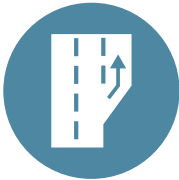


GRAHAM

Greater Rural Access and Highways to Accelerate Mobility



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN



CLIMBING LANES



UPGRADES



ITS COMPONENTS



SAFETY

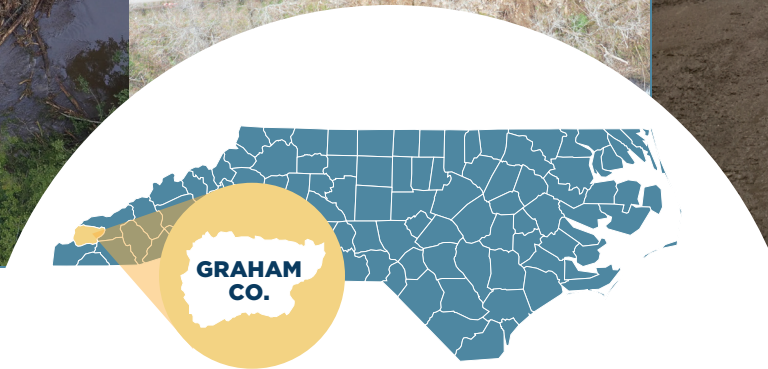


STATE OF GOOD REPAIR



WILDLIFE CROSSING

Project Readiness



GRAHAM CO.

USDOT RAISE Investment Program
GRANT APPLICATION
FEBRUARY 2023



GRAHAM is a culmination of a multi-year planning effort with community involvement and support demonstrating its project readiness. NCDOT will serve as the RAISE 2022 Discretionary Grant Applicant and Recipient responsible for administering the grant if selected for award, and will provide oversight of project delivery. GRAHAM is technically feasible with low levels of environmental and project risk. Roadway and ITS improvements are one of NCDOT's primary functions; and NCDOT has delivered thousands of similar projects. As the project sponsor, NCDOT will apply its experience in successfully delivering this RAISE project.

The addition of the project's ITS components do not require significant design changes, and NCDOT will ensure that these improvements will meet relevant State and Federal specifications.

Project Schedule

Transportation improvement studies for this region have been in various planning stages for decades. The planning and project development for State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) A-0009C was restarted in 2015 after a four-year hiatus to allow for the development of the Graham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan as well as a regional opportunity initiative (Opt-In) to build consensus at both county and regional levels on an approach for prioritizing transportation

investments, including the completion of Corridor K. Upon restarting the project in 2015, NCDOT undertook an integrated planning process focused on meaningful public involvement and collaboration with public officials, stakeholders and agency groups since restarting the project in 2015. In 2021, NCDOT was awarded The National Association of Environmental Professionals [Environmental Excellence Award in Environmental Management, Stewardship, Conservation and Protection.](#)

Environmental approvals, final design, and right of way (ROW) for A-0009C have been completed, and sections CA, CB, and CC were all let in 2022. Construction on these sections is anticipated to be complete in late 2027 or early 2028. Utility relocation has been completed for section CA, and is ongoing with anticipated completion in 2024 for the remaining sections. RAISE funding is needed to complete the final section of A-0009C; if awarded, funds would be obligated immediately upon completion of the grant agreement, and construction would commence in early 2024. The design and construction of GRAHAM's ITS components are expected to last up to 12 months, and would begin concurrent with construction for A-0009CD. A detailed schedule is provided below.

	2023				2024				2025				2026				2027				2028			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
RAISE Milestones		●		●															●					
ITS Design + Construction																								
A-009C ROW Acquisition																								
A-009C Utilities																								
A-009C Construction																								

↑
Anticipated Award date: June 2023

↑
Obligation of GRAHAM funds: December 2023

↑
Statutory Obligation deadline: September 30, 2027

Notes:
 NEPA for A-0009C (FONSI) completed in 2021
 Final Design for A-0009C completed in 2022
 Construction began for A-0009CA and A-0009CB in October 2022
 Construction began for A-0009CC in January, 2023



Environmental Risk Assessment

The final [Environmental Assessment](#) for A-0009C was completed on August 26, 2020, and the [Finding of no Significant Impact \(FONSI\)](#) was signed on March 19, 2021. The FONSI includes a series of project commitments to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts related to acidic rock treatment and other geotechnical considerations, hazardous waste, water quality and habitat protection. The Section 106 requirements for the Project are actively being addressed through a Programmatic Agreement Task Force (PATF) formed by the project specific Programmatic Agreement. The PATF meets quarterly to address historic architecture and archeological concerns. All historic architecture sites have received a no effects determination. NCDOT is working with the PATF to address the remaining archeological concerns and any construction changes or discoveries. The Project is rich with tribal resources that NCDOT is working diligently to protect and preserve. All required environmental and construction permits, including those pursuant to section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act were obtained for the A-0009C project in summer 2022.

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

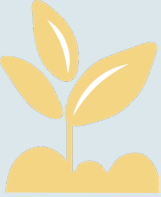



The Project Team has identified the following potential risks and corresponding mitigation strategies in order to implement the project on schedule and within budget. NCDOT, who will administer the project, will leverage its extensive experience completing RAISE projects to reduce and mitigate risk.



The Project roads are popular with motorcyclists and motor sports enthusiasts



One of the only Golden-winged Warbler populations in NC is found along the ANST in the Project corridor

Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Strategy
<p>Environmental and geotechnical</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excavation of acidic rock is required for construction Trout waters are located in the project area Disturbance of culturally significant areas/project schedule delays due to Section 106 effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of potential acidic rock excavation is small enough that even very high results could be economically and feasibly treated A moratorium on all work within a 25-ft buffer disturbance zone of trout-supporting streams will be in place January 1 - April 15 of any given year Communication with the PATF on construction schedules in culturally significant areas, hired a project specific environmental consultant to monitor the construction activities, monitor the need for data recovery
<p>Construction Impacts</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary construction detours may impact access and travel time Construction could impact ANST access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing construction in a timely manner Communicating detours and construction schedules to the community through multiple channels in English and Spanish Access to the ANST will be maintained during construction. A safe pedestrian route for ANST hikers will be maintained, including wayfaring and construction warning signs, a clearly marked route for hikers through or around the construction site and a construction flagger/guide through active construction
<p>Project Costs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remote location, difficult terrain, materials shortages and inflation causing volatility in materials and construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCDOT anticipates approximately \$51.5 million of additional ADHS funding will be authorized in fiscal years 2024-2026, which is sufficient to cover GRAHAM and other ADHS project commitments in the state. Substantial contingency was included in the Project budget to account for these uncertainties (see Project Budget Narrative for more information).
<p>Buy America Requirements</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal statute requires that steel or iron materials be domestically manufactured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCDOT will include a special provision in all construction contracts requiring the contractor to furnish a notarized certification that all manufactured products and construction materials permanently incorporated into any project will meet requirements of the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

USDOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application

February 2023

GRAHAM

Greater Rural Access and Highways to Accelerate Mobility



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