

## Orange County Transit Plan: Transit Summit Summary

**Date:** October 1, 2020

**Time:** 5-8 PM (Eastern)

### **Attendees**

#### Orange County Hosts

Craig Benedict (Orange County)

Tom Altieri

Thomas Ten Eyck

#### Consulting Team

Caroline Dwyer (Renaissance Planning)

Amanda Chornoby (Renaissance Planning)

Dan Hardy (Renaissance Planning)

Alex Bell (Renaissance Planning)

Scudder Wagg (Jarrett Walker + Associates)

Irma McClaurin (Irma McClaurin Solutions)

Jackie Metivier (Bilingual Communications)

Yasmin Wurts (Bilingual Communications)

#### Participants

Sue Hunter

Dave Engstrom

Jean Hamilton

Robert David

Nick Pittman

Noelle Claybrook

Denisé Dews

Joan Guilkey

Neal Paschal

Allyson Coltrane

Nishith Trivedi

Heidi Perry

Matt Day

Wannetta Mallette

Jennifer Green

Brandi Beeker

Shelley Curran

Olivia Torano

Jay Heikes

Roxane Howerton



Meg Scully  
Ellen Beckmann  
Doug Moore  
Alison Smith  
Betty White  
David Jerrido  
John Morris  
Tina Moon  
Sally Greene  
Charles Humble  
Mark Bell  
Mark Marcoplos  
Robert Burnett  
Julie McClintock  
Josh Mayo  
TeLeishia Holloway  
Theo Letman  
Fred Lampe  
Molly De Marco  
Caitlin Rose  
Penny Rich  
Chassem Anderson  
Trish McGuire  
Janice Tyler  
Praveen Sridharan  
Geoff Green  
Rachel Gaylord-Miles  
Michael Parker  
Jeffrey Sullivan  
John Hodges-Copple  
Kathy Kaufman  
Zachary Hallock  
Aaron Cain  
Travis Myren  
Randee Haven-O'Donnell  
Stelfanie Williams  
Candace Kester  
Dave Laudicina

## **Presentation**

The Transit Summit began with a welcome and introduction from Craig Benedict, AICP - Orange County Planning and Inspections Director.

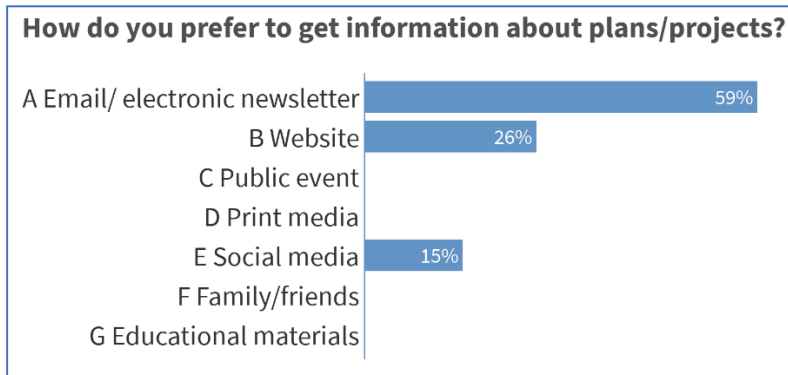


Caroline Dwyer, AICP of Renaissance Planning (lead planning consultant for the Orange County Transit Plan) then introduced the consulting team and their roles in the planning process.

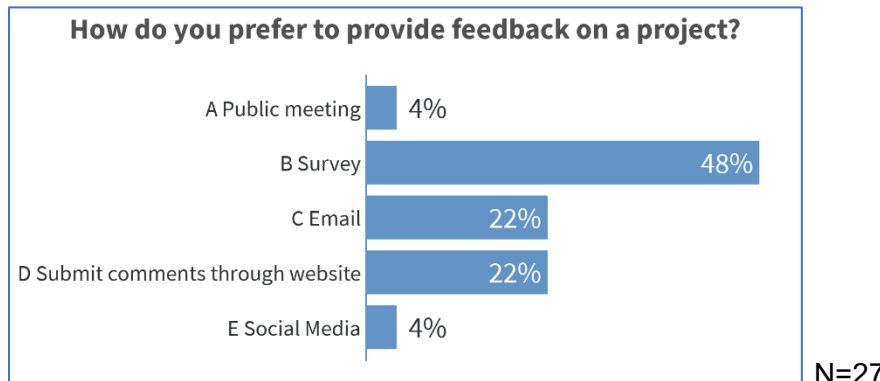
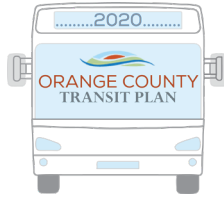
Participation and logistical information was then reviewed including: “ground rules” for virtual participation, accessing the Spanish language audio channel, accessing and using the Poll Everywhere platform for live polling and participation, using the Zoom chat function, and using the Zoom Q&A feature. An “ice breaker” poll was conducted to familiarize participants with the platform and troubleshoot potential access issues. The ice breaker poll asked participants to identify what they are looking forward to the most when the quarantines are lifted. Answers included:

A party with friends and family	Eating out with friends.	more travel	Vacation
sending my kids to school	brunch!	Ok it is working	Eating dinner out with my friends.
Going to the movie!	Doing things with my friends	Festivals	Eating inside with friends
Not working from home	Travel	Vacation!	Riding a bus
Dating	Going out for beers with friends!	Going out to eat	Anything new!
Traveling to distant locations	Being with other people	Not wearing a mask	Getting out of house
Eating inside a restaurant	riding my bike TO something	Travel	Seeing friends and family
Going to UNC basketball games	Leaving my house	Riding the bus	

Caroline Dwyer then presented a summary of project information discussing why the transit plan is being updated, the schedule and process for updating the transit plan, plans and goals for project outreach and engagement, and the purpose of the transit summit. Participants were asked two poll questions:



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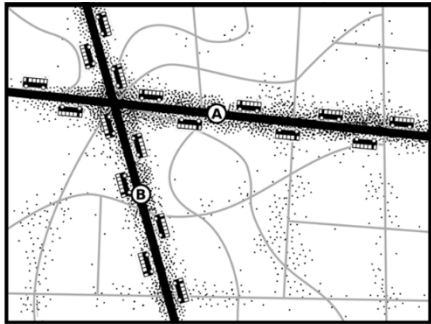
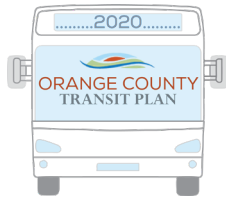


The next portion of the presentation introduced “Transit Planning 101.” Scudder Wagg began this segment began by challenging participants to think about the “transit product.” It also introduced the ingredients needed to support abundant transit access (“*How much of the city, in all its richness, is available to me?*”) These ingredients include:

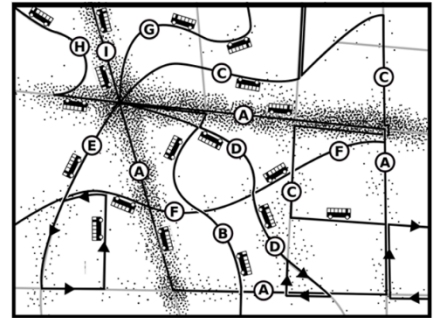
- High all-day frequency...
- Forming a connected network...
- With reasonable speed and reliability ...
- With sufficient capacity ...
- Following patterns of ...
  - Density
  - Walkability
  - Linearity
  - Proximity.

Each of these elements was then discussed and described further.

The next concept explored was the question of transit frequency versus coverage (“*Access for many or something for all?*”) The differences between a ridership goal (“frequent network”) and a coverage goal (“some service for everyone”) were explored. The presentation also introduced a “catch 22” in transit planning – ridership and coverage are both important, but these goals lead in opposite directions (i.e. you cannot have both in a world of limited resources). The importance of identifying the right place on the ridership-coverage spectrum for Orange County transit services was discussed.



Ridership Goal

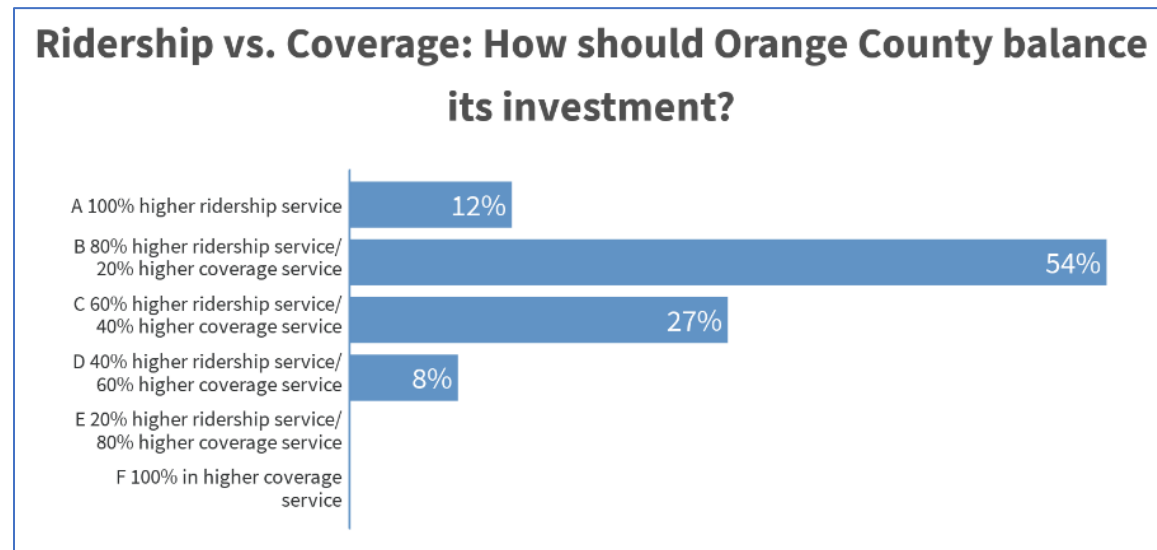


Coverage Goal



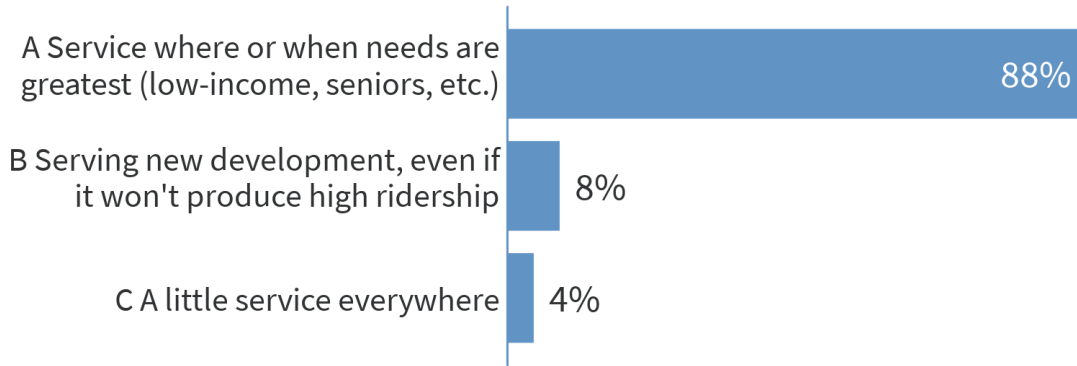
The goals of Orange County’s 2012 and 2017 transit plans were re-visited and examined from the perspective of ridership and coverage goals. It was determined that some of the previous plans’ goals are in conflict. For example, “Improving overall mobility,” “Encouraging transit-supportive land use,” and “Providing positive impacts on air quality” are ridership-oriented goals. “Improving transportation options” and “Providing geographic equity” are coverage-oriented goals. The goal of “Supporting improved capital facilities” is neither ridership- nor coverage-oriented. Part of the transit plan update process will involve identifying a set of goals that are not in conflict with each other.

The presentation then provided a high-level overview of the orientation of the existing transit service network in Orange County. Participants were then asked to answer several poll questions:





## Coverage Priorities: When we deploy coverage service, is the priority...

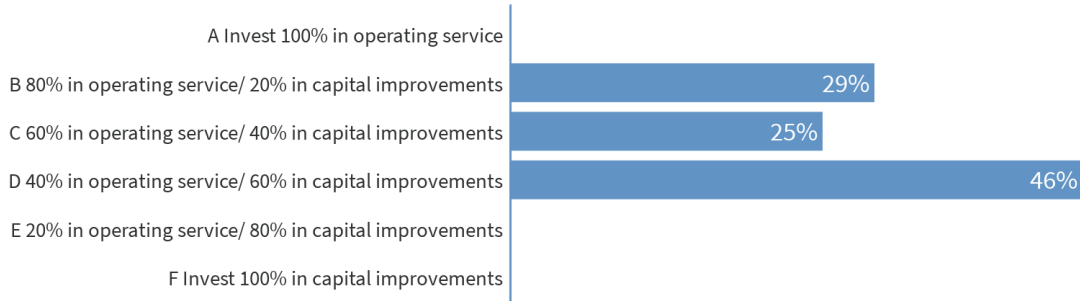


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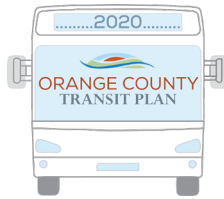
The next part of the presentation focused on budgeting, funding, and the differences between capital costs and operating costs. Orange County's current budget split between capital and operating costs is 69% and 31%, respectively. The breakout of capital funds was presented and discussed (most capital funding is currently supporting the N-S BRT project and vehicles). Operating funds are supporting the expansion of Chapel Hill Transit services (29%), the expansion of GoTriangle services (21%), administration (20%), expansion of Orange County Public Transportation services (14%), Chapel Hill Transit ICES (13%), and Orange County Public Transportation ICES (2%). The relative share of funding from Orange County supporting each transit service were also explored.

Participants were asked a poll question about investment in capital and operating costs:

## Operating vs. capital: How should Orange County balance investments in capital and operating?



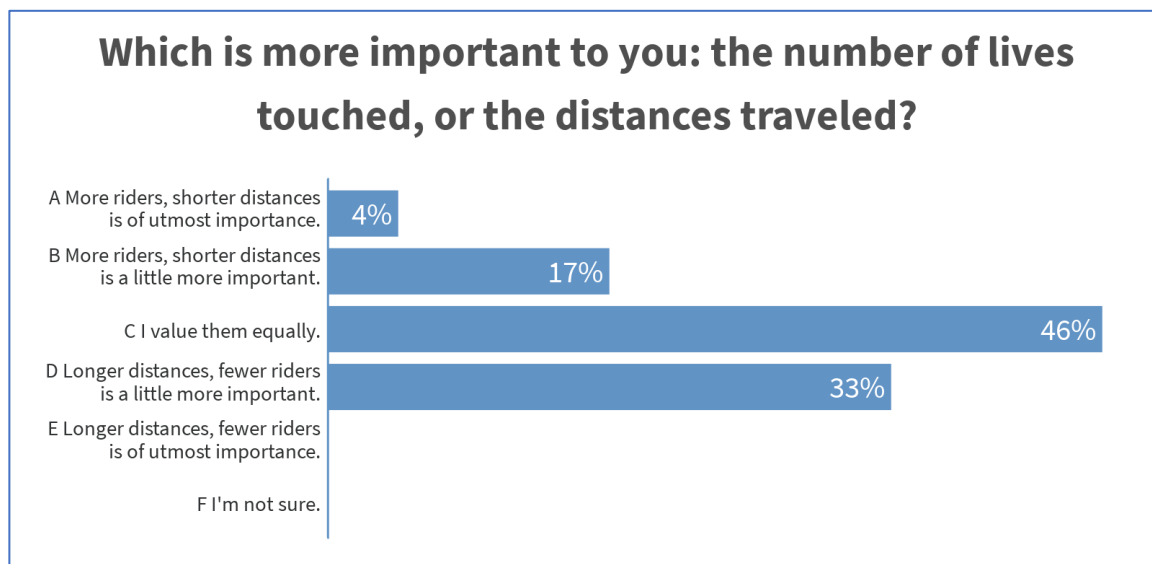
N=24



Metrics of service performance were introduced and discussed including productivity and cost-per-rider for each of the three transit service providers. Chapel Hill Transit has the highest productivity and the lowest cost per rider (40 boardings per hour/\$3 per boarding). GoTriangle service varies in both metrics, ranging from 16-23 boardings per hour and \$5-7 in cost per boarding. Orange County Public Transportation service is the least productive (11-13 boardings per hour) and the most expensive (\$8.57 to \$10.18 cost per rider). The higher costs of peak service were also discussed.

Finally, a critical trade-off in transit planning was discussed – is it more important to travel longer distances or is it more important to service more riders? Two hypothetical transit routes and their implications were presented for consideration and participants were asked to respond to a final poll question:

Route	What does it do?	How should we measure it?	Results:	
A	4 people, 3 miles each	Number of people (boardings)	4 boardings	12 passenger miles
B	2 people, 10 miles each	Number of miles (people x miles)	2 boardings	20 passenger miles



N= 24

Following the information portion of the presentation, a question and answer session was conducted. Please see the end of this summary for the session chat log and Q&A log.

After all questions were addressed, the final segment of the transit summit asked for participants' help to spread the word about the project and the public survey that will remain open until 10/16/2020 at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OCTransit>. The project team then discussed next steps (summarize feedback and share; use findings from Transit Summit to



develop conceptual transit scenarios; Transit Summit 2 (Winter 2021). Participants were thanked for attending and directed to the project website for more information [www.octransit2020.com](http://www.octransit2020.com).

## Meeting Chat Log

From Renaissance Planning: If anyone has any technical issues during the meeting please let me know in the chat or email [achornoby@ciesthatwork.com](mailto:achornoby@ciesthatwork.com)

Julie McClintock to All panelists: Carolyn your volume is not consistent.

Irma McClaurin to All panelists: Everyone should mute.

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: Please go over the directions again

Meg Scully to All panelists: Hi All. I arrived three minutes late. Are we able to see who is attending this event? Thanks.

From Renaissance Planning: Yes, if you click on the participants the full list of attendees will appear.

From Meg Scully to All panelists: The participants icon is not on our screens.

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: Volume is much better

From Josh Mayo to All panelists: Not great for feedback because of the time commitment

From Heidi Perry to All panelists: I do not see a button for participants

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: I'd like to know what information this survey is intending to collect. It does not seem to measure anything meaningful about transit needs.

From Molly De Marco (she/her) to All panelists: Actually, attendees don't get the Participants option in Zoom, just y'all, I suspect.

From Robert David to All panelists: thank you. I must leave

From Caroline Dwyer to All panelists: Thanks for the audio feedback :)

From Theo Letman: people

From Meg Scully to All panelists: Transportation

From Caroline Dwyer: Please feel free to use the chat box to introduce yourself and let others know you're here! We will provide a list of registrants with the follow up summary.

From Meg Scully to All panelists: Meg Scully, Planning Manager, GoTriangle

From Caroline Dwyer to Julie McClintock and all panelists : Hi Julie - this first survey is intended to determine how folks are currently using transit, where there are opportunities for transit enhancements, and to better to understand the values of transit riders in terms of more frequent service or more service coverage.

From Caroline Dwyer to Meg Scully and all panelists: Meg - I think your message only went to panelists. Try resending to "All Panelists and Attendees." Thanks!

From Meg Scully: Meg Scully, Planning Manager, GoTriangle

From Brandi Beeker: I'm Brandi Beeker, TDM Coordinator, Orange County

From Candace Kester to All panelists: Candace Kester, Admin Assistant for the Durham Tech Orange County Campus

From Alison Smith: Alison Smith, Transportation Specialist, Orange County Department on Aging

From Julie McClintock: Hi Meg I'd love to talk to you more offline. I do not see how the questions I answers measures where people want to go.

From Julie McClintock: Hi Meg my email is

From Allyson Coltrane: Allyson Coltrane, Transportation Services Manager, Orange County Public Transportation

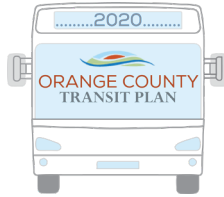
From Julie McClintock: [mclintock.julie@gmail.com](mailto:mclintock.julie@gmail.com)

From wannetta mallette to All panelists: Wannetta Mallette, Burlington - Graham MPO

From Heidi Perry: Heidi Perov Perry, Orange County OUTBoard

From Janice Tyler to All panelists: Janice Tyler, Director, Orange County Department on Aging





From Molly De Marco (she/her): Molly De Marco (she/her), transit rider in Orange County and the Triangle and NEXT Chapel Hill-Carrboro. I rode the bus today!

From Chassem Anderson to All panelists: Cha'ssem Anderson, Associate Director, UNC Transportation and Parking

From Charles Humble: Chas Humble, 34-year resident of Chapel Hill, hope to increase transpo for folks most in need of it across the county.

From Teleishia Holloway: TeLeishia Holloway, Transportation Administrator, Orange County Public Transportation

From Rachel Gaylord-Miles to All panelists: Rachel Gaylord-Miles, Carrboro Planning Board

From Geoff Green to All panelists: Geoff Green, live in work in Chapel Hill and frequent bus and bike rider (during normal times)

From Julie McClintock: Julie McClintock, CHALT, wants to see a solid plan that meets Orange County's needs.

From Caitlin Rose to All panelists: Caitlin Rose, Planner at Triangle J COG and Coordinator of Triangle Clean Cities Coalition

From Jennifer Green: Jenny Green, Transit Service Planner, GoTriangle

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: How many people are attending?

From Heidi Perry: I also want to see more state and federal funding, and dedicated lanes that make riding transit faster than driving a car :)

From Renaissance Planning: Not including panelists, we have 60 attendees online right now.

From Aaron Cain to All panelists: Aaron Cain, Durham-Chapel Hill=Carrboro MPO

From Charles Humble: Excellent! Alas, I have a conflict in 10 minutes. Thanks for doing this.

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: How can we provide a written comment is we need to leave this meeting early.

From Renaissance Planning: Feel free to send a private chat message to me or Caroline Dwyer and we will note your comment.

From Caroline Dwyer: Hi Julie - you can submit comments via our project website at [www.octransit2020.com](http://www.octransit2020.com) or by email to [Craig Benedict cbenedict@orangecountync.gov](mailto:Craig.Benedict@orangecountync.gov)

From Renaissance Planning: Or send to my email: [achornoby@ciesthatwork.com](mailto:achornoby@ciesthatwork.com)

From Tina Moon to All panelists: Will you make a copy of the presentation available afterward?

From Caroline Dwyer: Hi Tina - yes! We will post the materials, the recording, and a feedback summary on the project website!

From Caroline Dwyer: We will also send a link (with materials, etc.) via email to all who registered for the summit.

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: Question for Consultant: Don't people have a transit need regardless of where they live - in a dense area or not.

From Caroline Dwyer to Julie McClintock and all panelists: Hi Julie - absolutely. Our job is to help find the right balance for Orange County.

From Molly De Marco (she/her) to All panelists: Y'all perhaps you can collect participant demographics and transit-riding behaviors the next time folks have to register for one of these sessions.

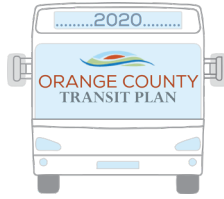
From Fred Lampe to All panelists: That is not correct. Transit can be inexpensive to rural locations.

From D Laudicina to All panelists: many people also live in Orange County but work at RTP, Durham, Raleigh

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: This is the wrong question. Coverage should be based on need, not density.

From Theo Letman: I think we are leaving out other transportation needs like demand response, medicaid, ada, senior transportation. Fixed route has more frequency and ridership, but demand response services are necessary as well.

From Janice Tyler to All panelists: Yes, thank you Theo!



From Meg Scully: How many participants responded to the question regarding ridership vs. coverage?

From D Laudicina to All panelists: we all live in the Triangle and commute all over the Triangle. we only now have 40 and 85 which means we are mostly driving. how do we get beyond Chapel hill efficiently?

From Caroline Dwyer: 25 responses, Meg

From Julie McClintock to All panelists: On demand services make senses for rural parts of Orange County even if not efficient.

From Meg Scully: Thank you.

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Possibly, the split of investment should also include a demand response component whether as an independent service or as a coverage aspect or assist

From Caroline Dwyer to Meg Scully and all panelists: 26 :)

From Meg Scully: GoTriangle provides service in Orange County as well. Was their data included in these calculations?

From John Hodges-Copple: was the 69% capital, 31% operating the total dollars spent, or just the Orange County transit tax revenues that were spent?

From John Hodges-Copple: is there a benchmark for other similar places for % going to administration?

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Capital also includes construction of roads for transit as in an extra lane for BRT or in the old case of LRT the new rail and electric line was capital

From Jennifer Green: What is the split now?

From John Hodges-Copple : Seems to me I would answer this differently if talking about any specific year, vs. on a sustained, multi-year basis -- I assume we are being asked about over a 20-year period, on average.

From Julie McClintock: Right now, all of OC transit tax revenues go to GoTriangle. Why can't OC keep the tax money and decide what to do with it?

From Michael Parker to All panelists: Ultimately, the county, DCHCMPO, and GoTriangle have to agree on how the funds are spent.

From Julie McClintock: Now that we don't have a cross county project so do, we really need GoTriangle to be the cash register. We could save some \$ for transit.

From Michael Parker to All panelists: No one party can say yes, but any one party can say no.

From John Hodges-Copple: Might be helpful to think of GoTriangle as the bank. the bank does not get to decide how you spend the money in your account; they just hold it and then direct deposits based on what the "owner" of the account directs.

From Julie McClintock: And they charge you overhead!

From Olivia Torano to All panelists: Will any of the investments that were made into the light rail contribute to this transit plan?

From Penny Rich: Thanks for coming y'all. Must run to another meeting.

From John Hodges-Copple: yes, they charge an administrative fee, as any other bank would. legitimate to ask if the fee level is appropriate, but that is also decided by the "owners"

From Julie McClintock: Wake County does it differently. They keep the tax money, decide how to spend it, and work with GoTriangle when appropriate.

From wannetta mallette to All panelists: Do total revenues include Section 5307 funding OCPT receives from BGMPO?

From John Hodges-Copple: We can talk off-line, Julie, but GoTriangle is also the bank for Wake County. the administration is handled slightly differently, but not significantly so.

From Julie McClintock: Sure, I'd like to know the differences.

From Meg Scully: Regional services may best be compared to regional services as distances are so great.

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Wannetta,

From Heidi Perry: 3 miles is easily walked or biked, 10 miles is not

From Julie McClintock: I'm interested in the administration of funds.



From Julie McClintock: Consultant: What can you say about the methodology you will use to ascertain transit needs?

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: Wrong question. You need to know where people need to go before you can answer this.

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Wannetta, the funding in the financial plan assumes 75% (GT) or 90% (CHT, OPT) direct funding from transit tax and the remainder from 5307, 5311 or fare box

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: That is a fundamental wrong approach.

From Jennifer Green to All panelists: How is travel from outside of the county to employment in the county being considered as you are evaluating the travel demand?

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: You need to know where the people that need transit need to go. This is not related to demographics.

From Praveen Sridharan to All panelists: GoTriangle was appointed as the administrator for the Special Transit tax on behalf of all three counties by the North Carolina Statute. The GoTriangle board comprises of elected official representatives from all three counties (Orange, Durham, and Wake) and municipalities in the Triangle including (Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, Wake Forest) and NCDOT.

From Josh Mayo to All panelists: Would highlight age as an important factor in transit propensity in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. Reaching university students is an important function of transit that cannot be forgotten

From Heidi Perry: Thank you for this presentation. I need to run so I will check the recording for the rest of this. If anyone is interested BikeWalk NC will be holding an Inclusive Transportation Summit in November that will allow folks to hear from those most dependent on transit. You can learn more about it at <https://www.bikewalknc.org/nc-bikewalk-summit/>

From Geoff Green to All panelists : Many of UNC's services that used to be located in the main hospital are being moved to satellite sites, some of which are transit-served but none of which are as convenient for transit dependent people as the main hospital, where almost all the Chapel Hill routes go

From Craig Benedict to All panelists : I think one of the transit need elements could be related to jobs vs. services or another element, as one attendee mentioned, for OC residents working in OC or other county or for external county residents working in OC

From Geoff Green to All panelists: For example, the new UNC Eastowne medical facility is located somewhere that doesn't have great transit service (although it's close to transit service).

From Josh Mayo to All panelists: For the capital vs operating split, would focus capital on routes that need the visibility. A trip on MLK to downtown is visible with or without capital investments, but Chapel Hill-Durham is seen as not doable and needs the support of infrastructure

From Sally Greene to All panelists: Thank you for making that connection so clearly. In investing public dollars in facilities of any kind, including housing, it is not a good use of those funds unless they are transit-accessible.

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: I think we could cross match the potential services as how many boxes are checked, eg. 15-501 high traffic and new medical facility and regional connectivity

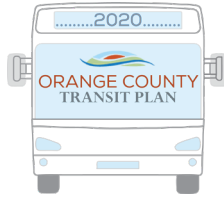
From Jennifer Green to All panelists: Will the plan apply to the unallocated funds only or will it affect the routes that are already funded by the plan? Thank you! This has been an interesting discussion. I look forward to seeing the reports.

From Julie McClintock: To what extent are you talking to the "Reimagining 15-501" MPO/DOT effort or is this a parallel?

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: How do you plan to find out where the 10,000 people in OC that need transit need to go to and when?

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: You are getting input from 30 people, not 10,000

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Something not mentioned directly is the possibility of augmenting and facilitating van pools to assist in coverage pickup to focused job areas.



From Julie McClintock: To what extent are you talking to the “Reimagining 15-501” MPO/DOT people or is this a parallel effort?

From Julie McClintock: This is an exploration process and not a plan yet so I’d be interested to know how you will incorporate it.

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: You can reach all the 10,000 people that need transit via surveys handed to their kids at school — when schools return.

From Fred Lampe to All panelists: How many surveys responses have been received thus far?

From Craig Benedict to All panelists: Part of the transit consultant work is specifically to develop a regional connectivities element and work with Durham and other triangle counties and the MPO or STIP to take into consideration cross-county road studies and projects

From Josh Mayo: Will the survey’s demographics be released? Recent survey results from the MPO have done so, and brought light to who is being heard

From Caroline Dwyer: RE: number of surveys. We have 157 responses and I have another 20+ from TeLeishia at OCPT that I need to enter our responses.

From Caroline Dwyer: We are collecting demographic info and will report that along with the survey findings.

From Irma McClaurin : There are organizations that are distributing groceries and other needed items and we might think about seeing if we could add a postcard with info about where people can visit online to do the survey or learn about this planning process.

From Caroline Dwyer: That’s a great idea, Dr. Irma. I will follow up on that!

From Sally Greene to All panelists: Telecommuting is another wrinkle, but some might end up telecommuting because they don’t have access to transit. So I’m unsure how we can estimate how many folks are willing telecommuters.

From Irma McClaurin: Groceries stores are still very operational, so conducting surveys or distributing info about this plan at these sites might be useful. Maybe a comment card and a box for people to drop their thoughts in.

From Irma McClaurin: A box that looks like a bus--Lol

From Irma McClaurin: How can people volunteer to be an ambassador?

From Molly De Marco (she/her) to All panelists: How can we get a survey version that we can print?

From Meg Scully: Thank you. This was a well done event.

From Molly De Marco (she/her) to All panelists: Super! Thank you!

From Irma McClaurin: And address where to return it

From Alison Smith to All panelists: Thank you for this opportunity to be a part of the planning process!

From Brandi Beeker: Thank you for this very interesting presentation. Have a good night, everyone.

From Tina Moon to All panelists: Thanks Craig and Caroline.

From Trish McGuire to All panelists: Thanks to all.

### Questions Addressed During Live Q&A

- To answer this question, it be helpful to understand how many people in orange county are traveling short vs. long distances for work or any other reason.
- With the new norm for Covid how does social distancing on buses shape planning in the future?
  - More on demand or subscription-based service?
- Is the 70/30 estimate based on the service changes from Chapel Hill Transit’s short range service plan?



- Supply the service to those who needs transit the most. Individuals that doesn't have any options for basic living.
- I had a question about Section 5307 funds received from OCPT. Are they included in total revenue?
- In addition to focusing on "jobs" what about focusing on "health care organizations". Both urban and rural residents need access to medical care and find it very challenging because of the Durham/Orange county line
- In addition to county line challenges ... city limits are a challenge as well. UNC designated their Hillsborough location for Geriatrics - which created an access issues for seniors that live in Chapel Hill city limits.
- How much money was lost due to the failure of GoTriangle to deliver the the light rail? It makes you not wanting to trust them with handling money.
- Would it be cost effective to create more "shuttle" options for heavy use on-demand routes.
- The shuttles could travel between inter-county / inter-city limit locations. Not necessary door to door, but popular route in one location to another popular locatoin in another.
- 2 questions: What will be done to make areas with public transport more walkable? What could be done to increase commuter travel? On UNC's campus (for example) parking is quite inaccessible, what limits use of public transport by commuters?