

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR



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Gov. Perdue Announces Acceleration of Start Dates for Urban Loop Projects

RALEIGH – Gov. Bev Perdue today announced that several Urban Loop projects scheduled to begin between 2014 and 2019 will begin earlier, due to available cash and cost savings from a favorable construction environment. While no additional money exists to add new Loop projects to the construction schedule, the N.C. Department of Transportation expects to see additional savings of about \$50 million by being able to take advantage of today's lower real estate and construction costs, which could move forward other Loops in their priority order.

The following Urban Loop segments will be accelerated:

Charlotte I-485 widening

Using design/build, construction will begin in 2012, two years sooner.

Greensboro Western Loop

Part C (Bryan Boulevard to Battleground Avenue) - Construction will begin in 2013, one year sooner.
Part D (Battleground Avenue to Lawndale Drive) – Buying right of way will begin in 2011, eight years sooner.

Greensboro Eastern Loop:

Part B (US 70 to US 29) - Buying right of way will begin in 2011, four years sooner and construction will begin in 2014, three years sooner.

Wilmington US 17 Bypass:

Part B (US 74/76 to US 421) – All grading and structures work will be consolidated into one contract in 2013. Paving work will be done under a separate contract in 2017, completing the overall project in 2018, two years sooner.

NCDOT uses a cash management system, modeled on the private sector, which allows the department to monitor finances on a monthly basis. Since much of its funding comes from the Highway Use and gas taxes, this system helps NCDOT spend resources effectively.

The money to accelerate these projects was made available in three ways:

- By using the design-build method, which allows construction and design to take place simultaneously, and coordinating construction work on three separate projects that will complete I-485 and widen I-85 in the Charlotte area the department saved about \$130 million;
- Savings of nearly 20 percent on construction contract bids over the past year; and
- While NCDOT implemented a data-driven system for scheduling loop projects last year all loop projects were put on hold, which built up cash on hand.

Ten cities are identified by law to receive special funding from the Highway Trust Fund for urban loops. They are located in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Gastonia, Greensboro, Greenville, Raleigh, Wilmington and Winston-Salem. NCDOT is continuing to look for creative ways to advance all these Loop projects.

Only 140 out of 353 miles in these loops currently are open to traffic. To complete them all at today's prices would cost an estimated \$8 billion. At the current level of funding, \$150 million per year, it will take 50 years to complete the remaining 213 miles, without inflation.

To learn more about NCDOT's prioritization process that uses facts instead of politics to determine which projects receive these limited funds first, visit

<http://www.ncdot.org/performance/reform/prioritization/>.

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