

North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Division of Highways  
Transportation Mobility and Safety Division

**Standard Practice  
for  
NC Route Designations**

The purpose of this standard practice is to establish guidelines for NC Routes Designation. The procedure set forth in the Standard Practice for NC Routes Designation shall be utilized in the engineering investigation and evaluation for a requested route:

- 1) A review should be completed by the Regional Traffic Engineer and/or staff (RTE) for any anticipated route modifications. If review determines that a route modification is required and meets the appropriate criteria as listed below in the portion of this practice under NOTE, the RTE will hold discussions concerning the potential route modification with the Signing and Delineation Unit, Division Staff and any additional group or agency directly affected by the possible modification.
- 2) If a proposed NC route is developed through a STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) process, a plan review meeting for the TIP Project is held with the Signing and Delineation Unit, Division Staff, RTE, Transportation Planning Branch, Program Development Branch, and Highway Design Branch. The proposed plans are presented for comments, to include but not limited to route designation changes and/or additions.
- 3) All formal requests for designation, addition, relocation or deletion of NC routes shall be submitted to the Transportation Mobility and Safety Division (TMSD) Staff Engineer with a copy to the Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator on the [Route Change Request Form](#) with a map indicating location for initial approval from State Traffic Engineer.
- 4) Once the State Traffic Engineer has signed the [Route Change Request Form](#), the TMSD Staff Engineer will notify the RTE and Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator of approval by providing the signed copy of the Route Change Request Form. If request is denied, the Route Change Request Form will be returned with an explanation attached.
- 5) Once receiving initial approval, RTE will compile and complete the information on the [Segment Worksheet](#) for route change requests. A map will accompany the worksheet. The segments located on the labeled map will correspond with the segments listed in the work sheet. (Ex A, B, C). This worksheet is to be submitted to the TMSD Staff Engineer with a copy to the Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator.
- 6) The NCDOT (RTE or Division) must obtain a resolution from municipal officials, county commissions, Rural Planning Organizations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations approving NC route modification, as appropriate. The resolution(s) is to be submitted to the TMSD Staff Engineer. (Note: RTE may incorporate any required municipal concurrence speed zone ordinances within the resolutions at this time.)

- 7) NC Routes are not required to be approved by FHWA or AASHTO; however, will be processed through Interstate/ US Route Committee. Please see "Review of Policy, Procedure, and AASHTO Applications for Interstate and US Routes" for details concerning the AASHTO Interstate/ US Route Committees referenced in this document. Once the Segment Worksheet is completed, the AASHTO Interstate/ US Oversight (NCDOT) Committee reviews the route from a statewide perspective to ensure the route follows all necessary guidelines and the addition or modification is in the best interest of North Carolina.
- 8) If State Traffic Engineer and Route Committees approve the route modification, the TMS Staff Engineer will notify the Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator of route approval. The Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator will update the North Carolina Truck Network (NCTN) map, TEAAS, the Route Change webpage and notify the appropriate personnel.
- 9) RTE is responsible for writing any appropriate ordinances for the route modification utilizing the TEPL Practice H-11 (Highway Ordinances). The only ordinances the RTE will not be responsible for are the Route Change and STAA ordinances (Ordinance Type 22 and Ordinance Type 40-46). The Route Change and STAA ordinances will be written by the Traffic Ordinance Program Coordinator.

NOTE: For NC routes follow

### **[TE-PR-3] N.C. ROUTE NUMBERS**

- a. The NCDOT has full responsibility for establishing N.C. routes. Normally this relates to removing a road from the secondary road system and placing it on the primary road system.
- b. N.C. numbered routes shall have numbers not to exceed 999. N.C. route numbers shall not be in conflict with interstate numbers or U.S. numbers.
- c. Requests for the addition, modification, or deletion of N.C. route numbers shall be submitted to the Traffic Engineering Branch who shall make recommendations relative to the request based upon the following criteria:
  1. The proposed N.C. route must be adequately designed and constructed in terms of its pavement structure such that it can carry the statutory 18,000 pound axle load.
  2. The proposed route must meet minimum accepted operational standards of a minimum of a 20-foot paved width and with adequate shoulders.
  3. The horizontal and vertical alignment of the route must be such that it can safely handle traffic at the statutory speed limit of 55 miles per hour for the majority of its length. In extreme mountainous areas, consideration may be given to an average operating speed of 45 miles per hour.
  4. The desired minimum length of any N.C. route is established at 50 miles.
  5. N.C. routes shall not overlap existing N.C. or U.S. routes already established unless the duplication is for a short distance and the routes then diverge, ending in different terminal points.
- d. No additional N.C. route shall be added to the primary highway system or extended except where there is a definite showing of an adequately improved highway carrying an established and necessary line of intrastate traffic not otherwise provided for by existing U.S. or N.C. routes.
- e. The use of an N.C. route number, such as N.C. 42, and another route numbered as N.C. 42A is prohibited.