

Beyond Traffic

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) plays a vital role in planning the urban landscape. These organizations are federally mandated with the comprehensive planning and coordination of transportation initiatives within a specific metropolitan planning area. Their primary responsibility is to create a long-range transportation plan (LRTP) that outlines strategies for addressing the mobility needs of the region, ensuring that the transportation infrastructure effectively supports economic growth and community development. One important tool for preparing the LRTP is the regional travel demand model maintained by PART. In North Carolina the LRTP is evaluated on a four year cycle, a cycle that all four of the Triad's MPOs are currently in ... **making this a prime time to get much valued community input!**

MPOs undertake extensive data analysis and public engagement to identify transportation issues, prioritize projects, and allocate funding efficiently. For example, an MPO may analyze traffic patterns, public transit usage, and pedestrian safety concerns to propose enhancements such as improved bus routes, expanded bike lanes, or upgraded roadways. Moreover, they work closely with local governments, state agencies, and community stakeholders to foster a collaborative approach to solving regional transportation challenges.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations serve as the cornerstone of regional transportation planning. Their efforts not only enhance mobility and connectivity but also contribute to the overall quality of life in metropolitan areas, making them essential for future growth and sustainability in urban environments. The Triad's Four Regional MPOs are actively in planning phases at the time of this article, and they need community input.

**Scan your MPO's QR code below ... or visit your MPO's website and get connected ...
have a voice in your community's' planning efforts!**

The Greensboro metropolitan planning area includes the City of Greensboro, the majority of unincorporated Guilford County, and the towns of Oak Ridge, Pleasant Garden, Sedalia, Stokesdale, and Summerfield. www.greensboro-nc.gov/departments/transportation/metropolitan-planning-organization



The High Point metropolitan planning area includes the municipalities of High Point, Archdale, Denton, Jamestown, Lexington, Thomasville, Trinity, and Wallburg. It also includes parts of Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, and Randolph Counties. www.highpointnc.gov/261/HPMPO



The Burlington Graham metropolitan planning area includes the City of Burlington, City of Graham, City of Mebane, Town of Elon, Town of Gibsonville, Town of Green Level, Town of Haw River, Town of Whitsett, Village of Alamance, and all of Alamance County. www.bgmpo.org



The Winston-Salem metropolitan planning area includes Winston-Salem, Lewisville, Clemmons, Bermuda Run, Tobaccoville, Bethania, Rural Hall, Midway, Walkertown, Kernersville, Wallburg, and parts of Forsyth, Davie, Davidson, and Stokes counties. www.cityofws.org/1466/Metropolitan-Planning-Organization



Riding To Success



In the wake of COVID-19, public transportation faced unprecedented challenges. Ridership plummeted as health concerns kept people off buses, and across the board, impacted all ride sharing options. However, as public confidence began to return, transit systems started to adapt. In North Carolina, cities across our region have embraced this opportunity to rethink and revitalize their public transportation offerings. Rider behavior guided change and flexibility and willingness from providers to adapt, proved to be a formula for success.

According to data from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), ridership across the U.S. has rebounded to approximately 70% of pre-pandemic levels. North Carolina's Triad region has mirrored this trend, showing a promising uptick in daily commuters

utilizing buses and other public transit options. Local transit authorities have reported steady increases in ridership. One of the most encouraging aspects of this reboot is the emphasis on sustainability. Public transit is inherently greener than individual car travel, significantly reducing carbon footprints and traffic congestion. In the Triad, local transit authorities are not only focusing on increasing ridership but also integrating environmentally friendly practices into their operations with a focus on messaging about environmental stewardship.

In our region, public transportation is more than just a means to get from point A to point B; it's a vital thread that weaves communities together. In the Triad, transit systems are working collaboratively to ensure that they serve not just major urban centers but also suburban and rural areas. This approach fosters agency partnerships, allowing residents access to jobs, education, and essential services.

Innovation is at the heart of the resurgence of public transportation. Cities across North Carolina are adopting technology-driven solutions to enhance the user experience. For instance, real-time bus tracking is now commonplace, allowing riders to monitor bus schedules and routes from their smartphones. This technology reduces anxiety and uncertainty and broadens customer support ... making public transit more user-friendly and accessible.

Moreover, ride-sharing services are becoming in higher demand. By integrating these platforms with traditional public transit, cities can offer more flexible and comprehensive transportation options. This model is especially beneficial for those who may live in areas with limited direct transit access, enabling them to reach their final destinations more efficiently. PART's long standing Vanpool Program is a classic example of how having options is key to comprehensive regional mobility. This program has also seen steady growth in the past four years. Having planners and transportation experts at the helm of this customer driven program gives PART's Vanpool Program an exceptional advantage in the pool of other mobility options. With the main focus of the program to provide employers and employees with options for getting to and from work everyday, it not only reduces parking demands but reduces commuter cost ... while at the same time reducing the carbon footprint of those sharing the ride!

EXPLORE MOBILITY OPTIONS.

RideTheTriad.org
Regional Mobility Options

Logos: PART, GTA, WSTA, LINK TRANSIT, High Point

Explore Mobility Options

PART's **Explore Mobility Options** marketing campaign kicked off this month ... focused on driving traffic to a regional website **RideTheTriad.org**. Designed, produced and managed by PART, the website was crafted through a collaborative effort to be a landing site to access local and regional mobility options.

In addition to directing users to the website, the campaign is also softly messaging four popular mobility options that are utilized in our area and modes that **RideTheTriad.org** offers information on.

