



Rail Division Charlotte Gateway Station and Charlotte Passenger Rail Facility

Nov. 2023

Background

- Charlotte Gateway Station (CGS) and the connected Charlotte Passenger Rail Facility (CPRF) are projects that have been conceptualized, designed, and incrementally implemented in partnership with the city since the early 2000s.
- The purpose of these projects is to meet Charlotte's vision to bring passenger rail service to Uptown.
- Together, these projects will accommodate customer growth, supporting the Queen City as an important destination for travelers in the region and servicing modern, efficient passenger train sets of the future.
- The launch of the new Amtrak Airo fleet will enhance the customer experience by introducing new trains with a focus on safety, passenger comfort, reliability, and environmental sustainability.
- Since beginning the study for environmental updates in 2022 to CPRF to accommodate new train equipment, NCDOT has assessed whether it is possible to relocate CPRF to another location.
- Due to previous federal investment which would have to be repaid or replaced, CGS agreements requiring direct access between the station and facility, and complications with freight operations, NCDOT has determined that relocation of the facility is not prudent or feasible.
- Further, relocation would require at least 10+ years to replace the facility, an

additional estimated over \$100M in railroad infrastructure to access another location and increased operational costs.

NCDOT Actions

- NCDOT is early in the development process of the current phase of the CPRF project and no decisions have been made on what property, if any, would be needed for possible expansion. The current phase would allow servicing of the new Amtrak Airo fleet and expanded passenger train operations to CGS.
- Public input and stakeholder involvement will continue to be vital to any decision-making about this project as we explore needs at this location and the potential for alternative solutions.
- We are planning public engagement efforts to hear concerns, identify issues and challenges, and provide an update of ongoing efforts.
- NCDOT is committed to following the state and federally required procedures to evaluate and develop practical measures to avoid and minimize impacts to people, the environment and businesses as we determine the best path forward.

Estimated Timeline:

- 2023-2024: NEPA Consultation and Stakeholder Coordination
- 2023-2025: Facility Design
- 2024-2026: Property Acquisition, if necessary
- 2026-2028: Construction

Timeline of Events

2000s

- Charlotte Gateway Station (CGS) and a corresponding Charlotte Passenger Rail Facility (CPRF) were conceptualized to relocate intercity passenger rail operations due to constraints of the current Amtrak Station built in 1962 and located at N. Tryon Street.
- Once feasibility studies identified the future CGS site, NCDOT Rail Division and the City of Charlotte staff began considering possible locations for the CPRF close to the location of the Norfolk Southern (NS) main line and the CGS 'main block' on Trade Street.

2002

- Feasibility Study for the Charlotte Multi-Modal Station and Area Track Improvements was completed In July, including the location of CPRF.

2011

- Initial concepts for the CPRF were refined through design studies. The location of the CPRF site was key to how it would function in the future due to its proximity to CGS.
- Other considerations were: the ability to build infrastructure needed with the opportunity for growth and expansion, and the avoidance of interactions with freight rail tracks.
- The Charlotte Passenger Rail Facility was included as a standalone project in the state's 10-year transportation plan, STIP #P-2918F.

2013

- NCDOT received federal approvals of its environmental assessment.
- A Design Public Hearing was conducted to allow the public to review the design,

copies of the Environmental Document, and to formally comment on the project in Dec. This hearing was the culmination of a robust public engagement process.

2014

- The Federal Railroad Administration issued their Finding of No Significant Impact.

2015 – 2017

- CGS public engagement was conducted to provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments on the project.

2018

- The existing portion of the CPRF was completed; it covers about 19 acres and used \$52M federal funds under the Piedmont Improvement Program for design, right of way and construction of Phase I. This phase of the facility is adequate for the current Piedmont train equipment and current service levels.
- In July, NCDOT began construction of Charlotte Gateway Station Phase 1.

2019

- NCDOT received a federal grant of \$77M supporting the update and expansion of CPRF to accommodate servicing the new equipment to be procured for Piedmont service. New Amtrak Airo equipment has now been funded by the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

2022

- NCDOT completed Phase 1 of the Charlotte Gateway Station. The project was on time and within the budget.