



I-26 Connector

Asheville

NCDOT TIP Project I-2513

Project Citizens Workshop Scheduled

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has scheduled a Citizen’s Informational Workshop in Asheville on Monday, October 9 and Tuesday October 10 to answer questions and receive comments about the entire I-26 Connector project. This **informal workshop will be held in the ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel located at One Thomas Wolfe Plaza in downtown Asheville.** For the convenience of interested parties, three time periods will be available for attendance. **Project information and staff will be available on Monday, October 9 from 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm** and again on **Tuesday, October 10 from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm** and also on **Tuesday, October 10 from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.** The same information will be available at each session.

THREE SECTIONS STUDIED

The proposed I-26 Connector is located on the west side of Asheville, North Carolina and improves the existing I-240 and US 19-23 corridors from the I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). The project limits begin along I-26 south of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange and continue northeastward along I-240, then cross Patton Avenue near the Westgate Shopping Center and continue northward on new location before crossing the French Broad River and joining US 19/23/70 just south of Broadway.

The project improvements are defined in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project. Section A includes widening and safety improvements along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. Section B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue

interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Section C improves the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project.

PROJECT STUDY PROGRESS

NCDOT has prepared preliminary plans and cost estimates for each of the alternatives in the three sections of the project. Extensive studies identifying the potential impacts to the human and natural environment associated with these alternatives have been developed. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared describing the project purpose, design and impacts. A local project aesthetics advisory committee has been formed to suggest design details to allow the project to reflect the character of the community.

SCHEDULE

Conduct Citizen’s Info Workshop	(Fall 2006)
Complete Draft EIS	(Spring 2007)
Conduct Public Hearing	(Summer 2007)
Select Preferred Alternative	(Fall 2007)
Complete Final EIS	(Summer 2008)
Right of Way Acquisition Section A & B	(FY 2009)*
Right of Way Acquisition Section C	(Beyond 2013)*
Construction Section A	(FY 2012) *
Construction Section B	(FY 2013) *
Construction Section C	(Beyond 2013) *

*Per 2007-2013 NCDOT DRAFT TIP

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed I-26 Connector is described in three separate sections, Section A, B and C that must be combined to comprise the entire project. These separate sections include:

SECTION A consists of widening and safety improvements” along existing I-240 from just north of the I-26/I-240/I-40 interchange to just south of the Patton Avenue interchange on the west side of the French Broad River. The Section A improvements along existing I-240 are common to all of the project alternatives.

SECTION B will provide an interstate on new location from just south of the Patton Avenue interchange across Patton Avenue and continuing along the west side of the French Broad River before crossing the French Broad and joining existing US 19-23-70 and continuing to the US 19-23-70 interchange with SR 1781 (Broadway). Four alternatives (Alternates B2, B3, B4, and B5) are being considered for Section B. These Section B alternatives are described below.

Alternate B2 crosses Patton Avenue at the Westgate Shopping Center property and follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it further north and connecting with the US 19-23-70 alignment south of SR 1781 (Broadway Street).

Alternate B3 crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate B2.

Alternate B4 also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the

same alignment as Alternate B2. This alternate also realigns I-240 on the east side of the French Broad River to follow the alignment of US 19-23 northward past the Hillcrest Community and onto new I-240 crossings of the river connecting to the I-26 Connector on the west side of the river. This removes I-240 traffic from the existing Smoky Park Bridges over the French Broad River. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate Patton Avenue traffic.

Alternate B5 also crosses Patton Avenue and parts of the golf course and tennis facility just west of the Westgate Shopping Center property. The I-26 alignment then follows the western side of the French Broad River before crossing it and continuing along the same alignment as Alternate B2. This alternate also realigns Patton Avenue on a new crossing of the French Broad River adjacent to and just south of the Smoky Park Bridges. The Smoky Park Bridges will continue to accommodate I-240.

SECTION C consists of improvements to the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange to provide the missing moves between I-40 and I-240 at the southern end of the project. At the public design forum where the consideration of the new location alternatives was expanded to eventually include Alternates B4 and B5, the local citizens also requested improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange to accommodate the missing moves between I-40 westbound and I-240 northbound, and between I-240 southbound and I-40 eastbound. Section C initially included three alternatives (Alternates A2, C2 and D1). These improvements to the existing I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange were presented to the public at a Citizen's Workshop in June 2004. The alternative design schemes considered for the I-40/I-26/I-240 interchange improvements include:

Interchange Alternate A2 provides a fully directional interchange configuration for traffic movements

between I-26, I-40 and I-240, a westbound collector-distributor along westbound I-40, and a modified diamond interchange at NC 191 and I-40. In the northeast quadrant of the NC 191/I-40 interchange, an entrance ramp loop is provided from NC 191 to I-40 westbound.

Interchange Alternate C2 provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with loops in lieu of directional ramps for southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and for westbound I-40 to southbound I-26. This layout provides collector-distributors along both sides of I-40 through the I-240/26 and NC 191 interchanges. The proposed NC 191 interchange provides the same loops in the eastern quadrants as the existing interchange.

Interchange Alternate D1 provides a semi-directional interchange configuration with a loop in lieu of a directional ramp from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40, and a conventional diamond-type interchange at NC 191 and I-40.

Interchange Alternate F1 which is a new alternative, is also being evaluated in Section C to satisfy the project purpose and need with less environmental impacts. This alternate provides a semi-directional interchange configuration very similar to the existing configuration with modifications to include the addition of a loop from southbound I-240/26 to eastbound I-40 and a directional ramp from westbound I-40 to northbound I-240/26.

WEBSITE

To learn more about the I-26 Connector project, please visit the project website at:

www.ncdot.org/projects/I26Connector

PROJECT MAILING LIST

Add your name to the mailing list
by contacting:

Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
Suite 141
975 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511



INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

For more information or to express any comments or concerns about the I-26 Connector, contact either TGS Engineers or the NCDOT at the addresses below. Please refer to Project I-2513 when writing about the proposed project. All comments and questions will be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Vince Rhea, P.E.
Project Development and Environmental
Analysis Branch
N.C. Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548
919-733-7844 Ext. 261
vrhea@dot.state.nc.us

or

Mr. J. Kenneth Burleson, P.E.
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street, Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511
919-319-8850 Ext. 109
kburleson@tgsengineers.com

**I-26
CONNECTOR
INFO-LINE
919-319-8850**

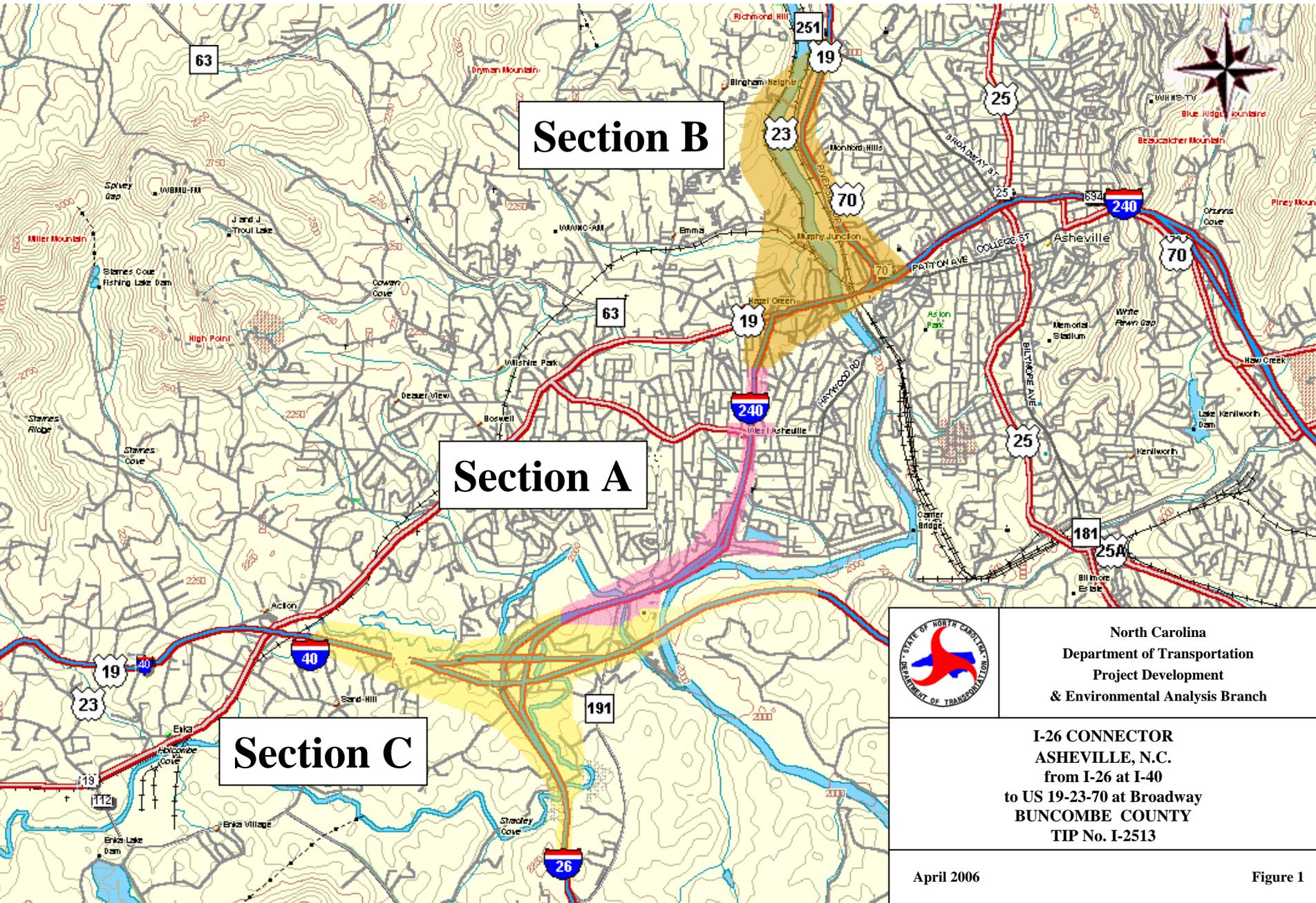
If you have questions concerning other transportation projects, please call our Customer Service Office toll free at 1-877-DOT-4YOU or check our website for more information at www.ncdot.org



**I-26 Connector Newsletter
TGS Engineers
975 Walnut Street
Suite 141
Cary, NC 27511**

1

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Section B

Section A

Section C



North Carolina
 Department of Transportation
 Project Development
 & Environmental Analysis Branch

**I-26 CONNECTOR
 ASHEVILLE, N.C.
 from I-26 at I-40
 to US 19-23-70 at Broadway
 BUNCOMBE COUNTY
 TIP No. I-2513**