

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have questions about this project, you may write, call, or email one of the following people:

Mr. Tracy Walter
 NCDOT Project Development and Environmental Analysis
 1548 Mail Service Center
 Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
 (919) 707-6177
 twalter@ncdot.gov

or

Ms. Liz Kovasckitz
 CALYX Engineers and Consultants
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Visit the project website: www.ncdot.gov/projects/ReaRoad/

NCDOT is on the Web!

www.ncdot.gov

Public involvement is an important part of the planning process. The NCDOT encourages citizen involvement on transportation projects, and will consider your suggestions and address your concerns. If you have transportation questions on other projects, call our Customer Service Center toll-free at **1-877-DOT-4YOU**, or visit the NCDOT website at www.ncdot.gov.

N.C. 84 (Rea Road Extension) from N.C. 16 to Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road (S.R. 1008) in Wesley Chapel Union County

N.C. 84 - Rea Road Extension (U-3467) Project Update

This newsletter provides information on:

- The selection of the Preferred Alternative for the project
- Changes made to the U-3467 preliminary design as a result of feedback from citizens and local officials
- A public meeting scheduled for June 20, 2017
- The proposed conversion of Parks & Recreation Trust Fund grant-assisted property at Dogwood Park
- Who to contact with questions or comments

The proposed project is included in the N.C. Department of Transportation's 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as Project U-3467. NCDOT is proposing to extend Rea Road on new location from N.C. 16 in Weddington to N.C. 84 (the new location roadway would be signed as N.C. 84), and widen existing N.C. 84 to Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road in Wesley Chapel. The STIP identifies funds for right-of-way acquisition in fiscal year (FY) 2018 and construction in FY 2019.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the mobility and connectivity of Weddington Road (N.C. 84) in the project study area.

Project Development Process

The proposed project will involve federal funds and must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Under NEPA, an agency must study the adverse and beneficial environmental impacts of alternatives that meet a project's purpose and need. This planning process can be divided into the steps shown below. This project is currently transitioning to **Step 8** of the process.

1. Identify Purpose of and Need for Project
2. Collect Data on Project Study Area
3. Analyze Preliminary Alternatives
4. Select Detailed Study Alternatives
5. Evaluate Impacts of Detailed Study Alternatives
6. Publish Environmental Assessment Document and Conduct Public Hearing
7. Select Preferred Alternative
8. Prepare and Publish Finding of No Significant Impact Document

Public Involvement

Public Meeting Scheduled

Open House Public Meeting
 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 20, 2017
Graceway Baptist Church
4700 Monroe-Weddington Road
Matthews, NC 28104

NCDOT will hold an informal open-house public meeting for the proposed project. The meeting is an opportunity for the public to review project maps and displays, ask questions, and discuss the project informally with NCDOT representatives. The meeting will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and interested citizens may attend at any time during those hours.

At this meeting NCDOT will present information on the Selected Alternative for project U-3467. Information on a proposed Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant-assisted

property conversion at Dogwood Park will also be presented (see inside of newsletter for more details on these topics).

Written comments and questions may be submitted anytime during the public meeting, or by mail or email through the comment period ending July 24, 2017. All comments received will become part of the project record.

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who wish to participate in this meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact Jammie Robbins, NCDOT Public Involvement Group Leader, as early as possible so arrangements can be made. Mr. Robbins may be contacted at (919) 707-6085, or via email at jarobbins@ncdot.gov.

Persons who speak Spanish and do not speak English, or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior to the hearing by calling 1-800-481-6494.

Aquellas personas que hablan español y no hablan inglés, o tienen limitaciones para leer, hablar o entender inglés, podrían recibir servicios de interpretación si los solicitan antes de la reunión llamando al 1-800-481-6494.

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Design Changes Made in Response to Public Comments

The N.C. 84 - Rea Road Extension project Environmental Assessment (EA) was published by NCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in May, 2015 and a Combined (Location and Design) Public Hearing was held on January 26, 2016 at Graceway Baptist Church in Matthews, North Carolina. Copies of the EA along with detailed maps of the preliminary design were available for review at the public hearing. The public hearing maps and the EA were also made available for review at the offices of the Town of Weddington, the Village of Wesley Chapel, Union County and NCDOT Highway Division 10, District 3, as well as on the NCDOT project and public meeting websites.

The purpose of the hearing was to obtain public input on the location and design of the proposed project. One hundred forty-one (141) citizens registered their attendance at the public hearing. Twelve individuals recorded their comments at the hearing and 380 individuals submitted written comments at the hearing or during the following comment period.

All spoken and written comments were reviewed at a post-hearing meeting conducted on March 22, 2016 by NCDOT staff representing Planning, Design, Traffic Operations, Division, Right-of-Way, Public Involvement & Community Studies and others who play a role in the development of a project. Additional studies were conducted in response to comments received from the hearing about the location and design of the proposed project. Comments were incorporated, where feasible, and revised preliminary design plans have been prepared.

Additional studies conducted as a result of comments from the 2016 public hearing include:

- The evaluation of an alternative that would combine portions of the two alternatives shown at the public hearing (A2 & C2);
- An analysis of a shift in the proposed alignment to avoid impacts to Wesley Chapel Weddington Athletic Association's (WCWAA) Optimist Park ball fields and Southbrook Community Church parking; and
- Additional detailed traffic operations studies at several locations including the intersection of N.C. 84 and Lester Davis Road, WCWAA Optimist Park access points, and N.C. 84 and Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road shopping center access points.

Changes incorporated into the preliminary design as a result of these studies and public comments include:

- A "combination alternative," Alternative CA2, was developed to minimize impacts to the natural and human environments.
- The preliminary design was revised to utilize a 75-foot setback area along N.C. 84 at Dogwood Park to avoid impacts to WCWAA Optimist Park ballfields and Southbrook Community Church parking.
- A roundabout is proposed east of the N.C. 84 and Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road intersection at Hardwood Drive. The roundabout will aid westbound travel for vehicles exiting the shopping centers located at the intersection of N.C. 84 and Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road.

NCDOT representatives will be at the open house public meeting on June 20, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Graceway Baptist Church to review detailed maps of the revised preliminary design with interested citizens.

Public Notice of Partial Conversion of Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Project Land to Use Other than Public Recreation

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides matching grants to local governments to acquire land and/or develop park and recreation areas and facilities that serve the general public. When PARTF funding is used by a local government to acquire land, PARTF rules require the land to be used for only public recreation use.

North Carolina Parks and Recreation Area Rules provide for the "conversion" of PARTF projects to uses other than public recreation, provided certain requirements are met. A conversion is the use of property acquired or facilities built with PARTF assistance for a purpose other than public recreation.

NCDOT project U-3467, N.C. 84 – Rea Road Extension, includes the widening of N.C. 84 from two lanes to four lanes along the northern Dogwood Park boundary. The original alignment proposed by NCDOT avoided impacts to Dogwood Park but resulted in impacts to Wesley Chapel Weddington Athletic Association's (WCWAA) Optimist Park ball fields and Southbrook Community Church parking. In response to community input from NCDOT's U-3467 January 2016 public hearing, and in an effort to identify a solution which will most effectively serve the community, the Village of Wesley Chapel asked NCDOT to investigate an alignment option that would utilize a portion of Dogwood Park in an effort to save the WCWAA fields and Southbrook Community Church parking. In response, NCDOT redesigned the proposed widening to use a portion of the 75-foot setback area within Dogwood Park along N.C. 84.

The Village of Wesley Chapel has submitted an initial

proposal for a partial conversion of 0.73+/- of an acre of land at Dogwood Park, which received Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) development assistance. Approximately 97 percent, or 21.78 +/- acres, of Dogwood Park will remain unconverted and available for outdoor recreation use. NCDOT is working with the Village of Wesley Chapel to satisfy the elements required to submit a request for conversion of PARTF-assisted property, including the identification of suitable replacement property.

By shifting the roadway alignment to avoid impacts to WCWAA ballfields and church parking, the proposed project will, to some extent, affect public park resources at Dogwood Park. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 gives special protection to public parks and recreational resources. Under Section 4(f), these resources cannot, in most cases, be disrupted by highway projects unless it can be shown there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to doing so. However, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is provided with a method, known as "de minimis impact determination," in cases where the official with jurisdiction over the park or recreational property concurs that the project would not adversely affect the property. FHWA will consider public comments when evaluating a *de minimis* impact determination under Section 4(f) for the proposed project's potential impact of 0.73+/- of an acre of land at Dogwood Park along N.C. 84.

Comments on the proposed conversion of PARTF project land at Dogwood Park may be submitted in person at the June 20, 2017 public meeting, or by mail or email (as shown on the back page of this newsletter) by July 24, 2017.

Preferred Alternative Selected

NCDOT reviewed comments from the public hearing that requested they evaluate a hybrid of the new location portions of Alternatives A2 and C2. The goals associated with the development of a "combination alternative" included, where practicable:

- Minimize impacts to existing properties, homes and areas proposed for development;
- Minimize impacts to the natural environment; and
- Improve roadway geometry.

NCDOT evaluated the new location alignments of Alternatives A2 and C2 and developed Alternative CA2 with the above goals in mind.

Alternative CA2 begins just west of the existing Rea Road and N.C. 16 intersection. From N.C. 16, Alternative CA2 extends on new location to the northeast and east to tie into existing N.C. 84 about 0.40 mile west of Twelve Mile Creek Road. Alternative CA2 then follows existing N.C. 84 to just east of Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road. Alternative CA2 is 4.36 miles long.

In consultation with FHWA, NCDOT selected Alternative CA2 as the Preferred Alternative. In making this selection, NCDOT considered safety, traffic service, costs, social and environmental impacts, and all public and agency comments. Meetings were held with state and federal regulatory and environmental resource agencies in December, 2016 and March, 2017 to review the evaluation of Alternatives A2, C2 and CA2. In response to agency comments, modifications were made to the design to further avoid and minimize impacts. NCDOT, FHWA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the N.C. Historic Preservation Office, the N.C. Division of Water Resources, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, and the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization reached consensus on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), Alternative CA2, in April 2017.

Detailed mapping of Alternative CA2 can be viewed on the project's website at www.ncdot.gov/projects/ReaRoad/ or the NCDOT public meetings website at <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings/>.

