



N.C. 3 Study: Cabarrus provided planning options

By [Eric Deines](#) | Independent Tribune

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CABARRUS — A regional study of how best to expand N.C. 3 and foster development along the highway has garnered different opinions from Cabarrus County and Kannapolis.

Whereas Cabarrus County's growth plan leans toward a more rural future for the highway, Kannapolis wants to develop the highway for residential and business growth.

The highway connects Kannapolis and the Odell community to Iredell County and Mooresville.

The expansion study, led by the Metrolina Council of Governments, provides options for both a land-use plan along the road and the widening of the road.

In both cases, Cabarrus County officials recommend the road remain as close to its current state as possible.

"Property owners wanted it to remain rural," said Jonathan Marshall, Cabarrus County director of commerce.

However, Kannapolis officials want to see residential, commercial and industrial development around an already-approved mixed-use development at N.C. 3, Sudbury Road and Odell School Road.

That \$123 million office park and commercial development, called Concrescere Corporate Park, is being built by Wayne Brothers Inc., and was made possible by a special state bill last year that allowed Kannapolis to annex the property and rezone it for mixed commercial and residential use.

In September 2006, the County Commission denied Wayne a rezoning request from institutional zoning to general commercial and medium density residential for the project, which at the time included some residential development.

Kannapolis promised Wayne Brothers up to \$2.5 million in water and sewer infrastructure work for the development.

Option 1 for the future land-use plan maintains the county's "very low density" residential zoning and is closer to the county's watershed protection area plan.

"Our zoning has a lower threshold than what is mandated by the state," said Marshall of the county's three-house-per-acre zoning for some of the study area.

Option 2 for the future land-use plan for N.C. 3 allows for medium residential development and business development south of the Iredell County line to the west of the highway.

Commissioner Grace Mynatt said she felt that if the board were to choose Option 2 for the land-use plan it would be acting against its own growth plan for the area, and its decision over the Wayne Brothers development.

As for the actual expansion of N.C. 3, Option 1 keeps the road as a two-laned highway.

However, Option 2 proposes to expand the highway into a four-lane highway, even turning some portions into a "super street," Marshall said.

Marshall said Option 2 would ask residential developers to build off the roadway, so to keep a buffer of a "rural area."

"In other words, it preserves the illusion of a rural area," said Cabarrus County Manager John Day, explaining the concept to commissioners.

However, the business development allowed in Option 2 would not have to create such a buffer.

"Kannapolis is not willing to discuss a viewshed as it relates to business development," Day said. The expansion of N.C. 3 is not yet budgeted or listed in the N.C. Department of Transportation's Transportation Improvement Plan.

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