



North Carolina Department of Transportation NC 109 IMPROVEMENTS

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This newsletter is the fourth in a series published by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to help keep the public informed about the NC 109 Improvements study. Since the last newsletter, five alternatives have been selected for further, detailed study. This newsletter provides information on the status of the project and contact information for public questions and comments.

Project maps, copies of newsletters, comment sheets and other materials are available on the project website:

www.ncdot.org/projects/NC109Improvements

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Five Alternatives Selected for Detailed Study

Five alternatives for the NC 109 Improvements Project have been selected for further, detailed study, signaling the end of preliminary analysis of the proposed improvements. A map showing the five alternatives appears on page 3 of this newsletter.

To select these alternatives, the NC 109 Project Team, consisting of representatives of federal, state and local agencies, reviewed the results of analysis of the potential environmental, social, and economic effects of the project's preliminary alternative corridors to identify alternatives that best meet the purpose and need of the project while minimizing negative effects. The Project Team also considered input provided by the public and local officials, including comments made at the November 2005 Citizens Informational Workshops.

At a meeting held on August 15, 2006, the Project Team discussed the benefits and drawbacks of the preliminary alternative corridors, reaching agreement that each of the five provided key benefits relative to the others and should therefore be carried through to the next steps in the study process.

Corridor 1, the Upgrade Existing NC 109

Alternative, was retained because it minimizes impacts to natural resources. This alternative would follow the existing alignment of NC 109, with a bypass west of Wallburg. **Corridor 3**, located west of existing NC 109 and terminating near the existing NC 109 interchange with I-40, was retained because it would remove the most traffic from existing NC 109. **Corridor 4** begins east of NC 109 and sweeps west to terminate at the existing US 52/South Main Street interchange. It was retained because it would require the fewest relocations and minimize stream impacts. **Corridors 5 and 6**, which are combinations of Corridors 3 and 4, were retained because they each provide unique mixes of benefits.

With the selection of these five alternatives, the next step in the project development process can begin. In this step, preliminary designs will be prepared for the five alternatives, which will provide the basis for more detailed study of the impacts of each alternative on the human and natural environments to determine which is the "Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative." Once this work is completed, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be prepared and another Citizens Informational Workshop will be held.

Project Schedule

Complete Draft Environmental Impact Statement	Winter 2008
Select Preferred Alternative	Summer 2009
Complete Final Environmental Impact Statement	Summer 2010
Right-of-Way Acquisition	Post Year*
Construction	Post Year*

**Right-of-way acquisition and construction for this project are not included in NCDOT's 2006-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This means funding will be set aside in the future, and right-of-way acquisition and construction will take place after 2012.*

For more information regarding the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) visit:

www.ncdot.org/planning/development/TIP

Steps in the NC 109 Project Development Process

Step 1

Data Collection
Inventory of Planning Issues
Transportation Needs Study
First Citizens Informational Workshops

Step 2

Development of Preliminary Alternatives
Documentation of Community Concerns
Preliminary Field Studies
Second Citizens Informational Workshops
Selection of Alternatives for Detailed Study

→ **Step 3**
Detailed Studies of Alternatives
Preliminary Designs

We Are Here

Detailed Field Surveys
Environmental Analysis

Step 4

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
Third Citizens Informational Workshop

Step 5

Corridor Public Hearing

Step 6

Review of Comments on the DEIS
Review of Public Hearing Transcript
Selection of Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)

Step 7

Preliminary Design Refinement
Additional Field Studies
Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)
Record of Decision (ROD)

Step 8

Design Public Hearing

Step 9

Right-of-Way Acquisition

Step 10

Construction

The Project Development Process

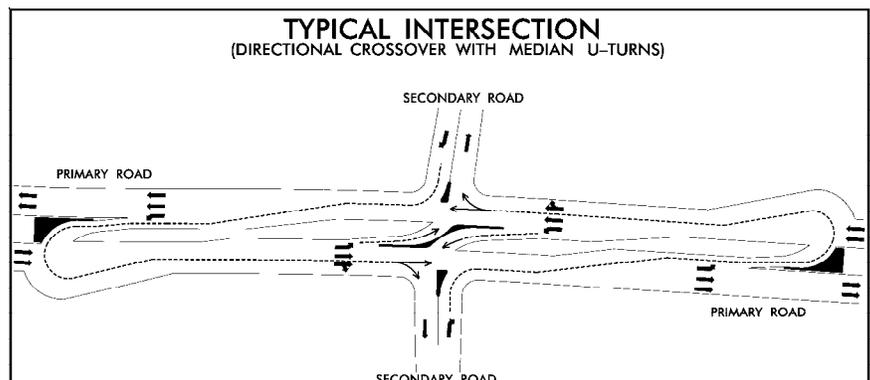
The NC 109 Improvements Project is being conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Under NEPA, a project using federal funds must comply with regulations requiring the public disclosure of the possible positive and negative effects expected as a result of each alternative under consideration. This requirement is met by following the project development process, outlined in the chart shown at left.

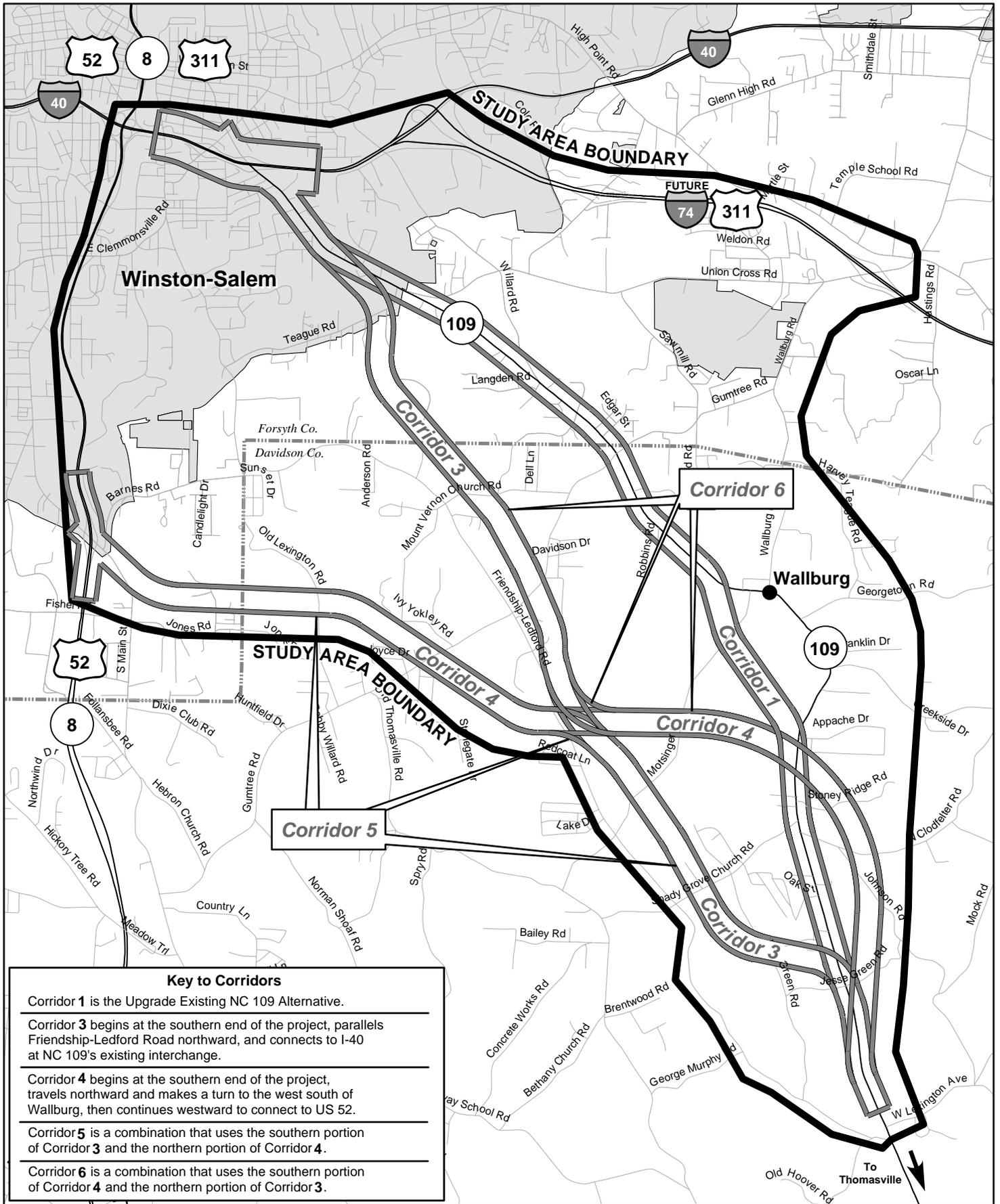
The project development process is divided into eight steps; the NC 109 Improvements Project is currently beginning Step 3. During this step, staff will conduct detailed studies of the potential effects of each of the five alternatives on cultural resources and the human and natural environments. Cultural resources evaluation will include analyzing potential impacts on historic and archaeological sites. Studies of effects on the human environment will include analysis of community, noise and air quality impacts. Studies of effects on the natural environment will include analysis of impacts on wetlands, streams, and protected plant and animal species. During the next year, staff will conduct detailed field surveys to collect data for use in these analyses. Property owners are requested to allow these individuals access to properties within the project alternatives. Your cooperation with this work will help project staff complete the evaluation of environmental impacts in a timely fashion.

New Intersection Concept Proposed for NC 109 Project

NCDOT has proposed an innovative design concept for intersections along the NC 109 improvements. This concept is known as a directional crossover with indirect left turns. With this concept, traffic traveling on NC 109 would be able to make a direct right or left turn onto a secondary road at an unsignalized intersection. Traffic traveling on the secondary road, however, would only be able to make a direct right turn onto NC 109. Travelers wishing to make a left turn from the secondary road onto NC 109 would first make a right turn onto NC 109 and then make a U-turn at a median opening approximately 1/4-mile away from the intersection. The diagram below shows this type of intersection.

While this type of intersection would not be adequate for all of the intersections along the project, it is well-suited to the rural characteristics of much of the project area. In this setting, directional crossovers can reduce the number of traffic conflict points, improving safety and allowing for improved traffic flow along NC 109.





Key to Corridors

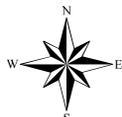
Corridor 1 is the Upgrade Existing NC 109 Alternative.

Corridor 3 begins at the southern end of the project, parallels Friendship-Ledford Road northward, and connects to I-40 at NC 109's existing interchange.

Corridor 4 begins at the southern end of the project, travels northward and makes a turn to the west south of Wallburg, then continues westward to connect to US 52.

Corridor 5 is a combination that uses the southern portion of Corridor 3 and the northern portion of Corridor 4.

Corridor 6 is a combination that uses the southern portion of Corridor 4 and the northern portion of Corridor 3.




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 Alternatives Selected for Detailed Study
 (August 2006)



North Carolina Department of Transportation

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The next newsletter will be mailed during the winter of 2007 as an update to the project's status.

The next Citizens Informational Workshops will be held following the completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), scheduled for winter 2008.

The project website has been updated!
Visit it today at:

www.ncdot.org/projects/NC109Improvements

NC 109 Improvement Study Contact Information

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