

GRADING METHODOLOGY

2006 NORTH CAROLINA INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD

This first North Carolina’s Infrastructure Report Card was published by the North Carolina Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) to raise public awareness of the impact crumbling infrastructure is having on our daily lives, and the many issues and decisions that face our state as we strive to maintain and improve our infrastructure. We believe discussion of the issues detailed in this report will lead to a greater understanding of the current and future needs of our state, prompting decision makers in our communities and in the legislature to formulate policies and provide the necessary funding to address North Carolina’s infrastructure needs.

The Report Card evaluates North Carolina’s infrastructure in nine critical areas—Airports, Bridges, Dams, Drinking Water, Rail, Roads, Schools, Storm Water and Wastewater. Overall grades were given to each category, and supporting information on existing conditions, trends and concerns, and policy options were provided, as well as recommendations for future action. The Report Card, prepared by the North Carolina Section, was modeled after the Report Card for America’s Infrastructure released by ASCE National in 2005 (www.infrastructurereportcard.org).

A committee of 25 volunteer professional engineers from across the state were assembled to collect data, review and evaluate the information obtained and to develop the grades and recommendations. Also, in an effort to maintain an objective and consistent perspective on the findings and grading, the committee called upon a Blue Ribbon Panel of recognized public and private engineering professionals to evaluate their findings.

Grades were assigned on the basis of condition and capacity, and funding verses need—generally following a traditional grading scale (e.g., if only 77 percent of roads were found to be in good condition or better, a grade of C assigned). The following grading scale was used for the overall category assessments: A = Exceptional; B = Good; C = Fair; D = Poor; and F = Inadequate.

In some cases, category grades were adjusted if the expectations for a particular performance criterion did not meet the traditional grading scale, or if the data was incomplete. Due to the many factors that can impact infrastructure’s overall performance, some categories were given individual grades in multiple areas of assessment, which were then averaged to create the overall category grade.

In addition to numeric data, qualitative information was also used to make modifications to the grades. Also, for several infrastructure categories, hard data was not readily available in all areas, which required more subjective assessments to be made. All grades were critiqued by the Review Panel for objectivity and consistency before being finalized.

	Airports	Bridges	Dams	Drinking Water	Rail	Roads	Schools	Storm Water	Wastewater
National	D+	C	D	D-	C-	D	D	N/A	D-
State	D+	C-	D	C+	B-	D	D+	C-	C-