

# REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

## HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**MEETING DATE:** July 20, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Phase I–Highway Map

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) Phase I Highway Map
- 2) Comments and Answers Generated from TAC Public Input Sessions
- 3) June 28, 2005 Letter from Jack Lynch

### **SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

As the Board is well aware, the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and County staff have been working with North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) Planning Branch for the past five years to complete a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Henderson County. On January 27, 2005, NCDOT staff presented the Highway Map for Phase I of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan to the TAC. In turn, after initial review by the Board and the TAC, a process was developed to allow for public input concerning the Phase I Highway Map. The TAC held two public input sessions on April 12 and April 13, 2005. Attached is the listing of comments received during these public input sessions and the TAC's responses. Per the attached letter from Jack Lynch, the TAC is requesting that the Board endorse the Phase I Highway Map. The MPO has final approval authority for the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

As the Board considers the endorsement of the Phase I Highway several issues should be considered. First, the projects identified in the current TIP as "funded" projects are considered constructed by 2030 for NCDOT's planning analysis. NCDOT staff feels that these projects will offer much needed improvements to the highway system and will need local support to advance.

Second, NCDOT notes that improvements in lane width, alignment, and traffic operations on several local streets will facilitate traffic movement around downtown Hendersonville. According to NCDOT, many of these improvements can be accomplished at the NCDOT Division level and may not require TIP funding.

Third, NCDOT indicates that US 25 North, US 176, and Four Seasons Boulevard should be included in a more detailed study to better identify any access management techniques and land use considerations that can maintain mobility in these areas. NCDOT feels that US 25 North currently has sufficient capacity to act as the primary

entrance to Hendersonville. Following the completion of the current US 25 North project, I-26 signage changes are recommended to divert traffic from the north to downtown Hendersonville along this corridor rather than continue to the US 64 interchange.

Fourth, NCDOT also notes that as development increases on the eastern side of I-26, Howard Gap Road will become a major north-south corridor. In order to maintain the mobility on this corridor, special consideration must be given to control of access to adjacent development. Improvements in alignment, addition of turn lanes, limited driveway cuts, use of service roads, and limited signalized intersections are recommended as strategies to maintain capacity. For protection of future needed right-of-way, a four-lane median-divided cross-section is recommended. NCDOT has indicated that this corridor will be given additional study in Phase II of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Finally, NCDOT notes that an additional I-26 interchange north of US 64 offers the most relief in future traffic volumes for Four Seasons Boulevard. Several interchange locations were studied. However, the "Balfour Parkway" alignment is preferred by the TAC. This new location facility allows for a limited access roadway that can be implemented in stages to provide connections to US 25, NC 191, and US 64. In addition to a new interchange at I-26, this alignment will require an interchange at US 25 North to allow a railroad crossing. This facility will require major TIP funding, an in-depth environmental study, and an analysis of all design considerations.

#### **COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION/ACTION REQUIRED:**

Staff recommends that the Board endorse the Highway Map for Phase I of the Henderson County Comprehensive Transportation Plan with the following comments:

- 1) Overall, the Phase I Highway Map complies with the County Comprehensive Plan.
- 2) Final alignment of the proposed "Balfour Parkway" should cause little or no impact on County facilities (solid waste transfer station, animal shelter, landfill, bus garage, Stoney Mountain Activity Center).
- 3) The County will strive to promote sound transportation planning through active involvement of the TAC and Board in transportation issues, continued cooperation with NCDOT, and the implementation of transportation-related land use regulations such as access management standards.
- 4) The County requests that NCDOT complete the Henderson County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (Phases I and II) as soon as possible.

**PRELIMINARY**

# Highway Map

## French Broad River MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan Henderson County Phase I

- Freeways**
  - Existing
  - Needs Improvement
  - Recommended
- Expressways**
  - Existing
  - Needs Improvement
  - Recommended
- Boulevards**
  - Existing
  - Needs Improvement
  - Recommended
- Other Major Thoroughfares**
  - Existing
  - Needs Improvement
  - Recommended
- Minor Thoroughfares**
  - Existing
  - Needs Improvement
  - Recommended
- Interchanges**
  - Existing Interchange
  - Proposed Interchange
- Grade Separations**
  - Existing Grade Separation
  - Proposed Grade Separation



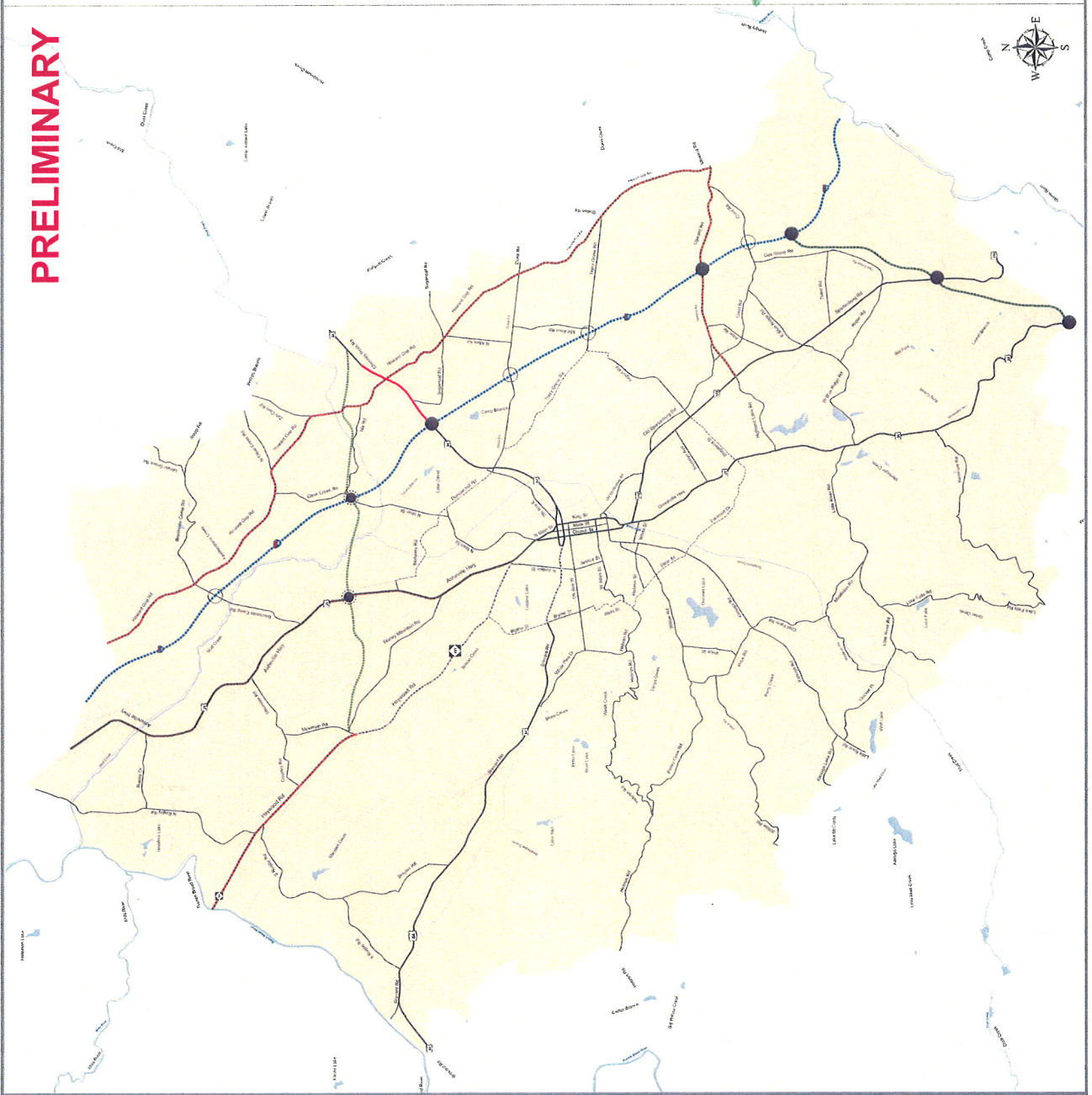
PREPARED BY THE  
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BRANCH

IN COOPERATION WITH  
US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Sheet 2 of 5

Base map date: February 21, 2004

Refer to CTP document for more details



6/21/05

## Comments from Public Hearing

On

### 2005 Comprehensive Transportation Plan

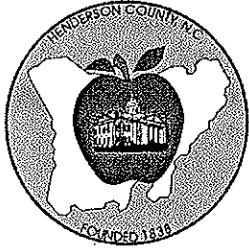
April 12, 2005

1. Question on capacity of Kanuga Road for future traffic demand. Answer: Current traffic projections do not indicate a need for major improvements here.
2. Question on analysis of traffic patterns on roads surrounding Balfour Pkwy. Answer: Beverly's power point presentations reflects changes in traffic loading. Balfour Pkwy is a limited access roadway and should have minimum effect on local roads.
3. Loop roads represent poor planning; they strangle the downtown and create more congestion. Answer: The word "Loop" is not used to represent high speed bypasses but rather improvements to local roads to provide alternate means of getting from one side of town to another. Congestion from excessive traffic being forced through the center of town will hurt Main Street Businesses.
4. Don't steer any traffic away from downtown; the merchants need the business. Answer: See No. 3 above.
5. When will there be schedule dates placed on the recommended improvements? Answer: The Comprehensive Transportation Plan does not set schedules. Schedules are established by a number of separate processes which rely on the "Plan" for a general guideline.
6. How will the various improvements be prioritized? Answer: Improvements are prioritized by through the TIP process with community input.
7. What is the real impact of the loop system that is recommended? Answer: The desired impact is to relieve the downtown area of a lot of the cross-town traffic.
8. Is the Balfour Pkwy part of a loop system? Answer: It would be a major component of a "loop" system.

April 13, 2005

1. Describe the design plans for loop roads; number of lanes, etc. Answer: Other than the Balfour Pkwy., most loop roads would involve the widening of existing lanes to 11 feet to enhance ease of traffic movement. There would be some intersection improvement and perhaps some straightening of curves.
2. How does Balfour Pkwy impact local areas around the Parkway? Answer: See No. 2 for April 12, 2005.

3. In considering a bypass plan, the County Commissioners, City of Hendersonville, and DOT need to review the current conditions on 64 West. Answer: A project to improve 64 West and provide turn lanes is on the current TIP schedule.
4. Demonstrate and Illustrate vehicle efficiency per mile over the whole system; this would help tie land use and transportation planning together. Answer: The computer model may allow for this analysis. DOT will look at the possibility.
5. What is the impact on Stoney Mtn Rd and other secondary roads when the Balfour Pkwy Phase I is complete and before Phase II is complete? Answer: See No. 2 for April 12, 2005.
6. Emphasize the importance of alternative modes of transportation; pedestrian, bicycle, greenways, public transportation. Answer: DOT is working on adding those elements to the Transportation Plan and will be reviewing those plans with us in the near future.
7. When I-26 is widened to 6 lanes, one lane each way should be designated as "HOV" (high occupancy vehicle) lane and Alternative Fuel Vehicles. Answer: This will have to be reviewed for practicality and ultimate benefit to traffic flow
8. Howard Gap Rd needs improvements now to improve safety. Answer: There is current work planned for widening shoulders and straightening some curves to improve safety. Improvement to a four lane divided boulevard will take a number of years to accomplish.
9. Look at overcoming the apparent restrictions on widening 64 West at the cemetery. Are the limitations due to governmental regulations or to public relations. Answer: DOT has agreed to look into this.
10. Should not divert traffic from downtown merchants. Additional signage should be put up to direct people to the downtown business area. Answer: Excessive congestion from cross-town traffic seems to be a greater hindrance to the downtown merchants.
11. The recommended improvements reduce the present amount of green space. Need to consider air and environmental issues. Answer: Population growth generally does infringe on green spaces.
12. We are a self sufficient community. Answer: Uncertain about meaning of comment.
13. DOT needs to work with the TAC and local officials in planning & implementing road improvements and not be just a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to the process. Answer: The DOT has been working closely with the TAC in developing this Transportation Plan as well as in dealing with routine issues through the DOT Division Office.
14. We need a bypass around Hendersonville. Answer: A system of loop roads is our best answer for accomplishing this.
15. Look at Howard Gap Rd in sections; the southern end does not have as much traffic as the portion north of 64 East. Answer: The DOT recognizes that and only recommends plans to widen the Northern section.
16. Widen the lanes on 2 lane roads for increased safety. Answer: Improvements to roads scheduled to become "loop" roads will widen the lanes to 11 feet. Shoulder improvements to other roads is handled through the Maintenance Division of DOT.



**HENDERSON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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June 28, 2005

William L. Moyer, Chair  
Henderson County Board of Commissioners  
100 North King Street  
Hendersonville, NC 28792

Dear Bill:

As discussed at the LGCCA meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2005, we did have two public sessions to discuss the Henderson County Preliminary Comprehensive Plan Phase I on Tuesday, April 12, 2005 and Wednesday, April 13, 2005. At both meetings we had a presentation by Ms. Beverly Williams of NCDOT and Don Bryson which provided an overview of the Plan as well as details leading up to the draft which we presented at prior meetings of the TAC. At the end of the presentation we had public input sessions as well as a question and answer period. Attached is a copy of the comments for each session as well as proposed answers to each statement which we will follow up with NCDOT as necessary.

We would ask that you review the comments from each session and return your endorsement after your next county or municipal meeting and we will then forward them to the MPO for acceptance of the Phase I of the Henderson County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Please return your endorsement in writing to Ms. Avalina Merrill to the address above or via email to [avalina@hendersoncountync.org](mailto:avalina@hendersoncountync.org).

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Lynch".

Jack Lynch, Chair

Cc: Transportation Advisory Committee members  
County/City/Town Managers

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