

**BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: March 1, 2011

Action Requested:

Approval of Resolution Authorizing the County Manager to Execute an Agreement with the City of Asheville, as Direct Recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, for funds under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Program

Background:

Buncombe County has obtained grant funding for this route from a variety of funding sources over the years. Most recently, the NCDOT funded this service until JARC grant funds could be applied for and secured to continue the service. Last fall, the County applied to the French Broad River MPO for JARC funds to operate this route. The MPO unanimously supported our request for funding. Funding for the JARC program flows from the FTA to the City of Asheville, its designated recipient for these funds, then to the County as a subrecipient.

This JARC grant will enable Mountain Mobility to continue operating the Black Mountain Trailblazer service through December 31, 2013. The route provides public transportation services for the general public, including transporting low-income persons to and from jobs in the Black Mountain area. In addition, the Black Mountain Trailblazer connects with Asheville Transit's route throughout the day to allow residents of Black Mountain and Montreat to utilize public transportation into the City of Asheville and to allow residents of Asheville to get to employment areas in Black Mountain and Montreat. Some of the employment centers that may be accessed on the Black Mountain Trailblazer include Ingles Shopping Center, Blue Ridge Assembly, Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women, the Black Mountain Center, and Montreat College.

Funds/Staff requested:

The JARC grant requires a 50% match, which will be provided through passenger fares, through existing funds allocated to the Transportation Division, and through local contributions by the Town of Black Mountain.

Due to increased match requirements (formerly 10%), it should be noted that Trailblazer fares will need to be increased from the current 50 cents/boarding to \$1. Staff will schedule a public comment period for this fare increase and bring the request back to the Board of Commissioners for consideration in the near future.

Request submitted by: Lori S. Hembree, Planner III, Transportation Division (Mountain Mobility)

Date Submitted: February 21, 2011