



Mountain Mobility

Buncombe County's Community Transportation System

*Celebrating 24 Years of Service
1989 to 2013*

Snapshot Overview

What key services are provided?

- ✓ Transportation to medical appointments, adult day programs, educational programs, senior centers, grocery shopping, retail shopping, employment, job training, banking and other personal business.
- ✓ Community transportation via Trailblazer bus routes that serve the Black Mountain and Swannanoa communities in east Buncombe County, the Enka-Candler community in west Buncombe County, and the North Buncombe area, with connections to Asheville's ART routes.
- ✓ Information and referral services to individuals who may need or desire other mobility options.
- ✓ Senior bus pass program which provides ART monthly passes to seniors age 65 and older.
- ✓ RIDE (Ridership Independence for Disabled and Elderly) Voucher Program which provides user-side subsidy vouchers for participants to use other transportation providers, thereby increasing their independence, self-esteem, freedom of choice and transportation options.

Who are the recipients and how is the community impacted?

- ✓ Serves eligible residents of Buncombe County, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, clients of human service agencies and departments of local governments, and general public transportation services for residents outside of City limits.
- ✓ Increases access to community resources, businesses, and healthcare facilities, including life-saving medical treatments such as dialysis and chemotherapy.
- ✓ Enables workers to access job and employment training opportunities.
- ✓ Provides jobs for drivers, dispatchers, managers, schedulers and other transit positions, and enhances passenger safety and security through use of a well-trained, drug-free workforce.
- ✓ Provides funding to agencies that offer other transportation options such as volunteer transportation services.
- ✓ Strengthens local economy through the purchase of supplies, parts, and services in the community, including fuel, tires, computers, radios, advertising, maintenance, etc., from businesses that in turn provide jobs and tax revenue for the community.
- ✓ Benefits local businesses that provide or sell goods and services to passengers (e.g., pharmacies, grocery stores, retail stores).

What are the benefits of coordinating services through Mountain Mobility?

- ✓ Designated by the NCDOT-Public Transportation Division as the lead transportation provider for community transportation in Buncombe County.
- ✓ Provides opportunities for input into local, regional, and state transportation project planning, funds, and initiatives.
- ✓ Maximizes transportation funding available by coordinating the use of over 20 funding sources to provide transportation services to citizens.
- ✓ Uses advanced technologies including GIS, mobile data communications, and security cameras to help ensure efficient use of resources and enhance safety.
- ✓ Promotes collaboration and partnerships that will allow citizens to access healthcare, employment opportunities, and other resources that will enhance and improve their quality of life.

Quick Reference

- ◆ Operates Monday – Saturday, 5:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m., and as otherwise required for ADA-eligible passengers.
- ◆ Utilizes a fleet of 43 vehicles, including 31 lift-equipped vans, 6 standard vans and 1 mini-van, and 5 small buses; 51% of fleet vehicles use alternative fuels.
- ◆ Contractors employ approximately 65 full-time or part-time workers for operations and administration.

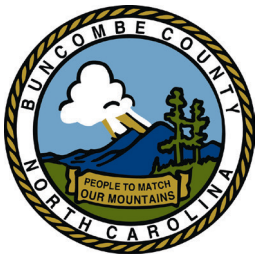
Facts and Figures – FY 2013

Number of passenger trips provided	159,974
Number of trips on a typical weekday	597
Average miles per trip	9.12
Average cost per trip	\$12.50
Accidents per 100,000 miles	.50
Service area in square miles	657



For More Info, Contact:

Buncombe County Planning and Development
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Asheville, NC 28801
Phone: (828) 250-4830
www.buncombecounty.org/transportation



Buncombe County Government

Planning and Development

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Mountain Mobility

Buncombe County's Community Transportation System

System Overview

The primary emphasis behind a 1978 Executive Order by the Governor of North Carolina was to reduce and eliminate duplication of transportation services needed by human service agencies and programs and to coordinate the efficient delivery of services. Buncombe County first established its transportation program in 1989 after consolidating and expanding senior routes and medical volunteer transportation programs previously operated by two community non-profit agencies. In 1998, Buncombe County fully embraced the objectives of the state's Community Transportation Program, which was developed by the NCDOT to enhance the provision of human service and general public transportation in North Carolina. Mountain Mobility has achieved the state's objectives for transportation coordination and has increased the level of transportation services available to Buncombe County citizens.

Mountain Mobility is administered and operated through third-party contracts with the Land-of-Sky Regional Council and McDonald Transit Associates, Inc., d/b/a Buncombe County Transit Management, Inc. The Buncombe County Community Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB) serves as an advisory board to Buncombe County staff and the Board of Commissioners and is actively involved in the planning and operation of the system.

Buncombe County Planning and Development oversees transit planning and contract administration; assists County Commissioners in formulating and implementing administrative, policy, and procedural mechanisms that enhance transportation services at all levels; oversees the implementation of Buncombe County's Community Transportation Improvement Plan; and monitors and assesses contractor performance to assure compliance with federal, state, and/or local regulations and requirements.

The goals of Mountain Mobility include efforts to: (1) increase transportation resources and mobility options for various types of transportation services; (2) increase coordination and partnering opportunities between providers, agencies, organizations, and local governments; (3) reduce costs; and (4) enhance the overall quality of transportation services provided to citizens.

The following information supplements the brief overview of Mountain Mobility's services and community transportation efforts included as Attachment A.

Geographic Service Area

Buncombe County is located in western North Carolina and rests in between the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east and the Great Smoky Mountains on the west. Interstate I-40 runs east to west, and the I-26 corridor runs south to north, intersecting I-40 in Asheville. I-240 serves as a loop connection running east to west through the City of Asheville between I-40 and I-26. The region is home to a portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The land area of Buncombe County encompasses 657 square miles and includes six municipalities: Asheville, Biltmore Forest, Black Mountain, Montreat, Weaverville, and Woodfin. The N.C. Office of State Budget and Management's 2010 certified population estimate is 239,179, with an estimated 100,412 households. The non-municipal population of Buncombe County is estimated to be 135,662.

Services

By coordinating transportation services through Mountain Mobility, it ensures collaboration of efforts among human service agencies and community organizations, transportation providers, and offers opportunities for input into local, regional, and state transportation projects, funds, and initiatives. Mountain Mobility provides transportation services under contract to over 30 human service agencies and organizations including the Land-of-Sky Area Agency on Aging/Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium, Buncombe County Department of Social Services; City of Asheville's ART System (ADA Comparable Paratransit Program); Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College;

CarePartners Adult Day Center; Council on Aging; Goodwill Industries; Irene Wortham Center; N.C. Division of Services for the Blind; and N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; as well as other organizations including several nursing homes and adult care facilities. Mountain Mobility also provides general public transportation outside of the City of Asheville's ART transit system service area.

Transportation modes include demand-response service, subscription service, and deviated fixed-route service. Demand response and subscription services are shared rides, which allows the system to operate more efficiently and provide more transportation service at a lower cost. Mountain Mobility operates three deviated fixed routes (Trailblazer routes) that serve the Black Mountain/Swannanoa community to the east; northern Buncombe County, and the Enka-Candler area in west Buncombe County. These routes provide transportation around local communities, as well as connections where passengers can transfer to Asheville Transit buses and ride into the City of Asheville. The Enka-Candler Trailblazer also makes connections to Haywood Public Transit.

In addition to direct service provision, Mountain Mobility partners with other transportation providers to provide other transportation options. Mountain Mobility's Senior Bus Pass Program provides a mobility option for eligible seniors age 65 or over who are willing and able to use Asheville's ART fixed route bus services to meet their transportation needs. The program provides a monthly bus pass to eligible seniors at no cost to them. Under a new program called RIDE (Ridership Independence for the Disabled and Elderly), eligible participants can purchase a \$10 voucher for only \$2.50, affording them assistance in paying for the cost of transportation through a participating taxi company or private provider of their choice. RIDE vouchers can be used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, giving eligible participants flexibility and independence to meet their transportation needs. These programs may not be used to supplant funding/services provided through other funding sources (e.g., Medicaid) unless funding is depleted.

Other grant funds received by Buncombe County help support other transportation options for seniors, including subsidies for the Council on Aging's Call-A-Ride Volunteer Transportation Program and the Land-of-Sky Regional Council's Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs.

Fleet

Mountain Mobility utilizes a fleet of 43 vehicles, including 31 lift-equipped conversion vans, 6 standard conversion vans, 5 small buses, and 1 mini-van.

Buncombe County's Strategic Plan and energy conservation goals include improving air quality and protecting the region's natural beauty and resources in order to enhance and improve the quality of life in the County. Mountain Mobility has contributed to achieving this goal by converting 51% of its transit fleet to vehicles with dual fuel systems, which has effectively reduced the system's vehicle emissions discharged on an annual basis. In May 2012, Mountain Mobility received a Clear Air Excellence Award from the WNC Regional Air Quality Agency for its efforts to protect and improve air quality in the region. Mountain Mobility was the first community transportation system in North Carolina to convert public transportation vehicles to cleaner burning and domestically produced fuels, an initiative that has since been undertaken by several other community transportation systems in the region.

Funding

Mountain Mobility's FY 2013 total expense budget (administration, operations, and capital) was balanced by the following funding sources:

Funding Source	% of Total Budget
Contract Revenues/Fares/Donations	47%
County Funding	32%
State/Federal Grants	18%
Other Local Revenues	3%



**BUNCOMBE
COUNTY**
NORTH CAROLINA

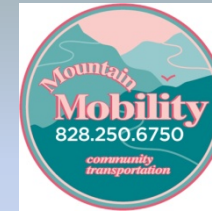


Mountain Mobility

Buncombe County's Community Transportation Program



Celebrating 24 Years of Service
1989 - 2013



Service Overview and Performance Measures

2000 Riverside Drive, Suite 17
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(828) 250-6750

www.buncombecounty.org/transportation

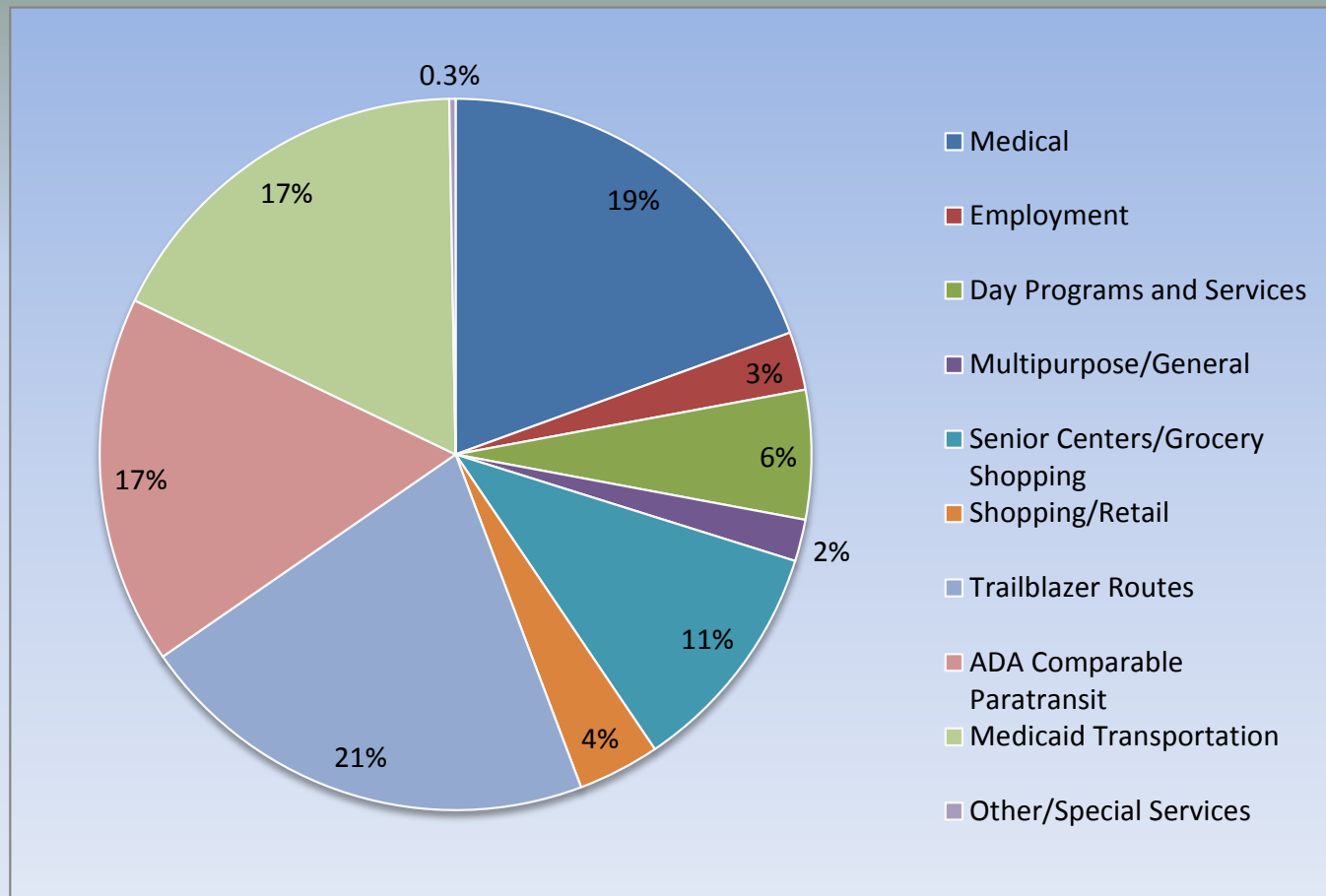


Overview of Services

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
No. Passengers Signed Up for Service	6,471	7,456	8,443	10,251	11,547
Total Passenger Trips	142,802	148,578	162,985	166,680	159,974
Average Weekday Trips	535	542	579	633	597
Average Saturday Trips	96	103	110	123	148
% Demand-Response Trips	37%	34%	20%	14%	15%
% Subscription Trips	54%	53%	40%	30%	28%
% Medicaid Trips	<i>Inc. Above</i>	<i>Inc. Above</i>	26%	25%	20%
% ADA Trips	<i>Inc. Above</i>	<i>Inc. Above</i>	<i>Inc. Above</i>	15%	16%
% Trailblazer Trips	9%	12%	14%	15%	20%
Average Trip Distance	9.94	9.47	9.32	9.44	9.12
Accidents per 100,000 Miles	0.98	0.76	0.77	1.00	0.50
Average Cost per Trip	\$12.69	\$12.62	\$11.83	\$12.32	\$12.50



Trips by Purpose





Trailblazer Routes

Serving the General Public

Mountain Mobility operates three "Trailblazer" routes. These three routes are deviated-fixed routes, which means the bus will be at preset locations according to a schedule but can deviate off the route by one-quarter mile to pick a passenger up from an address if the passenger is unable to get to the nearest street the bus runs on. These routes are open to anyone that wants to ride. The Trailblazer buses are 25 light transit vehicles that seat 14 to 18 passengers, and are equipped with lifts to serve persons using mobility aids. Each bus has a bike rack for passengers bringing a bicycle. These routes provide transportation around local communities, as well as connections where passengers can transfer to Asheville Transit buses and ride into the City of Asheville. We also offer service by request if you need to get to catch the city bus before the pick up times indicated on the schedules.

**Black
Mountain
Trailblazer**

**Enka-Candler
Trailblazer**

**North
Buncombe
Trailblazer**

*Flag the Mountain
Mobility driver to
pick you up
anywhere along the
route*

*by raising your
hand when you see
the bus coming.*

*Mountain Mobility
Fare: 50 Cents
Per Boarding*

	<i>Route Started</i>	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Black Mountain Trailblazer	<i>Dec-02</i>	7,725	8,271	10,108	12,118	15,475
Enka-Candler Trailblazer	<i>Mar-07</i>	4,162	4,307	6,203	6,252	10,018
North Buncombe Trailblazer	<i>Feb-09</i>	126	4,369	5,580	6,672	6,912
Total Trailblazer Trips		12,013	16,947	21,891	25,042	32,405
Increase/Decrease Per Year		5%	41%	29%	14%	29%



Performance Measures

	Target	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Number of revenue trips provided per revenue hour of service	2.35	2.24	2.28	2.35	2.32	2.42
Percent of passengers dropped off and picked up within +/- 15 minutes of their scheduled time.	95%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%
Number of accidents per 100,000 miles	0.00	0.98	0.76	0.77	1.00	0.50
Percentage of drivers meeting or exceeding requirements for evaluations, initial training, retraining, and recertifications	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Vehicle Information

	Current	Projected
Number of vehicles available to provide passenger transportation	43	43
Number of vehicles equipped with wheelchair lifts	36	36
Number of vehicles that use alternative fuels (liquid propane/autogas and CNG)	22	23
% of Fleet Using Alt Fuels	51%	53%