

Item Title: Wake County Response to Draft FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners authorizes a letter from Wake County to the Transit Planning Advisory Committee in response to the Draft FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan.

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Transit Planning Advisory Committee has released the Draft Wake Transit Work Plan for public, agency, and stakeholder feedback. TPAC asks all stakeholder jurisdictions to formally provide feedback on the draft.

Background: The FY2021 Draft proposes investing in bus route frequency, GoWake Access, and BRT lines. The draft also proposes dedicating matching funds to Community Funding Areas to assist smaller towns that want to provide improvements beyond the plan's scope. The Board of Commissioners received an update on the proposed projects as well as how those projects relate to the Board's initiatives its February 10, 2020 work session. With this action, the Board formally approves the feedback to be shared with TPAC.

Board Goal: The FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan complements several initiatives in the Board Goal Areas of Growth and Sustainability and Social and Economic Vitality.

Fiscal Impact: Projects are included in the Wake Transit Plan, funded in large part by the ½ cent local option sales tax for transit, approved by Wake County voters in November 2016. Federal funding is assumed in FY 2021 in support of the New Bern Bus Rapid Transit Corridor and later years of the Wake Transit Plan for other BRT corridors and Commuter Rail.

Additional Information:

Wake County continues to work in partnership with transit stakeholders on implementation of the Wake County Transit Plan.

On January 28, 2020 the Transit Planning Advisory Committee released the FY 2021 Draft Work Plan for public, agency, and stakeholder comment. Included in proposed projects is the addition of Raleigh's fifth frequent network by converting the Route 6 to every 15 minutes between downtown Raleigh to Duraleigh Road and improving service between Duraleigh Road to Brier Creek. In addition, Route 21 which serves the New Oak City Cares facility will receive increased frequency to every 30 minutes from 6 AM – 7PM and

service would be extended hourly until midnight. Continuing the second big move of connecting all communities, new all-day service will be added between Apex and Raleigh, and express service will be started between Apex and Cary during peak hours Monday – Friday.

The plan also includes continued investment in capital expenditures to benefit transit customers, including new transit centers, new bus shelters, enhancements to transfer points to include digital passenger information signs, safety call boxes, and improved lighting and larger shelters.

The FY 2021 Draft Wake Transit Work Plan also directly supports GoWake Access. In addition to \$437,000 for elderly, disabled, and rural trips and funds to support the call center, the Draft Wake Transit Work Plan includes \$100,000 for GoWake to conduct a planning study in the northeastern portion of the County. The Northeastern Microtransit Planning Study will be used to design and test a geofenced service area between Zebulon, Wendell, Southern Rolesville, and the unincorporated areas of Knightdale using trip planning software to design an efficient, fiscally sustainable, quick response Microtransit service for Wake Transit Rural and Elderly and Disabled trips. Last year, the Board of Commissioners committed a portion of County federal funds it receives as a subrecipient of Raleigh FTA funding, through FFY 2022, to be used towards a new demand response operations and maintenance facility to be shared by the City of Raleigh and GoWake Access. The FY 2021 Draft Wake Transit Work Plan includes \$4 million of new Wake Transit funding for land acquisition and design in support of this facility.

The largest capital project in the FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan is \$67 million for remaining design, right of way, construction, and vehicles for the New Bern Avenue Bus Rapid Transit corridor. Of this amount, \$35 million is assumed in federal funding. The City expects 30 percent design will be finished by this Spring, final design will be finished by Summer 2021, and construction will happen in 2021 – mid 2023 for service to begin by the end of 2023.

An additional \$4.5 million is also included for additional project development for the Western, Southern, and Northern BRT corridors. Project development includes environmental review, alternatives review, selection of a locally preferred alternative, and design. The City expects to enter the FTA project development process for the Western and Southern corridors by Summer 2020. Land use changes supporting BRT are expected to be proposed by Spring 2020. Funds continue to be held in reserve for Commuter Rail environmental review processes, development of alternatives, and selection of a locally preferred alternative once early project development activities are complete.

Finally, the Draft Work Plan includes funds to be allocated for Community Funding Areas, which provides 50 percent matching funds for localities to implement transit services over and above those programmed as part of the larger Wake Transit Plan. The funds will be allocated through a competitive process between the Draft and Recommend Wake Transit FY 2021 Work Plans. The Town of Apex has applied for funding for a fixed route circulator service to be operated by the Town of Cary. The Town has requested that it

contract with GoWake Access to be its complimentary ADA paratransit provider. If the Town is awarded FTA funding, the County will enter into a contract with the Town who will reimburse the County for delivery of this service. The Town of Morrisville also applied for FY 2021 Community Funding Area funding.

Staff has prepared a letter in response to the Draft FY 2021 Transit Work Plan. The letter, directed to the Chair of the Transit Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC), includes comments provided by staff and those provided by the Board at its February 10, 2020 work session. The TPAC, as authorized by the Transit Governance ILA, is a committee composed of technical staff from transit providers, CAMPO, Wake County, NCSU, and all municipalities. The TPAC will review all public and agency comments and finalize the FY 2021 Transit Work Plan for consideration of adoption by CAMPO and GoTriangle in June.

Attachments:

1. Letter to the Transit Planning Advisory Committee
2. Draft FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan