

Durham County Letterhead

August 25, 2025

Ms. Julie White
Deputy Secretary for Multi-Modal Transportation
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1 S. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Ms. White,

Durham County appreciates our long-standing and successful partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to provide residents, students, employers, and our visitors with passenger rail service in the heart of downtown Durham. The railroad has been an integral part of the City's infrastructure since its founding in the 1800s. Passenger rail service fulfills a critical transportation need for those without the option of driving and provides a convenient option for families, business travelers, and the general public. The railroad has always been one of Durham's economic development drivers both for freight service and for connecting residents to other cities. The Durham station serves a broad section of the population, which is growing and expected to double by 2045.

The NC Department of Commerce projects the Raleigh-Durham area will experience an increase of 146,000 new jobs by 2032, the highest growth rate in the State. This means double-digit percentage increases in nearly all major occupational groups. Durham County's population growth eclipses state averages as well, largely due to factors like job opportunities, availability of healthcare and community services, and a lower cost of living compared to similar regions.

The Research Triangle Park area is a major job engine and economic development driver for Durham County and the State of North Carolina. The County is an active partner with RTP in the ambitious and forward-thinking RTP 3.0 process that will facilitate mixed-use and transit-oriented development in the park. There is already much interest in passenger rail service for the employees and residents of this area, and RTP 3.0 is expected to accelerate this demand. The *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* pass by RTP multiple times daily but do not stop. We believe that an appropriately timed and located station in RTP could be of significant benefit to residents currently commuting to RTP and a benefit to the attractiveness of RTP for new businesses and developments.

We would like to request that NCDOT collaborate in partnership with the County and other stakeholders to develop a timeline, action items, and cost for the development of a station/stop in RTP. We appreciate the Department's consideration of expanding passenger rail service in this rapidly growing region.

Sincerely,

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