



2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 10 Years



A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP

*Improving Transportation
through Regional Cooperation*

**March 2009
Volume 6**

MISSION STATEMENT: To enhance the quality of all forms of transportation for each of our citizens through efficient use and protection of our natural, economic, and human resources.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Neighbors:

2008 was a year of great successes for the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation. New programs were initiated as others were expanded to meet the needs of our citizens as the region continues to grow.

First, we expanded PART Express into the counties of Davidson, Randolph, Stokes and Yadkin. As we saw gasoline prices rise to \$4.00 per gallon, we responded quickly with these new services and expanded PART Express on existing routes. At the end of the year when fuel prices dropped below \$1.50 per gallon, our ridership was 58% higher than the beginning of the year. This makes a strong case to "try transit- you just might enjoy it!"

Funding for PART's services continued to increase from state and federal sources. Total expenditures for 2008 were \$7.69M with \$2.53M coming from the local taxation on short-term vehicle rentals.

As the year came to a close, the Board of Trustees bid farewell to departing Board members David Isley, Rockingham County Commissioner, and Bill Whiteheart, Airport Commission of Forsyth County. Great appreciation was expressed by the Board and staff for their many years of hard work and dedicated service to PART.

As you read this annual report, take a look at the many programs and services PART is currently providing to improve transportation throughout out ten-county region. If you would like more information or have a question about PART, please let me know or contact the PART staff.

On behalf of the PART Board of Trustees, I extend our sincere thanks to the many regional partners for continuous cooperation and support. By working together, we are improving the quality of life in the Triad.

Sincerely,

Darrell Frye
PART Chairperson



MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Seamless Mobility

PART coordinated the completion of the Piedmont Triad Seamless Mobility Study. The study took approximately 8 months and included 12 fixed route, paratransit and community transportation systems from 9 counties. The study assessed all of the system's services and recommended that further study be continued on additional activities for providing transit services more efficiently, effectively and seamlessly. The recommendations are designed to be implemented over a 5 to 10 year period. The ultimate goal is to reduce the overall cost of providing similar services by each transit system and improve service outputs. The study was funded through a grant from the North Department of Transportation for all the associated cost. PART hired a project manager and facilitated the study. The draft final report was completed in August 2008. Since that time PART has coordinated presentations of the report's findings to 16 boards, councils, agencies and authorities. The next phase of the study is to undertake each recommendation in a prioritized order to determine how each might be a benefit to the Triad. The final report can be accessed on PART's web site www.PARTnc.org.



Transportation Demand Management

The PART Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program is committed to traffic congestion mitigation in the North Carolina Piedmont Region by offering alternative transportation to the single occupancy vehicle. These alternatives include Vanpooling, Carpooling, Teleworking, Compressed Work Week, Walking/Bicycling and Riding the Bus. PART also supports a statewide ridesharing database, SharetheRideNC, which matches commuters for ridesharing opportunities.

In conjunction with Triad Air Awareness, PART hosted the second annual Triad Commute Challenge, which ran from March 1, 2008 through May 31, 2008. The purpose of the Triad Commute Challenge is to encourage the use of public transportation and alternative transportation to mitigate traffic congestion on our roads, as well as, increase air awareness issues within the Piedmont region. There were 1,573 commuters that pledged to use alternative transportation during the three month period, and as a result, reduced the amount of vehicle miles traveled by 1,868,724 miles and green house gas (CO₂) emissions were reduced by 68 tons. Over 50% of the Challenge participants stated that they will continue to use alternative transportation and over 80% of participants stated that they had a positive experience using alternative transportation during the Challenge. For more information about the Triad Commute Challenge or the TDM program contact PART at (336) 662-0002.

Triad Air Awareness

The partnership between Forsyth County Environmental Affairs and PART has reached thousands of people this year with the Triad Air Awareness program. The program continues to educate the public about the important link between air quality and transportation.

The Triad Air Awareness program has reached out to 4th graders in Davie County, school health officials in Lexington and soccer coaches across Guilford County, just to mention a few. Triad Air Awareness continues to provide education, information and the tools necessary for citizens to make choices in their life which will have a positive impact on our air quality.

If you would like someone speak to your group about air quality, health, and what we can do to reduce air pollution, please contact Lorelei Elkins at (336) 703-2449 or Elkinslt@forsyth.cc

SERVING THE NEEDS

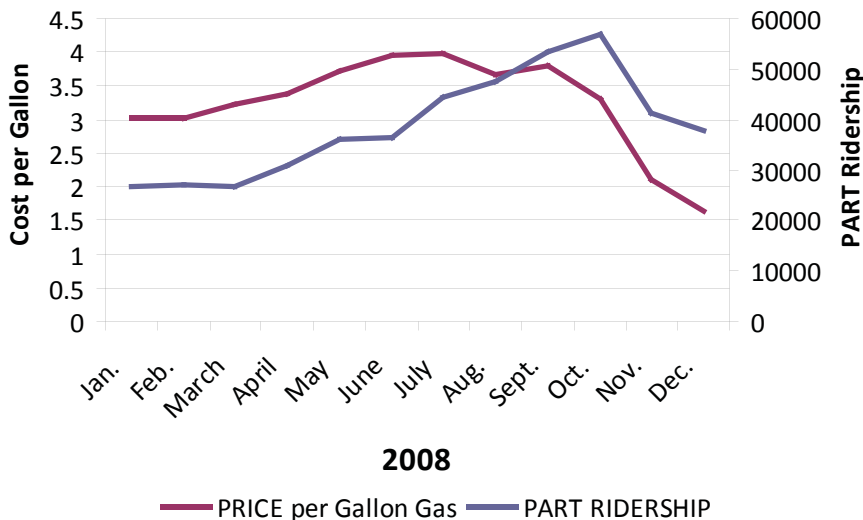
PART Express

During 2008 PART Express expanded service to four additional counties. The US 52 corridor in Davidson County serves Lexington, Midway and Winston-Salem. The Business 85 corridor serves Lexington to Thomasville, High Point, Archdale and Greensboro. The US 220 South corridor in Randolph County serves from Asheboro and Randleman into Greensboro. In October service was added from King and Rural Hall providing a link into Winston-Salem. Service expansion also included Yadkin County with travel options to Winston-Salem. All of these new services provide connections to area hospitals, downtown business districts, colleges and universities.

PART Ridership

In 2008 the price of fuel increased significantly, which had a huge impact on PART ridership. Ridership reached an all time high as the fuel prices reached \$4 per gallon and totalled 56,000 passengers for the month of October. For the entire year ridership was 56% higher than 2007, reaching 472,341 passenger trips. At the end of the year, with fuel prices below \$1.50 per gallon, ridership remained strong, which indicated that riders choose to ride PART for reasons other than the cost of fuel.

2008 PART Ridership vs. Fuel Cost
(Price per gallon of unleaded fuel - Source AAA)



Passenger Testimonial

“The gas prices are not even a factor any more, it’s just easier getting on the bus. Gas prices could go down to \$.50 and I would still want to ride. PART Express is just the way to go.”

Phyllis Campbell, Rider from Randolph County to Lincoln Financial Group

Intercity Bus Service

Mountaineer Express – US421 Intercity Bus service – connecting Boone, Wilkesboro, Yadkinville, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro operated its second full year of service in 2008. The Mountaineer Express route operates 7 days a week and two round trips daily. Ridership exceeded 18,000 trips in 2008 on this route. This was a 150% increase over 2007. The US52 Intercity Bus route expanded further south to include Davidson County. This Intercity bus route travels from Lexington to Mt. Airy 5 days a week. An amazing 73,567 trips were taken on this corridor in 2008.

Park & Ride

PART constructed new park-and-ride facilities in Archdale, Asheboro, Lexington and Mount Airy during 2008 as operations expanded. Additional locations in Mocksville, King, Pleasant Garden, High Point, Pilot Mountain, Randleman and Midway are being identified for development in the PART region for 2009.

www.PARTnc.org



CREATING THE FUTURE

Regional Mass Transportation

The Major Investment/Alternative Analysis Study for regional mass transportation services has continued to make good progress. This year's work has focused on finding a location for a central terminal in the vicinity of the Piedmont Triad International Airport. Following a feasibility study which looked at several sites, meetings were held with representatives of Piedmont Triad International Airport and a site was selected. Preliminary layouts for the various activities to be provided on the site have been completed and funding is in place to begin the final design.

After a long search, the Travel Demand Modeler position was filled in September. With contracts in place with Wilbur Smith and Associates and Parsons Brinckerhoff, work continued on fine tuning the travel demand model for the projection of transit ridership.

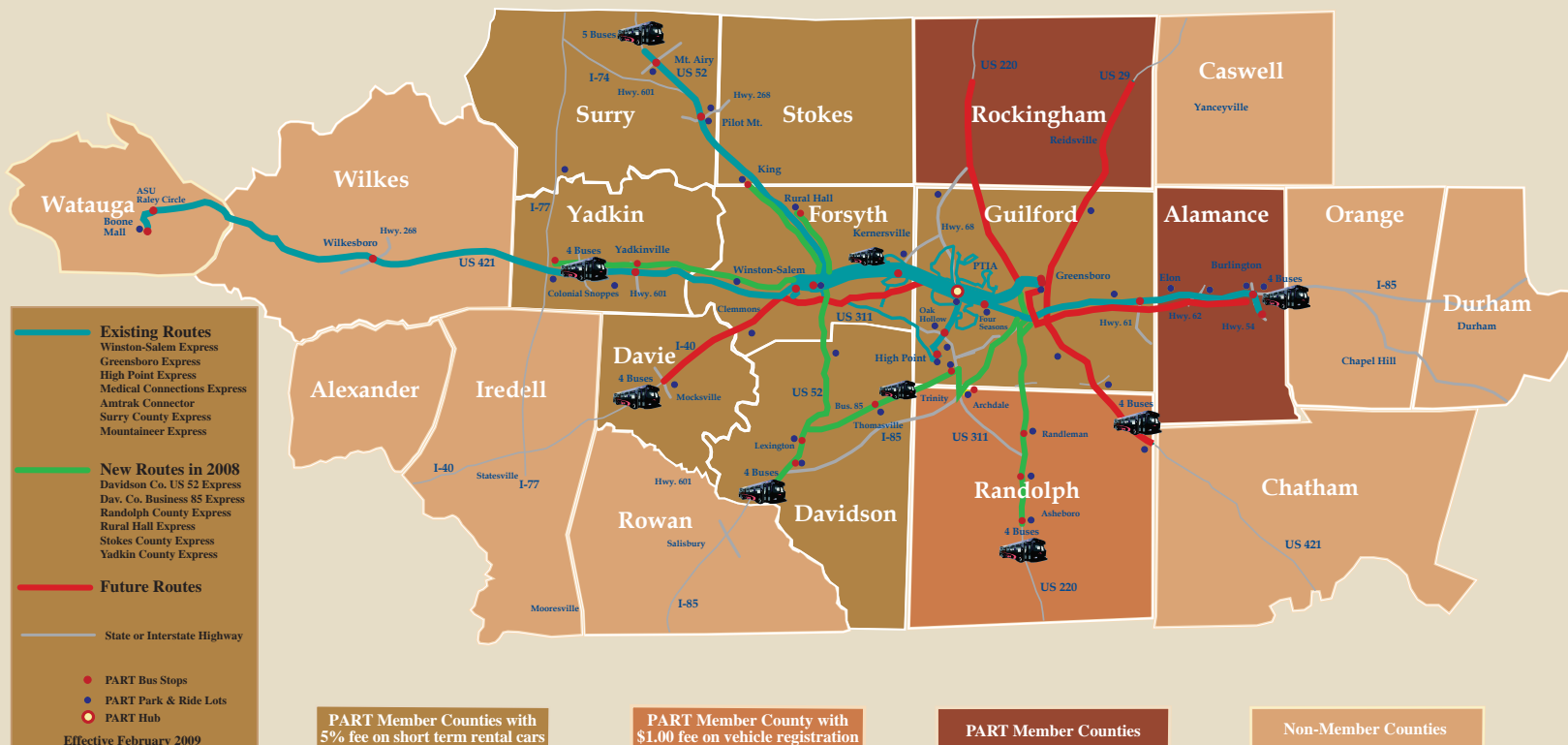
Regional Planning

Air quality conformity and development of the long range transportation plans was a major undertaking in 2008. PART coordinated the further development of the region's travel demand model to increase the reliability and output performance. PART provided assistance to the region's MPO's and NCDOT to finalize the federal requirements for developing both the Air Quality Conformity documents and LRTP's of the Triad. Special thanks are deserving to all the planning partners at the Cities and Counties within the PART territory for participating in regional planning activities.

Heart of the Triad

Two committees were created by seven local governments to continue land use/transportation planning for an area known as the Heart of the Triad consisting of approximately 7,000 acres located on the Forsyth/Guilford County line. The Strategic Planning Committee consists of seven elected officials with alternate members. The Stakeholders Committee consists of nineteen members representing residents, property owners, business and development interests. The groups spent much of the year writing the Vision, Goals and Objectives which will serve as guiding principles for development of the final plan.

The Transportation Future of the Piedmont Triad Region



PARTNERSHIP TESTIMONIALS

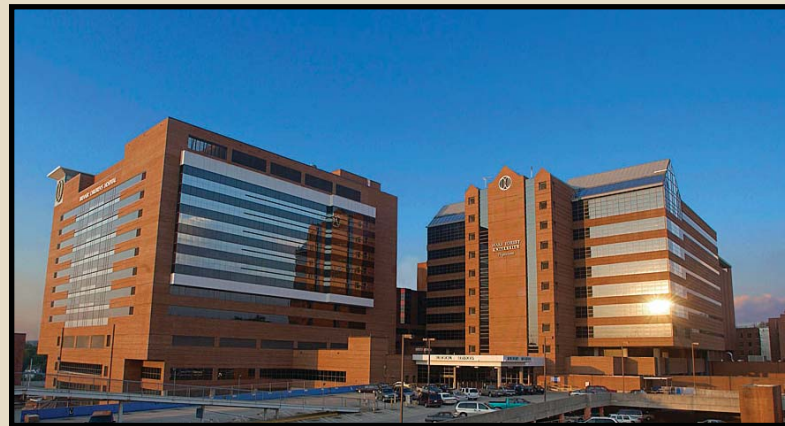


“Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center is proud to have PART as their transportation partner. PART has expanded routes and added regular stops on campus to accommodate our diverse workforce. Without the always reliable PART service many of our employees would find the daily commute to work difficult. We encourage other Triad employers to explore a partnership with PART.”

Marc Sears, Director of Benefits, Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center Health Sciences

“From bicycling to carpooling to public transit, PART is an integral component of our campus access management program. The use of alternative modes of transportation to access campus has increased dramatically since the 2008 Triad Commute Challenge, and feedback from students, staff, and faculty is consistently positive. Though the Davidson County and Randolph County direct-to-campus bus routes are quite popular, awareness of other PART services is on the rise. The synergy developing between PART and UNCG is truly amazing.”

Suzanne Williams, Associate Director - Parking Operations & Access Management, UNCG



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