

Interstate 44: Raleigh to Hampton Roads

The US 64 east freeway is Raleigh's first and only direct free-flow highway link to the northern and mid-Atlantic states. An Interstate designation for the US 64 freeway east of Raleigh would be a logical addition to the overall Interstate system, as it would provide a direct northbound Interstate connection between the North Carolina state capital and the most prominent east coast Interstate, I-95 at Rocky Mount.



The RTA has requested that NCDOT apply to reserve an Interstate number for the corridor between Raleigh and the Hampton Roads region of Virginia via Rocky Mount and Elizabeth City, N.C., consistent with the existing Federal High Priority Corridor 13 from Raleigh to Norfolk. The corridor would follow the US 64 east freeway from I-40/I-440 at Raleigh, east past I-95 at Rocky Mount towards Tarboro and Williamston, N.C. and then travel the US 17 corridor via Elizabeth City, N.C., and then connecting to Chesapeake and Norfolk, Virginia in the Hampton Roads region.

Rationale. This corridor reservation will commence the first step needed to create a future Interstate link from Raleigh to I-95 at Rocky Mount to I-64 near Norfolk via Elizabeth City.

Reference: [*US Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 - H.R. 2950, sec 1105*](#)

Quick facts

- **The Hampton Roads region of VA and Raleigh/Wake County, NC each has only one two-digit Interstate** route in their immediate vicinity (I-64 in southeastern Virginia and I-40 in Raleigh/Wake County). Future Interstate 44 would represent a second two-digit primary Interstate route for both areas.
- **The corridor would provide Raleigh its first direct Interstate link to the mid-Atlantic and northeastern US (via I-95 north) and afford counties such as Franklin and Edgecombe their first Interstate access.** Site selection consultants often consider transportation -- including Interstate access -- in business location efforts, and this effort would create the first direct access to a future Interstate for many counties in North Carolina.
- **The suggested Future I-44 designation is for convenience,** and if an Interstate designation were approved for the corridor, the actual number would be determined by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in cooperation with the VA and NC Departments of Transportation and the US Federal Highway Administration.
- **Approval of the Interstate number reservation request** would enable a possible future request for a future Interstate designation for various segments of the corridor.
- **The entire US 64 corridor from Raleigh to Williamston in North Carolina is built to freeway standards, with the vast majority of mileage posted at 70 MPH.** The US 64 Knightdale bypass in Wake County, N.C. already meets all Interstate standards. Some sections of US 17 are freeway in the vicinity of Windsor, Edenton, and Elizabeth City, N.C. The City of Chesapeake, Virginia has proposed to create three new interchanges along US 17/Dominion Blvd. In addition, VA 168 is an existing turnpike freeway from I-64 to near the N.C. border.

A future Interstate designation east of Raleigh has been endorsed by:

- Research Triangle Regional Partnership
- Carolinas Gateway Partnership of Rocky Mount
- Northeast North Carolina Commission
- Capital Area MPO
- Kerr-Tar RPO
- Upper Coastal Plain RPO
- Rocky Mount Area MPO
- Franklin Co. Board of Commissioners
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
- Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
- Knightdale Chamber of Commerce
- Garner Chamber of Commerce
- Regional Transportation Alliance

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