The N.C. Department of Transportation will hold an open house and public hearing for the proposed U.S. 221 widening project from Deep Gap to Jefferson. The meetings will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 4, at Ashe County High School, located at 184 Campus Drive in West Jefferson.

NCDOT proposes to widen 16.1 miles of U.S. 221 to a four-lane roadway divided by a median from U.S. 421 in Deep Gap to the U.S. 221 Business/N.C. 88 intersection in Jefferson. This proposed project will increase traffic capacity, alleviate congestion and reduce traffic crashes. Additional right-of-way acquisition and the relocation of homes and businesses will be required for this project. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin next summer, with construction scheduled to begin in the summer of 2015. NCDOT representatives will be available at a pre-hearing open house to answer questions and receive comments regarding the proposed project. The open house will be informal and residents may drop in any time between 4-6:30 p.m. The formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. The presentation will consist of an explanation of the proposed design, right-of-way and relocation requirements and procedures. Citizens will have the opportunity to comment or ask questions. The presentation and comments will be recorded and a transcript will be prepared. Additional comments may be submitted until Dec. 21.

Maps displaying the design of the project and a copy of the Environmental Assessment are available for public review at the NCDOT Resident Engineer's Office, 160 Den-Mac Drive - Suite A, Boone; Ashe County Manager's Office, 150 Government Circle, Suite 2500, Jefferson; and the Watauga County Planning Office, 331 Queen St., Boone. Copies of the maps are also available on the project public meeting webpage at http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings/. For more information, please contact Jamille Robbins, NCDOT-Human Environment Section at 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598, by phone at (919) 707-6085, or via email at jarobbins@ncdot.gov.

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who want to participate in this meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact Robbins as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.

Persons who speak Spanish and do not speak English, or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior to the meeting by calling 1-800-481-6494.