

= North Carolina Highway 54 =

North Carolina Highway 54 (NC 54) is a 55 @-@ mile @-@ long (89 km) primary state highway in the U.S. state of North Carolina . The highway serves the Research Triangle area , between Burlington and Raleigh , connecting the cities and towns of Chapel Hill , Durham , Morrisville and Cary . The highway also links the campuses of University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University .

NC 54 runs from U.S. Highway 70 (US 70) in Burlington along Chapel Hill Road through the downtown area of Graham . Turning to the southeast the route runs through some of the outskirts of Burlington before moving through a predominantly rural area . Approaching Chapel Hill , the highway follows the NC 54 " Bypass " around the town and runs concurrently with US 15 / US 501 until reaching Raleigh Road . At Raleigh Road , NC 54 continues to the east crossing Interstate 40 (I @-@ 40) and running through the outskirts of Durham . The road continues to follow I @-@ 40 as it enters into Research Triangle Park and Morrisville . NC 54 follows Chapel Hill Road until reaching the downtown area of Cary where it uses Maynard Road as a bypass . On the eastern side of Cary , NC 54 turns back onto Chapel Hill Road and follows the road until reaching Hillsborough Street near Raleigh . At Hillsborough Street , NC 54 turns to the east to follow the street through west Raleigh and along the NC State Fairgrounds . The highway ends at I @-@ 440 / US 1 west of downtown Raleigh .

NC 54 first appeared as an original state highway running from NC 75 in Pittsboro to Moncure . However by 1928 the route was recommissioned as a secondary road which remains today as Moncure Pittsboro Road . The current NC 54 was signed in 1929 from Graham to US 70 south of Durham . In 1930 it was further extended through Rockingham to the Virginia border , however in 1940 much of that routing was renumbered as NC 87 . The route was further extended in 1953 where it ran concurrent along US 70A until reaching US 1 in Cary . The Chapel Hill Bypass was completed in 1956 and NC 56 was rerouted from its downtown Chapel Hill routing to the new bypass . The last major change to the routing occurred in 1963 when NC 54 was extended along Hillsborough Street to the new US 1 freeway (present day I @-@ 440) .

= = Route description = =

= = = Burlington to Chapel Hill = = =

NC 54 east begins in western Burlington at the intersection of US 70 / NC 62 (Church Street) and Chapel Hill Street . This intersection is a right @-@ in / right @-@ out intersection with US 70 eastbound ; access to and from westbound US 70 is provided through South O 'Neal Street . NC 54 is also signed along this sub @-@ 500 @-@ yard (460 m) segment of O 'Neal Street .

NC 54 follows Chapel Hill Road to the intersection of NC 49 / NC 100 (Maple Avenue) in downtown Graham . NC 54 joins NC 49 north on Harden Street through downtown . The route roughly parallels I @-@ 40 to the south as it enters into the downtown area of Graham . NC 49 / NC 54 turns to the northeast before intersecting NC 87 (West Elm Street) . After the intersection the road turns east and follows along a concurrency with NC 49 and NC 87 . NC 87 turns off at Main Street in downtown Graham . Three blocks to the east NC 49 exits at East Elm Street . NC 54 begins its turn southeast and crosses I @-@ 40 / I @-@ 85 at its exit 148 . NC 54 remains on Harden Street until it crosses the Haw River , and is known from that point solely as NC 54 .

After crossing the river , NC 54 remains relatively parallel to the Haw River . The route passes east of Swepsonville where it also passes by a country club along with a large manufacturing plant . Immediately after passing the plant , the road intersects the southern terminus of NC 119 at an intersection with East Main Street . After the intersection the road turns more toward the east and runs through an area which is primarily rural with multiple neighborhoods surrounding the route . After passing through the unincorporated community of Oaks , the road makes a gradually turn from its southeastern direction towards an eastern direction . Several farms lie adjacent to the road as

most of the neighborhoods dissipate . NC 54 finishes its eastern turn as it enters another unincorporated community , White Cross . The route briefly turns to northeasterly , however turns back to a gradual southeastern direction after passing by a quarry .

As the road nears Carrboro , several neighborhoods and businesses are found adjacent to the highway . Before intersecting Old Fayetteville Road , the highway begins to widen from a two lane road , to a four lane divided highway . The highway passes by a strip mall immediately after passing Old Fayetteville Road , and intersects Main Street before turning to the south . NC 54 follows a limited access highway known as the NC 54 Bypass , along the south side of Carrboro and Chapel Hill . The highway has diamond interchanges at Jones Ferry Road , Greensboro Street along with South Columbia Street , where NC 86 has its southern terminus and US 15 / US 501 joins NC 54 . The road becomes Fordham Boulevard , where the highway begins to turn north to head toward Durham .

= = = Chapel Hill to Morrisville = = =

NC 54 exits east on Raleigh Road on the east side of Chapel Hill . Multiple strip malls and neighborhoods are located adjacent to the route as it heads southeast towards Durham . After passing by a developed area east of Chapel Hill , the route turns east and becomes the Nelson @-@ Chapel Hill Highway , a divided highway connecting Fordham Boulevard and I @-@ 40 . The route crosses I @-@ 40 at a partial cloverleaf interchange . After an intersection with Leigh Farm Road the road narrows to a 2 lane road and continues east toward Durham . As NC 54 approaches NC 751 (Hope Valley Road) , it widens again to a four lane road with a turning lane . Once reaching Hope Valley Road , a group of stores are found congregated around the intersection . The road has another immediate intersection with Garrett Road and then begins a slow turn toward the southeast before turning back into a two lane road and completing it 's southeasterly turn . After passing Rollingwood Drive the road again widens up to a four lane road . Several shopping centers appear as the road nears an intersection with Fayetteville Road . Directly after the intersection the road narrows back down to a two lane road and passes under I @-@ 40 at a diagonal . The route somewhat parallels the freeway and forms the northern border for the Wellington Forest neighborhood . The route briefly widens at the intersection of Barbee Road before passing by several houses and a park . Just before reaching NC 55 (Apex Highway) , NC 54 once again widens to a four lane road .

Passing NC 55 , the road crosses a railroad track before entering into Research Triangle Park . Several offices buildings are found both adjacent to and along roads that branch off of NC 54 . The road intersects TW Alexander Drive before crossing over NC 147 (Triangle Expressway) . NC 54 approaches South Miami Boulevard after crossing under another railroad . At the intersection , NC 54 turns right to follow Miami Boulevard to the south towards Cary . Miami Boulevard crosses Page Road and passes by several office buildings and stores . At Surles Court , the road makes a shift to turn more toward the southeast , directly paralleling the railroad NC 54 previously crossed under . An interchange with NC 540 marks the roads entrance into Morrisville and the road 's name change to Chapel Hill Road .

= = = Morrisville to Raleigh = = =

Chapel Hill Road begins by running through a primarily residential area of Morrisville . However after passing McCrimmon Parkway , the area shifts to more industrial @-@ style commerce including several warehouses . The road intersects Airport Boulevard which provides access to Raleigh @-@ Durham International Airport . The road runs directly through the middle of Morrisville at intersections with Aviation Parkway / Morrisville Carpenter Road . As Chapel Hill Road bears further to the east , the highway splits from the railroad track that it had been previously running alongside of . Entering into Cary , the road serves as access to the Park West Village Shopping Center and the surrounding apartment complexes . Briefly after intersecting North West Cary Parkway , the road narrows back down from a four lane road to a two lane road . Continuing further

the road meets back up with the railroad that it had previously broken away from and roughly begins to parallel it again . Chapel Hill Road makes a turn towards the east to meet up with Maynard Road . At the intersection , NC 54 turns left to follow along Maynard Road to the east . The four lane road passes by West Cary Middle School and Robert Godbold Park before entering into a mixed residential / commercial section north of the center of Cary . Continuing east along Maynard Road , the highway runs along residential area north of downtown Cary . The road turns toward the southeast and meets up with Reedy Creek Road . Maynard Road meets back up with Chapel Hill Road on the eastern side of downtown Cary . NC 54 turns left onto Chapel Hill Road to continues heading east towards Raleigh . Chapel Hill Road intersects Trinity Road briefly before meeting I @-@ 40 at exit 290 .

Entering into Raleigh , the road names continues as Chapel Hill Road . Chapel Hill Road intersects the southern terminus of Edwards Mill Road , providing access to Carter @-@ Finley Stadium and the PNC Arena . Briefly after the intersection NC 54 widens to a four lane divided road and continues that way until reaching Hillsborough Street . At the intersection , NC 54 continues east onto Hillsborough Street and once again closely parallels the same railroad . NC 54 provides multiple accesses to the North Carolina State Fairgrounds before intersecting Blue Ridge Road . Continuing east NC 54 runs along the south side of NC State 's Centennial Biomedical Campus . NC 54 reaches it 's eastern terminus at I @-@ 440 / US 1 at exit 3 , a folded diamond interchange . Hillsborough Street continues east to access NC State 's North Campus and Downtown Raleigh .

= = History = =

The routing for the original NC 54 was included on the 1916 map of the planned state highway system in North Carolina . However NC 54 was not officially marked on any state highway maps until 1924 ; it was routed from NC 75 in Pittsboro southeast to NC 50 in Moncure , connecting the town to US 1 . By 1929 the first NC 54 was decommissioned and was redesignated as a secondary road .

At the same time , NC 54 was signed along a new routing beginning at US 70 / NC 10 in Graham and running along its current routing to US 70 / NC 10 in Nelson . In 1930 the route was extended north to Virginia . NC 54 was placed onto a concurrency with NC 100 to Burlington , where it then followed a new routing through Ossipee to NC 703 near Thompsonville . The road followed along a brief concurrency with NC 703 to the west into Thompsonville where it then was extended back onto a new routing north to Reidsville . It then replaced NC 709 north to the Virginia border . By 1940 the routing of NC 54 north of Graham was replaced by NC 87 . The route was then extended along a section of NC 93 to connect with US 70 on the western side of Burlington . NC 54 was extended along US 70A between 1952 and 1953 , and then placed onto Chapel Hill Road to Cary where it ended at US 1 . By 1955 , NC 54 was placed from its routing through downtown Chapel Hill along its current bypass around Carrboro and Chapel Hill . The previous routing was signed as NC 54A and by 1959 became NC 54 Business before being decommissioned in 1985 . The route was extended along Hillsbourough Street by 1963 to the US 1 Freeway which later became Interstate 440 . Between 2000 and 2002 , NC 54 was routed onto the northern loop of Maynard Street around Cary .

= = Future = =

Currently the town of Morrisville is building an extension to McCrimmon Parkway along the eastern side of NC 54 and the center of town . The road , which is scheduled to be completed between 2018 and 2021 , would serve as a bypass NC 54 , which is mostly two lanes through the town . However there has been no official word from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) if the highway will be routed onto McCrimmon Parkway .

In October 2015 the towns of Cary and Morrisville held a joint meeting over the future of NC 54 between the towns . NC 54 currently has around 16 @,@ 000 ? 20 @,@ 000 vehicles using the road each day . By 2040 the towns projects that nearly 45 @,@ 000 vehicles will be using the road

daily . NCDOT , the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization , and the Town of Morrisville teamed up on the study of the six @-@ mile (9 @.@ 7 km) corridor from NC 540 to Maynard Road . Ideally the road would become a four- to six @-@ lane superstreet from the Durham County line southeast into Cary . Besides the study the NCDOT has yet to allocate money to make improvements to NC 54 .

= = Major intersections = =

= = Related route = =

North Carolina Highway 54 Alternate (NC 54A) was a renumbering of NC 54 through Carrboro (via Main Street) and Chapel Hill (via Franklin Street , Columbia Street , South Road and Raleigh Road) . The route was commissioned in 1955 after NC 54 was shifted from its downtown Chapel Hill routing to the new Carrboro and Chapel Hill bypass . NC 54A served as a connection into Chapel Hill and to the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill . The route was redesignated NC 54 Business (NC 54 Bus .) in 1959 . In 1985 the route was decommissioned and became only secondary streets .