



White Paper

Closing Bragg Boulevard and Widening Murchison Road

Force Protection: Fort Bragg officials recommended closing Bragg Boulevard to public access in response to heightened security concerns following September 11, 2001, and this became a priority element of Fort Bragg's Force Protection Plan. The Fort Bragg Garrison presented this need to the Fayetteville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) and requested assistance in closing Bragg Boulevard to public traffic. This request resulted in a North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) highway project to widen Murchison Road, develop new interchanges at access control points and close Bragg Boulevard to public access. Military family housing units, administrative facilities, a commissary and post exchange are located in close proximity to Bragg Boulevard. The BRAC 2005 addition of a four-star U.S. Army Forces Command and a three-star Army Reserve Command (FORSCOM/USARC) headquarters to the installation, scheduled for July 2011 and located less than one mile from the highway, makes this security requirement even more critical.

Considerations: The original project design to widen Murchison Road was based on normal growth and traffic volume; however, the increase in population due to BRAC and other mission growth at Fort Bragg will result in a much higher than expected volume. FAMPO, which is responsible for transportation planning for this area, projects that more than 101,000 vehicles per day will pass through the Town of Spring Lake by 2030. When Bragg Boulevard is closed, Murchison Road will become the main North/South artery. Factoring in the latest traffic counts, NCDOT determined that the interchanges at Randolph Road and Honeycutt Road would fail if designed as at-grade intersections. The additional project cost is a result of adding an interchange at Honeycutt Road and Murchison Road and at Randolph Street and Murchison Road. This project was approved for partial federal funding in the Defense Access Road program.

Scope of Project U-4444: This project is currently being planned and designed by the NCDOT in two phases: Phase I. Widen NC 210 (Murchison Road) to six lanes beginning at the new I-295 Fayetteville Outer Loop interchange and continuing north to include a new interchange at Honeycutt Road. Phase II continues with widening NC 210 from Honeycutt Road Northward to the Town of Spring Lake to the intersection with NC 87 and Hwy 210, and build a new interchange at Randolph Road for an access control point to Fort Bragg.

Projected Cost of Project: Current cost projections by NC DOT include:
Total Construction, Right of Way, and Mitigation Costs: \$83.7 million

The project is divided into two phases:

Phase I construction costs were **\$28.7 million**. This phase is complete.

Funding Sources: FY 2009 Military Construction Act Army Portion = **\$21.8 million**. NCDOT Portion = **\$6.9 million** (includes preliminary engineering, Right of Way, and Construction).

Phase II right of way, mitigation, and construction costs are approximately **\$55 million**. NCDOT's request for federal financial assistance for this project, through the Defense Access Roads (DAR) program, was granted.

Funding Shortfall: The **total project shortfall is \$35 million**. However, the FY-11 President's budget includes \$17 Million for Right of Way Acquisition for Murchison Road and the remaining \$18 Million is in the FY-12 Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)¹. (If there are additional costs beyond NCDOT's request, NCDOT plans to cover them, within reason,)²

Timing: Phase I is under construction with an estimated completion date of June 2012. If Phase II is not fully funded next year, the 3-year project may be delayed beyond the estimated completion date of 2013. FORSCOM/USARC Headquarters will be operational in July 2011. This will result in security issues and severe traffic problems.

Recommendation: Continue to monitor the funding requests and ensure that anticipated funds for Phase II remain on track.

Summary: Failure to fully fund this project will result in Bragg Boulevard remaining open to public traffic. Closing Bragg Boulevard has been identified as a mission critical security issue for the new U.S. Army Forces Command/ U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters and for the base. If this project is delayed for several years, the result will be severe traffic congestion and delays for the region and the base, as well as additional security issues for the base.

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¹ Confirmed by G. Prillaman, Fort Bragg DPW, e-mail message, 04 NOV 2010

² Confirmed by T. Pittman, NCDOT Highway Division 6, personal communication, 24 NOV 2010