

NC LTAP Turns 40 Years Old

Submitted by *Bill Woods*

Happy Birthday to...Us! This year, 2026, marks the 40th birthday of the North Carolina Local Technical Assistance Program! Way back in 1985, the North Carolina center was established, and not even a year later, we were up, running, and provided low-cost training and technical assistance for local government agencies across North Carolina. So, let's go back to the very beginning, to the year 1981. This is when President Ronald Reagan began the LTAP story on December 23rd by signing legislation that established the Rural Technical Assistance Program, RTAP (oh how our government Loves acronyms!) The mission of RTAP for the most part remains our mission today, to provide road maintenance and road construction training, education and technical assistance to the over 38,000 (and growing) local public agencies (counties, cities and towns).



Location of NC LTAP on NC State University's Centennial Campus

We operated as the Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) until 1991 when another batch of legislation, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), was signed into law and renamed the RTAP to the 'Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)'; expanding the program into urban areas, and also establishing the Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) which started providing the same support for the tribal governments throughout the country. In North Carolina our tribal nation TTAP is in Cherokee, NC.

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transportation**TRACKS**

Technology Transfer Newsletter

Published by the North Carolina Local Technical Assistance Program at the Institute for Transportation Research and Education at North Carolina State University

www.itre.ncsu.edu



In North Carolina we have seen very few changes in leadership throughout the years. Our first Director was James Martin, who was our director for an amazing 36 years and grew the center into much of what it is today. Only a few short years ago did we see a new director take the helm, Kate Davison, who continues to expand and grow the North Carolina Local Technical Assistance Program. Kate took the helm in a very difficult time, COVID, but instead of sitting and waiting it out, she charged on and pushed us into the on-line world of webinars. Ideally, we thought they would be just a temporary adjustment for delivery of our workshops, but they were so well received, we continue to offer them for a select few of our classes today and have no interest in stopping, only expanding.

As far as how we do all this, we do this with support from our Federal Highway Administration, FHWA. They provide us with what we call match money. Basically, this is how it works - The FHWA gives us a chunk of money to fund our program and start delivering workshops. We use this money with the agreement that we will generate that same amount, basically matching it BUT, instead of paying it back, they let us keep it to reinvest in our center. The match money source varies from center to center, we are free to choose where it comes from, but here at the North Carolina center, our match comes from the fees associated with attending our workshops. We keep the cost as low as possible to just cover our match but again the good news is we don't have to pay it back! We get to keep it and reinvest it in our program.

When I started in March of 2007, we were doing about 90 workshops a year with only 3 employees. Myself, James Martin and Linda Collier, the Assistant Director. Since then, we have sadly said goodbye to both James and Linda and thanked them for the many years they dedicated to NC-LTAP, and replaced them with Kate Davison, Ray Narvaez, Katrina Elsheimer, and our newest full time member, Adrianna Little, not to mention a host of part time temporary students who help us with the everyday upkeep of our Databases.

Finally, to our most important members of the LTAP Team, our instructors. Without their continued support, dedication and energy, none of this would even be possible. Many of our instructors are already working in their own lifelong careers but take the time to spend the day with our students spreading their knowledge from everything technical to everything managerial for our Public Works folks across NC. We have instructors that have been with NCLTAP longer than I have (and I'm working on 19 years) with instructors we have recently hired for as little as a few months. As we continue to grow and expand, the demand for our classes also grows, which we here at the North Carolina Local Technical Assistance Program are committed to keep providing.



Replacing the Key Bridge with Local Wildlife in Mind

When the replacement of the Pigeon River High Bridge threatened to eliminate suitable roosting habitat for the endangered gray bat, NCDOT resident engineer Kenny McCourt developed an integrated mitigation strategy. Rather than using external boxes that didn't fit into the new bridge design McCourt and his team incorporated "these bat habitats right into the Boulderscape wall." The construction used excess materials and a layer of shotcrete to create a natural habitat within the bridge's own support structure. This phenomenal collaboration between NCDOT, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and contractors successfully attracted an endangered gray bat within days of installation. To support the colony's long-term success, NCDOT will plant a half-acre of native flowers that bloom at night to attract the insects that serve as bat food. This innovative design is expected to be adopted "across the state and when word gets out, across the country" as a new standard for wildlife-friendly infrastructure.

[Learn More](#)

The National Transit Database (NTD)

From the Federal Transit Administration

The Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD), established after a 1974 Congressional reporting mandate, serves as the central repository for data on the financial, operating, and asset conditions of U.S. transit systems. It supports local, state, and regional planning, funding allocation, trend analysis, and public transparency by tracking key metrics such as Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM), Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH), Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT), Unlinked Passenger Trips (UPT), and Operating Expenses (OE). The NTD also collects information on agency funding sources, vehicle and facility inventories, safety events, service levels, and transit employees.



FTA annually releases NTD Annual Data Products to provide insights into the transit industry. The 2024 release included the National Transit Summary and Trends report, interactive maps of urban transit systems, 30 datasets and visual summaries on DOT’s open data platform, 27 detailed database files, six time-series files, and a GTFS weblinks database updated monthly for trip planning and mapping. Data collection for the 2025 report year closes mid-July 2026, with products scheduled for release in October 2026.

Key 2025–2026 reporting changes include:

- **Geospatial Data Reporting:** Agencies submitting GTFS feeds must now include shapes.txt files for visual route information and provide an agency_id linking GTFS data to the NTD P-50 form.
- **Enhanced Safety Reporting:** Clarified guidance for reporting cybersecurity events and a new rail collision element, disabling damage, aligned with State Safety Oversight rules.
- **Asset Reporting Improvements:** Consolidation of stations and facility reporting into a single form, addition of three asset categories, and better tracking of ADA accessibility.

NTD System Updates: Expanded waivers for rural full reporters to reduce reporting burden and a self-certification option for voluntary reporters.

These updates are intended to streamline reporting, improve data accuracy, and enhance the usability of transit information for agencies, planners, and the public.



Governor Stein Celebrates Largest-Ever Class Of 149 New NCDMV Examiners In Rocky Mount

Governor Josh Stein and NCDMV Commissioner Paul Tine joined the graduation ceremony of 149 new NCDMV Driver License Examiners, the largest graduating class ever. Governor Stein signed House Bill 245 back in September, which allowed more North Carolinians to renew their driver’s licenses online. This expanded access has allowed nearly 80,000 renewals in just nine weeks, helping reduce lines at DMV offices. Statewide, DMV vacancies have fallen below 5% out of 632 roles, Governor Stein’s Office says. Governor Stein signed House Bill 125 in August, appropriating funding to the DMV for Driver License Examiner positions. This resulted in 64 additional examiner positions, all of which have been filled, according to Governor Stein’s Office.

[Learn More](#)

Triangle Traffic Headaches: What's Being Done About Them

Summarized from WRAL News

Look around the Triangle and the signs of rapid growth are everywhere. Cranes rise over downtown Raleigh and Durham, trees are cleared for new developments — and traffic congestion is worsening across the region.

Viewers shared their biggest traffic headaches, including stop-and-go conditions on I-40 between Raleigh and Durham, delays from the long-running I-440 widening project, and congestion near the Durham Freeway interchange at I-885 and N.C. 147. But the most frequently mentioned trouble spot was the I-40/U.S. 1 interchange between Raleigh and Cary, where drivers have just 600 feet to weave through heavy traffic. “You need a co-pilot,” said driver Ginia Cooper-Gay.



Traffic in the Triangle

Chris Lukasina, executive director of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), says the interchange will eventually be replaced with a safer design while keeping lanes open during construction — but the project won't be completed until at least 2030. Funding, he says, is the biggest challenge. “[I]dentifying transportation problems is the easy part. The hard part is figuring out how to pay for it.”

The N.C. Department of Transportation has hundreds of Triangle-area projects outlined in the State Transportation Improvement Plan, which ranks projects based on safety, congestion, and local priorities while balancing limited budgets. Some major projects are already underway, including the I-440 widening between Walnut Street and Wade Avenue, expected to finish in spring 2026, and the final section of N.C. 540, set for completion in late 2028. Public transit is also expanding. Raleigh is building a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system with dedicated lanes and frequent service. The first corridor along New Bern Avenue is under construction, with additional routes planned across the city and connections to Cary. Durham and Chapel Hill are also planning BRT systems, which leaders say could offer a flexible alternative for some trips.

Commuter rail remains a longer-term possibility. Studies show potential benefits but also major cost and timing challenges, leading planners to focus instead on improving passenger rail connections using existing infrastructure. Future upgrades could also include “managed freeways,” using technology to dynamically adjust speeds and lanes to ease congestion. Transportation leaders stress that keeping up with growth means improving roads, transit, and air travel. Expansion at RDU, including a new runway and a larger Terminal 2, is already underway. While projects can feel slow, business leaders say traffic troubles are a sign of a thriving region — and that continued collaboration is key to finding solutions faster.

Updates Around North Carolina: Helene Recovery

Summarized from NCDOT

Another priority for NCDOT is helping western North Carolina **from Hurricane Helene**. After Helene hit western North Carolina in late September 2024, it left behind more than 9,400 damaged locations on state-maintained roads, including nearly 850 bridges.

Since then, crews have completed work at over 8,000 damaged sites, including repairs or replacements on more than 590 bridges. "Watching the people of the Department of Transportation respond to a disaster like we've never seen before, has been awe-inspiring," said Secretary Johnson. "The department's going to remain focused. It's going to remain our number one priority until we've completely restored the road infrastructure in western North Carolina."



For the latest information on closures, visit [DriveNC.gov](https://www.drive-nc.gov).

Scam Alert: Stay Safe from Parking Payment Scams

The City of Raleigh is warning drivers about a possible scam involving QR codes placed on on-street parking meters in downtown Raleigh. Officials say motorists should only use the physical parking meters or the official Passport parking app and should not scan QR codes, which may have been placed by scammers to steal personal or financial information or direct users to malicious websites. While the issue has so far been identified in downtown Raleigh, city officials note the scam could potentially spread to other areas of North Carolina. The City emphasized that it only uses QR codes related to parking on violation notices and SkiData tickets for parking garages. City staff are inspecting meters in the affected area, and anyone who notices suspicious activity is encouraged to contact Raleigh Parking at 919-996-3996.

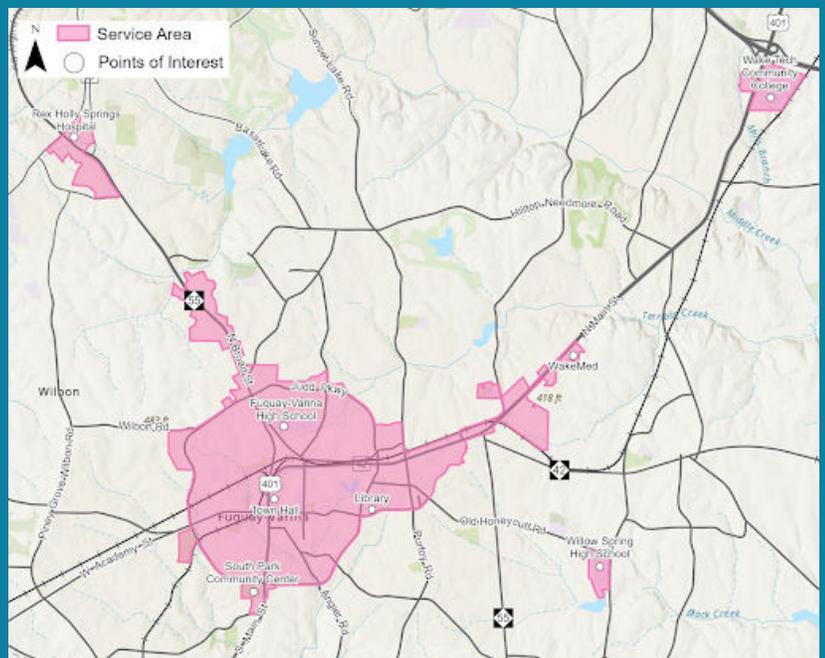
[Learn More](#)

Fuquay-Varina, Holly Springs Launch On-Demand Transit Systems

Press Release from WRAL News

The service will run weekdays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays. Some service spots include Wake Tech, downtown and Rex Holly Springs hospital. People can request rides through the MicroLink app or by phone at (919) 996-3459. Riders must be 13 years or older. Riders under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Pets are not allowed on MicroLink. The service will be fare-free through January 2027.

Get more information about MicroLink, which also operates in Rolesville. The town of Holly Springs also launched a microtransit service on Monday, January 12th. The **Holly Springs Hopper** offers door-to-door rides anywhere within the service area up to seven miles. It runs Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.



MicroLink service map for the Town of Fuquay-Varina

Rail Record Ridership

[Press Release from NCDOT](#)

North Carolina’s intercity passenger rail service has broken its ridership record for the fourth year in a row. In 2025, NC By Train carried nearly 740,000 passengers—a 15% increase since 2023 and the highest ridership in the service’s 35-year history. Officials attribute train travel’s increasing popularity to more affordable service, increased daily trip options, and special offerings like Carolina Panthers game trains and the [Ale Trail by Rail](#).



North Carolina Train

Stephen Curry Dedication

[Press Release from NCDOT](#)

Exit 30 off Interstate 77 in north Mecklenburg County has been named the “Stephen Curry Interchange” in honor of the Golden State Warriors star and Davidson College alum.

The dedication, approved in 2023 by the Town of Davidson and the North Carolina Board of Transportation, recognizes Curry’s lasting impact on the school’s basketball program and the broader community. Federal, state and local officials joined NCDOT and Davidson College leadership to unveil the new sign during halftime of Davidson’s Dec. 30 home game against Duquesne University.

For more information about NCDOT Now, contact the NCDOT Communications Office at (919) 707-2660. Additional news stories from throughout the week can be found on [NCDOT.gov](#).



Interstate 77 in north Mecklenburg County has been named the “Stephen Curry Interchange”

Tailgate Safety Talks: Cold Weather Slips, Trips, and Falls Safety

Reprint from NLTAPA:

This Everyday Safety Tailgate Talk was originally published as the January 2016 "Safety Pins" by Phillip E. Spiezio, Safety Officer, Washington County Office of the Safety Officer.

Cold weather brings many risks and hazards with it. An increased risk of slipping and falling is just one of those risks. Injuries from slips, trips and falls are one of the most common causes of injuries.

Here are a few tips that may help you or somebody you know avoid an injury from the result of a slip, trip or fall.

- Keep floors dry and pathways clear as much as possible.
- Look for signs indicating a wet floor.
- Wear appropriate foot wear. You can change your shoes later.
- Take your time.
- Walk like a penguin when encountering icy/wet areas!
- Be observant!
- Pay close attention to stairs and entryways as well as getting in and out of your vehicle or between parked vehicles.
- Carry a little less.
- Always have at least one hand free. Make an extra trip if need be.
- If you find an icy area, put some ice melt down or report it immediately.
- Watch out for one another.
- Offer assistance to someone who may need help.
- Use extra caution in poor light conditions.
- Allow sufficient time to get where you are going.
- If possible, use a snow rake for cleaning off your roof instead of climbing a ladder!

Resources and References:

1. OSHA Winter Weather Hazards/Precautions Webpage
https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_weather/hazards_precautions.html
2. OSHA Winter Weather Preventing Slips on Snow and Ice
https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_weather/index.html
3. OSHA Hazard Alert on Elevated Surface Snow and Ice Removal
https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_storm/snow_hazard_alert.html



NCDOT Now Accepting Applications for Free Bicycle Helmets

Applications are now open for organizations across North Carolina to receive free bicycle helmets through the N.C. Department of Transportation’s Bicycle Helmet Initiative, a long-running program aimed at improving bicycle safety and reducing head injuries among children. Administered by NCDOT’s Integrated Mobility Division, the initiative partners with schools, local governments, nonprofits, public health organizations and churches to distribute helmets to children in need.

Eligible groups may request between 25 and 100 helmets. Applications must be submitted online through NCDOT’s Bicycle Helmet Initiative webpage by Feb. 20. Helmets will be distributed in the spring ahead of National Bike & Roll to School Day in May. Launched in 2007 and funded through N.C. “Share the Road” specialty license plate sales, the program has provided more than 85,000 free helmets statewide over the past five years.

[Learn More](#)

New DMV Office in Town of Garland

Press Release from NCDOT

The [North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles](#) and the Town of Garland recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of a [driver license office](#) in the Sampson County town. The office at 35 South Ingold Avenue will operate weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and give people easier access to driver license and ID services.

This is the first of four new driver license offices funded through House Bill 125, which was signed into law in August. Reducing wait times and improving customer service at DMV offices is one of state Transportation Secretary Daniel Johnson’s top priorities.



New driver license office opens in Town of Garland

State Shifting NEVI Strategy to Put EV Charging Stations Where Needed Most

Summarized from NCDOT

North Carolina transportation officials are changing course on their electric vehicle charging strategy to expand access in underserved areas by shifting federal funding away from already well-served highway corridors and toward rural communities and coverage gaps. Under new federal guidance issued in August, the N.C. Department of Transportation will reduce the number of NEVI-funded charging stations planned along designated alternative fuel corridors, scaling back from more than 40 additional sites to 16, as many corridor locations are now supported by private infrastructure.

The flexibility allows the state to avoid competing with existing chargers and redirect resources to areas with fewer options, including rural towns and highways such as Interstate 26 in the mountains. North Carolina has received \$109 million in NEVI funding, and officials say the revised approach will help create a more equitable, statewide EV charging network. NCDOT plans to seek proposals from private developers later this spring, with the program reimbursing up to 80 percent of construction and operating costs for the first five years.



EV Charging Station

[Learn More](#)



Now Accepting Applications

until April 17, 2026

The State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) Incentive Program funds activities such as:

- Conducting internal assessments.
- Initiating capacity building.
- Developing guidance.
- Drafting standards and specifications.
- Organizing peer exchanges.
- Implementing system process changes.



Example STIC Projects in NC

Awards up to \$125,000

to offset the costs of
standardizing
innovative practices



Online Application



NC LTAP News & Updates

To update your mail information, add a colleague to the database, or obtain information about Roads Scholar Program complete the form online at go.ncsu.edu/ncltapcontactform.



For more special offers and news, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

Your Name _____

Company/Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____

Check Appropriate Items

- Add/Update email information to NCLTAP listserv NCTROADS
- Send information about Roads Scholar program
- Send schedule of training opportunities

NCTROADS Listserv

Subscribe to the NC LTAP listserv. It is free and easy. Send a message to _____ or call Kate Davison at 919-515-3983 and ask to be added to NCTROADS.

This is an informal network for the exchange of news about current research, discussion of problems and solutions, request for advice and assistance, and announcements of upcoming conferences, events and training opportunities for transportation personnel. Once you are subscribed, you can send a message all the listserv members at NCTROADS@lists.ncsu.edu

NC Local Technical Assistance Program

March – April 2026 Schedule

For Online Registration see calendar at: <https://itre.ncsu.edu/training/ltap-training/>

Questions or Email Registration: wewoods@ncsu.edu or kbdaviso@ncsu.edu

Course descriptions available on website.

Date	Class Title	RS/ARS/MRS	Cost	Location	To Sign Up
Mar 3rd - 4th	Site Development & Highway Access Practitioner	N/A	\$200.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 5th	Asphalt Pavement Maintenance	RS	\$150.00	Nags Head	Click Here
Mar 5th	Fundamentals of Government	MRS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 6th	Maintenance and Repair of Utility Cuts	RS	\$100.00	Nags Head	Click Here
Mar 10th	Basic Work Zone Installer	RS	\$150.00	Jacksonville	Click Here
Mar 11th	Intermediate Work Zone Safety Training	RS	\$175.00	Jacksonville	Click Here
Mar 11th	Plan Reading for Transportation Personnel	RS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 12th	Work Zone Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification	ARS	\$175.00	Jacksonville	Click Here
Mar 12th	Writing Skills for Transportation Personnel	ARS	\$100.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 19th	Public Speaking and Communication Skills	MRS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 24th	Backhoe Operator Training	RS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Mar 24th	Emergency Management	MRS	\$150.00	Concord	Click Here
Mar 25th	Excavator Operator Training	RS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Apr 13th	Chainsaw Safety	RS	\$100.00	Matthews	Click Here
Apr 14th	Trenching Competent Person and Hands-On Soil Classification	ARS	\$175.00	Hendersonville	Click Here
Apr 15th	Basic Work Zone Installer	RS	\$150.00	Lenoir	Click Here
Apr 16th	Flagger Training	RS	\$100.00	Lenoir	Click Here
Apr 16th	Concrete: What, When, How	RS	\$175.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Apr 20th - 22nd	Work Zone Traffic Control Supervisor	ARS	\$450.00	Hickory	Click Here
Apr 21st	Pipe Installation	RS	\$150.00	Concord	Click Here
Apr 28th	Site Development & Highway Access - Introduction	N/A	\$140.00	Asheville	Click Here
Apr 29th	Effective Leadership Skills	MRS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here
Apr 30th	Soils Fundamentals	RS	\$150.00	Raleigh	Click Here

LTAP Links on the Web

Transportation Information at your fingertips!

NC LTAP	https://itre.ncsu.edu/focus/ltap/
National LTAP/TTAP	http://www.nltapa.org/
NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT)	https://www.ncdot.gov/
Rural Road Safety Center	https://ruralsafetycenter.org/
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/
US Department of Transportation (USDOT)	https://www.transportation.gov/
UNC School of Government	https://www.sog.unc.edu/
Institute of Transportation Engineers	http://www.ite.org/
NC Section of ITE (NCSITE)	http://ncsite.org/
APWA - NC Chapter	https://northcarolina.apwa.org/
NLTAPA Tailgate Talks	https://nltapa.org/information-exchange/nltapa-tailgate-talks/

NC LTAP Advisory Board

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