



GoTriangle
Planning & Legislative Committee
June 23, 2021 2:00 pm
Eastern Time

Based on NC Safer At Home executive orders in response to COVID-19, the GoTriangle Planning & Legislative Committee will meet remotely on Wednesday, June 23, 2021.

*Click here to: Join Webex Meeting
Meeting Number / Access code: 171 485 3127 #
Password: 1234
Or dial: +1 415-655-0003*

I. Call to Order and Adoption of Agenda

(1 minute Will Allen III)

ACTION REQUESTED: Adopt agenda.

II. Draft Minutes - May 26, 2021

(1 minute Michelle Dawson)

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve minutes.

III. TJCOG Regional Study

(30 minutes Charles Lattuca, Lee Worsley)

*John Hodges-Copple, Metropolitan Planning Director, Triangle J
Council of Governments*

IV. Commuter Rail Rolling Stock and Station Accessibility

(40 minutes Katharine Eggleston)

Tim Potens, Transportation Systems Specialist, STV

V. Adjournment

(Will Allen III)

GoTriangle Board of Trustees
Planning & Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2021
Held Remotely via Webex

Committee Members Present:

Will Allen III, Chair
Brenda Howerton

Sig Hutchinson

Committee Members Absent:

Michael Fox

Renée Price (excused)

Other Board Members Present:

Michael Parker

Committee Chair Will Allen III called the meeting to order at 1:44 p.m.

I. Adoption of Agenda

Action: On motion by Hutchinson and second by Howerton the agenda was adopted.

II. Approval of Minutes

Action: On motion by Howerton and second by Hutchinson the minutes of the March 24, 2021, meeting were approved.

Action: Upon vote by roll call, the two prior motions were carried unanimously.

III. Transit Plan Updates

Meg Scully offered background on the on-going efforts to update the Durham and Orange County Transit Plans. She introduced those leading the update efforts for the two counties: Caroline Dwyer, consultant for Orange County, and Tom Altieri of Orange County planning staff and Ellen Beckmann, Durham County Transportation Manager and Aaron Cain, DHCH MPO Planning Manager.

A. Orange Transit Plan Update

Carolyn Dwyer’s presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. She stated the update process is in the second phase to present two conceptual scenarios to leadership boards and committees. She said transit service providers also will have opportunity to provide feedback before conducting public outreach. All feedback received will be used to create one balanced scenario by October.

Sig Hutchinson asked for more detail on the scenarios. Dwyer responded that the scenarios have not been released, but shared that one scenario is

more focused on routes with higher ridership and in higher ridership transit corridors and the other provides wider geographic coverage to increase access to transit. She added that there is significant overlap within the two scenarios; both focus on providing inter-county connections between Durham and Orange and improving service frequency along those commuter routes.

B. Durham Transit Plan Update

The Durham County Transit Plan update presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Ellen Beckmann stated this is the largest revision of the transit plan since its adoption in 2011, initiated by the cancelation of the D-O LRT project. The update will consider local transit needs along with regional connections to replace the purpose of the D-O LRT project for service to Orange County and ways to connect to Wake County including the commuter rail project. Also included in the update is a governance study that will help develop a new ILA, create new and/or updated polices that reflect the new projects in the plan, facilitate better regional coordination with Orange and Wake counties and provide a stronger oversight and accountability structure.

Beckmann said the update process is about halfway complete, with the options developed using feedback received during public outreach. The options will be released for public engagement in June, with a final plan adopted late this year.

She reviewed the feedback receiving during the first outreach phase:

- Greater frequency, more 15-minute service
- Improved bus stops
- Increased sidewalk access
- Crosstown service
- More transit access to jobs
- Commuter rail

Beckmann noted that there were sight differences in responses from the engagement ambassador sessions and the online survey:

- Investments in paratransit service was most important
- Street maintenance/road quality
- Wheelchair and stroller access at bus stops and on buses
- Service running later at night, all-day and weekends

Aaron Cain stated that more frequent service, improvements to bus stops and service later at night were incorporated into all three of the options;

however, the options vary in ways that give people an opportunity to weigh in on what they like better. He emphasized that people will not be asked to choose one option but rather what they like best about each of the options. He said it is expected that the final preferred option will be a mix of the three options.

Cain added that there are a number of already committed projects including bus routes and capital and administrative projects. He said these projects account for approximately half of the \$1 billion expected to be generated over the next 20 years in tax revenues. Cain noted that all the options are fiscally feasible.

Option A

- Focus on local and regional bus operations with increased frequency, extended hours and capital expenditures to support service.
- Highest level of sidewalk access and paratransit service improvements.
- Most services implemented in first five years.
- Most projects locally funded and less complex.

Option B

- Focus on local and regional bus infrastructure improvements.
- Bus Rapid Transit implementation in FY32 with faster and more efficient service for local and regional buses, dedicated lanes and improved regional connections to Chapel Hill and RTP. This will require federal funding and regional partnerships.
- Some sidewalk access and paratransit service improvements.
- Fewer service improvements and later implementation than in Option A.

Option C

- Includes commuter rail with rapid, dependable service to Wake (and possibly Johnston) County. Major Durham destinations also will be served with implementation in FY29. This will require federal funding and regional partnerships.
- Some paratransit service improvements and fewer sidewalk access projects.
- Fewer service improvements and later implementation than in Options A and B.

Cain said following public outreach over the next month, a preferred option will be presented in late summer.

Allen stated his surprise that only one option includes commuter rail. Cain responded that it does not reflect the importance of the project, rather an attempt to create options that provide a contrast for the public to be able to provide feedback.

Beckmann pointed out that Durham is faced with the task of replacing the function the D-O LRT project served within Durham and as a connection to Orange County. She said Durham County has to figure out how to balance connections to Orange and Wake counties as well as within Durham County. She also noted limited funding.

Parker commented that in Durham and Orange counties the half cent sales tax is inadequate to meet the legitimate transit needs both counties have. He said without more money both counties will be forced to make sub-optimal choices.

IV. Policy Framework for Use of Wake Transit Funds to Acquire Real Property

Gary Tober stated that GoTriangle owns five parcels in Wake County along the proposed commuter rail line. He said in order to retain ownership of those properties which were purchased with an FTA contribution, GoTriangle had to reimburse FTA. Wake Transit funds were used for the reimbursement and a policy was proposed to outline rules and expectations for use of Wake Transit tax funds for the acquisition, utilization and disposition of real property.

Tober introduced Wake Transit program manager Bret Martin to present the policy framework. His presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Martin reviewed the proposed policy framework:

- Purpose
- Applicability
- Submission of Information for Consideration of Funding Real Property Acquisition
- Real Property Inventory and Utilization Plan
- Real Property Disposal Methods
- Further Methods of Institutionalization

He restated the purpose for the policy is to clarify requirements and responsibilities of project sponsors and lead agencies for:

- Submission of information for TPAC review of requests,
- Maintaining and reporting certain information for applicable real property,
- Methods allowed for disposal and use of applicable proceeds, and

- Methods for incorporating tenets of policy framework into program-level processes for transit plan implementation.

The policy does not apply to the acquisition of personal property, real property leasing, or the acquisition of easements or other nonpossessory interests. Wake Transit funds used to acquire any individual parcel, or combination of contiguous parcels, that exceed an area of 0.10 acre and have an assessed or appraised value of greater than \$50,000 are subject to the policy. Property acquired for streetside bus stops or bus transfer point infrastructure is exempt from the policy framework if the property is less than 0.50 acre and has a value of no more than \$75,000.

Martin added that in the event federal and/or state funding is involved with a parcel and there is inconsistency between this policy and state or federal law, the state or federal law shall control.

Martin stated that Part 3 of the policy addresses the information to be submitted by the project sponsor requesting the use of Wake Transit funds for the acquisition of real property:

- Necessity
- Location and size
- Property value(s)
- Funding source(s)
- Title issues
- Environmental issues
- Displacements
- Incidental uses

The TPAC will consider need, cost and location when evaluating requests under this policy.

Project sponsors approved for funding under this policy must prepare, and update at least annually, a real property inventory and utilization plan for all real property acquired.

Finally the policy addresses disposal methods, which is required within three years of determining the property has no remaining eligible use:

- Sell and reimburse Wake Capital Fund
- Offset within same distinct wake Transit-funded project
- Sell and keep net proceed in open project
- Transfer property to other eligible project
- Retain title with buyout

Tober stated that this policy is consistent with FTA requirements.

Action: On motion by Howerton and second by Hutchinson the Committee recommended Board approval of the Policy Framework for Use of Wake Transit Funds to Acquire Real Property. The motion was carried unanimously.

V. Adjournment

Action: Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 2:59 p.m.

Prepared by:

Michelle C. Dawson, CMC
Clerk to the Board of Trustees

Draft

MEMORANDUM

TO: GoTriangle Planning and Legislative Committee
FROM: Planning and Capital Development
DATE: June 9, 2021
SUBJECT: Briefing on RAISE Grant Application for Regional Transit Study

Strategic Objective or Initiative Supported

3.4 Encourage local governments and institutions to put affordable housing, job opportunities and public facilities in locations accessible by transit.

Action Requested

Staff requests that the Committee receive an update on a proposed regional study focused on transit, affordable housing, and greenspace.

Background and Purpose

As the Triangle continues to grow, local and regional leaders have identified the need for a coordinated vision of 1) transit, 2) affordable housing, and 3) greenspace in the region. The goal of the regional plan will be to lay out a compelling long-term, regional-scale vision that builds on existing projects to integrate priority investments in these three categories along key corridors in the region. Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) will lead the project, which would be informed both by quantitative data and evidence, and by public engagement, including a proposed statistically valid survey. The outcome of the study is envisioned to be a conceptual portrait of what future land use and transportation development can look like along 4-7 critical regional investment corridors. The study could also be leveraged into a regional agreement among key stakeholders to execute this vision.

TJCOG and GoTriangle are working to identify potential funding sources for the study, including potential federal grants. In April 2021, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the availability of discretionary grant funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants program. GoTriangle has contracted with our on-call planning consultant, Kimley-Horn, to develop a RAISE grant application for federal funding for the proposed regional study, to be submitted by TJCOG prior to the July 12 RAISE grant deadline.

Financial Impact

None at this time

Attachments

- None

Staff Contact(s)

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MEMORANDUM

TO: GoTriangle Board of Trustees Planning & Legislative Committee
FROM: Planning and Capital Development
DATE: June 9, 2021
SUBJECT: **Briefing on Commuter Rail Rolling Stock and Station Accessibility Evaluation**

Strategic Objective or Initiative Supported

2.4 Ensure an attractive and accessible transit environment

Action Requested

Staff requests that the Committee receive an update on ongoing study of potential approaches to commuter rail station platform accessibility.

Background and Purpose

At its March 2020 meeting, the GoTriangle Board authorized the Board Chair and President and CEO to execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Support of Continued Development of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail (GTCR) Project. This MOU identifies GoTriangle as the project sponsor and lead entity responsible for a range of tasks identified for further study and evaluation prior to a decision by the funding partners on whether or not to advance the project into implementation and apply for entry into the Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grants Program.

One of the tasks is to evaluate rolling stock and station design considerations to develop conceptual approach to address applicable federal performance standards for rolling stock accessibility.

Ensuring that transit service is accessible and easy to use is a key element of GoTriangle's mission and a goal of regional transit advocates. However, accessibility in a shared-use rail corridor can pose challenges and require compromises. Federal requirements and industry standards for commuter rail accessibility are evolving, but implications for rolling stock and station design are critical to informing project definition, cost, and schedule contingency. This purpose of this task is to revisit working assumptions about the commuter rail fleet and associated implications for station and right-of-way requirements.

This briefing will report progress to date on the following items:

- General public and municipal stakeholder input received regarding accessibility
- Input received from GoTriangle's Accessible Services Advisory Committee
- Evaluation of approaches to accessibility used by other systems throughout the country since implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Engineering and operational analysis specific to the project corridor

Financial Impact

None at this time

Attachments

- None

Staff Contact(s)

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