

Durham Staff Working Group
September 20, 2023
MEETING NOTES

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 1:00pm in the Durham County Admin II Building, Room 466, as well as through the Microsoft Teams platform. The following members and guests were in attendance:

Colleen McGue (Acting 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
Ryan Eldridge	Durham County
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Filmon Fishastion*	DCHC MPO
Brian Fahey*	City of Durham
Bill Judge*	City of Durham
Eric Simpson	City of Durham
Jennifer Hayden*	GoTriangle
Nathan Kemp*	GoTriangle
Wendy Mallon*	GoTriangle
Steven Schlossberg	GoTriangle
Meg Scully*	GoTriangle
Austin Stanion	GoTriangle
Katie Urban*	GoTriangle
Courtney Wilson*	GoTriangle
Darlene Laws**	Orange County
Nish Trivedi**	Orange County

Quorum Count: 4 of 4 Voting Members

*Attended remotely

**Attended remotely after roll call

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

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

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

Acting Chair Colleen McGue asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were none.

3. Public Comment

Acting Chair Colleen McGue asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

4. Administration

a. SWG Administration

i. Approval of August 2023 Minutes

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

ii. Agenda Request Form

Brandi Minor provided information on the new Agenda Request Form and the process. The form should be submitted two weeks prior to the next SWG meeting, and the associated attachments may be submitted one week before the meeting. Steven Schlossberg and Jenny Green asked if a reminder email can be sent to remind the SWG of the agenda submission deadline. Brandi Minor replied that she would send a reminder email. Meg Scully asked if the form is in addition to any items on the pre-set agenda. Brandi Minor replied yes, but any attachments needing to be submitted for the pre-set agenda items should be sent by the established deadlines of the form.

iii. Move the December 2023 SWG Meeting date to December 18th

Brandi Minor stated that a discussion was had amongst some SWG members regarding the December meeting. The original meeting date was scheduled for December 20th. However, as this date is very close to the Christmas holiday and a lot of people would be taking time off, it would be feasible to move the meeting to Monday, December 18th. Ellen Beckmann mentioned that December 20th is also the same date as the TC and GoTriangle Board meetings so there would be multiple conflicts. Ellen Beckmann also stated that the same conflict would exist for the November SWG meeting and recommended we move this date as well. Steven Schlossberg asked how moving the meeting dates would affect the submission of the templates. Ellen Beckmann made a motion to move the November meeting to November 13th and the December meeting to December 18th. The motion was passed unanimously.

iv. Project Agreement Templates

Brandi Minor stated that the contract with consultant Adam Howell ended on August 31st; but that two clean and final versions of the Operating and Capital project agreement templates were provided to the SWG. Brandi Minor opened the discussion for any minor changes wanting to be made to the templates. Steven Schlossberg mentioned that at the Orange County SWG meeting that morning, they decided to have an offline discussion in the second week of October to discuss some of the changes and concerns some of the municipalities had, which resulted in them delaying their approval to the next month's meeting. Steven Schlossberg then stated that GoTriangle had no concerns with the operating or capital agreement, nor the Capital Exhibit A. Steven Schlossberg then stated that there is some concern on the Operating Exhibit A, as there are a lot of projects and GoTriangle wants to know if the Exhibit A may be streamlined, and/or verify that it makes sense to complete the forms in their current format. Steven Schlossberg then reiterated that at the Orange SWG, the partners were adamant that they wanted the agreements to be consistent. Steven Schlossberg also brought up the quarterly reimbursement request discussion that he had with Brandi Minor and a few others via email prior to the meeting. This discussion was regarding the language GoTriangle added to the agreement, stating that Durham County would be held to the same standards and review process that GoTriangle currently follows. Steven Schlossberg mentioned that Brandi Minor had added some language regarding the documentation that would be required during the review process and wants to make it clear that if this language is included in the

agreement that it should be consistent for all partners. Brandi Minor stated that she agrees there should be consistency but wants to reiterate that the documentation requirements for Durham County may not be the same as the other partners. In the review of GoTriangle's Q4 reimbursement request, the Durham County Finance team requested the project detail in addition to the other documentation provided by GoTriangle. Brandi Minor then stated that in her review of the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, there are no specific documentation requirements outlined, and that it only mentioned that the project template and required documentation are needed but doesn't define what the supporting documentation should be. Brandi Minor then mentioned that the documentation provided to GoTriangle for the Durham reimbursement request is beyond what GoTriangle requires to be submitted; but is provided since the Durham County Finance team requires this information during their review process. Brandi Minor reiterated that it is not her intention to dictate what other partners do, to which Steven Schlossberg replied that his point is just that everybody is held to the same standard. Steven Schlossberg stated that GoTriangle is used to providing a lot of detail during their audit process and reiterated that he would prefer the requirements to be consistent across the board. Colleen McGue asked if this issue is something that needs to be defined today or is this something we can put a placeholder in and determine in the future. Steven Schlossberg replied that it can be the latter and that this is the first time we are using these global templates so the process will evolve over time. Steven Schlossberg then stated that he does not feel this matter should hold up the process; that it is something we can wait on but also something that we want to get right to avoid a double standard later. Ellen Beckmann mentioned that the information Durham County requested is stuff we all produce anyway, it's just a matter of sharing it and that we should not worry about it being burdensome. Colleen McGue stated that Orange County delayed their approval of the agreements to the next meeting, and this could be an option for Durham SWG. Ellen Beckmann replied that she was aware of the delay in Orange County, and that Durham SWG delayed the approval of the templates last month after having gone through the governance study process and workshops, with multiple deadlines and time to review the templates which she believes are in good shape. Ellen Beckmann also reiterated that this is a template for staff purposes that doesn't get approved by any of our governing boards until the Spring. There may be tweaks needed, which is reasonable, but we need to make progress because there is a deadline in place that was specified in the agreements to have all these things in place by the Spring. Brandi Minor responded that she agrees the minor tweaks needed should not hold up the approval process; and that the templates can be approved with the expectation that there will be minor tweaks. Meg Scully stated that the template says it can be used to summarize each individual project or it could be used to summarize all projects, and in her mind that is hugely different, and she would want to decide that before approving the template. Ellen Beckmann responded that Exhibit A is the project sheet in the work program and there will be individual project sheets for each operating project just as there is today. It is possible that we would want to consolidate similar projects, such as Tax District Administration, Financial Staff and Support Services, and the SWG should be open to that but in general there will be individual project sheets and individual Exhibit A's. Ellen Beckmann also stated that there will be one text agreement with attachments for each project and that Exhibit A will be populated by the information provided by each project sponsor in the red and green sheets. Ellen Beckmann made a motion to approve the project agreement templates with the understanding that there may be tweaks but generally the current template outlines what we expect them to look like. Jay Heikes asked if we would accept a friendly amendment that we set a certain

date to work through some of these tweaks. Steven Schlossberg asked if this would be to see the final draft, to which Jay Heikes responded that Jenny Green had expressed interest in additional time to review, but that we could also leave the motion as is to see if it passes. Jenny Green stated that if we want to be able to use these exhibits as part of the work plan that gets released in January, we should be firming this up by November. Ellen Beckmann responded that Exhibit A is the work that will require the most effort and that we're going to get started working on these after today's meeting. Jay Heikes asked if Exhibit A is the new project budget submittal sheet. Ellen Beckmann responded that the red and green sheets will be used to populate the information for Exhibit A. Steven Schlossberg mentioned that each sponsor will create their sheets. Ellen Beckmann said everything will be tied into the tracker, which will summarize and display the agreed upon metrics. Colleen McGue redirected the SWG back to the prior motion and friendly amendment that was on the floor. Ellen Beckmann stated that because we will be releasing a draft work program in January, we will be working on these agreements and will probably find that stuff will need to be changed; therefore, if we have a pencils down date, she thinks it should be in January, but that we should move forward with getting the authorization now to start creating and working on the templates. Jay Heikes responded that he would revise his friendly amendment to say that we will revisit in January and adjust along the way as needed. Ellen Beckmann reiterated that this is for staff purposes and that no Board will be approving at this point. Steven Schlossberg recommended that at some point after this meeting, a final document should be sent out. Colleen McGue stated that we still have a motion on the floor. Ellen Beckmann responded that she does not agree with the friendly amendment and thinks we should approve the templates as is with the assurance we will continue to refine them as we learn and work through the process. Brandi Minor reiterated her stance that this is a template, and she does not believe the vote should be delayed. Colleen McGue asked if there was a second to Ellen Beckmann's motion, to which Jay Heikes specified would be without the friendly amendment. Jenny Green seconded the motion and the motion passed.

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 but will also include a justification section, which should describe why the project is a worthwhile investment for the transit fund. The sheets also include an implementation metrics and deliverables section. These were the only two major adjustments added to the project sheet. Any questions on the project budget sheets may be directed to Steven Schlossberg or Katie Urban. Steven Schlossberg stated that a SharePoint site will also be available soon, which will contain the templates and other documents such as the quarterly reimbursements. Jenny Green asked if the SharePoint link will be the same link as the reimbursement requests and project sheets. Steven Schlossberg responded yes, and that anyone that currently receives emails from Priscilla Bond will be given access to SharePoint. Jenny Green asked if for the FY25 project sheets, will we need to resubmit all the projects that are continuing from the last year and if so, will those projects be populated to the SharePoint so there would be a starting reference point. Steven Schlossberg responded that there is a master file from last year, but that the Staff Working Group

Administrator (Durham County) will work with each project sponsor to collect all the project sheets and will send them over to GoTriangle who will then create a consolidated spreadsheet, which will then be transferred into InDesign by the SWG Administrator. Steven Schlossberg also stated that he thinks the projects will need to be resubmitted, but he will confirm and let us know. Ellen Beckmann stated that the sheet has changed so the sheets will have to be resubmitted. Steven Schlossberg indicated that he would provide the old sheets for reference. Ellen Beckmann stated that in the long term, she would like this information to be input into a database to make the process easier. Jenny Green asked for clarification that GoTriangle as the Tax District Administrator would be hosting the SharePoint site, but that the County serving as the SWG Administrator would be responsible for sending out the deadlines and reminders. Brandi Minor confirmed this information and stated that she would be collecting the project sheets, to which Steven Schlossberg replied that it would be a collaborative effort between the County and GoTriangle. Jenny Green asked if the project sheet was available in Excel format, to which Steven Schlossberg replied yes and that he would send it out again via email. Ellen Beckmann stated that we will be tracking on most projects how much was spent versus how much was requested, along with the schedule and reiterated the importance of putting a realistic schedule as in the past some of the schedules presented were a little ambitious.

ii. FY25 Revenue Assumptions

Steven Schlossberg gave a presentation on the financial revenue estimate for FY23 and provided insight into what the FY25 budgeted revenues would be. The estimate for FY23 is approximately \$42.2M for the half-cent sales tax and overall, approximately \$46.3M including the registration fees and vehicle rental tax. This is around \$7M more than the estimated budget. Steven Schlossberg also reviewed the estimated expenses and estimated FY23 carryover. Ellen Beckmann mentioned that the carryover seemed relatively large compared to the actual spent. Steven Schlossberg replied that a lot is due to the timing of the projects, because the money has been authorized but not spent and should not be viewed as savings. Jay Heikes responded that for vehicle purchases, the money must be budgeted in an account two years before you pay as the payment is not made until the vehicles are delivered. Ellen Beckmann stated that she wants us to tell an accurate story and demonstrate that we have a good plan. Steven Schlossberg stated that they will continue to provide quarterly reports that show budget versus actual, and that the mid-year and end of year financial reports will also provide clarity, so the information isn't misleading. Eric Simpson suggested that it would be helpful to show the data by year. Steven Schlossberg replied that in the work plan, the information is broken out. Jay Heikes replied that speaking specifically on the Bus Stop Improvement project and the two additional staff members that were approved to improve the delivery speed of stops; that there were some internal conversations had and that the approach for FY25 is to keep the pipeline funded at its current level so that in FY26, once they have reviewed the results to determine if they were able to reach 40 stops, they will evaluate and set a new trendline and adjust the program at that time. Steven Schlossberg reiterated that there are ways to easily see the detail for each project and that quarterly reports will show more of the detail laid out by project. Jenny Green asked if a report could be produced that would show all the funding from inception to now, to which Steven Schlossberg replied he could provide this report and added that the remaining funding can

be viewed as part of the Q1 reimbursement template that will be uploaded next week. Steven Schlossberg then displayed a graph illustrating the half-cents sales tax in comparison to the Federal Reserve, noting that his graph has up to a three-month lag because they have not officially received the June numbers and the Feds are already providing their July and August numbers. In summary, the FY25 recommendation will be around \$43M, which is \$3M more than the FY24 adopted budget. Ellen Beckmann stated that the FY25 current financial model is not in the current adopted transit plan, to which Steven Schlossberg confirmed was correct, and that the transit plan captures a specific point in time. Ellen Beckmann pointed out that the rental car tax was included in the transit plan financial model but is not included in the current financial model. Ellen Beckmann then mentioned that the Work Program schedule stated that the SWG would convene a financial subcommittee to include the Durham County finance staff which will occur sometime in November. Steven Schlossberg replied that we can meet in November or earlier if needed. Jenny Green asked if the financial presentation can be sent out to the SWG to which Steven Schlossberg replied yes.

c. Public Engagement and Communication

i. GoForward website updates

Wendy Mallon provided an update on the status of the GoForward website updates and mentioned that Liz Raskopf who normally provides the updates from will be back in November. Wendy Mallon mentioned that she has already been working with Brandi Minor on the website updates, specifically as it relates to the Q2 Quarterly Amendment Public Comment Period. Brandi Minor stated as a reminder that she would be meeting with GoTriangle's Communications team the following Monday to discuss other website updates Liz Raskopf had provided prior to her absence. Ellen Beckmann asked if those updates would include information from the new transit plan and the priority language from the plan. Brandi Minor replied that those updates would be included and discussed at the Monday meeting. Wendy Mallon asked if Brandi Minor would be bringing any updates to the meeting on Monday or if it would be a general discussion around what needs to be updated. Brandi Minor replied that it would be a discussion and she would forward the email Liz Raskopf previously sent for reference as preparation for the Monday meeting.

ii. Transit Tracker Development

Ryan Eldridge provided an update on the Transit Tracker. He mentioned that he is still working with the Durham County IS&T and Purchasing departments to draft and develop an RFQ to select a web designer for this project. As it relates to the display metrics, there was a small group meeting earlier in the month to obtain some partner feedback on the development of the metrics; and he will get back in touch with those individuals to set another meeting and provide reworked materials to discuss. The goal is to develop some good metrics that will be provided to the web designer upon hire. Jenny Green asked how it ties into the budget sheet and if the tracker is dependent on the budget sheets. Ellen Beckmann replied that it all fits together and the metrics will need to be reported in the tracker.

5. Work Program

a. FY24 Work Program Amendments

Brandi Minor provided an overview of the two amendments received for Q2. The two amendments were the FAST 2 Study and Mobile Ticketing Technology. At the end of the discussion of the amendments, Ellen Beckmann made a motion to release the two amendments for public comment. The motion was seconded by Jay Heikes. The motion passed unanimously.

i. FAST 2 Study

This amendment was presented by Durham County to fund its financial commitment to the FAST 2 Study. The amount of this amendment is \$110,000. Additional documentation detailing the background and scope was provided by Ellen Beckmann which was included in the September agenda packet. Meg Scully stated that she wanted it to be clear in the amendment materials that the funding is from all three entities (Durham County, City of Durham and GoTriangle). Brandi Minor responded that this information was included on the project sheet. Jenny Green stated that she wanted to express appreciation to Durham County and GoTriangle for supporting this effort. Steven Schlossberg stated that he wanted to thank the County as well. Ellen Beckmann mentioned that she spoke to NCDOT staff on the need and desire for them to present on this study once it goes to Board of the Commissioners for approval in November, as there are a lot of questions about Bus Rapid Transit, specifically about who's doing what and how it all fits together. The intention is to work with them on a presentation, and to work with the MPO and GoTriangle on any other funded Bus Rapid Transit Studies. Jay Heikes mentioned that the FAST Study is focused on the arterial highway infrastructure that is there now and in places where we are running transit services.

ii. Mobile Ticketing Technology

This amendment was presented by GoTriangle. Steven Schlossberg commented that a revised amendment was submitted due to the original cost estimate by the vendor being incorrect. Austin Stanion, the project manager for this project, stated that this project is essentially upgrading the hardware on the vehicles and that one of the outcomes would be that the vehicles would be able to accept open payments, which is tapping your credit card directly on the reader or if you have Apple Pay or Google Pay, you may use your phone to pay. There are also routers included that will allow for mobile payments and increase the reliability and uptime of the vehicle, as well as ensure a reliable internet connection. Ellen Beckmann asked if this is in preparation to return to fares in FY25, to which Austin Stanion replied yes, they are preparing to return to fares on July 1, 2024. Ellen Beckmann also asked if this would help with low-income riders or the Go Passes. Austin Stanion replied that those discussions are ongoing but that this would allow someone with a prepaid debit card to tap and pay, but the low income Go Pass would either be a physical remote pass, or someone could have it on their mobile phone. Steven Schlossberg commented that because nobody has collected fares in 3.5 years, the equipment is outdated, and these upgrades would bring us current with what others within and outside the region are doing. Ellen Beckmann asked if this would be a one-time payment, to which Austin Stanion confirmed yes. Ellen Beckmann asked if the decision to return to

fares is final, to which Steven Schlossberg said no, and reiterated that the Board's guidance was to have everything ready in case they do return to fares, but no firm decision has been made. Jay Heikes stated that the Board directed staff to do the work necessary to prepare the equipment and to also prepare a low-income fare program. Jenny Green stated that the City is supportive of this request, and that they also do not have a decision on whether to return to fares, but indicated that they would probably be looking at similar upgrades if they do return to fares.

iii. Public Comment Period for Amendments

Brandi Minor provided an update on the upcoming public comment period which will begin on September 21st and end on October 12th. The GoForward website has been updated to include information on the amendments and the Durham County Communications team developed some graphics that will be posted weekly during the public comment period. The information will also be shared on the County's social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and NextDoor. Additionally, the Durham County Staff Working Group website also has information and supporting documentation regarding the amendments. Public Comments may be emailed to TransitPlan@dconc.gov. Steven Schlossberg asked if the comments would be sent out to the SWG every week, to which Brandi Minor replied that the comments would be collected and shared at the end of the public comment period.

b. FY25 Work Program

i. Review Schedule and any upcoming tasks for October

Brandi Minor reviewed the Work Program Development and Approval Schedule tasks for September. Jenny Green asked if the schedule has been adjusted to have the project sheets due in November as discussed at a previous meeting and if a due date has been established. Steven Schlossberg replied that he will work with Brandi Minor and Ellen Beckmann to have an email sent out by the end of next week detailing the due dates and expectations. Brandi Minor stated that there are several items from today's agenda that will require a follow-up and she will send out a recap email following the meeting so everyone will know what to expect ahead of the October meeting.

6. Project Sponsor Updates

a. Durham County

Ellen Beckmann stated the Governance Study contract has ended.

b. DCHC MPO

Colleen McGue stated that they are having conversations with consulting teams to assist with identifying the scope of the Bus Speed and Reliability Study.

c. GoTriangle

Jay Heikes stated that they received excellent public comments, including 400 online comments, for the Short-Range Transit Plan. There is a meeting tomorrow in which the

comments will be reviewed, and information will be shared about what they will bring back the public for their second phase of engagement. After the meeting, public engagement materials will be prepared, and the second public engagement will begin October 23rd which will conclude in November. The final plans will be ready for GoTriangle and GoDurham for their respective adoption processes in January.

Austin Stanion gave a presentation on the Durham Connect Program. They currently administer the two micro transit zones, North Durham and East Durham. North Durham was facing some budget issues at the end of the last fiscal year, but adjustments were made to this zone between June and July and now they are on track to stay within the FY24 budget. Another issue with the North Zone was that previously over half of the rides were beginning and ending in areas served by fixed route transit or potentially fixed route duplication. Program adjustments were made to reduce the potential fixed route duplication from 60% to around 15%. The program will continue to be monitored to ensure goals are met and that the program remains within budget. They will continue to work with the City of Durham to transfer this program over in FY25.

d. City of Durham

Eric Simpson gave a presentation update on the Durham Station. The presentation included an update on the progress, which is currently at 30% DD's. Photos were shown to show what the Bus Island/Restrooms will look like in the daytime and at night. Important milestones include NCCR Coordination (October 2023), Construction Drawing Approvals (June 2024), Council Award (September 2024), Groundbreaking (February 2025) and closeout is scheduled for February 2026 as it will take a year for construction. There have been changes in the market which have increased the cost. The original 2021 estimate was \$11M and now the 2023 estimate is \$18.3M. This is due to unprecedented construction escalation, unforeseen site conditions, safety and security, community engagement and other enhancements that were increased for user experience but not essential to function. The Value Engineering (Soffit, Coping, Lighting, Real Time Signs) was discussed which represents a potential savings of approximately \$1.6M. They are also looking to reduce scope and entertain some alternative materials/construction methods, which will be a potential total savings of \$3.1M. Finally, the next steps were reviewed which restates that the Groundbreaking event is scheduled to occur in February 2025.

Jenny Green reported on the FY23 GoDurham Operating Hours using County Transit Plan funds. They operated 58% of the budgeted hours from the FY23 Work Program. They did have a half of year service expansion programmed in there and they are still running on reduced service. But, if you remove the service expansion, GoDurham operated 74% of the approved transit plan funds. They are looking to do a service restoration on November 11th which will get them to 98% of the October 2020 service levels for weekdays and systemwide. They are working with the contractor to reach 100% of service by January 27, 2024, which will get them to pre-pandemic and be able to do some service expansion in April.

There are also six electric buses that will be arriving soon from California. They intend to have them into revenue service by the end of October. These buses were paid for by the FY21 Work Program.

7. Next Meeting – October 18, 2023

Colleen McGue announced that the next Durham County SWG meeting will be October 18.

8. Adjournment

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.