

# Annual Report on Progress Toward SB 953 Goals

## By the N.C. Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division

Session Law 1999-328, The Ambient Air Quality Improvement Act, established statewide goals for reducing the growth of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the state. The legislation directed the N.C. Department of Transportation to develop a plan to reduce VMT growth by 25 percent by July 1, 2009, focusing on job-related travel.

From 2000 to 2008, the projected growth of commuter VMT has been reduced by 24.6 percent with all indications that the 25 percent target will be met.

The goal of transportation demand management (TDM) is to focus on efforts to reduce demand for roadway space by influencing travel choices and the amount and timing of travel. TDM aims to encourage more walking, cycling, use of public transit, carpooling, vanpooling and telecommuting.

In 2004, NCDOT officially initiated funding to local TDM programs, awarding 50 percent of their administrative costs. Prior to that time, the department gave similar support for vanpool programs at Charlotte Area Transit System, Triangle Transit and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation. New TDM programs joining that trio of systems were Cape Fear Breeze in Wilmington, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, N.C. State University, SmartCommute @ RTP and the City of Asheville.

### 24.6% Reduction in Growth of Daily Commuter VMT

From 2000 to 2008, with commuter trips being accommodated in carpools, vanpools and transit, daily commuter VMT increased by 14,733,333 VMT. From 2000 to 2008, with commuter trips not being accommodated in these alternative modes, daily commuter VMT would have increased by 18,364,526 VMT, representing a 24.6 percent reduction in projected growth of commuter VMT.

### GoPass On the Go

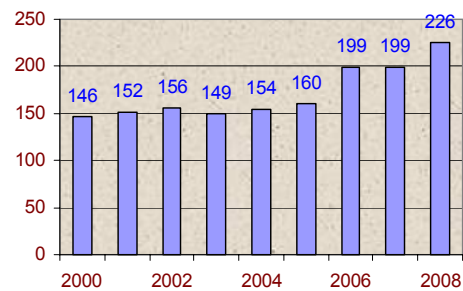
The GoPass Program has been very popular with state government employees. In July and August of 2008, parking coordinators at state agencies distributed 4,400 GoPass cards to state employees.

Capital Area Transit (CAT) in Raleigh introduced the fare-free program in September 2002 for students and staff at N.C. State University. One year later, state and city employees began enjoying the benefit and were followed in FY 2005 by Wake County workers and in FY 2006 by Meredith College students and staff. Between 2005 and 2008, annual state government ridership increased by 35.7 percent. Total GoPass ridership for all agencies has increased 38.6 percent, from 444,768 in 2005 to 616,411 in 2008, and now comprises 12.4 percent of the total CAT ridership.

Following the success of CAT, Triangle Transit began its GoPass Program for state employees in October 2005 and has met with phenomenal success. Triangle Transit began the GoPass Program in September 2002 with North Carolina State University. UNC-Chapel Hill joined in August 2004, and were followed by the City of Raleigh in January of 2007 and Wake County in July 2007. State government ridership in the GoPass Program increased by 36.8 percent from 2007 to 2008. Total GoPass ridership for all agencies in the program now comprises 40 percent of the total Triangle Transit ridership.

### More Vanpools, Carpools On the Road in North Carolina

Increasing Number of Vanpools

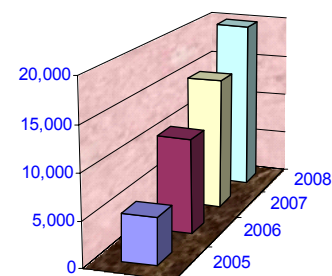


Vanpools and people interested in carpooling are increasing.

Between 2000 and 2008, the number of vanpools in North Carolina increased by 55 percent. Vanpool programs are operated by Charlotte Area Transit System, Triangle Transit, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation and NCDOT, which contracts for service for the rural vanpool program.

The number of registrants in ShareTheRideNC, the statewide Web-based rideshare matching program, increased by 31 percent between 2007 and 2008. There are now almost 20,000 commuters registered on the ShareTheRideNC database for ride-matching services.

Increasing Number of Registrants in ShareTheRideNC



# North Carolina's Transportation Demand Management Programs

Program	Program Description
<b>ASHEVILLE, CITY OF</b> 	<p>The City of Asheville implemented its Blue Ridge Commuter Connections in FY 2006. The purpose of the program is to reduce emissions and congestion in the Asheville area by decreasing the number of single-occupancy vehicles for commuter traffic into and around the city. During 2008, the program promoted the Best Workplaces for Commuters Program, which resulted in the Grove Park Inn being designated. Staff also promoted the Web-based rideshare matching software program ShareTheRideNC.org, investigated the Zipcar Program for downtown Asheville, designed and promoted a Commuter Club program, hired an intern to set up a commuter challenge for the 2008 Strive Not to Drive campaign, developed a TDM Web site with links to adjacent county Web sites, and worked closely with the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization and the local transit agency to locate park-and-ride lots. Staff also promoted the Passport Program, in conjunction with Asheville Transit. This program operates like the GoPass Program in the Triangle, where employees of participating employers can ride transit for free. Three employers began participating in the Passport Program.</p>
<b>CHARLOTTE, CITY OF</b> 	<p>The City of Charlotte will continue to provide and promote alternate ways of commuting to the citizens who live and work in or near the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region. Activities undertaken in FY 2008 included promoting the Best Workplaces for Commuters Program, expanding the mini-vanpool program, conducting transportation fairs to increase awareness of various transportation alternatives, increasing usage of the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) by bicycle riders and increasing the use of vanpools in the Charlotte region. Another goal was to increase the Employee Transportation Coordinator membership, and seven new businesses became members. In addition, the TDM program continued to advertise and utilize the Web-based rideshare matching program ShareTheRideNC.org for Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties. The number of Charlotte area commuters registered on the ShareTheRideNC Web site increased to 6,912, a 34 percent increase from 2007. ~ The TDM program is housed at CATS and currently leases 85 vans.</p>
<b>N.C. STATE UNIVERSITY</b> 	<p>The Transportation Department at N.C. State University implements travel demand management measures to maintain air quality and improve mobility options for the campus. Activities undertaken during FY 2008 included administering the U-Pass program to allow students and faculty to ride Capital Area Transit and Triangle Transit for free, promoting the Wolftrails program and Web site through promotional items and articles in employee publications, the Technician newspaper, quarterly newsletters and brochures. The Wolftrails brochure was redesigned and 2,000 copies were printed and distributed at new employee orientation and building liaison meetings. Staff also participated in a spring promotional event in conjunction with Earth Day as well as Employee Appreciation Day to increase awareness of transportation options and register persons in ShareTheRideNC. In addition, staff conducted an annual transportation survey to track commuter behavior; participated in the SmartCommute Challenge; assisted Triangle J Council of Governments and other coalition partners in promoting/recruiting Best Workplaces for Commuters members; and conducted presentations to university employees to explain commute options supported by the university. NCSU worked with Triangle Transit on the ReDefine Travel campaign to increase ridesharing and transit usage among students.</p>
<b>PIEDMONT AUTHORITY FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION</b> 	<p>PART receives financial support from the Cities of Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem. The goal of PART's Commuter Services Program is to increase the use of alternative transportation in the region by providing individuals and employers with information on transit, carpooling, vanpooling, park-and-ride lots and the Emergency Ride Home Program. PART will initiate a new hire pass program in the airport hub area and develop TDM initiatives for students at universities and colleges in the area. Staff also participated in job fairs to market PART services, including the PART Express Bus service between High Point, Greensboro and Winston-Salem, and advertised the Web-based rideshare matching program ShareTheRideNC.org. The number of commuters registered in ShareTheRideNC.org increased to 2,317, a 55 percent increase from 2007. Staff partnered with Triad Air Awareness to administer the second annual Triad Commuter Challenge and experienced a 55.5 percent increase in the number of challenge participants. PART expanded the coverage of the Emergency Ride Home Program to cover all alternative commuters instead of just vanpoolers. In addition, it will be developing a Best Workplaces for Commuters campaign. ~ PART currently leases 44 vans, a 25.7 percent increase from 2007.</p>
<b>TRIANGLE TRANSIT</b> 	<p>Triangle Transit will continue to manage and operate the Triangle Area Rideshare Program, which offers rideshare matching services, guaranteed ride home, van leasing for vanpools, and transit and park-and-ride information to employees and the general public in the three-county (Durham, Orange and Wake) and the greater Triangle area. Additional activities undertaken during FY 2008 included administering the statewide Web-based rideshare matching program ShareTheRideNC.org, organizing the SmartCommute Challenge, conducting Lunch and Learn events, distributing new-hire packets to area employers, administering the employee commuter survey for the Durham Trip Reduction Ordinance and promoting ridesharing and transit on campuses with the ReDefine Travel campaign. Staff assisted employers in becoming designated as Best Workplaces for Commuters, with seven employers receiving the designation in 2008. Staff also conducted a Dump The Pump campaign, Car Free Day, Fare Free Day and a GoTriangle launch. On Fare Free Day, ridership was up 10 percent from the previous Friday. Over 90 employer on-site events were held related to the SmartCommute Challenge. The number of commuters registered on ShareTheRideNC.org increased to 9,114, a 25 percent increase from 2007. Triangle Transit will also continue promoting GoTriangle.org, which provides trip-planning information. ~ Triangle Transit currently leases 70 vans.</p>

# North Carolina's Transportation Demand Management Programs

## Program

## Program Description

### SMARTCOMMUTE @ RTP



This transportation management association, funded by the Research and Production Service Districts of Durham and Wake counties, will continue a transportation demand management program in the Research Triangle Park area with the overall goal of increasing the percentage of RTP employees using commute alternatives. Activities undertaken during FY 2008 included participating in the SmartCommute Challenge to encourage employees to try commute alternatives, hiring an intern to assist with the SmartCommute Challenge and on-site events, working with Triangle Transit on the Triangle Region Best Workplaces for Commuters Program, and providing temporary subsidies to new riders of SmartCommute member employers for vanpool fares and transit passes. Staff also participated in outreach events including commuter fairs and Earth Day events and was a resource for non-SmartCommute member employers. Staff provided leadership and administrative support for the SmartCommute @ RTP Committee and was successful in attracting two additional RTP employers to join the committee. Air quality signs were given to member employers who posted them outside their buildings to alert their employees of air quality issues and promote ridesharing when the air quality index is unhealthy.

### UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL



The Commuter Alternatives Program (CAP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill promotes TDM by providing information and incentives to those who do not purchase a university parking permit. CAP markets the commuter options of park-and-ride lots, transit, vanpools, carpools, walking and bicycling. Activities undertaken in FY 2008 included distributing CAP brochures throughout the university and nearby student apartment complexes, participating in the ReDefine Travel campaign to encourage student ridesharing, bicycling and walking, and advertising university-subsidized Triangle Transit bus passes and vanpool rider fares. Open houses were held with Chapel Hill Transit, Triangle Transit and Zipcar. Staff also promoted additional bus services including point-to-point shuttles and increased marketing and assessment of the Zipcar program. The Zipcar program was expanded to include 18- to 20-year-old drivers, four new cars were added, and Zipcar annual membership is one-half price to CAP members. The walking times map brochure was finished and ads/posters were designed for the Smart Moves Apartment Finder Maps, which help students locate off-campus housing along transit lines. Staff arranged for a 40 percent discount on hourly fees at the Ramshead Deck to assist CAP participants if they need to use the hourly pay lot after they have used up their one monthly campus parking permit. Staff also advertised the statewide rideshare matching program ShareTheRideNC.org as well as the regional trip planning program GoTriangle.org.

### WILMINGTON, CITY OF



The City of Wilmington will continue the Cape Fear Breeze Transportation Demand Management Program. The purpose of the program is to develop and promote alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use for target groups, including employers and employees, visitors and the general public. Activities undertaken during FY 2008 included promoting the Way2Go Club, a Web site that captures data regarding the usage of alternative modes; conducting the Second Annual Cape Fear Breeze Commuter Challenge to encourage employers, employees and the general public to take advantage of alternative methods of transportation; working with UNC-Wilmington to implement a faculty carpooling program and formalize an emergency ride home program; working with New Hanover County to implement a transit pass program as well as implement preferential carpool permits and an emergency ride home program; and promoting registration in the ShareTheRideNC.org database by creating customized employer page log-ins for new employees and registering employees using laptops during all outreach events. In addition, the program will promote the Best Workplaces for Commuters Program to employers in the region and continue to coordinate with the New Hanover Transportation Services and the Wilmington Transit Authority.

## Survey Documents Trip Reduction

An annual Durham County employer survey shows that more employees are making commuter trips by modes other than single-occupant vehicles, almost achieving the 20 percent rate as outlined in the ordinance.

In FY 2008, the figure had climbed to 19.9 percent of total commuters, compared to 17.5 percent in 2007, 15.6 percent in 2006, and 13.4 percent in 2005. The program was instituted in 2000 for employers with 100 or more employees.

Employers participating in the Durham Commute Trip Reduction Survey represented 66,638 employees. More than 16,000 responses were received. The survey was administered by Triangle Transit.



### Greensboro College Students Ride for Free

In August 2006, Greensboro Transit began the Higher Education Area Transit (HEAT), a free service for all students enrolled in one of eight major colleges and universities in Greensboro and Jamestown. Ridership on the HEAT service was 154,082 in FY 2008.

Participating schools are Bennett College, Elon University School of Law, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC Jamestown and Greensboro campuses), North Carolina A&T State University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

HEAT, supported primarily by federal and state grants, is a partnership among the Greensboro Transit Authority, the City of Greensboro and the participating schools. More than 40 similar transportation programs for institutions of higher learning are operating around the country. HEAT decreases demand for on-campus parking, enhances air quality in Greensboro and the Triad region and reduces dependence on private vehicles for local transportation needs.

# Taking the Challenge

A commuter challenge is a campaign designed to increase general public awareness of alternate commuting options through aggressive marketing and employer site visits. Campaigns have shown that about 10 percent of employees who try a commute alternative will make it a regular practice. Currently commuter challenge campaigns are conducted in four areas of the state, Wilmington, the Triangle, the Triad and Asheville.

Cape Fear Breeze in Wilmington conducted its first campaign in April 2007. The campaign had almost 3,500 alternative transportation trips made by members of seven teams. The Second Annual Challenge will be held Sept. 15 through Oct. 17. The goal of the challenge will be to increase the number of employer teams participating and to encourage use of alternative transportation beyond the challenge period.

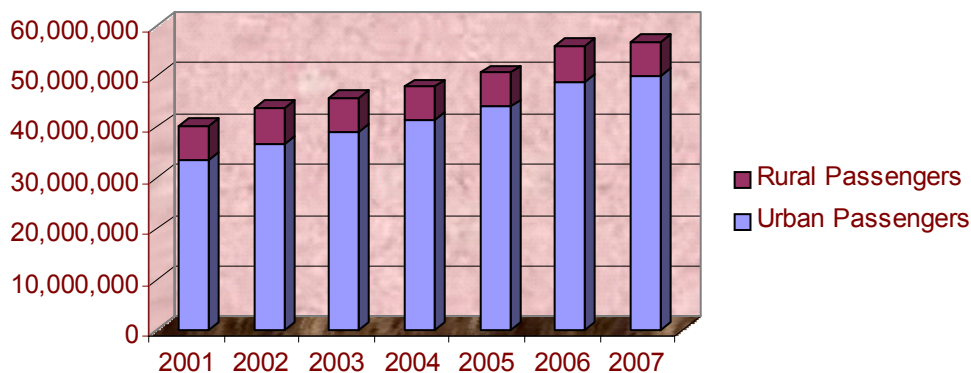
SmartCommute and Triangle Transit sponsored a Triangle-wide SmartCommute Challenge for the six-week period of April 15 to May 30. During the challenge, 12,210 Triangle area employees and college students participated. Of those, 97 percent followed through on their pledges and 77 percent were willing to continue using an

alternative form of commuting at least once a week. Participants eliminated 1.9 million commuter miles and save 86,485 gallons of gas. During the challenge, transit ridership increased 19.5 percent in April from the April 2007 ridership and 7.8 percent in May from May 2007 ridership.

The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), based in Greensboro, was the first TDM program to kick off its challenge in FY 2008 during festivities on March 4. PART partnered with Triad Air Awareness for its three-month Triad Commute Challenge, which ran through May 31. Challenge participation increased by 55.5 percent over the previous year.

Blue Ridge Commuter Connections held a Strive Not To Drive Week May 12-16. That week was during a six-month worksite wellness initiative, Downtown on the Move, which included prize drawings for employees who joined the commuter club. The focus of this event was on bicycling as an alternative form of commuting. There were 264 pledges. Although it did not meet the goal of 1,000, it did double the registrants from the previous year.

## Public Transportation Passengers



## N.C. Public Transportation Serves Millions of Passengers Annually

North Carolina's public transportation systems are getting North Carolinians where they want to go. The state's public transit systems serve citizens in both urban and rural areas. Two systems serve urban regional areas in the Triangle and Triad.

North Carolina's transit systems provided 56.7 million passenger trips in FY 2007, operated almost 2,500 vehicles and traveled 83 million miles of revenue service.

# Latest TDM News

## Charlotte's LYNX Starts Strong Surpasses Ridership Estimates

The Charlotte Area Transit System's LYNX Blue Line began service on Nov. 26, 2007. North Carolina's first light rail system runs approximately 9.5 miles from Uptown Charlotte to Interstate 485/South Boulevard. The first full year average daily ridership was projected

to be 9,100, but the average weekday ridership is 14,417, the average Saturday ridership is 13,050, and the average Sunday ridership is 7,414. Between service inauguration and June 30, 2008, the LYNX system carried a total of 2.8 million passengers.



*Photo courtesy of CATS*

## NCDOT Named 'Capital Commuter Champion'

At the Triangle Kick Gas Celebration, held in June 2008, the NCDOT received the Capital Commuter Champion Award for its commuter benefits program and promotion of TDM in the downtown Raleigh area.

NCDOT was recognized for holding four on-site SmartCommuter Challenge events, advertising the challenge in e-mail and newsletter, implementing a compressed workweek schedule option, participating in the GoPass Program, continuing to be designated a Best Workplace for Commuters employer, providing funding for TDM programs across the state, and providing news releases about ShareTheRideNC.org.

The Kick Gas Celebration was sponsored jointly by the GoTriangle Transportation Demand Management Partners: SmartCommuter@RTP, N.C. State University's Transportation Department, UNC – Chapel Hill's Commuter Alternatives Program, the Town of Chapel Hill's Go Chapel Hill Program and Triangle Transit.



*Tamra Shaw, who heads up the state's transportation demand management effort, accepts the "Capital Commuter Champion for Promotion" Award.*

## PART's Service Growing

The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation continues to expand in a 10-county area. Among its services are express buses connecting points in Winston-Salem, High Point and Greensboro and linking the Triad to points along U.S. 421 on the Mountaineer Express and to Surry County. PART Express ridership for the months of July and August of 2008 were up more than 80 percent over the same periods last year.

## Wake Forest Transit Service Now Available

The Wake Forest-Raleigh express bus service and the Wake Forest Loop both began service on July 7, 2008. These two new routes provide free in-town service and a rush hour express.

The Wake Forest-Raleigh Express travels from a park-and-ride lot in downtown Wake Forest to downtown Raleigh during peak commute times with stops at Triangle Town Center and the State Government Complex before its final destination at Moore Square. Mid-day service is available between Wake Forest and Triangle Town Center on an hourly basis.

The Wake Forest Loop, a local circulator service that loops through the Town of Wake Forest and a portion of the Wakefield community, is fare free through the end of the year. These services are provided through a partnership among the Town of Wake Forest, the City of Raleigh and Triangle Transit.

## Triangle Region Contracts For Seven-Year TDM Plan

A consultant was hired to develop a seven-year TDM plan in the Triangle region. The Advisory Committee, comprised of NCDOT, metropolitan planning organization representatives and representatives from all of the Triangle TDM programs, determined that the purpose of the plan is to reduce regional growth in commuter vehicle miles traveled by 25 percent between 2008 and 2015. In order to achieve this reduction, the Triangle TDM plan will need to shift 6,000 regional commuters on a daily basis to non-single occupant vehicle modes by 2015.

The plan outlines a package of TDM strategies. These include the Triangle J Council of Governments assuming responsibility for contracting, call for projects, evaluation and monitoring of TDM in the Triangle. It also calls for the MPOs to provide additional funding for TDM activities and implementing a competitive call for projects in the region.

The plan identifies six "hot spot" areas for TDM focus. These plan elements are already being implemented for the 2009 fiscal year.

# Employers Win BWC Distinction Employees Receive Commute Alternatives

The Best Workplaces for Commuters (BWC) Program is a public/ private partnership that publicly recognizes employers whose outstanding commuter benefits meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Standard of Excellence to reduce traffic and air pollution and improve health and the quality of life for commuters.

The focus of the program is to increase the number of employer-based transportation programs aimed at reducing vehicle miles traveled and air pollution by identifying innovative solutions to commuter needs. The BWC program continues to evolve as it grows nationally. As of October 1, 2007, the Center for Urban Transportation and Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida assumed program management responsibilities from the EPA with support from the National Center for Transit Research and other sources.

North Carolina's 66 BWC employers represent more than 100,000 employees. Four employers are located in Asheville and three in Charlotte, and the remaining 59 BWC employers are based in the Triangle. Seven of those Triangle organizations were officially designated Best Workplaces for Commuters during the past year.

About one in seven Triangle employees works for a BWC employers. Those employees have substantial incentives to take an alternative way to work. Triangle Transit administers the Triangle BWC Program.

## North Carolina BWC Employers

### TRIANGLE

2Plus, Inc.  
 ARCADIS, Inc.  
 BASF Corporation  
 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina  
 Capital Area Transit  
 Cato Research  
 Chapel Hill District  
 Cisco Systems  
 City of Durham  
 City of Raleigh  
 Downtown Raleigh Alliance  
 Durham County  
 EMC Corporation  
 First Environments  
 GlaxoSmithKline  
 IBM  
 \*Lenovo  
 \*McKesson Corporation  
 \*Meredith College  
 National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
 News and Observer  
 Nortel  
 N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts  
 N.C. Community College System  
 N.C. Department of Administration  
 N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



***North Carolina has the distinction of having more BWC state government agencies – 20 – than any other state.***

N.C. Department of Commerce  
 N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety  
 N.C. Department of Cultural Resources  
 N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
 N.C. Department of Health & Human Services  
 N.C. Department of Insurance  
 N.C. Department of Justice  
 N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
 N.C. Department of Revenue  
 \*N.C. Department of Secretary of State  
 N.C. Department of State Treasurer  
 N.C. Department of Transportation  
 N.C. General Assembly  
 N.C. League of Municipalities  
 N.C. Office of Information Technology Services  
 N.C. Office of the State Auditor  
 N.C. State University  
 N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission  
 \*Quintiles Transnational  
 \*Red Hat  
 The Redwoods Group  
 Research Triangle Foundation  
 RTI International  
 Syngenta Biotechnology, Inc.  
 Town of Carrboro  
 \*Town of Cary  
 Town of Chapel Hill  
 Triangle J Council of Governments  
 Triangle Transit  
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (RTP)  
 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
 Wake County  
 Wyeth

### ASHEVILLE

City of Asheville  
 \*Grove Park Inn  
 NOAA's National Climatic Data Center  
 UNC-Asheville

### CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Area Transit System  
 Duke Energy  
 Mecklenburg County

\*New in FY 2008