

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: February 16, 2005

SUBJECT: NCDOT Upward Road Improvement Project

ATTACHMENTS: Staff Memorandum

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

During the February 7 meeting, the Board had a brief discussion concerning NCDOT's improvement project for Upward Road. As was indicated during the meeting, NCDOT has developed an updated design for the improvement project. Staff has reviewed the updated design and drafted the attached memorandum. The attached memorandum compares recommendations made by the Board on August 19, 2004 and changes made with the updated design that address these recommendations. The memorandum also includes wording from an NCDOT e-mail that specifically describes changes that were made for the updated design. In order for this project to proceed, NCDOT has requested that the Board formally endorse the updated design.

COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION/ACTION REQUIRED:

It is apparent that NCDOT has addressed many of the design issues raised by the Board in August 2004. Furthermore, it is clear that if the Upward Road improvement project does not proceed as currently designed, funding for the project will be dropped and the project will be pushed back to the 2012 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Therefore, staff strongly recommends that the Board endorse the updated NCDOT design for the Upward Road improvement project.

MEMORANDUM

February 10, 2005

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Justin B. Hembree, Assistant County Manager
Subject: Upward Road Project

As noted during the Board’s meeting on February 7, NCDOT has developed an updated design for the Upward Road project. On August 19, 2004, the Board of Commissioners forwarded some specific design recommendations concerning the first design for improvements to Upward Road to NCDOT. For your information, listed below are the August 19 Board of Commissioner’s recommendations and the manner in which they are addressed in the updated design:

<i>August 19, 2004 Board Recommendations</i>	<i>Winter 2005 New Design</i>
“While a 4-lane divided highway would be preferred, the current NCDOT design does not meet the needs of the citizens and businesses along the road. Unless NCDOT can develop a plan that addresses issues such as property access, left turns, and improved safety for the I-26 interchange, Upward Road should be developed as a 5-lane highway from US 176 to Ballenger Road with appropriate landscaping.”	With the updated design, Upward Road would be improved to a 4-lane divided highway. However, some specific design changes have been made to address access issues and safety.
“Traffic lights and/or separate access roads should be provided to allow for frequent left turns at both Commercial Boulevard and McMurray Road.”	Traffic light is placed at Commercial Boulevard intersection to allow for frequent left turns. NCDOT staff has indicated that a traffic light can be placed at McMurray Road if traffic levels justify such placement.
“Traffic lights should be considered at Crest Road and Ballenger Road to assist with school and truck traffic.”	NCDOT staff has indicated that traffic lights can be placed at Crest Road and Ballenger Road intersections if traffic levels justify such placements.
“The intersection of Upward Road Extension and Upward Road at East Henderson High School should be changed to one-way, allowing only right turns from Upward Road.”	The construction area in this specific section has been downsized to allow for less traffic making left and right turns and is proposed to be a “right in, out right” intersection. NCDOT staff has some safety concerns with changing Upward Road Extension to one-way due to traffic flow in the area of the school.
“Leave project as proposed by NCDOT from Ballenger Road to the end of the project area.”	With the exception of extremely minor design adjustments, the project is unchanged from Ballenger Road to the end of the project area.

Via an e-mail sent on February 8, 2005, NCDOT provided the following list of changes and adjustments that were made for the updated design:

- (1) "The revised 12/04 maps show – Y4 – (Upward Rd. Extension) as RT IN only...we would like to make this a RT IN/RT OUT connection. We have safety concerns with only making this intersection a RT IN."
- (2) "Dead-end Bell Avenue (-Y5A-)."
- (3) "Set up design @ South Allen Rd. (-Y7-) for U-turns for WB traffic."
- (4) "Made Commercial Ave. (-Y8-) a full movement signalized intersection."
- (5) "The RT IN/RT OUT driveway between the McDonalds/Cracker Barrel will be maintained. The 'pork-chopped' shaped island will need to be removed, but the drive connection will be maintained as curbed driveway cut."
- (6) "The bridge over I-26 will now need to be replaced due to loading requirements and the need to improve the vertical clearance over I-26. A 3 lane temporary detour to the south of the existing bridge will need to be constructed in order to maintain traffic."
- (7) "Provide U-turns for Tractor/Trailers and Tanker Trucks either at north side of Ballenger Road intersection or further north at the Apple Orchard. (The Ballenger Road is preferred)."
- (8) "Provide a partial movement crossover (leftover) at the Western NC Produce property. This crossover should also be setup for U-turns for passenger vehicles."
- (9) "Extended the 4-lane median divided section to Howard Gap Road."
- (10) "Proposed right of way width increased to 115' for utility relocations."