



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Blue Bus™ Wins 2024 Community Transit System of the Year Award - Small System**

West Palm Beach, Florida - June 12, 2024 - The North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) "Blue Bus™" proudly announces its receipt of the prestigious 2024 Community Transit System of the Year Award - Small System, presented by the Community Transit Association of America (CTAA). The award ceremony took place on June 12, 2024, during the CTAA's annual Expo held in West Palm Beach, Florida. The honor marks the first such award from CTAA to any New Mexico public transportation system.

The Community Transit System of the Year Award recognizes Blue Bus's™ outstanding contributions and commitment to providing innovative, accessible, and responsive transportation services to rural communities with populations of 50,000 and below. The national award underscores NCRTD's dedication to meeting the diverse needs of its customers and communities while actively fostering collaboration and partnerships to enhance transportation accessibility and options.

NCRTD's exemplary initiatives and achievements that led to this prestigious recognition include:

1. **Providing innovative and creative services in the community:** NCRTD has continually introduced innovative transportation solutions tailored to the unique needs of rural and tribal communities, ensuring convenient and reliable mobility options for residents, including MyBlue on-demand rideshare services in Taos and Española and plans to acquire ten electric buses as part of the District's Zero Emissions Bus plan, and involving the community in developing a new brand name – The Blue Bus."
2. **Being responsive to its customers and community needs:** NCRTD prioritizes the feedback and needs of its customers and communities, swiftly adapting its services to address evolving demands and enhance overall satisfaction, Key activities include a Bus Stop Amenities project that will establish new guidelines to enhance and improve stops across the District's 10,000 square mile service area, and the implementation of a Long-Range Strategic Plan featuring a regional Bus Rapid Transit route from Taos via Española to Santa Fe.

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3. **Coordinating and collaborating with other public and special services transportation:** NCRTD actively collaborates with public and special services transportation providers to optimize service delivery, streamline operations, and maximize community impact, particularly with the development of a Tribal Transit Plan. The plan focuses on developing and evaluating transit service alternatives for the Jicarilla Apache Nation, Nambé Pueblo, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris Pueblo, Pueblo of Pojoaque, Pueblo de San Ildefonso, Santa Clara Pueblo, Taos Pueblo, and Pueblo of Tesuque.
4. **Helping the community accomplish their goals:** Through the Long-Range Service Plan, the NCRTD plays a vital role in helping communities achieve their transportation and mobility objectives, contributing to broader socioeconomic development and quality of life improvements.
5. **Building public and private partnerships:** NCRTD fosters partnerships with a diverse array of organizations, both public and private, to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for the collective benefit of the communities served. The NCRTD worked with planners at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in FY 2023 to develop a Transit Implementation Study. With the LANL campus expected to grow from 15,000 to 18,000 employees by 2028, a comprehensive plan is being designed to facilitate employees commuting to and from the Laboratory on either public transit or LANL run shuttles by 2028.
6. **Providing accessible transportation services:** NCRTD is committed to ensuring accessibility for all individuals, offering inclusive transportation solutions that cater to diverse mobility needs and preferences. NCRTD planners are implementing the next phase of a Transit Alternatives Program (TAP) that will earmark 20 locations for ADA enhancements and bring District facilities, such as bus stops, into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act throughout the District
7. **Building transportation alternatives:** NCRTD actively develops and promotes transportation alternatives that cater to a wide range of community needs, fostering sustainable and equitable mobility solutions, with programs such as the Bus Rapid Transit project and conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the use of Automated Vehicle (AV) technology for public transit use in North Central New Mexico.

"We are deeply honored to receive the 2024 Community Transit System of the Year Award - Small System from the CTAA," said NCRTD Executive Director Anthony Mortillaro, who accepted the Award on behalf of the District Board and staff. "This esteemed recognition underscores our unwavering commitment to serving the transportation needs of rural and tribal communities and reflects the dedication and hard work of the entire Blue Bus™ team. We are immensely grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the well-being and prosperity of the communities we serve."

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The NCRTD extends its gratitude to the CTAA for this distinguished honor and reaffirms its commitment to delivering exceptional transportation services that positively impact the lives of individuals and communities across the region.

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With headquarters in Española, New Mexico, The North Central Regional Transit District Blue Bus™ connects communities, pueblos, and tribes across 10,000 square miles throughout north central New Mexico, serving residents in Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, Taos, and Los Alamos counties as well as eight Northern Pueblos and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. Additional services connect communities in San Juan, Mora, and San Miguel Counties. The District operates 29 routes, with a mix of fixed-routes, flex routes, on-demand MyBlue™ ridesharing service, and paratransit/ADA services. Visit RideTheBlueBus.com to learn more or call 866.206.0754

## ADDITIONAL MEDIA RESOURCES

CTAA award graphics (see attachments in email for original files)



*NCRTD Executive Director  
Anthony Mortillaro Accepts  
Award at CTAA Expo in West Palm  
Beach Florida*