

ORANGE COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN UPDATE

Transit Service Provider Feedback

This document aggregates and synthesizes questions and feedback from transit service providers and partners that we received following the Transit Service Providers meeting on 6/3/21 when two transit plan conceptual scenarios were reviewed and discussed.

KEY FEEDBACK (CAPITAL INVESTMENT):

- Include **annualized costs of vehicle purchases** to support delivery of additional services
- Identify funds available (and when) for **purchase of zero-emission vehicles** and/or only allow for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles with Transit Plan money
- Identify **capital for targeted transit infrastructure improvements** on 15-501 supporting service frequency, reliability, and access (signal priority, queue jumps, stop improvements, etc.) as a mid-term investment as we look to rapid transit in the future
- Identify a **specific amount of funding each year or for set time periods for bus stop improvements**, focusing on stops that support LMI areas, community facilities, downtowns, job centers, etc.
- Incorporate **“regional, scalable elements” order to leverage and build on regional bus rapid transit (BRT)**:
 - Interstate 40, in eastern Orange and Durham counties, via a new Transit Priority Shoulder (TPS) treatment near the median
 - NC 54 and US 15-501, between Chapel Hill and Durham, via BRT, FAST, TPS on the inside shoulder, and/or Bus On Shoulder System (BOSS) on the outside shoulder
 - US 15-501, between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro, via BRT, FAST, and/or BOSS treatments
- **Regional Transit Center**: \$34 million total cost; 50% from federal funds; the 50% non-federal share allocated 70% Wake, 20% Durham, 10% Orange
- **CRT “extension”** from West Durham to new Hillsborough train station (between 2041-50), based on having NEW local/regional revenues, not coming off the existing ½ cent sales tax

KEY FEEDBACK (OPERATIONAL):

- **Broad support for service improvements to N-S route, D route, and the 400/405 routes**:
 - The 400/405 improvements are a stated GoTriangle priority (but GoTriangle notes that with the current route alignments, it is not possible to offset Routes 400 and 405 for 15-minute, would like plan to include a recommendation for alignments satisfying this constraint)
- **There are several recommendations for projects not included in either scenario including**:
 - Operational improvements to the HS route
 - Increase frequency (at least 30 minute headways) on the J route to complement service enhancements on the N-S route and to improve transfer timing with other CHT routes and with GoTriangle Routes 400 and 800
 - Realignments to the Orange Alamance Connector to complement the adjusted ODX
- **Reconsider 800 Route enhancements**:

- GoTriangle recommends reconsidering enhancements to the 800 route because current ridership levels do not support increased midday frequency and it is not clear how it would be matched in Durham (not included in transit plan update)
 - A recommendation is to shift hours from the proposed 800 service expansion to accommodate 30-min evening, Saturday, and Sunday service on the 400/405
- **Reconsider how ride-share/MOD/vanpool services are reflected in the plan:**
 - Identify funding to make regional demand response service in Orange County (similar to what is currently in place in Durham and Wake); would allow GoTriangle to provide improved service in Chapel Hill and Carrboro
 - Move a small amount of capital in scenario A to fund MOD as part of scenario A
 - Instead of using money to create new vanpools, encourage partnership with PART and GoTriangle to ensure vanpools are available in northern Orange County
 - Cost savings from proposed ODX re-alignment could possibly fund route improvements (30-minute peak service or midday service)

KEY FEEDBACK ASPIRATIONAL):

- Recognize *future* potential for:
 - Improved service to Chatham County (Chatham Park)
 - Improved service between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill (on 86)
 - Dedicate funding to evaluating rapid transit options in the NC-54 corridor (through White Cross) over the next 10-20 years

OTHER COMMENTS:

- Need to consider lack of state funding for next 2-3 years (DCHC)
- UNC's priorities are reflected in the Chapel Hill Transit's short range transit plan (UNC)
- Continued commitment to the N-S BRT is critical (UNC; CHT)
- The Durham Transit Plan Option B has much more operating service in 15-501 than OCTP A or B and the Durham Transit Plan does not have increases in 800 or ODX. This must be consistent between the two plans once preferred alternatives are being presented so that GoTriangle can implement the projects (GT)
- Encourage a focus on equity as a primary metric of success (RTA)
- Recommend placing the majority of the focus on Orange County needs – but we also urge a significant regional connectivity and opportunity emphasis; we call this a 2/3 “me” (Orange), 1/3 “we” (regional) framework (RTA)
- Support the implementation of Freeway And Street-based Transit (FAST) elements and treatments, including “transit advantage” infrastructure along streets and roadways, largely or exclusively funded during and by roadway improvement projects to maximize our transit and multimodal investment dollars (RTA)
- As the MPOs adopt their 2050 MTP, I want to make sure the MPO staff have the latest detail for use of Orange County transit tax revenues. Since the MTP must be fiscally constrained, and any investments that are shared between Orange and other Counties have project shares assigned, I want to make sure we are not over-spending Orange revenues (TJCOG)

REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

| Questions | |
|---|---------------------|
| Why is Route ODX included for expansion ahead of Route 420? | GoTriangle |
| Do the Cedar Grove Peak Connector or White Cross Commuter Service require a Park-and-Ride? If so, this needs to be noted in the prose even if a cost is not available yet. | GoTriangle |
| Vanpool service is already available through GoTriangle for any origin or destination in Orange County. Can you clarify how the vanpool service would be expanded? Is this an additional subsidy for vanpools under GoTriangle's program, or an alternative model for vanpool service entirely? | GoTriangle |
| Should the Orange-Alamance Connector (OAC) should have peak-hour service to replace service removed from Route ODX? | GoTriangle |
| What are the span and frequency recommendation for the White Cross Commuter Service in Scenario B | GoTriangle |
| Requested Clarifications/ Revisions | |
| Confirm where paratransit services will be expanded to match fixed route services | Chapel Hill Transit |
| Confirm that services funded in years prior to the new plan are funded through the duration of the plan (understanding that some may choose to alter or adjust these services based on performance and/or community needs) | Chapel Hill Transit |
| Confirm that buses previously funded with transit plan funds are planned to be replaced every 12-14 years with transit plan funds in the future | Chapel Hill Transit |
| Ensure that GoTriangle Route CRX investments are assumed to be split equally with Wake County (re: scenario B) | GoTriangle |
| Adjust cost of D route extension to factor in an assumed cost share with the Durham Transit Plan | GoTriangle |