

**Abandoned Building Collapses in Downtown Raleigh**

12/05/14 598 W, 3 I - + 7 - 4

We're fortunate in Raleigh to have exceptionally few deteriorating buildings. But those that do exist are obvious challenges for fire crews. Companies must remain aware of their territory. And a complete size-up is imperative to ensure a correct conditions assessment.

The perils of such structures were demonstrated the previous morning when an old bus station on Blount Street spontaneously collapsed. Let's look at the incident... Dispatched at 11:26 p.m. as structural collapse with possible entrapment at Branch Street and Blount Street.

Fire units were Engine 2, Ladder 4, Battalion 2, as first-due companies plus technical rescue response of Rescue 1, Squad 14, Squad 15, USAR 801 (staffed by Engine 25), Ladder 3 (SOC company), and Battalion 5 (rescue chief). Plus Air 1 and Haz-Mat 2, which are automatically dispatched. Medical response was EMS 10, EMS 39, District 10, Medic 92, and Truck 1.

Police were originally dispatched to the incident, and requested fire and EMS due to prior incidents of occupancy by homeless individuals.

Address 1277 S. Blount Street. Property owner Carolina Coach Company. One-story brick warehouse building with 8,536 square-feet. Built around 1936 (says my research, versus 1939 say tax records). News reports say same had been empty for several years.

Ladder 4 was first arriving and took command. They found the street-facing side of the building (Division A) collapsed into the street. There was a combination of "pancake" and "lean to"? collapses within the front section of the structure (Division 1).

Battalion 2 and Rescue 1 soon arrived, with Battalion 2 assuming command, with Ladder 4 assigned as Operations. Battalion 5 assumed Operations upon his arrival.

Rescue 1 evaluated the structure and began searching void spaces in the collapse area. Ladder 4 searched the section of the building that was undamaged. Other units were staged on the street as they arrived.

After a briefing with all companies present, operations continued. USAR 801 was assigned RIT and also secured utilities. Squad 14 and 15 were rotated into Division 1 to assist with debris removal. Engine 2, Ladder 3, Air 1, and Haz-Mat 2 were released.

Once the primary search of the building was complete, Ladder 4 conducted a secondary search. No individuals were found in the structure. After the arrival of a city building inspector, the scene was secured and transferred to police and the inspector. Demolition will reportedly begin today.

Here's are images from [this WRAL story](#) and [this NBC17 story](#). See [this WTVD story](#).



*WRAL photo*



*NBC17 photo*

### **What's the History?**

Next question, what's the history of that building? Has it always been used by the bus company. Negative. The parcel was purchased by Carolina Coach Company in 1969. Before that time the structure served as everything from an auto showroom to a sausage plant.

Here are (incomplete) city directory listings for 1277 S. Blount Street that tell some of that story:

- 1934  
No listing for business or dwelling.

1936

Carolina Sausage Co Inc manufacturers

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc contract haulers

- 1938

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc contract haulers

- 1940

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc contract haulers

R & S Packing Co wholesale meats

- 1943

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc contract haulers

- 1950

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc contract haulers

- 1955

Carolina Delivery Service Co Inc

- 1963

Sanders Motor Co auto display [show room?]

Meanwhile, similar listings for the adjoining 1201 S. Blount parcel show the bus company on the site since circa 1940:

- 1938

Dwelling

- 1940

Carolina Coach Co (general office)

- 1943

Carolina Coach Co (general office)

Atlantic Greyhound Corp

- 1950

Carolina Coach Co (general office)

- 1955

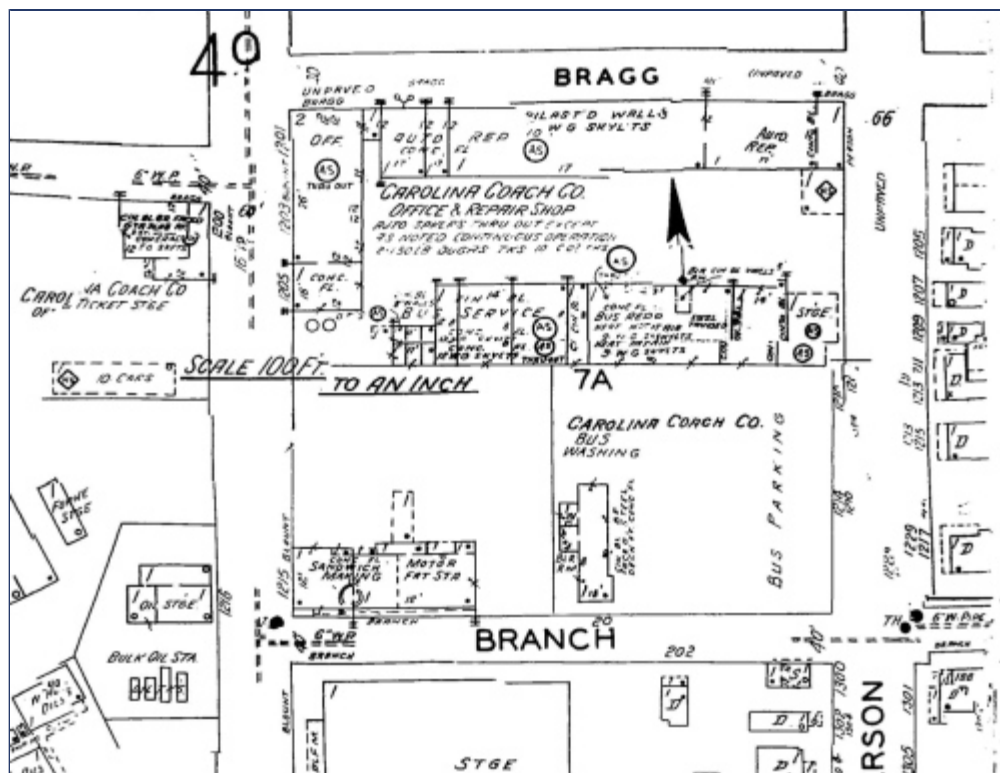
Carolina Coach Co (general office)

- 1963

Carolina Coach Co (general office)

Carolina Trailways

Here's a Sanborn Map image from 1950, showing the details of the entire block, and notably the bus facilities. The building at 1277 is addressed 1215 on the map and housed a "sandwich making" facility. [Click to enlarge:](#)



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**What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?**

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