

## Project Schedule

NCDOT has started the planning and engineering studies in order to document existing conditions within the project study area and determine the need for the project. The findings of these initial studies and comments received at the workshop, as well as those that are mailed in, will help NCDOT to develop project alternatives that will be evaluated in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. To obtain more citizen input on the next phase of the project, NCDOT anticipates holding a second Citizens Informational Workshop to present design concepts for the project in the Spring of 2012. Dates for major milestones are shown below.

Project Planning and Design Studies.....	Currently Starting
Citizens Informational Workshop #1.....	June 13, 2011
• to seek public input before starting any design work	
Prepare Design Alternatives.....	Fall 2011
Citizens Informational Workshop #2.....	Spring 2012
• to seek public input on design alternatives	
Draft Environmental Impact Statement.....	Summer 2014
• presents analysis of detailed alternatives and their impacts	
Public Hearing.....	Fall 2014
• provides more information on each alternative and seeks public input	
Final Environmental Impact Statement.....	Spring 2016
• presents NCDOT's recommended alternative	
Record of Decision.....	Summer 2016
• presents NCDOT's final decision	
Right-of-Way Acquisition Begins.....	2020
Construction Begins.....	Currently Unfunded

## Comments, Questions or Concerns

The NCDOT realizes individuals and businesses close to a proposed project want to be informed of the potential impacts the project might have on their homes and businesses. However, exact information is not available at this stage of the planning process. Additional environmental and design studies will be performed before any right of way limits for the proposed project can be established. More detailed information will be available and presented to the public after preliminary study corridors have been developed.

To obtain the most up to date information on the Independence Boulevard Extension Project, please visit the project website, call the project hotline, or contact Peter Trencansky (URS).

**Need more information?  
Have concerns or comments?**  
Visit the project web site at  
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/IndependenceBlvd/>  
or call the Project Hotline at 1-800-233-6315

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## Independence Boulevard Extension Project

### CITIZENS INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOP JUNE 13, 2011

Welcome to this evening's meeting for the Independence Boulevard Extension Project.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide you with information and obtain your input regarding the proposed project. You will have an opportunity to review study area maps and displays, talk with the project team members, and offer your input.

### Participating in Tonight's Meeting

#### 1. Sign In and Collect Handouts

Sign in at the registration table, pick up a set of handouts and provide your contact information to receive future mailings. Please let us know if you would want to receive project updates.

#### 2. Learn About the Study and Ask Questions

Project displays and other materials are available to help you learn more about the project. Project team members are also present to answer your questions and discuss the project; team members are identified by nametags.

#### 3. Provide Your Input

This information packet includes a comment sheet which includes questions corresponding to this evening's workshop stations. Please feel free to write any additional comments on the maps and displays presented at the stations. We appreciate you taking the time to provide input. The information you provide will help the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) develop the project by including input from all stakeholders prior to project decisions being made. Please submit your comments tonight or mail your comments to the address on the comment sheet by **July 15, 2011**.

### Project History and Status

The Independence Boulevard Extension project has been included in local transportation plans since the first plan was created in 1972, and is currently included in the *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan*. The extension of Independence Boulevard is also a component of the Wilmington Urban Loop (which is one of the urban highway loops created and funded by the North Carolina General Assembly in the 1989 Highway Trust Fund legislation). NCDOT conducted a feasibility study of the proposed project in July 2002. The project was then included in the NCDOT's 2004-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and is currently included in the 2009-2015 TIP as project number U-4434

### Tonight's Workshop Stations

- Show us Where you Live and Work
- Project Presentation
- Project Background
- Study Area and General Needs for the Project
- Study Process and Project Schedule
- Citizens Comments

### Description of the Project

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is proposing to construct a new road in Wilmington, North Carolina. Located within the central portion of the City of Wilmington, the proposed 1.7-mile long roadway would be an extension of existing Independence Boulevard (in the vicinity of the Covil Avenue and Montgomery Avenue corridor) from the intersection with Randall Parkway to US 74 (Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway). Overpasses and interchanges will be considered at multiple locations along the project. Additional lanes along Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway may be needed for continuous connection with nearby interchanges at Kerr Avenue and 23rd Street. NCDOT will also consider improvements at two CSX railroad crossings.

### General Need for Project

Needs identified for the Independence Boulevard Extension include the following:

- Deficient North-South Regional Roadway Connectivity
  - only one major north-south road (College Road) connects all of the major east-west roads
- Deficient North-South System Capacity
  - inability of all north-south roads (combined) to meet the traffic needs in central Wilmington
- Deficient Linkage Within and Through New Hanover County
  - Wilmington has poor connections to other transportation facilities (airports, railroad hubs, ports)

### Local, Regional and State Plans

The Independence Boulevard Extension is included in the following local, regional and state plans:

#### Wilmington Thoroughfare Plan

The Independence Boulevard Extension project has been included in the Wilmington Thoroughfare Plan since the first plan was created in 1972, and is included in the most recent plan developed in 2005. The Wilmington Thoroughfare plan was created to serve as a basis for transportation improvements in the Wilmington area due to changes in the population and travel patterns. The project would provide relief to College Road and reduce traffic pressure on residential streets that are being used for cut-through traffic.



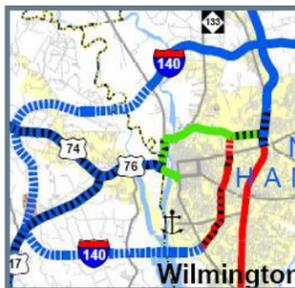
#### Wilmington Urban Area MPO—Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan

The Independence Boulevard Extension is included in the recently adopted Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation as one of five designated highest-priority congestion mitigation projects. The project is also noted as an important freight connection and a portion of a larger regional roadway network that combined with other projects would create a comprehensive transportation network connecting Brunswick and New Hanover Counties.



#### NCDOT Strategic Highway Corridors

NCDOT has established a vision for North Carolina that includes developing a network of safe and reliable high-speed facilities to accommodate statewide and regional travel. The NC Board of Transportation adopted the Strategic Highway Corridor Vision Plan in 2004 which identifies Independence Boulevard as a connection serving I-40, Wilmington International Airport and the Port of Wilmington. For more information on NCDOT Strategic Highway Corridors, please visit: <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/tpb/shc/>



### Project Cost

Funding for right of way acquisition is scheduled to begin in 2020 and construction of the proposed project is not currently funded in the State Transportation Improvement Program. The total estimated cost for the project is approximately \$58 million, which includes roughly \$26 million for construction and \$30 million to purchase the right of way for the project.

## Project Study Area

