

Triangle Passenger Rail Initial Feasibility Study
Draft Scope
February 20, 2026

The NCDOT Rail Division will work with CAMPO and TWTPPO to prepare an initial feasibility study on implementing the Strategic Regional Rail Infrastructure Investment Study by adding additional intercity passenger trains serving the Triangle on the S-Line and the NCRR (NC-Line). This effort can be completed in SFY26-27 at a cost of \$200,000. This planning work can lay the groundwork for achieving higher passenger train frequencies and ridership in the triangle.

The deliverables for this initiative will include:

- Potential approximate intercity passenger train schedules that are coordinated with existing and planned services,
- Identification of anticipated critical infrastructure projects and a rough order of magnitude estimate of their cost,
- A schedule for host railroad interaction,
- A rough order of magnitude estimate of costs to support service operations, and
- Identification of needed equipment with an estimate of one-time and ongoing costs.

This planning project will provide the MPOs direction on all the corridors where passenger trains currently operate as well as the S-Line north of Raleigh, investigating as far as:

- NC-Line West of Cary: To Downtown Durham
- NC-Line East of Raleigh: Into Johnston County
- S-Line North of Raleigh: To Wake Forest and Franklinton
- S-Line South of Cary: Into Chatham County

Alternatives and recommendations will be provided on two planning horizons:

1. Initial opportunities that may be implementable in parallel with the fifth Piedmont round trip and extension of Piedmont service to Wake Forest on the S-Line.
2. Identification of next phases that are likely to require:
 - a. More extensive host railroad coordination,
 - b. Additional investment in railroad infrastructure, and
 - c. Increases in available equipment fleet beyond existing plans.

The NCDOT Rail Division will engage professional services through existing on-call contracts to complete this work. NCDOT anticipates using timetable planning tools to efficiently explore alternatives and generate project deliverables. All deliverables of this effort will be subject to future railroad review and coordination that is not included in this scope.