



Complete 540

Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension
PO Box 30923
Raleigh, NC 27622



PLANNING STUDY *and* ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

ISSUE 3 ■ SEPTEMBER 2013

STUDY RESUMES TO COMPLETE 540

The Complete 540 study for the Southeast Extension of the Triangle Expressway has resumed following a delay of more than two years.

The N.C. General Assembly recently enacted new legislation (NCSL 2013-94 and 2013-183) that reversed NCSL 2011-7, which placed the study on hold, limiting the ability of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to comply with certain federal requirements.

The Complete 540 project would provide a more direct route and quicker access to Research Triangle Park, the Raleigh-Durham International Airport, and major employment and activity centers along 540 for rapidly growing communities south and east of Raleigh.

In early August, the NCDOT study team resumed work

on the project to collect information about how the various route locations proposed for completing 540 would affect the area environment. Information about future traffic volumes, development patterns, community features, natural resources, possible noise impacts, and other features is being collected and studied. NCDOT will also collect information from area residents and other local stakeholders to get local perspectives on the project.

The overall goal of the study is to understand how the project would benefit the region, and how the various routes proposed for it would impact the area and those who live and work there. With this information at hand, the best possible route location for completing 540 can be determined.



Let Us Know What You Think!

Your thoughts and questions are important to us. We encourage your input and there are many ways you can reach us:

Web | Visit our website at www.ncdot.gov/complete540

and our project blog at complete540.blogspot.com

E-mail | Send us a comment via e-mail to complete540@ncdot.gov

Telephone | Call our toll-free hotline at **1-800-554-7849**

Letter | Send your letter to: **Mr. Eric Midkiff, P.E.**
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

Fall 2013 Public Meetings

Mon., Oct. 14, 2013, 4:00 pm–7:00 pm
Wake Tech Community College
9101 Fayetteville Road
Raleigh, NC 27603

Tues., Oct. 15, 2013, 4:00 pm–7:00 pm
Barwell Road Community Center
3935 Barwell Road
Raleigh, NC 27610

Wed., Oct. 16, 2013, 6:00 pm–9:00 pm
Holly Springs High School
5329 Cass Holt Road
Holly Springs, NC 27540

Share Your Thoughts!

Three separate public meetings are being held in the project study area. The purpose of these meetings is to provide the latest information about the Complete 540 study. NCDOT staff and consultants will be there to receive your comments and answer your questions. These meetings will be in an open-house format, meaning you may attend at any time during the posted hours. Formal presentations will not be made at the meetings. The same information will be available at each of the three meetings, which are being held in different parts of the project study area for the convenience of all who would like to attend.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled persons who wish to participate in these meetings. To receive special services, please contact the study team by phone 1-800-554-7849 or email complete540@ncdot.gov. Please provide adequate notice prior to the date of the meeting so that arrangements can be made.

Si desea recibir una copia de este boletín en Español, por favor llame al número de teléfono 1-800-481-6494, o envíe un correo electrónico a complete540@ncdot.gov. Servicios de intérprete estarán disponibles en la junta para las personas que hablan Español y no hablan Inglés o si tienen una capacidad limitada para leer, hablar o entender el Inglés. Para obtener más información sobre estos servicios, por favor llame al número de teléfono 1-800-481-6494.



ROUTE ALTERNATIVES CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION

At public meetings held in September and December of 2010, several color-coded route location alternatives were presented for review and comment. Following those meetings, some of those alternatives were dropped from further consideration. Since that time, four new alternatives have been developed, and a portion of two that were dropped in 2010 have been reintroduced.

The map on the facing page shows the route alternatives that are currently recommended by NCDOT for further study. The paragraphs below explain the new routes that have been added since 2010. They also explain why the two previous routes needed to be reintroduced.

Lilac Corridor — NCDOT worked with the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and other local and agency stakeholders to see if they could identify any other route locations that could minimize wetland impacts similar to the Red Corridor. A new corridor—designated as the Lilac Corridor—showed the potential to accomplish this.

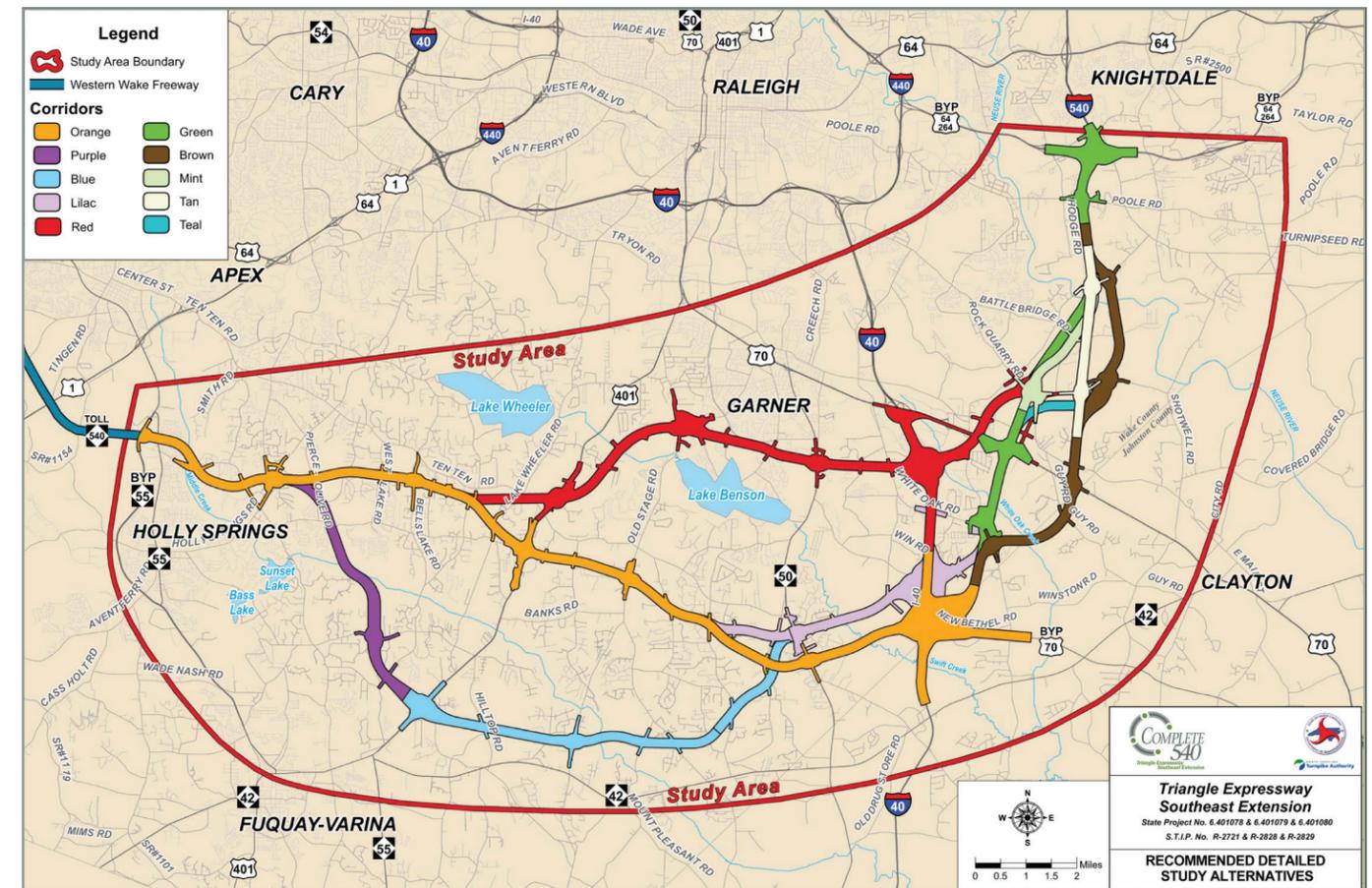
Mint Green Corridor — Compared to the Green Corridor, this option reduces impacts to a proposed development known as Randleigh Farm and would displace fewer homes and businesses than the nearby Tan Corridor.

Brown Corridor — This option completely avoids the Randleigh Farm property, but would impact a public wastewater treatment facility and a police training center.

Teal Corridor — This is a short connector between the Green corridor and the Brown corridor, creating another route for 540 between I-40 and US 64/US 264 Bypass.

Purple-Blue-Lilac Corridor — The Blue and Purple Corridors were removed from consideration in November 2010 because the original connection did not provide enough benefit over other options under consideration at that time. With the development of the Lilac Corridor, however, it was found that connecting the Purple Corridor to the Blue Corridor, and then to the new Lilac Corridor, created an option that minimizes wetland impacts similar to the Red Corridor. For this reason, the combination known as the Purple-Blue-Lilac Corridor is under consideration.

Red Corridor — After NCSL 2011-7 was enacted, preventing full evaluation of the Red Corridor, NCDOT worked extensively with environmental agencies and local stakeholders to find a way to move the study forward without the Red Corridor. Despite that effort, the US Army Corps of Engineers determined that the federal laws they administer require the Red Corridor be studied at the same level of detail as the other route locations, and that the State law enacted in 2011 does not supersede federal law.



NOTE: If the project is approved for construction, only one of the potential routes would be built.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After consideration of all public and agency comments received on these recommended alternatives, NCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration will decide on the final set of “Detailed Study Alternatives.” Once this decision is made, the study team will proceed with the required in-depth evaluations and comparisons. The results of these studies will be documented in the project’s Draft Environmental Impact Statement, along with a possible recommendation of which alternative best meets the project purpose. The current schedule calls for this document to be published in the spring of 2015.

Once this document is published, public hearings will be scheduled at several locations in the project study area. Following the public hearings, NCDOT will again review all public and agency comments and then make a final decision about the best route, or “Preferred Alternative” for the project.

Anticipated Project Time Frame

Hold Public Meetings on Alternatives	Fall 2013
Finalize Detailed Study Alternatives	Winter 2013
Complete Required Technical Studies	Fall 2014
Receive Approval of the Draft EIS*	Spring 2015
Draft EIS Review Period and Public Hearings ..	Summer 2015
Selection of the Preferred Alternative	Fall 2015
Approval of the Final EIS*	Spring 2016
Publication of the Record of Decision	Summer 2016
Complete Environmental Study Process	Fall 2016

*Environmental Impact Statement

If the Study results in project approval, the following is expected, subject to availability of funding:

Complete Financial Feasibility.....	Spring 2017
Begin Right-of-Way Acquisition	Summer 2017
Begin Construction	Spring 2018
Open to Traffic	Spring 2022