

Durham Staff Working Group
March 20, 2024
MEETING NOTES

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 1:00pm in the Durham County Admin II Building, Room 126, 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
Ryan Eldridge	Durham County
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Curtis Scarpignato	Durham County
Kelly Fomenko*	DCHC MPO
Monet Moore*	DCHC MPO
Brian Fahey	City of Durham
Eric Simpson	City of Durham
Paul Black*	GoTriangle
Liz Raskopf*	GoTriangle
Steven Schlossberg	GoTriangle
Meg Scully*	GoTriangle
Austin Stanion	GoTriangle
Katie Urban*	GoTriangle

Quorum Count: 4 of 4 Voting Members

*Attended remotely

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. There were none.

4. Administration

a. SWG Administration

i. Approval of February 2024 Minutes

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

b. Tax District Administration

i. Q2 Financial Report Update

Steven Schlossberg gave a presentation on the Q2 financials. The FY24 YTD Actuals (July – December 2024) for the ½ cent sales tax are more than 50% of the budgeted revenues. There has been a total of \$22,253,930 collected thus far. For the expenditures, there has been \$13,065,655 of the budgeted \$58,523,500 spent in FY24. The budget includes \$34M of previously adopted projects that have been carried forward. The Rainbow (Progress) Report was also reviewed, and most projects are on schedule.

c. Public Engagement and Communication

i. GoForward website updates

Liz Raskopf provided an overview of the engagement process for the FY25 Work Program. She stated that a final report was provided to Durham County which provides a detailed analysis of the comments received as well as some recommendations for improving the engagement efforts for next year. One improvement she recommends is providing a summary document for the Work Program since the document was over 200 pages. Another improvement would be to print the demographic questions for the in-person events to be able to capture a full picture of who responded during those events. Ellen Beckmann stated that the route specific comments received have been forwarded to the appropriate partners and that a response will also be sent to Bike Durham.

ii. Engagement Update

The engagement update was provided in the previous comments from Liz Raskopf.

iii. Transit Tracker Development

Ryan Eldridge mentioned that he is still in the procurement process for the consultant, but the process will be concluded soon. The contract has been approved by the BOCC, and he announced that the selected firm is FourSquare ITP, which is a firm located in the Arlington, VA area. The consultant will be onboard soon and information regarding kickoff will be provided soon. Ellen Beckmann also stated that this project is under budget. Jenny Green asked if the scope of work for the contract could be shared, to which Ryan Eldridge agreed.

5. Work Program

a. FY24 Work Program

i. Q4 Amendments

Brandi Minor stated that we received five (5) Q4 amendments. There are three (3) amendments from the City of Durham and two (2) amendments from GoTriangle. Each sponsoring agency was asked to provide a high-level overview

of their amendments. Jenny Green provided an overview of the City of Durham's amendments. Steven Schlossberg commented that the amendments won't be approved by both boards until the end of May. Brian Fahey responded that for the Swiftly contract, they understand there is some risk on their end regarding the timing of the contract and the City not being able to financially commit until the amendment is officially approved. There was some discussion regarding the increase in the cost of the Swiftly contract between the two sponsors (GoDurham and GoTriangle); Austin Stanion explained that the original cost of the contract was based on a significantly lower amount of vehicles than what is now the total fleet for GoDurham and GoTriangle. Jay Heikes provided an overview of the GoTriangle amendments. For clarity on their Swiftly contract, he mentioned they are rescinding the original FY25 request (Project 21GOT_AD14) and consolidating the cost of the contract into another project, Project ID 21GOT_AD13. Ellen Beckmann asked if other vendors were considered given the cost increase. Brian Fahey responded that there aren't a lot of vendors that provide this technology, and the ones that do are the current CAD/AVL vendors. Ellen Beckmann made a motion to release the amendments for public comment. Jenny Green seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. FY25 Work Program

i. Review final recommended FY25 Work Program

Brandi Minor provided an overview of the updates that have been made to the Work Program since the draft was released at the end of January. There were four (4) updates; three (3) for the City of Durham to include the decrease in the Increased Cost of Services (ICES), removal of the Vehicle Repower FY25 request, and the addition of the Data Visualization FY25 request; the fourth update is for GoTriangle and relates to the removal of the Data Visualization project and consolidating the Swiftly costs into an existing project. Steven Schlossberg asked if we could remove reference to the Vehicle Rental Tax from the Work Program since it is no longer a revenue source. Brandi Minor and Ellen Beckmann responded that the references to the vehicle rental tax are only in the narrative sections of the Work Program; and it was included because it was previously included as a revenue source in the 2023 Durham Transit Plan and should be noted to the public and the elected officials that it has since been removed. There was some additional discussion on finalizing the content for the Work Program and the SWG was advised that the final recommended Work Program will be presented to the BOCC on April 1st and will be approved on April 8th. After the final revisions were discussed, Ellen Beckmann made a motion to approve the FY25 Work Program. Jay Heikes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Brandi Minor stated that each project sponsor will receive copies of their project sheets along with the Global Operating and Capital agreement templates, as these agreements must be adopted by June 30, 2024. Doug Plachcinski stated that if a project sponsor is unable to execute the agreements before the Work Program takes effect July 1, then any expenses incurred would not be reimbursable until the agreement is in place, to which Steven Schlossberg agreed.

ii. Review Schedule and any upcoming tasks for next month

This item was inadvertently skipped but the next steps for the Work Program were discussed during the meeting in the prior section.

6. Project Sponsor Updates

a. Durham County

Ellen Beckmann announced that Durham County has a new employee, Curtis Scarpignato, who is the new Transportation Planner. She also stated that we received an additional \$850,000 for the Railroad Crossing Study, and we are currently working to get the grant agreement in place. Ellen also provided an update on the Employment Access project, stating that we have been working with the City on implementing travel services to the Museum of Life and Science. There has been a slow response from Museum staff, but hopefully it will be underway soon.

b. DCHC MPO

Doug Plachcinski provided an update for the MPO. He mentioned they have initiated stakeholder engagement on the Bus Speed and Reliability planning process.

c. GoTriangle

Austin Stanion provided an update on the Durham Connect Microtransit Program. The goal is to provide mobility options in areas identified with a high transit propensity but limited fixed route transit service. The GoTriangle pilot of this program is set to end on June 30th. In the past 12 months, there have been over 88,000 rides between the two zones by almost 3,000 riders. There have been major fluctuations in cost and some of the mobility patterns they've seen with the program were beyond the goals of the program. The East zone was launched first, followed by the launch of the North zone at the end of 2022. He provided additional insight into the metrics of the program, and stated they will be under budget for FY24. He also mentioned there will be one more program analysis completed at the end of the pilot to provide insight on the lessons learned which will be shared with the SWG.

Jay Heikes stated they recently implemented a service change and that there have been no reported significant issues with this change. He also mentioned there has been an improvement in retention, there are enough operators to meet their service changes, and they are hoping to expand.

d. City of Durham

Jenny Green stated that they have begun conversations with their technology vendor and service operator about starting the microtransit service in the two zones for next year. They are looking to start the program in September 2024, along with the GoDurham ACCESS contract amendment, and there will be a gap in services given that GoTriangle's Lyft program ends on June 30th.

Brian Fahey stated that they have adjusted the scope of the paratransit improvement study with two of their tasks; one which looked at expanding their user program and the other was looking at an additional pilot for county and city services. Their consultant is currently working on the cost and service models, and they are going through a decision tree process to talk through some scheduling models. He anticipates providing a more comprehensive update to the SWG at the next meeting or the meeting in May. He also mentioned that they are moving ahead with service expansion since COVID, as they restored 100% service back in January. They are scheduled for April 27th as their first expansion and the contractor is working to increase staffing levels by 35 operators over the next six months. Lastly, he wanted to thank the Durham County Transit Plan for the purchase of the electric buses. Overall, as compared to the first two buses, they are seeing approximately 172 miles versus

70 miles on the old buses, and the maintenance costs are averaging \$0.29 per mile whereas their hybrid vehicles are getting around \$2.10 per mile. They are hoping to replace the hybrid vehicles and are excited to see the overall lifecycle cost savings on the electric buses.

Eric Simpson stated that the City Council approved an amendment to the Durham Station design contract and the qualification plan which gives them the opportunity to reach out to contractors. They are anticipating having the Guaranteed Maximum Price approval on May 6th, followed by advertising for bids. There will be a bid-opening in mid-June and the contract execution will be in July, along with the anticipated groundbreaking and a tentative gold shovel event on July 29th.

7. Next Meeting – April 16, 2024

Brandi Minor announced the next Durham County SWG meeting will be April 16.

8. Adjournment

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