

ATLAS Policy Frequently Asked Questions

What projects does the policy apply to?

This policy currently applies to all projects that have not gone to let and have a project site in Connect Scoping and Preconstruction. What projects does this policy not apply to? Small projects, specialty projects, and local administered projects do not currently have a Connect Preconstruction site as a standard. The IPD and related teams will be tasked to investigate how key documents for those special projects will be handled in the future.

What deliverables should be uploaded through ATLAS?

NCDOT staff and consultants should upload through ATLAS the final project documents, deliverables, and spatial data, as currently listed in ATLAS Comprehensive Document list. Currently the ATLAS Comprehensive Document list does not include design files. However, one of the upcoming enhancements will provide an automated capture of files loaded into ProjectWise. The ATLAS team will work with the business units to define this process. Do project deliverables previously completed need to be uploaded to ATLAS? To enable accurate reporting, any deliverables completed since the beginning of 2021 are required and are a priority for uploading in the ATLAS interface. It is strongly encouraged for project managers and discipline leads to upload prior deliverables for all active projects so that they can be included in program delivery analysis and so the project data collected is available for other uses. The ATLAS team can offer manpower to get ATLAS deliverables uploaded. Please send a request through ATLAS@ncdot.gov

Will someone know if I don't use ATLAS?

The ATLAS team has been asked by NCDOT management to provide a monthly update on use of ATLAS, including comparison of deliverables loaded through ATLAS versus deliverables that should have been loaded through ATLAS, but were loaded directly through SharePoint.

Why do I need to load deliverables through ATLAS?

Consistent project documentation and data records are key to integrated project delivery and quality standards at NCDOT. The ATLAS Workbench serves as a gateway to upload files to Connect Scoping and Preconstruction project sites that enforces document and metadata standards. These new standards ensure that key final project deliverables are stored on Connect consistently across projects so the status of deliverables can be easily queried, spatial and other business intelligence can be gathered, and collaboration with internal and external project stakeholders is more seamless across all activities. Implementation of this policy will contribute to analysis of project data, efficient retrieval of project documentation, harvesting of environmental data for use on other projects, and for advancing model development.

Why can't I just put my documents on SharePoint as I always have?

Have you ever looked for a document and found three different versions of the same document and wondered, which one is the latest/correct version? If a deliverable is loaded directly through SharePoint (Connect Scoping or Connect Preconstruction), then it is not guaranteed that the correct documentation metadata is populated, making cross projecting reporting on document status very cumbersome.

ATLAS assigns correct documentation metadata to your files when they are uploaded and populates this key information on the user's behalf. This will ensure that there is consistent information across projects to address current and future reporting needs.

Additionally, the Workbench links your documents to spatial data also uploaded through the ATLAS Workbench. Adding this spatial context to projects will allow NCDOT to assess project results and inform other projects regionally.

I may have several versions, addendums and/or supplements to a final deliverable. How does ATLAS handle that?

Although the last document uploaded for a particular document is the only one visible in the Workbench, ATLAS has the capabilities to store up to 10 versions of the same document in SharePoint. So, if you have a revised final document, upload it again "over top" of the old one, and ATLAS will store both, with the newest one being visible.

There are other documents or data uploads that I think are important to project delivery but are not included in the Workbench. Can items be added to the Workbench?

Yes. If a subject matter expert believes additional documents or other data should be added to the Workbench, this can be added in the appropriate tab. Because the Workbench functions on standardized naming conventions and data formats, please consult with ATLAS@ncdot.gov so we can define these items and place them in the ATLAS Standards Document so that all users can reference this on other projects.

What do I do if a deliverable is not required for my project?

When you click on each discipline tab in the workbench, there is a yes or no option at the top to indicate if each section is required or not. It is important to note that if you are unsure whether a section should be required, please consult with the appropriate NCDOT business unit or subject matter expert. In addition, if there is a specific question in a section that should be changed from required to not required or vice versa, please contact ATLAS@ncdot.gov.

Are there any naming standards or requirements for files loaded through ATLAS?

Yes. The ATLAS Standards Document defines naming conventions for deliverables and detailed standards for the delivery of project related GIS data.

The ATLAS Workbench Standards Document is a living document and will be updated as PDN business processes are added or updated.

What should I do if I have already loaded a file through SharePoint that should have or was also loaded through ATLAS?

Project Managers should be aware that if a file was uploaded directly to the Preconstruction discipline folder AND to the ATLAS Workbench, then the document may be duplicated in the project files. The ATLAS link should be retained, and the alternatively uploaded document should be deleted. If the document was updated since it was initially finalized in ATLAS, simply reupload the document in the ATLAS Workbench interface and the linked document will be updated on Connect Preconstruction.

Are there other requirements of the ATLAS policy?

Yes. In addition to finalizing project documentation, NCDOT staff and consultants use the ATLAS Workbench to answer key questions about their projects' evaluation, processes, and conclusions. This will allow project indicators to be analyzed and reported upon across the PDN in the future.

NCDOT staff and consultants will use the ATLAS Screening Tool to assess study areas for potential effects on the human and natural environment and gain regional awareness about their project. These GIS-based screening reports capitalize known data points, including data from other DOT projects in the region, to inform Project Scoping activities, the population of the CE checklist, and other business processes.

NCDOT staff and consultants will use the ATLAS Search Tool to access data used to create NCDOT PDN deliverables and gain spatial intelligence about their projects.

When will the next round of ATLAS updates occur?

ATLAS is now on a quarterly update cycle. Any suggestions or edits that are submitted will be rolled into the next quarterly update where feasible. Some minor edits to the Workbench may even be able to be made the same day they are submitted if they don't require IT support.