

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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PRINCIPAL CLERK

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SENATE BILL DRS45555-MWa-105

Short Title: Commuter Transportation Study/Piedmont Triad. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Lowe and Craven (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO STUDY HOW TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION IN THE PIEDMONT
3 TRIAD.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (Department) shall
6 study the cost and potential economic benefits of a commuter rail service linking dense
7 population centers in the North Carolina Piedmont Triad, and shall include the cities of
8 Winston-Salem, High Point, and Greensboro and encompass the counties of Forsyth and
9 Guilford. The study shall also evaluate additional transportation options beyond rail and shall
10 incorporate population and development growth projections through the year 2050. The study
11 shall, at a minimum, include all of the following:

12 (1) Governance & Implementation Structure.

- 13 a. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a regional transit authority to
14 coordinate transportation across the Triad.
15 b. Consider an authority that would integrate both rail and bus
16 systems into a single, connected network.
17 c. Include a review of the potential governance structure and
18 representation across participating counties.

19 (2) Mode Flexibility.

- 20 a. Evaluate additional transportation options beyond commuter rail,
21 including.
22 1. Bus rapid transit (BRT).
23 2. Regional bus systems.
24 3. Roadway expansion and congestion mitigation projects.
25 b. Direct the Department to determine the most effective mix of
26 modes based on cost, ridership, and feasibility.

27 (3) Funding and Financing.

- 28 a. Include analysis of funding options across all modes, including local,
29 State, and federal sources.
30 b. Evaluate potential regional funding mechanisms and cost-sharing
31 approaches.

32 (4) Economic and Land Use Considerations

- 33 a. Include study of land and right-of-way needs for roadway expansion
34 and bus infrastructure.
35 b. Provide cost estimates for acquiring necessary property and access
36 rights across all modes.



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1 **SECTION 2.** No later than December 29, 2026, the Department shall report to the
2 House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Senate Appropriations
3 Committee on the Department of Transportation, Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight
4 Committee (JLTOC), and the Fiscal Research Division on the results of the study and any
5 recommendations for implementation.

6 **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the Highway Fund to the Department of
7 Transportation the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in nonrecurring funds
8 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year to be used by the Department for this study.

9 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and expires on December 29,
10 2026.