



Destination 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Draft Report

February 3, 2026 Draft

Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization

Chapter 1: Executive Summary

Transportation investments link people to the places where they live, work, learn, shop, and play, and provide critical connections between businesses and their labor markets, suppliers, and customers.

This document contains the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs) for the two organizations charged with transportation decision-making in the Research Triangle Region: the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization (TWTPO). These organizations, and the areas for which they are responsible, are commonly called “MPOs.”

Responding to Regional Growth & Change

The areas covered by this plan are part of a larger economic region. Transportation investments should consider the mobility needs of this larger region and links to other large metro regions of North Carolina and throughout the Southeast. The Triangle Region is expected to accommodate substantial future growth - *we must plan not just for the region that we are today, but also for the region that we will become.*

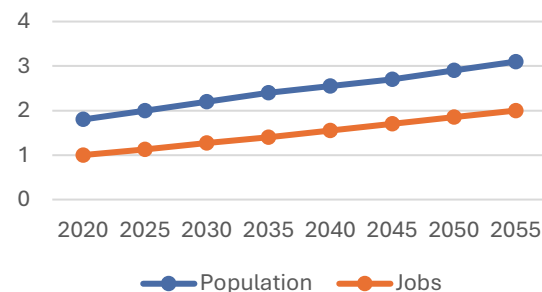


*Anticipated 2020-2055
Population/Employment Growth*

Capital Area MPO Area	
Population Growth:	1,082,000
Total 2055 Population:	2,456,000
Employment Growth:	776,000
Total 2055 Employment:	1,448,000
Triangle West TPO Area	
Population Growth:	198,000
Total 2055 Population:	648,000
Employment Growth:	261,000
Total 2055 Employment:	572,000

Between the Capital Area MPO area and the Triangle West TPO area, the Triangle Area is anticipated to add approximately **1.3 million additional people** and **1 million additional jobs** by the year 2055.

Figure 1.1: Forecast Population and Job Growth in the Triangle (in Millions)



The Triangle has historically been one of the nation’s most sprawling regions, and current forecasts project *both* continued outward growth *and* infill development in selected locations, most notably in the central parts of Raleigh and Durham and the areas in between them - this includes a new mixed use center currently being developed within Research Triangle Park. A key challenge for our transportation plans is to match our vision for how our communities should grow with the transportation investments to support this growth.



Development underway at HUB RTP

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No region has been able to “build its way out of congestion.” An important challenge for our transportation plans is to provide travel choices that allow people to avoid congestion where it cannot be prevented.

Our region’s population is changing. The population is aging, more households consist of single people and two-person households without children, the number of households without cars is increasing, and more people are interested in living in more compact neighborhoods with a mix of activities. Our plans are designed to provide mobility choices to address our region’s changing needs.

Our region’s two MPOs are tied together by very strong travel patterns between them - our largest commute pattern and heaviest travel volumes occur at the intersection of the MPO boundaries. Our transportation plans need to recognize the mobility needs of residents and businesses that transcend our administrative MPO and county borders.



Interstate 40 in Research Triangle Park

Regional Transportation Vision

The region has a common vision of what it wants its transportation system to be:

A seamlessly-integrated set of transportation services that provide

travel choices to support economic development and that:

- *are compatible with the character and development of our communities*
- *are sensitive to the environment*
- *improve quality of life, and*
- *are safe and accessible for all.*

The MPOs have jointly adopted goals and objectives to accomplish this vision and selected performance measures to track progress over time. Each MPO has targets that reflect the unique characteristics and aspirations of the communities within the organization. *Destination 2055* commits our region to transportation services and development patterns that contribute to a more equitable and sustainable place where people can successfully pursue their daily activities.

Analysis of Investment Choices

To analyze our transportation investment choices, the Capital Area MPO and Triangle West TPO followed a systematic process involving significant public engagement, including targeted engagement with traditionally underrepresented voices. It began with understanding our communities’ core values and priorities. Special emphasis was placed on identifying key activity centers in the region and investments and strategies that would connect these centers to neighborhoods with the most significant numbers of Title VI-protected population groups, providing these neighborhoods with a range of travel choices, especially transit.

Next, we used carefully-documented analysis tools to forecast the types, locations, and amounts of future homes and jobs based on market conditions and trends, factors that influence growth, and local plans. Based on these forecasts, we looked

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at mobility needs and trends, and where our current transportation system may become deficient in meeting these needs.



Destination 2055 Public Engagement Event

Working with a variety of partners and based on public input, we created land use and transportation system scenarios and analyzed their impacts, comparing the performance of system alternatives against one another and to performance targets derived from our goals and objectives.

Alternatives Analysis Scenarios



Plans &
Trends



Shared
Leadership



All
Together

Planned Transportation Investments

The result of this analysis and extensive public engagement was a set of planned investments, together with a pattern of land development aligned with these investments. Additional studies were identified to ensure that the investments are carefully designed and effectively implemented. The core of the plan is the set of transportation investments described in Chapter 7:

- New and expanded **roads** where needed, and redesigned roads for safer, better multi-modal travel;
- Local and regional **transit** facilities and services, including rapid bus and regional rail;
- **Aviation** and long-distance passenger and freight **rail** services;
- **Bicycle** and **pedestrian** facilities, both as independent projects and in conjunction with road projects;
- **Transportation Demand Management** (TDM) marketing and outreach efforts to increase the use of alternative modes and reduce peak-period solo driving;
- **Technology**-based transportation services, such as the use of advanced technology to make transit and road investments more effective, including the advent of connected and autonomous vehicles; and
- **Transportation Systems Management** (TSM) solutions that aim to improve the efficiency of the transportation network.

In addition to these investments, the plan includes a focus on issues where the ties between development and transportation investments are most critical:

- **Transit corridor development**, with an emphasis on equitable transit-oriented development and affordable housing strategies;
- **Safe and healthy streets** with designs that are sensitive to the neighborhoods of which they are a part and support the needs of a full range of users, including drivers, transit users, cyclists and pedestrians - these are sometimes referred to as "context-sensitive complete streets."



Example “Complete Street” improvement project on Hillsborough Street in Raleigh

The plan anticipates that the region will match its historic focus on roads with a sustained commitment to high-quality transit service as well, emphasizing five critical components:

- Connecting the region’s main centers with fast, frequent, reliable transit services;
- Offering transit service to all communities that have implemented local transit revenue sources;
- Providing frequent transit service in urban travel markets;
- Providing on-demand “microtransit” services in locations where they can provide superior service; and
- Supplying better transit access, from first mile/last mile circulator services in key centers to safe and convenient cycling and walk access to transit routes.

Although the plan includes an emphasis on transit investment, it envisions significant additional roadway investment as well, focusing on “complete corridors” that incorporate provisions for transit and active transportation as part of the roadway improvements.

One clear message from both elected officials and public engagement during the development of *Destination 2055* is that

roadways need to be designed and engineered with much greater care than has been typical in the past, using more flexible and context-sensitive standards. Especially in urban and urbanizing locations, designs should prioritize steady, safe, reliable, moderate-speed travel rather than high-speed travel.

Destination 2055 includes a number of recommendations for shared regional projects that cross the boundary between the Capital Area MPO and Triangle West TPO, including:



Investments in Regional Rail corridors across the region, including a connection between the two MPOs



Relocation of the Regional Transit Center, serving regional buses, BRT and Regional Rail services



Continuing progress on the Triangle Bikeway connecting Wake, Durham & Orange Counties along the I-40 corridor



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors approaching from both MPOs and converging at the Regional Transit Center in Research Triangle Park



Addition of managed lanes and technology improvements in the I-40 corridor across the region



Upgrades on US 70 corridor between I-540 and I-885 (freeway in Wake County, improved boulevard in Durham County)



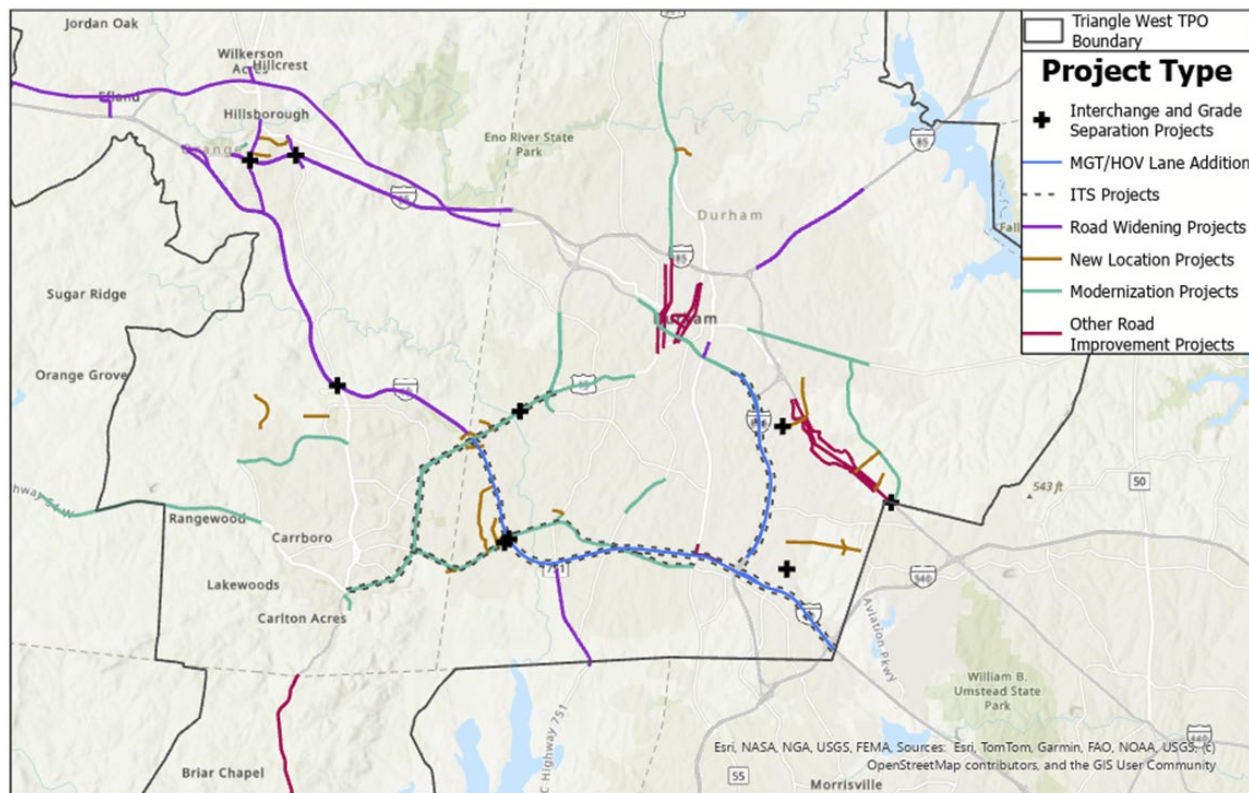
Administration of a regional Travel Demand Management (TDM) program to encourage alternatives to driving alone

The figures on the next four pages highlight major planned projects within each MPO. More information about these can be found in Chapter 7 and in Appendices 2 (roadway projects) and 3 (transit projects).

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Figure 1.2: Triangle West TPO Major Roadway Projects List & Roadway Project Map

2026-2035	2036-2045	2046-2055
I-40/NC 54 interchange improvements	I-40 HOV/managed lanes from Wake/Durham line to I-885	I-40 HOV/managed lanes from I-885 to US 15-501
I-40 widening from Orange/Durham line to I-85	I-885 HOV/managed lanes from I-40 to NC 147	I-85 widening from east of Midland Terrace to Red Mill Rd
I-85 widening from Sparger Rd to Orange Grove Rd	NC 147 boulevard conversion from Swift Ave to Briggs Ave	US 70 widening from Orange/Durham line to TPO boundary west of Efland
I-85/S Churton St interchange upgrade	NC 54 modernization from US 15-501 to NC 55	NC 98 modernization from Lynn Rd to Nichols Farm Dr
I-40/NC 86 Interchange improvements	US 70 boulevard improvements from Pleasant Dr to Durham/Wake line	
NC 98 modernization from Junction Rd to Lynn Rd	US 15-501 intersection improvements from Smith Level Rd to US 64	
	US 15-501 modernization from I-40 to US 15-501 Bypass/MLK Pkwy and US 15-501 Bypass modernization from MLK Pkwy to Cameron Blvd	

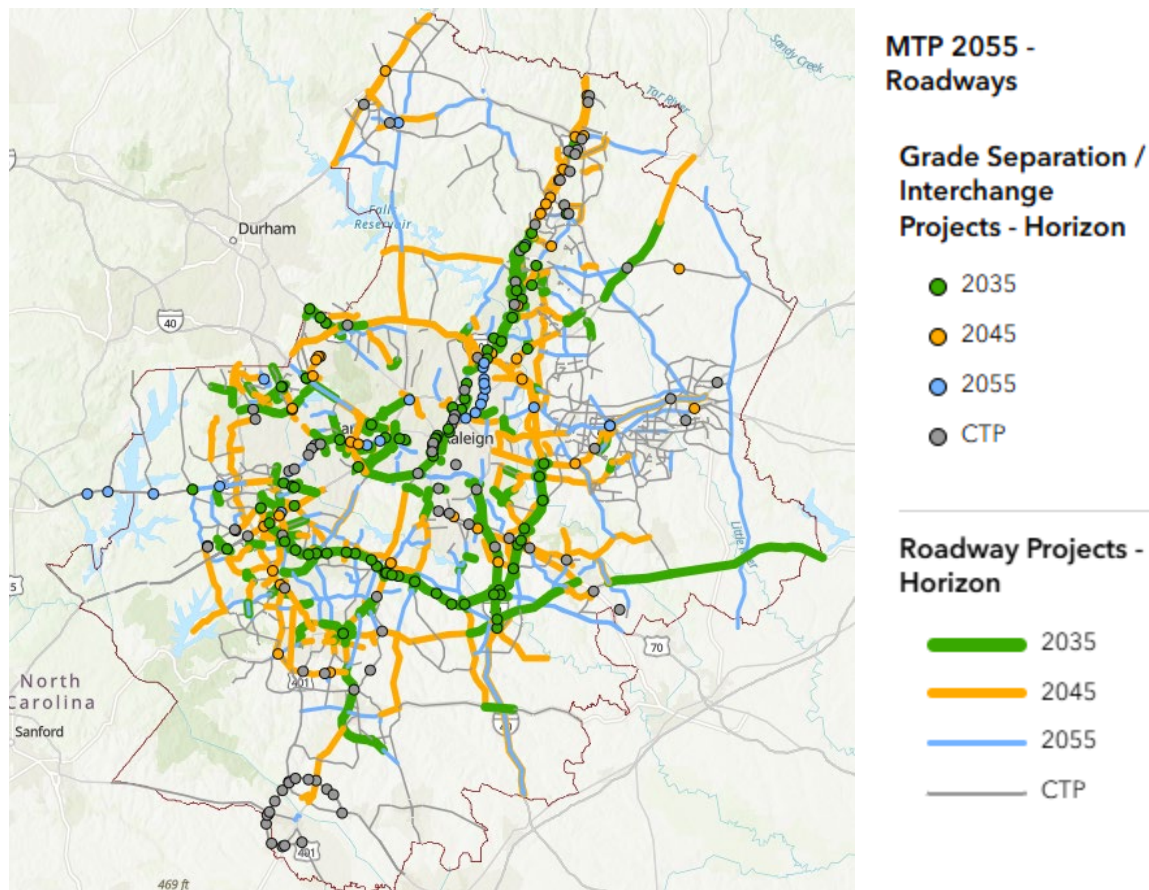


Triangle West TPO Roadway Project Map Online [here](#).

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Figure 1.3: Capital Area MPO Major Roadway Projects List & Roadway Project Map

2026-2035	2036-2045	2046-2055
I-40 widening from US 1/64 to Lake Wheeler Rd and interchange improvements at I-40 and US 1/64	I-40 widening from NC 36/Cleveland Rd to MPO boundary near Benson	Capital Blvd corridor improvements from I-440 to I-540
Completion of NC 540 loop from I-40 to I-87	I-40 widening from Harrison Ave to US 1/64	I-42 widening from I-40 to US 70 Business
US 1 freeway improvements from I-540 to Harris Rd	I-85 widening in Granville County	I-40 managed lanes from Durham/Wake line to MPO boundary near Benson
US 70 freeway improvements from I-540 to Wake/Durham line	I-87/US 64 widening from I-440 to US 264 in Zebulon (8 lanes west of Wendell Blvd, 6 lanes east)	I-540 managed lanes from I-40 to I-87
US 64 corridor improvements from US 1 to west of Laura Duncan Rd	US 1 freeway improvements from Harris Rd to MPO boundary north of Franklinton	I-87/US 64 widening from Wendell Blvd to US 264 in Zebulon (8 lanes)
I-440 widening from I-40 to Wade Ave	US 1 widening from US 64 to NC 540 in Apex	US 64 freeway improvements from NC 540 to NC 751
I-40 widening from Harrison Ave to Aviation Pkwy	US 64 freeway improvements from west of Laura Duncan Rd to NC 540	

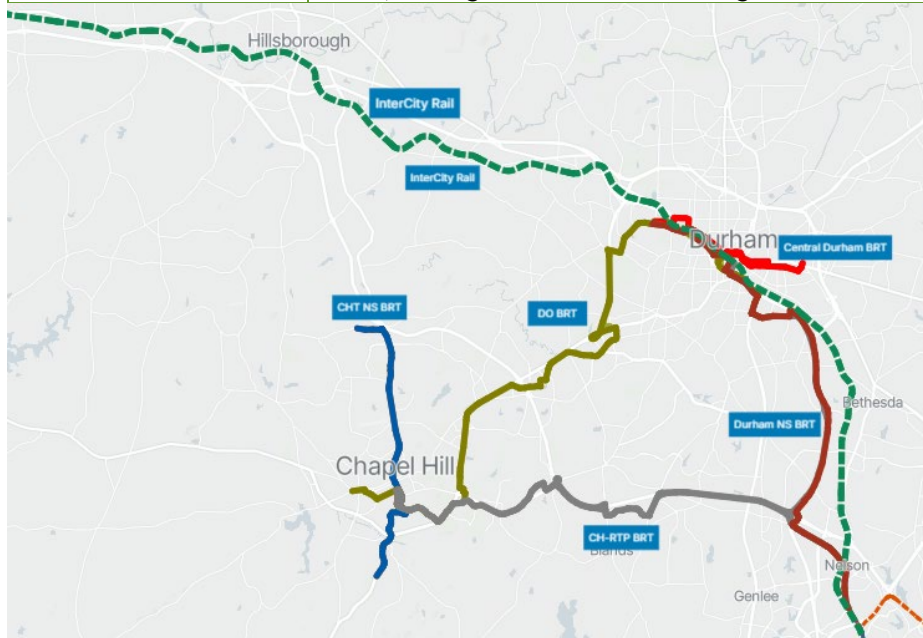


Capital Area MPO Roadway Project Map Online [here](#).

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Figure 1.4: Triangle West TPO Fixed Guideway Transit Projects List & Map

Project	Description	MTP Horizon Year
Intercity Passenger Rail (ICR) Stations	2035: Intercity Rail (ICR) service from Downtown Durham through the new RTP station and transit center to Cary and Raleigh; 2055: Expanded ICR service from the new Hillsborough station and transit center to Downtown Durham, the RTP station, Cary and Raleigh, connecting major regional transit hubs.	2035, 2055
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Chapel Hill North-South Line	BRT service in Chapel Hill, running from Eubanks Road, through the UNC Healthcare complex, and to Southern Village, using a mix of dedicated lanes and mixed traffic.	2035
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Central Durham Line	BRT service in Durham, running from the Duke University/ Medical Center area through the central bus station and Downtown Durham to the Village area, using a mix of dedicated lanes and mixed traffic.	2035
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Durham-Orange Line	BRT service between Durham and Orange counties, operating from Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and the UNC Healthcare complex to the Duke University and Medical Center area via US 15-501, and continuing to Durham Station and NCCU. The BRT line includes segments operating in dedicated lanes as well as segments in mixed traffic.	2035
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Durham NS BRT Line Combined with CAMPO's Western BRT Line	BRT service, running from Duke, Downtown Durham, and NCCU to the Research Triangle Park (RTP) via NC 147/I-885, continuing on to Cary, Raleigh, and Clayton. The route includes segments operating in dedicated lanes and managed lanes, as well as segments in mixed traffic.	2045
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Chapel Hill-RTP Line Combined with CAMPO's I-40 BRT Line	BRT service from Chapel Hill to Downtown Raleigh via the Research Triangle Park (RTP) and I-40. This aligns the Chapel Hill-RTP BRT with the I-40 BRT at RTP to create a continuous regional route. This route includes segments in dedicated lanes, managed lanes as well as segments in mixed traffic.	2055

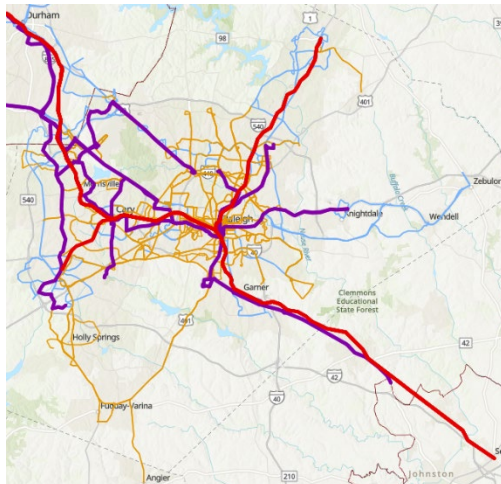


Triangle West TPO Major Transit Project Map Online [here](#).

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Figure 1.5: Capital Area MPO Fixed Guideway Transit Projects List & Map

Project	Description	MTP Horizon Year
Regional Rail	From Regional Transit Center (RTC) to Wake Forest	2035
Regional Rail	- From Regional Transit Center (RTC) to Wake Forest with stop added in Morrisville (McCrimmon); - From Downtown Apex to Auburn/Garner	2045
Regional Rail	- From Hillsborough to Selma; - From Franklinton to Downtown Apex; - From Downtown Apex to Veridea	2055
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	- SAS to Regency Center - between SAS Campus and Regency Center via mixed traffic along Harrison Avenue, Kildaire Farm Rd, Tryon Rd and Regency Pkwy; - Capital Blvd - between Downtown Raleigh and Triangle Town Center via dedicated guideway parallel to Capital Blvd; - Midtown - between Downtown Raleigh and North Hills via mixed traffic using Capital Blvd, Wake Forest Rd, Atlantic Avenue and Six Forks Rd; - New Bern - between Downtown Raleigh and Corporation Pkwy via dedicated guideway parallel to US 64; - Western - between Powhatan (Clayton) and Regional Transit Center (RTC) via US 70 (mixed traffic) to Garner Station, dedicated guideway from Garner Station to Downtown Raleigh to Downtown Cary to RTC parallel to NC 54.	2035
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	- Western Extended - between Powhatan (Clayton) and RTC via US 70 (mixed traffic) to Garner Station, dedicated guideway from Garner Station to Downtown Raleigh to Downtown Cary to RTC parallel to NC 54. Extended to West Durham via mixed traffic along I-885, NC 147 and Alston Avenue; - I-40 - between Downtown Raleigh and RTC via dedicated guideway parallel to Western Blvd, mixed traffic along Blue Ridge Rd to Trinity Rd to Edwards Mill Rd to Wade Avenue/I-40 to NC 540 west to NC 54 to RTC; - US 70 - between Crabtree Valley Mall and Davis Drive via US 70, Brier Creek Pkwy, Aviation Pkwy and McCrimmon; - Apex - between RTC and Downtown Apex via mixed traffic using Davis Drive; - Veridea - between Downtown Apex and Veridea via Salem St and Veridea Pkwy.	2045
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	- New Bern/Knightdale (New Bern Extended) - between Downtown Raleigh and Knightdale Station Pkwy via dedicated guideway parallel to US 64 to Corporation Pkwy, mixed traffic to Knightdale Station along US 64; - I-40/Chapel Hill (I-40 Extended) - between Downtown Raleigh and UNC via dedicated guideway parallel to Western Blvd, mixed traffic along Blue Ridge Rd to Trinity Rd to Edwards Mill Rd to Wade Avenue/I-40 to NC 540 west to NC 54 to RTC, continuing along NC 54 to Barbee/Herndon Rd to Renaissance Pkwy to I-40 to NC 54/US 15-501 along Manning Drive to Cameron Avenue.	2055



Transit Corridors - By Service Type

Transit Mode/Frequency Pickup (15 min or less)

- Regional Rail
- Bus Rapid Transit/Yes
- Bus/Yes
- Bus/No

Capital Area MPO Major Transit Project Map Online [here](#).