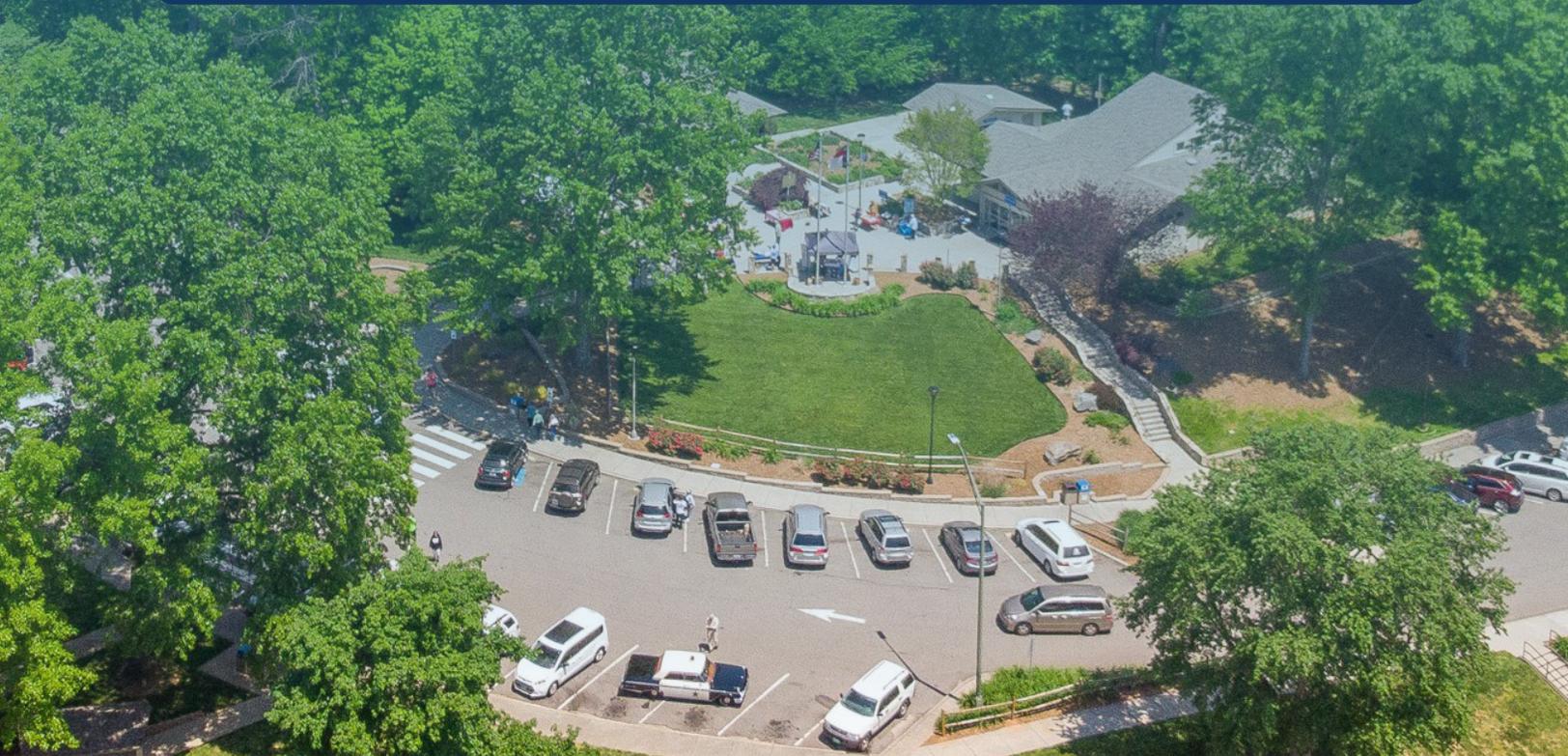


REST

Rest area Expansion for Safe Transportation

➤ Merit Criteria



**FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments
to Leverage Development (BUILD)**

GRANT APPLICATION
FEBRUARY 2026



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Application + Supplemental Materials: <https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/BUILD2026-I77Surry/Pages/default.aspx>



Merit Criteria

BUILD Merit Criteria	How REST Meets High Rating
 Safety	<p>Expands freight truck parking to reduce the risk of crashes from driver fatigue, parking on shoulders and exit ramps, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from drivers searching for scarce parking while improving NCDOT’s ability to monitor the I-77 corridor for crashes and dangerous weather conditions.</p>
 Environmental Sustainability	<p>Invests in resilient solutions by constructing stormwater control measures to protect regional water quality and installing standby power generators to protect public safety and continuity of operations.</p>
 Quality of Life	<p>Creates a modernized Welcome Center facility that improves user experience by consolidating functions into a more operationally efficient building, implementing a shorter and safer walk from bus, RV, and truck parking, and improving the travel experience for the disabled and traveling families with improved restroom facilities and stroller accommodations.</p>
 Mobility and Community Connectivity	<p>Enhances mobility and accessibility by incorporating Universal Design elements, shortening walking distances between parking areas and rest area amenities, and reducing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles to better serve families and disabled travelers.</p>
 Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity	<p>Promotes economic growth and supports tourism by expanding access to safe truck parking and modernizing one of North Carolina’s (NC’s) most heavily traveled welcome centers.</p>
 State of Good Repair	<p>Restores a core infrastructure asset in a remote part of NC to a state of good repair and reduces maintenance burdens by constructing a more efficient building, expanding heavy-duty vehicle parking, and reconstructing shoulders to support future emergency parking.</p>
 Partnership and Collaboration	<p>Partners with the NC Department of Commerce (NCDOC) and other agencies alongside stakeholder groups to engage local residents, regional travelers, and freight truck drivers with both in-person and virtual engagement opportunities.</p>
 Innovation	<p>Implements a Truck Parking Information Management System (TPIMS) and expands the State’s network of traffic cameras to monitor real-time conditions and support more efficient freight operating practices.</p> <p>Streamlines project delivery through the use of a Programmatic Agreement and business practices that promote timely decision-making and accountability.</p>



Safety

Over the 20-year analysis period, the Project’s expansion of State’s Traffic Information Management System (TIMS) and expanded freight truck parking is expected to result in a reduction of **1,050 crashes** over 20 years, equating to a reduction of **3.7 million miles** in freight truck vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and total benefits of **\$25.5 million**.

Challenge: Inadequate Freight Truck Parking

Inadequate truck parking is a significant regional challenge (see **Project Description**). When freight truck drivers cannot find parking, it increases unsafe behaviors that increase crash risk and undermine compliance with federal and state regulations. Truck driving involves long hours and irregular schedules, with extended workdays, inconsistent sleep schedules, and pressure to meet delivery windows. According to [ARC’s 2024 Regional Truck Study](#), this leads to fatigued driving, which impairs drivers’ cognitive function to a level comparable to being legally intoxicated; 21 hours without sleep is equivalent to a 0.08 percent blood alcohol content (BAC). Fatigued truck driving contributes to approximately 100,000 crashes in the US annually, with over 72 percent resulting in casualties.

[Hours of service \(HOS\) regulations](#) (49 CFR 395) specify the maximum amount of time freight truck drivers are permitted to drive and be on duty as well as the number and length of rest periods to combat fatigue. The corridor’s freight truck parking shortage forces drivers approaching their HOS limits and unable to locate parking to park illegally along highway and exit ramp shoulders or face penalties, fines, and even immediate out of service orders. A recent study by Geotab and HNTB found that the median journey prior to a ramp parking event covers 520 miles and almost 10 hours, which is just short of the HOS maximum drive time of 11 hours. The I-77 N Welcome Center (Welcome Center) is located approximately 500 miles south of the northern terminus of I-77, making it a prime location for freight truck drivers transporting goods from midwestern markets and ports to need parking for an extended period of time.

Safety Challenges Addressed by REST

NC in Top 10 states for fatal truck crashes (2018-2022)



Source: [USDOT](#)



32%

of truck-related crashes in NC

occur on highway ramps within 2 miles of truck parking facility

Source: [NCDOT Truck Parking Study](#)

334 Truck-Involved Crashes*

Fatigue-Related Truck Crashes*
5 Fatal
22 Total

Adverse Weather Crashes*

2 Fatal
10 Serious Injury
2,287 Total

*Crash data for I-77 and Surry County, NC (2018-2025). See BCA Technical Memo for details

Freight trucks parked on shoulders create multiple safety hazards for both freight truck drivers and the traveling public, particularly during nighttime hours when trucks are parked for longer periods and visibility is reduced:

- Occupies shoulder space needed for emergencies and crash response
- Creates sightline obstructions on ramps and merge areas
- Increases crash risk for vehicles traveling at high rates of speed approaching large, stationary trucks
- Deprives drivers of restful sleep and access to amenities, resulting in impaired performance

Solution: Additional Parking to Reduce Crashes Related to Unsafe Parking and Fatigue

REST will address the region's truck parking shortage and improve traveler safety by expanding freight truck parking at the Welcome Center by 300 percent and installing a mini-DMS to communicate real-time truck parking availability. The Project's safety benefits include:

Reduced Truck Driver Fatigue: REST will increase the amount of parking available to freight truck drivers for required HOS rest periods and improve access to critical rest stop amenities like bathrooms and food vending that are essential to their well-being and alertness.

Reduced Truck Parking on Shoulders: The Project will reduce the need for freight truck drivers to park along highway and exit ramp shoulders to meet HOS requirements. This will improve sight lines and reduce conflicts between large stationary trucks and fast-moving vehicles while ensuring shoulder access for emergency responders.

Reduced VMT: REST will reduce the amount of VMT freight truck drivers spend searching for scarce parking by 3.7 million miles over 20 years.



➤ NCDOT's Truck Parking Study showed that 65% of drivers have the most difficulty finding parking between 7:00 pm and midnight. The above photographs show the outcome of these difficulties on the Project corridor, where freight trucks crowd shoulders and exit ramps along I-77, creating congestion and sightline obstructions that increase crash risks.

Challenge: Responding to Adverse Traffic and Weather Conditions

The Welcome Center sits at the foot of the Blue Ridge Escarpment, marking a sharp change in elevation between the Appalachian Mountains and Piedmont. The Escarpment produces unique weather patterns where fog and severe weather can develop suddenly. The I-77 corridor is vulnerable to winter storms where ice and snow create rapidly deteriorating driving conditions. These unpredictable conditions are especially dangerous for freight truck drivers because they reduce traction and limit reaction time for heavy vehicles that require long stopping distances and have high rollover vulnerability.

NCDOT is unable to monitor and proactively respond to adverse weather, crashes, and congestion due to the absence of traffic cameras in the Project corridor. This creates significant challenges in identifying dangerous conditions. It also leads to delays in incidence response; authorities must be dispatched to assess conditions, which slows clearance time and increases the likelihood of secondary crashes.



➤ *Winter Storm Fern (January 2026) required NCDOT to request resources from the National Guard to aid with incident response on the Project Corridor. Due to inadequate parking in the region, freight truck drivers were forced to park along the Welcome Center's exit ramp due to dangerous road conditions, creating unsafe conditions for other travelers.*

Crash data from NCDOT shows that the I-77 corridor in Surry County, NC saw a total of 2,287 crashes related to adverse weather conditions; of these 376 (16 percent) involved freight trucks. This exceeds the findings of [FMCSA's Large Truck Crash Causation Study](#), which showed that adverse weather conditions were a factor in approximately 13 percent of all large truck crashes. Inadequate truck parking along the I-77 corridor further increases crash risk from freight truck drivers who cannot find parking and continue to drive in dangerous conditions or park on shoulders to wait out storms.

Solution: Expand Truck Parking + Install Traffic Cameras

REST will connect the region to NC's Traffic Information Management System (TIMS) by installing 11 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) traffic cameras and 8 miles of fiber. These improvements will provide more robust and timely responses to incidents in the area, thereby reducing congestion and crash risk. The Project will also add 30 freight truck parking spaces at the Welcome Center, giving more freight truck drivers a place to park during unsafe travel conditions. Real-time information on weather and traffic conditions between the Welcome Center and NC mm 98, including the nearby Weigh Station and I-74 interchange, will be fed to the state's [TIMS](#). From this system, NCDOT's Traffic Systems Operations and Division 11 staff can detect crashes and severe weather, verify calls, and dispatch responders more quickly and effectively. In particular, the addition of CCTV cameras at the Mt. Airy Weigh Station will allow video sharing with the NC State Highway Patrol to further improve the speed and effectiveness with which authorities can respond to emergency situations. Lastly, REST will enable NCDOT to quickly alert freight truck drivers and travelers of crashes and deteriorating weather conditions ahead through a data sharing agreement with Virginia DOT (VDOT), who will post advisories via a series of DMS along southbound I-77 in Virginia.



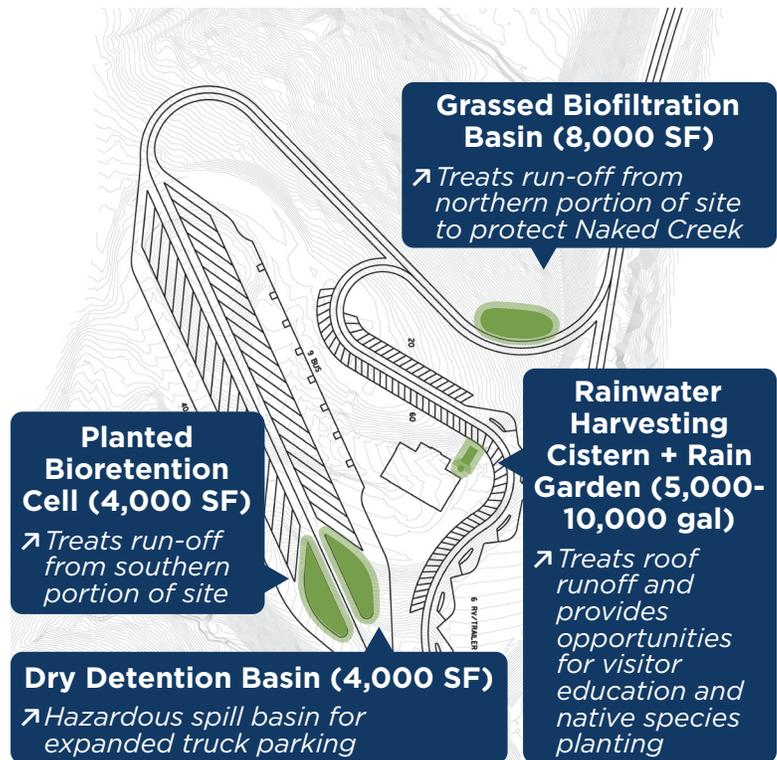
Environmental Sustainability

Challenge: Resilience of At-Risk Infrastructure

The Project Corridor is vulnerable to a variety of hazards, including severe winter storms that cause icy conditions, road closures, and prolonged power outages; as well as hurricanes and tropical systems that cause heavy rainfall and flooding despite its inland location. During these events, stormwater at the Welcome Center drains to nearby environmentally protected Trout Waters, including Stewarts Creek, which contains both 100- and 500-year floodplain along its length. Polluted runoff from the Welcome Center's parking areas and sidewalks contributes to downstream flooding and threatens regional water quality.

Solution: Stormwater Control Measures (SCMs)

The Project will reduce stormwater pollutants from roadways, parking areas, and structures to the maximum extent practicable in keeping with the NCDOT's environmental stewardship goals. REST will treat all new runoff created by the addition of 75,000 square feet of built-upon area (BUA) with stormwater control measures including filtration basins, a planted bioretention cell, a rainwater harvesting cistern and raingarden, and hazardous spill containment. These improvements will protect downstream resources from flooding and pollution while creating new opportunities for environmental education. During design, NCDOT will analyze and confirm structural SCMs and non-structural best management practices that meet watershed targets and treatment goals and can be effectively implemented, maintained, and integrated into the normal operation of the facility. These stormwater measures will also enhance the vegetative biodiversity and natural aesthetics of the Welcome Center. The Project's permanent post construction stormwater management plans will comply with the requirements of NCDOT's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit No. NCS 000250.



↗ REST will improve stormwater management by implementing measures to treat all new BUA

Solution: Install Standby Generator

REST will install a standby generator to increase the resilience of this critical transportation investment and support continuity of operations during severe weather and other emergency events. By adding backup power generation, REST will allow NCDOT to support better coordinated multi-agency emergency response by utilizing the Welcome Center as a staging area. Welcome centers and rest areas are commonly used as emergency response staging areas in North Carolina, especially near the coast for hurricane response. Utility companies rely on these facilities during recovery operations because of their accessibility and proximity to major highways. By increasing preparedness, REST advances regional resiliency and creates a dependable resource for post-storm recovery efforts.



Quality of Life

Over the 20-year analysis period, the Project is expected to result in a benefit of **\$1.6 million** in **vehicle operating and highway use costs**.

Challenge: Poor User Experience

The Welcome Center provides restrooms and vending machines and is staffed by travel counselors during normal business hours. However, these services are spread across three separate buildings, creating inefficiencies and poor user experience, particularly at night and during bad weather. Families traveling with children face barriers in accessing the Welcome Center's amenities; the accessible route to the Welcome Center for families traveling by bus or RV can exceed 700 feet, otherwise these families must climb 15 stairs, which is difficult with young children and parents using strollers. Deaf and blind travelers face similar access challenges as well as wayfinding difficulties due to the lack of tactile and auditory cues from more distant parking spaces, particularly when accessing services spread across three separate buildings.

While the site's layout is inefficient for all travelers, it especially disadvantages freight truck drivers, who must walk up to 900 feet or climb over 30 steps to access the Welcome Center's restrooms and vending areas, with grades approaching five percent

in some areas. This path does not have adequate lighting or crosswalks, creating unsafe conditions for freight truck drivers crossing multiple heavily trafficked parking lots on foot where passenger vehicles, buses and RVs entering from I-77 at relatively high speeds.

Solution: Context-Appropriate Design to Improve User Experience

REST will create an improved Welcome Center designed to leverage the beauty of the landscape to improve user experience and operational efficiency. The Project will:

- Consolidate Welcome Center functions into a modern, efficient, and well-lit building to improve traveler safety and convenience and improve access for disabled travelers.
- Expand vending machine offerings, modernize restroom facilities, and enhance outdoor spaces with additional seating, picnic areas, plantings, and landscaping that maximizes the scenic beauty of the site and creates an attractive and welcoming first impression for travelers entering NC.



↗ REST will create a more efficient + context appropriate design that addresses accessibility challenges and improves the travel experience for families

- Expand freight truck parking by 300 percent to minimize parking search times and freight truck operating costs (see **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity**).
- Reduce the walking distance between freight truck parking and the Welcome Center building by up to 800 feet to create a shorter, less steep, and accessible path that reduces conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles (see **Mobility and Community Connectivity**).
- Create a shorter and more direct path to the Welcome Center building for buses, RVs, and other motor vehicles.
- Improve the travel experience for families by constructing improved restroom facilities with changing tables and nursing areas, and creating better accommodation for strollers by removing the need to traverse stairs.

- Improve lighting in all parking areas to improve user safety during nighttime hours



↗ Existing freight truck, bus, and RV parking is located several hundred feet downhill from the restroom and vending facilities, requiring users to climb up to 30 stairs to access the Welcome Center's amenities



Mobility and Community Connectivity

Over the 20-year analysis period, the Project is expected to result in a benefit of **\$5.4 million in delay reductions** related to improved traffic incident management, saving approximately 700,000 hours vehicle hours over 20 years.

Challenge: Limited Accessibility

Many travelers face difficulties accessing the Welcome Center's amenities. The layout of the site is inefficient (see **Quality of Life**), creating long, unsafe walks for traveling families, as well as bus, RV, and freight truck drivers. Walking distances to the restroom, vending, and traveler information buildings can exceed 500 feet along semi-steep grades for the Welcome Center's 75 car parking spaces. For all buses and RVs, accessible walking routes to these buildings can exceed 700 feet and require users to traverse 15 stairs and one parking lot with minimal crossing protections. Freight truck parking has the poorest site accessibility, with walking distances up to 900 feet. Freight truck drivers who are lucky enough to secure scarce truck parking at the Welcome Center (see **Project Description**) must climb 30 stairs and cross two parking lots to reach rest area amenities. These conditions lead to safety risks and mobility limitations for families traveling with children and people with disabilities, who struggle to use stairs, walk long distances, or safely cross parking lots with high volumes of vehicles entering and exiting the facility from I-77 at relatively high speeds. (see **Project Description**).

Solution: Create a Fully Accessible Welcome Center

REST's proposed site design for the Welcome Center will enhance mobility and accessibility for all travelers by:

- Incorporating **Universal Design elements** like accessible parking spaces and picnic areas; improved lighting; and sloped walkways, curb cuts, and ramps to better serve wheelchair users, strollers, and travelers using mobility devices.
- **Shortening walking distances** by up to 800 feet and **removing stairs** for bus, RV, and freight truck parking by providing direct access to Welcome Center amenities (see **Quality of Life**).
- **Reducing conflicts** between pedestrians and vehicles by optimizing the site configuration so that 100 percent of all bus, RV, and freight truck travelers and 31 percent fewer passenger car travelers must cross active traffic lanes in multiple parking lots to access Welcome Center amenities.



Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

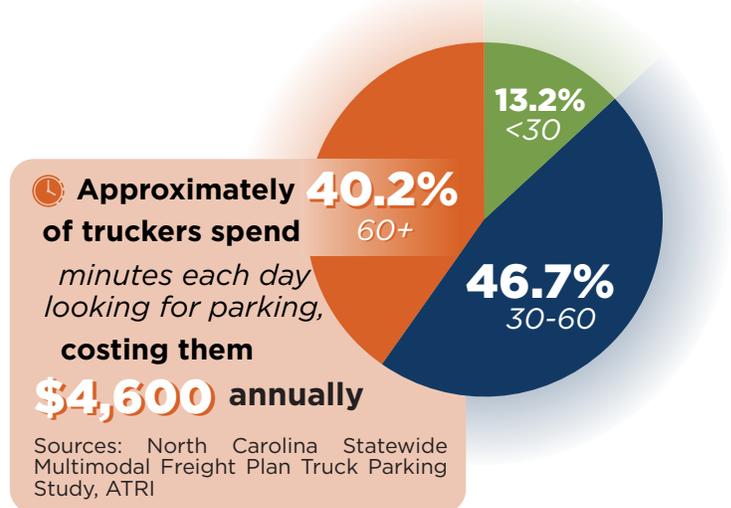
Over the 20-year analysis period, the Project is expected to result in a benefit of **\$19.2 million** in **time savings and productivity improvements** for truck drivers and shippers.

Challenge: Lack of Safe Truck Parking

I-77 is a key north-south shipping corridor for NC as it connects the Charlotte region to major Midwestern markets (namely Columbus, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh) as well as shipping ports in Charleston, SC and Wilmington, NC. As such, it experiences significant truck volumes relative to other major interstate highways within North Carolina. However, scarce freight truck parking in the Project corridor creates economic challenges for both drivers and shippers and adversely impacts driver safety and quality of life (see **Project Description, Safety, and Quality of Life**).

[National research from the American Transportation Research Institute \(ATRI\)](#) shows that freight truck drivers frequently end shifts earlier than required by HOS regulations to search for and secure parking, resulting in the loss of 56 minutes of driving time per day and costing the average driver \$4,600 annually in non-revenue time. According to the [Statewide Multimodal Freight Plan](#), nearly 90 percent of freight truck drivers in NC reported spending an average of more than 30 minutes searching for parking, including 40 percent who spend more than an hour searching for scarce parking. This leads to lost productivity and shipping delays for freight truck drivers who are responsible for transporting approximately 80 percent of all freight in NC (*ibid*). This also creates challenging working conditions that discourage driver retention in an industry that [consistently faces a shortage of qualified drivers](#). Yet trucking remains [one of the most common occupations](#) nationwide and offers a [reliable route to the middle class](#) without requiring a bachelor's degree.

Economic Impacts of Scarce Truck Parking



Solution: Expanding Access to Safe Truck Parking

REST will expand truck parking capacity at the Welcome Center by 300 percent, yielding 40 well-lit and safely accessible spaces. The availability of parking will be monitored and displayed in real time through a TPIMS to support freight truck drivers to make informed decisions about where they can safely rest on their journeys to meet HOS limits. Through this expansion, REST will create a more effective freight corridor that minimizes parking search times and lost driver wages. In doing so, the Project supports the state's economic competitiveness by making freight shipping along I-77 safer and more efficient.

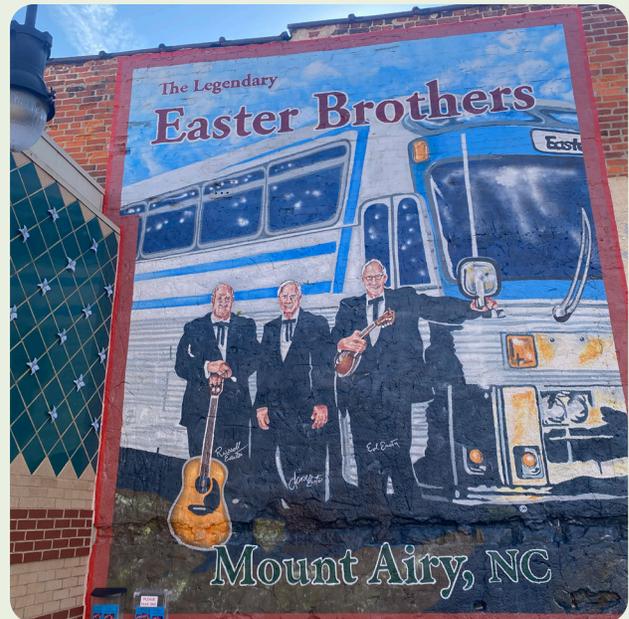
REST's Tourism and Economic Impact

The Welcome Center serves southbound travelers headed towards large NC cities like Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point as well as smaller rural communities in the northwest NC mountains and Yadkin Valley region. Given this pivotal location, it is NC's third busiest welcome center and plays a pivotal role supporting the State's \$36.7 billion [tourism economy](#) in the fifth-most visited state in the country. NCDOC staff support the Welcome Center's approximately 500,000 annual visitors (see **Supplemental Materials**) by providing tourism and travel information, answering travel questions, and promoting destinations in the Yadkin Valley region and across all 100 counties in the state. Major recreational sites in the region, including the Blue Ridge Parkway, Pilot Mountain State Park, and Hanging Rock State Park, and Lake Norman State Park, see millions of visitors each year, many of which use I-77 on their travels.

The nearby City of Mount Airy is a major tourism attraction. Nicknamed "Mayberry" for its starring role as the hometown of a

charismatic small-town sheriff on the Andy Griffith Show, the city is home to several museums with memorabilia real-life places that inspired the television show. Mount Airy hosts the Mayberry Days festival each September, which attracts thousands of visitors. Tourism in Mount Airy is a major contributor to tourism spending in Surry County, which totaled \$160.1 million in 2024, a 6.2 percent increase from the previous year.

By modernizing the Welcome Center, REST will provide critical traveler support services and promote attractions, accommodations, events, and recreational opportunities in all 100 NC counties to support the state's thriving tourism industry.



“Expanding truck parking at the I 77 N Welcome Center will directly support North Carolina’s economic competitiveness by reducing parking search times, improving driver safety, and strengthening one of North Carolina’s most important freight corridors. At the same time, this investment enhances our ability to welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, connect them with destinations across all 100 counties, and promote North Carolina’s \$36.7 billion tourism economy. REST represents a critical modernization that will improve the experience of all users, while supporting the communities and businesses that depend on a strong tourism industry and robust freight network.”

- Bryan Gupton, Director of Visitor Services, NC Department of Commerce



State of Good Repair

Over the 20-year analysis period, the Project is expected to result in a benefit of **\$9.3 million** in **avoided operations and maintenance costs**.

Challenge: Welcome Center at End of Useful Life

The Welcome Center is one of the State's most heavily traveled rest areas (see **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity**), providing truck and bus parking in a remote freight corridor where truck volumes are high, but parking is scarce.

NCDOT designed the Welcome Center in the early 1970s and opened it to the public in 1978. Since then, design and construction standards as well as travel patterns have changed substantially. The Project corridor has seen increasing freight truck volumes as I-77 has grown to become a major shipping corridor connecting the midwest and southeast. NCDOT last renovated the Welcome Center in 1997, almost 30 years ago.

According to data from the [Certified Commercial Property Inspectors Association](#) all facilities have reached or exceeded the end of their estimated useful life (EUL). This includes the roofing and drainage systems (20–40-year EUL), wood exterior components (25–35-year EUL), and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) and plumbing systems (15–40-year EUL). Moreover, the Welcome Center's sanitary sewer system is old and over capacity, leading to frequent closures – 60 days in 2025 alone – that negatively impact NCDOT and NCDOC's ability to offer critical rest stop amenities and traveler services.

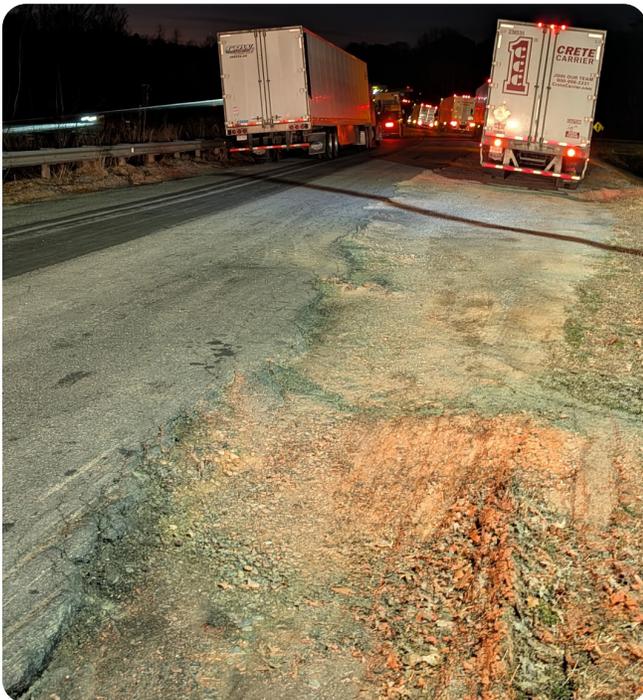
Additionally, the Welcome Center's restrooms, vending machines, and traveler information are in three separate buildings, which are up to 900 feet uphill from the truck parking area, further increasing maintenance costs and decreasing operational efficiency (see **Quality of Life**).

Solution: Restore and Modernize the Welcome Center

REST will restore and modernize the Welcome Center. Planned improvements include:

- A new, consolidated Welcome Center building served by energy-efficient lighting, plumbing, and HVAC systems to increase efficiency and lower operating costs.
- Installation of standby generators to improve resilience (see **Environmental Sustainability**).
- Upgraded sanitary sewer system (a separate project, see **Partnership and Collaboration** and **Project Readiness** for more details).
- Additional parking that expands the highway system's functionality to meet the needs of freight truck drivers by adding 30 freight truck parking spaces (a 300 percent increase) and 7 new bus/RV spaces (an 88 percent increase).
- More accessible truck, bus, and RV parking to improve user experience (see **Quality of Life** and **Mobility and Community Connectivity**).

This project will ensure that the Welcome Center remains a dependable resource for freight truck drivers and the traveling public along a remote section of I-77. It will also reduce operating and maintenance burdens by replacing components that have reached end of their useful life and improving NCDOT's ability to maintain the facility in a state of good repair.



Challenge: Repetitive Damage from Illegal Truck Parking

The I-77 corridor faces a severe shortage of freight truck parking (see **Project Description**). Truck parking facilities, including the Welcome Center, are regularly at capacity, particularly during the overnight hours. Therefore, I-77's freight truck drivers are often forced to park illegally along highway and exit ramp shoulders to avoid fines, penalties, and immediate out of service orders for exceeding HOS requirements, as well as during dangerous weather conditions when parking is not available but continued travel is hazardous. The shoulders are not designed to hold the weight of heavy vehicles for an extended period of time, which has led to pavement damage, deterioration, and rutting that requires repetitive repair and increased maintenance.

Solution: Improved Welcome Center Ramps + Shoulders

By expanding truck parking, REST addresses the severe parking shortage along the corridor and reduces maintenance burdens by decreasing freight truck parking on shoulders. Additionally, REST will construct 16-foot wide and full depth shoulders along the Welcome Center's on- and off-ramps to reduce repetitive maintenance burdens and extend their useful life and support future safe emergency parking during hazardous driving conditions or incident recovery.

➤ REST will restore and modernize the Welcome Center and reduce wear and tear on shoulders and exit ramps from illegal freight truck parking.



Partnership and Collaboration

The Welcome Center provides essential services and amenities for a high volume of travelers and freight truck drivers while serving as a primary gateway for information on attractions, accommodations, events, and recreational opportunities across the state. REST’s public engagement approach reflects this pivotal role by engaging local residents, regional organizations, and Welcome Center visitors to meaningfully engage those who live and work in the corridor during project development.

During the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, NCDOT will provide multiple in-person and virtual touchpoints to share information about the Project, answer questions, and provide opportunities for feedback and comment. In-person events will primarily target residents, local stakeholders, and people employed in the area, while virtual events will target freight truck drivers and other regional travelers. To promote these avenues of engagement, NCDOT will reach out to local and state tourism industry representatives to share with their members and work collaboratively with organizations like the North Carolina Trucking Association to share project information with their members. Throughout the design process, NCDOC travel counselors will distribute flyers and paper surveys, answer questions, and direct people to the Project website.

Through their relationship with the Business Enterprise Program (see **Project Location**), NCDOC will help NCDOT obtain input from the visually impaired during the design process to maximize the facility’s accessibility and improve user experience.

Coordination with Utility Improvements

The Welcome Center currently uses a shared septic system for the sanitary sewer needs of the facility that has reached the end of its useful life. In 2025, NCDOT and NCDOC were forced to close the Welcome Center for a total of 60 days due to sewer system failures, requiring costly repairs and offsite sewage transport. For several years, NCDOT has been working with VDOT and the Carroll County Public Service Authority to connect the Welcome Center, the adjacent northbound Welcome Center in Virginia, and the Lumbsburg, VA Love’s Truck Stop to the Mount Airy, NC municipal sewer system. NCDOT will continue to collaborate with these regional partners to coordinate the design and construction schedule of the sanitary sewer project with REST to accomplish both projects simultaneously and avoid delays in re-opening of the Welcome Center.

REST’s Public Engagement Approach



Collect Feedback and Public Comment

Paper survey

➤ Distribute at Welcome Center + Open House Meetings

PublicInput.com survey

➤ Share via Agency Partners and Project Stakeholders



Share Project Information

Display boards + flyers with QR codes to project website and digital survey

➤ Include design info, environmental considerations, and Project Schedule



Answer Questions

2 Open House Meetings

➤ 1-77 N Welcome Center and Mount Airy

2 virtual town hall meetings

➤ Focused on reaching freight truck drivers and regional travelers

● In-person engagement

● Virtual engagement



Innovation

Innovative Technologies

The lack of adequate parking for freight trucks, paired with the absence of real-time parking information, creates safety and economic competitiveness challenges along one of North Carolina's primary freight corridors (see **Project Description**). To address these challenges, REST will implement a suite of innovative technologies to monitor real-time conditions and support more efficient freight operating practices

Truck Parking Information Management System:

REST will share real-time parking information with freight truck drivers. The Project's TPIMS will use radar or lidar sensors in REST's expanded truck parking area to monitor parking occupancy and transmit the data via a control cabinet to a mini-DMS embedded in a static sign prior to the Welcome Center exit. This will be the first ever deployment of a TPIMS at an NCDOT facility and lays out the groundwork for future expansions of the TPIMS to communicate availability through mobile apps, traveler information websites, and in-cab navigation systems. This innovation will improve driver safety (see **Safety** section) and efficiency of freight movements (see **Economic Competitive and Opportunity**).

Additional Traffic Cameras: The I-77 corridor in Surry County is vulnerable to rapid onset of snow and ice storms due to its location in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, as well as crashes and associated delays due to the corridor's high volume of travelers (see **Project Description**). NCDOT does not have the capability to monitor real-time traffic and weather conditions along the Project corridor; the nearest CCTV camera is 19 miles away and there is currently no single-mode fiber optic cable for ITS devices on the I-77 corridor north of I-40. This severely hampers the ability of NCDOT incident response units, state highway patrol, and emergency responders to respond quickly and effectively to hazards, and to alert travelers of dangerous conditions. To address these conditions, REST will install 8 miles of fiber optic cable and add 11 CCTV



➤ REST will install a mini-DMS to alert freight truck drivers of parking availability at the Welcome Center

cameras between the Welcome Center and mile marker 98. Two cameras will be installed near Mount Airy Weigh Station, which will provide connectivity to an existing northbound DMS and support video sharing with the highway patrol as well as potential future expansion of the TPIMS to include parking at the Weigh Station. The addition of two CCTV cameras near mile marker 98 will provide a new connection to existing northbound DMS, further enhancing NCDOT's ability to communicate weather and crash hazards quickly and effectively. NCDOT will alert VDOT of adverse conditions so that messages can be displayed on DMS along southbound I-77 to alert drivers of conditions ahead.

Innovative Project Delivery

To deliver REST, NCDOT will leverage the following tools and practices to accelerate project delivery:

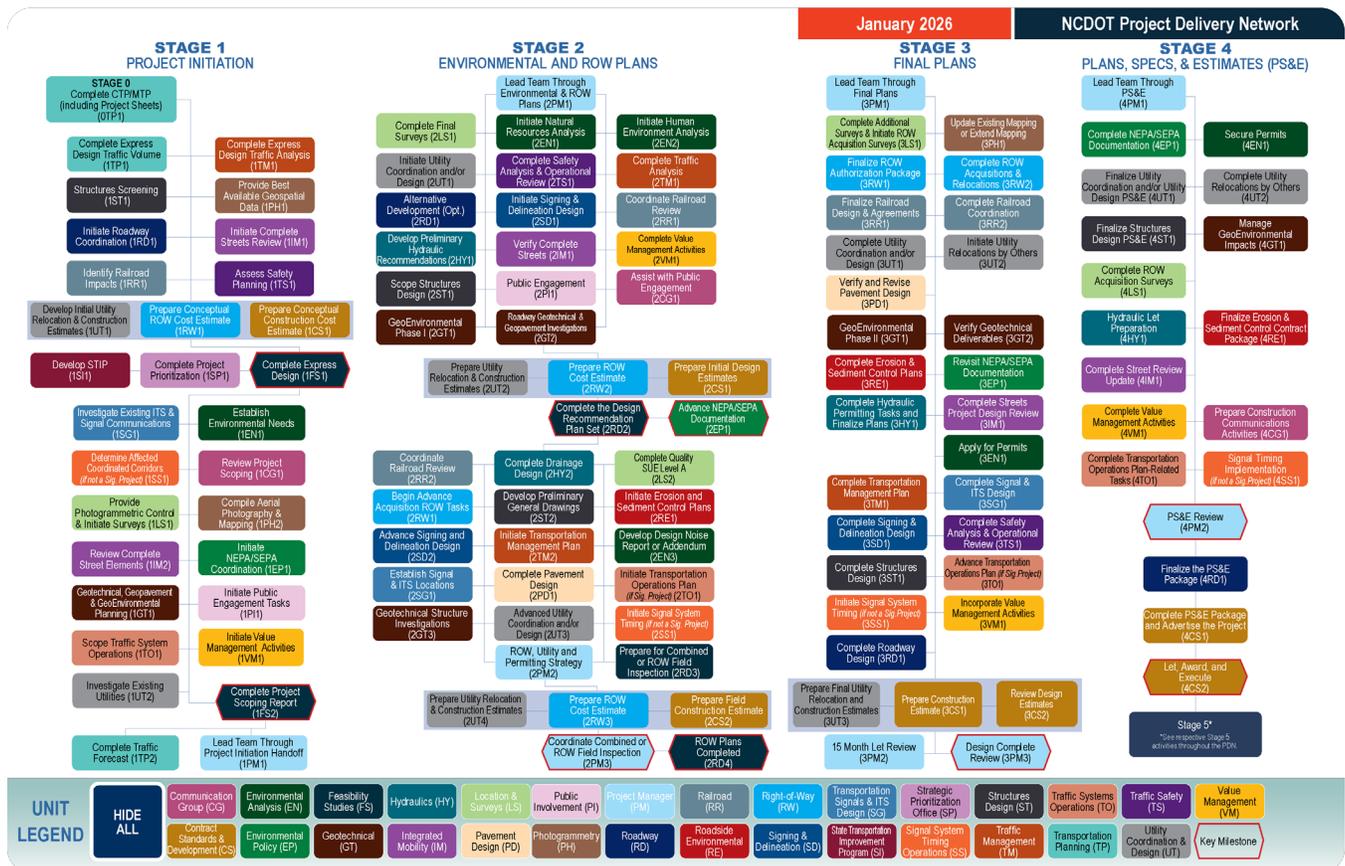
FHWA Programmatic Agreement: REST will leverage a 2024 Programmatic Agreement that streamlines the NEPA review process for commonly encountered project types, including improvements to rest areas (see **Project Readiness**). NCDOT will complete environmental review expeditiously by using a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Checklist to obtain needed approvals in a timely fashion.

Advancing Transportation through Linkages, Automation, and Screening (ATLAS):

NCDOT's ATLAS platform leverages regional GIS data to improve business processes and provide a data access and storage framework that supports informed project development. NCDOT staff and professional engineering firms (PEFs) will use this system to support environmental review, track progress, and create a central repository of all project deliverables, and signed documents will be submitted through this system. This will allow NCDOT to make informed decisions, complete design, and environmental review efficiently, and accelerate project delivery.

NCDOT Project Delivery Network (PDN):

The PDN is an innovation-driven framework for delivering transportation projects with greater speed, predictability, and accountability. The PDN accelerates project delivery by providing a standardized, milestone driven system of project development steps that improves schedule reliability, promotes accountability, and reduces risks through clear sequencing of activities, built-in multidisciplinary coordination, and systematic quality control across all project stages. By defining required tasks and deliverables from project initiation through environmental review, design, and construction letting, the PDN ensures early issue identification and consistent collaboration—minimizing delays and rework. These integrated practices collectively enhance efficiency, support stronger project readiness, and enable NCDOT to deliver REST more quickly and reliably.



➤ NCDOT's Project Delivery Network (PDN) delivers transportation projects with greater speed, predictability, and accountability

**BUILD FY 2026
GRANT APPLICATION
February 2026**

REST

Rest area Expansion for Safe Transportation



N.C. Department of Transportation
1 South Wilmington Street
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