

North Carolina Department of Transportation
PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION FORM
TIP Project U-4437

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Consultation Phase: Right of Way / Construction

Project Description: NC 54 (Hillsborough Street) and SR 1664 (Blue Ridge Road) near CSX Transportation System and North Carolina Railroad and SR 3042 (Beryl Road) in Raleigh

State Project: 35868.1.1

Federal Project: STP-0054(15)

Document Type: Categorical Exclusion (CE) September 26, 2012

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

This project is combined with STIP Project U-2719, to let both projects in one design-build contract to avoid conflicting construction efforts. This project, combined with U-2719 anticipated Let date is August 2018.

The following changes have occurred in the project design since the preparation of the public hearing map and signing of the document in 2012.

Design

On SR 1664 (Blue Ridge Road) the 12-foot exterior lanes and four-foot bicycle lanes have changed to 11-foot exterior lanes and five-foot bicycle lanes. The 14-foot sidewalk shall be elevated only on the west side has been changed to may be elevated on the east and west side. The maximum difference in height of the roadway and the sidewalk would be approximately six feet. If the sidewalks are elevated then the elevation on east and west 14-foot sidewalks shall be the same. A minimum 54-inch ornamental fence will

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be provided along the traffic side of the elevated sidewalk, matching the style to be provided on the top of the brick retaining wall. A 10-foot concrete sidewalk will be provided from the staircase on the west side of the retaining wall south to Hillsborough Street. A clearance of 17 feet will be provided under the railroad tracks, in lieu of 23 feet.

On Hillsborough Street Loop, the five-foot sidewalk on the west side has been changed to 10-foot sidewalk on both sides of the loop/connector.

The proposed sidewalks on the north side of Hillsborough Street Bridge will be 10.5 feet wide to accommodate the 10 foot approach sidewalk. No sidewalk will be provided on the south side of Hillsborough Street and north side of Beryl Road adjacent to the railroad right of way.

A 10-foot sidewalk will be constructed along Hillsborough Street frontage with the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine Campus.

Public Involvement

NCDOT to hold a project update public meeting for stakeholders and residents in the area to inform them of the project status and the intent to let the project with U-2719. Local Officials will be invited to attend the public meeting anticipated to be held in June 2018.

Culture Resource

NCDOT has continued to work with NC HPO, Raleigh Public Arts Commission, Raleigh Urban Design Center, NC State Fairgrounds, and NCSU on an art installation and lighting for the new retaining wall adjacent to the State Fairgrounds as mitigation for effects to the State Fairgrounds historic property under Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act.

The face of the retaining wall will be covered in a red brick veneer, creating breaks, or “windows” in the brick where the artwork will be installed. Arched “windows” of similar scale as the doors on the Commercial and Education Building will be provided. Brick would be used to create a frame for the art installation and a sloped “window sill” for drainage.

A uniform approach to the railings along the sidewalk, top of the retaining wall, and along the Hillsborough Street bridge will be provided.

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Protected Species

The known federally protected species for Wake County, North Carolina are listed below along with the Biological Conclusion for each species.

Red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*)

Federal Status: ENDANGERED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

Habitat for the RCW is not found within the project corridor

Dwarf wedgemussel (*Alasmidonta heterodon*)

Federal Status: ENDANGERED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

There are no water resources within the project corridor.

Michaux's sumac (*Rhus michauxii*)

Federal Status: ENDANGERED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

A survey of the project corridor was conducted on August 4, 2006, May 19, 2011 and May 1, 2018. There is some marginal habitat in the corridor, however no specimens of Michaux's sumac were observed.

Yellow lance (*Elliptio lanceolate*)

Federal Status: THREATENED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

There are no water resources within the project corridor.

Cape Fear Shiner (*Notropis mekistocholas*)

Federal Status: ENDANGERED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

There are no water resources within the project corridor.

Tar River spiny mussel (*Parvaspina steinstansana*)

Federal Status: ENDANGERED

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

There are no water resources within the project corridor.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Federal Status: Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

Biological Conclusion: No Effect

Habitat for the bald eagle is not found within the project corridor or within 1.0 miles of the project corridor.

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Railroad

NCDOT have been coordinating with CSX Transportation (CSXT), North Carolina Railroad (NCR) and Norfolk Southern Railway (NSR) monthly on design issues for the project. Through coordinated with the State Fairgrounds, the “Circus Track” will be permanently removed since there is no need for it and it is in the way of both the temporary and permanent passenger platforms for the special Amtrak NC State Fair Stop.

Utilities

All utility related attachments must be evaluated and approved by the State Utilities Manager, including any existing attachments to any structure(s) that require modification or replacement, in lieu of “utilities may be attached to proposed bridge structures as needed” as stated in the 2012 document.

IV. LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

NCDOT will implement all practical measures and procedures to minimize and avoid environmental impacts. See attached list of environmental commitments.

V. COORDINATION

Project management personnel have discussed current project proposals with others as follows:

Design-Build Engineer:	<u>David Hering, PE</u>	4/19/2018
FHWA	<u>Felix Davila, PE</u>	4/24/2018
City of Raleigh:	<u>Eric Lamb</u>	4/13/2018
NES Environmental Specialist: (Construction Consultations only)	<u>Jason Dilday</u>	5/3/2018

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VI. NCDOT CONCURRENCE

Janis J. Lusk 5/23/18
Project Management Engineer (signature) Date

VII. FHWA CONCURRENCE

for *Felip D. Lee* 5/23/18
Federal Highway Administration (signature) Date
Division Administrator

Project Commitments

NC 54 (Hillsborough Street) and SR 1664 (Blue Ridge Road) Near CSX Transportation System and North Carolina Railroad and SR 3042 (Beryl Road) in Raleigh Construct a Grade Separation

Federal Aid Number STP-054(15)
WBS Element 35868.1.1
STIP Project Number U-4437
Wake County, North Carolina

This project is combined with STIP Project U-2719, to let both projects in one design-build contract to avoid conflicting construction efforts. Unless noted otherwise the following commitments will be coordinated during the design and construction. Current status, changes, or additions to project commitments as shown in the environmental document for the project are printed in *italics*.

Work Zone Traffic Control Unit / Division 5

NCDOT will coordinate with emergency service providers, Wake County Public Schools, Triangle Transit, Capital Area Transit, and others as necessary during final design regarding access changes and detours. Coordination should continue through construction.

NCDOT will coordinate with the NC State Fair, PNC Arena, and the North Carolina State University (NC State) Centennial Biomedical Campus regarding the project construction schedule. The schedule will be planned to minimize disruptions during the annual state fair.

A public information strategy will be developed to inform visitors of the best routes to entertainment venues in the project vicinity during construction.

Design-Build Unit / Signals and Geometrics Section / Work Zone Traffic Control Unit / Division 5

NCDOT will coordinate with the City of Raleigh regarding constructing sidewalks along the south side of Beryl Road in which the City will pay a portion of the construction cost of the sidewalks.

The City of Raleigh and NCDOT are in the process of working on the agreement.

NCDOT will construct sidewalks along both sides of Blue Ridge Road within the project limits. Sidewalks on the west side of Blue Ridge Road will be bifurcated from the vehicle travel lanes. Sidewalks will be 14-feet wide between Pylon Drive and Trinity Road and should be built according to preliminary plans. Sidewalks will be constructed on both

sides of the connector road between Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street. The sidewalk on the east side of the connector will be 10' in width to match the wide sidewalk to be constructed along Hillsborough Street. NCDOT will coordinate with the City of Raleigh regarding construction of an ADA-compliant pedestrian access between Beryl Road and Blue Ridge Road.

Sidewalks on the west side of Blue Ridge Road may be bifurcated from the vehicle travel lanes. Ten-foot sidewalks will be constructed on both sides of the connector/loop road between Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street. 10-foot multiuse path will be constructed along Hillsborough Street on the NCSU Vet School frontage. The City of Raleigh and NCDOT are in the process of working on the agreement for the ADA-compliant pedestrian access between Beryl Road and Blue Ridge Road.

Design-Build Unit / Division 5 / Roadside Environmental Unit

NCDOT will coordinate with the J.C. Raulston Arboretum in providing directional signage to the arboretum from Blue Ridge Road.

NCDOT will provide landscaping along Blue Ridge Road and in the median (except under bridges) and on the slope between the connector road and Blue Ridge Road, where practicable.

NCDOT will coordinate with the City of Raleigh and other stakeholders as necessary if tree grates are to be incorporated in the sidewalks along Blue Ridge Road.

The City of Raleigh and NCDOT are in the process of working on the agreement for the tree grates along Blue Ridge Road.

Geotechnical Engineering Unit / GeoEnvironmental Section

Two sites presently, or formerly, containing underground storage tanks (USTs) were identified in the project limits. Preliminary site assessments for soil and groundwater contamination will be performed prior to right-of-way acquisition.

Design-Build Unit / Division 5

NCDOT will coordinate with NCSU during final design of the connector road to minimize encroachments on the leased parcels for future development of the NCSU Centennial Biomedical Campus (College of Veterinary Medicine).

Structures Management Unit

NCDOT will coordinate with the NC State Fairgrounds regarding the proposed ADA-compliant ramp that would provide handicap access from the sidewalk along Blue Ridge Road in proximity to the intersection with the connector road.

NCDOT has been coordinating with NC State Fairgrounds and will be additional coordination during the design and construction.

The wing wall in the southeast quadrant of the Beryl Road bridge will be constructed to accommodate an ADA-compliant sidewalk to be constructed to provide access between Blue Ridge Road and Beryl Road. The design of the sidewalk will be coordinated with the City of Raleigh as a cost-share item under the current pedestrian policy.

The City of Raleigh and NCDOT are in the process of working on the agreement for the pedestrian access between Blue Ridge Road and Beryl Road.

Division 5

The posted speed limit on Blue Ridge Road will be changed to 35 miles per hour between Pylon Drive and Trinity Road.

The Old Hickory Highway Marker will be removed and stored during construction, and will be re-erected at a comparable location in consultation with the NC State Historic Preservation Office.

The NC State Fairgrounds sign in the northwest quadrant of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street will be removed and stored during construction. Upon completion of project construction, the sign will be relocated to an appropriate location coordinated with the NC State Fairgrounds.

Division 5 / Rail Division

The NC State Fairgrounds railroad spur ("the circus track") may be temporarily relocated during construction. This relocation will be coordinated with the NC State Fairgrounds, the North Carolina Railroad (NCR) and Norfolk Southern, and its users, as appropriate.

NCDOT has coordinated with the stake holders and are planning on removing the "Circus Track" permanently.

Design-Build Unit

The NCDOT will coordinate with the City of Raleigh regarding cost and installation of pedestrian scale lighting on Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street.

Division 5 / Structures Management Unit / Project Management Unit

NCDOT, NC State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh Public Arts Commission, Raleigh Urban Design Center, NC State Fairgrounds, and NCSU will work together on the plans for the retaining walls, bridges, and lighting to develop a unified design that incorporates public art in keeping with NCDOT's and the City Raleigh's public art policies. The scope and cost of the public art will be determined prior to construction in

consultation with the NC State Historic Preservation Office, City of Raleigh, and other adjacent stakeholders.

Retaining walls will be finished to allow for installation of public art on their surfaces after construction. The appropriate surface treatment for art will be coordinated with the NC State Historic Preservation Office and the City of Raleigh.

NCDOT has coordinated with NC SHPO, Raleigh Public Arts Commission, Raleigh Urban Design Center, NC State Fairgrounds, and NCSU on an art installation within the proposed red brick veneer retaining walls and lighting for the new retaining wall adjacent to the State Fairgrounds. This coordination will continue through the design and construction of the art installation. The wing wall on the northeast quadrant of the Hillsborough Street Bridge and the retaining wall south of Beryl Road along Blue Ridge Road shall match the red brick veneer on the retaining wall adjacent to the State Fairgrounds.

Structures Management Unit / Project Management Unit

Roadway Bridges will be supported with vertical abutments. Retaining walls constructed on the west side of Blue Ridge Road will be designed to accommodate the bridge abutments.

NCDOT will coordinate with Triangle Transit to ensure the structure design accommodates future access through the retaining walls to the proposed light rail transit platform(s).