

# NewsRelease



North American  
Bus Industries, Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **NABI's BRTs helping get UNC students to class on time**

**Anniston, AL** (February 20, 2008) –Chapel Hill, North Carolina, has a population of 90,000 people. But, as the home of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill's transit system sees huge demand. In 2002, the system also went fair-free, a move that eventually led it to purchase its first articulated vehicles, three 60-foot BRTs from North American Bus Industries.

"In 2002, our ridership went from 2.5 million to 6 million riders per year," said Steve Spade, Chapel Hill's transit director. "Prior to 2007 our fleet consisted mainly of 35-foot buses that we were scheduling to arrive at bus stops every five minutes ... and that still wasn't enough capacity. We were still having to leave people behind."

"With Chapel Hill's increased ridership numbers, the BRT was a perfect fit for them," said Chris Dabbs, regional sales manager for North American Bus Industries, Inc. "It's not just the added capacity, though. These buses are a rolling billboard for promoting the modernization and attractiveness of public transportation."

Spade admitted some of his people were a little skeptical of the articulated design. "We decided to purchase these first three to demonstrate the BRTs ability to everyone. After just a few months, these futuristic buses have proven their value."

Chapel Hill's bus drivers are also big fans of the "artics," too. "We allow our drivers to bid on which runs they want to drive. The runs the BRTs are on have gone to higher seniority operators due to their popularity," Spade said.

"We are all about dependability and quality of service," Spade added. "With the BRTs, we've been able to positively impact these factors. By improving our ability to pick up everyone at a stop and not force anyone to wait for the next bus, we've given our passengers the confidence that we can get them to class on time."

Spade said they have had as many as 120 passengers on a BRT at one time. "They really seem to attract the riders. There's something about the modern, sleek, "bullet train" styling that tends to attract people. We've also heard a lot of riders comment, 'When I see this bus coming, I know I'm not going to get left at the curb.'"

With the success of its fair-free system, Chapel Hill is moving to further develop its transit options along the city's Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor. Those plans include adding more stops, more routes and more BRTs. "We think we should be able to keep 13-15 BRTs operating at a high capacity on a daily basis," Spade said. Originally, the transit system planned to operate its BRTs only during peak ridership hours. But, the articulated vehicle's efficiency has forced transit authorities to re-think that strategy. "As big as they are, they are still carrying full loads from seven to eleven in the mornings, and then at three in the afternoon. So there's not much of a lull in the action. These BRTs are really getting a work out."

**About Us:** North American Bus Industries, Inc. markets three successful transit bus brands: NABI, Optima and Blue Bird offering a complete line of standard and low-floor, heavy-duty 30', 35', 40', 42', 60' and 65' (articulated) transit buses at its facilities in Anniston, Alabama. North American Bus Industries is the market leader with its sleek and most advanced designed BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) vehicles which offer a cost effective alternative to expensive light rail. The transit buses are available with clean diesel, CNG, LNG, or diesel hybrid-electric propulsion systems.

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