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FRIDAY, May 12, 2017

Report offers assessment of state's roads

FRONT PAGE



By Paul B. Johnson
ENTERPRISE STAFF
WRITER

HIGH POINT — North Carolina and the Piedmont Triad face a bumpy road addressing long-term highway and bridge needs, according to a report released Thursday by a national transportation group.

The state lags behind

funding new roadway construction and maintenance needs compared to the increasing amount of car and truck travel, say officials with the national transportation research group The Road Information Program. In a 27-page report, TRIP found that 18 percent of North Carolina's major urban roads and highways have pavement in poor condition, while 26 percent are rated in mediocre condition. The Triad, including the High Point area, reflects the state's roadway plight, with 41 percent of major roads in poor or mediocre condition.

"With an already large transportation funding shortfall, North Carolina is poised to see increasingly deteriorated and congested roads in the future," said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP.

The deterioration of roadways and bridges has implications for job creation and economic development, Wilkins said, since companies examine a state or region's transportation network when making decisions about new or expanding operations.

One sign of the daunting task for North Carolina is reflected in the request for road needs by communities compared to the money available for projects.

The N.C. Department of Transportation received requests from state and regional transportation agencies for \$53 billion in road, highway and bridge projects for inclusion in the 10-year State Transportation Improvement Program. But the state had funding available to include \$9 billion, or 17 percent of projects, in the roadwork master plan document, according to TRIP.

At the same time, with the steady growth of the state's population, the highways and bridges of North Carolina are getting a heavier workout. Vehicle miles of travel across the state increased 29 percent from 2000-16, the ninth-highest rate of growth nationally, TRIP said.

TRIP released its report as the N.C. General Assembly gears up its budget deliberations for the upcoming 2017-18 fiscal year, which begins July 1. In releasing its \$22.9 billion budget proposal this past Tuesday, the Senate Republican leadership highlighted appropriation requests for transportation needs. They include:

- Increasing funding for the N.C. Department of Transportation's long-range improvement program by \$320 million, which will permit 100 new projects over the next 10 years

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Main Street stores to host party

BY PAT HAMBROGH
TOWSON TOWN CENTER
HIGH POINT — Merchants affected by the five-month closure of Main Street say they want to remain the place they're still in business and thank customers who stuck with them during the traffic shutdown. — To that end, they're hosting a promotional event Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Main Street Square shopping center at 805 N. Main St. that will include live music and store giveaways. — "We kind of wanted it to be a thank-you for all the support we got from our customers during the difficult time of construction, but also to say, 'We've opened for business. Come and check us out,'" said Angela LaFollette, co-owner of Foot Fit Foot Care, one of the stores in the shopping center. — The city closed N. Main Street from Westwood to Parkway avenues from early November until mid-April for a sewerage construction project and other improvements. — Not all of the work is complete, but the city pledged to keep the road open to traffic during the remainder of the project.

18358 GORDON 1/17
MERCHANTS AT MAIN STREET SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER ARE HOLDING A CELEBRATION SATURDAY TO MARK THE END OF CONSTRUCTION ON NORTH MAIN STREET.

SEE PARTY PAGE A11

Public meeting on Rich Fork nears

Master plan proposal could be unveiled in next 30 days

BY PAUL B. JOHNSON
RICH FORK AREA
HIGH POINT — County leaders are progressing on a final master plan for trails at Rich Fork Preserve, which a county official said included getting input from some neighbors of the open space in northeastern High Point. — There's still a time frame for the Guilford County Board of Commissioners to take up a vote on the final design for Rich Fork Preserve, which is the last before work can begin to carve out walking and mountain biking trails. County officials are consulting with a design firm to come up with a master plan for the approximately 120-acre project. — County officials have met with some of the neighbors of the open space, including walking some of the existing trails on the scenic, wooded property, said interim parks superintendent John Chaberton. — "We are consulting with some neighbors in the trail and some of the feedback we've received," Gladson said. The High Point Enterprise. "We've met with a few of the neighbors interested in trail layout. We had the chance to walk a good portion of the property with these individuals."

SEE RICH FORK PAGE A11

YWCA hosts Cork & Ale fundraiser

South attend Thursday's YWCA annual Cork & Ale fundraiser at Lulu and Rita. The wine-and-beer-tasting event featured local vendors coming together to showcase a variety of wines and beers. Live entertainment was provided by the music group Turquoise Shrine.

18358 GORDON 1/17
A silent auction was also held at Thursday's YWCA annual Cork & Ale fundraiser for guests to bid on various items.

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SEE ROADS PAGE A11

- Spending \$246 million on structurally deficient bridges statewide
 - Investing \$40 million for immediate needs that improve roadway safety, reduce congestion and promote economic development
 - Adding \$130 million to improve the condition and safety of roadways and increase funding for pavement work by \$70 million
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WHO'S NEWS
Ward O'Quinn, a 30-year former furniture industry veteran, joined My Health, MAE America. He will serve in a sales and product advisory role because of key accounts MAE America is the U.S. arm of Italian Manufacturer MAE Group S.p.A., a leading provider serving Europe.

INSIDE
IT'S IN THE MAIL: Postal food drive set for Saturday.

OBITUARIES
Henry Lee Campbell, Dallas Carick, 92, William Bland, Canton, 74, Robert Earl Hunt, 84, LARRY GREEN 1/17, Edward Johnson, 84, Neider Patricia McCaslin, 79, Stuart McCarty, 84, Johnny McWilliams, 58, Victoria Olson, 52, Holly Lynn Steppers, 84.

WEATHER
Showers likely High: 61, Low: 55

JAGDIN PAGAN
DAN-VIEW ELEMENTARY

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