N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
FY27 Intercity Bus Call for Application – Addendum
3/9/2026

QUESTION: Why does NCDOT require Realtime GTFS (GTFS-RT) for all Intercity Bus services?

NCDOT-IMD prioritizes providing all available trip-planning resources to potential customers. The mandate is to ensure the state supported service is provided as a publicly legible, interoperable piece of the state's transportation infrastructure. GTFS-RT should be developed in accordance with the guidelines provided by https://gtfs.org/documentation/realtime/reference/. Often, existing bus-tracking automatic vehicle location (AVL)-based applications can be translated into GTFS-RT.

Multimodal Trip Planning Integration
Intercity buses often serve as a critical link in a broader transportation network, connecting rural communities to urban centers. By requiring GTFS-RT, NCDOT ensures that real-time bus data — vehicle positions, trip updates, and service alerts — can be ingested by a variety of apps including Google Maps or Apple Maps, giving travelers seamless, accurate connections across transit modes and providers.

Service Visibility and Rural Access
Real-time data helps riders make informed decisions in the moment, reducing missed connections and the burdens of unreliable service. Additional trip planning applications also means additional visibility to potential riders — especially in rural areas with less intercity service marketing exposure.

State Oversight and Accountability
Requiring a standardized feed gives state transportation agencies a consistent, machine-readable stream of operational data. This allows to monitor on-time performance, identify chronic service failures, and provides an additional source of data to corroborate the required reporting metrics.

Emergency and Disruption Communication
The service alerts component of GTFS-RT lets providers push real-time notices about delays, detours, or cancellations directly into traveler-facing platforms — improving public safety communication during weather events or other disruptions.

QUESTION: Are carriers only allowed to submit for existing NCDOT subsidized routes, or can new routes be proposed?

Carriers are allowed to submit proposals for existing routes as well as new routes throughout the State. If proposing a new route, the route must have logical start and end termini and connect to the State intercity bus network as well as the national network. There must be strong justification as to why the new route is being proposed.

QUESTION: Can a carrier provide in-kind match via farebox revenues on other services?

No. In-kind match can only be provided from an intercity bus carrier by using the value of unsubsidized and connecting intercity bus service. For more information, please see the FTA Circular on Page IX-4.
https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2024-09/C9040.1H-Circular-11-01-2024.pdf