



Editor's Note: The Carolinas Association for Passenger Trains, which does business as All Aboard Carolinas, continues to monitor public input about the state's intercity passenger rail service, particularly the debate about skip stops at various stations along the Piedmont Line. We also applaud the NC Department of Transportation's long-term vision to expand service along the line.

The organization is formulating an official position on skip stops and will produce a special issue of this newsletter to let the public know our opinion on this important topic. Safe, frequent, convenient and dependable passenger rail service is our goal for all North Carolinians; indeed, passenger rail enthusiasts across America demand and deserve as much. Enjoy your Memorial Day holiday weekend and stay tuned to an important announcement from All Aboard Carolinas!

PIEDMONT CORRIDOR TO BENEFIT FROM GRADE SEPARATION IN CHARLOTTE

Orr Road on the north side of Charlotte will get a grade separation costing close to 5 million dollars. 3.7 million dollars from the Federal Department of Transportation will be supplemented by over 900 thousand dollars from the City of Charlotte. The funding share of the project by Charlotte was approved earlier this month. Design and construction would take a couple of years.

This investment will help close and replace the existing Orr Road rail crossing with a new grade-separated crossing in the I-85/Sugar Creek corridor. This grade separation project would enhance safety, improve rail operations, and increase efficiency for the existing rail service and future high-speed passenger rail service between Washington, D.C., Charlotte and Atlanta as part of the Southeast High-Speed Rail corridor.

IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR PIEDMONT CORRIDOR

“The N.C. Department of Transportation wishes to inform you about changes to public engagement to be conducted in your area about NC By Train, the state’s intercity passenger rail service. Based on feedback from some communities, the in-person meetings scheduled in Salisbury and High Point has been adjusted.

Please find the attached letter for more information about the engagement effort. For more information about NC By Train service, visit NCByTrain.org. For more information about this public engagement, visit the Public Input website at <https://publicinput.com/piedmont-service-expansion>. This site includes a survey that will be open until June 30.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this engagement.”

Jason S. Myers
Rail Programs Manager
Rail Division, North Carolina Department of Transportation



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

J.R. "JOEY" HOPKINS
SECRETARY

May 13, 2025

RE: **NCDOT Public Engagement for NC By Train Intercity Passenger Rail Service –
Future Improvements and Expansion (Updated)**

Dear Sir or Madam:

The N.C. Department of Transportation wishes to inform you about public engagement to be conducted in your area about NC By Train, the state’s intercity passenger rail service.

The meetings are scheduled for:

Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2025
Time: 5 – 7 p.m.
Location: CityGate Dream Community Center in Burlington, 1423 N. Church St.

Date: Wednesday, June 4, 2025
Time: 5 – 7 p.m.
Location: High Point Public Library, 901 N. Main St.

Date: Monday, June 2, 2025
Time: 5 – 7 p.m.
Location: Rowan Museum in Salisbury, 202 N. Main St.

Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2024
Time: 5 – 7 p.m.
Location: Trinity United Methodist Church in Kannapolis, 416 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

NCDOT invites you to share this information via your communications channel(s) as well as attend the public engagement in your area. These meetings will be an open-house format and people may drop in at any time. In addition to informing the public about NC By Train, staff will be available to answer questions and discuss current service and future plans. There will also be a survey for people to complete at the meetings and it will be available online until June 30.

For more information about NC By Train service, visit NCByTrain.org. For more information about this public engagement, visit the Public Input website at <https://publicinput.com/piedmont-service-expansion>

Thank you and have a nice day.

Sincerely,

Jason S. Myers,
Rail Programs Manager
NCDOT Rail Division

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APPROVAL EXPECTED FOR RAIL AND BUS PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED BY POTENTIAL NEW SALES TAX IN MECKLENBURG

"The Metropolitan Transit Commission is expected to approve a plan late this month to guide transit corridor construction if the Transportation Sales Tax is eventually approved by Mecklenburg County voters. 40 percent of the money would go to road related construction, and the remaining 60 percent would be used for rail and bus transit.

"The recommended plan would fund the Red Line commuter/regional rail project, the Silver line light rail between the Airport and Bojangles Arena. Further light rail expansion from Bojangles to Matthews would be worked in as time goes by as money becomes available and in segments. In the interim bus services would fill the gap. It would extend the Blue line light rail from I-485 to Ballantyne near Pineville. Finally, the Gold Line Streetcar would be extended to north of I-85 on Beatties Ford on the west end, and from Sunnyside to Eastland on the east end. All existing bus services would be upgraded and made more frequent. No Bus Rapid Transit was included in the 30 year plan due to significant community support for rail instead. The Blue Line will get 3 length car platforms at the 11 stations that don't have them already. This will allow all trains to run with three cars, the equivalent hauling capacity of 9 buses."

*Refer to last month's newsletter on Sales Tax issues and components associated with the projected 30 year plan. At press time there have been no new developments on a passage of a measure in the NC General Assembly concerning the Sales Tax or companion bill to creation a Regional Transportation Authority to oversee the plan and transit operations.

LEASE EXTENDED FOR CURRENT COLUMBIA, SC, TRAIN STATION

"The City of Columbia and Amtrak are entering into another lease renewal of station property at 850 Pulaski Street in the capital city's Congaree River Vista. The Amtrak station has been located there since the Amtrak station was moved from the historic Seaboard Railway station in 1991. It was required as a result of a railroad consolidation project which removed the viaduct servicing the Gervais Street location. A consolidated rail corridor through the river district now serves both Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation.



Columbia, SC, Amtrak station.

“The new lease will now end January 31, 2030, unless terminated sooner in accordance with the provisions of the lease. At that time Amtrak would have an option to renew under the same terms for up to 15 years through separate 5 year agreements.

“The station site could be hemmed if not expanded or moved elsewhere due to development measures in the area. The current station is a modular building used since 1991. Over the years a desire has been voiced for a more permanent structure by rail passenger supporters. All Aboard Carolinas supports this and has also suggested historic Union Station be considered as a new site if the present site is not pursued.”

ALL ABOARD CHARLOTTE GIVEN ADDITIONAL STRUCTURE

"Organizational policies for the newly created 'All Aboard Charlotte' chapter of All Aboard Carolinas (CAPT) have been approved by the Board of Directors. At the May 17th meeting in Charleston, there were discussions of forming a chapter for Columbia, SC region in the future."

All Aboard Charlotte Organizational Policies

All Aboard Charlotte (AA-CLT) is a local chapter organized under Carolina's Association for Passenger Trains (CAPT, All Aboard Carolinas). AA-CLT finances are accounted for with CAPT's accounts, and all financial decisions and disclosures are reported to the CAPT Treasurer.

Mission Statement

We members of AA-CLT form this chapter to educate and advocate to and for communities and leaders throughout the greater Charlotte Metropolitan Area on the benefits of passenger rail connections and supportive transit solutions.

Leadership

AA-CLT is to be led by a 5-member Board serving 1 year terms; 1 Chairman (to be elected by the board after CAPT Board approval), 1 secretary, and three general members, including a minimum of 1 CAPT Board member among the 5. The Board is selected by the local chapter members, and the list is submitted for approval at the next CAPT Board Meeting. The local chapter's Chair is responsible for reporting finances to the CAPT Treasurer.

Membership Structure

Participants

As a locally focused branch of CAPT, AA-CLT remains open to general participation from those who are not paying CAPT members. These individuals, Participants, may attend any and all public meetings, voice ideas and concerns, and otherwise engage with topics. Participants are not eligible to serve on the Board of AA-CLT or vote on which Members will serve.

Members

CAPT Members current with their dues may further engage with AA-CLT by attending private meetings, voting on which Members may serve on the Board, and are eligible to serve on the Board.

Board Members

The Board serves to organize and lead the chapter, including making decisions about proposals, meetings, contacts, expenditures, schedules, and general plans, by voting on any motion which has a second.

Meeting Schedule

The 2025 meeting schedule for AA-CLT is monthly, on the last Friday of the month. Those dates are below:

- May 30th
- June 27th

- July 25th
- August 29th
- September 26th
- October 31st
- November 28th*
- December 26th*

*Dates falling on or near holidays will be reviewed and adjusted.

FRA CONTINUES FIGHT FOR IMPROVED, EXPANDED, AND SAFER TRAINS

Advocating on behalf of America’s rail passengers, the Rail Passengers Association continues to defend and fight for a “modern, national rail network.”

A determined Jim Mathews, RPA president and CEO writes:

- We can’t sit back and wait for the more chaos, while passenger rail was largely ignored in an early May transportation bill which focused on highway funding, Air Traffic Control Modernization, and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Nor should we lower our sights, pare back our ideas, and shrink our requests for improved, expanded, and safer trains.
- The blunt passenger rail advocate executive wants to see a fully funded rail title follow the \$66 billion appropriated for passenger rail in 2021 in the Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act.
- “ We offered the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee recommendations on ways to streamline and speed up review processes, so that we can start new services in just a few years, not decade.

46 YEARS OF PATIENCE PAYS OFF FOR NEW RIVER VALLEY, VIRGINIA

Passenger rail service connecting Roanoke to Christiansburg, VA, with return service to the New River Valley is closer to reality following ground breaking in April by Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin. Restoring this service is an initiative of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) and its Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) effort. The service last existed in 1979.

For more information, please open the following attachment from the ***Roanoke Star***.

[Governor Glenn Youngkin Breaks Ground on New River Valley Rail Project](#)

MAJOR EXPANSION OF AMTRAK *CASCADES* SERVICE PROPOSED

Legislation approved by the State of Washington legislature calls for expanded *Cascades* service. The bill calls for a minimum of 14 daily round trips between Seattle and Portland, ORE., up from six daily round trips. Passenger train service between Seattle and Vancouver would see five daily round trips, rather than two, as exists presently. The bill awaits a decision by Washington Gov. Bob Ferguson, According to *Trains Magazine*.

\$1 BILLION BUDGETED FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL IN CALIFORNIA

“California Governor Gavin Newsom’s revised budget proposal would allocate \$1 billion each year for the next 20 years to high-speed rail, using funds from the state’s cap-and-trade program. This dedicated funding stream would provide the California High-Speed Rail Authority with financial stability, enabling the project to advance with greater confidence,” reports the High Speed Rail Alliance.

At a conference earlier in May, Authority CEO Ian Choudri said “the governor’s commitment would supply the necessary resources to expand the system beyond the Central Valley.”

The \$1 billion budget could also help in attracting private investment, it was reported.

NEXT ALL ABOARD CAROLINAS BOARD MEETING

“The next meeting of All Aboard Carolinas is planned for Kannapolis, NC on July 18, 2025. Emphasis is expected to include the newly formed North Carolinians for Passenger Rail (NCPR) and whether it would be prudent to work with them on common concerns through alignment or affiliation.”

CAPT'S AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION AND CORPORATE MEMBERS

	 <p>www.easterncarolinairail.com</p>
<p>MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION FOR RAIL PASSENGERS marp.org and on Facebook</p>	<p>THIS SPACE RESERVED IN EVERY ISSUE FOR YOUR CORPORATE LOGO & URL</p>
<p>FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS’ ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE = \$200</p>	<p>SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CAROLINAS!</p>
<p>JOIN AND PAY ONLINE AT https://captrail.org/membership.htm</p>	<p>NON-PROFIT CORPORATIONS’ ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE = \$100</p>
<p>THIS SPACE CAN BE YOURS!</p>	<p>CAPT: THE ONLY PASSENGER RAIL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION IN THE CAROLINAS WITH MEMBERS</p>
<p>=====</p> <p>MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2025</p> <p>=====</p>	<p>CAPT’S MEMBERSHIP IS IT’S STRENGTH..... JOIN NOW, AND HELP US GET STRONGER</p>

If you are reading this newsletter on our website – captrail.org – but would still like to have a PDF copy emailed to you, please contact Martin Wheeler at mwheeler3@att.net

ALL ABOARD CAROLINAS

CAROLINAS ASSOCIATION FOR PASSENGER TRAINS

OFFICERS

OFFICE	INDIVIDUAL	TERM	HOME TOWN	EMAIL
President	Martin L. Wheeler, Jr.	11/24 – 11/25	Charlotte, NC	mwheeler3@att.net
Vice President – NC	Tommy Thomas	11/24 – 11/25	Castle Hayne, NC	tommyt56@twc.com
Vice President - SC	Charles D. Gossett	11/24 – 11/25	Columbia, SC	gossetcd64@gmail.com
Secretary	VACANT	11/24 – 11/25		
Treasurer	Ralph Messera	11/24 – 11/25	Matthews, NC	ralphselden@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

DIRECTOR	INDIVIDUAL	TERM	HOME TOWN	EMAIL
North Carolina	Robert H. Bischoff	11/24 – 11/26	Charlotte, NC	cemt200@gmail.com
North Carolina	John Bobinyec	11/23 – 11/25	Cary, NC	jgb@dbd01.com
North Carolina	Jim Fetchero	11/24 – 11/26	Charlotte, NC	jfetch@aol.com
North Carolina	Ed Locklin	11/24 – 11/26	Charlotte, NC	edlocklin@carolina.rr.com
North Carolina	Ralph Messera	11/24 – 11/26	Matthews, NC	ralphselden@gmail.com
North Carolina	Tommy Thomas	11/24 – 11/26	Castle Hayne, NC	tommyt56@twc.com
North Carolina	Martin L. Wheeler	11/23 – 11/25	Charlotte, NC	mwheeler3@att.net
North Carolina	Chris Wallace	11/24 – 11/25	Charlotte, NC	cmwallace105@gmail.com
North Carolina	David Thomas	11/24 – 11/25	Charlotte, NC	daydaydude@gmail.com
North Carolina	Andy Zou	11/24 – 11/25	Charlotte, NC	zouandy8@gmail.com
South Carolina	Charles D. Gossett	11/23 – 11/25	Columbia, SC	gossetcd64@gmail.com
South Carolina	VACANT			
South Carolina	VACANT			

APPOINTED POSITIONS

POSITION	INDIVIDUAL	TERM	HOME TOWN	EMAIL
Newsletter Editor	Donald Yehle	11/24 – 11/25	Bluffton, SC	dyehle@gmail.com
Membership Chair	David Robinson	11/24 – 11/25	Raleigh, NC	dr.david.robinson@gmail.com

BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS IN 2025

MONTH	LOCATION	DATE
January	Columbia, SC	January 24 (Friday)
March	Raleigh, NC	March 21 (Friday)
May	Charleston, SC	May 17 (Saturday)
July	Kannapolis, NC	TBD in 3 rd week
September	Florence, SC	TBD in 3 rd week
November	Goldsboro, NC	TBD in 3 rd week

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES STRUCTURE

A. Individuals up to age 64	\$30
B. Individuals 65 and older (retired)	\$20
C. Degree students up to age 25	\$20
D. Not-for-profit corporation *	\$100
E. For profit corporation *	\$200

* Newsletter & website recognition

CAPT is an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation.

FROM THE CAB is published monthly by CAPT.

All Aboard Carolinas is a DBA (doing business as) name.

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

(copy or include info separately when mailing check)

Name					
Category (circle)	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E
Address					
City					
State					
Zip Code					
Phone					
Email					
Your Amtrak Station					
Make check to "CAPT" & mail to Ralph Messera, Treasurer 401 S. Freemont St, Matthews, NC 28105					
To join or renew and pay dues online:					
https://www.captrail.org/membership.htm					

Membership in All Aboard Carolinas (CAPT) includes participation in regional chapters such as the newly formed All Aboard Charlotte.