

NCDOT ATLAS Policy

Streamlining Project Delivery through GIS-based Regional Modeling

Introduction

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT or the Department) is committed to optimizing program performance through streamlining and expediting project development and delivery. The Department is dedicated to accomplishing this goal without sacrificing statutory requirements, public engagement, the environment, or project quality. This continuous effort includes evaluating recommendations for improving procedures, embracing technology improvements, and leveraging data sharing opportunities.

In support of this goal, NCDOT has developed **ATLAS**, which stands for **A**dvancing **T**ransportation through **L**inkages, **A**utomation, and **S**creening. Through use of GIS-based data on a regional level, ATLAS will improve business processes and provide a data access and storage framework to support informed project development. This effort aligns with the Secretary of Transportation's priorities to improve program delivery.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the integration of ATLAS into project development and program delivery. Adherence to this policy will allow NCDOT staff and consultants to better understand and define transportation problems; identify existing resources; recognize issues and constraints; develop potential solutions; and more effectively plan a project's approach and next steps.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all Department staff and consultants supporting all transportation project delivery methods and technical units.

Effective Date

This policy is effective from May 31, 2019. The latest version of referenced publications (i.e., the ATLAS Data Standards Document and ATLAS Guidance) should be used in conjunction with this policy.

Policy

NCDOT's primary mission is to connect people, products, and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability, and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina. NCDOT is a performance-based organization with a strategic, data-driven, decision-making process that is transparent and accountable. NCDOT values innovation and promotes the development and use of new and better solutions.

ATLAS is an essential resource for NCDOT staff and consultants, and it was designed to improve business processes and provide a framework for data. It is an aid to, and not a substitute for, critical thinking and decision making throughout a project's lifecycle. ATLAS is not a replacement for subject matter expertise or field verification.

It is the Department's policy that ATLAS will streamline and expedite project development and delivery. This will be accomplished through use of the ATLAS Screening Tool, Search Tool, and Workbench. Early screening of projects will aid in the identification of issues that may affect scope, schedule, and budget. Access to, and automation of, reports will reduce repetitive manual tasks. A central repository for project deliverables and associated data in a geospatial format will improve efficiency and communication. As data is captured for individual projects, the cache of data available for future projects will grow.

Responsibilities

Successful integration of ATLAS requires NCDOT staff and consultants to be fully vested in embracing process improvements and technology advancements. Accordingly, NCDOT staff and consultants are expected to abide by the following requirements:

- NCDOT staff and consultants will submit all signed documents, project deliverables, reports, and official plan submittals through the ATLAS Workbench. Files will be automatically placed in the correct SharePoint folder. Spatial data will be displayed in the Workbench Map.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will use the ATLAS Workbench to manage their projects. The Workbench steps teams through all facets of the project lifecycle and tracks the progression of a project based on reporting from multiple business units.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will use the ATLAS Screening Tool to assess study areas for potential affects to the human and natural environment. The Screening Tool will help project teams quickly understand a project's scope and schedule. It will provide information essential to a Scoping meeting and for completion of the CE checklist.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will use the ATLAS Search Tool to help create project deliverables by searching for relevant data and downloading the files within the study area, such as an environmental base map for a project's Natural Resources Technical Report or Indirect and Cumulative Effects document.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will follow the basic data standards (i.e., file naming conventions, spatial data standards, and document and data submission protocols) identified in the *ATLAS Data Standards Document*. These basic data standards will ensure that spatial data and reports received by NCDOT can be incorporated into tools developed by NCDOT.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will include acknowledgement of, and planned adherence to, the ATLAS Policy and basic data standards in contract documents.
- NCDOT staff and consultants will ensure appropriate involvement from technical units and Subject Matter Experts.

- NCDOT staff and consultants will communicate issues and opportunities for improvement to the ATLAS team. The success of ATLAS is reliant on active input from NCDOT staff and consultants.

Contact

- For questions or comments, contact ATLAS at Atlas@ncdot.gov.
