

Widening of U.S. 158 makes state list

By Wesley Young

JOURNAL REPORTER

Thursday, April 28, 2005

WALKERTOWN

State highway planners are considering a project to widen U.S. 158 from Winston-Salem to an intersection just east of Walkertown.

The state's proposed Transportation Improvement Program for 2006-2012 calls for U.S. 158 to be widened to a four-lane divided highway. Construction would start in 2012 for the section between Old Greensboro Road in eastern Winston-Salem and Belews Creek Road east of Walkertown. When it is completed, the road would have limited access, but it wouldn't be a freeway, said Pat Ivy, a division engineer for the N.C. Department of Transportation.

"It will be partial control," Ivey said. "We have a lot of residences and things like that, so we will not be controlling it fully, but at intersections and things like that we will have some control (on access)," Ivey said. "It will be similar in scope to Silas Creek Parkway."

The widening project is appearing finally on the state's list of scheduled work projects. The previous Transportation Improvement Program had scheduled only the purchase of right-of-way for the project in 2010. The planning document is revised every two years, and the latest proposal is the first to reach as far as 2012.

Plans call for U.S. 158 to be widened to four lanes to the intersection with U.S. 220 in Guilford County, Ivey said. The section of the road east of the Belews Creek Road intersection is rural enough for even more limited access, Ivey said. The project would include a bypass of Stokesdale. Ivey said that the section between Winston-Salem and Belews Creek Road will cost \$32 million. The section from Belews Creek Road to U.S. 220 will cost \$105 million.

Much development has occurred along U.S. 158 in Walkertown since the completion in 2003 of a town sewer system. The Walkertown Commons shopping center and several new housing developments still are adding stores and houses near the highway.

Walkertown Mayor Doc Davis said that it was difficult for him to get excited about the road-widening project. He said that many legislative sessions will be held before a four-lane road is built through Walkertown. "We would welcome the improvements to the road for sure," Davis said. "But who knows when the money will come? The money from Raleigh determines what can be done and what can't. We tend to get a little less excited on the local level."

• Wesley Young can be reached at 727-7381 or at wyoung@wsjournal.com **This story can be found at:**

http://www.journalnow.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WSJ%2FMGArticle%2FWSJ_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031782389198&path=%21localnews&s=1037645509099

