



U.S. 1 / Capital Blvd. North Upgrades – Tolling Option

Public Engagement Preliminary Results

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) has pursued converting the U.S. 1 (Capital Blvd) North Corridor to a freeway for several decades. To address continued project delays and cost escalations, in 2024, CAMPO partnered with the N.C. Turnpike Authority (NCTA) to investigate alternative and innovative methods to complete this project.

At the March 2025 Executive Board Meeting, NCTA presented their study findings regarding four (4) potential tolling scenarios which looked at a mix of elements from the type of tolling infrastructure - expressway and express lanes, to financing, such as delivering the upgrades project as part of the Triangle Expressway System. The Executive Board directed CAMPO staff to engage the public on the scenarios to help inform the Executive Board. Public engagement activities, including a public comment period, occurred from April 7th to May 14th. This included an educational website, online survey, in-person public information sessions, supported by a variety of outreach mechanisms targeted to users and residents along the corridor.

Engagement Performance & Analysis

There were approximately 3,680 participants in the online survey and over 1,750 written comments. The in-person information sessions in Raleigh and Wake Forest had over 180 public attendees. The public comments have been compiled and preliminarily analyzed by CAMPO staff and through Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT (Model o3 for advanced reasoning). The use of LLMs was used to increase the efficiency of data processing. CAMPO staff conducted quality assurance on the data processing by repeating several of the analyses manually.

The following provides a preliminary synthesis of the public input received.

Overall Take-Aways:

1. **Affordability is the starting point.** Whether people favor or oppose tolling, the *price* of using U.S. 1 is the first thing they consider. If tolling is pursued as a project delivery method, public education on toll schedules, discounts, and how revenue is reinvested will be essential.
2. **Congestion relief is still the end-goal.** Even many toll skeptics commented that “something has to be done” to address existing delays. Messaging that links funding choice (tolls vs. traditional) to how fast congestion can be reduced resonates.
3. **Secondary impacts—diversion & local access—must be addressed up front.** Traffic modeling, mitigation plans for key cut-through routes, and a frontage-road continuity strategy will directly address the # 3 and # 4 concerns.
4. **A minority sees tolling as an acceptable trade-off.** About one comment in ten explicitly endorses tolls **if** they accelerate construction or fund managed lanes. This suggests room for a balanced narrative rather than an all-or-nothing debate.
5. **Requests for multimodal and environmental considerations, while not dominant, are consistent.** If tolling is pursued, integrating transit commitments, bike/ped crossings, and environmental mitigation should be given strong consideration in future planning.

Top Three Concerns from Comments:

Local trips becoming a pay to use system would burden residents going to schools, churches, shopping, and more. For many years U.S. 1 has been a local road and residents are concerned about how tolling will impact their usual trips.

Tolls on U.S. 1 will increase traffic on alternate routes like Falls of Neuse Road and Ligon Mill Road; lack of confidence in trip time savings on U.S. 1 and diversionary analysis for impacts to non-tolled alternate routes.

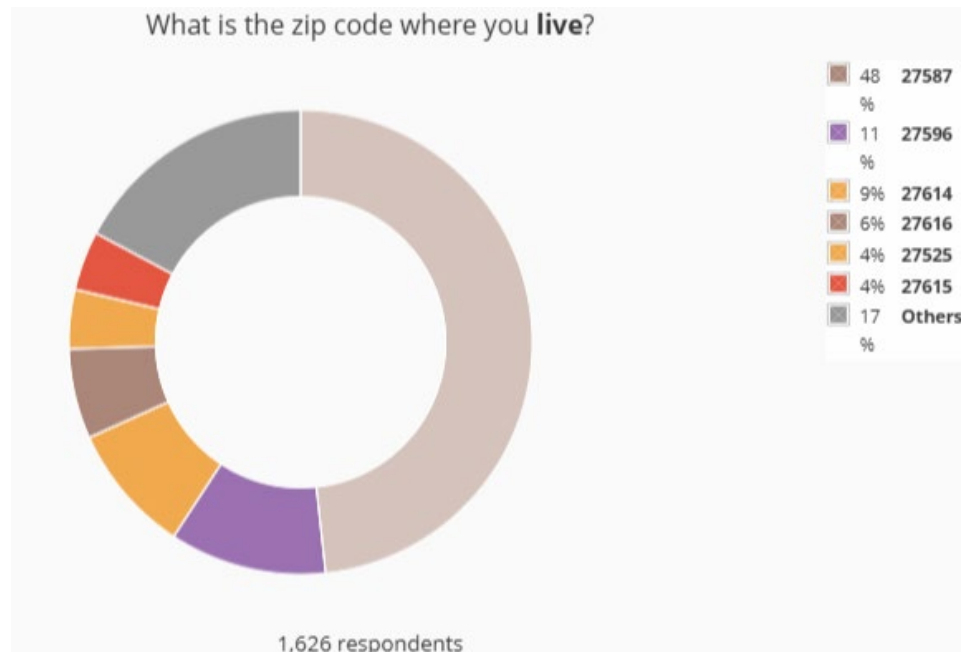
Length of time tolls will be in place; how the money is utilized, and the entity operating the tolls. Many have stated concerns about outside entities being involved in the tolling infrastructure.

Online Survey Results

Respondent Characteristics

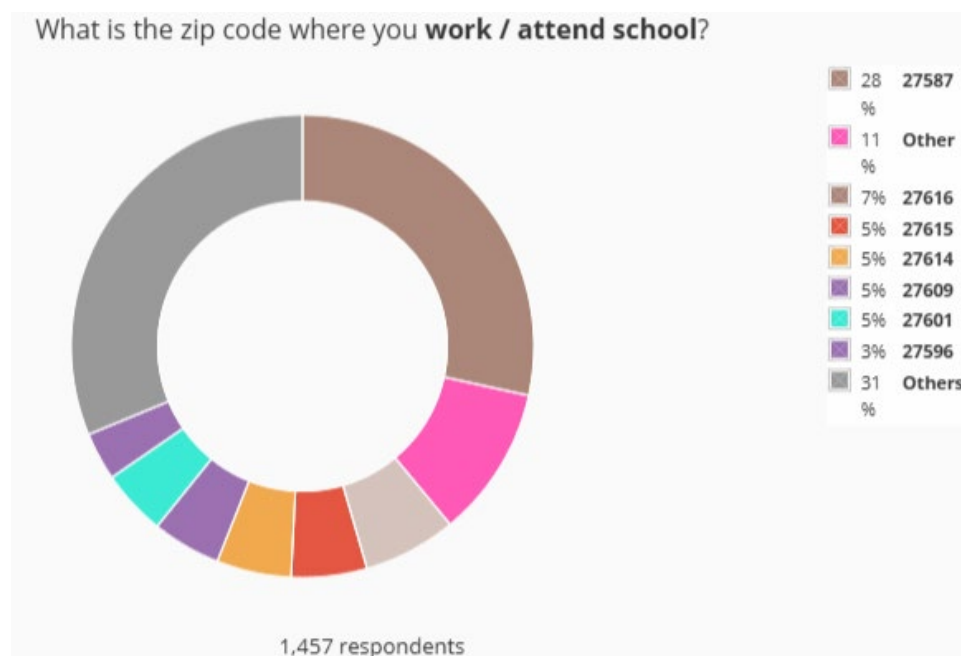
Among persons who responded to the demographic questions at the end of the survey, most report living in the U.S. 1 Corridor area.

What is the zip code where you *live*?



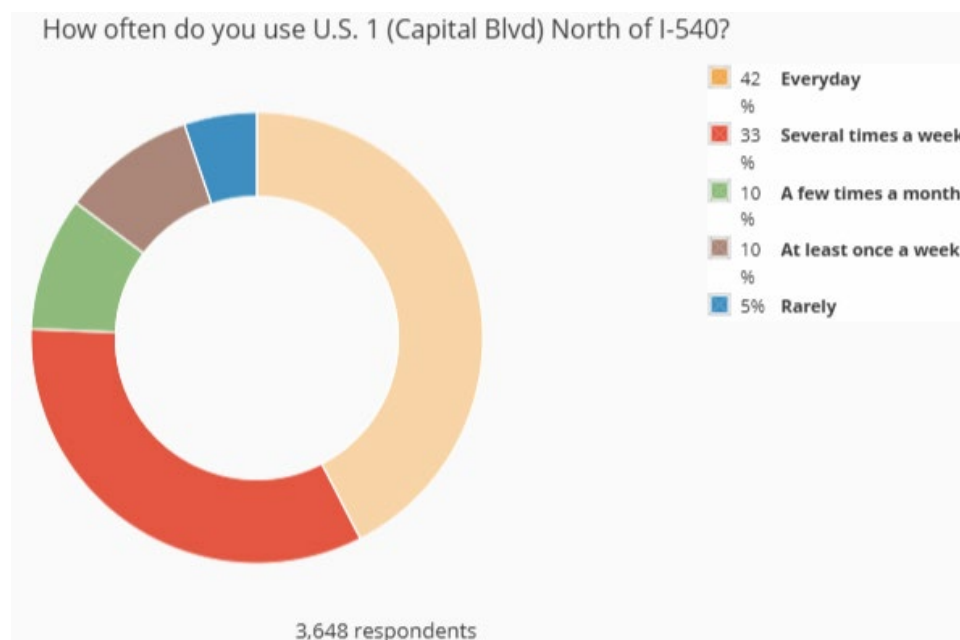
27587 = Wake Forest and areas west
27596 = Youngsville area
27614 = Raleigh north of I-540 – west of U.S. 1
27616 = Raleigh north of I-540 – east of U.S. 1

What is the zip code where you *work/attend school*?



**Maps of zip codes and responses attached to end of summary*

How often do you use U.S. 1 (Capital Blvd) North of I-540?



Most Important Factors to Consider

Survey participants were asked to rank the most important factors to consider in determining a path forward for the project. In the image below, each factor was given a “Rank score” – **the lower the score is, the higher that factor was ranked** among the 2,400 respondents for this question.

What are the **most important factors** that should be considered when determining a path forward for the U.S. 1 Upgrades project?

80%	Cost to Users (Toll Price)	Rank: 2.62	1929 ✓
77%	Reducing U.S. 1 (Capital Blvd) Congestion	Rank: 2.69	1846 ✓
79%	Impacts to Congestion on Nearby Roads	Rank: 2.76	1894 ✓
69%	Current and Projected Growth along the Corridor	Rank: 3.72	1664 ✓
67%	Timely Project Delivery	Rank: 4.29	1606 ✓
64%	Cost of Overall Project	Rank: 4.66	1549 ✓
61%	Air Quality & Environmental Impacts	Rank: 5.36	1455 ✓
19%	Other	Rank: 5.70	456 ✓

2,403 Respondents

Ranking differences across user type

1. Everyday users (1,548 respondents)

Rank	Item (lower avg weight = higher priority)	Avg. weight
1	Cost to Users (Toll Price)	2.28
2	Reducing Capital Blvd. congestion	2.71
3	Congestion on nearby roads	2.72

Daily users (likely commuters) prioritize what they'll pay first, then congestion.

2. Several times a week (1,211)

Rank	Item (lower avg weight = higher priority)	Avg. weight
1	Reducing Capital Blvd congestion	2.62
2	Congestion on nearby roads	2.70
3	Cost to Users	2.71

Frequent—but not daily—users put congestion slightly ahead of toll price, though all three top factors sit within a narrow band.

3. At least once a week (349)

Rank	Item (lower avg weight = higher priority)	Avg. weight
1	Nearby-road congestion	2.70
2	Capital Blvd congestion	2.76
3	Cost to Users	2.92

Weekly users prioritize impacts to nearby roads, then mainline delay, then cost to users.

4. A few times a month (350)

Rank	Item (lower avg weight = higher priority)	Avg. weight
1	Capital Blvd congestion	2.67
2	Nearby-road congestion	2.93
3	Cost to Users	3.09

Infrequent users prioritize congestion first; cost slips to third.

5. Rarely (190)

Rank	Item (lower avg weight = higher priority)	Avg. weight
1	Capital Blvd congestion	3.16
2	Nearby-road congestion	3.36
3	Cost to Users	3.52

Those who seldom use the corridor give all factors lower priority, but congestion remains their top concern.

Key Takeaways

- **Cost sensitivity rises with frequency of use.** Daily users rank toll price #1; by contrast, rare users place it third.
- **Congestion relief is universally high—but its exact form varies.** Frequent users emphasize mainline flow; weekly users focus on spill-over to nearby roads.

Comments

Overall, 1,542 comments that were received. Based on CAMPO staff analysis as described above, several trends appear.

Of the 888 comments opposed to tolling, 151 stated opposition for reasons related to negative impacts on businesses/schools/properties that currently have access to the U.S. 1 Corridor. The U.S. 1 Upgrades project will convert the roadway to a freeway and the design, includes the construction of service roads on both sides of U.S. 1. These parallel service roads will provide access to businesses/schools/properties that would lose access due to the upgrade to freeway. In all cases these access roads would never be tolled, allowing residents to continue free local travel to meet daily needs.

"It does not seem fair to charge a toll to residents who have no option to not use any stretch of US 1 because of where they live. This is not a normal highway - people, myself included, live directly off of Cap1 & unless there is a caveat that's not been explained, then these residence shouldn't be forced into something they can't afford."

"Our neighborhood exits onto Capital. Essentially every single car trip we take involves some amount of Capital boulevard. A toll road could be a huge financial burden to us."

The 256 comments indicating direct support for tolling further breaks down to 75 specifically requesting 'Express Lanes' and 21 specifically requesting 'Expressways'.

"I am in favor of toll road with local access roads and 1-2 lanes in each direction be "express lanes" with higher toll."

"For those of us in Wake Forest, we would absolutely be willing to pay a toll to have a full expressway to 540."

There is broad agreement that the growing congestion on U.S. 1 is a problem that needs to be addressed. This is seen in both the free response question and survey ranking question, with 342 comments and 1,800+ survey respondents highlighting congestion as highly important. Often comments in opposition to tolls acknowledge that congestion needs to be addressed.

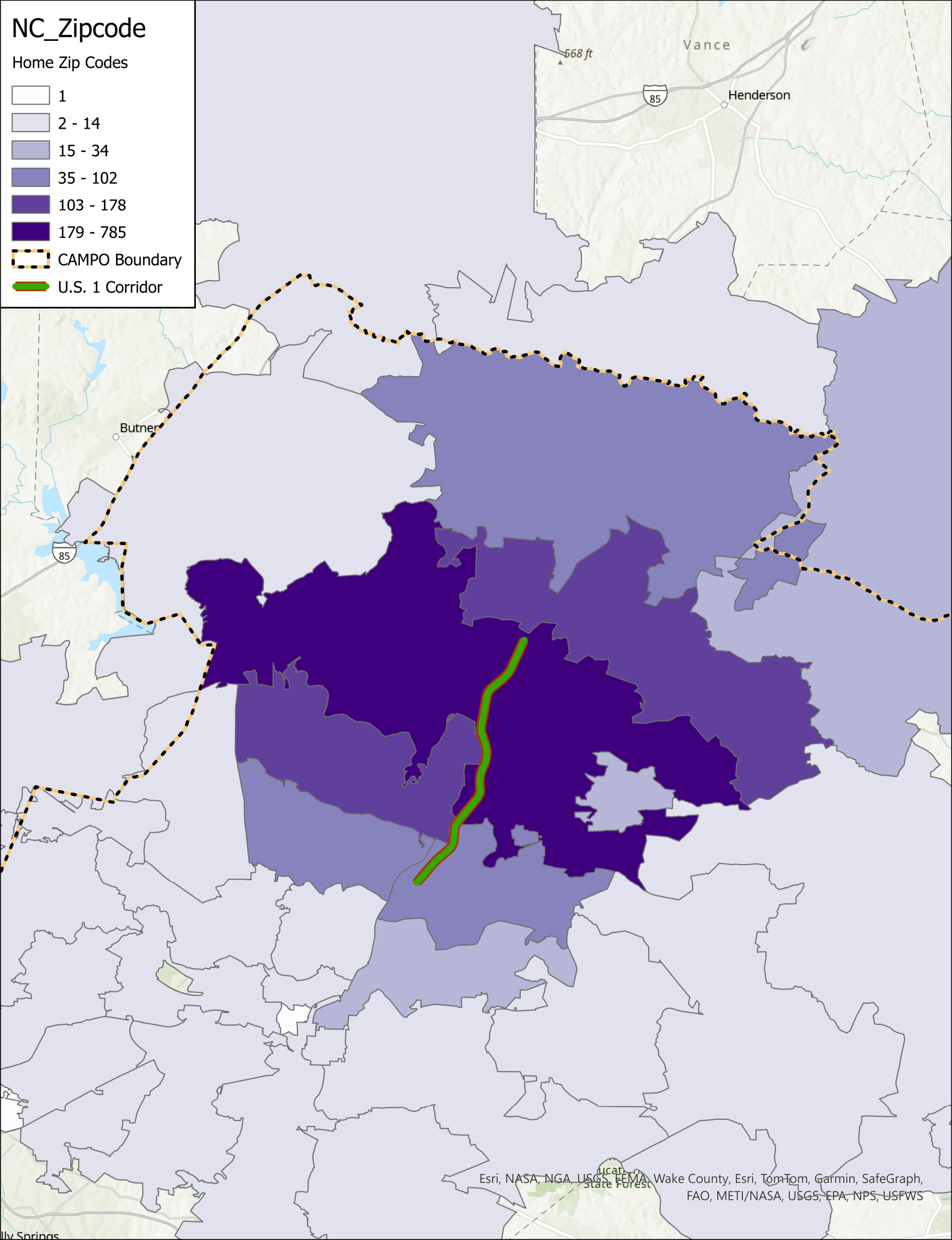
"I do not want a toll, I'd prefer first expanding to us1 to being 6 lanes all the way from 540 to 98. Currently some sections are 6 lanes but others are only 2, creating a bottle neck. Make the intersections you can a freeway with on/off ramps as you can without tolling."

"Congestion on this road is so bad, especially between Durant and Burlington Mills. Why can't they add lanes without worrying about making it a toll road? If it becomes a toll road, other routes will also become overcrowded as this just happened when Lihon Mill was closed."

NC_Zipcode

Home Zip Codes

- 1
- 2 - 14
- 15 - 34
- 35 - 102
- 103 - 178
- 179 - 785
- CAMPO Boundary
- U.S. 1 Corridor



NC_Zipcode

Work/School Zip Codes

1

2 - 13

14 - 26

27 - 49

50 - 95

96 - 414

CAMPO Boundary

U.S. 1 Corridor

