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NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



December 2015

Governor McCrory Announces \$25 Million TIGER Grant for Charlotte Gateway Station

Governor Pat McCrory announced that North Carolina has secured a \$25 million grant for the Charlotte Gateway Station project, a vital passenger rail connection for our state.

"This announcement is fantastic news for the Charlotte region and our state," Governor McCrory said. "As mayor of Charlotte, this station was a major part of our 25-year transportation vision and served as an important recruiting tool to attract Johnson and Wales University, which helped revitalize the Trade Street corridor in Charlotte."

The N.C. Department of Transportation obtained the grant, part of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary program, to expand transit options for North Carolinians. NCDOT is partnering with the City of Charlotte on this project.

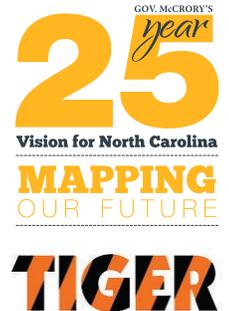
The 2015 TIGER grant will be used to fund Phase I of the project, the design and construction of critical track and safety work which will

lay the foundation for the future transit center and improving planned freight operations.

"This is a significant step forward for better connections and more transportation choices for our workforce," Governor McCrory said.

"We know companies want to locate where it's easy to move people and products and where their employees can enjoy a greater quality of life, which includes access to transit."

In 2014, NCDOT secured a \$200,000 TIGER grant to develop transit options along the Piedmont corridor, including projects such as the Charlotte Gateway Station. "We are committed to improving and expanding transportation in North Carolina, and Charlotte Gateway Station is a prime example of that commitment," said NCDOT Secretary Nick Tennyson.



State-owned Piedmont and Northern Railroad in Gaston County Launches Service with a New Operator – Piedmont Railway

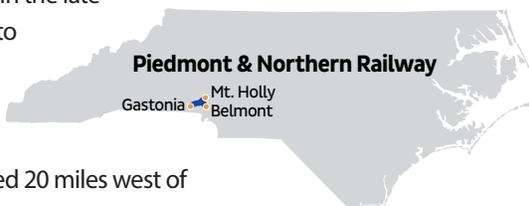
Following a competitive solicitation for proposals for an operator of the state-owned Piedmont & Northern railroad in Gaston County, NCDOT has selected a subsidiary of Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC as the ideal candidate. Piedmont Railway will operate, maintain, market freight service, and explore opportunities for tourist excursions on the line that stretches between Gastonia and Mount Holly.

"This is an exciting step forward for Gaston County and the Piedmont & Northern Rail Corridor. Improving freight service along the railroad will support new and existing economic development and create new job opportunities in the area," said Keith Weatherly, NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit. "NCDOT and Gaston County have committed time, money and effort to this project and we look forward to having Iowa Pacific as our new partner."

NCDOT purchased the 13-mile line after CSX proposed its abandonment in the late 1980s in order to

preserve this important transportation

corridor. Located 20 miles west of Charlotte, the line currently serves 2 customers and features strategic interchanges with both Class I



railroads in NC, Norfolk Southern at Gastonia and CSX at Mount Holly. NCDOT and Iowa Pacific will work together to maintain and improve the P&N Railroad to ensure its success.



NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit Keith Weatherly speaks to the crowd at the service launch held on November 10th in Ranlo.



Rail Director Paul Worley (left) and Joe Carpenter, Vice Chair of the Gaston County Commissioners (right) assist Iowa Pacific President Ed Ellis with the ribbon cutting.

Piedmont Railway will run its first tourist excursions this holiday season on select dates between November 27 and December 27.

*For information on **The Train to Christmas Town**, visit: www.traintochristmastown.com for more information*

2016 SOUTHEAST RAIL FORUM

March 16-18 | Charlotte, NC

www.2016srf.org

SAVE THE DATE

Planning for Change; Preparing for Success

The NCDOT Rail Division and the Triangle Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) are planning a regional rail forum to discuss ongoing freight and passenger rail initiatives in the Southeast. The Southeast Rail Forum will be held on March 16-18, 2016 in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Sheraton Hotel. Agenda planning is underway to ensure a broad spectrum of issues related to high performance passenger, intermodal, and freight rail are discussed.

The forum sessions are anticipated to highlight the drivers and needs for rail to support our growing region and economy, the positive economic impacts of passenger and freight rail operations and investments, ongoing initiatives and associated challenges, and governance issues on how to fund projects across state lines. Transportation officials, legislators, Federal Railroad Administration staff, railroads, Chambers of Commerce, MPOs, transit agencies, and other industry experts will discuss projects and strategies that can assist in developing a vision and method to deliver better freight and passenger services to the growing population and economy in the Southeast.

Major Track and Structure Improvements Coming for NCVA Railroad

In October, members of the Rail Planning group met with representatives from the US Army Corps of Engineers and Genesee & Wyoming, Inc.



to review planned improvements to multiple bridges and drainage structures along the North Carolina and Virginia Railroad (NCVA). NCVA is one of four railroads operated by G&W in the state. It connects steel and plastics manufacturers of northeastern NC to the ports of VA through connections with CSX and Norfolk Southern. The Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Program (FRRCSI) is partially funding the rehabilitation of fifteen bridges along the approximately 50 miles of the railroad in NC. Track upgrades and rehabilitation of the Meherrin River bridge span will be funded through a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant as well as matching state funds.

Raleigh Union Station Project on Track for Construction to Begin

Another hurdle has been cleared to allow construction to begin for Raleigh Union Station with the completion of Tryon Siding in South Raleigh. This siding replaces the yard capacity in downtown Raleigh and allows for the construction of station tracks for the new Raleigh Union Station. The City of Raleigh is working to execute contracts in order to begin construction on the station as soon as possible.



NCDOT Rail Director Paul Worley and Secretary Nick Tennyson sign the pledge to BeRailSafe at the 2015 NC State Fair.

NC State Fair Display Encourages Citizens to BeRailSafe

N.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Nick Tennyson visited the BeRailSafe booth at the N.C. State Fair to sign a pledge stating his commitment to rail safety. The pledge encourages people not to trespass on railroad tracks, to cross them only at public crossings and to look both ways to be sure a train is not coming.

"Railroad safety is an important message that we want to share with all North Carolinians," said Secretary Tennyson. "I welcome everyone here to join me in signing this pledge to be safe around railroad tracks."

Fairgoers were invited to stop by and sign the pledge, which was displayed at the BeRailSafe booth at NCDOT's Safety City, sponsored by NCDOT's Governor's Highway Safety Program.

Trespassing on railroad tracks is dangerous and illegal. Walking on or along railroad tracks in North Carolina without the consent of the railroad company is a misdemeanor. It can also be deadly – already this year, 21 people have been killed while walking on railroad tracks across the state.



The *Piedmont* train schedule coincides with December 13 and January 3 Panthers home games. Visit www.ncbytrain.org today to book your ticket.



Carolina Panthers Game Day Helps Piedmont Break Ridership Record

Piedmont ridership hit an all-time high of 941 passengers for the day on Sunday, November 8th. Panther's fans helped fill 242 seats on train 73 and 341 seats on 76. Mid-day trips carried 188 passengers on train 74 and 170 on train 75.

Hats off to RailPlan, our mechanical contractor, for fielding the extra coaches. A "well done" to Amtrak for all the great on-board and station side handling of the trains and passengers. Reports are that we had a lot of very pleased customers.

NC State Fair Stop Popular with Riders!
3,947 passengers took advantage of the special NSF stop across the street from the NC State Fairgrounds.



Special Stop for Lexington Barbecue Festival Breaks Ridership Records

North Carolina's Amtrak made special stops in Lexington for the city's renowned 32nd Annual Barbecue Festival on Saturday, Oct. 24. This year's event broke ridership records, with 709 passengers traveling by train to attend the festival. NC's Amtrak has been stopping at the Barbecue Festival since 1995.

Cheerwine and NC Peanuts Now Available on Piedmont Trains

Anyone who has ridden the *Piedmont* has seen a North Carolina theme woven throughout the trip. From locomotives named for major cities and numbered for the date of incorporation to coaches named for state symbols and lounge cars for the state's largest bodies of water, our trains are North Carolina through and through. Now two North Carolina favorites – Cheerwine and peanuts – are available in vending machines on our lounge cars. Special thanks to NC Agriculture and the NC Peanut Growers Association for helping the Rail Division to get local products on NC trains.



Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – *Sept. 2015 vs. 2014

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	12,297	13,246	-7%	\$259,146	\$272,002	-5%
Carolinian	21,707	22,210	-2%	\$1,320,684	\$1,329,931	-1%

*September 2015 service modifications and annulments impacted four *Piedmont* trains and one *Carolinian* train due to PIP construction. On September 28, all *Piedmont* trains were annulled and Train 80 originated in Durham. In addition, on September 26 Train 73 suffered engine failure between Burlington and Greensboro; passengers were bused to destinations, Train 74 was cancelled, and Train 80 was delayed providing rescue service. In September 2014, there were no annulments. Additional disruptions for PIP project work are expected between September and December 2015. Average gasoline prices were \$2.29/gallon in September, 2015 vs. \$3.42/gallon in September, 2014 (EIA Weekly Retail Gasoline for Lower Atlantic region).

Bikes on Board Service Expands

Walk-up bike service is now available at all train stations served by the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* trains. All baggage cars have racks to accommodate up to six unboxed bicycles. Reservations for a bike rack space must be made when tickets are purchased. At stations between Charlotte and Raleigh, there is no handling fee. From Selma, NC, north to New York City on *Carolinian* Trains 79 and 80 there is a \$20 handling fee.

How to Reserve a Space for your Bicycle

- When buying your ticket online, click on "View Upgrade Options" and follow the directions to reserve your bike space.
- When buying your ticket via 1-800-USA-RAIL or in person at an Amtrak staffed station the Amtrak agent will assist you with your bike space reservation.

Getting your Bike Ready for the Trip

- All bikes must have a completed baggage tag on handlebars.
- Loaded saddlebags must be removed and handled as carry-on luggage or checked baggage.
- If racks are full, bikes can still be transported, but must be boxed, checked as baggage and a checked baggage fee may be charged.

Visit amtrak.com/bring-your-bicycle-onboard for boxed bike info.

At the Station

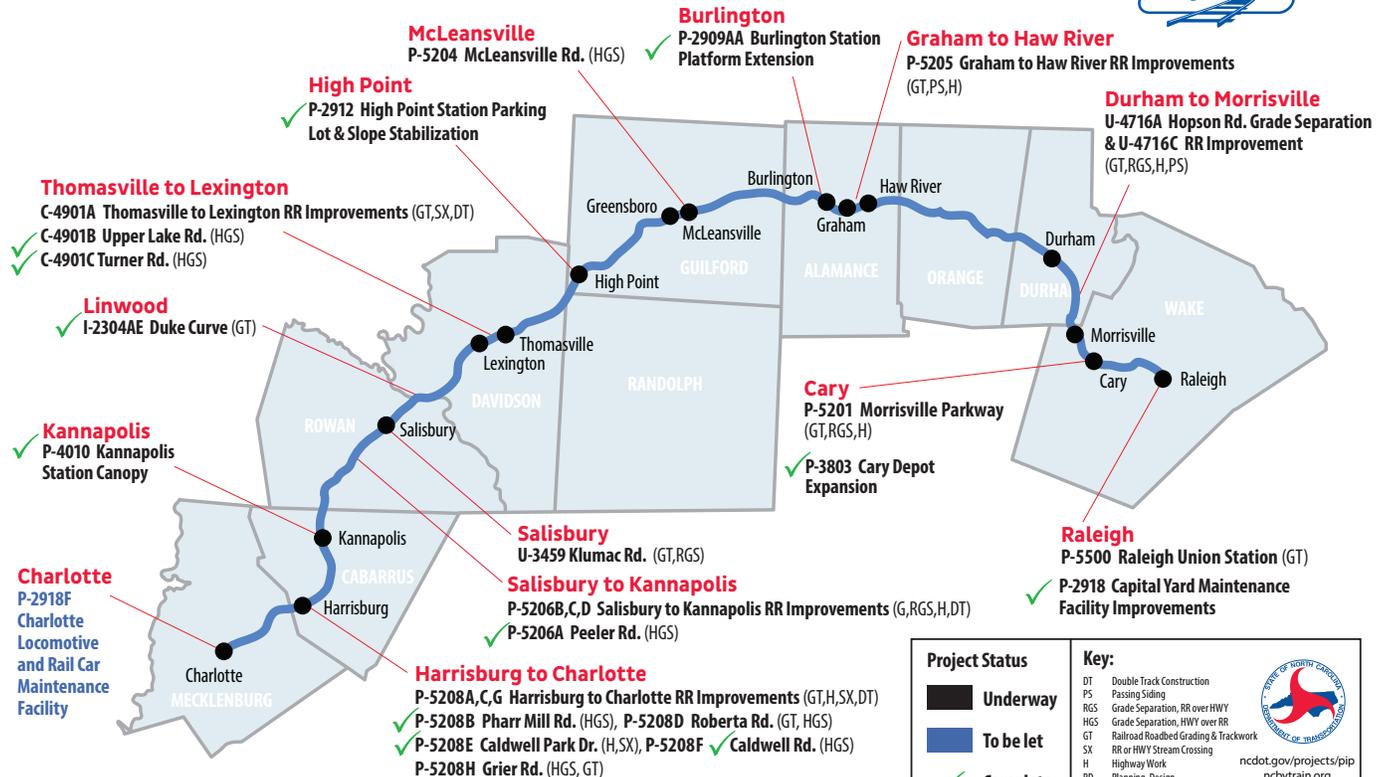
- Check in with the station staff at least 20 minutes prior to departure time.
- Keep bike with you until boarding time.
- When the train arrives, hand the bike up to the conductor at the baggage car door. The conductor will secure it in the bike rack.
- When you get to your destination, reclaim your bike at the baggage car door.



950 Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in September, supporting North Carolina's Amtrak onboard trains and at events.



Piedmont Improvement Program – October 2015 Status Report



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 10/31/2015)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$48,279,932
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$26,933,812
Stations & Facilities	\$38,397,186
Track & Structures	\$ 213,975,063
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$329,766,369

Nine new contracts totaling \$208,551 were awarded in October.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 10/31/2015)

Current Commitments		\$471M
Pending Commitments	Anticipated Date	\$42.7M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	3/16	\$33M
PIDS Construction	1/16	\$1.5M
PD&A	Through '16	\$8.2M
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP Milestones

Salisbury – Both new main tracks were put into service across the new railroad bridge over Klumac Road on November 1 and 2. Removal of the double track detour is underway. The completion of this work allows road construction to continue underneath the new bridge.

Graham – Completion of track and roadway work at the Pomeroy Street grade crossing allowed the reopening of the roadway on October 23. The new double track crossing has a much-improved roadway profile across the railroad and features medians to channelize traffic across the crossing.



Raleigh – The Tryon Road siding located in South Raleigh was placed into service on October 16. This new 1.4 mile siding replaces yard capacity in downtown Raleigh and will allow for the construction of the station tracks for the new Raleigh Union Station.

Piedmont Improvement Program and Congestion Mitigation Project Photos October 2015



Congestion Mitigation Project, CP Armstrong



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, bridge construction



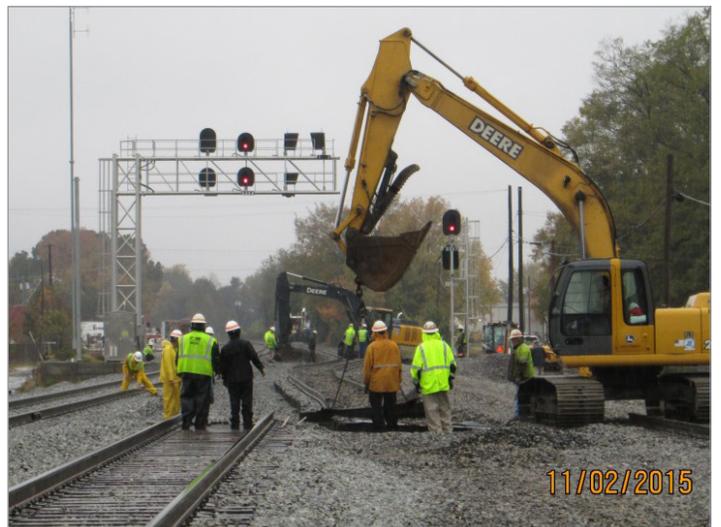
U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, sub-ballast



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, track construction



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, Abbotts Creek bridge construction



U-3459 Klumac Road, final track construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos

October 2015



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, track construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, grading



P-5208A Haydock to Junker, Rocky River Bridge Construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Grier Road area grading



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, arch culvert construction



P-5500C Tryon Siding, complete CP "South Raleigh"