



## Project Overview

- Widening about four miles of U.S. 321 from two lanes to a divided four-lane highway.
- Turn lanes are being added at select locations, new retaining walls are being built and traffic signals.
- From Blackberry Road in Caldwell County outside the Blowing Rock town line, through Blowing Rock and finishing just past the intersection with U.S. 221 near the Shoppes on the Parkway shopping center.
- Due to the unique nature of this road widening project, blasting is necessary to help clear rock from the work area. Note that blasting is only allowed during daylight hours. For more information about blasting, see the “U.S. 321 Blasting” fact sheet (available online at [www.ncdot.gov/projects/BlowingRock321/](http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/BlowingRock321/)).
- The project will be divided into two areas. Area I, which is more commercial, lies between U.S. 321 Business and Boone within the town limits. Area II is more residential and rural, and stretches from the U.S. 321 Business intersection south toward Lenoir outside the town limits. The contractor is allowed to work in both areas simultaneously during the project.
- The project was originally awarded to Taylor & Murphy Construction Company of Asheville. However, after the company declared for bankruptcy, the project was awarded to Maymead, Inc. of Mountain City, Tenn. in March 2013.
- The contractor expects to complete Area I by April 26, 2015, and the entire project is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2016.
- Contract Amount: \$66,438,147.43
- Contractor: Maymead, Inc. [www.maymead.com](http://www.maymead.com)  
P.O. Box 911 (423) 727-2011  
Mountain City, NC 37683 (423) 727-2025 (fax)

## Project Benefits

- Improved traffic flow and reduced congestion through Blowing Rock. Without the road improvements, the forecast traffic along this section of U.S. 321 will exceed the road’s capacity (and already does in some places).
- Improvements will increase sight distances by straightening curves, thereby providing a safer road.
- Improvements will provide separate lanes for drivers turning left at key locations.

## A Better Road for Blowing Rock

- NCDOT worked closely with the Blowing Rock Town Council to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to lessen the effects of the project on the community and to build a road that maintains the character of the town. The MOU addressed concerns such as project aesthetics, access, traffic flow and construction-related inconveniences.
- NCDOT conducted meetings with the State Historic Preservation Office, Green Park Inn, Blowing Rock Country Club and residents of the Green Park Historic District to develop a plan to mitigate the adverse effects the project may have on the district.
- Forty-one retaining walls will be constructed as a part of this project. NCDOT has worked with the town to determine appropriate aesthetic treatments for the retaining walls. NCDOT and the town will develop and implement a landscaping plan after construction is finished. Retaining wall visuals and plans will be added to the project website when they are finalized.

## Travel Tips: How to Get Around

- Access will be maintained to all homes and businesses during construction.
- Permanent digital message signs in Blowing Rock and Lenoir, as well as mobile changeable message signs along the detour route and NCDOT Travel Information Management System (TIMS), will be used to provide road closure information.
- The contractor will be allowed to close the project section of U.S. 321 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and either Monday or Wednesday nights from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. for blasting. During the closure, the following signed detour will be in place: **N.C. 18 to Wilkesboro to U.S. 421 north to Boone to U.S. 321 to Blowing Rock.**

Actual blasting will be done during daylight hours.

- There will be restrictions against closing U.S. 321 for holidays, Appalachian State University home football games, fall foliage weekends and special events occurring in Blowing Rock.
- The anticipated work schedule will be Monday through Friday, with crews working 10-hour days. If necessary, the work schedule may be expanded to include evenings or weekends.

**Staying Connected**

- NCDOT will provide regular updates through traditional news outlets as well as new media. Visit [www.ncdot.gov/projects/BlowingRock321/](http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/BlowingRock321/) or follow Twitter (@NCDOT\_EastMTN) for the latest project updates, information about traffic pattern changes and alerts about construction-related congestion. These tools will help you “know before you go.”

**About Twitter**

- The N.C. Department of Transportation offers travel information on Twitter.com, a free social-networking Web site. You do not need an account to see the information that shared through Twitter. Learn more at [www.ncdot.gov/travel/Twitter](http://www.ncdot.gov/travel/Twitter).

**Contact Information**

**Doug Eller, Resident Engineer**  
 NCDOT Transportation Division 11  
 160 Den-Mac Drive, Suite A  
 Boone, N.C. 28607  
**Project Hotline: (828) 964-3260**

