

WAKE COUNTY TRANSIT
PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019





Wake County has more than a million residents, and that number grows by more than 60 people a day. In 2016, Wake County voters approved a half-cent transit-designated sales tax to invest in the Wake Transit Plan. By 2027, the plan should triple countywide bus services, increase the number of routes running every 15 minutes or less and add bus rapid transit and commuter rail systems. In fiscal year 2019, the revenue stream, which includes the half-cent sales tax and new vehicle registration fees, provided \$108,899,128 to the Wake Transit Plan.

In fiscal year 2019, that money helped expand bus service throughout Wake County, further linking colleges and universities, employment centers, medical facilities, dense residential areas, Raleigh-Durham International Airport and downtowns. Weekend and evening service was increased, stops were improved and additional on-demand trips were provided to elderly, disabled and rural Wake County residents.

The design phase for the county's first bus rapid transit corridor began in late spring. New Bern Avenue is one of four planned corridors that will feature dedicated bus lanes on local roads, priority treatment at traffic signals and raised platforms for commuters.

Planning and studies continue for a commuter rail line that will run between Garner and Durham, with stops at downtown Raleigh, NC State University, Cary, Morrisville and Research Triangle Park.

Fiscal year 2019 marked the first year of the community funding areas program, through which matching money will support more local community-oriented transit services. Municipalities wanting to create their own transit circulator services, additional demand-response trips, intercommunity connections or other types of services can now submit project proposals and receive matching funds through the program. Apex and Morrisville submitted applications for fiscal year 2019 funds.

View the Wake Transit Plan at goforwardnc.org/county/wake-county/about.

LONG-RANGE GOALS

- Connect the region.
- Connect all Wake County communities.
- Create frequent, reliable urban mobility.
- Enhance access to transit.



SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTED

GO CARY

- Began first full year of expanded midday service on Routes 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Sunday service on all routes (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

GO RALEIGH

- Implemented two route packages that added service in Southeast Raleigh and realigned the Rex Hospital route to include service to the N.C. Museum of Art and the N.C. State Fairgrounds for the first time.
- Launched its fourth high-frequency network route, providing service every 15 minutes along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Poole Road in Southeast Raleigh. Ridership grew 60% over the previous year.

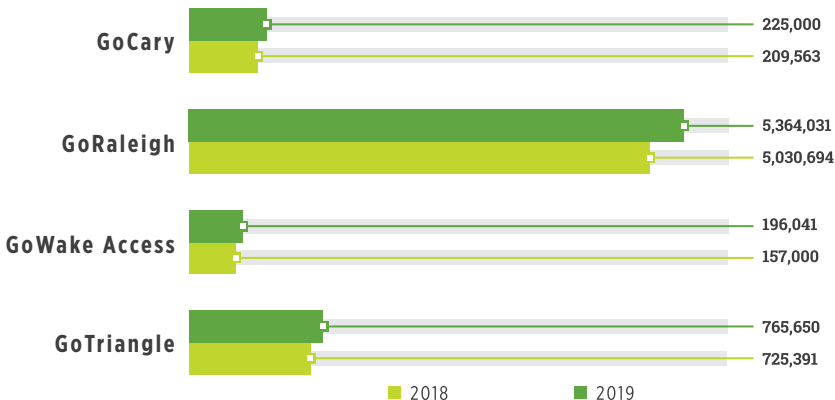
GO TRIANGLE

- Added peak-period trips on Route DRX (Durham-Raleigh Express) to bring frequency to every 15 to 30 minutes during the highest-use portions of the day.
- Added service on Route CRX (Chapel Hill-Raleigh Express) to improve reliability.
- Extended Sunday service on GoTriangle core Routes 100 and 300 until 9 p.m.
- Launched a holiday calendar with service on five additional holidays. GoTriangle provides service on all holidays except Christmas Day and Thanksgiving Day.

GO WAKE ACCESS

- Provided an additional 1,779 trips to rural, elderly and disabled riders in Wake County.
- Reduced the average time customers hold on the phone from 5 minutes to 3 minutes.

RIDERSHIP IMPROVEMENT FY19



GoCary FY19 ridership increased almost **8%** compared with **FY 2018**; over **225,000** riders on fixed-route services in **FY 2019**, GoCary's highest total since **FY 2015**.

GoRaleigh FY19 ridership was **5,364,031**. Total system ridership increased by about **6.6%** on routes operated by GoRaleigh.

GoWake FY19 ridership was **196,041**, increasing **25%** over **FY18** ridership. **GoWake** provided **8,670** additional trips to Wake County in **FY19**.

GoTriangle FY19 ridership on **Wake routes** was **765,650**, increasing **5.5%** over **FY18** ridership.



| CAPITAL PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED

GOCARY

- Selected a consultant for a systemwide Bus Stop Improvement Project and began preliminary design work.
- Held two programming and design workshops for GoCary's Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility and began reviewing the initial concept design.
- Continued the feasibility study for the downtown multi-modal transit facility with work related to site selection and the federal NEPA process.

GORALEIGH

- Completed engineering and design work for 43 bus stops.
- Secured with the City of Raleigh a Federal Transit Administration \$1.6 million Low or No Emission Grant toward acquiring five electric buses. Vehicles should arrive for service in fiscal year 2021.
- Procured an additional 23 compressed natural gas buses.
- Continued work to acquire land for two projects: the East Raleigh Transit Center and the Poole Road ADA Facility.
- Submitted an application to the Federal Transit Administration Small Starts Grant program to advance project development of the New Bern Avenue bus rapid transit corridor. The City of Raleigh began working on 30% design and environmental documentation for the project.

GOTRIANGLE

- Executed a contract for professional services to provide bus stop and park-and-ride site plan designs.
- Executed a contract for professional services to plan, coordinate and perform feasibility studies for five park-and-ride locations in Wake County.
- Hired a consultant to perform a space and efficiency study to determine the operational and financial viability of suggested improvements at the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility.
- Secured \$20 million BUILD grant for the Raleigh Union Station Bus facility.

| PLANNING PROJECTS INITIATED

GORALEIGH

- Began the Wake BRT: Western Boulevard Corridor Study to further refine alternatives and analyze land use along the Western Boulevard BRT corridor.

GOTRIANGLE

- Executed a contract for professional services to plan, coordinate and perform a study to determine the most feasible alternatives to relocate the Regional Transit Center.



| SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

GOCARY

- Implement systemwide changes in early 2020 that include new services such as Route 7 along Weston Parkway and the Holly Springs Express, which will connect Holly Springs with transit for the first time.

GORALEIGH

- Continue to create new bus stops and improve others, with 80 sites set for engineering work.
- Gained approval to add three routes to the GoRaleigh system: Rolesville, Garner and Knightdale. Garner and Knightdale service (former GoTriangle routes) will be local, all-day service. The Rolesville Route will be GoRaleigh's first regional express service, connecting Rolesville with transit for the first time. The route will connect to two continuing express services to Research Triangle Park and downtown Raleigh.

GOTRIANGLE

- Add Route 310, providing all-day service Monday-Friday from the Regional Transit Center to Wake Tech RTP campus.
- Add Route NRX (North Raleigh-RTC Express), replacing Route 201.
- Add trips on Route DRX (Durham-Raleigh Express) to increase the route's frequency to every 15 to 30 minutes during the highest-use portions of the day.
- Add trips on Route CRX (Chapel Hill-Raleigh Express) to improve the frequency of the route.

GOWAKE ACCESS

- Coordinate with senior agency partners to increase public engagement and work with Fuquay-Varina on a planning study for on-demand microtransit services.

| CAPITAL PROJECTS

GOCARY

- Build and upgrade at least 60 bus stops.
- Begin design of the GoCary Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility.
- Begin land acquisition for the downtown Cary Multimodal Center in late FY20 pending a final site selection.

GORALEIGH

- Work on completing the design for the New Bern Avenue bus rapid transit corridor and initiate project development for the western and southern BRT corridors.
- Solicit construction bids for improvements to 43 bus stops. Complete right of way and land acquisition for 21 more bus stops, which will be added to the bid to be built in FY20.
- Design five enhanced transfer points. Construction is funded for one of those sites. Build the remaining four in FY21 with such upgrades as real-time displays, large shelters, additional seating, bicycle racks and a distinctive design.



GOTRIANGLE

- Conduct feasibility studies and obtain approvals to design and implement park-and-ride improvements in Apex, Wake Forest and other municipalities.
- Assign engineering design tasks to consultant and implement plans to construct eight bus stops that qualify for improvement.
- Continue coordination with regional partners to identify bus stops requiring improvements and to determine ways to implement them quickly.
- Coordinate engineering design and construction of planned improvements at the existing Carter Finley park-and-ride to help relieve traffic congestion on the NCSU Wolfline as well as during stadium events.
- Finalize design of 300 bus stop signs with GoTriangle logo and updated information and hire a company to coordinate fabricating and installing them. The new signs will replace those that use the former Triangle Transit logo.

PLANNING PROJECTS

GORALEIGH

- Hold the first public meetings for the Western Boulevard BRT Study. A consultant was hired and initial scoping work completed.

GOTRIANGLE

- Continue planning and coordination with consultant to study the most feasible alternatives for relocating the Regional Transit Center.
- Complete an assessment of the efficiency of space and operations at the Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility as well as the financial viability of suggested short- and long-range improvements.

INCREASE IN REVENUE HOURS

FY19



GoCary systemwide revenue hours increased **2.05%** over **FY 2018**.

GoRaleigh systemwide revenue hours increased about **10%**.

GoWake Access systemwide revenue hours increased **10%**.

GoTriangle revenue hours on **Wake routes** increased **5.6%**.



\$92,496,302 ■
HALF-CENT SALES TAX

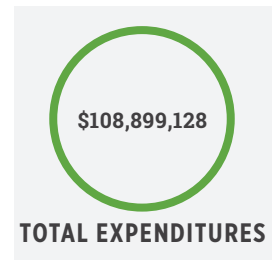
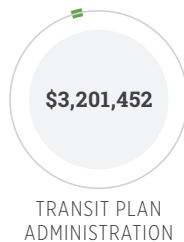
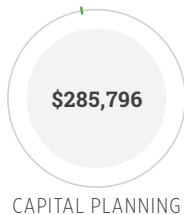
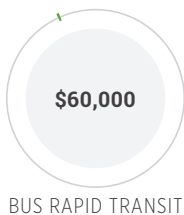
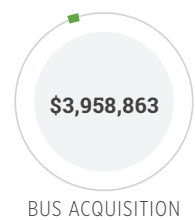
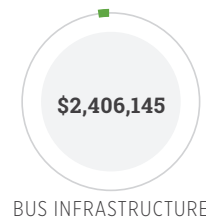
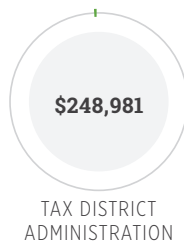
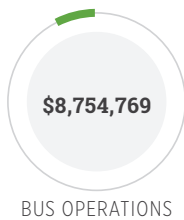
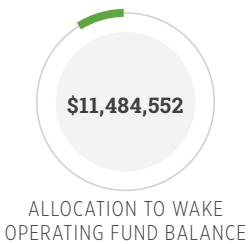
\$6,470,828 ■
\$7 VEHICLE REGISTRATION TAX

\$4,258,283 ■
VEHICLE RENTAL TAX

\$2,901,820 ■
OTHER REVENUE

\$2,771,895 ■
\$3 VEHICLE REGISTRATION TAX

\$108,899,128
TOTAL REVENUE





After the late summer launch of the Youth GoPass program invited them to ride free, youths ages 13 to 18 took to public transit in droves during fiscal year 2019. Teens swiped their GoPasses to the tune of 460,083 boardings on GoTriangle, GoRaleigh, GoCary and GoDurham routes. Dedicated transit funds in three counties allowed the agencies to create the program that brought teenagers new freedoms to explore the Triangle. Going forward, agency officials are hoping the wave of youth choosing transit will keep rising with a growing awareness of the environmental benefits and ease of traveling together.

Altogether, more than **6,600 teens** ages 13 to 18 signed up for **Youth GoPasses** between July 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Christopher Reynolds, 17, is one of more than 400 Broughton High School students with a Youth GoPass, and he uses his every day to take GoRaleigh Route 8 between his home and school. His family had been spending about \$50 a month for him to use public transportation before the free Youth GoPass program started last year.



My grandma read about the pass, and she printed out the articles about it. My mom picked me up from school one day and we went to the library, and we got it.

All I needed was a student ID, which I had on me. It's easy.

- **CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS** | BROUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT



The Commuter Rail Transit project, as originally included in the Wake and Durham county transit plans, would run 37 miles from Garner to downtown Raleigh, North Carolina State University, Cary, Morrisville and the Research Triangle Park continuing to downtown Durham. The current plan calls for:

- Evaluating up to eight trips in each direction during peak hours with one to two trips each way during midday and evening hours.
- Leveraging the bus network to connect riders with key destinations such as the Raleigh-Durham International Airport.

Fiscal year 2019 brought about several milestones in the pre-planning stage of this project.

In November 2018, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization designated

GoTriangle as the project sponsor for the initial 37-mile project. As project sponsor, GoTriangle would lead additional stages including project planning, development, engineering and construction in coordination with local and federal partners. In June 2019, the Commuter Rail Major Investment Study was completed. This study analyzed peer commuter rail systems and evaluated potential station locations, human and environmental considerations, and potential frequencies of commuter rail service.

In late fiscal 2019, several regional partners asked that the project be expanded, so an additional pre-planning study now underway will assess the feasibility of extending service to Selma in Johnston County and Mebane in Alamance County. The study, expected to be completed in late 2019, will provide more detail on possible timelines, costs and rider projections for the original project and for any proposed expansions. Results and additional information will be posted on the GoForwardNC.org website and shared with the community in a variety of ways as it becomes available.

The commuter rail project will incorporate significant community engagement and public input as it moves forward into any additional phases, which could include leveraging local transit funding sources with available federal and state funds.



