

Some Wake Transit projects may hold as virus brings uncertainty to tax collections

Because efforts to curb the coronavirus pandemic are expected to significantly affect many kinds of tax collections, the Wake County Transit Planning Advisory Committee is recommending that most new Wake Transit improvements proposed for fiscal year 2021 be delayed until available revenues can be better assessed later this year.

North Carolinians have been under a stay-at-home order since March 30 to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 cases. As a result, most businesses are closed, which has decreased the sales that generate the tax revenue expected to pay for new transit investments. Wake County voters approved a half-cent sales tax to invest in Wake Transit improvements in 2016.

Commented [BW1]: will need to update with current status on may 15

“It is reasonable to anticipate that there will be some impact to funds available for transit projects in the upcoming year,” said Shannon Cox, TPAC chair and long-range planning manager for the town of Apex. “In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the TPAC is recommending that most new investments included in the draft FY21 work plan be held in ‘unbudgeted reserve’ until more information is known about transit funds. Only the new projects that address pressing needs or that have other committed funds are recommended to move forward in July. The Wake Transit partners will continue working hard on the many changes and improvements already funded and well underway.”

In January, the TPAC held a public review and comment period on a draft transit work plan for fiscal year 2021 that listed \$114.2 million in proposed investments. Find a news release about those investments [here](#).

The TPAC used that feedback and weighed a project’s time sensitivity and riders’ most pressing needs, among other criteria, to recommend what should move forward in July.

The projects recommended to proceed include the next steps in developing the New Bern Avenue bus rapid transit corridor, additional bus service on GoRaleigh’s Route 21 and two projects associated with the [Community Funding Area program](#).

The projects moved to the “unbudgeted reserve” category include a GoRaleigh route package serving Glenwood Avenue, GoTriangle expansion of Route 305 to all-day service and planning and construction of transit centers, bus stops and park and ride lots.

Review and comment on the recommended FY21 Wake Transit Work Plan [here](#).

The 30-day public comment period will run from May 15 to June 14. Feedback received will be considered by the CAMPO Executive Board and the GoTriangle Board of Trustees prior to the plan’s adoption.