

Confident Scope and Cost Estimate (CSCE) Form

When to Complete the CSCE

This form is to be completed by a project team at the appropriate time to memorialize a Confident Scope and Cost Estimate for the purpose of reducing cost increases (at least due to scope creep) and delays due to funding availability thereby maintaining a stable STIP.

Completion Guidance

A field guide for preparing a clear, complete, and review-ready CSCE form.

Purpose Use this guide while completing the CSCE form. It follows the form from top to bottom and explains what information belongs in each field, table, checkbox, and signature area.

General completion principles

- Timing: Below are examples of project types and what might be an appropriate time to complete the CSCE.
 - Basic project (ex. turn lane, signalization) – Express Design and cost estimate required
 - Complex project (ex. widening; project with one alternative) – Design Recommendation Plan Set and cost estimate required
 - Larger project (ex. multiple alternatives) – LEDPA, Public Involvement
 - Required for project to move from back half of STIP to front half of STIP
- Cost verification tool has indicator to be selected when official estimate updates are being submitted.
- Use the most current, verified project information available at the time the form is prepared.
- Keep entries concise but specific enough that a reviewer can understand the project purpose, scope, cost, schedule, and major risks without relying on unstated assumptions.
- Where a field does not apply, use a clear notation such as “N/A” rather than leaving the reviewer to determine whether the field was overlooked.
- Attach supporting documentation when it materially improves clarity, particularly for complex risks or other information that cannot be summarized effectively on the form.

Important The form itself defines the required content but does not prescribe every office-specific naming, coding, approval, or documentation convention. Follow applicable NCDOT/unit procedures where those details are not stated on the form.

1. Project Identification and Ownership

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Date	Enter the date the CSCE is completed or finalized for review. Use a consistent date format throughout the document.
Project ID	Enter the official project identifier used for the project. Verify the identifier against the current project record before submission.
Project Name	Enter the official or commonly recognized project name. Use wording that is consistent with current project documentation.
Project Division	Enter the NCDOT Division associated with the project.
Project Location	Identify the project location clearly enough to orient the reviewer. Use the project's established location description (for example, route/corridor and locality) where available.
NCDOT DE	Enter the name of the NCDOT Division Engineer (DE) associated with the project.
PM	Enter the Project Manager's name and unit, as indicated by the form.
Consultant PM	If applicable, enter the consultant Project Manager's name and firm name. Use "N/A" when there is no consultant PM.
Project Description	Provide a brief, plain-language summary of what the project is. Keep this top-line description short; the detailed purpose/objective and scope are documented in the sections below.
Primary Funding Sources	Identify the project's primary funding source(s). The form provides State, Federal, and Local as examples; include all primary sources that apply.
Project Lead	• Check the single lead category that best represents where the project is managed: Division, PMU, Structures, Rail, or Other. • If "Other" is selected, identify the lead organization or group clearly.

2. Project Description - Purpose and Objective

This section explains why the project is needed and what it is intended to accomplish. The form specifically prompts the preparer to discuss the adequacy of current facilities and other relevant needs or drivers.

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Project Purpose and Objective	• Describe the core transportation need or problem the project is intended to address. • Discuss current and projected conditions when relevant, including whether existing facilities are adequate to handle present and projected traffic. • Where applicable, address needed capacity and the level of service for existing and proposed facilities. • Include other relevant project drivers identified on the form, such as system linkage, economic development, legislation, modal interrelationships, roadway deficiencies, and safety. • Describe the objective fully enough that the proposed scope can be traced directly back to the stated need.

Good practice: Write this section as a “why” statement. A reviewer should be able to read it and understand the problem being solved before reading the detailed construction scope.

Other considerations – Documenting this point is a project-by-project decision, and the following are considerations that might impact a project scope and cost:

- Sufficient Stakeholder Engagement
- Project Scoping Meeting
- Risk Assessment Worksheet
- Agency Coordination
- Complete Streets Recommendations
- Railroad Coordination
- Right of Way impacts
- Utility impacts
- Geotechnical Recommendations
- Historic or Archeologic Resources
- Roadway Typical Section
- Traffic Capacity
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Easements
- Hydraulic Recommendations
- Structures Recommendations
- Constructability
- Agreements
- Septic/Wells
- Etc.

3. Project Description - Scope of Project Work

This section defines the construction work that will be performed to satisfy the project goals. The form directs the preparer to list the major project improvements and be as specific as possible.

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Type of project	State the basic project type, such as widening or new location, using the terminology applicable to the project.
Typical section - existing and proposed	Summarize the existing roadway/facility configuration and the proposed typical section. Include the features needed to understand the physical change.
Beginning and end of project	Identify the project limits clearly, including the beginning and ending points or other established termini.
Major Y Line typical section(s)	Describe major Y Line typical sections where they are part of the project. If none apply, indicate N/A.
Interchange/intersection configuration(s)	Describe proposed interchange or intersection configurations when changes are included. Focus on the major configuration changes that affect scope.
Project length	Provide the project length using the project's standard unit of measure and current verified limits.
Complete Streets elements	Identify Complete Streets elements included in the proposed project, as applicable.
Other major improvements	Include any other major construction elements necessary to define the work, even if they are not explicitly listed in the form prompt.

4. Delivery and Environmental Information

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Project Delivery Method	• Check the applicable delivery method: Design/Bid/Build, DB, Progressive DB, CMGC, or Other. • If "Other" is selected, enter the delivery method in the space provided.
Environmental Document Type	• Check the applicable document type: CE, EA/FONSI, EIS/ROD, MCDC, or SEA/FONSI. • Use the document designation that reflects the current project approach/status at the time the form is prepared.
Reason (for *MCDC / *SEA/FONSI)	When the starred document type requires an explanation, briefly state the reason in the space provided. Keep the explanation specific and tied to the selected document type.

5. Verified Project Cost Estimates

Enter the verified cost components shown on the form. The amounts should be internally consistent and reflect the current project understanding at the time of completion.

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
ROW	Enter the verified Right of Way (ROW) cost estimate.
Utilities	Enter the verified utilities cost estimate.
Construction	Enter the verified construction cost estimate.
Total Project Cost Estimate	Enter the total project cost estimate. Confirm that the total is consistent with the component estimates shown on the form and any applicable project cost documentation.

Check before routing Confirm that the cost figures are current and that the scope described elsewhere on the CSCE is the scope represented by the estimate.

6. Potential Project Risks

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Potential Project Risks	• List major potential risks that could affect the project budget and/or schedule. • State each risk in concrete terms. Focus on the event or condition that could occur and the project impact it could create. • Prioritize material risks rather than filling the space with minor routine issues. • For complex projects, attach the project risk register instead of trying to reproduce an overly detailed risk analysis in the form. • If a risk register is attached, make that clear in the form and check the additional-documentation box near the acknowledgment.

Useful risk wording Use a cause/event/impact structure when practical—for example: “Potential utility conflicts may require relocation coordination, which could affect ROW or construction schedule.” This keeps the risk specific without turning the CSCE into a full risk register.

7. Schedule

The schedule table is intended to summarize the relevant PDN stage, the proposed milestones, and the scheduled completion date. The form includes an instruction to modify the table while keeping two rows.

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
PDN Stage	Identify the applicable PDN stage for the schedule information being shown. Use the project’s current terminology and stage designation.
Proposed Milestones	List the key milestone(s) that define the work or decision points for the corresponding PDN stage. Use milestones that are meaningful for project delivery and review.
Scheduled Completion Date	Enter the currently scheduled completion date for the corresponding stage or milestone entry.

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Table structure	Modify the table as needed to fit the project information, but retain two rows as directed on the form. Keep the entries concise and aligned across all three columns.

Consistency check Make sure the schedule summary is consistent with the scope, delivery method, risk discussion, and any current project schedule used by the team.

8. Acknowledgement and Supporting Documentation

Form Field / Portion	How to Complete It
Acknowledgement	Before signing, each required reviewer/signatory should confirm that the scope of work, schedule, and budget have been reviewed and that the CSCE represents the information known at that time.
Additional documentation checkbox	Check this box when supporting documentation is included with the CSCE. Examples may include a risk register or other attachments referenced in the form.
Project Role	Use the project role shown in the signature table. The form currently provides rows for Division Engineer (DE) and MPO/RPO. The MPO/RPO signature is desired but not required.
Name (Print)	Print or type the name of the person signing for the listed project role.
Signature	Provide the required signature for the listed project role using the accepted signature method for the routing process.
Date	Enter the date the individual signs/acknowledges the CSCE.

Final Review Checklist

Use this checklist before routing the form for acknowledgement/signature.

Review Item
☐ All project identification fields are complete and use current project information.
☐ The short project description is consistent with the detailed purpose/objective and scope.
☐ The purpose/objective clearly explains why the project is needed.
☐ The scope identifies the major physical improvements and addresses each applicable item prompted by the
☐ The selected delivery method and environmental document type reflect the current project approach.
☐ ROW, utilities, construction, and total project cost estimates are current and internally consistent.
☐ Major budget/schedule risks are listed, or a risk register is attached for a complex project.
☐ The schedule table includes PDN stage, proposed milestones, and scheduled completion date, and retains
☐ The additional-documentation checkbox is marked when attachments are included.
☐ Required names, signatures, and dates are complete in the acknowledgement table.

Source note This guide is based on the fields, prompts, checkboxes, tables, and acknowledgement language contained in the attached Confident Scope and Cost Estimate Form. It is intended as completion guidance and does not replace any applicable NCDOT/unit procedures or approval requirements.