

FY 2024 WAKE COUNTY TRANSIT PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

WAKE COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN

Progress continued during FY 2024 toward achieving the goals outlined in the Wake County Transit Plan. This planning document is collaboratively developed and provides a vision for improving the overall mobility of Wake County residents by improving and expanding the county's public transportation network. The vision includes increasing and diversifying travel choices so as to improve access to jobs, education, community services, shopping, entertainment, and other activities. The Wake County Transit Plan is guided by the Four Big Moves.

THE FOUR BIG MOVES

- 1) Connect the Region.
- 2) Connect all Wake County Communities.
- 3) Create Frequent and Reliable Urban Mobility.
- 4) Enhance Access to Transit.

Highlights

In FY 2024, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, known as CAMPO, started the Wake Transit Plan Update, which will extend the planning horizon to 2035. Significant progress during FY24 included developing the State of the Wake Transit Plan report and conducting a robust public engagement phase that resulted in more than 1,500 responses to the Transit Priorities Survey. Construction also continued on the 1.76-acre site for the Raleigh Union Station Bus Facility, known as RUS Bus. This facility will be part of a vibrant, integrated, joint development in the Warehouse District of downtown Raleigh. RUS Bus will weave together a street-level bus facility with bike- and pedestrian-friendly spaces. Private development will include 420 multifamily residential units, including 10% dedicated for affordable housing opportunities, as well as retail space, in one central hub.

The Town of Cary further progressed design for the Regional Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility. This new facility will accommodate GoCary's current fixed route and Door to Door service, allow room for expansion, and afford the opportunity to share resources with other regional transit providers. GoTriangle continued to advance the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (BOMF) Modernization and Expansion Project, as well as preparing for the installation of new electric charging infrastructure for buses and non-revenue vehicles.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) planning continued to progress throughout the year in these four corridors: Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue Corridor – GoRaleigh held a groundbreaking ceremony on November 7, 2023 to kick off the construction phase of this first Wake BRT corridor in the state of North Carolina. Construction of the New Bern BRT Corridor is expected to be completed in FY 2027. Wake BRT: Northern Corridor – the City of Raleigh advanced the planning study and conducted public engagement on the initial screening of alternatives for the corridor to investigate an extension to Midtown Raleigh and Triangle Town Center. Wake BRT: Southern Corridor – is in the final design phase. The final design team is working toward a 30% design milestone. The project received an \$85.91 million funding allocation from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Final design is anticipated to be completed by summer 2025.

Wake BRT: Western Corridor – is in the preliminary design phase. The City of Raleigh advanced the design and developed materials for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts Ratings application.

The Community Funding Area Program sets aside a portion of Wake Transit revenue for community based transit services in areas with limited access to fixed route services. During FY 2024, the Town of Morrisville continued operating its node-based Smart Shuttle service. GoWake Access ensured the continuation of the GoWake SmartRide program by partnering with Knightdale, Wendell, and Zebulon in the NE geofenced area and securing a Community Funding Area grant. In addition, GoApex Route 1 and the Wake Forest Circulator are continuing to serve as Community Funding Area operating projects.

WAKE TRANSIT PROGRESS

Tracking Wake Transit Progress: Wake Transit Plan implementation and progress toward meeting program goals is reported in two places. This annual progress report is published in December/January to provide a snapshot of the work accomplished in the previous fiscal year, July 1-June 30, as well as to note some activities planned to be undertaken in the upcoming fiscal year. The Wake Transit Performance Tracker is an online resource for ongoing program progress information. Details of operating and capital projects are included on the interactive project map. Progress toward reaching goals and objectives of the Wake Transit program are graphically displayed with historical data on the performance dashboard. The Tracker is updated at least three times a year: in summer, after the adoption of the new Wake Transit Work Plan; in December, to update annual revenue and expenditure totals; and in the spring, to reflect approved Work Plan amendments and commuter rail and bus rapid transit project progress information. Below is a summary of FY 2024 statistics that can be found on waketranstracker.com

NOTE: The following pages identify specific transit agency accomplishments and plans for future investments as they relate to the Wake Transit Plan. Each item is classified by which of the Four Big Moves it helps achieve: 1) Connect the Region; 2) Connect all Wake County Communities; 3) Create Frequent and Reliable Urban Mobility; and, 4) Enhance Access to Transit.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

CITY OF RALEIGH

- GoRaleigh contracted with Capitol Special Police/Capitol Special Patrol for security services at GoRaleigh Station. The goal of the new service contract is to provide a safe, secure, and comfortable environment. The enhanced security has created a more peaceful environment for staff, riders and the general public. This partnership has successfully addressed the public's safety concerns. (3, 4)
- GoRaleigh returned to full-service levels in January 2024. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- The R-Line returned with 15-minute frequency. (3, 4)
- Route 6: Crabtree became a high frequency route, operating every 15 minutes, Monday - Saturday, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m., and 30 minute frequency on Sundays. (3, 4)

- Route 70L: Brier Creek Express began hourly all-day service Monday - Sunday. (3, 4)
- Route 19: MLK/Sunnybrook returned to 15-minute frequency, 6 a.m. - 7:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, with 30-minute frequency on Saturday and Sunday. (3, 4)
- Route 21: Caraleigh became a high frequency network route, operating every 15 minutes from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. (3, 4)
- Route 55X: Poole Rd. now runs all day and serves the Social Security Administration building on Poole Rd. at Samuel St., in response to customer suggestions. (3, 4)
- More than 40 miles of local roads are currently served by 15-minute service. The added new service will increase high frequency route coverage to more than 80 miles. (3, 4)
- In May 2024, GoRaleigh doubled the coverage of the high frequency network, from 40 miles to more than 80 miles. (3, 4)

GOTRIANGLE

- Restored 30-minute Saturday service on Routes 100 and 300. (3)
- Restored additional trips on Route DRX, matching 2019 service levels. (1)

TOWN OF APEX

- GoApex routing and scheduling was adjusted to serve a new bus stop that was constructed at the main entrance of the Apex Senior Center. (4)
- Additional projects are in the works that will improve access to transit, including sidewalk connections and bus stop improvements. (4)

TOWN OF MORRISVILLE

- The Town maintained existing service hours and days while adding benches to 6 nodes, bike racks to 5 nodes, one bus shelter, and an additional node on McCrimmon Pkwy. (4)

WAKE COUNTY

- GoWake Access finalized new contracts with operations provider RATP-Dev and software provider Ecolane. (4)

CAPITAL PROJECTS

CITY OF RALEIGH

- The City of Raleigh purchased 17 acres for the new GoRaleigh Access/GoWake Access operations and maintenance facility. This facility will provide parking and maintenance for over 150 vehicles and 250 employees. The facility will host equipment and staff needed to provide complementary ADA paratransit and medical transportation services to our disabled community. (3, 4)
- GoRaleigh achieved its goal of having a fleet that is at least 70 percent zero, or near zero, emissions by 2023. GoRaleigh boasts 76 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses and five electric buses in its fleet. (3)
- City staff issued a purchase order for 4 new CNG 40' buses to replace an aging fleet. (3)
- GoRaleigh expanded its charging infrastructure for a capacity of 14 electric buses. (3)
- GoRaleigh improved 39 bus stops, with 28 being full shelter buildouts and 7 enhanced stops. An additional 15 bus stops received new seating. (3, 4)

- A contract was executed for the construction of 49 new bus stops, with approximately 25% of those bus stops complete. (3, 4)

GOTRIANGLE

- Construction continued on the Raleigh Union Station Bus Facility project with utility work nearing completion. Structural concrete work included completion of the elevated slab, as well as laying out masonry, stud walls, and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) rough-ins. The final bracing for the existing brick walls was fully permitted and being placed. (3, 4)
- Preparing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design services for the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (BOMF) Modernization and Expansion Project, as well as preparing for the installation of new electric charging infrastructure for buses and non-revenue vehicles. (3, 4)
- Executed a design contract for 56 existing bus stops in Wake County, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements and the inclusion of additional amenities to enhance passenger safety and comfort. (4)
- Completed funding flex from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and submitted the environmental review checklist to the FTA for improvements to the 56 bus stops previously mentioned. (4)

TOWN OF CARY

- Phase 3 of the Town's Bus Stop Improvement Project is bringing more bus stops into Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, with 100% compliance targeted by 2025. (4)
- Design on the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility project reached National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) conclusion and 90% completion. (3, 4)
- The Town acquired additional property for its planned Multimodal Center. (3, 4)

TOWN OF KNIGHTDALE

- The Town began design work for pedestrian access improvements along GoRaleigh Route 33, including three crosswalks across Knightdale Blvd. and sidewalk gaps along Old Knight Rd. (3, 4)

PLANNING PROJECTS

CAPITAL AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CAMPO)

- CAMPO started the Wake Transit Plan Update, which will extend the planning horizon to 2035. The Plan Update is expected to take 18 months. Significant progress during FY24 included developing the State of the Wake Transit Plan report and conducting a robust public engagement phase that resulted in more than 1,500 responses to the Transit Priorities Survey. (1, 2, 3, 4)

CITY OF RALEIGH

- GoRaleigh bus tracking is now available on Google Maps. (4)

- GoRaleigh bus tracking is now available on Apple Maps. (4)
- The Triangle Regional Transit Survey was completed and provides an improved understanding of transit trip-making, travel patterns, and characteristics across the Greater Triangle region, including eight operating agencies. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- A completed microtransit study included introducing a new micro-transit service, branded as MicroLink, as a way to better serve the residents of Rolesville. The MicroLink service was scheduled to begin with the adoption of the Recommended FY25 Wake Transit Work Plan. (3, 4)
- The City is conducting an On-Demand Mobility Study to help guide future micro-transit implementation and service improvements. (3, 4)
- Staff planned for the implementation of the Rolesville Micro-transit Zone, branded MicroLink, including defining the boundaries and creating branding. (3, 4)
- The City awarded a design contract on the Poole Road Expansion project. This project will provide additional maintenance bays for the existing facility to support the 60' articulated buses used on the BRT corridors. It will also add additional administrative office space as the existing facility is at capacity. (3, 4)
- The City issued an RFQ for design services on the new GoRaleigh Access/GoWake Access operations and maintenance facility. (3, 4)
- Construction on the Poole Road park and ride reached substantial completion. This site includes more than 220 parking spaces that will be served by three (3) GoRaleigh routes. It also provides overflow parking for GoRaleigh employees as the staff continues to grow in order to implement the Wake Transit Plan. Twelve (12) EV Chargers were installed as part of this project with infrastructure available to expand to 24 units. (3, 4)
- Design on the East Raleigh park and ride reached 90%. This site will support approximately 100 parking spaces. Twelve (12) EV Chargers will be installed as part of the project with infrastructure available to expand to 24 units. This site will be the end of the line for the future Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue and future East Raleigh Transit Center. (3, 4)

GOTRIANGLE

- Initiated schematic design for Triangle Mobility Hub. Received a \$25 million grant award from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grant (RAISE) program. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Continued to advance the Fleet Study to identify fleet needs, evaluate opportunities for regional cooperation, and to establish low- or no-emissions fleet composition goals, including charging and/or fueling infrastructure. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Completed GoTriangle's FY24-FY28 Short Range Transit Plan, which provides a roadmap for continued service restoration and transit plan funded service expansion. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Conducted extensive transit rider engagement in preparation for return to fares. Prepared for the launch of new UMO mobile application and card fare payment methods. Prepared new and renewed GoPass options, including Partner GoPass, Youth GoPass, and Transit Assistance Program. As of June 30, 2024, there were 2,535 UMO accounts created. (1, 2, 3, 4)

TOWN OF APEX

- The Town is conducting a Transit Prioritization Study to determine the next steps for service improvements and/or expansions within the next few years. (4)

TOWN OF CARY

- GoCary completed a Microtransit Feasibility Study. The study will help guide future Microtransit implementation and service expansions for the fixed route network. (3)
- The Town is nearing completion of the remaining bus stop upgrades necessary to reach 100% compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This effort supports our mission to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transit services to community members of all ability levels. (4)

CITY OF RALEIGH-WAKE BRT PROJECTS

NEW BERN AVENUE CORRIDOR

- Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue is the first of four planned corridors. It will traverse 5.39 miles with 3.3 miles of dedicated, bus-only lanes. GoRaleigh held a groundbreaking ceremony on November 7, 2023 to kick off the construction phase of the first Wake BRT corridor in the state of North Carolina. The City of Raleigh advertised for construction bids in March 2024 with bid opening in May 2024. (3)

NORTHERN CORRIDOR

- Wake BRT: Northern Corridor is currently in the planning phase. The City of Raleigh advanced the planning study and conducted public engagement on the initial screening of alternatives for the corridor to investigate an extension to Midtown Raleigh and Triangle Town Center. (3)

SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

- The Wake BRT: Southern Corridor is in the final design phase. The final design team is working toward a 30% design milestone. The project received an \$85.91 million funding allocation from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). (3)

WESTERN CORRIDOR

- The Wake BRT: Western Corridor is in the preliminary design phase. The City of Raleigh advanced the design and developed materials for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts Ratings application. (3)

NEXT STEPS

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

CITY OF RALEIGH

- The new Route 9: Hillsborough will be launched with 15-minute frequency. (3)

- Implementation of the Route 5: Biltmore Hills high-frequency package is slated for FY25. This package will remove Routes 13 and 22, while realigning Route 5 to include areas previously covered by the eliminated routes. The new Route 5 will operate at 15-minute frequencies and Route 20 will be expanded to include weekend service. (3)
- Rolesville will receive microtransit, connecting Rolesville with Wake Forest. The service will be named MicroLink. This service replaces Route 401X. (2, 3, 4)
- Route 11: Avent Ferry will become a new high frequency network route. (3)
- Route 33: Knightdale service is expanded to cover weekends and also to serve the new East Wake Technical Community College. (3)

GOTRIANGLE

- Restore service on Routes CRX and 310. (1, 3)
- Expand service for the Route 305 including (2, 3):
 - Weekday midday and evening service between Raleigh and Apex.
 - Saturday and Sunday service between Raleigh and Apex.
 - Provide two-way service during peak periods between Apex and Holly Springs.
 - Extend the route to serve more destinations in Holly Springs.
- Continue to develop transit service expansions included in the Wake Transit Plan. (1, 2, 3, 4)

WAKE COUNTY

- GoWake SmartRide will begin its Knightdale expansion. The included municipalities will receive regular updates on ridership, so they can make informed decisions on service improvements. The City of Raleigh will provide microtransit service to the previously served area of Rolesville. (3, 4)
- In partnership with the City of Raleigh, GoWake Access will launch its new app, GoAccess! Both the GoWake SmartRide and Raleigh ADA services will be available in a single app. (3, 4)
- For the protection of our young riders, staff initiated a student rider application for GoWake SmartRide. Students attending East Wake and Knightdale High Schools will apply for permission to use the service. This will ensure that all students have an emergency contact and a school contact in the event of behavioral issues. (3, 4)

TOWN OF APEX

- The Town is working to implement Sunday service in FY25 and make additional bus stop improvements. (3, 4)

TOWN OF CARY

- GoCary plans to launch Routes 11 and 12 in FY25. Route 11 will serve East Cary and connect to North Carolina State University. Route 12 is an expansion of the current Apex-Cary Express and will provide all-day, local service. (2, 3)

TOWN OF MORRISVILLE

- The Town will add a node on Church Street in FY25 as well as an additional vehicle on Saturday afternoons to match weekday service. (4)

CAPITAL PROJECTS

CITY OF RALEIGH

- GoRaleigh's first park-and-ride location is scheduled to open beside the transit operations facility. It will be served by Route 18 and the 55X. The park-and-ride facility has 235 parking spots with 12 EV charging stations and the capacity for 24 EV charging stations. It has LED lighting and is ADA accessible. (3, 4)
- GoRaleigh's second park-and-ride facility is in design, with construction scheduled to begin in early 2025. The facility is expected to offer 90-100 parking spaces with about 12 spaces dedicated to EV charging. This facility will service a Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue platform and a future fixed-route transit center. (3, 4)
- GoRaleigh will complete construction of Set 8 by summer 2025, marking the addition of 44 bus stop shelters and improvements to a total of 49 bus stops. (4)
- GoRaleigh will advertise for construction bids for Set 9 in the fall of 2024, which primarily contains plans for enhanced site improvements. (4)

GOTRIANGLE

- Continue construction of the Raleigh Union Station Bus Facility (RUS Bus) in anticipation of revenue service beginning in August 2025. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Begin construction on 56 bus stop improvements in Wake County. (3, 4)
- Select a design team via Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (BOMF) Modernization and Expansion Project. Procure and install electric chargers for the new electric buses arriving in 2025. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Complete environmental review and schematic design for the Triangle Mobility Hub. (1, 2, 3, 4)

TOWN OF CARY

- GoCary will complete the design and start the construction of Phase 3 of the Bus Stop Improvement Project, which includes stops for Route 11 and Route 12. (4)
- GoCary will complete final design of the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility project and begin the bidding process for construction. (3, 4)
- The Town will complete the land acquisition process for the Multimodal Center. (4)

PLANNING PROJECTS

CAPITAL AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CAMPO)

- CAMPO continues working on the 2035 Wake Transit Plan Update, which is projected to conclude in Q4 of FY 2025. Phase II of public engagement is scheduled for Q2 of FY 2025 and will give the public an opportunity to provide feedback on three investment scenarios. The Draft 2035 Wake Transit Plan Update Plan, with the chosen investment scenario, will open for public comment in early spring 2025. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- CAMPO will begin a Concept of Operations Study for the Wake BRT: Western and Southern corridor extensions in FY 2025. The study will investigate the preferred

solutions identified for extension of these corridors, which are being planned by the City of Raleigh. The study will finalize assumptions for vehicle type, station design considerations, transit signal priority/queue jump technology, and operations considerations between the core BRT corridors and the extensions. (1)

CITY OF RALEIGH

GoRaleigh is slated to begin implementing FY25 Wake Transit Work Plan items in January of 2025. Those service planning improvements include the following tasks: (2, 3, 4)

- Route 11: Avent Ferry is increasing to 15 minute service.
- Route 18: Poole will split into two routes with the half closer to downtown Raleigh increasing to 30 minute all day service.
- Route 3: Glascock will increase in service span and include 30 minute midday and weekend service.
- Route 12: Method will increase in service span.
- Route 27: Blue Ridge will be realigned to cover the southern portion of Route 26.
- Route 26: Edwards Mill will be decommissioned.
- Route 4: Rex Hospital will be realigned to cover the northern portion of Edwards Mill Rd previously served by Route 26.
- Route 7L: Carolina Pines will be realigned, increase in service span late night, and increase in midday frequency.
- Route 11L: Buck Jones will be realigned to terminate at the Avent Ferry-Gorman intersection and will increase frequency to 45 minutes.
- Route 33: Knightdale will receive hourly weekend service.
- The City will conduct a GoRaleigh Access attitudinal survey.
- The City will evaluate existing services for frequency improvements and consistent span of high-frequency service.

CITY OF RALEIGH-WAKE BRT PROJECTS

Wake BRT: NEW BERN AVENUE CORRIDOR

- The City will re-advertise construction bids for the project and begin construction. (3)

WESTERN CORRIDOR

- The City is submitting the Small Starts Ratings application to FTA in August 2024. (3)
- Transitioning from preliminary to final design is scheduled for early 2025. (3)

SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

- Continuing to advance final design milestones and preparing for the FTA risk and readiness review, which is required prior to a grant agreement for federal funds. (3)

NORTHERN CORRIDOR

- The next steps include a detailed screening of the alternatives analysis and a second round of public engagement in fall 2024. (3)

- Next steps include the completion of a planning study to identify the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for each corridor option: downtown to midtown Raleigh and downtown to Triangle Town Center. (3)

GOTRIANGLE

- GoTriangle will return to fares and launch new and renewed GoPass options, including youth and transit assistance programs, as well as partner GoPasses with universities, community organizations, and employers. (1, 2, 3, 4)

TOWN OF APEX

- The Town is working to finish the Transit Prioritization Study. (3)

TOWN OF CARY

- Evaluating existing services for realignment and efficiency improvements. (3)
- Continuing to monitor existing bus stops and ADA access points for improvements. (4)
- Monitoring demand throughout the system for amenity improvements. (4)

TOWN OF MORRISVILLE

- The Town will conduct a transit study to analyze the existing Smart Shuttle service and make recommendations for a future local transit service model. (4)

WAKE COUNTY

- The North Carolina Department of Transportation will complete an electric vehicle fleet transition plan. The plan will fulfil the requirements necessary for GoWake Access to begin purchasing electric vehicles in future years. (3)

REVENUE HOURS CHART

GoApex

FY24 route revenue hours were 4,826 increasing about 7.7% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 4,482.

GoCary

FY24 revenue hours were 50,515.57 increasing 0.26% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 50,384.27.

GoRaleigh

FY24 revenue hours were 303,680.64 increasing about 4.5% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 290,478.79.

GoTriangle

FY24 revenue hours were 114,588 increasing 13.7% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 100,780.

GoWake Access

FY24 revenue hours were 88,667 increasing 11.17% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 79,757.

Town of Morrisville

FY24 revenue hours were 5,413.2 increasing 4.4% compared with FY23 revenue hours of 5,650.9.

RIDERSHIP CHART

GoApex

FY24 ridership was 16,225 increasing about 35% compared with FY23 ridership of 12,075.

GoCary

FY24 ridership was 441,596 increasing 27% compared with FY23 ridership of 348,590.

GoRaleigh

FY24 ridership was 4,369,574 decreasing about 3.8% compared with FY23 ridership of 4,539,125.

GoTriangle's Wake County Ridership

FY24 ridership was 787,602 increasing/decreasing about 18.9% compared with FY23 ridership of 662,614.

GoWake Access

FY24 ridership was 193,401 increasing about 20.81% compared with FY23 ridership of 160,083.

Town of Morrisville

FY24 ridership was 23,302 increasing about 8.6% compared with FY23 ridership of 21,445.