

Trump funding freeze leaves NC transportation projects in limbo

WUNC | By **Bradley George**

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Mark Schiefelbein / AP

President Donald Trump speaks as he meets with homeowners affected by Hurricane Helene in Swannanoa, N.C., Friday, Jan. 24, 2025.

The Trump Administration's freeze on federal funding could have a major impact on transportation projects in North Carolina.

The Biden Administration poured billions of dollars into road and rail development, including a new passenger train rail line from Raleigh to Richmond, Virginia. The U.S. Department of Transportation approved [more than \\$1 billion](#) for the new rail corridor. The money came from the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The new route includes a stop in Wake Forest, which received a \$13 million federal grant for [a new multimodal station](#) one week before Biden left office in January.

Funding is now on hold, but Gov. Josh Stein and state Transportation Secretary Joey Hopkins urged U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy to get the money flowing again. They spoke with Duffy when he visited western North Carolina earlier this month to look at Helene damage on Interstate 40, according to the [News and Observer](#).

Transportation for America, an advocacy group, says the Trump Administration's guidance on federal spending is [holding up nearly \\$126 billion](#) obligated under the 2021 infrastructure law.

Another funding challenge comes from a memo issued by Duffy, which directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to prioritize projects in areas with high marriage and birth

The policy change could affect cities like Charlotte, which is seeking billions in federal funding to expand its light rail system, [WFAE reports](#). Duffy said the guidance is necessary to end “woke” Biden Administration policies and “strengthen American families.”

NCDOT will give state lawmakers an update on the rail project, known as the S-Line, [at a Tuesday meeting](#) of the Senate Committee on Appropriations for the Department of Transportation.

Meanwhile, the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce is urging the General Assembly to [create an infrastructure bank](#) that would fund transportation needs.

Tags[Economy](#)[Donald Trump](#)[Transportation](#)[Josh Stein](#)**Bradley George**

Bradley George is WUNC's AM reporter. A North Carolina native, his public radio career has taken him to Atlanta, Birmingham, Nashville and most recently WUSF in Tampa. While there, he reported on the COVID-19 pandemic and was part of the station's Murrow award winning coverage of the 2020 election. Along the way, he has reported for NPR, Marketplace, The Takeaway, and the BBC World Service. Bradley is a graduate of Guilford College, where he majored in Theatre and German.

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