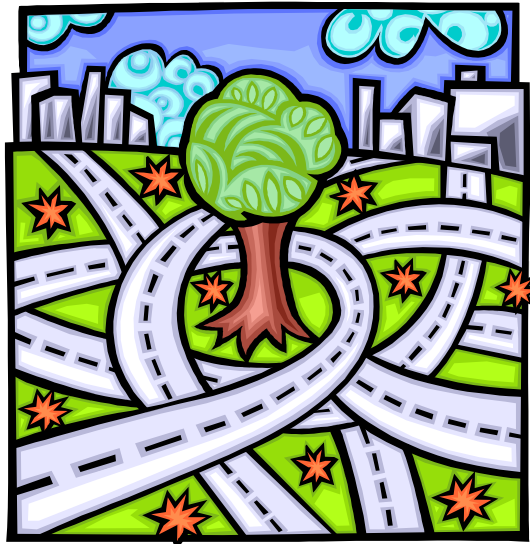


**Fayetteville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**

# **Human Services Transportation Plan**

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*The Community Transportation Program  
A Key to Independence*



**Updated January 2004**

**FAYETTEVILLE AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Cumberland County  
Community Transportation Program  
January 2004

Born out of the North Carolina's Governor Transit Initiative in 1974, the Community Transportation Program, as part of Cumberland County's Human Service Transportation System, helps provide transportation alternatives to its citizens. The roots of NCDOT's Public Transportation Division began when the 1974 General Assembly instituted the Mass Transit Division. Soon after, the Mass Transit Division was renamed and revamped to mirror the importance of public transportation within the state. Currently, PTD administers nearly \$30 million in transit funding each year to more than 120 public transportation systems across North Carolina.

Transportation issues are important to people from all walks of life. One of the keys to self-sufficiency and independence is mobility. Most people travel almost effortlessly in privately owned vehicles to various destinations across the city and county, relying on one's own independence to arrive at work, the doctor's office or even the grocery store. It is usually not until the loss of one's mobility that it is realized the true extent of how much independence through mobility is taken for granted. Thousands of residents in Cumberland County try to manage daily with the reality of not having any means of transportation. The mission of the Cumberland County Community Transportation Program (CTP) is to provide safe, dependable, accessible and affordable transportation to the Cumberland County residents. The State has enacted the ROAP grant, the AAA Block Grant program, and other funding streams to help combat the transportation issues that many people face to improve the quality of life for its citizens. The CTP utilizes these funds in order to complete its mission.

Many structural changes in the program have occurred since the inception of the Cumberland County Human Service Transportation System. In 2000, the state designation of Human Service Transportation System was upgraded to Community Transportation Program with the onset of additional funds for the Rural General Public Grant. This was a major step in the State of North Carolina's goal of creating a Community Transportation Program in all 100 counties. Additionally, this was a definite improvement for the citizens of the county by providing additional alternatives and assistance for residents in the rural areas.

Human Service Transportation (HST) across the state has provided approximately 40 million annual trips to the citizens of North Carolina. HST Systems do not directly serve the general public but work with local agencies to transport clients for medical, educational, employment, and recreational needs. For clients to participate in the program, they must be referred by a local human service agency. HST Systems are organized using 3 possible scheme implementations: consolidated, contracted consolidated, or coordinated lead agency system. Cumberland County's system is based on the contracted consolidated system in which a single program purchases services and contracts for operations with transportation vendors. The program contracts with three vendors to meet the needs of the human service agencies' clients across the county.

In 2000, with the advent of Cumberland County receiving Rural General Public, the system's designation was altered to reflect its new status of Community Transportation Program. CTP systems differ from HST systems in that a CTP receives federal grant funds for rural transit. In turn, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act requires the CTP system to offer services for general public riders in addition to established human service clients. In short, a CTP system amalgamates the two types of systems using the same fleet of vehicles. The human service agencies currently in partnership with the Community Transportation Program include Bethel Adult Day Health Care Center, Cumberland County Association for Indian People, County Health Department, County Mental Health Department, Employment Source, Fayetteville Recreation Department, Hope Mills Sunshine Senior Center, Independent Living - Vocational Rehab, North Carolina Indian Housing Authority, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Sycamore Tree Senior Center.

Along with a new name and additional funding, the set up of the guiding organization was also altered. Rather than a Human Services Steering Committee, the organization evolved into the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). The purpose of the TAB is to provide technical advice and assistance in carrying out the goals of the program. Members of the TAB are appointed by the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners for a two year term. Meetings are held regularly and are open to the public. Every Community Transportation Program and Human Services Transportation System receiving North Carolina Department of Transportation - Public Transportation Division funding, shall have a County Commissioner approved advisory board. The organizational purpose of said board is to be a liaison between the Transportation Program Coordinator, the County Commissioners, and public receiving service, to ensure that the needs of the citizens of the county are and will continue to be met. The mission of the Cumberland County Transportation Advisory Board, as adopted February 12, 2002, is to guide the development and expansion of coordinated Human Service and General Public Transportation in Cumberland County with the purpose of providing safe, dependable, accessible and affordable transportation to all Cumberland County residents.

The Community Transportation Program's funding is awarded by a combination of three major grants. Although all funding originates with the Federal Government, the state is the entity that filters the money and, for all intents and purposes, is the grantor of the funding. The three funding streams are the Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant, the Community Transportation Program (CTP) Grant, and the MidCarolina Area Agency on Aging Block Grant (AAA Block Grant). Both the CTP and ROAP grants are distributed annually from the North Carolina Department of Transportation - Public Transportation Division. The CTP program receives an additional annual allotment of the Division of Aging Block Grant from the Mid Carolina Area Agency on Aging. All of the grants are requested annually and include a local match that is provided by local government of Cumberland County. The local match is between 15% to 10% of the total grant amount contingent on the type of grant and from whom it is received.

The Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant is an annual grant distributed by the North Carolina Department of Transportation that includes funding from both the federal and state governments. This grant includes funding from both the FTA 5310 and 5311 funds and

must be renewed annually. Funding allocation to the county systems of North Carolina is based upon many factors, two of which are county population and previous years spending. The grant amount is decided on by the state from a formula to ensure impartial distribution. The ROAP grant provides the bulk of the program's funding and is divided into three separate programs to provide additional means of combating mobility problems. Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program (EDTAP), Rural General Program (RGP), and the Work First are the three divisions of ROAP funding. Each provides for a separate demographic to ensure fair and equitable assistance across populations. The Work First program of Department of Social Services receives a portion of the ROAP Grant annually. The intent of this program is to provide assistance for transitional Work First and general public employment transportation needs of individuals that are not eligible to receive benefits from the TANF program. Rural General Public (RGP) funding also receives a portion of the ROAP Grant annually. RGP funds are intended to provide transportation services to the general public. The Spring Lake FAST Route 40 was established for this purpose. Originally enacted by legislation in the 1989 Session of the General Assembly, EDTAP provides operating assistance funds for the transportation of the state's elderly and disabled citizens. This transportation assistance allows for the individual to reside for longer periods in their homes, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

The CTP Grant provides for the administrative and employee development, capital, facility, and technology costs to operate the program. The salaries, benefits and other administrative costs as well as funding for employee training, office supplies, and equipment such as computers or software are included in this annual grant. Each subset has an independent budget and must be applied for separately. For instance, a program may apply for administrative and capital funding but may not request and facility assistance. The budget amounts for each line item are specified by the transportation system and are approved in whole or in part by the North Carolina Board of Transportation. Unlike the ROAP Grant in which the allotted amount is automatically distributed in its entirety by check to the financial department, the CTP Grant funds are reimbursed to the entity by way of an invoice sent to the state Department of Transportation requesting funds on a quarterly basis.

The Mid Carolina Area Agency on Aging is housed within the MidCarolina Council of Governments and distributes funding annually across Region M, which includes Cumberland County, Sampson County and Harnett County. Many of the programs receiving such subsidies, work in combination with other programs to coordinate services and stretch the proverbial grant dollar. Funding for this program is a combination of federal, state, and local monies. Like the DOT funds, the grant is applied for through one agency, the MidCarolina Area Agency on Aging. The Block Grant is divided into two funding streams; Medical and General. The General Transportation Assistance is the main focus for this grant and also receives the majority of the block grant monies. The transportation portion of the program is a tool used to ensure client participation in the nutrition program, which is the true focus for the Area Agency on Aging. General Transportation is arranged by the CTP office for eligible senior citizens to be taken to registered area nutrition sites such as the Fayetteville Senior Center, Spring Lake Senior Center, and the Indian Association Center. There, clients receive the benefits of a well balanced meal that many cannot provide themselves as well as social interaction. Clients eligible for this program may also be transported to local medical appointments, however, individuals are not required to participate in the nutrition program to be entitled to medical transportation.

All transportation, without regard to the grant, is coordinated by the Community Transportation Program office. Meaning, the grants are managed and invoices paid through the CTP office. All services are provided through contracted vendors. Due to the complexity of each grant and the different goals and focus of each plan, the vendors are not all contracted for the same grants. Currently, the EDTAP program contracts are serviced by the Fayetteville Area System of Transit (FAST) and a local taxi company. FAST also provides the transport vehicle and drivers for the Route 40 RGP section. The local taxi company also provides transportation to the medical clients of the AAA Block Grant. General transportation services are scheduled with a local bus company. Work First funding is operated by the Cumberland County Department of Social Services. Services provided by Work First are usually for mileage reimbursement, car repairs, or automobile insurance supplements and therefore no vendor is used.

To the greater extent, the Community Transportation Program operates with the demand response service design. Clients call in and request transportation appointments based on their schedules. As is the case with the General Transportation clients and the Dialysis patients riding with the EDTAP grant, some clients who ride more frequently to the same destination on a schedule, become subscription clients. Route 40 runs on a fixed route based on FAST's schedule and is open to any individual wishing to pay the fare and ride the bus. All services through the vendors with exception to Route 40 run on an 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday schedule. Route 40 operates 5:45 am to 7:30 pm Monday through Saturday.

Eligibility Requirements vary across the different programs. Many of the grant funds were established for a specific need and population segments. To that end, the different grantors regulate and allow for different eligibility factors. EDTAP, Work First, RGP, and MidCarolina AAA Medical and General Transportation all have different client qualification parameters.

The EDTAP program is available for the elderly or disabled. For EDTAP eligibility purposes, an elderly person is defined as one who is aged 60 or more years. A disabled person is defined as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, an individual who has a record of such impairment, or an individual who is regarded as having such impairment. EDTAP services are not intended to supplant other services an individual is qualified for. These funds are intended for those individuals who do not qualify for transportation assistance under any other program. Individuals already qualified to participate with Medicaid and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transportation are not eligible for EDTAP services. There is no income minimum or maximum threshold to qualify for eligibility under the EDTAP program.

Work First provides services for non-TANF individuals or families without regard to age. Participants must be working or seeking employment. Gross income is a factor in determining service eligibility. Also, the client must also contribute a portion of funding for services. Usually, it is 5% to 10% of the total amount of assistance given.

In accordance with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, services operated with RGP funding are open and available to anyone. There are no age, income, physical, or local restrictions on participation. An individual needs only to pay the bus fare in order to receive this transportation assistance. This is the only part of the program where a fee is required to

participate. Currently, the fare is seventy-five cents each way with a ten cent charge for transfers. With this nominal fee, an individual can travel from the rural area of Spring Lake into the urbanized areas of the City of Fayetteville.

MidCarolina requires that a person be aged 60 years or more before they are allowed to participate in programs supported by AAA Block Grant funds. Income is not a mitigating factor to eligibility, although it is preferred that individuals with low incomes participate and therefore receive special consideration. No fee is required to participate, however, clients of the General and Medical Transportation program are asked to participate in the Cost Sharing program. The purpose of the Service Cost-Sharing Policy is to extend the availability of in-home and community based services administered by the Division of Aging by soliciting from all service recipients, a portion of the cost of services rendered based upon their ability to pay. Revenues collected from service recipients will be retained by the local service provider and used to increase services to existing clients. Money collected from Cost- Sharing for this program will be used to increase transportation services for CTP clients. Service will not be denied due to the inability to contribute. It is requested that participants contribute but it is not required.

The Community Transportation Program, although newly formed, has many goals and directions for upcoming accomplishments and improvements. Future goals include the possible consolidation of scheduling through the CTP office, compiling a resource library for vendor and employee training, and creating and implementing Advanced Technology and Capital Assistance Plans. Additionally, as the population increases and more and more individuals need services on ever constrained budgets, the need for regional planning and coordination is needed. The Public Transportation Division realizes the pressing future need of regionalism and has begun the process of requiring programs to evaluate current systems and devise ideas to further that goal. The next few years will usher changes that will foster regionalism and cooperation throughout the State of North Carolina.

Scheduling consolidation will streamline the process of providing transportation to the clients. Orders processed through the CTP office assistant will be for all eligible clients as referred by the TAB approved human service agencies. The CTP office will serve as the client clearinghouse for the EDTAP and MidCarolina transportation assistance. To aid in this endeavor, the Transportation Program Coordinator will establish and implement a Microsoft Office Access Database to store, organize, control, and analyze client files. The database will usher in the total automation of the CTP office. The timetable envisioned for this extensive and intricate undertaking is for the design of the database to begin in January 2004. The actual consolidation planning process with the agencies and clients should begin soon after the database data entry information is complete, estimated at July 2004. Implementation of the new streamlined system, if approved by the TAB, is tentatively slated to begin at the start of the 2006 fiscal year.

Employee Development funds for the 2005 fiscal year were requested in the CTP Grant Application to provide training materials for a resource library. There are many federal and state regulations and in order to receive federal grant monies must be followed. For instance, all drivers must have training in OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens and in Drug and Alcohol Substance Abuse Deterrence. In order to better accommodate contract vendors and ensure compliance, the

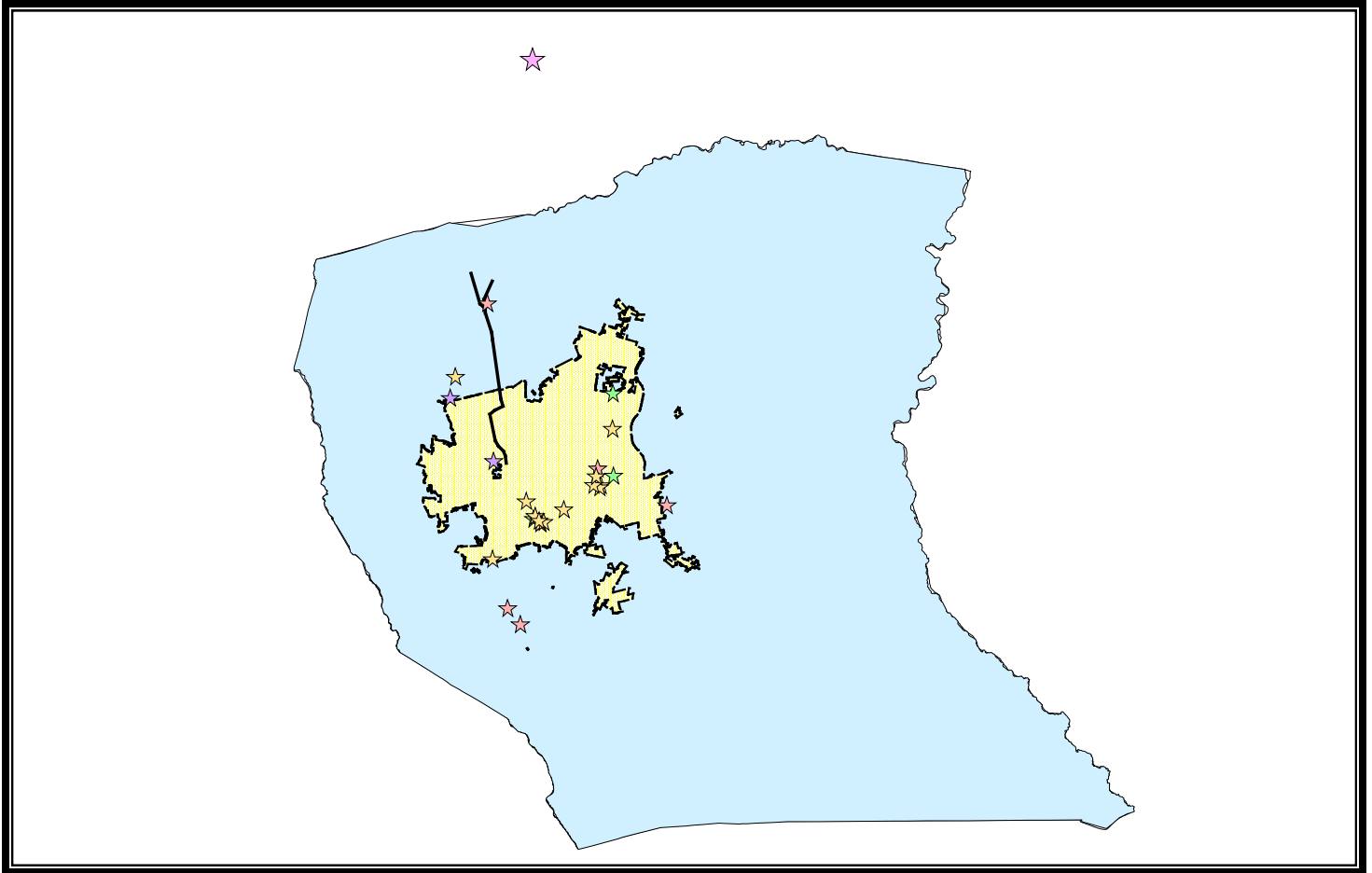
CTP office plans to create a resource library of training videos and pamphlets on hand to be borrowed and returned by the vendors as need for employee training. Information from various entities is already on file and the hope is to have a complete library covering all the necessary training materials by the end of the 2005 fiscal year.

A new requirement for the NCDOT – Public Transportation Division’s CTP Grant Application is the compilation and implementation of both an Advanced Technology plan and a Capital Assistance Plan. In order for grant requests to be awarded, CTP offices must show adequate good faith to create and adhere to the plans and policies. NCDOT has required certain system minimums with regard to software packages and operating systems for computers being utilized by the programs and paid for with North Carolina funds. A plan for both Advanced Technology and Capital Assistance is scheduled to be drafted during the 2004 fiscal year and updated as needed in the future.

The Cumberland County Community Transportation Program will continue working to achieve steady expansion of services and adherence to regulations. No matter the goal or the time line, the Community Transportation Program will always strive to continue for tomorrow what it is today; a key to independence.

## References

- NC Transit Today, *Public Transportation Today in North Carolina*, NCDOT – Public Transportation Division website  
<http://www.ncdot.org/transit/transitnet/PublicInfo/TransitToday.html>



## The Community Transportation Program Service Area

This map depicts the service areas of the CTP.  
It also illustrates the types of services provided and the most common destinations of the clients of the program.

### Legend

	Cumberland County Limits – only taxi contractors operate within this area
	Dialysis Centers
	Fayetteville City Limits – FAST and taxi contractors operate within this area
	Medical Facilities – includes hospitals and private practice medical centers
	Other – includes general transportation to grocery stores and banking institutions
	Cross County Transportation – trips to Duke University and Chapel Hill Hospitals
	Senior Centers
	RGP – Spring Lake Route 40