



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

05/23/2022

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC, 20590

Subject: Certification of Financial Contribution 2022 MPDG Application:
I-85 FUNDing Transportation Utilizing Resilient, Equitable, Solutions
(I-85 FUTURES)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The North Carolina Department of Transportation wishes to express its full support for the I-85 FUNDing Transportation Utilizing Resilient, Equitable, Solutions (as known as I-85 FUTURES) project under the United States Department of Transportation's Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) program. This investment in the infrastructure of the North Carolina Piedmont will have a long-lasting, positive impact on the economy, mobility, equity, and safety of the region. This portion of I-85 from Charlotte, NC to Atlanta, GA has been dubbed "Charlanta," and powers the nation's third largest economic region, as well as being a major travel route moving people and goods.

This section of I-85, when completed in 1965, split existing communities, creating inequities that still need to be addressed. Comprehensive improvements in the efficiency, equity, and resiliency of this vital section of I-85 are needed to support all the traveling public and move regional transportation into a sustainable future. To address the inequities that were created by building the interstate, NCDOT is committed to providing improvements to bicycle and pedestrian accommodations at interchanges and overpasses, including walking and bicycling, in the form of sidewalks, bicycle lanes, or multi-use paths and greenways as well as the consideration of potential transit accommodations. Providing these multi-modal options will help to restore some of the connectivity of communities severed by the interstate.

The growing combination of through traffic and commuter traffic has led to congestion and more frequent crashes along I-85. Congestion experienced along this Strategic Highway Corridor (SHC) is not only a function of capacity deficiencies, but also

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substandard design elements such as poor sight distances, narrow median shoulders, and poor entrance/exit ramp designs. To address these deficiencies, NCDOT, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has proposed improvements to I-85 including widening the road from six to eight lanes.

I-85 FUTURES also proposes to install fiber optic cable from the NC/SC border to US 74 at Kings Mountain, which will enhance high-speed broadband service within this critical corridor. New access to quality, high-speed broadband could strengthen the economic competitiveness of rural areas and communities. In addition, NCDOT is reviewing locations for providing zero emission vehicle infrastructure along I-85. This infrastructure improvement will provide capacity for current and future needs, allow for modernization of public safety centers, and facilitate the safe deployment of connected and autonomous vehicles.

The project is reflected in our mission statement:

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina.

To that end, the NCDOT will fund the I-85 FUTURES project in the amount of \$323,270,000 (2022\$) towards a successful MPDG grant from the state funded North Carolina Highway Trust Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of the I-85 FUTURES project for the 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program.

If NCDOT can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (919)707-4320 or via e-mail at sjking@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Stephanie King
Chief Financial Officer