

## THE ROUTES IN CABARRUS COUNTY

To help you plan your rides, the following route descriptions provide information about the length of each route, sights along the way, and other information. Whether you're cycling for an hour, a day, or longer, this 200-mile system of routes gives you a variety of places to ride and sights to see. On the road, look for signs like the one shown here that mark the routes.



**ROUTE 1: LOOP ROUTE (74 MILES)**  
This route forms a loop through the central part of the county, linking Concord and Kannapolis with the smaller towns of Harrisburg, Midland and Mount Pleasant. Hilly and curvy, the lightly traveled roads also connect the small crossroads communities, parks and historic sites throughout Cabarrus County. Contrasting views of historic towns, modern development, and beautiful country vistas paint a picture of Cabarrus County's past and present. Cabarrus County's school-park concept means that you'll find park facilities at many of the county's schools. There are plenty of restaurants and country stores along the way where you can stop for refreshments.

Starting in Kannapolis, the route winds along less-traveled residential streets. While relatively free of traffic, these streets can sometimes be narrow with poor visibility at several intersections, so caution is required. The route passes through Cannon Village, which attracts both tourists and shoppers with its restaurants, park areas, antique mall, book gallery and other stores. Restrooms and interesting exhibits, including the free Textile Museum, are located in the Visitors Center in the middle of the village. The city of Concord, south of Kannapolis, offers numerous restaurants and shops in its downtown where many buildings have been restored to their earlier splendor. The Concord Historic District was established along Union Street, with its huge old trees and stately homes. Here you'll see the Concord Hotel, the original downtown hotel for the city; the Historic Cabarrus County Courthouse with its unique architectural style; and the city's oldest churches. Just off the route is Memorial Garden with its extensive plantings of seasonal flowers and blooming shrubs amidst historic

markers from the early 1800s. Just south of Concord, Daniel Pharr Community Center in spacious Caldwell Park offers restrooms and water plus athletic facilities. Breathe deeply and enjoy the scenic vistas along Zion Church Road but be aware that traffic can be heavy during peak commuting hours. W.W. Flowe Park gives cyclists yet another rest area with restrooms and water, trails, horseshoes, and picnic areas.

Several historic churches, reminders of the pioneers who settled the area, dot the route: Rocky River Presbyterian Church; Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church; and St. John's Church in Mount Pleasant. Their sites give cyclists green spaces and shade in which to rest and enjoy a snack. The town of Harrisburg has restaurants and stores plus a quiet park. New development in the area has increased traffic along the once-quiet roads, so extra caution is advised. In the southern part of the county, the rolling hills give way to more challenging, up-and-down stretches. Nested among the hardwoods in eastern Cabarrus County is Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site, which set off a gold rush in the early 19th century. In the town of Mount Pleasant, the Eastern Cabarrus Historical Society Museum is housed in an antebellum school. The town also has several restaurants and McAllister Park.

Past Mount Pleasant, the route continues north, back to Kannapolis. Half way between, just a short distance off the route, is Camp T.N. Spencer Park which offers three fishing lakes, picnic shelters and walking trails as well as tent camping sites and cabins.

**ROUTE 2: NORTHERN ROUTE (50 MILES)**  
This mainly east-west route connects Mecklenburg County with Stanly County through the northern and central parts of Cabarrus County. The western part of the route skirts the border with and loops briefly into Rowan County before turning south through Kannapolis. The eastern part of the route drifts south and then east toward the border with Stanly County. Although Cabarrus County is located in the Piedmont, the undulating roads along the way link quiet pastoral settings with residential and business areas. This route passes through Cannon Village in Kannapolis. Originally the shopping district for the mill town that was established around Cannon Mills, historic Cannon Village has been completely renovated into a Williamsburg-style village with a variety of shops. Watch out for multiple railroad tracks near the mill, which are quite dangerous for bikes. The safest way to cross them is at a right angle. You'll also find some refreshing green space in Veterans Park in Cannon Village. Lake Fisher offers restrooms, vending machines,

picnic shelters, and rental boats. In the late spring, you'll see signs for fresh strawberries along the rural roads. Also on the route, the town of Mount Pleasant is aptly named so be prepared for a climb on the way into town. Despite a few places where heavier commuter traffic to and from Mecklenburg County will demand your full attention, this route overall offers a pleasant blend of rural and small town scenes. The prevalence of restaurants and stores makes it easy to find refreshments along the way.



**ROUTE 6: PIEDMONT SPUR (31 MILES)**  
North Carolina has a 3,000-mile Bicycling Highways system consisting of lightly traveled scenic back roads that connect the distant corners of the state. A portion of the Piedmont Spur Route which runs from Lincolnton to southern Alamance County passes through southern Cabarrus County.

Traffic along the western portion of this route as you enter Cabarrus County from Mecklenburg County can be heavy during peak commuting hours. Heading southward, the large farms and forested areas give way to residential and business districts around the major highways. This is NASCAR country, where you can catch a glimpse of Lowe's Motor Speedway near where the route intersects with US 29. Historic Rocky River Presbyterian Church is situated along this route, offering a shaded and grassy resting spot. A nearby country store sells refreshments for thirsty riders. The route winds its way through narrow and curvy country lanes, where you'll need to be alert for tractors on the road. The sweeping countryside and green fields make the ride well worth the effort.

Maps of this and other routes can be obtained from the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation at [www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle](http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle).

**UNSIGNED CONNECTOR ROUTES (45 MILES)**  
These unsigned routes were selected as links between the signed routes within Cabarrus County and those in the adjacent counties of Mecklenburg and Rowan. Most of these routes are in rural areas, although a few pass through small towns or residential areas. These unsigned routes can serve as a shortcut between signed routes or can link routes for additional mileage.

## BICYCLING IN CABARRUS COUNTY

Located in the southern Piedmont region of North Carolina, Cabarrus County has managed to maintain much of its rural character, rich heritage, and hospitable towns as it continues to grow. These factors make it ideal for bicycle touring. Its sights are varied: historic sites, stately homes, country estates, and the site of the country's first gold rush. The prevalence of country stores and parks makes it easy to find a place to rest and refresh. The county's approach to parks — placing them adjacent to the schools — means they are numerous and well spaced throughout the county. Be prepared, though. The lovely rolling terrain that prevails can also frequently become challengingly curvy and hilly, giving cyclists a good workout.

This map shows a 200-mile bicycle route system that can be combined to create innumerable touring options. This system includes two signed county routes, the Loop Route and the Northern Route; the signed Piedmont Spur cross-state Route, and twelve additional connector routes, which are shown on this map but are not marked with signs on the road.

The varied terrain, interesting sights, and hospitable citizenry will make bicycle touring in Cabarrus County most enjoyable.



**BICYCLE LAWS**  
In North Carolina, the bicycle has the legal status of a vehicle. This means that bicyclists have full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of a motor vehicle. Under North Carolina law, bicyclists are required to:

- Ride on the right in the same direction as other traffic.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Use hand signals to communicate intended movements.
- Equip each bicycle for night riding with a front lamp visible from 300 feet and a rear reflector that is visible from a distance of 200 feet.

In addition, cyclists under the age of 16 are required by North Carolina law to wear a bicycle helmet approved by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

**SAFETY TIPS**

- Ride defensively and in a predictable manner.
- Wear a bicycle helmet every time you ride your bike.
- Avoid riding at night, if possible.
- When riding in a group, ride single file.
- Wear bright-colored clothes to increase your visibility.
- Be courteous to other drivers.
- Keep traffic flowing by helping motorists pass safely.

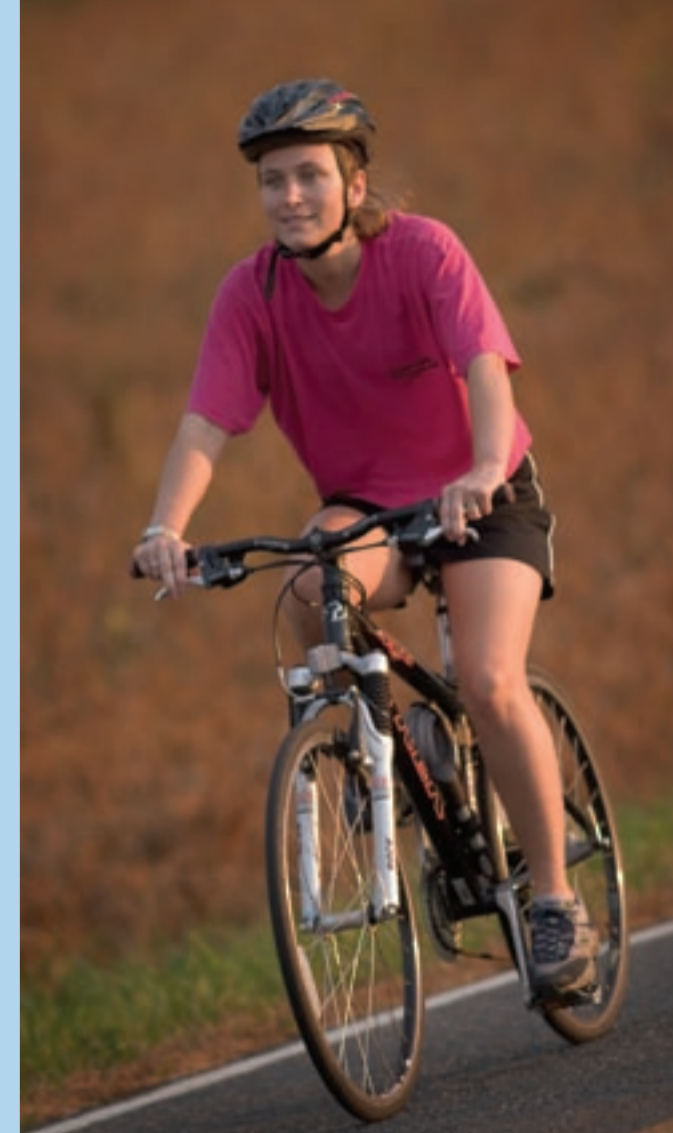
**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES**

<p><b>Cabarrus County Parks &amp; Recreation Department</b> P.O. Box 707 Concord, NC 28026-0707 Phone: 704/920-3350 Fax: 704/920-3358 parks_recre@cabarruscourty.us <a href="http://www.cabarruscourty.us/Pages/ParkRecreation/index.html">www.cabarruscourty.us/Pages/ParkRecreation/index.html</a></p>	<p><b>Kannapolis Parks &amp; Recreation Department</b> 246 Oak Avenue P.O. Box 1199 Kannapolis, NC 28082 Phone: 704/938-5133 Fax: 704/938-5919 <a href="http://www.cityofkannapolis.com">www.cityofkannapolis.com</a></p>
<p><b>Cabarrus County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</b> 3003 Dale Earnhardt Blvd. Kannapolis, NC 28083 Phone: 704/782-4340 or 800/848-3740 Fax: 704/782-4333 <a href="http://www.cabarruscvb.com">www.cabarruscvb.com</a></p>	<p><b>Division of Bicycle &amp; Pedestrian Transportation</b> 1552 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1552 Phone: 919/733-2804 Fax: 919/715-4422 bikedep_transportation@dot.state.nc.us</p>
<p><b>Concord Parks &amp; Recreation Department</b> 147 Academy Ave., NW P.O. Box 308 Concord, NC 28026-0308 Phone: 704/920-5600 Fax: 704/792-1971 <a href="http://www.concordparksandrec.org">www.concordparksandrec.org</a></p>	<p><b>Visit the Division's website</b> <a href="http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle">www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle</a> for maps of cross-state, regional, and local bicycle routes, additional information on laws and safety tips, a calendar of bicycle events, and listings of North Carolina bicycle shops and clubs.</p>



This map was produced in conjunction with the Cabarrus County Parks and Recreations Department. Funding for this project was provided through the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program. 10,000 copies of the map were printed on recycled paper at \$.44 a copy and are distributed free of charge. Published April 2005.

## CABARRUS county — BICYCLING —



North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

## WELCOME TO CABARRUS COUNTY

The land that was to become Cabarrus County was home to various Indian tribes, who thrived on the plentiful wild game sheltered in the hardwood forests and buffalo that roamed the rolling grassy meadows. English surveyor John Lawson, the first European to explore the area, described the land as a "delicious country." A high ridge through the middle of the land was used by the Indians for an ancient trading path, which later became the first "highway" called the Great Wagon Road.

To this bountiful country in the 1730s came Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who had traveled the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania and Maryland to settle in the lovely rolling hills of Cabarrus' Rocky River country. In the next decade, German immigrants of the Lutheran and Reformed faiths followed and settled in the eastern part of this area.

Both groups had come to the New World to seek refuge from European wars, famine, and religious intolerance. In North Carolina, they crafted one-room log homes for their large families, planted crops of Indian corn, wheat, rye, barley, and indigo, and organized congregations. Grain production led to the establishment of mills throughout the county.

Those early settlers, seeing education as the path to self-government and independence, established the earliest schools in their churches. In 1778 in the midst of the American Revolution, a classical school opened at Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church. These law-abiding people grew resentful of British colonial rule with its excessive taxes and fees. So in 1771, nine Scotch-Irish young men blew up gunpowder and supplies destined for the King's troops, enraging the royal governor and forcing the young men into hiding. In 1775 settlers from the part of Mecklenburg that would become

Cabarrus County, participated in a meeting in Charlotte that produced the document known as the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. These fiercely independent Scotch-Irishmen and their German neighbors so strongly supported the American cause in the Revolutionary War that the region was called "Hornet's Nest" by the British.

In 1792, Cabarrus County became separate from Mecklenburg County and was named in honor of Stephen Cabarrus, the speaker of the House of Representatives who had cast the deciding vote in favor of the new county's creation. By 1796, citizens had agreed to the location of the county seat and the town named Concord, or "harmony," was established with the county courthouse built at the intersection of its two main streets.

Cabarrus County was also the site of the first gold discovery in the United States, when Conrad Reed, a 12-year-old boy, found a large yellow rock — said to weigh seventeen pounds — in Little Meadow Creek in 1799. With cotton being grown in western Cabarrus County, a spinning mill was built in Concord in 1841. In 1877 the mill was sold to J.M. Odell and became the nucleus of his Odell Mills. James W. Cannon, a merchant and cotton buyer in Concord, built his first mill in 1887. In 1906, Cannon began constructing Kannapolis, his "model mill town," which was eventually incorporated in 1984. After his father's death, C.A. Cannon joined nine mills into Cannon Mills Company.

After World War II, the county industrial base became more diversified with giant motor sports facilities derived from the popularity of NASCAR, tobacco manufacturing, and Northeast Medical Center, which had begun as Cabarrus Memorial Hospital in 1935. As part of the greater Charlotte-Mecklenburg metropolitan area, Cabarrus County continues to experience both business and residential growth and is now the site of Concord Mills, a very large regional mall. Yet, the county still maintains much of its rural and farming heritage and its charming small towns that are hospitable to bicycle touring.

## POINTS OF INTEREST IN CABARRUS COUNTY

**HISTORIC CONCORD**  
The city of Concord was founded in 1796. After much disagreement between the German and Scotch-Irish settlements over the location for the county seat, a compromise was eventually reached and the town was established on a 26-acre site. The name Concord was chosen to reflect the spirit in which the issue was settled. From tree-lined streets to beautifully restored Victorian homes, downtown Concord is a sightseer's delight. Much of the downtown is a historic district with seasonal tours available for the historic homes.



Another historic building worth visiting is the historic **Cabarrus County Courthouse** at 65 Union Street South in Concord. Erected in 1876, this architecturally unique structure is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. **Tours by appointment only. Call 704/920-2465.**

The **Concord Museum**, located on the lower level of Union Street Square at 11 Union Street, houses displays of historical items from the Revolutionary War through the twentieth century, including household relics and tools of various trades. It is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – noon. There is no charge but donations are welcomed.

You also may want to stroll through the beautiful three-acre **Memorial Garden** built in 1804, which boasts enormous oaks, magnolias, dogwoods, and twisted crepe myrtles plus 14,000 tulips, seasonal flowers, and azaleas. Brilliant summer annuals add bursts of color along the walks. The garden is open Monday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 – 5:30 p.m. There is no charge but donations are welcomed.

**The Old Courthouse Theatre**, a regional, award-winning community theater established in 1976, offers musicals, comedies, classics, and new plays as well as youth and children's theater productions. The theater is located at 49 Spring Street NW in Concord. **For more information on any of these attractions: 704/782-4340 or 800/848-3740 or www.cabarruscvb.com.**

**Harold B. McEachern Greenway** is the first phase of a trail that will eventually connect downtown with the hospital area. Phase one is one mile in length. It starts at Les Myers Park and travels up to the new J.W. (Mickey) McGee Park.

**KANNAPOLIS**  
Although Kannapolis was not actually incorporated until 1984, its story began much earlier, in the imagination of Concord industrialist, J.W. Cannon. As the market for Cannon Mills' high-quality, inexpensive cotton boomed in the early years of the twentieth century, the textile pioneer began to envision a "model mill town" in which his factories would be surrounded by good homes for his employees, churches, stores, recreational facilities, and schools for their children. He began purchasing land north of Concord and by 1906 his vision was turning into a real town, which took his name — with a spelling variation — for its own: Kannapolis. As the mill grew over the decades, so did the town, with the mill providing land for new churches, schools, and parks.

In 1982 Cannon Mills in Kannapolis, NC, including the downtown shopping district, was purchased by wealthy California financier David Murdock. Intrigued by the charm of Kannapolis, Murdock began extensive renovation to redesign the district using the architectural

style of Colonial Williamsburg. Extensive landscaping including park benches, flowers, and trees gives this charming village the feel of a southern garden. After the renovation, the stores that succeeded were the home furnishings and specialty shops that visitors see today.



Located on the corner of West Avenue and West B Street, the **Cannon Village Visitors Center** is housed in a converted 1940s movie house, which was also used for traveling stage shows scheduled to accommodate mill workers on the 3 PM to 11 PM shift. The building also houses the **Fieldcrest Cannon Textile Museum & Exhibit**, home of the world's largest towel, and offers a multi-image theater show. Admission is free. Restrooms are available. The center is open Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday from 1:00 – 6:00 p.m., except for major holidays. **For more information: 800/438-6111, 704/938-3200, or www.cannonvillage.com.**

**REED GOLD MINE STATE HISTORIC SITE**  
Reed Gold Mine is the site of the first documented gold find in the United States in 1799 on the farm of John Reed. Reed, whose actual name was Johannes Rieth, was a Hessian soldier who left the British army near the conclusion of the Revolutionary War and came to settle near fellow Germans in the area. Reed's life as a farmer would have long been forgotten but for a chance event one Sunday in 1799. On that day his son Conrad found in Little Meadow Creek a large yellow rock said to weigh about seventeen pounds. The rock was used as a doorstep in the Reed home until 1802 when a jeweler determined that it was gold. This discovery helped create a new industry to the extent that North Carolina led the nation in gold production until 1848 when it was eclipsed by the rush to California.

This historic site offers an orientation film highlighting the first gold discovery as well as exhibits about gold and historical mining equipment. Guided tours take visitors through the restored underground tunnels and a restored ore-crushing stamp mill. A picnic area and walking trails through the mining area give visitors a place to unwind and relax. Visitors may also pan for gold on a seasonal basis for a fee.

All tours are guided and are scheduled hourly; however, groups are requested to make advance reservations. Admission to the site is free except for panning. From April through October, the site is open Monday-Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. From November through March, the site is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. The site is closed most major holidays. **For more information: 704/721-4653 or www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/reed/reed.htm.**



**EASTERN CABARRUS HISTORICAL MUSEUM**  
The museum, built in 1855, is located in charming Mount Pleasant, in the center of the town's historic district. Originally built as a school in 1852, the larger building on the campus has been restored and provides a glimpse of Cabarrus County life from 1850 to the early 1900s. Exhibits encompass records, memorabilia and artifacts of the early schools and settlers in the area, Civil War artifacts, and seasonal exhibits, which include special Christmas festivities. The museum, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located on North Main Street in Mount Pleasant, NC. **For schedules and other information: 704/436-6612.**