

Plea Urged For Williamson Creek Highway

New Route Said Best To The Du Pont Plant

By CAL CARPENTER

At the December 12th meeting of the Brevard Chamber of Commerce, a resolution was taken to endorse construction of a new highway from Brevard to the Du Pont plant by way of the old Williamson Creek Road and across the mountain to Laurel Creek Road.

The Chamber's action called for all directors to write Governor Dan Moore in support of this proposal and to encourage Brevard and Transylvania citizens, who feel the same way, to write the Governor or their State Senator and representative.

This constructive suggestion can best be carried out if every letter writer is in possession of the facts supporting his position — if he has the ammunition, so to speak.

We believe the facts are in favor of the Williamson Creek route rather than a Cascade Lake, Laurel Creek route to the Du Pont plant from Henderson County, proposed by Henderson County officials and citizens. The following paragraphs contain our reasons.

NEED A NEW ROAD

Here are some Du Pont employment figures. These support a case for better access to the Du Pont plant either from Brevard or Hendersonville, or both. The present employment figures are sufficient justification; the continued growth of the plant as indicated by the expected employment in 1968, 1969, and 1970, makes better access mandatory.

Present Plant Employment	660
Supervisory	192
Clerical	53
Wage	411
Present Construction Force	550
Employees From Henderson Co.	40%
Employees From Transylvania Co.	60%
Expected Future Employment	
By 1968	700
By 1969	850
By 1970	1000

PRESENT ROAD USAGE

Here is some information which should be considered in the decision whether to build both roads or one and, if a choice has to be

made, which one is needed most. This information shows the condition and usage of U.S. Highway 276, the present route from Brevard to the plant, and the present condition and usage of the Cascade Lake Road.

Certainly a new Cascade Lake Road would be used more than these figures indicate; but the traffic would not approach the already overburdened use of Highway 276, which will continue at this rate of use and even higher if the Williamson Creek road is not built.

U.S. HIGHWAY NO. 276

Description:
Length (to just south of the Du Pont turnoff) 14 miles
Width 18 feet
Curves Many; sharp and dangerous
Grades Many; steep
Construction Old (1925-31), not banked
Serviceability Impassable in high water

Kinds of Traffic:

Du Pont Employees
Du Pont Construction Force
Interstate Trucks (to and from Du Pont—30 to 40 per day)
Tourists—from South Carolina to the Pisgah National Forest and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Through Traffic—From Southeast to the Mid-West

Traffic Count:
Outside City Limits of Brevard 4,000 daily
At a point seven miles south of Brevard 900 daily
At Cedar Mountain (just south of Du Pont turnoff) 650 daily

CASCADE LAKE ROAD

Description:
Length (south from Crab Creek to Du Pont) 5 miles
Width 16 feet
Curves Many; sharp and dangerous, unbanked
Grades Moderate
Construction Gravel—unimproved
Serviceability Normal for mountain, unimproved road.

Kinds of Traffic:

Mostly serves Cascade Lake development and Du Pont
At north end (between Crab Creek Rd. and Cascade Lake development) 85 daily
At south end (just north of entrance to Du Pont) 55 daily

BOTH ROADS NEEDED

If it were possible to build both roads,

this would be the best solution for good access to the Du Pont plant. The Cascade Lake road is needed and would provide easy access for employees from Henderson County.

This road is very poor and certainly needs improvement, as do many unimproved roads in many counties in North Carolina. It would be a shorter piece of road construction, either as it runs now or over a new, straighter route that eventually might become necessary if the TVA plans for that area materialize and flood the present road.

But the Williamson Creek road would serve a larger percentage of Du Pont employees. It would relieve most of the congestion presently encountered on U.S. 276 south of Brevard. It would reduce the distance to the Du Pont plant from Brevard from the present 14 miles plus to 6 miles plus. It would benefit both Transylvania and Henderson county employees at Du Pont by shortening the driving distances from either Hendersonville or Brevard. Admittedly, the Brevard employees' route would be shortened much more, but the Cascade Lake route would benefit only the Henderson county employees by shortening their driving distance drastically while helping the Transylvania employee none at all.

The proposed Williamson Creek route would leave U.S. Highway 276 near the Brevard city limits, follow Elm Bend road (which is already selected for improvement and a new bridge over the French Broad river to raise it above the high water level), and cross the Wilson Bridge road roughly one mile north of U.S. 276. From there it would continue northeast, generally follow the old Williamson Creek road, cross the mountain through one of two low gaps, and then on northeast to the Du Pont plant. Henderson county employees could save considerable driving distance by leaving U.S. 64 and going through Pisgah Forest to the Wilson Bridge road intersection instead of driving into Brevard to connect with U.S. 276.

IN THE APPALACHIA PROGRAM

A check with our State Highway Commission District Commissioner, W. Curtis Russ, discloses that although preliminary aerial surveys have been made, prospects for immediate construction of either the Williamson Creek or Cascade Lake roads are not too good. Fund curtailment by both state and federal agencies has forced both roads out of normal construction consideration. There is only one other source of funds for either project or both: the Appalachia Program.

The aerial surveys and proposals have been turned over to the Appalachia Program. A study



Beautiful New Bridge Across Railway Near Lake Sega

group will make a study of need, possible construction difficulties, TVA plans, and costs. They will then decide whether to recommend one, both, or neither of the projects. If a recommendation is made to go ahead, and if money is available, the Appalachia Program will provide the funds and the State Highway Commission will be in charge of the work.

But the prospect is pretty dim here also. The Federal Government has frozen the Appalachia Program funds and just when money will

again be available is not known.

CITIZENS ENCOURAGED TO WRITE

The procedure encouraged by the Brevard Chamber of Commerce, that of writing Governor Moore and/or our State Senator and State Representative, is a sound one. The Appalachia Program includes 13 states; the Governor of each state is the State Chairman for the Program. If Transylvania citizens are concerned enough to make the need for this new road known at the state capital, the chances of it being done as soon as money becomes available, will be greatly increased.

Directors of the Brevard Chamber of Commerce

have adopted a resolution urging the construction of the new highway via Williamson Creek to the Du Pont plant. It is carried elsewhere in this issue of The Times.

Summary Made Of Highway Work In County

Future Projects Are Also Cited By Commissioner

By STAFF WRITER

We sometimes hear the complaint that Transylvania County gets short changed on state highway funds. We hear that little of our tax money is being spent on our roads; that highway and road funds are allocated so as to penalize low population, but property rich counties such as ours to the benefit of higher population counties with, perhaps, less property value. These complaints are in error.

Let's look at the facts . . .

It is a fact that a very large amount of state highway money has been spent in Transylvania County—more in the last few years than ever before. Here are some figures provided by the State Highway Commissioner's Office for this District.

These are not guesses; they are from the State Auditor's vouchers—money committed or spent on primary and secondary roads in Transylvania County:

Fiscal Year 1966 (July 1, 1965 — June 30, 1966)	\$1,640,000
Fiscal Year 1967 (July 1, 1966 — June 30, 1967)	\$1,200,000

And according to W. Curtis Russ, State Highway Commissioner, for this District, the Fiscal Year 1968 will far exceed either of these years; possibly it will approach their combined total.

How Allocated?

It is the wide belief that county property tax money is used in the highway program. We had best dispel this before we talk about allocation, for it is not true. State Highway Commission funds come solely from the tax on gasoline and motor vehicle license fees. No local tax money is used for this purpose. Obviously, then, the value of real property and population have only an indirect effect on a county's contribution to the state highway fund. They have no effect on its allocation. Some years ago, population was a factor, but not now.

Interstate highway construction and other Federally assisted projects are affected by population—the effect worked out on a 50-state formula. This, too, is an equitable division but it is Federally determined and largely beyond state control.

How are state highway funds allotted? Let's take secondary road improvement for an example. This is totally state money and state controlled and we can be specific in the procedure.

The state sets up a fund for secondary road improvement. All counties share equally on the basis of the number of unimproved miles of secondary roads in each of the 100 counties in the state. The fund is divided by

the number of unimproved miles in the 100 counties. The last figure came out to be \$162.10 per unimproved mile with a 10% additional allowance in mountain counties such as Transylvania for snow and ice problems. This is the amount of money available, statewide, for each mile of secondary road improvement. This figure, multiplied by the number of miles of unimproved road in a county, produces the full allocation for that county.

This money is for the exclusive use of the county designated and must be spent in that county. It cannot be transferred to another county or for use toward another purpose.

Which Roads Are Improved?

How does the highway commission determine which roads are to be improved? This is done by impartial formula. It begins with a careful survey of the number of residences on a road, the under-way housing developments, the churches, the cemeteries. It is determined whether the road is a school bus route or a main route. An accurate count is made of all vehicular traffic on the road.

The road is then given a number of points, weighted by category. School bus routes, for example, rate high. One point is then totaled. This total is divided by the number of miles of the road needing improving. The resulting figure is that particular road's priority for improvement. All unimproved roads which were considered in the original county fund allocation are so surveyed and a list is made.

The next step is to obtain the right-of-way. Since the state cannot buy right-of-way for secondary roads outside town limits, these must be donated. If a road has the highest point total and the right-of-way has been donated, it is then number one for improvement. Should the right-of-way not be donated, even though a road ranks first, consideration then goes to the next ranking road and so on down the list.

In the case of secondary road improvement inside a town limits, the town participates. This is a standard 15% of the total cost of right-of-way, the same for all towns. A little thought discloses this to be a necessity in order to prevent individuals from demanding unreasonably high prices for the in-town right-of-way.

On occasions when a town has been unable to raise its 15% of the right-of-way cost, the State Highway Commission has been known to loan the necessary money—for up to 5 years, without interest, in order to get the project started. It is pretty hard to imagine fairer treatment than that.

What Has Been Done?

Let's look at what has been done in Transylvania in the last two years. We are indebted for this information to T. M. Austell, District Highway Engineer and Fred Davidson, Resident Highway Engineer.

In 1966, there was the new bridge and approaches across the river at Blantyre, resurfacing of Crab Creek Road, King Road, McGuire Road, East Fork Road and several shorter length improvements in Brevard such as Outland Avenue, Park Avenue, Grandview; several other block-length projects here and

there. There was the improvement of U.S. Highway 64 into the Rosman town limits.

In 1967, base and resurfacing of 9.7 miles of secondary roads amounted to a \$230,000 expenditure.

This included work in the Rosman and Brevard town limits (such as Brevard's \$79,000 drainage project on Broad and Caldwell streets, still going on), and improvement of Ross, Pole Miller, Quebec, Illahee, Tinsley and Brevard High School Roads. There was the resurfacing and widening of Highway 64 and the fine new bridge and approaches near Lake Sega Road, involving an expenditure of \$266,000. There was the \$30,000 guard rail project on Gloucester Road from Highway 64 to the Tracking Station. This latter was all Federal funds from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) but, nevertheless, county road improvement. There was an expenditure of \$300,000 for 14 miles of new grading, \$84,000 for primary road maintenance, and \$200,000 for secondary road maintenance.

It is the opinion of the state highway engineers in this district, without researching the records for figures to back it, that almost as much money has been spent on Transylvania secondary roads in the last two years as in the five previous years.

Future Work

Bidding opened in Raleigh last Tuesday for some 47.77 miles of new primary and secondary roads in Transylvania and Henderson counties. About half of this will be in Transylvania. The bids are taken on the two-county job because a better price can be had on the combined projects.

Future work will include a project on Highway 276 to raise the entire link above the French Broad flood level south of Brevard. A new bridge on the Elm Bend Road extension will also keep this area traffic above high water.

Another project is the proposed \$1,000,000 job of paving the road south from Highway 64 to White Water Falls and continuing it into South Carolina. This still depends in part on a Forest Service appropriation and is therefore not yet a definite project. It is, however, pretty certain to be done, and when completed, will provide an easy access to the scenic beauty of the White Water Falls area which will constitute a tourist attraction of benefit to all of Western North Carolina as well as Transylvania County. There are also other exciting projects in the planning stage which will be announced as soon as possible.

Good Job

Transylvania County is not being short changed on state highway funds. We are and have been receiving our share of road improvements even though it is not always obvious when we look at such mammoth projects as the new Federal Interstate Highway in Haywood County.

We can, based on past performance, confidently expect to continue to receive our fair share. We are fortunate to have a sincere and dedicated group of fellow citizens in the State Highway Commission who are doing an honest and impartial job for all of the state's people. Perhaps we should take the time once in a while to tell them we appreciate them. Like most people in a thankless public service job, they'd no doubt be glad to hear it.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

With genuine appreciation to our customers for their generous consideration, we take this opportunity to extend the season's greetings and good wishes to you and yours for holiday joy and happiness.

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WISHING YOU

The blessed peace of Christmas... may it be yours.

And may holiday joys warm your heart and light your home.

Let gifts and goodness be yours in abundance.

Most sincerely, we greet you and thank you for your many favors. Have a wonderful Yuletide!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

MITCHELL-BISSELL COMPANY

"And, lo, the Star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." As the light of Christmas shone for the Wise Men long ago, so may it shine now, in every heart and home.

Joy to You this Christmas

KEARNS GROCERY

Callers! At French Broad in Brevard

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Time to wish all of our good friends and loyal customers a merry holiday season full of peace and happiness. We extend our heartfelt thanks to you and your families for your loyal patronage during the year.

KEARNS GROCERY

Callers! At French Broad in Brevard

GREETINGS

Times change... but the warmth of the Christmas spirit lives on forever. Enduring, too, is the gratitude we feel for the privilege of serving our customers.

May your holidays be happy.

McGRAY CHEVROLET-OLDS, INC.

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Greetings

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