

**Durham Staff Working Group
October 16, 2024
MEETING NOTES**

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at 1:00pm in the Durham County Admin II Building, Room 128, as well as through the Microsoft Teams platform. The following members and guests were in attendance:

Doug Plachcinski (Chair, Voting Member)	DCHC MPO
Ellen Beckmann (Vice-Chair, Voting Member)	Durham County
Jay Heikes (Voting Member)	GoTriangle
Eric Simpson (Alternate, Voting Member)	City of Durham
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Brooke Roper	Durham County
Curtis Scarpignato	Durham County
Sean Egan	City of Durham
Brian Fahey	City of Durham
Henri Prosperi*	City of Durham
Priscilla Gilchrist*	GoTriangle
Paul Kingman*	GoTriangle
Steven Schlossberg	GoTriangle
Meg Scully*	GoTriangle
Greg Saur	Public

Quorum Count: 4 of 4 Voting Members

*Attended remotely

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Doug Plachcinski called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All voting members were acknowledged to be in attendance.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

Chair Doug Plachcinski asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were none.

3. Public Comment

Chair Doug Plachcinski asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

4. Administration

a. SWG Administration

i. Approval of September 2024 Minutes

Ellen Beckmann made a motion to approve the SWG Meeting Minutes. Jay Heikes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Tax District Administration

Steven Schlossberg stated there were no major updates but reminded the SWG that the Project Budget Sheets were currently being reviewed. Steve also stated that he plans to share the FY24 Actuals at the next SWG meeting.

c. Public Engagement and Communication

i. GoForward website updates

Meg Scully stated there were no updates. Brandi Minor mentioned that she collaborated with Chris Clark to have the FY25 Q2 Amendments posted on the GoForward website.

ii. Transit Tracker Development

Curtis Scarpignato stated that there were no major updates and that the County is continuing to work with their partners on the Transit Tracker.

5. Work Program

a. FY25 Work Program

i. Q2 Amendments

Brandi Minor stated that the public comment period ended on October 11. Brandi also stated there was one public comment received from Bike Durham. Brandi mentioned that the SWG would have an opportunity to review and discuss the amendments again before approving to release them to the governing boards for approval. The amendments released for public comment were as follows:

- Transit Construction Project Manager
- Transit Construction Team Leader
- Transit Construction Engineer
- Transit Planner Support for BRT
- Transportation Plan Management
- Durham Station Improvements
- PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles) Operations Support Vehicles
- Durham Transit Tracker
- Bus Rapid Transit Vision Plan

Each amendment was discussed by the submitting agency and the SWG had opportunities to ask clarifying questions as needed. After the discussion of the Transit Planner Support for BRT by Sean Egan, Ellen Beckmann mentioned there would be a change to the City's amendments. Sean Egan agreed and responded that there had been some discussion after the last SWG meeting regarding the Small Starts Study and Grant Application. Sean asked the SWG to reconsider a revised amendment request, which would be an amendment in the amount of \$200,000 for the Small Starts Study and Grant Application. Steven Schlossberg asked if we could legally include this amendment, since it had not been included in the public comment materials. Ellen Beckmann responded and stated that the Small Starts Study and Grant Application was included in the public comment materials, but as a component of the BRT Vision Plan. Ellen then stated that

since it was included in the materials, there is no conflict with pulling it out as a separate amendment. The SWG continued to discuss the Small Starts Study and Grant Application and how it relates to the BRT Vision Plan. Steven Schlossberg stated that the Small Starts Study and Grant Application amendment would be categorized under the Capital Planning Ordinance. Steven also stated that he is not planning to launch a BRT ordinance at this time until we know for sure there will be a BRT project. Ellen Beckmann asked a clarifying question; her question was if the SWG moved forward with approving the project development costs in the FY26 Work Program, would that trigger the creation of a BRT ordinance? Steven Schlossberg replied yes. Ellen Beckmann then stated that the Transit Plan amendment to approve project development costs would be included in the development of the FY26 Work Program. Ellen also mentioned that this project should be included in the narrative of the Work Program, and that the narrative should be prepared in a manner that will be easily understood by the public. Ellen Beckmann asked Brandi Minor when a draft of the Work Program narrative would be needed, to which Brandi responded that it would need to be submitted by December. Ellen Beckmann asked if the SWG could review the narrative at the December meeting. Steven Schlossberg asked if the goal for the November SWG meeting is to have all the Project Budget Sheets rolled forward, to which Brandi Minor replied yes. Brandi then stated that the goal at the next meeting is to have all project sheets submitted and ran through the financial model. Ellen Beckmann stated that in the amendment materials, it should be clear and understood that an approval of the Small Starts Study and Grant Application amendment implies that a Transit Plan amendment will be forthcoming in the next few months and that public engagement on this project would be considered part of the Work Program. Sean Egan provided an overview of the Durham Station Improvements amendment and explained why the costs have risen. Jay Heikes stated that he would like to see more collaboration and early engagement on some of the decisions that drive cost. Doug Plachcinski and Ellen Beckmann agreed with this recommendation, and City staff agreed that open communication regarding Durham Station would have been helpful. Meg Scully stated that about a year ago at the GoTriangle Board meetings, they started inviting project sponsors to their meetings to share technical information on projects to avoid the Tax District Administrative staff from having to speak to projects sponsored by other agencies. After the conclusion of the review of all the amendments, Brandi Minor reviewed the amendments one last time to ensure all changes had been captured. The changes made to the amendments were as follows:

- Transit Planner Support for BRT will be renamed as Transit Project Implementation Staff
- The Durham Bus Rapid Transit Small Starts Study and Grant Application was submitted as an individual amendment, and removed from the Bus Rapid Transit Vision Plan amendment
- The Bus Rapid Transit Vision Plan description was amended to indicate that no staffing was included in the project budget

Eric Simpson made a motion to release the amendments to the governing boards for approval. Doug Plachcinski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. FY26 Work Program

i. Project Budget Sheets

Brandi Minor stated that the Project Budget Sheets were due last Friday, and she is in the process of reviewing them. Brandi also stated that she will contact project sponsors as needed if she has any questions or comments regarding their PBS.

ii. Overview of FY26 Base Budgets

Brandi Minor reminded the SWG that the base budgets have been uploaded to SharePoint. Brandi also reminded Eric Simpson that she would assist the City with the completion of the City's base budgets. Brandi also stated that the next steps would be the review of the PBS and for Steven Schlossberg to provide a consolidation of the PBS as well as run all the projects through the financial model. The results of the financial model will be shared at next month's SWG meeting and the SWG will need to decide which projects will move forward in the Work Program. Steven Schlossberg stated that Priscilla Gilchrist is creating the roll forward of all the existing PBS and it will be uploaded to SharePoint. Steven also reminded the SWG that any operating project requesting more than a 2.5% increase or with a scope change will need a new PBS, and all capital projects, even if it was programmed, will also need a PBS. Steven also stated that it is the responsibility of the project sponsor to review their sheets to ensure everything is correct. Brandi Minor stated that the Exhibit A workshop will be the last workshop, and it is scheduled for December.

iii. Review Schedule and any upcoming tasks for next month

Brandi Minor reviewed the schedule and stated that the next steps are for Steven Schlossberg to provide the results of the financial modeling and that partners will begin working on their Exhibit A's. Brandi also stated that any FY25 Q3 amendments are due on November 28, which is 10 days after the November SWG meeting. Ellen Beckmann stated that we also need to convene the Finance Subcommittee next month. Steven Schlossberg replied that he thinks we should wait until after the financial modeling results, and possibly meet in early December. Brandi Minor stated that we may convene the Financial Subcommittee in-between the November and December SWG meetings.

6. Project Sponsor Updates

a. City of Durham

Brian Fahey stated that the on August 24, GoDurham implemented North Durham improvements, including crosstown service between Duke/VA and Danube/Hebron with Route 6. As they saw with the April expansion, demand continues to increase. The City has seen pass/hr. slightly decrease the month after expansion, and then increases again. For example, overall system pass/hr. in September went down from 30 to 29. However, projected October pass/hr. will likely be close to 31, and while they are only halfway through the month, they are projecting that GoDurham will reach an all-time high for monthly ridership (>640,000). Brian also stated that they are currently finalizing recommended service changes for public engagement later this month. The expansion is planned for Q3, and will include the following:

- Route 3 every 15-minutes daytime and 30-minutes night/Sun
- Route 3B every 30 minutes (rename to Route 16)
- Route 5 alignment change
- Route 8 extension and schedule change
- Route 12 alignment and schedule change (coordinate with GoTriangle Route 800 change)
- Route 12B elimination (coordinate with GoTriangle Route 800 change)
- New Route 13 (East Durham/NCCU Crosstown) every 30-minutes until 7pm Mon-Sun

Brian mentioned that for Microtransit, the last 2 days they have been doing on the road testing of the GoDurham ACCESS microtransit program, and service will begin on Monday (10/21). The service will be operated by GoDurham ACCESS and will allow for co-mingling when the system allows. More information is available at www.godurhamtransit.org/microtransit. Brian also wanted to recognize Lindsay Smart for the great work in moving this project forward and thanked GoTriangle and Durham County for helping to amplify the release of information.

For the Paratransit Task Force, Brian stated that they have continued to engage customers and stakeholders since the final paratransit service improvements report was published. Brian also mentioned that they are currently researching opportunities to immediately improve customer communications and allow for a more interactive experience. The City has continued to receive positive feedback from riders and partners on the new scheduling/reservations system. The City is consistently seeing over 92% on-time performance, no-show percentages less than 2%, and travel times around 27 minutes. Their contractor, WeDriveU, will be adding a new service provider (Silverride) in early December which will continue to increase capacity to achieve same-day reservations for all GoDurham ACCESS.

Lastly, regarding TSP, Brian stated that Preliminary configuration work has been completed. Field testing begins next week, and they anticipate the pilot beginning in early November at three intersections on Fayetteville St, with then expansion to 14 intersections in early 2025.

Sean Egan stated that they have been working with their General Services department on the acquisition of the maintenance facility. Sean also stated that it was screened in the NEPA process review, which means that based on what they are hearing now, they will most likely not be eligible for federal funding. Ellen Beckmann asked what the financial impact of this would be, to which Sean Egan replied \$2M. There was some additional discussion on how this would affect the Work Program overall and if there are ways to make this cost neutral to the Work Program.

b. GoTriangle

Jay Heikes stated that GoTriangle made the difficult decision to pull back on a November service increase in on time performance due to operator turnover. Jay also mentioned that they have had one full month of DRX ridership and it has increased 36% for midday service.

Meg Scully stated that they have completed their return to fares campaign effort. Meg also stated that there was a three-month grace period from July 1 – September 30 where they phased in various requirements for pay. Meg then stated that they are tracking data for all usage and will go to monthly reporting as they are feeling more

comfortable. Lastly Meg mentioned that they will be doing a survey with the evaluation to understand the users and any problems or suggestions they may have.

c. Durham County

Ellen Beckmann stated she didn't have any additional updates.

d. DCHC MPO

Doug Plachcinski stated the SWG adopted a matrix of lead agency responsibilities, and he would like to add this as an agenda item for the November meeting to discuss and possibly alter if necessary.

7. Next Meeting Date – November 18, 2024

Brandi Minor announced the next Durham County SWG meeting will be on Monday, November 18, 2024.

8. Adjournment

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.