



# 01

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARTNERS

INTRODUCTION

CORE PRINCIPLES

PLAN GOALS

SUMMARY OF PLANNING PROCESS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

FINAL RECOMMENDED PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



## PARTNERS

The co-signatories of this Plan are the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Durham County, and GoTriangle. The governing board of the DCHC MPO includes local, elected officials from the City of Durham, Town of Chapel Hill, Town of Hillsborough, Town of Carrboro, Durham County, Orange County, and Chatham County, as well as representatives from GoTriangle and the State Board of Transportation. The GoTriangle Board consists of appointed representatives from Durham, Orange, and Wake Counties, and the State Board of Transportation.



## INTRODUCTION

The Durham County Transit Plan, also referred to as “this Plan,” “the updated Plan,” the “2022 Plan,” and/or “this Plan update,” contains a program of transit services and projects to be funded by the dedicated local revenues for transit in Durham County through 2040. There are four dedicated revenue streams used toward funding the local share of projects and services in this Plan, referred to throughout the Plan as Tax District Revenues. These four dedicated Tax District Revenue streams are as follows:

- Article 43: Half-Cent Sales and Use Tax
- Article 50: Five-Percent Vehicle Rental Tax (portion allocated to Durham County by GoTriangle Board of Trustees)
- Article 51: Three-Dollar increase to GoTriangle Regional Vehicle Registration Fee
- Article 52: Seven-Dollar County Vehicle Registration Fee

According to the 2013 Interlocal Implementation Agreement, a Staff Working Group was created that included representatives from Durham County, GoTriangle, and DCHC MPO to review the Plan and prepare updates as needed, or at least every four years. These Staff Working Group representatives, and representatives from the City of Durham and City-County Planning Department, worked collaboratively as the Project Team in developing this plan update. The last updated Durham County Transit Plan was in 2017 and included funding for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (DOLRT) project, which was discontinued in 2019. The funds previously allocated for the DOLRT project are reallocated as part of this updated Plan.

This Plan will provide over \$1 billion of local transit dedicated dollars to spend on transit improvements in Durham through 2040. About half of the funding in this Plan will be used to continue the bus service improvements that were approved in the 2017 transit plan; no service improvements will be stopped because of the adoption of this Plan (GoDurham Route 20 was suspended in 2020 and permanently discontinued in 2022 due to low ridership). The other half of the funds will support new transit initiatives and projects throughout the county, as identified through the public involvement process.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

The Project Team recognizes that certain groups of people have historically been underserved or disproportionately burdened by transportation decision-making outcomes. In an effort to intentionally center underserved communities developing this Plan, two core principles to guide planning efforts were crafted based on the Listening and Learning sessions in winter 2019: Equity and Community Trust.

### EQUITY

*Investing in underserved and transit-dependent communities.*

Prioritize transit access and investment for Environmental Justice (EJ) communities, including, but not limited to, minority race and ethnic populations (i.e., Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latinx, all racial and ethnic minorities), elderly populations, low-income households, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) communities, and zero-car households.

Provide transit options and access to affordable housing developments.

Improve access for people with mobility challenges.

### COMMUNITY TRUST

*Providing transparency throughout the planning and decision-making processes.*

Be transparent about how community feedback affects transit decisions.

Account for how transit funds are spent and the cost of different types of service.

Address what happened to recently discontinued or reduced services.

Actively engage residents and empower them to influence decisions.

Provide real opportunities for residents to impact service design.



## PLAN GOALS

As the core principles guide the development of this Plan with overarching commitments to Durham County residents, the Plan's goals and objectives provide further direction for the Plan's development and final recommendations for transit improvements. The objectives and goals were based on community comments and were vetted by the Plan's Technical and Outreach Committees. Below are a list of the Plan's goals and objectives:

### ACCESSIBILITY

*Providing opportunities for all users to access transit.*

### CONNECTIVITY

*Providing a well-connected, multimodal transportation network.*

### CONVENIENCE

*Creating reliable transit options and providing dependable information to riders.*

### SUSTAINABILITY

*Creating resilient infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and future populations.*

## SUMMARY OF PLANNING PROCESS

This high-level overview of the planning process describes the major milestones of the Plan's development in five sequential stages. The holistic planning process is the culmination of meaningful community engagement, analysis by passionate and experienced transit professionals, and dedicated community leadership. At each major milestone in developing the Plan, public feedback was synthesized and incorporated into subsequent milestones.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ..... 2019



The planning process started by establishing the Plan's goals and objectives. These were created using transit-related input gathered from annual on-board transit riders survey, the Comprehensive Plan update Listening and Learning sessions, Phase I of the City of Durham Participatory Budgeting Process, and resident focus groups from the City of Durham's 2019 Annual Resident Survey.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS ..... 2020



The next step was gaining an understanding of the transit needs and gaps in Durham by performing in-depth data analysis.

### TRANSIT OPTION PLANNING ..... 2021



The third step involved developing three different illustrative transit options (or scenarios) that each addressed identified transit needs. Each transit option contained varying levels of investment and different types of projects to demonstrate benefits and tradeoffs associated with each. These options were presented to the public for feedback.

### RECOMMENDED TRANSIT PLAN ..... 2022



The fourth step involved building a single, cost-constrained, preferred transit plan with the projects that were chosen as the highest priority, based on public feedback on the options. This draft preferred option was then presented again to the public for final feedback prior to finalizing.

### FINAL PLAN AND APPROVAL ..... 2023



The final step of the Durham County Transit Plan was documenting the entire planning process and final recommendations, and presenting the final report to the approving bodies. The participating agencies will continue to work together implementing the recommended service improvements and projects identified in the Plan.



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This Plan's development is centered on intentional, equitable, and representative public input. An Outreach Committee made up of staff from DCHC, City of Durham, Durham County, GoTriangle, and consultant team members led the planning and execution of three phases of outreach. All three phases were conducted in partnership with the Durham Engagement Ambassadors, helping to ensure a diverse and representative response from communities across Durham whose feedback was needed the most. The Engagement Ambassadors are a group of residents connected to parts of our community that staff may not be able to fully engage. The efforts of these Ambassadors was the most successful component of outreach.

## PHASE I

Phase I of public outreach focused on the existing system and confirming transit service improvement priorities previously expressed by Durham residents.



## PHASE II

Phase II of public outreach presented three transit options to illustrate how funds could be invested differently. The public was presented the potential benefits of each transit options and asked to prioritize the capital and operating projects and varying levels of transit service.



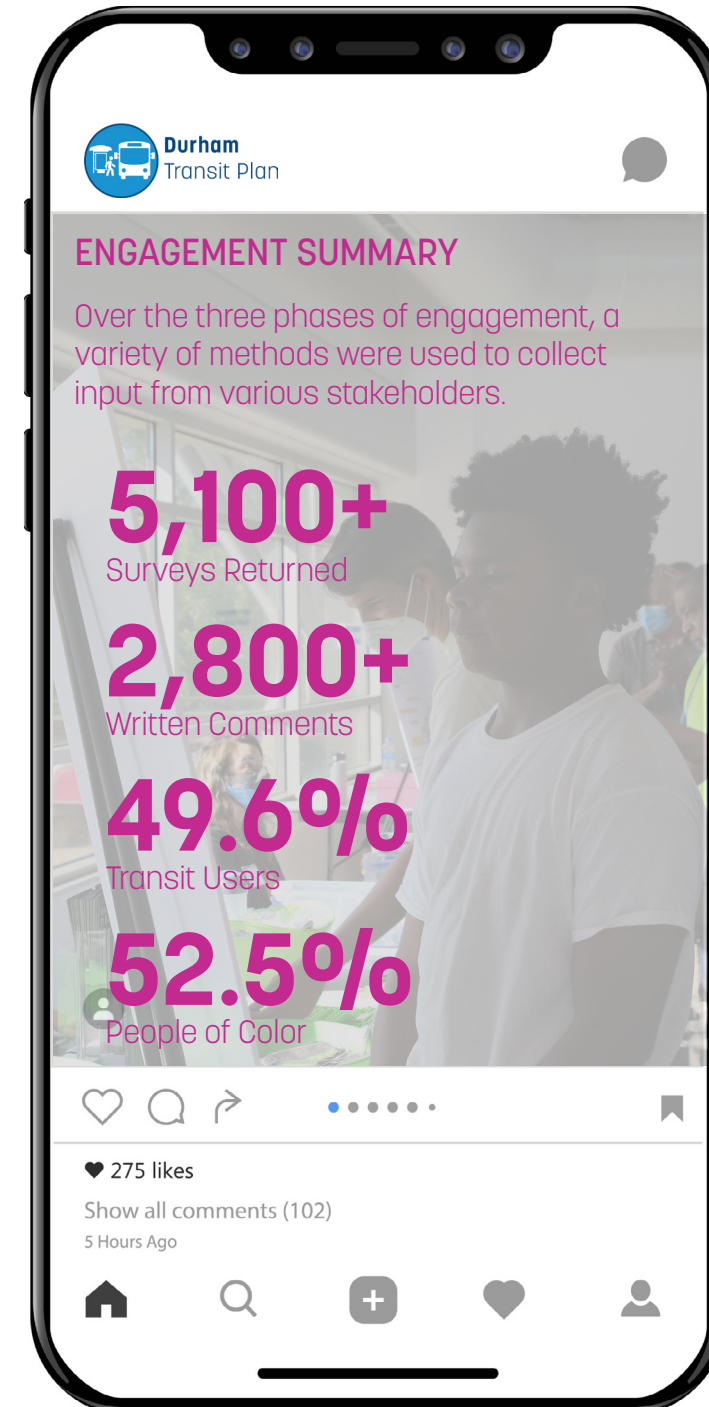
## PHASE III

Phase III of public outreach shared the draft preferred transit scenario containing the final recommended capital and operating transit improvements with the public and asked for feedback.



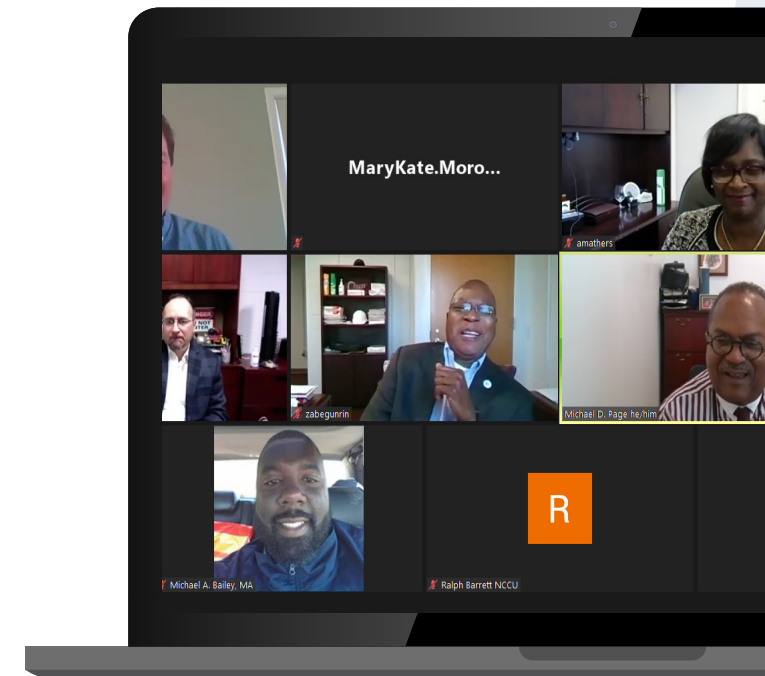
Before, during, and after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, a mix of virtual and in-person (when safe and appropriate) outreach events were conducted, with an emphasis on transparency of the process. Community leaders, key stakeholders, and elected officials were also consulted throughout each major milestone of the outreach process.

Challenges associated with COVID-19 made conducting outreach through traditional methods difficult. To collect representative, meaningful feedback, it was imperative that the public engagement strategy be flexible and intentional. The three phases of outreach combined various in-person events with virtual meetings to provide a variety of options for residents. All surveys published online were available in print, in English and Spanish, and links to the survey were posted on board buses and at Durham Station to encourage the participation of transit riders.



*“As I read the plan it looks as if the planners really listened to the underserved neighborhoods.”*

- Durham Transit Plan Public Comment





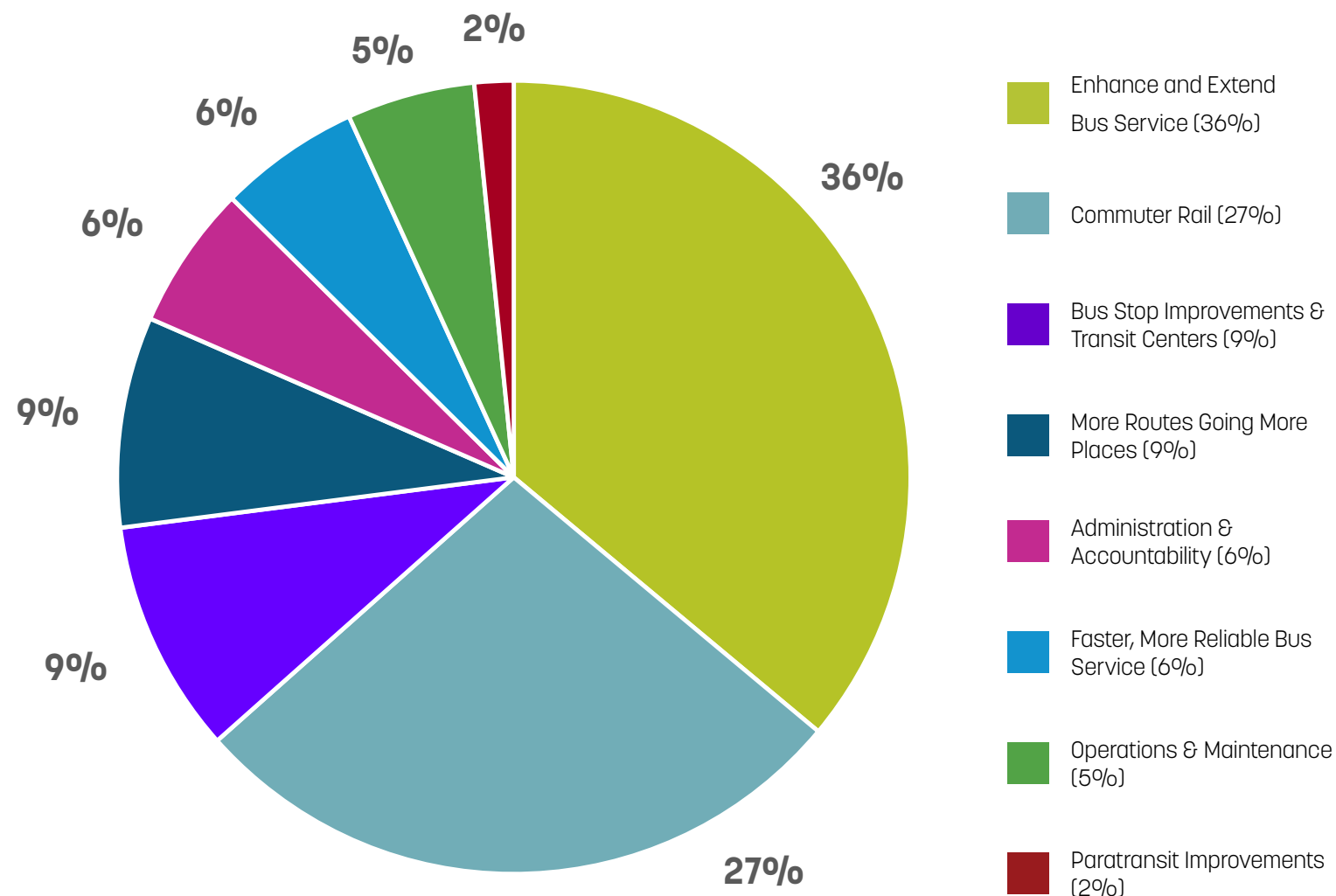
# FINAL RECOMMENDED PLAN

The final Durham County Transit Plan contains additional capital and operating projects that address the needs identified through detailed analysis and the priorities of the public. These priorities were gathered during intentional and in-depth stakeholder and public outreach. The needs and priorities were translated into key improvement themes used in the development of the final transit recommendations.

## KEY IMPROVEMENT THEMES

- Improve the current bus system
- More transit projects sooner
- Connecting the region with quick and reliable service
- Better experience at stops and stations

The following graphic breaks down the funding allocation for each improvement type:

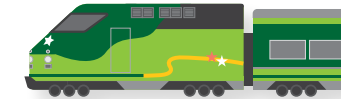


## PROJECT TYPES



### ENHANCE AND EXTEND SERVICE

All GoDurham routes will come every 30 minutes or better and will run later at night and on the weekends, including Sundays.



### COMMUTER RAIL

Durham County will contribute financially to build and run the commuter rail between Durham County and Wake County or provide other regional, fast, and reliable service improvements.



### BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS & TRANSIT CENTERS

Enhancements at existing bus stops and transit centers will include ADA landing pads, benches, shelters, signage, and/or lighting.



### MORE ROUTES GOING MORE PLACES

New crosstown routes to go more places in Durham and new GoDurham Connect (Microtransit) zones.



### ADMINISTRATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Dedicated staff positions to administer the Transit Plan, equitable contracting, and transit-oriented development efforts.



### FASTER, MORE RELIABLE SERVICE

Study for potential bus rapid transit (BRT) and infrastructure projects to help buses stay on schedule, such as traffic signal improvements, bus-only lanes, and adjusting bus stop spacing.



### OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Bus maintenance facility improvements and expansions, additional bus purchases and replacements, new electric buses, bus fuel and operating costs.



### PARATRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

GoTriangle and GoDurham paratransit (ACCESS) service expansions, Food Access for Seniors Shuttle, and a GoDurham Access Improvement Study.



# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation of projects identified in the final Durham County Transit Plan will happen over the course of the Plan's 20-year lifespan. Operating and capital projects will begin in an order that meets the highest needs and priorities and can be funded with dollars available in that year. Consideration will be given to projects that must be implemented at the same time for the projects to provide intended benefits. Projects that were identified as a high priority through the public input process were designated for early implementation when funding and delivery schedules allowed.

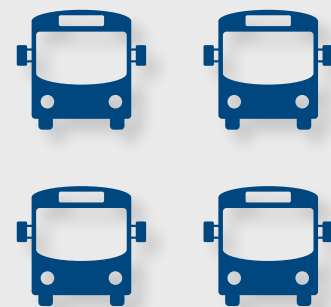
*Over \$150 million are planned to be spent on new projects in Durham County by 2027.*

This Plan includes funding for the following projects to be delivered in the next five years (by 2027):

- New East Durham/The Village to NCCU Crosstown Route
- Extend Sunday service to midnight
- 30-minute service on all GoDurham routes in the evenings and Sundays
- Improve Route 4 to run every 15-minutes and extend to Danube/Hebron
- Improve Route 9 to run every 15-minutes
- Provide 15-minute all day service on the 15-501 corridor from Durham to Chapel Hill with Routes 400/405
- The Village and North Duke Crossing Transit Center
- GoTriangle ACCESS and GoDurham ACCESS Improvement Study
- Construction of Durham Station Improvements
- Construction of Route 3 (Holloway) and Route 5 (Fayetteville) Bus Transit Corridors
- Bus Rapid Transit and Bus Speed and Reliability Infrastructure Study

## 2022 DURHAM COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN

This Plan includes much more funding for bus service than the 2017 Durham County Transit Plan. More than 70% of the Durham County Transit Plan funds will be used for bus projects.



**73%**  
Bus Projects



**27%**  
Commuter Rail

## PLAN OVERSIGHT

Consistent with the principle to focus on community trust, the partner agencies—Durham County, DCHC MPO, and GoTriangle—are committed to tracking and reporting plan implementation in a way that is easily accessible to the public. The partners will develop a performance monitoring program to track progress on project implementation and Transit Plan goals. This Plan, along with the annual Transit Work Programs, will serve as the foundation documents for tracking the implementation of the proposed projects.

The annual Transit Work Program outlines the specific transit services, programs, and infrastructure projects that will be funded in the upcoming fiscal year (July to June). It also includes the multi-year investment strategy, which lists the service and infrastructure investments planned to be funded in future years covered by the Durham County Transit Plan. The partner agencies will review and update the progress of project implementation at least twice per year. The first scheduled update will occur in July/August at the start of the fiscal year. This update cycle will ensure that the elements of the Transit Work Program, adopted in June, are accurately represented. The second cycle will occur in January/February to capture any needed mid-year updates. Implementation metrics for tracking the progress of this Plan are described in the Implementation Plan chapter.

