

PURPOSE AND NEED AND STUDY AREA DEFINED

US 17 from south of Edenton Road Street to north of Wiggins Road

Perquimans County

STIP Project R-5869

North Carolina Department of Transportation

Division 1



MERGER CONCURRENCE POINT NUMBER 1

April 9, 2026

1. Introduction

Lead federal agency: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Primary points of contact for the subject project are:

Agency	Name
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North Carolina Division of Water Resources (NCDWR)	Paul Nyarko
North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM)	Cathy Brittingham
US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)	Amanetta Somerville
USFWS	Gary Jordan
NCWRC	Travis Wilson
NCHPO	Renee Gledhill-Earley
Albemarle RPO	David Whitmer
North Carolina Department of Transportation	Kim Gillespie
VHB	Lauren Triebert

The purpose of this meeting is to reach concurrence on CP 1, Purpose and Need and Study Area defined.

1.1 Project Description

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to upgrade US 17 to interstate standards (Future I-87) from south of US 17 Business (Edenton Road Street) to north of Wiggins Road (SR 1220) in Perquimans County, North Carolina. The full project corridor is approximately 5.2 miles long and is identified in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as Project No. R-5869A/B/C, WBS No. 47894.1.1, Federal Aid No. n/a. The project location is shown in Figure 1.

Three (3) alternatives are under consideration:

- Alternative 1 Upgrade Existing: Improve the existing alignment of US 17 to meet interstate standards with frontage roads to address changes in access due to new interchanges; replace the existing US 17 bridges over the Perquimans River.
 - Alternative 1A – Includes a new interchange at New Hope Road (SR 1300) and US 17 on the north side of the Perquimans River.
 - Alternative 1B – Includes a new interchange at Wiggins Road (SR 1220) and US 17 on the north side of the Perquimans River.
- Alternative 2 – Bypass on a new location roadway west of Hertford with a new interchange at Grubb Street (SR 1110) including a new crossing and associated bridge over the Perquimans River.

1.2 Project History and Merger Plan

On December 3, 2015, Congress approved a Future Interstate designation (Future I-87) for a route extending from Raleigh to Hampton Roads, passing through Rocky Mount and Elizabeth City. In relation to R-5869, this Future Interstate would follow the US 17 corridor, beginning at US 64 in Williamston, located south of the project study area, and extending northward to the Virginia state line.

In 2018, NCDOT completed a feasibility study that identified potential impacts of upgrading US 17 to an interstate (Future I-87) from US 64 in Williamston to the Virginia state line. The feasibility study separated the US 17 corridor into ten (10) segments, and Segment 7 is the portion relevant to R-5869. Two alternatives were evaluated for Segment 7, Alternatives 7 and 7A. Both alternatives assessed upgrading the existing US 17 with service roads on both sides of the highway, and various interchange and grade separation improvements. Alternative 7A included a northern realignment of US 17 starting at Wiggins Road. The study anticipated 79 to 96 residential displacements, and 3 to 21 historic resources impacted.

The feasibility study conducted Local Officials Information Meetings and public involvement. No opposition to the project was noted, and one (1) public comment expressed support for Alternative 7A.

To facilitate the incremental upgrading of US 17 to interstate standards, NCDOT has included several separate projects in the 2026 - 2035 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), including:

- R-5869A: Convert the Harvey Point Road (SR 1336) and Wynne Fork Road (SR 1336) at-grade intersection to an Interchange.
- R-5869B: Convert the New Hope Road (SR 1300) at-grade intersection to an interchange or grade separation.
- R-5869C: Upgrade the US 17 corridor from south of US 17 Business (Edenton Road Street) to north of Wiggins Road (SR 1220) to interstate standards.

The costs for the project as estimated in the current STIP are shown in Table 1. The proposed project schedule is included in Table 2 and is based on the Merger Plan. The schedule and cost estimates are draft and subject to change.

Table 1. 2026 - 2035 STIP R-5869 Cost Estimate

Phase	Estimated Costs		
	R-5869A*	R-5869B*	R-5869C**
Right of Way	\$29,300,000	\$5,301,000	\$3,500,000
Utilities	\$2,600,000	\$880,000	\$1,000,000
Construction Total	\$70,800,000	\$53,900,000	\$135,000,000
Total	\$102,700,000	\$60,081,000	\$139,500,000

*Funded for Preliminary Engineering Only

**Not Funded

Table 2. Draft R-5869 Merger Plan Schedule*

Milestone	Anticipated Date
CP 2 meeting	May 2026
CP2A meeting	TBD
Public Meeting	TBD
CP 3 (LEDPA Determination)	TBD
NEPA Document	TBD
CP 4A	TBD
CP 4B	TBD

CP 4C	TBD
Begin ROW Acquisition	TBD
Begin Construction	TBD

*Draft, subject to change

1.3 Other STIP Projects Nearby

- STIP Project R-4467, construction is underway of a replacement bridge carrying US 17 Business/NC 37 over the Perquimans River, in the Town of Hertford.
- STIP Project R-5806, construction is underway to modernize SR 1336 (Harvey Point Road) from US 17 to SR 1336 (Churches Lane) in Perquimans County.
- STIP Project R-5939 proposes to modernize SR 1300 (New Hope Road) from Woodland Church Road to SR 1329 (Woodville Road).
- HI-0027: Rehabilitate pavement on US 17 from SR 1304 (Cartwright Swamp Road) to the Pasquotank County line.

2. Existing Conditions

2.1 Transportation Features

Within the study area, US 17 is 4-lane roadway median divided roadway with 4-foot inside shoulder and 2-foot outside shoulders. The median is typically grass and 22 feet wide, near intersection and at the river crossing, the median narrows. Two existing bridges carry US 17 over the Perquimans River. Bridge #710080 conveys US 17 north was constructed in 1994 and has a sufficiency rating of 95.08 (out of a possible 100). Bridge #710080 has a 32-foot wide deck with two 12-foot travel lanes with 4-foot paved shoulders. Bridge #710014 conveys US 17 south was constructed in 1965 and reconstructed in 2009. The bridge has a sufficiency rating of 73.05. Bridge #710014 has a 28-foot wide deck with two 12-foot travel lanes and 2-foot paved shoulders.

At-grade intersections within the study area include US 17 at:

- US 17 Business (Creek Drive/S Edenton Road Street)
- SR 1338 (Wynne Fork Road)
- SR 1336 (Harvey Point Road/S Church Street)
- SR 1300 (New Hope Road)
- SR 1220 (Wiggins Road)
- SR 1301/SR 1227 (Old Neck Road/Swing Gate Road)

US 17 is currently classified as a Principal Arterial in the NCDOT Functional Classification System with partial access control. The existing right of way is 100 feet wide, and the post speed limit is 50 miles per hour. The existing right of way is 100 feet.

Table 4 lists basic information about each facility, including NCDOT’s functional classification, 2024 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), existing lanes, lane width, existing ROW, and posted speed limit.

Table 1. Existing Roadway Characteristics						
Facility		Existing Feature			Functional Classification	2024 AADT Vehicles per Day (vpd)
		Lanes (width ft)	ROW (est. ft)	Speed Limit (mph)		
US 17	Ocean Highway	4 (12)	100	50	Principal Arterial	14,800
US 17 BUS	Edenton Rd. Street	2 (12)	100	45	Major Collector	1,300
SR 1338	Wynne Fork Road	2 (12)	60	35	Secondary Route	700
SR 1336	Harvey Point Road	2 (11)	60	55	Minor Collector	4,700
SR 1300	New Hope Road	2 (11)	60	55	Minor Collector	1,600

Source: NCDOT Road Characteristics 01/07/25

2.2 Environmental Features

Environmental resources in the project area are shown in the Environmental Features Map (Figure 3). The study area is part of the Pasquotank River Basin (U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] Hydrologic Unit [HUC] 03010205). The study area includes numerous jurisdictional streams and wetlands, as well as numerous structures and districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. There are also voluntary agricultural districts (VADs) and public park space in the study area; the entire study area, with exception of portions adjacent to wetlands, crossing the river, and areas within the municipal borders, is surrounded by designated prime farmland. There are bridge and culvert structures in the study area that are likely habitat for the Proposed Endangered Tricolored bat, as well as areas of potential habitat for other threatened or endangered terrestrial, aquatic and plant species.

3. Project Purpose and Need

3.1 Proposed Purpose and Need Statement

The purpose of the proposed project, inclusive of the NCDOT STIP designated sections of R-5869A, B and C, is to improve mobility and connectivity on US 17 from south of US 17 Business (Edenton Road Street) to north of Wiggins Road (SR 1220) in Perquimans County, supporting the NCDOT STC plan to upgrade the larger US 17 corridor (from US 64 in Williamston, NC to the Virginia border) to interstate standards to help promote the economic vitality of the corridor. This project is also needed to comply with the Congress approved Future I-87 designation of this route. US 17 is a key corridor in the regional economic development strategy, delivering products to the Port of Virginia and local markets.

4. Project Study Area Defined

The proposed Project Study Area was developed to address the Purpose and Need of R-5869 and is shown in Figure 2. The study area for Alternatives 1A and 1B is a 300 to 1,000 foot buffer along US 17 starting at Starlight Drive and ending at Union Hall Road. The study area extends along US 17 Business (S. Edenton Road Street), Wynne Fork Road (SR 1338), Harvey Point Road (SR 1336), New Hope Road (SR 1300), and Old Neck Road (SR 1301) to account for the conversion of at-grade intersections to a grade-separated interchange design. For Alternative 2, the study area is a 300 – 1,200 foot buffer that starts at Starlight Drive and extends along US 17 for approximately 2,000 feet before turning north to bypass the Town of Hertford; the study area curves to the east near Grubb Street (SR 1110), extends across the Perquimans River at a new crossing location, and ties back into US 17 between New Hope Road (SR 1300) and Wiggins Road (SR 1220). The Alternative 2 study area also ends at Union Hall Road (SR 1302).

5. Avoidance and Minimization

During project scoping, the Study Area corridor limits were chosen in order to avoid impacts to nearby wetlands and known cultural resources.

6. Merger Plan Review/Next Steps

NCDOT proposes that the next Merger Meeting will be for CP 2 (Detailed Study Alternatives Carried Forward). Prior to the next Merger Meeting, NCDOT will compile a potential impact estimates table, based on desktop evaluation of available environmental information for the proposed alternatives. It is anticipated that the CP 2 meeting will be held in May 2026; Merger Team members will be notified of any changes that require a revision of this timetable.

Figures

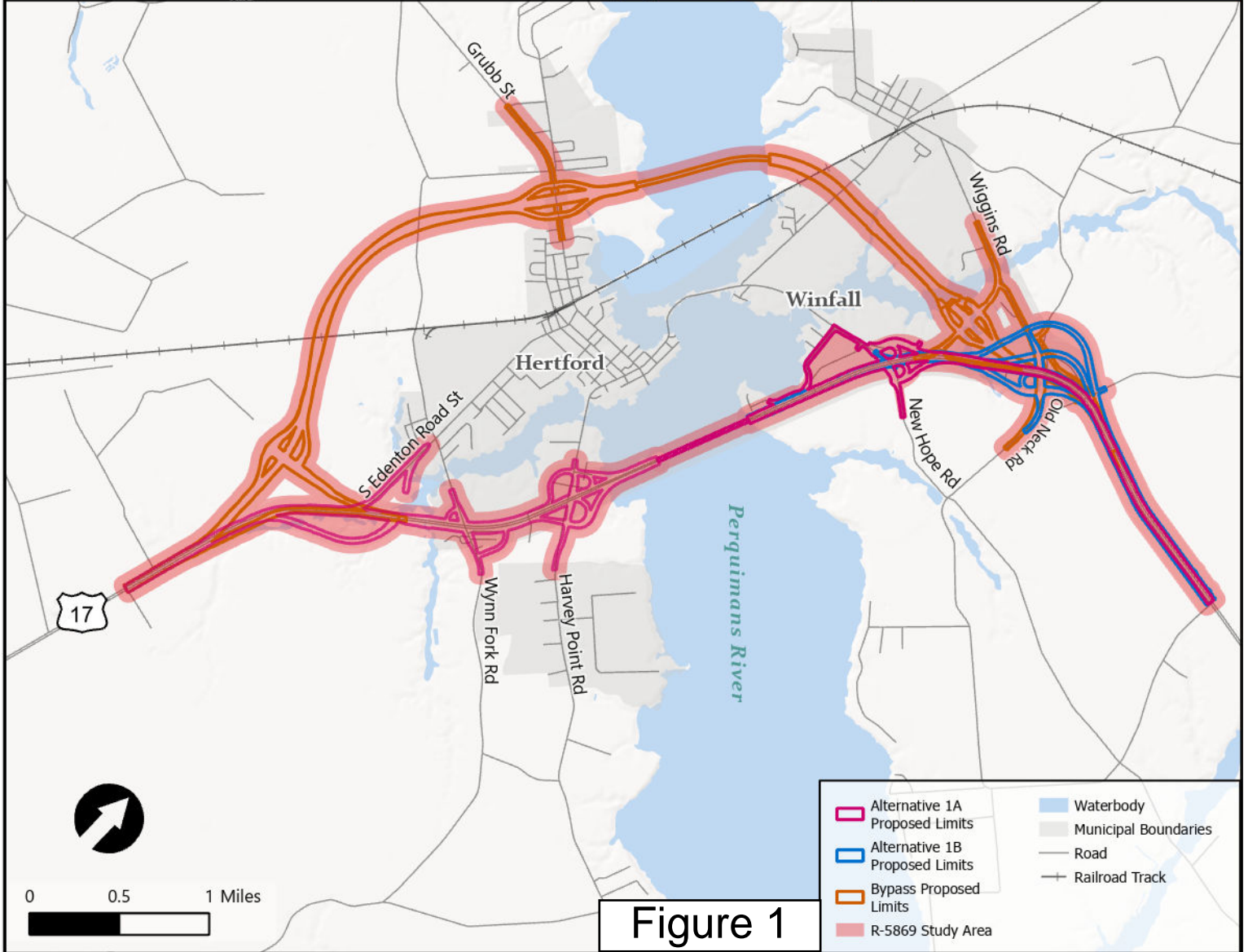
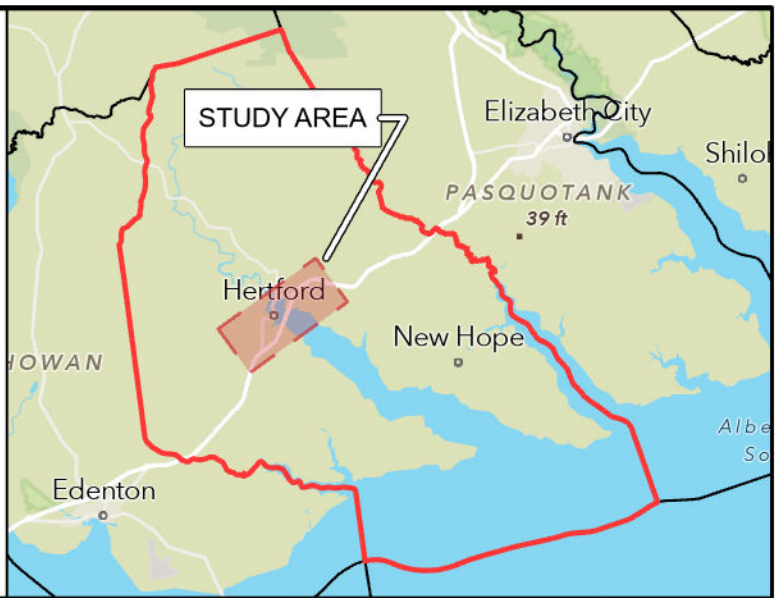
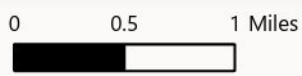


Figure 1

Alternative 1A Proposed Limits	Waterbody
Alternative 1B Proposed Limits	Municipal Boundaries
Bypass Proposed Limits	Road
R-5869 Study Area	Railroad Track



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 1**

VICINITY MAP

**IMPROVEMENTS US 17 FROM
S. OF US 17 BUS. (EDENTON ROAD ST)
TO N. OF SR 1220 (WIGGINS RD)**

County:	Perquimans
Division:	1
Project:	R-5869
Date:	Feb. 2026

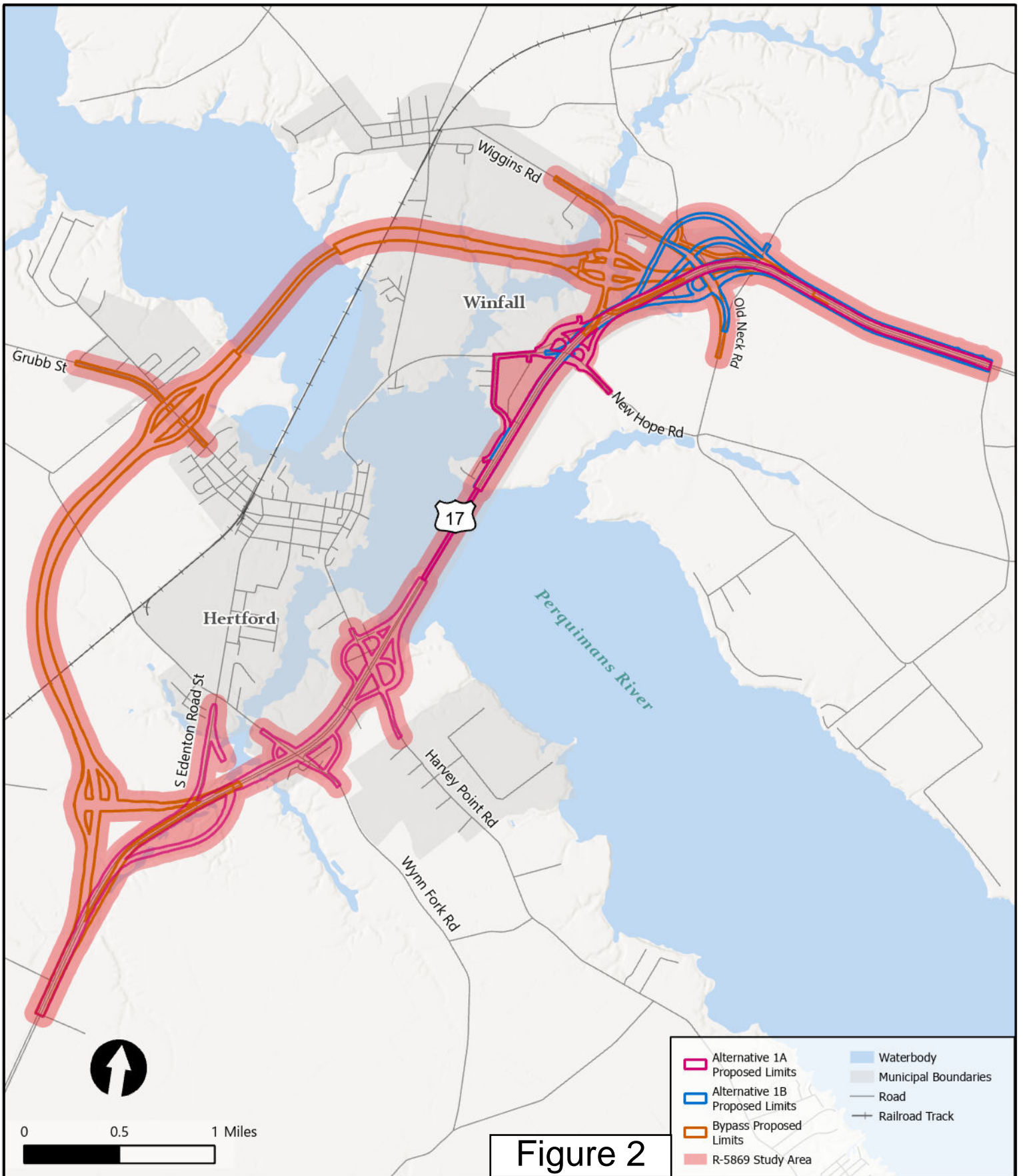


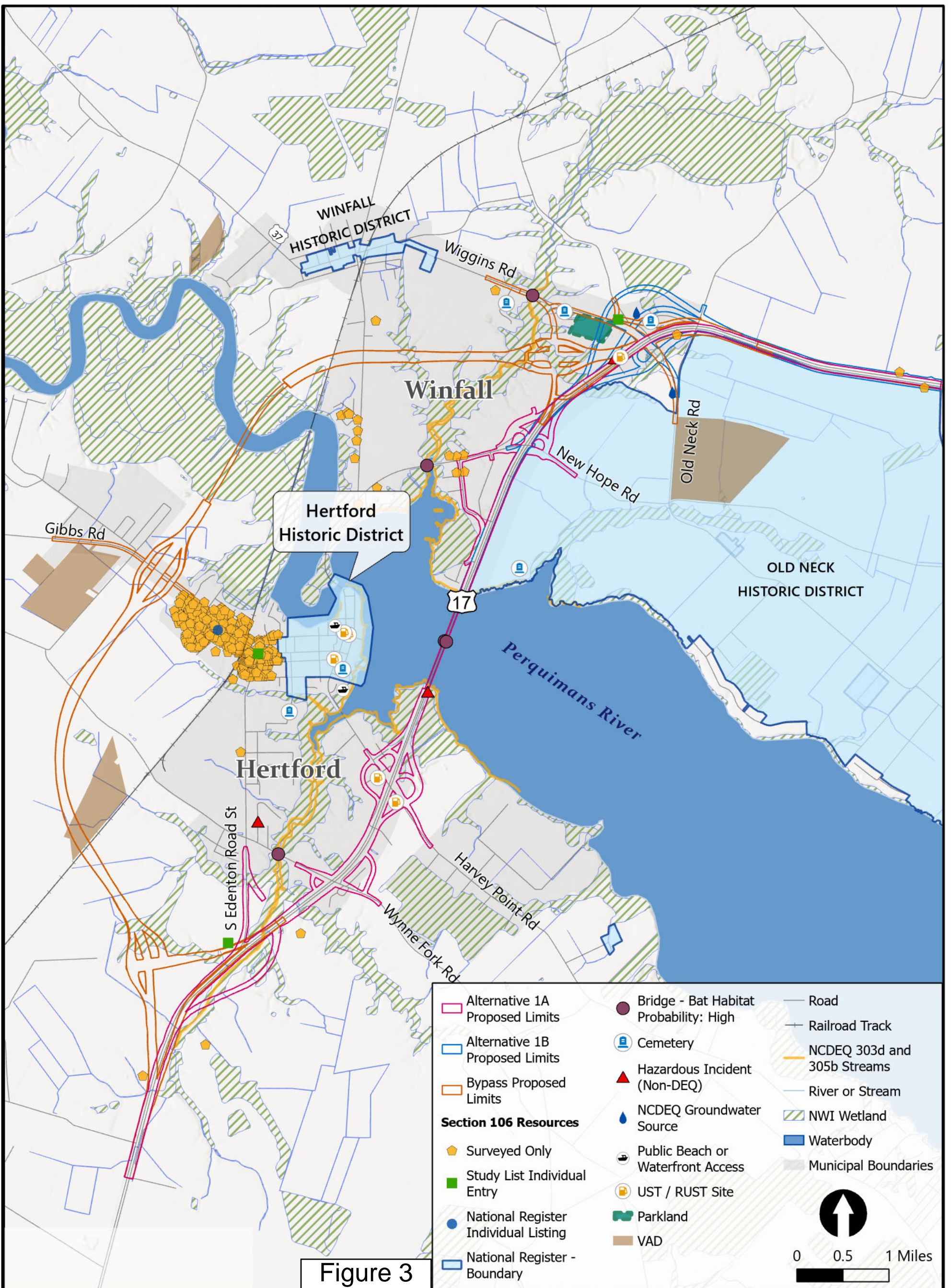
Figure 2



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 1**

STUDY AREA
**IMPROVEMENTS US 17 FROM
S. OF US 17 BUS. (EDENTON ROAD ST)
TO N. OF SR 1220 (WIGGINS RD)**

County:	Perquimans
Division:	1
Project:	R-5869
Date:	Feb. 2026



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 1

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES
IMPROVEMENTS US 17 FROM S. OF US 17 BUS. (EDENTON ROAD ST) TO N. OF SR 1220 (WIGGINS RD)

County: Perquimans

Division: 1

Project: R-5869

Date: Feb. 2026