National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Volume V

National Interest Index & Corridor Evaluation Framework

A Technical Framework for Evaluating, Managing, and Sustaining Transportation Infrastructure Serving the National Interest

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Working Draft

July 2026

Prepared for:

United States Congress

United States Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

State Departments of Transportation

Federal and State Infrastructure Partners

Prepared by

Roger Brown

July 2026

“America’s most strategically important transportation corridors cannot be evaluated solely by traffic volumes or pavement conditions. Their true value lies in the essential national missions

they enable—from defense and energy security to critical minerals, Arctic operations, emergency preparedness, and long-term economic resilience."

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Volume V - National Interest Index and Corridor Evaluation Framework

Developing a National Framework for Identifying, Evaluating, Designating, and Implementing National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors

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Author

Roger Brown

Fairbanks, Alaska

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Document Description

Volume V establishes the National Interest Index (NII), a standardized framework for evaluating transportation corridors based on their significance to the national interest. The NII provides objective criteria for assessing corridors supporting national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency response, Arctic access, and long-term economic resilience.

This volume explains the methodology, scoring system, evaluation criteria, designation process, and supporting analyses used to determine whether a transportation corridor qualifies for National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation under the proposed federal legislation. While the Dalton Highway serves as the principal case study, the framework is intended to be applicable to transportation corridors throughout the United States.

This volume should be used in conjunction with the companion volumes of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative.

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Framework Disclaimer

The National Interest Index and Corridor Evaluation Framework are planning and policy tools intended to support transportation decision-making. The methodologies presented are proposed evaluation and implementation models and do not establish federal policy or regulatory requirements unless adopted through future legislation or administrative action.

Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	July 2026	Initial Working Draft

Letter of Transmittal

To the Members of the United States Congress, the United States Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, State Departments of Transportation, and transportation stakeholders:

I am pleased to submit **Volume V of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative**, *National Interest Index and Corridor Evaluation Framework*.

The proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program establishes a new statutory mechanism for recognizing transportation corridors of exceptional national significance. The success of that program, however, depends upon more than legislative authority. It requires a consistent, transparent, and technically defensible methodology capable of evaluating transportation corridors according to the national interests they serve.

Volume V provides that methodology through the development of the **National Interest Index (NII)**. The framework presented herein complements existing transportation planning processes by incorporating considerations that traditional transportation performance measures often do not fully capture, including national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and long-term economic resilience.

While the Dalton Highway serves as the principal case study throughout this volume, the methodology has been intentionally developed as a national framework capable of application to transportation corridors throughout the United States. The National Interest Index is intended to support objective, evidence-based decision-making while preserving the longstanding Federal-State partnership established under Title 23, United States Code.

This volume should be considered together with the companion volumes of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. Volumes III and IV establish the proposed legislative framework, while Volume VI provides recommendations for implementation and long-term program administration. Together, these documents present a comprehensive framework for identifying, evaluating, designating, and stewarding transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Brown
Author
National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative
Fairbanks, Alaska
July 2026

Foreword

Legislation can establish the authority to designate a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor, but it cannot, by itself, determine which corridors deserve that designation. That determination requires a methodology—one that is consistent, transparent, and capable of withstanding scrutiny from Congress, Federal agencies, State partners, and the public alike.

Volume V provides that methodology. The National Interest Index evaluates transportation corridors according to the full range of national missions they support—defense readiness, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency response, Arctic operations, and long-term economic resilience—rather than traffic counts or pavement condition alone. It is designed to complement, not replace, the performance measures already used throughout the Federal transportation planning process.

The Dalton Highway again serves as the working example throughout this volume, just as it does throughout the broader Initiative. Its year-round connection between Interior Alaska and the North Slope illustrates, in concrete terms, the kind of national significance the Index is built to recognize. The framework itself, however, is written to be applied anywhere in the country a similar case can be made.

It is my hope that this volume offers Congress, the Department of Transportation, and State transportation agencies a workable, defensible tool for identifying the corridors that matter most to the Nation’s security and economic future—and a starting point for the sustained investment those corridors require.

Roger Brown
Fairbanks, Alaska
July 2026

Preface

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Act establishes the statutory authority to designate and manage corridors of exceptional national significance. Volume V provides the technical methodology needed to put that authority into practice: the National Interest Index, together with the evaluation, designation, and implementation procedures that surround it.

The Index is built around a straightforward premise: some transportation corridors support missions—military mobility, energy security, critical mineral supply chains, Arctic access, disaster response—that conventional transportation metrics were never designed to measure. Volume V combines quantitative data with professional judgment, interagency consultation, and long-range planning to produce an evaluation that captures that broader significance while remaining grounded in verifiable evidence.

This volume is organized in six parts. Part I introduces the National Interest Index and its underlying philosophy. Part II details the evaluation framework and scoring methodology. Part III describes how the framework is implemented, including corridor designation and Corridor Management Plans. Part IV addresses coordination with Federal transportation programs and the existing Title 23 planning process. Part V applies the framework through detailed case studies, with particular attention to the Dalton Highway. Part VI provides the practical tools—templates, checklists, and reference materials—needed to apply the Index in practice.

Although the Dalton Highway is the recurring example throughout this volume, the methodology is designed to scale. Any corridor that can demonstrate a comparable contribution to national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, or long-term resilience can be evaluated using the same framework, regardless of its location.

Volume V is intended to be read alongside the companion volumes of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative, particularly the proposed legislation in Volume III and the implementation guidance in Volume VI. Together, they translate the Index from a planning concept into an operational program.

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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

DOE — U.S. Department of Energy

DOI — U.S. Department of the Interior

DOT — U.S. Department of Transportation

EPA — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

FAA — Federal Aviation Administration

FEMA — Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHWA — Federal Highway Administration

FRA — Federal Railroad Administration

MARAD — Maritime Administration

NOAA — National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Transportation Planning

CMP — Corridor Management Plan

NHS — National Highway System

NII — National Interest Index

NSIC — National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor

NSICI — National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative

Transportation & Infrastructure

GIS — Geographic Information System

ITS — Intelligent Transportation Systems

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.

Future Demand Assessment

An evaluation of anticipated transportation needs based upon projected economic activity, demographic trends, freight demand, national security requirements, technological advancement, and other long-term factors.

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 Evaluation

The structured assessment used to determine whether a transportation corridor demonstrates exceptional national significance under the National Interest Index framework.

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.

Performance Measure

A quantitative or qualitative indicator used to evaluate infrastructure condition, operational effectiveness, maintenance performance, resilience, safety, or progress toward established objectives.

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.

Executive Summary

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Act proposes a new framework for identifying, evaluating, and managing transportation corridors whose continued operation serves exceptional national interests. While the legislation establishes the statutory authority for the program, successful implementation requires a clear methodology that can be applied consistently by the Federal Government, participating States, Tribal governments, and other public and private stakeholders.

Volume V provides that methodology.

At the center of this volume is the **National Interest Index (NII)** a strategic planning and decision-support framework designed to complement existing Federal transportation performance measures. Unlike traditional transportation evaluations that focus primarily on traffic volumes, pavement condition, bridge ratings, freight tonnage, or congestion, the National Interest Index recognizes that certain transportation corridors provide value extending well beyond conventional transportation functions.

Transportation infrastructure increasingly supports multiple national missions simultaneously. Strategic corridors facilitate military readiness, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency response, Arctic operations, scientific research, and the resilience of national supply chains. While existing Federal transportation programs effectively evaluate engineering performance and mobility, they generally do not provide a unified framework for assessing these broader national interests collectively.

The National Interest Index fills that gap.

The framework presented in this volume is **not intended to create a new funding formula, establish mandatory project rankings, or replace existing Federal transportation planning requirements.** Instead, it provides a consistent methodology through which Congress, the Department of Transportation, participating States, and other Federal agencies may evaluate transportation corridors according to their overall contribution to the Nation’s long-term security, economic prosperity, and resilience.

The framework emphasizes qualitative analysis supported by quantitative information. It recognizes that many strategic transportation functions—including military mobility, energy security, critical mineral supply chains, and infrastructure redundancy—cannot be fully represented through traffic counts or engineering statistics alone. Accordingly, the National Interest Index integrates technical data with professional judgment, interagency consultation, long-range planning, and documented evidence to produce a comprehensive evaluation of corridor significance.

This volume also establishes procedures for integrating the National Interest Index into the broader transportation planning process. It describes how designated corridors should be evaluated, how Corridor Management Plans should be developed, how Future Demand

Assessments should be prepared, and how Federal agencies and participating States can coordinate long-term stewardship activities while preserving the traditional Federal-State partnership established under Title 23.

Recognizing that transportation infrastructure is increasingly influenced by rapidly evolving national priorities, Volume V places particular emphasis on future-oriented planning. The framework considers anticipated changes in defense strategy, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, Arctic transportation, population growth, technological innovation, and climate resilience. By incorporating these factors into transportation planning before significant demand materializes, the National Interest Index promotes proactive investment rather than reactive infrastructure management.

To demonstrate practical application, this volume includes detailed case studies illustrating how the framework may be applied to transportation corridors with diverse strategic functions. Particular attention is given to the Dalton Highway in Alaska, which serves as an example of infrastructure whose national significance extends far beyond traditional traffic-based performance measures. The same methodology, however, is designed to be scalable and applicable to transportation corridors throughout the United States.

The implementation framework presented herein is intentionally flexible. It establishes a consistent national methodology while allowing participating States to account for regional conditions, operational requirements, environmental challenges, and unique economic characteristics. The framework is intended to evolve over time through research, technological advancement, lessons learned, and periodic review, ensuring that it remains responsive to changing national priorities and emerging transportation needs.

Ultimately, Volume V provides the technical foundation necessary to transform the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Act from a legislative proposal into an operational program. By integrating engineering performance, strategic national interests, long-term asset stewardship, and interagency coordination within a single planning framework, the National Interest Index offers a comprehensive approach to managing transportation infrastructure that supports the Nation’s security, economic competitiveness, and long-term resilience.

The chapters that follow present the philosophy, evaluation methodology, implementation procedures, case studies, and practical tools necessary to ensure that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is administered consistently, transparently, and effectively. Together, they establish a framework through which transportation infrastructure can be evaluated not only for how well it moves people and goods today, but also for how effectively it supports the enduring national interests of the United States for decades to come.

PART I - The National Interest Index

Chapter 1 - Introduction to the National Interest Index

Purpose

The National Interest Index (NII) is the foundational analytical framework of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative. It provides a consistent, transparent, and adaptable method for evaluating transportation corridors whose significance extends beyond traditional transportation performance measures.

Existing Federal transportation programs have successfully improved mobility, safety, freight movement, bridge conditions, and infrastructure resilience through decades of partnership between the Federal Government and the States. These programs remain essential to the Nation's transportation system and continue to serve their intended statutory purposes.

However, the strategic environment surrounding America's transportation infrastructure has evolved. Transportation corridors increasingly support missions involving national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, Arctic operations, homeland security, emergency preparedness, and the resilience of national supply chains. While these national interests often intersect along the same transportation corridors, they are typically evaluated independently under separate statutory authorities and agency missions.

The National Interest Index is intended to bridge this gap by providing a unified planning framework that recognizes transportation infrastructure as a strategic national asset. Rather than replacing existing engineering evaluations or funding criteria, the Index complements them by incorporating broader national considerations into long-range transportation planning and corridor stewardship.

The Index is not a funding formula, nor is it intended to rank transportation corridors numerically. Instead, it serves as a structured decision-support framework that enables Congress, the Department of Transportation, participating States, and other Federal agencies to evaluate how transportation infrastructure contributes to the Nation's long-term security, prosperity, and resilience.

Through this framework, transportation planning evolves from a project-centered approach to one focused on **corridor stewardship**, recognizing that the value of strategically important infrastructure is measured not only by its physical condition or traffic volume, but by its ability to sustain essential national missions over time.

The chapters that follow describe the philosophy, methodology, evaluation categories, implementation processes, and practical application of the National Interest Index. Together, they establish a framework that complements existing Title 23 authorities while providing

policymakers with a comprehensive understanding of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

Chapter 2 - The Evolution of Strategic Transportation Planning

Introduction

For more than a century, transportation policy in the United States has evolved alongside the Nation's economic, military, and technological development. From the earliest federal road programs to the Interstate Highway System and today's multimodal transportation network, each generation has expanded the role of transportation infrastructure in response to emerging national priorities.

Early federal transportation investments focused primarily on connecting communities, supporting interstate commerce, and improving public safety. During the twentieth century, national defense became an increasingly important consideration, culminating in the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, which established the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. The Interstate System demonstrated that transportation infrastructure could simultaneously serve civilian mobility, economic growth, and military readiness.

Over subsequent decades, Congress expanded Federal transportation policy to address freight mobility, bridge preservation, safety performance, environmental stewardship, resilience, and asset management. Programs such as the National Highway Performance Program, the National Highway Freight Program, and the PROTECT Program reflect this continuing evolution by responding to changing transportation needs while preserving the successful Federal-State partnership established under Title 23.

Today's strategic environment presents another stage in that evolution.

Transportation infrastructure now supports an increasingly diverse set of national missions. Corridors that once served primarily commercial or regional transportation functions may now play essential roles in national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic operations, strategic manufacturing, emergency preparedness, and the resilience of domestic supply chains.

These changing responsibilities require transportation planning that considers not only how infrastructure performs today, but also how it contributes to the Nation's long-term strategic interests.

The National Interest Index represents the next logical step in the evolution of Federal transportation planning. It builds upon existing engineering standards, performance measures, and planning processes by introducing a broader strategic perspective capable of evaluating transportation infrastructure according to its contribution to the national interest.

Rather than replacing the principles that have guided Federal transportation policy for generations, the Index extends those principles to address the complex economic, security, and

geopolitical challenges of the twenty-first century.

Evolution of Federal Transportation Policy

Federal transportation policy has progressively expanded through several distinct phases:

Phase I — National Connectivity (1806–1955)
Roads, canals, railroads, and early highways focused on connecting communities, facilitating commerce, and promoting national expansion.

Phase II — National Defense and Interstate Mobility (1956–1990)
The Interstate Highway System established transportation as essential infrastructure for both economic development and national defense.

Phase III — Performance-Based Transportation (1991–Present)
Federal policy increasingly emphasized asset management, freight efficiency, safety performance, infrastructure resilience, and data-driven investment decisions.

Phase IV — Strategic Infrastructure Stewardship (Proposed)
The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program expands transportation planning to recognize infrastructure serving multiple national interests through coordinated long-term stewardship.

Chapter 3 - Why Traditional Transportation Metrics Are No Longer Enough

Introduction

Traditional transportation performance measures remain essential for evaluating the condition and operation of America's transportation infrastructure. Measures such as pavement condition, bridge ratings, traffic volumes, freight tonnage, congestion, travel-time reliability, and crash statistics provide objective information that supports sound engineering decisions and responsible stewardship of public investments.

However, these measures were developed to evaluate transportation performance—not national strategic importance.

Increasingly, transportation corridors support functions whose significance extends well beyond the movement of vehicles or freight. Military logistics, domestic energy production, critical mineral supply chains, Arctic operations, emergency response, and national economic resilience often depend upon infrastructure that may carry relatively modest traffic volumes yet remain indispensable to the Nation.

Traditional performance measures alone cannot fully capture these broader strategic functions.

Limitations of Existing Metrics

Current transportation evaluation generally measures pavement condition, bridge condition, traffic volume, freight movement, safety performance, congestion, asset condition, and infrastructure reliability.

These measures effectively answer questions such as: Is the roadway in good condition? Is traffic moving efficiently? Are bridges structurally sound? Is freight moving safely?

They do not necessarily answer broader questions, including: What national missions depend upon this corridor? How important is the corridor to military readiness? What role does it play in domestic energy production? Does it support critical mineral development? What are the consequences of prolonged disruption? Are practical alternative routes available? How important will this corridor become over the next fifty years?

These broader considerations require a complementary analytical framework.

Looking Beyond Traffic Volume

Traffic volume has traditionally served as one indicator of transportation demand. While valuable, traffic alone does not always reflect strategic importance.

A remote transportation corridor may support the Nation's largest domestic energy reserves, strategic military facilities, emerging critical mineral districts, Arctic infrastructure, major industrial development, and essential emergency response capabilities.

Although daily traffic volumes may be comparatively low, disruption of the corridor could have consequences extending well beyond the surrounding region.

The National Interest Index acknowledges that transportation significance cannot always be measured solely by vehicle counts.

Chapter 4 - Philosophy and Guiding Principles of the National Interest Index

Introduction

The National Interest Index is founded upon the principle that transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests should be evaluated through a comprehensive framework reflecting both engineering performance and strategic significance.

The Index is intended to support informed decision-making rather than prescribe predetermined outcomes. It recognizes that transportation policy must balance measurable engineering data with broader national priorities that may not be fully represented through traditional transportation performance measures.

Accordingly, the Index emphasizes flexibility, transparency, consistency, and long-term stewardship.

Guiding Principles

National Significance

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to the national missions they support, including defense, energy, critical minerals, commerce, emergency preparedness, and economic resilience.

Complement Existing Transportation Policy

The National Interest Index supplements existing Title 23 performance measures rather than replacing them.

Engineering performance, asset condition, freight movement, and safety remain fundamental components of transportation planning.

Long-Term Stewardship

Transportation investments should emphasize preservation, preventive maintenance, operational readiness, resilience, and lifecycle asset management to maximize the long-term value of public infrastructure.

Future-Oriented Planning

Transportation planning should consider foreseeable changes in defense strategy, industrial development, energy production, critical minerals, population growth, climate adaptation, and technological advancement.

Federal-State Partnership

The National Interest Index reinforces the traditional Federal-State partnership established under Title 23.

Participating States retain primary responsibility for ownership, maintenance, and operation of transportation infrastructure while benefiting from enhanced strategic coordination.

Flexibility

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

No single methodology should apply rigidly to every corridor.

Transparency

Evaluation methods should be publicly documented, consistently applied, and periodically reviewed to maintain confidence in the designation process.

Continuous Improvement

The National Interest Index should evolve through research, technological innovation, changing national priorities, and lessons learned during implementation.

Regular review ensures that the framework remains relevant as transportation systems and national strategic interests continue to evolve.

Conclusion

The National Interest Index is more than a new planning tool; it represents an evolution in how the Nation evaluates transportation infrastructure. By integrating engineering performance with broader considerations of national security, economic resilience, energy independence, critical mineral development, and future demand, the framework establishes a comprehensive approach to identifying and stewarding transportation corridors of exceptional national importance.

The chapters that follow translate these guiding principles into a practical evaluation methodology capable of supporting consistent, transparent, and evidence-based transportation planning across the United States.

PART II - National Interest Evaluation Framework

Chapter 5 - National Defense and Homeland Security

Introduction

Since the establishment of the Interstate Highway System under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, transportation infrastructure has played a central role in the national defense of the United States. While military mobility remains a core transportation objective, the strategic environment has evolved considerably. Today's transportation corridors must support not only conventional military logistics, but also homeland defense, Arctic operations, cybersecurity resilience, disaster response, and continuity of critical government functions.

The National Interest Index recognizes that certain transportation corridors provide capabilities essential to national security regardless of their daily traffic volumes. These corridors may serve as the only reliable access to military installations, strategic energy infrastructure, defense industrial facilities, ports, airfields, radar installations, missile defense systems, or other nationally significant assets.

Accordingly, defense and homeland security considerations represent one of the primary evaluation categories within the National Interest Index.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to military readiness and force projection, strategic mobility, defense logistics, homeland defense, border security, emergency military deployment, continuity of government operations, and national emergency preparedness.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may consider access to military installations, strategic mobility routes, support for National Guard operations, missile defense infrastructure, Arctic defense operations, Coast Guard facilities, defense industrial base, military training areas, national security communications infrastructure, and transportation redundancy during national emergencies.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of Defense
- NORTHCOM

- INDOPACOM (where applicable)
- Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Coast Guard
- National Guard Bureau
- FEMA
- FHWA

Example Applications

Examples may include corridors supporting Arctic defense infrastructure, strategic ports, missile defense facilities, military logistics centers, emergency evacuation routes, defense manufacturing, and National Guard mobilization.

Key Principle

National defense value is determined by strategic function rather than traffic volume.

Chapter 6 - Domestic Energy Security

Introduction

Reliable transportation infrastructure is essential to America's ability to produce, transport, refine, and distribute domestic energy resources. Energy security depends not only upon the availability of oil, natural gas, electricity, renewable resources, and emerging fuels, but also upon the transportation systems that connect these resources to processing facilities, markets, military installations, and consumers.

Transportation corridors supporting domestic energy production frequently serve national interests extending well beyond regional economic development. Disruptions affecting these corridors may reduce domestic production, increase transportation costs, constrain emergency response capabilities, and affect national energy resilience.

The National Interest Index therefore evaluates transportation corridors according to their contribution to long-term domestic energy security.

Evaluation Objectives

Consider whether a corridor supports oil production, natural gas production, LNG infrastructure, electricity transmission, renewable energy development, pipeline construction and maintenance, fuel distribution, strategic fuel reserves, and emerging energy technologies.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may evaluate existing production, future production potential, energy infrastructure access, transportation reliability, industrial dependence, national supply implications, infrastructure redundancy, and operational resilience.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of Energy
- Department of Transportation
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- Department of the Interior
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

- State energy agencies

Example Applications

Potential examples include North Slope oil production, Alaska LNG, Permian Basin, Gulf Coast energy infrastructure, Appalachian natural gas, and renewable energy corridors.

Key Principle

Transportation infrastructure enabling domestic energy production represents an important component of national energy security regardless of regional location.

Chapter 7 - Critical Minerals and Strategic Resources

Introduction

Critical minerals have become increasingly important to the Nation’s economic competitiveness, defense industrial base, advanced manufacturing sector, and energy transition. Many of the mineral resources identified as strategically important are located in remote regions where transportation infrastructure represents the primary constraint to responsible development.

The transportation system supporting critical mineral development extends beyond mining operations. It includes roads, bridges, ports, rail connections, airports, and supporting logistics networks necessary for exploration, construction, production, processing, and shipment.

Because many of these resources contribute directly to national security and industrial resilience, transportation corridors supporting their development warrant strategic consideration within the National Interest Index.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to critical mineral exploration, mine development, mineral processing, domestic refining capacity, strategic manufacturing, defense industrial supply chains, battery production, semiconductor manufacturing, and national economic resilience.

Potential Evaluation Factors

Evaluation may consider existing mineral production, identified mineral resources, future development potential, national strategic importance, transportation constraints, infrastructure redundancy, supply chain vulnerability, and long-term economic impact.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of the Interior
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Department of Energy
- Department of Defense
- Department of Commerce
- Bureau of Land Management

- State geological agencies

Example Applications

Illustrative examples include transportation corridors supporting Ambler Mining District, Livengood Gold Project, Graphite Creek, rare earth element development, copper production, and strategic mineral processing facilities.

The framework is intended to apply nationally, encompassing comparable resource corridors throughout the United States.

Relationship to National Security

Congress and multiple Federal agencies have identified secure domestic supplies of critical minerals as increasingly important to military readiness, advanced manufacturing, semiconductor production, electric grid reliability, battery technologies, aerospace industries, telecommunications, and national economic competitiveness.

Transportation infrastructure serving these supply chains should therefore be evaluated not only for current traffic demand but also for its contribution to long-term national resilience.

Conclusion to Part II (Chapters 5–7)

These first three evaluation categories establish a central principle of the National Interest Index: transportation infrastructure should be assessed according to the national missions it enables, not solely by the volume of vehicles or freight it carries. Defense, energy security, and critical mineral development each represent strategic national interests whose transportation requirements often overlap along the same corridors. By evaluating these interconnected functions together, the National Interest Index provides a more comprehensive understanding of a corridor’s importance and lays the foundation for the remaining evaluation categories in Part II.

Chapter 8 - Strategic Manufacturing and Industrial Capacity

Introduction

A resilient transportation system is essential to maintaining America's industrial base. Manufacturing facilities, processing plants, shipyards, refineries, defense contractors, and industrial supply chains depend upon reliable transportation infrastructure to move raw materials, equipment, finished products, and skilled labor.

Recent disruptions to domestic and international supply chains have demonstrated that transportation infrastructure is not merely a facilitator of commerce, but a strategic asset supporting national economic security. As the United States expands domestic manufacturing of semiconductors, advanced batteries, aerospace components, defense systems, and critical technologies, transportation corridors serving these industries become increasingly important to national competitiveness.

The National Interest Index recognizes transportation infrastructure supporting strategic manufacturing as a key component of long-term national resilience.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to domestic manufacturing capacity, defense industrial production, advanced technology industries, semiconductor manufacturing, aerospace manufacturing, heavy industrial production, industrial supply chains, workforce mobility, and economic diversification.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may consider existing industrial activity, planned manufacturing investments, supply chain importance, industrial employment, freight requirements, access to ports, railroads, and airports, transportation reliability, infrastructure redundancy, and future industrial expansion.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Transportation
- Small Business Administration

- Economic Development Administration
- State economic development agencies

Example Applications

Illustrative examples include corridors serving semiconductor manufacturing facilities, aerospace production, defense contractors, shipbuilding facilities, steel production, battery manufacturing, petrochemical industries, and advanced manufacturing centers.

The framework applies equally to emerging industrial corridors as well as established manufacturing regions.

Relationship to National Competitiveness

Reliable transportation infrastructure reduces production costs, improves supply chain efficiency, encourages private investment, and strengthens America’s ability to compete in global markets.

Transportation corridors supporting strategic manufacturing should therefore be viewed as long-term national assets rather than solely regional economic infrastructure.

Key Principle

Transportation infrastructure supporting strategic manufacturing strengthens both national security and long-term economic competitiveness.

Chapter 9 - Interstate Commerce and Supply Chain Resilience

Introduction

Interstate commerce has been a principal objective of Federal transportation policy since the earliest Federal road programs. Today's economy depends upon highly integrated domestic and international supply chains that require reliable transportation networks capable of moving goods efficiently under both routine and emergency conditions.

Recent disruptions—including natural disasters, pandemics, cyber incidents, geopolitical instability, and infrastructure failures—have highlighted the vulnerability of modern supply chains and the importance of transportation system resilience.

The National Interest Index therefore evaluates transportation corridors according to their contribution to interstate commerce, freight movement, logistics, and overall supply chain resilience.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should support interstate freight movement, national logistics networks, port connectivity, rail connectivity, airport access, distribution centers, strategic freight corridors, supply chain redundancy, and economic continuity.

Potential Evaluation Factors

Evaluation may include freight volumes, commodity diversity, port and rail connectivity, industrial dependence, national supply chain importance, availability of alternate routes, seasonal reliability, infrastructure resilience, and future freight demand.

Potential Federal Participants

- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Maritime Administration
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Homeland Security
- Supply Chain Council (as applicable)

Example Applications

Examples may include corridors supporting major freight gateways, agricultural exports, energy distribution, manufacturing supply chains, Arctic logistics, container movement, cross-border commerce, and remote industrial development.

National Supply Chain Perspective

The National Interest Index recognizes that the significance of a transportation corridor is often determined by its role within the larger national logistics network.

Disruption of a seemingly remote transportation corridor may affect production facilities, distribution networks, manufacturing operations, energy markets, or military logistics located thousands of miles away.

Transportation planning should therefore evaluate both local transportation functions and broader national supply chain consequences.

Key Principle

Transportation corridors supporting interstate commerce contribute directly to national economic resilience.

Chapter 10 - Arctic Operations and National Presence

Introduction

The Arctic is emerging as one of the most strategically significant regions of the twenty-first century. Climate change, increased maritime activity, evolving geopolitical competition, expanding resource development, and growing national security interests have elevated the importance of Arctic transportation infrastructure.

The United States possesses substantial Arctic territory, extensive natural resources, and significant national defense responsibilities within the region. Reliable transportation infrastructure is essential to maintaining year-round access, supporting military operations, enabling responsible resource development, strengthening scientific research, and ensuring the continued presence of the United States throughout the Arctic.

Transportation corridors supporting these missions require evaluation beyond conventional transportation performance measures.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to Arctic defense, national sovereignty, military mobility, scientific research, resource development, community access, emergency response, maritime support, international competitiveness, and long-term Arctic presence.

Potential Evaluation Factors

Evaluation may include access to Arctic communities, military installations, ports and harbors, airfields, resource development areas, Coast Guard operations, icebreaker support, communications infrastructure, environmental conditions, infrastructure resilience, and transportation redundancy.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of Defense
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of the Interior
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Department of Energy
- Federal Highway Administration

- State of Alaska

Example Applications

Illustrative examples include transportation corridors supporting North Slope energy production, Arctic military installations, missile defense facilities, scientific research stations, Arctic ports, strategic logistics hubs, indigenous communities, and critical mineral development.

Although Alaska provides the most prominent domestic example, the framework may also apply to other northern and remote transportation systems that support national strategic interests.

Relationship to National Strategy

Recent Federal policy documents—including the **2024 Department of Defense Arctic Strategy**, the **National Strategy for the Arctic Region**, and related homeland security and maritime initiatives—recognize that transportation infrastructure is fundamental to maintaining U.S. presence and operational capability in the Arctic.

The National Interest Index incorporates these strategic considerations into long-range transportation planning by evaluating how transportation corridors contribute to national objectives beyond traditional measures of traffic or economic activity.

Key Principle

Transportation infrastructure in the Arctic should be evaluated according to its contribution to national security, sovereignty, resilience, economic opportunity, and long-term strategic presence —not solely by present-day traffic volumes or population served.

Chapter 11 - Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure serves as the backbone of emergency response before, during, and after natural disasters, public health emergencies, industrial accidents, and national security incidents. Reliable transportation corridors enable the rapid movement of emergency personnel, medical resources, fuel, equipment, relief supplies, and displaced populations while supporting the restoration of essential public services.

The frequency and complexity of disasters affecting the United States have increased the importance of transportation systems capable of maintaining operational continuity under adverse conditions. Whether responding to hurricanes along the Gulf Coast, wildfires in the western United States, flooding throughout the Mississippi River Basin, earthquakes, severe winter storms, or Arctic emergencies, transportation corridors play an indispensable role in national preparedness and recovery.

The National Interest Index recognizes emergency preparedness and disaster response as a fundamental component of strategic transportation planning.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their ability to support emergency response operations, disaster relief logistics, evacuation and reentry, continuity of government, public safety, medical transportation, utility restoration, fuel distribution, humanitarian assistance, and long-term recovery.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may consider historical disaster response activity, access to hospitals and emergency facilities, connectivity to emergency operations centers, availability of alternate routes, seasonal reliability, infrastructure redundancy, vulnerability to natural hazards, emergency staging capabilities, restoration priorities, and response times.

Potential Federal Participants

- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Department of Homeland Security
- Federal Highway Administration
- Department of Defense

- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State emergency management agencies
- Tribal emergency management organizations

Example Applications

Examples include transportation corridors supporting hurricane evacuation, wildfire suppression, Arctic emergency response, flood recovery, earthquake response, hazardous materials incidents, major public health emergencies, and search and rescue operations.

National Preparedness Perspective

Transportation infrastructure is frequently the first public asset required during emergencies and the last to return to normal operation following major disasters.

Accordingly, transportation planning should emphasize operational continuity, system redundancy, and rapid restoration capabilities alongside traditional engineering considerations.

Key Principle

Transportation corridors supporting emergency preparedness should be evaluated according to their ability to maintain public safety and national continuity during periods of crisis.

Chapter 12 - Infrastructure Redundancy and System Reliability

Introduction

A resilient transportation network depends not only upon the condition of individual facilities but also upon the availability of alternative routes capable of maintaining mobility when disruptions occur.

Many strategically important transportation corridors possess little or no practical redundancy. Temporary closures caused by flooding, landslides, bridge failures, severe weather, accidents, or maintenance activities may interrupt critical supply chains, military logistics, emergency response, or energy production for extended periods.

The National Interest Index therefore evaluates transportation infrastructure according to its overall contribution to network reliability and redundancy.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to transportation network redundancy, operational continuity, infrastructure reliability, freight reliability, emergency detour capability, system resilience, and long-term operational availability.

Potential Evaluation Factors

Evaluation may include availability of alternate routes, length of detours, seasonal accessibility, bridge redundancy, freight diversion capability, single-point failure risks, critical chokepoints, infrastructure condition, historical closures, and network resilience.

Potential Federal Participants

- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Maritime Administration
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Department of Defense
- State DOTs
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Example Applications

Examples include transportation corridors with no practical alternate route, isolated bridge crossings, remote highways, major freight bottlenecks, port access routes, energy transportation corridors, and Arctic transportation systems.

Strategic Importance

Transportation redundancy provides flexibility during emergencies while improving long-term economic stability.

Corridors lacking practical alternatives frequently require higher levels of preventive maintenance, operational planning, and resilience investment because disruptions may produce disproportionate national consequences.

Key Principle

The strategic importance of a transportation corridor often increases as available alternatives decrease.

Chapter 13 - Climate, Permafrost, and Infrastructure Resilience

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure throughout the United States is increasingly exposed to environmental conditions that affect long-term performance, maintenance costs, and operational reliability. Flooding, erosion, coastal storm surge, extreme heat, wildfires, drought, freeze-thaw cycles, landslides, seismic activity, and permafrost degradation present varying challenges depending upon regional geography.

While resilience planning has become an important component of Federal transportation policy, corridors serving significant national interests frequently require additional consideration because prolonged disruptions may affect national defense, energy production, interstate commerce, emergency response, and economic resilience.

The National Interest Index therefore incorporates environmental resilience as a core evaluation category.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their ability to withstand environmental hazards, maintain operational continuity, adapt to changing environmental conditions, reduce long-term lifecycle costs, protect critical infrastructure investments, and improve recovery following major disruptions.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may consider flood risk, coastal erosion, river erosion, permafrost degradation, freeze-thaw cycles, wildfire exposure, landslide susceptibility, seismic hazards, drainage capacity, climate adaptation measures, and infrastructure monitoring systems.

Potential Federal Participants

- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Geological Survey

- Department of the Interior
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State DOTs
- Tribal governments

Permafrost and Arctic Engineering

Transportation infrastructure located in Arctic and sub-Arctic regions presents engineering challenges that differ substantially from those encountered elsewhere in the United States.

Permafrost degradation, seasonal thaw settlement, thermokarst development, changing hydrology, and increased erosion may significantly affect roadway stability, bridge foundations, drainage systems, and long-term maintenance requirements.

Because these challenges directly influence national defense, energy development, critical mineral production, and Arctic access, transportation planning should incorporate region-specific engineering practices and long-term monitoring strategies.

Infrastructure Resilience as a Strategic Investment

Historically, transportation agencies often focused on repairing damage after major events occurred.

The National Interest Index encourages a more proactive approach emphasizing risk reduction, preventive maintenance, hazard mitigation, monitoring technologies, engineering innovation, and adaptive infrastructure management.

This approach improves long-term reliability while reducing lifecycle costs and strengthening the Nation’s ability to sustain transportation operations during changing environmental conditions.

Key Principle

Infrastructure resilience is not simply the ability to recover from disruption—it is the ability to anticipate risk, adapt to changing conditions, and maintain reliable transportation service throughout the lifecycle of the corridor.

Chapter 14 - Future Transportation Demand

Introduction

Transportation planning has traditionally relied upon historical traffic volumes, population trends, and existing travel patterns to forecast future infrastructure needs. While these methodologies remain valuable, they may not fully capture the transportation demands created by emerging national priorities such as domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, Arctic operations, military modernization, and supply chain realignment.

Many nationally significant transportation corridors experience substantial increases in demand long before traditional planning models predict them. Major industrial developments, defense initiatives, resource discoveries, and infrastructure investments often generate transportation requirements that exceed historical trends and place unforeseen demands upon existing transportation systems.

The National Interest Index therefore incorporates future transportation demand as a core evaluation category, recognizing that infrastructure should be planned not only for current conditions but also for reasonably foreseeable national needs.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their capacity to accommodate projected freight growth, industrial expansion, population growth, military infrastructure development, energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, Arctic transportation, emerging technologies, and long-term national priorities.

Potential Evaluation Factors

The Secretary may consider approved industrial projects, planned public infrastructure investments, energy production forecasts, critical mineral resource assessments, military planning documents, State freight plans, long-range transportation plans, regional economic development strategies, population projections, and emerging freight patterns.

Potential Federal Participants

- Federal Highway Administration
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Commerce

- Department of the Interior
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Maritime Administration
- State Departments of Transportation
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Strategic Forecasting

Unlike traditional forecasting methods that rely heavily on historical trends, the National Interest Index encourages the use of forward-looking information.

Examples include planned military installations, authorized energy projects, critical mineral development, industrial expansion, port modernization, rail improvements, Arctic development, national manufacturing initiatives, and emerging transportation technologies.

Planning for foreseeable demand before congestion or infrastructure deficiencies occur improves long-term infrastructure performance while reducing future public costs.

Example Application

The Dalton Highway illustrates the importance of future demand planning.

Current traffic volumes reflect existing North Slope operations; however, foreseeable developments—including additional oil production, Alaska LNG, the Ambler Mining District, the Livengood Gold Project, Graphite Creek, expanded Arctic defense infrastructure, and other strategic initiatives—could substantially increase freight movement over coming decades.

Evaluating the corridor solely according to present-day traffic volumes would underestimate its future national importance.

Key Principle

Transportation infrastructure should be planned for the Nation’s future strategic needs rather than solely its historical transportation patterns.

Chapter 15 - Economic Resilience and National Prosperity

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure is fundamental to the economic strength and long-term competitiveness of the United States. Reliable transportation networks enable commerce, support domestic production, reduce logistical costs, improve workforce mobility, and connect communities with regional, national, and international markets.

As global supply chains become increasingly complex, transportation infrastructure has emerged as a critical component of national economic resilience. Corridors supporting multiple industries—including energy, manufacturing, mining, agriculture, defense, tourism, and technology—provide benefits that extend well beyond regional economies.

The National Interest Index recognizes that transportation corridors contributing to sustained economic resilience warrant consideration alongside traditional transportation performance measures.

Evaluation Objectives

Transportation corridors should be evaluated according to their contribution to national economic competitiveness, domestic production, industrial investment, employment, supply chain resilience, regional development, international trade, workforce mobility, and long-term economic stability.

Potential Evaluation Factors

Evaluation may include gross regional economic activity, employment supported, industrial diversity, freight value, export activity, private investment, transportation costs, infrastructure reliability, economic vulnerability, and long-term growth potential.

Potential Federal Participants

- Department of Commerce
- Economic Development Administration
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Energy
- Department of Agriculture
- Small Business Administration

- State economic development agencies

Strategic Economic Perspective

Economic resilience extends beyond measuring current economic output.

Transportation planning should also consider future investment opportunities, emerging industries, domestic manufacturing, strategic resource development, supply chain diversification, national economic security, and regional economic sustainability.

By supporting these objectives, transportation infrastructure contributes directly to long-term national prosperity.

Example Applications

Examples include corridors supporting energy production, critical mineral development, agricultural exports, manufacturing centers, major ports, international trade gateways, Arctic economic development, and rural economic connectivity.

Relationship to National Interest

Economic resilience is closely interconnected with national defense, energy security, and industrial capacity.

Transportation corridors serving these functions frequently generate broad public benefits that extend beyond traditional transportation performance measures and regional economic statistics.

Key Principle

Transportation infrastructure should be evaluated according to the long-term economic opportunity and national resilience it enables—not solely the economic activity it currently serves.

Chapter 16 - Integrated National Interest Evaluation Framework

Introduction

The preceding chapters have identified the principal national interests that should be considered when evaluating transportation corridors of exceptional strategic importance. Individually, each category provides valuable insight into a corridor's contribution to the Nation. Collectively, they form an integrated framework capable of supporting comprehensive transportation planning and long-term infrastructure stewardship.

The National Interest Index is not intended to produce a single numerical score or ranking. Rather, it provides a structured methodology through which Federal and State decision-makers may evaluate transportation corridors using a consistent set of nationally relevant considerations.

Integrating Multiple National Interests

Transportation corridors rarely serve only one national purpose.

A single corridor may simultaneously support national defense, homeland security, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, infrastructure resilience, economic resilience, and future transportation demand.

The National Interest Index recognizes these overlapping functions and encourages decision-makers to evaluate them as interconnected elements of a corridor's overall strategic significance.

A Flexible Decision-Support Framework

The National Interest Index is intended to support—not replace—professional judgment.

The framework does not establish mandatory scoring thresholds, does not create automatic funding priorities, does not replace engineering evaluations, does not supersede State transportation planning, and does not diminish existing Title 23 performance measures.

Instead, it provides a consistent methodology for organizing information relevant to national strategic transportation planning.

Decision-Making Process

Evaluation should integrate engineering analysis, transportation performance, economic assessment, defense considerations, energy security, critical mineral development, environmental resilience, future demand forecasting, agency consultation, and public input.

This comprehensive approach improves transparency while supporting evidence-based infrastructure planning.

Relationship to Corridor Management Plans

The National Interest Index serves as the analytical foundation for Corridor Management Plans.

The evaluation informs maintenance priorities, capital improvements, operational planning, resilience investments, Future Demand Assessments, federal-State coordination, and long-term stewardship strategies.

By integrating these planning activities, participating agencies can better align investments with national objectives.

Periodic Review

National priorities evolve over time.

Accordingly, National Interest evaluations should be periodically reviewed to reflect changing defense strategies, emerging industries, new energy development, critical mineral discoveries, climate conditions, technological innovation, infrastructure improvements, and economic trends.

Periodic reassessment ensures that designated corridors continue to reflect the Nation’s evolving strategic needs.

Conclusion

The National Interest Index represents an evolution in transportation planning that recognizes infrastructure as a strategic national asset. Rather than viewing highways solely through the lens of traffic volumes or engineering performance, the framework encourages policymakers to consider the broader public benefits that transportation corridors provide to national defense, economic prosperity, energy security, critical mineral supply chains, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and long-term resilience.

By integrating these diverse considerations into a single planning methodology, the National Interest Index strengthens the Federal-State partnership while providing Congress, the Department of Transportation, and participating States with a practical framework for identifying, managing, and preserving transportation corridors of exceptional national significance.

PART III - Implementation Methodology

Chapter 17 - National Interest Evaluation Methodology

Introduction

The National Interest Index is intended to provide a consistent and transparent methodology for evaluating transportation corridors whose continued operation serves significant national interests. Unlike traditional transportation performance measures, which generally focus on engineering condition or operational efficiency, the National Interest Index incorporates strategic considerations that extend beyond transportation alone.

The methodology presented in this chapter is designed to ensure that corridor evaluations are comprehensive, repeatable, evidence-based, and adaptable to the diverse transportation systems found throughout the United States. It establishes a common analytical process while allowing sufficient flexibility to account for regional differences, evolving national priorities, and corridor-specific characteristics.

The methodology is intended to guide—not replace—professional judgment. Transportation planning remains a collaborative process requiring engineering expertise, economic analysis, policy considerations, and interagency consultation.

Evaluation Philosophy

The National Interest Evaluation is built upon five fundamental principles: objectivity, through the use of documented evidence and measurable information; consistency, by applying a common evaluation framework nationwide; transparency, through publicly documented methodologies and findings; flexibility, to accommodate varying geographic, operational, and strategic conditions; and adaptability, to evolving national priorities, emerging technologies, and changing transportation demands.

The objective is not to produce identical outcomes for every corridor but to ensure that each evaluation follows a consistent analytical process.

Evaluation Process

The Secretary, in consultation with participating States and appropriate Federal agencies, should evaluate corridors through the following sequence:

Step 1 — Corridor Identification

Identify the transportation corridor proposed for evaluation and define its geographic limits, transportation modes, and principal functions.

Step 2 — Data Collection

Collect relevant engineering, operational, economic, environmental, and strategic information from Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private-sector sources.

Step 3 — National Interest Assessment

Evaluate the corridor using each applicable National Interest Index category established in Part II.

Step 4 — Interagency Consultation

Consult with Federal agencies whose statutory responsibilities intersect with the corridor's strategic functions.

Step 5 — Integrated Analysis

Prepare a comprehensive evaluation summarizing the corridor's strategic importance, opportunities, risks, and long-term considerations.

Step 6 — Public Review

Provide appropriate opportunities for State, Tribal, local, industry, and public participation.

Step 7 — Final Determination

Incorporate evaluation findings into the Secretary's designation decision and subsequent Corridor Management Plan.

Evaluation Documentation

Each National Interest Evaluation should include:

- Corridor description.

- Transportation characteristics.
- Existing infrastructure.
- Strategic functions.
- Engineering conditions.
- National Interest findings.
- Agency consultations.
- Supporting documentation.
- Future demand considerations.
- Recommendations.

This documentation promotes transparency while creating a permanent record supporting future evaluations.

National Consistency

Although transportation corridors differ substantially throughout the Nation, application of a common methodology improves consistency in decision-making.

National consistency also facilitates comparison among corridors while preserving flexibility for unique regional circumstances.

Key Principle

The National Interest Evaluation should provide a structured analytical process—not a rigid checklist—for understanding the strategic importance of transportation infrastructure.

Chapter 18 - Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure serves many functions that can be measured objectively through engineering data, traffic statistics, and economic indicators. Other strategic contributions—such as military readiness, national resilience, emergency preparedness, and long-term industrial potential—cannot always be fully represented by numerical measures alone.

The National Interest Index therefore combines quantitative information with qualitative professional judgment to produce a balanced assessment of corridor significance.

Quantitative Assessment

Where appropriate, evaluations should incorporate measurable information including:

- Traffic volumes.
- Freight tonnage.
- Pavement condition.
- Bridge ratings.
- Travel-time reliability.
- Crash statistics.
- Freight value.
- Infrastructure age.
- Maintenance expenditures.
- Economic activity.
- Population served.
- Energy production.
- Mineral production.
- Industrial employment.

Quantitative information provides objective evidence supporting engineering and operational analyses.

Qualitative Assessment

Certain strategic considerations require broader professional evaluation.

Examples include national defense significance, homeland security, strategic manufacturing, supply chain vulnerability, future development potential, military planning, infrastructure redundancy, operational flexibility, Arctic strategic importance, emerging technologies, and national resilience.

These considerations should be documented using expert analysis, agency consultation, and supporting evidence.

Integrating Both Approaches

Neither quantitative nor qualitative information alone provides a complete understanding of corridor significance.

Accordingly, evaluations should integrate both forms of analysis to ensure that measurable engineering conditions are fully considered, strategic national interests receive appropriate recognition, future opportunities are evaluated alongside existing conditions, and long-term stewardship decisions reflect the full range of available information.

Avoiding False Precision

The National Interest Index intentionally avoids assigning rigid numerical scores to strategic considerations.

Many national interests cannot be meaningfully reduced to mathematical formulas without oversimplifying complex policy decisions.

Accordingly, evaluations should emphasize documented evidence, professional judgment, transparent reasoning, interagency consultation, and public accountability.

Documentation Standards

Qualitative findings should identify supporting evidence, participating agencies, technical references, assumptions, uncertainties, and potential future changes.

This documentation promotes transparency and facilitates future review.

Key Principle

The National Interest Index measures strategic significance through informed analysis rather than numerical scoring alone.

Chapter 19 - Federal Agency Coordination

Introduction

Transportation corridors serving significant national interests frequently support multiple Federal missions simultaneously. National defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, interstate commerce, and Arctic operations often involve separate Federal departments operating under distinct statutory authorities.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program recognizes that effective stewardship of nationally significant transportation infrastructure requires coordinated planning rather than isolated decision-making.

Accordingly, the National Interest Index incorporates interagency consultation as a core element of the evaluation process.

Purpose of Coordination

Federal coordination seeks to improve information sharing, identify overlapping national interests, reduce duplication of effort, strengthen strategic planning, improve investment coordination, enhance long-term infrastructure stewardship, and support evidence-based decision-making.

Coordination is intended to improve planning—not to transfer authority among agencies.

Participating Federal Agencies

Depending upon corridor characteristics, consultation may include:

Department of Transportation

Overall transportation planning, infrastructure condition, freight movement, safety, and program administration.

Department of Defense

Military mobility, force projection, Arctic operations, homeland defense, logistics, and defense infrastructure.

Department of Energy

Domestic energy production, energy infrastructure, electricity transmission, strategic energy resources, and emerging energy technologies.

Department of the Interior

Public lands, resource development, critical minerals, geological information, and environmental stewardship.

Department of Homeland Security

Emergency preparedness, border security, disaster response, critical infrastructure protection, and national resilience.

Department of Commerce

Economic development, manufacturing, industrial competitiveness, supply chains, and trade.

Additional Participants

As appropriate:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Tribal governments
- State transportation agencies
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Local governments

Consultation Process

Agency participation may include technical review, data sharing, strategic assessments, written recommendations, identification of future initiatives, infrastructure coordination, and research collaboration.

The Secretary should establish procedures that promote timely coordination while minimizing unnecessary administrative burdens.

Preservation of Agency Authority

Nothing in the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program alters the statutory authority of participating agencies.

Each agency retains responsibility for exercising its existing authorities in accordance with applicable Federal law.

The purpose of coordination is to improve communication and planning—not to consolidate jurisdiction or create additional regulatory authority.

Benefits of Coordination

Routine coordination improves infrastructure planning, investment efficiency, national preparedness, long-term resilience, strategic decision-making, public accountability, and federal-State partnerships.

By bringing together agencies with complementary expertise, the National Interest Index provides a more comprehensive understanding of how transportation infrastructure supports multiple national objectives.

Chapter 20 - Corridor Management Plans

Introduction

Designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor is intended to initiate a continuous process of planning, coordination, investment, and long-term stewardship. The principal mechanism for achieving these objectives is the **Corridor Management Plan (CMP)**.

A Corridor Management Plan serves as the comprehensive strategic document guiding the long-term management of a designated corridor. Rather than focusing solely on individual construction projects, the plan integrates maintenance, operations, resilience, capital investment, emergency preparedness, and future demand into a unified management strategy.

The purpose of the Corridor Management Plan is not to replace existing State transportation plans, Transportation Asset Management Plans (TAMPs), State Freight Plans, or Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs). Instead, it provides a strategic overlay that coordinates these existing planning documents around transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests.

By establishing a common planning framework, the Corridor Management Plan promotes collaboration among Federal agencies, State departments of transportation, Tribal governments, local jurisdictions, infrastructure owners, industry stakeholders, and the public.

Purpose

Each Corridor Management Plan should:

- Establish a long-term strategic vision for the corridor.
- Identify transportation assets and infrastructure conditions.
- Document the corridor’s contribution to national interests.
- Evaluate operational risks and vulnerabilities.
- Establish maintenance and preservation priorities.
- Coordinate capital improvement strategies.
- Incorporate resilience and climate adaptation measures.
- Forecast future transportation demand.
- Support interagency coordination.
- Establish performance measures for ongoing evaluation.

Core Components

Each Corridor Management Plan should include, at a minimum:

Corridor Overview

- Geographic limits.
- Transportation modes.
- Ownership and jurisdiction.
- Existing infrastructure.
- Operational characteristics.
- Historical development.

National Interest Assessment

Summarize findings from the National Interest Index, including:

- Defense significance.
- Energy security.
- Critical minerals.
- Strategic manufacturing.
- Interstate commerce.
- Emergency preparedness.
- Arctic operations.
- Economic resilience.

Infrastructure Inventory

Document:

- Roadway characteristics.
- Bridges.
- Tunnels.
- Culverts.
- Drainage systems.
- Rail crossings.
- Airports.

- Ports.
- Utility crossings.
- Communications infrastructure.
- Maintenance facilities.

Asset Condition Assessment

Evaluate:

- Pavement condition.
- Bridge condition.
- Operational deficiencies.
- Safety concerns.
- Maintenance history.
- Infrastructure age.
- Deferred maintenance.
- System reliability.

Operations and Maintenance

Describe:

- Maintenance responsibilities.
- Winter operations.
- Incident management.
- Traffic management.
- Equipment needs.
- Workforce requirements.
- Maintenance funding.
- Operational performance.

Preventive maintenance and operational readiness should receive equal consideration with capital improvements.

Resilience Strategy

Identify:

- Flood risks.
- Erosion.
- Permafrost degradation.
- Wildfire.
- Landslides.
- Seismic hazards.
- Climate adaptation measures.
- Infrastructure monitoring technologies.
- Emergency restoration priorities.

Capital Improvement Strategy

Identify:

- Planned improvements.
- Capacity enhancements.
- Bridge replacements.
- Safety projects.
- Freight improvements.
- Technology investments.
- Funding opportunities.
- Implementation priorities.

Performance Measures

Establish measurable objectives addressing:

- Infrastructure condition.
- Reliability.
- Safety.
- Maintenance performance.
- Operational continuity.
- Resilience.

- Future demand preparedness.

Coordination

Preparation of Corridor Management Plans should involve consultation with:

- FHWA.
- Participating State DOTs.
- Tribal governments.
- Local governments.
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations.
- Department of Defense.
- Department of Energy.
- Department of Homeland Security.
- Department of the Interior.
- Department of Commerce.
- Industry stakeholders.
- Public representatives.

The objective is collaborative planning rather than regulatory oversight.

Relationship to Existing Plans

The Corridor Management Plan is intended to complement—not replace:

- Transportation Asset Management Plans.
- State Freight Plans.
- Long-Range Transportation Plans.
- STIPs.
- Metropolitan Transportation Plans.
- Emergency Operations Plans.
- State resilience strategies.

Where practical, existing planning documents should be incorporated by reference to minimize duplication.

Periodic Updates

Because transportation systems and national priorities evolve over time, Corridor Management Plans should be reviewed periodically.

Updates should consider:

- Infrastructure improvements.
- Emerging industries.
- Defense priorities.
- Energy development.
- Critical mineral projects.
- Climate conditions.
- Transportation demand.
- Lessons learned.

A comprehensive review should occur at least every five years or sooner if significant changes occur.

Key Principle

A Corridor Management Plan transforms designation into long-term stewardship by integrating engineering, operations, maintenance, resilience, and strategic planning into a single management framework.

Chapter 21 - Future Demand Assessments

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure should be planned not only for today's traffic but also for tomorrow's strategic requirements. Many nationally significant transportation corridors experience substantial increases in demand because of industrial development, military expansion, resource production, technological innovation, or changing national priorities that are not reflected in historical transportation data.

Traditional forecasting methods rely heavily upon past traffic volumes and demographic trends. While these remain valuable planning tools, they may underestimate future transportation needs associated with emerging strategic initiatives.

The Future Demand Assessment (FDA) provides a structured process for identifying and evaluating these foreseeable changes before they create infrastructure deficiencies or operational constraints.

Purpose

Future Demand Assessments are intended to identify emerging transportation requirements, forecast long-term freight movement, evaluate industrial development, assess military transportation needs, support energy infrastructure planning, evaluate critical mineral development, identify future capacity constraints, guide long-term investment decisions, and support Corridor Management Plans.

Planning Horizon

Future Demand Assessments should evaluate transportation demand over multiple planning horizons, including short-term (5 years), intermediate-term (10–20 years), and long-term (20–50 years).

Longer planning horizons are particularly important for transportation corridors supporting major industrial, defense, and energy investments.

Sources of Future Demand

Potential demand drivers include:

Future defense-related demand considerations include military installations, force posture changes, strategic mobility, Arctic operations, and homeland defense.

Future domestic energy demand considerations include oil production, natural gas, LNG infrastructure, renewable energy, and pipeline development.

Future critical minerals demand considerations include exploration, mine development, processing facilities, and manufacturing supply chains.

Future strategic manufacturing demand considerations include semiconductor facilities, defense production, advanced manufacturing, and industrial expansion.

Population and economic growth considerations include community development, tourism, workforce mobility, and commercial activity.

Emerging technology considerations include autonomous freight, connected infrastructure, advanced logistics, and alternative fuels.

Assessment Methodology

Future Demand Assessments should integrate information from State transportation plans, Federal strategic plans, economic forecasts, industrial development proposals, defense planning documents, energy forecasts, critical mineral assessments, freight studies, academic research, and industry consultation.

Forecasts should emphasize reasonably foreseeable developments supported by credible evidence rather than speculative projections.

Scenario Planning

Recognizing uncertainty, assessments should consider multiple future scenarios, including baseline conditions, moderate growth, accelerated development, national emergency, infrastructure disruption, and technological transformation.

Scenario planning improves preparedness while reducing the risk of underinvestment or overbuilding.

Relationship to the National Interest Index

Future Demand Assessments provide the forward-looking analytical foundation for National Interest evaluations.

They ensure that corridor significance reflects not only current transportation activity but also foreseeable national needs.

Together with the National Interest Index and Corridor Management Plans, Future Demand Assessments complete a comprehensive strategic planning framework.

Example Application

For a corridor such as Alaska's Dalton Highway, a Future Demand Assessment may evaluate the combined transportation implications of expanded North Slope oil production, Alaska LNG development, Ambler Mining District, Livengood Gold Project, Graphite Creek and other critical mineral projects, Arctic defense initiatives, port and logistics expansion, scientific research, and climate adaptation and infrastructure resilience.

Rather than evaluating each project independently, the assessment considers their cumulative effect on long-term transportation demand and corridor performance.

Periodic Review

Future Demand Assessments should be updated periodically to reflect new industrial investments, defense initiatives, energy production changes, infrastructure improvements, technological advances, economic conditions, and national policy priorities.

Regular updates ensure that transportation planning remains responsive to changing strategic circumstances.

Key Principle

The most effective transportation systems are planned before demand exceeds capacity. Future Demand Assessments enable proactive investment, reduce long-term costs, and help ensure that nationally significant transportation corridors remain capable of supporting the Nation's evolving defense, economic, energy, and security requirements for decades to come.

PART IV - Federal Integration

Chapter 22 - Relationship to Existing Federal Transportation Programs

Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is designed to operate within the existing Federal transportation framework established under Title 23, United States Code. Rather than creating a separate transportation system or replacing existing programs, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Act builds upon decades of successful Federal transportation policy by introducing a strategic planning framework focused on nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

The Federal-aid Highway Program has consistently evolved to address emerging national priorities. Beginning with construction of the Interstate Highway System and expanding through programs supporting freight mobility, bridge preservation, asset management, resilience, and emergency response, Congress has repeatedly adapted transportation policy to meet changing national needs.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program represents the next stage in that evolution by recognizing transportation corridors whose importance extends beyond traditional transportation functions.

Building Upon Title 23

The proposed legislation complements existing transportation authorities by adding strategic planning tools rather than creating new transportation systems.

The Act preserves State ownership of transportation infrastructure, existing Federal funding programs, established planning processes, performance management requirements, federal-State partnerships, existing environmental review procedures, and current regulatory authorities.

Instead of replacing these systems, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program provides a framework for coordinating them around transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests.

Relationship to Existing Programs

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to complement numerous Federal transportation programs.

National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)

The NHPP focuses primarily on preserving and improving the condition and performance of the National Highway System.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program expands this perspective by considering how transportation infrastructure contributes to national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, and long-term strategic resilience.

National Highway Freight Program (NHFP)

The NHFP improves freight movement and freight planning across the National Highway Freight Network.

The proposed framework builds upon these objectives by evaluating freight infrastructure within the broader context of national strategic priorities, including defense logistics, domestic manufacturing, energy production, and future industrial demand.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

The STBG provides States with broad flexibility to address transportation needs.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program does not alter this flexibility. Instead, it provides additional strategic information that may assist States in prioritizing investments along nationally significant corridors.

Bridge Formula Program

Bridge investments remain essential to transportation system reliability.

The National Interest Index recognizes that certain bridges may possess strategic importance extending beyond structural condition alone because they provide critical access to nationally significant infrastructure or represent single points of failure within strategic transportation networks.

PROTECT Program

The PROTECT Program advances transportation resilience through planning and infrastructure improvements.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program complements these efforts by incorporating resilience into comprehensive corridor stewardship alongside defense, energy, freight, and long-term strategic planning.

INFRA, MEGA, and RAISE Programs

Competitive discretionary grant programs support nationally and regionally significant transportation projects.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program does not replace these programs.

Instead, designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor may provide additional strategic context supporting project development while preserving existing competitive selection processes.

Emergency Relief Program

Emergency Relief funding restores transportation infrastructure following disasters.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program emphasizes preventive planning and resilience intended to reduce both the frequency and consequences of major infrastructure disruptions.

Relationship to Existing Planning Requirements

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program complements existing transportation planning documents, including Statewide Transportation Plans, Transportation Asset Management Plans, State Freight Plans, Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs, Metropolitan Transportation Plans, Long-Range Transportation Plans, Freight Investment Plans, and Resilience Plans.

The Act encourages integration of these existing documents into a comprehensive corridor management strategy rather than requiring duplicate planning efforts.

Relationship to Existing Performance Measures

Current Federal transportation performance measures remain essential.

The National Interest Index does not replace measures such as pavement condition, bridge condition, safety, freight reliability, congestion, asset management, and system performance.

Instead, it supplements these measures by evaluating broader strategic contributions that are not presently incorporated into traditional transportation performance management.

Complementary Rather Than Competitive

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should not be viewed as competing with existing transportation programs.

Rather, it provides a strategic framework that helps integrate transportation planning, national defense, energy security, critical minerals, emergency preparedness, Arctic policy, economic resilience, and infrastructure stewardship.

This integrated perspective strengthens the effectiveness of existing Federal transportation investments.

Conclusion

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to enhance—not replace—the Federal-aid Highway Program.

By introducing strategic planning tools while preserving existing authorities, funding mechanisms, and Federal-State partnerships, the legislation provides Congress and participating States with a practical framework for ensuring that transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests receive coordinated, long-term stewardship consistent with their importance to the Nation.

Chapter 23 - Relationship to Existing Federal Corridor Designations

Introduction

Congress has long recognized that certain transportation corridors warrant specialized consideration because of their unique economic, geographic, environmental, or national significance. Over time, numerous Federal corridor designation programs have been established to address freight movement, defense, scenic resources, energy infrastructure, recreation, maritime transportation, and other specialized purposes.

Each designation was created to address a specific national objective.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon this established legislative practice by creating a designation specifically focused on transportation corridors whose continued operation supports multiple national strategic interests simultaneously.

Rather than replacing existing corridor designations, the proposed program integrates them within a broader framework emphasizing long-term stewardship, resilience, and interagency coordination.

Existing Federal Corridor Designations

Examples of existing Federal corridor designations include National Highway System (NHS), Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, National Highway Freight Network (NHFN), Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), National Scenic Byways, America’s Marine Highway Program, Federal Lands Transportation Program, Energy Corridors authorized under various Federal statutes, border infrastructure corridors, and Defense Access Roads.

Each serves an important but distinct statutory purpose.

Distinct Purpose of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

Unlike existing designations, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program evaluates transportation corridors according to their combined contribution to multiple national interests.

These may include national defense, homeland security, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, infrastructure resilience, economic resilience, and future transportation demand.

This integrated approach distinguishes the proposed designation from corridor programs focused upon a single transportation or economic objective.

Relationship to the National Highway System

The National Highway System identifies roadways essential to the Nation's transportation network.

Designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor does not alter NHS designation or create a separate highway classification.

Instead, it provides an additional planning framework for corridors that possess exceptional national strategic importance.

Relationship to STRAHNET

The Strategic Highway Network identifies highways important to military mobility and defense readiness.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program complements STRAHNET by recognizing that many strategically important corridors also support energy production, critical minerals, manufacturing, emergency response, Arctic operations, and economic resilience.

Defense remains an essential consideration but is evaluated alongside other national interests.

Relationship to the National Highway Freight Network

The National Highway Freight Network emphasizes efficient freight movement.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program expands the evaluation beyond freight by considering the broader strategic importance of the industries, resources, and national missions supported by transportation infrastructure.

Relationship to Energy Corridors

Several Federal statutes recognize energy transportation corridors supporting pipelines and transmission infrastructure.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program incorporates energy security into a broader evaluation framework that also considers transportation infrastructure supporting energy production, maintenance, logistics, workforce access, and future development.

Relationship to America's Marine Highway Program

Marine highways provide important multimodal transportation alternatives.

Where appropriate, multimodal transportation corridors incorporating highways, ports, railroads, airports, and marine facilities may be evaluated as integrated transportation systems under the National Interest Index.

Multiple Designations

A transportation corridor may simultaneously qualify for several Federal designations.

For example, a corridor may be part of the National Highway System, STRAHNET, the National Highway Freight Network, an Energy Corridor, and a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor.

These designations are complementary rather than mutually exclusive.

Each reflects a different aspect of the corridor's national significance.

Why a New Designation Is Appropriate

Congress has repeatedly established specialized corridor designations when transportation infrastructure serves unique national objectives.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program follows this well-established legislative precedent.

Its distinguishing characteristic is that it evaluates transportation corridors according to the combined national benefits they provide, rather than a single transportation function or funding category.

As national priorities increasingly intersect across defense, energy, manufacturing, supply chains, and Arctic policy, an integrated designation framework becomes both appropriate and necessary.

Conclusion

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation should be viewed as an evolution of existing Federal corridor policy rather than a departure from it.

By building upon established designation programs and integrating multiple national interests into a unified planning framework, the Act provides Congress, Federal agencies, and participating States with a practical mechanism for identifying and stewarding transportation corridors whose continued operation is essential to the Nation's long-term security, prosperity, and resilience.

The following chapters examine how this designation framework supports coordinated funding strategies, performance management, and long-term implementation across the Federal transportation program.

Chapter 24 - Funding Coordination

Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is not intended to establish a new, stand-alone Federal funding program. Instead, it provides a strategic framework through which existing Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private funding sources may be coordinated to achieve long-term corridor stewardship.

Historically, transportation funding has been distributed through a combination of formula programs, discretionary grants, emergency appropriations, and project-specific authorizations. While these mechanisms have successfully financed transportation improvements across the Nation, they frequently operate independently of one another, with limited coordination across multiple Federal agencies or long-term strategic objectives.

Transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests often support multiple Federal missions simultaneously. Consequently, opportunities frequently exist to leverage transportation funding alongside investments supporting defense, energy security, critical mineral development, economic development, emergency preparedness, and climate resilience.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program seeks to improve this coordination while preserving existing statutory authorities and Congressional appropriations responsibilities.

Purpose

Funding coordination is intended to improve the efficiency of public investment, reduce duplication among Federal programs, encourage long-term infrastructure stewardship, support multi-agency planning, maximize return on taxpayer investment, improve project sequencing, increase financial flexibility, and strengthen Federal-State partnerships.

Existing Funding Sources

Designated National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors may continue to utilize existing funding authorities, including:

Federal Highway Administration

- National Highway Performance Program
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
- National Highway Freight Program
- Bridge Formula Program

- PROTECT Program
- Emergency Relief Program
- Competitive discretionary grant programs

Other Federal Agencies

Depending upon corridor characteristics, additional funding opportunities may include programs administered by Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Department of the Interior, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Denali Commission, Appalachian Regional Commission, and other Congressionally authorized infrastructure programs.

State Participation

Participating States remain responsible for determining how transportation investments are incorporated into Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs, Transportation Asset Management Plans, State Freight Plans, Long-Range Transportation Plans, and annual transportation budgets.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation does not alter State authority regarding project selection or programming.

Leveraging Multiple Investments

One of the principal benefits of coordinated planning is the ability to recognize projects that simultaneously advance multiple national objectives.

Examples may include projects that improve highway safety, freight efficiency, military mobility, energy infrastructure access, critical mineral development, emergency response, climate resilience, and economic development.

Rather than pursuing these objectives independently, integrated planning allows transportation improvements to generate multiple public benefits through a single investment.

Long-Term Investment Strategy

Transportation corridors serving exceptional national interests frequently require investment over many decades.

Accordingly, funding coordination should emphasize predictable investment, preventive maintenance, asset preservation, operational readiness, capacity expansion where justified, infrastructure resilience, and future demand preparation.

Long-term investment strategies generally produce greater public value than episodic funding focused solely on immediate deficiencies.

Public-Private Partnerships

Where appropriate and authorized by law, participating States may consider partnerships with private infrastructure owners, energy producers, mining companies, port authorities, railroad operators, industrial developers, and local governments.

Such partnerships should complement—not replace—public investment and remain consistent with applicable Federal and State laws.

Financial Stewardship

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program encourages responsible stewardship of public resources through lifecycle cost analysis, preventive maintenance, performance-based investment, transparent project selection, coordinated planning, and periodic program evaluation.

These principles promote long-term value while reducing deferred maintenance and improving infrastructure reliability.

Key Principle

Funding coordination is not about creating new funding streams—it is about making existing investments work together more effectively in support of nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

Chapter 25 - Performance Management

Introduction

Performance management provides the foundation for responsible infrastructure stewardship. Effective transportation planning requires continuous evaluation of infrastructure condition, operational performance, investment outcomes, and long-term strategic objectives.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program expands traditional performance management by incorporating measures that reflect not only engineering performance but also the corridor's contribution to national interests.

This approach recognizes that transportation infrastructure serving national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, and economic resilience should be evaluated according to both transportation performance and strategic effectiveness.

Purpose

Performance management under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program seeks to measure long-term infrastructure performance, support evidence-based decision-making, improve accountability, guide future investment, encourage continuous improvement, strengthen public confidence, and inform Congressional oversight.

Traditional Transportation Performance

Existing Federal transportation performance measures remain fundamental to corridor management.

These include pavement condition, bridge condition, highway safety, freight reliability, travel time, congestion, asset condition, and infrastructure availability.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program fully supports continued use of these measures.

Strategic Performance Measures

In addition to traditional transportation metrics, designated corridors should consider broader strategic performance indicators such as operational continuity, emergency response capability, military mobility, energy infrastructure support, critical mineral accessibility, infrastructure redundancy, economic resilience, climate adaptation, future demand preparedness, and interagency coordination.

These measures provide a more comprehensive understanding of corridor performance over time.

Performance Reporting

Performance evaluations should be incorporated into Corridor Management Plans, annual program reports, five-year program evaluations, Future Demand Assessments, and National Interest Index updates.

Reporting should emphasize transparency while minimizing unnecessary administrative burden.

Adaptive Management

Transportation systems continually evolve.

Performance management should therefore support adaptive decision-making by allowing participating agencies to modify maintenance strategies, adjust investment priorities, incorporate new technologies, respond to changing national priorities, and address emerging transportation needs.

Adaptive management improves long-term program effectiveness while preserving flexibility.

Continuous Improvement

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should encourage a culture of continuous improvement through research, innovation, technology deployment, performance benchmarking, best-practice sharing, workforce development, and lessons learned.

Regular evaluation ensures that the Program remains responsive to changing conditions while maintaining high standards of infrastructure stewardship.

National Performance Perspective

The ultimate measure of success is not simply the condition of individual transportation assets, but the ability of designated corridors to reliably support the national interests they serve.

A strategically important corridor should demonstrate reliable year-round operation, safe and efficient transportation, resilience to natural and operational hazards, capacity to accommodate future demand, effective coordination among participating agencies, and responsible stewardship of public investment.

These outcomes represent the long-term objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Conclusion

Performance management transforms the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program from a planning initiative into a system of continuous stewardship. By combining traditional transportation performance measures with broader strategic considerations, the Program provides Congress, Federal agencies, and participating States with a comprehensive understanding of how transportation infrastructure contributes to the Nation's security, economic competitiveness, and resilience.

Together, **funding coordination** and **performance management** complete the Federal Integration component of this volume. They demonstrate that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is not intended to create a parallel transportation system, but to strengthen the existing Federal-aid Highway Program through improved coordination, accountability, and long-term strategic planning.

PART V - Case Studies

Chapter 26 - Case Study: The Dalton Highway, Alaska

Introduction

The Dalton Highway provides one of the clearest examples of why the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is needed. Although the corridor carries relatively modest average daily traffic compared with the Interstate Highway System, it supports an extraordinary concentration of national interests that extend far beyond conventional transportation functions.

Constructed to support development of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, the Dalton Highway has evolved into the only year-round surface transportation corridor connecting Alaska’s Interior with the North Slope energy fields. Today, it serves domestic energy production, Arctic defense, homeland security, critical mineral development, scientific research, industrial logistics, emergency response, and remote community access.

The Dalton Highway illustrates how traditional transportation performance measures alone cannot adequately represent a corridor’s strategic national significance.

Corridor Overview

Length: Approximately 414 miles

Ownership: State of Alaska

Managing Agency: Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

The Dalton Highway's primary function includes North Slope access, industrial freight, oil production support, Arctic logistics, emergency response, and resource development.

National Interest Evaluation

National Defense

Supports Arctic defense operations, military logistics, missile defense infrastructure, homeland security activities, and strategic mobility throughout northern Alaska.

Energy Security

Provides the only year-round highway access supporting North Slope oil production and future Alaska LNG infrastructure while enabling maintenance of existing energy facilities.

Critical Minerals

Supports access to significant mineral districts including Ambler Mining District, Livengood Gold Project, Graphite Creek, and additional Interior and Arctic resource development.

Interstate Commerce

Serves freight movement supporting North Slope industries, construction, fuel distribution, industrial development, and Alaska's broader economy.

Arctic Operations

Provides surface transportation supporting Arctic research, Coast Guard activities, military readiness, environmental monitoring, and continued U.S. presence.

Future Transportation Demand

Future demand is expected to increase as a result of increased oil production, Alaska LNG, critical mineral development, Arctic infrastructure, defense modernization, and industrial expansion.

Lessons Learned

The Dalton Highway demonstrates that national significance cannot be measured solely through traffic volume, maintenance is as strategically important as expansion, future demand should influence infrastructure planning, multiple Federal missions frequently depend upon a single transportation corridor, and long-term stewardship provides greater public value than reactive investment.

Relationship to the National Interest Index

Nearly every National Interest category applies to the Dalton Highway.

Accordingly, the corridor serves as an excellent demonstration of how the National Interest Index integrates multiple strategic considerations into a single planning framework.

Conclusion

The Dalton Highway demonstrates that transportation infrastructure serving exceptional national interests deserves evaluation through a broader framework than traditional engineering metrics alone. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program provides that framework while preserving existing State ownership and Federal transportation authorities.

Chapter 27 - Case Study: Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS)

Introduction

The Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) demonstrates how Congress has successfully created a specialized transportation program addressing unique regional and national needs through long-term Federal-State partnership.

Established by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, the ADHS was designed to overcome geographic isolation, improve economic opportunity, and strengthen transportation connectivity throughout the Appalachian region.

Although its statutory purpose differs from the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program, the ADHS illustrates how Congress has previously recognized that certain transportation corridors warrant dedicated planning and sustained Federal investment beyond traditional highway funding mechanisms.

Program Overview

Administered through Appalachian Regional Commission, Federal Highway Administration, and participating States.

Objectives include regional connectivity, economic development, access to employment, freight movement, and community integration.

Similarities to the NSIC Program

Both programs recognize unique transportation needs, operate through Federal-State partnerships, coordinate long-term investments, support regional and national objectives, and utilize existing transportation institutions.

Key Differences

The ADHS primarily addresses economic development, regional accessibility, and community connectivity.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program additionally considers national defense, energy security, critical minerals, Arctic operations, strategic manufacturing, homeland security, and future demand.

Lessons Learned

The ADHS demonstrates Congress may establish specialized transportation initiatives without disrupting existing highway programs, long-term corridor investment produces lasting economic benefits, regional transportation planning can complement nationwide transportation policy, and dedicated corridor strategies improve infrastructure performance over time.

Conclusion

The Appalachian Development Highway System provides an important legislative precedent supporting the creation of specialized transportation programs addressing unique national needs. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program extends this concept by focusing on transportation corridors whose significance derives from national strategic interests rather than regional economic development alone.

Chapter 28 - Case Study: Gulf of Mexico Energy Security (GOMESA)

Introduction

The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA) demonstrates how Congress has successfully linked nationally significant resource development with long-term infrastructure investment and revenue sharing.

Recognizing that offshore energy production generates both national benefits and regional infrastructure demands, Congress established a framework through which a portion of Federal revenues supports eligible Gulf Coast States and local governments.

Although GOMESA focuses on offshore energy rather than transportation infrastructure, it provides an important example of how Federal policy can align national strategic interests with long-term infrastructure stewardship.

Program Overview

Administered through Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and Gulf producing States.

Objectives include energy security, coastal resilience, environmental restoration, infrastructure support, and economic development.

Similarities to the NSIC Program

Both recognize that nationally significant economic activity creates infrastructure needs extending beyond local or State interests.

Both encourage long-term planning, federal-State partnership, sustainable investment, strategic infrastructure stewardship, and national economic resilience.

Key Differences

GOMESA focuses on offshore energy revenues, utilizes revenue sharing, and concentrates on Gulf Coast States.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is nationwide in scope, addresses transportation infrastructure, coordinates multiple Federal programs, supports numerous strategic sectors, and does not establish a dedicated revenue-sharing mechanism.

Lessons Learned

GOMESA demonstrates that Congress may recognize nationally significant industries, create specialized infrastructure programs, establish enduring Federal-State partnerships, and support maintenance and long-term stewardship alongside economic development.

These principles reinforce the policy foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Conclusion

GOMESA illustrates that transportation and infrastructure policy can successfully reflect broader national interests. While the mechanisms differ, both programs recognize that infrastructure supporting nationally important industries requires sustained planning, coordinated investment, and strong Federal-State cooperation.

Chapter 29 - Case Study: The Denali Commission

Introduction

The Denali Commission provides one of the most relevant examples of how the Federal Government can successfully partner with a State to address unique infrastructure challenges that cannot be adequately served through traditional formula funding alone.

Established by Congress in 1998, the Denali Commission was created to improve the quality of life in Alaska by coordinating Federal investments, reducing duplication among agencies, and supporting infrastructure essential to the long-term sustainability of Alaska's communities and economy.

Although the Commission's statutory mission extends beyond transportation, its governance model demonstrates how Federal coordination, regional flexibility, and long-term planning can be combined to address infrastructure challenges associated with remote geography, extreme climate, and limited transportation networks.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program draws upon many of these same principles while applying them to nationally significant transportation corridors throughout the United States.

Program Overview

Established: 1998

Primary Mission:

To provide critical infrastructure investments through coordinated Federal-State partnerships serving Alaska's unique transportation, energy, public safety, and community development needs.

Governance Structure

The Denali Commission operates through a Federal commission, Federal agency coordination, State participation, local and Tribal engagement, and public-private partnerships where appropriate.

This governance model encourages collaboration rather than centralized Federal control.

Areas of Investment

Historically, the Denali Commission has supported investments involving transportation infrastructure, rural aviation, marine transportation, energy systems, community facilities, broadband, workforce development, emergency preparedness, climate resilience, and village infrastructure.

Lessons for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

The Denali Commission demonstrates several important principles applicable to the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Federal Coordination

Infrastructure challenges rarely align neatly within the jurisdiction of a single Federal agency.

The Commission has shown that coordinated planning among multiple agencies produces better outcomes than isolated decision-making.

Regional Flexibility

Transportation systems differ significantly across the United States.

Successful programs provide national objectives while allowing implementation strategies to reflect regional geography, climate, economy, and operational realities.

The National Interest Index follows this same philosophy.

Long-Term Stewardship

The Commission emphasizes infrastructure sustainability rather than one-time construction projects.

Likewise, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program focuses on preventive maintenance, lifecycle asset management, infrastructure resilience, long-term operational reliability, and continuous improvement.

Partnership Rather Than Regulation

The Denali Commission operates primarily through cooperation.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program similarly relies upon federal-State partnerships, interagency collaboration, State leadership, local participation, and stakeholder engagement.

Relationship to the National Interest Index

The Denali Commission illustrates that successful infrastructure policy often extends beyond engineering.

Transportation decisions must also consider economic sustainability, community resilience, environmental conditions, national security, emergency preparedness, and long-term infrastructure performance.

These same considerations are integrated within the National Interest Index.

Key Differences

While the Denali Commission provides valuable precedent, important distinctions remain.

The Denali Commission primarily serves Alaska, invests across multiple infrastructure sectors, operates through Congressionally appropriated programs, and does not establish a national transportation designation.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program applies nationwide, focuses specifically on transportation infrastructure, establishes a strategic evaluation framework, coordinates existing transportation authorities, and introduces the National Interest Index as a planning methodology.

Conclusion

The Denali Commission demonstrates that Congress has repeatedly recognized the need for specialized Federal-State partnerships when conventional infrastructure programs alone cannot adequately address unique national or regional challenges.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon these lessons by establishing a national framework for identifying, evaluating, and stewarding transportation corridors whose continued operation supports exceptional national interests.

Chapter 30 - Lessons Learned from Existing Federal Programs

Introduction

The preceding case studies demonstrate that Congress has repeatedly adapted Federal infrastructure policy to address emerging national priorities. Although each program was created to solve different challenges, several common principles consistently appear throughout successful Federal transportation and infrastructure initiatives.

These principles provide important guidance for implementation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Rather than replacing existing authorities, the proposed legislation incorporates proven concepts that have already demonstrated success across multiple Federal programs.

Lesson One

Congress Creates Specialized Programs When National Needs Change

Federal transportation policy has never remained static.

Examples include Interstate Highway System, Appalachian Development Highway System, Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), National Highway Freight Program, PROTECT Program, GOMESA, and Denali Commission.

Each program addressed needs not fully served by existing authorities.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program represents a similar evolution responding to today’s strategic environment.

Lesson Two

Federal-State Partnerships Produce Better Outcomes

Successful infrastructure programs consistently preserve State leadership while strengthening Federal coordination.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program continues this longstanding tradition by preserving State ownership, maintaining existing transportation authorities, encouraging collaborative planning, and improving coordination among Federal agencies.

Lesson Three

Long-Term Stewardship Outperforms Reactive Investment

Infrastructure serving nationally significant purposes requires continuous management rather than periodic reconstruction.

Preventive maintenance, resilience planning, operational readiness, and lifecycle asset management consistently provide greater long-term public value than deferred maintenance followed by emergency repair.

This principle is central to the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Lesson Four

Transportation Serves Multiple National Interests

Transportation infrastructure rarely supports only one public objective.

Modern transportation corridors frequently serve national defense, homeland security, domestic energy, critical minerals, manufacturing, freight, emergency response, community access, and economic development.

The National Interest Index recognizes these interconnected missions through a unified evaluation framework.

Lesson Five

Future Demand Should Influence Present Investment

Many successful Federal programs were established before transportation demand reached critical levels.

Planning ahead has historically produced lower lifecycle costs, greater economic opportunity, improved national readiness, and better infrastructure performance.

Future Demand Assessments incorporated within the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program continue this forward-looking approach.

Lesson Six

Strategic Infrastructure Extends Beyond Engineering

Traditional engineering measures remain essential.

However, successful infrastructure policy also considers national security, economic resilience, supply chain reliability, climate adaptation, operational continuity, strategic redundancy, and emerging technologies.

The National Interest Index integrates these broader considerations without replacing existing engineering standards.

Lesson Seven

Coordination Improves Public Investment

The case studies consistently demonstrate that coordination among Federal agencies, States, Tribal governments, industry, and local communities improves infrastructure planning while reducing duplication and maximizing public benefit.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program institutionalizes this coordination through Corridor Management Plans, Future Demand Assessments, and interagency consultation.

Common Themes

Across all of the case studies presented in this volume, several common themes emerge: infrastructure should be viewed as a long-term national asset, maintenance is as important as construction, transportation investments should support multiple public benefits whenever possible, Federal coordination strengthens State-led implementation, strategic planning improves infrastructure resilience, future demand should inform today's investment decisions, and flexibility is essential to successful national programs.

These principles provide the philosophical foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Conclusion

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is not an entirely new concept. Rather, it represents the logical evolution of decades of successful Federal transportation and infrastructure policy.

Programs such as the Appalachian Development Highway System, GOMESA, the Denali Commission, STRAHNET, and other Federal initiatives demonstrate that Congress has

consistently responded to changing national priorities by creating specialized frameworks tailored to unique transportation and infrastructure challenges.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon these precedents while addressing the increasingly interconnected demands of national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, Arctic operations, emergency preparedness, and economic resilience.

Together, these case studies demonstrate that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Act is both practical and achievable. It does not replace existing transportation programs or alter the traditional Federal-State partnership. Instead, it integrates proven concepts into a comprehensive framework that strengthens long-term stewardship of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

PART VI - Implementation Tools

Chapter 31 - Example National Interest Evaluation

Introduction

The National Interest Evaluation (NIE) provides a standardized framework for documenting the strategic significance of a transportation corridor. While every designated corridor will possess unique characteristics, a common evaluation format promotes consistency, transparency, and comparability across the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The example presented in this chapter illustrates how the National Interest Index may be applied to a corridor supporting multiple national interests. It is intended as a planning template rather than a mandatory scoring system and demonstrates the type of information that may be considered during corridor designation and periodic review.

Example Corridor

Corridor Name: Dalton Highway (Alaska Route 11)

Location: Fairbanks to Deadhorse, Alaska

Length: Approximately 500 miles

Managing Agency: Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Primary Transportation Function: Surface freight transportation supporting Arctic resource development, industrial logistics, emergency response, and remote access.

National Interest Evaluation Summary

National Defense

Assessment: Exceptional

The corridor provides the only year-round highway access to Alaska’s North Slope and supports military logistics, Arctic defense operations, homeland security activities, missile defense infrastructure, and strategic mobility.

Supporting Agencies:

- Department of Defense
- U.S. Northern Command
- Alaska National Guard
- Department of Homeland Security

Domestic Energy Security

Assessment: Exceptional

Supports domestic oil production, future natural gas development, pipeline maintenance, and energy infrastructure servicing.

Supporting Agencies:

- Department of Energy
- Department of the Interior

Critical Minerals

Assessment: High

Supports existing and future development of nationally significant mineral resources including copper, gold, graphite, and rare earth elements.

Supporting Agencies:

- U.S. Geological Survey
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Commerce

Interstate Commerce

Assessment: High

Serves industrial freight, heavy haul transportation, fuel distribution, and commercial logistics supporting Alaska’s economy.

Emergency Preparedness

Assessment: High

Provides emergency response access for industrial incidents, wildfires, natural disasters, and Arctic search-and-rescue operations.

Arctic Operations

Assessment: Exceptional

Supports year-round U.S. presence throughout the Arctic through transportation access for military, scientific, industrial, and governmental operations.

Infrastructure Resilience

Assessment: Moderate to High

Subject to permafrost degradation, river erosion, seasonal flooding, extreme temperatures, snow drifting, wildfire, and limited redundancy.

Long-term resilience planning is essential.

Future Transportation Demand

Assessment: Exceptional

Forecast growth includes increased North Slope production, Alaska LNG, Ambler Mining District, Livengood Gold Project, Koyukuk Mining District, expanded Arctic defense, and strategic manufacturing supply chains.

Overall Evaluation

The Dalton Highway demonstrates exceptional national significance across multiple National Interest categories. While traffic volumes remain comparatively modest, the corridor supports an unusually broad range of national strategic missions whose importance substantially exceeds traditional transportation performance measures.

Accordingly, the corridor would warrant designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor and preparation of a comprehensive Corridor Management Plan.

Lessons Learned

This example illustrates that strategic importance cannot be measured solely through traffic volume, national interests frequently overlap within a single transportation corridor, long-term stewardship requires coordination among multiple Federal agencies, and future demand should influence present-day investment decisions.

Chapter 32 - Example Corridor Management Plan

Introduction

Following designation, each National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor should be managed through a comprehensive Corridor Management Plan (CMP). The CMP provides the long-term strategy for preserving infrastructure condition, improving operational performance, preparing for future demand, and coordinating investments among participating agencies.

This chapter presents an illustrative outline demonstrating how such a plan may be organized.

Example Corridor Management Plan

Section 1

Executive Summary

This illustrative Corridor Management Plan demonstrates how a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor may be managed following designation under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. While the example presented in this chapter uses Alaska's Dalton Highway (Alaska Route 11), the planning framework is intended to be adaptable to any corridor designated under the Program.

The Dalton Highway extends approximately 500 miles from the Elliott Highway north of Fairbanks to Deadhorse on Alaska's North Slope. As the only year-round highway connecting Alaska's interior to the North Slope, the corridor serves multiple national interests, including domestic energy production, Arctic defense, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency response, and scientific research.

The primary objective of this Corridor Management Plan is to provide a long-term strategy for preserving infrastructure condition, improving operational reliability, enhancing system resilience, coordinating investments among participating agencies, and preparing the corridor to accommodate anticipated future transportation demand. The plan emphasizes lifecycle asset management, proactive maintenance, and coordinated planning rather than reactive infrastructure investment.

Key findings indicate that the corridor possesses exceptional national strategic importance while facing significant challenges associated with Arctic climate, permafrost degradation, increasing freight demand, aging infrastructure, limited year-round services, and the need for sustained maintenance investment. Continued coordination among Federal agencies, the State of Alaska, industry stakeholders, and other partners will be essential to maintaining reliable year-round operations.

Major recommendations include strengthening long-term maintenance funding, implementing comprehensive asset management practices, improving climate resilience, expanding emergency response capabilities, integrating future demand assessments into capital programming, and establishing regular performance monitoring to ensure that the corridor continues to support evolving national priorities.

Section 2

Corridor Description

The Dalton Highway (Alaska Route 11) is a strategically significant surface transportation corridor extending approximately 414 miles from its southern terminus at the Elliott Highway near Livengood to Deadhorse on Alaska's North Slope. Constructed in conjunction with the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System during the 1970s, the corridor has evolved from an industrial access road into one of the Nation's most important transportation assets supporting Arctic operations, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency response, and interstate freight movement.

The corridor traverses a wide range of terrain and environmental conditions, including boreal forest, mountain passes, Arctic tundra, continuous and discontinuous permafrost, numerous major river crossings, and environmentally sensitive landscapes. These conditions present unique engineering, operational, and maintenance challenges that require specialized management practices and sustained long-term investment.

The highway is owned and maintained by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and serves as the only year-round highway connecting Alaska's Interior with the North Slope. Although primarily a highway corridor, it functions as part of a broader multimodal transportation network supporting pipeline infrastructure, industrial facilities, aviation assets, telecommunications systems, emergency services, and resource development throughout northern Alaska.

The strategic importance of the corridor has expanded considerably since its construction. In addition to supporting existing North Slope oil production, the corridor is expected to play an increasingly important role in future energy development, critical mineral extraction, Arctic defense initiatives, scientific research, and industrial growth. As a result, long-term corridor management must consider not only existing transportation needs but also the substantial increase in demand anticipated over the coming decades.

Geographic Limits

- Southern Terminus: Elliott Highway (MP 73), north of Livengood, Alaska

- Northern Terminus: Deadhorse, Alaska
- Total Length: Approximately 414 miles

Existing Infrastructure

- Highway roadway and associated drainage systems
- Bridges and major river crossings
- Maintenance stations and equipment facilities
- Airports supporting corridor operations
- Communications infrastructure
- Trans-Alaska Pipeline System crossings and adjacent infrastructure
- Industrial access roads and supporting transportation facilities

Ownership

- State of Alaska
- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Jurisdiction

- State transportation corridor administered by Alaska DOT&PF
- Coordination with multiple Federal land management agencies where applicable
- Support for numerous Federal missions and strategic national interests

Transportation Modes

- Highway freight transportation
- Passenger vehicles
- Industrial and oversize freight
- Emergency response vehicles
- Maintenance and construction equipment
- Aviation support at key locations
- Pipeline and utility infrastructure operating in parallel with the corridor

Historic Development

Constructed between 1974 and 1977 to support construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, the Dalton Highway has become an indispensable transportation corridor serving Alaska's North Slope. Over time, its role has expanded well beyond pipeline support to include energy production, Arctic logistics, emergency response, scientific research, tourism, and increasing national security responsibilities. Today, the corridor represents a critical component of the Nation's strategic transportation network and illustrates the importance of managing infrastructure based on long-term national interests rather than traffic volume alone.

Section 3 – National Interest Assessment

This section should summarize the findings of the National Interest Evaluation presented in Chapter 31 and demonstrate how those findings influence long-term corridor management priorities. The assessment identifies the national interests supported by the corridor and establishes the strategic rationale for preservation, operational improvements, resilience investments, and future infrastructure planning.

For the Dalton Highway, the assessment concludes that the corridor provides exceptional value in supporting national defense, domestic energy production, Arctic operations, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, and long-term economic resilience. These findings serve as the foundation for the management strategies presented throughout the remainder of this Corridor Management Plan.

National Interest Summary

- National Defense
- Homeland Security
- Domestic Energy Security
- Critical Minerals
- Strategic Manufacturing
- Interstate Commerce
- Arctic Operations
- Emergency Preparedness
- Infrastructure Resilience
- Future Transportation Demand

- Economic Resilience

This list mirrors the National Interest Index categories used in the evaluation framework in Chapter 31, so that readers can readily connect this management plan to the underlying national interest assessment.

Section 4 – Existing Infrastructure

This section inventories the physical transportation assets that comprise the designated corridor. The inventory establishes the baseline from which maintenance priorities, capital investments, operational improvements, and lifecycle asset management strategies are developed. It should identify not only transportation facilities but also supporting infrastructure essential to the corridor's continued operation.

Infrastructure Inventory

- Highway roadway
- Bridges and major river crossings
- Culverts and drainage systems
- Maintenance stations and equipment facilities
- Airports supporting corridor operations
- Communications infrastructure
- Fuel and emergency service facilities
- Utility and pipeline crossings
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (where applicable)

Section 5 – Infrastructure Condition Assessment

This section documents the current condition of corridor assets and identifies maintenance needs, operational deficiencies, resilience challenges, and infrastructure risks that may affect long-term performance. The assessment provides the technical basis for prioritizing maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation, and capital improvement projects within the Corridor Management Plan.

For the Dalton Highway, the assessment should emphasize the unique engineering and operational challenges associated with Arctic conditions, including permafrost degradation, frost

heave, flooding, erosion, extreme temperature fluctuations, remote operations, and seasonal maintenance requirements.

Condition Assessment

- Roadway surface condition
- Gravel surface and aggregate performance *(specific to the Dalton)*
- Bridges and structural condition
- Drainage and hydraulic performance
- Slope stability and erosion
- Permafrost-related impacts
- Maintenance history
- Deferred maintenance
- Safety deficiencies
- Operational reliability
- Climate resilience vulnerabilities

Section 6

Management Goals and Strategic Objectives

This section establishes the long-term vision for management of the designated corridor and identifies the strategic objectives that will guide future maintenance, operations, preservation, capital investment, and interagency coordination. Management goals should be directly informed by the National Interest Assessment and designed to preserve the corridor's ability to support national priorities for decades to come.

For the Dalton Highway, the primary objective is to maintain a safe, reliable, and resilient year-round transportation corridor capable of supporting domestic energy production, Arctic defense, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency response, and future economic growth while adapting to changing environmental conditions and increasing transportation demand.

Strategic Goals

- Preserve long-term infrastructure condition.

- Maintain safe and reliable year-round operations.
- Improve corridor resilience to permafrost degradation, flooding, erosion, and extreme weather.
- Support national defense and Arctic mobility.
- Ensure reliable access for domestic energy production and critical mineral development.
- Enhance freight mobility and operational efficiency.
- Integrate future demand into maintenance and capital planning.
- Improve emergency preparedness and incident response.
- Promote coordinated Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private-sector planning.
- Maximize lifecycle value through proactive asset management.

Section 7

Maintenance and Operations Strategy

This section establishes the maintenance and operational practices necessary to preserve corridor performance and ensure reliable year-round service. Because nationally significant transportation corridors must remain operational under a wide range of conditions, maintenance planning should emphasize preventive maintenance, rapid response, operational readiness, and long-term asset preservation rather than reactive repairs alone.

For the Dalton Highway, maintenance activities must address unique Arctic operating conditions, remote logistics, and rapidly changing weather while ensuring uninterrupted access to the North Slope.

Maintenance Strategy

- Preventive maintenance program.
- Pavement and gravel surface preservation.
- Dust control and aggregate replacement.
- Bridge inspection and maintenance.
- Culvert and drainage maintenance.
- Slope stabilization and erosion control.
- Permafrost monitoring and mitigation.

- Vegetation management.
- Snow removal and winter maintenance.
- Avalanche and rockfall mitigation where applicable.

Operations Strategy

- Incident management.
- Emergency response coordination.
- Traveler information systems.
- Commercial vehicle operations.
- Oversize and overweight load management.
- Construction traffic coordination.
- Seasonal operational planning.
- Equipment readiness.
- Maintenance workforce planning.
- Performance monitoring.

Section 8

Capital Improvement Strategy

This section identifies long-term capital investments necessary to preserve, modernize, and enhance the corridor while supporting future transportation demand and national strategic priorities. Capital improvements should complement routine maintenance and asset management by addressing long-term infrastructure deficiencies, improving operational reliability, and increasing system resilience.

Capital investment decisions should prioritize projects that maximize lifecycle performance, improve resilience, enhance safety, and strengthen the corridor’s ability to support multiple national interests.

Capital Improvement Priorities

- Bridge rehabilitation and replacement.
- Roadway reconstruction.

- Drainage system modernization.
- Permafrost stabilization projects.
- Slope stabilization and erosion protection.
- Safety improvements.
- Maintenance facility modernization.
- Communications infrastructure improvements.
- Intelligent Transportation Systems deployment.
- Emergency response infrastructure.
- Strategic freight staging areas.
- Climate resilience projects.

Project Prioritization

Projects should be evaluated using criteria including:

- Contribution to national interests.
- Infrastructure condition.
- Safety benefits.
- Operational reliability.
- Lifecycle cost-effectiveness.
- Resilience improvements.
- Future transportation demand.
- Environmental considerations.
- Funding availability.
- Coordination with other planned infrastructure investments.

Section 9

Future Demand Assessment

This section summarizes the findings of the Future Demand Assessment and identifies the anticipated changes in transportation demand that should influence long-term maintenance, operations, preservation, and capital investment decisions. Unlike traditional transportation

planning, which often relies heavily on historic traffic trends, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program emphasizes the importance of forecasting future national needs and incorporating those projections into present-day infrastructure planning.

For the Dalton Highway, future demand is expected to increase substantially as a result of expanding energy production, critical mineral development, Arctic defense initiatives, industrial investment, and other nationally significant activities. These anticipated demands reinforce the need for proactive infrastructure management and long-term corridor preservation.

Future Demand Drivers

- Increased North Slope oil production.
- Alaska LNG Project.
- Ambler Mining District development.
- Livengood Gold Project.
- Graphite Creek and other critical mineral projects.
- Arctic defense and military logistics.
- Scientific research and Arctic operations.
- Industrial development and freight growth.
- Population and workforce movement.
- Climate adaptation and infrastructure resilience.

Planning Considerations

- Long-term freight demand projections.
- Seasonal operational requirements.
- Maintenance workload forecasting.
- Infrastructure capacity assessment.
- Equipment and workforce planning.
- Future capital investment priorities.
- Risk and scenario planning.
- Periodic reassessment of transportation demand.

Section 10

Implementation Strategy

This section establishes the framework for implementing the Corridor Management Plan through coordinated planning, funding, performance monitoring, and periodic review.

Successful implementation depends upon continued collaboration among Federal agencies, the State of Alaska, Tribal governments, local governments, industry partners, and other stakeholders. Implementation should emphasize continuous improvement and adaptive management while preserving flexibility to respond to changing national priorities and transportation needs.

The strategies identified in this Corridor Management Plan should be incorporated into existing transportation planning processes whenever practicable and coordinated with applicable Federal and State funding programs.

Funding Coordination

- Federal transportation programs.
- State transportation funding.
- Public-private partnerships.
- Agency coordination.
- Long-term funding strategies.
- Research and innovation funding opportunities.

Agency Responsibilities

- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.
- Federal Highway Administration.
- Participating Federal agencies.
- Tribal governments.
- Local governments.
- Industry and private-sector partners.

Performance Measures

- Infrastructure condition.
- Operational reliability.
- Maintenance performance.
- Safety performance.
- Freight mobility.
- Infrastructure resilience.
- National Interest objectives.
- Future demand preparedness.

Monitoring and Reporting

- Annual performance review.
- Asset management updates.
- Corridor Management Plan implementation status.
- National Interest reassessment, as appropriate.
- Coordination among participating agencies.

Five-Year Review

The Corridor Management Plan should undergo a comprehensive review at intervals not exceeding five years. The review should evaluate changes in infrastructure condition, transportation demand, national priorities, corridor performance, and management effectiveness. Recommendations should be incorporated into updated planning documents to ensure that the corridor continues to support its strategic national functions while maintaining safe, reliable, and resilient operations.

Chapter 33 - Example Future Demand Assessment

Introduction

The Future Demand Assessment (FDA) evaluates foreseeable changes likely to affect transportation demand throughout the planning horizon. Unlike traditional forecasting methods that rely primarily upon historical traffic volumes, the FDA incorporates emerging national priorities, industrial development, defense planning, and long-term economic trends.

The following example illustrates the structure of a typical assessment.

Example Future Demand Assessment

Planning Horizon

Short-Term: 0–5 Years

Medium-Term: 5–20 Years

Long-Term: 20–50 Years

Existing Transportation Demand

Document:

- Traffic volumes
- Freight movement
- Seasonal variation
- Industrial activity
- Safety performance

Future Demand Drivers

Defense

Potential increases resulting from:

- Arctic strategy implementation
- Military modernization
- Homeland security initiatives
- Strategic logistics

Energy

Potential growth from:

- Expanded oil production
- Alaska LNG
- Pipeline maintenance
- Renewable energy

Critical Minerals

Potential development including:

- Ambler Mining District
- Livengood Gold Project
- Graphite Creek
- Additional exploration

Manufacturing

Forecast transportation needs associated with:

- Processing facilities
- Industrial development
- Supply chain expansion

Population and Workforce

Evaluate:

- Regional population changes
- Workforce mobility
- Community development
- Tourism

Alternative Scenarios

Develop multiple planning scenarios.

Scenario A

Baseline growth.

Scenario B

Accelerated industrial development.

Scenario C

Major Arctic defense expansion.

Scenario D

Combined development scenario incorporating defense, energy, mining, manufacturing, and climate adaptation.

Transportation Implications

Evaluate:

- Capacity needs
- Pavement performance
- Bridge loading
- Freight staging
- Maintenance requirements
- Safety improvements
- Technology investments
- Workforce needs

Investment Strategy

Recommend:

Immediate Priorities

- Deferred maintenance reduction

- Critical bridge improvements
- Operational reliability

Intermediate Priorities

- Capacity enhancements
- Maintenance facilities
- Intelligent transportation systems

Long-Term Priorities

- Corridor modernization
- Climate adaptation
- Strategic redundancy
- Future expansion

Conclusion

Future Demand Assessments provide the forward-looking analytical foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. By integrating transportation planning with anticipated defense, energy, industrial, and economic developments, the assessment enables infrastructure investment to occur proactively rather than reactively.

When combined with the National Interest Evaluation and Corridor Management Plan, the Future Demand Assessment completes a comprehensive planning framework that ensures transportation corridors remain capable of supporting the Nation’s evolving strategic priorities while maximizing the long-term return on public investment.

Chapter 34 - Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program introduces a new strategic planning framework within the Federal-aid Highway Program. As with any new initiative, questions naturally arise regarding its purpose, implementation, relationship to existing transportation law, and potential impacts upon States and stakeholders.

This chapter addresses the most frequently anticipated questions from Members of Congress, Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, local governments, industry representatives, and the public.

The responses are intended to clarify legislative intent and demonstrate how the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program complements existing transportation policy while preserving the successful Federal-State partnership established under Title 23.

Does the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program create a new Federal highway system?

No.

The Program does not establish a new highway system, transfer ownership of transportation infrastructure, or alter existing Federal highway classifications.

Instead, it creates a strategic planning designation for transportation corridors whose continued operation serves significant national interests.

Does designation increase Federal ownership or control?

No.

Transportation infrastructure remains under the ownership and operational responsibility of the appropriate State, Tribal, local, or Federal agency.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation is intended to improve planning and coordination—not ownership or regulatory authority.

Does the Program replace existing Federal transportation programs?

No.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program complements existing programs such as National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), National Highway Freight Program (NHFP), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Bridge Formula Program, PROTECT Program, INFRA, MEGA, RAISE, and Emergency Relief Program.

These programs continue to operate under their existing statutory authorities.

Is the National Interest Index a funding formula?

No.

The National Interest Index is a strategic planning and evaluation framework.

It is not intended to allocate Federal funding, establish project rankings, replace engineering analyses, override Congressional appropriations, and determine grant awards.

Instead, it provides additional strategic information supporting transportation planning and investment decisions.

Does the Program favor one State or region?

No.

The Program is national in scope.

Any transportation corridor meeting the statutory designation criteria may be considered regardless of geographic location.

Examples could include transportation corridors supporting Arctic operations, Gulf Coast energy infrastructure, border security, strategic manufacturing, interstate freight, critical mineral development, defense logistics, and major ports.

The evaluation methodology is applied consistently nationwide.

Why isn’t traffic volume enough?

Traffic volume remains an important transportation performance measure.

However, many strategically significant transportation corridors support national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, or Arctic operations despite relatively modest traffic volumes.

The National Interest Index recognizes these broader national functions.

Will this create additional bureaucracy?

The Program is designed to minimize unnecessary administrative burden.

Where practical, existing transportation planning documents—including Transportation Asset Management Plans, State Freight Plans, Long-Range Transportation Plans, and Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs—should be incorporated rather than duplicated.

The intent is better coordination, not additional bureaucracy.

Does the Program require new environmental reviews?

No.

Nothing in the proposed legislation modifies or replaces existing environmental review requirements.

Projects remain subject to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Tribal consultation requirements, and other applicable Federal and State laws.

How often are corridors evaluated?

National Interest Evaluations should be reviewed periodically, generally every five years, or sooner if significant changes occur involving defense strategy, energy development, critical mineral production, transportation demand, infrastructure condition, climate resilience, and national policy.

Periodic review ensures that designated corridors continue to reflect evolving national priorities.

Can corridors lose designation?

Yes.

If a corridor no longer satisfies the statutory designation criteria or if national priorities substantially change, the Secretary may review, modify, or rescind the designation following consultation with affected States and participating Federal agencies.

What are the primary benefits of designation?

Designation provides enhanced strategic planning, improved Federal-State coordination, long-term infrastructure stewardship, better integration of existing transportation programs, improved resilience planning, future demand forecasting, stronger interagency collaboration, and greater recognition of nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

Why is preventive maintenance emphasized?

Transportation infrastructure supporting national interests cannot reliably fulfill its mission if maintenance is deferred until major failures occur.

Preventive maintenance reduces lifecycle costs, improves reliability, increases safety, minimizes emergency repairs, protects public investment, and strengthens operational readiness.

The Program therefore emphasizes stewardship throughout the lifecycle of designated corridors.

Conclusion

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program builds upon existing Federal transportation policy while addressing emerging national priorities. The questions addressed in this chapter demonstrate that the Program is designed to strengthen—not replace—the Federal-aid Highway Program by improving long-term planning, coordination, and stewardship of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

Chapter 35 - Conclusions

Introduction

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program represents the culmination of more than a century of Federal transportation policy evolution. From the earliest Federal road programs to the Interstate Highway System, Congress has repeatedly recognized that transportation infrastructure serves purposes extending beyond mobility alone.

Today's transportation network supports national defense, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and the resilience of the American economy.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program acknowledges these expanding responsibilities by introducing a comprehensive planning framework that integrates strategic national interests into transportation decision-making while preserving the successful Federal-State partnership that has guided American transportation policy for generations.

A New Perspective on Transportation

Traditional transportation planning has understandably emphasized engineering performance, mobility, safety, and freight efficiency.

These measures remain essential.

However, the strategic importance of transportation infrastructure increasingly depends upon the national missions it enables rather than solely the number of vehicles using a roadway.

Transportation corridors serving national defense installations, domestic energy production, critical mineral supply chains, strategic manufacturing centers, and Arctic operations may possess extraordinary national importance regardless of traffic volume.

Recognizing these broader functions is the principal purpose of the National Interest Index.

The National Interest Index

The National Interest Index is not intended to replace existing transportation performance measures.

Instead, it provides an additional strategic perspective through which transportation infrastructure may be evaluated according to its contribution to national defense, homeland security, domestic energy security, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, infrastructure resilience, economic resilience, and future national transportation demand.

Together, these considerations create a more comprehensive understanding of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest.

Stewardship Rather Than Expansion

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is its emphasis on stewardship.

Historically, transportation investment has often focused upon expansion or reconstruction after deficiencies become apparent.

The proposed framework instead emphasizes preventive maintenance, lifecycle asset management, operational readiness, infrastructure resilience, future demand planning, and continuous improvement.

This proactive approach protects public investment while improving long-term infrastructure performance.

A National Framework

Although Alaska's Dalton Highway provides a compelling example throughout this volume, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intentionally national in scope.

The framework may be applied to transportation corridors supporting military installations, major freight gateways, domestic energy production, critical mineral districts, strategic manufacturing centers, border infrastructure, coastal transportation systems, rural transportation networks, Arctic infrastructure, and emerging industrial regions.

The Program is designed to remain adaptable as national priorities evolve.

Strengthening Existing Transportation Policy

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program does not seek to replace existing Federal transportation law.

Instead, it strengthens the existing framework by improving coordination among Federal agencies, enhancing State planning, integrating long-term stewardship, supporting evidence-based investment, recognizing emerging national priorities, and encouraging collaboration across multiple infrastructure sectors.

This approach preserves the proven strengths of Title 23 while preparing the Nation's transportation system for future challenges.

Looking Forward

The strategic environment facing the United States will continue to evolve.

Future demands associated with defense, energy security, critical minerals, advanced manufacturing, Arctic operations, technological innovation, and climate resilience will increasingly influence transportation planning.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program establishes a flexible framework capable of adapting to these changes while maintaining transparency, accountability, and strong Federal-State partnerships.

By encouraging proactive planning and coordinated stewardship, the Program helps ensure that America's most strategically important transportation corridors remain reliable, resilient, and prepared to support the Nation's security and prosperity for generations to come.

Final Thoughts

Transportation infrastructure has always been more than pavement, bridges, and rights-of-way. It is the physical foundation upon which national defense, economic opportunity, energy independence, emergency preparedness, and community resilience depend.

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Initiative recognizes that the Nation's most important transportation corridors deserve a planning framework equal to the responsibilities they carry. By integrating engineering excellence with strategic foresight, the National Interest Index provides Congress, Federal agencies, and participating States with a practical and enduring approach to identifying, managing, and preserving transportation infrastructure that serves the national interest.

As America enters an era defined by renewed strategic competition, evolving supply chains, Arctic development, and increasing infrastructure challenges, the ability to sustain these critical corridors will become increasingly important. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program offers a forward-looking framework that honors the legacy of the Federal-aid Highway Program while preparing it to meet the demands of the twenty-first century and beyond.

Closing Statement

"The strength of a nation is measured not only by the roads it builds, but by its commitment to preserving the transportation corridors that sustain its security, prosperity, resilience, and future. The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program provides a durable framework through which those corridors may be identified, stewarded, and strengthened for the benefit of generations to come."

APPENDIX A - National Interest Evaluation Guide

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

A-1 Purpose

This appendix establishes a standardized framework for conducting National Interest Evaluations (NIEs) under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The purpose of the National Interest Evaluation is to provide a consistent, transparent, and evidence-based process for determining whether a transportation corridor possesses sufficient strategic significance to warrant designation as a National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor.

The framework is intended to supplement existing transportation planning and performance management requirements under Title 23 by incorporating broader national strategic considerations into corridor evaluation.

The National Interest Evaluation is not intended to replace engineering analysis, transportation performance measures, environmental review, or State transportation planning. Rather, it provides an integrated assessment of how transportation infrastructure contributes to the national interest.

A-2 Evaluation Process

Every National Interest Evaluation should follow the same general process.

Step 1

Corridor Identification

Identify:

- Corridor limits
- Transportation modes
- Jurisdictions
- Ownership
- Existing designation(s)

Step 2

Background Information

Summarize:

- Corridor history
- Transportation function
- Regional economy
- Existing infrastructure
- Current transportation demand

Step 3

Data Collection

Collect information from:

- FHWA
- State DOT
- MPOs
- Tribal governments
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of the Interior
- Industry stakeholders

Step 4

National Interest Assessment

Evaluate every National Interest category.

Document:

- Supporting evidence
- Existing conditions
- Future considerations

- Agency input

Step 5

Integrated Evaluation

Prepare an overall assessment summarizing:

- Strategic importance
- Risks
- Opportunities
- Future demand
- Corridor significance

Step 6

Recommendations

Determine whether designation is recommended.

A-3 Evaluation Categories

Each category should be evaluated independently.

National Defense

Questions may include:

- Does the corridor support military mobility?
- Does it provide access to defense facilities?
- Does it support Arctic operations?
- Does it improve national readiness?

Homeland Security

Questions include:

- Border security?
- Emergency response?
- Critical infrastructure?

- Continuity of government?

Domestic Energy

Questions include:

- Oil?
- Natural gas?
- LNG?
- Pipeline infrastructure?
- Electricity transmission?

Critical Minerals

Questions include:

- Existing mines?
- Future mines?
- Processing facilities?
- Strategic resources?

Strategic Manufacturing

Questions include:

- Industrial facilities?
- Semiconductor production?
- Defense manufacturing?
- Workforce mobility?

Interstate Commerce

Questions include:

- Freight movement?
- National logistics?
- Ports?
- Rail?

- Airports?

Emergency Preparedness

Questions include:

- Evacuation?
- FEMA access?
- Disaster response?
- Medical transport?

Arctic Operations

Questions include:

- Arctic access?
- Scientific research?
- Coast Guard?
- Defense?

Infrastructure Resilience

Questions include:

- Flooding?
- Permafrost?
- Wildfire?
- Seismic activity?
- Climate adaptation?

Future Transportation Demand

Questions include:

- Planned industrial projects?
- Military expansion?
- Population growth?

- Future freight?

Economic Resilience

Questions include:

- Jobs?
- Economic diversification?
- Supply chains?
- National competitiveness?

A-4 Evidence Standards

Evaluations should rely upon credible information.

Examples include:

- Engineering reports
- Transportation studies
- Federal strategic plans
- State transportation plans
- Economic forecasts
- Defense assessments
- Scientific studies
- Industry data
- Agency consultation Whenever possible, conclusions should be supported by multiple independent sources.

A-5 Evaluation Matrix

Each category should be summarized using a standardized format.

Category	Supporting Evidence	Current Importance	Future Importance	Comments
National Defense				
Homeland Security				
Energy				
Critical Minerals				
Manufacturing				
Commerce				
Emergency Response				
Arctic				
Resilience				
Future Demand				
Economic Resilience				

A-6 Agency Coordination

Each evaluation should identify agencies consulted.

Examples include:

Agency	Consultation	Comments
FHWA		
DoD		
DOE		
DHS		
DOI		
Commerce		
FEMA		
State DOT		

A-7 Documentation Requirements

Each evaluation should include:

- Executive Summary
- Corridor Description
- Existing Conditions
- National Interest Evaluation
- Agency Consultation
- Future Demand Assessment
- Supporting Maps
- Supporting Data
- References
- Final Recommendation

A-8 Review Process

The completed evaluation should undergo:

- Technical review
- Interagency review
- State review
- Public comment (where appropriate)
- Secretary’s determination

A-9 Sample Evaluation

The appendix concludes with a completed example using the Dalton Highway, demonstrating how the National Interest Evaluation framework can be applied to a real-world corridor. The example illustrates documentation standards, agency coordination, evidence collection, and integration of the National Interest Index into a comprehensive strategic assessment.

APPENDIX B - Corridor Management Plan Development Guide

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

B-1 Purpose

This appendix establishes a standardized framework for preparing Corridor Management Plans (CMPs) for transportation corridors designated under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The Corridor Management Plan is the principal implementation document supporting long-term stewardship of designated corridors. It integrates maintenance, operations, capital investment, resilience planning, asset management, and future transportation demand into a unified planning framework.

The purpose of the Corridor Management Plan is to ensure that nationally significant transportation corridors remain safe, reliable, resilient, and capable of supporting the strategic missions identified through the National Interest Evaluation.

The Plan is intended to complement existing transportation planning requirements under Title 23 rather than replace them.

B-2 Guiding Principles

Every Corridor Management Plan should be based upon the following principles:

- Long-term stewardship rather than short-term project delivery.
- Preventive maintenance before infrastructure failure.
- Integration of maintenance, operations, and capital improvements.
- Collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private partners.
- Adaptability to changing national priorities.
- Evidence-based planning.
- Continuous performance improvement.

B-3 Plan Development Process

Preparation of a Corridor Management Plan generally follows seven steps.

Step 1

Review the National Interest Evaluation

Identify the strategic missions supported by the corridor.

Step 2

Inventory Existing Infrastructure

Document:

- Roadways
- Bridges
- Culverts
- Tunnels
- Rail crossings
- Airports
- Ports
- Utility crossings
- Communications systems
- Maintenance facilities

Step 3

Evaluate Existing Conditions

Assess:

- Pavement condition
- Bridge condition
- Safety performance
- Maintenance history
- Operational reliability
- Capacity constraints
- Existing resilience measures

Step 4

Identify Future Demand

Review:

- Economic development
- Industrial expansion
- Military planning
- Energy development
- Critical mineral projects
- Population growth
- Freight forecasts

Step 5

Develop Management Strategies

Prepare strategies addressing:

- Maintenance
- Preservation
- Operations
- Capital improvements
- Emergency preparedness
- Technology deployment
- Climate adaptation
- Workforce requirements

Step 6

Coordinate with Stakeholders

Consult:

- FHWA
- State DOT
- Tribal governments

- Local governments
- Federal agencies
- Industry
- Public stakeholders

Step 7

Finalize and Adopt

Complete technical review, public review where appropriate, agency approval, and implementation.

B-4 Recommended Plan Format

Each Corridor Management Plan should include:

Executive Summary

Corridor Overview

National Interest Summary

Existing Infrastructure Inventory

Infrastructure Condition Assessment

Maintenance Strategy

Operations Strategy

Capital Improvement Strategy

Resilience Strategy

Future Demand Assessment

Funding Strategy

Performance Measures

Implementation Schedule

Periodic Review Process

B-5 Maintenance and Operations Framework

Unlike traditional corridor studies, Corridor Management Plans emphasize continuous stewardship.

Recommended maintenance components include:

- Preventive maintenance schedules
- Pavement preservation
- Bridge preservation
- Drainage maintenance
- Winter maintenance
- Vegetation management
- Rockfall mitigation
- Avalanche management (where applicable)
- Dust control
- Signage
- Striping
- Intelligent Transportation Systems
- Communications infrastructure

Operational planning should also address:

- Incident response
- Traveler information
- Emergency communications
- Freight operations
- Seasonal restrictions
- Oversize/overweight movements

B-6 Resilience Planning

Every Corridor Management Plan should identify:

Natural Hazards

- Flooding
- River erosion
- Coastal erosion
- Permafrost degradation
- Landslides
- Earthquakes
- Wildfires
- Extreme weather

Operational Risks

- Infrastructure failure
- Utility interruptions
- Supply chain disruptions
- Workforce shortages
- Equipment availability

Mitigation Measures

- Preventive maintenance
- Engineering improvements
- Monitoring systems
- Emergency contracts
- Alternate routing
- Rapid response capability

B-7 Capital Improvement Prioritization

Capital investments should support long-term corridor objectives.

Potential priorities include:

- Bridge replacement
- Pavement reconstruction

- Capacity improvements
- Freight mobility
- Safety improvements
- Maintenance facilities
- Communications systems
- ITS deployment
- Climate adaptation
- Operational improvements

Projects should be coordinated with existing transportation programs whenever practical.

B-8 Performance Management

Performance measures should monitor:

- Pavement condition
- Bridge condition
- Infrastructure availability
- Travel reliability
- Safety
- Freight performance
- Emergency response capability
- Maintenance effectiveness
- Asset lifecycle
- Resilience improvements

Annual reporting should identify progress toward corridor objectives.

B-9 Five-Year Review

Every Corridor Management Plan should be comprehensively reviewed at least once every five years.

Reviews should evaluate:

- National Interest changes

- Infrastructure condition
- Emerging industries
- Defense priorities
- Energy development
- Critical mineral projects
- Climate impacts
- Funding needs
- Lessons learned

The review should result in updates to maintenance strategies, capital priorities, and implementation schedules.

B-10 Example Corridor Management Plan Outline

Section 1 – Executive Summary

Section 2 – Corridor Description

Section 3 – National Interest Evaluation Summary

Section 4 – Existing Infrastructure Inventory

Section 5 – Existing Conditions Assessment

Section 6 – Maintenance Strategy

Section 7 – Operations Strategy

Section 8 – Resilience Strategy

Section 9 – Future Demand Assessment

Section 10 – Capital Improvement Program

Section 11 – Funding Coordination

Section 12 – Performance Measures

Section 13 – Implementation Schedule

Section 14 – Five-Year Review Process

B-11 Example Implementation Timeline

Phase	Timeframe	Primary Activities
Initial Designation	Months 0-6	National Interest Evaluation, agency coordination
Plan Development	Months 6-18	Infrastructure inventory, stakeholder engagement, draft CMP
Initial Implementation	Years 2-5	Maintenance improvements, priority projects, performance monitoring
Program Expansion	Years 5-10	Capital improvements, resilience projects, technology deployment
Long-Term Stewardship	Year 10 and beyond	Continuous monitoring, updates, and adaptive management

B-12 Conclusion

A Corridor Management Plan transforms the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor designation from a policy decision into an actionable long-term management strategy. By integrating infrastructure condition, maintenance, operations, resilience, capital planning, future demand, and interagency coordination, the Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for preserving transportation corridors that serve the Nation’s most important strategic interests.

Used together with the National Interest Evaluation (Appendix A) and the National Interest Index Framework (Appendix C), the Corridor Management Plan establishes a repeatable and scalable implementation model that can be applied consistently across the United States while allowing sufficient flexibility to address regional conditions and evolving national priorities.

APPENDIX C - National Interest Index Framework

Technical Guidance for the Evaluation of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors

C-1 Purpose

The National Interest Index (NII) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating transportation corridors according to their contribution to the national interest.

Unlike traditional transportation performance measures, which focus primarily upon engineering performance, traffic operations, or freight movement, the National Interest Index recognizes that transportation infrastructure increasingly supports multiple national missions simultaneously.

These missions include national defense, homeland security, domestic energy production, critical mineral development, strategic manufacturing, emergency preparedness, interstate commerce, Arctic operations, and long-term economic resilience.

The National Interest Index is intended to supplement—not replace—existing transportation planning requirements established under Title 23, United States Code.

Its purpose is to provide Federal and State decision-makers with a consistent methodology for identifying transportation corridors whose strategic importance extends beyond conventional transportation performance measures.

C-2 Guiding Principles

The National Interest Index is founded upon several guiding principles.

National Perspective

Transportation infrastructure should be evaluated according to its contribution to the Nation as a whole rather than solely local or regional transportation demand.

Multiple National Interests

Transportation corridors frequently support several strategic missions simultaneously.

Evaluations should recognize these combined contributions.

Long-Term Stewardship

Infrastructure planning should emphasize preservation, resilience, operational readiness, and lifecycle asset management.

Future-Oriented Planning

Planning should incorporate foreseeable changes involving defense, energy, manufacturing, critical minerals, technology, climate, and freight demand.

Flexibility

The framework should remain adaptable as national priorities evolve.

Transparency

Evaluation methods should be publicly documented and consistently applied.

C-3 National Interest Categories

The National Interest Index evaluates transportation corridors through eleven integrated categories.

National Defense

Military readiness

Strategic mobility

Force projection

Homeland defense

Homeland Security

Border security

Emergency preparedness

Continuity of government

Critical infrastructure protection

Domestic Energy Security

Oil

Natural gas

Electricity

Renewable energy

Energy infrastructure

Critical Minerals

Exploration

Production

Processing

Strategic materials

Supply chains

Strategic Manufacturing

Industrial capacity

Defense manufacturing

Semiconductors

Advanced manufacturing

Interstate Commerce

Freight

Ports

Rail

Air cargo

National logistics

Emergency Preparedness

Evacuation

Emergency response

Disaster recovery

Medical transportation

Arctic Operations

National presence

Defense

Research

Resource development

Infrastructure Resilience

Climate adaptation

Flooding

Permafrost

Wildfire

Operational continuity

Future Transportation Demand

Industrial growth

Military expansion

Population

Emerging technologies

Economic Resilience

Employment

Supply chains

Regional development

National competitiveness

C-4 Evaluation Methodology

Each category should be evaluated through:

Engineering analysis

Transportation planning

Economic assessment

Federal consultation

State consultation

Industry input

Professional judgment

Supporting documentation

The Index intentionally avoids assigning rigid numerical scores.

Instead, it provides a structured analytical framework emphasizing documented evidence and professional evaluation.

C-5 Evaluation Matrix

Each National Interest category should be documented using a common evaluation format.

National Interest Category	Existing Contribution	Future Contribution	Supporting Evidence	Observations
Defense				
Homeland Security				
Energy				
Minerals				
Manufacturing				
Commerce				
Emergency Response				
Arctic				
Resilience				
Future Demand				
Economic Resilience				

C-6 National Interest Profiles

Rather than assigning numerical scores, the National Interest Evaluation should identify an overall profile describing the corridor.

Illustrative profiles may include:

National Strategic Corridor

Supports numerous Federal priorities across multiple National Interest categories.

Strategic Resource Corridor

Supports nationally significant energy, mineral, manufacturing, or industrial development.

Defense Mobility Corridor

Supports military readiness, homeland security, and national defense.

Economic Resilience Corridor

Supports national commerce, manufacturing, logistics, and supply chain reliability.

Arctic Strategic Corridor

Supports national Arctic operations, resource development, scientific research, and military presence.

A corridor may qualify under more than one profile.

C-7 Integration with Transportation Planning

The National Interest Index should inform Corridor Management Plans, Transportation Asset Management Plans, Long-Range Transportation Plans, State Freight Plans, Transportation Improvement Programs, Future Demand Assessments, resilience planning, and Federal discretionary grant applications.

The Index is intended to strengthen—not replace—existing planning requirements.

C-8 Periodic Review

National priorities continually evolve.

Accordingly, the National Interest Framework should undergo periodic review.

Updates may consider defense strategy, energy policy, critical minerals, manufacturing, transportation technology, climate resilience, freight trends, and infrastructure performance.

Periodic review ensures the framework remains responsive to changing national priorities.

C-9 Governance of the National Interest Index

The National Interest Index should be administered through a collaborative process led by the Secretary of Transportation in consultation with participating Federal agencies and States.

The Secretary should establish procedures for technical guidance, evaluation standards, periodic updates, interagency coordination, data management, research, best practices, and public transparency.

This governance model promotes national consistency while preserving flexibility for State implementation.

C-10 Example National Interest Profile

This appendix concludes with an illustrative National Interest Profile for the Dalton Highway.

The example demonstrates how a transportation corridor may simultaneously support Arctic defense, North Slope energy production, critical mineral development, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, scientific research, national supply chains, and future industrial expansion.

Rather than assigning a single numerical rating, the example presents a comprehensive strategic profile that reflects the corridor’s unique contribution to the national interest.

C-11 Conclusion

The National Interest Index is the conceptual foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. It expands transportation planning beyond traditional engineering and operational measures by recognizing the broader strategic missions that transportation infrastructure supports.

By integrating defense, energy, critical minerals, manufacturing, commerce, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, resilience, and future demand into a single evaluation framework, the Index provides Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and participating States with a practical and adaptable tool for identifying and stewarding transportation corridors of exceptional national significance.

Together with the National Interest Evaluation Guide (Appendix A) and the Corridor Management Plan Development Guide (Appendix B), the National Interest Index Framework completes a comprehensive implementation toolkit capable of supporting consistent, transparent, and evidence-based management of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors throughout the United States.

APPENDIX D - Governance, Administration, and Interagency Coordination

National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program

D-1 Purpose

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is founded on the principle that transportation infrastructure serving significant national interests requires coordinated planning, long-term stewardship, and sustained collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private-sector partners. While transportation corridors have traditionally been planned and managed primarily to meet regional mobility and economic needs, many corridors now perform functions that are essential to national defense, energy security, interstate commerce, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, Arctic operations, and overall economic resilience.

The purpose of this governance framework is to establish a coordinated administrative structure that supports the identification, designation, planning, implementation, and long-term management of National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors. The framework is intended to improve communication, promote interagency collaboration, encourage evidence-based decision-making, and ensure that transportation investments reflect both current and anticipated national priorities.

This appendix does not establish new regulatory authority, alter existing statutory responsibilities, or transfer ownership or operational control of transportation infrastructure. Rather, it provides a collaborative governance model that enables participating agencies to better integrate their existing authorities and expertise while preserving the long-standing Federal-State partnership established under Title 23, United States Code.

The governance framework is designed to provide consistency in program administration while allowing sufficient flexibility to address the unique characteristics, operational requirements, and strategic importance of individual corridors across the United States.

D-2 Governance Principles

The administration of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be guided by principles that promote cooperation, accountability, transparency, and long-term stewardship. These principles establish the foundation upon which all program activities should be conducted and provide a common framework for decision-making among participating agencies and stakeholders.

The Program should be administered in accordance with the following principles:

Federal-State Partnership. The Program is intended to strengthen, not replace, the existing partnership between the Federal Government and the States. States remain the primary owners and managers of transportation infrastructure while the Federal Government provides coordination, technical assistance, and strategic guidance for infrastructure serving significant national interests.

Respect for Existing Authorities. Participation in the Program does not modify the statutory responsibilities or jurisdiction of any Federal agency, State, Tribal government, or local government. Each participating entity retains its existing legal authority and decision-making responsibilities.

Collaboration and Coordination. Transportation infrastructure supporting multiple national objectives should be planned and managed through collaborative decision-making that incorporates expertise from all relevant governmental and non-governmental partners.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making. Program decisions should be supported by documented technical analyses, reliable data, professional judgment, and transparent evaluation methodologies consistent with the National Interest Index Framework.

Long-Term Stewardship. Transportation investments should emphasize lifecycle asset management, resilience, preventive maintenance, operational reliability, and the long-term preservation of nationally significant infrastructure.

Transparency and Accountability. Program administration should encourage public participation, regular reporting, clear documentation, and measurable performance to promote confidence in program decisions and the responsible use of public resources.

Adaptability. Because national priorities and transportation needs continually evolve, the Program should remain sufficiently flexible to incorporate new information, emerging technologies, changing infrastructure conditions, and future strategic requirements.

These principles should guide all aspects of program administration, including corridor designation, planning, implementation, performance monitoring, and periodic program review.

D-3 Secretary of Transportation

The Secretary of Transportation serves as the principal Federal official responsible for administering the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program and ensuring its consistent implementation nationwide. Acting through the Federal Highway Administration and in consultation with participating Federal agencies and States, the Secretary provides strategic leadership, policy direction, and overall program oversight.

Responsibilities of the Secretary may include:

- Establishing national program policies and implementation guidance.
- Designating National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors following completion of the evaluation process.
- Maintaining and periodically updating the National Interest Index Framework.
- Coordinating participation among Federal agencies.
- Approving or overseeing Corridor Management Plans where appropriate.
- Promoting consistency in National Interest Evaluations.
- Supporting transportation research, innovation, and technology deployment.
- Reporting program activities and recommendations to Congress.
- Conducting periodic reviews of program effectiveness.
- Encouraging collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private-sector partners.

The Secretary should administer the Program in a manner that promotes transparency, technical excellence, and effective coordination while respecting the statutory authorities and operational responsibilities of participating agencies and States.

D-4 Federal Highway Administration

The Federal Highway Administration serves as the lead implementation agency for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program under the direction of the Secretary of Transportation. FHWA is responsible for providing technical leadership, coordinating program administration, and assisting participating States in implementing the objectives of the Program.

FHWA responsibilities may include:

- Developing and maintaining technical guidance, manuals, and implementation documents.
- Coordinating National Interest Evaluations.
- Reviewing Corridor Management Plans for consistency with program guidance.

- Providing technical assistance to State Departments of Transportation and other participating agencies.
- Supporting data collection, performance monitoring, and program evaluation.
- Facilitating interagency coordination and information sharing.
- Promoting research, innovation, and best practices related to corridor planning and management.
- Maintaining national program records and supporting public transparency.
- Assisting with training, peer exchanges, and professional development opportunities for participating agencies.
- Coordinating periodic reviews and updates of program guidance and technical methodologies.

In carrying out these responsibilities, FHWA should work collaboratively with Federal agencies, States, Tribal governments, local governments, industry stakeholders, and academic institutions to ensure that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program remains technically sound, nationally consistent, and responsive to emerging transportation needs.

As the Program's lead implementation agency, FHWA also serves as the primary point of coordination between Federal partners and participating States, helping to integrate transportation planning with broader national priorities while preserving the flexibility necessary to address the unique characteristics of individual corridors.

D-5 Participating Federal Agencies

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program recognizes that transportation infrastructure serving significant national interests frequently supports multiple Federal missions simultaneously. As a result, effective planning and stewardship require collaboration among Federal agencies with complementary statutory responsibilities and technical expertise.

Participation by Federal agencies under this Program is intended to improve coordination, information sharing, and long-term planning. Nothing in this appendix alters or expands the statutory authority of any participating agency. Each agency retains its existing responsibilities under applicable Federal law.

The following summarizes the anticipated roles of principal Federal participants.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The Federal Highway Administration serves as the lead implementation agency for the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program under the direction of the Secretary of Transportation.

Primary responsibilities include:

- Providing technical guidance and implementation support.
- Coordinating National Interest Evaluations.
- Reviewing and assisting with Corridor Management Plans.
- Integrating the Program with existing Title 23 planning requirements.
- Supporting State Departments of Transportation during implementation.
- Maintaining program guidance and best practices.
- Monitoring corridor performance and reporting outcomes.
- Coordinating research, data collection, and technology deployment.

FHWA also serves as the principal liaison between participating States and other Federal agencies involved in corridor planning.

Department of Defense (DoD)

The Department of Defense provides expertise regarding transportation infrastructure that supports national defense, military readiness, homeland defense, and strategic mobility.

Responsibilities may include:

- Identifying corridors supporting military installations and training ranges.
- Evaluating military mobility requirements.
- Assessing force projection and logistics needs.
- Supporting Arctic defense planning.
- Identifying transportation dependencies affecting national security.
- Coordinating with U.S. Northern Command, the military services, and the National Guard Bureau as appropriate.

DoD participation ensures that transportation planning reflects current and future defense requirements while preserving military operational security.

Department of Energy (DOE)

The Department of Energy provides technical expertise concerning transportation infrastructure supporting domestic energy production, transmission, distribution, and emerging energy technologies.

Responsibilities may include:

- Identifying corridors critical to oil and natural gas production.
- Evaluating transportation needs associated with LNG facilities and energy infrastructure.
- Assessing strategic petroleum and energy supply chain considerations.
- Supporting transportation planning for electricity transmission, hydrogen, carbon management, and other emerging energy systems.
- Coordinating with national laboratories and other DOE offices on long-term energy forecasts.

DOE participation helps ensure that transportation planning reflects the Nation's long-term energy security objectives.

Department of the Interior (DOI)

The Department of the Interior provides expertise regarding public lands, natural resources, and critical mineral development.

Responsibilities may include:

- Identifying transportation needs associated with Federal lands.
- Supporting evaluation of critical mineral and resource development projects.
- Providing geological, environmental, and land management information.
- Coordinating with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Geological Survey, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and other Interior bureaus.
- Supporting long-term resource development planning.

DOI participation helps ensure that transportation infrastructure appropriately supports responsible access to nationally significant natural resources.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

The Department of Homeland Security provides expertise regarding critical infrastructure protection, emergency preparedness, border security, and national resilience.

Responsibilities may include:

- Evaluating transportation corridors supporting emergency response.
- Identifying critical infrastructure dependencies.
- Supporting continuity of operations planning.

- Coordinating border and customs transportation considerations where applicable.
- Assessing transportation system resilience against natural and human-caused hazards.

DHS participation strengthens the Program's focus on national preparedness and infrastructure security.

Department of Commerce (DOC)

The Department of Commerce provides expertise regarding economic development, manufacturing, industrial competitiveness, and national supply chains.

Responsibilities may include:

- Evaluating transportation support for strategic manufacturing.
- Assessing industrial investment and economic development opportunities.
- Identifying transportation needs affecting domestic supply chains.
- Supporting freight and logistics analyses.
- Coordinating with the Economic Development Administration and other Commerce agencies.

Commerce participation helps ensure that transportation investments support long-term economic competitiveness and industrial resilience.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA supports transportation planning related to disaster preparedness, hazard mitigation, and post-disaster recovery.

Responsibilities may include:

- Identifying critical evacuation and emergency response routes.
- Supporting hazard mitigation planning.
- Coordinating disaster recovery strategies.
- Advising on infrastructure resilience and continuity planning.
- Sharing lessons learned from disaster response operations.

FEMA participation ensures that designated corridors remain capable of supporting emergency operations during periods of crisis.

Additional Federal Participants

Depending upon the characteristics of a designated corridor, consultation may also include:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- Maritime Administration (MARAD)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- General Services Administration (GSA), where appropriate
- Other Federal departments or agencies with relevant statutory responsibilities

These agencies may provide technical expertise, data, and planning assistance when their missions intersect with the strategic functions of a designated corridor.

Interagency Coordination

Participation by Federal agencies is intended to improve communication and coordination rather than create additional regulatory requirements. The Secretary of Transportation, through the Federal Highway Administration, should facilitate regular interagency collaboration, encourage data sharing, and integrate agency expertise into National Interest Evaluations, Corridor Management Plans, and Future Demand Assessments.

This collaborative approach ensures that designated National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors are managed with a comprehensive understanding of the defense, energy, economic, environmental, and public safety missions they support, while respecting the statutory authorities and responsibilities of each participating agency.

D-6 State Departments of Transportation

State Departments of Transportation remain the primary owners, operators, and managers of transportation infrastructure designated under the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. The Program is intended to strengthen the existing Federal-State partnership established under Title 23, United States Code, by providing additional planning tools and interagency coordination without diminishing State authority or responsibility.

Participating State Departments of Transportation should lead the development and implementation of Corridor Management Plans and continue to administer maintenance, operations, preservation, capital improvements, and transportation planning activities consistent with applicable State and Federal law.

State responsibilities may include:

- Preparing and maintaining Corridor Management Plans.
- Conducting National Interest Evaluations in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration.
- Integrating designated corridors into Long-Range Transportation Plans, State Freight Plans, Transportation Asset Management Plans, and Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs, as appropriate.
- Managing infrastructure maintenance and preservation activities.
- Coordinating with local governments, Tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, regional planning organizations, and industry stakeholders.
- Collecting and reporting performance data.
- Conducting Future Demand Assessments.
- Supporting emergency preparedness and infrastructure resilience planning.

Participating States should retain discretion in establishing project priorities and selecting implementation strategies while coordinating with Federal partners to achieve the objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

D-7 Tribal Governments

Tribal governments possess unique governmental responsibilities, cultural knowledge, and transportation interests that may contribute significantly to the planning and stewardship of designated National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors. Where a proposed or designated corridor affects Tribal lands, treaty rights, traditional use areas, or Tribal transportation systems, Tribal governments should be engaged throughout the planning and implementation process.

Consultation should be conducted on a government-to-government basis in accordance with applicable Federal laws, Executive Orders, and established Tribal consultation policies.

Tribal participation may include:

- Providing input during National Interest Evaluations.
- Contributing traditional ecological and cultural knowledge relevant to corridor planning.
- Coordinating transportation planning and infrastructure development.
- Identifying transportation safety and mobility needs affecting Tribal communities.
- Supporting emergency preparedness and disaster response planning.
- Coordinating cultural resource protection and environmental stewardship.
- Identifying opportunities for economic development and workforce participation.

Meaningful Tribal consultation strengthens corridor planning by incorporating local expertise while ensuring that transportation investments respect Tribal sovereignty, cultural resources, and long-term community interests.

D-8 Local Governments and Regional Planning Organizations

Local governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs), and other regional entities play an important role in integrating nationally significant transportation corridors with surrounding communities and regional transportation networks.

Although the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program focuses on infrastructure serving the national interest, successful implementation depends upon coordination with local transportation systems, land use planning, emergency services, utilities, and economic development initiatives.

Local and regional participation may include:

- Providing information regarding existing transportation conditions.
- Coordinating land use and infrastructure planning.
- Identifying local transportation priorities and operational concerns.
- Supporting emergency management and evacuation planning.
- Coordinating utility infrastructure and public services.
- Participating in public outreach and stakeholder engagement.
- Assisting with implementation of Corridor Management Plans where appropriate.

The Program is intended to complement—not supersede—existing local and regional planning responsibilities.

D-9 Industry and Private-Sector Participation

Private-sector stakeholders frequently own, operate, or depend upon infrastructure that is essential to the Nation’s transportation, energy, manufacturing, and logistics systems. Their operational experience and technical expertise provide valuable insight into current transportation needs, future demand, and opportunities for improving corridor performance.

Industry participation should be encouraged throughout the planning and implementation process while maintaining the public responsibilities of participating governmental agencies.

Stakeholders may include:

- Freight carriers.
- Railroads.

- Pipeline operators.
- Port authorities.
- Airport operators.
- Energy producers.
- Mining companies.
- Manufacturing industries.
- Utility providers.
- Construction contractors.
- Logistics companies.
- Infrastructure owners and operators.
- Academic and research institutions.

Private-sector participation may include technical consultation, operational data sharing, future demand forecasting, identification of infrastructure constraints, research partnerships, workforce development initiatives, and collaboration on infrastructure resilience and emergency preparedness.

The inclusion of industry expertise helps ensure that National Interest Evaluations and Corridor Management Plans accurately reflect current operational realities and future economic opportunities.

D-10 Advisory Committees

To promote effective coordination and informed decision-making, the Secretary of Transportation may establish one or more advisory committees to provide technical advice and recommendations concerning the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Advisory committees are intended to facilitate collaboration among Federal agencies, participating States, Tribal governments, local governments, industry, academia, and other stakeholders with expertise relevant to nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

Committee membership may include representatives from:

- Federal agencies.
- State Departments of Transportation.
- Tribal governments.
- Metropolitan and regional planning organizations.
- Freight and logistics industries.

- Energy and utility providers.
- Mining and natural resource industries.
- Manufacturing organizations.
- Academic and research institutions.
- Infrastructure engineering and transportation professionals.
- Emergency management organizations.
- Public interest organizations, as appropriate.

Advisory committees should provide non-binding recommendations regarding National Interest Evaluations, Corridor Management Plans, research priorities, technical guidance, emerging transportation technologies, infrastructure resilience, and long-term strategic planning.

The Secretary should determine the size, structure, and operating procedures of advisory committees as appropriate to support the effective administration of the Program.

Advisory committee activities should be conducted in a transparent manner consistent with applicable Federal advisory committee requirements and should complement, rather than replace, the decision-making authority of the Secretary of Transportation and participating State Departments of Transportation.

Together, these advisory bodies can help ensure that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program benefits from a broad range of technical expertise while remaining responsive to evolving national priorities, transportation challenges, and stakeholder needs.

D-11 Decision-Making Process

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to provide a transparent, collaborative, and evidence-based process for identifying, evaluating, designating, and managing transportation corridors of national significance. The decision-making framework emphasizes coordination among Federal agencies, participating States, Tribal governments, local governments, and affected stakeholders while preserving existing statutory authorities and the Federal-State partnership established under Title 23, United States Code.

The following sequence describes the recommended decision-making process.

Corridor Nomination

A proposed National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor may be nominated by a State Department of Transportation, a consortium of States, a Federal agency, or another entity authorized by the Secretary of Transportation. Nominations should identify the corridor, describe its geographic

extent, summarize the national interests it supports, and provide preliminary documentation demonstrating why designation should be considered.

At a minimum, nominations should include existing transportation conditions, current and anticipated uses, known infrastructure challenges, and the relationship of the corridor to national defense, energy security, critical minerals, interstate commerce, emergency preparedness, or other applicable national priorities.

Preliminary Review

Upon receipt of a nomination, the Federal Highway Administration should conduct a preliminary review to determine whether sufficient information has been provided to initiate a formal National Interest Evaluation. During this stage, FHWA may request additional documentation or coordinate with the submitting entity to clarify corridor boundaries, supporting evidence, or anticipated program objectives.

The preliminary review is intended to ensure that nominations are complete and suitable for further evaluation rather than to determine whether designation is warranted.

National Interest Evaluation

Following acceptance of a nomination, FHWA should coordinate a comprehensive National Interest Evaluation using the methodology described in Appendix A and the National Interest Index Framework contained in Appendix C.

The evaluation should examine the corridor's contribution to applicable National Interest categories, existing infrastructure conditions, operational performance, resilience, anticipated future demand, and long-term strategic importance. Evaluations should rely upon documented evidence, technical analyses, and professional judgment rather than predetermined numerical scoring thresholds.

Interagency Consultation

As part of the evaluation process, the Secretary of Transportation should consult with Federal agencies whose missions are directly affected by the proposed corridor. Consultation may include the Departments of Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, the Interior, Commerce, FEMA, and other agencies with relevant expertise.

Interagency consultation provides an opportunity to identify national priorities, future infrastructure needs, operational considerations, and potential opportunities for coordination. Each participating agency should provide technical input within its existing statutory authority.

State, Tribal, and Local Coordination

Participating State Departments of Transportation should serve as principal partners throughout the evaluation process. Where applicable, Tribal governments, regional planning organizations, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and other affected stakeholders should also be consulted.

This coordination helps ensure that national objectives are integrated with regional transportation priorities, community needs, environmental considerations, and existing planning efforts.

Public Participation

Public participation should be incorporated throughout the designation process in a manner consistent with existing Federal and State transportation planning requirements.

Public engagement may include informational meetings, opportunities for written comment, coordination with affected communities, and consultation with industry stakeholders. The objective is to improve transparency, strengthen technical analyses, and identify issues that may not otherwise be apparent during agency review.

Secretary's Determination

Following completion of the National Interest Evaluation and consultation process, the Secretary of Transportation should determine whether the proposed corridor satisfies the objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The determination should be based on the documented evidence presented during the evaluation rather than any single performance metric. Corridors demonstrating significant and sustained contributions to multiple National Interest categories may be designated as National Strategic Infrastructure Corridors.

The Secretary may also identify conditions, recommendations, or implementation priorities associated with the designation.

Corridor Management Plan Development

Following designation, the participating State or States should prepare a Corridor Management Plan in accordance with the guidance provided in Appendix B.

The plan should establish long-term objectives for infrastructure preservation, operations, maintenance, resilience, capital improvements, performance monitoring, and coordination among participating agencies. Corridor Management Plans should be developed through a collaborative planning process and periodically updated to reflect changing conditions and national priorities.

Implementation and Performance Monitoring

Following approval of the Corridor Management Plan, participating agencies should implement recommended projects, operational improvements, maintenance strategies, and resilience initiatives consistent with available funding and existing planning processes.

Performance monitoring should evaluate infrastructure condition, operational effectiveness, system reliability, resilience, and progress toward established management objectives. Results should inform future planning, investment decisions, and program improvements.

Periodic Review and Adaptive Management

Each designated corridor should undergo a comprehensive review at least once every five years, or more frequently if warranted by significant changes in national priorities, infrastructure conditions, or transportation demand.

The review should evaluate whether the corridor continues to satisfy the objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program, assess the effectiveness of implemented management strategies, identify emerging challenges, and recommend revisions to the Corridor Management Plan or National Interest Evaluation as appropriate.

This adaptive management approach ensures that designated corridors remain responsive to evolving national needs while promoting continuous improvement, accountability, and long-term stewardship.

Decision-Making Framework

The decision-making process can be summarized as follows:

1. Corridor Nomination
2. Preliminary FHWA Review
3. National Interest Evaluation
4. Federal Interagency Consultation
5. State, Tribal, and Local Coordination
6. Public Participation
7. Secretary of Transportation Determination
8. Corridor Management Plan Development
9. Implementation and Performance Monitoring
10. Five-Year Review and Adaptive Management

This framework provides a predictable, transparent, and collaborative process that integrates transportation planning with broader national priorities while preserving State leadership and the established Federal-State partnership.

D-12 Program Oversight

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be administered in a manner that promotes accountability, transparency, fiscal responsibility, and continuous improvement. Program oversight is intended to ensure that designated corridors continue to support the national interests for which they were established while allowing Federal and State partners to adapt to changing transportation needs, emerging technologies, and evolving national priorities.

Oversight should emphasize performance-based management, interagency coordination, and regular evaluation rather than prescriptive regulatory requirements. The objective is to provide decision-makers with reliable information that supports sound investment decisions and long-term stewardship of nationally significant transportation infrastructure.

Performance Monitoring

The Secretary of Transportation, acting through the Federal Highway Administration, should establish procedures for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Program monitoring should evaluate, as appropriate:

- Infrastructure condition and state of repair.
- Operational reliability and system performance.
- Maintenance effectiveness.
- Freight mobility and network connectivity.
- Infrastructure resilience and hazard mitigation.
- Progress toward Corridor Management Plan objectives.
- Emerging transportation and economic trends.
- Changes in national strategic priorities affecting designated corridors.

Performance monitoring should complement existing Federal and State transportation performance management requirements and avoid unnecessary duplication of reporting.

Annual Program Reporting

The Secretary should prepare an annual report summarizing the status of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. The report should provide Congress, participating States, and the public with an overview of program activities, accomplishments, and emerging challenges.

The report may include:

- Newly designated corridors.
- Updates to existing corridor designations.
- Significant infrastructure improvements.
- Maintenance and operational initiatives.
- Progress toward Corridor Management Plan objectives.
- Federal and State coordination activities.
- Research, innovation, and technology initiatives.
- Emerging risks and future planning considerations.
- Recommendations for administrative or legislative improvements.

Annual reporting promotes transparency while providing decision-makers with information necessary to guide future policy and investment decisions.

Five-Year Program Review

At intervals not exceeding five years, the Secretary should conduct a comprehensive review of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

The review should evaluate:

- Overall program effectiveness.
- Adequacy of the National Interest Index Framework.
- Effectiveness of Corridor Management Plans.
- Coordination among participating agencies.
- Emerging national priorities.
- Infrastructure resilience.
- Long-term maintenance and operational needs.
- Opportunities to improve implementation guidance.

The findings of each review should inform future revisions to program guidance and support continuous improvement of the Program.

Independent Evaluation

The Secretary may request periodic independent evaluations by qualified public or private organizations to assess the effectiveness of the Program and identify opportunities for improvement.

Independent evaluations may examine:

- Program administration.
- Technical guidance.
- Evaluation methodologies.
- Governance practices.
- Interagency coordination.
- Long-term infrastructure outcomes.
- Cost-effectiveness.
- National strategic benefits.

Independent assessments can provide valuable perspectives while strengthening public confidence in the Program.

Data Management and Transparency

Effective oversight depends upon reliable, consistent, and accessible information. The Federal Highway Administration should maintain appropriate data management practices that support program administration while respecting applicable security, privacy, and confidentiality requirements.

Where appropriate, program information should be made publicly available to encourage transparency, facilitate research, and support informed decision-making by Federal, State, Tribal, local, academic, and private-sector partners.

Information that could compromise national security, critical infrastructure protection, or other protected interests should be managed in accordance with applicable Federal law and policy.

Continuous Improvement

Transportation systems, national priorities, and infrastructure technologies continually evolve. Accordingly, the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should incorporate a process of continuous improvement through regular review of program guidance, technical methodologies, and implementation practices.

Lessons learned from designated corridors, advances in engineering and transportation technology, stakeholder feedback, and changing national priorities should be considered when updating the National Interest Index Framework, Corridor Management Plan guidance, and other program documents.

This adaptive approach ensures that the Program remains effective, relevant, and responsive over time while preserving consistency and transparency in its administration.

Conclusion

Program oversight is essential to ensuring that the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program remains accountable, effective, and responsive to the Nation's evolving transportation needs. Through regular performance monitoring, transparent reporting, comprehensive periodic reviews, and continuous collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private-sector partners, the Program can maintain the long-term stewardship necessary to support infrastructure of exceptional national significance.

The oversight framework established in this appendix is intended to promote informed decision-making, responsible investment, and continuous improvement while preserving the flexibility needed to address future challenges and opportunities. In doing so, it reinforces the Program's central objective: ensuring that transportation corridors critical to national defense, energy security, economic resilience, emergency preparedness, and strategic resource development remain safe, reliable, and capable of serving the Nation for generations to come.

D-13 Research, Innovation, and Technology Integration

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should encourage the continuous advancement of transportation planning, engineering, asset management, and operational practices through research, innovation, and the responsible integration of emerging technologies. As infrastructure systems become increasingly complex and national strategic priorities evolve, the adoption of new tools and methodologies will be essential to maintaining safe, resilient, and efficient transportation corridors.

Research conducted under the Program should complement existing Federal and State transportation research initiatives while addressing the unique planning, operational, and maintenance challenges associated with nationally significant transportation corridors.

Research Priorities

Research efforts should focus on improving the long-term performance and resilience of designated corridors. Areas of emphasis may include infrastructure preservation and lifecycle asset management, transportation system resilience to natural hazards and climate-related

impacts, permafrost degradation, coastal erosion, flooding, landslides, and other geotechnical challenges, freight mobility and logistics optimization, advanced pavement, bridge, and structural engineering technologies, emergency response and continuity of operations, strategic corridor planning methodologies, and emerging transportation technologies and infrastructure modernization.

Research priorities should be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain aligned with evolving national transportation, economic, energy, and defense objectives.

Innovation and Technology

The Program should encourage the evaluation and implementation of technologies that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of strategic transportation corridors.

Examples include Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), remote infrastructure monitoring, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), unmanned aerial systems for infrastructure inspection, artificial intelligence and machine learning applications, predictive maintenance technologies, digital twins and advanced modeling, real-time weather and roadway monitoring systems, and advanced traffic and freight management technologies.

Technology deployment should be based upon demonstrated effectiveness, operational suitability, and long-term value.

Data Collection and Analysis

Effective transportation planning depends upon reliable and timely information. Participating agencies should promote the collection, management, and analysis of data necessary to support National Interest Evaluations, Corridor Management Plans, Future Demand Assessments, and performance monitoring.

Data sources may include transportation operations, infrastructure condition assessments, freight movement, environmental monitoring, economic activity, demographic trends, and other relevant information. Agencies should seek to improve data quality, interoperability, and information sharing while protecting sensitive or proprietary information in accordance with applicable law.

Pilot Programs

The Secretary may encourage pilot projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to corridor planning, infrastructure management, maintenance operations, resilience, and emerging transportation technologies.

Pilot programs provide opportunities to evaluate new concepts under real-world conditions, identify best practices, and inform future program guidance before broader implementation.

Lessons learned from pilot projects should be documented and made available to participating agencies whenever practicable.

Knowledge Sharing

The Federal Highway Administration should facilitate the exchange of technical information and best practices among participating agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, local governments, academic institutions, and private-sector partners.

Knowledge sharing may include technical workshops, research publications, training programs, conferences, peer exchanges, and other collaborative activities designed to improve transportation planning and corridor management nationwide.

Conclusion

Research, innovation, and technology are fundamental to the long-term success of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. By encouraging continuous learning, supporting applied research, and promoting the responsible adoption of emerging technologies, the Program can improve infrastructure performance, strengthen resilience, and enhance the Nation’s ability to respond to future transportation challenges. This commitment to innovation ensures that designated corridors remain capable of supporting national priorities in an increasingly dynamic operational environment.

D-14 Continuous Improvement

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program should be administered as an adaptive, continuously evolving framework capable of responding to changing national priorities, transportation demands, technological advancements, and infrastructure conditions. Continuous improvement is intended to ensure that the Program remains effective, transparent, and relevant over time while preserving consistency in its fundamental objectives and implementation principles.

Rather than relying upon static policies or one-time evaluations, the Program should encourage periodic review, performance assessment, stakeholder engagement, and refinement of guidance documents based on experience and emerging knowledge.

Adaptive Management

Adaptive management recognizes that transportation systems and the national interests they support will continue to evolve. Designated corridors should therefore be managed using an iterative process that incorporates monitoring, evaluation, implementation, and periodic adjustment.

Program guidance, evaluation methodologies, and Corridor Management Plans should be updated when appropriate to reflect changes in infrastructure conditions, transportation technologies, economic activity, national security priorities, environmental conditions, or other significant factors.

Lessons Learned

Participating agencies should document and share lessons learned from corridor planning, infrastructure investment, maintenance operations, emergency response, and resilience initiatives.

These experiences should be used to improve future National Interest Evaluations, Corridor Management Plans, technical guidance, and administrative procedures while encouraging consistent application of successful practices across the Program.

Stakeholder Feedback

Continuous improvement should incorporate meaningful input from participating Federal agencies, State Departments of Transportation, Tribal governments, local governments, industry representatives, academic institutions, and the public.

Stakeholder feedback provides valuable perspectives regarding program implementation, operational effectiveness, emerging challenges, and opportunities for improvement. The Secretary should establish appropriate mechanisms for receiving and considering such input during periodic program reviews.

Guidance Updates

The Secretary, acting through the Federal Highway Administration, should periodically review and revise program guidance as necessary to reflect advances in transportation planning, engineering, resilience, data analytics, and infrastructure management.

Updates should be developed through a transparent process that encourages collaboration among participating agencies and stakeholders while maintaining consistency with the statutory objectives of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program.

Long-Term Stewardship

Continuous improvement supports the Program’s broader commitment to long-term stewardship of transportation infrastructure serving the national interest. By regularly evaluating program performance and incorporating new knowledge into planning and management practices,

participating agencies can improve infrastructure reliability, maximize public investment, and enhance the Nation’s long-term transportation resilience.

Conclusion

The National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program is intended to remain a living framework that evolves alongside the Nation’s transportation system and strategic priorities. Through adaptive management, periodic review, stakeholder collaboration, and ongoing refinement of technical guidance, the Program can continue to provide an effective foundation for identifying, managing, and preserving transportation corridors of exceptional national significance.

This commitment to continuous improvement reinforces the Program’s core principles of accountability, transparency, innovation, and long-term stewardship, ensuring that designated corridors remain capable of supporting national defense, energy security, economic resilience, emergency preparedness, and future infrastructure needs for generations to come.

D-15 Conclusion

Effective stewardship of nationally significant transportation corridors depends not only on sound engineering and adequate investment, but also on clear governance, defined responsibilities, and sustained collaboration among all levels of government and the private sector.

The governance framework established in this appendix preserves the proven Federal-State partnership that has guided American transportation policy for decades while providing a practical structure for coordinating transportation planning with national defense, energy security, critical mineral development, emergency preparedness, economic resilience, and Arctic strategy.

Together with the preceding appendices, this governance framework completes the operational foundation of the National Strategic Infrastructure Corridor Program. It ensures that corridor designation, evaluation, planning, implementation, and performance management function as an integrated system capable of adapting to evolving national priorities while maintaining transparency, accountability, and long-term stewardship.