

Tuesday, May 1, 2007
Highway bypass up for approval

By Taft Wireback
News & Record- Greensboro, NC

North Carolina transportation officials are poised to approve the last segment of the U.S. 311 Bypass through Guilford County, the future Interstate 74.

The \$104 million project is among six highway building proposals the state Board of Transportation is to consider at its Thursday meeting in Raleigh.

The new section of highway will go 6.2 miles from Business 85 to just north of Spencer Road, east of Archdale .

Eventually, the new road will give High Point a second interstate in addition to Interstate 85 and become the Triad's fourth interstate. The others are Interstate 40 and future Interstate 73.

When complete, the highway will link the region more directly to the Midwest in one direction and Myrtle Beach, S.C., in the other.

"The initial signs going up there will be 'Future I-74,'" said David Hyder, High Point's transportation planning administrator .

It likely will be designated a full-fledged interstate when the next and final leg of the bypass is complete, Hyder said.

The last leg of the bypass will go from Spencer Road to U.S. 220 north of Asheboro. That section of the bypass is scheduled to go out for bids next year, said Christian Brill of the state Department of Transportation .

Highway officials expect the next leg of the bypass to be complete to Spencer Road in about four years, Brill said. Blythe Construction of Charlotte is the apparent low bidder.

I-74 begins in southern Iowa to travel through Peoria, Ill., and Cincinnati on a course ending in Myrtle Beach . It links with I-73 north of Asheboro and follows the route of what is now U.S. 220 into South Carolina .

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