

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT
Meeting Date: February 4, 2014**

**Action Agenda
Item No. 7-a**

SUBJECT: Triangle Transit Update on Implementation of the Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Inspections

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

No

ATTACHMENT(S):

INFORMATION CONTACT:

- 1) Update on Implementation of the Orange County Bus and Rail Improvement Plan Memo from Triangle Transit with Attachments 1(a)-1(g)

Michael Talbert, Orange County Manager, 919-245-2300
David King, Triangle Transit General Manager, 919-485-7424

PURPOSE: To receive an update and provide feedback on Triangle Transit's annual report on the Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan (OCBRIP), a preview of Plan updates, and additional revenue from the one-half cent sales tax for transit.

BACKGROUND: The Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan (OCBRIP) was approved by the BOCC in June 2012. The OCBRIP provides local and regional transit opportunities including expanded bus service and proposed light rail. Voters in November 2012 approved a one-half cent sales tax to fund the local portion of the Plan and collection of the sales tax began on April 1, 2013.

Additional background documents such as the adopted OCPRIP can be found via the following link, listed under Transportation Documents:

<http://www.co.orange.nc.us/planning/transportation.asp>

Attachment 1 is a memo from David King, General Manager of Triangle Transit (TT), which outlines its report and associated attachments.

Due to time limitations and the need to complete and distribute the work session materials, Orange County Planning Staff did not review the attached materials prior to its distribution. In addition to TT staff and upon the discretion of the Board, Orange County Planning Staff will be available at the work session to provide its input or respond to questions.

NEXT STEPS:

The following items will be coming to the BOCC for its approval in the future:

- 1) OCBRIP updates for approval in accordance with the Implementation Agreement; and
- 2) Five-Year Bus Service Expansion Program (including upcoming expanded TT and Orange Public Transit service).

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Although this item does not have an immediate financial impact, the associated activity relates to the process to expend:

- Approximately \$6 Million per year of half-cent transit sales tax revenue;
- \$7 County vehicle registration fees;
- \$3 regional/TT vehicle registration fees (not yet implemented); and
- Existing regional/TT rental car tax revenues.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Manager recommends the Board:

1. Receive the update; and
2. Provide feedback as appropriate.

Attachment 1

Memorandum

To: Michael Talbert, Interim Manager, Orange County

From: David King, General Manager, Triangle Transit

Date: January 23, 2014

Re: Update on Implementation of the Orange County Bus and Rail Improvement Plan

We appreciate the opportunity to provide your Board with an update on implementation of the Orange County Transit Plan. We will report on the following issues:

- FY13 Annual Progress Report
- Draft Updates to the County Plan Financial Assumptions
- Status of Central and Rural Orange County Bus Service Expansion Program
- Hillsborough Train Station
- Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project

We've attached the following documents for your review:

1. Electronic version of an updated Orange County Transit Plan FY13 Annual Progress Report
2. Summary of Draft Updates to the Transit Plan Financial Assumptions
3. Graph of Forecasted Annual Closing Cash Balances
4. Tables Comparing 5-Year Bus Revenue Forecast to Adopted Plan
5. Table of Annual Revenues for Adopted Plan
6. Table of Annual Revenues with Updated Assumptions
7. Central and Rural Orange County Bus Service Expansion Program slides

We look forward to the work session next Tuesday.

Chapel Hill Transit North Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study

Attachment 1(a)

Chapel Hill Transit North South Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study is the first step in the federal process that will allow CHT to compete for federal funds to build an enhanced transit service project within the corridor. The Alternatives Analysis will examine a variety of public transportation options and alignments and conclude with the identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the corridor. The study will review the Columbia St./ MLK Blvd transportation corridor. The study is scheduled to begin in October 2013. The anticipated study timeline is 15-18 months.

The study will expand on previous work to identify and evaluate multiple alignments for the corridor and a broad range of service delivery options in order to recommend an LPA that:

- improves accessibility, frequency, connectivity, reliability, capacity, speed, and convenience;
- improves the level of service and increases ridership to the UNC campus/hospital and provides a necessary connection to the new campus at Carolina North;
- provides access and connection to the proposed UNC Light Rail Station;
- provides more accessible, safe, and comfortable stations/stops with pedestrian connections to activity centers in the corridor;
- supports future development within the corridor and provides benefits to existing neighborhoods, including low income and minority populations; and
- generates wide public and stakeholder support and encourages partnerships among agencies, businesses and organizations in the corridor.

Durham-Orange Light Rail Project:

Planning work continues on the proposed 17-mile Durham/Orange Light Rail Transit Project that would connect East Durham, through downtown Durham to Chapel Hill and UNC Hospital. Triangle Transit is working closely with area stakeholders and regional partners to identify and resolve issues as they work to complete an intensive environmental study of the proposed corridor. Work on the light rail has been funded by Triangle Transit's Major Transportation Investment Fund. Beginning in July 2013, additional work

on the project will be funded by the new revenue streams identified in the Transit Plan. Construction could begin by 2021 with operations underway in 2026.

Hillsborough Amtrak Station:

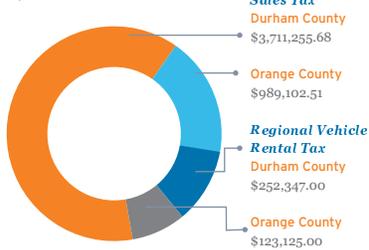
Additional work on the station awaits the result of rail corridor capacity analysis to be performed by Triangle Transit, North Carolina Railroad, and Norfolk Southern. Planning work should begin later this fall and is targeted to be completed within three to four months.

Financial Summary

In November 2011 and November 2012, voters in Durham County and Orange County passed separate referenda that allowed each county to levy a 1/2-cent sales tax to fund the Durham and Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan (D-O Transit Plan). During the past fiscal year (July 2012 through June 2013), the new transit tax was in effect for three months from April 2013 through June 2013. The D-O Transit Plan is also funded through a portion of the current Regional Vehicle Rental Tax.

Triangle Transit anticipates receiving other new revenues for the D-O Transit Plan from additional funding sources including a \$7 County Vehicle Registration Tax, a \$3 Regional Vehicle Registration Tax increase, state and federal grants and customer fare payments.

April - June 2013 Revenue



* Readers should not assume that these values represent 1/4 of a full year's revenue. Month-to-month variability is high and April 2013 receipts were very low.

ORANGE COUNTY

Bus & Rail Investment Plan Progress Report

In the early summer of 2012 the Orange County Board of County Commissioners, Durham -- Chapel Hill -- Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) and Triangle Transit Board of Trustees approved the Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan (Transit Plan). This progress report is meant to highlight some of the advancements made in the implementation of the Transit Plan over the course of Fiscal Year 2013*

*Fiscal Year 2013 is July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013

Goals of the Orange County Transit Plan

The goals of the Transit Plan are to:

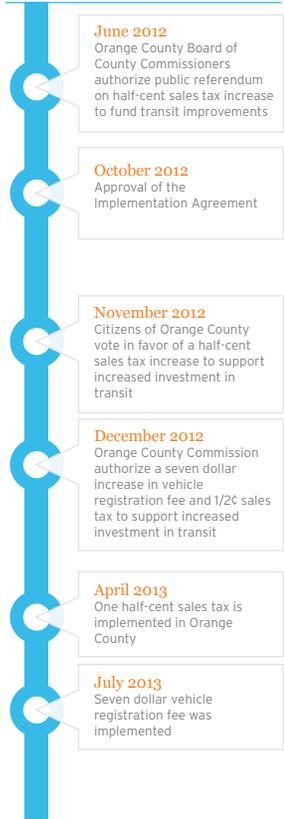
- Improve overall mobility and transportation options in the region
- Provide geographic equity
- Support improved capital facilities
- Support transit supportive land use
- Provide positive impact on air quality

Strategies to accomplish these goals include:

1. New bus services locally, throughout the county, and across the region that:
 - Improve connectivity
 - Increase frequency in peak hours
 - Improve weekend, night services (off peak)
 - Enhance existing services
 - Maintain existing services
 - Maintain level of local funding at no less than the August 1, 2009 spending level;
2. An Amtrak Train Station in Town of Hillsborough
3. Enhanced bus service on MLK Blvd. in Chapel Hill
4. A 17 mile Light Rail connection from Chapel Hill to Durham.

All of the proposed transit improvements found in the Transit Plan require new revenue. The Orange County Board of County Commissioners authorized a referendum on a half-cent cent sales tax increase and an increase to the vehicle registration fee to help pay for these transit improvements. To the right are a series of milestones that have been achieved that help advance the implementation of the Transit Plan.

Milestones



Accountability Orange County Annual Programming of Bus Service Expansions

Each December, Triangle Transit will communicate to Orange County and the Chapel Hill Transit Partners how much money will be available for bus service expansions in the upcoming year. If the amounts are not consistent with the adopted Plan, Triangle Transit will explain why. Then, Orange County, the Chapel Hill Transit Partners, and Triangle Transit will each identify which bus services from the Transit Plan will be paid for with the available money. Triangle Transit's Board of Trustees is responsible for making sure that the services funded with the ½-cent sales tax and the vehicle registration fees are consistent with State law, local agreements, and the County Plan.

Once reviewed and approved by Triangle Transit, the County and the Chapel Hill Transit Partners can budget for and implement the planned services.

Next Steps Upcoming Bus Service Expansions

- The following services will be implemented in the upcoming fiscal year (July 2013 through June 2014):
- More frequent weekday service between Streets at Southpoint park-and-ride and UNC-Chapel Hill on Triangle Transit Route 800 (August 2013)
 - Later weekday service on Chapel Hill Transit routes CM, CW, D, F, and J (August 2013)
 - Improved Saturday service on Chapel Hill Transit routes CM, CW, and JN (August 2013)

Orange County and Triangle Transit are also working cooperatively to refine a bus service expansion program for central and northern Orange County to meet growing needs for local and regional transit travel. This program of services is expected to be completed by December 2013. The schedule for service expansions will be determined through this process.

Over the upcoming five years, Chapel Hill Transit, Orange Public Transportation, and Triangle Transit will implement new or expanded bus services. Residents will also see new bus shelters, park-and-ride lots and sidewalk connections to bus stops.