



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

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LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

April 3, 2003

RECEIVED

MEMORANDUM

APR 15 2003

TO: Local Government Officials

FROM: Secretary Lyndo Tippett

**CHAPEL HILL
ENGINEERING DEPT.**

SUBJECT: Potential Local Projects for Proposed *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* Program

NCDOT is requesting your help to identify potential projects to be funded from the proposed *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* initiative announced by Governor Easley February 19th. *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* is a major transportation initiative that will provide \$700 million of additional funds for maintenance, modernization and public transportation improvements across the state. Since the Governor's announcement, Senate and House leaders have introduced legislation to authorize the program. The purpose of this letter is to provide you background on the initiative and to ask for your assistance in identifying potential road projects.

In the last 12 years, the primary focus for the department's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) has been to complete projects authorized in the Highway Trust Fund. All of the Highway Trust Fund TIP projects are new road construction or the addition of new lanes to existing roads. These projects are the most complex types of projects to plan, design and permit and do not necessarily address the broad range of needed projects in the state. In recent years, we have had many requests for smaller, "big bang for the buck" projects that can improve safety and mobility, reduce congestion or stabilize the condition of our existing infrastructure, but very little funding available to respond. *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* not only helps to fill this gap but also offers significant economic benefits. Using nationally-based information, we project that *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* could result in up to 30,000 jobs over the next two years.

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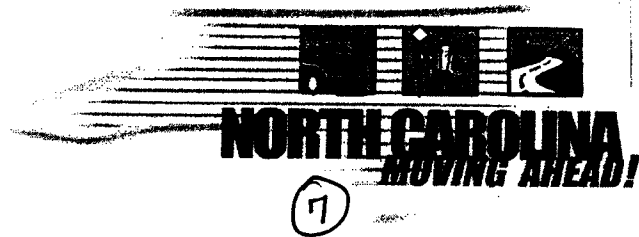
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The General Assembly is considering the Governor's proposal and we hope that they will act favorably. Both the transportation improvements and economic stimulus goals are high priorities for NCDOT. If the program is approved by the General Assembly, NCDOT will begin implementation immediately. To meet this goal we are initiating contingency implementation planning to identify candidate projects so that we can anticipate procedures and resources needed. Therefore, the department has developed draft project selection criteria that we will be using internally to identify potential projects. It is clear that projects will need to be small (probably in the \$500,000 to \$2.5 million range) and uncomplicated to meet the program goals. We will be looking for projects that require minimal environmental review, no more than very small amounts of new right-of-way and the simplest and quickest types of permitting. Attached is a copy of our draft project selection criteria. We anticipate that these may change somewhat during the next month, but the general goals and types of projects outlined should remain consistent with this draft.

We know that local governments have potential projects that can fit these project selection criteria and we want to consider these local projects for *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* should this program be approved. Please use these criteria to begin screening potential local projects that you think meet the proposed goals of *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* so that we can consider these needs in our contingency planning. Attached is a simple form for you to use to submit your recommendations. These lists should be sent to the NCDOT division engineer for your area at the name and address shown on the attached list. As the type and number of projects is a critical first step in our implementation planning, please submit your list by the deadline of May 2, 2003.

As proposed, *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* includes \$70 million of additional funding for non-road improvements. Statewide rail, aviation, bicycle, pedestrian and ferry projects will be drawn from NCDOT-identified priorities. A substantial portion of the public transportation funding will be used to fulfill the state share commitment for construction of regional rail systems in Charlotte and Triangle, and to begin the necessary planning in the Triad. The Public Transportation Division works with local transit operators to maintain priority lists for new state and federal public transportation funds. And transit projects will be identified using these existing lists. Some funds will be reserved for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The process for selecting these projects has not been finalized.

The department is working diligently to assure passage of *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* and we want to work with you to be sure that the improvements authorized address local and state needs whenever possible. If you have questions, there is additional information about *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* on our website at www.ncdot.org.



NORTH CAROLINA: MOVING AHEAD!
HIGHWAYS

Program Goal

The goal of *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* is to improve safety and mobility on North Carolina's highways by preserving, modernizing, and improving maintenance of the state highway system.

Projects selected for *North Carolina: Moving Ahead!* should serve to:

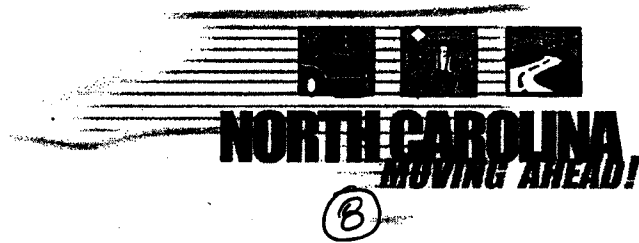
- Enhance safety
- Reduce congestion
- Reduce accidents
- Reduce fatal crashes
- Upgrade pavement widths and shoulders
- Extend pavement life of roads
- Provide smooth pavements
- Rehabilitate or replace deficient bridges
- Improve horizontal and vertical alignments
- Provide adequate drainage

Project Selection Criteria

Criteria to be considered in project selection:

- Functional or safety improvements
- Traffic flow
- Traffic volume
- Crash history
- Pavement condition
- Pavement width
- Shoulder width
- Roadway cross section
- Bridge sufficiency rating
- Bridge functional obsolescence (width)
- Off-site detour required for bridge replacement
- Pipe or culvert condition

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Other criteria to be considered in project selection:

- Environmental impacts
- Right-of-way requirements
- Not currently funded in TIP
- Ability to complete or have under contract in two years

Program Outcome

The following is a list of the types of improvements that may meet program goals; however, it is not intended to be all-inclusive. Each project will be examined to determine project scope and to determine if the project satisfies selection criteria.

- Widening two-lane roads
- Widening narrow shoulders
- Providing turn lanes
- Providing vertical and/or horizontal realignments
- Resurfacing and/or rehabilitation of roads
- Eliminating pavement edge drop offs
- Installing/upgrading roadway lighting
- Installing/upgrading pavement markings and pavement markers
- Installing/upgrading traffic signals
- Providing sight distance improvements
- Providing signing improvements
- Providing channelization
- Providing/upgrading impact attenuators and breakaway devices
- Installing guardrail
- Removal of roadside hazards
- Replacement of substandard, narrow and/or deficient bridges
- Upgrading under-designed and outdated drainage systems
- Stabilize slopes

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