

Durham Staff Working Group
January 21, 2026
MEETING MINUTES

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 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:

Ellen Beckmann (Chair, Voting Member)	Durham County
Colleen McGue (Vice-Chair, Voting Member)	Triangle West TPO
Eric Simpson (Voting Member)	City of Durham
Meg Scully (Voting Member)	GoTriangle
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Caroline Lamb	Durham County
Brooke Roper	Durham County
Curtis Scarpignato	Durham County
Doug Plachcinski	Triangle West TPO
Thomas Porter*	Triangle West TPO
Bharat Mehta*	City of Durham
Paul Black*	GoTriangle
Logan DiGiacomo*	GoTriangle
Alvin Gonzalez*	GoTriangle
Jason Hardin*	GoTriangle
Jay Heikes*	GoTriangle
Kelley Smith*	GoTriangle
Brandon Carey*	GoTriangle – Tax District Administration
Paul Kingman*	GoTriangle – Tax District Administration
Steven Schlossberg	GoTriangle – Tax District Administration

Quorum Count: 4 of 4 Voting Members

*Attended remotely

1. Call to Order/Roll Call (Timestamp: 00:22)

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

2. Adjustments to the Agenda (Timestamp: 00:49)

Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. Brandi Minor stated there was an adjustment submitted by Steven Schlossberg from the GoTriangle Tax District Administration. Steven has requested that all Tax District Administration staff be designated as such in the materials going forward.

3. Public Comment (Timestamp: 01:36)

Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if there were any public comments. Brandi Minor stated there were none.

4. Administration

a. SWG Administration

i. Approval of November 2025 Minutes (Timestamp: 01:45)

Eric Simpson made a motion to approve the December 2025 Meeting Minutes. Colleen McGue seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Tax District Administration (Timestamp: 02:41)

i. FY26 Q1 Durham Transit Plan Financial Update

Steven Schlossberg provided a reminder to partners that the Q2 reimbursements are due within the next couple of weeks.

There was also a brief conversation regarding the sales tax revenues. Durham County staff stated that their Budget Director had indicated the October 2025 receipts were down 8% - 9% as compared to last year. No official predictions were provided by the Budget Director, but he believes the decline is attributed to the government shutdown. GoTriangle Tax District Administration staff confirmed that sales tax revenues in October 2024 were \$3.8M as compared to \$2.3M in October 2025. Despite this, TDA staff stated the overall revenue for the first four months is still up compared to last year.

5. Work Program

a. FY26 Work Program

i. Q3 Amendments (Timestamp: 05:22)

Brandi Minor stated that the Q3 amendments public comment period was open for 21 days (December 16, 2025 – January 6, 2026). Brandi then mentioned that she did not receive any public comments and confirmed that the action at today's meeting is to release the amendments to the governing boards for approval.

The three amendments received and the financial impact to the FY26 budget are as follows:

Staffing Study Personnel – increases budget by \$17,188
Route 800 Improvements – increases budget by \$123,370
Staffing Study – increased budget by \$183,570

Brandi asked the SWG if the SWG wanted to have any discussion before approving the amendments.

For the staffing study, concerns were raised about ensuring funding is secured before moving forward with the staffing study to avoid assumptions about

payment responsibilities. It was clarified that contracts cannot be signed until funding is confirmed and the amendment is approved, as reimbursement from the Transit Plan requires proper documentation. Durham County is expected to cover 50% of the cost, which will be reimbursed through the Tax District Administration quarterly reimbursement process. While Orange County's participation remains uncertain, if Orange does not participate, the study scope will be limited to Durham. The amendment is expected to be approved by the governing boards in February. Procurement and contract negotiations will occur after approval, and the project is unlikely to incur costs before agreements are finalized.

For Route 800 Improvements, Durham County staff expressed concern about approving funding in FY26 given current budget constraints for FY27. They recommend deferring this amendment request for consideration alongside other funding requests in the FY27 work program.

Support for the Route 800 Improvements amendment was expressed by GoTriangle staff. They indicated that this is a high-priority route and although this amendment will increase the budget, they believe the request will improve on-time performance of existing service.

Below is a summary of the actions on this item:

First Motion: A motion was made by Meg Scully and seconded by Eric Simpson to approve all three amendments. Ellen Beckmann and Colleen McGue voted no. The motion failed.

Second Motion: A substitute motion was introduced by Ellen Beckmann to approve only the Staffing Study and Staffing Study Personnel amendments. Collen McGue seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 3–1 (Yes: Ellen Beckmann, Colleen McGue, Eric Simpson; No: Meg Scully).

b. FY27 Work Program (Timestamp: 42:05)

- i. **Schedule Update**
- ii. **Overview of Draft**
- iii. **Review schedule and any upcoming tasks for next month**

Brandi Minor provided an overview of the Draft FY27 Work Program and next steps. Key milestones include the SWG voting to approve the release of the draft Work Program for public comment at the February 18 SWG meeting. The public comment period will be open for 21 days, which will run from February 27 through March 20. The final Recommended Work Program will be presented to the governing boards in May and will receive final approval from the GoTriangle Board of Trustees in June.

Brandi also provided an overview of the guidance received from the Durham Board of County Commissioners which included the following:

- No support for any changes requiring a Transit Plan amendment
- Maintain current funding for the Quick & Reliable Regional Connections

- Proceed with a baseline “status quo” budget and submit proposals for the approximately \$4.2 million in available funding
- Questions were raised regarding the City’s contributions to capital projects
- Board members also expressed an interest in exploring a future tax increase

Brandi also stated that a presentation was provided to the GoTriangle’s Audit and Finance Committee. Although no formal directives were offered, comments were received from Briam Smith, Go Triangle’s CEO, regarding a revised proposal.

Brandi also emphasized that the draft is not final and changes can be made through early April. Brandi then stated that the planned budget retreat was rescheduled to February 3 to allow discussion of funding options and proposals ahead of her presentation to the governing boards in March. At the retreat, the SWG should come prepared with ideas for cost savings, such as closing out capital projects or identifying efficiencies, to help accommodate pending requests. Cost-saving strategies discussed also included reviewing carryover project funds, adjusting for actual operating costs, refining Cost Per Hour estimates, and prioritizing proposals.

Brandi noted that the draft will reflect the baseline budget but will incorporate feedback from governing boards and public comments before finalization. She also stated that a public engagement strategy will be developed to ensure robust input during the comment period.

Brandi ended her presentation outlining the next steps in finalizing the Work Program and noting that consensus is critical to avoid an interim budget, which would freeze operating growth and capital funding.

6. Project Sponsor Updates (Timestamp: 1:39:40)

a. City of Durham

Eric Simpson provided an update on Durham Station. Progress continues including a move from the inside platform to the exterior platform, red pavement installation, and drywall completion.

b. GoTriangle

Meg Scully provided an update on the Route 700 realignment that is planned for March. This adjustment will improve service to central Durham and Durham Tech, reconnecting areas previously impacted by construction.

c. Durham County

Curtis Scarpignato provided an update on the BRT Vision Plan. There was an initial evaluation of potential corridors for future BRT, that has been shared with staff at all partner agencies. Curtis noted that the rankings are preliminary and subject to change

based on deliverability and feedback. Additional options, including NC 147 connections, have been added based on stakeholder input.

Caroline Lamb provided an update on the East Durham Railroad Crossing Study. Caroline stated that the kickoff meeting is scheduled for next week.

Ellen Beckmann stated that the Durham Transit Tracker has updated data and that it will be promoted via social media and presentations to ensure public engagement.

d. Triangle West TPO

The final draft of the NTP is open for public comment through next month, with board approval expected in February.

7. Next Meeting Date – February 18, 2026 (Timestamp: 1:48:42)

Ellen Beckmann announced the next Durham County SWG meeting will be on February 18, 2026.

8. Adjournment (Timestamp: 1:49:37)

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.