

NCDOT + ACEC NC Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes (11-18-25)

Felix Obregon, PE (NCDOT Div. 10 Engineer) provided a presentation:

Hurricane Helene – Impacts & Ongoing Recovery (NCDOT Divisions 11, 13, 14)

- Helene caused unprecedented damage across western NC, including:
 - Major slope failures and roadway loss along I-40 near the TN border.
 - Complete isolation of areas around Gerton, Bat Cave, Chimney Rock, and Lake Lure.
 - Flooding that destroyed back roads and an entire maintenance yard in Yancey County.
- Over **1,400 road closures**, with **only 33** segments still closed one year later.
- Div. 13 identified **90+ bridges** needing replacement; Div. 11 identified **3,800+ damaged sites**, with **1,600 repaired** to date.
- DOT crews, IMAP, and environmental staff conducted high-risk evacuations and round-the-clock response.

Key takeaway:

Recovery will continue for multiple years, but significant progress has been made through coordinated NCDOT, ACEC, and contractor support.

NCDOT Leadership Priorities

Secretary Daniel Johnson

- Recently appointed following Secretary Joey Hopkins' retirement.
- Emphasizes:
 - **Improved project delivery** to reduce cash balance concerns and accelerate spending.
 - **Customer service and solution-oriented decision-making**, pushing divisions toward "How *can* we do this?" rather than defaulting to no.
 - **Stronger support for economic development**, especially via land development coordination.

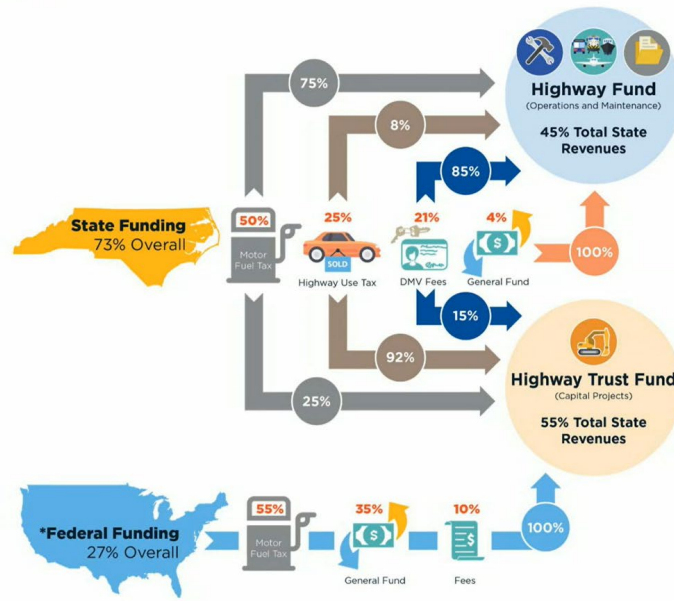
Message to industry:

Expect greater accountability on schedule performance, utility coordination, and collaborative problem-solving.

Division 10 Highlights (Mecklenburg, Union, Cabarrus, Anson, Stanly)

- Nearly **400 employees** overseeing planning, construction, and maintenance.
- Significant statewide turnover: many divisions have newly appointed division engineers.
- Division maintenance budgets have increased:
 - Historically ~\$35M → \$50M → **\$68M this year**.
- Maintenance challenges include:
 - New mowing restrictions, expected to cause public concern.
 - Growing vacancy pressures.
 - Escalating utility relocation timelines impacting project delivery.

DOT Funding Sources



Annual Budget of approx. \$4.8B

* IJA's USDOT FHWA and FTA FFY 2022-23 Allocations

Statewide Funding, Costs & STI/Prioritization

- Annual NCDOT budget remains approx. **\$4.8B**.
- Construction and utility costs continue to escalate, affecting both traditional and alternative delivery projects.
- P8 prioritization is midway through the cycle; final programming expected by 2027.
- Division 10 mobility funds: **\$53M available as of July**.

P8.0 Funding Availability – As of July 9, 2025

STI Funding Category	Funding Availability
Division 1	\$198M
Division 2	\$152M
Division 3	\$112M
Division 4	\$35M
Division 5	\$73M
Division 6	\$242M
Division 7	\$77M
Division 8	\$54M
Division 9	\$68M
Division 10	\$53M
Division 11	\$43M
Division 12	\$69M
Division 13	\$132M
Division 14	\$235M

*** Values are as of July 9, 2025, and will change due to, but not limited to:

- Variance Adjustments
- Additional funding for ongoing activities
- Bid Adjustments
- Cost Changes for future activities
- Schedule Changes
- Changes in anticipated revenues (including federal transportation re-authorization)

P8.0 Funding Availability – As of July 9, 2025

STI Funding Category	Funding Availability
Statewide Mobility	\$1,665M
Region A (Divisions 1 & 4)	\$145M
Region B (Divisions 2 & 3)	\$104M
Region C (Divisions 5 & 6)	\$646M
Region D (Divisions 7 & 9)	\$319M
Region E (Divisions 8 & 10)	\$277M
Region F (Divisions 11 & 12)	\$366M
Region G (Divisions 13 & 14)	\$186M

*** Values are as of July 9, 2025, and will change due to, but not limited to:

- Variance Adjustments
- Additional funding for ongoing activities
- Bid Adjustments
- Cost Changes for future activities
- Schedule Changes
- Changes in anticipated revenues (including federal transportation re-authorization)

Major Project Updates

I-77 Express Lanes South (CRTPO submission)

- Approx. **\$3.2B**, the most expensive project in NC history.
- Comparative analysis confirmed **P3 is required**; insufficient state funding for traditional delivery.
- Public meetings drew 350+ and 150+ attendees, reflecting high community interest.

Other Key Projects

- I-485 construction nearing completion (Spring 2026).
- I-45/85 interchange CMGC project underway.
- Multiple active resurfacing contracts totaling ~\$47–49M annually.

ACEC–NCDOT Subcommittee Coordination

Alternative Delivery

- Updated Progressive Design-Build (PDB) guidelines posted; industry feedback encouraged.
- New CPM guidelines in progress
- Alternative Delivery GESC was advertised
- Strong movement toward **electronic proposal submissions** (paper proposal burden highlighted).
- Ongoing discussions on ATC conditional approvals, cost estimating transparency, and ProjectWise/ORD implementation.
- Emergency express design-build Groups 18–22 posted

Project Delivery

- Continued transition to **ORD/OpenX digital delivery**, with a new workspace rolling out in early 2026.
- 20–25% of active projects remain in V8i; conversion guidance being developed.
- New **Combined Field Inspection Guide** and updated checklists now published.(aligned with PDN)
- PIC tool being replaced by the new PET spreadsheet-based system for final quantities.

Construction & Materials

- CEI Guidelines undergoing major revision; **21 firms** submitted over 150 comments, narrowed to 30 recommendations.
- Focus on education requirements, consistency across divisions, and scalable contract packaging.
- AGC–NCDOT workshops scheduled in Durham and Asheville (Feb–Mar).

Structures

- New PSP issued for cored slab and box beam post-tensioning.
- Pilot work underway for construction-ready 3D deliverables.
- Bridge rehab workshop planned for January 2026; PCI bridge forum targeting May 5, 2026.

Multimodal

- Rail Division reassessing S-Line timelines; pursuing federal coordination.
- LAP program undergoing evaluation by RS&H.
- Toll credit pilot funded 15 projects; additional 22 identified for future rounds.
- BRT guidebook in development for state route applications. (design and maintenance)
- SPOT 8.0 – Creating a final list of STIP projects – coming soon

ACEC NC Updates

- Holiday event Dec 3 in Charlotte (ugly sweater theme).
- ACEC Life & Health Trust recommended for firms facing rising insurance premiums.
- Advocacy efforts active at state and federal levels:
 - DBE policy adjustments following court rulings.
 - FEMA reform discussions ongoing nationally.
 - Mecklenburg PAVE Act passed, enabling major regional funding opportunities.

ACEC NC Junior Board

- October socials were successful with 75 attending in Raleigh and Charlotte
- Lunch and Learn coming soon –AI presentation
 - March 4th Event – Generations At Work

Legislative update -Seth Poole

- Mentioned shut down
 - Affected review times
- DBE changes – NCDOT has provided guidance
- National level - FEMA reform – task force working
- State CR but still working through
- Paybacks Mech tax for funding source
- State PAC up and running
- Anticipate busy campaign year in 2026
- ECNC – Charlotte Business Alliance
 - Super Pac – thanks for the efforts
 - Companies can donate to this PAC
 - ECNC gave \$25k to support
- State PAC, Federal PAC, ECNC all different ways for individuals AND Firms to donate.

Upcoming Meetings & Action Items

- **Next Transportation Committee:
February 17, Raleigh (Rural Center)**
- May meeting scheduled in Charlotte.
- ACEC/NCDOT Joint Conference Committee launching 2026 planning