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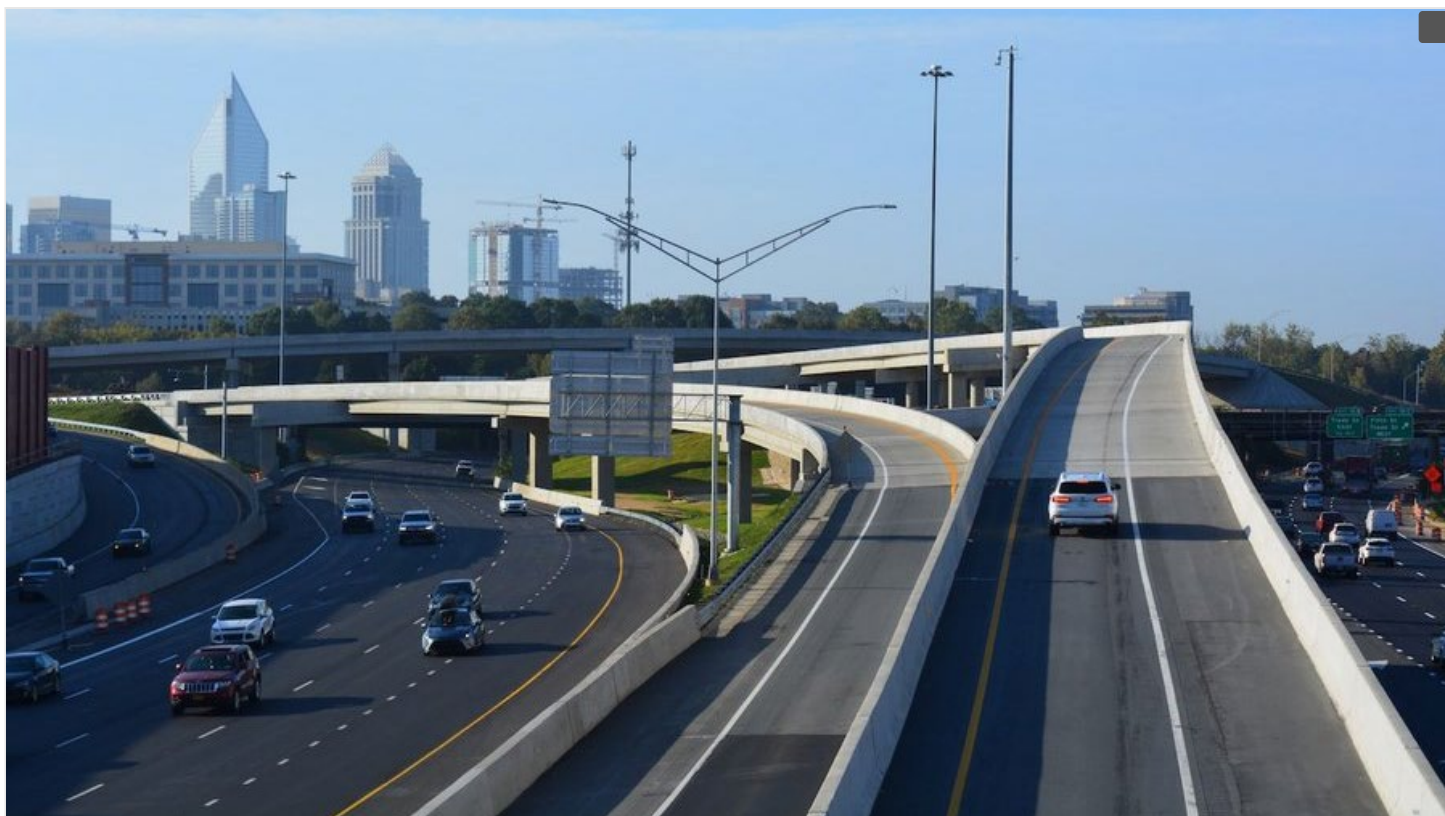
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Transportation •

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I-77 Express reaches another milestone in Charlotte



I-77 Express is a public-private partnership between I-77 Mobility Partners and the North Carolina Department of Transportation that developed an innovative solution to a critical transportation corridor that was often plagued by congestion.

By I-77 Mobility Partners
Apr 27, 2023

The I-77 Express corridor is continuing to move people and goods at a faster, more reliable pace despite being utilized by a record number of vehicles.

On March 31, 2023, the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) rate of cars and trucks on the corridor reached its highest level ever of about 123,000 – an increase of 13,000 from the same time the previous year.

Even so, because of how I-77 Express constantly manages the flow of traffic by convincing drivers to move in and out of its express lanes, the average speeds in all lanes are faster than they were prior to the start of construction on I-77 Express in 2015.

“We’re very proud of this accomplishment,” said David Garcia, CEO of I-77 Mobility Partners, the company that designed, built, and manages I-77 Express. “Every time a driver chooses to use the express lanes, that frees up space in the free general-purpose lanes. That means all drivers are benefitting from the construction of the corridor.”

Faster speeds

A first of its kind for North Carolina, I-77 Express is a public-private partnership between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and I-77 Mobility Partners that developed an innovative solution to a critical transportation corridor that was often plagued by congestion. After responding to a competitive state-led procurement process, I-77 Mobility Partners secured more than \$500 million in private financing – money that did not come from taxpayers’ pockets – allowing the NCDOT to make major improvements to 26.2 miles of I-77 roughly 20 years of ahead of schedule.

Those improvements have decreased travel times for all drivers – not just those who choose to use the express lanes. For example, prior to the start of construction in 2015, drivers needed about 45 minutes during the morning or evening rush hour to travel from Charlotte to Mooresville. In the free general-purpose lanes, the same trip now takes about 30 minutes.

Improved safety

What's impressive is the dramatic improvement in safety throughout the corridor. Despite the increase in vehicles, the accident rate has fallen from 196 accidents per 100,000,000 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in 2015 prior to the start of construction to 103 accidents per 100,000,000 VMT in 2022. That's a more than 90% drop.

"It makes perfect sense," said Garcia. "If traffic is moving at a more reliable pace, driver behavior becomes more predictable and there's less risk of accidents caused by brake-tapping or erratic movements."

Garcia also said he hopes to decrease that number even further. Each year, I-77 Mobility Partners invests millions of dollars in new safety equipment, such as cameras that use artificial intelligence to spot potential safety hazards. And more is on the way. Garcia's goal is to create the safest, most technologically advanced highway in North Carolina, if not the entire southeast.

For more information on I-77 Express and how to save up to 35% on tolls by using an NC Quick Pass transponder, go to www.i77express.com.

I-77 Mobility Partners LLC financed, developed, designed, constructed, operates and maintains the 26-mile I-77 Express corridor as part of the first-ever public-private partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. NCDOT retains ownership of the roadway and helps ensure I-77 Mobility Partners adheres to the standards of their contractual partnership.

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