

Fact Sheet for I-40 Widening Project and I-440 Signing Improvements in Wake County

Project Overview:

- Widening 6.2 miles of I-40 from west of Wade Avenue (State Road 1728) to east of the Jones Franklin Road (S.R. 5039) bridge.
- The \$49 million project was awarded to S.T. Wooten Corp. of Wilson.
- The contractor will begin placing work zone signs the week of July 27 and will begin placing barriers the following week. Lane closures are expected to begin the beginning of August.
- The project is anticipated to be complete by June 30, 2011, less than two years.

Why is this section of I-40 being widened?

- To reduce congestion and improve traffic flow in one of the most heavily congested areas in the Triangle.

When will work take place?

- Lane closures will be allowed between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. Monday through Friday, until 9 a.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. on Sunday.
- One extended weekend lane closure can also occur from 9 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Monday and will be in the eastbound lanes between Harrison Avenue and Wade Avenue. The date for the extended closure is being determined.

Improvements to I-40:

- Adding one 12-foot wide lane in each direction of I-40 expanding the interstate from four to six lanes.
- A 12-foot wide shoulder is also being added in each direction. The shoulder will be built to the same depth as the roadway, which will allow for easier expansion of the highway in the future.
- The bridges carrying I-40 over Wade Avenue and U.S. 1/64 will also be widened so they will have the capacity for eight lanes.
- Median guiderail will be installed throughout the project. Guardrail will be replaced on the outside shoulder.
- At the eastbound I-40/Wade Avenue split, the roadway will be expanded to provide three lanes for I-40 from the current two lanes and the right acceleration lane from Harrison Avenue will continue to Wade Avenue.
- There will also be sign adjustments at this location to ease motorists confusion.
- I-40 shield pavement markings will be placed in the I-40 through lanes prior to Harrison Avenue and at two locations prior to the Wade Avenue split.
- Installation of a dynamic message sign on I-40 westbound between Lake Wheeler Road and Gorman Street.

Signing Improvements on I-440

- New signs will be installed between Exit 293 (U.S. 1/64) and Exit 301 (the I-40/I-440 split).
- I-40 East and West will remain the route designations for the loop on the south section of Raleigh, which will no longer also be designated I-440.
- The new interstate route numbering is meant to help ease motorist confusion about travel on I-440.
- The Outer Beltline (the northern part of the city) will now be I-440 West.
- The Inner Beltline will now become I-440 East.
- All signs referring to the beltline will be removed.

Project Highlights

- Also, motorist traveling U.S. 1/64 North needing to access I-40 East will need to merge onto I-40 prior to the Jones Franklin Road bridge once the project is completed. Currently, motorists are not required to merge here, the lane “free flows” onto I-40.
- Motorists traveling Harrison Avenue needing to access Wade Avenue via I-40 East will no longer need to merge onto I-40 East as the existing merge condition is being eliminated.
- This project will be constructed using the design-build method. Design-build is an innovative procedure that allows NCDOT to conduct a project’s design, environmental permitting, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and construction concurrently under one contract. These steps help reduce construction time and help the department avoid cost inflation.
- The department estimates using the design-build method will accelerate the project’s completion by as many as 18 months.
- The project will be funded through the use of GARVEE bonds. GARVEE stands for Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles, and allows the department to borrow against future federal funding to help finance projects sooner and avoid cost increases due to construction inflation.
- The contractor will install two conveyer belt systems near the N.C. 54 interchange to transport stone and asphalt to the median area. The contractor estimates their use of the conveyors will eliminate 237 lanes closures and nearly 12,000 truckload trips that otherwise would have been needed to haul the materials from the I-40 travel lanes.