

# Orange County Transit

## *Plan Progress Report Fiscal Year 2017*

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

### BACKGROUND

Recognizing the benefits of transit for all, voters in 2012 approved a half-cent sales tax to support funding for the Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan (now called the Orange County Transit Plan), and the tax levy began in April 2013. In fiscal 2017, that sales tax provided \$6,854,397 to support the Orange County Transit Plan.

Here's a look at the transit plan's long-term goals as well as its accomplishments, projects and finances during fiscal year 2017. In addition to making progress on implementing the plan, this past winter and spring, GoTriangle worked closely with staff and elected officials from Orange County, the towns of Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Hillsborough, and the Durham-Chapel Hill-

Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) to update the transit plan's projects, services and financial assumptions. In April 2017, Orange County, GoTriangle, and the DCHC MPO adopted the updated plan, which will guide how the countywide transit tax revenue will be spent. View the Orange County Transit Plan at [ourtransitfuture.com/plans/orange/](http://ourtransitfuture.com/plans/orange/).

Orange County's population of **141,796**

in 2016 is predicted to jump to

**172,000** by 2037.

Services and Projects Implemented by Chapel Hill Transit, Orange Public Transportation, the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, and GoTriangle

### **Long-Range Goals:**

- Improve overall mobility and transportation options in the region.
- Provide geographic equity.
- Support improved capital facilities.
- Support transit-supportive land use.
- Provide positive impact on air quality.

## FISCAL YEAR 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Service Improvements Implemented:**

- Added more frequent service on GoTriangle Route 400 (Durham–Patterson Place–Chapel Hill). It operates every half hour from the beginning of service to 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday.
- Added new peak-hour service from Carrboro to Durham on GoTriangle Route 405 (Durham–Chapel Hill/Carrboro).

### **Capital Projects Implemented:**

- Began property acquisition for the Hillsborough Park-and-Ride Lot.
- Prepared Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional services to include feasibility study and design for the Hillsborough Transfer Center.

# CHAPEL HILL NORTH-SOUTH BUS RAPID TRANSIT (NS BRT) PROJECT UPDATE

The North-South Bus Rapid Transit (NS BRT) project is an 8.2-mile-long multi-modal (transit, bicycle and pedestrian) project along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, South Columbia Street and US 15-501 South. The goals are to improve access, capacity, convenience and travel time for riders from the Eubanks Road Park-and-Ride Lot to the Southern Village Park-and-Ride Lot. The proposed NS BRT will operate in a combination of dedicated lanes and mixed traffic providing frequent, reliable and convenient transit service.

Chapel Hill Transit submitted an application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to enter the NS BRT into the Small Starts Project Development Phase. The project was accepted into the program in November 2016. The next steps are to advance the project through the preliminary design phase and to conduct an environmental review required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In fall 2017, Chapel Hill Transit staff was finalizing the procurement process to select consultant teams to assist with design and environmental work.

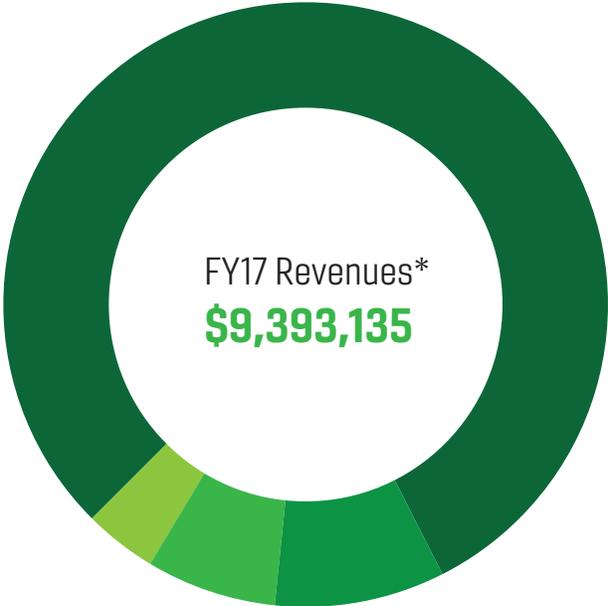
## HILLSBOROUGH TRAIN STATION UPDATE

The NC Department of Transportation, GoTriangle and the Town of Hillsborough provided \$8.1 million for design and construction funding for the new Hillsborough Train Station for fiscal years 2017 to 2020.

The station will be served by two Amtrak passenger train routes that already pass through Hillsborough — the Carolinian, which travels between Charlotte and New York twice daily, and the Piedmont, which travels between Charlotte and Raleigh four times daily.

The environmental documentation is complete. Design commencement awaits the outcome of a rail corridor capacity analysis to confirm that the additional stop will not affect freight train operations.

RESEARCH TRIANGLE REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
**Orange County Transit Plan Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Report**

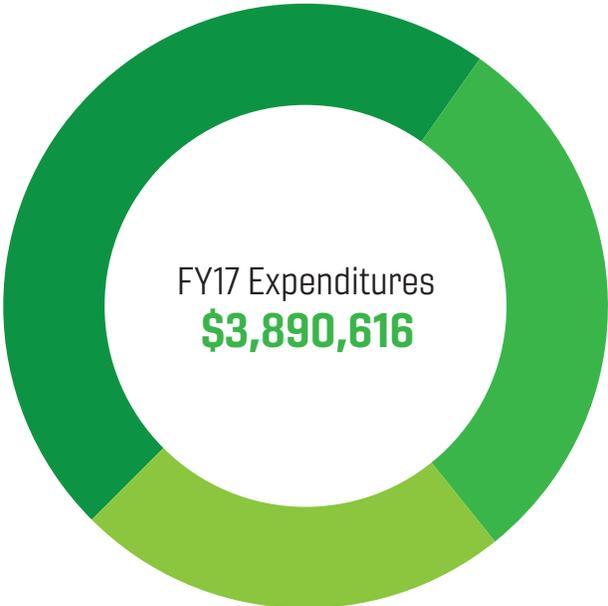


|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| ● Half-cent sales tax          | \$6,854,397 |
| ● \$7 vehicle registration tax | \$780,024   |
| ● 5 percent vehicle rental tax | \$596,712   |
| ● \$3 vehicle registration tax | \$334,296   |

\*Includes investment income.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| ● Light-Rail Development                | \$1,839,467 |
| ● Transit Service                       | \$1,145,551 |
| ● Administrative Services & Personnel** | \$905,598   |

\*\*Includes GoTriangle staff and support infrastructure



# NEXT STEPS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

## Service Improvement

- Add more frequent service on GoTriangle Route 800 (Chapel Hill–Southpoint–RTC). All of GoTriangle’s “core routes” (100, 300, 400, 700, 800) will operate every half hour from the beginning of service to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday.
- Continue to identify service and capital improvements through the GoTriangle Short-Range Plan.

*Orange County—through Orange Public Transportation plans to implement these new services in fall 2018:*

- Orange-Alamance Connector with midday service between Mebane and Hillsborough.
- Efland-Hillsborough Commuter Loop with peak period service between Efland and Hillsborough.
- Zone-deviated fixed routes serving three rural county areas midday, two days a week per zone.

## Capital Projects

- Obtain professional services to provide feasibility studies for bus stop improvements and property acquisition.
- Use professional services to design the Hillsborough Park-and-Ride Lot.
- Start planning for the Hillsborough Transfer Center.
- Complete the design package for regional signage and fabricate and deliver bus stop signage.

## Durham-Orange Light-Rail Transit (D-O LRT) Project

The final construction design for the Durham-Orange Light-Rail Transit (D-O LRT) Project will advance to 50 percent complete in fiscal year 2018, from 30 percent in fiscal year 2017.

# DURHAM-ORANGE LIGHT-RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT TO CONNECT TRIANGLE

The Durham-Orange Light-Rail Transit Project — part of the Durham and Orange County Transit Plans — will offer a congestion-free alternative for riders commuting to jobs, education and health care in Durham and Chapel Hill. The 17.7-mile light-rail system will connect three major universities, three major medical facilities and three of the top 10 employers in the state (Duke University, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and UNC Health Care). The line is projected to provide over 26,000 trips a day when complete in 2028 and will encourage walkable communities where residents can live, work and play.

Learn more at [ourtransitfuture.com/projects/lrt/](https://ourtransitfuture.com/projects/lrt/).



## Seamless Travel in the Triangle

As part of a cohesive transit plan, the light-rail project will connect to current and planned transit services. These include GoTriangle's current bus systems, Wake County's future 37-mile commuter rail line and the future bus rapid transit network in Chapel Hill, which will feature dedicated bus lanes on local roads to keep traffic rolling. The light rail will provide:

- 10-minute frequency during peak times, 20-minute frequency during off-peak times.
- Public transportation in a dedicated guideway, separate from traffic.
- 18 stations, nine park-and-ride locations and connections to other transit services.
- Relief to several bus routes that currently serve portions of the corridor, allowing them to be rerouted to serve other areas of the community.

## FISCAL YEAR 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In fiscal year 2017, the Durham-Orange Light-Rail Transit Project moved forward with a series of major accomplishments. These included preliminary engineering and environmental clearance for the addition of a station at North Carolina Central University, which enrolls 8,000 students, and the hiring of new engineering and management consultants for the final design phase.

In July 2017, GoTriangle received approval from the Federal Transit Administration to proceed from initial "Project Development" to "New Starts Engineering," which means GoTriangle will work closely with FTA over the next few years to finalize the project design. Entry into the engineering phase means our region will be on track to receive over \$1 billion in federal investment, which accounts for 50 percent of the total project funding. The project's remaining funding sources are an expected 10 percent from the state and 40 percent from local sources, including revenues generated from a half-cent sales tax already passed in both Durham and Orange counties.