

NORTH CAROLINA
Turnpike Authority

Monroe Expressway

Operations Statistics Report

2026 Third Quarter
July - September

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Introduction

Purpose

The North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) presents the operations statistics for the Monroe Expressway during the third quarter (July - September) of 2026. The report includes data related to traffic volumes, roadway operations, and maintenance. The statistics will allow for future analysis to identify quarterly and annual trends over time, providing a quantifiable method to track performance.

Project

The Monroe Expressway is an 18.5-mile toll road that extends from US 74 near I-485 in Mecklenburg County to US 74 between the towns of Wingate and Marshville in Union County. The four-lane, controlled-access toll facility relieves congestion on US 74, which serves as an important commercial corridor for residents and businesses in Union and Mecklenburg counties as it gives retail, commercial and employment centers in the area direct access to and from the route.

The Monroe Expressway utilizes an all-electronic, non-stop tolling system that does not require drivers to stop at toll plazas and pay cash tolls. Instead, free-flow toll zones are employed where vehicles are detected while traveling at highway speeds. Payments are accepted through an Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) program called NC Quick Pass® or a video billing program called Bill by Mail.

NCTA toll zones are located along the Monroe Expressway are located on the mainline between all interchanges. An illustration of the Monroe Expressway can be seen in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1: Monroe Expressway System Map



Traffic Statistics

Traffic Statistics

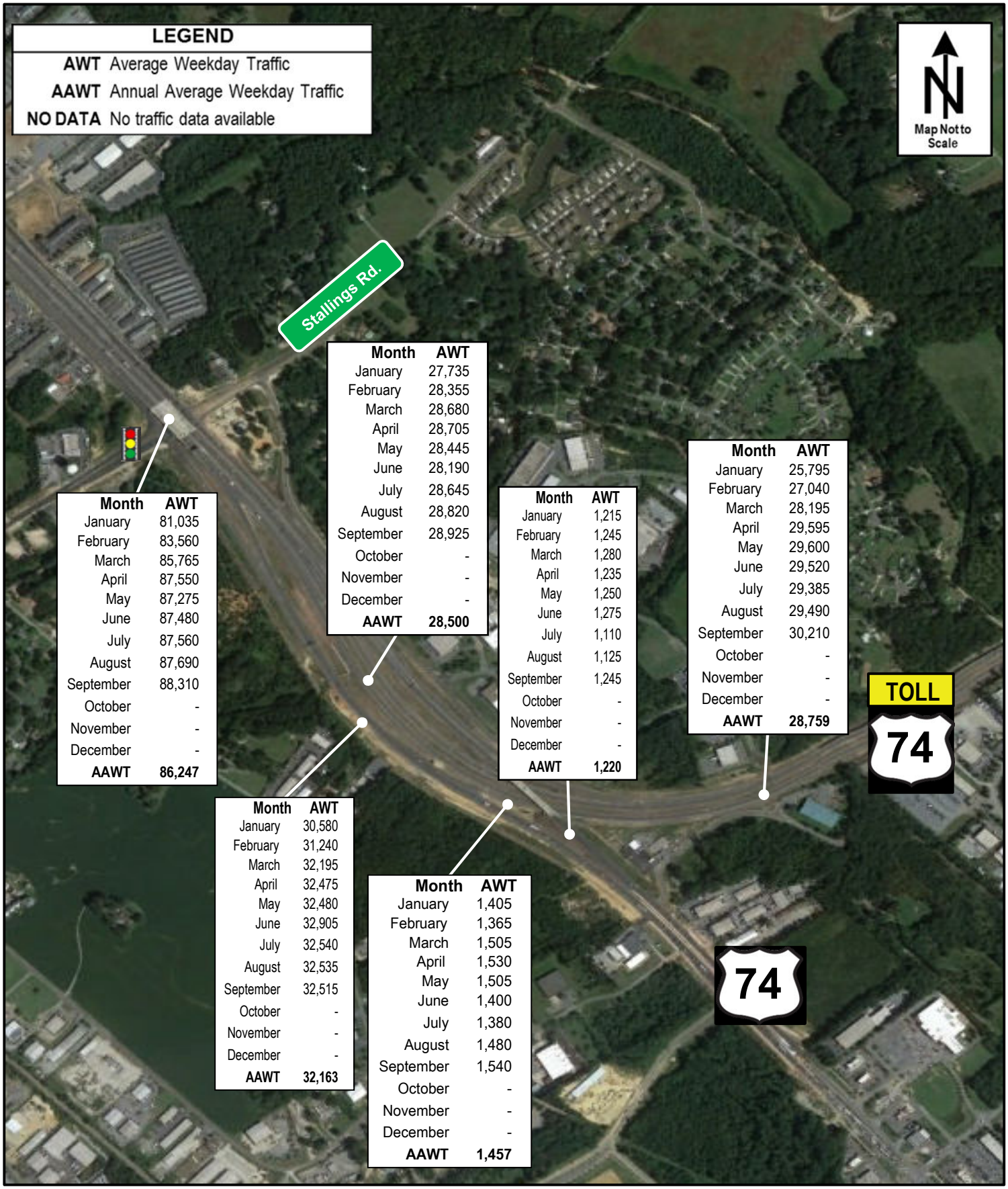
Traffic data is collected and stored using roadside inductive loops installed throughout the Monroe Expressway. The data provides an overview of the roadway's current utilization. The data can also be analyzed to identify trends that could more accurately predict future utilization.

It should be noted that the Monroe Expressway opened in November 2018. Traffic volumes increase significantly as the customers become more familiar with the facility.

Average Weekday Traffic (AWT)

Traffic volume data is collected at all ramps and mainline segments between interchanges. The location of interchanges along the Monroe Expressway can be seen in *Figure 1*. Typically, there is a large difference between peak and off-peak volumes, as well as between weekday and weekend volumes. This gap becomes significantly larger for a tolled facility because it tends to have a much higher percentage of traffic on weekdays during peak hours than non-toll facilities, as there is less of a benefit for toll users during off-peak hours. For this reason, Average Weekday Traffic (AWT) is reported instead of Average Daily Traffic (ADT). AWT is a measure of the average daily traffic collected on a typical Monday through Friday over a designated time period.

Figures 2 to 9 contain visual representations of AWT along the facility which are representative of NCTA's loop detector data. It should be noted that if a loop detector fails to provide reliable data (meeting the established threshold) for at least five days in a month then "NO DATA" is reported for that loop detector. The missing data in Figure 3 for the month of January can be attributed to the loop detector being offline during this period.



Month	AWT
January	81,035
February	83,560
March	85,765
April	87,550
May	87,275
June	87,480
July	87,560
August	87,690
September	88,310
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**86,247**

Month	AWT
January	27,735
February	28,355
March	28,680
April	28,705
May	28,445
June	28,190
July	28,645
August	28,820
September	28,925
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**28,500**

Month	AWT
January	1,215
February	1,245
March	1,280
April	1,235
May	1,250
June	1,275
July	1,110
August	1,125
September	1,245
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**1,220**

Month	AWT
January	25,795
February	27,040
March	28,195
April	29,595
May	29,600
June	29,520
July	29,385
August	29,490
September	30,210
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**28,759**

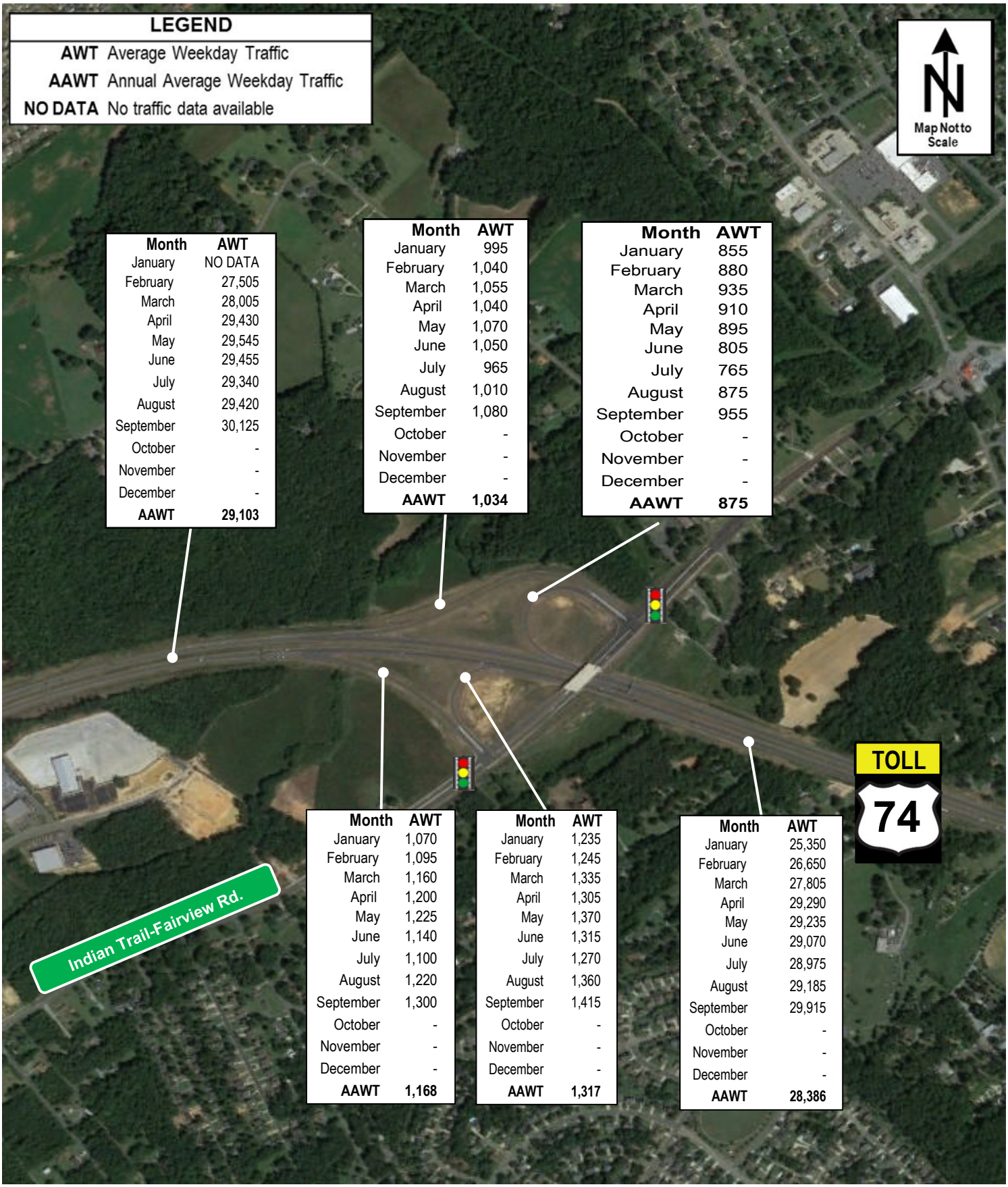
Month	AWT
January	30,580
February	31,240
March	32,195
April	32,475
May	32,480
June	32,905
July	32,540
August	32,535
September	32,515
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**32,163**

Month	AWT
January	1,405
February	1,365
March	1,505
April	1,530
May	1,505
June	1,400
July	1,380
August	1,480
September	1,540
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**1,457**

Toll US 74 Exp at US 74 West Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

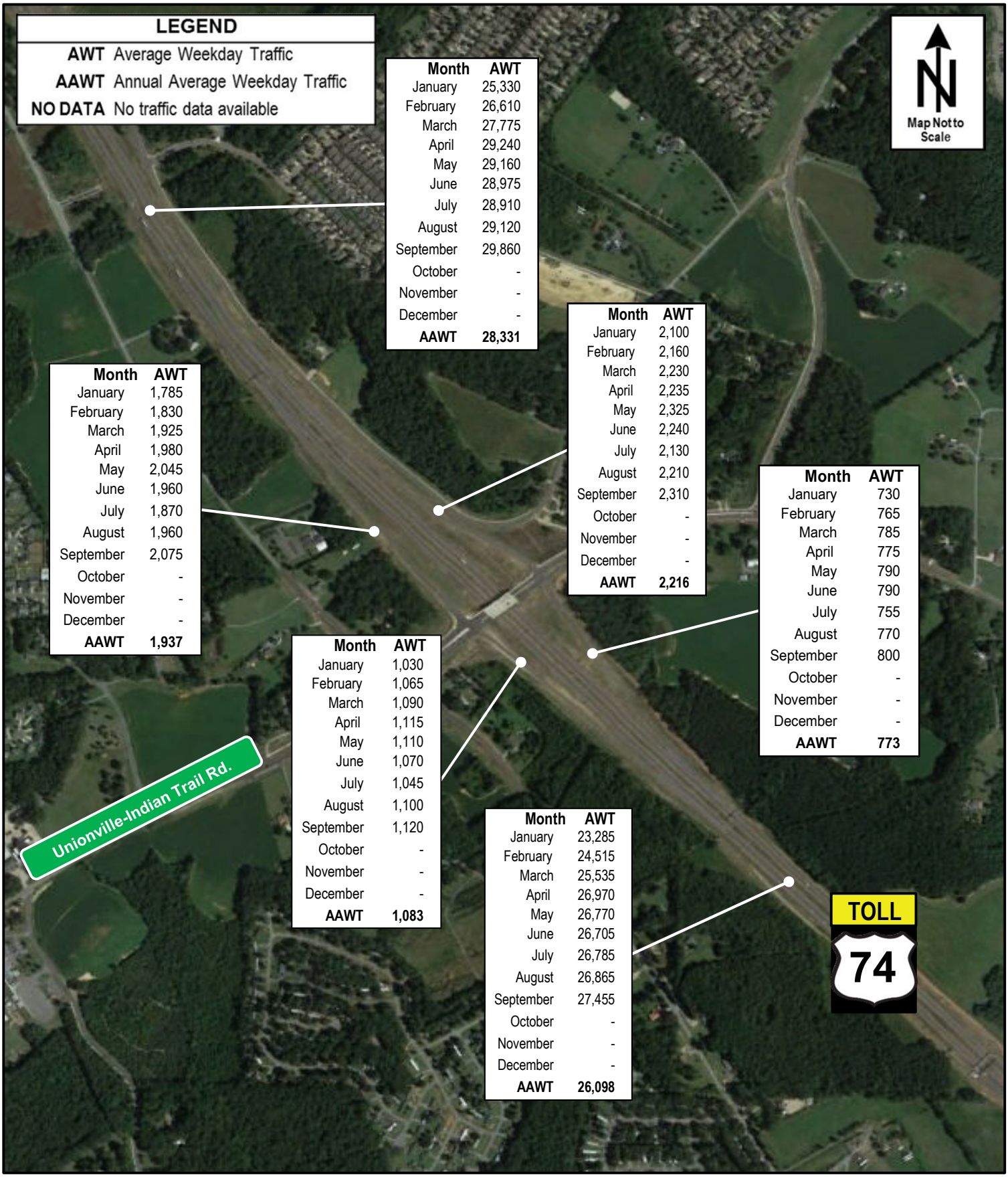
Figure 2



Toll US 74 Exp at IT-Fairview Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

Figure 3



Month	AWT
January	25,330
February	26,610
March	27,775
April	29,240
May	29,160
June	28,975
July	28,910
August	29,120
September	29,860
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**28,331**

Month	AWT
January	1,785
February	1,830
March	1,925
April	1,980
May	2,045
June	1,960
July	1,870
August	1,960
September	2,075
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**1,937**

Month	AWT
January	2,100
February	2,160
March	2,230
April	2,235
May	2,325
June	2,240
July	2,130
August	2,210
September	2,310
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**2,216**

Month	AWT
January	730
February	765
March	785
April	775
May	790
June	790
July	755
August	770
September	800
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**773**

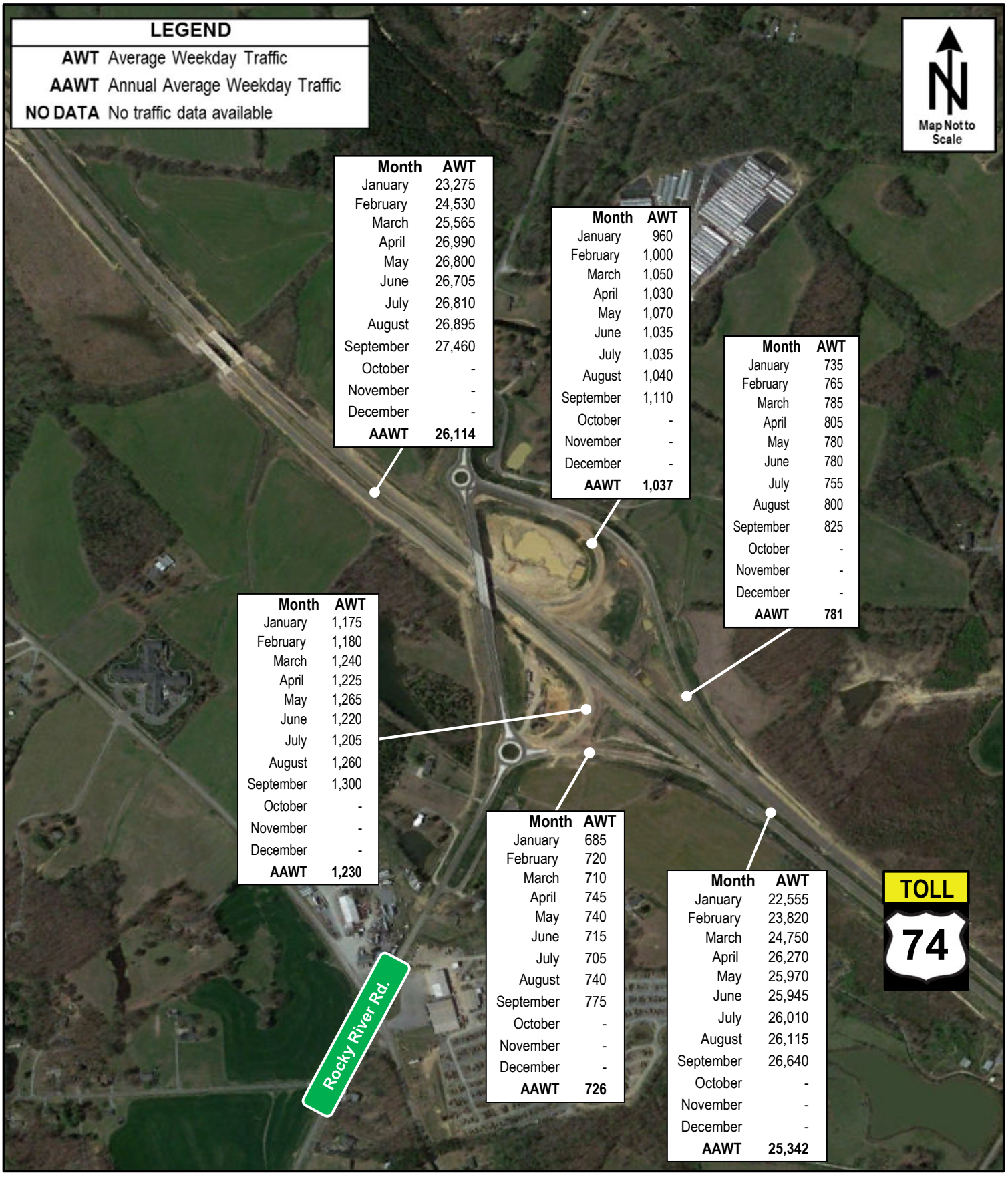
Month	AWT
January	1,030
February	1,065
March	1,090
April	1,115
May	1,110
June	1,070
July	1,045
August	1,100
September	1,120
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**1,083**

Month	AWT
January	23,285
February	24,515
March	25,535
April	26,970
May	26,770
June	26,705
July	26,785
August	26,865
September	27,455
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**26,098**

Toll US 74 Exp at Unionville-IT Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

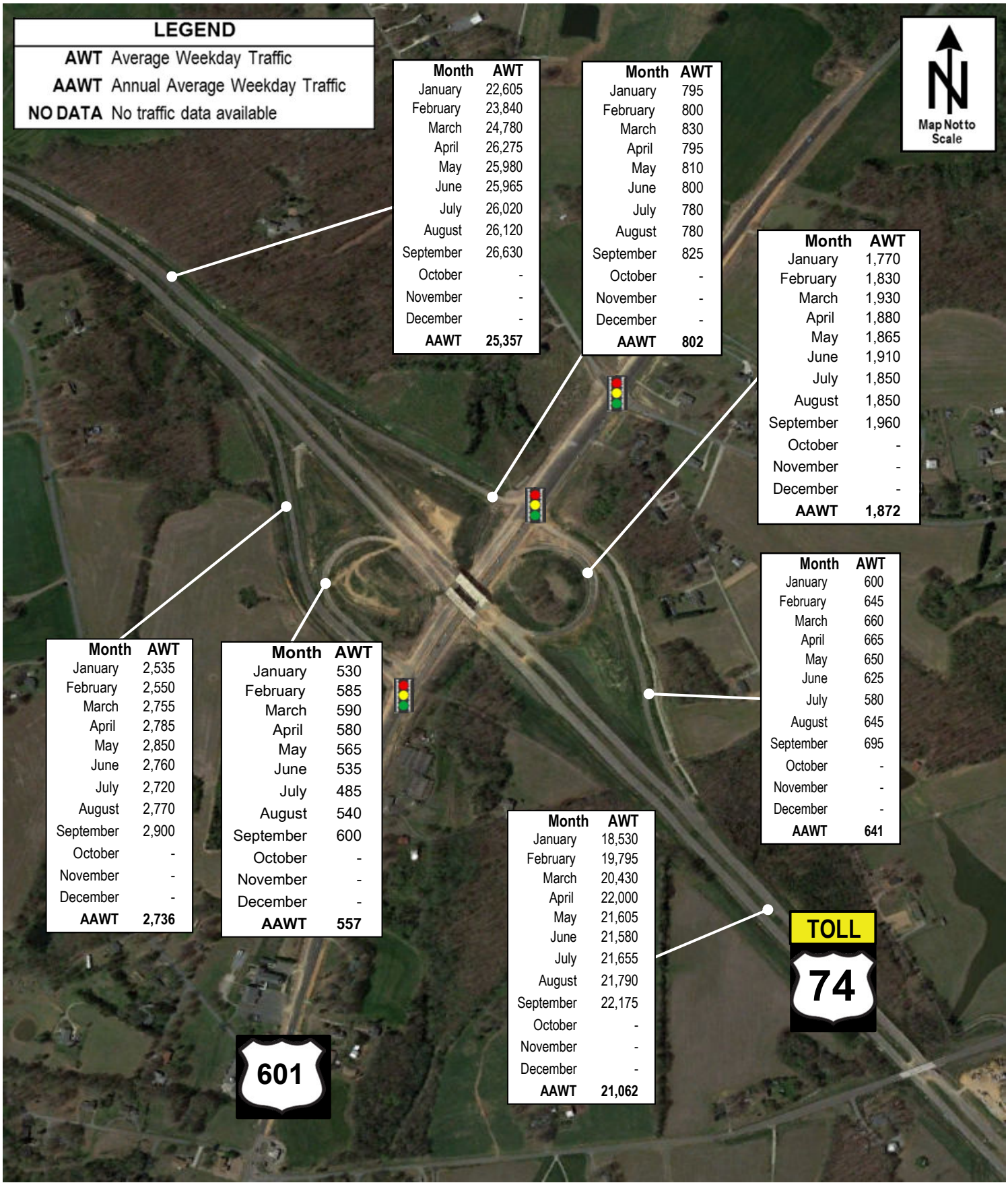
Figure 4



Toll US 74 Exp at Rocky River Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

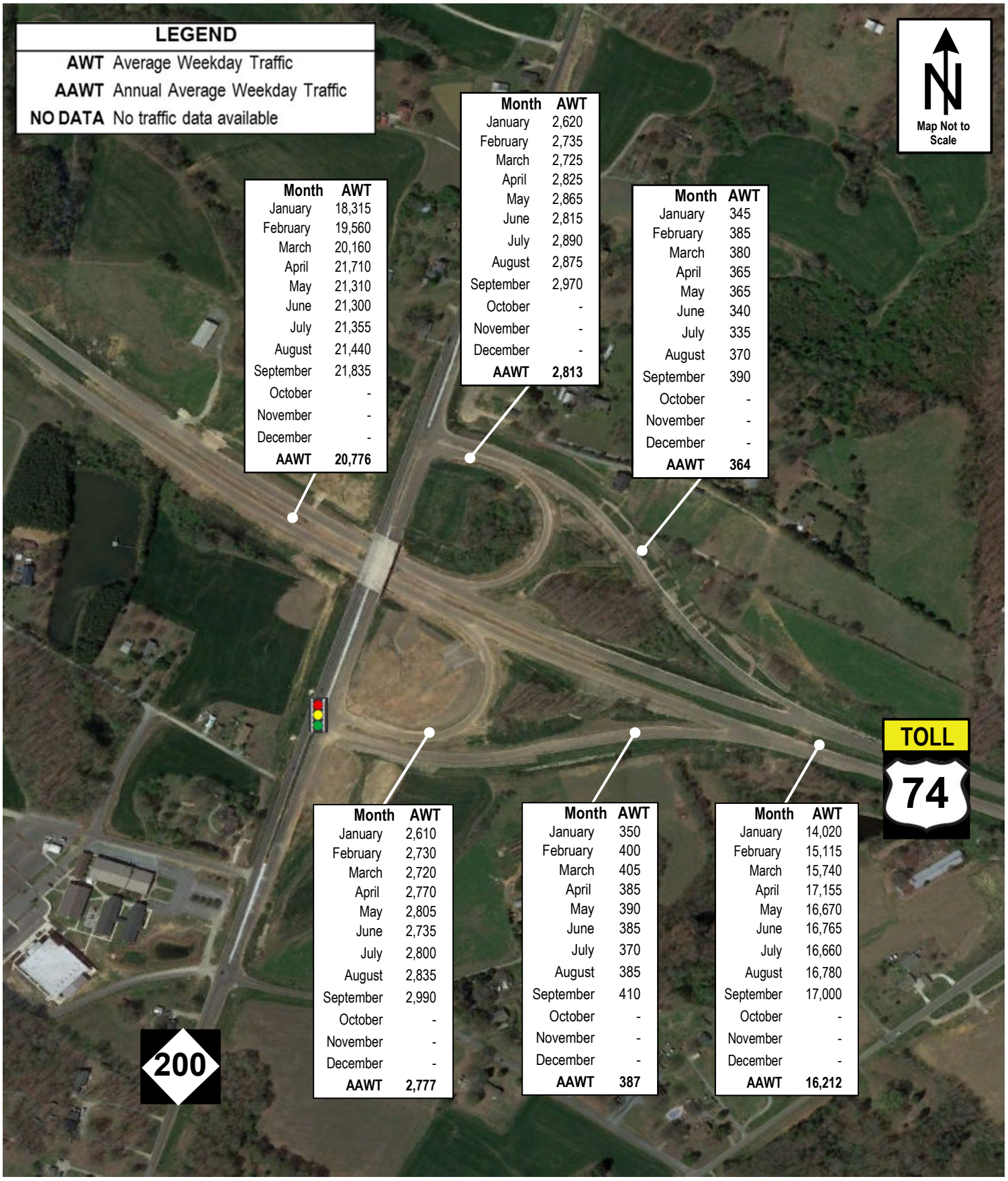
Figure 5



Toll US 74 Exp at US-601 Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

Figure 6



Month	AWT
January	18,315
February	19,560
March	20,160
April	21,710
May	21,310
June	21,300
July	21,355
August	21,440
September	21,835
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**20,776**

Month	AWT
January	2,620
February	2,735
March	2,725
April	2,825
May	2,865
June	2,815
July	2,890
August	2,875
September	2,970
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**2,813**

Month	AWT
January	345
February	385
March	380
April	365
May	365
June	340
July	335
August	370
September	390
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**364**

Month	AWT
January	2,610
February	2,730
March	2,720
April	2,770
May	2,805
June	2,735
July	2,800
August	2,835
September	2,990
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**2,777**

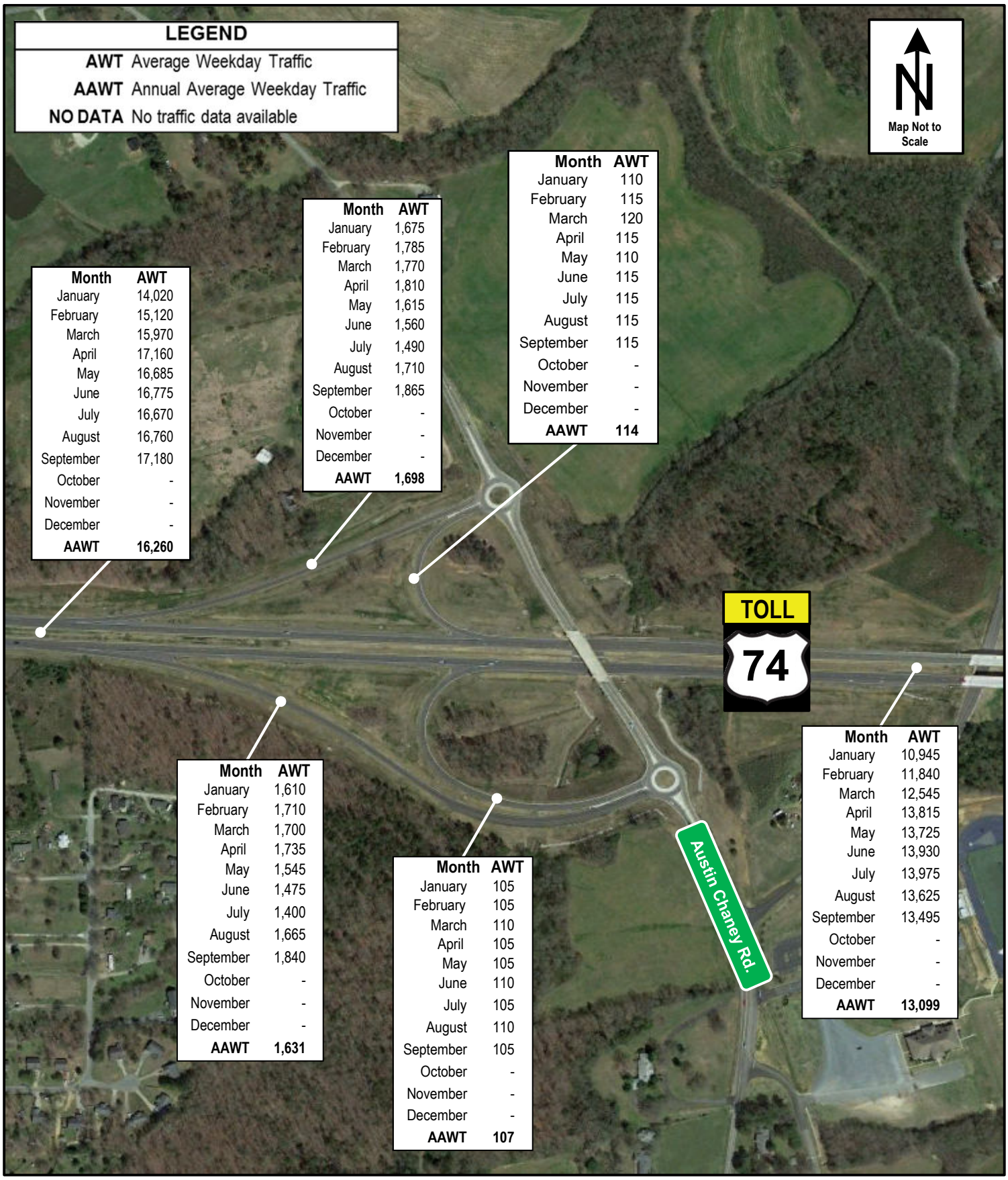
Month	AWT
January	350
February	400
March	405
April	385
May	390
June	385
July	370
August	385
September	410
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**387**

Month	AWT
January	14,020
February	15,115
March	15,740
April	17,155
May	16,670
June	16,765
July	16,660
August	16,780
September	17,000
October	-
November	-
December	-
AAWT	**16,212**

Toll US 74 Exp at NC-200 Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

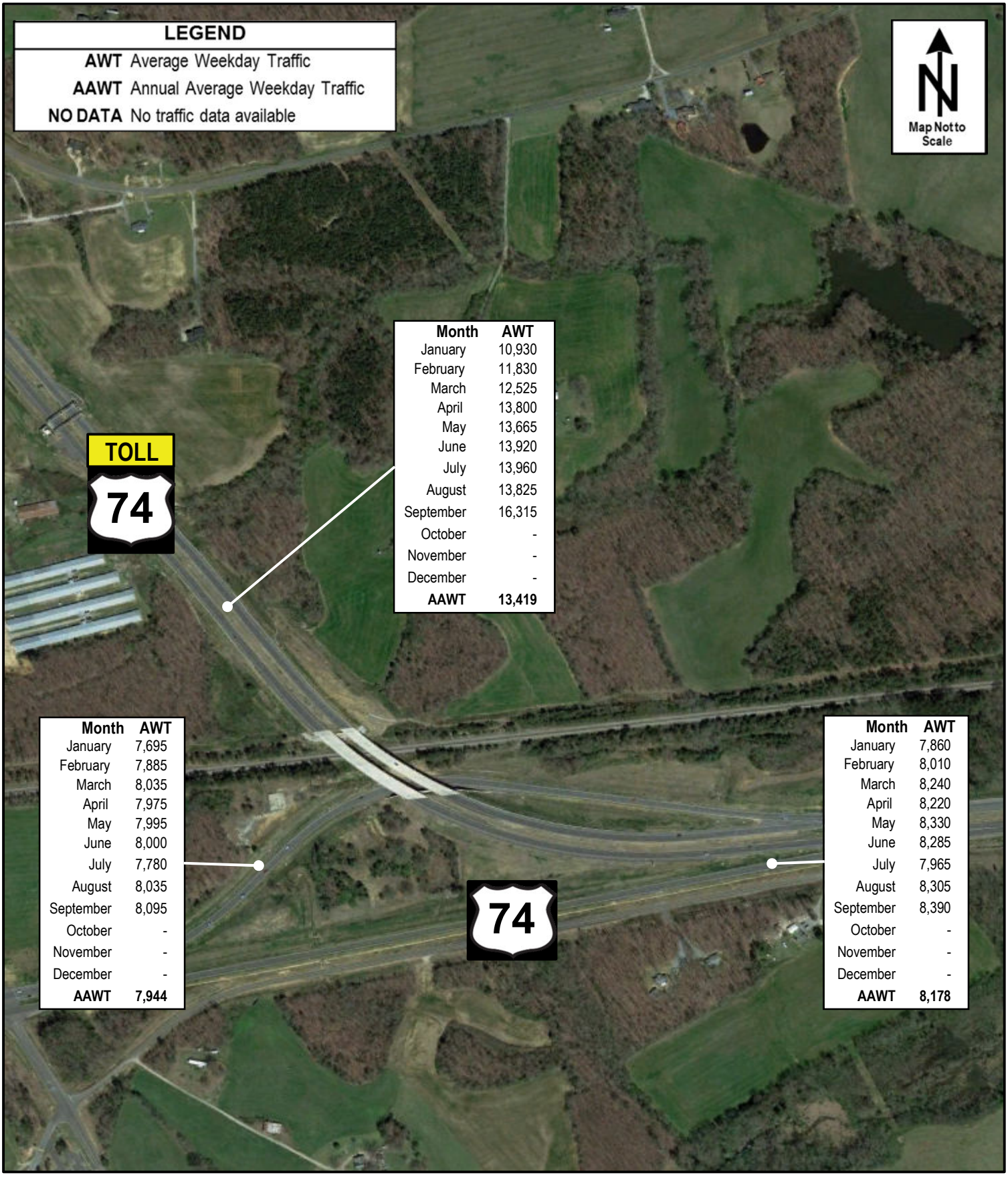
Figure 7



Toll US 74 Exp at Austin Chaney Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

Figure 8



Toll US 74 Exp at US 74 East Interchange

2026 Average Weekday Traffic

Figure 9

Roadway Safety Statistics

Roadway Statistics

Traffic crashes are often related to deficiencies in the safety and capacity characteristics of a transportation facility. To identify these deficiencies early and reduce the likelihood of crashes on the Monroe Expressway, NCTA monitors safety conditions on the facility through quarterly crash analyses. These analyses involve the use of the Traffic Engineering Accident Analysis System (TEAAS) to collect monthly crash data along the facility, which is separated into four (4) segments:

- Toll US 74, from Exit 255 (US 74) to Exit 259 (Unionville-Indian Trail Road)
- Toll US 74, from Exit 259 (Unionville-Indian Trail Road) to Exit 264 (US 601)
- Toll US 74, from Exit 264 (US 601) to Exit 266 (NC 200)
- Toll US 74, from Exit 266 (NC 200) to Exit 273 (US 74)

The data collected includes total crashes and the number of fatal and injury crashes reported along each segment. This data is analyzed over a rolling three-year period to determine the Total Crash Rate of each of the four segments selected, as well as for the entire facility. The Monroe Expressway opened to traffic in November 2018. Comparison to the statewide critical crash rate was performed for every quarter.

Total Crash Rates are a function of the length of roadway, average daily traffic, and number of reported crashes along a route during a specific time frame. These rates are expressed in crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (MVMT). In the crash analysis conducted during the third quarter, the Total Crash Rates of the four segments selected and the entire facility were calculated based on the roadway segment length, the average annual daily traffic (AADT) and the number of crashes recorded from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2026, for each segment. The AADT used for this quarter analysis was collected from the Vehicle Detection System loops from 2025. The Statewide Crash Rate (132.70 crashes per 100 MVMT) used for comparison purposes in this analysis was collected from the 2021-2025 NCDOT Statewide Total Crash Rates for urban interstate facilities, as the Monroe Expressway operates more like an interstate than a state route.

Critical Crash Rates are crash rates that have been statistically adjusted with a 95% level of confidence to remove the elements of chance and randomness. They are used as a reference to determine if the Total Crash Rate at a given location is significantly higher than a predetermined average rate for locations with similar characteristics. Monroe Expressway continues to report a Total Crash Rate significantly lower than both the Statewide Crash Rate and Critical Crash Rate.

Table 1 provides a summary of the crash data collected.

Table 1: Safety Statistics, September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2026

Segment	Length	AADT	Total Crashes	Vehicle Exposure (MVMT)	Total Crash Rate	Statewide Crash Rate	Critical Crash Rate
Toll US 74 US 74 to Unionville-Indian Trail Rd	4.58	27,000	66	135.42	48.74	132.70	149.35
Toll US 74 Unionville-Indian Trail Rd to US 601	5.34	27,200	93	158.99	58.50	132.70	148.04
Toll US 74 US 601 to Austin Chaney Rd	5.74	21,900	62	137.55	45.07	132.70	149.22
Toll US 74 Austin Chaney Rd to US 74	3.02	16,000	28	52.82	53.01	132.70	159.72
Monroe Expressway	**18.68**	**23,700**	**249**	**484.78**	**51.36**	**132.70**	**141.41**

Roadway Operations Statistics

Roadway Operations Statistics

Highly trained NCTA operators monitor and manage traffic operations and coordinate incident response and maintenance/construction work along the Monroe Expressway. These operators work at the Metrolina Regional Transportation Management Center (MRTMC) located in Charlotte. They are responsible for monitoring the facility from 5AM to 9PM. During non-working hours, monitoring is turned over to the Statewide Transportation Operations Center in Raleigh (STOC) and is monitored for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year using closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, vehicle detectors (VDS), and toll zone security cameras. Additionally, STOC monitors roadside toll technology and toll facilities.

Operators can communicate travel conditions and emergencies to customers via 10 full-color Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), NCDOT's 511 system, and NCDOT's Traveler Information Management System (TIMS) website. Operators can also quickly dispatch toll technology technicians to address equipment failures via the Transportal maintenance ticket system. Additionally, in the event of incidents on the facility, operators can use interoperable 800MHz radio frequency dispatch from local 911 and statewide Highway Patrol communications to dispatch Incident Management Assistance Patrol (IMAP).

The NCTA Toll Safety Patrol Program consists of dedicated State Highway Patrol (SHP) and IMAP services provided on the Monroe Expressway. This program provides two SHP officers and two IMAP responders to the facility between the hours of 5 AM and 9 PM, Monday through Friday. During this time, the assigned SHP officers and IMAP drivers are responsible for patrolling the facility and responding to incidents reported by operators.

This section presents operations statistics reported by SHP and IMAP during the third quarter of 2026. It includes driver violations and warnings issued by SHP and total IMAP assistance recorded, as well as average monthly IMAP response and clearance time.

Table 2 and *Table 3* present SHP operation statistics during 2026. "Chargeable Activities" are SHP activities involving fines. It should be noted that the "Other Violations" category includes chargeable activities such as load and equipment violations, driver's license violations, vehicle registration violations, and littering.

Table 2: 2026 SHP Chargeable Activities, YTD

Chargeable Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Speed Violations	37	43	61	46	41	47	50	48	41				
Alcohol Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Seat Belt Violations	0	9	9	17	7	8	6	5	5				
Child Restraint Violations	1	2	0	2	3	0	1	0	3				
Reckless Driving	11	16	27	18	11	17	11	15	8				
Drug Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Obstructed Plates	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Other Violations	44	82	54	83	42	39	56	48	45				
Total Charges	**93**	**152**	**151**	**166**	**104**	**111**	**124**	**116**	**102**				

Table 3: 2026 SHP Non-Chargeable Activities, YTD

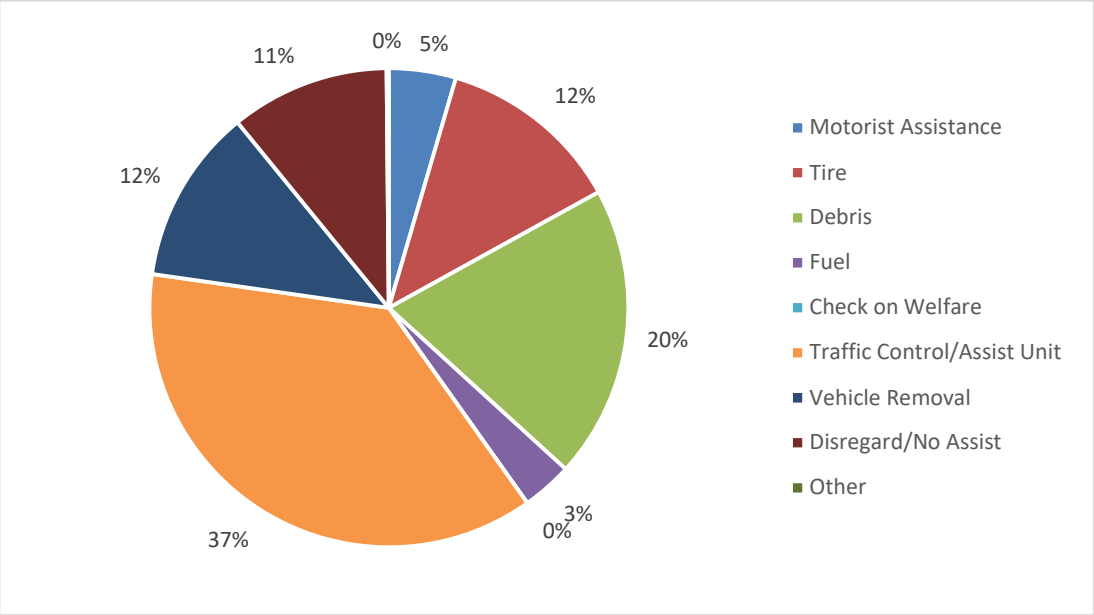
Non-Chargeable Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Warnings	16	8	13	14	13	25	3	12	10				
Crashes Investigated	0	1	0	0	4	1	2	0	1				
Calls for Service	12	16	17	12	21	15	17	26	1				
Total	**28**	**25**	**30**	**26**	**38**	**41**	**22**	**38**	**30**				

The IMAP assists with stranded motorists and incident clearance, thereby maintaining the flow of traffic along the roadway. *Table 4* and *Figure 10* present the monthly breakdown of IMAP services, by type, for the Monroe Expressway during 2026. The “other” category includes extinguish fire service, first aid service, and other rare miscellaneous services.

Table 4: 2026 IMAP Services, YTD

Assist Type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Motorist Assistance	0	4	5	1	2	6	6	2	3				
Tire	10	4	12	9	9	7	11	7	11				
Debris	13	5	23	20	16	22	10	12	6				
Fuel	1	2	6	1	1	3	3	4	1				
Check on Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Traffic Control / Assist Unit	15	25	26	26	22	36	35	29	24				
Vehicle Removal	6	11	10	4	9	8	9	13	6				
Disregard/ No Assist	4	10	4	7	12	4	12	13	3				
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0				
Total Charges	**49**	**61**	**86**	**69**	**71**	**86**	**86**	**80**	**54**				

Figure 10: 2026 IMAP Services by Type, YTD



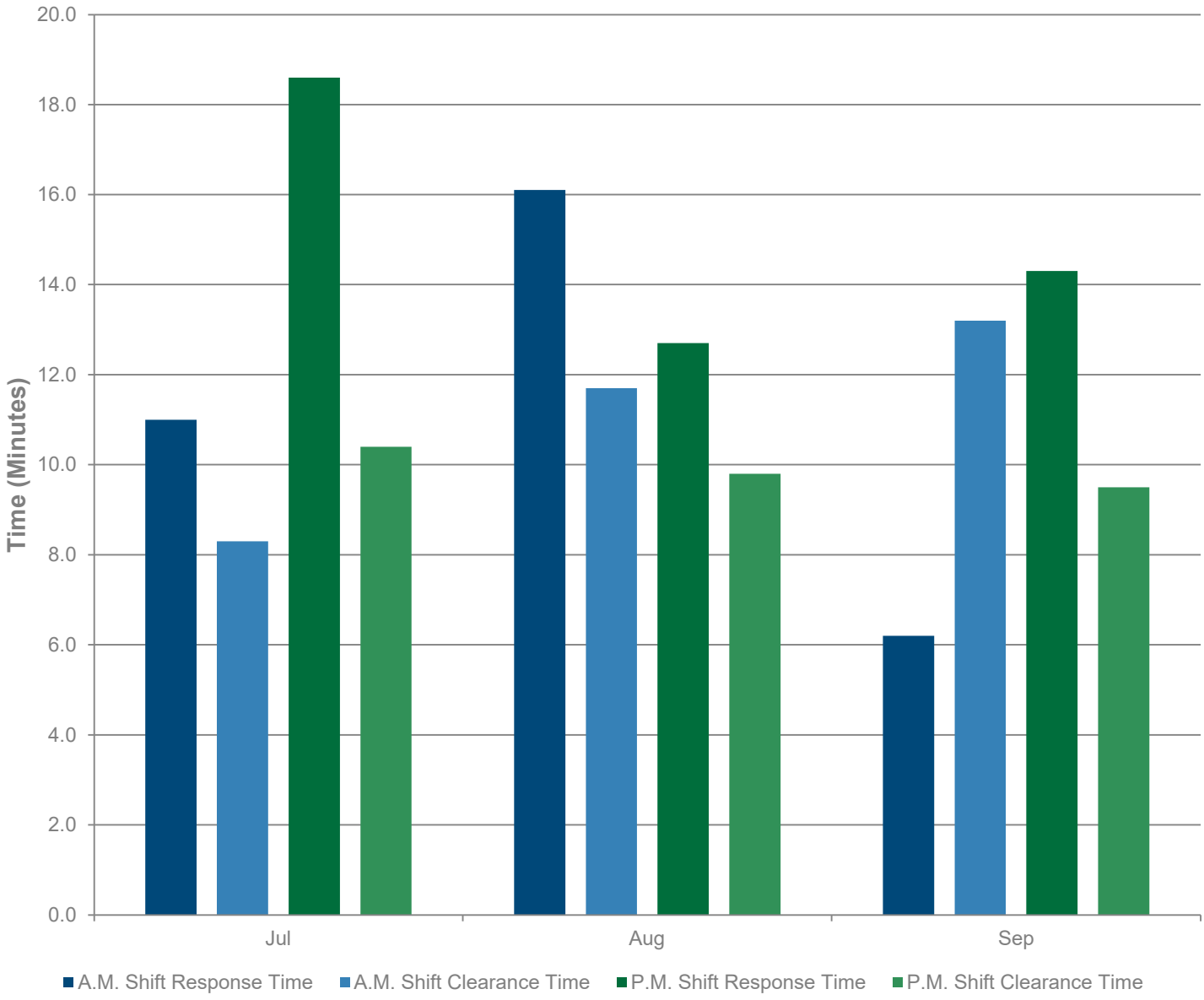
The response and clearance times for all IMAP assists are logged by IMAP and provided to the NCTA. Response time is the time from which a responder receives a call to the time they arrive on the scene. Clearance time is the time it takes the responder to clear the incident and return the roadway to normal operation. The IMAP staff's A.M. shift occurs from 6 AM to 1 PM, while the P.M. shift occurs from 1 PM to 9 PM. Shift response times may differ due to the number of drivers on duty and their coverage areas.

Table 5 and *Figure 11* present the average IMAP assistance response and clearance times, in minutes, for the Monroe Expressway.

Table 5: 2026 Average IMAP Response and Clearance Times (Minutes), YTD

Response Type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2026 Average
A.M. Shift Response	13.5	17.9	19.5	11.3	9.3	12.3	11.0	16.1	6.2				
A.M. Shift Clearance	9.0	12.1	16.1	7.7	9.1	7.6	8.3	11.7	13.2				
P.M. Shift Response	38.0	11.8	11.0	11.4	11.6	12.3	18.6	12.7	14.3				
P.M. Shift Clearance	10.3	7.7	10.0	7.2	9.3	12.0	10.4	9.8	9.5				

Figure 11: Average IMAP Response and Clearance Times (Minutes), Third Quarter, by Month



Roadway Maintenance Statistics

Roadway Maintenance Statistics

This section outlines the NCTA Maintenance Rating Program (MRP), which is a maintenance evaluation program for roadway features and toll facilities. MRP is a comprehensive planning, measuring, and managing process that provides a means for communicating to managers, stakeholders, and key customers the impacts of policy and budget decisions on program service delivery.

Using outcome-based performance measures and the service level scale (0 through 100), the inspection results are rated against established threshold criteria. The program analysis is accomplished using sampling procedures that capture the level of service being provided for individual asset features. Over time, these ratings will be charted to identify work needs and subsequent necessary actions. The evaluations are based on the establishment of threshold conditions that quantify the maximum defect allowed to exist for a characteristic before it is considered unacceptable. The NCTA performance standards, threshold criteria, and Maintenance Rating Program were developed through a collaborative effort by NCTA managers, NCDOT maintenance staff, and consultants.

Using field survey information, a maintenance matrix can be developed to show the ties between maintenance activities and the characteristics of various roadway features. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide information that will be used to schedule and prioritize routine maintenance activities and provide uniform maintenance conditions that meet established objectives.

Assessment Schedule

As part of the NCTA MRP, a “baseline” assessment is scheduled for each newly opened roadway section soon after opening to toll collection. The baseline assessments include a complete inventory data collection and assessment on 100% of the roadway assets.

After the baseline assessment is completed, future assessments for that segment switch over to a statistical sampling assessment. Inspections are performed during the months of February, May, August, and November to account for dynamic seasonal changes to assets. These inspections are accomplished using statistically valid, random sampling procedures that capture the level of service for individual assets with a 95% confidence level in sampling.

Assessment Results

Table 6 presents the 2026 quarterly and annual MRP Assessment rating. It is important to note that the Quarterly Ratings are only representative of the samples inspected during each quarter. Therefore, they are not a statistically valid representation of the assets' conditions; only the annual rating will provide a 95% confidence level in statistical sampling.

Table 6: MRP Assessment Results

Element	Q4 2025 Rating	Q1 2026 Rating	Q2 2026 Rating	Q3 2026 Rating	Rolling Rating
Road Surface	100.0	96.7	100.0	96.7	**98.3**
Unpaved Shoulders and Ditches	98.6	99.3	97.9	100.0	**98.9**
Drainage	96.2	96.7	94.9	100.0	**96.9**
Roadside	96.4	97.1	99.4	97.7	**97.6**
Traffic Control Devices	94.4	94.9	97.8	98.8	**96.5**
Overall MRP Performance Rating	**96.9**	**96.6**	**98.2**	**98.4**	**97.5**