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**OPEN HOUSE INTRODUCING KINSTON TRACK IMPROVEMENTS
TO BE HELD THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10**

KINSTON, NC – Improvements to enhance safety, speed and economic development on the North Carolina Railroad will be discussed at an Open House on Thursday, September 10, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 410 North Queen Street in Kinston. The event is jointly hosted by Pride of Kinston and the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR). The Norfolk Southern Railway, freight operator on the NCR, will also be represented.

The event is open to all who would like know more about current and future rail corridor upgrades. A nine-month project that will realign the tracks between Mitchell and North Independence Streets in downtown Kinston is scheduled to begin mid-September. The realignment will permit increased train speed from the current 10 mph to 25 mp, enabling trains to clear in-town crossings more quickly. Faster trains will reduce traffic delays at crossings.

Further, the recent removal of the decaying freight depot plus the downtown track realignment will allow today's larger rail cars, such as those used by Spirit AeroSystems and Camp Lejeune, to pass through, further opening up eastern North Carolina for rail-served industries.

Also underway is construction of a transload track to serve the Global TransPark, creating a siding and truck/rail loading ramp for Spirit and other future users. The cost to NCR of both projects, funded out of NCR freight revenues, is approximately \$3.5 million. Under a separate project, the North Carolina Department of Transportation is constructing a six-mile rail line to connect the Global TransPark to the NCR, which will also be operated by Norfolk Southern.

The event will begin with brief comments from Kinston Mayor O.A. (Buddy) Ritch and several business and civic leaders. The rest of the Open House will be informal, with representatives from NCR, Pride of Kinston and Norfolk Southern available to answer

questions. The meeting is open to the public and people are invited to come by at any time during the two-hour open house.

The North Carolina Railroad Company owns and manages the 317-mile rail corridor extending from Morehead City to Charlotte. The railroad carries 60 freight trains and eight passenger trains daily. NCRR is the state's oldest corporation and remains at the forefront of rail improvements and partnership development to promote jobs and rail-served industry across the state. Industries accounting for 24% of the state's economic output depend on rail service on the NCRR line.

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