

**Wake County Ambulance Plan, 1976**

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Digging through newspaper articles about the history of the communications center finds a bit of related history. This map appeared in the *Raleigh Times*, around April or May of 1976. It shows the locations of a proposed city-county ambulance service that Wake County Emergency Preparedness Director Russell Capps presented to county commissioners that spring.

The jointly funded proposal was previously adopted by the Raleigh City Council, and would supplant service provided under contract by Beacon Ambulance.

The plan would put four county-purchased ambulances at Raleigh fire stations 1, 3, 14, and 15. And the two city-operated rescue units would respond from fire stations 2 and 9. The locations would result in five minute or less response times for most city residents.

The ambulances would be operated 24 Raleigh firefighters, who would be trained and hired. The department was also in the process of training all personnel as EMTs. Capps also proposed tripling the current county subsidy to seven rural rescue squads.

The joint plan was never implemented, and the county formed its own ambulance service, the present Wake County EMS.



Can you imagine getting anywhere in the city in five minutes from just four stations?! It takes five minutes to get from station 1 to station 3 these days!

I remember when... if all of the EMS units were out of service, we had to dispatch one of the RFD rescue companies to the call.

**John W. Franks** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 07/17/10 - 12:50

I heard some years ago that Lee Gupton, who retired from Wake S.O., (early Garner Rescue chief) had a lot to do with the initial placement of ambulances. I was told he physically plotted out EMS calls on map and compiled lots of data at the time. He would be a good source to seek out the "how it all began" answers.

John, a good friend of mine was a passenger in a multiple PI wreck about 15 years ago, and he was transported on Rescue 7 because all EMS resources were busy treating those more seriously injured.

I would love to write a book about the most exciting times for EMS in our area. the 80's and 90's. This is when ALS care first came to the area, the first paramedic class, the creation and and dissolution of several rescue squads. Apcor radios "patch to Wake on Med7", trauma center designation, air-medical transport, OEMS formation/early leadership, there are many chapters yet to be told that are most exciting, not to mention the most memorable responses during those times (tornado in north Raleigh, etc). A separate, and very interesting chapter, could be about the many private ambulance services that have served Wake County. (Beacon, Gray, Suggs, Bright, Metro, AMR, Johnston, MidSouth, and many more). I would love to find some photos of the Gray Funeral Home Ambulances and the old Metro ambulances – they're a part of our history too (often a darker side). There have got to be people around here who have some photos of them.

**Jason Thompson** ([Email](#)) - 07/17/10 - 14:02

Well said Jason. I would love to see some pics also!

**Travis Loy** ([Email](#)) - 07/17/10 - 22:31

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