

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Raleigh Regulatory Field Office
6508 Falls of Neuse Road, Suite 120
Raleigh, North Carolina 27615-6814
(Web page - <http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/wetlands/index.htm>)

Action ID No. 200021876

October 16, 2003

PUBLIC NOTICE

The NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS (NCDOT), 1548 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548, has applied for a Department of the Army (DA) Permit pursuant to SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT to authorize the proposed discharge of fill material, impacting waters of the United States, including WETLANDS and STREAMS, for construction of IMPROVEMENTS TO GREENSBORO - HIGH POINT ROAD from its intersection with ENTERPRISE DRIVE east to HILLTOP ROAD, south of JAMESTOWN, in GUILFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA. The project will impact the jurisdictional waters of REDDICKS CREEK, BULL RUN CREEK, HIGH POINT LAKE, the DEEP RIVER and several of the unnamed tributaries to each waterbody (T.I.P. No. U-2412).

BACKGROUND:

The social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with reasonable and feasible construction alternatives for this project have been described in a NCDOT/Federal Highway Administration Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) dated June 30, 2003 (Reevaluation of original 1992 DEIS document).

Over the last few years, NCDOT has conducted an extensive reevaluation of the 1992 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Greensboro-High Point Road Improvement Project (TIP Project U-2412). The reevaluation process is now complete and the findings are documented in a publication entitled *Reevaluation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation* dated June 30, 2003. The 1992 DEIS studied three alternative construction corridors: Alternative Corridors 1, 2, and 3. During the reevaluation process, the eastern portion of the Alternative Corridor 3 was eliminated from further consideration because of growth that had occurred in the corridor since 1992. The Reevaluation discusses the potential impacts of Construction Alternative Corridor 1, Construction Alternative Corridor 2, and two more construction alternatives, which are combinations of Alternative Corridors 1 and 2 with the western portion of the Alternative Corridor 3. These combination alternatives are called Alternative Corridors 3-1 and 3-2. All four construction alternatives studied are shown on the attached maps. The Mass Transportation

and "No Build" alternatives are also discussed in the DEIS dated June 30, 2003. By Concurrence Form dated March 8, 2001, the Corps of Engineers agreed with these construction alternatives to be studied in detail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The following description of work is taken from data provided by the applicant and from observations made during on-site inspections by a representative of the Corps of Engineers. The four proposed construction alternatives are described below. Maps showing the location of the project are included with this public notice.

NCDOT proposes to improve Greensboro-High Point Road (SR 1486-SR 4121) in Guilford County, North Carolina. The project, Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) U-2412, will provide a multilane facility from the existing multilane facility at the interchange of Greensboro Road (SR 1486) and US 311 (I-74) to the six-land portion of existing High Point Road (SR 4121) at Hilltop Road (SR 1424). Portions of the improved facility will follow existing Greensboro Road (SR 1486) and High Point Road (SR 4121), and portions will be constructed on new location. The length of the project is approximately 8.1 miles. Interchanges will be provided at the US 311 Bypass and the proposed Western Urban Loop (TIP Project U-25240).

All four construction alternatives share a common corridor, which begins on new location between Manor Drive and North Scientific Street (east of the US 311 Bypass interchange). Going east, the common corridor crosses the Southern Railroad tracks south of the High Point Water Works. It then connects to existing High Point Road (SR 4121) near the intersection of Stanford Road. Following the existing High Point Road (SR 4121), the common corridor terminates just east of Anson Road. Beginning at the proposed US 311 Bypass interchange with existing Greensboro-High Point Road (SR 1486- SR 4121), Alternative Corridor 1 follows existing Greensboro Road east to Enterprise Drive. The corridor then shifts to the south of Greensboro Road onto new location and continues east to meet the common corridor. At the end of the common corridor at Anson Road, Alternative Corridor 1 then follows the existing High Point Road ending just past Hilltop Road. Alternative Corridor 2 is identical to Alternative Corridor 1 to Anson Road. Just east of Anson Road it heads to the north on new location and returns to the existing High Point Road just east of Roland Drive. Alternative Corridors 3-1 and 3-2 remain on the existing Greensboro Road just east of the US 311 Bypass interchange instead of the proposed new location of Alternative Corridors 1 & 2 returning to the common corridor just west of North Scientific Street. Both Alternative Corridors 3-1 & 3-2 continue on the common corridor to Anson Road. At Anson Road Alternative Corridor 3-1 follows the Alternative Corridor 1 corridor and Alternative Corridor 3-2 follows the Alternative Corridor 2 corridor.

The wetlands that would be impacted by the project are riparian bottomland hardwood wetlands and jurisdictional stream channels. Wetland and stream channel impact sites by alternative are designated in the following table.

Impacts by alternative are as follows:

| Impact Category | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3-1 | Alternative 3-2 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Wetland acres | 0.9 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 1.5 |
| Stream Channel Linear Feet | 4,079 | 4,266 | 3,182 | 3,369 |

In order to more fully integrate Section 404 permit requirements with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and to give careful consideration to our required public interest review and 404 (b)(1) compliance determination, the Corps of Engineers is soliciting public comment on the merits of the proposal and on the alternatives evaluated in the DEIS. At the close of this comment period, the District Engineer will evaluate and consider the comments received as well as the expected adverse and beneficial impacts of the proposed road construction to select the least environmentally damaging, practicable alternative (LEDPA). The District Engineer is not authorizing construction of the Greensboro – High Point Road improvements at this time. A final Department of the Army permit could be issued, if at all, only after our review process is complete, impacts to the aquatic environment have been minimized to the maximum extent practicable, and a compensatory mitigation plan has been approved.

NCDOT is committed to incorporating all reasonable and practicable design features to avoid and minimize surface waters and wetland impacts and to provide full compensatory mitigation of remaining jurisdictional impacts.

Detailed discussions of the purpose and need for the project are presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in Chapter 1, Sections 1.2 and 1.7. The primary purposes of the proposed action are to improve traffic flow and level of service on Greensboro – High Point Road and to reduce accidents along the length of the corridor. Additionally, the project will result in the construction of a facility consistent with the Thoroughfare Plan in Guilford County as well as the 2002-2008 TIP.

Functional design plans and the DEIS are available for review at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Field Office at 6508 Falls of Neuse Road, Suite 120; Raleigh, North Carolina 27615-6846.

NCDOT is held open-house public hearing for this project on October 6, 2003, at the Percy Sears Applied Technology Center located on the Guilford Technical Community College campus, 601 High Point Road, Jamestown, North Carolina.

The State of North Carolina will review this public notice to determine the need for the applicant to obtain any required State authorization. No Department of the Army permit will be issued until the coordinated State viewpoint on the proposal has been received and reviewed by

this agency, nor will a Department of the Army permit be issued until the North Carolina Division of Water Quality has determined the applicability of a Water Quality Certificate as required by PL 92-500.

This application is being considered pursuant to Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Any person may request, in writing within the comment period specified in the notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearing shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Historic architectural and archaeological resources have been identified and evaluated in accordance with the requirements of 36 CFR 800.4 for this project. Six historic architectural resources currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and thirteen determined to be eligible for the NRHP are located within the project area. These are the Stephen Gardner House and Gardner Hill Gold mine site, Jamestown Historic District, Shubal Coffin House II, Jamestown Public School, Potter House, Oakdale Cotton Mill Village, the Harper and Welch Houses, Orville Willard House, Sedgefield Historic District, Sedgefield Stables, John Hampton Adams House, Mill and Miller's House, Celia Phelps Methodist Episcopal Church, Ragsdale Farm, Standard Oil Station, and William G. Wiley House. Table 4-3 in the DEIS details the four build alternatives and an effect determination, concurred with by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), for each of the above listed Historic Resources. Alternative 2 would have no effect on Historic Resources, while Alternative 1 would Adversely Effect both the Sedgefield Historic District, and the Chamblee-Brannan House. Alternatives 3-1 and 3-2 would have greater Adverse Effects on Historic Resources than Alternative 1 (see table 4-3). The SHPO also has recognized two archeological resources for the NRHP within the build alternative corridors. These two sites are the High Point Waterworks and the Iddings House. In a letter from the SHPO dated October 4, 2001, (see DEIS Appendix A), it was concurred that neither the High Point Waterworks nor the Iddings House would be affected by any of the proposed build corridors. The District Engineer is otherwise unaware of the presence of additional cultural or historic resources. Presently, unknown archeological, scientific, prehistoric, or historical data may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit.

The project area contains appropriate habitat for only one federally listed species, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Primarily associated with large bodies of water where it feeds, the bald eagle could occur within the U-2412 corridor. Surveys for this federally protected species will be conducted along all build alternatives, where appropriate habitat exists.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all those factors, which become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The decision whether to authorize a proposal, and if so the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur, are therefore determined by the outcome of the general balancing process. That decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which

may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving the placement of dredged or fill materials in waters of the United States, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria, a permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

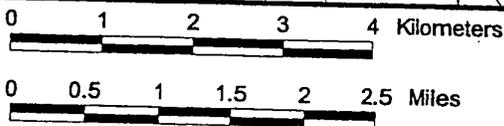
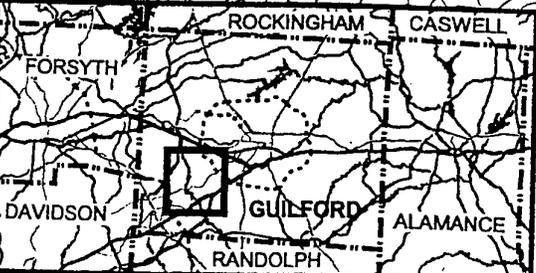
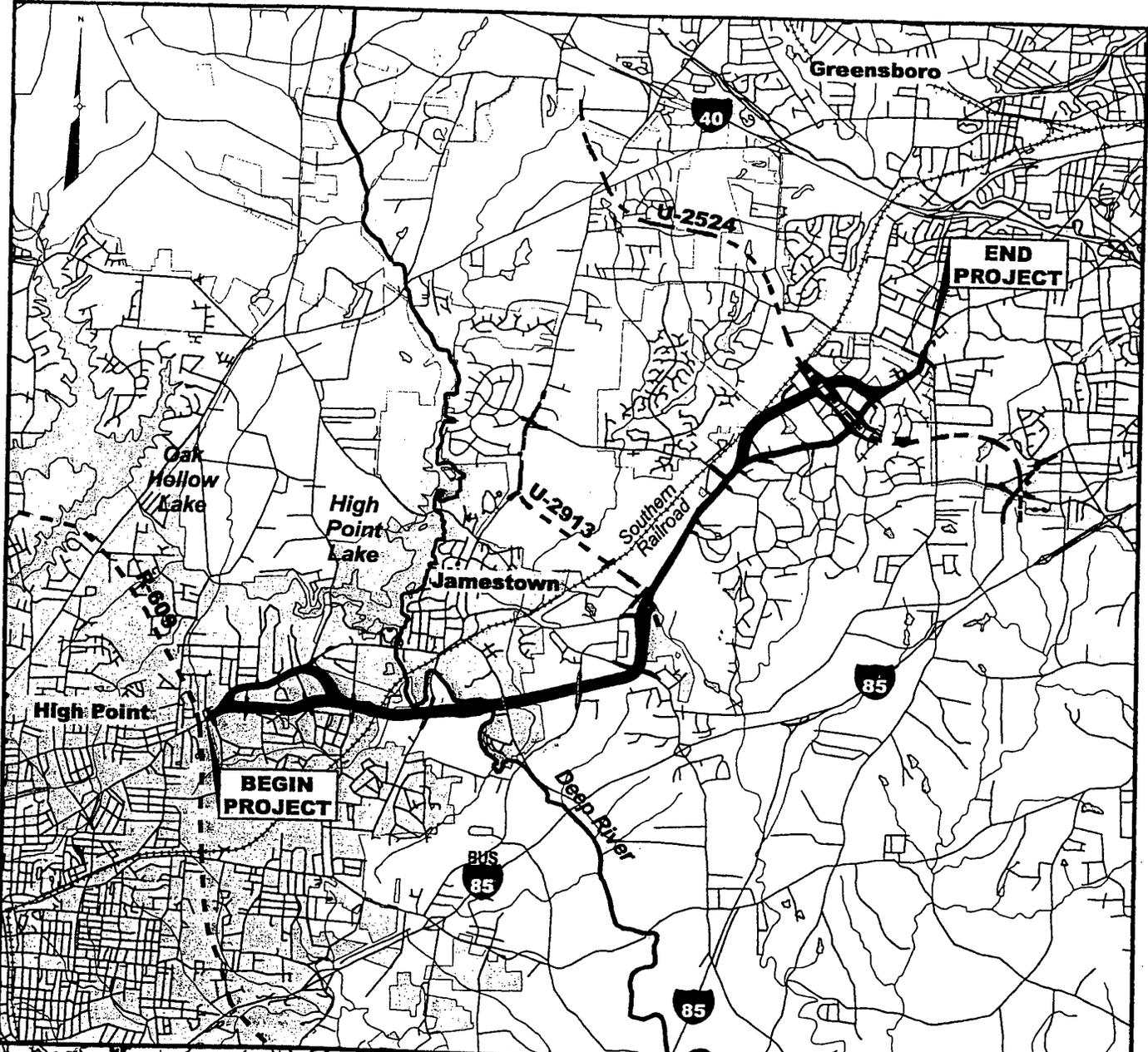
The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Generally, the decision whether to issue this DA permit will not be made until the North Carolina Division of Water Quality (NCDWQ) issues, denies, or waives State certification required by Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. The NCDWQ considers whether or not the proposed activity will comply with Sections 301, 302, 306, and 307 of the Clean Water Act. The application and this public notice for the DA permit serves as application to the NCDWQ for certification.

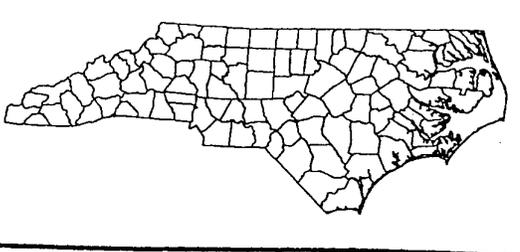
Additional information regarding the Clean Water Act certification may be reviewed at the offices of the Wetlands /401 Unit, North Carolina DENR, Division of Water Quality, 2321 Crabtree Boulevard, Raleigh, North Carolina. Copies of such materials will be furnished to any person requesting copies upon payment of reproduction costs.

All persons desiring to make comments regarding the application for Clean Water Act certification should do so in writing delivered to the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Water Quality, 1650 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1650, on or before November 14, 2003, Attention: Mr. John Dorney.

Written comments pertinent to the proposed work, as outlined above, will be received in this office, Attention: John Thomas, until 4:15 p.m., November 14, 2003, or telephone 919-876-8441, extension 24.



North Carolina - Department of Transportation
 Division of Highways
 Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch

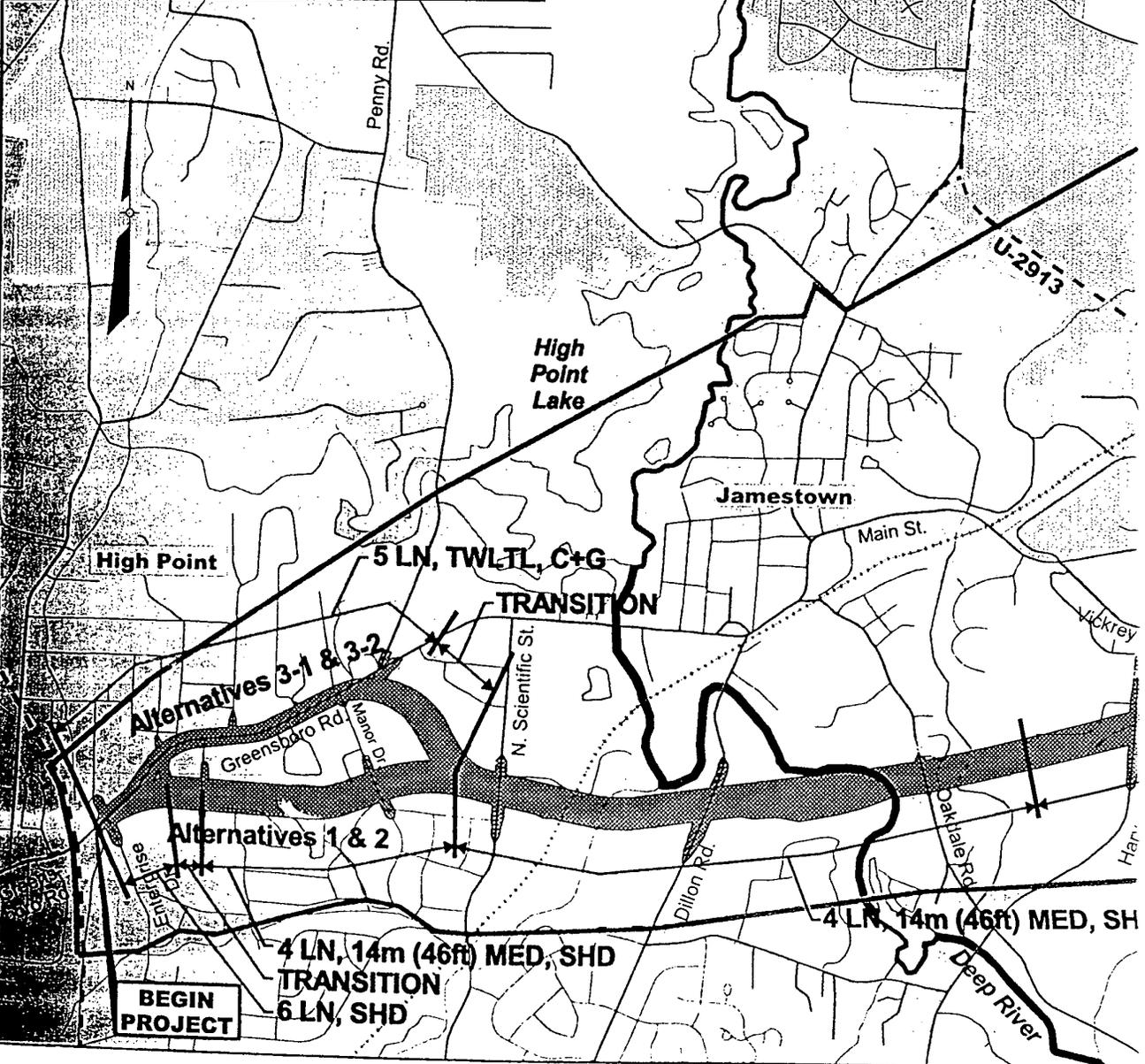


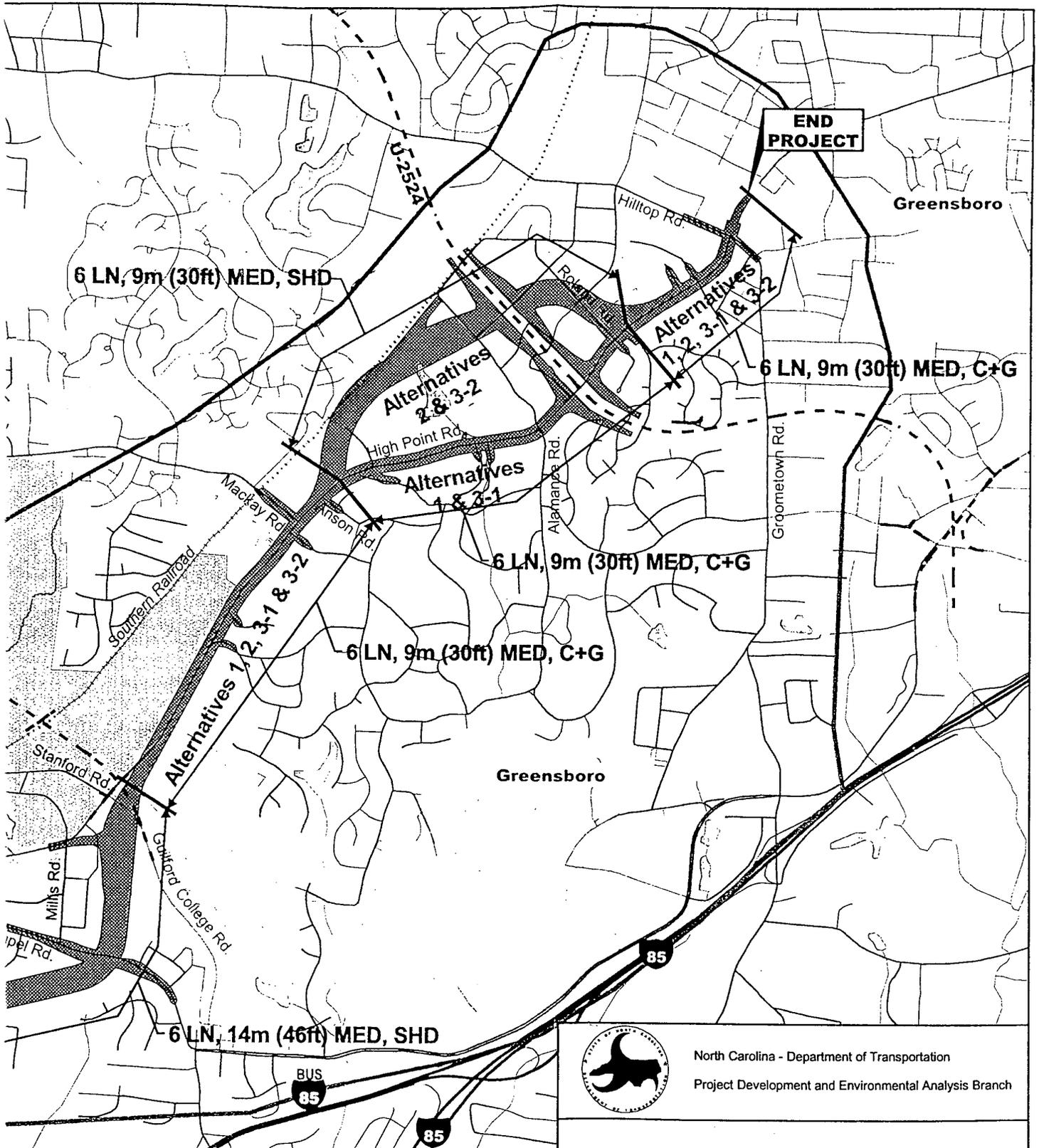
PROJECT LOCATION

U-2412 IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGH POINT ROAD
 GUILFORD COUNTY

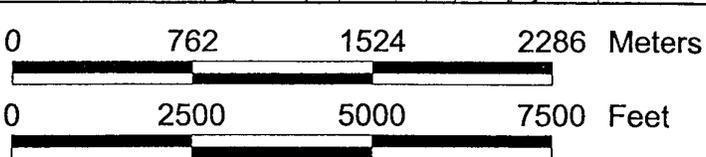
LEGEND

-  Study Corridors
-  Study Area
- Extra Territorial**
- City Limits**
-  Greensboro
-  High Point
-  Jamestown
- LN** Lane
- TWLTL** Center Two-way, Left Turn Lane
- MED** Median
- SHD** Shoulder Section
- C+G** Curb and Gutter Section





North Carolina - Department of Transportation
 Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch



TYPICAL SECTION LOCATIONS

U-2412 IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGH POINT ROAD
 GUILFORD COUNTY