

NCDOT TPD NEWS



NCDOT Transportation Planning Division (TPD) Newsletter

November 2025

TPD Statewide Initiatives

Below is a list of current initiatives being undertaken by NCDOT.

Emergency Relief funding for Hurricane Helene

The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded North Carolina \$1.15 billion in additional Emergency Relief marking the largest single allocation to a state in the federal program's history. The funding brings total federal transportation aid for North Carolina's hurricane recovery to nearly \$2 billion. This was in response to Governor Stein's request in September for \$13.5 billion. Per his letter, North Carolina has yet to receive the dollars that Congress appropriated last December.

"We can meet the most urgent needs for western North Carolinians by:

- Substantially increasing CDBG-DR funding to expedite assistance for housing recovery, public infrastructure, and economic revitalization.
- Supporting small businesses, which are the economic foundation of the region, with grants or forgivable loans. According to a survey of affected small businesses, only one in seven were above pre-Helene revenue, with more than half of businesses below 80% of pre-Helene revenue levels.
- Ensuring resources are in place for expedited awards and disbursements to handle the current surge in demand for existing recovery programs.
- Replenishing the nation's Disaster Relief Fund (DRF), which is critical to timely local response to disasters and emergencies.
- Reforming FEMA to work better for people by focusing on permanent home repairs rather than just temporary restoration, streamlining its application process for survivors and local governments alike, and surging staffing to keep up with the pace of recovery.

The governor's entire letter can be read here:

<https://www.osbm.nc.gov/helene-federal-funding-request-sept-2025/open>

Freight Analysis Framework

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) released an updated version of its Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) commodity flow dataset, which now includes preliminary annual estimates for 2024 and final annual estimates for 2023. This version of the FAF (FAF 5.7) provides estimates of freight tonnage, value, and ton-miles by origin-destination pair of FAF regions, commodity type, and mode.

In addition, FAF5.7 includes improved estimates of foreign trade flows for 2024 by ground modes across the Canada and Mexico borders and of waterborne foreign trade flows. These improvements are applied to 2024 in this release and will be applied to previous years in upcoming releases. Updated annual estimates for 2024 will use the new FAF6 benchmark and will be available mid-2026.

FAF5.7 is available at <https://www.bts.gov/faf>

"Connecting people, products, and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability, and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina...."

- NCDOT Mission Statement

Safety News

Daylight Saving Time

This change can present challenges for drivers as it gets darker sooner, so many late afternoon commutes will be at dusk. There is also a high risk of vehicle-animal collisions, as behaviors change.

Deadliest Months

October through January are statistically the deadliest months on North Carolina's roads.

If there is an accident

- Contact State Highway Patrol
- Scrape away any snow or debris from the exhaust to prevent carbon monoxide build up inside the car.
- Stay in the car. Do not leave to search for assistance. You may become disoriented and lost in snow.
- Use a brightly colored cloth to attract attention of passing motorists who can help report your situation to law enforcement.

"Choose your heroes very carefully and then emulate them. You will never be perfect, but you can always be better."

- Warren E. Buffett

TPD Overall News

Traffic Forecast

U-2801A; Sweeten Creek Rd. – Underway

Widen a stretch of Sweeten Creek Road (U.S. 25A) in Asheville from two lanes to a four-lane divided roadway from Hendersonville Road (U.S. 25) to Rock Hill Road.

Contact Us

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Modal Growth 2024

Airport Passenger Service

According to the FAA, airplane boardings in NC grew on average 9% in 2024. Airlines continued adding additional international and nonstop flights in the past two years. Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU), for instance, doubled the number of nonstop international destinations. Charlotte Douglas International Airport increased passengers 10% in 2024 alone, jumping seven spots to the 7th ranks airport in America by passengers. Only Asheville and Fayetteville saw under 6.5% growth.

Growth in 2023 was even stronger. The state overall experienced 14% growth. Including Asheville at the top with 22.39% yoy growth, outpacing Raleigh (21.70%) and Charlotte (12.10%). There was more of a mix of results as three airports (Jacksonville, New Bern, and Concord) had negative growth.

NC By Train Ridership Continues to Grow

NC By Train continues to experience growth in the first half of 2025. The state-supported intercity passenger rail service saw an overall increase of 4% for NC By Train for the first half of 2025 compared to ridership for the first half of 2024. NC By Train has grown steadily, carrying 522,000 passengers in 2022, 641,000 passengers in 2023 and over 720,000 passengers in 2024.

2024 vs 2022 AADT

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) is collected at over 50,000 locations in the state, some annually some bi-annually. Data is released in the fall of the year after collection. FBRMPO and LOSRPO are predominantly counted on even years. When comparing only locations counted in 2022 and 2024, the region experienced an increase of 4.34% (2.15% per year). Meanwhile evaluating the entire state using the same technique, growth was 3.46% (1.71% per year).

NCDOT Cash Report

NCDOT Cash Watch Number Report for November 7, 2025, is \$2,309,448,731 in Unreserved Cash roughly split 50/50 between the Highway Fund and the Highway Trust Fund.