



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

October 26, 2005

Memorandum

To: James A. Smailes, PE
Federal Railroad Administration

From: Eric Haugaard, PE *Eric Haugaard*
Crossing Project Engineer

Subject: *Quarterly Report #34*, North Carolina Sealed Corridor Project;
TIP Project No. P-3419; Next Generation High Speed Rail Grant

During the second and third quarter of 2005, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has completed the following tasks as part of the Sealed Corridor project (all involve Norfolk Southern Railway, unless otherwise noted):

Projects in Design Phase:

- Four-quadrant gate system with Signal Preemption at Ragsdale Road (Crossing No. 722 354N) in Jamestown.
- Four-quadrant gate system upgrade with Signal Preemption at Orr Road (Crossing No. 715 350U) in Charlotte.
- Four-quadrant gate system with Signal Preemption at Hoskins Street (Crossing No. 722 351T) in High Point.
- Four-quadrant gate system upgrade with Signal Preemption at Driver Street (Crossing No. 630 471D) in Durham.
- Four-quadrant gate system at Holts Chapel Road (Crossing No. 722 956E) in Greensboro.
- Four-quadrant gate system at West Point Avenue (Crossing No. 722 334C) in High Point.
- Four-quadrant gate system at Universal Street (Crossing No. 724 408Y) in Kannapolis.
- Widening of Caldwell Road (Crossing No. 715 332W) and installation of concrete median separators in Harrisburg - Gannett Fleming project in right-of-way acquisition phase.

MAILING ADDRESS:
RAIL DIVISION
ENGINEERING & SAFETY BRANCH
1556 MSC
RALEIGH NC 27699-1556

TELEPHONE: 919-715-8803
FAX: 919-715-8804

WEBSITE: www.bytrain.org

LOCATION:
CAPITAL YARD
862 CAPITAL BOULEVARD
RALEIGH, NC 27603

- A plan review and coordination meeting was held on September 21st pertaining to 75% roadway design plans for Back Creek Church Road (SR 2827) grade crossing improvement project (Crossing No. 715 339U) in Charlotte. Improvements include:
 - Provide dual northbound left turn lanes
 - Widen southbound lane
 - Widen northbound thru/right lanes
 - Installation of a concrete crossing surface
 - Update railroad gates, flashers on both sides of track
 - Update railroad cantilevers for northbound traffic
 - Installation of a monolithic concrete island with tubes
 - Asphalt shoulders within the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) right of way.
 - Sidewalks and curb & gutter outside of NCR right of way.
 - Revise traffic signal at NC 49 (University City Blvd.) and Pavilion Blvd./Back Creek Church Road (SR 2827) by Charlotte DOT.

Gannett Fleming will incorporate comments received and provide 90% roadway design plans to all stakeholders. Upon receipt of 90% roadway design plans, the NCDOT Rail Division Project Engineer will request right of way funds. Project is estimated at \$935,000. In August, the NCDOT Rail Division requested revised average daily traffic counts at Back Creek Church Road (SR 2827). Original traffic counts, taken on (8-10-05), were obtained while the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools were NOT in session.

- On August 16th, NCDOT Rail Division provided comments to Gannett Fleming on the preliminary plans for improvements at the McLean Road crossing (Crossing No. 715 343J) in Charlotte. NCDOT Rail Division is awaiting submittal of revised plans.
- Newell-Hickory Grove Road safety improvements (Crossing #715 348T) in Charlotte - Gannett Fleming submitted preliminary plans to NCDOT Rail-Division and is waiting for approval by NCR before proceeding to final plan preparation.

□ **Anticipated Crossing Closures:**

- On September 28th, NCDOT Rail Division provided a notice to proceed to Gannett Fleming for preparation of plans to allow for construction of a “hammerhead” type turnaround south of the existing Rocky River Road (SR 2828) crossing (Crossing No. 715 346E) in Charlotte. This improvement will facilitate the permanent closure of this crossing.
- Upon completion of the Guilford College Road project (State TIP No. U-2913A), near Jamestown, the SR 1550 (Stanford Road) at-grade crossing (Crossing No. 722 357J) will be permanently closed. The permanent crossing closure is anticipated by April 2006.
- Gannett Fleming is working on roadway design plans for improvements to Sugar Creek Road at N. Davidson Street, which will accommodate a left-turn lane onto Davidson and installation of a traffic signal. Widening of Davidson Street to provide for a dual left-turn lane and a right turn lane onto Sugar Creek Road is also planned. These improvements will facilitate the permanent at-grade crossing closure of Craighead Road (Crossing No. 715 355D) in Charlotte. As part of this crossing closure, the City of Charlotte will realign Davidson Street and provide a cul-de-sac where Craighead Road will terminate. On August 16th, NCDOT Rail Division provided comments to Gannett Fleming on the preliminary plans. NCDOT Rail Division is awaiting submittal of revised plans.

- The High Point TSS is currently in negotiations for the design contract. We anticipate Notice to Proceed with design by mid-November.
 - Ralph Whitehead & Associates submitted to NCDOT Rail Division a Draft Traffic Analysis Report in the area of the Powell Drive (SR 1342) crossing (Crossing No. 630 650U) in west Raleigh for review and comment. Upon completion of a final Traffic Analysis Report, the NCDOT Rail Division will begin the process for a permanent closure, per the *NCDOT State Maintained Road/Railroad Crossing Closure Procedures*.
 - The public hearing for Reedy Creek Road will take place this winter.
 - A meeting with NCDOT (Division of Highways and Rail Division), Triangle Transit Authority and North Carolina Railroad Company will be scheduled in the fourth quarter to discuss options for a permanent crossing closure at Church Street (SR 1980) (Crossing No. 734 748M) in Durham.
- **Private Crossing Safety Initiative (PCSI):**
- An agreement between the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Thomas & Howard Company is an agenda item for consideration by the North Carolina Board of Transportation at their October meeting. Thomas & Howard Company will be responsible for preliminary engineering, donation of necessary right-of-way, contract administration and construction for an alternative access road to Maxfield Road (SR 3025), near Greensboro. This improvement will facilitate the nearby permanent at-grade crossing closure of the Thomas & Howard private crossing (Crossing No. 722 963P).
- **PCSI - Crossing Closures**
- The Smith Street crossing (Crossing No. 722 989S) was permanently closed by NCDOT forces on (8/8/05).
 - The Hoover Street crossing (Crossing No. 722 321B) in Thomasville was permanently closed by NCDOT forces on (8/15/05).
 - The Peace Street grade separation was opened to motorists in early August. The bridge replaced the former at-grade crossing at Peace Street (Crossing No. 722 319A). The final cost for this bridge was \$3,015,481.
 - A Local Officials Meeting and Citizens Informational Workshop was held on July 18th for the proposed extension of Central Avenue in the Town of Landis. The existing Central Avenue crossing (Crossing No. 724 391X) is significantly “humped” and crosses the tracks at a severe angle. The new crossing would cross perpendicular and eliminate the “humped” condition. A completed Categorical Exclusion (CE) environmental document is anticipated by the fourth quarter. This project will facilitate a permanent crossing closure of the above reference Central Avenue crossing.
 - A public workshop was held for discussing closure of Ethel Lane (Crossing No. 724 377C) and Juke Box Road (Crossing No. 724 378J). Gannett Fleming provided two plans to provide alternate access for property owners affected by the proposed closures. A third alternative was suggested and supported by the majority of the property owners present, therefore Gannett Fleming will develop preliminary plans reflecting this concept.
 - NCDOT will investigate the feasibility of constructing an alternative access and closing the driveway for Recreational Ventures, Inc. (Crossing No. 630 652H).

- NCDOT will investigate the feasibility of constructing an alternative access and closing the driveway for the Gladys Doster residence (Crossing No. 715 329N).
- Rail Safety Consultants will be assigned the task of finding alternate access and closing the PSNC Gas Co. (Crossing No. 630 660A) driveway.
- Rail Safety Consultants will be assigned the task of investigating the feasibility of closing the crossing near Rocky Ridge (NS-access, MP-358.1).

- **PCSI - Special Signage & Crossbucks**
 - Norfolk Southern has installed all the "STOP/PVA" sign packages at the 28 private crossings along the Sealed Corridor. NCDOT will not participate in the cost of this particular work.

- **PCSI - Gates & Locks**
 - Master agreements with NCRR to cover installation and maintenance of locked/gated locations are being drafted.

- **Rail View:**
 - NCDOT is working to obtain speed indication from the system.

Jason Field will be handling the Sealed Corridor in the future. If there are any questions, he may be contacted at (919) 733-5587 or jfield@dot.state.nc.us.

cc: David D. King, NCDOT
Patrick B. Simmons, NCDOT
Paul C. Worley, CPM, NCDOT
Michael Shumsky, PE, NCDOT
Dorene Creech, NCDOT
Ellen Holding, NCDOT
Max Tate, FHWA
Tom Drake, FRA
Bill Barringer, NS
Adam Mastrangelo, NS
Rick Ray, NS
Shelby Stevenson, CSXT

(Note to Dorene Creech: Please submit a copy of this progress report to Mr. Smailes with the appropriate financial reports as soon as possible)

(Note to Ellen Holding: Please include this report on the Sealed Corridor web site)