

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

A Comprehensive Framework for Identifying, Evaluating, Designating, Funding, Implementing, and Managing Transportation Infrastructure Serving the National Interest

Master Publication Guide

Publication No. **NSICI-M**

Protecting Transportation Infrastructure That Serves the National Interest

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Master Document

Publication No. NSICI-M

Version 1.0

July 2026

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Prepared For

Congress of the United States

United States Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

State Departments of Transportation

Federal Agencies

Transportation Planning Organizations

Industry Stakeholders

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Document Status

Living Document

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to serve as a living document. Future editions may incorporate legislative changes, emerging transportation technologies, updated research, implementation experience, stakeholder recommendations, and evolving national priorities.

Suggested Citation

Brown, Roger.

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative: A Comprehensive Framework for Identifying, Evaluating, Designating, Funding, Implementing, and Managing Transportation Infrastructure Serving the National Interest.

Master Document.

Publication No. NSICI-M.

Version 1.0.

July 2026.

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Version History

Version	Date	Description
0.1	July 2025	Initial concept and research.
0.2	September 2025	Expanded policy framework and corridor designation concepts.
0.3	December 2025	Preliminary legislative framework developed.
0.5	March 2026	Added governance, funding mechanisms, and National Interest Index.
0.8	May 2026	Expanded technical guidance and implementation strategy.
0.9	June 2026	Six-volume structure completed; supporting appendices developed.
1.0	July 2026	First complete Master Document published.

Document Organization

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative (NSICI) is organized as a coordinated publication series consisting of one Master Document and six companion volumes. Together, these publications provide a comprehensive framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation infrastructure that serves the national interest.

The Master Document (Publication No. **NSICI-M**) serves as the primary reference for the Initiative. It introduces the strategic vision, establishes the overall framework, summarizes the companion volumes, presents integrated recommendations, and describes how the individual components function together as a unified national program. While the Master Document provides a comprehensive overview of the Initiative, it is not intended to replace the detailed guidance contained within the companion volumes.

Each companion volume expands upon a specific element of the Initiative:

- **Volume I** – Strategic Vision establishes the long-term vision, guiding principles, and strategic objectives supporting the Initiative.
- **Volume II** – Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA) presents a comprehensive policy proposal for establishing a dedicated governance and funding entity within the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, providing the organizational, financial, and operational framework for the long-term stewardship of the Dalton Highway Corridor.
- **Volume III** – Draft Alaska Legislation provides an illustrative state-level legislative proposal establishing a specialized transportation authority for a designated strategic corridor, using the Dalton Highway corridor as the pilot application.
- **Volume IIIA** – Legislative Analysis & Section-by-Section Commentary provides a detailed legal and policy analysis of the draft legislation presented in Volume III, including section-by-section commentary explaining the purpose, legal basis, and intended effect of each statutory provision.
- **Volume IV** – Proposed Amendments to Title 23, United States Code provides illustrative Federal statutory language and legislative recommendations for establishing a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.
- **Volume V** – National Interest Index & Technical Guidance presents the technical methodologies, evaluation criteria, scoring framework, and analytical tools used to identify and assess nationally significant transportation corridors.
- **Volume VI** – Implementation Strategy and Program Administration outlines recommended implementation procedures, administrative guidance, phased program development, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement.

Each volume is designed to function as a standalone technical reference while supporting the broader objectives of the Initiative. Readers seeking a general understanding of the proposed framework are encouraged to begin with the Master Document. Those requiring detailed policy analysis, legislative language, governance guidance, technical methodologies, or implementation procedures should consult the appropriate companion volume.

Collectively, the Master Document and companion volumes form the complete National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative Publication Series, providing policymakers, transportation agencies, industry stakeholders, researchers, and other interested parties with a comprehensive and integrated framework for advancing transportation infrastructure that serves the long-term national interest of the United States.

Letter of Transmittal

July 2026

To the Members of the United States Congress, the Secretary of Transportation, Federal and State Transportation Officials, Tribal Governments, Industry Partners, and Transportation Stakeholders:

It is my honor to submit the **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative**, a comprehensive framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation infrastructure that serves the long-term national interest of the United States.

This Initiative is the culmination of extensive research into transportation planning, infrastructure policy, asset management, national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, freight mobility, and long-term economic resilience. It is founded on the principle that certain transportation corridors possess strategic importance extending well beyond traditional measures of traffic volume or regional significance. These corridors support national security, interstate commerce, energy independence, resource development, and emergency response, and therefore warrant a planning and investment approach that recognizes their unique contribution to the Nation.

The recommendations presented throughout this publication are intended to complement—not replace—the existing Federal-State partnership established under Title 23 of the United States Code. The proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon current transportation planning processes by introducing additional tools to evaluate national strategic importance, improve long-term stewardship, strengthen interagency coordination, and encourage investment decisions that reflect both present and future national needs.

While the concepts presented are applicable nationwide, the Dalton Highway in Alaska is used throughout this publication as a representative case study to demonstrate how the proposed framework can be applied to transportation corridors that serve critical national interests. The Initiative is designed to provide a scalable and adaptable model that may be used to evaluate corridors across the United States with similar strategic significance.

This Master Document is organized into six complementary volumes addressing strategic vision, policy development, proposed legislation, governance, technical guidance, and implementation strategy. Together, these volumes are intended to provide policymakers, transportation professionals, and stakeholders with a practical roadmap for establishing and administering a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Foreword

Transportation infrastructure has long been recognized as the backbone of the American economy, connecting communities, enabling commerce, supporting national defense, and providing access to essential services. For generations, federal and state transportation programs have successfully expanded and maintained a vast network of highways, railroads, ports, airports, and waterways that have fueled economic growth and strengthened the Nation. These investments have helped create one of the most capable transportation systems in the world.

Yet the demands placed upon this system continue to evolve. Emerging industries, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic operations, national security priorities, climate resilience, and increasingly complex supply chains have highlighted the importance of transportation corridors whose significance extends far beyond traditional measures of traffic volume or local economic activity. Certain corridors serve functions that are essential not only to the regions they traverse, but to the long-term strategic interests of the United States as a whole.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative was developed in response to this changing transportation landscape. Rather than proposing a replacement for existing transportation planning processes, this Initiative seeks to complement and strengthen the proven Federal-State partnership established under Title 23 of the United States Code. It recognizes that traditional transportation planning remains essential while also acknowledging that some infrastructure assets warrant additional consideration because of the unique national interests they support.

Central to this Initiative is the belief that transportation planning should incorporate a broader understanding of national significance. Infrastructure decisions should account not only for current conditions and historical demand, but also for future economic opportunities, evolving national priorities, resilience to emerging challenges, and the long-term stewardship of assets that may become increasingly important over time. Planning for the future requires looking beyond present-day traffic counts to consider how transportation infrastructure supports energy security, critical supply chains, military readiness, emergency response, technological advancement, and sustained economic competitiveness.

To support this objective, the Initiative introduces a comprehensive framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation corridors that serve the national interest. The proposed National Interest Index provides a structured planning and evaluation framework that allows strategic considerations to be incorporated alongside established engineering, operational, environmental, and economic analyses. It is intended to inform transportation planning—not replace professional judgment or existing statutory requirements.

Although this Initiative is national in scope, the Dalton Highway in Alaska serves throughout this publication as an illustrative case study demonstrating how the proposed framework may be applied to corridors that support multiple national priorities simultaneously. The lessons drawn

from this example are intended to be broadly applicable to transportation corridors across the United States, recognizing that every region possesses infrastructure assets with unique strategic importance.

The recommendations contained within these volumes are offered in the spirit of collaboration and continuous improvement. They are intended to encourage discussion among policymakers, transportation professionals, industry, Tribal governments, researchers, and the public regarding how the Nation can better identify and preserve infrastructure that serves both current and future generations. As transportation systems continue to evolve, so too should the tools used to evaluate and manage them.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is presented as a living document. Its continued development should be guided by research, implementation experience, technological innovation, legislative refinement, and ongoing collaboration among all levels of government and the many stakeholders responsible for America's transportation system. It is through that collaborative process that this Initiative can continue to evolve and contribute to a stronger, more resilient, and more strategically prepared national transportation network.

It is my hope that this publication serves not only as a proposal for a new transportation framework, but also as an invitation to think more broadly about the role transportation infrastructure plays in advancing the national interest. By recognizing the strategic value of our most critical transportation corridors and investing in their long-term stewardship, we strengthen the Nation's ability to meet the challenges and opportunities of the decades ahead.

Roger Brown

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Preface

The **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative** was developed from a simple observation: some transportation corridors are indispensable to the long-term interests of the United States, yet existing planning and funding frameworks often evaluate them primarily through traditional measures such as traffic volume, congestion, or localized economic activity. While these measures remain essential components of transportation planning, they may not fully capture the strategic value of infrastructure that supports national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, interstate commerce, Arctic operations, or other priorities of national significance.

This publication seeks to broaden—not replace—the framework through which transportation infrastructure is evaluated. It proposes an approach that recognizes the diverse ways transportation corridors contribute to the Nation’s security, prosperity, resilience, and long-term competitiveness. The recommendations presented throughout these volumes are intended to complement existing Federal transportation programs and strengthen the long-standing partnership between the Federal Government, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, industry, and other transportation stakeholders.

The Initiative is organized into six complementary volumes, each addressing a distinct component of the proposed framework. Collectively, they present a comprehensive roadmap for identifying transportation corridors of national strategic importance, evaluating their significance, establishing a designation process, integrating them into existing planning and funding mechanisms, providing governance and administrative guidance, and supporting long-term implementation. Although each volume may be used independently, they are intended to function together as an integrated framework.

Throughout the publication, the Dalton Highway in Alaska is used as an illustrative case study to demonstrate how the proposed framework can be applied in practice. Its inclusion reflects the corridor’s unique combination of strategic functions and should not be interpreted as limiting the Initiative to a single state, region, or type of infrastructure. The principles presented are intended to be nationally applicable and adaptable to transportation corridors across the United States that serve similarly important national interests.

The development of this Initiative has been informed by a broad range of publicly available resources, including Federal statutes, transportation plans, policy reports, technical guidance, academic research, and lessons learned from existing infrastructure programs. It has also been shaped by practical experience within the transportation industry and by discussions with transportation professionals, public officials, agency representatives, industry stakeholders, and others who share a commitment to improving the long-term stewardship of America’s transportation system.

This publication is presented as a living document. As transportation technologies evolve, national priorities change, infrastructure conditions shift, and new research becomes available, future editions should incorporate additional knowledge and practical experience. Constructive review and thoughtful collaboration are welcomed and encouraged, with the goal of continually refining the concepts presented herein.

Ultimately, this Initiative is offered as a contribution to the ongoing national conversation about infrastructure. Its purpose is not simply to propose a new designation program, but to encourage a broader discussion about how the United States identifies, prioritizes, preserves, and invests in transportation corridors whose importance extends beyond regional boundaries and whose continued reliability is essential to the Nation's future.

Acknowledgments

The development of the **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative** has benefited from the work of countless transportation professionals, researchers, engineers, planners, public servants, industry leaders, and policymakers whose efforts over many decades have advanced the understanding of transportation planning, infrastructure management, and public policy. Their published research, technical guidance, legislative work, and commitment to public service have provided the foundation upon which this Initiative has been developed.

Special recognition is extended to the many Federal agencies whose guidance, research, and planning documents informed this work, including the **U.S. Department of Transportation**, the **Federal Highway Administration**, the **Federal Railroad Administration**, the **Maritime Administration**, the **U.S. Department of Energy**, the **U.S. Department of Defense**, the **U.S. Department of the Interior**, the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, and numerous other agencies whose missions intersect with the Nation's transportation system.

Appreciation is also extended to State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, academic institutions, industry associations, and private-sector transportation professionals whose published work and practical experience continue to advance transportation planning and infrastructure management across the United States.

The concepts presented throughout this publication have also been strengthened through discussions with transportation practitioners, elected officials, agency representatives, business leaders, and stakeholders who have generously shared their perspectives on freight mobility, infrastructure resilience, asset management, energy development, national defense, and long-term transportation investment. While this publication reflects the author's independent research and conclusions, those conversations have helped refine many of the ideas presented.

Finally, sincere appreciation is extended to the many individuals who dedicate their careers to designing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and preserving the transportation infrastructure upon which the Nation depends every day. Their work often occurs outside the public spotlight, yet it remains fundamental to the safety, security, economic vitality, and resilience of the United States.

Any errors, omissions, or interpretations contained within this publication remain solely the responsibility of the author.

Executive Summary

America's transportation infrastructure serves as the foundation of the Nation's economy, national defense, energy security, emergency preparedness, and quality of life. For decades, the Federal-State partnership established under **Title 23 of the United States Code** has successfully guided the planning, development, preservation, and operation of one of the world's most extensive transportation systems. Existing transportation programs have enabled significant investments in highways, bridges, freight networks, public transportation, aviation, rail, ports, and multimodal infrastructure, providing substantial economic and societal benefits across the country.

At the same time, the strategic environment in which transportation infrastructure operates continues to evolve. Domestic energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic operations, advanced manufacturing, military readiness, supply chain resilience, climate adaptation, and rapidly changing economic conditions increasingly rely upon transportation corridors whose importance extends well beyond traditional measures of traffic demand or regional mobility. While existing planning processes remain effective for evaluating many transportation investments, they are not specifically designed to identify corridors whose value lies primarily in their contribution to the broader national interest.

The **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative (NSICI)** presents a comprehensive framework for addressing this gap. Rather than replacing existing transportation planning processes, the Initiative complements them by introducing additional tools that allow strategic national priorities to be considered alongside established engineering, economic, environmental, and operational analyses. The objective is to strengthen—not fundamentally alter—the existing Federal-State transportation partnership by providing policymakers and transportation professionals with a structured approach for recognizing and managing infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests.

Central to the Initiative is the proposed **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program**, through which transportation corridors of exceptional national significance may be identified, evaluated, designated, and managed using consistent national criteria. The Initiative introduces the **National Interest Index (NII)**, a planning and evaluation framework that considers a corridor's contribution to national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, supply chain resilience, economic competitiveness, and other strategic objectives. The National Interest Index is intended to inform transportation planning and investment decisions while complementing existing planning requirements established under Federal law. It is not proposed as a replacement for existing funding formulas or statutory transportation programs.

The Initiative is organized into six complementary volumes that collectively provide a comprehensive roadmap for implementation. **Volume I** establishes the strategic vision and underlying principles supporting the Program. **Volume II** presents the Dalton District

Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA), a governance and funding proposal for the long-term stewardship of Alaska’s Dalton Highway Corridor. **Volume III** presents illustrative state-level legislation establishing a specialized transportation authority for a designated strategic corridor. **Volume IV** proposes Federal legislative language necessary to authorize the Program. **Volume V** provides technical guidance, including the National Interest Index methodology and supporting evaluation framework. **Volume VI** presents an implementation strategy, administrative guidance, and recommended procedures for Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies responsible for administering the Program.

Although the Initiative is national in scope, the **Dalton Highway in Alaska** is presented throughout this publication as an illustrative case study. The corridor demonstrates how transportation infrastructure can simultaneously support multiple national priorities, including domestic energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic operations, military logistics, emergency response, scientific research, and interstate commerce. The Dalton Highway serves as one example of how the proposed framework can be applied; the concepts developed throughout this Initiative are intended to be scalable and applicable to strategically significant transportation corridors throughout the United States.

The Initiative emphasizes several guiding principles. Transportation infrastructure should be managed through a long-term stewardship perspective that prioritizes lifecycle asset management, preventive maintenance, operational reliability, resilience, and future readiness. Planning should account not only for existing transportation demand but also for projected economic development, emerging industries, technological advancement, demographic change, and evolving national priorities. Effective implementation requires collaboration among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, local governments, industry, and the research community, recognizing that transportation infrastructure serves a wide range of public and private interests.

The Initiative also recognizes that successful transportation policy must remain flexible. Accordingly, the proposed Program is presented as an adaptive framework capable of evolving through continued research, implementation experience, technological innovation, legislative refinement, and stakeholder collaboration. The recommendations contained in this publication are intended to encourage discussion and provide a foundation upon which future policies and administrative practices may be developed.

Ultimately, the **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative** seeks to ensure that transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests receives appropriate recognition within existing transportation planning processes. By expanding the framework through which strategic importance is evaluated, the Initiative aims to improve long-term infrastructure stewardship, strengthen national resilience, support economic competitiveness, enhance national security, and preserve transportation assets that are essential to the prosperity and security of the United States.

The recommendations presented throughout these volumes are offered as a practical and collaborative framework for future consideration by Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, industry partners, and transportation stakeholders. Their purpose is to contribute to an ongoing national conversation regarding how the United States can continue to strengthen its transportation system while preparing for the opportunities and challenges of the decades ahead.

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Acronyms

Purpose

This section identifies abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the *National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative*. Unless otherwise noted, acronyms are defined at their first use in each volume and are included here for quick reference.

Federal Agencies

DOT — U.S. Department of Transportation

Transportation Planning

NHS — National Highway System

NII — National Interest Index

NSICI — National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Alaska-Specific Examples

DDIMA — Dalton District Infrastructure and Maintenance Authority

Definitions

Purpose

The following definitions establish a common vocabulary for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. Unless otherwise specified by Federal statute or regulation, these definitions apply throughout this publication.

Adaptive Management

A structured decision-making process that allows transportation agencies to adjust policies, investments, and management strategies as conditions, technologies, infrastructure performance, and national priorities evolve.

Asset Management

A systematic process for maintaining, upgrading, operating, and replacing infrastructure in a cost-effective manner throughout its lifecycle.

Corridor

A transportation route or interconnected network of transportation facilities that supports the movement of people, freight, energy, resources, military assets, or other nationally significant activities.

Corridor Management Plan

A long-term planning document that establishes strategies for preserving, operating, maintaining, improving, and monitoring a designated National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor.

Critical Infrastructure

Infrastructure whose continued operation is essential to national security, public safety, economic stability, or the uninterrupted delivery of critical services.

Lifecycle Asset Management

A comprehensive approach to planning, preserving, maintaining, rehabilitating, and replacing transportation infrastructure to maximize long-term value while minimizing total lifecycle costs.

National Interest

The collective economic, security, energy, defense, emergency preparedness, environmental, and societal objectives supported by transportation infrastructure.

National Interest Index (NII)

A planning and evaluation framework that considers strategic national interests alongside traditional transportation planning metrics when evaluating transportation corridors.

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor

A transportation corridor designated by the Secretary of Transportation because of its exceptional contribution to one or more national interests, including national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, or long-term economic resilience.

Preventive Maintenance

Planned maintenance activities performed to preserve infrastructure condition, extend service life, improve reliability, and reduce long-term lifecycle costs.

Resilience

The ability of transportation infrastructure to prepare for, withstand, recover from, and adapt to natural hazards, technological changes, cyber threats, operational disruptions, and other adverse events.

Stewardship

The responsible planning, operation, preservation, maintenance, and improvement of transportation infrastructure to ensure its continued service for present and future generations.

Sustainability

The ability to manage transportation infrastructure in a manner that supports long-term economic, environmental, and operational performance while preserving resources for future generations.

Interpretation

Unless specifically defined by Federal law or regulation, terms used throughout this publication should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. Where conflicts exist between these definitions and applicable statutes or regulations, the statutory or regulatory definitions shall govern.

PART I – Introduction

Chapter 1 - Foundations for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

1.1 Purpose of the Initiative

The United States has long recognized that transportation infrastructure is fundamental to the Nation's economic prosperity, national security, public safety, and overall quality of life. Highways, bridges, railroads, ports, airports, pipelines, and multimodal transportation networks connect communities, facilitate commerce, support military readiness, enable domestic energy production, and provide access to critical services across every region of the country. For more than a century, Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments have partnered to develop and maintain one of the most extensive transportation systems in the world.

As national priorities continue to evolve, so too must the methods used to evaluate, preserve, and improve this infrastructure. Emerging industries, changing supply chains, technological innovation, increasing infrastructure resilience requirements, Arctic development, domestic energy production, critical mineral extraction, and national defense considerations have highlighted the importance of transportation corridors whose value extends beyond traditional transportation performance measures.

The purpose of the **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative (NSICI)** is to provide a comprehensive framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation infrastructure that serves the long-term national interest. The Initiative is intended to complement existing transportation planning processes by providing additional tools for recognizing transportation corridors whose strategic importance may not be fully reflected through conventional planning methodologies alone.

1.2 Background

Federal transportation policy has historically evolved to meet the changing needs of the Nation. From the development of the Interstate Highway System to the establishment of the National Highway System, transportation investment has consistently adapted to support economic growth, population expansion, interstate commerce, and national defense.

Today, transportation infrastructure supports an increasingly diverse set of national objectives. Freight corridors move essential goods through complex domestic and international supply chains. Transportation networks support military mobilization, emergency response, energy production, scientific research, tourism, and the development of emerging industries.

Infrastructure resilience has become increasingly important as agencies respond to natural hazards, changing environmental conditions, aging assets, cybersecurity concerns, and evolving operational demands.

These changes have created a need for planning tools that consider not only current transportation demand, but also the broader strategic importance of transportation infrastructure to the Nation as a whole.

1.3 Why This Initiative Was Developed

Existing transportation planning processes remain highly effective for evaluating infrastructure based upon mobility, safety, congestion, system preservation, environmental stewardship, and economic performance. These established methodologies should remain the foundation of transportation decision-making.

However, certain transportation corridors perform functions that extend beyond these traditional considerations. Some corridors provide the only surface access to nationally significant energy resources, critical mineral deposits, military installations, Arctic infrastructure, strategic ports, or emergency response capabilities. Others may become increasingly important as national priorities evolve over time.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative was developed to provide a structured framework for recognizing these broader national interests while preserving the integrity of existing transportation planning processes. Rather than replacing established programs, the Initiative seeks to enhance them by introducing additional planning considerations where appropriate.

1.4 Vision

The vision of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is to establish a nationally consistent framework through which transportation corridors of exceptional strategic importance can be identified, evaluated, preserved, and managed in support of the long-term interests of the United States.

The Initiative envisions a transportation system that not only responds to current transportation needs but also anticipates future national priorities through proactive planning, coordinated investment, and responsible stewardship.

1.5 Scope of the Initiative

This publication presents a comprehensive framework applicable to transportation corridors throughout the United States. Although highways provide the principal focus of the initial

proposal, many of the concepts presented may also be applicable to multimodal transportation systems, including rail, maritime facilities, aviation infrastructure, pipelines, and intermodal freight networks where appropriate.

The Initiative emphasizes flexibility, recognizing that implementation should build upon existing Federal transportation programs while allowing individual States and participating agencies to address their own unique transportation needs and priorities.

Throughout this publication, the Dalton Highway in Alaska is presented as an illustrative case study demonstrating how the proposed framework may be applied to transportation infrastructure serving multiple national interests. The concepts presented, however, are intended for nationwide application and should not be interpreted as specific to any single transportation corridor.

1.6 Guiding Principles

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is founded upon several guiding principles:

- **Strengthen the Federal-State partnership** by building upon existing transportation planning processes rather than replacing them.
- **Recognize transportation infrastructure serving the national interest** through consistent and transparent evaluation criteria.
- **Promote long-term stewardship** by emphasizing lifecycle asset management, preventive maintenance, operational reliability, and resilience.
- **Support informed decision-making** through objective analysis and the consideration of future transportation demands alongside present conditions.
- **Encourage interagency collaboration** among Federal, State, Tribal, local, academic, and private-sector partners.
- **Maintain flexibility** to accommodate changing technologies, infrastructure needs, and national priorities.

1.7 Organization of the Initiative

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is organized into six complementary volumes that together provide a comprehensive framework for establishing and administering a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

- **Volume I** presents the strategic vision and foundational concepts.

- **Volume II** presents the Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA), a governance and funding proposal for the long-term stewardship of Alaska's Dalton Highway Corridor.
- **Volume III** presents illustrative state-level legislation establishing a specialized transportation authority for a designated strategic corridor.
- **Volume IV** proposes Federal legislative language necessary to authorize the Program.
- **Volume V** provides technical guidance, including the National Interest Index and evaluation methodology.
- **Volume VI** presents implementation strategies, administrative guidance, and recommended procedures for long-term program administration.

Each volume is designed to function independently while contributing to an integrated national framework.

1.8 Looking Ahead

Transportation infrastructure has always played a defining role in shaping the economic strength, security, and resilience of the United States. As the Nation prepares for future challenges and opportunities, transportation planning must continue to evolve while preserving the principles that have guided successful infrastructure investment for generations.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative represents one approach to meeting that challenge. By recognizing the strategic importance of transportation corridors that serve the national interest, the Initiative seeks to provide policymakers and transportation professionals with an additional framework for ensuring that America's most critical infrastructure continues to support the Nation's prosperity, security, and resilience for decades to come.

The chapters that follow examine the need for such a framework, its relationship to existing transportation policy, and the practical steps necessary for its successful implementation.

Chapter 2 - The Need for a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

2.1 Introduction

The United States possesses one of the most extensive and capable transportation systems in the world. Through decades of investment and collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, the Nation has developed an interconnected network of highways, railroads, ports, airports, pipelines, and waterways that supports economic growth, public safety, interstate commerce, national defense, and the movement of people and goods across a vast and diverse landscape.

This transportation system has evolved through successive generations of policy, legislation, engineering innovation, and infrastructure investment. Programs established under Title 23 of the United States Code and other Federal authorities have provided a flexible framework that allows transportation agencies to address changing demands while preserving the principles of the Federal-State partnership.

As the Nation enters an era characterized by rapidly changing economic conditions, technological innovation, increasing infrastructure vulnerabilities, and expanding national security requirements, transportation planning must continue to evolve. Certain transportation corridors now perform functions whose importance extends beyond regional mobility or traditional freight demand. These corridors serve national interests that influence the economic strength, security, resilience, and long-term competitiveness of the United States.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine why an additional planning framework is warranted and how the proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program can complement existing transportation policies while addressing emerging national priorities.

2.2 Evolution of Federal Transportation Planning

Transportation planning in the United States has consistently adapted to meet the Nation's changing needs. Early Federal investments focused on improving access between communities and supporting economic development. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 established the Interstate Highway System, transforming interstate travel, freight mobility, military readiness, and regional development.

Subsequent legislation expanded transportation planning to include safety, environmental stewardship, congestion management, freight movement, public transportation, multimodal integration, asset management, and infrastructure resilience. More recent legislation, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, has further emphasized system preservation, climate resilience, supply chain performance, and long-term infrastructure sustainability.

These developments demonstrate that transportation planning is not static. As national priorities evolve, transportation policy has continually adapted to ensure that infrastructure investments support both present and future needs.

2.3 Strengths of the Existing Transportation Framework

The existing Federal-State transportation planning process has proven highly effective in delivering transportation improvements throughout the Nation. Current planning practices incorporate extensive technical analysis, public involvement, environmental review, engineering evaluation, and fiscal responsibility.

Transportation agencies routinely evaluate projects based upon factors such as:

- Safety
- Mobility
- Congestion reduction
- Freight movement
- Infrastructure condition
- Asset management
- Environmental stewardship
- Economic efficiency
- Community accessibility
- System preservation

These planning processes remain fundamental to transportation decision-making and should continue to serve as the foundation for infrastructure investment. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative does not seek to replace these methodologies. Rather, it recognizes that additional considerations may be appropriate for transportation corridors whose significance extends beyond conventional transportation metrics.

2.4 Emerging National Challenges

The strategic environment surrounding transportation infrastructure has changed considerably during the past several decades. Transportation systems now support increasingly complex national objectives that were less prominent when many planning methodologies were originally developed.

Emerging challenges include:

- Domestic energy production and transmission.

- Critical mineral exploration and development.
- Arctic transportation and national security.
- Supply chain resilience.
- Military mobility and strategic readiness.
- Climate adaptation and infrastructure resilience.
- Emergency response and disaster recovery.
- Cybersecurity and operational continuity.
- Advanced manufacturing and industrial growth.
- Population shifts and regional economic development.

Many of these challenges require transportation corridors capable of supporting activities that are national in scope, even where present-day traffic volumes remain relatively modest.

2.5 Strategic Importance Beyond Traffic Volume

Traditional transportation planning often relies upon measurable indicators such as average daily traffic, congestion, crash history, pavement condition, bridge condition, and freight volumes. These measures remain essential for evaluating transportation performance.

However, transportation corridors may possess strategic importance that cannot be fully represented by these metrics alone.

Examples include corridors that:

- Provide the only surface access to nationally significant energy resources.
- Support development of critical mineral reserves.
- Enable military logistics and national defense operations.
- Connect Arctic infrastructure and strategic facilities.
- Provide essential redundancy during emergencies.
- Support major interstate freight movements despite relatively low traffic volumes.
- Serve as lifelines for remote communities or nationally significant industries.

The national value of these corridors is determined not solely by the number of vehicles using them today, but by the consequences of their disruption and their ability to support future national priorities.

2.6 Planning for Future National Priorities

Transportation infrastructure is designed and managed over decades rather than years. Decisions made today will influence national mobility, economic opportunity, and infrastructure resilience for generations.

Accordingly, transportation planning should consider not only existing demand but also foreseeable future needs.

Future planning considerations may include:

- Domestic manufacturing expansion.
- Emerging energy technologies.
- Critical mineral supply chains.
- Defense modernization.
- Arctic development.
- Climate resilience.
- Population growth.
- Technological innovation.
- Autonomous transportation systems.
- Changes in freight movement patterns.

Incorporating these long-term considerations allows infrastructure investments to better support evolving national priorities while reducing future costs associated with reactive infrastructure expansion.

2.7 The Role of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is proposed as a complementary planning framework designed to recognize transportation corridors of exceptional national importance.

The Program would provide a structured process for:

- Identifying nationally significant corridors.
- Evaluating strategic importance using consistent criteria.
- Supporting long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Improving interagency coordination.
- Encouraging integrated planning across Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments.
- Informing future investment decisions.
- Enhancing national resilience.

Importantly, designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor would not automatically alter existing transportation funding formulas or diminish State authority. Rather, it would provide an additional planning tool through which strategic national interests may be considered alongside existing transportation priorities.

2.8 A National Framework with Broad Applicability

Although this publication uses the Dalton Highway in Alaska as an illustrative example, the proposed framework is intended for nationwide application.

Transportation corridors serving strategic national interests exist throughout the United States. These may include corridors supporting military installations, international trade, major energy production regions, inland waterways, agricultural centers, manufacturing hubs, critical ports, border crossings, and emerging industrial development.

The proposed framework is intentionally flexible, allowing it to be adapted to the unique characteristics of transportation infrastructure across every region of the country.

2.9 Summary

America's transportation system has evolved continuously to meet changing national needs. Existing planning processes remain highly effective and should continue to serve as the foundation of transportation investment and infrastructure management.

At the same time, emerging national priorities have highlighted the importance of transportation corridors whose strategic value extends beyond traditional measures of transportation performance. Recognizing these corridors through a consistent and nationally applicable framework can strengthen long-term planning, improve infrastructure stewardship, enhance interagency coordination, and better prepare the Nation for future challenges.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is proposed as one means of accomplishing this objective. By complementing existing transportation planning processes with additional consideration of national strategic interests, the Program seeks to ensure that infrastructure critical to the Nation's security, economy, resilience, and future prosperity receives appropriate recognition within the broader transportation planning framework.

The following chapter establishes the vision, objectives, and guiding principles that underpin the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative and provide the foundation for the policy, legislative, technical, and implementation recommendations presented throughout the remainder of this publication.

Chapter 3 - Purpose and Objectives

3.1 Introduction

Transportation infrastructure is among the Nation's most valuable public assets. It supports economic growth, national defense, public safety, domestic energy production, emergency response, interstate commerce, and the daily movement of people and goods. The continued reliability of this infrastructure is essential to maintaining America's economic competitiveness, security, and resilience.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative was developed to provide a comprehensive framework for recognizing transportation corridors whose importance extends beyond conventional transportation planning considerations. While existing transportation programs effectively evaluate mobility, safety, congestion, infrastructure condition, and environmental stewardship, certain corridors serve broader national interests that warrant additional consideration within the planning process.

The purpose of this chapter is to define the vision, mission, objectives, guiding principles, and expected outcomes of the Initiative. Together, these elements establish the strategic direction that informs the policy recommendations, legislative proposals, technical guidance, governance framework, and implementation strategies presented throughout this publication.

3.2 Vision

The vision of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is to establish a nationally consistent framework through which transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests is recognized, preserved, and strengthened to support the long-term prosperity, security, resilience, and competitiveness of the United States.

The Initiative envisions a transportation system that not only addresses current operational needs but also anticipates future national priorities through proactive planning, coordinated investment, responsible stewardship, and adaptive management.

3.3 Mission

The mission of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is to provide policymakers and transportation professionals with a practical framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation corridors that contribute significantly to the national interest while preserving the existing Federal-State partnership that has guided transportation investment for generations.

The Initiative seeks to enhance existing transportation planning by introducing additional strategic planning tools rather than replacing established engineering, environmental, or economic evaluation processes.

3.4 Purpose

The principal purpose of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is to ensure that transportation corridors of exceptional national importance receive appropriate recognition within existing transportation planning and investment processes.

The Initiative is intended to:

- Complement existing Federal transportation programs.
- Promote long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Encourage strategic planning that considers future national priorities.
- Improve coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies.
- Strengthen infrastructure resilience.
- Support informed investment decisions through consistent evaluation methods.
- Encourage efficient use of public resources while preserving State decision-making authority.

3.5 Strategic Goals

The Initiative is guided by several long-term strategic goals.

Goal 1 — Recognize Nationally Significant Transportation Corridors

Develop a nationally consistent process for identifying transportation corridors that make exceptional contributions to national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, economic competitiveness, and other national priorities.

Goal 2 — Strengthen Long-Term Infrastructure Stewardship

Promote lifecycle asset management, preventive maintenance, operational reliability, resilience, and sustainable investment strategies that preserve nationally significant transportation infrastructure for future generations.

Goal 3 — Support Better Decision-Making

Provide transportation agencies with additional planning tools, including the National Interest Index, that complement existing transportation planning methodologies and assist decision-makers in evaluating strategic national importance alongside traditional transportation performance measures.

Goal 4 — Improve Interagency Coordination

Encourage collaboration among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, local governments, industry partners, research institutions, and other stakeholders responsible for transportation planning and infrastructure management.

Goal 5 — Prepare for Future National Needs

Encourage transportation planning that considers projected economic development, technological innovation, emerging industries, national security requirements, demographic trends, and changing environmental conditions.

3.6 Program Objectives

To achieve these goals, the Initiative establishes the following objectives:

- Develop nationally consistent corridor designation criteria.
- Create a transparent National Interest Index evaluation framework.
- Integrate strategic planning considerations into existing transportation processes.
- Encourage comprehensive Corridor Management Plans for designated corridors.
- Promote coordinated investment among participating agencies.
- Improve data collection and performance monitoring.
- Encourage research and innovation.
- Foster continuous program evaluation and improvement.

These objectives are intended to support informed planning while preserving the flexibility necessary to address regional transportation priorities and changing national needs.

3.7 Guiding Principles

The Initiative is founded upon several guiding principles that should inform all aspects of program development and implementation.

Federal-State Partnership

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should strengthen, not replace, the established partnership between the Federal Government and State Departments of Transportation.

National Perspective

Transportation corridors should be evaluated not only for their regional importance but also for the broader contributions they make to the national interest.

Long-Term Stewardship

Infrastructure planning should emphasize preservation, maintenance, operational reliability, lifecycle asset management, and resilience over the full service life of transportation assets.

Transparency

Evaluation criteria, designation procedures, and implementation processes should remain objective, transparent, and consistently applied.

Collaboration

Successful implementation depends upon cooperation among all levels of government, Tribal governments, industry, academic institutions, and the public.

Adaptability

The Program should remain flexible and responsive to changing technologies, infrastructure conditions, transportation demands, and national priorities.

Fiscal Responsibility

Recommendations should support efficient use of existing transportation resources while encouraging strategic investment where nationally significant infrastructure warrants additional consideration.

3.8 Expected Benefits

Implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is expected to provide numerous long-term benefits, including:

- Improved recognition of nationally significant transportation infrastructure.
- Enhanced coordination among transportation agencies.
- More comprehensive long-range planning.
- Greater emphasis on preventive maintenance and asset preservation.
- Improved infrastructure resilience.

- Better integration of national security, energy, and economic considerations.
- Increased consistency in corridor evaluation.
- Improved decision-making through objective planning tools.
- Stronger alignment between transportation investment and long-term national priorities.

These benefits are intended to complement existing transportation programs while supporting more informed and strategic infrastructure planning.

3.9 Looking Forward

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative represents an evolution in transportation planning rather than a departure from established practice. By building upon existing Federal transportation programs and introducing additional planning tools focused on the national interest, the Initiative seeks to improve the Nation's ability to identify and preserve infrastructure that supports America's long-term prosperity, security, and resilience.

The chapters that follow describe how these objectives can be translated into policy, governance, technical guidance, legislation, and implementation strategies. Together, they present a comprehensive framework designed to assist transportation professionals and policymakers in strengthening the Nation's most strategically important transportation corridors while maintaining the principles that have long guided successful transportation investment in the United States.

Chapter 4 - Relationship to Existing Federal Transportation Programs

4.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to strengthen, rather than replace, the existing Federal transportation framework. For more than six decades, the partnership between the Federal Government and State Departments of Transportation has provided the foundation for planning, constructing, operating, and preserving one of the world's most extensive transportation systems. Existing transportation statutes, regulations, funding programs, and planning processes have consistently evolved to address changing national priorities while maintaining flexibility for State and local implementation.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon this established framework by introducing an additional planning perspective that recognizes transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests. Rather than creating a separate transportation system or duplicating existing programs, the Initiative integrates strategic national considerations into established planning processes through a coordinated and complementary approach.

This chapter describes how the proposed Program relates to existing Federal transportation policies, planning requirements, funding mechanisms, and asset management practices.

4.2 Building Upon the Federal-State Partnership

Since the enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, transportation infrastructure has been developed through a collaborative partnership between the Federal Government and the States. This partnership recognizes that transportation infrastructure serves both national and regional purposes while allowing States to retain primary responsibility for planning, programming, constructing, operating, and maintaining transportation facilities.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative fully supports this partnership. The proposed Program is designed to provide additional planning tools and technical guidance without altering the existing allocation of responsibilities established under Federal law. State Departments of Transportation would continue to lead statewide transportation planning, while the Federal Government would provide strategic guidance, technical assistance, and coordination where transportation corridors serve exceptional national interests.

4.3 Relationship to Title 23

Title 23 of the United States Code establishes the statutory framework governing Federal-aid highways and transportation planning. It provides the legal authority for transportation investment, project delivery, performance management, asset management, and Federal-State cooperation.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to operate within this existing framework. Designation of a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor would complement, rather than supersede, the planning requirements established under Title 23. Existing requirements for statewide transportation planning, metropolitan planning, environmental review, performance management, and public involvement would remain unchanged.

The Initiative proposes that strategic national importance be considered as an additional planning factor where appropriate, particularly when evaluating transportation infrastructure that supports national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, or other nationally significant activities.

4.4 Relationship to Existing Transportation Planning Processes

Transportation planning currently incorporates a comprehensive range of technical analyses, including traffic forecasting, safety evaluation, infrastructure condition assessment, freight movement, environmental stewardship, fiscal constraint, and public participation.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to complement these existing processes by encouraging transportation agencies to evaluate whether certain corridors provide broader national benefits that may not be fully reflected through conventional transportation metrics.

Rather than establishing a parallel planning system, the Initiative integrates strategic evaluation into existing planning documents such as:

- Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs)
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs)
- Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)
- Transportation Asset Management Plans (TAMPs)
- Freight Plans
- Corridor Studies
- State Resilience Plans
- Emergency Transportation Plans

This approach minimizes duplication while encouraging greater consistency in recognizing nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

4.5 Relationship to Existing Federal Programs

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is designed to complement numerous existing Federal transportation and infrastructure programs.

National Highway System (NHS)

The NHS identifies highways important to the Nation's economy, defense, and mobility. National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation would not modify NHS eligibility or requirements but may recognize corridors whose strategic importance extends beyond traditional NHS considerations.

National Highway Freight Program (NHFP)

The Initiative supports the goals of the NHFP by encouraging long-term planning for freight corridors critical to interstate commerce and national supply chains.

Transportation Asset Management

The Initiative reinforces existing asset management requirements by emphasizing lifecycle planning, preventive maintenance, infrastructure resilience, and long-term stewardship for nationally significant transportation assets.

PROTECT Program

The Initiative complements the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program by encouraging resilience planning for transportation corridors that provide nationally significant services.

INFRA, MEGA, and RAISE

The Initiative does not replace discretionary grant programs but may provide an additional planning framework that helps identify transportation corridors warranting strategic consideration during project development and long-range planning.

4.6 National Interest Index as a Planning Tool

A central feature of the Initiative is the National Interest Index (NII). The NII is intended to function as a planning and evaluation framework rather than a funding formula or regulatory requirement.

The National Interest Index provides transportation agencies with a structured method for considering national strategic interests alongside existing engineering, environmental, operational, and economic analyses.

Potential evaluation categories include:

- National defense
- Domestic energy production

- Critical mineral development
- Interstate commerce
- Supply chain resilience
- Emergency preparedness
- Economic competitiveness
- Infrastructure resilience
- Future development potential

The NII is intended to support informed decision-making without replacing professional judgment or existing statutory planning requirements.

4.7 Preservation of State Authority

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative recognizes that State Departments of Transportation possess extensive expertise regarding their transportation systems and remain best positioned to identify regional transportation priorities.

Accordingly, the Initiative preserves State authority over project selection, transportation programming, infrastructure operations, and maintenance. National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation would not transfer ownership, operational responsibility, or routine decision-making authority to the Federal Government.

Instead, the Program seeks to improve coordination where transportation corridors serve broader national interests while respecting the responsibilities and expertise of State transportation agencies.

4.8 Benefits of Integration

Integrating strategic national considerations into existing transportation planning offers several advantages:

- Builds upon well-established planning processes.
- Avoids duplication of administrative responsibilities.
- Preserves existing funding mechanisms.
- Encourages interagency collaboration.
- Promotes consistent evaluation nationwide.
- Supports proactive long-term planning.
- Improves infrastructure stewardship.

- Enhances national resilience.
- Provides flexibility for future adaptation.

By integrating rather than replacing existing transportation programs, the Initiative minimizes administrative burden while expanding the information available to decision-makers.

4.9 Summary

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is designed to complement the existing Federal transportation framework by recognizing that certain transportation corridors provide benefits extending beyond traditional transportation performance measures. The Initiative preserves the Federal-State partnership established under Title 23 while introducing additional planning tools that support informed decision-making regarding infrastructure serving the national interest.

Rather than creating new layers of regulation or replacing existing transportation programs, the proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon proven planning processes, strengthens interagency coordination, and encourages long-term stewardship of strategically important transportation assets.

The following chapter explains how readers should use this publication and describes the relationship among the six volumes that collectively comprise the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative.

Chapter 5 - How to Use This Publication

5.1 Introduction

The **National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative (NSICI)** has been developed as a comprehensive reference for policymakers, transportation professionals, government agencies, industry stakeholders, researchers, and others interested in the long-term stewardship of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

Unlike a traditional policy report or legislative proposal, this publication is organized as a multi-volume framework. Each volume addresses a distinct aspect of the proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program while contributing to an integrated strategy for identifying, evaluating, designating, funding, implementing, and managing transportation corridors of exceptional national significance.

This chapter provides guidance on the organization of the Initiative, identifies its intended audiences, and explains how the various volumes may be used independently or collectively.

5.2 Intended Audience

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative has been prepared for a broad audience involved in transportation planning, infrastructure policy, and public investment. While individual readers may focus on specific sections relevant to their responsibilities, the Initiative is intended to encourage collaboration across all levels of government and the private sector.

Primary audiences include:

- Members of the United States Congress.
- Federal agencies involved in transportation, defense, energy, emergency management, and natural resources.
- State Departments of Transportation.
- Tribal governments.
- Metropolitan and regional planning organizations.
- Local governments.
- Infrastructure owners and operators.
- Freight and logistics providers.
- Energy and resource development industries.
- Academic and research institutions.
- Transportation consultants and engineers.

- Industry associations.
- Public policy organizations.

Although each audience may approach the Initiative from a different perspective, all share a common interest in ensuring that transportation infrastructure continues to support the Nation's long-term economic strength, security, and resilience.

5.3 Organization of the Initiative

The Initiative is organized into six complementary volumes that collectively present a complete framework for establishing and administering a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Volume I — Strategic Vision

Establishes the philosophical foundation of the Initiative by describing the evolving role of transportation infrastructure in advancing the national interest and presenting the long-term vision for a nationally coordinated strategic corridor program.

Volume II — Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA)

Presents a comprehensive policy proposal for establishing DDIMA as a dedicated governance and funding entity within the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, providing the organizational structure, funding strategy, and operational framework for the long-term stewardship of the Dalton Highway Corridor.

Volume III — Draft Alaska Legislation

Presents illustrative state-level legislative language establishing a specialized transportation authority responsible for governing a designated strategic corridor, using the Dalton Highway corridor as the pilot application for a model other states may adapt.

Volume IV — Proposed Amendments to Title 23, United States Code

Presents illustrative Federal legislative language and recommended statutory amendments that could authorize and establish the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program within the existing Federal transportation framework.

Volume V — National Interest Index and Technical Guidance

Provides technical guidance supporting corridor identification, evaluation, designation, performance monitoring, and long-term management, including the proposed National Interest Index methodology.

Volume VI — Implementation Strategy and Program Administration

Presents recommended implementation procedures, administrative guidance, phased program development, Federal and State coordination strategies, and long-term program management recommendations.

5.4 Using the Master Document

The Master Document provides a comprehensive overview of the entire Initiative while incorporating each of the six supporting volumes.

Readers seeking a general understanding of the Initiative are encouraged to review:

- Executive Summary
- Part I
- Integrated Recommendations
- Conclusions

Readers requiring detailed guidance should consult the individual volumes corresponding to their areas of responsibility.

The Master Document serves as the principal reference for the Initiative and should be considered the authoritative source for the overall framework.

5.5 Using Individual Volumes

Each volume has been written to function as an independent reference document.

For example:

- Legislators may primarily consult **Volume III**, and Volume IV.
- Transportation executives may focus on **Volumes II, IV, and VI**.
- Engineers and planners may rely primarily upon **Volume V**.
- Policy analysts may reference **Volumes I and II**.
- Program administrators may use **Volumes IV and VI** throughout implementation.

Although each volume may be read independently, readers are encouraged to consult the Master Document to understand how the individual components relate to one another.

5.6 A Living Document

Transportation systems continue to evolve as technologies advance, infrastructure ages, economic conditions change, and national priorities shift. Consequently, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is presented as a living document rather than a static publication.

Future editions may incorporate:

- Legislative changes.
- New Federal guidance.
- Advances in transportation planning.
- Emerging technologies.
- Updated research.
- Lessons learned through implementation.
- Stakeholder recommendations.
- Changes in national priorities.

Periodic revision will help ensure that the Initiative remains relevant and responsive to evolving transportation challenges and opportunities.

5.7 Supporting Collaboration

The concepts presented throughout this publication are intended to encourage collaboration rather than prescribe rigid administrative requirements.

Successful implementation will depend upon continued cooperation among:

- Federal agencies.
- State Departments of Transportation.
- Tribal governments.
- Regional and local governments.
- Industry partners.
- Academic institutions.
- Infrastructure owners.

- Transportation professionals.
- The public.

The Initiative recognizes that transportation infrastructure serves many interests simultaneously and that effective stewardship requires coordinated decision-making across organizational boundaries.

5.8 Relationship to Existing Planning Documents

The Initiative is intended to complement—not replace—existing transportation planning documents and statutory requirements.

Implementation should be coordinated with, as appropriate:

- Long-Range Transportation Plans.
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs.
- Transportation Improvement Programs.
- Transportation Asset Management Plans.
- Freight Plans.
- Resilience Plans.
- Emergency Transportation Plans.
- State Freight and Rail Plans.
- Corridor Studies.
- Agency strategic plans.

Where possible, the proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should leverage existing planning processes rather than create unnecessary administrative duplication.

5.9 Looking Ahead

The chapters and volumes that follow provide progressively greater levels of detail, moving from broad strategic concepts to specific policy recommendations, legislative proposals, technical guidance, governance structures, and implementation procedures.

Readers are encouraged to approach the Initiative according to their individual interests and responsibilities while recognizing that its greatest value lies in the integration of all six volumes into a unified framework.

By presenting strategic vision, policy, legislation, governance, technical guidance, and implementation within a single coordinated publication, the National Strategic Infrastructure

Corridor Initiative seeks to provide a practical and enduring resource for strengthening the Nation's transportation infrastructure in support of the national interest.

With the foundational concepts established in **Part I**, the remainder of this publication examines the Initiative in greater detail through the six supporting volumes, each addressing a critical component of the proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

PART II - The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Chapter 1 - Overview of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

1.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative (NSICI) represents a comprehensive framework for recognizing, evaluating, preserving, and strengthening transportation infrastructure that serves the long-term national interests of the United States. Building upon the foundational principles established in Part I of this publication, the Initiative proposes a coordinated approach to integrating strategic national considerations into existing transportation planning while preserving the Federal-State partnership that has guided infrastructure investment for generations.

Rather than replacing existing transportation programs or creating an entirely new planning system, the Initiative seeks to complement current Federal and State transportation practices by providing additional tools for evaluating transportation corridors whose significance extends beyond conventional measures of mobility, traffic volume, or regional economic activity. The proposed framework recognizes that certain transportation corridors support national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and other functions essential to the Nation's security, resilience, and economic prosperity.

1.2 Purpose of the Initiative

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative has been developed to provide a practical and nationally applicable framework through which transportation corridors of exceptional strategic importance may be identified, evaluated, designated, managed, and preserved.

The Initiative seeks to:

- Recognize transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.
- Encourage long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Improve coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments.
- Strengthen lifecycle asset management and resilience planning.
- Support informed transportation investment decisions.

- Prepare transportation systems for future national priorities.
- Build upon existing transportation planning processes rather than replace them.

Collectively, these objectives establish a comprehensive framework capable of supporting both current transportation needs and the evolving strategic interests of the United States.

1.3 Framework Organization

To address the broad range of policy, technical, legislative, and administrative considerations associated with a national transportation program, the Initiative is organized into six complementary volumes.

Each volume addresses a distinct component of the overall framework while contributing to an integrated national strategy.

Chapter 2 - Volume I – Strategic Vision

2.1 Introduction

Volume I establishes the strategic vision upon which the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is founded. It provides the philosophical framework for recognizing transportation infrastructure as a national strategic asset whose value extends beyond its immediate transportation function. While transportation systems have traditionally been evaluated based on mobility, safety, congestion, and economic performance, Volume I argues that certain corridors also play indispensable roles in supporting national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, supply chain resilience, and long-term economic competitiveness.

The Strategic Vision serves as the foundation for the entire Initiative. It explains why a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is needed, defines the principles that guide its development, and establishes the long-term objectives that are carried forward throughout the remaining volumes.

2.2 Purpose of Volume I

The purpose of Volume I is to establish a national perspective for transportation planning that recognizes infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.

Specifically, Volume I seeks to:

- Explain the evolving role of transportation infrastructure in advancing national priorities.
- Introduce the concept of transportation corridors serving the national interest.
- Establish the long-term vision for a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.
- Describe the principles of strategic infrastructure stewardship.
- Provide the philosophical foundation for the policy, legislative, governance, technical, and implementation recommendations presented in subsequent volumes.

Rather than proposing specific legislation or administrative procedures, Volume I establishes the strategic context within which those recommendations should be understood.

2.3 Major Themes

Several recurring themes define the Strategic Vision.

Transportation Infrastructure as a Strategic National Asset

Transportation infrastructure is more than a network for moving people and goods. It is a foundational component of the Nation’s economic strength, national defense, emergency response capability, energy independence, and industrial competitiveness. Corridors supporting these functions warrant consideration within a broader national context.

Long-Term Stewardship

The Initiative emphasizes stewardship over short-term investment. Infrastructure should be planned, preserved, maintained, and modernized using lifecycle asset management principles that maximize long-term value, reliability, and resilience.

Planning Beyond Present Demand

Transportation decisions should account not only for current conditions but also for projected economic development, technological change, defense requirements, emerging industries, demographic shifts, and future freight demand. Planning for tomorrow’s national needs requires looking beyond today’s traffic counts.

Partnership and Collaboration

The Strategic Vision reinforces the importance of the Federal-State partnership while recognizing the contributions of Tribal governments, local governments, industry, research institutions, and the private sector. Long-term success depends upon coordinated planning and shared responsibility.

2.4 Key Recommendations

Volume I establishes several foundational recommendations that guide the remainder of the Initiative.

These include:

- Recognizing transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests.
- Incorporating strategic considerations into existing planning processes.
- Promoting long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Encouraging lifecycle asset management and preventive maintenance.
- Strengthening interagency coordination.
- Supporting infrastructure resilience.
- Developing nationally consistent evaluation methodologies.
- Planning proactively for future transportation needs.

These recommendations are intentionally broad and serve as guiding principles for the more detailed proposals presented in later volumes.

2.5 Relationship to the Overall Initiative

Volume I provides the strategic direction for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. Each subsequent volume expands upon the concepts introduced in the Strategic Vision.

- **Volume II** translates the vision into a proposed governance structure for the Dalton Highway Corridor.
- **Volume III** presents a state-level legislative template establishing a specialized transportation authority for a designated corridor.
- **Volume IV** proposes the Federal legislative authority necessary to establish the Program.
- **Volume V** provides the technical methodologies used to evaluate transportation corridors.
- **Volume VI** describes implementation strategies and long-term program administration.

Collectively, these volumes transform the broad principles established in Volume I into a comprehensive and actionable national framework.

2.6 Summary

Volume I establishes the philosophical and strategic foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. It explains why transportation infrastructure should be viewed through a broader national lens and introduces the principles of long-term stewardship, strategic planning, and collaborative governance that guide the Initiative.

By emphasizing the relationship between transportation infrastructure and the Nation's security, economy, resilience, and future prosperity, Volume I provides the conceptual framework upon which the remaining volumes are built.

Readers seeking a detailed discussion of these concepts, including supporting research, strategic analyses, and illustrative examples, should refer to **Volume I – Strategic Vision**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

Chapter 3 - Volume II – Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA)

3.1 Introduction

Volume II presents the Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA), a comprehensive policy proposal for establishing a dedicated governance and funding entity within the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Building upon the strategic vision introduced in Volume I, Volume II translates that vision into a practical governance framework for the long-term stewardship, maintenance, operation, and strategic investment of Alaska’s Dalton Highway Corridor.

Rather than proposing an entirely new transportation agency, Volume II recommends establishing DDIMA as a public corporation and instrumentality of the State of Alaska, operating within DOT&PF while exercising independent powers necessary to plan, finance, maintain, and improve the Dalton District. While developed specifically for the Dalton Highway, the governance model presented in Volume II is intended to serve as a scalable template other states may adapt for transportation corridors of comparable national significance.

3.2 Purpose of Volume II

The purpose of Volume II is to present a complete policy case for dedicated, specialized governance of the Dalton District, one of the most strategically significant transportation corridors in the United States.

Specifically, Volume II seeks to:

- Document the historical development and evolving strategic importance of the Dalton District.
- Identify the governance, financial, and operational challenges facing the corridor under its existing administrative structure.
- Propose DDIMA’s organizational structure, including its Board of Directors, executive leadership, and administrative responsibilities.
- Recommend a diversified, sustainable funding strategy supporting long-term corridor stewardship.
- Establish performance measurement, accountability, and reporting mechanisms, together with the legal framework and phased implementation strategy necessary to establish the Authority.

The recommendations contained within this volume are intended to strengthen—not replace—DOT&PF’s existing responsibilities and the broader Federal-State transportation partnership.

3.3 Major Themes

Several themes define the governance framework presented in Volume II.

Dedicated Governance

DDIMA would provide dedicated leadership focused exclusively on the Dalton District, allowing specialized attention to a corridor whose strategic importance, environmental conditions, and financial requirements differ substantially from Alaska’s broader highway system.

Financial Sustainability

The Authority is intended to diversify and stabilize corridor funding by coordinating existing state and federal highway revenues with additional partnerships and revenue sources, reducing reliance on annual appropriations alone.

Operational Excellence and Lifecycle Asset Management

Volume II emphasizes proactive maintenance, lifecycle asset management, and operational reliability over reactive infrastructure investment, recognizing that the Dalton District must remain passable and safe throughout demanding Arctic conditions.

Strategic Partnerships and Accountability

DDIMA is intended to serve as the coordinating body among the many federal, state, tribal, and private-sector stakeholders the corridor supports, while maintaining transparent, measurable performance standards and public accountability.

3.4 Principal Recommendations

Volume II presents several recommendations intended to guide the establishment and long-term administration of DDIMA.

These recommendations include:

- Establishing DDIMA as a public corporation and instrumentality of the State of Alaska within DOT&PF.
- Creating a Board of Directors responsible for strategic direction, policy, budget approval, and oversight of long-term planning.
- Adopting a diversified funding strategy that complements existing state and federal highway revenues.
- Prioritizing proactive maintenance, lifecycle asset management, and infrastructure resilience.

- Establishing measurable performance standards and annual public reporting requirements.
- Implementing the Authority through a deliberate, phased approach that minimizes disruption to existing operations.
- Preserving DOT&PF's ownership and overall authority over the corridor.

Collectively, these recommendations establish the governance foundation for the statutory framework presented in Volume III.

3.5 Relationship to Other Volumes

Volume II provides the governance blueprint that Volume III translates into binding statutory language, with Volume III-A providing a detailed section-by-section explanation of that legislation.

The governance framework:

- Establishes the policy rationale for the DDIMA governance model enacted through the draft legislation presented in **Volume III**.
- Complements the Federal legislative authority proposed in **Volume IV** by demonstrating a state-level governance structure capable of operating under Federal corridor designation.
- Provides the institutional foundation to which the National Interest Index presented in **Volume V** may be applied.
- Informs the implementation recommendations contained in **Volume VI**.

As such, Volume II serves as the governance foundation upon which the remainder of the Initiative builds.

3.6 Summary

Volume II translates the broad strategic principles established in Volume I into a detailed governance proposal for one of the Nation's most strategically significant transportation corridors. It demonstrates that dedicated, specialized governance can provide the leadership, funding stability, and long-term stewardship the Dalton District requires.

Rather than replacing DOT&PF, DDIMA is intended to strengthen it by providing a dedicated organizational structure focused exclusively on preserving, operating, and improving Alaska's most strategically important transportation corridor.

Readers seeking the complete governance analysis, supporting discussion, and detailed recommendations are encouraged to consult **Volume II – Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

Chapter 4 - Volume III – Draft Alaska Legislation

4.1 Introduction

Volume III presents an illustrative state-level legislative proposal establishing the Dalton District Infrastructure & Maintenance Authority (DDIMA), a specialized transportation authority created within an existing state department of transportation to govern the long-term stewardship of a corridor recognized as serving exceptional national interests. While the preceding volumes describe the strategic vision, policy framework, and national program concept, Volume III demonstrates how a state may translate those concepts into a working governance structure at the state level.

The Dalton Highway and Elliott Highway corridor in Alaska serves as the pilot application for this legislative model. The statutory framework presented in Volume III is intended to function as a template that other states may adapt when establishing governance structures for corridors designated as nationally significant.

The legislative language presented throughout Volume III is illustrative and intended to support policy discussion. It is not offered as a final legislative product, but as a model that may be refined through state legislative deliberation, agency review, and stakeholder engagement.

Volume III is accompanied by Volume III-A – Legislative Analysis & Section-by-Section Commentary, a companion publication that provides detailed legal and policy analysis of the draft legislation, including section-by-section commentary explaining the purpose, legal basis, and intended effect of each provision. Readers seeking a deeper legal analysis of the statutory language presented in this chapter should consult Volume III-A directly.

4.2 Purpose of Volume III

The purpose of Volume III is to demonstrate a state-level statutory framework through which a specialized transportation authority could be established, governed, and financed to preserve and manage a corridor of exceptional national interest.

Specifically, Volume III seeks to:

- Establish the legal authority necessary to create a specialized transportation authority within an existing state department of transportation.
- Define the Authority’s board structure, executive leadership, and administrative responsibilities.
- Establish dedicated financial mechanisms, including a corridor infrastructure fund and defined revenue sources.

- Preserve the existing state department of transportation’s ownership and overall authority over the corridor.
- Establish a mechanism for coordinating with Federal agencies and pursuing Federal recognition of the corridor’s national significance.
- Provide planning, maintenance, and capital improvement requirements appropriate to long-term corridor stewardship.
- Establish reporting, audit, and accountability requirements to ensure transparent administration.

The statutory framework is intended to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate the institutional and legal circumstances of the adopting state while maintaining consistency with the principles established throughout this Initiative.

4.3 Legislative and Governance Approach

The proposed legislation is guided by several fundamental principles.

Building Upon Existing State Authority

Rather than creating an entirely new transportation system, the proposed legislation establishes a specialized authority within an existing state department of transportation, preserving that department’s ownership and overall jurisdiction.

Preserving the Federal-State Partnership

The proposed legislation recognizes that the State retains primary responsibility for its transportation system while establishing a pathway for Federal coordination and recognition of the corridor’s national significance.

Dedicated Financial Stewardship

The legislation establishes a dedicated infrastructure fund and diversified revenue sources intended to support the long-term preservation, maintenance, and capital improvement of the corridor.

Encouraging Long-Term Stewardship

The proposed statutory framework emphasizes preservation, lifecycle asset management, resilience, and future readiness as central objectives of the Authority.

4.4 Major Legislative Components

Volume III proposes legislation addressing several principal areas.

Authority Establishment

Creates a specialized transportation authority within the state department of transportation, with defined jurisdiction over the designated corridor.

Board of Directors and Executive Leadership

Establishes a governing board and an executive director responsible for the Authority's policy direction and day-to-day administration.

Financial Management and Revenue

Establishes a dedicated infrastructure fund, defines eligible revenue sources, and sets requirements for financial reporting, audits, and fiscal accountability.

Federal Coordination

Establishes a mechanism for the Authority to coordinate with Federal agencies and support the State's pursuit of Federal recognition of the corridor's national significance.

Planning, Maintenance, and Capital Improvements

Establishes requirements for corridor management plans, maintenance standards, and capital improvement programming.

Reporting and Oversight

Provides for legislative reporting, audits, and rulemaking to ensure transparency and accountability in the Authority's administration.

4.5 Relationship to Existing State Law

The proposed legislation has been developed to operate within the adopting state's existing transportation and administrative statutes.

The Initiative does not propose:

- Transferring ownership of the corridor from the state department of transportation.
- Diminishing the department's overall jurisdiction or authority.
- Creating an independent public corporation separate from state government.
- Displacing existing state financial management or procurement law.
- Altering existing environmental review or permitting requirements.
- Establishing new taxing authority beyond the revenue sources specifically authorized.

Instead, the proposed legislation establishes a specialized authority that operates within, and remains accountable to, the existing framework of state government.

4.6 Expected Outcomes

If enacted, the proposed legislative framework would provide the legal foundation necessary to:

- Establish a specialized transportation authority for the designated corridor.
- Provide dedicated, sustainable financing for long-term corridor stewardship.
- Strengthen coordination between the state and Federal agencies.
- Support the State’s pursuit of Federal recognition of the corridor’s national significance.
- Improve long-term maintenance, resilience, and capital planning.
- Strengthen transparency and accountability in corridor administration.
- Preserve the existing department’s ownership and overall jurisdiction.
- Demonstrate a governance model that other states may adapt.

These outcomes are intended to improve the Nation’s ability to recognize and manage transportation infrastructure serving long-term national interests through a governance model grounded in state-level implementation.

4.7 Summary

Volume III demonstrates how a state may translate the strategic vision and policy framework established in the preceding volumes into a working, state-level governance structure. The illustrative legislation establishes a specialized transportation authority, dedicated financial mechanisms, and a pathway for Federal coordination, while preserving the state department of transportation’s ownership and overall authority.

Rather than prescribing a single national model, Volume III offers a legislative template that individual states may adapt to their own institutional and legal circumstances.

Readers seeking the complete legislative proposal, including illustrative statutory language, section-by-section analysis, and supporting commentary, are encouraged to consult **Volume III – Draft Alaska Legislation**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

Chapter 5 - Volume IV – Proposed Amendments to Title 23, United States Code

5.1 Introduction

Volume IV presents the legislative framework necessary to establish the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program within the existing Federal transportation system. While the preceding volumes define the strategic vision and supporting policy, Volume IV translates those concepts into proposed statutory language and legislative recommendations that may serve as the basis for future congressional consideration.

The proposed legislation is intended to complement existing Federal transportation law rather than replace it. Consistent with the principles established throughout this Initiative, the legislative framework preserves the Federal-State partnership, respects existing transportation authorities, and integrates with current planning and funding mechanisms established under Title 23 of the United States Code.

The legislative language presented throughout Volume IV is illustrative and intended to support policy discussion. It is not offered as a final legislative product, but as a framework that may be refined through congressional deliberation, agency review, stakeholder engagement, and future legislative development.

5.2 Purpose of Volume IV

The purpose of Volume IV is to provide a statutory framework through which the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program could be authorized, administered, and integrated into existing Federal transportation law.

Specifically, Volume IV seeks to:

- Establish legal authority for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.
- Define the purpose and objectives of the Program.
- Establish a nationally consistent corridor designation process.
- Define Federal and State responsibilities.
- Authorize development of the National Interest Index.
- Encourage coordinated planning and long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Preserve existing transportation planning and funding authorities.

The legislative framework is intended to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate future policy development while maintaining consistency with existing Federal transportation statutes.

5.3 Legislative Philosophy

The proposed legislation is guided by several fundamental principles.

Building Upon Existing Law

Rather than creating an entirely new transportation system, the Initiative proposes targeted statutory additions that complement existing transportation programs and planning requirements.

Preserving the Federal-State Partnership

The proposed legislation recognizes that State Departments of Transportation remain the primary stewards of their transportation systems while acknowledging the Federal interest in corridors serving exceptional national significance.

Maintaining Administrative Flexibility

The legislation establishes broad statutory authority while allowing the Secretary of Transportation and participating agencies to develop implementation guidance through the administrative rulemaking process.

Encouraging Long-Term Stewardship

The proposed statutory framework emphasizes preservation, lifecycle asset management, resilience, and future readiness as central objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

5.4 Major Legislative Components

Volume IV proposes legislation addressing several principal areas.

Program Authorization

Establishes the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program within the United States Department of Transportation.

Corridor Designation

Creates a nationally consistent process for identifying and designating transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests.

National Interest Index

Authorizes development and administration of the National Interest Index as a planning and evaluation framework supporting corridor designation and long-term planning.

Program Administration

Assigns administrative responsibilities to the Secretary of Transportation while providing for coordination with Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, and other stakeholders.

Planning and Coordination

Encourages integration of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors into existing transportation planning processes while minimizing duplication of effort.

Reporting and Program Evaluation

Provides for periodic review, reporting, and continuous improvement of the Program to ensure that it remains responsive to changing national priorities.

5.5 Relationship to Existing Federal Law

The proposed legislation has been developed to operate within the broader framework of existing Federal transportation statutes.

The Initiative does not propose replacing:

- Title 23 transportation planning requirements.
- Federal-aid highway programs.
- Transportation Asset Management requirements.
- Existing discretionary grant programs.
- Environmental review requirements.
- State transportation planning authority.

Instead, the proposed legislation provides an additional statutory mechanism through which transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests may be recognized and incorporated into existing planning processes.

5.6 Expected Outcomes

If enacted, the proposed legislative framework would provide the legal foundation necessary to:

- Establish a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.
- Promote nationally consistent corridor evaluation.
- Strengthen long-term infrastructure stewardship.
- Improve interagency coordination.
- Support strategic transportation planning.

- Encourage consideration of future national priorities.
- Enhance transportation system resilience.
- Preserve flexibility for State implementation.

These outcomes are intended to improve the Nation's ability to recognize and manage transportation infrastructure serving long-term national interests while maintaining the strengths of the existing transportation system.

5.7 Relationship to the Overall Initiative

This Federal legislative framework provides the statutory foundation through which the recommendations presented throughout the Initiative can be authorized and implemented.

- **Volume I** establishes the strategic vision that guides the Program.
- **Volume II** provides the governance framework establishing DDIMA and its institutional relationship to DOT&PF.
- **Volume III** demonstrates a state-level governance model that may operate under this Federal authority.
- **Volume V** provides the technical methodologies used to evaluate transportation corridors.
- **Volume VI** builds upon this legislative framework by describing implementation procedures, program administration, and long-term operational management.

Together, these volumes establish a comprehensive framework that combines strategic direction, state and Federal legislative authority, technical guidance, and effective administration.

5.8 Summary

Volume IV translates the strategic vision and policy framework established in the preceding volumes into a proposed legislative framework capable of supporting a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. The recommended statutory language is designed to complement existing Federal transportation law, preserve the Federal-State partnership, and provide the legal authority necessary for coordinated program administration.

Rather than prescribing every administrative detail, the proposed legislation establishes a durable statutory foundation upon which future regulations, guidance, technical standards, and implementation procedures may be developed. This approach provides both legislative certainty and administrative flexibility, allowing the Program to evolve alongside changing transportation needs and national priorities.

Readers seeking the complete legislative proposal, including illustrative statutory language, section-by-section analysis, and supporting commentary, are encouraged to consult **Volume IV – Proposed Amendments to Title 23, United States Code**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

Chapter 6 - Volume V – National Interest Index & Technical Guidance

6.1 Introduction

Volume V presents the technical framework supporting the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative through development of the National Interest Index (NII) and associated technical guidance. While the preceding volumes establish the strategic vision, policy framework, legislative authority, and governance structure, Volume V provides the objective methodologies used to evaluate transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests.

The National Interest Index is designed to supplement existing transportation planning by providing a nationally consistent framework for identifying corridors whose importance extends beyond traditional transportation performance measures. Rather than replacing existing planning methodologies, the NII incorporates strategic national considerations into infrastructure evaluation while remaining compatible with established transportation planning practices.

The technical guidance presented throughout this volume is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and sound engineering judgment while allowing sufficient flexibility to recognize the unique characteristics of individual transportation corridors.

6.2 Purpose of Volume V

The purpose of Volume V is to establish the technical methodologies and evaluation framework supporting the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Specifically, Volume V seeks to:

- Establish the National Interest Index as a planning and evaluation framework.
- Identify nationally relevant evaluation criteria.
- Promote objective and transparent corridor assessments.
- Support data-driven transportation planning.
- Encourage consistent application of technical methodologies across jurisdictions.
- Provide guidance for evaluating transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests.

The methodologies presented in this volume are intended to inform planning decisions while complementing existing transportation engineering, asset management, and planning practices.

6.3 The National Interest Index

The National Interest Index serves as a structured planning and evaluation framework through which transportation corridors may be assessed according to their contribution to long-term national objectives.

Unlike traditional transportation evaluation methods that primarily emphasize traffic volumes, congestion, or economic performance, the National Interest Index considers a broader range of strategic factors that contribute to the Nation's long-term security, resilience, and prosperity.

These factors may include:

- National defense and military mobility.
- Domestic energy production and distribution.
- Critical mineral development and resource access.
- Interstate and international commerce.
- Supply chain resilience.
- Emergency preparedness and disaster response.
- Arctic and border security.
- Economic competitiveness.
- Infrastructure resilience and long-term sustainability.

The National Interest Index is intended to support informed planning decisions and should not be interpreted as a formula for allocating Federal transportation funding or replacing existing statutory funding programs.

6.4 Technical Guidance

Volume V provides technical guidance supporting consistent implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The guidance addresses topics including:

- Corridor identification and screening.
- Evaluation methodologies.
- Data collection and performance measures.
- Risk and resilience assessments.
- Lifecycle asset management considerations.
- Corridor Management Plans.

- Performance monitoring.
- Periodic reassessment of designated corridors.

The guidance is designed to evolve as new technologies, analytical tools, and transportation practices emerge, ensuring that the Program remains responsive to changing national priorities.

6.5 Principles of Technical Evaluation

The technical framework presented in Volume V is guided by several fundamental principles.

Objectivity

Transportation corridors should be evaluated using consistent, evidence-based methodologies supported by reliable data and sound engineering judgment.

Transparency

Evaluation criteria and decision-making processes should be clearly documented, allowing agencies and stakeholders to understand how corridor assessments are performed.

Flexibility

The evaluation framework should accommodate the diverse geographic, operational, and economic characteristics of transportation corridors across the United States.

Continuous Improvement

Technical methodologies should be periodically reviewed and refined to reflect advances in transportation research, data analytics, infrastructure management, and national strategic priorities.

6.6 Relationship to the Overall Initiative

Volume V provides the technical foundation supporting implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The National Interest Index transforms the strategic concepts introduced in **Volume I**, reflects the governance and funding framework proposed in **Volume II**, reflects the state-level governance model demonstrated in **Volume III**, and operates under the Federal legislative framework proposed in **Volume IV**. Together, these elements enable the implementation strategies outlined in **Volume VI**.

By providing a consistent technical methodology, Volume V ensures that corridor evaluations are objective, repeatable, and aligned with the long-term goals of the Initiative.

6.7 Summary

Volume V establishes the technical framework for evaluating transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests through the National Interest Index and supporting technical guidance. By combining objective evaluation criteria with flexible implementation methodologies, the volume provides transportation agencies with a practical tool for incorporating national strategic considerations into existing planning processes.

The National Interest Index is intended to complement—not replace—traditional transportation planning and engineering analyses. Its purpose is to improve the Nation’s ability to recognize, evaluate, and steward transportation infrastructure that supports defense, energy, commerce, emergency preparedness, critical mineral development, and other enduring national priorities.

Readers seeking the complete technical methodologies, evaluation criteria, guidance documents, and supporting analyses are encouraged to consult **Volume V – National Interest Index & Technical Guidance**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

Chapter 7 - Volume VI – Implementation Strategy and Program Administration

7.1 Introduction

Volume VI presents the implementation strategy for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative by describing the processes, administrative considerations, and long-term actions necessary to transition the Initiative from concept to practice. Building upon the strategic vision, policy framework, legislative recommendations, governance structure, and technical guidance presented in the preceding volumes, this volume outlines a practical roadmap for establishing and sustaining a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Recognizing that transportation systems evolve over decades rather than years, the implementation strategy emphasizes a phased, collaborative approach that allows the Program to be integrated into existing transportation planning processes while minimizing administrative disruption. The objective is not to create an entirely new transportation system, but to provide transportation agencies with practical tools and procedures that enhance long-term strategic planning and infrastructure stewardship.

7.2 Purpose of Volume VI

The purpose of Volume VI is to provide guidance for implementing, administering, and continuously improving the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Specifically, Volume VI seeks to:

- Establish a practical implementation roadmap.
- Recommend phased program development and deployment.
- Define administrative processes supporting the Program.
- Promote coordination among participating agencies and stakeholders.
- Encourage continuous evaluation and program improvement.
- Support long-term stewardship of nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

The implementation strategy is intended to be flexible, allowing agencies to adapt the Program to changing transportation needs, technological advancements, and evolving national priorities.

7.3 Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy is designed to support gradual integration of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program into existing transportation planning and management activities.

The recommended implementation process includes:

Program Establishment

Following legislative authorization, the United States Department of Transportation would establish the administrative framework necessary to support the Program, including the development of implementing guidance, administrative procedures, and technical standards.

Development of Technical Guidance

National guidance documents, evaluation methodologies, and administrative procedures would be finalized through collaboration with Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, industry representatives, and other stakeholders.

Corridor Identification and Evaluation

States and participating agencies would identify transportation corridors for evaluation using the National Interest Index and other applicable technical guidance, integrating these activities into existing planning processes whenever practicable.

Corridor Designation

Transportation corridors meeting established criteria may be considered for designation as National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors through a transparent and coordinated review process.

Long-Term Stewardship

Once designated, corridors would be incorporated into long-term planning, asset management, resilience initiatives, and Corridor Management Plans to promote sustained performance and preservation.

7.4 Program Administration

Volume VI recommends an administrative framework that emphasizes coordination, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Program administration includes:

- Development and periodic revision of technical guidance.
- Coordination among participating Federal agencies.
- Support for State implementation activities.
- Performance monitoring and reporting.
- Maintenance of national corridor information.
- Periodic reassessment of designated corridors.
- Program evaluation and refinement.

The administrative framework is intended to remain adaptable while ensuring consistency across participating jurisdictions.

7.5 Continuous Improvement

Transportation systems, infrastructure technologies, national priorities, and economic conditions continually evolve. Accordingly, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be viewed as an adaptive framework capable of responding to future challenges.

Volume VI recommends that the Program incorporate regular review of:

- Evaluation methodologies.
- National Interest Index criteria.
- Corridor performance measures.
- Administrative procedures.
- Emerging technologies.
- Infrastructure resilience practices.
- Lessons learned through implementation.

This process of continuous improvement ensures that the Program remains effective, relevant, and responsive over time.

7.6 Expected Benefits

Implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is expected to strengthen the Nation's ability to plan for, preserve, and manage transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.

Potential benefits include:

- Improved recognition of strategically significant transportation corridors.
- Enhanced coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, and local partners.
- More consistent long-term infrastructure planning.
- Increased emphasis on preventive maintenance and lifecycle asset management.
- Improved infrastructure resilience.
- Better alignment of transportation planning with future national priorities.
- Greater transparency and consistency in corridor evaluation and management.

Collectively, these outcomes support a more resilient and strategically prepared national transportation system.

7.7 Summary

Volume VI provides the implementation roadmap for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative by describing the administrative processes, phased implementation strategy, and continuous improvement framework necessary to establish and sustain the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. It demonstrates how the concepts presented throughout the preceding volumes can be translated into practical actions while preserving the strengths of the existing Federal transportation system.

Together, the six volumes form a comprehensive and integrated framework. The Strategic Vision establishes the Initiative's guiding principles; the Policy Framework integrates those principles into existing transportation policy; the Draft Alaska Legislation demonstrates a state-level governance model; the Federal Legislative Proposal establishes national statutory authority; the National Interest Index and Technical Guidance establish objective evaluation methodologies; and the Implementation Strategy provides the roadmap for transforming these concepts into an enduring national program.

Readers seeking the complete implementation strategy, administrative guidance, recommended procedures, and supporting documentation are encouraged to consult **Volume VI – Implementation Strategy and Program Administration**, the companion publication containing this material in full.

PART III - Integrated Recommendations

Chapter 1 - Legislative Recommendations

1.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative proposes a series of legislative actions intended to strengthen the Nation's ability to identify, preserve, and manage transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests. These recommendations build upon the strategic vision, policy framework, governance principles, and technical guidance presented throughout this publication while preserving the established Federal-State partnership that has long guided transportation investment.

The recommendations presented in this chapter are intended to provide Congress with a flexible legislative framework capable of supporting long-term infrastructure stewardship without replacing existing transportation planning processes or funding programs. Rather than creating an entirely new transportation system, the proposed legislation enhances current authorities by recognizing transportation corridors whose significance extends beyond conventional transportation performance measures.

1.2 Legislative Objectives

The legislative recommendations are intended to establish a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program within the United States Department of Transportation, recognize transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests, preserve and strengthen the Federal-State transportation partnership, encourage long-term infrastructure stewardship and lifecycle asset management, improve coordination among Federal agencies with shared transportation responsibilities, support objective, nationally consistent corridor evaluation, and promote resilience, reliability, and future readiness of strategically significant transportation infrastructure.

1.3 Recommended Legislative Actions

Program Authorization

Authorize the establishment of a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program within the United States Department of Transportation to provide a nationally consistent framework for identifying and managing transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.

Corridor Designation Authority

Establish statutory authority for the designation of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors using objective evaluation criteria and transparent administrative procedures.

National Interest Index

Direct the Secretary of Transportation to develop and maintain the National Interest Index as a planning and evaluation framework for supporting corridor designation and long-term strategic planning.

Corridor Management Plans

Require preparation and periodic updating of Corridor Management Plans for designated corridors to encourage coordinated planning, lifecycle asset management, resilience, and long-term preservation.

Interagency Coordination

Encourage formal coordination among Federal agencies responsible for transportation, defense, energy, emergency management, natural resources, commerce, and homeland security to ensure that transportation planning reflects broader national priorities.

Reporting Requirements

Require periodic reports to Congress evaluating implementation of the Program, corridor performance, emerging national priorities, and opportunities for continuous improvement.

1.4 Legislative Priorities

Implementation should prioritize legislation that builds upon existing Federal transportation law, avoids duplication of existing programs, preserves State transportation authority, encourages objective and transparent decision-making, supports long-term infrastructure investment and stewardship, and allows administrative flexibility for future adaptation.

1.5 Summary

The legislative recommendations establish the statutory foundation necessary to implement a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program while preserving the strengths of the existing Federal transportation framework. Together, these recommendations provide Congress with a

practical roadmap for integrating national strategic considerations into transportation planning through targeted amendments to existing law rather than wholesale restructuring of current programs.

Chapter 2 - Administrative Recommendations

2.1 Introduction

While congressional action provides the statutory authority for a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program, many aspects of implementation can be advanced through administrative action by the United States Department of Transportation and its partner agencies. This chapter identifies recommendations intended to improve coordination, planning, technical guidance, and program administration within existing authorities.

Administrative actions provide an opportunity to strengthen transportation planning, improve interagency collaboration, and develop the institutional capacity necessary to support future legislative implementation.

2.2 Administrative Objectives

Administrative recommendations are intended to improve coordination among participating agencies, establish nationally consistent implementation guidance, promote data-driven decision-making, strengthen long-term infrastructure stewardship, support State and local implementation, and encourage continuous improvement of transportation planning practices.

2.3 Recommended Administrative Actions

National Program Guidance

Develop comprehensive implementation guidance describing designation procedures, evaluation methodologies, Corridor Management Plans, reporting requirements, and administrative responsibilities.

Interagency Coordination

Establish formal coordination mechanisms among Federal agencies whose missions intersect with nationally significant transportation infrastructure, ensuring that planning reflects defense, energy, emergency management, commerce, and resource development priorities.

State Technical Assistance

Provide technical assistance, training, and planning resources to State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, and regional planning organizations to support implementation of the Program.

Data Management

Develop nationally consistent standards for data collection, performance monitoring, corridor inventories, and infrastructure reporting to improve transparency and support evidence-based planning.

Performance Evaluation

Implement regular monitoring and reporting procedures to evaluate designated corridors, assess program effectiveness, and identify opportunities for improvement.

Continuous Improvement

Establish a structured process for periodically updating technical guidance, administrative procedures, and evaluation methodologies to reflect changing transportation needs, emerging technologies, and evolving national priorities.

2.4 Administrative Principles

Successful implementation should emphasize collaboration rather than centralized control, transparency and accountability, consistency across jurisdictions, flexibility to address regional needs, integration with existing transportation planning processes, and long-term stewardship of nationally significant infrastructure.

2.5 Summary

Administrative leadership will play a critical role in translating legislative authority into effective transportation policy and practice. By developing clear guidance, strengthening interagency coordination, supporting State implementation, and promoting continuous improvement, the United States Department of Transportation can establish a durable administrative framework that complements existing transportation programs while advancing the long-term objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative.

Chapter 3 - Funding Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

Long-term transportation resilience depends not only upon adequate investment but also upon strategic allocation of available resources. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative recognizes that existing Federal transportation programs have provided significant benefits for the Nation; however, transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests often requires planning and investment considerations that extend beyond traditional funding priorities.

The recommendations presented in this chapter are intended to strengthen long-term infrastructure stewardship by encouraging investment strategies that recognize national strategic importance while preserving the existing Federal-State transportation partnership. The objective is not to replace existing funding programs, but to improve their ability to support transportation corridors that contribute to national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, and long-term economic resilience.

3.2 Funding Objectives

Funding recommendations are intended to promote long-term infrastructure stewardship, encourage lifecycle asset management, improve infrastructure resilience, support nationally significant transportation corridors, maximize the effectiveness of existing transportation investments, encourage coordination among Federal funding programs, and preserve State flexibility in transportation investment decisions.

3.3 Funding Principles

Prioritize Preservation

Transportation agencies should continue emphasizing preservation and maintenance of existing infrastructure as a cost-effective strategy for protecting long-term public investment.

Invest Strategically

Infrastructure investments should consider both present transportation demand and the long-term national importance of transportation corridors supporting defense, energy production, critical mineral development, supply chain resilience, and emergency response.

Encourage Program Coordination

Where appropriate, Federal agencies should coordinate investments when transportation infrastructure advances multiple national objectives, allowing complementary funding opportunities to be considered while respecting each agency's statutory authority.

Maintain Flexibility

States should retain the flexibility necessary to address regional transportation priorities while incorporating national strategic considerations into long-term planning.

3.4 Recommended Funding Actions

The Initiative recommends that Federal transportation investment policies continue supporting formula-based transportation funding, encourage greater emphasis on preventive maintenance and lifecycle asset management, improve eligibility for resilience-related infrastructure improvements, promote coordinated investment among transportation, defense, energy, and emergency management agencies where appropriate, support Corridor Management Plans as long-term investment strategies for designated corridors, encourage data-driven project prioritization using objective planning methodologies, and explore future funding mechanisms that recognize the national significance of designated transportation corridors.

3.5 Long-Term Investment Strategy

Transportation infrastructure should be viewed as a long-term national asset requiring sustained stewardship. Deferred maintenance frequently results in substantially higher future costs, reduced system reliability, and increased disruption to interstate commerce, emergency response, and national security.

Accordingly, transportation investment decisions should emphasize preventive maintenance, resilience improvements, and strategic modernization to preserve the Nation's infrastructure for future generations.

3.6 Summary

The funding recommendations presented in this chapter emphasize strategic investment rather than increased expenditure alone. By promoting lifecycle asset management, resilience, interagency coordination, and long-term stewardship, these recommendations seek to maximize the value of existing transportation investments while ensuring that infrastructure serving exceptional national interests remains reliable, resilient, and capable of supporting future national priorities.

Chapter 4 - Research and Technology Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

Transportation infrastructure is increasingly influenced by rapid advances in engineering, data analytics, digital technologies, and materials science. To ensure that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program remains effective over the coming decades, transportation planning must embrace innovation while maintaining the safety, reliability, and durability of the Nation's infrastructure.

The recommendations presented in this chapter encourage continued research, technological advancement, and data-driven decision-making to improve transportation planning, infrastructure management, and long-term system performance.

4.2 Research Objectives

Research recommendations are intended to improve transportation planning methodologies, enhance infrastructure resilience, support evidence-based decision-making, encourage innovation in asset management, improve understanding of emerging national transportation needs, and strengthen collaboration among government, academia, and industry.

4.3 Priority Research Areas

The Initiative recommends continued research in areas including:

Infrastructure Resilience

Advance engineering practices that improve infrastructure performance under extreme weather, natural hazards, environmental change, and other long-term stressors.

Advanced Asset Management

Develop improved methods for evaluating infrastructure condition, predicting deterioration, and optimizing maintenance schedules through lifecycle asset management.

Data Analytics and Decision Support

Expand the use of geographic information systems, predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, and digital modeling to improve transportation planning and infrastructure management.

Freight and Supply Chain Analysis

Improve forecasting methodologies that evaluate freight movement, critical supply chains, strategic resource transportation, and emerging industrial development.

Emerging Transportation Technologies

Monitor technological developments affecting freight transportation, construction methods, intelligent transportation systems, autonomous technologies, and infrastructure monitoring.

Arctic and Remote Transportation

Encourage research addressing transportation challenges unique to remote, northern, and Arctic environments, including permafrost degradation, seasonal accessibility, and resilient infrastructure design.

4.4 Collaboration

Successful research requires collaboration among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, universities, national laboratories, private industry, Tribal governments, and professional organizations. The Initiative encourages multidisciplinary partnerships that accelerate innovation while supporting practical transportation solutions.

4.5 Technology Implementation

Research should be translated into practice through updated technical guidance, engineering standards, workforce training, pilot projects, and continuous refinement of transportation planning methodologies. Technology adoption should enhance—not complicate—the ability of agencies to make informed, transparent, and effective infrastructure decisions.

4.6 Summary

Research and technological innovation will play a critical role in the long-term success of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. By encouraging continued advancement in infrastructure engineering, asset management, data analytics, resilience, and transportation planning, these recommendations help ensure that the Nation’s transportation system remains capable of meeting evolving strategic, economic, and security needs throughout the twenty-first century.

Chapter 5 - Future Program Development

5.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to establish a durable framework capable of evolving alongside the Nation's transportation system and strategic priorities. Transportation infrastructure serves a dynamic role within the national economy, supporting changing patterns of population growth, commerce, energy production, resource development, defense, technological innovation, and emergency preparedness. Accordingly, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be viewed as an adaptive framework that encourages continuous improvement rather than a fixed set of policies.

The recommendations presented in this chapter provide a long-term vision for the future development of the Program. As new technologies emerge, national priorities evolve, and transportation systems become increasingly interconnected, the Program should remain flexible enough to incorporate new information while preserving its foundational principles of strategic planning, infrastructure stewardship, and collaborative governance.

5.2 Long-Term Vision

The long-term objective of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is to establish a nationally recognized framework for identifying, preserving, and strengthening transportation infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests.

As the Program matures, it should continue to improve the Nation's ability to recognize strategically important transportation corridors, strengthen coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, and local partners, improve long-term transportation planning, support infrastructure resilience, enhance national preparedness, and encourage efficient stewardship of public infrastructure investments.

Future program development should remain focused on these enduring objectives while adapting to emerging transportation challenges.

5.3 Continuous Improvement

Transportation planning should evolve as new data, technologies, and experience become available. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should incorporate periodic review of National Interest Index evaluation criteria, corridor designation procedures, Corridor Management Plans, administrative guidance, technical standards, performance measures, and emerging national transportation priorities.

This process of continuous improvement will help ensure that the Program remains effective, objective, and responsive to changing conditions.

5.4 Expanding Knowledge and Partnerships

The continued success of the Program will depend upon strong partnerships among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, regional planning organizations, academia, industry, and infrastructure owners.

The Initiative encourages continued collaboration through research partnerships, professional education and workforce development, information sharing, pilot projects and demonstration programs, public and stakeholder engagement, and international cooperation where transportation systems support shared strategic interests.

These partnerships will contribute to the refinement of technical guidance and the continued advancement of transportation planning practices.

5.5 Preparing for Emerging Challenges

Future transportation planning must anticipate conditions that may differ significantly from those experienced today. The Program should remain adaptable to address emerging freight and logistics patterns, technological advancements, infrastructure modernization, climate adaptation and resilience, Arctic and remote transportation challenges, changing national security requirements, energy transition and resource development, and population and economic shifts.

By maintaining a forward-looking perspective, the Program can help ensure that transportation infrastructure continues to support the Nation's evolving strategic interests.

5.6 Measuring Success

The long-term success of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be evaluated not only by the number of designated corridors, but by its ability to improve transportation planning, strengthen infrastructure stewardship, enhance resilience, and support national priorities.

Indicators of success may include improved coordination among participating agencies, more consistent integration of national strategic considerations into transportation planning, increased emphasis on lifecycle asset management, enhanced infrastructure resilience, improved transparency in corridor evaluation, and greater readiness to address future transportation challenges.

These measures should be reviewed periodically and refined as the Program evolves.

5.7 Summary

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to serve as the foundation for a long-term, adaptive approach to transportation planning that recognizes infrastructure as a strategic national asset. Future development of the Program should emphasize continuous improvement, collaborative governance, technical innovation, and responsible stewardship while remaining responsive to changing national priorities and emerging transportation needs.

The recommendations presented throughout this publication provide a framework that can evolve over time without compromising the enduring principles upon which the Initiative is founded. By combining strategic vision with practical implementation and ongoing refinement, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is positioned to support a more resilient, efficient, and nationally integrated transportation system for future generations.

PART IV - National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

Chapter 1 - Program Structure

1.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program (NSICP) establishes a nationally consistent framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, and supporting transportation corridors that serve exceptional national interests. The Program is intended to complement existing Federal transportation planning and investment processes by recognizing transportation infrastructure whose strategic value extends beyond conventional transportation performance measures.

Transportation corridors supporting national defense, energy security, critical mineral production, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and other essential national functions often provide benefits that are not fully reflected through measures such as traffic volume, congestion, or economic output alone. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program provides a structured approach for incorporating these broader national interests into long-range transportation planning while preserving the established Federal-State partnership that has guided transportation policy for decades.

1.2 Program Purpose

The purpose of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is to establish a coordinated, objective, and nationally consistent framework for recognizing transportation corridors whose continued reliability, resilience, and operational capability are essential to the national interest.

The Program is intended to recognize transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests, support long-term transportation planning, promote infrastructure resilience and reliability, encourage lifecycle asset management, improve coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local partners, strengthen national preparedness and supply chain resilience, and provide decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding of transportation infrastructure supporting critical national functions.

1.3 Program Objectives

To accomplish its purpose, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program seeks to establish a nationally consistent methodology for evaluating transportation corridors, identify

infrastructure whose strategic importance extends beyond traditional transportation metrics, promote transparent and evidence-based planning, encourage coordinated investment and stewardship, improve collaboration among transportation and partner agencies, support long-term preservation of nationally significant transportation assets, and enhance the Nation's ability to respond to future transportation, economic, and national security challenges.

1.4 Program Organization

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program consists of six integrated elements that collectively provide a comprehensive framework for identifying and managing strategically significant transportation corridors: the National Interest Index, an objective framework for evaluating the national significance of transportation corridors; Corridor Designation, a transparent administrative process for recognizing corridors that meet established evaluation criteria; Governance, encompassing organizational responsibilities, interagency coordination, and program administration; Funding Coordination, integrating existing transportation funding programs and strategies that encourage long-term infrastructure stewardship; Implementation, the procedures for applying the Program through planning, Corridor Management Plans, technical guidance, and administrative actions; and Performance Monitoring and Continuous Improvement, the ongoing evaluation of designated corridors, program effectiveness, and periodic refinement of policies, methodologies, and technical guidance.

Together, these elements provide a unified framework that supports strategic transportation planning while preserving the flexibility of existing Federal and State transportation programs.

1.5 Guiding Principles

Implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is guided by the following principles:

National Significance

Transportation infrastructure should be evaluated not only for its transportation function, but also for its contribution to national defense, economic competitiveness, energy security, emergency preparedness, resource development, and other enduring national interests.

Federal-State Partnership

The Program is intended to strengthen—not replace—the long-standing partnership between the Federal Government and State transportation agencies. States retain primary responsibility for planning, constructing, operating, and maintaining their transportation systems.

Objectivity

Program decisions should be based upon transparent methodologies, reliable data, sound engineering judgment, and clearly defined evaluation criteria.

Stewardship

Transportation infrastructure should be managed using lifecycle asset management principles that emphasize preservation, resilience, reliability, and long-term public value.

Adaptability

The Program should remain flexible and responsive to evolving transportation technologies, changing national priorities, and emerging infrastructure challenges.

Collaboration

Successful implementation depends upon coordination among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, industry, academia, and other stakeholders.

1.6 Relationship to Existing Programs

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to complement existing transportation planning and investment programs rather than establish a separate or competing system. The Program should be integrated, where appropriate, with statewide Long-Range Transportation Plans, Metropolitan Transportation Plans, transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs), Transportation Asset Management Plans, State Freight Plans, National Highway System planning, resilience and emergency preparedness planning, and other Federal transportation planning requirements established under Title 23 of the United States Code.

The Program provides an additional strategic planning perspective by identifying corridors whose national importance may not be fully reflected through traditional transportation planning methodologies.

1.7 Summary

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program establishes a comprehensive framework for recognizing and managing transportation infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests. By integrating objective evaluation, collaborative governance, long-term stewardship, and coordinated planning into existing transportation processes, the Program strengthens the

Nation's ability to preserve infrastructure that supports defense, commerce, energy, emergency preparedness, and future economic prosperity.

The following chapter introduces the **National Interest Index**, the analytical framework that serves as the technical foundation for evaluating transportation corridors and supporting designation decisions throughout the Program.

Chapter 2 - National Interest Index

2.1 Introduction

The National Interest Index (NII) is the analytical framework that supports the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program by providing an objective, transparent, and nationally consistent methodology for evaluating the strategic significance of transportation corridors. While traditional transportation planning appropriately emphasizes factors such as traffic volume, congestion, safety, pavement condition, and economic performance, certain transportation corridors provide broader national benefits that may not be fully captured through conventional planning metrics alone.

The National Interest Index addresses this gap by incorporating strategic considerations that reflect the transportation system's role in supporting national defense, economic competitiveness, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, supply chain resilience, emergency preparedness, and other enduring national priorities.

The National Interest Index does not replace existing transportation planning methodologies. Rather, it supplements them by providing decision-makers with an additional framework for evaluating transportation infrastructure whose importance extends beyond regional or statewide transportation needs.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the National Interest Index is to provide a standardized framework for evaluating the strategic contribution of transportation corridors to the national interest. The Index supports consistent decision-making while recognizing that transportation infrastructure often serves multiple Federal, State, regional, and local objectives simultaneously.

Specifically, the National Interest Index is intended to support objective evaluation of transportation corridors, improve consistency in identifying nationally significant infrastructure, inform corridor designation recommendations, strengthen long-range transportation planning, support development of Corridor Management Plans, improve coordination among Federal agencies, and promote transparency and repeatability in strategic transportation assessments.

2.3 Guiding Principles

The National Interest Index is based upon several fundamental principles that ensure its credibility and long-term usefulness.

Objectivity

Evaluations should rely upon measurable data, established planning methodologies, and professional engineering judgment rather than subjective opinion.

Transparency

Evaluation criteria, methodologies, assumptions, and results should be clearly documented and publicly understandable whenever practicable.

Repeatability

Similar transportation corridors evaluated under similar conditions should produce comparable results regardless of geographic location.

National Applicability

The framework is intended to be applied consistently throughout the United States while remaining flexible enough to recognize regional differences and unique transportation functions.

Adaptability

The National Interest Index should evolve as transportation technologies, national priorities, and available data continue to develop.

Integration

The Index should complement existing transportation planning processes rather than create duplicate evaluation systems.

2.4 Evaluation Framework

The National Interest Index evaluates transportation corridors through multiple strategic categories that collectively reflect the diverse roles transportation infrastructure plays in supporting the Nation.

Representative evaluation categories include national defense and military mobility, domestic energy production and energy security, critical minerals and strategic resource development, interstate and international commerce, freight movement and supply chain resilience, emergency preparedness and disaster response, national connectivity and system redundancy, infrastructure resilience and climate adaptation, economic competitiveness, and future strategic importance.

The weighting, scoring methodology, and technical evaluation procedures associated with these categories are described in detail in **Volume V: National Interest Index and Technical Guidance**.

2.5 Program Application

The National Interest Index is intended to support several components of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Evaluation results may be used to support corridor designation recommendations, inform Corridor Management Plans, assist long-range transportation planning, improve interagency coordination, identify nationally significant transportation assets, support strategic investment planning, and monitor changes in corridor significance over time.

The Index is designed to inform decision-making rather than prescribe predetermined outcomes. Final program decisions remain subject to administrative review, engineering judgment, and applicable statutory requirements.

2.6 Relationship to Existing Transportation Planning

The National Interest Index is intended to complement—not replace—existing Federal and State transportation planning requirements.

Accordingly, the Index should be used in conjunction with statewide Long-Range Transportation Plans, Metropolitan Transportation Plans, State Freight Plans, Transportation Asset Management Plans, transportation Performance Management, National Highway System planning, infrastructure resilience initiatives, and other planning requirements established under Title 23 of the United States Code.

Importantly, the National Interest Index is not a funding allocation formula, a grant selection process, a regulatory program, a replacement for existing transportation planning requirements, and a substitute for engineering judgment or environmental review.

Instead, it serves as a strategic planning and evaluation framework that helps decision-makers recognize transportation corridors whose national significance extends beyond traditional transportation performance measures.

2.7 Governance and Periodic Review

To ensure continued relevance and technical integrity, the National Interest Index should be reviewed periodically by the Secretary of Transportation in consultation with Federal partner agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, industry representatives, and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Periodic reviews should evaluate emerging national priorities, advances in transportation planning methodologies, availability of improved data sources, lessons learned from program implementation, and changes in national infrastructure needs.

Updates to the National Interest Index should preserve methodological consistency while allowing the framework to evolve alongside the Nation's transportation system.

2.8 Summary

The National Interest Index provides the analytical foundation for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program by establishing a transparent, objective, and nationally consistent framework for evaluating transportation corridors that serve exceptional national interests. By integrating strategic considerations with existing transportation planning processes, the Index enables decision-makers to recognize infrastructure whose value extends beyond conventional transportation metrics while preserving the Federal-State partnership and existing planning framework established under Federal law.

The following chapter describes how National Interest Index evaluations support the formal designation of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors, including eligibility requirements, administrative procedures, and the implications of designation.

Chapter 3 - Corridor Designation

3.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation is the formal recognition of a transportation corridor whose strategic importance to the United States has been demonstrated through objective evaluation using the National Interest Index and supporting technical analysis. Designation acknowledges that certain transportation corridors provide benefits extending beyond conventional transportation functions by supporting national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, supply chain resilience, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and other enduring national interests.

Designation under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to strengthen long-range transportation planning and infrastructure stewardship while preserving the existing authorities and responsibilities of Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local transportation agencies. Designation is a planning and policy recognition rather than a transfer of ownership, operational authority, or regulatory jurisdiction.

3.2 Purpose of Designation

The designation process is intended to provide a nationally consistent method for recognizing transportation corridors that serve exceptional national interests and warrant coordinated long-term planning.

The objectives of designation are to recognize transportation corridors of national strategic importance, encourage comprehensive Corridor Management Plans, promote lifecycle asset management and infrastructure stewardship, improve coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local agencies, support long-term transportation resilience, increase transparency in strategic transportation planning, and encourage integration of national strategic considerations into transportation decision-making.

Designation serves as a planning tool that supports informed decision-making rather than establishing new regulatory requirements.

3.3 Eligibility

Transportation facilities eligible for consideration under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program may include, but are not limited to interstate Highways, United States Highways, State highways, strategic freight corridors, military access routes, energy transportation corridors, critical mineral transportation corridors, multimodal freight corridors,

ports and port access corridors, rail corridors, intermodal connectors, and other transportation facilities determined by the Secretary of Transportation to serve exceptional national interests. Eligibility for consideration does not constitute designation. Each corridor must successfully complete the evaluation and administrative review process established by the Program.

3.4 Nomination Process

A transportation corridor may be nominated for designation by eligible entities, including State Departments of Transportation, Federal transportation agencies, Tribal governments, territorial governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and other public entities authorized by the Secretary of Transportation.

Each nomination should include sufficient technical documentation to support evaluation under the National Interest Index and demonstrate the corridor's contribution to national strategic objectives.

3.5 Evaluation and Administrative Review

Following nomination, each proposed corridor should undergo a structured review process consisting of preliminary eligibility review, National Interest Index evaluation, technical analysis and documentation, interagency consultation, public and stakeholder engagement, as appropriate, administrative recommendation, and final review by the Secretary of Transportation.

Throughout the review process, evaluations should remain objective, transparent, and supported by documented technical analysis.

3.6 Designation Criteria

Corridors should be evaluated using the National Interest Index and other supporting technical information to determine their overall contribution to the national interest.

Factors considered during designation may include national defense and military mobility, energy security, critical mineral production and transportation, interstate commerce, freight movement, supply chain resilience, emergency preparedness and disaster response, infrastructure resilience, national connectivity, economic competitiveness, and future strategic significance.

No single criterion is intended to determine designation independently. Rather, designation should reflect the cumulative strategic importance of the corridor as demonstrated through the complete evaluation process.

3.7 Effects of Designation

Designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor formally recognizes the corridor's strategic contribution to the Nation and establishes the basis for coordinated long-term planning under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Designation is intended to recognize the corridor's national strategic importance, support preparation of Corridor Management Plans, improve interagency coordination, encourage lifecycle infrastructure stewardship, inform long-range transportation planning, and improve visibility of nationally significant infrastructure within existing planning processes.

Designation does not transfer ownership, alter State authority, create Federal operational control, automatically establish funding eligibility, supersede existing environmental review requirements, and replace existing transportation planning requirements.

Any future funding opportunities or administrative authorities associated with designated corridors would require separate statutory authorization.

3.8 Modification and Removal of Designation

Transportation systems evolve over time, and corridor designations should be subject to periodic review.

The Secretary of Transportation may modify, suspend, or remove a designation if the corridor no longer demonstrates exceptional national strategic significance, significant changes occur in national transportation priorities, updated National Interest Index evaluations warrant reconsideration, and the designated corridor undergoes substantial changes affecting its strategic function.

Periodic review helps ensure that the Program remains current, objective, and responsive to changing national needs while maintaining the credibility of the designation process.

3.9 Summary

The corridor designation process provides a transparent, objective, and nationally consistent mechanism for recognizing transportation infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests. By combining rigorous technical evaluation through the National Interest Index with structured administrative review, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program ensures that designation reflects both sound transportation planning and broader national priorities.

Designation establishes the foundation for coordinated management of nationally significant corridors. The following chapter describes the governance structure, organizational responsibilities, and interagency coordination necessary to administer the Program effectively.

Chapter 4 - Governance

4.1 Introduction

Effective administration of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program requires a governance framework that promotes collaboration, transparency, and accountability while preserving the established responsibilities of Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local transportation agencies. The Program is intended to strengthen existing transportation planning institutions rather than create a new layer of government.

Transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests frequently support multiple Federal missions simultaneously, including national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, and economic competitiveness. Effective governance therefore requires coordinated decision-making across agencies whose statutory responsibilities intersect with transportation infrastructure.

The governance framework described in this chapter establishes organizational responsibilities, interagency coordination procedures, and administrative processes necessary to ensure consistent implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

4.2 Governance Objectives

The governance framework is intended to promote effective program administration, preserve the Federal-State transportation partnership, improve coordination among participating agencies, support objective and transparent decision-making, clearly define organizational responsibilities, encourage collaboration with Tribal, territorial, regional, and local governments, and maintain consistency in Program implementation nationwide.

4.3 Administrative Responsibility

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be administered by the **Secretary of Transportation**, acting through the appropriate administrations within the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Administrative responsibilities should include Program oversight, development of technical guidance, Administration of the National Interest Index, review of corridor nominations, coordination of designation decisions, maintenance of designated corridor records, preparation of reports to Congress, and periodic review and refinement of Program guidance.

The Secretary may delegate day-to-day administrative responsibilities to the appropriate modal administrations while maintaining overall responsibility for Program implementation.

4.4 Federal Agency Coordination

Transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests often supports multiple Federal missions. Accordingly, the Secretary of Transportation should coordinate with appropriate Federal agencies during corridor evaluation, designation, and long-range planning activities.

Participating agencies may include, as appropriate:

- Department of Defense.
- Department of Energy.
- Department of Homeland Security.
- Department of Commerce.
- Department of the Interior.
- Department of Agriculture.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Environmental Protection Agency.
- Other Federal agencies whose statutory responsibilities relate to designated corridors.

Interagency coordination is intended to improve information sharing, identify common planning objectives, and promote efficient use of existing Federal resources while respecting each agency's statutory authority.

4.5 State, Tribal, Territorial, and Local Participation

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program recognizes that transportation infrastructure is planned, owned, operated, and maintained through a collaborative system involving multiple levels of government.

State Departments of Transportation should remain the primary transportation partners responsible for corridor planning, infrastructure operation, asset management, project development, maintenance activities, and coordination with regional and local transportation partners.

Tribal governments, territorial governments, metropolitan planning organizations, regional planning organizations, port authorities, and local governments should be encouraged to participate in corridor planning where their transportation systems contribute to nationally significant corridors.

4.6 Advisory Committees and Technical Working Groups

To support continuous improvement, the Secretary may establish advisory committees or technical working groups composed of representatives from:

- Federal agencies.
- State Departments of Transportation.
- Tribal governments.
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations.
- Academia.
- Industry.
- Freight stakeholders.
- Infrastructure owners and operators.
- Professional transportation organizations.

These groups may provide technical recommendations regarding National Interest Index methodology, Corridor Management Plans, infrastructure resilience, emerging transportation technologies, performance measures, and Program administration.

Their role is advisory and does not supersede the Secretary's statutory authority.

4.7 Decision-Making Principles

Program decisions should be guided by several principles: objectivity, transparency, technical credibility, collaboration, accountability, consistency, long-term stewardship, and respect for existing statutory authorities.

These principles are intended to promote confidence in the Program while ensuring that designation decisions are supported by reliable information and sound professional judgment.

4.8 Program Review and Oversight

The Secretary should periodically review the effectiveness of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program to ensure that it continues to meet its intended objectives.

Reviews should consider Program implementation, National Interest Index performance, corridor designation outcomes, interagency coordination, emerging transportation priorities, technological advancements, and opportunities for administrative improvement.

Periodic reports summarizing these findings should be provided to Congress and made available to participating agencies, as appropriate.

4.9 Summary

The governance framework establishes a collaborative administrative structure for implementing the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program while preserving the established Federal-State transportation partnership. By clearly defining organizational responsibilities, strengthening interagency coordination, and promoting transparent decision-making, the Program provides a durable governance model capable of adapting to evolving transportation needs without creating unnecessary administrative complexity.

The following chapter describes how the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program integrates with existing Federal transportation funding mechanisms and promotes long-term infrastructure investment and stewardship.

Chapter 5 - Funding

5.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to strengthen transportation planning by recognizing corridors of exceptional national significance. While designation identifies transportation infrastructure serving important national interests, it does not establish a separate Federal funding program or alter existing transportation funding authorities.

Instead, the Program is designed to complement existing Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local transportation investment processes by providing additional strategic information that may inform long-term planning, infrastructure stewardship, and coordinated investment decisions.

The funding framework presented in this chapter emphasizes collaboration, lifecycle asset management, and the effective use of existing transportation resources while preserving the Federal-State partnership established under Title 23 of the United States Code.

5.2 Funding Objectives

The funding component of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to promote long-term infrastructure stewardship, encourage preservation before reconstruction where appropriate, improve infrastructure resilience, support coordinated investment among participating agencies, maximize the effectiveness of existing transportation programs, encourage data-driven investment decisions, and preserve State flexibility in transportation programming.

5.3 Relationship to Existing Funding Programs

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to complement existing transportation funding mechanisms rather than establish a new categorical funding program.

Designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor does not automatically create Federal funding eligibility, guarantee project selection, alter existing formula apportionments, replace discretionary grant programs, and supersede State transportation priorities.

Instead, designation provides additional strategic context that may be considered, where authorized by law, during transportation planning and investment decisions.

The Program should be coordinated with existing Federal transportation programs administered under Title 23, including formula funding, discretionary grants, freight programs, resilience initiatives, and other transportation investment authorities enacted by Congress.

5.4 Funding Coordination

Transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests frequently support multiple Federal missions. As a result, agencies should seek opportunities to coordinate investments when transportation improvements advance shared national objectives.

Where appropriate and authorized by law, coordination may occur among agencies responsible for transportation, national defense, energy infrastructure, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, economic development, public lands management, and border and Arctic operations.

Such coordination should improve planning efficiency while respecting each agency's statutory responsibilities and funding authorities.

5.5 Investment Principles

Investment decisions affecting designated corridors should be guided by several core principles.

Lifecycle Stewardship

Transportation infrastructure should be managed as long-term public assets through preventive maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation, and strategic modernization.

Resilience

Investments should improve the ability of transportation systems to withstand natural hazards, environmental change, operational disruptions, and evolving national security challenges.

Strategic Value

Planning should consider the corridor's contribution to national defense, energy security, interstate commerce, supply chain resilience, emergency response, and economic competitiveness in addition to traditional transportation performance measures.

Cost Effectiveness

Transportation investments should maximize long-term public value by balancing initial costs with lifecycle performance, operational reliability, and future maintenance requirements.

5.6 Future Funding Opportunities

While the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program does not establish new funding authorities, future legislation may authorize additional investment opportunities for designated corridors.

Potential future authorities could include enhanced planning assistance, Corridor Management Plan implementation grants, resilience improvement initiatives, research and technology demonstration projects, interagency pilot programs, and technical assistance for nationally significant corridors.

Any future funding mechanisms should be established through separate statutory authority and should preserve the flexibility of existing Federal transportation programs.

5.7 Relationship to the National Interest Index

The National Interest Index provides strategic planning information that may assist transportation agencies in understanding the national significance of transportation corridors.

However, the National Interest Index is not a funding allocation formula, a grant evaluation methodology, a project prioritization system, a replacement for existing benefit-cost analyses, and a substitute for State or Federal programming decisions.

Funding decisions should continue to be made through established statutory processes using the planning, engineering, financial, and environmental analyses required under applicable law.

5.8 Summary

The funding framework of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program reinforces the principle that strategic transportation planning and responsible infrastructure investment are mutually supportive. By providing decision-makers with a clearer understanding of the national significance of designated corridors, the Program enhances existing transportation planning without altering established funding authorities or creating duplicative investment programs.

The following chapter describes the implementation framework for applying the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program through corridor planning, administrative guidance, and coordinated execution across participating agencies.

Chapter 6 - Implementation

6.1 Introduction

Successful implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program requires a coordinated, phased approach that integrates strategic planning, technical guidance, interagency collaboration, and continuous evaluation. The Program is intended to build upon existing Federal and State transportation planning processes, minimizing administrative burden while improving the Nation's ability to recognize and steward transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.

Implementation should occur through established transportation planning frameworks whenever practicable, allowing agencies to incorporate the Program into existing planning, programming, and asset management activities rather than creating duplicative administrative processes.

6.2 Implementation Objectives

The implementation framework is intended to integrate the Program into existing transportation planning processes, promote nationally consistent application of the National Interest Index, support development of Corridor Management Plans, strengthen coordination among participating agencies, encourage long-term infrastructure stewardship, improve transparency and accountability, and provide flexibility to accommodate regional transportation needs.

6.3 Phased Implementation

Implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should occur in a series of progressive phases.

Phase I – Program Establishment

Initial implementation should focus on establishing the administrative framework necessary to support the Program, including publication of program guidance, development of National Interest Index procedures, creation of administrative policies, establishment of interagency coordination processes, preparation of nomination procedures, and development of reporting requirements.

Phase II – Corridor Evaluation

Following program establishment, eligible transportation corridors may be nominated and evaluated using the National Interest Index and supporting technical guidance.

This phase includes corridor nominations, technical evaluations, data collection and verification, interagency consultation, and administrative review.

Phase III – Corridor Designation

Corridors determined to meet the Program’s evaluation criteria may be designated by the Secretary of Transportation following completion of the administrative review process.

Designation should be accompanied by documentation describing the corridor’s strategic significance and supporting technical analysis.

Phase IV – Corridor Management

Following designation, transportation agencies should incorporate designated corridors into long-range planning and develop Corridor Management Plans appropriate to each corridor’s operational characteristics, strategic role, and infrastructure needs.

Management activities may include asset management, Resilience planning, operational coordination, infrastructure monitoring, maintenance planning, and performance reporting.

Phase V – Program Evaluation

Implementation should conclude with ongoing monitoring and periodic program review to evaluate effectiveness, identify opportunities for improvement, and refine guidance as national transportation needs evolve.

6.4 Corridor Management Plans

Each designated National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor should be supported by a Corridor Management Plan appropriate to its function, ownership, and operational characteristics.

A Corridor Management Plan should provide a long-term strategy for preserving the corridor’s ability to serve national interests and may address corridor description and strategic significance, existing infrastructure conditions, asset management strategies, maintenance and preservation priorities, operational considerations, resilience and risk management, emergency response coordination, future infrastructure needs, performance measures, and implementation priorities.

Corridor Management Plans should be periodically updated to reflect changing conditions, new information, and evolving national priorities.

6.5 Technical Guidance

The Secretary of Transportation should publish technical guidance supporting consistent implementation of the Program nationwide.

Technical guidance may address National Interest Index methodologies, corridor nomination procedures, data collection standards, documentation requirements, Corridor Management Plan development, performance reporting, and Program administration.

Guidance should be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect advancements in transportation planning, engineering practice, and infrastructure management.

6.6 Interagency Collaboration

Implementation depends upon effective collaboration among Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, territorial governments, metropolitan planning organizations, infrastructure owners, and other stakeholders.

Coordination should emphasize information sharing, joint planning where appropriate, consistent technical methodologies, integrated resilience planning, efficient use of existing transportation resources, and respect for statutory authorities and organizational responsibilities.

Implementation should strengthen existing partnerships rather than establish duplicative organizational structures.

6.7 Program Flexibility

Transportation systems, technologies, and national priorities will continue to evolve throughout the life of the Program. Accordingly, implementation should remain sufficiently flexible to accommodate emerging transportation technologies, changes in freight movement, new national security requirements, energy transition, critical mineral development, infrastructure modernization, environmental and climatic changes, and future legislative direction.

Administrative guidance should allow adaptation while preserving the Program's fundamental principles of objectivity, transparency, and long-term stewardship.

6.8 Summary

The implementation framework provides a practical roadmap for integrating the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program into existing transportation planning and administration. Through phased implementation, Corridor Management Plans, technical guidance, and coordinated interagency collaboration, the Program can be applied consistently across the Nation while respecting established Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local responsibilities.

The following chapter concludes Part IV by establishing the framework for performance monitoring, program evaluation, and continuous improvement, ensuring that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program remains effective, transparent, and responsive to the Nation's evolving transportation needs.

Chapter 7 - Performance Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

7.1 Introduction

The long-term success of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program depends upon its ability to adapt to evolving transportation needs while maintaining transparency, accountability, and technical credibility. Performance monitoring provides the mechanism through which designated corridors, administrative processes, and the Program as a whole may be evaluated to ensure they continue to support the national interest.

Continuous improvement is an essential component of the Program. Transportation infrastructure, technology, freight movement, national security priorities, and economic conditions will continue to evolve throughout the twenty-first century. Accordingly, the Program should incorporate periodic evaluation and refinement to ensure that it remains responsive to changing national priorities while preserving the principles of objective analysis and long-term infrastructure stewardship.

7.2 Performance Monitoring Objectives

Performance monitoring is intended to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program, assess the continued strategic significance of designated corridors, measure progress toward long-term program objectives, support evidence-based policy decisions, improve accountability and transparency, identify opportunities for program refinement, and promote continuous improvement in transportation planning and infrastructure stewardship.

7.3 Corridor Performance Monitoring

Designated corridors should be periodically evaluated to ensure they continue to fulfill the national functions that supported their designation.

Monitoring may consider infrastructure condition and reliability, operational performance, freight movement and supply chain reliability, infrastructure resilience, emergency response capability, national defense and strategic mobility considerations, energy and resource transportation, economic performance, and emerging transportation demands.

Performance monitoring should emphasize long-term trends rather than short-term fluctuations and should utilize existing transportation data whenever practicable.

7.4 Program Evaluation

In addition to evaluating individual corridors, the Secretary of Transportation should periodically assess the effectiveness of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program as a whole.

Program evaluations should consider consistency of National Interest Index application, effectiveness of corridor designation procedures, interagency coordination, State and Tribal participation, Corridor Management Plan implementation, administrative efficiency, integration with existing transportation planning processes, and achievement of overall program objectives.

Evaluation results should inform future administrative guidance and legislative recommendations.

7.5 Reporting

To promote transparency and accountability, the Secretary of Transportation should prepare periodic reports summarizing Program implementation and performance.

Reports may include newly designated corridors, status of previously designated corridors, Program accomplishments, emerging national transportation priorities, significant infrastructure risks, research findings, recommended administrative improvements, and legislative recommendations, when appropriate.

These reports should support informed decision-making by Congress, Federal agencies, State transportation agencies, Tribal governments, and other participating organizations.

7.6 Continuous Improvement

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should remain adaptable to changing national needs through periodic review and refinement.

Areas for continuous improvement may include National Interest Index methodology, technical guidance, evaluation procedures, corridor designation criteria, performance measures, administrative processes, data collection methodologies, and interagency coordination.

Updates should maintain methodological consistency while incorporating advances in transportation planning, engineering practice, infrastructure management, and emerging national priorities.

7.7 Future Program Development

As transportation systems evolve, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should remain sufficiently flexible to address emerging freight and logistics patterns, technological innovation, infrastructure modernization, climate adaptation and resilience, Arctic and remote transportation challenges, national defense requirements, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, and future economic opportunities.

The Program should continue to serve as a strategic planning framework capable of adapting to changing conditions without compromising its core principles of objectivity, transparency, collaboration, and long-term stewardship.

7.8 Summary

Performance monitoring and continuous improvement ensure that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program remains an effective and credible framework for recognizing and managing transportation infrastructure of exceptional national significance. Through periodic evaluation, transparent reporting, and ongoing refinement, the Program can adapt to evolving transportation needs while maintaining consistency with its guiding principles and statutory objectives.

The framework presented throughout Part IV establishes a comprehensive approach to administering the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program, from organizational structure and corridor evaluation to designation, governance, funding coordination, implementation, and long-term program oversight. Together, these elements provide a durable foundation for integrating national strategic considerations into the Nation's transportation planning processes.

PART V - Case Studies

Chapter 1 - Case Study: Dalton Highway, Alaska

1.1 Introduction

The Dalton Highway provides an illustrative example of how the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program may be applied to transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests. While developed using the unique characteristics of northern Alaska, the methodology presented in this case study is intended to demonstrate a nationally applicable framework rather than establish a precedent unique to any single transportation corridor.

Originally constructed to support development of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, the Dalton Highway has evolved into a transportation corridor supporting domestic energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic operations, national defense, interstate commerce, scientific research, emergency response, and the economic vitality of Alaska's North Slope. Despite these nationally significant functions, many of the corridor's strategic contributions are not fully reflected through traditional transportation performance measures alone.

This case study demonstrates how the National Interest Index can provide a broader evaluation of transportation infrastructure whose importance extends beyond conventional measures such as traffic volume, congestion, or population served.

1.2 Corridor Overview

The Dalton Highway extends approximately 414 miles (666 kilometers) from the Elliott Highway north of Fairbanks to Deadhorse on Alaska's North Slope. Constructed in conjunction with the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System during the 1970s, the highway traverses one of the most remote and environmentally challenging transportation corridors in North America.

The corridor crosses diverse terrain, including boreal forest, mountain passes, continuous and discontinuous permafrost, major river systems, and Arctic tundra. Extreme weather conditions, seasonal freeze-thaw cycles, flooding, erosion, and permafrost degradation present unique engineering and maintenance challenges requiring continuous infrastructure stewardship.

Although traffic volumes remain relatively modest compared to many national freight corridors, the highway provides the only year-round surface transportation connection to Alaska's North Slope energy infrastructure and supports a wide range of nationally significant activities.

1.3 National Strategic Functions

Application of the National Interest Index demonstrates that the Dalton Highway supports multiple strategic national functions simultaneously.

These include domestic energy production and energy security, critical mineral exploration and development, national defense and Arctic mobility, freight transportation supporting remote industrial operations, emergency response and disaster recovery, scientific research and environmental monitoring, supply chain resilience, national economic competitiveness, and access to federally managed lands and strategic infrastructure.

The combination of these functions illustrates why transportation corridors should be evaluated using multiple dimensions of national significance rather than traffic volume alone.

1.4 National Interest Index Assessment

Applying the National Interest Index to the Dalton Highway demonstrates strong performance across multiple evaluation categories.

Representative considerations include national defense and Arctic strategic importance, support for domestic energy infrastructure, existing and future critical mineral transportation, essential freight connectivity, limited transportation redundancy, infrastructure resilience challenges, emergency access to nationally significant facilities, long-term economic value, and future strategic potential.

Collectively, these factors demonstrate that the corridor's national significance substantially exceeds what would be suggested through traditional transportation performance measures alone.

Detailed scoring methodologies and supporting technical analyses are provided in **Volume V: National Interest Index and Technical Guidance**.

1.5 Management Considerations

Application of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program would encourage development of a comprehensive Corridor Management Plan addressing the unique operational characteristics of the Dalton Highway.

Such a plan could include lifecycle asset management, permafrost adaptation strategies, flood and erosion mitigation, slope stabilization, winter maintenance and operational reliability, freight mobility, emergency response coordination, infrastructure resilience, long-term capital improvement planning, and interagency coordination.

These management activities illustrate how designation under the Program supports coordinated stewardship without altering existing ownership or operational responsibilities.

1.6 Lessons Learned

The Dalton Highway demonstrates several important principles underlying the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

First, transportation corridors of exceptional national importance may not be identified through conventional transportation performance measures alone.

Second, nationally significant infrastructure frequently serves multiple Federal missions simultaneously, requiring greater coordination among agencies responsible for transportation, defense, energy, natural resources, emergency preparedness, and economic development.

Finally, long-term infrastructure stewardship requires proactive planning that considers resilience, lifecycle asset management, and future national transportation needs rather than reacting solely to current operational demands.

1.7 Broader National Application

Although the Dalton Highway presents unique geographic and operational characteristics, the evaluation framework demonstrated in this case study is intended to be broadly applicable throughout the United States.

Transportation corridors supporting ports, military installations, energy production, critical mineral development, major freight gateways, border crossings, inland waterways, and other nationally significant infrastructure may similarly benefit from evaluation using the National Interest Index.

The Program is therefore designed to recognize strategic importance wherever it exists, regardless of geographic location or traffic volume.

1.8 Summary

The Dalton Highway demonstrates how the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program provides a more comprehensive framework for evaluating transportation infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests. By integrating national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, freight mobility, infrastructure resilience, and long-term stewardship into a single analytical framework, the National Interest Index recognizes the broader strategic value of transportation corridors that conventional planning metrics may not fully capture.

As the Initiative's flagship case study, the Dalton Highway illustrates the practical application of the Program while demonstrating that the underlying methodology is scalable and transferable to transportation corridors across the Nation. The following chapter presents additional examples, highlighting how the same framework can be applied to other nationally significant transportation corridors with different geographic, operational, and strategic characteristics.

Chapter 2 - Additional National Case Studies

2.1 Introduction

While the Dalton Highway illustrates the application of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program to a remote Arctic transportation corridor, the National Interest Index is intended to be applied consistently across the United States regardless of geography, traffic volume, or transportation mode. Transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests exists in every region of the country and fulfills a wide range of strategic functions.

The examples presented in this chapter demonstrate how the National Interest Index may be applied to corridors supporting military readiness, domestic energy production, freight movement, international commerce, critical mineral development, and national supply chain resilience. These examples are illustrative only and should not be interpreted as formal designation recommendations.

2.2 National Defense Corridors

Transportation corridors serving military installations, defense industrial facilities, training ranges, strategic ports, and deployment routes may demonstrate exceptional national significance through their contribution to military readiness and homeland defense.

Evaluation may consider access to military installations, strategic deployment capability, defense logistics, equipment mobility, redundancy and reliability, and emergency mobilization capacity.

Representative examples include interstate corridors serving major military bases, strategic seaports, and air mobility hubs.

2.3 Energy Transportation Corridors

Transportation infrastructure supporting domestic energy production contributes directly to national energy security and economic stability.

Evaluation may consider oil and natural gas production, LNG transportation, electrical transmission support, refinery access, pipeline construction and maintenance, renewable energy development, and fuel supply reliability.

These corridors often support both regional economies and national energy resilience.

2.4 Critical Mineral Corridors

Growing domestic demand for critical minerals has increased the strategic importance of transportation corridors serving mining districts, processing facilities, and export terminals.

Evaluation may consider access to mineral resources, transportation of strategic materials, processing infrastructure, industrial supply chains, manufacturing support, and future development potential.

As domestic production expands, transportation infrastructure supporting these industries may become increasingly important to national economic competitiveness and supply chain security.

2.5 Freight and Supply Chain Corridors

Freight transportation corridors form the backbone of the national economy by connecting producers, manufacturers, ports, rail terminals, distribution centers, and consumers.

Evaluation may consider freight volumes, supply chain connectivity, multimodal integration, interstate commerce, network redundancy, economic resilience, and national distribution capacity.

These corridors frequently support multiple industries simultaneously and are critical to maintaining reliable movement of goods throughout the Nation.

2.6 Port and Border Corridors

International gateways provide critical links between domestic transportation systems and global commerce

Transportation corridors serving major ports and land border crossings may demonstrate exceptional national significance through their contribution to international trade, national economic competitiveness, customs operations, strategic imports and exports, energy imports, defense logistics, and supply chain resilience.

Efficient connections between ports, rail systems, highways, and inland freight networks are essential components of a resilient national transportation system.

2.7 Lessons from National Applications

Although each transportation corridor serves unique regional needs, application of the National Interest Index demonstrates several common principles.

Transportation corridors of national significance frequently support multiple Federal missions, serve economic functions extending well beyond State boundaries, require long-term infrastructure stewardship, benefit from coordinated planning among multiple agencies, contribute to national resilience and preparedness, and possess strategic importance that is not fully reflected through traditional transportation performance measures.

These common characteristics reinforce the value of evaluating transportation infrastructure through a broader national strategic framework.

2.8 Summary

The representative case studies presented in this chapter demonstrate that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is designed to be nationally applicable rather than regionally focused. Whether supporting national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, freight mobility, international commerce, or supply chain resilience, transportation corridors across the United States may provide strategic value that extends beyond traditional transportation metrics.

Together with the Dalton Highway case study presented in Chapter 1, these examples illustrate the flexibility and scalability of the National Interest Index and demonstrate how a consistent evaluation framework can recognize nationally significant transportation infrastructure across diverse geographic regions and operational environments.

PART VI - Conclusions

Chapter 1 - Conclusions

1.1 Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative was developed in recognition of a fundamental reality: transportation infrastructure serves purposes that extend well beyond the movement of people and goods. Throughout the Nation's history, transportation corridors have supported national defense, economic growth, domestic energy production, natural resource development, emergency response, scientific advancement, and the continued prosperity of communities across the United States.

As the Nation confronts emerging challenges—including infrastructure aging, changing freight patterns, supply chain vulnerabilities, increased demand for domestic energy and critical minerals, Arctic development, and evolving national security priorities—transportation planning must also evolve. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative provides a framework through which these broader national interests can be more effectively recognized and incorporated into long-term transportation planning.

1.2 Major Findings

The analyses presented throughout this publication support several principal findings.

First, transportation corridors frequently provide strategic national benefits that are not fully reflected through conventional transportation performance measures alone.

Second, existing transportation planning processes remain fundamentally sound but can be strengthened by incorporating broader national strategic considerations into long-range planning and infrastructure stewardship.

Third, objective and transparent evaluation methodologies—such as the National Interest Index—can improve consistency in identifying transportation infrastructure that serves exceptional national interests without replacing existing planning frameworks.

Finally, long-term infrastructure stewardship requires sustained collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, regional, and local partners working toward shared national objectives.

1.3 The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

The Initiative establishes a comprehensive framework consisting of a nationally applicable strategic planning methodology, an objective National Interest Index, a transparent corridor designation process, collaborative governance, integration with existing transportation planning and funding programs, long-term Corridor Management Plans, and performance monitoring and continuous program improvement.

Together, these components provide a practical framework capable of strengthening transportation planning while preserving the established Federal-State partnership that has guided transportation investment for generations.

1.4 National Significance

The case studies presented in this publication demonstrate that nationally significant transportation corridors exist throughout the United States and serve many different strategic functions.

Some corridors support military readiness and homeland defense.

Others support domestic energy production, critical mineral development, international commerce, freight movement, emergency response, Arctic operations, agricultural production, manufacturing, or national supply chain resilience.

Although these corridors differ in geography, ownership, and operational characteristics, they share a common role in advancing the long-term interests of the Nation.

Recognizing these diverse contributions through a consistent planning framework strengthens the Nation's ability to preserve infrastructure that supports economic opportunity, national security, and public safety.

1.5 Looking Forward

Transportation systems must continue to evolve alongside the Nation they serve.

Future infrastructure planning will require greater resilience, improved coordination, enhanced asset management, and increased adaptability to technological innovation, environmental change, and shifting economic conditions.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative is intended to provide a durable framework capable of adapting to these changes while maintaining its core principles of objectivity, transparency, collaboration, and responsible stewardship.

As new strategic priorities emerge, the Program should continue to evolve through research, experience, stakeholder engagement, and periodic refinement.

1.6 Final Observations

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative does not seek to replace existing transportation planning processes or diminish the role of State and local transportation agencies. Rather, it provides an additional strategic lens through which transportation infrastructure can be evaluated and managed in support of enduring national interests.

By integrating national strategic considerations into existing planning frameworks, the Initiative encourages more comprehensive decision-making, strengthens infrastructure stewardship, and improves coordination among agencies whose missions depend upon reliable transportation systems.

Ultimately, the success of the Initiative will not be measured solely by the number of designated corridors or administrative actions undertaken. Its lasting value will be reflected in a transportation system that is more resilient, more strategically informed, and better prepared to support the Nation's security, economy, and prosperity for generations to come.

1.7 Closing Statement

Transportation infrastructure has long been one of the Nation's most enduring strategic assets. From the earliest roads and railroads to the Interstate Highway System, inland waterways, ports, pipelines, and modern freight networks, investments in transportation have shaped the Nation's economic development, national defense, and quality of life.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative builds upon this legacy by providing a practical and nationally applicable framework for recognizing transportation corridors whose significance extends beyond traditional planning metrics. Through objective evaluation, collaborative governance, long-term stewardship, and continuous improvement, the Initiative seeks to ensure that transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests remains reliable, resilient, and capable of supporting future generations.

As the United States enters an era of increasing geopolitical competition, evolving supply chains, expanding domestic energy production, critical mineral development, and renewed emphasis on infrastructure resilience, transportation policy must continue to adapt. The framework presented in this publication offers one path forward—grounded in existing institutions, strengthened by collaboration, and focused on preserving the transportation systems that underpin the Nation's security, prosperity, and long-term strategic interests.

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