the following command in the body of your message.
>
>  subscribe smartgrowth
>
> To get off of the list, send mail to: majordomo@main.nc.us
> with the following command in the body of your message:
>
>  unsubscribe smartgrowth
>
> [Please note that the word smartgrowth does NOT have a space
> in it. It doesn't matter what you put in the subject field.]
>
> For a list of listserv commands, e-mail majordomo@main.nc.us,
> with:
>
>  help
>
> in the message body.
>
> If you would like to get in contact with the list manager (if you have
> trouble subscribing, unsubscribing, or have questions about the list
> itself), send e-mail to: scott@newcontext.com.

cc: Bill Gilmore

FYI

MPO

MAY 17 2002

MEMORANDUM

May 10, 2002

Metropolitan Planning Organization

landscaping

buses

bicycles

roadways

signs

sidewalks and pedestrians

TO: Alan Thornburg, Board of Transportation
Blake Norwood, PE, Manager, Statewide Planning Branch
Troy Peoples, PE, State Traffic Engineer
Deborah M. Barbour, PE, State Design Engineer
Dan Martin, PE, Division 13 Engineer

FROM: Dan Baechtold. MPO Coordinator
Asheville Area MPO

SUBJECT: Resolution requesting pedestrian signals and other pedestrian improvements.

Attached is a resolution from the Asheville Area MPO Transportation Advisory Committee requesting pedestrian signals and crosswalks at all signalized intersections on future NCDOT roadway projects.

The resolution passed on April 18, 2002. Please let me know if you have any questions about the attached resolution.

RECEIVED
MAY 22 2002
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS BRANCH

attn. dan baechtold p.o. box 7148 asheville, n.c. 28802
828.259.5943 fax: 828.232.4517 www.ci.asheville.nc.us

# Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Nathan Ramsey, Chairman
David W. Young, Vice Chair

Patsy Keever, Commissioner
David Gantt, Commissioner
Bill Stanley, Commissioner

RECEIVED
NOV 13 2003
DIVISION 13

November 5, 2003

Mr. Jay Swain, Division Engineer
Department of Transportation
P O Box 3279
Asheville, NC 28802

Dear Mr. Swain:

Thank you for sending members of your staff to each of our four Community Meetings. They represented your department well and answered many of the concerns of the community.

We have since received several additional questions and I have provided a list of those questions and the name of the individual who requested the information. Please copy us on your response to his concerns so we can share this information with others who might contact us.

Again, we appreciate and thank you for your willingness to help us and to be available when we need you.

Sincerely,

Nathan Ramsey
Chairman

Cc: Commissioner Patsy Keever
Russell Cate

60 Court Plaza, Asheville, NC 28801-3565 Telephone/TDD (828) 250-4001 Fax (828) 255-5535

Russell B. Cate
176 Sulphur Springs Road
Asheville NC 28806
rbcate@earthlink.net

1. What is the expected sound impact of the new 240/26 (the "connector") on West Asheville neighborhoods?

2. What is the expected air impact of the connector on West Asheville neighborhoods?

3. What is the DOT level-of-service/performance criteria for interstates in an urban area the size of Asheville?

4. DOT has projected 99,100 vehicles per day on the new road. How does this fit in with established DOT standards for interstates in an urban area the size of Asheville?

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

January 5, 2004

The Honorable Charles Worley, Mayor
City of Asheville
P. O. Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802

Dear Mayor Worley:

During our recent meeting with the I-26 Connector Community Coordinating Committee, more questions concerning the number of lanes proposed along the I-240 section of the project came up. The proposed number of lanes along the I-240 section was addressed by the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in June 2002. The MPO voted to accept the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) recommendation that I-240 be widened from four to eight lanes between Patton Avenue and the I-240/I-26/I-40 interchange as part of the I-26 Connector project. This allowed us to proceed with the project development.

As you are aware, our initial traffic forecast from the late 1990's indicated the need for an eight-lane facility along this portion of the project in order to meet the anticipated future traffic demand. This forecast was developed using the former Asheville Area MPO travel demand model which was challenged by some members of the local community. As a result of this public comment, the MPO elected to update the population and employment data for the model. The resulting updated model indicated even higher traffic volumes on I-240 than previously anticipated.

While the existing model was being updated, a new "State of the Practice" traffic model was also being developed for a much larger region within the MPO. This effort was undertaken based on considerable public interest in transportation issues in the Asheville community, as well as a recognized need for a different approach to transportation planning for this area. The new model was adopted by the MPO early enough in the preliminary design phase to allow it to be used for traffic forecasting. The resulting traffic forecasts from the new model support the need for an eight-lane facility.

While each of these models provide a different specific projection of the number of vehicles anticipated on I-240 in the future, they all support the need for a capacity that

**MAILING ADDRESS:**
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
1548 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1548

TELEPHONE: 919-733-3141
FAX: 919-733-9794

*WEBSITE: WWW.NCDOT.ORG*

**LOCATION:**
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

can only be provided by an eight-lane facility. The NCDOT is continuing project development studies based on the new traffic forecasts with a proposed eight-lane cross section on I-240. We will continue to involve the local community in other project development issues through meetings, workshops, and hearings to insure that the ultimate project design is in keeping with the character of the Asheville community. I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

**Resolution**
**Asheville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**

# RESOLUTION REQUESTING PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS AND OTHER PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS ON ALL FUTURE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NCDOT) ROADWAY PROJECTS IN THE ASHEVILLE AREA MPO

WHEREAS, Pedestrian traffic is an important component of the urban transportation system; and

WHEREAS, Pedestrian safety and the ability to cross major roadways is paramount in traversing the street network, including increasing motorists' awareness of pedestrian traffic and installing traffic control devices in a uniform manner; and

WHEREAS, Accommodations for the pedestrian advances walking as a viable mode of transportation, in addition to promoting smart growth principles.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Asheville Urban Area MPO Transportation Advisory Committee as follows:

(1) That the Asheville Area MPO hereby requests that all future NCDOT construction projects within the Asheville MPO and particularly within all municipalities in the MPO include pedestrian signals and marked crosswalks at all planned signalized intersections.

(2) That the Asheville Area MPO hereby requests that other pedestrian crossing improvements be considered in areas between signalized intersections on all future NCDOT construction projects within the Asheville MPO and particularly within all municipalities in the MPO. These improvements will typically be requested by MPO staff or by other officials from any of the local agencies within the Asheville Area MPO. Examples include raised medians in general and marked crosswalks, possibly in conjunction with raised median refuges, curb extensions, special signage, or other features or traffic control devices that can make it easier or safer for pedestrians to cross the street.

(3) That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Blake Norwood, PE, Manager of NCDOT Statewide Planning Branch; Alan Thornburg, Board of Transportation; Troy A. Peoples, PE, State Traffic Engineer; and Deborah M. Barbour, PE, State Design Engineer.

Adopted this 18th day of April 2002.

Charles Grimes, Chair
Asheville Urban Area MPO

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

March 3, 2004

The Honorable Charles Worley, Mayor
City of Asheville
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, North Carolina 28802

Dear Mayor Worley:

Thank you for the assistance you and your staff have provided for the I-26 Connector project. The cooperation of the community and City of Asheville staff has allowed us to make significant progress in the development of this project.

I am writing to request your assistance with another project-related matter. NCDOT is committed to working with the local citizens to develop solutions for aesthetic issues that reflect the community's character. Your help in providing the local leadership necessary to organize an "Aesthetics Advisory Committee" to address aesthetic issues throughout the planning and design of the project would be appreciated.

We have developed several recommendations to assist in organizing the committee and offer them for your consideration.

The Committee should consist of five to seven members that are nominated by the Mayor. Nominees will receive a detailed letter outlining the anticipated tasks and amount of time that will be required. Nominees should fill out applications to establish their commitment, and the City and NCDOT should agree on the members selected.

We believe it would be best not to select applicants with either a strong pro or con opinion of the project, or those who have a special agenda. Representation of the general public and some amount of technical expertise are both desirable.

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
1548 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1548

TELEPHONE: 919-733-7844
FAX: 919-733-9794
WEBSITE: WWW.DOH.DOT.STATE.NC.US

LOCATION:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

The expectations and limits of the Committee should be clearly defined, (see attached letter to applicants) and goals and an overall agenda should be developed. The committee will act in an advisory capacity only. It will be important that they become familiar with NCDOT policies and City ordinances. Members must know that any recommendation that is outside of NCDOT policy may be considered but should include suggestions for funding. To assist them, NCDOT and the City can jointly provide technical and functional support. NCDOT will provide technical assistance for some visualization. It is hoped that the City can provide meeting locations and notifications.

Undoubtedly, a strong chairperson would be an asset. We believe that facilitation will not be required, but it could be added later in the process if necessary. The Committee will be asked to assist with community outreach via neighborhood group meetings, workshops, surveys, etc.

A defined schedule for the Committee to follow will be necessary. Suggestions should be developed in phases to enable the project to proceed in a timely manner without back tracking. The Committee might also be requested to supply deliverables such as written recommendations on specific issues.

Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. If you should require any additional information or have any questions, please contact me at 919-733-7844, ext. 261.

Sincerely

Vincent J. Rhea

Vincent J. Rhea, PE
Project Development Engineer
Project Development and Environmental Analysis

vjr
Attachment

Cc: Drew Joyner
File

**Subject:** **RE: I-2513 and the Hominy Creek Road to Amboy Road Greenway in A sheville**
**Date:** Fri, 5 Mar 2004 10:08:32 -0500
**From:** Elizabeth Teague <ETeague@ashevillenc.gov>
**To:** 'Drew Joyner' <djoyner@dot.state.nc.us>, Ken Burleson <kburleson@tgsengineers.com>
**CC:** Elizabeth Teague <ETeague@ashevillenc.gov>,
"'bevwilliams@dot.state.nc.us'" <bevwilliams@dot.state.nc.us>,
Dan Baechtold <dbaechtold@ashevillenc.gov>, "Vincent J Rhea, P.E." <vrhea@dot.state.nc.us>

Thanks Drew-
Ken and I connected yesterday and we got what we needed.
Looking forward to seeing you and meeting Vince on March 26th.

ET

-----Original Message-----
From: Drew Joyner [mailto:djoyner@dot.state.nc.us]
Sent: Friday, March 05, 2004 10:05 AM
To: Ken Burleson
Cc: Elizabeth Teague; 'bevwilliams@dot.state.nc.us'; Dan Baechtold;
Vincent J Rhea, P.E.
Subject: FWD: I-2513 and the Hominy Creek Road to Amboy Road Greenway in
Asheville

Ken,
Would you contact Elizabeth Teague (see message below). Please provide her
with
the best info we have to date. She's working on the greenway adjacent to
part
of the I-26 Connector. Please let me or Vince know if you have any
questions.
Thanks!
-Drew

Elizabeth Teague wrote:

> *Drew-*
> *Beverly Wlliams suggested I touch base with you regarding the local*
Greenway
> *Project proposed to run from Hominy Creek Road to Amboy Road. We have*
been
> *working with Tom Norman at the State level and I understand that you and*
he
> *have discussed this project in detail.*
>
> *The City of Asheville is beginning work on a survey and preliminary plans*
> *for this project in order to move forward with construction in the next*
1-3
> *years. As part of this process we will be talking with land owners and*
> *developing an approach and budget for right-of-way aquisition. We want to*
> *ensure that this project does not come into conflict with the future*
I-2513
> *project, and I was hoping you could send me the estimated boundary for the*
> *I-2513 project so that we can consider it in our planning. I understand*
> *that these plans are not final, but am hoping that you could pass along an*
> *estimated r-o-w line to assist us in determining the best trail alignment.*
>
> *Any assistance you could provide would be appreciated.*
>
> *ET*
>
>
> *Elizabeth Teague, AICP*
> *French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization*
> *P.O. Box 7148*
> *Asheville, NC 28802*

> *Phone: (828) 232-4528*
> *Fax: (828) 232-4517*
> *eteague@ashevillenc.gov*
> *http://www.frenchbroadrivermpo.org*

--
Drew Joyner, P.E.
TIP Program Manager
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
(p) 919-715-0954
(f) 919-733-9428

RECEIVED
AUG 16 2004
DIVISION 13
DIVISION OFFICE

RIVER LINK

August 13, 2004

Mr. Jay Swain
Division Engineer
NC Dept. of Transportation
P.O. Box 3279
Asheville, NC 28802

Dear Jay,

This letter will transmit the resolutions of the RiverLink board of directors as well as the members of RiverLink's Executive Action Team in relation to the proposed I-26 and I-240 transportation projects.

RiverLink is a regional non-profit spearheading the economic and environmental revitalization of the French Broad River and its tributaries as a place to work, live and play. We were born in 1986 of simultaneous efforts to address water quality concerns throughout the French Broad River basin, expand public opportunities for access and recreation, and spearhead the economic revitalization of Asheville's dilapidated riverfront district. As expressed in our mission statement, we focus on related issues that directly influence the environmental health of our region's rivers and streams and the growth and sustainability of our economy.

As part of fulfilling this mission, RiverLink has worked with the greater Asheville community in creating the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Master Plan to provide a vision for development within the 17-mile plan area that encompasses areas adjacent to the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers. We have established a core group of stakeholders called the RiverWay Executive Action Team (REAT) to help implement the plan and broaden our outreach in our community. This group meets under the auspices of our board of directors and is also focused on issues regarding the plan as well as issues affecting the aesthetics, economic development and environmental concerns within the project area.

We acknowledge that the I-26/I-240 project will have a tremendous effect on our community in addition to the impact in the RiverWay area. We hope that our resolutions are effective in pinpointing our needs to help make Asheville more livable and the French Broad River a destination to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Karen

Karen Cragnolin
Executive Director

[illegible] • Asheville, North Carolina [illegible] • (828) 252-8474 • FAX: (828) 253-6546
Email: [illegible] • Webpage: www.riverlink.org

August 13, 2004

Jay Swain
Division Engineer
NC Dept. of Transportation
P.O. Box 3279
Asheville, NC 28802

Dear Jay,

RiverLink is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection, sustainable development and environmental restoration of the French Broad River and its watershed. The North Carolina portion of the waterway, a 117 mile long section, includes 25 municipalities and eight counties; providing drinking water to over one million people in North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. The greatest threats to maintaining this water quality is sedimentation, urban and agricultural runoff, stream bank erosion, loss of riparian vegetation and unchecked development that adds to the impervious surfaces in the watershed. We promote proper restoration and conservation techniques coupled with land-use development that follows sustainable and smart growth principles to accommodate population increases in the watershed that maintains or enhances the quality of life for all citizens of the watershed. RiverLink urges DOT to design the I-26/I-240 project to minimize the impact on water quality by employing Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the project area that add aesthetic value, are innovative and have educational opportunities for the French Broad watershed community.

RiverLink urges DOT to follow Smart Growth practices in the decision involved in the design of the I-26/I-240 project. We support the City of Asheville's adoption of Smart Growth practices which include implementing new approaches to transportation planning, such as: better coordinating land use (multi-story, mixed income, mixed-use) and transportation; increasing the availability of high quality transit service; creating redundancy, resiliency and connectivity within their road networks; and ensuring connectivity between pedestrian, bike, transit, and road facilities. In short, they are coupling a multi-modal approach to transportation with supportive development patterns, to create a variety of transportation options. These transportation and land-use decisions are inexorably linked and should be addressed collaterally with the I-26/I-240 project.

Additionally, RiverLink urges the DOT to design the infrastructure and adjacent land-uses to maximize access to the River and neighboring communities. The French Broad River has been cut off from the West Asheville, downtown, Biltmore Village, UNCA communities by conventional infrastructure and development practices of the last 40 years -- we seek to reverse that trend. The design of the I-26/I-240 project shall be designed to maximize pedestrian and vehicular access to and across the river, treat the river as an asset to the community and increase the attractiveness of the area. RiverLink encourages the design of bridges that enhance the experience of the Wilma Dykeman Riverway and that adds beauty to our community and instills local pride.

[illegible] • (828) 252-6474 • FAX: (828) 253-6846
[illegible] • Web page: www.riverlinkorg

The I-26/I-240 project can be pivotal in restoring the access to the French Broad and will represent a new aesthetic **and planning** for the French Broad corridor. RiverLink offers its expertise in planning, design, and environmental restoration to make this project and the corridor the best that it can be. We look forward to assisting DOT and community leaders in helping make the I-26/I-240 project one which adds to the quality of life for the citizens of our watershed.

Sincerely,

**RiverLink Board of Directors**
Fred C. West, Chairman
Richard T. Hall, Vice Chair
Bob Shepherd, Secretary
Richard Sills, Treasurer
Dr. Nathan Burkhardt
Joe Eblen
Stephen A. Levine, Ph.D.
Timothy Johnston
Rodney W. Locks
Ted Prosser
Dana Stonestreet
Frank Taylor
Pam Turner

[illegible] • (828) 252-8474 • FAX: (828) 253-6846
[illegible] • Webpage: www.riverlink.org

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

September 23, 2004

Ms. Karen Cragnolin, Executive Director
RiverLink, Inc.
Post Office Box 15488
Asheville, North Carolina 28813

Subject: I-26/I-240 Proposed Bridges

Dear Karen:

Thank you, the RiverLink Board of Directors, and my fellow RiverLink Executive Action Team members for the recent letter and resolutions pertaining to the proposed roadway and bridge(s) to be constructed over the French Broad River as part of the new I-26 corridor through Asheville. Several of the NCDOT Division 13 managers and I received copies of the same correspondence. This letter serves as a response for our Division. We too share Riverlink's interest in the aesthetics of the riverfront in the urban Asheville area. This project will certainly provide an opportunity to enhance this important part of Asheville.

As you know, bridge design features beyond the basics can be more costly. If more ornate bridge designs are considered, it may be incumbent upon the local citizenry to raise funds to help cover the cost differential and to demonstrate the community's enthusiasm and support for what could be an unprecedented project for North Carolina. With the level of commitment to aesthetically pleasing bridges noted in your letter and resolutions, Riverlink may be the organization best suited to spearhead a local fund raising effort.

I am forwarding a copy of your letter and resolutions to Mr. Vince Rhea, P.E., who is the NCDOT Project Manager for this project in Raleigh, as well as other Department officials. I am requesting that Mr. Rhea help ensure that these resolutions receive all due consideration.

Division Thirteen Office
Phone: 828/251-6171

Post Office Box 3279
Office of the Division Engineer
www.doh.dot.state.nc.us/operations/division13

Asheville, North Carolina 28802
Fax: 828/251-6709

Thank you for your interest in this project and your willingness to assist in the design process. If I may provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

J. J. Swain, Jr., P.E.
Division Engineer

JJS/KAW/pl

cc: The Honorable Charles Worley, Mayor, City of Asheville, w/att.
Mr. Lyndo Tippett, Secretary, NC Department of Transportation, w/att.
Mr. Gordon Myers, Transportation Board Member, w/att.
Mr. Len Sanderson, P.E., State Highway Administrator, w/att.
Mr. Vince Rhea, P.E., Project Manager, w/att.
Mr. Rick Tipton, P.E., P.L.S., Division Construction Engineer
Mr. K. A. Wilson, P.E., Division Operations Engineer
Mr. G. S. Shuler, Division Project Manager

# City of Asheville, NC

**Engineering Department**

September 24, 2004

Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511

Re: I-26 Connector – Street Connections

Dear Mr. Burleson:

As we have previously discussed, the City of Asheville would like to pursue reconnection of some of the neighborhood streets that were severed by the original construction of Interstate 240. The reconstruction of the freeway in conjunction with the I-26 Connector project provides an opportunity to do this. Specifically, the streets that we would like to see reconnected (see attached map) are:

- Montana Avenue
- Pennsylvania Avenue
- New Jersey Avenue
- Stewart Street

Adequate rights-of-way appear to exist for each street. The preferred cross-section for each connection would be a 24'-wide street with sidewalks on both sides.

Also attached is a 1959 aerial image of the pre-Interstate street network, showing the connections. The intent of the reconnections is to minimize the disruption and separation of the neighborhoods by the freeway.

I would appreciate your consideration of this request and the inclusion of requested connections as feasible. I understand that the City of Asheville will be primarily responsible for the justification of the connections to our residents.

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Butzek, PE, PTOE
City Traffic Engineer

/ajb
Attachments

Copy to: Mr. Drew Joyner, PE, TIP Program Manager
Ms. Beverly Williams, PE, MPO Supervisor
Mr. James L. Westbrook, City Manager
Ms. Cathy Ball, PE, City Engineer
Mr. Scott Shuford, AICP, City Planning Director
Mr. Dan Baechtold, AICP, MPO Coordinator

N
Haywood Rd.
Montana Ave.
New Jersey Ave.
Stewart St.

NANCY ST
HAZEL MILL RD
HAWKINS LN
N LOUISIANA AV
SAWYER ST
PATTON AV WB
PATTON AV-EB
RAMP RA
PATTON AV
CLIFF ST
I-240 WB WB
HAZEL MILL EXT
CRAVEN ST
RIVERSIDE DR
ANNIE ST
RICHLAND ST
N
EDGAR ST
FAYETTEVILLE ST
IVY ST
BUFFALO ST
BOYD ST
OREGON AV
DELLWOOD ST
VANDALIA ST
BRANNING ST
SUNRISE DR
WAYNESVILLE AV
GEORGIA ST
LOGAN AV
CRAGGY AV
DUNWELL AV
BRUCEMONT CR
DORCHESTER AV
FLORIDA AV
MARDELL CR
BRYANT ST
LOGAN CR
HAYWOOD RD
TREMONT ST
OAKWOOD ST
MILDRED AV
HERRON AV
LOUISIANA AV
BALM GROVE AV
MARTIN AV
KENDALL ST
BURTON ST
I-240 WB-HAYWOOD RD RA
ARGYLE LN
WESTWOOD PL
BROWNWOOD AV
EUCLID BV
NO NAME
ALLEY
BAKER AV
DEAVER ST
WAMBOLDT AV
RIVERVIEW DR
LYMAN ST
VERMONT AV
WELLS AV
NEVADA AV
ALLEN ST
PARKMAN AV
I-240 WB-HANOVER ST
PENNSYLVANIA AV
NEBRASKA AV
YALE AV
MONTANA AV
SWANNANOA AV
GARDEN CR
LONGVIEW RD
GRANDVIEW DR
MAPLE ST
LANGWELL AV
ALABAMA AVE
MICHIGAN AV
WELLINGTON ST
BREVARD RD
GALAX AV
LUFTY AV
HUDSON ST
STATE ST
INDIANA AV
BRADLEY ST
REX DR
FIFTH ST
EVA CR
FRANCES ST
DESOTA ST
MORRIS ST
FAIRFAX AV
VIRGINIA AV
STEWART ST
KENTUCKY DR
HUBBARD AV
GREELEY ST
DALE ST
GRANADA AV
NO NAME
PEACE ST
LAMB AV
SAMAYOA PL
AMBOY RD-I-240 WB RA
CORDOVA ST
MOORE AV
JOYNER AV
AMBOY RD
I-240 EB EB
I-40 WB-NC 191 RA
ALMY RD
ASTON RD
I-40 EB-EB
I-40 WB WB

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

October 25, 2004

Mr. Anthony J. Butzek
City Traffic Engineer
City of Asheville, Engineering Dept.
PO Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802-5617

Re: I-26 Connector – Street Connections

Dear Mr. Butzek

Thank you for your letter of September 24, 2004 requesting that NCDOT consider reconnecting Montana Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, New Jersey Avenue and Stewart Street as part of the I-26 Connector project.

Our consultant has reviewed what would be required to accomplish these connections and the work would be substantial. It also appears that there would be several additional relocations required.

It is the Department's feeling that this work would be outside the scope of the existing project, and it would therefore be necessary for the City of Asheville to pay for the considerable additional cost. If, after considering this information, the City is still interested in making the reconnections please let me know.

Sincerely

Vincent J. Rhea

Vincent J. Rhea, PE
Project Development Engineer

**MAILING ADDRESS:**
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
1548 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1548

TELEPHONE: 919-733-7844
FAX: 919-733-9794

WEBSITE: WWW.DOH.DOT.STATE.NC.US

**LOCATION:**
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

VJR/vjr

cc: Drew Joyner, PE, TIP Program manager
Beverly Williams, PE, MPO Supervisor
James L. Westbrook, City Manager
Cathy Ball, PE, City Engineer
Scott Shuford, AICP, City Planning Director
Dan Baechtold, AICP, MPO Coordinator

Livable Streets, Inc.
1426 Harbour Walk Road • Tampa, FL 33602
813.221.5223 • Fax 813.354.4422

**TAC and TCC members**
c/o Dan Baechtold, MPO Coordinator
French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
P.O. Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

October 29, 2004

RE: I-26 Connector - Follow-up to October 1, 2004 memo and letter from NCDOT

Dear Members of Metropolitan Planning Organization Committees:

This letter is to follow up to the October 1, 2004 Memorandum from J. Kevin Lacy of the NCDOT concerning the engineering analyses of the future I-26 Connector. Unfortunately, as a response to the repeated and continuing requests by city and MPO staff, elected officials, the general public, and me for justification for an 8-lane facility, this memorandum falls well short of providing the additional comprehensive information deserved by these various stakeholders and others. Instead, the memo was simply a reiteration of NCDOT's previous statements and a rather accusatory response to my suggestions for changes to analysis assumptions.

In July 2004, as part of their justification for 8 travel lanes, the DOT presented the brief results of an analysis of the anticipated future Level of Service for the I-26 Connector. At the MPO TAC meeting, I presented an alternative and more detailed analysis that indicated that 6 travel lanes likely would provide an adequate Level of Service. The primary conclusion to be drawn from these disparate presentations was not so much taking sides as to which set of assumptions were most defensible, but consensus that a further and even more thorough analysis was necessary to attempt to resolve these differences and to provide the best information possible to make this very significant decision for the future of this region.

By letter dated July 16, 2004, this is exactly what was sought by the City of Asheville (copy attached). In this letter, City Traffic Engineer Anthony Butzek outlined how a "more comprehensive" analysis was needed, described how it could be done, and estimated that it likely would take no more than 30 hours to perform. Mr. Butzek described this further analysis as "a critical part of any final determination." Similarly, in my July presentation to the MPO TAC, and in my letter dated August 17, I noted that a more detailed analysis would be helpful to provide additional information to the stakeholders in Asheville and throughout the region. In our letters, both Mr. Butzek and I offered to work with the NCDOT, and at the September MPO TAC meeting, I publicly urged that the DOT staff contact me while working on their response.

Instead of working with us and undertaking this critical further analysis, the DOT merely stuck by its existing analysis. In his memorandum, Mr. Lacy stated that the analysis presented in July "was a summary and should not have been considered a presentation of the detailed analysis." He went on to say that the NCDOT consultant, TGS Engineers, "conducted a thorough analysis of the various segments." I verbally asked NCDOT staff and consultants if they had more detailed analysis, but I received no additional information. Unfortunately, since NCDOT has not provided their actual analysis, there is no way to confirm that their analysis did in fact consider the various segments. I note that the traffic volumes presented by TGS Engineers at the public meeting in July were not based on any specific segment using peak hour data from the traffic model. Instead, I understand that the peak hour directional volume used in the analysis presented at the public meeting (5320 vehicles per hour) was generated based on rough assumptions from the model's daily values.

I stand by my analysis as a general indication that a 6-lane facility likely will provide a Level of Service D for this corridor. Aside from disagreements over several of the assumptions that go into the analysis, the primary reason my analysis found that a 6-lane I-26 Connector was estimated to provide Level of Service D during the peak hour of traffic, rather than Level of Service E, is that I included the effect of auxiliary lanes. Auxiliary lanes are often added to the through traffic lanes between interchanges, connecting each on-ramp with the next off-ramp. As stated by Ken Burleson of TGS Engineers at the TAC meeting in July, due to the short distance between interchanges, there will likely be auxiliary lanes between all of the interchanges in the area between Patton Avenue and Interstate 40. This means that a design with 6 through lanes will typically be 8 lanes wide between interchanges, and a design with 8 through lanes will typically be 10 lanes wide between interchanges.

In his memorandum, Mr. Lacy indicates that auxiliary lanes are typically not used by through traffic. This statement is true but irrelevant to the effect of auxiliary lanes that I referred to in my August 17 letter. The issue is that the directional traffic volume analyzed for presentation by NCDOT at the July public meeting (5320 vehicles per hour) will occur only where the freeway will likely have two auxiliary lanes, whereas the normal 6- or 8-lane segments of the freeway are estimated to carry considerably less traffic. The traffic model shows that there are significant volumes of traffic using each interchange. In my analysis, I used the actual peak hour directional volumes from the model for each specific location, and I included the fact that the on- and off-ramp traffic will use the auxiliary lanes, thereby improving the Level of Service when compared to a design without auxiliary lanes. (See Highway Capacity Manual 13-18, 13-27, 13-28).

Beyond the matter of auxiliary lanes, the NCDOT and I disagree as to the values to use for several quantitative factors in these analyses, including the driver population factor and peak hour factor. Mr. Lacy's letter misrepresents my statements about some of the assumptions, probably based on a misunderstanding of my attempts to discuss complex technical issues in a relatively short written letter. Misunderstandings can be avoided by direct discussion of the issues, which is why I'm disappointed that the NCDOT chose not to contact me before providing their response.

The Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) includes default values for each assumption and factor included in the Manual. The HCM recommends that analysts use studies of existing traffic operations in order to calibrate the methodology and identify appropriate factors and assumptions for local conditions. (HCM 9-9) The NCDOT has not done these studies for the I-26 Connector, which is reasonable at this stage (planning level analysis). In the absence of these studies of local conditions, the NCDOT consistently chose factors that have the effect of adding traffic to the analyzed volume, thereby reducing the capacity and expected Level of Service.

In his memorandum, Mr. Lacy frequently mentions the uncertainty of future traffic projections, presumably to justify the decisions to use uniformly conservative factors that reduce the theoretical capacity. Conservative assumptions are generally a good idea for structural analysis for bridge design, increasing the factor of safety. And for traffic engineering, conservative assumptions are justified if the only issue of concern is the best possible estimated traffic operations in future years. But for the I-26 Connector, where there are significant potential negative social and environmental effects of larger roadways, these assumptions may result in an overbuilt roadway that carries unwarranted costs and impacts. In his memo, Mr. Lacy wrote: "Under-designing this vital link will be a mistake that will be easily recognized for many years." Considering all the possible impacts and costs on this community, the reverse of this statement also holds true: Over-designing this vital link will be a mistake that will be easily recognized for many years.

The DOT memo described at length how the models and manuals that all professional engineers use are merely tools to use in making decisions and that, especially when attempting to project conditions so far into the future, these models are far from exact. These are the exact reasons why it is prudent to make significant decisions like this one based not only on these models, but also considering other factors of great importance to the community beyond the projected Level of Service, especially when, as in this case, the results of the various analyses are so close to the margin between Levels of Service D and E. The I-26 Connector will have significant and long-lasting impacts on Asheville, and therefore it is appropriate also to consider the impacts of this freeway on Asheville's neighborhoods and businesses, air quality, and quality of life. The cost of this freeway is another important consideration, as the money saved by building a freeway with fewer travel lanes could be redirected toward innovative design features that further reduce the impacts of the freeway or toward other transportation needs.

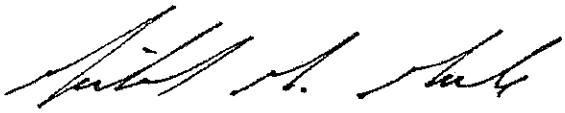
In my August 17 letter to NCDOT, I suggested that it would be "useful to have more information about the difference in environmental and community impacts between a 6-lane facility and an 8-lane facility." Unfortunately, Mr. Lacy viewed this suggestion "as an attempt to further delay this project and to deprive the community of a much needed highway improvement." The truth is that I suggested this because I have heard questions and concerns about the local affects of the project whenever I have spoken to people in the community about the I-26 connector. Everyone I have spoken to about this project recognizes that it is needed and should be expedited, as do I. The existing

situation at the Smoky Park bridges is unacceptable due to its poor design, and when I was Asheville's City Traffic Engineer, it was a frequent topic of discussion with constituents.

Rather than attempting to delay this project, many of us are working for the best project possible for Asheville and this region, and are working well within the DOT's own time schedule, raising concerns and proposing alternatives even before DOT has prepared a draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and years before construction is scheduled to begin. Rather than seeking to deprive the community of this project, I and others are trying to move the project forward by working to address multiple community concerns while also meeting projected traffic demand. I continue to invite the DOT to work with all who care about this region and its future to build consensus around workable solutions.

I urge the MPO and all local decision makers to continue to demand the best possible information concerning this project, which would consist of the type of analysis outlined by Asheville City Traffic Engineer Anthony Butzek.

Sincerely,



Michael M. Moule, PE, PTOE
President, Principal Transportation Engineer

Enclosure

# City of Asheville, NC

Office of the Mayor

November 18, 2004

Mr. Lyndo Tippett
Secretary of Transportation
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1501 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1501

Dear Secretary Tippett:

The Asheville City Council unanimously agreed to request that the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) perform a more detailed analysis of the I-26 Connector project. The intent of the motion is to request the use of CORSIM traffic simulation software in order to support the final decision that must be made regarding the number of lanes for this project.

Our hope is that NCDOT will perform this analysis expeditiously, so that the additional information is available as a basis for resolution of the desired number of lanes. It is not our expectation that an exhaustive analysis, including an existing model and calibration, be performed, but that an assumed design concept be analyzed for projected future year traffic volumes. We would request NCDOT to share assumptions and review of the model with the public and City staff. Because it is our belief that this analysis is an important factor in the final determination regarding the number of lanes, and because a prior request for this analysis by City staff was rejected, the City of Asheville may proceed with this analysis if NCDOT is unable or unwilling.

We would request a response by November 30, 2004 indicating whether NCDOT will be able to perform the requested analysis. It is obvious that the analysis should be completed within a time frame that allows its use in the decision making process. At the same time, we do not wish to see any impact to the overall project timetable.

We also look forward to working with NCDOT on the aesthetics of the project as it moves forward. As you know, this has been (and continues to be) a contentious issue in the Asheville community. Careful attention to the aesthetics may well help in soothing some of this contentiousness after the final decisions have been made.

P.O. Box 7148 • Asheville, N.C. 28802 • 828-259-5600 • Fax: 828-259-5499 • www.ashevillenc.gov

I would be happy to meet with you or your staff if there are any questions or if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Worley

Charles R. Worley
Mayor

CRW/pc

pc: Gordon S. Myers, Member, Board of Transportation
J. J. Swain, Jr., P.E. Division 13 Engineer
Nathan K. Phillips, P.E., NCDOT Congestion Management
Drew Joyner, P.E., TIP Program Manager
Asheville City Council Members
James L. Westbrook, City Manager
Cathy Ball, P.E., City Engineer
Anthony Butzek, P.E., P.T.O.E, City Traffic Engineer

ASHEVILLE
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

RECEIVED
DEC 02 2004
DIVISION 13
DIVISION OFFICE

December 1, 2004

Mr. Jay Swain, Jr., PE
Division Engineer
NCDOT Division 13
PO Box 3279
Asheville, 28802

Dear Jay:

Please find enclosed for your records a copy of the Chamber's recent resolution encouraging North Carolina Department of Transportation funding for aesthetics design recommendations for the I-26 Connector.

The Asheville Area Chamber recognizes that collaboration between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the I-26 Connector Aesthetics Advisory Committee may serve as a valuable vehicle for establishing a majority agreement on aesthetic design and cost considerations for highway design elements, including bridge(s), noise walls, landscaping and areas of public interaction associated with the I-26 Connector.

Additionally, the funding of aesthetics for the I-26 Connector appropriate to the existing visual beauty of our area will be critical to our billion dollar tourism industry, our economic development recruitment, and retention of our local talent. The I-26 Connector will serve as a "gateway" to the region; such funding for aesthetics components will help further economic development and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Asheville and for all of Western North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Lutovsky
President & CEO

PO BOX 1010 ASHEVILLE NORTH CAROLINA 28802
(828) 258 6101 FAX (828) 251 0926
http://www.ashevillechamber.org asheville@ashevillechamber.org

# RESOLUTION

## IN SUPPORT OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDING FOR AESTHETICS DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE I-26 CONNECTOR IN ASHEVILLE, WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce reaffirms the importance of ensuring that the I-26 Connector, North Carolina Department of Transportation Project I-2513 in the Transportation Improvement Program, is completed on schedule; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Board recognizes that the I-26 Connector, should be not only safe and adequate for our transportation needs, but should also be a physical asset for our community and region; and,

**WHEREAS**, the I-26 Connector will serve as a "gateway" to the region and the City of Asheville, which Rand McNally Places Rated Almanac consistently ranks as one of the best places to live in the United States among metropolitan areas smaller than 250,000 people; and,

**WHEREAS**, citizens of the community take pride in Asheville's "sense of place," derived from a unique combination of elements including the Blue Ridge Mountains, a place to relax and rejuvenate, a vibrant arts scene, architectural gems, downtown vitality, economic and educational and medical hub for Western North Carolina, and a diversely talented citizenry; and,

**WHEREAS**, in June of 2004, Mayor Charles Worley of the City of Asheville appointed a six member I-26 Connector Aesthetics Advisory Committee to work on the behalf of our citizenry with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to study and recommend aesthetic design options for the I-26 Connector; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Committee has specific recommendations for the aesthetics design of sound walls and bridge components for the I-4401 Project, a separate but directly-related project that affects the I-26 Connector; and,

**WHEREAS**, the collaborative aesthetics design work between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the I-26 Connector Aesthetics Advisory Committee may well serve as a valuable vehicle for establishing a majority agreement on aesthetic design and cost considerations for highway design elements, including bridge(s), noise walls, landscaping and areas of public interaction associated with the I-26 Connector; and,

**WHEREAS**, visual beauty of our region is critical to our billion dollar tourism industry, our economic development recruitment efforts that are based on a sense of place, and retention of our local talent; and,

**WHEREAS**, funding for the aesthetics of the I-26 Connector appropriate to the existing beauty of our area will have economic impact on not only the Asheville area, but on surrounding communities in Western North Carolina.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Directors for the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce fully supports and encourages the North Carolina Department of Transportation to provide specific and appropriate state funding related to the recommendations of the I-26 Connector Aesthetics Advisory Committee for the I-4401 Project and for future design opportunities for the I-2513 Project, with the ultimate objectives of furthering economic development, complementing the environment, and improving the quality of life for the visitors and citizens of Asheville and all of Western North Carolina.

Adopted this 23rd day of November, 2004

John Mark Stroud

John Mark Stroud, Chairman of the Board
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

City of Asheville, NC

Office of the Mayor

July 21, 2005

Secretary Lyndo Tippett
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1501 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1501

Dear Secretary Tippett:

The Asheville City Council, at its Worksession on July 19, 2005, heard a report from our Traffic Engineer, Anthony Butzek, on the results of the CORSIM Analysis recently performed by the Department of Transportation at the request of the Asheville City Council. Based upon Council discussion and the questions raised by the presentation, Council is requesting that a representative or representatives of the Department of Transportation come to a future City Council Worksession and present the Department of Transportation's analysis of the CORSIM study, and respond to Council questions regarding the study, and other pertinent studies, the connector, and the six-lane versus eight-lane decision. In particular, the Asheville City Council is attempting to develop an understanding of the reason for the selection of the eight-lane alternative.

The Asheville City Council meets on the second, third, and fourth Tuesday of each month, with the Worksession taking place on the second Tuesday. If need be, to accommodate the schedule of the Department of Transportation, we could schedule a special meeting for this purpose.

We would respectfully request that you or your staff work with our City Manager, Gary Jackson, to schedule this presentation at one of our meetings.

I would be happy to meet with you or your staff if there are any questions or if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Worley

Charles R. Worley
Mayor

cc: Alan Thornburg, Division 13 Board of Transportation Member
J. J. Swain, Jr., P.E., Division 13 Engineer
Nathan K. Phillips, P.E., NCDOT Congestion Management
Drew Joyner, P.E., TIP Program Manager
Asheville City Council Members
Gary Jackson, City Manager
Cathy Ball, P.E., City Engineer
Anthony Butzek, P.E., P.T.O.E., City Traffic Engineer

P.O. Box 7148 • Asheville, N.C. 28802 • 828-259-5600 • Fax: 828-259-5499 • www.ashevillenc.gov

**Subject: I-26 Public Forum**
**Date:** Thu, 19 Oct 2006 13:56:03 -0400
**From:** "michael mcdonough" <michael@mcdonougharchitect.com>
**To:** <vrhea@dot.state.nc.us>

Vince,

Just a quick note to thank you and your team for the information you provided our community at the recent forum.
It is such an enormous project, that we have only begun to understand all the elements of this project.

I also wanted to offer an apology for the actions of some of my fellow AIA 150 "participants".
While most of us were busy digesting all the information on the walls, one or two citizens, without prior coordination of the AIA 150/Asheville Design Center Board, used our educational model as a platform for advocacy of individual perspectives.

As clarification, the AIA 150/Asheville Design Center has not endorsed one of the 4 existing alignments, nor a new alignment. We are still exploring the elements and impacts of each, while exploring how we can add our perspectives to the process.

We believe the City still has much to do to accommodate this project, as your answers to many of our questions indicated, and we hope to focus our efforts in this regard.

Thanks again, and I hope that you and your team will continue to be available for information in the future.

Sincerely,
Michael McDonough

"KEEPING THE PROMISE"

November 9, 2006

Mr. Vince Rhea
Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548

We are writing to comment on the alternative plans for the I-26 Connector Project presented at the October 9 and October 10 public meetings here in Asheville. The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville is primarily concerned with the impact of the various alternatives on our residents. Our residents are low-income, predominately African-American citizens of Asheville, who historically have borne the brunt of various highway projects. From that perspective we want to thank the Department of Transportation for avoiding demolition of Housing Authority properties in all of the proposed alternatives for this project.

Beyond preserving the housing units themselves, we have some additional concerns that we request you consider, primarily focusing on pedestrian and street access to Hillcrest Apartments, centrally located in Section B of the I-26 Project. We believe it is important to do everything possible to reintegrate the Hillcrest community into the City of Asheville. From our perspective that means improved street and pedestrian access to the property.

First, we believe that any alternative that eliminates Westgate Shopping Center should be eliminated from consideration for economic and environmental justice reasons. Westgate is the only shopping area within reasonable walking distance from Hillcrest.

Second, we believe that Alternatives B-4 and B-5 are the only two plans presented by DOT that meet the critical economic and environmental justice needs of our residents. We are concerned, however, that the relatively high cost of those two alternatives will prevent them from being selected in the final analysis.

For these reasons, we recommend that DOT consider a new alternative similar to the one proposed by the AIA-150 group at the public hearings. Essentially, this new alternative would use one span of the existing Smoky Park Bridge for local vehicles and pedestrians, reconnecting Patton Avenue across the river. It would use the other existing span for I-240 in eastbound traffic and would reroute the westbound I-240 traffic along the current 19-23 north to the new I-26 Connector Bridge.

165 SOUTH FRENCH BROAD AVENUE 28801
P.O. BOX 1898, ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA 28802
PHONE (828) 258-1222 FAX (828) 254-2276

Although this recommendation may be slightly different from the AIA 150 proposal, we suggest that the least disruptive (and least expensive) alternative would probably be to leave eastbound I-240 where it currently is on the southern span of the Smoky Park Bridge and to reroute westbound I-240 along the current 19-23 north to the new I-26 bridge. This would leave the northern span of the Smoky Park Bridge (which already has a pedestrian walkway from Hillcrest to Westgate) for enhanced local vehicle and pedestrian use.

This new alternative would accomplish a number of important goals:

1. Interstate and local traffic across the French Broad would be separated and the local connection from downtown to West Asheville would be enhanced.

2. Westgate Shopping Center, and pedestrian access to it, would be preserved.

3. Hillcrest residents would still have the current access to Hill Street, possibly without replacing the existing bridge, and a new street could be built as proposed by DOT directly to the new Patton Avenue connector near the existing bridge.

4. The need for construction of new bridges could be minimized and costs should be more in line with Alternatives B-2 or B-3.

We want to emphasize that environmental justice is a critical factor for you to consider in developing your plans for this project, and we believe that a cost-effective preferred alternative can be developed along the lines discussed in this letter. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this recommendation with you and other interested officials and citizens.

Sincerely,

Gene Bell
Executive Director

Cc: J. Kenneth Burleson, TGS Engineers
Mayor Terry Bellamy
Members, Asheville City Council

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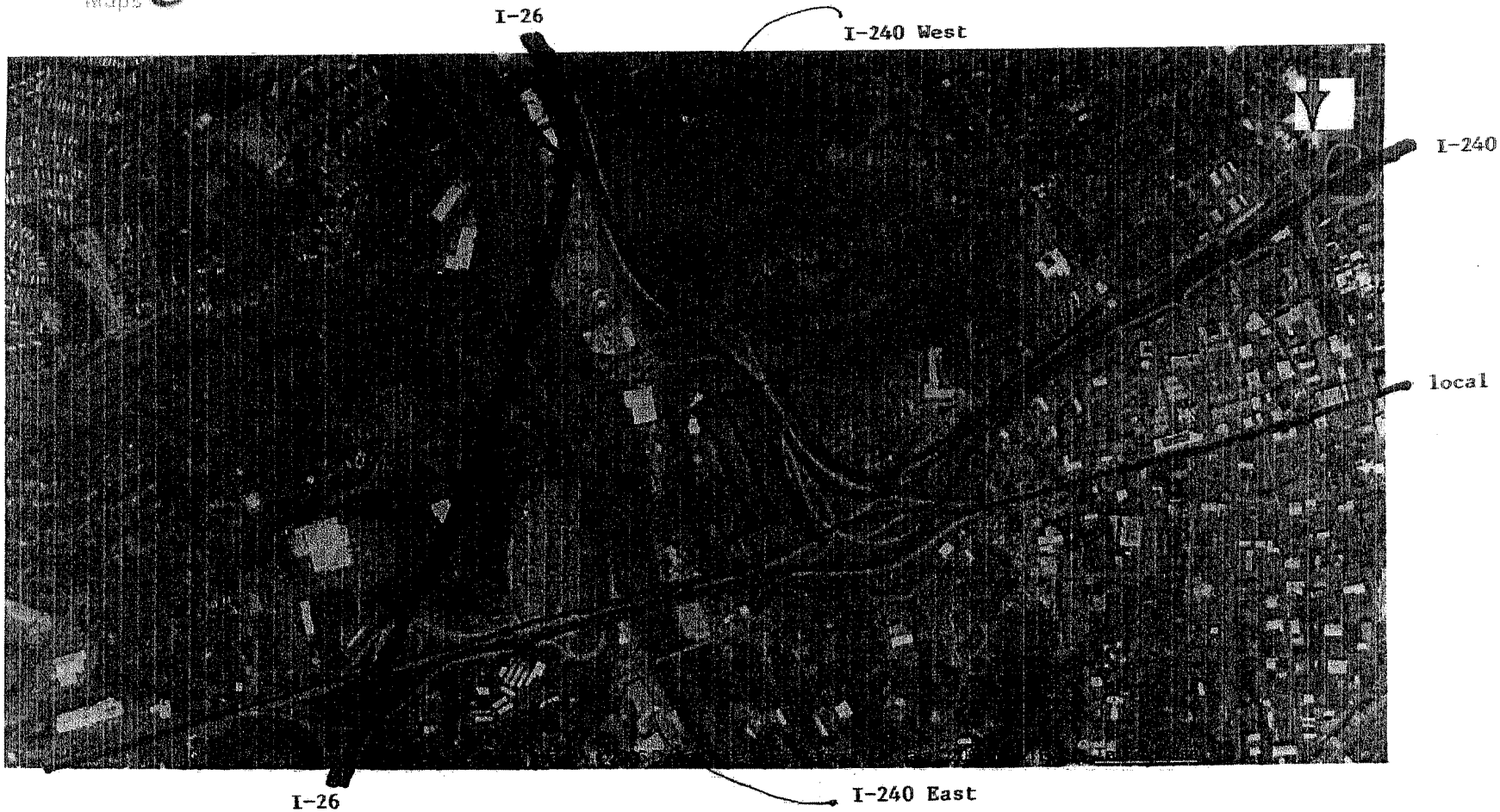


local

I-26

I-240

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

November 10, 2006

Vince Rhea
Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: Comments on the I-26 Connector, TIP Project I-2513

Dear Mr. Rhea:

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Western North Carolina Alliance and the Southern Environmental Law Center.

We appreciate the recent public meetings organized by the DOT, the maps and other information presented, the availability of DOT personnel at those meetings, and this post-meetings opportunity for comment. However, these meetings reinforced our concern that, rather than using the EIS process to identify, study, and refine all reasonable alternatives as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the DOT is pursuing a predetermined course of action based on significant decisions made outside of the NEPA process and is inflexible concerning many significant capacity and design issues that greatly will affect this project's overall impact on our region.

As discussed in more detail below, it is crucial that the DOT comply with NEPA by using the EIS process to "identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that will avoid or minimize adverse effects..." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.2(e). These alternatives, including differing lane configurations and design modifications to the four basic geographic alignments, vastly could augment the benefits of this project for the City and region while minimizing its negative impacts. With roughly two years built into the project schedule for the EIS process, and construction not scheduled to begin until 2012, a full six years from now, there is plenty of time to comply with NEPA by truly considering alternatives, and doing so will result in the best project for the community.

## The NEPA Process Must Identify And Assess All Reasonable Alternatives For The Project

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires agencies to "study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources." 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(E). Consistent with this statutory directive, the NEPA regulations require that

> Federal agencies shall, to the fullest extent possible: [u]se the NEPA process to identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to proposed actions that will avoid or minimize adverse effects of these actions upon the quality of the human environment.

40 C.F.R. § 1500.2(e) (emphasis added). Reinforcing the emphasis on consideration of alternatives, the regulations further provide that alternatives are "the heart of the environmental impact statement," 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14, and that agencies "shall rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives." Id. (emphasis added); Route 9 Opposition Legal Fund v. Mineta, 75 Fed. Appx. 152, 156 (4th Cir. 2003) (unpublished opinion).

A primary goal of NEPA is to ensure that

> federal agencies infuse in project planning a thorough consideration of environmental values. The consideration of alternatives requirement furthers that goal by guaranteeing that agency decisionmakers have before them and take into proper account all possible approaches to a particular project (including total abandonment of the project) which would alter the environmental impact and the cost-benefit balance.

Alaska Wilderness Recreation Tourism Association v. Morrison, 67 F.3d 723, 729 (9th Cir. 1995), quoting Bob Marshall Alliance, 852 F.2d 1223, 1228 (9th Cir. 1988), cert. denied, 489 U.S. 1066 (1989) (emphasis added). In the context of significant highway projects in urban areas, "all reasonable alternatives" should included options such as Transportation System Management (TSM) and mass transit, as well as alternative alignments and other design considerations. Davis v. Mineta, 302 F. 3d 1104, 1120-1122 (10th Cir. 2002). "The existence of a viable but unexamined alternative renders an environmental impact statement inadequate." Resources Ltd. v. Robertson, 35 F.3d 1300, 1307 (9th Cir. 1994).

The DOT Must Consider Lane Alternatives To An Eight-Travel-Lane Connector, As Well As Various Alternative Alignments, Interchange Designs, And Other Design Alternatives That Arise During The EIS Process.

A. The EIS Must Rigorously Consider And Assess Lane Alternatives To An Eight-Travel- Lane Connector.

Since 2002, the DOT has refused to consider anything less than an eight-travel-lane Connector. This approach, if carried forward into the EIS, would violate NEPA and be arbitrary and capricious because alternatives of less than eight lanes are reasonable and because this decision was made outside of the NEPA process.

1. The Number Of Lanes In This Project Is A Significant Decision, With Significant Environmental Impacts, That Should Be Addressed Through Appropriate Alternatives In The EIS.

The issue of the size of the Connector (its number of lanes) long has caused significant concern and controversy in the communities that will bear the major impacts of this project. Many community leaders and residents have sought to keep the road as small as possible to minimize its impacts. Notably, in 20000 a Community Coordinating Committee, comprised of representatives from various interests adopted the following consensus goals, among others: (1) match the scale of the project to the character of the community, (2) minimize impacts to neighborhoods and local businesses, (3) reunify and connect the community, and (4) minimize air quality and other environmental impacts. All of these goals are best served by a smaller highway than eight travel lanes. It is striking that cities the size of Pittsburgh and Portland do not have freeways larger than six travel lanes, yet the DOT has proposed to build a larger, eight-travel-lane highway directly through Asheville, a much smaller city.

The size of this highway is a very significant decision for the long-term quality of life in Asheville and the region and for influencing how and where this region grows. We can invest all of our resources in more and bigger highways that promote sprawl, congestion, and air pollution, or we can devote some of our resources to highways while also investing in local transportation improvements, transit, and other alternatives that give citizens alternatives to driving and promote more livable communities. Because these decisions in turn affect future traffic volume, the anticipated future traffic should be but one factor, rather than the only factor, in making the decision as to the size of this project, and all of these community considerations bear on the critical decision as to the number of lanes. The proper place to weigh these considerations and assess their relative benefits and costs is in the EIS, and the DOT should consider a full range of alternative lane scenarios for this project, as well as alternative geographic alignments and other design features.

In fact, such a true consideration of lane alternatives through the NEPA process is exactly what the DOT itself at one time set forth for this community. In the 2001-2002 period, the Chief Officer of DOT's Office of Planning and the Environment gave a

presentation in which she outlined these "public policy questions" bearing on the size of the Connector as (1) will I-240 be the primary traffic corridor?, or (2) will the region increase investments in transit and existing roads if the highway is only 4 or 6 lanes?, or (3) will the region implement changes in land use to reduce traffic demand? See "The Transportation Decision-Making Process," by Janet D'Ignazio, attached as Exhibit A. In turn, these public policy questions and studies of their related environmental and community impacts would inform the analysis of alternatives, which she presented as 4 potential geographic alignments, with "options for 4, 6, and 8 lanes" for "12 total scenarios."

This true consideration of lane alternatives, as outlined by Ms. D'Ignazio, is precisely what NEPA requires of the upcoming EIS. Unfortunately, it appears that the DOT intends to avoid consideration of alternatives and thus to violate NEPA.

2. In 2002, The DOT Predetermined The Number Of Lanes Based Solely On Vastly Inflated Traffic Projections, And Has Refused To Change This Predetermination Even Though The Projected Traffic Has Dropped Significantly And Other Considerations Should Bear On This Decision.

Contrary to Ms. D'Ignazio's presentation, later in 2002 the DOT began pushing the French Broad River MPO for approval to proceed with only an eight-travel-lane design of the I-26 Connector, based on an outdated traffic model that was predicting the inflated volume of 143,000 cars per day in the year 2025. The DOT sought this approval even though a new and more thorough traffic model was being developed. When questioned about this, the DOT assured the local Technical Coordinating Committee that "we don't expect huge changes between the models." Minutes of Technical Coordinating Committee, June 20, 2002. The DOT also stated that it wanted to evaluate only one lane cross-section to "speed up the process." Id.

Along with the traffic projections for a 4-lane, 6-lane, and 8-lane Connector, the DOT circulated a table that showed traffic volumes for Level of Service (LOS) "E" for freeway widths of 4, 6, and 8 lanes. This table showed that the traffic volume for an 8-lane freeway to provide that LOS was 138,000 vehicles. Although the then-projected volume for the Connector of 143,000 exceeded this LOS E volume by 5,000 vehicles, the DOT strongly urged the MPO to accept its recommendation to build an 8-lane freeway. This table also showed that the volume for a six-lane freeway was 103,500 vehicles. Handout, I-26 Connector Project, TIP I-2513, May 21, 2002.

Contrary to NEPA, DOT representatives told the MPO that it was appropriate to make a decision as to the number lanes at that time, and that it needed to "make a decision and move on." Minutes of Joint Meeting, Technical Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee, May 8, 2002. Contrary to the facts, DOT representatives told the MPO that "[e]ven if we delay the decision another couple of years we would still have the same information to go on." Id.

Both of Asheville's representatives to the MPO spoke in favor of the DOT considering alternatives to eight travel lanes, and both voted against the resolution to study only eight-travel-lane configurations. However, at that time the MPO voted to accepted the DOT's recommendation and approved an eight-lane Connector, subject to the proviso that if the new model results or other new information became available, then this decision would be revisited. Id.

The very next year, in 2003, the results of the new model became available. Contrary to the DOT's assurances, these new traffic projections were quite lower than the prior model, even though they looked five years further into the future. The updated model predicted a maximum traffic volume of 96,000-99,000 cars per day in the year 2030, a huge decline in projected traffic of over 44,000 cars per day. Despite this drastic decline in projected traffic volume, the DOT steadfastly has adhered to its predetermined decision to evaluate only eight travel lanes for the I-26 Connector.

3. Although The DOT Has Adhered To Its Predetermined Decision, In 2004 The MPO Encouraged Consideration Of Alternatives By Adopting A New Resolution That Requested The Minimum Number Of Lanes As Deemed Appropriate.

After the tremendous reduction in projected traffic volume became public information, many community leaders and other citizens expected the DOT to reduce the projected size of the Connector to six travel lanes, consistent with the tables that the DOT had provided to the public in 2002. When this did not occur, public pressure led to several public forums and meetings, including presentations before the MPO.

During these meetings, the DOT abandoned the traffic capacity tables it had provided to the public in 2002 and came up with a new rationale for why it refused to consider less than eight travel lanes. Now, the DOT claimed that the Connector had to meet some sort of requirement to achieve LOS "D," and that, applying a very basic analysis from the Highway Capacity Manual, eight lanes were required to provide LOS D at all points in the Connector during the peak hour.

In response to the huge drop in projected traffic, the MPO adopted a new resolution on the I-26 Connector Project. After noting the NEPA requirement to study all reasonable and practicable alternatives, and, in particular, the independent requirement under the Clean Water Act to select the Least Environmentally Damaging Practical Alternative, this resolution provided, in pertinent part:

> The MPO requests that the NCDOT design the I-26 Connector with as few lanes as deemed appropriate to meet the projected travel demand in the year 2030. At the same time, the MPO recognizes that the number of lanes must meet the purpose and need of the project, and comply with federal standards for level of service on interstates.

Resolution of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted November 18, 2004.

In contrast to the prior MPO resolution that approved of studying eight travel lanes, this resolution explicitly sought the minimum number of lanes appropriate to meet projected travel demand. The "as few lanes as deemed appropriate" language recognized that there may be alternative ways to meet travel demand other than via an eight-travel-lane freeway. The only legal way to consider these alternatives, balance their benefits and costs, and decide which alternative is most appropriate, as well as the LEDPA, is through full consideration of lane alternatives in the EIS.

4. <u>There Is No Requirement That The Connector Achieve LOS D At The Peak Hour.</u>

Although the DOT has asserted that the Connector must achieve LOS D during the peak hour in the year 2030, the DOT has not cited any legal authority for this requirement because no such authority exists. .

Indeed, the claimed requirement to meet LOS D is belied by the DOT's own actions in pushing for the approval of eight travel lanes in 2002. Given the projected traffic demand of 143,000 cars per day, the very table that the DOT provided to the public indicated that an eight-lane freeway would exceed LOS E, yet the DOT aggressively urged the MPO to approve eight lanes. Achieving LOS D cannot be a firm requirement, or else the DOT itself violated that requirement in 2002. Since the DOT itself was not just willing to consider a Connector that would have exceeded LOS E, but also forcefully sought approval for such a Connector, at a minimum the DOT must consider alternatives that would build fewer lanes but would achieve the same LOS that was acceptable when the DOT wanted it to be acceptable.

5. <u>The Traffic Demand Model And Its Traffic Projections 25 Years Into The Future Cannot Be The Sole Factor Considered In Determining The Number Of Travel Lanes For The Connector</u>.

As argued earlier, the sensible approach to the lanes decision would take projected traffic demand as an important factor, but not the only factor, in the decision as to the size of this highway. Community impacts, the need for alternative forms of travel, growth and sprawl impacts, and overall costs also are important considerations in this decision. Beyond this, the model itself includes inherent deficiencies that render arbitrary the DOT's reliance on it as the sole consideration in this decision.

a. The Projection Of 96.000-99,000 Cars Per Day, And The Model's Other Projections, Are Based On An Assumption That The Connector Will Be Eight Lanes, Thereby Creating A Circular Decision Process And A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy.

In generating its projected traffic demand for the Connector, the model itself has been programmed with the assumption that the Connector will have eight travel lanes. In turn, this critical assumption underlies the projected traffic demand of 96,000-99,000 vehicles per day.

By taking this projected vehicle demand, itself based on an eight-lane freeway, and then plugging it into an HCM analysis that, lo and behold, led the DOT to assert that an eight-lane freeway is necessary, the DOT has created a circular justification for an eight-lane highway. The model assumed eight lanes and generated a traffic projection, which the DOT then analyzed and concluded that eight lanes are needed to carry that traffic projection. Relying solely on this self-fulfilling prophecy to eliminate consideration of any fewer travel lanes would be arbitrary and capricious.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that, in 2002, the old model also generated projected traffic volumes for a four-lane and a six-lane Connector, and that these projections were substantially lower than the 143,000 cars per day projected for the eight-lane Connector (the projections for the six- and four-lane Connectors were 137,000 cars per day and 117,000 cars per day, respectively). Comparable traffic projections from the new model for a four-lane and six-lane Connector have not been provided to the public, but it is certain that these projection would be substantially less than the 96-99,000 cars per day figure that has been provided, and that these lower projections would be even more consistent with fewer lanes providing an appropriate LOS. The DOT is required to provide these four-lane and six-lane projections to the public and fully to consider them and the lane alternatives they represent in the Connector EIS.

b. The Model Includes Six-Lanes For I-26 North And South Of The Connector, Even Though Those Expanded Highways Are Neither "Existing Nor Committed" Projects.

The accepted practice is for traffic models to include only "existing and committed" projects, meaning other roads that either already exist or already are funded. Stantec Traffic Forecast Report for TIP I-2513, February 2002.. This practice has been reinforced by the DOT's public description of these models, which have emphasized that these models are based on "existing and committed" roads. Minutes of Meeting of Technical Coordinating Committee, June 20, 2002.

Despite this accepted practice and public description, the DOT biased the results of the models underlying the traffic projections for the I-26 Connector by requiring that these models include several large potential expansions of I-26 north and south of the Connector that are neither "existing" nor "committed." The first of these potential expansions (I-26 north from the terminus of the Connector to Mars Hill) merely is in the

feasibility stage and may or may not occur. The other potential expansions (I-26 south from the I-40/I-26 interchange to past Hendersonville) are in various stages of planning but also are far from committed or funded. Together, these improperly-included projects total over 35 miles of hypothetically-expanded interstate feeding into the Connector and substantially inflating the model's projected traffic volumes.

It is illegal and misleading to refuse to consider alternatives to eight travel lanes based on a model that should be limited to existing and committed projects but that nonetheless includes potential projects that inflate the projected traffic volumes on the Connector even though these projects may never be funded. The DOT must provide projections from the model that do not include these non-existent and non-committed projects and consider these more accurate projections, along with multiple other considerations, in deciding among a full range of reasonable lane alternatives less than eight travel lanes.

c. The Model's Projections Are Inherently Speculative In Attempting To Look 24 Years Into The Future And Should Not Serve As The Sole Basis For The Lanes Decision.

The traffic demand forecast on which the DOT has placed such weight merely is a prediction that is attempting to project 24 years into the future. Like all such models, this model has an inherent capacity for error and inherent uncertainty. The best evidence of this uncertainty and capacity for error is the enormous reduction in traffic demand between the old and the new models, a reduction of over 44,000 cars per day. The model does not and cannot account for such factor as the likely increase in the price of oil and its impact on driving patterns, or the changing approach to the region's growth, such as the changes reflected in recent actions by the Buncombe County Commission. While the model forecasts are useful information, they are inherently speculative and uncertain and cannot be the basis for refusing to consider other lane alternatives. Ultimately, transportation decisions should be based not only on models, but also on extremely important community considerations that include the impacts of this freeway on Asheville's neighborhoods and businesses, the impacts on air quality, the impacts on quality of life and livability, and the relative costs of a smaller versus a larger freeway.

6. Even If Achieving LOS D Is Required, There Is Substantial Evidence And Reasonable Expert Opinion That A Six-Travel-Lane Connector Will Achieve That LOS.

Michael Moule, P.E., has used the traffic forecasts provided from the model to perform a detailed, segment-by-segment HCM analysis of the likely Connector LOS that is far more thorough than any analysis that the DOT has provide to the public. This analysis demonstrated that a six-lane Connector would produce Level of Service D for all segments at all times of the day and in both directions, except for a single segment during the peak hour in one direction. As to this segment, minor design improvements could improve the Level of Service without adding additional travel lanes. Moule Letter to DOT, August 17, 2004.

Although the DOT's engineers may disagree with parts of this analysis, that disagreement does not render the six-lane alternative so unreasonable that the DOT may refuse to address it in the EIS. Rather, NEPA requires that this disagreement be aired and assessed in the EIS, as part of the process of choosing among these alternatives.

7. The DOT's Own CORSIM Analysis Demonstrated That A Six-Lane Connector Would Operate Without Congestion At the Peak Hour.

Based on the different results of the HCM analyses performed by Mr. Moule and the DOT, Mr. Moule suggested that the DOT perform an even more thorough and defensible analysis of the Connector using CORSIM, a software that models the flow of projected traffic on the Connector as constructed. Likewise, in September 2004, Anthony Butzek, P.E., Asheville City Traffic Engineer, wrote to DOT and requested that the DOT perform a CORSIM analysis of the Connector. This letter described CORSIM as "the current state of the practice for traffic simulation and analysis of freeways in the United States, and would provide the most detailed analysis possible."

DOT agreed to perform this CORSIM analysis, and City Traffic Engineer Butzek consulted with DOT during this study. The results were made available in the Spring of 2005. According to Mr. Butzek's report to Asheville City Council, this study showed (1) no congestion in a six-lane configuration, even during the peak traffic time, (2) six lanes provided an acceptable overall level of service of C or D during that peak hour, and (3) a difference of only a few seconds of travel time for the Connector with six lanes versus eight lanes. Asheville City Council Meeting, July 19, 2005, attached as Exhibit B.

Thus, the Asheville City Traffic Engineer also has stated that a six-lane Connector will provide an appropriate LOS and will meet project traffic demand during the peak hour in 2030. The information and analyses provided by of Mr. Butzek and Mr. Moule demonstrate that, even considering traffic projections and LOS alone, the alternative of a six-lane Connector is reasonable and must be assessed fully in the EIS.[1]

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[1] The history of the lanes decision, the problems with the model, the closeness of the LOS determinations, and professional disagreement concerning the Connector's capacity under different lane configurations, all distinguish this matter from that addressed in Route 9 Opposition Legal Fund v. Mineta, 75 Fed. Appx. 152, 156 (4th Cir. 2003). In that case, lower-lane alternatives did not receive detailed study because the facts showed a vast disparity between the capacity of the lower-lane alternatives and the expected traffic volume of the road, so vast that the lower lane alternatives "could not possibly meet the capacity needs of the project. 75 Fed. Appx. At 156. In contrast, the facts outlined above show that alternatives of less than eight lanes reasonably can meet the project's capacity needs while minimizing the negative impacts of the project, especially if these alternatives incorporate design features that augment LOS, such as those suggested by Mr. Moule or the TSM and other features required to be considered in the case of Davis v. Mineta, 302 F. 3d at 1121-22. Accordingly, the DOT must assess and consider these reasonable lane alternatives in the EIS.

8. The Combined Weight of All Of These Circumstances Demonstrates That the DOT's Refusal To Consider Alternatives Of Less Than Eight Lanes Is Arbitrary And In Violation Of NEPA.

The Fourth Circuit has stressed that NEPA compliance must be measured by the totality of the circumstances in each specific case. National Audubon Society v. Department of the Navy, 422 F. 3d 174, 186 (4th Cir. 2005). Each of the circumstances outlined above demonstrates that, to this point, the DOT arbitrarily has predetermined to consider only eight travel lanes. The totality of these circumstances indicates that this approach, if continued into the EIS, would violate NEPA's requirement that the agency consider all reasonable alternatives. The DOT must comply with NEPA by fully assessing alternatives of less than eight travel lanes.

B. The DOT Must Consider And Assess Design Alternatives, Such As Alternative Alignments, Alternative Design of the Patton Avenue Interchange, Innovative Approaches To The Haywood Road Interchange, And An Attractive Bridge, That Arise Now Or Through The NEPA Process.

In the early 2000s several community design forums occurred which led to reasonable ideas that now are part of the project, such as alternative alignments for the Connector, the inclusion of the I-26/I-40 interchange in the project, and the formation of the Connector aesthetics committee. The pendency of the EIS process has led to renewed interest in project design issues, including the formation of a group of architects and planners who are focused specifically on I-26 design issues under the sponsorship of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Whether arising from that group or from others, ideas that would increase the benefits of the project or reduce its costs must be assessed and evaluated in the EIS process, and there is plenty of time to incorporate good ideas without delaying this project.

The guiding principles for design of this project substantially mirror the consensus recommendations and goals of the I-26 Community Coordinating Committee, which were adopted by the Asheville City Council and which DOT has committed to incorporate into this project. As qualified and capable professionals of varied experience and background examine this project, it is highly likely that improved design alternatives will arise that significantly would improve the project by enhancing its benefits or by reducing its costs and impacts to the community, and often by achieving both. These alternatives may include variations on the proposed alignments, better design of key interchanges, innovative approaches to interchange development or highway construction, alternatives that reduce the acreage of land condemned and removed from the local tax base and the number of homes and businesses lost, design features that promote quality commercial and residential growth within the City limits, better separation of local from interstate traffic, better integration of this project into local traffic patterns and capacity, an attractive bridge across the river, and design innovations that would promote the quality of life in West Asheville and other neighborhoods that will be impacted by this project.

The NEPA regulations explicitly require that the DOT "shall" use the EIS process to "identify" as well as to assess alternatives to the proposed action. Thus, if reasonable design alternatives arise now or during the NEPA process, these alternatives must be considered and incorporated, rather than being dismissed as "too late" and "causing delay." With at least six years remaining until construction is scheduled to begin on this project, no reasonable ideas arising during the EIS process are "too late," and there is no defensible reason why incorporating these design modifications or improvements would delay the project. Even in the unlikely event that assessing a design alternative would cause delay, the point of the process is to weigh the benefits of the alternative against such costs and to make an informed decision, rather than arbitrarily excluding new ideas.

A primary goal of the NEPA process is to ensure an informed decision and an informed public. National Audubon Society, 422 F. 3d at 184. Consistent with its NEPA obligations, the DOT should welcome public involvement in the design process and carefully assess any alternatives that rise from that involvement. Such an approach will produce the best project for the community and bring this project to construction in the most timely manner.

## Conclusion

NEPA requires that the DOT study, describe and assess all reasonable alternatives for the I-26 Connector. For all of the reasons stated in these comments, these reasonable alternatives include alternative with fewer than eight travel lanes, and design alternatives arising now or during the EIS process that augment the project's benefits or reduce its impacts and costs. We respectfully request that the DOT comply with NEPA and produce the best project for this community on a timely schedule by fully considering these alternatives in the EIS.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ruley

cc: Lisa Glover, Assistant Attorney General

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999



April 10, 2007

TGS ENGINEERS

Mr. Jim Orr, Superintendent
Parks and Public Facilities Division
City of Asheville
Parks and Recreation Department
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Subject: New Route, Asheville, NC, I-26 Connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13, NC TIP No. I-2513, BSIP WBS Element 34165.1.2, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Dear Mr. Orr:

The NC Department of Transportation is planning the proposed I-26 Connector which will include widening and improvements to exiting I-240 in the vicinity of SR 3556, Amboy Road. The improvements as currently planned will affect both the proposed French Broad River Greenway extension and Carrier Park near the Amboy Road interchange. As these are public recreational facilities, the project is subject to the requirements of United States Code (USC) Title 23 in Section 138 (Section 4(f)), the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), known as Section 4(f) of the DOT Act. According to Section 4(f) the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT):

> ...shall not approve any program or project...which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from an historic site of national, State or local significance as so determined by such officials unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from such use.

We have identified the park facilities and boundaries as well as the proposed alignment of the greenway and included them on our base plans for the improvements to I-240 and Amboy Road in the area. As a result, we have included several modifications to our plans to avoid these facilities. However, these plans indicate a small amount of right of way and easement will be required from Carrier Park and approximately 300 feet of the proposed French Broad River Greenway extension will need to be reconstructed by our project.

The principal purpose of the scheduled April 13 meeting with you and your staff is to present our preliminary plans with these proposed modifications and to document your comments and suggestions. I have assembled the following questions concerning these facilities that we can hopefully address at this meeting.

1. Were there any LWCF funds used in the development of either of these facilities? (The Land

and Water Conservation Fund Act (Section 6(f)) at 16 USC 460 is a primary funding source of the US Department of the Interior for outdoor recreation development and land acquisition by local governments and state agencies. The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, administers the program on behalf of the federal government. Authority for the program at the state level is vested in the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the State Liaison Officer appointed by the Governor.)

2. Are there any restrictive covenants attached to the deeds for these facilities? If so, we may need to obtain copies of these restrictions.

3. Are there documented future plans for improvements to Carrier Park? If so, we would like to discuss these plans and if possible obtain copies of plans locating any proposed facilities.

4. Of the several routes available, is there an official routing of the French Broad River Greenway through Carrier Park?

5. Has the right of way for the proposed French Broad River Greenway been obtained? If so, was it purchased fee simple or obtained through easement?

6. What are the horizontal clearance requirements for the proposed French Broad River Greenway?

To satisfy Section 4(f), NCDOT must document the coordination with the City to minimize impacts to these facilities. The goal is to obtain and document the City's concurrence that the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to these recreational facilities.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to minimize any effects on these recreational facilities with the construction of this important transportation improvement.

If I can provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers

JKB: jdw
cc: File

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

April 18, 2007

Mr. Jim Orr, Superintendent
Parks and Public Facilities Division
City of Asheville
Parks and Recreation Department
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Subject: New Route, Asheville, NC, I-26 Connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13, NC TIP No. I-2513, BSIP WBS Element 34165.1.2, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Dear Mr. Orr:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is writing a Draft Environmental Statement for the I-26 Connector. The project will include widening and improvements to exiting I-240 and Amboy Road in the vicinity of Carrier Park. The proposed preliminary plans for this project will affect both the proposed French Broad River Greenway extension and Carrier Park. As these are public recreational facilities, the project is subject to the requirements of United States Code (USC) Title 23 in Section 138 (Section 4(f)), the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), known as Section 4(f) of the DOT Act.

As stated in Section 4(f) of the above, "the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) shall not approve any program or project... which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from an historic site of national, State or local significance as so determined by such officials unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from such use".

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
1548 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1548

TELEPHONE: 919-733-7844
FAX: 919-733-9794

WEBSITE: WWW.DOH.DOT.STATE.NC.US

LOCATION:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

We understand that you have had an opportunity to review the project preliminary plans that have been revised to minimize effects to these facilities. *De minimis* impacts on publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges are defined as those that do not "adversely affect the activities, features and attributes" of the Section 4(f) resource. If the City official(s) with jurisdiction over the property will provide written concurrence that the proposed I-2513 project will not "adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify" Carrier Park and the existing and proposed French Broad River Greenway for protection under Section 4(f), the Federal Highway Administration intends to make a *de minimis* finding regarding these facilities. A letter to me stating concurrence would be sufficient.

Please note that the coordination efforts with the City to minimize project impacts to these facilities will be continued throughout the project planning and design process. We will also provide an opportunity for public involvement during the public hearing once the 4(f) *de minimis* documentation requirements are satisfied.

The NCDOT looks forward to working with you and your staff to minimize any effects on these recreational facilities with the proposed project. If I can provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Vincent J. Rhea, PE
Project Planning Engineer

Cc: Jake Riggsbee, PE, FHWA
Files

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

April 20, 2007

TGS ENGINEERS

Mr. Jim Orr, Superintendent
Parks and Public Facilities Division
City of Asheville
Parks and Recreation Department
PO Box 7148
Asheville, NC 28802

Subject: New Route, Asheville, NC, I-26 Connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13, NC TIP No. I-2513, BSIP WBS Element 34165.1.2, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Dear Mr. Orr:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on Friday, April 13 to review the proposed modifications to the subject project preliminary plans in order to minimize effects on the Carrier Park and French Broad River Greenway. We have added the driveway connection we discussed and sent Al Kopf a copy of the revised plans with cross sections in the area along Amboy Road in front of Carrier Park.

To keep the project on schedule, NCDOT needs to document your concurrence that the proposed project plans will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of Carrier Park and the existing and proposed French Broad River Greenway. NCDOT will be sending you a letter informing you of the Section 4(f) evaluation procedures necessary for the project use of the park property and greenway alignment.

If you have any questions or I can provide additional information, please let me know as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers

JKB:jdw
cc: File

City of Asheville, NC

Parks and Recreation

September 12, 2007

Vincent J. Rhea, PE
Project Development Engineer
PDEA Branch
NCDOT
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

RE: *De minimis* impact statement for project I-2513

Mr. Rhea,

It is my understanding that the I-26 connector project will include widening and improvements to exiting I-240 and Amboy Road in the vicinity of Carrier Park. The proposed preliminary plans for this project will effect both the proposed French Broad River Greenway extension (FBRG) and Carrier Park. As these are public recreational facilities, I understand the project is subject to the requirements of United States Code (USC) Title 23 in Section 138 (Section 4(f)), the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), known as Section 4(f) of the DOT Act.

As stated in Section 4(f) of the above, "the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge resulting from such use".

It is my understanding that the preliminary plans for the project have been revised to minimize the impacts to the FBRG and Carrier Park. The widening would shift the proposed FBRG slightly southward for a modest portion, but not adversely affect its use. The widening would also encroach into the parking area in front of the Carrier Park restroom facility as well as a short section of the FBRG. The department planned to remove the parking area in the future so it will not adversely affect this function. The State expressed a willingness to remove the parking lot area and landscape it in an attractive manner. The state would work with City staff on the overall design which includes minimizing potential retaining walls that would be required with the widening.

Access to the existing parking lots north and south of the restroom facility would be maintained.

My staff as well as the Greenway Commission and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has reviewed the preliminary plans and have concluded that the proposed I-2513 project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of Carrier Park and the existing and proposed FBRG. The City expects the State to rebuild and relocate any portion of greenway trail that is negatively impacted by this widening project at the States expense, including, but not limited to re-negotiating easements.

This letter shall not be interpreted as giving consent for the City to enter into land negotiations with the State. City Council approval must be obtained for any land transaction involving City-owned land. Preferably, we would like to approach City Council with land transaction proposals for all properties slated to be effected by the widening project at one time. Lastly, please present the preliminary drawings to Karen Cragnolin, Executive Director of RiverLink, for her comments. RiverLink donated the Carrier Park property to the City and as a courtesy we like to include RiverLink in conversations about future park development.

Sincerely,

Roderick Simmons, Director
City of Asheville Parks and Recreation Department

Cc: Ken Burleson, Al Kopf, Seth Hendler

**Subject: I-26 Connector (NCDOT TIP I-2513B) - Design Criteria and Data Request Status**
**Date:** Thu, 8 Nov 2007 10:15:12 -0500
**From:** "Carballo, Manuel" <mcarball@figgbridge.com>
**To:** "Cathy Ball" <cball@ashevillenc.gov>, "Ken Putnam" <KPutnam@ashevillenc.gov>
**CC:** "Cathy S. Houser, PE" <chouser@dot.state.nc.us>,
"Derrick Weaver" <dweaver@dot.state.nc.us>,
"Vincent J Rhea, P.E." <vrhea@dot.state.nc.us>, <rtipton@dot.state.nc.us>,
"Lonnie Brooks" <lbrooks@dot.state.nc.us>, <kburleson@tgsengineers.com>,
<cflowe@tgsengineers.com>, <christopher_werner@urscorp.com>,
"Peter Trencansky" <Peter_Trencansky@URSCorp.com>,
"Alan McGuinn, AIA" <alan.mcguinn@cjmw.com>, <alice.iodesign@gmail.com>,
"Stephanie Pankiewicz" <SPankiewicz@landdesign.com>,
<mike.goodson@buncombecounty.org>, <celler@civildesignconcepts.com>,
"Eason, Brian" <beason@hwlochner.com>, "Browde, Stephen" <sbrowde@hwlochner.com>,
"Rohleder, Jay" <jrohleder@figgbridge.com>

Cathy B., Ken P.,

Attached please find two documents:

1. Alternate 4B Design Criteria. The intent of this document is to capture the key design parameters needed in our evaluation. We have developed this list in consultation with the NCDOT. Please consider this a living document, as we progress in our study there may be additional items that require coordination with the NCDOT.

2. List of data items requested in the kick-off meeting and their status. As you can see, the majority of the information has already been provided by the NCDOT and/or their Consultants. We currently have all these files in LOCHNER's ftp site and they are available for anyone to access. If you have a specific repository for these files or need copies in CD's I would be glad to coordinate that.

I also want to thank the NCDOT, TGS and URS for their responsiveness to all our requests.

Best regards,

Manuel

Manuel F. Carballo, P.E., S.E.
Director Texas Office
FIGG

10000 North Central Expressway
Suite 1300
Dallas, Texas 75231
214.363.3444
214.363.4435 (fax)
469.286.8722 (mobile)
mcarballo@figgbridge.com

<<ALternate 4B Design Criteria 11_8_07.pdf>> <<Data Requests 11_8_07.pdf>>

| | |
|---|---|
| ALternate 4B Design Criteria 11_8_07.pdf | **Name:** ALternate 4B Design Criteria 11_8_07.pdf<br>**Type:** Portable Document Format (application/pdf)<br>**Encoding:** base64<br>**Description:** ALternate 4B Design Criteria 11_8_07.pdf<br>**Download Status:** Not downloaded with message |

| | |
|---|---|
| Data Requests 11_8_07.pdf | **Name:** Data Requests 11_8_07.pdf<br>**Type:** Portable Document Format (application/pdf)<br>**Encoding:** base64<br>**Description:** Data Requests 11_8_07.pdf<br>**Download Status:** Not downloaded with message |

**STUDY OF THE ASHEVILLE DESIGN CENTER'S I-26 CONNECTOR PROPOSAL**
**NCDOT TIP I-2513B**

**Generalized Design Criteria**

DESIGN SPEEDS:

- I-26 NB & SB ..... 60 mph
- I-240 EB ..... 60 mph
- I-240 WB ..... 60 mph
- US 19-23 ..... 60 mph
- I-26 RAMPS ..... 30 to 50 mph (50 where ramps tie in to I-26)
- I-240 RAMPS ..... 30 to 50 mph (50 where ramps tie in to I-240)
- LOOPS ..... 25 mph min would prefer 30
- PATTON AVE ..... 50 mph
- REGENCY DRIVE ..... 50 mph
- RIVERSIDE DRIVE ..... 50 mph
- CITY STREETS POSTED 35 MPH ..... 40 mph
- MINOR CITY STREETS POSTED 25 MPH ..... 30 mph

MINIMUM RADII:

6% Maximum Superelevation on Alignments with Bridges:

60 mph ..... 1330'
50 mph ..... 833'
40 mph ..... 485'
30 mph ..... 231'

8% Maximum Superelevation on Alignments without Bridges:

60 mph ..... 1200'
50 mph ..... 758'
40 mph ..... 444'
30 mph ..... 214'

Sufficient tangent distance must exist between curves to allow for superelevation transitions based on design speed and number of lanes. Transition spirals are required to allow superelevation transitions for I-26, I-240, US 19-23, and the associated ramps. See AASHTO A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets pp. 175-199.

MAXIMUM GRADES: (Reference AASHTO A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets for details)

I-26 and US 19-23 ..... 4%
I-240 ..... 4%
RAMPS ..... 5%
**Pg 829 of AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets states that 7% & 8% are ok for short upgrades. 5% does not unduly interfere with truck operations. Flatter grades will cut down on truck noise. With heavy truck traffic the down grades should be lower in the 3% - 4% range.*
LOOPS ..... 8%
PATTON AVENUE, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, ETC ..... 7%
LOCAL STREETS ..... 10%

VERTICAL CURVES:

Based on design speed and whether crest or sag vertical curve. See AASHTO A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets pp. 265-266, 267-270 for crests, 273-277 for sags.

For Crest Vertical Curves

| Design Speed | Min. K Value |
|---|---|
| 30 mph | 19 |
| 40 mph | 44 |
| 50 mph | 84 |
| 60 mph | 151 |

For Sag Vertical Curves

| Design Speed | Min. K Value |
|---|---|
| 30 mph | 37 |
| 40 mph | 64 |
| 50 mph | 96 |
| 60 mph | 136 |

VERTICAL CLEARANCES:

OVER INTERSTATES OR US 19-23 ..... 17'-0" to 17'-6"
OVER OTHER ROADS AND STREETS ..... 15'-0" to 15'-6"
OVER RAILROADS ..... 23'-0" to 23'-6"

CONCEPTUAL LEVEL STRUCTURAL DESIGN

DESIGN LIVE LOAD.....HS-20
HORIZONTAL CLEARANCES TO PIERS.....NCDOT BRIDGE POLICY
PIERS IN THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.....MINIMIZE NUMBER OF PIERS, MAX. OF 2 PER STRUCTURE PREFERRED

**STUDY OF THE ASHEVILLE DESIGN CENTER'S I-26 CONNECTOR PROPOSAL**
**NCDOT TIP I-2513B**

**DATA REQUESTS**

| | To Be Provided By | Received Date |
|---|---|---|
| Design Criteria | NCDOT | 10/26/2007 |
| Available MicroStation and Geopak Files for Alternates 4 & 4B (Latest Planimetrics, Design Files, Profiles, Cross Sections,SuperElevation Files) | TGS | 10/30/2007 |
| *Available Traffic Forecast for Alternates 4 & 4B | URS (N/A 4b) | 10/22/2007 |
| Available Traffic Files for Alternates 4 & 4B | URS | 10/26/2007 |
| Construction Phasing Plan for Alternate 4 | TGS | To Be Provided |
| Construction Schedule for Alternate 4 | N/A | N/A |
| Updated Project Constraints Map for Alternate 4 | URS | ** |
| Conceptual double decker bridge layout (span layouts / pier placement | NCDOT | 10/26/2007 |
| Cost Estimates for Other Alternates | TGS | 10/30/2007 |
| Public Hearing Maps Alternate 4 | TGS | 10/30/2007 |
| *Capacity Analysis | URS | 10/26/2007 |
| **Draft EIS | URS | 10/26/2007 |

**MEMORANDUM**

**DRAFT**

**TO:** The Files

**FROM:** Manuel F. Carballo

**REFERENCE:** Study of the Asheville Design Center's I-26 Connector Proposal Kick-Off Meeting

**DATE:** October 30, 2007

A Kick-Off meeting was held for the above referenced project on Monday, October 22, 2007 at 2:00 PM at City Hall, Asheville, North Carolina. Agenda and meeting attendees are attached.

Per the agenda:

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM.

1. Introductions – Went around the table introducing ourselves.
2. Contract
   a. FIGG to prepare monthly invoice and progress report and submit to the City of Asheville.
   b. All communication and coordination between the City of Asheville, Buncombe County and the Asheville Design Center to go through Ken and Manuel.
   c. All communication with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to go through Mr. Vince Rhea with copies to Derrick and Rick.

3. Scope of Work - This portion of the NCDOT project being considered is approximately a two mile connection between two completed segments of I-26 that will run through Asheville adjacent to the French Broad River and downtown. The Asheville Design Center has created a new alternative within the same study area that is currently being considered by the community as a viable alternative that is a more context sensitive solution. Earlier this summer at the request of the Asheville City Council and local state legislators, the NCDOT consultants currently working on the project provided a partial analysis of the ADC proposal. Although the ADC's proposal was not determined infeasible in the NCDOT report, results of the study identified several concerns. In an effort to address these concerns, the City of Asheville, Buncombe County and The Asheville design Center retained the services of FIGG/LOCHNER to perform an independent analysis as well as proposed schematic solutions that seek to determine the viability of the proposed ADC alternative. The FIGG/LOCHNER team has identified three major tasks for performing the proposed alternate feasibility study:

   a. Prepare Design Criteria & Comprehensive List of NCDOT Concerns. One of the primary goals of this meeting is for the

FIGG/LOCHNER team to gather the design criteria used by NCDOT on the other alternates as well as to develop a clear understanding of all the concerns previously identified by the NCDOT.

b. Analysis of ADC's Alternative 4B. Once the designed criteria have been established and a comprehensive list of concerns has been prepared, the FIGG/LOCHNER team will analyze alternative 4B.
c. Final Plan Development. The intent of this phase is to evolve the ADC alternative into a complete functional plan that is compliant with FHWA and NCDOT design guidelines.

4. Confirm NCDOT Corridor Design Criteria

- Design criteria for alternate 4b are the same as for all other alternates.
- FHWA requires no design exceptions.
- FIGG/LOCHNER will obtain electronic copies of MicroStation Geopak files from TGS.
- NCDOT will provide via e-mail to FIGG/LOCHNER a copy of the design criteria.

5. NCDOT Concerns Discussion
   - NCDOT's review identified concerns in these areas: clearances (shoulders, over and under streets and railroads), alignment (horizontal and vertical) and capacities (operational).
   - The alternate appears to be lacking in shoulders offset, clearance between lanes, gradients, etc.
   - On the west side, the bridge over the French Broad River will also have to cross the Smith Mill Creek floodplain, a railroad and a golf course – these are all "physical constraints" relative to footing placement. The structure at this location has a very wide footprint.
   - All alternates end at Broadway in order to compare apples to apples. This is necessary for the EIS document even if construction is done in phases.
   - FHWA wants no design exceptions on this project.
   - On the east side, there is a landfill running along the French Broad River, the Montfort Area Historic District and a railroad spur (runs along landfill). These three constraints pose horizontal clearance challenges (this condition is illustrated as Section F in the NCDOT Powerpoint presentation to Asheville City Council). North of Section F available horizontal clearance increases.
   - The grade on I-240EB ramp (west side of river) required to provide the necessary vertical clearance over I-26 (at the double deck bridge) is acceptable.

- The profile on I-240WB ramp (west side of river) required to provide the necessary vertical clearance over I-26 (at the double deck bridge) is not acceptable. Unlike the I-240EB lanes, the I-240WB lanes are at the low point of the 6% superlevation prior to climbing over I-26. This condition requires a steep grade approaching the double deck structure. There is also a low point on the structure which is unacceptable to the NCDOT.
- If I-240 ramp profile (west of river) is lowered, ramp length can be reduced.
- NCDOT does not allow low points on structures.
- Bridge cross-section approaching double-deck structure is 216 ft. out-to-out. 10 lanes plus shoulders, interstate criteria.
- Operational issues (queue storage, weave distances, etc.) were identified at the following locations:
    I. I-240 EB Exit Ramp to Patton
    II. I-240 EB Entrance loop from Patton
    III. I-240 WB Exit Loop to Patton
    IV. I-240 WB Exit to Hill Street
    V. I-240 WB Entrance from Hill Street
    VI. Hill Street Connector
- Cost estimates developed are strictly construction costs. Detour costs are not included.

6. Data Requests
    a. Available MicroStation and Geopak Files for Alternates 4 & 4B (Latest Planimetrics, Design Files, Profiles, Cross Sections, SuperElevation Files) – TGS to provide electronic copies to FIGG/LOCHNER
    b. Available Traffic Forecast for Alternates 4 & 4B. – This data does not exist for alternate 4b, however, hard copy for alternate 4 provided to FIGG/LOCHNER by URS.
    c. Available Traffic Files for Alternates 4 & 4B - URS to provide this data to FIGG/LOCHNER.
    d. Construction Phasing Plan for Alternate 4 – TGS to provide available data to FIGG/LOCHNER.
    e. Construction Schedule for Alternate 4 – This data does not currently exist. Based on past history no less than 36 months. Too early for NCDOT to set construction schedule.
    f. Updated Project Constraints Map for Alternate 4 – URS to provide copy of Draft EIS Chapter 3 to FIGG/LOCHNER.
    g. Conceptual double deck bridge layout (span layouts / pier placement) – NCDOT to discuss internally and advise FIGG/LOCHNER what assumptions were made on structural members sizes, span lengths, etc.

7. Schedule – The independent analysis is to be completed in 90 days with an anticipated notice to proceed given on October 26, 2007.

8. Action Items – see data request section above for assignments.

In addition to the agenda items, the following items were also discussed.

a. TGS did not review the Hill Street Interchange for possible improvements. Their scope of work consisted of evaluating alternate 4b as presented to them.
b. The bridge cross-section approaching the double-deck structure has a 6% superlevation. Vertical separation of the I-240 ramps will be a constraint.
c. Freeman and C.G. Worley Historic Properties are constraints on other NCDOT alternates.
d. Southwest Loop is approximately 500 ft. in length. There is a storage concern.
e. Fiber Optics near Patton is a concern due to the high cost of relocation. This is also a constraint for NCDOT alternates 3, 4 & 5. Overhead Power is a constraint for all alternates.
f. The Railroad on the east side of the river runs about 3 trains per wee. Each train has between 3 to 6 cars each which corresponds to 13 to 26 tractor trailers.
g. Buildings to be demolished are included in the land acquisition costs.
h. The intent of the independent analysis is to take the evaluation a step further and investigate possible improvements to the alternate so that it meets FHWA and NCDOT acceptance criteria. The City of Asheville, Buncombe County, Asheville Design Center and the FIGG/LOCHENR team are committed to be in constant communication with NCDOT during this review process.
i. Cost Estimates for Other Alternates – TGS to provide this data to FIGG/LOCHNER so that any estimates developed by FIGG/LOCHNER are consistent with the other alternates.
j. Public Hearing Maps Alternate 4 – TGS to provide electronic copies of the alternate 4 public hearing maps. These maps use the current flood plain data. FIGG/LOCHNER are to use the current flood plain data in order to be consistent with the other alternates, then identify where changes will be made relative to newer maps (currently as draft being reviewed).

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM

Xc: All attendees
Mr. Vincent J. Rhea, P.E.

**Study of The Asheville Design Center's I-26 Connector Proposal**
**Kick-Off Meeting**
**City Hall - October 22, 2007**

| NAME | AGENCY | PHONE | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|---|
| MANUEL CARBALLO | FIGG | (214) 363-3444 | MCARBALLO@figgbridge.com |
| KEN PUTNAM | COA | 828 259-5415 | KPUTNAM@ASHEVILLENC.GOV |
| JAY ROHLEDER | FIGG | 610 5942460 | jrohleder@figgbridge.com |
| Stephanie Pankiewicz | ADC | 828-281-1447 | spankiewicz@landdesign.com |
| ALAN McGUINN, AIA | ADC | 828-225-7400 | ALAN.McGUINN@CAMW.COM |
| BRIAN EASON | LOCHNER | 919-571-7111 | beason@hwlochner.com |
| RICK TIPTON | NCDOT | 828-251-6171 | RTIPTON@dot.STATE.NC.US |
| Chris Werner | URS | 919-461-1470 | christopher_werner@urscorp.com |
| Peter Trencansky | URS | 919-461-1332 | peter_trencansky@urscorp.com |
| DERRICK WEAVER | NCDOT | 919-733-7844 x219 | DWEAVER@DOT.STATE.NC.US |
| PLEASE ALSO SEND TO: VINCE RHEA | NCDOT | 919-733-7844 x261 | VRHEA@DOT.STATE.NC.US |
| CATHY HOUSER | NCDOT | 919-250-4016 | chouser@dot.state.nc.us |
| Ken Burleson | TGS | 919-319-8850 | kburleson@tgsengineers.com |
| CHARLIE FLOWE | TGS | 919-319-8850 | cflowe@tgsengineers.com |
| Alice io Oglesby | I-26 Aesthics | 828-225-5925 | alice@iodesign.net |
| MIKE GOODSON | BUNCOMBE CO. | 828-250-4854 | mike.goodson@buncombecounty.org |
| Cathy Ball | COA | 828-259-5405 | cball@ashevillenc.gov |
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**AGENDA**
**OCTOBER 22, 2007**

**KICK-OFF MEETING**
**STUDY OF THE ASHEVILLE DESIGN CENTER'S I-26 CONNECTOR PROPOSAL**
**CITY OF ASHEVILLE OFFICES**
**2:00 PM**

**ATTENDEES**

City of Asheville:
Cathy D. Ball – Director of Transportation and Engineering (828) 259-5405
Kenneth J. Putnam – ~~City Traffic Engineer~~ (828) 259-5943
ASSISTANT DIR. OF TRANSPORTATION + ENGINEERING

Buncombe County:
Mike Goodson – Storm Water Administrator (828) 250-4854
Chris Eller – Civil Design Concepts

Asheville Design Center:
Alan D. McGuinn - CJMW (828) 225-7400
Stephanie Pankiewicz - LandDesign (828) 259-5943

North Carolina Department of Transportation:
Ricky A. Tipton – Division Construction Engineer (828) 251-6171

I-26 Aesthetics Advisory Committee
Alice Oglesby -io design & illustration, inc. (828) 225-5925

FIGG/LOCHNER:
Jay Rohleder – FIGG (610) 594-2460
Manuel Carballo – FIGG (214) 363-3444
Brian Eason – LOCHNER (919) 571-7111

**AGENDA**
**OCTOBER 22, 2007**

1. Introductions.....ALL

2. Contract.....CA
   a. Administrative procedures
   b. Coordination/Communication between CA/BC/ADC and Consultant Team
   c. Coordination/Communication with NCDOT, others

3. Scope of Work.....FIGG/LOCHNER
   a. Prepare Design Criteria & Comprehensive List of NCDOT Concerns
   b. Analysis of ADC's Alternative 4B
   c. Final Plan Development

4. Confirm NCDOT Corridor Design Criteria.....FIGG/LOCHNER/NCDOT
   (Refer to Attachment #1)

5. NCDOT Concerns Discussion.....ALL

6. Data Requests.....FIGG/LOCHNER
   a. Available MicroStation and Geopak Files for Alternates 4 & 4B (Latest Planimetrics, Design Files, Profiles, Cross Sections, SuperElevation Files)
   b. Available Traffic Forecast for Alternates 4 & 4B
   c. Available Traffic Files for Alternates 4 & 4B
   d. Construction Phasing Plan for Alternate 4
   e. Construction Schedule for Alternate 4
   f. Updated Project Constraints Map for Alternate 4
   g. Conceptual double decker bridge layout (span layouts / pier placement)

7. Schedule.....FIGG/LOCHNER

8. Action Items.....ALL

## DESIGN CRITERIA

| Route Name | Facility Type | Functional Classification | Design Speed | Max. Superelevation | Terrain | Lane Width | Shoulder Width | Normal Cross Slope | Minimum Horizontal Curvature | Superelevation | Maximum Grade | Vertical Curvature Sag | Vertical Curvature Crest | Vertical Clearance | Horizontal Clearance | Stopping Sight Dist | Bridge Width |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-26 | Interstate | Interstate | 60 mph | 8% w/o Bridges<br>6% w/ Bridges | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| I-240 | Interstate | Interstate | | 8% w/o Bridges<br>6% w/ Bridges | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| US 19/23/70 | Expressway | Urban Arterial | 60 mph | 8% w/o Bridges<br>6% w/ Bridges | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| Patton Ave | Boulevard | Urban Arterial | 50 mph | 6% | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| Riverside Dr. | Thoroughfare | Urban Collector | 60 mph | 6% | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| Hill Street | Thoroughfare | Urban Collector | 40 mph | 4% | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| Emma Road | Thoroughfare | Urban Collector | 40 mph | 4% | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |
| Cross Street | Thoroughfare | Urban Collector | 40 mph | 4% | Rolling | DM | DM | DM | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | AASHTO | | DM | DM | AASHTO | DM |

KEY
AASHTO = American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officals-Geometric Design of Highways and Streets ("Green Book") 2004 Ed
DM = North Carolina Department of Transportation Design Manual (Highway Design Branch)

**Attachment #1**

**Subject:** I-26 Connector (I-2513B) - Structural Concepts
**Date:** Sat, 10 Nov 2007 11:40:19 -0500
**From:** "Carballo, Manuel" <mcarball@figgbridge.com>
**To:** "Lonnie Brooks" <lbrooks@dot.state.nc.us>
**CC:** "Cathy S. Houser, PE" <chouser@dot.state.nc.us>,
"Vincent J Rhea, P.E." <vrhea@dot.state.nc.us>,
"Derrick Weaver" <dweaver@dot.state.nc.us>, <rtipton@dot.state.nc.us>

Lonnie,

Apparently the file size I tried to send the first time was too large for the NCDOT e-mail service (sorry). I will send the pictures I reference in my e-mail via a series of e-mails (the bull dozer approach).

Thanks,

Manuel

Manuel F. Carballo, P.E., S.E.
Director Texas Office
FIGG

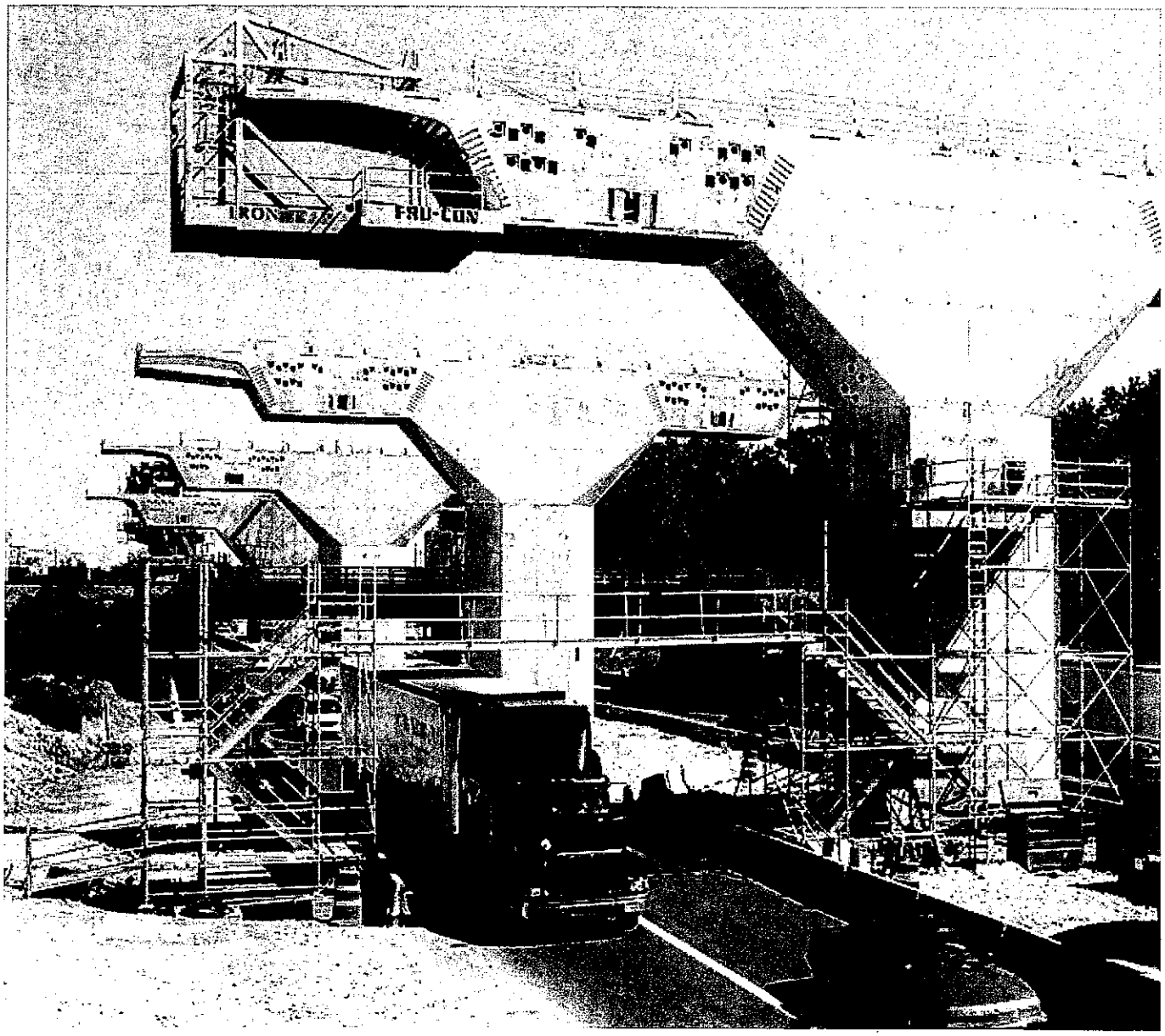
10000 North Central Expressway
Suite 1300
Dallas, Texas 75231
214.363.3444
214.363.4435 (fax)
469.286.8722 (mobile)
mcarballo@figgbridge.com

> _____
> *From: Carballo, Manuel*
> *Sent: Saturday, November 10, 2007 10:29 AM*
> *To: Lonnie Brooks*
> *Cc: 'Cathy Ball'; 'Ken Putnam'; 'Alan McGuinn, AIA';*
> *'alice.iodesign@gmail.com'; 'Cathy S. Houser, PE'; Derrick Weaver;*
> *Vincent J Rhea, P.E.; 'rtipton@dot.state.nc.us'; 'Eason, Brian';*
> *'Browde, Stephen'; Rohleder, Jay*
> *Subject: I-26 Connector (I-2513B) - Structural Concepts*
>
> *Hi Lonnie,*
>
> *There is a couple of structural concepts that we are evaluating for*
> *the ADC's alternate 4B and would like to get the Structures Design*
> *Group input.*
>
> *The first concept is the use of "integral" pier caps. As you know, in*
> *this concept the girders and pier cap are combined into a single*
> *element as opposed to the more common scheme where the girders are*
> *supported by bearings resting on a pier cap. The "integral" concept is*
> *advantageous for conditions where there are vertical clearance (there*
> *is limited vertical clearance between the two roadways to provide for*
> *the girder depth and the pier cap depth) and horizontal clearance*
> *challenges (the pier cap would encroach horizontally into the roadway*
> *below) because we are combining the girder and pier cap depth into a*
> *single element. In addition, this reduction in structural depth may*
> *provide us the flexibility to adjust the vertical profile (in*
> *particular in the double deck area where there are longitudinal grade*

> concerns).
>
> The other structural concept is the use of "straddle" bents. As the
> name suggests, these type of bents are advantageous for conditions
> where obstructions (permanent or temporary) need to be straddled.
>
> To illustrate these ideas, I have attached a few pictures of projects
> in which we have successfully used these structural schemes.
>
> I-93 - Boston. The I-93 project in Boston (as you may imagine) is in
> the heart of Boston and presented many unique challenges. One that we
> had to overcome early on was the challenge of developing a structural
> scheme for building a two level interchange in a heavily urbanized
> area with severe limitations on pier placement, vertical and
> horizontal clearances. The first picture illustrates the overall
> project. The second picture illustrates our solution for the area of
> the project where we had a double deck structure. For that condition
> we used a two level straddle bent (we had to straddle the at grade
> roadways) with the second level built integrally with the straddle
> bent to satisfy vertical profile requirements and still provide the
> necessary vertical clearance. The third picture illustrates a one
> level straddle bent with the superstructure built integrally with the
> cap.
>
> Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway. In this project, a section of the
> elevated portion had to be built directly over an existing roadway and
> the roadway had to remain open during construction. We also used
> "integral" straddle bents to meet this challenge.
>
> I-280 Veterans' Glass City Skyway - Toledo, Ohio. This project
> presented a significant challenge in an area where the bridge had to
> be built over existing roadways and railroads that must remain open
> during construction but the use of straddle bents was not practical.
> One advantage we had in this project was that at this location the
> existing roadways were separated by a median where structural elements
> could be built. So, we developed the concept of a single stem "T" (or
> Hammerhead) Pier that would be integral with the superstructure. With
> this scheme, we combined the superstructure and pier cap to provide
> the necessary vertical clearance and used the existing median to build
> the pier and foundation. To give you an idea of the size of this
> T-Pier, each box girder cantilevering over the roadway below provides
> for 3 lanes of traffic and 2-10 foot shoulders.
>
> When I lived in Raleigh I recall of at least one project near the
> airport where an integral cap was used. Could the Structure Design
> Group comment on the NCDOT's policy on using straddle bents and
> integral caps?. For instance: deck width, span length, previously used
> applications.
>
> Thanks!
>
> Manuel
>
> Manuel F. Carballo, P.E., S.E.
> Director Texas Office
> FIGG
>
> 10000 North Central Expressway
> Suite 1300
> Dallas, Texas 75231
> 214.363.3444
> 214.363.4435 (fax)
> 469.286.8722 (mobile)

JPEG image 900x675 pixels

JPEG image 900x600 pixels



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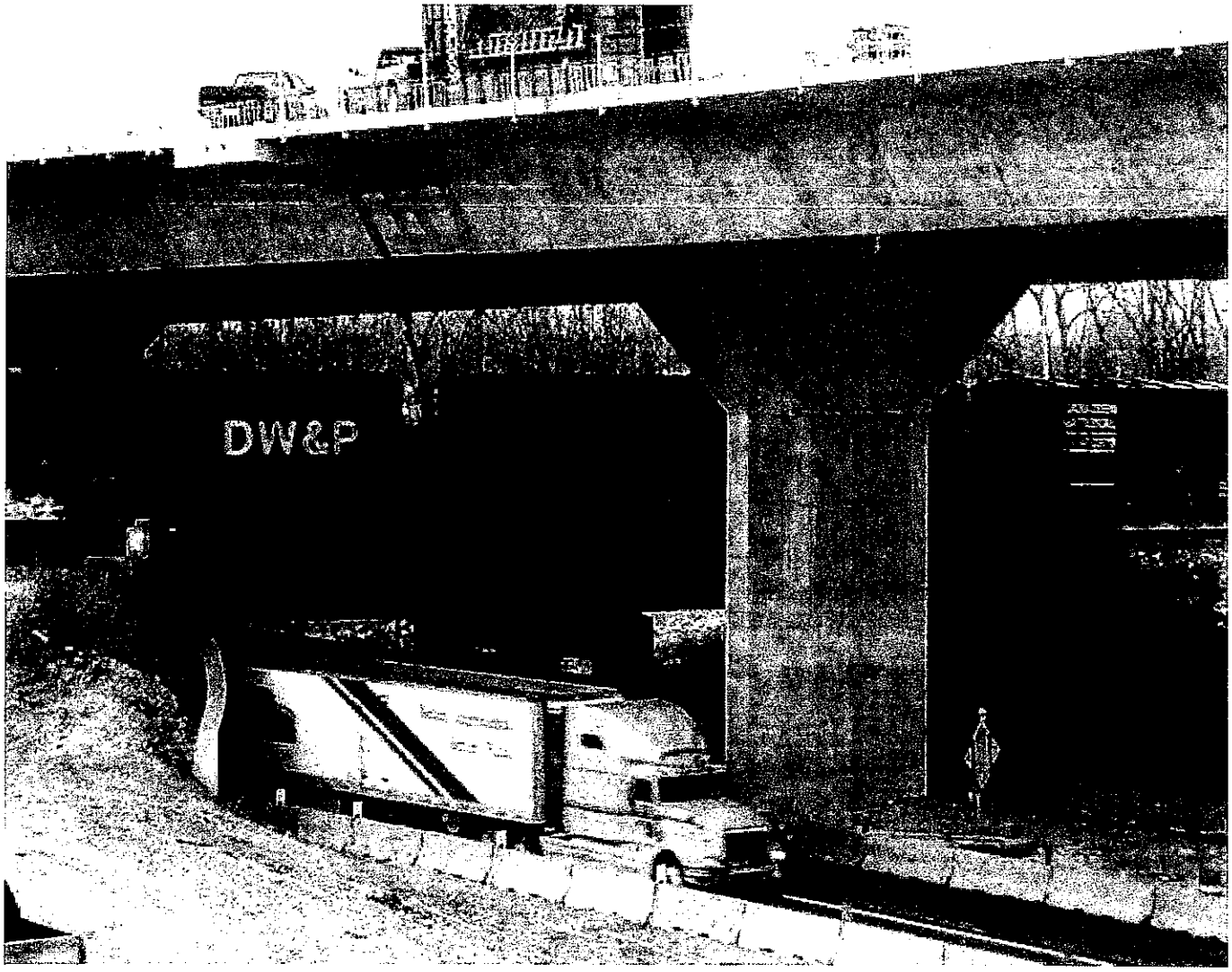

8 College Street
Asheville, NC 28801
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

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Michael McDonough RA
Jackie Schauer, AIA

Mr. Vince Rhea, PE
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch, NCDOT
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
vrhea@dot.state.nc.us

January 14, 2008

Dear Mr. Rhea:

As representative of the Asheville Design Center (ADC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting quality design in the Asheville region, I am writing to express that our group feels it is crucial that the Report of the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) of September 2000, be included in the NC DOT's Purpose and Needs Statement for the I-26 Connector Project, (I-2513). This report was created by Asheville area residents, including members of the business community, elected officials, neighborhood groups, and others, and was officially adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on September 21, 2000.

The report includes nine key project design goals, but most importantly, the Purpose and Needs Statement must include the separation of local and interstate traffic on Patton Avenue particularly across the Smokey Park Bridge. This will obviously help eliminate the dangerous merging situations that currently exist, but it will also allow the development of a local boulevard that can reunify and connect our city with the larger community. We think it is important that the design of the project must match the scale and character of this unique region.

The nine Evaluation Criteria of the CCC Report were developed to specifically address the purpose and needs of the project, and were adopted by the City and the MPO as an effective method of gaining extensive public input on the Connecter project while keeping the project on schedule. These 9 goals were intended for inclusion in the Purpose and Needs Statement. We feel that any Purpose and Needs Statement that excludes the CCC report is incomplete.

Sincerely,

Alan McGuinn, AIA, Chair

cc: City Council
County Commissioners

The Asheville Design Center (ADC) is a community resource created by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) through a project called the AIA 150. We have, as part of our mission, the goal to accomplish the AIA 10 principles of livable communities. These are:

1. **Design on a Human Scale -** Compact, pedestrian-friendly communities allow residents to walk to shops, services, cultural resources, and jobs and can reduce traffic congestion and benefit people's health.
2. **Provide Choices -** People want variety in housing, shopping, recreation, transportation, and employment. Variety creates lively neighborhoods and accommodates residents in different stages of their lives.
3. **Encourage Mixed-Use Development -** Integrating different land uses and varied building types creates vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and diverse communities.
4. **Preserve Urban Centers -** Restoring, revitalizing, and infilling urban centers takes advantage of existing streets, services and buildings and avoids the need for new infrastructure. This helps to curb sprawl and promote stability for city neighborhoods.
5. **Vary Transportation Options -** Giving people the option of walking, biking and using public transit, in addition to driving, reduces traffic congestion, protects the environment and encourages physical activity.
6. **Build Vibrant Public Spaces -** Citizens need welcoming, well-defined public places to stimulate face-to-face interaction, collectively celebrate and mourn, encourage civic participation, admire public art, and gather for public events.
7. **Create a Neighborhood Identity -** A "sense of place" gives neighborhoods a unique character, enhances the walking environment, and creates pride in the community.
8. **Protect Environmental Resources -** A well-designed balance of nature and development preserves natural systems, protects waterways from pollution, reduces air pollution, and protects property values.
9. **Conserve Landscapes -** Open space, farms, and wildlife habitat are essential for environmental, recreational, and cultural reasons.
10. **Design Matters - D**esign excellence is the foundation of successful and healthy communities.

We believe there exist opportunities to meet these principles, minimize expenditures on land acquisition and construction costs, while facilitating design excellence that will add value to Asheville for generations to come. We are a community resource to help refine and expedite community design and save DOT time and money.

How can we help best incorporate these 10 principles (above) into the project?

The following are a list of questions that will help align design objectives for the project area:

1. Can we have the contact information for your Interdisciplinary Team (the

landscape architect, architect, planner, and urban designer) on the DOT team that is part of the design team for the alternate layouts?

2. Why do all the alternatives all show the same bridge location across the French Broad river? What are the attributes of this location?
3. What alignment option best minimizes the amount of new paving?
4. How does each alignment minimize loss of taxable property? Could you state the amount of real estate required by right-of-way each alignment.
5. For each option, how much land is acquired for each proposal and added to the DOT right of way?
6. How do the alignments address the NEPA primary elements (ecological, aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health)?
7. How are you determining and evaluating the direct, indirect and cumulative impact for the project and each alignment?
8. Are there any right-of-ways that will be given back to the real estate taxable base? If so, which alignments give back what real estate?
9. Like Charleston, SC; Asheville would benefit from a signature bridge. What steps are necessary to realize such a bridge? How can we help facilitate the process?
10. Could you provide examples of this process from other communities?
11. How are bicycle and pedestrian connections part of your program? Where will they be located on each alternate?
12. Is it possible to move DOT's proposed main French Broad Bridge (approximately 1,500 feet to the south) to a location at the Emma Rd./Southern Railway intersection; and if not, what are the impediments to moving the bridge to this location?
13. What amount is budgeted for the bridge over the French Broad and for the bridge over Emma Road respectively?
14. Is DOT open to the possibility of a modified version that recombines the existing alternates?
15. For Alternate 5, the proposed bridge south of the existing Smoky Park bridges, will this bridge be funded as part of this connector project? Can that bridge be moved north of Smoky Park if we have consent with the Asheville community and the Public Housing Authority?

Answers to the above questions can be addressed to:

William Langdon, AIA
Asheville Design Center. President
8 College Street
Asheville, NC 28801
828-252-0296
wlangdon@aol.com
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

asheville
**design**
center

1. Each of the DOT alternatives (as proposed) falls short of incorporating:
   - The adopted CCC recommendations (Appendix A)
   - The AIA Blueprint for America: 10 (Appendix B)

   We believe it is feasible to combine elements of the proposed alternatives to create an alternative that meets those above noted guidelines. Our goal is to identify an alternative that will incorporate the guidelines above.
2. We believe the process to date has failed to address the location and the sensitivity to Asheville's context. We support the creation and use of a locally knowledgeable interdisciplinary team (as required by NEPA) that includes, but is not limited to landscape architects, architects, planners, and urban designers. It is imperative that these professionals be an integral part of the DOT team for the creation of alternate layouts.
3. Furthermore, we believe the process would benefit from a more effective implementation of the MPO's Cooperative Agreement with NCDOT. We are willing to assist in this process and encourage NCDOT to enter into a formal partnership with local governments.
4. Because of the proximity to our downtown and our river issues such as heat island effect are relevant, quantify the amount of impervious surface for each alignment and include in the EIS.
5. Because of issues regarding lost tax base and missed development opportunities in the 4 DOT alternatives, quantify the amount of right-of-way area (in acres) for each alignment and include in the EIS.
6. For each option, how much land is acquired for each proposal and added to the DOT right of way?
7. How are you determining and evaluating the indirect and cumulative impact for the project and each alignment, such as how you are evaluating the impact on isolated and reduced access to properties? How many properties meet this qualification for each alternative?
8. What rights-of-way might be returned to the taxable real estate base?
9. Why do all four of the DOT alternatives show the same bridge location across the French Broad river? What are the attributes of this location?
10. Did you investigate locating the main French Broad Bridge at the Emma Rd./Southern Railway intersection (approximately 1,500 feet to the south) or any other sites? What are the impediments to moving the bridge to those locations?
11. A "signature" bridge, like the Cooper River Bridge in Charleston, SC, would benefit the Asheville metropolitan region. What steps are necessary to realize such a bridge? Could you provide examples of this process from other communities? How can the Asheville Design Center help facilitate the process?

12. Why are transit, bicycle and pedestrian connections excluded from the proposed alternatives? If they are not meant to be excluded, what will be the design criteria and location for such facilities?
13. What is the cost estimate for each bridge or viaduct in each alternative?
14. For Alternate 5, will the proposed bridge south of the existing Smoky Park bridges be funded as part of this connector project? Can that bridge be moved north of Smoky Park if we have consent with the Asheville community and the Public Housing Authority?
15. Each alternative should demonstrate a positive gateway opportunity that demonstrates excellence in civic design similar to what is found at Pack Sq. with the mix of public/private buildings and public/private spaces. In the vicinity of the East side of the existing Smoky Park bridges, we feel that this are should be designed with such civic thinking.
16. Context Sensitive Solutions of the ITE (or its equivalent) should be used for design of streets and pedestrian accommodations within the entire project area within the Asheville district.
17. Given the current congestion, why hasn't the I-40/I-26 interchange improvements to be given highest priority expedited. How can this happen?
18. Could I-240 from the interchange @ I-26 to the Beaucatcher cut be a different design standard such as:
    A. An urban parkway or boulevard roadway section,
    B. Conceptually make 240 a "business" classification,
    C. Keep 240 limited access 4-lane divided highway – with a posted speed limit 50 mph
    D. Seek a context sensitive solutions that maximize urban land by creating opportunities for developable real estate in areas that are currently right-of-way
19. I-26 design speed from the Amboy Road interchange to the Broadway interchange should reflect its context in an "urban corridor" area. The design speed in this section should be 50 mph max.
20. The design should aim to reclaim land in the corridor in areas of:
    A. Existing roadway corridors
    B. New corridor/interchange design
    C. Tighten corridor width to urban design standards
    D. Create mixed-use "places" throughout the project area, and adjacent to local road and pedestrian networks

**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE DESIGN OF THE I-26 CONNECTOR THROUGH ASHEVILLE**

## Purpose of Report

This report documents the goals identified by public input at the I-26 Connector Design Forum held July 21-22, 2000 in Asheville and recommends that these goals be included in the Purpose and Needs Statement and thoroughly studied as a design alternative in the project Environmental Impact Study.

The goals described are generated from official records of discussion table comments at the forum and summaries of citizen-developed mission statements at the forum wrap-up session. They have been evaluated by the Community Coordinating Committee and recommended for consideration. These goals provide the foundation for a citizen-based design alternative to be given engineering and environmental study both preliminarily and through the EIS. They also provide recommended criteria for EIS evaluation of all alternatives.

## Section 1 - Project Goals Identified by the Design Forum

Many facets of the project were discussed at the forum. The themes listed below summarize the most prominent concerns of area citizens. They provide a set of specific goals the community would like to see accomplished through the course of completing the I-26 Connector Project.

**We, as a community, want a thorough, full and proper study of an alternative design which will accomplish these goals. At the same time, the community feels strongly that the ultimate completion date for the project should be maintained and expedited, if possible.** We are hopeful that building community consensus around the design alternative that best accomplishes these goals will ultimately help expedite the project. Due to the inter-related nature of the issues raised, the immediate proximity of areas to be affected and the need to expedite completion of the work, the strong preference of the Community Coordinating Committee is for these to be addressed as a single project rather than multiple "phased projects."

## Key Project Design Goals

1. Separation of local and interstate traffic
2. Matching scale of project to character of community
3. Reunification and connectivity of community
4. Minimization of neighborhood and local business impacts
5. Use of updated traffic modeling software and data
6. Maintenance of compatibility with community's design vision and plans; incorporation of community-selected design features
7. Creation of full interstate movements between I-26 and I-40
8. Minimization of air quality and other environmental impacts
9. Emphasis on safety - during construction and in the design of the final product

## Section 2 - Evaluation Criteria

This section restates our community's design goals and establishes a set of criteria, or standards, by which their achievement should be measured.

Evaluation Criteria For:

1. Separation of Local and Interstate Traffic

    a. Eliminate Patton Avenue/Smoky Park Bridges as an Interstate Link
    b. Reclaim land for community use (including expansion of taxable base)
    c. Create Patton Avenue gateway possibilities (which complies with City of Asheville 2010 Plan)
    d. Generate redevelopment possibilities in Corridor in compliance with City's"smart growth" principles
    e. Simplify traffic movements
    f. Create a more convenient and safer driving environment

2. Matching Scale of Project to Character of Community

    a. Be sensitive to the prominence of the highway relative to Asheville's unique topography, landscape and built environment
    b. Recognize the highway's relationship to the river and downtown
    c. Retain the "feel" of a small city in the mountains
    d. Select the lowest design speed compatible with safe and proper functioning of the various components of the highway facility
    e. Consider the impact of highway widening and alignment decisions on property takings and neighborhood division
    f. Do not use a "Jersey barrier" approach to median design; the raised median in the I-240 cut is a much better example of sensitive median design in a constrained space

3. Reunification and Connectivity Of Community

    a. Provide well-defined pedestrian/bicycle facilities throughout the project corridor
    b. Improve opportunities for reconnecting neighborhoods and Downtown with the French Broad Riverfront
    c. Expand accessibility for Hillcrest Community
    d. Create a better local street network (including linkages between West Asheville and Downtown, within Downtown and within West Asheville) to relieve interstate traffic pressure

4. Minimization of Neighborhood and Local Business Impacts

    a. Minimize residential property acquisitions
    b. Limit impact on neighborhood connectivity
    c. Minimize number of businesses needing to be closed or relocated

d. Prioritize safety and traffic-routing during construction
e. Maximize opportunities for hiring of local workers for construction of project

5. Use of Updated Traffic Modeling Software and Data

   a. Determine that project scale achieves safe and adequate traffic flow with the minimal number of lanes
   b. Create an opportunity to reinforce and/or redirect land use decisions that relate to transportation
   c. Optimize transportation alternatives (balancing of thoroughfare plan with mass transit, bike/pedestrian, local street grid improvements and other alternatives)
   d. Assess "induced traffic" phenomenon and interrelationship of highway capacity and development patterns

6. Maintenance of Compatibility with Community's Design Vision and Plans

   a. Achieve compatibility with riverfront use and development plans (particularly limiting the loss of riverfront property for highway use)
   b. Achieve compatibility with "smart growth" direction of city planning
   c. Reclaim land for non-highway use
   d. Create recognizable community character in design features
   e. Develop unique and attractive bridge design(s)
   f. Include gateway elements
   g. Include local artists in creating design features
   h. Use quality materials

7. Creation of Full Interstate Movements Between I-26 and I-40

   a. Reduce through-traffic volume (especially trucks) in Asheville central district (I-240)
   b. Enhance driving safety on I-240
   c. Remove interstate traffic (especially trucks) from West Asheville street network

8. Minimization of Air Quality and Other Environmental Impacts

   a. Determine best highway design with least impact on air quality
   b. Protect water quality
   c. Preserve tree canopy and wildlife habitat

9. Emphasis on Safety - During Construction and in the Design of the Final Product

   a. Improve simplicity of design for weaving, merging, and diverging

b. Segregate local and through truck traffic
c. Provide for incident management
d. Alleviate complexity and safety risks of current road and ramp configuration
e. Provide effective maintenance of traffic flow during construction

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the alternative alignment concept developed at the Design Forum receive serious study for inclusion in the project Environmental Impact Statement.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT, FHWA and local citizens work together as a "Committee on Visual Design" to develop ideas for bridge design, signage, overpass design, landscaping and other aesthetic issues that reflect our community's character.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA expedite the development of new and updated traffic models for use on the ultimate design of this project, including regional air quality modeling.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA explore engineering and signage options to improve the north-to-east connection of eastbound I-26 traffic with I-40 in an easterly direction as part of this project or a simultaneous project. The specific concerns involve limiting commercial truck through-traffic on I-240 and on lesser-classified roadways proximate to residential areas.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO reflecting the Committee's general consensus that the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity be restored to link neighborhoods and the river while simultaneously exploring traffic calming measures to reduce the vehicular impact on residential streets.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA ensure that all interchange design is community sensitive. To achieve this end, it would be helpful to provide artist's renditions of feasible design alternatives for public review.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA seriously examine safety issues in project construction and design including maintenance of traffic during construction and emergency access after construction.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA release any unneeded right-of-way at the completion of this project to the City of Asheville to be zoned and used in accordance with a land use plan to be developed by the City in cooperation with the NCDOT.

- Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA keep the I-26 Connector project on its current or, preferably, an expedited schedule.

**Section 3 - Potential Tradeoffs**

We realize that the achievement of our design goals involves tradeoffs. While the accomplishment of some of them may reduce construction costs, the accomplishment of others may increase the overall cost of the project. Aesthetic improvements may carry their added costs. In order to produce a separation of Patton Avenue from I-240, there may need to be additional bridging of the French Broad River which carries with it some visual impact. New and improved traffic and air quality modeling, though providing a more accurate picture of transportation system needs, could slow key decisions about capacity and design speed.

In another areas, the selection of a lower design speed to minimize neighborhood impact may affect travel time. Fewer lanes may create challenges to planning for maintenance of traffic during construction. Shrinking the footprint of the highway could result in a more "engineered" highway in terms of landscaped medians and grade differentials between east and west travel lanes.

It is too early in the process to fully understand the costs and benefits of each alternative design for the project. We mention some possible costs we have considered in order to demonstrate our awareness of them, in order to enhance our capability for addressing them, but most of all, in order to express that, despite the potential tradeoffs, we as a community are united in support for achieving our set of project design goals.

**Section 4 - Design Forum Background**

In December 1999, the Asheville City Council, in response to active and continuing citizen involvement, requested City staff to formulate plans for a community design process related to the I-26 Connector Project that would allow extensive public input while keeping the project on schedule. A month later, the North Carolina Department of Transportation joined the City in this effort by agreeing to incorporate the idea of an I-26 Connector Design Forum into its public involvement program. It was seen as an opportunity to enhance community-wide input from Asheville area citizens to the design of the I-26 Connector. This, in turn, would expand on recent efforts to solicit neighborhood-based involvement.

In April 2000, the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the City of Asheville agreed to create a Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) to guide this public participation in the design process. In addition to planning the design process format, the composition of the CCC would help achieve community consensus in the identification and interpretation of key issues. Representatives from a broad base of community organizations as well as project stakeholders were chosen to comprise the CCC. The design process they selected took place in two stages.

During mid-June, an Education Forum was held to inform the public about project design issues. This was attended by over 300 people who listened to expert presentations and participated in project component breakout sessions.

In late July, an intensive two-day Design Forum was scheduled to draw from the public both general design concepts and specific design ideas. This Forum attracted between 500-600 community residents over the two-day period. It was staffed by representatives of the Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina Department of Transportation, City of Asheville, the American Institute of Architects, and several independent consulting engineers and community mediators. Fred Craig, Vice President of Parsons Brinkerhoff's Ohio office, acted as overall Forum facilitator.

The overwhelming sense from participants was one of appreciation for the privilege of taking part in the process. Repeatedly stated was the fact that this highway project could either impose negative impacts or provide beneficial opportunities for the community. Continuing citizen input to defining design criteria was seen as central to maximizing project benefits while minimizing the costs. This report by the CCC contributes to its ongoing function - that of translating community concerns into specific goals which can be achieved through integration into ultimate project design.

# MISSION STATEMENT

Bridging the French Broad: creating connected and livable communities.

The American Institute of Architects has enabled Asheville to facilitate an active community engagement and visualization process toward achieving the highest environmental, cultural, urban design, and economic values from the I-26/I-240 connector on the French Broad River. This partnership will:

- expand our downtown;
- create people-friendly, livable, and walkable communities;
- wisely use our limited land;
- increase all types of mobility; and
- enhance our waterfront.

# POSITION STATEMENT

The American Institute of Architects' team of local citizens and professionals is organizing an all volunteer civic venture to leverage massive public investment and a dramatic urban design opportunity – the completion of I-26 in the heart of Western North Carolina's Asheville urban region. Our civic venture seeks joint development and redevelopment of land for significant private investment, public improvements, and entrepreneurial expansion; we encourage public involvement through 2007. This once-in-a-century design opportunity will examine the highest environmental, cultural, urban design, and economic benefits resulting from North Carolina Department of Transportation's substantial programmed investment.

In September 2007, NC DOT will propose final designs and alignments for the I-26/I-240 connector. There are stark differences and consequences in how this Interstate is conceived:

- Without public participation, the connector's alignment could yield more isolated Interstate land parcels, a major urban riverfront denied, a downtown gateway thwarted, and lost economic return for many years to come… the connector serves only the motor vehicle;
- With public engagement, political support, and professional oversight, a correct alignment yields hundreds of millions in prime new high density, smart growth real estate investments. The connector could serve to open Asheville's core to the French Broad River as a destination for enjoyment, walking and biking… as well as motoring.

AIA's Asheville chapter is honored to be selected as one of twelve national locations – and the only North Carolina city – for this 'Blue Print for America' grant. The grant considers each of the AIA's 10 principles for livable communities. Reasons for the Asheville region's optimism in this award include:

- AIA-150 presents an extraordinary opportunity to leverage programmed highway construction dollars for higher civic purposes;

- About 80% of traffic on our regional Interstate system is local traffic. Improvements must comport with local needs and opportunities;
- Asheville is one of the most land-constrained cities in the US. Highway design becomes an occasion to open new areas for higher density development, reuse, and recreation;
- Asheville has the highest housing costs of any major North Carolina city. As our dynamic community grows, maintains an environmental conscience, and increases diversity, more people should live in, work in, and enjoy our downtown.

Public sector remaking of our downtown's western edge, river escarpment, view planes, and public spaces must include sensitive, accessible, people-friendly, and appropriately-scaled architecture and streetscapes. By early 2007, the AIA-150 team – and the community – will present alternatives for urban land use and design choices in the I-26/I-240 connector alignments and roadways.

Optimization of connector development involves large parcels of public land. Since areas in downtown's core now sell for $1 million per acre, there is opportunity to meld rights-of-way, bridges, and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes with major development opportunities. We promote agreements among the City, the County, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, NC DOT, and the private sector to create mixed-use, planned unit developments within walking distance of downtown… to almost double the size – and tax base – of our downtown.

AIA-150 looks forward to facilitating an interactive process. This honors the formal Cooperative Agreement between NC DOT and MPO mandating use of the Federal Highway Administration's tradition of 'continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated planning.' With government assistance and community collaboration, AIA-150 will portray the most promising joint development investments, the best urban environmental designs, and the most desirable use of Interstate highway funds.

Indeed, it may be possible to accelerate Asheville's promise as one of North Carolina's most dynamic economic development hubs. In turn, this will measurably enhance Asheville's standing as a popular 'destination city,' a national example of downtown livability as well as an international model for riverfront enhancement.

The I-26/I-240 connector is a relatively short roadway in a much larger Interstate system crossing both Carolinas and Tennessee. To traditional road builders, it is an intersection into Asheville, two bridges, and a few miles of new right-of-way. For western North Carolina, this roadway's design will determine the expansion of our city's core as an economic, cultural, and social hub. At question is the investment potential of 100 acres and two to three times as much developable land. Using the highest urban environmental design principles, this is the one opportunity for the State of North Carolina, Buncombe County and the City of Asheville to maximize future economics for jobs, tourism, a critical mass of in-migrating entrepreneurs, and optimal smart growth investment in higher density, mixed-use developments.

## AIA 10 principles for livable communities

1. **Design on a Human Scale**
Compact, pedestrian-friendly communities allow residents to walk to shops, services, cultural resources, and jobs and can reduce traffic congestion and benefit people's health.

2. **Provide Choices**
People want variety in housing, shopping, recreation, transportation, and employment. Variety creates lively neighborhoods and accommodates residents in different stages of their lives.

3. **Encourage Mixed-Use Development**
Integrating different land uses and varied building types creates vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and diverse communities.

4. **Preserve Urban Centers**
Restoring, revitalizing, and infilling urban centers takes advantage of existing streets, services and buildings and avoids the need for new infrastructure. This helps to curb sprawl and promote stability for city neighborhoods.

5. **Vary Transportation Options**
Giving people the option of walking, biking and using public transit, in addition to driving, reduces traffic congestion, protects the environment and encourages physical activity.

6. **Build Vibrant Public Spaces**
Citizens need welcoming, well-defined public places to stimulate face-to-face interaction, collectively celebrate and mourn, encourage civic participation, admire public art, and gather for public events.

7. **Create a Neighborhood Identity**
A "sense of place" gives neighborhoods a unique character, enhances the walking environment, and creates pride in the community.

8. **Protect Environmental Resources**
A well-designed balance of nature and development preserves natural systems, protects waterways from pollution, reduces air pollution, and protects property values.

9. **Conserve Landscapes**
Open space, farms, and wildlife habitat are essential for environmental, recreational, and cultural reasons.

10. **Design Matters**
Design excellence is the foundation of successful and healthy communities.

PP0078

Southern
Environmental
Law Center

29 North Market Street, Suite 605
Asheville, NC 28801-2934
828-285-9125
Fax 828-285-9181
druley@selcnc.org

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

January 14, 2008

Vince Rhea
Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: Comments on the I-26 Connector, Project I-2513

Dear Mr. Rhea:

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Western North Carolina Alliance and the Southern Environmental Law Center.

The Department of Transportation's (DOT) latest newsletter sought comment on the "purpose and need for the project and project alternatives."

Concerning project alternatives, the Southern Environmental Law Center submitted extensive comments dated November 10, 2006, that still apply. The DOT and the draft EIS must give full consideration to the design alternative proposed by the Asheville Design Center (ADC) and also to alternatives of less than eight travel lanes. Indeed, much has occurred since November 2006 that strengthens the case for consideration of these alternatives. Foremost among these developments is an engineering review of the ADC alternative that has found that this alternative is feasible and can be implemented with minor modifications, according to recent news articles.

Concerning project purposes, these purposes should be expanded to incorporate the project goals set forth in the Report of the Community Coordinating Committee For the Design of the I-26 Connector Through Asheville (2000). This Report represented the consensus of this community about how to proceed with the I-26 Connector and formally was endorsed by both the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commission.

A primary purpose of the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) Report was to influence the project's Purpose and Need and for the community's goals to be included in the project's purposes. CCC Report at 1. Unfortunately, this has not

occurred; the project's purposes do not include any of the goals from the CCC Report. The DOT should remedy this deficiency by amending the "Summary of Need" and "Purposes of Action" in its Draft EIS. The "Summary of Need" should be modified to include a paragraph titled "Community Enhancement," or something similar, that sets forth the need to incorporate the goals of the CCC Report into the project. The "Purposes of Action" should be supplemented to include the primary goals of the CCC Report.

Chief among these goals of the CCC Report are (1) separation of local and interstate traffic; (2) matching the scale of the project to the character of the community, and (3) minimizing neighborhood, business, and environmental impacts. CCC Report at 2. The goals can and should be incorporated into the purposes of the action to guide the development of and selection among alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ruley

Douglas A. Ruley

DL- 00002

Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency
Serving Buncombe County and the City of Asheville
David A. Brigman, Director

April 28, 2008

Land-of-Sky Regional
339 New Leister Highway, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806

Re: I-26 Connector DEIS

To Whom It May Concern:

The Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency (WNCRAQA) has reviewed the air quality sections of the I-26 Connector Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which we received on CD-ROM last week. Our comments, which reference the numbering scheme and section headings used in the DEIS, are as follows.

3.3.2.1 Background and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (p. 3-31)

The first sentence of the first paragraph states that the project is located in the jurisdiction of NCDENR. However, in Buncombe County, air quality is regulated by the WNCRAQA, one of three local agencies having county-level jurisdiction. WNCRAQA also operates the Buncombe County monitoring stations mentioned in the third paragraph.

7-3

The third paragraph also mentions that the monitored air quality data in Table 3-18 (p. 3-32) were obtained from a report available on the NCDENR Division of Air Quality (DAQ) website and that the measurements were for 2002. In checking the cited URL, it was determined that the measurements were for 2000. Given that the Air Quality Analysis was completed in 2006, more recent measurements could have been provided.

The last sentence of the third paragraph states that "these recent measurements are within federal and state ambient air quality standards." However, the 8-hour ozone concentration and the annual and 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations are higher than the corresponding standards shown in Table 3-18. No explanation is provided as to how these levels are within ambient standards.

Table 3-18 could be updated to include the 3-hour (secondary) $SO_2$ standard and the newly revised 8-hour ozone standard (0.075 ppm).

49 Mount Carmel Road Asheville, NC 28806
Telephone: (828) 250-6777 Fax: (828) 255-5226 Web Address: www.wncairquality.org
E-Mail: wncair@buncombecounty.org

4.1.3.2 Air Quality Standards (p. 4-12)

7-4 No discussion of the procedures, modeling assumptions, receptor locations, results, etc. is presented. Also, no documentation is provided in the DEIS appendices. Is the *Air Quality Analysis Technical Memorandum* (cited in the DEIS), as well as any backup documentation, available for review?

4.1.6.4 Air (p. 4-40)

It is mentioned that a permit from the NC Division of Forest Resources would be needed for burning cleared (vegetative) materials within 500 feet of woodlands. (This is also mentioned in the Required Permits and Actions section of the summary, p. S-17.) A WNCRAQA burning permit would also be required for burning any machine-piled brush anywhere in the county.

7-5 Potential asbestos impacts during construction are not discussed. The demolition or relocation of any buildings or other structures would require a WNCRAQA asbestos inspection and permit.

Please forward a copy of these comments to the NC State Clearinghouse. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please call Vic Fahrer at (828) 250-6788.

Sincerely,

David A. Brigman

David A. Brigman
Director

City of Asheville, NC

Transportation & Engineering Department

DL0003

May 5, 2008

RECEIVED
Division of Highways

MAY 09 2008

Preconstruction
Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch

Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D., Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Subject: City of Asheville's comments on Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement for New I-26 route, Asheville Connector along I-26 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70, Buncombe County
State Project # 8.U843701, F.A. Project # MANHF-26-1(53)
TIP Project # I-2513

Dear Mr. Thorpe:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this historic project for the City of Asheville, and region of Western North Carolina. We recognize, and appreciate the Department's willingness to work with us on behalf of the citizens of Asheville to make the most of this improvement.

Currently, the document doesn't fully address the alternate endorsed by the Asheville Design Center (ADC). While it is mentioned in several sections of the document, the messages seem to contradict one another, and are somewhat confusing. With this being the case, it is difficult to fully assess our comments at this time.

2-63

I would suggest that when a decision has been made about the ADC alternate, that the City of Asheville be afforded an opportunity to comment on all of the options at that time. It is our understanding that this should occur in the near future, therefore this request shouldn't result in any unnecessary delay in the project.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on behalf of the citizens of Asheville on this project. Please contact me if I can provide further assistance in this matter, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Respectfully,

Cathy D. Ball

Cathy Ball, P.E.
Director of Transportation and Engineering

dl0002

RECEIVED
Division of Highways
JUN 25 2008
Preconstruction
Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch

asheville design center

8 College Street
Asheville, NC 28801
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

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The Asheville Design Center is a 501C3 non profit organization.

Tax identification number:
20-8268724

Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D., Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
June 19, 2008

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for New I-26 route, Asheville Connector, TIP Project # I-2513

Mr. Thorpe:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Asheville Design Center.

We at the Asheville Design Center are concerned by the omission from this draft Environmental Impact Statement of the project alternative proposed by the Design Center. The 4-B Alternative, which, as proposed by the ADC, enjoys broad public support in the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, is the best option to advance the I-26 project quickly while providing for the future growth of Asheville.

It is our understanding that the 4-B Alternative was not included in this draft EIS because NCDOT is working with the consultant retained by the City of Asheville to ensure that the alternative meets NCDOT's design standards. We are grateful that the alternative is receiving careful consideration.

To ensure full consideration or the 4-B alternative, however, NCDOT must amend the current draft EIS to include 4-B. The current draft EIS paints an unclear picture about NCDOT's intent for the 4-B alternative. The draft notes that the City is working "with NCDOT" to modify the Alternate (section 8.4.3), but also describes the ADC Alternate as "eliminated" from consideration (in chapter 2).

Before the ADC or the public in Asheville and Buncombe County can provide informed comment on the issues raised by this draft EIS, the document must be amended to reflect the 4-B community alternative. We believe it important that evaluation of the 4-B alternative proceed in tandem with the other alternatives under consideration. 2-30

Furthermore, we urge NCDOT to engage again the public process that has served the 4-B alternative well to this point. The City of Asheville's Technical Review Committee must be provided an opportunity to review and comment on NCDOT's alterations to the 4-B Alternative, as should the Asheville Design Center. Also, NCDOT's revised Alternative 4-B should be presented to the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commissioner as soon as possible to ensure that the alternative considered by NCDOT in its environmental review process is consistent with the intentions of the community. 21-4

Finally, we note that the current draft EIS does not adequately evaluate the consistency of the project alternatives with the City of Asheville's 2025 Plan (2025 Plan). Though there is discussion on this plan in Section 1.7.4, consideration of the impacts of the connector with regard to land-use and transportation design in 3.2.1.3 is not quantified. Neither does the draft consider the cumulative land-use impact of the Connector on the 2025 Plan in Chapter 4.2. Consistency with the City of Asheville's long-term growth plan is a key measure by which the community will weigh these alternative proposals. We ask that the draft EIS be amended to reflect this important information. 2-31

Sincerely,

David A. Johnson

David Johnson, Ph.D., FAICP
Chair-Elect, Asheville Design Center

Southern
Environmental
Law Center

29 North Market Street, Suite 605
Asheville, NC 28801-2934
828-285-9125
Fax 828-285-9181
druley@selcnc.org

June 21, 2008

Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D.
North Carolina Dept. of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: Comments on Draft EIS, I-26 Connector

Dear Mr. Thorpe:

These comments on the Draft EIS for the I-26 Connector are submitted on behalf of the Western North Carolina Alliance and the Southern Environmental Law Center.

The Draft EIS fails to serve its purpose of providing a "full and fair discussion of significant environmental issues" and of informing decisionmakers and the public "of the reasonable alternatives which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts..." 40 CFR § 1502.1.

First, the Draft EIS is premature and incomplete because the DOT and FHWA released it before numerous very significant actions were resolved and assessments were completed. Foremost among these unresolved and incomplete matters are (1) full review and inclusion into the EIS of the alternative designed by the Asheville Design Center (ADC); (2) the cumulative impacts assessment of the I-26 Connector combined with other reasonably foreseeable transportation projects in the Asheville region; (3) completion of a new project-level traffic forecast, which is highly significant to the number of lanes on Section A of the Connector; and (4) completion of other studies and assessments, such as the historic architecture studies. Draft EIS at S-18. The rush to release this Draft EIS in the face of these unresolved and incomplete matters deprived the decisionmakers and the public of the opportunity to review and comment and will require the publication of a supplemental Draft EIS once these assessments are completed and the information is available to the public.

Second, the DOT and the FHWA failed to incorporate the primary goals of the Community Coordinating Committee ("CCC) Report into the project's purpose and need, as requested by the City of Asheville and numerous members of the public. Draft EIS at 1-1, 1-3, and 1-6. Chief among these goals of the CCC Report are (1) separation of local and interstate traffic; (2) matching the scale of the project to the character of the community, and (3) minimizing neighborhood, business, and environmental impacts.

CCC Report at 2. The Draft EIS erroneously asserted that the CCC goals should not be used to eliminate the evaluation of "viable" alternatives. Draft EIS at 1-7. To the contrary, any alternative that does not separate local from interstate traffic and otherwise minimize impacts cannot "solve the transportation problem," id., and is not viable. The DOT and the FHWA should recognize this directly by incorporating the primary CCC goals into the project's purpose and need.

Third, the Draft EIS failed to explore and evaluate "all reasonable alternatives." 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(a)(emphasis added). For section A of the project, the Draft EIS considered only the single alternative of an eight-travel-lane highway, and refused to consider the reasonable alternatives of either a six-lane highway or six lanes with auxiliary lanes. Draft EIS at 2-54. This deficiency is further addressed later in these comments, and the Western North Carolina Alliance and the Southern Environmental Law Center already have submitted extensive comments on the lanes issue that are hereby incorporated by reference. See Comments dated November 10, 2006.

For section B of the project, the Draft EIS failed to include the ADC-designed alternative that meets the goals of the CCC Report and the AIA principles of context-sensitive design and that is strongly supported by the City of Asheville. Draft EIS at 2-43. Beyond this huge omission, the Draft EIS purportedly considered three alternatives for section B of the project. Id. However, two of these alternatives do not separate local from interstate traffic and otherwise do not meet the goals of the CCC Report or otherwise address the needs of this community, and hence are not truly viable alternatives. Thus, for section B, as for section A, this Draft EIS contains only one truly viable alternative. After so much time and expense have gone into this project, for the DOT and the FHWA to consider only one viable alternative in sections A and B of the project flouts NEPA, the public process, and the interests and expressed goals of the City of Asheville and the larger regional community.

Finally, as detailed later in these comments, the analysis of impacts in this Draft EIS is inadequate in numerous respects.

## I. THE DRAFT EIS IS PREMATURE AND INCOMPLETE.

### A. The Draft EIS Does Not Include The ADC Alternative Or Any Description Or Analysis Of That Alternative, Its Design Principles, Or Its Support From The City Of Asheville And The Local Community.

The Draft EIS recognized that the ADC has designed an alternative based on the principles of the CCC Report and the AIA principles of context-sensitive design that was being evaluated as of the publication of the Draft EIS and that, if this alternative is determined to be viable, "additional studies will be necessary prior to the selection of a preferred alternative." Draft EIS at S-18, 1-8. This piecemeal approach is confusing to the public and inconsistent with NEPA -- if the alternative is viable, and all indications are that it is, a supplemental Draft EIS will be necessary to compare the ADC alternative with the other alternatives and to give the public the opportunity to comment on these

alternatives together. NEPA requires that the Draft EIS "[d]evote substantial treatment to each alternative considered in detail...so that reviewers may evaluate their comparative merits." 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(b). The comparative evaluation of the ADC alternative required by NEPA only can be provided in a supplemental Draft EIS.

Beyond this premature and piecemeal approach, the Draft EIS is confusing and inadequate in its treatment of the ADC's multiyear effort and alternative design. As noted above, the initial sections of the Draft EIS describe an ADC alternative that is undergoing further evaluation. Draft EIS at S-18, 1-8. In contrast, a later section of the Draft EIS stated that the ADC alternative was determined not to be reasonable and was eliminated from further study. Draft EIS at 2-42. This approach to the ADC alternative erroneously created the impression that there are two ADC alternatives when, in fact, there is but one alternative, based on the principles of the CCC Report and the AIA principles of context-sensitive design. This single alternative has undergone modifications to meet engineering and operational concerns, but, so far, it is the only alternative proposed that meets the essential goals of separating local from interstate traffic while minimizing the footprint of the facility, Draft EIS at 2-38, and otherwise meets the goals of the CCC Report and the AIA principles of context-sensitive design.

Moreover, the Draft EIS fails to mention or address the strong community support for the ADC alternative, including the support of the City of Asheville, or how this community has worked to create an alternative that meets transportation needs while also minimizing the negative impacts and maximizing the benefits of the project. The Draft EIS should not have been published without this alternative, rather than publishing the confusing, erroneous, and incomplete treatment of the ADC alternative found in this document.

B. The Cumulative Impacts Assessment Is A Very Significant Analysis That, Like The ADC Alternative, Will Require A Supplemental EIS.

It is shocking that the Draft EIS was published before the preparation of the cumulative impacts assessment of this project combined with the many other projects that are reasonably foreseeable in the Asheville region. Draft EIS at S-18. The cumulative impacts of the project, combined with other reasonably foreseeable expansions of I-26 and other highways in this area, are perhaps the most significant environmental effect on the region and its future, yet it is absent from this Draft EIS. Merely including this assessment in the Final EIS, as the DOT and FHWA appear to intend, id., would not comport with NEPA.

It is well-known that the DOT is planning o expand over 40 contiguous miles of the existing and planned I-26 in Buncombe and Henderson Counties:

(1) this project, the I-26 Connector, approximately 5.5 miles of either six or eight lanes;
(2) a 13.6-mile segment running from Hendersonville to Buncombe County that is proposed to be six lanes (Project I-4400);;

(3) an 8.6-mile segment running from the northern end of Project I-4400 to the City of Asheville that is proposed to be six lanes (Project I-4700); and

(4) a 15-mile segment running from the City of Asheville north essentially to Mars Hill (Project FS-0113B) that is proposed to be six lanes, as well as Project A-10, which is upgrading the existing road in this segment to interstate standards.

A federal court has held directly that the DOT must consider the cumulative impacts of all of these projects before proceeding with any of them. Western North Carolina Alliance v. N.C. Dept. of Transportation, 312 F. Supp. 2d 765. 773 (E.D. N.C. 2003). In light of this ruling, the publication of this Draft EIS prior to the preparation of this analysis is a plain violation of NEPA.

The combined and cumulative impacts of these reasonably foreseeable projects on total motor vehicle traffic and number of miles traveled, air pollution, water pollution, growth, land use and sprawl, development patterns, open spaces, and quality of life are a critical and significant issue that cannot be left for later analysis or included only in the Final EIS. An overwhelming number of authorities have noted the connection between larger highways, more traffic, sprawl, land use, and air pollution, among other impacts:

"Transportation is often considered the single greatest force shaping land use ... the expansion or widening of highway and road systems shapes the patterns of new development." Institute of Transportation Engineers, Smart Growth Transportation Guidelines, An ITE Recommended Practice (2003), at 16-17.

"No single force has had a greater impact on the pattern of land development in American cities in this century than highways ... Highway transportation improvements abetted other market forces that encouraged increasing numbers of households and firms to pick suburban locations." Terry Moore and Paul Thorsnes, The Transportation/Land Use Connection, American Planning Association, Planning Association Report No. 448/449, at 2. (1994).

"The land-use patterns and transportation systems in most of the areas developed since World War II emphasize the single-occupant vehicle and provide fewer choices of transportation modes and ways to reduce congestion." Institute of Transportation Engineers, Smart Growth Transportation Guidelines, An ITE Recommended Practice (2003), at 16.

After World War II, federal funding for highway construction opened vast areas of land for development. A survey of experts by the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae") declared "More than any other single measure, the 1956 act created the decentralized, automobile-dependent metropolis we know today."

"Automotive transportation allowed and encouraged radical changes in the form of cities and the use of land. Cheap land in the outer parts of cities and beyond became attractive to developers, much of it being converted from agricultural uses." Hornberger, Kell, and

Perkings, Fundamentals of Traffic Engineering, 13th Edition, Institute of Transportation Studies, UCB (1982).

"Although there are other factors that play a role [in urban sprawl], reliance on the automobile has been most significant..." John Edwards, Transportation and Traffic Engineering Handbook, Institute of Transportation Engineers/Prentice Hall (1982).

For all of these reasons, the DOT and the FHWA must do a very thorough and detailed analysis of the cumulative impacts of all reasonably foreseeable transportation projects in the Asheville region. The Draft EIS should not have been published absent this analysis, and a supplemental Draft EIS is necessary to correct this NEPA violation.

C. The Draft EIS Should Not Have Been Published Prior To Completion And Analysis Of The Updated Traffic Forecast.

The completion, analysis, and application of an updated traffic forecast based on a new traffic model, Draft EIS at S-18, is yet another highly significant evaluation that should have occurred prior to the publication of the Draft EIS. As the history of this project and its traffic forecasts has shown, these forecasts can vary dramatically. Draft EIS at 1-35 to 1-43. Moreover, these forecasts have a substantial bearing on the very significant issue of the size of this project and the number lanes, especially in Section A of the project. Lastly, slightly downward changes from the existing traffic forecast would make the alternative of six travel lanes in Section A even more feasible, even applying the DOT's own erroneous requirement of meeting LOS D at all segments and intersections at all times of the day. Accordingly, disclosure and analysis of the revised traffic forecast is necessary in a supplemental Draft EIS.

## II. THE PURPOSE AND NEED SHOULD INCLUDE THE PRIMARY GOALS OF THE CCC REPORT.

On January 14, 2008, SELC submitted comments requesting that the primary goals of the CCC Report be included in the project's purpose and need. A copy of these prior comments are included with and incorporated into these comments. Chief among these goals is the separation of local traffic from interstate traffic. The City of Asheville also has supported including the CCC goals in the project's purpose and need. The Draft EIS is inadequate because it failed to include any of the CCC goals within the project's purpose and need and failed to evaluate the alternatives fully with reference to these goals.

## III. THE DRAFT EIS FAILED TO CONSIDER, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires agencies to "study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available

resources." 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(E). Consistent with this statutory directive, the NEPA regulations require that

> Federal agencies shall, to the fullest extent possible: [u]se the NEPA process to identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to proposed actions that will avoid or minimize adverse effects of these actions upon the quality of the human environment.

40 C.F.R. § 1500.2(e) (emphasis added). Reinforcing the emphasis on consideration of alternatives, the regulations further provide that alternatives are "the heart of the environmental impact statement," 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14, and that agencies "shall rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives." Id. (emphasis added); Route 9 Opposition Legal Fund v. Mineta, 75 Fed. Appx. 152, 156 (4th Cir. 2003) (unpublished opinion).

A primary goal of NEPA is to ensure that

> federal agencies infuse in project planning a thorough consideration of environmental values. The consideration of alternatives requirement furthers that goal by guaranteeing that agency decisionmakers have before them and take into proper account all possible approaches to a particular project (including total abandonment of the project) which would alter the environmental impact and the cost-benefit balance.

Alaska Wilderness Recreation Tourism Association v. Morrison, 67 F.3d 723, 729 (9th Cir. 1995), quoting Bob Marshall Alliance, 852 F.2d 1223, 1228 (9th Cir. 1988), cert. denied, 489 U.S. 1066 (1989) (emphasis added). In the context of significant highway projects in urban areas, "all reasonable alternatives" should included options such as Transportation System Management (TSM) and mass transit, as well as alternative alignments and other design considerations. Davis v. Mineta, 302 F. 3d 1104, 1120-1122 (10th Cir. 2002). "The existence of a viable but unexamined alternative renders an environmental impact statement inadequate." Resources Ltd. v. Robertson, 35 F.3d 1300, 1307 (9th Cir. 1994).

### A. NEPA Requires That The DOT And The FHWA Consider And Address The Alternatives Of Six Lanes And Six Lanes Plus Auxiliary Lanes In Section A.

For many years, SELC and many others in this community have been advocating that the DOT and the FHWA consider alternatives of less than eight travel lanes. For all of those years, the DOT has equally stubbornly insisted on proposing only the single alternative of eight travel lanes, at least on Section A of the project, even though that significant decision was made long before this Connector EIS process and at a time when future traffic projections were considerably higher than the present projections. On November 10, 2006, SELC submitted extensive comments addressing the lanes issue and other issues bearing on reasonable alternatives. Because the Draft EIS adds relatively little that is new to the lanes analysis in Section A, those comments are still valid and

they are attached and incorporated. To avoid repetition, the comments below address only points that arise in this Draft EIS.

For the first time, this Draft EIS publicly acknowledged that there is no formal or regulatory requirement that defines the Level of Service (LOS) for this or any other highway. Draft EIS at 1-47. Thus, the setting of the Level of Service, and the decision that all segments of this project must meet that LOS at all times, are choices that the DOT and the FHWA have made. These choices violate the law because they are significant actions that were made outside the NEPA process, and in fact were made years before this Draft EIS, with no public input or consideration of the environmental effects of these choices. Draft EIS at 1-48 and November 10, 2006 Comments, attached.

Also for the first time, this Draft EIS publicly acknowledged that, as of 2002, the DOT was recommending an eight-lane highway that would have provided LOS F based on the most current traffic forecasts at that time. Draft EIS at 1-38. Plainly, in the light of the current and much-lower traffic forecasts, the decision to achieve LOS D now is an after-the-fact justification for the eight lanes decision made at that time. Beyond this, the Draft EIS stated that the DOT had determined that more than eight lanes "may not be practical for the project." Id. The Draft EIS is inadequate because it failed to explain what it meant by "impractical," what factors went into this determination, and how these same factors might bear on the choice between six and eight lanes now. Many area residents, especially those living in West Asheville, believe that eight lanes "is not practical for this project" due to the multiple impacts of the larger highway and our community's desire to avoid becoming a mini-Atlanta.

Moreover, although the DOT and FHWA are trying to pretend otherwise, the choice of the LOS, and the decision to require that LOS from all segments at all times, are not dictated by the purpose and need of this project. The "need" for the project merely states that I-240 needs additional capacity; it does not specify how much capacity or a required LOS. Draft EIS at 1-3. Similarly, the "purpose" of the project includes "to improve the capacity of the existing I-240 west of Asheville to accommodate the existing and forecasted (2030 design year) traffic in this growing area." Id. Again, this purpose does not specify how much capacity or a required LOS; the word "accommodate" is non-specific and could apply to LOS A, B, C, D, or E.

Under these circumstances, the 2004 MPO resolution requesting that the DOT design the Connector with as few lanes as possible to meet the project travel demand and the purpose and need weighs heavily in favor of considering the alternatives of six travel lane and six lanes plus auxiliary lanes. The meager data concerning these alternatives contained in the Draft EIS shows that these alternatives, especially the latter, would provide increased capacity and would accommodate forecasted traffic.

Focusing on the alternative of six travel lanes plus auxiliary lanes, the CORSIM data summarized in the Draft EIS shows that is little, if any, functional difference between eight travel lanes and six lanes with auxiliary lanes. In the northbound direction, there was only a three-second difference in average travel time during the peak hour, and

but a .5 mph difference in average speed between these two configurations. Draft EIS at 1-45, Table 1-4. Similarly, in the southbound direction, there was a 3.8-second difference in average travel time, and a .6 mph difference in average travel speed.[1] Between six lanes and eight lanes, these differences were mildly larger, especially in the northbound direction, but still not significant. The CORSIM analysis plainly indicated that a six-lane highway, or six lanes with auxiliary lanes, would function very well and provide an acceptable overall level of service throughout the Connector.

Using the HCM and AASHTO guidelines, the alternative of six lanes with auxiliary lanes provided LOS D on all highway segments, and on all other segment/interchanges except for three interchanges, which resulted in LOS E. Draft EIS at 2-10. As to these three interchanges, there are steps other than additional lanes with can provide a better LOS, if that is truly needed. See Letters from Michael Moule, P.E. Combined with the CORSIM results, this HCM analysis showed that an alternative of six lanes, especially the alternative of six lanes with auxiliary lanes, would accommodate the forecasted traffic, meet the purpose and need, and otherwise is reasonable. The conclusion in the Draft EIS that this alternative does not meet the purpose and need has no reasonable basis and is arbitrary and illegal. To consider only a single alternative of eight travel lanes for Section A violated NEPA.

B. <u>The Draft EIS Must Consider The ADC Alternative That Meets The Goals Of The CCC Report And The AIA Principles Of Context-Sensitive Design</u>.

The ADC has designed an alternative for Part B that separates local from interstate traffic, minimizes the footprint of the project, promotes infill commercial and residential development, and otherwise is designed to achieve the goals of the CCC Report and the AIA principles of context-sensitive design. Absent the inclusion of this alternative in the Draft EIS, a supplemental Draft EIS will be necessary to analyze and compare this alternative and to allow for public comment and review.

As noted earlier, only one of the three alternatives for Part B considered in this Draft EIS meets the CCC goal of separating local from interstate traffic and thus is truly viable. Therefore, this Draft EIS considered only one alternative for Part A (eight lanes) and one viable alternative for Part B (no. 4). Such a restricted, predetermined approach to this project fell far short of NEPA's requirement to consider all reasonable alternatives.

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[1] The average speeds of 65-69 mph shown in the CORSIM table for these lane configurations far exceed any reasonable speed for this urban highway in rolling terrain. The Draft EIS ranges of suggested design speeds and failed to specify the design speed for this facility, Draft EIS at 1-66, a key factor in calculating LOS.

## IV. THE ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WAS INADEQUATE IN MULTIPLE RESPECTS.

The Draft EIS failed miserably in its lack of analysis of how this highway will impact the quality of life in Asheville and the region. Rather than providing data and analysis, the Draft EIS provide bland generalities or nothing at all. For example, there was no analysis of the number of acres condemned and what that will mean for the local tax base. There was no analysis of the alternatives, and especially the not-included ADC-designed alternative, in terms of promoting infill development and concentrated growth close to the city center versus sprawling growth north and south of the city. There was no analysis of the connection between West Asheville and downtown whether this project will provide better or worse linkages between these parts of the city. There was no serious analysis of future development along the French Broad River and how this project can or will interact with the burgeoning plans for this river district. There was no analysis of the future of Patton Avenue, and whether it will be part of an attractive boulevard into downtown or whether it will be part of an Atlanta-style freeway cutting the city into pieces. There was no analysis of how the alternatives meet each of the goals of the CCC Report. Overall, the analysis of impacts was cursory and conclusory.

The Draft EIS failed to mention or address the current price of gasoline, how this affecting travel demand and future traffic forecasts, and what is expected of oil and gasoline prices in the future and the impacts of the likely cost of fuel. Likewise, the Draft EIS entirely failed to address the significant issue of global climate change, and how larger highways tend to lead to greater carbon emissions. See "Increases In Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Highway Widening Projects," Sightline Institute (October 2007).

## CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated, the Draft EIS violated NEPA in multiple respects. A supplemental Draft EIS will be necessary to correct these deficiencies and to consider all reasonable alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ruley

Douglas A. Ruley

Southern
Environmental
Law Center

DG-0001
29 North Market Street, Suite 605
Asheville, NC 28801-2934
828-285-9125
Fax 828-285-9181
druley@selcnc.org

September 16, 2008

Vince Rhea, P.E.
N.C. Dept. of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: I-26 Connector, TIP No. I-2513

Dear Mr. Rhea:

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Western North Carolina Alliance and the Southern Environmental Law Center.

A primary purpose of these comments is to urge the DOT to address in a supplemental Draft EIS the alternative proposed by the Asheville Design Center (ADC), as modified by Figg Engineering and Lochner Engineering during consultations with the DOT, and to make this alternative the preferred alternative as this project moves forward.

This modified ADC alternative now has passed any conceivable test of engineering standards and there can be no question that this alternative is a reasonable alternative that must be addressed in a supplemental Draft EIS pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In fact, both Figg and Lochner considered that the original ADC alternative they presented to the DOT fully met all engineering standards for consideration as an alternative and inclusion in the Draft EIS. However, in an effort to work with DOT, they met multiple times with DOT staff and addressed multiple points the DOT raised, taking the ADC alternative through at least two further iterations to its current modified status. At this point, DOT representatives committed to Figg and Lochner that the modified ADC alternative, known as Alternative 4B, would be addressed as an alternative in the EIS process, and Board of Transportation member Alan Thornburg made a similar commitment to representatives of the City of Asheville. If the DOT fails to address this alternative through a supplemental EIS, such action not only would violate NEPA, it would mock the extensive process engaged in by the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and Figg and Lochner and call into question the DOT's good faith in engaging in this process.

2-16P

Beyond meeting engineering standards and inclusion a supplemental Draft EIS, the modified ADC alternative should be chosen as the preferred alternative. This alternative has strong support from the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and many members of the public. This alternative best meets the goals of the report of the Community Coordinating Committee, which was adopted by the City of Asheville and

Buncombe County. It is the only alternative that fully meets the Asheville 2025 Thoroughfare Plan. This alternative will take less land, leaving more land available for development and redevelopment, and will best preserve and augment the tax base of the City and County. It presents the only opportunity to unite all of these entities and the citizens of this region in support of this project design, and the DOT and the FWHA would be foolish not to seize this opportunity to move forward with the modified ADC alternative.

2-168

Previous comment letters have included extensive outlines of NEPA requirements for consideration of all reasonable alternatives which these comments will not repeat. Suffice it to say that failure to consider and address the modified ADC alternative in a supplemental EIS, and in the final EIS, would be a gross violation of NEPA.

For the reasons stated in previous comment letters, the DOT and FHWA are committing an equally gross violation of NEPA in failing to consider alternatives of less than eight travel lanes for Section A of this project. NEPA requires that, at a minimum, the DOT consider and address alternatives of six travel lanes and six lanes plus auxiliary lanes for Section A.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ruley

Douglas A. Ruley

DL0001

Oct. 15, 2008

asheville design center

8 College Street
Asheville, NC 28801
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

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Mr. Vincent J. Rhea P.E.
Project Engineer, PDEA Branch, NCDOT
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Subject: Comments on I-26 Connector (TIP Project I-2513)

Dear Mr. Rhea,

The Asheville Design Center appreciates the effort by NCDOT, in cooperation with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, to further develop the alternative that ADC presented last year, and to include it as Alternative 4b for Section B at the September 16th public hearing. The aerial visualization material for the alternatives was especially helpful. However, in order to give complete information to the stakeholders who will be deciding among the various alternatives, it is essential that Alternative 4b be included as a full alternative in a supplemental DEIS.

We have the following comments on various procedural and design aspects of the I-26 Connector project:

1. The March 2008 DEIS is incomplete in several respects, and we request that a supplemental DEIS address those deficiencies:

- Alternative 4b should be included as a full alternative in a supplemental DEIS. Alternative 4b has smaller impacts than other alternatives and has wide public support, as demonstrated at the September hearing. 2-30
- There are four alternatives for Section B and four alternatives for Section C, but only one alternative for section A,. We believe the community should have more than one option to consider for Section A, especially since this section has the largest number of residential relocations. NEPA requires that all reasonable alternatives be included. DOT's own traffic simulation shows that a six-lane highway can handle the projected traffic at speeds very close to those with an eight-lane highway. Therefore we request that a six-lane alternative be included in the DEIS for Section A. 2-154
- NCDOT should conduct a multi-disciplinary analysis of the land use, urban design, and property tax impacts of the alternatives. The current DEIS has only a cursory discussion of land use impacts. It does not compare the effects of different alternatives. It does not address the potential re-use of current highway right-of-way along Patton Avenue in Alternatives 4 and 4b. It does not examine opportunities for re-connecting neighborhoods and the local street system. It does not analyze the long-term effects of property takings or 4-14

property re-use on the city's tax base. It does not analyze the effect of reduced access to isolated properties.

- The DEIS does not address the cumulative impacts of this project combined with the proposed projects to widen I-26 north and south of this project.
- The DEIS needs to be updated to reflect the traffic projections that are scheduled to be completed in October.
- The DEIS does not quantify or compare the amounts of impervious surface for the alternatives.
- The DEIS does not adequately address the integration of other modes, including walking, bicycling, and transit. Alternatives 4 and 4b have opportunities to improve accessibility by all three of these modes.

4-14

2. It is very important that the Preferred Alternative meet the goals of the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) report and the City of Asheville's 2025 Plan, which call for separation of local and interstate traffic on the Smoky Park Bridge. Removing interstate traffic from the bridge and adjacent portions of Patton Avenue will allow new urban development along Patton Avenue, with Patton Avenue being more of a "Boulevard" section. Several street section alternates are laid out in the Transportation element of the 2025 Plan. Since Alternatives 2 and 3 do not meet the adopted City goals, we recommend that they be eliminated from further consideration.

2-100

3. Other major goals in the CCC report are: matching the scale of the project to the character of the community; and minimizing neighborhood, business, and environmental impacts. The alternatives as currently designed do not meet these goals. The alternatives retained for further study should be refined to reflect context-sensitive design principles. The alignment, and especially the interchanges, should fit into the urban framework. Sprawling suburban-type ramps are not appropriate along Patton Avenue. NCDOT should take advantage of the flexibility that is permitted by FHWA in developing "good design that is sensitive to its surrounding environment" (*Flexibility in Highway Design,* Federal Highway Administration). We urge serious consideration of the following design refinements:

- The design of the east side interchange (Alt. 4 & 4b) should be tightened up to save up to five houses in the Hill Street neighborhood. The westbound I-240 lanes could be moved adjacent to the eastbound lanes. Both roadways should be narrowed from three lanes to two lanes east of the Patton Avenue ramps. The westbound on-ramp and eastbound off-ramp could be designed as a typical half-diamond ramp, with right-angle turns where the ramps intersect a cross road that connects to Patton. This should allow preservation of the Hill Street neighborhood, as well as providing more land for potential infill development on the north side of Patton Avenue. There are several other design ideas that we have drawn up that we would like to share with you as well. We understand that there will be more opportunity to work this out as the design moves forward and we look forward to that conversation.
- In Alternative 4b, the west side interchange could be made more efficient by using a diamond ramp arrangement on the west side of I-26 at Patton Avenue, as is done with Alternative 4. The weaving problem could be solved by adding a new ramp, for traffic wanting to exit at Patton, from southbound I-26 near Riverside Drive to I-240 westbound near the river crossing; this would allow a single right-hand lane to handle all exiting traffic to Patton. The new ramp would take additional property along Riverside Drive, but this would be offset by smaller right-of-way needs along Patton; also, the Riverside Drive property, which is in the flood plain, will be taken in the future by the Wilma Dykeman Riverway Plan, which is part of DOT's approved Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Using a diamond ramp layout at Patton could also allow Patton to cross over I-26, as in Alternative 4. This is preferable in terms of urban design, visual impacts, and potential property re-use.
- In Alternative 4b, the length of elevated structure next to Riverside Cemetery and the Montford neighborhood could possibly be shortened. One option would be to reduce the number of lanes for

20-21

I-26 to two each way, and eliminate any space between the northbound and southbound roadways. Another option would be to shift Riverside Drive to the west side of the railroad. This would create a wider right-of-way for the new highway and allow I-26 to come down to grade further south. As in the previous comment, this would entail taking land in the flood plain that is already programmed for acquisition for the Wilma Dykeman Riverway. 28-21

4. The new bridge over the French Broad can be an icon for Asheville. It should be designed using techniques which will result in a dramatic, attractive, and cost-effective structure. Examples include the Cooper River Bridge in Charleston, SC and the Linn Cove Viaduct on the Blue Ridge Parkway. 28-22

5. There appears to be some confusion about the design standards used for the project. The DEIS refers to a 50 mph design speed for the I-240 portion of the project. However, a sheet received from Figg Inc. shows a design speed of 60 mph for I-240. We request that NCDOT consider using slower speeds for certain elements of the project, as permitted by FHWA guidelines, in order to reduce the project's footprint in sensitive areas. Examples are the I-240 bridges over the French Broad River in Alternative 4b, and the ramps to and from Patton Avenue in all alternatives. 28-23

6. We question the cost estimates for Alternative 4b that were presented at the September public hearing. The table shows almost identical right-of-way costs for Alternatives 4 and 4b. However, the north end of Alternative 4 takes a large swath of land west of the river and north of Emma Road that is not touched by Alternative 4b, which uses existing DOT right-of-way for its northern section. DOT's own figures show that Alt. 4 takes 84 acres vs. only 56 acres for Alt. 4b. We also believe that the design refinements described above could result in significantly lower costs for both construction and right-of-way. We are open to continuing our conversation with Asheville representatives from NCDOT on this, and we can share our information on property if it will help the conversation. 28-24

In summary, we believe that Alternatives 2 and 3 for Section B should be rejected, since they do not conform to the City of Asheville's adopted 2025 Plan. Furthermore, they have the largest property impacts. Alternative 2 takes Westgate Shopping Center, which would have a negative impact on the tax base for the City of Asheville. It also takes numerous houses in the Vandalia Avenue neighborhood. Alternative 3 takes the largest number of houses, including many in the Burton Street neighborhood. While these alternatives have lower capital costs than Alternatives 4 or 4b, this does not account for financial benefits to the City and County with 4 and 4b, due to fewer property takes and valuable land along Patton Avenue being returned to the tax base. 2-155 5-24

For Alternatives 4 and 4b, we believe that costs and impacts can be reduced if the recommended design refinements are made. We believe that the final analysis will show that Alternative 4b has significantly smaller impacts on property and streams than Alternative 4, and that the capital cost estimates for Alternatives 4 and 4b will be comparable. Therefore we urge the adoption of Alternative 4b as the Preferred Alternative.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project.

Respectfully,

Joe Minicozzi
Chair, Asheville Design Center

cc:
Representative Heath Shuler
Mayor Terry Bellamy, City of Asheville
Chairman Nathan Ramsey, Buncombe County Commission
Senator Martin Nesbitt
Representative Susan Fisher
Representative Charles Thomas
Representative Bruce Goforth
Commissioner Chuck McGrady, TAC Chair
Mr. Alan Thornburg, NCDOT Board Member
Mr. Drew Joiner, P.E., NCDOT Human Environment Unit
Ms. Carrie Runser-Turner, Transportation Coordinator, Land-of-Sky Region

December 19, 2008

Mr. Drew Joyner, P.E.
NCDOT – Human Environment Unit
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1583

Dear Drew:

The Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce has completed a comprehensive analysis on the four design alternatives including 2, 3, 4, and 4B of Section B of the I-26 Connector project. In its deliberations, the Chamber dedicated thoughtful consideration to the following criteria in evaluating the design options:

- Maintain the view-shed along the French Broad River
- Minimize the impact on the Montford Historic District, the oldest local Historic District in Asheville – particularly related to noise and visual impact to the District and Riverside Cemetery
- Maintain Westgate Plaza and protection of land value along the west side of the French Broad River
- Minimize the impact on the developable land along the east side of the French Broad River north of Patton Avenue
- Maintain the potential of a walkable, pedestrian friendly connection across the French Broad River from east and west
- Minimize the repetitive local eastbound and westbound travel distance and gasoline consumption
- Minimize the impact on the east-west skyline with I-26 crossing under Patton Avenue
- Minimize the environmental impact on the French Broad River and banks of the river
- Provide future opportunities on the east side of the river to allow for better access to downtown from West Asheville

After extensive research, input and consideration of the four designs as presented in the 2008 NCDOT plans and three dimensional simulation models, the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors voted on November 25, 2008 to recommend the selection of Alternative 3 for Section B in the NCDOT I-26 Connector project. Alternative 3 meets the requirements of the criteria captured above concerning the quality of life, economic prosperity, protection of the environment, the safety of visitors and local citizens, and the beauty of the Asheville community. The Chamber Board encourages NCDOT to study the existing interchange on the west side of the river for simplification and looks forward to discussing important aesthetics considerations for the project and signature enhancements of the bridges.

We appreciate the talent and resources that NCDOT has made to this critical project in our community.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Lutovsky
President & CEO

Laura Copeland
Vice President Workforce Development/Public Policy

| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Rhea, Vincent J |
| **To:** | Weisner, Jeff; Trencansky, Peter |
| **Subject:** | FW: I-26 ConnectUs Project comment letter |
| **Date:** | Tuesday, December 18, 2012 9:49:42 AM |
| **Attachments:** | i-26 ConnectUs Project comment letter.doc<br>Draft EIS comments - June 2008.pdf |

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Gentlemen
FYI & files.
Vince

-----Original Message-----
From: Julie Mayfield [mailto:Julie@wnca.org]
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2012 9:41 AM
To: Rhea, Vincent J
Cc: Weaver, Derrick G; Swain, James J; Tipton, Ricky A
Subject: I-26 ConnectUs Project comment letter

Hello Vince - I hope this message finds you well. On behalf of the I-26 ConnectUs Project, I am submitting the attached letter with our revised goal statement and a list of issues we would like to see addressed in the EIS that is under revision. I also would like to resubmit the Alliance's comment letter to the 2008 EIS, prepared by Doug Ruley at SELC, to ensure the comments there that are still relevant are also addressed in the revised EIS.

Please let me know if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you and your DOT team on this project in the months and years to come.

All the best
Julie

Julie V. Mayfield, Executive Director
Western North Carolina Alliance
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
Asheville, NC 28801
828-258-8737
828-258-9241 fax

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WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
ALLIANCE
*Protecting our mountains, rivers, and forests*

Vince Rhea, P.E.
N.C. Dept. of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Re: I-26 Connector, TIP No. I-2513

Dear Mr. Rhea:

Now that work on the I-26 Connector Project has begun again, the I-26 ConnectUs Group would like to provide the following comments to you and DOT regarding our hoped for goals for the project and the new EIS. The I-26 ConnectUs Group represents most of the potentially impacted neighborhoods, including West Asheville, Burton Street, East-West Asheville, WECAN, and Montford. Though we no longer have a specific representative for the Emma community, we continue to consider the interests of that neighborhood. The group also has participation from the Asheville Housing Authority, Christians for a United Community, the design community and, of course, the Western North Carolina Alliance.

The I-26 ConnectUs Project has revised its 2009 goal statement to better reflect the current status of the project and the need for all parties involved to step back from earlier, entrenched positions. Our current goal statement, or vision, for the project appears below, and we would anticipate being able to support a project that met these goals:

> To ensure the long term health and success of the economy, citizens, and environment of Asheville and the surrounding area, the final design and construction of the Asheville I-26 Connector should achieve the following:
>
> - Safe travel for interstate and local traffic
> - Improved connections for all modes of local traffic
> - Minimal destruction of neighborhoods, homes, and businesses
> - Minimal harm to air and water quality
> - Improvements that match the scale and character of Asheville

In addition, there are several issues that we request the new EIS specifically address. Many of these are standard considerations for EISs, but we want to be sure DOT understands what we think is most important and provides information that will help Asheville and DOT make the best possible decisions around this project. Therefore, we request that the new EIS include the following;

- Recognition of the importance of the environment and character of Asheville, their role in promoting regional tourism, and an analysis of the impacts the various alternatives will have on these.
- An assessment of the impacts the alternatives will have on neighborhood and city connectivity via local streets and documentation of specific impacts to neighborhoods.

- An analysis of how this project helps advance or impede the goals and implementation of various plans adopted by the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and the region, including the Long Range Transportation Plan; the City's 2025 plan, Greenway Master Plan, Transit Master Plan, Pedestrian Plan, and Bicycle Plan; and the County's new Greenway Master Plan.

- An analysis of whether improvements to local roads and/or transportation demand management strategies would be effective at reducing local traffic on I-26.
- A clear explanation of the traffic forecast and the resulting recommendation on the number of lanes, as well as the tradeoffs inherent in the relationship between the number of lanes and the level of service.
- A new traffic forecast that uses a revised local model to see if state and national trends in reduction of VMT is occurring in Asheville and what impact that might have on the project.
- An analysis of the application of the NCDOT Complete Streets Policy and the new NCDOT Public Health Policy to this project and how this project advances or impedes the goals of these policies.
- A more complete analysis of the air and water quality impacts of the various alternatives.

For purposes of the EIS, we also note the addition of New Belgium to our community in the vicinity of this project, and we ask that the DOT consider in its design alternatives providing easier highway access for New Belgium truck traffic that reduces the impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

Finally, we encourage DOT to focus the funding available for this project on Section B. We realize the only currently available funding is for Section A through West Asheville, but Section A is a much lower priority and, if funding continues to be limited, should be built after Section B. In no case should Section A be built before or apart from Section B, as that would be unnecessarily destructive to neighborhoods, homes, and the environment and would not address any transportation need.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. As members and leaders of this community, we look forward to working with you and others to design and chose the alternative that will best serve Asheville and its citizens and visitors for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Julie V. Mayfield
Executive Director

Cc: Asheville City Council
Buncombe County Commission
Paul Black, French Broad River MPO
Jay Swain, NCDOT Division 13
Rick Tipton, NCDOT Division 13

September 26, 2013

Mr. Clarence Coleman
Dr. Unwanna Dabney
North Carolina Division
Federal Highway Administration
310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410
Raleigh, NC 27601

Re: I-26 Connector Project, TIP Project Number I-2513

Dear Mr. Coleman and Dr. Dabney:

As elected leaders of the region and board members of the French Broad River MPO, we are writing to formally request that FHWA reconsider the current requirement imposed on the I-26 Connector Project that all segments of the project meet Level of Service (LOS) D or better at all times of the day. In place of that current requirement, we ask that FHWA consider making a design exception, or otherwise allowing flexibility, that would enable consideration of a smaller footprint that would safely accommodate the anticipated capacity demands.

This request stems from an ad-hoc group of Buncombe County and City of Asheville elected and community leaders who came together in March to seek agreement on long-standing, divisive issues that have surrounded this project for well over a decade. The overarching goal of this group is to reach consensus on these divisive issues, secure broad community support for the project, and thus see the project completed in a timely manner. More specifically, this group seeks to:

1. Move the project forward expeditiously to address congestion, safety, and commerce
2. Identify ways to bring the project cost down to ensure value to the taxpayers and competitive ranking within the state prioritization process; and
3. Ensure minimal harm to neighborhoods and the environment.

As other elected leaders in the region, we share these goals. Because the LOS requirement on this project serves to increase the project cost, increase the community impacts, and is a major point of contention in the community, we endorse this specific request to re-examine the LOS requirement.

**Background**

We understand that FHWA does not dictate the number of lanes required for any particular project. We also understand that the AASHTO Green Book and federal regulations recommend a minimum of LOS D for urban freeway projects, a recommendation that FHWA expressly, and quite unusually, imposed as a requirement on the I-26 Connector Project in July 2004. It is also true,

however, that FHWA allows design exceptions to Green Book standards and has done so on other projects in North Carolina, particularly in urban environments.

As you know, the various demand analyses and modeling done for this project over the years have shown a wide range of projected traffic volumes for the design year. Despite these variations, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has only ever seriously considered eight travel lanes and two auxiliary lanes for Section A through West Asheville to carry this projected traffic. NCDOT's stated rationale for this consistent position is that the projected traffic volume cannot meet LOS D if there are fewer lanes. So while FHWA may not dictate the specific number of lanes, the LOS requirement imposed on this project has the same effect.

**Design Exception Request**

In light of our collective desire to move the project forward, we are writing to ask you to reconsider this LOS D requirement and consider making a design exception, or otherwise allowing flexibility. FHWA's webpage on design exceptions states:

> While FHWA-approved standards apply to all projects on the [National Highway System], we encourage flexibility and a context-sensitive approach which considers the full range of project needs and the impacts to the community and natural and human environment. Design exceptions are a useful tool that may be employed to achieve a balance of project needs and community values.

The website also states:

> NHS geometric design standards provide a range of acceptable values for highway features, and FHWA encourages the use of this flexibility to achieve a design which best suits the desires of the community while satisfying the purpose for the project and needs of its users.
>
> Design values should be selected based on an evaluation of the context of the facility, needs of all the various project users, safety, mobility (i.e., traffic performance), human and natural environmental impacts, and project costs. For most situations, there is sufficient flexibility within the range of acceptable values to achieve a balanced design. However, when this is not possible, a design exception may be considered and be appropriate.

Finally, the website states that "Design exceptions may be approved at any time prior to finalizing the design of a project," so it should not be too late for consideration of our request.

FHWA has a clear system for considering design exceptions to its geometric design standards. LOS, however, is not a geometric design standard, and is not listed as one of the

13 controlling criteria for which a formal design exception is required (see FHWA's *Mitigation Strategies for Design Exceptions*, July 2007, p. 6). That would perhaps indicate FHWA actually has more flexibility in determining LOS for any given project.

Despite the fact that LOS is not one of these controlling criteria, the justifications for design exceptions cited in the 2007 *Mitigation Strategies* report might nevertheless be instructive in considering flexibility in a required LOS. Those justifications include:

- Impacts to the natural environment
- Social or right-of-way impacts
- Preservation of historic or cultural resources
- Sensitivity to context
- Sensitivity to community values
- Construction or right-of-way costs

Additionally, with regard to reconstruction projects, which is what Section A through West Asheville would be, this 2007 report states, "According to FHWA, design exceptions are required for projects involving an existing alignment or corridor for which reconstruction is proposed. Design exceptions may be more common on reconstruction projects because of additional site constraints and, in some areas, years of development and land use changes." (p. 7).

Based on the design exception factors listed above and the extensive residential and business development in this corridor, we believe the LOS requirement for the I-26 Connector Project deserves the kind of flexibility envisioned by FHWA for geometric design exceptions. Further elaboration of these factors in the context of the I-26 Connector Project appears below:

1. <u>Construction and Right-of-Way Costs</u>
   The 8/10 lanes currently being considered for Section A have an impact on the cost of the project. If a design exception on the LOS requirement allows NCDOT to build fewer lanes and still accommodate projected traffic demand, the project cost will come down and the project will be more competitive in the state prioritization process. It would also be helpful, in this context, for us to better understand the role that the auxiliary lanes play in the traffic capacity and LOS D analysis, as well as what they add to the cost.

2. <u>Social or Right-of-Way Impacts</u>
   The 8/10 lanes currently being considered have significant impacts on residents and businesses in West Asheville. Allowing a design exception that results in a smaller footprint will reduce these impacts as well as community opposition to the project.

3. <u>Sensitivity to Context/Construction and Right-of-Way Costs</u>

For many reasons, including the non-car travel preferences of the millennial generation and continuous reductions in national vehicle miles travelled statistics, travel demand models across the state and country are showing greatly reduced projected demand. We think it likely that this trend holds true in Asheville, especially given improved land use planning in Buncombe County and recently expanded bike facilities and transit service in Asheville. We are wary of overbuilding a costly and impactful highway when a smaller footprint could suffice should current projections prove to be high.

4. Sensitivity to Context/Sensitivity to Community Values
   Inherent in the LOS requirement is a judgment about the appropriate amount of congestion. Given that a lower level of congestion means higher project costs and community impacts, as regional leaders, we would like to better understand options involving different levels of congestion and impacts. We are, perhaps, better judges of what tradeoffs are appropriate for our region, but we need a better understanding of those trade-offs – one that we do not have given FHWA's insistence on LOS D. Providing a design exception would allow you, NCDOT, and us to more carefully examine and determine the right balance between cost, impacts, and congestion.

5. Sensitivity to Context/Sensitivity to Community Values
   We note that there is a move away from urban freeways, with several having been dismantled in recent years. Cities are focusing more on preserving or rebuilding their urban fabric, and we want the I-26 Connector to enhance Asheville's sense of place rather than diminish it. We want a highway that allows travelers to realize they are in a special place rather than just pushes them through it. Taking a one-size-fits all approach that results in an 8/10 lane highway that could be anywhere and does not respect the context of a walkable, interconnected urban place runs counter to FHWA's efforts to promote sustainable highways.

**Traffic Capacity Analysis Concern**

On a separate but related note, we are concerned that NCDOT did not perform an accurate traffic capacity analysis in 2010. In that analysis, conducted by TGS Engineers, the traffic forecast assumed eight lanes of induced-demand on Section A through West Asheville and concluded that six lanes could not handle that volume (eight lanes of induced demand) and still meet LOS D. This is, perhaps, not surprising. We do not know, however, if the lower volume of six lanes' worth of induced demand on six lanes would meet LOS D.

While our primary request to you is to consider allowing flexibility on the LOS D requirement, we are concerned that the most recent traffic capacity analysis is not accurate or complete and does not provide you, NCDOT, or our region with correct information on which to move this project forward. Since this analysis matters for all the reasons mentioned above – project cost, community values, social impacts, and context – we ask that you look at whether this analysis needs to be redone to ensure it is correct and complete.

**Conclusion**

We very much want the I-26 Connector Project to move forward, and, by this letter, we are inviting FHWA into a conversation and partnership with us as we work to achieve community consensus around cost, community values, social impacts, and sensitivity to context. The specific items we ask you to consider and discuss with us are the following:

1. That you consider making a design exception to the recommended LOS D for urban freeways for the I-26 Connector Project, or otherwise allow a level of flexibility that would enable consideration of a smaller footprint for Section A that would safely accommodate the anticipated capacity demands; and

2. That you examine the 2010 traffic capacity analysis to determine if it was conducted properly or whether additional analysis of six lanes is warranted.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of these requests, and we hope the resulting conversation will advance the current, positive dialog between the City of Asheville and Buncombe County around this project. We cannot impress upon you enough the importance of the LOS issue to the success of these discussions, and we look forward to working with you and NCDOT to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Jan Davis
Chair, French Broad River MPO

U.S. Department of Transportation
**Federal Highway Administration**

**North Carolina Division**

310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 856-4346
(919) 747-7030
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ncdiv/

October 24, 2013

In Reply Refer To:
HDA-NC

Mr. Jan Davis
Chair, French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140
Asheville, NC 28806

Dear Mr. Davis:

Thank you for your September 26, 2013, letter regarding the Interstate 26 Connector project. As you are aware, the project known as the Interstate Connector has a long history and has been under development since 1995, when State and local leaders pursued the designation of U.S. Route 19/23 as part of the future Interstate System. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), in its agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), agreed to construct and upgrade the corridor to meet all standards of the Interstate System.

Your letter requests that we approve a design exception to the recommended Level of Service D for urban freeways for the I-26 Connector Project or flexibility for consideration of a smaller footprint for the project. We cannot act on your design exception request for two reasons. First, all requests for design exceptions must come to the FHWA through the NCDOT. The NCDOT has neither requested a design exception nor provided information in support of such a request. Secondly, a major component of the Interstate 26 Connector is to construct a new interstate highway to connect I-26 from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange southwest of Asheville to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville so that a corridor up to Tennessee may be designated as I-26. Federal law (title 23 U.S.C. §109(b)) and regulation (23 C.F.R. §625.4(a)) requires this project to accommodate the types and volumes of traffic anticipated for such project for the twenty-year period commencing on date of our approval of the plans, specifications, and estimates for actual construction of such project. For urban areas, FHWA has adopted through regulation, a level of service D requirement for Interstates in urban areas. FHWA has seldom added a new facility to the original Interstate system that did address anticipated future traffic.

Your second request asks that we examine the 2010 traffic capacity analysis to determine if it was conducted properly and if further analysis is warranted. In previous discussions with FHWA staff, the French Broad River MPO staff has been advised that the results of the traffic analysis being used for this project are based on the region's travel demand model. It is FHWA's opinion that unless volumes from an updated travel demand model are significantly different from the travel demand model data used for the 2010 traffic capacity analysis, further capacity analysis would not provide results that are considerably different from the 2010 analysis. We are willing to assist you in addressing travel demand through congestion management strategies in the

planning process. We are also willing to work with you and the NCDOT to implement the upcoming MAP-21 performance measures for the interstate system in your region and the establishment of targets to improve its performance.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with the FHWA. We welcome a meeting and continued dialogue with your group of elected and community leaders along with the NCDOT to address your concerns.

Sincerely,

For John F. Sullivan, III, P.E.
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. J. J. (Jay) Swain, Jr., PE, NCDOT, Division 13
Ms. Jennifer Harris, P.E., NCDOT, PDEA
Mr. Derrick Weaver, NCDOT, PDEA

The Town of Woodfin
90 Elk Mountain Road
Woodfin, NC 28804
828-253-4887 fax: 828-253-4700

**Resolution:** *Recommending the Construction of Eight (8) Lanes on the Proposed 1-26 Connector project to the North Carolina Department of Transportation*

**Passed August 16, 2005:**

***WHEREAS,*** the I-26 Connector project is a project in the approved Long Range Transportation Plan and an approved project in the TIP and is identified as TIP # I-2513: and

***WHEREAS,*** the Town of Woodfin is a member of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and supports a transportation planning process in the urbanized area that is comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing, and addresses public safety and local and regional economic needs; and

***WHEREAS,*** the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is responsible for designing and implementing projects in the TIP; and

***WHEREAS,*** the I-26 Connector project is in the stage of planning, and preliminary design; and

***WHEREAS,*** the Town of Woodfin finds the travel demand modeling assumptions in the 2030 Asheville Regional Travel Demand Model to be based on sound engineering judgment; and

***WHEREAS,*** the 2030 Asheville Regional Travel Demand Model indicates the need for the design of the section of I-240 that will accommodate the proposed I-26 Connector to include eight continuous lanes, and

***WHEREAS,*** the NCDOT is soliciting ongoing input from the French Broad River MPO and the local community on the design of the I-26 Connector project;

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF WOODFIN:***

That the Town of Woodfin recommends and requests that the NCDOT design and construct the section of I-240 that will accommodate the proposed I-26 Connector with no less than eight continuous lanes.

Ayes 6

Nays 0

Abstains 0

M. Jerry VeHaun
Mayor

Attest:

Cheryl Mears
Town Clerk

## Appendix A4

## Newsletters

(Note: Due to typographical error Newsletters 7 and 8 were never issued)

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# I-26 - Proposed Asheville Connector
## NCDOT TIP Project I-2513

*Issue No. 1* *March, 1998*

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**The North Carolina Department of Transportation proposes building a four-lane freeway connecting Interstate 26 southwest of Asheville to US 19/23/70 north of Asheville. When completed, the freeway will join I-26 near Sams Gap at the Tennessee state line with I-26 southwest of Asheville.**

**The project involves improving existing Interstate 240 from the Interstates 26/40/240 interchange southwest of Asheville to Patton Avenue and building a freeway on new location from Patton Avenue northward across the French Broad River to US 19/23/70 south of Broadway Street (SR 1781) in Asheville.**

**The project is included in the 1998-2004 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as project I-2513. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin in 1999 with construction to follow in 2001.**

### PROJECT NEED

**The extension of I-26 through Buncombe and Madison Counties northward to Tennessee will route additional traffic along the study corridor through Asheville. A traffic study and capacity analyses of I-240 southwest of Asheville confirms the need for improvements. The existing facility, including the Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River, will not accommodate future traffic demands at an acceptable level.**

### ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

**A Phase I Environmental Analysis completed in 1995 determined the study corridor for this project. Since the Phase I analysis, conceptual plans have been developed to determine reasonable and feasible alternatives within the study corridor. These alternatives include: improving the existing roadway southwest of Patton Avenue, and three alignments on new location north of Patton Avenue. Each of the new location alignments cross the French Broad River and tie into US 19-23-70 south of the Broadway Street interchange serving UNC-Asheville.**

**All alignments will be evaluated based on engineering, environmental and socio-economic factors before selecting a preferred alternative. Other factors include; costs, roadway safety, traffic growth, and maintenance of existing traffic service. Environmental factors include; potential impacts to historic sites, and wetland areas. The socio-economic factors include anticipated impacts to existing homes and businesses.**

#### *I-240 Southwest of Patton Avenue*

**The capacity analysis indicates existing I-240 will need eight lanes from the I-26 interchange to the I-240/Patton Avenue interchange to accommodate the estimated 2020 traffic. Widening the existing roadway will affect most properties along the route and require the relocation of an estimated 9 businesses and 59 residences.**

#### *New Location Alternatives*

**Three new location freeway alignments were developed from immediately southwest of the I-240/Patton Avenue interchange northward across the French Broad River to existing US 19-23-70. All of these alternatives improve the existing I-240/Patton Avenue interchange before continuing northward along new location. Alternatives 1 and 2 cross the Westgate Shopping Center property and Alternative 3 crosses a portion of the golf course at the Holiday Inn Sunspree. Alternative 1 ties into existing US 19-23-70 adjacent to the Riverside Cemetery. Alternatives 2 and 3 tie into US 19-23-70 between the Riverside Cemetery and Broadway Street (SR 1781). Alternative 1 will require the relocation of an estimated 56 businesses and 20 residences. Alternative 2 will require the relocation of an estimated 52 businesses and 49 residences. Alternative 3 will require the relocation of an estimated 16 businesses and 58 residences.**

### CITIZENS WORKSHOP

On Thursday, April 23, 1998, an informal workshop will be held at the National Guard Armory on Brevard Road near I-240, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Engineers will answer questions and receive comments about the project. The preliminary conceptual plans illustrating the project alternatives will be displayed.

### INFO-LINE

To obtain information and offer comments concerning this project, call:

**1-919-319-8850**

**PROJECT MAILING LIST**

Add your name to the mailing list by contacting:

Asheville Connector
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511

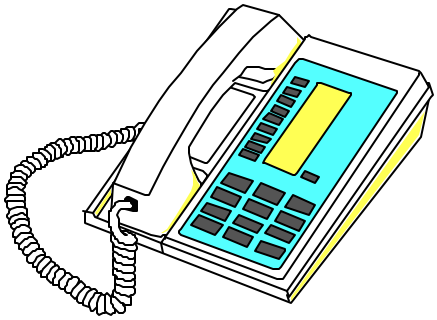
**INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

For more information about this project, or to express any comments or concerns, write to either TGS Engineers or the NCDOT at the addresses below. Please refer to Project I-2513 when writing about the proposed project. All comments and questions will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Drew Joyner, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
1-919-733-3141
djoyner@dot.state.nc.us

or

J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511
1-919-319-8850



# PROJECT INFO-LINE

# 1-919-319-8850

# I-26 Connector
## Asheville
## NCDOT TIP Project I-2513

*Issue No. 2* *November, 2000*

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Many developments have taken place concerning the I-26 Connector Project in Asheville since the initial public workshop held in April 1998. The interest in the project at that workshop led to more than twelve additional meetings with affected neighborhoods and business groups to explain the proposed project and find ways to reduce and/or mitigate the project impacts. Early this year, the City of Asheville requested that the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) conduct a more comprehensive public involvement process for the project to allow other Asheville residents the opportunity to learn more about the project and to comment on the proposed project designs.

As a result of the City request, the I-26 Connector Community Coordinating Committee (CCC), consisting of local government, business groups and neighborhood association leaders, was formed to develop a more comprehensive public involvement process aimed at building community consensus for this major facility. The CCC organized two public meetings. The first, to inform the public of the project considerations, and the second, to provide an opportunity for the expression of opinions and ideas for the project. In June, an educational forum was held at UNC-A to educate interested citizens about the project. Many possibilities for project improvements were explained at this forum. In July, a two-day design forum was held at the Renaissance Hotel to encourage local citizens to suggest modifications to the proposed plans. Several new ideas and design concepts were proposed at this forum.

As a result of the comments received at the design forum, the CCC developed several key recommendations for the project. These recommendations were reviewed, approved and forwarded to NCDOT by the Asheville City Council and the Asheville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In an effort to expedite the project development, NCDOT has developed an initial response to these key recommendations. NCDOT will continue to consider these recommendations during the project development. Below are the key recommendations from the CCC listed in italics, followed by the NCDOT response to the City and MPO including suggestions for methods to address these recommendations:

### COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH NCDOT RESPONSES

*Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the alternative alignment developed at the Design Forum receive serious study for inclusion in the project Environmental Impact Statement.*

NCDOT has initiated an evaluation of the alternative alignment concept developed at the Design Forum. During the development of this concept, several alternatives have arisen that will be shared with the CCC for further consideration. In our efforts to expedite the project development, we must focus our evaluations; therefore, we will work with the community in an attempt to determine the most suitable alternative alignment(s) for serious study.

*Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT, FHWA and local citizens work together as a "Committee on Visual Design" to develop ideas for bridge design, signage, overpass design, landscaping and other aesthetic issues that reflect our community's character.*

NCDOT is committed to working with the local citizens to develop ideas for aesthetic issues reflecting the community's character. It is our hope that the City and the CCC can help provide the local leadership necessary to organize a "Committee on Visual Design" to address these issues throughout the planning and design of the project.

*Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA expedite the development of new and updated traffic models for use on the ultimate design of this project, including regional air quality modeling.*

NCDOT is expediting the development of a new traffic model for the Asheville Urban Area. However, as these models often take years to develop as useful tools for project planning, the current model must continue to be the basis for the planning and design of this facility. The existing model will be updated with current land use data and traffic volumes to determine traffic projections for all the alternatives. In addition, NCDOT will attempt to constrain the updated model to show the effect of the completed project with four, six, and eight lanes on the rest of the road network in Asheville.

*Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that*

*the NCDOT and FHWA explore engineering and signage options to improve the north-to-east connection of eastbound I-26 traffic with I-40 in an easterly direction as part of this project or a simultaneous project. The specific concerns involve limiting commercial truck through-traffic on I-240 and on lesser-classified roadways proximate to residential areas.*

**NCDOT will consider alignment and signage options to improve the connection from US 19-23 southbound (proposed I-26 eastbound) to I-40 eastbound that are available within the scope of the I-26 Connector project. To provide a new connection between these facilities is not considered to be part of the I-26 Connector project and will need to be considered by the Asheville Area MPO for addition to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Prohibiting commercial truck through traffic on I-240 cannot be achieved since this is a federal interstate route.**

***Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO reflecting the Committee's general consensus that the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity be restored to link neighborhoods and the river while simultaneously exploring traffic calming measures to reduce the vehicular impact on residential streets.***

**Working with the City of Asheville, NCDOT is currently developing several means to provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity with the project. Project elements currently developed to restore this connectivity include: 1) plans to connect Amboy Road with the future greenway to Hominy Creek Park, 2) plans to reconnect Amboy Road with Brevard Road including reconnections with Fairfax and Virginia Avenues, 3) plans to provide the additional clearance at the State Street underpass requested by the City to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians, 4) plans to continue the Patton Avenue sidewalk from the Smoky Park Bridge westward to the Hazel Mill Road area, and 5) plans to reconnect to the existing Hazel Mill Road/Craven Street access to the French Broad River. These plans have been developed in close coordination with the City of Asheville. However, traffic calming measures on local streets to reduce vehicular impact on residential areas is principally the responsibility of the City. As these are locally sensitive issues, NCDOT will continue to work with the City to achieve this recommendation.**

***Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA ensure that all interchange design is community sensitive. To achieve this end, it would be helpful to provide artist's renditions of feasible design alternatives for public review.***

**NCDOT is planning to provide renditions of feasible design alternatives in sensitive interchange areas for public review. NCDOT will continue to coordinate with the CCC to determine the alternatives and areas to be rendered.**

***Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA seriously examine safety issues in project construction and design including maintenance of traffic during construction and emergency access after construction.***

**NCDOT will seriously examine all safety issues in the project design including the maintenance of traffic during construction as well as emergency access after the project completion.**

***Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA release any unneeded right-of-way at the completion of this project to the City of Asheville to be zoned and used in accordance with a land use plan to be developed by the City in cooperation with the NCDOT.***

**Assuming some of the right-of-way is not needed after construction, NCDOT must follow NC General Statue 136-19 when dealing with right-of-way acquisition and disposition. This law generally prescribes, for any lands not needed for highway right-of-way, that NCDOT shall give first consideration to the former property owner. However, a great deal about how such property is disposed of is determined by the means under which it was acquired. The NCDOT Right-of-Way Disposal Committee makes determinations as to the disposition of NCDOT right-of-way.**

***Make a strong recommendation to the City Council and MPO that the NCDOT and FHWA keep the I-26 Connector project on its current or, preferably, an expedited schedule.***

**Given the time needed to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, design the project, and acquire right of way, an expedited schedule is not possible. NCDOT is making every effort to keep the I-26 Connector project on its current completion date based on the 2002-2008 Draft Transportation Improvement Program. However, unless a decision is made on the preferred alternative early next year, the scheduled completion date will likely be delayed.**

## NEXT STEP

**Over the next several months, NCDOT will continue to work with the local community to develop the project. If new designs are found to be feasible for consideration in the project environmental impact analysis, they will be developed for future public presentation and review.**

## COMMENTS

**The NCDOT hopes that all interested citizens were able to attend the recent public forums to learn more about this important project and express any concerns. If you were not able to attend these forums and would like to express your concerns, and/or ask questions concerning the project please contact us at the telephone numbers or the mailing or email addresses listed on the back of this newsletter.**

## COMING SOON

**Look for the I-26 Connector website at "NCDOT Projects" on NCDOT's webpage www.dot.state.nc.us**

**PROJECT MAILING LIST**

Add your name to the mailing list
by contacting:

Asheville Connector
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511

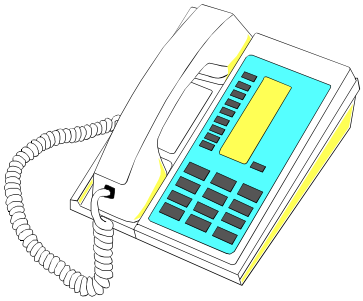
**INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

For more information about this project, or to express any comments or concerns, write to either TGS Engineers or the NCDOT at the addresses below. Please refer to Project I-2513 when writing about the proposed project. All comments and questions will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Drew Joyner, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental
Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
1-919-733-3141
djoyner@dot.state.nc.us

or

Mr. J. K. Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511
1-919-319-8850
kburleson@tgsengineers.com

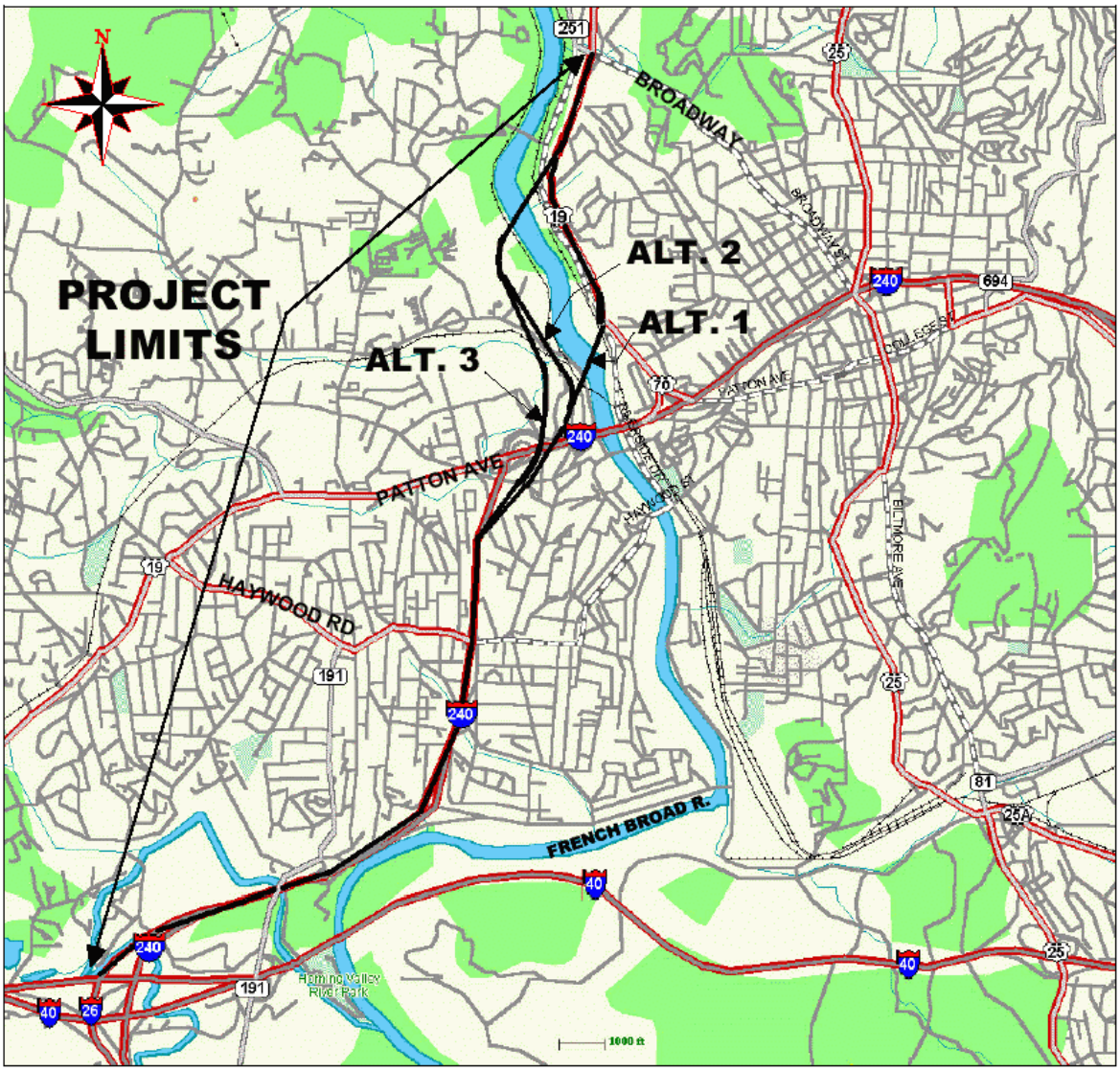


# PROJECT INFO-LINE 1-919-319-8850

**If you have questions concerning other transportation projects, please call our Customer Service Office toll free at 1-877-DOT-4YOU or check our website for more information at www.dot.state.nc.us**

**I-26 Connector Newsletter**
**% TGS Engineers**
**975 Walnut Street**
**Suite 141**
**Cary, NC 27511**

# Newsletter No. 2 - Map 1



North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Project Development
& Environmental Analysis Branch

I-26 CONNECTOR
ASHEVILLE, N.C.
from I-26 at I-40
to US 19-23-70 at Broadway
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
TIP No. I-2513

May, 2000 Figure 1

# I-26 Connector

## Asheville

## NCDOT TIP Project I-2513

*Issue No. 3* *January 2004*

# Project Expanded As A Result Of Public Involvement

As a result of suggestions received at the public design forum held in the July 2000, the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has expanded the I-26 Connector study corridor to include the area along the eastern side of the French Broad River near the Smoky Park Bridges, and the area surrounding the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange southwest of Asheville. This expansion allows the consideration of additional alternatives as well as improvements to the I-26/I-40/ I-240 interchange.

### New Alternatives Added

NCDOT has added two new project alternatives, Alternatives 4 and 5, to the new location portion of the project north of Patton Avenue. These alternatives separate Patton Avenue and I-240 traffic across the French Broad River with new river crossings and improvements along I-240 and Patton Avenue immediately east of the river. These alternatives are shown on the maps on the inside of this newsletter.

### Interchange Improvements Added

NCDOT also proposes to improve the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange in southwest Asheville as part of the I-26 Connector project. During the public design forum, many local citizens requested that the department provide the missing interstate connections between the future I-26 and I-40. Currently, there are no direct connections for vehicles traveling south on I-240 to I-40 East and for those traveling west on I-40 to north on I-240. Improvements to the interchange will add these connections as well as relieve existing congestion and improve safety through this area.

### Project Study Progress

NCDOT recently has completed a new area traffic prediction computer model. Environmental evaluations of cultural and natural resources were completed for the expanded study area east of the French Broad River and are underway in the area of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

### Field Studies

During the next year, NCDOT will conduct additional field studies to determine potential environmental impacts within the project area. **Land surveys will be conducted to develop detailed maps of the study area. Many areas will be surveyed that will not be directly affected by the project.**

These surveys will enable NCDOT to conduct engineering studies that will help determine the environmental impacts of each of the alternatives under consideration.

### Public Involvement

Small group meetings will be held with local interest groups such as neighborhoods businesses, and civic organizations. A project aesthetics advisory committee will be formed to suggest design details to reflect the character of the community. NCDOT will hold two more citizens informational workshops to display project alternatives and receive public comment.

### Schedule

As a result of the project improvements and the additional studies needed to complete the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the project schedule has been updated as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Conduct I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange Workshop | (Spring 04) |
| Conduct Alternates Workshop | (Summer 05) |
| Complete Draft Environmental Impact Statement | (Winter 05/06) |
| Conduct Public Hearing | (Winter 05/06) |
| Select Preferred Alternative | (Spring 06) |
| Complete Final Environmental Impact Statement | (Late 06) |
| Conduct Public Workshop | (Summer 07) |
| Complete Right of Way Plans | (Summer 07) |
| Award Right of Way & Construction Contract | (Spring 08) |
| Anticipated Construction Completion | (2012) |

**WEBSITE**

To learn more about the I-26 Connector project, please visit the project website at: www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector

**PROJECT MAILING LIST**

Add your name to the mailing list
by contacting:

I-26 Connector in Asheville
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511

**INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

For more information or to express any comments or concerns about the I-26 Connector, contact either TGS Engineers or the NCDOT at the addresses below. Please refer to Project I-2513 when writing about the proposed project. All comments and questions will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Drew Joyner, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
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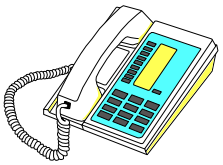
919-733-7844 Ext. 269
djoyner@dot.state.nc.us

or

Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511
919-319-8850 Ext. 109
kburleson@tgsengineers.com



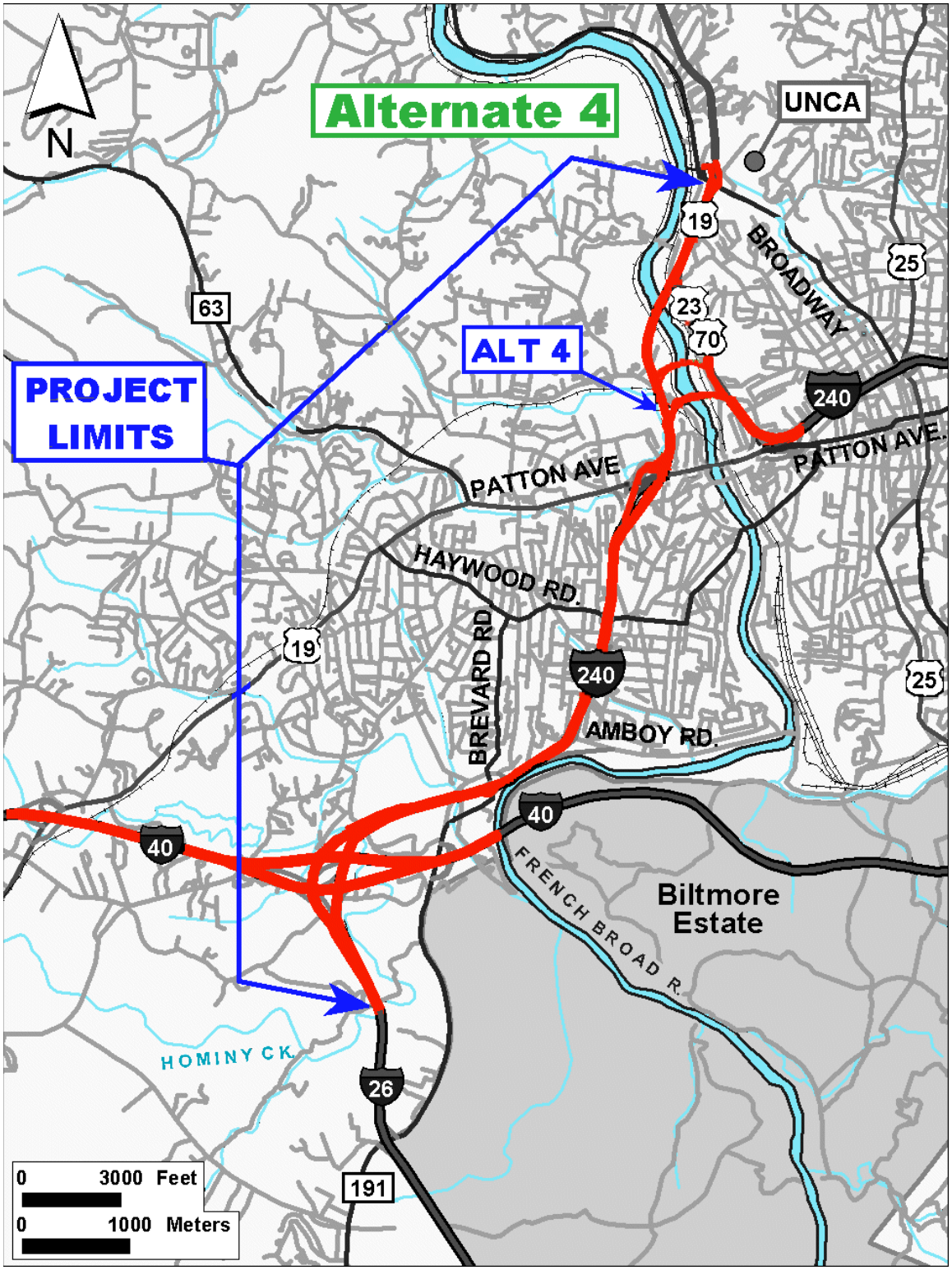
**I-26 CONNECTOR INFO-LINE 919-319-8850**

**If you have questions concerning other transportation projects, please call our Customer Service Office toll free at 1-877-DOT-4YOU or check our website for more information at www.ncdot.org**

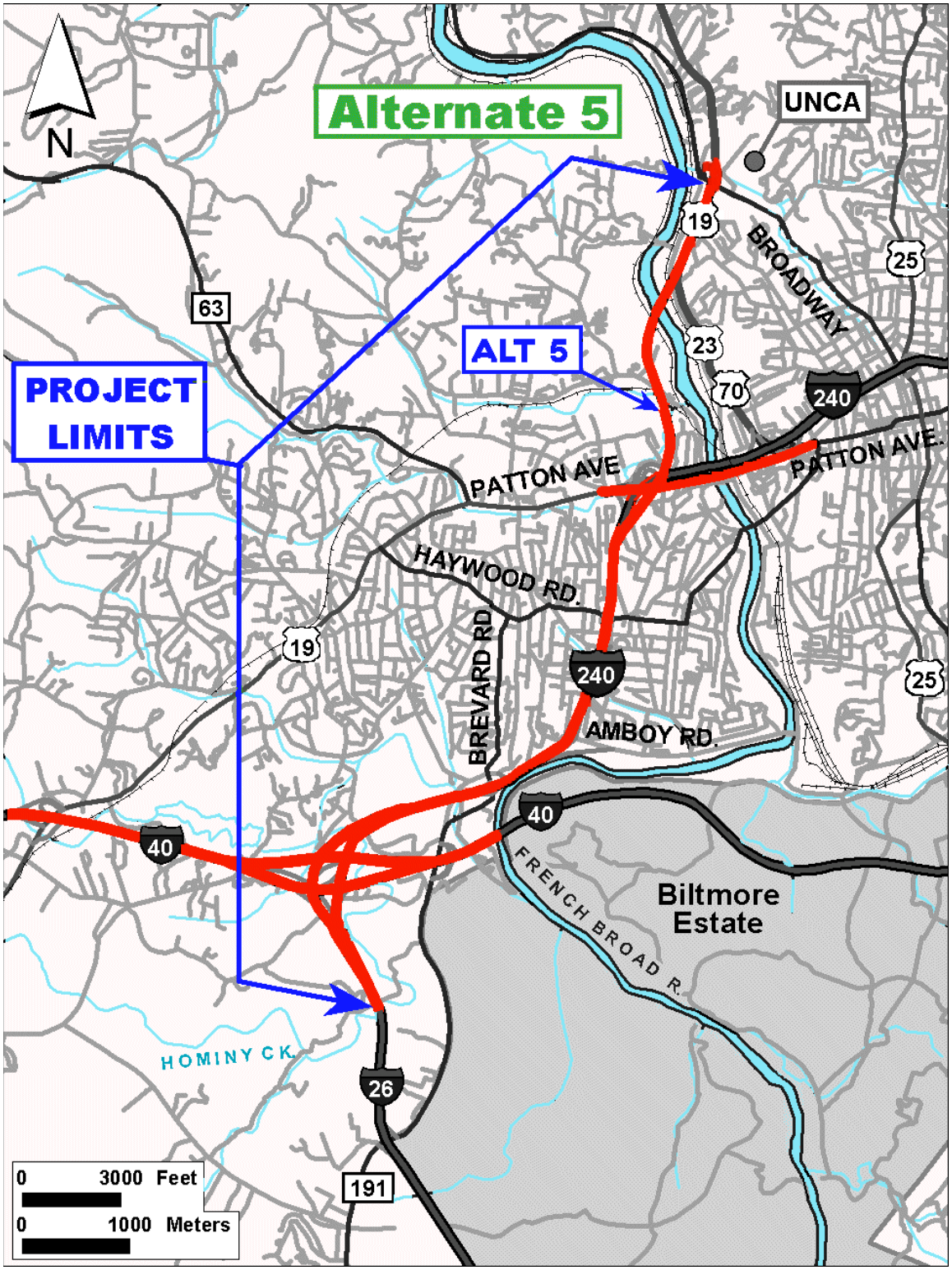
**I-26 Connector Newsletter**
**TGS Engineers**
**975 Walnut Street**
**Suite 141**
**Cary, NC 27511**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

# Newsletter No. 3 - Map 1



# Newsletter No. 3 - Map 2



# I-26 Connector

## Asheville

## NCDOT TIP Project I-2513

*Issue No. 4* *September 2006*

## Project Citizens Workshop Scheduled

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has scheduled a Citizen's Informational Workshop in Asheville on Monday, October 9 and Tuesday October 10 to answer questions and receive comments about the entire I-26 Connector project. This **informal workshop will be held in the ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel located at One Thomas Wolfe Plaza in downtown Asheville.** For the convenience of interested parties, three time periods will be available for attendance. **Project information and staff will be available on Monday, October 9 from 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm** and again on **Tuesday, October 10 from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm** and also on **Tuesday, October 10 from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.** The same information will be available at each session.

### THREE SECTIONS STUDIED

The proposed I-26 Connector is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). The project limits begin along I-26 south of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange and continue northeastward along I-240, then cross Patton Avenue near the Westgate Shopping Center and continue northward on new location before crossing the French Broad River and joining US 19/23/70 just south of Broadway.

The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project. Section A includes widening and safety improvements along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. Section B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Section C improves the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project.

### PROJECT STUDY PROGRESS

NCDOT has prepared preliminary plans and cost estimates for each of the alternatives in the three sections of the project. Extensive studies identifying the potential impacts to the human and natural environment associated with these alternatives have been developed. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared describing the project purpose, design and impacts. A local project aesthetics advisory committee has been formed to suggest design details to allow the project to reflect the character of the community.

### SCHEDULE

| | |
|---|---|
| **Conduct Citizen's Info Workshop** | **(Fall 2006)** |
| **Complete Draft EIS** | **(Spring 2007)** |
| **Conduct Public Hearing** | **(Summer 2007)** |
| **Select Preferred Alternative** | **(Fall 2007)** |
| **Complete Final EIS** | **(Summer 2008)** |
| **Right of Way Acquisition Section A & B** | **(FY 2009)*** |
| **Right of Way Acquisition Section C** | **(Beyond 2013)*** |
| **Construction Section A** | **(FY 2012) *** |
| **Construction Section B** | **(FY 2013) *** |
| **Construction Section C** | **(Beyond 2013) *** |

*Per 2007-2013 NCDOT DRAFT TIP

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed I-26 Connector is described in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project. These separate sections include:

**SECTION A** consists of widening and safety improvements" along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. The Section A improvements along existing I-240 are common to all of the project alternatives.

**SECTION B** will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Four alternatives (Alternates B2, B3, B4, and B5) are being considered for Section B. These Section B alternatives are described below.

**Alternate B2** crosses Patton Avenue at the Westgate Shopping Center property and follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it further north and connecting with the US 19-23-70 alignment south of SR 1781 (Broadway Street).

**Alternate B3** crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate B2.

**Alternate B4** also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate B2. This alternate also realigns I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19-23 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto new I-240 crossings of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. This removes I-240 traffic from the existing Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic.

**Alternate B5** also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate B2. This alternate also realigns Patton Avenue on a new crossing of the French Broad River adjacent to and just south of the Smoky Park Bridges. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate I-240.

**SECTION C** consists of improvements to the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project. At the public design forum where the consideration of the new location alternatives was expanded to eventually include Alternates B4 and B5, the local citizens also requested improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to accommodate the missing moves between I-40 westbound and I-240 northbound, and between I-240 southbound and I-40 eastbound. Section C initially included three alternatives (Alternates A2, C2 and D1). These improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange were presented to the public at a Citizen's Workshop in June 2004. The alternative design schemes considered for the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvements include:

**Interchange Alternate A2** provides a fully directional interchange configuration for traffic movements between I-26, I-40 and I-240, a westbound collector-distributor along westbound I-40, and a modified diamond interchange at NC 191 and I-40. In the northeast quadrant of the NC 191/I-40 interchange, an entrance ramp loop is provided from NC 191 to I-40 westbound.

**Interchange Alternate C2** provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with loops in lieu of directional ramps for southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and for westbound I-40 to southbound I-26. This layout provides collector-distributors along both sides of I-40 through the I-240/26 and NC 191 interchanges. The proposed NC 191 interchange provides the same loops in the eastern quadrants as the existing interchange.

**Interchange Alternate D1** provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with a loop in lieu of a directional ramp from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and a conventional diamond-type interchange at NC 191 and I-40.

**Interchange Alternate F1** which is a new alternative, is also being evaluated in Section C to satisfy the project purpose and need with less environmental impacts. This alternate provides a semi-directional interchange configuration very similar to the existing configuration with modifications to include the addition of a loop from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40 and a directional ramp from westbound I-40 to northbound I-240/26.

## WEBSITE

To learn more about the I-26 Connector project, please visit the project website at:

www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector

**PROJECT MAILING LIST**

Add your name to the mailing list by contacting:

Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511

**INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

For more information or to express any comments or concerns about the I-26 Connector, contact either TGS Engineers or the NCDOT at the addresses below. Please refer to Project I-2513 when writing about the proposed project. All comments and questions will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Vince Rhea, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
919-733-7844 Ext. 261
vrhea@dot.state.nc.us

or

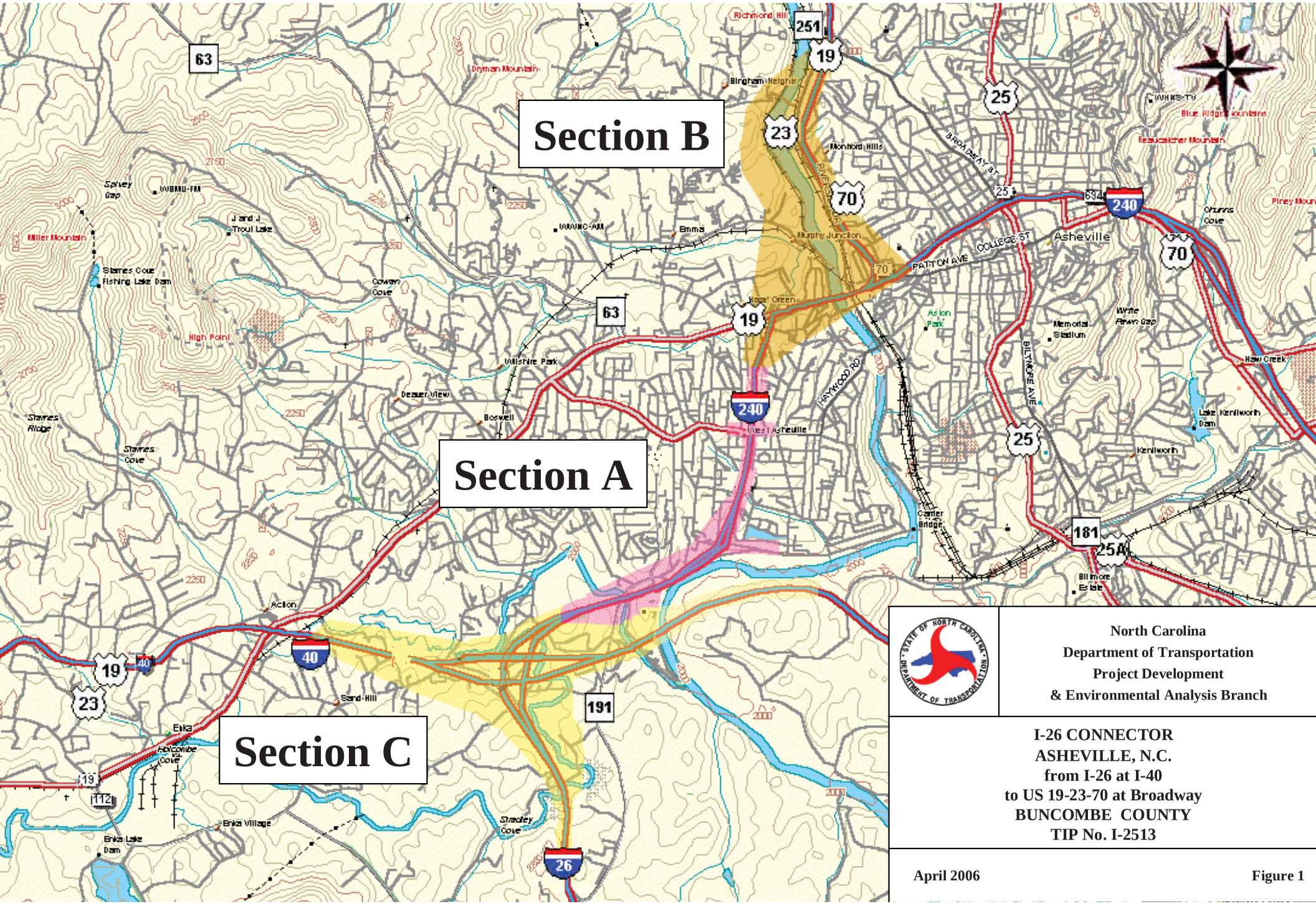
Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511
919-319-8850 Ext. 109
kburleson@tgsengineers.com

# I-26 CONNECTOR INFO-LINE 919-319-8850

**If you have questions concerning other transportation projects, please call our Customer Service Office toll free at 1-877-DOT-4YOU or check our website for more information at www.ncdot.org**

**I-26 Connector Newsletter**
**TGS Engineers**
**975 Walnut Street**
**Suite 141**
**Cary, NC 27511**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**




North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Project Development
& Environmental Analysis Branch

**I-26 CONNECTOR**
**ASHEVILLE, N.C.**
**from I-26 at I-40**
**to US 19-23-70 at Broadway**
**BUNCOMBE COUNTY**
**TIP No. I-2513**

April 2006

Figure 1

Issue No. 5
December 2007

# I-26 CONNECTOR
## ASHEVILLE
## NCDOT PROJECT NO. I-2513

Project Status…….Page 1
Purpose and Need….Page 2
Project Alternatives &
Alternatives Map…….Page 3
Contacts……..…Page 4

### *NCDOT Seeks Input from Citizens on Project's Purpose and Need and Alternatives*

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is conducting planning and environmental studies for the I-26 Asheville Connector from I-40 to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville in Buncombe County, North Carolina (Transportation Improvement Program [TIP] Project No. I-2513). The proposed project is intended to provide a link between existing I-26 and US 19-23-70 north of Asheville, completing a gap in the I-26 corridor within North Carolina.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide citizens with information about the project and provide citizens with an opportunity to review and comment on the purpose of and need for the project and project alternatives. This newsletter contains a project description, an update on the project status, the project Purpose and Need statement, a summary of project alternatives being studied, next steps in the project development process, and project contact information.

## Project Description

The proposed I-26 Asheville Connector project will improve the existing I-26, I-240 and US 19-23-70 corridors from south of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). The proposed project is designated as project number I-2513 in the NCDOT Draft *2009-2015 Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP).

This project includes upgrading the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, improving I-240 (including the interchanges) between the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange and the I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue west of the French Broad River. At the I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue a northward freeway on new location will be constructed that would cross the French Broad River and merge into existing US 19-23-70.

## Project Status

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended, the NCDOT is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed project. The Draft EIS is a federally required environmental document that generally describes the purpose and need for the project, identifies project alternatives, and evaluates project alternatives for potential environmental effects. As part of the NEPA process, the NCDOT is providing citizens this opportunity to review and comment on the project's Purpose and Need statement and alternatives.

The alternatives to be evaluated in detail in the Draft EIS were presented at the Citizens' Informational Workshop held on October 9 & 10, 2006. Since the workshop one of the alternatives in Section B, Alternative 5, was eliminated from further consideration because of traffic operational deficiencies that could not be overcome. The alternatives remaining in Section B include Alternatives 2, 3 and 4. All of the project alternatives to be studied in detail in the Draft EIS are described later in this newsletter.

The City of Asheville and Buncombe County have recently retained an engineering consulting firm to study another conceptual alignment for crossing the French Broad River. This concept is in the early stages of development. The NCDOT will review this concept when it is completed and presented to the Department.

# Purpose and Need

The following statement of purpose and need for the proposed project is presented for citizens' review and comment. Please submit any questions or comments that you may have on the purpose and need statement to Mr. Vince Rhea, NCDOT Project Engineer, no later than January 15, 2008. Mr. Rhea's contact information is included on the back page of this newsletter.

## Summary of Need

**System Linkage:**

**A better transportation facility is needed to connect I-26 south of Asheville with US 19-23 north of Asheville.** I-26 currently connects the Port of Charleston, South Carolina with the mountains of North Carolina joining I-240 at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange southwest of Asheville. I-240 west of Asheville currently connects I-26 with US 19-23-70. The I-240 freeway, constructed in the 1960's, does not meet current interstate design standards. The existing interchange connecting US 19-23-70 from the north with I-240 contains sharply-curved, single-lane ramps. Freeway traffic using this interchange connecting I-240 with the US 19-23 freeway is restricted to one lane in each direction which causes traffic to queue onto I-240. When the construction of NCDOT TIP Project A-10 (US 19-23 Improvements from Asheville to the Tennessee state line) is completed, it will allow motorists to travel on a fully controlled-access, median-divided freeway from I-81 near Kingsport, Tennessee to I-240 in Asheville.

**Capacity:**

**I-240 needs additional capacity because increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the level of service on I-240 west of Asheville.** Several sections of I-240 currently operate at capacity, resulting in traffic delays and queuing on I-240. Traffic congestion and resulting delays will continue to worsen in the future as the traffic volumes increase due to population increases. The completion of portions of NCDOT TIP Project A-10 has further increased traffic demands along I-240 west of Asheville. The increase in traffic volumes further contribute to the congestion and delays being experienced along I-240.

**Roadway Deficiencies:**

**Interstates within the study area have roadway deficiencies and need to be upgraded to meet current design standards.** Existing I-240 west of Asheville and the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange do not meet current interstate design standards due to substandard roadway features.

**Safety:**

**I-240 needs safety improvements.** Multiple segments of I-240, west of Asheville, currently have an accident rate for similar North Carolina facilities, demonstrating the need for safety improvements along this section of the facility.

## Purpose of the Action

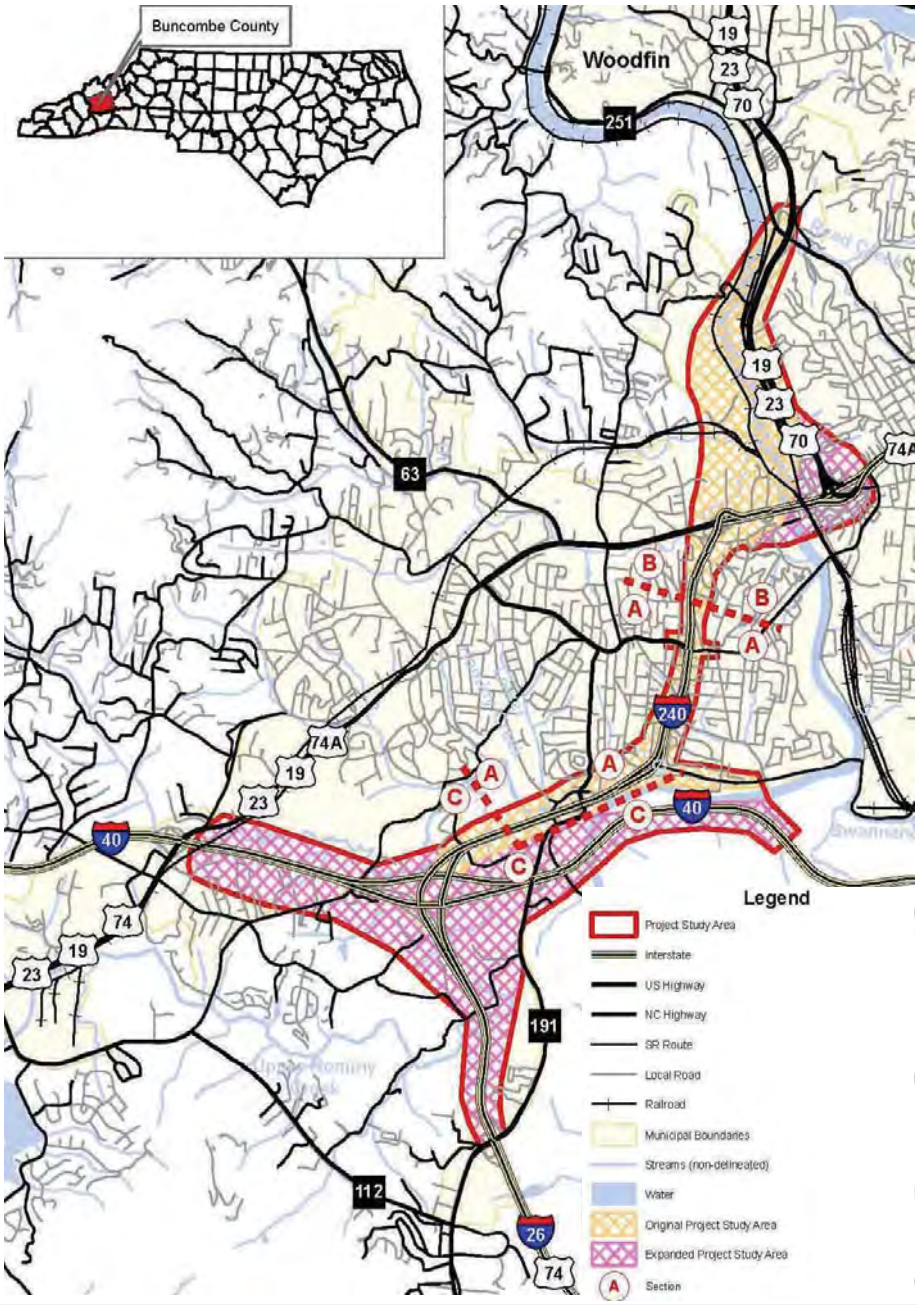
The primary purposes of the proposed project are:

- To provide a freeway-to-freeway connection between I-26 south of Asheville and US 19-23 north of Asheville.
- To provide a link in the transportation system connecting a direct, multi-lane, freeway facility meeting interstate standards from the Port of Charleston, South Carolina to I-81 near Kingsport, Tennessee.
- To improve the capacity of existing I-240 west of Asheville to accommodate the existing and forecasted (2030 design year) traffic in this growing area.
- To reduce traffic delays and congestion along the I-240 crossing of the French Broad River, which currently operates at capacity.
- To increase the remaining useful service of the existing Smoky Park Bridges by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River.
- To improve the safety of I-240 west of Asheville.

# Project Alternatives

The project is divided into three sections; A, B and C. Section A includes the I-240 portion of the project and Section B includes the I-240/Patton Avenue interchange and extends across the French Broad River to the US 19-23-70/Broadway interchange. Section C includes the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. As indicated on the figure below, Sections A and B encompass the original project study area and Section C was added to the project later as the project study area was expanded to include the interchange.

Four detailed study alternatives including various interchange configurations were developed for Section C. Those alternatives are A-2, C-1, D-1 and F-1. Section A includes the I-240 Widening Alternative which would include a best-fit design for the widening and reconstruction of existing I-240 from a four-lane freeway to an eight-lane freeway. Three new location alternatives in Section B, Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, have been developed for detailed study. Each of the project alternatives can be viewed on the project website (http://www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector/) or at the NCDOT Division 13 Office in Asheville.



## Next Steps in Process …

The Draft EIS should be completed by Spring 2008 and will be available for review and comment. After the Draft EIS is signed, a public hearing will be held where citizens will be able to review project information and comment on the Draft EIS. After citizen comments have been received, the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA), or Preferred Alternative, will be identified from the alternatives studied and presented to the public. After identification of the Preferred Alternative, the Final EIS will be prepared. The final approval of the Preferred Alternative will be documented by the Federal Highway Administration in the Record of Decision.

### PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about the project, please contact Mr. Vince Rhea at the address below. All comments on the Purpose and Need Statement should be submitted in writing by January 15, 2008. All questions and comments will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Vince Rhea, PE
Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch, North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548 919-733-7844 ext. 261 vrhea@dot.state.nc.us

Additional project information and maps can be found on the project website at http://www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector or at the NCDOT Division 13 Office located at 55 Orange Street in Asheville, NC 28802, telephone828-251-6394.

URS

I-26 Connector Newsletter
URS Corporation
1600 Perimeter Park Drive, Suite 400
Morrisville, NC 27560
ATTN: Jeff Weisner

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

# NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

### I-26 Asheville Connector from I-40 to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville in Buncombe County, North Carolina

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed I-26 Asheville Connector project.

The Draft EIS is a federally required environmental document that generally describes the purpose and need for the project, identifies project alternatives, and evaluates project alternatives for potential environmental effects. As part of the NEPA process, the NCDOT is providing the citizens this opportunity to review and comment on the Draft DEIS.

The Draft EIS can be viewed on the project website at http://www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector/ or at the following locations:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Pack Memorial Library** | **67 Haywood St. Asheville, NC** |
| **West Asheville Library** | **942 Haywood Road Asheville, NC** |
| **Buncombe County Law Library** | **60 Court Plaza Asheville, NC** |

All comments on the Draft EIS will be considered and should be submitted in writing to NCDOT care of :

Mr. Vince Rhea, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
919-733-7844 Ext 261
vrhea@dot.state.nc.us

Additional opportunities to comment on the project will be provided at a future public hearing. The date, time, and location of the public hearing will be advertised at a future date and will be announced in a project newsletter.

*Issue 6*
*June 2008*

No. 9 April 2009

# I-26 Connector

NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program Project No. I-2513

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is aware of the concern in the Asheville community regarding the delays that the I-26 Connector project has experienced and would like to take this opportunity to explain where we are, what we are doing, and how we plan to select a preferred alternative.

Since the September 2008 public hearing, NCDOT has been reviewing and addressing the public comments received. That process is almost complete. The responses will be posted on the project Web site (http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/I26Connector/) in the post-public hearing minutes soon. Alternative 4B, which was shown at the hearing, is being included as a detailed study alternative for this project and will be considered on an equal basis when a preferred alternative is chosen.

The Federal Highway Administration requires an interchange modification report for all revisions to the interstate system, such as the I-26 Connector. This report looks beyond the project area to ensure the interstate and interchanges will operate properly when the project is constructed and into the future. For the purpose of this report the NCDOT is updating the traffic forecasts for the entire project.

While I-26 traffic volumes have remained relatively unchanged from previous projections, preliminary results of the traffic forecast show the traffic volumes for the crossing streets, ramps and auxiliary lanes are higher than previously projected. This could create congestion for local traffic if it is not resolved. In an effort to ensure the least impact to and avoid segmentation of local roadways and neighborhoods, careful study of the project's effect on local interchanges and traffic is currently under way.

NCDOT anticipates that design modifications may be needed for some of the alternatives. We are also looking at other design changes to reduce impacts to residences and businesses, including retaining walls in the Burton Street area. These updates will be included in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), which will also include alternative 4B.

Another public hearing will be held once the SDEIS is completed. All the project alternatives, including 4B, will be displayed. No decision will be made on a preferred alternative until after the public hearing and comment period. Comments received will all be considered in the selection of the preferred alternative.

All of this work has and will require an effort beyond what was originally anticipated. It is therefore necessary to revise the project schedule as shown on the front of this newsletter.

1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Suite 400
Morrisville, NC 27560

# I-26 CONNECTOR I-2513
# PROJECT NEWSLETTER

## Project Contact Information

**Maps displaying all alternatives under consideration, a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and other project information may be viewed at the project website**:
http://www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector/

or at the NCDOT Division 13 Office located at:
**55 Orange St.**
**Asheville, NC 28801**
**(828) 251-6171**

Mr. Vince Rhea, PE, NCDOT Project Engineer can also be contacted for additional information by email at vrhea@ncdot.gov, or by phone
**919-733-7844 Ext. 261**

## Revised Project Schedule

Supplemental DEIS ..... *Spring 2010*
SDEIS Public Hearing ..... *Spring 2010*
Preferred Alternative..... *Summer 2010*
Final EIS .....*Early 2011*
Record of Decision ..... *Summer 2011*
Begin Right of Way Acquisition..... *Fall 2012*
Begin Construction ..... *Fall 2014*

**Toll Free Hotline:……1-800-233-6315**

# I-26 CONNECTOR

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC MEETING MAY 12, 2014
NCDOT STIP PROJECT NO. I-2513

## COMMENT FORM

Public input is essential to every project that serves the people of the community where it is built. Public comments will be considered by the NCDOT project team in preparation of a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement If you require a direct response, please supply enough contact information (email or address) so that we may contact you. You may always contact the project team at the Project Hotline below.

YOUR NAME: _____ EMAIL: _____

ADDRESS (optional): _____ CITY,STATE, ZIP: _____

ORGANIZATION (IF ANY): _____PHONE: _____

Please provide any comments about he I-26 Connector project.

_____

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Return completed comment form no later than June 12, 2014 to:
Michael Wray, P.E. Project Planning Engineer
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-154

**Project Hotline: 1-800-233-6315**
**Project Website:**
**http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/**

# I-26 CONNECTOR

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC

INTERSTATE 26 · 19 · 23

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**NEWSLETTER ISSUE, APRIL 2014**
**NCDOT STIP PROJECT NO. I-2513**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The I-26 Connector Project is an interstate freeway project that is being proposed to connect I-26 in southwest Asheville to U.S. 19/23/70 in northwest Asheville. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has programmed this project to upgrade and widen I-240 from I-40 to Patton Avenue, and then proceed northward from Patton Avenue on new location across the French Broad River and connect to U.S. 19/23/70 just south of Exit 25 (Riverside Drive – Broadway – UNC-Asheville). Upon completion, this project will be part of the I-26 Interstate that extends from Charleston, South Carolina, to Kingsport, Tennessee.

The proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville is approximately 7 miles long from the I-40 interchange to Broadway. The project includes:

- Upgrading 4.3 miles of existing I-240 from the I-26/I-240 interchange with I-40 to the I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue, west of the French Broad River.
- Improvements to the I-26/I-240 interchange with I-40 and Brevard Road (N.C. 191), Amboy Road (S.R. 3556), Haywood Road (S.R. 3548/U.S. 19/23 Business) and Patton Avenue (U.S. 19-23) interchanges.
- Construction of the interstate on new location from the Patton Avenue interchange north for 2.6 miles across the French Broad River, tying into U.S. 19/23/70 south of Broadway (S.R. 1781).

The I-26 Connector Project was originally proposed in 1989. After issuing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2008 and holding public meetings, a new priority rating system was implemented by NCDOT in 2010. The new ranking of the I-26 Connector Project was much lower than its previous ranking, and thus, work on the project was halted and the project was placed on hold.

Project development studies for the I-26 Connector were re-initiated in Spring 2012. Since 2012, project alternatives in Section "B" (the new location portion north of Patton Avenue, across the French Broad River) have been modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road Community and to enhance multimodal connectivity between west Asheville and Asheville.

A new alternative, Alternative 3C, was developed in 2013 to further reduce impacts to the natural and human environments. Alternative 3C is similar to Alternative 3, but has a smaller footprint and connects to U.S. 19/23 further south of the Alternative 3 connection. NCDOT will present all existing alternatives at the Public Meeting scheduled for May 12, 2014.

## PUBLIC MEETING

**MAY 12, 2014**
**4:00-7:00 PM**
**RENAISSANCE HOTEL**
**GRAND BALLROOM**
**31 WOODFIN STREET, ASHEVILLE**

The purposes of this meeting are to:

- present and receive public comments on all project alternatives including a new alternative, Alternative 3C.
- Present updated roadway design plans that have been modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road community;
- provide the status of the environmental studies that are currently underway and describe next steps; and,
- announce that a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared to document the updated studies.

This is an informal, open-house, public meeting. You may drop in at any time between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m., see the meeting maps and other materials, meet one-on-one with NCDOT representatives, and provide comments on Alternative 3C or any other aspects of the project.

For more information about the meeting please contact Mr. Michael Wray at (919) 707-6050.

**Need Special Services or Assistance for the Public Meeting?**

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for persons who wish to participate in this workshop and require special services. Contact Michael Wray at (919) 707-6050 as early as possible for these arrangements.

**A Spanish language interpreter will be present. Se Habla Español.**



## You're invited to attend a Public Meeting.

**TIME & LOCATION**
**May 12, 2014 | 4:00 to 7:00 PM**
**Renaissance Hotel Grand Ballroom**
**31 Woodfin Street**
**Asheville, NC**

This meeting has four main purposes:

- Present Alternative 3C.
- Present roadway design plans that have been modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road community.
- Announce updated environmental studies that are underway.
- Announce the preparation of a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

For more information, please visit the project website or contact NCDOT using the toll-free hotline. Written correspondence can also be mailed or e-mailed to NCDOT or URS Corporation.

**Project Hotline – *Línea Gratutita del Proyecto*:**
**1-800-233-6315 (English/ Español)**

**Project Website – Página Web del Proyecto:**
**http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/**

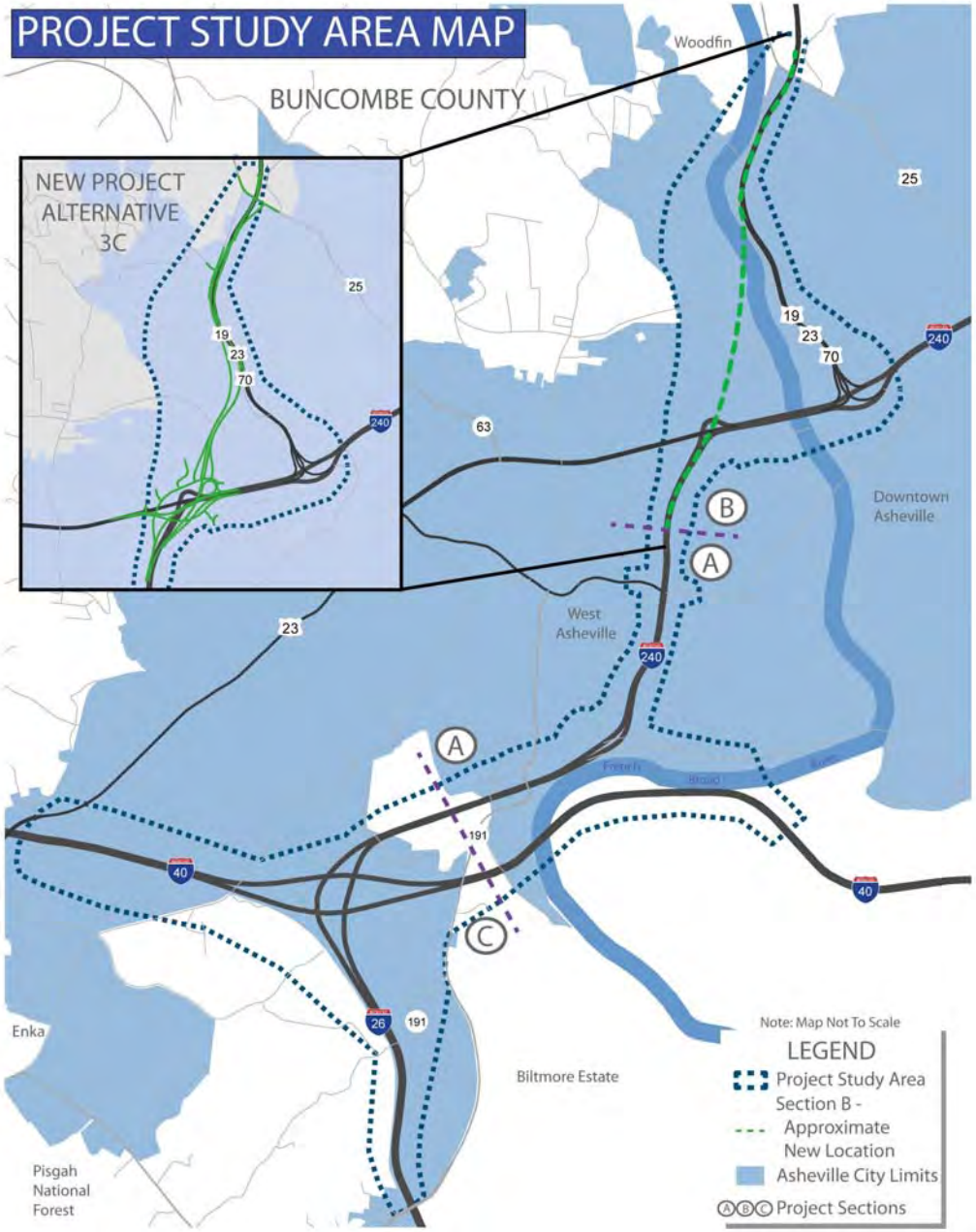
**N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT)**
Michael Wray, P.E. (Project Planning Engineer)
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
(919) 707-6050
mgwray@ncdot.gov

**URS Corporation (NCDOT's Consultant)**
Jeff Weisner, AICP
1600 Perimeter Park Drive, Suite 400
Morrisville, NC 27560
(919) 461-1440
jeff.weisner@urs.com

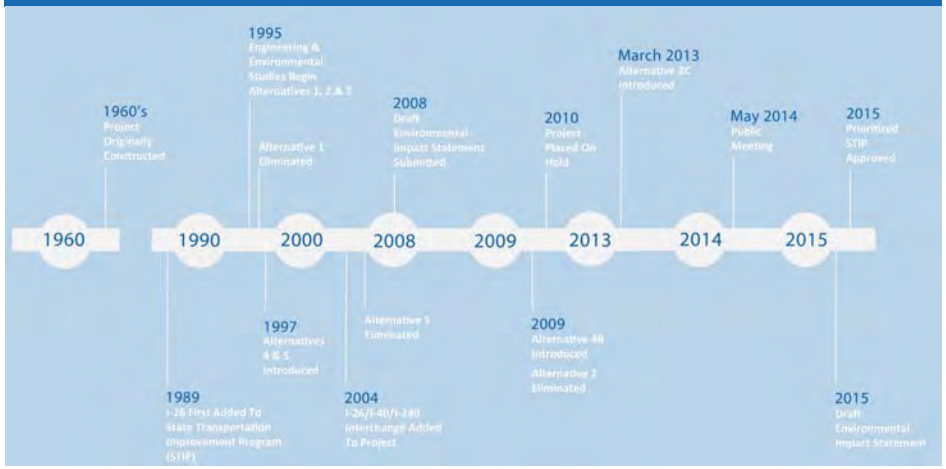
**4300** copies of this public document were printed at a cost of $3870 or approximately $ .90 each.

**I-26 Connector Project**
ATTN: Michael Wray
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
URS

NCDOT Mission Statement: Connecting people and places safely and efficiently, with accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy, health and well-being of North Carolina.




## Project History




## Environmental Studies

A new Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the I-26 Connector is planned for release in the Summer of 2015. It will be based on findings from several on-going environmental studies in the I-26 Connector project area. These studies include:

- Community Impact Assessment
- Natural Resources Technical Report
- Traffic Operations Analysis
- Air Quality Analysis
- Traffic Noise Analysis
- Cultural Resource Studies
- Evaluation of Alternatives

## Other I-26 Projects

**NCDOT STIP Project No. A-0010A, U.S. 19/23 (Future I-26) Improvements Project:**

NCDOT is proposing to improve approximately 12 miles of U.S. 19/23 from north of I-240 in Asheville to just south of Exit 13 (Forks of Ivy – Stockton Road) near Mars Hill. This project is currently in the early stages of the planning process.

**NCDOT STIP Project No. I-4400 / I-4700, I-26 Widening Project:**

NCDOT is proposing to widen approximately 22 miles of I-26 from US 25 (Exit 54) in Henderson County to I-40 in Asheville. This project is about to begin the preliminary design process.

**I-5504 /Brevard Road interchange project (Exit 33):**

NCDOT is proposing to modify an existing partial cloverleaf interchange, primarily to alleviate congestion by increasing the efficiency of the interchange. The project may include the widening of the N.C. 191 (Brevard Road) bridge over I-26.

URS

1600 Perimeter Park Drive, Suite 400
Morrisville, NC 27560
Telephone: (919) 461-1100
Facsimile: (919) 461-1415

# RECORD OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| DATE: July 15, 2014 (1:13 p.m.) | NCDOT PROJECT NO. I-2513:<br>I-26 Asheville Connector Project | |
| RECORDED BY: Project Hotline | OWNER / CLIENT: NCDOT – PDEA | |
| CALL FROM: Brian Austin | | |
| ROUTE TO:<br>Project File. | FOR INFORMATION | FOR ACTION |
| | | |
| SUBJECT: (no subject) | | |

1. Received from (828) 255-0100.
2. Please call back at (828) 450-2897.

-End-

**I-2513: I-26 Asheville Connector Project**

**Deborah Mashburn's Property at 15 Kentucky Drive, Asheville**

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# Appendix B

# Records of Meetings and Concurrence Points

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# Appendix B1

## Merger Meetings and Concurrence Points

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# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

## Concurrence Point No. 1. Purpose and Need

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

## Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action

The following existing and projected conditions summarize the need for the proposed action:

- A better transportation facility is needed to connect US 19-23 north of Asheville with I-26 south of Asheville.
- Increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the level of service along I-240 on the west side of Asheville.
- The construction of improvements to US 19-23 (NCDOT TIP Project A-10) project is anticipated to further increase traffic volumes along I-240 on the west side of Asheville.
- I-240 needs safety improvements.

The primary purposes of the proposed action are:

- To provide a freeway-to-freeway connection between I-26 south of Asheville, US 19-23 north of Asheville and I-40.
- To provide a link of a direct, multi-lane, freeway facility meeting interstate standards along the existing and future section of the I-26 corridor from the port of Charleston, South Carolina to I-81 in Kingsport, Tennessee.
- To address identified capacity deficiencies based on existing and forecasted 2030 design year traffic in this growing area.
- To reduce traffic delays and congestion along the I-240 French Broad River crossing which currently operates at capacity.
- To increase the remaining useful service of the existing Smoky Park Bridges by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River.
- To improve the safety of I-240 on the west side of Asheville, which has a higher accident rate than the average rate for this type of facility in North Carolina.

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, December 8, 2004 with the "Purpose and Need" (Concurrence Point No. 1) as stated above.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers _____

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency _____

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service _____

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Marla Chambers 1-31-05

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources _____

N.C. DENR –
Division of Water Quality _____

Tennessee Valley Authority _____

Federal Highway Administration _____

French Broad River MPO _____

N.C. Department of Transportation _____

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Alternatives to be Studied in Detail**

| | |
|---|---|
| Alternate 2 | Alternate 3 |
| Alternate 4 | Alternate 5 |
| Interchange Alternate A-2 | Interchange Alternate C-2 |
| Interchange Alternate D-1 | |

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, December 8, 2004 with the "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above.

| | |
|---|---|
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | [signature] |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | [signature] |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | [signature] |
| N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission | Marla Chambers 1-31-05 |
| N.C. Department of Cultural Resources | [signature] |
| N.C. DENR – Division of Water Quality | John E. Hennessy |
| Tennessee Valley Authority | Harold M. Draper |
| Federal Highway Administration | Clarence W. Coleman Jr. |
| French Broad River MPO | [signature] |
| N.C. Department of Transportation | Vincent J. Rhea |

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# ASHEVILLE, NC
# NEPA Merger Team Meeting
# December 9, 2004
# ATTENDANCE LIST

**Please print you name below so that we will have a record of your attendance.**

| Name | Representing |
|---|---|
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| DERRICK WEAVER | NCDOT PDEA |
| CHARLIE FLOWE | TGS ENGINEERS |
| VINCE RAEA | NCDOT PDEA |
| Drew Joyner | NCDOT-TIP Program Manager |
| CATHY HOUSER | NCDOT- ROADWAY DESIGN |
| DAVID SCHEFFEL | NCDOT- ROADWAY |
| CLARENCE COLEMAN | FHWA-NC DIVISION |
| Megan Willis | PDEA - ONE |
| Chris Underwood | PDE - ONE |
| LONNIE I. BROOKS | NCDOT- STRUCTURE DESIGN |
| CHRIS MILITSCHER | USEPA - Raleigh Office |
| JOHN HENNESSY | NC DWQ |
| SARAH McBride | SHPO/DCR |
| Anne Gamber | NCDOT / HYDRAULICS |

**Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team Meeting Agreement**
**Concurrence Point No. 1**
**Purpose and Need**
**And**
**Concurrence Point No. 2**
**Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail**

**I-26 Connector**
T.I.P. No. I-2513
NCDOT Project No. 8.U843701
Federal-Aid Project No. MANHF 26-1 (53)
NCDOT Division 13

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this meeting is to reaffirm concurrence with the "Purpose and Need" and the "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" for the subject project. Shortly after Concurrence Point 1 and 2 were signed in January 2002, improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project were added to the project scope. These alternatives are being presented for your review and comment. New concurrence forms are included for your signature.

**Project Description:**

The proposed I-26 Connector in Asheville improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway Street). The project length is approximately 6.5 miles (10.4 kilometers) including the section through the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange.

**Project History:**

In October 1999, NCDOT met with interagency officials including Steve Lund (COE), John Hennessy (DWQ) and David Cox (NCWRC) to discuss the status of the subject project and to bring the project into the Section 404/NEPA Merger process. After a description of the project development, the agency officials were asked about any concerns regarding the approval status of the project. Mr. Lund acknowledged that the Purpose and Need, and Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail (Concurrence Point Nos. 1 and 2) were achieved during the Phase I Study. To reaffirm these decisions, a concurrence meeting was held on January 23, 2002. The purpose and need was adjusted and a concurrence form was signed by all but one member of the team. However, due to the addition of alternatives to improve the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project, this meeting has been arranged to reaffirm concurrence with the Concurrence Point 1, "Purpose and Need" and to modify Concurrence Point 2, "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail".

**Purpose of and Need for Action:**

As noted in the attached original purpose and need form, the need for the proposed action is to provide a better transportation facility to connect US 19-23 north of Asheville with I-26 south of Asheville. Increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the level of service along I-240 on the west side of Asheville. The completion of improvements to US 19-23 (NCDOT TIP Project A-10) project is anticipated to further increase traffic volumes along I-240 on the west side of Asheville. In addition, I-240

needs safety improvements.

The primary purposes of the proposed action are to provide a freeway-to-freeway connection between I-26 south of Asheville and US 19-23 north of Asheville. The facility will provide a link of a direct, multi-lane, freeway facility meeting interstate standards along the existing and future section of the I-26 corridor from the port of Charleston, South Carolina to I-81 in Kingsport, Tennessee. The route will address identified capacity deficiencies based on existing and forecasted design year traffic in this growing area. It will reduce traffic delays and congestion along the I-240 French Broad River crossing which currently operates at capacity. This project will increase the remaining useful service of the existing Smoky Park Bridges by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River. Finally, the project will improve the safety of I-240 on the west side of Asheville, which has a higher accident rate than the average rate for this type of facility in North Carolina.

The addition of the interchange improvements will further satisfy the project purpose and need by allowing direct movements between future I-26/I-240 and I-40.

**Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail:** The development of reasonable and feasible alternatives was started during the Phase I study. During this study, consideration was given to the no-build alternative, bypass corridors around the west side of Asheville, and the corridor using the I-240 alignment from existing I-26 to Patton Avenue in combination with a new location route from Patton Avenue northward across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70. After extensive public involvement, the recommended corridor addressed in this study uses the I-240 alignment from existing I-26 to Patton Avenue and a new location route from Patton Avenue northward across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70. The US Army Corps of Engineers, the US Department of Interior, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the NC Department of Cultural Resources joined in approving the recommendations in the Phase I analysis. After the Phase I analysis, conceptual plans were developed to determine reasonable and feasible alternatives within the recommended study corridor.

Initially, three alternatives (Alternatives 1, 2 and 3) were developed for the interchange with Patton Avenue and the new location freeway north of Patton Avenue. The studies determined Alternate 1 could not be constructed without impacting the historic Riverside Cemetery and relocating Riverside Drive and the Craggy spur of the Norfolk Southern Railway into a former landfill. Due to these problems, Alternate 1 is no longer considered to be a feasible alignment for the project and was eliminated from further consideration. At the request of local officials, a public design forum was held in the summer of 2000 to allow interested citizens the opportunity to become involved in the project design. As a result of the input received at the public design forum, two additional alternatives (Alternatives 4 and 5) were developed to address the desire to separate I-240 and Patton Avenue traffic across the French Broad River. Also as a result of the input received at the public design forum, improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to improve traffic service and provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 were added to the project.

Each of the "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" consists of three sections: 1) "Improvements" along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River, 2) Roadway on "New Location" from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway Street) and 3) "Improvements" to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240. I-240 improvement scenarios include widening options that are common to all four "new location" alternatives.

The "New Location" portions of the alternatives are described below (The new location alternatives are shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3.)

**Alternate 2** crosses the Westgate Shopping Center property and follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it further north.

**Alternate 3** crosses parts of the golf course and tennis facility at the Holiday Inn Sunspree then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it at the same location as Alternate 2.

**Alternate 4** will realign I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19-23 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto a new I-240 crossing of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue.

**Alternate 5** will realign Patton Avenue on a new crossing of the French Broad River adjacent to and just south of the Smoky Park Bridges. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate I-240.

At the public design forum where the consideration of the new location alternatives was expanded to eventually include Alternates 4 and 5, the local citizens also requested improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to accommodate the missing moves between I-40 westbound and I-240 northbound, and between I-240 southbound and I-40 eastbound. Shortly after the approval of the original Concurrence Point 1, "Purpose and Need" and Concurrence Point 2, "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail", improvements to this interchange were added to the scope of the project to satisfy this local citizen request. Ten different layouts for these improvements were investigated before the following three alternative alignments were developed to satisfy the request for improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange. These improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange were presented to the public at a Citizen's Workshop on June 22, 2004. All three of these interchange alternatives satisfied the request for the interchange improvements and no reason for the elimination of any of the three presented alternatives were identified. The three alternative design schemes being considered for the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvements (A-2, C-2 and D-1) are shown on the attached figures.

**Interchange Alternate A-2** provides a fully directional interchange configuration for traffic movements between I-26, I-40 and I-240, a westbound collector-distributor along westbound I-40, and a modified diamond interchange at NC 191 and I-40. In the northeast quadrant of the NC 191/I-40 interchange, an entrance ramp loop is provided from NC 191 to I-40 westbound.

**Interchange Alternate C-2** provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with loops in lieu of directional ramps for southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and for westbound I-40 to southbound I-26SB. This layout provides collector-distributors along both sides of I-40 through the I-240/26 and NC 191 interchanges. The proposed NC 191 interchange provides the same loops in the eastern quadrants as the existing interchange.

**Interchange Alternate D-1** provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with a loop in lieu of a directional ramp from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and a conventional diamond-type interchange at NC 191 and I-40.

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

## Concurrence Point No. 1. Purpose and Need

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

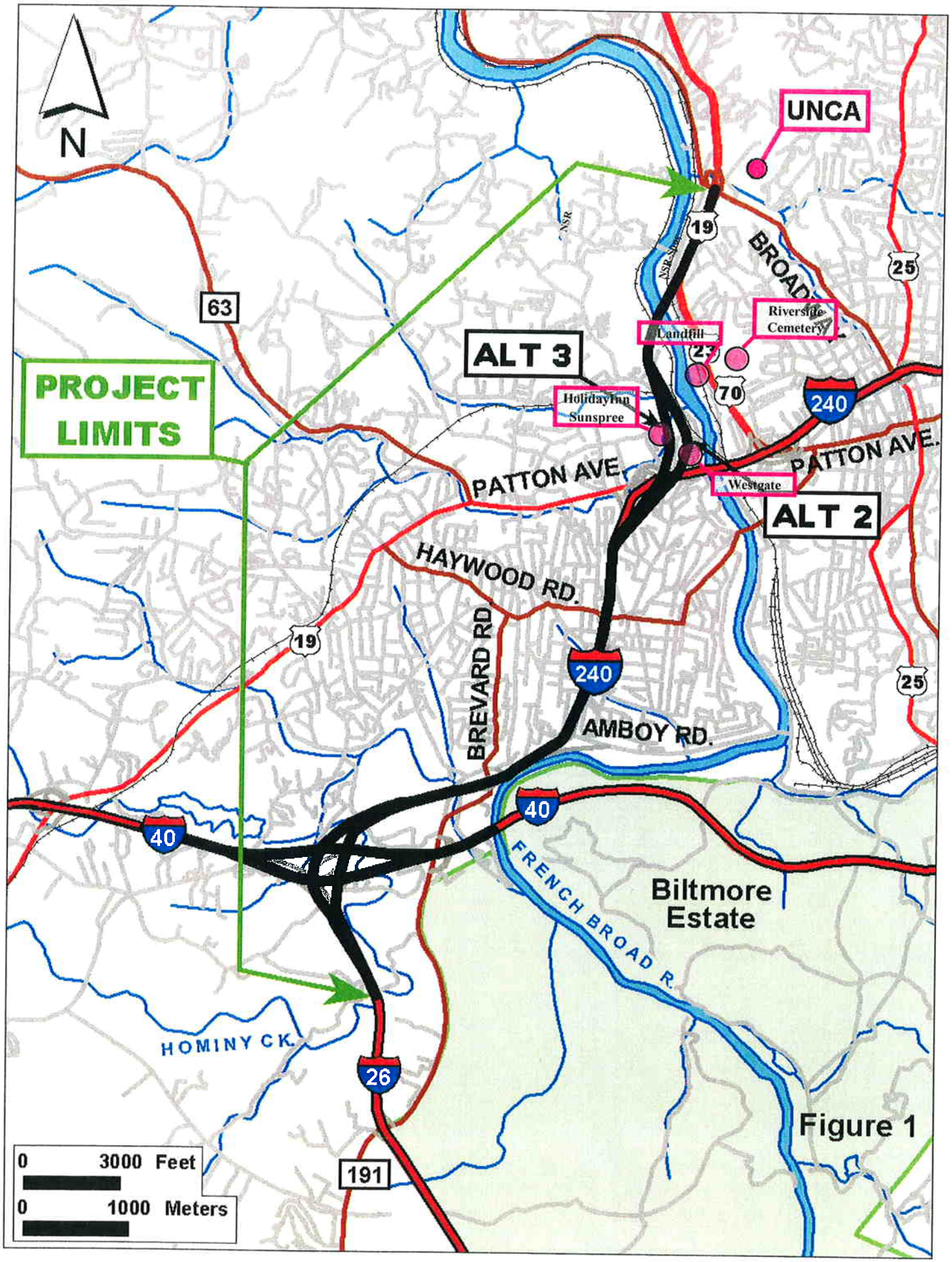
## Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action

The following existing and projected conditions summarize the need for the proposed action:

- A better transportation facility is needed to connect US 19-23 north of Asheville with I-26 south of Asheville.
- Increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the level of service along I-240 on the west side of Asheville.
- The construction of improvements to US 19-23 (NCDOT TIP Project A-10) project is anticipated to further increase traffic volumes along I-240 on the west side of Asheville.
- I-240 needs safety improvements.

The primary purposes of the proposed action are:

- To provide a freeway-to-freeway connection between I-26 south of Asheville, ~~and~~ US 19-23 north of Asheville and I-40.
- To provide a link of a direct, multi-lane, freeway facility meeting interstate standards along the existing and future section of the I-26 corridor from the port of Charleston, South Carolina to I-81 in Kingsport, Tennessee.
- To address identified capacity deficiencies based on existing and forecasted 2025 design year traffic in this growing area.
- To reduce traffic delays and congestion along the I-240 French Broad River crossing which currently operates at capacity.
- To increase the remaining useful service of the existing Smoky Park Bridges by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River.
- To improve the safety of I-240 on the west side of Asheville, which has a higher accident rate than the average rate for this type of facility in North Carolina.


N
UNCA
PROJECT LIMITS
ALT 3
ALT 2
Landfill
Riverside Cemetery
Holidayinn Sunspree
Westgate
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
HAYWOOD RD.
BREVARD RD
AMBOY RD.
BROAD
FRENCH BROAD R.
HOMINY CK.
Biltmore Estate
63
19
25
70
240
40
26
191
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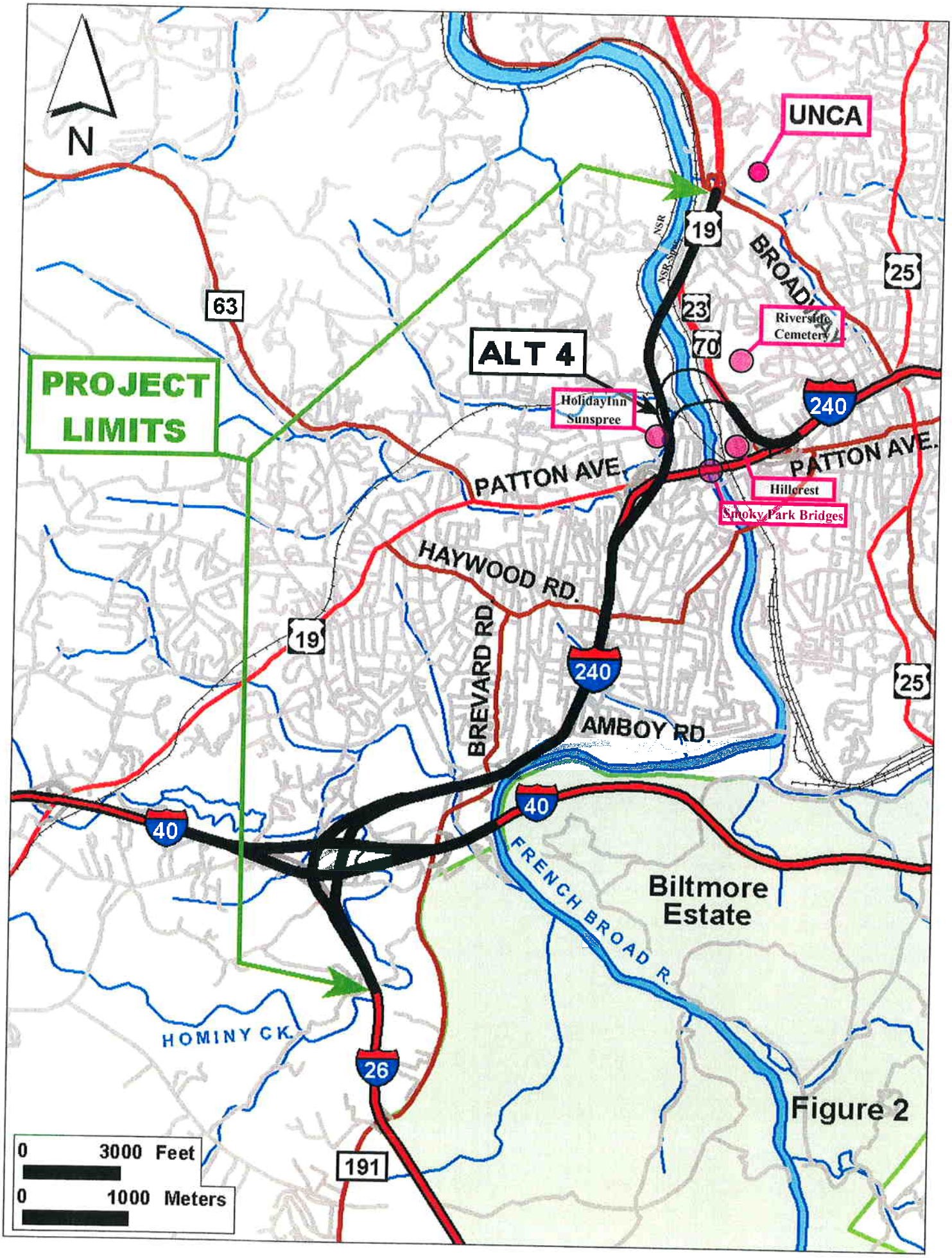
0 1000 Meters

Figure 1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19
BROADWAY
25
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23
Riverside Cemetery
70
ALT 4
PROJECT LIMITS
Holiday Inn Sunspree
240
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
Hillcrest
Smoky Park Bridges
HAYWOOD RD.
19
BREVARD RD
240
25
AMBOY RD.
40
40
FRENCH BROAD R.
Biltmore Estate
HOMINY CK.
26
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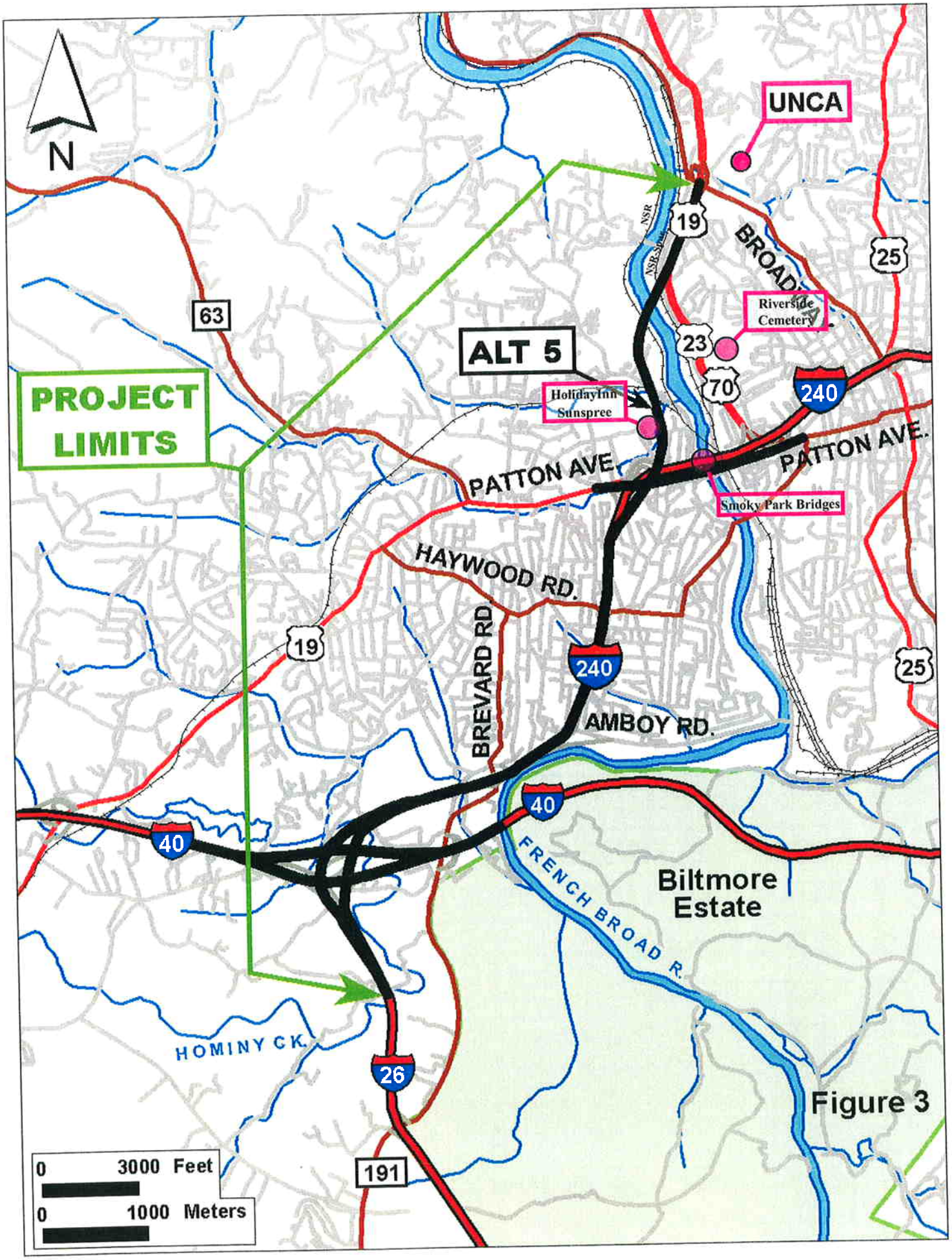
Figure 2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PROJECT LIMITS
Holiday Inn Sunspree
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
Smoky Park Bridges
HAYWOOD RD.
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BREVARD RD
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AMBOY RD.
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FRENCH BROAD R.
Biltmore Estate
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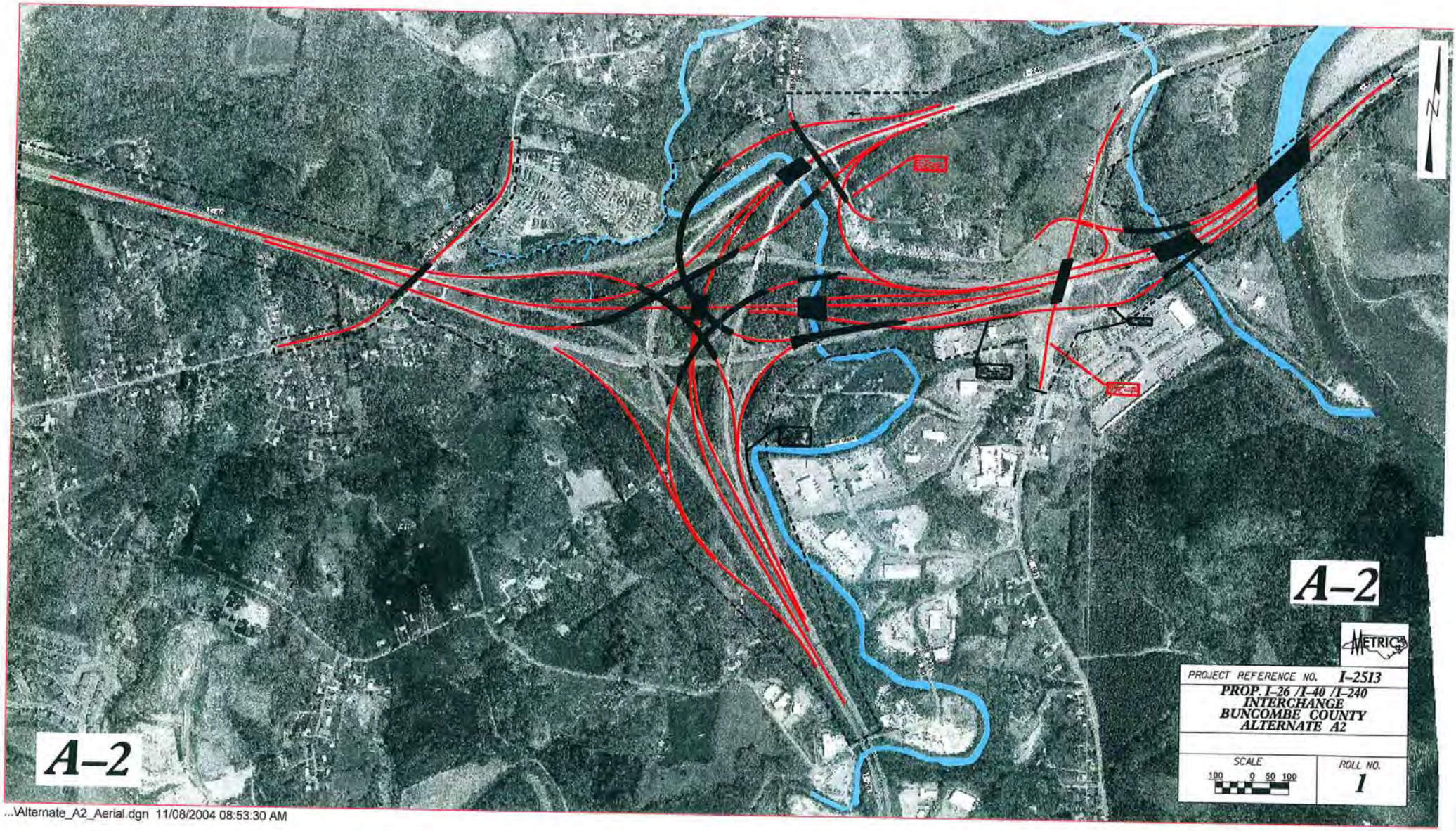
Figure 3

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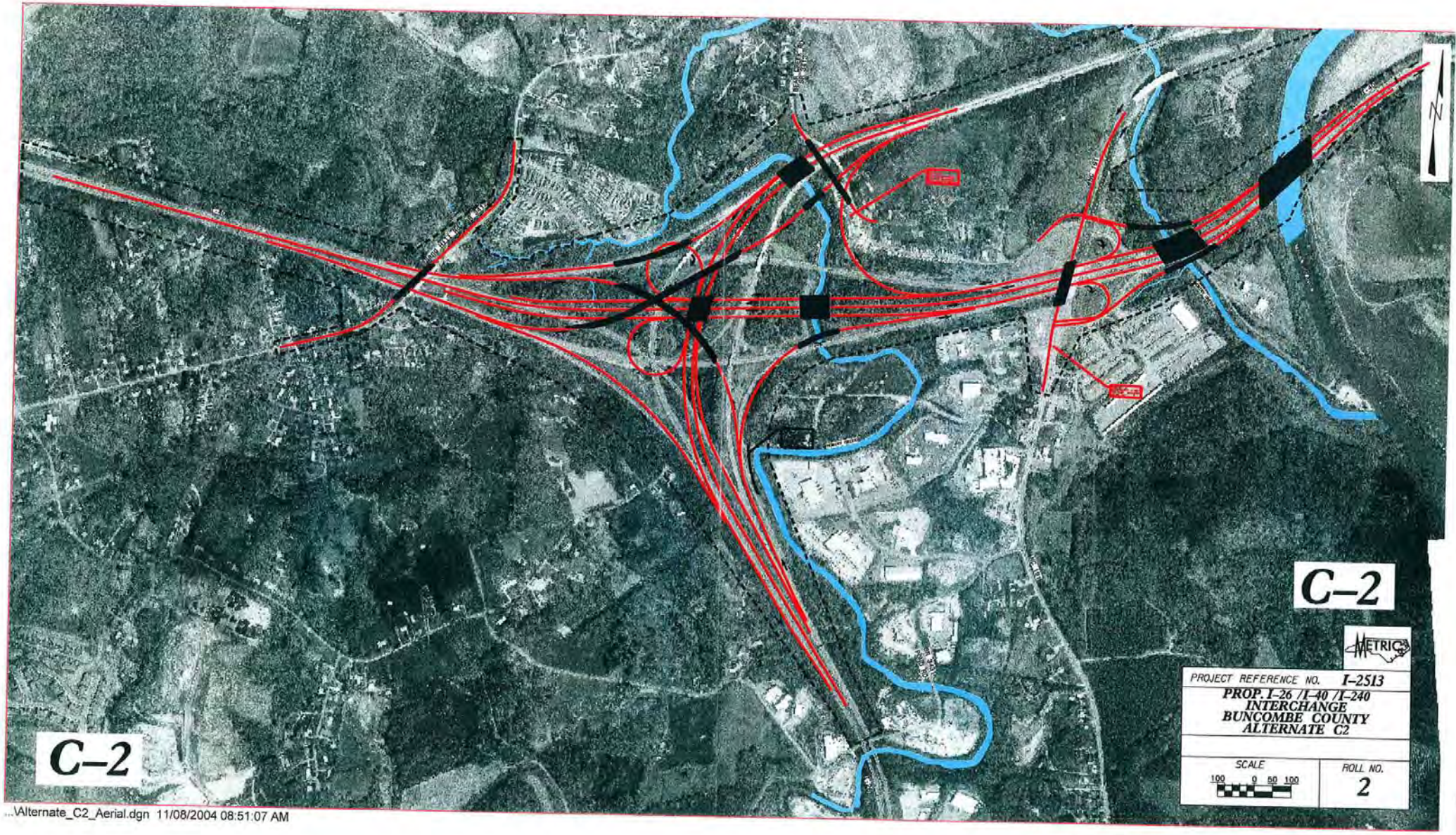


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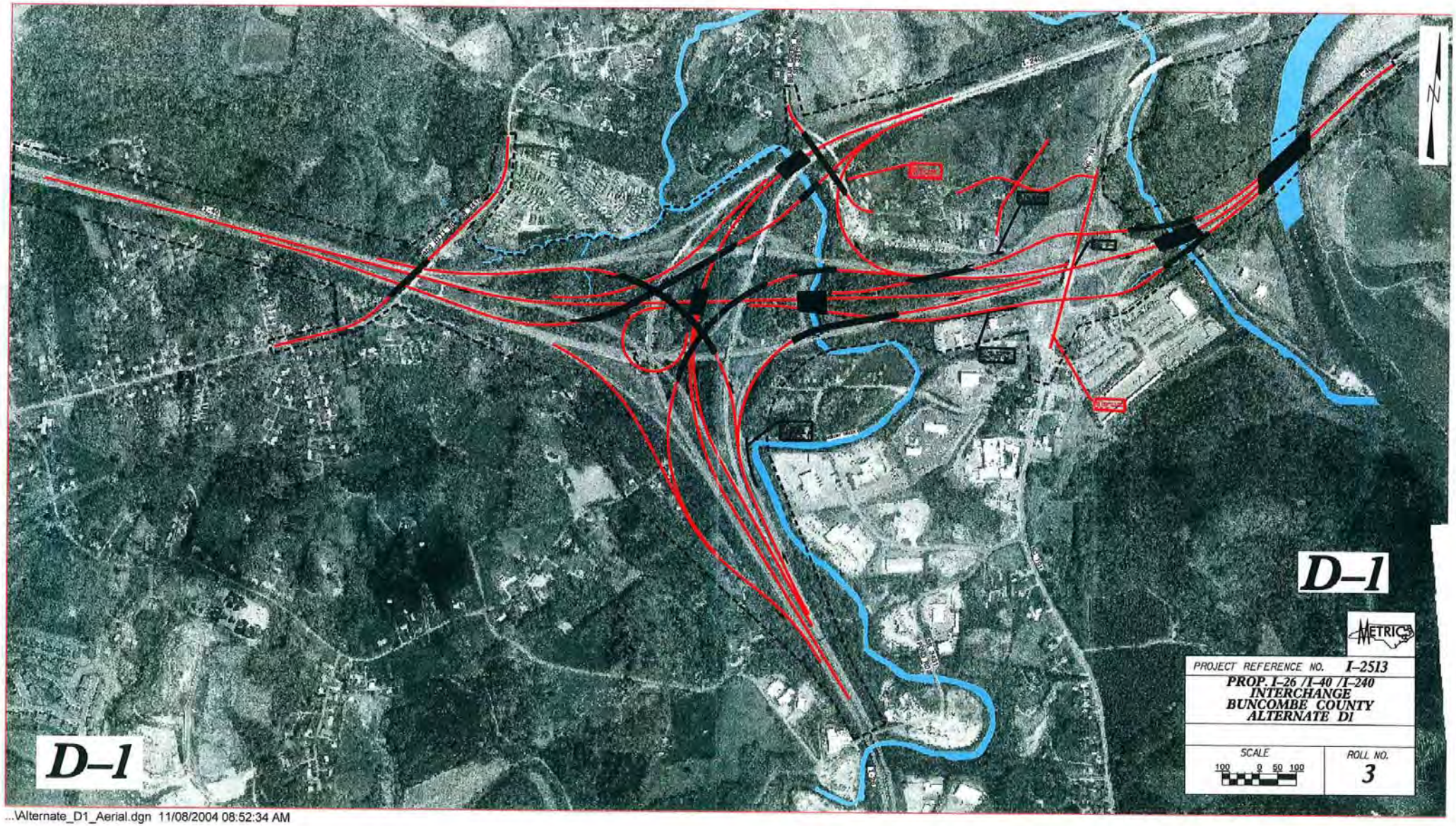


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MEMO TO: File

FROM: Ken Burleson

SUBJECT: New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NCDOT Division 13, NC TIP No. I-2513, BSIP WBS Element 34165.1.2, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

DATE: September 9, 2006

On Thursday, September 7, 2006 a Merger Team Meeting was held for the subject project in the Division 13 Office in Asheville. The following attended:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Charlie Flowe | TGS Engineers | 919-319-8850 | cflowe@tgsengineers.com |
| Sarah McBride | DCR/HPO | 919-733-6545 x-225 | sarah.mcbride@ncmail.net |
| Jake Riggsbee | FHWA | 919-856-4350 x-102 | jake.riggsbee@fhwa.dot.gov |
| David Scheffel | NCDOT Roadway | 919-250-4016 | dscheffel@dot.state.nc.us |
| Dan Duffield | NCDOT Hydraulics | 919-250-4100 | dduffield@dot.state.nc.us |
| Sandy Smith | EcoScience Corp. | 919-828-3433 | smith@ecoscience.com |
| Rick Tipton | NCDOT Division 13 | 828-251-6171 | rtipton@dot.state.nc.us |
| Steve Lund | USACE | 828-271-7980 x-223 | steven.w.lund@usace.army.mil |
| Dave Baker | USACE | 828-271-7980 x-225 | david.k.baker@usace.army.mil |
| Freddie C. Bennett | TVA | 423-467-3802 | fcbennett@tva.gov |
| Brian Wrenn | DWQ | 919-733-5715 | brian.wrenn@ncmail.net |
| Marla Chambers | NCWRC | 704-545-3841 | chambersmj@carolina.rr.com |
| Jeff Hemphill | NCDOT | 919-715-1455 | jhemphill@dot.state.nc.us |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Marella Buncick | US Fish and Wildlife Service | (828) 258-3939 x237 | marella_buncick@fws.gov |
| Vince Rhea | NCDOT PDEA | 919-733-7844 x-261 | vrhea@dot.state.nc.us |
| Carla Dagnino | NCDOT PDEA | 919-715-1456 | cdagnino@dot.state.nc.us |
| Dan Baechtold | FBRMPO | 828-259-5457 | dbaechtold@ashevillenc.gov |
| Daniel Holt | NCDOT TPB | 828-232-4528 | dlholt@dot.state.nc.us |

After introductions, each of the project alternatives in each section was addressed and discussed. The increased bridge lengths and associated stream impact reductions in Section B that were introduced since the original preliminary plan development were noted. The only NCDOT recommendations that were discussed in detail concerned the proposed culvert(s) along Reed Creek and along Smith Mill Creek in Alternates B3, B4 and B5. The proposed culvert extension along Trent Branch with Alternates A2, C2, D1 and F1 was briefly discussed. The following conclusions were noted:

1. In Alternative B3 in Section B, NCDOT will shorten the proposed 450-foot culvert at Holiday Inn Drive over Smith Mill Creek through the introduction of a retaining wall along Holiday Inn Drive.

2. In Alternative B4 in Section B, NCDOT will replace the recommended culvert at Holiday Inn Drive and the exit ramp over Smith Mill Creek with bridges.

3. NCDOT agreed to add cross-veins or other appropriate measures to reduce the potential for head cutting on Smith Mill Creek with any alternative.

4. NCDOT agreed to use sills or baffles to contain low flows to one or two barrels at the culvert along Reed Creek.

5. In Alternatives A2 and D1 in Section C, NCDOT will shorten the culvert extension(s) at Trent Branch and remove some of the existing culvert under the I-240 westbound to I-40 westbound ramp.

6. Although not yet quantified, the stream and wetland impacts associated with Alternate F1 in Section C were noted to be less than those of the other Section C alternates.

7. Alternate F1 was approved as an alternative for detailed study (Merger Point 2).

8. The revised Merger Point 2 and the Merger Point 2a forms were signed by the attendees.

9/7/06

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | I-26 Connector |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Alternatives to be Studied in Detail**

| | |
|---|---|
| Alternate B2 | Alternate B3 |
| Alternate B4 | Alternate B5 |
| Interchange Alternate A2 | Interchange Alternate C2 |
| Interchange Alternate D1 | Interchange Alternate F1 |

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, December 8, 2004 with the "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above. 9/7/06

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources

N.C. DENR –
Division of Water Quality

Tennessee Valley Authority

Federal Highway Administration

French Broad River MPO

N.C. Department of Transportation

9/7/06

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2A. Bridging and Alignment**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Section/Alternatives Reviewed and Modifications Requested**

Section A - none

Section B Alternate B2 - none

Section B Alternate B3 – Shorten Proposed Culvert at Holiday Inn Drive

Section B Alternate B4 – Replace Proposed Culvert at Holiday Inn Drive to a Bridge

Section B Alternate B5- none

Section C Alternate A2- none

Section C Alternate C2- none

Section C Alternate D1- none

Section C Alternate F1- none

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, September ~~9~~ 7 VR, 2006 with the "Bridging and Alignment Review" (Concurrence Point No. 2A) as noted above.

| | |
|---|---|
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | |
| N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission | |
| N.C. Department of Cultural Resources | |
| N.C. DENR – Division of Water Quality | |
| Tennessee Valley Authority | |
| Federal Highway Administration | |
| French Broad River MPO | |
| N.C. Department of Transportation | |

9/7/06

# Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team Meeting Agreement
# Concurrence Point No. 2A
# Bridging and Alignment Review

**I-26 Connector**
T.I.P. No. I-2513
NCDOT Project No. 8.U843701
Federal-Aid Project No. MANHF 26-1 (53)
NCDOT Division 13

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain concurrence with the bridging and alignment recommendations for the subject project. Shortly after Concurrence Point 1 and 2 were signed in January 2002, improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project were added to the project scope. In December 2004, Concurrence Points 1 and 2 were revisited and approved to add the improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project. Since the approval of Concurrence Point 2, another I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvement alternative (Alternate F1) is also being developed to satisfy the project purpose and need with fewer environmental impacts in a more economical manner. Alternate F1 satisfies the project purpose and need by improving the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange operations including the addition of the missing direct movements between future I-26/I-240 and I-40. Therefore, approval of Alternate F1 as another alternative to be studied in detail is also requested. A Concurrence Point 2 form adding Alternate F1 is included for your signature.

The preliminary designs and recommendations have been developed for the project alternatives. These alternatives are being presented for your review and comment on the bridging and alignments. A Concurrence Point 2A form is included for your signature.

**Project History:**

In October 1999, NCDOT met with interagency officials including Steve Lund (COE), John Hennessy (DWQ) and David Cox (NCWRC) to discuss the status of the subject project and to bring the project into the Section 404/NEPA Merger process. After a description of the project development, the agency officials were asked about any concerns regarding the approval status of the project. Mr. Lund acknowledged that the Purpose and Need, and Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail (Concurrence Point Nos. 1 and 2) were achieved during the Phase I Study. To reaffirm these decisions, a concurrence meeting was held on January 23, 2002. The purpose and need was adjusted and a concurrence form was signed by all but one member of the team. Due to the addition of alternatives to improve the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project, another merger team meeting was held in December 2004 to reaffirm concurrence with the Concurrence Point 1, "Purpose and Need" and to modify Concurrence Point 2, "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail". Both Concurrence Point 1 and Concurrence Point 2 forms were signed by all members of the team.

**Project Description:**

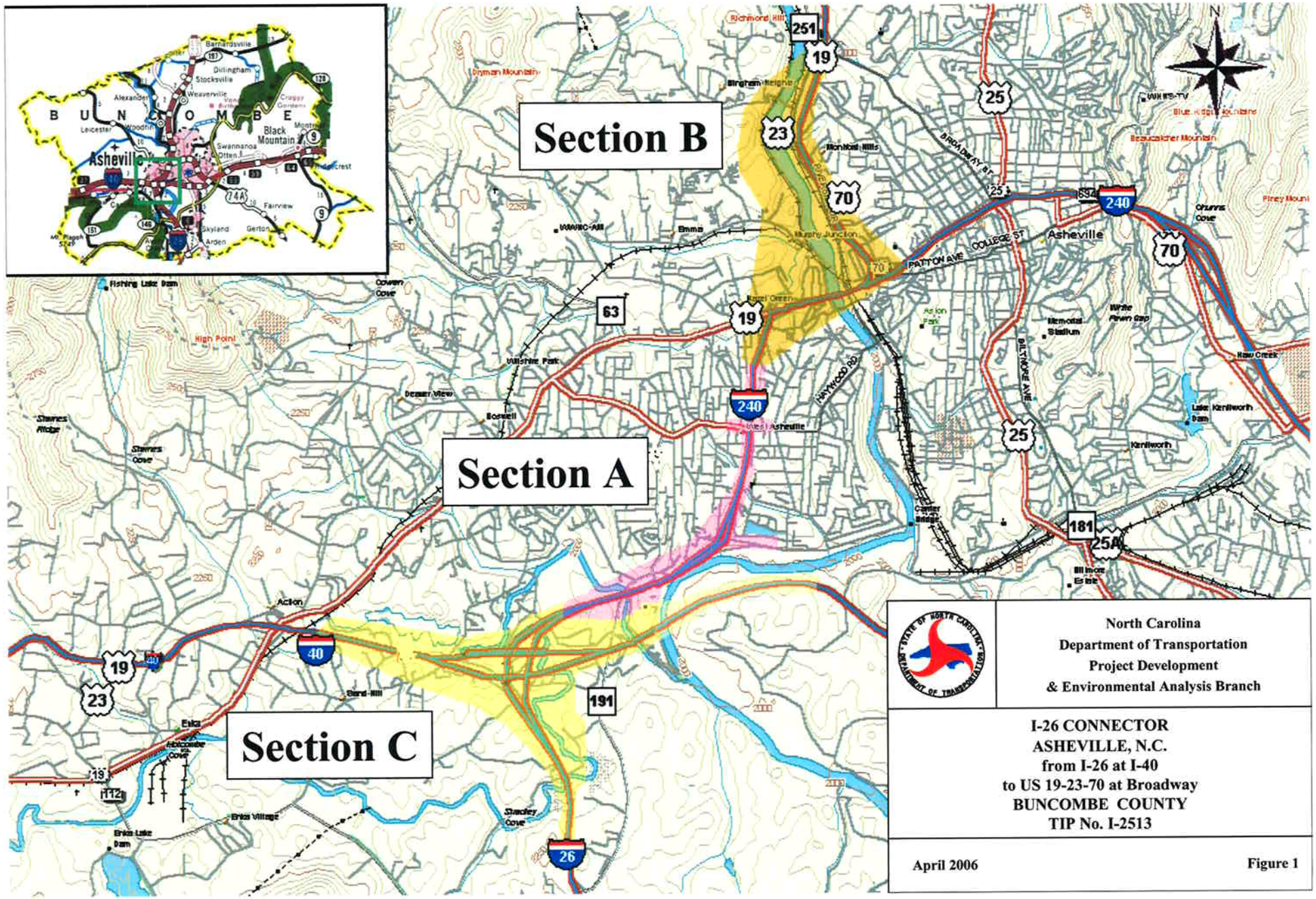
The proposed I-26 Connector is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway Street). Including the improvements to I-40 through the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the project is approximately 10 miles long (see Figure1). The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project. These separate sections are described below.

Section A consists of widening and safety improvements along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. The Section A improvements along existing I-240 are common to all of the project alternatives.

Section B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Four alternatives (Alternates B2, B3, B4, and B5) are being considered for Section B. These Section B alternatives are described below (see Figures 2, 3 and 4).

- Alternate B2 crosses Patton Avenue at the Westgate Shopping Center property and follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it further north and connecting with the US 19-23-70 alignment south of SR 1781 (Broadway Street).
- Alternate B3 crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate 2.
- Alternate B4 also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate 2. This alternate also realigns I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19-23 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto new I-240 crossings of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. This removes I-240 traffic from the existing Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic.
- Alternate B5 also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate 2. This alternate also realigns Patton Avenue on a new crossing of the French Broad River adjacent to and just south of the Smoky Park Bridges. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate I-240.

Section C consists of improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project. At the public design


Section A
Section B
Section C
North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Project Development
& Environmental Analysis Branch
I-26 CONNECTOR
ASHEVILLE, N.C.
from I-26 at I-40
to US 19-23-70 at Broadway
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
TIP No. I-2513
April 2006
Figure 1

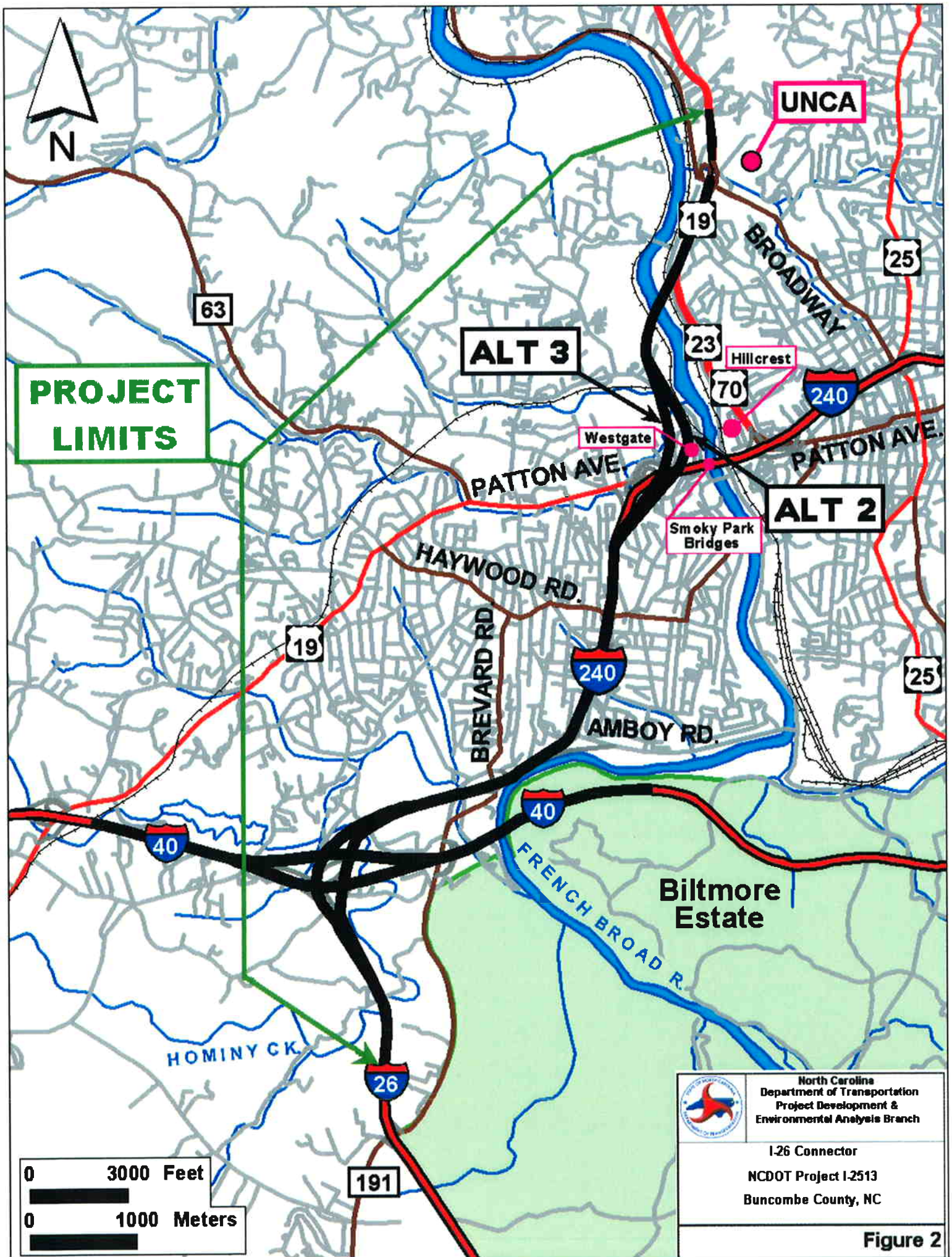
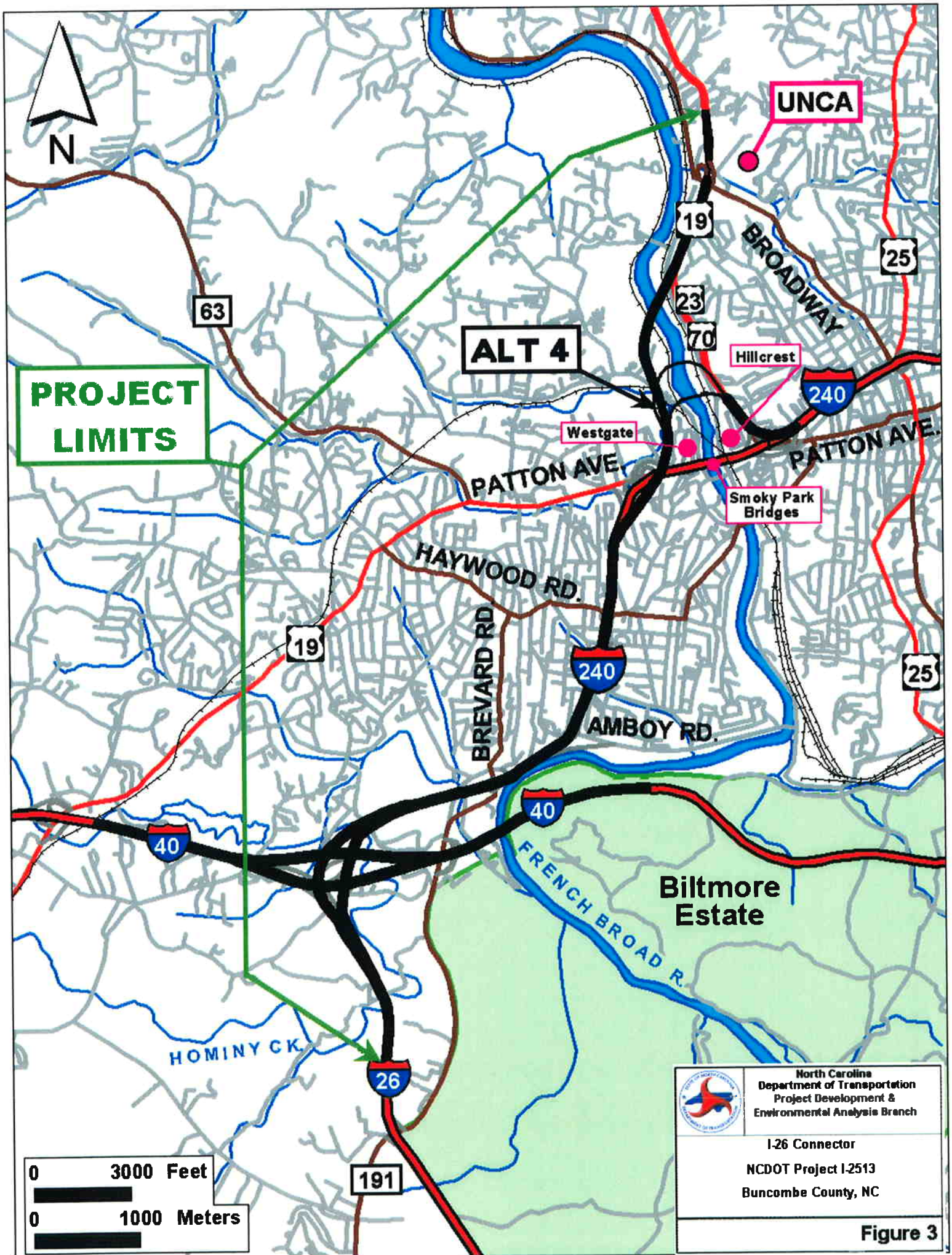

N
UNCA
19
BROADWAY
25
63
ALT 3
23
Hillcrest
70
240
PROJECT LIMITS
Westgate
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
ALT 2
Smoky Park Bridges
HAYWOOD RD.
19
BREVARD RD
240
25
AMBOY RD.
40
40
FRENCH BROAD R.
Biltmore Estate
HOMINY CK.
26
191
0 3000 Feet
0 1000 Meters
North Carolina Department of Transportation Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
I-26 Connector
NCDOT Project I-2513
Buncombe County, NC

Figure 2


N
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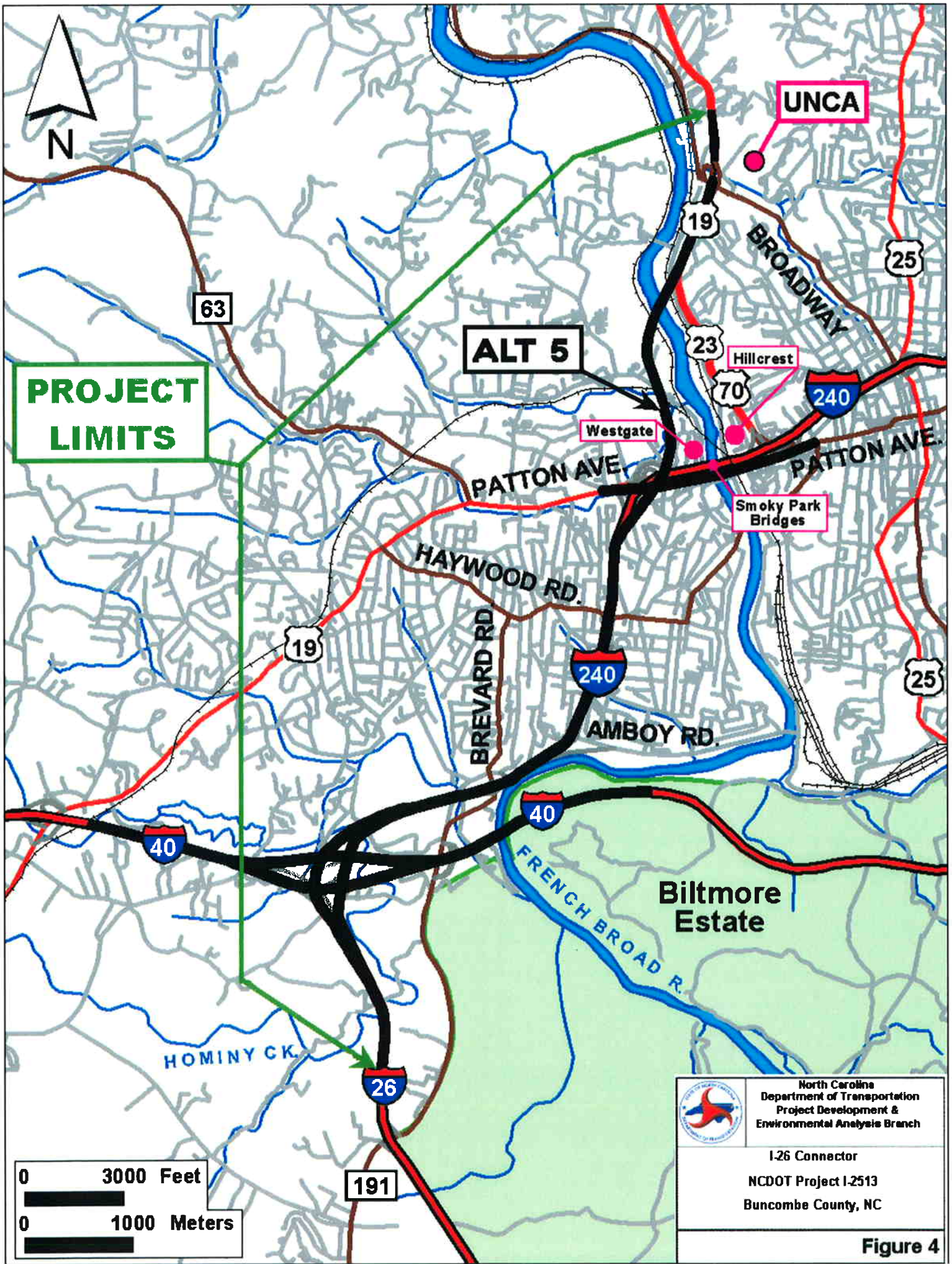
BROADWAY
25
23
70
63
ALT 4
Hillcrest
240
PROJECT LIMITS
Westgate
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
Smoky Park Bridges
HAYWOOD RD.
19
BREVARD RD
240
25
AMBOY RD.
40
40
FRENCH BROAD R.
Biltmore Estate
HOMINY CK.
26
191
0 3000 Feet
0 1000 Meters
North Carolina Department of Transportation Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
I-26 Connector
NCDOT Project I-2513
Buncombe County, NC
Figure 3


N
UNCA
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BROADWAY
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ALT 5
23
Hillcrest
70
240
PROJECT LIMITS
Westgate
PATTON AVE.
PATTON AVE.
Smoky Park Bridges
HAYWOOD RD.
19
BREVARD RD
240
25
AMBOY RD.
40
40
FRENCH BROAD R.
Biltmore Estate
HOMINY CK.
26
191
0 3000 Feet
0 1000 Meters
North Carolina Department of Transportation Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
I-26 Connector
NCDOT Project I-2513
Buncombe County, NC

Figure 4

forum where the consideration of the new location alternatives was expanded to eventually include Alternates B4 and B5, the local citizens also requested improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to accommodate the missing moves between I-40 westbound and I-240 northbound, and between I-240 southbound and I-40 eastbound. Section C initially included three alternatives (Alternates A2, C2 and D1). These improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange were presented to the public at a Citizen's Workshop on June 22, 2004 and received Concurrence Points 1 & 2 approval in December 2004.

Another alternative (Alternate F1) is also being developed in Section C to satisfy the project purpose and need with fewer environmental impacts in a more economical manner. Alternate F1 satisfies the project purpose and need by improving the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange operations including the addition of the missing direct movements between future I-26/I-240 and I-40.

The four alternative design schemes considered for the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvements (A2, C2, D1 and F1) are described below.

- Interchange Alternate A2 provides a fully directional interchange configuration for traffic movements between I-26, I-40 and I-240, a westbound collector-distributor along westbound I-40, and a modified diamond interchange at NC 191 and I-40. In the northeast quadrant of the NC 191/I-40 interchange, an entrance ramp loop is provided from NC 191 to I-40 westbound.
- Interchange Alternate C2 provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with loops in lieu of directional ramps for southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and for westbound I-40 to southbound I-26. This layout provides collector-distributors along both sides of I-40 through the I-240/26 and NC 191 interchanges. The proposed NC 191 interchange provides the same loops in the eastern quadrants as the existing interchange.
- Interchange Alternate D1 provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with a loop in lieu of a directional ramp from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and a conventional diamond-type interchange at NC 191 and I-40.
- Interchange Alternate F1 provides a semi-directional interchange configuration very similar to the existing configuration with modifications to include the addition of a loop from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40 and a directional ramp from westbound I-40 to northbound I-240/26.

The known project impacts for each of the alternatives in each of the project sections are included in Table A.

## *TABLE A*
## *I-2513 Impacts by Section*

| | **Section A** | **Section B** | | | | **Section C** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Widen I-240 | New Location Across French Broad | | | | I-26/I-40 Interchange | | | |
| | Exist Alignment | Alt. B-2 | Alt. B-3 | Alt. B-4 | Alt. B-5 | Alt. A-2 | Alt. C-2 | Alt. D-1 | Alt. F-1 |
| Length (miles) | 2.8 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 3.9 | 3.6 |
| Bridged Stream Crossings | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 7 |
| Culverted Stream Crossings ≥72" | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 (2x) | 1 | 1 |
| Stream Impacts (# / Length) | 4 / 611 | 7 / 2156 | 10 / 2841 | 9 / 2403 | 8 / 2615 | 12 / 2088 | 13 / 2142 | 11 / 1623 | ? / ? |
| Wetland Impacts (# / Acres) | 1 / 0.01 | 2 / 0.17 | 2 / 0.08 | 2 / 0.06 | 2 / 0.06 | 6 / 1.34 | 6 / 1.02 | 5 / 0.75 | ? / ? |
| Pond Impacts (# / Acres) | 0 / 0 | 2 / 0.21 | 2 / 0.09 | 2 / 0.13 | 2 / 0.13 | 0 / 0 | 0 / 0 | 0 / 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Historic Properties | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Est. Residential Relocations | 93 | 44 | 61 | 37 | 53 | 22 | 15 | 16 | ?? |
| Est. Business Relocations | 21 | 55 | 17 | 18 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 1 | ? |
| Schools | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Churches | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| # Interchanges | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| R/W Cost Estimate | $21,194,000 | $64,635,000 | $64,475,000 | $60,415,000 | $65,705,000 | $8,010,000 | $7,030,000 | $8,380,000 | $6,500,000* |
| Construction Cost Estimate | $88,900,000 | $143,700,000 | $197,200,000 | $307,700,000 | $249,000,000 | $228,600,000 | $223,400,000 | $205,700,000 | $80,000,000* |
| Total Cost Estimate | $110,094,000 | $208,335,000 | $261,675,000 | $368,115,000 | $314,705,000 | $236,610,000 | $230,430,000 | $214,080,000 | $86,500,000* |

*** These costs are based on conceptual design.**

## Water Resources

The project study area is contained within the French Broad River Basin located west the Eastern Continental Divide. This basin covers approximately 2842 square miles in the mountains of North Carolina. Three separate subbasins are denoted within the French Broad River Basin: the French Broad River, the Pigeon River, and the Nolichucky River. Drainage from this basin travels through the Tennessee, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. The project study area lies within the French Broad River subbasin (USGS Hydrologic Unit #06010105) approximately 54 miles downstream of the headwaters of the French Broad. This portion of the river, including the adjoining tributaries, is part of the NCDWQ-designated subbasin 04-03-02 (NCDWQ 2005a).

Section A of the project study area contains five streams: Lower Hominy Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-76), the French Broad River (NCDWQ Index No. 6-(54.5)), two unnamed tributaries (UTs) to the French Broad River (UT 1A and UT 2A) (NCDWQ Index No. 6-(54.5)), and Moore Branch (NCDWQ Index No. 6-77) (NCDWQ 2005b) (Figures 3D and 3E, Appendix A; Sheet A-A, Appendix B). Lower Hominy Creek is located in the southwestern portion of this section and crosses the project area flowing in a southerly direction. The French Broad River is located along the southern boundary of this section flowing in an easterly direction. The two UTs to the French Broad River are located in the central portion of this section and each flow in a southerly direction across the study area. Moore Branch is located in the northern portion of this section and flows in a southeastern direction across the project study area.

Section B contains ten streams: Smith Mill Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-79), four UTs to Smith Mill Creek (UT 1B through UT 4B), the French Broad River (NCDWQ Index No. 6-(54.5)), three UTs to the French Broad River (UT 1B through UT 3B), and Reed Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-80) (Figures 3F-3H, Appendix A; Sheet B2, B3, B4, and B5, Appendix B). Smith Creek is located in the southern portion of this section and flows in a northeastern direction across the project study area. Two of the UTs to Smith Creek flow in a westerly direction across the project study area and the other two UTs flow in easterly direction. The French Broad River flows from south to north through this section and is bridged at least once by the proposed alternatives. Reed Creek is located in the northern portion of this section and crosses the project study area flowing in a westerly direction. Three UTs to the French Broad River are located in the central portion of this section; however, two flow in a westerly direction across the project study area and one flows in an easterly direction.

Section C contains 14 streams: Ragsdale Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-76-11), two UTs to Ragsdale Creek (UT 1C and UT 2C), Trent Branch (NCDWQ Index No. 6-76-10), Upper and Lower Hominy Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-76), four UTs to Hominy Creek (1C and 2C to Upper and Lower), the French Broad River (NCDWQ Index No. 6-(54.5)), two UTs to the French Broad River (1C and 2C), and two UTs (1 and 2) to UT 1C to the French Broad River (Figures 3A-3E, Appendix A; C-A2, C-C2, and C-D1, Appendix B). The eastern portion of this section contains two UTs to the French Broad River. These UTs flow in a northerly direction through the project study area. Two reaches of Hominy Creek flow through the project study area. One reach meanders from south to north through the widest portion of Section C (Upper Hominy Creek). North of the project study area, Hominy Creek arcs back south to pass through the project study area a second time prior to a confluence with the French Broad River along the eastern portion of the project study area (Lower Hominy Creek). Both reaches of Hominy Creek have two UTs flowing through the project study area. Ragsdale Creek flows from west to east across the northern edge of the central portion of Section C with only a small portion entering the

project study area. Two UTs to Ragsdale Creek occur along the western most boundary of this section flowing in a northerly direction through the project study area. Trent Branch is also a tributary of Ragsdale Creek. This stream flows northward through the project study area just west of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. Trent Branch flows into Ragsdale Creek just upstream of the Ragsdale Creek/Hominy Creek confluence.

No ORW, HQW, WS-I, or WS-II waters occur within 0.5 mile of the project study area (NCDWQ 2005a). One stream within the project study area, Hominy Creek is listed on 303(d) impaired waters list. No streams within the project study area are classified as trout waters. Therefore, the road improvement project can be classified as Case 3, which means there are no special restrictions beyond those outlined in the Best Management Practices for Protection of Surface Waters.

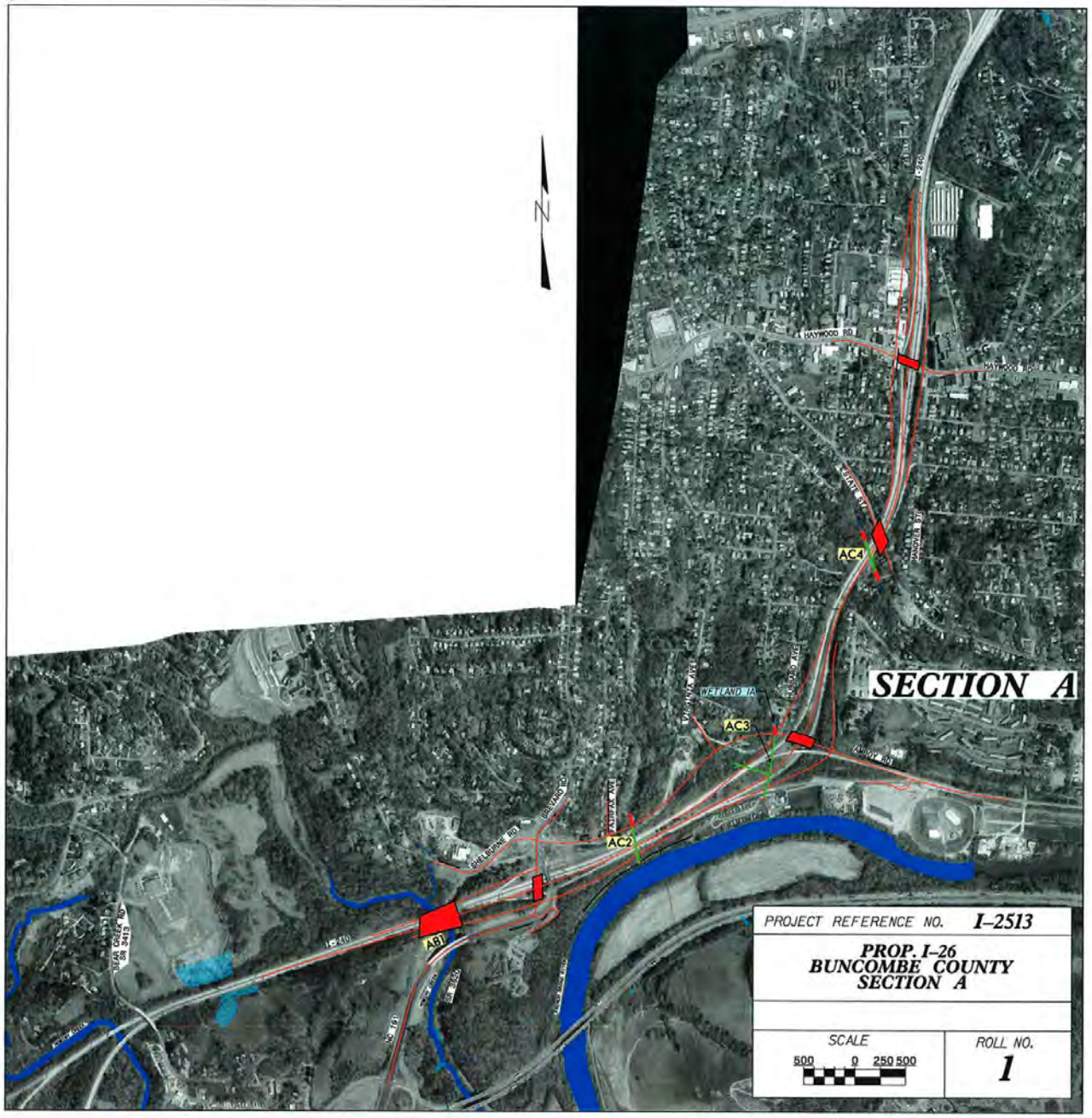
The following Table B is a hydraulic table including information for all the jurisdictional streams affected by the project and providing the proposed hydraulic recommendations at the major crossings for each of the alternatives in each of the project sections. A map showing the alternatives and crossing locations is included for each alternative.

## Protected Species

The USFWS lists nine Endangered species (Carolina northern flying squirrel, eastern cougar, gray bat, Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, bunched arrowhead, mountain sweet pitcher plant, and spreading avens), two Threatened species (spotfin chub and Virginia spiraea), and one Threatened due to Similarity of Appearance (bog turtle) as having ranges which extend into Buncombe County. NCNHP records indicate one known population of these species within 1.0 mile of the project study area, the Appalachian elktoe. Suitable habitat within the project study area does exist for the gray bat, Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, spotfin chub, bunched arrowhead, and Virginia spiraea. Detailed surveys within the project study area for the Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, bunched arrowhead, and Virginia spiraea have been conducted with the results indicating the mussels and plants were not present. Detailed surveys still need to be conducted for the gray bat.

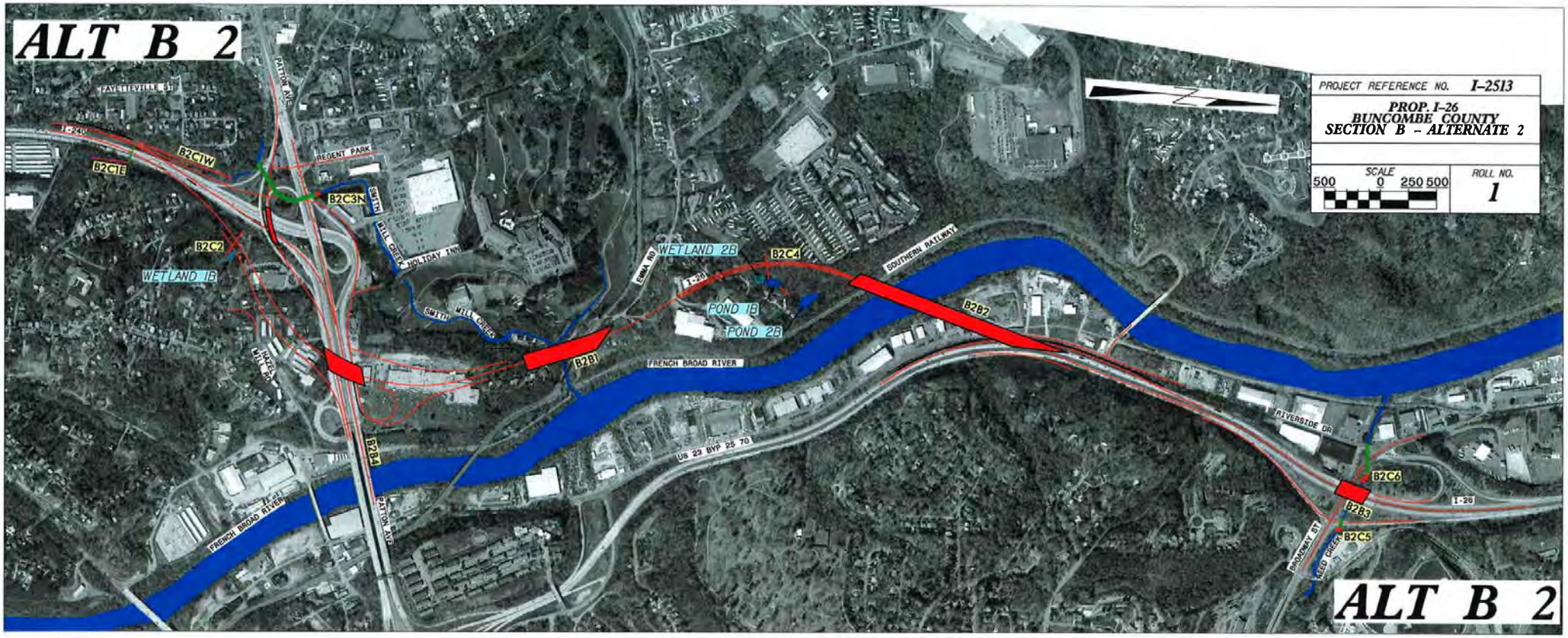
## TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Section A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Streams | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Crossing # | Hydro | Location | Wetland/Stream | Stream | Impacts to | | Intermittent | Channel Dimentions | | Existing | Recommended | Recommended Size | | | Cost |
| | Site # | | Crossed | Classification | Jurisdictional Areas | | or Perennial | Avg. Width | Avg. Depth | Structure | Structure | Width(FT)or | Length | Deck Area | Comparison |
| | | | | | (feet) | (acres) | | (feet) | (inches) | | | Culvert Size | (feet) | (sq. feet) | (millions) |
| AB1 | 8 | I-26 over SR 3620 | L.Hominy Cr. | C | Bridged:N/A | ---- | P | 18 | 12 to 18 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 402 | 90167 | |
| AC2 | 18 | I-26 east of Brevard | UT 1A (FBR) | B (FBR) | 184 | 0.02 | P | 5 | 4 | 48" CMP | Replace CMP | 2 @ 66" | 527 | ---- | |
| AC3 | n/a | I-26 @ Amboy | UT 2A (FBR) | B (FBR) | 210 | 0.01 | P | 3 | 6 | 42"to48" CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | | |
| AC4 | 19 | I-26 @ State Street | Moore Branch | C | 217 | 0.05 | P | 10 | 6 | 48" CMP | Replace CMP | 2 @ 60" | 484 | ---- | |
| | | | | **Total** | **611** | **0.08** | | | | | | | | | |
| Section A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wetlands | | | | Wetland Class | | Area | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Location | ID # | and Rating | | (acres) | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Near Amboy | Wetland 1-A | PF01A 40 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | **Total** | | **0.01** | | | | | | | | | |


N
SECTION A
AC4
AC3
AC2
AB1
HAYWOOD RD
WETLAND 1A
SHELBURNE RD
I-240
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SECTION A
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
1

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section B 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Section B 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Streams | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Crossing # | Hydro | Location | Wetland/Stream | Stream | Impacts to | | Intermittent | Channel Dimentions | | Existing | Recommended | Recommended Size | | | Cost |
| | Site # | | Crossed | Classification | Jurisdictional Areas | | or Perennial | Avg. Width | Avg. Depth | Structure | Structure | Width(FT)or | Length | Deck Area | Comparison |
| | | | | | (feet) | (acres) | | (feet) | (inches) | | | Culvert Size | (feet) | (sq. feet) | (millions) |
| B2C1E | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 350 | 0.08 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B2C1W | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 888 | 0.20 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B2C2 | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 2B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 421 | 0.03 | P | 3 | 3 | 30"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| B2C3N | 17 | North of Patton | Smith Mill Cr. | C | 30 | 0.01 | P | 15 | 18 | 3@8'x11' | Extend RCBC | 3@8'x11' | 30 | ---- | |
| B2B1 | 14 | I-26 @ Emma Rd. | Smith Mill Cr. | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 18 | None | Bridge | 143 | 744 | 109447 | |
| B2C4 | n/a | South of FBR | UT 1B (FBR) | B (FBR) | 340 | 0.02 | I | 2 | 2 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B2B2 | 15 | I-26 @FBR &Riverside | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | 1770 | 223029 | |
| B2B2 | " | " | UT 2B (FBR) | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 2 to 4 | 2 to 6 | " | " | " | " | " | |
| B2B3 | 16 | I-26 @ Broadway | Reed Creek | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 36 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 271 | 36314 | |
| B2C5 | 16 | I-26 N Ent. Ramp | Reed Creek | C | 34 | 0.01 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 34 | ---- | |
| B2C6 | 16 | Broadway/Riverside | Reed Creek | C | 93 | 0.03 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 93 | ---- | |
| | | | | **Total** | **2156** | **0.38** | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Section B 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wetlands | | | | Wetland Class | | Area | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Location | ID # | and Rating | | (acres) | | | | | | | | | |
| | | South of Patton | Wetland 1B | PF01A 43 | | 0.08 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | South of FBR | Wetland 2B | PSS1A 33 | | 0.09 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | **Total** | | **0.17** | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Section B 2 | | | | | | Area | | | | | | | | | |
| Ponds | | Location | ID # | Class & Rating | | (acres) | | | | | | | | | |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 1B | PUB3H 37 | | 0.17 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 2B | PUB3H 37 | | 0.04 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | **Total** | | **0.21** | | | | | | | | | |

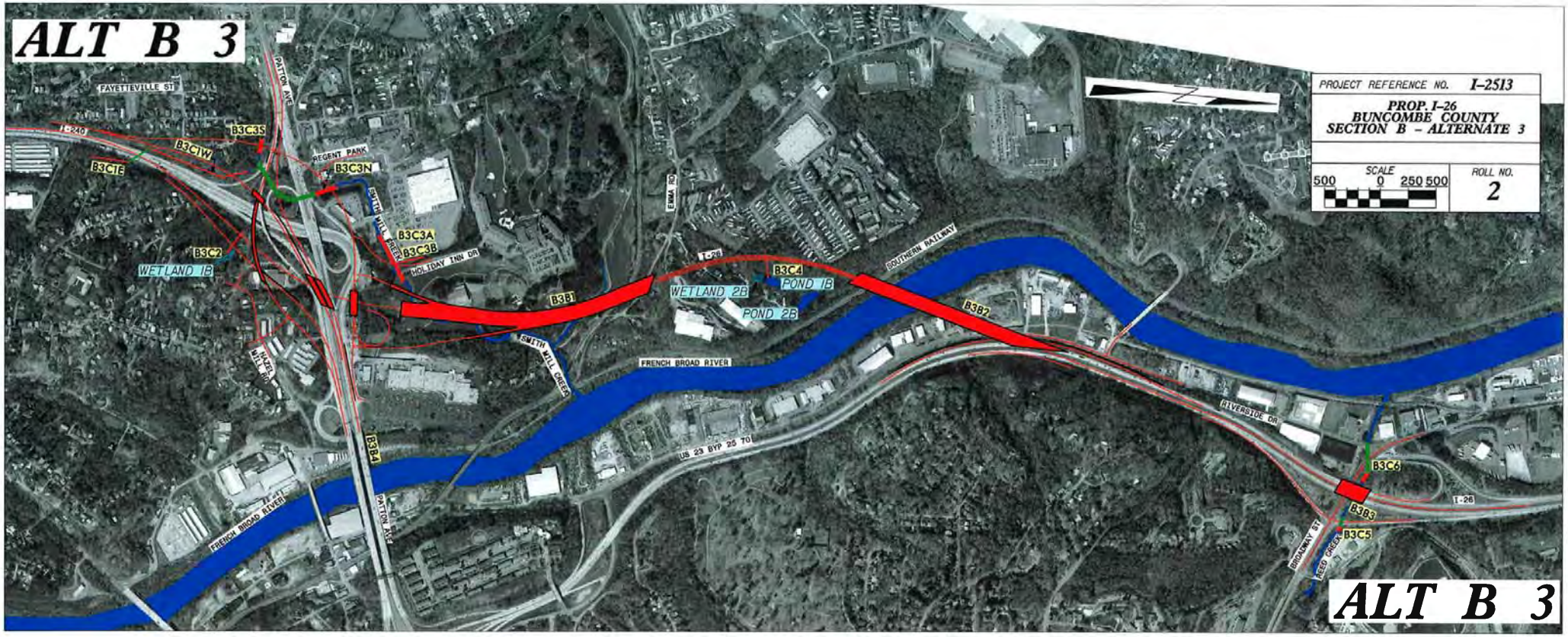

ALT B 2
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SECTION B - ALTERNATE 2
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
1
FAYETTEVILLE ST
I-26
B2C1E
B2C1W
REGENT PARK
B2C3N
SMITH
MILL CREEK
HOLIDAY INN
B2C2
WETLAND 1B
EMMA RD
WETLAND 2B
B2C4
I-26
SOUTHERN RAILWAY
POND 1B
POND 2B
B2B2
B2B1
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
PATTON AVE
B2B4
US 23 BYP 25 70
RIVERSIDE DR
B2C6
B2B3
I-26
B2C5
BROADWAY ST
ALT B 2

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section B 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Section B 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Streams** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Crossing #** | **Hydro** | **Location** | **Wetland/Stream** | **Stream** | **Impacts to** | | **Intermittent** | **Channel Dimentions** | | **Existing** | **Recommended** | **Recommended Size *** | | | **Cost** |
| | **Site #** | | **Crossed** | **Classification** | **Jurisdictional Areas** | | **or Perennial** | **Avg. Width** | **Avg. Depth** | **Structure** | **Structure** | **Width(FT)or** | **Length** | **Deck Area** | **Comparison*** |
| | | | | | **(feet)** | **(acres)** | | **(feet)** | **(inches)** | | | **Culvert Size** | **(feet)** | **(sq. feet)** | **(millions)** |
| B3C1E | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 223 | 0.05 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B3C1W | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 920 | 0.21 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B3C2 | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 2B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 316 | 0.02 | P | 3 | 3 | 30"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| **B3C3S**/B3B1G* | 17 | Ramp B @ Patton | Smith Mill Cr. | C | **114**/--- | **0.04**/--- | P | 15 | 18 | None | **RCBC** / Bridge | **3@8'x11'** / Var. | **114** / 120 | ---- / 4110 | **0.34** / 0.53 |
| **B3C3N**/B3B1F* | 17 | Westgate Access | Smith Mill Cr. | C | **184**/--- | **0.06**/--- | P | 15 | 18 | 3@8'x11' | **Extend RCBC**/Bridge | **3@8'x11'** / 40 | **184** / 200 | ---- / 8000 | **0.55** / 1.04 |
| **B3C3A**/B3B1D* | 9 | Holiday Inn Dr. | Smith Mill Cr. | C | **450/---** | **0.15**/--- | P | 15 | 18 | None | **RCBC** / Bridge | **2@12'x10'** / 30 | **450** / 360 | ---- / 10800 | **1.35** / 1.89 |
| B3C3B | n/a | Holiday Inn Dr | UT 3B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 263 | 0.03 | P | 5 | 6 | 15"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| B3B1 | 10(&14) | I-26 @ Smith Mill Cr. | Smith Mill Cr. | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 18 | None | Bridge | Var. | Var | 339676 | |
| B3B1 | " | " | UT 4B (SMC) | C (SMC) | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 1.5 | 1 to 3 | None | Bridge | " | " | " | |
| B3C4 | n/a | I-26 South of FBR | UT 1B (FBR) | B (FBR) | 244 | 0.01 | I | 2 | 2 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B3B2 | 15 | I-26 @FBR &Riverside | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | 1770 | 223029 | |
| B3B2 | " | " | UT 2B (FBR) | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 2 to 4 | 2 to 6 | " | " | " | " | " | |
| B3B3 | 16 | I-26 @ Broadway | Reed Creek | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 36 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 271 | 36314 | |
| B3C5 | 16 | I-26 N Ent. Ramp | Reed Creek | C | 34 | 0.01 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 34 | ---- | |
| B3C6 | 16 | Broadway/Riverside | Reed Creek | C | 93 | 0.03 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 93 | ---- | |
| *** Recommended is shown in Bold** | | | | **Total** | **2841**/2093 | **0.61**/0.36 | | | | | | | | **Total** | **2.24** / 3.46 |

| Section B 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Wetlands** | | | **Wetland Class** | **Area** |
| | | **Location** | **ID #** | **and Rating** | **(acres)** |
| | | South of Patton | Wetland 1B | PF01A 43 | 0.02 |
| | | South of FBR | Wetland 2B | PSS1A 33 | 0.06 |
| | | | | **Total** | **0.08** |

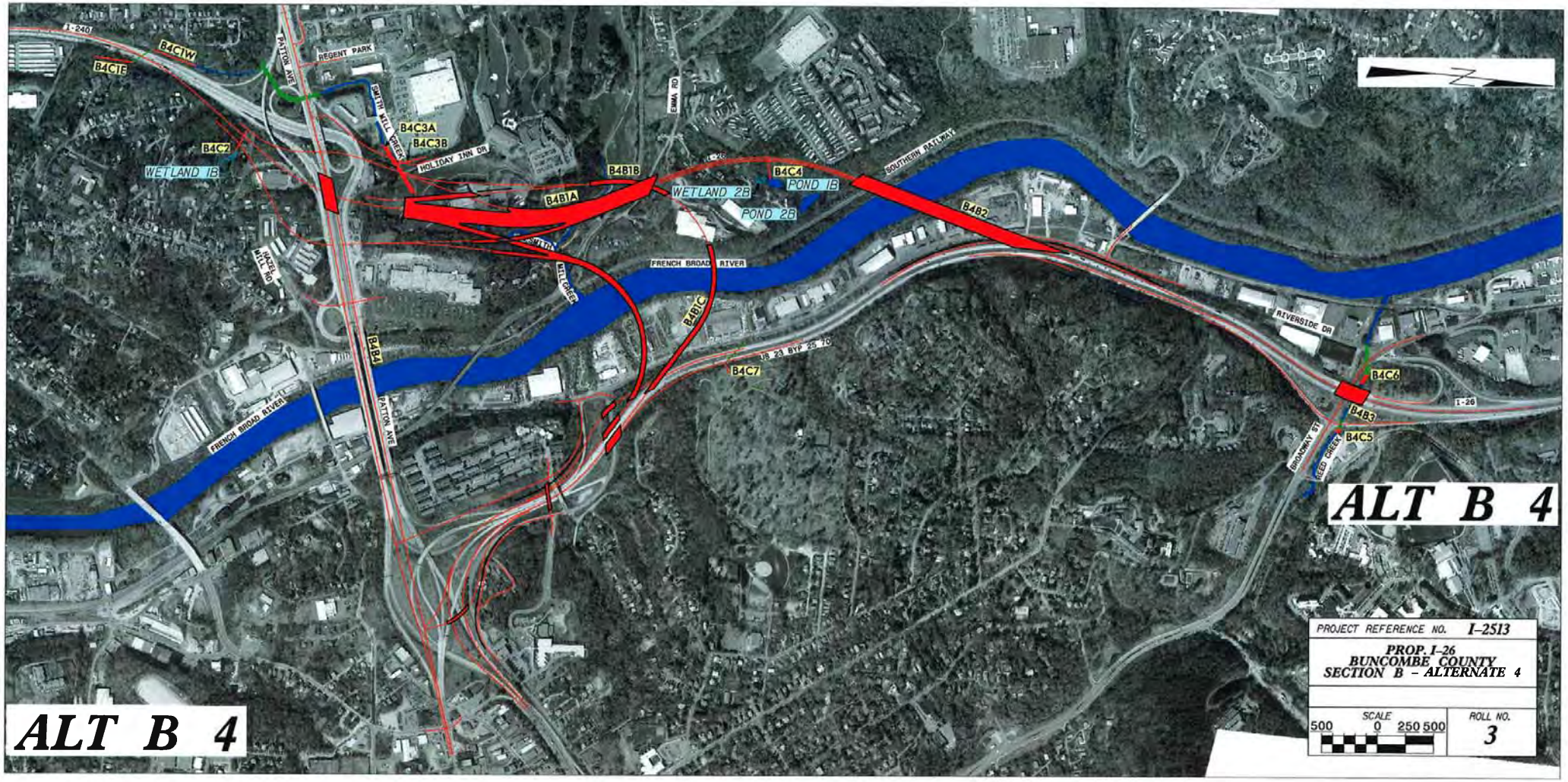
| Section B 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ponds** | | **Location** | **ID #** | **Class & Rating** | **Area(acres)** |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 1B | PUB3H 37 | 0.03 |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 2B | PUB3H 37 | 0.06 |
| | | | | **Total** | **0.09** |


ALT B 3
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SECTION B - ALTERNATE 3
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
2
FAYETTEVILLE ST
I-240
B3C3S
B3C1W
B3C1E
REGENT PARK
B3C3N
SMITH MILL CREEK
B3C3A
B3C3B
HOLIDAY INN DR
B3C2
WETLAND 1B
PATTON AVE
B3B1
I-26
B3C4
POND 1B
WETLAND 2B
POND 2B
EMMA RD
SOUTHERN RAILWAY
B3B2
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
SMITH MILL CREEK
RIVER MILL RD
B3B4
US 23 BYP 25 70
RIVERSIDE DR
B3C6
B3B3
B3C5
BROADWAY ST
REED CREEK
ALT B 3

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section B 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Section B 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Streams | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Crossing # | Hydro | Location | Wetland/Stream | Stream | Impacts to | | Intermittent | Channel Dimentions | | Existing | Recommended | Recommended Size *M110 | | | Cost |
| | Site # | | Crossed | Classification | Jurisdictional Areas | | or Perennial | Avg. Width | Avg. Depth | Structure | Structure | Width(FT)or | Length | Deck Area | Comparison * |
| | | | | | (feet) | (acres) | | (feet) | (inches) | | | Culvert Size | (feet) | (sq. feet) | (millions) |
| B4C1E | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 352 | 0.08 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B4C1W | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 556 | 0.13 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B4C2 | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 2B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 289 | 0.02 | P | 3 | 3 | 30"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| **B4C3A**/B4B1D&E* | 9 | Holiday Inn/240WB Exit | Smith Mill Cr. | C | **480**/--- | **0.17**/--- | P | 15 | 18 | None | **RCBC** / 2 Bridges | **2@12'x10'** / Var. | **480** / 690 | ---- / 36100 | **1.44** / 4.69 |
| B4C3B | n/a | Holiday Inn Dr | UT 3B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 304 | 0.03 | P | 5 | 6 | 15"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| B4B1A | 10,11,14 | I-26 @ Smith Mill Cr. | Smith Mill Cr. | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 18 | None | Bridge | Var. | Var | 539533 | |
| B4B1A | " | I-240 EB | Smith Mill Cr./FBR | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | " | " | |
| B4B1B | 11 | I-240 WB | UT 4B (SMC) | C (SMC) | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 1.5 | 1 to 3 | None | Bridge | 42 | 700 | 31500 | |
| B4B1C | 12 | I-240 WB | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | 42 | 1493 | 62480 | |
| B4C4 | n/a | I-26 South of FBR | UT 1B (FBR) | B (FBR) | 255 | 0.01 | I | 2 | 2 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B4B2 | 15 | I-26 @FBR &Riverside | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | 1770 | 223029 | |
| B4B2 | " | " | UT 2B (FBR) | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 2 to 4 | 2 to 6 | " | " | " | " | " | |
| B4C7 | n/a | US19/23 @ Riverside | UT 3B (FBR) | B | 40 | 0.003 | P | 3 | 2 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| B4B3 | 16 | I-26 @ Broadway | Reed Creek | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 36 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 271 | 36314 | |
| B4C5 | 16 | I-26 N Ent. Ramp | Reed Creek | C | 34 | 0.01 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 34 | ---- | |
| B4C6 | 16 | Broadway/Riverside | Reed Creek | C | 93 | 0.03 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 93 | ---- | |
| * Recommended is shown in Bold | | | | **Total** | **2403**/1923 | **0.48**/0.31 | | | | | | | | **Total** | **1.44** / 4.69 |

| Section B 4 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wetlands | | | | Wetland Class | | Area |
| | | Location | ID # | and Rating | | (acres) |
| | | South of Patton | Wetland 1B | PF01A 43 | | 0.01 |
| | | South of FBR | Wetland 2B | PSS1A 33 | | 0.05 |
| | | | | **Total** | | **0.06** |
| Section B 4 | | | | | | |
| Ponds | | Location | ID # | Class & Rating | | Area (acres) |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 1B | PUB3H 37 | | 0.03 |
| | | South of FBR | Pond 2B | PUB3H 37 | | 0.10 |
| | | | | **Total** | | **0.13** |

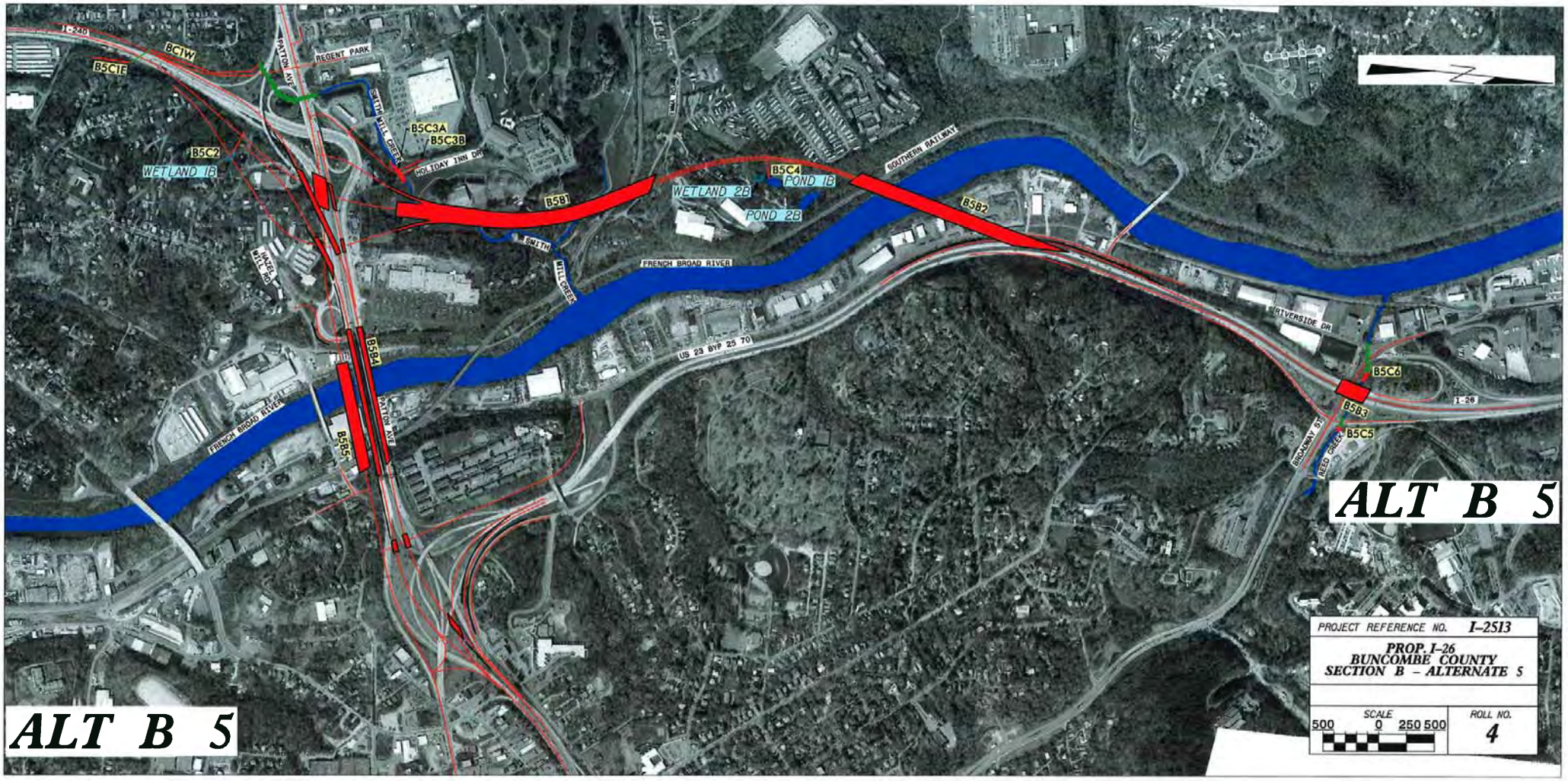

I-240
B4C1W
B4C1E
PATTON AVE
REGENT PARK
SMITH MILL CREEK
B4C3A
B4C3B
HOLIDAY INN DR
B4C2
WETLAND 1B
EMMA RD
B4B1B
B4B1A
WETLAND 2B
B4C4
POND 1B
POND 2B
SOUTHERN RAILWAY
B4B2
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
MILL CREEK
B4B1C
B4B4
B4C7
US 23 BYP 25 70
RIVERSIDE DR
B4C6
I-26
B4B3
B4C5
BROADWAY ST
REED CREEK
ALT B 4
ALT B 4
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SECTION B - ALTERNATE 4
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
3

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section B 5 Streams Crossing # | Hydro Site # | Location | Wetland/Stream Crossed | Stream Classification | Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas (feet) | Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas (acres) | Intermittent or Perennial | Channel Dimentions Avg. Width (feet) | Channel Dimentions Avg. Depth (inches) | Existing Structure | Recommended Structure | Recommended Size * Width(FT)or Culvert Size | Recommended Size * Length (feet) | Recommended Size * Deck Area (sq. feet) | Section B 5 Cost Comparison * (millions) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B5C1E | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 222 | 0.05 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B5C1W | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 1B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 1129 | 0.26 | P | 10 | 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B5C2 | n/a | I-26 south of Patton | UT 2B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 450 | 0.03 | P | 3 | 3 | 30"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| **B5C3A**/B5B1D* | 9 | Holiday Inn Dr. | Smith Mill Cr. | C | **193**/--- | **0.07**/--- | P | 15 | 18 | None | **RCBC** / Bridge | **2@12'x10'** / 30 | **170** / 290 | ---- / 8700 | **0.51** / 1.52 |
| B5C3B | n/a | Holiday Inn Dr | UT 3B (SMC) | C (SMC) | 246 | 0.03 | P | 5 | 6 | 15"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| B5B1 | 10 | I-26 @ Smith Mill Cr | Smith Mill Cr. | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 18 | None | Bridge | Var. | Var | 341359 | |
| B5B1 | 14 | I-26 @ Emma Rd. | UT 4B (SMC) | C (SMC) | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 1.5 | 1 to 3 | None | Bridge | " | " | " | |
| B5C4 | n/a | I-26 South of FBR | UT 1B (FBR) | B (FBR) | 248 | 0.01 | I | 2 | 2 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| B5B2 | 15 | I-26 @FBR &Riverside | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | 1770 | 223029 | |
| B5B2 | " | " | UT 2B (FBR) | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 2 to 4 | 2 to 6 | " | " | " | " | " | |
| B5B5 | 13 | Patton @ FBR | French Broad River | B | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 200 | 72 | None | Bridge | Var. | 976 | 101992 | |
| B5B3 | 16 | I-26 @ Broadway | Reed Creek | C | Bridged:N/A | --- | P | 15 | 36 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 271 | 36314 | |
| B5C5 | 16 | I-26 N Ent. Ramp | Reed Creek | C | 34 | 0.01 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 34 | ---- | |
| B5C6 | 16 | Broadway/Riverside | Reed Creek | C | 93 | 0.03 | P | 15 | 36 | 4@8'x9' | Extend RCBC | 4@8'x9' | 93 | ---- | |
| * Recommended is shown in Bold | | | | **Total** | **2615**/2422 | **0.49**/0.42 | | | | | | | | **Total** | **0.51** / 1.52 |

| Section B 5 Wetlands | | Location | ID # | Wetland Class and Rating | Area (acres) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | South of Patton | Wetland 1B | PF01A 43 | 0.01 |
| | | South of FBR | Wetland 2B | PSS1A 33 | 0.05 |
| | **Total** | | | **Total** | **0.06** |

| Section B 5 Ponds | Location | ID # | Class & Rating | Area(acres) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | South of FBR | Pond 1B | PUB3H 37 | 0.03 |
| | South of FBR | Pond 2B | PUB3H 37 | 0.10 |
| | | | **Total** | **0.13** |

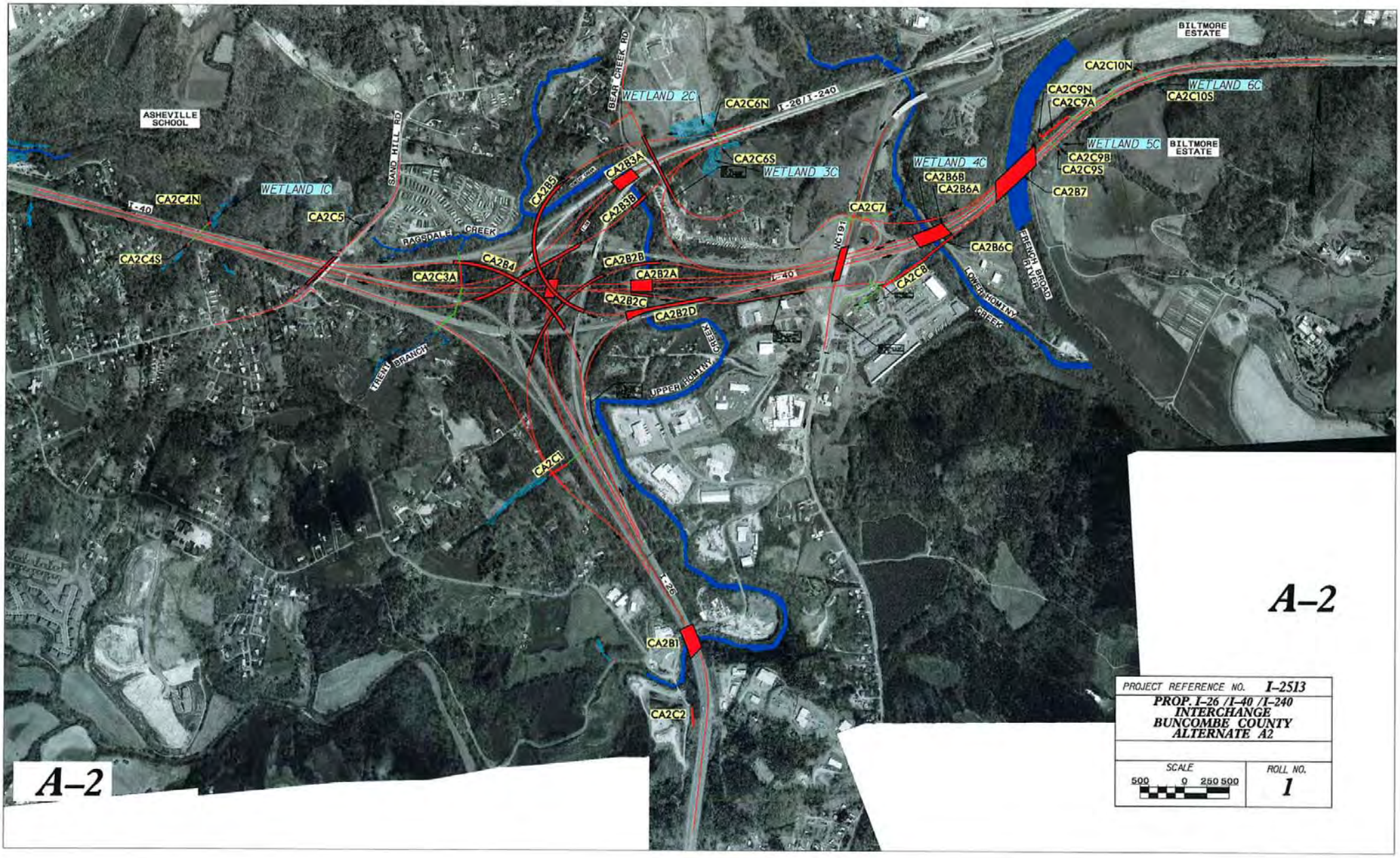

I-26
B5C1W
B5C1F
PATTON AVE
REGENT PARK
SMITH MILL CREEK
B5C3A
B5C3B
HOLIDAY INN DR
B5C2
WETLAND 1B
B5B1
WETLAND 2B
B5C4
POND 1B
POND 2B
SOUTHERN RAILWAY
B5B2
SMITH MILL CREEK
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
HAZEL MILL RD
B5B4
B5B5
PATTON AVE
US 23 BYP 23 70
RIVERSIDE DR
B5C6
I-26
B5B3
B5C5
BROADWAY ST
REED CREEK
ALT B 5
ALT B 5
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SECTION B – ALTERNATE 5
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
4

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Streams Crossing # | A-2 Hydro Site # | Location | Wetland/Stream Crossed | Stream Classification | Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas (feet) | (acres) | Intermittent or Perennial | Channel Dimentions Avg. Width (feet) | Avg. Depth (inches) | Existing Structure | Recommended Structure | Recommended Size Width(FT)or Culvert Size | Length (feet) | Deck Area (sq. feet) | Section C Streams Cost Comparison (millions) | A-2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CA2C4N | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT1C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 50 | 0.01 | P | 4 | 0 to 8 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C4S | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT2C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 23 | 0.002 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C5 | 5 | Sand Hill Road | Ragsdale Creek | C | --- | --- | P | 11 | 1 to 12 | 2@8'x8' | Raise Headwall | | | | | |
| CA2C3A | 21 | I-26N to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | 282 | 0.06 | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | 1@6'x9' | Extend RCBC | 1@6'x9' | 282 | | | |
| CA2B4 | 21 | I-26N to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | None | Bridge | 40 | 1454 | 58160 | | |
| CA2B1 | 7 | I-26 S of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 307 | 48954 | | |
| CA2B2A | 3 | I-40E & W | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 126 | 209 | 26279 | | |
| CA2B2B | 3 | I-40W to I-26S | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 40 | 246 | 9837 | | |
| CA2B2C | 3 | I-40E to NC 191 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 26 | 215 | 5590 | | |
| CA2B2D | 3 | I-26 to I-40E | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 955 | 48129 | | |
| CA2B3A | 4 | I-26 N of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 235 | 31490 | | |
| CA2B3B | 4 | I-40E to I-26N | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 38 | 180 | 6840 | | |
| CA2B5 | 22 | I-26S to I-40E | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 40 | 1600 | 64000 | | |
| CA2C6N/S | 6 | I-26 E of Bear Cr. Rd. | Wetland 2C | | | see wetlands | | | | 48"CMP | Extend CMP | 48" | 54 each | | | |
| CA2B6A | 2 | I-40 E of NC191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 375 | 61203 | | |
| CA2B6B | 2 | I-40W to NC 191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | Var. | 367 | 9565 | | |
| CA2B6C | 2 | NC191 to I-40E | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | Var. | 420 | 10920 | | |
| CA2C7 | n/a | NC 191 N | UT 1C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 78 | 0.004 | I | 2 | 2 to 4 | 30"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C8 | n/a | NC 191 S | UT 2C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 525 | 0.04 | P | 3 | 2 to 4 | 18"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2B7 | 1 | I-40 | French Broad River | B | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 250 | 48 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 603 | 112013 | | |
| CA2C1 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 1C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 235 | 0.03 | P | 5 | 4 to 6 | 60"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C2 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 2C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 380 | 0.07 | P | 8 | 2 to 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | | |
| CA2C9N | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1C to French Broad River | B | 70 | 0.03 | P | 15-25 | 5 to 6 | 48"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C9S | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1 to UT 1C to FBR | B | 15 | 0.001 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C9A | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 2 to UT 1C to FBR | B | 371 | 0.03 | P | 4 | 2 to 3 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | | |
| CA2C9B | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | Wetland 5C | | | see wetlands | | | | None | | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C10N | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 28 | 0.01 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CA2C10S | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 31 | 0.01 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| | | | | **Total** | **2088** | **0.29** | | | | | | | | | | |

## TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Wetlands | A-2 | Location | ID # | Wetland Class and Rating | | Area (acres) | | | | | | | | Section C Wetlands | A-2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | I-40 W of Sand Hill Rd. | Wetland 1C | PF01A 41 | | 0.03 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 2C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.88 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 3C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.36 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | NC 191 N | Wetland 4C | PF01C 43 | | 0.05 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-40 E of FBR | Wetland 5C | PF01A 35 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Biltmore | Wetland 6C | PSS1A 35 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Total | | 1.34 | | | | | | | | | |



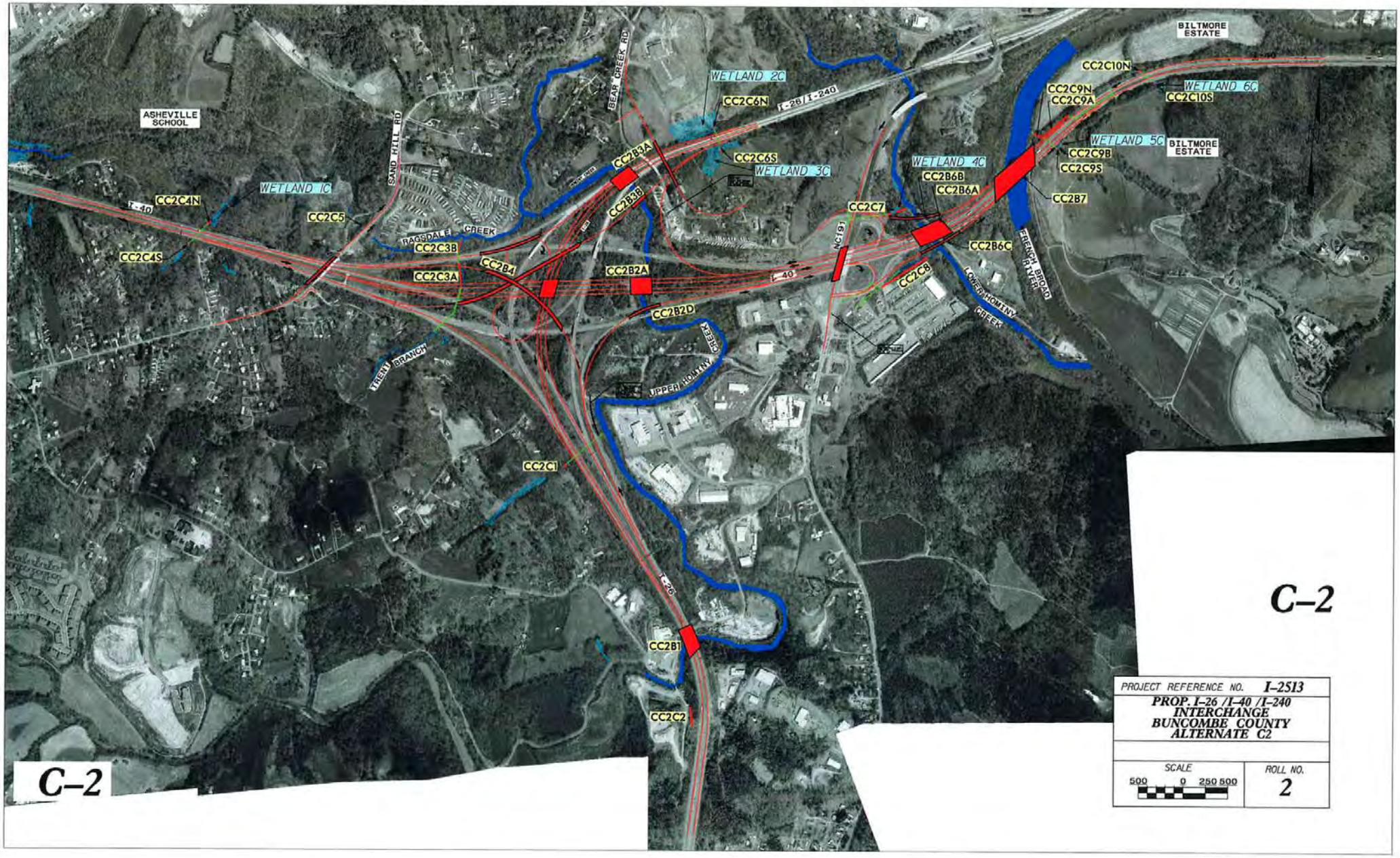
BILTMORE ESTATE
CA2C10N
CA2C9N
CA2C9A
WETLAND 6C
CA2C10S
WETLAND 5C
BILTMORE ESTATE
CA2C9B
CA2C9S
CA2B7
WETLAND 4C
CA2B6B
CA2B6A
CA2C7
CA2B6C
CA2C8
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
LOWER HOMINY CREEK
NC191
I-40
I-26/I-240
CA2C6N
WETLAND 2C
BEAR CREEK RD
CA2C6S
WETLAND 3C
CA2B3A
CA2B3B
CA2B5
CA2B4
CA2B2B
CA2B2A
CA2B2C
CA2B2D
CA2C3A
CA2C1
CA2B1
CA2C2
CA2C4N
CA2C4S
CA2C5
WETLAND 1C
SAND HILL RD
RAGSDALE CREEK
TRENT BRANCH
UPPER HOMINY CREEK
ASHEVILLE SCHOOL
A–2
A–2
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26 /I-40 /I-240
INTERCHANGE
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
ALTERNATE A2
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
1

# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Streams Crossing # | C-2 Hydro Site # | Location | Wetland/Stream Crossed | Stream Classification | Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas (feet) | (acres) | Intermittent or Perennial | Channel Dimentions Avg. Width (feet) | Avg. Depth (inches) | Existing Structure | Recommended Structure | Recommended Size Width(FT)or Culvert Size | Length (feet) | Deck Area (sq. feet) | Section C Streams Cost Comparison (millions) | C-2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CC2C4N | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT1C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 50 | 0.005 | P | 4 | 0 to 8 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C4S | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT2C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 23 | 0.002 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C5 | 5 | Sand Hill Road | Ragsdale Creek | C | --- | --- | P | 11 | 1 to 12 | 2@8'x8' | Raise Headwall | | | | | |
| CC2C3A | 21 | I-26N to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | 282 | 0.06 | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | 1@6'x9' | Extend RCBC | 1@6'x9' | 282 | | | |
| CC2C3B | 21 | I-26S to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | 155 | 0.03 | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | 1@6'x9' | Extend RCBC | 1@6'x9' | 143 | | | |
| CC2B4 | 21 | I-26N to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | None | Bridge | 40 | 1396 | 55840 | | |
| CC2B1 | 7 | I-26 S of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 307 | 48954 | | |
| CC2B2A | 3 | I-40E & W | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 214 | 205 | 43870 | | |
| CC2B2D | 3 | I-26 to I-40E | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 30 | 225 | 7200 | | |
| CC2B3A | 4 | I-26 N of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 184 | 235 | 43240 | | |
| CC2B3B | 4 | I-40E to I-26N | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 38 | 180 | 6840 | | |
| CC2C6N | 6 | I-26 E of Bear Cr. Rd. | Wetland 2C | | | see wetlands | | | | 48"CMP | Extend CMP | 48" | 46 | | | |
| CC2C6S | 6 | I-26 E of Bear Cr. Rd. | Wetland 3C | | | see wetlands | | | | 48"CMP | Extend CMP | 48" | 55 | | | |
| CC2B6A | 2 | I-40 E of NC191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 370 | 80093 | | |
| CC2B6B | 2 | I-40W to NC 191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | Var. | 340 | 11727 | | |
| CC2B6C | 2 | NC191 to I-40E | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | 26 | 420 | 10920 | | |
| CC2C7 | n/a | NC 191 N | UT1C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 78 | 0.004 | I | 2 | 2 to 4 | 30"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C8 | n/a | NC 191 S | UT 2C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 545 | 0.04 | P | 3 | 2 to 4 | 18"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2B7 | 1 | I-40 | French Broad River | B | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 250 | 48 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 600 | 137984 | | |
| CC2C1 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 1C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 44 | 0.01 | P | 5 | 4 to 6 | 60"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C2 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 2C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 380 | 0.07 | P | 8 | 2 to 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | | |
| CC2C9N | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1C to French Broad River | B | 124 | 0.06 | P | 15-25 | 5 to 6 | 48"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C9S | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1 to UT 1C to FBR | B | 20 | 0.001 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C9A | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 2 to UT 1C to FBR | B | 371 | 0.03 | P | 4 | 2 to 3 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | | |
| CC2C9B | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | Wetland 5C | | | see wetlands | | | | None | | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C10N | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 27 | 0.005 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| CC2C10S | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 43 | 0.01 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | | |
| | | | | **Total** | **2142** | **0.33** | | | | | | | | | | |

## TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Wetlands | C-2 | Location | ID # | Wetland Class and Rating | | Areas (acres) | | | | | | | | Section C Wetlands | C-2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | I-40 W of Sand Hill Rd. | Wetland 1C | PF01A 41 | | 0.03 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 2C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.56 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 3C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.36 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | NC 191 N | Wetland 4C | PF01C 43 | | 0.05 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-40 E of FBR | Wetland 5C | PF01A 35 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Biltmore | Wetland 6C | PSS1A 35 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | **Total** | | **1.02** | | | | | | | | | |

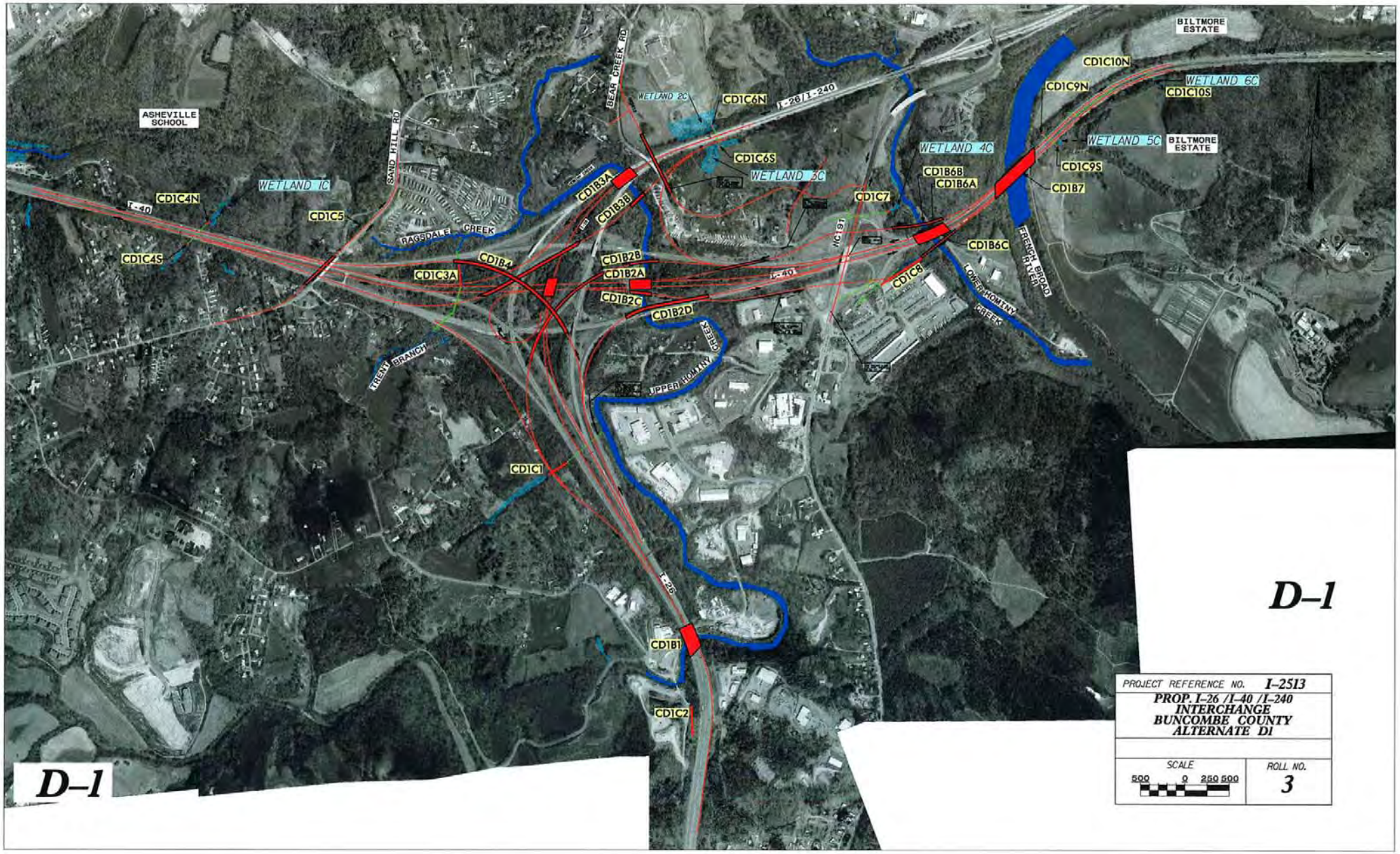

ASHEVILLE SCHOOL
SAND HILL RD
BEAR CREEK RD
WETLAND 1C
WETLAND 2C
WETLAND 3C
WETLAND 4C
WETLAND 5C
WETLAND 6C
BILTMORE ESTATE
BILTMORE ESTATE
I-26/I-240
I-40
I-26
NC191
RAGSDALE CREEK
TRENT BRANCH
UPPER HOMINY CREEK
LOWER HOMINY CREEK
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
CC2C4N
CC2C4S
CC2C5
CC2C3B
CC2C3A
CC2B4
CC2B3A
CC2B3B
CC2B2A
CC2B2D
CC2C6N
CC2C6S
CC2C7
CC2B6B
CC2B6A
CC2B6C
CC2C8
CC2C9N
CC2C9A
CC2C9B
CC2C9S
CC2C10N
CC2C10S
CC2B7
CC2C1
CC2B1
CC2C2
C–2
C–2
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26 /I-40 /I-240
INTERCHANGE
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
ALTERNATE C2
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
2

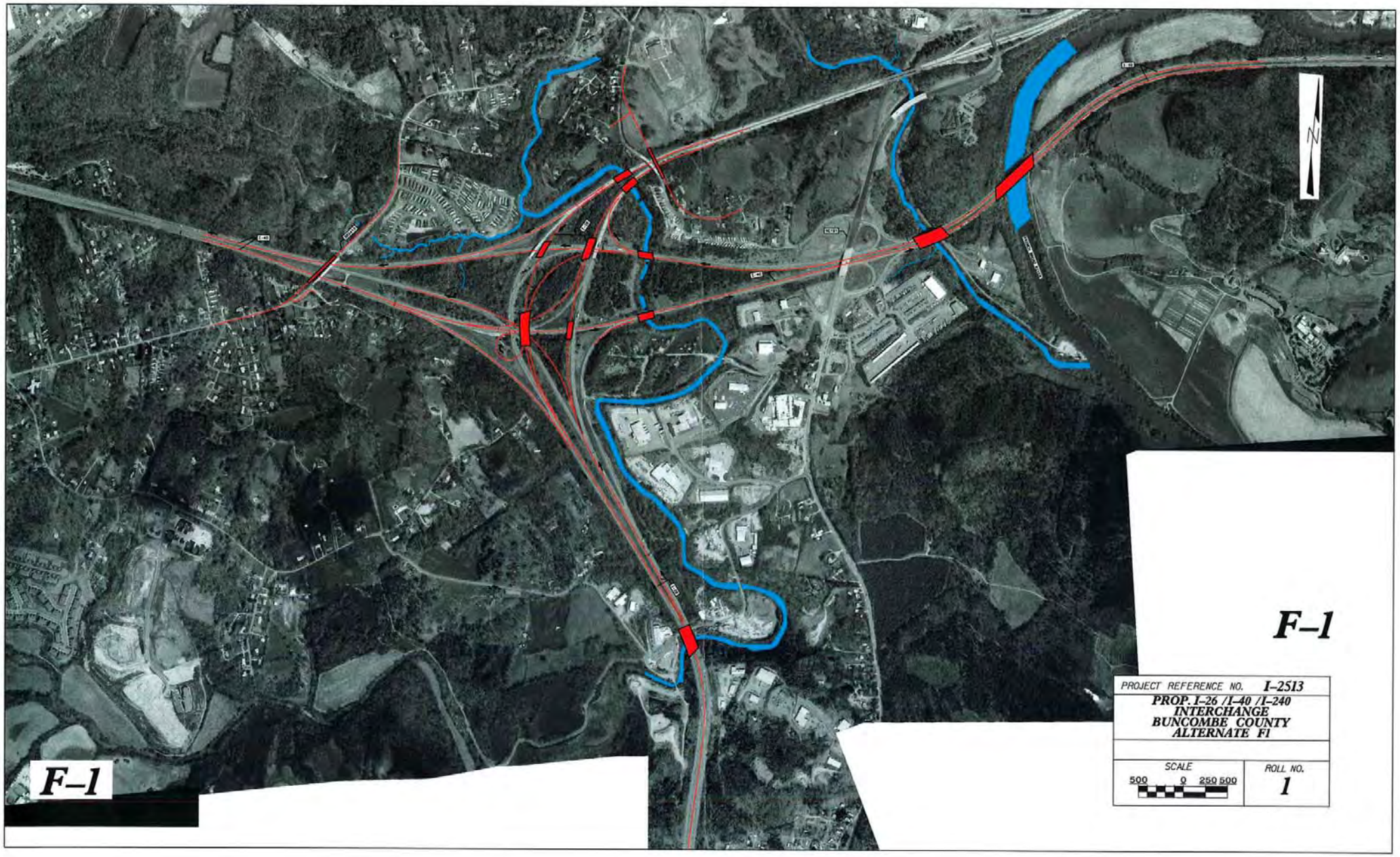
# TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Streams | D-1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | Section C Streams | D-1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crossing # | Hydro Site # | Location | Wetland/Stream Crossed | Stream Classification | Impacts to Jurisdictional Areas (feet) | (acres) | Intermittent or Perennial | Channel Dimentions Avg. Width (feet) | Avg. Depth (inches) | Existing Structure | Recommended Structure | Recommended Size Width(FT)or Culvert Size | Length (feet) | Deck Area (sq. feet) | Cost Comparison (millions) |
| CD1C4N | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT1C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 50 | 0.005 | P | 4 | 0 to 8 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C4S | n/a | I-40 W of I-26 | UT2C to Ragsdale Creek | C | 23 | 0.002 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | 48"RCP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C5 | 5 | Sand Hill Road | Ragsdale Creek | C | --- | -- | P | 11 | 1 to 12 | 2@8'x8' | Raise Headwall | | | | |
| CD1C3A | 21 | I-26S to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | 282 | 0.06 | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | 1@6'x9' | Extend RCBC | 1@6'x9' | 282 | ---- | |
| CD1B4 | 21 | I-26NS to I-40W | Trent Branch | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 9 | 6 to 12 | None | Bridge | 40 | 1454 | 58160 | |
| CD1B1 | 7 | I-26 S of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 307 | 48954 | |
| CD1B2A | 3 | I-40E & W | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | Var. | 205 | 26977 | |
| CD1B2B | 3 | I-40W to I-26S | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 40 | 226 | 9040 | |
| CD1B2C | 3 | I-40E to NC191 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 26 | 209 | 5434 | |
| CD1B2D | 3 | I-26N to I-40E | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 30 | 920 | 28210 | |
| CD1B3A | 4 | I-26 N of I-40 | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 134 | 235 | 31490 | |
| CD1B3B | 4 | I-40E to I-26N | Upper Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 50 | 4 to 10 | None | Bridge | 38 | 180 | 6840 | |
| CD2C6N | 6 | I-26 E of Bear Cr. Rd. | Wetland 2C | | | see wetlands | | | | 48"CMP | Extend CMP | 48" | 35 | | |
| CD2C6S | 6 | I-26 E of Bear Cr. Rd. | Wetland 3C | | | see wetlands | | | | 48"CMP | Extend CMP | 48" | 51 | | |
| CD1B6A | 2 | I-40 E of NC191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | 118 | 375 | 44250 | |
| CD1B6B | 2 | I-40W to NC 191 | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | Var. | 374 | 9924 | |
| CD1B6C | 2 | NC191 to I-40E | Lower Hominy Creek | C | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 57 | 2 to 30 | None | Bridge | 26 | 420 | 10920 | |
| CD1C7 | n/a | NC 191 N | UT1C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 53 | 0.002 | I | 2 | 2 to 4 | 30"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C8 | n/a | NC 191 S | UT 2C to Lower Hominy Cr. | C | 545 | 0.04 | P | 3 | 2 to 4 | 18"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1B7 | 1 | I-40 | French Broad River | B | Bridged; N/A | --- | P | 250 | 48 | Bridge | Replace Bridge | Var. | 603 | 85633 | |
| CD1C1 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 1C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 235 | 0.03 | P | 5 | 4 to 6 | 60"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C2 | n/a | I-26 S of I-40 | UT 2C to Upper Hominy Cr | C | 380 | 0.07 | P | 8 | 2 to 4 | None | Pipe | < 72" | | ---- | |
| CD1C9N | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1C to French Broad River | B | 18 | 0.01 | P | 15-25 | 5 to 6 | 48"CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C9S | n/a | I-40 E of FBR | UT 1 to UT 1C to FBR | B | 13 | 0.001 | I | 3 | 1 to 4 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C10N | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 4 | 0.001 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| CD1C10S | n/a | Biltmore | UT 2C to French Broad River | B | 20 | 0.004 | P | 8 | 6 | CMP | Replace or Extend | ---- | | ---- | |
| | | | | Total | 1623 | 0.22 | | | | | | | | | |

## TABLE B JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

| Section C Wetlands | D-1 | Location | ID # | Wetland Class and Rating | | Areas (acres) | | | | | | | | Section C Wetlands | D-1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | I-40 W of Sand Hill Rd. | Wetland 1C | PF01A 41 | | 0.03 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 2C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.34 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-26 N of Bear Creek Rd. | Wetland 3C | PSS1A 71 | | 0.36 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | NC 191 N | Wetland 4C | PF01C 43 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | I-40 E of FBR | Wetland 5C | PF01A 35 | | 0.01 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Biltmore | Wetland 6C | PSS1A 35 | | --- | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Total | | 0.75 | | | | | | | | | |


ASHEVILLE SCHOOL
SAND HILL RD
BEAR CREEK RD
WETLAND 2C
CD1C6N
I-26/I-240
BILTMORE ESTATE
CD1C10N
CD1C9N
WETLAND 6C
CD1C10S
WETLAND 5C
BILTMORE ESTATE
WETLAND 4C
CD1C6S
WETLAND 3C
CD1B6B
CD1B6A
CD1C9S
CD1B7
WETLAND 1C
CD1C4N
I-40
CD1C5
CD1B3A
CD1B3B
CD1C7
RAGSDALE CREEK
NC191
CD1B6C
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
CD1C4S
CD1B4
CD1B2B
CD1B2A
CD1C3A
I-40
CD1C8
LOWER HOMINY CREEK
CD1B2C
CD1B2D
TRENT BRANCH
UPPER HOMINY CREEK
CD1C1
I-26
CD1B1
CD1C2
D-1
D-1
PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513
PROP. I-26 /I-40 /I-240
INTERCHANGE
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
ALTERNATE D1
SCALE
500 0 250 500
ROLL NO.
3




| | |
|---|---|
| PROJECT REFERENCE NO. I-2513 | |
| PROP. I-26 /I-40 /I-240 INTERCHANGE BUNCOMBE COUNTY ALTERNATE F1 | |
| SCALE 500 0 250 500 | ROLL NO. 1 |

# Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team Meeting Agreement
# Concurrence Point No. 2
# Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail

**I-26 Connector**
T.I.P. No. I-2513
NCDOT Project No. 8.U843701
Federal-Aid Project No. MANHF 26-1 (53)
NCDOT Division 13

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this meeting is to recommend the removal of Alternative 5 from further consideration. After the development of preliminary designs, further investigations into the traffic operations and safety suggests there is potential for Alternative 5 to exacerbate an existing weaving condition along I-240 between the US 19-23 and Montford Avenue interchanges. Based upon the configuration of Alternative 5 and the potential affects it may have on overall system operations and safety, it is recommend this alternative be eliminated from further study.

**History within Interagency/Merger Process:**

In October 1999, NCDOT met with interagency officials including Steve Lund (COE), John Hennessy (DWQ) and David Cox (NCWRC) to discuss the status of the subject project and to bring the project into the Section 404/NEPA Merger process. After a description of the project development, the agency officials were asked about any concerns regarding the approval status of the project. Mr. Lund acknowledged that the "Purpose and Need", and "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" (Concurrence Point Nos. 1 and 2) were achieved during the Phase I Study. To reaffirm these decisions, a concurrence meeting was held on January 23, 2002. The purpose and need was adjusted and a concurrence form was signed by all but one member of the team.

Due to the addition of alternatives to improve the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project, another merger team meeting was held in December 2004 to reaffirm concurrence with the Concurrence Point 1, "Purpose and Need" and to modify Concurrence Point 2, "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail". Both Concurrence Point 1 and Concurrence Point 2 forms were signed by all members of the team.

Since the approval of Concurrence Point 2, another I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange improvement alternative (Alternative F1) was developed to satisfy the project purpose and need with fewer environmental impacts in a more economical manner. Alternative F-1 was presented at a concurrence meeting held September 7, 2006, with the Concurrence Point 2 form signed by all members of the team. In addition to the inclusion of Alternative F-1, the September 7, 2006 meeting also included the presentation of preliminary designs and bridging recommendations for the project alternatives. With several modification requests, the Concurrence Point 2A form was signed by all members of the team.

**Project Description:**

The proposed I-26 Connector spans approximately 10 miles and is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project (see Figure1). These separate sections are described below.

**Section A**

Section A consists of the I-240 Widening Alternative that would include the widening and reconstruction of existing I-240 from a four lane freeway to an eight lane freeway from just north of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to just south of the existing I-240/Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River (see Figure 2). The reconstructed roadway would carry both I-26 and I-240 throughout the length of Section A and would be compatible with all of the proposed alternatives for Section B and Section C. The Section A alternative would include interchanges at NC 191 (Brevard Road), SR 3556 (Amboy Road), and US 19 23 Business (Haywood Road). The alternative would begin at the north end of Section C and would include eight basic freeway lanes and an auxiliary lane along I-26 westbound/I-240 eastbound for Section C alternatives A-2, C-2 and D-1.

**Section B**

Section B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the existing I-240/Patton Avenue interchange before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Four alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5) are being considered for Section B. These Section B alternatives are described below.

***Alternative 2*** would include the modification of the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and the extension of I-26 across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70 (see Figure 3). Throughout Section A, the proposed project would include I-26 and I-240 combined as one roadway through the interchange of I-26/I-240 with US 19-23 Business (Haywood Road). At the existing interchange of I-240 with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue, the two interstates would separate with I-26 continuing to the north on new location and I-240 continuing to the east across the Smoky Park Bridges. The interchange area is very complex due to the mixing of local traffic on Patton Avenue which also utilizes the Smoky Park Bridges. The existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-70/Patton Avenue east of the French Broad River would not be modified for Alternative 2. All improvements to the combined I-240/Patton Avenue roadway would occur on the west side of the river and would not involve any construction along the Smoky Park Bridges. Alternative 2 would include new or replacement bridges at a total of five locations.

***Alternative 3*** would include the modification of the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and the extension of I-26 across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70 (see Figure 4). Throughout Section A, the proposed project would include I-26 and I-240 combined as one roadway through the interchange of I-26/I-240 with US 19-23 Business (Haywood Road). At the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue, the two interstates would separate with I-26 continuing to the north on new location and I -240 continuing to the east across the Smoky Park

Bridges. The interchange area is very complex due to the mixing of local traffic on Patton Avenue which also uses the Smoky Park Bridges.

The existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-70/Patton Avenue east of the French Broad River would not be modified for Alternative 3. All improvements to the combined I-240/Patton Avenue roadway would occur on the west side of the river and would not involve any construction along the Smoky Park Bridges. Alternative 3 would include new or replacement bridges at a total of seven locations.

***Alternative 4*** would include the modification of the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and the extension of I-26 across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70 (see Figure 5). Throughout Section A, the proposed project would include I-26 and I-240 combined as one roadway through the interchange of I-26/I-240 with US 19-23 Business (Haywood Road). Alternative 4 was developed to separate the local Patton Avenue traffic from the I-240 through-traffic. To create this separation the split between I-26 and I-240 would be moved to the north and the existing Smoky Park Bridges would be converted to serve Patton Avenue traffic only. The I-26 freeway alignment for Alternative 4 would be very similar to Alternative 3.

Due to the separation of the local Patton Avenue traffic from the interstate traffic, the interchange configuration for Alternative 4 becomes simpler with regard to the connection to US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and very complex with regard to the split of I-26 and I-240. The location of the proposed interchange would require that the entrance to the Crowne Plaza Resort be relocated to the west of the interchange, intersecting with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue approximately 300 feet west of the interchange. The proposed design of the I-26/I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue would not include the movements connecting I-26 eastbound to I-240 eastbound or I-240 westbound to I-26 westbound. The interchange where I-240 and US 19-23-70 split east of the French Broad River would not include the movements connecting I-240 eastbound to US 19-23-70 northbound or US 19-23-70 southbound to I-240 westbound. The I-26 interchange with US 19-23-70 would not include the movements connecting I-26 westbound with US 19-23-70 southbound or US 19-23-70 northbound to I-26 eastbound. To make these movements, the traffic would utilize an adjacent interchange. These movements would essentially be redundant and would only be utilized by motorists who missed an exit. Alternative 4 would include new or replacement bridges at a total of ten locations.

***Alternative 5*** would include the modification of the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and the extension of I-26 across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70 (see Figure 6). Alternative 5 was developed to separate the local Patton Avenue traffic from the I-240 through-traffic. To create this separation a new parallel bridge would be constructed to the south of the Smoky Park Bridges that would serve the local Patton Avenue traffic and the existing Smoky Park Bridges would carry I-240 traffic only.

The I-26 freeway alignment for Alternative 5 would be very similar to alternatives 3 and 4. The complexity of the proposed interchange of the I-26 and I-240 freeways with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue would be compounded because the interchange would accommodate the separation of the freeways and the connections to US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue at a single location. This alternative would include new or replacement bridges at a total of 11 locations.

**Section C**

Section C is the southern end of the project and consists of improvements to the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange including the addition of the missing moves between I-40 and I-240. Four interchange alternatives (Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1, and F-1) are being considered for Section C. These Section C alternatives are described below

***Alternative A-2*** would reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange as a fully directional interchange that would provide direct ramp connections between I-26, I-40 and the proposed I-26/I-240 combined roadway, including the movements that are currently not provided by the existing interchange (see Figure 7). To the south and east of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-26 and I-40 would be widened.

Due to the configuration of the proposed interchange ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the existing grade-separated crossing of SR 3413 (Bear Creek Road) over I-26/I-240 would be relocated to the east and the bridge would be lengthened to accommodate the increased footprint associated with the interchange. To the west of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-40 would tie to the eight-lane typical section being constructed under NCDOT TIP Project I-4401 and would include some widening of I-40 to transition the ramp lanes to the basic eight-lane typical section. This alternative would include new or replacement bridges at a total of 19 locations.

***Alternative C-2*** would reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange as a semi-directional interchange that would provide six of the eight ramp movements with directional ramps and two of the eight ramp movements with semi-direct loop ramps (see Figure 8). The reconfigured interchange would contain the movements that are currently not provided by the existing interchange. To the south and east of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-26 and I-40 would be widened.

Due to the configuration of the proposed interchange ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the existing grade-separated crossing of SR 3413 (Bear Creek Road) over I-26/I-240 would be relocated to the east and the bridge would be lengthened to accommodate the increased footprint associated with the interchange. To the west of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-40 would tie to the eight-lane typical section being constructed under NCDOT TIP Project I-4401 and would include some widening of I-40 to transition the ramp lanes to the basic eight-lane typical section. This alternative would include new or replacement bridges at a total of 16 locations.

***Alternative D-1*** would reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange as a semi-directional interchange that would provide seven of the eight ramp movements with directional ramps and the remaining movement with a semi-direct loop ramp (see Figure 9). The reconfigured interchange would provide the movements that are currently not included in the existing interchange.

To the south and east of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-26 and I-40 would be widened. Due to the configuration of the proposed interchange ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the existing grade-separated crossing of SR 3413 (Bear Creek Road) over I-26/I-240 would be relocated to the east and the bridge would be lengthened to accommodate the increased footprint associated with the interchange. To the west of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-40 would tie to the eight-lane typical section being constructed under NCDOT TIP Project I-4401 and would include some widening of I-40 to transition the ramp lanes to the basic eight-lane typical section. This alternative would include new or replacement bridges at a total of 18 locations.

***Alternative F-1*** would reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange and maintain the same general configuration while adding the two missing movements (see Figure 10). The new movement from I-26 eastbound/I-240 westbound to I-40 eastbound would be accomplished with a semi-direct loop connection and the movement from I-40 westbound to I-26 westbound/I-240 eastbound would utilize a direct ramp connection. To the south and east of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, I-26 and I-40 would be widened.

Due to the configuration of the proposed interchange ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the existing grade-separated crossing of SR 3413 (Bear Creek Road) over I-26/I-240 would be relocated to the east and the bridge would be lengthened to accommodate the increased footprint associated with the interchange. This alternative would include new or replacement bridges at a total of 14 locations and widened bridges at two locations.

**Alternative 5 discussions:**

After the development of preliminary designs, further investigations into the operations suggests there is potential for Alternative 5 to exacerbate an existing weaving condition along I-240 between the US 19-23 and Montford Avenue interchanges. Currently, a weaving movement is required along eastbound I-240 between southbound US 19-23 traffic to Montford Avenue and Clingman Avenue traffic to eastbound I-240. Southbound US 19-23 accesses I-240 eastbound via a left-hand entrance ramp with approximately 225 feet of acceleration distance prior to merging into I-240 traffic (see Figure 11). Approximately 565 feet downstream, Clingman Avenue accesses eastbound I-240 via a right-hand entrance ramp which becomes an auxiliary lane between Clingman Avenue and Montford Avenue, creating a weaving segment. The existing weaving segment allows approximately 1075 feet to accommodate the above weaving movement, with two I-240 through lanes being maintained throughout the weaving operation.

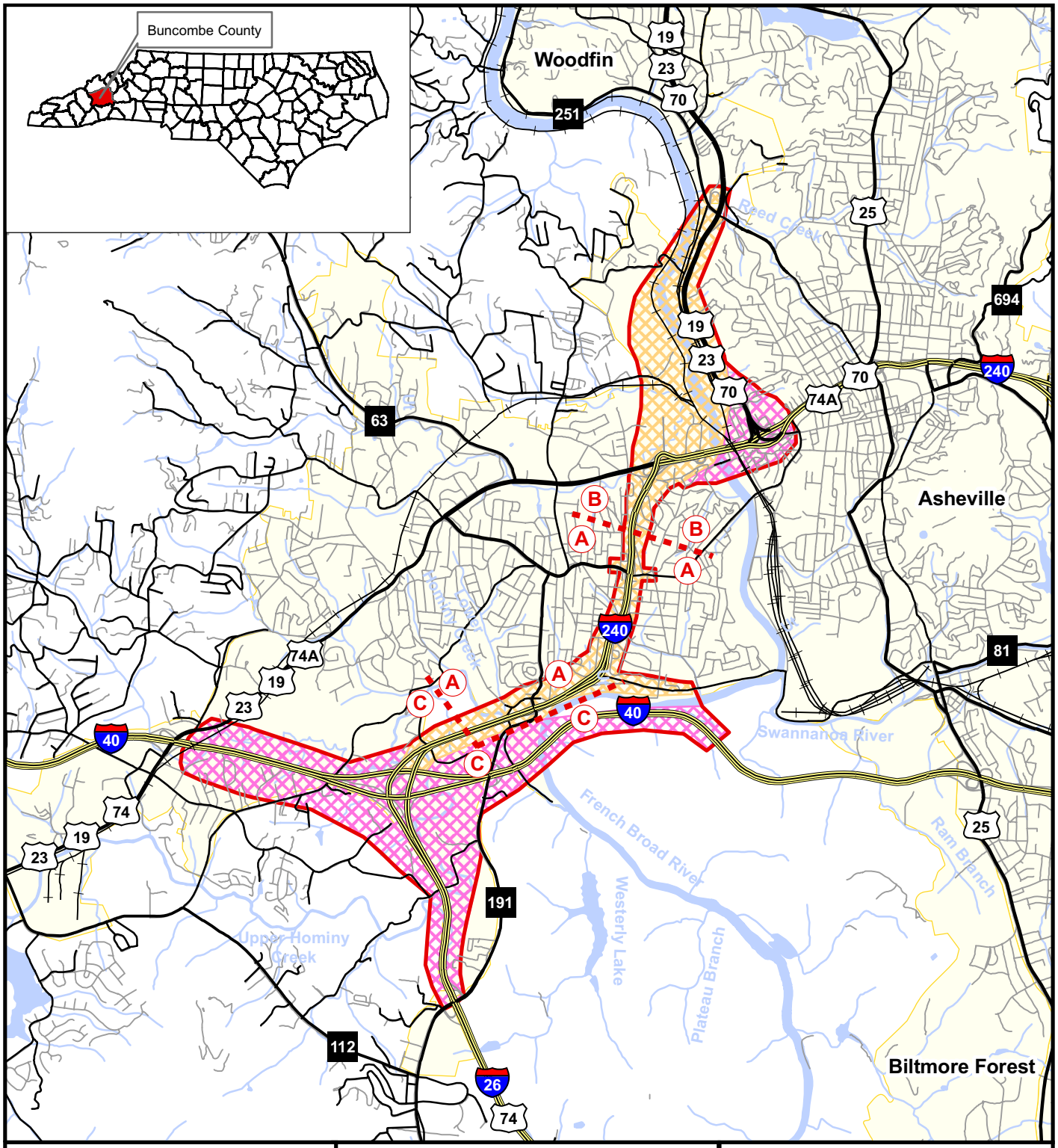
Alternative 5 was developed in part to separate the local Patton Avenue traffic from the through traffic of I-240. This is accomplished by providing parallel bridges south of the Smoky Park Bridges to serve Patton Avenue traffic, with the Smoky Park Bridges accommodating I-240 traffic. Given the urban setting of the project and the complexity of the crossing of Patton Avenue, I-240 and I-26, design constraints required Patton Avenue access to I-240 be limited at two locations: access to eastbound I-240 would be provided on the east side of the French Broad River and access to westbound I-240 would be provided on the west side of the French Broad River. The limited access to eastbound I-240 from Patton Avenue would result with a concentration of traffic turning left from Patton Avenue utilizing dual left-turn lanes onto a ramp which would include an immediate lane drop prior to the weaving operation with Montford Avenue. The proposed design configuration of the southbound US 19-23 to eastbound I-240 movement and the Patton Avenue to eastbound I-240 movement would result in successive ramps with a distance of 175 feet between the two (see Figure 11). The proposed design would provide approximately 1425 feet between the Patton Avenue to eastbound I-240 entrance ramp and the Montford Avenue exit ramp

According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *A* Policy *on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*, 2004 Edition, a recommended minimum of 1000 feet is suggested between the US 19-23 entrance ramp and the Patton Avenue to eastbound I-240 entrance ramp. Between the Patton Avenue to eastbound I-240 entrance ramp and the Montford Avenue exit ramp a recommended minimum of 1600 feet would be required.

The location of the US 19-23 left-hand entrance ramp combined with the adjacent Clingman Avenue right-hand entrance ramp creates complex weaving movements required in order to exit at Montford Avenue towards downtown Asheville. Recommended minimum distances between successive ramps according to AASHTO would not be provided. The southbound US 19-23 traffic would be required to make two lane changes in order to exit at Montford Avenue, with Clingman Avenue to eastbound I-240 required to make one lane change. In addition, the complexity of the interchange design would require an I-240 through lane be dropped as the exit to Montford Avenue. Such changes to an interstate facility would go against standards established by AASHTO regarding the maintenance of the basic number of lanes (lane continuity).

Table 1 - Successive Ramp Terminal Spacing Comparison

| Ramp to Ramp | Existing Spacing (ft) | Alternative 5 Spacing (ft) | AASHTO Recommended Minimum Ramp Terminal Spacing (ft) |
|---|---|---|---|
| US 19-23 merge to Clingman Ave. merge | 790 | 175 | 1000 (Entrance to Entrance for Full Fwy.) |
| Clingman Ave. merge to Montford Ave. diverge | 1075 | 1425 | 1600 (Service to Service Interchange) |




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

**Legend**

- Project Study Area
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- SR Route
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Original Project Study Area
- Expanded Project Study Area
- A Section

N W E S

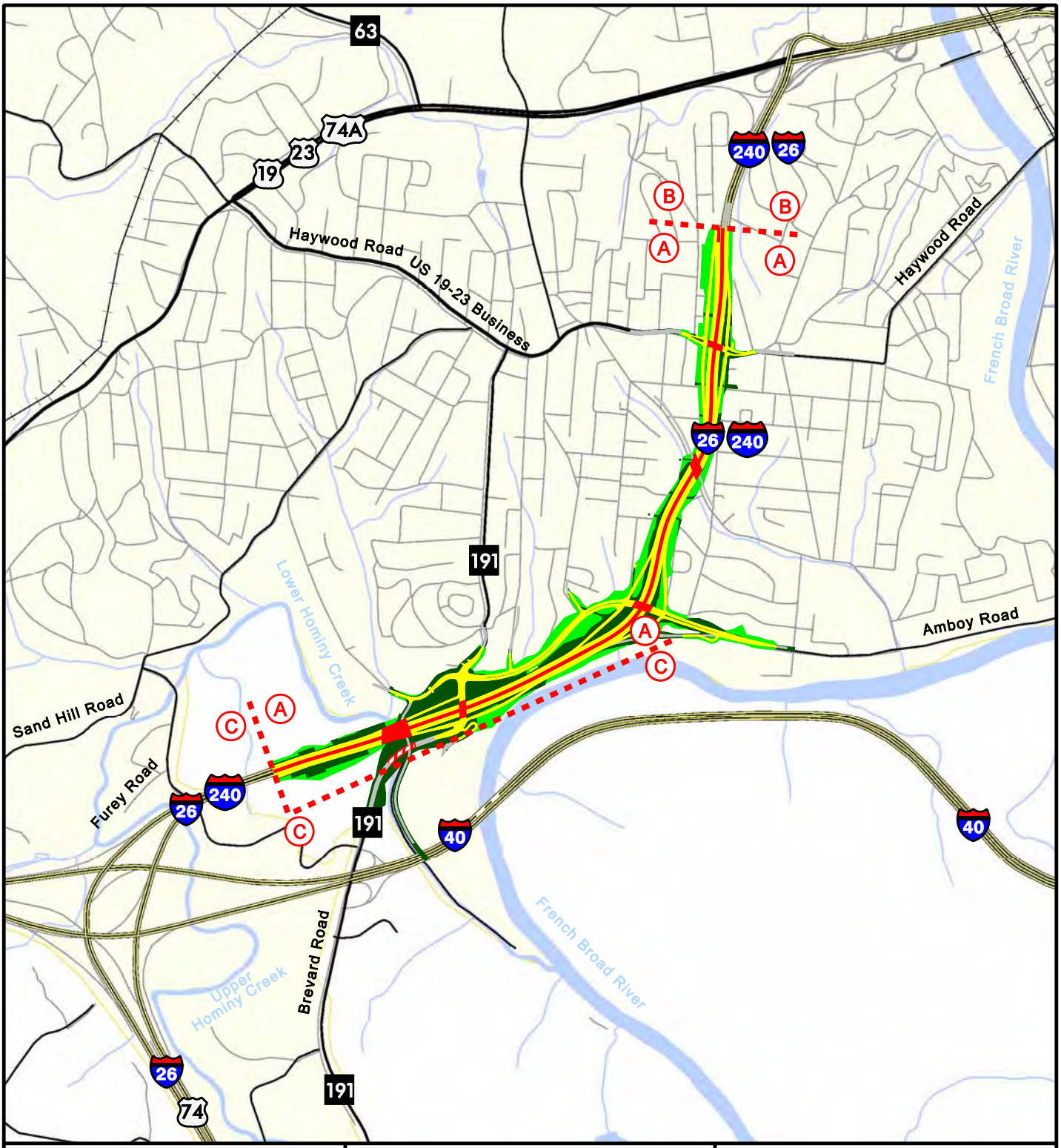
0 0.5 1 Miles

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

**Figure 1**

**Project Study Area with Expansions and Sections**




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- (A) Section

N
W E
S

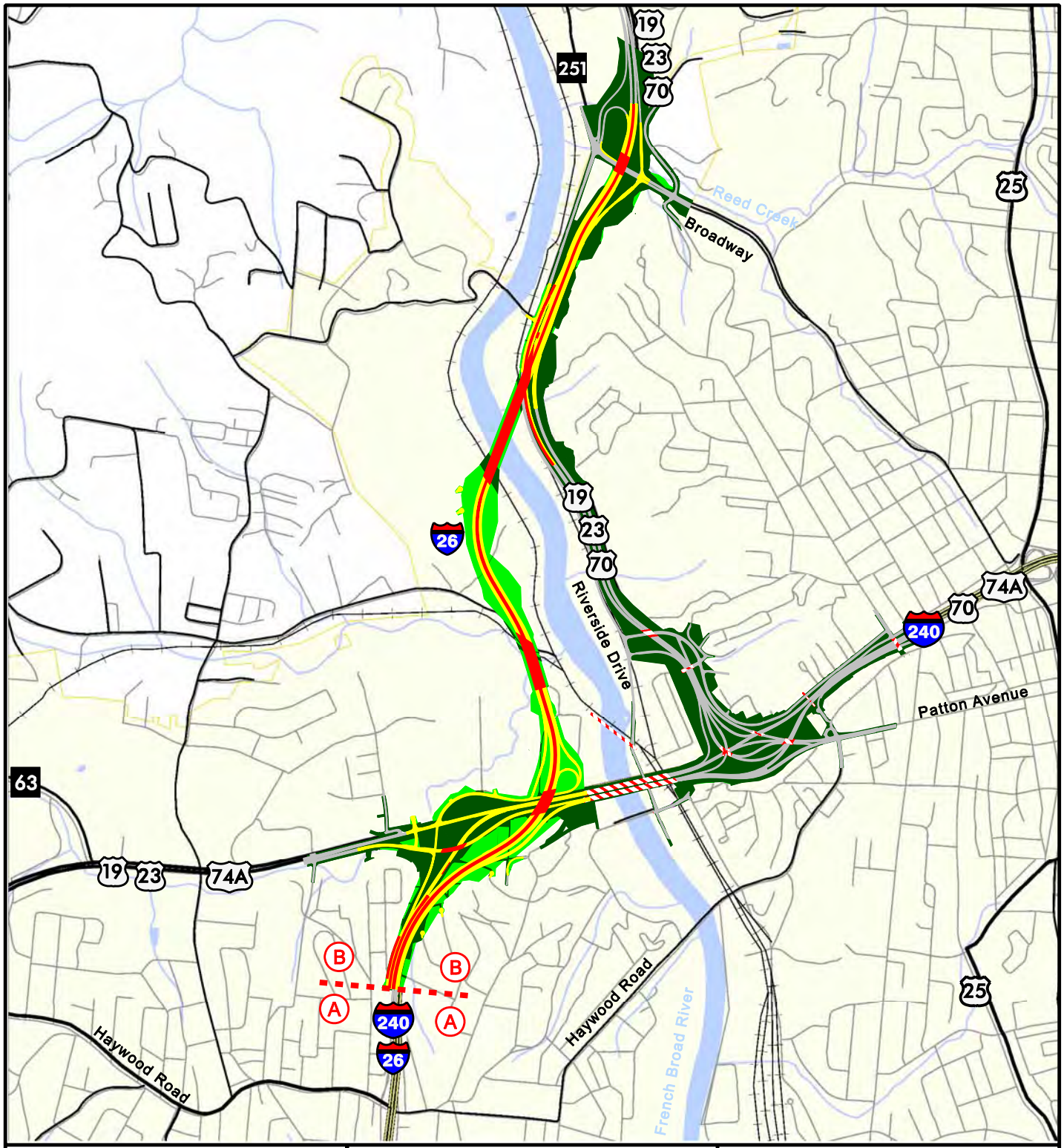
0 1000 2000
FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 2

Section A
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

**Legend**

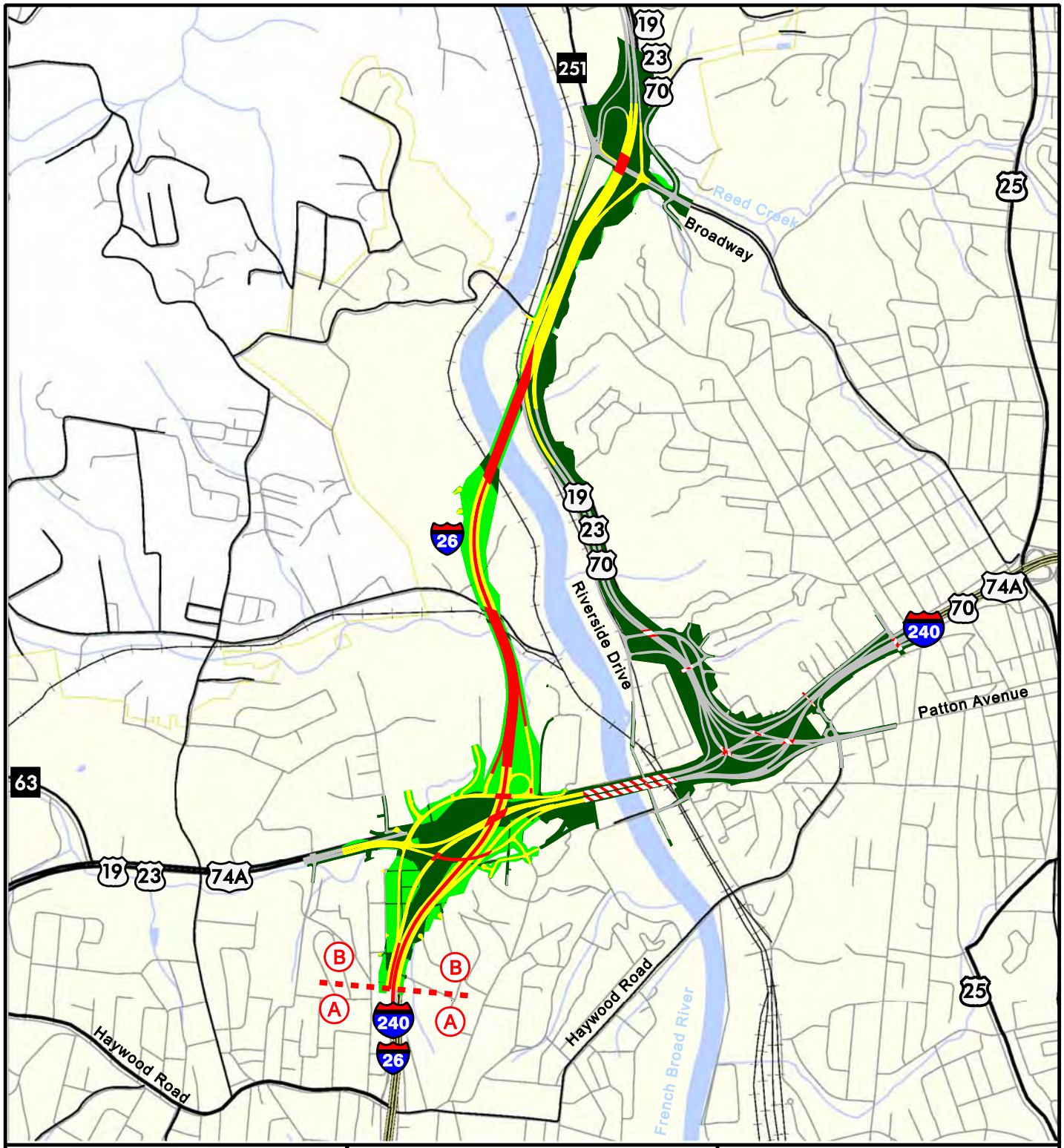
- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- Section

N W E S

0 1000 2000 FEET

Figure 3

Section B Alternative 2
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- (A) Section

N W E S

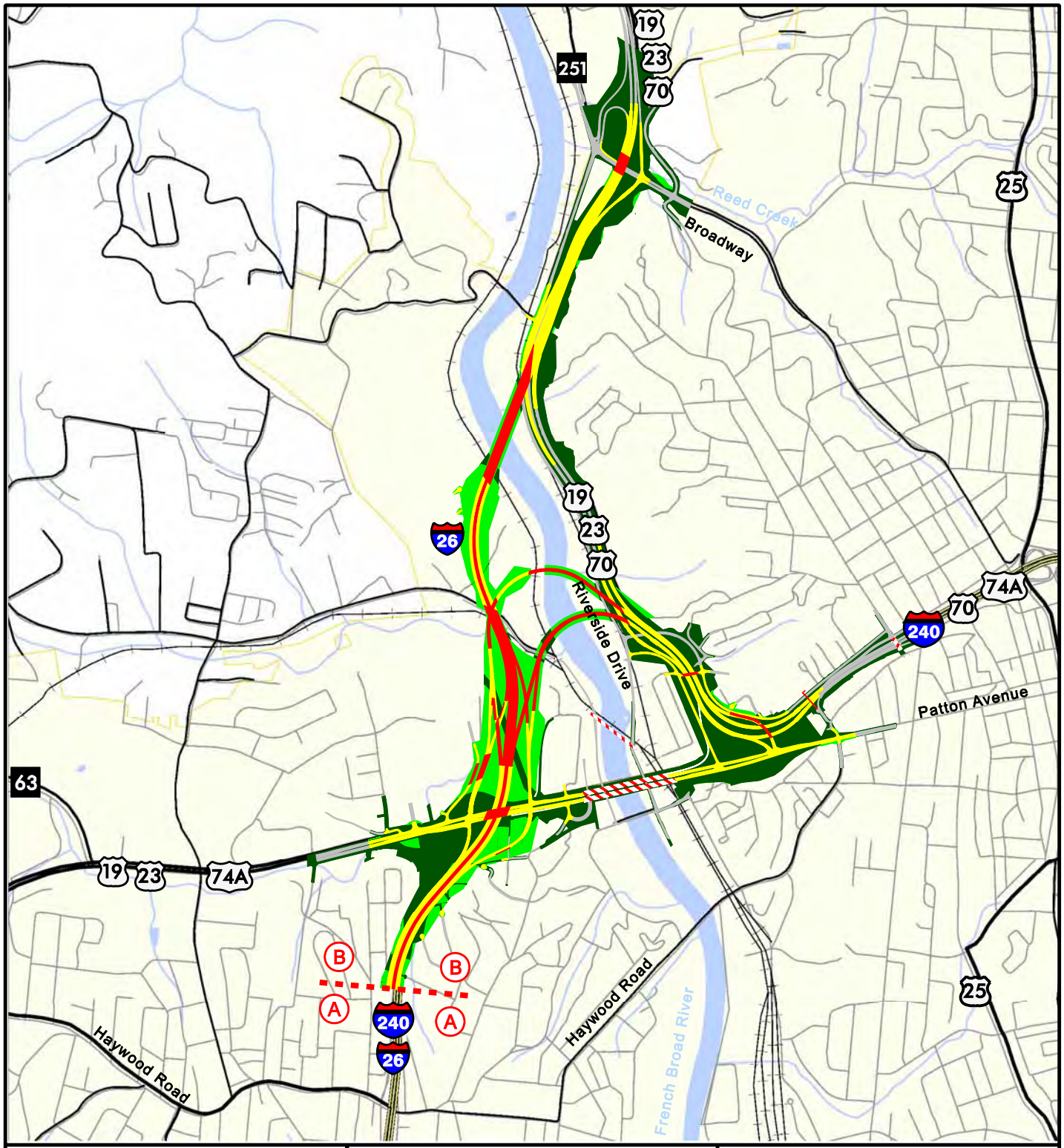
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 4

Section B Alternative 3
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- (A) Section

N W E S

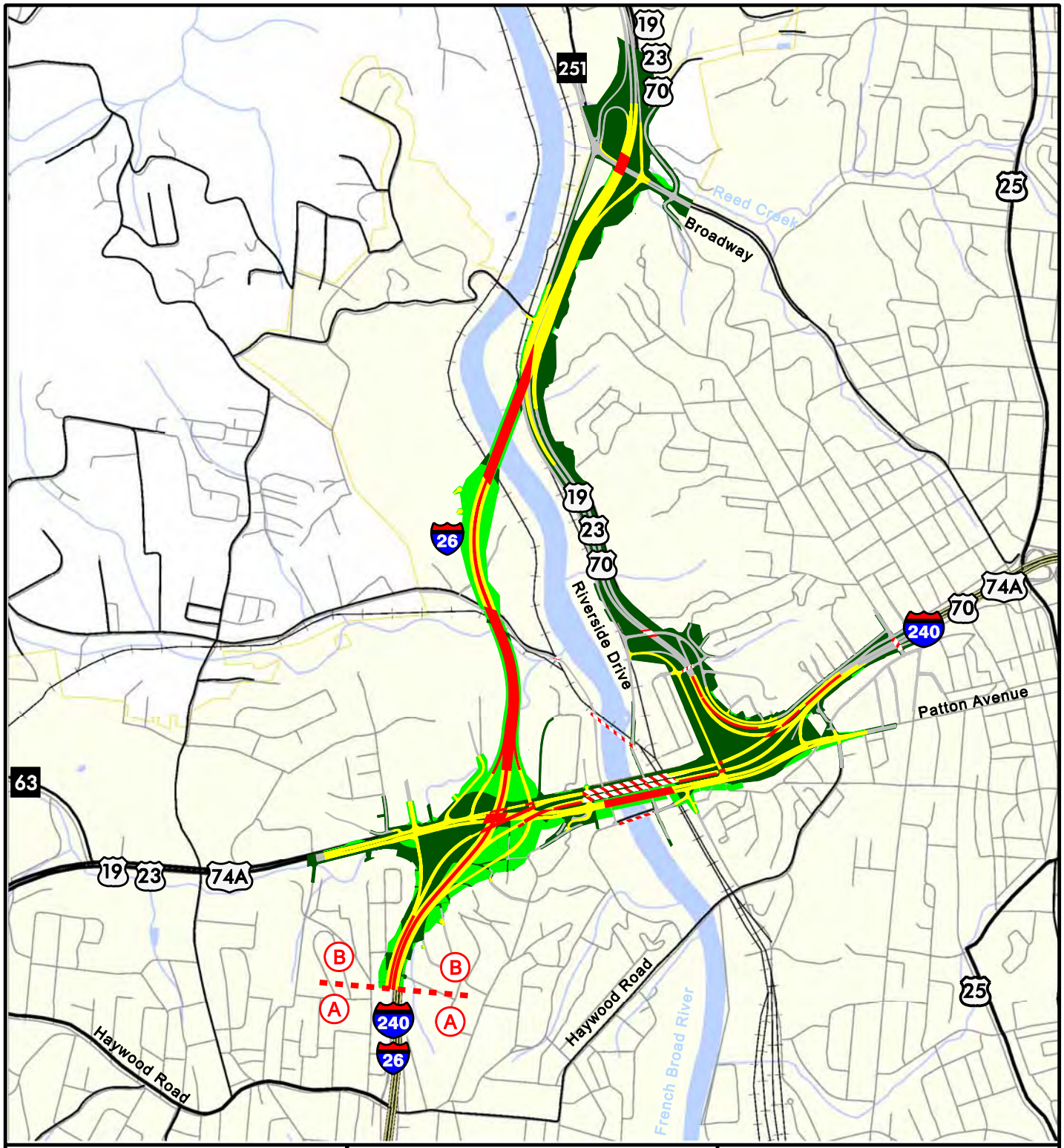
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 5

Section B Alternative 4
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- (A) Section

N W E S

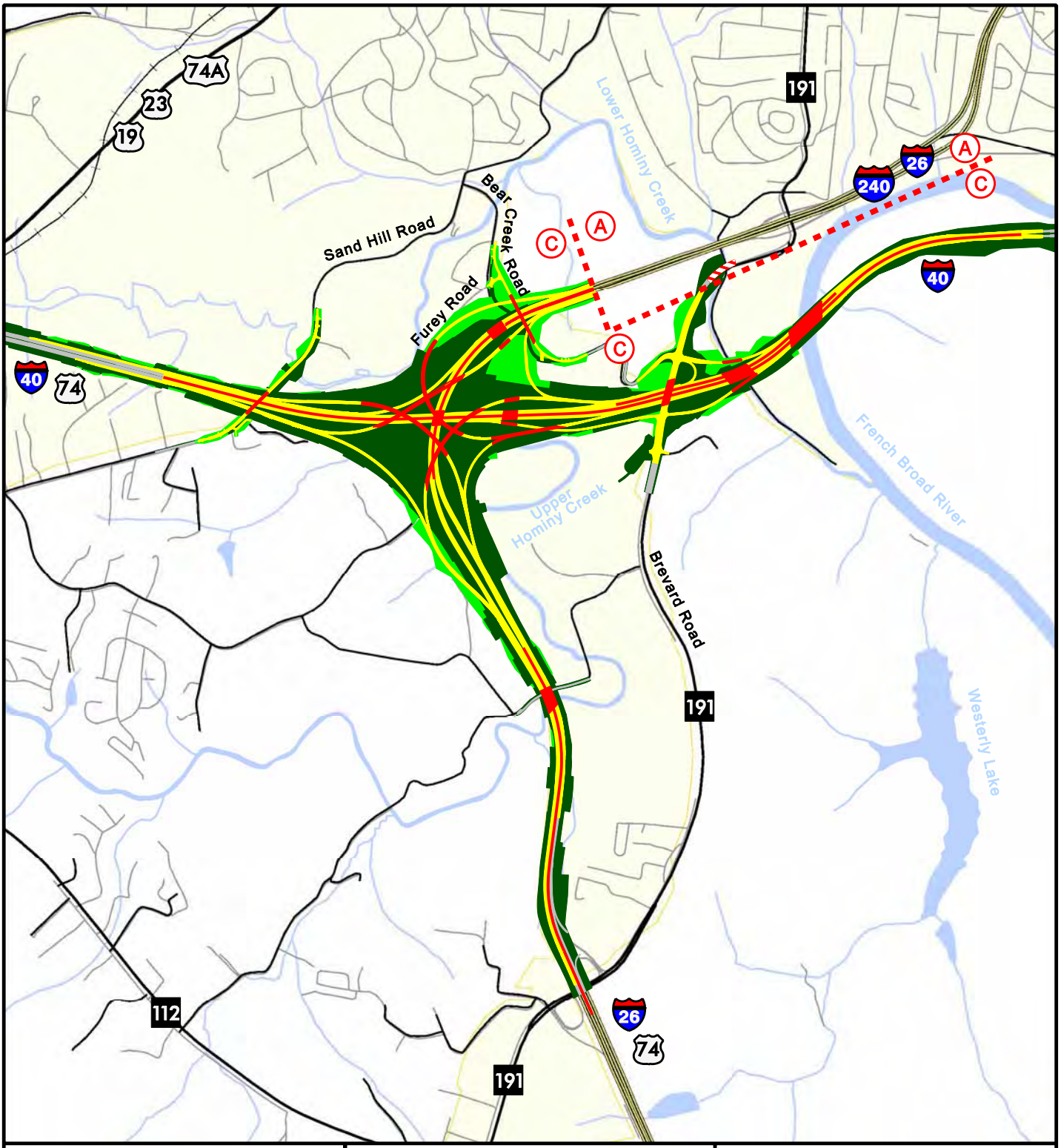
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 6

Section B Alternative 5
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

Legend

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- Section

N W E S

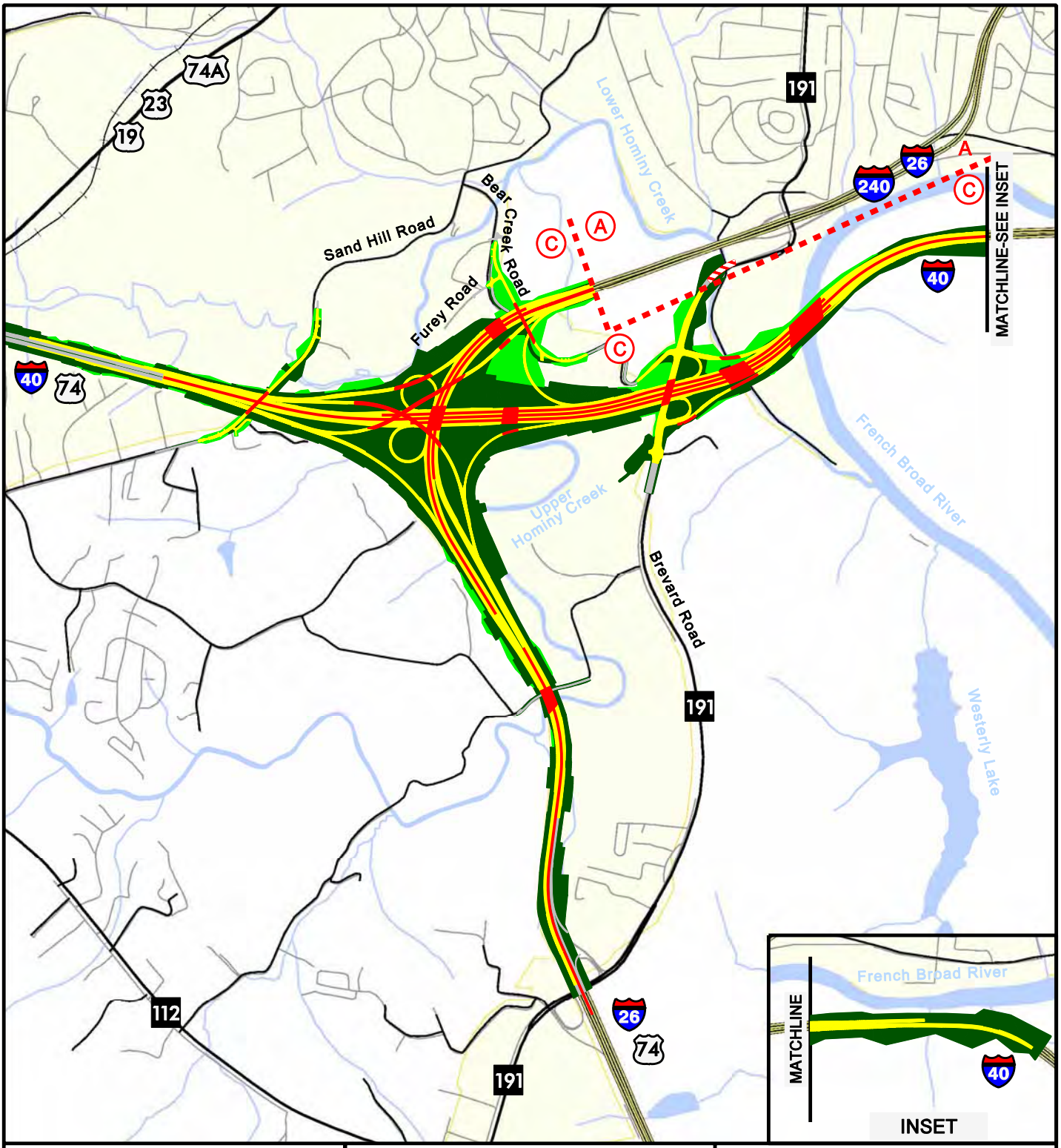
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 7

Section C Alternative A-2
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

Legend

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- Section

N W E S

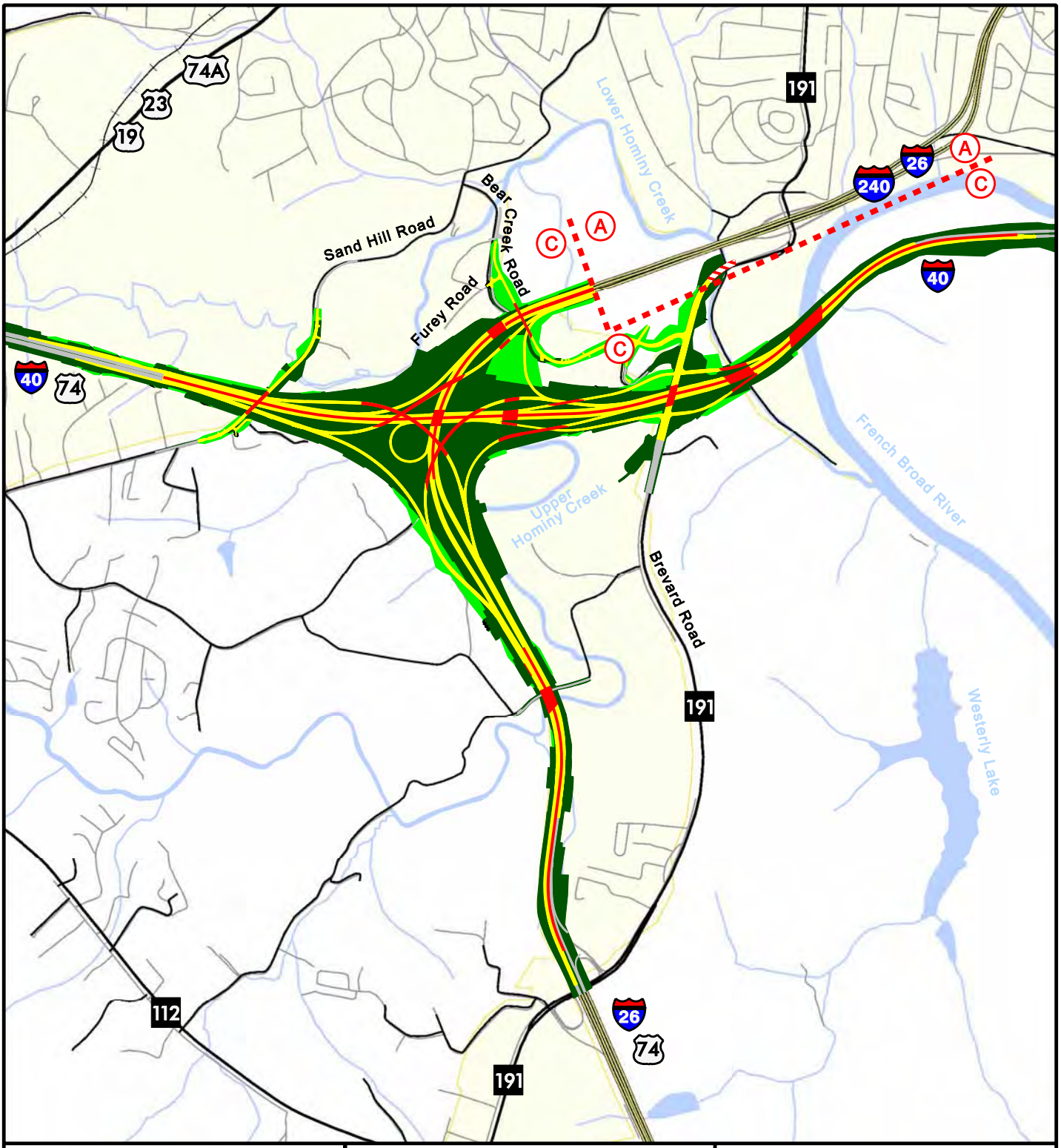
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 8

Section C Alternative C-2
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

Legend

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- Section

N W E S

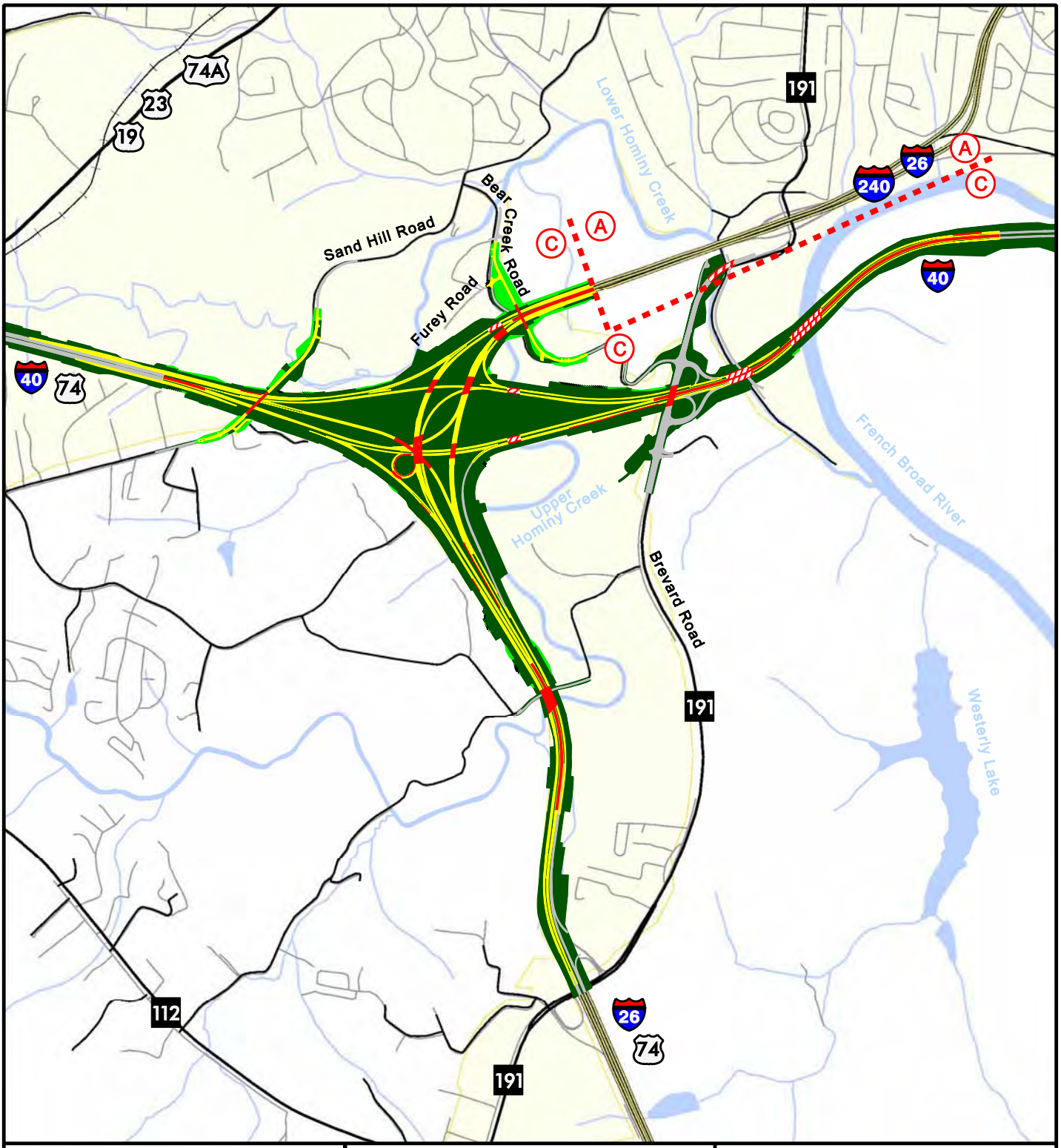
0 1000 2000 FEET

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 9

Section C Alternative D-1
Detailed Study Alternative




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

Legend

- Interstate
- US Highways
- NC Highways
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Existing Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Structures
- Existing structures, island, curb and gutter to be retained
- Water
- Concrete Barrier
- Section

N W E S

0 1000 2000 FEET

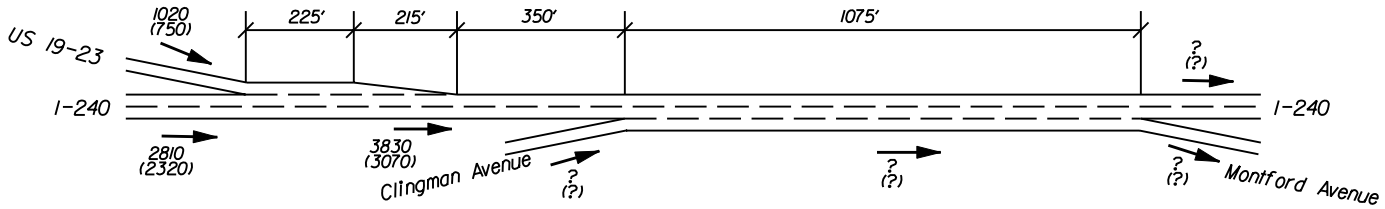
I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

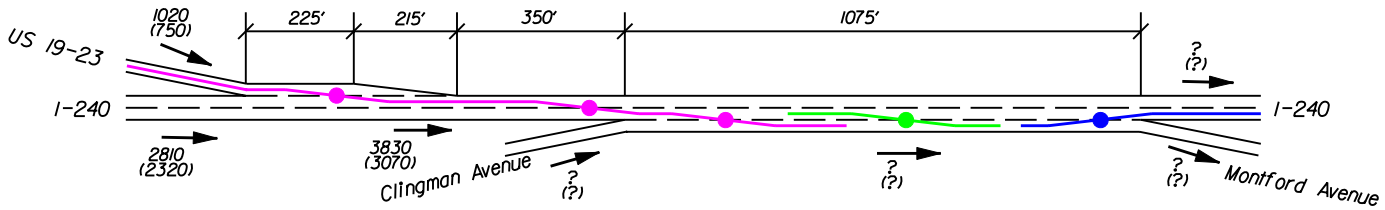
Figure 10

Section C Alternative F-1
Detailed Study Alternative

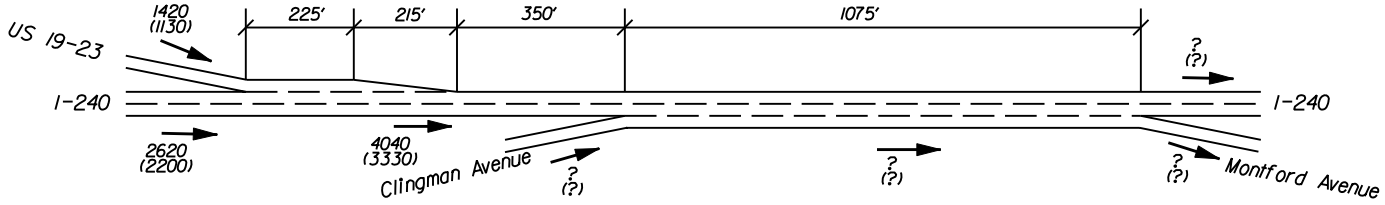
## 2005 EXISTING



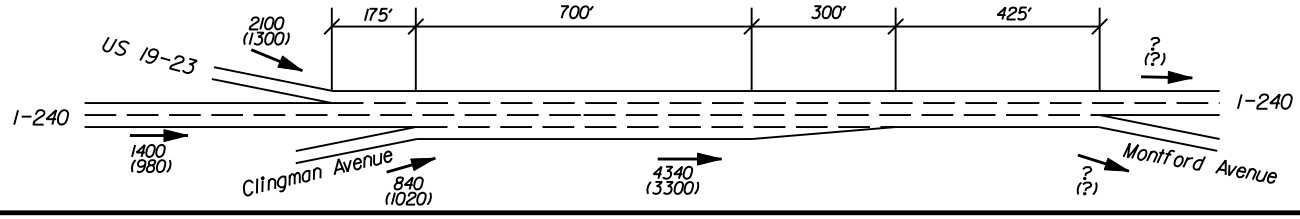

## WEAVING - 2005 EXISTING



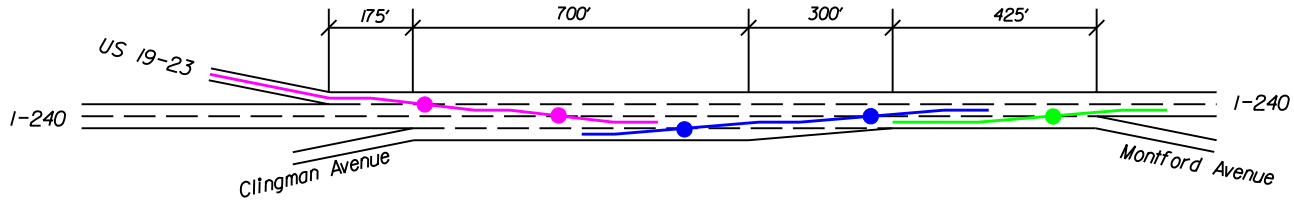

## 2030 NO-BUILD




## 2030 ALTERNATIVE 5




## WEAVING - ALTERNATIVE 5




North Carolina
Department of Transportation

### Legend

- US 19-23 Lane Change Required
- I-240 Lane Change Required
- Clingman Ave. Lane Change Required
- ## (##) Peak Hour Design Volume - AM (PM)

Not to Scale

I-26 Connector
Buncombe County

TIP Project No. I-2513

Figure 11

Weaving Movements

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

## Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

## Alternatives to be Studied in Detail

Alternative B2

Alternative B3

Alternative B4

Interchange Alternative A2

Interchange Alternative C2

Interchange Alternative D1

Interchange Alternative F1

## Concurrence

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, July 24, 2007 with the "Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers _____

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency _____

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service _____

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission _____

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources _____

N.C. DENR –
Division of Water Quality _____

Tennessee Valley Authority _____

Federal Highway Administration _____

French Broad River MPO _____

N.C. Department of Transportation _____

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

JUL 27 2007

**Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Alternatives to be Studied in Detail**

Alternative B2

Alternative B3

Alternative B4

Interchange Alternative A2

Interchange Alternative C2

Interchange Alternative D1

Interchange Alternative F1

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, July 24, 2007 with the "Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers _____

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency _____

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service _____

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission _____

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources _____

N.C. DENR –
Division of Water Quality _____

Tennessee Valley Authority Charles R. Nicholas

Federal Highway Administration _____

French Broad River MPO _____

N.C. Department of Transportation _____

# Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team Meeting Agreement
# Concurrence Point No. 2 and 2A
# Detailed Study Alignments &
# Bridging and Alignment Review

**I-26 Connector**
T.I.P. No. I-2513
NCDOT Project No. 8.U843701
Federal-Aid Project No. MANHF 26-1 (53)
NCDOT Division 13

**Introduction/History:**

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain concurrence with the elimination of a detailed study alternative (Alternative 2), the addition of a detailed study alternative (Alternative 4B), and the review of bridging and alignment recommendations for Alternative 4B for the subject project.

Shortly after Concurrence Point 1 and 2 were signed in January 2002, improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project were added to the project scope. In December 2004, Concurrence Points 1 and 2 were revisited and approved to add the improvements to the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project. Since the approval of Concurrence Point 2, another I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvement alternative (Alternate F1) was added and given Concurrence Point 2 on September 7, 2006. At this same meeting, the preliminary designs and recommendations were presented for your review and comment on the bridging and alignments. Concurrence Point 2A was achieved for Section A, Section B, (Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5) and Section C (Alternatives A2, C2, D1 and F1). On July 24, 2007, Concurrence Point 2 was revisited again with the removal of Alternative 5 as a detailed study alternative due to the detrimental affects to I-240 east of the project. In March of 2008, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement was circulated addressing the impacts of the detailed study alternatives. Public involvement led to the development of a new conceptual alignment that was presented along with the preliminary designs of the detailed study alternatives at a Corridor Public Hearing that was conducted on September 16, 2008. Since that hearing, the new conceptual alignment was further refined and preliminary plans were developed to determine the feasibility of the alignment identified as Alternative 4B in Section B.

This meeting is to address alternatives in Section B (see Figures 1and 2). Alternative 4B is being introduced to the Merger Team for inclusion in Concurrence Point 2 as a detailed study alternative to be addressed in a Supplemental Draft Impact Statement, and Alternative 2 is being eliminated as a detailed study alternative due to operational issues. In addition, the preliminary bridging and alignment recommendations for Alternative 4B are being presented for review and comment for Concurrence Point 2A.

**Project Description:**

The proposed I-26 Connector is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the

US 19/23/70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway Street). Including the improvements to I-40 through the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the project is approximately 10 miles long. The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project (see Figure1). These separate sections are described below.

Section A consists of widening and safety improvements along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. The Section A improvements along existing I-240 are common to all of the project alternatives.

Section B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19/23/70 and continuing to the US 19/23/70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). With Alternative 2 being eliminated, three alternatives (3, 4, and 4B) are being considered for Section B. The Section B alternatives are described below (see Figure 2).

- Alternate 2 (being eliminated) crossed over Patton Avenue at the Westgate Shopping Center property and followed the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it further north and connecting with the US 19/23/70 alignment south of SR 1781 (Broadway Street).
- Alternate 3 crosses beneath Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate 2. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate I-240.
- Alternate 4 also crosses beneath Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate 2. This alternate also realigns I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19/23 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto new I-240 crossings of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. This removes I-240 traffic from the existing Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic.
- Alternate 4B also crosses beneath Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then crosses the French Broad River and continues along the east side of the river, crossing the Craggy spur line of the Norfolk Southern Railway, SR 1477 (Riverside Drive) and becomes an elevated structure over US 19/23/70 approximately one-half mile north of the Smoky Park Bridges before merging with US 19/23/70 to the north. The I-26 freeway alignment would include a continuous complex bridge structure beginning north of Patton Avenue, extending north to the I-26 and I-240 split, and providing an elevated structure over US 19/23/70 before merging with US 19/23/70 south of Broadway. Similar to Alternate 4, this alternative also realigns I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19/23/70 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto new I-240 crossings of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. This removes I-240 traffic from the existing Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic.

Section C consists of improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project. The four alternative design schemes considered for the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvements (A2, C2, D1 and F1) were previously addressed at the September 7, 2006 Merger Team meeting.

**Agenda Issues:**

The following issues are the focus of this meeting:

**The elimination of Section B, Alternative 2** - After the preliminary design was evaluated based on the revised traffic forecast for the project, Alternative 2 had several major issues related to traffic capacity. The design included a service road north of the I-26/I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue, west of the French Broad River. The service road included a partial interchange with I-26/I-240 that would serve traffic from I-26 southbound and I-240/I-26 northbound as well as local traffic to Resort Drive and Sam's Club. The service road intersected with Patton Avenue west of the proposed interchange and included a series of four signalized intersections in close proximity to one another that also connect Regent Park Boulevard to Patton Avenue and included the ramp to I-26/I-240 southbound. The traffic volumes at this location were too high to allow the four signalized intersections to operate acceptably as originally designed and would result in LOS F at multiple locations and extensive queuing, including queuing onto the interstate.

Measures were taken to try to revise the preliminary design to attain acceptable traffic operations; however, no solution could be developed that addressed the traffic capacity concerns at this location. Therefore, based on the concerns with traffic operations it was determined this alternative was not feasible.

**The addition of Section B, Alternative 4B** - A group of architects in Asheville became interested in the project after the design forum held in Asheville in July, 2000. They developed a concept similar to Alternative 4 in Section B to separate the local Patton Avenue traffic from the I-240 through-traffic and further minimize the footprint of the design. After gaining substantial local support for this concept, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County funded the engineering of this concept which was presented along with the preliminary designs of the detailed study alternatives at the Corridor Public Hearing that was conducted on September 16, 2008.

The City's support for this concept led to further development of a preliminary design to determine the feasibility of this alignment. Once the preliminary design was evaluated to determine the alignment was feasible, and at the request of the local officials, NCDOT determined the alignment, named Alternative 4B, should be evaluated along with the other feasible alternatives in the NEPA process. Therefore, concurrence that Alternative 4B be added to the detailed study alternatives is requested.

**The preliminary bridging and alignment recommendations for Section B, Alternative 4B** - The preliminary design alignment and major bridging recommendations for Alternative 4B are being presented for review, comment and approval.

Alternative 4B would include new or replacement bridges at a total of ten locations. The first bridge location would be a complex bridge structure that would include the mainline of I-26 from north of Patton Avenue to US 19/23/70, the I-240 westbound flyover ramp and a portion of the ramp to I-26 westbound from Patton Avenue. The second would include the I-240 eastbound

flyover ramp, and a portion of a slip ramp connecting a Patton Avenue to the I-240 eastbound flyover. These bridges would span Smith Mill Creek and the French Broad River. The third and fourth bridges would be along Patton Avenue over I-26/I-240 and the entrance ramp to I-26 eastbound/I-240 westbound. The fifth bridge location would be along the I-26 eastbound/I-240 westbound off-ramp loop in the southwest quadrant of the Patton Avenue interchange. The sixth bridge location would be a freeway bridge that would be part of the interchange of I-26/US 19/23/70 with SR 1781 (Broadway). The seventh bridge location would be along I-240 westbound/US 19/23/70 northbound crossing over Hill Street. The eighth bridge location would be along US 19/23/70 southbound crossing over Hill Street. The ninth and tenth bridge locations would be associated with the reconfiguration of the existing US 19/23/70/Patton Avenue interchange with I-240. The ninth bridge location would include a new bridge along relocated Atkinson Street over I-240/US 19/23/70 that would connect Hill Street and a new roadway between Patton Avenue and SR 1477 (Riverside Drive). The tenth bridge location would be a new ramp that would connect Patton Avenue to I-240 westbound/US 19/23/70 northbound and would cross over the combined I-240/US 70 roadway.

**Section B Architectural Resources Summary**

A Phase II (intensive level) architectural resources survey was completed for the I-2513 Project and is comprised of three previous investigations undertaken between 1999 and 2003 for transportation projects (T.I.P. No. I-2513 and T.I.P. No. I-4401). The first Phase II architectural survey was for a proposed freeway connecting I-26 from its junction with the I-40/I-240 interchange southwest of Asheville with US.19/23/70 on the north side of Asheville. In December 2001, a supplemental Phase II architectural survey was completed for the project. Under the supplement, two additional alternatives (Alternates 4 and 5) in Section B were added.

The survey incorporated and updated these previous investigations into one document in order to identify all the historic resources located within the area of potential effects (APE). Alternative 4B in Section B is entirely within the boundaries of the APE.

Within Section B, near the north end of the project is the Montford Area Historic District that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1977). A recommended boundary expansion for this historic district was determined eligible for the National Register as a result of the 1999 Phase II architectural survey. Two other National Register resources, the Mrs. Minnie Alexander Cottage (N.R. 1989) and the Whiteford G. Smith House (N.R. 2004) are located south of the Montford Area Historic District. Also located south of the Montford Area Historic District is the Great Smoky Mountain Park Bridge (1948-1950; altered 1989) that carries westbound I-240/US 19/23 over the French Broad River which received a determination of eligibility (D.O.E.) in 2003. The C.G. Worley House, determined eligible in 1999 is located southeast of the existing I-240 interchange with Patton Avenue west of the French Broad River. Two additional resources were determined eligible for the National Register eligibility. The Haywood Street United Methodist Church (1891, expanded 1917, 1967) is located just south of I-240 at Patton Avenue and the ca. 1900 Freeman House, a well-preserved, picturesque dwelling is located just north of Westgate Shopping Center.

The current preliminary design of Alternative 4B requires right of way from the Worley and Freeman House sites. However, all of the detailed study alternatives require property from the Worley House site, and Alternatives 2 and 4 also require property from the Freeman House site. As a detailed study alternative, Alternative 4B will be evaluated for potential effects to all of these resources in the APE.

## Section B Water Resources Summary

The project study area is contained within the French Broad River Basin located west the Eastern Continental Divide. This basin covers approximately 2842 square miles in the mountains of North Carolina. The project study area lies within the French Broad River subbasin (USGS Hydrologic Unit #06010105) approximately 54 miles downstream of the headwaters of the French Broad. This portion of the river, including the adjoining tributaries, is part of the NCDWQ-designated subbasin 04-03-02 (NCDWQ 2005a).

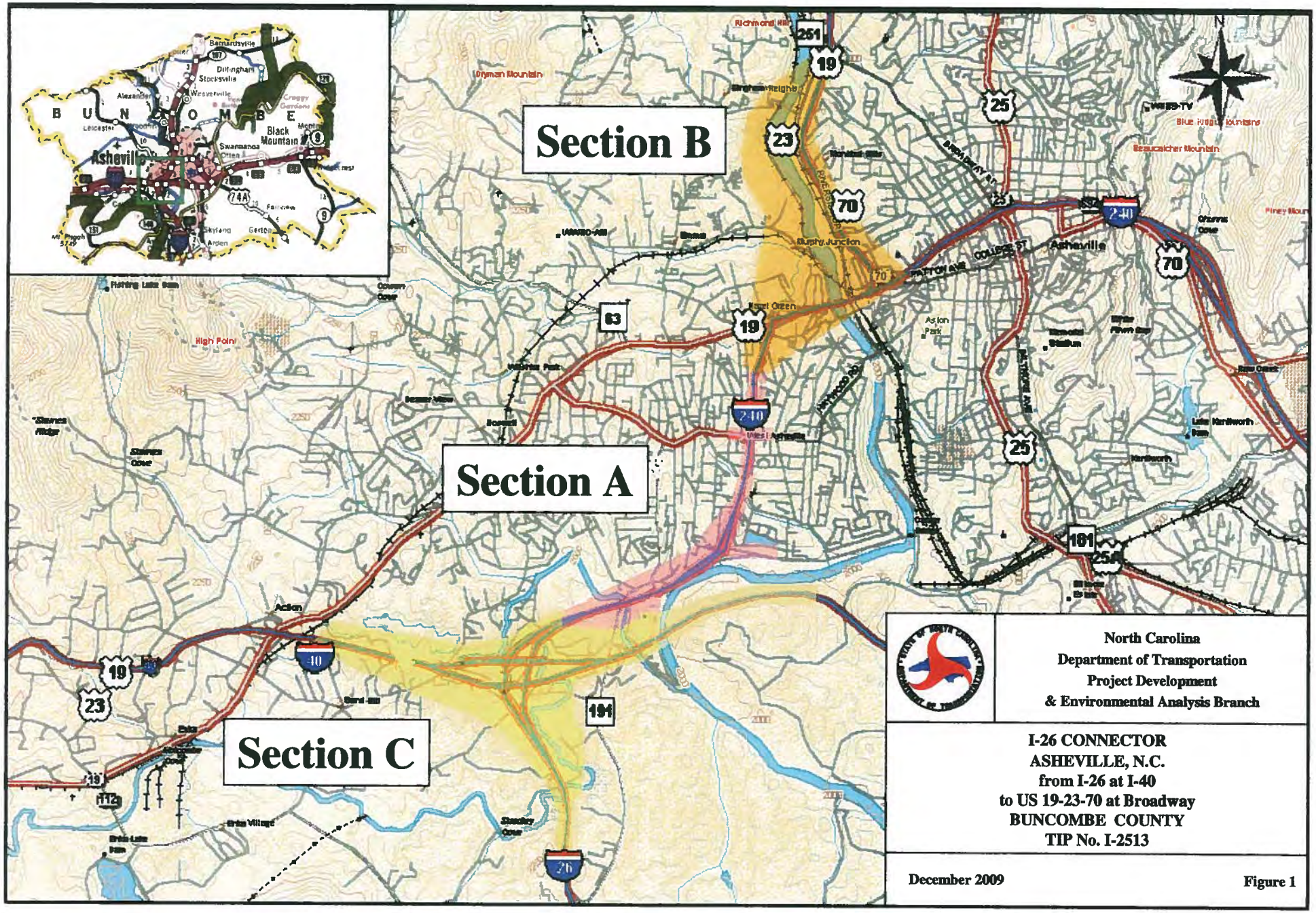
Section B contains ten streams: Smith Mill Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-79), four unnamed tributaries (UTs) to Smith Mill Creek (UT 1B through UT 4B), the French Broad River (NCDWQ Index No. 6-(54.5)), three UTs to the French Broad River (UT 1B through UT 3B), and Reed Creek (NCDWQ Index No. 6-80). Smith Mill Creek is located in the southern portion of this section and flows in a northeastern direction across the project study area. Two of the UTs to Smith Mill Creek flow in a westerly direction across the project study area and the other two UTs flow in easterly direction. The French Broad River flows from south to north through this section and is bridged at least once by the proposed alternatives. Reed Creek is located in the northern portion of this section and crosses the project study area flowing in a westerly direction. Three UTs to the French Broad River are located in the central portion of this section; however, two flow in a westerly direction across the project study area and one flows in an easterly direction.

No ORW, HQW, WS-I, or WS-II waters occur within 0.5 mile of the project study area (NCDWQ 2005a). No streams within the project study area are classified as trout waters. Therefore, the road improvement project can be classified as Case 3, which means there are no special restrictions beyond those outlined in the Best Management Practices for Protection of Surface Waters.

The alignment of Alternative 4B bridges over all but one of the jurisdictional streams requiring culverts over 72 inches. The only such crossing proposed to be accommodated with a culvert is located along the entrance to the Crowne Plaza Resort over Smith Mill Creek. This crossing is planned to be accommodated by a 185-foot extension of the existing 3 @ 8-foot by 11-foot culvert beneath Patton Avenue.

## Protected Species Summary

The USFWS lists nine Endangered species (Carolina northern flying squirrel, eastern cougar, gray bat, Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, bunched arrowhead, mountain sweet pitcher plant, and spreading avens), two Threatened species (spotfin chub and Virginia spiraea), and one Threatened due to Similarity of Appearance (bog turtle) as having ranges which extend into Buncombe County. NCNHP records indicate one known population of these species within 1.0 mile of the project study area, the Appalachian elktoe. Suitable habitat within the project study area does exist for the gray bat, Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, spotfin chub, bunched arrowhead, and Virginia spiraea. Detailed surveys within the project study area for the Appalachian elktoe, oyster mussel, tan riffleshell, bunched arrowhead, and Virginia spiraea have been conducted with the results indicating the mussels and plants were not present. Detailed surveys were also conducted for the gray bat and no evidence of roosting bats was found.




North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Project Development
& Environmental Analysis Branch

I-26 CONNECTOR
ASHEVILLE, N.C.
from I-26 at I-40
to US 19-23-70 at Broadway
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
TIP No. I-2513

December 2009

Figure 1

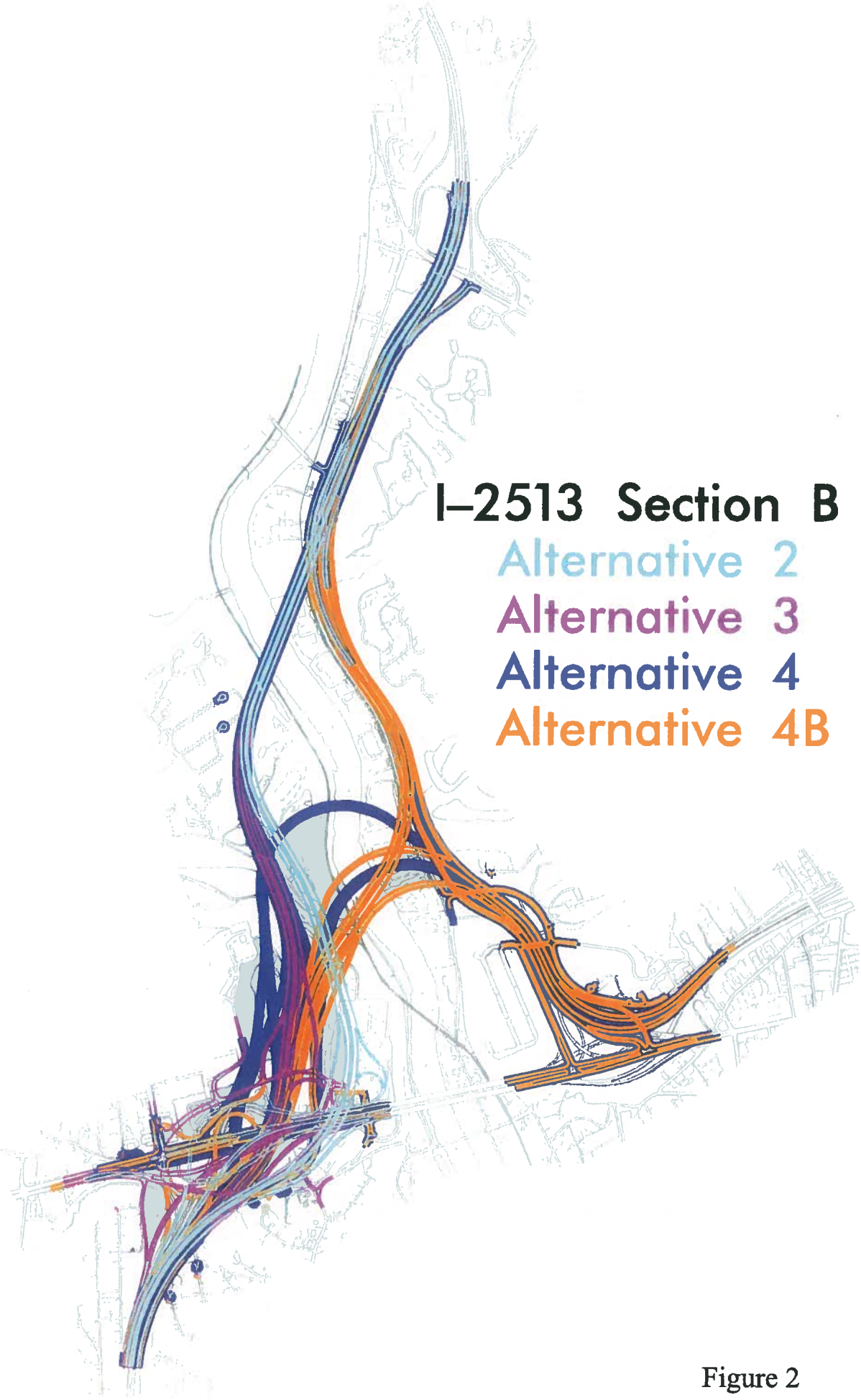

I–2513 Section B
Alternative 2
Alternative 3
Alternative 4
Alternative 4B

Figure 2

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

## Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

## Alternatives to be Studied in Detail

Section B Alternate 2 was eliminated and Section B Alternate 4B was added at this merger team meeting.

| | |
|---|---|
| Section A | Section B Alternate 3 |
| Section B Alternate 4 | Section B Alternate 4B (ADDED) |
| Interchange Alternate A2 | Interchange Alternate C2 |
| Interchange Alternate D1 | Interchange Alternate F1 |

## Concurrence

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, December 15, 2009 with the "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers _____

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency _____

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service _____

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission _____

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources _____

N.C. DENR –
Division of Water Quality _____

Tennessee Valley Authority _____

Federal Highway Administration _____

French Broad River MPO _____

N.C. Department of Transportation _____

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2A. Bridging and Alignment**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Section/Alternatives Previously Reviewed and Approved**

Section A

Section B Alternate 3

Section B Alternate 4

Section C Alternate A2

Section C Alternate C2

Section C Alternate D1

Section C Alternate F1

**Section/Alternatives Reviewed and Modifications Requested**

Section B Alternate 4B

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, December 15, 2009 with the "Bridging and Alignment Review" (Concurrence Point No. 2A) as noted above.

| | |
|---|---|
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | |
| N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission | |
| N.C. Department of Cultural Resources | |
| N.C. DENR – Division of Water Quality | |
| Tennessee Valley Authority | |
| Federal Highway Administration | |
| French Broad River MPO | |
| N.C. Department of Transportation | |

# MEETING SUMMARY

To: Meeting Attendees
Project File

From: Joanna Rocco
AECOM

Date: January 29, 2015

RE: **Section 404/NEPA Merger Process – Concurrence Meeting: CP 2 Revisited**
**NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

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Meeting Attendees:

Mitch Batuzich, FHWA
Earl Dubin, FHWA
Lori Beckwith, USACE*
Marella Buncick, USFWS*
Marla Chambers, NCWRC*
Renee Gledhill-Earley, HPO*
Cynthia Van Der Wiele, USEPA*
Paul Black, French Broad River MPO
Rick Tipton, NCDOT – Division 13*
Kristina Solberg, NCDOT – Division 13*
Jody Kuhne, NCDOT – Western Regional Office*
Van Argabright, NCDOT – STIP Unit*
Zahid Baloch, NCDOT – PDEA
Jennifer Harris, NCDOT – PDEA
Derrick Weaver, NCDOT – PDEA
Michael Wray, NCDOT – PDEA
Brendan Merithew, NCDOT – TPB
Pam Cook, NCDOT – TPB
Kirby Pendergraft, NCDOT – Hydraulics
Bill Zerman, NCDOT – Hydraulics
Kevin Moore, NCDOT – Roadway Design
Steve Kendall, NCDOT – Roadway Design
Herman Huang, NCDOT – HES
Drew Joyner, NCDOT – HES
Carla Dagnino, NCDOT - NES
Phil Harris, NCDOT – NES
Jeff Hemphill, NCDOT – NES
Mark Staley, NCDOT – Roadside Environmental
James Dunlop, NCDOT – Congestion Mgmt.
Elise Groundwater, NCDOT – Congestion Mgmt.
Tim Sherrill, NCDOT – Structures Mgmt. Unit
Phil Geary, NCDOT
Kiersten Bass, HNTB
John Burris, AECOM
Ed Edens, AECOM
Dennis Hoyle, AECOM
Rhiannon Kincaid, AECOM
Mathew Potter, AECOM
Joanna Rocco, AECOM
Chris Werner, AECOM

*Joined meeting via telephone

A meeting was held at 10:00 AM on Thursday, January 22, 2015 in the NCDOT Structure Design Conference Room C to revisit Concurrence Point 2. The purpose of this meeting was to notify the Merger Team of an expansion in the project study area to accommodate revised design configurations and to obtain concurrence on the addition of a Detailed Study Alternative (DSA): Section B, Alternative 3-C.

Michael Wray began the meeting by stating the meeting's purpose and initiating introductions. The Merger Team was provided a copy of the meeting's presentation and Merger Packet (attached).

Chris Werner then gave a presentation on the project status, Detailed Study Alternatives, project study area revisions, project schedule, and next steps.

Discussion points from the meeting are summarized below:

- Lori Beckwith from the USACE inquired about when the merger application would be submitted. Derrick Weaver explained that the application would be submitted after the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was issued and before the Public Hearing, therefore anticipated around May of 2015.
- An updated historic architecture report is anticipated by the end of January. Archaeological studies will not need to be updated for inclusion in the DEIS, but will be available prior to selecting the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).
- Paul Black from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) noted that the MPO board had questioned if the alternatives could be designed to Level of Service E since the facility is currently designated as an interstate facility and had an interstate designation and signing. Mitch Batuzich from FHWA noted that current regulations state that interstates must be designed to LOS D. Paul stated that he would defer to FHWA, but would forward the reference to the design exception to Mitch for his consideration.
- Renee Gledhill-Earley requested a timeframe for when the updated list of resource impacts would be available. Jennifer Harris stated that this information would be available to the Merger Team at the CP 2A Revisited meeting, which is anticipated to be held in February or March. Derrick Weaver noted that we would not be committing to a date for CP 2A Revisited meeting at this time, as NCDOT needs to review the design modifications currently under development before scheduling a meeting. Several members of the Merger Team noted that it may be useful to have the meeting in Asheville in case any of the sites need to be visited.
- The Merger Team agreed to adding Alternative 3C as a DSA, therefore the concurrence form will be signed by all members including the following DSAs:
    - Section A
    - Section B: Alternative 3
    - Section B: Alternative 3C
    - Section B: Alternative 4
    - Section B: Alternative 4B
    - Section C: Alternative A-2
    - Section C: Alternative C-2
    - Section C: Alternative D-1
    - Section C: Alternative F-1

- The revised project study area was also agreed to by the Merger Team. It was requested that a figure showing the updated study area be added to the CP 2 form for future reference. The CP 2 form will be revised with this information and then sent to the Merger Team for signature.

Action Items

- NCDOT to coordinate with the Merger Team on CP 2A date and location.
- NCDOT to distribute updated CP 2 Concurrence Form to the Merger Team for their signatures via Docusign.

# Section 404/NEPA Merger Team Meeting
# Concurrence Point No. 2
# Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail (Revisited)

**I-26 Connector**
T.I.P. No. I-2513
NCDOT Project No. 8.U843701
Federal-Aid Project No. MANHF 26-1 (53)
NCDOT Division 13

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this meeting is to notify the Merger Team of an expansion in the project study area to accommodate revised design configurations and to obtain concurrence on the addition of a detailed study alternative (Section B, Alternative 3-C).

**Merger Process History:**

*CP 1 and CP 2 Concurrence (2002)*

In October 1999, NCDOT met with interagency officials including Steve Lund (COE), John Hennessy (DWQ) and David Cox (NCWRC) to discuss the status of the subject project and to bring the project into the Section 404/NEPA Merger process. After a description of the project development, the agency officials were asked about any concerns regarding the approval status of the project. Mr. Lund acknowledged that the "Purpose and Need", and "Alternatives To Be Studied In Detail" (Concurrence Points 1 and 2) were achieved during the Phase I Study. To reaffirm these decisions, a concurrence meeting was held on January 23, 2002. The purpose and need was adjusted and a concurrence form was signed by all but one member of the team.

Due to the addition of alternatives to improve the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange at the southern end of the project, another merger team meeting was held in December 2004 to reaffirm concurrence with Concurrence Point 1 and to modify Concurrence Point 2. Both Concurrence Point 1 and Concurrence Point 2 forms were signed by all members of the team.

*CP 2 Revisited and CP 2A (2006)*

Another I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange improvement alternative (Section C, Alternative F-1) was developed to satisfy the project purpose and need with anticipated fewer environmental impacts in a more economical manner. Alternative F-1 was presented at a concurrence meeting held on September 7, 2006, with the Concurrence Point 2 form signed by all members of the team. In addition to the inclusion of Alternative F-1, the September 7, 2006 meeting also included the presentation of preliminary designs and bridging recommendations for the project alternatives. With several modification requests, the Concurrence Point 2A form was signed by all members of the team.

*CP 2 Revisited (2007)*

In July 2007, all members of the Merger Team agreed at an additional Concurrence Point 2 meeting to eliminate Alternative 5 from further consideration. This alternative proposed constructing a new crossing of the French Broad River immediately south of the existing Captain Jeff Bowen Bridge to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic. This alternative was eliminated due to operational deficiencies that would worsen the traffic operations along existing I-240 east of the project in downtown Asheville.

*CP 2 Revisited (2009)*

The Merger Team met in December 2009 and agreed to remove Alternative 2 from consideration due to operational issues after the traffic forecasting was updated (NCDOT updated the traffic forecast for all alternatives and revised the design based on the new traffic volumes in 2009). In August 2010, NCDOT decided to replace the 2008 DEIS with a new DEIS instead of developing a Supplemental DEIS. NCDOT began preparation of a new DEIS in 2010 that updated the traffic forecast, eliminated Alternative 2 from consideration, and added Alternative 4-B for detailed studies.

*CP 2 Revisited (2015)*

After a 2-year deferment of the project due to low project priority ranking, NCDOT reinitiated development of the project in the spring of 2012. Alternative 3 and Alternative 4 in Section B, and the new location portion of the project from north of Patton Avenue crossing the French Broad River to US 19-23-70, were modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road Community. NCDOT developed a new alternative for Section B, Alternative 3C, with a smaller footprint and connection further to the south of US 19-23-70 that would generate fewer environmental impacts than Alternative 3.

The new alternative, Alternative 3C, was presented to the public in May of 2014 (in addition to all other alternatives) to present updated roadway design plans that were modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road Community, to announce that updated environmental studies will be conducted, and to announce that a new DEIS will be prepared to document the updated environmental studies. NCDOT is continuing the analysis of existing and projected traffic operations, and is developing conceptual design revisions based upon the recommendations from the traffic operations analysis. All Section B alternatives are being studied to better accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. NCDOT is also updating the environmental studies and beginning preparation of a new DEIS to present the findings of those studies and revisions to the roadway design plans.

Therefore, at this point, the Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail include:

Section A I-240 Widening Alternative

Section B Alternatives 3, 3-C, 4, and 4-B

Section C Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1, and F-1

**Purpose and Need for the Project:**

The need for this proposed action is summarized by the following existing and projected conditions:

- ***System Linkage*: A better transportation facility is needed to connect I-26 south of Asheville with US 19-23 north of Asheville.** I-26 currently connects the Port of Charleston, South Carolina, with the mountains of North Carolina joining I-240 at the I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange southwest of Asheville. I-240 west of Asheville, which connects I-26 with US 19-23-70, was constructed in the 1960s and does not meet current interstate design standards due to roadway deficiencies. The existing interchange connecting US 19-23-70 from the north with I-240 contains sharply curved, single-lane ramps. Freeway traffic using this interchange connecting I-240 with the US 19-23-70 freeway is restricted to one lane in each direction, which causes traffic to queue onto I-240. This facility needs to be updated to meet current interstate design standards.
- ***Capacity*: I-240 needs additional capacity because increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the level of service on I-240 west of Asheville.** Several sections of I-240 currently operate at capacity, resulting in traffic delays and queuing on I-240. Traffic congestion and resulting delays will continue to worsen in the future as the traffic volumes increase due to population increases. The completion of portions of NCDOT STIP Project Number A-0010 has further increased traffic demands along I-240 west of Asheville. The increase in traffic volumes further contributes to the congestion and delays being experienced along I-240.
- ***Safety*: I-240 needs safety improvements.** Multiple sections of this project have accident rates that exceed the critical crash rates for similar North Carolina facilities, demonstrating the need for safety improvements for this facility.

The primary purposes of this proposed action are to:

- Provide a freeway-to-freeway connection between I-26 south of Asheville and US 19-23-70 north of Asheville
- Provide a link in the transportation system connecting a direct, multilane, freeway facility meeting interstate standards along the existing and future section of the I-26 Corridor from the Port of Charleston, South Carolina, to I-81 near Kingsport, Tennessee
- Improve the capacity of existing I-240 west of Asheville to accommodate the existing and forecasted (2033 design year) traffic in this growing area
- Reduce traffic delays and congestion along the I-240 crossing of the French Broad River, which currently operates at capacity
- Increase the remaining useful service of the existing Smoky Park Bridge (now known as the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridge) by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River
- Improve the safety of I-240 west of Asheville

**Project Study Area**

The Project Study Area extends from the western terminus of I-26 southwest of the City of Asheville around the western side of Asheville to existing US 19-23-70 north of Asheville. The project study area has been revised to allow for additional design configuration revisions. The original and revised study areas are shown on Figure 1.

**Project Description:**

The proposed I-26 Connector spans approximately 7 miles and is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project (see Figure 2). These separate sections are described below.

**Section A**

The only build alternative in Section A, The I-240 Widening Alternative, shown in Figure 3, includes a best-fit alignment for the widening and reconstruction of existing I-240 from a four-lane freeway to an eight-lane freeway. The reconstructed roadway would carry both I-26 and I-240 throughout the length of Section A and would be compatible with all of the proposed alternatives for Section B and Section C. The Section A alternative would include three interchanges that will require auxiliary lanes for appropriate weaving distances. This alternative would also include a new bridge along I-26/I-240 over Lower Hominy Creek including the ramps to the interchange of NC 191 (Brevard Road) with I-26/I-240.

**Section B**

Section B of the proposed project, shown in Figure 4, would include the modification of the existing interchange of I-240 with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue and the extension of I-26 on new location across the French Broad River to US 19-23-70. From the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange, the proposed project includes I-26 and I-240 combined as one roadway. At the existing I-240 interchange with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue, the two interstates would separate with I-26 continuing to the north on new location and I-240 continuing to the east. The interchange area is made more complex due to the mixing of local traffic on Patton Avenue with freeway traffic along the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges.

**Alternative 3,** shown in Figure 5, begins south of the existing interchange of I-240 with US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue, where I-26 and I-240 would be combined as one roadway. The combined roadway of I-26 westbound/I-240 eastbound separates south of the US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue interchange, with I-26 continuing to the north and I-240 continuing to the east across the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges. I-26 would continue to the north on new location across the Westgate Shopping Center property and would cross the French Broad River on a new bridge approximately 5,000 feet north of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges before connecting with US 19-23-70.

**Alternative 3C**, which is proposed to be added as an Alternative to be Studied in Detail and is shown on Figure 6, is almost identical in configuration and design to Alternative 3 with the exception of the new alignment location for the I-26 freeway after the I-240 split. The new I-26 alignment will turn east instead of going north and will cross French

Broad River on two bridge structures approximately 2,500 feet north of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges before connecting with US 19-23-70.

**Alternative 4**, shown in Figure 7, would separate the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the freeway traffic on I-26 and I-240 through the addition of two new flyover bridges 2,800 feet north of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges, which would be free to carry only local traffic. The curved flyover bridges would also span the Norfolk Southern Railway, SR 1338 (Emma Road), the Norfolk Southern Railway Craggy spur line and SR 1477 (Riverside Drive). The alignment of I-26 east of the I-240 flyovers is similar to Alternative 3. For this alternative nearly all of the braided ramps would be required to be constructed as bridges.

**Alternative 4-B,** shown in Figure 8, is similar to Alternative 4, with I-240 crossing over the French Broad River on two flyover bridges north of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges, which would be free to carry only local traffic. The curved flyover bridges would also span the Norfolk Southern Railway, SR 1338 (Emma Road), the Norfolk Southern Railway Craggy spur line and SR 1477 (Riverside Drive). I-26 would continue to the north on new location and cross over the French Broad River approximately 2,700 feet north of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges, combining with US 19-23-70 approximately 2,700 feet south of the SR 1781 (Broadway) interchange. I-26 westbound traffic would not be able to access US 19-23-70 in the southbound direction, and northbound US 19-23-70 will not be able to access I-26 eastbound.

**Section C**

Section C of the proposed project focuses on upgrading the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. The existing interchange is a partial interchange with fully-directional movements that would provide only six of the typical eight ramp movements included in a freeway to freeway interchange. The existing interchange does not include the movements from I-40 westbound to I-240 eastbound or from I-240 westbound to I-40 eastbound. Additionally, the existing interchange includes two ramps, I-40 eastbound to I-240 eastbound and I-40 westbound to I-26 eastbound that have both left-hand exits and entrances.

Four interchange alternatives (Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1, and F-1) are being considered for Section C. These Section C alternatives are described below:

**Alternative A-2**, shown in Figure 10, would provide direct ramp connections between I-26, I-40 and the proposed I-26/I-240 combined roadway, including the movements that are currently not provided by the existing interchange. The design would include C/D roadways along I-40 to alleviate traffic capacity issues. As a result of implementing the C/D roadways, improvements would also be required to the existing I-40 interchanges with NC 191 (Brevard Road) and US 19/23/74A which are adjacent to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

**Alternative C-2**, shown in Figure 11, would be a semi-directional interchange that would provide six of the eight ramp movements with directional ramps while the remaining two movements would be provided by semi-direct loop ramps. Alternative C-2 would have the same general configuration for the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange as Alternative C-1, with two semi-direct loop movements in the northwest and southwest quadrants. The design would include a C/D roadway along I-26 eastbound to accommodate traffic at the I-40 interchange as well as C/D roadways on both the north and south sides of

I-40. As a result of implementing the C/D roadways, improvements would also be required to the existing I-40 interchanges with NC 191 (Brevard Road) and US 19/23/74A which are adjacent to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

**Alternative D-1**, shown in Figure 12, would be a semi-directional interchange that would provide seven of the eight ramp movements with directional ramps with the remaining movement provided by a semi-direct loop ramp. This design would result in no direct connection to I-26 or I-240 from NC 191 (Brevard Road) via I-40, which would require vehicles to use interchanges along I-26/I-240 for access. The design would include C/D roadways along I-40 to alleviate traffic capacity issues. As a result of implementing the C/D roadways, improvements would also be required to the existing I-40 interchanges with NC 191 (Brevard Road) and US 19/23/74A which are adjacent to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

**Alternative F-1**, shown in Figure 13, was developed to potentially minimize impacts to the human and natural environment as well as to provide a lower cost option for consideration. The design would provide the two missing movements so access will be provided for all directions at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. The design would include C/D roadways along I-40 to alleviate traffic capacity issues. As a result of implementing the C/D roadways, improvements would also be required to the existing I-40 interchanges with NC 191 (Brevard Road) and US 19/23/74A which are adjacent to the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

**Agenda Issues:**

The following issues are the focus of this meeting:

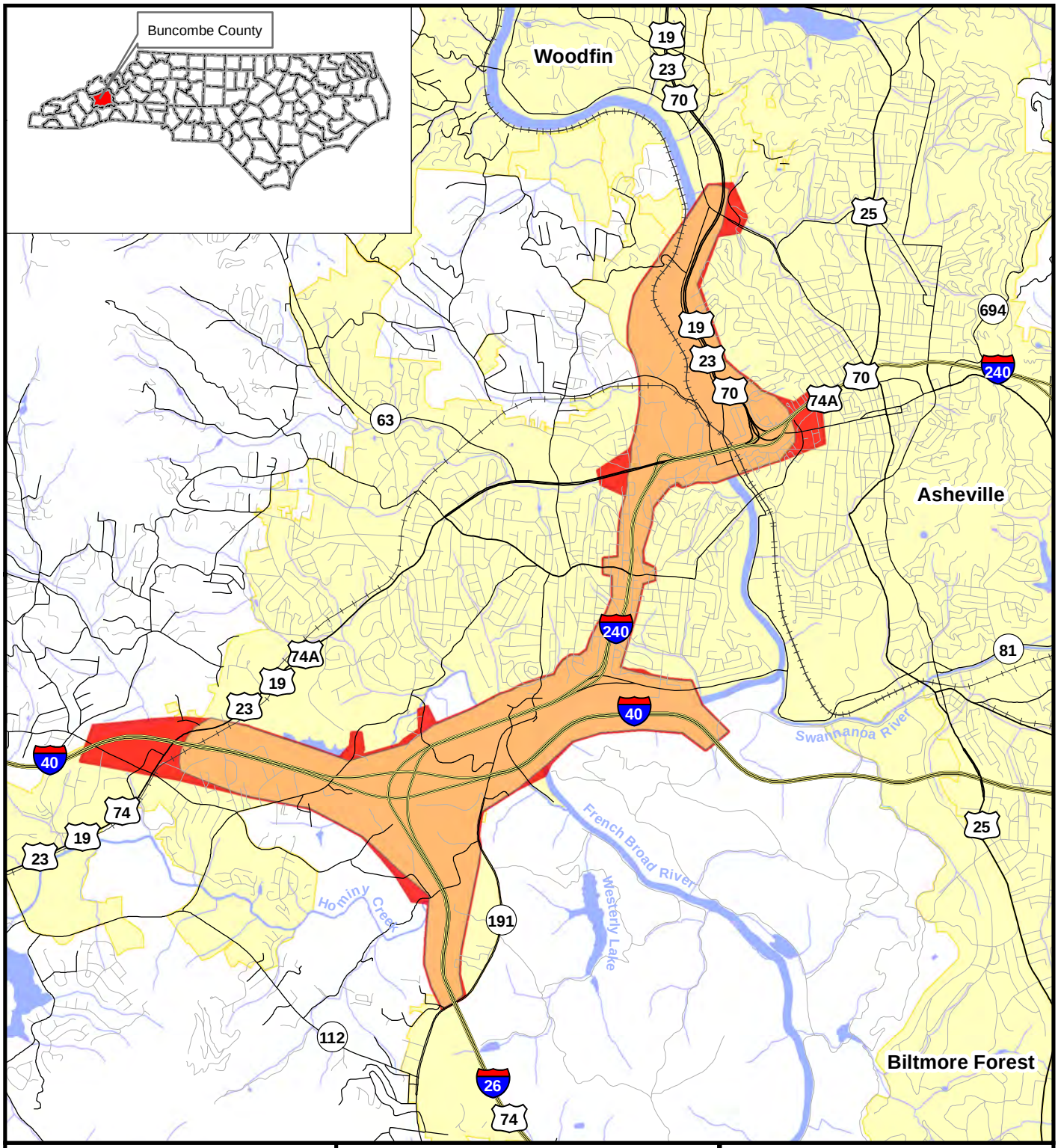
**Expansion of the Project Study Area** - The Project Study Area is being expanded in several areas to allow for additional design configuration revisions based upon the recommendations from the traffic operations analysis. Most of the Project Study Area expansions are minor in nature; however, three areas will allow for the extent of the project limits to be slightly extended. These areas include: along I-40 west of the US 19-23-74A interchange, along US 19-23-74A/Patton Avenue west of the French Broad River, and along I-240 and Patton Avenue east of the French Broad River.

**The addition of Section B, Alternative 3C as an Alternative to be Studied in Detail** - After a 2-year deferment of the project due to low project priority ranking, NCDOT reinitiated development of the project in the spring of 2012. Alternative 3 and Alternative 4 in Section B, and the new location portion of the project from north of Patton Avenue crossing the French Broad River to US 19-23-70, were modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road Community. NCDOT developed a new alternative for Section B, Alternative 3C, with a smaller footprint and connection further to the south of US 19-23-70 that would generate fewer environmental impacts than Alternative 3.

The new alternative, Alternative 3C, was presented to the public in May of 2014 (in addition to all other alternatives) to present updated roadway design plans that were modified to avoid impacts to the Emma Road Community, to announce that updated environmental studies will be conducted, and to announce that a new DEIS will be prepared to document the updated environmental studies. The feedback provided regarding this new alternative on comment cards at these public involvement activities included one opposition and three supporting views, out of approximately 144 attendees.

**Project Next Steps:**

NCDOT is continuing the analysis of existing and projected traffic operations, and is developing design revisions based upon the recommendations from the traffic operations analysis. Additionally, all Section B alternatives are being studied to better accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. As a result of reinitiating the project, adding a new alternative, and revising/developing conceptual design revision, NCDOT is also updating the environmental studies and beginning preparation of a new DEIS to present the findings of those studies and revisions to the roadway design plans. As such, NCDOT is anticipating that a CP2A Revisited Merger Meeting will be held in February to review the revised designs and to discuss Bridging Decisions and Alignment Review.




**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Originial Project Study Area
- Additional Project Study Area
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

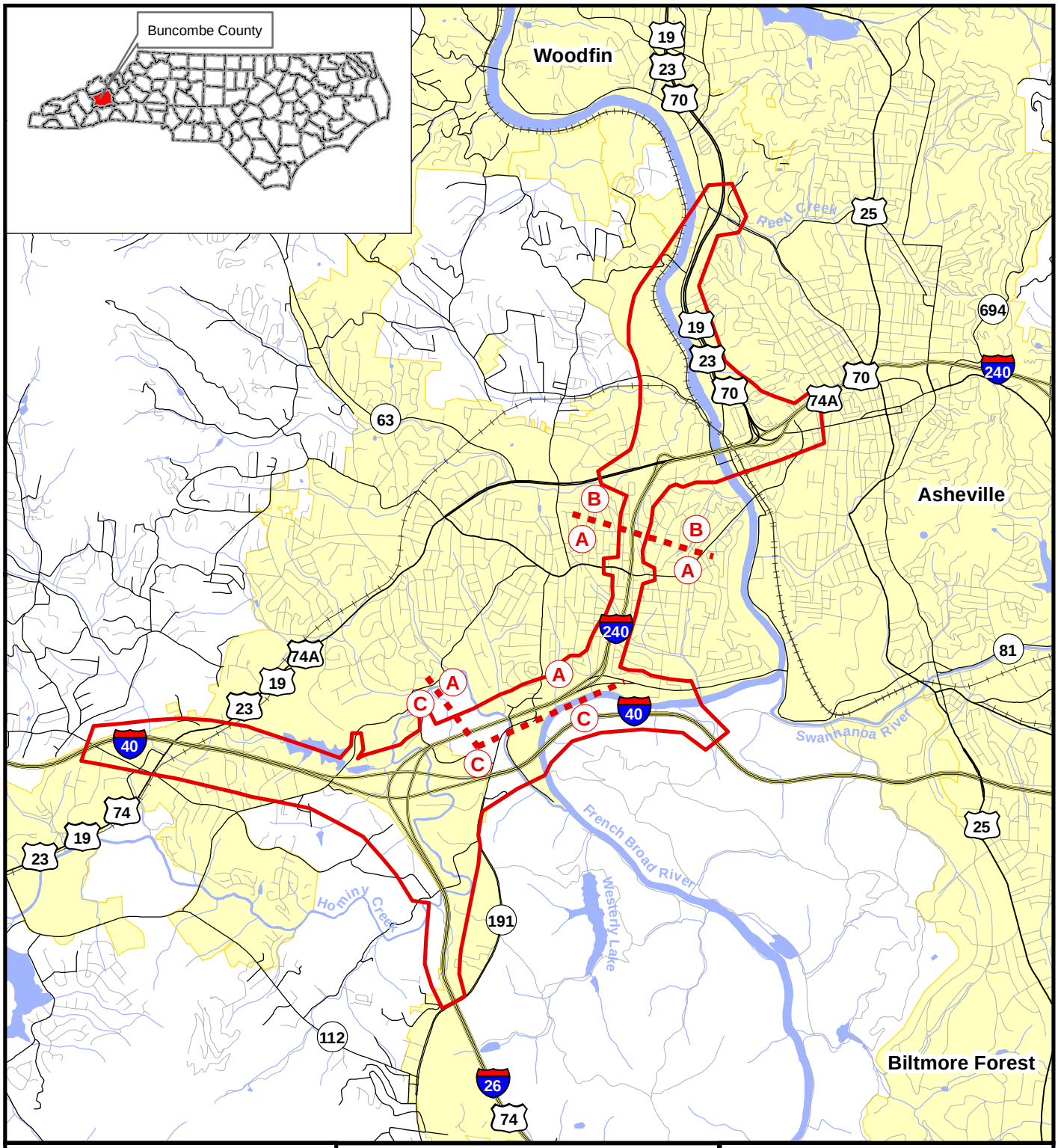
0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 1**

**Original and Revised Project Study Area**




**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Project Study Area
- Municipal Boundary
- (A) Section

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

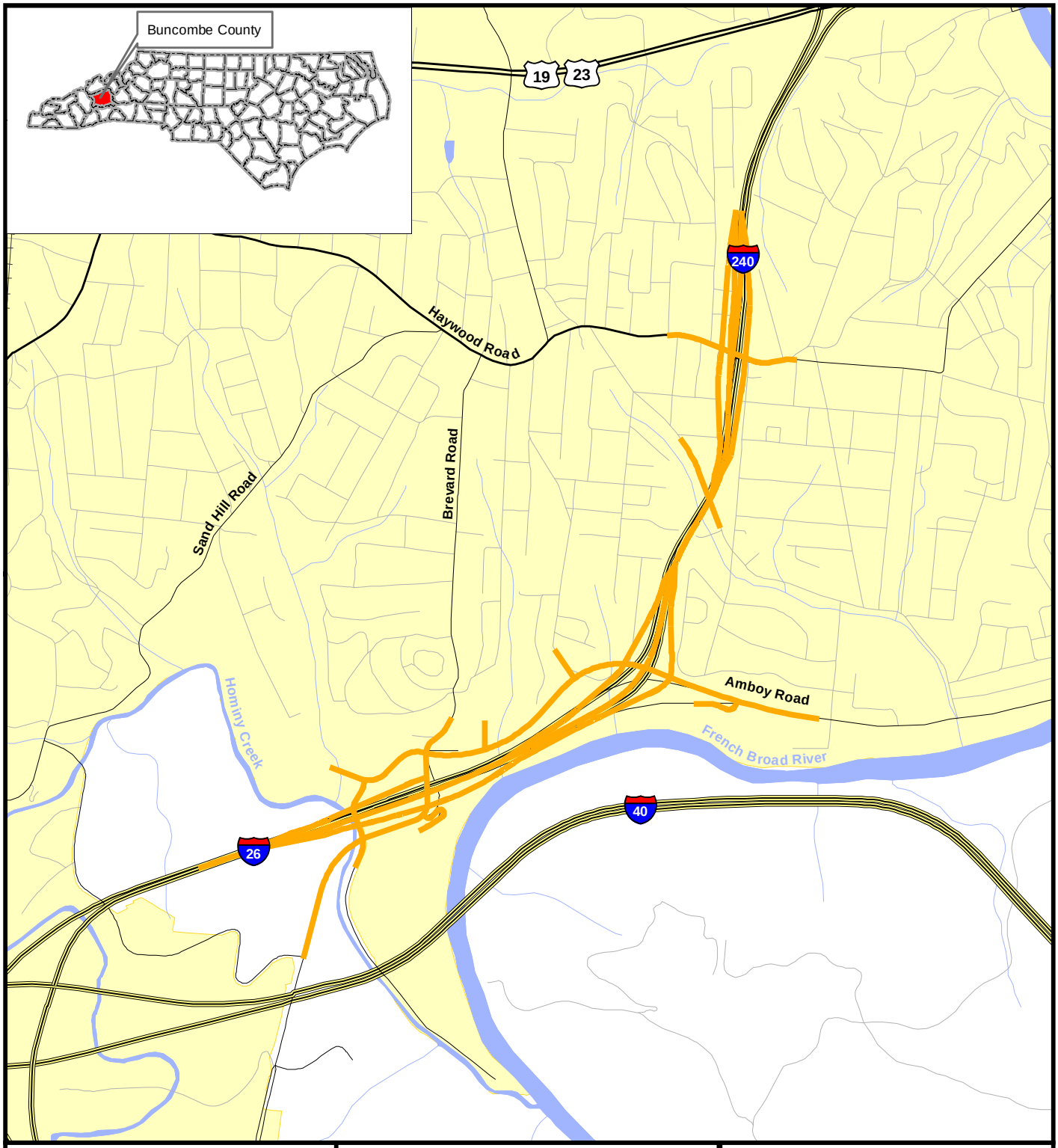
0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 2**

**Project Study Area: Sections A, B and C**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Section A
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

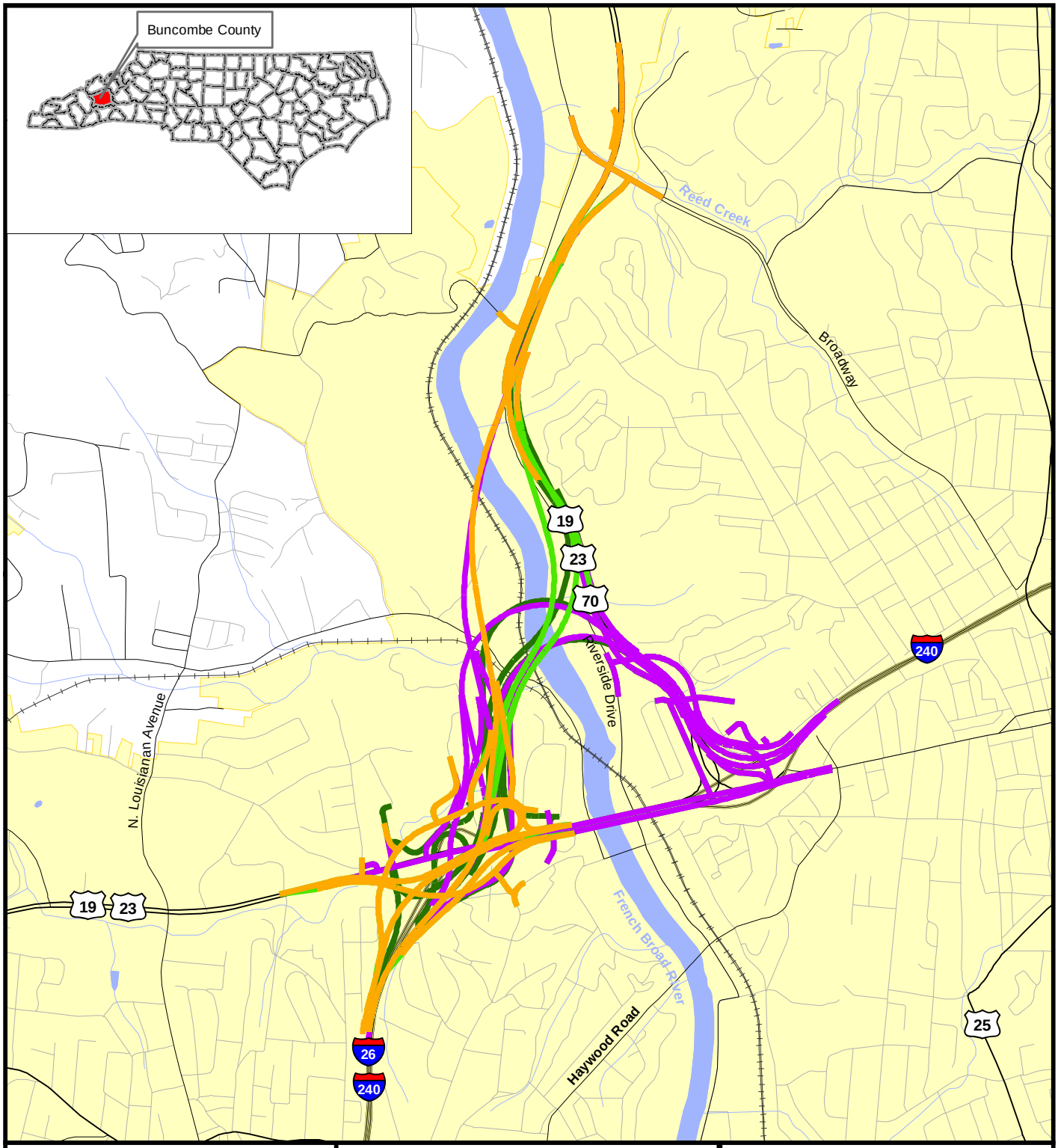
0 0.25 0.5 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 3**

**Section A:**
**Project Alternatives**




**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative 3
- Alternative 3C
- Alternative 4
- Alternative 4B
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

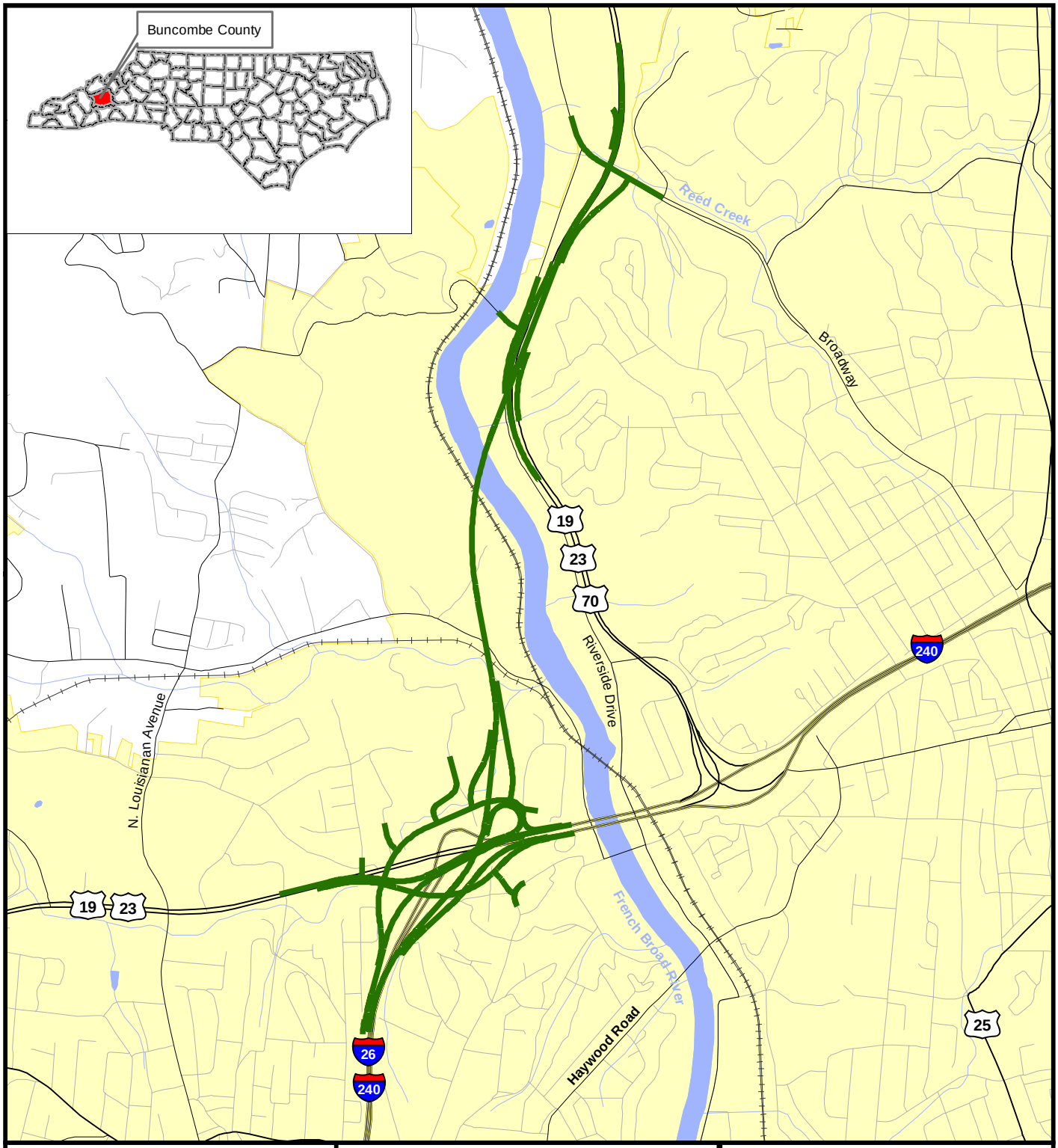
0 0.25 0.5 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 4**

**Section B: Project Alternatives**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative 3
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

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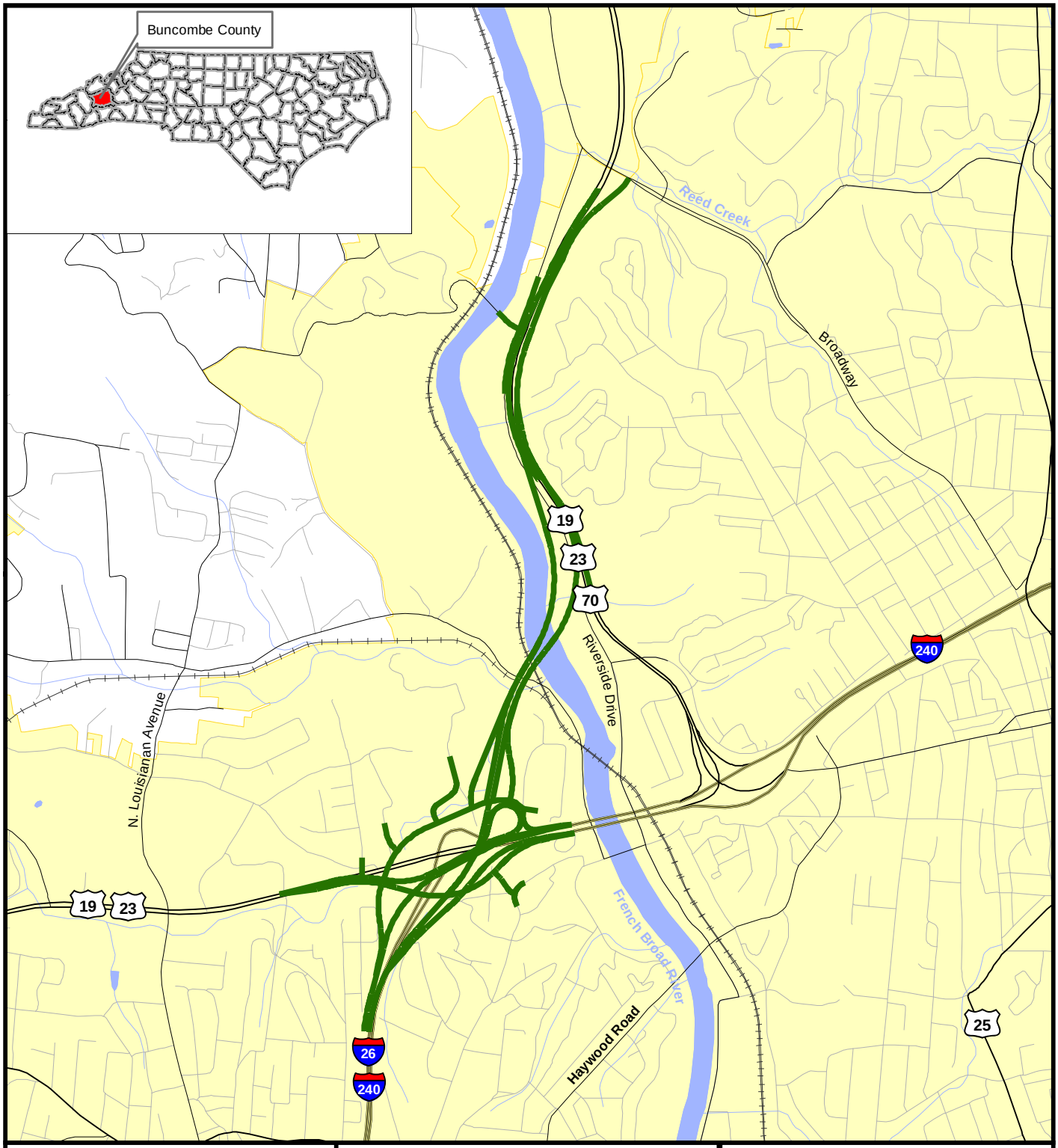
**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 5**

**Section B:**
**Alternative 3**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative 3C
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

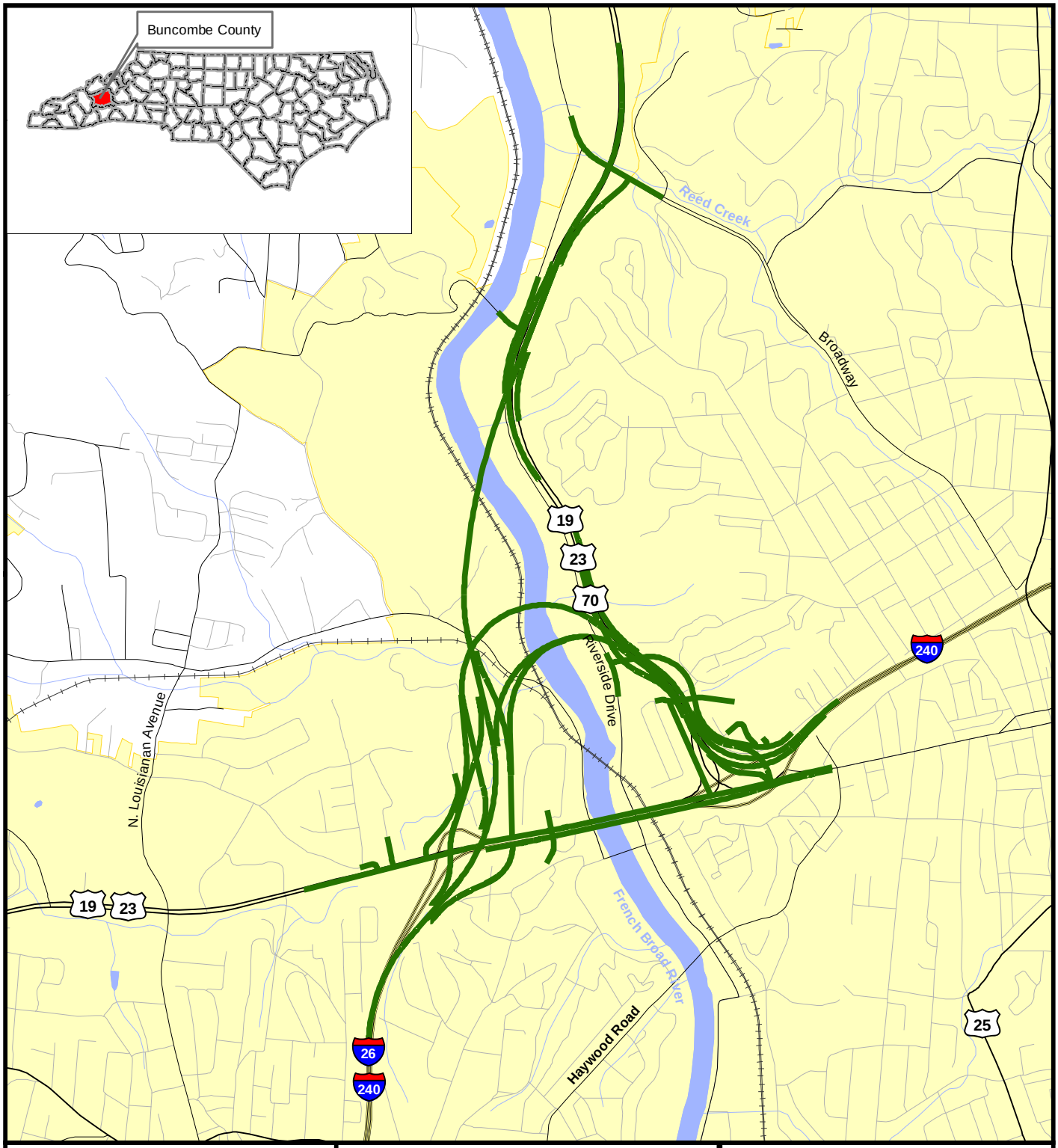
0 0.25 0.5 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 6**

**Section B:**
**Alternative 3C**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative 4
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

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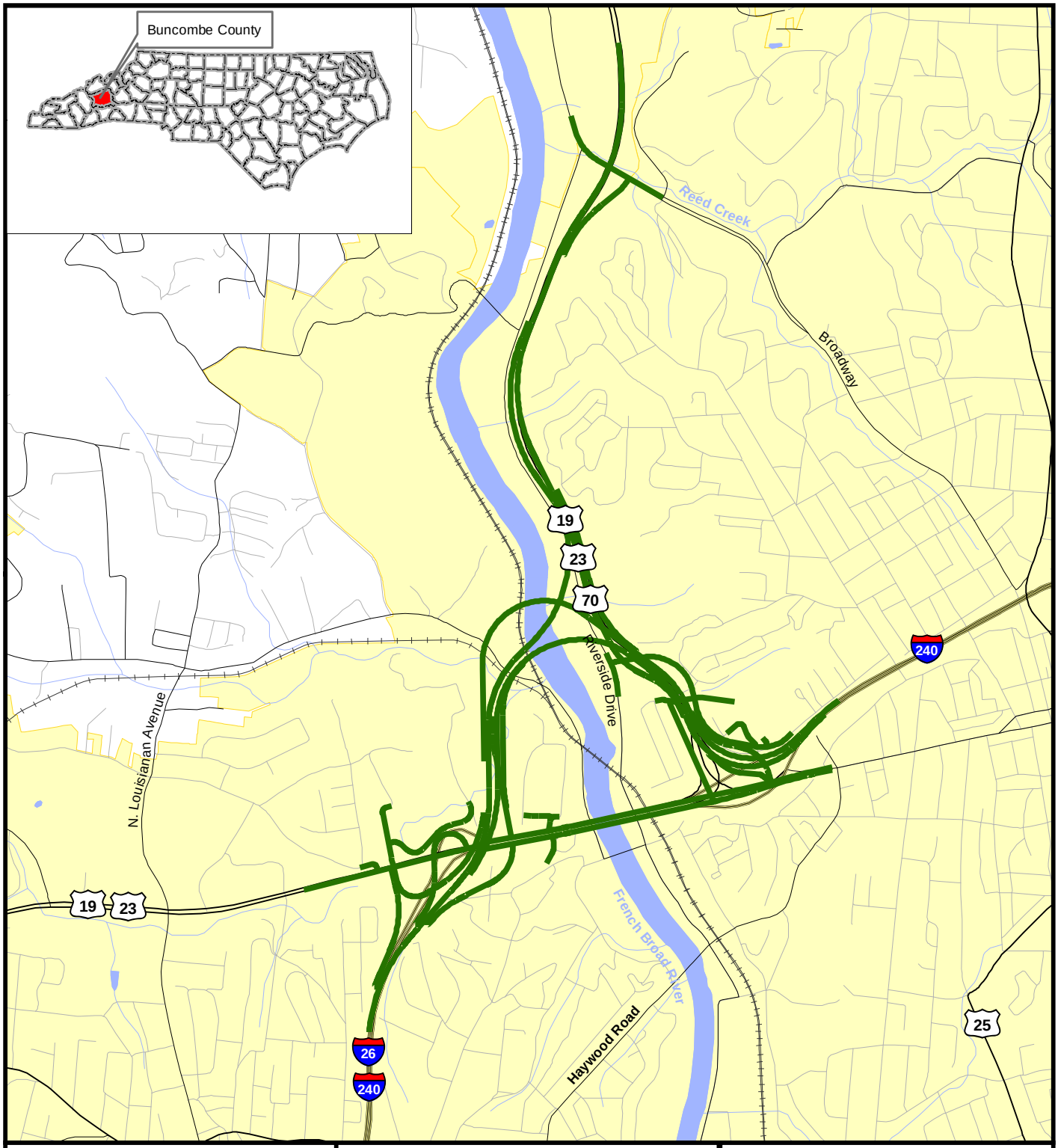
0 0.25 0.5 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 7**

**Section B:**
**Alternative 4**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative 4B
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

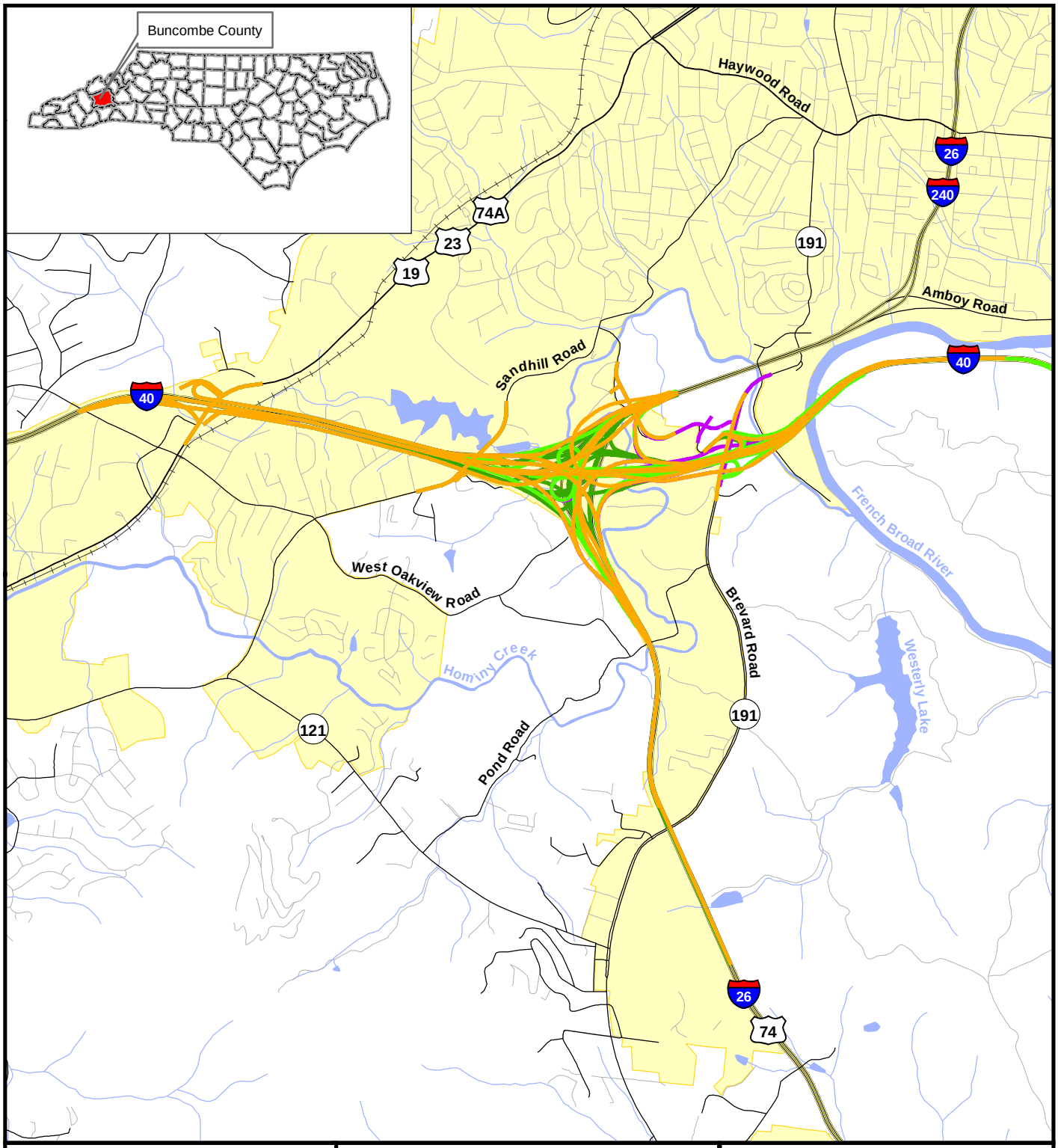
0 0.25 0.5 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 8**

**Section B:**
**Alternative 4B**




**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative A-2
- Alternative C-2
- Alternative D-1
- Alternative F-1
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

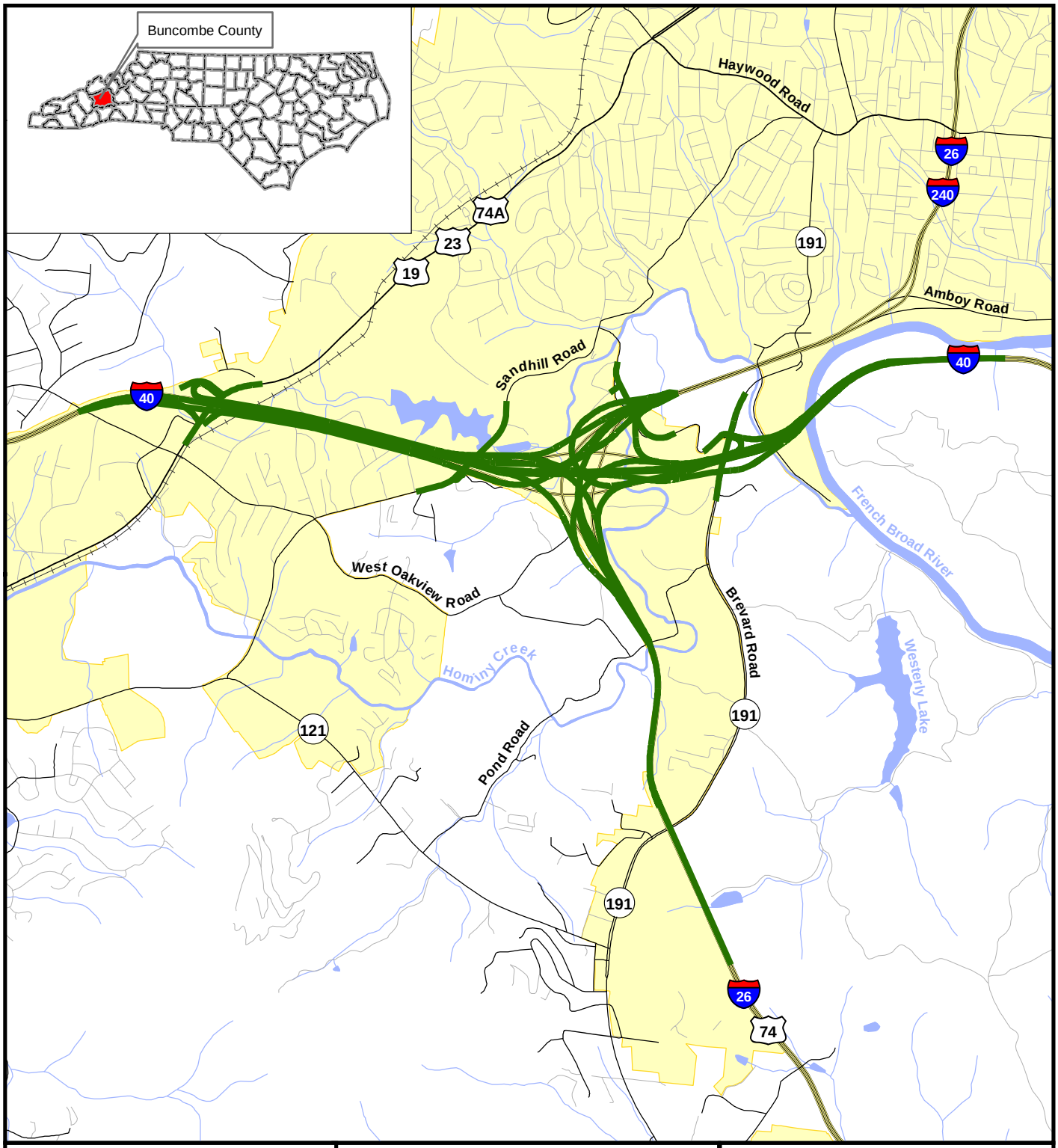
0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 9**

**Section C:**
**Project Alternatives**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative A-2
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

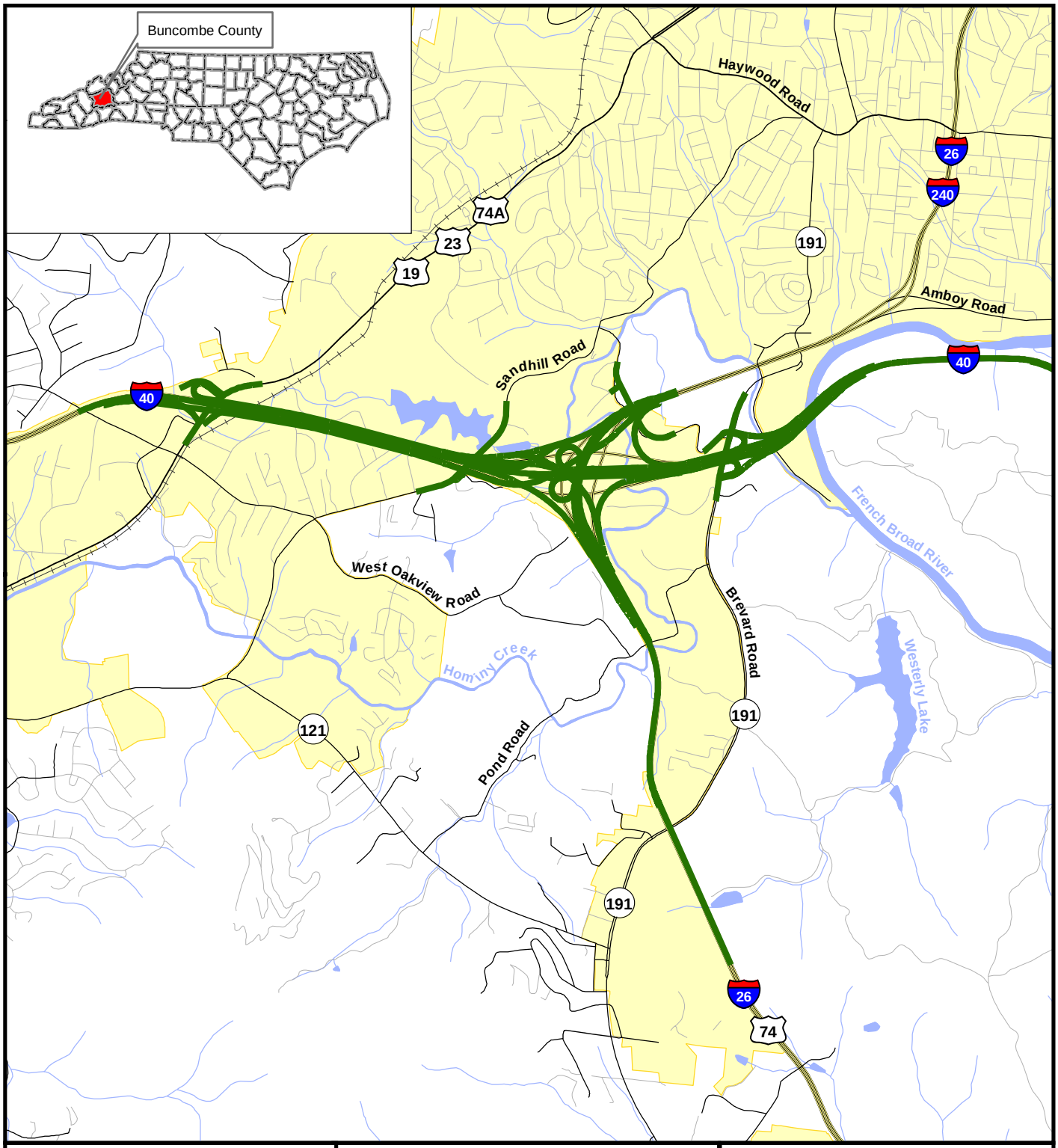
0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 10**

**Section C:**
**Alternative A-2**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative C-2
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

N W E S

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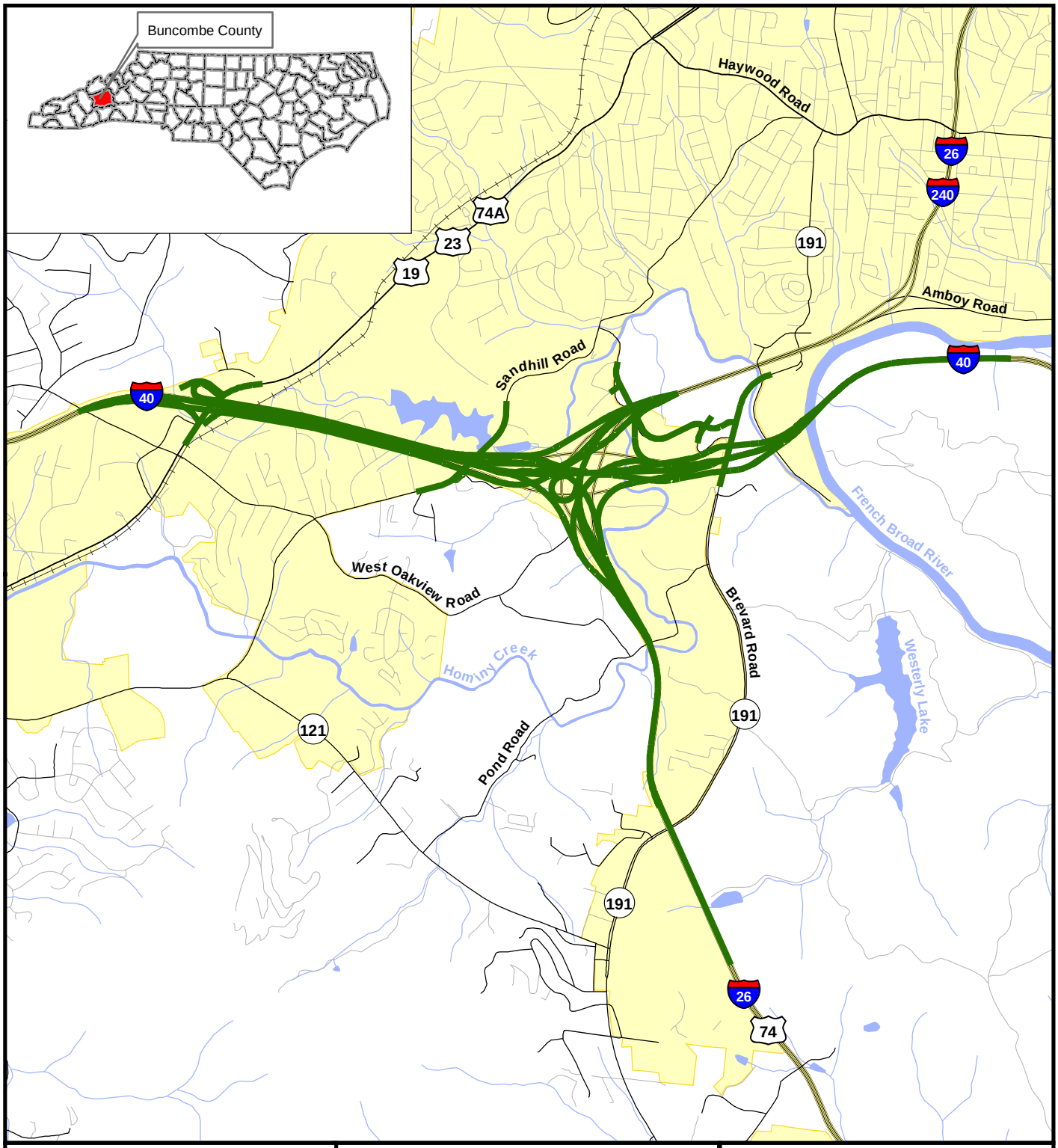
**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 11**

**Section C:**
**Alternative C-2**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative D-1
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

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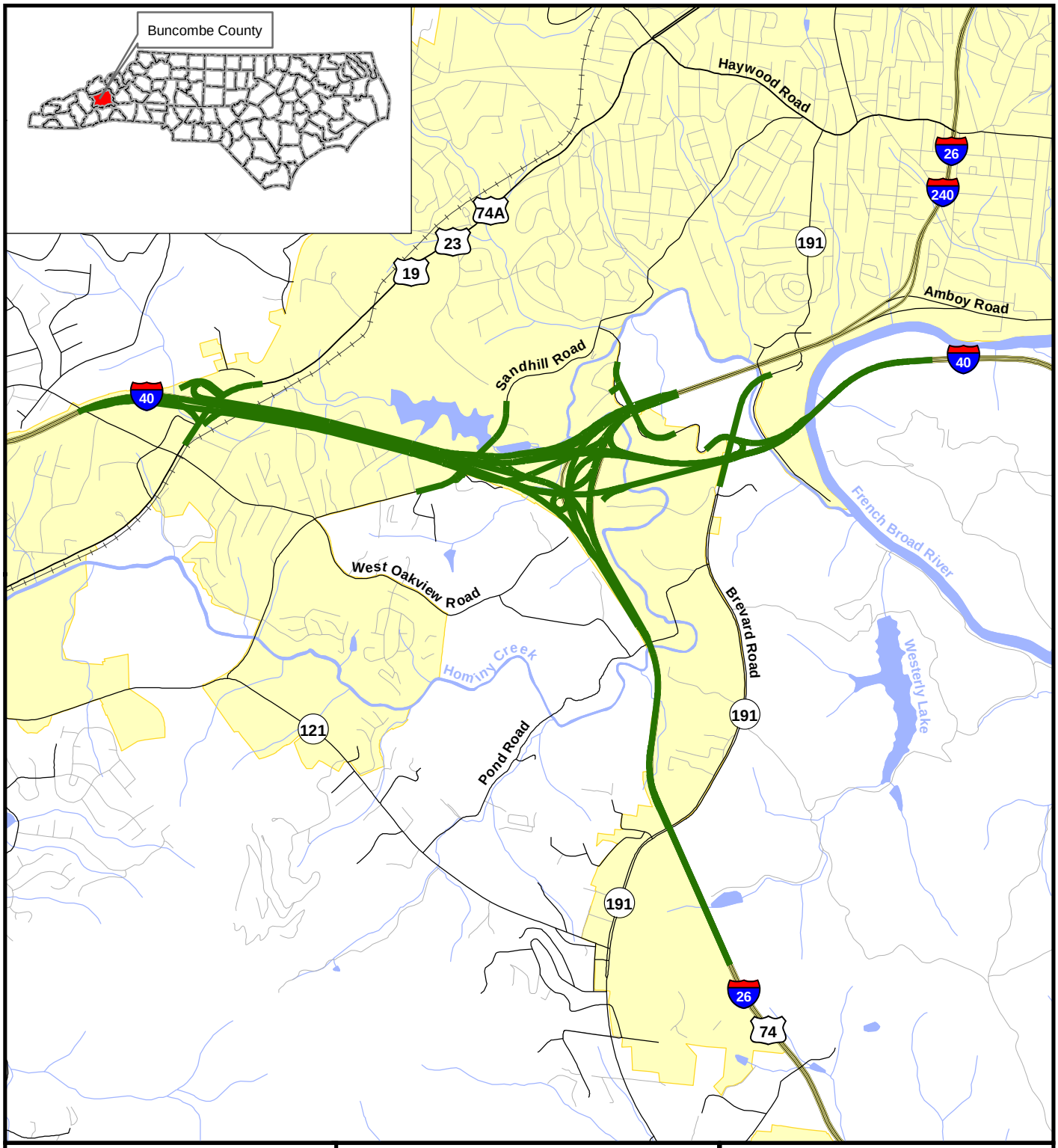
**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 12**

**Section C:**
**Alternative D-1**




**North Carolina**
**Department of Transportation**

**Legend**

- Alternative F-1
- Interstate
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- State Route
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Streams (non-delineated)
- Water
- Municipal Boundary

**Date: January 2015**

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0 0.5 1 Miles

**I-26 Asheville Connector**
**Buncombe County**

**STIP Project No. I-2513**

**Figure 13**

**Section C**
**Alternative F-1**

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2. Alternatives**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Alternatives to be Studied in Detail**

| | |
|---|---|
| Section A | Section C: Alternative A-2 |
| Section B: Alternative 3 | Section C: Alternative C-2 |
| Section B: Alternative 3 C | Section C: Alternative D-1 |
| Section B: Alternative 4 | Section C: Alternative F-1 |
| Section B: Alternative 4B | |

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, January 22, 2015 with the "Alternatives to Be Studied in Detail" (Concurrence Point No. 2) as noted above. The Merger Project Team also agreed to an expansion of the project study area to accommodate revised design configurations for all alternatives (see attached figure).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | DocuSigned by: Lori Beckwith BE7189E4BA384E3... | 3/6/2015 |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | DocuSigned by: Cynthia Van Der Wiele 7ECF19B3FF8144D... | 3/10/2015 |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | DocuSigned by: Marella Buncick A39FFFDDE1E74BB... | 3/6/2015 |
| N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission | DocuSigned by: Marla Chambers B1D3DCA076AD4C9... | 3/6/2015 |
| N.C. Department of Cultural Resources | DocuSigned by: Renee Gledhill-Earley C26A1556A275464... | 3/11/2015 |
| N.C. DENR – | | |
| Division of Water Resources | DocuSigned by: Kevin Barnett D9465026204540A... | 3/30/2015 |
| Tennessee Valley Authority | N/A | |
| Federal Highway Administration | DocuSigned by: Michael Batuzich 98CBE89EC69B4C3... | 3/10/2015 |
| French Broad River MPO | DocuSigned by: Paul Black 52D6D63936AF4B5... | 3/6/2015 |
| N.C. Department of Transportation | DocuSigned by: Michael G Wray 29DFF4A561DE41C... | 3/6/2015 |

# MEETING SUMMARY

To: Meeting Attendees
Project File

From: Rhiannon Kincaid
AECOM

Date: May 5, 2015

RE: **Section 404/NEPA Merger Process – Concurrence Meeting: CP 2A Revisited**
**NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

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Meeting Attendees:

Mitch Batuzich, FHWA
Lori Beckwith, USACE
Marella Buncick, USFWS
Marla Chambers, NCWRC
Cynthia Van Der Wiele, USEPA
Tristan Winkler, French Broad River MPO
Rick Tipton, NCDOT – Division 13
Kristina Solberg, NCDOT – Division 13
Jennifer Harris, NCDOT – PDEA*
Derrick Weaver, NCDOT – PDEA
Kirby Pendergraft, NCDOT – Hydraulics*
Bill Zerman, NCDOT – Hydraulics*
Ray Lovinggood, NCDOT – Hydraulics*
Kevin Moore, NCDOT – Roadway Design
Terry Harris, NCDOT – Roadway Design
Carla Dagnino, NCDOT - NES
Jeff Hemphill, NCDOT – NES
Kevin Barnett, NCDENR - DWS
Ed Edens, AECOM
Dennis Hoyle, AECOM
Rhiannon Kincaid, AECOM
Joanna Rocco, AECOM
Chris Werner, AECOM
Rebecca Berzinis, Atkins
Jeremy Schmid, Atkins

*Joined meeting via telephone

A meeting was held at 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 2, 2015 in the NCDOT Division 13 Office to revisit Concurrence Point 2A. The purpose of this meeting was to review previous CP2A decisions and to obtain concurrence with the bridging and alignment recommendations. CP2A is being revisited as a result of the addition of Alternative 3C being selected as a Detailed Study Alternative (DSA) and due to the design revisions being incorporated to the remaining DSAs.

Derrick Weaver began the meeting by stating the meeting's purpose and initiating introductions. Chris Werner then gave a presentation on:

- the previous CP2A decisions,

- the natural resources within the project study area (per the recently updated Natural Resources Technical Report, which also included the project study area expansions presented to the Merger Team in January 2015),

- the proposed minimum hydraulically required structures (only structures greater than or equal to 72 inches were analyzed; however, impacts to all jurisdictional resources were reviewed)

- the proposed design configurations for each DSA, including slopestake limits, slopestake limits plus 25 foot buffers, and proposed retaining wall locations

- Anticipated DSA impacts for all jurisdictional resources within the project study area. Updated copies of the Merger Packet Table 1 and 2 (attached) were provided to attendees. Updates included revisions for clarity, updated wetland impacts (in Section C DSA A-2, C-2, and D-1 for Wetland WI), and updated stream impacts (in Section B DSA 4, Section C DSA A-2, C-2, D-1, and F-1).

Discussion points from the meeting are summarized below:

- Requests made at the previous CP2A Concurrence (September 7, 2006) were reviewed:
    1. In Alternative B3 in Section B, NCDOT will shorten the proposed 450-foot culvert at Holiday Inn Drive over Smith Mill Creek through the introduction of a retaining wall along Holiday Inn Drive. *Follow-up: no longer an issue as Holiday Inn Drive has been realigned.*
    2. In Alternative B4 in Section B, NCDOT will replace the recommended culvert at Holiday Inn Drive and the exit ramp over Smith Mill Creek with bridges. *Follow-up: this has been implemented in the current designs for this alternative.*
    3. NCDOT agreed to add cross-veins or other appropriate measures to reduce the potential for head cutting on Smith Mill Creek with any alternative. *Follow-up: there has been no change to this previous commitment.*
    4. NCDOT agreed to use sills or baffles to contain low flows to one of two barrels at the culvert along Reed Creek. *Follow-up: there has been no change to this previous commitment*
    5. In Alternatives A2 and D1 in Section C, NCDOT will shorten the culvert extension(s) at Trent Branch and remove some of the existing culvert under the I-240 Westbound to I-40 westbound ramp. *Follow-up: there has been no change to this previous commitment*
    6. Although not yet quantified, the stream and wetland impacts associated with Alternative F1 in Section C were noted to be less than those of the other Section C alternates. *Follow-up: Impacts for this alternative were presented to the Merger Team; whereas, during the 2006 meeting, impacts were not available.*
- Smith Mill Creek, Natural Resources Technical Report (NRTR) Stream SR near Holiday Inn Drive was discussed in detail. The water in this stream is of low quality due to high levels of runoff. The long culverts proposed in Alternatives 3 and 3C are not desirable, but are acceptable. While bridges may be a more expensive construction option, the cost of mitigation efforts for the length of stream moved to a culvert should also be considered in the alternative comparison during CP3. It was agreed that further discussion on avoidance and minimization of impacts to Smith Mill Creek for Alternative 3 or 3C could be reviewed during CP4A, where NCDOT should evaluate the feasibility of bridging Smith Mill Creek.

- Upper Hominy Creek, NRTR Stream SX was discussed. Alternatives A-2 and D-1 includes ramp alignment parallel and nearly overtop of Stream SX. If possible, NCDOT will investigate the potential to realign this ramp for these alternatives in order to shift the bridge outside of the stream limits. Alternatives C-2 and F-1 includes fill slopes that may encroach on Stream SX. It was noted this is an area impacts to the stream may be avoided through the use of a retaining wall that should also be considered in the alternative comparison during CP3.
- All existing multi-barrel culverts within the project limits were reviewed with the Merger Team to determine if any sites were candidates to be replaced with bridges. No sites were identified.
- In extending existing structures, all structures should be evaluated for functionality and areas where over widening exists should be corrected.
- Sills and baffles shall be provided in new box culverts to retain the native material and maintain the natural stream width and depth. Where existing box culverts do not have sills and baffles, NCDOT should consider adding a supplemental pipe to maintain similar culvert flow characteristics in order to provide sills and baffles.
- CP 3 and CP4A were discussed. For this project, CP 4A may need to be discussed before CP 3 can be determined, because of the potential high mitigation costs.
- CP 2A was achieved at this meeting on the DSAs. The Merger Team agreed on the minimum hydraulic recommendations for Alternatives 3 and 3C as presented at the meeting, but requested that NCDOT evaluate the feasibility of bridging Smith Mill Creek. This has been noted on the concurrence form.

Action Items

- NCDOT to distribute CP2A Concurrence Form to Merger Team for remaining signatures.
- NCDOT to continue with preparation of the DEIS.
- It was agreed that further discussion on avoidance and minimization of impacts to Smith Mill Creek for Alternative 3 or 3C could be reviewed during CP4A, where NCDOT should evaluate the feasibility of bridging Smith Mill Creek.
- Site 20 is just outside of the project limits, crossing Shelburne Road, and was analyzed due to its close proximity to the project. The analysis suggested the existing structure is undersized with a much larger structure required to handle the flow. NCDOT Division 13 will determine if there is a history of issues associated with the existing culvert.

**Table 1: I-2513 Impacts by Section**

| | Section A | Section B | | | | Section C | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Widen I-240 | New Location Across French Broad | | | | I-26/I-40 Interchange | | | |
| | Exist Alignment | 3 | 3C | 4 | 4B | A-2 | C-2 | D-1 | F-1 |
| Length along I-26 (miles) | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Interchanges in Build Area (Number) | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Number of Railroad Crossings | 0 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Schools (Number) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Churches (Number) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cemetaries (Number) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| *Historic Properties (Number) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| **Archeological Sites (Number) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Federally Listed Species Present Within Corridor (Yes or No) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| State Listed Species (yes or no) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Forest Impacts (Acreage) | 49.5 | 52.9 | 48.9 | 62.9 | 52.2 | 196.0 | 191.7 | 193.1 | 180.0 |
| Prime Farmlands (Acreage) Conservation Service Form AD 1006 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| Potential Residential Relocations | This information is currently being updated based on revised designs. | | | | | | | | |
| Potential Business Relocations | | | | | | | | | |
| Hazardous Materials Sites (Number and type, if known) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wetland Impacts (Number of Crossings) | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 12 |
| Wetland Impacts (Acres) | 0.01 | 0.16 | 0.05 | 0.15 | 0.05 | 2.62 | 2.37 | 2.03 | 1.87 |
| Delineated Stream Impacts (Number of Crossings) | 3 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 13 |
| Delineated Stream Impacts (Length in ft) | 799 | 3331 | 3096 | 1764 | 1891 | 2618 | 2494 | 2532 | 1815 |
| Riparian Buffer Impacts for Zone 1 and Zone 2 (Sq. Foot) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Water Supply Critical Areas (yes or no) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Wildlife Refuges and gamelands (yes or no) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Greenway Crossings (Number) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Low Income Population Impacts (Number of relocatees and communities) | This information is currently being updated based on revised designs. | | | | | | | | |
| Minority Population Impacts (Number of relocatees and communities) | | | | | | | | | |
| Impacted Noise Receptors (Number) | | | | | | | | | |
| Federal Lands (Yes or no) | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Significant Natural Heritage Program Areas (Number of Crossings) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Right-of-Way Cost Estimate | This information is currently being updated based on revised designs. | | | | | | | | |
| Construction Cost Estimate | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Cost Estimate | | | | | | | | | |

***Historic properties/boundaries are currently still being determined.***

****Impacts to Archeological resources are currently still being determined. These values will be updated for the 2015 DEIS.***

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513A

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE DIMENSIONS | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO JURISDICTIO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | VAR 202' TO 262' | 378 | 90,606 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | BRIDGE |
| 18 | SD | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1A TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 290 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 48" CMP |
| 19 | SC | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | MOORE BRANCH | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 225 | 12 | 3 | 6 | 48" CMP |
| 20 | SH | OLD | N/A | | | | UT3C TO LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 | 3 | 12 | NONE |
| N/A | SF | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2A TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 284 | 3 | 2 TO 3 | 6 | 42" to 48" CMP |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 799 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

## WETLAND IMPACTS

### I-2513A

| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-26 SB NORTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WA | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 40 | 0.01 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 0.01 |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet.

## POND IMPACTS

### I-2513A

| LOCATION | POND ID | AREA (ACRES)* |
|---|---|---|
| NO PONDS IN SECTION A | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet.

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513B

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | SR | OLD | RCBC | (2) 12x10 | 805 | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 833 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 10 | SR | OLD | BRIDGE SB | VAR 60' TO105' | 2,214 | 143,069 | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| | SR | OLD | BRIDGE NB | VAR 26' TO 100' | 2,165 | 152,769 | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 13 | SA | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING BRIDGE | | | | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | 60' X 1312' EB<br>60' X 1203' WB |
| 15 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | 122 | 2,165 | 243,342 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 16 | SJ | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | REED CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 15 | 4 | 36 | (4) 8 X 9 RCBC |
| 17A | SR | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 313 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | (3) 8' X 11' RCBC |
| 23 | SP | OLD | SITE 10 BRIDGE | | | | UT4B TO SMITH MILL CREEK [EMMA BRANCH] | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 | 2 TO 3 | 4 | NONE |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 234 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 946 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| 17B | SR | REVISED | RCBC | (3) 8' X 11' | 92 | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 154 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| N/A | SU | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 324 | 3 | 1 to 2 | 3 | NONE |
| N/A | SN | N/A | NONE | | | | UT1B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 379 | 2 | 1 | 2 | NONE |
| N/A | SI | N/A | SITE 15 BRIDGE | | | | UT2B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | N/A | 2 TO 4 | 2 | 2 TO 6 | NONE |
| N/A | SK | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT4B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 148 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 18" CMP |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 3331 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513B

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE 3-C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | SR | OLD | RCBC | (2) 12x10 | 805 | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 901 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 10 | SR | OLD | SITE 11 BRIDGE | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| | SR | OLD | SITE 14 BRIDGE | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 11 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 28' TO 77' | 4,719 | 319,353 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 13 | SA | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING BRIDGE | | | | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | 60' X 1312' EB<br>60' X 1203' WB |
| 14 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 28' TO 60' | 5,241 | 336,530 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 16 | SJ | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | REED CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 15 | 4 | 36 | (4) 8 X 9 RCBC |
| 17A | SR | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 313 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | (3) 8' X 11' RCBC |
| 23 | SP | OLD | SITE 14 BRIDGE | | | | UT4B TO SMITH MILL CREEK [EMMA BRANCH] | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 | 2 TO 3 | 4 | NONE |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 234 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 946 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| 17B | SR | REVISED | RCBC | (3) 8' X 11' | 92 | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 154 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| N/A | SU | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 324 | 3 | 1 to 2 | 3 | NONE |
| N/A | SI | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 94 | 2 TO 4 | 2 | 2 TO 6 | 42" CMP |
| N/A | SK | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT4B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 130 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 18" CMP |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 3096 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513B

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | SR | OLD | BRIDGE SB | VAR 60' TO105' | 2,240 | 142,978 | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| | SR | OLD | BRIDGE NB | VAR 26' TO 100' | 2,240 | 199,614 | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 11 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 44' TO 89' | 2,216 | 160,978 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 12 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | 42 | 1,490 | 58,169 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 13 | SA | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | 60' X 1312' EB<br>60' X 1203' WB |
| 15 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | 122 | 1,971 | 240,462 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 23 | SP | OLD | SITE 10 BRIDGE | | | | UT4B TO SMITH MILL CREEK [EMMA BRANCH] | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 | 2 TO 3 | 4 | NONE |
| 24 | N/A | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | (1) 8' X 8' RCBC |
| 25 | N/A | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | (1) 84" CMP |
| 16 | SJ | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | REED CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 15 | 4 | 36 | (4) 8 X 9 RCBC |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 359 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 364 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SN | N/A | NONE | | | | UT1B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 447 | 2 | 1 | 2 | |
| N/A | SS | N/A | NONE | | | | UT3B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 183 | 5 | 1 TO 3 | 6 | |
| N/A | SU | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 287 | 3 | 1 to 2 | 3 | NONE |
| N/A | SK | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT4B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 124 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 18" CMP |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 1764 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513B

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE 4-B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE SB | VAR 60' TO 84' | 4,800 | 303,218 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE NB | VAR 34' TO 60' | 4,225 | 292,199 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 12 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 42' TO 54' | 4,120 | 148,693 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 13 | SA | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | 60' X 1312' EB<br>60' X 1203' WB |
| 14 | SA | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 34' TO 42' | 3,651 | 205,002 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | NONE |
| 10 | SR | OLD | SITE 14 BRIDGE | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | NONE |
| 17 | SR | OLD | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 203 | 20 | 6 TO 8 | 18 | (3) 8' X 11' RCBC |
| 24 | N/A | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | (1) 8' X 8' RCBC |
| 25 | N/A | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | (1) 84" CMP |
| 16 | SJ | OLD | RETAIN EXISTING | | | | REED CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 15 | 4 | 36 | (4) 8 X 9 RCBC |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 942 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SG | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 246 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 60" CMP |
| N/A | SI | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 130 | 2 TO 4 | 2 | 2 TO 6 | 42" CMP |
| N/A | SU | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2B TO SMITH MILL CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 317 | 3 | 1 to 2 | 3 | NONE |
| N/A | SK | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT4B TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 53 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 18" CMP |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 1891 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

| Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-2513B | | | | |
| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) * |
| ALTERNATIVE 3 | | | | |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WC | HEADWATER FOREST | 43 | 0.01 |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WF | HEADWATER FOREST | 29 | 0.04 |
| I-26 SOUTH OF FRENCH BROAD RIVER NORTH OF PATTON | WD | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 33 | 0.11 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 0.16 |
| | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE 3-C | | | | |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WC | HEADWATER FOREST | 43 | 0.01 |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WF | HEADWATER FOREST | 29 | 0.04 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 0.05 |
| | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE 4 | | | | |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WF | HEADWATER FOREST | 29 | 0.04 |
| I-26 SOUTH OF FRENCH BROAD RIVER NORTH OF PATTON | WD | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 33 | 0.11 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 0.15 |
| | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE 4-B | | | | |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WC | HEADWATER FOREST | 43 | 0.01 |
| I-26 NB SOUTH OF PATTON | WF | HEADWATER FOREST | 29 | 0.04 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 0.05 |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | | | |

| POND IMPACTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| I-2513B | | |
| LOCATION | POND ID | AREA (ACRES)* |
| ALTERNATIVE 3 | | |
| I-26 WEST OF SITE 19 | 1B | 0.27 |
| I-26 WEST OF SITE 19 | 3B | 0.26 |
| ALTERNATIVE 3-C | | |
| NO PONDS IN ALTERNATIVE 3-C | | |
| ALTERNATIVE 4 | | |
| I-26 WEST OF SITE 19 | 1B | 0.27 |
| I-26 WEST OF SITE 19 | 3B | 0.33 |
| ALTERNATIVE 4-B | | |
| NO PONDS IN ALTERNATIVE 4-B | | |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | |

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513C

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE A-2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N/A | SAQ | N/A | RETAIN | | | | UT5C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 3 | 0.5 | 0 TO 3 | |
| N/A | SE | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 88 | 4 TO 8 | 1 TO 6 | 6 | |
| N/A | SAB | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 132 | 4 TO 8 | 2 TO 6 | 5 TO 6 | |
| N/A | SAG | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2 TO UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 375 | 4 | 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 1 | SA | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 184 | 603 | 112,013 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | (2) 576' BRIDGES |
| 2A (MAINLINE) | SB | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 164 | 375 | 61,203 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | (WB) 350' BRIDGE (EB) 355' BRIDGE |
| 2B (WB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 360 | 9,565 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 2C (EB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 420 | 10,920 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 3A (MAINLINE) | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 116 | 209 | 23,826 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 3B (EB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 44 | 1,000 | 48,129 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 180' BRIDGE |
| 3C (NB TO EB) | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 215 | 5,592 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 3D (WB TO SB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 42 | 245 | 9,837 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 172' BRIDGE |
| 4A (MAINLINE) | SX | REVISED | REPLACE BRIDGE | 134 | 235 | 31,490 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | (2) 198' BRIDGES |
| 4B (EB) | SX | REVISED | BRIDGE | 38 | 180 | 6,840 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 4C (WB) | SX | REVISED | SITE 22 BRIDGE | N/A | N/A | N/A | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 5 | SV | OLD | RETAIN | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (2) 9' x 9' RCBC |
| N/A | SAF | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 312 | 5 | 3 TO 4 | 4 TO 6 | |
| 7 | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 158 | 307 | 48,954 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | (WB) 252' BRIDGE (EB) 312' BRIDGE |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 239 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | NONE-LONG. IMPACTS | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 259 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 45 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 21 | SW | REVISED | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | TRENT BRANCH | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 149 | 6 | 4 | 6 TO 12 | 6' x 9' RCBC |
| 22 | SX<br>SV | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 26' TO 77' | 3,484 | 142,539 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK & RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50<br>8 TO 13 | 1 TO 5<br>3 TO 4 | 4 TO 10<br>1 TO 12 | NONE |
| 28 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 125 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 7' x 9' RCBC |
| 29 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 121 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 8' x 8' RCBC |
| 30 | SAD & SAK | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO RAGSDALE<br>UT2C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 165 | 4<br>3 | 2<br>2 | 0 TO 8<br>1 TO 4 | 48" RCP & 30" RCP |
| N/A | SAN | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT3C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 155 | 4 | 2 | 1 TO 8 | |
| N/A | SAC | N/A | N/A | | | | UT1C TO LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 79 | 2 | 1 TO 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAJ | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2C TO LOWER HOMINEY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 374 | 3 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 2618 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has not been reviewed with the Merger Team, and "REVISED" refers to a site that has been previously reviewed with the Merger Team however the site has been moved or updated.

## Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters

### I-2513C

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE C-2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N/A | SAQ | N/A | RETAIN | | | | UT5C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 3 | 0.5 | 0 TO 3 | |
| N/A | SE | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 130 | 4 TO 8 | 1 TO 6 | 6 | |
| N/A | SAB | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 208 | 4 TO 8 | 2 TO 6 | 5 TO 6 | |
| N/A | SAG | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2 TO UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 375 | 4 | 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 1 | SA | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 230 | 603 | 137,984 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | (2) 576' BRIDGES |
| 2A (MAINLINE) | SB | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 227 | 375 | 80,093 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | (WB) 350' BRIDGE (EB) 355' BRIDGE |
| 2B (WB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 50 | 360 | 11,727 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 2C (EB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 420 | 10,930 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 3A (MAINLINE) | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 216 | 209 | 43,870 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 3B (NB TO EB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 30 | 240 | 7,152 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 180' BRIDGE |
| 4A (MAINLINE) | SX | REVISED | REPLACE BRIDGE | 184 | 235 | 43,841 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | BRIDGE |
| 4B (EB) | SX | REVISED | BRIDGE | 38 | 180 | 6,840 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 5 | SV | OLD | RETAIN | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (2) 9' x 9' RCBC |
| N/A | SAF | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 15 | 5 | 3 TO 4 | 4 TO 6 | |
| 7 | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 158 | 307 | 48,954 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | (WB) 252' BRIDGE (EB) 312' BRIDGE |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 239 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | NONE-LONG. IMPACTS | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 259 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 45 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 21 | SW | REVISED | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | TRENT BRANCH | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 148 | 6 | 4 | 6 TO 12 | 6' x 9' RCBC |
| 22 | SX & SV | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 32' TO 65' | 2,291 | 127,465 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK & RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50<br>8 TO 13 | 1 TO 5<br>3 TO 4 | 4 TO 10<br>1 TO 12 | NONE |
| 29 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 121 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 8' x 8' RCBC |
| 28 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 125 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 7' x 9' RCBC |
| 30 | SAD & SAK | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO RAGSDALE<br>UT2C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 165 | 4<br>3 | 2<br>2 | 0 TO 8<br>1 TO 4 | 48" RCP & 30" RCP |
| N/A | SAN | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT3C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 155 | 4 | 2 | 1 TO 8 | |
| N/A | SAC | N/A | N/A | | | | UT1C TO LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 79 | 2 | 1 TO 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAJ | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2C TO LOWER HOMINEY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 430 | 3 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 2494 | | | | |

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### I-2513C

| HYDRAULIC SITE | NRTR MAP ID | OLD/NEW/ REVISED HYDRAULIC SITE*** | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE | | | STREAM NAME | SURFACE WATER BEST USE CLASSIFICATION** | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | STREAM CLASSIFICATION | IMPACTS TO | EXISTING CHANNEL DIMENSIONS | | | EXISTING STRUCTURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE D-1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N/A | SAQ | N/A | RETAIN | | | | UT5C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 3 | 0.5 | 0 TO 3 | |
| N/A | SE | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 63 | 4 TO 8 | 1 TO 6 | 6 | |
| N/A | SAB | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 70 | 4 TO 8 | 2 TO 6 | 5 TO 6 | |
| N/A | SAG | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2 TO UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 375 | 4 | 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 1 | SA | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 142 | 603 | 85,633 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | (2) 576' BRIDGES |
| 2A (MAINLINE) | SB | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 125 | 375 | 44,245 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | (WB) 350' BRIDGE (EB) 355' BRIDGE |
| 2B (WB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 35 | 374 | 99,284 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 2C (EB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 420 | 10,920 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 3A (MAINLINE) | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 136 | 209 | 26,977 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 3B (EB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 30 | 924 | 28,210 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 180' BRIDGE |
| 3C (NB TO EB) | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 26 | 214 | 5,454 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 3D (WB TO SB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 40 | 226 | 9,044 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 172' BRIDGE |
| 4A (MAINLINE) | SX | REVISED | REPLACE BRIDGE | 134 | 235 | 31,480 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | BRIDGE |
| 4B (EB) | SX | REVISED | BRIDGE | 38 | 180 | 6,840 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 4C (WB) | SX | REVISED | SITE 22 BRIDGE | | | | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 5 | SV | OLD | RETAIN | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (2) 9' x 9' RCBC |
| N/A | SAF | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 313 | 5 | 3 TO 4 | 4 TO 6 | |
| 7 | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 158 | 307 | 48954 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | (WB) 252' BRIDGE (EB) 312' BRIDGE |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 239 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | NONE-LONG. IMPACTS | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 259 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 45 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 21 | SW | REVISED | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | TRENT BRANCH | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 149 | 6 | 4 | 6 TO 12 | 6' x 9' RCBC |
| 22 | SX & SV | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 26' TO 77' | 3,509 | 142,513 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK & RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50<br>8 TO 13 | 1 TO 5<br>3 TO 4 | 4 TO 10<br>1 TO 12 | NONE |
| 29 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 121 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 8' x 8' RCBC |
| 28 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 125 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 7' x 9' RCBC |
| 30 | SAD & SAK | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO RAGSDALE<br>UT2C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 165 | 4<br>3 | 2<br>2 | 0 TO 8<br>1 TO 4 | 48" RCP & 30" RCP |
| N/A | SAN | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT3C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 155 | 4 | 2 | 1 TO 8 | |
| N/A | SAC | N/A | N/A | | | | UT1C TO LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 79 | 2 | 1 TO 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAJ | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2C TO LOWER HOMINEY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 374 | 3 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 2532 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | WIDTH (FT) OR CULVERT SIZE | LENGTH (FT) | DECK AREA (SF) | | | | | LENGTH (FT) * | BANK WIDTH (FT) | BANK HEIGHT (FT) | WATER DEPTH (IN) | |
| ALTERNATIVE F-1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N/A | SAQ | N/A | RETAIN | | | | UT5C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 3 | 0.5 | 0 TO 3 | |
| N/A | SE | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 67 | 4 TO 8 | 1 TO 6 | 6 | |
| N/A | SAB | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | 22 | 4 TO 8 | 2 TO 6 | 5 TO 6 | |
| N/A | SAG | N/A | NONE | | | | UT2 TO UT1C TO FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 375 | 4 | 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 1 | SA | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 87<br>54 | 574 | 49,640<br>30,962 | FRENCH BROAD RIVER | B | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 200 | 4 TO 12 | 200 | (2) 576' BRIDGES |
| 2A (MAINLINE) | SB | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 88 | 375 | 29,923 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | (WB) 350' BRIDGE (EB) 355' BRIDGE |
| 2B (WB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 29 | 360 | 7,942 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 2C (EB) | SB | OLD | BRIDGE | 66 | 375 | 23,418 | LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 75 | 6 | 12 TO 18 | NONE |
| 3B (EB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 106 | 180 | 19,080 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 180' BRIDGE |
| 3D (WB) | SX | OLD | REPLACE BRIDGE | 121 | 172 | 19,857 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | 172' BRIDGE |
| 4A (MAINLINE) | SX | REVISED | REPLACE BRIDGE | 87 | 229 | 17,268 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | BRIDGE |
| 4B (EB) | SX | REVISED | BRIDGE | 97 | 185 | 17,880 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 4C (WB) | SX | REVISED | SITE 22 BRIDGE | | | | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | NONE |
| 5 | SV | | RETAIN | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (2) 9' X 9' RCBC |
| N/A | SAF | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 41 | 5 | 3 TO 4 | 4 TO 6 | |
| 7 | SX | OLD | BRIDGE | 158 | 307 | 45,482 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50 | 1 TO 5 | 4 TO 10 | (WB) 252' BRIDGE (EB) 312' BRIDGE |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 239 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | NONE-LONG. IMPACTS | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 259 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| N/A | SAL | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT2C TO UPPER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 45 | 2 TO 8 | 1 TO 3 | 2 TO 4 | |
| 21 | SW | REVISED | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | TRENT BRANCH | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 122 | 6 | 4 | 6 TO 12 | 6' x 9' RCBC |
| 22 | SX<br>SV | REVISED | BRIDGE | VAR 28' TO 100' | 3,500 | 157,211 | UPPER HOMINY CREEK<br>& RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | N/A | 30 TO 50<br>8 TO 13 | 1 TO 5<br>3 TO 4 | 4 TO 10<br>1 TO 12 | NONE |
| 29 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 121 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 8' x 8' RCBC |
| 28 | SV | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | RAGSDALE CREEK | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 125 | 8 TO 13 | 3 TO 4 | 1 TO 12 | (3) 7' x 9' RCBC |
| 30 | SAD & SAK | NEW | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT1C TO RAGSDALE<br>UT2C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 165 | 4<br>3 | 2<br>2 | 0 TO 8<br>1 TO 4 | 48" RCP & 30" RCP |
| N/A | SAN | N/A | RETAIN/EXTEND | | | | UT3C TO RAGSDALE | C | N/A | PERENNIAL | 155 | 4 | 2 | 1 TO 8 | |
| N/A | SAC | N/A | N/A | | | | UT1C TO LOWER HOMINY CREEK | C | N/A | INTERMITTENT | 79 | 2 | 1 TO 2 | 2 TO 4 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | **TOTAL** | 1815.1183 | | | | |

* Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. ** Best Usage Classifications: B: Primary Recreation, Fresh Water; C: Aquatic Life, Secondary Recreation, Fresh Water. *** Hydraulic Site Explanation: "OLD" refers to a site previously reviewed with the Merger Team, "NEW" refers to a site that has

| Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-2513C | | | | |
| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) * |
| ALTERNATIVE A-2 | | | | |
| I-40 EB SOUTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WL | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.02 |
| I-40 EB EAST OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WK | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.03 |
| I-26 SB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WH | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 1.14 |
| I-26 NB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WI | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.93 |
| NEAR HYDRO SITE 29 | WAC | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 59 | 0.33 |
| EAST OF SITE 29, WEST OF SITE 30, ON CREEK SAN | WX | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 46 | 0.06 |
| NORTH OF WX | WZ | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 40 | 0.05 |
| I-40 WB EAST OF BREVARD RD | WJ | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 43 | 0.05 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAF | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | <.01 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAG | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | 0.01 |
| I-26 SOUTH OF I-40 | WQ | HEADWATER FOREST | UNKNOWN | <.01 |
| I-40 EB WEST OF SAND HILL RD | WV | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 54 | <.01 |
| NORTH OF WX | WY | HEADWATER FOREST | 40 | <.01 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 2.62 |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | | | |

| Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-2513C | | | | |
| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) * |
| ALTERNATIVE C-2 | | | | |
| I-40 EB SOUTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WL | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.02 |
| I-40 EB EAST OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WK | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.03 |
| I-26 SB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WH | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.87 |
| I-26 NB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WI | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.95 |
| NEAR HYDRO SITE 29 | WAC | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 59 | 0.33 |
| EAST OF SITE 29, WEST OF SITE 30, ON CREEK SAN | WX | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 46 | 0.06 |
| NORTH OF WX | WZ | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 40 | 0.05 |
| I-40 WB EAST OF BREVARD RD | WJ | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 43 | 0.05 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAF | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | <.01 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAG | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | 0.01 |
| I-40 EB WEST OF SAND HILL RD | WV | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 54 | <.01 |
| NORTH OF WX | WY | HEADWATER FOREST | 40 | <.01 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 2.37 |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | | | |

| Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-2513C | | | | |
| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) * |
| ALTERNATIVE D-1 | | | | |
| I-40 EB SOUTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WL | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.02 |
| I-40 EB EAST OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WK | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.03 |
| I-26 SB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WH | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.57 |
| I-26 NB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WI | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.91 |
| NEAR HYDRO SITE 29 | WAC | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 59 | 0.33 |
| EAST OF SITE 29, WEST OF SITE 30, ON CREEK SAN | WX | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 46 | 0.06 |
| NORTH OF WX | WZ | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 40 | 0.05 |
| I-40 WB EAST OF BREVARD RD | WJ | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 43 | 0.05 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAF | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | <.01 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAG | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | 0.01 |
| I-26 SOUTH OF I-40 | WQ | HEADWATER FOREST | UNKNOWN | <.01 |
| I-40 EB WEST OF SAND HILL RD | WV | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 54 | <.01 |
| NORTH OF WX | WY | HEADWATER FOREST | 40 | <.01 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 2.03 |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | | | |

| Table 2: Jurisdictional Waters | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I-2513C | | | | |
| LOCATION | WETLAND MAP ID | NCWAM CLASSIFICATION | NCDWR WETLAND RATING | AREA (ACRES) * |
| ALTERNATIVE F-1 | | | | |
| I-40 EB SOUTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WL | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.02 |
| I-26 SB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WH | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.73 |
| I-26 NB NORTHERN PART OF SECTION C | WI | HEADWATER FOREST | 71 | 0.6 |
| NEAR HYDRO SITE 29 | WAC | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 59 | 0.33 |
| EAST OF SITE 29, WEST OF SITE 30, ON CREEK SAN | WX | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 46 | 0.06 |
| NORTH OF WX | WZ | BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST | 40 | 0.05 |
| I-40 EB EAST OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER | WK | HEADWATER FOREST | 35 | 0.03 |
| I-40 WB EAST OF BREVARD RD | WJ | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 43 | 0.04 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAF | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | <.01 |
| I-26 SB NORTH OF BREVARD RD | WAG | HEADWATER FOREST | 39 | 0.01 |
| I-40 EB WEST OF SAND HILL RD | WV | RIVERINE SWAMP FOREST | 54 | <.01 |
| NORTH OF WX | WY | HEADWATER FOREST | 40 | <.01 |
| | | | **TOTAL** | 1.87 |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus 25 feet. | | | | |

| POND IMPACTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| I-2513C | | |
| LOCATION | POND ID | AREA (ACRES)* |
| All Alternatives | | |
| NO PONDS IN SECTION C | | |
| * Impacts calculated using design slopestake limits plus | | |

# I-26 Connector

## City of Asheville
## Buncombe County
## STIP Project No. I-2513

Section 404/NEPA Interagency Merger Meeting for
Concurrence Point 2A Revisited:
*Bridging and Alignment Review*

NCDOT Division Office, Asheville, North Carolina
April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector

## Agenda

- Introductions and Purpose of Meeting
- Project Review
- Detailed Study Alternatives
- Hydraulic Crossings
- Human and Natural Environment
- Project Schedule and Next Steps
- Project Discussion

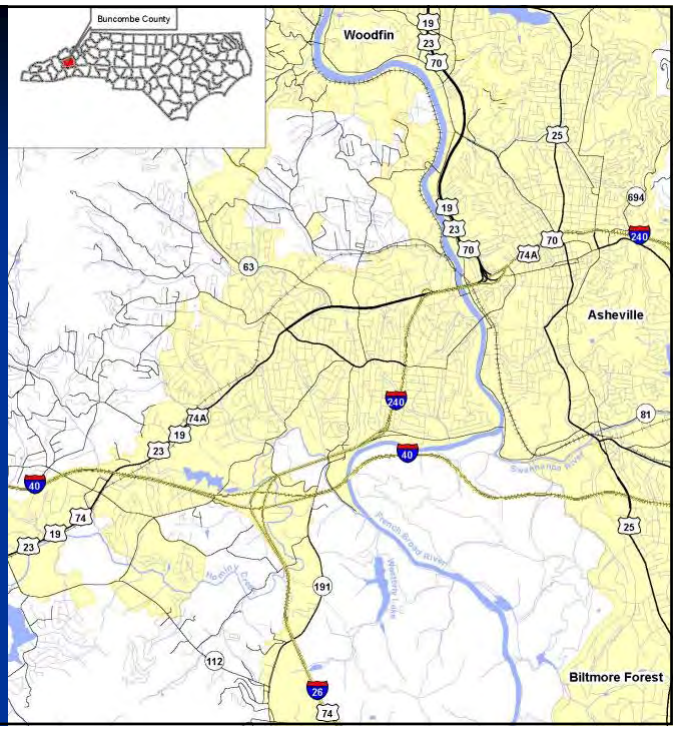
# I-26 Connector

## Purpose of Meeting

- Review the project
- Review new, revised, and previously studied hydraulic crossings
- Review other changes in anticipated project impacts

April 2, 2015

## Project Vicinity




April 2, 2015

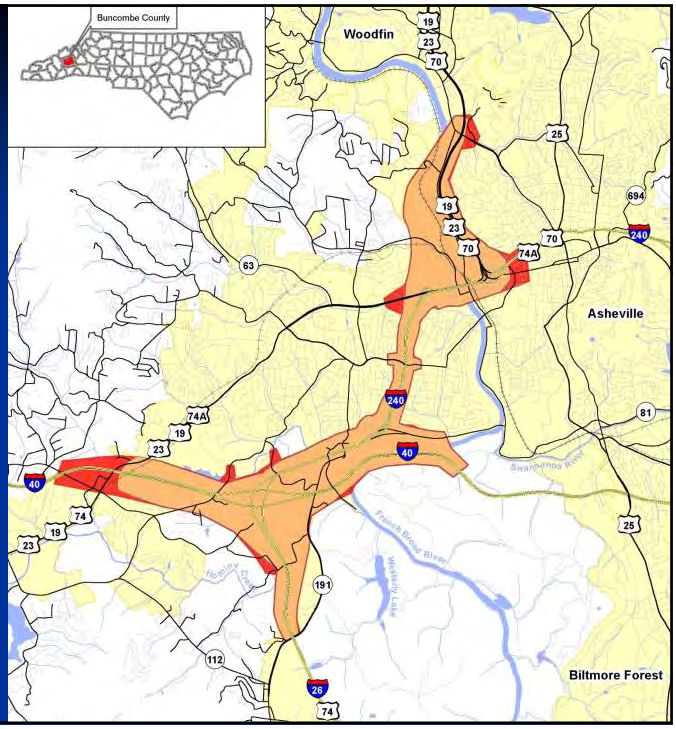
# Project Study Area Revision

(as presented at 1/22/2015 CP2R meeting)

Project Study Area

Recent Expansion

April 2, 2015




# I-26 Connector

## Merger Process History

- 2002 CP1 and CP2 Concurrence
  - (Concurrence Points 1 and 2) were achieved during the Phase I Study
  - A concurrence meeting was held on January 23, 2002 to reaffirm these decisions
- 2004 CP2 Concurrence
  - I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange alternatives added at southern end of the project
  - A concurrence meeting was held in December 2004 to reaffirm concurrence with Concurrence Point 1 and to modify Concurrence Point 2

# I-26 Connector

## Merger Process History (cont.)

- 2006 CP2 Revisited and CP2A Concurrence
  - Additional I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange alternative added
  - Designs for alternatives were reviewed for bridging and alignment decisions
  - Concurrence Point 2A achieved with several modifications
- 2007 CP2 Revisited
  - Concurrence Point 2 modified to eliminate Alternative 5 due to traffic operational deficiencies

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# I-26 Connector

## Merger Process History (cont.)

- 2009 CP2 Revisited
  - Concurrence Point 2 modified to eliminate Alternative 2 due to traffic operational deficiencies
- 2015 CP2 Revisited
  - Alternative 3C was added to the Alternatives to be Studied in Detail
  - The project study area expansion was also reviewed

Leaving the following Alternatives to be Studied in Detail:

- Section A Widening Alternative (middle section)
- Section B Alternatives 3, 3C, 4, and 4B (northern section)
- Section C Alternatives A-2, C-2, D-1, and F-1 (southern section)

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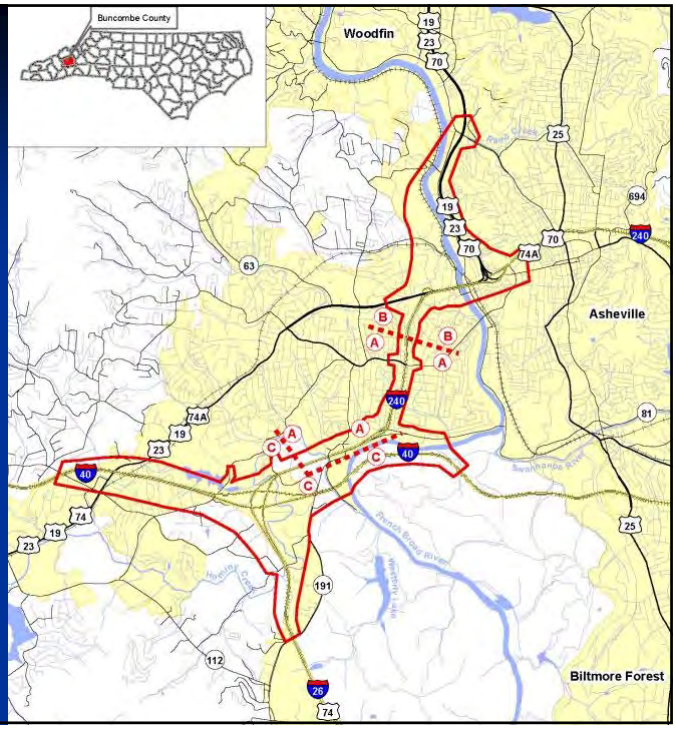
# Project Sections

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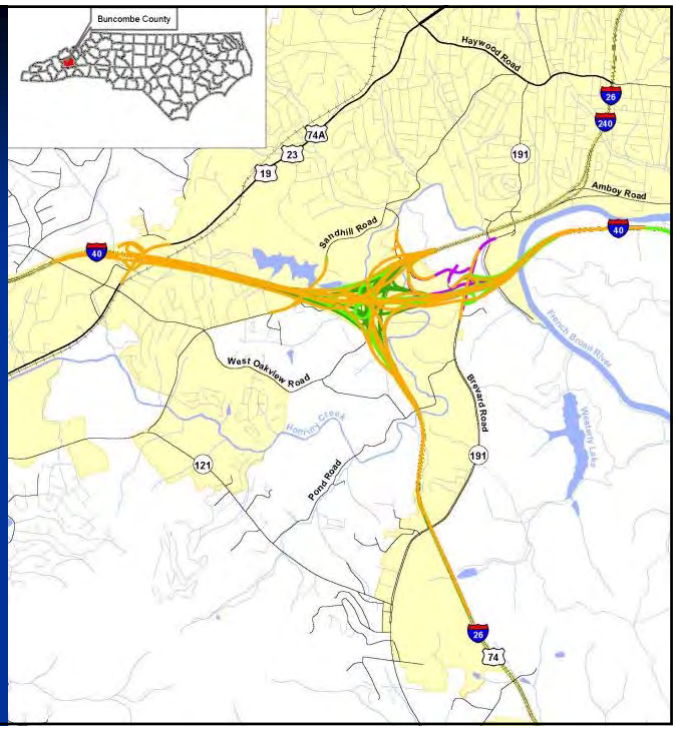
# Section C

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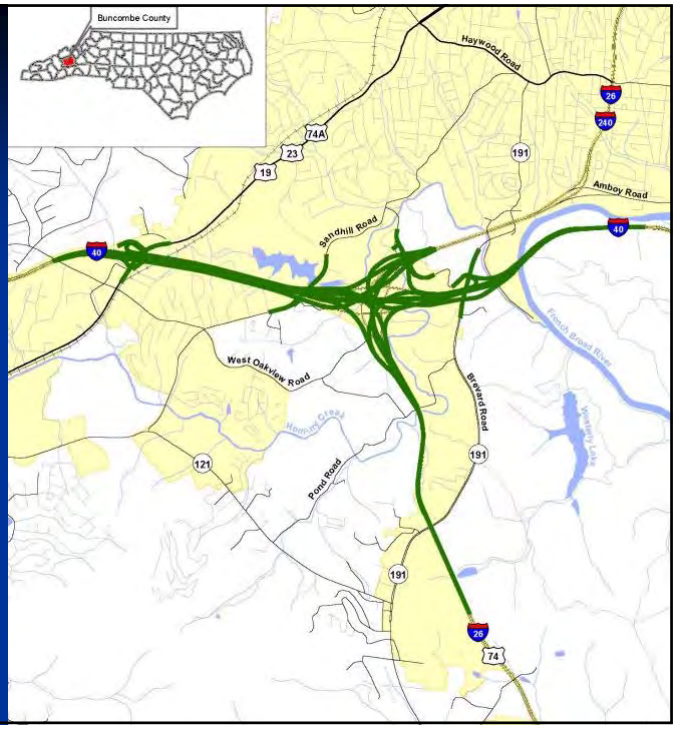
# Section C
# Alternative A-2

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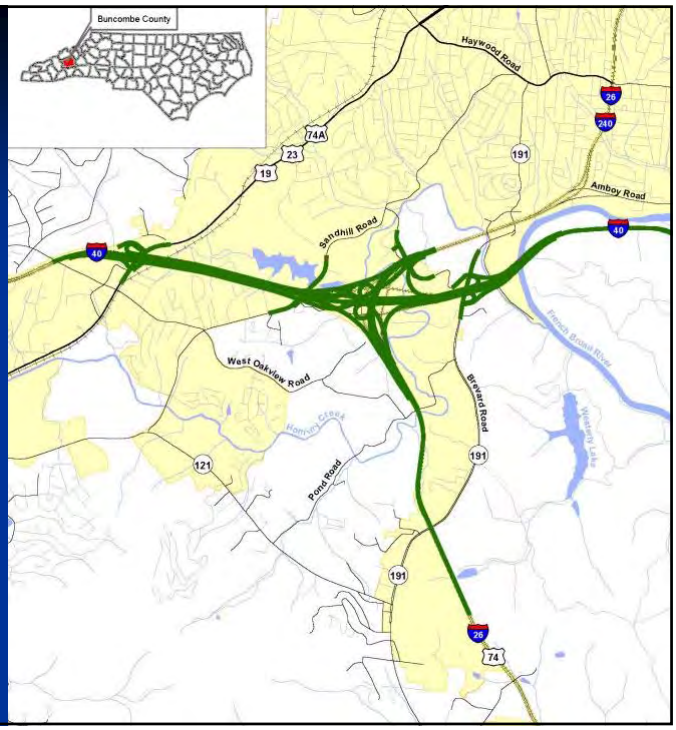
# Section C
# Alternative C-2

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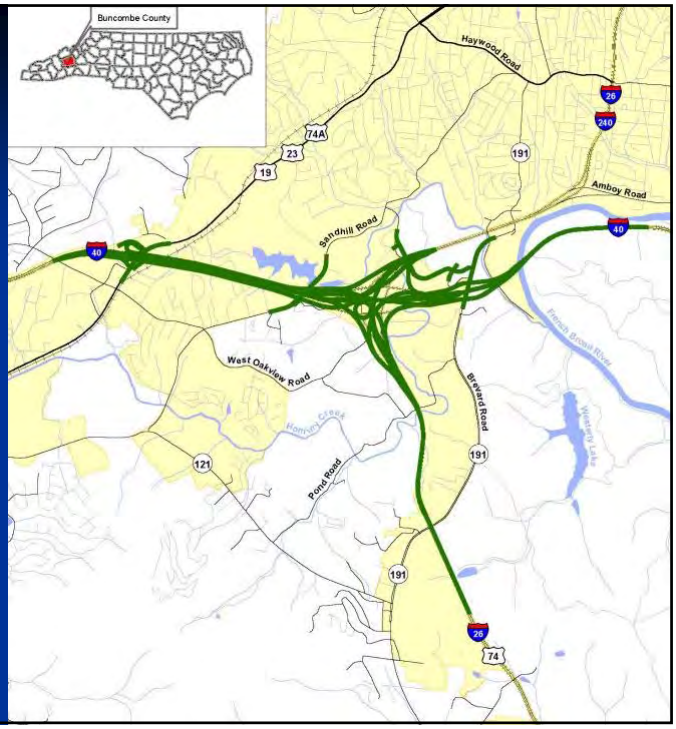
# Section C
# Alternative D-1

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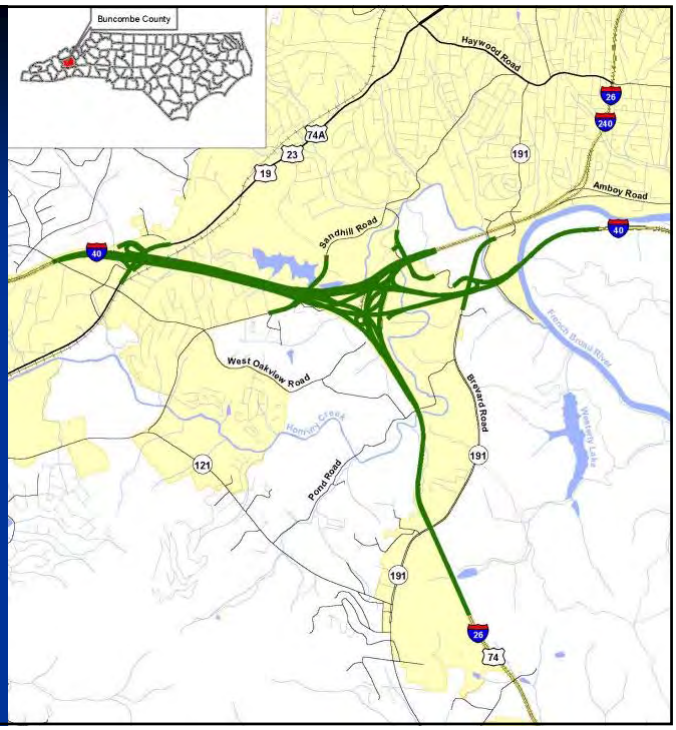
# Section C
# Alternative F-1

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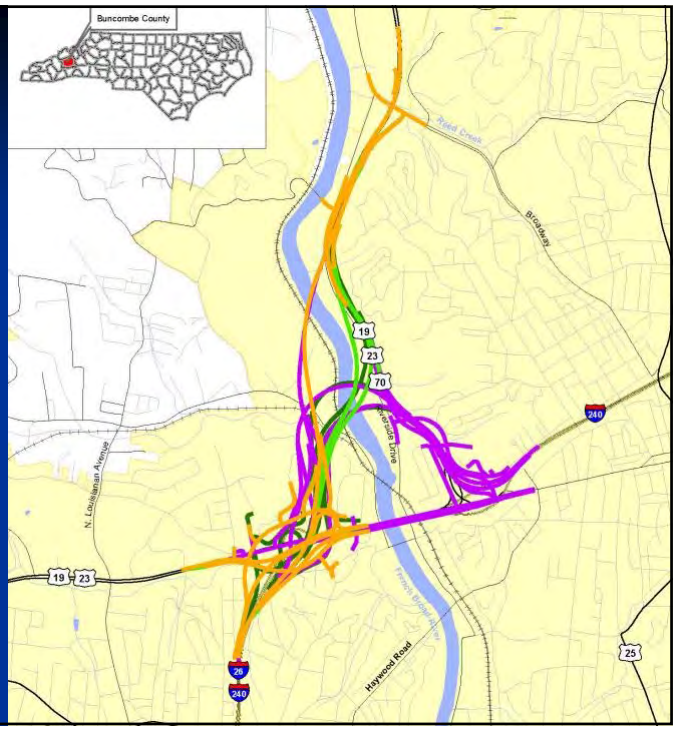
# Section A

April 2, 2015

# Section B

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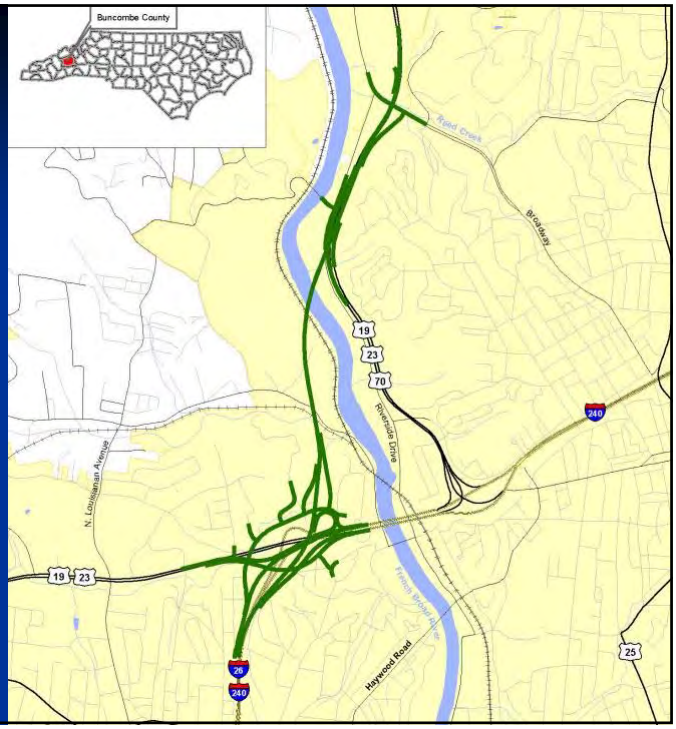
# Section B Alternative 3

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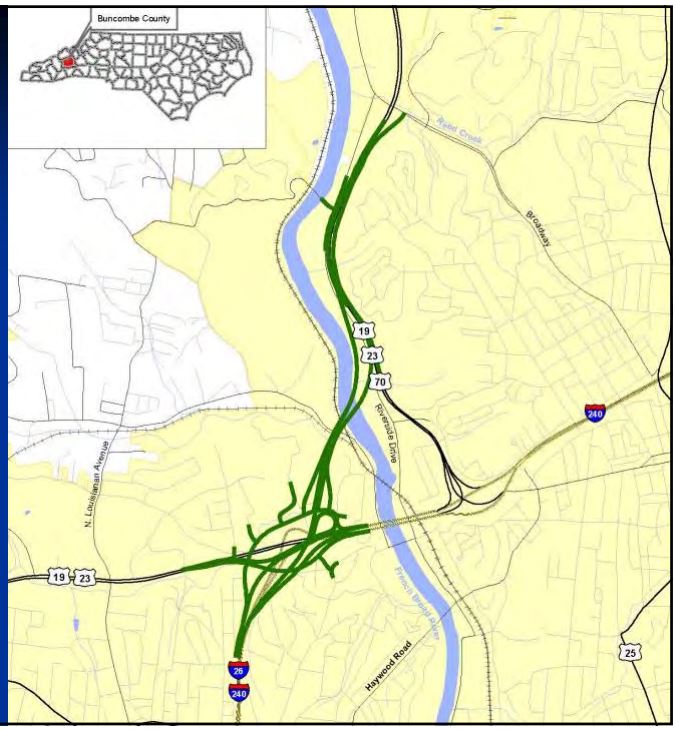
# Section B Alternative 3C

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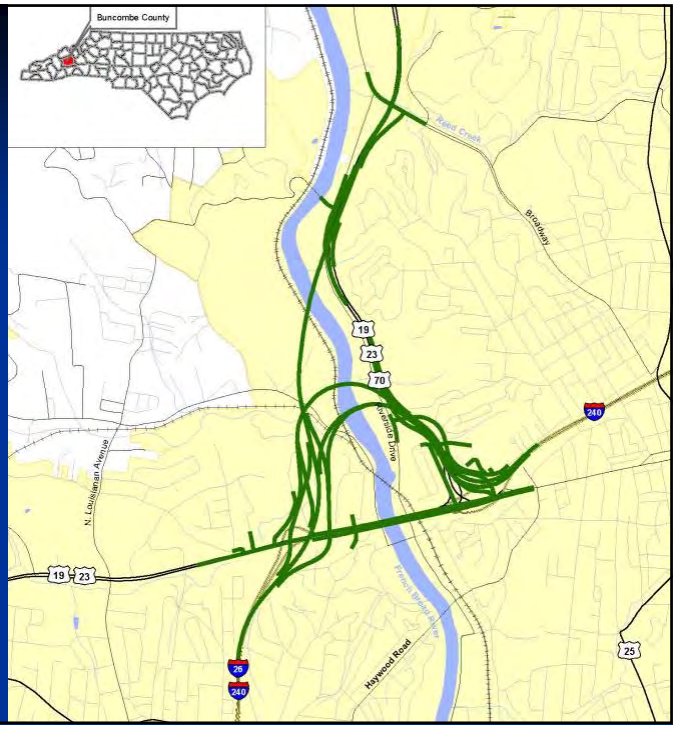
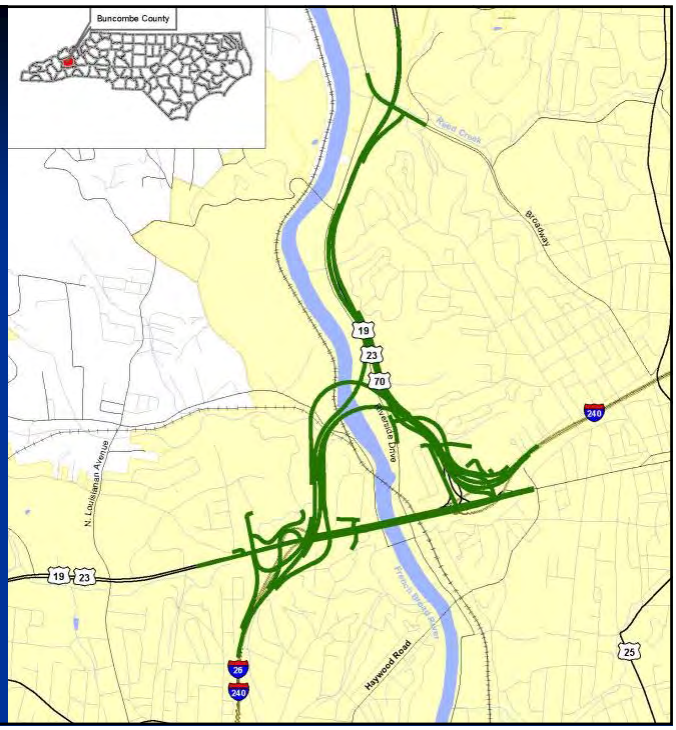
# Section B Alternative 4

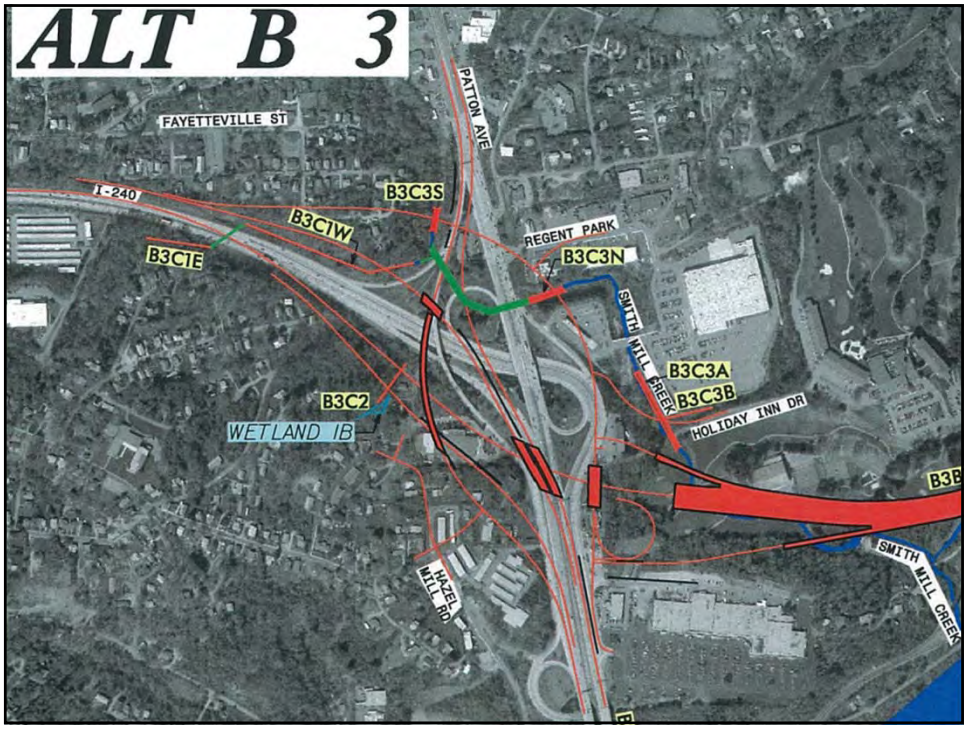


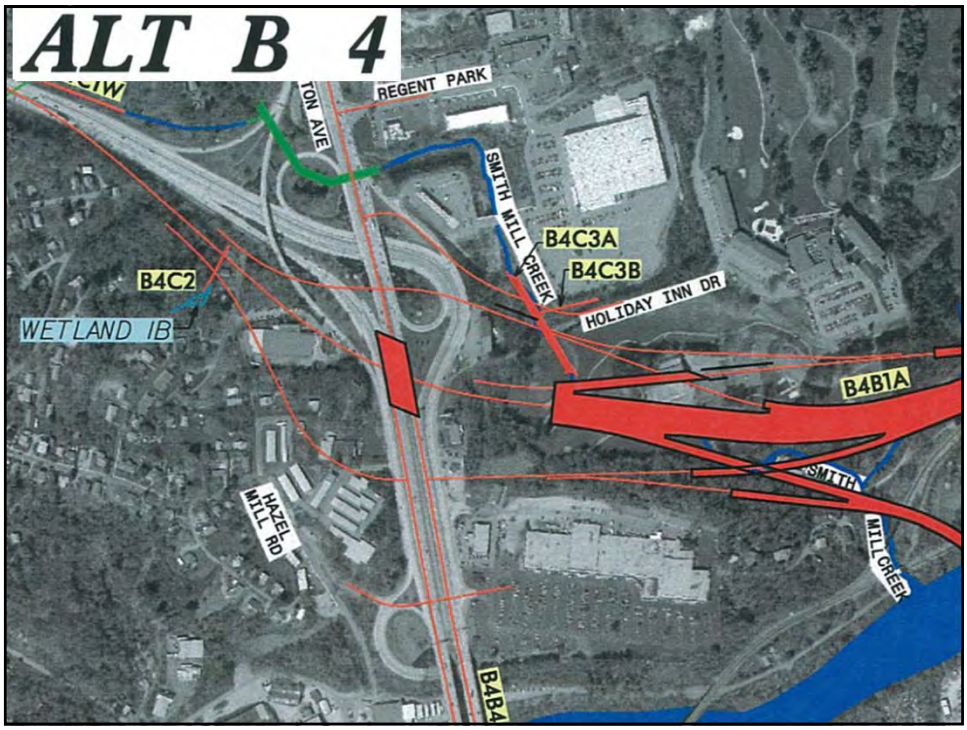

April 2, 2015

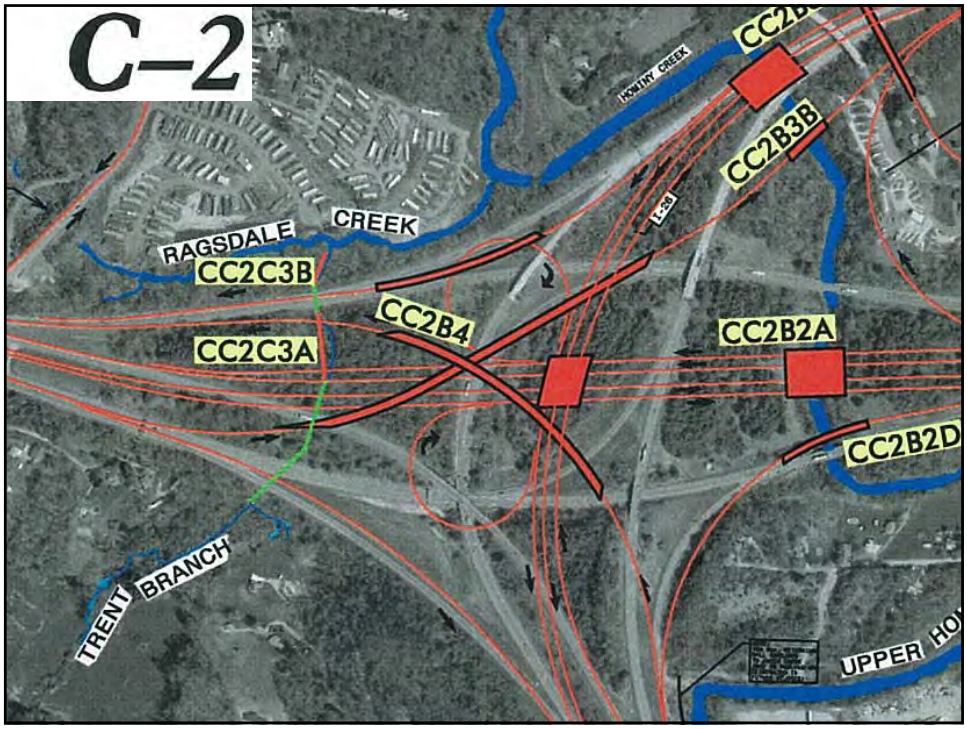
# Section B Alternative 4B




April 2, 2015


ALT B 3
FAYETTEVILLE ST
PATTON AVE
I-240
B3C3S
B3C1W
B3C1E
REGENT PARK
B3C3N
SMITH MILL CREEK
B3C3A
B3C3B
HOLIDAY INN DR
B3C2
WETLAND IB
HAZEL MILL RD
SMITH MILL CREEK


ALT B 4
REGENT PARK
TON AVE
SMITH MILL CREEK
B4C3A
B4C3B
HOLIDAY INN DR
B4C2
WETLAND IB
B4B1A
HAZEL MILL RD




# I-26 Connector

## Hydraulic Analysis

- 27 Sites previously evaluated
- Re-evaluation required
  - Designs revised due to new traffic operations methodologies
  - Designs also prepared for Alternative 3C (new DSA per 1/22/15)
- 9 New or revised sites evaluated
  - 2 New sites (sites 28 and 29)
    - Added due to design limits extending to US 19-23-74A along I-40
  - 7 Sites moved or changed (sites 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 21, and 22)

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector

## Review (separate PDF)

- NRTR resources
- Design configurations
- Crossing of NRTR resources
- Avoidance efforts
- Minimization efforts

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section C Alternative A-2

## Stream Crossings

- 6 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - All multi-barrel culverts are existing
- 12 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 13 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section C Alternative C-2

## Stream Crossings

- 6 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - All multi-barrel culverts are existing
- 10 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 12 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section C Alternative D-1

## Stream Crossings

- 6 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - All multi-barrel culverts are existing
- 12 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 13 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section C Alternative F-1

## Stream Crossings

- 5 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - All multi-barrel culverts are existing
- 11 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 12 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section A

## Stream Crossings

- 3 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 0 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
- 1 bridge

## Wetland Crossings

- 1 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section B Alternative 3

## Stream Crossings

- 3 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - 2 proposed multi-barrel culverts, 2 existing
- 3 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 3 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 2 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section B Alternative 3C

## Stream Crossings

- 4 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - 2 proposed multi-barrel culverts, 2 existing
- 3 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 2 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section B Alternative 4

## Stream Crossings

- 3 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 3 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - 0 proposed multi-barrel culverts, 1 existing
- 5 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 2 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 2 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector Section B Alternative 4B

## Stream Crossings

- 4 minor crossings (less than or equal to 72")
- 4 culvert/pipe (greater than 72")
  - 0 proposed multi-barrel culverts, 1 existing
- 4 bridges

## Wetland Crossings

- 2 impacted

## Pond Crossings

- 0 impacted

April 2, 2015

# I-26 Connector

Discussion:

- Review designs with previous CP2A commitments
- Review multi-barrel box locations (if needed)
- Review sites selected by Merger Team (if needed)
- Review impacts and avoidance/minimization efforts to date

April 2, 2015

04/02/2015

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

**Concurrence Point No. 2A. Bridging and Alignment Review**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

| Name | Entity/Agency | Email Address |
|---|---|---|
| Rebecca Berzinis | Atkins | rebecca.berzinis@atkinsglobal.com |
| Jeremy Schmid | Atkins | jeremy.schmid@atkinsglobal.com |
| Carla Dagnino | NCDOT-NES | cdagnino@ncdot.gov |
| CYNTHIA VAN DER WIELE | USEPA | vanderwiele.cynthia@epa.gov |
| DENNIS HOYLE | AECOM | DENNIS.HOYLE@AECOM.COM |
| RHIANNON KINCAID | AECOM | RHIANNON.KINCAID@AECOM.COM |
| ED EDENS | AECOM | ed.edens@AECOM.com |
| Mitch Batuzich | FHWA | michael.batuzich@dot.gov |
| Kevin Moore | NCDOT-Roadway | Kmoore@ncdot.gov |
| TERRY HARRIS | NCDOT-ROADWAY | taharris@ncdot.gov |
| Chris Werner | AECOM | christopher.m.werner@AECOM.com |
| Lori Beckwith | USACE | loretta.a.beckwith@usace.army.mil |
| Kristina Solberg | NCDOT Div 13 | klsolberg@ncdot.gov |
| JEFF HEMPHILL | NCDOT RDY | jhemphill@ncdot.gov |
| Mark Chambers | NCWRC | mark.chambers@ncwildlife.org |
| Tristan Winkler | FRRMPO | tristan.winkler@landofsky.org |
| KEVIN BARNETT | NCDOT-BMR | KEVIN.BARNETT@NCDOT.GOV |
| Marella Buncick | USFWS | marella_buncick@fws.gov |
| Joanna Rocco | AECOM | Joanna.Rocco@AECOM.com |
| Ricky Tipton | NCDOT Division 13 | |
| Derrick Weaver | NCDOT PDEA | |

| Name | Entity/Agency | Email Address |
|---|---|---|
| | VIA Phone | |
| Jennifer Harris | NCDOT- PDEA | |
| Kirby Pendergraft | NCDOT- Hydraulics | |
| Bill Zerman | NCDOT- Hydraulics | |
| Ray Lovingood | NCDOT- Hydraulics | |

04/02/2015

# MERGER PROJECT TEAM MEETING AGREEMENT

**Concurrence Point No. 2A. Bridging and Alignment**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Project Name/Description:* | **I-26 Connector** |
| *TIP Project No.:* | I-2513 |
| *State Project No.:* | 8.U843701 |
| *Federal-Aid Project No.:* | MANHF 26-1 (53) |

**Alternatives to be Reviewed and Approved**

| | |
|---|---|
| Section A | Section C: Alternative A-2 |
| Section B: Alternative 3 | Section C: Alternative C-2 |
| Section B: Alternative 3C | Section C: Alternative D-1 |
| Section B: Alternative 4 | Section C: Alternative F-1 |
| Section B: Alternative 4B | |

**Concurrence**

The Section 404/NEPA Merger Project Team concurred on this date, April 2, 2015 with the "Bridging and Alignment Review" (Concurrence Point No. 2A) to the Detailed Study Alternatives (DSA) as noted above. For the DSAs, the minimum hydraulic recommendations will be acceptable as presented with the addition of the following:

In Alternatives 3 and 3C, NCDOT will evaluate the feasibility of bridging Smith Mill Creek.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — [signature] 4/2/15

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — Cynthia F. Van Der Wiele

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — [signature]

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission — Marla Chambers

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources — DocuSigned by: Renee Gledhill-Earley

N.C. Division of Water Resources — DocuSigned by: C26A1556A275464... Kevin Barnett D9465026204540A...

Federal Highway Administration — [signature]

French Broad River MPO — [signature]

N.C. Department of Transportation — [signature]

# Appendix B2

# Records of Other Agency Meetings

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1215 Jones Franklin Road
Suite 203, North Building
Raleigh, North Carolina 27606
Phone 919 851 7144
Fax 919 859 0557

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 704 437 4681
Fax 704 433 9146

# MEMORANDUM

TGS ENGINEERS

**DATE:** September 12, 1996

**TO:** File

**FROM:** TGS Engineers LMR

**SUBJECT:** New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

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A meeting for the subject project was held on Wednesday, September 11, 1996 in the conference room of the NCDOT Division 13 Office in Asheville. The following attended:

| | |
|---|---|
| Joe Bloise | FHWA - Atlanta |
| Greg Punske | FHWA |
| Dave Snyder | FHWA |
| Joe Buckner | NCDOT - Division Construction Engineer |
| Louis Raymond | TGS Engineers |
| Thad Duncan | TGS Engineers |

The meeting opened with a discussion of the project limits and some of the constraints that have to be dealt with as a result of these limits. A 400' wide corridor along existing alignment and three alternatives on new location were shown on a 1"=200' scale aerial photography. Louis Raymond presented a brief overview of the planning and environmental considerations of the new location corridors.

The first part of the project discussed was the I-40/I-240/I-26 interchange at the south end of the project. It was noted that an upgrade of this interchange will not be included within the scope of this project. In order to eliminate the left-hand on-ramp from Amboy Road, Thad Duncan explained the considered alternatives in the area of I-240 between NC 191 and Amboy Road. Project U-2902, the relocation of NC 191, was described as being in the design phase.

In order to reduce right-of-way damages from the widening of I-240 near Haywood Road, the design of a single point urban interchange (SPUI) is being considered. Joe Buckner had concerns over public adaptability and older drivers related to the SPUI. He also noted the pedestrian bridge over I-240 south of Haywood Road should be eliminated with the widening.

The two complex interchange designs of I-240 with Patton Avenue and the proposed I-26 were discussed in greater detail. New comments were made on the interchange design through the shopping center. Maintaining Patton Avenue traffic during the construction of I-26 was viewed as difficult if I-26 was built under existing I-240. It was suggested that earthwork and

profiles be developed for I-26 under and over I-240. Additionally, if I-26 extends over I-240 the alignment should cross the river farther upstream to reduce the grade of I-26. The interchange design through the golf course was shown with no additional comments.

A field reconnaissance review took place to examine existing I-240 as well as the proposed interchange areas. It was concluded that the feasibility of the I-26 grade separation over I-240 needs to be studied further. Dave Snyder will take over Greg Punske's position in Raleigh FHWA office in approximately one month.

cc: Joe Westbrook, P.E.
Earl Willis, P.E.
Ken Burleson, P.E.

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Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 704 437 4681
Fax 704 433 9146

# MEMORANDUM

TGS ENGINEERS

**DATE:** October 16, 1996

**TO:** Meeting Attendees

**FROM:** TGS Engineers LMR

**SUBJECT:** Summary Minutes of First Steering Committee Meeting for New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

---

The first Steering Committee Meeting for the subject project was held on Tuesday, October 15, 1996 in Room 470 of the Transportation Building in Raleigh. The following attended:

| | |
|---|---|
| Frank Vick | NCDOT - Planning and Environmental |
| Richard Davis | NCDOT - Planning and Environmental |
| Joe Westbrook | NCDOT - Planning and Environmental |
| Bill Smart | NCDOT - Division 13 Engineer |
| Kimberly Hinton | NCDOT - Statewide Planning |
| Eddie Sasse | NCDOT - Traffic Engineering |
| Derrick Lewis | NCDOT - Traffic Engineering |
| Len Hill | NCDOT - Roadway Design |
| Kathy Lassiter | NCDOT - Roadway Design |
| David Foster | NCDEHNR - Highway Envir. Eval. |
| Eric Galamb | NCDEHNR DEM - Water Quality |
| David Cox | NCWRC |
| Ron Fuller | City of Asheville |
| Roy Shelton | FHWA |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| Thad Duncan | TGS Engineers |
| Louis Raymond | TGS Engineers |

Joe Westbrook, the NCDOT Project Manager opened the meeting with a welcome and requested each attendee to introduce themselves. After the introductions, Louis Raymond of TGS Engineers presented a slide show as seen in the agenda handout. He presented the existing location alignment as well as the new location alternatives on a 1" = 200' scale aerial mosaic of the study area. A mainline corridor width of 400 feet was shown along with existing roadways, buildings and environmental features. As part of the slide show, pictures from the project area were viewed.

After the project study presentation, Louis Raymond stated that TGS Engineers would like to receive technical input to develop our conceptual designs and alternative evaluations. The meeting was opened for questions and comments and the following was noted.

Eric Galamb questioned why the first alignment shown in the original approved Phase 1 Study across the area between the golf course and the shopping center was no longer being considered. Mr. Burleson explained after further study it was discovered that the first alignment was not feasible due to several design, access and environmental constraints which he pointed out. He noted the two alternatives shown for I-26 crossing Patton Avenue in the same vicinity were developed to allow the use of the existing I-240 corridor from existing I-26 to Patton Avenue for the extension of I-26 as indicated in the Phase I Study.

Another issue discussed was pedestrian access. Two existing pedestrian bridges cross over I-240 in the vicinity of the project that have been closed with the City's approval. The location of these crossings are 1) east of the Smokey Park Bridge, and 2) between Amboy and Haywood Roads. Bill Smart and Ron Fuller noted that pedestrians have cut the access controls and cross I-240 east of the closed pedestrian bridge at the river. Bill Smart noted that a pedestrian had recently been killed making this crossing. Ken Burleson noted that the project, as currently planned, would not affect the crossing east of the river but would remove the closed bridge between Amboy and Haywood. Ron Fuller indicated that removing that crossing would likely be acceptable to the City since the school it was constructed to serve has been torn down. He noted that the City agreed to allow closure of these overpasses with the stipulation that other pedestrian access be provided across I-240. He mentioned a local desire for a I-240 pedestrian overpass between Patton and Haywood that originated when the original I-240 construction split a neighborhood. Ron also noted that the City desires pedestrian access along the north side of Patton Avenue across the French Broad and through the I-26 interchange which Mr. Burleson indicated was possible with the TGS conceptual plans.

Mr. Fuller then noted the City's desire for bicycle facilities along Amboy Road and Riverside Drive. It was explained that bicycle access along the Amboy to Brevard Road ramp is not being considered due to the access control and the merging traffic in this area. Also, no facilities are currently being planned along Riverside Drive since the roadway itself serves as a bicycle route.

Roy Shelton questioned the weaving analysis for I-26 west (northbound) to Broadway Street across US 19-23-70. Mr. Burleson indicated that TGS would further look at the weaving distances at Broadway.

David Foster encouraged further and continual public involvement. Mr. Shelton also suggested that public involvement was needed and questioned which local group should be contacted to begin this effort. After some discussion about what and when to present as well as to whom, it was determined that TGS should present the alternatives for the Patton Avenue interchange to the local TAC with colored mapping showing lanes and access. TGS will develop this presentation mapping and contact Ron Fuller to set up this meeting as soon as it is available. A public meeting should be held sometime after with the availability of right-of-way and construction cost information.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

October 15, 1996

I. Welcome/Introductions - NCDOT

II. Project Description - TGS Engineers

III. Initial Phase I Environmental Analysis Asheville Area - TGS Engineers

IV. Physical Constraints - TGS Engineers

V. Projected Traffic, Level of Service & Accident Data - TGS Engineers

VI. Conceptual Studies - TGS Engineers

A. Existing I-240
- I-240, I-40 & I-26 Interchange
- NC 191-Brevard Road Interchange
- Amboy Road
- Pedestrian Considerations
- Haywood Road
- Patton Avenue

B. New Location Connector
- Study Window
- Hydraulic Crossings
- Railroads
- Possible Contamination
- Historic Sites
- Alternatives

C. Planned Public Involvement - TGS Engineers

D. Site Views - TGS Engineers

E. Comments & Concerns - Attendees

# I-26 Asheville Connector

## I-26 Asheville Connector

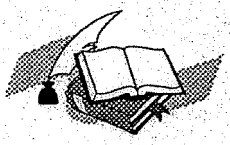
Louis M. Raymond, E.I.T.
Planning and Design Engineer
TGS Engineers

## Project Description

- TIP Number I-2513
  - Schedule
- Project Limits
- Existing and New Location
- I-26 Linkage

## Initial Phase I Environmental Analysis

- Phased Approach to Problem Areas
- Preferred Alternate A
- Recommended Corridor Protection
- Final Approval and Concurrence, April 1996



## Initial Phase I Environmental Analysis

- Concurrence resolutions
  - City of Asheville
  - Buncombe County
  - Towns of :
    - Biltmore Forest
    - Fletcher
    - Woodfin
    - Black Mountain
    - Montreat
    - Weaverville

## Physical Constraints

- Design of Existing I-240
- Smokey Park Bridges can't be widened
- Existing Railroad line along Riverside Dr.
- Former landfill along the eastern side of the French Broad River
- Maintaining I-240 Traffic during Construction

## Traffic & Level of Service (LOS)

- Traffic Projections >> Phase I Study
- Acceptable LOS, D or better
- Design Year 2020
  - 8-lanes (I-240 West of Patton Ave.)
  - 6-lanes (US 19-23-70)
  - 4-lanes (I-26 Connector)

# I-26 Asheville Connector

## Accident Data

- Strip of I-240 from 0.18 miles E of US 19-23 Business to the east end of the Smokey Park Bridges
  - 412.5 ACC/100 MVM
  - 143.7 ACC/100 MVM (NC Average)
  - 117 Rear-End Collisions over 3 years

## EXISTING I-240

## I-240, I-40 & I-26 Interchange

- FHWA wanted consideration for I-40 W to I-26 N and I-26 S to I-40 E
  - NC 191 provides access
  - Historic Biltmore Estate
  - Excessive project costs
- Hominy Creek
  - R3UBH Channel Wetlands

## NC 191 - Brevard Road Interchange

- TIP Project U-2902 - Relocation of NC 191- Brevard Road
- Historic Bridge under I-240
- Westbound I-240 exit ramp proposed to begin before Amboy Road as part of modified collector-distributor

## Amboy Road

- Left-hand entrance ramp
  - Insufficient weaving distance
- Two alternatives developed
  - Loop consideration
  - Modified collector-distributor system

## Pedestrian Considerations

- Smokey Park Bridges
  - Shopping Center Access
- Pedestrian Overpass
  - Remove without replacement

# I-26 Asheville Connector

## Haywood Road

- 2 Alternatives being considered
  - Symmetric widening from centerline
  - Widening along the western side
- Diamond Interchange Consideration and Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI)

## Patton Avenue

- Complex interchange of I-240
- Access problems with I-26
  - Westgate Shopping Center
  - Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort
  - Sam's Warehouse

## NEW LOCATION CORRIDOR

## Study Window

- 2 Corridors at Patton Avenue
- Hydraulic Crossings
- Railroads
- Possible Contamination
- Historic Sites
- 3 Alternatives for I-26 Connector

## Hydraulic Crossings

- Smith Mill Creek
  - R4SBC Channel Wetlands
- French Broad River
  - Straight Bridge highly desirable
  - R3UBH Channel Wetlands

## Railroads

- Norfolk Southern Railroad Corridor
  - Lines along west side of river
- Railroad line next to Riverside Drive on the west
- 23-foot Vertical Clearance Required

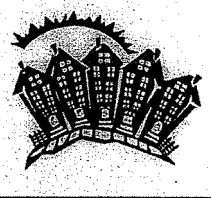
# I-26 Asheville Connector

## Possible Contamination

- Former Landfill between French Broad River and Riverside Drive
- Phase I Study
  - Environmental Site Assessment
  - NCDOT Geotechnical Unit
  - Recommended Detailed Site Investigation

## Historic Sites

- Montford Historic District
  - Riverside Cemetery
- Montford Hills Historic District

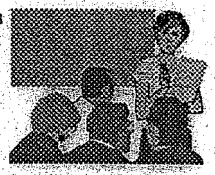


## Alternatives

- 4-lanes with 22-foot median
- Alternate 1 (Shopping Center)
- Alternate 2 (Shopping Center - Long)
- Alternate 3 (Golf Course)

## What's Next ?

- Planned Public Involvement
- Further Conceptual Design
- Alternatives Evaluation
  - R/W & Construction Costs



## SITE VIEWS

## Comments and Concerns

# STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE

**New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)**
**October 15, 1996**

| NAME | ADDRESS |
|---|---|
| BILL SMART | NCDOT, 55 ORANGE ST., ASHEVILLE |
| Ron Fuller | Asheville Urban Area MPO |
| Kimberly Drew Hinton | Statewide Planning Branch - NCDOT |
| RICHARD DAVIS | NCDOT - P&E |
| Kathy Lassiter | NC DOT - Roadway Design |
| Frank Vick | NCDOT - P.&E |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| Eddie Karam | NCDOT - Traffic Engineering |
| Derrick Lewis | NCDOT - Traffic Engineering |
| LEN HILL | NCDOT - ROADWAY DESIGN |
| DAVID FOSTER | DEHNR - Hwy. Envir. Unit |
| Eric Galamb | Div. of Water Quality |
| David COX | NCWRC |
| Thad Duncan | TGS Engineers |
| ROY SHELTON | FHWA |
| Joe Westbrook | NCDOT - P&E Envir. |
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1215 Jones Franklin Road
Suite 203, North Building
Raleigh, North Carolina 27606
Phone 919 851 7144
Fax 919 859 0557

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 704 437 4681
Fax 704 433 9146

TGS ENGINEERS

**MEMO TO:** File

**FROM:** J. K. Burleson

**REFERENCE:** TAC Meeting to discuss new I-26 route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

**DATE:** November 12, 1996

On Thursday, November 7, Earl Willis and I went to Asheville to present the alternatives being considered for the subject project to local officials. We met at 1:00 pm in the City Public Works facility. A list of attendees is attached.

I briefly presented the project to the attendees. I described the Brevard Road, Amboy Road and Haywood Road interchange alternatives, then noted the two alternative alignments at the Patton Avenue interchange with the new location connections to US 19-23-70. Several access problems were noted and discussed.

One principal item of concern was the number of lanes required along existing I-240 to accommodate design year traffic. The Phase 1 study done by Statewide Planning indicated 6-lanes would accommodate traffic. I noted that with the current of traffic projections, 8-lanes would be needed along this portion of the facility but retaining walls would be evaluated to reduce right of way damages. I also noted that even to construct 6-lanes while maintaining traffic service would require substantial damages in some areas such as at the Haywood Road interchange.

We then displayed two colored maps with proposed alternatives for the interchange with Patton Avenue. One of these requires taking the Westgate Shopping Center while the other requires taking a significant portion of the golf course at the Holiday Inn. Access considerations were discussed and it was noted that even with the golf course alternative, access restrictions to the shopping center would be substantial. If the shopping center is not taken, access to it will be expensive and circuitous since it will be located inside a triangle created by two interstate routes and the French Broad River. Without the benefit of right of way cost estimates, which could seriously influence any decisions, the group appeared to favor the alignment that takes the shopping center.

East of the French Broad River, we displayed two alternate connection points with US 19-23-70. I noted that both of these alignments would cross a former landfill and the Craggy Branch line of the Norfolk Southern Railroad. I explained that coordination was currently underway with the railroad to abandon this line, thus eliminating some design problems at either connection. I noted the desire to keep the long bridge crossing of the river and landfill as flat and straight as possible to avoid safety problems during inclement weather. I implied that this concern makes the northern connection more desirable, however I failed to note the additional length and limited available weaving distance to the Broadway interchange to the north may make the southern connection a better alternative.

Separating this project into two projects to delay the right of way impacts of widening I-240 to eight lanes was discussed. I noted the current plans called for the project to be let as two projects that are separated north of Haywood Road. This would include the Patton Avenue interchange with the new connector over the river. Ron Poole indicated that other area improvements could reduce the anticipated traffic on I-240 possibly reducing the need for 8-lanes. With the current plans, delaying the I-240 widening would be possible.

I summarized that the details of the conceptual plans are still being developed and are subject to change. We provided Bill Smart with a copy of the aerial photography in the Patton Avenue vicinity that indicated the main line alternative alignments. I also promised to provide him with an uncolored copy of the Patton Avenue interchange alternatives but emphasized that the details were subject to change before finalization.

I ended the meeting by letting the attendees know that TGS is available to present these alternatives to the public.

cc: Joe Westbrook
Bill Smart w/plans

11/7/96

# ASHEVILLE CONNECTOR
# MEETING ATTENDEES

| | |
|---|---|
| Bett Stroud | Mayor - Weaverville |
| Charles Bradley | Mayor - Protem Town of Woodfin |
| James M. Cheeks, Jr. | Traffic - City of Asheville |
| Barbara Field | Vice Mayor - City of Asheville - Chair TAC |
| Bob Parrish | Mayor - Town of Fletcher |
| Gordon Myers | Board Member - NCDOT |
| Bill Smart | Division Engineer - NCDOT |
| Ron Poole | Statewide Planning - NCDOT |
| Earl Willis | TGS Engineers |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |

Memo To: File

From: J. K. Burleson, P.E.

Date: April 23, 1998

Subject: NC TIP No. - I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53) New I-26 route, Asheville connector along I-240 from existing I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County.

Tom Kendig, Bill Smart and I met with the local officials on the attached list from the Asheville area at the National Guard Armory at 2:45 p.m. on Thursday April 23, 1998 to present the subject project before the scheduled citizens workshop. Tom introduced himself and me, described the project, then asked all present to introduce themselves and identify their position. After the introductions, I went over a brief history of the project and several principal issues regarding the proposed designs of the three project alternatives on aerial photography of the project area. After this presentation, we opened the floor for questions. The principal issues addressed included:

It was asked when a selection of the preferred alternative would be made and if there was any indication as to which alternative would be selected. I stated the selection would be after the public hearing scheduled for early 1999. I also indicated Alternative 1 did not appear likely to be selected due to the railroad and the cemetery involvement, but no preference was apparent between Alternative 2 and 3.

It was asked why take a shopping center (Alternative 2) instead of a golf course (Alternative 3). I noted the expense of dealing with the owners of the time share units associated with the golf course and the poor access to the shopping center from the Downtown area (I-240 east) with Alternative 3.

It was asked if consideration had been given to a "bypass" around the western side of the city. I pointed out such a "bypass" was considered in the earlier study but the existing I-240 route was recommended. Bill Smart elaborated on the Asheville Connector Advisory Committee's activities and their selection of the existing I-240 alignment.

It was asked when the decision was made to increase the width to eight lanes. I indicated that the traffic projections provided for this study reflected a need for eight lanes and that this traffic projection was larger than the traffic projections used in the Phase I study.

It was asked when the environmental impacts associated with the project would be identified. I responded that we were currently collecting environmental impact data that would be addressed in the EA.

It was asked when the project would be completed. I noted the environmental document was scheduled to be completed late in 1998. For the existing alignment, right of way purchase would start in 1999 and construction in 2000 with the new location section following about a year behind. It was also noted that depending on funding, traffic could be on the new route in six or seven years.

It was asked whether noise and retaining wall locations had been determined. I responded the noise studies were underway but not complete enough to determine specific noise wall locations and that some retaining walls were shown due to design considerations but others may be added to avoid right of way impacts later. I noted we wanted to show the worst case to the public rather than remove a wall due to cost considerations later.

It was asked whether local access would be provided to and across the French Broad River. I pointed out the access would be via existing streets. I also noted that we had met and were coordinating with the Riverlink officials to attempt to address their concerns.

It was asked how many homes would be relocated along the existing I-240. I responded that the exact number would not be known until design was completed but in the range of 50.

It was noted the City desires additional pedestrian access across the facility to replace the closed Stewart Street bridge which will be removed. I noted the City should express their desires and if possible provide specific locations as soon as possible for such additional access since it was being provided at Brevard Road, State Street, Haywood Road and along Patton Avenue.

It was asked if the existing Haywood Road Bridge would be replaced and the response was yes.

It was asked if the traffic along Haywood Road Bridge would be maintained during construction and the response was yes.

The City officials requested the capacity analysis at the Haywood Road Ramps be studied to determine if the project would back up traffic along Haywood. The possible need to remove existing parking along Haywood was noted. I noted that it may be necessary to limit the improvements to the immediate area of the interchange.

City officials noted the currently missing moves at the I-40 interchange and the Amboy Road interchange. I pointed out I-40 moves were not to be added and would be handled by an improved NC 191. The Amboy Road moves were not added due to the lack of apparent traffic demand and the substantial expense and impacts to an area with existing and planned low-income housing. Some traffic demand was noted but there was some question among City officials as to whether the City desires the addition of the missing moves to the Amboy interchange at the expense of their proposed housing.

After this meeting, the attendees were invited to stay for the following citizens workshop to view the plans showing the conceptual design including necessary takings from specific properties, and to hear the general comments of the attending public.

CC: Tom Kendig

I-2513
LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETING
APRIL 23, 1998

| | |
|---|---|
| Patsy Keever | Buncombe County Commissioner |
| Tommy Sellers | City Council |
| Earl Cobb | City Council |
| Bob Parrish | Chairperson - TAC Asheville |
| Charles Grimes | Vice Chairperson - TAC Asheville |
| Cathy Ball | City of Asheville |
| James M. Cheeks | City of Asheville |
| David Snyder | FHWA |
| Steve Belcher | FHWA |
| Ron Fuller | Asheville MPO Planner |
| Coy F. Rice | Mayor - Town of Woodfin |
| Charles Bradley | Mayor Pro tem - Town of Woodfin |

**MEMORANDUM**

TGS

**DATE:** April 27, 1999

**TO:** File

**FROM:** TGS Engineers

**SUBJECT:** MPO Concerns Meeting for New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

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A meeting was held on Monday, April 26, 1998 in Room 160 of the Highway Building in Raleigh to discuss project issues raised by the Asheville MPO. The following attended:

Janet D'Ignazio
Larry Sams
Whit Webb
Ray McEntire
Jay Bissett
Tom Kendig
Carl Goode
Len Hill
Ken Burleson
Rich Fontanilla

The meeting started with Len Hill noting the list of concerns about the project that was submitted by the MPO (attached). He then asked Tom Kendig to explain the project history. Whit Webb cautioned about setting precedents, noting NCDOT would be expected to provide betterments adopted on this project for all projects. Then, Ken Burleson started through the list of MPO concerns to determine how each should be addressed.

**1. Bike facility under I-240 at Hominy Creek.** This request for a modification to Project U-2902 is a direct result of the planning for the project replacing the NC 191 bridge over Hominy Creek and is not considered as part of the subject project. It was noted that U-2902 is currently under construction and therefore, any additions to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles should be requested from the NCDOT Bicycle program.

2. **Bike Path to connect Amboy Road with Hominy Creek Park.** This concern is for NCDOT

to provide R/W with the I-26 Connector project that will contain a proposed bike trail. This trail is part of TIP Project E-3608 to link Hominy Creek Park along the French Broad River to the former speedway property along Amboy Road. Therefore, I-2513 project plans will include bike accommodations from Amboy Road to the end of the access road serving the properties along the French Broad River, and a path along the R/W outside of C/A fence into Aston Park Hospital Property where the proposed path alignment and I-240 R/W diverge.

**3. Full interchange at Amboy Road (SR 3556).** NCDOT is looking at revisions to include a full interchange at Amboy Road and I-240. The resulting additional impacts will be determined and discussed with the City when available.

**4. Improvements to Amboy Road (SR 3556).** The NCDOT Program Development Branch is conducting a feasibility study (FS 9913D) considering improvements to this route. These improvements are not included in Project I-2513.

**5. Improvements to State Street crossing under I-240.** Since this crossing must be replaced by Project I-2513, a bridge length sufficient to accommodate anticipated improvements to State Street can be provided. In addition to the MPO suggestions for separated sidewalks, lighting and bike accommodations, the City Manager earlier requested the provision of a sidewalk to link to existing sidewalks along the south side of State Street. It was determined that NCDOT will provide a bridge over State Street of sufficient length to allow a future 32-foot face to face typical section with berms sufficient to accommodate 5-foot sidewalks and a 5-foot separation along both sides. However, no improvements to existing State Street are planned as part of this project. If sidewalks exist along State Street on either end of the underpass, or the City agrees to construct sidewalks along State Street in conjunction with the project, NCDOT will construct the sidewalks beneath the crossing as part of the project. Lighting beneath the crossing was not discussed.

**6. Salvaging Existing Housing.** Since no historic houses are anticipated to be impacted, moving houses will be addressed with owners at the R/W procurement stage of the project.

**7. Noise and Retaining Walls to be of Materials Indigenous to the Area.** Noise and retaining walls will be considered in eligible areas where they are desired by property owners. Construction materials other than concrete can be considered after wall sizes and locations are determined. Construction materials other than the most cost effective can be provided only if the City agrees to provide the additional costs. Earth berms requiring additional R/W cannot be considered in areas where they would require additional relocations.

**8. Lower I-240 at Haywood Road.** Due to the existing I-240 grade and clearance beneath Haywood Road, I-240 cannot be lowered while maintaining 4-lanes of traffic during construction. A longer and wider bridge needed along Haywood Road will require raising the elevation of Haywood Road at the crossing. Efforts are being made to reduce this elevation as much as possible.

**9. Separated sidewalks along Haywood Road Bridge.** Separating the sidewalks with planting strips on the Haywood Road bridge would require widening the structure. Widening the Haywood Road bridge to the south is not possible without raising Haywood Road due to the vertical clearance requirements over the Interstate. Additional width can be considered if the City agrees to provide the additional associated costs.

**10. Design Revisions for Alternate 2**. Ken Burleson displayed an alignment revision to Alternate 2 to consolidate traffic signals along Patton Avenue. TGS is analyzing the design to determine the intersection capacity.

**11. Available Open Space between Project and the French Broad River.** Whit Webb noted lands not used for highway purposes could not be condemned and purchased for non-highway use.

Since another meeting was scheduled in the room, this meeting ended before the remaining three issues were discussed. Janet D'Ignazio indicated she desired the City's position on these issues since they may be asked to provide the costs of betterments.

cc: Tom Kendig

May 21, 1999

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Meeting with COE and NCWRC concerning I-26 Connector in Asheville

On Tuesday May 18, 1999, Tom Kendig, Missy Dickens, Mike Lindgren, John Schrohenloher, Rich Fontanilla and Ken Burleson met with Steve Lund of the US Army Corps of Engineers and Marc Davis of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in the Division 13 office conference room to discuss the alternatives for the I-26 connector project. Ken described the three alternatives being considered for the project and provided the attached summary of the natural systems report for these officials. It was explained that Alternate 1 was unlikely to be preferred due to cultural resources issues. Alternate 2 was noted as being preferable to Alternate 3 when considering social and natural resource impacts.

Ken displayed an Alternate 2 revision that is being considered at the City's request to combine several intersections along Patton Avenue. This revision was noted to require approximately 425 feet of additional culvert along Smith Mill Creek in the Regency Park area. Mr. Lund appeared to be most concerned with the areas along Smith Mill Creek and requested a reconsideration of natural resources with Alternate 2 if the revision was adopted. Mr. Davis offered no concerns regarding species noting the developed character of the impacted areas. Mr. Lund felt further coordination could be conducted in Raleigh when other projects were being coordinated. Ken left a copy of the Natural Resource Report summary with both.

cc: Tom Kendig

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 828 437 4681
Fax 828 433 9146

May 26, 1999

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Meeting with Asheville Parks and Recreation Department concerning I-26 Connector (I-2513) in Asheville

On Tuesday, May 18, 1999, Tom Kendig, Missy Dickens, Rich Fontanilla and Ken Burleson met with Alan Grimes and Al Kopf of the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department in their conference room to discuss a proposed access road with possible bicycle accommodations to facilitate part of the proposed E-3608 bicycle route connecting Amboy Road with the Hominy Creek Park along the French Broad River. The proposed access road is located southwest of Amboy Road providing access to several parcels along the French Broad River floodplain.

Initially, it was thought that the proposed E-3608 bicycle facility could either use or parallel the alignment of the access road from the connection to Amboy Road westward to the end of the access road and then be extended as an independent facility within the project R/W further west to the Aston Park property. Ken explained that the current plans do not allow the extension of the E-3608 bicycle facility within the subject project R/W. Due to floodway/floodplain restrictions, a large retaining wall is proposed to minimize fill, keeping the project within the existing right of way at the western end of the proposed access road. Since the E-3608 bicycle path cannot be constructed on the bank within the existing R/W, the City will look at the plans and determine if they want the E-3608 facility to follow the proposed access road from the western end to Amboy Road.

Ken also explained NCDOT is considering a modification to the Amboy Road interchange that could affect the location of the access road entrance into Amboy. Since this entrance and the access road will be located on City land currently proposed for a park, this entrance and the access road plans should be coordinated with City Parks and Recreation.

The retaining wall design along the Amboy Road ramp of the I-26 connector project was noted and studied. Ken discussed the wall using Ko & Associates' preliminary plans. The design and justification for the retaining wall were questioned and could not be answered without design personnel at the meeting. Ken offered to consult with Ko & Associates and NCDOT design officials to determine the floodplain/floodway limits and clarify the need for the wall.

Al Kopf noted the City wants to discuss the plans and meet again with project personnel when the location for the access road intersection with Amboy Road is determined.

cc: Tom Kendig

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8880
Fax [illegible]

1-5 West Parkers [illegible]
[illegible]
Morgantown, [illegible]
Phone [illegible]
Fax [illegible]

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Meeting with City of Asheville personnel concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** July 27, 1999

On Thursday, July 22, 1999, at 9:00 A.M., Tom Kendig (NCDOT), Ken Burleson, and Rich Fontanilla attended an I-2513 coordination meeting at the City of Asheville Public Works/Engineering Building with the following City of Asheville personnel:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ron Fuller | Planning and Development |
| Mark Combs | Fire Department |
| Wayne Hamilton | Fire Department |
| Suzanne Malloy | Public Works |
| Mark Slaughter | Public Works |
| Michael Moule | Traffic Engineering |

The purpose of this meeting was to follow-up and discuss project issues Ron Fuller collected from the City and local agencies which he presented to NCDOT several months ago. Ron Fuller was the main facilitator for the meeting while Tom and Ken addressed these issues and concerns with the City of Asheville personnel.

The meeting started by everyone introducing themselves. All of the City personnel present at the meeting were knowledgeable on the project. Tom provided a general outline of the project parameters while Ken discussed some of the specific issues concerning the project. Plans for the entire project, provided by TGS Engineers, were available during the meeting. The main issues presented by Mr. Fuller that were discussed during the meeting are summarized as follows:

**Proposed asphalt bicycle/pedestrian path in conjunction with NC 191.** There was some misunderstanding about how this project related to I-2513 and not the current U-2971 under construction. Tom said this project is separate from I-2513 and is to be handled accordingly.

**Coordination for proposed bicycle/pedestrian facility from Amboy Road to Hominy Creek Park.** The I-2513 project will accommodate this facility to the end of the access road along the river. However, no extra R/W exists for construction beyond this point.

**Full access interchange at I-240/Amboy Road.** Ken showed a plan from Ko and Associates that displayed a full interchange at I-240/Amboy Road. He left the plan with Ron Fuller for City comments.

**Design improvements for Amboy Road with respect to park and recreation amenities.** NCDOT is studying this as a separate project.

**Removal of Stewart Street pedestrian overpass and improvements to State Street underpass.** Sufficient clearances at State Street are planned to allow a future 32' face to face with 5' sidewalks. The issue concerning the underpass lighting is currently being studied by NCDOT.

**Salvage existing housing by moving them to another lot instead of using demolitions.** NCDOT is supportive of this effort and will cooperate with City efforts later in the project process.

**Construction of noise barriers and retaining walls.** The City of Asheville requests that the construction materials for noise barriers and retaining walls be indigenous to the area. If the City will provide betterment costs, NCDOT will consider this when wall locations are determined.

**Lower I-240 instead of raising Haywood Road.** This request is not possible since bridge construction for the Haywood Road overpass must be done before the connector is constructed. The bridge construction must be the first phase once construction starts. The longer bridge will require a deeper superstructure and to achieve appropriate clearance over the new I-26, will require raising Haywood Road.

**The bridge at Haywood Road and I-240 should be constructed with wide sidewalks to ensure the safety of bicyclist and pedestrians in the area.** This request cannot be accommodated without further raising Haywood Road due to clearance restrictions.

**Improve traffic intersections along Patton Avenue.** Ken displayed Alternate 2 (Revised) to the City personnel , which shows combining several Patton Avenue intersections. This plan is currently being investigated.

**Open space between the French Broad River and the new I-26 connector.** The City of Asheville wants to use possibly available land between the river and the new roadway for a linear recreational park. Tom said NCDOT will look into the matter if lands are available. This would happen during the right of way phase of the project.

**Bike and pedestrian linkage across French Broad River.** The City would like to have this linkage implemented with the new I-26 bridge structure. NCDOT will consider this issue if the City has definite plans for connecting facilities on both sides of the river.

Another issue of considerable concern was the design of Burton Street at Haywood Road. Because of the proximity of historically eligible Friendly Grocery Store, Burton Street is slated to become dead-ended or a "right-in only" access at Haywood. Ken suggested a "jug-handle" configuration for a turn-around to allow two-way traffic along much of Burton Street south of Baker Street. However, this action will result in Baker Street providing service to much of the current Burton Street traffic. A desire to accommodate emergency vehicles on Burton Street was noted. Tom and Ken addressed this issue by acknowledging that improvements to Baker Street may be necessary. They asked the City for their recommendations for these improvements.

Ken provided Ron Fuller a Ko and Associates developed plan of the Amboy Road/I-26 full interchange for the City to use in developing comments.

cc: Tom Kendig

City of Asheville
I-2513 Meeting

7/22/99

| Name | Representing |
| --- | --- |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| Tom KENDIG | NCDOT |
| Mark Combs | City of Asheville - Public Works |
| WAYNE HAMILTON | City of Asheville |
| Suzanne Molloy | COA - Public Works. |
| MARK SLAUGHTER | COA - Public Works |
| Ron Fuller | COA - Planning & Dev |
| RICH FONTANILLA | TGS ENGINEERS |
| MICHAEL MOULE | CITY OF ASHEVILLE - TRAFFIC ENG |

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Bicycle Task Force Meeting concerning Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** August 23, 1999

At 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 19, 1999, the following attended a meeting to discuss concerns expressed by the local Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council offices in Asheville:

| | |
|---|---|
| Bill Marley | FHWA |
| John Schrohenloher | FHWA |
| Gerry Hardesty | Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force |
| Connie Duncan | Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force |
| Oliver Gajda | City of Asheville, MPO |
| Claudia Nix | Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force |
| Dwayne Stutzman | NC Division & Parks & Recreation |
| Tom Redinger | TCC & Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force |
| Elizabeth Teague | Land-of-Sky Regional Council |
| Rich Fontanilla | TGS Engineers |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| Tom Kendig | NCDOT |
| Susan Roderick | Quality Forward |

All attendees introduced themselves and Ken provided an overview of the project displaying the conceptual plans for Alternates 2 and 3 explaining that Alternate 1 was no longer being given serious consideration due to the cemetery involvement. He then pointed out several issues which indicate Alternate 2 may result in fewer impacts than Alternate 3.

Several points concerning the routing of the project and the development of an 8-lane width along existing I-240 were noted. The differences in 6-lanes verses 8 were discussed and it was explained how 6 would require almost the same impacts as 8 without providing adequate capacity. Safety improvements and constructibility were noted during this discussion.

The attendees then reviewed a list of concerns expressed by the Bike/Pedestrian Task Force which were almost identical to a list submitted by the MPO. Each item of concern was discussed and Tom Kendig of NCDOT provided the responses given to the MPO. Tom, Ken, and John Schrohenloher of the FHWA elaborated on the design modifications that have been adopted as a result of the comments, and also on the constraints that have prevented the adoption of all of the request made in the comments.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

**Memo To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

Subject: New ~~I-26~~ Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

Date: September 3, 1999

On Wednesday, September 1, 1999, the following personnel met to discuss several issues regarding the subject project:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| Rich Fontanilla | TGS Engineers |
| Tom Kendig | NCDOT - Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch |
| Everett B. Ward | NCDOT - Planning and Programming |
| John Schrohenloher | FHWA |
| Debbie Barbour | NCDOT - Highway Design Branch |
| Roy Shelton | FHWA |
| Jim West | NCDOT - Right of Way Branch |
| Carl Goode | NCDOT Citizens Participation |
| Tony Bowers | FHWA |
| Jay Bissett | NCDOT - Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch |
| Bill Gilmore | NCDOT - Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch |
| Len Hill | NCDOT - Preconstruction |
| Calvin Leggett | NCDOT - Planning and Programming |
| David Scheffel | NCDOT - Design Services Unit |

Three principal issues; environmental justice, preferred alternative selection, and proposed design modifications were discussed. The first item discussed was environmental justice (E.J.). Five areas of E.J. concern identified by NCDOT were noted. Of the five, two areas, the Haywood Road/Westwood Place area and the Westwood Place area, were combined for public meeting purposes. Public meeting in these two, along with the Burton Street area have been conducted. The Westwood and Burton areas are located between Haywood Road and Patton Avenue and have differing anticipated project impacts depending on the alternative selected. The remaining two, Bingham Road and Montford Hills have essentially the same project impacts regardless of the alternative selected and public meetings have not been conducted in these areas.

The public meeting in the Westwood Place area was discussed and it was decided to return to the

area with another meeting of community leaders to focus on the area specifically to determine desired mitigation measures.

The meetings and other communications with the Burton Street area which resulted in numerous mitigation requests were noted. Since relocation appears to be the area's principal concern, it was determined that the project could provide a retaining wall to avoid relocation of several residences. Other measures to mitigate project impacts through improvements to the community and community center that are listed in the attached letter were also generally discussed. It was determined that only those that would enhance the community infrastructure should be considered. Potential candidate mitigation measures for the community include improved street lighting , paving of Fayetteville Street, and landscaping. Potential candidate improvements for the community center include parking lot expansion and tennis court addition if suitable land is made available. Also mentioned as candidate improvements to the center were asbestos/lead paint removal for safety, and air conditioning for noise abatement. Project staff were directed to convey all of the requests to the City officials to solicit their assistance in meeting these needs.

The meeting then addressed the selection of a preferred alternative. After noting the potential impacts to the Burton Street neighborhood, the Westwood Place area and the Westgate Shopping Center and the comments from these areas in the pertinent public meetings, it was determined the Alternate 2 would be identified as a preferred alternative in the project NEPA document. Alternate 2 will impact less residences in E.J. areas, have less stream impact, and avoid historic properties. With Alternate 2, the retaining wall labeled Wall "D" along the Burton Street community was endorsed for further development. Coordination of this decision with City officials prior to the circulation of the document was encouraged.

Several proposed design modifications were also addressed. At the City's request, a proposed full interchange at Amboy Road was developed. This proposed design was shown and it was decided to add this full interchange to the plans if the City endorsed the layout.

The E-3608 bicycle/pedestrian facility was also discussed. This path is to be placed within the project right of way from Amboy Road to the Aston Park property. Since a retaining wall is planned be constructed along the existing fill slope to avoid floodway encroachment for most of this length, it was determined that the project could provide a wider right-of-way at the base of the retaining wall to accommodate the cross-section of the path near the bottom of the existing slope rather than lowering the base of a retaining wall to place the path beside the base of the wall.

A City requested alternate design for Alternate 2 combining intersections along Patton Avenue was shown. Since the intersection capacity for this modification appears to be inadequate, additional traffic volume information has been requested for further evaluation of this alternate. It was suggested to coordinate with the Division Traffic Engineer and to explain the operational difficulties with City Staff before eliminating this possible modification.

Lighting under State Street was discussed and it was determined that NCDOT would provide the lighting but the City must provide the power.

Finally, to separate the sidewalks from traffic lanes along Haywood Road across the I-240/I-26

bridge, the introduction of a barrier was discussed. The conclusion was a barrier would not be effective considering the low speeds along Haywood Road. With inadequate space for end treatments, a barrier would present a hazard to motor vehicles while causing circuitous pedestrian travel. With curbs and the low vehicle speeds between the intersections on each end of the crossing, the need for a barrier to provide additional pedestrian safety was not considered to be necessary.

Project I-2513
I-26 Asheville Connector
Management Meeting
Wednesday, September 1, 1999

# AGENDA

1) ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

   a) Demographic Information Review

   b) Public Involvement Summary

   c) Burton Street Neighborhood Requests

2) PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE SELECTION

3) REQUESTED DESIGN MODIFICATIONS

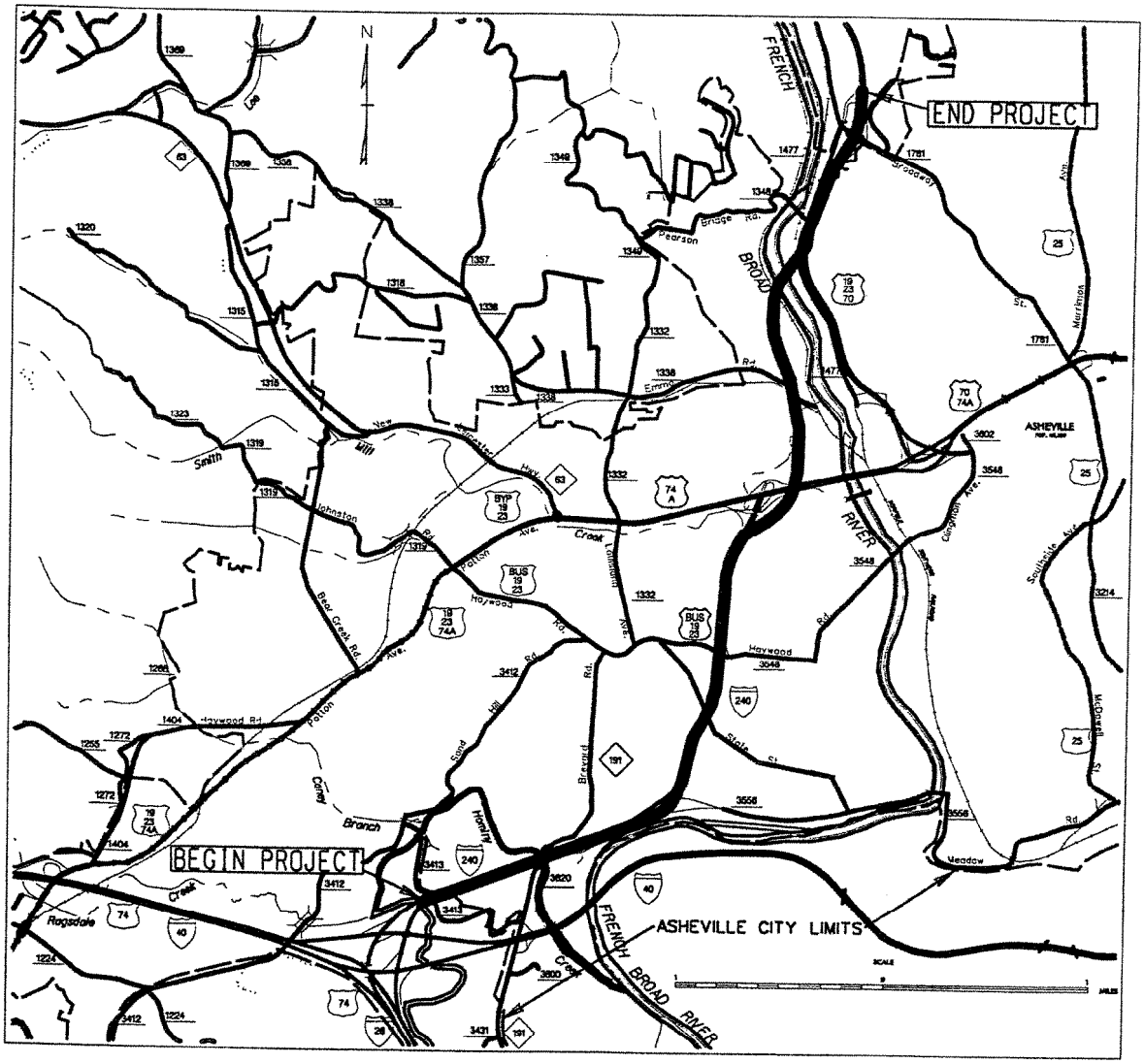
   a) Amboy Road Interchange

   b) E-3608 Pedestrian/Bicycle Facility

   c) Alternate Patton Avenue Design

   d) State Street Lighting

   e) Haywood Road Pedestrian Barrier


END PROJECT
BEGIN PROJECT
ASHEVILLE CITY LIMITS
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
ASHEVILLE
Smith Mill
Johnston Rd.
Patton Ave.
Haywood Rd.
Bear Creek Rd.
Caney Branch
Ragsdale Creek
Sand Hill Rd.
Brevard Rd.
Lamsdale Ave.
Emma Rd.
Pearson Bridge Rd.
Broadway
Murrinton Ave.
Clingman Ave.
Southside Ave.
McDowell St.
Meadow Rd.
State St.
Hawkins Ave.
Lee
N

## I-2513 PUBLIC MEETINGS

| Location | Date |
|---|---|
| Citizen's Workshop | 4/23/98 |
| Westwood Neighborhood | 3/29/99 |
| Burton St. Neighborhood (#1) | 3/30/99 |
| Haywood Rd. Businesses | 5/17/99 |
| First Church of Asheville (Burton St.) | 5/18/99 |
| Burton St. Neighborhood (#2) | 6/24/99 |
| Riverside Dr. Businesses | 7/21/99 |
| Westgate/Patton Ave. Businesses | 7/22/99 |
| Amboy Rd. Area | 8/19/99 |
| Bingham Rd. Area | TBA |
| Fairfax Ave. Neighborhood | TBA |
| Montford Ave. Neighborhood | TBA |

### Interest Group Meetings

| | |
|---|---|
| Local TAC | 11/7/96 |
| Western North Carolina Corridor Assn. | 3/10/98 |
| Riverlink Inc. | 3/10/98 |
| Local Public Officials Meeting | 4/23/98 |
| Leadership Asheville Seniors | 10/14/98 |
| Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods | 1/25/99 |
| TIP Hearing | 3/31/99 |
| City of Asheville Parks & Rec. Staff | 5/18/99 |
| City of Asheville Public Works and Engineering Staff | 7/22/99 |
| Land of Sky Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force | 8/19/99 |

# BURTON STREET NEIGHBORHOOD
# RETAINING WALLS

| | ALTERNATE 2 | | | | | ALTERNATE 3 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | w/o WALL | WALL A | WALL B | WALL C | WALL D | w/o WALL | WALL A | WALL B |
| RELOCATIONS | | | | | | | | |
| BUSINESSES | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| RESIDENCES | 11 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 28 | 24 | 22 |
| CHURCHES | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| CONST. COST | $0 | $862,155 | $2,100,000 | $2,420,000 | $990,000 | $0 | $862,155 | $2,100,000 |
| R/W SAVING | $0 | $335,200 | $755,600 | $818,000 | $397,600 | $0 | $335,200 | $755,600 |
| TOTAL COST | $0 | $526,955 | $1,344,400 | $1,602,000 | $592,400 | $0 | $526,955 | $1,344,400 |

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

145 West Parker Road (28655)
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Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 828 437 4681
Fax 828 433 9146

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers RJF

**Subject:** Meeting with Staff Managers of City of Asheville concerning Project I-2513 concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** September 30, 1999

On Wednesday, September 29, 1999, at 8:00 AM, Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) conducted a meeting at the City of Asheville Municipal Building concerning I-2513 with the following personnel:

| | |
|---|---|
| Jim Westbrook | COA-City Manager |
| Michael Moule | COA-Traffic Engineer |
| Cathy Ball | COA-City Engineer |
| Irby Brunson | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Faye Harper | COA-Police, Traffic Unit |
| Alan Glines | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Jim Orr | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Ron Fuller | COA-Planning & Development |
| Robert Griffin | COA-Fire Department |
| John Rukavina | COA-Fire Department |
| Scott Shuford | COA-Planning & Development |
| Paul Benson | COA-Planning & Development |
| Gerald Green | COA-Planning & Development |
| Oliver Gajda | COA-Public Works |
| Bruce Black | COA-Transit Service |
| Tom Aardema | COA-Police |
| Ross Robinson | COA-Police |

Colored functional maps of Alternate 2, Alternative 3, and the proposed Amboy Road full interchange were displayed. Aerial photographs of the project area were also shown. Other visual aids included hand-outs on cost/relocation alternate comparison, Burton St. neighborhood needs list, and project map showing the proposed roadway alignment.

Tom started the meeting by discussing the general project parameters. He then presented the following issues: designating Alternate 2 as the preferred alternate, mitigation for the Burton St. neighborhood, and the proposed improvements to Amboy Road interchange. The staff managers were also given the opportunity to discuss any questions and concerns they might

have.

Alternate 2 was designated by NCDOT as the preferred alternative. Tom explained that it was chosen because Alternate 2 did not affect historical property (Riverside Cemetery) or greatly impact a residential neighborhood (Burton St. community) as Alternate 1 and Alternate 3 would have, respectively.

Tom briefly discussed some mitigation efforts that are being considered for environmental justice areas such as the Burton St. community. Infrastructure-type improvements such as road repavement and would likely be provided by the NCDOT. Noise walls and retaining walls are also being considered for these neighborhoods. Cathy Ball indicated a desire for City staff to be informed and involved in the neighborhood mitigation efforts to avoid conflicts with any City plans for these areas

The revised plan for Amboy Rd. interchange includes an exit loop off I-26/240 South on to Amboy Rd. and an exit ramp off Amboy Rd. onto I-26/240 North. A concern the staff personnel had was the amount of additional right-of-way that would be needed for the exit loop from the interstate onto Amboy Rd. Tom noted that approximately15-20 additional residential units would have to be relocated. City officials noted that affordable housing projects are in the vicinity of the exit loop. City engineers and planners wanted to consider removing the exit loop and utilizing a "diamond" type configuration for entrance onto Amboy Rd. from I-26/240 South; thus minimizing the amount of right-of-way allocated and the number of relocatees. They will discuss such revisions and respond to Tom as soon as possible.

Improvements on Haywood Rd. were also discussed with the city personnel. Burton St. is slated to be a "right-in" and "right-out" only at Haywood Rd. The proposed alignment at the intersection of Burton St. and Haywood Rd. was shifted more to the east due to the close proximity of the historically significant building at the corner (once known as Friendly Grocery Store) of Haywood Rd. and Burton St..

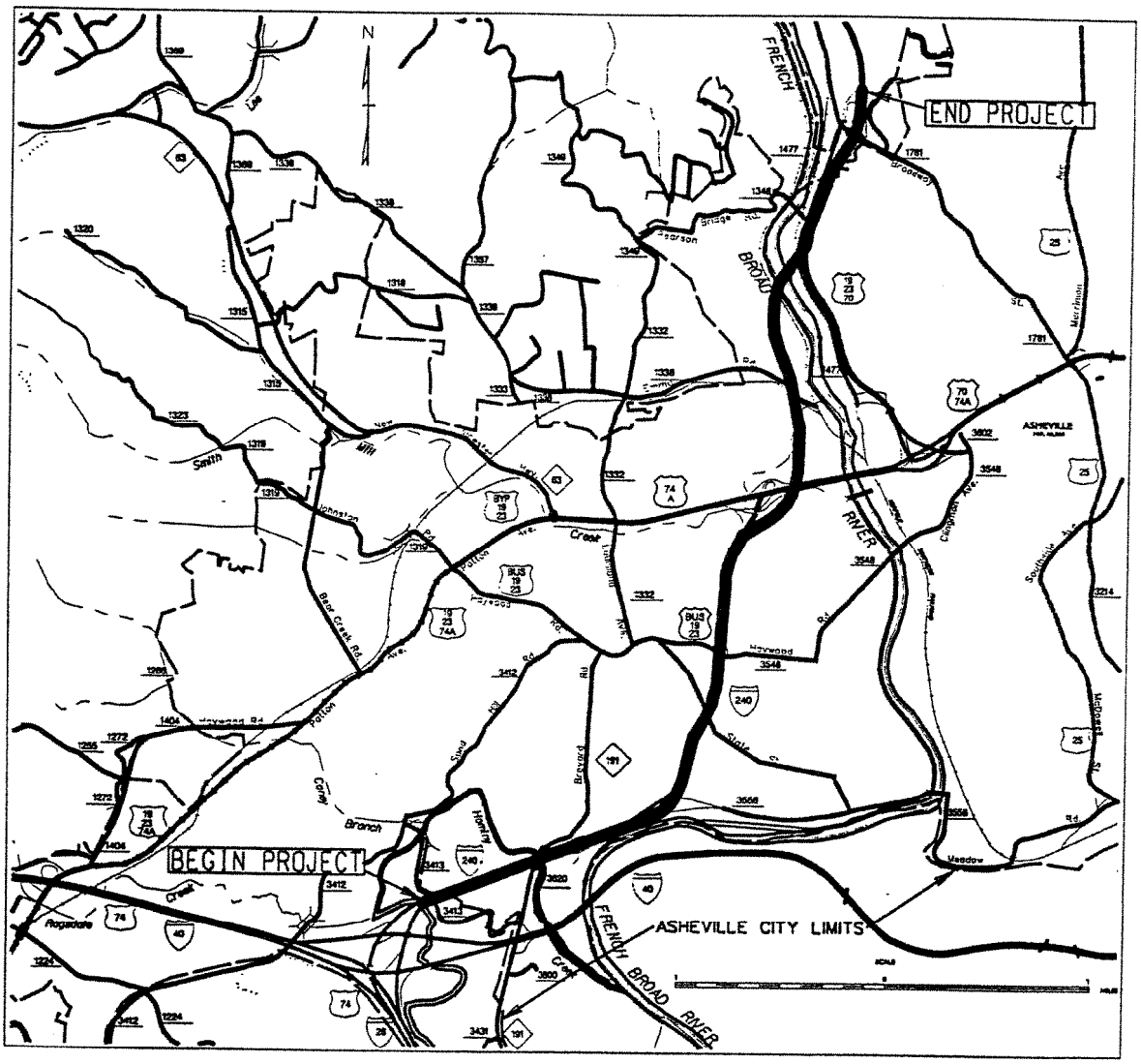
A concern the COA Fire Department expressed was to provide for water access through the noise walls in case of an emergency on I-26/I-240. Tom recognized that need as being requested earlier and efforts will be made to be sure this concern is noted in the environmental document.

The meeting ended at approximately 9:30 AM.

| NAME | AGENCY |
| --- | --- |
| Jim Westbrook | City (MANAGER) |
| MICHAEL MOULE | CITY TRAFFIC ENG. |
| Cathy Ball | City TRAFFIC ENG. |
| Delly Brunson | City - Parks + Recreation |
| Jaye Harper | city - Police - Traffic Unit |
| Alan M. Golines | City Park + Rec |
| JIM ORR | City - PARKS & RECREATION |
| Ken Burleson | TGS Engineers |
| TOM KENDIG | NCDOT PDEA |
| RICH FONTANILLA | TGS ENGINEERS |
| RON FULLER | COA - PLANNING |
| ROBERT GRIFFIN | COA FIRE DEPT |
| John Rubarine | Asheville Fire Department |
| SCOTT SHUFORD | Asheville Planning & Dev |
| Paul Benson | City Planning |
| GERALD GREEN | ASHEVILLE PLANNING & DEVMT |
| Oliver Gajda | City - Public works |
| BRUCE BLACK | COA - TRANSIT |
| TOM AARDEMA | COA - POLICE |
| ROSS ROBINSON | COA - POLICE |

I-26

| Name | Agency | Phone |
|---|---|---|
| Cathy D. Ball | CoA | 5405 |
| Deby Benson | CofA - Parks | 5800 |
| Jaye Harper | CofA Police | 251-4910 |
| Alan [illegible] Gunes | [illegible] | [illegible] |
| JIM ORR | CofA Parks | 259-5805 |
| Ken Burkson | TGS Engineers | 919-319-8850 |
| [illegible] | [illegible] | [illegible] |
| RICH FONTANILLA | TGS ENGINEERS | 919-319-8850 |
| BRUCE BLACK | CoA Transit | 828-259-5691 |
| Tom Aardema | COA Police | 259-5875 |
| ROSS Robinson | COA Police | 259-5880 |


END PROJECT
BEGIN PROJECT
ASHEVILLE CITY LIMITS
FRENCH BROAD RIVER
ASHEVILLE
Smith
Mill
Creek
Johnston
Patton
Haywood
Bear Creek Rd.
Sand Hill Rd.
Brevard
Hominy
Coney
Branch
Rogadale
Meadow
Merrimon
Clingman Ave.
Southside Ave.
McDowell St.
State St.
Broadway
Bridge Rd.
Pearson
N

## I-2513 PUBLIC MEETINGS

| Location | Date |
|---|---|
| Citizen's Workshop | 4/23/98 |
| Westwood Neighborhood | 3/29/99 |
| Burton St. Neighborhood (#1) | 3/30/99 |
| Haywood Rd. Businesses | 5/17/99 |
| First Church of Asheville (Burton St.) | 5/18/99 |
| Burton St. Neighborhood (#2) | 6/24/99 |
| Riverside Dr. Businesses | 7/21/99 |
| Westgate/Patton Ave. Businesses | 7/22/99 |
| Amboy Rd. Area | 8/19/99 |
| Bingham Rd. Area | TBA |
| Fairfax Ave. Neighborhood | TBA |
| Montford Ave. Neighborhood | TBA |
| Westwood Neighborhood (#2) | TBA |
| State St. Neighborhood | TBA |

### Interest Group Meetings

| | |
|---|---|
| Local TAC | 11/7/96 |
| Western North Carolina Corridor Assn. | 3/10/98 |
| Riverlink Inc. | 3/10/98 |
| Local Public Officials Meeting | 4/23/98 |
| Leadership Asheville Seniors | 10/14/98 |
| Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods | 1/25/99 |
| TIP Hearing | 3/31/99 |
| City of Asheville Parks & Rec. Staff | 5/18/99 |
| City of Asheville Public Works and Engineering Staff | 7/22/99 |
| Land of Sky Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force | 8/19/99 |

09/24/1999

# ALTERNATE COMPARISON

| | ALT. 2 | ALT. 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Estimated Costs** | | |
| Construction | $102,090,000 | $113,262,000 |
| Right of Way | $36,626,400 | $29,453,800 |
| Total | $138,716,400 | $142,715,800 |
| **Relocations (N. of Haywood Rd.)** | | |
| **Businesses** | | |
| E.J. Areas | | |
| Burton | 4 | 4 |
| Westwood | 4 | 4 |
| Subtotal E.J. Area Bus. | 8 | 8 |
| Others along New Loc. | 49 * | 12 |
| **Total** | 57 | 20 ** |
| **Residences** | | |
| E.J. Areas | | |
| Burton | 5 | 24 |
| Westwood | 11 | 13 |
| Bingham | 18 | 18 |
| Subtotal E.J. Area Res. | 34 | 55 |
| Others along New Loc. | 17 | 11 |
| **Total** | 51 | 66 |
| **Churches** | | |
| Burton | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | 1 | 1 |
| **Historic Properties (4F)** | 0 | 1 |

* Includes 38 Westgate Shopping Center Businesses

** 17 are common with Alternate 2

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Meeting with City Council Members of City of Asheville concerning Project I-2513 concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** September 30, 1999

On Monday and Tuesday, September 27-28, 1999, Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) conducted sessions at the City of Asheville Municipal Building concerning I-2513 with the following personnel:

| Name | Position | Time/Date of Session |
|---|---|---|
| Leni Sitnick | Mayor-COA | 2:00 PM/Sept. 27 |
| Earl Cobb | Council Member-COA | 2:00 PM/Sept. 27 |
| Barbara Field | Council Member-COA | 3:00 PM/Sept. 27 |
| Chuck Cloninger | Council Member-COA | 4:00 PM/Sept. 27 |
| Edward Hay | Council Member-COA | 9:00 AM/Sept. 28 |
| O.T. Tomes | Council Member-COA | 9:00 AM/Sept. 28 |
| Tommy Sellers | Council Member-COA | 10:00 AM/Sept. 28 |

Colored functional maps of Alternate 2, Alternate 3, and the proposed Amboy Road full interchange were displayed. Other visual aids included hand-outs on cost/relocation alternate comparison, Burton St. neighborhood needs list, and project map showing the proposed roadway alignment.

Tom started the sessions by discussing the general project parameters. During the sessions, he addressed the following issues: designating Alternate 2 as the preferred alternate, mitigation for the Burton St. neighborhood, and the proposed improvements to Amboy Road interchange. The council members were also given the opportunity to discuss any questions and concerns they might have.

Tom explained that Alternate 2 has been designated as the preferred alternate by NCDOT. He noted several reasons for this decision. Alternate 1 is essentially no longer being considered due to its proposed alignment in the near vicinity of Montford Historic District which includes historic Riverside Cemetery. The two main factors in not choosing Alternate 3 as the preferred alternate are the substantial impacts to the Burton St. neighborhood, and the access problems to Westgate Shopping Center. Alternate 3 would relocate a substantial number of residencies in the Burton St. neighborhood that would be avoided by Alternate 2. Since Burton St. is a low-income, minority community, impacts to this area involve environmental justice

policy. The access plan to Westgate in Alternate 3 is viewed to be inconvenient and troublesome and, therefore, it is assumed the center would eventually suffer. Alternate 3 also has more impacts to the natural environment than Alternate 2

Tom presented the Burton St. mitigation efforts to the Council. It included a list of needs for their benefit compiled by the neighborhood. He explained that NCDOT is willing to provide the community with infrastructure-type services (ie: repavement of Fayetteville St., HVAC repair, new tennis courts, etc.). A proposed noise wall and retaining wall are also being planned in the Burton St. area. The retaining wall is not considered cost-justifiable, but with the forecasted environmental justice impacts associated with the neighborhood, the wall was approved.

A revised proposed plan for a full Amboy Rd. interchange requested by the City, was also presented to the Council. An exit loop from proposed I-26 South to Amboy Rd. and an exit ramp from Amboy Rd. to I-26 North was added. It was noted additional right-of-way purchase and relocations would occur if this proposed interchange was approved. Tom could not give an exact number of additional relocations due to the lack of and mapping information for the impacted area, but it was estimated approximately 15-20 residential units would be affected.

A major concern the council wanted to discuss was the decision to provide eight lanes on proposed I-26/I-240 from I-40/I-240 interchange to Patton Ave./I-240 interchange. Tom noted that the future 20-year design traffic volumes, which were based on the region's projected growth rate, would require eight lanes for an acceptable level of service.

Mayor Sitnick provided the attached proposed plan that would route I-26 around West Asheville to avoid eight lanes along I-240. It was pointed out that the "bypass" would not alleviate congestion problems along the Smokey Park Bridges. She and Councilman Cobb suggested both the new connector and the bypass be provided in lieu of widening existing I-240 to eight lanes.

Barbara Field was supportive of the planned project but indicated reservations concerning eight-lanes along I-240. Chuck Cloninger was also supportive and showed concern for noise walls and other betterment features. Earl Hays was especially concerned with the additional impacts from a full interchange at Amboy Road. O.T. Tomes seemed most concerned about the impacts to the Westgate businesses. Councilman Sellers was also concerned about the additional Amboy Road interchange impacts noting planned development in the area. With the exception of the Mayor and Councilman Cobb, the Council seemed supportive with all having reservations about eight-lanes along I-240. All wanted attractive noise walls and landscaping betterments.

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 828 437 4681
Fax 828 433 9146

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** Interagency Meeting concerning I-2513, New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, State Project 8.U843701, Federal No. MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** October 22, 1999

On Thursday, October 21, 1999, Tom Kendig, Rich Fontanilla and Ken Burleson met with interagency officials including Steve Lund (COE), John Hennessy (DWQ) and David Cox (NCWRC) to discuss the status of the subject project.

After Tom and Ken briefly described the project development to date, the agency officials were asked about any concerns regarding the approval status of the project. Mr. Lund acknowledged the purpose and need and alternative approvals were achieved during the Phase I Study conducted by Statewide Planning. Roy Shelton asked Steve Lund to put the project out for public notice after completion of the EA to avoid any confusion and delays regarding the 404 permit and merger team coordination.

Tom and Ken explained that Alternative 2 is being identified as the NCDOT preferred alternate due to the comparative impacts (see attached handout). Several questions regarding the stream impacts of the alternates were answered and after some discussion, the agency officials agreed Alternate 2 is preferred.

10/18/1999

# ALTERNATE COMPARISON

| | ALT. 2 | ALT. 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Estimated Costs** | | |
| Construction | $102,090,000 | $113,262,000 |
| Right of Way | $36,626,400 | $29,453,800 |
| Total | $138,716,400 | $142,715,800 |
| **Natural Resources** | | |
| **Jurisdictional Areas** | | |
| Wetlands (Acres) | 0.570 | 0.490 |
| Pond (Acres) | 0.025 | 0.012 |
| Streams (Lin.Ft) | | |
| Bridged | 803.9 | 656.3 |
| Culverted | 1189.9 | 2512.1 |
| Relocated | 0 | 2352.5 |
| **Plant Communities** | | |
| Hardwood Forest | 15.7 | 20.6 |
| Mixed Forest | 8.8 | 10.9 |
| Urban/Disturbed Area | 162.6 | 171.4 |
| Pastoral Area | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Shrub/Scrub Assem. | 0.7 | 1.3 |
| **Historic Properties (4F)** | **0** | **1** |
| **Relocations (N. of Haywood Rd.)** | | |
| **Residences** | | |
| E.J. Areas | | |
| Burton | 5 | 24 |
| Westwood | 11 | 13 |
| Bingham | 18 | 18 |
| Subtotal E.J. Area Res. | 34 | 55 |
| Others along New Loc. | 17 | 11 |
| **Total** | **51** | **66** |
| **Churches** | | |
| Burton | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **1** | **1** |
| **Businesses** | | |
| E.J. Areas | | |
| Burton | 4 | 4 |
| Westwood | 4 | 4 |
| Subtotal E.J. Area Bus. | 8 | 8 |
| Others along New Loc. | 49 * | 12 |
| **Total** | **57** | **20 ** ** |

* Includes 38 Westgate Shopping Center Businesses

** 17 are common with Alternate 2

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 828 437 4681
Fax 828 433 9146

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** 12/13/1999 Meeting with New City Council Members of City of Asheville concerning Project I-2513 concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** December 16, 1999

On Monday, December 13, 1999 at 2:30 P.M., Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) conducted an I-2513 project informational meeting at the City of Asheville Municipal Building planning conference room with the following personnel attending:

| Name | Organization |
|---|---|
| Terry Whitmire | Council Member-COA |
| Barbara Field | Council Member-COA |
| Charles Worley | Council Member-COA |
| Brian Peterson | Council Member-COA |
| Jenn Burleson | Asheville Citizen-Times |
| John Schrohenloher | FHWA |
| Ron Fuller | COA-Planning |
| Michael Loyselle | FHWA |
| Tammy Jones | WWNC |
| Betty Lawrence | Independent Consultant-I-26 Awareness Group |

The main purpose of this meeting was to give a project overview to the recently elected new City Council members and discuss current updates pertaining to the project. Colored functional maps of Alternate 2, Alternate 3, and the proposed Amboy Road full interchange were displayed. A handout on cost/relocation alternate comparison was given to each Council member.

Tom started the meeting by discussing the origins of the I-2513 project. In 1989, the project was added to the 1990-1996 North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). After extensive study and input from both the public and environmental agencies, a preferred corridor alignment for this proposed project was determined. In 1995, NCDOT completed and circulated a Phase I Environmental Analysis for the Asheville Urban Area that included this preferred corridor. During the presentation, Tom

addressed the following issues: designating Alternate 2 as the preferred alternate, mitigation for the Burton St. neighborhood, and the proposed improvements to Amboy Road interchange. The council members were also given the opportunity to discuss any questions and concerns they might have.

Tom explained that Alternate 2 has been designated as the preferred alternate by NCDOT. He noted several reasons for this decision. Alternate 1 is essentially no longer being considered due to its proposed alignment in the near vicinity of Montford Historic District which includes historic Riverside Cemetery. The two main factors in not choosing Alternate 3 as the preferred alternate are the substantial impacts to the Burton St. neighborhood, and the access problems to Westgate Shopping Center. Alternate 3 would relocate a substantial number of residencies in the Burton St. neighborhood that would be avoided by Alternate 2. Since Burton St. is a low-income, minority community, impacts to this area involve environmental justice policy. The access plan to Westgate in Alternate 3 is viewed to be inconvenient and, therefore, it is assumed the center would eventually suffer. Alternate 3 also has more impacts to the natural environment than Alternate 2.

Tom presented the Burton St. community mitigation efforts to the Council. It included a list of needs for their benefit compiled by the neighborhood. He explained that NCDOT is willing to provide the community with transportation-related and noise abatement-type services (ie: resurfacing of Fayetteville St., HVAC repair for community center, community center parking lot, etc.).

A revised proposed plan for the Amboy Rd. interchange was also presented to the Council. A new interchange is needed in order to improve safety and to better facilitate access towards the downtown area. The plan shows a full access diamond configuration for the interchange with proposed I-26/I-240 and a limited access extension of Amboy Rd. from the interchange running parallel with proposed I-26 south and connecting with Brevard Rd.. Virginia and Fairfax Avenues are shown as cul-de-sacs. The new Council Members had favorable remarks for the interchange, but debated about connecting Virginia and Fairfax Avenues.

A major concern the council wanted to discuss was the decision to provide eight lanes on proposed I-26/I-240 from I-40/I-240 interchange to Patton Ave./I-240 interchange. Tom noted that the future 20-year design traffic volumes, which were based on the region's projected growth rate, would require eight lanes for an acceptable level of service expected on an interstate route.

Both Terry Whitmire and Barbara Field stated a dislike for the proposed Jersey Barrier median on the project alignment. Tom emphasized that this barrier was the most cost-effective for this project, but he could research other options with the proper NCDOT personnel.

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8850
Fax 919 319 6999

145 West Parker Road (28655)
Post Office Drawer 1359
Morganton, North Carolina 28680-1359
Phone 828 437 4681
Fax 828 433 9146

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** 12/14/1999 Meeting with City Staff Members of City of Asheville concerning Project I-2513 concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** December 16, 1999

On Tuesday, December 14, 1999 at 10:00 A.M., Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) conducted an I-2513 project informational meeting at the City of Asheville Municipal Building planning conference room with the following personnel attending:

| Name | Organization |
|---|---|
| John Schrohenloher | FHWA |
| Ron Fuller | COA-Planning |
| Michael Loyselle | FHWA |
| Alan Glines | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Elizabeth Teague | Land of Sky Regional Council |
| Scott Shuford | COA-Planning |
| Oliver Gajda | COA-Bike & Pedestrian Coordinator |
| Suzanne Molloy | COA-Public Works |
| Cathy Ball | COA-Engineering |
| Charlotte Caplan | COA-Community Development |
| Butch Kisiah | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Irby Brunson | COA-Parks & Recreation |
| Jon Orr | COA-Parks & Recreation |

The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss current updates pertaining to the project. Of particular interest, Tom and Ken presented the revised Amboy Road interchange and discussed the mitigation efforts for Burton Street community. Colored functional maps of Alternate 2, Alternate 3, and the proposed Amboy Road full access interchange were displayed.

A previous plan for adding the missing moves at this interchange showed an exit loop from I-26 south to Amboy Road. The displayed plan extends Amboy Road westward to Brevard Road at Shelbourne Road with a controlled access facility to include a full diamond interchange at the crossing of I-26/I-240. The extension of Amboy contains two way traffic with bike lanes. Virginia and Fairfax Avenues were not connected to the extension. This plan would require less right of way than the previously considered plan. Several City staff members thought Virginia and Fairfax should be connected to the extension.

Ken asked City officials for contacts in the Virginia Avenue neighborhood to assist in the arrangement of a future meeting to discuss the project. Suzanne Molloy requested traffic volumes at the Amboy Road interchange to assist in the City's evaluation of the proposed plans. A copy of the revised Amboy Road plan was left with the City staff members. The City staff is expected to review the plans and comment on the proposal to NCDOT in the next several weeks.

Next, Tom discussed the Burton Street community mitigation efforts as proposed in a list of needs compiled by the neighborhood. He explained that NCDOT is willing to provide the community with transportation-related and noise abatement-type services (ie: repavement of Fayetteville Street, HVAC repair for community center, community center parking lot, etc.). It was noted that NCDOT will provide services for the repavement and widening as long as the COA obtains the right-of-way. Any property that would be needed for a new community center parking lot would have to be purchased by the City or donated by the property owners. If a new parking lot is approved, the COA must do the planning. It was also noted that Alan Glines of COA Parks and Recreation Department would handle the coordination for the community center improvements for the City.

It was noted that some affordable housing units were located in the vicinity of the Amboy Road interchange. Tom said NCDOT would minimize as much as possible any anticipated impacts or relocations on these housing units.

The proposed pedestrian crossings at Haywood Road were questioned. Some City staff members felt there were safety concerns for these proposed crossings. Tom said he will coordinate with the private consultants responsible for this portion of the project and study this issue.

TGS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** 3/9/2000 Meeting with COA-Parks and Recreation staff concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** March 16, 2000

At 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, March 9, 2000 Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), Drew Joyner (NCDOT-PD&EA), Carl Goode (NCDOT), Chris Gatchell (FHWA), Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) met with Alan Glines and Jim Orr of COA-Parks and Recreation to discuss the current Burton Street Community mitigation list.

A copy of the current Burton Street mitigation list was passed out to each of the attendees. Alan presented an aerial photograph of the Burton Street area to the group with an overlay showing requested improvements to the community. The overlay showed the following proposed improvements:

-Five foot sidewalks along Fayetteville Street and Buffalo and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Sidewalks in front of the community center.
-Repavement of Fayetteville Street, Buffalo Street, Edgar Street and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Parking lot consisting of 24 spaces for the community center along Bryant Street The two properties where the proposed lot is to be located would be purchased.
-Direct access from the proposed parking lot to the center. The property where the proposed access is to be located would be purchased.
-Basketball court expansion to regulation size.
-Conversion of the upper basketball court to a standard size tennis court.

Ken suggested that the upper basketball court be converted into a parking lot for the center. It was noted by other attendees that there is it is not enough space to justify constructing a parking lot. However, this proposal was not ruled out; additional site planning would be conducted in the vicinity.

Tom wanted decisiveness and initiative on the part of FHWA to help the Burton Street community mitigation to move forward. Chris noted that the environmental justice issue is a relatively new process and the agency is learning more as these issues arise in projects across the

nation. He would report the updated Burton Street list back to FHWA Raleigh office.

Tom wanted to implement a strong coordination effort between COA-Parks and Recreation and COA-Public Works for the community project. In particular, Tom needs measurements on the proposed sidewalks, which will be needed for cost estimates.

attach.: Burton Street mitigation list

cc: Tom Kendig
Drew Joyner

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** 3/23/2000 Meeting with project planning team concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** March 30, 2000

At 8:30 A.M. on Thursday, March 23, 2000, Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) met with the following personnel at the NCDOT-PD&EA Conference Room to discuss the Burton Street community mitigation requests:

| Name | Organization |
|---|---|
| Tom Kendig | NCDOT-PD&EA |
| Drew Joyner | NCDOT-PD&EA |
| Roy Shelton | FHWA |
| Chris Gatchell | FHWA |
| Everett Ward | NCDOT |
| Carl Goode | NCDOT |

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the latest Burton Street mitigation request list among the project planning team and determine if these amenities on the list are to be further considered for government funding.

Tom and Drew discussed each amenity with the project planning team. With Roy providing vital feedback based on FHWA's viewpoints, the amenities were categorized under proposed funding sources.

NCDOT Funding

-Sidewalks in front of the community center.
-Five foot sidewalk along Bryant Street, length from Downing Street to Burton Street.
-Construction of 24 space parking lot for the community center along Bryant Street..
-Site landscaping
-Parking lot lighting
-Iron fencing at the front of the Burton Street Recreation Center.
-ADA compliant walkway from Bryant Street to the Recreation Center.

City of Asheville Funding

-Repavement of Fayetteville Street, Buffalo Street, Edgar Street and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Purchase of the two properties where the proposed 24 space community center parking lot is to be located.
-Direct access from the proposed parking lot to the center. The property where the proposed access is to be located would be purchased.
-Basketball court expansion to regulation size.
-Conversion of the upper basketball court to a standard size tennis court.
-Five foot sidewalks along Fayetteville Street and Buffalo and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Playground renovation at community center.

This categorization of amenities is not final; the City of Asheville staff will be contacted and a continued discussion will be conducted at a later time. The funding source for building renovations to the center (asbestos removal, rewiring, update HVAC, etc.) was not determined at the meeting. The building is currently being researched for possible historic significance.

Carl suggested finding other sources for funding, such as federal grants. Roy suggested private companies and social support groups as other channels for funding.

It was noted that visualizations of proposed sidewalks, repavements, parking lots, retaining walls, and noise walls should be presented to the community.

cc: Drew Joyner

Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, North Carolina 27511
Phone 919 319 8860
Fax 919 319 6999

TGS ENGINEERS

**Memorandum To:** File

**From:** TGS Engineers

**Subject:** 4/6/2000 Meeting with City of Asheville staff concerning the proposed I-26 Route, Asheville Connector along I-240 from I-26 to US 19-23-70 in Buncombe County, NC TIP No. I-2513, State Project 8.U843701, Federal Number MANHF 26-1 (53)

**Date:** April 13, 2000

At 11:30 A.M. on Thursday, April 6, 2000 Tom Kendig (NCDOT-PD&EA), Drew Joyner (NCDOT-PD&EA), Ken Burleson (TGS Engineers), and Rich Fontanilla (TGS Engineers) met with the following City of Asheville personnel at the COA Conference Room to discuss the Burton Street community mitigation requests:

| Name | Organization |
|---|---|
| Mark Combs | Public Works |
| Irby Brinson | Parks and Recreation |
| Ron Fuller | Planning and Development |
| Scott Shuford | Planning and Development |
| Cathy Ball | Engineering |
| James L. Westbrook | City Manager |

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the latest Burton Street mitigation request list with the City staff and the City manager and determine a preliminary plan for funding for these requests. This updated list reflects the guidance from FHWA.

Tom and Drew discussed each amenity with the staff members. They indicated that the NCDOT project could fund the following with the City's cooperation:

-Resurfacing of Fayetteville Street, Buffalo Street, Edgar Street and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Sidewalks in front of the Burton Street Community Center.
-A five-foot sidewalk along Bryant Street, length from Downing Street to Burton Street.
-Construction of 24-space parking lot for the Burton Street Community Center along Bryant Street.
-Site landscaping at the Burton Street Community Center.
-Parking lot lighting at the Burton Street Community Center.
-Iron fencing at the front of the Burton Street Community Center.
-ADA compliant walkway from Bryant Street to the Community Center.

Tom and Drew asked the City to consider funding:

-Purchase of the two properties where the proposed 24 space Burton Street Community Center parking lot is to be located.
-Direct access from the proposed parking lot to the Community Center. The property where the proposed access is to be located would be purchased by the City.
-Basketball court expansion to regulation size.
-Conversion of the upper basketball court to a standard size tennis court.
-Five-foot sidewalks along Fayetteville Street and Buffalo and the connecting streets Texas and Ohio.
-Playground renovation at the Burton Street Community Center.

Tom stressed a partnership and sharing of improvement costs between NCDOT and COA. Other possible funding sources such as private corporation contributions and state loan programs were also discussed. He also suggested that the community (Burton Street Neighborhood Association, I-26 Awareness Group, etc.) be involved with some of the labor aspects in implementing these mitigation requests, such as site landscaping and playground renovation as a community building exercise.

Cathy noted that Fayetteville Street was rated as a number 4 on the City's priority list for street resurfacing. However, Mark Combs who determines which streets on the list are improved, noted that since the community is under consideration for environmental justice concerns, the City could add this mitigation effort in a timely manner. The City offered to do the work if NCDOT would provide the materials.

Mr. Westbrook questioned the need for a 24-space parking lot for such a small center. Tom noted this concern. This will be reviewed during further studies.

The City recently has conducted a haz/mat survey on the community center that covered among other items, asbestos and lead paint. No major concerns were noted at the center. Tom emphasized that he would like for all improvements to the building to relate to impacts from the I-26 project (i.e., additional noise and air pollution mitigated with HVAC improvements). The City staff noted the structure had been evaluated for historic architecture and was not considered historic.

Tom and Drew requested cost estimates from the City's previous bond referendum to be used in planning for the Burton Street community improvements.

City staff noted that the community had failed to assist in labor for community improvement projects and had failed (worse than the City average) to vote for a recent bond referendum to fund park improvements, many of which were planned for Burton Street.

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## MINUTES
## ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING – APRIL 25, 2000
## 8:30 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Chairman Bissette called the meeting to order. After self-introductions, the group heard a brief presentation by Drew Joyner, NCDOT Project Manager for the I-26 Connector, regarding the current status of the Connector project. Mr. Joyner answered several questions about the project.

Chairman Bissette then initiated discussion regarding the expectations of the Committee members for the future public involvement process. There was agreement that Committee members shared the following expectations regarding the process:

- The primary objective of public involvement is to achieve community-wide consensus on the Connector project design through broad public involvement.
- The process must provide the best possible opportunity for questions to be asked and answered in an effective manner.
- The process needs to de-bunk the many myths surrounding the Connector project.
- The process must insure that the public understands the regional context of the project as well as the local context.
- The Committee's efforts must fully involve the media in the process to maximize the dissemination of information.
- All groups must commit to the process with the understanding that consensus requires compromise.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed Educational Meeting and its potential benefits to achieve many of the above expectations of the Committee. Timing of the Educational Meeting was discussed, with concern expressed that the project not be delayed. NCDOT representatives indicated that a mid-July completion of the entire public involvement process would not negatively impact the project schedule unless a major design change resulted from the public input. The Committee felt the format for the Educational Meeting needed to include a presentation from NCDOT on the project history, status and, most especially, its critical design constraints, as there was a strong desire to have local design efforts focus on areas of practical impact. A variety of dates and locations were suggested.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Design Forum. It was felt that this meeting should occur roughly two weeks after the Educational Meeting and be held in the same location. A possible meeting format was suggested by Mary Clayton. This format would involve having multiple design professionals develop independent ideas for Connector design; these ideas would be presented for public reaction at the Design Forum, with the most promising ideas identified and forwarded to NCDOT with a request for additional study. It was recognized that NCDOT would not be in a position to commit to specific design alternatives at the Design Forum due to technical considerations, but the Committee could expect ideas proposed through this Forum to be taken very seriously by the NCDOT.

It was noted that some design improvement ideas may be classified as "betterments" by the NCDOT. Examples of betterments cited by NCDOT include landscaping that requires extensive maintenance or sound walls faced in brick or other material. The marginal cost increase or added maintenance cost of these typically aesthetic considerations are generally funded by local sources rather than through the project budget (for example, if there was a recommendation that a retaining wall be faced in brick and the additional cost above the "standard" retaining wall surface was $100,000, the locality would pay the $100,000, rather than the full cost of the retaining wall). These betterments would require local approval prior to NCDOT adding them to the project.

Discussion ensued about the Committee's role regarding taking a position on ideas generated at the Design Forum. It was felt that the Committee should take a formal position and recommend ideas that it felt offered the most promise.

Chairman Bissette and Vice-Chairman Newman volunteered to meet with City staff to develop some logistical proposals (dates, times, places) for the two meetings as well as to further define the formats of the two meetings. The Committee would then reconvene on Wednesday, May 3 to finalize logistics and formats. The Committee meeting adjourned at 11:20 A.M.

## Committee Attendance

Present:

Louis Bissette, Chair
Brownie Newman, Vice-Chair
Leni Sitnick
Ron Ainspan
Jeff Kelly
Chuck Pickering
Charles Price
Mike Plemmons
Bradley Hix
Bob Shepherd
Betty Lawrence
Susan Ballard
Jim Coman
Karen Cragnolin

Absent:

Gloria Johnson
Tommy Sellers
Debby Vance
Yates Pharr
Susan Roderick

## Other Attendees

NCDOT and Related Staff:

Chris Gatchell, FHWA
Carl Goode, NCDOT
Thomas Kendig, NCDOT
Ken Burleson, TGS
Drew Joyner, NCDOT
Mary Clayton, Parsons-Brinkerhoff

City Staff:

Cathy Ball
Scott Shuford
Ron Fuller
Michael Moule

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## AGENDA
## Wednesday, May 3, 2000

**Introductions**

**Approval of Minutes of April 25, 2000**

**Discussion of Educational Meeting – Logistics and Format**

**Discussion of Design Forum – Logistics and Format**

**Other Items of Business**

**Next Meeting**

**Adjournment**

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## PROPOSED EDUCATIONAL MEETING LOGISTICS AND FORMAT

**Proposed Dates:** EITHER June 15 OR June 22

**Proposed Time**: 6:30 P.M. until 9:30 P.M.

**Proposed Location:** EITHER AB Tech – Laurel Auditorium OR Civic Center Community Room UNCA - Auditorium

**Proposed Agenda:**

**Welcome**

**Mission Statement – Community Coordinating Committee**

**Announcement of Design Forum**

**Presentation by NCDOT**
Project History (Macro/Micro), Chronology and Schedule
Public Involvement to Date
Current Status of Project
Project Design Constraints

**Relevant Highway Design Innovations/Concepts/Issues**
Presentations by Various Knowledgeable Local Sources

**General Question and Answer Session**

**Adjournment**

**Post-Meeting Specific Issue Discussion**

## Meeting Preliminaries and Followup:

- Press Releases, Pre-Meeting Media Contacts, City TV Scrolling – Roles?
- Topics and Local Speakers?
- Dress Rehearsal – Date?
- Written Questions – Need Forms
- Design Forum to Follow ~ 2 weeks after Educational Meeting

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## PROPOSED DESIGN FORUM LOGISTICS AND FORMAT

**Proposed Dates:** July 20th

**Proposed Times:** _____

**Proposed Location:** EITHER AB Tech – Laurel Auditorium OR Civic Center Community Room

**Proposed Agenda:**

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Purpose of the Design Forum**

**Presentations of Alternative Designs by Selected Design Professionals and NCDOT**

**Discussion and Critique**

**Summary of Ideas and Issues**

## Meeting Preliminaries and Followup:

- Press Releases, Pre-Meeting Media Contacts, City TV Scrolling – Roles?
- Selection of Design Professionals
- Written Questions – Need Forms
- Recommendation Meeting to Follow ~ 2 weeks after Design Forum

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## MINUTES
## ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING - May 3, 2000
## 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Vice Chairman Newman called the meeting to order. Vice Chairman Newman posed a question for discussion, "What is difference about this opportunity for public involvement and other opportunities we have had in the community?" There was some discussion. General consensus was:

- It should be an information exchange and sharing opportunity
- It should be conducted in a positive manner that allows sharing of ideas in a non-debate oriented setting

Potential dates were looked at for the Educational Forum. June 15, 2000 was selected as a date for that meeting. Ms. Baidas was able to secure Lipinsky Auditorium and some classrooms at UNC-A for that date.

Chairman Bissette arrived and assumed the chair. Mr. Ken Burleson, TGS Engineers, distributed some draft information concerning suggestions for the Educational Forum. The pages are attached to these minutes. Mr. Burleson briefly discussed the information for a proposed Educational Agenda, a Proposed Educational Meeting Project Presentation Outline and Proposed Specific Issues. It was clarified that the breakout sessions should be of a more educational orientation than design.

Discussion ensued concerning the use of outside consultants and engineers. No resolution was made, although names mentioned were Bill McDunn from the University of Virginia and Fred Craig of Parsons Brinckerhoff.

Dates for the Design Forum were discussed. July 21 was selected as a date where the same facilities at UNC-A would be available. That date was secured during the meeting. There was some discussion as to the need for an additional day (July 22). That issue was left unresolved.

Mr. Ainspan distributed and briefly discussed a document from the I-26 Connector Awareness Group regarding issues for the design forum. That document is attached.

Discussion ensued regarding the next meeting of the Community Coordinating Committee. It was agreed that the group would meet on May 16 at noon in the Large Conference Room on the fifth floor of City Hall. The purpose of that meeting would be primarily devoted to discussion of the Design Forum.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

**Committee Attendance**

Present:

Louis Bissette, Chair
Brownie Newman, Vice Chair
Ron Ainspan
Susan Ballard
Jim Coman
Tommy Sellers
Roger Derrough
Jeff Kelly
Mike Plemmons
Bob Shepherd
Betty Lawrence
Susan Roderick
Curtis Williams
Debbie Vance
Karen Cragnolin

Absent:

Karen Cragnolin
Gloria Johnson
Chuck Pickering
Yates Pharr
Bradley Hix
Mac Swicegood
Charles Price

Other Attendees:

Carl Goode, NCDOT
Drew Joyner, NCDOT
Mary Clayton, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Ron Fuller, COA
Philan Medford
Thomas Kendig, NCDOT
Ken Burleson, TGS Engineering
Michael Moule, COA
Max Phillips, NCDOT
Betty Jackson

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# PROPOSED
# EDUCATION MEETING
# AGENDA

1) Welcome

2) Mission Statement / Design Forum

3) Local Presentations?

4) Project Presentation

5) Question / Answer

6) Adjournment to Specific Issue Tables

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# PROPOSED
# EDUCATION MEETING
# PROJECT PRESENTATION OUTLINE

A. Background / Statewide Study

1) Purpose

2) Support of Alternative

B. Conceptual Design and Environmental Studies

1) Map Orientation

2) Existing I-240 Deficiencies

a. Capacity
b. Safety

3) Design Constraints

4) Design Features

a. Existing I-240
b. New Location

5) Summary

6) Betterments / Mitigation

# I-26 CONNECTOR
# PROPOSED
# SPECIFIC ISSUE TABLES

1) Design Criteria

2) Traffic Volumes / Capacity

3) Noise Abatement

4) R/W Impacts

**I-26 Connector Awareness Group**

% WNCA 70 Woodfin Place, Suite 326 Asheville, NC 28801 (828) 281-4800 x 75 www.main.nc.us/i26group

# I-26 Connector Awareness Group Issues For The Design Forum Process

## 1. PROJECT PHASING

a. The Issue

The name of this project is the I-26 Connector, but, in the current plans, the "connecting" aspect is secondary. As currently phased, the project calls for widening I-240 through West Asheville first, and then connecting I-26 through Asheville at a later date. The most critical aspect of the project for moving traffic, reducing accidents, and securing any possible economic development advantages of the road is to actually **connect** the northern and southern parts of future I-26.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- build a new bridge connecting the northern and southern parts of I-26 first
- build a re-designed Patton Avenue interchange second
- consider changes to I-240 through West Asheville only after completion of the new bridge and interchange

## 2. MINIMIZATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, AND BUSINESS IMPACT

a. The Issue

This project is massive in scale beyond the typical scope of present-day interstate projects and wholly out of proportion for a community of Asheville's size. The project includes an eight lane segment, requires the demolition of over 100 residences, and necessitates the relocation of over 60 businesses.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- maintain four lanes through West Asheville
- minimize pressure to widen I-240 through downtown and destroy the fabric of the central business district
- use a 50 mph design speed
- design for the geography of a mountain city of less than 75,000 people
- reduce the number of residential and business re-locations
- make no relocations solely to accommodate traffic during construction
- reduce intrusions into neighborhoods resulting from ramps and service roads that are located far from the primary lanes of travel and from large overpasses

## 3. APPROPRIATE SCOPE OF PROJECT TO INCLUDE EAST SIDE OF RIVER

a. The Issue

As currently conceived, the project does not address any problems on the east side of

the French Broad River. The approach to the Smoky Park Bridge is a natural fit with the overall context of this project that should be addressed while other issues are being solved.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- separate surface and interstate traffic
- limit Smoky Park Bridge to local Patton Ave. traffic
- explore the advantages of building the second bridge near the current bridge

## 4. USE OF CREATIVE, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN ELEMENTS

a. The Issue

Asheville is a beautiful city in a beautiful region of the country. This project goes through the heart of the community and parallels the French Broad River, which is the focus of re-development efforts to take advantage of a neglected natural amenity. Standard bridge railings, guardrails, and other design features may detract from the scenic beauty that contributes to Asheville's quality of life and economic vitality.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- use design elements reflecting the natural materials and architectural heritage of the area
- reflect, through design, the natural, cultural, and environmental values of the community

## 5. THOROUGH EVALUATION OF TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS

a. The Issue

Because traffic modeling is severely limited in the accuracy it can achieve and because much of the input is based on subjective engineering judgment, there is a perception that DOT can "cook the books" to generate whatever numbers it wants. Combining this perception with the frequent and unexplained changes in the projections used to support this project and the history of Asheville citizens exposing grossly inaccurate DOT traffic projections creates a climate of mistrust.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- use the new traffic model that Asheville is developing and the most up-to-date data available to re-check traffic projections
- model projections for four-, six-, and eight-lane alternatives so that comparisons are possible
- include induced traffic analyses in **all** model runs

## 6. INTEGRATION OF TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLANNING

a. The Issue

As a result of constantly improving knowledge, more and more transportation planning now actively addresses the linkages between transportation and land use planning. A

road project of this scope has may ramifications for land use in the region and presents many opportunities for supporting innovative land use projects. The current plans neither address the ramifications nor take advantage of the presented opportunities.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- design the project so as to support the re-development of Westgate as a mixed-use New Urbanist community
- incorporate walkable community design practices into the re-design of Patton Avenue as an urban boulevard which functions as a gateway to Asheville
- promote riverfront access and re-development

## 7. MINIMIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. The Issue

There are environmental issues associated with this project that should be addressed in the design instead of through recommended mitigation.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- acknowledge the air quality problem in the area and design appropriately to reduce it
- reduce or eliminate the impacts of surface water runoff to the French Broad River
- use design features that capture and filter surface water runoff before releasing it

## 8. FISCAL CONSTRAINT

a. The Issue

Funding for transportation projects is tight. Diversions of funds because of Hurricane Floyd, cost increases from rising oil prices, and increased maintenance costs all may affect this project. There should be full disclosure of the fiscal issues surrounding this project.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- identify the projected maintenance costs and indicate the likely amount of funding available for future maintenance
- use maintenance and other life-cycle costs as a decision criterion for which design to choose
- disclose immediately and publicly any effect on the project from funding changes
- correct immediately and publicly any misperceptions in the community related to funding issues

## 9. COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT DESIGN FORUM RESULTS

a. The Issue

There is a mixed perception in the community regarding the outcome of the Design Forum. Many are expecting significant design changes to come out of the Forum while others continue to believe that the current I-26 design is a "done deal." A lack of a

definitive statement from NCDOT concerning the expected outcomes has made it difficult to spread the idea that changes are possible.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- continue to solicit input from the public on the process for the Design Forum and all events and meetings preceding it
- disclose early and publicly all decisions made on all Design Forum processes
- produce a schematic engineering drawing at the Design Forum that reflects community consensus
- conclude the Design Forum with an agreed-upon process for implementation of the Design Forum's recommendations
- maintain the commitment to improving public participation consistent with the original intent of the FHWA citizen involvement pilot project

## 10. COMMUNITY-WIDE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a. The Issue

Of necessity, parts of planning for the Design Forum involve meetings with key stakeholders and small groups. However, since the ultimate goal is community-wide consensus, there should be as many well-publicized opportunities as possible for participation by all members of the public.

b. Suggestions to Consider

- involve the entire public in the final Design Forum workshop
- use small group "breakouts" as necessary to manage large public events
- synthesize the work "breakouts" into a final product

# I-26 Connector Community Coordinating Committee
# Leadership Group
# Minutes of May 9, 2000

The Leadership Group of the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) met at 2:00 PM on May 9, 2000, to discuss formats for the proposed education meeting and design forum. Attending this meeting were CCC Chairman Lou Bissette, Vice-Chair Brownie Newman, Ron Ainspan, and Curtis Williams. Staff members in attendance included Ken Burleson of TG&S (via telephone), Scott Shuford and Ron Fuller.

Much of the meeting revolved around the format for the Educational Meeting. After considerable discussion, the Leadership Group felt that the meeting should include the following components:

- Welcome/Introduction
- Mission Statement/Design Forum
- Presentations on Specific Technical Issues
- NCDOT Presentation on Connector Project
- General Question and Answer Session
- Adjournment to Specific Issue Tables

The Group debated the time frames which should be allowed for each component of the Educational Meetings. Ken Burleson indicated that he would need at least 40-45 minutes to do an adequate job on project presentation. It was felt that a cumulative 10-15 minutes would be needed for the welcome/introduction and mission statement/design forum components. More work needed to be done refining which issues should be covered under the **Presentations on Specific Technical Issues** section of the agenda. It was also felt that the question and answer session could be facilitated through requesting, but not requiring, written questions on index cards. The idea behind the written questions is to allow as many questions related to the project's impact on individual properties to be addressed during the specific issue break-out session.

The break out session would include tables on the following specific issues:

- Design Criteria
- Traffic Volume/Capacity
- Environmental Issues
- Right-of-Way Impact
- Aesthetic and Other "Betterments"

The Leadership Group did not have an opportunity to spend a substantial amount of time discussing the format for the Design Forum. Some discussion ensued regarding whether one day was sufficient time for the Design Forum to be effectively carried out, however, no decision was reached on this. Additional discussion ensued regarding whether the format for the Design Forum should be finalized after the Educational Meeting in order to allow ideas presented at that meeting to be included in the forum; again, no specific decision was reached. The Leadership Group meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 PM.

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
# I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

## AGENDA
## Tuesday, May 16, 2000

**Introductions**

**Approval of Minutes of May 3, 2000**

**NCDOT Discussion of Design/Time Constraints**

**Discussion of Educational Meeting – Logistics and Format**

**Discussion of Design Forum – Logistics and Format**

**Other Items of Business**

**Next Meeting**

**Adjournment**

# COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
## I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

### MINUTES 16
### MEETING – MAY ~~17~~, 2000
### NOON – 2:00 P.M.

Chairman Bissette called the meeting to order. After approval of the May 3, 2000 minutes, Scott Shuford indicated that the chair and vice-chair had met with staff, Ken Burleson of TG&S and two Committee members to attempt to work out the remaining details of the Educational Meeting and Design Forum. Minutes of that meeting were distributed. Mr. Shuford indicated that NCDOT had expressed some concern that a planned component of the Educational Meeting (the issues presentations) might address issues that could potentially delay the construction schedule of the I-26 project. He reiterated that a key element of the Committee's charge was to keep the project on schedule and pursuant to that, he had asked the NCDOT to provide information on design constraints that could not be compromised without delaying the project. Drew Joyner, Tom Kendig and Ken Burleson addressed this matter, listing the following constraints:

- Smoky Park Bridge cannot be widened to carry additional traffic lanes.
- Traffic maintenance during construction is a major design constraint.
- There are National Register and National Register eligible historic sites proximate to the project, including the Friendly Grocery Store, buildings along Haywood Road, Worley House, the Montford neighborhood, Richmond Hill Inn, and Riverside Cemetery.
- There is an archeological site that must be designed around.
- The Hominy Creek Bridge is a design constraint.
- Railroad lines and spurs must be designed around.
- There are various wetlands, creeks and floodplains that must be taken into consideration, including Smith Mill Creek.
- There is a landfill that must be designed around.

Discussion ensued, with several Committee members noting that meaningful design changes could occur without affecting any of the NCDOT's constraints, although the inability to widen Smoky Park Bridge and the need to maintain traffic were the primary limitations to large scale design changes. Tom Kendig indicated that an interchange on the east side of the river was "not on the table." Ron Ainspan distributed a proposed Educational Meeting format and summed up the Committee's expectations for the Educational Meeting by saying he hoped it would offer "a dose of reality along with a dose of inspiration."

Discussed shifted to what issues should be considered at the Educational Meeting. Betty Lawrence indicated that "betterment" issues should not be limited in scope at this time; it was noted that "betterment" issues were not typically as time-sensitive as several other considerations. Mayor Sitnick stated that three main issues dominated her constituent contacts:

- Design Speed/Safety
- Air Quality
- Eight-Laning

Using Mr. Ainspan's proposed meeting format as a guide, the Committee felt that most items on his list should be addressed in some fashion at the Educational Meeting, but that some key issues, generally those raised by the Mayor, should be singled out for a more detailed discussion during the Meeting, with others being better addressed at the breakout session after the general Meeting.