



## Transportation

**To:** Durham Board of County Commissioners  
**From:** Brandi Minor, Staff Working Group Administrator  
**Subject:** Draft Durham County FY27 Annual Transit Work Program  
**Date:** April 6, 2026

### Executive Summary

In 2011, the Durham Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) authorized a referendum for a half-cent sales tax to expand public transit in Durham County. Voters approved the tax in November 2011. Along with a \$7 Vehicle Registration Tax approved by the BOCC and a \$3 Vehicle Registration Tax approved by the GoTriangle Board, these revenues are managed by GoTriangle as part of the Tax District Administration. Under state legislation, these funds must support public transit improvements identified in the Durham County Transit Plan, which is approved by the BOCC, the GoTriangle Board of Trustees, and the Triangle West Transportation Planning Board (Triangle West). An Interlocal Agreement (ILA) adopted in 2013 by the three governing boards outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency in administering these revenues.

Since that time, several significant updates have occurred. First, in spring 2023, the Durham County Transit Plan was updated and adopted, replacing the 2017 plan. The 2023 Transit Plan strategically programs transit revenues and centers on four primary themes:

- Improve the Current System
- More Projects Sooner
- Connect the Region with Quick and Reliable Service
- Better Experience at Stops and Stations

Second, a new ILA was adopted in 2023. This updated agreement strengthens collaboration among the governing bodies, enhances interagency coordination, and improves project reporting and accountability. It also requires the Annual Transit Work Program to be approved by both the BOCC and the GoTriangle Board of Trustees and adds the City of Durham as the fourth member

of the Staff Working Group (SWG). The SWG serves as the administrative and advisory body to the ILA partners. Durham County was designated as the SWG Administrator and is represented by Ellen Beckmann, Transportation Director, with Curtis Scarpignato, Transportation Planner, serving as the alternate. Staff from Triangle West, GoTriangle, and the City of Durham also serve on the SWG.

A third major change in 2023 was the rescission of the Vehicle Rental Tax. GoTriangle notified the SWG that, beginning July 1, 2023, revenues from this tax would remain within the Tax District and would no longer be included in the Annual Transit Work Program.

### **Background and Purpose**

The SWG develops an annual Work Program in accordance with the requirements of the ILA. This Work Program serves as the annual budget for the Durham County Transit Plan and includes projected revenues and expenditures, as well as a Multi-Year Operating Plan and a Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

The draft FY27 Work Program was released for public comment on March 27, 2026. The comment period will remain open for 21 days, closing on April 17, 2026. During this time, the Work Program will be available online at [Durham County | Annual Work Programs](#) and promoted through media notices issued by Durham County and partner agencies. Pop-up events will also be held at Durham Station to directly engage transit riders.

During the public comment period, the SWG Administrator will present the Work Program to the BOCC at its April 6 work session. The GoTriangle Audit and Finance Committee will receive a presentation on April 8. After the comment period concludes, the SWG will finalize the Work Program and recommend it for approval by the BOCC in early June 2026 and by the GoTriangle Board of Trustees in late June 2026.

### **Issues and Analysis**

Due to a decline in sales tax revenues, the draft Work Program includes limited new projects this year and focuses on sustaining existing operating expansions and advancing the next phases of current capital projects. The Multi-Year Operating and Capital Improvement Plans were updated to delay four future projects. These adjustments ensure that projects through 2040 remain financially feasible while maintaining financial model assumptions consistent with the adopted financial policy.

### **Action Requested**

The SWG Administrator requests that the Durham Board of County Commissioners receive a presentation on the Draft FY27 Durham Annual Transit Work Program and provide input during the work session or through staff so that recommendations can be incorporated into the final FY27 Work Program prior to its adoption later this year.