



WAKE COUNTY TRANSIT PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021



Wake County transit plan

This report reflects the progress made toward achieving the goals outlined in the Wake County Transit Plan in fiscal year 2021. Included is a listing of Wake Transit partner programming and planning accomplishments as well as a look at planned future investments in Wake County's transit network.

In spring 2021, the two Wake Transit governing boards – the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Executive Board and GoTriangle's Board of Trustees – adopted an updated Wake Transit Plan covering fiscal years 2021 through 2030. The update process included:

- Completing a transit market reassessment.
- Updating the 10-year financial assumptions.
- Evaluating cost and schedule feasibility for major capital projects.
- Reprioritizing and reprogramming investments into the new financial constraint.
- Confirming the community's transit investment goals called the "Four Big Moves."

Several notable bus service expansions occurred in FY2021. We celebrated the accomplishment of the first "Big Move" to connect all 12 Wake County municipalities with fixed-route transit service with the extension of peak service on GoTriangle Route 305 to the Town of Holly Springs. The Apex-Cary Express Route, connecting riders with other regional transit services from the Cary Depot, began operation.

GoRaleigh Route 21: Caraleigh is now operating with increased frequency and expanded hours. In addition, transit providers received funding to support complementary Americans with Disabilities Act/ paratransit services on Wake Transit-funded, fixed routes across the system.

The Community Funding Area Program, which sets aside a portion of Wake Transit revenues to support the development of community-based transit services in communities with limited access to the fixed-route network, continued to expand. In FY2021, the Town of Wake Forest used CFA program funds to support the operation of its bidirectional circulator and to add Saturday service on Wake Forest Loop B. The Town of Morrisville completed planning for its node-based Smart Shuttle service set to launch in fall 2021 and the Town of Apex continued developing GoApex Route 1, the town's first fixed-route service anticipated to launch in mid-2022.

Other FY2021 Wake Transit Program highlights include advancing the New Bern Avenue Bus Rapid Transit project into the final design phase. The Federal Transit Administration recommended this project for funding through its Small Starts program, and its Wake Transit funding allocation was extended to cover construction and project completion costs.

In addition, alternatives analyses were completed and locally preferred alternatives selected for the Western and Southern bus rapid transit corridors as well as for the Downtown Cary Multimodal Center. Transit

centers, transfer points, bus stops and park-and-ride lots were improved throughout the transit network, and several new facilities entered or continued through the project development process.

Several studies continued or were launched during the year:

- Wake County coordinated a Northeast Area Microtransit Planning Study.
- The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization began a major investment study on two rapid bus extensions.
- GoTriangle continued early project development activities in support of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Project.
- The process to update the Wake Bus Plan – including developing short-range transit investment plans for the four Wake County transit providers – began.

The Wake Transit Performance Tracker, developed during FY2021, puts Wake Transit project and program information at the fingertips of partners and community members. This new online resource includes two core components: the map and the dashboard. The interactive map shares detailed information on service and infrastructure investments that have been completed, are in progress or are programmed to be funded in future years. The performance dashboard tracks and reports on our progress toward accomplishing the Four Big Moves and other program goals.

There are 17 performance measures tracked including annual ridership, revenue and expenditure totals, service expansion to outlying Wake County communities, progress building onto the frequent network, progress expanding the fixed-route network and progress toward developing commuter rail and bus rapid transit services. Information about the tracker can be found at waketranstracker.com. Throughout most of the fiscal year, stay-at-home and safer-at-home safety protocols were in place to mitigate COVID-19 health risks. Wake Transit Program staff and partners quickly adapted to conducting business and community engagement virtually. The result was a successful year, moving our community closer to reaching the goals of the Wake Transit Plan. View the current (FY2021-2030) Wake Transit Plan at goforwardnc.org/county/wake-county/the-plan.

The following pages identify transit agency accomplishments and plans for future investments as they relate to the Wake Transit Plan, which is guided by the Four Big Moves. Each item is categorized by which move it serves to complete. Wake Transit staff and partners work throughout the year to learn from and involve Wake County community members in the transit planning and decision-making process. You can sign up to receive email notifications for public events and activities or view notices and announcements online at goforwardnc.org/wakeinput.

The four big moves



Connect the region.



Create frequent, reliable urban mobility.



Connect all Wake County communities.



Enhance access to transit.

Accomplishments

Service improvements

GOCARY

- Implemented new Route 7 along Weston Parkway. 🔄
- Implemented new Apex-Cary Express (ACX) from Apex to the Cary Depot. 🔄🔄

GORALEIGH

- Increased frequency for Route 21: Caraleigh with 30-minute service all day on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. 🔄
- Continued implementation of the Loop B Circulator in Wake Forest, and expanded service to Saturdays. 🔄

GOTRIANGLE

- Extended Route 305 to downtown Apex and Holly Springs. 🔄🔄
- Extended Route 310 to connect the Regional Transit Center, Wake Technical Community College Research Triangle Park campus and Morrisville to Cary Depot with service every 30 minutes at peak hours and hourly service in the middle of the day and evenings Monday through Friday. 🔄🔄🔄
- Made significant changes in the Raleigh/Raleigh-Durham International Airport/Regional Transit Center corridor – including realigning Route 100, creating an RDU Shuttle and suspending Route 105 – to achieve productivity and improve travel times. The change was temporary but could be extended as part of the Wake Bus Plan. 🔄

GOWAKE ACCESS

- Continued service-level improvements in the call center while answering 83,847 calls, representing a less than 1% increase compared with the prior fiscal year.
- Increased trips provided to the rural residents of Wake County by 30% since FY2019. 🔄

Capital projects

GOCARY

- Completed Phase I design work and initiated construction of 57 bus stops. 🔄
- Began Phase 2 design work to improve 54 existing bus stops. 🔄
- Continued preliminary design for GoCary's Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility. 🔄
- Continued feasibility study for the Downtown Cary Multimodal Center with work related to site selection and the federal National Environmental Policy Act process. 🔄🔄🔄🔄
- Improved bus stops to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. 🔄

GORALEIGH

- Improved 29 bus stops to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and improved safety. 🔄
- Finalized construction on 24 bus shelters and 18 concrete strips for existing and new Wake Transit routes. 🔄
- Bought and received five electric buses funded by WTP and a federal No or Low Emission grant award of \$1.65 million. ✔️🔄🔄
- Completed charging infrastructure for up to six electric buses, expandable for up to 10. ✔️🔄🔄
- Bought four paratransit vehicles and eight compressed natural gas buses. ✔️🔄🔄
- Submitted and awarded CAMPO Locally Administered Projects Program grant of \$787,000 for four enhanced transit stops. 🔄

GOTRIANGLE

- Continued the Wake Park-and-Ride Feasibility Study of short-term and long-term park-and-ride lot improvements and identified improvements to be designed in FY2022. 🔄➡️
- Continued development of the Raleigh Union Station Bus Facility including completing a schematic design of the facility. ✔️🔄
- Put six new buses into service. 🔄➡️

Planning projects

GORALEIGH

PROJECTS IN THE PLANNING STAGE:

- East Raleigh Community Transit Center. Planning continued, and a site will be selected in 2022 that will also serve as the end of the line for Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue. The site will also include a park-and-ride facility for fixed-route and new BRT service. ✔️🔄
- ADA Operations and Maintenance Facility. Planning activities including Title VI compliance and initial National Environmental Policy Act work continued. 🔄

BRT PROJECTS

GENERAL ACTIVITY

- Conducted virtual open houses in fall 2020 and spring 2021 to present project updates and receive feedback from the community. ✔️➡️
- Convened BRT Stakeholder Committee quarterly to assist in developing the BRT projects. ✔️➡️
- Held online BRT workshops to provide project updates. ✔️➡️

FOR NEW BERN AVENUE CORRIDOR

- Received a \$35 million allocation from the Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Program. ✔️
- Continued work for preliminary design and federal National Environmental Policy Act documentation. ✔️

FOR WESTERN CORRIDOR

- Finalized Locally Preferred Alternative endorsed by the Town of Cary and City of Raleigh. ✔️➡️
- Accepted into the project development phase for the CIG program. ✔️➡️
- Initiated preliminary design and federal National Environmental Policy Act documentation. ✔️➡️

FOR SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

- Finalized Locally Preferred Alternative endorsed by the Town of Garner and City of Raleigh. ✔️➡️
- Locally Preferred Alternative decisions were adopted in FY2021. ✔️➡️
- Accepted into the project development phase. ✔️➡️

GOTRIANGLE

- Completed the feasibility study for improving or relocating the Regional Transit Center, identifying a strategy for relocating the facility to a new site that will improve transit speed and reliability, address passenger amenity and operational needs and provide new multimodal connections. ✔️🔄➡️
- Continued Phase 2 of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study to further define the project concept, build consensus among stakeholders and engage the community. ➡️

TOWN OF APEX

- Substantially completed design for all new bus stops that will support GoApex Route 1. 🔄
- Completed the National Environmental Policy Act documentation for the fixed-route circulator GoApex Route 1. 🔄

CAPITAL AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

- Finalized an update to the Wake Transit Plan, considering the original cost and schedule assumptions made for major capital projects, to extend the plan's horizon from 2027 to 2030. 🔄👉👍🔄
- Planned the Wake Transit Performance Tracker, an online resource that tracks and reports on our investment in Wake County's transit network. Launched in FY2022, the tracker has two parts: an interactive project map and a program-level performance dashboard.

WAKE COUNTY

- Initiated a microtransit planning study to determine options in northeast Wake County. Wake County's goal is to launch microtransit services that provide a "first five-mile, last five-mile" approach to connect rural residents with more distant services. 🔄

Next steps

Service improvements

GOCARY

- Launch GoApex Route 1, the first local transit service in Apex. 🔄
- Finalize planning and launch the Morrisville Smart Shuttle service. 🔄

GORALEIGH

- Implement Glenwood Ave High-Frequency Network route package to include all-day service to Brier Creek. 👍🔄

GOTRIANGLE

- Expand frequency of Route 305 during peak hours and introduce midday, evening and weekend service between GoRaleigh Station and downtown Apex. 🔄🔄

TOWN OF APEX

- Partner with GoCary and GoWake Access to offer the first local bus route in Apex with complementary paratransit service. 🔄

Capital projects

GOCARY

- Build or upgrade at least 60 bus stops. 🔄
- Begin design of the GoCary Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility. 🔄
- Complete planning studies and design for the Downtown Cary Multimodal Center. 🔄👉👍🔄

GORALEIGH

- Complete construction of Poole Road Park-and-Ride facility in FY2023. ➡
- Build the four transfer points that were in planning or design during FY2020. ✓ ➡
- Design and build enhanced transfer points at WakeMed North, Pleasant Valley Shopping center and Capital Boulevard/Millbrook Road. ✓ ➡
- Continue design of ADA/Paratransit Operations and Maintenance Facility, a joint project of GoRaleigh Access and GoWake Access. ➡
- Continue design of East Raleigh transit center. ▶ ✓ ➡
- Build and install charging infrastructure for five electric buses. ✓ ➡

GOTRIANGLE

- Procure six buses. 🔄 ➡
- Advance design of the Raleigh Union Station Bus Facility. ✓ ➡
- Initiate preliminary engineering for the relocated Regional Transit Center and new Wake park-and-ride lots. ▶ ✓ ✓ ➡
- Continue to work with partners to develop and launch a regional mobile ticketing program. ➡

TOWN OF APEX

- Continue building the 41 planned bus stops to serve GoApex Route 1. ➡

Planning projects

GORALEIGH

- Continue preliminary design phase and federal National Environmental Policy Act documentation for the Wake BRT: Western Boulevard corridor and the Wake BRT: Southern Corridor. ✓
- Continue to advance final design phase for the Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue Corridor. ✓
- Continue providing project updates with additional public engagement and outreach through the use of virtual BRT open houses. ✓

GOTRIANGLE

- Continue Phase 2 of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study to further define the project concept, build consensus among stakeholders and engage the community. 🔄
- Continue the Regional Fleet and Facilities Study to evaluate fleet, maintenance facility expansion or relocation and electric vehicle-charging needs for GoTriangle's fleet as well as opportunities for coordination among transit service providers. 🔄 ➡

GOWAKE ACCESS

- Continue the Northeastern Microtransit Planning Study. The study plan was approved in March 2021. GoWake Access is finalizing operations and technology contracts with Uber and expects to launch the new GoWake SmartRide NE service in the late fall. ➡
- Continue and finalize rapid bus extensions study for CAMPO.

TOTAL REVENUE
\$118,214,325

OTHER REVENUE
\$1,330,249






VEHICLE REGISTRATION TAX \$3
\$2,914,392

VEHICLE RENTAL TAX
\$3,119,546

VEHICLE REGISTRATION TAX \$7
\$6,803,069

HALF-CENT SALES TAX
\$104,047,069



 TAX DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION \$356,134	 CAPITAL PLANNING \$393,351	 COMMUNITY FUNDING AREA \$425,013	 TRANSIT PLAN ADMINISTRATION \$2,922,388
 COMMUTER RAIL TRANSIT \$3,118,048	 BUS INFRASTRUCTURE \$3,609,233	 VEHICLE ACQUISITION \$4,858,571	 BUS RAPID TRANSIT \$6,299,316
 ALLOCATION TO WAKE OPERATING FUND BALANCE \$11,162,106	 TRANSIT SERVICES \$12,878,663	 ALLOCATION TO WAKE CAPITAL FUND BALANCE \$72,191,502	