

North Carolina Strategic Transportation Corridor Policy

Preamble

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has as its stated mission *“Connecting people and places safely and efficiently, with accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy, health and well-being of North Carolina.”* This mission and associated system delivery goals of ensuring traveler safety, promoting efficient movement of people and goods, and preserving its infrastructure investment require that the Department conduct sound planning that advances critical transportation facilities and services that are needed to support the State’s long-term economic prosperity goals. In pursuit of these goals, NCDOT has identified a network of Strategic Transportation Corridors and has adopted this Strategic Transportation Corridors Policy to guide transportation planning and project development efforts and to support realization of Governor McCrory’s *25-Year Vision for North Carolina*.

The intent of this Policy is to update the Strategic Highway Corridor (SHC) policy adopted by the Board of Transportation on September 2, 2004, consistent with direction provided by the Board in 2012 by adopting the NC Statewide Transportation Plan (the 2040 Plan).

It is the stated purpose of Strategic Transportation Corridors to identify from existing facilities a network of multimodal high priority strategic transportation corridors which will form the state’s core network of highly performing facilities for movement of high volumes of people and freight. The facilities and services in those corridors are considered to be of great importance on a statewide basis for long-distance movement of people and freight. The policy establishes that preservation of those facilities at a consistently high level of functionality, in terms of classification, condition, and service, will guide long-term planning at statewide, regional, and corridor levels and should be considered the state’s highest priority when such corridors are being analyzed within the framework of regional or local transportation and land use plans.

The Strategic Transportation Corridors that are defined by this policy are dynamic and intended to support the highest level of transportation needs. They can and will be amended as conditions change. It is not intended that this policy will restrict transportation system improvements and investments needed to address local or smaller regional needs. Rather, Strategic Transportation Corridor identification is intended to recognize the importance of the identified corridors and the need for their protection as regional transportation and land use plans consider local land access and mobility needs.

Strategic Corridors Vision

It is the Board of Transportation’s vision that North Carolina should have an identified network of high-priority, integrated multimodal transportation corridors comprised of facilities that interconnect statewide and regional transportation-dependent activity centers, to enhance economic development in all regions of the state, promote highly reliable and efficient mobility and accessibility, and support good decision-making.

Strategic Corridors Goals

In adopting this Policy, the Board establishes the following goals for North Carolina’s Strategic Transportation Corridors:

1. **System Connectivity:** *Provide essential connections to national transportation networks critical to interstate commerce and national defense.*
2. **Mobility:** *Facilitate high volume inter-regional movements of people and goods across the state.*
3. **Economic Prosperity:** *Support efficiency of transport logistics and economic development throughout the state for economic regions and clusters of existing and emerging activity centers.*

Policy

It is the policy of the NCDOT to place highest priority in the planning and long-term improvement of safe, highly reliable, and efficient multimodal Strategic Transportation Corridors. These Corridors, as identified through a coordinated planning process, are intended to support the economic prosperity goals of the State of North Carolina by enhancing the multimodal mobility function of critical transportation facilities, and are incorporated into this Policy as depicted in Exhibit 1.

In adopting the STC Policy, the Board of Transportation specifically sets aside the SHC facility type directives established by the previous SHC policy, except as those facility type directives have been subsequently incorporated into further project development efforts, and directs NCDOT to prepare updated corridor vision plans in close collaboration with regional planning partners as noted below.

Further, it is expressly recognized at the time of adoption of this Policy that identification of Strategic Transportation Corridors does not affect the programming of projects in NCDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, as that programming has been directed by current Strategic Transportation Investment statutes.

Reflecting the Strategic Corridors vision and goals established in this Policy, the North Carolina Department of Transportation shall:

1. As quickly as practicable, work with regional planning partners to prepare Strategic Transportation Corridor vision plans that reflect consistent, corridor-long performance standards that take into account regional and statewide characteristics and needs in terms of mobility, multimodal opportunities, operational performance, safety, and physical condition, and that establish consistent, high-level facility-types and operating standards for each Strategic Transportation Corridor.
2. Within the context of regional Comprehensive Transportation Plans, establish that for identified Strategic Transportation Corridors, preservation of inter-regional, long-distance travel needs into and through the region should take priority over direct land access and local travel patterns.
3. In managing highway elements of individual Strategic Transportation Corridors, apply the highest practicable access management provisions to promote operational efficiencies and safety, and to enhance the movement of people and freight on primary corridor facilities.
4. Preserve and support prior project development decisions that have been based on identified Strategic Highway Corridors (as those highways were established by the aforementioned Strategic Highway Corridor policy action). Such project development decisions include but are not limited to environmental studies, purpose and need determinations, screening of alternatives, travel corridor or mode definitions, or identification of environmental impacts and mitigation. It is not the intent of the Strategic Transportation Corridors policy to replace, modify, or negate any ongoing or prior project development decisions that include or reference the components of the Strategic Highway Corridor policy. Such ongoing or prior project development decisions shall remain valid and are incorporated into the Strategic Transportation Corridors Plan by reference.

Adopted by the Board of Transportation on March 4, 2015.

Exhibit 1
NC Strategic Transportation Corridors Network




**NORTH CAROLINA
 TRANSPORTATION
 NETWORK**
 MARCH 2015
 Source: NCDOT/NCRC, NCDOT 206, 839H

Strategic Transportation Corridors (solid = Highway; dashed = rail)

Legend	A (US74W)	F (I73/Future I73)	K (US421/NC87)	P (US79E/NCRR)	U (US74W/US74E)
	B (US441)	G (I77)	L (US1)	Q (I40)	V (US264E)
	C (US26/US23)	H (I74/Future I74)	M (I495/US64E)	R (US64W/NC49)	W (US401/NC24/US258)
	D (US321/CSX)	I (I85)	N (US13)	S (I795/US117)	X (US258/NC11/US13)
	E (US421W)	J (US296/NS)	O (US17)	T (I95/CSX)	Y (US158)

**NORTH CAROLINA
 STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION
 CORRIDORS NETWORK**

 NC Seaports
 NC Int'l or Major Freight Airports