



## Project Planning & Environmental Process

Overall, the project planning and environmental process can be divided into the following six major steps (NCDOT is now in the early stages of Step 3):



## Public Involvement Program

Public Involvement is an important part of the US 64 Improvements project, as it enables interested individuals and groups to participate in the planning process and keep up-to-date on overall project activities. These activities include the following:

- Newsletters describe current project information.
- Citizens Information Workshops provide an opportunity for the general public to discuss the project and current developments with NCDOT, and provide feedback.
- Small group meetings with community groups or organizations can be arranged with NCDOT to address specific issues. The meeting sponsor is responsible for arranging a location and notifying participants.
- Toll-free project hotline and a dedicated e-mail address provide direct contact between citizens and the project study team.

## Contact Us

If you did not receive this newsletter by mail and would like to be added to the mailing list, please call the project **Hotline at 1-(800) 263-2434** and ask to be added to the US 64 mailing list. If you call after hours, please leave a recorded message.

If you have comments or questions, call the project Hotline, send an email to: [US64Improvements@](mailto:US64Improvements@)

[pbworld.com](http://pbworld.com) or write to the project team. All correspondence should refer to TIP Project R-2544/5. Address letters to:

**Mr. Reginald Scales**  
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## CITIZENS INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOPS

**Date:** April 27, 2009  
**Time:** 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm  
**Place:** Tyrrell County Public Library  
 Columbia, NC

**Date:** April 28, 2009  
**Time:** 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm  
**Place:** East Lake Community Center  
 East Lake, NC

The NCDOT invites citizens, local officials, and interested organizations to the workshops to ask questions, learn more about the project and its schedule, and provide input to the planning staff. No formal presentations are planned. Anyone is invited to approach project planners to begin discussions. The public is invited to arrive at any time during the workshop hours of 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm. NCDOT will display maps of the project area, and staff will be available to answer questions and record comments regarding the project.

## What is the US 64 Project Study?

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is in the process of evaluating a proposed project to widen the 27.3-mile segment of US 64 between Columbia (in Tyrrell County) and US 264 (in Dare County, near Manns Harbor). The project proposes to widen this portion of two-lane road to a multiple-lane highway and replace the Lindsey C. Warren Bridge across the Alligator River with a new bridge. The proposed project is funded by the state of North Carolina. Therefore, NCDOT will comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), which requires NCDOT to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that provides an analysis of both adverse and beneficial impacts that the project may have on the social, economic, and natural environments. The EIS will describe project alternatives, provide a detailed description of each alternative, evaluate impacts, and select a preferred alternative.

The purpose of this newsletter is to update the public on the status of the project, describe the Purpose and Need, and provide information on corridor alternatives selected for detailed study.

Also, NCDOT wishes to notify citizens of two upcoming workshops to discuss the project.

## Project Status

Since the March 2007 Citizen Informational Workshops, NCDOT has been busy coordinating with the Project Merger Team to establish the project Purpose and Need and select alternatives for detailed study in the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Project Merger Team, which is comprised of NCDOT and numerous state and federal resource agencies, follows a process to streamline the project development and permitting processes, agreed to by the USACE, NCDENR (DWQ, DCM), and NCDOT

and supported by other stakeholder agencies. At specific points in the process, each project team member and their agency agrees to the decisions made. Concurrence points must be achieved in the proper order, as follows:

- **Concurrence Point 1:** Purpose and Need and Study Area Defined;
- **Concurrence Point 2:** Detailed Study Alternatives Carried Forward (DSA)
- **Concurrence Point 2A:** Bridging Decisions and Refine Alternatives Alignment
- **Concurrence Point 3:** LEDPA ("least environmentally damaging practicable alternative") /Preferred Alternative Selection
- **Concurrence Point 4A:** Avoidance and Minimization Measures
- **Concurrence Point 4B:** Review of Hydraulic Issues
- **Concurrence Point 4C:** Permit Drawings Review

The Merger Team reached concurrence on the Project Purpose and Need (CP 1) on June 16, 2007:

1. Consistency with North Carolina's Strategic Highway Corridor Plan (which seeks long-term interconnectivity of consistent transportation corridors in North Carolina) and the Intrastate Highway System. North Carolina's Strategic Highway Corridors plan designates the US 64 corridor as a multi-lane expressway.
2. Reduce US 64 hurricane evacuation time to better meet state clearance goals in the project study area. US 64 is a primary North Carolina Hurricane Evacuation route for the Outer Banks and northeastern North Carolina. A hurricane evacuation analysis concluded that the existing highway is inadequate to provide satisfactory hurricane evacuation.
3. Maintain/Improve a bridge across the Alligator River that meets the needs of highway users.

On October 16, 2008 the Merger Team reached concurrence on Detailed Study Alternatives to Carry Forward (CP 2). The Study Alternatives are shown on Pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter. The next step in the Merger process will be Concurrence Point 2A, when the Team will review significant bridging decisions and proposed study alignments. As public input is a consideration for CP 2A decisions, the upcoming Citizen Information Workshops are important.



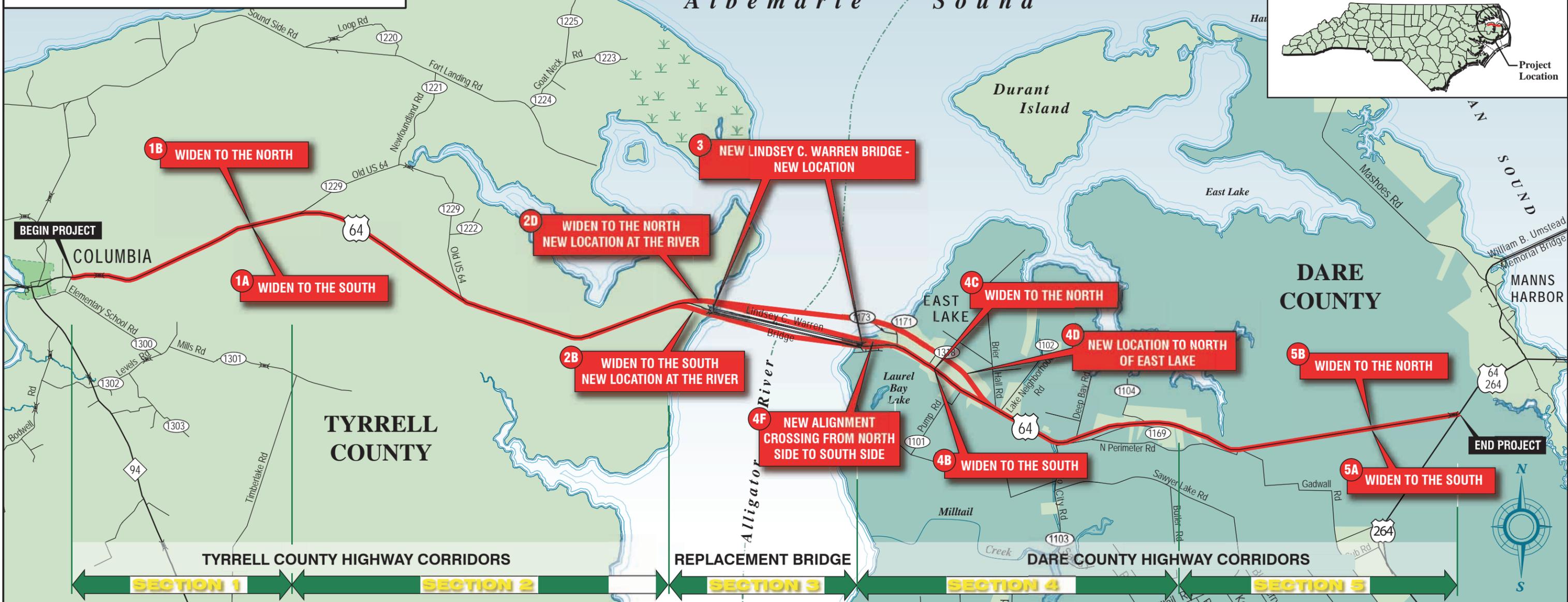
# US 64 IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVES MAP

- Legend**
- Project Corridor Alternatives
  - Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge



County: TYRRELL / DARE COUNTIES    WBS: 35487  
 Div: 1    Date: April 2009  
 TIP Nos.: R2544 & R2545

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS  
 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS BRANCH



## Alternatives Selected for Detailed Study

NCDOT has selected 15 study corridors and three bridge alternative corridors for detailed study in the EIS. A No-Build and Best Fit alternative will also be evaluated. Because of the multiple managed and protected resources, the 27.3-mile study corridor has been divided into five distinct sections (see map above) to aid the study team in evaluating impacts to the natural and built environments. The corridors under consideration include widening to the north and south of the existing roadway (Sections 1 and 5), as well as widening and/or new location corridors (Sections 2, 3, and 4). Every alternative studies a 4-lane, median-divided highway. Within Tyrrell County, 23-foot and 46-foot medians will be evaluated for each corridor. Within Dare County, only 23-foot medians will be evaluated. Corridor design criteria are listed with the location of each corridor and its general descriptions shown on the map above.

## Corridor Design Criteria

Each corridor was developed in accordance with NCDOT and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Official (AASHTO) standards. The general roadway characteristics include:

- Four-lane divided highway
- Highway Cross Sections and Bridge Type:
  - 46-foot depressed median (Tyrrell County)
  - 23-foot raised median (Tyrrell and Dare Counties)
  - Single 78-foot wide high-rise bridge with two travel lanes in each direction, separated by a concrete median barrier. Inside shoulder will be 4-foot wide, and outside shoulder will be 10 feet wide to accommodate bicycles.
- Design speed of 60 miles per hour
- Maintain partial control of access (defined as one access point per parcel)
- All existing intersections with US 64 will remain at-grade

## Current Project Schedule

The project schedule includes the following past, current and future activities:

- **June 2008** - Approve Project Purpose and Need
- **Summer 2008 to Spring 2009** - Identify widening alternatives and any corridors where a highway on new location will be considered.
- **October 2008** - Select alternatives for detailed study.
- **April 2009** - Conduct Citizens Informational Workshops.
- **October 2009** - Bridging decisions and refine alternative alignments.
- **2010** - Develop a Draft EIS for public review and comment.
- **2011 - 2012** - Select the Preferred Alternative, and submit Final EIS for public review and comment.
- **2012** - Prepare Record of Decision and submit for public review.
- **2013** - Begin right-of-way acquisition for areas of highway widening.
- **2013** - Begin construction of the new Lindsey C. Warren Bridge and its approaches.
- **Construction activities** for widened sections of US 64 are not yet funded in the 2007-2013 Transportation Improvement Program. Therefore, no timeframe for highway construction can be provided at the time of this newsletter.