



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 10, 2024

To: Bryan Sowell, NCDOT Project Engineer

From: RS&H Project Team

Subject: STIP Project No. U-2530A
N.C. 127 Widening, Catawba County
Public Meeting #2, March 21, 2024 – Meeting Summary

Overview

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to widen N.C. 127 west of U.S. 321 from Huffman Farm Road to Zion Church Road in the Mountain View area in Catawba County. The project length is approximately 3.1 miles.

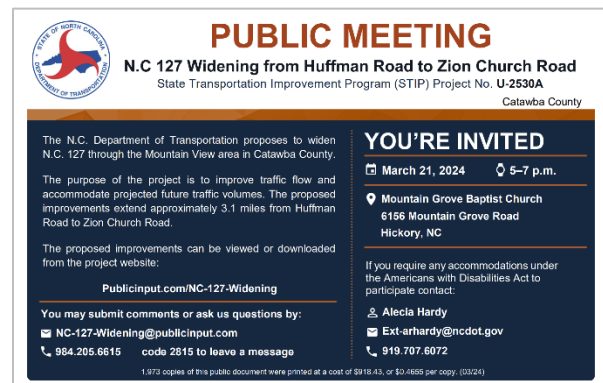
An open house Public Meeting was held on March 21, 2024, at Mountain Grove Baptist Church. The purpose of the meeting was to present the preferred design alternative and provide updates on the project schedule.

Local officials were invited to a Local Officials Informational Meeting (LOIM) prior to the Public Meeting and given the opportunity to provide feedback on the preferred design alternative, give input on desired improvements, and share any concerns related to the project or surrounding area. Local officials were given a brief presentation by the project team followed by an open Q&A session. Following the presentation to local officials, the meeting venue was open to the public from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

Details about the LOIM and Public Meeting are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Public Meeting Attendance

Date	Total Attendees	Comments Received
Local Officials Informational Meeting	9	None
Open House Public Meeting	150	29



Public Meeting Postcard

A project website, <https://publicinput.com/NC-127-Widening>, was developed in advance of the Public Meeting to field early comments and maintain communication with the public. Meeting information and materials were also posted to the website for public use.

Two (2) weeks prior to the public meeting, postcards were mailed to approximately 2,000 property owners and tenants and email invitations were sent to local officials. One (1) week prior to the public meeting, information regarding the public meeting was sent out via geofencing through Facebook and Nextdoor.

Following the Public Meeting, a public comment period was open until April 19, 2024, where interested parties could provide comments via email, mail, or the project website.



Local Officials' Informational Meeting

Project Team Presenting to Local Officials

Nine (9) local officials attended the LOIM. A list of attendees is provided in **Table 2**. Cole Gurley, Division 12 Project Development Engineer, opened the meeting with introductions. Jenny Noonkester, RS&H Project Manager, followed with a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the proposed project, including project history, local plans, and purpose and need. She then provided a summary of the proposed improvements, the preferred design alternative, proposed typical section, project schedule, and next steps. No comments were received from the local officials present.

Table 2. Local Officials Informational Meeting Attendees

Local Officials		Project Team Members	
Sylvia Fisher	Catawba County	Bryan Sowell	NCDOT Division 12 Project Lead
Drew Foy	City of Hickory	Cole Gurley	NCDOT Division 12 Project Development Engineer
Caleb Bynum	City of Hickory	Alecia Hardy	NCDOT Public Involvement Consultant
Averi Ritchie	Western Piedmont Council of Governments	Jenny Noonkester	RS&H
Chris Timberlake	Catawba County	Allison Drake	RS&H
Daniel Odom	Western Piedmont Council of Governments	Cassie Robinson	RS&H
Casey Fullbryant	Western Piedmont Council of Governments	Ford Tanner	RS&H
Erroc Ward	Mountain View Fire Department		
Scott Jandrew	Mountain View Fire Department		

Public Meeting

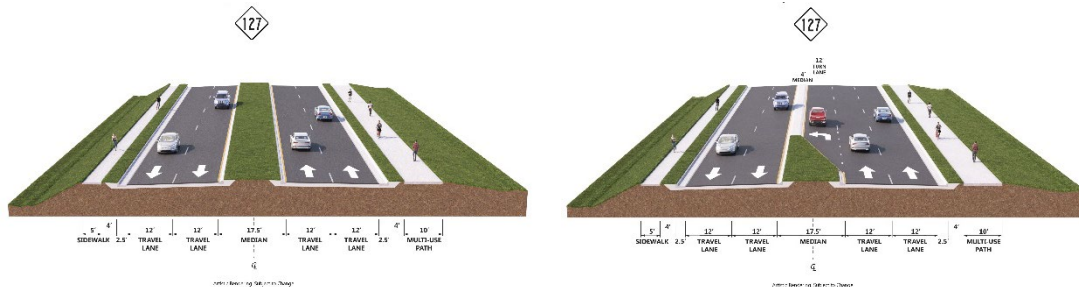


Residents Discussing the Preferred Design Alternative with the Project Team

The Public Meeting was held from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM in an open house format where attendees could stop by at any time to review materials and ask questions. Upon entering the meeting, attendees were asked to sign in and were given a handout with project information and a comment form. The meeting handout included an overview of the project, the preferred alternative, proposed typical section, and other relevant project information.

Attendees were encouraged to review the project displays and talk with the Project Team about any questions or concerns they may have. Display boards included the public meeting map, two proposed typical sections, and a traffic volume board, as described below:

- *Public Meeting Map* – displayed the preferred design alternative.
- *Two Proposed Typical Sections* – provided artistic renderings of proposed typical sections along N.C. 127 (with and without turn lane).



- *Traffic Volume Board* – provided a display of future traffic volumes along the N.C. 127 corridor in relation to roadway capacity.

All project information was also available on the project website – <https://publicinput.com/NC-127-Widening>.

Public Meeting Comments Summary

Attendees were invited to provide comments on any aspects of the proposed project. A total of 29 comment forms were received from 150 attendees at the meeting. An additional 63 comments were received via mail, email, or phone during the public comment period. The following is a general summary of the comments received.



Traffic Board and Typical Sections



- Approximately 75 percent of the responses expressed concern or opposition. The remaining 25 percent had neutral questions or statements about the preferred alternative or the project in general.
- A total of 16 comments were opposed to or had concerns about the median-divided facility. Reasons stated for the opposition included: concerns regarding objections to access control, desire to maintain the center two-way-left-turn lane, increasing congestion, and right-of-way impacts.
- A total of 11 comments were opposed to or had concerns about the lack of signals included with the preferred alternative.
 - Reasons stated for the opposition included: difficulty turning left at multiple locations, safety concerns with making U-turns, and increasing congestion.
 - Multiple comments noted Westover Road and Moss Farm Road/Woodridge Drive as locations to add a signal.
- Four (4) comments noted safety concerns with the current and future speed limits. Reasons stated for the concern included: increased number of bike/ped users in the project area, highly congested roadways, and safety when entering/exiting N.C. 127.
- Three (3) comments were received related to specific intersection designs.
 - Residents mentioned other options that should be taken into consideration such as roundabouts, lighting, or crosswalks.
- A total of 20 comments expressed concerns about the impacts on different properties and the community. Reasons stated for the concerns included: the number of businesses that will close/relocate, impacts to personal property, and impacts on the small-town feel/character of the community.
- Two (2) comments noted the project should be extended all the way to N.C. 10.
- Two (2) comments were received related to the completion of a noise study and the addition of a noise barrier following construction.
- Two (2) comments were received regarding the impact to utilities.
- Multiple comments were received related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
 - One (1) response expressed support for bike lanes and sidewalks.
 - Ten (10) respondents expressed opposition or concerns about the bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Reasons stated for the opposition included lack of protection from the roadway and lack of need for these facilities.
 - Three (3) respondents requested bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the surrounding neighborhoods instead of along N.C. 127.

Responses to general comments are available on the project website and residents with an email on file (Public Input subscriber list) were notified in June 2024. Comments that required a personal response were also addressed via email.