

North Carolina Department of Transportation
PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION FORM
I. D. No. R-2530B/ B-4974

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- a. Consultation Phase: Right of Way Consultation
- b. Project Description: NC 24-27 From NC 740 in Albemarle to the
Proposed Troy Bypass (R-623), west of Troy
Stanly and Montgomery Counties, North Carolina
- c. State Project: 34446.1.7, 39922.1.1
Federal Project: STBG-0024(083)
- d. Document Type: Environmental Assessment 6/22/2011
Date

Finding Of No Significant Impact 4/10/2017
Date

II. CONCLUSIONS

The above environmental document has been reevaluated as required by 23 CFR 771. It was determined that the current proposed action is essentially the same as the original proposed action. Proposed changes, if any, are noted below in Section III. It has been determined that anticipated social, economic, and environmental impacts were accurately described in the above referenced document(s) unless noted otherwise herein. Therefore, the original Administration Action remains valid.

III. CHANGES IN PROPOSED ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Though the FONSI comprised of three (3) projects, R-2530B, B-4974 and R-2527, this consultation will only pertain to R-2530B and B-4974. This is because R-2527 was recently funded and does not have any design plans to discuss. The following design changes were made since the completion of the FONSI.

DESIGN CHANGES

At the intersection of NC 24-27-73 (East Main Street) and Barnard Street, this unsignalized intersection is now designed to be a roundabout. The roundabout will realign Anderson Road to line up across from Barnard Street. East Main Street will have two lanes enter and exit the roundabout, while Barnard Street and Anderson Road will have one lane enter and exit the roundabout. The design of the roundabout will not require additional right-of-way. In the EA, the Anderson Road typical section was illustrated as one inbound lane and two outbound lanes which included an exclusive left

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turn lane and a through-right turn lane. With the inclusion of the roundabout, Anderson Road will be constructed as a two lane road. The roundabout increases the right-of-way on the mainline by 0.08 acres; however, Anderson Road is reduced by 0.13 acres. Therefore, the net of right-of-way is reduced approximately 0.05 acres.

WATER RESOURCES

Water classification within the project area have not changed since the April 2017 FONSI. There are no streams within 1.0 mile of the project area listed on the 2014 FONSI 303(d) list of impaired waters for sedimentation or turbidity.

FEDERALLY PROTECTED SPECIES

As of June 1, 2017, USFWS list two federally protected species for Stanly County (Table 1).

Table 1 – Federally protected species listed for Davie (D) and Forsyth (F) County

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status*	Habitat Present	Biological Conclusion
<i>Helianthus schweinitzii</i>	Schweinitz sunflower	T	Yes	No Effect – R-2530B
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern long-eared bat	T	Yes	*

*May Affect – This project is in the compliance with the USFWS 4(d) rule.

Surveys for Schweinitz Sunflower was conducted during its blooming season in late summer/early fall 2017 for the proposed roundabout area of the project. No specimens were observed in this area and the biological conclusion of No Effect was rendered. An update to this species for the remainder of the project will be available prior to construction.

The entire project (R-2530B) was reviewed for effects on NLEB in a report issued March 14, 2017 by NCDOT's Biological Surveys Group. The report determined that the nearest NLEB hibernacula record is 104 miles northwest of the project and no known NLEB roost trees occur within 150 feet of the project area.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A local officials and public meeting was held on October 19, 2017 to present information regarding the proposed roundabout. Approximately 98 persons attended the meetings and 10 written comments were received. A summary of the comments received and responses is attached.

IV. LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

See attached greensheet for Project Commitments.

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V. COORDINATION

PDEA personnel have discussed current project proposals with others as follows:

Design Engineer: Allison White 7/26/2017
Date

NES-PM: Jeff Hemphill 7/5/2017
Date

FHWA: _____
Date

VI. NCDOT CONCURRENCE

Beverly D. Robinson
Project Planning Engineer

12/19/17
Date

Sandra E. Smith
Team Lead, Project Management Unit

12/19/17
Date

VII. FHWA CONCURRENCE

Federal Highway Administration
Division Administrator

Date

PROJECT COMMITMENTS

NC 24-27

From NC 740 in Albemarle

To the Proposed Troy Bypass (R-623), west of Troy

Stanly and Montgomery Counties

Federal Aid Project STBG-0024(083) – R-2530B

WBS Elements 34446.1.7, 39922.1.1, & 35572.1.1

TIP Projects R-2530B, B-4974, and R-2527

Current status, changes, or additions to the project commitments as shown in the environmental document for the project are printed in *italics*.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit/ Natural Environmental Unit

NCDOT will coordinate with ~~Progress~~ Duke Energy regarding any requirements of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Requirements from the FERC regarding approvals will be met prior to right of way acquisition.

FERC coordination is currently underway and will be completed prior to construction.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit, Roadway Design Unit, Rail Division

In the R-2527 project limits, the Norfolk Southern Railroad bridge crosses NC 24-27 within the Uwharrie National Forest which is under the US Forest Service's jurisdiction. NCDOT will ensure that the US Forest Service is part of the project's railroad design coordination process.

Project R-2527 was recently funded in the Draft STIP. However, while the FONSI was being developed, TIP Project R-2527 was unfunded and final design plans were postponed. NCDOT will coordinate with the US Forest Service regarding the railroad design and will begin to develop right of way plans for Project R-2527. Results of this coordination will be captured in a consultation document focused on project R-2527.

Geotechnical Unit

Preliminary site assessments will be conducted for twenty-three potentially contaminated sites within the proposed right of way prior to right of way acquisition.

Site assessments will be determined and completed once final ROW plans become available and prior to ROW acquisition.

Divisions 8 and 10 Construction Units

This project involves construction activities on or adjacent to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulated stream. Therefore, the Division shall submit sealed as-built construction plans to the Hydraulics Unit upon completion of project construction, certifying that the drainage structures and roadway embankment that are located within the 100-year floodplain were built as shown in the construction plans, both horizontally and vertically.

This is a standard project commitment.

Division 8 and 10 Construction and Wildlife Resources Commission

NCDOT commits to resurface and pave the Swift Island Boat access facility parking lot with the conditions that a de minimus determination will be rendered for the impacts to the property. WRC commits to allow NCDOT access to the property to complete these construction activities.

*This commitment applies to R-2530B and B-4974 projects. **This coordination is underway and will be completed prior to construction.***

Hydraulics Unit

The Hydraulics Unit will coordinate with the Floodplain Mapping Program (FMP), the delegated state agency for administering FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, to determine the status of the project with regard to applicability of NCDOT'S Memorandum of Agreement with FMP, or approval of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) and subsequent final Letter of Map Revision (LOMR).

This commitment will be addressed during final design.

Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit, Roadway Design Unit

Fourteen foot outside travel lanes will be utilized for bicycle accommodations from NC 740 in Albemarle to SR 1731, Sweet Home Church Road. Four foot paved shoulders will be utilized for bicycle accommodations from SR 1731, Sweet Home Church Road to the proposed Troy Bypass, west of Troy.

The current design illustrates this commitment.

Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations will be further coordinated with the City of Albemarle prior to final project design. In accordance with the NCDOT Pedestrian Policy, NCDOT will bear the full cost to replace any existing sidewalks to be relocated by

the project along existing streets. The City of Albemarle will participate in the cost of new sidewalks in areas where sidewalks do not currently exist. A municipal agreement will be prepared prior to project construction.

This commitment applies to R-2530B project.

The City of Albemarle has committed to participate in sidewalk accommodations. The municipal agreement will be prepared prior to construction. Five-foot sidewalks are proposed on both the north and south sides of NC 24-27-73, within the Albemarle city limits and the southwest quadrant of NC 24-27-73 (Spaulding Street) and SR 1625 (Raleigh Highway) for approximately 325 feet.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit – Natural Environment Section

Due to the presence of Schweinitz's sunflower within the project area as well as within 1-mile of the project area, a biological conclusion of "May affect, likely to adversely affect" has been given. Additional surveys will be required prior to project construction, and this biological conclusion will necessitate further coordination and consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. A Biological Assessment and a Biological Opinion will be completed prior to the completion of the final environmental document.

A Biological Assessment will be completed once surveys are updated for the proposed project. A Biological Opinion will be completed prior to construction.

Schweinitz's sunflower surveys for Project R-2530B occurred Fall 2016 for the roundabout area of the project. No specimens were observed for the area of the project. A biological conclusion of no effect was rendered for the roundabout area. A Update of this species will be for the remainder of R-2530B and B-4974 will be available prior to construction. Schweinitz's sunflower surveys for Project R-2527 will not occur until 2020.

The proposed projects will have no effect on the smooth coneflower. However, due to the presence of potential habitat within the project area, additional surveys will be required prior to construction.

*Surveys for smooth coneflower will be conducted **prior to construction for the Montgomery County portion of the project.** An update to this species will be available prior to construction.*

Additional bald eagle surveys may be required within Montgomery County and Stanly County prior to project construction as specified by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. However, these surveys will be restricted to 660 feet from the edge of the project boundaries.

This commitment will be addressed prior to construction.

This project may impact individuals of the three S and LR species (smooth coneflower, large witch alder and glade wild quinine), but will not affect the viability of any of the three species across the forest. Discussions will occur with the USFS to determine avoidance and minimization options.

Project R-2527 was recently funded in the Draft STIP. However, while the FONSI was being developed, TIP Project R-2527 was unfunded and final design plans were postponed. Updated Forest Services survey will occur in 2017 and 2018 for TIP Project R-2527. NCDOT will coordinate with the Forest Service and will begin to develop right of way plans for Project R-2527. Results of this coordination and the new surveys will be captured in a consultation document prior to R/W acquisition for project R-2527.

The Northern Long-Eared Bat has been added to the species list since the completion of the EA. NCDOT has determined that the proposed action does not require separate consultation on the grounds that the proposed action is consistent with the final Section 4(d) rule, codified at 50 C.F.R. § 17.40(o) and effective February 16, 2016. NCDOT may presume its determination is informed by best available information and consider Section 7 responsibilities fulfilled for Northern Long-Eared Bat.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit, Roadway Design Unit

~~The proposed project will have “no adverse effect” on Bridge No. 51 if a responsible party agrees to take ownership of Bridge No. 51 and preserves it in place. A Section 4(f) evaluation and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will be required for B-4974, Alternative 1 if a responsible party does not agree to take ownership of Bridge No. 51 and for B-4974, Alternative 4 since Bridge No. 51 will be removed.~~

Bridge No. 51 is proposed to be rehabilitated. Coordination with the SHPO and NCDOT Historic Architecture Section, rendered a no adverse effect determination for this improvement.

This commitment applies to B-4974 project.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit–Human Environment Section

Multilingual public outreach measures will be taken on an “as needed” basis.

This commitment was satisfied during out public involvement process.

Divisions 8 and 10 Construction Units, Utilities Unit – Relocation of Utilities

All relocation of utilities including but not limited to power lines, water and sewer lines, and communication lines located on NFS lands must be coordinated with the USFS. Utility companies cannot use the easement granted to the North Carolina Department of

Transportation for construction and operation of the highway for their uses. All utility companies must work directly with the USFS to modify their existing special use permits on relocations within the project area.

This commitment applies to R-2527 project.

Divisions 8 and 10 Construction Units, Roadside Environmental – Landscaping and Erosion Control

Landscaping and erosion control plants and seed mixes to be used on NFS lands must be discussed with the FS and disclosed in this document.

Project R-2527 was recently funded in the Draft STIP. However, while the FONSI was being developed, TIP Project R-2527 was unfunded and final design plans were postponed. Coordination is needed with the US Forest Service and NCDOT Roadside Environmental Unit regarding erosion control plants and seed mixes to be used on NFS lands.

Roadside Environmental Unit, Division Resident Engineer – High Quality Waters

Given the potential for impacts to the resources during the project implementation, NCDWQ requests that NCDOT strictly adhere to North Carolina regulations entitles Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds (15A NCAC 04B .0124) throughout design and construction of the project. This would apply for any area that drains to streams having WS CA (Water Supply Critical Area) classifications.

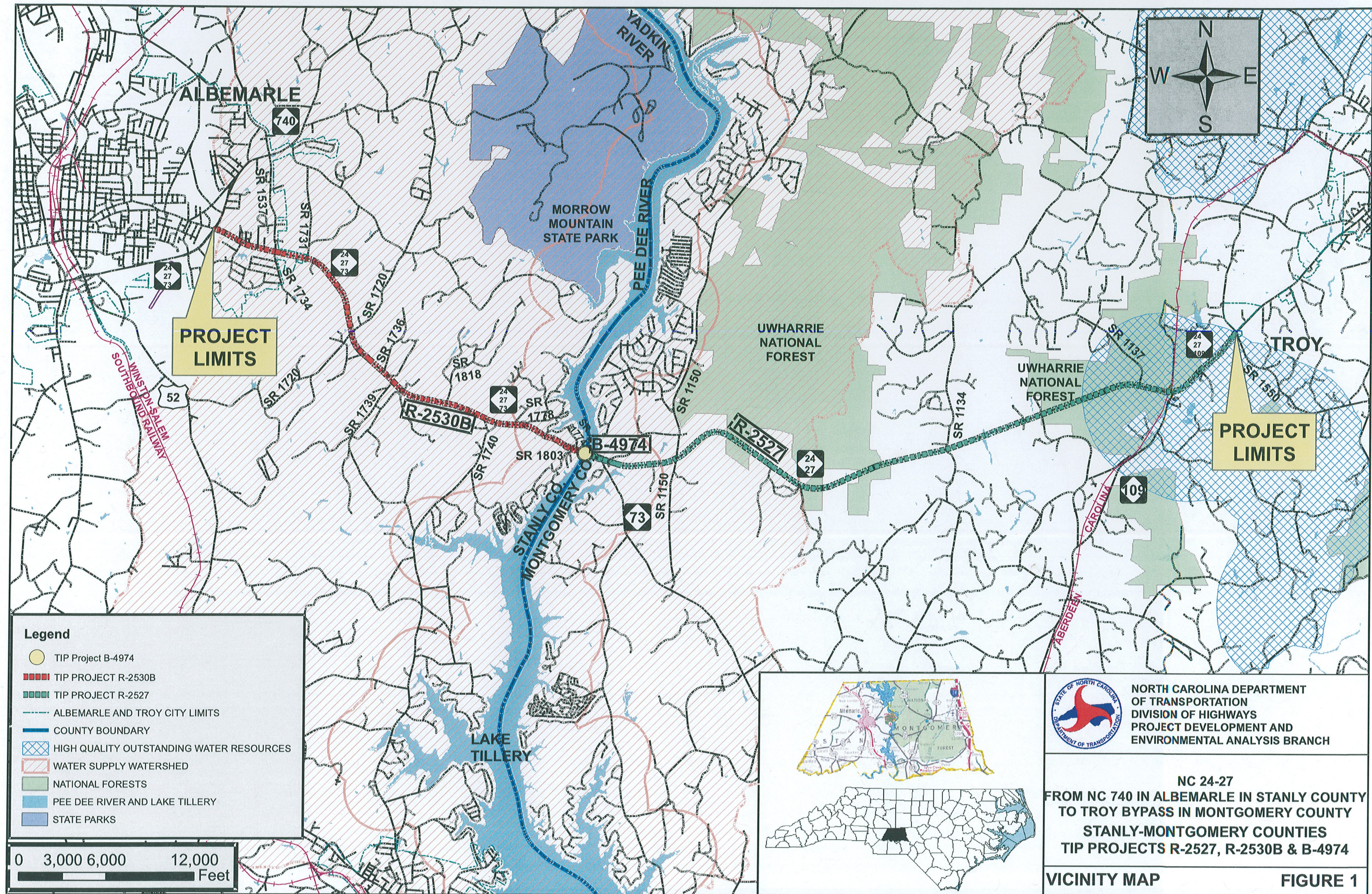
Standard Procedure. This commitment will be implemented during construction.

Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit – Archaeological Section

*Six National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible archaeological sites (31Mg1806, 31Mg1629, 31Mg321, 31St195, 31St196 and 31St204/204**) will be adversely effected by the undertaking per the 2014 Notification of Adverse Effect Finding. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will be prepared by NCDOT in consultation with the Historic Preservation Office, the United States Forest Service (USFS) and other consulting parties that may be identified and invited by FHWA to participate. The MOA will detail the measures NCDOT plans to carry out to mitigate adverse effects to these sites. USFS is requiring actual Right-of-Way (ROW) widths to identify the actual impacts to archaeological resources present in the project area(s) and to prescribe mitigation for projection of historic resources. All required data recovery mitigation efforts will be initiated after ROW acquisition is completed relative to each site. No construction related activities are permitted within an individual site's limits until the field investigation/mitigation requirements relative to that site have been completed. Each site will require six months after their respective ROW acquisition is complete in order to complete their respective field investigation/ mitigation requirements*

**Project Development & Environmental Analysis Unit – Human Environment
Section – Traffic Noise & Air Quality Group**

A Design Noise Report (DNR) will be completed during final design *for all sections of the proposed project.*



Project R-2530B (N.C. 24-27 Improvements)

Public Meeting Comment Summary

October 19, 2017

A total of 10 written comments were received. A summary of comments is below:

Design comments

Turning Lane Comments

- Why was a left turn not provided at entrance to City Electrical Supply and Superior Insurance, but one provided at the ABC Store. (2)

Response: Not enough space exists between the NC 740 and Barnard/Anderson intersections on NC 24-27 to allow left turns into both the ABC Store and City Electrical Supply. Those wishing to access City Electrical Supply and Superior Insurance will be able to make a U-Turn at the proposed roundabout located at Barnard/Anderson.

- Is the median on N.C. 24-27 necessary?

Response: Yes. The median is necessary to prohibit left turns which, in turn, will enhance the safety of the corridor.

- Why does R-2530B not connect to the NE Connector? Makes more sense to go behind buildings on Hilco Street (Stanly Chrysler) to make a connection. This would help reduce traffic at 740/24/27 intersection.

Response: Expanding the project limits beyond Hilco Street is not desirable; connecting to the NE Connector would have delayed the project and improvements were needed on Hilco Street due to increased traffic from the proposed roundabout.

- Can the roundabout be larger to accommodate tractor trailers better?

Response: The roundabout has been designed to accommodate a WB-67 (Interstate Semi-Trailer) per typical design standards. If needed, larger vehicles can utilize the concrete vehicular apron to safely complete turning maneuvers.

- Can the Superstreet be extended to cover the proposed roundabout?

Response: The City of Albemarle has expressed strong support for the roundabout and its inclusion in the project will provide more efficient and safe access to businesses located on the north side of NC 24-27.

- Why can't the proposed roundabout be a signalized intersection?

Response: The roundabout will reduce future maintenance costs and will likely lead to a significant reduction in crashes compared to a signalized intersection.

Other Comments

- Do easements impact burial sites at Anderson Grove Baptist Church?

Response: Easements are not anticipated to impact the burial sites at Anderson Grove Baptist Church. The space between the curb and sidewalk in this area has been reduced to limit possible impacts.

Additional comments

No response is necessary for these comments.

- Too many unsafe U-turns. Inconvenient to have to turn right in order to go left.
- Traffic is not bad on this corridor. The future traffic volumes do not make sense.
- Roundabouts are dangerous to drive through. The proposed roundabout is a bad idea.
- Trucks will have a difficult time traveling through the proposed roundabout. This will likely lead to serious traffic concerns.
- This project will be disruptive to the City during construction.
- This project is not worth the money.
- The proposed Superstreet will be difficult to traverse for elder individuals.