

APPENDIX F3

RECORDS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Date	Meeting Type	Attendees	Location	Purpose
11/15/2015	Corridor Public Hearing	Approximately 500 attendees	Renaissance Hotel, Asheville, NC	To discuss the DEIS, explain corridor location, design, relocations requirements/procedures, and the state federal relationship. Official comment session with transcribed proceedings and recorded comments and responses.
09/20/2016	Small group meeting - West Asheville Business Association (WABA)	40	Isis Restaurant	To discuss the LEDPA, design refinement process, and gather feedback regarding potential impacts.
09/20/2016	Small group meeting - Montford Neighborhood	Over 100	Isaac Dickenson Elementary School	Invited to Montford to discuss the LEDPA, the project status, and potential impacts such as noise, visual, air quality, land stability, and eminent domain.
10/17/2016	Small group meeting - Burton Street Neighborhood	18	Burton Street Community Center	To discuss the LEDPA, design refinement process, and potential mitigation opportunities associated with the Environmental Justice status.
02/20/2017	Small group meeting - Burton Street Neighborhood	20	Burton Street Community Center	To discuss the design refinement process and potential mitigation opportunities associated with the Environmental Justice status.
03/21/2017	Small group meeting - Fairfax Avenue/Virginia Avenue	39	Mothlight	To discuss the LEDPA, design refinement process, and discuss access options to the community.
03/21/2017	Small group meeting - Hillcrest Apartments	12	Carl E. Johnson Community Center	To review designs and impacts to the community, review next steps of the project, and receive feedback regarding impacts and/or benefits to the community.
06/05/2017	Small group meeting - EWANA	39	East West Village Rentals	To review design concepts at Amboy Road, Brevard Road, and Haywood Road and receive feedback.
06/06/2017	Small group meeting - WABA	40	Isis Restaurant	To review design concepts at Amboy Road, Brevard Road, and Haywood Road and receive feedback.
09/07/2017	Small group meeting - Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue	14	Earth Fare	To review design concepts at Amboy Road and Brevard Road and receive feedback.

01/15/2018	Burton Street Community Open House #1	41	St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church	To receive feedback from community on developing a community driven Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMS).
01/15/2018	Burton Street Stakeholder Group Meeting	3	St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church	To receive feedback from businesses on developing a community driven Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMS).
03/20/2018 ^a	Burton Street Community Open House #2	28	St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church	To receive feedback from community on developing a community driven Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMS).
04/30/2018 ^a	Burton Street Community Open House #3	34	Burton Street Community Center	To receive feedback from community on developing a community driven Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMS).
08/16/2018	Small group meeting – Asheville Primary School	20	Aycock Primary School Conference Room	To review design concepts and receive feedback from school officials on impacts to traffic patterns and parking.
11/14/2018 ^a	Riverlink Meeting	3	Riverlink, Asheville NC	To provide an overview of the I-26 Connector project to local businesses and organizations that use French Broad River, discuss potential impacts to the French Broad River during construction, and to receive feedback from stakeholders on impacts to operations and river user safety.
12/04/2018 ^a	Design Public Hearing	450	Renaissance Hotel, Asheville, NC	To present the preliminary designs for the preferred alternative under consideration in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.
05/20/2019 ^a	Burton Street Community Meeting	5	Burton Street Community Center	To present an update on the project and plans to work with community to implement the mitigation strategies
06/24/2019	Asheville Primary School Meeting	4	Asheville Primary School, Asheville, NC	To discuss impacts to the Asheville Primary School and follow-up from discussions held with school officials in August 2018 on impacts to access and the schools parking lot.

^a No minutes are available for this meeting.



I-26 CONNECTOR

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



NCDOT To Hold A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT

NOVEMBER 16, 2015



The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-26 Connector Project and is holding a Pre-Hearing Open House and Public Hearing for public input. Locations of the DEIS and the Public Hearing maps for public review are located on the project website noted below.

NCDOT representatives will be available between the hours of 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to answer questions and receive comments relative to the proposed project. Interested participants may attend at any time during the above mentioned hours. A formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. The hearing will be open to those present for statements, questions and comments. The presentation and comments will be recorded and a transcript will be prepared.

The hearing will also be streamed online if you cannot attend the formal hearing at 7PM (see project website for link). Comments will be accepted during the webinar; however, responses will not be provided until after the comment period has closed on December 16, 2015.

TIME AND LOCATION

November 16, 2015

Open House: 4 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Public Hearing: 7 p.m.

**Renaissance Hotel Grand Ballroom
31 Woodfin Street
Asheville**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL THE PROJECT HOTLINE OR VISIT THE
PROJECT WEBSITE.**

TOLL-FREE HOTLINE: 1-800-233-6315

WEBSITE:

WWW.NCDOT.GOV/PROJECTS/I26CONNECTOR/



NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who wish to participate in this workshop. Anyone requiring special services should contact Drew Joyner at 1-800-233-6315 as soon as possible.

NCDOT proporcionará ayuda adicional y servicios, según lo dispuesto en El Acto de Americanos con Discapacidades, a las personas con discapacidades que deseen participar en este taller. Cualquier persona que desee solicitar servicios especiales puede hacerlo llamando lo antes posible al teléfono 1-800-233-6315.



WELCOME TO THE I-26 CONNECTOR PROJECT PRE-HEARING OPEN HOUSE AND CORRIDOR PUBLIC HEARING

PRE-HEARING OPEN HOUSE: 4-6:30PM

PUBLIC HEARING: 7PM

PLEASE SIGN-IN

- ✓ Let Us Know You Attended Tonight
- ✓ Pickup Handouts
- ✓ Watch Presentation about Project
- ✓ Review the Project Information
- ✓ Ask Questions
- ✓ Provide Your Comments





SPANISH INTERPRETER

SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

Si Usted desea tener un intérprete para esta reunión, por favor pregunte a un miembro del equipo del proyecto.





PROJECT PRESENTATION

- ✓ Please watch the video to learn about the project
- ✓ Note that this video will repeat





Purpose and Need

PROJECT PURPOSES:

- To **upgrade the Interstate corridor** from I-26 south of Asheville through the US 19-23 interchange to meet design standards for the Interstate system
- 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 (2033 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 Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges by substantially reducing the volume of traffic on this vital crossing of the French Broad River

PROJECT NEEDS:

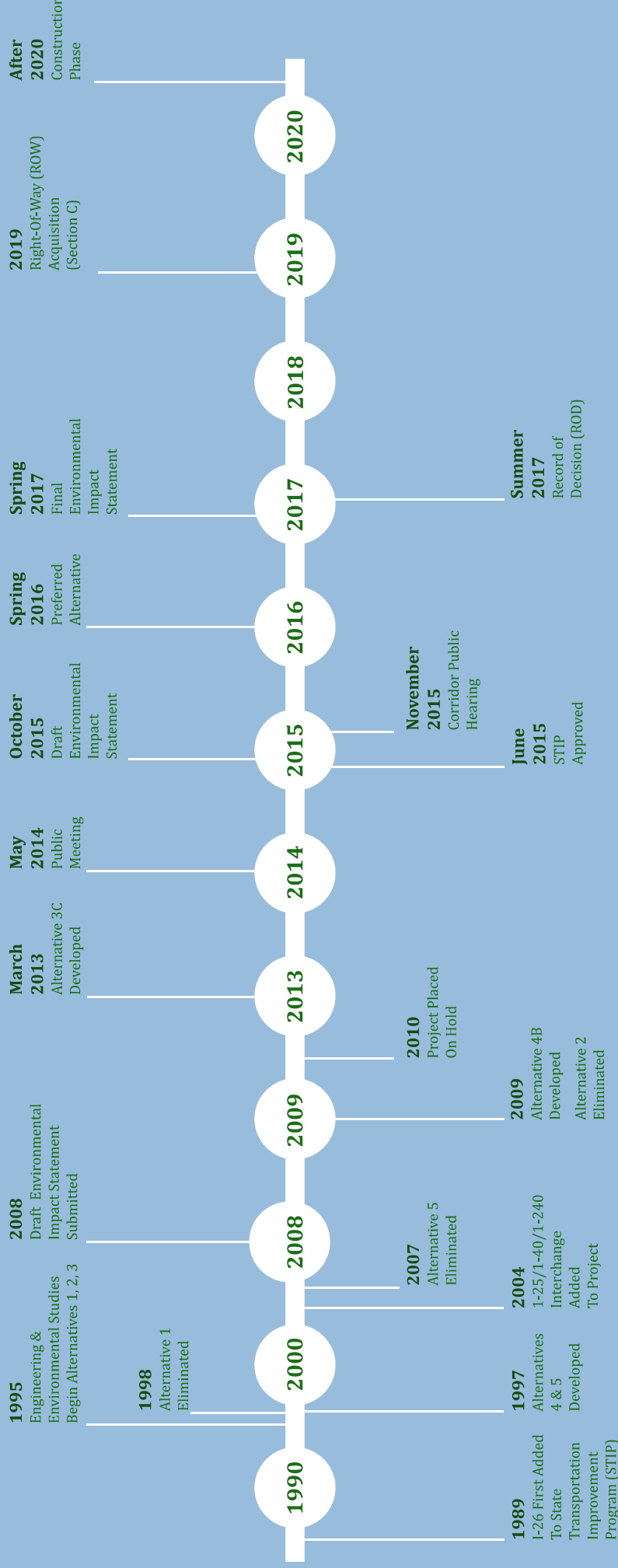
- **System Linkage**
A better transportation facility is needed to connect US 19-23 north of Asheville with I-26 south of Asheville.
- **Capacity***
I-240 needs additional capacity because increasing traffic volumes have substantially reduced the Level of Service on I-240 west of Asheville.
- **Roadway Deficiencies**
Interstates within the study area have roadway deficiencies and need to be upgraded to meet current design standards. Multiple segments of I-240 west of Asheville currently have an accident rate that exceeds the critical crash rate for similar North Carolina facilities.

*Capacity = In terms of a highway, capacity is the ability of a road to accommodate traffic volume.
Level of Service = A qualitative measure used to relate the quality of traffic operations on a scale of A (free-flow and low traffic density) to F (breakdown of traffic flow with traffic volumes greater than the road's capacity)





Project History





NEPA Study Process

Opportunities for public input throughout process.

Identify Purpose of and Need for Project

Collect Data on Project Study Area

Analyze Preliminary Alternatives

Select Detailed Study Alternatives

Evaluate Impacts of Detailed Study Alternatives

Publish Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Select Preferred Alternative

Publish Final Environmental Impact Statement

Issue Record of Decision

Purchase Right of Way

Construct Project



Next Steps



1

SUBMIT COMMENTS



In-Person



By Mail



By Phone



Online

See **Comment Form** for all comment submittal options and deadlines.

2

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE TO BE SELECTED

The comments received on the DEIS and Public Hearing will be evaluated by the project team and considered in the selection of the Preferred Alternative.

3

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Justification for the selection of the Preferred Alternative will be documented. Additionally, designs for the Preferred Alternative will be refined based on updated traffic projections. Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the project will be updated based upon the refined design for the Preferred Alternative, and summarized in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.ncdot.gov/projects/126Connector

CONTACT NCDOT

Mr. Drew Joyner, PE
Human Environment Section
1-800-233-6315
djoyner@ncdot.gov





NEPA Study Process

Opportunities for public input throughout process.

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Evaluate Impacts of Detailed Study Alternatives

Publish Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Select Preferred Alternative

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Issue Record of Decision

Purchase Right of Way

Construct Project

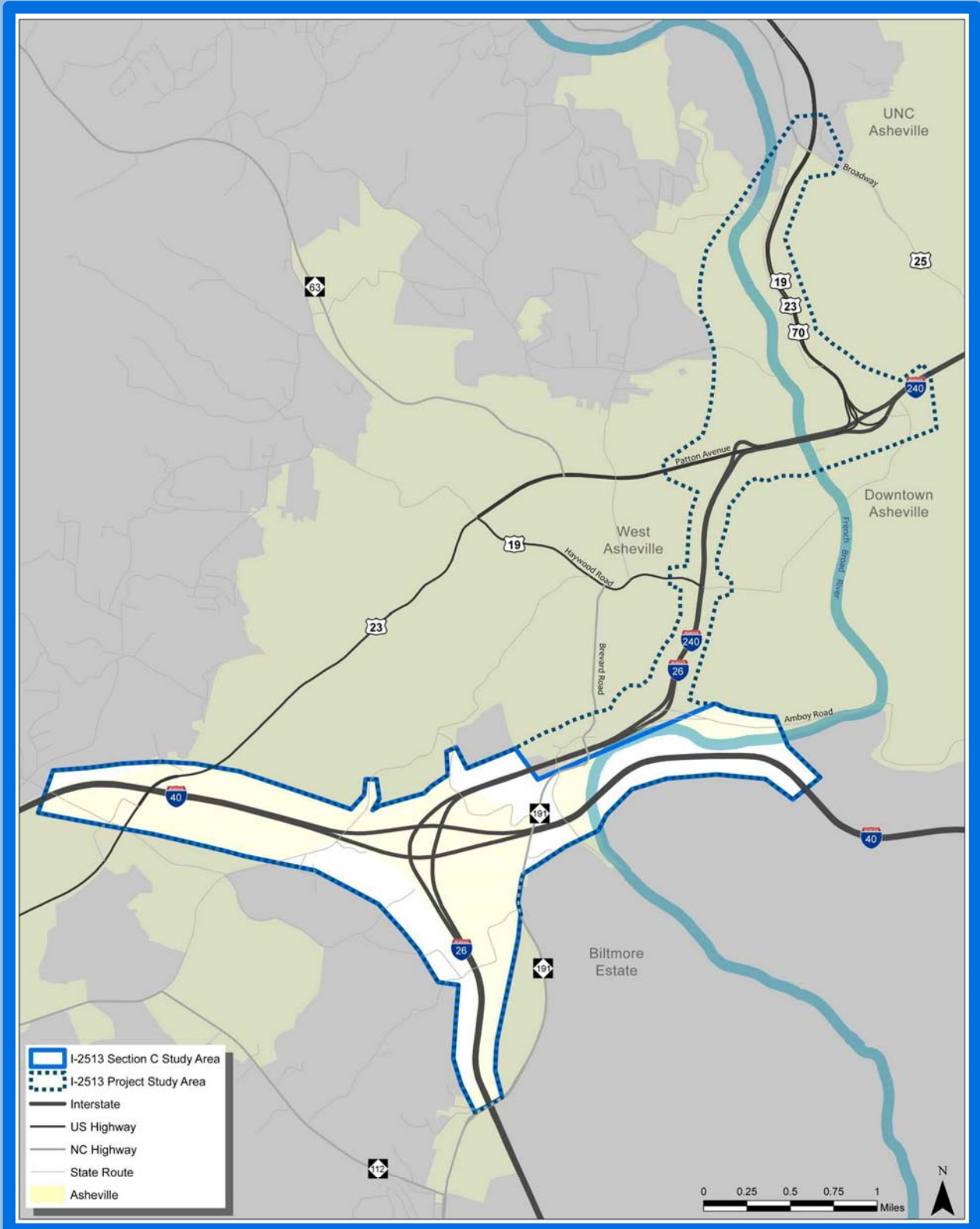




I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



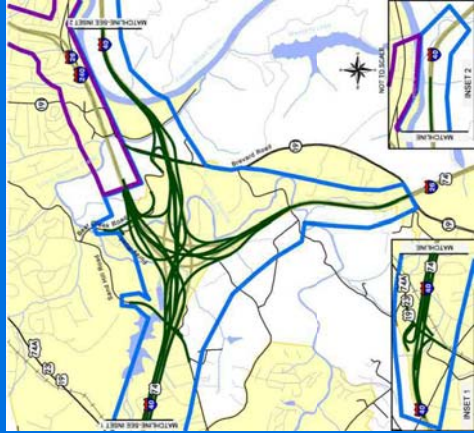
Section C



Section C – New Location Alternatives

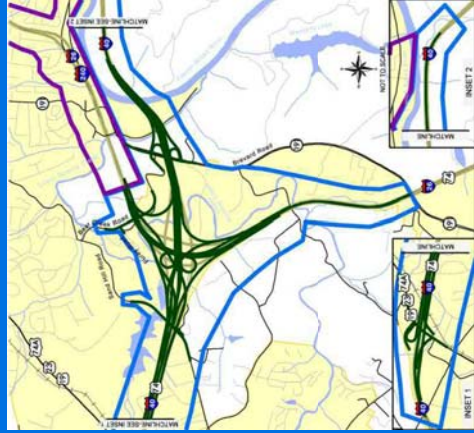


Alternative A-2



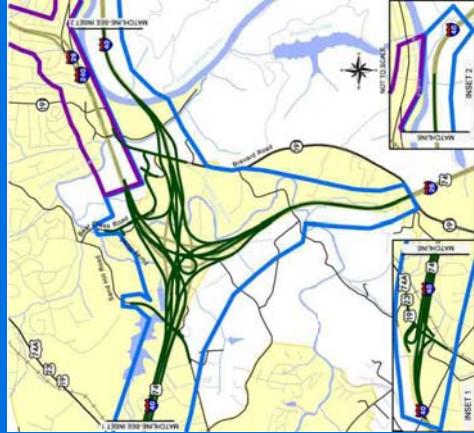
Provides direct flyover ramps for all movements at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

Alternative C-2



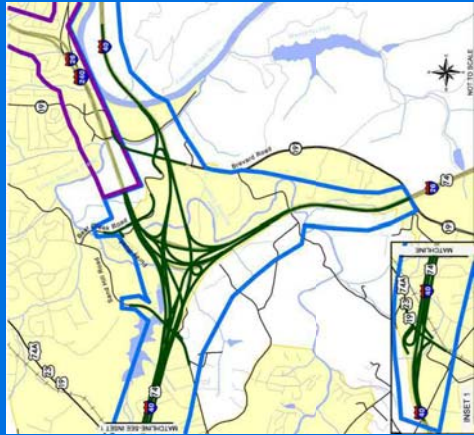
Provides two flyover ramps and two loop ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange along with collector-distributor roadways in both directions along I-40 and in the eastbound direction along I-26.

Alternative D-1



Provides three flyover ramps and one loop ramp at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

Alternative F-1



Reconstructs the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange in the same general configuration as today but with the addition of two missing connections to I-40.

Section C includes improvements to the I-26 / I-240 interchange with I-40 and the Brevard Road and Smokey Park Highway interchanges.

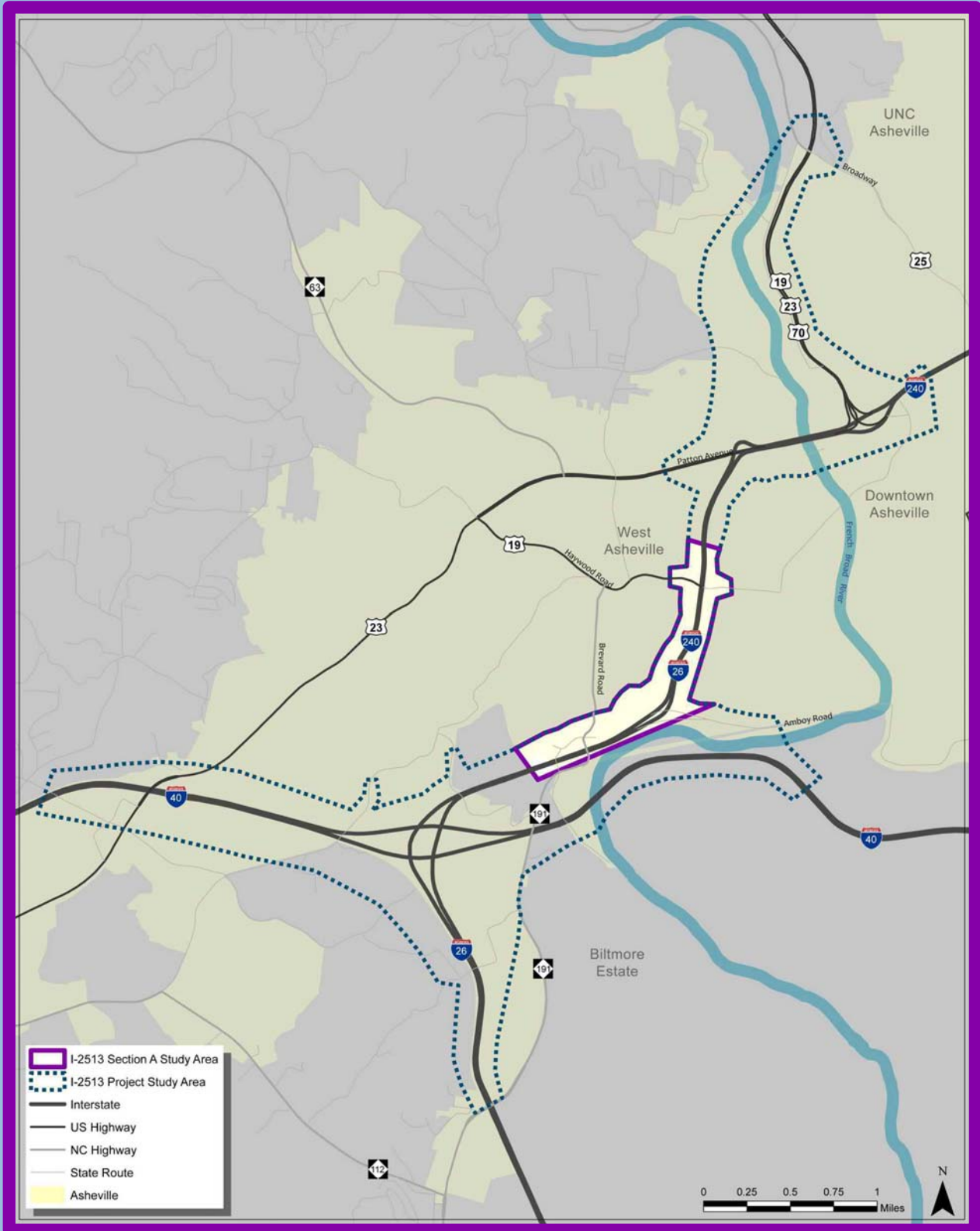




I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



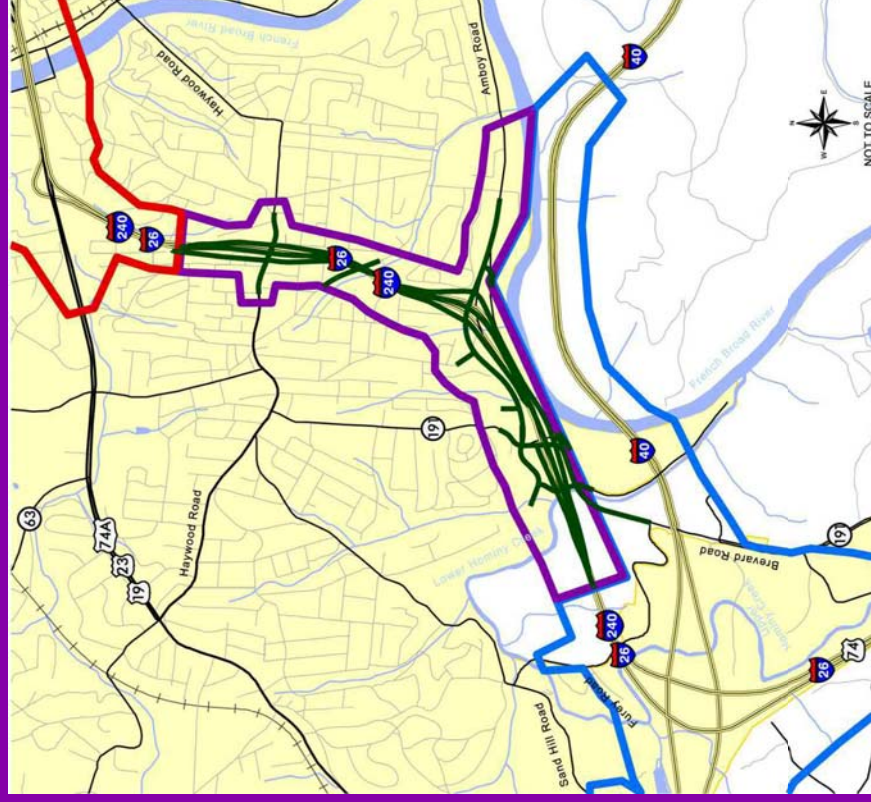
Section A



Section A – Upgrade Existing Roadway Alternative



Section A includes upgrading approximately 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. This includes upgrades to the Brevard Road, Amboy Road, and Haywood Road interchanges.

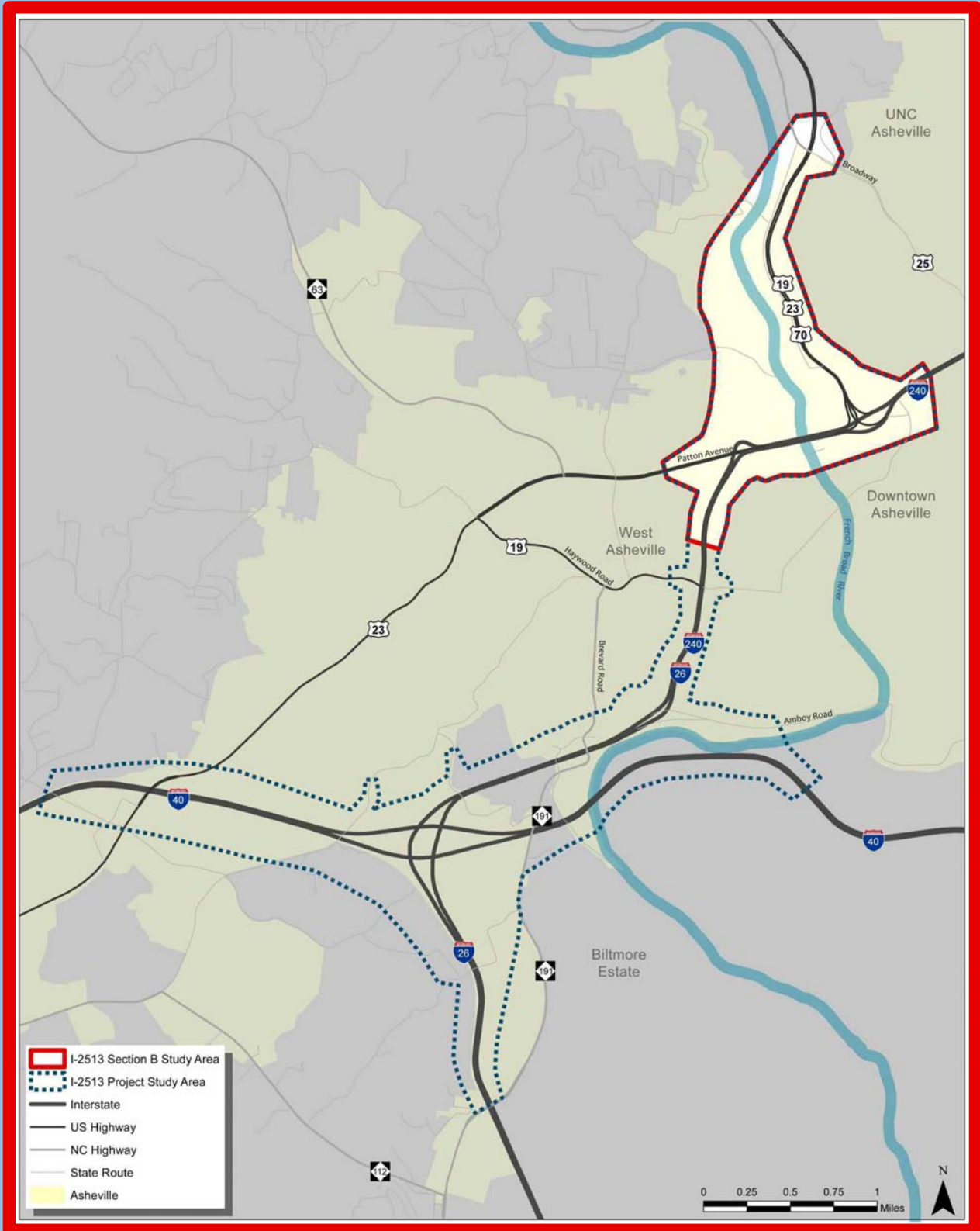




I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



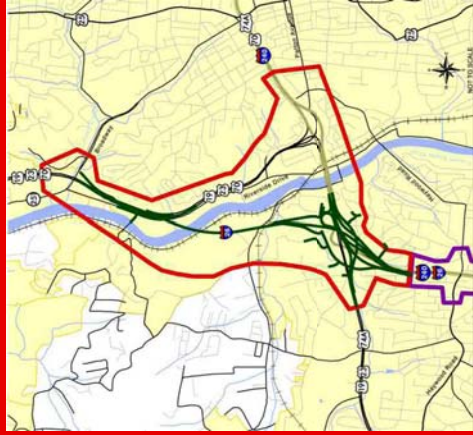
Section B



Section B – New Location Alternatives

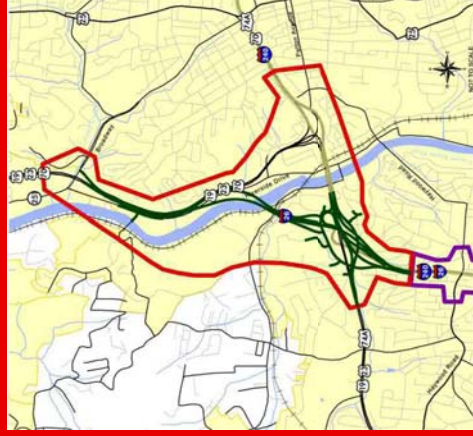


Alternative 3



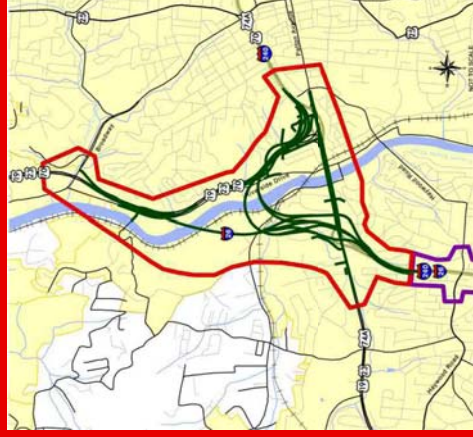
Separates I-240 and I-26, with I-26 running north along a new alignment and I-240 continuing over the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges as it does currently.

Alternative 3C



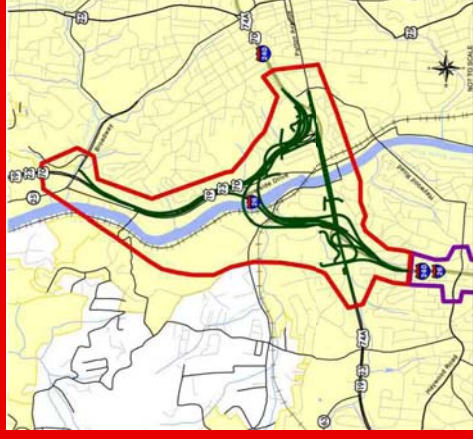
Follows the same alignment as Alternative 3, but crosses the French Broad River on two bridges further south.

Alternative 4



Separates the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the I-240 through traffic, but otherwise follows a similar route as Alternative 3.

Alternative 4B



Also separates the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the I-240 through traffic, otherwise following a similar route as alternative 3C.

Section B includes the construction of the interstate on new location from the Patton Avenue interchange north for approximately 2.6 miles across the French Broad River, tying into US 19 / 23 / 70 south of Broadway (SR 1781).

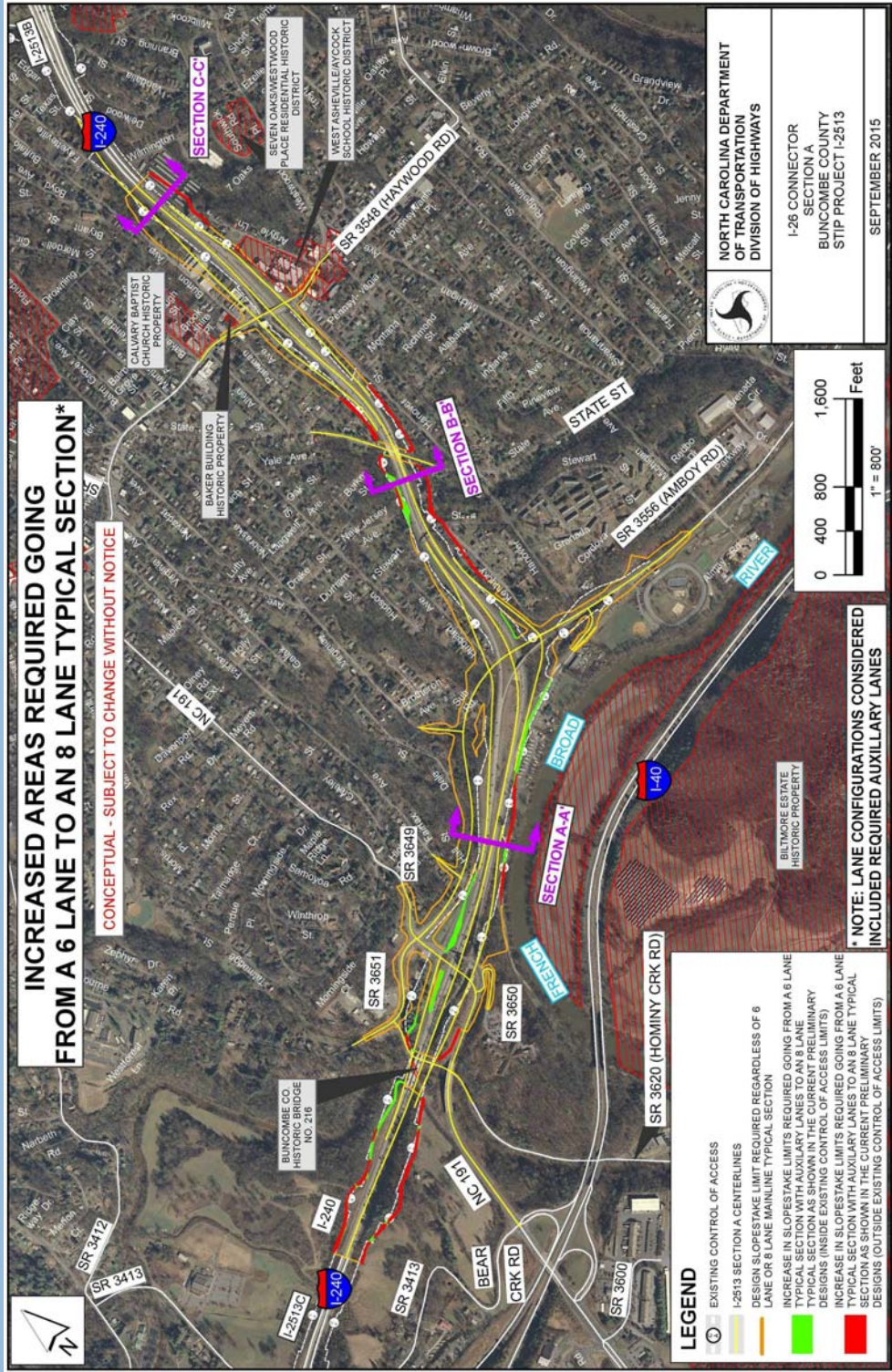




CONSTRUCTION PHASING CONCEPTS



Construction Phasing Concepts Overview



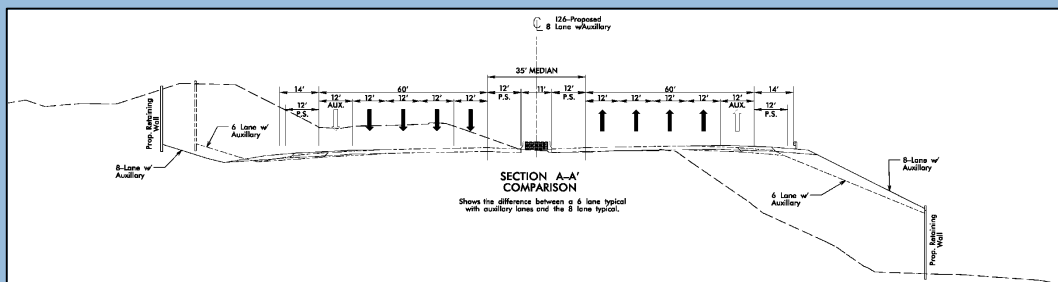
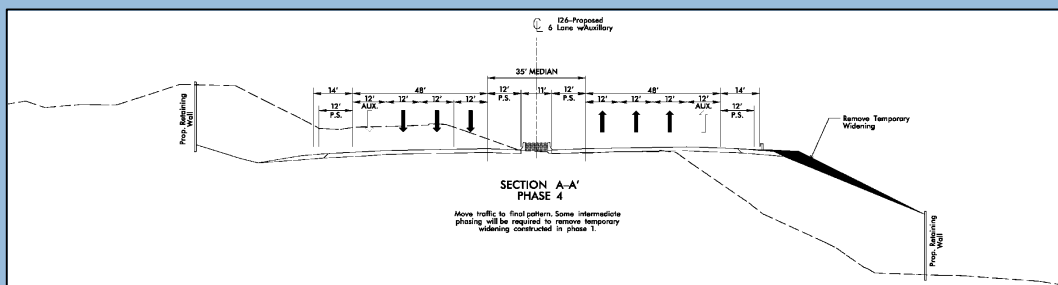
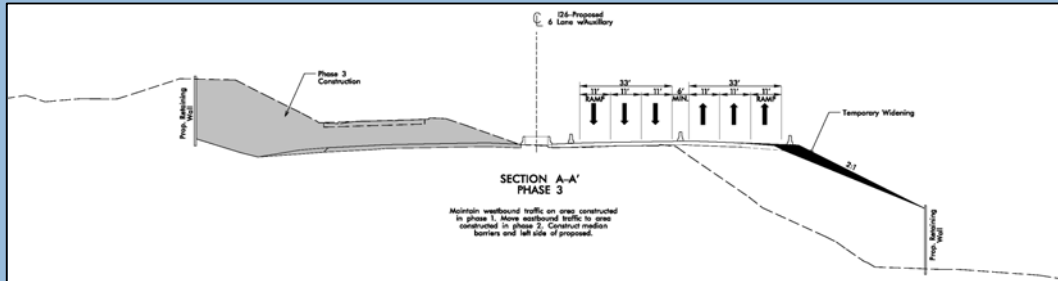
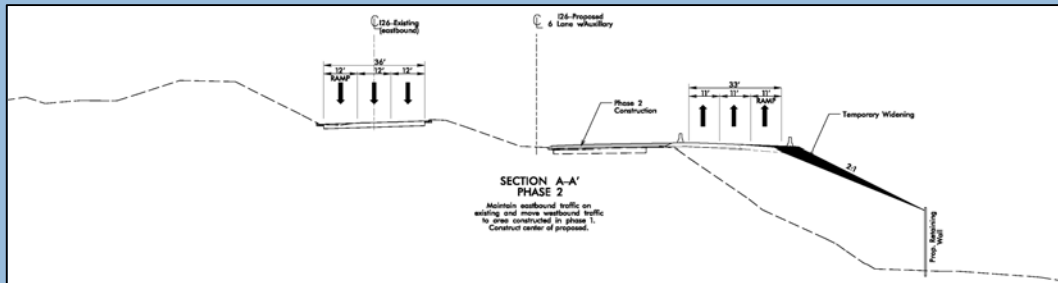
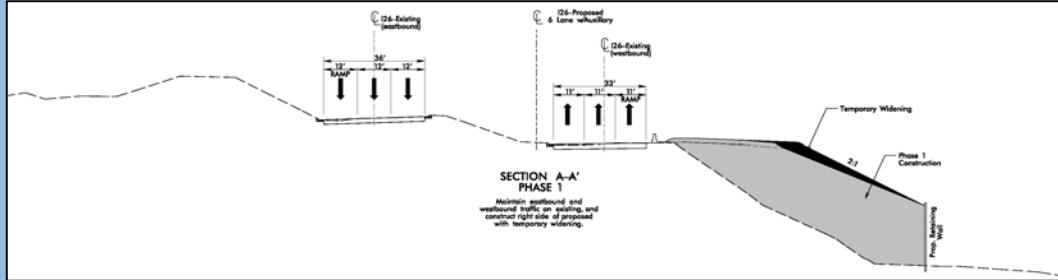


I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



Construction Phasing Concepts

SECTION A-A (BETWEEN BREVARD ROAD AND AMBOY ROAD)



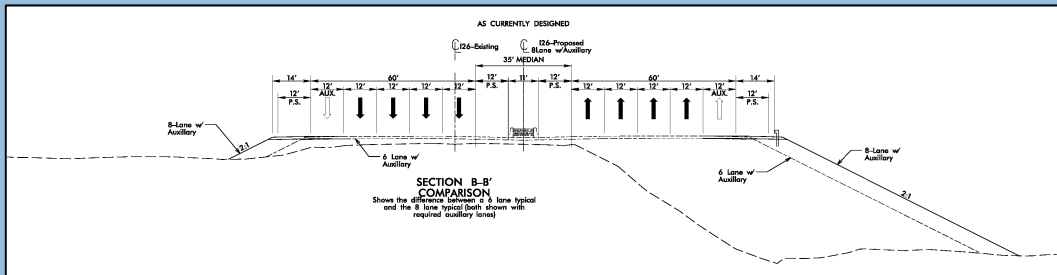
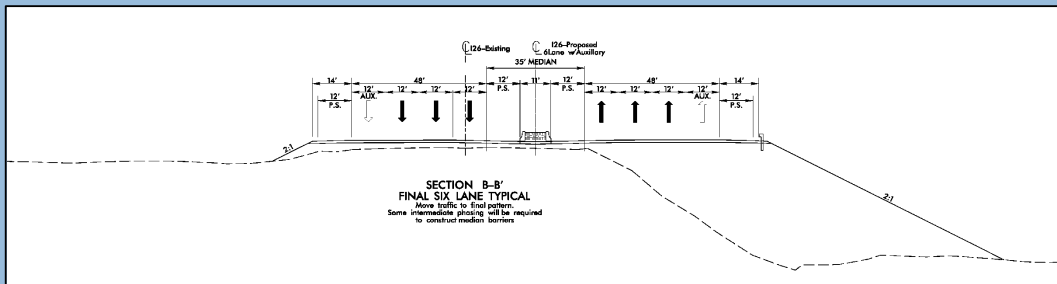
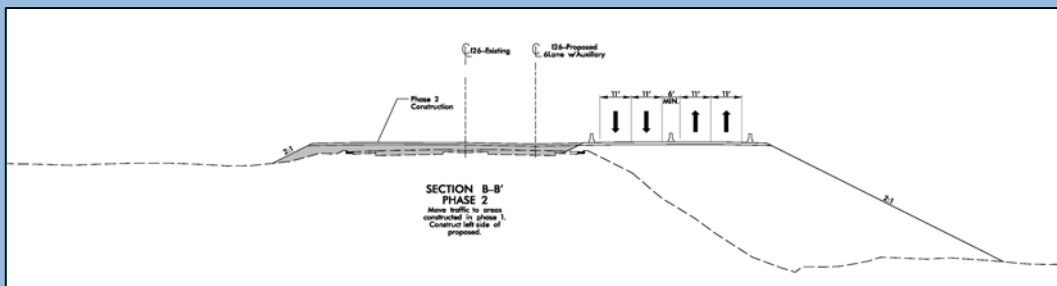
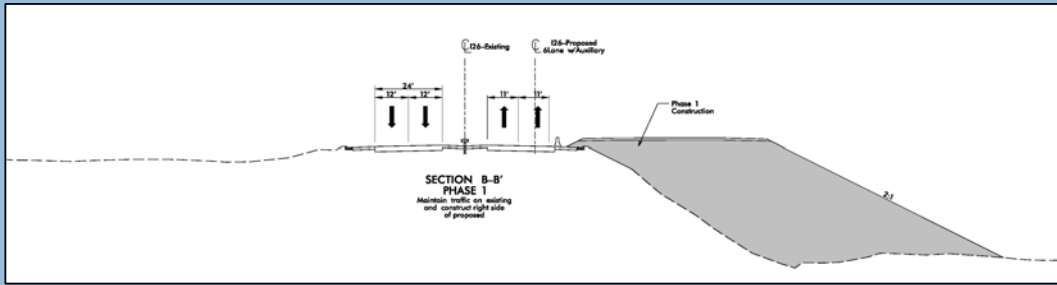


I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



Construction Phasing Concepts

SECTION B-B (SOUTH OF BRIDGE OVER STATE STREET)



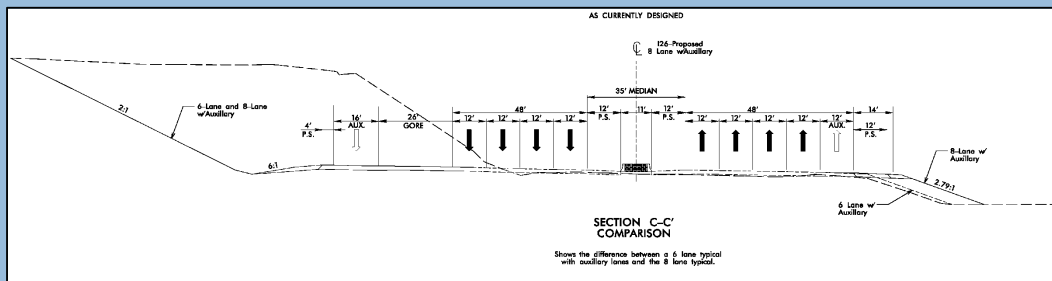
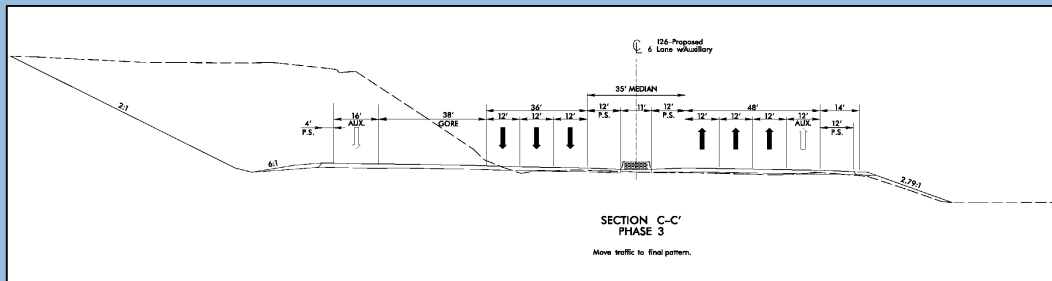
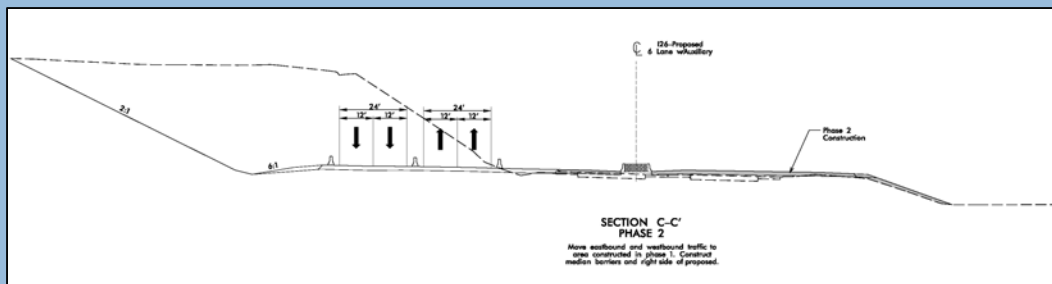
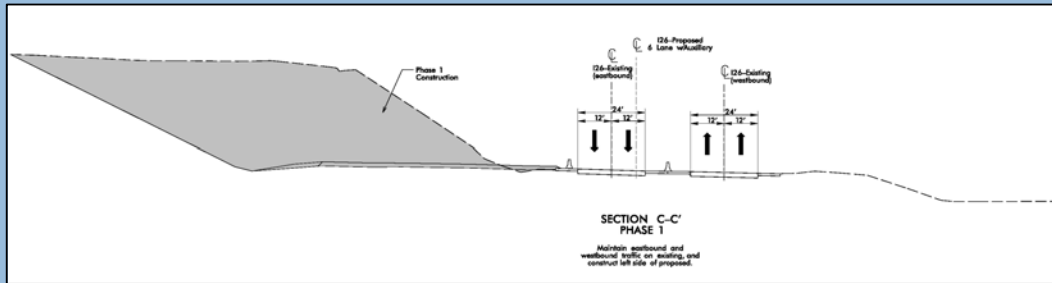


I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



Construction Phasing Concepts

SECTION C-C (NORTH OF HAYWOOD ROAD INTERCHANGE)





REGIONAL PROJECTS



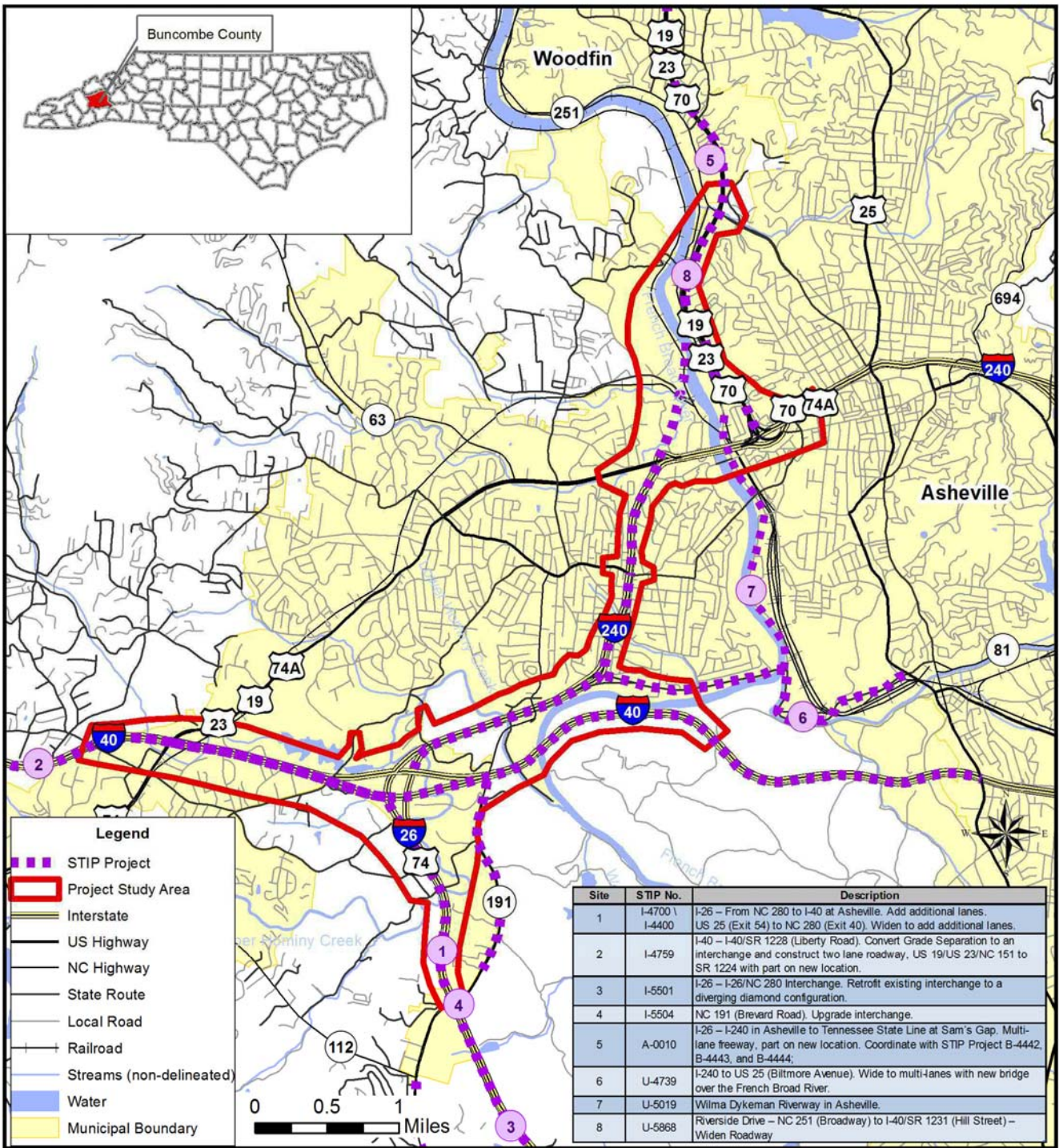


I-26 CONNECTOR

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



STIP Projects in Vicinity





TRANSIT

&

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Accommodations in and around the project

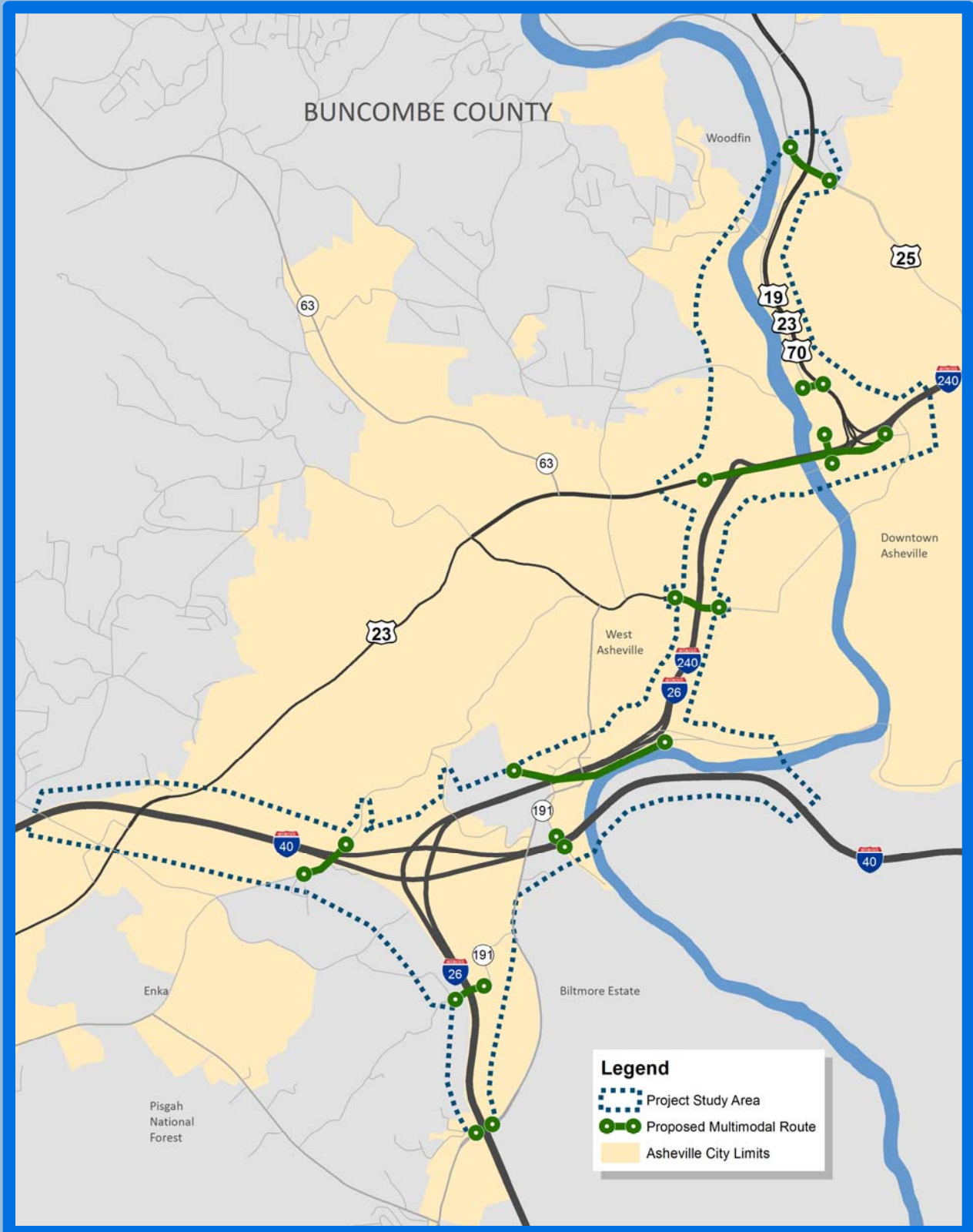




I-26 CONNECTOR
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



Multimodal Connectivity

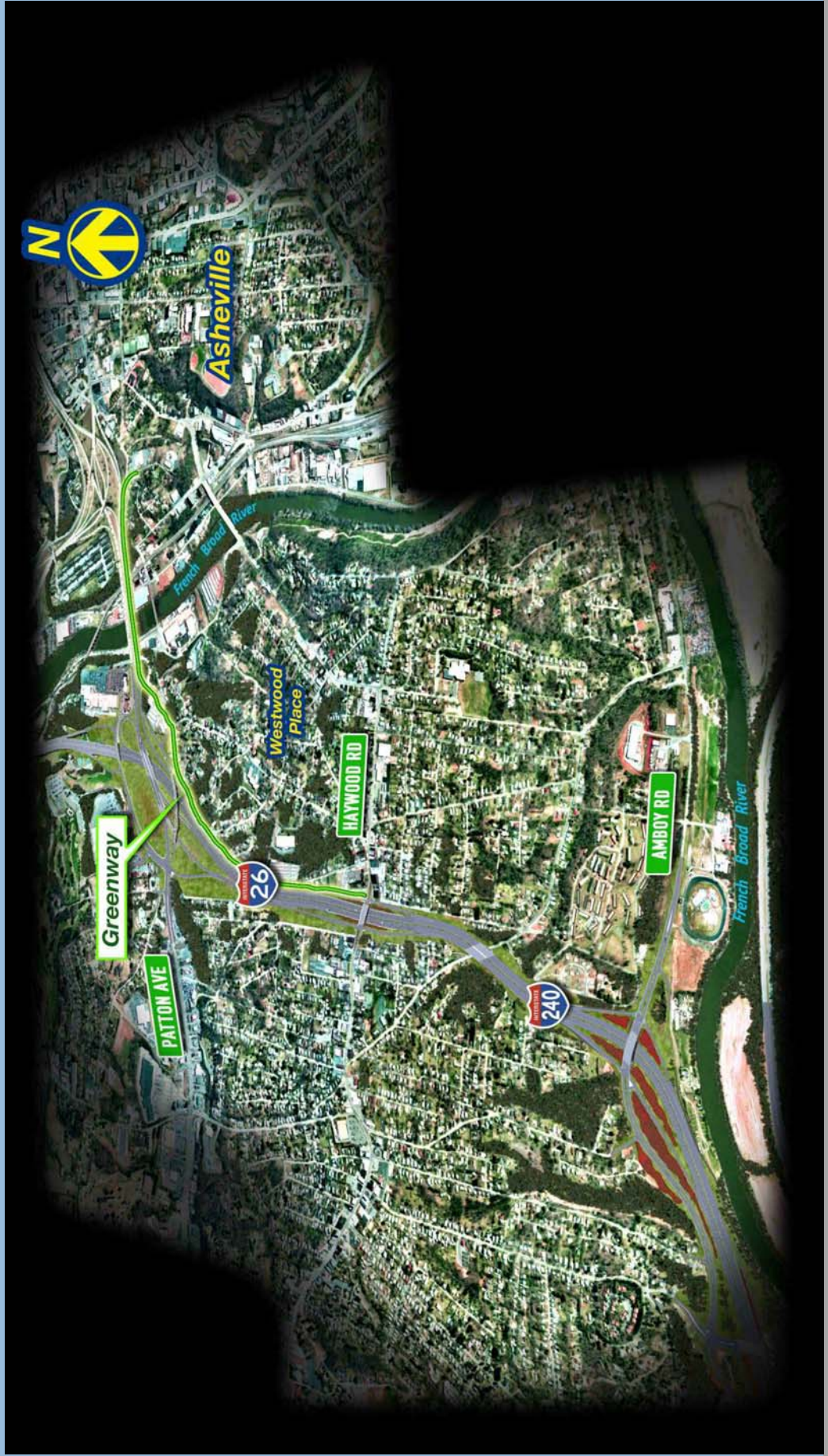


This graphic presents locations of multimodal routes that will be studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Multimodal may include Greenways, Transit, Bicycle Improvements, or Sidewalks.



West Asheville Greenway Overview Map

 **I-26 CONNECTOR**  **19**  **23**
BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NC



Proposed West Asheville Greenway



Conceptual Pedestrian Bridge





COMMENTS COLLECTED HERE

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Please Take a Moment to Fill
Out a Comment Form.

Copies of the DEIS are available
for your review.



KID'S CORNER





TRAFFIC NOISE AND RIGHT OF WAY IMPACT INFORMATION





MAP PRINTING

An assistant is available to help you print a map of anything you have seen today to take home.





THE PURPOSE OF THE OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC HEARING

Today's hearing is another important step in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) procedure for making you, the public, a part of the project development process. The purpose of the hearing is to obtain public input on the location and design of the project.

There are two portions to today's event, an informal open house and a formal public hearing.

View the DEIS and detailed project maps

Planning and environmental studies on the I-2513, I-26 Connector Project are available in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Copies of the DEIS, along with today's hearing maps, are available for review.

View the animated representation of the project

A visualization of some of the proposed alternatives for the project will be played continuously during the pre-hearing open house. Please take a moment to view this video with an explanation of the project.

Speak with project representatives

NCDOT representatives will be available between the hours of 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to answer questions and receive comments relative to the proposed project.

Stay for the Public Hearing

A formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. The presentation will consist of an explanation of the proposed corridor location, design, right of way, relocation requirements/procedures, and the state-federal relationship. The hearing will be open to those present for statements, questions and comments. The presentation and comments will be recorded and a transcript will be prepared. If you can not stay, the Public Hearing will be streamed, live, on the project website and you can submit comments online or through the mail.

Inside This Handout:

Frequently Asked Questions	Page 2
Project Purpose and Need	Page 2
Public Review and Comment	Page 3
Project Timeline	Page 3
Detailed Study Alternatives	Page 4
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Section A Alternative	Page 6
Section B Alternatives	Pages 6-7
Nearby Projects	Page 8
Summary of Project Impacts by Section	Pages 9-10

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The I-26 Connector Project is an interstate freeway project that is being proposed to connect I-26 in southwest Asheville to US 19-23-70 in northwest Asheville. The 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 US 19-23-70 just south of Exit 25 (Broadway). 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 three sections: C, A, and B.

Section C

Improvements to the I-26/I-240 interchange with I-40 and the Brevard Road and Smokey Park Highway interchanges.

Section A

Upgrading 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. This includes upgrades to the Brevard Road, Amboy Road, Haywood Road and Patton Avenue interchanges.

Section B

Construction of the interstate on new location from the Patton Avenue interchange north across the French Broad River, tying into US 19-23-70 south of Broadway.

PROJECT INFORMATION

GENERAL

What is the DEIS?

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) NCDOT prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-26 Connector Project. The DEIS is a federally required environmental document that describes the purpose and need for the project, identifies project alternatives, and evaluates them for potential environmental effects.

Are the Designs Final?

The design plans shown at the Public Hearing are preliminary and have not been finalized. Additional information including traffic forecasts and updated property information may result in modifications of right-of-way limits, the limits of construction, road curves, or pavement markings.

Has a Preferred Alternative Been Selected?

At this point, a preferred alternative has not been selected. All alternatives under consideration are presented in the DEIS and to the project team for selection of the preferred alternative.

What's Next?

The next step in the planning process will be to summarize comments received at the public hearing and choose the Preferred Alternative. Your comments and recommendations will be on public record and will be considered when selecting the Preferred Alternative and to assist in developing the final design of the project.

When Will Construction Start?

Section C of the project will be the first to start construction and is scheduled to begin in 2021. Section B construction will commence in 2024, and Section A will begin in later years.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Why is the I-26 Connector needed?

The project is needed to address traffic capacity problems along the existing I-240 corridor (future I-26), across the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges to US 19-23-70. Presently numerous areas do not meet interstate design standards and cannot be designated I-26 without being improved. The project would improve traffic flow, address the substandard roadway features, and provide an interstate roadway through West Asheville for the I-26 Corridor.

How will traffic operate if the project is not built?

Traffic operations are evaluated using a "Level of Service" rating ranging from A (best) to F (worst). If no improvements are made, in 2033, 41 of the 80 freeway elements will operate at an unacceptable level of service, based on Federal Highway Administration standards. The completion of portions of the adjacent NCDOT Project A-0010A (US 19-23-70 improvements from Asheville to the Tennessee state line) will further increased traffic demands along I-240 west of Asheville.

What are the roadway deficiencies along the existing corridor?

The existing route serving I-26 traffic has numerous design deficiencies that do not meet interstate design standards. The corridor was evaluated based on 19 design criteria, and 24 locations were shown to have elements that were substandard. Multiple segments of I-240 west of Asheville currently have an accident rate that exceeds the critical crash rate for similar North Carolina facilities, demonstrating the need for these improvements along this section of the facility.

State-Federal Relationship

The proposed project is a Federal-Aid Highway Project and thus will be constructed under the State-Federal Aid Highway Program. Financing of this project will be 80% Federal funds and 20% State funds through the National Highway System Program. The Board of Transportation is responsible for the selection and scheduling of projects on the Federal Aid System, including their location, design and maintenance cost after construction. The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for the review and approval of the previously mentioned activities to ensure that each Federal Aid Project is designed, constructed and maintained to Federal Aid Standards.

PROJECT INFORMATION

What is done with input received?

A post-hearing meeting will be conducted after the comment period has ended. NCDOT staff representing Planning, Design, Traffic Operations, Division, Right of Way, Public Involvement, Community Studies, and others who play a role in the development of a project will attend this meeting. The project will also be reviewed with federal agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as state agencies such as the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources. When appropriate, local government staff may also attend.

All spoken and written comments are discussed at the post-hearing meeting. Most issues are resolved at the post-hearing meeting. The NCDOT considers safety, costs, traffic service, social impacts and public comments in making decisions. Complex issues may require additional study and may be reviewed by higher management, Board of Transportation Members and/or the Secretary of Transportation.

Minutes of the post-hearing meeting will be summarized and are available to the public by noting your request on the comment sheet. Once distributed, the post-hearing meeting minutes will also be posted on the project website.

WHERE TO REVIEW PROJECT INFORMATION

The DEIS and Public Hearing Maps are available for public viewing at the following locations:

NCDOT Division 13 55 Orange Street Asheville, North Carolina 28801	City of Asheville Transportation 70 Court Plaza—Mezzanine Level Asheville, North Carolina, 28802
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The DEIS is also available for public viewing at the following public library locations:

State Library of North Carolina: 109 East Jones Street Raleigh, North Carolina 27601	Pack Memorial Library: 67 Haywood Street Asheville, North Carolina 28801
West Asheville Library 942 Haywood Road Asheville, North Carolina 28806	Buncombe County Law Library 60 Court Plaza Asheville, North Carolina 28801

People can also view the materials at the project website at <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/>

YOUR PARTICIPATION

Now that the opportunity is here, you are encouraged to participate by making your comments and/or questions a part of the public record. This may be done by having them recorded at the formal Public Hearing, calling the project hotline at 1-800-233-6315, or by writing them on the attached comment sheet. Several representatives of the North Carolina Department of Transportation are present. They will be happy to talk with you, explain the design to you and answer your questions. You may write your comments or questions on the comment sheet and leave it with one of the representatives or mail them by December 16, 2015 to the following address:

Mr. Drew Joyner, P.E.
NCDOT - Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
Email: djoyner@ncdot.gov
1-800-233-6315

Additionally, comments can be submitted through EngageNCDOT, an interactive public engagement tool at <http://engagenctdot.mysidewalk.com/>

Everyone present is urged to participate in the proceedings. It is important, however, that the **opinions of all individuals be respected regardless of how different they may be from your own.** Accordingly, debates, as such, are out of place at public hearings. Also, the public hearing is not to be used as a popular referendum to determine the location and/or design by a majority vote of those present.

PROJECT TIMELINE

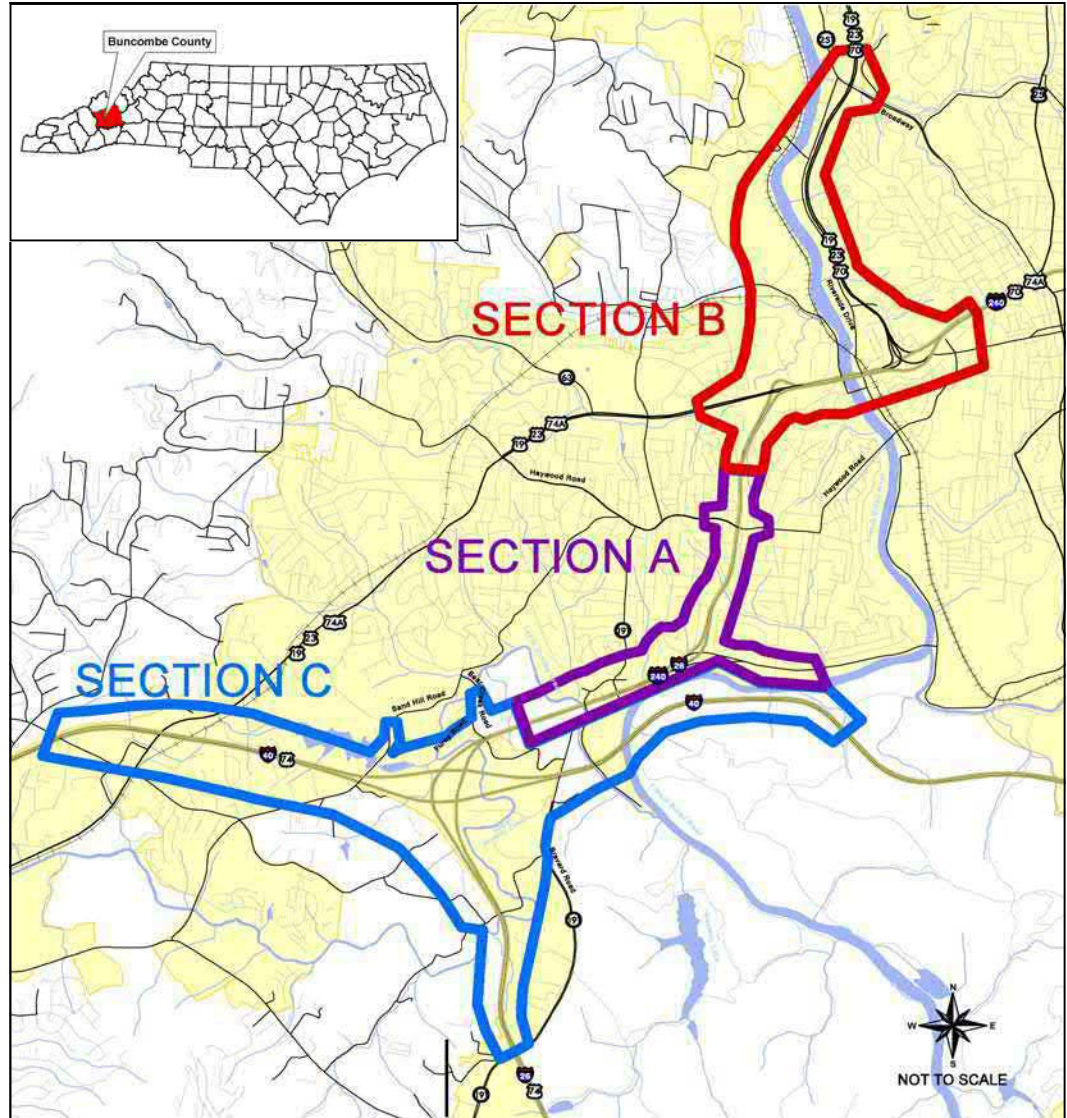


NCDOT Mission Statement: Connecting people, products, and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina.

DETAILED STUDY ALTERNATIVES

All of the detailed study alternatives would accommodate the projected traffic demands, as well as sharing common features such as landscaping, buffers, and color treatments on structural elements. However, each alternative balances the impacts to the human and natural environment in different ways.

The Project Study Area has been broken into three sections, as shown here. The proposed alternatives for each section are shown on the following pages.



SECTION C

The four build alternatives for Section C, as presented on the next page, offer a variety of options to reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. All alternatives provide the missing movements at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange.

Alternative A-2 provides direct flyover ramps for all movements at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. This is a comprehensive solution that will result in an interchange that moves traffic in all four directions.

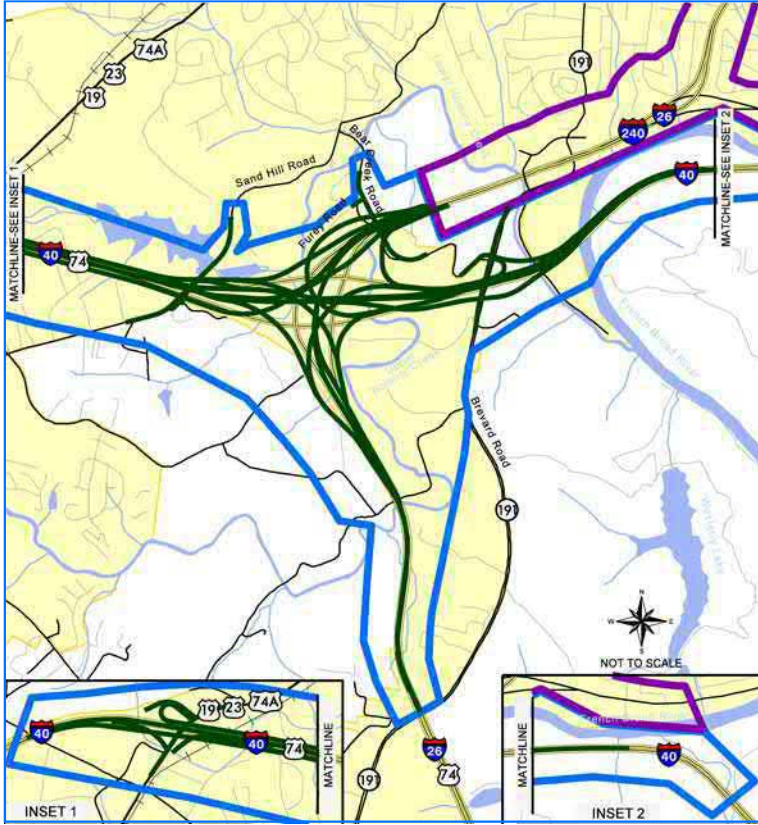
Alternative C-2 provides two flyover ramps and two loop ramps at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange along with Collector-Distributor roadways in both directions along I-40 and in the eastbound direction along I-26. This solution balances between optimal traffic improvements and overall cost.

Alternative D-1 provides three flyover ramps and one loop ramp at the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange. This solution balances optimal traffic improvements with overall cost.

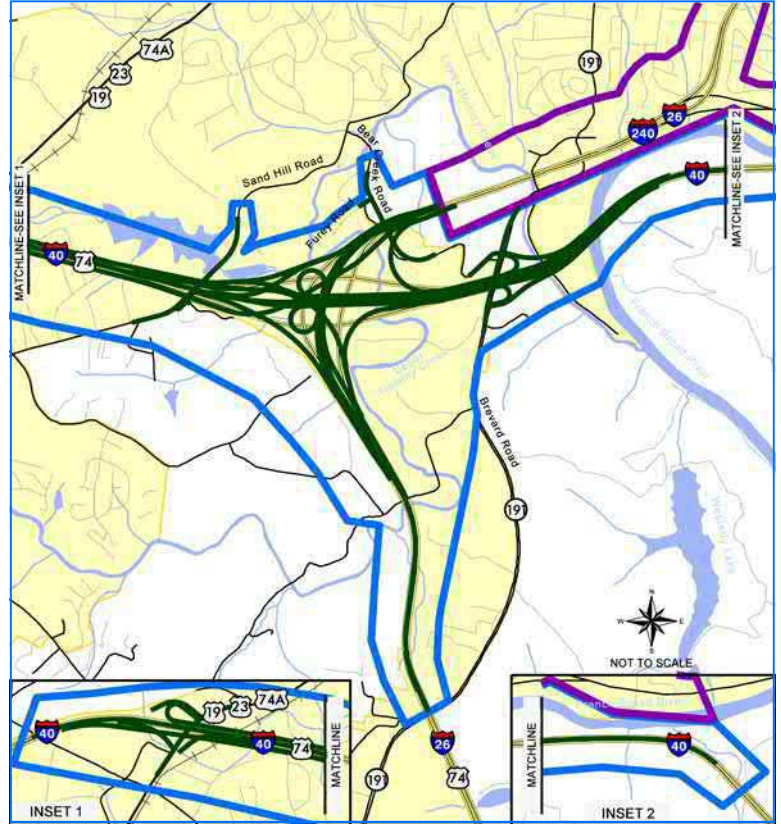
Alternative F-1 reconstructs the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange in the same general configuration as today but with the addition of two missing connections to I-40. This is a low-cost, efficient, solution that provides the missing movements in the interchange and accommodates projected traffic demands.

DETAILED STUDY ALTERNATIVES—SECTION C

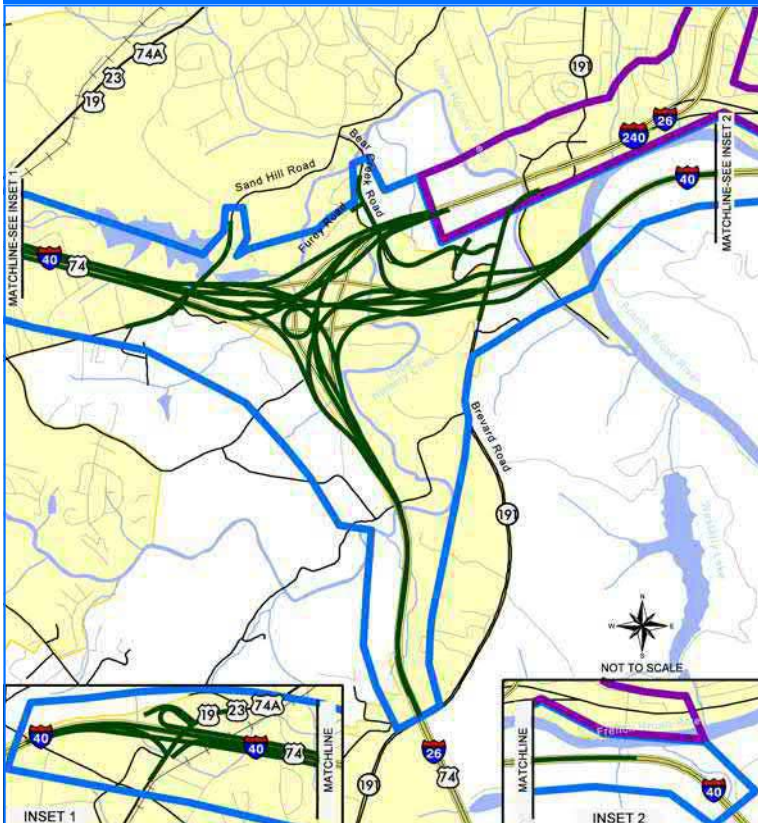
Section C: Alternative A2



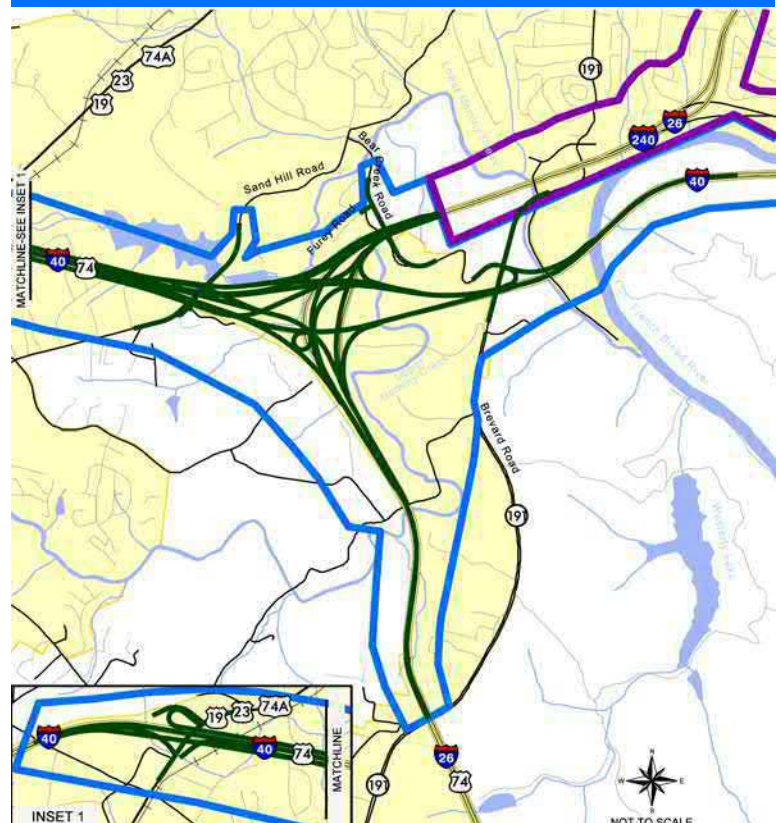
Section C: Alternative C2



Section C: Alternative D1



Section C: Alternative F1



DETAILED STUDY ALTERNATIVES—SECTION A

SECTION A

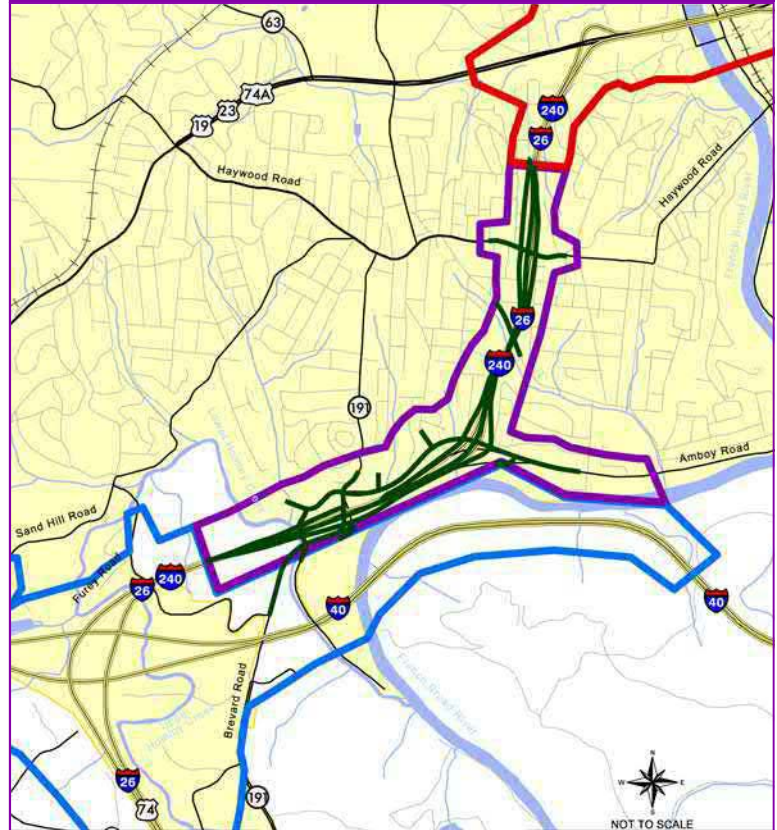
There is one build alternative for Section A, which would widen I-240 from four lanes to eight lanes and provide upgrades at three interchanges.

The interchange with Brevard Road would have limited connectivity because of close proximity to the Amboy Road interchange. I-26 East/I-40 West traffic would exit at an upgraded Amboy Road interchange and travel along a new extension of Amboy Road to Brevard Road.

This extension of Amboy Road would connect to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue and continue to an intersection at Brevard Road.

A third interchange, at Haywood Road, would be converted to a tight urban diamond configuration. This design would relocate the current exit ramp from I-240 East that connects to Hanover Street and relocate it to connect directly to Haywood Road. The current two-way section of ramp in the northeast quadrant would also be eliminated.

Section A: I-240 Widening Alternative



SECTION B

The four build alternatives for Section B, as presented on the next page, offer a variety of options for crossing the French Broad River and connecting to US 19-23-70 at the northern end of the project.

Alternative 3 separates I-240 and I-26, with I-26 running north along a new alignment and I-240 continuing over the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges as it does currently.

Alternative 3C follows the same alignment as Alternative 3, but crosses the French Broad River on two bridges further south.

Alternative 4 separates the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the I-240 through traffic, but otherwise follows a similar route as Alternative 3.

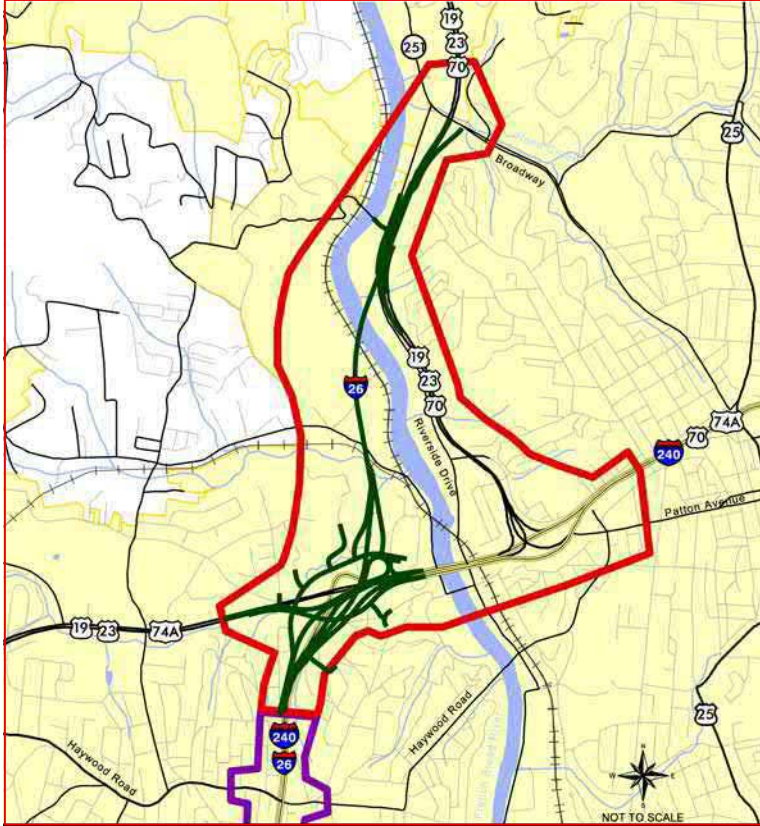
Alternative 4B also separates the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the I-240 through traffic, otherwise following a similar route as alternative 3C.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

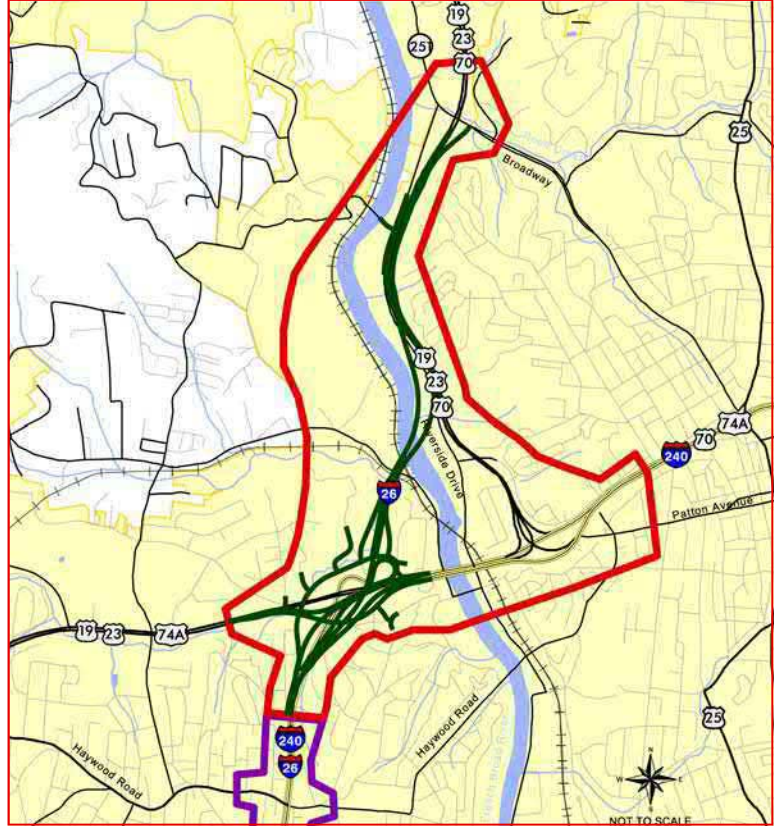
The City of Asheville has multiple plans to address bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout the city. In harmony with these plans, a greenway is proposed along Section A and all of the Section B alternatives. The greenway begins at Haywood Road and will follow the I-26 improvements in Section B, where it merges with Patton Avenue to cross the French Broad River and ties to the nearby streets, providing access to downtown Asheville. In addition, the proposed designs include multiple connections throughout the project area to existing sidewalks, bike paths, or transit routes.

DETAILED STUDY ALTERNATIVES—SECTION B

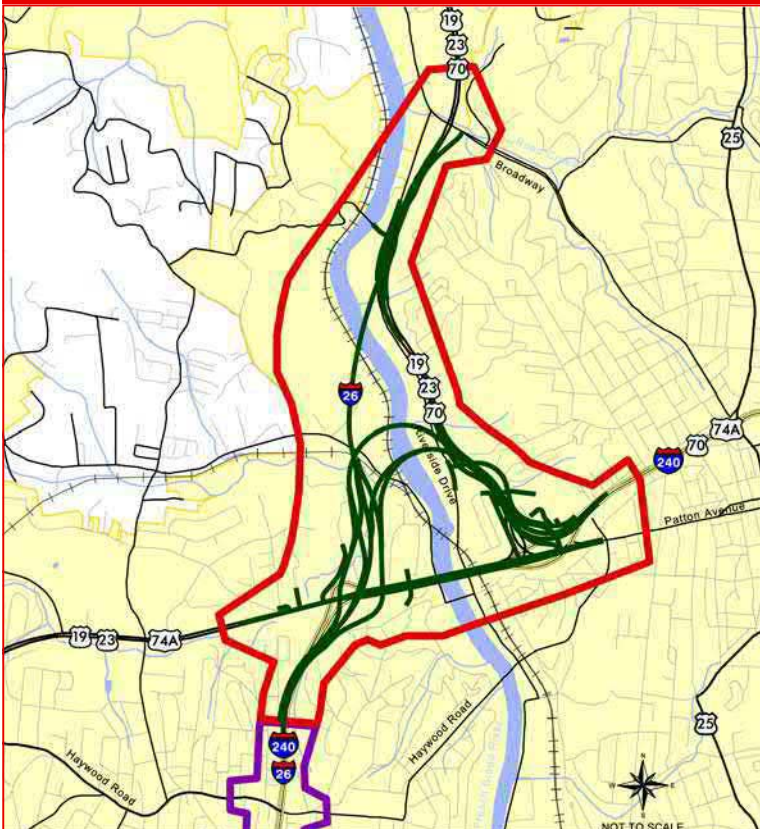
Section B: Alternative 3



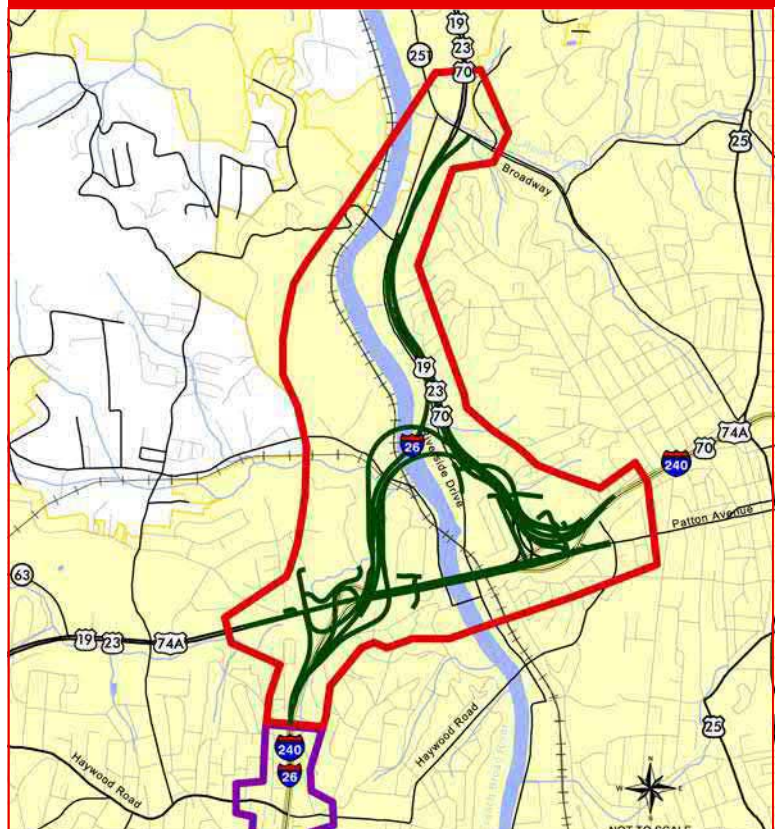
Section B: Alternative 3C



Section B: Alternative 4



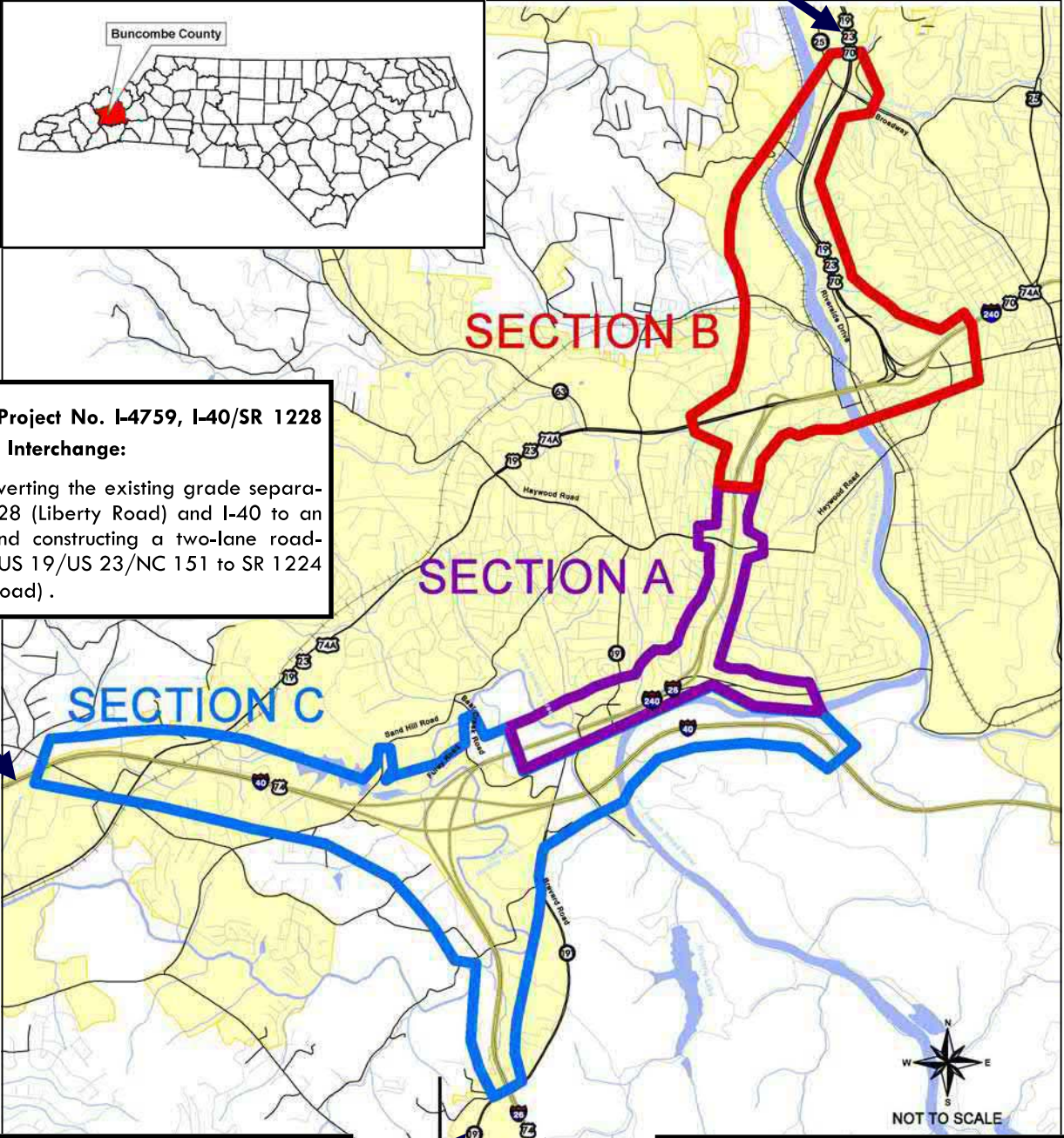
Section B: Alternative 4B



NEARBY PROJECTS

NCDOT STIP Project No. A-0010A, US 19/23 (Future I-26) Improvements Project:

NCDOT is proposing to improve approximately 12 miles of US 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-4759, I-40/SR 1228 (Liberty Road) Interchange:

NCDOT is converting the existing grade separation at SR 1228 (Liberty Road) and I-40 to an interchange and constructing a two-lane roadway between US 19/US 23/NC 151 to SR 1224 (Monte Vista Road).

NCDOT STIP Project No. I-5504/Brevard Road Interchange project (Exit 33):

NCDOT is modifying an existing partial cloverleaf interchange, primarily to alleviate congestion by increasing the efficiency of the interchange. The project may include the widening of the NC 191 (Brevard Road) bridge over I-26.

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.

Resource	Section C (I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange)						Section A I-240 Widening				Section B (New Location across French Broad)						
	Alt. A-2	Alt. C-2	Alt. D-1	Alt. F-1	I-240 Widening		Alt. 3	Alt. 3C	Alt. 4	Alt. 4B							
Floodplain Impacts (acres)	20.53	20.39	18.06	16.63	8.36	9.36	7.65	8.13	3.91								
Floodway Impacts (acres)	2.74	4.23	2.27	2.00	1.94	2.88	2.96	0.69	0.38								
<i>Land Use Impacts by Zoning Category (acres)</i>																	
Residential Single-Family Districts	19.3	12.7	19.7	12.5	8.4	4.0	4.3	6.4	7.5								
Residential Multifamily Districts	21.4	15.4	15.2	16.0	26.5	26.5	17.0	27.6	17.0								
Neighborhood Business District	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1								
Community Business Districts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	0.1	0.1	0.04	0.0								
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	4.0	0.0	2.4	0.4								
Institutional District	38.6	38.6	35.4	34.5	13.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4								
Office	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0								
Highway Business District	11.4	9.6	9.7	7.8	1.9	14.8	15.8	14.0	14.3								
Regional Business District	32.3	32.4	34.1	27.1	0.0	15.4	15.4	9.3	10.5								
Central Business District	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3								
Commercial	28.7	31.4	30.8	24.8	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0								
Resort District	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.1	21.5	37.2	19.6								
River District	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	11.2	24.8	16.1	22.3								
Total	151.8	140.1	144.9	122.6	64.7	98.9	99.7	113.7	92.5								
Human Environment																	
<i>Community Effects (# of communities within or adjacent to study area with benefit or burden from proposed alternatives)</i>																	
High Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-								
Moderate Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1								
Low Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2								
Neutral	-	-	2	-	1	5	5	1	1								
Low Burden	2	2	-	2	3	4	4	4	4								
Moderate Burden	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	2								
High Burden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-								
Cultural Resources																	
Historic Properties – Section 106 Effects	0	0	0	0	1 Adverse Effect	0	0	0	0	1 Adverse Effect							

Resource	Section C (I-26/I-40/I-240 Interchange)						Section A				Section B (New Location across French Broad)						
	Alt. A-2	Alt. C-2	Alt. D-1	Alt. F-1	I-240 Widening		Alt. 3	Alt. 3C	Alt. 4	Alt. 4B							
Historic Properties Impacted	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Archeological Sites Impacted	5	6	5	6	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Natural Environment																	
<i>Biotic Resources (acres)</i>																	
Maintained/ disturbed	192.86	191.47	188.84	171.93	91.08	87.85	83.96	126.50	124.82								
Mesic Mixed Forest	140.72	137.11	135.08	111.26	47.41	39.02	33.32	40.02	40.67								
Alluvial Hardwood Forest	8.97	9.11	8.33	6.55	1.50	5.87	4.76	3.10	3.88								
Open Water	0.19	0.39	0.24	0.17	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00								
Total	342.75	338.07	332.49	289.90	139.99	132.74	122.04	169.63	169.37								
Impervious Surface Increase (acres)	74.43	82.03	61.33	57.12	27.45	29.68	28.37	38.26	40.45								
Stream Impacts (#)	12	12	13	12	4	7	6	6	7								
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	2,965	2,779	2,938	1,984	798	3,874	3,639	1,839	2,128								
Wetland Impacts (#)	13	12	13	12	1	3	2	4	2								
Wetland Impacts (acres)	2.62	2.36	2.01	1.86	0.01	0.22	0.11	0.22	0.10								
Pond Impacts(#)	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0								
Pond Impacts(acres)	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0	0.53	0								
Protected Species Adversely Affected	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0								

*Stream, wetland, and pond impacts calculated using design slope stakes plus 25-foot buffer. All other impacts calculated using right-of-way.



**NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

**PUBLIC HEARING NOVEMBER 16, 2015
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 selection of a Preferred Alternative. If you require a direct response, such as a copy of the Public Hearing transcript, please provide your contact information so that we may follow up with 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: _____

Do you request a copy of the Public Hearing transcript? Yes No

For each Section, please select your preferred corridor alternative:

Section C

Alternative A2
 Alternative C2
 Alternative D1
 Alternative F1
 Do Nothing (No-Build)

Section A

Widen Existing
 Do Nothing (No-Build)

Section B

Alternative 3
 Alternative 3C
 Alternative 4
 Alternative 4B
 Do Nothing (No-Build)

Please provide an explanation of why you selected the alternative preferences as shown above:

Please provide any additional comments about the I-26 Connector project:

The hearing will also be streamed online if you cannot attend the formal hearing at 7 p.m. (see project website for link). Comments will be accepted during the webinar; however, responses will not be provided until after the comment period has closed on December 16, 2015.

Please leave completed form in the comment box, or return no later than December 16, 2015 to:
Drew Joyner, P.E.
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

Project Hotline: 1-800-233-6315
Project Website:
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/>
Provide comments online at:
<http://engagencdot.mysidewalk.com/>



Mr. Drew Joyner, PE
NCDOT Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

TITLE VI PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

Completing this form is **completely** voluntary. You are not required to provide the information requested in order to participate in this meeting.

Meeting Type: Public Hearing	Date: November 16, 2015
Location: Renaissance Hotel, Asheville, North Carolina	
TIP No.: I-2513	
Project Description: I-26 Connector	

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) assures that no person(s) shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any of the Department's programs, policies, or activities, based on their race, color, national origin, disability, age, income, or gender.

Completing this form helps meet our data collection and public involvement obligations under Title VI and NEPA, and will improve how we serve the public. Please place the completed form in the designated box on the sign-in table, hand it to an NCDOT official or mail it to the PDEA-Human Environment Section, 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598.

All forms will remain on file at the NCDOT as part of the public record.

Zip Code: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Street Name: (i.e. Main Street) _____	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 <input type="checkbox"/> 75-84 <input type="checkbox"/> 85 or over
Total Household Income: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 – \$74,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 – \$14,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 – \$99,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 – \$24,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 – \$149,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 – \$34,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 - \$200,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 – \$49,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000 or more	Have a Disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Race/Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	National Origin: (if born outside the U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Central American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> South American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____

How did you hear about this meeting? (newspaper advertisement, flyer, and/or mailing)

For more information regarding Title VI or this request, please contact the NCDOT Title VI Section at (919) 508-1808 or toll free at 1-800-522-0453, or by email at slipscomb@ncdot.gov.

Thank you for your participation!



PDEA
NCDOT Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: December 13, 2016

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, West Asheville Business Association
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA
David Brown – NCDOT Board Member
Jay Swain – NCDOT, Division 13
Rick Tipton – NCDOT, Division 13

Neil Dean – AECOM
Celia Foushee – AECOM
Joanna Rocco – AECOM
Chris Werner – AECOM

The project team was invited to attend and present at the West Asheville Business Association (WABA) meeting held September 20, 2016 at 9:30 am at the Isis Restaurant and Music Hall in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the WABA members with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the designs (presented at the 2015 Public Hearing) and corresponding potential impacts along Haywood Road, and to review next steps for the project.

Chris Werner began the presentation discussing the NEPA Process, the project history, the project study area, the Detailed Study Alternatives, and the Preferred Alternative selected in May 2016. He then briefly discussed the business impacts that are referenced in the 2015 DEIS. It was noted that not all business impacts reflected in the 2015 DEIS result in a business take. In some cases, only a portion of the property will be impacted for right-of-way purposes and the business will remain. Chris discussed the 2015 Public Hearing maps and reviewed the impacts along Patton Avenue and Haywood Road. Additional details regarding the multiple constraints surrounding the Haywood Road interchange were discussed. The next steps and project schedule were then presented.

Questions discussed are listed below:

- Clarification of the location of the Haywood Road interchange [is this in Section A or Section B]?
 - Answer: Haywood Road is located within Section A
- Where is the Baker Building Historic Property and what are the other historic resources in the area?
 - Answer: The location of the Baker Building Historic Property was shown on the Public Hearing maps. Additional historic resources adjacent to the Haywood Road interchange include the Calvary Baptist Church Historic Property, and the West Asheville/Aycock School Historic District.
- Are the current designs shown based on an eight-lane section? If so, this is what is pushing the limits. Also, impacts to the Burton Street Community have not been discussed.

MEETING SUMMARY

December 13, 2016

Page 2 of 3

- Answer: Yes, the designs presented at the 2015 Public Hearing are based on an eight-lane typical section. Through the design refinement process impacts to the Burton Street Community, as well as other locations throughout the project study area, will be minimized as much as possible. The project team will also meet with the Burton Street Community to discuss the designs, additional avoidance/minimization opportunities, and potential mitigation opportunities.
- What does the light green represent on the Public Hearing maps and can we discuss the businesses that are being taken?
 - Answer: The lighter green on the 2015 Public Hearing maps shows the proposed right-of-way limits. Businesses and residents within the light green may be directly impacted by the project; however, through the design refinement process, impacts will be minimized as much as possible. It was also explained that the final determination as to which businesses and residents will be relocated cannot be determined until the final designs have been prepared following the FEIS.
- What are the drivers that push the ramp in the Northwest quadrant so far to the west?
 - Answer: The existing interchange configuration does not meet current design standards. In order to meet current design standards and accommodate projected travel demand the interchange configuration shown on the 2015 Public Hearing Map was required. With regard to establishing the physical location of the interchange, efforts to minimize impacts to business, residents, as well as the West Asheville/Aycock School Historic District and Baker Building Historic Property were considered. It was explained the current location of the proposed interchange was a best-fit location to avoid or minimize impacts to the greatest extent.
- What type of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations will be included in the Southeast quadrant?
 - Answer: As shown on the 2015 Public Hearing Map, the existing intersection of Hanover Street with Haywood Road is proposed to be closed. Currently, pedestrian accommodations exist along both sides of Haywood Road and along the east side of Hanover Street. There may be a “bicycle waiting area” within the proposed raised median shown on Haywood Road. There would also be five-foot sidewalks along both sides of Haywood Road and on the east side of Hanover Street. Access to Hanover Street from Haywood Road would be closed to motorists; however, bike and pedestrian traffic from Haywood Road and the proposed greenway would still have access to Hanover Street. It was noted detailed bicycle and pedestrian accommodations are not shown on the 2015 Public Hearing maps due to the level of designs presented.
- Are there bicycle and pedestrian counts for this area?
 - Answer: The City of Asheville will input what types of accommodations would be appropriate at this location.
- What kinds of impacts from construction of the bridge can be expected?
 - Answer: This will be discussed more once designs have been refined.
- When will the impacted property owners be notified?
 - Answer: Based upon the current project schedule, Right-of-way acquisition is expected to begin in 2019 for Section C. Individual property owners will be notified if their property is being acquired.
- For those interested in addressing specific items within the designs, what would be the best way to relay that information to NCDOT?

MEETING SUMMARY

December 13, 2016

Page 3 of 3

- Answer: Going through the City Council. The NCDOT and members of the City Council meet approximately every month to discuss details of the project. It was noted that additional items requested, beyond NCDOT standards, would be a cost to the city.
- Was the idea of moving the Haywood Road interchange or closing the interchange all together every considered?
 - It was noted from another WABA member that closing or moving the interchange would likely result in loss of business to several owners surrounding the interchange and this should not be considered.
- How are you measuring the impact of moving the transit stops on the housing authority communities?
 - Answer: The project team is working with the City to investigate alternate transit stops and conducting small group meetings with the communities in the area.
- How can I access the pedestrian study that was completed on Merrimon Street after the death of a pedestrian?
 - It was clarified the scope of the crash data analyzed for the I-26 Connector Project was much larger than only Merrimon Street.
 - Answer: NCDOT will send the location of the study.
- What is the schedule of the project?
 - Answer: Section C is scheduled for right-of-way acquisition in 2019 and construction in 2021. Section B is scheduled for right-of-way acquisition in 2020 and construction to begin in 2023. Section A is currently unfunded for right-of-way and construction, according to the 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program.

Some questions were asked during the meeting but there was not sufficient information to answer at the time and are noted below:

- How much wider will the new Haywood Road bridge be than existing.
 - Answer: The existing bridge structure is approximately 125 feet wide. The proposed structure is approximately 222 feet wide.
- What are the existing bicycle and pedestrian counts for the Asheville area, specifically Haywood Road?

Action Items

- NCDOT will reproduce a half size set of plans, zoomed to the Haywood Road interchange and send to Alice Oglesby to distribute to the WABA members as necessary.
- NCDOT will find existing bicycle and pedestrian counts in the Asheville area, determine where counts were taken, and how they have been used. Mike Sule with Asheville on Bikes requested this information. He can be reached at mike@ashevilleonbikes.com or 828-582-4705. *Update: The project team has coordinated with the NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian division for the requested information and, if available, will provide to Mike Sule.*
- The project team will locate and provide to meeting attendees a copy of the pedestrian study that was completed on Merrimon Street. *Update: The requested pedestrian study is attached to the meeting summary.*

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: September 26, 2016

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Montford Neighborhood Association
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Mike Dawson – FHWA	Rick Tipton – NCDOT, Division 13
Derrick Weaver – NCDOT, Programs Management	Mark Reep – ICA Engineering
Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA	Neil Dean – AECOM
Mary Pope Furr – NCDOT, HES	Celia Foushee – AECOM
Bob Haskett – NCDOT, ROW	Joanna Rocco – AECOM
David Brown – NCDOT Board Member	Chris Werner – AECOM
Jay Swain – NCDOT, Division 13	

The project team was invited to attend and present at the Montford Neighborhood Association (MNA) neighborhood meeting held September 20, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Isaac Dickson Elementary School in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the Montford Neighborhood (Montford) of the I-26 Connector Project status and potential impacts to the neighborhood. Suzanne Devane moderated the meeting and the format involved a panel of project team members that included: Derrick Weaver, Chris Werner, Mark Reep, Bob Haskett, and Rick Tipton.

David Patterson (MNA President) began the meeting with a brief introduction and overview of the purpose of the meeting. Suzanne Devane then gave a statement regarding the intended process of the meeting. It was noted that the project team panel members would provide project specific information and address questions that were raised prior to the meeting. After the presentation, any additional questions from the audience would be addressed.

Derrick Weaver began the presentation discussing the NEPA Process, the project's history, the project study area, and the Preferred Alternative selected in May 2016.

Chris Werner gave additional information regarding the selection process of the preferred alternative and criteria considered. This included the ability to meet the purpose and need for the project, overall impacts to resources, project costs, and public and local officials input. Design considerations of the preferred alternative for Section B were also discussed. It was noted traffic analyses are currently being updated which will be used to further refine the designs. The origin of traffic analyses and the forecast were also noted. Visualizations shown at the 2015 Public Hearing and new 360-visualizations were then displayed. It was noted the 360-visualizations were still in draft form and additional photos would be taken during

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winter months when there is less foliage on the trees. An elevation graphic was discussed which showed existing and proposed elevations at various locations in Section B. Concerns regarding tree removal impacts were discussed during the presentation by members of the audience. It was noted the visualizations show tree removal that will occur within the right-of-way, but does not show tree removal during construction. The 360-visualizations are a tool meant to inform the public of what the project could potentially look like once constructed, but are not meant to be a definitive reflection of the final result.

Rick Tipton discussed concerns regarding land stability from construction of the project. It was noted that NCDOT will perform several geological tests to confirm that land in the area is stable and will be stable during construction techniques such as blasting. It was noted that stability issues are a geotechnical issue throughout the project and in the mountain region of North Carolina for all roadway projects, and NCDOT intends to conduct borings of the area before any removal of land occurs.

Mark Reep discussed noise impacts, sound mitigation techniques, and NCDOT's policies regarding sound mitigation. It was noted in order for a noise wall to be constructed a ballot is sent to impacted residents, and a majority vote in favor of constructing a noise wall has to be received in order move forward.

Bob Haskett discussed the Right-of-Way Program, the eminent domain process, condemnation process, and next steps in right-of-way acquisition. It was noted specific information about impacts to homes could not be addressed at the meeting; however, concerned residents could contact Mr. Haskett to inquire about impacts to their property. The 2015 Public Hearing maps and relocation reports disclose information regarding which properties could potentially be impacted. Properties that must have right of way required to construct the project will not be known definitively until final design.

Suzanne Devane discussed some questions for NCDOT officials from members of the audience. Additional questions not discussed during the meeting will be sent to the project team. The questions discussed are listed below:

- Why weren't visualizations of the project provided prior to the meeting?
 - Answer: Visualizations were provided at the 2015 Public Hearing. The 360-visualizations were created per a request from the Working Group.
- How many vehicles are projected for the area?
 - Answer: 90,000 vehicles per day.
- Why is the project not being designed at a smaller scale?
 - Answer: The current designs are at a large scale, or "worst case", for the purposes of comparing alternatives and selective a Preferred Alternative for the project. Through additional traffic analysis and public input, NCDOT is currently working to further refine the designs for the Preferred Alternative. The project is being designed to meet projected traffic volumes in the year 2040, and traffic projections in the analysis are based upon local socioeconomic data from the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO).
- Is there any chance the Preferred Alternative could be moved to the west side of the French Broad River?
 - Answer: Until the Record of Decision is written, the alignment is not set in stone; however, NCDOT is moving forward with designs using the Preferred Alternative alignment.
- What traffic studies have justified this decision [of the Preferred Alternative]?

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- Answer: The previous FBRMPO Travel Demand Model was used to prepare a traffic forecast that was used to create the current designs. The updated FBRMPO Travel Demand Model will be used to update the traffic studies to further refine the designs.
- Request to discuss the Kirby Case and how it relates to the I-26 Connector project.
 - Answer: The NCDOT staff at the meeting would like the opportunity to further research how this case relates to the project.
- What is the travel time savings for those travelling through Asheville?
 - Answer: This information is located in another report not readily available. NCDOT will get the information for the MNA's review.
- Why were all properties not shown on the public hearing maps?
 - Answer: NCDOT is aware that not all properties were displayed on the public hearing maps, for example some parcels that have been subdivided since the latest set of parcel data was not shown. The hearing maps displayed aeriels and parcel data available at that time. Mapping is currently being updated and will continue to be updated as appropriate throughout the project development process.
- Was a tunnel option discussed?
 - Answer: Yes. Tunnels are substantially more expensive.

Some questions were asked during the meeting but there was not sufficient time to answer and are noted below:

- Request to clarify the noise wall policies.
- Is there literature on how noise levels impact property values?
- Request to discuss air quality impacts.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: January 4, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Burton Street Community
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

The project team presented to the Burton Street Community held October 17, 2016 at 6:00 pm at the Burton Street Community Center in Asheville, North Carolina (see attached sign-in sheet). The purpose of the meeting was to provide the Burton Street Community with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the designs (presented at the 2015 Public Hearing) and corresponding potential impacts to the Burton Street Community, discuss additional avoidance or minimization efforts, discuss potential efforts to mitigate for the project impacts, and to review next steps for the project.

Prior to the meeting officially beginning, residents viewed the 2015 Public Hearing maps that were displayed on the wall and asked property specific questions to the project team. The Burton Street Community Association leader began the meeting discussing the purpose of the meeting and introducing the I-26 Connector project team. Derrick Weaver began the presentation discussing the NEPA Process, the project's history with the Burton Street Community, the project study area, the Preferred Alternative selected in May 2016, and the goal of the meeting and future meetings. It was noted this would be the first of several meetings with the Burton Street Community to discuss potential mitigation measures to lessen the impacts of the I-26 Connector Project. It was noted the Preferred Alternative selected had the least amount of impacts to the community.

Chris Werner then discussed the design process and the steps required to refine the designs for the Preferred Alternative. It was noted this project was locally identified as a need for the community. The process to determine future traffic conditions and how it will affect the final design was briefly discussed, noting the state and federal guidelines which must be considered. A general review of the data and information considered by the resource agencies when selecting the Preferred Alternative was discussed, noting that the comments collected in response to the 2015 DEIS were taken into consideration, as well as impacts to the human and natural environment. It was noted the project team was meeting with neighborhood and business associations, as well as owners of historic properties, in order to continue with community coordination to obtain additional input on the designs so the Preferred Alternative can be refined as much as possible to best fit with within the adjacent communities. Next steps of the project were discussed which included additional small group meetings with communities, continued meetings with historic property owners, refining designs based upon public and resource agency input and traffic analyses, publication of the Final EIS, and holding of a Design Public Hearing.

Derrick Weaver discussed in more detail the Community Effects Evaluation Findings, summarized within the 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which suggested that the Preferred Alternative (Section

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C Alternative F-1, Section A Widening Alternative, and Section B Alternative 4-B) would have a “Low Burden” on the Burton Street Community. He further explained that although the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to benefit the community in the form of improved emergency response times, negative effects to the community would include recurring impacts to community cohesion, the physical aspects of the project, the potential difficulties associated with finding replacement housing within financial means, as well as anticipated effects to the visual environment within the community. He continued by suggesting in addition to input provided by the community as to how the project team might further refining the designs to lessen the impacts to the community, NCDOT was also interested in receiving input from the community as to what additional transportation improvements might be made in the community to offset or lessen the burden of the overall project impacts. It was noted that this is the first of many meetings with the community to discuss these options and reiterated no decisions would be made tonight. At this time, meeting attendees were invited to examine the 2015 Public Hearing maps and discuss impacts to the Burton Street Community. Below are discussion points and questions raised during this conversation.

- The symbology shown on the maps was discussed. This included proposed and existing right-of-way, noise study areas, historic resource boundaries, and new roadways.
- It was noted the Burton Street Community was evaluated by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation (SHPO) office multiple times to determine eligibility for listing in the National Register. The report was finalized in June 2016.
 - A copy of the report and/or guidelines for decisions by SHPO was requested by a resident of the community.
- Question: How will the project affect houses in the community, specifically on Fayetteville Street?
 - It was noted there would be no homes taken as a result of the project on Fayetteville Street. The Noise Study Area boundary which includes Fayetteville Street was discussed as well as the noise policies and requirements to construct noise walls.
- Specific impacts to Burton Street were discussed. It was noted not all impacts include a full property take. The difference in a full take and a partial take was discussed.
- The possibility of extending the currently proposed retaining wall (located near the intersection of Texas Street and Fayetteville Street) was discussed. It was noted that while this may prevent the full take of properties, the tie back required for the wall would likely still impact the property. It was also noted if a tie back is located underneath a house, it would result in a full take of the property. NCDOT will investigate use of additional retaining walls to further minimize impacts to the Burton Street Community.
- Question: Would six lanes of traffic versus eight lanes make a difference in the amount of impacts?
 - It was discussed there may be a minor difference in the impacts, however the driver to determine the number of lanes in Section A will be the traffic forecast and associated traffic analyses.
- Question: Is the purpose of the project to move truck traffic into Tennessee?
 - It was discussed this is generally one of the purposes of the project. Other purposes of the project as presented in the DEIS were discussed.
- Question: How are the lengths of the ramps [at the Haywood Road interchange] determined?
 - The ramps are designed to provide enough storage, based on projected amount of traffic using the ramps during the peak hour, without traffic backing up onto the interstate.
- Will Patton Avenue be built as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly roadway?

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- Yes, the project team is working with members of the City Council to determine locations for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout the entire project.
- Questions regarding access to Hanover Street, increased traffic on Baker Avenue, and on-street parking on Baker Avenue and Haywood Road were discussed.
 - It was noted direct access to Hanover Street from I-240 and Haywood Road would be removed.
 - It was noted a right-in, right-out concept would likely be implemented at Burton Avenue from Haywood Road. Residents were concerned this would increase traffic on Baker Avenue for those who want to take a left turn onto Haywood Road. This may be challenging given the amount of on-street parking several homes utilize on Baker Avenue.
- Through discussions, it was noted access to Patton Avenue from Florida Avenue has poor access. NCDOT stated that an improvement to Florida Avenue is an example of mitigation that NCDOT may be able to offer in efforts to reduce impacts as a result of access modifications to Burton Street.
- Residents noted B & B Pharmacy on Haywood Road is a frequently visited business for Burton Street residents and provides a delivery service to the community which may be impacted by the proposed Haywood Road improvements.
 - It was noted while the on-street parking for B & B Pharmacy may be removed, the building will not be impacted and bicycle/pedestrian accommodations would still be provided.
- Question: Will there be visualizations when the design refinements are finalized?
 - Yes, visualizations are being updated to reflect the refined designs in both winter and summer months.
- Question: What is the time frame for construction of the project?
 - It was noted right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin for Section C in 2019 and for Section B in 2021. Section A is currently unfunded for right-of-way and construction. It was noted that constructing the project by sections would be re-evaluated closer to right-of-way acquisition.
- Question: How close will NCDOT work with the community and how can members of the community follow the progress of the project?
 - It was noted additional small group meetings will occur with the Burton Street Community and other communities in the project study area. The project website is updated and includes project information, updates, and history. All coordination and commitments made to communities will be summarized in the Final EIS. Additionally, the project website has contact information for the NCDOT Project Manager, Michael Wray.
- Question: What is the process of eminent domain and right-of-way acquisition?
 - A brief overview of the process for right-of-way acquisition was discussed. It was noted further details regarding the process could be answered by NCDOT Division Right-of-way staff.
- Question: Will you go into details about the Environmental Justice (EJ) designation?
 - Due to the demographics of the community, Burton Street has been classified as an EJ population which has incurred reoccurring impacts, due to having a minority population and/or low-income population that meets the appropriate threshold within Buncombe County to be designated as such. With an EJ designation, NCDOT can provide additional mitigation opportunities to lessen the burden of the project that other communities are not subject to receive. It was noted the *Burton Street Community Plan* from 2010 may be

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a good starting point for residents of Burton Street to identify goals NCDOT can possible provide assistance for.

- Question: Who should residents coordinate with moving forward?
 - It was noted Derrick Weaver and Michael Wray were NCDOT project managers for the I-26 Connector project located in Raleigh. Cole Hood was identified as a local NCDOT contact for the project and Ken Putnam was identified as a local City contact. DeWayne Barton was also identified as a contact NCDOT has been coordinating with to meet with neighborhoods.
- It was suggested another meeting with the Burton Street Community should occur once residents have had an opportunity to develop a list of potential mitigation measures that may lessen the impact to the community.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm and any specific additional concerns were open for discussion with the project team.

Action Items

- NCDOT will send a copy of the Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report; Intensive Evaluation: Burton Street Neighborhood to DeWayne Barton to distribute as necessary to the community. *Update: The requested report was sent to DeWayne Barton on 11/10/2016.*
- NCDOT will investigate use of additional retaining walls to further minimize impacts to the Burton Street Community.

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: March 13, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Burton Street Community
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

The project team attended the Burton Street Community monthly neighborhood association meeting held February 20, 2017 at 6:00 pm at the Burton Street Community Center in Asheville, North Carolina. This was the second time the project team has met with the community. The purpose of the project team attendance was to provide the Burton Street Community with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, discuss the Environmental Justice policy, discuss additional avoidance or minimization efforts, discuss potential efforts to mitigate for the project impacts, and to review next steps for the project. Prior to the meeting, DeWayne Barton, a Burton Street community representative, took the project team on a walking tour of the neighborhood. He expressed various mitigation opportunities the community would consider during the tour such as potential speed bumps at Burton and Buffalo Roads, and a greenway connection at Saratoga and Fayetteville Roads.

During the meeting, Derrick Weaver began the discussion on the I-26 Connector Project with an update of the design revisions. The Environmental Justice policy and how it affects the community was reviewed. It was noted due to this policy, there is opportunity for NCDOT to provide mitigation to the community due to the impacts from the proposed project. It was recommended the community update their community plan to develop a vision for the community moving forward. It was also recommended the community hire a consultant, with assistance from NCDOT, to complete this task. There would be two phases of the Environmental Justice process; first to update the plan and second to identify the impacts from the project and identify potential mitigation opportunities. Neighborhood Solutions was identified as a potential consultant firm that has experience in assisting communities with this type of effort. Their work in Winston Salem was recognized as an example. It was noted this effort would be funded by NCDOT. At this time, discussion followed and is summarized below.

- What is the timeline for hiring the consultant Neighborhood Solutions?
 - NCDOT currently has this consultant on a retainer; therefore it is possible they could be under contract for this project within 30 to 45 days.
- What is the timeline for construction of the I-26 Connector Project?
 - Sections B and C are scheduled to begin construction in 2020, the Final EIS is scheduled to be finalized in winter 2017/2018 with a Record of Decision in the summer 2018.
- It was noted Phase 1 of the plan is dependent upon community coordination efforts and it could be possible to have an updated plan within six months.

The community meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

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Action Items

- NCDOT will coordinate with Neighborhood Solutions to begin work with the Burton Street Community.

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: March 29, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Fairfax Avenue/Virginia Avenue Community
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Mike Dawson – FHWA
Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA
Kristina Solberg– NCDOT, Division 13
Neil Dean – AECOM
Celia Foushee – AECOM
Chris Werner – AECOM

The project team presented to the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue Community on March 21, 2017 at 6:00 pm at The Mothlight venue in Asheville, North Carolina. The Mothlight was a make-shift venue, after the original location, the Grace Baptist Church, was not accessible. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the residents of the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue Community with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the designs and corresponding potential impacts to the community, review next steps for the project, and get feedback from the community on the impacts and benefits to their community from the project.

Chris Werner began the presentation by discussing the project history, the project study area, the Detailed Study Alternatives, and the Preferred Alternative selected in May 2016. He then discussed the current status of the project and the process of updating designs of the Preferred Alternative through updates to the traffic analyses. He reviewed the 2015 Public Hearing maps in the vicinity of the community and explained the proposed designs for the I-26 interchanges at Brevard Road and Amboy Road. It was noted the Amboy Road Extension was conceptualized based upon local input. Amboy Road Extension is currently shown as a 4-lane divided facility with a bike lane in each direction, curb and gutter due to low vehicular design speeds, and berm to accommodate sidewalks, should the City of Asheville choose to assist in the cost of constructing sidewalks. It was explained the four lanes on Amboy Road Extension were provided to meet the traffic demand based upon previous versions of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) travel demand model, which included socioeconomic data which the MPO established based on local input. It was noted the proposed right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue was provided for access to the neighborhoods, but would go through public, agency and the City of Asheville review for comment as to whether this access should ultimately be provided. Surrounding restrictions that drive the current designs in the vicinity were noted;

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this includes the steep grade south of I-240 between Brevard Road and Amboy Road, location of the existing greenway, Carrier Park, and avoidance of wetlands.

The process of the project prioritization was briefly discussed. It was noted the project is currently funded for right of way acquisition and construction for Sections C and B to begin in 2020. Section A is currently unfunded; however, it was noted the prioritization is updated every two years, therefore, it could score better in future revisions as the project moves forward, should the locals make that project a priority.

Chris Werner explained that NCDOT is in the process of updating the traffic capacity analysis, which will help determine the number of lanes needed on I-26 and at the interchanges. As such, the designs will be refined to only provide the number of lanes required based upon the new traffic data. At the same time, NCDOT has been reviewing public and resource agency comments provided on the 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Additionally, NCDOT has also been participating in periodic meetings with the City of Asheville Working Group to review and address their comments on the project. NCDOT has also been meeting with business groups (as requested), adjacent neighborhoods, and historic property owners in order to better understand concerns and to obtain input on how the project could be refined to better fit within the context of Asheville while meeting local and regional needs.

General feedback received from attendees included:

- The existing intersection of Virginia Avenue and Haywood Road has traffic operational issues. It was noted the project team would forward this information to the City of Asheville.
- Even providing right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue from Amboy Road Extension is perceived to be a safety issue on Fairfax and Virginia Avenues as these are narrow streets, with no sidewalks, and on-street parking.
- It was recommended traffic calming measures be implemented on High Court Entrance. It was noted the project team would forward this information to the City of Asheville.
- There were concerns that the City of Asheville does not have an adequate amount of affordable housing for those whom may be relocated by the I-26 Connector Project.
- If the Amboy Road Extension is required, it was suggested removing the right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue.
- It was suggested that there are too many lanes on the Amboy Road Extension.
- Residents expressed interest in removing the Amboy Road Extension all together in order to reduce the overall project impacts. Concepts suggested included a configuration similar to a spread diamond interchange between Brevard Road and Amboy Road. It was noted by residents, with this type of configuration, the bike lanes and sidewalk as currently proposed, could be completely eliminated by providing a greenway. They proposed the greenway connection could begin on the north side of the spread diamond interchange, and run from Shelburne Road east to Carrier Park. It was perceived by some that a greenway serving pedestrians and bicyclists would be more desirable than bike lanes/cycle tracks and a sidewalk.
- Noise impacts were discussed at a high level; however it was noted if the community would like additional, more specific information regarding the noise analysis and results, a future meeting can be scheduled with a noise representative.
- Residents questioned why a bypass around Asheville is not being considered. It was noted this alternative was considered at the early stages of the project; since it does not meet the purpose and need of the project, it was eliminated by the Merger Team for further evaluation.

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- It was suggested that efforts need to be made to eliminate truckers from using Jake Brakes in residential areas. It was noted this request would be forwarded to the NCDOT Division office and the City of Asheville for further consideration.
- It was generally agreed that Ulla Reeves should continue to be the neighborhood contact. She will use the sign-in sheet to create an email list for future correspondence about the project. Her contact information includes: Ulla Reeves 221 Fairfax Avenue Asheville, NC 28806 ulla.reeves@gmail.com
- It was questioned if any meetings such as this have been held for the Haywood Road/I-240 area. The provided response stated no meetings have been requested in that area except by the West Asheville Business Association, which has been held; however, NCDOT would be available to meet if there was a request.
- General recommendations suggested designs be prepared to provide accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the project and with a focus on safety in areas where they interact with motor vehicles.
- It was noted traffic signal timing throughout the city is poor and needs remediation. It was noted the project team would forward this information to the City of Asheville and the NCDOT Division office.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.



STIP I-2513 I-26 Connector
FAIRFAX AVENUE/VIRGINIA AVENUE

COMMUNIT

March 21, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
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Kim Porter	Garceley St homeowner	porter.kiger@hotmail.com
STEVE VINZANI	FAIRFAX ROAD	INAZNIN@GMAIL.COM
Benjamin Robinson	Fairfax Rd resident	Ben.Krobinson74@gmail.com



STIP I-2513 I-26 Connector
FAIRFAX AVENUE/VIRGINIA AVENUE

COMMUNIT March 21, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
Will Kinney	Hubbard Ave. Resident	willkinney53@yahoo.com
Jim Morrison	Dale St. Resident	jimgmorrison@gmail.com
KEN PUTNAM	COA	KPUTNAM@ASHEVILLE.ORG
Gwen Wisler	Asheville Council	
Liz Preyer / Morris Letsinger	Virginia Ave residents	lizpreyer@gmail.com / mletsinger@gmail.com
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STIP I-2513 I-26 Connector
FAIRFAX AVENUE/VIRGINIA AVENUE

COMMUNIT

March 21, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
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MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Joanna Rocco
AECOM

Date: March 28, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Hillcrest Apartment Community
March 21, 2017
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Derrick Weaver – NCDOT, PDEA
Cole Hood – NCDOT, Division 13
Greg Smith – McCormick Taylor
Joanna Rocco – AECOM

The project team was invited to attend and present at the Hillcrest Apartment Community meeting held March 21, 2017 at 6pm at the Carl E. Johnson Community Center in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the residents of the Hillcrest Apartments an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the designs and corresponding potential impacts to the neighborhood, review next steps for the project, and get feedback from the community on the impacts and benefits to their community from the project.

Derrick Weaver began the presentation by discussing the project history, the project study area, the Detailed Study Alternatives, and the Preferred Alternative selected in May 2016. He then reviewed the 2015 Public Hearing maps and explained the access changes to the community. Residents were in agreement that the proposed access changes to and from the community were generally a benefit to the residents.

Feedback was solicited on the types of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations desired by the residents. It was agreed sidewalks to the signalized intersection at Patton Avenue would be desirable, but that attention must be paid to safety at that intersection due to the amount of traffic anticipated. The residents also agreed it would be beneficial to keep the pedestrian bridge, but that there could potentially be ramps instead of stairs to accommodate wheelchairs and any other special needs of pedestrians. NCDOT noted that if the pedestrian bridge was to be moved it would be at full cost to the City of Asheville.

Greg Smith gave an overview of the potential noise impacts to the community and the process of receiving a noise wall. He also explained the results of the initial traffic noise analysis, where a noise wall could potentially be located, demonstrated the current and future noise at the apartment community via a noise demonstration, and showed photos of NCDOT's standard noise walls.

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Questions discussed are listed below:

- Are the elevations of the roadway different in that area than the existing elevations?
 - Answer: The elevations will be relatively the same, except for the area near the French Broad River. That area may be higher due to the bridging and grades at that location.
- How many noise meters were used near the Hillcrest Apartment community during the noise analysis?
 - Answer: There was one noise meter used in this community in order to validate the model at that location. These are used to determine if noise measurements will be accurate at any point along the designs of the project.
- Is the noise analysis looking at the same types of cars used in present day? Won't there be quieter cars in the future?
 - Answer: While it's true the technology in the future may allow for a higher percentage of electric cars, which tend to be quieter, traffic noise above 35 miles per hour is typically a function of the sound of tires on pavement. A percentage of trucks is also included in the model.
- If residents don't want a noise wall, will the noise be louder due to the project?
 - Answer: No, the traffic noise without a wall decreases due to the traffic volumes and the location of the traffic, which is pushed further east with the proposed designs. A noise wall would reduce traffic noise even further.
- How would a noise wall be maintained?
 - Answer: The NCDOT Division 13 office would maintain the grass berm in front of the wall and the wall itself.
- When residents receive the noise ballot, will there be any project information along with it so an informed decision can be made?
 - Answer: Yes, there will be a detailed project information packet that explains the purpose of the project, noise impacts, and general dimensions, appearance, and location of the proposed noise wall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Joanna Rocco
AECOM

Date: August 7, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, East West Asheville Neighborhood
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA
Cole Hood – NCDOT, Division 13
Brendan Merithew - NCDOT, Division 13
Kristina Solberg – NCDOT, Division 13

Rick Tipton – NCDOT, Division 13
Joanna Rocco – AECOM
Chris Werner – AECOM

The project team held a public meeting for the East West Asheville community on June 5, 2017 at the East West Vintage Rentals in Asheville, North Carolina. The meeting was held as an “open house” type meeting from 6 to 8pm, to allow residents to attend at any time and no formal presentation was held. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the residents of the East West Asheville Community an opportunity to ask questions regarding the I-26 Connector Project, review the design concepts at Amboy Road, Brevard Road, and Haywood Road (see concepts attached), and get feedback from the community on the impacts and benefits to their community from the project.

Approximately 39 citizens attended the meeting (see attached sign in sheet). General feedback received from attendees included:

- Safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians if Haywood Road was designed as a roundabout or “ovalabout”. Many residents explained that they value being able to commute from East West Asheville to areas for recreation and work, and didn’t feel comfortable with traversing a roundabout. The perception heard from most residents was that drivers will be paying more attention to other vehicles than they would bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Several residents inquired about having a potential pedestrian bridge if a roundabout concept was developed further.
- Residents expressed positive feedback for the concepts recommended between Amboy and Brevard Roads.
- General recommendations suggested designs be prepared to provide accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the project and with a focus on safety in areas where they interact with motor vehicles.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.



STIP 1-2513 I-26 Connector
EAST WEST ASHEVILLE COMMUNITY
MEETING SIGN IN SHEET

June 5, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
Dach Webster		
Ted Figura	EWANA / FERNWOOD Citizens Advisory Center	tfigura@verizon.net
Derek Weekley	neighbor	Dweekley1@gmail.com
Merrilee Keenan	Neighbor	mkeenan@bpr.org
Susan Paul	neighbor	susanpaulbanyan@aol.com
Isyah Ransmeier	RIVERLINK, RABDA	isyah.ransmeier@gmail.com
DARRYL & TAMMIE CHASPER	EWANA / NEIGHBOR	dchasper@charter.net
Jim Grede	neighbor	jimgrede@gmail.com
Tobias Friedkin	Neighbor	T.Friedkin@gmail.com
Karin Bobbitt	neighbor	krobbitt@warren-wilson.edu
Karin Eckert	Dw AC	KARIN GARDEN@yahoo.com
Scott Miller		scott.millerswoodworks@gmail.com
Ava Crane	EWANA / Neighbor	ava.crane@hotmail.com
Bill Curtis		billc@pluridge.edu
Ben Brown	neighbor	babrown88@gmail.com
Joshua Martin	neighbor	sundownslim@gmail.com



STIP 1-2513 1-26 Connector
EAST WEST ASHEVILLE COMMUNITY
MEETING SIGN IN SHEET

June 5, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
Stephen Edge	EWANNA	MSengineer1977@yahoo.com
April Sorey		
Curt Tucker	EWANNA	tucbar1234@gmail.com
RL to Cardine Rodier	Town of Westwood	cmrodier@gmail.com
Doree Campbell	RABBA / Allegra Funding	Doree@Allegra Asheville.com
David Lutz	EWANNA	davidlutz@bellsouth.net
Lynna Brulstano	EWANNA	lveandlearn.lynna@gmail.com
Elena Mansour	EWANNA	elena.mansour@hotmail.com
Dawn Burton	Hoodhuges Interiors	Dawn@hoodhuges.com
Jill Meyfield	City of Asheville	jillmeyfield@citycouncil.com
Brad Foster		kbfoster@me.com
Mike Wasmer	Burton	mike.wasmer@yahoo.com
Andrew Hager		ahager@icloud.com
RACHEL WINGRO	NEIGHBOR	RACHEL.WINGRO@gmail.com
Roger Smith	EWANNA	rogers147@yahoo.com
Shaere Smith	EWANNA	shaere@tsfsecure@gmail.com



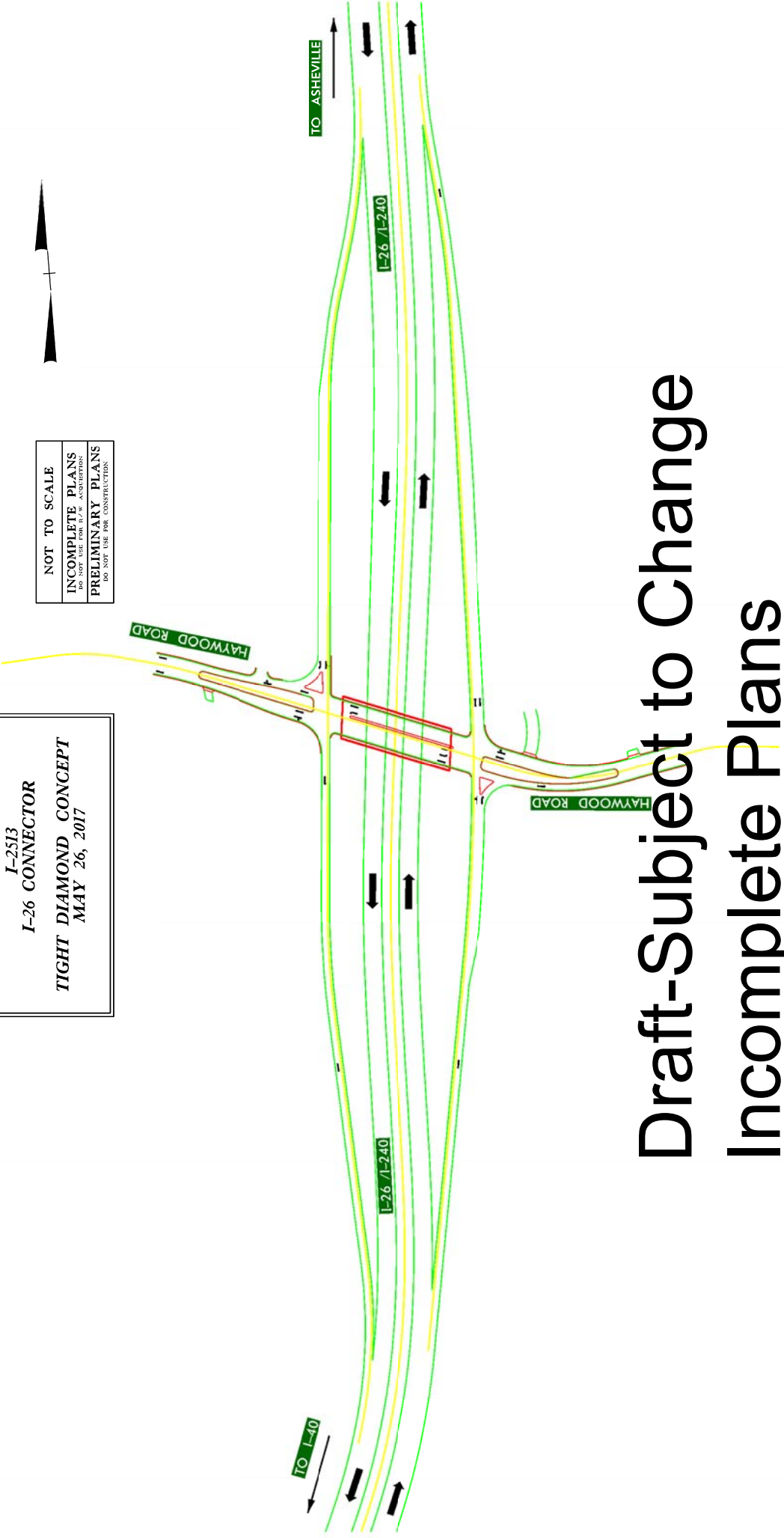
STIP I-2513 I-26 Connector
EAST WEST ASHEVILLE COMMUNITY
MEETING SIGN IN SHEET

June 5, 2017

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
Whit RYDER	PROP DORRIZ	Whitryler@yahoo.com
Shawn Johnson		shawn@closingtree.com
Tom Burnett		tkbaur@gmail.com
Lauren Shaufetey		lauren@prcapps.com
Patrick Conant	..11	Patrick@prcapps.com
Leanna Joyner	EUMINA	leanna@stjohn.com
Marcus Barksdale	EWAAL	

*I-2513
I-26 CONNECTOR
TIGHT DIAMOND CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017*

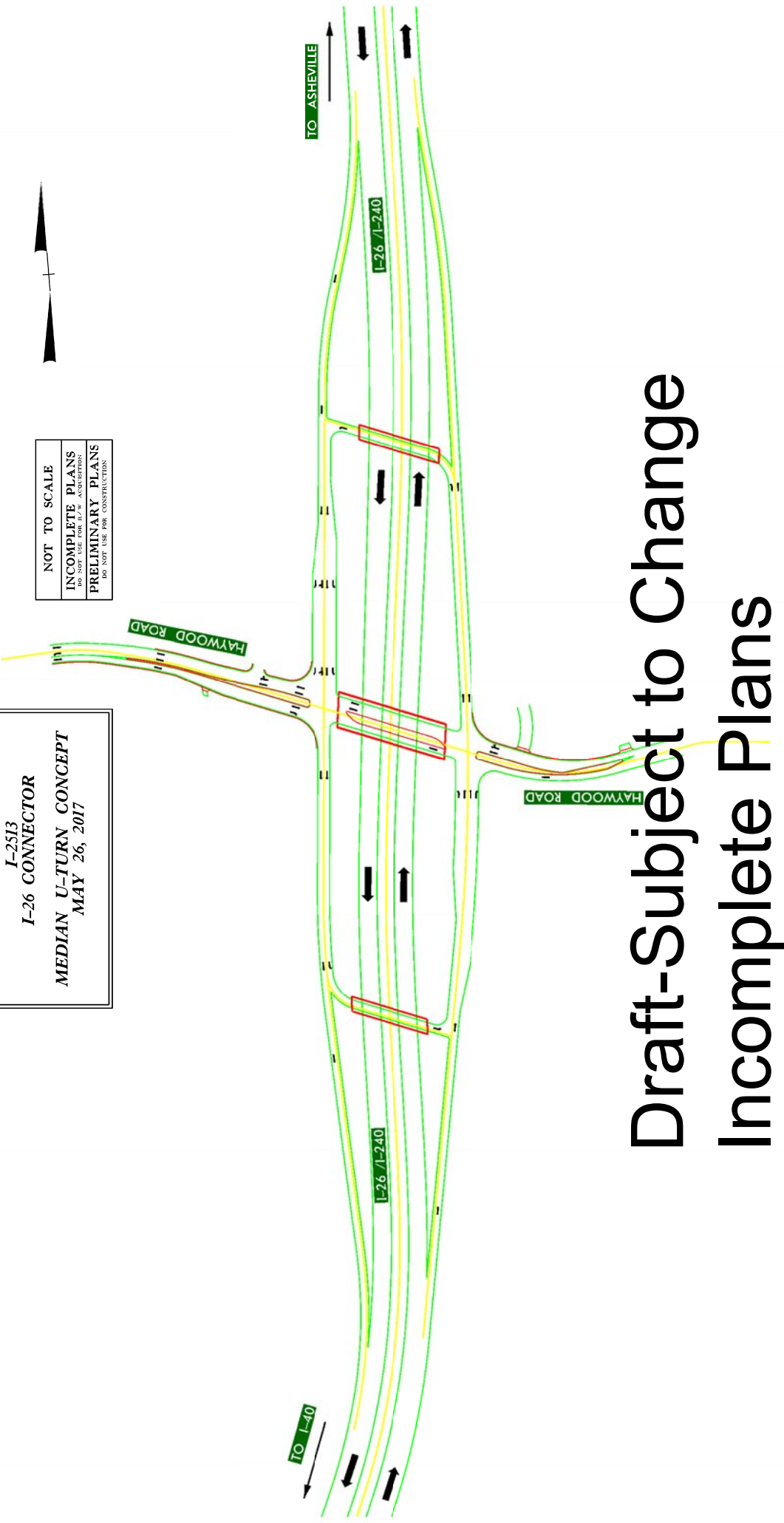
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MEDIAN U-TURN CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017*

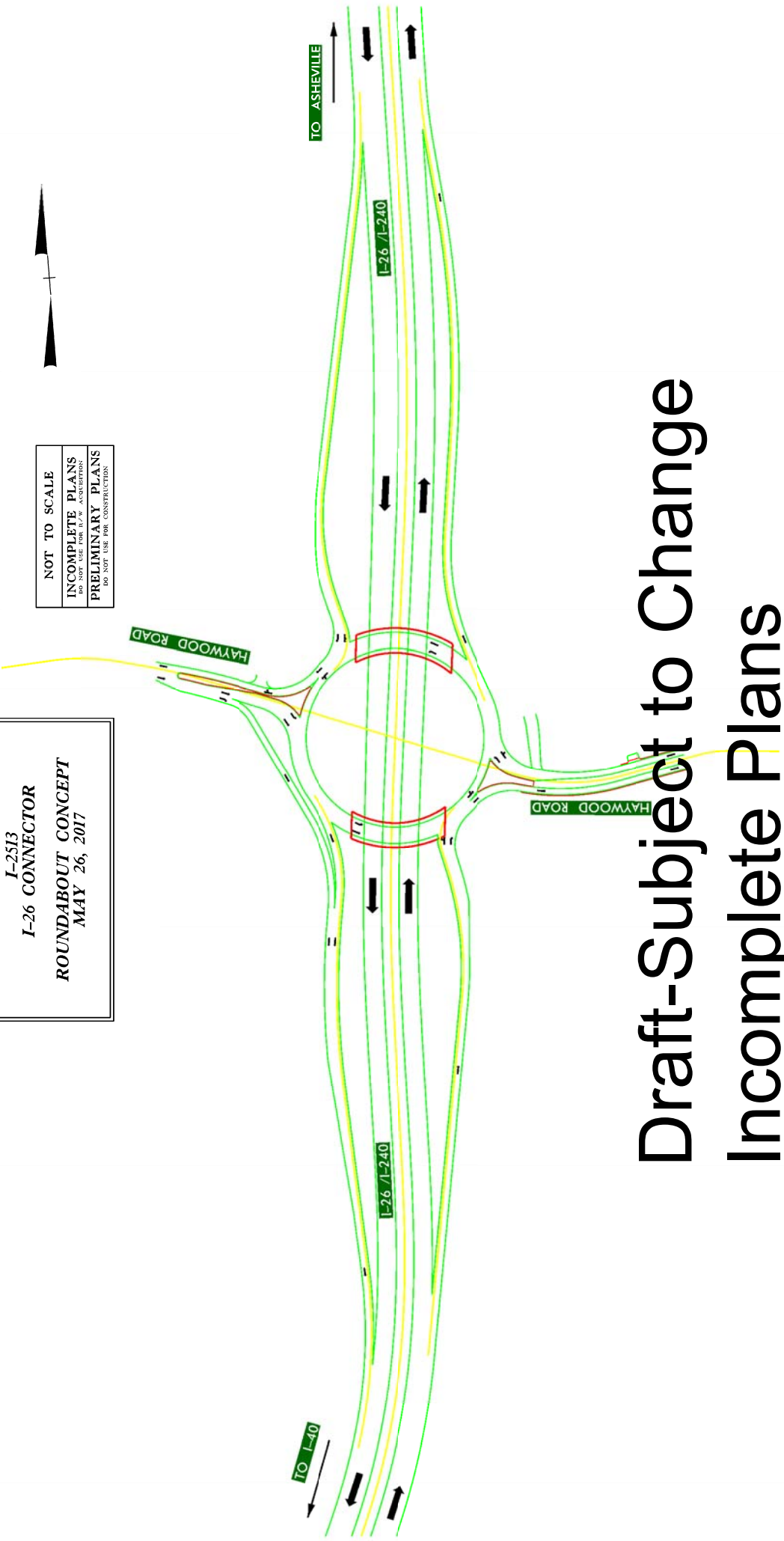
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ROUNDABOUT CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017**

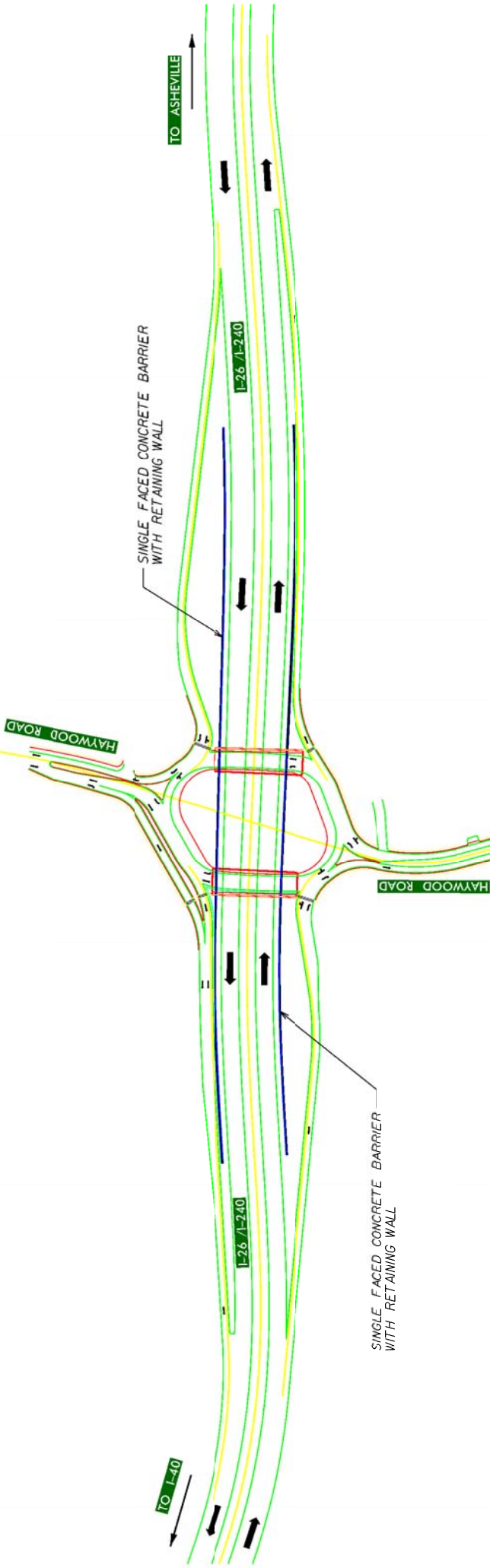
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OVALABOUT CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017

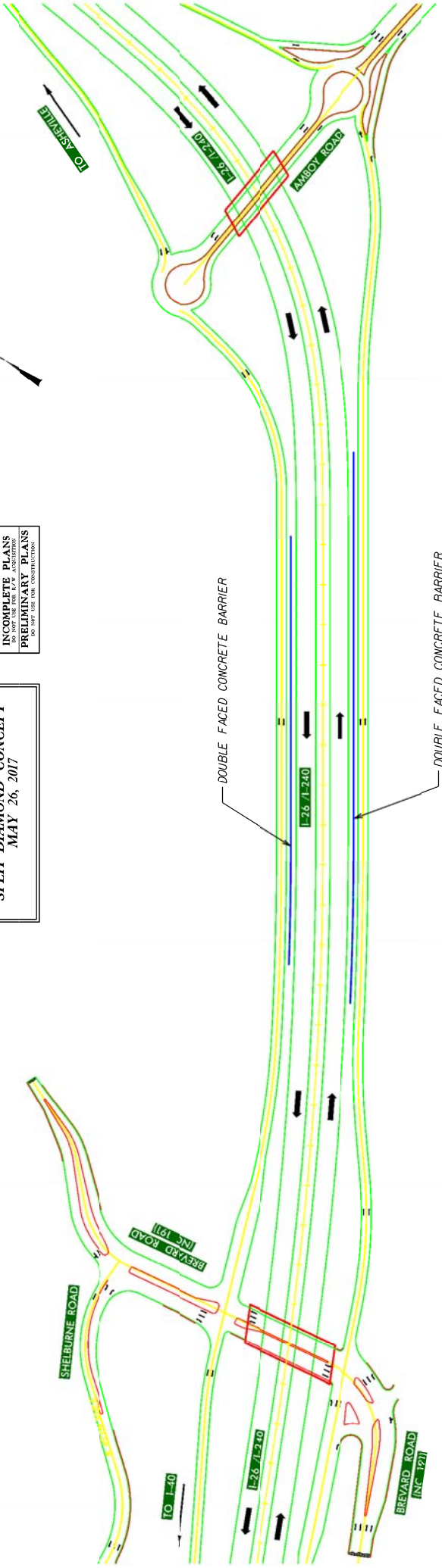
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PRELIMINARY PLANS
FOR THE I-26 CONNECTOR



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I-2513
I-26 CONNECTOR
SPLIT DIAMOND CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017

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MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Joanna Rocco
AECOM

Date: August 7, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, West Asheville Business Association
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA	Joanna Rocco – AECOM
Kristina Solberg – NCDOT, Division 13	Chris Werner – AECOM
Rick Tipton – NCDOT, Division 13	

The project team was invited to attend and present at the West Asheville Business Association (WABA) meeting held June 6, 2017 at 9:30 am at the Isis Restaurant and Music Hall in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the WABA members with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the conceptual designs developed for Amboy, Brevard, and Haywood Roads, and to review next steps for the project.

Michael Wray began the discussion by explaining the project status since we last met with WABA in September of 2016. Chris Werner then explained that the project team has been meeting with small groups and neighborhoods throughout the project development process to solicit feedback on the project. Most recently, the project team met with the Fairfax Avenue/Virginia Avenue community in March, and received feedback on Amboy and Brevard Roads. He noted residents there were concerned about the project providing right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue from Amboy Road Extension, as it is perceived to be a safety issue since these streets are narrow with no sidewalks and have on-street parking. Residents also expressed interest in removing the Amboy Road Extension all together in order to reduce the overall project impacts. Concepts suggested included a configuration similar to a split diamond interchange between Brevard Road and Amboy Road. It was noted by residents, with this type of configuration, the bike lanes and sidewalk as currently proposed, could be completely eliminated by providing a greenway. They proposed the greenway connection could begin on the north side of the spread diamond interchange, and run from Shelburne Road east to Carrier Park.

Chris explained the project team used that feedback from residents to assist in preparing designs for the area between Amboy and Brevard Roads and displayed the current concept (see attached). This concept replaces the Amboy Road Extension with a ramp to reduce the width, eliminates right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue, and replaced traffic signals at Amboy Road with roundabouts to keep traffic moving and decrease speed. This will also help prevent traffic from backing up onto the interstate. He noted that without the Amboy Road Extension (which would have included sidewalks and bike lanes) a greenway could be provided to access Carrier Park. The project team will be holding another

MEETING SUMMARY

August 7, 2017

Page 2 of 2

meeting with the residents of the Fairfax Avenue/Virginia Avenue community to get their feedback on the proposed concept.

Chris then reviewed the concept development for the Haywood Road interchange. The original concept presented in the 2015 Public Hearing Maps showed a Tight Urban Diamond Interchange (TUDI). Public comments received regarding a TUDI include concerns on the amount of impacts, safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians, and not fitting into the urban context.

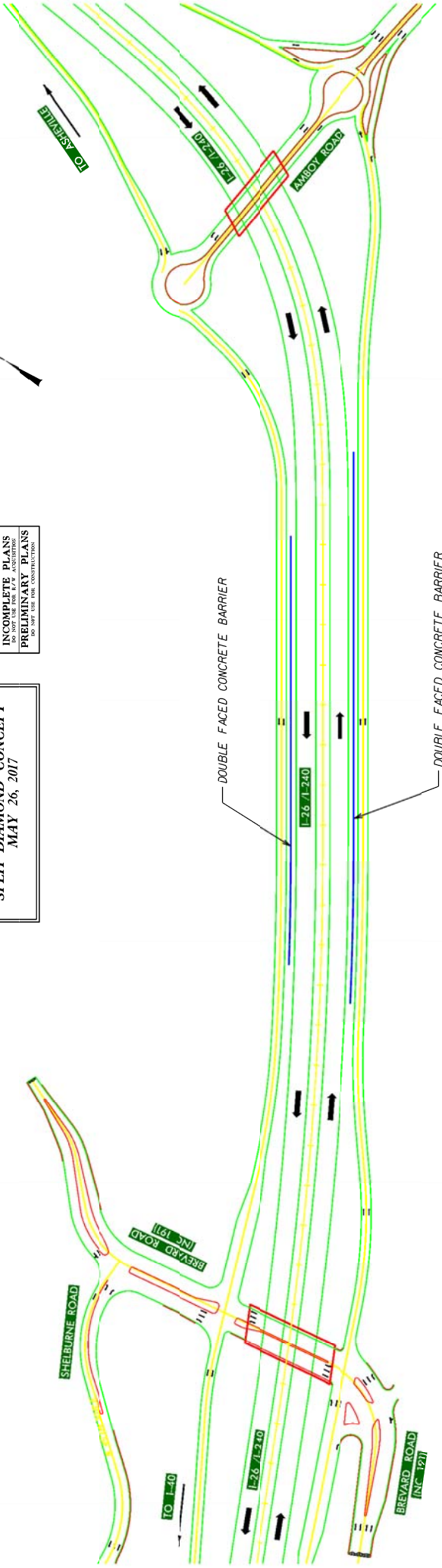
A series of meetings have been held with NCDOT and FHWA, including an urban design specialist from NC State that is now employed with NCDOT. These meetings resulted in several concept iterations. Chris showed the concepts for a Median U-Turn Interchange (MUTI), a roundabout interchange, and an oval-shaped roundabout interchange, or "ovalabout". The primary purpose of the MUTI is to accommodate left-turning traffic (all left turn movements removed) since constraints in the area do not allow the road to be widened. The MUTI is fatally-flawed however, since the distance to the Patton Avenue ramp exceeds the allowable distance between ramp terminals, making it not function from a traffic standpoint. Other disadvantages of the MUTI include vehicles having to go out of their way to make left turn movements and construction of 2 additional bridges. The roundabout design concept was presented and noted that it could potentially increase impacts. It also forces bicycle and pedestrian traffic to have to circumvent the roundabout along with the vehicular traffic. The "ovalabout" design concept was presented as well, which may work better from a traffic standpoint and is still being analyzed to determine its feasibility. It was noted the most concern from the EWANA residents the night before was bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Discussion items after the presentation are listed below:

- It was clarified Section A of the project is not yet funded, but the funding is reevaluated every two years. This section of the project continues to be studied at the planning level with the other two sections while NCDOT works with the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization on its prioritization.
- The traffic studies are currently being prepared and will determine if six or eight thru lanes are needed for Section A of the project.
- The goal of all interchanges presented at the meeting is to reduce impacts (or remain the same at least) from the impacts presented in the 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- Separate bicycle and pedestrian facilities have not been considered thus far for the roundabout and "ovalabout" design concepts at Haywood. Once traffic studies are complete, and the feasibility of these options and whether or not they can be designed is determined, bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be considered.

I-2513
I-26 CONNECTOR
SPLIT DIAMOND CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017

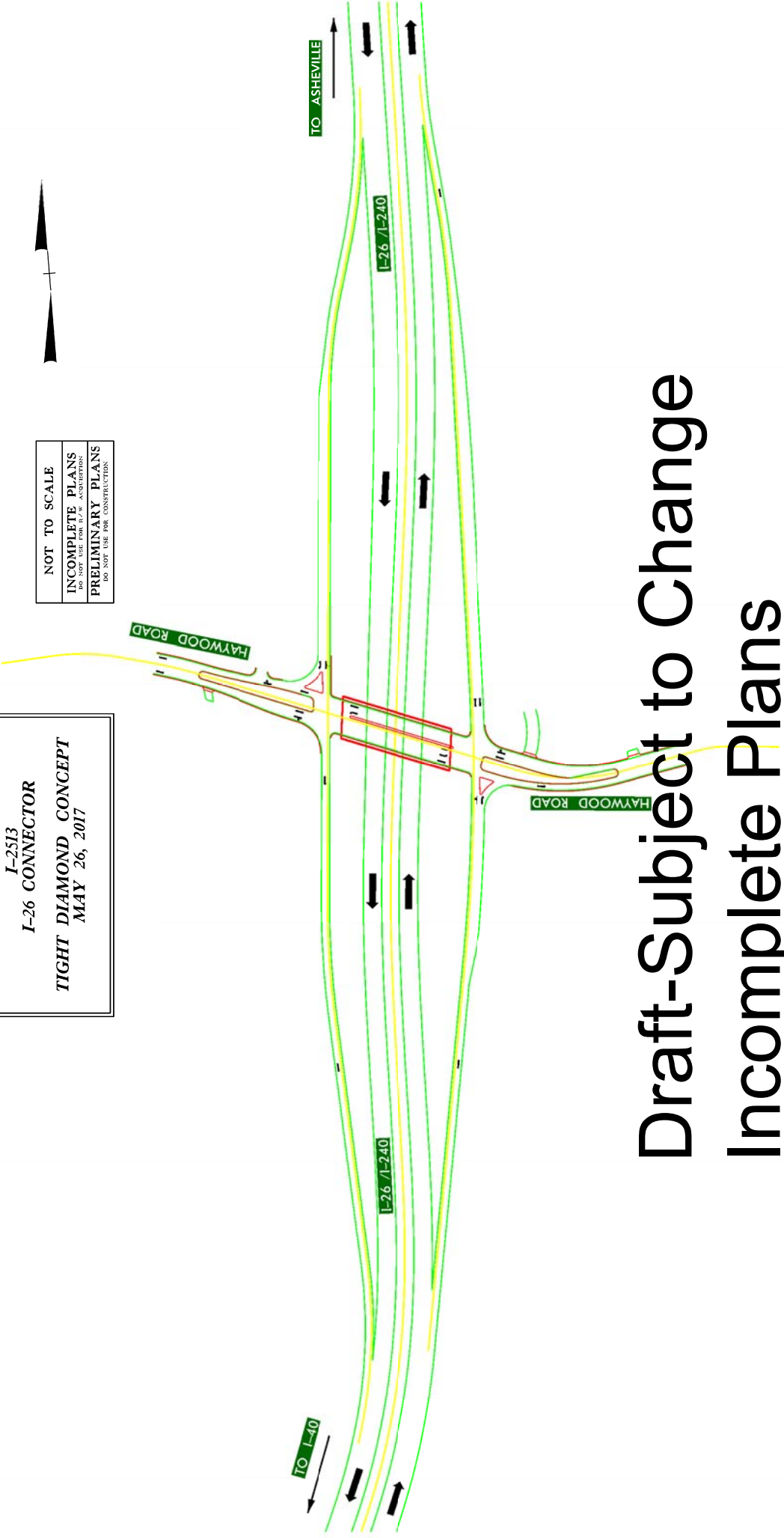
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TIGHT DIAMOND CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017*

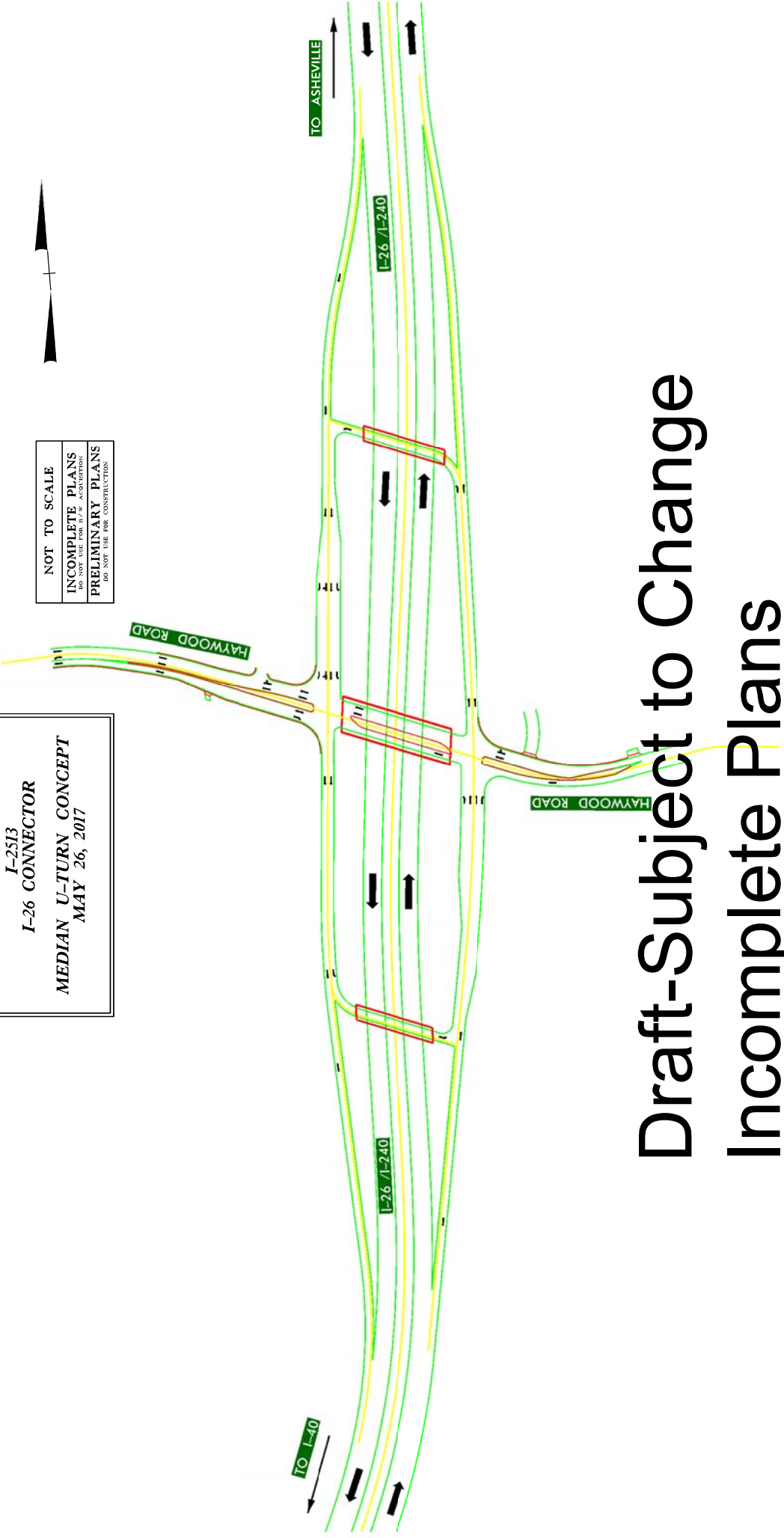
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MEDIAN U-TURN CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017*

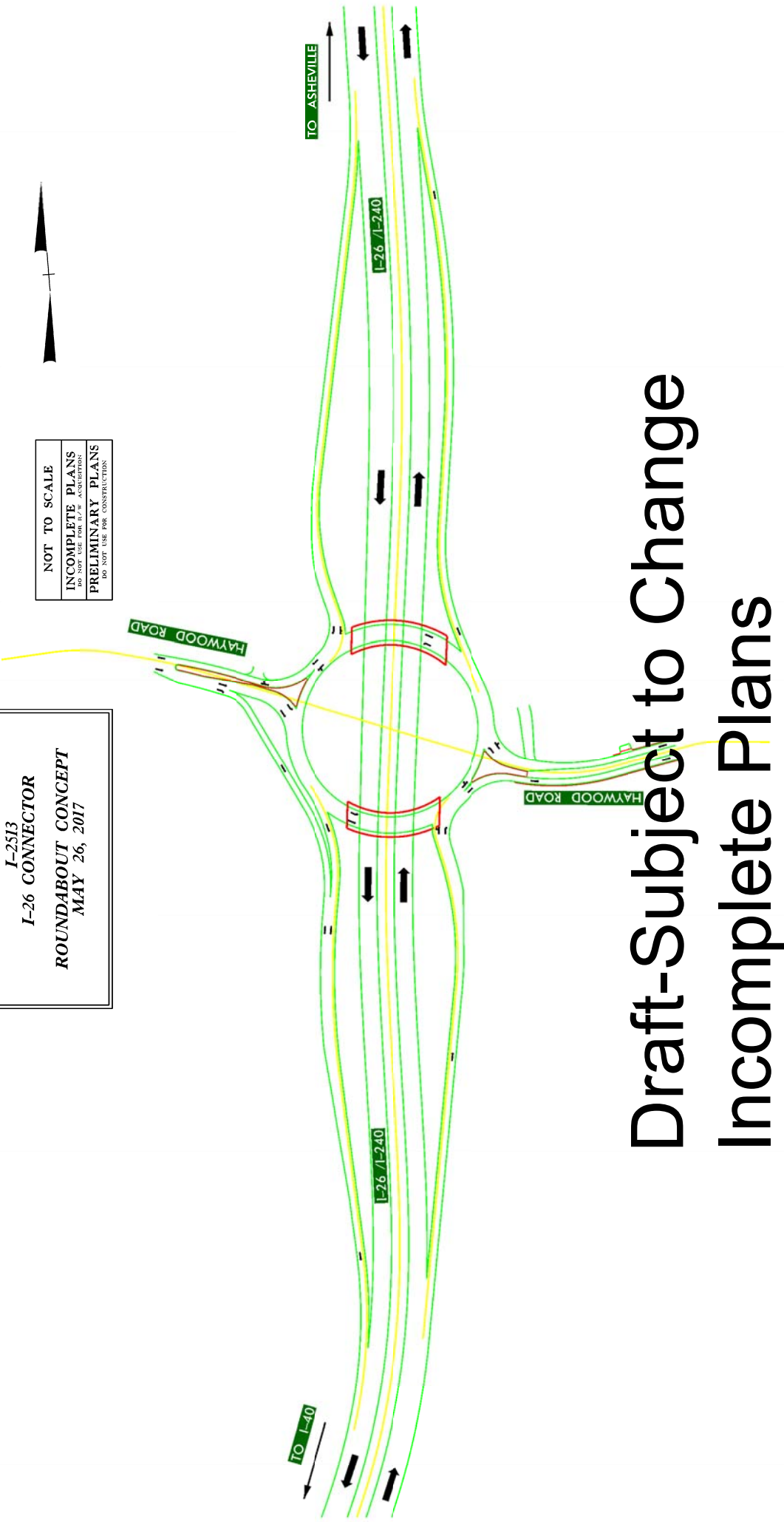
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ROUNDABOUT CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017**

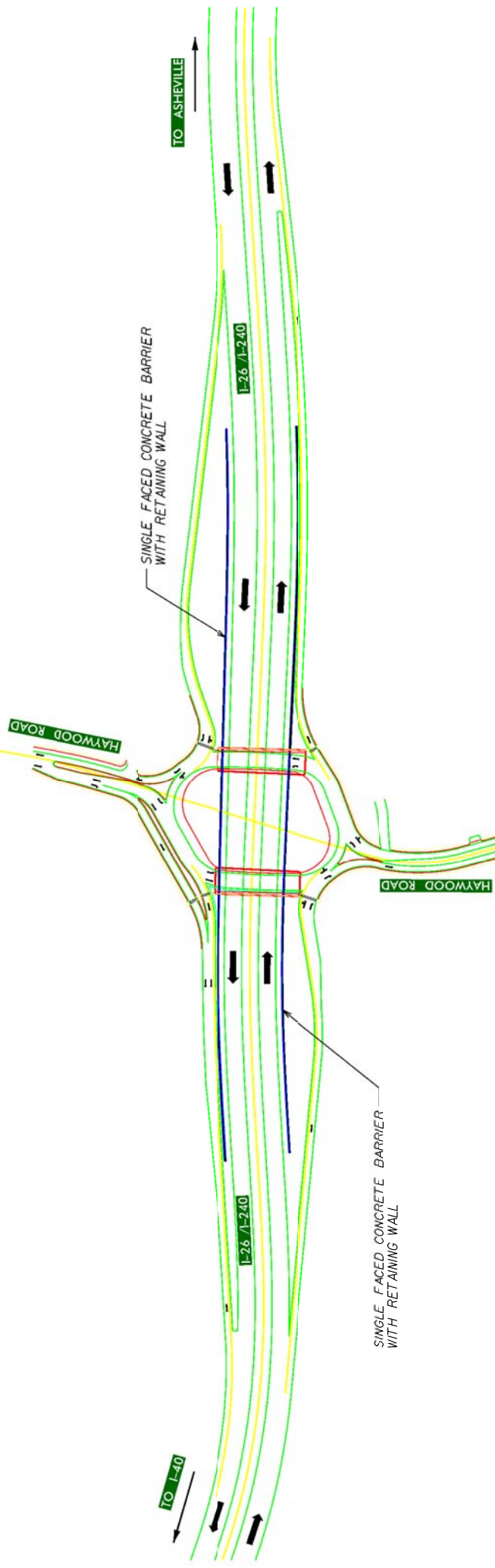
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OVALABOUT CONCEPT
MAY 26, 2017

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MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Celia Foushee
AECOM

Date: September 14, 2017

RE: **I-2513 Small Group Meeting, Fairfax Avenue/Virginia Avenue Community
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Project Team Meeting Attendees:

Mike Dawson – FHWA
Michael Wray – NCDOT, PDEA
Kristina Solberg– NCDOT, Division 13
Neil Dean – AECOM
Celia Foushee – AECOM
Joanna Rocco – AECOM

The project team presented to the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue community on September 7, 2017 at 6:00 pm at Earth Fare in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the residents of the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue community with an update on the I-26 Connector Project, review the conceptual designs developed as a result of the meeting held with the community on March 21, 2017, review next steps for the project, and get feedback from the community on the revised designs at Amboy Road and Brevard Road.

Three sets of maps were on display at the meeting; each set included the 2015 public hearing map, zoomed to Amboy Road and Brevard Road, and the 2017 revised conceptual designs on aerial imagery. The 2017 conceptual design maps did not show proposed right of way and slope stake limits since they are still being developed. The meeting began informally, allowing residents to review the maps with the project team and ask questions.

Michael Wray formally began the meeting by discussing the project history and the project status. Neil Dean then discussed the design revisions that have been made since meeting with the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue residents in March. This design replaces the Amboy Road Extension with a ramp to reduce the width, eliminates right-in/right-out access to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue, and replaces traffic signals at Amboy Road with roundabouts. The 2017 revised designs presented at the meeting illustrated a multi-transportation path along the western side of the Amboy Road roundabouts and bridge. The path would likely continue along the north side of the split diamond ramp, connecting to Brevard Road and ultimately to Shelburne Road. NCDOT is working closely with City of Asheville staff to identify the appropriate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Residents of the community noted they would like to have the multi-transportation path continue along the north side to connect Shelbourne Road to Carrier Park with connections to Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue. Ken Putnam noted that the

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2017

Page 2 of 2

City will request funding to incorporate the requested multi-transportation path in the project. He also noted there will be a connection from the multi-transportation path to neighborhood roads such as Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue.

Neil discussed several different traffic movements to describe how the public would travel from I-26 to Brevard Road, Amboy Road, Carrier Park, and into the Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue community.

Residents expressed safety concerns regarding the slip ramp from I-26 to Amboy Road south, noting cars could speed through the ramp without paying attention to bicyclists or pedestrians. It was noted the slip ramp would be posted for 35 miles per hour and the roundabout design would not encourage people to travel at higher speeds. Furthermore, it was noted roundabouts are designed to slow down traffic, typically to 15 miles per hour.

The residents requested the project team provide additional information regarding traffic patterns in the AM and PM peak hours. It was noted this information is currently being evaluated in the traffic microsimulation analysis and that additional visualizations showing these patterns may be provided at the Final EIS Public Hearing.

It was noted the project team is in the process of updating the Traffic Noise Analysis based on the revised designs and updated traffic forecast. Additional information regarding traffic noise impacts will be discussed in the Final EIS.

It was noted Section A of the project is currently unfunded. The project team advised the residents to coordinate with their local representatives to voice their support for including Section A in the next State Transportation Improvement Program prioritization.

Action Items

- The project team will send a notification letter of the design changes to the residents of Fairfax Avenue and Virginia Avenue located within the project study area and a digital version of the letter to Ulla Reeves to distribute to the entire community.

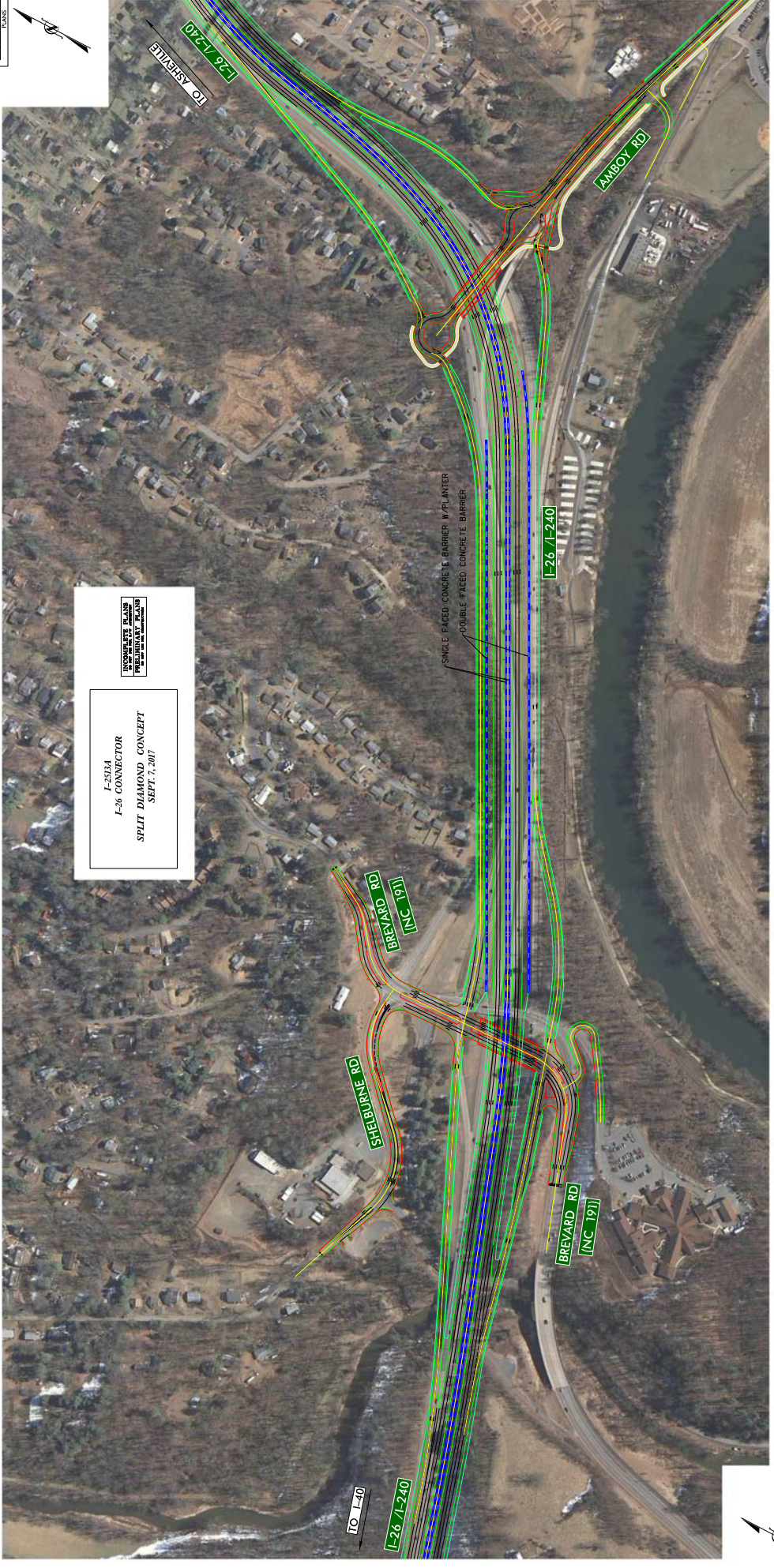
The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

GRAPHIC SCALE
1" = 100'
PLAN



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FOR PRELIMINARY REVIEW
ONLY**

I-35/54
I-26 CONNECTOR
SPLIT DIAMOND CONCEPT
SEPT. 7, 2007



GRAPHIC SCALE
1" = 100'
PLAN



Stakeholder Group Meeting Summary

A small group meeting was coordinated by the I-26 Connector Burton Street Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMSP) project team to introduce the NMSP project to Burton Street community businesses and community organizations and obtain feedback on their specific concerns and issues surrounding the I-26 Connector project and the Burton Street community. Postcard notifications were sent to the property owners and leadership of ten neighborhood churches, businesses and schools. The small group meeting was held on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 11:30am to 12:30pm at the St Paul's Missionary Baptist Church fellowship hall. A project overview presentation followed by a facilitated question and answer period was given, and a project information handout was provided to attendees. Respondent comments were transcribed by project staff. Three church leaders, the Burton Street Community Association Secretary, and project staff were in attendance.

Community Meeting #1 Summary

Two community workshops were coordinated by the I-26 Connector Burton Street Neighborhood and Mitigation Strategies Plan (NMSP) project team to discuss the NMSP project and obtain feedback from residents on community priorities and concerns. Postcard notifications were sent to residents and property owners in the Burton Street neighborhood, email notifications were sent to the Burton Street Community Association (BSCA) email list, and fliers were distributed to neighborhood churches and recreation center. The community workshops were held on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the St Paul's Missionary Baptist Church fellowship hall. Display boards were used to present information on the NMSP project background, project area, purpose and proposed schedule, and to guide attendees through a community visioning process. A project information handout including a Title VI data collection form and project comment sheet was provided to attendees. Participants were provided with multiple options to provide input, including written comment forms, a web-based survey, and verbally to the project team. Comments on neighborhood assets, priorities, needs and challenges are being accepted via email, mail or online until February 14, 2018. Forty one residents including the BSCA leadership board were in attendance (21 afternoon, 20 evening meeting).



NORTH CAROLINA

Department of Transportation



STIP Project No. I-2513 I-26 Connector

River Users Meeting

November 14, 2018

Agenda

- Purpose of Meeting
- Project History and Overview
- Preferred Alternative Overview
- Next Steps and Schedule
- Endangered Species
- Bridge Locations and River Access Points
- Potential Impacts to French Broad River Users
- River User Safety
- Questions/Feedback

Purpose of Meeting

- Provide overview of the I-26 Connector project to local businesses and organizations that use French Broad River
- Discuss potential impacts to French Broad River users during construction of I-26 Connector project
- Receive feedback from stakeholders on impact to operations and river user safety

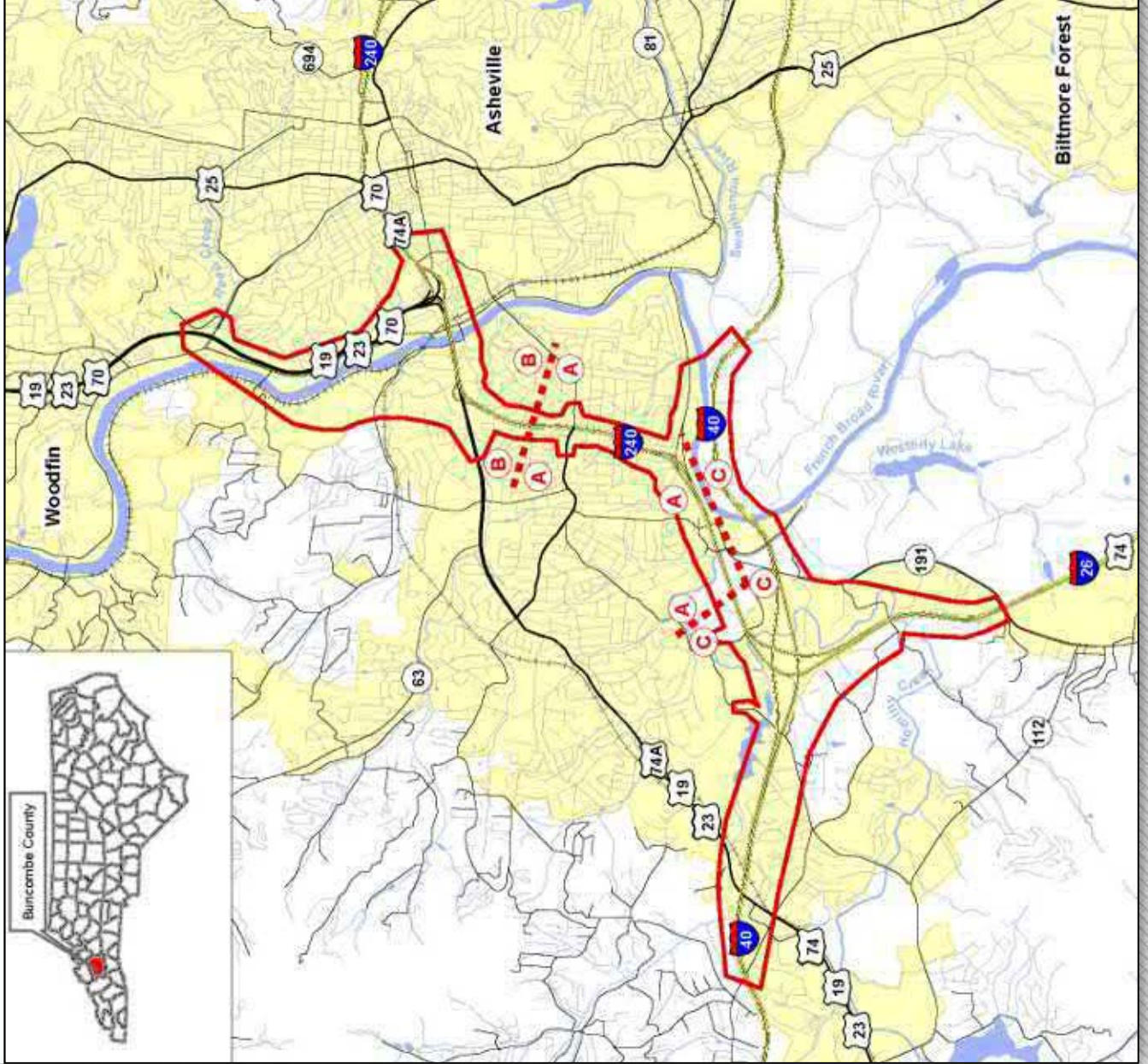
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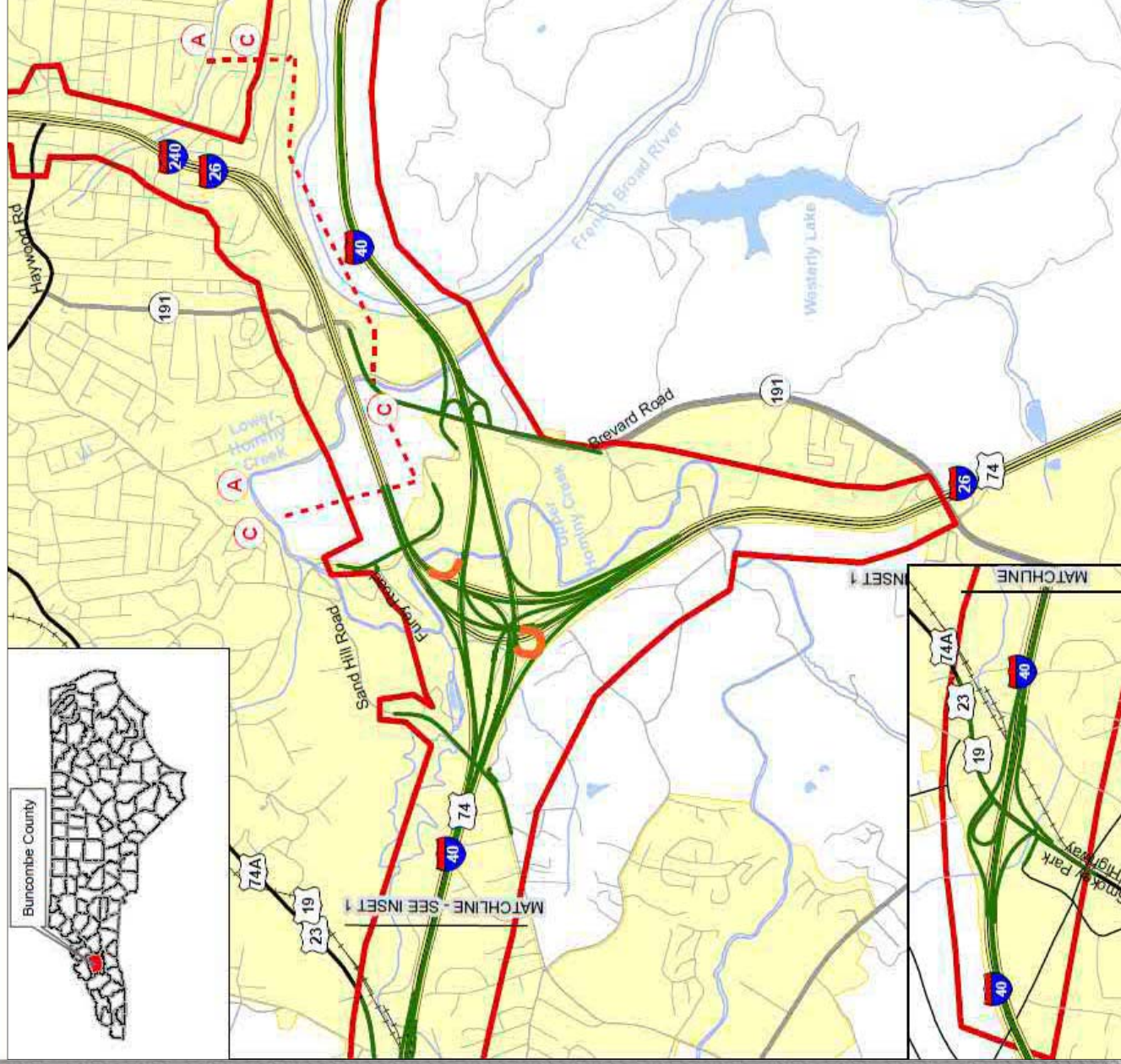
- Draft EIS Published – October 2015
- Corridor Public Hearing – November 2015
- Traffic Studies updated – 2016
- Technical Studies updated – 2017/2018
- Preliminary Designs finalized – 2018

Project Overview

- Purpose of Proposed Action
 - Upgrade corridor
 - Provide improved system linkage
 - Increase capacity of existing I-26
 - Reduce congestion on I-240 over French Broad River

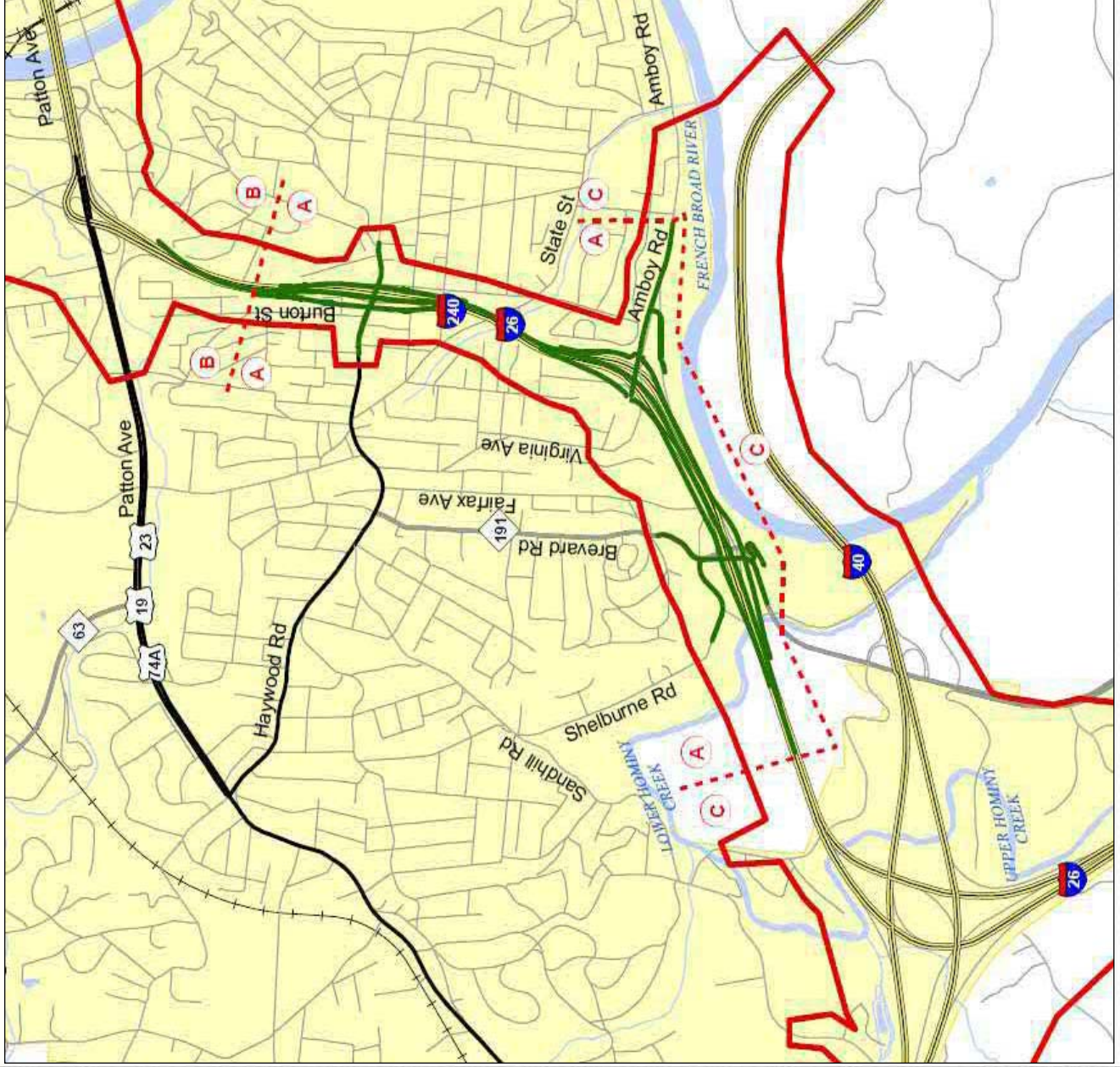
Project Study Area



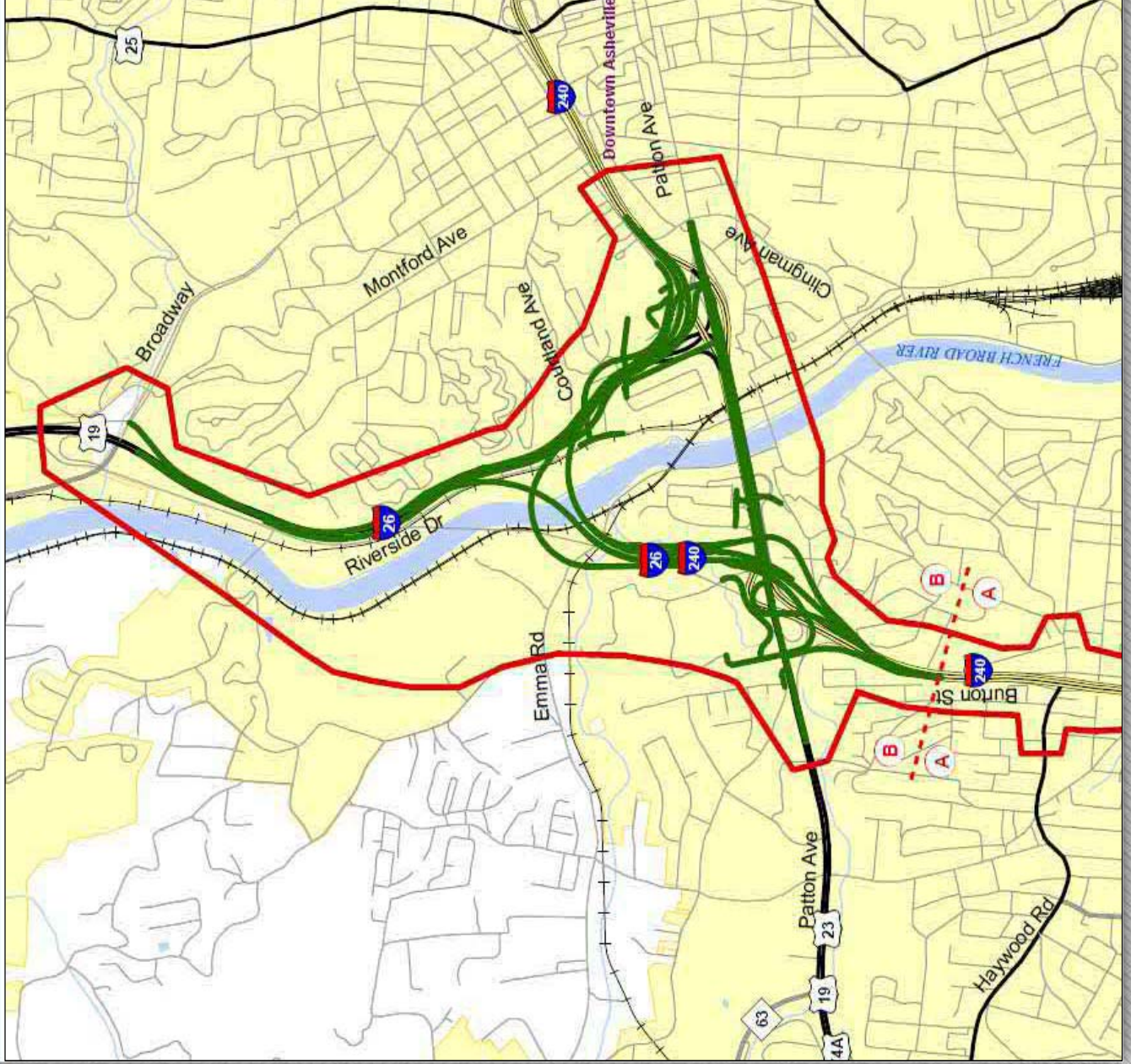


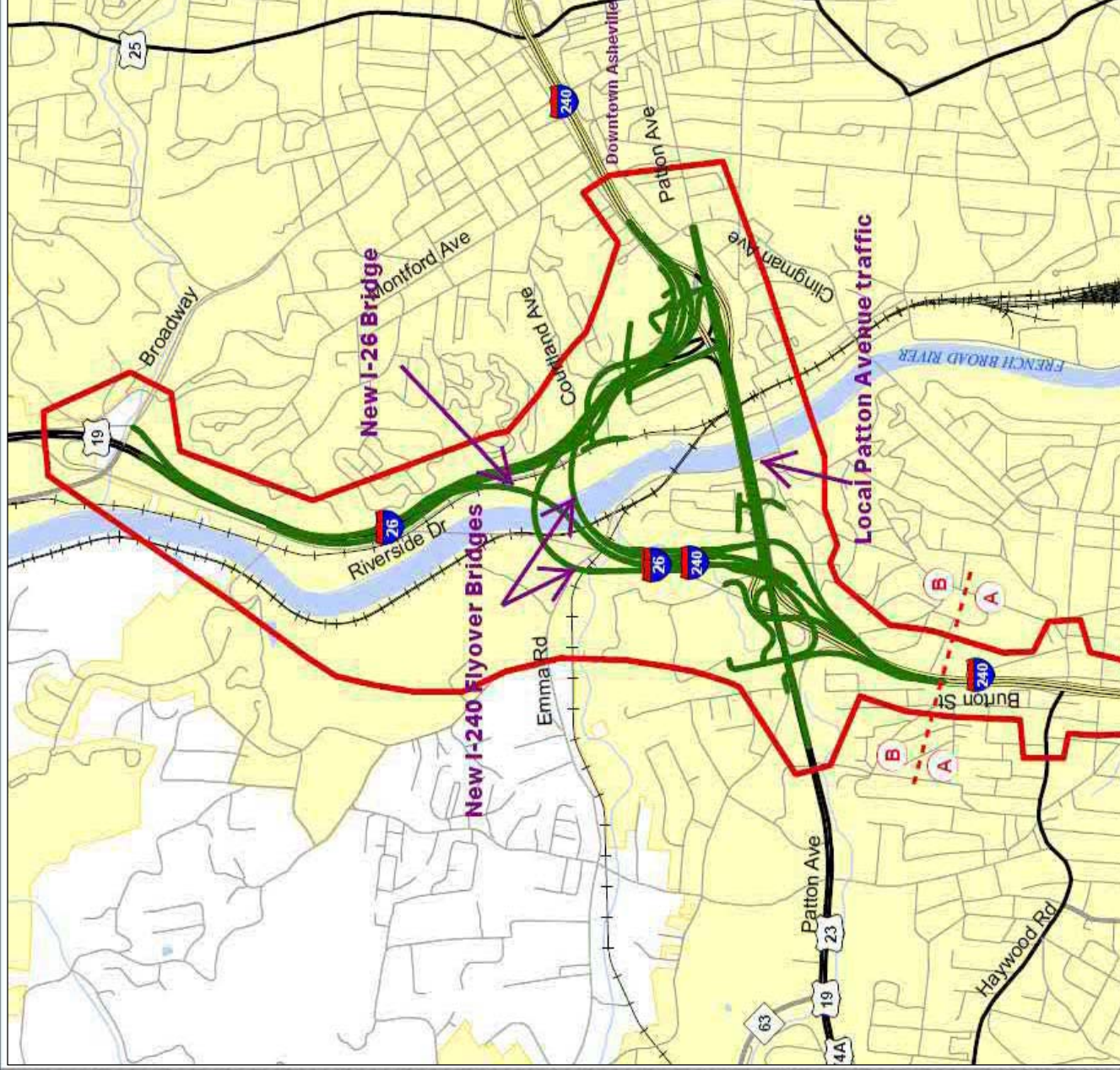
Selected Detailed Study Alternative: Section C Alt. F-1

Selected Detailed Study Alternative: Section A Widening Alternative



Selected Detailed Study Alternative: Section B Alternative 4B





Selected Detailed Study Alternative: Section B Alternative 4B

Next Steps and Schedule

- **Next Steps**
 - Continue coordination with local officials, the public, and various stakeholders on preferred alternative designs and impacts
 - Prepare Traffic Noise Analysis
 - Prepare River User Safety Plan
 - Hold Design Public Hearing
 - Prepare Biological Assessment
 - Publish Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD)
 - Right of way acquisition and construction
- **Schedule**

– Design Public Hearing	December 4 th , 2018
– Sign FEIS	January 2019
– Record of Decision	June 2019
– Design Build LET	FY 2020

Endangered Species

- Gray Bat (*Myotis grisescens*)
 - Detected in multiple locations in Buncombe County and within the project study area
 - Biological Conclusion: May Affect – likely to adversely affect
- Appalachian elktoe (*Alasmidonta raveneliana*)
 - Previous study found presence in the mainstem French Broad River approximately 1.5 river miles upstream
 - Assuming presence within I-2513 project study area
 - Biological Conclusion: May Affect – likely to adversely affect
- Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973
 - Formal consultation required
 - Biological Assessment will be submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
 - Biological Opinion to be issued by the USFWS



Credit: US Fish and Wildlife Service



Credit: US Fish and Wildlife Service

French Broad River Users and I-26 Connector Construction



Credit: French Broad River Outfitters

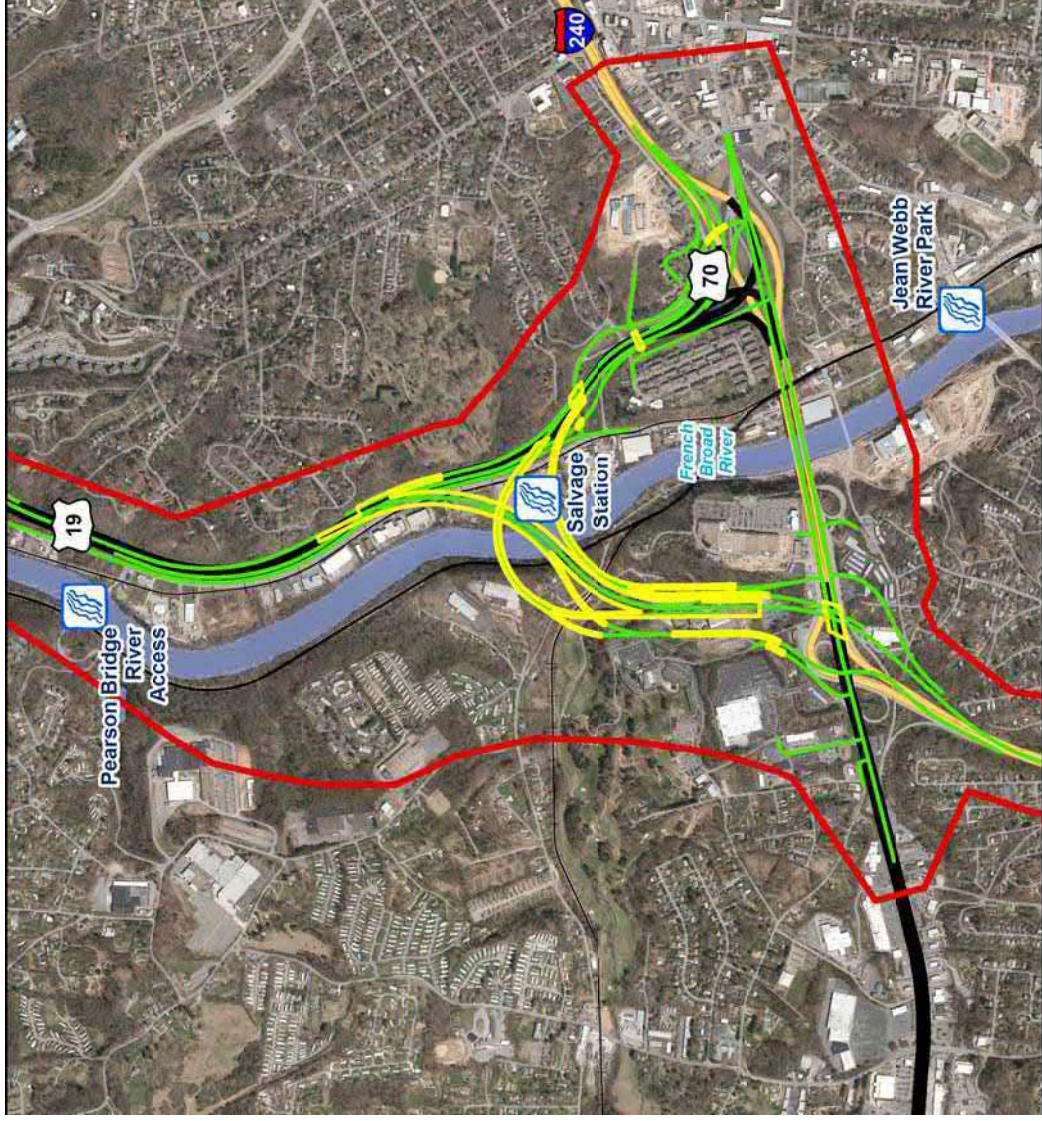


Credit: romanticasheville.com

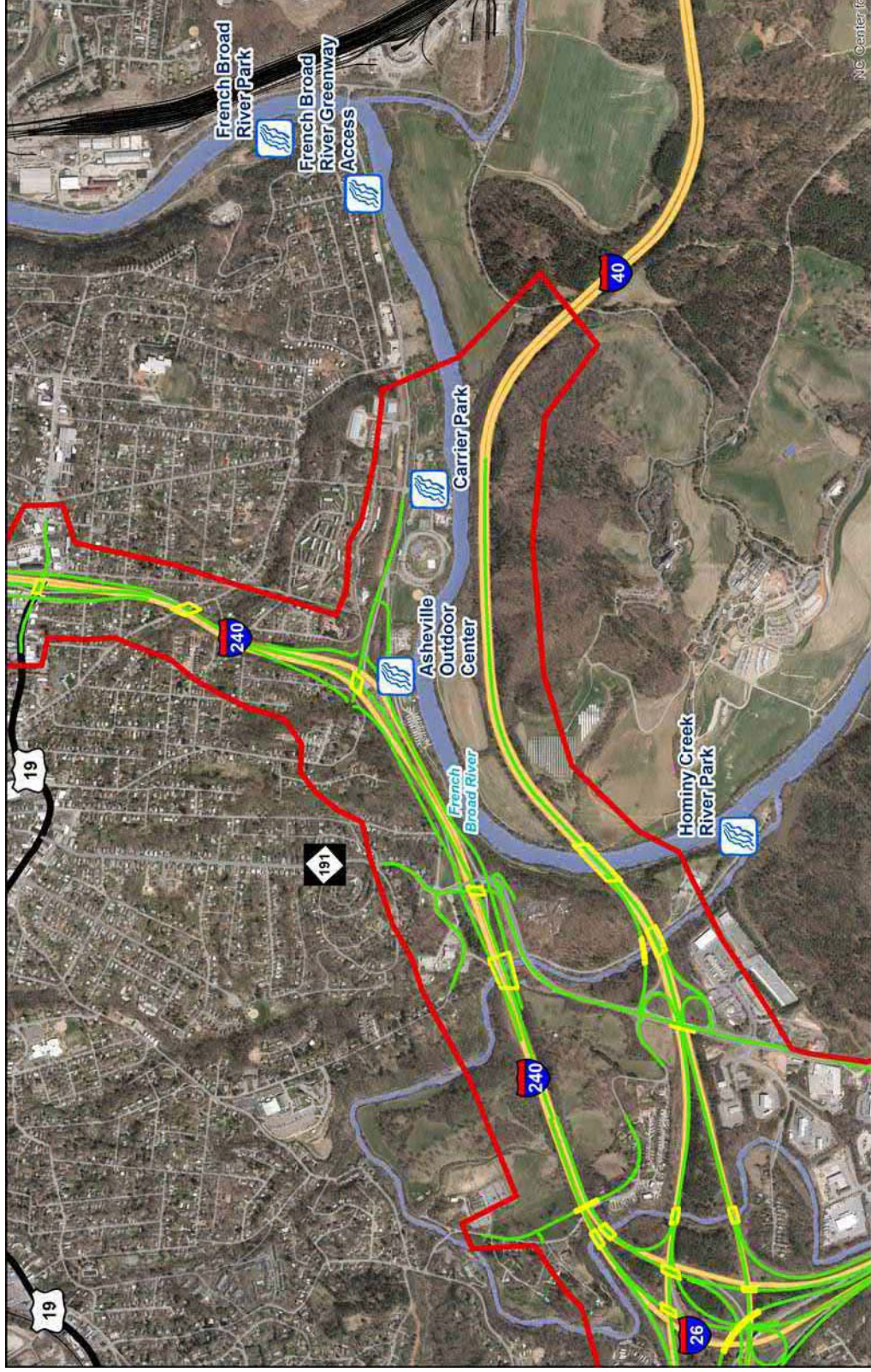


Credit: Sky Tubing

Bridge Locations



Bridge Locations



River Users and Bridge Construction

- **Impacts to river users**
 - Navigate bridge construction area
 - River opening will be narrowed at bridge sites
 - Potential changes in access points
 - Temporary river closures (off-season)
- **River user safety**
 - Safe passage lane provided for users
 - Warning lights present
 - Signage at common use spaces
 - Communication plan in place
 - Minimal construction work during active use periods (holidays, special events, etc.)
 - Social media, television, radio, and other community resources notified
 - NCDOT River User Safety Plan



*Rendering of passage lane from I-4400/I-4700
River User Safety Plan*

Questions/Feedback

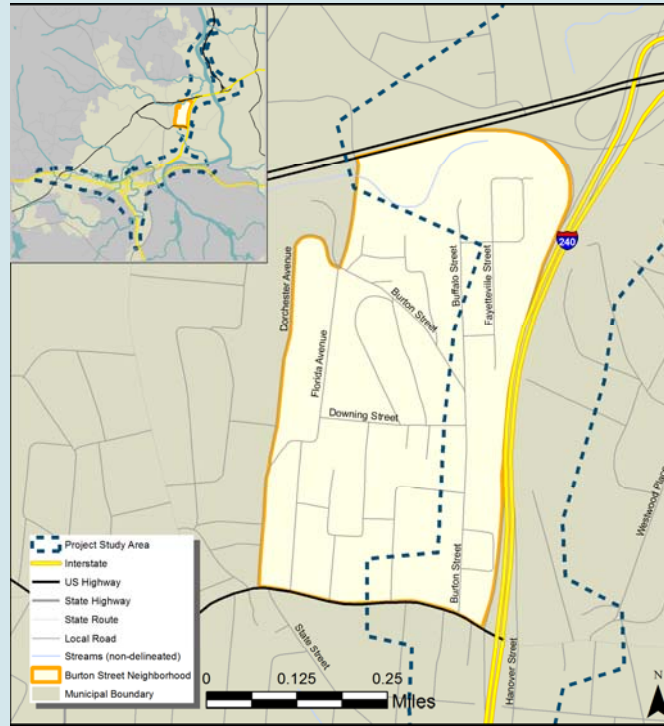


I-26 Connector

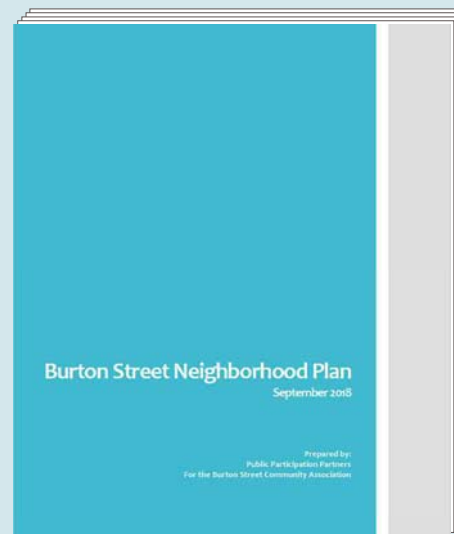
Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Burton Street Community



- ◆ The Burton Street community is an Environmental Justice* community impacted by the project
- ◆ The community has had recurring impacts from transportation projects throughout the years
- ◆ NCDOT, in coordination with the Burton Street Community Association and the City of Asheville, developed the Burton Street Neighborhood Plan
- ◆ The Plan includes a list of mitigation strategies to be implemented by NCDOT



*Environmental justice refers to the equitable treatment of people of all races, cultures, ages, and incomes with respect to development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This section identifies special populations based on those set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and EO 12898, to ensure that the project does not have a disproportionately high and adverse impact or deny benefits of the project.





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Kids Activity Area





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Please leave your comments here.

Comments can also be submitted on the project website:
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/>

Or mailed to:
Mr. Jamille Robbins
NCDOT
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1598



Next Steps

1

Submit Comments



In Person



By Mail



By Phone



Online

2

Final Environmental Impact Statement

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be published, which will summarize the anticipated beneficial and adverse environmental effects of the preferred alternative, as well as address the comments on the 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the FEIS.

3

Record of Decision

The final step in the project's planning phase will be to issue a Record of Decision (ROD), which will address comments received on the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The ROD will also identify the preferred alternative, present the basis for the decision, and provide information on the adopted means to avoid, minimize, and compensate for environmental impacts.

4

Let for Construction

After the ROD is published, designs will be refined to further minimize impacts where possible, right-of-way acquisition will begin, and the project will be constructed. The project is scheduled to be let for construction in 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website

www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector

Contact NCDOT

Jamille Robbins

NCDOT Public Involvement

1-800-233-6315

jarobbins@ncdot.gov



I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.

STIP No. I-2513





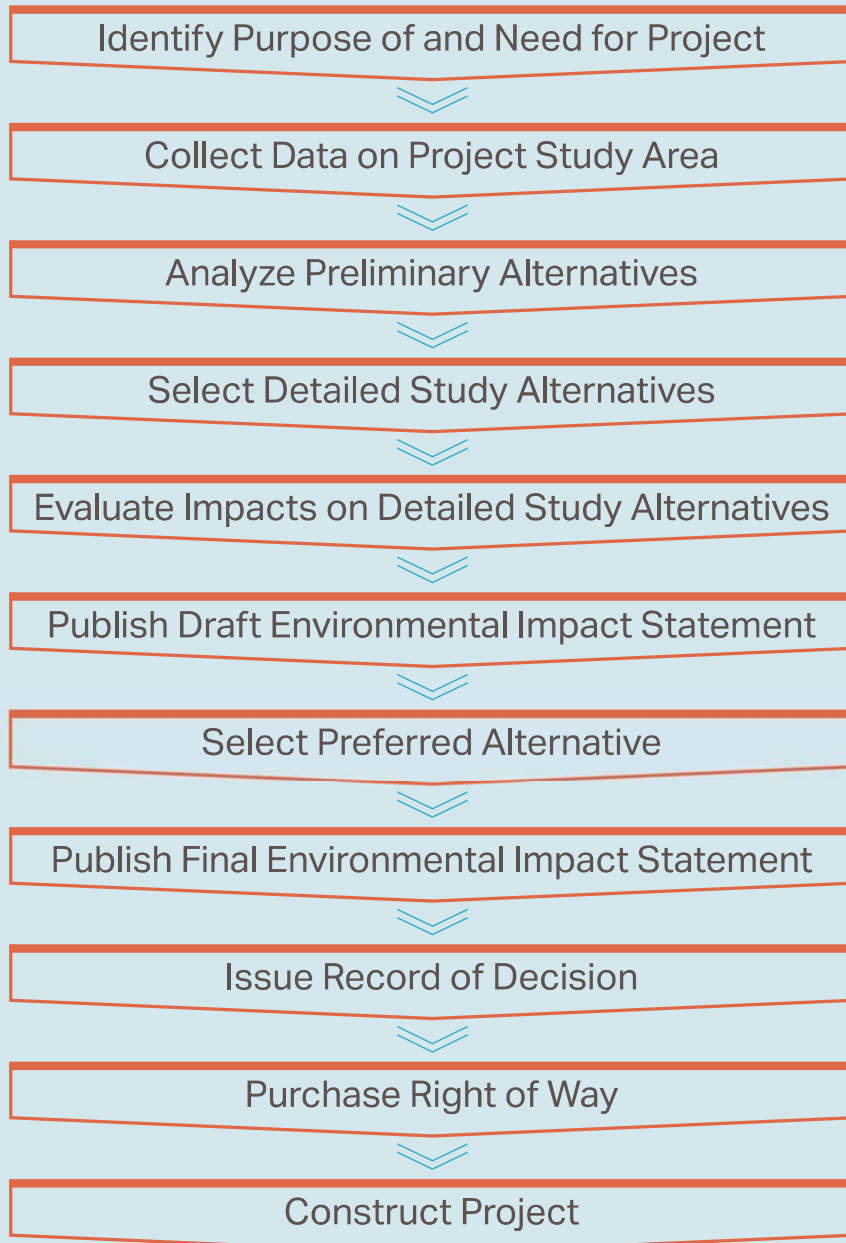
I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



NEPA Study Process

Opportunities for public input throughout the process





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513

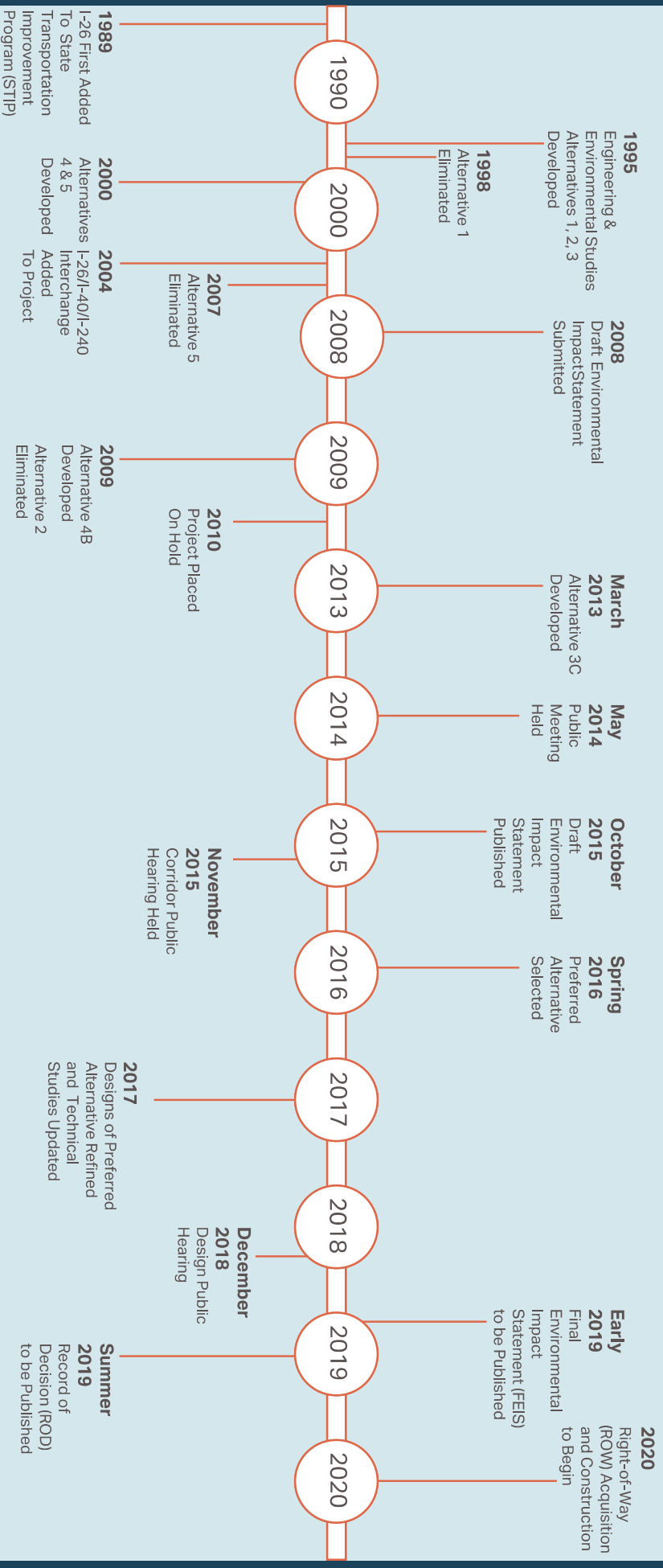


Project Video

- ◆ Please watch the video to learn about the project.
- ◆ Note this video will repeat.



Project Timeline



I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Project Purposes

- ◆ **Upgrade the interstate corridor** to meet design standards
- ◆ **Provide a link in the transportation system**, connecting a multi-lane freeway from the Port of Charleston, S.C. to I-81 near Kingsport, T.N.
- ◆ **Improve the capacity** of I-240 west of Asheville to accommodate existing and forecasted traffic levels
- ◆ **Reduce traffic delays and congestion** along I-240 crossing the French Broad River
- ◆ **Increase the remaining useful service** of the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges by reducing traffic on this crossing of the French Broad River



Project Needs

- ◆ **System linkage** - better connectivity for travelers between I-26 south of Asheville and U.S. 19-23-70 north of Asheville
- ◆ **Capacity** - additional capacity along I-240 due to increasing traffic volumes and reduced Level of Service
- ◆ **Roadway improvements** - upgrades to remedy current roadway efficiencies and bring interstate up to current design standards



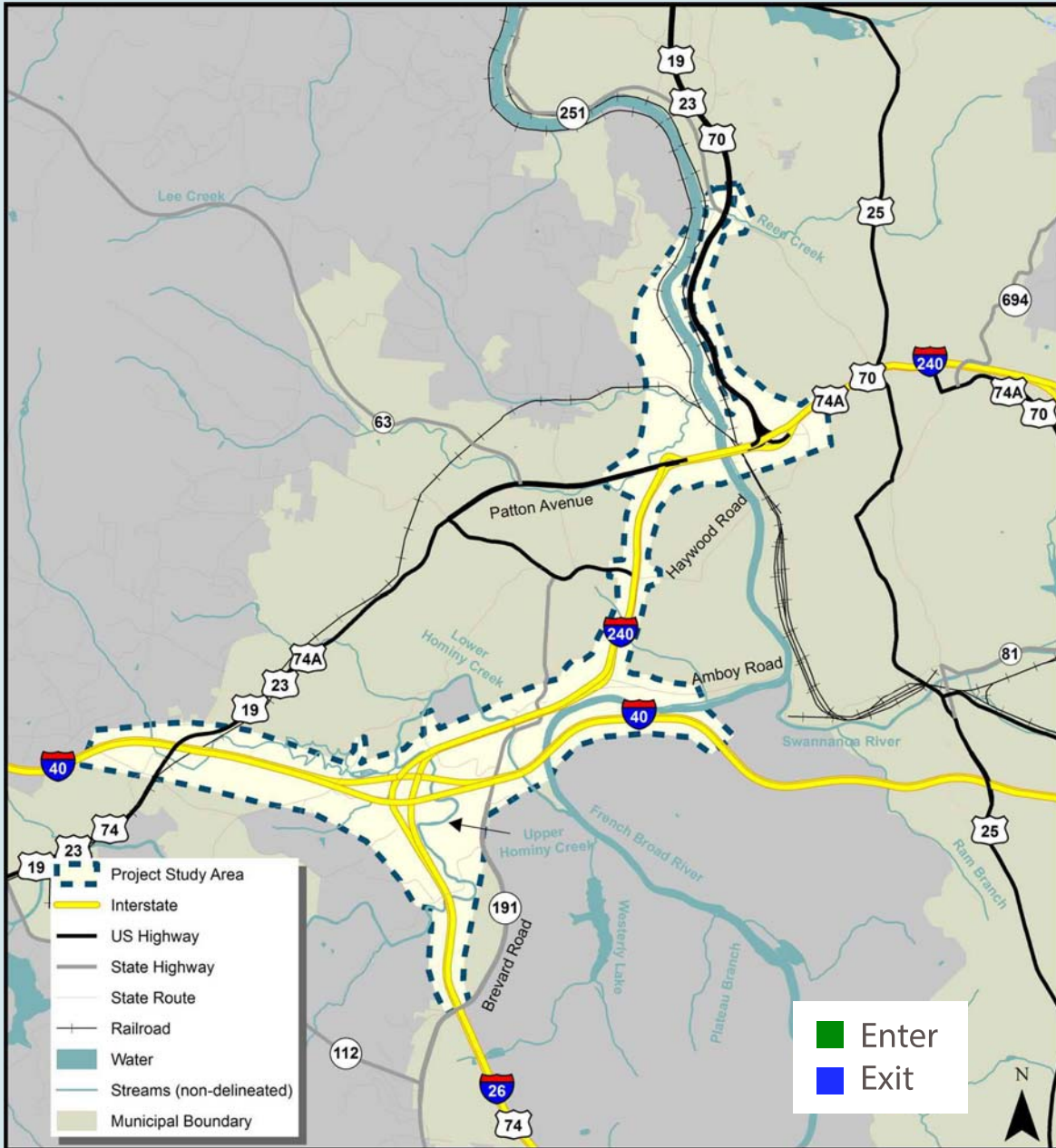


I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



River Users

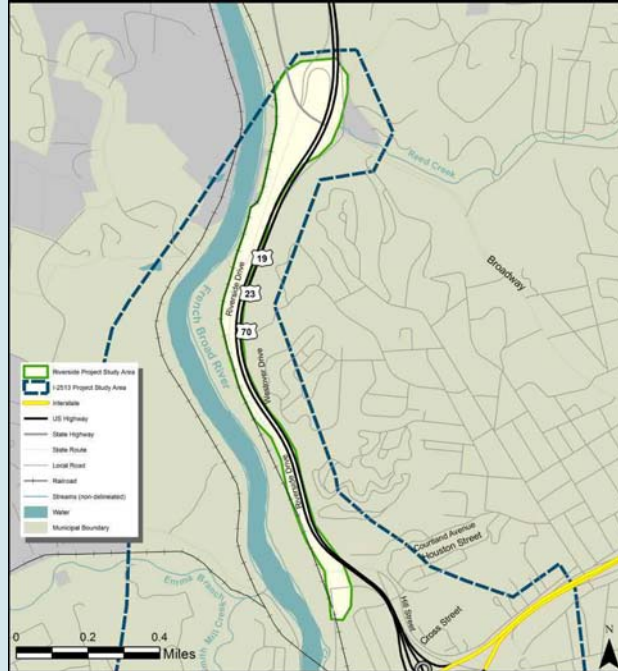


Please indicate areas where you enter or exit the river for recreational activities.



Riverside Drive Widening

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. U-5868



Project Details

- ◆ Widen 1.4 miles of Riverside Drive from Broadway to Hill Street from two lanes to three lanes
- ◆ Replace bicycle lanes with a 10-foot wide multi-use path on the western side of Riverside Drive
- ◆ The project is included in:
 - ◆ French Broad River MPO's *Comprehensive Transportation Plan* (2007)
 - ◆ City of Asheville's *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan* (2008)
 - ◆ French Broad River MPO's *2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* (2015)

Typical Section





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Right-of-Way and Relocation Assistance Information



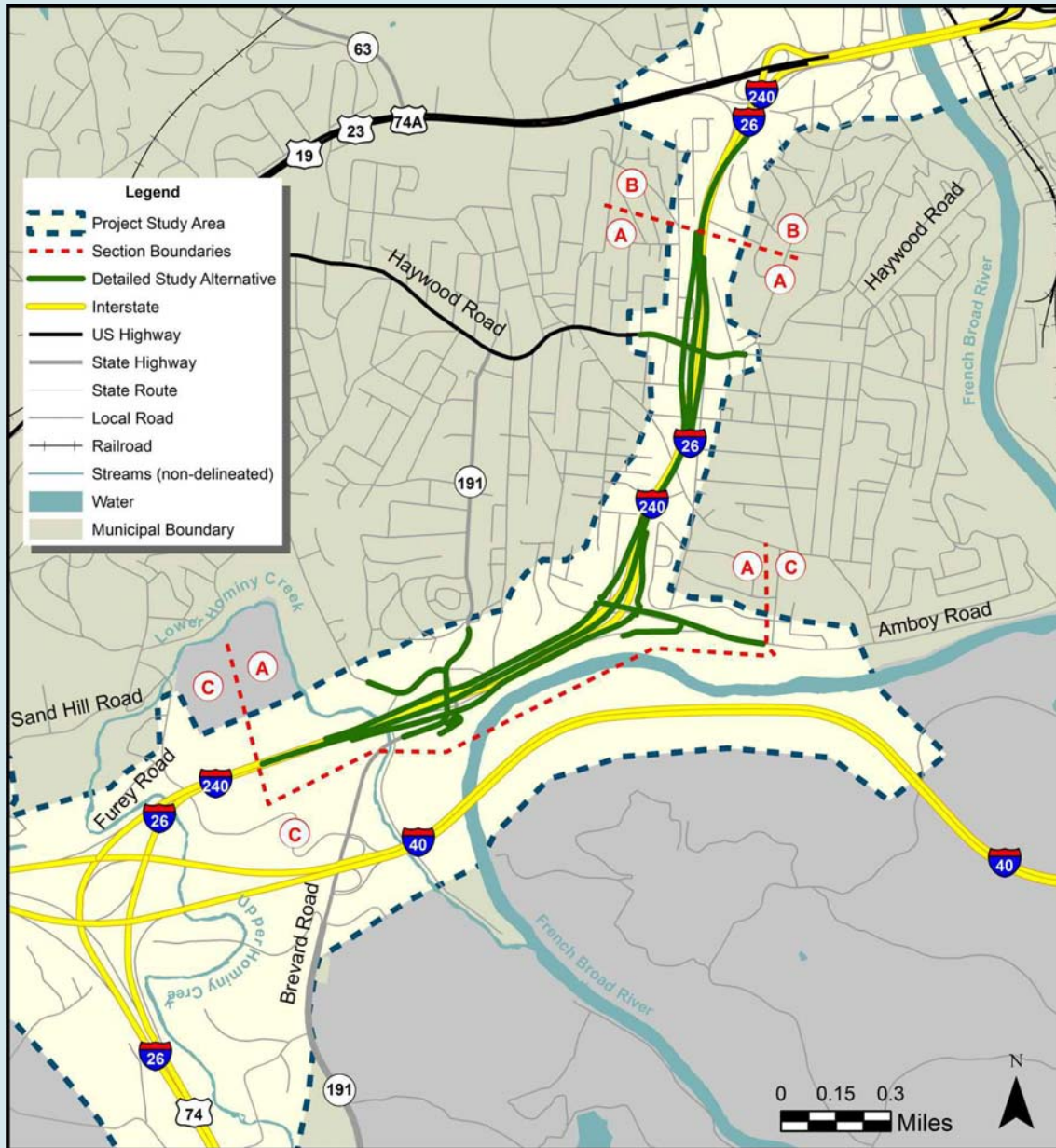


I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Section A - Widening Alternative Preferred Alternative



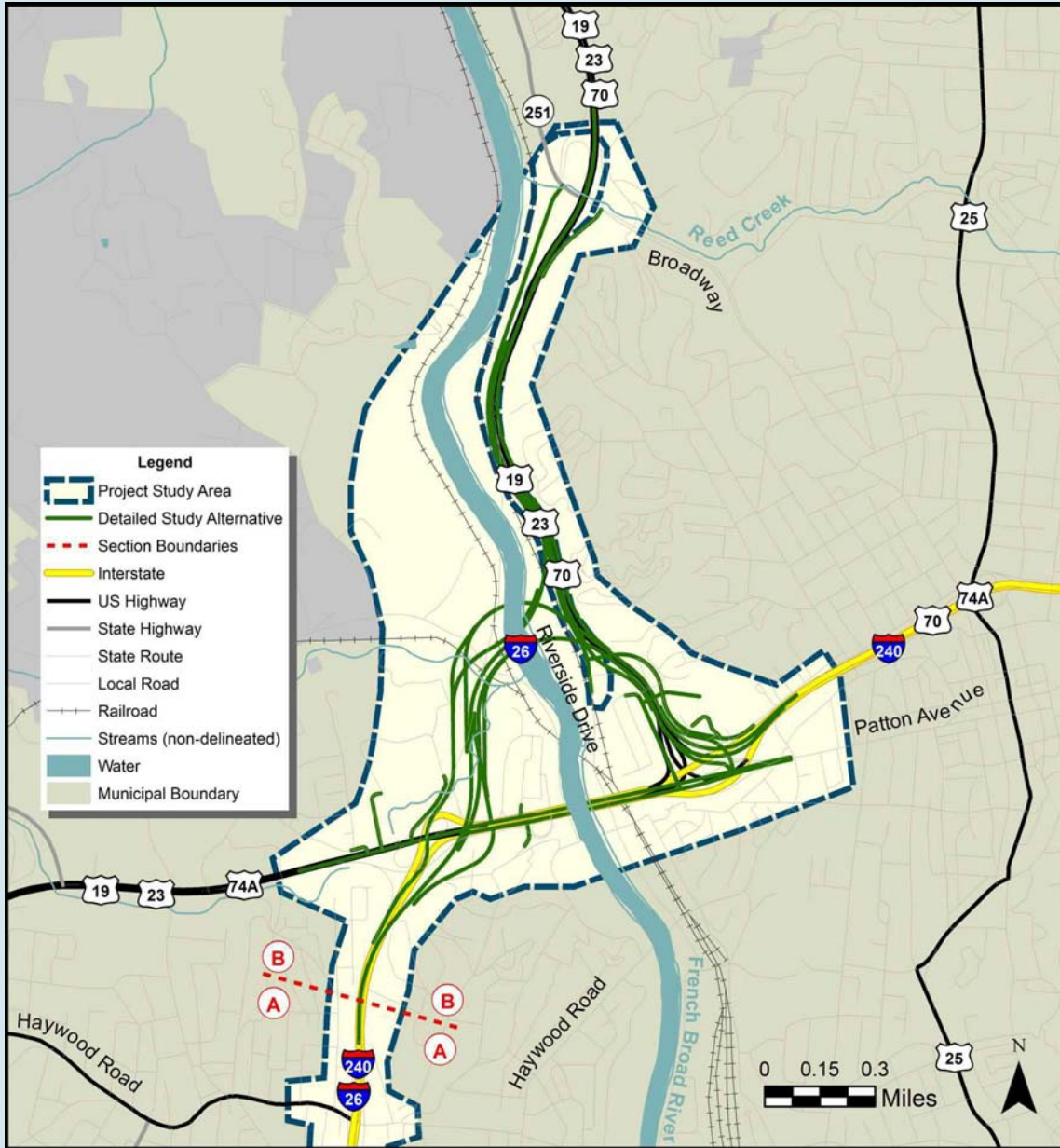


I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Section B - Alternative 4-B Preferred Alternative



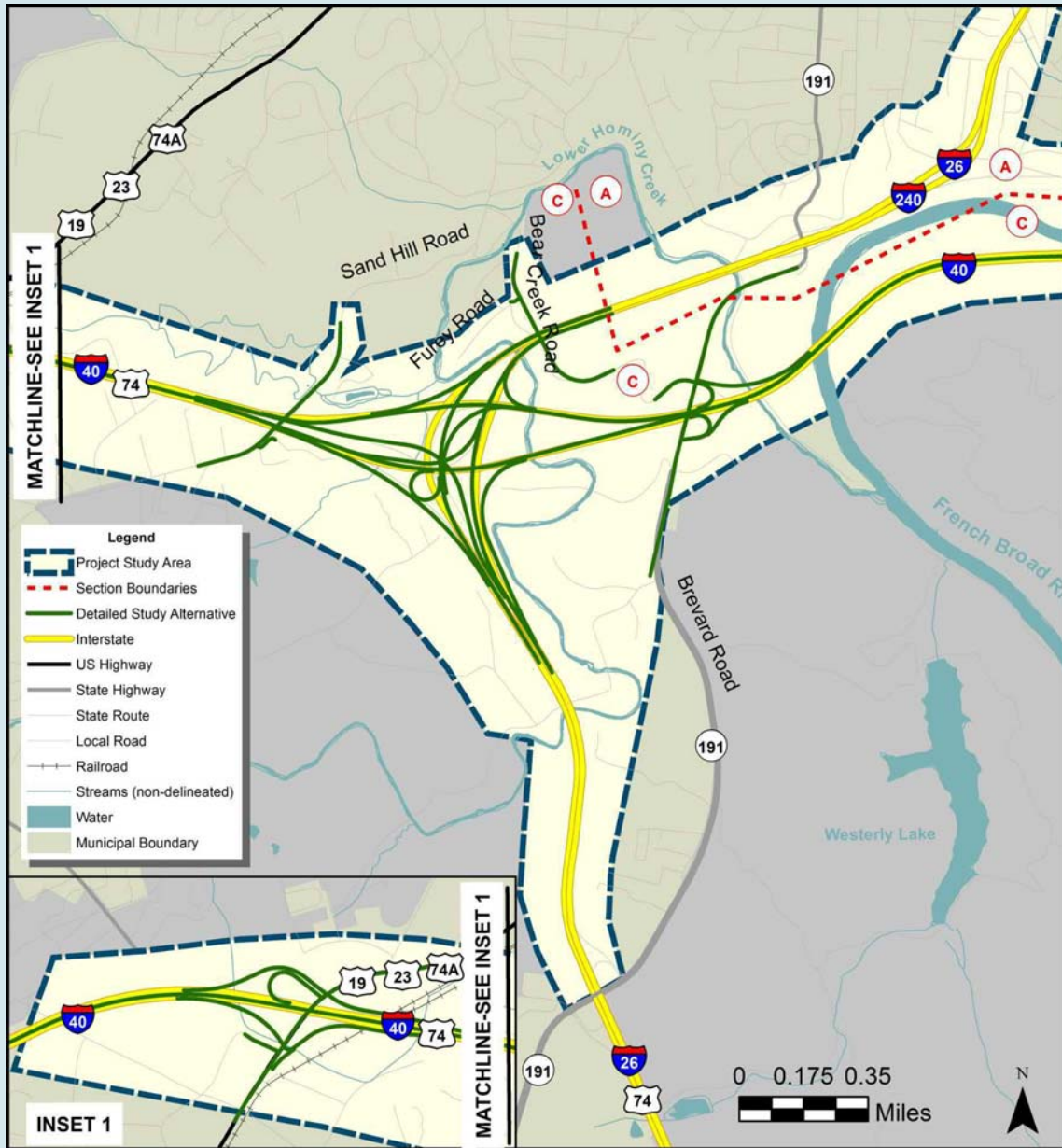


I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Section C - Alternative F-1 Preferred Alternative





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Spanish Interpreter

Se Habla Español

Si Usted desea tener un intérprete para esta reunión, por favor pregunte a un miembro del equipo del proyecto.





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Traffic Noise Information





I-26 Connector

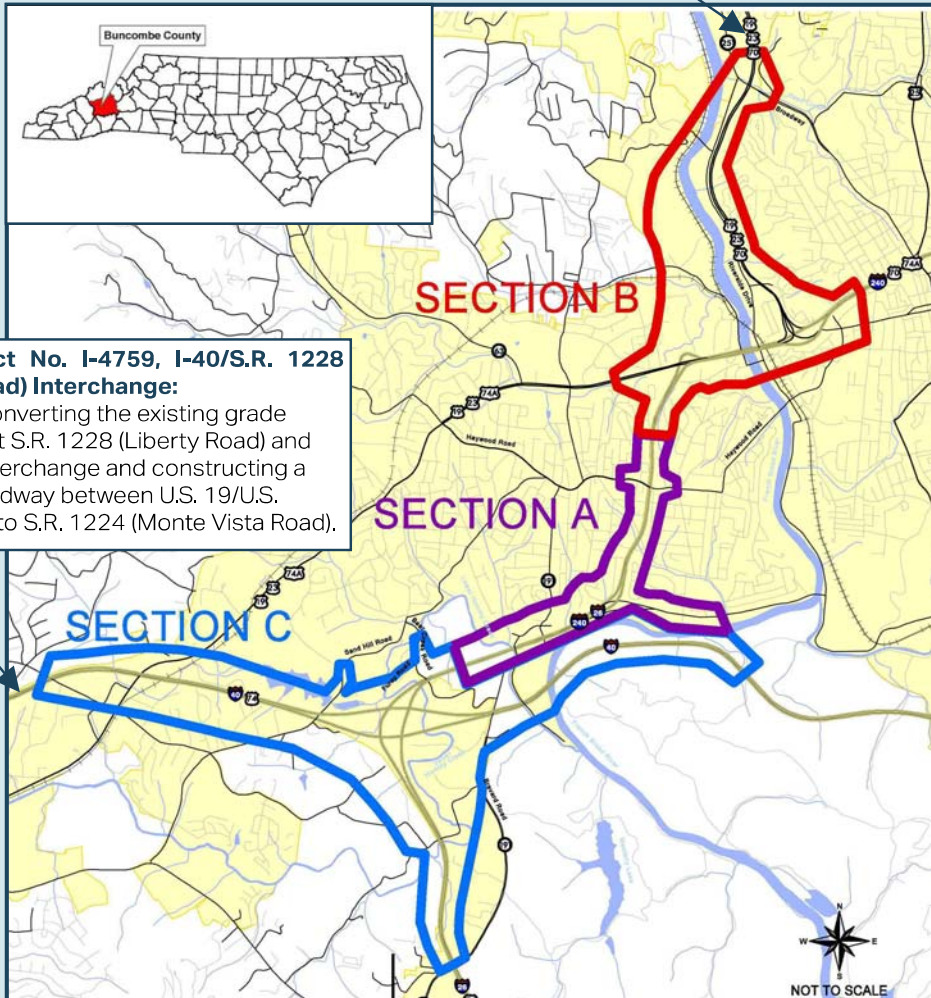
Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Other Projects in the Vicinity

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.



STIP Project No. I-4759, I-40/S.R. 1228 (Liberty Road) Interchange:

NCDOT is converting the existing grade separation at S.R. 1228 (Liberty Road) and I-40 to an interchange and constructing a two-lane roadway between U.S. 19/U.S. 23/N.C. 151 to S.R. 1224 (Monte Vista Road).

STIP Project No. I-5504/Brevard Road Interchange project (Exit 33):

NCDOT is modifying 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.

STIP Project No. I-4400/I-4700, I-26 Widening Project:

NCDOT is proposing to widen approximately 22 miles of I-26 from U.S. 25 (Exit 54) in Henderson County to I-40 in Asheville.





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Accommodations





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, N.C.
STIP No. I-2513



Welcome!

Public Hearing for the I-26 Connector

NCDOT STIP Project I-2513

Please Sign In Here.

- ◆ Let Us Know You Attended
- ◆ Pick Up Handouts
- ◆ Review Information
- ◆ Ask Questions
- ◆ Provide Comments





I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, NC.
STIP No. I-2513



Design Public Hearing
December 4, 2018

The Purpose of the Open House and Public Hearing

Today's hearing is another important step in the N.C. Department of Transportation's procedure for making you, the public, a part of the project development process. The purpose of the hearing is to gather public input and receive feedback on the revised project designs.

There are two portions to today's event, an informal open house and a formal public hearing.

View the detailed project maps of the preferred alternative

NCDOT has completed Preliminary Designs for the preferred alternative for the I-26 Connector Project. Copies of the Public Hearing maps are available for review and are located on the project website.

View the animated representation of the project

A visualization of the preferred alternative for the project will be played continuously during the pre-hearing open house. Please take a moment to view this video with an explanation of the project.

Speak with project representatives

NCDOT representatives will be available between the hours of 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to answer questions and receive comments relative to the proposed project.

Stay for the Public Hearing

A formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. The presentation will consist of an explanation of the proposed design, right of way, relocation requirements/procedures, and the state-federal relationship. The hearing will be open to those present for statements, questions and comments. The presentation and comments will be recorded and a transcript will be prepared. If you can not stay, the Public Hearing will be streamed, live, on the project website and you can submit comments online or through the mail.

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 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 (Broadway). 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 three sections: C, A, and B.

Section C

Improvements to the I-26/I-240 interchange with I-40 and the Brevard Road and Smokey Park Highway interchanges.

Section A

Upgrading 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. This includes upgrades to the Brevard Road, Amboy Road, Haywood Road and Patton Avenue interchanges.

Section B

Construction of the interstate on new location from the Patton Avenue interchange north across the French Broad River, tying into U.S. 19-23-70 south of Broadway. Section B also includes improvements along Riverside Drive. This would include the addition of a center turning lane and a 10-foot multi-use path to the west of the roadway, from Hill Street to Broadway.

Inside This Handout:

Project Information	Pages 2-3
Traffic Noise and Bicycle/Pedestrian	Page 4
Right-of-Way Information and Design-Build	Page 5
Section C Alternative	Page 7
Section A Alternative	Page 8
Section B Alternative	Page 9
Nearby Projects	Page 10
Comment Form	Page 11
Title VI Form	Page 12



Project Information

GENERAL

What is the FEIS?

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) NCDOT will prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement, or FEIS, for the I-26 Connector Project. The FEIS is a federally required environmental document that describes the purpose and need for the project, identifies the preferred alternative, and evaluates potential environmental effects from the preferred alternative.

Are the designs final?

The design plans shown at the Public Hearing are preliminary and have not been finalized. Once the final environmental document has been signed (Record of Decision, or ROD), the project will be advertised for final design and construction. At this stage, designs may be refined further.

What happened last?

In October 2015, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, was published for review and comment by federal, state, and local agencies, and the public. The DEIS summarized impacts of several alternatives studied in detail and their impact to the human and natural environment.

In November 2015, project designs of all the alternatives studied in the DEIS were presented at a Corridor Public Hearing so the public could provide NCDOT feedback on the various detailed study alternatives being evaluated and their potential impacts. Environmental resource and regulatory agencies met in May of 2016 to select a preferred alternative. The selection considered human and environmental impacts, comments received from the public, and how well the alternative addressed the transportation need for the project.

Since that time, NCDOT has coordinated with several local officials and communities to discuss the proposed impacts of the preferred alternative and potential design revisions.

What's Next?

The next step in the planning process will be to publish the FEIS for public review, review comments received at the public hearing, and issue the ROD and a notice of availability in the Federal Register. Once the ROD is published, the project will be advertised for construction and right-of-way acquisition will begin.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Why is the I-26 Connector needed?

The project is needed to address traffic capacity problems along the existing I-240 corridor (future I-26), across the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges to U.S. 19-23-70. Presently numerous areas do not meet interstate design standards and cannot be designated I-26 without being improved. The project would improve traffic flow, address the substandard roadway features, and provide an interstate roadway through West Asheville for the I-26 Corridor.

How will traffic operate if the project is not built?

Traffic operations are evaluated using a "Level of Service" rating ranging from A (best) to F (worst). If no improvements are made, in 2033, 41 of the 80 freeway segments will operate at an unacceptable level of service, based on Federal Highway Administration standards. The completion of portions of the adjacent NCDOT Project A-0010A (U.S. 19-23-70 improvements from Asheville to the Tennessee state line) will further increased traffic demands along I-240 west of Asheville.

Are there roadway deficiencies along the existing corridor?

The existing route serving I-26 traffic has numerous design deficiencies that do not meet interstate design standards. The corridor was evaluated based on 19 design criteria, and 24 locations were shown to have elements that were substandard.

Multiple segments of I-240 west of Asheville currently have an accident rate that exceeds the critical crash rate for similar North Carolina facilities, demonstrating the need for these improvements along this section of the facility.

State-Federal Relationship

The proposed project is a Federal-Aid Highway Project and thus will be constructed under the State-Federal Aid Highway Program. Financing of this project will be 80% Federal funds and 20% State funds through the National Highway System Program. The Board of Transportation is responsible for the selection and scheduling of projects on the Federal Aid System, including their location, design and maintenance cost after construction. The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for the review and approval of the previously mentioned activities to ensure that each Federal Aid Project is designed, constructed and maintained to Federal Aid Standards.

The total cost of the project is estimated at approximately \$950 million.

Project Information

YOUR PARTICIPATION

Now that the opportunity is here, you are encouraged to participate by making your comments and/or questions a part of the public record. This may be done by having them recorded at the formal Public Hearing, calling the project hotline at 1-800-233-6315, or by writing them on the attached comment sheet. Several representatives of the North Carolina Department of Transportation are present. They will be happy to talk with you, explain the design to you and answer your questions. You may write your comments or questions on the comment sheet and leave it with one of the representatives or mail them by January 4th, 2019 to the following address:

Mr. Jamille Robbins
NCDOT - Environmental Analysis Unit
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1598
Email: jarobbins@ncdot.gov
1-800-233-6315

Everyone present is urged to participate in the proceedings. It is important, however, that the opinions of all individuals be respected regardless of how different they may be from your own. Accordingly, debates, as such, are out of place at public hearings. Also, the public hearing is not to be used as a popular referendum to determine the location and/or design by a majority vote of those present.

WHERE TO REVIEW PROJECT INFORMATION

The Public Hearing Maps are available for public viewing at the following locations:

NCDOT Division 13 55 Orange Street Asheville, North Carolina 28801	City of Asheville Transportation 70 Court Plaza—Mezzanine Level Asheville, North Carolina, 28802
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The FEIS will also available for public viewing at the following public library locations once published:

State Library of North Carolina 109 East Jones Street Raleigh, North Carolina 27601	Pack Memorial Library 67 Haywood Street Asheville, North Carolina 28801
West Asheville Library 942 Haywood Road Asheville, North Carolina 28806	Buncombe County Law Library 60 Court Plaza Asheville, North Carolina 28801

People can also view the materials at the project website at
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26connector/>

What is done with input received?

A post-hearing meeting will be conducted after the comment period has ended on January 4, 2019. NCDOT staff representing Planning, Design, Traffic Operations, Division, Right of Way, Public Involvement, Community Studies, and others who play a role in the development of a project will attend this meeting. The project will also be reviewed with federal agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as state agencies such as the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

All spoken and written comments are discussed at the post-hearing meeting. The NCDOT considers safety, costs, traffic service, social impacts and public comments in making decisions.

Minutes of the post-hearing meeting will be summarized and are available to the public by noting your request on the comment sheet. Once distributed, the post-hearing meeting minutes will also be posted on the project website.

Traffic Noise

Traffic Noise Process

During planning and design for highway projects, NCDOT must identify traffic noise impacts, examine potential noise abatement, incorporate feasible and reasonable noise abatement measures, and coordinate with local officials to provide helpful information on compatible land use planning and control. The procedures for doing this are stipulated by Federal regulation (23 CFR 772) and the NCDOT Traffic Noise Policy.

Preliminary noise analyses for this project are currently underway, and the results of this preliminary analysis will be documented in a Traffic Noise Report (TNR). This TNR will present predicted traffic noise impacts based on the project's preliminary design, and will identify locations where noise abatement preliminarily meet feasibility and reasonableness criteria. The results of this preliminary analysis will be included in the FEIS anticipated in February 2019. As part of the project's final design activities, additional noise studies will be conducted to identify recommended noise barrier locations.

Once recommended noise barrier locations are identified during final design, all property owners and tenants who are benefitted by a barrier will be asked to vote on the barrier. At that time, NCDOT will contact property owners and tenants who are eligible to vote and explain the balloting process and what they are being asked to vote on. Only recommended noise barriers that pass this voting process will be constructed.

Traffic Noise Policy

An important concept in Federal regulation and in the NCDOT Traffic Noise Policy is the Date of Public Knowledge, which stipulates when NCDOT is and is not responsible for providing noise abatement. The Date of Public Knowledge of the location and potential noise impacts for this project will be the approval date of the Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD is expected to be approved in Summer 2019.

NCDOT is not responsible for evaluating or implementing any noise barriers to protect developed lands that did not have building permits issued before the Date of Public Knowledge. NCDOT advocates use of local government authority to regulate land development, planning, design and construction in such a way that noise impacts are minimized.

While the results of the traffic analysis are not yet available, representatives from NCDOT's Traffic Noise Group are available tonight to answer general questions about traffic noise, NCDOT's Traffic Noise Policy, and noise abatement.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Consistent with the City of Asheville's plans to address bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout the city, a greenway is proposed in Section A and in Section B. The greenway begins at Haywood Road and will follow the I-26 improvements in Section B, where it merges with Patton Avenue to cross the French Broad River and ties to the nearby streets, providing access to downtown Asheville.

After selection of the preferred alternative, the City of Asheville identified potential bicycle and pedestrian accommodations (referred to as betterments) throughout the project study area, including multi-use paths, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. The preferred alternative preliminary designs include some of these betterments and/or do not preclude the facilities from being constructed during the construction of the proposed project or in the future. NCDOT is currently coordinating cost-sharing with the City of Asheville for the bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and a summary of the coordination between NCDOT and the City of Asheville regarding the betterments to be included in the proposed project are included in the FEIS.

Right-of-Way and Relocations

Right-of-Way Procedures

After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. If you are an affected property owner, a Right-of-Way Agent will contact you and arrange a meeting. The agent will explain the plans and advise you as to how the project will affect you. The agent will inform you of your rights as a property owner. If permanent right-of-way is required, professionals who are familiar with real estate values will evaluate or appraise your property. The evaluations or appraisals will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy, and then the Right-of-Way Agent will make a written offer to you. The current market value of the property at its highest and best use, when appraised, will be offered as compensation. The Department of Transportation must:

- Treat all owners and tenants equally
- Fully explain the owner's rights
- Pay just compensation in exchange for property rights
- Furnish relocation advisory assistance

Relocation Assistance

As the project moves toward Final Design, NCDOT will look to further minimize impacts as much as possible. What is shown on the map is the worst-case scenario. If you are a relocatee, that is, if your residence or business is to be acquired as part of the project, additional assistance in the form of advice and compensation is available.

You will also be provided with assistance regarding locations of comparable housing and/or commercial establishments, moving procedures, and moving aid. Moving expenses may be paid for you. Additional monetary compensation is available to help homeowners cope with mortgage increases, increased value of comparable homes, closing costs, etc. A similar program is available to assist business owners. The Right-of-Way Agent can explain this assistance in greater detail.

NOTE: PAMPHLETS SUMMARIZING RIGHT-OF-WAY AND RELOCATION PROCEDURES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE SIGN-IN TABLE.

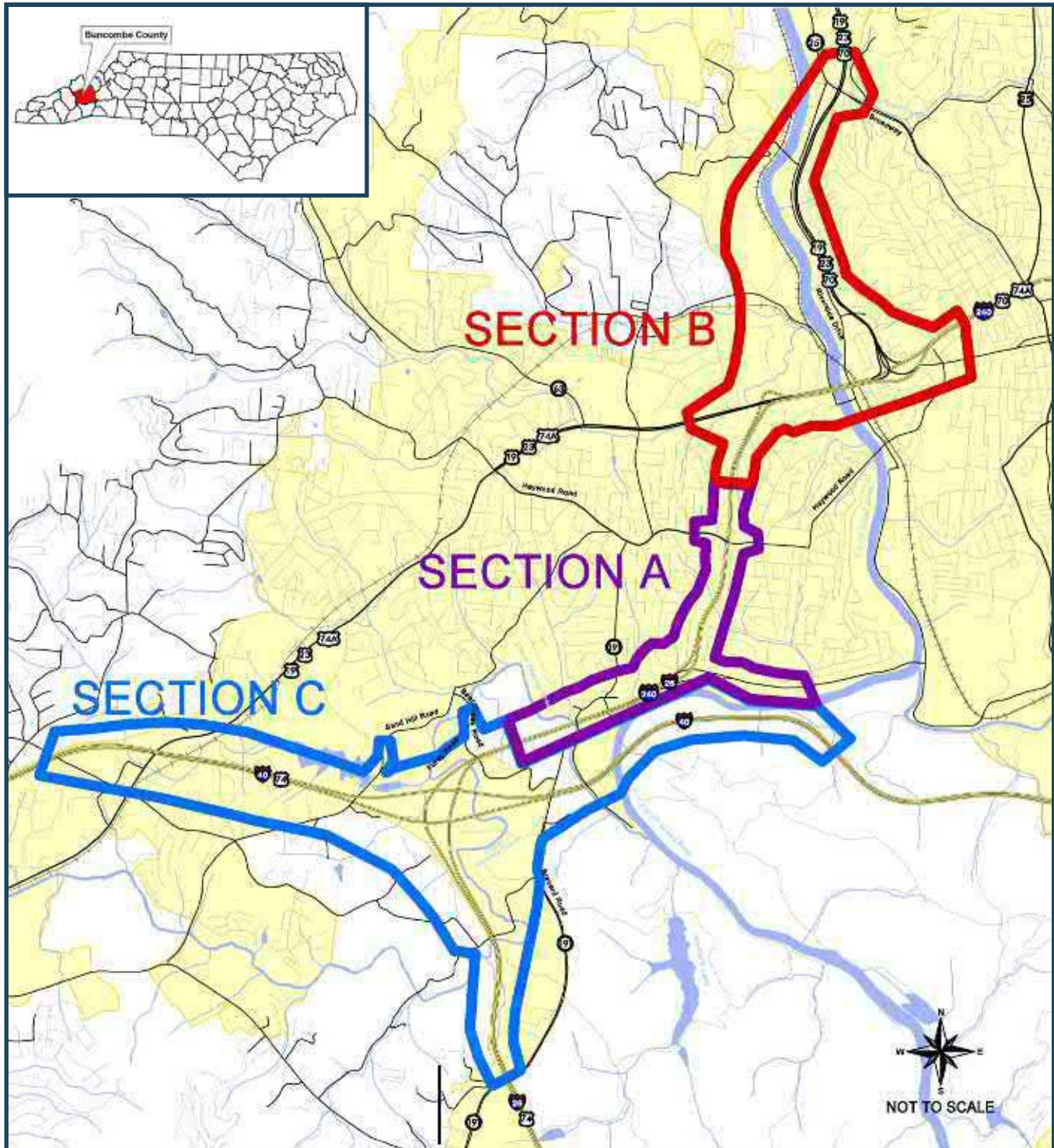
Design-Build Process

The I-26 Connector Project is being constructed as a design-build project.

The design-build process allows NCDOT to hire a team of designers and contractors that are responsible for the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the project. The team may begin construction on one portion of the project while they finish the design and right-of-way acquisition for another section. This typically results in faster completion.

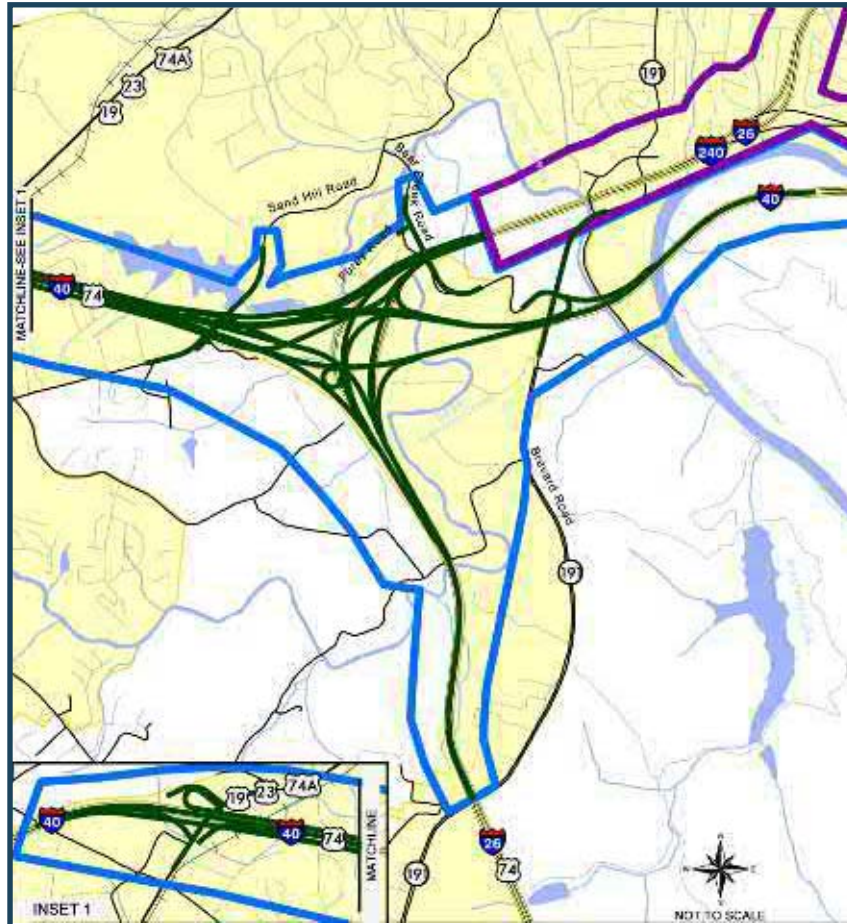
Additional benefits to a design-build project may include innovative solutions that save time, money and/or reduce impacts and quicker resolution to problems that arise during design and construction. The process may provide additional alternatives or modifications to the existing alternatives which in turn may reduce costs or impacts.

Project Study Area



The Project Study Area has been divided into three sections, as shown here. The preferred alternative for each section are shown on the following pages.

Preferred Alternative - Section C

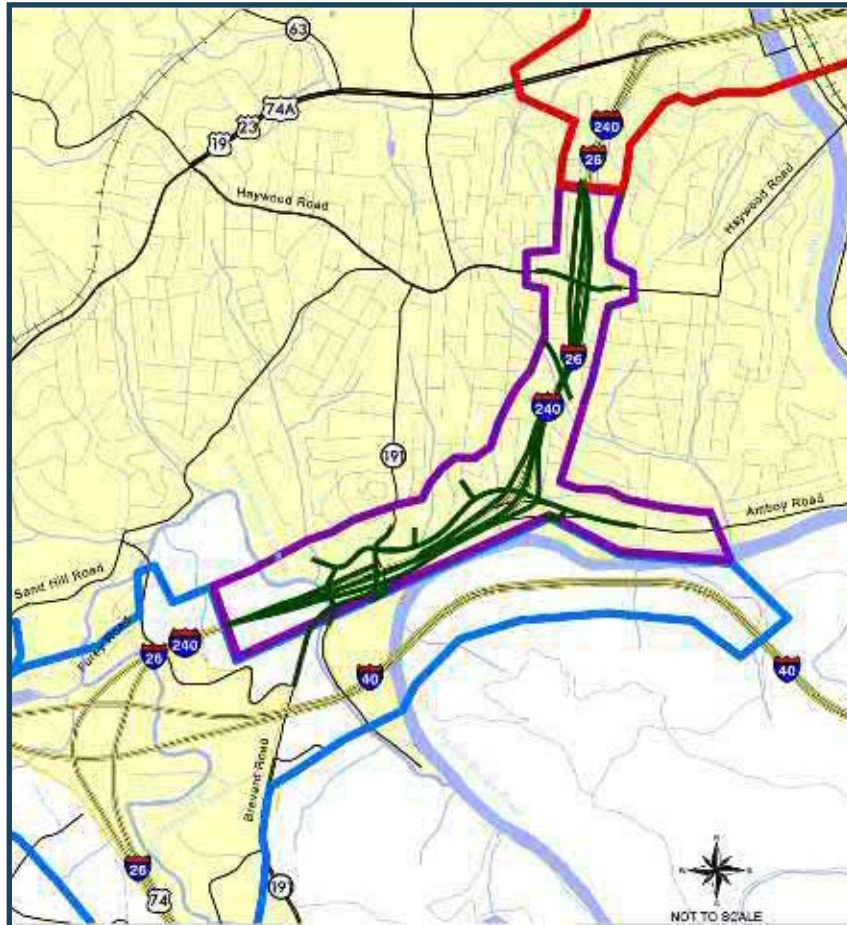


SECTION C

The preferred alternative in Section C, Alternative F-1, would reconstruct the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange in the same general configuration as today but with the addition of two missing connections between I-40 and I-26/I-240. A new loop would connect I-26 East/I-240 West to I-40 East while a new ramp would connect I-40 West to I-26 West/I-240 East. I-40 would be widened from near the Smokey Park Highway interchange through the Brevard Road interchange. With this alternative, traffic coming to and from I-26 and I-240 would have full access to Brevard Road from I-40.

Major design revisions since the November 2015 Corridor Public Hearing include the removal of the collector/distributor roads along I-40, reducing impacts to several commercial and residential properties. Additionally, the interchange configuration at Smokey Park Highway was revised to minimize impacts to businesses.

Preferred Alternative - Section A



SECTION A

The preferred alternative selected for Section A would widen I-240 from four lanes to six lanes and provide upgrades at the Brevard Road, Amboy Road, and Haywood Road interchanges.

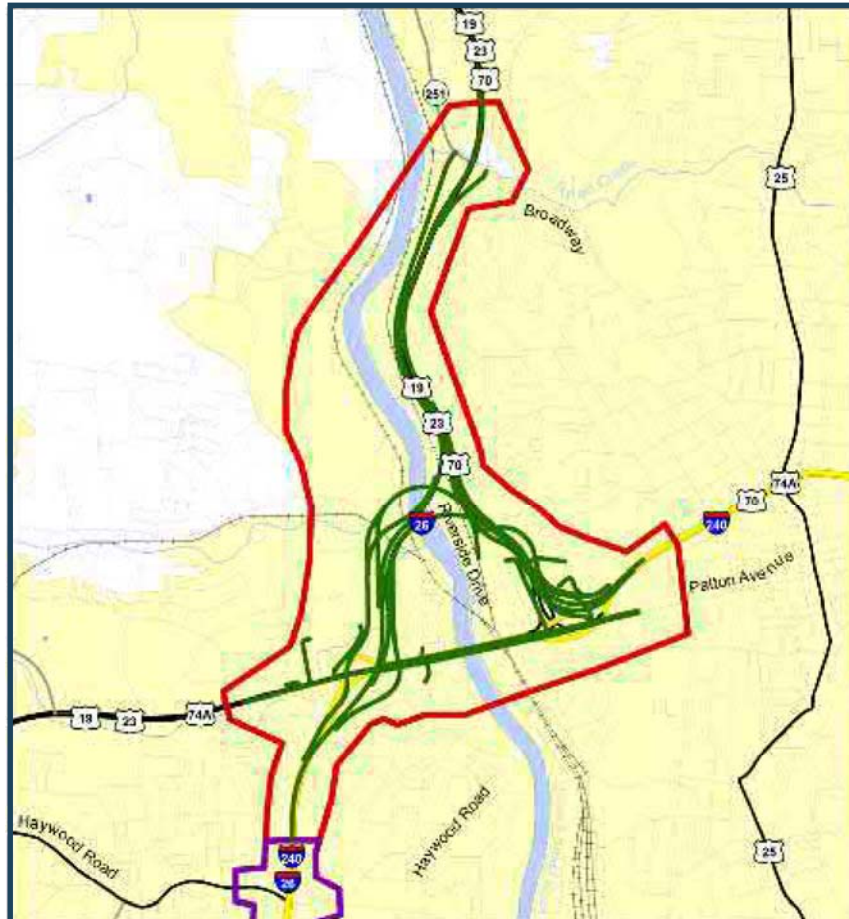
Major design revisions in Section A since the November 2015 Corridor Public Hearing include the reduction of the number of through lanes on I-240 from eight lanes to six lanes.

Additionally, at Amboy Road, the previously proposed Amboy Extension has been removed. Options were presented to the surrounding community, which resulted in a less impactful configuration. This new concept proposes a split diamond interchange configuration parallel to I-26, connecting Amboy Road and Brevard Road. A multi-use path would be constructed to the north of the ramps, connecting Brevard Road to Amboy Road and Carrier Park.

Furthermore, traffic analyses determined the roadway would operate more efficiently and would minimize impacts even more if Amboy Road was positioned under I-26. I-26 East/I-40 West traffic would exit at an upgraded Amboy Road interchange and travel along a new extension of Amboy Road to Brevard Road. The interchange at Amboy Road would include roundabouts to the north and south, with ramps traveling parallel to I-26 and connecting to Brevard Road.

A third interchange at Haywood Road would be converted to a tight urban diamond configuration. This would relocate the current exit ramp from I-240 East that connects to Hanover Street and relocate it to connect directly to Haywood Road. The current two-way section of ramp in the northeast quadrant would also be eliminated.

Preferred Alternative - Section B



SECTION B

Alternative 4-B was developed to separate the local traffic on Patton Avenue from the I-240 through traffic. To accomplish this, the split between I-26 and I-240 would be moved north of the interchange at Patton Avenue, allowing the Captain Jeff Bowen Bridges to carry only local Patton Avenue traffic.

Alternative 4-B's alignment for the combined I-26/I-240 would cross Patton Avenue slightly west of the Westgate Shopping Center, and run through the edge of the Crowne Plaza golf course. I-26 would then split from I-240 and cross Smith Mill Creek, the Murphy Branch line of the Norfolk Southern Railway, Emma Road and the French Broad River along a complex bridge structure. The I-26 bridge crossing would tie back to U.S. 19-23-70 in the vicinity of Riverside Cemetery where it would become an elevated bridge over the existing lanes of U.S. 19-23-70. The I-26 mainline bridge would end at the north end of the Montford neighborhood where the lanes of US 19-23-70 would merge into I-26. To the north, I-26 would continue to the Broadway interchange.

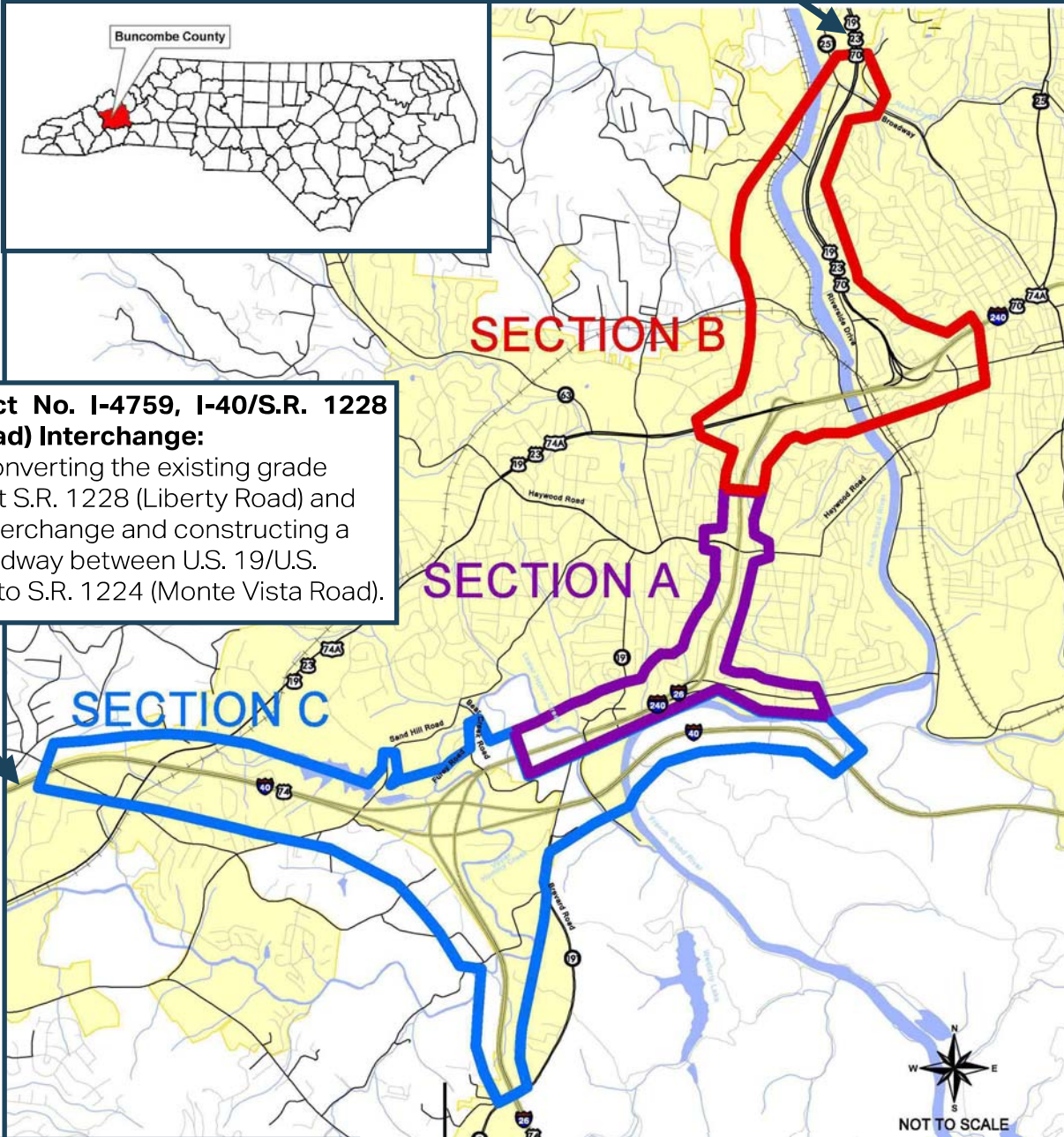
A greenway is proposed along Section A and Section B. In Section B the greenway begins at Haywood Road and will follow I-26 where it merges with Patton Avenue to cross the French Broad River linking to other destinations in downtown Asheville.

Additionally, the Riverside Drive Widening Project (formerly STIP Project No. U-5868) will be included as part of the I-26 Connector project in this section due to the interrelatedness of the two projects. This decision was made in coordination with FHWA, NCDOT, and the City of Asheville. The proposed Riverside Drive project would widen Riverside Drive from Hill Street to Broadway from two lanes to three lanes and construct a multi use path on the western side of the roadway.

Nearby Projects

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.



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NCDOT is converting the existing grade separation at S.R. 1228 (Liberty Road) and I-40 to an interchange and constructing a two-lane roadway between U.S. 19/U.S. 23/N.C. 151 to S.R. 1224 (Monte Vista Road).

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NCDOT is proposing to widen approximately 22 miles of I-26 from U.S. 25 (Exit 54) in Henderson County to I-40 in Asheville.



I-26 Connector

Buncombe County, NC
STIP No. I-2513



Design Public Hearing
December 4, 2018

HOW CAN WE REACH YOU?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email or Phone _____

Homeowner's Association or other Civic Group _____

How did you hear about today's meeting?

Newsletter Newspaper Friend/Family Other _____

TELL US YOUR VIEWS

Your opinions about this project are important to us. Please use the space below to include your comments or questions. If you need additional space, please take additional sheets or you may include your own letter.



fold here

Place
Stamp
Here

Mr. Jamille Robbins
North Carolina Department of
Transportation
1598 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

fold here

seal with tape

TITLE VI PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

Completing this form is **completely** voluntary. You are not required to provide the information requested in order to participate in this meeting.

Meeting Type:	Date:
Location:	
TIP No.:	
Project Description:	

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities, the N.C. Department of Transportation assures that no person(s) shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any of the Department's programs, policies, or activities, based on their race, color, national origin, disability, age, income, or gender.

Completing this form helps meet our data collection and public involvement obligations under Title VI and NEPA, and will improve how we serve the public. Please place the completed form in the designated box on the sign-in table, hand it to an NCDOT official or mail it to the Environmental Analysis Unit, 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598.

All forms will remain on file at the NCDOT as part of the public record.

Zip Code: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Street Name: (i.e. Main Street) _____	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older <input type="checkbox"/> 30-44
Total Household Income: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$12,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$47,000 – \$69,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$12,000 – \$19,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 – \$93,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 – \$30,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$94,000 – \$117,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$31,000 – \$46,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$118,000 or greater	Have a Disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Race/Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	National Origin: (if born outside the U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Central American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> South American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> European: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____

How did you hear about this meeting? (newspaper advertisement, flyer, and/or mailing) _____

For more information regarding Title VI or this request, please contact the NCDOT Title VI Nondiscrimination Program at (919) 508-1808 or toll free at 1-800-522-0453, or by email at titleVI@ncdot.gov. Thank you for your participation!

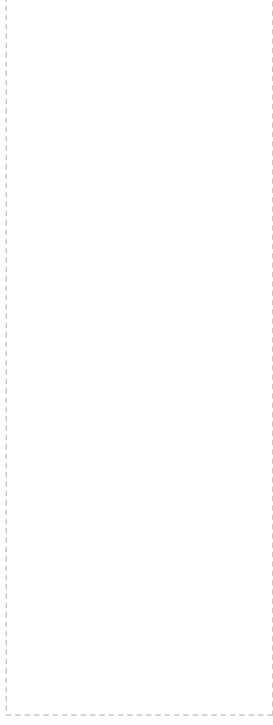


NCDOT - Environmental Analysis Unit
Attn: Jammie Robbins
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598



I-2513 / U-5868
Jamilie Robbins
NC Department of Transportation
Environmental Analysis Unit
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

*Aquellas personas no
hablan inglés, o
tienen limitaciones
para leer, hablar o
entender inglés,
podrían recibir
servicios de
interpretación si
los solicitan antes
de la reunión
llamando al
1-800-481-6494.*



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Public Hearing

**Pre-Hearing
Open House:
4 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Public
Hearing
7 p.m.**

**Tuesday
December 4**
Renaissance
Hotel Grand
Ballroom
31 Woodfin St.
Asheville



I-26 Connector Project and Riverside Drive Widening Project In Asheville

State Transportation Improvement Project Nos: I-2513 and U-5868



The N.C. Department of Transportation in partnership with the City of Asheville, has completed preliminary designs for the preferred alternative for the I-26 Connector Project (Project No. I-2513) and Riverside Drive Widening Project (Project No. U-5868). A Pre-Hearing Open House and Public Hearing will be held to gather public input and receive feedback on project designs. Public Hearing maps are available for public review and are located on the project website noted below.

NC DOT representatives will be available between the hours of 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to answer questions and receive comments relative to the proposed projects. Interested participants may attend at any time during these hours. A formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m., followed by an opportunity for the public to provide verbal comments. Verbal comments will be recorded at the meetings for inclusion in the public hearing record. Written comments can also be submitted until January 4, 2019.

For more information on projects **I-2513 and U-5868**, please call the project hotline or visit the project website. **Toll-free Hotline:** 1-800-233-6315 **Website:** <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/asheville-i-26-connector>

NC DOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who wish to participate in these meetings. Anyone requiring special services should contact Jamille Robbins, (jrobbins@ncdot.gov or 919-707-6085), so that arrangements can be made.

MEETING SUMMARY



To: Project File

From: Joanna Rocco
AECOM

Date: June 25, 2019

RE: **I-2513 Historic Property Meeting, Asheville Primary School
NCDOT STIP Project I-2513 (I-26 Connector)**

Meeting Attendees:

Lauren Evans – ACS	Ken Putnam – City of Asheville
Susanna Smith – ACS	Brendan Merithew – NCDOT, Division 13
Don Sims – ACS	Derrick Weaver – NCDOT, EPU
Jack Thomson – Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County	Theresa Ellerby – NCDOT, PMU
Gwen Wisler – City of Asheville	Neil Dean – AECOM
	Joanna Rocco – AECOM

The project team met with several stakeholders from Asheville City Schools (ACS) on June 24, 2019 to discuss impacts to the Asheville Primary School (APS) at I-240 and Haywood Road. APS is part of the West Asheville/Aycock School Historic District, which has been determined to have historical significance by the NC State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) and was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up from discussions held with school officials in August 2018 on impacts to access and the school's parking lot resulting from the I-26 Connector project. The goal of the project team was to receive feedback on recently prepared designs for the school that provide additional parking and changes in the school's access patterns. Since the previous meeting, NCDOT has been refining designs for the project based on coordination with local officials, community associations, and the public.

Major discussion items from the meeting are summarized below:

- The school currently uses approximately 10 buses, with dropoff beginning at 7:10 and pickup from 2:30-3pm. A single preschool bus runs throughout the day. The largest bus holds approximately 42 students – ACS will confirm this with the project team so the bus turnaround template can be used to approximate the turning radii needed for buses on the property.
- The school currently has around 40-50 staff.
- The school play yards are currently used by around 300 children and must not be impacted for parking; therefore, concepts that had been prepared by the project team using this portion of the property will not be considered further.
- The school requested that cars and buses remain separated in the traffic pattern for safety. Staff parking spaces may be placed within the area used for the bus turnaround.

MEETING SUMMARY

June 25, 2019

Page 2 of 3

- The concept prepared by the project team (below) was reviewed. In general this concept was acceptable to school officials; however, various refinements will be prepared based on discussion at the meeting.



- Various refinements requested to the above concept included the following:
 - Since a retaining wall would likely be needed between the parking lot next to the gymnasium and the bus turnaround due to the steep grade, it was requested either stairs or a sidewalk (or both) be added on the property for access/mobility. It was noted the sidewalk would be built as part of the I-26 Connector project, however the maintenance costs would likely be the responsibility of the school since it would be placed on school grounds.
 - The road and bus turnaround would likely need to be shifted in order to separate buses and cars, however staff parking spaces could be placed within the turnaround area.
 - The bus depot area will be expanded in order to stack additional buses, which will in turn alleviate congestion along Argyle and improve safety.
- The school requested a gravel path be added to an already worn path used by parents/children needing to access the front entrance to the school from the parking lot along the I-240 ramp. It was noted this would be acceptable from a historic property perspective since it does not include any vertical improvements to the front of the school.
- The project team will attempt to create as much parking in the space behind the gym as possible, taking into consideration the one-way travel patterns during carpool and potential relocation of the dumpsters.
- The project team will attempt to show as close to 100 spaces in total where feasible, including the area for staff at the bus turnaround.
- School officials reiterated they would like a crosswalk or signal at the intersection of Argyle and Haywood. It was noted that due to the closing off of Hanover Street, this intersection will be looked at further to determine any improvements needed.

MEETING SUMMARY

June 25, 2019

Page 3 of 3

- It was noted NCDOT would communicate with the public regarding changes to access along Haywood during construction.
- It was noted this section of the project will be let for Design-Build in 2020, therefore it will likely be at least two school years before construction would begin. The gravel path could potentially be done sooner.
- The project team will prepare new concepts at the school within 2-3 weeks and will send to the school officials to review. Once the concept is agreed upon, NCDOT can use this agreement in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The MOA will discuss agreed upon measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects to historic properties within the project.
- After the MOA is completed and before the project is let for construction, a meeting(s) will need to be held with parents/board members to inform them of the plan.

