

NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



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Piedmont Improvement Program One of Six Southeast Transportation Projects Honored in National Competition



The Piedmont crosses over Morrisville Parkway on a newly constructed bridge.

A national transportation organization is honoring North Carolina officials for highway and railroad projects that have improved safety and mobility and spurred economic growth in the Piedmont and Wilmington.

The N.C. Department of Transportation was one of six southeastern transportation agencies earning awards on



Norfolk Southern trains pass each other on new double track completed under the program.

Aug. 7 as part of the 11th annual America's Transportation Awards competition. The winners were announced during the annual meeting of American Association of State Transportation Officials in Houston, Texas.

"We're pleased to be recognized among our transportation peers in the

Piedmont Improvement Program Accomplishments

- Constructed **27** miles of double track between Greensboro and Charlotte, making the entire corridor double track
- Constructed **five** new high speed crossover locations between Greensboro and Charlotte to increase the number of locations where trains can quickly change tracks
- Constructed **two** 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 **five** locomotives, **two** cab control units and **nine** passenger cars to the *Piedmont* fleet
- Constructed **three** new crossover locations on the CSX A-line between Weldon and Rocky Mount to improve rail traffic flow

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Southeast for these two projects,” said NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon. “The Wilmington Bypass and the Piedmont Improvement Program reflect our commitment to improve safety, capacity and reliability.”

The Piedmont Improvement Program, which was North Carolina’s largest series of improvements to the state’s rail infrastructure, was completed in 2017. The program involved rail and highway projects that have made train travel more safe and reliable between Raleigh and Charlotte.

The program has also allowed for a new daily round trip on the *Piedmont* passenger line, meaning passengers are now able to travel on four trains each way between Raleigh and Charlotte. The \$520 million program of projects was largely paid for with a federal grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The NCDOT partnered with the North Carolina Railroad Company, the Federal Railroad Administration and Norfolk Southern on the program. The Piedmont Improvement Program won in the “Operations Excellence, Large Project” category. The competition is sponsored by AASHTO, Socrata, AAA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

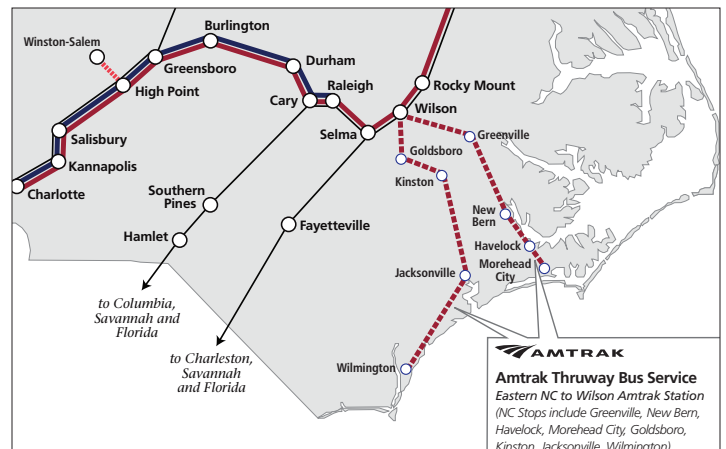


The Cary Amtrak Station was expanded under PIP and is now a full service station — the 4th busiest in North Carolina.

October Railroad Trivia Question: The N.C. State Fair began in 1853, bringing farm families into Raleigh by the train from across the state. Where was the original fairground located, what day did it open, and how did railroads in the state help the North Carolina Agricultural Society make the fair a success?
See answer on page 5.

New Transit Center in Greenville Includes stop for Amtrak Thruway Connector Bus

An August 8 ribbon cutting ceremony marked the opening of the new G.K. Butterfield Transportation Center in Greenville. In addition to serving as the central hub for the GREAT bus system, it also offers service from Pitt Area Transit, East Carolina University Transit, Greyhound and Amtrak’s Thruway Connector Service. Originating in Wilson, the Connector buses make stops in Greenville, New Bern, Havelock, Morehead City, Goldsboro, Kinston, Jacksonville and Wilmington, providing the citizens of eastern North Carolina access to Amtrak long-distance service.

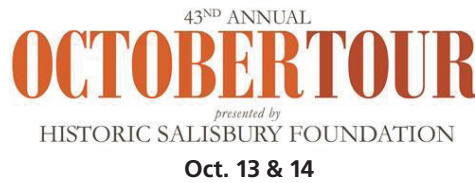


Get on Board for Fall Fun!

With 7 stations between Charlotte and Raleigh, plus four daily round trips, it's easier than ever to take the train to your next adventure!



Oct. 5-7 at the Transportation Museum in Spencer. Ride NC By Train to Salisbury and catch the trolley to the museum.



NC By Train will make its annual "Special Stop" for the BBQ Festival on Oct. 27. Use city code LEX when purchasing tickets.

Ride the Carolinian to the State Fair! Buy tickets at NCByTrain.org

The special stop (city code NSF) is on Blue Ridge Road across from Gate 1 at the fairgrounds.



Visit BeRailSafe and Operation Lifesaver at the N.C. State Fair

BeRailSafe and Operation Lifesaver will be Safety City at the N.C. State Fair again this year to share important rail safety information.



Score a Touchdown by Riding NC By Train to Carolina Panther Games

Passengers headed to the 1 p.m. Sunday home games can take *Piedmont* Train 73 from any of the eight stations along the corridor to arrive in Charlotte at 9:40 a.m. *Piedmont* Train 78 departs Charlotte at 7 p.m.

While Trains 75 and 76 also make trips to and from Charlotte, please be aware that train Train 75 arrives in Charlotte shortly after the game starts and Train 76 departs before the game is finished.

Train tickets can be purchased at NCByTrain.org.



NC BY Train passengers can request a Transit Pass from the conductor to travel by CATS bus from the Charlotte Amtrak Station to the Charlotte Transportation Center in Uptown near the football stadium. The pass is valid for one ride and one transfer. For the trip back to the train station, bus fare is \$2.20. Please bring exact fare as drivers do not have change. Or, you can download the CATS Pass mobile app to purchase bus and LYNX tickets online. Visit RideTransit.org for more info about CATS.

Timeline for train arrivals and departures compared to game time.



Ridership & Revenue on NC By Train Service – June 2018 vs. 2017

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2018	2017	% +/-	2018	2017	% +/-
<i>Piedmont</i>	14,294	10,824	32%	\$326,665	233,228	40%
<i>Carolinian</i>	21,367	25,691	-17%	\$1,458,825	\$1,726,843	-16%

1,272



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

June 2018 service modifications affected six *Carolinian* trains. On June 6, 10 and 11, Trains 79 and 80 operated between Charlotte and Rocky Mount only due to CSX track and signal work in Virginia. *Piedmont* trains 77 and 78 began service on June 4. No other service modifications or annulments affected *Piedmont* trains in June. Average gasoline prices remained low in June 2018, but were 44¢ per gallon higher than in June 2017.

NCDOT Rail Division Receives Smart Fleet Champion Award at the Sustainable Fleet Technology Conference and Expo

The 12th annual North Carolina Mobile Clean Air Renewable Energy (CARE) and NC Smart Fleet award winners were announced on Aug. 23 at the 2018 Sustainable Fleet Technology Conference & Expo held at the Durham Convention Center. Award winners were recognized for their commitment and accomplishments in reducing petroleum use, thus reducing CO2 emissions and other harmful emissions, and for their fleet sustainability practices.

The NCDOT Rail Division received a Smart Fleet Champion award for their emissions reduction accomplishments on the NCDOT *Piedmont* locomotive fleet using a retrofitted selective catalytic reduction system, known as Blended After-Treatment System (BATS). The BATS system treats locomotive engine exhaust with diesel exhaust fluid prior to its release into the environment, significantly reducing the emissions to a level that is compliant with, and in some cases better than the EPA's most stringent requirements for air pollution. The system was EPA certified in February.

The Rail Division's Mechanical Engineering Team, McDowell Engineers & Associates, developed this system in conjunction with Rail Propulsion Systems of Fullerton, CA. The team has been working on this technology since Summer 2015 and hopes to achieve fleetwide implementation within the next few years.



NCDOT Rail Division Mechanical Engineering Contractor Lynn Harris, right, of McDowell Engineers, accepts 2018 Smart Fleet Champion Award

This is the first year that the NCDOT Rail Division has received this prestigious award. NC Smart Fleet Champion award winners also included BuildSense, City of Charlotte, City of Durham, Epes Transport System LLC, Orange County, Town of Cary, and UNC Charlotte.

NC Smart Fleet Leader Award winners included Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, City of Winston-Salem, Durham City Transit Company, Gaston County and GoTriangle.

The awards are given by the N.C. Clean Energy Technology Center with support from the N.C. Department of Transportation.

NCDOT and Town of Landis Complete Safety and Accessibility Improvements at Ryder Avenue



Improvements at Central Avenue and Ryder Street

The NCDOT Rail Division and Division of Highways partnered with the Town of Landis on a project to improve safety and accessibility at the Ryder Street crossing in the downtown business district. Both vehicular and pedestrian needs were addressed, and access to Central Avenue was improved for economic development. The Rail Division Design and Construction team developed and managed the project. Norfolk Southern Railway modified the existing two-quadrant gated system to four-quadrant gates at the crossing. Highway Division 9 constructed a traffic signal with ADA-compliant pedestrian features and curb bulb-outs at Ryder Avenue's intersection with Central Avenue.

NCDOT, the Aberdeen, Carolina and Western and Blue Ridge Southern Railroad Make Crossing Safety Improvements

The NCDOT Rail Division, Division 8, and the Aberdeen Carolina and Western Railroad partnered to improve a major highway crossing in Montgomery County on NC 24/27 in Biscoe. This very busy crossing has considerable truck traffic. The crossing consisted of concrete panels that were deteriorating, making for a poor ride and also causing issues with the crossing signal equipment. It was replaced with a long-lasting concrete tub crossing which provides a low-maintenance surface and a smooth ride for motorists.



Additionally the Rail Division, Division 14, and the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad improved a crossing in Haywood County on Jones Cove Road near Clyde. This was a two-lane rail seal and asphalt crossing. This road has considerable truck traffic to and from a nearby landfill. The existing asphalt and rail seal were replaced with new rail seal and asphalt, providing a much better ride for the traffic on this road.



Hilltop Drive before improvements



Jones Cove Road before improvements



Hilltop Drive after improvements



Jones Cove Road after improvements

October Railroad Trivia Answer:

The first fairgrounds were located on a 16-acre tract of land between East Hargett and East Davie streets within a mile of the State Capitol. Opening day was October 18, 1853. The North Carolina Railroad, and the Raleigh and

Gaston Railroad with connections to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad offered visitors reduced fares and transported goods to be exhibited at the Fair for free. This practice continued well into the twentieth century.

Source: *The North Carolina State Fair, The First 150 Years*