



A Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan for North Carolina

**19th National Rural Public and Intercity Bus
Conference**

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Overview

1. Background
2. Development of the Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan
3. Experience from implementing new services
4. Future goals

Background

- Operating subsidies for intercity bus services from submissions to needs assessment
- Reactionary—resulted in mixed success
- Some routes continued after demonstration; others ceased operation
- No overall plan or prioritization for new intercity bus services

Background

- Individual and comparative analysis of potential services from FY 2007 needs assessment :
 - Population—city and counties
 - Trip attraction—Gravity Model
 - Ridership—US DOT method by Fravel, Burkhardt, and Menzer (1987)
 - Estimated operating costs (total and per passenger)
- Two routes consistently scored highest
- Statewide Plan should be developed

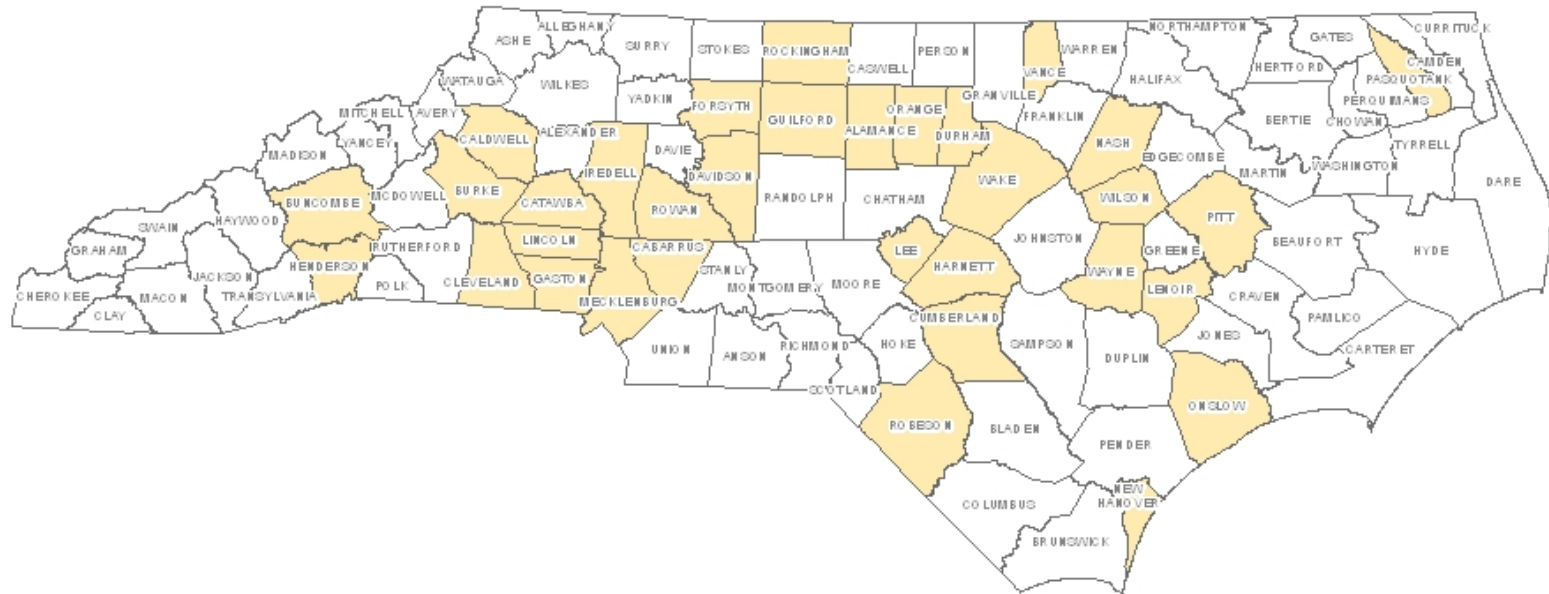
Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan


- Developed FY 2009
- Drew from Colorado, and Washington plans by KFH Group, Inc.
- Goal—develop *statewide* plan to guide prioritization of services to be maintained/subsidized
- Goal—use *simple* method to facilitate updates and use by NCDOT staff

Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan

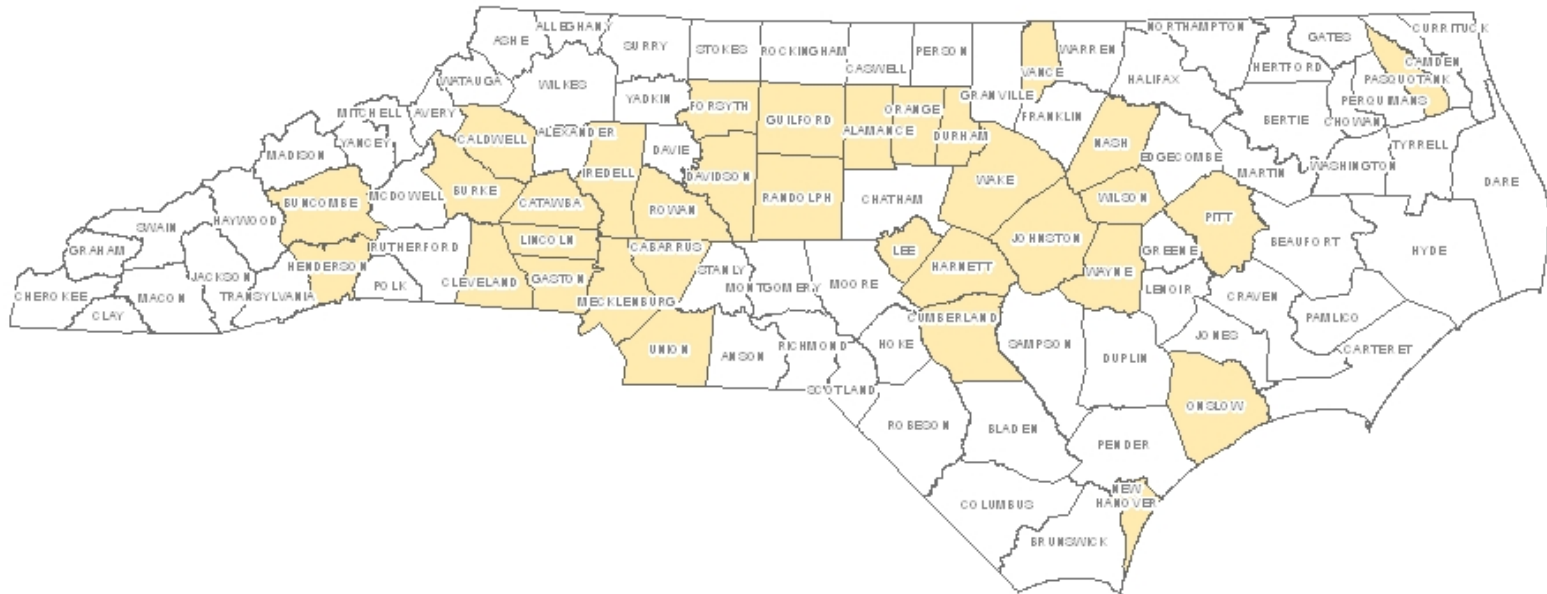
- Analysis conducted at county level
- 2 variables for potential need/demand:
 - “Transit-dependent” population density (<16, > 60, < poverty level, disability, without auto)
 - Overall population density—sufficient to support intercity bus service?


Top Third of Counties with Highest Density of Transit Dependent Persons



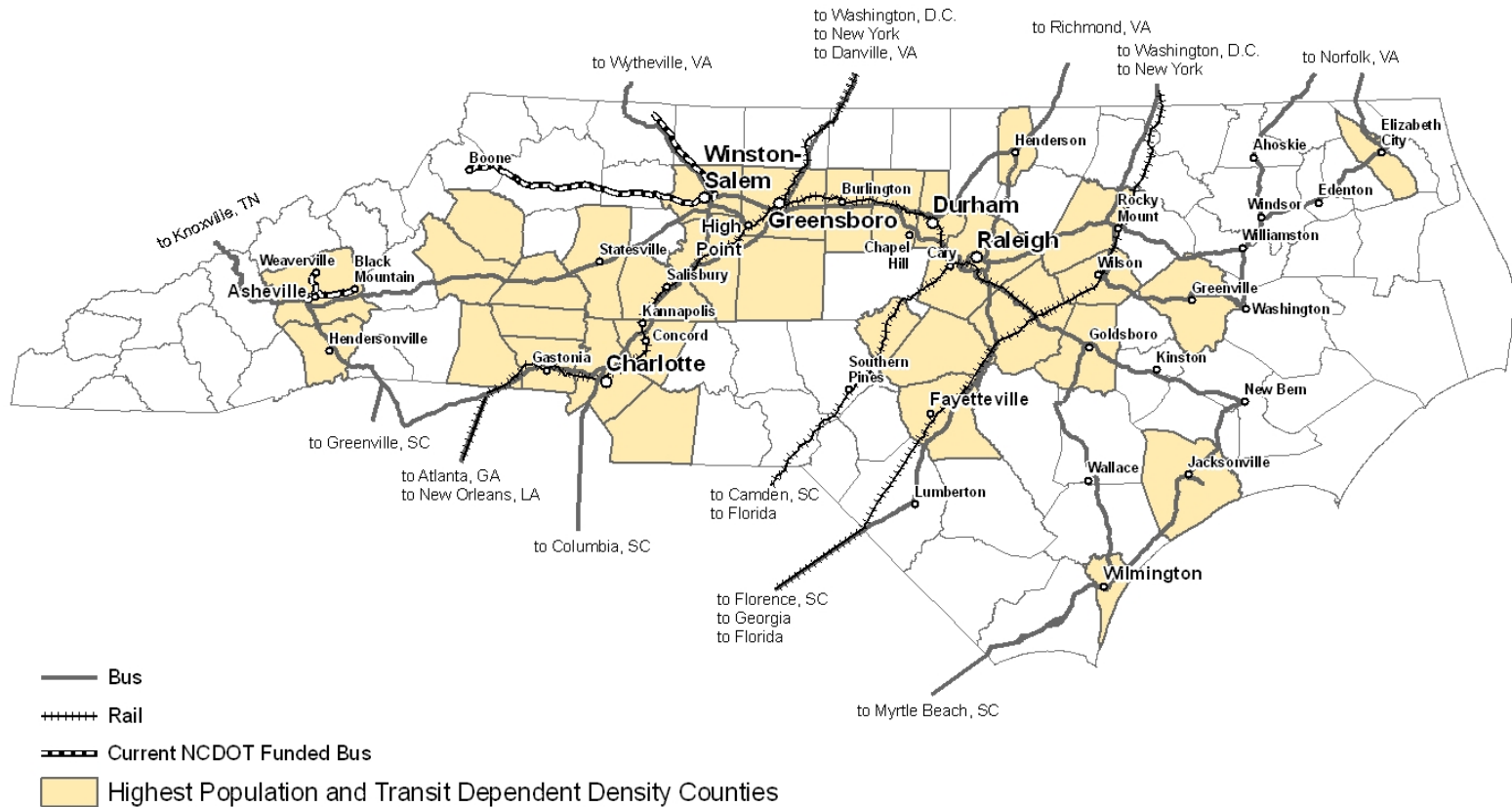
 Highest Transit Dependent Density

Top Third of Counties with Highest General Population Density

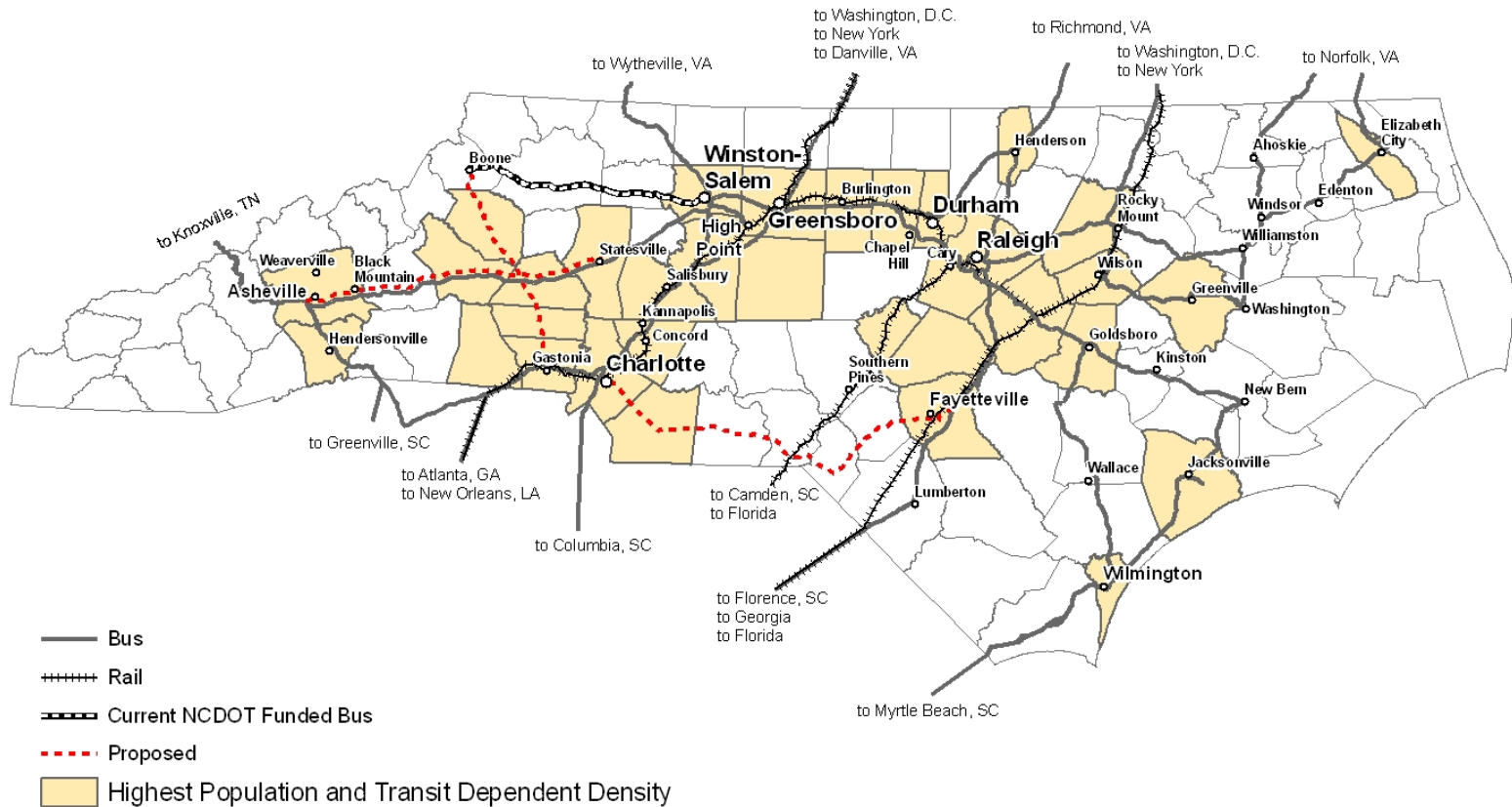


 Highest General Population Density

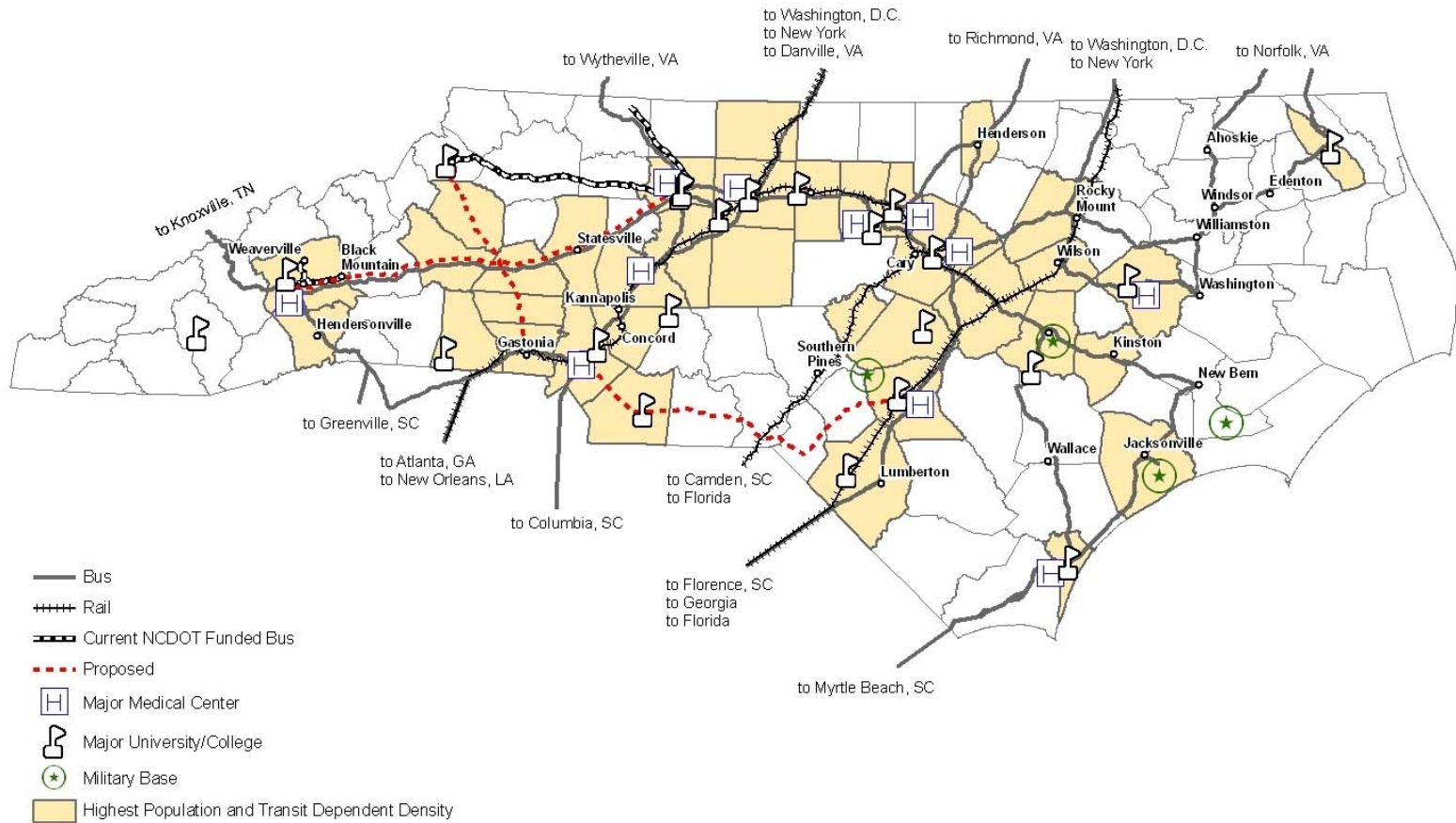
Overlay of Intercity Routes with Population and Transit Dependent Density



Overlay of Proposed Intercity Routes with Population and Transit Dependent Density



Overlay of Intercity Routes with Population and Transit Dependent Density and Institutions



Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan

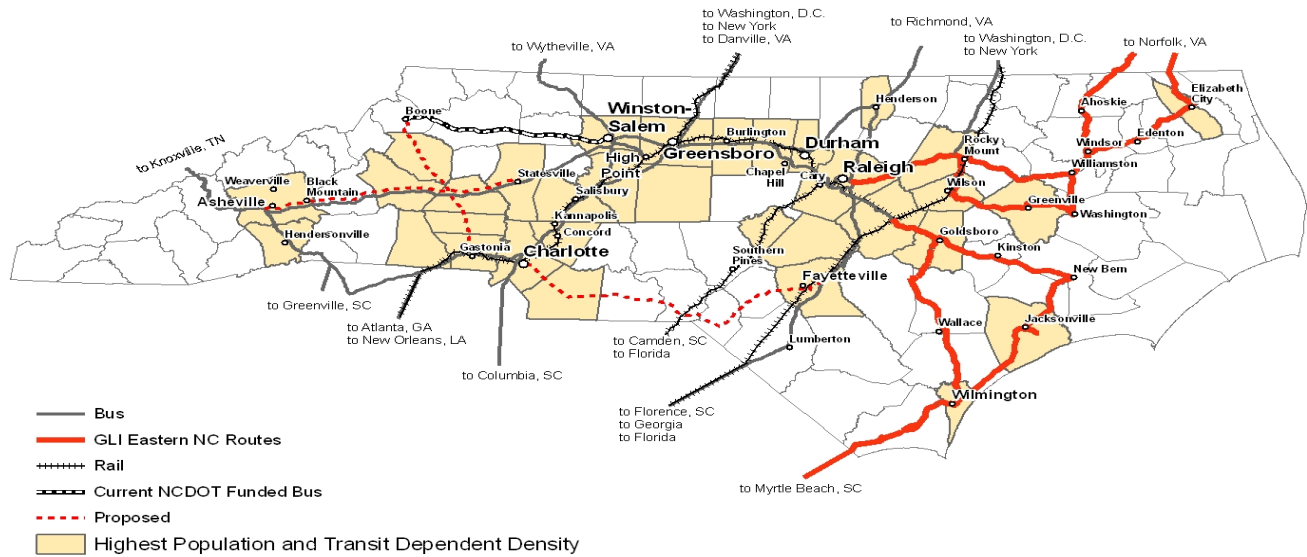
Findings:

- Intercity bus service in most counties / corridors with high population densities, and high densities of transit-dependent persons
- Most military, higher education, and major medical facilities in areas with intercity bus service
- No service in Boone—Charlotte, & Wilmington—Charlotte corridors

Implementing New Services

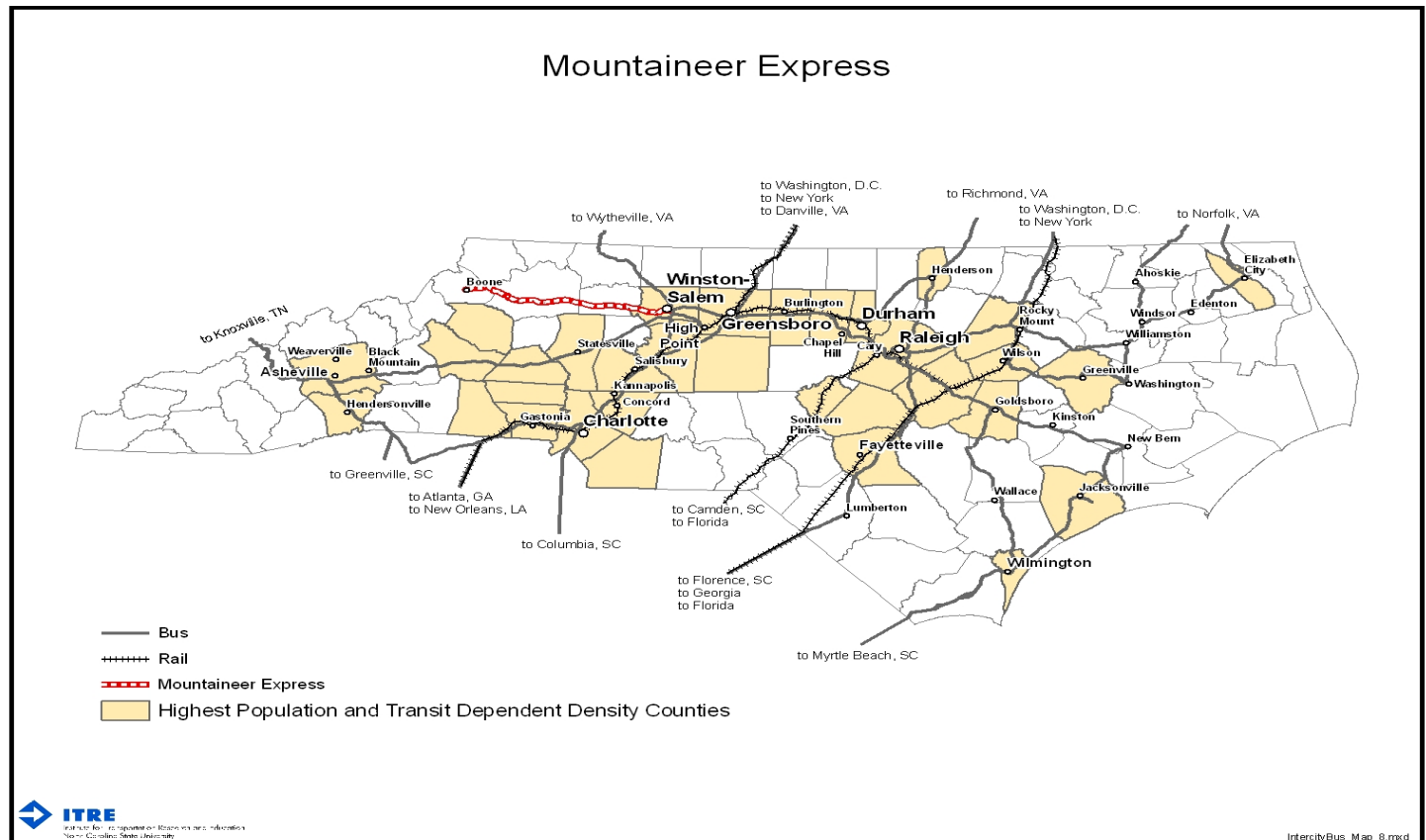
Complication #1: Greyhound notice of intent to abandon service in eastern NC

Subsidized Eastern North Carolina Routes



Implementing New Services

Complication #2: Grantee to cease operations of Boone—Greensboro route



Implementing New Services

2010—New routes (2)

- One round trip per day
- Oriented for a.m. travel to Charlotte; p.m. travel from Charlotte
- Oriented primarily to intercity bus connections in Charlotte
- Interlined with Greyhound

2010—Existing routes (6)

- Maintain 5 Greyhound eastern NC routes—subsidized using 5311(f) in-kind match
- Change in Boone—Greensboro grantee

Implementing New Services

Lesson—Section 5311(f) In-Kind Match:

- Very effective in maximizing use of federal 5311(f) funds when state funds are limited
- GLI a very cooperative, helpful partner
- The pilot should be extended/made permanent



Implementing New Services

Lesson—balancing competing priorities:

- New vs. existing services
- Operating vs. capital funding needs
- Fare rate vs. subsidy rate
- Scheduled connections to national network vs. intrastate travel convenience
- Multi-modal stations vs. convenience stores
- Intercity bus connections vs. passenger rail or air connections
- Signage content vs. DOT regulations

Future Goals

A state-level intercity bus program continually evolves!

- Evaluate performance of subsidized routes
- Maintain/expand service as funding allows
- Develop revenue targets for new services
- Locate stops at multi-modal facilities
- Prioritize additional service frequency
- Increase marketing
- Develop local feeder services

Questions/Comments?