Transportation

OPTIONS ABOUND IN THE SCENIC CITY

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 50% of the public charging station ports in and around Chattanooga offer free charges for electric cars.
Whether by rail, water, plane, car, or bicycle, Chattanooga has been a long-standing hub of transportation catering to residents and businesses that are always on the move.

With direct access to the Tennessee River, an expansive rail system, and three major interstates, Chattanooga is a natural home base for trucking, logistics, and delivery companies serving businesses across the United States.

Chattanooga welcomed its first rail line in 1850 with the arrival of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. In 1858, the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad arrived in Chattanooga, and the city transformed into a railroad hub. Since that time, rail transportation has continued to play a significant role in Chattanooga’s economy. Over a century later, two main players – CSX and Norfolk Southern – carry freight through Chattanooga daily and move it throughout the country.

Another deep-rooted method of transportation still used today is the Tennessee River. From the Tennessee River, barges can access the Missouri River, Ohio River, and Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. Approximately 28,000 barges travel the river each year carrying roughly 50 million tons of goods.

More modern modes of transportation have been made possible by the development of highways, and Chattanooga sits conveniently at the convergence of interstates 24, 59, and 75. With its prime location, several trucking companies have started in the Scenic City, among them Covenant Transport and U.S. Xpress. Of the 13 Chattanooga organizations named to Inc. 5000’s fastest-growing companies list in 2019, eight of them are in the logistics industry. Logistics companies such as UPS-owned Coyote Logistics and Kenco Group also have a notable presence, and FreightWaves is providing near real-time updates and information for the trucking and transportation freight markets. Amazon and FedEx operate fulfillment and distribution facilities in the area.

With over 3 million passengers annually and 20 routes, CARTA provides many options for residents and visitors to get around the city, including Care-a-van services for the disabled. With national notoriety for its innovation, CARTA has consulted with governments across the United States and even internationally on electric bus technology.

For those who prefer two wheels instead of four, Bike Chattanooga offers a city-wide network of bikes that can be rented from one of 42 stations located throughout the city. The availability of bicycles is accompanied by expansive bike lanes, making it a breeze to use this method both recreationally and as a way to get to and from work.

Keeping with eco-friendly initiatives is the Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport, which offers nonstop flights to 10 cities across the nation. The airport has become the first 100% solar-powered airport in the United States and is continuing to gain attention. As of September, passenger boardings were up nearly 11% compared to the same period from the previous year, and for good reason. The airport supports a strong economy and vibrant tourism business while offering visitors numerous amenities.

Forward-thinking transportation doesn’t stop there. Every day, residents are doing their part by purchasing electric cars, and there are over 100 public charging stations within a nine-mile radius of the city. An additional green initiative includes GreenTrips, an online carpool matching program by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency.
Interstates
Paving the way for growth in Chattanooga is the presence of interstate highways. With easy access to numerous cities in the South, Chattanooga’s interstates provide residents and visitors with a viable way to get in and out of town. Interstates 24, 75, and 59 allow travelers to get to destinations such as Nashville, Birmingham, Knoxville, and Atlanta in less than two hours. Other notable cities like Memphis, Charlotte, Louisville, and Cincinnati are roughly five hours away.

Trucking
With such a prime location, Chattanooga is a haven for the trucking industry. Several small carriers work in and around the city, and two of the top trucking companies in the United States – U.S. Xpress and Covenant Transport – call Chattanooga home. Both provide long-distance trucking, distributing raw materials and finished goods to other businesses in other markets.

Chattanooga Airport
The Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport (CHA) is growing in size and now offers direct flights to cities including Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, New York City, Orlando, Philadelphia, Tampa, and Washington D.C. Boasting the convenience of a smaller airport, CHA features flights from Allegiant, American Airlines, Delta, and United. Airport amenities include Wi-Fi and notary and restaurant services. CHA has also reduced its environmental footprint, becoming the United States’ first 100% solar-powered airport.

Custom Air Transportation
Fixed-base operator Wilson Air Center offers airline and freight handling services, including private air service for travel and private parties.

Megabus
With a permanent stop on East 23rd Street, Megabus offers intercity bus service to locations such as Atlanta, Louisville, Nashville, Chicago, and Indianapolis. Outfitted with power outlets, restrooms, and free Wi-Fi, Megabus offers affordable fares on its double-decker buses.

Bus Service
The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) is a great way to get around the city. With 20 fixed bus routes, a free electric shuttle system running downtown, and a Care-a-van for the disabled, CARTA has one of the largest fleets of electric buses in the country. Fares start at 75 cents per ride, and 24-hour, 7-day, and 31-day unlimited ride passes are also available. CARTA buses are equipped with free Wi-Fi.

Bike Chattanooga
Operated by the Chattanooga Department of Transportation, Bike Chattanooga maintains approximately 400 bikes and e-bikes throughout the city that can be found across 42 rental stations. Residents have the option to purchase an annual membership for just $50, and 3-day and 24-hour passes are also available.

Electric Vehicles
More than 100 electric vehicle charging stations are located within a nine-mile radius of Chattanooga. These stations reach areas such as East Brainerd, Lookout Mountain, Ooltewah, and Hixson, making it easy for residents to be environmentally friendly.

Groome Transportation
Groome Transportation provides affordable and reliable shuttle service to and from the Nashville International Airport and Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. With 24-hour reservations, a free parking and waiting area, group rates, and pet transportation, locals have plenty of convenience at their fingertips.

Railroads
CSX and Norfolk Southern connect Chattanooga to various other destinations across the country. Norfolk Southern’s Crescent Corridor is a $2.5 billion rail infrastructure system that spans 11 states, while CSX operates and maintains approximately 1,600 miles of track across Tennessee.

Logistics Providers
Nestled between I-24, I-75, and I-59, Chattanooga is a great location for logistics providers. Top providers in the area include Covenant Transport, U.S. Xpress, Kenco Group, and Coyote Logistics (a UPS company). Trident Transport and LYNC Logistics made Inc. magazine’s 2019 list of 500 fastest-growing firms in America, and LMS (Logistics Made Simple) and Steam Logistics made the top 5000 list. Dynamo holds the title of Chattanooga’s first logistics accelerator, while FreightWaves, a transportation and logistics data and content provider, is the largest provider of its kind in the global logistics industry.

Water Transportation
With access to numerous inland rivers and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, the Tennessee River is a mecca for transporting goods and services throughout the nation. Two public terminals in Chattanooga include Centre South Riverport/Industrial Park and the Port of Chattanooga. Companies such as Serodino, Inc. move over 2 million tons of cargo a year on the Tennessee River.
WE’RE UP THERE... WHEN IT COMES TO AIR TRAVEL

Chattanooga Airport gets high marks. We take the hassle out of air travel. Parking. Check-in. And boarding. Couldn’t be easier. Gates are much closer. And it’s pretty tough to beat 10 non-stops to the country’s major cities. Next time you’re flying, head for Chattanooga Airport. We’ll have you up there in no time.

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