

US 17 IMPROVEMENTS
Washington and Chocowinity Vicinity
Beaufort County and Pitt County, North Carolina

From South of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) to North of SR 1418 (Roberson Road)

Federal Aid Project No. MAF-75-3 (26)
State Project No. 8.T150601
T.I.P. Project No. R-2510

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

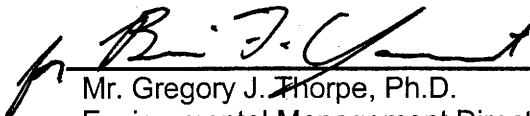
Submitted Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act [42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(C)] and 49 USC 303
by the

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

COOPERATING AGENCIES:
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
U.S. COAST GUARD

8-31-04

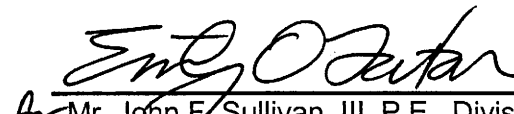
Date of Approval



Mr. Gregory J. Thorpe, Ph.D.
Environmental Management Director
Project Development & Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation

8-31-04

Date of Approval



Mr. John F. Sullivan, III, P.E., Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

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This abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement documents the need for transportation improvements along US 17 in Beaufort and Pitt Counties from SR 1127 to SR 1418. Current and forecasted traffic volumes indicate that the existing roadway is not adequate. A Draft EIS, approved on June 5, 2002, evaluated three Build Alternatives with respect to cost, social and economic impact, and environmental consequences. This Final EIS documents the selection of the Preferred Alternative and the ability of the Preferred Alternative to fulfill the purpose and need for the project.

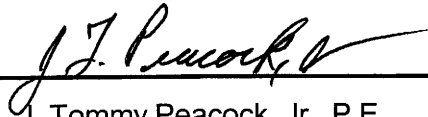
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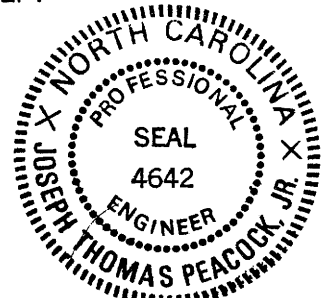
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DOCUMENTATION PREPARED BY RUMMEL, KLEPPER, & KAHL, LLP:



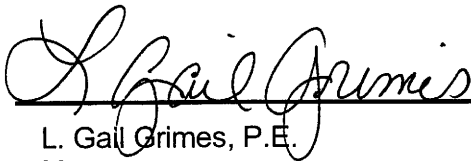
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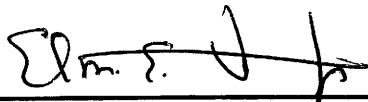
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S.0 SUMMARY

S.0 Summary

S.1 Federal Highway Administration

Administrative Action: Environmental Impact Statement

☐ Draft ☐ Final ☒ Abbreviated Final

This document was prepared as an Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in accordance with specifications contained in 40 CFR 1503.4(c). This Final EIS and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) were prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended, and are intended for use by both decision-makers and the public. These documents include the disclosure of relevant environmental information regarding the proposed project and conform to the methodologies and requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines regarding the implementation of NEPA and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) technical advisory for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents (FHWA, 1987). Information provided in the Draft EIS is updated in this document as needed and new information and data that was obtained is included.

The "abbreviated" Final EIS format was agreed to jointly by the Federal Highway Administration and the North Carolina Department of Transportation due to the adequacy of information in the Draft EIS, the success of public and agency involvement in the development and review of the project, and due to the NEPA-Section 404 Merger Team having reached agreement on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative. With the "abbreviated" format, information in the Draft EIS is not repeated, new and explanatory information is provided.

S.2 Contacts

The following individuals may be contacted for additional information concerning this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

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S.3 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to improve the 15.5-mile US 17 Corridor in the vicinity of the City of Washington and the Town of Chocowinity in Beaufort County, North Carolina. The study area is approximately 16 miles long and encompasses a portion of Beaufort County centered on the City of Washington and the Tar/Pamlico River, as well as a small tip of Pitt County. The City of Washington, Town of Chocowinity, and crossroad communities of Hackney, Frederick, and Old Ford are located within the study area. This document reviews the three Build Alternatives that were presented in the Draft EIS and the selection of a Preferred Alternative. A summary of all the alternatives studied for the project is presented in this Summary section under Section S.5 Alternatives Considered and in Chapter 2 under Section 2.5 Agency Coordination.

Alternative B was selected as the Preferred Alternative for the project. Alternative B begins 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) and extends northward along portions of the existing roadway and partially on new location and again along existing roadway to terminate at a point 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road). Alternative B leaves existing US 17 near SR 1149 (Price Road) south of Chocowinity, crosses NC 33 with an interchange east of Chocowinity, crosses existing US 17 with a grade separation north of Chocowinity, crosses the Tar River approximately 1.1 miles west of the existing crossing, crosses US 264 with an interchange west of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) and west of the Washington central business district, and connects to existing US 17 north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road). The total length is 15 miles. See Exhibits F-1.1 and F-2.1 in Appendix C for location.

The proposed roadway improvements are four-lane, median divided, with both full and partial control of access. See Chapter 2, Section 2.2 Preferred Alternative and Reasons for Selection, for a detailed description of typical roadway cross-sections for each section of the project. Roadway Typical Sections are also shown in Appendix C.

The proposed US 17 Improvement is identified in the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) 2004-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (T.I.P.) as Project No. R-2510. The US 17 Improvement project through Beaufort County is also

designated as priority item number one in the Thoroughfare Plan for the City of Washington (2000). The 2004-2010 T.I.P. shows right of way acquisition scheduled to begin in fiscal year 2004 and construction is scheduled to start in fiscal year 2006. The updated NCDOT project schedule (4-7-04) calls for right of way acquisition to begin in fiscal year 2005 and for construction to start in fiscal year 2007. This updated NCDOT project schedule is shown on Exhibit F-4.1, Project Scheduling Map, in Appendix C.

S.4 Other Major Government Actions

US 17 from the Virginia state line to the South Carolina state line is a North Carolina Intrastate Corridor. The US 17 Intrastate Corridor is divided into fourteen projects in the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (T.I.P.), including the one discussed in this Final EIS. All of these projects are funded and are in different stages of development ranging from project planning to right of way and construction. See Table 1.1 in Chapter 1 of this document for a listing of these projects.

S.5 Alternatives Considered

The three Build Alternatives (Detailed Study Alternatives) presented in the Draft EIS are briefly described below: (See Exhibit F-2.1 in Appendix C for location.)

Alternative B (Preferred)

Alternative B begins 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) and extends northward along portions of the existing roadway and partially on new location and again along existing roadway to terminate at a point 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road). Alternative B leaves existing US 17 near SR 1149 (Price Road) south of Chocowinity, crosses NC 33 with an interchange east of Chocowinity, crosses

existing US 17 with a grade separation north of Chocowinity, crosses the Tar River approximately 1.1 miles west of the existing crossing, crosses US 264 with an interchange west of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) and west of the Washington central business district, and connects to existing US 17 north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road). The total length is 15 miles.

Alternative C

Alternative C begins 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) and extends northward along portions of the existing roadway and partially on new location and again along existing roadway to terminate at a point 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road). Alternative C widens existing US 17 through Chocowinity and leaves existing US 17 north of SR 1142 (Bragaw Lane) north of Chocowinity, crosses the Tar River approximately 1.1 miles west of the existing crossing, crosses US 264 with an interchange west of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) and west of the Washington central business district, and connects to existing US 17 north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road). The total length is 14.8 miles.

Alternative I-G

Alternative I-G (modification of 1999 Preliminary Build Alternatives I and G) begins 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) and extends northward along portions of the existing roadway and partially on new location and again along existing roadway to terminate at a point 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road). Alternative I-G leaves existing US 17 north of SR 1149 (Price Road) and south of Chocowinity, crosses NC 33 with an interchange west of SR 1158 (Carrow Road) west of Chocowinity, crosses the Tar River in Pitt County approximately 4.0 miles west of the existing crossing, crosses US 264 with an interchange near SR 1407 (Leggett Road) west of Washington and connects to existing US 17 near SR 1413 (Ball Road) north of Washington. The total length is 17.5 miles.

S.6 Preferred Alternative

Alternative B was selected as the Preferred Alternative for the following reasons:

- Provides the best service to the US 17 Intrastate System traffic
- Is one of the shortest alternatives studied
- Has the least number of relocatees
- Has no adverse effects on cultural resources
- Has the second fewest noise impacts
- Has the second fewest wetland, stream, and buffer impacts
- Has the second lowest total cost
- Is supported by local governments and organizations including the City of Washington, the Town of Chocowinity, the Beaufort County Board of Commissioners, the Beaufort County Economic Development Commission, the Beaufort County Committee of 100, and the Southern Albemarle Association
- Was selected as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative by the NEPA – Section 404 Merger Team

S.7 Summary of Impacts

Following is a brief discussion of the impacts anticipated with the Preferred Alternative. Table S.1, Build Alternatives Impact Summary, located at the end of this Summary section, provides a summary of impacts associated with the three Build Alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative. This impact summary data is also provided in Table 1.3, in Chapter 1 of this Final EIS.

Relocation Impacts

Alternative B (Preferred) displaces a total of 102 residencies, of which 54 are minorities, and relocates 16 businesses, of which 4 are minority owned. No churches or community facilities are displaced by Alternative B.

Community Impacts

Alternative B (Preferred) will impact regional community cohesion in both a neighborhood and community-wide manner. Alternative B will impact Bucks County Manor Mobile Home Park located along existing US 17 south of Chocowinity. At this mobile home park, 80 feet of additional right of way will be acquired, 3 mobile homes will be relocated, and noise levels will increase for the remaining mobile homes. Harris Acres Mobile Home Park located along existing US 17 south of Chocowinity will have 35 feet of additional right of way acquired for shoulder and ditch reconstruction, but no relocations will be necessary and the travel lanes will not be moved any closer to the mobile homes. Alternative B will impact Maryanna Mobile Estates located along US 264 west of Washington. At this mobile home park, 15 mobile homes will be relocated and noise levels will increase for the remaining mobile homes. Driveway and property access issues will be discussed on a property-by-property basis during the final design phase of the proposed project.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations", directs all federal agencies to determine whether a proposed action will have an adverse or disproportionate impact on minority and/or low income populations. It also directs agencies to ensure that representatives of an affected community have every opportunity to provide input regarding the impact of the proposed project. In compliance with Executive Order 12898, a review was completed to determine whether these social groups would experience disproportionately adverse health and/or environmental impacts from the proposed project.

Minority Populations

African-Americans are the predominant minority population in Beaufort County and Pitt County with Hispanic Americans being the second largest minority group. The minority relocations along Alternative B (Preferred) average 52.9 percent, which exceeds the overall averaged minority percentage (40.6) found in the alternative study area.

Low-Income Populations

Alternative B has an average per capita income of \$10,234. The per capita income for the State of North Carolina and Beaufort County averaged \$12,885 and \$10,606, respectively. The residents located in the study corridor for Alternative B (Preferred) have a per capita income ranking lower than the state as a whole; however, it is comparable to the countywide average of \$10,606.

Findings

The review of the minority populations relocated by each Build Alternative represent higher percentages compared to the surrounding area. Alternative B (Preferred) relocates an approximate 12 percent higher proportion of non-white populations than contained in the surrounding population.

This project is being implemented in compliance with Executive Order 12898.

Public Involvement

An important part of the Environmental Justice process involves keeping area citizens and public officials informed of the proposed project. Four Citizens Informational Workshops were held at the Washington Civic Center located two blocks east of Main Street in downtown Washington. The center is the approximate mid-point of the project study area and is accessible to all interested citizens. A Public Hearing was held September 23, 2002 at the Beaufort Community College on Highway US 264 East in Washington. All meetings were advertised in local newspapers and in project newsletters mailed to approximately 1,000 local citizens on the project mailing list. This mailing list was generated in 1994 by comparing a broad study area encompassing all Build Alternatives to local tax records. The mailing list was continually maintained and updated. Announcements for these meetings listed a toll-free telephone number for general inquiries and if special facilities such as wheelchair access were needed.

Seven (7) newsletters were published and distributed for the proposed project. Copies of the project newsletters and workshop handouts are included in Appendix A of this Final EIS. Comments received during and following the Public Hearing are presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.2 of this Final EIS.

A Design Public Hearing will be announced and held in the project area following completion of updated designs, circulation of this Final Environmental Impact Statement, and preparation of a Record of Decision.

Transit Dependent Populations

There is no public transportation system throughout Beaufort County. Local seniors groups offer shuttle service to area seniors for doctor appointments and shopping excursions. Alternative B (Preferred) will have no impact on these private services as detours will be added during construction and no facilities will be permanently cut off from area roadways.

Cultural Resource Impacts

Historic Architectural Resources

This project is subject to compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and implemented by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106, codified at 36 CFR Part 800. Section 106 requires Federal agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings (federally-funded, licensed, or permitted) on properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and to afford the Advisory Council a reasonable opportunity to comment on such findings.

An intensive survey of historic architectural properties within the area of potential effect for the proposed project was completed in April 2004. Eight (8) properties were determined as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The findings of effects on historic properties by Alternative B (Preferred) are as follows:

Woodmen of the World: No Effect

Swanner-Cooper Farm: No Effect

J. C. Swanner House: No Effect, with a commitment that all improvements be east of the treeline and ditch along US 17.

Bishop Joseph A. Beebe House: No Adverse Effect, with a commitment that NCDOT minimizes any tree removal along the right-of-way in front of the Beebe House and erect a tree-protection fence line during construction of the project.

Rhem Family House: No Adverse Effect

Leggett Family House: No Effect

Alton Weatherly House and Workshop: No Effect

Chocowinity Historic District: No Effect

Washington Historic District: No Effect, with a commitment that NCDOT, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, design the proposed US 17-Washington Bypass Bridge over the Tar/Pamlico River with aesthetically pleasing rails to minimize any visual impacts to the Washington Historic District.

Impacts to any eligible historic property were avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Unavoidable impacts and mitigation measures were coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO).

Archaeological Resources

An intensive archaeological survey of Alternative B (Preferred) was conducted following the selection of the Preferred Alternative. The field study was conducted from November 2003 to February 2004. This investigation was conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA 1966, as amended) and the guidelines established by the Office of the Secretary of the Interior of the United States and followed the specifications of a Scope of Work supplied by NCDOT. The Environmental Review numbers for this project as assigned by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) are ER 91-7074 and ER 99-7710.

Detailed results of the archaeology survey are presented in Final Report - An Intensive Cultural Resource Assessment Survey of the Preferred Corridor: US 17 Washington Bypass, Beaufort County, North Carolina (Environmental Review Numbers 91-7074 and 99-7710, June 2004). The report is referenced and is on file at the NCDOT-PDEA-Archaeology Unit in Raleigh. A summary of the report is given in Chapter 1 of this document under Section 1.2.6 Affected Environment, Archaeological Resources.

Sixty-two (62) archaeological sites were discovered (31BF324/324 through 31BF385) and two previously recorded archaeological sites were revisited (31BF59 and

31BF282). Of these sites, 52 are historic, three are prehistoric, and nine contain both prehistoric and historic components. Sixty-three (63) of the sites investigated at the intensive level do not exhibit characteristics that would make them eligible for listing in the National Register. These sites lack integrity, are not associated with events or persons significant in history, and do not have the potential to yield important data. One of the sites (31BF340), a Middle Woodland limited activity location, was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D – Data. Site 31BF340 is recommended for data recovery.

Six sites located within the proposed right-of-way, (31BF327, 31BF329, 31BF362, 31BF365, 31BF367, and 31BF378) are not considered eligible for the National Register but contain burials and should be avoided by construction activities, if possible. A seventh site (31BF337) contains burials, but is located outside of the preferred corridor as currently designed.

The State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) has recommended that a comprehensive survey of underwater resources be made at the site of the proposed bridging of the Tar/Pamlico River. An underwater archaeology survey and an assessment of potential effects will be conducted prior to construction of the project. A copy of the HPO's letter of April 19, 2004 is included in Appendix B.

Noise Impacts

Noise levels were calculated using the projected 2025 Design Year traffic volumes to determine potential noise impacts on sensitive receivers in the project study area. The noise impact and abatement analysis was conducted in accordance with the procedures and criteria approved by the Federal Highway Administration and the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and as such, documents ambient noise impacts, and an evaluation of potential noise abatement measures. Alternative B (Preferred) is anticipated to impact 87 receptors. However, traffic noise abatement measures were not determined feasible or reasonable and no noise abatement measures are proposed.

Prime and Statewide Important Farmland

Alternative B will impact 29 acres of Prime and Statewide Important Farmland. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) site assessment criteria does not warrant protective measures.

Hazardous Material Sites

In March 2004, a field reconnaissance survey for hazardous material sites was undertaken for Alternative B (Preferred). Five underground storage tank sites were identified within the project area. Four potentially contaminated properties were identified. The NCDOT GeoEnvironmental Evaluation identifies these sites. A copy of the NCDOT GeoEnvironmental Evaluation is on file at NCDOT in Raleigh.

Water Resources

Alternative B (Preferred) impacts 27 stream crossings affecting 5,977 feet of stream length. The open water impacts for Alternative B is 0.5-acre.

In addition, the proposed project will increase the amount of impervious surface area thus increasing the nonpoint pollution load from highway storm runoff.

Floodplains

Alternative B (Preferred) impacts 7.2 acres of flood zone. Encroachment into the floodplain and floodway of each stream will be minimized by crossing each stream at a perpendicular or near perpendicular angle.

Tar-Pamlico Riparian Buffers

All water resources impacted by Alternative B (Preferred) are subject to the Tar-Pamlico Riparian Buffer Rules and as such, will require a “no practical alternatives” determination prior to initiation of construction in these areas. The riparian buffer impacts associated with Alternative B is 9.3 acres. These impacts are inclusive of Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Waters of the U.S.

The greatest potential impact to wetland areas with Alternative B (Preferred) is the Tar/Pamlico River and associated floodplains which account for nearly half of the total impacts. The updated jurisdictional wetland impacts associated with Alternative B is 9.5 acres.

Impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and streams will be further minimized to the extent practicable. Compensatory mitigation will be provided for all unavoidable impacts to these valuable natural systems. Once on-site opportunities are exhausted, compensatory wetland and stream mitigation will be provided by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Ecosystem Enhancement Program pursuant to the tri-party Memorandum of Agreement between the United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) (July 2003).

Federally Protected Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list of federally protected species for Beaufort County is shown in Table 3.17 of the DEIS under Affected Environment on page 62. This list is consistent with the most recently updated USFWS list of February 5, 2003.

As documented in the Draft EIS, the USFWS in a letter dated December 7, 2001 stated that the Protected Species Survey Report of September 2001 was an accurate representation of surveys and results for the protected species. The USFWS concurred that the project will have "No Effect" on the Red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), the Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and the Rough-leaved loosestrife (*Lysimachia asperulaefolia*); and that the project is "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" the sensitive joint-vetch (*Aeschynomene virginica*). A copy of the USFWS letter is included in Appendix B of the Draft EIS.

S.8 Areas of Controversy

Public involvement and agency coordination were implemented early in the planning process. No areas of controversy were identified as part of the proposed project.

S.9 Unresolved Issues

There are no unresolved issues associated with the proposed project at the current time.

S.10 Action Required by Other Federal Agencies

Application for an Individual Section 404 Dredge and Fill permit (33 U.S.C. 1344) will be required for wetland and stream impacts. A “no practical alternatives” determination and a 401 Water Quality Certification from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) Division of Water Quality (DWQ) for stream crossings which are subject to the Tar-Pamlico Riparian Buffer Rules is also required.

Bridge construction over larger stream bodies within the project study area considered navigable waters will be subject to a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Permit in accordance with Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. 401) and the General Bridge Act (33 U.S.C. 525-533).

The North Carolina Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) provides for jurisdictional review of impacts affecting Areas of Environmental Concern (AEC) in 20 designated coastal counties, including Beaufort County. AEC resources impacted by Alternative B will require a permit from NCDENR, Division of Coastal Management (DCM).

The proposed action will require a Major Development Permit. The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act requires that federal actions (*i.e.*, 404 permit issuance) comply with requirements of state-administered coastal zone management programs [16 U.S.C. 1456 (c)]. Therefore, for non-AEC impacts in Beaufort County, a CAMA consistency determination will be required from NCDENR-DCM as part of the permit process. A State Stormwater Permit for CAMA Major Projects will be required.

Table S.1 - Build Alternatives Impact Summary Based on Preliminary Design

US 17 Improvements - T.I.P. No. R-2510

Evaluation Criteria	Alternatives		
	B (Preferred)	C	I-G
Length (mi)	15.0	14.8	17.5
Interchanges (#)	2	1	2
Grade Separations (#)	4	2	7
Road Closures (#)	2	3	1
Road Relocations	4	2	3
Relocations *			
Residential (#)	102	118	126**
Business (#)	16	31	7
Church (#)	0	1	0
TOTAL (#)	118	150	133**
Minority Relocations *			
Residential (#)	54	67	58**
Business (#)	4	6	0
Church (#)	0	1	0
TOTAL (#)	58	74	58**
Cultural Resources Adverse Effects (Section 106 Historic Architectural)	0	2	1
Section 4(f) Impacts	0	1	0
Noise Impacts (#) *	87	146**	73
Hazardous Material Sites (#)	3	3	2
Floodplain Impacts (ac)	7.2	10.1	24.0
Prime and Important Farmland (ac)	29	25	86
Wetland Mitigatable Impacts (ac) *	9.5	8.9	29.1
Open Water Impacts (ac)	0.5	0	2.4
Stream Crossings (#)	27	33	77
Stream Mitigatable Impacts (ft) *	5,977	5,903	16,873
Tar/Pamlico Riparian Buffer Mitigatable Impacts (ac) Zones 1 & 2 *	9.3	8.8	18.5
Costs (\$ millions)			
Right-of-Way	19.5	26.1	16.6
Utility	1.6	2.1	2.2
Construction	207.0	189.0	210.4
Wetland Mitigation	0.2	0.2	0.7
Stream Mitigation	1.4	1.5	4.2
Riparian Buffer Mitigation	0.4	0.4	0.7
TOTAL COST (\$ millions)	230.1	219.3	234.8

* Reflects changes to impacts from those shown in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement published June 2002.

** Includes additional impacts for residents of Cedar Manor Rest Home.

PROJECT COMMITMENTS

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Beaufort County and Pitt County, North Carolina

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In addition to the General Nationwide Permit Conditions, Section 404 Individual Permit (IP) Special Conditions, CAMA Permit, State Stormwater Permit for CAMA Major Projects, Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) Conditions, Regional Conditions, State Consistency Conditions, NCDOT's Guidelines for Best Management Practices for Protection of Surface Waters, NCDOT's Guidelines for Best Management Practices for Bridge Demolition and Removal, and General Certification Conditions, the following special commitments were agreed to by NCDOT:

Highway Design Branch / Right of Way Branch

Five underground storage tank (UST) sites and four other potentially contaminated properties were identified during the field reconnaissance survey. NCDOT will make a determination of contamination for these sites prior to right of way acquisition.

Highway Design Branch / Division 2

"High Quality Waters (HQW) Erosion Control Guidelines" will be adhered to throughout construction.

NCDOT's "Stream Crossing Guidelines for Anadromous Fish Passage" will be adhered to for this project.

A construction moratorium for anadromous fish from February 15 through June 15 will be adhered to for in-water work.

Precautionary Guidelines for General Construction in Areas Which May Be Used by the West Indian Manatee in North Carolina will be utilized for this project.

Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch

An underwater archaeological survey was recommended in the Draft EIS. An underwater archaeology survey will be conducted prior to construction of the project.

An Indirect and Cumulative Impacts Study will be performed by NCDOT during the Section 404 / Section 401 permitting process.

Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch / Highway Design Branch / Construction Branch

The acquisition of scenic easements in the waters and wetlands of the Tar/Pamlico River and in the view-shed of the Washington Historic District will be evaluated during final design of the project. Additional acreage along the bridge through the Tar/Pamlico River waters and wetlands may be considered for preservation as mitigation for environmental impacts.

Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch / Highway Design Branch /
Division 2

Tree removal along the right of way in front of the historic Joseph A. Beebe House will be minimized and a tree-protection fence line will be erected during construction of the project.

Bridge rail designs sympathetic with the character of the Washington Historic District will be provided on the new US 17-Washington Bypass Bridge over the Tar/Pamlico River. The NCDOT will coordinate the rails' aesthetic appearance with the State Historic Preservation Office.

An intensive archaeological survey was conducted for the preferred corridor for Alternative B (Preferred). Site 31BF340, a Middle Woodland limited activity location was determined eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion D - Data. Data recovery will be undertaken at this site prior to construction.

Six archaeological sites (cemeteries) located within the proposed right of way, (31BF327, 31BF329, 31BF362, 31BF365, 31BF367, and 31BF378) are not considered eligible for the National Register but contain burials that will be avoided during construction activities, if possible.

Bridge construction techniques will be evaluated during final design in order to determine the most appropriate technique for constructing structures in the waters and wetlands of the Tar/Pamlico River. Final construction methods will be selected as part of the permitting process.

A Mitigation Plan for jurisdictional impacts will be developed by NCDOT during the Section 404 / Section 401 permitting process. Once on-site opportunities are exhausted, compensatory mitigation will be provided by the NCDENR Ecosystem Enhancement Program pursuant to the tri-party Memorandum of Agreement between USACOE, NCDENR, and NCDOT (July 2003).

CHAPTER 2

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE AND BASIS FOR SELECTION

Chapter 2 - Preferred Alternative and Basis for Selection

2.1 Introduction and Overview

The proposed action is to improve the 15.5-mile US 17 Corridor in the vicinity of the City of Washington and the Town of Chocowinity in Beaufort County, North Carolina. The study area is approximately 16 miles long and encompasses a portion of Beaufort County centered on the City of Washington and the Tar/Pamlico River, as well as a small tip of Pitt County. The City of Washington, Town of Chocowinity, and crossroad communities of Hackney, Frederick, and Old Ford are located within the study area.

The need for improvements along this route include levels of services (LOS) ranging between LOS D and E along US 17 throughout most of the study area, above average statewide accident rates along US 17 through Washington and Chocowinity, and the need to improve the US 17 crossing over the Tar/Pamlico River. The LOS is for current traffic volumes and is expected to decrease as traffic volumes increase. In addition, US 17 through Beaufort County is part of the North Carolina Intrastate System which is designed to support statewide growth and development objectives and to connect to major highways of adjoining states; and is a STRAHNET route developed by the Department of Defense to provide defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities.

The proposed US 17 Improvement is identified in the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) 2004-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (T.I.P.) as Project No. R-2510. The US 17 Improvement project through Beaufort County is also designated as priority item number one in the Thoroughfare Plan for the City of Washington (2000). Documented reasons for this high priority include "US 17 is the only route east of I-95 that is an alternative for continuous north-south travel and is an essential link in realizing the full potential of the tourism industry in the coastal region of North Carolina." The 2004-2010 T.I.P. shows right of way acquisition scheduled to begin in fiscal year 2004 and construction is scheduled to start in fiscal year 2006. The updated NCDOT project schedule (4-7-04) calls for right of way acquisition to begin in

fiscal year 2005 and for construction to start in fiscal year 2007. This updated NCDOT project schedule is shown on Exhibit F-4.1, Project Scheduling Map, in Appendix C.

2.2 Preferred Alternative and Reasons for Selection

Alternative B is the Preferred Alternative for the improvement of US 17 in the vicinity of the City of Washington and the Town of Chocowinity in Beaufort County, North Carolina. See Exhibits F-1.1 and F-2.1 in Appendix C for location.

Alternative B begins 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) and extends northward along portions of the existing roadway and partially on new location and again along existing roadway to terminate at a point 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road). Alternative B leaves existing US 17 near SR 1149 (Price Road) south of Chocowinity, crosses NC 33 with an interchange east of Chocowinity, crosses existing US 17 with a grade separation north of Chocowinity, crosses the Tar River approximately 1.1 miles west of the existing crossing, crosses US 264 with an interchange west of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) west of the Washington central business district, and connects to existing US 17 north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road). The total length is 15 miles.

Alternative B (Preferred) consists of the following typical sections:

- From 0.5 mile south of SR 1127 (Possum Track Road) to SR 1149 (Price Road) [length = 4.2 miles] - Widen existing roadway to a four-lane divided expressway facility with a 46-foot median and partial control of access.
- From SR 1149 (Price Road) to south of existing US 17 north of SR 1142 (Bragaw Lane) [length = 1.8 miles] - Four-lane freeway on new location with a 46-foot median and full control of access. An interchange is provided at NC 33 near SR 1142 (Bragaw Lane) east of Chocowinity.

- From south of existing US 17 north of SR 1142 (Bragaw Lane) to north of the Tar River [length = 2.8 miles] - Four-lane freeway bridge on new location with a 10-foot median divided by a barrier and full control of access. The bridge will span existing US 17, the Norfolk-Southern Railway, SR 1165 (Sand Hole Road), the Tar River, Kennedy Creek, and the wetlands adjacent to the Tar/Pamlico River.
- From north of the Tar River to existing US 17 north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) [length = 1 mile] – Four-lane freeway on new location with a 46-foot median and full control of access. An interchange is provided at US 264 west of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road). An at-grade intersection is provided at existing US 17 north of SR 1404. A grade separation is provided at 15th Street.
- From north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) to 0.2 mile north of SR 1418 (Roberson Road) [length = 5.2 miles] – Widen the existing roadway to a four-lane divided expressway facility with a 46-foot median and partial control of access.

The roadway typical sections, grade separation typical sections, and Tar/Pamlico River bridge typical section for the proposed US 17 improvement project are shown in Appendix C.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in cooperation with State and Federal Environmental Regulatory and Resource Agencies selected Alternative B as the Preferred Alternative for the improvement of US 17 in the vicinity of Washington and Chocowinity. Comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and at the Public Hearing were considered during the selection of Alternative B as the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative B was selected as the Preferred Alternative for the following reasons:

- Provides the best service to the US 17 Intrastate System traffic
- Is one of the shortest alternatives studied
- Has the least number of relocatees
- Has no adverse effects on cultural resources
- Has the second fewest noise impacts
- Has the second fewest wetland, stream, and buffer impacts
- Has the second lowest total cost
- Is supported by local governments and organizations including the City of Washington, the Town of Chocowinity, the Beaufort County Board of Commissioners, the Beaufort County Economic Development Commission, the Beaufort County Committee of 100, and the Southern Albemarle Association
- Was selected as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative by the NEPA – Section 404 Merger Team

2.3 Floodplain Findings

Regulatory floodplain encroachment was evaluated for Alternative B (Preferred) in compliance with Executive Order 11988 and 23 CFR Part 650.105(q). Alternative B crosses 27 major rivers and/or streams and their associated floodplains for a total of 7.2 acres. It is anticipated that some degree of floodway modification will be required and the NCDOT will coordinate with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the local community during the final design phase of the proposed project.

2.4 Jurisdictional Findings

Wetlands and Waters of the US – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) regulates the discharge of fill and dredged material into “Waters of the US”, including wetlands, under Section 404 of the Water Pollution Control Act of 1977, commonly known as the Clean Water Act. The occurrence of wetlands was determined using the three parameters discussed in the COE Wetland Delineation Manual of 1987. The largest regulated impacts are associated with the Tar-Pamlico River and adjacent floodplains and are anticipated to be 9.5 acres for Alternative B (Preferred). In general, the wetlands directly associated with the Tar-Pamlico River are functionally classified as higher quality riverine or palustrine systems while the wetlands that occur further removed from the river are medium quality palustrine and/or palustrine emergent systems.

Streams – The COE under Section 404 guidelines, jointly with the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources; Division of Water Quality (DWQ) under 15A NCAC 2H.0506, jointly regulate perennial and intermittent streams in North Carolina. Impacts to regulated stream features for the Preferred Alternative are anticipated at 5,977 linear feet. The general characteristics of the perennial streams located adjacent to Alternative B (Preferred) are low flow with sandy or sand/organic substrate materials, averaging 4 to 5 feet in width and classified as Rosgen channel type F (highly entrenched with moderate sinuosity).

Riparian Buffers – DWQ regulates riparian buffers along waterways in the Tar-Pamlico River Basin in North Carolina under 15A NCAC 2B.0259. Anticipated impacts to regulated riparian buffers are 9.3 acres and as such, the proposed project will require a “no practical alternatives” determination prior to initiation of construction. The vegetated riparian buffers located adjacent to local streams are characterized as forested, broad-leaved deciduous with well developed shrub and herbaceous layers.

Avoidance and minimization measures were reviewed for all regulated impacts. Compensatory mitigation measures will be coordinated through the COE and DWQ for those that were unavoidable.

2.5 Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

The proposed US 17 Improvement through Beaufort County is part of the North Carolina Intrastate System which is designed to support statewide growth and development objectives as well as providing improved access to major transportation facilities within and through the State. This project is one of 14 projects in North Carolina to improve US 17 as part of the Intrastate System. Commuter traffic, general accessibility, and employment opportunities should benefit from the proposed improvements to US 17.

Based on 1990 to 2000 population data (North Carolina Office of State Planning), Beaufort County's population is expected to increase by 3.4 % over a 10-year period as compared to a projected growth of 16.6 % over a 10-year period for the State of North Carolina. Business establishments in Beaufort County are expected to increase at a rate of 1.5 % per year. The proposed US 17 Improvements should support development that is planned and expected in Beaufort County.

The proposed 15 miles of US 17 improvements included in this project involve approximately 9.6 miles along existing locations which are already developed. There will be approximately 5.6 miles on new location with full control of access, and therefore the adjacent property will not be directly accessible from the proposed facility. Much of the property along the new location sections is wetland; and therefore, development will be limited and subject to environmental protection and subject to federal, state, and local regulations. The other properties along the full control of access sections already have access by existing local roadways, and therefore the proposed project will only support improved accessibility as opposed to creating new access to isolated property. Also, the availability of developable land exceeds the demand for developable land. Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed project and other anticipated actions in the area should have limited indirect and cumulative impacts.

Based on the low levels of growth and the low demand for new developable property, and due to the fact the project does not open isolated lands for development, it was determined that it was not necessary to prepare a full Indirect and Cumulative Impact

Study (ICI) for the project. Additional ICI analysis focused on impacts to water resources will be prepared as part of the Section 404 / Section 401 permitting process as stated in the Project Commitments (Green Sheets).

2.6 Agency Coordination

The Wilmington District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) signed an Interagency Agreement Integrating Section 404/NEPA in 1997. This agreement describes a “phased” approach to the coordination process where a series of four concurrence points are reviewed by a “Project Team” assembled at the beginning of selected highway project. The Project Team reviews each concurrence point with respect to the project and provides written concurrence before the next step is initiated. The four concurrence points reviewed for this project are as follows:

- Purpose and Need (Concurrence Point 1)
- Detailed Study Alternatives (Concurrence Point 2)
- Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) (Concurrence Point 3)
- Avoidance and Minimization of Impacts (Concurrence Point 4A)

A Comparison of the Preliminary Study Alternatives used in the selection of Build Alternatives (Detailed Study Alternatives) by the Project Team is given as follows:

Comparison of Preliminary Study Alternatives

These alternatives were reviewed by the Project Team and Alternatives B, C, and I-G were selected to be carried forward as Build Alternatives. The other alternatives were eliminated from further study by the Project Team for the reasons noted.

Alternative A upgraded the existing US 17 roadway through the Town of Chocowinity and the City of Washington. This involved multiple residential relocations, had the largest potential impacts to businesses, and had significant impacts to the National Register listed Washington Historic District. This alternative was not favored by local citizens or officials.

Alternative B (Build Alternative) had some of the lowest overall impacts and was selected by the NEPA-Section 404 Merger Team to be carried forward as a Build Alternative.

Alternative C (Build Alternative) had some of the lowest overall impacts and was selected by the NEPA-Section 404 Merger Team to be carried forward as a Build Alternative.

Alternative D extended westward of the City of Washington and was determined to be detrimental to planned land uses in the area. Local citizens were against this alternative as it was felt that it would completely divert traffic away from the commercial downtown areas of Washington.

Alternative E modified Alternative D extending westward of the City of Washington and was determined to be detrimental to future land uses in undeveloped areas of Beaufort County. The total cost for this alternative was the largest anticipated for the alternatives.

Alternative F extended westward of the City of Washington and was determined to be detrimental to future land uses in undeveloped areas of Beaufort County. Local citizens were against this alternative as it was felt that it would divert traffic away from the existing commercial areas of Washington.

Alternative G modified Alternative F and extended westward of the City of Washington and was determined to be detrimental to future land uses in undeveloped areas of Beaufort County.

Alternative H modified Alternative F and extended westward of the City of Washington and was determined to be detrimental to future land uses in undeveloped areas of Beaufort County. This alternative had the largest impacts to agricultural lands and designated floodplains and the third largest impacts to regulated wetland features.

Alternative I extended westward into Pitt County and was determined to potentially impact three listed historic properties. This alternative was the second longest alternative studied and again, was not favored by local citizens due to the distance from the City of Washington and associated business district. This alternative had the second largest impacts to agricultural lands, large potential impacts to Section 4(f) properties, and the highest residential relocation potential of the alternatives located west of existing US 17.

Alternative I-G (Build Alternative) was developed to combine the best features of Alternatives I and G, and was selected by the NEPA-Section 404 Merger Team to be carried forward as a Build Alternative.

Alternative J extended eastward of the City of Washington and was the longest of the preliminary alternatives. This alternative potentially impacted the largest amount of wetland and stream areas. The majority of local citizens and officials did not favor this route located east of existing US 17.

Alternative K extended eastward of the City of Washington and was determined to impact historic areas in the Washington Historic District and Washington Park. This alternative would have impacted the most acres of floodplain and had the largest number of residential relocatees. This alternative has the second largest potential impacts to regulated wetland features. The majority of local citizens and officials did not favor this route located east of existing US 17.

On June 5, 2002, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project was approved by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. The DEIS was distributed to federal, state, local agencies and the public for review and comments. The comment period for the DEIS ended on August 30, 2002. See Appendix B – Agency and Governmental Involvement for agency comments received on the DEIS. See Chapter 3 – Comments and Responses for responses to the agency comments.

Project Team meetings were held on November 20, 2002 and on January 22, 2003 to discuss agencies comments to the DEIS and to identify the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative. The team identified Alternative B as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative. A copy of the Concurrence Point 3 – Alternative Selection agreement is included in Appendix B of this document.

On January 22, 2003, the Project Team also discussed Avoidance and Minimization efforts associated with the project. Several members of the Team visited the project area to review impacts to natural resources and possible design changes in the vicinity of the proposed interchange of the project with NC 33. As a result of this coordination, on April 23, 2003 the Team signed the Concurrence Point No. 4A – Avoidance and Minimization agreement. A copy of the Concurrence Point 4A – Avoidance and Minimization agreement is included in Appendix B of this document.

The following measures were undertaken during project development to avoid and minimize impacts to environmental resources:

Concurrence Point 4A – Avoidance and Minimization Efforts – Alternative B

1. Delineated, field verified, and surveyed per GPS methodology all jurisdictional features (wetlands, streams, riparian buffers) within the study corridor for Alternative B. The study corridor was approximately 1,000 feet in width along new location and 500 feet in width along upgrading existing. Using these surveyed features, preliminary designs were adjusted to avoid and/or minimize impacts to jurisdictional areas.
2. Removed an interchange from design of existing US 17 and Alternative B south of Chocowinity; avoided relocation of several residences and reduced impacts to natural systems.
3. In the area south of NC 33 and east of Chocowinity, the entire alignment was shifted westward to minimize a parallel crossing through a large wetland maintaining continuity of the natural system.
4. Considered bridging pond adjacent to existing US 17 and east of Chocowinity; however, based on field review and information received from project biologists concerning the pond being a beaver impoundment, it was not recommended.
5. Designed a perpendicular crossing of the northern most finger of the same wetland.
6. Revised interchange with NC 33 to avoid relocations of local physician's office and pharmacy.
7. Shifted Alternative B east at the NC 33 interchange to avoid relocations on Jones Circle and Bragaw Lane.
8. Reduced median width from 46 feet to 10 feet for approximately 500 feet prior to beginning of bridge over Tar/Pamlico River.
9. Extended Tar/Pamlico Bridge over all open water, adjacent riparian buffers and natural wetland systems.
10. Closed Grimes Road at historic Rhem Family House to avoid impacts.

11. Compressed interchange at US 264 to minimize community cohesion and relocation impacts to Maryanna Mobile Estates. A second entrance was also provided into the community.
12. Removed an interchange from design at existing US 17 and Alternative B north of City of Washington; avoided relocation of several residences, reduced impacts to adjacent natural systems, and avoided the historic Bishop Joseph A. Beebe House.
13. Terminated right of way and control of access south of the historic Bishop Joseph A. Beebe House to avoid impacts.
14. Bridged stream south of SR 1001 (Cherry Run Road).
15. Revised the design for Alternative B to avoid the relocation of Paradise Outreach Ministries located on the east side of existing US 17 north of SR 1509 (Springs Road).
16. Terminated proposed construction limits at existing ditch to maintain historic oak trees and minimize impacts at historic J.C. Swanner House.
17. Shifted SR 1409 (Wharton Station Road) north at historic Swanner-Cooper House property and terminated right of way at eastern property line to avoid impacts to the historic property.
18. Shifted alignment westward to utilize existing roadbed and crossing over Old Ford Swamp.
19. Shifted NC 171 north and ended proposed construction at existing ditch at historic Woodmen of the World Lodge to avoid impacts to the historic property.
20. A construction moratorium for anadromous fish from February 15 through June 15 will be adhered to for in-water work.
21. Precautionary Guidelines for General Construction in Areas Which May Be Used by the West Indian Manatee in North Carolina will be utilized for this project.
22. Additional bridging of Chocowinity Creek at the NC 33 interchange was investigated. The design of Ramp C was tightened and the culvert length was shortened to reduce impacts to Chocowinity Creek and associated wetlands.

Additional avoidance and minimization actions since the Concurrence Point 4A Merger Team meeting and the Combined Public Hearing are as follows:

1. The horizontal alignment of NC 33 was revised and the control of access reduced to minimize impact on the recently constructed Chocowinity Fire and EMS located on the south side of NC 33. The station structure and parking lot are located in the southwest interchange quadrant.
2. The US 264 interchange Ramp A (northwest quadrant) was modified to reduce impacts to the Maryanna Mobile Home Park. The relocation of five (5) mobile homes was avoided as a result.
3. The location of the 15th Street connector to the Maryanna Mobile Home Park was revised to connect to the north side of the mobile home park. This revision was requested by the mobile home park to provide better access, and also avoids impacts to the recently constructed Hampton Inn and Radio Shack.
4. The proposed US 17 connector north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) was modified to avoid the existing building and the recently constructed St. John's Missionary Baptist Church on the John Hardison property. The relocation of the church was avoided as a result.
5. Right of way was reduced to avoid a newly constructed residence located on the west side of US 17 on the Joseph Boston and Mazel Smith property.
6. To minimize any effect to the Bishop Joseph A. Beebe House, a commitment was to minimize any tree removal along the right of way in front of the Beebe House and to erect a tree-protection fence line during construction of the project.
7. To minimize any effect to the Washington Historic District, a commitment was added to design the proposed US 17-Washington Bypass Bridge over the Tar/Pamlico River with "aesthetically pleasing" rails. The design of the rails is to be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office.

2.7 Public Involvement

A public involvement program was developed and has been maintained throughout the project in recognition of the guidelines of Part 1506.6 - Public Involvement Regulation for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The public involvement program for the US 17 Improvements project included multiple newsletters and news releases, small group meetings, public officials' meetings, citizens' informational workshops, public availability of the Draft EIS, a combined public hearing, and a toll-free HOTLINE telephone number. Copies of informational materials after June 5, 2002 (DEIS) are included in Appendix A of this document.

On September 23, 2002 a public hearing was held at the Beaufort Community College in Washington. A discussion of public comments received at the hearing and following the hearing is given in Chapter 3 of this Final EIS.

Below are design changes to Alternative B (Preferred) as a result of agency comments, public comments, and efforts to reduce project impacts. These changes were made after the Public Hearing (September 23, 2002) and will be shown at the Design Public Hearing.

- An additional 875' service road was added along the west side of existing US 17 near Cedar Manor Rest Home. The service road provides access to the Hurst property via the Bondy property.
- An additional 625' service road was added east of SR 1136 (Gray Road) to provide access to parcels 314, 315, 316 and the remainder of the Walter Gerard parcel along the back property lines. This location is east of the NC 33 interchange.
- The horizontal alignment of NC 33 was revised and the control of access reduced to minimize impacts on the recently constructed Chocowinity Fire and EMS located on the south side of NC 33.

- Along NC 33, the Ramp B / Loop B (southwest quadrant) intersection with SR 1142 (Bragaw Lane) was revised to minimize impacts on the recently constructed Chocowinity Pharmacy and Chocowinity Family Care located on the north side of NC 33. The revisions to Ramp B resulted in an increase of 0.14 acre of wetland impacts.
- The NC 33 interchange Ramp C (southeast) was modified to reduce wetland impacts. The wetland impacts were reduced by approximately 0.06 acre.
- An additional 250' service road was added east of Clarks Neck Road southwest of the US 264 interchange to provide access to the remainder of the Rufus Knott property via the Eddie Knott / Rufus Knott property.
- Grimes Road was relocated to tie into US 264 at Pontiac Drive creating a four-way intersection.
- Whispering Pines Road (SR 1404) was cul-de-saced on both approaches to the former intersection with US 264.
- The US 264 interchange Ramp A (northwest quadrant) was modified to reduce impacts to the Maryanna Mobile Home Park. The relocation of 5 mobile homes was avoided as a result.
- The location of the 15th Street connector to the Maryanna Mobile Home Park was revised to connect to the north side of the mobile home park. This revision was requested by the mobile home park to provide better access, and avoids impacts to the recently constructed Hampton Inn and Radio Shack. The new connector is 400' in length.

- The recently constructed expansion of the State Employees Credit Union parking lot was located and will be shown on the Design Public Hearing Map. No adjustment was made to the project's design at this time. Measures will be taken in final design to minimize/avoid impact to the parking lot, as practicable.
- Additional new buildings at the US 264 interchange – the Double Diamond Sports Bar in quadrant D; and H&R Block, Westgate Shoppes and C&C Used Furniture on 15th Street – have been located for design purposes. The Double Diamond Sports Bar and the C&C Used Furniture business are new relocatees as a result.
- The proposed US 17 connector north of SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) was modified to avoid the existing building and the recently constructed St. John's Missionary Baptist Church on the John Hardison property. The new church was located for design purposes.
- An additional 2,100' service road was added along the west side of the proposed US 17 Bypass near the intersection with existing US 17 north of Washington. The service road provides access to the Dalton Lilley property.
- The portion of the existing US 17 roadway being retained as a service road east of the proposed US 17 Bypass near SR 1404 (Whispering Pines Road) was revised to connect to the proposed US 17 Bypass rather than existing US 17. This 700' service road provides access to the Dorothy H. Elk's property.
- On the east side of US 17, the driveways from the John D. Lilley property and the North Carolina Highway Patrol Station will be extended to connect to the proposed US 17 northbound travelway.

- The Caterpillar property and structures (700' north of Spring Road) on the east side of US 17 were located for design purposes. Access to the property was reviewed and partial control of access is proposed along the property.
- Other recently constructed buildings that were located and placed on design plans include the following:
 - One residence located on the west side of US 17 on the Joseph Boston & Mazel Smith property. The proposed right of way was reduced to avoid the building on the property.
 - Two residences and one garage located on the west side of US 17 on the James Beatty & Joyce W. Family Trust property.
 - A church located on the east side of US 17 on the Covenant Community Church property. The former church building was removed from the map and the new church building was located on the Design Public Hearing Map.
 - Pamlico Mini-Storage located on the west side of US 17 on the Swanner-Cooper Farm Historic Property adjacent to parcel 474.

This Final EIS will be made available to the public. A Record of Decision (ROD) will be prepared after the distribution and comment period of the Final EIS, and the ROD will be made available to the public. A Design Public Hearing will be held, after the circulation of this Final EIS and the completion of the ROD, to inform the public of changes made since the public hearing of September 23, 2002.

2.8 Mitigation

NCDOT is to complete development of a mitigation plan for the project during the permitting process. Impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and streams will be further minimized if practicable, during the final design of the proposed project. Compensatory mitigation will occur for all unavoidable impacts to these valuable natural systems. Once on-site opportunities are exhausted, compensatory wetland and stream mitigation will be provided by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Ecosystem Enhancement Program pursuant to the tri-party Memorandum of Agreement between the United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) (July 2003).

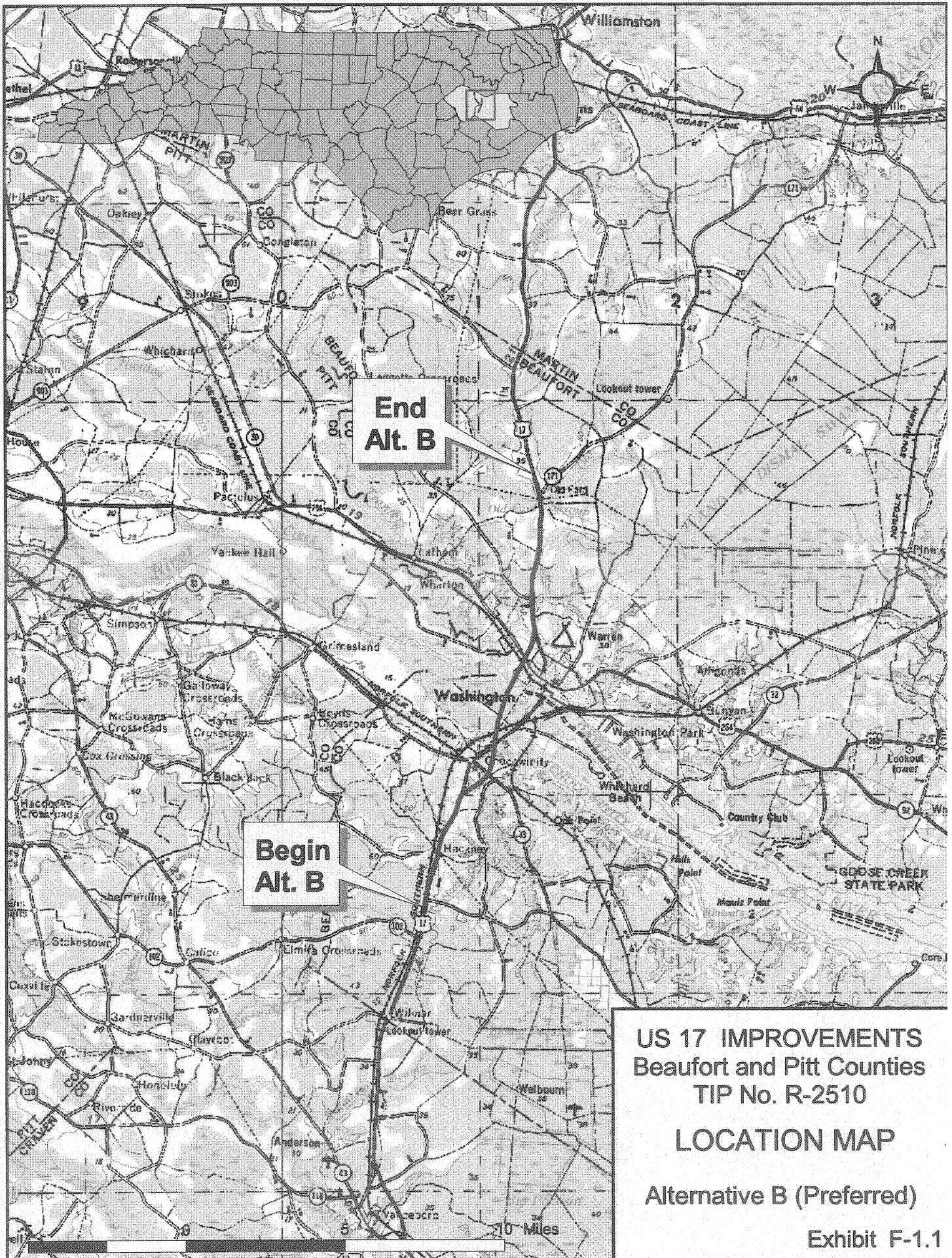
APPENDIX C

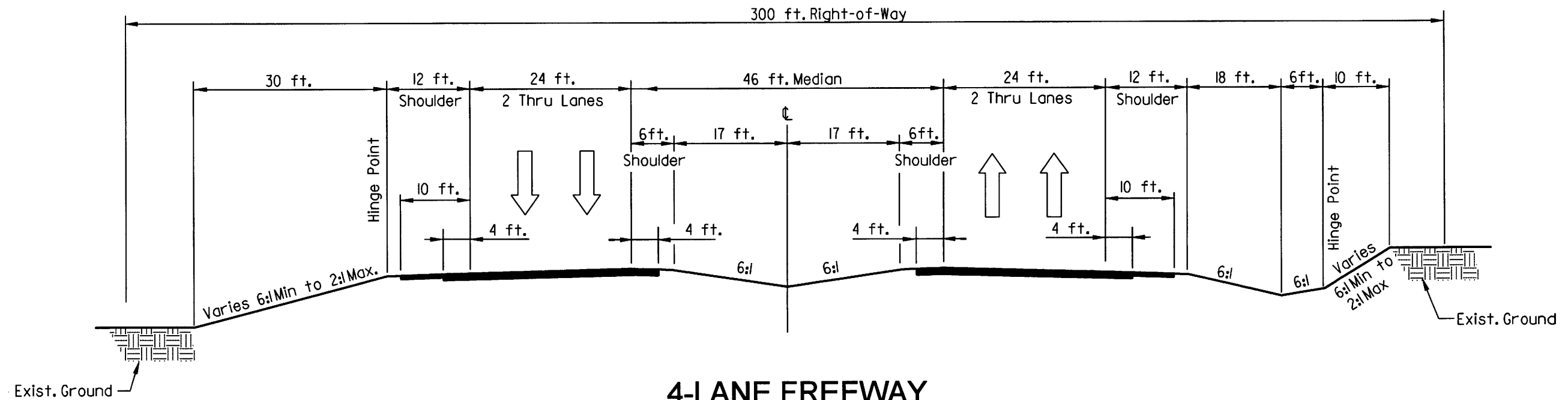
EXHIBITS

APPENDIX C

LIST OF EXHIBITS

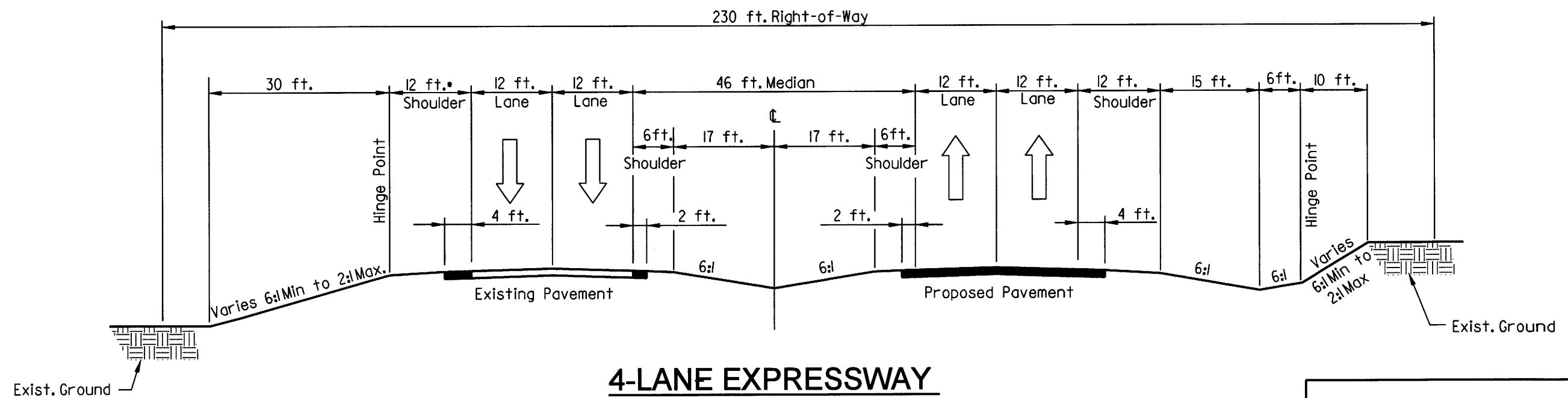
Exhibit F-1.1	Location Map
Exhibit F-2.1	Build Alternatives
Exhibit F-3.1	Roadway Typical Sections
Exhibit F-3.2	Grade Separation Typical Sections
Exhibit F-3.3	Tar/Pamlico River Bridge Typical Section
Exhibit F-4.1	Project Scheduling Map





4-LANE FREEWAY NEW LOCATION TYPICAL SECTION

*15 ft. With Guardrail



4-LANE EXPRESSWAY EXISTING US 17 UPGRADE TYPICAL SECTION

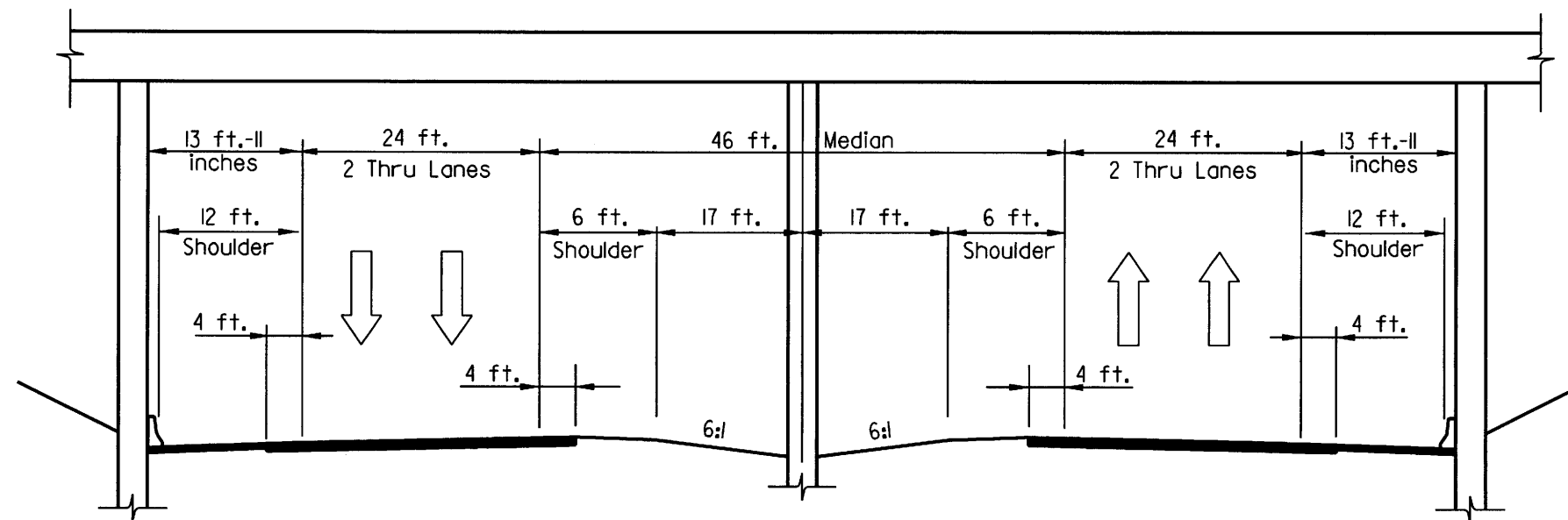
* 15 ft. With Guardrail

US 17 WASHINGTON IMPROVEMENTS
Beaufort and Pitt Counties

TIP No. R-2510

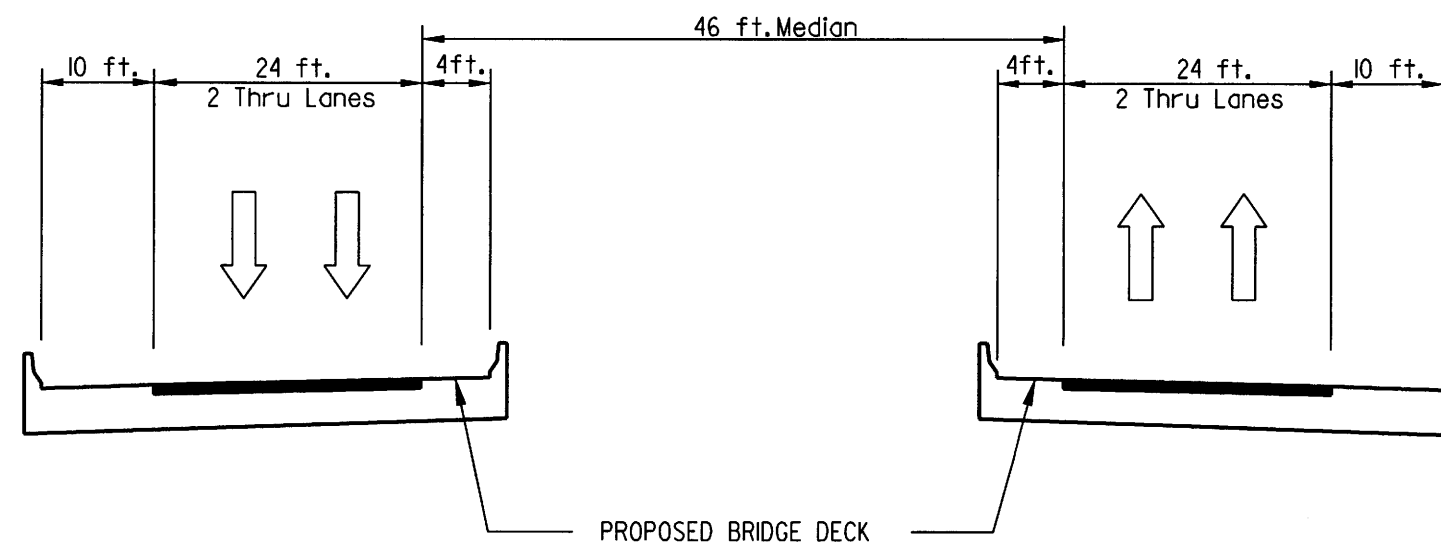
ROADWAY TYPICAL SECTIONS

EXHIBIT F-3.1



Note: 16 ft.- 6 inches Minimum Vertical Clearance

TYPICAL SECTION UNDER BRIDGE
UNDERPASS



BRIDGE TYPICAL SECTION
OVERPASS

US 17 WASHINGTON IMPROVEMENTS
Beaufort and Pitt Counties

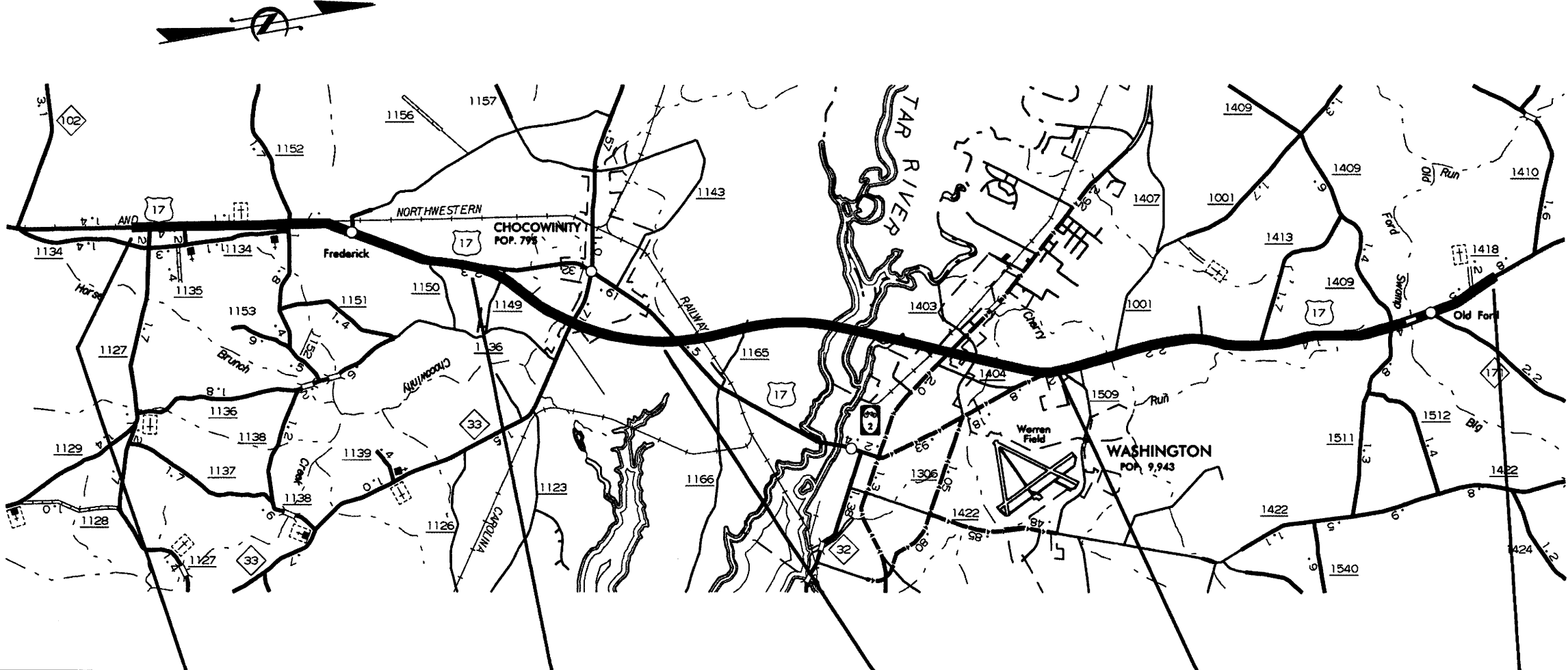
TIP No. R-2510
GRADE SEPARATION
TYPICAL SECTIONS

EXHIBIT F-3.2

PROJECT SCHEDULES AND COSTS ARE ACCURATE AS OF DATE SHOWN.

R-2510 BEAUFORT COUNTY

US 17 – Washington Bypass



I.D. NO. / D.S.R. NO.	R-2510A	R-2510BA	R-2510BB	R-2510C
STATE PROJECT NO. (P.E.)	C. HOUSER	THOMAS	THOMAS	THOMAS
PROJECT ENGINEER	C. HOUSER	THOMAS	THOMAS	THOMAS
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOUTH OF SR 1127 (POSSUM TRACK RD.) TO SOUTH OF SR 1149 (PRICE RD.)	SOUTH OF SR 1149 (PRICE RD.) TO NORTH OF NC 33	NORTH OF NC 33 TO US 17 SOUTH OF SR 1536 (HAMILTON BEACH RD.)	US 17 SOUTH OF SR 1536 (HAMILTON BEACH RD.) TO NORTH OF NC 171
COUNTY / DIVISION	BEAUFORT / DIV 2	BEAUFORT / DIV 2	BEAUFORT / DIV 2	BEAUFORT / DIV 2
LENGTH	4.0 MILES	1.85 MILES	4.25 MILES	4.85 MILES
TYPE OF CONTRACT	TURNKEY	TURNKEY	TURNKEY	TURNKEY
REMARKS				
BEGIN R/W ACQUISITION (T.I.P.)	FY 05	FY 09	PY	PY
BEGIN R/W ACQUISITION (PRODUCTION)				
PROPOSED LETTING (T.I.P.)	FY 07	PY	PY	PY
PROPOSED LETTING (PRODUCTION)				
EST. COMP. DATE (T.I.P.)				
ESTIMATED R/W COST	\$5,200,000	\$4,600,000	\$6,900,000	\$4,300,000
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST	\$15,100,000	\$27,000,000	\$115,500,000	\$20,800,000

UPDATED - 4/7/04



North Carolina Department of Transportation
Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch

US 17 WASHINGTON IMPROVEMENTS
Beaufort and Pitt Counties

TIP No. R-2510

PROJECT SCHEDULING MAP

EXHIBIT F-4.1

R-2510