



Howard Gap: Resilience After Landslides

APPENDIX H

Letter of Commitment



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

DANIEL H. JOHNSON
SECRETARY

October 8, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Letter of Financial Commitment -PROTECT Grant Application for Howard Gap:
Resilience after Landslides

Dear Secretary Duffy:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is pleased to provide this letter of financial commitment for the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program Project, the Howard Gap: Resilience after Landslides Project.

The purpose of this project is to re-establish connectivity for the local community, particularly the Rixhaven Community, by repairing and stabilizing Howard Gap Road to mitigate the occurrence of future landslides along Howard Gap Road and Interstate 26. Howard Gap Road has been closed since a storm event in 2019, and the community has been forced to utilize a 16-mile detour that adds an additional 30 minutes to their commute time. This presents additional conflicts in emergency situations, as this detour drastically impacts first responder response times and the ability to access medical care in a timely fashion. Additionally, with US 176 closed to commercial trucks in this area due to Hurricane Helene, this restoration project becomes even more important. The replacement of this roadway is anticipated to cost \$15,500,000.

NCDOT is submitting a request for \$13,485,000 to construct the project and acknowledges a local commitment of \$2,015,000. It is anticipated that these funds will come from General Maintenance Reserve (GMR) funds (\$1,000,000) and High-Impact Low Costs funds (\$1,015,000). The Department is hopeful this award can significantly offset costs of the project, expanding the impact of traditional state funding methods. NCDOT fully commits to pursuing all options available to fund the required match for the implementation of this project if it is awarded.

Thank you for your consideration of NCDOT's Howard Gap: Resilience after Landslides PROTECT application. If you have any questions, please call 919-418-5858 or email mnewsome2@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Mark Newsome

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Mark T. Newsome
Chief Financial Officer
North Carolina Department of Transportation