



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WORK SESSION
MEETING MINUTES**

4600 Emperor Boulevard
Suite 100
Durham, NC 27703

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

3:00 p.m.

GoTriangle Board Room

Board members present | Sally Greene, Brenda Howerton, Sig Hutchinson, Vivian Jones, Jennifer Robinson [left 1:25 p.m.], Stelfanie Williams [arr. 12:38 p.m.]

Board members attending remotely | Mary-Ann Baldwin, Valerie Jordan [left 1:00 p.m.], Elaine O'Neal

Board members absent | Corey Branch, Michael Fox, Michael Parker [excused]

Chair Sig Hutchinson officially called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

Action: A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Greene to adopt the agenda. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Chuck Lattuca introduced Monica Barrow with STV to share the feasibility study results. The presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Study results

- Commuter rail offers travel time savings, labor force connectivity and productivity and other benefits.
- 27% of the region's affordable housing exists within a mile of the rail corridor.
- Commuter rail could have 12,000-18,000 daily boardings by 2040.
- Freight, intercity and commuter rail services can reliably coexist.
- Capital cost for rail infrastructure and equipment is \$2.8-\$3.2 billion.
- This cost is more than the available funding identified for commuter rail in the Wake Transit Plan and the draft Durham Transit Plan, but phased implementation is possible.
- Western segment – highest risk
 - Capital cost \$1.6 billion [exceeds the financial capacity of the Durham Transit Plan at this time]
 - Daily riders 3,000
 - Timeframe 12 years
- Central segment – medium risk
 - Capital cost \$800,000 - \$1 billion
 - Daily riders 4,000
 - Timeframe 10 years
- Eastern segment – lowest risk
 - Capital cost \$600,000-\$700,000
 - Daily riders 4,000
 - Timeframe 8 years

Additional concepts

- NC-147/Durham Freeway corridor
 - Bridges reinforced or rebuilt
 - Traffic impacts – reducing travel lanes or comingling
 - Adjacent/related projects
 - New location for East Durham station
 - Environmental Impact Statement most like required and longer construction duration likely
 - Not likely to have lower capital cost or faster implementation schedule
- Dedicated tracks
 - Negotiation with NCRRT for acquisition or long-term lease of corridor, is a departure from NCRRT's current four-track vision for the corridor
 - Study and design for Raleigh Union Station and Cary Multimodal Facility
 - Not likely to have lower capital cost or faster implementation schedule
- Western terminus closer to Angier Avenue, near Glover Road, is feasible

Feasibility Study Results Public Engagement Summary

Eric Curry introduced Liz Raskopf to provide a summary of the public engagement. Elise Bielen also was present.

Raskopf stated that over the 45 day public comment period, 20 in-person events were held and over 6,000 survey responses were received. The first round of public comment in September 2020 had fewer than 3,000 responses. Eighty-five percent of respondents support a first phase of construction beginning with the central portion of the corridor, with 11% opposing. Sixty-eight percent of respondents support a first phase of construction beginning with the Eastern scenario, with 27% opposing. Eighty-three percent of those who responded support continued planning for the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail project; 13% were opposed. Support was evenly distributed by geography and race.

Howerton expressed concern that the majority of survey respondents were in higher income brackets. Robinson and Greene asked about responses from current riders. Raskopf responded that 18% of respondents reported they did use current public transportation. She said only two percent of the region's population ride transit. Williams suggested looking for trends between those that ride the buses and those that do not.

Feasibility Study Recommendations and Next Steps

Katharine Eggleston reminded the board that phase one of the feasibility study was a wider geographic area from Mebane to Selma, which identified the most feasible area for a project as west Durham to Garner or Clayton, with multiple phases of implementation with extensions in the future to realize that full vision for rail for the greater Triangle region.

Jordan left.

Auburn to West Durham - Base Case

- \$3.059 billion YOE capital cost
- \$42 million operation & maintenance cost
- 30-minute peak service [8-2-8-2]
- 12,000 weekday boardings - 2040
- Revenue service by 2035
- 37.6 miles

Raleigh Union to Ellis Road

- \$878 million YOE capital cost
- \$16.8 million operation & maintenance cost
- Hourly service
- 4,000 weekday boardings - 2040
- Revenue service by 2033
- 20.2 miles

Auburn to Raleigh Union Station

- \$596 million YOE capital cost
- \$14.9 million operation & maintenance cost
- Hourly service
- 4,000 weekday boardings - 2040
- Revenue service by 2031
- 9.6 miles

Auburn to RTP

- \$1.697 billion YOE capital cost
- \$28.7 million operation & maintenance cost
- Hourly service
- 8,000 weekday boardings - 2040
- Revenue service by 2033
- 26.5 miles

Key Findings

- Adding stations and track will add substantial cost.
- More analysis would be required to evaluate the cost of different options; cost estimates cannot be added together.
- Initial implementation options have different estimated time horizons and different cost assumptions.
- The base year for cost estimation is 2022; current year of expenditure cost estimates will likely increase as the base year is updated and the timeline of development evolves.
- Station locations, design elements and ridership estimation would be refined throughout project development and engineering.
- Ridership modeling shows downtown Raleigh as the destination for most trips.
- Most trips originate near the stations farthest from Raleigh, RTP/Ellis Road and Auburn in Garner.
- Including Ellis Road does not increase ridership in relation to an option that stops at the RTP station.

Eggleston stated that the project may not be eligible for federal funding through the Capital Investment Grants program due to changes in ridership and cost estimation. She added that FTA will be updating the guidance that determines project eligibility. Future phases of the project could make it more competitive for funds by planning for job and population density in station areas. Before proceeding, plans should provide local financial commitment for the full cost of initial implementation. Timing for phased implementation will depend on the availability of funding. Increased funding for a second phase to deliver the project sooner could constrain funding for other projects.

Regarding Durham, the capital cost of the portion of the full project in Durham County is estimated to be at least \$1.6 billion. The Durham Transit Plan has allocated \$195 million for the capital cost of the commuter rail project plus additional funding for operations between 2022 and 2040. The most

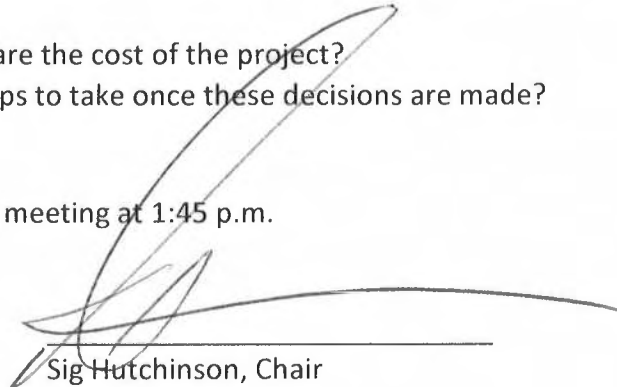
significant design challenges identified by the feasibility study are associated with a Norfolk Southern rail yard in east Durham. Capital cost share for Durham, based on mileage in the county, would be \$210 million for the Raleigh to Ellis Road scenario and \$95 million for Auburn to RTP. Eggleston said that in order to overcome the challenges that have been identified in the feasibility study in Durham will require a multi-phased approach. She stated that GoTriangle and Durham County staff worked to submit an application for funding to study some of the rail crossing related challenges in east Durham and also are working to identify other small steps that could chip away at those challenges such as federal grant opportunities that would address safety-related issues and track capacity needs related to the yard in east Durham.

Robinson left.

Questions to be answered

- Should the project move forward?
- Which portion of the project will be delivered first?
- What funding sources will provide the local financial commitment for the cost of initial implementation?
- How will the funding partners share the cost of the project?
- What are the immediate next steps to take once these decisions are made?

Action: Chair Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.



Sig Hutchinson, Chair

Attest:



Michelle C. Dawson, CMC
Clerk to the Board