

Moving ahead in stride



A review of accomplishments within the Regional TDM Program for FY 2024



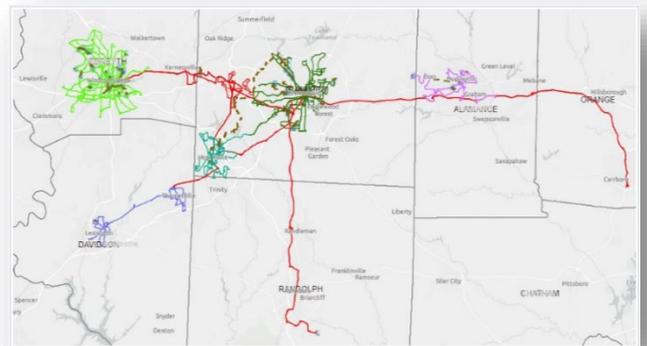
The Highlights

The Piedmont Triad Regional TDM Initiative has completed its third year. The initiative has expanded its reach and now includes 24 partners. During our quarterly TDM council meetings between 15 and 25 participants have joined the discussion.

The vanpool program remains strong, boasting 34 vans in service. FY 23 ended with 26 vans in service. The regional vanpool program and Gildan Corp. have partnered with Triad refugee agencies to create employment and transportation to and from that employment for refugees living in Greensboro. This is about a 40-mile trip one way. Two vanpools were started in the second quarter of FY 24 due to this partnership. Many of the refugees do not have vehicles of their own. The regional vanpool program provided much-needed transportation so they could be employed and help support their families.

In another innovative step forward, PART staff developed an emissions reduction calculation that includes fixed-route buses and vanpools. Passenger miles and vehicle type are the two main factors used in the calculation. Currently, only PART Express and the regional vanpool vehicles are included in the calculation. However, the 2024 – 2025 work plan includes getting data from the other transit agencies and including them in the calculation. The TDM team will investigate including other modes in the future, such as walking and biking.

The Initiative's third major accomplishment was the launch of Transit to Trails, an interactive map linking public transportation to trails and greenways across the region. The map sits on the RidetheTriad.org web page. The map allows the user to quickly find the trail they want to explore, information about the trail, and most importantly, how to get there by public transportation. The map highlights 50 trails, greenways, and parks across five counties highlighted on the map. The launch was in February 2024, and by June the map had been viewed 1,985 times.



The Vanpool Program also faces some challenges. Supply chain issues have slowed the ordering and delivery of replacement vanpool vehicles. This has slowed the expansion of vanpool in service and the replacement of vehicles that have reached their useful life. PART recently learned that the cost to insure the Vanpool Program's vehicles will double in cost next year. This may result in a "fare" increase to vanpool participants.

Employers are apprehensive of the Vanpool Program due to liability concerns. Staff are often told that some employers are timid about encouraging employees to form a vanpool through offering incentives or being the go-between for employees and PART. A misunderstanding exists in NC liability law and vanpooling. Given the State's willingness to provide tax incentives to companies locating outside urban areas where transportation to work options are more prevalent, a comprehensive Transportation to Work bill should be considered.

Purpose and Goals

The over-arching intention of the regional transportation demand management initiative is to:

- Reduce single occupancy vehicle miles traveled.
- Reduce CO₂ and particulate emissions; and
- Increase mode share in the Piedmont Triad.

Moving the needle on these metrics can result in decreased traffic congestion, improved traffic flow for freight and emergency vehicles, improved air quality, a reduction in the impacts of climate change, increased freedom of movement, reduced need for surface parking and parking decks, greater access to jobs and health care and lessening an individual's transportation cost.

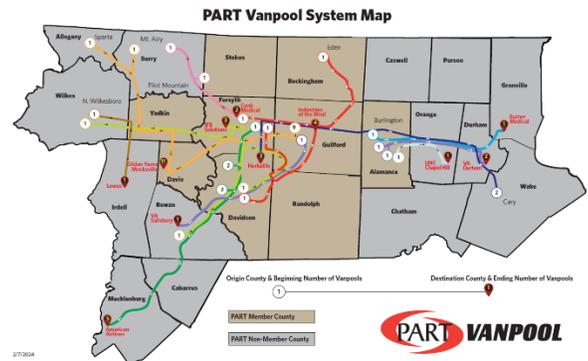
To achieve positive results, the following goals were established for FY 24:

- Strengthen integration of TDM Strategies at the regional level while supporting local initiatives.
- Build on FY 24 regional vanpool program successes.
- Promote all forms of non-SOV travel; and
- Improve multimodal connections between transit, rail, and aviation.

Accomplishments

Vanpool Service Expansion

- PART manages the regional vanpool program. Eight vanpools were added to the program during FY 24. The program focuses on providing transportation resources for employment, higher education, training and workforce development programs. Several non-traditional uses of vanpools have been explored. The Gildan Corp. discussed earlier is a great example of a company the embraces the benefits of the program. PART and Gildan partnered with agencies working with immigrant populations to provide targeted vanpool opportunities.
- Guilford College has been working to develop a transportation program for students to access service learning/worksites. This project has been a PART TDM work task as well. PART staff is looking into ways vanpooling will work for Guilford College. Some students have been able to use existing transit services to access an internship site for the "Out of the Garden Project" which provided nutritious food to children and families in need, fostering a supportive community, and ensuring every child has the resources to thrive.



Launched Transit to Trails

- This project was envisioned in the spring of 2023 as a transit response to the Year of the Trail. The idea was an interactive way for walkers and hikers to learn about and plan transit trips to access trails, greenways and paths within the Piedmont Triad. The end project was the development of an interactive map using ArcGIS Online. The map shows all trails and greenways in the region. It provides details on how to access trailheads accessible via public transportation. And because all buses in the region have bike racks, cyclists are brought closer to trails and greenways, extending what is accessible to them. This tool brings together walking, biking, and public transportation, the well-being of the individual, and fewer cars on the road.

Please tell me there is some way to get to that greenway without driving to it.

THERE IS! Go to RidetheTriad.org and check out Transit to Trails.



Incorporated Emissions Calculations

- In 2023, concern was expressed that the initiative needed adequate performance measures related to reducing emissions, which is one of our main goals. For more than a year, PART staff has researched methods to measure greenhouse emissions. The process is more complex than one can imagine. For simplicity, the factors to the right were used. As a starting point, PART Express and the Regional Vanpool vans were used for the calculations. Data from each transit agency must be gathered quarterly to capture to full benefit of public transportation in our region.

Emission Factors

For buses

- * 2019 diesel transit bus and 2020 light commercial truck (LTVs)
- * Based on the fleet's age and vehicle types
- * Which bus takes what route varies day by day

For vanpool

- * Specific to vanpool vehicle model year and fuel type
- * What van is used for what route varies rarely

For SOVs

- * Based on type of vehicle share and average age of private vehicles in NC
- * 83% passenger vehicle (14 years old) and 17% light truck (12 years old)
- * Did not factor in diesel SOVs

TDM Council Formed and Expanded

- In 2024, the TDM Initiative partners formed a TDM Council. Members represent all the various partner organizations, including universities and colleges, transit agencies, MPO staff, city sustainability offices, and business organizations. The Council is designed to be an overarching advisor of all things TDM within the Piedmont Triad, giving guidance and vision. Working groups consisting of a subset of the Council can be convened to collaborate on a specific project. The Council meets quarterly.



Transit Employee Benefit

- This year, the Triad transit agencies agreed to provide all transit employees in the region with free fares across all systems. This was a recommitment from 2012. Due to several systems being fare-free and some now using the same digital fare system, the commitment needed updating. All agencies signed agreements, and the program began August 5th. The hope is that this will encourage more transit ridership and one day expand to city and county employees throughout the region.



Media Campaigns

- Media campaigns focused on connectivity with PART Rxpress, the vanpool program and promoting RideTheTriad.org. The media platforms included digital, print and email blast. The campaign outlets included billboards, bus ads on all transit systems, Burlington and Greensboro Latino newspapers and Triad City Beat. According to the media outlets the 17 ad placements achieved a total of 15 million impressions at a cost of less than \$ 0.01 per impression! Samples of the ads are shown below.
- A 4-part public transportation marketing campaign, in partnership with our university and college partners was initiated that will span 12 months. Marketing “tool kits” were developed and mailed to 9 university and college participants. The kits included printed posters and digital files loaded on a USB drive. As a result of the partnership Wake Forest University, developed a transportation webpage as part of this initiative. The final piece of the campaign will be a Buddy Ride provided by transit agency staff for university and college students, showing them how simple it is to plan and take a trip on public transportation.



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Community and Employer Engagement Events

Below is a list of events and meetings that TDM staff attended and organizations they formed partnerships with during the year:

- Joined Business Advisory Council.
- Reinstated several chamber memberships.
- Attended UNC at Chapel Hill Employee Appreciation Day.
- Participated in meetings with the Winston Urban League.
- Attended the Alamance Community College Community Fair.
- Met with Elon University and facilitated a discussion about transportation challenges they face.
- Held a discussion with Forsyth Technical Community College about transportation for job training.
- Participated in Whitaker Elementary School’s Transportation Day Festival.
- Attended the Accessible Festival (ADA) in Winston-Salem.
- Attended Earth Day Fair in Winston-Salem.
- Was a sponsor for the Industries of the Blind Golf Tournament.

Measuring our success

Success is often hard to measure. Changing the way, one thinks about one’s travel habits is particularly challenging. The scorecard below provides a numerical glimpse into the scope and breadth of all the past year’s activities. The list was expanded over last year and tailored to reflect our program’s current initiatives.

Success Indicators	2022				2023				2024			
	Jul-Spt	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Spt	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Spt	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
Engagement and Involvement												
# of Employer and community partners engaged with TDM program	13	15	15	17	17	19	20	21				
# of Commuters represented by partner organizations above	260	300	280	265	285	318	329	407				
# of College and university partners engaged with TDM program	1	1	7	7	8	9	9	9				
Education of Travel Options												
<i>Website</i>												
Total Page Views	74,668	67,231	64,393	66,575	54,637	64,054	61,284	61,322				
New Visitors/Users	17,176	19,029	16,857	17,757	17,000	17,000	18,000	18,000				
Average Session Duration (seconds)	172	141	145	190	140	103	91	97				
<i>Facebook</i>												
Total Posts	47	44	34	18	26	15	16	52				
Followers	3,714	3,600	3,700	3,737	3,739	3,742	3,727	4,363				
<i>Instagram</i>												
Total Posts	47	44	33	18	26	15	16	52				
Followers	1,128	1,130	1,047	1,046	1,054	1,050	1,051	1,055				
Vanpool Participation												
# of Vans in Service					26	32	33	34				
# of Vanpool Participants					221	287	295	299				
Avg. One-Way Vanpool Trip Distance (miles)					45	45	46	46				
Average Vanpool Ridership					8.5	9	8.9	8.8				

Road map for the future

Several projects and initiatives for FY 25 have been identified and highlight in the FY 25 plan.

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- Simplifying messaging – less lingo and more meaningful strategies
- Address vanpool adoption challenges with NCDOT-IMD.
- A buddy ride day for colleges and universities is planned for the 1st quarter.
- Install wayfinding signs for Transit-to-Trails bus stops.
- LINK transit in Burlington is set to become a part of the Regional Call Center.
- Explore the desire to have in-person meetings with TDM partners. Face-to-face meetings are important for building trust and trust is important for innovation.
- Research how to incorporate travel by walking, micro-mobility devices, and biking can be included in the emissions reduction calculation.
- A targeted Transit-Bike-Pedestrian Training Day will be held in several immigrant and disadvantaged neighborhoods.



Regional Shared Lease Program for Commuting to Work!

PART VANPOOL
piedmont authority for regional transportation



RideTheTriad.org