

## APPENDIX B5

### E-MAILED PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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**From:** Diana Imrie [mailto:dlwesley@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 12, 2009 10:25 PM  
**To:** 'gaston@ncturn-pike.org'  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway DEIS feedback.

e001

Dear Jennifer Harris

As a current resident and property owner in Gaston County, I wanted to express my appreciation for the work you have done in support of the proposed Garden Parkway. This project has been in the design phase for many years and it is great to see that a "recommended" route has finally been selected. In reviewing the extensive documentation provided at the NCTA's website, it is obvious that complete and thorough analysis has been done on all the project impacts and variables. The "recommended" route appears to be an excellent compromise for Gaston county and I wanted to give my personal support to the decision and for the unbiased process which was used to keep local politics out of the picture. Any new transportation project will have Financial, Human, Environmental and Safety impacts, but the "Garden Parkway" design team has found a great compromise route that focuses on the Environmental and Safety issues first. My hope is that this "recommended" route will be the "final" route and that we can move forward with starting this project in the coming years.

Regards

Paul Imrie

**From:** Brian Booth [bbooth@breezeplay.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2009 1:20 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Great Job!  
Great Job!

e002

I am new to Charlotte and live at the Vineyards on Lake Wylie. I heard the story on NPR this morning and was really excited about the development. This is great, its going to connect Gaston County to the rest of the city. As a new resident of this area it makes perfect sense. This part of the county is land locked.

As with all projects of this size you will run into locals who don't like change. In Atlanta the East-West connector that opened up West Cobb County received similar kickback. In that instance a federally protected Civil War battlefield and Kennesaw Mountain stood in the way.

This was Great news to my family.

**Brian Booth • Creative Director**  
[bbooth@breezeplay.com](mailto:bbooth@breezeplay.com)

**From:** 1stchoicehousing [1stchoicehousing@birch.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2009 2:27 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Interchange at us 29-74

e003

As a property owner on 29-74, I am for an interchange which would revitalize and energize this area of town moreso than only an interchange at I-85.

Russell Fox, Property Owner

**From:** jimmort@att.net  
**To:** gaston  
**Cc:** JimMort@att.net  
**Sent:** Wed May 20 21:20:52 2009  
**Subject:** TOLL ROAD TO NO WHERE  
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

e004

I have recently purchased a home in the York Chester Historic District located in Gastonia North Carolina. This home is located right on highway 321.

I am not an attorney.

However, if the information regarding the proposed "Toll Road to No Where" had not been revealed to me by the previous real estate agent that had listed that property - "PRIOR TO ME SIGNING" the North Carolina Association of REALTORS and North Carolina Bar Association's Offer to Purchase and Contract form 2-T, it would have been grounds for loss of the agent's license and possible civil action. The reason - that information would be considered a "Material Fact" which must be disclosed according to North Carolina Real Estate Law. It would have definitely influenced my decision to NOT BUY THAT HOME! Unfortunately, I bought the home from a For Sale By Owner who is required to reveal nothing.

My point. The United States Supreme Court ruled in the 1920's that Zoning Ordinances were appropriate and legal. The reason being they were and are designed to protect the public's interest. In fact Zoning's intent is to restrict anyone including those in government from establishing a use for property that brings the value down of surrounding properties. Deed restrictions are for the same purpose.

In the beautiful York Chester Historic District in Gastonia North Carolina, many of the homes located right on York Street and Chester (321) are found in the National Registry of Historic Homes and the City of Gastonia will not permit a home owner to alter anything about the home without first running it by the Historic Preservation Group. Permission to do something that may detract from the original character of the home or cause devaluation of property values will not be permitted by the City.

1 You are going against the basic premise of zoning, deed restrictions, home owner association rules and regulations by building the "Toll Road to No Where". Should that plan be approved, it is estimated that in one day, 20,000 more cars/tractor trailers/semi's etc., will pass in front of our homes on highway 321.

That's TWENTY THOUSAND MORE VEHICLES PER DAY...TRAVELING UP YORK STREET TO GO NORTH AND TWENTY THOUSAND MORE VEHICLES COMING BACK CHESTER EACH AND EVERY DAY!

1 Are your plans to widen 321 by removing the telephone poles which will need to be done if this plan goes through? Are your plans to cut down the oak trees that sit right beside the road so the road can be widened? As a home owner, I can not touch the trees unless they are dead or have fallen down or on my house because they are part of the character of that Historic Community which is protected by the City of Gastonia.

As a real estate educator of 38 years, one who has worked for most of the major organizations as Director of Education, Licensing and Training, as the founder of Keiser University's Real Estate Division with 22 campuses, your plans will result in nothing other than a hardship for those of us who live in the York Chester Historic District and devaluation of our property values.

1 Zoning and deed restrictions intent is to stop changes that may cause devaluation in properties to take place. Yet, if this "Toll Road to No Where" is approved, if it goes through as proposed, that is exactly what you will do.

1 THIS IS UNNECESSARY...THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES LIKE SIMPLY WIDENING AN EXIST BRIDGE AND ROAD THAT WILL NOT DISTURB THE CHARACTER OF WHAT HAS TAKEN SO MANY YEARS AND LIVES TO BUILD - THE HISTORIC COMMUNITY OF YORK CHESTER IN GASTONIA.

I am asking, please do not allow this to take place.

Sincerely,

James R. Mort

5200 Woodland Bay Drive  
Belmont, NC 28012

e005

May 21, 2009

Ms. Jennifer Harris, PE  
NC Turnpike Authority  
5400 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 400  
Raleigh, NC 27612

Dear Ms. Harris:

Thank you for your work on the proposed Garden Parkway. I am pleased that a route for this road has been recommended by the NC Turnpike Authority following many years of review. The recommended route appears to be free from political influence and considers many financial, environmental, human and safety factors that are very important to our citizens and our communities. I hope that you will continue to support the recommended route during the upcoming public hearings and that this route will become the approved and designated location for the Garden Parkway.

Sincerely yours,

John A. Corbett

From: mlund2020@carolina.rr.com  
Sent: Saturday, May 23, 2009 10:56 PM  
To: Gurak, Jill S  
Subject: Garden Parkway

e006

Jill Gurak,

I want to express my thanks for the extensive research and exhaustive efforts that went into the draft EIS in evaluating the proposed routes for the Garden Parkway. After thoroughly reviewing the Draft EIS and supporting documents, it is clear that whichever route is selected there will be a significant amount of human and environmental impact. I agree with and support the recommendation that alternative #9 has the least amount of human and environmental impact. This route crosses the Southfork River where it is very narrow and very shallow. This will result in much less environmental impact to our already endangered rivers, than more southern crossings would. It also avoids all cemeteries, and has the least impact to churches and schools, while all proposed routes will result in many displaced homes which is a concern for everyone in the path of this highway, alternative #9 minimizes the number of displaced residents as much as possible. I support this recommendation and hope that alternative #9 will be confirmed in the final decision. I applaud your efforts to leave politics and special interest out of this process, and instead focus on the human and environmental impacts. I hope that you will also support alternative #9 as the preferred route for this important transportation project.

Michael Lund

From: keith diggs [ktyboff@bellsouth.net]  
Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2009 5:03 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: US 74

e007

THIS PROJECT WILL END UP BEING US 74 FRM KINGS MT TO MONROE. DO IT WRIGHT THE FIRST TIME!  
KT DIGGS  
WILMINGTON,NC

From: Stacey Ivancic [staceyivancic@gmail.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2009 11:18 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Garden Parkway recommended route owners list

e008

Hello,

1 I would like to know if I could get a listing of all owners and their addresses that would be 1300 feet on either side of center line of the recommended route of the Gaston Connector or Garden Parkway.

I am not sure if this is public record, but if it is could I get a copy of this?

Thanks.

--  
Stacey A Ivancic

From: Toole, William [mailto:WToole@rbh.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2009 4:53 PM  
To: Harris, Jennifer  
Cc: jsgurak,; State Clearinghouse  
Subject: Garden Parkway - Request for Extension of Time to Submit Written Comments

e009

Dear Ms. Harris:

I am following up on my voicemail to you of late last week in which I had hoped to discuss the most expedient way to request a thirty day extension of time to submit written comments to the Garden Parkway DEIS.

1 The DEIS, as you know, is quite large and complex. Since issuance of the DEIS at the end of April, a group of approximately 200 citizens has been reviewing the document and its appendices. In light of the document complexity, the fact that this large group of interested citizens cannot devote themselves to the full-time review of the DEIS, and that many must also juggle the demands of work, school and upcoming vacation obligations while also trying to digest a document that recommends a major transportation facility, the members of this group are requesting that the time to submit written comments be extended thirty days to August 17, 2009.

Extension of the time to submit written comments will impose no undue burden on the Turnpike Authority. The Turnpike Authority is no stranger to the need to delay its internal schedule, having issued the DEIS well after the Authority's previously publicized January 2009 date. An additional thirty days will not jeopardize the Project, and in fact will assure the full, fair and complete public participation that is the essential hallmark of the NEPA/SEPA process.

If it would be of help, I can ask the other members of the citizens' group to separately submit requests for an extension of time. To date, at my suggestion they have refrained from doing so as it seemed probable that the sheer quantity of such requests might overwhelm your office. We will, of course, accommodate you in whatever way makes the most sense to achieve the requested thirty day extension.

I look forward to receiving your response to this request. Please feel free to contact me by email or at the numbers below.  
Bill Toole

From: Eric Riley [eric@crescentstructures.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2009 11:21 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Please STOP the Garden Parkway

e010

Dear Sirs,

I am writing you today to urge you to assist the citizens of Gaston County with STOPPING the construction of the proposed Garden Parkway. I, along with many other citizens, have worked hard to save our money and either purchase land for a future home site or have built a home and put down roots. Now, that is being threatened by this roadway. The little money we would receive for the NCDOT Right of Way Department would not nearly be enough to uproot and start our lives over and build to the degree that exists now. Please leave the citizens of Gaston and Mecklenburg County well enough alone. Please do not participate with BIG GOVERNMENT in coming in, overpowering us and taking what does not belong to them. PLEASE STOP THIS ROADWAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We have our rights as citizens - please respect those rights and leave us alone!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric L. Riley  
Eric L. Riley

-----Original Message-----

From: Chuck Meakin [mailto:chuck2325@carolina.rr.com]  
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2009 11:45 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Garden parkway

e011

I also want to pass on the discussions from the trenches as I speak to 40 to 60 patients per day and numerous other Gaston citizens through the week. Many feel the reason for the Garden Parkway conceived years ago is now antiquated as people live closer to where they work, try to drive less, and may be slower to engage home ownership. The cost of the road in terms of state and federal dollars is huge and the precedent for pay off based on other projects is unlikely. In the climate of draconian cuts in state and county services, evaporating green space, and diminishing individual driving; is the parkway the right move? Let me know what I am missing as I certainly only see what is outside of "my window" of the world.

From: sds70@yahoo.com  
Sent: Sunday, July 05, 2009 1:18 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Comments on Garden Parkway Toll Road

e012

I just wanted to complement you on the presentation for the Garden Parkway Toll Road that you presented at Olympic High School in Charlotte recently. I learned a lot more about the proposed toll road and where its going to go, how much its going to cost, etc. Your staff should be commended for the work they've put into the presentation !!!!

With that being said, I have 1 concern though. I've read that the NC Turnpike Authority (NCTA) has decided to collect tolls strictly via overhead scanners vs. traditional toll plazas (or as most states do now, a combination of both). I read in the press where N-O-T building toll plazas would save in construction costs (millions of dollars). However, I have a concern that the NCTA is putting all its faith in people being honest and willing will pay the toll bill for this and the other NCTA Toll Roads that are built whenever they get it in the mail. I am concerned that a few people (and perhaps more over time) will just simply throw the bill away and not pay the toll, which will hurt the NCTA finances over the long haul. Yesssss, you might be able to pressure NC drivers into paying the toll (i.e. by not allowing them to renew their driver license) but I don't believe the NCTA will not have the resources or time to chase out of town drivers into paying the toll. I fear at some point once these toll roads are opened (5-10 years maybe) and the NCTA finds out the hard way that they are losing lots of money from folks not paying the toll, I feel that you guys are just going to have to go back and put up toll plazas later, which will cost more money.

I think the NCTA should go up to VA and see how most of their toll plazas are designed. The traditional toll plazas are located on the outside lanes while scanners are set up on the inside lanes so folks can zip thru their if they have a transponder on their car/truck.

Yessssssss, toll plazas would require hiring more people and building support facilities (offices, toll plazas, etc.). But I think you guys should 'bite the bullet' and build them now vs. later, which will only cost the NCTA more money in the long run.

Shawn Smith  
Charlotte

From: Judson Stringfellow [judsontr@bellsouth.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2009 6:04 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Draft EIS Comments

e013

This e-mail is in response to the Public Hearing Announcement mailing which was sent recently seeking attendance at public meetings or comments by e-mail or mail.

As the owners of Tax Parcel # 153837 located on West Franklin St, we support Alternative #9, subject to detailed review of the final road R/W details. As our property is near or adjacent to a proposed intersection, we look forward to being able to upgrade our property to its highest and best use being so situated.

Judson & Donna Stringfellow  
judsontr@bellsouth.net

From: Alec Long, Broad Street Bonded Warehouse, Inc [alec.long@bondedstorage.com]  
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2009 2:12 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: garden parkway

e014

I writing this letter in support of the Garden Parkway. Gaston County needs this road for economic development. This road could lead to more business development in the southern part of Gaston County. This road goes right to Charlotte Douglas Airport. Not only will this road go to the airport but the Norfolk Southern Distribution Facility. This will be a big driving force for future business growth for Gaston County. We keep losing jobs but this is one that will create jobs. Sincerely, Alec.

Alec Long

From: bdsly@aol.com  
Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2009 12:34 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Toll Road in Gaston County

e015

My family would like to write and protest the Garden Parkway in Gaston County. This is a ridiculous waste of money in a time when the state is in dire straits. You cannot continue it to I-85, and 24 traffic lights between the end of the route and I-85 will keep many people from considering using it.

Your environmental impact statement is seriously flawed. We have 7,000 signatures protesting this road. Why don't you work with the DOT and fix the existing road situations in North Carolina. Our maintenance is limited because of funds and I-485 is still not complete.

I am wholeheartedly supporting the putting the Turnpike Authority under the governance of NC DOT.

David Hoyle and Robert Pittinger will obviously benefit from this greatly. That disgusts me. As politicians they are supposed to represent the wishes of the people in the county. We are overwhelming, except for the Gaston Chamber of Commerce, hearing opposition.

Why would you continue this?

Sincerely,  
John, Carolyn, JJ and Darden Sly

**From:** Susan Denton [mailto:hdenton1@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 18, 2009 12:57 PM  
**To:** Wright, Ashley K  
**Subject:** Re: Garden Parkway

e016

*The correct cost should have been \$911 million.  
Also, I have just learned that the road will not be completed to I-85 until 2030! This makes this a road "from nowhere to nowhere".  
Please put this money back in the general fund and use it for more urgent projects!  
Use it for needs, not 'wants'....  
Thanks for listening. I am attending meetings and public forums..I hope my voice will help make a difference!  
Susan Denton*

**From:** Susan Denton [mailto:hdenton1@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 15, 2009 12:04 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway

*This project baffles me. I don't get it at all. Who needs to go from below the airport to I-85? Or visa-versa? It doesn't seem to be trucks, as only 10% of the traffic is projected to be trucks. If we need a toll road around Gastonia and Belmont and Charlotte to cut down on traffic, leaving 85 for commuters, why would we put it here, where it is so expensive to acquire land and build over water (again and again)?? Would it make sense to put it much farther out? And why a toll road? Why not an outer-outer loop?*

*It bothers me that local officials, who have promoted this project without recusing themselves, own property along the route and will benefit. That smells!*

*I do not see support from the people who live here. Only from the city politicians and chambers.*

*Please tell me who benefits and why this project makes sense. Just because there is starter money that is easy to get, is this a reason to embark on a \$9,000,000 plus project? I'm not buying these bonds!*

*This really does seem like a "road to nowhere" to me. It makes no sense to me.*

*Can anyone there justify this project? I haven't heard anything at any of the meetings I have attended.*

*I do not support this toll road.*

*Susan Denton*

**From:** Stacey Ivancic [staceyaivancic@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 15, 2009 2:22 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Against the Garden Parkway Toll Road

e017

Hello,

My name is Stacey Ivancic and I am very concerned about the new proposed Garden Parkway Toll road. Let me say that I am against the Garden Parkway in its current form! Why? Let me list my top reasons:

**Cost is too high!**

The entire toll road would cost \$1.2 billion in today's dollars. There won't be enough tolls (cars using the road) to pay for the highway all the way from I-485 to I-85, this is according to the Toll Authority, and because there isn't enough money to build the whole superhighway, the building plan has been broken into two parts.

The first phase would go from I-485 at the Charlotte-Douglas Airport to US 321 just south of Gastonia's York Chester neighborhood, costing \$765 million. The Toll Authority studies show traffic tolls would not cover even the first leg of the project, so a few years ago the NC legislature agreed to subsidize the toll road with \$35 million each year for 40 years to pay for the funding gap.

The second phase of the road from US 321 south past Crowders Mountain and up to I-85 would cost another \$500 million. Toll Authority studies show that there simply won't be enough traffic or tolls to pay for the second stage of the road. That means the legislature would have to find another \$25 million a year for 40 years to pay for the second leg.

Even before the financial crisis, there wasn't any money in Raleigh to build the second leg. I thought the reason a toll roads was such a great idea is that it would pay for itself and not cost the taxpayers anything, if this is NOT the case then why build it. \$35 million a year for 40 years is a lot of money, isn't there a smarter way to use this money, here is what \$35 million could buy us in Gaston County:

1. A complete fix of the US 321 – I-85 interchange
2. Widens the 75 year old US 74 bridge at Catawba River from 4 to 6 lanes
3. Buys back 3 ½ of the state's school days that are proposed to be cut
4. Keeps all the assistant principals, social workers, guidance counselors, and media coordinators who are to be cut
5. Hires back one third of the third grade teaching assistants proposed to be eliminated

e017

*continued*

This seems like a much smarter use of our taxpayer money. On the same cost note, the Toll Authority recently reduced the traffic counts, making it even more likely that the road cannot pay for itself!

**Planned Route not good:** The six-lane toll superhighway starts at I-485 beside Charlotte Douglas Airport, and crosses the Catawba River at Paw Creek and Sadler Roads, passing north of the Allen Steam Plant. The recommended route clips the new Optimist Club fields, and then crosses South Point Road between Boat Club and Tucker Roads. The route turns north to impact neighborhoods on Singing Brook/Brook Forest/Forest Lane and Belle Meade. After crossing the South Fork River at Lake Wylie Road and the northern part of the Paradise Point neighborhood, the highway crosses South New Hope Road between Suzanne Drive and Teakwood Road. The route runs parallel to and south of Union New Hope Road before it turns north beside the Coachwood and Greenhaven Lane communities. Funding for the highway terminates at US 321 South, between Forbes and Crowders Creek Roads. This termination at US 321 South will force 14,000 vehicles a day onto US 321 (this is a reduction in the Toll Authorities original count of 20,000 vehicle, why are we building the road if the traffic use keeps going down!!). These neighborhoods are busy enough as it is, and even 14,000 vehicles a day would alter the community drastically, and cause additional issues at the 321/85 interchange which is already a headache for anyone who uses it, which is where all the cars should be going if the purpose of this road is a shortcut from Charlotte to I-85. One of the main arguments for the road is that it will create jobs, business will move into Southern Gaston County if this road is here because the Garden Parkway will create easy access to 85 and 485. However I am not sure how many businesses will move here if the section from 321 to 85 is never built, for vehicles to move from 321 to 85 thru an area not able to handle the traffic flow, into an interchange that is currently a headache does not seem like a good business plan. Then there is the toll concept, the businesses will already be paying extra in gas since the short cut from 485 to 85 via 321 is longer than just 85 straight across, they have to incur an extra cost of tolls, again not the best business plan. The only thing I see increasing is homes, in an area with already overcrowded schools, and two lane roads not able to handle much more increased traffic load. Who will pay to upgrade existing roads that the toll road empties traffic onto? As per the John Locke Foundation research into the matter found at this link: <http://www.johnlocke.org/site-docs/traffic/05Gastonia.pdf>, one of their recommendations is to widen I-85. Quoted from their document it says:

*"Re-consider the widening of I 85. In a major oversight the present Plan does not mention I 85's problems or its importance to the region. I 85, not the Garden Parkway, is the region's future lifeline, tying it to jobs in Charlotte and points east. The possibility of widening I 85 has not been seriously reviewed. Room for 4 lanes each way is presently available through the entire corridor, and this action may be needed in any case to handle growing long-distance and truck traffic in the Atlanta-Washington corridor. The westbound 'squeeze' from 4 to 3 lanes at Belmont Abby is arguably the most dangerous site in the county, yet is not mentioned in the Plan. Innovative highway designs<sup>14</sup> that allow for capacity improvements in tight spaces are increasingly common. Given that widening might be needed west of Gastonia and through the region, even if the Parkway is built, more attention should be placed on this option. Other options that should be looked at include reversible lanes and a westbound HOT lane."*

These are my top reasons, there are many more, to Stop the Toll Road to Nowhere! I hope you will take my points into consideration when determining if the Garden Parkway is a benefit for our area!

--  
Stacey A Ivancic

Paschall\_Nancy\_ Ms. Harris Support the Garden Parkway!\_061509 e018  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2009 7:12 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Ms. Harris: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Jennifer Harris (NC Turnpike Authority): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for Jennifer Harris: As a Past Gaston Regional Chamber of Commerce Chair, practicing attorney in a 15 member firm, commercial property owner on York Street (Highway 321 North) and involved citizen, I think the Garden Parkway is a vital link to the progress of our region. Thank you for your assistnace in seeing the Garden Parkway become a reality.  
Your Name: Nancy Paschall  
Your Community of Residence: Gastonia  
Your Email Address: npaschall@mhc-law.com

Paschall\_Tim\_ Ms. Harris Support the Garden Parkway!\_061509 e019  
From: Squarespace Services <services@squarespace.com>  
To: Harris, Jennifer  
Sent: Thu Jun 11 10:02:29 2009  
Subject: Form Submission - Ms. Harris: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Jennifer Harris (NC Turnpike Authority): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for Jennifer Harris:  
Your Name: Tim Paschall  
Your Community of Residence: Gastonia  
Your Email Address: ttpaschall@carolina.rr.com

Carstarphen\_Bip- Mr. Joyner Support the Garden Parkway!\_061609 e020  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 5:09 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Mr. Joyner: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Mr. David Joyner (NC Turnpike Authority, executive director): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for David Joyner: Please support the Garden Parkway - Gaston County needs this Parkway and this may be our only opportunity.

Thank you.  
Your Name: Bip Carstarphen  
Your Community of Residence: McAdenville Your Email Address:  
bip.carstarphen@pharryarns.com

Kagen\_Scott\_Stop the toll road\_061609 e021  
From: Scott Kagen [scottkagen@mac.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 8:29 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: stop the toll road

Dear Sirs,

I'm totally against this senseless road project. The total cost is way out of hand, needing 35 million dollars a year for 40 years from us tax payers is crazy. I can name quite a few better ways to spend tax payers money. Starting with fixing our roads we already have. Finishing I-485. Fixing the 321 exit off I-85. Fixing the decrepit bridges on Wilkinson Blvd. through Gaston Co. The turnpike will not help with the overcrowded schools in Belmont and Gastonia, it will only hinder. It will divide Belmont. It will add to the pollution problem in Gaston Co. It's going to infringe on the Optimism Club new baseball and football fields. It's going to cross two rivers and upset the Ecosystem. Gaston co doesn't need three roads running parallel within five miles of each other. My biggest problem is the road will end at 321, dumping 18,000 or so cars a day on 321. what is the going to do to that community? What is that going to do to that road? Who is going to pay to fix that road from all the trucks and the pot holes that come with that traffic?

Please reconsider your choice to put the road through our community.

Thank you,  
Scott Kagen

Long\_Joel- Mr. Joyner Support the Garden Parkway!\_061609 e022  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 1:17 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Mr. Joyner: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Mr. David Joyner (NC Turnpike Authority, executive director): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for David Joyner: Dear Mr Joyner  
I am a resident of gaston county and business owner and am in favor of this project to enhance the future of our citizens. Thanks for your efforts in improving our community.  
Sincerely,

Joel Long  
Your Name: Joel Long  
Your Community of Residence: Belmont, NC Your Email Address:  
joel@gastoniasheetmetal.com

Lowery\_Johnathan- Mr. Joyner Support the Garden Parkway!\_061609 e023  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 2:57 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Mr. Joyner: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Mr. David Joyner (NC Turnpike Authority, executive director): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for David Joyner: I believe if we do not do this now, we will be making a huge mistake!! Secretary of State Colin Powell, one of the greatest strategic minds of our times, once said, 'indecision has cost Americans, American business and the American government billions more than a wrong decision.

We need to make the right decision for our future growth and progress to build the Garden Parkway. This decision will be meaningful for many years to come and will eliminate a lot of traffic on I-85 and Highway 74 at peak traffic hours. I think we need to act proactive on this project because this road will benefit our citizens of this region for decades and allow us to continue to grow and prosper! Thank you!  
Your Name: Johnathan Lowery  
Your Community of Residence: Gastonia  
Your Email Address: jslowery2@wealthplanfinancial.com

Padgett\_Fred- Mr. Joyner Support the Garden Parkway!\_061609 e024  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 1:38 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Mr. Joyner: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Mr. David Joyner (NC Turnpike Authority, executive director): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for David Joyner: Please continue to support this important project for our region.  
Your Name: Fred Padgett  
Your Community of Residence: Gastonia  
Your Email Address: padgettfred@bfusa.com

Kimbrell\_Duke- Mr. Joyner Support the Garden Parkway!\_061709 e025  
From: Squarespace Services [services@squarespace.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2009 9:54 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Form Submission - Mr. Joyner: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Mr. David Joyner (NC Turnpike Authority, executive director): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-West Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.  
Additional Comments for David Joyner: I have supported many worthwhile projects in Gaston County and find the Garden Parkway to be one of the most important.  
Your Name: Duke Kimbrell  
Your Community of Residence: Gaston County Your Email Address: dkimbrell@parkdalemills.com

From: Ann.Jenkins@pharryarns.com e026  
To: Joyner, David; Dayton, Jeff; Harris, Jennifer; jamesf@ndleg.net ; Hoyle, David; wilh@ndleg.net ; billcu@ndleg.net ;  
Sent: Fri Jun 19 13:03:26 2009  
Subject:

**I am writing to express my support concerning the Garden Parkway.**

**The construction of this roadway will encourage positive economic development and balance geographic growth for the Gaston County region and the Lake Wylie corridor. The Garden Parkway will mitigate the increasing congestion on Interstate 85 and Highway 74.**

**As a manufacturer in Gaston County, Pharr Yarns has the majority of its key production facilities located in close proximity to Interstate 85 and I am very concerned about increasing traffic congestion. If the congestion continues to escalate at the same rate as we have experienced over the past several years, our ability to receive and ship goods in a timely and efficient manner, as well as the ability of our 1500 associates to access their respective facilities easily and safely, are two major factors that impact significantly our ability to be successful manufactures in Gaston County. I believe that the Garden Parkway will help to alleviate further traffic congestion on Interstate 85.**

**The Garden Parkway will provide much better access to the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, one of this region's finest assets, helping to sustain and provide for the Garden's future viability.**

**I hope that you will support the Garden Parkway and thank you for all you do to provide guidance and leadership for the region.**

Best regards,

**Bill Carstarphen**

Barrett\_Amy\_No Toll Road\_062009 e027  
From: ragcb99 [ragcb99@gmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, June 20, 2009 10:59 PM  
To: billcu@ndleg.net; dale.burkett@cityofgastonia.com; gaston@ncturnpike.org; hbretzius@gastongazette.com; Dayton, Jeff; jennifer.harris@ncturnpike.org; mayor@cityofgastonia.com; Mickey Price; Pearl.Burris-Floyd@ndleg.net; reginap@cityofgastonia.com  
Subject: No Toll Road

As I have wrote before about the no toll road, I was appalled by the billboard on interstate 85 this weekend. It stated that if people did not like traffic, then vote for the parkway. How misconception and misleading can this be to people? Out of all the government and legislative officials who are voting for the garden parkway, how many of you actually drive interstate 85 daily? Hmmm, because I do. I will tell you if interstate 85 would not go down to only two lanes at the Belmont Abbey exit, you would not have a traffic jam daily when five o'clock traffic hits. After you get through this exit, traffic is generally fine. This is why I refused to live below the Belmont Abbey exit when searching for a new home. Before the residents of Gaston County are mislead, please tell them what all is involved in this process. Also, explain to them why we are laying off teachers but yet we can produce the funds to build a toll road. I would personally want teachers who have small class sizes to be adequately teaching my children. However, I do know when that day comes, I will enrolling my children into private school. As I have mentioned before, NO toll road, the toll road is not necessary. It is a shame the people we elect take our lives and homes away. I feel bad for these people living the reality of this nonsense decision.

Sincerely,  
Amy Barrett

From: info@ncturnpike.org e028  
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 9:11 PM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Subject: Comment: Gaston East-West Connector  
**Contact Information**  
Name: Robert K. Bradley

Email: bradleylrj@bellsouth.net

Comments: To whom it may concern, Taking consideration of the choices given alterantive 9 seems to be the reasonable choice that would make the least impact on land wildlife within the projected area. Although I do not approve of a road being put thru our last remaining country side and possibly damaging or destroying whats left of our wildlife,vegetation and water resources. Surely their are other ways to acheive the same out come with up rooting new areas.

From: vellington@bellsouth.net  
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 3:54 PM

To: jamesf@ncleg.net; davidh@ncleg.net; wiln@ncleg.net; gaston@ncturnpike.org;  
www.StopTheTollRoad.com@smtp10.state.nc.us

Subject: the garden Parkway

Our family is opposed to the construction of the proposed Garden Parkway. There are numerous reasons for our oppositions:

e029

1. Several members of our government supporting the Garden Parkway will profit from this project as they own property near the proposed routes.
2. A large amount of the daily traffic clogging up South Point Road, New Hope Road, and Union Road are the result of traffic coming from South Carolina. To even consider the northern route makes no sense because it will shift the heavy South Carolina traffic through areas that you are projecting will be problem areas. The southern proposed route is shorter and cheaper.
3. The people in this region are already breathing a huge amount of pollution emitted from Duke Energy. To add the pollution from the number of vehicles you are hoping will use the Garden Parkway will create an even greater risk to the health of our family friends and neighbors. Many citizens are already plagued by the pollutant devils. As our elected officials, your prime object in serving your constituency should be to protect their health and well being.
4. In choosing the northern route the only little league field in this area will be destroyed. Many established home places that have been in families for generations will no longer be landmarks to be passed on to future family members.
5. Routing a projected 20,000+ vehicles onto 321 Gastonia will be a headache to the historical district where the road stops. No area should be forced to struggle with such an enormous volume of traffic for the projected fifteen+ years. Just imagine the detrimental impact this project will have on the physical and mental health of the residents living there.
6. The cost of constructing the Garden Parkway is too expensive. As alternate ideas that would serve the most people physically, mentally and financially, we submit that the committee look long and hard at commuter rail, widening 74 which already needs major road and bridge improvements, and adding more lanes to I-85. Let South Carolina bear the burden of providing transportation for their residents to get to Charlotte.

Sincerely,

Frank and Virginia Ellington

Childe\_Emma\_RE Garden Parkway Questions\_062509

e030

Dear Sirs,

I want to start by saying that I do feel that the southern half of Gaston County is poorly served, as is the northwestern portion of York County SC. The proposed Parkway could potentially cut commute times for many residents, particularly those who travel to the southern half of Charlotte, and for commercial truckers going to and from the airport.

that being said, I do have some concerns about the current proposal. I am a resident and business owner of the City of Gastonia. I reside 1 1/2 blocks off of 321, in the Historic York Chester neighborhood. Both my husband and my businesses are 1 1/2 blocks off 321 in Historic Downtown Gastonia. Both of these historic districts are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and are important resources for the City, both for tax revenue and attractions. Also, many of the residents, such as my family, have purchased in the district because of the tax benefits of a Historic District, and the charm and beauty of living in a walkable neighborhood. The City of Gastonia is currently spending a large sum of money and lots of resources to revitalize and preserve the Historic City Center.

I have intended to attend the Community Hearings, but due to commitments to my business, I have been unable to. I have a quite a few questions about the impact this highway will have on my home, my business, and my neighborhood.

Childe\_Emma\_RE Garden Parkway Questions\_062509

e030

continued

1. According to the Gaston Gazette, the projected increase in traffic on US 321 is 1000 cars per day. In comparison to current traffic, what percentage of increase is projected? We are discussing a residential area, so this will affect property values and quality of life for residents.
2. Since the proposed Parkway is only funded to US 321, what is being done to minimize the impact the additional traffic will have on the Historic buildings in both districts?
3. Trucks are the biggest problem, both noise and vibration, for the York Chester Neighborhood. Since commercial trucks, by law, must travel on highways, what protections are in place for this problem on US 321? Rerouting traffic down Hudson Blvd and out to US 74 does not address this issue unless Hudson is made into a bypass/highway.
4. If buildings are damaged by the increase in traffic on US 321, what, if any, recourse do property owners have to recover/repair their buildings and homes?
5. If, due to the increase in traffic, US 321 needs to be widened, either North- or South-bound, how will the loss of natural canopy and neighborhood beauty be addressed? Also, if buildings are to be demolished, how will the loss of contributing structures impact National Historic District standings? This also applies to damage and/or inadvertent condemnation due to damage to contributing and pivotal structures. Much of 321 South is only 2 lanes through York Chester, and some houses are only 8-10 feet from the existing road.
6. Since funding is in place for only a portion of the highway, what is the projected/planned timeline for obtaining the remaining funding needed to complete the tollroad to I-85?
7. The Garden Parkway will only be partially completed. This is going to cut down on revenues, meaning there is less traffic, and less toll money coming in. What, if any is projected impact on taxpayers due to the shortfall?
8. Any access to the Parkway from I-85 seems to take a round-about way. If you are travelling North on I-85 to Charlotte, you will be taken very far south, and vice-versa. Is this really the most time-saving and logical path for the tollroad?
9. Is there a possibility of creating a business route for US 321 through Gastonia? We are a heavily developed city, yet we are one of the only remaining places on this stretch of 321 that is heavily impacted by traffic. Lincolnton, Dallas, and many other small towns' city centers are no longer so directly impacted by US 321.

After these questions are answered, I will most likely have additional questions. For now, I do have some suggestions!

Perhaps the money would be better spent by creating a commuter rail line to Charlotte. Tracks are already in place! Commuter buses are already crowded, and there may be additional federal money for cutting down on vehicle emissions caused by heavy freeway traffic. It would also create more development within Gaston County, because an easier commute to Charlotte, headache-free, will make it a more attractive place to live. Many of the newer residents, like myself, have come from larger cities where public transportation is commonplace, and even more desirable that commuting in a personal vehicle. Maybe create toll lanes on I-85 itself, which is also common elsewhere, which would minimize the impact on the entire county, and still create a fast-track to and from Charlotte.

There are many ways to skin a cat, so to speak, and even though this project has been in the works for many years, it might not be the best solution in this day and age. Remember that the Greenway was also purchased for a bypass road through Gastonia, and now it is a beautiful park!

Thank you for your time!  
Ella Childe

**From:** info@ncturnpike.org  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 25, 2009 5:38 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Comment: Gaston East-West Connector  
**Contact Information**

e031

**Name:** John Corbett  
**Email:** johnandsue@carolina.rr.com

**Comments:** Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the public hearing for the Garden Parkway at Forestview High School on June 23, 2009. I have previously commended the NC Turnpike Authority for its research of potential routes for the Garden Parkway. Following the open house and public hearing, I continue to believe that alternative 9 is the most economical and environmentally friendly option. Considering Berewick District Park, alternative 9 has much less impact on this facility compared with the "southern" route. I encourage the NC Turnpike Authority to select alternative 9 as the final, approved route for the Garden Parkway and proceed with this project as soon as possible. Thank you, John Corbett (704) 825-2998

**From:** cglong2@netzero.net [mailto:cglong2@netzero.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 25, 2009 9:00 AM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Pkwy.

e032

I was raised in Gastonia and still have my family there. Though I live in Concord now, I plan to move back to Gastonia in about 4-5 years. I read in the Gaston Gazette Sunday the reasons that be support the parkway that is being proposed to go through the county. The reasons that were given were the very reasons many of us DON'T want this road being built (ie development, lose of greenspace/farmland, etc.). Gaston County is the most beautiful county in the Charlotte Metro Area and its careful placement and planning of dev elopement has been the key to this. In my opinion, this highway is far from needed. Gaston County has the best traffic flow of any of our counties in the metro area. The development around the interchanges will absolutely destroy the natural surroundings in these pristine areas. I live in Concord and have seen what this type of uncontrolled, rubber stamp growth does to the quality of life, and it isn't good. I assume when giving your argument in the newspaper, you were giving it your best shot. If that's so, I'm even more convinced the this project is a huge waste of money with the biggest motivation being personal windfalls. I would not expect you to admit to this as the truth, but I come to this conclusion based on everything (including your arguments for this) I have seen and heard. I would like to respectfully ask you to do the right thing and abandon this idea and help preserve one of the few natural gems of the Charlotte area.

Thank you,

Gil Long

**From:** lisacbeal@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, June 29, 2009 1:01 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway

e033

Dear Sirs,

I am a lifetime Gaston County resident and I have many concerns about the proposed Garden Parkway. I am particularly concerned that the Turnpike Authourity didn't even study the long standing routes that had been on the Gaston Urban Thoroughfare Plan. The fact that this road will end at US 321 in Gastonia, not Interstate 85, and will dump 20,000 cars and trucks in the York Chester neighborhood doesn't make sense. These are hard times and I hope that you would agree the \$35 million per year that our legislators have pledged for the next 40 years would be much better spent on education and balancing our state budget, instead of building a road that nobody but land speculators, developers, and road builders want.

Respectfully yours,  
Lisa Beal

**From:** Roger Fenlon [rfenlon@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 02, 2009 11:18 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org

e034

I am resident of Belmont and am totally opposed to building the toll road across the Southpoint peninsula. It is insane to build another road through Belmont and thus increase traffic on Southpoint Rd.

Roger J. Fenlon

**From:** Richard Stewart [mailto:rpstewart@inbox.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 02, 2009 8:30 PM  
**To:** gaston  
**Subject:** Tollroad to nowhere

e035

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my complete disagreement with the proposed Gaston East-West Connector highway. I have reviewed the NCDOT proposal and cannot understand why the state of NC would waste money on this road. It appears that there will be minimal time or miles travelled savings versus taking I-85. Has the state seriously considered widening I-85 in Gaston county instead? According to the documentation a through analysis of that alternative was not even studied. Please don't waste our money and destroy our neighborhoods for this unnecessary road.

I agree that an East-West connect road is necessary in southern Gaston country but we don't need a freeway or toll way. I simple 2-5 lane road with a bridge over the Catawba river would be satisfactory

Best regards,  
Richard Stewart

**From:** msp007\_us@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 07, 2009 8:18 AM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Toll Road  
Dear Sir or Madam,

e036

I am concerned about the State of North Carolina installing Toll Roads which benefit only a small percentage of the population. The Garden Parkway benefits a small group in southern Gaston County to the disadvantage of large group along the proposed route. The small group includes people that can afford the toll and commercial vehicles. The parkway also contributes to the problem of urban sprall. More people that work in Charlotte can move to southern Gaston County which increases traffic, polution, etc..

If the State wants to benefit the people of Gaston County, start by updating public transit, fix the highway infrastructure, etc.. Do not force more debt on us. We can not afford the debt we have at present.

Stan Pons

Belmont, NC

**From:** Mark Colone [mcolone@signaturesportsgroup.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 09, 2009 9:21 AM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Toll Road proposal in Gaston County  
Dear Sir or Madam,  
I am concerned that the State of North Carolina is considering installing Toll Roads which benefit a small percentage of the population.

e037

1 The Garden Parkway benefits a small group in southern Gaston County to the disadvantage of large group along the proposed route. The small group includes people that can afford the toll and commercial vehicles. The proposed Parkway would also contribute to the problem of urban growth as even more people that work in Charlotte can move to southern Gaston County which increases traffic, pollution, crowded schools, etc.

2 If the State wants to benefit the people of Gaston County, start by updating public transit, fix the highway infrastructure, and mandate an impact fee on builders so our education system can sustain itself. This will force more debt on us and we can not afford the debt we have now.

Mark and Susan Colone

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**From:** shirley thompson [praisehim59@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 11, 2009 8:53 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** North Carolina Turnpike  
Dear Jennifer,

e038

I am writing in behalf of my mother-in-law, Ida Jackson who resides at 750 Belfast Drive in Gastonia, NC . My mother-in-law has gotten to the point in her life where she can semi-retire. She has worked hard in keeping up the maintenance on her home. A home which she takes pride in keeping up. Also she has paid off her home so she could be worry free of having to think about making monthly payment. Now they want to take away a home which she had planned to live in until the day she leave this earth. A home which she thought would become her children one day. She is very concern that they will not reimburse her for what her home is worth. Also she is concern that she won't have the funds to start all over again. This not only apply to her but to other retiree who will be affected by this transition. Even though I do not reside in Gastonia now , I do comes to Gastonia frequently. My mom resides in Gastonia. I see this toll road will affect all of us who frequently travel 321. My mom also is retire and her church is in Clover, SC which she has to travel 321 to get to her church. These people are on fixed income, it seem unfair to put them through all of this. This remind me of when homesteader would settle on their land. They would work hard to develop their home and land and one day someone would tell them you got to move or they would some how force the people to move in an deceitfully way. I ask all who are involve in this decision making to please reconsider or find another solution.  
Thank you

Sincerely,  
Shirley Thompson

**From:** BillWaltz@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, July 13, 2009 8:56 AM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org; Gurak, Jill S; Billcu@ncleg.net; Wiln@ncleg.net; rboyce@cityofbelmont.org; David.Hoyle@ncleg.net; david.joyner@ncturnpike.org; jennifer.harris@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Feedback/Opinion  
Greetings,

e039

I'm writing you today to share my opinions regarding the Garden Parkway. While I am sending this with only a week to spare, it is in no way a reflection of a lack of interest in the project. In fact, I have followed it very closely for several years and have been a core member of the Gaston SECC group opposed to the "southern route."

My wife and I purchased land in Woodland Bay across from the Stowe Botanical Garden in March of 2007, and we just completed (and moved into) our new home over the past few weeks. Prior to buying the land, I spent about an hour on the phone with Jill Gurak discussing the project. She assured me that the NCTA would be thorough, fair and unbiased in their route selection process. Given the data available at that time, including the potential route through the Allen Steam Plant, we decided to proceed. When the articles surfaced about local politicians last fall, I became quite concerned about the potential for political influence on the route selection process. Again, Jill assured me, along with a group gathered at Misty Waters, that the process would be straight up.

Now that everything has unfolded, I have several comments:

1. As near as I can tell, you kept your word. The process was fair, unbiased and free from political influence.
2. The draft EIS is extremely thorough. I would have liked to have seen a little more emphasis on the fog and blowing fly ash issues raised by the SECC, but overall I think your team did an excellent job.
3. It is clear to me that regardless of the route, the Parkway will result in considerable impact -- both positive and negative. Because of this impact, it is extremely important for the NCTA to choose the route that has the least amount of overall impact. DSA 9 appears to fit that description and for that reason, I wholeheartedly support your route recommendation.
4. Like a lot of folks in Gaston County, the decision of whether or not to build the road has caused me to do some soul searching. On one hand, I'm very troubled by the fact that the highway will directly impact the lives of so many people, uprooting them from their homes and forcing major life changes. On the other hand, a drive through the center of Gastonia with all of its urban blight, or through many other NC towns illustrates the desperate need for a growing tax base, thoughtful planning and the benefits that combination can bring to an area. Taking all of this into consideration, I support the highway PROVIDING the state FAIRLY compensates those who are directly impacted by its construction. I know that statements have made in the various meetings to this effect, but given the depressed real estate market, the potential for unfair compensation levels is a real concern for me. The highway will benefit Gaston County (and western Mecklenburg), but it shouldn't be done by short changing those who are required to sacrifice the most.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Waltz

**From:** tomtwinlakes@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2009 7:14 AM  
**To:** tomtwinlakes@aol.com; gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Re: Garden Parkway Comment

e040

I have included one clarification with regard to the bridges.

Thanks.

.....tom

-----Original Message-----

**From:** tomtwinlakes@aol.com  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org; tomtwinLakes@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tue, Jul 14, 2009 11:52 pm  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Comment

To the Turnpike Authority regarding the "Garden Parkway"

"Build it and they will come" is an oft quoted expression with more than a ring of truth to it. Build the "Garden Parkway" and most assuredly the cars will come, and Charlotte will find another area into which to extend its network of roads and suburbs. The problem is that what is being built is a road for ONLY motorized vehicles, and ONLY cars and trucks and busses "will come". Is this really in the spirit of doing something about the Global Warming issues and in particular the smog and pollution challenges that Charlotte and this region faces.

If a toll road is to be built, make it true "Garden Parkway", one that promotes environmentally friendly alternatives and really merits the name of "Garden Parkway". At the very least all the bridges over large bodies of water, such as the Catawba river, with a very limited number of crossings, should be designed to encourage pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Furthermore highway design should include numerous under and overpasses to allow wild life and pedestrians to cross and to retain connectivity between severed parts of the community. Allow space for a light rail, even if that is not now feasible.

The South New hope road area from personal observations has been popular with recreational cyclists. The projected widening of the road where it will cross the toll road, unless properly designed will thwart this popularity. Change the construction mindset. Build this road and others like it to encourage not discourage the cyclist and pedestrians. The Charlotte 485 interchanges are particularly good examples of how to discourage all but motorized vehicles from cross those bridges. Please do not make the same mistakes with the CGarden Parkway".

Sincerely Yours  
Tom McMeeken

**From:** Tory Borne [tory.borne@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 17, 2009 1:23 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Gaston East-West Connector project Impact on York Chester Historic District

e041

Dear Ms. Harris,

This is a follow-up to our previous correspondence. As mentioned before, I am a resident of York Chester neighborhood, a nationally recognized historic district, and I am against the terminus of the Gaston East-West Connector at Hwy. 321. While all twelve of the Detailed Study Alternatives of the Gaston East-West Connector project cross US 321 several miles south of the York Chester neighborhood, I respectfully disagree with the position that none of the alternatives would directly impact our fragile historic district.

This area is already considered highly trafficked and the city continues to have to make costly repairs to the aged underlying water and drainage system under our streets and sidewalks caused by traffic vibration. More traffic, especially commercial traffic would increase this burden to the city. In addition, root systems of the scenic oak trees and the foundations of historic home, and retaining walls that line many properties would be impaired. The Historic District is also known for its tree lined sidewalks that promote walkability and increase quality of life and provides measures of community watch safety. Pushing a baby stroller or walking a dog mere inches from commercial trucks is not safe, or the type of quality expected of a residential historic district. As a homeowner located a block away, we experience vibrations. Currently the only traffic calming devices through this neighborhood are a handful of traffic lights that are actually timed to promote through traffic, and a speed limit of 35 mph. There are no restrictions to commercial vehicles, weight, height or axels.

Beyond the narrow curvy streets that are hazardous, the Hwy 321 stretch through our district is lined with homes recognized as contributing properties to both the local and national historic district designation, leaving no room for widening so that a buffer zone between sidewalk and moving traffic could be increased. In this district, there are 638 contributing properties with those along Hwy 321 among our oldest. A color-coded map and approved national historic district application narrative including descriptions of historic homes along York, Chester streets as well as Garrison Boulevard are attached for your reference. The full application can be viewed with the State Historic Preservation Office, where Ann Swallow and Paul Fomberg (919.807.6578) were most helpful in our gaining national district status.

I understand the economic value to our county of having a Gaston East-West Connector project from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 near the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. However, I am specifically against any activity that would increase commercial traffic on the stretch of Hwy 321 from Hudson Boulevard to the I-85 exchange. Therefore, because the likely interim western project terminus would be US 321 until further funding is granted, and also because there would be an entry point for access to the road from the north which would introduce more traffic from points north of our neighborhood including I-85, I am against the project.

Please note that I am submitting this letter to you as a concerned citizen, not as president of the York Chester National Historic District Neighborhood Association, and this is on purpose. The position of not taking a stand on this issue falls into the history of the organization as appearing elitist as some residents strongly felt that decisions about the neighborhood were being made by a group of three or four and that it was not right for a handful of self-selected residents to speak for the entire neighborhood. Subsequently, the association reorganized and bylaws were written to expand the board and encourage membership and a section specifically reins in the actions of the board in that membership must be notified in writing prior to taking a stand on a public issue.

The bylaws also helped define our place among the other existing organizations - the York Chester Historic Corporation, The Historic District Commission, and the York Chester Neighborhood Watch. Of these three, the Commission has the most official voice as this body (unlike our self-appointed board with a handful of members) are appointed by our elected officials and tasked with preserving the historic integrity of our neighborhood through approval and denials of certificate of appropriateness and are partners with the city planning department as legal decision-makers and protectors of the historic properties in our district. At present, we have just begun a membership drive and have only a small fraction of over 700 potential members to represent. Until we have a true representation of residents among our members, our focus remains on educating residents, anything more would be presumptuous.

Respectfully submitted,

Tory Borne

**From:** Kirsten Damore [kdamore@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 17, 2009 8:29 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Comments

e042

To the North Carolina Turnpike Authority,

I have already submitted comments to you regarding my concerns and opposition to construction of the Garden Parkway or East-West Connector Tollroad proposed to be built through Gaston County and have written to my elected officials. The purpose of this email is to express my concerns regarding the impact of the road on my personal property located at 1030 Robinson Road. The current maps indicate that an access ramp would cut directly in front and through my property, cutting within feet of my house. The property is a 28 acre farm with a house (newly renovated vintage custom home, championship riding arena (also taken), 5,000 square ft. horse barn, pond (taken), hay barn, 20 acres of 4-board wood fenced pastures and baseball field (taken). The current plans are completely unacceptable and destroy the character and beauty and useful nature of our property which is not only our home but a place of business where we raise and train horses. The right-of-way appears to take the access of our property including a custom built security gate and totally devalues the property. It is unclear if we would even have a potential commercial property if the road is to be built as outlined.

I wish to make you aware of the value of our property which we estimate at around 1.5 million dollars which does not include the intangibles of a unique property that could not be duplicated in this area for anything near that amount. I ask that you reconsider the design of the road, moving it further south or relocating the access ramp across the street and somehow preserving the access to the land. I hope that the road will not be approved and constructed, but if it is, please look closer at my particular property in its' design and construction. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kirsten D'Amore, M.D.

**From:** Kirsten Damore [kdamore@carolina.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 17, 2009 8:45 PM  
**To:** gaston@ncturnpike.org  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway

e043

To the North Carolina Turnpike Authority,

I wish to state my concerns regarding the construction of the Garden Parkway, not only on the negative impact on my personal property located at 1030 Robinson Road, but to this part of Gaston County in general.

The road as designed would completely devalue our property which my wife has outlined in detail with an estimated value (1.5 million). Duplicating what we have here would far exceed that amount. I also ask that you reconsider the design of the road to preserve our property as a whole so we could continue our business ventures or at least as a potential commercial property so that we could recoup our investment. The road as currently proposed would render our property almost worthless and not a place where anyone would want to live.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Martin J. D'Amore, M.D.

**From:** BDSLY@aol.com [mailto:BDSLY@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 17, 2009 2:40 PM  
**To:** Joyner, David  
**Subject:** I would like to voice my opposition to the Garden Parkway

e044

Dear Mr. Joyner,

I would like to voice my opposition to the Gardern Parkway. I think it is a waste of resources and money since it will not fulfill its two stated purposes of being an East West Connector (stops 24 traffic lights from I-85) and also will not relieve congestion in Gaston County on I-85.

I would also like to comment that David Hoyle stands to benefit personally from this boondoogle, which is ridiculous.

Enough is enough.

Regards,  
Carolyn Sly

### Stop the Toll Road to No Where 7-19-09

e045

I was born and raised in Gaston County. My family and I own and pay taxes on 80 to 100 acres located off Forbes Road near the Hwy 321 and part of my family still lives on this property and vote in Gaston County. From the maps which I have seen the proposed road will not go thru the middle of our property but will take one edge and skirt it's northern boundary. This means we would benefit from the increased noise, air and water pollution to our creeks which would result from the automotive runoff from this road. Actually our proximity to the Hwy 321 interchange might even make our land increase in value but I am sure our taxes would increase to help pay for it. We are all against this road!

This toll road has been talked about for the past twenty some odd years. In its beginning the reason for building the road was to connect the southern part of Mecklenburg County near the Charlotte airport through southern Gaston County and connect into I-85 west of Gastonia. This sort of makes some sense. However the road which is being proposed does not make our this connection. It dumps the traffic onto Hwy 321 which in order to get to I-85 would mean you have to travel north on an all ready too busy Hwy 321 through the middle of Gastonia with 19-20 stop lights. This is going to cause a lot more congestion and wear and tear on this already busy road. The first time a trucker or traveler does take this road and has to go thru this ordeal would mean it will be their last time and no more tolls paid by them again. It would be faster to use the existing interstate roads which are free.

Since I live in Greenville County, South Carolina I can also tell you about how unsuccessful our "Southern Connector" toll road has been. It was started in 2001, and by the original forecast it was supposed to have generated around 27000 tolls per day in 2002; it actually generated only around 10000 tolls per day. In 2007 it was supposed to have generated 33000 tolls per day and actually closed the gap to only around 16000 tolls per day. In 2008, these numbers dwindled to only around 8000 tolls per day. This toll road actually does connect I-385 south of Greenville to I-85 west of Greenville and is still not being used as it was sold to us. The bottom line is that this toll road will go bankrupt at the end of 2009 according the public information which I have read. I would imagine the taxpayers will be left holding the bag to pay for this so called "Toll Road".

e045  
continued

2 [ The North Carolina General Assembly has voted to support this road to the tune of \$35 million dollars per year for the next 40 years. I find this very strange when they are having such a problem funding the repair of existing roads and completing projects like I-485 around Charlotte. I have heard that widening the existing I-85 corridor through Gaston County is not an option which I don't understand. I think there would be much less property which would have to be purchased and turned up side down along this already existing corridor. It would be difficult but not impossible. Another better use of the tax payer's money would be to improve the intersection of I-85 and Hwy 321 which is currently a nightmare. Some of this same money could also be used to keep teachers employed in North Carolina which are being laid off. The Catawba River Bridge on Wilkinson Boulevard is also in need of replacement which some of this money could be better used on. There are a lot of better uses for this money!

4 [ I have also heard that this proposed road will enhance the chances of new business and jobs in the area. If this road had already been in place, I doubt seriously that it would have saved the textile jobs and other manufacturing jobs such as Homelite and Freightliner which have left. These jobs did not just leave Gaston County, they left the United States for cheaper labor and taxes. This road might increase the number of convenience stores, fast food restaurants, shopping malls and housing developments which will create some new low paying jobs. It would definitely cause more urban sprawl in southern Gaston County. The real winners in this are the small number of people who have invested in land along this corridor which some are or have been state representatives that say they did not know the road was going near the land they purchased. I find this very offensive to the intelligence of the taxpayers and voters of North Carolina which they are supposed to represent.

I urge anyone who has a vote on this matter to vote against this project.

Respectfully yours,

Al Brandon

-----Original Message-----  
From: scotpen@hotmail.com [mailto:scotpen@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 10:40 AM  
To: Roberts, Cass  
Subject: gastonmpo.org contact

e046

name: Bill Scott  
comments: This Garden Parkway Toll Road is an expensive catastrophe for Gaston county. Please Stop this project now!  
B1: Submit

From: Bill Scott [scotpen@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, July 18, 2009 9:20 AM  
To: gaston@ncturnpike.org  
Cc: jwinters@co.gaston.nc.us  
Subject: Garden Parkway Toll Road Folly

Dear Voters, Politicians, Planners and Engineers:

The Garden Parkway cutting through Gaston is destructive to Gaston county. It benefits only developers. STOP THIS FOLLY!

1 [ This Garden Parkway toll road is destined to go broke and thus forcing the state to take it over.  
The Garden Parkway is based upon a flawed model which will not reduce I-85 congestion, yet wastes the money needed to widen I-85.  
The Garden Parkway is destructive to our cultural and physical environment, destroying habit for people, animals and cultural amenities.  
The Garden Parkway Turnpike Authority has become its' own stake holder and cannot make objective observation of this debacle.  
North Carolina cannot afford to inherit the Garden Parkway financial disaster.  
I hold a geography degree from a major university and live in Gaston county. I do not live in the Garden Parkway development area.

Regards, William Scott

**From:** Craig Graves [jraiggraves@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 19, 2009 9:00 PM  
**To:** gaston@nctumpike.org  
**Subject:** Written Comments for the Garden Parkway

e047

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Garden Parkway that will connect Mecklenburg and Gaston Counties.

1 First of all as a North Carolina taxpayer I cannot support spending that amount of money on a project that does not reduce traffic on Interstate 85 and stops at US321. We have real budget issues in our state and will continue to have these issues for the next several years. The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them.

Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail. The road in Greenville is a prime example and while I realize the Charlotte metro area has 1.7 million people, how many will actually use the road and pay tolls? Once this road is built it's too late and the taxpayer could be stuck with the bill.

2 The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or even two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there. We should solve that problem first before spending money on "nice-to-have's" like the Garden Parkway.

3 The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area for many years and am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.

I think this project should be canceled and we should look for ways to invest our money in projects that solve traffic issues in our area and our State. The Garden Parkway clearly is not one of these investments.

Sincerely,

Jonathan C. Graves

**From:** Vivian Chapman [ampmrestate@bellsouth.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2009 2:12 PM  
**To:** gaston@nctumpike.org  
**Subject:** Toll Road

e048

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Garden Parkway that will connect Mecklenburg and Gaston Counties.

1 First of all as a North Carolina taxpayer I cannot support spending that amount of money on a project that does not reduce traffic on Interstate 85 and stops at US321. We have real budget issues in our state and will continue to have these issues for the next several years. The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them.

Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail. The road in Greenville is a prime example and while I realize the Charlotte metro area has 1.7 million people, how many will actually use the road and pay tolls? Once this road is built it's too late and the taxpayer could be stuck with the bill.

2 The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or even two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there. We should solve that problem first before spending money on "nice-to-have's" like the Garden Parkway.

3 The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area for many years and am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.

I think this project should be canceled and we should look for ways to invest our money in projects that solve traffic issues in our area and our State. Isn't it the responsibility of our state officials to see that money, (and there is great shortage of money in our state) is spent wisely and where the need is great. Widening I85 is really needed, and everyone knows this. The Toll Road project seems to me to be related to "pork barrel" spending in the government. This is not good for our state.

Sincerely,

Vivian Chapman

From: Sherry Graves  
To: [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org)  
Subject: Comments for the Garden Parkway  
Date: Monday, July 20, 2009 10:14:42 PM

e049

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Garden Parkway that will connect Mecklenburg and Gaston Counties.

1 First of all as a North Carolina taxpayer I cannot support spending that amount of money on a project that does not reduce traffic on Interstate 85 and stops at US321. We have real budget issues in our state and will continue to have these issues for the next several years. The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them.

Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail. The road in Greenville is a prime example and while I realize the Charlotte metro area has 1.7 million people, how many will actually use the road and pay tolls? Once this road is built it's too late and the taxpayer could be stuck with the bill.

2 The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there. We should solve that problem first before spending money on "nice-to-have's" like the Garden Parkway.

3 The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area all of my life and I am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates, but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.

I think this project should be canceled and we should look for ways to invest our money in projects that solve traffic issues in our area and our State. The Garden Parkway clearly is not one of these investments.

Sincerely,

Sherry Graves

From: Sabrina Messer  
To: Harris, Jennifer  
Sent: Mon Jul 20 21:36:25 2009  
Subject: Garden Parkway

e050

Ms. Harris—

1 I am writing IN **OPPOSITION** to the proposed "Garden Parkway." I live in the historic Brookwood neighborhood which is located on Highway 321 adjacent to the York Chester neighborhood in Gastonia. The current proposal which has the toll road dead-ending into Highway 321 will do nothing but increase traffic on an already over loaded highway. It will be detrimental to the safety of those traveling on that road especially as it goes through the center of the York Chester neighborhood. Please take my views as well as the views of the hundreds (perhaps thousands) who have already contacted you expressing their **OPPOSITION** to this proposed project.

Sincerely,

Sabrina C Messer

From: McKenzie, Kelly [kelly.mckenzie@wachovia.com]  
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2009 2:25 PM  
To: [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org)  
Subject: Gaston county resident - OPPOSED!!!

e051

1 I am emailing to voice my concern and opposition to the Garden parkway plan. I live in the historic neighborhood of Brookwood, directly off of US 321, where you plan to end the Parkway. You have already admitted that the toll road will not alleviate traffic on 85. Have you even looked at US 321? US 321 cannot even handle the traffic and tractor trailers that fly down the narrow lanes as it is. There will be terrible, deadly consequences if you route any more traffic to this road. The state budget is in crisis and NC cannot afford this road. Don't start this project unless you can finish it. Don't build a road you can 'afford'; build a road that actually works!

I am a full-time working mother of 2 young children. I do not have much spare time in my life, but I plan to make time to fight this project. I will be at the opposition rally at the Gaston County courthouse on Tuesday, July 21, with other members of my neighborhood to help stop this waste of money.

Kelly McKenzie

July 19, 2009

e052

Re: Gaston East-West Connector  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Written Comments

This e-mail is a duplicate of the letter from Mr. John Medlin dated 7/19/09 (Document lc011). See responses provided for that letter.

Dear Sir,

Included herein as Attachment 1 are specific comments to the referenced document and applicable attachments.

As a professional engineer regularly involved in projects costing in the hundreds of millions, and sometimes billions of dollars, I have read many environmental impact statements. I feel that the report developed for this project is the least complete, and least conclusive of them all. The results are not a reflection on the authors, but on the project itself. The proposed project is not financially viable, nor does it meet the intent of the original visionaries. The data reported is both biased toward the "known answer" and incomplete. Furthermore, continued effort on this project is a waste of North Carolina taxpayer's money.

Currently, a significant portion of Gaston County, and a smaller portion of Mecklenburg County, is under the shadow of a potential project that will greatly affect property values if built. Those properties in the current study area are effectively frozen. Potential sellers cannot find buyers because of the risk of this project going forward in some to-be-determined configuration. If, because of the lack of local support, or other reasons, this project is not approved to proceed, then the plans for the project MUST be removed from public record. Otherwise, these properties will remain in an economically depressed state.

This project should not be allowed to proceed until the deficiencies listed in the attached are corrected, and issues raised by others are addressed. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

John R Medlin, PE, PMP  
Attachment 1

**Traffic**

The Final Statement of Purpose and Need (FSPN) and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement DEIS cite a "Need to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow on the sections of I-85, US 29-74 and US321 in the project study area..." Traffic data published in the FSPN and the DEIS indicate that traffic volumes will not be significantly improved by the proposed project and in some cases will actually be worsened.

Projected Traffic Volumes in 2030

Corridor	No-build	Project to 321	Project to I-85
485 to 85	91400	NR	96800
85 crossing Catawba River	193600	NR	185200
74 crossing Catawba River	70500	NR	51000
74 west of the project (phase 2)	37200	NR	44900
85 just north of 321	134600	139300	137400
321 South of Project	20700	22400	25000
321 North of Project	20700	38500	25200
East-West Connector at Catawba River	0	NR	55400
East-West Connector at 321 (east side)	0	14300	20000

NR = Not Reported

e052

*continued*

As reflected above, the data issued indicates that traffic volumes on I85 at 321 will be worse with the project than without. It doesn't solve the problem, but in fact exacerbates it. Traffic on 85 at the Catawba river is only slightly improved (~4%) and will continue to operate at an elevated Level of Service. This minimal improvement is not sufficient to justify the project. The DEIS needs to address this.

The project initiates additional urban sprawl, and causes a new influx of traffic along the proposed corridor that actually increases the traffic on secondary roads. This increase has not been studied in a secondary impact analysis.

In addition, a secondary impact analysis has not been performed on the need and availability of funding for the other additional services needed to accommodate the projected urban sprawl: schools, water, sewer, etc.

Where is the study of impacts of the project on air quality in the region? Our area is a non-attainment area and is getting worse everyday. Because the project doesn't significantly improve the situation on the primary corridors, and adds to traffic on the secondary roads, it will in fact make air quality worse. This impact needs to be evaluated before deciding to proceed with this project.

As part of the justification for proceeding with the project, the DEIS claims that the project will save 20 to 25 minutes for commuters to travel from Gaston County to the Charlotte airport. Actual current travel time from the center of the study area (Patrick road adjacent to the project corridor) is ~28 minutes. Likewise, travel time to downtown Charlotte is only 35. Apparently, the time savings are significantly overstated and should not be considered as justification to proceed with the project.

As indicated by the published data, if the project is built only to 321 and remains that way for many years (if not permanently), the traffic traveling to there on the proposed project exits to 321, then exits onto either Stagecoach Rd or Robinson Rd. Neither of these roads is sufficient to add the projected volume of additional vehicles each day. In one direction Robinson empties back onto an already very busy area on Union road. At the other end, it passes through a one-lane underpass. Stagecoach eventually makes its way to 74, but passes thru neighborhoods and by schools and several churches. The alternative is that the traffic remain on 321 north to reach 74 or I-85, and pass through the historic district of Gastonia and downtown. Again, these secondary impacts have not been studied.

Also not addressed by the study are the local impacts if the project is not completed west and north to I-85. If the second phase is not completed, the project will not provide a bypass for 85, or access to the industrial parks built in the Bessemer city area.

The FSPN also states a need for improved mobility, access and connectivity within southern Gaston County. The DEIS states that this need will be fulfilled. However, it does not provide evidence that this concept, a local toll road, will work and succeed as proposed. There are no studies provided of like projects that have succeeded. In fact, there is evidence that these projects fail; e.g. I-185 in the Greenville, SC area. This needs to be studied and quantified.

**Noise**

The currently proposed alignment for the project predominately passes through rural areas. As stated in the DEIS, these areas are currently noted for farmlands, and low density housing. Consequently the noise impacts of the project, measured on a per person basis, will be low. However, because the analysis for the need for sound walls/buffers is influenced by these same low population densities, the result is biased. In fact, the sound impact on any one individual is the same whether he has many neighbors, or is isolated. The relative quality of life of the rural resident will be significantly negatively affected. Background noise will change from being relatively non-existent to excessive. This perspective needs to be addressed and evaluated further.

e052  
continued

How does the proposed project plan address the impact of noise on future development? Will there be mandatory buffer zones? This response seems reasonable, however, the original plan does not account for this. The stated plan is that in essence only the property needed for the actual project right of way will be purchased. Buffer zones will not be obtained. This will result in a situation where the environment of existing residents is affected to a greater degree than future residents. The study needs to address and quantify this inequity.

Table 3-5 in Appendix G lists impacts by neighborhood and by DSA. Some of the segments are not included in the analysis. For example, segment JX4, part of the recommended DSA 9, is not listed. This affects the White Oak Subdivision at a C1 level. There are currently 14 residences in this neighborhood. If the proposed alignment for DSA 9 were to be built, only 4 of those residences would remain, and three of those would have part of their residential lots purchased for right of way (and be subject to noise levels between 66 and 71dBA). If an alternate access were provided, two more of the residences could remain, but the level would be C2. In addition, 4 other residences are affected by segment JX4 (part of DSA 9). This omission of segment JX4 analysis suggests that other errors may exist in the analysis of the routes and that the analysis should be repeated and completed. Are these residences along JX4 even considered in the totals for impacted residences?

Construction noise is being assumed to be mitigated by vegetation screens. This will not be the case along much of the alignment because the proposed route passes through open farm land and neighborhoods. Other mitigation schemes should be considered, and their costs included in the analysis.

#### Financial

At this time, the study indicates a \$35MM/yr shortfall. This calculation was performed based on preliminary traffic count predictions. Since the DEIS was issued, additional traffic data has been published, and the numbers quoted at public hearings have changed. Does the study accurately predict the shortfall, or will the calculation indicate a change?

The estimated toll is being advertised as \$2.50 in 2015, or \$0.11 per mile, subject to change based on supply and demand. Is there a maximum amount that can/will be charged if usage is significantly less than predicted?

Is the calculation for revenue weighted by actual travel miles predicted?

#### Environmental

The DEIS has an extensive discussion on the way the state of NC is avoiding a sanction on highway projects related to submission of the SIP for atmospheric compliance. It even goes so far as to say that the project will not be stopped because the state has a plan for mitigating the requirements. The traffic studies indicate that the project will substantially increase the total number of vehicle miles traveled in the area. Presumably, this increase in VMT will increase air emissions and will have a negative impact on the regional ozone non-attainment status. However, there is no analysis that evaluates this issue, much less a plan for actually improving air quality, nor is there any documentation or discussion on how the project will improve air quality. This approach is irresponsible and dangerous to the health of the citizens of the region. A plan for actually mitigating the effects, not the requirements, needs to be developed.

In addition, there is no discussion or analysis on the impact of traffic congestion on secondary roads created by suburban sprawl. These areas will likely contribute to further air quality degradation. These effects need to be analyzed and quantified.

In Table 3-7: General Environmental Justice Evaluation for Toll Facility, many issues are presented, and then dismissed with no basis provided. The authors simply provide a convenient response; e.g. the stated concern of "Diversion of traffic through neighborhoods" elicited the response of "No potential for disproportionately high and adverse impact" and "Very limited potential for diverted traffic through neighborhoods containing special populations." This method is unscientific and subjective and needs to be addressed.

e052  
continued

#### Local Support

State law requires that the Turnpike Authority demonstrate local support for the project to proceed. The comments solicited at the public hearings make it apparent that only community leaders and developers are supporting the project; i.e. those who will gain financially from the project. The data presented in the DEIS support this notion; e.g. traffic will not improve, air quality will be worsened, urban sprawl will accelerate. By definition, this has become a special interest project, not one being built for the good of the general public. The current residents and many local businesses are generally opposed to the project. The opposition is being voiced not only by citizens immediately adjacent to the proposed routes, but also by others across the county and the state. Only a few hundred homes are proposed to be affected, yet thousands of signatures have been collected opposing the project. The demonstration of local support has not been provided.

The project is being planned for future citizens, not the current ones. The current citizens will be unwillingly sacrificing property values and solitude for those who will come after. The DEIS does not address this issue completely and should be required to do so.

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**From:** [Nick Swafford](mailto:Nick_Swofford@turnpike.org)  
**To:** [gaston@turnpike.org](mailto:gaston@turnpike.org); [mayor@cityofgastonia.com](mailto:mayor@cityofgastonia.com); [citycouncil@cityofgastonia.com](mailto:citycouncil@cityofgastonia.com); [jamesf@ncleg.net](mailto:jamesf@ncleg.net); [billcu@ncleg.net](mailto:billcu@ncleg.net);  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2009 10:31:12 AM

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I am writing this on behalf of my family. We have resided on Edgewater Drive, in Paradise Point off of South New Hope road for twenty "peaceful" years. We are adamantly opposed to the construction of the Garden Parkway! We, like so many other rational thinking Gaston County citizens, feel it is THE TOLL ROAD TO NOWHERE!!!!!!!!!! And we want it to GO AWAY FOREVER AND NOT REAR ITS UGLY HEAD AGAIN!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The people of Gaston County have been opposed to this road and have been fighting it for fifteen years!!!!!!!!!! Enough is enough, the people of Gaston County have spoken and have made it very clear that this road is not acceptable in our county!!!!!!!!!! The reasons have all been submitted many, many times over and we adamantly support our neighbors in rejecting THE TOLL ROAD TO NOWHERE!!!!!!!!!! Thank you for taking the time to review our comments. Sincerely, Nick, Rhonda, and Justin Swafford

**From:** [CLAYTON JR WHITE](#) e054  
**To:** [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org)  
**Subject:** Gaston East-West Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2009 7:26:30 AM

Hi, My name is Pam White and I live on Camille St in south Gaston County. I'd like to give my opinion on the "Garden Parkway" that is proposed to come just beside my house.

My family moved to this piece of land in 1953. My husband and I bought, moved and remodeled my grandparents' house in 1985 (which is where we still live) and my brother lives in my parents' house next door. We are perfectly happy with Robinson Road the way it is now and has been for the past many, many years. We don't need a 4 or six lane road to take us to Charlotte or wherever it's supposed to go. We have plenty enough traffic as it is. We enjoy watching the deer, rabbits and other wildlife and birds out our windows every day, and we feel the new road would ruin the idyllic country life that we have loved for so long. Heck, we don't even mind the occasional snake that crawls up on our front porch!

We would much rather see the money spent on improvements on I-85, especially around the 321 exit and Belmont Abbey. And how about finishing I-485? I like the idea of doing something with mass transit to Belmont, Mt Holly, and Charlotte via the existing railroad tracks. Something like that, I think, would be more environmental-friendly than a new 6 lane highway tearing up the beautiful landscape across Gaston County.

To tell the truth, before we found out how our street was going to be closed off, we weren't that much against the road, but once we found out how we're going to be hemmed in with a 14 foot high fence around us, well, we can't stand by and do nothing. My brother next door will probably have his home destroyed and will have to find somewhere else to live. I don't even want to think about how our property will be devalued!

I don't know what difference any of this will make to you or anyone else that may read this, but please, please, do not bring the Garden Parkway here - or anywhere else in Gaston County. We don't need it, we've got along without it until now, and we do not see where it can improve the lives of the people who live in this part of the county.

Thank you.  
Pam White

**From:** [John Stines](#) e055  
**To:** [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org)  
**Subject:** Written Comments -- AGAINST Garden Parkway Toll Road - Gaston County, NC  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2009 4:26:48 PM

1 I am very much against the Garden Parkway toll road project. The project is ill-conceived and will do little more than create sprawl at a time when Gaston County's towns and cities are trying to revitalize their downtowns. While this proposed toll road does not affect my property directly, it will pass by my property within approximately 1/2 mile. The last thing I want to see is rural SE Gaston County turned into a copycat design of Huntersville and Pineville with heavy commuter traffic, ugly high-density developments, and strip malls. I am also concerned about crime, as criminals often use fast access to major roads as the conduit for their hit and run operations. This happened with I-485, and I'm sure it will happen near interchanges of this toll road, if built.

2 Already, Catawba Cove is plagued with pollution and silt, and this road will be built on top of rare (for this area) wetlands. I do not want to see the cove harmed more than it already is. And this cove is part of Lake Wylie, which I'm sure you are aware is already in critical condition with pollution -- one of the worst lakes in the US. We don't need even more oil, grease, antifreeze, and brake dust entering the lake from runoff from this toll road.

3 Lastly, it is quite frankly a joke to build a toll road that doesn't connect two major highways. With the funding not available to complete this project, and having traffic dump into the York Chester neighborhood, it seems an act of lunacy to build this road in the current economic reality. What this project would accomplish is the means for new developments to be built along the SE corner of Gaston County and give these new developments quick access to I-485. And that is entirely the WRONG reason this road project should be built. Our tax dollars should not be spent to be an enabler of a few individuals to create developments. We can barely provide, and in some cases fail to provide, the infrastructure for the population we have now. We're already cutting teachers and increasing class size, and taxes are proposed to be raised to pay for other services. The last thing we need is a development engine, and that is exactly what this road would accomplish and little more.

It is my hope and wish that this project be cancelled.

Sincerely,  
John Stines

**From:** [info@ncturnpike.org](mailto:info@ncturnpike.org) e056  
**To:** [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org)  
**Subject:** Comment: Gaston East-West Connector  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2009 4:45:26 PM

**Name:** Greg and Suzanne Grant

**Comments:** We live in Saddlewood Subdiv an are very disappointed in this proposal. This is a very beautiful area of Gastonia with horse farms and nice homes. I'm sure Gaston Cty. receives much taxes and revenues from this area. It seems like a connection to 321 would be sufficient instead of destroying all the homes in between.

**From:** Matt Young  
**To:** Joyner, David  
**Cc:** Harris, Jennifer; Dewitt, Steve  
**Sent:** Tue Jul 21 21:42:32 2009  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Displeasure

e057

You always hear the saying, "The American Dream". I've heard it since I was a little girl and I couldn't wait until the day that I could have my American Dream. Everything started falling into place four years ago when I met my husband. Last year he proposed and we started to plan our future. His family owns land on South New Hope Road, which he inherited a portion of. We had our house plans drawn up and designed. I was so excited and I felt so blessed to start out my life with my new husband in our "dream" home. It was perfect and big enough to raise our own family after we got married. We got loan approval and even began to purchase materials and accessories that were to be used in the home. Every item was picked out with great attention to detail and dreaming about how it would fit into our home. My American Dream was coming true and things were falling into place.

Well, I thought everything was great. My husband broke the news to me that a proposed toll road would be affecting our plans and the road would completely seize our land to which our house would be built along with our current home and the homes of his family. He had to call the bank and cancel the loan because there was no need to proceed. My heart was crushed along with my dream. So, we married June 6, 2009 and instead of us spending our newlywed days in our newly constructed home, we are fortunate enough to be able to live in his bedroom at his parents' house, which will also be taken due to the road to nowhere. My husband also inherited his late grandmother's house, which we are in the process of remodeling. It is small and humble with one bedroom, but a step above living in a bedroom in his parents' home. It will be a home of our own, but not large enough to start a family. Also, I failed to mention that this house too will be torn down for the sake of the State of North Carolina.

Not only has this road delayed us from building our dream home, but also from starting a family. My husband and I cannot start a family because we have nowhere to live. I won't be able to get a nursery ready for a baby, when there is not room for a baby.

This road has not only dashed away my American Dream, but has delayed a start to my new life! I want you to ask yourselves if your organization would continue to pursue such a poorly designed project if you or your daughter were in my shoes.

Sincerely,

Hannah L. Young

**From:** Matt Young  
**To:** Joyner, David  
**Cc:** Harris, Jennifer; Dewitt, Steve  
**Sent:** Tue Jul 21 22:12:59 2009  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Waste

e058

I would like to express my concerns and discontent with the plans and proposal of the "Garden Parkway" in Gaston and Mecklenburg counties. This project has been ongoing for approximately twenty years and has been ever-changing as time has progressed. Now that a preferred route has been chosen, things continue to change. The first proposal of having the parkway connect I-485 to I-85 in Gaston County have been changed and now the road will only make it to US-321. I know you say it would only be temporary until funding is secured, I guess that's what the folks in charge of completing I-485 say also. Our governor proudly boasted that the 485 project would begin this year and soon be completed, I guess she ate crow when the DOT said last week that the project could not continue until 2015. The great parkway was also supposed to alleviate traffic on I-85 through Gaston County, but another report from the DOT stated that this was not the case. It seems that in a time of budget crunches and government cutbacks that we would be 100% sure a project like this would be successful and you would have the information to sell it to the public, but when there are conflicting reports between the Turnpike Authority and the DOT about traffic projections and the ever-changing route citizens don't just don't believe you.

It's very hard for the citizens and tax payers of North Carolina to set back and watch our state government struggle to piece together a budget and to attempt to operate in the black for the next year when projects like these are created and promoted by politicians that would gain monetarily or have their name attached to a stretch of the road. We will have to pay an increased tax rate in 2010 to compensate for our budget deficit and you want to build a toll road with no apparent benefit. By the way, how did you like your ½% pay cut and furlough hours due to the budget crunch. You can probably expect another reduction in pay with days of furlough for the upcoming year, enjoy! But want we enjoy paying those taxes for more pork barrel spending. As government you should be good stewards of the tax payers' money and spend it on necessity and justified reasons. How do you sleep at night when your spend our money to take people's homes to build another failed road project? Let's finish what we started with so many other road projects before we start another money pit, and let's save \$24 million and eliminate a worthless portion of our state government by cutting the Turnpike Authority.

So, as I sacrifice my home and watch as my parents and other neighbors struggle to find another place to live off of the greatly depreciated "fair market" values you pay us, rest your heads proudly as you sleep tonight. Maybe people like you won't be around and your children won't have to worry about losing their homes due to a worthless state project that benefits the greedy.

Sincerely,  
Matthew L. Young

**From:** Jeff Young  
**To:** [david.joyner@ncturnpike.org](mailto:david.joyner@ncturnpike.org)  
**Cc:** Beth Wise  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2009 8:26 PM  
**Subject:** Garden Parkway Toll Road Gaston County  
Mr. Joyner, Ms Harris, and Ms Wise:

e059

I am a resident of the South New Hope Road community. Many of the residents of this area are older folks like myself who have lived here all our lives. This farm community was purchased and developed by our grandfathers and great grandfathers. There are many sentimental elements to this community and many of us are kin. The barn in my backyard was built by my grandfather more than 80 years ago with hand-hewn rafters. How can that be replaced or a value put on it? We have many feral cats we care for that live in the barn. We always have cats and kittens for the young ones to play with. I could not leave my property without providing for these animals. We inherited this property from my parents with the intention of continuing to maintain the atmosphere we were raised in, a warm, strong, community surrounded by our friends and family. This is the life we chose, to live in this small rural community. What right does government have to take our property to develop a toll road when we have yet found anyone who says they will use it? We are unable to hire teachers, unable to complete major road projects already started such as 485, yet you want to start another road that will not benefit the rural community it will be consuming. The road will cost billions of dollars to not only build, but also to maintain. We are asking this item be removed from the DOT agenda. Allow us to keep our homes, property, and preserve our heritage. No amount of money can compensate us for the years of memories we have stored. Please do not take away the opportunity of our children and future generations to inherit our land and homes. Rural property cannot be replaced. Think of your own parents. Would you want them uprooted and relocated when they are in their senior years? I think not! Please hear the cries of the people this road will be affecting. Let major highways stay in the cities as a was intended. This is America and we have the right to chose our dwelling places and home sites. Please do not take that freedom away. This parkway will also affect the rural areas surrounding three churches. People will not readily attend churches off a major highway. The play areas for the church yards will be too dangerous! As politicians and members of the DOT, please listen to the people. Many of us voted for you to be our voice. Hear our voices now and represent the sentiments of the people! We do not want the garden parkway. Gaston county currently has an unemployment rate of 13.9%. Many of the people who will lose their homes and land have already lost their jobs. These people will be unable to start over. My entire home is in the proposed pathway. There will be no way for my family to start over. What will we use for collateral? Our home and land has always been our collateral. Please reconsider this project. I have been to many area meetings regarding the road. Those who are for it state they would be against it if it involved their homes and property. Those affected should get to decide. I also do not know how anyone can say it is not a conflict of interest when Senator David Hoyle had inside information he used to purchase surrounding land that will also be purchased for the road! This is disgusting! The environmental impact will be huge! We have many forms of wildlife including deer, opossums, raccoons, etc. Many are being killed in the road because they already have no where to live. Please listen to those this road impacts most. A rural, agricultural community is very rare these days! Please preserve the green! We have enough asphalt!

**From:** Labrey Burris  
**To:** [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org);  
**cc:** [gaston@ncturnpike.org](mailto:gaston@ncturnpike.org);  
**Subject:** Attn. Ms. Jennifer Harris, PE  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2009 12:20:18 PM

e060

How did you hear about the meeting?  
Other: Word of mouth.

Which Gaston East-West Connector Pre-Hearing Open House did you attend?  
June 23, 2009 - Forestview H.S.  
\* Also, attended a July 14th community meeting at T. Jeffers Community Center  
\* Also, attended the Gastonia City Council Meeting July 21, 2009.

1. I am most concerned about the whole turnpike parkway project and live in the western corridor. Based on information from June 23, 2009 - Forestview H.S. and the July 14th community meeting at T. Jeffers Community Center my home would directly be effected. My home is located in the Matthew Acres community of Gastonia and I am 100% against this project.

Comment Summary...

My home is located in the Matthew Acres community of Gastonia and I am 100% against this project. God has provide the opportunity to pay for my home and make additional home expansion. I am approaching retirement horizon in the near future and look forward to a debt free retirement. Based on this project, I would have to relocate and find a new home. Todays, market would require me to go into debt for a new home. It is a personal goal to leave an inheritance for my son. Furthermore, I am concerned for the elderly residences in my community that likewise have worked hard. Many of them are retired home owners. Uprooting the fabric of this community is wrong and will have a negative impact.

1 I am very alarmed by the economic greed behind this project and lack of common good. Our tax dollars should be invested to improve and widen current roads (example.... widen I-85 near Belmont both north and south and widen 321). Funds should be used for our greatest resource: CHILDRENS EDUCATION. Gaston County school district ranked 113th out of 115 school districts in North Carolina when it comes to having access to computers in school. Our students are graduating from high school below basic reading level. How can you bring 21st century jobs to the community and not prepare a 21st century worker.

2 Truth is the Parkway will fail to reduce times between I-85 and I-485 and lack funds to complete the project, which will only increase the traffic issues on I-85 and 321. STOP THE TOLLROAD AND STOP THE LACK OF COMMON SENSE!

thank you,  
Mary Burris

**Subject:** Gaston hotline message 4

A message came in on the Gaston hotline at 11:02am June 11<sup>th</sup>.

e061

Woodrow Benfield called from Gastonia.

1 [ "I want to let you all there know we do not need a Garden Parkway. There are no traffic problems in Gastonia or South Gastonia at all. They're going through and taking property we don't want them to have and we do not need the parkway. If you want to spend money, build a bridge on Highway 74 between Gastonia and Charlotte. The bridge is old and too narrow. Thank you and have a good day."

His number is . . . . .

He would like a call back.

Thanks!

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**From:** Squarespace Services <services@squarespace.com>

e062

**To:** Harris, Jennifer

**Sent:** Mon Jun 15 09:46:48 2009

**Subject:** Form Submission - Ms. Harris: Support the Garden Parkway!

To Jennifer Harris (NC Turnpike Authority): I am writing to ask for your support in making sure the Garden Parkway is built. I believe the East-west Connector Road is vital to the safety and prosperity of Gaston County and to our entire region. Thank you for your service and for your attention in this crucial matter.

Additional Comments for Jennifer Harris:

Your Name: Henry Whitesides

Your Community of Residence: Gastonia

Your Email Address: hmw117@att.net

Appendix B5 – E-mailed Public Comments

**Table B5-1: E-mailed Public Comments Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e001, e002, e003, e005, e006, e007, e013, e014, e018, e019, e020, e022, e023, e024, e025, e026, e028, e031, e039, e062			Expressed opinions in support of the Gaston East-West Connector, but no detailed response needed.	No response necessary.
e010, e011, e027, e028, e034, e053, e056, e057			Expressed opinions opposing the Gaston East-West Connector, but no detailed response needed.	No response necessary.
e004	1	Land Use and Transportation Planning	<p>You are going against the basic premise of zoning, deed restrictions, home owner association rules and regulations by building the "Toll Road to No Where". <i>Should that plan be approved, it is estimated that in one day, 20,000 more cars/tractor trailers/semi's etc., will pass in front of our homes on highway 321.</i> Are your plans to widen 321 by removing the telephone poles which will need to be done if this plan goes through? Are your plans to cut down the oak trees that sit right beside the road so the road can be widened? Are your plans to take whatever is needed off the front of our properties through Eminent Domain so 321 can be widened? Zoning and deed restrictions intent is to stop changes that may cause devaluation of properties to take place. Yet, if this "Toll Road to No Where" is approved, if it goes through as proposed, that is exactly what you will do. THIS IS UNNECESSARY....THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES LIKE SIMPLY WIDENING AN EXIST BRIDGE AND ROAD THAT WILL NOT DISTURB THE CHARACTER OF WHAT HAS TAKEN SO MANY YEARS AND LIVES TO BUILD - THE HISTORIC COMMUNITY OF YORK CHESTER IN GASTONIA.</p>	<p><u>Regarding project phasing.</u> The ultimate project would extend from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County, as described and evaluated in the Draft EIS. However, construction of large transportation projects such as the Gaston East-West Connector, I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed based on availability of funding. The intent is to build as much of the project in the first phase as possible, with the remainder constructed as soon as possible after that. At this time, based on available information, NCTA is planning on initially constructing the entire length of the project, with four lanes from I-485 to US 321 and two lanes from US 321 to I-85. The section from US 321 to I-85 would be upgraded to four lanes by 2035.</p> <p>However, in order to respond to concerns expressed prior to, and as part of, the public review process for the Draft EIS, the NCTA studied traffic forecasts for a potential interim project phase ending at US 321. The studies indicate there would be an increase in traffic along US 321 from the Gaston East-West Connector north to Stagecoach Road for a distance of approximately 3/4 mile. Beyond Stagecoach Road, the traffic is estimated to generally be the same with or without the interim project phase. Under both an interim phase for the project and the ultimate project, a corridor-level analysis indicates US 321 would operate under capacity and at acceptable levels of service from Robinson Road to US 29-74 through the year 2030. Therefore, the project would not be expected to have an impact on the Yorkchester historic district.</p> <p><u>Regarding widening alternatives.</u> The Draft EIS evaluated a range of reasonable alternatives, summarized in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS, including various options for improving existing roadways. The Draft EIS adequately demonstrates that improving I-85 or other area roadways cannot effectively meet the project purpose and were eliminated from study.</p>

**Appendix B5 – E-mailed Public Comments**

**Table B5-1: E-mailed Public Comments Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e008	1	Public Involvement	I would like to know if I could get a listing of all owners and their addresses that would be 1300 feet on either side of center line of the recommended route of the Gaston Connector or Garden Parkway. I am not sure if this is public record, but if it is could I get a copy of this?	Property owner names and addresses are a matter of public record and are available on-line at the Gaston County Web site GIS page: <a href="http://egov1.co.gaston.nc.us/website/ParcelDataSite/WelcomePage.html">http://egov1.co.gaston.nc.us/website/ParcelDataSite/WelcomePage.html</a> . The Gaston County Web site GIS page also has several project-related layers that can be displayed, including DSA 9 (Preferred Alternative) corridor boundaries and DSA 9 preliminary right of way limits.
e009	1	Public Involvement	The members of this group are requesting that the time to submit written comments be extended thirty days to August 17, 2009.	The comment period was extended from July 17 to July 21, 2009. The public review period "clock" is set based on the date a Draft EIS notice of availability is posted in the Federal Register, which for this project was May 22, 2009. Sixty days following that date is July 21, 2009. SAFETEA-LU mandates that the DEIS comment period not exceed 60 days, unless agreement is reached with the lead agencies, the project sponsor, and all participating agencies.
e012	1	Alternatives Considered	I've read that the North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) has decided to collect tolls strictly via overhead scanners vs. traditional toll plazas ( or as most states do now, a combination of both). I read in the press where N-O-T building toll plazas would save in construction costs (millions of dollars). However, I have a concern that the NCTA is putting all its faith in people being honest and willing will pay the toll bill for this and the other NCTA Toll Roads that are build whenever they get it in the mail. I am concerned that a few people (and perhaps more over time) will just simply throw the bill away and not pay the toll, which will hurt the NCTA finances over the long haul. Yesssss, you might be able to pressure NC drivers into paying the toll (i.e. by not allowing them to renew their driver license) but I don't believe the NCTA will not have the resources or time to chase out of town drivers into paying the toll. I fear at some point once these toll roads are opened (5-10 years maybe) and the NCTA finds out the hard way that they are losing lots of money from folks not paying the toll, I feel that you guys are just going to have to go back and put up toll plazas later, which will cost more money.	The NCTA plans to provide a number of electronic methods for paying tolls. Drivers can establish accounts with the NCTA and use transponders, or drivers can purchase pre-paid transponders without establishing an account. For vehicles without transponders, a video system will capture license plate numbers and a bill will be mailed to the vehicle's registered owner. These types of systems are in use at existing toll facilities throughout the country. The NCTA also is working with other toll authorities to provide interoperability with other toll systems' transponders so those transponders will work on North Carolina toll roads.

**Appendix B5 – E-mailed Public Comments**

**Table B5-1: E-mailed Public Comments Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e015	1	Land Use and Transportation Planning	You cannot continue it to I-85, and 24 traffic lights between the end of the route and I-85 will keep many people from considering using it. Your environmental impact statement is seriously flawed. We have 7,000 signatures protesting this road. Why don't you work with the DOT and fix the existing road situations in North Carolina. Our maintenance is limited because of funds and I-485 is still not complete. I am wholeheartedly supporting the putting the Turnpike Authority under the governance of NC DOT.	See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004) regarding project phasing. The Draft EIS was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and applicable guidance, as discussed in Section P.1.1 of the Draft EIS. The NCTA is in receipt of the referenced petition opposing the project, and it is part of the project record, as discussed in <b>Section 3.3</b> of the Final EIS.  On July 16, 2009, the General Assembly approved House Bill 1617 that revises GS 136-89.182(b) to transfer the "functions and funds of the North Carolina Turnpike Authority to the Department of Transportation to conserve expenditures and improve efficiency." The law became effective on July 27, 2009.
e016	1	Alternatives Considered	Who needs to go from below the airport to I-85? Or visa-versa? It doesn't seem to be trucks, as only 10% of the traffic is projected to be trucks. If we need a toll road around Gastonia and Belmont and Charlotte to cut down on traffic, leaving 85 for commuters, why would we put it here, where it is so expensive to acquire land and build over water (again and again)??? Wouldn't it make sense to put it much farther out? And why a toll road? Why not an outer-outer loop?	Traffic volumes projected along the Gaston East-West Connector for the year 2030 are listed in Table 2-5 of the Draft EIS. Updated forecasts for the Preferred Alternative for the year 2035 are listed in <b>Section 2.3.5</b> of the Final EIS. Travelers who would use the toll road could include a wide range of travelers, including commuters, truckers, and local and through traffic.  The process by which the Detailed Study Alternatives, and their locations, were developed are described Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS.  As discussed in Section 1.1 of the Draft EIS, "traditional (non-toll) transportation funding for this project is not likely in the foreseeable future." Therefore, if the project is to be constructed within the foreseeable future, alternatives means of funding (e.g. tolls) must be used.  An outer-outer loop (this is assumed to be relative to I-485) would be a parallel ring to I-485. In Gaston County, a parallel ring would run north-south. The purpose of the project, as stated in Section 1.3 of the Draft EIS, is to "improve east-west transportation mobility in the area around the City of Gastonia, between Gastonia and the Charlotte metropolitan area, and particularly to establish direct access between the rapidly growing area of southeast Gaston County and western Mecklenburg County."

**Appendix B5 – E-mailed Public Comments**

**Table B5-1: E-mailed Public Comments Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e017	1	Purpose and Need for Action	<p>There won't be enough tolls (cars using the road) to pay for the highway all the way from I-485 to I-85, this is according to the Toll Authority, and because there isn't enough money to build the whole superhighway, the building plan has been broken into two parts.</p> <p>Even before the financial crisis, there wasn't any money in Raleigh to build the second leg. On the same cost note, the Toll Authority recently reduced the traffic counts, making it even more likely that the road cannot pay for itself!</p>	<p>The ultimate project extends from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County. This is the project NCTA evaluated in the Draft EIS as required by NEPA, and this is the project NCTA intends to construct as soon as possible. However, construction of large transportation projects, such as I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed based on the availability of funding.</p> <p>Based on the Preliminary Traffic and Revenue Study for the Gaston East-West Connector, available on the NCTA Web site, the NCTA has determined that it is financially feasible to include tolls as part of the project's financing plan. An Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study, which includes more in-depth analysis, will be conducted prior to selling the bonds that will comprise a portion of the project funding. If investors are not satisfied, then the bonds will not be able to be sold, and the project will not be able to proceed.</p> <p>Other funding sources that may be used include federal credit assistance from the USDOT under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, and appropriation from the NC Legislature (i.e. "gap funding") in the currently approved amount of \$35 million per year.</p> <p>Updated forecasts for the Preferred Alternative for the year 2035 are provided in <b>Section 2.3.5</b> of the Final EIS.</p>
e017	2	Purpose and Need for Action	<p>Funding for the highway terminates at US 321 South, between Forbes and Crowders Creek Roads. This termination at US 321 South will force 14,000 vehicles a day onto US 321 (this is a reduction in the Toll Authorities original count of 20,000 vehicle, why are we building the road if the traffic use keeps going down!!) These neighborhoods are busy enough as it is, and even 14,000 vehicles a day would alter the community drastically, and cause additional issues at the 321/85 interchange which is already a headache for anyone who uses it, which is where all the cars should be going if the purpose of this road is a shortcut from Charlotte to I-85.</p>	<p>See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).</p>
e017	3	Indirect and Cumulative Effects	<p>One of the main arguments for the road is that it will create jobs, business will move into Southern Gaston County if this road is here because the Garden Parkway will create easy access to 85 and 485. However I am not sure how many businesses will move here if the</p>	<p>As described in Section 1.3 of the Draft EIS, the purpose of the project is to improve east-west transportation mobility in southern Gaston County and between southern Gaston County and western Mecklenburg County.</p>

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			section from 321 to 85 is never built, for vehicles to move from 321 to 85 thru an area not able to handle the traffic flow, into an interchange that is currently a headache does not seem like a good business plan.	The potential for development around the proposed Gaston East-West Connector is qualitatively discussed in Section 7.5.1 of the Draft EIS. Additional quantitative studies of indirect and cumulative effects, including changes in land use, were conducted for the Preferred Alternative and are summarized in <b>Section 2.5.5</b> of the Final EIS. For information about project phasing and traffic on US 321, see response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).
e017	4	Purpose and Need for Action	Then there is the toll concept, the businesses will already be paying extra in gas since the short cut from 485 to 85 via 321 is longer than just 85 straight across, they have to incur an extra cost of tolls, again not the best business plan. Who will pay to upgrade existing roads that the toll road empties traffic onto?	<p>The ultimate project would extend from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County, as described and evaluated in the Draft EIS. However, construction of large transportation projects such as the Gaston East-West Connector, I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed based on availability of funding. The intent is to build as much of the project in the first phase as possible, with the remainder constructed as soon as possible after that. At this time, based on available information, NCTA is planning on initially constructing the entire length of the project, with four lanes from I-485 to US 321 and two lanes from US 321 to I-85. The section from US 321 to I-85 would be upgraded to four lanes by 2035.</p> <p>However, in order to respond to concerns expressed prior to, and as part of, the public review process for the Draft EIS, the NCTA studied traffic forecasts for a potential interim project phase ending at US 321. The studies indicate there would be an increase in traffic along US 321 from the Gaston East-West Connector north to Stagecoach Road for a distance of approximately 3/4 mile. Beyond Stagecoach Road, the traffic is estimated to generally be the same with or without the interim project phase. Under both an interim phase for the project and the ultimate project, a corridor-level analysis indicates US 321 would operate under capacity and at acceptable levels of service from Robinson Road to US 29-74 through the year 2030.</p> <p>Existing roads that would interchange with the Gaston East-West Connector would be upgraded as needed in the area immediately surrounding the interchange. Improvements outside the interchange areas, if needed, would be separate projects.</p>
e017	5	Alternatives Considered	As per the John Locke Foundation research into the matter found at this link: <a href="http://www.johnlocke.org/site-docs/traffic/05Gastonia.pdf">http://www.johnlocke.org/site-docs/traffic/05Gastonia.pdf</a> , one of their recommendations is to widen I-85. Quoted from their document it says: "Re-consider the widening of I 85. In a major	In accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1502.14) and FHWA guidance and regulations (FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A, 1987 and 23 CFR 771.123), a range of reasonable alternatives were rigorously explored and objectively evaluated in Chapter

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			<p><i>oversight the present Plan does not mention I 85's problems or its importance to the region. I 85, not the Garden Parkway, is the region's future lifeline, tying it to jobs in Charlotte and points east. The possibility of widening I 85 has not been seriously reviewed. Room for 4 lanes each way is presently available through the entire corridor, and this action may be needed in any case to handle growing long-distance and truck traffic in the Atlanta-Washington corridor. The westbound 'squeeze' from 4 to 3 lanes at Belmont Abby is arguably the most dangerous site in the county, yet is not mentioned in the Plan. Innovative highway designs that allow for capacity improvements in tight spaces are increasingly common. Given that widening might be needed west of Gastonia and through the region, even if the Parkway is built, more attention should be placed on this option. Other options that should be looked at include reversible lanes and a westbound HOT lane."</i></p>	<p>2 of the Draft EIS, including Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives that involved widening I-85. The criteria by which the first screening of alternatives was evaluated to determine each alternative's ability to meet the project's purpose and need is described in Section 2.2.1 of the Draft EIS. Subsequent sections of Chapter 2 (Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 2.2.6.5, and 2.2.7.3) describe the reasons for eliminating or retaining alternative concepts through the first screening based on these criteria.</p> <p>A Transportation Demand Management Alternative that would convert existing lanes to High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes was considered. However, this alternative would not meet the project's purpose and need and as stated in the Draft EIS Section 2.2.4, North Carolina legislation (NCGS 136-89.187) prohibits "converting any segment of the non-tolled state highway system to a toll facility," so a TDM Alternative involving the conversion of existing free lanes on I-85 to HOT lanes is not possible without a change in state law.</p> <p>Options considered for adding capacity to I-85 included adding non-toll lanes, adding toll lanes that are fully barrier, and adding toll lanes or HOT lanes not fully barrier separated. None of these options were determined to meet the project's purpose and need.</p> <p>Reconfiguring existing pavement on I-85 to add capacity also was considered, as being studied in the Charlotte Fast Lanes Study. The Fast Lanes Study is discussed in Section 2.2.6.2 of the Draft EIS (pages 2-14 and 2-15). The Fast Lanes Study was finalized in July 2009. For the I-85 corridor west of Charlotte, the final study concludes that although revenue potential for a HOT lane would be favorable and travel times could be reduced, the physical attributes of the I-85 corridor in Gaston County would make it costly to add managed lanes to the existing cross-section and there is little opportunity for construction a Fast Lanes facility without using major design exceptions.</p>
e021	1	Alternatives Considered	<p>The total cost is way out of hand, needing 35 million dollars a year for 40 years from us taxpayers is crazy. I can name quite a few better ways to spend taxpayers' money. Starting with fixing our roads we already have. Finishing I-485. Fixing the 321 exit off I-85. Fixing the decrepit bridges on Wilkinson Blvd through Gaston Co. The turnpike will not help with overcrowded schools in Belmont and Gastonia, it will only hinder. It will divide Belmont. It will add to the pollution problem in Gaston Co. It will infringe on the Optimism Club new baseball and football fields. It's going to cross two rivers and upset the ecosystem.</p>	<p>The \$35 million in "gap funding" from the State Legislature is specifically allocated for the Gaston East-West Connector and cannot be used for other projects unless redirected by the State Legislature.</p> <p>As discussed in <b>Section 2.3.1</b> of the Final EIS, the preliminary engineering designs for the Preferred Alternative have been modified to avoid the expanded Belmont Optimist Club recreational fields located on Boat Club Road on property leased from Duke Energy Corporation.</p>

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			Gaston Co doesn't need three roads running parallel within five miles of each other. My biggest problem is the road will end at 321, dumping 18,000 or so cars a day on 321. What is the going to do to that community? What is that going to do to that road? Who is going to pay to fix that road from all the trucks and the pot holes that come with that traffic?	Regarding an interim project phase ending at US 321, see response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).
e029	1	Land Use and Transportation Planning	A large amount of the daily traffic clogging up South Point Road, New Hope Road, and Union Road are the result of traffic coming from South Carolina. To even consider the northern route makes no sense because it will shift the heavy South Carolina traffic through areas that you are projecting will be problem areas. The southern proposed route is shorter and cheaper.	Traffic originating in South Carolina or other points south that are using NC 274 (Union Rd), NC 279 (South New Hope Rd), and NC 273 (Southpoint Rd) to access US 29-74 or I-85 to go east-west would have the option of accessing the Gaston East-West Connector at the proposed interchanges with these routes, instead of continuing northward on these routes to access US 29-74 or I-85. As listed in Table S-2 of the Draft EIS, generally, the southern routes across the Belmont peninsula (DSAs 5, 23, 64, and 77) are shorter, but more expensive, than other corresponding DSAs that swing northward (using Segment K3A) to cross the Belmont peninsula to the north.
e029	2	Air Quality	The people in this region are already breathing a huge amount of pollution emitted from Duke Energy. To add the pollution from the number of vehicles you are hoping will use the Garden Parkway will create an even greater risk to the health of our family friends and neighbors. Many citizens are already plagued by pollutant devils. As our elected officials, your prime object in serving your constituency should be to protect their health and well being.	Since the commenter refers to breathing in the first sentence, it is assumed the commenter is referring to air pollution. A <i>Final Air Quality Technical Memorandum for the Gaston East-West Connector</i> (September 2008) was prepared in accordance with FHWA policies and guidance. The report is summarized in Section 4.2 of the Draft EIS. Air quality topics addressed include National Ambient Air Quality Standards, transportation conformity, mobile source air toxics, and local ordinances. Updates to transportation conformity and mobile source air toxics are included in <b>Section 2.5.2.2</b> of the Final EIS.
e029	3	Right-Of-Way Acquisition and Relocations	In choosing the northern route the only little league field in this area will be destroyed. Many established home places that have been in families for generations will no longer be landmarks to be passed on to future family members.	As discussed in <b>Section 2.3.1</b> of the Final EIS, the preliminary engineering designs for the Preferred Alternative have been modified to avoid the expanded Belmont Optimist Club recreational fields located on Boat Club Road on property leased from Duke Energy.
e029	4	Land Use and Transportation Planning	Routing a projected 20,000+ vehicles onto 321 Gastonia will be a headache to the historical district where the road stops. No area should be forced to struggle with such an enormous volume of traffic for the projected fifteen+ years. Just imagine the detrimental impact this project will have on the physical and mental health of the residents living there.	See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).
e029	5	Alternatives Considered	The cost of constructing the Garden Parkway is too expensive. As alternate ideas that would serve the most people physically, mentally,	The Draft EIS rigorously explored and objectively evaluated a range of reasonable alternatives as required by 23 CFR 771.123(c), as summarized

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			and financially, we submit that the committee look long and hard at commuter rail, widening 74 which already needs major road and bridge improvements, and adding more lanes to I-85. Let South Carolina bear the burden of providing transportation for their residents to get to Charlotte.	in Chapter 2. The alternatives evaluated included, among others, Mass Transit and Multimodal Alternatives and Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives (which included various options for widening I-85 and US 29-74). Mass Transit Alternatives, Multimodal Alternatives, and Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives would not meet the project's purpose and need, and were eliminated from consideration, as discussed in Chapter 2. These types of projects could be constructed as separate projects, independent of the Gaston East-West Connector.
e030	1	Land Use and Transportation Planning	<p>1. According to the Gaston Gazette the projected increase in traffic on us 321 is 1000 cars per day. In comparison to current traffic, what percentage of increase is projected? We are discussing a residential area, so this will affect property values and quality of life for residents.</p> <p>2. Since the proposed Parkway is only funded to US 321, what is being done to minimize the impact the additional traffic will have on the Historic buildings in both districts?</p> <p>3. Trucks are the biggest problem, both noise and vibration, for the York Chester Neighborhood. Since commercial trucks, by law, must travel on highways, what protections are in place for this problem on US 321? Rerouting traffic down Hudson Blvd and out to US 74 does not address this issue unless Hudson is made into a bypass/highway.</p> <p>4. If buildings are damaged by the increase in traffic on US 321, what, if any, recourse do property owners have to recover/repair their buildings and homes?</p> <p>5. If, due to the increase in traffic, US 321 needs to be widened, either North – or South-bound, how will the loss of natural canopy and neighborhood beauty be addressed? Also, if buildings are demolished, how will the loss of contributing structures impact National Historic District standings? This also applies to damage and/or inadvertent condemnation due to damage to contributing and pivotal structures. Much of 321 South is only 2 lanes through York Chester, and some houses are only 8-10 feet from the existing road.</p>	See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).
e030	2	Purpose and Need for Action	6. Since funding is in place for only a portion of the highway, what is the projected/planned timeline for obtaining the remaining funding needed to complete the toll road to I-85? 7. The Garden Parkway will only be partially completed. This is going to cut down on revenues, meaning there is less traffic, and less toll money coming in. What, if any is projected impact on taxpayers due to the shortfall?	Based on the current finance plan for the project, including the <i>Preliminary Traffic and Revenue Study for the Gaston East-West Connector</i> , available on the NCTA Web site, the NCTA has determined the project is financially feasible. An Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study, which includes more in-depth analysis, will be conducted prior to selling the bonds that will comprise a portion of the project funding. If investors are not

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
				<p>satisfied, then the bonds will not be able to be sold, and the project will not be able to proceed.</p> <p>Other funding sources that may be used include federal credit assistance from the USDOT under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, and appropriation from the NC Legislature (i.e. "gap funding") in the currently approved amount of \$35 million per year.</p> <p>The entire project is included in the Gaston Urban Area MPO's 2035 long range transportation plan as a project that will be completed by 2035.</p>
e030	3	Alternatives Considered	8. Any access to the Parkway from I-85 seems to take a round-about way. If you are travelling North on I-85 to Charlotte, you will be taken very far south, and vice-versa. IS this really the most time-saving and logical path for the toll road?	<p>Since vehicles traveling north on I-85 from west of Gaston County will have numerous destinations, the new location Gaston East-West Connector will provide a shorter distance route and/or a shorter travel time route for some destinations, but not for others. As discussed in detail in Appendix C in the Draft EIS, travel times in 2030 with the project in place are expected to be substantially shorter for many local and regional trips. Trips across southern Gaston County are expected to be almost 10 minutes shorter, and trips across the Catawba River to/from southern Gaston County/Mecklenburg County are estimated to be 20-30 minutes shorter.</p>
e030	4	Alternatives Considered	9. Is there a possibility of creating a business route for US 321 through Gastonia? We are a heavily developed city, yet we are one of the only remaining places on this stretch of 321 that is heavily impacted by traffic. Lincolnton, Dallas, and many other small towns' city centers are no longer so directly impacted by US 321.	<p>A business route for US 321 would be a separate, independent project, not a subject of the Gaston East-West Connector EIS. To discuss adding a project to the Gaston Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, please contact the Gaston Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GUAMPO) at <a href="http://www.gastonmpo.org">www.gastonmpo.org</a> or 704-854-6663.</p>
e030	5	Alternatives Considered	Perhaps money would be better spent by creating a commuter rail line to Charlotte. Tracks are already in place! Commuter buses are already crowded, and there may be additional federal money for cutting down vehicle emissions caused by heavy freeway traffic. It would also create more development within Gaston County, because an easier commute to Charlotte, headache-free, will make it a more attractive place to live.	<p>As discussed in Section 2.2.5 of the Draft EIS, Mass Transit Alternatives were considered, but determined not able to meet the project's purpose and need. However, mass transit could provide additional mode choices for travelers in Gaston County. Both mass transit and roadway improvements are included in the Gaston Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, and there is a need for both in Gaston County.</p> <p>The Gastonia Rapid Transit Study (December 2005) was conducted by the City of Gastonia and the Gaston Urban Area MPO (of which the City is also a member). The Gastonia Rapid Transit Study acknowledges the Garden Parkway and states; "Despite the proposed Garden Parkway, it is estimated that there is not enough east west capacity to meet the demand for traffic in the future." This statement implies, and the LRTP indicates, there is need for both new highway and transit services in Gaston County.</p>

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e032	1	Indirect and Cumulative Effects	In my opinion, this highway is far from needed. Gaston County has the best traffic flow of any of our counties in the metro area. The development around the interchanges will absolutely destroy the natural surroundings in these pristine areas. I live in Concord and have seen what this type of uncontrolled, rubber stamp growth does to the quality of life, and it isn't good.	Existing and projected traffic conditions without the project are discussed in Section 1.6 of the Draft EIS. Congestion is projected to continue to worsen through 2030. The potential for development around the proposed Gaston East-West Connector is qualitatively discussed in Section 7.5.1 of the Draft EIS. A quantitative evaluation of indirect and cumulative effects, including changes in land use, was conducted for the Preferred Alternative and is summarized in <b>Section 2.5.5</b> of the Final EIS. Please note that zoning and land use issues are under the authority of county and municipal governments. The NCTA would not have land use zoning authority outside the project's right of way.
e033	1	Alternatives Considered	The fact that this road will end at US 321 in Gastonia, not Interstate 85, and will dump 20,000 cars and trucks in the York Chester neighborhood doesn't make sense. These are hard times and I hope that you would agree the \$35 million per year that our legislators have pledged for the next 40 years would be much better spent on education and balancing our state budget, instead of building a road that nobody but land speculators, developers, and road builders want.	Regarding an interim project phase ending at US 321, see response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).  The \$35 million in "gap funding" from the State Legislature is specifically allocated for the Gaston East-West Connector and cannot be used for other projects unless redirected by the State Legislature.
e035	1	Alternatives Considered	It appears that there will be minimal time or miles travelled savings versus taking I-85. Has the state seriously considered widening I-85 in Gaston county instead? According to the documentation a thorough analysis of that alternative was not even studied. Please don't waste our money and destroy our neighborhoods for this unnecessary road. I agree that an East-West connect road is necessary in southern Gaston country but we don't need a freeway or toll way. A simple 2-5 lane road with a bridge over the Catawba river would be satisfactory.	As discussed in detail in Appendix C in the Draft EIS, travel times in 2030 with the project in place are expected to be substantially shorter for many local and regional trips compared to the No-Build Alternative. Trips across southern Gaston County are expected to be almost 10 minutes shorter, and trips across the Catawba River to/from southern Gaston County/Mecklenburg County are estimated to be 20-30 minutes shorter.  The Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, which would include adding capacity to I-85, are discussed in Section 2.2.6 of the Draft EIS. Both toll scenarios and non-toll scenarios for the new capacity on I-85 were evaluated. The reasons why these alternatives were eliminated from consideration are summarized in Draft EIS Section 2.2.6.5.  The Gaston Urban Area 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) includes the Gaston East-West Connector as their number one priority.

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e036	1	Indirect and Cumulative Effects	The parkway also contributes to the problem of urban sprawl.	The qualitative Indirect and Cumulative Effects Assessment for the Gaston East-West Connector is summarized in Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS and it provides a qualitative analysis of the potential indirect and cumulative effects from growth associated with the project, in accordance with NCDOT guidance. This report is incorporated by reference to the Draft EIS. A quantitative indirect and cumulative effects analysis has been prepared for the Preferred Alternative and summarized in <b>Section 2.5.5</b> of the Final EIS. This report quantifies the potential change in land cover that may occur with and without the proposed project.
e036	1	Alternatives Considered	If the State wants to benefit the people of Gaston County, start by updating public transit, fix the highway infrastructure, etc.	See response to Comment 5 in Frank and Virginia Ellington's email (Document e029).
e037	1	Indirect and Cumulative Effects	The proposed Parkway would also contribute to the problem of urban growth as even more people that work in Charlotte can move to southern Gaston County which increases traffic, pollution, crowded schools, etc.	See response to Comment 4 in Mr. William Toole's letter (Document u001).
e037	2	Alternatives Considered	If the State wants to benefit the people of Gaston County, start by updating public transit, fix the highway infrastructure, and mandate an impact fee on builders so our education system can sustain itself. This will force more debt on us and we cannot afford the debt we have now.	See response to Comment 5 in Frank and Virginia Ellington's email (Document e029).
e038	1	Right-Of-Way Acquisition and Relocations	She [resident of 750 Belfast Dr in Gastonia] is very concerned that they will not reimburse her for what her home is worth. Also she is concerned that she won't have the funds to start all over again. This not only applies to her but to other retirees who will be affected by this transition.	At this time, 750 Belfast Drive, Gastonia is within the study corridor for the Preferred Alternative, but not within the right of way for the refined preliminary engineering design. As discussed in Section 3.2.3.2 of the Draft EIS, the NCTA follows the relocation policies of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The policies ensure that comparable replacement housing is available for relocatees prior to construction of state and/or federally assisted projects. Furthermore, the NCTA will use three programs NCDOT has to minimize the inconvenience of relocation: Relocation Assistance, Relocation Moving Payments, and Relocation Replacement Housing Payments or Rent Supplements.
e040	1	Alternatives Considered	If a toll road is to be built, make it true "Garden Parkway", one that promotes environmentally friendly alternatives and really merits the name of "Garden Parkway". At the very least all the bridges over large bodies of water, such as the Catawba river, with a very limited number of crossings, should be designed to encourage pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Furthermore highway design should include numerous under and overpasses to allow wild life and pedestrians to cross and to retain connectivity between severed parts of the community. Allow space for	A number of measures will be incorporated into the Preferred Alternative to reduce impacts. During final design, the NCTA will work with local jurisdictions to provide sidewalks and other crossings where appropriate and can be funded. As stated in the Project Commitments section of the Draft EIS, NCTA will work with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, US EPA, and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission on the feasibility and design of a wildlife passage at Stream S156, located between Forbes Road and Robinson Road. As noted in Section 6.4.5.3 of the Draft EIS, as a result of

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			a light rail, even if that is not now feasible. The South New hope road area from personal observations has been popular with recreational cyclists. The projected widening of the road where it will cross the toll road, unless properly designed will thwart this popularity. Change the construction mindset. Build this road and others like it to encourage not discourage the cyclist and pedestrians. The Charlotte 485 interchanges are particularly good examples of how to discourage all but motorized vehicles from cross those bridges. Please do not make the same mistakes with the Garden Parkway”.	coordination with environmental resource and regulatory agencies, bridges were added or extended at three locations to reduce impacts to wetlands and streams. The estimated construction footprint of the Preferred Alternative has been reduced through reduction of the median width and modification/deletion of interchanges, as discussed in <b>Section 2.3.1</b> of the Final EIS. During final design, an aesthetic design guide will be prepared to incorporate local/regional aesthetic elements into the design of structures and other features along the Preferred Alternative.
e041	1	Cultural Resources	I am a resident of York Chester neighborhood, a nationally recognized historic district, and I am against the terminus of the Gaston East-West Connector at Hwy. 321. While all twelve of the Detailed Study Alternatives of the Gaston East-West Connector project cross US 321 several miles south of the York Chester neighborhood, I respectfully disagree with the position that none of the alternatives would directly impact our fragile historic district. This area is already considered highly trafficked and the city continues to have to make costly repairs to the aged underlying water and drainage system under our streets and sidewalks caused by traffic vibration. More traffic, especially commercial traffic would increase this burden to the city. In addition, root systems of the scenic oak trees and the foundations of historic home, and retaining walls that line many properties would be impaired.	See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).
e042	1	Right-Of-Way Acquisition and Relocations	The current maps indicate that an access ramp would cut directly in front and through my property, cutting within feet of my house. ...The current plans are completely unacceptable and destroy the character and beauty and useful nature of our property which is not only our home but a place of business where we raise and train horses... I ask that you reconsider the design of the road, moving it further south or relocating the access ramp across the street and somehow preserving the access to the land....please look closer at my particular property in its' design and construction.	The Robinson Road interchange was modified for the Preferred Alternative refined preliminary design, as discussed in <b>Section 2.3.1</b> of the Final EIS. The modified design shifts the interchange ramps on the north side of the interchange so they are closer to the mainline. This reduces impacts to the D'Amore property. Since the ramps are shifted closer to the mainline, the control of access along Robinson Road also is shifted south, allowing the existing driveway access to the D'Amore property to be retained.

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e043	1	Right-Of-Way Acquisition and Relocations	I wish to state my concerns regarding the construction of the Garden Parkway, not only on the negative impact on my personal property located at 1030 Robinson Road, but to this part of Gaston County in general. ...I also ask that you reconsider the design of the road to preserve our property as a whole so we could continue our business ventures or at least as a potential commercial property so that we could recoup our investment. The road as currently proposed would render our property almost worthless and not a place where anyone would want to live.	The Robinson Road interchange was modified for the Preferred Alternative refined preliminary design, as discussed in <b>Section 2.3.1</b> of the Final EIS. The modified design shifts the interchange ramps on the north side of the interchange so they are closer to the mainline. This reduces impacts to the D'Amore property. Since the ramps are shifted closer to the mainline, the control of access along Robinson Road also is shifted south, allowing the existing driveway access to the D'Amore property to be retained.
e044	1	Purpose and Need for Action	I think it is a waste of resources and money since it will not fulfill its two stated purposes of being an East West Connector (stops 24 traffic lights from I-85) and also will not relieve congestion in Gaston County on I-85.	<p>The ultimate project extends from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County. This is the project NCTA evaluated in the Draft EIS as required by NEPA, and this is the project NCTA intends to construct as soon as possible. However, construction of large transportation projects such as the Gaston East-West Connector, I-540, and I-485, typically are done in phases, as funding becomes available.</p> <p>The purpose of the project, as stated in Section 1.3 of the Draft EIS is to improve east-west transportation mobility in the area around the City of Gastonia, between Gastonia and the Charlotte metropolitan area, and particularly to establish direct access between the rapidly growing area of southeast Gaston County and western Mecklenburg County. With the ultimate project in place, the Gaston East-West Connector would provide an additional east-west route between Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties that would operate at LOS C or better, which is a traffic flow benefit that cannot be achieved under either the Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives (including widening I-85) or the No-Build Alternative, as discussed in Appendix C of the Draft EIS. While existing and future deficiencies of I-85 and US 29-74 are acknowledged in the Draft EIS, improving these specific roadways are not identified as purposes for this project.</p>
e045	1	Alternatives Considered	The road which is being proposed does not make this connection. It dumps the traffic onto Hwy 321 which in order to get to I-85 would mean you have to travel north on an all ready too busy Hwy 321 through the middle of Gastonia with 19-20 stop lights. This is going to cause a lot more congestion and wear and tear on this already busy road.	See response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004).

**Appendix B5 – E-mailed Public Comments**

**Table B5-1: E-mailed Public Comments Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
e045	2		I have heard that widening the existing I-85 corridor through Gaston County is not an option which I don't understand. I think there would be much less property which would have to be purchased and turned upside down along this already existing corridor. It would be difficult but not impossible	The Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, which would include adding capacity to I-85, are discussed in Section 2.2.6 of the Draft EIS. Both toll scenarios and non-toll scenarios for the new capacity on I-85 were evaluated. The reasons why these alternatives were eliminated from consideration are summarized in Section 2.2.6.5.
e045	3		The Catawba River Bridge on Wilkinson Boulevard is also in need of replacement which some of this money could be better used on. There are a lot of better uses for this money!	Transportation options for urban areas are evaluated and prioritized in long range transportation plans (LRTPs). The LRTP for Gaston County is prepared by the Gaston Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Gaston Urban Area 2035 LRTP includes the Gaston East-West Connector as their number one priority. The LRTP also includes the widening (from four to six lanes) of the US 29-74 bridge over the Catawba River as a project to be built by 2025.
e045	4		It would definitely create more urban sprawl in southern Gaston County.	The qualitative <i>Indirect and Cumulative Effects Assessment for the Gaston East-West Connector</i> is summarized in Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS and it provides a qualitative analysis of the potential indirect and cumulative effects from growth associated with the project, in accordance with NCDOT guidance. This report is incorporated by reference to the Draft EIS. A quantitative indirect and cumulative effects analysis has been prepared for the Preferred Alternative and summarized in <b>Section 2.5.5</b> of the Final EIS. This report quantifies the potential change in land cover that may occur with and without the proposed project.
e046	1	Purpose and Need for Action	This Garden Parkway toll road is destined to go broke and thus forcing the state to take it over. The Garden Parkway is based upon a flawed model which will not reduce I-85 congestion, yet wastes the money needed to widen I-85. The Garden Parkway is destructive to our cultural and physical environment, destroying habit for people, animals and cultural amenities.	Based on the Preliminary Traffic and Revenue Study for the Gaston East-West Connector, available on the NCTA Web site, the NCTA has determined that it is financially feasible to include tolls as part of the project's financing plan. An Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study, which includes more in-depth analysis, will be conducted prior to selling the bonds that will comprise a portion of the project funding. If investors are not satisfied, then the bonds will not be able to be sold, and the project will not be able to proceed.  Other funding sources that may be used include federal credit assistance from the USDOT under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, and appropriation from the NC Legislature (i.e. "gap funding") in the currently approved amount of \$35 million per year.  The Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, which would include adding capacity to I-85, are discussed in Section 2.2.6 of the Draft EIS. Both toll scenarios and non-toll scenarios for the new capacity on I-85 were

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				<p>evaluated. The reasons why these alternatives were eliminated from consideration are summarized in Section 2.2.6.5.</p> <p>The projected traffic operations, impacts, and benefits of the Detailed Study Alternatives for the Gaston East-West Connector are disclosed in the Draft EIS in Sections 1.6 and 2.4.4 and Appendix C. The Draft EIS addresses the human, physical, cultural, and natural environments in Chapters 3 through 7. Updates for the Preferred Alternative are included in <b>Chapter 2</b> of the Final EIS.</p>
e047	1	Purpose and Need for Action	<p>The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them. Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail.</p>	<p>The most recent cost estimates for the Preferred Alternative are included in <b>Section 2.3.4</b> of the Final EIS. The project would be funded from multiple sources over the course of several years.</p> <p>The Gaston East-West Connector would provide an additional east-west route between Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties that would operate at LOS C or better, which is a traffic flow benefit that cannot be achieved under either the Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives (including widening I-85) or the No-Build Alternative, as described in Chapter 2 and Appendix C of the Draft EIS. As some trips are diverted to the Gaston East-West Connector, other trips, that would not have used I-85 otherwise, would then use I-85.</p> <p>Overall, there is less congested vehicle hours and miles traveled with the New Location Toll Alternative in place, reducing the duration of congestion in the network. This additional new east-west route also improves the reliability of the east-west network. If an incident occurs on one of the local east-west routes or river crossings, the impact to travel would be less due to the additional option the new route provides.</p>
e047	2	Alternatives Considered	<p>The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or even two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there.</p>	<p>Traffic forecasts, traffic operations, and regional travel demand statistics are described in detail in Appendix C of the Draft EIS for the No-Build Alternative, Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, and New Location Alternatives. The Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives that include widening I-85 would achieve only minimal improvements to traffic flow on I-85. A widened I-85 (widened to 8-10 lanes) would continue to operate at LOS E and F in 2030. Most improvements to traffic flow achieved by increasing capacity would be offset by the increase in traffic volumes attracted to I-85. Therefore, a substantial investment in adding capacity to I-85 is not projected to result in substantial improvement in level of service.</p>

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**Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
				<p>The New Location Alternative would reduce traffic volumes on I-85 primarily from NC 279 eastward compared to the No-Build Alternative, although levels of service would remain at LOS E or F in 2030. Similar to the Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, there is not a large reduction in traffic volumes predicted to occur on I-85 because with the project in place, trips that are diverted to the Gaston East-West Connector from I-85 are replaced with different trips on I-85 that would like to use I-85 but had not in the past due to congestion. More importantly, however, the New Location Alternative provides an additional east-west route between Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties that would operate at LOS D or better through 2035, which is a traffic flow benefit that cannot be achieved under either the Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives or the No-Build Alternative. This additional new east-west route also improves the reliability of the east-west network. If an incident occurs on one of the local east-west routes or river crossings, the impact to travel would be less due to the additional option the new route provides.</p>
e047	3	Purpose and Need for Action	<p>The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area for many years and am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.</p>	<p>The ultimate project would extend from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County, as described and evaluated in the Draft EIS. However, construction of large transportation projects such as the Gaston East-West Connector, I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed based on availability of funding. The intent is to build as much of the project in the first phase as possible, with the remainder constructed as soon as possible after that. At this time, based on available information, NCTA is planning on initially constructing the entire length of the project, with four lanes from I-485 to US 321 and two lanes from US 321 to I-85. The section from US 321 to I-85 would be upgraded to four lanes by 2035.</p> <p>However, in order to respond to concerns expressed prior to, and as part of, the public review process for the Draft EIS, the NCTA studied traffic forecasts for a potential interim project phase ending at US 321. The studies indicate there would be an increase in traffic along US 321 from the Gaston East-West Connector north to Stagecoach Road for a distance of approximately 3/4 mile. Beyond Stagecoach Road, the traffic is estimated to generally be the same with or without the interim project phase. Under both an interim phase for the project and the ultimate project, a corridor-level analysis indicates US 321 would operate under capacity and at acceptable levels of service from Robinson Road to US 29-</p>

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**Documents: e001 – e061**

DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
				74 through the year 2030.
e048	1	Purpose and Need for Action	The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them. Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail.	See response to Comment 1 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).
e048	2	Alternatives Considered	The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or even two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there.	See response to Comment 2 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).
e048	3	Purpose and Need for Action	The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area for many years and am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.	See response to Comment 3 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).
e049	1	Purpose and Need for Action	The current cost of the project, \$1.25 billion along with the \$35 million dollar a year for 39-year subsidy, would go a long way in solving real traffic issues in our area and our state. The data on your website indicates that the proposed Garden Parkway would create more traffic problems as opposed to solving them. Also, if the road is not going to take traffic off of I-85 where are the tolls going to come from? We all know toll projects can fail.	See response to Comment 1 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).
e049	2	Alternatives Considered	The second reason I'm opposed to the Garden Parkway is the very fact that it will not relieve congestion on I-85. I-85 is lifeline of Gaston County connecting us with Charlotte to the North and Gastonia and	See response to Comment 2 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			other major cities to the South. The road goes from 4 lanes to 3 at Belmont Abbey and opening another lane there would greatly reduce traffic congestion. If you ride down I-85 there is plenty of room on both sides to add another lane or even two without displacing a soul. I know your data says this is not feasible but I-85 has been widened in many spots including Concord and Salisbury. And according to your own data it seems to me widening I-85 is inevitable since the proposed Garden Parkway will not reduce congestion there.	
e049	3	Purpose and Need for Action	The third reason is the US321 terminus. I have lived in this area for many years and am very familiar with the area where the road would stop. If your traffic numbers are correct then there will be major traffic issues on US321 as a result of the terminus. I question whether or not people will actually use the road because of the US321 terminus. I have reviewed the FAQ on your website and know that it says there will be no issues because of the way the traffic dissipates but if that is the case I question the need for a connector in our area in the first place.	See response to Comment 3 in Jonathan Graves' email (Document e047).
e050	1	Cultural Resources	I live in the historic Brookwood neighborhood which is located on Highway 321 adjacent to the York Chester neighborhood in Gastonia. The current proposal which has the toll road dead-ending into Highway 321 will do nothing but increase traffic on an already over loaded highway. It will be detrimental to the safety of those traveling on that road especially as it goes through the center of the York Chester neighborhood.	See response to Comment 1 in James Mort's email (Document e001).
e051	1	Cultural Resources	I live in the historic neighborhood of Brookwood, directly off of US 321, where you plan to end the Parkway. You have already admitted that the toll road will not alleviate traffic on 85. Have you even looked at US 321? US 321 cannot even handle the traffic and tractor trailers that fly down the narrow lanes as it is. Don't start this project unless you can finish it. Don't build a road you can 'afford'; build a road that actually works!	See response to Comment 1 in James Mort's email (Document e001).
e052	1		This email is a duplicate of the letter from Mr. John Medlin dated 07/19/2009 (document lc011). See responses provided for that letter.	See responses to comments in duplicate letter from Mr. John Medlin (Document lc011).
e054	1	Alternatives Considered	We would much rather see the money spent on improvements on I-85, especially around the 321 exit and Belmont Abbey. And how about finishing I-485? I like the idea of doing something with mass transit to Belmont, Mt Holly, and Charlotte via the existing railroad tracks.	As discussed in Section 2.2.5 of the Draft EIS, Mass Transit Alternatives and Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives (which included widening I-85) were considered, but determined not able to meet the project's purpose and need. However, mass transit could provide additional mode choices for travelers in Gaston County. Both mass transit and roadway

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
				<p>improvements are included in the Gaston Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, and there is a need for both in Gaston County.</p> <p>The <i>Gastonia Rapid Transit Study</i> (December 2005) was conducted by the City of Gastonia and the Gaston Urban Area MPO (of which the City is also a member). The <i>Gastonia Rapid Transit Study</i> acknowledges the Garden Parkway and states; "Despite the proposed Garden Parkway, it is estimated that there is not enough east west capacity to meet the demand for traffic in the future." This statement implies, and the LRTP indicates, Gaston County is planning for both new highway and transit services in Gaston County.</p> <p>As part of the funding for the Gaston East-West Connector, the NC General Assembly has allocated \$35 million per year of state tax dollars specifically to this project. Only the NC General Assembly can reallocate these funds to other uses.</p>
e055	1	Indirect and Cumulative Effects	The project is ill-conceived and will do little more than create sprawl at a time when Gaston County's towns and cities are trying to revitalize their downtowns.	The qualitative <i>Indirect and Cumulative Effects Assessment for the Gaston East-West Connector</i> is summarized in Chapter 7 of the Draft EIS and it provides a qualitative analysis of the potential indirect and cumulative effects from growth associated with the project, in accordance with NCDOT guidance. This report is incorporated by reference to the Draft EIS. A quantitative indirect and cumulative effects analysis has been prepared for the Preferred Alternative and summarized in <b>Section 2.5.5</b> of the Final EIS. This report quantifies the potential change in land cover that may occur with and without the proposed project.
e055	2	Water Resources	Already, Catawba Cove is plagued with pollution and silt, and this road will be built on top of rare (for this area) wetlands. And this cove is part of Lake Wylie, which I'm sure you are aware is already in critical condition with pollution -- one of the worst lakes in the US. We don't need even more oil, grease, antifreeze, and brake dust entering the lake from runoff from this toll road.	Numerous permits to protect water resources will be required prior to project construction. The project will require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the NC Division of Water Quality and a Section 404 permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers for impacts to streams and wetlands. Mitigation will be required as conditions of these permits. Section 6.4.5 of the Draft EIS describes these permitting issues. The NCTA must also prepare an erosion and sedimentation control plan in accordance with <i>Erosion and Sediment Control Planning and Design</i> (NC Division of Land Resources) and <i>Best Management Practices for the Protection of Surface Waters</i> (NCDOT). These are described in Section 6.2.4 of the Draft EIS. The Preferred Alternative crosses Lake Wylie (the Catawba River, South Fork Catawba River and Catawba Creek), which is subject to Catawba River Buffer Rules. The NCTA must obtain written authorization from the NC DWQ and provide compensatory mitigation

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
				(see Section 6.4.5.4 of the Draft EIS).
e055	3	Land Use and Transportation Planning	Lastly, it is quite frankly a joke to build a toll road that doesn't connect two major highways. With the funding not available to complete this project, and having traffic dump into the York Chester neighborhood, it seems an act of lunacy to build this road in the current economic reality.	The ultimate project would extend from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County, as described and evaluated in the Draft EIS. However, construction of large transportation projects such as the Gaston East-West Connector, I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed based on availability of funding. The intent is to build as much of the project in the first phase as possible, with the remainder constructed as soon as possible after that. At this time, based on available information, NCTA is planning on initially constructing the entire length of the project, with four lanes from I-485 to US 321 and two lanes from US 321 to I-85. The section from US 321 to I-85 would be upgraded to four lanes by 2035. Also, see response to Comment 1 in Mr. James Mort's email (Document e004) for information on interim phase traffic on US 321.
e058	1	Land Use and Transportation Planning	The first proposal of having the parkway connect I-485 to I-85 in Gaston County have been changed and now the road will only make it to US 321. I know you say it would only be temporary until funding is secured, I guess that's what the folks in charge of completing I-485 say also.	The ultimate project extends from I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 in Mecklenburg County. This is the project NCTA evaluated in the Draft EIS as required by NEPA, and this is the project NCTA intends to construct as soon as possible. However, construction of large transportation projects, I-485 in Charlotte, I-540 in Raleigh, etc., are typically constructed in phases as funding becomes available. Construction phases are determined after the environmental planning phase is completed. The ability to include tolls as part of project funding provides additional options for funding the completion of the project.
e059	1	Community Characteristics and Resources	This parkway will also affect the rural areas surrounding three churches. People will not readily attend churches off a major highway.	The preliminary design for the Preferred Alternative would impact three churches, as listed in Table 3-8 in the Draft EIS. The main church building for two of the churches (St. Titus AME Zion and Charity Independent Baptist) would be impacted and the churches will need to be relocated. Right of way would be required from the back portion of the third church parcel (Broomfield Methodist), but the main church building and its access would not be affected. The impacts to these churches will be evaluated again during final design and minimized where possible.
e059	2	Community Characteristics and Resources	Gaston County currently has an unemployment rate of 13.9%. Many of the people who will lose their homes and land have already lost their jobs. These people will be unable to start over. My entire home is in the proposed pathway. There will be no way for my family to start over. What will we use for collateral? Our home and land has always	As discussed in Section 3.2.3.2 of the Draft EIS, the NCTA follows the relocation policies of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The policies ensure that comparable replacement housing is available for relocatees prior to construction of state and/or federally assisted projects. Furthermore, the NCTA will use three programs NCDOT

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DOC. NO.	COMMENT NO.	PRIMARY TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
			been our collateral.	has to minimize the inconvenience of relocation: Relocation Assistance, Relocation Moving Payments, and Relocation Replacement Housing Payments or Rent Supplements.
e060	1	Alternatives Considered	Our tax dollars should be invested to improve and widen current roads (example.... widen I-85 near Belmont both north and south and widen 321).	The Improve Existing Roadways Alternatives, which would include adding capacity to I-85, are discussed in Section 2.2.6 of the Draft EIS. Both toll scenarios and non-toll scenarios for the new capacity on I-85 were evaluated. The reasons why these alternatives were eliminated from consideration are summarized in Draft EIS Section 2.2.6.5.  As part of the funding for the Gaston East-West Connector, the NC General Assembly has allocated \$35 million per year of state tax dollars specifically to this project. Only the NC General Assembly can reallocate these funds to other uses.
e060	2	Alternatives Considered	Truth is the Parkway will fail to reduce times between I-85 and I-485 and lack funds to complete the project, which will only increase the traffic issues on I-85 and 321.	As discussed in detail in Appendix C in the Draft EIS, travel times in 2030 with the project in place are expected to be substantially shorter for many local and regional trips compared to the No-Build Alternative. Trips across southern Gaston County are expected to be almost 10 minutes shorter, and trips across the Catawba River to/from southern Gaston County/Mecklenburg County are estimated to be 20-30 minutes shorter.
e061	1	Alternatives Considered	If you want to spend money, build a bridge on Highway 74 between Gastonia and Charlotte. The bridge is old and too narrow. Thank you.	See response to Comment 3 in Al Brandon's email (Document e045).