



Durham Transit Plan

Durham County Transit Plan FY27 Draft Work Program

April 2026



Durham County Transit Plan & Work Program Overview



2023 Durham County Transit Plan Overview

- In 2011, Durham County voters approved a half-cent sales tax to fund public transportation improvements that expand the quality of service within Durham County and provide greater regional connectivity to the rest of the Triangle.
- The 2023 Durham County Transit Plan (“Transit Plan”) determines how these public transportation funds within Durham County will be managed and spent and which proposed projects and improvements will be approved by the governing bodies.
- As required by state law, the Transit Plan was approved by the Durham County Board of Commissioners, Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization (formerly the Durham-Chapel-Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board), and the GoTriangle Board of Trustees in May and June 2023, respectively.



The Role of the Staff Working Group

- The Transit Governance Interlocal Agreement (“ILA”) establishes the duties and responsibilities of the Durham County Staff Working Group (“SWG”).
- The SWG serves in an **advisory** role to the Durham Board of County Commissioners, Triangle West TPO Board, and the GoTriangle Board of Trustees.
- The SWG has been tasked with coordinating the planning and implementation of the Annual Work Program, as well as facilitating the development of elements of the Multi-Year Vision Plan.



Each agency designates one voting member, who participates in collective decision-making on which items to advance to the governing boards for approval, including the Work Program and associated amendments.

Staff Roles

- Durham County was designated as the SWG Administrator effective July 1, 2023.
- This is a critical role that entails the following:
 - Leads the development of the draft and final recommended Work Program and quarterly amendments.
 - Develops and recommends policies, procedures, and process improvements to support the Transit Plan.
 - Serves as the Clerk to the SWG and hosts monthly and ad-hoc SWG meetings.
- However, Durham County staff do not have sole authority over the content of the Work Program and amendments. Project sponsors submit all projects, including scope, cost, and schedules, and the SWG must vote to recommend items.
- GoTriangle's role as Tax District Administrator is also an essential role and entails the following:
 - Preparation of the annual GoTriangle budget ordinance and any amendments.
 - Review and approval of the quarterly reimbursements.
 - Development and management of the financial model.
 - Managing Transit Plan revenues including investment strategies and providing regular updates on actual collections.

Annual Work Program Overview

DURHAM COUNTY FY27 TRANSIT WORK PROGRAM



DRAFT



The Work Program is the annual budget for the Transit Plan.

Each year, the SWG Administrator presents the Annual Work Program to the governing boards for approval.


The Work Program is developed collaboratively over the course of several months with our Transit Partners.

Its primary goal is to advance the projects in the adopted Transit Plan.

The Work Program is approved by the Durham Board of County Commissioners and GoTriangle Board of Trustees.



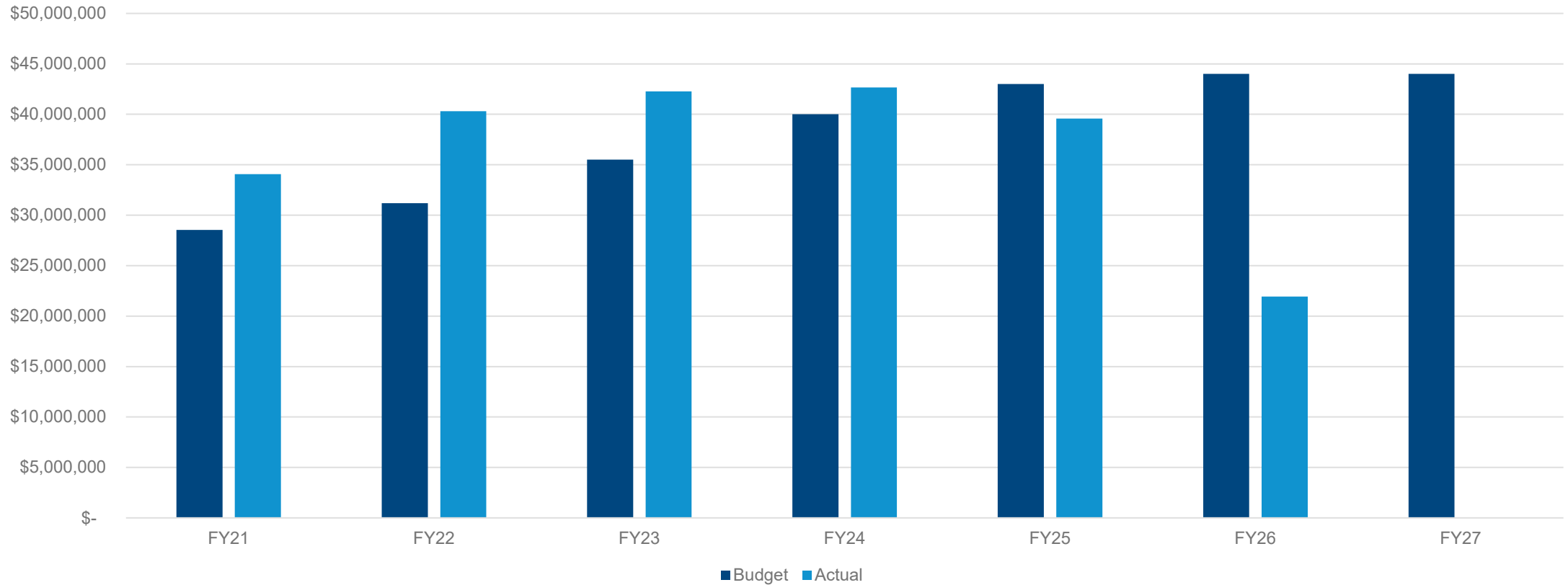
Annual Work Program Amendment Overview

- Partners may submit amendments to the Work Program based on the approved amendment schedule.
 - There are three quarterly amendment cycles:
 - Q2 – November
 - Q3 – February
 - Q4 – May
 - Upon approval by the SWG, amendments are released for a 21-day public comment period.
 - Following the public comment period, the SWG votes to release the amendments for governing board approval.
 - The SWG Administrator presents the amendments to the boards for final approval.
 - Each cycle takes about 2.5 months from submission to approval.
- 

Draft FY27 Work Program Budget Overview


Article 43: Half-Cent Sales Tax Overview

Article 43 Half-Cent Sales Tax Revenues



Note: FY26 actuals reflect July 2025 – December 2025

Draft FY27 “Status Quo” Budget + Partner Priorities

- Durham County staff presented to the BOCC and GoTriangle Audit & Finance Committee in early January 2026.
 - Following these presentations, the SWG-Admin advised the SWG to proceed with a status quo budget for the draft and develop options for the governing boards to consider with the remaining available funding.
 - The SWG voted to release the draft with the status quo budget and one new capital project (Durham Transit Plan Update). Consensus was not reached on the remaining requests.
 - A supplemental Partner Budget Priorities document was created to highlight the priority requests submitted by project sponsors.
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FY27 Work Program Budget

Maintaining the Financial Model Assumptions

- Multi-Year Operating Program
- Capital Improvement Program
- Fund balance is necessary for future capital and operating projects through FY40

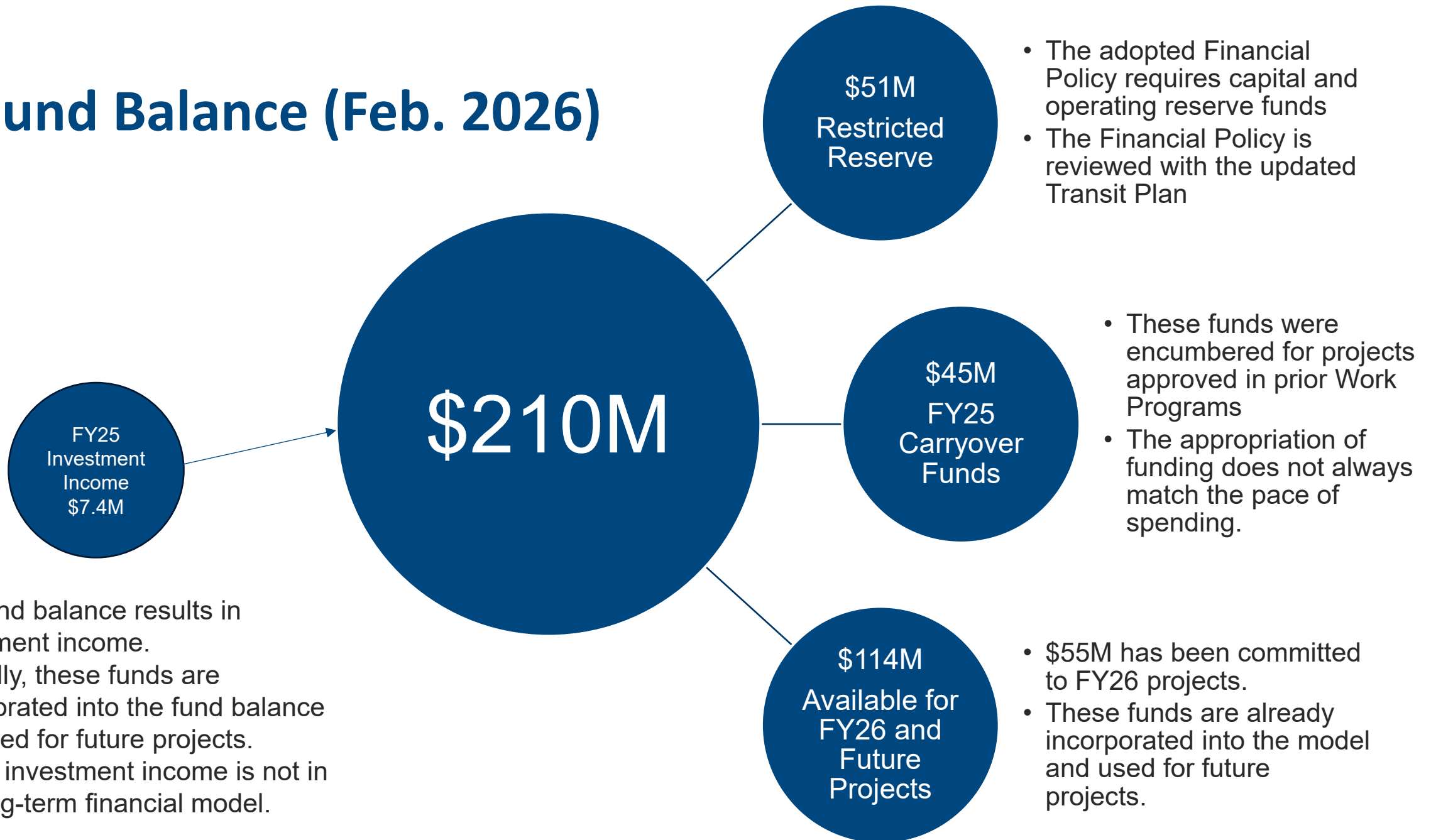
Low Point in the Financial Model is approximately \$15M in FY35



CAPITAL LIQUIDITY



Fund Balance (Feb. 2026)



FY27 Work Program Budget

PROJECTED REVENUE

 **\$44,000,000**
½ Cent Sales Tax

 **\$764,803**
\$3 Registration Fee

 **\$1,784,606**
\$7 Registration Fee

 **\$10,457,331**
Allocation from Fund Balance

TOTAL = \$57,006,740

RECOMMENDED CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

 **\$650,000**
Capital Planning

 **\$24,606,970**
Transit Infrastructure

 **\$728,000**
Vehicle Acquisition

 **\$500,000**
Regional Connections

TOTAL = \$26,484,970

RECOMMENDED OPERATING EXPENDITURES

 **\$3,155,681**
Transit Plan Administration

 **\$26,860,810**
Transit Operations

 **\$505,279**
Tax District Administration

TOTAL = \$30,521,770

FY27 Work Program Budget

RECOMMENDED EXPENDITURES BY AGENCY

| | |
|--|--|
|  | \$38,252,231 City of Durham/GoDurham |
|  | \$1,408,463 Durham County/ACCESS |
|  | \$16,280,284 GoTriangle |
|  | \$505,279 GoTriangle/Tax District |
|  | \$60,484 Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO |
|  | \$500,000 Regional Connections |
| | TOTAL = \$57,006,740 |

FY27 Work Program NEW

- The ILA requires the Plan to be updated every four years.
- This process includes a review of the Transit Governance ILA.
- There was consensus at SWG to move forward with the update.
- DCO staff also propose including some policy development in the next update.
- There is a desire to improve the Work Program development process, add reasonable flexibility in funding projects, and alleviate some of the conflict that arises during the current decision-making processes.

Durham Transit Plan Update

27DCC_AP31 | Capital Planning | Administration and Accountability

The Durham County Transit Plan determines how public transportation funds within Durham County will be managed and spent, and which proposed projects and improvements will be approved by the governing bodies. The Transit Plan is a living document which is updated every 2-4 years and will relay how the County intends to invest in, expand, and prioritize public transportation in the decades to come.

A consultant will be retained to assist with the completion of the DTP update. This project will include an evaluation of the implementation status of the 2023 Plan including reviewing budgets, appropriations, and reimbursements. It will recommend policies and process improvements for the Plan and Work Program development processes. It will include a long-range vision plan of capital and operating improvements. It will also include a review of the Transit Governance Interlocal Agreement for potential governance changes. Public and governing board engagement will be conducted throughout the planning process.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Agency: Durham County

Parties to Project: GoTriangle

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$650,000

Budgeted FY27 Costs funded by this Agreement: \$650,000

Programmed FY28 Costs funded by this Agreement: \$0

DTP Cost Share: 100%

Sponsor Cost Share: 0%

Other Cost Share: 0%

Start Date: July 1, 2026

Anticipated End Date: June 30, 2029

FY27 Work Program Approval Schedule

| Task | Due Date |
|--|------------------|
| Durham County Staff provides High-Level Overview of the Work Program to BOCC | 1/5/2026 |
| Staff Working Group Meeting | 1/21/2026 |
| Staff Working Group Meeting | 2/18/2026 |
| SWG Financial Modeling Meeting for Draft Work Program | 3/2/2026 |
| Staff Working Group Meeting - Vote to release for Public Comment | 3/18/2026 |
| Public Comment Period Opens | 3/27/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Draft Work Program to BOCC | 4/6/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Draft Work Program to GOT Audit & Finance Committee | 4/8/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Draft Work Program at Joint City/County Meeting | 4/14/2026 |
| SWG Meeting | 4/15/2026 |
| Public Comment Period Closes | 4/17/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Draft Work Program at BPAC Meeting | 4/21/2026 |
| SWG Meeting / SWG votes on Final Recommended Work Program | 5/20/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Final Work Program to GOT Board for approval | 5/27/2026 |
| SWG Admin presents Final Work Program to BOCC for approval | 6/1/2026 |
| BOCC Approves Final Work Program | 6/8/2026 |
| Triangle West TPO Approval (if DTP amendment is necessary) | 6/16/2026 |
| GoTriangle Board Approves Final Work Program | 6/24/2026 |



Draft FY27 Work Program Partner Budget Priorities

Partner Budget Priorities



City of Durham, GoDurham Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (BOMF) - Fay Street, Total Project Cost: \$60,739,010; Transit Plan Funding: \$17,500,000; Unfunded Cost: \$39,500,000

The GoDurham Fay Street BOMF project will expand and modernize the bus operations and maintenance facility to support a larger fleet, longer service hours, and the transition to electric buses. By relieving space constraints and improving parking, maintenance, and staff work areas, this project will strengthen service reliability and prepare the system for future growth. Funding is needed to advance these upgrades and keep Durham's transit network moving forward. The City has contributed roughly \$3.7 million to this project. In FY27, the approved Transit Plan funding will cover the full cost of Design; however, construction costs remain unfunded in FY28 and beyond.

City of Durham, Bus Operations Maintenance Paratransit Facility – Junction Road, Total Project Cost: \$39,092,272; Transit Plan Funding: \$10,492,272; Unfunded Cost: \$28,600,000

The Paratransit Junction Road BOMF project will expand our maintenance capacity so we can support a growing fleet and deliver more reliable service. By building a separate facility from Fay Street, this project reduces crowding, improves efficiency, and strengthens our transit system for future needs. With the Junction Road property already secured, funding is needed to move the project into construction and keep our paratransit services running strong. In FY27, the approved Transit Plan funding will cover the full cost of Design; however, construction costs remain unfunded in FY28 and beyond.

- City submitted two capital project requests
- Both facilities have sufficient Transit Plan funding to cover Design in FY27
- There is a combined \$68.1M unfunded need for Construction that is not in the Transit Plan CIP
- Unfunded costs were presumed to be covered by local or federal funding

Partner Budget Priorities



GoTriangle, Service Planning Staff, \$1,057,057, FY27 Request - \$75,426

FY27 – FY40 Budget Impact: +\$1,056,057

GoTriangle is requesting \$75,426 in FY27 to fund a new Service Planning Team. The team will be focused on developing and preparing new transit services funded by the Durham Transit Plan. This work includes coordinating with partners, riders, and the public; designing service changes; and completing required analysis and materials for governing board review. The team plans route alignments, stop changes, schedule updates, and expansion services, then monitors performance to keep service efficient and reliable. Service planning also includes data analysis, budgeting, and reporting to ensure transit improvements are delivered effectively and meet community needs. This is an ongoing operating project with an assumed 2.5% annual growth rate in the financial model. The cumulative increase for FY27-FY40 is \$1,056,057.



Triangle West TPO, SWG Participation, FY27 Request - \$27,956

FY27 – FY40 Budget Impact: +\$461,812

Triangle West TPO is requesting an additional \$27,956 in FY27, for a total of \$70,823, to fund the MPO's participation in the Staff Working Group, including meeting preparation, attendance, and follow-up by both the Planning Manager and Executive Director. MPO staff will also conduct the research, analysis, and reporting needed to fully support and engage in all SWG activities. This is an ongoing operating project with an assumed 2.5% annual growth rate in the financial model. The cumulative increase for FY27-FY40 is \$461,812.



GoTriangle, Route DRX Improvements, FY27 Request - \$265,559

FY27 – FY40 Budget Impact: +\$4,386,750

GoTriangle is requesting an additional \$265,559 in FY27, for a total of \$639,027, to fund half year, 30 minute weekday midday service on Route DRX. This improvement will provide faster, more reliable travel between Durham and Raleigh, reduce transfers, and build on the success of DRX improvements that boosted ridership by 25% in 2024. The request includes a 50% funding match from the Wake Transit Plan and continues previous investments that strengthened peak and off peak service on this key regional route. This is an ongoing operating project with an assumed 2.5% annual growth rate in the financial model. The cumulative increase for FY27-FY40 is \$4,386,750.

GoTriangle, Route 800 Improvements, FY27 Request - \$216,877

FY27 – FY40 Budget Impact: +\$3,582,585

GoTriangle is requesting an additional \$216,877 in FY27, for a total of \$874,959, to fund a full year of service improvements to keep Route 800 running on time while maintaining the frequency and span promised in the Durham Transit Plan. Route 800 is a key regional connection that continues to see strong growth and demand. As traffic along NC-54 and I-40 becomes more congested, additional operating hours are needed to ensure reliable travel between UNC Hospitals, Southpoint, RTP, and the Regional Transit Center. Continuing this funding, shared equally by Durham and Orange counties, is essential to keeping Route 800 dependable for riders traveling throughout this busy corridor. This is an ongoing operating project with an assumed 2.5% annual growth rate in the financial model. The cumulative increase for FY27-FY40 is \$3,582,585.

- **Two staffing requests were submitted**
 - A staffing study was recently approved to assess the staffing needs for current Transit activities. The study is estimated to be completed later this year.
- **GoTriangle also submitted two service expansion requests**
- **Durham County submitted one capital request**
 - DCO staff are exploring other options that may not involve DTP funding



Durham County, Annual Work Program Improvements, Total Project Cost - \$50,000

Durham County is requesting funds to hire a consultant to develop a more efficient system for submitting Project Budget Sheets used in the development of the Annual Work Program. The current process is time-consuming and cumbersome for Durham County staff and partners. A streamlined, user-friendly system will reduce administrative burden and free up staff time to focus on delivering transit services more effectively. This is a one-time capital request that would be paid 100% from the Transit Plan.

City of Durham Update



City Transit Fund – Expense and Revenue Drivers

- Personnel costs make up 70% of service expenses
- Staffing shortages in recent years
 - Resulted in missed trips, degraded service reliability
 - Prevented implementation of 15-minute service network expansion goals in DCTP
 - Necessitated a higher investment level in personnel to meet reliability, customer experience and service expansion goals
- Resulting financial structure has a gap between expenses of revenues of >\$8 million annually

| ACCESS Operator Wages | FY2022 | FY2023 | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | FY2027 | FY2028 |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Annual | 17% | 4.0% | 4.0% | 3.8% | 2.9% | 4.5% | 5.0% |
| Cumulative | 17% | 21% | 26% | 31% | 35% | 41% | 48% |

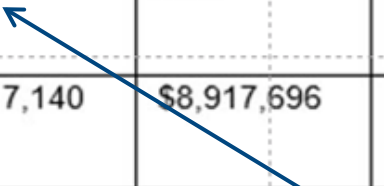
City Transit Fund – Multi-Year Outlook

| Actual/Budget/Forecast Fiscal Year | Budgeted 2026 | Projected 2026 | Projected 2027 | Projected 2028 | Projected 2029 | Projected 2030 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| TRANSIT FUND | | | | | | |
| REVENUES | | | | | | |
| Passenger Revenue | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Transit Plan Revenue - Fixed Route | \$ 17,213,515 | \$ 11,300,000 | \$ 15,961,342 | \$ 18,245,989 | \$ 18,702,139 | \$ 19,169,692 |
| Transit Plan Revenue - Other | | \$ 2,400,000 | \$ 3,530,966 | \$ 3,619,240 | \$ 3,709,721 | \$ 3,802,464 |
| Miscellaneous Revenue | \$ 277,518 | \$ 277,518 | \$ 288,518 | \$ 294,698 | \$ 301,063 | \$ 307,620 |
| State | \$ 3,358,290 | \$ 3,358,290 | \$ 3,358,290 | \$ 3,358,290 | \$ 3,358,290 | \$ 3,358,290 |
| Local | \$ 20,396,519 | \$ 20,396,519 | \$ 20,929,281 | \$ 21,478,362 | \$ 22,044,266 | \$ 22,627,517 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$ 41,245,842 | \$ 37,732,327 | \$ 44,068,397 | \$ 46,996,579 | \$ 48,115,480 | \$ 49,265,583 |
| APPROPRIATIONS | | | | | | |
| Fixed Route - City | \$ 23,320,611 | \$ 14,652,059 | \$ 18,703,134 | \$ 19,326,856 | \$ 20,197,209 | \$ 21,161,472 |
| Fixed Route - Transit Plan | | \$ 8,668,552 | \$ 12,561,298 | \$ 14,395,214 | \$ 14,950,914 | \$ 15,561,948 |
| Paratransit Service | \$ 7,675,780 | \$ 9,308,915 | \$ 10,408,772 | \$ 11,257,450 | \$ 11,908,184 | \$ 12,791,491 |
| Financial Expenses | \$ 2,603,872 | \$ 2,603,872 | \$ 2,709,012 | \$ 2,804,564 | \$ 2,905,628 | \$ 3,013,315 |
| Administration | \$ 2,820,539 | \$ 2,719,806 | \$ 2,781,320 | \$ 2,855,191 | \$ 2,932,753 | \$ 3,014,192 |
| Operations | \$ 2,998,676 | \$ 2,722,952 | \$ 2,590,000 | \$ 2,743,000 | \$ 2,906,350 | \$ 3,080,838 |
| Capital | \$ 1,552,542 | \$ 1,655,478 | \$ 32,000 | \$ 32,000 | \$ - | \$ - |
| Transfer to Other Funds | \$ 2,660,000 | \$ 2,660,000 | \$ 2,500,000 | \$ 2,500,000 | \$ 2,500,000 | \$ 2,500,000 |
| TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS | \$ 43,632,020 | \$ 44,991,634 | \$ 52,285,536 | \$ 55,914,275 | \$ 58,301,037 | \$ 61,123,255 |
| Beginning Fund Balance | \$ 5,324,171 | \$ 5,324,171 | \$ (1,935,136) | \$ (10,152,276) | \$ (19,069,971) | \$ (29,255,529) |
| NET | \$ (2,386,178) | \$ (7,259,307) | \$ (8,217,140) | \$ (8,917,696) | \$ (10,185,558) | \$ (11,857,671) |
| Ending Fund Balance | \$ 2,937,993 | \$ (1,935,136) | \$ (10,152,276) | \$ (19,069,971) | \$ (29,255,529) | \$ (41,113,201) |

City Transit Fund Faces \$8.2 million Shortfall in FY2027

Future Tax Rates Necessary to Fix the Transit Fund

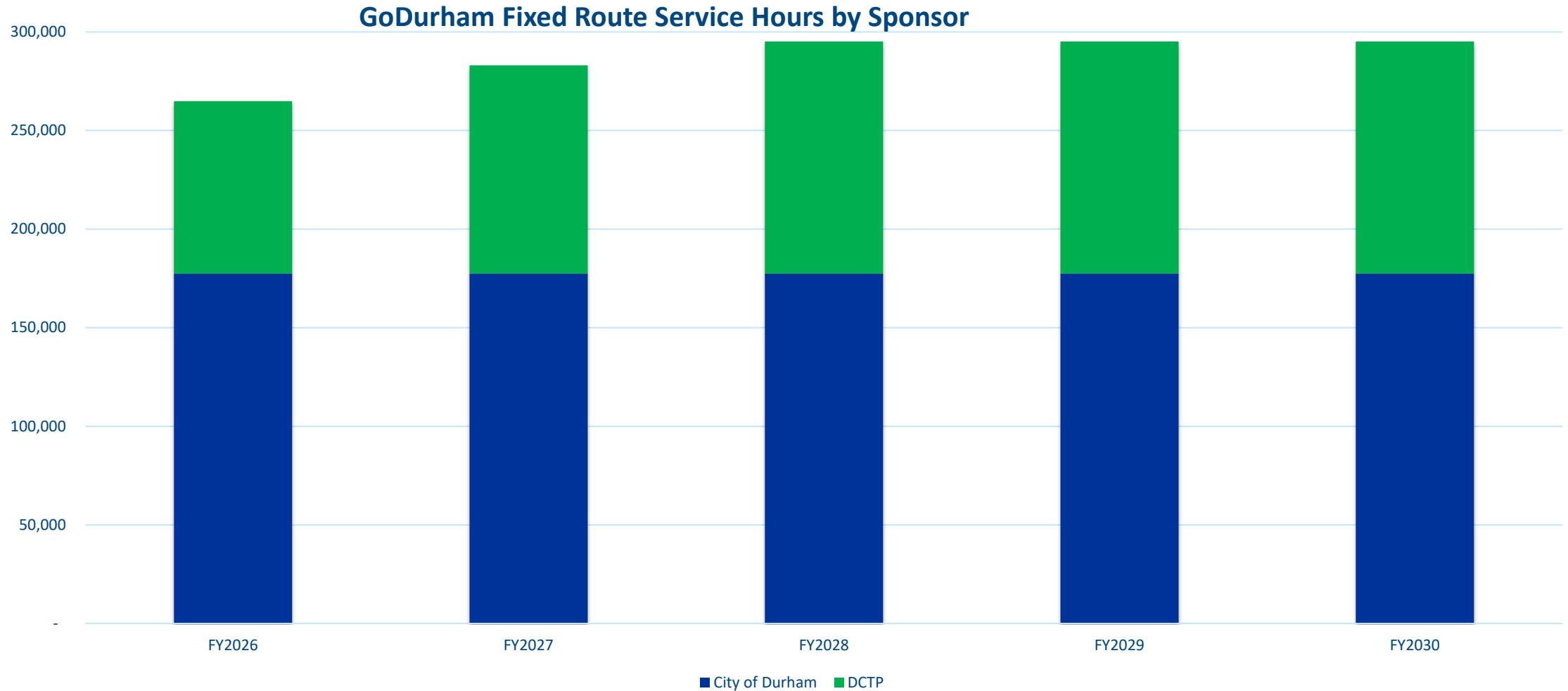
| | FY27 | FY28 | FY29 | FY30 | FY31 |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Additional Tax Necessary to Close the Gap | 1.16 | 0.06 | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.15 |
| Projected Gap Between Appropriations and Revenues | \$8,217,140 | \$8,917,696 | \$10,185,558 | \$11,857,671 | \$13,394,054 |



- Would increase property tax bill by \$48 for median home value of \$415,000
- Tax increase impacts
 - 317,467 City of Durham residents
 - 316,991 (99.85%) are also residents of Durham County

GoDurham Fixed Route Cost-Sharing

- Baseline of 177,000 Vehicle Revenue Hours supported by the City Transit Fund (FY27 - 63%)
- Durham County Transit Plan (DCTP) supports expansion hours above baseline (FY27 - 37%)
- Service reduction savings do not reduce City Transit Fund costs until cut below baseline



Budget Balance – City Transit Fund Policy Options

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Projected Shortfall for FY2027 | \$8,217,140 |
| Measure | Impact |
| Restrict Eligibility for Access to Federal Requirement | \$1,350,000 |
| Remove Off-Duty DPD Officers for Security | \$1,200,000 |
| Eliminate Customer Call Center | \$350,000 |
| City Sponsorship of Transit Pension* | \$150,000 |
| Subtotal, Cost Reduction | \$1,350,000 |
| Remaining Gap | \$6,867,140 |
| *Timeline for implementation limits impact in FY2027 | |
| Fare Policy | |
| Return to Fares - \$2 base fare Proposal Discussed Feb. 2025 | \$4,800,000 |

Budget Balance – Policy Options to Increase DCTP Financial Model Capacity

| Measure | Impact |
|--|--------------------|
| Revise Forecast for FY2026 DCTP-Funded GoDurham Services | \$3,680,654 |
| Revise Planned GoDurham Service Increases in FY2027 | |
| Defer Expansion of Sunday Service Hours from 9pm to Midnight | \$966,424 |
| Defer 30-minute service on Route 13 (remains hourly) | \$776,527 |
| Partial Implementation of 15-minute service in N. Durham | \$867,228 |
| Route 4 improves to 15 minutes from Downtown to Northern HS | |
| Route 9 remains at 30 minutes | |
| | |
| Total Additional DCTP Financial Capacity | \$6,290,833 |

Illustrative Policy Options to Redirect Increased DCTP Financial Model Capacity – One-Time Capital Assistance

| (\$ in millions) | |
|---|---------------|
| City-Funded Projects – Not Currently Eligible for DCTP Reimbursement | Total |
| Purchase of Refurbished Diesel Buses - 100% Local | \$3.32 |
| Purchase of New Diesel Buses - 20% Local Match | \$1.60 |
| Purchase of Paratransit Vehicles (LTV) – 20% Local Match | \$0.12 |
| Total | \$5.04 |

Illustrative Policy Options to Redirect Increased DCTP Financial Model Capacity – One-Time Operating Assistance

| FY2027 (\$ in millions) | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| | Wake Transit Operating Budget Support | | | | City of Durham Budget Support | | |
| | Local Providers | Raleigh | Cary | Wake Co. | Expenses | DCTP/DCo Funded | Difference |
| Transit Plan Administration | \$3.4 | \$2.3 | \$1.0 | \$0.1 | \$1.6 | \$0.9 | \$0.7 |
| ADA Services* | \$6.6 | \$4.9 | \$0.8 | \$0.9 | \$3.7 | \$0.6 | \$3.1 |
| Security Services | \$0.8 | \$0.7 | \$0.1 | | \$1.3 | \$0.5 | \$0.8 |
| Marketing & Communications | \$0.4 | \$0.3 | \$0.1 | | \$0.3 | \$0.0 | \$0.3 |
| Low-Income Fare Program | \$3.3 | \$3.3 | | | \$2.6 | \$0.4 | \$2.2 |
| Total | \$14.5 | \$11.6 | \$1.9 | \$1.0 | \$9.5 | \$2.4 | \$7.1 |
| *For City of Durham, ADA expenses shown represent 37% of ADA Paratransit costs | | | | | | | |
| Orange County Transit allocates 100% of \$7 vehicle registration fee revenues to local providers. | | | | | \$7 registration fee revenues - Durham Co. | DCTP Funded | Difference |
| DCTP allocates 50% of \$7 vehicles registration fee revenues to the City of Durham. | | | | | \$1.8 | \$0.9 | \$0.9 |

Questions?