

NCDOT Roadside Reforestation

Growth and Sustainability Committee

August 15, 2022

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Background

- NCDOT/Federal Highway projects allocate a small percentage of funding for roadside aesthetics/landscaping.
- These improvements are normally beautification projects at highway interchanges.



Background

- Projects like this generally require the local jurisdiction to make a request for the roadside improvement.
- If not, many times the money goes unused.
- When implemented, the local jurisdiction is responsible for maintenance.



Background

- NCDOT has also implemented roadside reforestation projects.
- When implemented, these improvements are generally low maintenance on the part of NCDOT.



Proposal

- Focus efforts to engage NCDOT funding for reforestation along NCDOT highway projects in Wake County:
 - I-40 widening from southeast Raleigh to Johnston County line
 - I-440 widening between Cary and Raleigh
 - NC540 Turnpike project in southern Wake County
 - Future NCDOT projects in Wake County
- Build consensus among local jurisdictions to develop a policy on this approach.

Proposal

Consider the following:

- Study that looks for all opportunity areas for reforestation on NCDOT projects.
- Strategy document that shows what could be done with respect for transportation needs, required maintenance and long-term growth.
- Planting, regrowth and soil conditions strategy for each area.
- Cost overview that outlines potential buy-in opportunities for local governments or local organizations to increase plantings.

Purpose / Findings

- To preserve and enhance tree canopy in our public right of ways to reduce the negative impacts.
- Trees clean the air, lower temperatures, and diminish sound transmission.
- Reforestation is different from aesthetic 'landscaping' which is often called for by municipalities and involves ongoing maintenance.
- NCDOT has funds and mechanisms to both preserve and plant more trees in our ROW's.

Status

- The Wake County Planning Board is supportive of this approach.
- The Capital Area MPO Technical Coordinating Committee will draft a policy statement for consideration by the CAMPO Executive Board.
- Continue engaging municipal planners and administrators on development of the policy.
- Engage the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners as needed.
- NCDOT is aware of our local efforts on development of this approach and accompanying policy.

Questions/Discussion



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