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June 18, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

The unincorporated area of Pender County adjacent to Surf City serves as the gateway to Topsail Island (Surf City/Topsail Beach). This area consists of two primary routes that lead to the popular beach and tourist area being NC 210 and NC 50. Outside of these primary routes, there are no secondary roadways that are maintained by either the North Carolina Department of Transportation or municipal entity to provide congestion relief for traffic, either generated through tourism or year-round residents. Also, other service delivery may be impacted including response times for emergency personnel on and off the Island.

Development in Surf City and unincorporated Pender County in the Topsail Township is expected to continue its rapid pace in the near future. Between 2000 and 2010, the population in the Topsail Township grew by 53%, which includes Surf City and unincorporated areas along US 17.

While there are several recommended roadway projects proposed at the State-level through the prioritization process, these projects are rather large in size and have not seen favorable scores for recommended funding. These include intersection improvements at US 17 and NC 210, NC 210 and Watt's Landing Road (SR 1560), NC 210 and NC 50, and a widening project from US 17 to NC 50 to bring NC 210 to a four-lane roadway. While these projects are needed, they will not bring any immediate relief to the congestion in this area, particularly during the seasonal months.

Over the last several years, traffic has sought out alternative routes to avoid or reduce their travel time going to Topsail Island. Several private roads that are maintained solely through homeowner's associations have not been able to address or keep up with the traveling public utilizing them for these alternative purposes. A majority of them are still un-paved. This has led to a burden relating to maintenance as well as safety of the residents and motorists attempting to use these routes. Specifically, the route from NC 210 utilizing Cedar Ave, Landing Dr, Driftwood Dr, Spot Ln (municipal), to Little Kinston Rd (municipal) back to NC 50 at the foot of the Surf City Bridge.

As an alternative route to access the Island, Pender County feels that this could be a benefit for the existing citizens as well as the general public as a strategic collector street to reduce a portion of the burden along the existing NC routes in the area. Pender County is respectfully requesting the attention of our State Legislators as well as NCDOT to seek a solution to this long-term issue to benefit the region and assure a safe and efficient transportation system.

Sincerely,

George Brown, Chairman  
Pender County Board of Commissioner

