

MEMORANDUM

To: Post Hearing Meeting Attendees

From: Jennifer Harris, PE
PDEA Western Region / Turnpike Section Head

Date: March 4, 2014

Subject: Post Hearing Meeting: Proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass, Mecklenburg and Union Counties, North Carolina, TIP Project R-3329/R-2559

Post Hearing Meeting Summary

A Post Hearing Meeting was held on January 13, 2014 in the NCDOT PDEA CCB Large Conference Room beginning at 1:30pm. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss public agency comments received on the Draft Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and draft responses to those comments. The following people attended the meeting:

Scott Slusser - NC Department of Justice	Jill Gurak - Atkins
K. Zak Hamidi - NCDOT – Design Build	Jenny Noonkester - Atkins
Tris Ford – NCDOT, Human Env Section	Carl Gibilaro - Atkins
Bradley Reynolds - HNTB	Michael Wood - The Catena Group
Colin Mellor – NCDOT, Natural Env Section	Jamal Alavi – NCDOT, Trans Planning Branch
Jamille Robbins – NCDOT, Human Env Section	*Florence Green – NCDOT, Right of Way
George Hoops - FHWA	*Jen Thompson – NCDOT, Division 10
Ken Gilland – Michael Baker Engineering	*Nancy Scott - The Catena Group
Spencer Franklin - HNTB	*Scott Cole - NCDOT Division 10
Joe Jeffers – HNTB	<u>*Lorna Parkins – Michael Baker Engineering</u>
Jennifer Harris – NCDOT, Western Region/Turnpike	*Participated via telephone

Materials distributed prior to the meeting included an agenda, a public hearings overview and representative comments and draft responses. Copies of these materials are attached to these minutes.

Jennifer Harris opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Carl Gibilaro gave a summary of the Public Hearings held for the project. The hearings were held on December 9, 10, and 11, 2013 at South Piedmont Community College (Monroe), Union County Agricultural Center (Monroe), and Next Level Church (Stallings), respectively. The hearings on December 9 and 10 included a pre-hearing open house from 4:00pm to 6:30pm, followed by a formal presentation and hearing at 7:00pm. The hearing on December 11 was an informal public hearing from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. A total of 524 people attended the hearings over the three nights (168 on December 9; 230 on December 10; and 126 on December 11).

The comment period ended on January 6, 2014. A total of 63 comment forms, 18 letters, and 24 emails were received, in addition to 17 verbal comments given during the public hearings. The majority of the comments expressed clear support or opposition to the project and/or expressed frustration with project delays and desires to move the project forward. A large number of the comments came from

organized groups challenging the validity of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS and the analyses contained within.

Mr. Gibilaro stated the discussion would focus on twelve generalized comments since the draft responses to those generalized comments would apply to most of the comments received. Responses to all comments received during the comment period will be provided in the Final Supplemental Final EIS and available on the project website. He also stated that hard copies of all the comments were available for review during the meeting if needed.

General Comments

The generalized comments are listed below, along with a draft response and a summary of the discussion at the meeting for each of these comments.

Comment 1: *NCDOT is not clearing the misconception that this project will relieve congestion along existing US 74.*

Discussion: The Monroe Connector/Bypass will provide an uncongested high-speed alternative to existing US 74. It has never been a stated purpose of the project to relieve congestion on existing US 74. Mr. Gibilaro stated that Section 2.5.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS addresses the question of how the project would affect traffic volumes on US 74. In all the comparisons evaluated, traffic volumes are expected to be less along the existing US 74 corridor with the Monroe Connector/Bypass in place. A reduction in traffic volumes along existing US 74 would be a secondary benefit of the project. Scott Cole suggested reference to the traffic forecast volumes to support this response (i.e., cite relevant sections of DSFEIS that compare the build vs. no-build volumes on US 74 in the design year).

It was noted that the NC Intrastate System was repealed in June 2013. Jill Gurak responded that this is noted in the comment responses. Ms. Harris stated that this does not change the purpose and need for the project; the Strategic Highway Corridor designation still applies and calls for a high-speed facility for the corridor.

Comment 2: *No consideration is being given to lower cost alternatives, including those identified in the Stantec report, to improve the existing US 74.*

Discussion: Mr. Gibilaro stated that Section 2.4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS documents all the alternatives considered. Ms. Harris pointed out that the commenter's statement is incorrect; NCDOT has implemented nearly all of the recommendations of the Stantec study with the exception being the superstreet improvements along US 74 which are scheduled for construction in 2014. The Stantec study recommendations are having the effect they were intended to have, providing short-term improvements to the level of service for US 74, but this does not remove the need for the Monroe Connector/Bypass project as shown through field and INRIX traffic data.

Comment 3: *NC 218 should be the bypass; the bypass should connect directly to I-485.*

Discussion: NC 218 is located in the Goose Creek watershed and USFWS noted in their scoping comments that the Goose Creek watershed includes critical habitat for the federally endangered Carolina heelsplitter mussel. As a result of this comment, the project study area was developed and agreed upon by the environmental agencies to avoid the Goose Creek Watershed. Colin Mellor

recommended that we find the exact wording from USFWS's scoping comments and include that in the response.

Ms. Harris suggested that the response to the I-485 connection comment should include a discussion of how we evaluated alternatives that connected to I-485 and why those alternatives were ultimately not selected.

Comment 4: *The amount of predicted growth as a result of the project is underestimated.*

Discussion: Mr. Gibilaro said there were several comments saying NCDOT is underestimating the growth that would be caused by the project, and that the no-build scenario is too high. Ken Gilland pointed out that all population estimates are in fact estimates using best available data. Jamal Alavi stated that the project should use approved the MPO data since this data is agreed to by all the municipalities. Mr. Gilland further stated that socioeconomic studies are commonly conservative estimates that are on the high side (overestimate potential impacts) whereas tolling and revenue studies are commonly conservative estimates that are on the low side (underestimate the number of vehicles paying a toll). He also said that the range of error in projections gets larger as the area of analysis gets smaller. Ms. Harris said the responses should clarify the ranges of variability. Lorna Parkins pointed out that some people are trying to say that growth slowed in the area due to the recession and it will not rebound, but this is not the case. Slower growth in a 2-3 year period is not determinative of long term growth patterns. Future growth that was projected will still occur, but it may be delayed by a few years. For these reasons, the No-Build Scenario is not artificially high.

Mr. Gibilaro asked how NCDOT should respond about statements from economic development interests that the project will bring growth. Under NEPA, the NCDOT's environmental document is the official record of the project's impacts; NCDOT can't control the statements of interest groups or how others interpret the EIS.

Comment 5: *Flawed traffic forecasts were not updated.*

Discussion: The traffic forecast memo included in Appendix G of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS answers this question. Portions of this memo are also included in Section 2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. The MPO reviewed the Draft Supplemental Final EIS and the only comment received was a clarification on how we referenced the various model versions; they had no issues with the traffic analysis. The analysis used the current approved socioeconomic (SE) data. Ms. Harris stated that the traffic forecasts were not flawed and it was determined that they do not need to be updated. A thorough analysis of why traffic forecasts were still valid is included in the EIS. Spencer Franklin noted that NCDOT and FHWA experts also reviewed and agreed with the traffic forecast memo. In the comments from the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), they are confusing the forecast with the tolling and revenue studies, each of which serves a different purpose.

Comment 6: *Tolls will never pay for the project.*

Discussion: Ms. Harris stated that it is true that tolls will not pay for 100% of the project. The toll revenue is only one component of the finance plan. Mr. Franklin added that tolls also will be used to pay for operation and maintenance of the facility.

Comment 7: *An origin/destination (O/D) study was never performed to determine where traffic is headed (i.e., local vs. thru trips).*

Discussion: Mr. Alavi stated that O/D data is included as a standard part of the MPO's model development process. Since the project traffic forecasts were prepared using the MPO model as a tool, O/D data was inherently considered and included in the traffic forecasting and analysis. Ms. Harris added that additional O/D data is not necessary to support the project's purpose and need for high-speed regional travel. Mr. Gibilaro stated that some comments asked why the environmental document did not address that the project is part of a larger vision to connect the mountains to the coast. Mr. Gibilaro added that the EIS acknowledges that US 74 is part of a connection to the port at Wilmington. However, it would not be reasonable or prudent to use a future land use study area (FLUSA) that included an area from the mountains to the coast. It was noted that as the study area got larger, the induced effects of the 20 mile project would get smaller. It was agreed that the existing FLUSA was reasonable for this study.

Comment 8: *Trucks will never pay for the project.*

Discussion: Bradley Reynolds stated that based on the traffic forecasts prepared for the project, trucks are projected to use the toll road. These traffic forecasts were approved by NCDOT. Mr. Mellor noted that he heard verbal comments during the pre-hearing open houses from truckers who said they would use the toll road. Ms. Harris stated there is no evidence to support the claim that trucks would not use the toll road; project traffic forecasts reflect that trucks will use it.

Comment 9: *The purpose and need for the project is too narrow, resulting in a predetermined solution.*

Discussion: Mr. Gibilaro stated that we've responded to this comment in past documents, and the response has not changed. Ms. Harris added that NCDOT stands by the purpose and need.

Comment 10: *NCDOT is being deceptive again. NCDOT is paying the design-build team to lobby support for the project. A BBQ was scheduled the same night and same place as one of the hearings.*

Discussion: Jamille Robbins stated that the Union County Agricultural Center is a private facility and can be rented by anyone. A statement was made at the hearing to make it clear that the BBQ was not a NCDOT-sponsored event. NCDOT is not paying the design-build team for these activities and NCDOT is in the process of getting a refund from the contractor for prior invoice charges for pro-bypass alternatives.

Comment 11: *Boggs Paving is corrupt and yet allowed to stay on the project.*

Discussion: NCDOT has taken the required action in order to meet both federal and state requirements for a company that is under indictment. FHWA has suspended Boggs Paving from bidding on future projects, until further notice.

Comment 12: *The project is being done for the financial benefit of politicians and developers.*

Discussion: Ms. Harris stated that individual property owners were not a consideration in developing the alignment of project alternatives. The process used to develop alternatives is well documented and was consistent with NEPA regulations and guidance. Mr. Hoops pointed out that people were given a chance to comment on the preliminary alternatives and suggest other alternatives.

Following discussion of the above, it was apparent to the group that an additional generalized comment should be added to this list for consideration.

Comment 13: *Travel time savings presented in the Draft Supplemental Final EIS are much less than those presented in the Final EIS. The high project cost is not justified by saving only 8-12 minutes.*

Discussion: Ms. Gurak stated that the travel times on the bypass will remain relatively the same in the future since the toll road will be uncongested, but existing US 74 will continue to get worse, so the travel time savings of using the bypass versus US 74 will increase in the future. She also stated that there is a difference in travel time savings calculated based on traveling the posted speeds on US 74 (which is unlikely based on existing conditions) versus those calculated using actual speeds along the corridor (INRIX data). If actual speeds are used, the travel time savings on the bypass is greater than 8-12 minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

Meeting Agenda

STIP Project R-2559/R-3329 – Monroe Connector/Bypass, Mecklenburg and Union Counties

Draft Supplemental Final EIS Post-Hearing Meeting

January 13, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30pm

NCDOT PDEA CCB Large Conference Room at Century Center – 1000 Birch Ridge Rd, Raleigh, NC

Purpose: Review and discuss public and agency comments received on the Draft Supplemental Final EIS.

Materials

Agenda

Summary of Generalized Comments and Proposed Responses

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Meeting Purpose**
- 3. Summary of Public Hearings**
 - a. Hearing format**
 - b. Attendance numbers**
 - c. Number of comments received**
- 4. Discussion of Comments Received**
- 5. Next Steps**
 - a. Combined Final Supplemental Final EIS/ROD**
 - b. Design-Build activities**



Public Hearings Overview

Monroe Connector Bypass Mecklenburg and Union Counties, NC

STIP Project Numbers: R-3329 and R-2559

Logistics

Date:	December 9, 2013	December 10, 2013	December 11, 2013
Time:	Pre-Hearing Open House: 4:00 – 6:30 pm	Pre-Hearing Open House: 4:00 – 6:30 pm	Open House 4:00 – 7:00 pm
	Public Hearing 7:00 pm	Public Hearing 7:00 pm	
Location:	South Piedmont Community College Building A 4209 Old Charlotte Hwy. Monroe, NC 28110	Union County Agriculture Center 3230-D Presson Road Monroe, NC 28112	Next Level Church 4317 Stevens Mill Rd. Matthew, NC 28104

Advertisement

A public notice (postcard) advertising the Pre-Hearing Open House and Public Hearing was mailed to approximately 19,800 property owners in the study area (17,418 in Union County and 2,387 in Mecklenburg County). A Public Notice and a press release were prepared by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The Public Notice was published in local newspapers as follows:

- Charlotte Observer - Nov 17, 24, Dec 1
- Charlotte Post – Nov 20, 27 and Dec 4
- La Noticia – Nov 20, 27 and Dec 4
- Hola News – Nov 19, 26, Dec 3

After the original postcard mailing and publication of the meeting dates in local newspapers, an error was identified in regard to the date of the meeting locations. The original postcard and public notice identified the Monday December 9th meeting to be held at the Agriculture Center in Union County and the Tuesday December 10th meeting to be held at the South Piedmont Community College.

A revised postcard correcting this location date error was mailed to the same property owners. A revised Public Notice was distributed.

Signs identifying the change in open house and public hearing location change and handouts with directions to the correct meeting location, were placed outside of the incorrect locations to assist the public in attending a meeting

The hearing notice was also advertised on community websites managed by:

- Town of Stallings
- Town of Matthews
- Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO)



Hearing Location Change sign and direction information outside the Union County Agriculture Center for Pre-Hearing Open House at South Piedmont Community College

Attendance

A total of 168 citizens signed in at the Public Hearing held at South Piedmont Community College. A total of 230 citizens signed in at the Public Hearing held at the Union County Agriculture Center and 126 citizens signed in at the informal hearing at Next Level Church. **Total attendance** for the three nights was **524**.

Comments Received from Citizens

The comment period ended January 6th, 2014. To date, 432 comments have been received.

Type	Received	Total Comments
Comment Form	63	174
Letter (Public)	9	63
Letter (Agency)	8	16
SELC	1	77
Verbal from Hearing	17	54
Email	24	48

General Summary of Comment Form Responses

Majority of comments expressed clear support or opposition to project or expressed frustration with project delay and expressed desires to start moving forward. A large number of the total comments came from organized groups challenging the validity of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS and the analyses contained within. Generalized areas of the comments are as follows:

1. *NCDOT is not clearing the misconception that this project will relieve congestion along the existing US 74.*

2. *No consideration is being given to lower cost alternatives, including those identified in the Stantec Report, to improve the existing US 74.*
3. *NC 218 should be the bypass / it should connect directly to I-485.*
4. *Amount of predicted growth as a result of the project is under estimated.*
5. *Flawed traffic forecasts were not updated.*
6. *Tolls will never pay for the project.*
7. *On Origin/Destination study was never performed to determine where traffic is headed.*
8. *Trucks will not use this toll road and therefore will not leave the existing US 74.*
9. *Purpose and Need was too narrow resulting in a predetermined solution.*
10. *NCDOT is being deceptive again. NCDOT is paying the design build team to lobby support for project. BBQ was scheduled the same night and same place as one of the hearings.*
11. *Boggs Paving is corrupt and yet allowed to stay on project.*
12. *Project is being done for the financial benefit of politicians and developers.*

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-003	Franklin Deese	2	Better alternative to tying into 74 at Stallings would be to tie into the Idlewild exit.	<p>Options for tying the project into I-485 at locations north and south of the existing US 74/I-485 interchange, including at the Idlewild Road/I-485 interchange, were considered, as documented in Section 2.3.2.1 of the Draft EIS. Relevant excerpts from the Draft EIS are provided below.</p> <p>“Linking the proposed project to I-485 at a location other than US 74 would create a discontinuity in US 74 for forcing travelers on the new US 74 to access another facility I-485) before continuing on US 74...</p> <p>In addition, to accommodate the projected traffic volumes, longer entrance ramps would be needed on I-485 to allow traffic from Idlewild Road and the proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass to merge before merging with traffic on I-485. Consequently, a collector-distributor roadway system would be needed between Idlewild Road (SR 1521) and US 74 to accommodate weaving movements along I-485...</p> <p>...In this urban area, creating a discontinuity to US 74 and routing it along a segment of I-485, where existing traffic volumes also are heavy, would result in greater potential for congestion and delays...</p> <p>...Improvements needed to accommodate a highway –to-highway connection at this location would encroach on the Goose Creek watershed, which is known habitat of the federally-endangered Carolina heelsplitter mussel.”</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-005	Chris Hammonds	5	Frustration about knowing if and when we will lose our home. Offer made in May 2012.	If an offer was previously made for your home, it has been identified as being located within the selected corridor. In that the selected corridor remains the same as that identified as part of the Draft and Final EIS, it likely remains within the selected corridor. An updated schedule detailing project activities following the environmental analysis has not yet been developed because of the many unknowns the NCDOT is facing following the approval of the Record of Decision. NCDOT intends to move the project forward as quickly as possible following the receipt of all necessary approvals. When the right of way process does resume, a right of way agent will contact you to discuss the acquisition process.
C-006	Divina Pomaikai	2	The project is taking too long to happen, citizens are upset and accidents have increased on HWY 74.	NCDOT intends to move the project forward as quickly as possible following the receipt of all necessary approvals. However, because of the many unknowns the NCDOT is facing following the approval of the Record of Decision an updated schedule detailing project activities following the environmental analysis has not yet been developed.
C-011	Beverly Dickerson	5	The number of tractor trailers is increasing and there are long delays at traffic lights. If through traffic will use the road, the existing roads are not adequate to handle existing traffic conditions.	Existing traffic conditions along US 74 are described in Section 1.2.4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Section 5.8 of the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013) analyzed the effect of this project to the local road network. Increases in vehicle miles traveled throughout Union County are expected to be modest (3 percent) and would not likely create substantial congestion issues within the design year of the project, particularly given that the impacts will be spread across the many miles of transportation facilities throughout Union County. The traffic impacts of induced growth do not appear to be substantial enough to result in indirect or cumulative effects to roadway congestion or overall traffic levels.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-013	Dustin Clark	3	Mic and sound system issues with Jamille’s microphone.	Comment noted.
C-016	Jane Miner	4	Concerned about loss of farm land and trees. Increased pollution from exhaust, development, and population increase. More taxes and new schools.	See response to Document C-011, Comment #4 & 5. As documented in the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013), additional growth as a result of this project is expected to be approximately 1 percent above what is expected to occur if the project is not built.
C-016	Jane Miner	5	Will truck traffic be relieved? Do you think local traffic will use and benefit from the project? Local traffic will not pay a toll to go to work.	It is anticipated that truck and bus traffic will comprise approximately 12 percent of the total traffic on the Monroe Connector/Bypass. Total volumes on the Monroe Connector/Bypass in the 2035 design year are anticipated to range from approximately 90,000 vehicles per day on the western end of the project to approximately 35,000 vehicles per day on the eastern end. These are vehicles which would likely be using US 74 if the Monroe Connector/Bypass is not built.
C-017	Lance Dunn	1	The Bypass Tolls won’t support the Bypass. Not enough people use it to increase traffic on the eastern end.	Toll revenues will provide a portion of the project financing. Toll revenue projections are documented in <i>Final Report: Proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass Comprehensive Traffic and Revenue Study</i> (Wilbur Smith, Oct 2010)

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-017	Lance Dunn	3	It doesn't solve congestion on US 74.	The Purpose and Need for this project is stated in Section 1 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS and has not changed since it was first presented to the public at the first Citizens Informational Workshop in June 2007. The purpose of the project is to improve mobility and capacity within the project study area by providing a facility for the US 74 corridor from near I-485 in Mecklenburg County to between the towns of Wingate and Marshville in Union County that allows for high-speed regional travel consistent with the designations of the North Carolina SHC program and the North Carolina Intrastate System, while maintaining access to properties along existing US 74.
C-017	Lance Dunn	4	It causes more of a tax burden on cities and counties.	Local taxes are not being utilized to finance this project. State and Federal gas tax allocations as well as bonds are financing the project.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-017	Lance Dunn	7	It adds to the four types of impairments on Stewarts Creek, which feeds the Monroe drinking supply, Lake Twitty, which drops 35% in high rainfall years.	<p>The watershed model developed for the Stewarts Creek HU projected increases in nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment loadings of 0.69, 2.52, 1.68 percent, respectively, as a result of indirect and cumulative impacts attributable to the Monroe Bypass/Connector. It should be noted, however, that the analysis did not consider site-specific best management practices (BMPs), such as bioretention basins, stormwater ponds, grass swales, etc. Consequently, the watershed model likely overestimates pollutant loadings from areas with treated stormwater.</p> <p>In the case of Stewarts Creek, 33 percent of land use change between the No Build and Build scenario is accounted for by the right-of-way of the Monroe Bypass/Connector and will be subject to the stormwater control requirements set forth in the NCDOT Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds (15A NCAC 04B .0124) . Another 51 percent is projected within the incorporated limits of the City of Monroe. Development in Monroe is subject to the Monroe Stormwater Management Ordinance³. Both rules set standards for the reduction of runoff-borne sediments. The NCDOT standards require a 70 percent reduction of 0.04 mm sediments, while the Monroe Stormwater ordinance requires an 85 percent average annual removal of total suspended solids (TSS). The stormwater BMPs necessary to remove 70 percent or more of TSS – bioretention basins, stormwater wetlands, sand filters, etc. – also provide total nitrogen and phosphorus reductions in the order of 35 and 40 percent, respectively⁴. As such, considerably reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment loadings from indirect and cumulative impacts in the Stewarts Creek HU will be realized by following existing stormwater management rules.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-017	Lance Dunn	8	It doesn't connect directly to I-485, which necessitated a 12 lane highway and a dangerous dog-leg.	Vehicles traveling to/from the Monroe Connector/Bypass and I-485 have a controlled access connection between the two roadways. All designs utilized appropriate and accepted design criteria. There are no dangerous "dog-legs" on the project.
C-017	Lance Dunn	9	It hurts downtown development.	BAKER
C-017	Lance Dunn	10	It causes building abandonment on Hwy 74.	The indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project are documented in the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013), summarized in Section 4.5 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. The proposed project is not expected to adversely impact the economy of Union County.
C-017	Lance Dunn	11	Almost \$1 Billion dollars is a lot to spend for no improvements. When 10% of that will produce better measureable results, rather than a ribbon of noise and pollution which doesn't benefit the hosts.	See response to Document C-017, Comment #3. The Monroe Connector/Bypass will provide a high-speed facility through the western half of Union County that connects to I-485 in Mecklenburg County. The Monroe Connector/Bypass will be accessible to local traffic via several interchanges. The project will provide benefit to motorists desiring an option to avoid the slower speeds and traffic signals on US 74.
C-017	Lance Dunn	12	The only benefit goes to politicians, land developers and road contractors. Politicians should focus on lower taxes and representing their people. Land developers should focus on the vacant buildings first. Road contractors should be fixing existing roads.	See response to Document C-017, Comment #11. The project will provide benefit to motorists desiring an option to avoid the slower speeds and traffic signals along existing US 74.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-017	Lance Dunn	13	Ask any government agency why the DOT supports the road and they clam up. Then they say, "Personally it only promotes urban sprawl, politics and land developers."	This project has been the number one priority of the region for many years, most recently in the <i>2035 Long Range Transportation Plan</i> which was developed and approved with input from municipalities within the MPO's jurisdiction.
C-018	Mya Yignal	1	Need more toys for kids to play with and less coloring books.	Comment noted.
C-019	Betty Wilson	5	There has been nothing but studies and talk about this project and wasted tax payer money.	Comment noted.
C-023	Wallace Currin	4	Build a spur from Hilltop Area over to 601 South to get all the sand and gravel trucks coming from Pageland, SC onto the bypass.	Comment noted. However, neither this project, nor a similar one, is included in the <i>2035 Long Range Transportation Plan</i> for the region.
C-024	Ken Howell	3	The information presented was very general with no specific expertise in any area of study. Hire smarter people or educate them better before the show.	Project staff in attendance at the hearings were knowledgeable about the project, and there were staff with expertise in a variety of areas, including but not limited to, roadway design, right of way, noise, and indirect/cumulative effect.
C-026	J. Keith Walters	5	How much will the toll be and will there be an option for a monthly access plan? A new branch to northbound 485 through Hemby Bridge area would be useful. Secret Shortcut gets a lot of use that could be improved with an additional leg.	Toll rates are discussed in Section 3.1.3 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. The price of the toll likely will vary over time, based upon variables such as managing demand, financing the initial construction of the project, and paying for roadway operations and maintenance. The toll rate will differ for cars and trucks, and will also be dependent on the collection method, i.e., transponder, registered license plate, or bill via US Mail. Toll road users will be able to establish accounts to pay their tolls. Initial toll rates for those utilizing a transponder are expected to be approximately \$0.13 per mile for cars and \$0.51 per mile for trucks. There are currently no plans to provide additional connectivity to I-485 in this area.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-028	Billy Brantley	3	Suggestion to keep Maple Road open from 601 to Fowler Road. Do not turn it into a cul-de-sec.	Comment noted.
C-028	Billy Brantley	4	Not convinced a thorough analysis has been performed with the Draft Supplemental Final EIS.	The Draft Supplemental Final EIS as well as this Final Supplemental Final EIS and Record of Decision all meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 23 U.S.C. 109(h) and 23 U.S.C. 138 (Section 4(f) of the DOT Act) and the reporting requirements of 23 U.S.C. 128.b along with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500- 1508) and FHWA's Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771) .
C-029	Charles Thornton	2	Meetings were a waste of time. No one had answers to anything.	Comment noted. It is unknown what specific questions this commenter was requesting answers to, but staff in attendance at the hearings was knowledgeable about the project. The one question that staff was unable to answer was when right of way and construction activities will resume.
C-029	Charles Thornton	5	Why are we stopping before Marshville? It is a start but not enough.	Current traffic projections show a drop in traffic volumes west of Marshville. A need has not yet been exhibited to continue the project further eastward.
C-031	Mark Tilley	4	Only to go to the east side of Marshville. The influx of traffic going from the Interstate to two lanes with a stop light will be overwhelming to Marshville.	See response to Document C-029, Comment #5.
C-033	John Plowman	5	Consider a connector between Oak Spring Rd. and Stinson Hartis Rd. Oak Spring is being dean ended. The connector would be needed to accommodate the movement of large farm equipment through that area.	Comment noted.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-035	Matt Jones	4	A thorough analysis has been performed and no areas need to be expanded.	Comment noted.
C-037	Jack Ritterskamp	2	Preferred Route is 2 nd best. Avoid Independence as much as possible. It is more expensive and destroys businesses in Stallings. If you must go that way: 2 toll booths used to go straight to Indian Trail, Monroe etc. should be removed. Otherwise, free travel requires use of frontage roads and numerous lights.	The controlled-access segment along existing US 74 at the western end of the project is a part of the Monroe Connector/Bypass, so it is planned to be tolled.
C-041	Lance Dunn	1	FREE BBQ from Monroe Bypass contractor to sway NCDOT at Public Hearing!?! It may be legal but it isn't ethical. Who benefits from Boggs' paving contractor with existing fraud charges and the politicians with land interest in and near the proposed Bypass path?	The referenced event that occurred concurrent to the December 9 th Public Hearing was not sponsored, funded, or endorsed by the NCDOT.
C-041	Lance Dunn	4	It doesn't solve congestion on US 74. Hwy 601 south of Monroe is a good example of what can be done on Hwy 74 and other existing roads with a few overpasses.	See response to Document C-017, Comment #3. Superstreet improvements similar to what was completed for US 601 are being considered for the western end of the existing US 74 roadway but these will not meet the stated purpose and need for the project.
C-041	Lance Dunn	13	The only benefit goes to politicians, land developers and road contractors. Politicians should focus on lower taxes and representing their people. Land developers should focus on the vacant buildings first. Road contractors should be fixing existing roads.	See response to Document C-017, Comment #11.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-041	Lance Dunn	16	It needs to move north and east the way 485 was moved closer to the county line rather than through downtown Matthews. It shouldn't be a parallel corridor of development, HWY 74 already did that to Charlotte-Monroe Road and look what it did.	Comment noted. Moving the roadway further north will place it within the Goose Creek drainage basin. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has previously commented that this basin supports the endangered Carolina heelsplitter mussel and is designated as critical habitat. The project study area was developed to avoid impacts to this area.
C-043	Sarah Traywick	3	I don't design roads but do feel like this road should be built to help traffic from Indian Trail through Wingate.	Comment noted.
C-044	David Cleveland	2	I prefer the western route that accessed the bypass closer to I-485, but it looks like that route has been dismissed.	Detailed Study Alternatives A, A1, A2, A3, B, B1, B2, and B3 had the Monroe Connector/Bypass ending nearer to I-485. Detailed Study Alternative D was selected as the Preferred Alternative for the reasons documented in Section 3.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS.
C-044	David Cleveland	5	If you are traveling east from I-485 towards Monroe, there should not be a toll booth if you want to continue straight on US 74. From your drawings it appears that you would have to make a right turn to avoid the first toll. This area of US 74 is congested enough without having to turn. The first toll should be after you turn left to access the Connector/Bypass.	See response to Document C-037, Comment #2.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-048	Wayne & Vicki LaPorte	2	We do not want it. The truckers will not pay a toll or us. And, what about the Catawba Waxhaw graves. Will the State move them?	Archaeological investigations have only identified one graveyard, Hasty-Fowler-Secret Cemetery, which will be directly impacted by the project. Special Project Commitment 6 states that any plan detailing removal of burials will be submitted and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office prior to any ground-disturbing activities in areas suspected to contain marked or unmarked graves. All possible burials identified will be treated as potential human graves and treated appropriately under North Carolina burial removal laws.
C-048	Wayne & Vicki LaPorte	4	We never went over it. I leave that to the Southern Environmental Lawyers to make that decision.	Comment noted.
C-050	Jerry McGee	5	The Bypass is desperately needed. Wingate University's College of Health Science students and faculty (500 daily) must travel to Matthews and Charlotte for clinical rotations. The congested traffic conditions make it nearly impossible for the pharmacy, physician assistant, nursing and physical therapy students to get to their sites.	Comment noted.
C-051	Thomas Alexander	3	Tell the Federal Government to get out of State Business!	Comment noted.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-052	Ron Burks	4.1	The natural runoff from the natural lake is way far worse the closer it is to the lake. It is much better and plenty of room towards the creek. Very swampy where they want the road – but not further down.	Hydraulics engineers have reviewed the proposed designs and determined the new entrance road could be designed to function adequately and meet required regulatory and NCDOT hydraulic guidelines. Realigning the entrance closer to the creek may not be an option based on buffer zones and existing floodways in the vicinity. The final alignment of this roadway will be determined during the final design phase but it is anticipated that it will remain within the current platted area.
C-054	Scott Williams	5.1	Side streets that will need to be upgraded. Union West Blvd, Pine Tree Dr, Beltway Blvd, Forest Park Rd., Cupped Oak Dr. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently sub-grade is not acceptable• Current pavement is cracked with missing asphalt, etc.	The mentioned streets are maintained by the Town of Indian Trail. NCDOT will pass along these concerns with the current conditions of these streets.
C-054	Scott Williams	5.2	The new alignment (according to the design plans) is dumping a 36” S.D. pipe on to the back of my property and there is currently a flooding issue without the new pipe SD design. Flooding in and below my property.	NCDOT Is not aware of existing flooding issues with your property but will pass this information along to the Town of Indian Trail who is responsible for street maintenance in that area. NCDOT will be responsible for the treatment and collection of all storm water runoff as a result of this roadway.
C-055	William F. Beasley	2	This bypass route should have followed the NC 218 corridor from I-485 to US 74 west of Wadesboro, NC, rather than dump traffic out in the middle of Marshville, NC which will create traffic backups at all those traffic lights. Also traffic going south on US 601 will still have to come through Monroe, no relief.	See response to Documents C-003, Comment #2, C-023, Comment #4, and C-029, Comment #5. CONFIRM THESE ARE INCLUDED.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-059	David Oates	1	The decision to build the Monroe Bypass appears to be more political than practical. The only people who will benefit from it are the developers and the contractors who will build it. Several developers and/or politicians have already bought up land along the proposed route and around where the interchanges are proposed to go.	See response to Document C-017, Comment #12.
C-059	David Oates	2	There seems to be little concern for the people who will lose property or be displaced by this project. Farms that have been in families for generations are being lost or ruined. Many older citizens, some retired and on fixed incomes and some with disabilities, are being forced to move and start over: These people are too old to have to go through a traumatic experience such as this. There is no amount of compensation that can make this right.	The NCDOT will follow the state and federal regulations and policies for right-of-way acquisition and relocation of all required properties. The policies ensure that comparable replacement housing is available for relocatees prior to construction of state and/or federally assisted projects. Furthermore, the NCDOT will use three programs to minimize the inconvenience of relocation: Relocation Assistance, Relocation Moving Payments, and Relocation Replacement Housing Payments or Rent Supplement. The relocation program for the Selected Alternative will be conducted in accordance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646) and the North Carolina Relocation Assistance Act (NCGS 133-5 through 133-18).
C-059	David Oates	3	The \$900,000,000 cost of this project and the fact that it will keep the state in debt for the next thirty years doesn't seem to bother the DOT. Then, consider the fact that it will only save drivers about 8 to 12 minutes driving time over just staying on Hwy 74.	The construction of the project will be financed through a number of sources, including state and federal funds and revenue bonds. The Monroe Connector/Bypass would improve travel times in Union County. Average travel time savings are shown in Map 14 of the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013). The map shows changes in driving time to the US 74/I-485 interchange from all intersections with the project area with the project in place compared to a no-build scenario. The map shows average travel time savings up to 8-10 minutes for areas around the east end of

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
				<p>the project.</p> <p>Another way to look at travel time savings is to consider a trip along the length of the Monroe Connector/Bypass compared to an equivalent trip along existing US 74 from east of Marshville to the US 74/I-485 interchange.</p> <p>Along the 20-mile length of the Monroe Connector/Bypass, a trip at the speed limit of 65 mph would take 18 minutes.</p> <p>For a trip along existing US 74, the speed limit varies; with the average weighted speed limit being 49 mph. At this speed, a trip from east of Marshville to the US 74/I-485 interchange would take 24 minutes. So, even under uncongested conditions and no delays at traffic signals along existing US 74, there would be a time savings of 6 minutes (or 25 percent) for travelers choosing the Monroe Connector/Bypass.</p> <p>However, existing US 74 is congested during peak periods, and existing average speeds are lower than the weighted average speed limit. As discussed in Section 1,2,4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS, existing average travel speeds during peak hours range from 42-45 mph for eastbound US 74 and 37-41 mph for westbound US 74. Therefore, eastbound US 74 travel times during peak periods currently take 26-29 minutes and westbound US 74 travel times during peak periods currently take 29-32 minutes.</p> <p>Based on the values above for current conditions, travel time savings for using the Monroe Connector/Bypass during peak periods would range from 8-14 minutes (30-40 percent) for vehicles traveling the length of the corridor.</p> <p>In the future, overall traffic volumes and vehicle miles traveled are projected to increase in Union County. Vehicles along the Monroe Connector/Bypass would still be predicted to operate at the</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
				65 mph speed limit, even as traffic volumes increase since the roadway was designed to handle projected future traffic volumes. However, on existing US 74, it is likely the average speeds would decrease from the averages noted above as traffic volumes increase. Therefore, travel time savings for vehicles using the Monroe Connector/Bypass also would be expected to increase over time.
C-059	David Oates	4	Not many people will be willing to pay the relatively high toll to save that little amount of time. The DOT says that they have an answer to that problem. They intend to leave Hwy 74 congested to keep it from competing with the bypass. This is a totally irresponsible attitude. If the bypass project had any credibility at all, it would stand on its own and there would be no need to eliminate the competition.	There are no plans to restrict future improvements to US 74 as a result of the Monroe Connector/Bypass. A number of improvements have already been made to existing US 74, as documented in Section 2.4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. See response to Document C-019, Comment #1.
C-059	David Oates	5	The DOT also predicts that Hwy 74 will continue to get more congested and that the bypass will do very little to relieve any of this congestion. The more congested Hwy 74 gets, the more likely the chance will be for more accidents, injuries, and deaths.	See response to Document C-059, Comment #4. The proposed project will provide a high-speed controlled access roadway as an alternative to the slower speeds and traffic signals along US 74. As discussed in Section 2.5.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS, the question of how the Monroe Connector/Bypass would affect traffic volumes on the US 74 corridor was addressed. In all the comparisons evaluated, traffic volumes are expected to be less along the existing US 74 corridor with the Monroe Connector/Bypass in place.
C-060	Louis Eubanks	3	I though the hearing was biased.	Comment noted.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-060	Louis Eubanks	4	I would like to see an analysis of the pros and cons of reworking US 74 rather than just dismissing that possibility as an alternative.	A full analysis of all improvements that were analyzed as part of this project is documented in Section 2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Section 2.4 and Appendix B of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS documents improvements that were analyzed to upgrade the existing US 74 roadway. Improvements to existing US 74 were eliminated because they did not meet the documented purpose of the project.
C-060	Louis Eubanks	5.3	Most of us know that these "sugar daddy" projects are never completed on time and within budget. What is the REAL Cost of this Proposed Road? I am sure NCDOT engineers have a Final Figure that they will attempt to hit. My guess is that an additional 20% should be added to the Project cost to get the Real cost closer to reality.	Cost estimates are discussed in detail in Section 3.3.4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Actual construction costs proposed by the selected design-build team were lower than the original estimates.
C-060	Louis Eubanks	5.4	What happens if the per vehicle toll does not provide enough yearly revenue to cover the maintenance of the road? Are the Union County resident's going to be expected to make up the yearly shortfall?	Toll revenues are only one part of the financing for the project. An Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study, <i>Final Report: Proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass Comprehensive Traffic and Revenue Study</i> (Wilbur Smith, Oct 2010), was completed and determined that the project is financially viable. While the overall economic climate will vary from year to year and cannot be accurately predicted, the NCDOT prepares studies and makes decisions based on the best information and forecasts available to date.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
C-060	Louis Eubanks	5.5	If this Road is built it will create more urban sprawl. Union County residents will have their taxes increased to pay for the added burden of additional schools, extension of water and sewer lines and additional infrastructure to meet the influx of more residents. Most of us are still waiting on Union County Government to begin the court ordered property revaluation, still waiting for Union County Government to adequately fund the schools we currently have. We cannot absorb any more expenses. This so called Toll Road may be strike three for Union County. We don't need another Union County failure.	Local taxes are not being utilized to finance this project. State and Federal gas tax allocations as well as bonds are financing the project. As documented in the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013), additional growth as a result of this project is expected to be approximately 1 percent above what is expected to occur if the project is not built.
C-063	Doris Massey	1	It will be a delight to not have those big trucks & less traffic on 74.	Comment noted.
E-003	John Powell	1	The Monroe bypass corridor must connect to I-485 directly. The failure to start at I-485 made the planners look foolish. If this is not the case, don't bother to start. The political backlash will never end by the voters in this area.	The Monroe Connector/Bypass preferred alternative will tie into existing US 74 prior to I-485. In this area, there will be a controlled access facility to I-485 and frontage roads to access adjacent properties.
E-004	Lance Dunn	5	No time savings for those in the corridor. Not the people and communities being displaced, give the land back.	Travel time's savings are expected for those wanting to avoid existing US 74 and willing to pay a toll.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-004	Lance Dunn	11	Stewart's Creek and the Stumplick Branch, which will be crossed by the Connector/Bypass will be heavily impacted by construction at the US-601 and NC-200 interchanges. Perhaps officials should take a closer look at what's been happening at Jordan Lake in Wake County, where development along the creeks that feed it is wreaking havoc with water quality in the reservoir (and the legislature is refusing to let upstream corrective measures be taken)."	See response to Document E-004, Comment #6. There are several Special Project Commitments related to water quality (Commitments 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11) listed in Section PC of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS.
E-005	Brian Harle	2	I do have to question whether the proposed highway will really attract the traffic that is projected. I am not a highway planner, but my observations are that the vast majority of traffic on US 74 in the study area is generated by the commercial and industrial development in close proximity to US 74. I doubt that a lot of drivers will be attracted to a facility that will save them less than 10 minutes of travel time, especially a facility that will be a toll road. I do not foresee using it a lot myself. My only hope is that it will, indeed, remove a significant amount of traffic from the existing roadway.	Regarding travel time savings, see response to Document C-059, Comment #3. As discussed in Section 2.5.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS, the question of how the Monroe Connector/Bypass would affect traffic volumes on the US 74 corridor was addressed. In all the comparisons evaluated, traffic volumes are expected to be less along the existing US 74 corridor with the Monroe Connector/Bypass in place.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-007	Carolynn Ruth	2	<p>When is right of way acquisition to begin?</p> <p>We would like to discuss mitigation plans as soon as possible, as it will take time to evaluate and design the most effective cure. We believe that the simplest and most cost effective way to replace the parking is for the Turnpike Authority to acquire for Public Storage a parcel of land on which to construct a new parking lot. The logical place for the relocated parking is the adjacent property to our south-east which shares a driveway with the Property. The alternative is to cut back a storage building. That would not only be a bigger burden on Public Storage, it would increase project costs by requiring greater construction expense and damaging the value of remainder by impairing its income producing ability.</p>	<p>Because of the many unknowns the NCDOT is facing following issuance of the Record of Decision, we currently do not know when right of way acquisition activities will resume. When the right of way process does resume, a right of way agent will contact you to discuss the acquisition process and address the concerns you have regarding the parking for your business.</p>
E-009	Scott Gainer	2	<p>Do you have any confidence level that construction will begin in 2014?</p>	<p>NCDOT intends to move the project forward as quickly as possible following the receipt of all necessary approvals, but there are many unknowns.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-012	Anniep123	1	<p>It seems to me so simple, if you didn't have to make the new bypass a toll road things would be a lot different. I am aware that you can't make an existing road a toll road. But you can create a new elevated Road for Truckers and those who are traveling south and east. Creating OVERPASSES and eliminating those long traffic lights that are the cause of the all the problems on Route 74. The accidents that happen are because of those traffic lights. Truckers don't have the space to stop and cars are trying to beat the yellow light before it turns red.</p> <p>You can make a highway that has off and on ramps for the service road. If you research " Sunrise Highway on eastern Long Island NY" about mid 80's . The money you will save will make up for the lack of toll. You will not have to buy homes that are in the way, you can stop the research that has been wasting money for over 20 years. You don't have to rip up farm land and animal Habitats. You will need less interchanges.</p>	<p>Comment noted. As shown in Figure 2-1b of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS, one of the alternatives studied was a controlled access highway along existing US 74 with one-way frontage roads on either side. It was eliminated from consideration due to high levels of impacts compared to other alternatives.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-013	Richard Moody	1	<p>I am fully aware of the new Monroe Bypass and think it is a great idea.</p> <p>I wanted to find out a contact to discuss the literal thousands of cyclists that use the current roads through the proposed Matthews connector at Oakdale and Stinson Hartis that will now be going away.</p> <p>We are interested in having bike lanes put in on Stevens Mill Rd that would reroute these cyclists around the new Bypass safely.</p> <p>This may seem like a small detail but not to the many in the area.</p>	<p>The North Carolina Turnpike Authority contacted local jurisdictions in March 2010 requesting input regarding bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along roadways crossing the Monroe Connector/Bypass as well as any planned future greenways. As included in the Sept 2010 Request For Proposal for the Design Build teams, all bridges crossing the Connector/Bypass “shall have sufficient width, length and barrier rail to provide sidewalk and bicycle accommodations constructed as part of this project as noted in the Roadway Scope of Work.”</p> <p>While accommodations will be made on the Stinson Hartis Road bridge, the North Carolina Department of Transportation currently has no plans to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Stinson Hartis Road beyond the construction limits of the Connector/Bypass project. Contact the Town of Indian Trail to determine if the Town has any long range plans to include these facilities along Stinson Hartis Road.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-014	Jack Ritterskamp	2	<p>There were only three significant arguments which I heard voiced at earlier meetings which give any justification for the "preferred alternative" being used. Those were all very self-serving to someone or some group. The first was that the Toyota dealership would save considerable money by not having to pay as much for their access via McKee Rd, as the toll-payers would supply the money. The second was that revising the interchange of I-485 & US-74 would impact the Mecklenburg County Sportsplex by some fifty (50) feet. I mean ... the loss of fifty feet of nothing but trees!!!! The third was that the lady who was mayor of Stallings at the time (some 3-4 years ago) did not want the road too near her home. It was OK for it to impact OTHERS, but not HER!!!</p>	<p>Reasons for identifying Alternative D as the Preferred Alternative are documented in Section 3.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Of the three reasons stated, only the Mecklenburg County Sportsplex was considered in that it is protected as a Section 4(f) property. Section 4(f) properties are afforded special considerations from federal actions. Section 4(f) resources include publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges as well as significant historic sites under public or private ownership.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-015	Paul Saleeby	1	<p>I am the pastor of Benton Heights Presbyterian Church in Monroe. We are also the church at the "crossroads" of Hwy 601 North (Concord Hwy) at the proposed crossing of the Monroe Bypass. For quite some time all indications were that the Bypass would cross a little further north than now indicated. Obviously, that was viewed as a boon for our church's location. However, the latest routes have the Bypass so close to the church that it potentially impedes access by our northern driveway.</p> <p>Not only is the northern driveway greatly used by our members (especially since our church offices are located on that side of the building), but our five day a week daycare uses it for the safety of our children. State required us to designate our southern driveway as an entry for parents, drop their children off at the rear of the building, then proceed to the northern driveway as an exit.</p> <p>The concrete barrier wall proposed in the widening of 601 will already be a huge hindrance in allowing any left turns in or out of our church's property. I implore you to consider not impeding us further by removing the needed access and egress both driveways provide.</p>	ROADWAY

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comm ent No.	Comment	Response
E-022	Derek Foellmer	1	As a local business based on Stinson Hartis Rd in Indian Trail, we have some reservations regarding the current plans to Dead-end Oak Springs Rd and terminate its connection with Stinson Hartis Rd. Our Business services the greater Charlotte Metro area and the most efficient way for our drivers to get to Rt 74 is to use Oak Springs. The termination of this connection with the only alternatives being utilizing the intersection of Rt 74 & Indian Trail Fairview Rd (an already overburdened and very lengthy wait) or the new Bypass (at a cost), will have a detrimental impact on our business. I understand that Stinson Hartis Rd will have a bridge over the Bypass, and would like to recommend keeping Oak Springs and Stinson Hartis connected in some manner so that the bridge will see more use and be more beneficial to all parties involved.	ROADWAY

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
E-023	Doug Marsh		<p>My comment involves the intersection of Stinson Hartis rd. and Oak Spring Road and the proposed bypass. As drawn the bypass goes under a proposed bridge for Stinson Hartis, and Oak Spring is dead ended. This seems totally illogical... Stinson Hartis is now a half circle with both ends intersecting Indian Trail Fairview rd. and therefore a bridge serves no purpose (if Oak Spring is deadended), because Stinson Hartis traffic could simply go the other direction. But Oak Spring Rd should not be dead ended , because it has a tremendous amount of traffic , much more than Stinson Hartis, and dead ending it will have a detrimental effect on traffic @ 74 and Indian Trail Fairview , (at Chick Fil A), where traffic backups are legendary, and cause drivers that used Oak Spring to drive further, and burden other roads and intersections needlessly. A large percentage of the Old Hickory Business Park sends service trucks and deliveries through Oak Spring Road. Also other residents, such as myself, use it as a way to get from Indian Trail to Stallings, and beyond. It seems very logical to me that a simple, cost effective solution, that would produce and maintain connectivity, would be to Build a short connector road to connect Oak Spring to Stinson Hartis just north /east of the new bridge construction, problem solved, connectivity preserved, It just makes sense.</p>	<p>ROADWAY</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	1	We urge NCDOT to take a more sustainable approach to the U.S. 74 corridor and invest public resources more wisely.	Comment noted.
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	2	The DSFEIS is based on outdated pre-recession data and dramatically overstates future population growth in Union County.	The Draft Supplemental Final EIS utilized the most current data available at the time. As noted in Appendix B of the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013), the population growth rates from the MPO data used in the Draft Supplemental Final EIS show projected growth from 2010 to 2030 in Union County would average less than 3 percent per year. During the period from 1990 to 2010, Union County experienced average annual growth rates of nearly 4 percent to over 5.5 percent.
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	4	The DSFEIS fails to calculate the extent to which current traffic in the corridor is local, and thus fails to determine who will actually pay a toll to use the new highway, and who will remain on U.S. 74.	Traffic models predict the usage of roadways within a set area but do not identify who each particular user is, i.e. through or local traffic. See response to Document E-005, Comment #2. Toll revenue projections are documented in <i>Final Report: Proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass Comprehensive Traffic and Revenue Study</i> (Wilbur Smith, Oct 2010) which does predict those motorists willing to pay a toll.
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	5	The DSFEIS is overly focused on travel speeds. It gives no consideration given to other important considerations of transportation planning, such as improvement physical and mental health, improved options for low income and older adults, or improved transportation flexibility, that may be occasioned from a more multi-modal solution.	The full range of transportation options considered for the project is documented in Section 2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. The Charlotte Region Transportation Planning Organization’s 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan addresses all transportation modes for the region.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	7	<p>The DSFEIS fails to give meaningful consideration to transit alternatives as part of a comprehensive solution for the corridor. Charlotte’s 2030 transit plan, which includes the Lynx silver line to Matthews, is completely ignored, with no consideration given as to how improved buses along the U.S. 74 Corridor could sync with the vision for the greater Charlotte region. Representatives from CATS have noted that Union County is a potential transit market, with opportunities for expanded park-and-ride and better planned, more convenient Bus Rapid Transit. These options are ignored by the DSFEIS.</p>	<p>Additional discussion of the Qualitative First Screening for the TDM, TSM, Mass Transit, and Multi-Modal Alternatives combining information from the Draft EIS, the Alternatives Development and Analysis Report (PBS&J, April 2008), and the US 74 Corridor Study (Stantec, July 2007) is provided in Final EIS Section 3.3.2 under Comment 3.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.3.2 of the Final EIS, CATS planned transit line from Uptown Charlotte to just east of I-485, the LYNX Silver Line (also known as the Southeast Corridor Rapid Transit Project) has been delayed until after 2020 and CATS is not currently developing this project.</p> <p>It is the purpose of the LRTP to identify and prioritize a comprehensive system of proposed transportation improvements, of which the Monroe Connector/Bypass is a part. The Monroe Connector/Bypass project does not preclude planning for other improvements, including transit service.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-001	Sustain Charlotte	10	The impacts analysis in the DSFEIS is highly suspect. Like it did in its previous Environmental Impact Statement, NCDOT has simply assumed that Union County will keep growing at dramatic rates regardless of the availability of infrastructure. The DSFEIS thus assumes from the get-go that the Bypass will have little effect on air and water quality or the quality of life in the study area.	The indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project are documented in the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013), summarized in Section 4.5 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS and included as Appendix E of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. As noted in Appendix B of the updated Quantitative ICE Report, the population growth rates from the MPO data used in the Draft Supplemental Final EIS show projected growth from 2010 to 2030 in Union County would average less than 3 percent per year. During the period from 1990 to 2010, Union County experienced average annual growth rates of nearly 4 percent to over 5.5 percent. Also, as noted in Section 4.2 of the updated Quantitative ICE report, many factors other than transportation infrastructure play a major role in the potential for growth and development. The conditions and circumstances of Union County (as documented in Appendix B of the Quantitative ICE report) suggest that higher than average growth will occur with or without the construction of the proposed project.
L-002	First Baptist Church	2	Also, there is a related proposal currently in the works to convert intersections in Indian Trail entering US 74 to the new Superstreet Design. While we welcome anything that would improve congestion at these crowded intersections, the timing of this project is very critical to us, and we believe could be helpful to NCDOT as well. We would appreciate consideration given to converting the intersection at Indian Trail-Fairview Road and US 74 during the summer months when school is not in session.	Comment noted.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-003	Rodney Mullis	3	This toll road will never be paid for with tolls collected so stop wasting our tax dollars. Repair the roads we already have.	Of the \$681 million financed for this project, toll revenues are only used to repay less than 25% of this total. The remaining funds for the project are financed through other mechanisms.
L-005	Lynda Paxton	1	I heard numerous updates from NCTA and NCDOT on the project. Updates typically included progress toward milestones such as acquiring the ROD, permit approvals, LGC review of financial plans, and bid results. There was very limited factual information on data to support the project or the rationale for elimination of some alternatives. The overriding assumption appeared to be that the project was inevitable and only minor details could be influenced.	<p>On February 26, 2007, MUMPO accepted NCTA’s invitation to become a Participating Agency for the Monroe Connector/Bypass project. In NCTA’s invitation letter, MUMPO’s role as a participating agency was as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide meaningful and early input on defining the purpose and need, determining the range of alternatives to be considered, and the methodologies and level of detail required in the alternatives analysis. 2) Participate in coordination meetings and joint field reviews as appropriate. 3) Timely review and comment on documents provided for your agency’s input during the environmental review process. <p>During the preparation of the Draft EIS, NCTA / NCDOT staff met with MUMPO on 12 occasions and the MUMPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) on 23 occasions. In addition to providing project updates, input was requested and received from MUMPO and TCC members regarding the Purpose and Need and alternative development for the project. Section 9.2.3.2 of the Draft EIS provides an overview of the topic of discussion for each of these meetings. No official correspondence was received from MUMPO during the development of the Draft EIS however correspondence was received from the following MUMPO members: Town of Indian Trail, Town of Matthews, City of Monroe, Town of Stallings. These correspondences can be found in Appendix A-9 of the Draft EIS.</p> <p>During the preparation of the Final EIS, NCTA / NCDOT staff met with MUMPO on 5 occasions and the MUMPO TCC on eleven</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
				<p>occasions. Discussions during these meetings included the identification of the Preferred Alternative and the Least Environmental Damaging Practicable Alternative. Section 3.2.3 of the Final EIS provides an overview of the topics of discussion for each of these meetings. Comments from MUMPO on the Draft EIS are also included in Appendix B2 of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Detailed minutes of all the above presentations are available on the MUMPO website: http://www.crtpo.org/about-us/mpo-meetings and http://www.crtpo.org/about-us/tcc-meetings.</p>
L-005	Lynda Paxton	3	<p>Improvements to Highway 74 were eliminated early in the process without thorough evaluation of the types of improvements that were feasible, the costs of various improvements, specific data about the impacts to businesses and homes on existing alignment as compared with other alternatives. Use of frontage roads, bridges, and superstreet design were not evaluated. The Stantec Study conducted in 2007 was never presented to MUMPO and staff notes include comments that "NCTA would not be in favor of changes to US 74 that would have a competing interest with the bypass." (US 74 Revitalization Study meeting notes January 18, 2011). Such statements create the impression that relevant information regarding other alternatives may have been deliberately withheld from decision makers.</p>	<p>See response to Document L-001, Comment #s 5 and 7. Section 2.4 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS documents low cost improvements to existing US 74 which were considered.</p> <p>On September 24, 2012 an overview of the Stantec Study was presented by NCDOT to the Stallings Town council at former Mayor Paxton's request.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	5	The SDEIS report does not include an origin and destination study despite the importance of that information having been pointed out repeatedly. In an email response to Mayor Paxton, Ms. Harris reported that 78% of survey respondents indicate that their trip began in Monroe, Indian Trail, Charlotte or Matthews and 75% were destined for Monroe, Charlotte, or Matthews which suggests traffic in the corridor is primarily local and would not likely use the bypass. (SDEIS Appendix 2)	The referenced survey was prepared as part of the Traffic and Revenue document prepared as part of the funding process as it relates to the selling of bonds for the project. This document and analysis along with the origin and destination analysis is irrelevant to the NEPA process.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	6	<p>Staff reports acknowledge that trucking companies are split about whether they will use the bypass, yet the new SDEIS makes no attempt to evaluate that further (US 74 Revitalization Study meeting notes January 18, 2011). Given that trucks typically provide 40-50% of toll revenue, this is a critical omission of data. A recent article about opening of the Intermodal Rail Yard at the Charlotte airport indicates it will take 393,000 long haul truck trips off the roads each year. The facility is not mentioned in the analysis. The general public has been told by promoters of the bypass that it will take the truck traffic off 74, but there is no data to support that assumption. There is data to show that the truck traffic within Stallings around I-485 will more than double that of the “no build” alternative with increases of 11% after the bypass is built. Data provided by Ms. Harris about truck traffic in 2012 shows an increase in truck traffic in all segments of the corridor except for 3 in the far eastern part of the county.</p>	
L-005	Lynda Paxton	7	<p>The pace of growth in Union County has dropped from 62.8 % from 2000 to 2010 to its current 1.7% annual growth. Moreover, the majority of growth has occurred in the south and west portions of the county near Ballantyne and far removed from the 74 corridor.</p>	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	8	No adjustments were made in 2035 projections for traffic despite the current data showing 0% increase in traffic over the past 12 years.	Reasons for not updating the 2035 Traffic Forecasts are explained in Section 2.5.2 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> .
L-005	Lynda Paxton	9	Recent minor improvements to 74 have demonstrated significant gains in travel speeds and time savings, yet those improvements were not evaluated and nor are the benefits accounted for in the SDEIS of other improvements scheduled for implementation such as conversions of some intersections on 74 to superstreet designs.	These improvements were considered in Sections 1.2.4 and 2.4 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> . A complete list of these improvements is included in Table 2.2 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> .
L-005	Lynda Paxton	10	The expansion of the Monroe Charlotte Airport and surrounding industrial development and potential development is not mentioned just as the previously mentioned Intermodal Rail yard was ignored. Project Legacy in Marshville, historically included when convenient and omitted when not, is also not mentioned.	Planned growth associated with the expansion of the Monroe Charlotte Airport and surrounding industrial development is incorporated in the future land use models prepared as part of this project. Page 61 of the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker, November 2013) addresses Legacy Park. Legacy Park is not a reasonably foreseeable development. The current proposal is highly speculative and unlikely to develop in a foreseeable timeframe.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	11	Conversations with key legislators, Representatives Bill Brawley and Dean Arp, reveal a misunderstanding about any flexibility in use of the bonds previously sold for the project. This misunderstanding may well be shared by others in the state legislature. These gentlemen have indicated support for the project primarily to avoid legal liability that could arise from shifting bond funds to other projects. That matter was discussed with LGC prior to issuing the bonds and funds can be used for other toll projects which would allow other sources to be freed up for alternatives not currently funded in the TIP.	Discussions of whether the existing bonds can be utilized on other transportation projects are irrelevant to the NEPA process.
L-005	Lynda Paxton	12	A second justification described by local legislators and top administrators at NCDOT is that the bypass will facilitate transport of goods from Asheville to the port at Wilmington, improving the state’s status for economic development. I do not recall that having been put forth as a purpose or benefit of the project until support recently began to erode. There is no data in the SDEIS to address that purpose.	The following statement has been included in the Draft EIS, Final EIS and Draft Supplemental Final EIS in discussions of the need for the proposed action: “US 74 is the major east-west route connecting the Charlotte region, a major population center and freight distribution point, to the North Carolina coast and the port at Wilmington (North Carolina’s largest port).” This statement has not been described as a purpose or benefit of project.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	13	When the definition of purpose for the project establishes a target speed of 65 mph and minimum of 50 mph as essential criteria, the stated purpose basically ensures that all other options will fail. Few, if any, major highways in the Charlotte region operate at that level during peak travel times though acceptable speeds are evident during non-peak. The study did not include any comparative data for I77, I485, I85, or 49/29 or other major highways in our region. The argument that Union County is the only county adjacent to Mecklenburg that does not have a high speed interstate facility was also refuted by Hartgen as inaccurate and as a newly invented criteria for evaluating projects that is not supported by NCDOT's new prioritization matrix.	As found in Section 1.1.2 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> , the purpose of the project is to improve mobility and capacity within the project study area by providing a facility for the US 74 corridor from near I-485 in Mecklenburg County to between the towns of Wingate and Marshville in Union County that allows for high-speed regional travel consistent with the designations of the North Carolina SHC program and the North Carolina Intrastate System, while maintaining access to properties along existing US 74. Section 1.1.1 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> how the US 74 corridor is designated as a Strategic Highway Corridor and consistent with local planning documents, this designation calls for the corridor to serve high-speed regional travel. The Strategic Highway Designation specifically calls for a freeway type facility. For the purposes of this study, high-speed is considered average speeds of 50 mph or greater.
L-005	Lynda Paxton	14	Current predictions for time savings are significantly lower than those of documents published in 2009 which described 29-32 minutes saved, thus diminishing the cost benefit of the project. (Citizens Summary March 2009). Travelers going from end to end are now expected to save 8-10 minutes in travel time when the bypass opens. Projections of increased time savings for future travelers are based on the assumption that traffic will get worse on 74. Costs for the project are now expected to fall between \$845 and \$923 Million. That is a cost of \$100 million per minute saved.	See response to Document C-059, Comment # 3. <i>In considering cost per minute saved, trips for all travelers for more than a single trip should be considered. If on average, 75,000 vehicles use the facility every day, and save at a minimum 10 minutes in travel savings, over a 12 month period (240 days), this equates to \$4.44 per minute saved for the first year alone. If costs per minutes are calculated until the year 2035, costs reduce to \$0.22 per minute saved.</i>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	15	Public support of the Monroe Bypass is based on the belief that the bypass will significantly relieve the congestion on Highway 74 and remove most of the truck traffic, making the road safer for local traffic. The Union County Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with NCDOT and Boggs Paving held a breakfast meeting for community leaders in February 2013 to promote the bypass as a remedy for congestion and a catalyst for economic development. The Chamber President, Sharon Rosche, was later featured in a follow up newspaper article hailing the benefits of the bypass as promoting growth and attracting commercial development to the eastern part of the county. NCDOT may not be responsible for the personal agendas of these individuals or their misinterpretation of data, but NCDOT has failed to publicly clarify the true purpose or to address these popular inaccuracies.	The project’s purpose and need has remained consistent throughout the EIS process and has been clearly stated in the NEPA documents and public meeting materials. As stated in the introduction to the Draft Supplemental Final EIS Section 1, “based upon a review of new information and public and agency comments received to date, the purpose and need for the project remain unchanged.”
L-005	Lynda Paxton	19	The Facebook Page “Fix It First” has quickly received a number of supporters since its founding on December 27, 2013.	Comment noted. It is noted that as of January 11, 2014, 91 individuals have “Liked” the page. https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fix-It-First-Say-NO-to-the-Pork-Parkway/429866827141908

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	20	There are currently 29 federal indictments against Monroe Bypass Constructors, the group awarded the contract for the bypass construction. Trial has been postponed until September 2014. NCDOT has refused to terminate the contract despite these charges and has made payments to Boggs Paving in excess of \$1.6 million since May of 2012.	
L-005	Lynda Paxton	21	The court ordered design work to stop in May 2012. NCDOT has since reported to MUMPO that the project would be able to start immediately once the new ROD and permits are received because they will have “a fully designed project” and it will no longer be a design-build project. When public hearings were conducted December 9, 10, and 11 of 2013, the original maps were presented. Updated maps and design work was not made available to the public.	Maps presented during the December 2013 Public Hearings were those of the Detailed Study Alternatives prepared during the NEPA process. Alternatives shown were all identified as preliminary and subject to change.
L-005	Lynda Paxton	22	Payments made to Boggs include reimbursement for activities in which employees engaged in activities to “promote” the bypass. These payments are possibly illegal and clearly unethical and inappropriate expenditures of taxpayer funds.	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-005	Lynda Paxton	23	David T. Hartgen, PH.D., P.E, a professor at UNCC in transportation studies and traffic analysis, has reviewed the SDEIS and written a critique of the work. He concludes that the “traffic forecasts presented in the SDEIS are too uncertain and insufficiently supported to be the basis for decision-making regarding the Monroe Connector/Bypass.” His report will be available to decision makers and is not delineated here.	
L-005	Lynda Paxton	24	The Monroe Bypass will have serious adverse impacts for the Town of Stallings. The elevated roadway will create a 20 foot wall through the one mile stretch on 74 essentially dividing the town in half. The anticipated benefit from the opportunity for redevelopment of some low quality commercial business in the corridor is essentially eliminated by current design that reduces ROW and preserves current use of property.	NCDOT has received from the Town of Stallings two resolutions in regard to the Monroe Connector/Bypass. The first dated November 13, 2007 states the Towns support of Alternative 2 which would align the project along the existing US 74 from I-485 to just east of Stallings Road. This alignment is included as part of the preferred alternative. A copy of this resolution is included in Appendix A6 of the <i>Draft EIS</i> . A second resolution dated March 11, 2013 expresses the Town’s support for the project. A copy of this resolution can be found in Appendix X of this <i>Final Supplemental Final EIS</i> . Both resolutions are signed by former Mayor Paxton.
L-006	SELC		SELC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES IN TABLE X	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-007	Frederick Becker	1	<p>The "build" scenario understates the amount of development that will occur.</p> <p>The DSFEIS anticipates a "build" residential growth figure of 1% more than the "no-build" figure for the study period, based on an estimated 1,800 acres of additional residential development. Methodologies used to arrive at this estimate included MPO projections and other considerations such as accessibility.</p> <p>I believe, based on over 20 years of studying residential growth patterns in the suburban Charlotte region with 14 of those years as an elected municipal official, that construction of the Monroe Connector/Bypass with nine interchanges in parts of Union County that are, in many cases, "in the middle of nowhere" and are currently underserved by convenient automobile transportation links to Charlotte will result in the addition of far more than 1,800 acres of residential development. Most of these tracts are not owner-occupied, and a majority of them are owned by Limited Liability Corporations and other speculative real estate investment entities, demonstrating that these tracts are being held for new development as soon as "something" happens. I submit that that "something" is the construction of the Monroe Connector/Bypass.</p>	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-007	Frederick Becker	2	<p>The DSFEIS failed to conduct a study of historical regional residential construction activity. Specifically, Interstate 485, which actually has fewer interchanges per mile than are proposed for the Monroe Connector/Bypass, is a good basis for regional comparison. I-485 has been constructed over a period of 20 years, and the land ownership and development sequence around proposed Monroe Connector/Bypass interchanges very closely mimics the early phases for land around the I-485 interchanges.</p> <p>To believe that the exact same thing will not happen at the Monroe Connector/Bypass interchanges is to ignore local development history. And therein lies one of the DSFEIS's major flaws: that 1% "build" residential development figure. That figure is ridiculously low. At the very least, the NCTA should conduct an analysis of the ownership history of the Union County land in question, compare it to the development history of the I-485 interchange land, and supplement the MPO "build" projections with some very well documented historical data.</p>	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-007	Frederick Becker	3	<p>I have repeatedly asked NCTA and NCDOT officials why the seven interchanges along the Monroe Connector/Bypass are even necessary. Why not simply eliminate them? This road is, after all, being promoted as a "bypass", so what is the purpose of all these interchanges? I have been told that "the interchanges are needed for accessibility and growth". But the project is not expected – or intended – to generate growth! With that in mind, there should be no downside to eliminating the interchanges. In fact, there should only be an upside: a huge reduction in cost. Those seven interchanges probably account for 10% - 20% of the total project cost.</p> <p>Until NCDOT adequately answers the question "why not eliminate the interchanges" with an answer that is consistent with the project's stated purpose, the DSFEIS has not properly addressed a significant issue about the project. Based on the claimed growth figures and the project's stated purpose, answers to that question that have been forthcoming thus far are not supported by the facts, and lead one to conclude that either NCDOT is not answering the question honestly or accurately, or is simply planning to waste millions of dollars on those unnecessary interchanges.</p>	<p>The locations of interchanges are consistent with those included in the CRTPO's 2035 LRTP. Several interchanges, including Unionville-Indian Trail Road, Rocky River Road, US 601, and Forest Hills School Road were reviewed considering both traffic volumes, as well as potential toll revenue, to determine if they could be removed. These interchanges were determined necessary to serve projected traffic demand in the design year 2035, as well as to support toll revenue bonds required as part of the project financing.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
L-007	Frederick Becker	5	The Draft Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement leaves many questions unanswered, and has the potential to lead our region in a harmful direction. It is essential that NCDOT address the issues raised in these comments, and find solutions to our local and regional transportation problems that are less costly, less damaging, and more practical than the Monroe Connector/Bypass.	The Draft Supplemental Final EIS as well as this Final Supplemental Final EIS and Record of Decision all meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 23 U.S.C. 109(h) and 23 U.S.C. 138 (Section 4(f) of the DOT Act) and the reporting requirements of 23 U.S.C. 128.b along with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500- 1508) and FHWA's Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771).
L-009	Anthony & Brenda Spierings	2	<p>We understand the highway department will be going back to court (for having the wrong analysis) - so our available property may change again. And it is hard to interest someone when we are not sure what we will have!!!!!! First was the Tar heel mussel (which we understand was never found there) How can the same thing go to court 4 times? How many appeals does one get?</p> <p>The way the highway people tell us, is the money is there to build the road. But, as long as it is in the courts it will not be a reality.</p>	An updated schedule detailing project activities following the environmental analysis has not yet been developed because of the many unknowns the NCDOT is facing following the anticipated approval of the Record of Decision. NCDOT intends to move the project forward as quickly as possible following the receipt of all necessary approvals. When the right of way process does resume, a right of way agent will contact you to discuss the acquisition process.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S - 101	Kate Asquith	1	<p>What I've been hearing tonight and throughout the bypass is that there is a common sense that building the Monroe Bypass will ease congestion, the current levels of congestions of US 74. In fact, the contractor of the bypass just recently released a press release saying yesterday. But in contrast to the EIS shows that US 74 is expected to get more congested with or without the bypass. So, could you take this opportunity to clarify on the record whether or not you expect correct levels of congestion on US 74 to be resolved by the bypass.</p> <p>I guess the specific focus of what I am saying is that what we hear is that current levels of congestion on US 74 are unacceptable for people that live here and drive on it every day and it doesn't sound like in certain parts of the EIS, what is being presented is that the bypass will not resolve current levels of congestion? So, what you are saying is that the purpose of the project is not resolve current levels of congestion. Is that right?</p> <p>I think the problem here is that a lot of people in this room probably think the bypass is supposed to ease congestion on US 74 as it is now. So, what you're saying though is that is not what the bypass will do. Correct?</p>	<p>The project's purpose and need has remained consistent throughout the EIS process and has been clearly stated in the NEPA documents and public meeting materials. As stated in the introduction to the Draft Supplemental Final EIS Section 1, "based upon a review of new information and public and agency comments received to date, the purpose and need for the project remain unchanged."</p> <p>As stated in Section 1.1.2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS, the purpose of the project is "to improve mobility and capacity within the project study area by providing a facility for the US 74 corridor from near I-485 in Mecklenburg County to between the towns of Wingate and Marshville in Union County that allows for high-speed regional travel consistent with the designations of the North Carolina SHC program and the North Carolina Intrastate System, while maintaining access to properties along existing US 74." (SEE NOTE BELOW)</p> <p>As described in Section 2.5.2 (Question 6), traffic volumes are expected to be less along the existing US 74 corridor with the Monroe Connector/Bypass in place, thereby improving traffic flow conditions along existing US 74 compared to the No-Build scenario.</p> <p>NOTE: The State legislation regarding the Intrastate System was recently repealed by the State Legislature in Session Law 2013-183, signed by the Governor on June 26, 2013. The Final Supplemental Final EIS includes an errata section updating the project purpose to remove reference to the NC Intrastate System. High speed travel is still designated for the corridor in the NC SHC program, so the substantive statements of the project purpose remain unchanged.</p>

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-102	Robert Stedje-Larsen	1	I'm in Wingate and if I look at Wingate and the development that's going to come around the intersections, there's a business district in Wingate that's on US 74 now. And the development that's going to come is just going to drain that business district because of the intersections that you're going to have in there.	
S-103	Rick Becker Mayor of Mineral Springs	1	There were four resolutions adopted by the municipalities in Union County so far, seeking alternatives to this particularly on a cost basis. As the previous speaker said that we were looking at a \$900M expenditure for a project which wasn't really projected to do much for Union County needs whatsoever. And those resolutions were not included in the EIS as far as I understand. So, I did want to make sure that the Mineral Springs resolution was again submitted and perhaps included in the EIS.	The resolutions are included in Appendix X of the <i>Final Supplemental Final EIS</i> .

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-103	Rick Becker Mayor of Mineral Springs	3	<p>My biggest concern I think is the EIS’s build scenario being way, way, way underestimating the impacts, the indirect impacts.</p> <p>They talk about 1,800 additional acres of residential development by 2030. That’s it. That’s 200 acres per interchange and that’s a small amount. That’s a medium sized subdivision. These types of expressways and interchanges heading directly to an employment center like Charlotte are magnets for developers. It’s like leaving your trash out at the campsite with woods full of bears. They’re going to flock to it. We’re going to have tens of thousands of commuter houses built at those interchanges. Each of those commuter houses are going to have kids in them that are going to have to go to Union County schools.</p> <p>Just looking at the I-485 Interchanges in Mecklenburg County, when it wasn’t there in south Charlotte, it was woods, it was farms. I-485 went in, interchange went in, Ballantyne Interchange went in...BOOM. You’ve got 10,000 residential units within five years. So, to think that that’s not going to happen in Union County is I think too be naïve and just turn a blind eye to a problem that’s not being addressed.</p>	

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-103	Rick Becker Mayor of Mineral Springs	4	And so you have economic impacts and you have environmental impacts with all of that development. It hasn't been addressed in the EIS.	The Draft Supplemental Final EIS as well as this Final Supplemental Final EIS and Record of Decision all meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 23 U.S.C. 109(h) and 23 U.S.C. 138 (Section 4(f) of the DOT Act) and the reporting requirements of 23 U.S.C. 128.b along with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500- 1508) and FHWA's Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771).
S-104	Frank Holloman	1	I sort of want to echo what the last gentleman said. When you look at the document that the department has put out, there's not much analysis of how much of the traffic on US 74 is local, how many of the trucks are local, and where they're going. And as the gentleman said, the document and the lady said, the document says US 74 is going to get more congested if you build a bypass.	
S-104	Frank Holloman	2	It is looks like the emphasis is spending the \$900M to build a bypass to move people from Charlotte to the beach. And so, the question I would say is has the department looked at how much more benefit there would be on congestion on US 74 if you spent the \$900M or some portion of it on improving US 74 and the local roads instead of building a Charlotte to the beach road. That's the question.	A full analysis of all improvements that were analyzed as part of this project is documented in Section 2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Section 2.4 and Appendix B of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS documents improvements that were analyzed to upgrade the existing US 74 roadway. Improvements to existing US 74 were eliminated because they did not meet the documented purpose of the project.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-105	Lance Dunn	1	You keep referring to the 74 Corridor. When I drive from here to the beach I see a lot of signs for the new Interstate 74, which doesn't seem to even go through this area. I was wondering if you could clarify what the difference is between that 74 Interstate Corridor and the one that you're referring to.	The US 74 referenced as part of the Monroe Connector/Bypass project is parallel to the existing US 74 extending from I-485 in Mecklenburg County to just west of Marshville. The Interstate 74 corridor is located east of Rockingham.
S-107	Kinsey Cockman	2	And what I really want to know coming here tonight was with the environmental impact, the environmental group that's suing the Department of Transportation are they done? Are they finished?	It is unknown at this time if additional lawsuits are forthcoming.
S-201	Karen Thomas	1	I'm going to look back at this purpose because this really surprised me; because in all of the years, I never really saw this purpose written out before. I live in Wingate. I never heard this purpose of this job described before as to get commuters from Wingate and Marshville up to the Charlotte area. For 30 years, I commuted from Wingate to Charlotte. There were probably a half a dozen of us commuting; \$1,000,000,000 for a road, yet for a handful of people. How many people live out in the Wingate and Marshville area? And you're justifying the road for a handful of us? I was one of them. I'm being displaced. So, you're building a road to get commuters in and you've knocked out one of the commuters in the process. It makes no sense.	Getting commuters from Wingate and Marshville to Charlotte is not the purpose of the project. The Purpose and Need for this project is stated in Section 1 of the <i>Draft Supplemental Final EIS</i> and has not changed since it was first presented to the public at the first Citizens Informational Workshop in June 2007. The purpose of the project is to improve mobility and capacity within the project study area by providing a facility for the US 74 corridor from near I-485 in Mecklenburg County to between the towns of Wingate and Marshville in Union County that allows for high-speed regional travel consistent with the designations of the North Carolina SHC program and the North Carolina Intrastate System, while maintaining access to properties along existing US 74.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-201	Karen Thomas	2	He pointed out that the Wingate and Marshville Economic Development Plan, the amount of growth that was projected. That is a fairly high amount of growth that they're projecting in the next 20 or 30 years. Well, guess what, I've read it. They're basing that growth on the bypass being in place. In fact, that document says the bypass is necessary for this growth. So, if the road doesn't happen, they don't think the growth is going to be there.	Growth projections with and without the project are included in the <i>Monroe Connector/Bypass Indirect and Cumulative Effects Quantitative Analysis Update</i> (Baker – November 2013) are based on input provided by local planners.
S-202	Cary Thomas	1	There is very little traffic on the eastern end. Most of the traffic is in Monroe just like all of the development that Union County has seen is been primarily from Monroe towards Charlotte because of the access that people want to drive to Charlotte have to the western side of Union County. It strikes me that the bypass is not a true bypass because there's not a lot of traffic going out on the eastern side. Its primary focus...its primary purpose is going to be to further increase development, primarily residential development.	See response to Document S-201, Comment #1. Land use and development decisions are under the purview of local officials, not the NCDOT.

Table 1: Citizen Comments (Comment Forms, Letters, and emails)

Document No.	Commenter	Comment No.	Comment	Response
S-203	Kim Hunter	1	<p>I want to also talk about the purpose of the road. It's really quite convoluted to read this project's purpose.</p> <p>I think that in my experience there's been some confusion as to what the purpose of this road is. Certainly in the flyer that was put out for the barbeque next door by the contractor for the bypass, there was a lot of talk about reducing congestion; we need this bypass to reduce congestion on US 74.</p> <p>We have asked and would love to see a project purpose, which was about reducing congestion on US 74. The DOT has been quite clear that that is not the purpose of this bypass and that we will not evaluate alternatives that reduce congestion on US 74.</p>	<p>NCDOT did not prepare or review the subject flyer and had no control over its content. The project as currently conceived was developed and endorsed by the local MPO and municipalities comprising its membership.</p>
S-203	Kim Hunter	3	<p>And happily DOT has started to implement some of those changes and that's why we've seen some improvement in speeds on US 74. And there's going to be even more improvements going into US 74 in the future, which unfortunately has stopped and it's not evaluated. But we would like to see even more.</p>	<p>A full analysis of all improvements that were analyzed as part of this project is documented in Section 2 of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS. Section 2.4 and Appendix B of the Draft Supplemental Final EIS documents improvements that were analyzed to upgrade the existing US 74 roadway. Improvements to existing US 74 were eliminated because they did not meet the documented purpose of the project.</p>

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S-204	Lance Dunn	1	I passed out cards to everybody here, most of the points are self-explanatory. And basically the bypass doesn't address the problems. In fact, it creates a lot more problems than what we have right now. All we have to do is look at US 601 South and see a really nice road that flows at high speed and that's what could be put on US 74, if that's what the direction is to be.	US 601 South is a more rural type roadway than US 74 within the project limits. Direct comparisons regarding the operations of the two facilities cannot be made.
S-204	Lance Dunn	2	One-third of this road goes through the Lake Twitty watershed. The Lake Twitty Watershed, the drinking water for the Town of Monroe and a lot of outside Monroe is already impaired in four different ways. And this road will make it worse, not better. We don't have brake linings. We don't have high speed traffic. We don't an increase in traffic driving through your drinking water supply and expect it to get better.	As stated in Section 2.3.1 of the <i>Draft EIS</i> , the northern boundary of the study area does not encroach on Lake Twitty because Lake Twitty is classified as a critical watershed.
S-205	Lynda Paxton	2	One of the more obvious questions for a project of this scale would be who will use it. That would call for a hard look at who's traveling in the corridor now. Where did they come from and where are they going? But the new report does not include an origin of destination study.	Traffic models predict the usage of roadways within a set area but do not identify who each particular user is, i.e. through or local traffic. An origin destination study is not required for this project.

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S-205	Lynda Paxton	3	Staff reports from 2011 acknowledge that trucking companies are split as to whether or not they will use the bypass. Yet, the EIS makes no attempt to evaluate that even further. The general public has been told by the promoters of the bypass that it will take the truck traffic off of US 74 and give it back to the locals. But there's no data to validate that assumption.	Staff reports referenced are from a study being completed outside of the NCDOT. No such surveys were completed as part of the NEPA analysis.
S-205	Lynda Paxton	8	It's no wonder that there is waning support within the county for this project. Four towns have adopted resolutions supporting alternatives to the bypass through unanimous votes of their board. These boards understand serious restraints of transportation funding that we have and they've issued a call for more responsible prioritization and spending. It's time to cut our losses and take this road off of the TIP.	Comment noted.

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S-213	Frank Holloman	2	<p>It was never the purpose of this road bypass to improve congestion on Highway 74. The purpose of this road has been as it says to improve mobility between Charlotte and the end. It's not to improve congestion on Highway 74 within Union County.</p> <p>That's been true from the beginning and it is still true in the document. The Department did do studies on what could be done to improve congestion on Highway 74. And there is a study, a Stantec study that you can read, but that is not building the bypass.</p>	<p>See response to Document L-001, Comment #s 5, 6 and 7.</p> <p>The Stantec Study was prepared to identify interim improvements as a result of delays in the Monroe Connector/Bypass and never intended to be a replacement.</p>

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S-213	Frank Holloman	3	<p>We agree entirely the truck issue is important. People are concerned about it. It's a relevant point. However, this is the point we've been trying to make. The Highway Department has done no studies to determine whether this bypass will or will not improve truck traffic on Highway 74. And I'm a taxpayer too.</p> <p>The proposal here is to spend almost \$1,000,000,000. For as the speaker said according to the Highway Department's own report, no more than 8 or 10 minutes of improvement in travel time, not on US 74, if you pay the toll, \$1,000,000,000.</p> <p>The truck drivers, you should know, that they use this toll road and get off Highway 74 will have to pay \$10 toll. There's no study done by the Highway Department that will tell us is it worth...are we going to get \$1,000,000,000 worth of improvement on which truck drivers will leave when.</p>	
S-213	Frank Holloman	4	<p>Our basic point is we're all taxpayers. We're going to spend \$1,000,000,000. How can we best spend that money to improve the congestion, the lives, the traffic, the businesses, and the truck driver's safety in this community? Building a \$1,000,000,000 toll highway designed to bring people from Charlotte to the beach or is it better to spend, study, economical improvements to US 74 to prevent the deaths and improve traffic and to deal with the trucks?</p>	

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