

**CHAPTER 9**  
**HIGHWAYS & ROADWAYS**





A PRODUCT OF THE  
**Western Piedmont**  
Council of Governments

**Greater Hickory Metropolitan  
Planning Organization**

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Under Federal Law, (23 USC 134), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) are required to prepare a Long Range Transportation Plan, also known as a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP is required to address the federal planning requirements in 23 USC 134, which include being fiscally constrained, having a 20 year horizon minimum, and being updated every 4 years in air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas (every 5 years in attainment areas).

Under State Law, (NCGS 136-66.2) MPO's and municipalities shall develop a comprehensive transportation plan (CTP) in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). For municipalities and counties, or portions thereof, located within an MPO planning area, the development of a comprehensive transportation plan shall be by the MPO in cooperation with the NCDOT. By comparison, the state law requires that the transportation plan be developed so that it will serve present and anticipated travel demand. The CTP is not required to be fiscally constrained and no minimum horizon year or update timeframes are specified. The Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) MTP is the fiscally constrained subset of the GHMPO's CTP. The MTP consists of three horizon years, 2030, 2040, 2050.

It is important to note that the MTP/CTP does not include every road on the highway system. As such, in accordance with NCGS 136-66.2, to complement the roadway element of the MTP/CTP, municipalities and MPO's may develop a collector street plan to assist in developing the roadway network. NCDOT may review and provide comments but is not required to provide approval of the collector street plan. The MTP/CTP and the locally approved Collector Street Plan(s) work together to identify the future of the transportation system. The streets and highways elements of the plans developed pursuant to G.S. 136-66.2 shall serve as the plan referenced in G.S. 136-66.10(a), which addresses the dedication of right-of-way under local ordinances.

## COMPLETE STREETS

NCDOT adopted a "Complete Streets" policy in July of 2009. The policy directs NCDOT to consider and incorporate several modes of transportation when building new projects or making improvements to existing infrastructure. Under this policy, the Department will collaborate with Cities, Towns, and Communities during the planning and design phase of projects. Together they will decide how to provide the transportation options needed to serve the community to complement the context of the area. The benefits of this approach include:

- » Making it easier for travelers to get where they need to go;
- » Encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation;
- » Building more sustainable communities;
- » Increasing connectivity between neighborhoods, streets, and transit systems;
- » Improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

Complete streets are streets designed to be safe and comfortable for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and individuals of all ages and capabilities. These streets generally include sidewalks, appropriate bicycle facilities, transit stops, right-sized street widths, context based traffic speeds, and are well integrated with surrounding land uses. The complete street policy and concepts were embraced in the development of the MTP/CTP. In meetings with local municipalities and counties, MPO staff discussed bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The MTP/CTP is based on the projected growth for the planning area. It is possible that actual growth patterns will differ from those logically anticipated. As a result, it may be necessary to accelerate or delay the implementation of some recommendations found within this plan. Some portions of the plan may require revisions in order to accommodate unexpected changes in development. Therefore, any changes made to one element of the MTP/CTP should be consistent with the other elements.

Initiative for implementing the MTP/CTP rests predominantly with the GHMPO. As transportation needs throughout the state exceed available funding, it is imperative that the local planning area aggressively pursue funding for priority projects. Projects should be prioritized locally and submitted by the GHMPO for submittal and prioritization locally and submitted by the GHMPO for submittal and prioritization to NCDOT. Local governments may use the MTP/CTP to guide development and project corridors for the recommended projects. It is critical that NCDOT and local government coordinate on relevant land development reviews and all transportation projects to ensure proper implementation of the MTP/CTP. Local governments and the NCDOT share the responsibility for access management and the planning, design, and construction of the recommended projects.

Recommended improvements shown on the MTP/CTP map represent an agreement of identified transportation deficiencies and potential solutions to address the deficiencies. While the MTP/CTP does propose recommended solutions, it may not represent the final location or cross section associated with the improvement, All MTP/CTP recommendations are based on high-level systems analyses that seek to minimize impacts to the natural and human environment. Prior to implementing projects from the MTP/CTP, additional analyses will be necessary to meet the National Environmental Policy Act or the North Carolina (or State) Environmental Policy Act. During the NEPA/SEPA process, the specific project and location and cross section will be determined based on environmental analysis and public input. The MTP/CTP may be used to support transportation decision making and provide transportation planning data in the NEPA/SEPA process.

## PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Problem Statements describe the system deficiencies identified during the planning process and recommended improvements to alleviate the deficiencies. Problem statements and complete information for each project can be found in Appendix - Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Recommended Highway Projects

## MTP Horizon Year 2030

### MULTI-COUNTY

#### US-321 (Burke, Caldwell, & Catawba Counties)

STIP project U-4700A improves US-321 from North of US 70 In Hickory to US-321A. This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040. Currently, the portion of US 321 from US 70 in Catawba County to US 64/NC 18 in Lenoir is programmed in the TIP for improvements and widening. It is listed as Project U-4700 (A, B & C;). It also includes B-4450 which is the widening of the bridge over the Catawba River to 6-lanes.

#### NC 127 (Alexander & Catawba Counties)

STIP Project R-3603A upgrades the existing two lane facility between Cloninger Mill Road and Richey Road. NC 127 is a major north-south radial serving the Hickory-Brookford-Mountain View area and is one of only two major crossings over Lake Hickory from Alexander County, making it a critical link for the travel between the Counties. The existing cross-section of NC 127 varies from 2-3 lanes south of Zion Church Road to 5 lanes through Brookford (SR 1008) and 4-5 lanes in Hickory. The cross-section narrows back down to 2 lanes in the area north of Cloninger Mill Road (SR 1400). Currently, traffic volume is reaching capacity at the 2 lane section through Mountain View and north of Cloninger Road. The problem will increase in the future as the traffic volume increases. Several recommendations are suggested to ease these traffic problems. On the north side, it is recommended that NC 127 be widened to a 4 lane divided boulevard with grass median from Cloninger Road to SR 1156 (Richey Road) in Alexander County. R-3603A will also include bicycle and pedestrian improvements, notably a multi-use path and sidewalk. Reference the CTP Appendix for complete information.

### ALEXANDER COUNTY

**US 64/ Church Road (SR 1124)** – STIP Project U-6041 adds a left turn lane on west bound US 64 at Church Road. Right of Way is programmed for 2024 and construction in 2025.

**NC-16** – STIP Project R-5762 constructs a right-turn lane at the intersection of NC-16 and County Home Road. Construction is currently underway.

**Alexander Industrial Access** – STIP Project R-5870 constructs an access road into the Alexander Industrial Park.

## BURKE COUNTY

**I-40 Exit 118 - SR 1716 (Old NC 10)** – STIP Project I-5990 constructs interchange improvements at this intersection. Right of Way is programmed for 2023 and Construction to follow in 2024.

**NC-181 – STIP Project U-5836 widens existing NC-181.** This route traverses the northern part of Burke County and provides access to the Pisgah National Forest and a number of recreational areas. It is also the most direct route to the Blue Ridge Parkway from Morganton. Portions of NC 181 were approved as a NC Scenic Byway as part of the Pisgah Loop Scenic Byway. The facility is designated as a bicycle route and is part of the Mountain-to-Sea and the Piedmont Spur trails. Because of the mountainous terrain of this facility, there is some concern about trucks traveling along this route. The need for more truck turnouts and run-away ramps has been identified. In Morganton, NC 181 (North Green Street) serves primarily residential traffic into the CBD. East of Bost Road commercial development to the north and industrial to the south are the primary users of the facility. This route is expected to be over capacity by 2030. It is recommended to widen NC 181 from SR 1414 (St. Mary's Church Rd) to the Morganton ETJ. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations are desired by the City of Morganton. See CTP Appendix for suggested cross section.

**Goat Farm Road** – STIP Project R-5967 constructs an industrial access road at the planned Goat Farm Industrial area. Construction is programmed for 2023.

**Albert Tron Boulevard** – STIP Project U-6057 constructed this connector between South Sterling and West Parker Road. This project is complete.

**W Fleming at US-64/70** – STIP Project U-6123 constructs turn lanes on US 70 to US 64. This project is currently unfunded.

## CALDWELL COUNTY

**US-321 at Mount Herman Road** – STIP Project U-4700CA improves the intersection of US-321 and Mount Herman Road. This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic volume was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040. Construction is currently programmed for 2023.

**US 321 at Pine Mountain Road** – STIP Project U-4700CC improves the intersection of US-321 and Pine Mountain Road. This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic volume was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040. Construction is currently programmed for 2023.

**US 321 at Mission Road – STIP Project U-4700CC improves US-321 at Mission Road.** This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic volume was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040.

**US 321 / DUDLEY SHOALS ROAD (SR 1002)** – STIP Project U-6161 constructs an on-ramp at Dudley Shoals Road and US-321. Right of Way is programmed for 2024 and Construction in 2026.

**US 64 / Calico Road** – STIP Project U-6033 constructs intersection improvements at the intersection of US 64 and Calico Road. Construction is programmed to begin in 2023.

**Dudley Shoals Road** – STIP Project U-6035 constructs a round-a-bout at the five points intersection of Dudley Shoals Road. Construction is programmed for 2023.

**Pinewood Road** – STIP Project U-6036 modernizes Pinewood Road from US-321 to Bert Huffman Road. This project addresses current facility deficiencies for Pinewood Road. The bicycle and pedestrian amenities also improve bicycle and pedestrian accessibility. Construction is programmed for 2023.

**Cajah's Mountain Road** – STIP Project U-6157 improves Cajah's Mountain Road from Connelly Springs Road to US-321A. This project addresses facility deficiencies and is programmed for Right of Way in 2023 and Construction in 2025.

**Connelly Springs Road** – STIP Project R-3430C widens Connelly Springs Road to multi-lane from just North of the Burke County line to Southwest Boulevard. Connelly Springs Road from Southwest Boulevard (SR 1933) to the Catawba River is currently a 2-lane facility. The entire section of Connelly Springs Road between Southwest Boulevard and the Catawba River will exceed its present capacity in the horizon year. It is recommended that this section be widened to 4-lane median divided facility. Right of Way is programmed for 2026 and Construction for 2029. See CTP appendix for complete recommendations.

**Brown Mountain Beach Road** – STIP Project HO-0006 widens Brown Mountain Beach road to 20 feet in five locations. Construction began in 2022.

**Pinewood Road Extension** – STIP Project R-5775 constructs intersection improvements at the intersection of US 321 and Pinewood Road Extension. Construction is programmed for 2022.

## CATAWBA COUNTY

**I-40 Exit 125** - Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd (SR 1007) – STIP project I-5716 adds a cloverleaf ramp to the northeast quadrant of the interchange. Construction is programmed for 2025.

**NC-127** – STIP Project U-5777 constructs turn lanes from 1st Avenue SE to 2nd Avenue SE. NC-127 serves as a key commercial corridor in Hickory. Hickory by Choice notes NC-127 as one of four roadways with a majority concentration of commercial establishments. Hickory by Choice also identifies the 127 corridor as a focal point for pedestrian friendly improvements, and the encouragement of neighborhood development.

**NC-127** – STIP Project U-2530A widens NC-127 to multi-lane from Huffman Farm Road to Zion Church Road. NC 127 is a major north-south radial serving the Hickory-Brookford-Mountain View area and is one of only two major crossings over Lake Hickory from Alexander County, making it a critical link for the travel between the Counties. The existing cross-section of NC 127 varies from 2-3 lanes south of Zion Church Road to 5 lanes through Brookford (SR 1008) and 4-5 lanes in Hickory. The cross-section narrows back down to 2 lanes in the area north of Cloninger Mill Road (SR 1400). On the south side, NC 127 is recommended to be widened to a 4-lane divided boulevard with a grass median from Zion Church Road Huffman Farm and then extend to NC 10. This recommendation is included in the TIP as Project U-2530.

**17th Street NW Connector** – STIP Project HL-0004 constructs a connecting road between 9th Avenue NW and Clement Avenue NW. Extending this connection to Clement Boulevard NW provides local residents an alternative route to US 321 between Clement Boulevard and US 70. Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations align with the Hickory By Choice 2030 complete streets vision. Right of Way is programmed for 2023 and Construction for 2024.

**NC-150** – STIP Project R-2307A. East of SR 1840 (Greenwood Rd) to Relocated NC 16 (TIP R-2206). NC-150 is widened to multi-lane with Intersection improvements at Greenwood Road. NC 150 is a major east-west route between Shelby, Lincolnton, and Mooresville (I-77). A small portion of NC 150 goes through the southeast corner of Catawba County. NC 150 is recommended to be widened from 2-lanes to multi-lanes from NC 16 in Catawba County to I-77 (R-2307).

**33rd Street SW (SR 1124) and 34th Street NW** – STIP Project U-6042 realigns the intersection of 33rd Street SW and 34th Street NW. Right of Way is programmed for 2027 and Construction in 2029.

**29th Avenue Drive NE** – This project is a portion of the overall McDonald Parkway, or Eastside Thoroughfare

project. The City of Hickory prefers a 4-lane divided boulevard cross section. If the City's preference is to be constructed, a special cross-section with a narrower lane and median will need to be designed for the 29th Avenue NE, 29th Avenue Drive NE portion (NC 127 to Springs Road). In addition to relieving the traffic from downtown Hickory, this facility will also improve home-to-work travel between the major residential area in northern Hickory and the industrial area around Highland Avenue/Tate Boulevard and the commercial area along US 70. Right of Way in 2025 and Construction in 2028.

**16th Street** – STIP Project C-5196 constructs a round-a-bout at the intersection of 16th Street and 21st Avenue Northeast. Right of Way is programmed for 2023 and construction in 2025.

**4th Street Drive** – STIP Project HL-0002 constructs intersection improvements. Construction began in 2022.

**NC-16 – From SR 1895 (Tower Road) To SR 1801 Claremont Road southeast of Newton, NC-16 widened to four lanes.** NC-16 is a major north-south radial serving the Newton-Conover area as well as eastern Catawba County. It also serves as a valuable link to the Charlotte urban area and Alexander County. This project is complete.

**NC-127 South** – This project widens NC-127 from Huffman Farm Road to NC Highway 10. NC 127 is a major north-south radial serving the Hickory-Brookford-Mountain View area and is one of only two major crossings over Lake Hickory from Alexander County, making it a critical link for the travel between the Counties. The existing cross-section of NC 127 varies from 2-3 lanes south of Zion Church Road to 5 lanes through Brookford (SR 1008) and 4-5 lanes in Hickory. The cross-section narrows back down to 2 lanes in the area north of Cloninger Mill Road (SR 1400). On the south side, NC 127 is recommended to be widened to a 4-lane divided boulevard with a grass median from Zion Church Road Huffman Farm and then extend to NC 10. This recommendation is included in the TIP as Project U-2530.

## 2040 Horizon Year

### MULTI COUNTY PROJECTS

**I-40** – This project widens I-40 to six-lanes from the Iredell County line to NC-16. I-40 is anticipated to reach capacity in the future. This project increases capacity in order to accommodate anticipated traffic volumes. I-40 is the region's major east-west interstate highway. Interstate expansion presents the opportunity for an improved commercial corridor, based on the high volumes of traffic that the interstate produces. Potential shopping districts may benefit from the proximity to major transportation, as identified by Conover's 2022 plan update.

**US 64 to NC 18** – STIP Project R-2549 widens the existing roadway to four-lane divided facility from Rocky Road (SR 1143) in Gamewell to US 64 in Morganton. Similar to US 64, NC 18 also provides travel service in the Caldwell/Burke County area. This arterial is a part of the Strategic Highway Corridors connecting the Caldwell/Burke County area to Wilkesboro on the north and Shelby on the south. High traffic volumes are located in the vicinity of Lenoir and Morganton and some of the 2-lane sections will be over capacity by 2040. Contributing to the attractiveness of this route is the direct link it provides between I-40 and the Morganton CBD, as well as the location of several major employers along this facility. Although some improvements have been made to NC 18, the remaining 2-lane sections are expected to exceed the facility's current capacity by the planning year. As development along this corridor increases, the character of the facility may deteriorate more quickly. This change will be due primarily to increasing residential growth in this area and commercial growth near Morganton. It is recommended that NC 18 should be widened to four lanes with some 5-lane sections in commercial areas as needed. Improvements to NC 18 included improvements to the interchange 105 at I-40 and which is currently under construction.

### ALEXANDER COUNTY

**NC-16** – STIP Project U-6151 modernizes NC-16 from the Catawba River to US-64. NC Highway 16 traverses the County north – south to link Newton in Catawba County and Wilkesboro in Wilkes County. Alexander County's current Comprehensive Plan identifies NC-16 as a needed improvement. This project includes LHTL at certain areas, including a turn lane from Alspaugh Dam Road to Macedonia Church Road.

**NC-16 / Millersville Road** – This project improves the existing intersection at NC-16 and Millersville Road. Millersville Road connects the eastern portion of the county to NC-16.

## BURKE COUNTY

**I-40 / Jamestown Road** – STIP Project I-5874 upgrades the intersection at I-40 and Jamestown Road. Two-way traffic on the interstate ramp from Old Hushpuppy Avenue on the southeast ramp and two-way traffic from Reep Drive on the northwest ramp need to be redirected in order to meet Federal design standards. This project is unfunded.

**I-40 / Drexel Road / Exit 107** – STIP Project I-5875 upgrades the interchange to meet State and Federal design standards. This project is unfunded.

**I-40 / US 64 Burkemont Road Exit 103** – STIP project I-5009 upgrades the interchange. The existing bridge poorly accommodates current traffic. Traffic sometimes backs up onto I-40 creating dangerous conditions. A feasibility study on Burkemont Avenue and I-40 has been completed and includes this interchange. This project is unfunded.

**I-40/SR 1734 (Carolina St SE/SR 1826) Exit 111** – STIP project I-5008 revises interchange. Exit 111 needs to be redesigned for safety reasons with ramps that meet State and Federal design standards. The recommended design is to revise the interchange to a diamond configuration. This project is unfunded.

**I-40/SR 1744 (Mineral Springs Mountain Road)** – STIP project I-5975 upgrades the interchange. Two-way traffic from the southeast onramp to the flea market off Paradise Avenue needs to be relocated to meet Federal design standards. This project is unfunded.

**Malcolm Boulevard** – Malcolm Boulevard is currently nearing capacity and will exceed capacity by the horizon year of 2050. The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan recommends widening Malcolm Boulevard to a four-lane divided roadway with Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations. Additional roadway capacity will ensure that Malcolm Boulevard maintains a LOS of D or better through the horizon year. This project is unfunded.

**I-40 / Old NC Hwy 10** – STIP project I-5971 upgrades the interchange. The eastbound deceleration lane needs to be extended and the bridge replaced. Two-way traffic needs to be removed. This project is unfunded.

## CALDWELL COUNTY

**US 321** – STIP Project U-4700B widens US-321 from US 321A in Granite Falls to Mission Road. This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic volume was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040. Currently, the portion of US 321 from US 70 in Catawba County to US 64/NC 18 in Lenoir is programmed in the TIP for improvements and widening. It is listed as Project U-4700 (A, B & C). It also includes B-4450 which is the widening of the bridge over the Catawba River to 6-lanes.

**US 321** – STIP Project U-4700C widens US-321 from Mission Road to Southwest Boulevard. This highway is a major north-south facility serving the Western Piedmont area of North Carolina. It connects the Charlotte/Gastonia urban area to the major furniture and textile industrial area of Hickory/Lenoir and to the tourist areas of Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Parkway before it crosses into Tennessee. In the Greater Hickory MPO, US 321 provides a critical connection between the Hickory urban area and other towns in Caldwell County such as Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills and Granite Falls. In certain sections of this highway, the daily traffic volume was over capacity by 2020. Other sections will be over capacity by 2030 and 2040. Currently, the portion of US 321 from US 70 in Catawba County to US 64/NC 18 in Lenoir is programmed in the TIP for improvements and widening. It is listed as Project U-4700 (A, B & C). It also includes B-4450 which is the widening of the bridge over the Catawba River to 6-lanes.

**Dry Ponds Road** – Modernize two-lane facility from Connelly Springs Road (SR 1001) to Pinewood Road (SR 1109) and construct a two-lane facility on new location from Pinewood Road (SR 1109) to US 321A. The enhanced connectivity would provide for more direct travel between US 321-A and US 321.

**Pleasant Hill Road** – Modernize two-lane facility from US 321-A to Connelly Springs Road (SR 1001). Recommendations include widened 12-foot lanes and straightened curves.



**Southwest Boulevard** – It is recommended that a 2-lane major thoroughfare be constructed connecting Southwest Boulevard with NC 18. This connection would be a route around the eastern side of Lenoir. This route would provide connectivity between Hickory Boulevard (US 321) and Wilkesboro Boulevard. The topography on the eastern side of Lenoir is mountainous and any new roads would carry a steep grade. The grade of a road dictates both its speed and facility type. For this reason, a new road in this vicinity should not be designed as a high-speed facility or one similar to the standards of the current Southwest Boulevard (SR 1933). This project is unfunded.

## CATAWBA COUNTY

**Rock Barn Road** – This major thoroughfare extends from First Street in Conover to Oxford School Road (SR 1006). It functions as a radial for the City of Conover providing service between the City and the northeast section of the planning area. The section south of I-40 is especially important to the City. It provides a vital link between the interstate and downtown as well as the industrial facilities in the south and eastern Conover. Traffic increase is highest in the southern section especially between the proposed Newton-Conover Loop and I-40. It is recommended that this segment of Rock Barn Road be widened to multi-lanes. This project is unfunded.

**I-40** – STIP Project I-5991A widens I-40 from four lanes to six lanes from US 321 to Fairgrove Church Road. I-40 is the region's major east-west interstate highway. Interstate expansion presents the opportunity for an improved commercial corridor, based on the high volumes of traffic that the interstate produces. Potential shopping districts may benefit from the proximity to major transportation, as identified by Hickory By Choice 2030. This project is funded for preliminary engineering.

**I-40** – STIP Project I-5991B widens I-40 from Fairgrove Church Road to NC 16. I-40 is the region's major east-west interstate highway. Interstate expansion presents the opportunity for an improved commercial corridor, based on the high volumes of traffic that the interstate produces. Potential shopping districts may benefit from the proximity to major transportation, as identified by Hickory By Choice 2030. This project is unfunded.

**Springs Road** – STIP Project U-6176 constructs access management improvements along Springs Road from 9th Avenue NE to Charlotte Street. This project is funded for preliminary engineering.

**US-321 Business** – This project seeks to improve the flow of traffic through Maiden, specifically from North Carolina Avenue to South Main Avenue.

**NC 127** – STIP Project U-6135 constructs access management issues within the NC 127 corridor between 8th Avenue NE and 30th Avenue NW. NC-127 is currently a commercial corridor. Hickory by Choice 2030 identifies this corridor as a target area for the development of pedestrian friendly community commercial neighborhoods. This project is unfunded.

**Fairgrove Church Road** – Widen to a four-lane divided facility from I-40 to Tate Boulevard. This major north-south facility currently connects US 70 and Highland Avenue NE and is currently near to overcapacity. This project is unfunded.

**Lap Road** – Improve and extend Lap Road from Rock Barn Road to NC 16. Lap Road already provides access to industrial property near I-40 and with the extension from Rock Barn Road to NC 16 can create a parallel access road with I-40 that can serve additional commercial property and create a connector that can remove traffic from I-40. This project is unfunded.

**Newton and Conover Loop Western Portion** – Widen Fairgrove Church Rd. (SR 1476) and extend the new roadway south to NC 10 West in Newton and a new roadway north to Section House Rd. (SR 1491). STIP project U-2529 seeks to enhance connectivity, construct a loop facility by widening Fairgrove Church Road (SR 1476), extending a new roadway south to NC 10 West in Newton, and creating a new roadway north to Section House Rd. (SR 1491). Recommendations are for a four-lane divided facility on new location and some five-lane for portions of existing Fairgrove Church Road (SR 1476). This project is unfunded.

**Newton and Conover Loop Southern Portion** – Construct multi-lane facility from NC 10 southwest of Newton to NC 16 via "P" St. Portion on new location. STIP project U-3450 creates a new loop to the south of Newton. Existing NC 10 is a primary route through Newton. This project is unfunded.

**Centennial Western Claremont Loop** – Construct new two lane facility on new location (from N. Oxford to US 70). The area west of Claremont suffers from a lack of connectivity. Area roadways currently load most trips onto US 70. Recommendations are to create a new two-lane loop around Claremont to divert through traffic. Centennial Boulevard (SR 2438) currently provides this loop function in northeast Claremont. The new facility would complete a western loop from NC 16 at Centennial Boulevard to US 70. This project is unfunded.

**Punch Loop Road and Extension** – Construct a two-lane facility on new location (from County Home Road to Fairgrove Church Road) and upgrade 10th Street PI West. This project accommodates congestion and improves connectivity. This project is unfunded.

**17th Street SW** – Widen to 3-lane from US 70 to 2nd Avenue NW. Widen to three-lane facility and add bicycle lanes from US 70 to 2nd Avenue NW (SR 1306). Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations align with the Hickory By Choice 2030 complete streets vision. This project is unfunded.

**17th Street NW** – Improve 17th St NW from 2nd Ave NW to 9th Ave NW. Widen for turn lanes and bicycle lanes from 2nd Avenue NW to 9th Avenue NW. Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations align with the Hickory By Choice 2030 complete streets vision. This project is unfunded.

**County Home Road** – Modernize County Home Road from NC-16 to Northern Drive to include: 1st Ave North (NC 16B) and 10th Street Northwest intersection upgrade, bridge replacement, bike lanes, and sidewalks. This project visions an intensive modernization of County Home Road. This should include: to include pedestrian crossings, potential traffic signal at 1st Ave N. Bridge replacement (existing installed 1993) – elevate/improve channel to reduce flood risk, widen to accommodate pedestrian/bike improvements. This project is unfunded.

**1st Street West** – This project widens the roadway from I-40 to NC 16. The existing cross-section varies from two to three lanes on the section north of NC 16 to four lanes in the downtown area. Traffic congestion currently occurs during peak hours. Recommended improvements such as the Newton-Conover Loop and Conover-Startown Extension will provide some relief for First Street in the future; however, traffic on this facility will remain high. Recommendation is to widen to multi-lanes from I-40 to NC 16 Business.

**Startown Road** – STIP Project R-5113 widens Startown Road from US-70 to NC 10. This project accommodates projected traffic volumes, and also addresses safety issues along the corridor. Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations align with the Hickory By Choice 2030 complete streets vision. This project is funded for Right of Way in 2028 and Construction in 2031. Recent land use development in relation to startown road comes in the form of Trivium Corporate Center, formerly referred to as Park 1764. The total area of this park will consist of approximately 300 acres of land area and access to I-40 and US-70.

**NC 127** – Convert 8th Ave NE to 30th Ave NW to 4 lane divided with sidewalks and left turn median openings. NC-127 is currently a commercial corridor. Hickory by Choice 2030 identifies this corridor as a target area for the development of pedestrian friendly community commercial neighborhoods.

## 2050

### MULTI-COUNTY

**I-40 Division 12/13** – This project widens I-40 from four to six lanes from Exit 123 to Old NC 10. I-40 is the region's major east-west interstate highway. Interstate expansion presents the opportunity for an improved commercial corridor, based on the high volumes of traffic that the interstate produces.

**Hubbard Road (SR 1143) / Shiloh Church Road (SR 1208)** – STIP project R-2918 modernizes these state roads with some new location from NC 127 to Grace Chapel Road (SR 1751). This project is currently unfunded.

**Caldwell Street** – Modernize bridge and roadway from Powerhouse Road to Burke County line in Rhodhiss. This project improves Caldwell Street and the existing bridge. The focal point of this improvement is bicycle and pedestrian accommodation and improvement around the Catawba River in Rhodhiss.

## ALEXANDER COUNTY

**NC 16** – STIP Project R-2403B upgrades NC 16 from US 64 to the Wilkes County line. NC-16 is the primary north-south corridor through Alexander County.

**Rink Dam Road (SR 1137) and Friendship Church Road (1134)** – This project modernizes the connecting roadway between NC 16 and NC 127. These roadways are a key connection route between NC 16 and NC 127, connecting the eastern and south western portions of the county.

**Teague Town Road, Alspaugh Dam Road, and Church Road Improvements** – This project modernizes the connecting roadway between NC 16 and NC 127. These roadways are a key connection route between NC-16 and NC 127, connecting the eastern and western portions of the county

## BURKE COUNTY

**Cape Hickory Road** – This project constructs intersection improvements at the intersection of Cape Hickory Road and Burke Street for safety purposes. A realignment may be necessary.

**NC 181** – SR 1440 TO SR 1419. WIDEN TO 3-LANES. From SR 1440 to SR 1419, NC 181 should be widened to three lanes. This route traverses the northern part of Burke County and provides access to the Pisgah National Forest and a number of recreational areas. It is also the most direct route to the Blue Ridge Parkway from Morganton. Portions of NC 181 were approved as a NC Scenic Byway as part of the Pisgah Loop Scenic Byway. The facility is designated as a bicycle route and is part of the Mountain-to-Sea and the Piedmont Spur trails. Because of the mountainous terrain of this facility, there is some concern about trucks traveling along this route. The need for more truck turnouts and run-away ramps has been identified. In Morganton, NC 181 (North Green Street) serves primarily residential traffic into the CBD. East of Bost Road commercial development to the north and industrial to the south are the primary users of the facility.

**NC-126** – Modernize two-lane facility from Independence Blvd (SR 1304) to Watermill Road (SR 1250). Recommendations include wide outside shoulders. Blueprint Burke identifies NC 126 as a priority to coordinate bicycle lane identification with NCDOT.

**I-40 / Causby Road Exit 98** – This project upgrades the existing interchange and also removes two way traffic within the interchange. This project is unfunded.

NC-126 – Watermill Road (SR 1250) to Fish Hatchery Road (SR 1254) widen curves and add paved shoulders with re-alignment where necessary. This project is unfunded.

**Johnson Bridge Road** – Improve Johnson Bridge Road (SR 1803) from Old NC 10 to George Hildebran School Road. This project improves Johnson Bridge Road from Old NC 10 to George Hildebran School Road by widening lanes and paved shoulders. Current shoulder width is limited in some areas.

**Miller Bridge Road** – This project improves Miller Bridge Road from Shoupes Grove Church Road to I-40, by widening lanes and adding paved shoulders

**Tex's Fish Camp Road** – Construct a two-lane facility on a new location from US 70 to Old NC 10 (SR 1761). The offset/dog-legged intersection of Curley's Fish Camp and Tex's Fish Camp Road at US-70 currently creates congestion, primarily caused by difficult left turns. The proposed extension of Tex's Fish Camp Road to Old NC 10 will eliminate congestion and provide access to I-40 via Old NC 10.

## CALDWELL COUNTY

**Abington Road** – Abington road is currently two lanes within the project extent, with some turn lanes at select locations. Improvements should consider additional turn lanes where necessary. Harper Road to Cheraw Road are the recommended extents.

**Dudley Shoals Road** – Improve Dudley Shoals Road from US 321 to the northeast. Dudley Shoals road is a primary artery in Eastern Caldwell County. This project increases roadway capacity to better accommodate future traffic volumes.

**Grace Chapel Road** – Grace Chapel Road is a 2-lane major thoroughfare 20-22 feet in width. Previous STIP Project R-3614 calls for improving the two existing lanes of Grace Chapel Road from Hickory Boulevard (US 321) to a point east of SR 1870 (Musket Drive) and to reserve an additional two lanes of right-of-way for a future multi-lane project. An additional route should be constructed on new location and to connect with NC 127 in Catawba County, requiring a new bridge over the Catawba River.

**Orchard Drive** – Improve Orchard Drive (SR 1146) by widening and align intersection of Orchard Drive with Crump Road (SR 1929) at Clark's Chapel Road. The Crump Road realignment is part of a series of recommendations to improve the connectivity between US 64/NC 18 to US 321 as well as the towns of Granite Falls, Cahah's Mountain and Hudson. The realignment is recommended on the section of road between west of Clarks Chapel Road and Orchard Drive and is proposed as a 2-lane facility

**Crump Road Extension** – The Rocky Road Connector is one of a series of recommendations to improve connectivity between US 64 / NC 18 and US 321, as well as the communities of Granite Falls, Cahah's Mountain, and Hudson. The connector would link Rocky Road at Miller Hill Road to Crump Road (SR 1929) on new location and is proposed as a two-lane facility.

**Pinewood Road Extension** – It is recommended that a 2-lane major thoroughfare be constructed connecting Pinewood Road at Dudley Shoals Road with Wyke Road. This recommendation is a part of an overall recommendation to provide a northern connector for Granite Falls.

**US 64 / NC 18** – From US-321 to Taylorsville Road. Construct access management improvements.

## CATAWBA COUNTY

**NC 16** – This project modernizes NC 16 from I-40 to Springs Road. NC 16 is a major north-south radial serving the Newton-Conover area as well as eastern Catawba County. It also serves as a valuable link to the Charlotte urban area and Alexander County. This project is a focus section of the larger I-40 to Catawba River modernization project.

**NC 16** – This project is the second focus area of the above project. This project modernizes NC 16 from Springs Road to the Catawba River.

**Conover Startown Road** – Widen to multi-lane (from Conover-Startown Road to Section House Road). Currently, this 2-lane facility serves western Newton by providing a connection between Startown Road and US 70. The proposed extension to Section House Road will facilitate the travel between the anticipated residential growth in western Newton and the Conover West Industrial Park off of US 70 as well as other industrial centers off of US 70-A in Conover. In addition, the combination of this facility with the Section House Road-Kool Park Road-Cloninger Mill Road will form a major north-south corridor serving the entire central part of the planning area. A multi-lane cross-section is recommended.

**Providence Mill Road** – Intersection improvements at Providence Mill Road (SR 1810), East Maiden Road and US 321-B.

**Slanting Bridge Road / Sherrills Ford Road** – This project constructs intersection improvements at Slanting Bridge Road and Sherrills Ford Road intersection. Safety data and line of sight suggests that improvements may be needed.

**US 321 / Rocky Ford Road** – This project constructs a new interchange at US 321 and Rocky Ford Road.

**Robinson Road** – This recommended 2-lane road extends southward from a location approximately 2000 feet north of NC 10. Paralleling Startown Road, this facility will connect back to the existing West Maiden Road at a location just west of the West Maiden/Startown Road intersection. This facility was proposed to provide continuity and to add capacity for the travel in the area. When complete, the Robinson Road Extension will provide the missing link for a continuous travel between the Catawba Boulevard/Valley Hills regional commercial center of Hickory and the Town of Maiden. The route will provide additional capacity to disburse the traffic that will be generated from the anticipated growth in the area east of US 321 freeway.

**Conover Startown Road Extension** – Currently, this 2-lane facility serves western Newton by providing a connection between Startown Road and US 70. The proposed extension to Section House Road will facilitate the travel between the anticipated residential growth in western Newton and the Conover West Industrial Park off of US 70 as well as other industrial centers off of US 70-A in Conover. In addition, the combination of this facility with the Section House Road-Kool Park Road-Cloninger Mill Road will form a major north-south corridor serving the entire central part of the planning area. A multi-lane cross-section is recommended.

**Hickory Lincolnton Highway / Zion Church Road** – This project will construct intersection improvements. Anticipated increases in traffic volumes of southeastern Catawba County support the need for safety improvements at some locations.

**Rosenwald School Street** – This project redesigns the intersection of Rosenwald School Street / Hudson Chapel Road / Lowrance Road. This intersection is currently poorly aligned and needs improvement as traffic volumes increase, in order to remain within the vision of the Town of Catawba.

**US 70 / N. Oxford Road** – The US 70 / N Oxford Road intersection is one of the most busy in the City of Claremont. Claremont has introduced this project to improve the existing intersection.