

NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



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September 2017

First Lady Cooper Joins NCDOT Christens New Locomotives



First Lady Cooper christens new NCDOT locomotives

First Lady Kristin Cooper joined state and local officials to christen the #1984 “City of Kannapolis” and #1871 “Town of Cary” locomotives for use in North Carolina’s daily *Piedmont* passenger service. The event was held on August 1 at the N.C. Department of Transportation Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility in Raleigh.

“We are pleased to christen two of our newly rebuilt locomotives in honor of the Town of Cary and City of Kannapolis for their long association with rail service in North Carolina,” said NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon. “Rail improvements like this are essential to providing a comprehensive transportation system to move people safely and efficiently.”

NCDOT names its locomotives for the cities along the Charlotte to Raleigh passenger rail corridor. Each locomotive’s number corresponds to the incorporation or charter date of the city after which it is named. They are painted in the NCDOT *Piedmont* paint scheme, which incorporates the colors and symbols of North Carolina’s state flag.

The locomotives were originally built in 1990 for Toronto’s GoTransit system. As part of NCDOT’s *Piedmont* Improvement Program

funded through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the locomotives were completely rebuilt mechanically, upgraded electrically and received car body repairs. In addition, the 3,000 horse power engines were upgraded to EPA Tier 0+ emission standards.

All rebuild work was completed at the Norfolk Southern Juliata shops in Altoona, PA. The cost of purchasing and rebuilding the locomotives was \$2.15 million, far less than the \$6 million to \$7 million cost of a comparable new passenger locomotive.

Through the *Piedmont* Improvement Program, NCDOT is investing more than \$500 million in rail improvements between Raleigh and Charlotte.

September Railroad Trivia Question

Who cast the deciding vote in the 1849 session of the NC Legislature in favor of chartering the North Carolina Railroad from Goldsboro to Charlotte?

(See answer on page 6)

Governor Cooper Announces 400 New Jobs as EGGER Wood Products Locates in Davidson County

EGGER Wood Products, one of Europe's leading wood-based materials suppliers for the furniture, wood construction and flooring industries, has selected Davidson County as the location for the company's first U.S. manufacturing plant. Their development plans include creating 770 jobs over the next 15 years with a proposed \$700 million investment. The first phase, creating 400 jobs, will happen over the next six years, and an additional 370 jobs are planned for later phases of the project. Governor Roy Cooper announced the company's investment in Lexington on July 24, 2017.

"Furniture manufacturing is part of North Carolina's legacy, and our top-flight workforce gives EGGER an edge as they enter the U.S. marketplace," said Governor Cooper. "North Carolina offers international manufacturing companies everything they need to succeed, including strong infrastructure, proximity to suppliers and customers, and skilled, trainable workers."

The Rail Division is contributing \$200,000 of Rail Industrial Access program funding towards the \$2.4M construction cost of a spur track for the facility.

A family-owned company based in Tyrol, Austria, EGGER Group operates 17 plants and 25 sales offices worldwide, providing a wide range of wood-based products. They are the global leader in decorative surfaces on wood-based materials and has developed a complete range of products and cutting-edge designs. The facility in North Carolina will be a state-of-the-art particleboard manufacturing plant and EGGER's first U.S. manufacturing operation. The facility will contribute to the regional economy through the purchase of wood byproducts from sawmills and by working with a range of local suppliers for additional services.



Rail Improvements and Investments Adopted by Board of Transportation

The summer months may see people headed on vacations, but there's been a lot happening for rail projects in North Carolina. On June 28, 2017, the N.C. Department of Transportation released the Revised Draft 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This identifies additional funding and scheduling for transportation projects over a 10-year period.

Projects funded within the first five years of the STIP are considered "committed projects" while those funded in years 6-10 are in the "Developmental Program" and are subject to reprioritization in STI Prioritization 5.0 (P5.0). There were nine additional rail projects recently added to the Revised Draft 2018-2027 STIP in the Developmental Program:

- **Kannapolis Station** – Construct second platform, pedestrian underpass and signaling equipment
- **Grade Separation at Gresham Lake Road** in Raleigh
- **Grade Separation at Neal Road** in Durham
- **Grade Separation at Wagoner Bend Road** in Greensboro
- **Grade Separation at Clanton Road** in Charlotte
- **Grade Separation at 7th Avenue** in Lexington
- **Salisbury Station** – right-of-way and construction of second platform, pedestrian underpass and signaling equipment
- **Salisbury Station** – upgrade station building and expand waiting area & parking
- **New station and platforms in Lexington** (partially funded)

The draft of the 2018-2027 STIP was adopted in August 2017 by the N.C. Board of Transportation.

Window for Next Round Submissions Now Open

On July 5, the SPOT On!line (NCDOT's online project prioritization evaluation system) project submission window for P5.0 was opened for MPOs, RPOs, and Divisions to begin submitting projects through the end of September. The Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) will then take approximately six months to score all submitted projects and each will be sorted into an appropriate tier for scoring.

The next draft STIP (2020-2029) is currently scheduled to be released in January 2019. Other important P5.0 dates are:

- **TIP Unit programs Statewide Mobility projects, March 2018**
- **Regional Impact point assignment, April – June 2018**
- **TIP Unit programs Regional Impact projects, July – August 2018**
- **Division Needs point assignment, September – October 2018**
- **TIP Unit programs Division Needs projects, November – December 2018**

Note: These dates were provided by the SPOT office and may be subject to change. Additional STI and STIP information can be found at <https://www.ncdot.gov/strategictransportationinvestments/> or contact Neil Perry, Rail Planning Manager at 919-707-4711.

Queen City Express Service Begins

On July 28, the Queen City Express made its first trip from the Port of Wilmington to the Charlotte Intermodal Terminal. Thirty-one containers were moved from the Port to Charlotte. The Queen City Express is a daily, intermodal rail service provided by CSX and North Carolina Ports to move containers between the Port of Wilmington and the greater Charlotte region. The service will help lower transportation costs and provide improved access to international

markets for North Carolina industries and businesses. The Queen City Express restores intermodal service to the Port of Wilmington. The Port's intermodal connectivity will be further enhanced upon the completion of the Carolina Connector intermodal hub near Rocky Mount. The North Carolina Port's press release on the Queen City Express is located at <http://ncports.com/about-the-ports/news/>.



Safety Recommendations Made for Mebane 5th Street Crossing After Study



On Feb. 16, 2017, Rail Signals Manager Richard Mullinax and BeRailSafe Safety and Outreach Consultant Roger Smock convened a 25 member diagnostic team at the Mebane Police Department. It was made up of multiple stakeholders to conduct a road safety audit on-site at the 5th Street (NC 119) crossing in Mebane.

The team was tasked to consider the 3E's – Engineering, Education, and Enforcement – for identifying possible safety improvements to the crossing. Motorists continually stopping on the track rather than at the stop bar, as well as pedestrians trespassing on and along railroad tracks, were identified as key concerns. After a site visit, discussions were held among the team members on their observations and recommendations for potential improvements were developed.

As a result of the recommendations, a BeRailSafe education and enforcement rail safety guide was compiled and provided to the

City of Mebane. The guide addressed trespasser education and enforcement best practices, along with a mayoral proclamation and suggestions on how to establish a culture that embraces rail safety. Engineering recommendations resulted in 'DO NOT BLOCK THE BOX' type pavement markings on each side of the 5th Street crossing. Installed on July 17, this is one of the first times this type of marking has been used in North Carolina for the purpose of discouraging vehicles from stopping on the tracks. The Institute for Transportation Research and Education will compare motorists' behavior before and after the installment of these markings to measure their effectiveness.

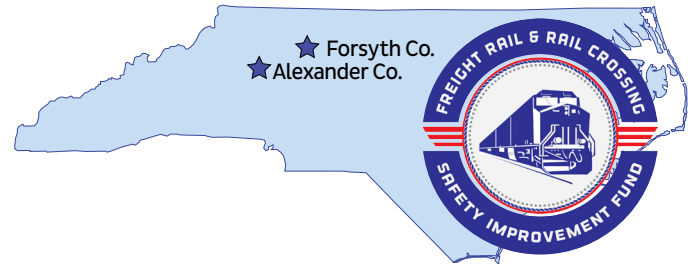
The Rail Division received several positive comments on the effectiveness of the diagnostic meeting and the benefits of having education, engineering and enforcement working together.



NCDOT and Alexander and Yadkin Valley Railroads Make Safety Improvements at Crossings

The NCDOT Rail Division, along with Division 12 and the Alexander Railroad, recently partnered to improve the at-grade railroad crossing on White Plains Road in Alexander County. The original asphalt crossing surface was replaced with a concrete tub crossing as the original surface was rough and in need of replacement. This crossing is frequently used by local school bus and truck traffic. The new tub surface provides a smoother crossing for the motoring public, and a low maintenance, long lasting highway crossing for the railroad.

The Rail Division also partnered with Division 9 and the Yadkin Valley Railroad to replace the crossing surface on Hidden Ridge Trail in Forsyth County. Previously, it'd been an asphalt and timber crossing before being replaced by a rail seal and asphalt surface. The original crossing was in extremely poor condition due to gaps in the timbers and asphalt, requiring drivers to move over it at a very slow speed. The new crossing surface allows drivers to maintain their speed and clear the crossing faster.



White Plains Road before improvements



White Plains Road after improvements



Hidden Ridge Trail before improvements



Hidden Ridge Trail after improvements

Ridership & Revenue on NC By Train Service – *June 2017 vs. 2016						
	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2017	2016	% +/-	2017	2016	% +/-
Piedmont	10,540	11,979	3%	\$233,228	\$215,521	8%
Carolinian	25,691	25,933	-1%	\$1,726,843	\$1,684,878	2%

814
Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in June, supporting NC By Train onboard and at events

June 2017 service modifications impacted 12 Piedmont trains and four Carolinian trains. On June 5, Trains 73 and 76 were cancelled, Trains 74 and 75 operated between Raleigh and Greensboro only, and Trains 79 and 80 operated between New York and Greensboro only due to PIP track work. On June 19, Trains 73 and 76 were cancelled, and Trains 74 and 75 operated between Raleigh and Greensboro only due to NS track work. On June 26, Trains 73 and 76 were cancelled, Trains 74 and 75 operated between Raleigh and Greensboro only, and Trains 79 and 80 operated between New York and Greensboro only due to PIP track work. Disruptions for PIP project work will continue to occur as necessary through completion of the project, but PIP track outages are anticipated to reduce significantly after July 2017. Average gasoline prices remained low in June 2017 but were \$0.04 per gallon lower than in June 2016.

Take NC By Train to the Hopscotch Festival in Downtown Raleigh, September 7-10!



All Aboard for the Lexington Barbecue Festival!



Are you ready for a day filled with barbecue, live music and family friendly attractions?

On **OCTOBER 28**, board NC By Train at any of the 7 stops between Charlotte and Raleigh to arrive just steps from the festival!

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Raleigh Union Station Construction Photos – July 2017



View of south elevation with passenger concourse center of photo, and footings for center island platform left edge of photo



View of north and west elevations

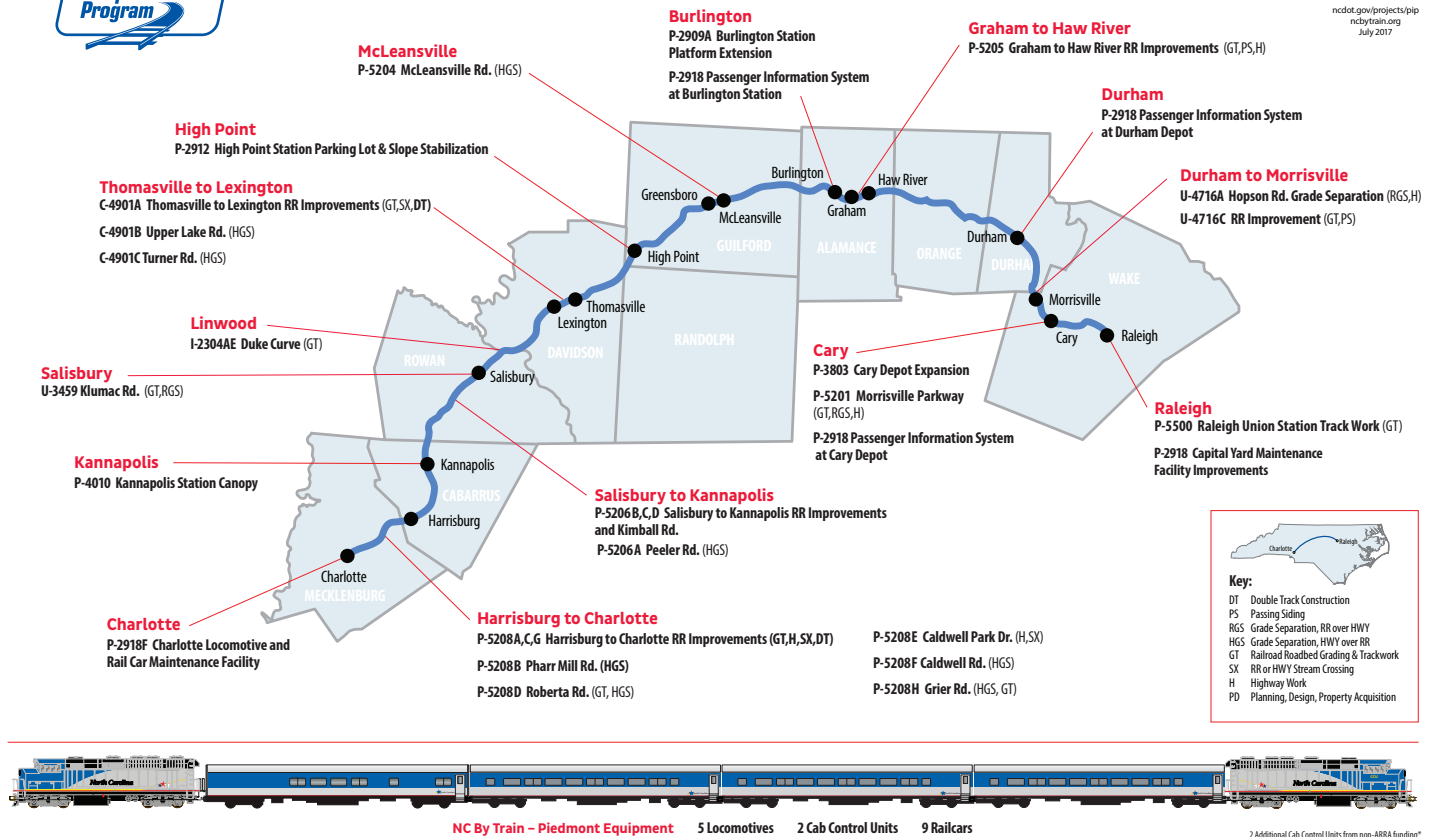
September Railroad Trivia Answer: Calvin Graves, member of the state House of Commons and state senator from Caswell County. As Speaker of the Senate his vote in favor of the NCRR charter broke with his own party's position against construction of the railroad. His tiebreaking vote cost him a promising political career and he never held public office again.



Piedmont Improvement Program Update – July 2017



ncdot.gov/projects/pip
ncbytrain.org
July 2017



Piedmont Improvement Program Accomplishments

- Constructed **27** miles of double track between Greensboro and Charlotte, making the entire corridor double track
- Constructed **5** new high speed crossover locations between Greensboro and Charlotte to increase the number of locations where trains can quickly change tracks
- Constructed **2** new passing sidings between Raleigh and Greensboro, for a total of **5** miles of second track
- Realigned over **30** railroad curves for increased operating speed
- Closed over **40** at-grade roadway crossings
- Improved **12** at-grade roadway crossings with advanced signal systems for increased safety
- Constructed **13** new bridges over or under highways
- Constructed over **13** miles of new or improved highways
- Expanded the Raleigh Maintenance Facility
- Constructed the new Charlotte Maintenance Facility
- Constructed extensive track work needed for the Raleigh Union Station
- Constructed station improvements in Burlington, Cary, High Point, and Kannapolis
- Added **5** locomotives, **2** cab control units, and **9** passenger cars to the *Piedmont* fleet
- Also constructed **3** new crossover locations on the CSX A-line between Weldon and Rocky Mount to improve rail traffic flow

The Piedmont Improvement Program utilized \$546.5M in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Work began in 2010 and was completed in 2017.