

**Durham Staff Working Group**  
**June 17, 2024**  
**MEETING NOTES**

The Durham Staff Working Group met on Monday, June 17, 2024, 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
Meg Scully* (Alternate, Voting Member)	GoTriangle
Jenny Green (Voting Member)	City of Durham
Brandi Minor	Durham County
Curtis Scarpignato	Durham County
Eric Simpson*	City of Durham
Paul Black*	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 May 2024 Minutes**

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

**ii. Approval of FY25 Schedules**

1. FY25 SWG Meeting Calendar
2. FY26 Work Program Development Schedule
3. FY25 Work Program Amendment Schedule

Brandi Minor reviewed the three documents needing approval. The FY25 meeting calendar has two dates that are scheduled outside of the normal meeting day to accommodate the holiday schedule. Brandi also mentioned that she is planning to secure a smaller meeting room for FY25, since in-person attendance does not

require the larger and more popular conference rooms on the fourth floor. On the FY26 Work Program Schedule, Brandi stated that all items highlighted in blue are new tasks. She also explained each of the new items in detail to ensure the SWG is aware of the schedule changes. Brandi also stated that any items highlighted in pink involve approval or review by the BOCC. Jenny Green asked if we could add due dates to the Work Program Schedule, to which Brandi Minor stated that she would revise and resend the schedule. Jenny Green also asked if the SWG partners would be asked to complete both the project budget sheets and the Exhibit A's again this year, to which Brandi replied yes. Jenny Green asked if the pre-list and the Q2 amendments can be due on the same day, which is 8/29/24, to which Brandi replied yes. Ellen Beckmann provided a recap of the main due dates, stating the pre-list and Q2 amendments will be due on 8/29/24; the project budget sheets will be due in mid-October, prior to the SWG meeting; and the Exhibit A's will be due prior to the Christmas holiday. Brandi agreed that this was the correct schedule. Brandi then reviewed the amendment schedule. She stated the schedule is pretty consistent with last year's schedule. Ellen Beckmann commented that the Q4 amendment public comment cycle runs the same time as the Work Program, which could be problematic for residents and may limit the public's feedback. Brandi Minor agreed and stated that an effort would be made to increase public engagement for both the amendments and Work Program. Jenny Green made a motion to approve the FY25 schedules. Ellen Beckmann seconded the motion.

### **iii. Real Property Discussion**

Brandi Minor stated that a Real Property Policy needs to be developed over the next few months in conjunction with the SWG. Development of this policy was also recommended by the BOCC during one of their meetings. Ellen Beckmann stated that Wake County has a policy and asked if anyone from the partner organizations wanted to participate with policy development. Ellen mentioned Gary Tober from GoTriangle possibly participating, to which Meg Scully agreed. Brandi Minor stated that she would send an email to the SWG regarding next steps.

## **b. Tax District Administration**

### **i. FY24 Q3 Financial Report**

Katie Urban provided an update on the Rainbow Report, which provides a status update of all Work Program projects. Katie also shared a financial update through Q3, with the data being current as of February 2024. Katie's report indicates that we have collected 68% of the ½ sales cent tax, and the carryover projection for FY24 is \$32.9M but will be adjusted for the actuals once the fiscal year has been finalized. Katie also reiterated that the Rainbow Report should be submitted along with the quarterly reimbursement requests. Ellen Beckmann stated that collected 68% of revenues is a little lower than the expected 75%. Katie Urban responded these figures do not include March, but when March is finalized, the revenues should be over our goal. Regarding expenditure estimates, historically Q3 is usually lower due to timing issues of when invoices are submitted, but the expenditures should catch up in Q4, which is the same trend as last year.

## **c. Public Engagement and Communication**

### **i. GoForward website updates**

Meg Scully stated that Liz Raskopf was still in the process of obtaining the final documents (Work Programs) from prior years. Meg Scully also provided an update of the return to fare engagement, which includes GoTriangle staff being in the field at high ridership stops and stops at routes that don't have high ridership. This engagement has been going on for about six weeks.

## **ii. Transit Tracker Development**

Curtis Scarpignato mentioned that a partner workshop was held earlier this month, and since then the consultants have been following up with the partners. There will be more to come at a later date.

## **5. Work Program**

### **a. FY25 Work Program**

#### **i. Approval of FY25 Work Program**

Meg Scully stated that the Durham FY25 Work Program was approved at the GoTriangle Board of Trustees meeting. Meg also stated that an interim FY25 budget for GoTriangle, as well as an interim FY25 Wake County Work Program were approved, which will require both parties to revisit and come to a resolution at a later date. Meg mentioned that the impact of the latter two approvals is unclear at this time. Ellen Beckmann asked if the approved GoTriangle interim budget includes the retention of the vehicle rental tax. Meg replied that it is her understanding that the FY24 budget will serve as the interim FY25 budget and indicated we should wait for guidance and expect to see an action that will resolve the issue, in hopes of everyone being able to move forward with their projects. Ellen Beckmann asked if this was a 60-day budget, to which Meg Scully replied that per her understanding, the interim budget starts July 1 and additional information would be forthcoming. Ellen Beckmann asked if GoTriangle would issue guidance to which Meg replied she was unsure. Doug Plachcinski stated that he understands it will take GoTriangle some time to unpack the decisions made at their board meeting and the SWG will give them time to do this. Jenny Green stated that the City of Durham has some upcoming significant service changes and having guidance from GoTriangle would be helpful. Meg Scully replied and suggested that Durham send a request for clarification to GoTriangle, which can be submitted through her if necessary. Later in the meeting, Meg received a message from Katharine Eggleston who was in a meeting with the GoTriangle legal team, who reiterated that the approval of the Durham and Orange FY25 Work Programs at the GoTriangle Board meeting are valid, and that GoTriangle and Wake County are the only entities in an interim state. Meg again reiterated that if anyone wants a more official response to contact Chuck Lattuca (GoTriangle's President & CEO) directly and copy her.

#### **ii. Global Agreement Approval Updates from Partners**

Brandi Minor asked all partners to provide an update on the approval status of the global agreements. Brandi then mentioned that the Durham County global agreements were approved by the BOCC and need to be routed for signature. It was also confirmed by Jenny Green that the City of Durham received approval of their global agreements on May 20<sup>th</sup> and theirs are being routed for signatures.

Doug Plachcinski stated that the MPO global agreements will be approved at the board meeting next Tuesday.

**b. FY26 Work Program**

Brandi Minor stated that the last task for FY25 Work Program is the approval by the GoTriangle Board of Trustees. Brandi also stated that the only task on the FY26 Work Program Schedule for July is the creation of the project budget sheet templates. Brandi mentioned that she will coordinate with Katie Urban on this task. Brandi then stated that there will be no SWG meeting in July, and the SWG will reconvene in August.

**6. Project Sponsor Updates**

**a. GoTriangle**

**i. Regional Technology Plan**

Austin Stanion provided an update on the Regional Technology Plan, which he stated should take about nine months. Austin reviewed the six focus areas and indicated that two of the six have been designated as Fall 2025 priorities which they hope to incorporate into the FY26 budgeting process. The first priority is Passenger Real-Time & Trip Planning, and the second priority is Transit Service Planning Tools. Following a detailed overview of the focus areas, Austin then reviewed the timeline created by Technology group for the Regional Technology Plan. The Durham SWG will receive an update on the plan in December 2024 which will include an overview of findings and next steps. In April 2025, the SWG will receive a draft engagement plan and will also be asked to approve the plan. Austin also mentioned there will be some public engagement for the plan. Regarding next steps, Austin indicated that the project management team will convene to finalize the scope with their consultant followed by contract execution.

**ii. Low-Wealth Fare Program**

Meg Scully mentioned that this program was meant to be a zero-fare program for qualifying low-wealth population as GoTriangle prepares to return to fares, after an over 4-year hiatus. The objectives of the program will be to maximize the program usage among eligible individuals. The goal is to have minimal administrative costs associated with program implementation. To qualify in FY25, participants should be between the ages of 19 to 64, currently receive Medicaid or EBT/Snap benefits, and have an annual income of less than \$35,000/year. To keep the enrollment simple and minimize barriers, self-certification is being proposed with monitoring to ensure the number of registered participants does not exceed expectations. There will be an online enrollment portal where participants will register and receive their GoPass benefit activation code which they'll use for the UMO Mobile Ticketing. Agencies will also be required to have an in-person enrollment location. GoTriangle is also working with service providers to persons who would qualify for these programs to expand their reach. They will also continue to monitor the program and adjust as needed. Jenny Green asked if there is a website people can go to for additional information on this program, to which Meg provided.

**b. City of Durham**

**i. GoDurham Service Changes**

Jenny Green provided a presentation of the August 2024 Service Changes. The August 2024 service changes are focused on improving GoDurham bus service in North Durham with 30-minute service on all routes at all times and a new connection from locations in North Durham to Duke/VA Hospitals. In addition, the recommendations include changes to other routes to improve the reliability of the service. The specifics of the changes may be found in the memo provided by the City of Durham in the agenda packet. These service changes will not have a financial impact on the FY25 Work Program. There was some discussion on if the service changes could be better aligned with the approval of the Work Program, in an effort to not have to amend a recently approved Work Program.

**c. Durham County**

Ellen Beckmann stated the BOCC is scheduled to approve the final grant agreement for the Durham RAIL-crossing, Engagement, Planning, and Innovative Revitalization (Durham REPAIR) Study on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>.

**d. DCHC MPO**

Doug Plachcinski stated that the MPO has worked with a consultant to put together a request for letters of intent scoping document to create a process to address the transit plan funding that is tied to regional, fast and reliable connections. Doug believes they have a really good document and mentioned they have received some feedback from some the partners that have been incorporated into the project. Doug then stated that the MPO does not have staff capacity to support this project as the previous designated staff person is no longer employed with the MPO. Doug stated that he would like to schedule a separate meeting with Durham County, City of Durham, and GoTriangle to discuss how to move forward.

**7. Next Meeting Date – August 21, 2024**

Brandi Minor announced the next Durham County SWG meeting will be August 21, 2024.

**8. Adjournment**

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