

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Over the past year, the City along with their consultant, URS Corporation, has received numerous questions and concerns from citizens. All of these concerns are considered seriously and fairly evaluated as to their effect on the following key elements for consistency with project planning goals:

- Function of the Roadway Facility
- Level of Safety of the Roadway Facility
- Impacts to Neighborhood and Community Access
- Adherence to Accepted the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Design Standards and Guidelines
- Cost and Budget Constraints

To date, several recurring questions and concerns have been raised addressing key aspects of the project. These questions have been taken into record and answers summarized here along with a brief description of how the project will be able to address or mitigate some of the impacts.

**WHAT IS THE PROPOSED PROJECT?** The City of Raleigh plans to improve existing Falls of Neuse Road by widening the facility to a multi-lane roadway beginning just south of Raven Ridge Road and continuing on existing alignment to approximately Lowery Farms Road then traversing on new location northeast across the Neuse River to connect to New Falls of Neuse Road in Wakefield.

**WHAT ARE THE GOALS THE CITY HAS FOR THE PROJECT?** This project serves as an important investment in servicing citizens who live and travel in the northern part of the City and unincorporated areas of Wake County. As early as the 1960s, local leaders recognized the existing road network, including existing crossings of the Neuse River, would not support traffic volumes associated with future large-scale residential and mixed-use developments. The proposed project will improve north-south connectivity and local and regional access on project study area roadways in North Raleigh and northern Wake County. The project will also increase traffic capacity on congested roadway segments.

**WHY ARE MEDIANS REQUIRED ALONG THE PROJECT CORRIDOR?** Medians are being proposed as a part of this project to control multiple access points along the improvement length and eliminate potential conflict points due to turning traffic crossing through traffic on a multi-lane roadway such as Falls of Neuse Road. A recent three year study of accident data from the NCDOT has shown that multi-lane divided facilities operate safer than traditional multi-lane open sections without medians (93% reduction in fatal accidents and a 71% drop in non-fatal injury accidents). <sup>(1)</sup>

**HOW CAN IT BE SAFER AND FASTER TO TURN RIGHT OUT OF A SIDE STREET, HEAD THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION THEN PERFORM A U-TURN THAN TO JUST TURN LEFT?** When turning right out of a side street onto a major multi-lane divided roadway, the driver is only forced to identify an acceptable gap in one direction of traffic, accelerate up to speed, and merge over into a protected U-turn lane. Then the driver must execute either a signal controlled U-turn or wait for an appropriate gap in one direction of traffic. In morning and afternoon peak hour traffic, when one direction of traffic is unusually higher than the other, the ability of a driver on a side street to identify a safe acceptable gap in both directions of traffic simultaneously can significantly add delay and may result with the driver making an unsafe maneuver to in order to make the desired maneuver.

**WHY IS THE PROJECT PROPOSING 6 LANES FOR THE FUTURE RATHER THAN 4 LANES?** The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) Triangle Regional Model (TRM) is the accepted traffic forecast tool used by NCDOT in this region to predict traffic volume growth forecasts necessary to plan, design, and construct roadway facilities. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) data currently is showing that Falls of Neuse Road will carry approximately 25,400 cars daily in 2007. That number is predicted to rise to 44,800 by 2035, which is the design year of this project. Falls of Neuse as a four lane roadway (two-lanes in each direction) with a speed limit of 50 mph could accommodate approximately 48,000 cars per day or as a six lane roadway

(three lanes in each direction) could accommodate approximately 73,000 cars per day if no traffic signals existed. This project proposes traffic signals at several locations in addition to the existing signals at Raven Ridge and Wakefield Pines Drive, which require additional lanes on Falls of Neuse Road in order to prevent significant driver delay.

**HOW CAN TRAFFIC INCREASES SUPPORTING THE FUTURE 6-LANE SECTION BE CORRECT SINCE THE WEST SIDE OF THE ROAD IS IN FALLS LAKE WATERSHED AND CANNOT BE FURTHER DEVELOPED AND THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD IS MOSTLY BUILT OUT?** The watershed side of Falls of Neuse Road can only be developed and subdivided for prescribed uses based on minimum lot sizes, so it is true that not much additional residential development can occur on that side of the facility. The east side of the project along the corridor is substantially built out now. However, the traffic growth projected by the TRM is being generated from farther up Falls of Neuse Road in the Highway 98 area and Wake Forest area. A tremendous amount of development is occurring and is predicted to continue the growth trends in this area of the county.

**WHY ARE THERE SOME INTERSECTIONS THAT DO NOT ALLOW LEFT TURNS OUT ONTO FALLS OF NEUSE ROAD?** Controlling access via left turns to the major roadway is an effective measure to increase the safety of the roadway facility and reduce accidents. By eliminating or reducing the amount of uncontrolled full movement intersections onto a multi-lane roadway facility the overall corridor safety is improved. NCDOT's Median Crossover Guidelines (effective 1/1/2004) calls for a minimum of 1,200 feet between median openings on divided roadway facilities with posted speeds of 45 miles per hour and less. This guidance was used to establish the medians openings as shown on Alternatives 1-4. With the existing signalized full movement intersection at Raven Ridge and the existing signalized full movement intersection at Dunn Road, only an intersection somewhere in the mid-point of this segment of the project met the criteria to provide a median opening. October Road falls approximately in the mid-point of this section. The proposed intersection between Old Falls of Neuse Road and New Falls of Neuse Road requires signalization due to the volume of turning traffic, an appropriate intersection somewhere in the mid point of that section was selected to provide a median opening. The intersection of Tabriz Pointe and Lake Villa Way was determined to meet this criteria.

**WHY ARE THERE NOT SIGNALS AT MORE SIDE STREETS CONNECTING TO FALLS OF NEUSE ROAD?** When determining whether an intersection should be controlled by a traffic signal, engineers compare the location's conditions to national guidelines. These guidelines, called "Warrants", have been established by studying intersections throughout the country. NCDOT and all municipalities utilize these guidelines to determine if there is justification for the installation of a new traffic signal. The placement of a traffic signal at a location where it is not warranted often results in an increase in minor accidents and potentially some level of traffic movement violations in disregard of the new signal.

**FALLS OF NEUSE ROAD IS AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A NEIGHBORHOOD STREET. SPEED LIMIT SHOULD BE REDUCED TO 35 MPH.** Falls of Neuse Road is part of NCDOT's secondary road system (SR 2000) and as such has been designated as a Major Thoroughfare since the 1960's. In 1986, an update of the Greater Raleigh Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan (now referred to as CAMPO Transportation Plan) designated Falls of Neuse Road as a Major Thoroughfare. In the current Thoroughfare plan, Falls of Neuse Road is designated as a secondary arterial facility. Current City planning guidelines call for all arterial facilities to be 6-Lane sections on 120-foot of right of way with a design speed of 50 mph.

**FALLS OF NEUSE ROAD SHOULD NOT CARRY TRUCK TRAFFIC.** Falls of Neuse Road is part of NCDOT's secondary road system (SR 2000) and has been designated as a local truck route since the 1960's. Local truck route restrictions only require that the truck traffic originate or terminate in the City and not be used as a through route.

**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL OCCUR AT DUNN ROAD.** The parcels in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Dunn Road and Falls of Neuse Road are currently zoned for commercial uses. Future commercial development at this location along Dunn Road was accounted for in the master plan for Bedford and Falls River communities. The current median opening along Dunn Road will provide two way ingress and egress from the commercial property. Other access points will be limited to right-in/right-out type access.