



Kim Gillespie  
 NCDOT PDEA  
 1548 Mail Service Center  
 Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548

# US 17 Corridor Study

New Hanover & Pender Counties  
 TIP Projects U-4751 and R-3300

# Project Newsletter



## US 17 Corridor Study Project Update

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform citizens of the selection of the Preferred Alternative for the US 17 Corridor Study and announce the upcoming Design Public Meeting for the proposed Military Cutoff Road Extension. The US 17 Corridor Study includes North Carolina Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects U-4751 and R-3300. Project U-4751 is an extension of Military Cutoff Road (SR 1409) on new location from Market Street (US 17 Business) to the US 17 Wilmington Bypass (John Jay Burney Jr. Freeway). Project R-3300 is the US 17 Bypass of Hampstead. The two projects are being addressed together in one environmental document because they share an endpoint at the existing US 17 Wilmington Bypass. The purpose of the US 17 Corridor Study is to improve the traffic carrying capacity and safety of the US 17 and Market Street corridors in the project area.

### Design Public Meeting Scheduled for Military Cutoff Road Extension

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will hold a Pre-Meeting Open House and Design Public Meeting for the Military Cutoff Road Extension project (TIP Project U-4751):

**Tuesday, August 28, 2012**

**Northeast Regional Library, David Paynter Large Assembly Room  
 1241 Military Cutoff Road  
 Wilmington, NC 28405**

NCDOT representatives will be available at the **Pre-Meeting Open House from 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.** to answer questions and receive comments regarding the proposed project. The opportunity to submit written comments and questions will be provided. Interested citizens may attend at any time during the above hours. **The formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m.** The presentation will consist of an explanation of the proposed design, right-of-way and relocation requirements and procedures. Citizens will have the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

NCDOT recently selected Alternative M1 as the corridor for the Military Cutoff Road Extension project (U-4751). This alternative was one of two shown for Military Cutoff Road Extension at the October 2011 corridor public hearings. Additional details regarding the project design will be shown at the scheduled Design Public Meeting.

The Hampstead Bypass project (R-3300), which was presented with the Military Cutoff Road Extension project at the October 2011 corridor public hearings, will not be presented at the August 28th Design Public Meeting. The Design Public Hearing for Hampstead Bypass will be scheduled at a future date.

A copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and a map displaying the design of the proposed Military Cutoff Road Extension are available for public review at the NCDOT Division 3 Office located at 5501 Barbados Blvd., Castle Hayne; Wilmington

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### Project Schedule

A tentative schedule is shown below. Because a number of factors can affect a project schedule, it is subject to change.

- **Complete Final Environmental Impact Statement**  
Early 2013
- **Complete State Record of Decision**  
Mid 2013
- **Begin Right-of-Way Acquisition**  
U-4751 – 2014  
R-3300 – 2016
- **Construction**  
U-4751 – 2017  
R-3300 – Currently Unfunded\*

\*Construction for this project is currently unfunded. It is expected funds would be available and construction would begin after 2020.

### Questions about the Military Cutoff Road Extension Design Public Meeting

Any questions about the Design Public Meeting for the Military Cutoff Road Extension should be directed to: Jamille Robbins, Project Development and Environmental Analysis Unit, NC Department of Transportation, 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1598

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who want to participate in the meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact **Mr. Jamille Robbins at 919-707-6085** as early as possible so arrangements can be made.

## CONTACT US

### There are Several Ways You Can Stay Informed about the US 17 Corridor Study Project

If you need additional information or would like to discuss the project further, please contact:

Kim Gillespie, PE NCDOT Project Development and Environmental Analysis (PDEA) 1548 Mail Service Center Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1548 Phone: 919-707-6023 E-mail: klgillespie@ncdot.gov	or	Liz Kovasckitz, AICP Mulkey Engineers & Consultants 6750 Tryon Road Cary, North Carolina 27518 Phone: 919-858-1808 E-mail: lkovasckitz@mulkeyinc.com
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### Toll Free Project Information Line: 1-866-841-4420

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. weekdays

### Project Website

Project mapping, newsletters and other project information is available on the project website: [www.ncdot.org/projects/US17HampsteadBypass](http://www.ncdot.org/projects/US17HampsteadBypass)

Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Office, 305 Chestnut St., 4th Floor, Wilmington; and the New Hanover County Planning Office, 230 Government Center Dr., Suite 110, Wilmington. Copies of the map and DEIS are also available on the project website at: <http://www.ncdot.org/projects/US17HampsteadBypass>.

**Alternatives Selected**

Two new location build alternatives for Military Cutoff Road Extension (M1 and M2) and four new location build alternatives for the US 17 Hampstead Bypass (E-H, O, R, and U) were studied in detail. These alternatives were shown to the public at two corridor public hearings held for the project in October 2011.

NCDOT has selected Alternative M1 as the corridor for the proposed Military Cutoff Road Extension (U-4751) and Alternative E-H as the corridor for the proposed US 17 Hampstead Bypass (R-3300). These selected alternatives are shown on page 3 of this newsletter.

In making this selection, NCDOT reviewed all public and agency comments and preferences. Meetings were held on December 15, 2011 and May 17, 2012 with state and federal regulatory and environmental resource agencies to review the evaluation of alternatives. NCDOT, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries, the N.C. Division of Coastal Management, the N.C. Historic Preservation Office, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, the N.C. Division of Water Quality, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, and the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) reached consensus on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) on June 8, 2012. NCDOT formally identified the Preferred Alternative on June 20, 2012.

**Military Cutoff Road Extension Alternative M1** will extend Military Cutoff Road from Market Street to the US 17 Wilmington Bypass. The proposed roadway will begin at a proposed interchange at Military Cutoff Road and Market Street. The alternative extends to the north and northwest, ending near Plantation Road and Crooked Pine Road at a proposed interchange with the US 17 Wilmington Bypass, approximately midway between I-40 and Market Street. Alternative M1 generally follows the alignment shown on the August 2005 official transportation corridor map adopted by the City of Wilmington for the proposed Military Cutoff Road Extension.

**US 17 Hampstead Bypass Alternative E-H** begins in New Hanover County at a proposed interchange with the US 17 Wilmington Bypass. The proposed roadway will extend from

the US 17 Wilmington Bypass northwest past Sidbury Road into Pender County. The alternative then turns to the north-east and continues to a proposed interchange with NC 210. From this interchange, the proposed bypass extends north-east and crosses Hoover Road north of South Topsail Elementary School. The project continues northeast behind the Topsail Schools complex and then turns east to tie into existing US 17 near Leeward Lane. The project continues north on existing US 17 to Sloop Point Loop Road. Alternative E-H follows the alignment shown on the November 2011 official transportation corridor map adopted by the Wilmington MPO for the proposed US 17 Hampstead Bypass.

NCDOT will continue to explore options for providing access to existing US 17 north of Topsail High School from the proposed bypass, in response to citizen concerns.

**Next Steps**

Comments received about the design of the proposed Military Cutoff Road Extension from the August 28, 2012 Design Public Meeting will be reviewed at a post-hearing meeting and incorporated, where feasible, into the development of final design plans for the project. Further studies and surveys will be conducted on the preliminary findings collected from the initial corridor studies for both the Military Cutoff Road Extension and US 17 Hampstead Bypass projects, such as hazardous materials, historic and archaeological sites, and access to residences and businesses.

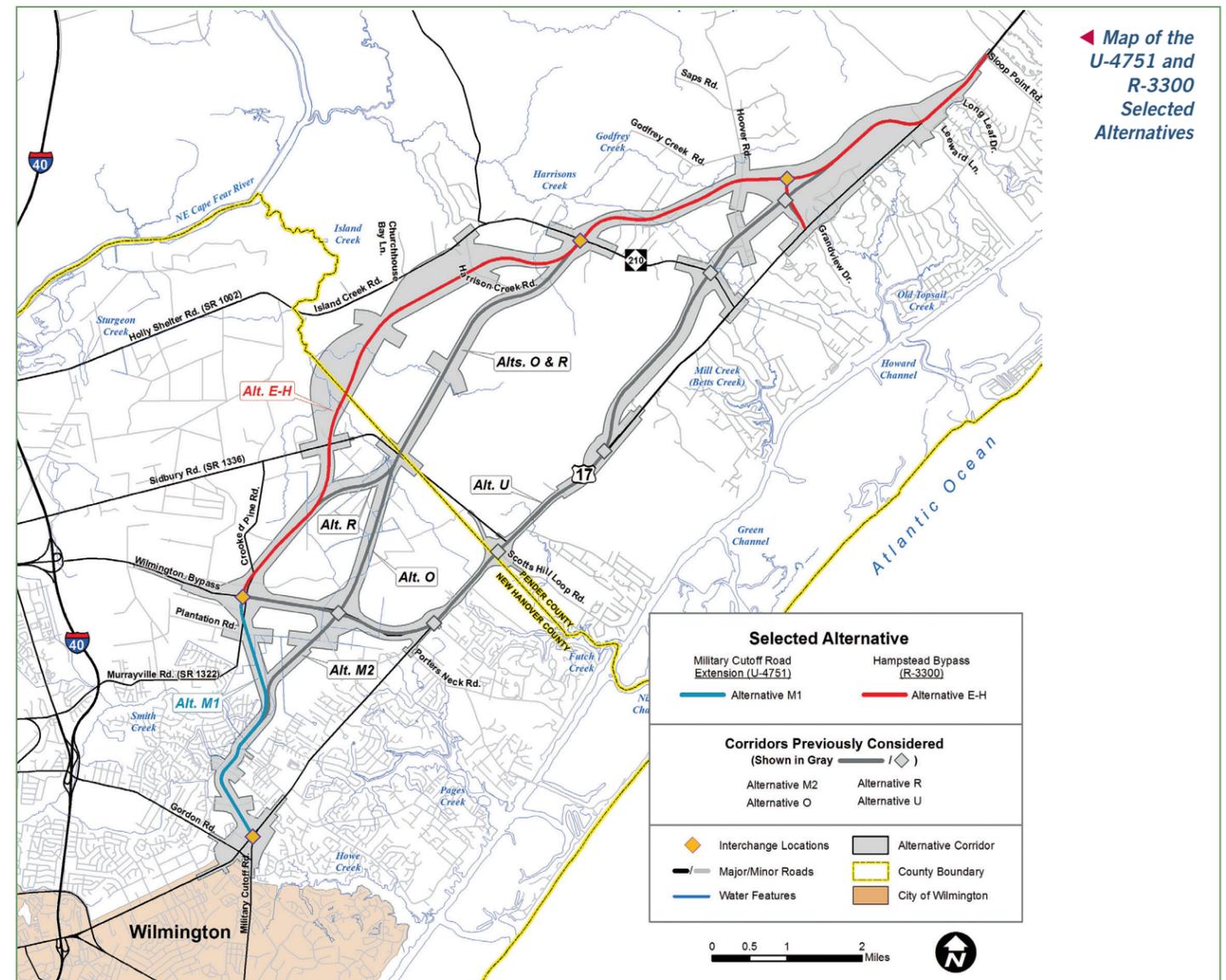
A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be prepared based on the results of the items above. The FEIS will be circulated for public and agency review.

A Design Public Hearing will be held for the US 17 Hampstead Bypass project at a later date, following the completion of the FEIS. More detailed information will be available on the US 17 Hampstead Bypass at that future hearing.

**The Project Development Process**

Any state or federal agency proposing a project that uses public funds and may have a potential detrimental environmental effect must comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Under SEPA/NEPA, agencies are required to evaluate the environmental impacts of their proposals. The evaluation generally follows a project development process that can be divided into the steps described below. The project is currently in **Step 6**.

**STEP 1:** Data collection and inventory of planning issues  
Study area/preliminary corridor development



**STEP 2:** First Citizens Informational Workshop  
Documentation of community concerns  
Selection of alternatives for detailed study

**STEP 3:** Preliminary design and detailed field studies  
Engineering/environmental analysis

**STEP 4:** Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)  
Corridor Public Hearing

**STEP 5:** Review comments on the DEIS  
Review public comments and hearing transcript  
Selection of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)

**STEP 6:** Preliminary design refinement  
Additional field studies (*Please Note: NCDOT personnel will require access to private property in order to conduct field studies.*)  
Design Public Meeting (U-4751)  
Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)  
State Record of Decision (SROD)

**STEP 7:** Design Public Hearing (R-3300)

**STEP 8:** Detailed Design

**STEP 9:** Right-of-Way Acquisition

**STEP 10:** Final Design

**STEP 11:** Project Construction