



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III
SECRETARY

NCDOT Response to Public Comments – June 2019 Public Meeting

STIP Project No. R-5857, U.S. 17 Intersection Improvements at Main Street/Frontage Road N.W. and at Main Street/Old Shallotte Road near Shallotte, Brunswick County

Public Meeting Summary

Date: Monday, June 24, 2019
Time: 5:00pm to 7:00pm
Location: Shallotte Town Hall Board Chambers, 110 Cheers Street, Shallotte, NC 28470
Attendance: 40 (including Town of Shallotte, Brunswick County, and MPO representatives)

An open-house public meeting was held to provide the public with information about the project which proposes to construct Reduced Conflict Intersections (RCI) on U.S. 17 at two intersections near Shallotte. The meeting was advertised on the local news site, on NCDOT's public meeting website <https://www.ncdot.gov/news/public-meetings>, and by postcard announcements mailed to nearby property owners and current residents. NCDOT and consultant staff were on hand at the meeting to answer questions about the project. In addition, an NCDOT Division 3 Right of Way Agent was available to answer questions from impacted property owners and provide information about the right of way acquisition process. Two sets of maps of the current project designs were on display. Meeting attendees were asked to provide comments on the design of each intersection and any potential property impacts.

Discussion topics at the meeting:

- What will be the changes in access to U.S. 17 from my property and how will I get onto U.S. 17 to go left or straight from this cross street?
- What is the project timeline? How long will construction take to complete?
- What are the impacts to my property?
- What is the purpose of this project?
- Where will traffic lights be located at these intersections?
- Will this project result in interchanges at these intersections?

Mailing Address:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
5501 BARBADOS BOULEVARD
CASTLE HAYNE, NC 28429-5647

Telephone: (910) 341-2000
Fax: (910) 675-0143
Customer Service: 1-877-368-4968

Location:
5501 BARBADOS BOULEVARD
CASTLE HAYNE, NC 28429-5647

Website: www.ncdot.gov

Public Comment Summary

Comment Period: June 24th to July 24th, 2019

of Comments Received: 14 (*15 total, one duplicate)

U.S. 17 at Main Street/Frontage Road N.W. (2 commenters)

1. Drivers speed on U.S. 17 and blow through the traffic light at this intersection so if you remove the traffic light, we would never get out onto U.S. 17 (2)

Current designs propose to retain traffic signals at the intersection of U.S. 17 and Main Street/Frontage Road.

2. Request to extend Frontage Road to the intersection of U.S. 17 and Smith Avenue to allow residents to turn left or go straight at this intersection (1)

The requested extension of Frontage Road is outside the scope of this project, but this request will be forwarded to the appropriate Unit within NCDOT.

3. Statement of objection to the RCI design (2)

- Statement of objection to the RCI design in this location but no request for grade-separated interchange (2)
 - Traffic volumes are too high for this type of intersection design to function properly/growth of Highlands and Cardinal Point will make the volumes too high in the future (cars and school buses)
 - Turning right and then merging across traffic to a left U-turn lane will be impossible
 - Tractor trailers, gooseneck trailers, and school buses will not be able to make the U-turns

RCIs lower crash rates, boost safety, improve traffic flow, and can accommodate more traffic without increased delays. Corridors with growing traffic volumes and high crash rates, such as U.S. 17, are good candidates for an RCI design. Raised medians and RCIs better manage access to a main road by redirecting drivers from minor movements.

Additional information about the benefits of RCIs can be found on the NCDOT website: <https://www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies/Transportation/safety-mobility/superstreets/Pages/default.aspx>

The proposed designs have been developed to accommodate current and forecasted future traffic volumes through the 2040 design year.

Based on traffic forecasts and traffic capacity analysis, traffic signals are included in the proposed designs. Traffic signals will allow for safe merging with appropriate gaps in

traffic and flexibility in the timing given to each direction of travel. Accommodations for large vehicles at RCI U-turns have been incorporated in the proposed designs.

U.S. 17 at Main Street/Old Shallotte Road (8 commenters)

1. Statement of support for the proposed relocation of Wildwood Street (1)

Comment noted

2. Request to add a right turn lane from Old Shallotte Road onto U.S. 17 (1)

Comment noted

3. Statement noting existing flooding/drainage concerns at the intersection of Old Shallotte Road and Wildwood St. NW (1)

Hydraulic analysis and plans will be developed during final design to ensure that the project does not result in additional drainage problems to adjacent properties.

4. Statement of objection to the RCI design at this intersection (7)

- Preference for a grade-separated interchange at this intersection rather than at-grade RCI design (4)
 - General statement that an overpass would be better
 - Traffic volumes are too high for RCI design to function properly
 - An overpass would cost less
 - An overpass would better accommodate future growth
 - Making a U-turn in front of “highway speed” traffic is dangerous if possible, in the first place
 - RCI deters economic activity to Shallotte and causes the near-strangulation of a vital supply route to Shallotte’s economy
- Statement of objection to the RCI design in this location but no request for grade-separated interchange (3)
 - Frequently turns left out of Wildwood and Old Shallotte Road and this design will make it more difficult and take longer
 - Traffic volumes are too high for this type of intersection design to function properly
 - The intersection and left turn lanes on Old Shallotte Rad/Main Street was a project just a few years ago so this is not necessary

RCIs lower crash rates, boost safety, improve traffic flow, and can accommodate more traffic without increased delays. Corridors with growing traffic volumes and high crash rates, such as U.S. 17, are good candidates for an RCI design. Raised medians and RCIs better manage access to a main road by redirecting drivers from minor movements.

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The proposed designs have been developed to accommodate current and forecasted future traffic volumes through the 2040 design year.

RCIs can be used as an alternative to construction of an overpass or interchange. RCI designs typically have fewer right of way impacts to adjacent properties, costs less to construct and maintain, and can be constructed faster.

Based on traffic forecasts and traffic capacity analysis, traffic signals are included in the proposed designs. Traffic signals will allow for safe merging with appropriate gaps in traffic and flexibility in the timing given to each direction of travel.

RCI corridors in North Carolina serve many thriving businesses. According to a 2010 N.C. State University report, a survey of several hundred business owners across the state found there was no significant difference in self-reported revenues between businesses on roads where medians were built versus those without medians.

Both intersections/General intersection design comments (4 commenters)

2. Statement of objection to the RCI design (4)

- Preference for a grade-separated interchange at this intersection rather than at-grade RCI design (4)
 - The intersections work fine and the RCI design does not make sense or is dangerous
 - An additional lane would be a better improvement
 - RCI deters economic activity to Shallotte
 - Slower moving vehicles such as school buses and service trucks will not be able to find suitable gaps and storage lanes will overflow
 - Conflict points increase with RCI design/overpasses are safer
 - Traffic volumes are too high for this type of intersection design to function properly
 - Turning right and then merging across traffic to a left U-turn lane will be impossible

RCIs lower crash rates, boost safety, improve traffic flow, and can accommodate more traffic without increased delays. Corridors with growing traffic volumes and high crash rates, such as U.S. 17, are good candidates for an RCI design. Raised medians and RCIs better manage access to a main road by redirecting drivers from minor movements.

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Other

1. Request to reduce the posted speed limit between the two project intersections from 60 mph to 55 mph or within a mile of each intersection (2)

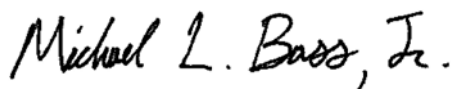
Comment noted. This request will be forwarded to the appropriate Unit within NCDOT.

2. Request to only use “fully functional” traffic signals at intersections – no flashing yellow arrow, only solid green and red arrows (1)

Comment noted

3. Statement of opinion that the project is a waste of money (2)

Comment noted



Michael L. Bass, Jr.
Engineering Technician Advanced
Division 3 Division Design Construct
North Carolina Development of Transportation

(910) 341-2000 (office)

(910) 675-0143 (fax)

mlbass@ncdot.gov