

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES
RECONNAISSANCE REPORT**

MONROE CONNECTOR / BYPASS
MECKLENBURG AND UNION COUNTIES, NORTH CAROLINA

PREPARED FOR
THE NORTH CAROLINA TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

BY

THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE GROUP



HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

Courtney Foley, Architectural Historian

OCTOBER 2007

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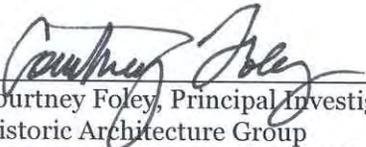
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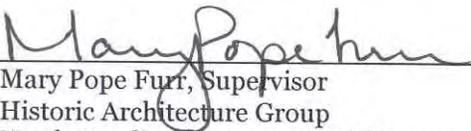
OCTOBER 2007



Courtney Foley, Principal Investigator
Historic Architecture Group
North Carolina Department of Transportation

25 OCTOBER 2007

Date



Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Group
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25 October 2007

Date

The North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) is examining ways to improve east-west travel in the US 74 corridor from Interstate 485 in Mecklenburg County to just west of the Town of Marshville in Union County. US 74 serves as the primary transportation route between Union County and the City of Charlotte/Mecklenburg County. The existing roadway is operating at or near capacity with 62,000 vehicles, including a high number of trucks, using this corridor daily. Traffic volumes are projected to increase about 30-35 percent along the corridor from 2007 to 2030.

The Monroe Connector/Bypass is a proposed new location roadway from US 74 at Interstate 485 in eastern Mecklenburg County to US 74 near the Town of Marshville in Union County. This project combines two projects previously studied by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), the Monroe Bypass (TIP No. R-2559) and the Monroe Connector (TIP No. R-3329).

The Monroe Bypass project investigated improvements in the US 74 vicinity from just west of the City of Monroe, around the north side of Monroe, to just west of the Town of Marshville. A 1995 survey for historic architectural resources documented seventy-five resources over fifty years of age within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) of this project; two of these resources were determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. NCDOT completed environmental studies in 1997 and selected a preferred alternative consisting of a four-lane divided highway on new location. NCDOT put the project on hold in 2001 due to concerns regarding impacts to the Carolina Heelsplitter mussel.

Studies for the Monroe Connector began in 1999 and examined improvements to the US 74 corridor from I-485 to US 601 in Monroe. Completion of this project would replace the need for that portion of the Monroe Bypass west of US 601. NCDOT completed studies evaluating historic architectural resources within the APE for this project in March of 2002. Fifty-nine resources over fifty years of age were documented and three resources were determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) included the Monroe Connector in MUMPO's Long Range Transportation Plan and in 2005 requested that the NCTA adopt the Monroe Connector as a candidate for a toll facility. In 2006 MUMPO recommended that the NCTA study the Monroe Bypass and the Monroe Connector as one project. The NCTA Board adopted this recommendation in November 2006. Since the original NCDOT studies, NCTA added a southern corridor that lies below US 74 generally following Old Charlotte Highway (Corridors 3, 5, and 6 on *Project Study Map* on pages 5 and 6).

Project Purpose and Need

The Monroe Connector/Bypass proposes to improve the US 74 corridor from I-485 in Mecklenburg County to the Town of Marshville in Union County. Approximately twenty-one miles in length, the study corridor is located southeast of Charlotte, in the vicinity of the towns of Indian Trail, Mint Hill, Stallings, Lake Park, Wingate, and Marshville, and the cities of Monroe and Matthews.

US 74 is designated as a NC Strategic Highway Corridor and is part of the NC Intrastate System. Regionally, US 74 serves as the primary transportation connection between Charlotte, the economic hub of the region, and Union County, one of the fastest growing

counties in North Carolina. Commuter traffic between the two counties as well as local traffic accessing businesses along US 74 use the road.

Currently, US 74 in the study area is a four-to-six lane arterial roadway with 26 at-grade signalized intersections, many additional unsignalized intersections, and numerous commercial and residential driveway connections. Average travel speeds range from approximately 20 to 30 miles per hour during the peak hour, and are expected to decline to less than 20 miles per hour by 2030. Congestion is high, with one-third of the intersections operating at an unacceptable Level of Service (LOS E or F) during the peak hour today. Approximately two-thirds of the intersections are expected to operate at LOS E or F by 2030, with long queues at many intersections.

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve mobility and capacity within the project study area by providing a facility in the US 74 corridor that allows for high-speed regional travel consistent with the designations of the North Carolina Strategic Highway Corridor system and the North Carolina Intrastate System, while maintaining access to properties along existing US 74.

Methodology

NCDOT conducted the survey and prepared this report in accordance with provisions of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR44716); 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60; and Section 106 Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT. This survey and report meet the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service.

This historic architectural resources survey was conducted as part of the planning process for the Monroe Connector/Bypass in Union and Mecklenburg Counties, North Carolina. NCDOT architectural historians carried out a reconnaissance level survey in order to accomplish the following objectives:

- to determine the APE of this undertaking, defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist; and
- to identify National Register-listed properties and all other resources considered to be potentially eligible for the National Register within the APE.

NCDOT architectural historians established the APE for this survey as the study area as shown on *Vicinity Map* on page 3, with particular attention paid to the preliminary corridor alternatives as shown on *Project Study Map* on pages 5 and 6.

Survey methodology consisted of reviewing historic architectural resources reports completed as part of the planning studies for NCDOT TIP Nos. R-2559 and R-3329 in 1995 and 2002, respectively. NCDOT architectural historians conducted a driving survey of one hundred percent of the APE over two days in August 2007. All structures over fifty years of age were visually inspected from the existing right-of-way. Only those properties previously determined eligible for National Register listing or structures viewed in the field that appeared to have exceptional architectural merit received more intensive site inspection.

Summary of Findings

Prior studies covered only that portion of the project study area located north of US 74. In-depth historic architectural resources surveys have not been conducted for Corridors 3, 5, 6, 44, the portion of Corridor 7 lying south of US 74, and the portion of Corridor 8 located east of Rocky River Road. (All corridor references are based on the Preliminary Study Map dated June 25, 2007.) The August 2007 windshield survey noted the presence of numerous structures over fifty years in age along these corridors. Architectural historians noted two structures and one residential district that would require further in-depth evaluation if an alternative south of US 74 is chosen.

The APE contains the following historic properties of note:

Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

- Monroe City Hall (UN 1)
- Monroe Downtown Historic District (UN648 and UN 718)
- Malcolm K. Lee House (UN 502)
- Monroe Residential Historic District (UN 717)
- John C. Sikes House (UN 4)
- Union County Courthouse (UN 3)
- US Post Office (UN 495)

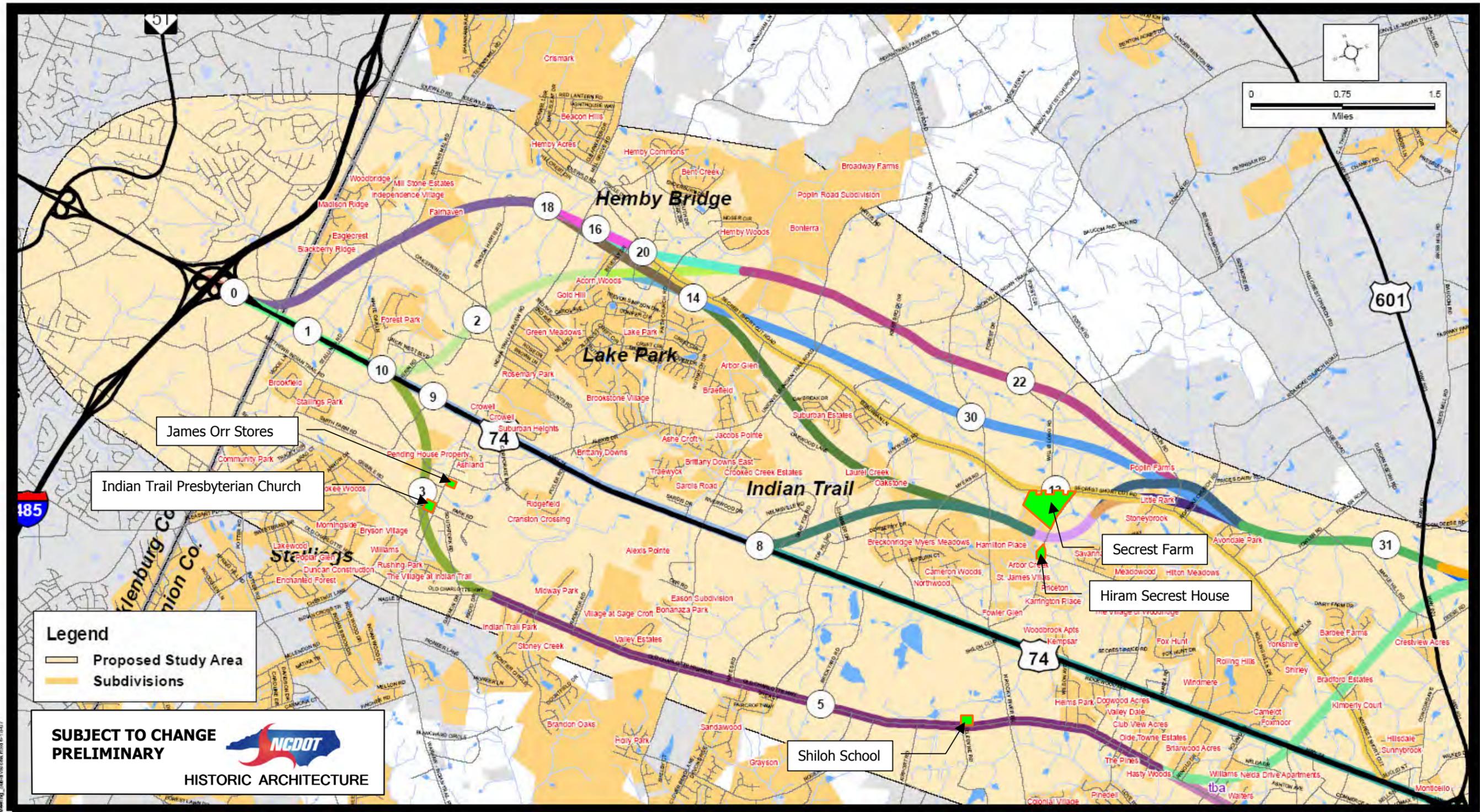
Properties Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (DOE):

- William Bivens House (UN 830)
- Perry-McIntyre House (UN 306)
- James Orr Stores (UN 302)
- Secrest Farm (UN 835)
- Hiram Secrest House (UN 351)
- Indian Trail Presbyterian Church (UN 199)

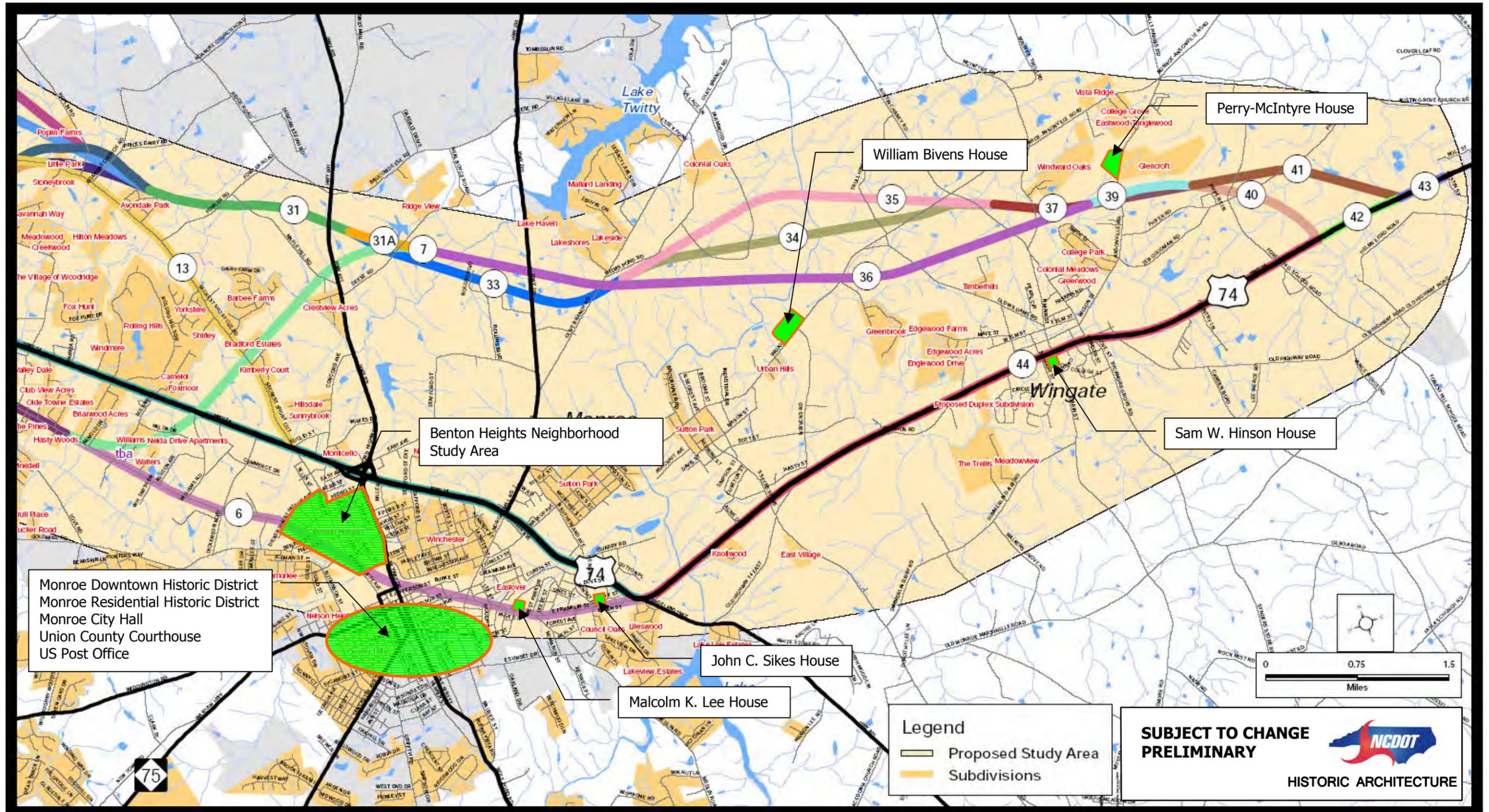
Properties Located South of US 74 requiring further study if a Southern Corridor is selected:

- Benton Heights Neighborhood
- Sam W. Hinson House (UN 181)
- Shiloh School (UN 356)

Each of the above mentioned properties is keyed to the Project Study Map on pages 5 and 6. A brief description of each property follows.



**MONROE CONNECTOR / BYPASS
PROJECT STUDY MAP 1 OF 2
SHOWING HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES**



**MONROE CONNECTOR / BYPASS
PROJECT STUDY MAP 2 OF 2
SHOWING HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES**

Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Monroe City Hall (UN 1): The former Monroe City Hall is located at 102 West Jefferson Street. Listed in the National Register in 1971, the building was constructed in 1848 as the public jail. The three-story, Flemish bond brick building features a pedimented gable roof and interior end chimneys. The building is eligible under Criteria A and C in the areas of politics and architecture and is a contributing resource in the Monroe Downtown Historic District. The National Register boundary for this property is the tax parcel on which it is located.

Monroe Downtown Historic District (UN648 and UN 718): Nominated in 1987, the district contains portions of Franklin, Hayne and Main Streets surrounding the Old Union County Courthouse. The courthouse square and grid pattern of streets radiating from this central point follow the original 1843 city plan and contain historic commercial and government buildings. The district is eligible under Criteria A and C in the areas of commerce and architecture.

Malcolm K. Lee House (UN 502): This Colonial Revival style house, constructed in 1919 is located at 1003 E. Franklin Street in Monroe. The two-story, brick-veneered, hip-roof residence features a colossal portico and flanking porches at the front corners. Listed in 1987, the house is eligible under Criteria B and C for an association with the builder G. Marion Tucker as well as the areas of architecture and commerce. The boundary is 4.5 acres and includes the house and surrounding landscape.

Monroe Residential Historic District (UN 717): Nominated in 1987, this district contains approximately sixty-eight blocks southeast, south, and west of the Monroe central business district. Most of this residential area within the boundary developed between 1870 and 1940. The district is eligible under Criteria A and C in the areas of architecture and community planning and development. This district is also a locally-designated historic district.

John C. Sikes House (UN 4): Located at 1301 E. Franklin Street, this Neoclassical residence is constructed of yellow Roman bricks and features a two-and-one-half story, five-bay main block. The house rests on a large lot featuring a designed landscape that is an integral part of the overall design. Listed in 1984, the house is eligible under Criterion B for an association with locally prominent politicians John C. Sikes and Henry Hill Wilson and Criterion C in the area of architecture. The National Register boundary consists of the current tax parcel.

Union County Courthouse (UN 3): Architecturally sophisticated, the courthouse was constructed in 1886 and designed by architect Thomas J. Holt, younger brother of prominent North Carolina architect Jacob Holt. Holt combined elements from a variety of popular styles to create a two-and-one-half story brick building with a five-story dome, and mansard roof. Three-bay wings that flank the original building core were added in 1926. Listed in 1971, the courthouse is eligible under Criteria A and C in the areas of politics and architecture. The Courthouse Square marks the National Register boundary. This property is a contributing resource in the Monroe Downtown Historic District.

US Post Office (UN 495): Constructed in 1913 this post office is a good example of Neoclassical federal architecture. Located at 407 N. Main Street, the building contains seven bays topped by a classical portico. Corinthian columns support the portico and

shelter the five central bays. An entablature engraved with “United State Post Office” features flanking medallions. Listed in 1984, the property boundary consists of the city block on which it sets. The resource is located just outside the Monroe Downtown Historic District. The building is eligible under Criteria A, B, and C for its association with the architect Oscar Wendroth as well as the areas of city planning and architecture.

Properties Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (DOE):

William Bivens House (UN 830): The William Bivens House is located at 3703 Monroe-Ansonville Road. Constructed circa 1846, the vernacular two-story, house retains its original single-pile form with rear shed appendage and weatherboard siding. The existing wrap-around porch and second-story sleeping porch replaced the original two-story entry portico in 1917. Original Greek Revival style elements that survive on the house include a wide freezeboard, cornerboards with caps and a molded boxed cornice with gable-end returns. The property retains a circa 1883 well house, a smokehouse, and carriage house that dates to the early twentieth-century. The property is eligible under Criterion C for architecture with a boundary that encompasses approximately nine acres and includes the house and surrounding farmyard.

Perry-McIntyre House (UN 306): Located at 758 Ansonville Road (SR 1002), the Perry-McIntyre House is a largely intact, frame I-House constructed circa 1880. Sheathed in weatherboard siding, the house features a hip-roof front porch with sawnwork balustrade and brackets. The central, single bay, second story room that projects from the front of the façade was added in the early twentieth century. A barn, shed, workshop, and a smokehouse that has been converted into a guesthouse are located on the property. Eligible under Criterion C for architecture, the National Register boundary is the tax parcel boundary and contains 11.42 acres.

James Orr Stores (UN 302): This property, located at 125 Indian Trail Road South (SR 1008), is a one-story brick commercial block building. The façade contains four symmetrically arranged three-bay store units below a decorative corbeled cornice. A shed-roofed porch extends the length of the façade. The southernmost entrance has a segmental arched entrance with a transom containing a recessed, horizontal paneled and glass door flanked by tall wood-sash windows. The remaining three storefronts contain double leaf, plank doors featuring a herringbone pattern. Eligible under Criteria A and C in the areas of commerce and architecture, the National Register boundary consists of the 0.78-acre tax parcel.

Secrest Farm (UN 835): The Secrest Farm consists of a substantial brick bungalow and seven intact outbuildings located at 4611 Secrest Shortcut Road (SR 1501). The house, built in 1930, features a side-gable roof, front gable dormer, and an engaged screened porch supported by heavy brick piers. Decorative brackets support the wide eave overhang of the roof. Single and grouped four-over-one windows pierce the elevations. Circa 1930s outbuildings include a well house, smokehouse, corncrib, equipment shed, cow stall, and a granary/corncrib. A 1950s poultry shed is also located on the property. The farm is eligible under Criterion A for agriculture with a boundary of approximately sixty-seven acres that includes the house, outbuildings, agricultural fields, and woodland.

Hiram Secrest House (UN 351): The Hiram Secrest House is located at 3023 James Hamilton Road (SR 1511). The circa 1900 house is a two-story, weatherboard, single-pile dwelling capped by a side-gable roof. An enclosed porch that projects from the center bay on the second story dates to the 1920s. The wrap-around porch supported by tapered posts on brick piers replaced the original front porch at this same time. An original decorative bargeboard embellishes the cornice. The only surviving outbuilding, a mid-twentieth century corner crib is used for storage. The property is eligible under Criterion C for architecture with a boundary that is limited to the current tax parcel of approximately four acres.

Indian Trail Presbyterian Church (UN 199): This property was listed in the State Study List in 1983. The original church was constructed in 1916 with weatherboard siding; renovations in 1934 faced the exterior with the stone veneer that exists today. A belfry and entrance tower, of unequal height flank the central front-gable wing. Lancet and tracery stained-glass windows dominate the front and side elevation. In form and detailing, the church is similar to contemporary weatherboarded Presbyterian churches in the county; however, the stone makes it stand out as one of the finest examples of rural church architecture in Union County. The church is located at 113 Indian Trail Boulevard (SR 1008) in Indian Trail and was determined eligible for National Register listing (DOE) in 2003 under Criterion C for architecture as part of the planning studies for NCDOT TIP No. U-3809.

Properties Located South of US 74 requiring further study if a Southern Corridor is selected:

Benton Heights: Benton Heights is a residential neighborhood roughly bounded by Patton Avenue, Pedro Street, Skyway Drive, Walnut Street, and both sides of N. Charlotte Avenue located northwest of downtown Monroe. The neighborhood includes housing stock from the early 1900s through the 1930s as well as some commercial buildings and the 1924 Benton Heights School, of which only the 1928 auditorium retains architectural integrity.

Sam W. Hinson House (UN 181): This Neoclassical inspired residence is located at 3918 E. US 74 in the Town of Wingate. A monumental portico with Ionic columns dominates the façade of the two-story house. German siding sheathes the exterior. Ionic columns support a one-story hip-roofed porch that wraps around the front and side elevations. Paired interior brick chimneys feature corbelled caps. The building currently houses the Wingate Town Hall.

Shiloh School (UN 356): Located at 3828 Old Charlotte Highway, the Shiloh School was erected in 1931 as a part of the consolidation program of rural county schools. The common bond brick main block and projecting front ell present a symmetrical appearance. The front elevation features segmented arches that each house a triple row of windows. Additions to the side and rear of the original building help retain the integrity. The building is still in use as a school.