

Garden Parkway

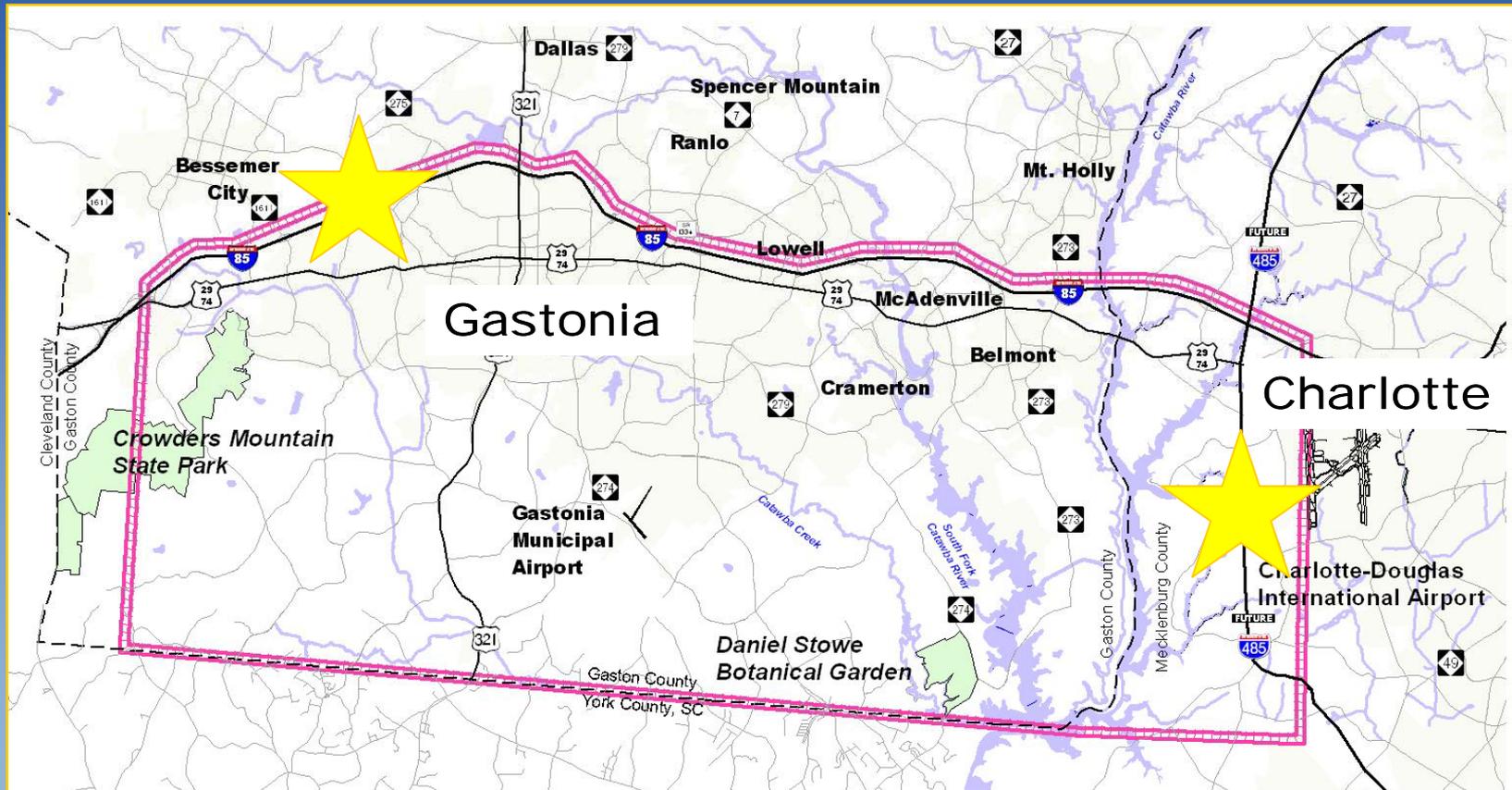
*Gaston County and Municipal Planners
May 27, 2008*

STIP Project # U-3321

Agenda

1. Project Description
2. Study History
3. Project Purpose & Need
4. What is an Environmental Impact Statement?
5. Project Timeline
6. Project Detailed Study Alternatives
7. Recent Accomplishments/Next Steps
8. Operations

Project Description



The Gaston East-West Connector is proposed to be a new toll road connecting I-85 west of Gastonia to I-485 near the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport.

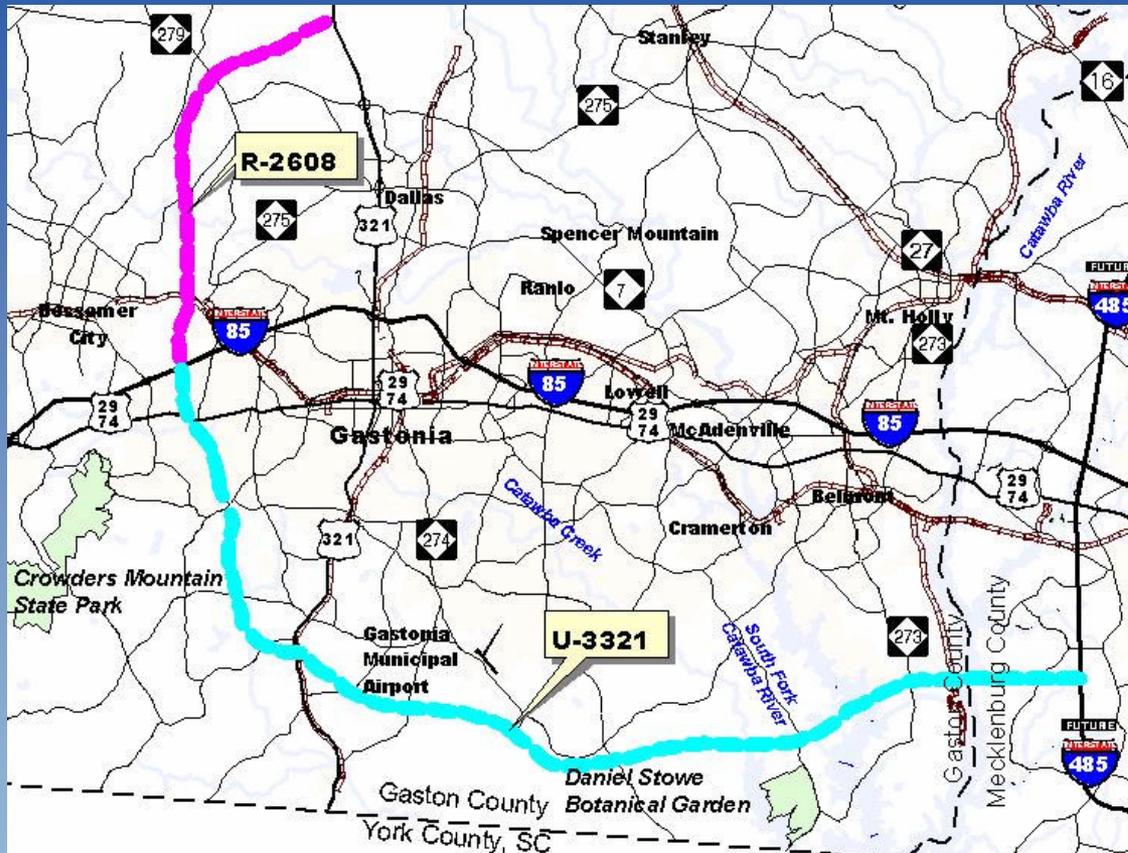
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STUDY HISTORY

- ◆ **Early 1990s – Need for a new road identified by local officials and named the Garden Parkway**
- ◆ **2001 – NC Dept. of Transportation began studies for the Gaston East-West Connector (a part of the Garden Parkway)**
- ◆ **2006 – SB 1381 – Named the Authority's five approved projects (including Gaston East-West Connector)**
- ◆ **Gaston East-West Connector adopted by the NC Turnpike Authority as a potential toll road**

The 2 Parts of the Garden Parkway:

- U-3321 – Gaston East-West Connector
- R-2608 – US 321 Bypass



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Lack of Connections Between Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties



*Few continuous
east-west roadways
in southern Gaston
County*

*No
crossings
south of
US 29/74 in
North
Carolina*



Congestion and
Traffic Flow on
I-85 and US
29/74 Expected
to Get Worse
Through 2030



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*National
Environmental
Policy Act
(NEPA)*



Environmental Impact Studies

- ◆ Range of Reasonable Alternatives
- ◆ Adverse and Beneficial Impacts
- ◆ Citizen and Agency Participation
- ◆ Required by law and prepared by NC Turnpike Authority, NC Dept of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration to help make sound project decisions

Coordination with GUAMPO

- ◆ **Extend Hudson Boulevard to Linwood Road at Gaston E-W Connector**
 - Provides a better overall design
 - Hudson Boulevard extension is in LRTP
 - Reduced impacts to Linwood Springs Golf Course and Lakewood Forest Neighborhood



Environmental Study Process Steps

- ◆ Verify Purpose and Need
- ◆ Determine Detailed Study Alternatives
- ◆ Perform Detailed Studies
- ◆ Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- ◆ Conduct a Public Hearing
- ◆ NCTA and FHWA Select an Alternative
- ◆ Prepare and Distribute the Final Environmental Impact Statement
- ◆ Prepare a Record of Decision

Citizen and Agency Coordination Occurs Throughout Process

Detailed Studies - Examples



- ◆ Wetlands and Streams
- ◆ Water Quality
- ◆ Endangered Species
- ◆ Floodplains and Floodways



- ◆ Historic and Archaeological Resources
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Community Resources
- ◆ Relocations
- ◆ Air Quality
- ◆ Hazardous Materials
- ◆ Farmlands



Natural Resources Field Visit

- ◆ 13 attendees participated in the two-day trip in December 2007
- ◆ Sites visited include: wetlands, streams, and a natural granite outcrop
- ◆ Agencies comfortable with NCTA's conclusions



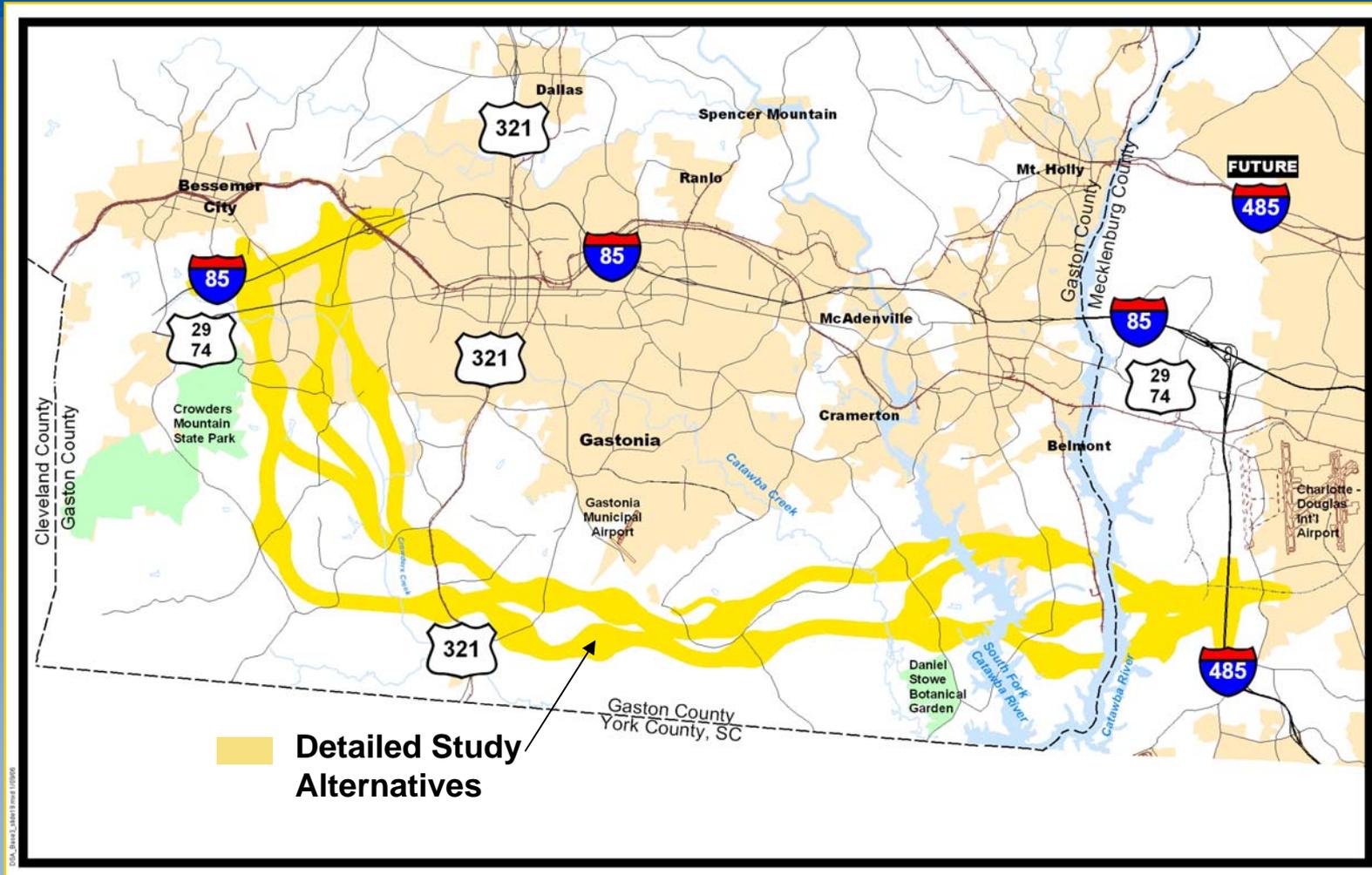
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Project Timeline

Financial Feasibility Study for Tolls	October 2006
Citizens Informational Workshops	July/August 2008
Draft Environmental Impact Statement	January 2009
Public Hearing	February/March 2009
Select Preferred Alternative	July 2009
Final Environmental Impact Statement	May 2010
Record of Decision	October 2010
Award Construction Contract*	December 2010
Project Open to Traffic*	December 2015

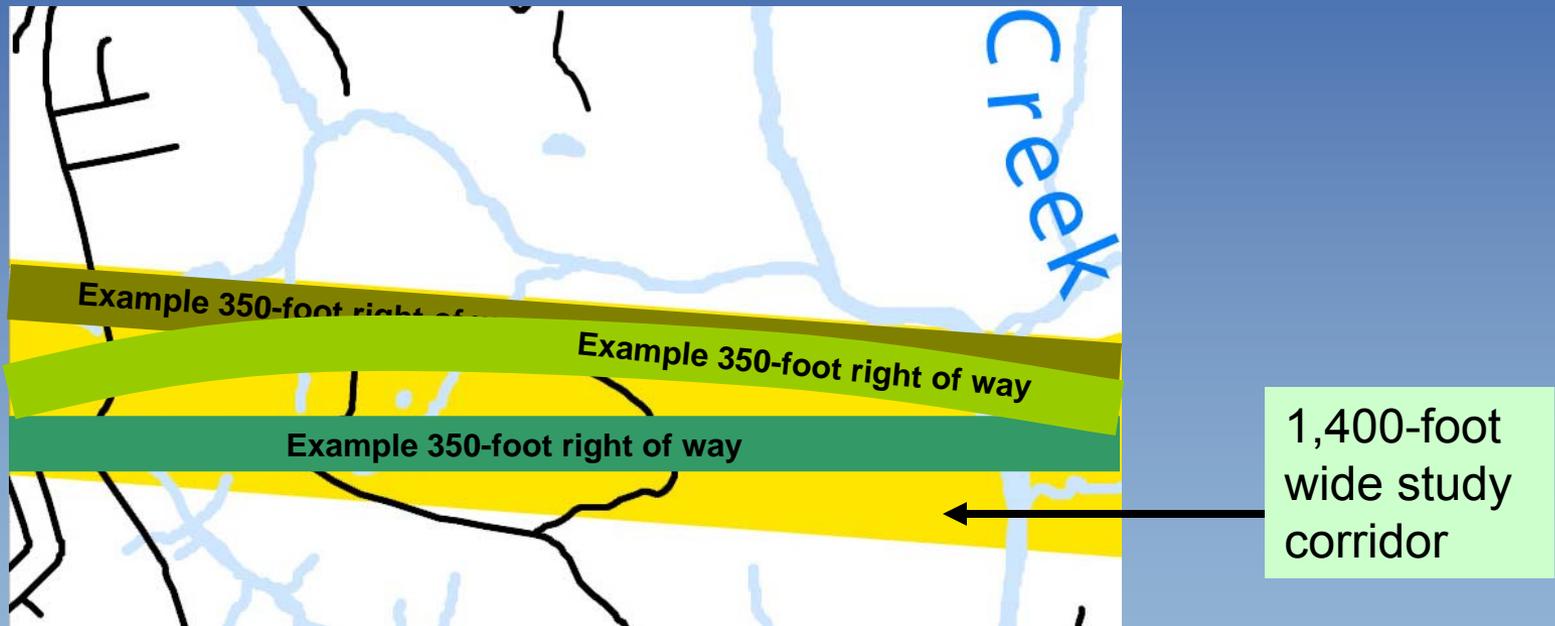
* Schedule subject to availability of funding

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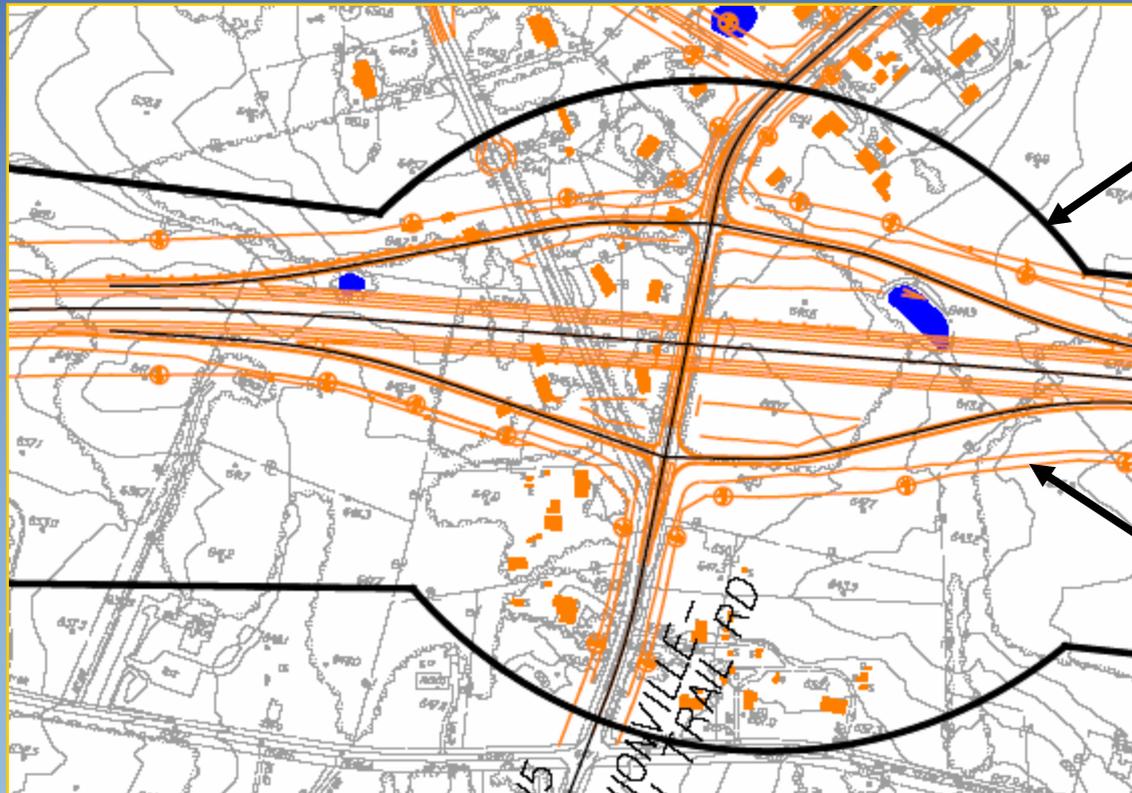
The 16 Detailed Study Alternatives are shown as 1,400-foot wide corridors

Example Highway Rights of Way Inside 1,400-foot Wide Study Corridor



**Right of Way for the highway will average 350 feet wide
(except at interchanges)**

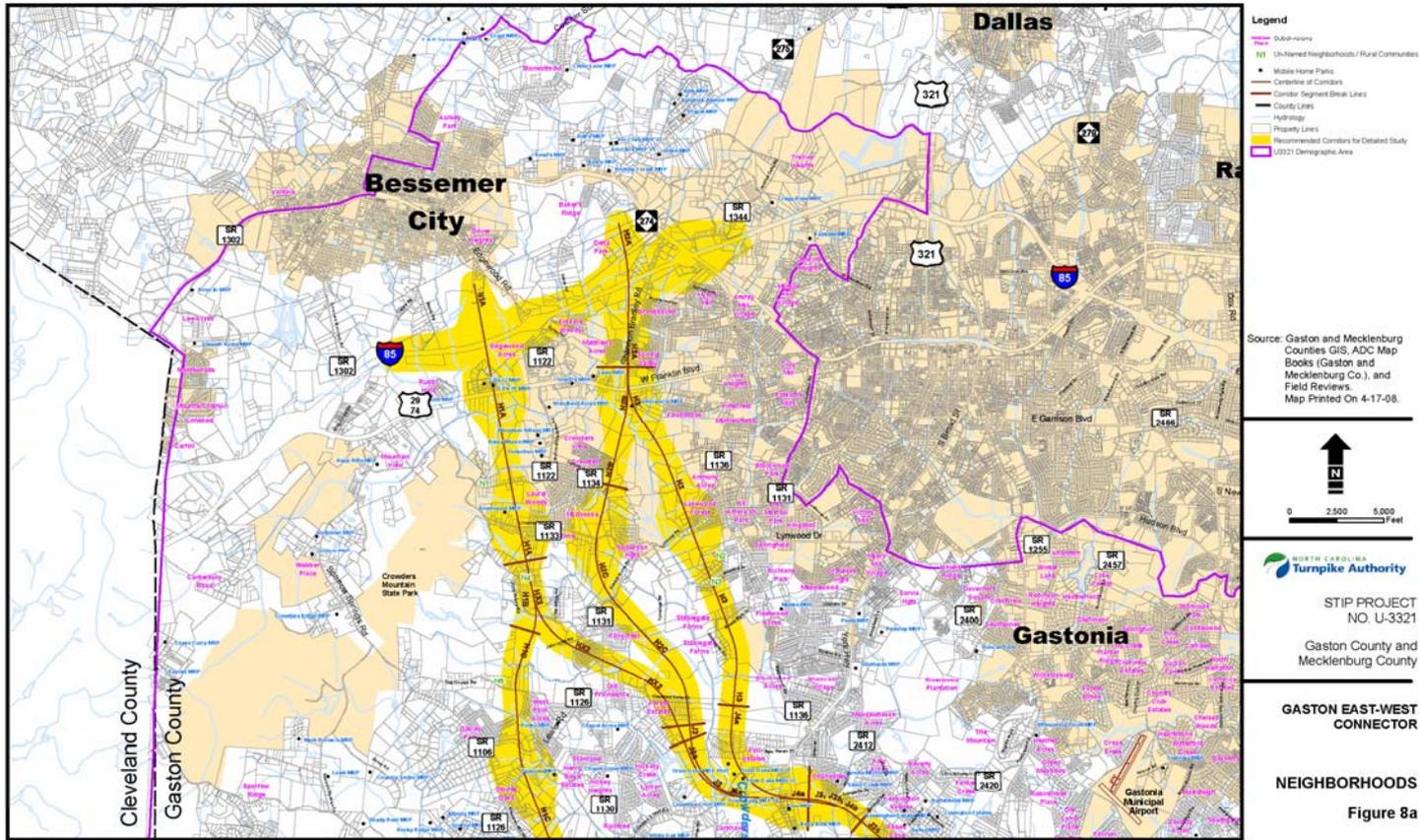
Example Engineering Design



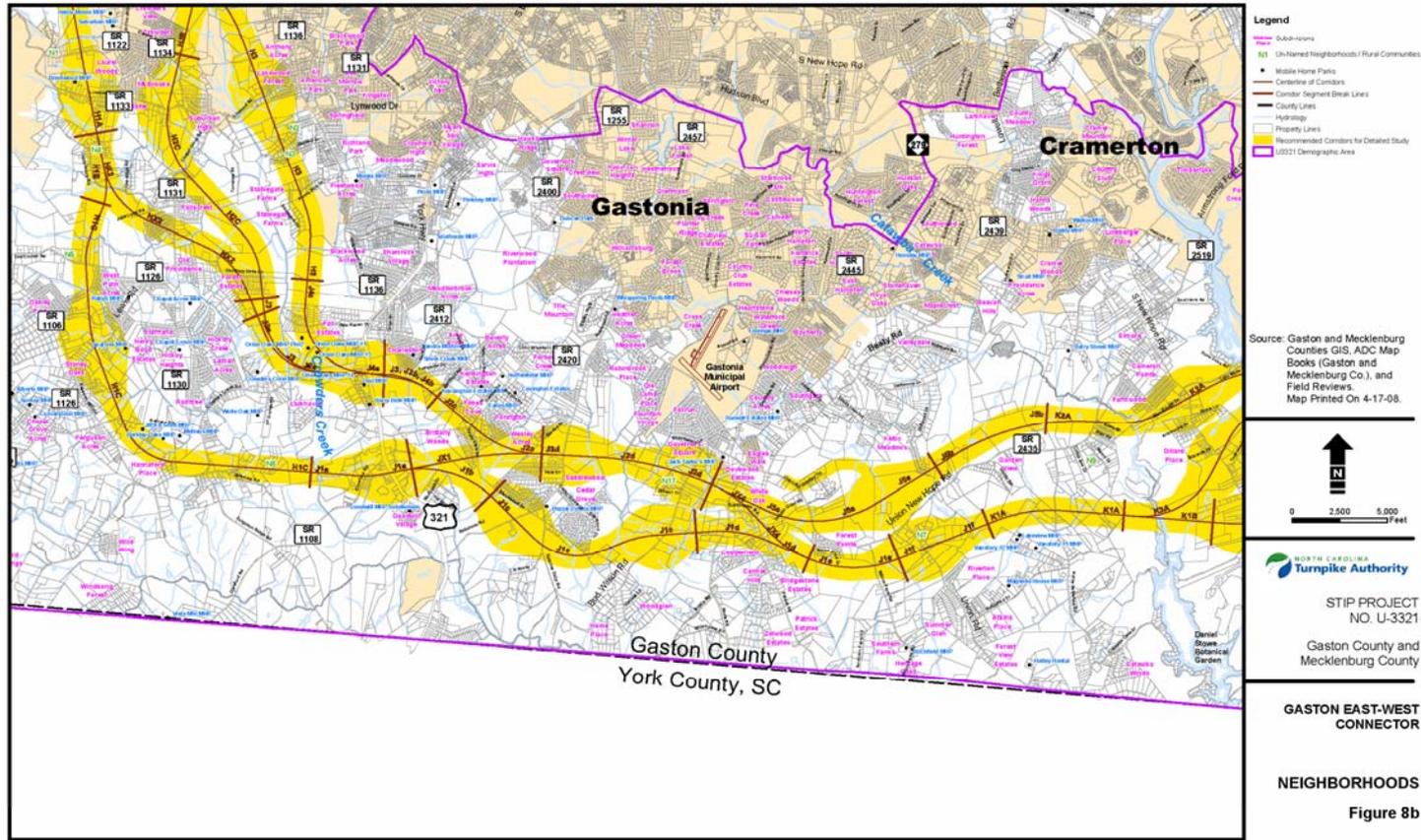
Study
Corridor
Boundary

Right of
Way for
Highway

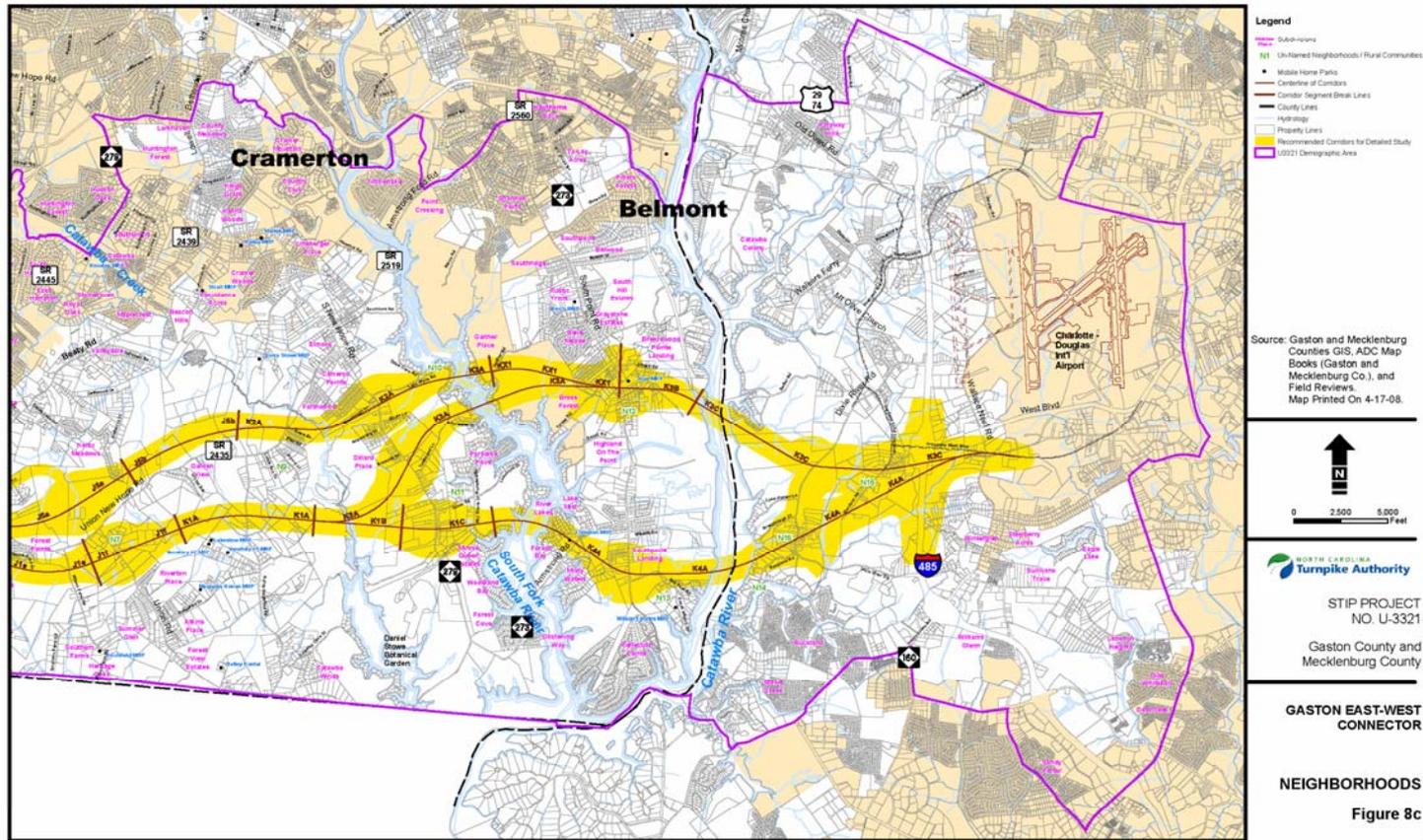
Western Portions of Study Area



Central Portions of Study Area



Eastern Portions of Study Area



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Recent Accomplishments

- Traffic Forecasting and Analysis
- Preliminary Designs & Hydraulic Studies
- Concurrence Point 2a (Bridging Decisions)
- Natural Resources Technical Memorandum
- Phase II Historic Resources Report

Next Steps

- Air and Noise Studies
- Community Impact Analysis
- Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- Citizens Informational Workshops (July/August 2008)
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (January 2009)

Continued Public Input

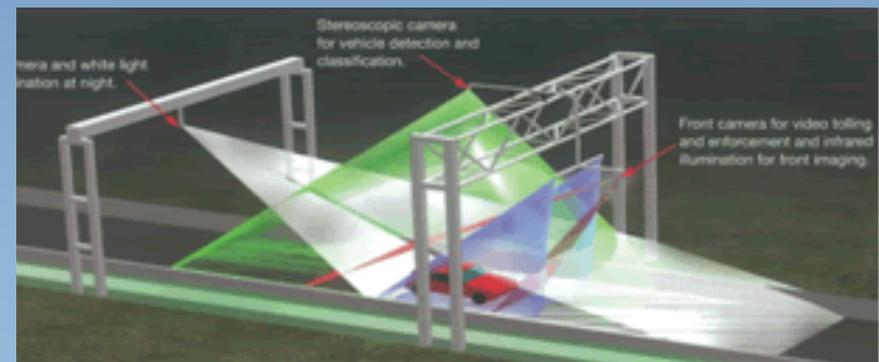
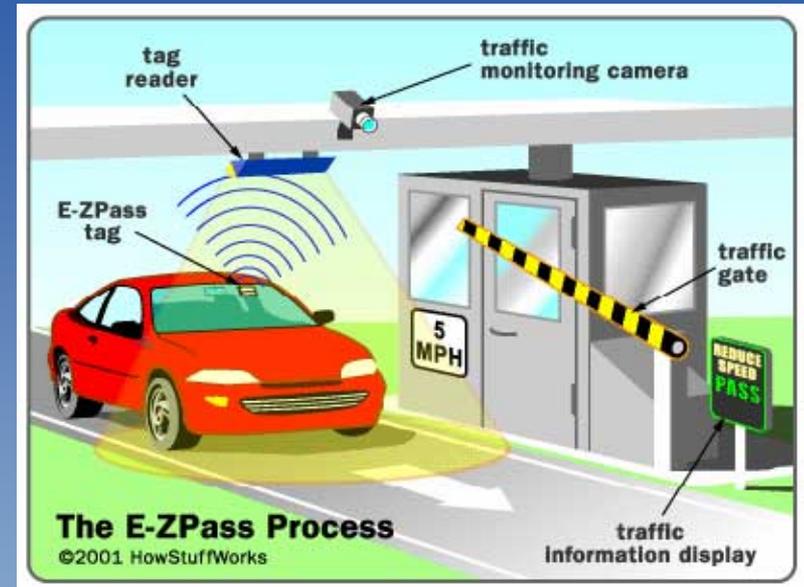
- Comments/Questions accepted at any time
- CRAFT Participation (August 2007)
- Community Meeting with Garrison Road Neighborhood (November 2007)
- Public Comment on DEIS (Spring 2009)
- Combined Corridor/Design Public Hearing / Workshops (Spring 2009)

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Operations

- ◆ Operations
 - Toll Technology Selection
 - Tags & Readers
 - E-Z Pass
 - Video Tolling
 - Equipment Maintenance

- Roadway Operations
- Roadway Maintenance
- Towing Services
- EMS – Fire/Rescue/Police



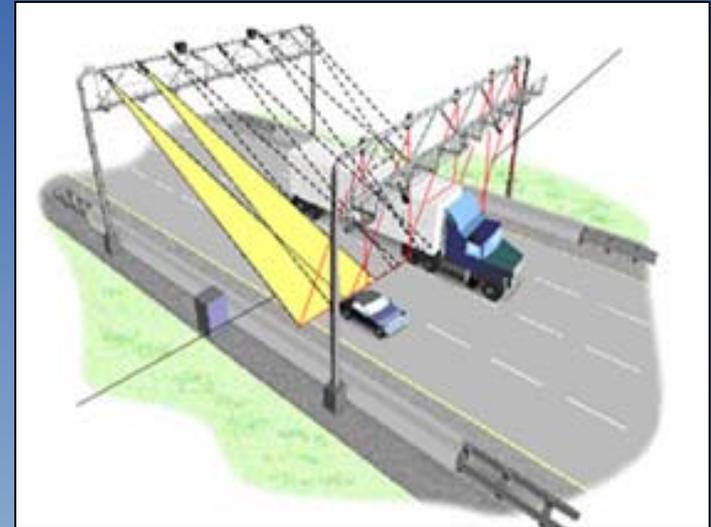
Tolling System

- Need consistent system throughout state
- Must keep traffic moving ALWAYS
- System should work for all customers
- Multiple payment options encourage usage
- System must be cost effective
- System must be acceptable to rating agencies

Important Advances in Toll Technology

No Stopping to Pay Tolls

- ◆ Cameras
- ◆ Transponders
- ◆ On-line registration



*NOT your Grandfather's
Turnpike*

The North Carolina Toll Road Experience



NORTH CAROLINA

Turnpike Authority

Questions?



Contact Information

Project Website: www.ncturnpike.org

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Project Hotline: 1-800-475-6402