

# TRANSPORTATION MODULE

## What is sustainable transportation?

Transportation is a necessary part of life. Unfortunately, driving single passenger vehicles and traveling by airplane produces greenhouse gases, which contribute to climate change.

When it comes to workplace transportation, the three main areas of travel are:

- 1) Commuting to work.
- 2) Traveling short distances for work (i.e., going to another UNC-Chapel Hill office for a meeting).
- 3) Traveling long distances for events.

Because University employees frequently commute and travel short distances, this is a key area. The average car [emits 0.89 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per mile driven](#) – that’s more than three beach balls of CO<sub>2</sub>!

The best way to reduce emissions from driving is to simply have fewer cars on the road. Ways of doing this include **carpooling**, taking **public transportation**, and/or **biking** or **walking**. When cars are taken off the road, fewer greenhouse gas emissions are generated, air quality improves and congestion decreases. Biking or walking doesn’t just eliminate emissions from driving a vehicle, it’s also good for your health too. Exercise gives you physical energy and improves concentration.

Another contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is air travel. Although most people travel by air less often than driving, flying is much more greenhouse gas intensive. Just one round-trip flight from Raleigh to California generates almost [20% of the greenhouse gases](#) that a car emits over an entire year. Planes [use far more fuel](#) than cars do and the emissions they release are more potent. Including air travel, transportation alone represents 23% of UNC-Chapel Hill’s greenhouse gas emissions!

## Why is sustainable transportation important at Carolina?

Carolina has made great progress helping employees commute more sustainably. Almost 30% of University and hospital employees already commute to campus by a method other than single-passenger vehicle.

However, that still leaves thousands of single-passenger vehicles on the road. To really drive down emissions and achieve the Sustainable Carolina [goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions](#), we need to do more. By educating and incentivizing your office to carpool, ride the bus, bike, or walk more often, your office can help move the needle on the Sustainable Carolina goals and help protect the planet!

# How can my office reduce transportation emissions?

Offices at UNC-Chapel Hill have the biggest opportunity to reduce emissions by encouraging alternatives to driving alone. You can support this effort by ensuring that your officemates know their options for sustainable transportation and feel empowered and encouraged to use them.

## 1) Commuting to Work

[The Commuter Alternative Program](#) (CAP) rewards Tar Heels who travel to campus via bus, rideshare, bike or their own two feet. Joining CAP has a ton of benefits. Members get discounts at certain restaurants and stores, commuter news alerts, entries to prize drawings, one free parking permit per month for permanent employees, emergency rides and subsidies for certain transportation options.

[Chapel Hill Transit](#), funded in large part by UNC-Chapel Hill, offers fare-free buses and can be navigated easily via the [TransLoc app](#). Chapel Hill Transit updated its online bus tracker. You can also track buses via the CH Transit app, available for [Android](#) or [iPhone](#) (app updated in summer 2023). All buses have bike racks for mixed mode commuters.

[ShareTheRideNC](#) is a ride-matching service that connects University employees with people in their area to carpool. Carpooling qualifies people in your office for CAP.

[Vanpooling](#) is like carpooling, except that UNC-Chapel Hill provides a monthly subsidy for van maintenance and parking is free. There are existing vanpools to the University from surrounding cities. You can also start a new one with other employees.

[Biking](#) is incredibly feasible on campus. Since 2023, Spin rental e-bikes have been available on campus (see section 2 for more information). We are one of only 100 universities in the U.S. with a Bicycle Friendly University status of silver or higher. Use Carolina's [interactive bike map](#) to scope out covered bike racks and bike amenities.

[Telecommuting](#) isn't an option for every department, but it is worth looking into to see if the people in your office are eligible to occasionally work from home. This avoids commuting emissions altogether on those days and has become much more common since the COVID pandemic.

## 2) Traveling Short Distances for Work

If you or your officemates need to travel short distances during the day for work, consider taking the bus or carpooling in fleet vehicles. If you're able to walk or bike, that's ideal.

If you don't have a bike on campus, you can take part in [Carolina's Tar Heel Bikes program](#). The bikes are provided by Spin. After downloading the Spin phone app, it is \$1.00 to unlock the e-bike plus \$0.29 per minute of use. Riders can also purchase a flat rate monthly pass for \$6.99 plus \$0.29 per minute of use,

with no additional unlock fee. Users who complete and pass a safety quiz will receive a \$5.00 credit to their account.

### 3) Traveling Long Distances for Work

Carpool with others, choose an appropriately sized, fuel-efficient vehicle and purchase offsets for your Enterprise rental by adding the charge to your bill. Note: The University may not cover the offset charge. If flying is unavoidable, you can again purchase offsets through companies like Terrapass that invest in emissions capture programs across the country. Google now includes carbon intensity in its [flight searches](#). Direct flights emit less carbon than flights with multiple segments. Take-offs and landings are the most carbon-intensive portions of the trip.

## Green Office Tasks

**To green your office and complete the transportation module:**

1. Get a baseline and prepare to be a CAP resource.
2. Complete 6 out of 11 transportation tasks.
3. Consider a community based social marketing campaign that addresses a specific transportation problem in your office.

### Get a Baseline and Prepare to Be A CAP Resource

**Do this before tackling anything else related to transportation!**

Meet with your parking coordinator to get a baseline of how your officemates commute to work and ask for their support as you undertake this module. If they do not know, you can find out how many parking passes your office currently gives out by emailing [cap@unc.edu](mailto:cap@unc.edu) with the name of your department.

Prepare to be a CAP Resource in your office by signing up for the CAP newsletter. [Manage Your Commuter News Subscription](#) and review past newsletters.

### Transportation Tasks

**Complete 6 out of the 11 tasks below!**

Task	Resources	Check
Point out the location of the nearest bike amenities at your next staff meeting.	<a href="#">UNC Interactive Bike Map</a>	
Develop a telecommute policy for your office and work to get it approved.	<a href="#">Flexible Work Arrangements</a>	
Encourage people to sign up for ShareTheRideNC by sending out an email.	<a href="#">Green Office Cut, Paste, Send ShareTheRideNC</a>	

If the office is purchasing new vehicles, make sure they are hybrid, electric, or alternative fuel.	<a href="#">Procurement Module</a>	
Make sure all employees get information about CAP by sending out an email.	<a href="#">Green Office Cut, Past, Send CAP</a>	
Commit to forwarding at least one Commuter News e-newsletter a year to your department.	<a href="#">Commuter News Enrollment</a>	
Put information on your website that will give visitors sustainable transportation options for visiting.	<a href="#">Website Example</a> <a href="#">Office of Transportation and Parking</a>	
Invite CAP representatives to speak for 10 to 15 minutes at a staff meeting	<a href="#">Commuter Alternative Program</a>	
Create a departmental Zipcar account and promote it by sending out an email.	<a href="#">Zipcar Department Sign-Up</a> <a href="#">Green Office Cut, Paste, Send ZipCar</a>	
Encourage staff to create a Tar Heel Bikes account by sending out an email.	<a href="#">Green Office Cut, Paste, Send Tar Heel Bikes</a>	
Wildcard: Have an idea for another task not listed? Reach out to Sustainable Carolina's Green Office Program to see if it will work!	<a href="#">Sustainable Carolina Contact</a>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		

### Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) Campaign

Identify an ongoing transportation challenge in your office (Seed). Develop a plan to address the challenge (Sprout). Implement a campaign designed to address the challenge (Sapling). Evaluate and assess your next steps (Tree).

- [Link to CBSM Word Document](#)
- [Link to CBSM Worksheet PDF](#)

## Contacts & Resources

[Sustainable Carolina](#) | [Green Office Program](#)

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[Office of Transportation and Parking, Commuter Alternative Program](#)

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[Chapel Hill Transit](#) | 919-969-4900

[UNC Transportation and Parking](#) | 919-962-3951