

North Carolina Turnpike Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

February 19, 2026



Board of Directors



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Board Member



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Board Member

Opening Comments

Secretary Johnson
Chair

Executive Director Opening Comments

J.J. Eden
Executive Director

Complete 540 Phase 1

Awards and Recognition

- **Roads and Bridges Magazine**
 - Contracts R-2721B and R-2828 selected as #8 for R&B annual Top 10 Roads Awards in Dec. 2025
- **American Infrastructure Magazine**
 - Jan./Feb. 2026 Issue
 - <https://builder.media/magazine/2026/AI/JanFeb26/>
- **Design Develop Construct (DDC) Journal**
 - Winter 2025 issue
 - <https://www.ddcjournal.com/issues/winter2025/>
- **ASCE**
 - Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) Honor Award in Feb. 2026



Complete 540 Phase 1

American Infrastructure Magazine – Jan./Feb. 2026 Issue

A Great **EXPANSION** for North Carolina's Traffic Connectivity

A major 18-mile expansion of the Triangle Expressway is transforming mobility in the Raleigh region



By Karla Valdez



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VALTIR

The Triangle Expressway in Raleigh, N.C., received a huge transformation to help facilitate the connection between the N.C. 55 in Apex and I-40 near Garner highways. The completed 540 Phase 1, is an 18-mile and six-lane toll road extension of the original Triangle Express.

This expansion is to provide regional growth, enhance mobility and reduce congestion in the Raleigh area. The North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) plays a crucial role in helping the North Carolina Department of Transportation's

(NCDOT) operations help advance toll facilities to provide drivers more choices in how they reach critical destinations while reducing congestion along heavily traveled routes.

The City's Expansion

Before the completed 540 Phase 1 opened to traffic, travelers in southern Wake County had limited access to connectivity routes, forcing them onto already congested options. Because of this matter, the rapid population and

The Complete 540 turbine-style interchange will connect three major highways and marks the end of Complete 540 Phase 1 and the beginning of Complete 540 Phase 2. When Phase 2 is open to traffic in late 2026, it will complete the I-540/N.C. 540 loop around the greater Raleigh area.

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Complete 540 Phase 1

American Infrastructure Magazine – Jan./Feb. 2026 Issue



Dual radial bridges over a stream were designed to combine functionality with aesthetic appeal. This design also minimized the environmental impact on the underlying ecosystem.

economic growth in the Raleigh-Durham region placed increasing strains on existing roadways and signaled a time for expansion.

The project was delivered through three synchronized design-build contracts and all of the segments of the completed 540 Phase 1 were opened in September 2025. "The project includes modern interchanges, advanced safety features, real-time traffic management and aesthetic treatments that reduce long-term maintenance costs," said Kim Poulton, Deputy Director of Public Relations at NCTA.

Unique Aspects of the Design

The project team embraced practical innovation and overcame complex challenges. As they navigated pandemic-related labor shortages, supply disruptions and inflation, even challenges that at one point left \$15 million in equipment sitting idle. But with perseverance, the team managed to complete the 540 Phase 1 R-2721A, R-2721B and R-2828 contracts on time with respect to the financing schedule and within their budget.

The project exemplifies environmental protection and energy-efficient aspects: the corridor avoided ecologically sensitive areas, such as the Swift Creek watershed and adjacent state forest. More than \$30 million was invested in environmental mitigation, including wetland and stream restoration and a \$5 million contribution to Wake County's Open Space Program to preserve green space. NCTA also built noise walls, constructed a pedestrian culvert to reconnect



NCTA has distinct aesthetic guidelines, which include identifying crossroads on overpass bridges, using real brick on bridges and noise walls and displaying emblems of the dogwood flower, North Carolina's state flower, along bridges for aesthetic charm.



The extension of the Triangle Expressway spans over 18 miles, featuring 52 bridges, 33 culverts and seven interchanges. The project involved moving more than 10 million yards of earth, installing 125,000 linear feet of piles, pouring 200,000 cubic yards of concrete, paving 900,000 tons of asphalt and placing over 39 miles of pipe.



The Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) at Holly Springs Road, part of the Complete 540 R-2721 A project, offers a unique design for quicker and safer access to the Triangle Expressway. Featuring free-flowing left and right turns, this DDI eliminates the need for protected or permitted left turns.

"Today, customers who choose to travel on N.C. 540 bypass that bottleneck entirely, enjoying a more direct, less congested path around the city and substantial time savings."

— Kim Poulton, Deputy Director of Public Relations at NCTA.



a bisected neighborhood and incorporated green infrastructure practices to capture and treat stormwater.

Project Highlights

For many residents in southern Wake and Johnston counties, the road expansion cut as much as 30 minutes from their daily commute. In the first 60 days of operation, more than five million toll transactions were recorded and truck usage was double projections. The project also continues regional economic development by enhancing access to the Research Triangle Park, Raleigh-Durham International Airport and multiple universities.

"The design of Complete 540 Phase 1 is unique in its use of alternative technical concepts and the efficient solutions they produced," said Jennifer Harris, General Engineering Consultant with NCTA. "Believing that design-build teams

could bring fresh, innovative ideas and creative solutions to the table, resulting in a distinctive design that better served the project's goals, the NCTA used the design-build project delivery method for the Complete 540 Phase 1 contracts."

Recognition

The Complete 540 Phase 1 project stood out for using a multi-contract, accelerated design-build approach, with all contracts advanced at the same time, an innovative method so effective that it was repeated for Phase 2. NCTA also strengthened Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation by gathering industry input to set meaningful goals, hosting a rare combined prime-contractor and DBE forum before project advertising and ultimately awarding about \$75 million in DBE contracts, fully meeting all inclusion targets.

The extension of the Triangle Expressway mainline is built using a combination of asphalt and concrete pavement. This photo, taken near Bells Lake Road, showcases the mainline constructed with asphalt.

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Complete 540 Phase 1

American Infrastructure Magazine – Jan./Feb. 2026 Issue



Complete 540 Phase 1
Raleigh metropolitan area, N.C.

Started/Completed:
Construction started in November 2019 and the project opened to traffic September 25, 2024

Project Team:

Engineers:
H.W Lochner, HNTB, Gannett Fleming, HDR & WSP

Owner:
North Carolina Turnpike Authority

Builders:
Flatiron – Branch Civil Joint Venture and Lane-Blythe Joint Venture

Photo Credits:
Summit Design & Engineering, NCDOT & WSP



The Complete 540 Phase 1 project is an all-electronic toll road. Toll gantries allow drivers to drive non-stop throughout the entire 38.8-mile Triangle Expressway corridor.



In June of 2024, before the road opening, the North Carolina Turnpike Authority put on a community event, 540 Fest, to thank everyone for their support during road construction and to give them a chance to see the road before it opened. 2,500 attendees came out to participate in a 5K Run, 10K Bike Time Trial and a fun for the whole family.

NCDOT and NCTA officials along with other dignitaries cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the newest 18-mile section of the all-electronic toll road, Triangle Expressway in Raleigh, N.C.



The project also integrated archaeological data recovery into its planning after early surveys uncovered artifacts up to 10,000 years old. Instead of delaying construction, NCTA and HNTB Corporation built time for excavation directly into procurement documents, ensuring archaeologists could recover and preserve materials now held by the state. This coordinated approach across cultural, environmental and construction interests exemplified NCTA's commitment to both delivering major infrastructure and protecting the state's heritage.

In 2012, the original Triangle Expressway toll road won the People's Choice Award as part of AASHTO's America's Transportation Awards program. In June 2025, the upgraded project received a National Recognition Award from the national ACEC for its unique design. As well as the R-2721A portion received the Grand Award from ACEC N. C. Looking ahead, Phase 2 is now under construction and will deliver the final 10 miles of the outer loop around the greater Raleigh region, anticipated to open to traffic in 2028.

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Finance Committee Report

Robert Teer
Finance Committee Chair

Action Item: Triangle Expressway System Reimbursement Resolution

Jacob Vlanich
Financial Manger

Reimbursement Resolution

Triangle Expressway Widening

- A copy of the proposed resolution has been provided and is available for reference in the back of the provided board books
- The purpose of the resolution is to provide the Authority flexibility to reimburse itself from a future debt issuance if Triangle Expressway funds are used to pay for advanced costs of a potential Triangle Expressway Widening
- The resolution is intended to comply with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code regarding the reimbursement of expenditures from tax-exempt proceeds and identifies the intent of the borrower at the outset
- The resolution does not require the Authority to pursue the project but rather provides flexibility in the event the widening moves forward

Operations Committee Report

Montell Irvin, P.E.
Operations Committee Chair

2026 Summer Intern Program

Travis Feltes, P.E.
Program Manager

Closing Comments / Adjournment

Secretary Johnson
Chair

2026 Board and Committee Meeting Dates

February 19, 2026



May 21, 2026

August 20, 2026

November 19, 2026

Contact Us



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Thank you!