

105 S. Long Street  
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Carolina 28039



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***"HOME OF HERITAGE & PROMISE"***

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2/17/26

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

On behalf of the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, I am pleased to affirm the Town's firm and unconditional commitment to provide \$5,780,340 in non-federal matching funds in support of the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR 2114 Interchange Construction Project.

These funds are readily available, unencumbered, and fully committed to this project. Specifically, \$4,980,340 will be provided from the Town's Capital Operating Account, and \$800,000 will be provided through a loan guaranteed by the Town of East Spencer. The Town has taken all necessary actions to ensure these funds are secured and will be available for obligation and expenditure in accordance with federal and project requirements.

The Town of East Spencer recognizes the transformative importance of this project to regional mobility, economic development, public safety, and quality of life. Accordingly, we are fully committed to advancing this project and partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation to ensure its successful delivery.

Please accept this letter as official confirmation of the Town's financial commitment. Should you require any additional information or documentation, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Douglas", is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Douglas  
Town Manager  
Town of East Spencer  
(704) 636-7111  
[townmanager@eastspencer.gov](mailto:townmanager@eastspencer.gov)



North Carolina General Assembly  
House of Representatives

REPRESENTATIVE HARRY WARREN  
ROWAN COUNTY - 77TH DISTRICT

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COMMITTEES:

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FINANCE  
INSURANCE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES

February 6, 2026

Michael Douglas  
Town Manager  
Town of East Spencer  
105 S. Long Street  
East Spencer, NC 28039

Dear Sir,

This is to inform you that I have made a formal appropriation request to the Senior Chairs of the House Appropriations Budget Committee on behalf of the Town of East Spencer.

The appropriation requested is for a \$5 million allocation to the Town of East Spencer in support of funding for the McCandless Road interchange project on I-85. If approved and included in the NC Budget/Conference Report, or in a "mini budget" the Legislature might pass, disbursement of the funding would be contingent to the Town of East Spencer's receipt of the federal Build Grant funding for the project. As you are aware, the deadline for making an appropriation request for inclusion in the state budget is long past, however, the budget negotiations are still ongoing between the Senior House and Senior Senate Appropriation Chairs. I will keep you advised of any decision of the Chairs.

I wish you the very best regarding the application for the federal Build Grant. The McCandless Road interchange would absolutely be transformative for northern Rowan County and especially for the immediate area, due to the tremendous economic and residential development it would facilitate. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harry Warren".

Representative Harry Warren  
District 76, Rowan County

# Developing an East Spencer Growth Nexus:

## Proposed I-85 McCanless Road Interchange in Rowan County

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**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Proposal**

**County of Rowan**

**I-85 Interchange at McCanless Road and Correll Street, Rowan County—Phase 1**

**Email**

**[craig.powers@rowancouncync.gov](mailto:craig.powers@rowancouncync.gov)**

**Phone**

**704-216-8606**

**Address**

**130 W. Innes St.  
Salisbury, NC 28144**

# Table of Contents

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- I. Applicant Information:.....3
- II. Project Information .....3
- III. Project Evaluation Criteria.....4
  - Bonus Points..... 10
- IV. Project Budget (Phase 1: PE Items) ..... 11
  - Estimated Preliminary Engineering Budget ..... 11
  - Project Implementation Timeline ..... 12
- V. Appendix A. Supporting Documentation ..... 13



## Applicant Information:

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Legal Name: County of Rowan, North Carolina  
Primary Contact: Craig Powers, Director of Engineering  
Address: 130 W. Innes St.  
City, State, Zip: Salisbury, NC 28144  
Telephone: 704-216-8606  
Email: [Craig.Powers@rowancountync.gov](mailto:Craig.Powers@rowancountync.gov)

## Project Information

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**Name:** Proposed I-85 McCanless Road Interchange in Rowan County: Phase 1 Preliminary Engineering

**Project Location:** McCanless Road and Correll Street in Rowan County, near East Spencer

**MTIP ID:** N/A

**SPOT ID:** # H190956

**Total Project Cost:** \$4,107,000

**Requested STBG Funds:** \$3,285,600

**Brief Project Description:** Rowan County is pleased to submit this request for funds to support Phase 1: Preliminary Engineering (PE) of the proposed McCanless Road Interchange Project (“Project”) along I-85 in Rowan County. The proposed Project would construct a new interchange by converting the McCanless Road (SRR2114) underpass to allow direct access to I-85 from the Town of East Spencer. Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) and an Area of Persistent Poverty (AoPP), the objective of the Project is to address long-term barriers relating to transportation, safety, congestion, and limited economic opportunity for the town’s residents and businesses. The overall project will construct a partial cloverleaf interchange at I-85 and SR2114 with a standard intersection at the southbound ramp terminal. The design will retain the existing I-85 structure; construction activities will generally be limited to developing ramps and merge lanes. The proposed interchange will be located at Correll Street and McCanless Road on I-85 and will address traffic congestion and safety along Long Street, and potentially Bringle Ferry Road and Highway 52 by providing an additional outlet. The proposed I-85 interchange will also open economic opportunities in Rowan County, particularly in East Spencer, by improving access to underutilized industrial and commercial land, thereby attracting private investment and supporting job creation in the area. The Project location is shown in *Figure 1*.

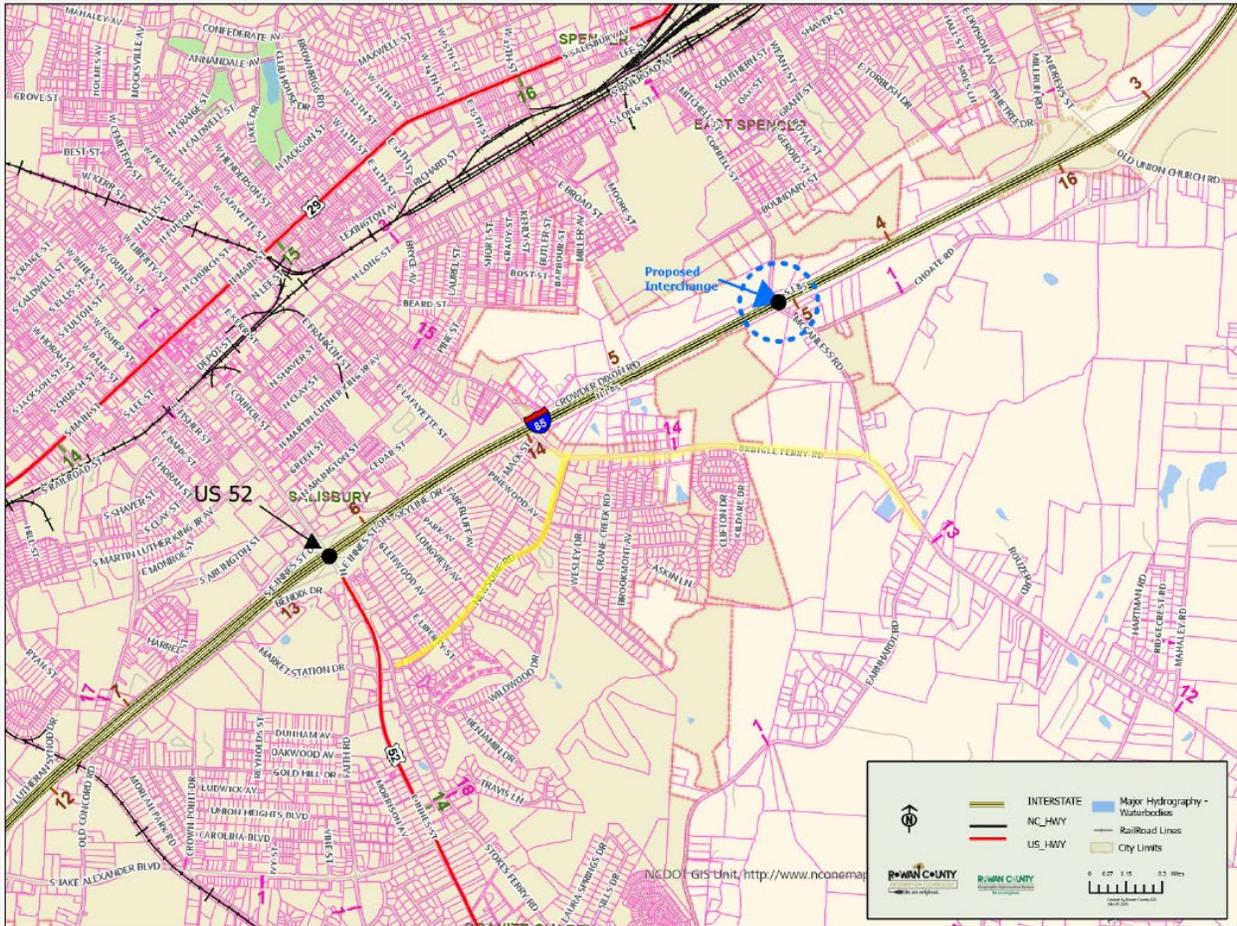


Figure 1. Map of Project Location

**This proposed interchange requires that we complete the preliminary engineering phase to unlock significantly greater funding down the line once completed.** Rowan County respectfully requests STBG funding in the amount of \$3,285,600 to support required PE; the County has requested discretionary funding for the required 20% match through our state legislators, Representative Harry Warren and Senator Carl Ford.

## Project Evaluation Criteria

- 1. Project Needs/Goals and Objectives: “The project should directly address priority transportation needs within the Cabarrus-Rowan MPO Planning Area as described in MPO’s Transportation Plan, Project Applications should clearly state the overall program goals and objectives and demonstrate how the project will benefit the community. (0-20 points)**

Importantly, the proposed interchange Project is key to addressing East Spencer's long-term transportation barriers which have historically contributed to the Town's poverty level and depressed economic conditions. East Spencer is a historically, predominantly African American population, and is largely cut off from nearby communities by the railroad and Town Creek, and without a direct connection to Bringle Ferry Road. The Town relies heavily on Long Street, which shows considerable wear and tear, to access nearby towns of Salisbury and Spencer. Being essentially "land locked" on 2 sides with limited access to I-85 severely limits the Town's opportunities for growth. The interchange Project will enable East Spencer to address many of its long-term problems.

As a Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) and an Area of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) it is crucial for East Spencer to overcome these transportation barriers. Accordingly, there have been several failed businesses over the years which limits the Town's tax base and leaves the town without substantial revenue to provide basic goods and services. The Town includes one census tract, 37159050800, listed as both HDC and AoPP due to the transportation barriers described in this proposal, along with low income, unemployment, and a high percentage of residents with less than a high school education. According to the ETC Explorer, one census tract 37159050800 has high transportation burden costs. Approximately 49.98 percent of the population in the tract are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level line. The median household income is \$41,347. With the average household spending 22.41 percent of their income on transportation, the households in this tract spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. The Project will provide economic opportunities for the population of East Spencer by addressing the significant transportation barriers that have historically contributed to the Town's economic challenges.

The proposed McCanless interchange project is identified in the Cabarrus-Rowan MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan as amended March 26, 2019. Additionally, the need for the interchange is addressed in the local *Land Use Plan Areas East of I-85 Rowan County*, adopted by the Rowan County Board of Commissioners in 2012. Rowan County would consider the land areas adjoining the Town of East Spencer ETJ within the I-85 Highway Corridor Overlay in the East Land Use Plan<sup>1</sup>. According to the Plan, future land use in East Spencer is geared toward mixed use, commercial, and industrial development. See *Figure 2. Highway Map Inset A, AMENDED*<sup>2</sup>.

Accordingly, Rowan County's long-term plan considers I-85 and US 29 to be advantageous locations for future commercial and industrial uses, and mixed-use developments are encouraged within the I-85, US 29 corridor of the Planning Area. Further, the City of Salisbury considers "Future Neighborhoods" in the eastern vicinity of McCanless Road at the Bringle Ferry intersection and Earnhardt Road.

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<sup>1</sup> *Land Use Plan: Areas East of I-85, Rowan County, North Carolina*. Prepared by Rowan County Department of Planning and Development. Adopted by Rowan County Commissioners January 17, 2012. URL <https://www.rowancountync.gov/443/Land-Use-Planning>

<sup>2</sup> *Comprehensive Planning Map*, Amended. Prepared by Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, NC. Last revised March 26, 2019.

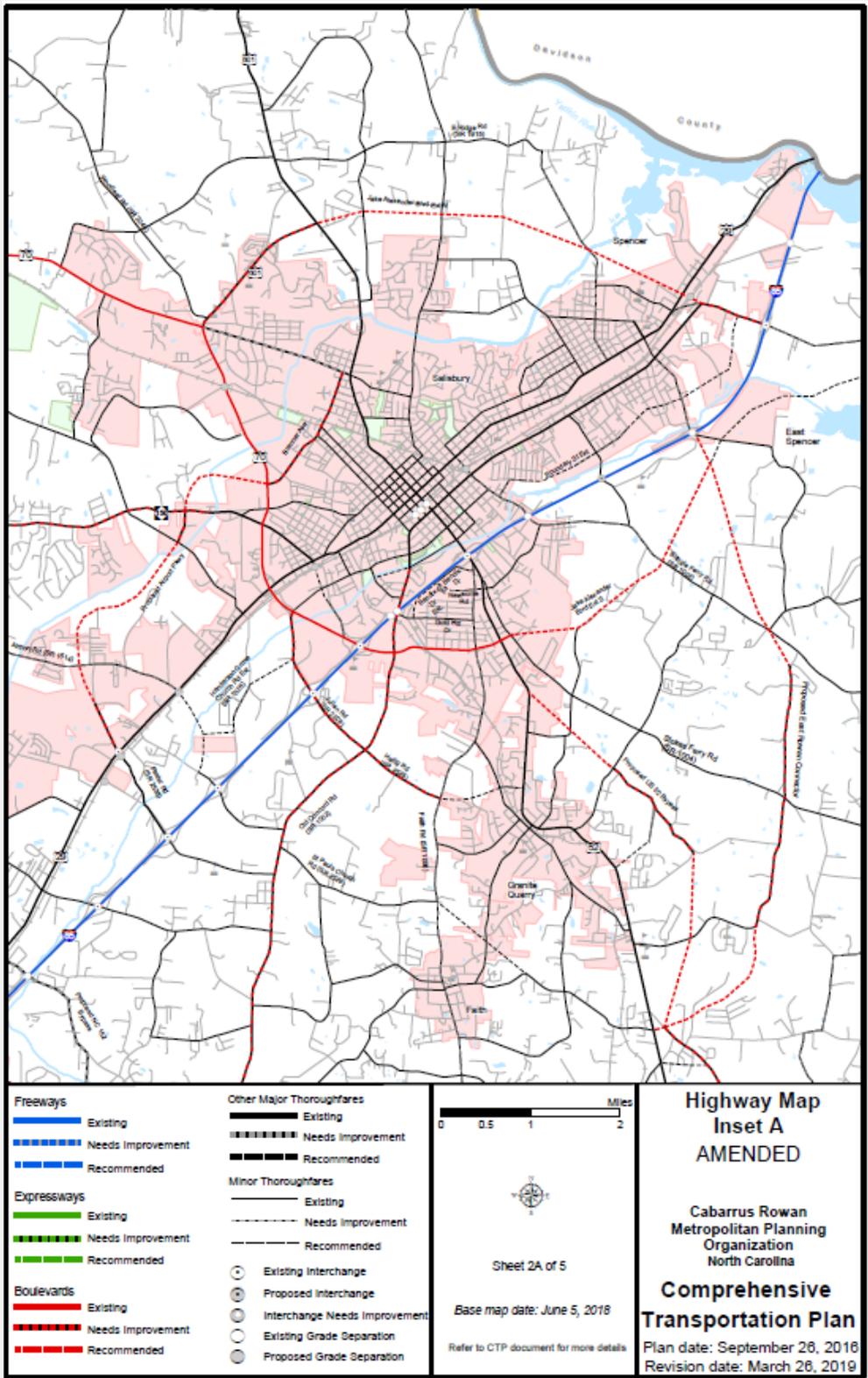


Figure 2. Highway Map Inset A, AMENDED; Comprehensive Transportation Map

- 2. Promotes Safety and Security: The project improves an existing hazardous condition. To receive full points, project sponsor must provide a complete description with supporting documentation of the hazardous condition. (0 to 15 points)**

The proposed interchange will address the safety of non-motorized travelers as well as motor traffic, particularly along Long Street in East Spencer, and other secondary roads, to access I-85 North or South. The travel width of Long Street is 27 feet, with no bike lanes and very narrow and noncontiguous sidewalks, causing pedestrians to need to leave the safety of the sidewalks to walk in the roadway at certain points. Further the lack of bike lanes means bicyclists must share the travel lane with traffic, including large commercial vehicles which have no route through East Spencer other than secondary roadways through which to access the Town to and from I-85. For example, from September 1, 2014, through August 31, 2024, there were 425 crashes on Long Street, including 3 fatal crashes. For a roadway less than 4 miles long with an annual ADT of 5,300, these are excessive numbers. The crashes involved 13 pedestrians, 4 bicyclists, and 17 mopeds. The proposed interchange will reduce truck traffic on Long Street, which will provide a safer, less congested route for bicyclists, pedestrians, and smaller non-commercial vehicles traveling along the route.

Currently, to access I-85, commercial vehicles regularly travel along Bringle Ferry Road which is the only reasonable route even though the roadway is not designed for such heavy traffic. While commercial and heavy vehicles had once utilized Newsome Road for such travel in the past, the City of Salisbury restricted commercial truck traffic along the route on July 17, 2018. Such vehicles are no longer permitted on Newsome Road due to hazardous conditions. The proposed interchange addresses this limitation by providing a more direct—and nonresidential route—to I-85.

- 3. Documented Project/Program Support: Applicants must submit documentation that shows local support for the project/program in the form of an official resolution. Other support could include letters from affected citizens, advisory boards or commissions, sheriffs or police, neighborhood associations, or business groups. (0 to 20 points)**

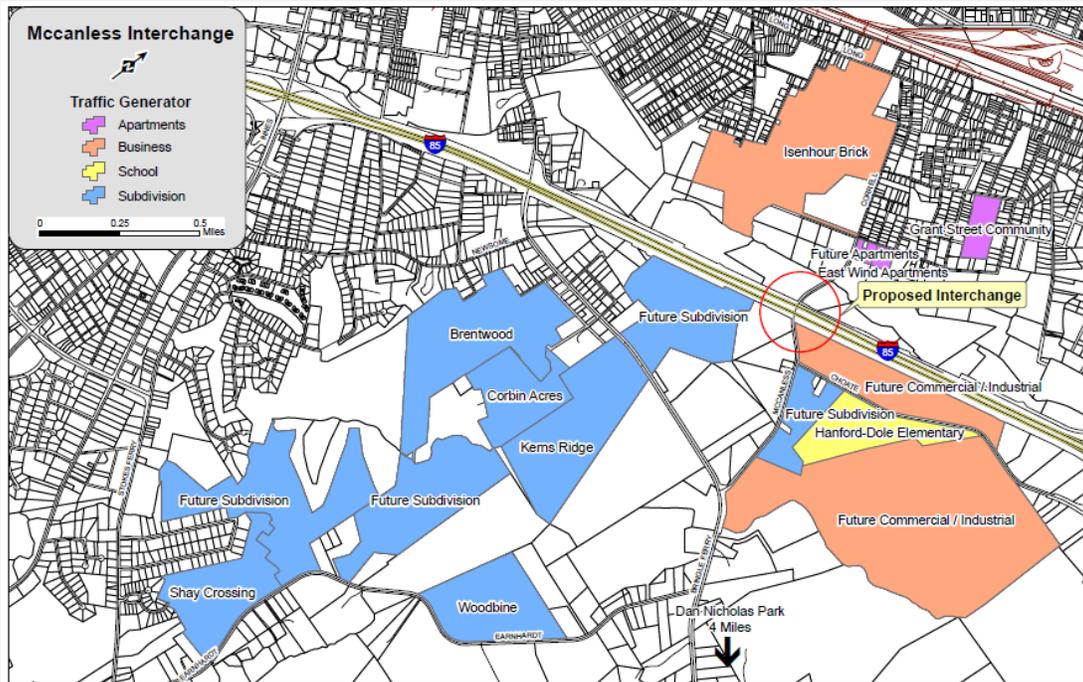
The Project has the support of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners, as shown in the attached resolution passed on August 4, 2025. The Project has also received support from Rowan County Economic Development, Rowan County Tourism, and the Town of East Spencer. See Appendix A.

- 4. Proximity to Existing/Planned traffic Generators: The project is in proximity to traffic generators such as residential or commercial areas, schools and other institutional uses, parks, libraries, etc. Applicant must describe proximity to, and connection with existing/planned transportation system and how it will improve access to the facilities. (0 to 15 points)**

The Project is part of a long-range plan by the Town of East Spencer. Through the Project, the Town can move forward with plans for EV charging stations at McCanless Road, as well as developing bicycle and pedestrian accommodations connecting East Spencer residents with Hanford-Dole Elementary School. As part of a regional development strategy, the new

interchange will enhance East Spencer residents' access to employment opportunities, housing, commerce, and recreational options including Dan Nicholas Park and High Rock Lake.

With funding in place for preliminary engineering, the Town and its stakeholders, including Rowan County, can move forward to pursuing funds for the Right-of-way (ROW) and Construction phases. For example, and with the support of Rowan County, in 2025 the Town applied for the highly competitive federal grant, Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (“BUILD”) program to the U.S. Department of Transportation for \$25M. While this year’s application was not successful, we are committed to developing a stronger application with feedback from the granting agency when the BUILD grant reopens in the next grant cycle. The County and Town are also seeking and pursuing additional capital grants to ensure the project is shovel-ready upon completion of PE work. See *Figure 3. McCanless Interchange Traffic Generators*.



**Figure 3. McCanless Interchange Traffic Generators**

- 5. Quantifiable Measures for Effectiveness in Addressing Congestion through Innovative or Multimodal Approaches/Application. (Reduces single occupant vehicle use—10 points; Reduces peak hour congestion volume—5 points; Improves travel time on corridor—1 point).**

As stated above, and because of the congestion on Long Street, the crash rate is unacceptably high. An in-depth analysis of *2050 Future Year No-Build Scenario*<sup>3</sup> results underscore the urgent need for the proposed interchange. The projected data show significant congestion and queuing driven by escalating traffic volumes and new developments that are intensifying demand for transportation connectivity, particularly during peak hours of travel. In fact, the total intersection delay for all intersections along the corridor is projected to decrease during both AM and PM peak periods under the Build scenario. While the intersection of McCanless Road does see a slight increase during the PM peak, overall improvements across other intersections will more than compensate. According to the data, the interchange is expected to provide essential capacity enhancements and significantly improve traffic flow compared to the *2050 No-Build* scenario. See *Table 1: Cabarrus Rowan MPO Congested Corridors - 2050 E + C Model*.<sup>4</sup>

Corridor Segment	Begin Milepost	End Milepost	Length	Total Crashes (Note 2)	Injury Crashes (Note 2)	2019 AADT Estimates (Note 1)	Total Crash Rate (Note 3)	2018 Peak Hour V/C Ratio (Note 4)	2050 Peak Hour V/C Ratio (Note 4)	2050 Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS)	Comments
Branchview Dr. from Corban Ave N. to City Limits at I-85	2.9	6.485	3.585	434	148	21,000	315.88	1.09	1.26	F	
Brookwood Ave. NE from Church St. N to Branchview Dr.	0.66	1.35	0.69	15	2	3,800	313.47	0.24	0.88	D	
Cabarrus Ave. W from US Hwy 601 to US Hwy 29	9.303	9.563	0.26	113	30	19,000	1253.40	0.66	0.58	B	Crash rate validates congested corridor issues
Cannon Blvd. From Concord City Limits to Rowan Co. Line	10.14	14.01	3.87	686	170	23,000	422.30	0.62	0.67	C	Used Northern city limits just North of I-85 Interchange
Cochran Rd. from Roberta Rd. to Pitts School Rd.	0	0.92	0.92	9	1	2,500	214.41	N/A	N/A	N/A	Corridor link was not included in the model data
Country Club Dr. NE from US Hwy 29 to Branchview Dr.	0	0.61	0.61	54	19	11,000	440.97	0.59	1.05	D	
Dale Earnhardt Blvd. From Main St. to Cannon Blvd.	8.638	10.07	1.432	259	71	17,000	582.97	0.51	0.70	C	
NC Hwy 73 from Trinity Church Rd West to the City Limits	4.35	6.01	1.66	177	40	27,000	216.39	0.90	1.04	D	Used Western Kannapolis city limits
I-85 from Concord Mills Blvd. To Rowan Co. Line	0.53	14.134	13.604	3,619	875	115,000	126.75	0.68	0.85	D	
So. Main St. from Dale Earnhardt Blvd South to City Limits	0.81	3.68	2.87	180	47	11,000	312.42	0.68	0.91	D	Used Southern Kannapolis city limits
US Hwy 601 from Miami Church Road to NC Hwy 49	12.61	13.54	0.93	107	36	20,000	315.22	1.22	1.28	F	
Jake Alexander Blvd. from Brenner Ave to Julian Rd.	15.96	17.16	1.2	572	120	40,000	652.97	0.79	0.89	D	
	12.515	12.862	0.347	82	22	40,000	323.71	0.79	0.89	D	

Note 1: AADT values are taken from available NCDOT 2019 count locations that reflect average values for the corridor. For locations where data were not available, 2019 AADT values were estimated by reviewing recent traffic trend.

Note 2: Crash data is from 1/1/2017 through 12/31/21 (last 5 calendar years); This is a high level analysis based on mileposted crashes only.

Note 3: Crash Rate is calculated as total crashes per 100 million VMT

Note 4: Volume over Capacity (V/C) is from Metrolina Regional Model (MRM)

**Table 1: Cabarrus Rowan MPO Congested Corridors - 2050 E + C Model**

## 6. Connectivity Measures for Linking Other Modes. (0 to 10 points)

Not Applicable.

<sup>3</sup> *H190956 Interchange Access Report, Division 9, County of Rowan*. Prepared by Andrew Covington, P.E., Patriot Transportation Engineering, PLLC. July 14, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Cabarrus Rowan MPO 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Appendix 9-1 Congestion Management Process - Congested Corridors.

## **Bonus Points**

- A. Funding – Commitment to amounts higher than the 20 percent local match may result in higher assigned points depending on the percent to complete. Sliding scale for each additional 10 percent.**

Rowan has requested discretionary funding for the required 20% match through our state legislators, Representative Harry Warren and Senator Carl Ford. Further, Rowan County is actively identifying potential funding sources for the Right-of-Way and construction phases once PE is complete.

- B. Geographic Equity – Projects serving populations less than 20k (5 points)**

As a Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) and an Area of Persistent Poverty (AoPP), East Spencer as the primary beneficiary of the McCanless Road intersection currently has a population of 1,567 according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census<sup>5</sup>. The data paints a picture of a town that is historically disadvantaged in part due to transportation barriers. The high poverty rate in East Spencer along with a low rate of high school graduation can be directly traced to limited transportation access to good-paying jobs, goods and essential services, limited ability for local economic development, and even delays to emergency response which has resulted in slower response rates due to indirect routes to the Town. The Project will address all these challenges.

- C. Innovation – Projects will be examined to see if it contains new or innovative service concepts or facilities that have the potential for improving access to and mobility. (5 points)**

Improves access and mobility for those in East Spencer and Bringle Ferry Road and will open East Spencer’s future plans to install EV stations and improvements to safety for bicyclists and pedestrians by adding bike lanes and improved community walkability features such as trails and improved sidewalks.

- D. Progress – Bonus points will be assigned to shovel ready projects with completed preliminary design, permitting, etc. (5 points)**

Not applicable; Rowan County is requesting funding specifically for the preliminary engineering phase to ensure the project is shovel-ready within 24 months.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://data.census.gov/profile/East\\_Spencer\\_town,\\_North\\_Carolina?g=160XX00US3719860](https://data.census.gov/profile/East_Spencer_town,_North_Carolina?g=160XX00US3719860)

# Project Budget (Phase 1: PE Items)

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## Estimated Preliminary Engineering Budget

Category	% of PE Budget	Estimated Cost
Planning & Project Development	10%	\$410,700
Environmental Documentation (NEPA)	25%	\$1,026,750
Engineering Design (prelim + final)	40%	\$1,642,800
Surveys & Geotechnical Investigations	15%	\$616,050
Contract Administration (PE phase)	10%	\$410,700
<b>Total Preliminary Engineering</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$4,107,000</b>

## Preliminary Engineering Budget Narrative

The total budget requested for preliminary engineering is **\$4,107,000**, which will support the full scope of pre-construction activities required to advance the proposed I-85 interchange project to construction readiness. These activities include planning and project development, environmental documentation in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), topographic and geotechnical surveying, preliminary and final design, and contract administration associated with the preliminary engineering phase.

The estimated budget allocation is as follows:

- Planning and Project Development (\$410,700):** This phase includes the coordination of stakeholders, refinement of project scope, scheduling, and development of planning-level studies needed to define the project approach and alternatives.
- Environmental Documentation (\$1,026,750):** Preparation of NEPA-compliant environmental documentation will be a significant component of the effort. This may include technical studies, public engagement, agency coordination, and the development of either a Categorical Exclusion (CE), Environmental Assessment (EA), or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), depending on federal and state requirements.
- Engineering Design (\$1,642,800):** This includes both preliminary and final design work necessary to produce construction-ready plans. It encompasses geometric layout, structural engineering, roadway and drainage design, traffic analysis, and utility coordination.
- Surveys and Geotechnical Investigations (\$616,050):** This stage of work includes field surveys, mapping, and subsurface investigations needed to inform the engineering design and environmental documentation. Accurate site data is critical to the feasibility and integrity of the design.
- Contract Administration for Preliminary Engineering (\$410,700):** This includes administrative support and oversight for consultant management, regulatory coordination, internal quality control reviews, and compliance with state and federal grant requirements during the engineering phase.

This comprehensive preliminary engineering phase will ensure the project is developed in accordance with all regulatory requirements, properly scoped, and positioned to advance into the right-of-way and construction phases with minimal delay. The funding request includes **\$821,400 local match**, which represents 20% of the total preliminary engineering cost and which has been requested from the General Assembly as discretionary funding.

**Project Implementation Timeline**

Rowan County anticipates the preliminary engineering portion of the overall project to take approximately 24 months:

<b>Task/Phase</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>
Planning/Scoping	3-6 months	Months 1-6
Surveys & Geotechnical Investigations	4-6 months (overlaps)	Months 4-9
Environmental Documentation (NEPA)	9-15 months (overlaps)	Months 6-21
Preliminary Engineering & Design	12-18 months (overlaps)	Months 9-18
Final Design	3-6 months	Months 18-24
Contract Administration	Throughout PE Phase	Months 1-24

**Key Notes:**

- **Agency Coordination:** FHWA, NCDOT, environmental agencies, local stakeholders will all require review periods that can affect the pacing of the timeline.
- **NEPA Complexity:** A reasonable estimate for an interchange is 12-15 months; although the complexity of NEPA regulation can affect the timeline (environmental assessment, categorical exclusion, etc.).
- **Right-of-way/utility coordination:** Portions of the next phases of the proposed I-85 construction can be initiated early, though completion of NEPA is critical before the next stages can fully begin.

## Appendix A. Supporting Documentation

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1. Resolution Supporting the Construction of New I-85 Interchange at McCanless Road and Correl Street in Rowan County. Adopted August 4, 2025.
2. Letter of Support—Town of East Spencer
3. Letter of Support – Rowan Economic Development Council
4. Letter of Support—Rowan Tourism Development Authority

Greg Edds, Chairman  
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman  
Daniel Lancaster  
Judy Klusman  
Craig Pierce



Aaron Church, County Manager  
Sarah Pack, Clerk to the Board  
John W. Dees, II, County Attorney

## Rowan County Board of Commissioners

130 West Innes Street • Salisbury, NC 28144  
Telephone 704-216-8181 • Fax 704-216-8195

### RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW I-85 INTERCHANGE AT McCANLESS ROAD AND CORRELL STREET IN ROWAN COUNTY

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**WHEREAS**, the safety and well-being of the citizens of Rowan County and the State of North Carolina are of paramount importance; and

**WHEREAS**, safe and efficient roadways are essential for the daily lives of residents, facilitating travel to work, school, healthcare, enhancing economic development opportunities, and other vital services; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (“CRMPO”) receives a direct allocation of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) funding through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) passed in 2021, of which the CRMPO has previously adopted a competitive process to determine which projects are funded; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners supports the construction of a new interstate interchange to provide a direct connection from I-85 to the Town of East Spencer at McCCanless Road and Correll Street; and

**WHEREAS**, the preliminary engineering costs for the above project are estimated at \$4,107,000, based on the *Cost Estimate and Environmental Justice Review* completed in 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, to fulfill the required 20 percent non-federal matching funds, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners supports pursuing discretionary funding requests to the State House and State Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners recognizes the opportunity to leverage funds by applying for the STBGP grant to address critical infrastructure needs and economic development growth opportunities without additional burden to local taxpayers; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners hereby expresses its support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation to construct the traffic improvements described above; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Rowan County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes and supports the County Staff in the endeavor to seek funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program consistent with the I-85 Interchange Project described above.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Board Chairman to sign any and all required and related materials associated with the STBGP grant proposal.

Adopted this the 4<sup>th</sup> day of August 2025.



Chairman, Rowan County Board of Commissioners

Attest:



Sarah Pack, Clerk to the Board



105 S. Long Street  
Post Office Box 339  
East Spencer, North  
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*"HOME OF HERITAGE & PROMISE"*

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Michael Douglas  
Town of East Spencer  
PO Box 339  
East Spencer, NC 28039

August 6, 2025

Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (CR MPO)  
135 Cabarrus Ave E # 101  
Concord, NC 28025

Re: Letter of Support for Rowan County's STBG Application for Preliminary Engineering – I-85 Interchange Project

Dear Members of the Cabarrus-Rowan MPO:

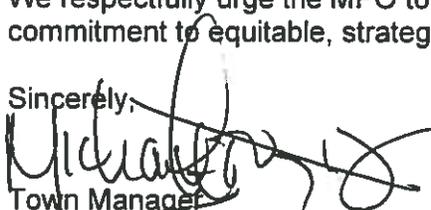
On behalf of the Town of East Spencer, I am pleased to express our full support for Rowan County's application for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding to initiate the preliminary engineering phase of the proposed I-85 Interchange project. We recognize the transformative impact this project will have on our region's transportation infrastructure, economic vitality, and long-term growth.

The Town of East Spencer is committed to advancing regional mobility, safety, and accessibility. This interchange project aligns with those priorities, offering significant potential to relieve traffic congestion, enhance freight movement, and provide new access to underserved areas—including key economic development zones in and around East Spencer. The design and planning efforts supported by this funding are critical first steps in realizing these shared benefits.

We commend Rowan County's leadership in spearheading this initiative and are proud to serve as an active partner in support of this work. The Town of East Spencer stands ready to collaborate with county and regional stakeholders to ensure the project's success.

We respectfully urge the MPO to give full consideration to this application. Thank you for your commitment to equitable, strategic transportation investments that serve our communities.

Sincerely,

  
Town Manager  
Town of East Spencer



August 5, 2025

Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization  
57 Union Street South  
Concord, NC 28025

Dear Grant Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rowan Economic Development Council, we are pleased to support Rowan County's application for a Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) to fund the preliminary engineering phase of a new interchange project at Interstate 85 and McCanless Road, near the Town of East Spencer.

This potential new interchange represents a significant opportunity to address both transportation and economic development challenges facing the Town of East Spencer. As a Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) and an Area of Persistent Poverty (AoPP), East Spencer has faced long-standing barriers to economic mobility and infrastructure improvements. A new interchange will directly address these challenges, improving transportation access and spurring economic growth in the area.

Historically, East Spencer has been isolated due to natural and man-made barriers, including railroad tracks to the west, Town Creek to the east, and limited connections to the south. For many years, Long Street has been the sole route for residents to access nearby communities. The redesign of the Correll Street/McCanless Road underpass into a fully functioning interchange will provide East Spencer residents with direct access to I-85, alleviating congestion on Long Street and improving safety for all users.

Additionally, this project presents an opportunity to increase economic growth in East Spencer. A new interchange will encourage travelers on Interstate 85 to pull off the road and spend money at the Town's businesses. The transformative potential of this project cannot be overstated, as it will break the cycle of disinvestment in East Spencer and open new pathways for economic prosperity for its residents.

We strongly believe that STBG funding is an important early step in this project, which will have a lasting and positive impact on the Town of East Spencer and Rowan County as a whole. We urge your favorable consideration of this application for STBG funding.

Thank you for your attention to this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Scott Shelton  
Vice President

# ROWAN COUNTY

Tourism Development Authority  
North Carolina

*Be an original.™*

August 6, 2025

Rowan County Tourism Development Authority  
204 East Innes Street, Suite 280  
Salisbury, N.C. 28144

Cabarrus-Rowan MPO  
135 Cabarrus Ave. E #101  
Concord, NC 28025

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of Rowan County Tourism, I am pleased to offer our strong support for Rowan County's Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) application for the proposed I-85 McCanless Road Interchange Project in East Spencer.

Tourism is an economic driver in Rowan County, attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors each year to our rich cultural, recreational, and historic attractions. Expanding access to these destinations is essential for continued growth, and the proposed interchange will significantly enhance connectivity to several key tourism and economic assets.

The new interchange will increase tourism access and regional visibility by providing direct, efficient entry into Rowan County from I-85, one of the state's most vital transportation corridors. The interchange will also improve access to cultural anchors, including the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, which draws over 100,000 visitors annually and stands as one of our most visited heritage tourism sites.

This investment will support revitalization efforts in East Spencer and Spencer, offering increased access to local parks, businesses, and community events that depend on visitor foot traffic to sustain growth, as well as strengthen tourism and recreation in Rowan County, including Dan Nicholas Park and High Rock Lake, both of which are prominent regional draws and key components of Rowan County's outdoor recreation strategy.

By alleviating congestion on local roads such as Long Street and Bringle Ferry Road, the project will also improve safety and the visitor experience—both of which are crucial to Rowan County's tourism brand. Moreover, this project aligns with long-term strategic plans to enhance infrastructure, support local economies, and improve equitable access for Historically Disadvantaged Communities like East Spencer.

Rowan County Tourism is proud to support this vital infrastructure investment and encourages all granting authorities to recognize the long-term benefits of this project for economic development and tourism alike.

With much appreciation,



James Rankin Meacham  
Chief Executive Officer