

> > > > > > *News from the Triangle Transit Authority to keep you going.*

## TTA to Purchase New Buses



The bus in this photo is a 40' Gillig from Greensboro Transit, used in last fall's TTA Festibus.

TTA is starting to replace its fleet. By summer 2008, the first of 20 buses will start running routes in the Triangle. The buses, 35-feet in length, will begin to replace current buses and shuttles. Additional orders in following years will give TTA a complete new look and feel.

The buses are manufactured by Gillig of Hayward, California and will be "low floor." Lowering the floor makes it easier for transit riders. New technologies make the vehicles more serviceable and more reliable, including side impact crash barriers. Gillig buses are currently operating in transit systems in North Carolina in Charlotte, Durham and Greensboro.

The 20 new buses will cost just over \$6 million dollars. Because federal funds are used in bus purchases, there are mileage and time restrictions on when the vehicles can be replaced. Almost all buses currently being operated by TTA are at the threshold in both categories.

TTA issued the purchase order in April for the 20 new buses, TTA General Manager David King said the new fleet will help. "Our buses cover almost 1,600 miles in the region each day. The replacement buses will upgrade our service, our ride and our customer satisfaction."

The Gillig bus was one featured in last fall's "Festibus," allowing riders the opportunity to see, touch and rate vehicles, providing TTA with important feedback as the new vehicle selection process got underway.



## Triangle Citizens Begin Rethinking Transit

The Triangle is rethinking transit. Thirty-eight members of a Special Transit Advisory Committee (STAC) started work on May 2.

The members of the STAC were appointed by the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Planning Organization (DCHC). In late October 2007, the commission will deliver a set of recommended major transit investments.

The MPOs have agreed to pursue the joint development of a Regional Transit Vision Plan for a regional transit system to serve as the foundation for making comprehensive, cooperative, and well-coordinated decisions on future major transit investments.

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Members of the Special Transit Advisory Committee meet for the first time at Sigma Xi in May.

The STAC's recommended investments will be based on:

- A set of guiding principles for transit investments
- An analysis of technical material on potential transit corridors
- Prioritizing transit investments
- The results of a community engagement process

## TTA Hosts Regional Transit Information Center

Schedules, fares and all key facts on transit in the Triangle are now one phone call away. The Triangle Regional Transit Information Center opened this spring and can be accessed by calling: **485-RIDE (7433).**



The information center, hosted by TTA, is a cooperative effort between Durham, Raleigh and TTA but also includes information on services provided by Cary, Chapel Hill, Duke University and the NC State Wolfline. Commuter Resources

Director John Tallmadge says, “the purpose of the call center is to create a more seamless system for passengers traveling between cities and counties in the Triangle area.” Additional steps by transit agencies in the region include a simplified fare structure, simplified paratransit system, joint marketing and a new look for the “GoTriangle” brand name for the “family” of public transportation and ridesharing services provided.

Since its inception, the call center has averaged around 4,400 calls per week from transit riders for CAT, DATA and TTA. The hours of operation are M-F from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday and holidays. The only day not operating will be Christmas Day.



## Take the GoBulls Shuttle

TTA is in its third season of offering service to Durham Bulls home games from downtown Cary on Friday and Saturday nights. To add to the fun and convenience, there's no charge for the shuttle this year.

### That's right, it's FREE.

The pickup point is the Cary Train Station at 311 N. Academy St. Available seating is on a first come, first served basis. To ensure a seat on the shuttle, please arrive at the pick-up location early.

For 5:00 p.m. games, the shuttle will arrive in Cary at 4 p.m. and leave at 4:15 p.m. For 7:00 p.m. games, the shuttle will arrive at 6 p.m. and leave at 6:15 p.m.

Return to Cary will leave the Durham Bulls Athletic Park 10 minutes after the end of the game or 10 minutes after the end of game fireworks. The GoBulls Shuttle! will pick fans up in front of the ballpark gate on Jackie Robinson Drive, the same location where they were dropped off.



## Triangle Citizens Begin Rethinking Transit (continued from cover)

The technical material to be provided will include data on travel markets, land use, impacts on the environment, impacts on neighborhoods and communities, costs of potential transit technologies, best practices in other areas, and other needs identified by the commission.

The recommendations will help the MPOs prepare long range transportation plans for the year 2030.

TTA, CAMPO, DCHC, Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG), the NC Department of Transportation and Regional Transportation

Alliance are sponsors of the work of the STAC. Coordination of the committee and its work will be managed by NC State University's Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE).

More information on the Special Transit Advisory Commission and Regional Transit Vision Plan is available at: [www.transitblue-print.org](http://www.transitblue-print.org). There is also a list of the commission members and meeting dates at the site.



Special Transit Advisory Committee members begin sorting through the transportation issues the Triangle must face.

## Triangle University Students Get a Hand with Transit-Friendly Housing

Until now, students looking for a way to save money by living in an apartment near transit have had the daunting and often frustrating task of synthesizing information from multiple bus route maps, bike maps and websites. Now, TTA, along with other area transit systems, UNC, NC State and Meredith College have teamed up to help college students Kick Gas.' New on-line maps now pinpoint some of the best transit-friendly places to live in Raleigh and Chapel Hill.

Amy Armbruster with TTA's commuter resources department says, "a 'Kick Gas' apartment is one that is served by several bus lines or is an easy walk or bike ride away from campus. The maps layer information about local and regional bus routes over the top of the locations of apartments so that students can easily distinguish between apartments that "kick" gas and allow them to take the bus, bike or walk instead of those that will require them to get in their cars and drive everyday."

The research compiled for this pilot project shows that choosing a "kick gas" apartment saves money on gas and parking fees. For the average NCSU student, driving 5 miles to campus and paying for an annual parking permit can cost up to \$772.74 a year. For the average UNC student, it costs about \$604.74 a year. For Meredith students, who park on campus for free, that figure is still \$457.14 a year!

The maps are part of the [RedefineTravel.org](http://RedefineTravel.org) campaign, funded in part by a grant from the NC Dept. of Transportation, the Capital Area MPO and the Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro MPO. The Web site is a great resource for Triangle university students at UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke University, NCCU, NCSU, Meredith College and Shaw University looking for information about how to ride Triangle buses, how to find a carpool partner, and how to safely bike to campus.



**REDEFINETRAVEL.ORG**

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## TTA Signs Important Agreement on Future Transit Development

Earlier this year, the Triangle Transit Authority and Cherokee Investment Partners signed a public-private partnership to develop dense, transit-friendly clusters of homes and businesses around transit stations in Durham, Research Triangle Park, Cary and Raleigh.

Development would not occur until the Triangle completes its rethinking of transit and the report of a **Special Transit Advisory Commission (STAC)**. The STAC is expected to have a final report for the community in late 2007.

The Master Development Agreement, often called the "MDA," designates Cherokee as the master developer for eight potential transit stops. TTA will contribute 28.6 acres in property it has purchased and Cherokee will acquire adjoining parcels and coordinate plans with other developers to build around the stations. Fixed guideways are a catalyst for transit oriented development.



Transit oriented development will be an increasing choice for many in the future.



## TTA is Setting Records!

Ridership growth on TTA regional buses and shuttles increased at levels four times the national average in 2006. The 12.2 percent gains by TTA compared with a 2.9 percent increase in America last year.

Public transportation usage reduces U.S. gasoline consumption by **1.4 billion** gallons each year—or the equivalent of 108 million cars filling up, almost 300,000 each day.



