

RESOLUTION 2025-XXX

A RESOLUTION PETITIONING THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ADDRESS CRITICAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES ON U.S. 1 (CAPITAL BOULEVARD)

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway 1 (US 1) is one of the oldest and most significant transportation corridors on the East Coast, stretching from Key West, Florida, to Fort Kent, Maine; and

WHEREAS, US 1 remains an essential artery for regional mobility and necessary for economic prosperity, particularly within the Research Triangle area; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina has acknowledged the strategic importance of the US 1 corridor—specifically between I-540 in Raleigh and Purnell Road in Wake Forest—by including it in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as Project U-5307 since 2012; and

WHEREAS, the US 1 Council of Planning was formed in 2006 to prioritize the corridor; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 STIP projected a 2018 start year and an estimated \$93 million cost of construction; and

WHEREAS the 2016 STIP projected a 2021 start year and an estimated \$269 million cost of construction; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the estimated cost of construction was \$581 million, with project completion anticipated by or before the date of this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, shifting funding priorities by the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) STIP scoring system have led to repeated delays; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2023, NCDOT informed the Town of Wake Forest that funds were reallocated from US 1 to address cost overruns in another project located in Fayetteville, NC; and

WHEREAS, these delays have escalated the project cost to \$1.34 billion in 2024 dollars and counting; and

WHEREAS, construction for the Wake Forest segments is now scheduled for the mid-2030s, with funding still not guaranteed despite ever-increasing traffic volume and congestion; and

WHEREAS, US 1 is critical for commuter and economic access between Wake Forest and counties to the north; and

WHEREAS, Wake Forest is at a competitive disadvantage in terms of highway infrastructure compared to other municipalities in Wake County and the surrounding region; and

WHEREAS, this disadvantage is evident in stalled economic development projects along US 1 due to uncertainty about road access and improvement timelines; and

WHEREAS, a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) conducted in December 2015 for a residential development on Burlington Mills Road recommended a Reduced Conflict Intersection (RCI) at the intersection with US 1 to prevent future congestion; and

WHEREAS, although developer-funded improvements are common along US 1, NCDOT did not require construction of the recommended RCI, citing the anticipated start of the US 1 project “within the next couple of years”; and

WHEREAS, 10 years later, construction has still not begun, and this intersection remains a significant bottleneck with frequent, extended traffic backups; and

WHEREAS, this delay has limited Wake Forest’s ability to expand its commercial tax base and attract jobs along US 1 which is one of the only commercial corridors in Wake Forest; and

WHEREAS, Representative Mike Schietzelt emphasized at the May 21, 2025, session of the North Carolina House of Representatives that “US 1 is part of early American history...during wartime and in peacetime and it still remains a critical corridor”; and

WHEREAS, Majority Caucus Chair Representative Matt Winslow stated at the same meeting that “US 1 is a major artery...and...the only road leaving out of Raleigh”; and

WHEREAS, tolling the corridor was considered and concern was expressed from local and state officials concerning imposing such costs on residents; and

WHEREAS, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) at their May 21, 2025, meeting passed a resolution authorizing the use of toll funding or other alternative delivery methods to deliver the improvements to the US 1 corridor; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina House of Representatives passed an amendment to the proposed state budget prohibiting the use of public funds for tolling the segment of US 1 between I-540 and Purnell Road; and

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of funding and indefinite project timeline has harmed businesses, residents, and landowners in Wake Forest and surrounding counties; and

WHEREAS, this uncertainty has effectively blocked private development, creating a situation akin to a regulatory “taking”; and

WHEREAS, NCDOT’s failure to require developer-funded improvements at the Burlington Mills Road intersection has directly contributed to severe congestion in that area; and

WHEREAS, the intolerable traffic conditions on this corridor now threaten the economic competitiveness, public safety, and quality of life for the Town and the region, stalling private development, choking commerce, and placing an unfair – and already years-long – burden on residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, US 1 is a state-maintained roadway, and the state’s failure to act has put Wake Forest at an economic and transportation disadvantage.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wake Forest Board of Commissioners:

- Request the State of North Carolina immediately prioritize and fully fund the construction of the US 1 improvements through a direct appropriation, a statewide transportation bond, or other means, with a firm commitment to begin construction no later than the Spring of 2027 and completion by Spring 2033, as outlined in the most recent corridor analysis.
- Further request, in the absence of full project funding or completion by 2033, the NCDOT immediately be directed to design and construct critical safety and congestion improvements at the Burlington Mills Road and U.S. 1 intersection, with completion by Spring 2027, to address the most acute hazards and bottlenecks.
- Directs the Town Clerk to transmit this Resolution to the Governor of North Carolina, the President Pro Tem of the North Carolina Senate, the Speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives, Members of the North Carolina

General Assembly representing Wake Forest, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Executive Director of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and to make the Board's position known in all relevant public forums.

Duly adopted this 3rd Day of June 2025.

(ATTEST)

Vivian A. Jones, Mayor

Evelyn Wright, Town Clerk