

NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



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NCDOT Rail Division Receives Federal Grant for Passenger Rail Upgrades

The Federal Railroad Administration has awarded the department's Rail Division with a \$76.9 million grant as part of the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program, the largest award of this program. The grant will support the purchase of a fleet of new coaches to phase out the oldest cars in the *Piedmont* passenger service fleet and allow for more frequent service options in the future. Currently six *Piedmont* trains operate daily between Raleigh and Charlotte, with seven additional stations in cities and towns along the way.

"With the support of our Federal partners, we will be able to modernize our passenger fleet," said NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon. "Communities between Charlotte and Raleigh that are connected by passenger rail will benefit from this enhancement."

The project also includes the construction of additional improvements to the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility in Charlotte that supports the *Piedmont* service. Detailed planning and engineering will begin once a contract agreement has been signed with the Federal Railroad Administration.

With this award, the department's Rail Division has received nearly \$143 million since 2018 in competitive federal grant funding to support freight, safety and passenger rail programs.



NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon to Serve as Chairman of National Rail Council



The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has appointed Secretary Jim Trogdon to a two-year term as chair of the Council on Rail Transportation (CORT).

In receiving this appointment, Secretary Trogdon is recognized for leading one of the nation's premier rail programs.

CORT addresses all policy, regulatory, safety, operations and investment issues related to the roles states play in developing efficient national freight and passenger rail systems. CORT serves as the rail representative for the AASHTO Freight Transportation Network and Special Committee on Intermodal Transportation and Economic Expansion.

Members of CORT include all AASHTO participating transportation departments.



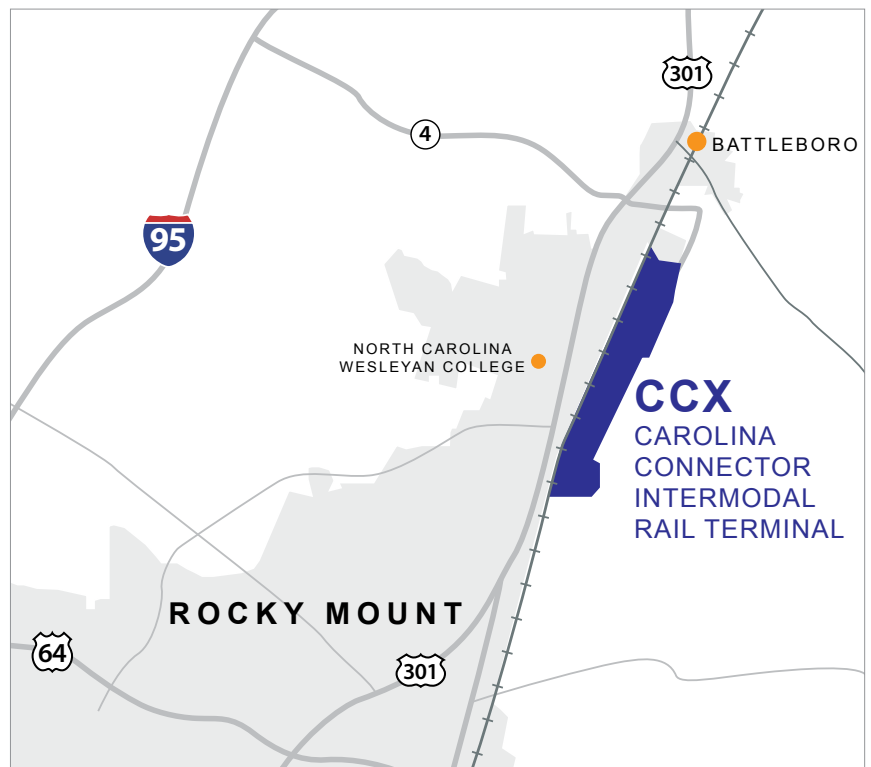
Construction Underway for the CSX Carolina Connector Intermodal Terminal

With all permits and approvals in hand, construction work is underway on CSX’s newest intermodal terminal in Rocky Mount. The facility will provide regional industries with convenient access to rail, helping connect products to consumers nationwide.

Located just five miles off I-95 and 60 miles northeast of Raleigh and the Triangle, the terminal will provide convenient truck access to local and regional markets. Shippers will benefit from its strategic location on the CSX mainline.

The Carolina Connector terminal will feature three wide-span, zero emission electric cranes with a combined lift capacity of 110,000 containers per year. The majority of container handling will be completely automatic with operators remotely controlling the initial lift and final placement from inside the terminal building. The facility will also feature an innovative operating system and automated gate technology that minimizes truck idle time.

Construction of the terminal is anticipated to be completed in late 2020.



September Trivia Question: Q: Why are the *Carolinian* and *Piedmont* locomotives referred to as “diesel-electric” locomotives?
See answer on page 2.

NCDOT and North Carolina Ports Partner to Reconstruct Tracks to enhance Intermodal Service to Port of Wilmington

The Freight Rail & Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) program provided matching funds for a track modernization project at the Port of Wilmington which was completed in July 2019. The project was developed as part of an intermodal rail strategy between NC Ports and NCDOT's Rail Division. The project reconstructed Tracks 1 and 18 to expand intermodal service at the Port. These tracks are dedicated to building intermodal trains on the Port terminal.

The Queen City Express (QCE), NC Port's intermodal rail service between the Port of Wilmington and Charlotte, started operations in July 2017. The service was designed to be a once a week round-trip service between Wilmington and the NC Ports intermodal facility in Charlotte. The service was so successful that in July 2019 the NC Ports and CSX finalized an agreement to offer a new, expanded intermodal product. The Track 1 and 18 intermodal rail project is one of several infrastructure projects which will support intermodal capabilities at the Port.

Daily intermodal service to Charlotte from the Port expands the market available to the Port's current customers and the presence of a viable intermodal service has been a catalyst for attracting new ocean carriers to the Port. In fiscal year 2019, more than 4,000 containers were moved by QCE. The service is projected to move 11,000 containers this fiscal year, growing



Track 1 completed

up to 15,000 containers by fiscal year 2022. This translates into environmental and cost savings, safety for the traveling public and also congestion savings across the state.

“North Carolina Ports is proud to partner with NCDOT on critical infrastructure projects like the Track 1 and 18 intermodal rail project. This important project will have many immediate and long-term benefits including job creation, improved safety, and economic development growth,” said Paul J. Cozza, Executive Director, North Carolina Ports.

FRRCSI projects such as this help make North Carolina businesses more competitive by reducing transportation costs, enhancing supply chain efficiency and reducing highway congestion by diverting freight to rail.

NC Operation Lifesaver and BeRailSafe participate in Gibsonville's “National Night Out!”



Tuesday, Aug. 6, was *National Night Out*. Communities across the nation gathered to share emergency responder and safety information – and to have a good time. NC By Train Volunteer Host Ken Norris and N.C. Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator Margaret Cannell represented rail safety in Gibsonville.

Participants were able to visit Gibsonville's Historic Mail Car and see how the mail was delivered “back in the day.” NC By Train's *Piedmont* made a “special guest appearance” right on time at around 7 p.m., and underscored the need to respect the train and the crossing. NCOL handed out coloring books, junior conductor stickers and fans.

National Night Out is a great community experience and BeRailSafe and NC Operation Lifesaver appreciated the opportunity to share safety information in a railroad town.

September Railroad Trivia Answer:

The locomotive pulling a NCDOT passenger train has a large diesel engine that generates high voltage electricity which is transmitted to an electric traction motor on each locomotive axle. The electric traction motor is what actually propels the locomotive, thus it is the combination of a diesel engine and electricity that moves our passenger trains.



Photo by Andrew Bryant Futrell

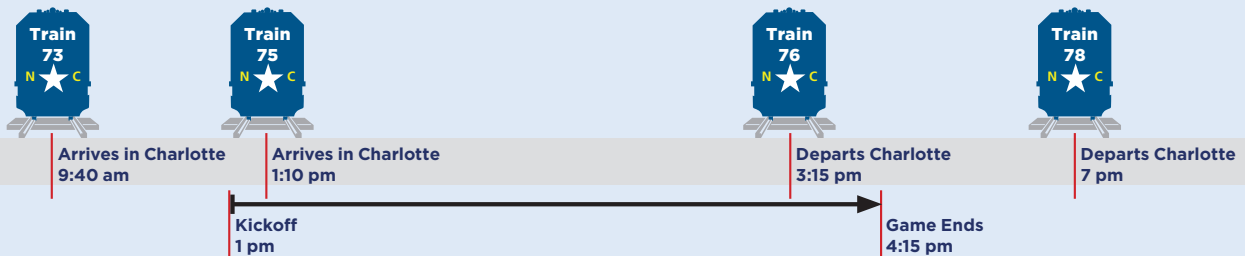


Score a Touchdown by Riding NC By Train to Carolina Panther Games

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.

Timeline for train arrivals and departures compared to game time.



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.

Ridership & Revenue on NC By Train Service – May 2019 vs. 2018

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2019	2018	% +/-	2019	2018	% +/-
<i>Piedmont</i>	20,725	11,500	80%	\$382,496	\$266,446	44%
<i>Carolinian</i>	22,742	22,757	0%	\$1,490,308	\$1,423,194	5%

1,178
Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in May supporting NC By Train onboard and at events

In May 2019 service modifications affected two *Piedmont* trains and one *Carolinian* train. All other *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* trains ran as scheduled.

Charlotte Gateway Station – Phase I Construction Update



Bridge construction at Trade Street



Bridge construction at 6th Street



Grading between 6th and 7th Streets



Bridge construction over pedestrian walkway



Bridge construction at 5th Street

NCDOT, Chesapeake & Albemarle and Carolina Coastal Railroads Improve Crossings

This month's featured crossing improvements are on the Chesapeake & Albemarle Railroad in Perquimans County, and the Carolina Coastal Railroad in Wilson County.

The timber and asphalt crossing surface of the Chesapeake & Albemarle crossing on East Bear Swamp Road was in very poor condition, meaning drivers had to maneuver around the bolts sticking up above the top of the deteriorating timbers. The new surface is a modern rubber rail seal and asphalt surface which provides a smoother ride for vehicles using the crossing. NCDOT Division 1, Perquimans County Maintenance and the Rail Division assisted with this crossing improvement.

The Carolina Coastal crossing on Evansdale Road near Wilson was also a deteriorated timber and asphalt crossing

surface with missing timbers, requiring drivers to slow down to cross the track. This surface was replaced with rubber rail seal and asphalt, making the surface smooth and no longer requiring drivers to slow down over the crossing. NCDOT Division 4 and Wilson County Maintenance assisted the Rail Division with the project.



East Bear Swamp Road crossing before improvements



Donald Mercer Road crossing before improvements



East Bear Swamp Road crossing after improvements



Donald Mercer Road crossing after improvements

Rail Division Retirement

Ann Wease retired on July 29 after 15 years of service to the NCDOT Rail Division where she worked in both the Crossing Safety Engineering Unit and the Contracts Office. While working in contract services, Ann supported the pre-qualification process and evaluated applicant firms. She also onboarded interns, getting them on the right track for a future rail career. In the Crossing Safety Engineering Unit, Ann supported a team of signalized crossing inspectors and managed the maintenance payments for signalized crossings.

Ann's selfless service, professionalism, loyalty and dedication have contributed greatly to the overall success of the Rail Division. We wish her much happiness in her retirement.



Rail Director Jason Orthner presents the Golden Spike award to Ann Wease