



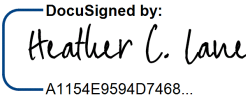
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III  
SECRETARY

MEMO TO: Post Hearing Meeting Attendees

FROM: Heather Lane, PE  
Division 2-Assistant Division Construction Engineer

DATE: January 10, 2020 A1154E9594D7468...

SUBJECT: Project: 34460 (R-2553) Craven, Jones, and Lenoir Counties  
USACE AID Number SAW-2009-01603  
US 70 from La Grange to Dover  
Kinston Bypass

**Post Hearing Meeting**

The post hearing meeting was held at the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Division 2 at 2:00pm on September 30, 2019 to discuss the comments received from the Corridor Public Hearing. The Corridor Public Hearing was held on August 20, 2019 at Lenoir Community College in Kinston. Approximately 265 people attended the public hearing. One hundred sixteen comments have been received during the comment period, which began on July 22, 2019 and ended on September 6, 2019. Additional comments that were received after September 6 have also been incorporated into this summary. The responses provided in this summary are applicable as of the date of this memorandum; however, updated information will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) as it becomes available.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The Kinston Bypass project would upgrade United States (US) 70 from La Grange in Lenoir county to Dover in Craven County.
- The Kinston Bypass project would involve upgrading existing US 70 and constructing a new facility, depending on the alternative selected. Twelve alternatives are being studied in detail for the project.

- The proposed action is listed in the federally approved NCDOT 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as Project Number R-2553.
- The purpose of the Kinston Bypass project is to improve regional mobility, connectivity, and capacity for US 70 between La Grange and Dover in a manner that meets the intent of the North Carolina Strategic Transportation Corridors policy (previously the Strategic Highway Corridors policy).

## **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

A Pre-Concurrence Point (CP) 3 meeting will be scheduled to present the project impacts as discussed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and discuss comments received on the project thus far to ensure the Merger Team had sufficient information to select a preferred alternative. The CP 3 meeting will be scheduled according to feedback received during the Pre-CP 3 meeting. These are anticipated to occur in November 2019 and February of 2020, respectively. NCDOT will provide updates as the project progresses through the project website (<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass>) and through public outreach activities.

Selection of the preferred alternative is scheduled for early 2020.

It should be noted that all 12 detailed study alternatives, including the No-Build Alternative, are still under consideration, and no alternatives will be eliminated from consideration until a preferred alternative has been determined.

All individuals that expressed interest in the project have been added to the project mailing list and will receive future updates on the project.

## **STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF COMMENTS:**

### **Comments Received**

- One hundred sixteen total comments were received since the distribution of the August 2019 postcard identifying the availability of the DEIS and the dates of the public open houses and public hearing. Ninety-nine of these comments were from the public and 17 were from local officials or governmental agencies.
- Fifty-nine public comments were received by mail, email, phone, or at the public hearing (16 of which are transcripts).
- Forty public comments were received through the NCDOT public input site.

### **Comment Types**

- NCDOT public input site: 40
- Email/Letter: 27
- Comment form: 33
- Public hearing transcript: 16
- NCDOT Contact Us: 1

## Comment Subjects

Comments expressed opinions pertaining to multiple subjects. The number of comments representing each subject matter are included below.

| <b>SUBJECT</b>                          | <b># OF COMMENTS</b> | <b>GENERAL RESPONSE (if applicable)</b>   |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Access concerns                         | 2                    | # 4 – General property impacts<br># 10 – Emergency response<br>#11 – Farmland impacts           |
| Alternative choice                      | 47                   | N/A   |
| Alternative suggestion                  | 6                    | # 1 – Northern bypass alternatives / other alternatives   |
| Business impacts                        | 17                   | # 3 – Business and economic impacts   |
| Community impacts                       | 7                    | # 2 – Community impacts (quality of life)   |
| Economic impacts                        | 24                   | # 3 – Business and economic impacts   |
| Environmental impacts                   | 5                    | # 12 – Natural resources  |
| Farm impacts                            | 10                   | # 3 – Business and economic impacts<br># 4 – General property impacts<br>#11 – Farmland impacts |
| Flooding impacts                        | 8                    | # 6 – Flooding  |
| Habitat/endangered & threatened species | 0                    | N/A   |
| Historic and archaeological resources   | 11                   | # 5 – Historic architectural and archaeological resources                                       |
| Noise pollution                         | 1                    | # 7 – Noise   |
| Other                                   | 2                    | N/A   |
| Project costs                           | 5                    | # 8 – Project cost  |
| Project / construction schedule         | 5                    | # 9 – General status of the project / next phase  |
| Property impacts                        | 22                   | # 4 – General property impacts  |
| Right-of-way                            | 8                    | # 4 – General property impacts  |
| Safety                                  | 0                    | N/A   |
| Traffic                                 | 2                    | N/A   |

## **Alternative Preferences**

The provided comment form and the NCDOT Public Input Site requested the public rank their preferences for the 12 detailed study alternatives. Seventy-two of the public elected to rank the alternatives. The statistics below represent the first preference identified.

- Alternative 1SB: 45
- Alternative 1UE: 12
- Alternative 11: 4
- Alternative 31: 4
- Alternative 36: 4
- Alternative 12: 1
- Alternative 35: 1
- Alternative 51: 1
- Alternative 32: 0
- Alternative 52: 0
- Alternative 63: 0
- Alternative 65: 0

## **Organizations**

- North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources - Natural Heritage Center
- Dollar General (405 E King St, Kinston, NC)
- North Carolina Department of Public Safety - Division of Emergency Management
- United States Environmental Protection Agency - Strategic Programs Office
- Jones County Commission
- Jones County Manager
- Kangaroo Express (509 E New Bern)
- Lenoir County Office of the Sheriff
- Massey Toyota
- Mayor of Dover
- National Marine Fisheries Service - Southeast Regional Office
- North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality - Inactive Hazardous Sites Branch
- North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality - Regional UST Supervisor
- Neuse Regional Water and Sewer Authority Executive Director

- Taco Bell (4806 Vernon Ave)
- United States Coast Guard Bridge Program
- Wyse Fork Volunteer Fire and Rescue

### **Comments Received on Other Projects**

Comments were received on other road construction projects that had no connection to R-2553 Kinston Bypass. These comments were noted but not addressed.

- A comment was received for R-5815 NC 11 Upgrade to Interstate Standards (#32)
- A comment was received for a project currently “going right through the historic part of town” (#106) (possibly the Queen Street Streetscape Project)
- A comment was received for a West Fuqua St project (#110) (Houston?)

## **GENERAL RESPONSES TO COMMENTS**

The subject matter responses below are based upon the 116 comments received during DEIS comment period of July 22, 2019 through September 6, 2019. The responses below are preliminary and may be revised as updated information becomes available. Final responses to all substantive comments will be published in the FEIS. The FEIS will be made available for public review.

### **1. Northern Bypass Alternatives/Other Alternatives**

#### Comment Summary

Eight comments were received regarding alternative suggestions. The comments included suggestions of other routes connecting to C.F. Harvey Parkway, or the addition of previously removed northern alternatives.

#### General Response

*Multiple alternatives have been studied throughout the development of the project over the last two decades – and each must consider the impacts to the human and natural environments while also meeting the purpose and need of the project.*

*Based on updated traffic forecasting performed in 2012 and 2013, the northern bypass alternatives, some of which connected from US 70 through C.F. Harvey Parkway and NC 11 back to US 70, would not draw as much traffic from existing US 70 as the southern bypass alternatives, and construction of a northern bypass alternative would result in the continued pressure to improve existing US 70 even after construction. Thus, the northern alternatives did not fulfill the purpose and need.*

*For more information about the evaluation of alternatives, please see Chapter 2 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which is available online at:*

<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/draft-environmental-impact-statement.aspx>

## 2. Community Impacts (Quality of Life)

### Comment Summary

Seven comments were received regarding community impacts or quality of life impacts. Comments stated concerns regarding impacts to the historical resources and community characteristics of the Sandy Bottom, Jackson Crossroads, and Wyse Fork communities. Specifically, comments identified community resources that contribute to the characteristics of the historic communities such as churches and cemeteries.

### General Response

*The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) includes social and economic impacts as part of a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) process. The CIA evaluates the effects of a transportation project on community quality of life including identification of potentially affected communities and resources used by these communities. The CIA process included the evaluation of all 12 detailed study alternatives and is summarized in Sections 4.1 and 4.14 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.*

*As part of this analysis process, social and economic demographic information within the project-specific direct community impact area are gathered from the 2010 United States Census and the 2011-2015 American Community Survey along with information from field visits, interviews with city and county planning organizations, small group meetings, and other public outreach opportunities to evaluate impacts to potentially affected populations and communities. This process also includes an Environmental Justice evaluation which identifies minority, low-income and limited English proficient populations in order to meaningfully engage these populations in the decision-making process as well as identify any potentially high and adverse impacts that may occur from the proposed project. Methodologies used to assess these community effects include NCDOT's guidance on conducting community impact assessments, Community Impact Assessment: A Quick Reference Guide (FHWA, 2018), EJ Reference Guide (FHWA, 2015), and USDOT LEP Guidance (2005).*

*NCDOT will continue to further avoid and minimize the project's impacts to the human and natural environments to the greatest extent practicable during refinement of preliminary and final designs. NCDOT will coordinate with local governments, neighborhoods, and organizations during the design refinement process as well.*

*For more information on community impacts, please see the Community Impact Assessment that is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>.*

## 3. Business and Economic Impacts

### Comment Summary

Approximately 40 comments were received regarding business and economic impacts. Comments discussed the concern for impacts to businesses along existing US 70 that

would be bypassed, as well as direct impacts to existing businesses and farming operations.

### General Response

*Due to public concerns about the economic vitality of the businesses along existing US 70 if a bypass were constructed, The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) conducted an Economic Impact Assessment to look at potential impacts a new bypass might have on businesses. This analysis assessed the potential economic tradeoffs for business profitability, market growth, and business development. For more information on economic impacts, please see the Economic Impact Assessment that is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>.*

*A certain amount of private property must be acquired to provide North Carolinians with a safe and modern transportation system. When a property, including businesses and farms, is shown to be impacted, many factors have been taken into consideration in determining that the affected site is the most practical location for the transportation project. The Relocation Report, which provides more information on potential impacts based on the current project information, is included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as part of Appendix D and available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/draft-environmental-impact-statement.aspx>.*

*The corridors of each alternative shown on the public hearing maps represent a 1,000-foot wide study area. The corridor shown on the maps is not the proposed right-of-way of the roadway, which is where the acquisition of property takes place. Once a preferred alternative corridor is determined, the design will be further refined and will take into consideration engineering feasibility, safety, economics, public well-being, accessibility, and the least amount of inconvenience to the public. NCDOT will continue to further avoid and minimize residential or business relocations due to the project to the greatest extent practicable. Additional public involvement and outreach with local governments, businesses, farmers, and other stakeholders will be held.*

*Upon selection of a preferred alternative, further analysis of how all impacts, including economic ones, can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated will be assessed and analyzed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. NCDOT will continue to further avoid and minimize business relocations and disruptions to farming operations due to the project to the greatest extent practicable.*

*After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. Affected property owners will be contacted by a right-of-way agent to explain the plans, discuss how the project will affect the property, and provide information regarding the rights of property owners. Appraisals and negotiations with the state will then take place, similar to purchasing a property. Property appraisals take into consideration several factors including lot size, square footage, any updates or improvements, location, and the current real estate market. The proposed project would not be the only factor considered when determining property values and the amount of*

any compensation. More information on the right of way acquisition process and relocation assistance is available online at:  
<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/Pages/property-owner-resources.aspx>.

#### **4. General Property Impacts**

##### Comment Summary

Approximately 23 comments were received regarding impacts to properties. The comments raised concerns about changes in access to a property, the loss of a property, and the relocation process.

##### General Response

*A certain amount of private property must be acquired to provide North Carolinians with a safe and modern transportation system. When a property is shown to be impacted, many factors have been taken into consideration in determining that the affected site is the most practical location for the transportation project.*

*The corridors of each alternative shown on the public hearing maps represent a 1,000-foot wide study area. The corridor shown on the maps is not the proposed right-of-way of the roadway, which is where the acquisition of property takes place. Once a preferred alternative corridor is determined, the design will be further refined and will take into consideration engineering feasibility, safety, economics, public well-being, accessibility, and the least amount of inconvenience to the public. The North Carolina Department of Transportation will continue to further avoid and minimize residential or business relocations due to the project to the greatest extent practicable. Additional public involvement and outreach with local governments, businesses, farmers, and other stakeholders will be held. As the highway's construction plans are refined, accommodations for maintaining access to all properties are examined in close detail and modified, as needed, to ensure adequate access is maintained.*

*After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. Affected property owners will be contacted by a right-of-way agent to explain the plans, discuss how the project will affect the property, and provide information regarding the rights of property owners. Appraisals and negotiations with the state will then take place, similar to purchasing a home. Property appraisals take into consideration several factors including lot size, square footage, any updates or improvements, location, and the current real estate market. The proposed project would not be the only factor considered when determining property values and the amount of any compensation. More information on the right of way acquisition process and relocation assistance is available online at:  
<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/Pages/property-owner-resources.aspx>.*



## 5. Historic Architectural and Archaeological Resources

### Comment Summary

Twelve comments were received regarding historic and/or archaeological resources that have the potential to be impacted by the project. The comments raised issues about the importance of these historic and archaeological resources to the local community and how these resources are being considered in the decision-making process.

### General Response

*The North Carolina Department of Transportation and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) on all detailed study alternatives. The coordination has included evaluation of any sites that are listed on, or considered eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places. HPO and USACE have concurred on which resources have adverse effects, no adverse effects, or no effect for each of the detailed study alternatives based upon Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Once a preferred alternative is selected, under Section 106, USACE and NCDOT will further coordinate with HPO on appropriate ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate for historic resources with adverse effects. For more information on historic resources near the project, the Historic Architecture Eligibility Evaluation Report is available online at:*

<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>.

*In addition, information on coordination between USACE and HPO regarding historic resources is included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in Appendix E, which is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/draft-environmental-impact-statement.aspx>.*

*Once a preferred alternative is identified, an archaeological survey will be completed which will identify any archaeological resources. Should there be any evidence of significant archaeological resources, it will be recommended to perform a Phase III archaeological study which will include data recovery excavations. Phase III studies typically take the form of large-scale excavations at a site to document cultural features and artifact patterns, coupled with analytical tasks to help further understand past lifeways. The work is guided by a data recovery plan that contains a research design specific to each site. The research design for potential sites will be developed by the NCDOT in consultation with the HPO and will detail a number of research questions the work may address, the level of effort required, field tasks, and analytical tasks (including any specialized analyses deemed appropriate), as well as appropriate reporting avenues (e.g., technical reports, public outreach). Once agreed upon, the data recovery excavations will be carried out prior to any ground disturbing activities for the construction of the project.*

## 6. Flooding

### Comment Summary

Nine comments were received regarding flooding impacts. The comments discussed major flood events and raised questions about whether the project and proposed roadway would remain operational and/or accessible during a major flood event. Other comments hypothesized on how some of the proposed alternatives may increase flooding to adjacent properties and roadways.

### General Response

*The North Carolina Department of Transportation acknowledges there has been significant flooding within the Kinston Bypass study area. All proposed designs will be in accordance with the guidelines, policies, methods, and design criteria developed by NCDOT for highway designs. It is the policy of NCDOT to abide by federal and state floodplain management rules and regulations and develop optimal infrastructure designs that are cost effective and least damaging to the human and natural environment to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, all applicable permits including floodplain compliance authorization will be secured prior to construction activities.*

*It has been noted that flooding concerns lie mainly along existing north-south routes. As this project has an east-west orientation, existing flooding concerns along intersecting roads are not a part of the project. However, the project will not worsen any flooding along north-south routes.*

*As part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, an analysis of flooding of the detailed study alternatives for the project was assessed and is summarized in a flood impact memo that is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>.*

## 7. Noise

### Comment Summary

Only 1 comment was received regarding noise impacts. The comment stated the noise abatement shown on the public hearing maps was inadequate.

### General Response

*The 2019 Traffic Noise Report presents a preliminary analysis of predicted traffic noise impacts and potential noise abatement for the detailed study alternatives. Evaluation of the feasibility and reasonableness of potential noise abatement measures was completed through the application of criteria found in the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) 2016 Traffic Noise Policy. The Traffic Noise Report is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>. Following the selection of a preferred alternative, NCDOT will update the traffic noise analysis.*

*Per the NCDOT policy, federal and state governments are not responsible for providing noise abatement measures for new development for which building permits are issued after the date of public knowledge, which will be the approval date of the Record of Decision. Although preliminary determinations have been made of locations where feasible and reasonable noise abatement are likely, the final decision of whether a noise wall or berm is built will be made following completion of project final design and the public involvement process. Areas not shown within a potential noise abatement area were preliminarily determined to not meet the feasibility and reasonableness criteria for noise abatement. These criteria are described in the Traffic Noise Report completed for the Kinston Bypass project and in the 2016 Traffic Noise Policy.*

## **8. Project Cost**

### Comment Summary

Four comments were received regarding the cost of the project.

### General Response

*State Law uses a formula to evaluate all potential transportation projects throughout the state through a rolling 2-year cycle. The public has an opportunity to participate in identifying funding priorities. The next schedule of programmed funds is anticipated for release by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in 2020.*

*The process to get any transportation project funded using state or federal funds is governed by State Law in North Carolina General Statutes. § 136-189.10 which allows projects to be submitted to the state for funding consideration every two years. After submittal, these projects will be evaluated through a statewide formula against all other transportation projects submitted throughout the state. Projects that score the highest through this formula will then be programmed by the state for funding.*

*The next opportunity the unfunded sections of the Kinston Bypass will have to be funded will be in the 2020-2029 North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Program which is anticipated for release in 2020. Although the process of programming transportation funds is governed by state law through a defined formula, NCDOT Division 2 and the Eastern Carolina Rural Planning Organization can impact which projects are considered for review and can award a portion of the final project scores. The public will have an opportunity to participate in the final project scores through public input processes conducted by both NCDOT Division 2 and the Eastern Carolina Rural Planning Organization. These opportunities for public input on final project scores will be advertised by NCDOT and the Eastern Carolina Rural Planning Organization in the spring of 2020.*

## 9. General Status of the Project/Next Phase

### Comment Summary

Five comments were received regarding project schedule.

### General Response

*The Kinston Bypass project is currently in the corridor alternative selection phase. Once a preferred alternative is selected, more detailed natural and human environment studies will be performed to further evaluate potential impacts along the selected corridor. These studies and potential impacts will be summarized in a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The purpose of the FEIS will be to identify the preferred alternative and the reasons for its selection, to summarize the impacts of the preferred alternative, to note any major changes in the design from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and to respond to comments on the DEIS. During the FEIS phase of the project, the engineering designs will be refined to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to natural and human resources.*

*The current project schedule lists the selection of the preferred alternative in the winter of 2019-2020, the FEIS in the winter of 2020-2021, and the Record of Decision in Spring 2021. Right-of-way acquisition would begin in 2022 and construction in 2025. The project schedule is subject to change.*

## 10. Emergency Response

### Comment Summary

Emergency responders have concerns regarding access and response times. In particular, the Wyse Fork Volunteer Fire and Rescue Station would be displaced by many of the routes. They have requested a service road to maintain their Insurance Services Offices or ISO rating and response times. There has also been concern voiced regarding flooding along existing routes and accessibility to the project.

### General Response

*The North Carolina Department of Transportation will continue to work with emergency response agencies as project designs progress to ensure that proper access is provided to the surrounding communities.*

*It has been noted that flooding concerns lie mainly along existing north-south routes. As this project has an east-west orientation, existing flooding concerns along intersecting roads are not a part of the project. However, the project will not worsen any flooding along north-south routes.*

*Potential impacts to emergency responders was analyzed as part of the Community Impact Assessment, which is available online at: <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/kinston-bypass/Pages/july-2019-technical-reports.aspx>*

## **11. Farmland Impacts**

### Comment Summary

Approximately eleven comments were received regarding impacts to farmland. Comments discussed concerns with building on valuable/precious farmland, loss of farmland, and agriculture as a backbone of the community.

### General Response

*North Carolina Executive Order 96, Conservation of Prime Agricultural and Forest Lands, requires all state agencies to consider impact of land acquisition and construction projects on prime farmland soils, as designated by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Farmland Protection Policy Act does not regulate nonfederal land or private farmland but is intended to minimize the impact federal programs have on the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses.*

*Upon selection of a preferred alternative, further analysis of how all impacts, including farmland ones, can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated will be assessed and analyzed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. NCDOT will continue to further avoid and minimize farmland impacts and disruptions to farming operations due to the project to the greatest extent practicable. NCDOT will ensure that access is maintained during construction for farm equipment and impacts to agricultural operations are minimized during construction.*

## **12. Natural Resources Impacts**

### Comment Summary

Approximately four comments were received regarding impacts to natural resources. Comments discussed concerns with impacts to wetlands, riparian habitats, floodplains, and wildlife movement.

### General Response

*The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) does not prevent implementation of projects with significant effects on the natural environment. It is virtually impossible to construct a new, limited-access facility without incurring environmental impacts. However, SEPA, and other state regulations, require that impacts to the natural and human environment be avoided to the greatest practical extent; impacts that cannot be avoided must be kept to a minimum, and the resulting impacts mitigated, to the greatest practical extent. NCDOT is working collaboratively with state and federal agencies to minimize impacts to natural resources. Efforts to avoid and minimize impacts have and will continue to be undertaken as the project develops.*

### 13. Construction Disruptions

#### Comments

Approximately two comments were received regarding impacts from highway construction. Comments discussed concerns with road construction hampering emergency responses times, access difficulties during construction, and damage from construction staging.

#### General Response

*During construction, short-term disruptions to local traffic patterns may occur. To keep such disruptions to a minimum, specific “maintenance of traffic” plans are developed. NCDOT will follow its standard construction policies to minimize construction disruptions and damage. NCDOT will coordinate with local emergency services to minimize disruptions to emergency services.*

#### **SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO COMMENTS**

The specific responses below are based upon the 116 comments received during DEIS comment period of July 22, 2019 through September 6, 2019. The responses below are preliminary and may be revised as updated information becomes available. Final responses to all substantive comments will be published in the FEIS. The FEIS will be made available for public review.

#### **Proposed Specific Responses**

**Hazardous Materials: Comment #8** “Also 2 buildings in Sandy Bottom corridor have asbestos shingle siding and could pose environmental issues if acquisition of property requires them to be moved or destroyed.”

*NCDOT will follow all applicable state and federal regulations pertaining to the removal, handling, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials such as asbestos.*

**Design Speed: Comment #45** “instead of your design speed at 70 mph, I would suggest 80 mph or higher. “

*The roadway will have a design speed of 70 mph which is the maximum speed currently permissible in North Carolina.*

**Travel Time Deficiencies: Comment #42** “are there large [sic] time efficiencies there? And I don’t believe enough for a bypass, I don’t believe so and I believe we should possibly maybe be some ways to do the stop lights.”

*A travel time analysis was completed to assess the travel speeds of US 70 between La Grange and Dover. The section of US 70 was broken down into 10 smaller segments of varying lengths to better detail the route and to show where signal delays typically occur. The study revealed that 4 of the 10 segments in the eastbound direction are operating at*

*speeds lower than the recommended minimum 45 mph in the a.m. and/or p.m. peak periods. Five of the 10 segments in the westbound direction are operating at speeds lower than the recommended minimum 45 mph in the a.m. and/or p.m. peak periods. As a result, approximately half of the segments along existing US 70 in the study area do not meet the mobility and capacity requirements for the recommended speed in the study area.*

**Additional Alternatives: Comment #116** “a high-speed super rail or vertically stacked east/west roadway design if Alternative 1UE is selected”

*The suggested alternatives are outside the scope of the project and do not meet the project Purpose and Need. Furthermore, the suggested alternatives are neither cost effective nor reasonable and feasible.*