

Recommendations for Widening of Sweeten Creek Road Project #U-2801A

Submitted by the Sweeten Creek Association of Neighborhoods (SCAN)

As the residential areas that will be most affected by the widening of Sweeten Creek Road, the Sweeten Creek Association of Neighborhoods (SCAN) intends to actively participate in the planning process and serve as a sounding board for various design options. SCAN currently includes about 900 households in seven Sweeten Creek Road neighborhoods – Cimarron, Hollybrook, Ballantree, Park Avenue, The Views of Asheville, Givens Estates, and Windsor Park. This document summarizes our recommendations for increasing road safety and accessibility while, at the same time, minimizing the impact on homeowners' properties and the natural environment. SCAN recommends that the NCDOT:

- Plan for a five-lane road that includes two through lanes in each direction, a center turn lane, and appropriate drainage features. Install raised medians with greenery where turn lanes are not needed.
- Assess the feasibility of building a paved multi-use path on the west side of Sweeten Creek Road that is wide enough to serve pedestrians and bicyclists. Build sidewalks on the east side of Sweeten Creek Road only where needed to connect neighborhoods and/or safely accommodate bus stops.

Rationale: Currently, the south Sweeten Creek Road corridor has no bus routes or sidewalks, forcing residents to use their cars to access nearby commercial amenities on Hendersonville Road. Even experienced bicyclists are hesitant to ride on the road due to the heavy traffic and the lack of a shoulder.

- Adjust road alignment as necessary to maximize opportunities for multi-modal transportation while minimizing the impact on homeowners' properties. Currently, most residential neighborhoods are located on the east side of south Sweeten Creek Road. The west side of south Sweeten Creek Road largely consists of vacant land and some defunct commercial properties. To maintain the residential character of our corridor, we urge the NCDOT to use *nonresidential* areas for property acquisition.
- Consider burying power lines to minimize the negative impact of utility easements and reduce vulnerability to power outages.
- Maintain the traffic light in front of Givens Estates. Add traffic lights and marked crosswalks in front of other neighborhoods, where appropriate, to facilitate left turns and help pedestrians and bicyclists safely cross the road. School buses should be able to safely make left turns out of our neighborhoods. Time the traffic lights to minimize congestion.

- Plant trees and shrubs along the road to reduce noise pollution from trucks, buses, and emergency vehicles. Preserve existing natural barriers to the extent practicable. In areas where homes are close to the widened road, assess options for barrier walls that are effective and visually attractive.
- Consider building a *new* Y road to connect Sweeten Creek Road and Hendersonville Road. Locate this new road between Rock Hill Road and Gerber Road to reduce traffic congestion and provide an additional exit route when natural or manmade disasters make Sweeten Creek Road impassable.

**Developed by a SCAN Committee
(with input from residents of each neighborhood)**

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