

North Carolina Department of Transportation



STIP PROJECT NO. R-2566B

WBS No. 37512.1.5

Federal Aid Project No. NHPP-0150(004)

Watauga County

N.C. 105 IMPROVEMENTS



Combined Public Hearing

November 7, 2016
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Watauga Campus of Caldwell Community College
& Technical Institute
372 Community College Drive, Boone

PUBLIC HEARING PURPOSE

Today's public hearing is an important step in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) process for keeping you, the public, a part of the project development process. The purpose of the public hearing is to obtain public input on the design of the N.C. 105 Widening Project.

YOUR PARTICIPATION

The intent of today's public hearing is to provide you with an opportunity to learn more about the proposed project and to voice your opinion on what you see today.

You may write your comments or questions on the comment sheet attached to this packet and leave it in the comment box located at the Comment Table, or mail it, by December 9, 2016, to the following address:

Mr. Jamille Robbins
NCDOT - Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
Email: jarobbins@ncdot.gov

Everyone present is urged to participate in the proceedings. It is important; however, that **THE OPINIONS OF ALL INDIVIDUALS BE RESPECTED REGARDLESS OF HOW DIVERGENT THEY MAY BE FROM YOUR OWN.** Accordingly, debates are out of place at public hearings. Also, the public hearing is not to be used as a Popular Referendum to determine the location and/or design by a majority vote of those present.

PROJECT FUNDING

The proposed project is a Federal-Aid Highway Project and will be constructed under the State-Federal Aid Highway Program. Financing of this project will be 80% Federal funds and 20% State funds. The NCDOT is responsible for the selection and scheduling of projects, including their location, design, and maintenance cost after construction. The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for review and approval of these activities to ensure that each project is designed, constructed, and maintained to Federal Aid Standards.

WHAT IS DONE WITH MY COMMENTS?

After the comment period ends on December 9, 2016, all comments will be reviewed and discussed at a post-hearing meeting. The meeting will include NCDOT project team members, including its planners, engineers, right-of-way agents, and other transportation related professionals, as well as representatives of other agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the North Carolina Department of Water Resources (NCDWR).

Issues raised will be addressed at that time or during the development of the final design. Minutes of the post-hearing meeting will be prepared and a summary will be available to the public. You may request this document on the attached comment sheet. NCDOT considers safety, costs, traffic service, social impacts, and public comments in making decisions.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- ◆ Agencies will formally choose the selected alternative in January 2017
- ◆ The final planning document, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be completed in Summer 2017
- ◆ The project will move into final design, then proceed to the right of way acquisition phase. More detail on the schedule is on page 6 of this handout.

PROJECT HISTORY

The project began in 2008 with consideration of improvements for a 14.6-mile section of N.C. 105 from Linville to Boone (Sections A and B). After a new traffic forecast was prepared in 2012, the project limits were shortened to 5.5 miles (just Section B), the purpose and need was revised, and alternatives were revisited.

Although the 5.5-mile corridor was chosen, improvements are not required for the entire length of the corridor since congestion and safety needs vary along the corridor. In August of 2014, one build alternatives was selected to be carried forward for detailed study, a Best-Fit Alternative that would improve N.C. 105 from Clark's Creek Road to N.C. 105 Bypass using the fewest improvements that would result in meeting the purposes of the project. A No Build Alternative was also carried forward for comparison.

Two public meetings were held in August 2011 to describe the project and gather initial input from the community. At that meeting, many citizens expressed concern about widening the full length of the corridor, and others requested addition of bicycle facilities. In June 2015, a public meeting was held to present a proposed alternative for the shortened project limits.

The environmental document, called an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed in September 2016.



Southern intersection of N.C. 105 and Old Shull's Mill Road

PURPOSE AND NEED

There are three purposes of this project.

1. Traffic congestion: N.C. 105 is used heavily by commuters during the week, but also tourists and locals visiting recreational areas on the weekends and during special events. Several segments of N.C. 105 currently operate at unacceptable levels of service, and are projected to worsen by the design year (2040).

The level of service (LOS) of a roadway is the measure of its traffic carrying ability. Levels of service range from A to F, "A" being the best scenario with unrestricted maneuverability and operating speeds, and "F" being the worst scenario where travel on a roadway is characterized by "stop and go" conditions.

A primary purpose of the proposed project is to reduce congestion to an acceptable level in the 2040 design year, allowing for a slightly higher level of congestion on Saturdays and seasonal peaks while maintaining a lower level of congestion during normal commuting days.

2. Safety: Data shows a history of crashes on the corridor. The type and location of crashes indicate that crash rates will worsen as traffic volumes increase.

Another primary purpose of the proposed project is to reduce rear-end collisions and run-off-road crashes on N.C. 105.

3. Bicycles: Bicyclists desire to use N.C. 105, but existing paved shoulders are very narrow.

A secondary purpose is to improve bicycle accommodations on N.C. 105 in areas where capacity and safety improvements are proposed.



N.C. 105 north of Broadstone Road

PROPOSED DESIGN

This project studied the 5.5 miles from Clark's Creek Road to N.C. 105 Bypass. No improvements are needed for the 1 mile from Clark's Creek Road to Old Shull's Mill Road. The following improvements are recommended for the 4.5 miles from Old Shull's Mill Road to N.C. 105 Bypass:

- ◆ The 1.7-mile section between Old Shull's Mill Road (south) and Broadstone Road will consist of three 12-foot lanes (two southbound and one northbound) with 6-foot wide paved shoulders on both sides for bicycle accommodations (see **Figure 1**).
- ◆ The 2.8-mile section between Broadstone Road and the N.C. 105 Bypass will consist of four 12-foot lanes, a 23-foot wide raised median, and 6-foot wide paved shoulders on both sides for bicycle accommodations (see **Figure 2**). This includes replacing the bridge over the Watauga River near Broadstone Road.

In addition, the two intersections where Old Shull's Mill Road tees into N.C. 105 have safety concerns. The northern intersection will be closed, and the southern intersection will be realigned.

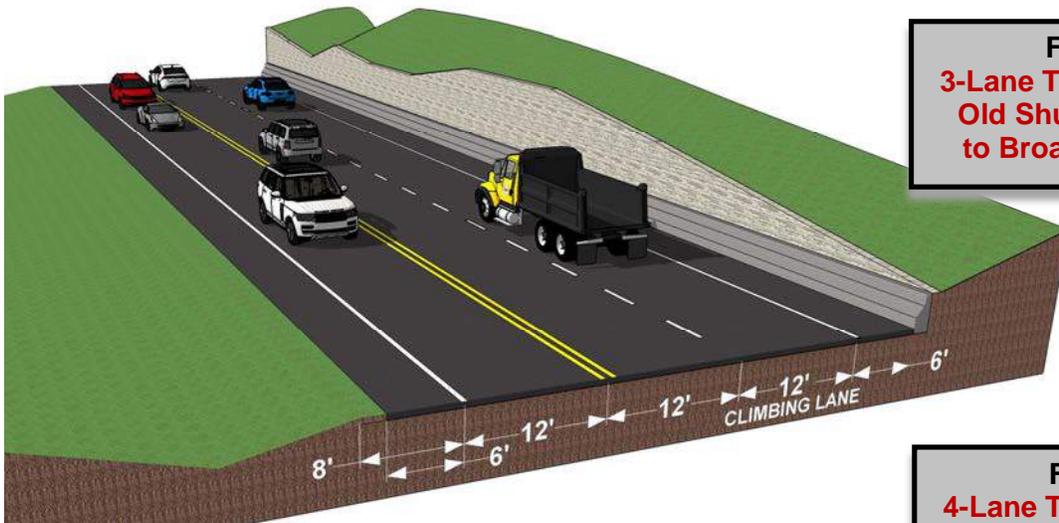


Figure 1
3-Lane Typical Section,
Old Shull's Mill Road
to Broadstone Road

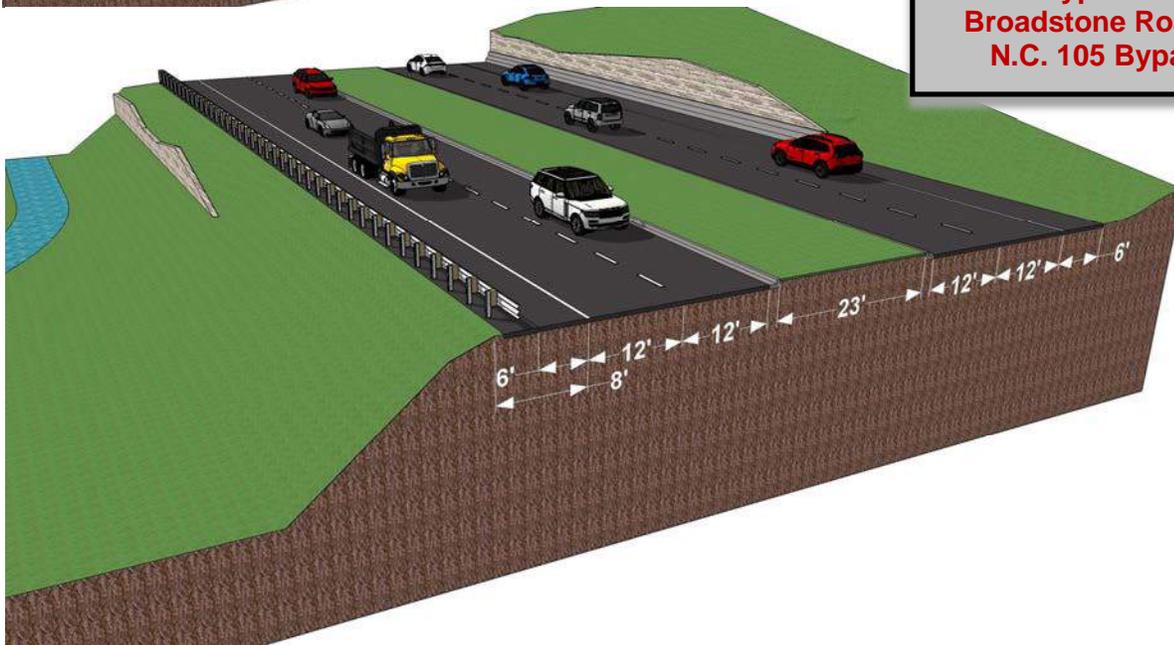


Figure 2
4-Lane Typical Section,
Broadstone Road to
N.C. 105 Bypass

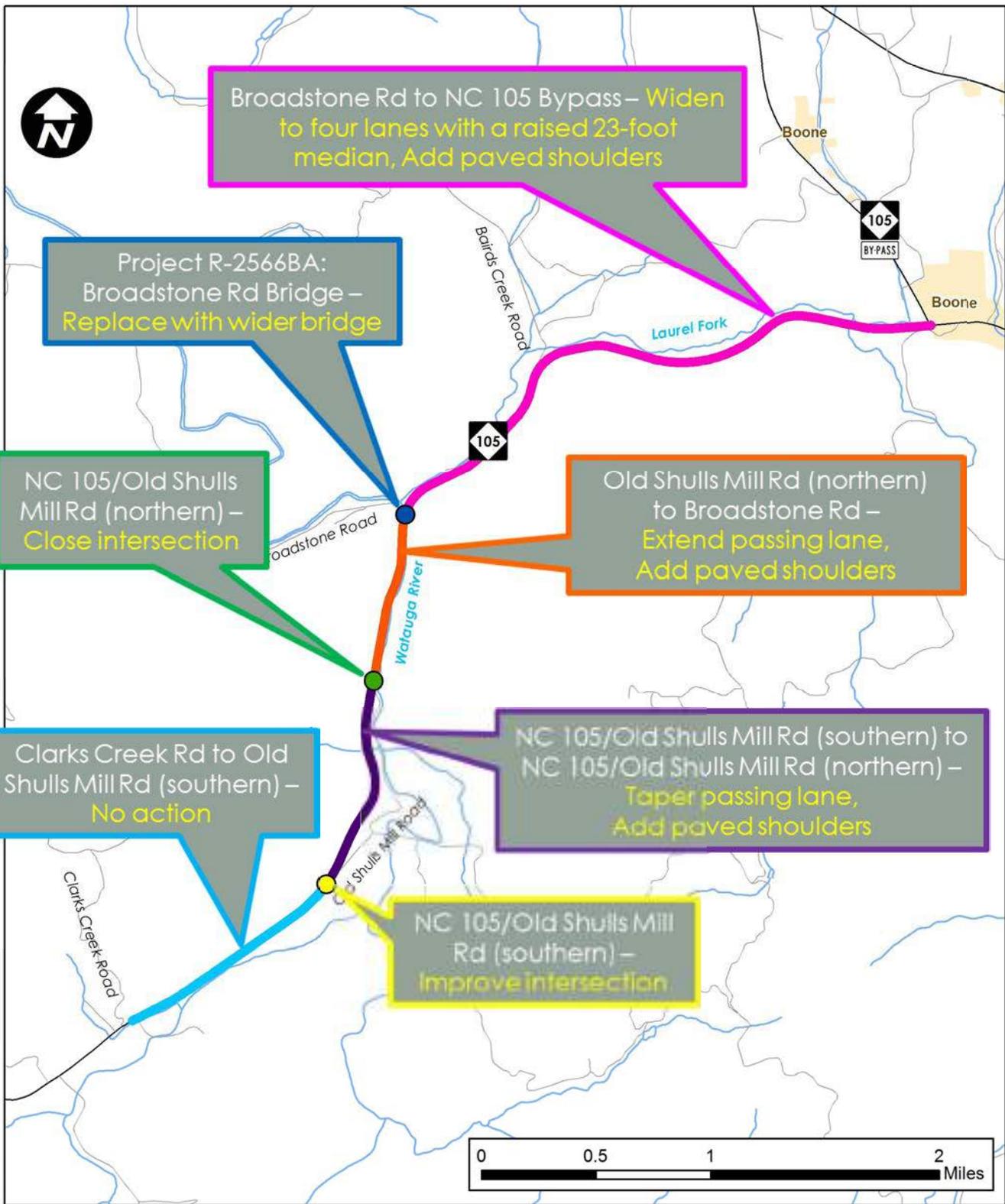


Figure 3
Project Area Map

ANTICIPATED PROJECT IMPACTS

The following are impacts associated with the “Best Fit” Build Alternative for Project R-2566B:

Topic	“Best Fit” Build Alternative
Schools	0
Recreational Areas & Parks	0
Churches or Cemeteries	0
Major Utility Crossings	8*
Historic Architecture Archaeological Impacts	0
Federally-Listed Species within Study Area	6 No Effect; 2 Unresolved; 1 No Biological Conclusion Required**
100-Year Floodplain Crossings	1
Prime and Unique Farmland	0
Residential Relocations	17
Business Relocations	11
Hazardous Material Sites	6
Wetland Impacts	0.2 acres
Stream Impacts	3,270 feet (19 crossings)
Traffic Noise Impacts (# of Receptors)	29
Low Income or Minority Population Disproportionate and Adverse Impacts	0

* Major power line crossings, in addition to smaller service drops.

** Formal consultation is underway for the Virginia big-eared bat and the Northern long-eared bat. A biological conclusion is not required for the bog turtle because it is threatened due to similarity of appearance.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS

The estimate project costs for the Preferred Alternative for Project R-2566B are as follows:

- ◆ Construction: \$42,500,000
- ◆ Utility Relocation: \$8,910,000
- ◆ Right-of-Way: \$9,713,000

TOTAL COSTS: \$61,123,000

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Current Schedule: The *tentative project schedule* is shown below. A number of factors can affect a project schedule, so schedules are subject to change.

- ◆ January 2017—Agencies will formally choose the selected alternative.
- ◆ Summer 2017—The final planning document, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be completed.
- ◆ Fall 2018—Right-of-Way acquisition is anticipated to begin for the bridge at Broadstone Road (Section BA).
- ◆ Fall 2019—Construction is anticipated to begin for the bridge at Broadstone Road (Section BA).
- ◆ Fall 2023—Right-of-Way acquisition is anticipated to begin for the rest of the project (Section B).
- ◆ Fall 2025—Construction is anticipated to begin for the rest of the project (Section B).

RIGHT-OF-WAY PROCEDURES

After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. If you are an affected property owner, a Right-of-Way Agent will contact you and arrange a meeting. The agent will explain the plans and advise you as to how the project will affect you. The agent will inform you of your rights as a property owner. If permanent right-of-way is required, professionals who are familiar with real estate values will evaluate or appraise your property. The evaluations or appraisals will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy, and then the Right-of-Way Agent will make a written offer to you. The current market value of the property at its highest and best use when appraised will be offered as compensation. The Department of Transportation must:

1. Treat all owners and tenants equally.
2. Fully explain the owner's rights.
3. Pay just compensation in exchange for property rights.
4. Furnish relocation advisory assistance.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

If you are a relocatee, that is, if your residence or business is to be acquired as a part of the proposed project, additional assistance in the form of advice and compensation is available. You will be provided with assistance on locations of comparable housing and/or commercial establishments, moving procedures, and moving aid. Moving expenses may be paid for you. Additional monetary compensation is available to help homeowners cope with mortgage increases, increased value of comparable homes, closing costs, etc. A similar program is available to assist business owners. The Right-of-Way Agent can explain this assistance in greater detail.

NOTE: PAMPHLETS SUMMARIZING RIGHT OF WAY AND RELOCATION PROCEDURES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE SIGN-IN TABLE

TITLE VI PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

Completing this form is completely voluntary. You are not required to provide the information requested in order to participate in this meeting.

Meeting Type: Public Hearing Location: Boone	Date: November 7, 2016
TIP No.: R-2566B Project Description: N.C. 105 Improvements between Foscoe and Boone, Watauga County	

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) assures that no person(s) shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any of the Department's programs, policies, or activities, based on their race, color, national origin, disability, age, income, or gender.

Completing this form helps meet our data collection and public involvement obligations under Title VI and NEPA, and will improve how we serve the public. Please place the completed form in the designated box on the sign-in table, hand it to an NCDOT official or mail it to the PDEA-Human Environment Section, 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598.

All forms will remain on file at the NCDOT as part of the public record.

Zip Code: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Street Name: (i.e. Main Street) _____	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older <input type="checkbox"/> 30-44
Total Household Income: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$12,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$47,000 – \$69,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$12,000 – \$19,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 – \$93,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 – \$30,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$94,000 – \$117,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$31,000 – \$46,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$118,000 or greater	Have a Disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Race/Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	National Origin: (if born outside the U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Central American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> South American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____

How did you hear about this meeting? (newspaper advertisement, flyer, and/or mailing) _____

For more information regarding Title VI or this request, please contact the NCDOT Title VI Section at (919) 508-1830 or toll free at 1-800-522-0453, or by email at mlwright4@ncdot.gov

Thank you for your participation!



Attn: Jamille Robbins
NCDOT - PDEA
Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

COMMENT SHEET

**N.C. 105 IMPROVEMENTS
Public Hearing
STIP R-2566B
Watauga County**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

COMMENTS: _____

Comments maybe mailed by December 9, 2016 to:

Mr. Jamille Robbins
NCDOT - Human Environment Unit
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
EMAIL: jarobbins@ncdot.gov



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