

## City cuts ribbon at transfer center

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By [Ethan Smith](#)

Published in News on September 20, 2015 1:50 AM



NEWS-ARGUS/ETHAN SMITH

Goldsboro Mayor Al King, surrounded by local, state and federal officials, marks the completion of the Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority Transfer Center at 103 N. Carolina St. with a ribbon cutting on Saturday morning.

City, state and federal officials, as well as members of the public, marked the completion of the Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority's new \$3.7 million transfer center at 103 N. Carolina St. with a ribbon-cutting Saturday morning.

The station, which was completed Aug.25, was one of two city projects funded by a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant, also known as a TIGER V grant.

Goldsboro was selected to be one of 27 communities that received the grant funds in September 2013, and was granted \$10 million to construct the new transfer center and give downtown a makeover with a Streetscape project.

"To me, that says we have a great vision in the city of Goldsboro, great leadership in the city of Goldsboro and great partners in the city of Goldsboro who helped us make this dream become a reality," said Mayor Al King at Saturday morning's ceremony, crediting the project's success to a hard-working staff and a clearly defined vision for the future of Goldsboro.

The new transfer center will be an integral part of improving the quality of life for many citizens of Wayne County, King said, as 9 percent of Wayne County residents do not have access to a vehicle of their own, and more than 30 percent have access to only one vehicle.

GWTA has revamped all of its bus routes to coincide with the completion of the transfer station, and all bus routes will now begin and end at the new transfer center.

In addition, for those without transportation seeking train travel to the far corners of the state, Amtrak train service will have buses that will pick up citizens from the

new transfer center and take them to Wilson, where they will then be able to board a train.

The new transfer center sits directly beside Goldsboro's Historic Union Station, blending the past of Goldsboro's history as a railroad boom-town with what many officials hope will be a bright future of multi-modal transportation in Goldsboro.

Deputy director of North Carolina's Rail Division, Allan Paul, said he hopes to see Union Station revitalized to its former glory by having train service routed through Goldsboro once again.

After Union Station opened in 1909, it hit its peak in the late 1910s and early 1920s, Paul said, as Goldsboro was made the crossroads for the longest railroad in the world at the time -- the 161-mile-long Wilmington-Weldon Railroad.

Union Station served three different rail lines and up to 22 passenger trains per day at its peak, Paul said, and officials are seeking to reopen the station for rail service in the near future and return it to prime condition.

Saturday morning's ribbon-cutting ceremony was also GWTA director Fred Fontana's birthday. He said he could not have been happier with the way the project turned out.

"It's so nice of all of these people to come out and celebrate my birthday with me," Fontana joked. "But really, this is a wonderful turnout for the ceremony, and I wasn't expecting such a crowd. We had wonderful weather, and it was great to have all of the people who were involved in the project's completion here for the ceremony."

To celebrate the project's completion, all GWTA urban bus routes will be free of charge for the public to ride on Monday, Sept. 21, and Tuesday, Sept. 22.

With the new transfer center comes new bus routes. There will no longer be names for the routes such as "Berkeley Mall Line," but rather the routes will be color-coded as red, purple, green, yellow and blue.

The blue line will make stops on Herman and Ash streets, North Spence Avenue and Berkeley Boulevard as well as at the Department of Social Services and the Peggy Seegars Senior Center.

The yellow line will make stops at H.V. Brown Homes, Goldsboro High School and the Peggy Seegars Senior Center.

The purple line will make stops at the Wayne County Courthouse, Seymour Homes, Slaughter Homes and the AMF bowling alley on Berkeley Boulevard.

The red line will make stops at Cherry Hospital, the Walmart on U.S. 70 West and the Little River Shopping Center.

The green line will make stops at the postal service office, Wayne Memorial Hospital, Wayne Community College and the intersection of Industry Court and North William Street.

Regular bus fare for routes within the city limits is \$1, and the reduced fare for persons with disabilities and senior citizens is 50 cents. To receive the reduced fare, the passenger will have to present a valid form of identification and a reduced fare card, which can be obtained from GWTA.

The transfer center's hours of operation will be from 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, and it will be closed on Sunday.