

Durham Staff Working Group
August 16, 2023
MEETING NOTES

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, at 1:00pm in the Durham County Admin II Building, Room 461, 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
Jenny Green (Voting Member)	City of Durham
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Ryan Eldridge	Durham County
Filmon Fishastion	DCHC MPO
Kelly Fomenko*	DCHC MPO
Eric Simpson	City of Durham
Jacob Vander Vis**	City of Durham
Liz Raskopf*	GoTriangle
Meg Scully*	GoTriangle
Sandra Freeman*	GoTriangle
Steven Schlossberg	GoTriangle
Paul Black**	GoTriangle
Courtney Wilson**	GoTriangle
Katie Urban**	GoTriangle
Nish Trivedi**	Orange County

Quorum Count: 4 of 4 Voting Members

*Attended remotely

**Attended remotely after roll call

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. Ellen Beckmann indicated there were none.

4. Administration

a. SWG Administration

i. Approval of June 2023 Minutes

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

ii. Durham County Website Update

Brandi Minor provided information on the new Durham County SWG website. It is still under construction but currently includes a brief overview of the purpose of the SWG and contains the 2022/2023 agendas and meeting minutes. Chair Doug Plachcinski acknowledged Jenny Green, who wanted to mention that the City Manager approved both her and Eric Simpson as voting members of the Durham SWG.

iii. Project Agreement Templates

Brandi Minor stated that revised copies of the global operating and capital agreements were provided by consultant Adam Howell. The original intent was for the SWG to approve the templates at today's meeting with the expectation that minor revisions would be forthcoming following the receipt of GoTriangle's Legal team comments as well as the revisions needed for Exhibit A.

Ellen Beckmann indicated that the templates were in pretty good shape and reminded the group that Adam's contract ends August 31st. The goal is to provide final comments by Friday and then vote on the final templates at the September meeting. Chair Doug Plachcinski stated that the same action was taken earlier at the Orange County SWG meeting. Ellen Beckmann asked if anyone had any specific issues we could discuss now and indicated that Durham County would have some minor adjustments to Exhibit A to include the project implementation metrics which would be consistent with what was presented to the Durham County Board of Commissioners. Steven Schlossberg said he believes we are all on the same page and asked if the templates could be sent out one last time to be sure. Ellen Beckmann mentioned that Adam had sent an email 30 minutes prior to the meeting, but that she hasn't had a chance to look at it; but plans to speak with Adam to confirm the schedule he would need to resolve any final comments. Chair Doug Plachcinski asked if the City of Durham, now having representation on the SWG, had any comments regarding the global templates. Jenny Green said they may have some staff to review the templates, but Ellen Beckmann responded that the templates were sent out months ago for review and at this point we must move forward. Jay Heikes made a motion to postpone the approval of the project templates to the September meeting. Ellen Beckmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Tax District Administration

i. Review Project Sheet Templates

Steven Schlossberg gave a presentation on the project budget sheet templates. The project sheets will be utilized for the FY25 Work Program. These project sheets are very similar to what has been shown in past work programs (to include project name, requesting agency, etc.) but will also now include a goals section, based on the discussions regarding Exhibit A of the Global Operating and Capital Agreements. There was a lot of discussion during this portion of the meeting. Jenny Green asked if questions number five and six could be consolidated into the justification as they both relate to the Durham Transit Plan. Ellen Beckmann stated that the project sheet should include a project implementation section that ultimately flows into what we track long term. To

address this comment, Steven Schlossberg mentioned he could add some blank spaces where the deliverables (project goals) could be listed. Ellen Beckmann commented that we should have a standardized reporting format. Meg Scully asked if we should already have the metrics before trying to put them on the form and commented that we should all agree on what the metrics are so everyone is reporting on the same metrics for the same type of project. Ellen Beckmann stated that the overall goal is to tell the story to the governing boards and the public in a simplified but concise way.

Ryan Eldridge mentioned that the metrics will tie into the Transit Tracker. The idea for the tracker is not to have metrics per project, but instead to create overarching metrics that touch multiple projects. As an example, Ellen Beckmann mentioned that we could also track the number of crosswalks improved within the Bus Stop Improvement program, but Meg Scully responded that the metrics for the tracker should be specific and only track the true purpose and intent of the project, and to include those other metrics (like the crosswalks) in an annual report, one-pager or as additional information listed somewhere in the tracker. Paul Black commented that the goals need to be realistic as there may be unforeseen challenges to completing projects, especially as it relates to the Bus Stop Improvement Program. Jay Heikes stated that GoTriangle is working with Durham County on an example project template for the Durham Bus Stop Improvements to help support and continue to justify the two new positions that are aimed at addressing some of the backlog in Durham, as these can get hung up in the legal, NCDOT, right-of-way, etc. Ellen Beckmann reiterated that we want the project sponsors to come up with realistic and achievable goals and schedules as we want to show success at the end of the year. Steven Schlossberg suggested asking consultant Adam Howell to review the project budget sheet as a means of being proactive in case something is missing.

ii. Financial Reports Schedule Update

Steven Schlossberg gave a presentation on the financial reports schedule. Before discussing the schedule, he introduced a stop-light progress report similar to the reimbursement template, that has been successful in Wake County. This report provides a high-level overview of the status on each project; and has been revised to include the option to select from five different status updates via a drop-down menu. This report along with the quarterly reimbursement request will be included on SharePoint. Regarding the financial reporting schedule, it highlights when the SWG will receive local revenue updates, the due dates for the quarterly reimbursements, as well the dates we will receive the quarterly financial presentations.

c. Public Engagement and Communication

i. GoForward website updates

Liz Raskopf provided an update on the status of the GoForward website updates. Along with her Senior Graphic Designer and Webmaster, they reviewed the pages of the website and provided a list of questions and potential updates to Brandi Minor via email for review. Liz is also working on a strategy for an annual schedule of engagement that she plans to submit to the County next week.

ii. Active Campaigns

Liz Raskopf provided an update on the active campaigns. They are currently in the public comment period for the GoDurham and GoTriangle short-range transit plans. The comment period opened on August 7th and will close on September 1st and has had about 200 participants so far in the survey. Ellen Beckmann asked about social media accounts. Liz Raskopf responded that their marketing team recommends the sponsoring entities to post their own information and GoTriangle can pick up or share the information via tagging to avoid having multiple posts being distributed.

iii. Transit Tracker development

Ryan Eldridge provided an update on the Transit Tracker. He mentioned that he is currently working with the Durham County IS&T and Purchasing departments to draft and develop an RFQ to select a web designer to put together this project. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the implementation metrics will be incorporated into the tracker and it is the hope that once we have that information, it can be provided to the web designer so they may create the graphics that correspond to the metrics. He is also looking to implement something a little more intuitive on the back end, where the raw data can be input directly into the back end of the website and be reflected either instantly or with some kind of review process afterwards directly into the graphics.

5. Work Program

a. FY24 Work Program

i. Overview of Amendment Process & Schedule

Brandi Minor provided an overview of the quarterly amendment process schedule for Q2. The deadline for Q2 amendments is August 31. She is working with the Durham County IS&T department to setup a separate email address where public comments may be received. The amendment submission process requires preparing a memo and the associated project sheet and submitting to the SWG Administrator.

ii. FAST Study Amendment

Steven Schlossberg commented that at the Orange County SWG meeting, there was discussion about having one person or lead agency submit the amendment rather than having everyone submit their own. Jay Heikes responded and said GoTriangle's interest is having one sponsor from the transit plan to fund the shares from the agencies and Durham County. Jay also indicated that Orange County reached a tentative agreement that they would be the sponsor for GoTriangle, Chapel-Hill Transit and Orange County to reduce the administrative burden of having separate agreements with NCDOT. Durham County will be submitting a FAST 2 Study amendment in the amount of \$110,000, which represents \$50,000 each for the County and City of Durham, and \$10,000 (20% match) for GoTriangle. This amendment will be presented at the SWG meeting in September with expected approval from the BOCC in November.

b. FY25 Work Program

i. Review Schedule and any upcoming tasks for September

Brandi Minor reviewed the Work Program Development and Approval Schedule tasks for September. There were only two tasks on the schedule, which included GoTriangle creating the project sheet templates and the SWG Administrator developing the work program timeline.

6. Project Sponsor Updates

a. Durham County Transit Plan

Ellen Beckmann stated the plan is approved.

b. Transit Governance Study

Ellen Beckmann stated that the study will end on August 31 and the agreement template was the last task we have the time and budget for. The SWG will be tasked with addressing governance issues going forward.

c. Short Range Transit Plans

Jay Heikes stated that there is an aggressive and exciting schedule that is planned to conclude at the end of the year. He is also planning to have the documents ready for adoption by the City of Durham and GoTriangle in January. A second engagement period is scheduled before the Thanksgiving holiday.

d. Commuter Rail

Jay Heikes said there is no update but there is a RAIL sub-committee meeting next week. Doug Plachcinski commented that there was a DCHC RAIL sub-committee meeting this past Monday and it was very clear from the elected officials that they want to see cooperation with NCDOT.

e. Bus Rapid Transit / FAST Study

Doug Plachcinski stated that the approach will likely be to try and bring in some strategic thought leadership on how to go about delivering this project and having them work with stakeholders to come up with a project scope and concept.

f. Future project updates agenda assignment (organize by Sponsor)

Brandi Minor asked if we should organize the project updates by sponsor on the agenda in case there are projects not on the list that needs to be discussed. It was unanimously agreed that this would be a great idea.

7. Next Meeting – September 20, 2023

Doug Plachcinski announced that the next Durham County SWG meeting will be September 20.

8. Adjournment

Prior to the adjournment, Meg Scully asked if GoTriangle could participate in the thought leadership process for the BRT study. She also mentioned there was a lot of interest in having

Orange County participate to make it more of a regional initiative. Doug Plachcinski commented that he would appreciate GoTriangle's participation and support. Ellen Beckmann responded that she is receiving a lot of questions regarding the BRT schedule, and that since the FAST 2 study amendment going forward for approval to the Durham County BOCC in November, it would be the perfect time to include an update on the BRT study and how it relates to the FAST 2 study.

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.