



Board of Commissioners

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February 17, 2020

Shannon Cox, Chair Transit Planning Advisory Committee
c/o Juan Carlos, GoTriangle Community Engagement Manager
PO Box 13787
RTP, NC 27709

Re: Draft FY 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan

Dear Shannon,

The Board of Commissioners received an update regarding commuter rail, proposed FY 2021 Wake Transit projects, and the NCDOT S-Line project at its February 10, 2020 work session. As projects are prepared for the fourth year of Wake Transit implementation, the Board is pleased to see the groundwork laid in the beginning years of implementation begin to yield results. Ridership is up for a second year in a row, the Youth GoPass Program continues to be a success, and more communities are now connected to transit. However, much work remains to implement the 10-year vision of the Wake Transit Plan and Wake's residents need to see additional tangible results of its investment.

The Board supports the additional fixed route services in the Draft Work Plan, especially the increase for the Caraleigh Route which serves the Oak City Cares facility, the additional frequency for the Glenwood Avenue bus routes, and additional services connecting Wake County communities such as improved service between Apex and Raleigh and Apex and Cary. The Board of Commissioners also supports the additional trips proposed for GoWake Access and is pleased to see the proposed microtransit study to design and test a geofenced service area between Zebulon, Wendell, Southern Rolesville, and the unincorporated areas of Knightdale included in the FY 2021 Draft Wake Transit Work Plan. These services and studies not only support implementing the Wake Transit Plan's big moves of connecting all Wake County communities and enhancing access to transit, but the expanded service also supports the Board's initiatives to increase mobility equity and address needs in vulnerable communities and

rural areas. In addition, 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 Board is pleased to be partnering with Raleigh and Wake Transit for this project.

At its work session, the Board also discussed the need to continue with actual implementation of capital projects that support the customer experience. The Board of Commissioners wants to reiterate its support for bus stops and shelters, and enhanced transit points and park and ride facilities, that support the fixed route bus network being established in the County as a result of the Wake Transit Plan. The Board reiterated that it wants to see these projects designed and built in a timely manner and wants to ensure that the projects are equitably distributed.

The Board of Commissioners remains very supportive of the Community Funding Area Program and wants to see Wake County communities match Wake Transit Funding to plan and implement various transit solutions throughout the County. It is excited that two additional municipalities, Apex and Morrisville, have applied for Community Funding Area Program funding. The Board supports continued investment in this program.

Finally, the Board of Commissioners remains keenly interested in the implementation of the Plan's major capital investment projects, especially Bus Rapid Transit and Commuter Rail. At its work session, the Board was pleased to see continued progress in the design of the New Bern Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Corridor. However, it reiterated the need for additional, corridor sensitive, public engagement for BRT corridors. The Board of Commissioners also supported moving forward with the next steps of additional study for Commuter Rail. The Board indicated its support for approving a memorandum of understanding for the next phase of the project and acknowledging a cost share methodology for the next phase of work at its March 16, 2020 board meeting. However, as updated cost estimates are prepared as part of early project development activities, the Board wants to ensure that a specific, targeted conversation is had with the Board of Commissioners regarding balancing the implementation of commuter rail against the other big moves included in the Wake Transit Plan. The Board reiterated that ultimately, the voters hold them accountable for the success of the Wake Transit Plan. As updates are made to the transit plan, it will be important to brief and consult with the Board of Commissioners to ensure the continued success of Wake Transit implementation.

Thank you and the TPAC for the work that continues in structuring the planning and implementation of the Wake Transit Plan. Wake County continues to be a key partner and is committed to ensuring the implementation of the Wake Transit Plan. Through the County's participation on the TPAC, various project management teams and special study groups, and through the Wake Transit concurrence process, we look forward to the County's participation in these efforts.

Sincerely,

Gregory D. Ford
Chair, Wake County Board of Commissioners

cc: Nicole Kreiser, Assistant County Manager
Chris Lukasina, CAMPO Executive Director
Shelley Blake Curran, GoTriangle Interim President and CEO