



Rural Transit Month: Renewing Our Commitment to Rural Transit

CTAA's Rural Transit Month | March 2018

The organization that is today's Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) was formed from a previous group known as Rural America, which advocated for many challenges facing rural communities, most notably housing. When that organization's leaders determined that access to transportation options was limiting the opportunities to improve prosperity for rural Americans, it merged with another nonprofit – known as National Association of Specialized Transportation Agencies (NASTA) – in 1989 to form CTAA.

We're proud of our legacy in working to improve the mobility needs of rural communities. That work has always been rooted in a group of passionate transportation professionals and innovators from across rural America sharing their ideas, challenges and solutions to provide more responsive, effective and efficient service. CTAA is a conduit for that exchange of knowledge and experience, providing technical assistance, resources and documents, training, meetings and events, networking and a range of other tools to the rural transit industry.

As we approach our 30th anniversary, the needs of rural America have found an even greater awareness at leaders of all levels of government. President Trump and the current Congress was elected through strong support from rural voters, and his recently-released [infrastructure initiative](#) proposes \$50 billion in new investment through a new Rural Infrastructure Program. The concept has received positive interest on Capitol Hill. Meanwhile, a task force chaired by Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue published a [report outlining a number of strategies](#) to support rural communities, outlining rural transit as a key asset in that effort.

With this newfound momentum to help strengthen rural communities, CTAA is highlighting the impact of rural transit systems throughout the month of March through our first-ever *Rural Transit Month*. We will be sharing content and resources focused on rural mobility. Using a variety of different formats - including profiles of CTAA rural transit providers and Board of Directors members, Infocards, webinars and

more - we'll convey the impact that rural transportation has on communities across the nation.

Rural transit does essential work every day in connecting people with jobs, healthcare, education, faith communities, community services and much more, and its services are being used now more than ever. Since 2007, while overall rural population has declined, ridership on rural transit systems have increased by 7.8 percent.

In telling the story's of America's rural transit providers, we'll explore how these systems have evolved and adapted, the challenges they face in continuing to meet the needs of their communities and trends that are emerging that can shape the future of rural mobility for years ahead. These ideas include everything from limited availability of drivers, working with regulations better suited for rail transit providers in urban areas and how new mobility technologies like Transportation Network Companies and autonomous vehicles factor into rural areas.

On behalf of CTAA's more than 400 rural transit provider members that operate service in every state in the nation, we're honored to tell the stories of an often-overlooked but nonetheless essential component of rural America. We invite you to join in this month-long conversation by checking in to www.ctaa.org or [@OfficialCTAA](https://twitter.com/OfficialCTAA) on Twitter for our new daily content and letting us know what ideas, challenges and innovations you see affecting rural transit, both now and over the long-term.



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