

North Carolina's Community, Regional Community, Urban and Regional Urban Transportation Systems

Community Transportation

Community transportation efforts formerly centered on assisting clients of human service agencies. Today, the vast majority of rural systems serve the general public as well as those clients. Citizens should call ahead for reservations, since most systems operate on a first-come, first-served basis; whereas, human service agencies prepay and reserve seats for a guaranteed number of passengers. There are 68 rural single-county transit systems in North Carolina.

Regional Community Transportation

Regional community transportation systems are composed of two or more contiguous counties providing coordinated/consolidated service. More than one-fourth of North Carolina's 100 counties have rural transportation provided by a regional system. Although such systems are not new - with Choanoke Public Transportation Authority operating in Bertie, Halifax, Hertford and Northampton counties since 1977 - the NCDOT Board of Transportation is encouraging single-county systems to consider mergers to form other regional systems. Demand for transit trips becomes more regional in nature as regions grow in population and geographic area. In addition to the Choanoke Public Transportation Authority, other regional community transit systems are:

- Craven Area Rural Transit System - Craven, Pamlico and Jones counties;
- Greenway Public Transportation – Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties;
- Inter-County Public Transportation Authority - Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Pasquotank and Perquimans counties;
- Kerr Area Rural Transportation System - Franklin, Granville, Vance and Warren counties;
- Regional Coordinated Area Transportation System - Montgomery and Randolph counties;
- Tar River Transit - Edgecombe and Nash counties; and
- Yadkin Valley Public Transportation - Davie, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin counties.

Urban Transportation

The Charlotte Area Transit System, with its light rail system, is the largest of the 19 urban transit systems operating in North Carolina. Urban transit serves citizens in cities across the state, from Asheville and Hendersonville in the west to Jacksonville and Wilmington in the east. In addition, transit is at work in three smaller cities: Boone, Salisbury and Wilson. Consolidated urban-community transportation exists in five areas of the state. In those areas, a single transportation system provides both urban and rural transportation within the county. They are:

- AppalCART in Boone and Watauga County;
- G.A.T.E.W.A.Y. Transit in Goldsboro and Wayne County;
- Greenway Public Transportation in Hickory, Newton and Conover and Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties;
- Tar River Transit in Rocky Mount and Edgecombe and Nash counties; and
- Wave Transit in Wilmington and New Hanover County.

Because Greenway Public Transportation serves four counties and Tar River Transit serves two counties, they also are considered regional community systems as well as consolidated urban-community transportation systems.

Regional Urban Transportation

Regional urban transit systems currently operate in two areas of the state. These systems connect multiple municipalities and counties. They are:

- Triangle Transit, based in Research Triangle Park, operating a fixed-route bus service that connects Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill and the surrounding area, and
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation, based in Greensboro, operating fixed-route bus service connecting Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, the surrounding area, and medical transportation to UNC Hospitals and Duke University Medical Center.