

Durham Staff Working Group

Meeting Notes

April 14, 2022

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Durham County – Chair Ellen Beckmann
GoTriangle – Jay Heikes and Meg Scully
DCHC MPO – Mariel Klein and Andy Henry

2. Approval of March 2022 Meeting Notes (MPO)

Motion by Jay Heikes to approve the March meeting notes, second by Mariel Klein. Motion passed.

3. Plan Updates

a. Durham County Transit Plan (MPO)

Aaron Cain said the preferred scenario has been selected and successfully run through the GoTriangle financial model. Aaron Cain said outreach materials are being put together and outreach should begin in June 2022, which is on schedule for adoption by the three boards this fall.

b. Transit Governance Plan (Durham County)

Ellen Beckmann said a second staff workshop was held on April 11 and a summary is being prepared for updates to elected boards in April and May. Ellen Beckmann said an update will be shared with the MPO Board on May 11 and the next step will be for the consultant to draft a new Interlocal Implementation Agreement (ILA) to be approved in tandem with the transit plans this fall.

c. Wake-Durham Bus Plan (GoTriangle)

Jenny Green said preparations are underway for public engagement activities to be held from April 29-May 29 and the efforts are being coordinated with the work program engagement. Jenny Green shared the purpose of the engagement with goals to understand the community perspective on various topics. Jenny Green said the engagement will consist of surveys and in person pop up events.

4. FY23 Draft Annual Transit Work Program – Release for Public Comment

Aaron Cain said discussions have been occurring over the last few months to determine what will

be included in the FY23 work program and to ensure consistency with the developing transit plan. Aaron Cain shared the budget summary sheet with operating and capital projects and pointed out new projects and projects with significant cost reductions. Aaron Cain said the action today is to approve the release of the draft FY23 work program for a 21-day public comment period. Steven Schlossberg asked that any request for a major change should be made as soon as possible. There was a discussion on the timeline of the upcoming schedule with the budget workshop and the GoTriangle committee and Board meetings.

There was a discussion on if the Durham Station project should now trigger a material change because a material change was not required for the design process. Ellen Beckmann said Durham Station should be treated as a material change for greater visibility to the elected Boards. Sean Egan said the City of Durham is in favor of greater visibility for Durham Station. Meg Scully pointed out that an amendment is not necessary to increase visibility and draw attention to the project. There was consensus that the bus stop improvements will be included as a material change in addition to Durham Station. Ellen Beckmann said the paratransit expansion project should also be included as a material change.

Sean Egan asked that the North Durham improvements project title be changed to “North Durham Improvements – 9/9A/9B/Crosstown” due to community input on the importance of the route. Sean Egan noted that the spelling should be changed from from Braggstown to Bragtown on page 13. Jay Heikes noted a few minor changes to the work program and said he will follow up with an email detailing the changes. Ellen Beckmann said the microtransit summary on page 7 needs to be updated to reflect that it is already partially operational and the same change should be made for the Durham Transportation Alternatives. Jenny Green said she will email a few minor revisions as well.

Ellen Beckmann mentioned a recent memo sent out that reflects her opinions and anticipated sentiments from the Durham Board of Commissioners. Ellen Beckmann said she supports the vast majority of the FY23 work program but Durham County has a different opinion on a couple topics. Ellen Beckmann said some of the comments in the memo do not require any changes to the work program and are therefore just informational. The first issue discussed was the GoTriangle request to increase staff costs in Durham County by 0.25 Full Time Employee (FTE) for Tax District Administration (TDA).

Sundra Freeman said GoTriangle staff has spent a significant amount of time justifying a 0.25 FTE slated to begin in Q3. Saundra Freeman said the request is for one new position to be funded 25% by Orange County, 25% by Durham County, and 50% by Wake County in order to have one FTE dedicated to the TDA to decrease the workload on other GoTriangle staff. Saundra Freeman suggested hiring a consultant to develop an indirect cost allocation matrix, as was done a few years ago. Saundra Freeman said GoTriangle is adamant that the 0.25 FTE is necessary, and once the Transit Plans Governance Study is complete adjustments can be made as needed through budget amendments.

Ellen Beckmann said she also hopes for a better workload balance as a result of the recommendations in the Governance Study. Ellen Beckmann said the most important goal of the

Governance Study is to set a framework for all parties to work together long-term. Ellen Beckmann said that from a Durham County perspective, she anticipates the Board to perceive that GoTriangle is requesting more staffing but does not want to share in the responsibilities for TDA. Sandra Freeman expressed confusion over that point and added that GoTriangle is taking on debt to support the TDA. Ellen Beckmann said Durham County is willing to take on more of a role in development of the work program.

Mariel Klein asked if Orange County has moved forward with their portion of the funding for the FTE. Aaron Cain confirmed that Orange County's 0.25 FTE is included in the draft work program they just approved to release for public comment. Meg Scully said these conversations should be viewed as public comments. Meg Scully said the action needed today is only to release the draft work program for public comment, so the public can weigh in on this issue.

There was consensus to hold a Durham SWG meeting on May 12, after the public comment period has ended to discuss public comments and solve the remaining issues.

Chair Ellen Beckmann made a motion to remove the increase for the 0.25 FTE. The motion failed due to a lack of a second. Mariel Klein made a motion to release the draft FY23 work program for public comment as is (with only the minor changes mentioned earlier included to increase the clarity and accuracy of the document). Jay Heikes seconded the motion. The motion passed, with Ellen Beckmann dissenting.

Ellen Beckmann said the Increased Cost of Existing Services (ICES) has increased by 18.5% which exceeds a threshold. Staff will compare the FY22 actuals and make sure the requested amount is not more than half.

Ellen Beckmann suggested changing the funding split of the three requested positions from the City of Durham to a 50% share to be paid for by the City of Durham. Ellen Beckmann said if the city has a financial share, it will incentivize more thoughtful planning for the positions. Aaron Cain said this can be discussed at the May 12 SWG meeting as the SWG already voted to release the work program for public comment.

5. FY23 Work Program Adoption Schedule

There was a discussion on the adoption schedule.

6. Proposed Operating Cost Policy (Durham County)

This item will be tabled until GoTriangle's comments are received and may be discussed at the June SWG meeting.

7. Next Meeting – Tentatively Schedule for May 26

The next SWG meeting will be May 12 from 10 am – 12 pm for further discussions on discrepancies within the FY23 work program. Another meeting will be tentatively scheduled for May 26 for the SWG to recommend approval of a final work program. A SWG meeting in June may be scheduled to discuss the operating cost policy.

Jennifer Hayden shared a reminder on the transit reimbursement and financial reporting templates that are due April 29. Jennifer Hayden reviewed the changes to the submittal instructions and the reimbursement page will be distributed next month for the Q4 estimates.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.