



## State Passenger Rail Priorities (2026 Update)

### Invest in Passenger Rail—A Key to North Carolina’s Future

North Carolina has a historic opportunity to expand passenger rail and strengthen connections across the state and the Eastern Seaboard. With major federal funding available and projects like the S-Line advancing, state partnership is essential to secure matching funds and unlock billions in investment—along with the jobs, economic growth, and improved mobility that come with it.

### Top State Priorities

#### Establish a Dedicated State Match Fund

- Create a flexible, recurring fund to meet federal **match requirements** (typically 10–20%).
- Enable North Carolina to fully compete for and secure available federal rail funding.

- Support a range of needs, including corridor development, stations, and local infrastructure.

**Return on Investment:** Every \$1 in state funding can leverage **\$4–\$9 in federal funding**.

#### Advance Passenger Rail Expansion Statewide

- Build on federally funded planning for multiple new and expanded corridors.
- Connect rural, suburban, and urban communities to jobs, education, and healthcare.
- Support projects that bring economic development to smaller towns across the state.

## Support Continued Progress on the S-Line

- Ensure sustained state support to deliver the **Raleigh–Wake Forest segment** and future phases north.
- Strengthen North Carolina’s connection to Richmond, Washington, D.C., and the Northeast.
- Maximize the impact of more than **\$1 billion** in federal investment already committed.

## Modernize Policy to Enable Investment

- Provide flexibility within state transportation funding frameworks to respond quickly to federal opportunities.
- Ensure NCDOT can efficiently deploy matching funds and advance projects.
- Support local governments with limited resources to participate in rail projects.

## Strengthen Existing Rail Service

- Continue support for **NC By Train** service operated in partnership with Amtrak.
- Build on record ridership and growing demand for reliable rail travel.
- Improve frequency, reliability, and station access across the system.

## Why It Matters

- Passenger rail drives **economic development**, especially in small towns and rural communities.
- It reduces congestion on highways and provides safer, more reliable travel options.
- Rail improves access for students, seniors, and those without reliable car access—connecting people to opportunity statewide.
- North Carolina’s existing service is already seeing **record ridership and strong economic returns**, with growth continuing.

## Contact

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