

# CORRIDOR D

## U.S. 321 - South Carolina state line to Tennessee state line

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The 105-mile Corridor D provides access to the northwest North Carolina mountains around Boone from upper South Carolina, serving Gaston, Lincoln, Catawba, Caldwell, and Watauga counties, as part of a longer corridor providing access from external activity centers such as Columbia, South Carolina; Savannah, Georgia; and Johnson City, Tennessee. Corridor D carries high passenger and truck traffic between Corridor Q (I-40) in Hickory and Corridor I (I-85) in Gastonia. To the northwest the corridor overlaps Corridor E (U.S. 421W) for 7 miles.

### VISION PLAN SPECIFICS

This corridor follows U.S. 321 within a 20-mile buffer on either side of the facility.

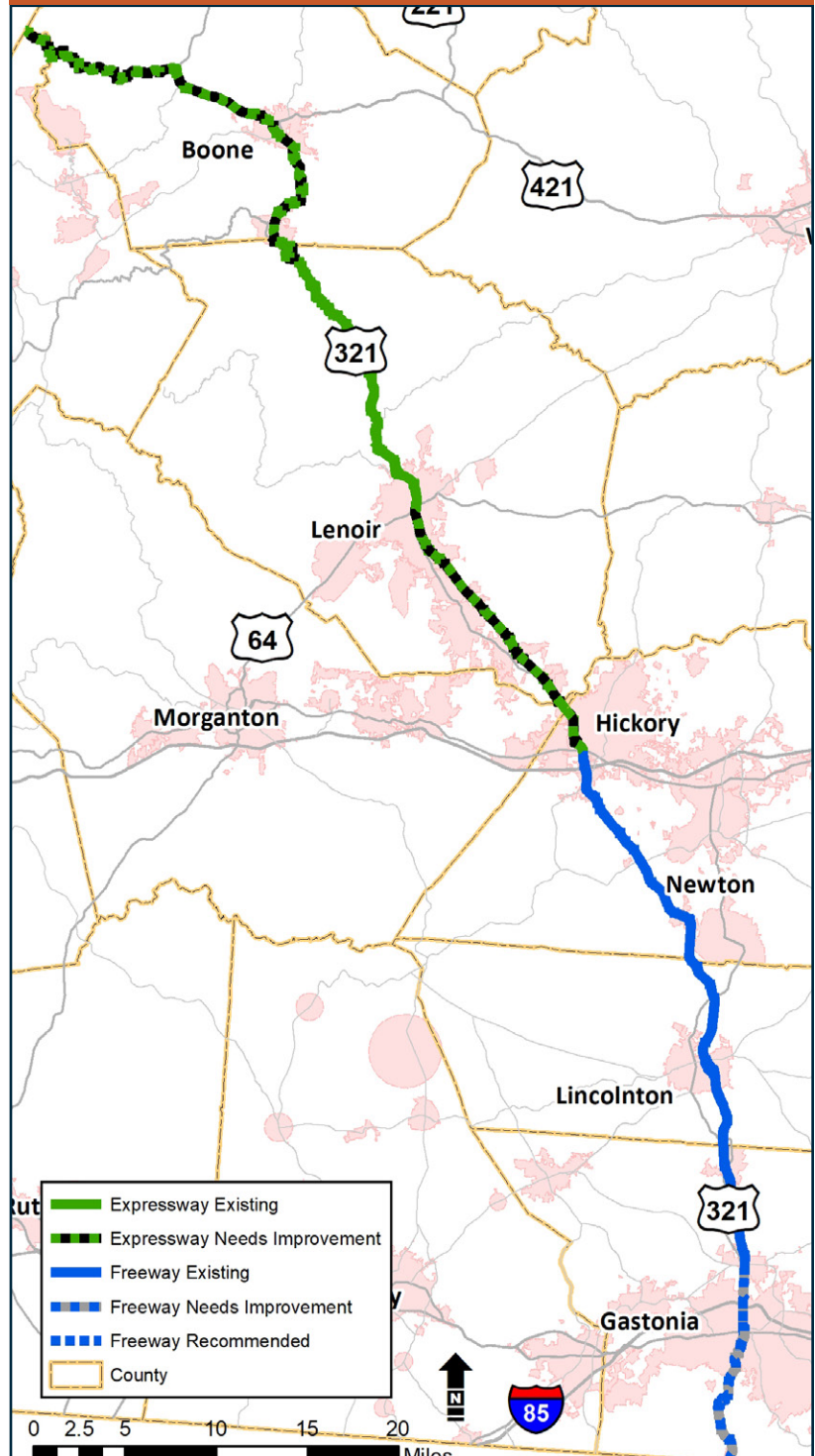
#### Tennessee state line to U.S. 70 north of Hickory

- Expressway cross-section
- AASHTO Design Classification of Arterial
- Minimum 4 lanes with a median
- Connections provided at interchanges for major cross streets and at-grade intersections for minor cross streets
- Limited access
- Short-term vision to eliminate traffic signals outside of Blowing Rock town limits

#### U.S. 70 north of Hickory to the South Carolina state line

- Freeway cross-section
- AASHTO Design Classification of Interstate or Freeway
- Minimum 4 lanes with a median
- Connections provided only at interchanges
- Traffic signals and driveways not allowed

### GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



### AREAS IDENTIFIED FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

- Expressway improvements northwest of Boone and the connection at the Tennessee state line
- Boone Bypass
- Expressway Improvements between Boone and Blowing Rock
- Blowing Rock Traffic Signal Study
- Freeway Improvements in Gastonia
- Freeway Improvements south of Gastonia and the connection at the South Carolina state line
- Multimodal connections
- Resiliency Assessment

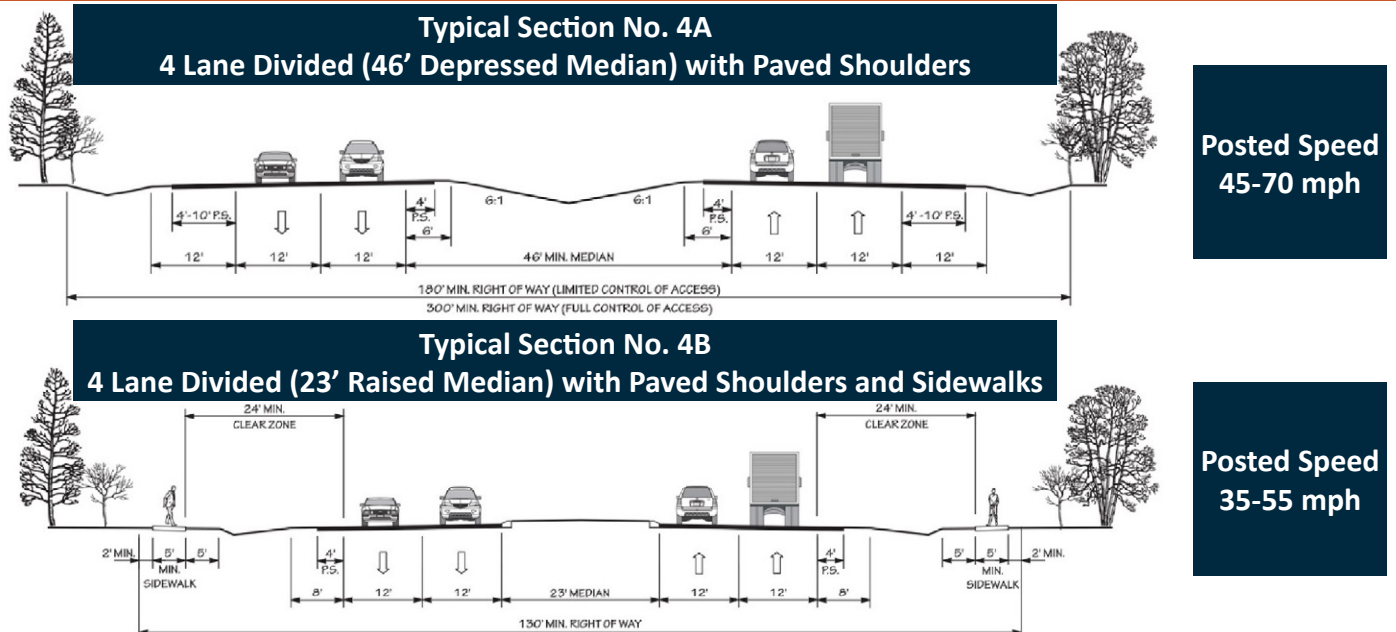
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### KEY FUNCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS (FUNCTIONS OF CORRIDOR IN CONTEXT OF STC GOALS AND CRITERIA)

- **Connectivity:** Corridor D provides a connection to South Carolina strategic US 321 corridor and is the primary connection from the northern mountains into Tennessee.
- **Mobility:** This corridor connects northeast Tennessee with I-40 and I-85 providing passenger and freight mobility across western North Carolina.
- **Economic Prosperity:** Corridor D serves three of the state's top tourism counties (Gaston, Catawba, and Watauga) and is a key access route to the primary academic center at Appalachian State University.
- **Expectation:** As the most direct route between the Charlotte/Gastonia region and the tourism-rich northern mountains, Corridor D should provide safe, reliable travel for both passenger and freight movement, with reduced delays through intermediate communities along the corridor.

### CROSS-SECTION



### FACILITY INFORMATION

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Projects	Connections and Freight	Primary Activity Centers
<p><u>2020-2029 STIP:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-5000, I-85 interchange improvements</li> <li>• U-4700, U.S. 70 to Southwest Boulevard (SR 1933) widen to six lanes</li> <li>• R-2615, U.S. 421 to N.C. 105 Bypass widen to multi-lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the National Highway System from I-85 to Tennessee state line</li> <li>• Federal designated truck route from South Carolina state line to I-85 and I-40 to U.S. 64</li> <li>• 67 bridges along the corridor: 3 are structurally deficient, 12 are functionally obsolete</li> <li>• US 321 carries high passenger volumes between I-40 in Hickory and I-85 in Gastonia</li> <li>• US 321 carries high truck traffic from I-40 in Hickory to I-85 in Gastonia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appalachian State University</li> <li>• Johnson City, Tennessee employment center</li> <li>• Watauga County tourism center</li> <li>• Gaston County tourism center</li> <li>• Gaston College (Dallas)</li> <li>• CaroMont Regional Medical Center (Gastonia)</li> <li>• Tweetsie Railroad</li> </ul>