NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Transportation

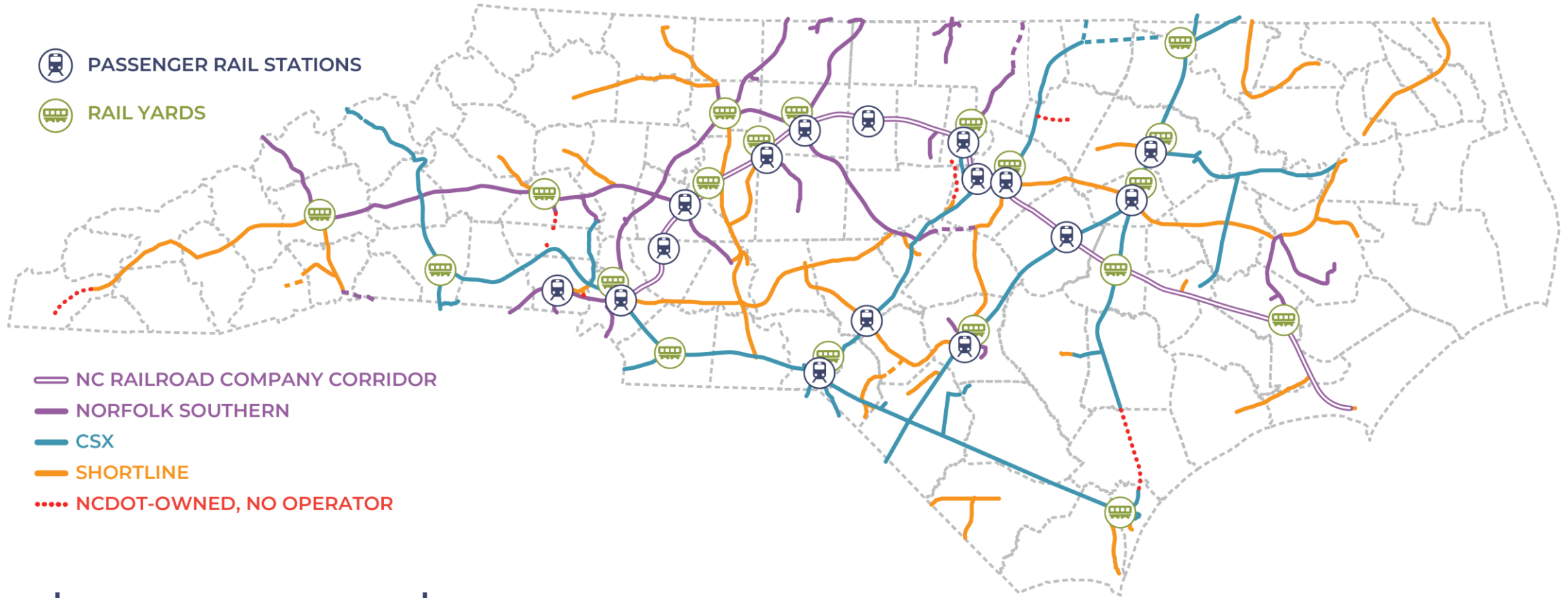# Growing Passenger Rail in North Carolina

Jason S. Myers

Rail Programs Manager

February 15, 2024

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

The Economic Impact of Rail

PASSENGER RAIL STATIONS

RAIL YARDS

NC RAILROAD COMPANY CORRIDOR

NORFOLK SOUTHERN

CSX

SHORTLINE

NCDOT-OWNED, NO OPERATOR

$20+ Billion
Annual Statewide
Economic Output

$990 Million
State & Local Tax
Revenue Supported
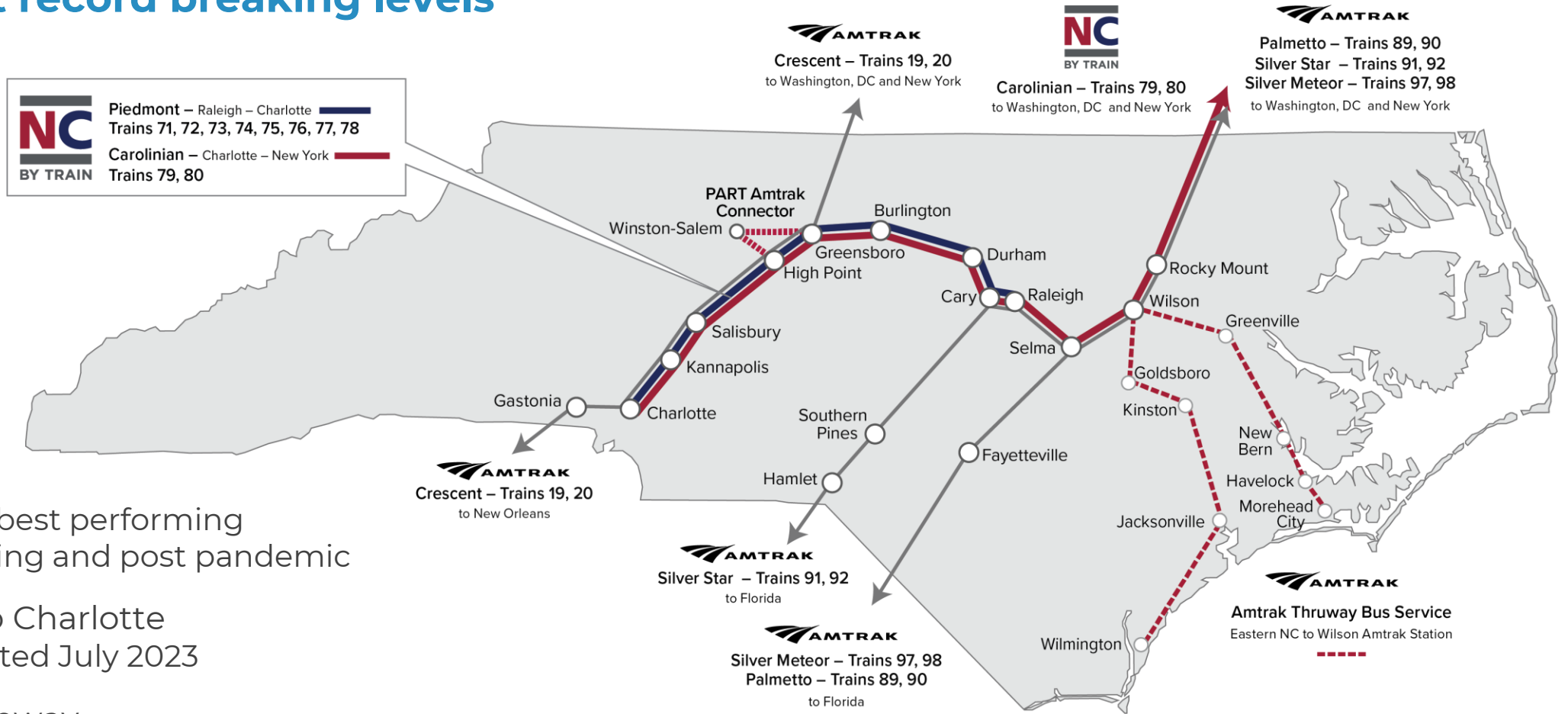
88,000
Jobs Supported
by Rail

860
Businesses Loading
Directly onto Rail

116
Rail Industry
Businesses

Source: ITRE analysis utilizing IMPLAN® model

NC Intercity Passenger Rail Service

## Ridership at record breaking levels

- NC By Train
  - Among the best performing services during and post pandemic

- 5th Raleigh to Charlotte round-trip started July 2023

- Charlotte Gateway Station target 2028 opening

NC BY TRAIN
Piedmont – Raleigh – Charlotte
Trains 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78
Carolinian – Charlotte – New York
Trains 79, 80

AMTRAK
Crescent – Trains 19, 20
to Washington, DC and New York

NC BY TRAIN
Carolinian – Trains 79, 80
to Washington, DC and New York

AMTRAK
Palmetto – Trains 89, 90
Silver Star – Trains 91, 92
Silver Meteor – Trains 97, 98
to Washington, DC and New York

PART Amtrak Connector
Winston-Salem
Burlington
Greensboro
High Point
Durham
Cary
Raleigh
Rocky Mount
Wilson
Greenville
Salisbury
Selma
Kannapolis
Goldsboro
Gastonia
Southern Pines
Kinston
Charlotte
New Bern
Fayetteville
Havelock
Hamlet
Morehead City
Jacksonville
Wilmington

AMTRAK
Crescent – Trains 19, 20
to New Orleans

AMTRAK
Silver Star – Trains 91, 92
to Florida

AMTRAK
Silver Meteor – Trains 97, 98
Palmetto – Trains 89, 90
to Florida

AMTRAK
Amtrak Thruway Bus Service
Eastern NC to Wilson Amtrak Station

ncdot.gov

NC Intercity Passenger Rail Service –
Amtrak Piedmont and Carolinian services
Highest ridership in 33-year history

38% ridership growth over 2019 pre-pandemic levels

641,000

522,550

463,808

431,148

362,191

179,777

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023
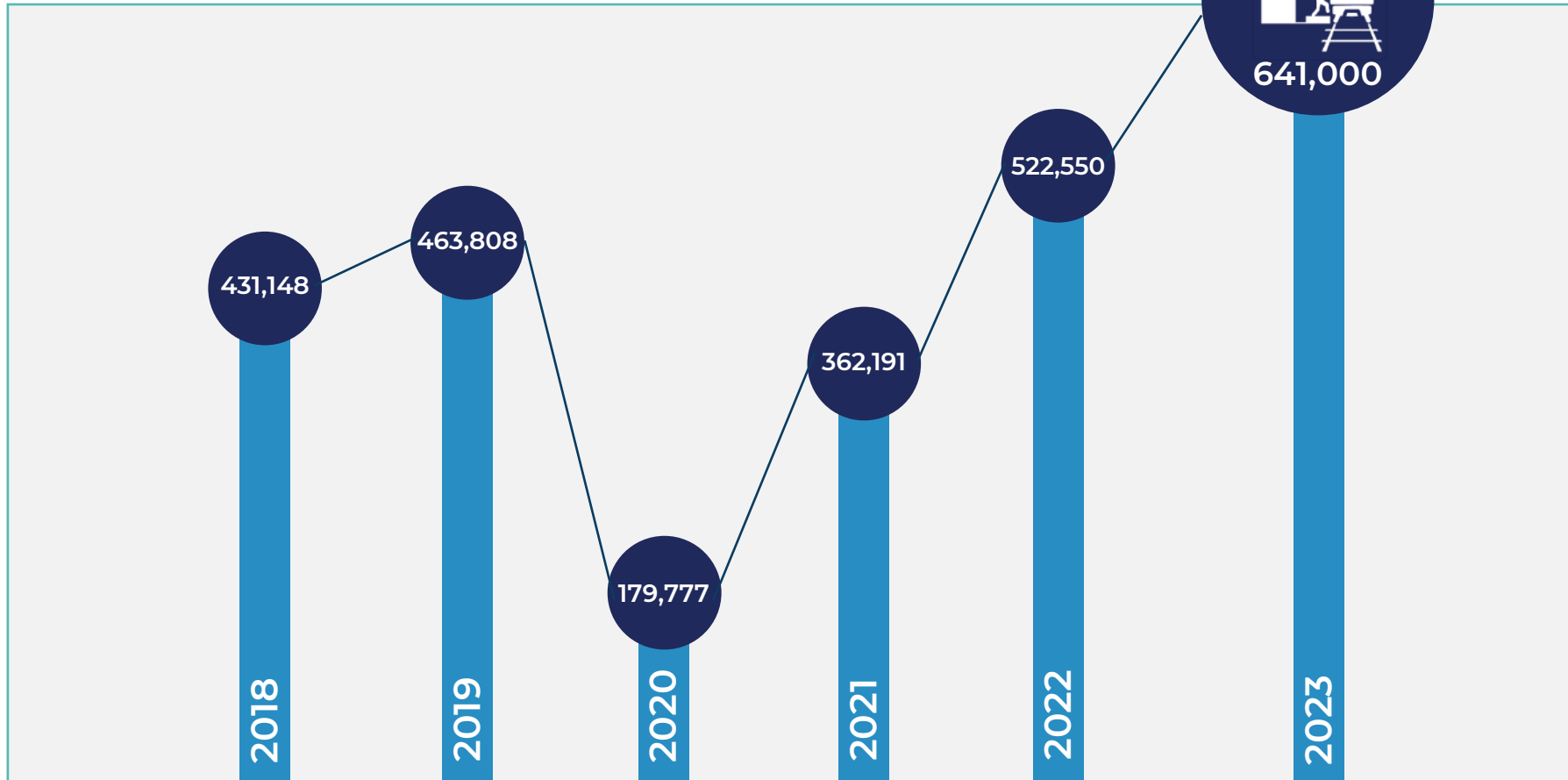
Bringing Passenger Rail back to Western North Carolina

Asheville to Salisbury Corridor

- **The Study Estimates:**
  - High Level Capital Cost
  - Approximate Trip Time
  - Ridership Projection

- **Preliminary Service Model:**
  - Three Round Trips per day
  - Departures in morning, mid-day, and afternoon/evening
  - Connect to SE Corridor Service in Salisbury (Piedmont/Carolinian)

Western North Carolina Passenger Rail Feasibility Study

December 2023

Created for NCDOT Rail Division by WGI, Inc

NC Corridor ID Program
Seven Corridors Awarded

- ✓ **Charlotte to Washington, DC**
- ✓ **Salisbury to Asheville**
- ✓ **Raleigh to Wilmington**
- ✓ **Charlotte to Kings Mountain**
- ✓ **Raleigh to Fayetteville**
- ✓ **Raleigh to Winston-Salem**
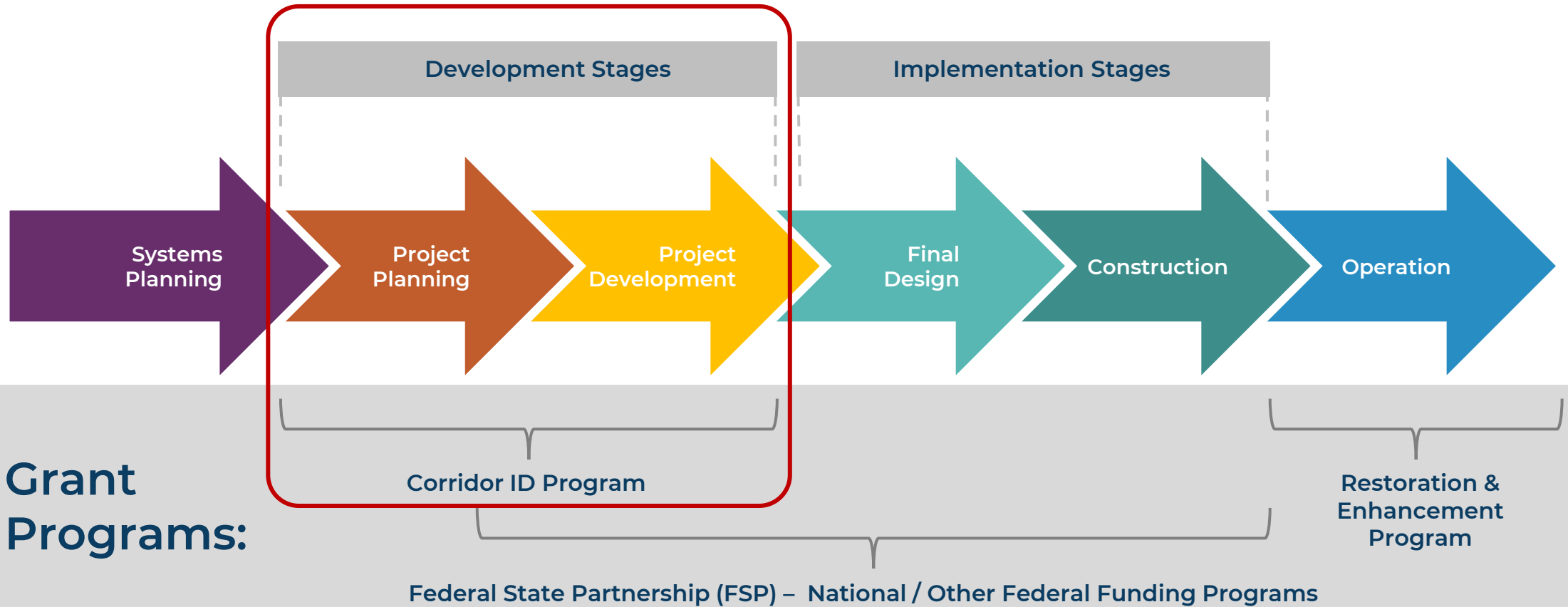- ✓ **Charlotte to Atlanta**

Future CID Applications:

- • **Raleigh to Greenville**
- • **Raleigh to Hamlet**
- • **Raleigh to Morehead City**
- • **Winston-Salem to Charlotte**
- • **Raleigh to Weldon**
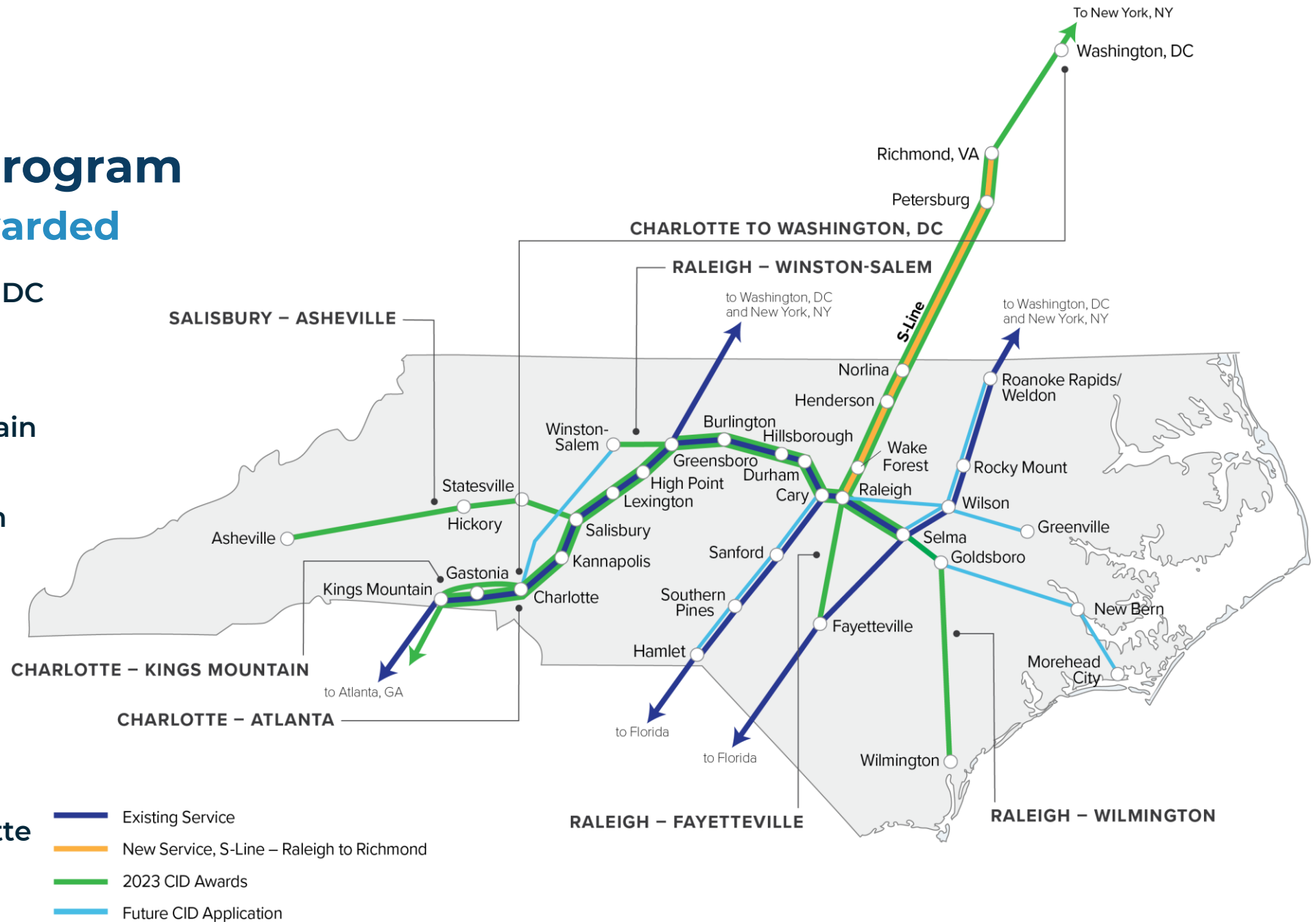
6

Corridor ID Process

Development Stages

Each Step will have a separate grant agreement
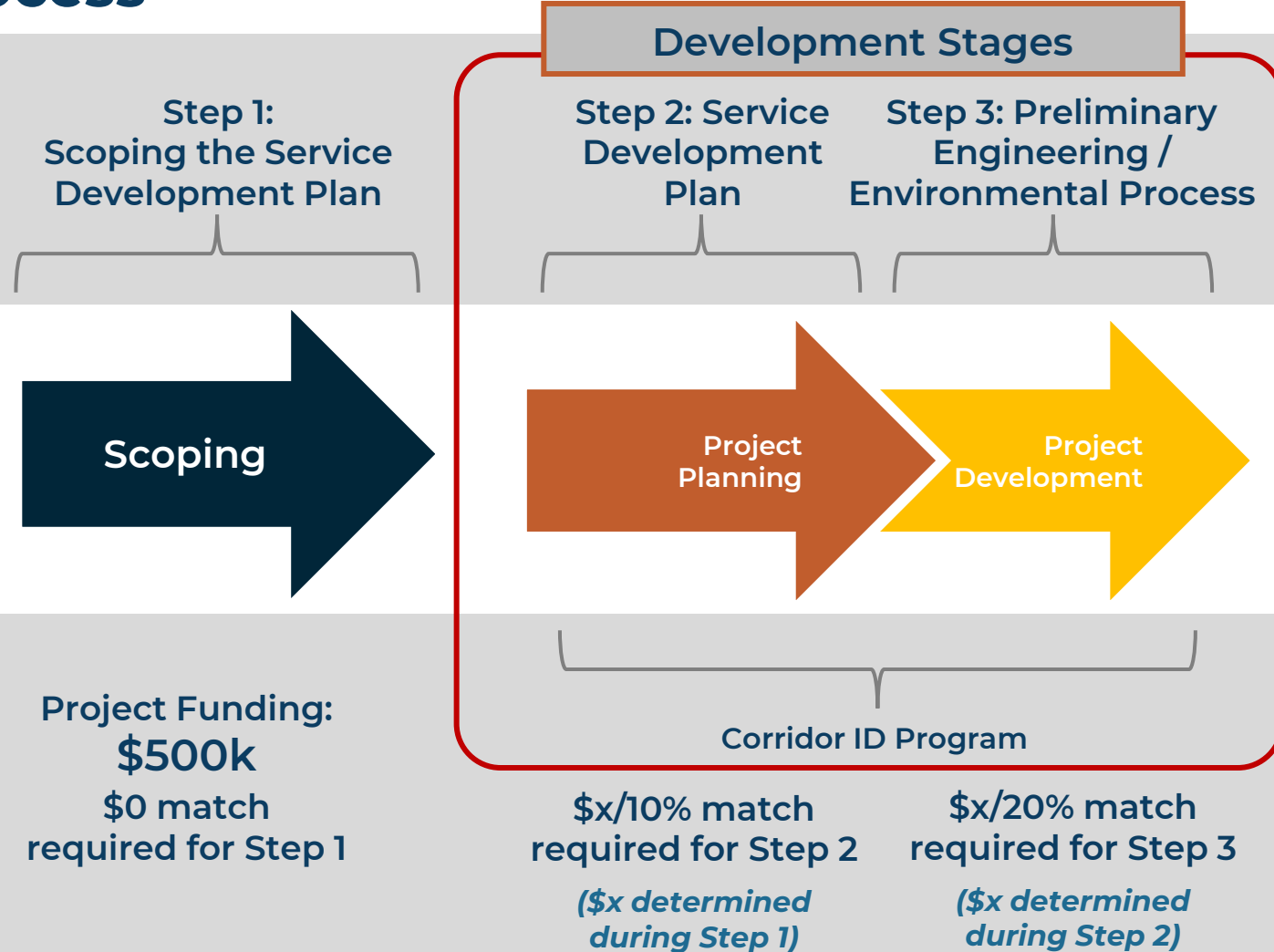
Step 1:
Scoping the Service Development Plan

Step 2: Service Development Plan

Step 3: Preliminary Engineering / Environmental Process

Scoping

Project Planning

Project Development

Corridor ID Program

Project Funding:
$500k

$0 match required for Step 1

$x/10% match required for Step 2

($x determined during Step 1)

$x/20% match required for Step 3

($x determined during Step 2)

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
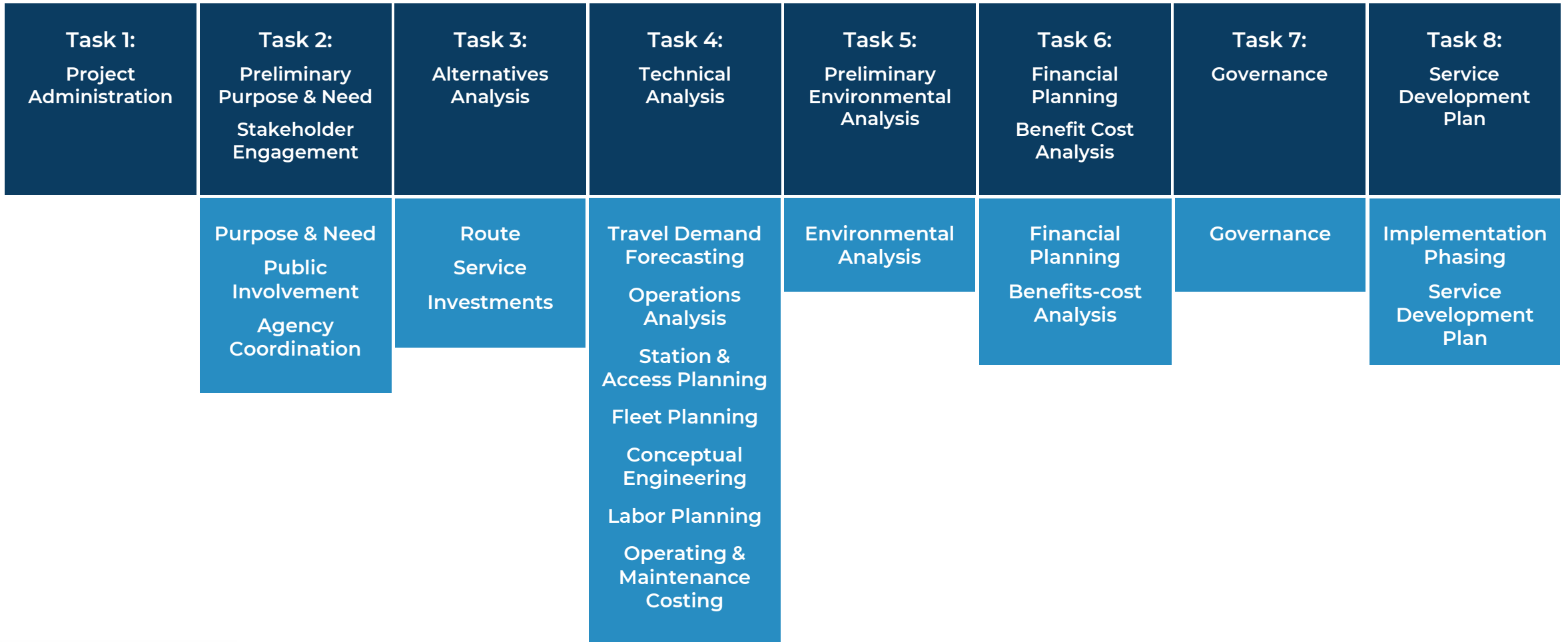
Service Development Plan (SDP) Outcomes

Results of Study

Operational Plans for how service works

List of projects that must be built

Feeds the next steps for NEPA

List of projects and cost estimates

Thank you!

Jason S. Myers

jsmyers1@ncdot.gov

919-707-4739

🖥 **ncdot.gov**

𝕏 @NCDOT   📷 ncdotcom   ▶ NCDOTcommunications   🧵 ncdotcom

f @NCDOT   in NCDOT   ⚫⚫ NCDOTcommunications   ☰ View All Channels