

Rail Division Projects make the Draft Statewide Funding Level in STI



Safety improvements were made to Rogers Lake grade crossing until it can be replaced by a STI funded grade separation

The Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) released the P4.0 preliminary scores to the public on April 13, 2016 for projects that would be funded at the statewide level. This is the first step in drafting the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for 2021-2027. The next step in the selection process is assigning points to projects that are eligible to receive funding at the regional level. Local input points are now being assigned to projects at the regional level through June 30th. After the projects are selected for the regional level, the SPOT office will then look to have local input points assigned to projects at the division Level. The division level is the final step in the selection of the draft STIP.

The Rail Division received funding for three projects at the statewide level. Rogers Lake Road Grade Separation, a long sought after project in Kannapolis that has been in the planning stages since 1997, was selected. This project will replace one of the busiest at-grade crossings in Cabarrus County with a grade separation. ROW plan development is currently under way with funding that was previously allocated to the project from FHWA and the Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) fund. Hilltop Road Grade Separation project, in Greensboro, was the next project selected. This project will eliminate a busy at-grade crossing on the NS Main line with a grade separation. The highest scoring project is the CSX Carolina Connector Intermodal facility, which is currently under site selection and planning.

\$5 Kids Fare

This year NC By Train along with Amtrak will offer the \$5 Kids Fare program. This campaign will begin May 1 and run through August. This offer will be eligible for travel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays only and is available on the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* (travel to/from all cities within North Carolina). This offer is valid for a \$5 rail fare for up to 2 children ages 2 – 12 accompanied by a paid adult regular (full) fare ticket. Children must travel with adult at all times and is available only for coach seating. **Tickets may be purchased through [NC By Train](#) using promotional code V765.**



Durham Train Station Makes Top Ten List

Amtrak released the Top Ten Stations list for the last six months, based on national Customer Satisfaction Index scores over the past six months. The Durham Station was second on the list. Congratulations to the Amtrak staff for your hard work and dedication to passengers.



Baseball Season Starts Up Along Rail Corridor



The Rail Division's Customer Service Unit is getting ready for baseball and other exciting events this spring and summer. We will be tabling

more than 20 baseball games as well as attending and/or sponsoring events such as Hello Huntersville, Cary Train Day, Cary Lazy Daze and Battle of the Bands to name a few.

Please mark your calendar for NC By Train Game Night with the Durham Bulls on June 23. Game starts at 7:05 pm.



New Student Discount Program

Now students can save 15 percent year-round on the train travel. This offer is available for students between the ages of 17 – 25. No code is needed, but a valid student photo ID is required upon request. Student reservations required a minimum of 3 days prior to travel.

*Out and about:
Rolling
advertisement
for NC By Train
and the new
Go. Reconnect.
campaign.*



Train Host Milestones



Hats off to Volunteer Train Host Bill Cole. This year marks his 25th year of service to the NC Train Host Association.

Bill has served in many positions in the organization, including dispatcher, vice president, president and Charlotte station host coordinator. In addition to hosting onboard the trains and at the Charlotte station, he has been present at station dedications, for

demonstration trains and many special events. While president of the association, he was instrumental in finalizing insurance for train hosts. Bill has worked hard to build the organization and comradery among the volunteers. Many Sunday afternoons he hosted gatherings for the hosts at his home.

Bill has worked hard to build awareness of and ridership on North Carolina's passenger rail service. Being a retired history teacher, he especially loves to help other teachers to plan field trips and sharing his knowledge to making the trips memorable for the teachers, children and the chaperones.

In addition to riding North Carolina's trains, Bill has traveled around the United States on Amtrak several times and even lead trips for the hosts to Chicago, New Orleans and Washington. If you participate in NC Transportation Museum, NRHS or CAPT excursions, expect to see Bill there too.

We commend Bill for his dedication and hard work to support NC By Train over the past 25 years. Thank you for all that you do!



Bill Cole being interviewed by reporter at Greensboro Station Dedication in 2005

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – *Mar. 2016 vs. 2015

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2016	2015	% +/-	2016	2015	% +/-
Piedmont	14,267	14,624	-2%	\$296,926	\$304,716	-3%
Carolinian	25,467	25,895	-2%	\$1,549,135	\$1,641,019	-6%

1,417



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

***March 2016 service modifications and annulments impacted four Piedmont trains.** On Mar. 14, Trains 74 and 75 were annulled, Train 73 terminated at Kannapolis, and Train 76 originated at Kannapolis to accommodate CATS project work. Additional disruptions for PIP project work will continue to occur as necessary through completion of the project. Average gasoline prices were \$0.42/gallon lower in Mar. 2016 than in Mar. 2015 (EIA Weekly Retail Gasoline for Lower Atlantic region).

Upcoming Special Train Stops

Raleigh – North Carolina State Fair

Carolinian trains 80 and 79 will make special stops at the Blue Ridge Road grade crossing Oct. 14 - 23, 2016.

Lexington Barbeque Festival

Carolinian and *Piedmont* trains will also be stopping in Lexington on Oct. 22 for the annual Lexington BBQ Festival.



Kannapolis Station Connectivity Study

This study focuses on improving connectivity to and from the Kannapolis Train Station. Utilizing the rail service at the Kannapolis Train Station will be more appealing to passengers if the ease of the “first mile” and “last mile” of their trip is improved. This study considers the obstacles and opportunities for the following transportation modes: Pedestrian, Bicycle, Personal Automobile, Transit and Private Providers.

This was the first Connectivity Study performed by the Rail Division with local stakeholders along the Rail Corridor. The Kannapolis Station Connectivity Study will serve as a template to perform additional connectivity studies at other stations between Raleigh and Charlotte. The next Connectivity Study will be performed in Salisbury.



March 2016 *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* Passenger On-Offs at the Kannapolis Station was 1,875 – 27% higher than March 2015.

Piedmont Locomotive Program wins Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant

A grant for \$102,500 has been awarded to the NCDOT Rail Division by the NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to acquire a diesel particulate filter which will be used as part of the prototype Blended Aftertreatment System (BATS) to reduce emissions levels on one NCDOT locomotive to near EPA Tier 4 levels. The Rail Division would like to thank DEQ for their continued support and partnership in working towards reducing our locomotive emissions.

Pets Now Permitted on NC By Train



Passengers are now permitted to travel aboard the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* with small cats and dogs for a \$25 fee. Some key parts of the new guidelines include:

- Only one pet per passenger is allowed.
- Pets must be at least eight weeks old and weigh a maximum of 20 pounds, including their carrier.
- The maximum size for pet carriers is

19” long x 14” wide by 10.5” high.

- Pets must be up to date on all vaccinations.
- Cats and dogs are the only pets allowed.

View [Amtrak's webpage](#) for more information on the pet policy.

Alexander Railroad's Ben Zachary completes 4th Boston Marathon

Ben Zachary, General Manager of the Alexander Railroad, completed the 2016 Boston Marathon in April. “... I am home with my finishing medal from the 120th Boston Marathon run on Monday! As expected, it was an exhilarating experience! Crowds were enormous and the loudest I can recall from my four years there.”

He ran with the charity team, MR8, which supports the Martin W. Richard Charitable Foundation, which invests in education, athletics and community. It was formed by the parents of eight-year-old Richard Martin, who was killed in the bombings which occurred at the 2013 Marathon. The team raised more than \$750,000 in support of the foundation, of which Ben contributed over \$12,000 with his fundraising.



Above: Ben Zachary

Left: MR8 Team

2016 Short Line Infrastructure Assistance Program aims to maintain bridges

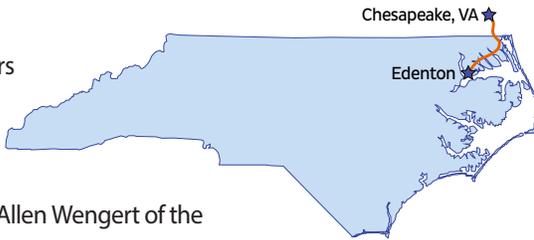
In early 2016, the North Carolina Board of Transportation approved matching funds totaling \$657,493.84 for the rehabilitation of bridges along the short line railroads of the state. The State Rail Plan identified \$35 million dollars in need through 2040 to maintain short line bridges, which are critical to the safety and reliability of regional freight networks. These repairs are an important step towards ensuring North Carolina's short line railroads continue to support job creation and economic development in rural communities. These projects are funded through the Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Program, funded by the General Assembly using dividends received from the North Carolina Railroad Company.



Repairing the historic Pasquotank River Swing Bridge

This April members of the NCDOT Rail Planning Division met

with Roadmaster Allen Wengert of the Chesapeake & Albemarle Railroad to review ongoing state funded infrastructure improvement projects and discuss future maintenance needs. Stretching between Chesapeake, VA and Edenton, NC this short line railroad is owned by the holding company Genesee & Wyoming, which owns more than 100 railroads in 5 countries. The Chesapeake & Albemarle serves primarily stone and chemical companies and has seen a surge of traffic as construction began last July on the Amazon Wind Farm in Perquimans and Pasquotank counties. In 2014 and 2015 NCDOT provided more



Pasquotank River Bridge – train crosses swing bridge

than \$500,000 in matching Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) funds to rehabilitate bridges and replace worn cross ties along the railroad's 68 miles of track. Through the Short line Infrastructure Assistance Program (SIAP) matching FRRCSI funds of \$178,300 have been committed in 2016 to rehabilitate a unique swing bridge spanning the Pasquotank River east of Elizabeth City. Although originally turned by hand, the bridge now requires repair to the motor that rotates the central span as well as the walkway spanning the length of the structure.



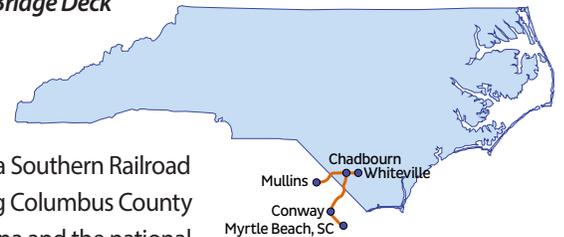
Surfacing crew making good use of FRRCSI dollars

Eastern NC short line reactivated with help from FR&RCSI program



Rehabilitated Bridge Deck

Freight service returned this April to the former Carolina Southern Railroad line connecting Columbus County to South Carolina and the national



rail network. Following years of disuse the R.J. Corman Railroad Group has invested millions of dollars to refurbish their latest acquisition, now known as R.J. Corman Carolina Lines. A 2015 state grant of \$350,000 in matching funds was used to rehabilitate ten bridges along the corridor, replace badly worn crossties, and resurface portions of the line from Chadbourn to the border with South Carolina. NCDOT Rail Planning

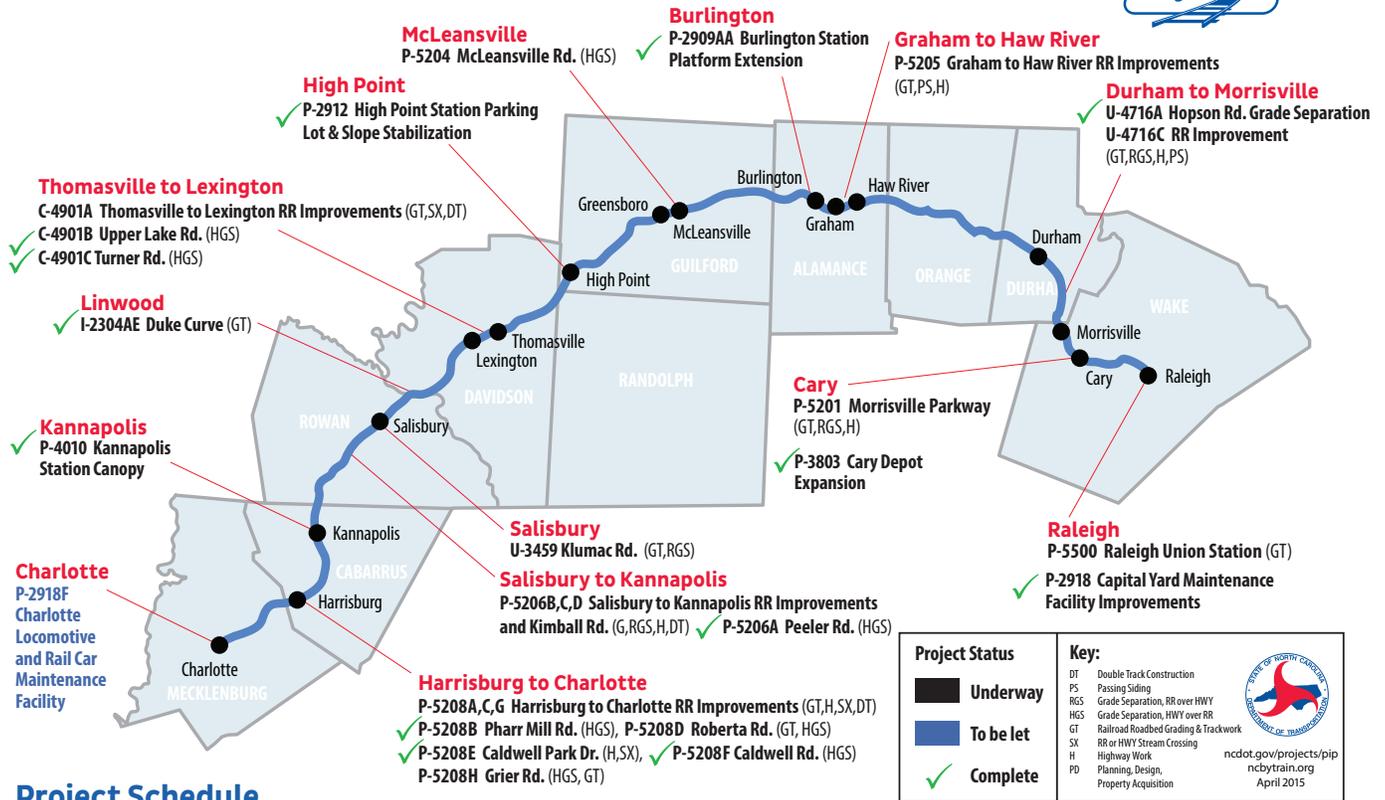
staff visited the renovated depot in Chadbourn this month to review the recent improvements made to date and discuss an upcoming Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) grant of \$415,625 in matching funds to repair several bridges and continue the cross tie replacement and surfacing program. R.J. Corman



New ties adjacent to badly worn highlights need for more funding

has been involved in industrial development efforts in the region, including preparations for the potential of a new industry occupying the former Georgia Pacific facility in Whiteville. Currently R.J. Corman runs two trains per week on the Mullins subdivision while work continues to reactivate the Conway subdivision, which terminates in Myrtle Beach, SC. Despite the significance of the recent improvements there remains a great need for additional funding to restore service to the entirety of this important rural railroad.

Piedmont Improvement Program – April 2016 Status Report



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 4/30/2016)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$50,877,008
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$28,219,594
Stations & Facilities	\$45,062,172
Track & Structures	\$267,834,378
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$394,173,528

Three new contracts totaling \$37,638 were awarded in April.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 4/30/2016)

Current Commitments		\$471M
Pending Commitments	Anticipated Date	\$42.7M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	5/16	\$33M
PIDS Construction (pending FRA approval)	5/16	\$1.5M
PD&A	Through '16	\$8.2M
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP and Congestion Mitigation Milestones



South Weldon: All turnouts at CP South Weldon, the last of three A-line double crossover projects, were placed in track on April 3. The crossover is scheduled to be placed fully in service in June. These turnouts will enable more efficient use of the capacity on the railroad for both freight and passenger trains.

Morrisville: The 1.5 mile main line realignment over the new Morrisville Parkway railroad bridge was cut in to service on May 2. Placement of the main track on the new bridge allows for removal of the existing track and the completion of the roadway under the bridge by late Summer.

Charlotte: The railroad bridge for future Mallard Creek Church Road extension was completed in April.

Piedmont Improvement Program – Project Photos – April 2016



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, track construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, signal work



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, erosion control



P-5204 McLeansville Road, bridge construction



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, Rich Fork Creek Bridge Construction



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track construction over Abbotts Creek

Piedmont Improvement Program – Congestion Mitigation – April 2016



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, track construction, China Grove



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, Kimball Road, bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Coddle Creek, bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Roberta Road bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, spiking



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, track construction