


PHASE I SURVEY
IMPROVEMENTS TO SR 1001 BETWEEN SR 1933 AND US 321
LENOIR, CALDWELL COUNTY
TIP # U-2211. W.O. # 8.2731701.
FEDERAL AID # STP-7533(2).

North Carolina Department of Transportation
Report Prepared by Edward T. Davis, A.I.A.

April 12, 1994



Principal Investigator

MAY 9, 1994
Date



Architectural Resources

MAY 13, 1994
Date

Proposed Improvements to SR 1001 Between SR 1933 and US 321
TIP # U-2211.
Lenoir, Caldwell County

Project Description

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is proposing to widen SR 1001 in Caldwell County from two lanes to a five lane curb and gutter facility, involving new location. This project begins at SR 1933 and ends east of US 321. The area of potential effect (APE) is indicated on the attached map.

Purpose of the Survey and Report

The Phase I Survey was conducted in order to delineate the area of potential effect (APE) and to identify historic properties or districts located there. This report was prepared to document the findings of the survey. This report is submitted pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. Section 106 requires that if a federally funded, licensed, or permitted project has an effect on a property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation be given an opportunity to comment.

Methodology

This survey was conducted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation in accordance with the requirements of FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A, (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716); 36 CFR Part 800; and 36 CFR Part 60.

Prior to surveying the area of potential effect (APE), the architectural historians at NCDOT researched the files at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and all available relevant materials at the North Carolina State Library and the School of Design at NC State University. The Western SHPO office in Asheville was consulted as well as the planners for the City of Lenoir.

In April, 1993, an architectural historian at NCDOT surveyed the area of potential effect (APE) for the above referenced project. The survey was made by car and on foot. Because several of the proposed alternatives require new location, it was necessary to walk portions of the alternatives 3 and 4. Individual property owners were consulted by telephone following the survey.

On November 10, 1993, NCDOT and a representative from the Federal Highway Administration met with SHPO in order to discuss the preliminary findings of the survey. At that time SHPO concurred with NCDOT that all properties over fifty years of age need not be documented and keyed to a map. In addition, it was determined that it would be necessary to survey other school buildings in the county in order to determine if additional school buildings contemporary with the (former) Whitnel School exist in Caldwell County. SHPO also requested that NCDOT address the railroad bridge.

Survey Results

The town of Whitnel was formerly referred to as "Treeland". The name of the town was changed in 1911 to Whitnel after the owners of two local mills, J.O. White and J.L. Nelson. These mills were established in 1907, however the mill village (marked #1 on the attached map) associated with J.L. Nelson's mill was not constructed until approximately ten years later. It should be noted that at the time of construction, Caldwell County had over 25 cotton mills and 7 hosiery mills. Mill villages existed at Cherryville, Rhodhiss, Lenoir, Granite Falls and Hudson. It should also be noted that these mill villages are currently largely intact. As may be evidenced in the attached illustrations, the houses comprising the first mill village in Whitnel have, without exception, undergone numerous character-altering changes. By the year the first house was under construction (1917), North Carolina had over 200 mill villages. These villages ranged in size from tiny hamlets of twenty or thirty houses to large, sprawling communities like Kannapolis in Cabarrus County, whose population reached over 30,000 people. As previously mentioned, Caldwell County possesses many mill villages which are still intact and which still have the adjoining mill. J.L. Nelson's mill (one of a chain of five mills with attached villages all located in Caldwell County) does not survive at Whitnel. This village is marked "#1" on the attached map. Because of numerous character altering changes (application of vinyl siding, replacement windows and additions which obscure the original appearance of this assemblage of mill housing) and, most importantly, because the mill associated with this mill village no longer exists, it appears that the mill village associated with J.L. Nelson

located at Whitnel is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

A second mill village was constructed in 1920 by the American and Efird Textile Company (marked #2 on the attached map). The houses constructed by this company have undergone some character-altering changes. Because the American and Efird Textile Company is still at its original location, adjacent to the mill village, it appears that this village may be eligible for listing in the National Register. Because the mill has been completely obscured and altered by additions and alterations, it does not appear to be a contributing element to the proposed district.

The Whitnel School was originally constructed in 1904 (see Illustration). The building was moved from its original site and remodeled in 1916. This facility served as a public school until 1959 when it was renovated and converted to a county office facility. The county abandoned this facility in 1986 and it was sold to Mr. Irvin Nelson. Mr. Nelson currently rents this building to the Whitnel Furniture Company (who also altered both the exterior and interior). While this former school has undergone extensive renovations, these have been largely cosmetic and are reversible. Moreover, a two day study of the County, conducted in January, 1994 by NCDOT, reveals that these schools, relatively unaltered, are rare. For these reasons, it appears that the former Whitnel School may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and Criterion C.

The Living Word Assembly of God (see illustration) was constructed in 1927. It is a simple brick building, three bays wide and four bays deep. There is a gable-front porch supported by wooden box columns which rest upon brick piers. The roof is surmounted by a belfry with a bellcast roof and simple square ventilators. The interior of the church has been altered within the last ten years. The original walls and furnishings have been covered or removed and a dropped acoustical ceiling has been added. Criterion C states that a religious property is eligible if it is a significant illustration of an architectural style, the work of a master, or if it exhibits artistic value in its design or detailing. The Living Word Assembly of God meets none of these criteria. This building does not appear to be eligible for the National Register.

Bridge #183, which falls within the APE, was constructed in 1937. It is a concrete T-Beam Bridge. This is one of over 500 such bridges remaining in the state.

It does not appear that this structure is eligible for listing in the National Register.

Conclusion

There are no properties within the area of potential effect which are listed on the National Register or are listed on the state study list. The mill village associated with the American and Efird Textile Company appears to be eligible for the National Register as a historic district. The former Whitnel School appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Appropriate boundaries are attached hereinafter. No other properties within the area of potential effect (APE) appear to merit eligibility.

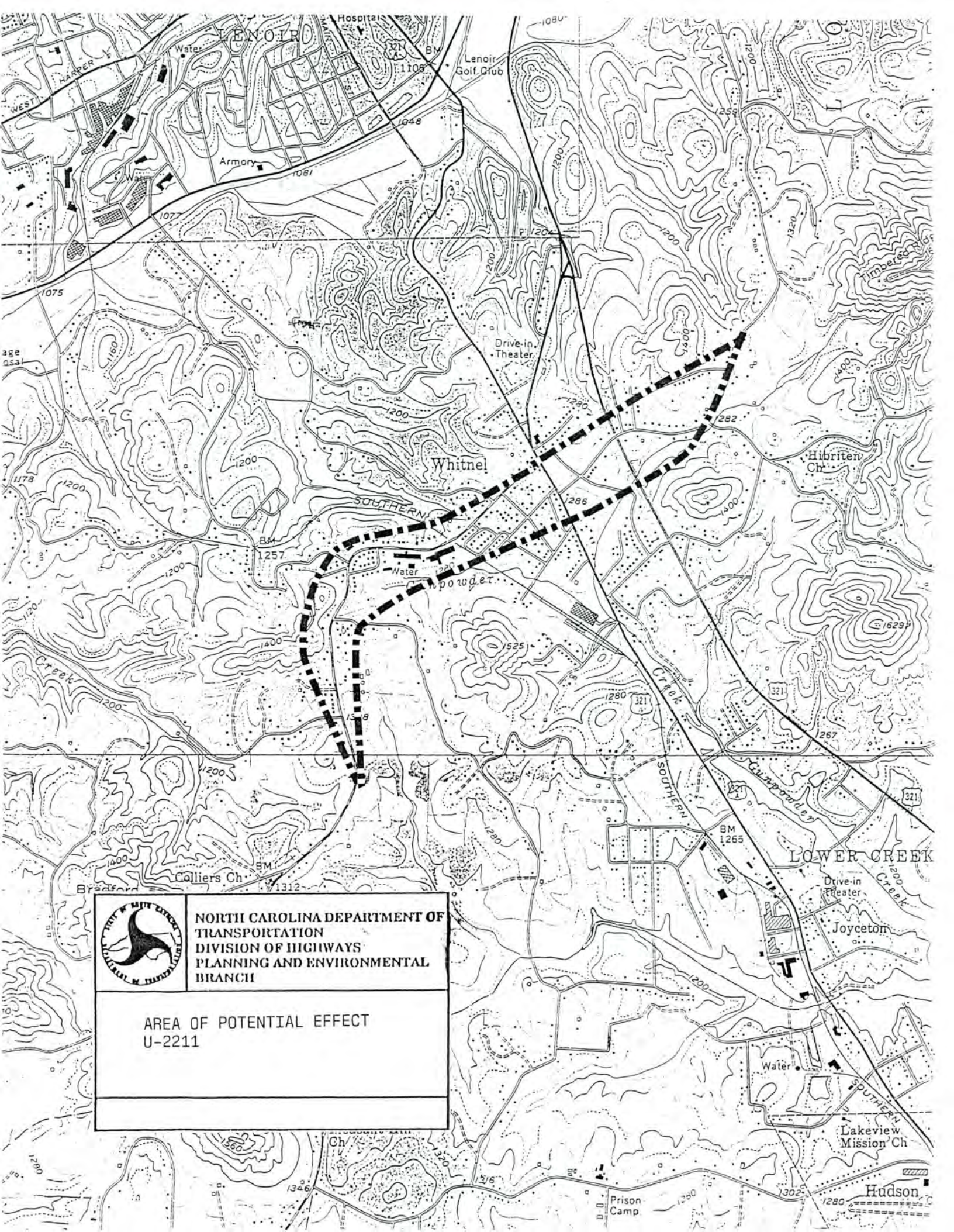
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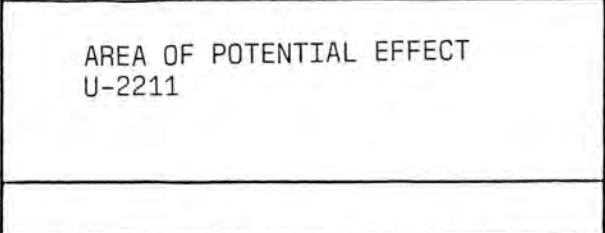
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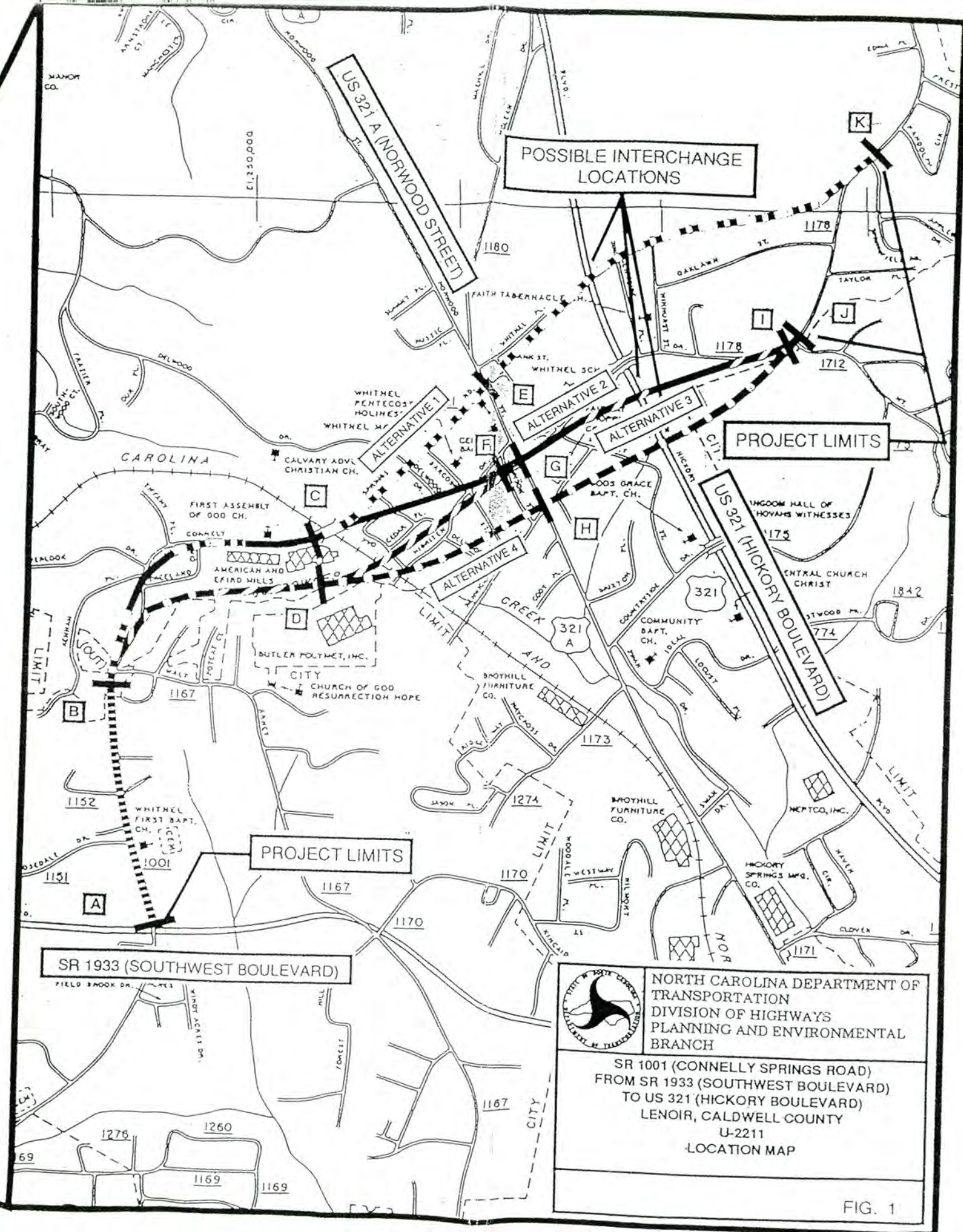
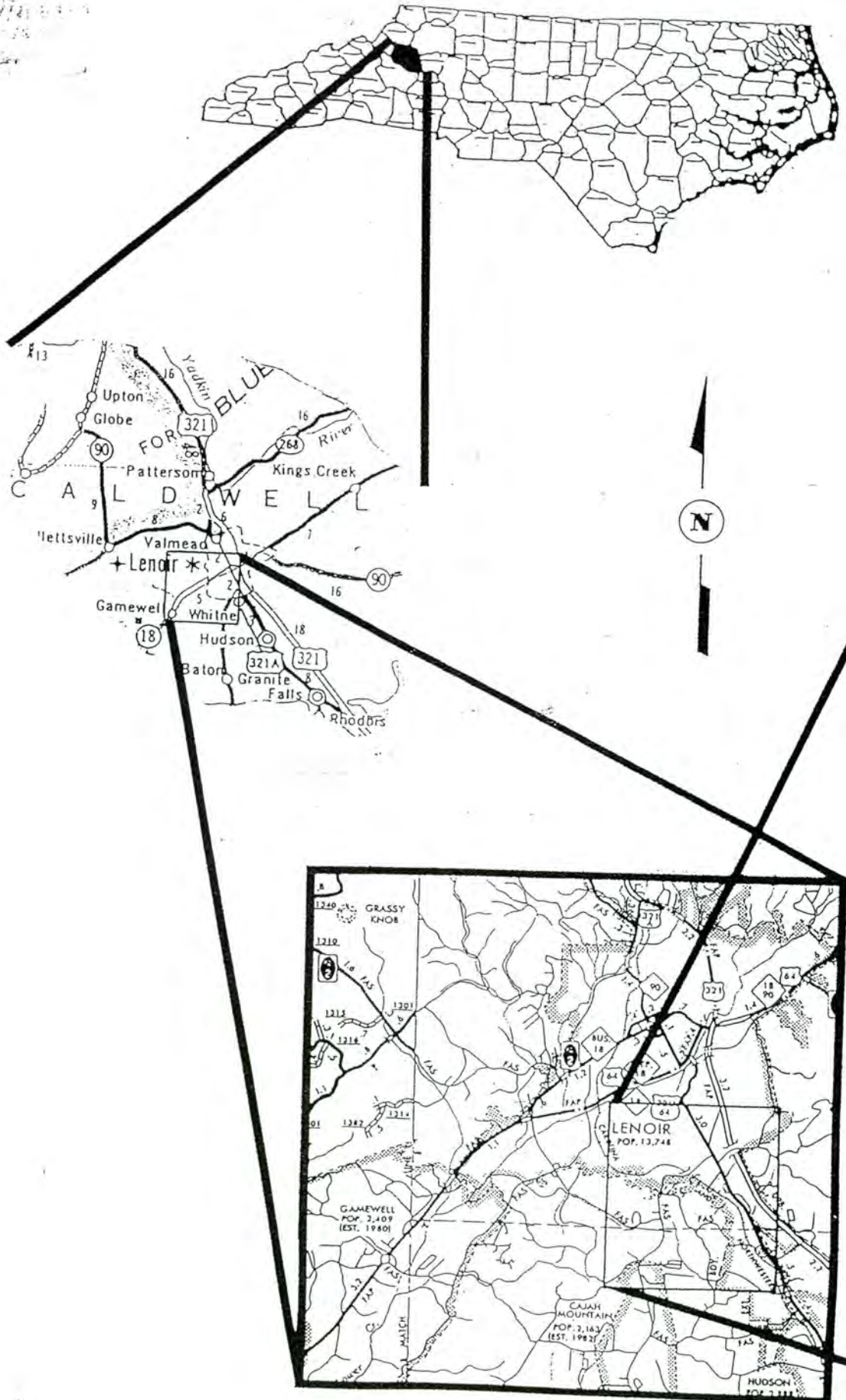
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**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
BRANCH**

**AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT
U-2211**






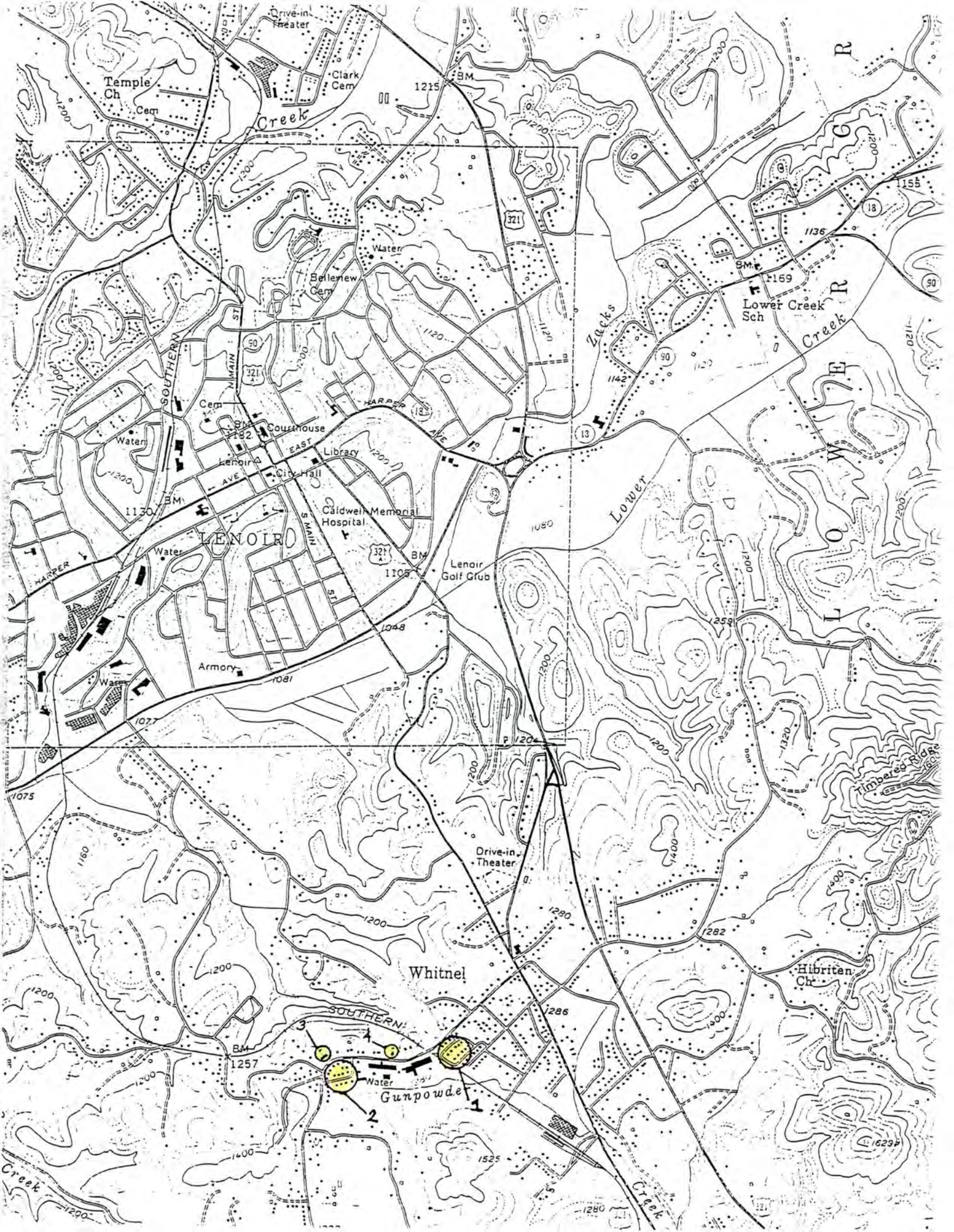

 NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
 TRANSPORTATION
 DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
 BRANCH
 SR 1001 (CONNELLY SPRINGS ROAD)
 FROM SR 1933 (SOUTHWEST BOULEVARD)
 TO US 321 (HICKORY BOULEVARD)
 LENOIR, CALDWELL COUNTY
 U-2211
 LOCATION MAP

FIG. 1





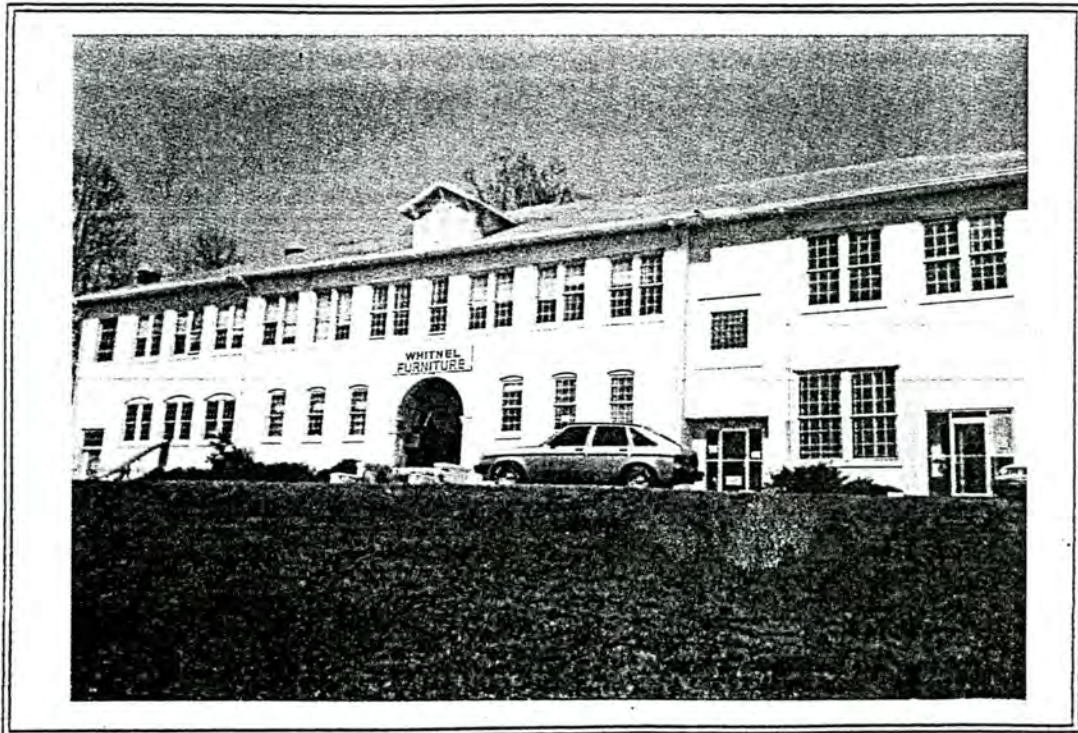
House located in Mill Village #1



House located in Mill Village #1



House located in mill village marked #1



Former Whitnel School
(marked #3 on map)



Living Word Assembly of God
(marked #4 on map)



House in mill village #1

12



House located in mill village #2



House located in mill village #2

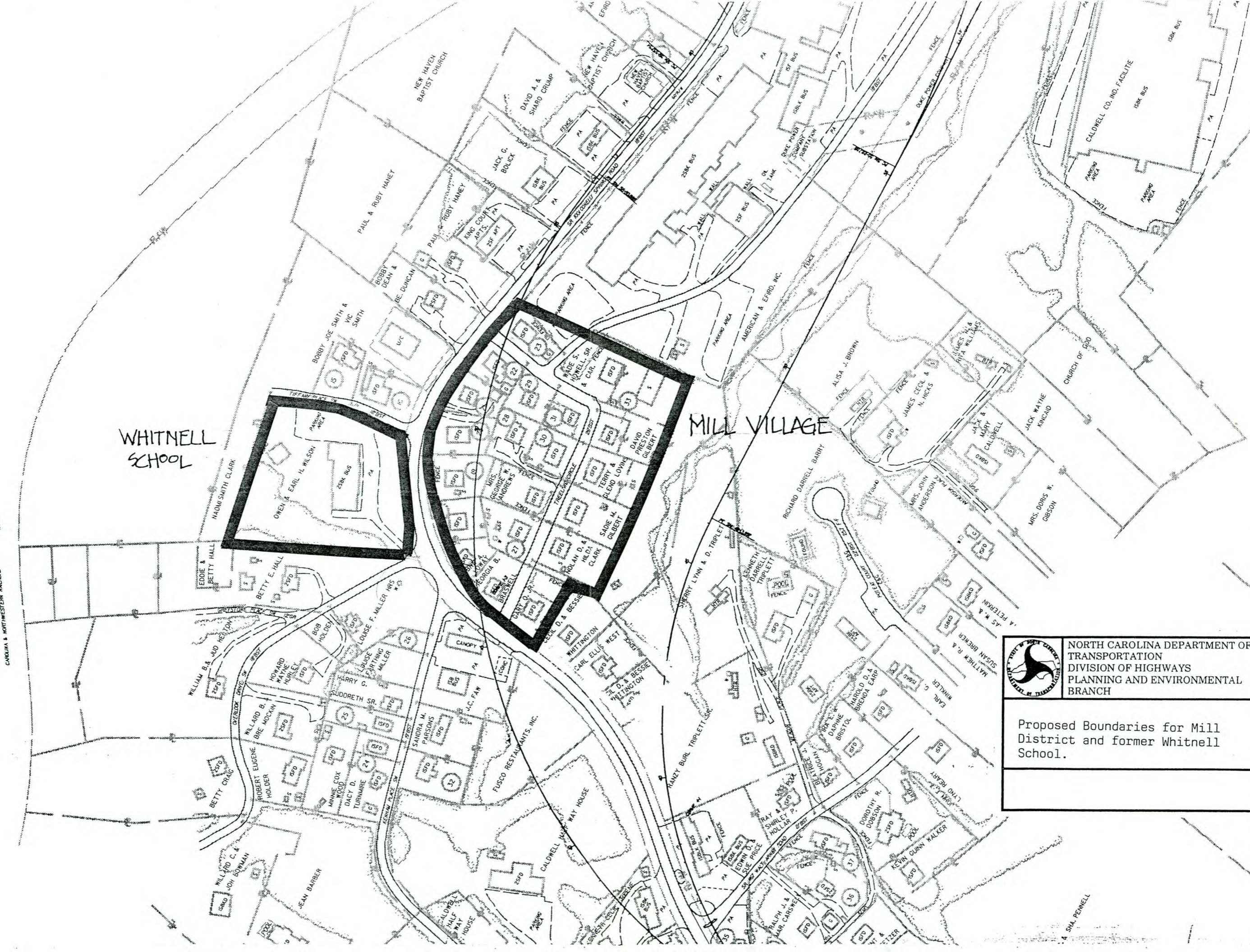
WHITNELL SCHOOL

MILL VILLAGE



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
BRANCH

Proposed Boundaries for Mill
District and former Whitnell
School.



CAROLINA & NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD

SHR. PENNELL