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BURLINGTON-GRAHAM MPO

REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

FINAL REPORT (DRAFT)



with support from partners at Link Transit, Alamance County Transportation Authority, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation, Orange County Public Transportation, and GoTriangle.

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) would like to thank the project team, the Technical Coordinating Committee's Transit Subcommittee, the BGMPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the BGMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for their efforts in the development of this report. TCC Transit Subcommittee members that participated throughout this study process included:

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1. Project Introduction & Purpose

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Organization (BGMPO) is studying opportunities to better coordinate and expand transit service in the region through improved connections, service coverage, and increased frequency.

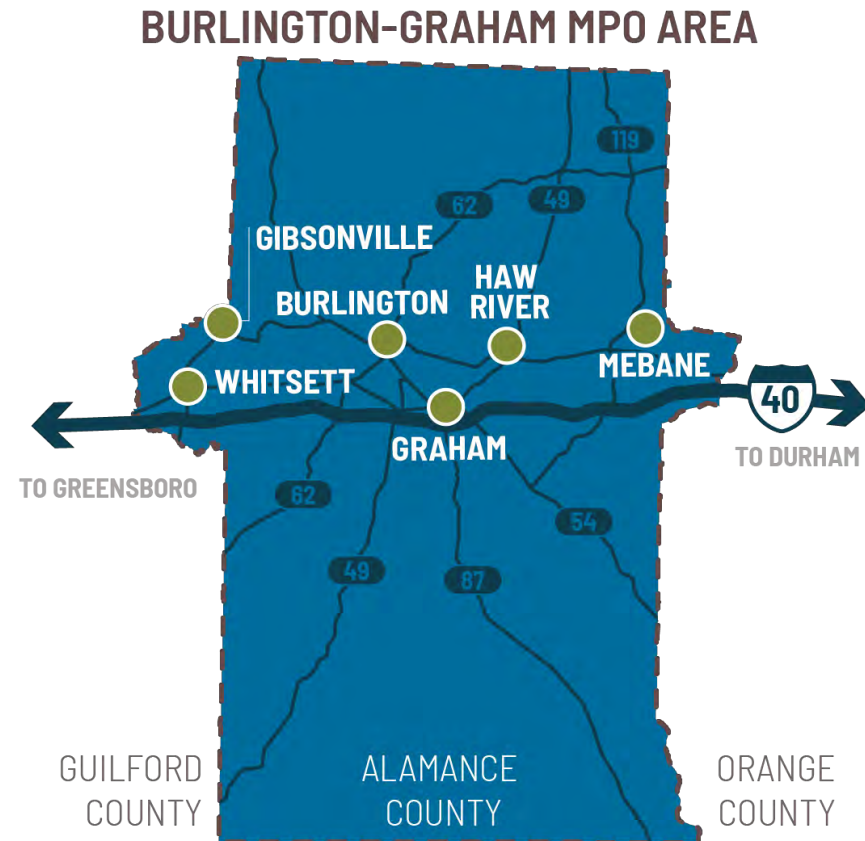
This study evaluates options to improve transit within the BGMPO region and to nearby regional destinations like Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill. It considers equitable approaches to expanding transit service in a manner that improves transit coverage and frequencies, accesses multimodal connections, reduces service duplication, improves safety, and identifies new funding opportunities. With limited available transit funding, understanding tradeoffs and priorities for service improvements is central to the project.

This study was sponsored by the BGMPO with support from partners at GoTriangle, Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), Orange County Public Transportation, Link Transit, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). It is supported by funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division.

The following technical memoranda have also been prepared as part of this project and provide additional detailed information on this study:

- Existing Conditions Assessment
- Community Engagement
- Operations and Fiscal Impact Analysis

They are available separately from this report.



Project Goals & Objectives

Goals provide a road map to guide a project from ideas to outcomes. The goals developed for this project are broad aims, including four goals focused on providing transit service and four related to governance and finance. The related objectives under each goal are specific measures developed to help achieve those goals. These eight goals define the aspirations of the public and project stakeholders, with supporting objectives intended as manageable tasks.

Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) such as the BGMPO are federally required to consider specific planning factors when developing transportation plans and programs within their metropolitan areas. Current legislation calls for MPOs to conduct planning that:

1. Supports the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increases the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increases the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increases the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protects and enhances the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhances the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between
7. modes, for people and freight;
8. Promotes efficient system management and operation;
9. Emphasizes the preservation of the existing transportation system;
10. Improves the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation; and
11. Enhances travel and tourism.

Service Plan Goals

The service plan-related goals aim to make transit improvements that are accessible for residents within the BGMPO area. These goals focus on making transit service an attractive, barrier-free option for regional and local travel.

Service Plan Goals

1. Maximize equitable access to transit services

Improve service span, coverage, and frequencies in Justice40-designated areas

2. Make transit a viable mode choice option for residents and visitors

- a. Improve service span, coverage, and frequencies to major trip destinations
- b. Streamline route alignments where feasible to reduce transit travel times
- c. Provide options for same day on-demand and paratransit service scheduling

3. Eliminate existing barriers for riders to travel throughout the entire region

- a. Improve route transfer opportunities (route connections and passenger facilities)
- b. Facilitate easier transfers and coordinate fare payments between different service providers
- c. Simplify and amplify transit information sources available to the public

4. Improve overall transit service performance in the region

Identify appropriate transit service modes that align with transit market needs

Governance and Funding Goals

Governance and funding goals were developed with an eye toward improving how the various transit agencies currently operating within the BGMPO area could work more effectively together, while minimizing overlapping services and maximizing limited funding resources. Transit service should have organizational structures and finances in place that are sustainable over the long term, particularly as the amount of service provided grows to address service needs.

Governance and Funding Goals

5. Identify opportunities to better coordinate and/or consolidate transit services

Reduce service overlaps and/or duplication

6. Provide a regional transit decision-making forum

Identify and investigate alternative regional transit governance structures

7. Maximizing transit funding opportunities (federal, state, and local)

- a. Identify and investigate new local funding opportunities for transit, such as a new tax or fee
- b. Maximize local fund leveraging opportunities for federal and state funds
- c. Identify an equitable means for distributing federal and state funds

8. Encourage transit-supportive land uses and densities among study area communities

Work with local jurisdictions to develop policies that encourage density and destination clustering

Engaging the Public

Members of the public were actively engaged through an extensive outreach process. Two online surveys, outreach events, interviews with community organization representatives, and informational open houses were used to solicit project feedback. Engagement opportunities were advertised through traditional and digital media. Objectives of the public outreach process were to: 1) engage and inform a broad cross-section of the public; 2) understand the public's transit service needs; 3) involve implementing agencies throughout the study process; and 4) facilitate continued communication and collaboration between area transit service providers.

Online and Paper Surveys

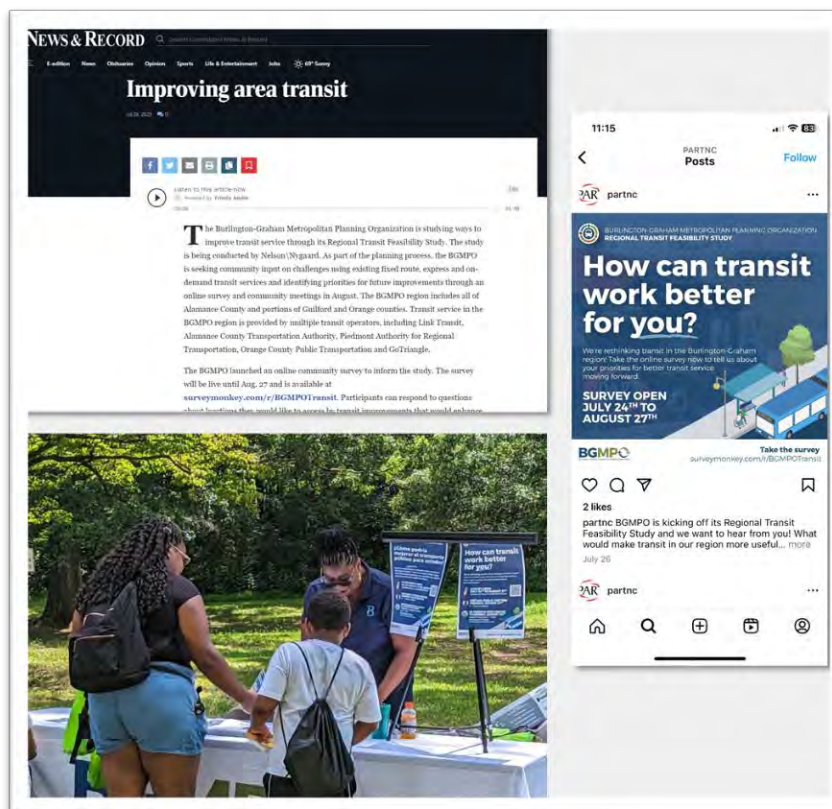
Two surveys were created to solicit feedback from the public. Surveys were promoted through social media, partner transit agencies, city accounts, flyers and posters at transit stops, tabling at community events, project website, project mailing lists, and through press releases. Administrative requirements for Title VI reporting were considered in the survey content and process.

Survey #1: Transit Experience and Priorities for Improvement

The first survey was open for five weeks and was an opportunity for community members to give input on their priorities for potential transit improvements. In the end, 267 surveys were received. The 18-question survey was available in English and Spanish and took about 10 minutes to complete. Questions focused on respondents' prior transit experience, exploration of prioritized transit improvements, and solicited information about respondent demographics.

Survey #2: Draft Scenarios Feedback

The second survey was an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on three scenarios with varying levels of investment and improvements. The 14-question survey took about 10 minutes to complete, with questions that focused on soliciting feedback for three project scenarios and respondent demographics. The second survey solicited 50 responses.



Virtual and In-Person Events

In addition to this survey, community members were invited to join in-person and virtual meetings in August and October 2023 to share their input on key issues. These events were advertised along with the online surveys. The first round of meetings provided an opportunity for the general public to learn about the project, ask questions, and provide feedback to shape project scenarios. The second round of meetings provided an opportunity for the general public to learn about and offer feedback on the project's three proposed governance and service scenarios.

Stakeholder Interviews

Invitations sent to 24 stakeholders with follow-ups resulted in 9 interviews. These interviews were conducted virtually during the month of August. Project stakeholders that were interviewed work in governmental, educational, business, healthcare, and non-profit organizations and included representation from organizations such as:

- Alamance Chamber of Commerce
- Alamance Wellness Collaborative
- City of Burlington
- Ebenezer Baptist Church
- United Way of Alamance County

Open ended questions covered personal and constituent/community members' experience with transit usage, transit challenges, perceived/known current issues, existing state of local and regional services, and suggested improvements.



2. Existing Service Characteristics and Needs

Existing Transit Services

The BGMPO area is served by several public transit service operators.

Link Transit operates service six days a week with 90-minute service frequencies on five routes. ADA paratransit service is also provided within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile buffer around Link Transit's fixed routes.

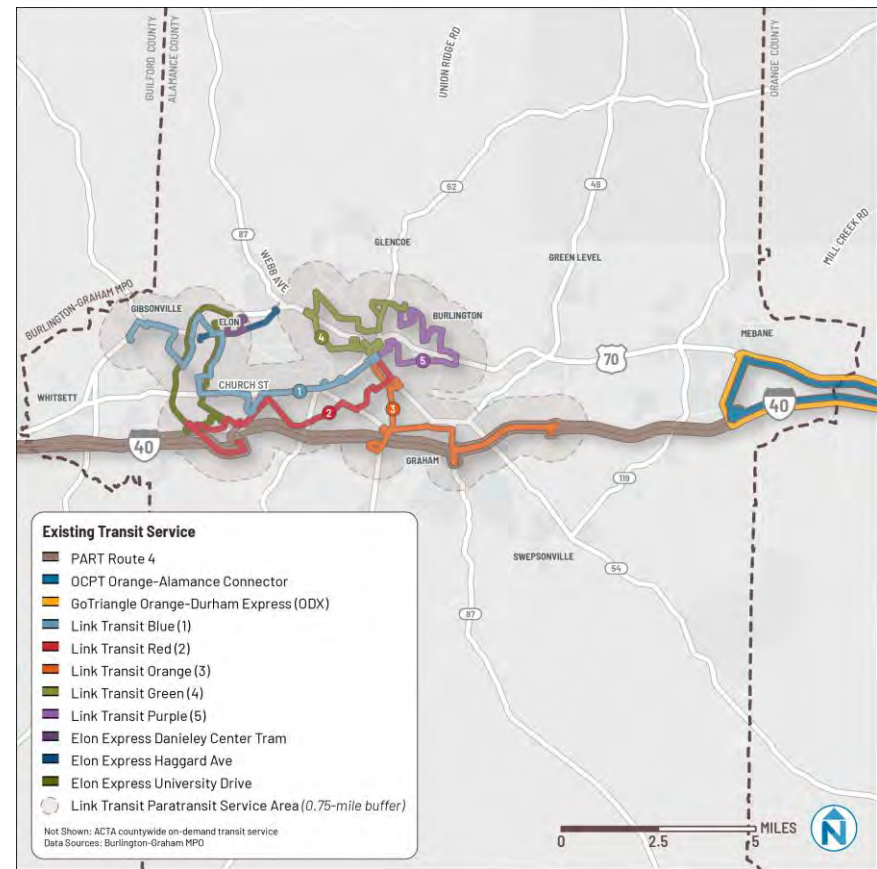
PART operates one regional route through Alamance County with service focused on commute trips to/from Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina. PART's Route 4 makes four stops in Alamance County.

ACTA provides countywide on-demand service Monday through Friday. ACTA's service is available to the general public. Passengers must make reservations by phone no later than the day before the requested trip.

GoTriangle operates the Orange-Durham Express (ODX), providing peak period service that connects Mebane, Hillsborough, and Durham.

Orange County Public Transportation operates the Orange-Alamance Connector, providing midday service in the Mebane area.

In addition to the above public operators, **Elon Express** operates three routes that provide free transportation to university students, faculty, and staff. Service is also open to the public.



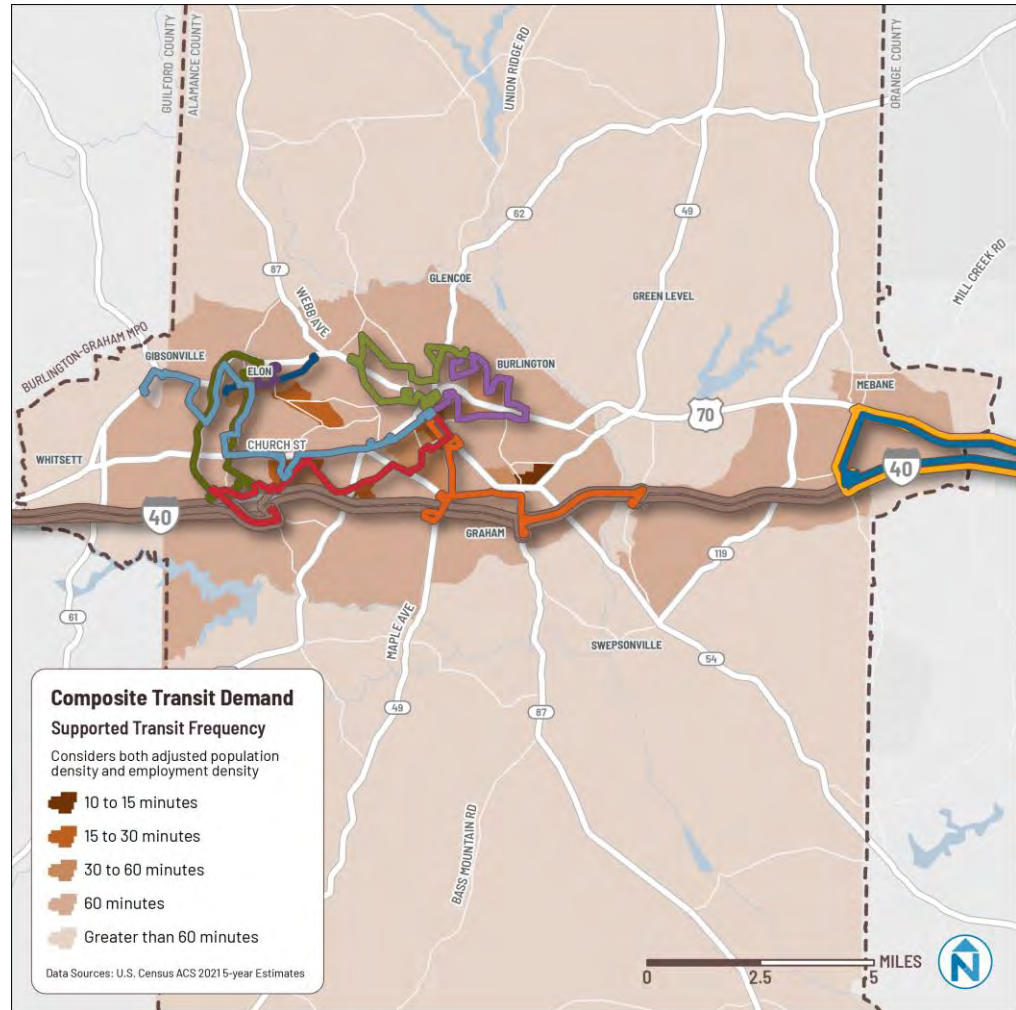
Existing Transit Services

Local Transit Service Needs

A transit propensity analysis was conducted to identify areas where local transit is most likely to be utilized. A transit propensity analysis shows higher relative demand for transit in specific locations compared to the region overall. Certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are indicators of higher transit usage and are inputs into the transit propensity analysis, such as people without cars and people living in low-income households.

The transit propensity scores developed for this project were then adjusted to account for population and jobs densities. This provides a complete understanding of the composite transit demand in the region.

The adjacent map presents composite transit demand in relation to existing transit service coverage. Most of the Burlington-Graham urbanized area, and Mebane can support 60-minute local fixed route service, with some pockets having demand that could support 30-minute service. Existing fixed route services align with areas where there is an identified need for fixed route transit, however there are large swaths of the urbanized area that currently have no fixed route coverage. Existing service frequencies (90-minute frequencies) also fall short of meeting identified service needs. Current transit service levels make planning trips on transit difficult. The lack of safe crossings and sidewalks is a further detriment to current transit usage.



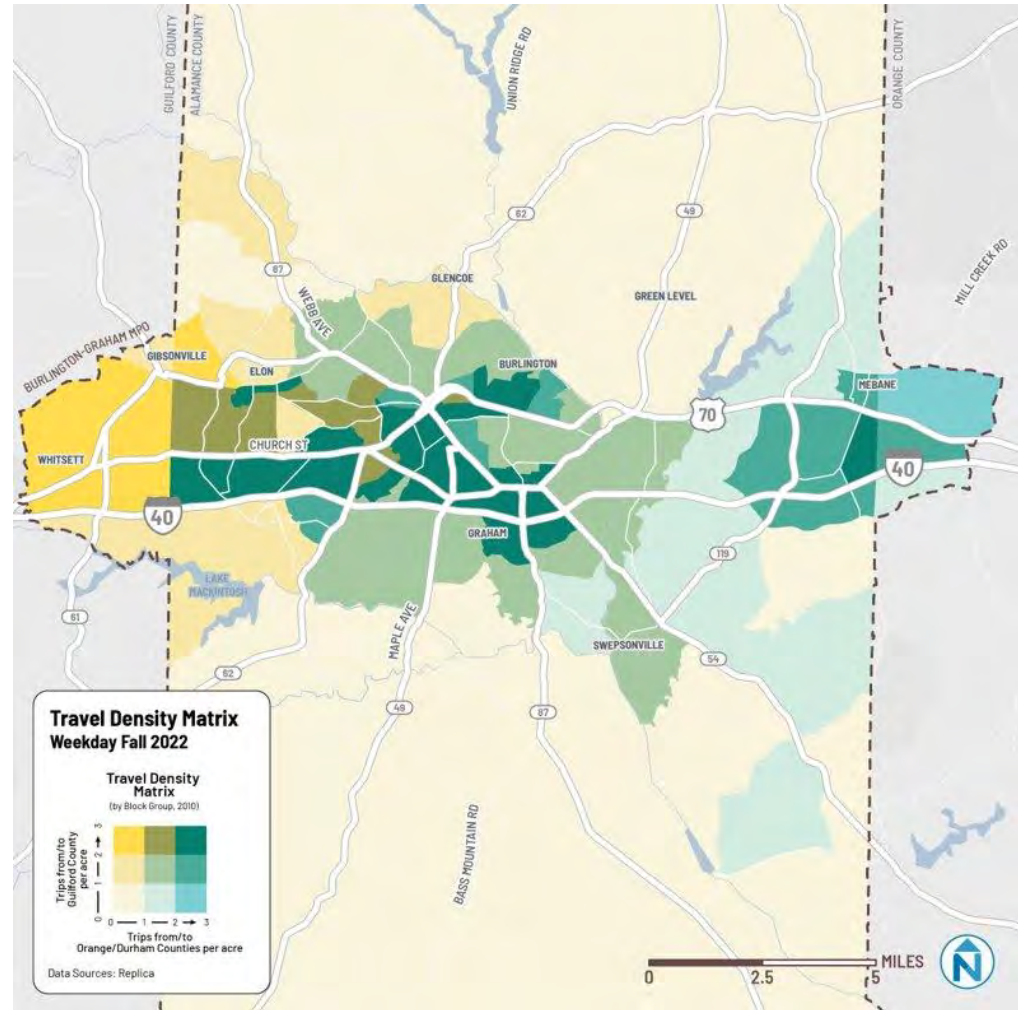
Existing Service vs. Composite Travel Demand

Regional Transit Service Needs

Existing travel patterns were analyzed through Replica – an online planning tool that provides actual travel pattern data through information sources such as cell phone data. The U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic (LEHD) data was also used to map job locations with household locations.

Travel pattern data from Replica shows most trips traveling to the BGMPO region are destined to areas along the I-40 corridor. Census block groups on the west side of the MPO tend to have more trips connected to Guilford County while census block groups on the east side have more trips connected to Orange/Durham Counties.

The U.S. Census LEHD data identified around 67,000 total jobs in the BGMPO area, of which half are held by people living outside of the BGMPO boundaries. It also identified 79,000 employed residents that live within the MPO area. Of this total, 58% commute outside of the area. Around 18% of working residents go to jobs in Orange or Durham Counties and 14% go to jobs in Guilford County.



Replica Regional Travel Pattern Characteristics

Planning for Equity

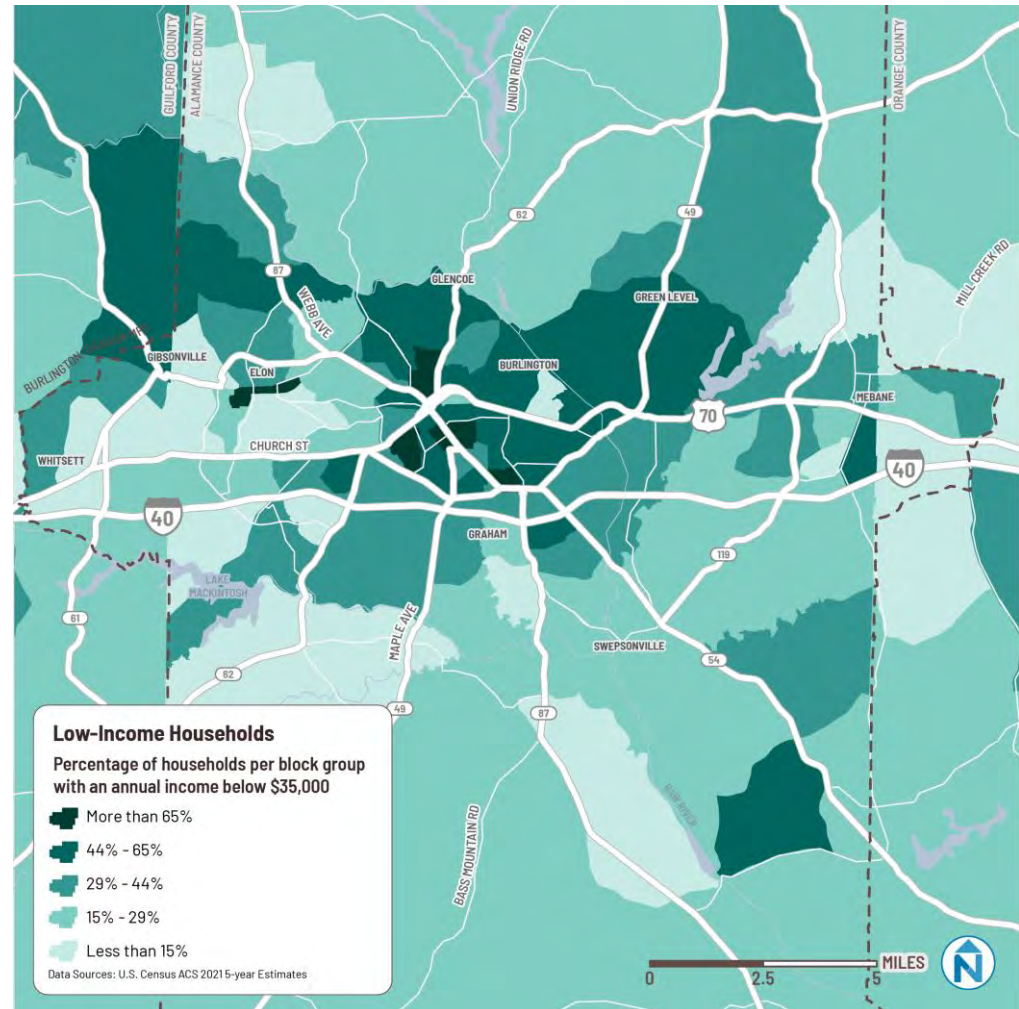
As part of the needs analysis, it is important to understand where there are populations that tend to have a higher propensity to use transit, such as locations of low-income households, zero-vehicle households, persons of color, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). Key findings regarding equitable transit service needs in the region are as follows:

Nearly one-third of BGMPO households are in poverty. Comprising 44% to over 65% within some block groups, these households generally live in central Burlington and near Graham where residential densities are highest. Other pockets with high household poverty rates include some areas just south of Elon and in less urbanized areas north of Burlington.

About 1 in 10 BGMPO households do not have a car. Households without access to a car must rely more on transit. These households have a high overlap with low-income residents and live near Burlington.

Residents of color are also centrally located in Burlington, with higher concentrations of Black and Hispanic residents to the north and east of Downtown Burlington, as well as around Graham.

Persons with LEP have overlap with Burlington's Hispanic population, comprising up to 1 in 4 people in some block groups in central and east Burlington.



Percentage of Low-Income Households

Planning for Safety

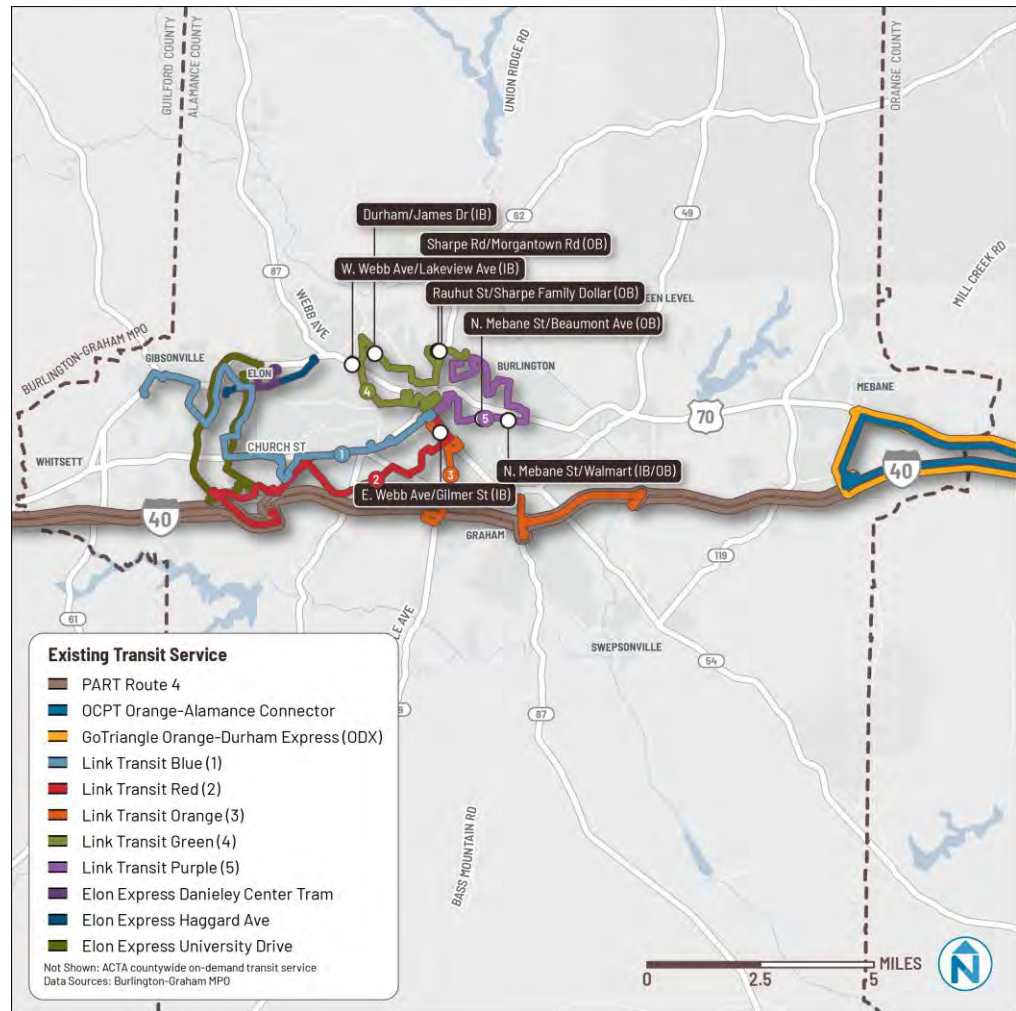
The needs analysis conducted for this project also utilized the BGMPO's **Transportation Safety Plan** which identifies high priority bus stops where safety improvements are needed. Criteria used to identify safety needs at bus stops include:

- Location along the project's defined High Injury Network
- Location crash history
- Cause of crashes falling within any of the safety plan's defined Emphasis Areas (e.g., alcohol, speed-related)
- Location within a defined equity area
- Bus stop ridership

The following stops were identified for prioritized safety improvements:

- Durham/James Drive (IB)
- Sharpe Road/Morgantown Road (OB)
- W. Webb Avenue/Lakeview Avenue (IB)
- Rauhut Street/Sharpe Family Dollar (OB)
- N. Mebane Street/Beaumont Avenue (OB)
- E. Webb Avenue/Gilmer Street (IB)
- N. Mebane Street/Walmart (IB/OB)

Potential countermeasure treatments identified in the report include sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks, HAWK signals, and lighting.



Top Stop Locations for Safety Improvements

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3. Transit Mobility Challenges

A baseline understanding of the current state of transit service in the region was conducted through an analysis of existing transit service characteristics and demand, as well as public input. An analysis of existing transit services, demographic characteristics, travel pattern characteristics, and transit demand identified the following challenges related to transit service in the BGMPO region.



Frequency and Span. Current route service frequencies and span can limit a resident's ability to use existing available transit services. Local routes operate infrequently (every 90 minutes). Regional routes have limited hours of service that make use of transit difficult for people with both traditional and non-traditional work hours.



Coverage. Existing local fixed route service is limited to Burlington, Elon, and portions of Gibsonville and Graham. Regional transit services are focused on travel to the east, and not to Greensboro.



Route Design. Current designs of many of the region's fixed routes can result in lengthy trip times for travel that is relatively short in distance. Consideration needs to be given to providing more direct service to key regional destinations.



Advanced Service Reservation Requirements. Paratransit service is available for most residents within the BGMPO service area and on-demand service is available for most residents outside of the Link Transit service area. However, prior day reservations are required, and trip times can be lengthy.



Overlapping Service Areas. Paratransit service can be confusing for a rider within the Link Transit service area. Link Transit provides paratransit service for trips that begin and end within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of fixed route service. ACTA provides general purpose demand response service for trips that have only one end of the trip within the Link Transit service area and the other end outside of the Link Transit service area. A rider must know which agency to contact.



Multiple Service Providers. Riders must also be knowledgeable about multiple systems to address their local and regional travel needs. There is no single website to access information about all available services and to understand route alignments and schedules on a comprehensive basis.



Changing Commute Patterns. The transit service analysis indicates that ridership on routes operated by PART, GoTriangle, and OCPT have not yet rebounded to pre-pandemic patterns, which correlates with changing post-

pandemic work commute trends. Consideration needs to be given to regional service performance improvement approaches.



Transit-Supportive Densities. The market analysis identified the central portion of the study area as the only geographic area supportive of fixed route service. Within that area, there are a few pockets where there is sufficient density to support 30-minute or better transit service. Given the lack of areas with strong transit-supportive densities, consideration should be given to alternative transit service options such as on-demand transit service zones.

Public outreach occurred early in the project effort to gauge service needs. Key themes that emerged from responses to the open-ended questions in Survey #1 included:

- Expand transit service coverage, especially to southern Alamance communities, Elon, and to the airport
- Improve safe walking and biking connections to transit
- Invest in more frequent service throughout the day
- Extend service times with hours that align with work schedules
- Add more transit stops
- Offer rail service, especially Amtrak to Burlington Station.

Desired outcomes for improvements identified from the survey effort are as follows:

- Respondents generally have limited knowledge about existing available transit services, but those with familiarity cite a lack of service coverage and infrequent service.
- Technology enhancements such as ordering and tracking trips through an app were desired.
- Better service coordination between the existing transit service providers was identified as a high need for all types of transit service.
- There was more interest in prioritizing local fixed route and on-demand service expansion over regional service expansion. However, those with interest in regional service expansion want to see service to more destinations outside of the BGMPO region.
- There was a recognized need for better and safer pedestrian access to bus stops.

Survey respondents ranked their top three desired improvements for each service type as noted in the following graphic.

Local Fixed Route Bus Service

1. Increase the frequency of existing fixed route bus service (buses coming more often than every 90 minutes as they do today)
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so I can easily transfer from one service to another
3. Make it easier to learn about current available transit service

On-Demand Transit Service

1. Provide option to schedule trips by smart phone with the transit provider's mobile app
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another
3. Improve the accuracy of real-time vehicle arrival information
4. Make the transit app more user-friendly

Regional Express Transit Service

1. Expand regional transit service to offer new connections from our area to additional destinations
2. Increase the frequency of existing regional transit service
3. Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another

Top Three Desired Improvements by Service Type (Survey #1 Respondents)

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4. Future Transit Scenarios

Each of the existing five public transit agencies that serve the BGMPO region currently operates independently, with coordination primarily through the BGMPO's Transit Subcommittee.

Delivery of a comprehensive and cohesive transit service for the region may be best accomplished through more expansive coordination efforts or consolidation of two or more transit agencies. The path to a consolidated transit organization can be accomplished in an incremental manner.

Scenario Overview

Three scenarios were developed to chart how transit serving the BGMPO area could evolve, ranging from minimal service expansion through existing governance structures and funding sources to a wholesale reinvention of the administrative and revenue systems that support transit service. The scenarios were explored in terms of governance structures, potential service improvements, and potential new funding mechanisms under each governance structure option.

-  **Funding**
FTA Section 5307 funding is a shared funding source, administered through the BGMPO, with funding distribution to the five agencies through a suballocation formula. Otherwise, funding is independent among the five agencies.
-  **Agency Coordination**
Current coordination efforts are through the BGMPO, with each agency's transit director participating in a transit subcommittee of the Technical Coordinating Committee.
-  **Fare Payments**
Riders pay a separate fare for each agency's service. Currently ACTA, Link Transit and GoTriangle service is fare free. However, Link Transit has recently reinstated its fare.
-  **Service Overlap**
ADA-eligible riders using on-demand services within the Link Transit service area must understand which agency to call if they are scheduling an ACTA on-demand or Link Transit ADA trip. Trips outside of the Link Transit service area are ACTA-eligible.
-  **Agency Boundaries Don't Match Travel Patterns**
Each agency has a defined service area. Yet travel patterns are not confined to each agency's service area boundaries. Traveling throughout the region with multiple service providers is challenging.
-  **Fare Payments**
Current transit agency governance structures do not coordinate fare payments nor have reciprocal fare agreements in place.

Current Transit Agency Coordination Efforts

The first scenario is labeled **Stay the Course**. This scenario keeps the current transit agencies' organizational and funding structures separate and focuses on continued coordination efforts through the MPO among all operators. This scenario assumes modest transit service improvements as funding allows.

The second scenario is labeled **Umbrella Organization**. This scenario assumes formation of a Regional Transit Partnership that coordinates transit agency functions with the goals of simplifying rider experiences and clarifying agency service responsibilities. All individual agencies will continue to operate separately. Additional funding through a countywide vehicle registration fee may be likely under this scenario.

The third scenario is labeled **Consolidated Organization**. This scenario considers opportunities for transit agency consolidation and leverages additional funding sources to more significantly expand transit service in the region.

The path to a Consolidated Organization can be accomplished in an incremental manner, advancing through the three scenarios described above. The Umbrella and Consolidated Organization scenarios assume additional dedicated local funds for transit. Both scenarios can be advanced without those funding arrangements from an administrative perspective. Service expansion opportunities, however, would be limited if additional funding is not pursued. Other benefits could still be realized such as improved service and funding coordination.

Why Governance Structure Matters

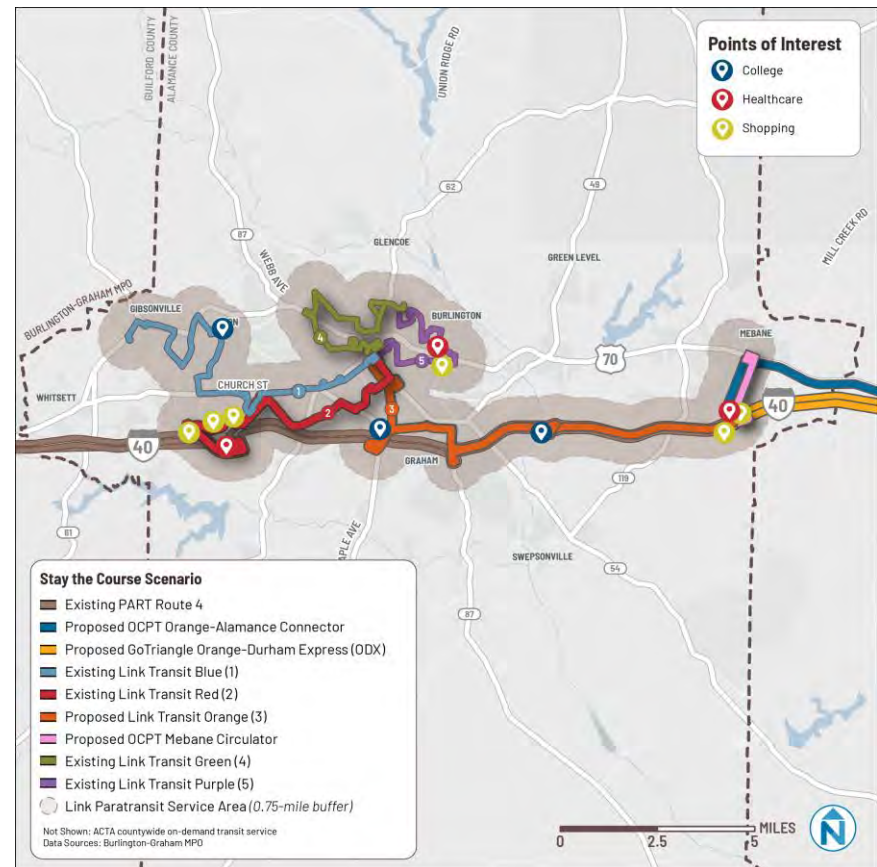
Finding the best fit for the type of agency or agencies that will provide transit service can address some of the top improvement requests from the community, like enhancing service coordination, better facilitating transfers, simplifying fare payments, and streamlining communications with riders. It can also help reduce overlapping service to maximize the use of available funds.

Scenario 1: Stay the Course

Assumptions: This scenario assumes incremental service improvements as funding allows, with a total of \$7 million available for annual operations costs. (Current cumulative funding spent on transit in the BGMPO region is estimated at \$6 million.) No significant changes in governance structure or funding sources are assumed. Link Transit and ACTA continue to work with local municipalities to fund service expansion. Priority improvements identified for this scenario are based on this project’s existing service assessment and input received from public outreach efforts.

Potential Improvements: Link Transit has recently initiated its own Transit Development Plan (TDP) effort to guide service investment plans over the next 5 years. Potential projects identified as part of this project effort are bulleted below but should be considered as placeholders until the TDP is finalized.

- Extend Link Transit Orange Line to Tanger Outlets in Mebane
- Implement OCPT’s planned Mebane Circulator
- Implement GoTriangle’s planned Route ODX service changes
- Add bus stops along Orange Route between Burlington and Graham
- Expand Link Transit Saturday span of service hours (6:30 am to 9:00 pm)
- Improve Link Transit Red Route weekday frequencies to 45 minutes (requires one additional bus)
- ACTA continues to provide county-wide on-demand service while implementing same-day trip reservation system
- No changes to PART Route 4
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT



Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization

Assumptions: This scenario assumes more substantive service improvements. With an umbrella organization, it is assumed that a countywide vehicle registration fee (possible through NCGS 105, Article 51), combined with current revenue resources can be put in place to allow for around \$8 million annually for transit operations.

Potential Improvements: Priority improvements identified for this scenario include those identified for the Stay the Course, along with the following:

- Elon to University Commons / Alamance Regional Medical Center route (potential cost-sharing arrangement with Elon University)
- Pilot microtransit service in North Burlington with “Uber-like” trip scheduling
- Consolidate ACTA on-demand and Link Transit ADA services within the urbanized area, to be operated by either ACTA or Link Transit
- Expand ACTA on-demand hours to weekday evenings and Saturdays
- Online trip planner inclusive of ACTA
- Transit payment app for ACTA, Link, and PART
- Modest passenger facility improvements at major transfer points
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT



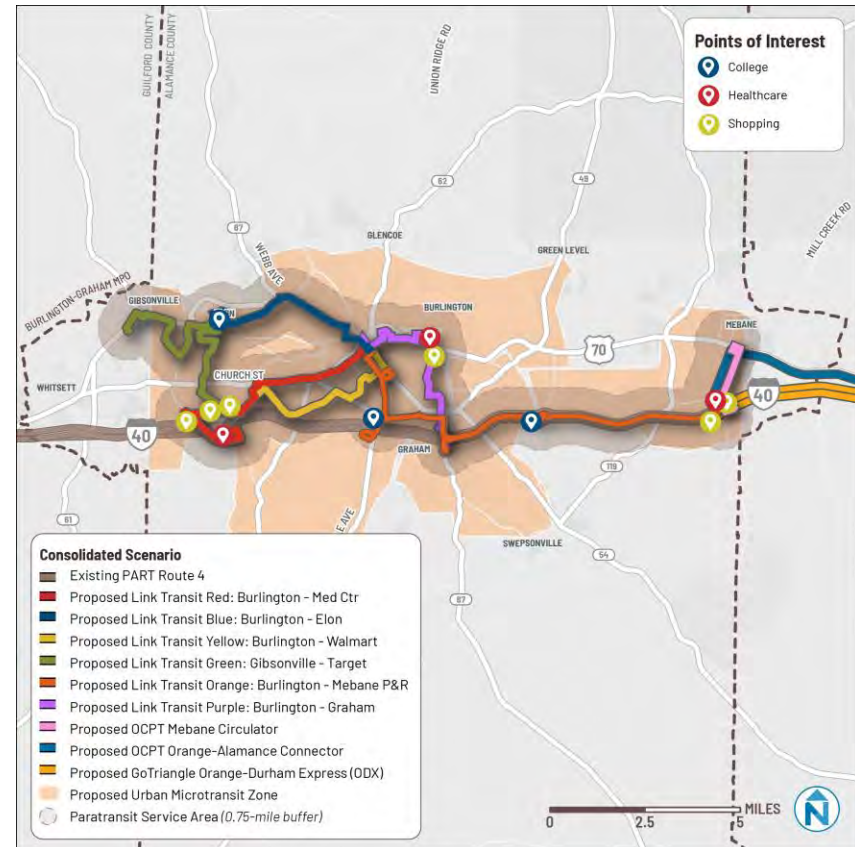
Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization

Assumptions: This scenario assumes the consolidation of Link Transit and ACTA for comprehensive and coordinated transit service throughout Alamance County. PART continues to provide regional service through along the I-40 corridor but with all-day service. Transit service in the eastern part of the county is coordinated with GoTriangle and OCPT transit services.

This scenario assumes a transformative expansion of transit service made possible with a ¼ cent sales tax that is dedicated towards transit (possible through NCGS 105, Article 43). A consolidated organization with a sales tax, vehicle registration fees and federal and state funding sources can support at least \$13.5 million in annual transit operations.

Potential Improvements: Priority local service improvements identified for this scenario are:

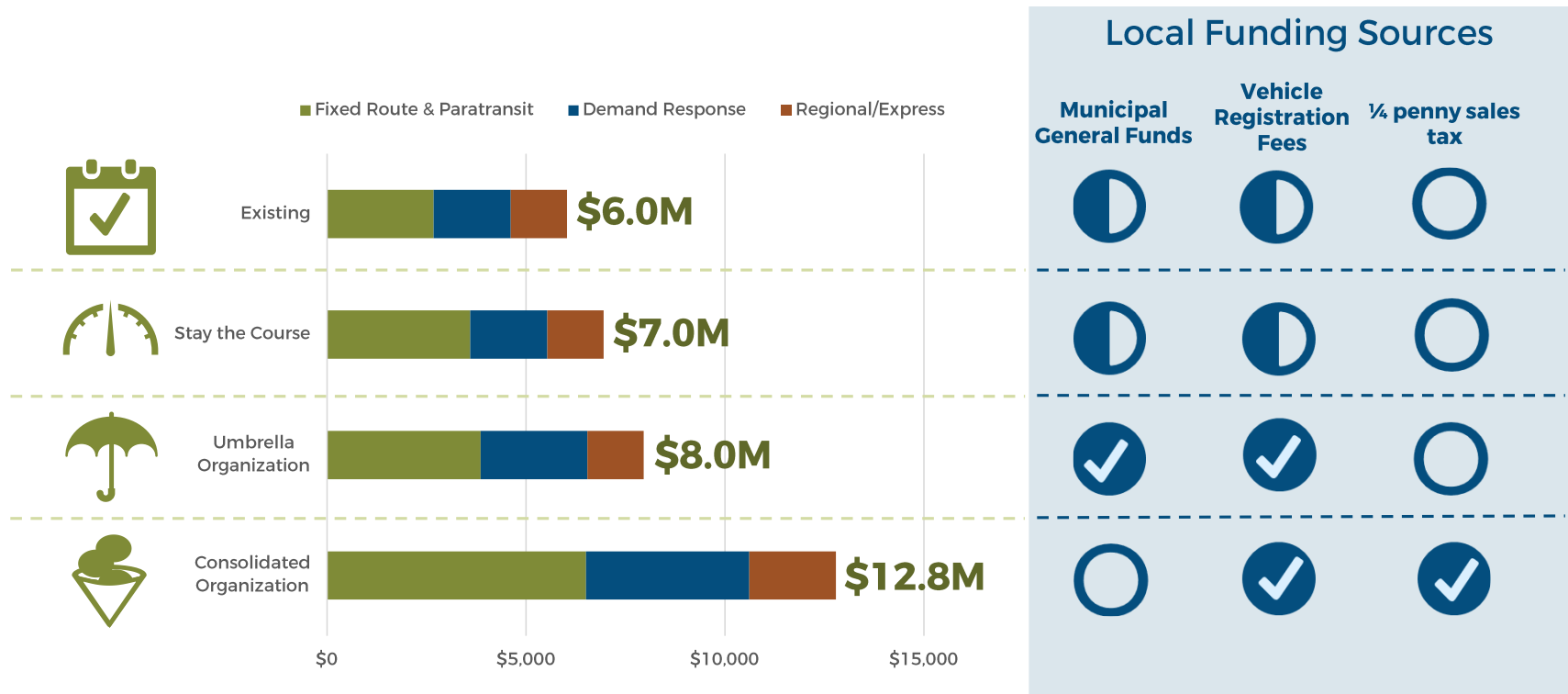
- New fixed route service coverage to address service gaps with more direct route alignments
- Service frequency improvements: 30-minute frequencies on Red, Orange and Green Routes; 60-minute baseline frequencies
- Expansion of weekend span of service
- New urban microtransit zones to expand coverage
- Coordinated service between fixed routes and microtransit zones with transfer connection points
- Designated rural on-demand transit zones (not shown on adjacent map)
- New transit super stops/facilities at key transfer stops
- Expansion of PART's Route 4 to all-day service, with a portion of this scenario's new funds distributed to PART to fund this service expansion
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT



Scenario Operating and Maintenance Costs and Funding

Projected annual operating costs are shown by local funding sources for each organizational structure option. The types of service comprising operating costs are shown in different colors. Costs are based on \$115 per revenue-hour for fixed route and paratransit services, \$60 per revenue-hour for on-demand and microtransit services and \$177 per revenue-hour for express/regional services. These figures reflect fully allocated unit costs and are based on current agency operating budgets. The following section of this report presents additional information regarding funding opportunities for each scenario.

Scenario Operating and Maintenance Cost Estimates and Potential Local Funding Sources















Local Funding Sources: Hollow circles indicate local funding source is not assumed, half circles indicate it is partially assumed (i.e., not county-wide), and full circles with a check mark indicate it is fully assumed countywide.





Project Goal Assessment

This report’s introduction identified four service plan-related and four governance and funding-related goals that were established for this project. Each scenario was evaluated with regards to its ability to address project-defined goals.

Service Plan-Related Goals













The Consolidated Organization scenario has the greatest potential to address service plan-related goals because of opportunities to expand transit service in a transformational way should a ¼ sales tax be put in. An Umbrella Organization can still achieve moderate action towards all service planning-related goals.





Service Plan-Related Project Goals	Scenario 1: Stay the Course	Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization	Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization
Maximize equitable access to transit services			
Make transit a viable mode choice option for residents and visitors			
Eliminate existing barriers for riders to travel throughout the entire region			
Improve transit service performance overall in the region			

-  Minor action toward goal
-  Moderate action toward goal
-  Signification action toward goal
-  Goal largely achieved

Governance and Funding-Related Goals

The Consolidated Organization scenario also has the greatest potential to address governance and funding-related goals because decision-making responsibilities are not divided among numerous agencies. An Umbrella Organization can still achieve moderate action towards all governance and funding-related goals.

Governance and Funding-Related Project Goals	Scenario 1: Stay the Course	Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization	Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization
Identify opportunities to better coordinate and/or consolidate transit services			
Provide a regional transit decision-making forum			
Maximize transit funding opportunities for the region			
Encourage transit-supportive land uses and densities			

-  Minor action toward goal
-  Moderate action toward goal
-  Significant action toward goal
-  Goal largely achieved

5. Funding Opportunities

Existing Federal and State Funding

Federal funds are available and used by all transit agencies that serve the BGMPO region. The primary federal funding programs available for transit agencies in the region include the following:

- **Section 5307.** This is FTA’s Urbanized Area Formula Program and is available for transit agencies that operate within a census-designated urbanized area. Section 5307 funds can be used towards up to 80% of capital costs and 50% of operating costs. The BGMPO administers Section 5307 funds for the region. The MPO’s allocation of 5307 funds was \$3.3 million in FY 2023, which was distributed to all five transit agencies that serve the region.
- **Section 5310.** This program provides formula funding targeted towards transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The federal share is up to 80% for capital projects and 50% for operating assistance. Example uses of eligible Section 5310-funded activities include the purchase of buses and vans, wheelchair lifts and ramps, mobility management programs, travel training and transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling, routing, and one-call systems. ACTA is a recipient of Section 5310 funds. Link Transit is also eligible for these funds.
- **Section 5311.** This is a formula grant program for rural areas, providing capital, planning, and operating assistance. The federal share is up to 80% for capital projects, 50% for operating assistance and 80% for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed route paratransit service. ACTA is a recipient of Section 5311 funds.

Why Funding Opportunities Matter

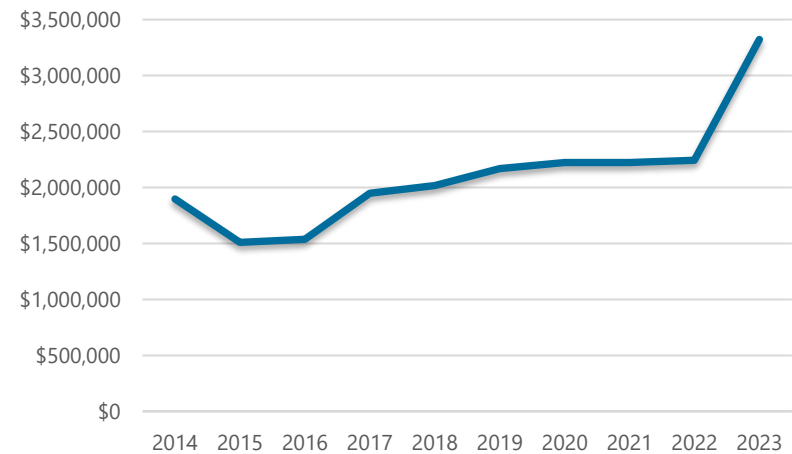
Many of the community’s requested improvements to transit service in the region cannot be realized within current funding constraints. As the region continues to grow, additional funding will be needed to serve more riders. Pursuing some of the additional funding sources available to the region will be necessary to implement transformative service enhancements.

- **Section 5339.** This is FTA’s Bus and Bus Facilities program that funds the replacement, rehabilitation and purchase of buses and related equipment, and construction of bus-related facilities. The federal share is not to exceed 80 percent of the net project cost. All federally-funded transit agencies serving the BGMPO region are eligible for these funds.
- **Carbon Reduction Program.** This is a new funding source through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Funds are administered through the NCDOT. The program provides funds for projects that reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from the transportation sector. These funds are a potential source for funding transit projects in the region.

Primary state funding available for transit agencies in the region are as follows:

- **State Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP).** This is a state-funded program administered by the North Carolina DOT’s Integrated Mobility Division. Formula-based programs that fall under ROAP include Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP); Employment and Transportation Assistance Program (EMPL); and Rural General Public Program (RGP). ROAP funds can be used to leverage FTA Section 310 and 5311 funds. ACTA is a recipient of ROAP funds.
- **State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP).** This program provides funds designated to assist urban, small urban and regional transit service providers with funding the non-federal share of operational expenses. Funds are allocated annually through a formula and can be used towards FTA Section 5307-eligible operating costs. SMAP funds cannot exceed the amount of the local match.

Section 5307 is by far the largest source of non-local funds for transit services in the BGMPO region. Over the past 10 years 5307 funding has more than doubled from a low of \$1.5 million in 2015 to high of \$3.3 million in 2023, as shown on the adjacent graph. This does not include the \$7 million the region received from the CARES and American Rescue Act programs in 2020 and 2021. Future increases in Section 5307 funds for the region are certainly possible but will require additional local match. Transit service improvements envisioned under the Umbrella and Stay the Course scenarios will be difficult to implement without additional local matching funds, which in turn can be used to leverage additional Section 5307 funds.



BGMPO Region's 5307 Historical Annual Apportionment

Local Funding Opportunities

Current local funds for each operator are generated through a variety of sources. Link Transit local funds are generated through a \$5.00 vehicle registration fee that is collected in the City of Burlington (through N.C. General Statute §20-97) and from additional funds provided by Burlington, Gibsonville, Alamance County, Elon, and the Alamance Community College. PART's primary local funding source is a rental vehicle tax. The tax collected in Alamance County generates about \$200,000 each year. Additional funds are generated for PART through vehicle registration fees by select counties. However, a PART vehicle registration fee is not currently in place in Alamance County. ACTA receives local funds from Alamance County and contracted service fees such as from the North Carolina Division of Social Services (DSS). A small amount of ACTA's budget includes funds from municipal sources. OCPT and GoTriangle's primary local funding sources are from a ½ cent sales tax with additional funds from a rental car tax and a vehicle registration fee.

As previously noted, service improvements envisioned under the Umbrella and Consolidated Organization scenarios will require additional local funding sources. The region can certainly advance either scenario without new local funding, however, opportunities to fund transit service expansion will be limited. Options available to increase local transit funding are as follows:

Vehicle Registration Fee

As previously noted, Link Transit is partially funded through a \$5 vehicle registration fee. Current PART legislation allows for Alamance County to collect up to \$8 per vehicle in Alamance County (Article 51 in NCGS 105). This fee can be enacted with consent by the County Commission; no public referendum is required. A countywide fee is anticipated to generate at least \$1 million in revenues each year. An increase in local funding through a vehicle registration fee can also leverage additional federal funds to support operations. A countywide vehicle registration fee was identified as a potential viable new funding source under the "Umbrella Organization" scenario.

Quarter Cent Sales Tax

Article 43 in NCGS 105 permits a Regional Transit Authority to put a ¼ cent transit sales tax on the ballot for voter approval. It is anticipated this could generate at least \$8 million in revenue each year. An increase in local funding through a ¼ cent sales tax can also leverage additional federal funds to support operations. A countywide ¼ cent sales tax through RTA legislation was identified as a potential new funding sources under the "Consolidated Organization" scenario.

Additional Municipal Contributions

In addition to the funding opportunities identified above, additional local funding could be realized through expanded general fund contributions by municipalities, with the possibility of additional funding leveraged from state and federal sources. Additional municipal contributions are the most viable new funding source under the “Stay the Course” scenario.

More information about these funding sources and references to North Carolina legislation outlining local and county-based transit funding status and opportunities can be found in the Operational and Fiscal Impact Analysis technical memorandum and as well as the *Public Transportation Funding Options and Opportunities for the Piedmont Triad* document included as an appendix to that memorandum.

6. Establishing an Umbrella Organization

As a result of this study effort, it is recommended that an Umbrella Organization be established as the next step towards a transformative transit service expansion in the BGMPO region. Coordination of services and activities by five different transit agencies in this region has been difficult at times, resulting in several challenges that have been identified through this study. An Umbrella Organization can provide a more formal governance structure for improved communication and coordination and can also be an interim step towards the implementation of a Consolidated Organization.

Currently, coordination activities are conducted through the MPO's Transit Subcommittee with representation by the directors of each of the five transit agencies. An Umbrella Organization differs from the current Transit Subcommittee in the following ways:

- The Board of this Umbrella Organization should include members that hold elected office in Alamance County and select municipalities within Alamance County. This creates the opportunity to elevate transit-decisions in the region.
- The primary charge of this organization should be to provide a venue for communication, coordination, and collaboration on governance, funding, and service-related issues between the five public transit providers, localities, and citizens.
- Recommendations from this organization would go to each transit agency's Board of Trustees, or similar decision-making board, for transit agencies that are not governed by a Board of Trustees.

Umbrella Organization Example: Charlottesville, VA

The Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) in Charlottesville, VA is an official advisory board created by the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, JAUNT, University of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. This Board provides recommendations to transit agencies and local government decision-makers on transit-related matters. The RTP has four established primary goals:

- Establish strong communications;
- Ensure coordination between transit providers;
- Set the region's transit goals and visions; and
- Identify opportunities for improved transit services and administration, including evaluation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA).

Stated objectives of the RTP have also been defined and are as follows:

- Build and advance relationships between governance bodies;
- Create a formal means of information sharing;
- Address pressing issues immediately;
- Facilitate transit planning;
- Integrate transit into other regional and local planning decision-making processes;
- Test a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) structure; and
- Prepare for an eventual RTA.

The definition of the RTA in Virginia is similar to that of North Carolina's legal definition of an RTA. The Charlottesville RTP does not have taxing authority, but an RTA in Virginia does.

The Board meets monthly and consists of 8 voting members from City, County, State and UVA (elected officials from the City and County), with several non-voting members such as MPO and transit agency staff. A major effort recently completed by RTP was a transit governance study identifying a road map for getting to an RTA. The MPO is responsible for staffing and programming for the RTP and is supported with Section 5303 program funding from FTA and RTP funds.

Umbrella Organization Structure

A key feature of the Umbrella Organization structure is representation by elected officials. This is an important component for it can facilitate greater participation and involvement in transit matters by elected boards. An important first step in the umbrella organization will be determining appropriate representation on the Organization's board. It is recommended that the MPO's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) should be engaged in that decision. Potential representation could include:

- Alamance County Board of Supervisors
- Elected officials from the County's three largest cities (Burlington, Graham, and Mebane)
- One or more elected officials representing smaller county municipalities
- PART Board representation
- NC DOT representation

Day-to-day administrative functions of this organization should be carried out by staff at the Burlington-Graham MPO, similar to what is done for the Charlottesville RTP. Additional staff time would be required to carry out these functions, thus resulting in the need for additional MPO staff.

Potential Umbrella Organization Task Assignments

Once board membership has been determined, a first action item for this new organization should be the establishment of vision and mission statements and agency goals and objectives. The Charlottesville RTP's Mission Statement is "to provide recommendations to decision-makers on transit-related matters". Its Vision Statement is as follows:

The Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit System is an efficient, high quality, integrated regional network of transit services that provides all residents with access to employment opportunities and community services in a way that minimizes congestion, catalyzes equitable and sustainable redevelopment and maximizes the region's reputation as the best place to live, work, learn and play.

Vision and Mission statements for this proposed Umbrella Organization must be tailored for Alamance County.

This new organization should also establish a work program with specific task assignments. Potential assignments uncovered as part of this study effort are listed below.

Clarify Transit Agency Service Roles

This study has identified challenges for a rider in a region with multiple service providers. The most pressing need regarding overlapping service is between ACTA and Link Transit's ADA service. The Umbrella Organization should investigate opportunities to reduce or eliminate the existing service overlap.

ADA-eligible trips in the urbanized area often go beyond Link Transit's $\frac{3}{4}$ mile ADA service boundaries around its fixed route. This results in confusion, with riders confused about which agency to contact for scheduling a trip. A potential solution to address this problem is to expand the designated ADA service area to cover more of the urbanized area and assign that service responsibility to a single provider. This would improve the rider experience and streamline operations. ACTA could be the designated ADA service provider within the urbanized area (thus eliminating the need for Link Transit to provide ADA service) or Link Transit could be the designated service provider (thus redefining ACTA's role as primarily a rural service provider). Under either scenario, existing regional transit funding distributions would need to be revisited and additional funding may be needed.

Identify Pilot On-Demand Zone Opportunities

Based on the demographic and travel pattern analysis completed as part of this study, there are several areas that are candidates for establishment of new microtransit service zones. As an example, this study identified a potential transit on-demand zone in the north part of Burlington, providing a connection to the fixed route network at Link Transit's Downtown Burlington transit center. A potential task assignment for this Umbrella Organization is to select one or more pilot on-demand zone opportunities and to secure funding for a pilot program.

Explore Opportunities for Further Coordination

There are opportunities for further coordination of administrative activities and transit service delivery between operators. Several aspects of transit service delivery have the potential for consolidation and coordination, such as:

- Administrative roles
- Operations and maintenance
- Customer service/marketing
- Fares

Explore New Funding Source Opportunities

As noted in the previous section, FTA's Section 5307 is a major funding source for transit in the BGMPO area. However, this funding requires a local match. Thus, meaningful service expansion will require additional local funding. Three potential new local funding sources were identified in this report:

- Additional municipal contributions,
- A countywide vehicle registration fee, and
- A ¼ cent sales tax referendum.

The Umbrella Organization should continually identify opportunities for new municipal and other local funding opportunities, such as cost-sharing partnerships. It should also investigate the feasibility of implementing an \$8.00 county-wide vehicle registration fee that is possible through existing PART legislation as a first step towards expanding regional transit funding. As previously noted, it is estimated that this fee could generate at least \$1 million annually. These additional local funds can be leveraged to increase federal, and possibly state, operating assistance.

The MPO's Section 5307 funding sub-allocation formula should also be reconsidered should new local funding be realized (such as through a county-wide vehicle registration fee). This study recommended minor adjustments to the MPO's funding formula. New local funding sources and service expansion could significantly alter the current distribution of funds, thus triggering the need to revisit current formula variables and weights.

Develop the “Road Map” for Agency Consolidation

This study has identified consolidation of Link Transit and ACTA as the most viable option for agency consolidation. This consolidation would address current challenges regarding the servicing of rural-to-urban trips, and urban-to-urban trips that currently fall outside of Link's service area. Passage of a ¼ cent sales tax dedicated to transit may be politically challenging for this region but is more likely under this scenario than under the “Stay the Course” and “Umbrella Organization” scenarios. A potential task assignment for the Umbrella Organization is to conduct a study that details the path forward towards agency consolidation.

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Regional Transit Feasibility Study

EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

December 2023



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REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS
ASSESSMENT

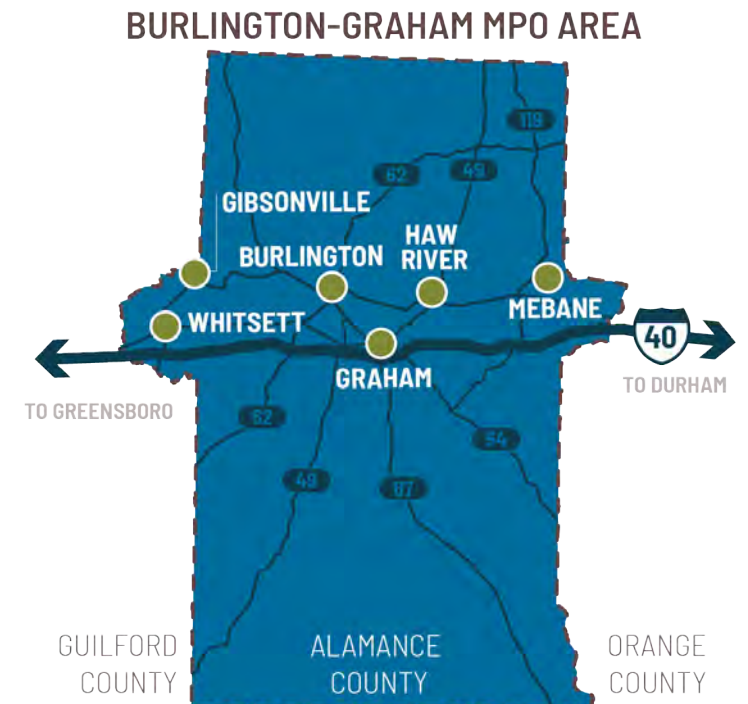
Project Purpose and Goals

About the Regional Transit Feasibility Study

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) is looking to improve regional transit access to nearby destinations like Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Equitable and innovative approaches are being considered to provide transit service, assess multimodal connections, reduce service overlap, determine cost-effective ways to enhance service, evaluate safety performance targets and measures, and develop funding recommendations. Because transit funding is limited, understanding the tradeoffs and priorities for service improvements is central to the project.

This study is being developed by the BGMPO with support from partners at GoTriangle, Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), Orange County Public Transportation, Link Transit, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). It is supported by funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division.

This Tech Memo provides key information regarding the region's transit market potential and current use of existing transit services. An understanding of existing conditions will help define project-specific goals and objectives, potential transit service coordination, and expansion plans and final recommendations.



More information about the project is available at bgmpo.org/transitstudy.

Proposed Goals for the BGMPO Regional Transit Plan

Service Plan-Related Goals

1. Maximize equitable access to transit services

- a. Improve service span, coverage and frequencies in Justice40-designated areas

2. Make transit a viable mode choice option for residents and visitors

- a. Improve service span, coverage and frequencies to major trip destinations
- b. Streamline route alignments where feasible to reduce transit travel times
- c. Provide options for same day on-demand and paratransit service scheduling

3. Eliminate existing barriers for riders to travel throughout the entire region

- a. Improve route transfer opportunities (route connections and passenger facilities)
- b. Facilitate easier transfers and coordinate fare payments between different service providers
- c. Simplify and amplify transit information sources available to the public

4. Improve overall transit service performance in the region

- a. Identify appropriate transit service modes that align with transit market needs

Proposed Goals for the BGMPO Regional Transit Plan

Governance and Funding-Related Goals

5. Identify opportunities to better coordinate and/or consolidate transit services

- a. Reduce service overlaps and/or duplication

6. Provide a regional transit decision-making forum

- a. Identify and investigate alternative regional transit governance structures

7. Maximizing transit funding opportunities (federal, state and local)

- a. Identify and investigate new local funding opportunities for transit, such as a new tax or fee
- b. Maximize local fund leveraging opportunities for federal and state funds
- c. Identify an equitable means for distributing federal and state funds

8. Encourage transit-supportive land uses and densities among study area communities

- a. Work with local jurisdictions to develop policies that encourage density and destination clustering

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Market Analysis

Overview





















The market analysis provides an overview of where current and potential transit riders live, work, and travel. Demographic and environmental data are used to **highlight where transit service is most needed and where it will be most effective.**

Findings will help the BGMPO better **understand patterns affecting transit demand and equitable access for area residents, informing potential strategies to deliver high-quality transit services for the community.**

Additional details on the market analysis methodology and source data is provided in this report's appendix.



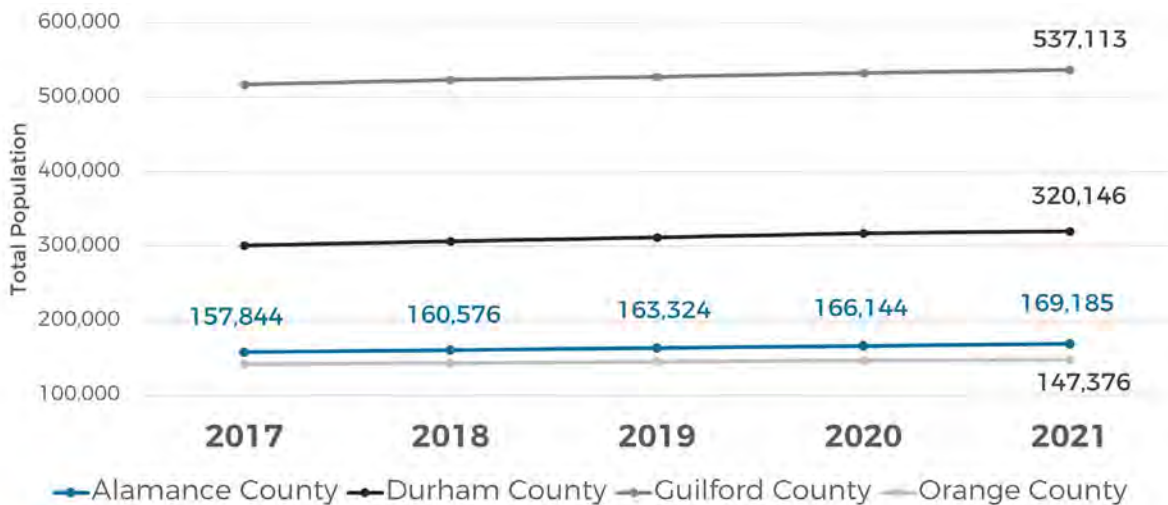
Transit Supportive Density

LAND USE			SUPPORTED TRANSIT	
PLACE TYPE	RESIDENTS PER ACRE	JOBS PER ACRE	APPROPRIATE TRANSIT TYPES	FREQUENCY OF SERVICE
DOWNTOWNS & HIGH-DENSITY CORRIDORS	>45	>25	    Rail BRT Rapid Bus Local Bus	 10 minutes or better
URBAN MIXED USE	30 - 45	15 - 25	   BRT Rapid Bus Local Bus	 10 - 15 minutes
NEIGHBORHOOD & SUBURBAN MIXED USE	15 - 30	10 - 15	 Local Bus	 15 - 30 minutes
MIXED NEIGHBORHOODS	10 - 15	5 - 10	  Local Bus On Demand	 30 - 60 minutes
LOW DENSITY SUBURBAN	2 - 10	2 - 5	  Rideshare On Demand	 up to 60 minutes or on demand
RURAL	<2	<2	  Rideshare On Demand	 On demand

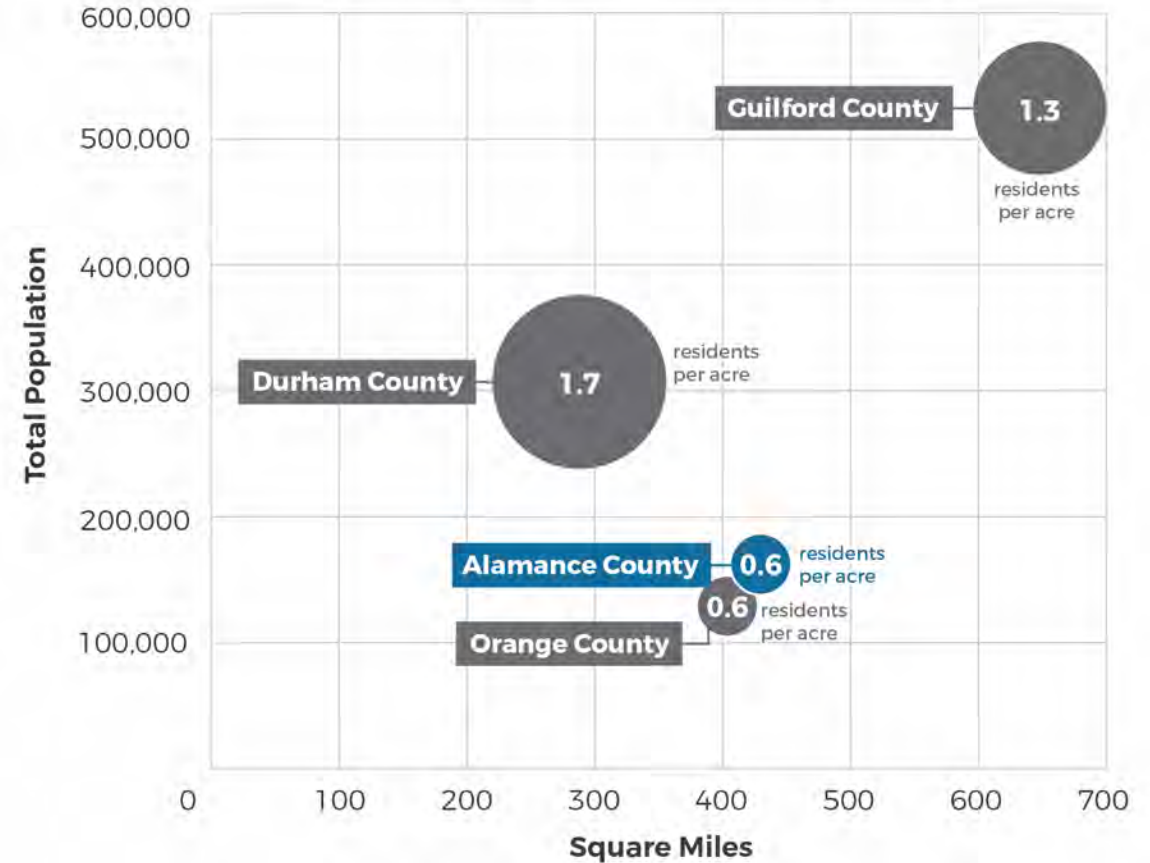
Total Population

Alamance County’s total population and density is comparable to neighboring Orange County, with **169,185 residents**—0.6 residents per acre—as of 2021. It grew about 1.7% per year between 2017 and 2021, adding a total of 11,341 new residents in 5 years (+7.2%). This **growth rate was higher** than Durham (+6.4%), Guilford (+3.9%), and Orange (+3.9%) Counties during this 4-year period.

Population Growth by County



Population Density by County



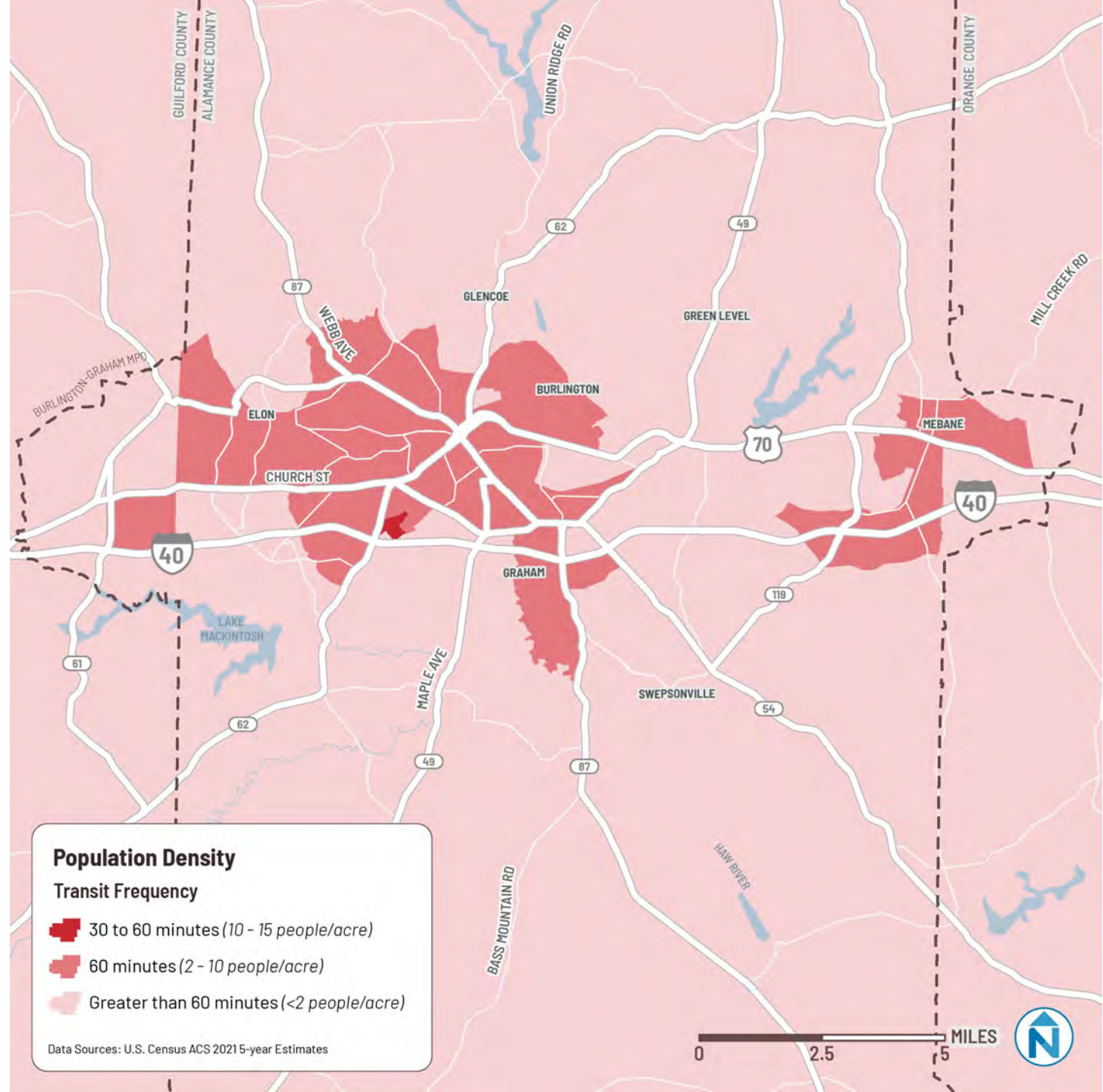
Data Source: U.S. Census 2021 ACS 5-year estimates

Population Density

Population density is one of the most important factors in determining underlying demand for transit. Higher concentrations indicate there are more people and destinations around to support transit use.

The **most densely populated areas are along the I-40 corridor** in the cities of Burlington, Graham, and Mebane and around Elon University. Even in these areas, the block group with the highest density levels had 10 to 15 residents per acre. That level of density typically supports transit service every 30 to 60 minutes.

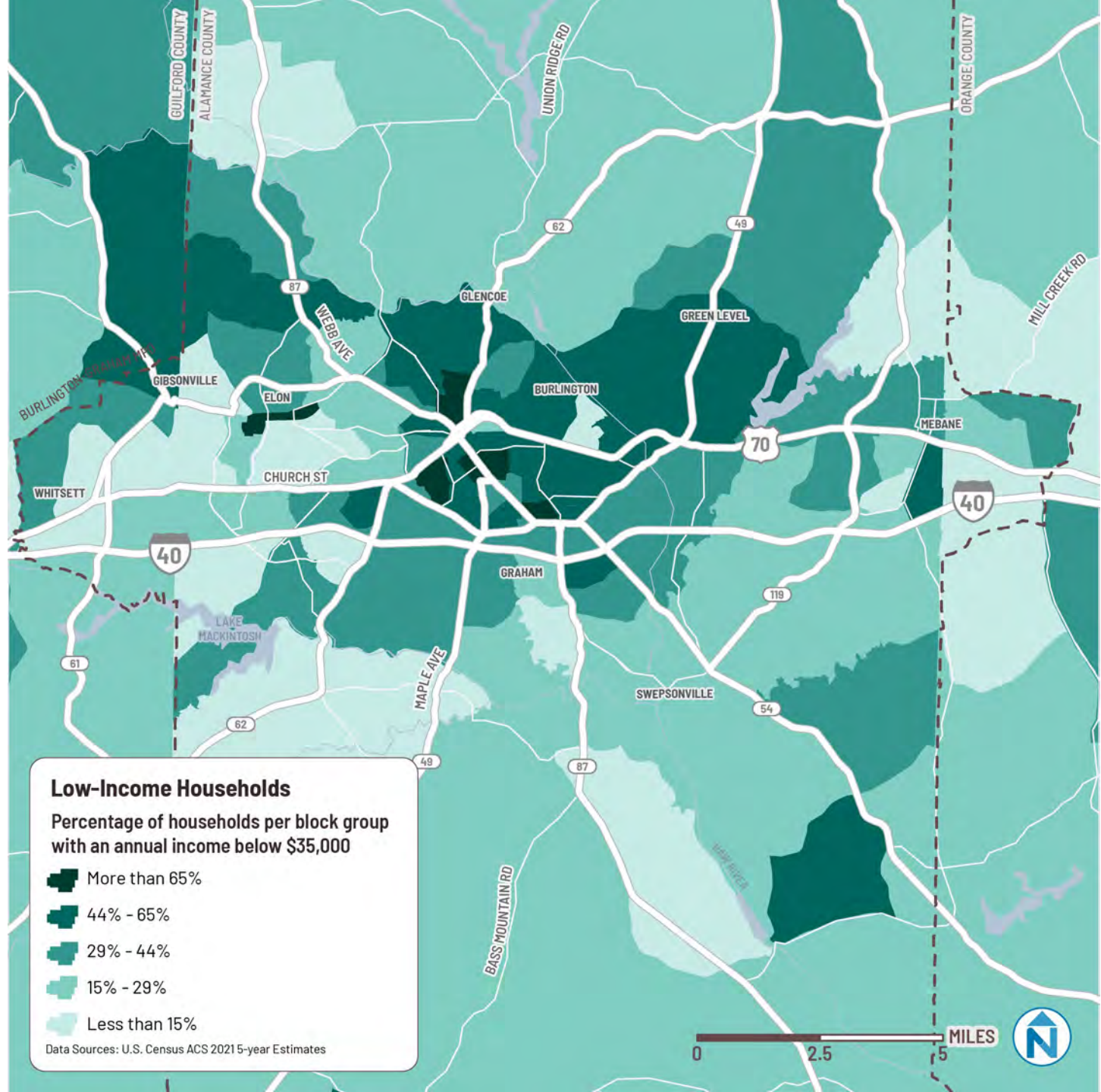
Most of the BGMPO area has fewer than 2 people per acre, a low level of density that is not typically well-suited for fixed route transit service.



Low-Income Households

Concentrations and locations of low-income households is another key factor in determining potential demand for transit.

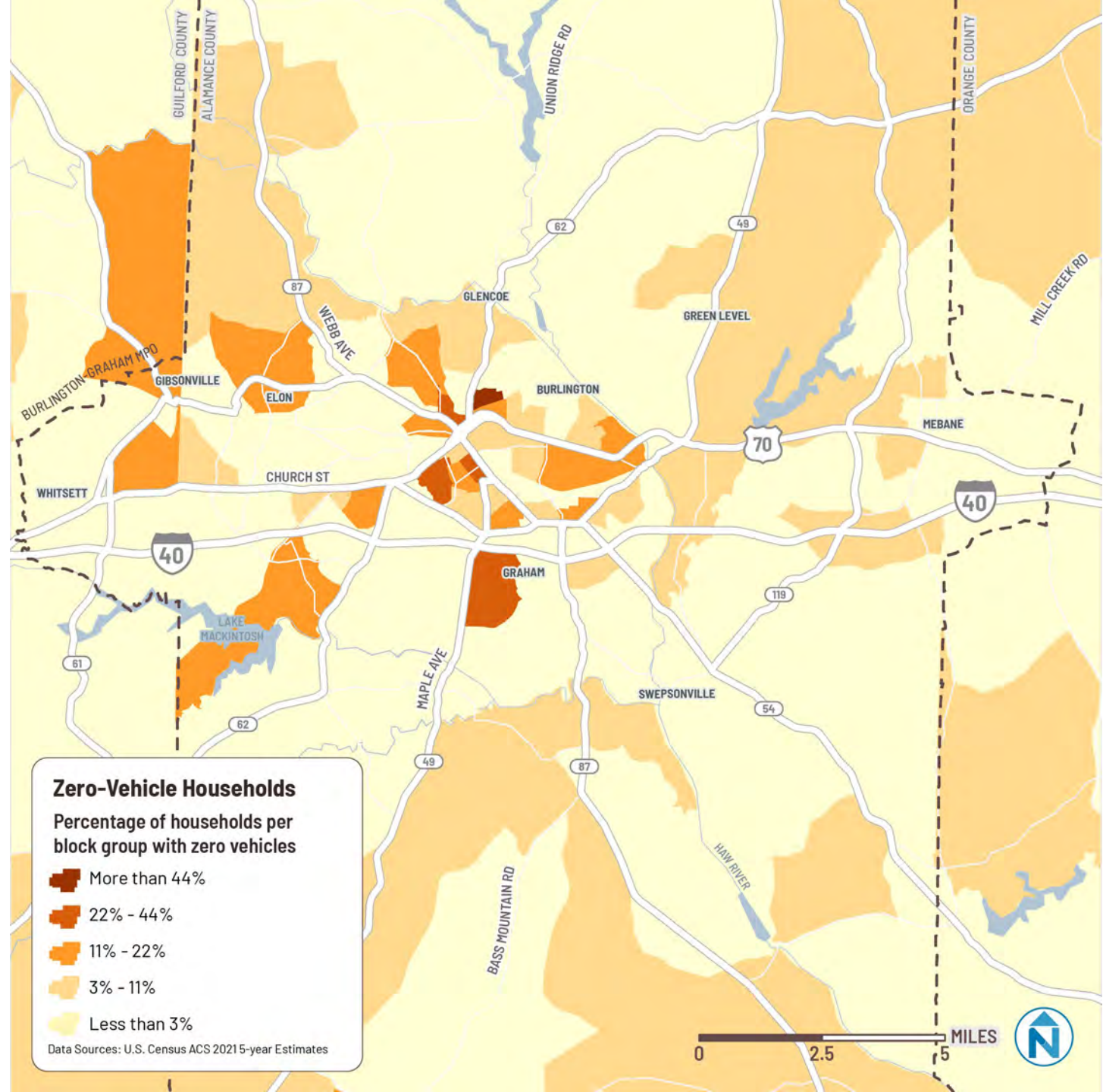
Within the BGMPO boundaries, there are an estimated 73,000 households, of which 31% have an annual income below \$35,000. Low-income households are primarily around Burlington, with some census block groups having low-income households exceeding 65% of the block group's total households.



Zero-Vehicle Households

Transit market potential can also be measured by determining concentrations and locations of zero-vehicle households.

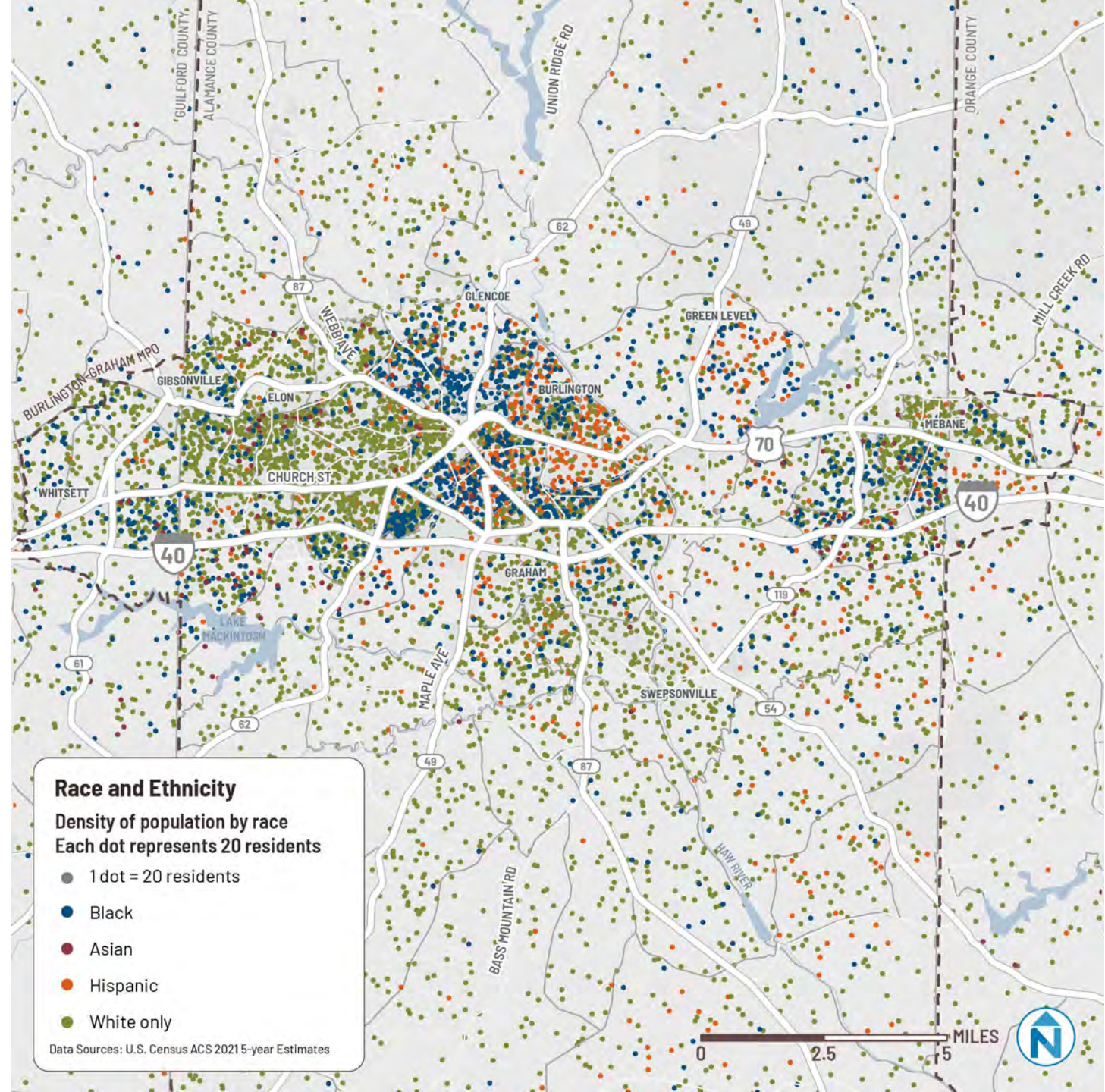
Most block groups within the BGMPO boundary have 11% or fewer zero-vehicle households. There are, however, **higher densities of zero-vehicle households in central Burlington and in southeast Burlington along Maple Avenue.**



Race and Ethnicity

In the United States, race is highly correlated with both personal income and generational wealth. As a result, **residents of color tend to be overrepresented among those who ride transit**, despite legacy policy and planning that historically excluded communities of color.

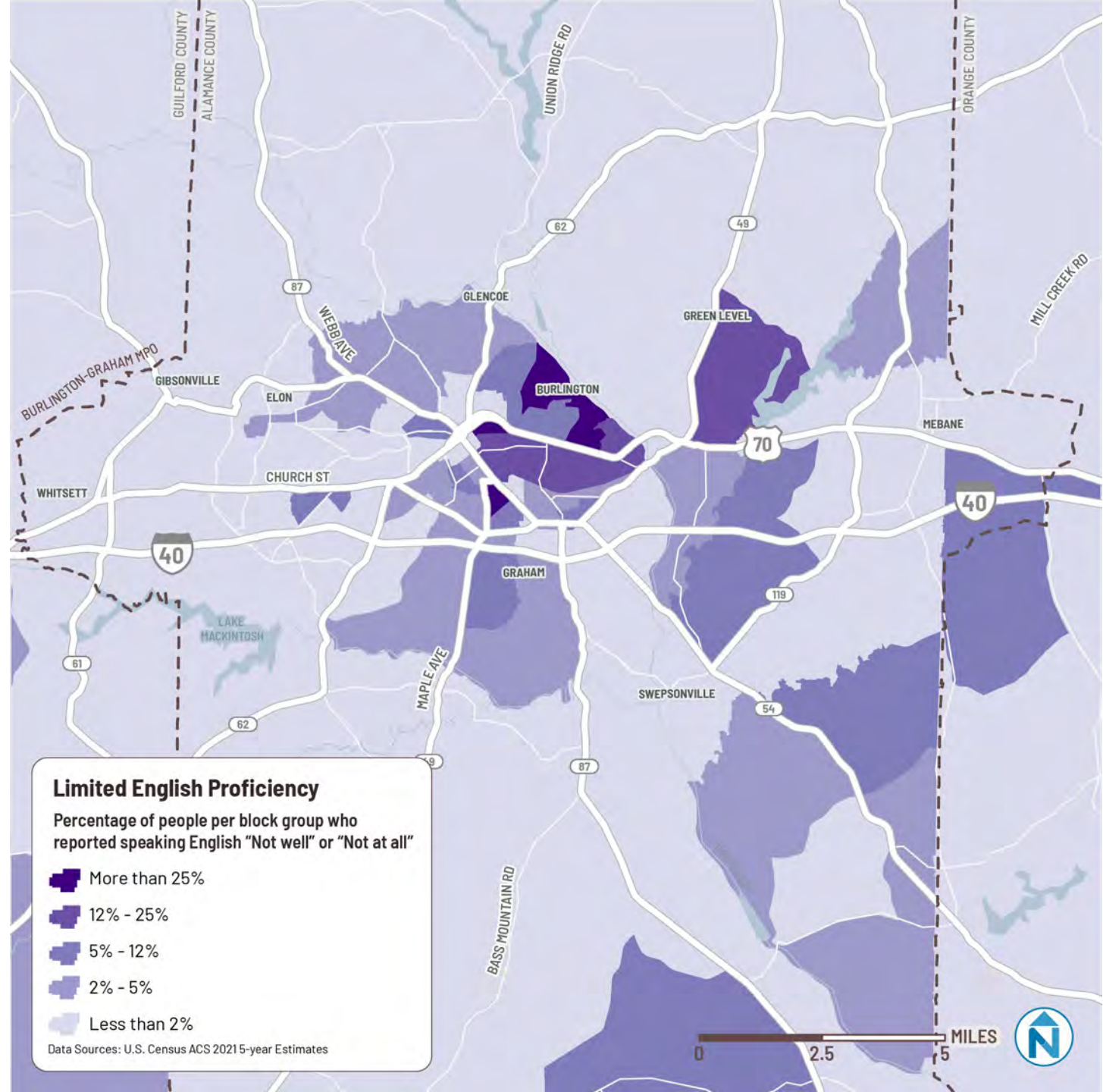
The adjacent figure presents population densities by race and ethnicity. This figure illustrates **higher concentrations of black residents in central Burlington areas** particularly east of Alamance Road and north of I-40, and north of downtown Burlington between Rauhut Street and Webb Avenue. **Hispanic residents are most represented on the east side of Burlington.**



Limited English Proficiency

Residents with limited English proficiency (LEP) are more likely to be recent immigrants with limited access to personal vehicles to meet their transportation needs.

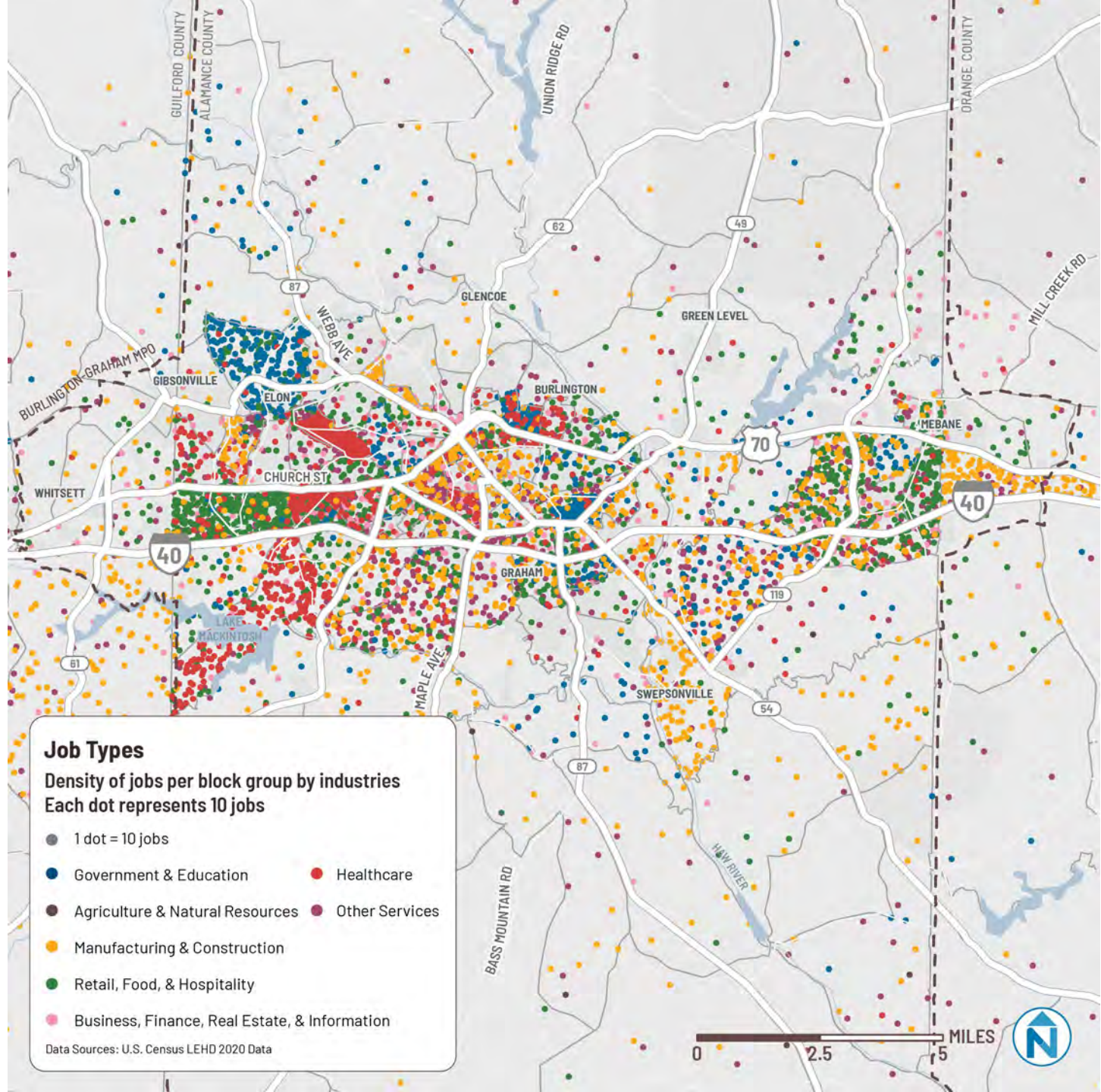
The adjacent figure illustrates where there are concentrations of LEP residents. **Areas with the highest concentrations tend to be on the east side of Burlington**, which aligns with the race and ethnicity data showing this area having a high concentration of Hispanic residents.



Job Types

Clusters of different types of jobs can have implications for transit demand either because of average income per industry, variety in shift times, and remote work flexibility.

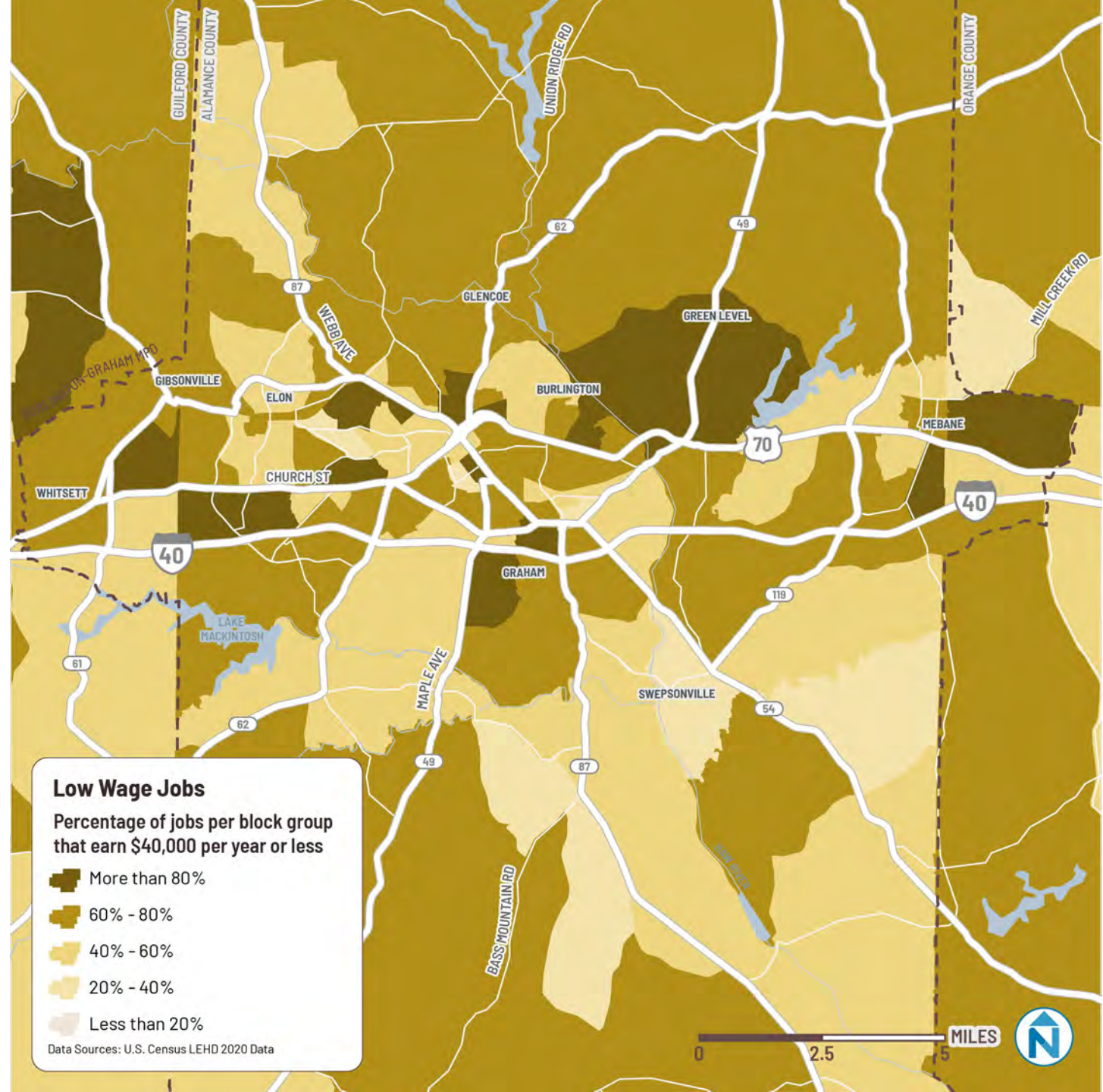
The BGMPO area shows patterns of industry clustering in Retail, Food, & Hospitality around the Huffman Mill Road and Mebane Oaks Road commercial corridors, Government & Education around Elon University and Downtown Graham, Healthcare along western Burlington, and some Manufacturing & Construction in southeast Mebane, Swepsonville, and between Burlington and Graham.



Low-Wage Jobs

People who work in low-wage jobs are more likely to need transit for their commutes, as their income might make the costs associated with vehicle ownership unfeasible.

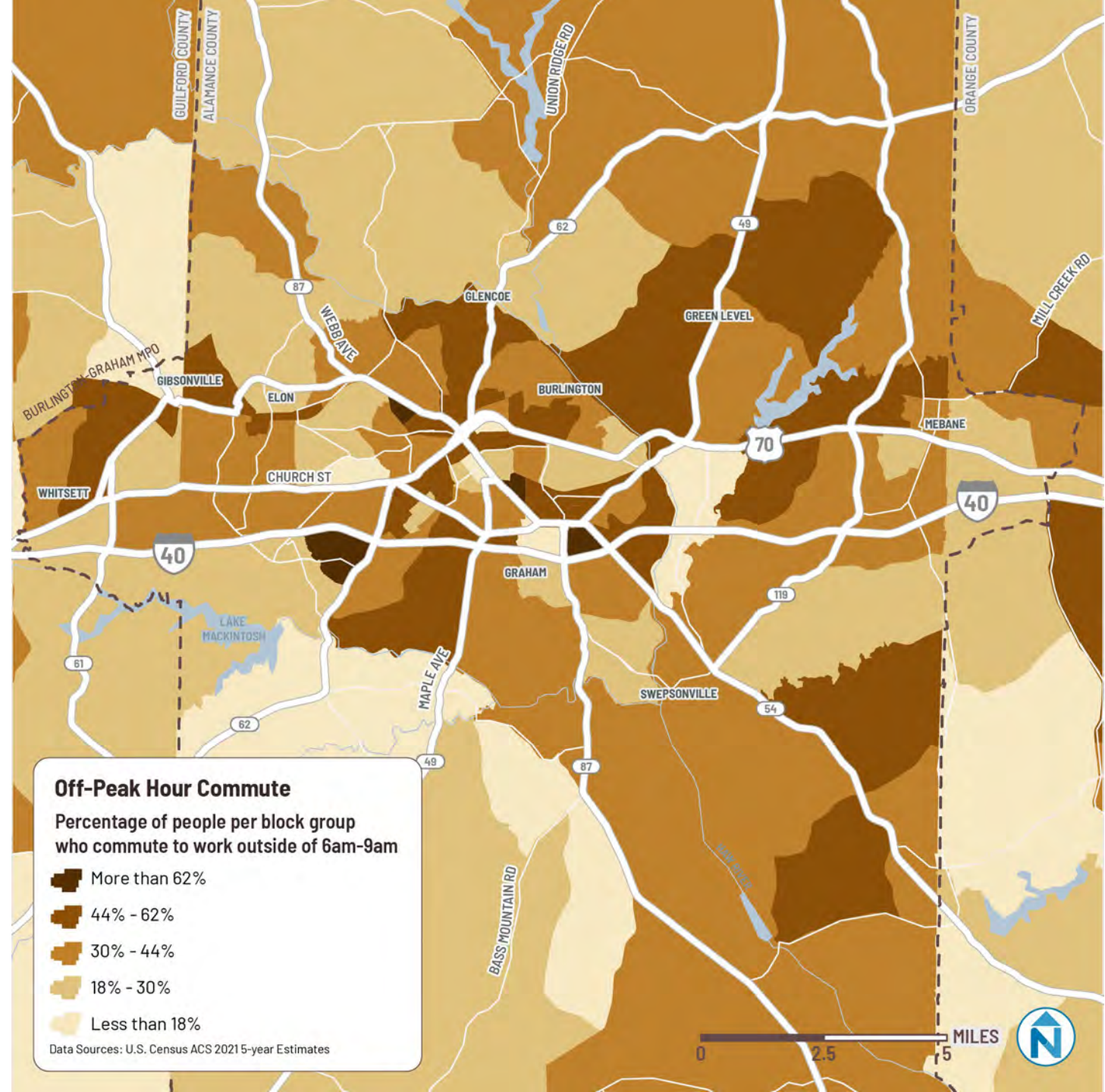
Many areas in the BGMPO region have a significant share of jobs **with wages that equate to \$40,000 per year or less**. Several areas have a high density of these jobs including Elon, the Huffman Mill Road commercial corridor, and Downtown Graham, where more than 80% of jobs earn below that benchmark.



Off-Peak Hour Commutes

A review of residents with off-peak commutes can be an indication of the need for all-day transit services.

As noted in the adjacent figure, **a large percentage of BGMPO residents have commutes outside of the typical 6 to 9 a.m. peak period.**



Transit Propensity

Certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are related to higher transit usage, including people without cars and people living in low-income households. When significant numbers of individuals and households from these high-transit propensity groups cluster together, they can influence the underlying demand for transit to an extent not captured when only considering total population. Similarly, in a location where transit-supportive demographic groups have low representation, the level of potential transit demand may be lower than total population density alone would indicate.

Factors from **a transit propensity analysis shows relative demand for transit in different areas** as compared to the region and accounts for both issues. These factors measure the **likelihood of the demographic groups listed to use transit** to commute to work relative to the study area's general population.

The table to the right shows the **transit index factor (TIF)** for different demographic groups in Alamance County calculated against the total average to show their propensity to use transit. **Any demographic group with a TIF greater than 1 is more likely than the general population to use transit.**

Demographic Characteristic	Relative Transit Propensity	% BGMPO Pop.
Race & Ethnicity		
White Alone (Not Hispanic or Latino)	0.46	63%
Black or African American	2.81	20%
Asian	4.94	2%
Other Race	0.46	3%
Hispanic or Latino	0.14	12%
Household Vehicle Ownership		
No Car	16.36	4%
One Car	0.49	28%
Two or More Cars	0.74	68%
Country of Origin		
Native	1.02	92%
Foreign Born	0.84	8%
Household Income		
Less than \$10,000	5.31	6%
\$10,000 - \$15,000	0.00	4%
\$15,000 - \$25,000	0.07	10%
\$25,000 - \$35,000	0.33	11%
More than \$35,000	0.83	69%

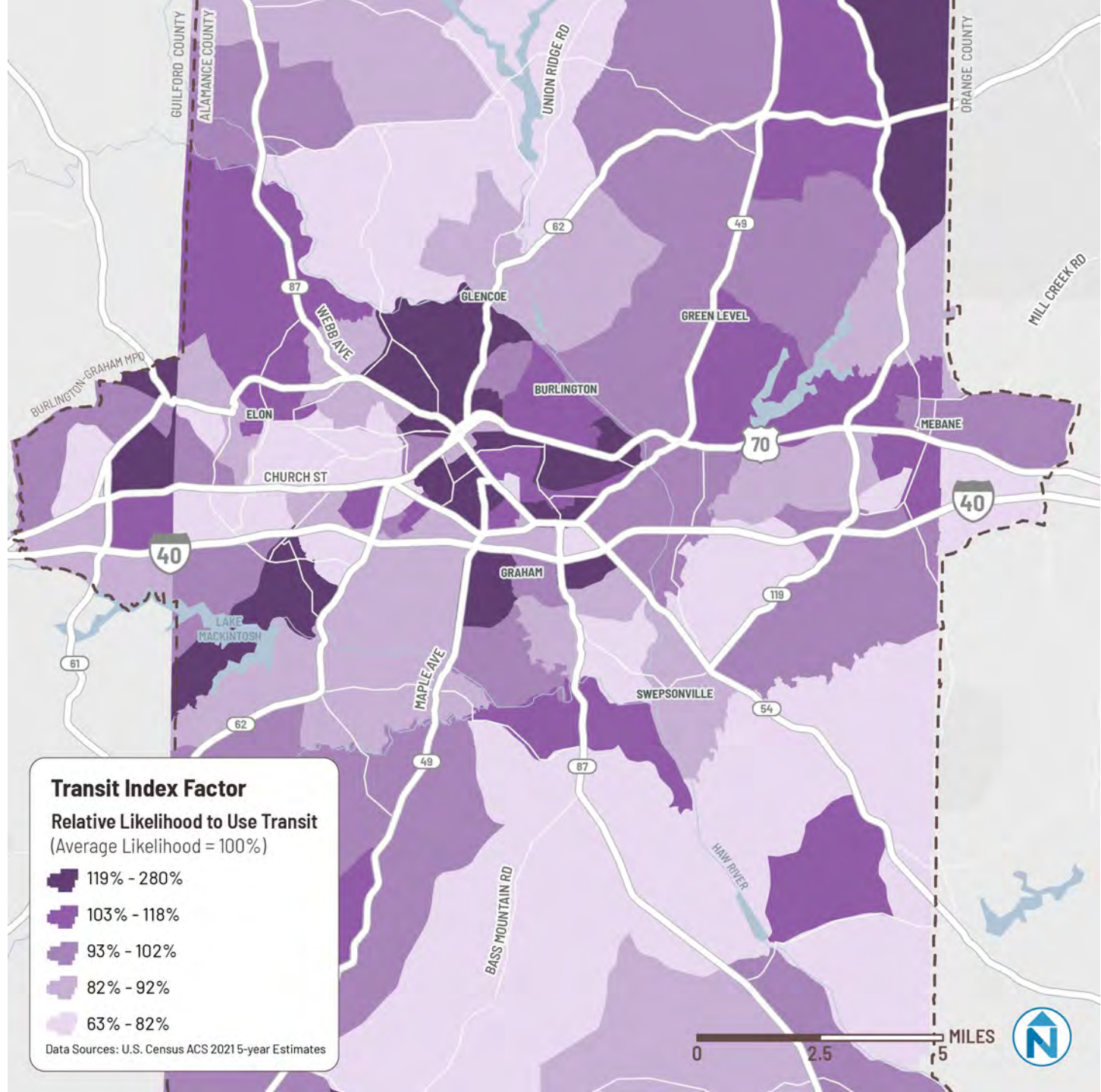
Transit Propensity

A transit index factor (TIF) is assigned to each block group based on its demographics to show the propensity of its residents to use transit.

Block groups that show **above average transit propensity (>100%)** include:

- Downtown Burlington
- Downtown Graham
- Lake Mackintosh
- Elon University
- Gibsonville
- Northeast Alamance County

Residents in rural areas in south central and north central Alamance County, as well as the west side of Downtown Burlington, have the lowest likelihood to use transit.

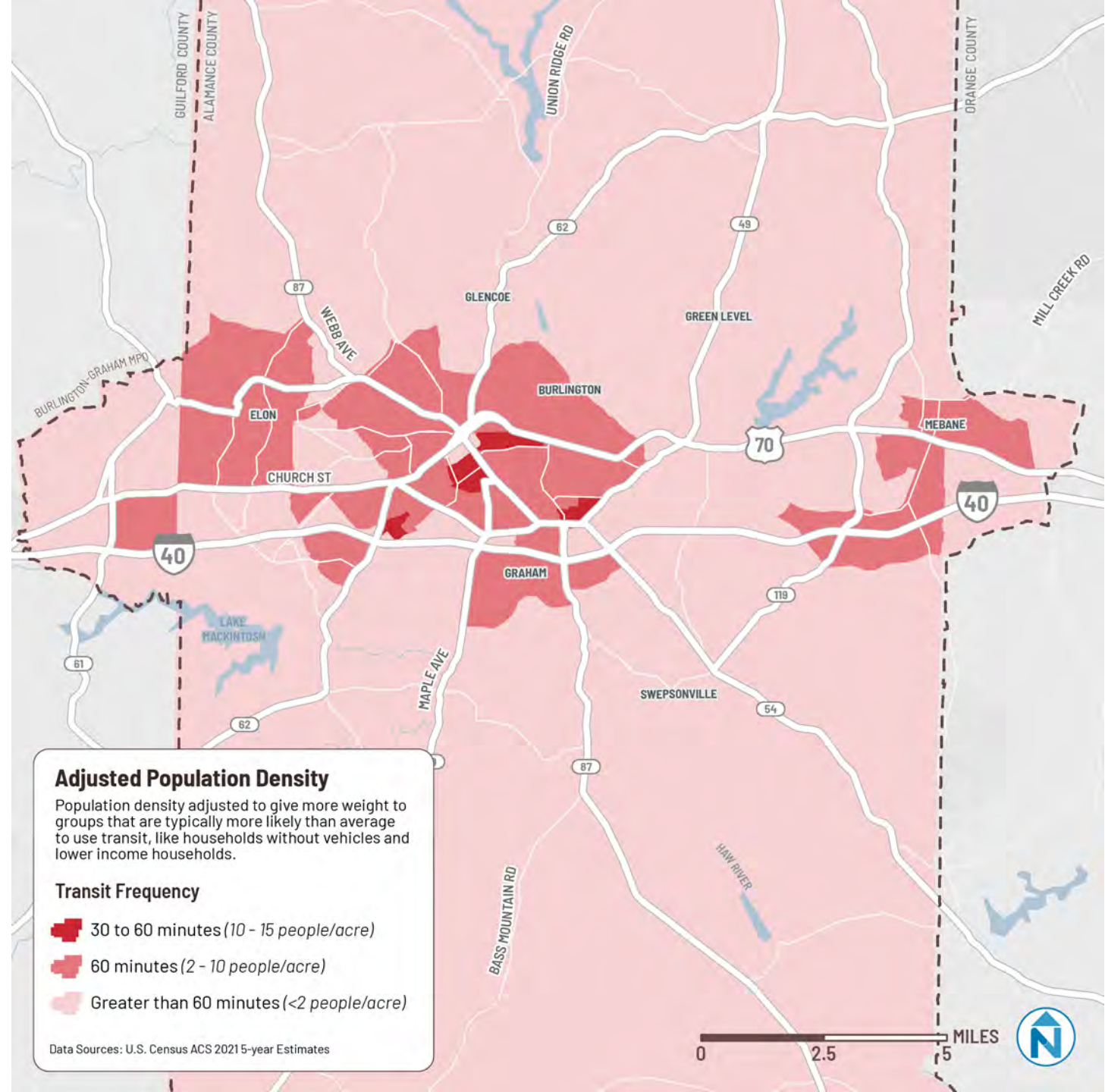


Adjusted Population Density

A block group's **Transit Index Factor** is multiplied by its unadjusted population density to provide an adjusted population density that reflects the **likelihood of residents using transit**.

Adjusting for population density allows for identification of areas by corresponding transit service frequencies.

Areas that may support transit service every 30 to 60 minutes include parts of **Downtown Burlington** just south of Church Street and part of **Downtown Graham**.



Employment Density

Commuting for work is the most common and consistent reason for taking transit,

making job density another strong indicator of demand. Job locations also highlight add-on demand. For example, where restaurant, retail, and medical workers commute, customers and patients also travel to shop or receive care.

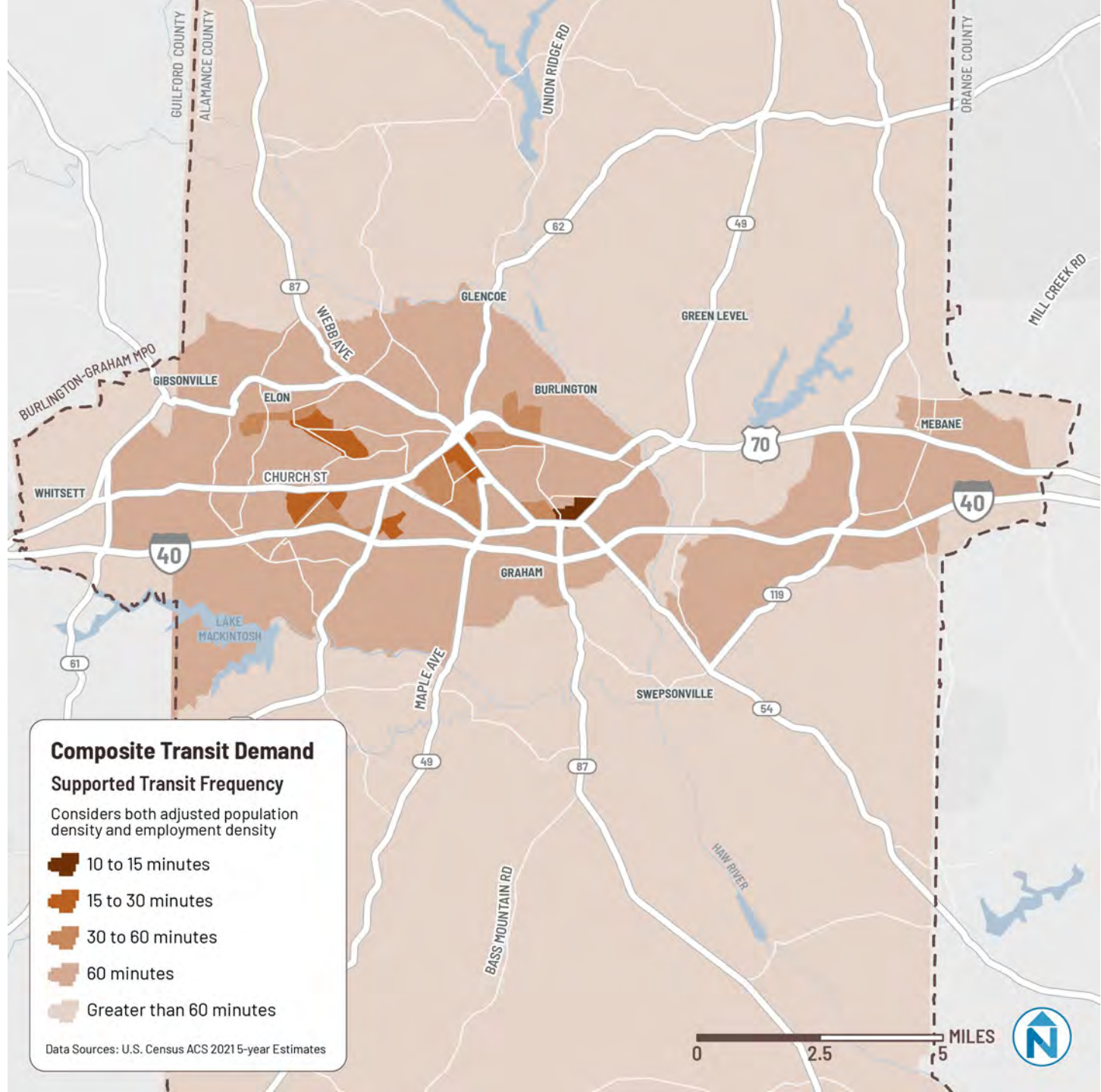
Like population density, **employment density in the BGMPO area is low**, with fewer than 2 jobs per acre in most places. **Jobs are concentrated around Downtown Burlington, Downtown Graham, Elon University, and a few commercial corridors like Huffman Mill Road and Webb Avenue.** The densest job centers would support transit service every 30 to 60 minutes.



Composite Demand

The **composite transit demand score combines adjusted population density and employment density**. Looking at population density, socioeconomic characteristics, and employment density combined is the best way to get a **complete understanding of the underlying demand** as none of these three aspects of demand exist in isolation from one another.

Using a composite score of population and employment densities, **most of the Burlington-Graham urban area, as well as Mebane, can support 60-minute local fixed route service**, with some pockets having demand that could support 30-minute service (e.g., around Elon, the I-40 corridor, and central Burlington).



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Travel Patterns

Travel Patterns 2022

Replica is an online planning tool that shows actual travel pattern characteristics in a region. It uses location-based services (LBS) data (such as cell phone data) to track trip origin and destination data at a census block group level.

For this study, fall 2022 data was reviewed to determine travel pattern characteristics within and to/from Alamance County and adjacent counties. As noted in the adjacent table, **most weekday trips originating in Alamance County remain in Alamance County (86%)**. Of those **trips leaving Alamance County, 55% are traveling west to Guilford County and 45% are traveling east to Orange and Durham Counties**.

For those **trips originating in adjacent counties and traveling to Alamance County, the split is identical** (55% from Guilford County and 45% from Orange and Durham Counties).

Fall 2022 Weekday Trips Origins & Destinations by County

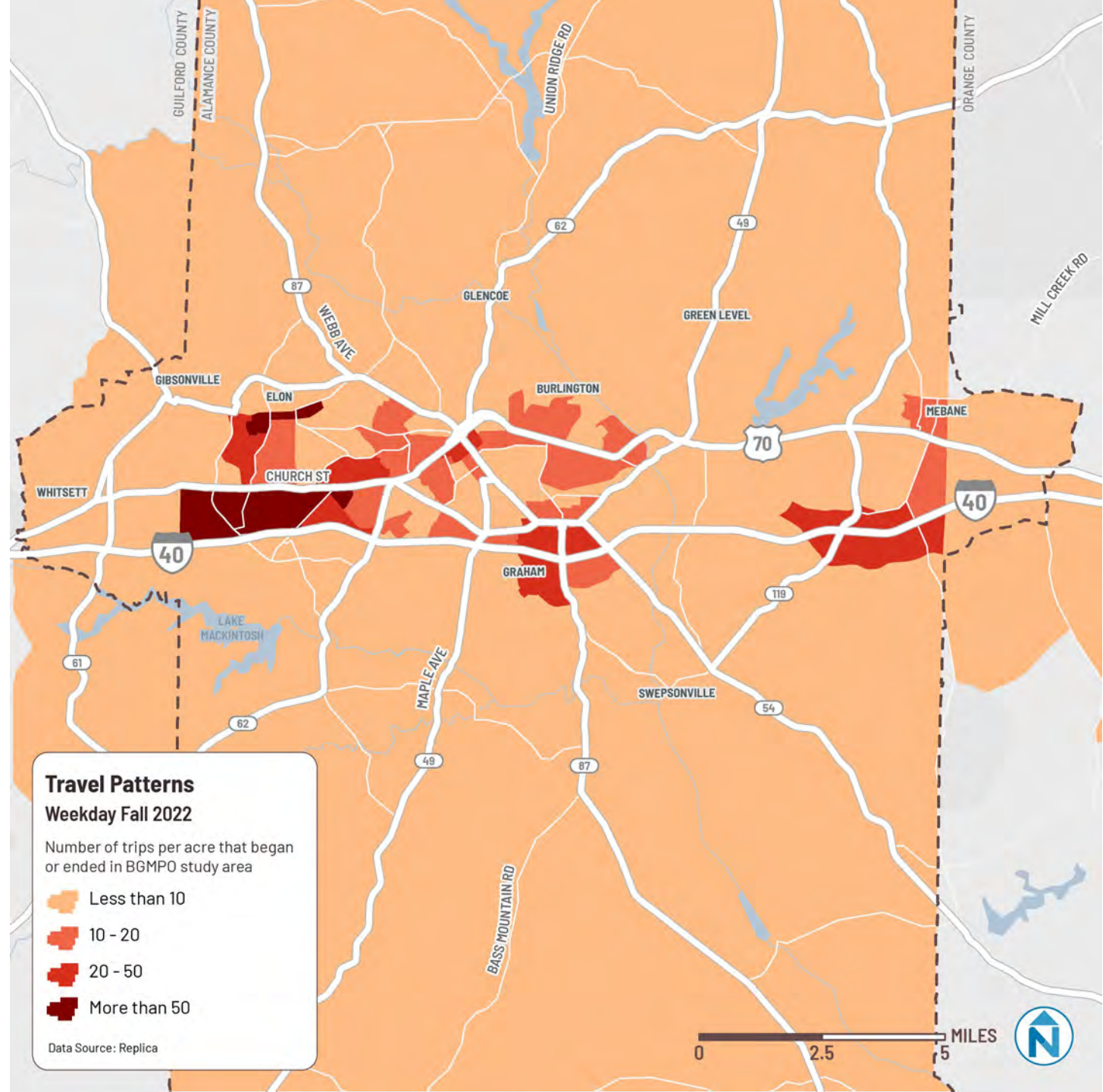
	Origin	Weekday Trips	Destination	Weekday Trips
FROM ALAMANCE	Alamance	647,554	Alamance	554,363
			Guilford	51,619
			Orange	28,270
			Durham	13,302
TO ALAMANCE	Guilford	1,912,010	Alamance	50,491
	Orange	457,603		28,595
	Durham	994,592		13,234

Travel Densities 2022

Internal Trips

The adjacent figure illustrates trip activity on a census block group and average weekday basis for trips that begin and end within the BGMPO study area.

Most of the **study area has fewer than 10 daily person trips per acre**. The areas with the highest trip activity are commercial areas along the I-40 and US 70 corridors.

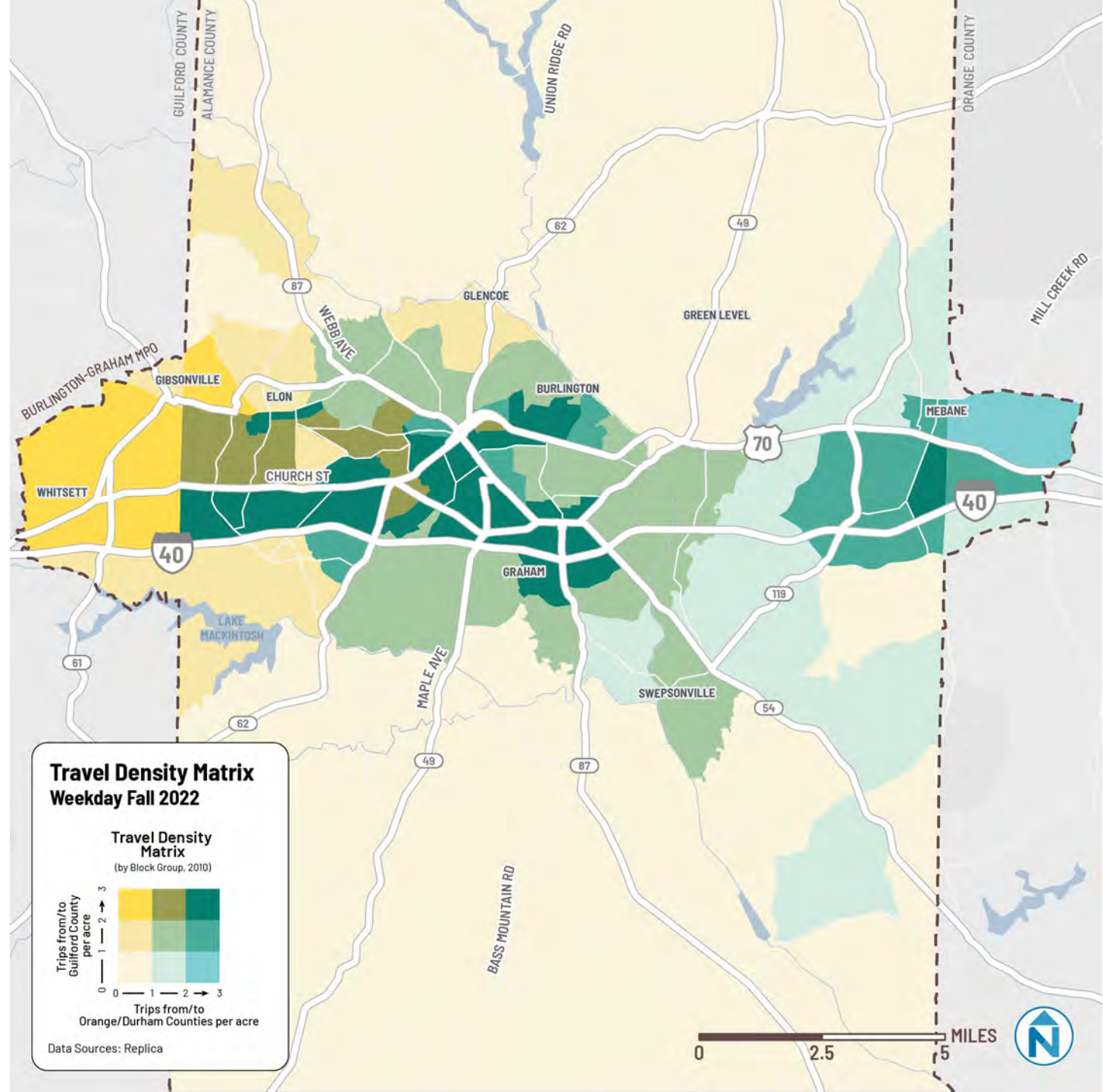


Travel Patterns 2022

External Trips

The adjacent figure illustrates trip activity on a census block group basis for trips that begin or end OUTSIDE of the BGMPO area. The colors indicate both relative level of travel based on trip density and where that level of travel is coming or going.

Areas with the **highest trip density from both the east and west are nearest to the I-40 corridor** covering Burlington, Graham, and South Mebane. **Block groups on the west side of the BGMPO area typically have more trips connected to Guilford County, while block groups on the east side have more trips to/from Orange/Durham Counties.** One exception appears to be along Hanover Rd between Burlington and Graham, which is central, but has more trips coming from Orange/Durham. Another exception is around Elon, which is further to the east, but has relatively even trip density from both east and west.

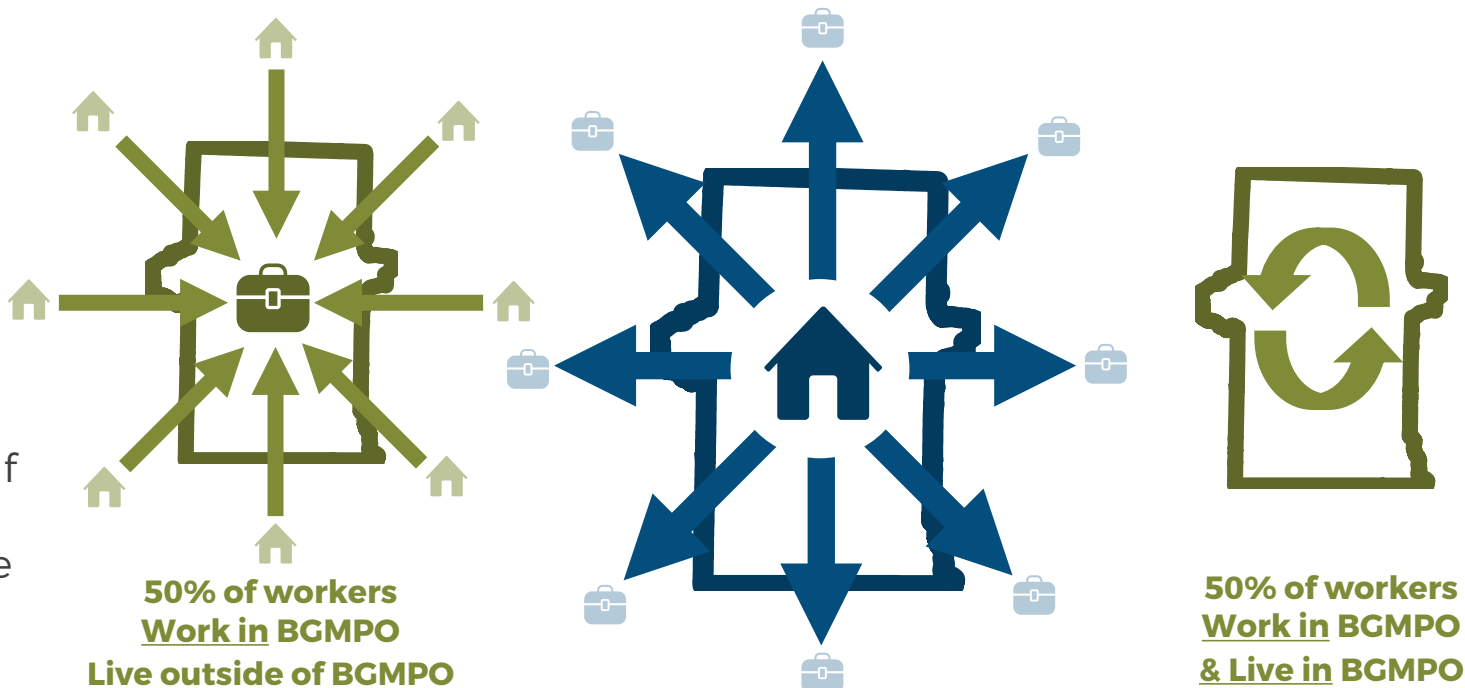


Work Travel



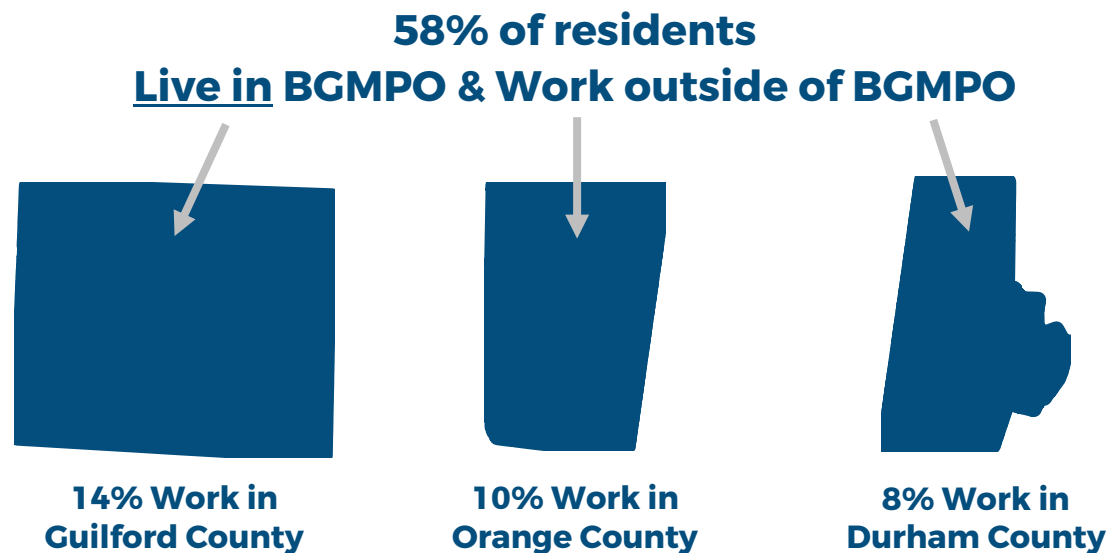
Where BGMPO Workers Live

The 2020 US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic (LEHD) Data indicates there are approximately 67,000 total jobs in the BGMPO area. Half of these jobs are held by people living outside the BGMPO boundaries while the other half live within the BGMPO area.



Where BGMPO Residents Work

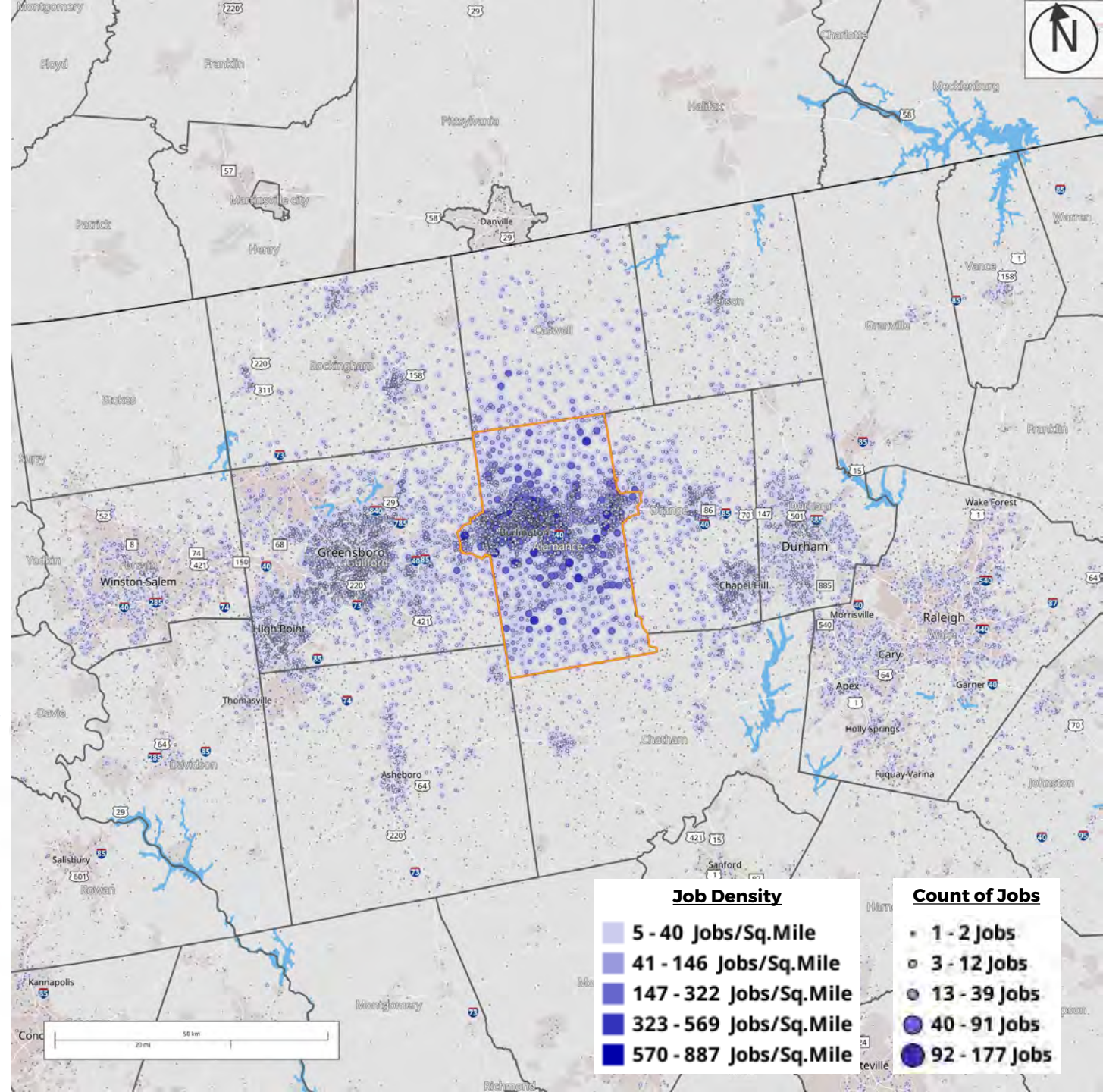
Of the 79,000 employed residents living within the BGMPO area, **58% of residents commute out for work**. The main destinations are Guilford, Orange, and Durham Counties, comprising **32% of BGMPO residents**. These work travel flows indicate significant demand for transportation services that can facilitate easy and convenient regional travel between counties.



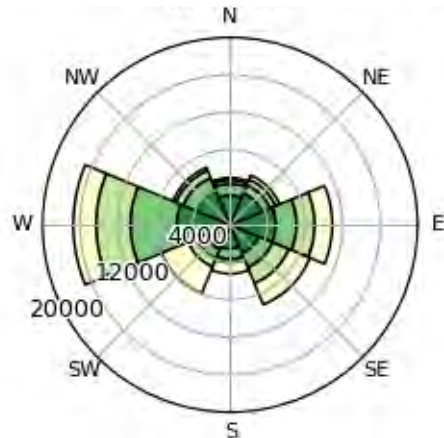
Distance/Direction: Commute Trips to BGMPO Jobs

2020 LEHD data was used to determine commute patterns to jobs within the BGMPO area.

- More trips from outside the study area come from the west (Guilford County) than from the east (46% vs. 38%).
- Workers commuting into the area have shorter commutes than BGMPO residents: 45% travel less than 10 miles compared to 38% of BGMPO residents.
- Over half of all inbound workers travel more than 10 miles away to jobs within the BGMPO area.



Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2020
All Workers



Jobs by Distance
Work Census Block to Home Census Block

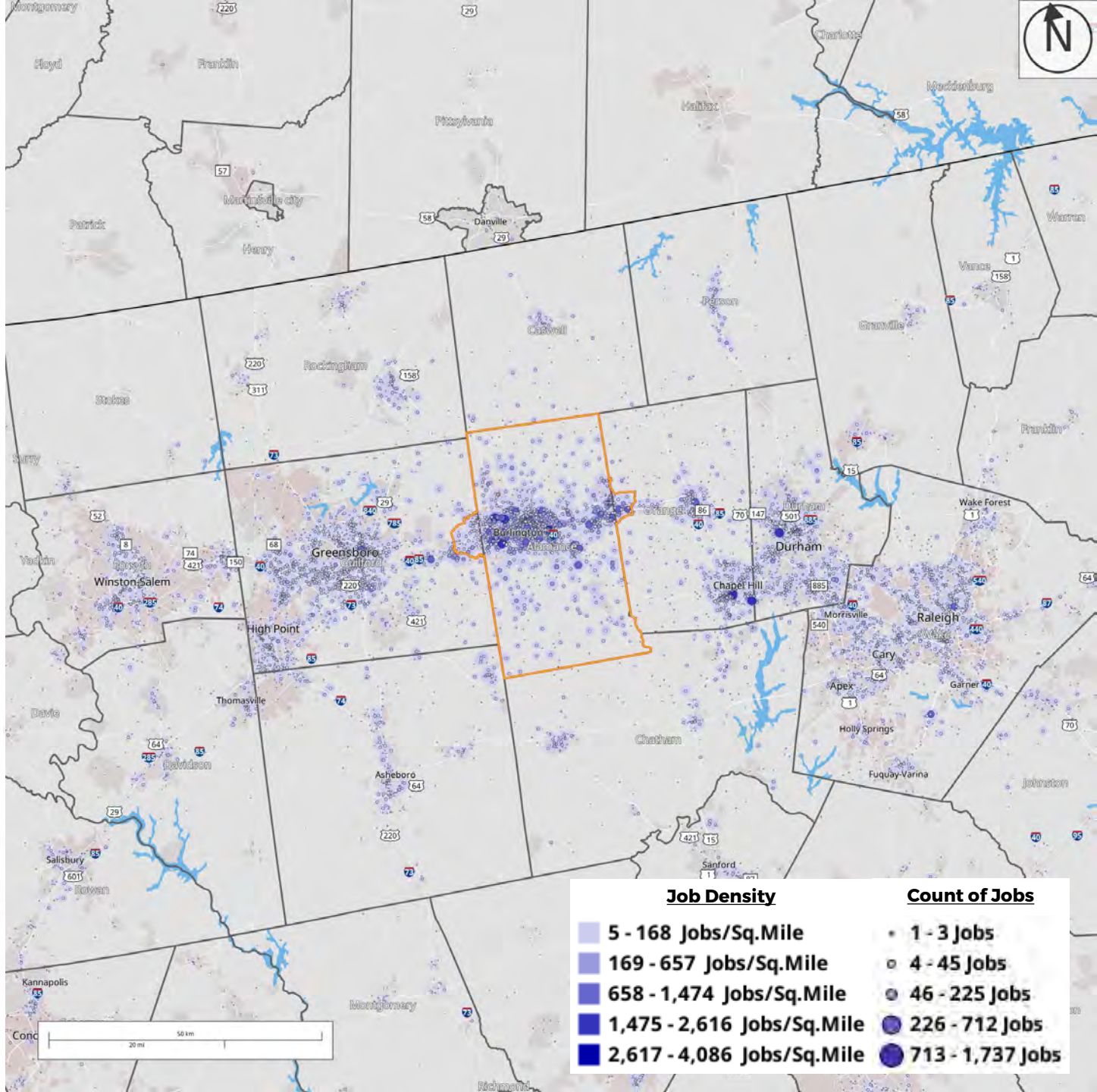
	2020	
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	67,330	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	30,059	44.6%
10 to 24 miles	14,597	21.7%
25 to 50 miles	10,598	15.7%
Greater than 50 miles	12,076	17.9%

Job Density	Count of Jobs
5 - 40 Jobs/Sq.Mile	1 - 2 Jobs
41 - 146 Jobs/Sq.Mile	3 - 12 Jobs
147 - 322 Jobs/Sq.Mile	13 - 39 Jobs
323 - 569 Jobs/Sq.Mile	40 - 91 Jobs
570 - 887 Jobs/Sq.Mile	92 - 177 Jobs

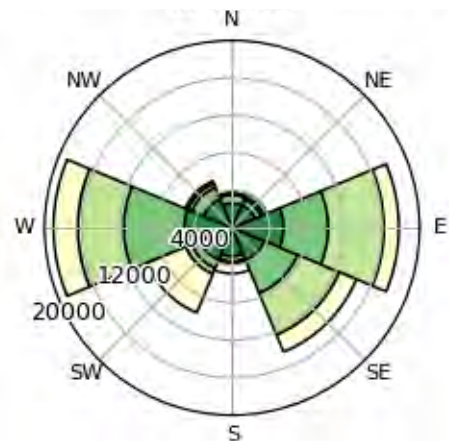
Distance/Direction: BGMPO Resident Trips to Jobs

2020 LEHD data was also used to determine commute patterns for BGMPO area residents.

- Resident work trips leaving the study area are oriented slightly more towards the east and southeast to Orange, Durham and Wake Counties than to the west (46% vs. 43%).
- Over 60 percent of all BGMPO area residents travel more than 10 miles to their jobs.



Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2020
All Workers



Jobs by Distance
Home Census Block to Work Census Block

	2020	Count	Share
Total All Jobs		79,052	100.0%
Less than 10 miles		29,797	37.7%
10 to 24 miles		19,333	24.5%
25 to 50 miles		17,503	22.1%
Greater than 50 miles		12,419	15.7%

EXISTING CONDITIONS
ASSESSMENT

Transit Service Assessment

Existing Transit Service

Local Fixed Route Service

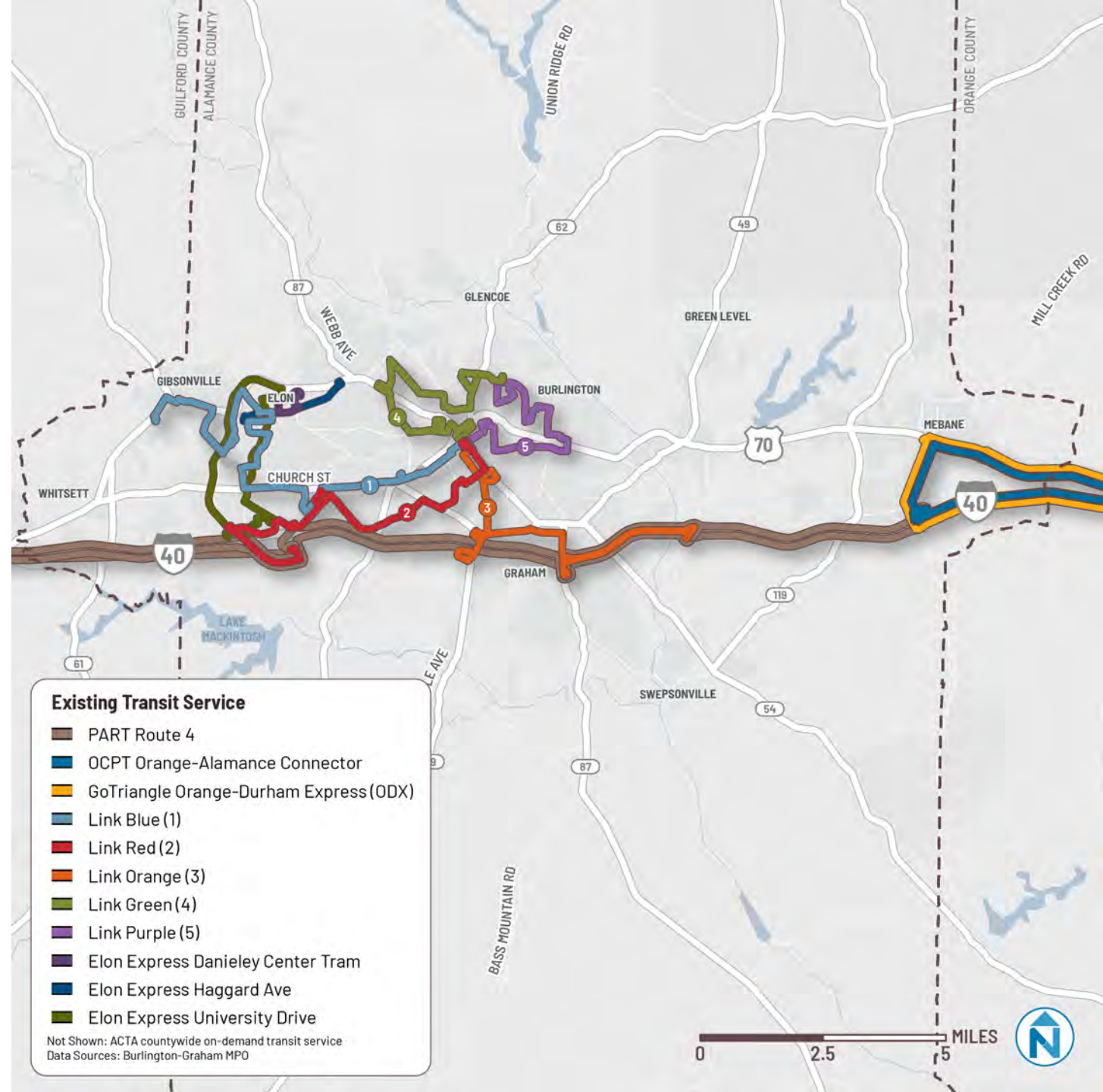
- Link Blue (1)
- Link Red (2)
- Link Orange (3)
- Link Green (4)
- Link Purple (5)
- Elon Express Danieley Center Tram
- Elon Express Haggard Avenue
- Elon Express University Drive

Regional Service

- PART Route 4
- OCPT Orange-Alamance Connector
- GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX)

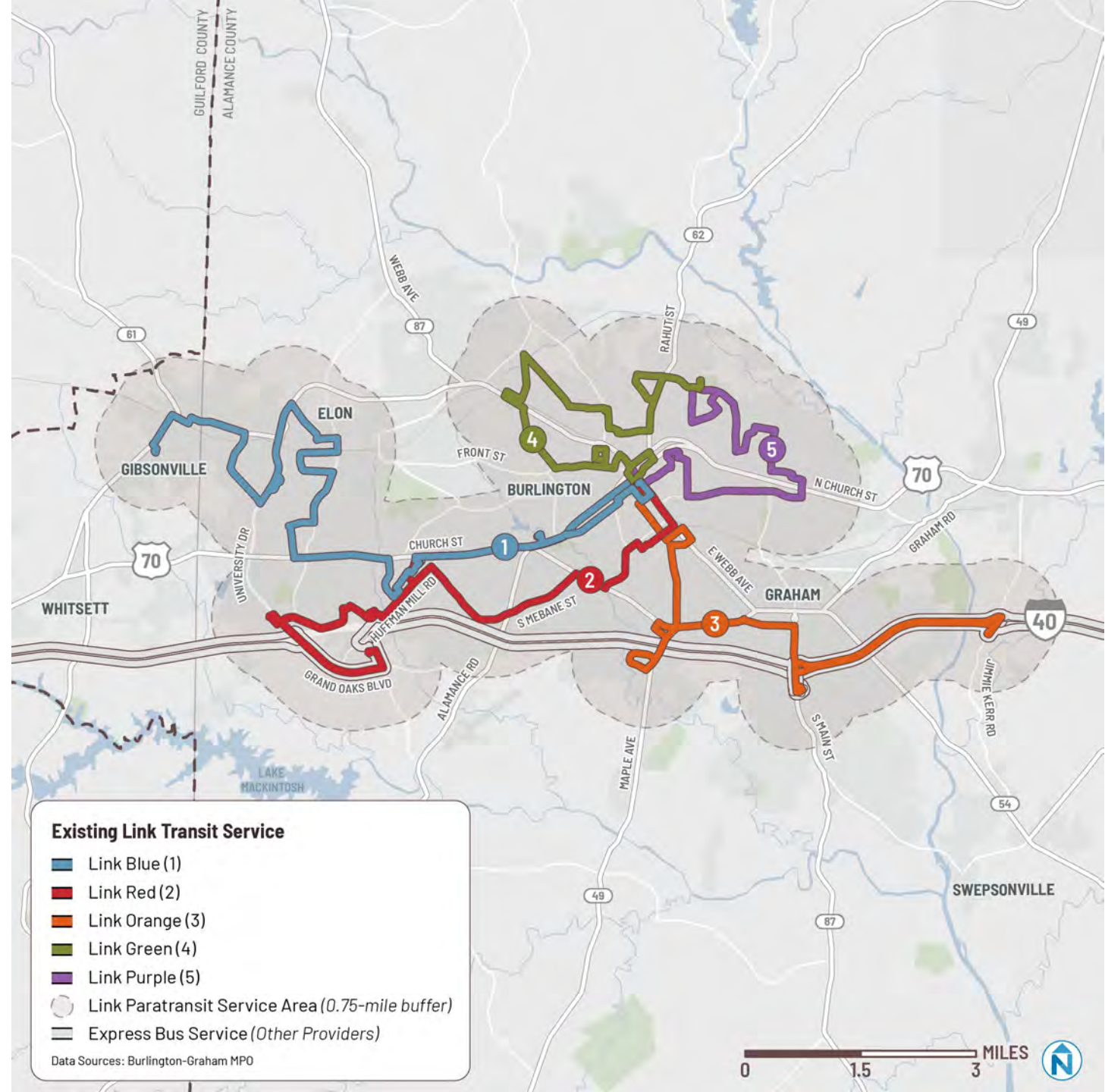
On-Demand Service

- Link Paratransit Service (¾ mile buffer around Link fixed routes)
- ACTA (countywide service)



Link Transit

- Link Transit operates five fixed routes plus paratransit (3/4-mile buffer around fixed routes)
- Fixed route and paratransit service is provided Monday through Saturday
 - Weekday service span is generally 6:30 am to 9:30 pm
 - Saturday service span is generally 9:30 am to 6:30 pm
- All routes operate at 90-minute service frequencies with timed transfers in Downtown Burlington
- All routes operate with one bus each



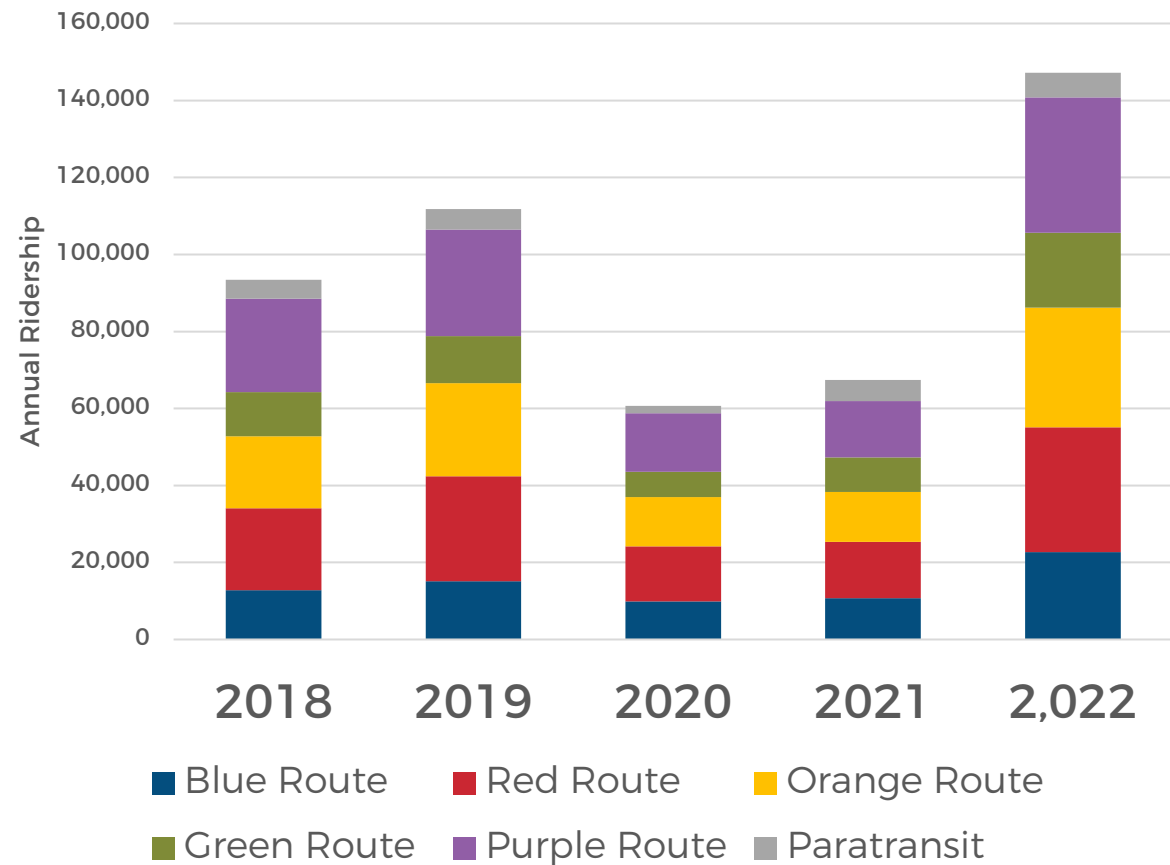
Link Transit

Link Transit service began in 2016. By 2019, system ridership had grown to nearly 112,000 annual passenger trips. Service was scaled back during the COVID-19 pandemic and fully restored in June 2021. FY 2022 system ridership was over 147,000 annual passenger trips, **32% above 2019 (pre-COVID) levels.**

The Purple, Red and Orange routes account for 70% of Link Transit's fixed route ridership. Paratransit trips are approximately 4% of total ridership.

Modifications were made this year to the Blue Route alignment and stops, and evening service was extended to 9:30 pm.

Link Transit Annual Ridership by Route



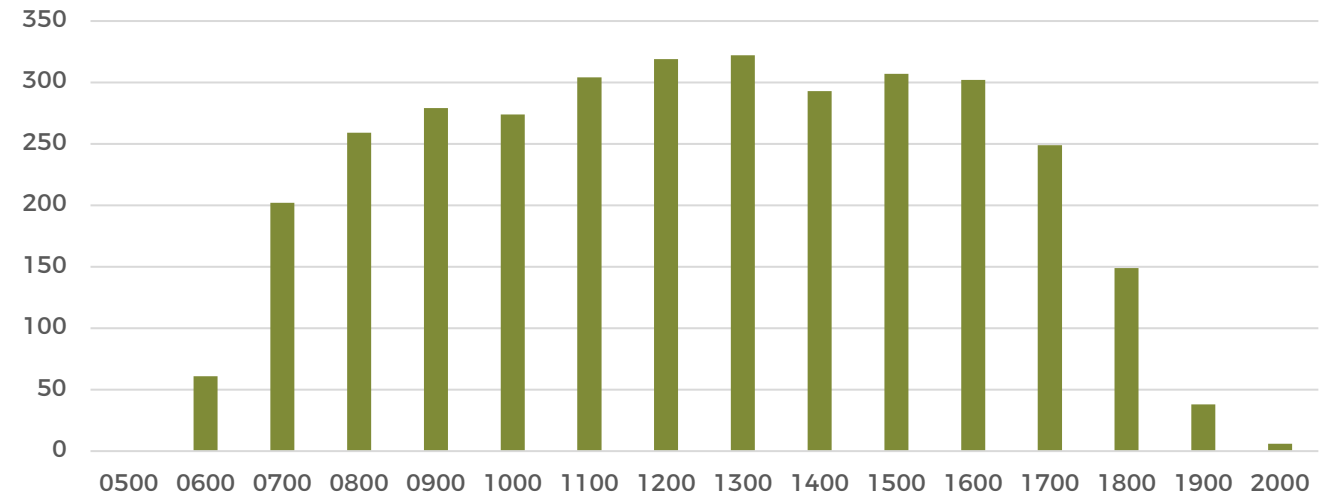
Link Transit

The adjacent graph presents Link Transit fixed route ridership by time-of-day for a week in September 2022 (i.e., before evening service was extended to 9:30 pm). This graph reflects total ridership for the week (i.e., six days of ridership).

Fixed route ridership is fairly consistent from 8 am to 6 pm, peaking around noon to 2 pm.

Paratransit ridership for this single week was 148 passenger trips, averaging about 29 to 30 trips per weekday.

Link Transit Fixed Route Hourly Ridership:
Week of September 12 - 17, 2022



Link Blue (1)

FIXED ROUTE

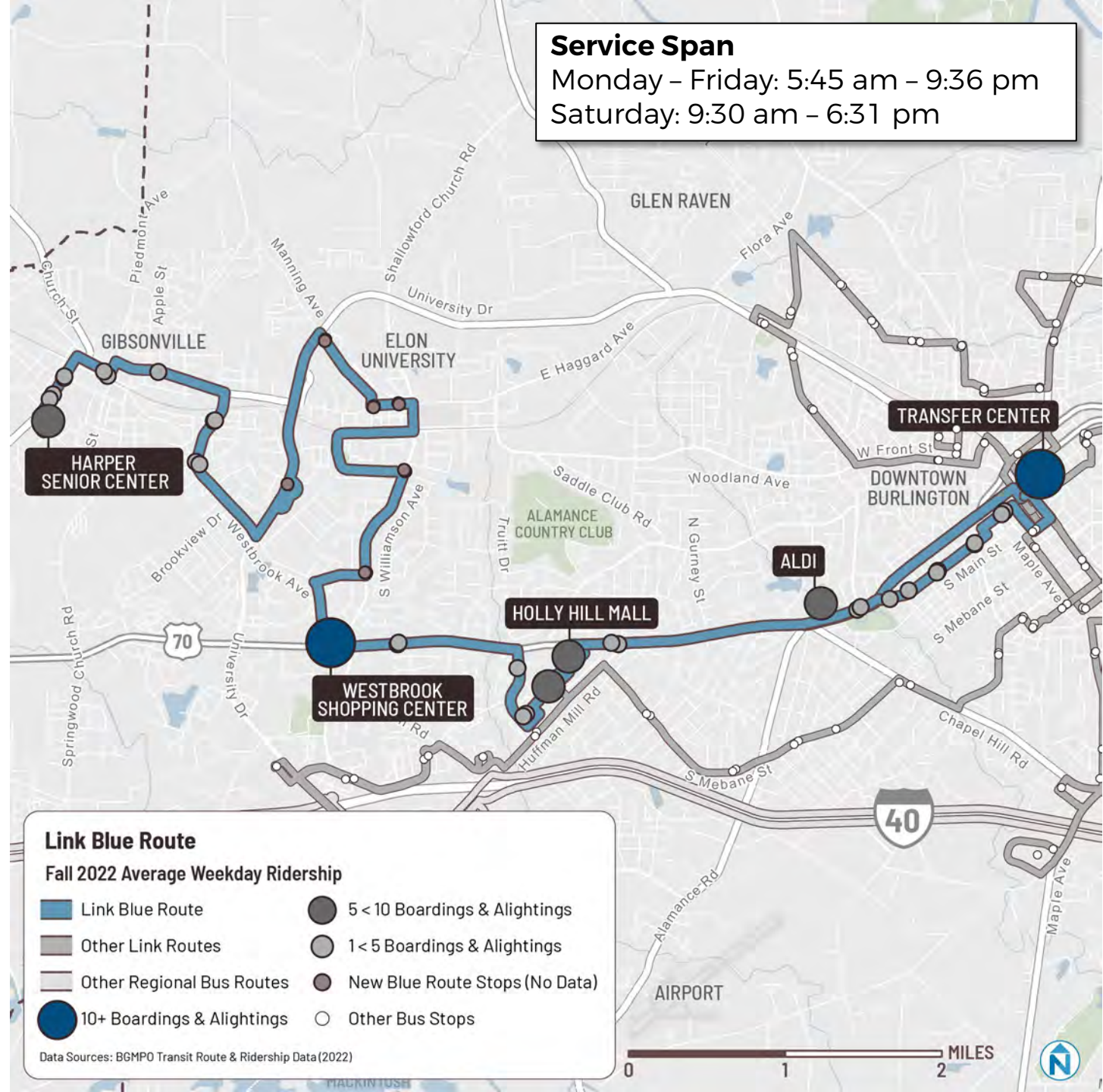
Service Span
 Monday – Friday: 5:45 am – 9:36 pm
 Saturday: 9:30 am – 6:31 pm

	2022 Avg. Daily Ridership	Revenue Hours	Riders per Rev. Hour
Weekday	80	13.5	5.9
Saturday	46	9.0	5.1
Sunday	No Sunday Service		



Major Ridership Hotspots (10+ boardings & alightings)

- Worth Street Transfer Hub - 62
- Westbrook Shopping Center - 15



Link Red (2)

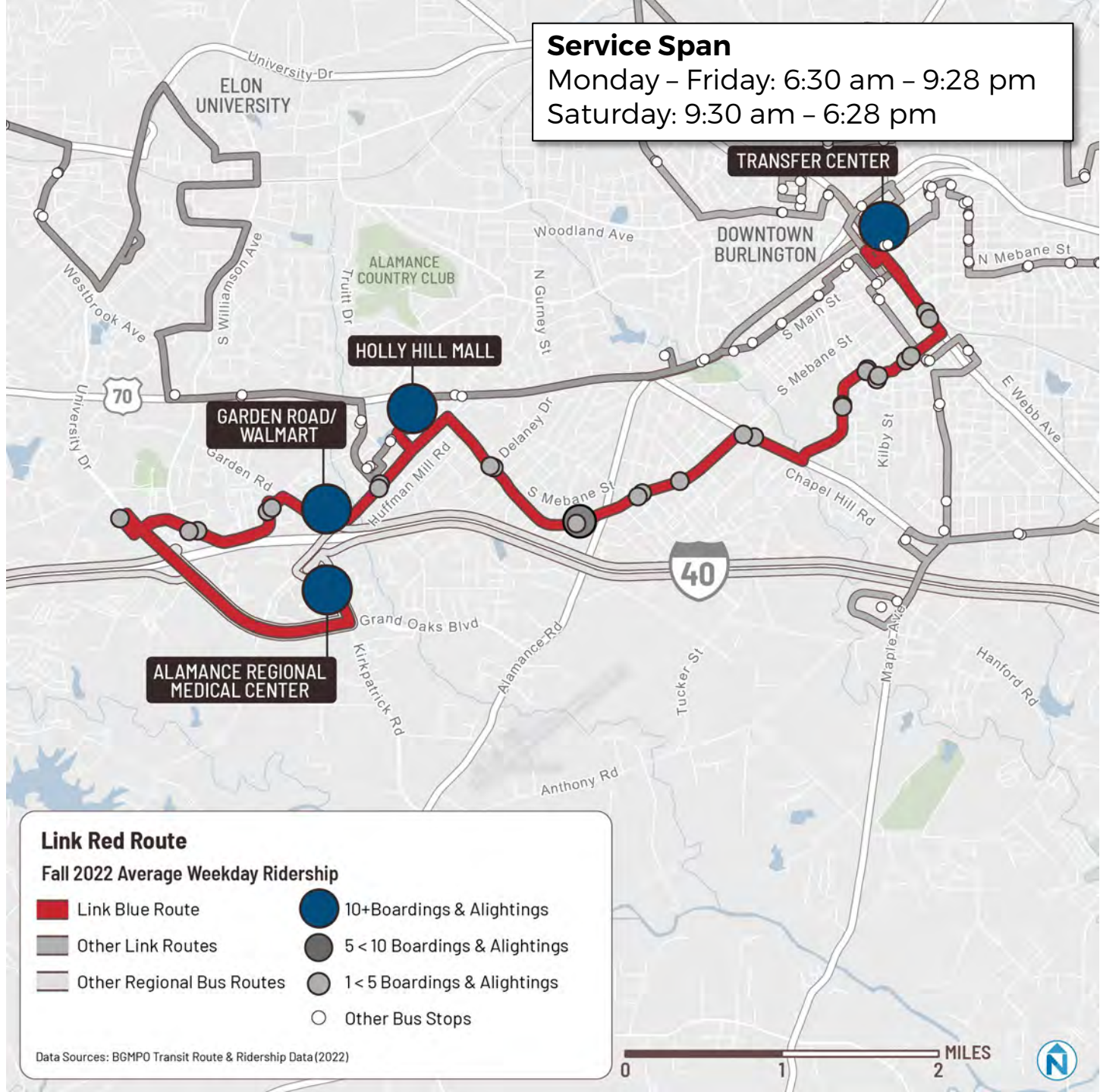
FIXED ROUTE

	2022 Avg. Daily Ridership	Revenue Hours	Riders per Rev. Hour
Weekday	120	13.5	8.9
Saturday	56	9.0	6.2
Sunday	No Sunday Service		



Major Ridership Hotspots (10+ boardings & alightings)

- Worth Street Transfer Hub - 68
- Alamance Regional Medical Center - 35
- Garden Road / Walmart - 34
- Holly Hill Mall - 21



Link Orange (3)

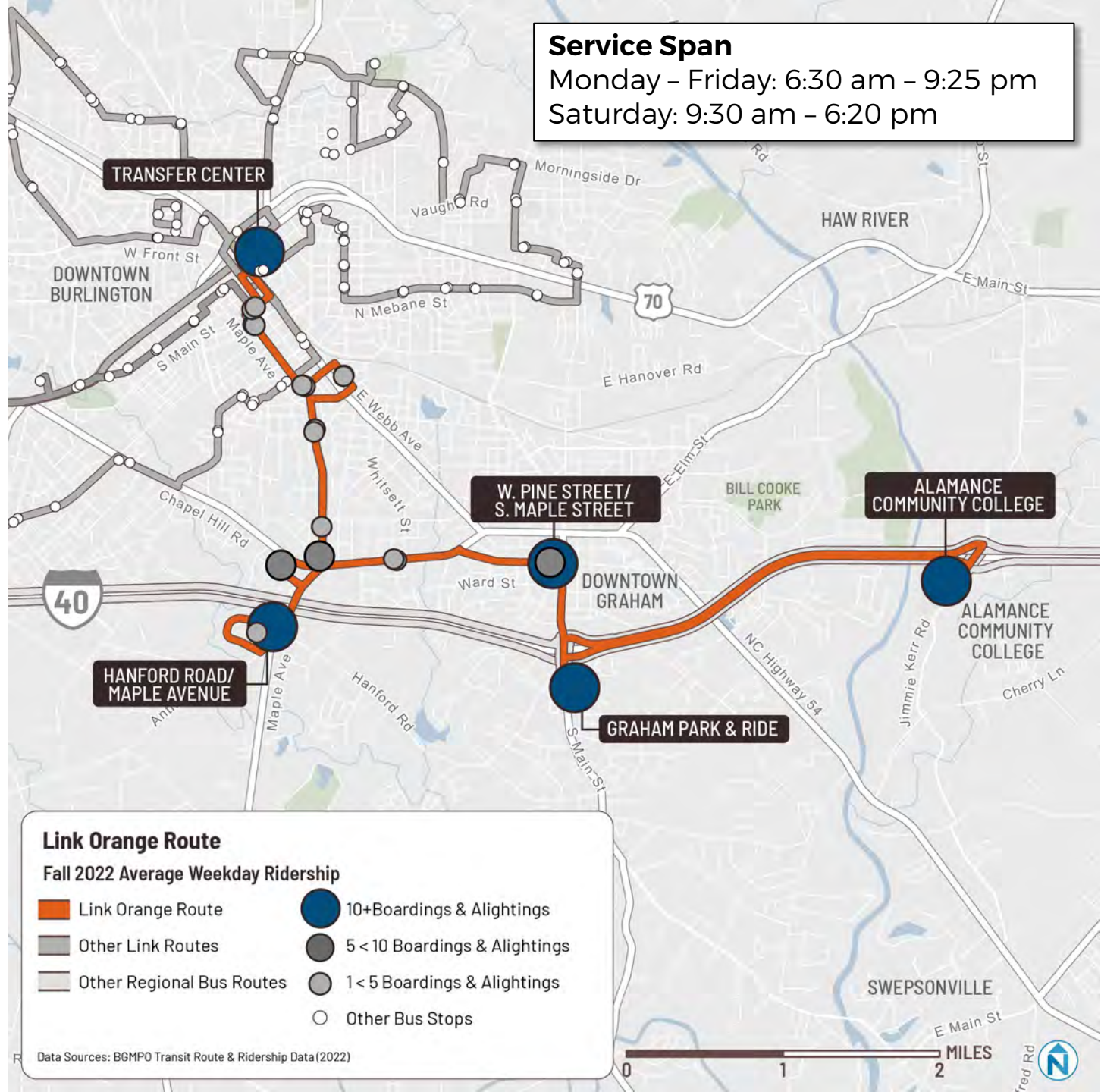
FIXED ROUTE

	2022 Avg. Daily Ridership	Revenue Hours	Riders per Rev. Hour
Weekday	100	13.5	7.4
Saturday	38	9.0	4.3
Sunday	No Sunday Service		



Major Ridership Hotspots (10+ boardings & alightings)

- Worth Street Transfer Hub - 80
- Alamance Community College - 31
- Graham Park & Ride Stop - 18
- Hanford Road/Maple Avenue - 16
- W. Pine Street/S. Maple Street - 13



Link Green (4)

FIXED ROUTE

	2022 Avg. Daily Ridership	Revenue Hours	Riders per Rev. Hour
Weekday	73	13.5	5.4
Saturday	22	9.0	2.4
Sunday	No Sunday Service		



Major Ridership Hotspots (10+ boardings & alightings)

- Worth Street Transfer Hub - 50
- Hatch Street/Logan Street - 26
- North Park Library Green - 23



Link Purple (5)

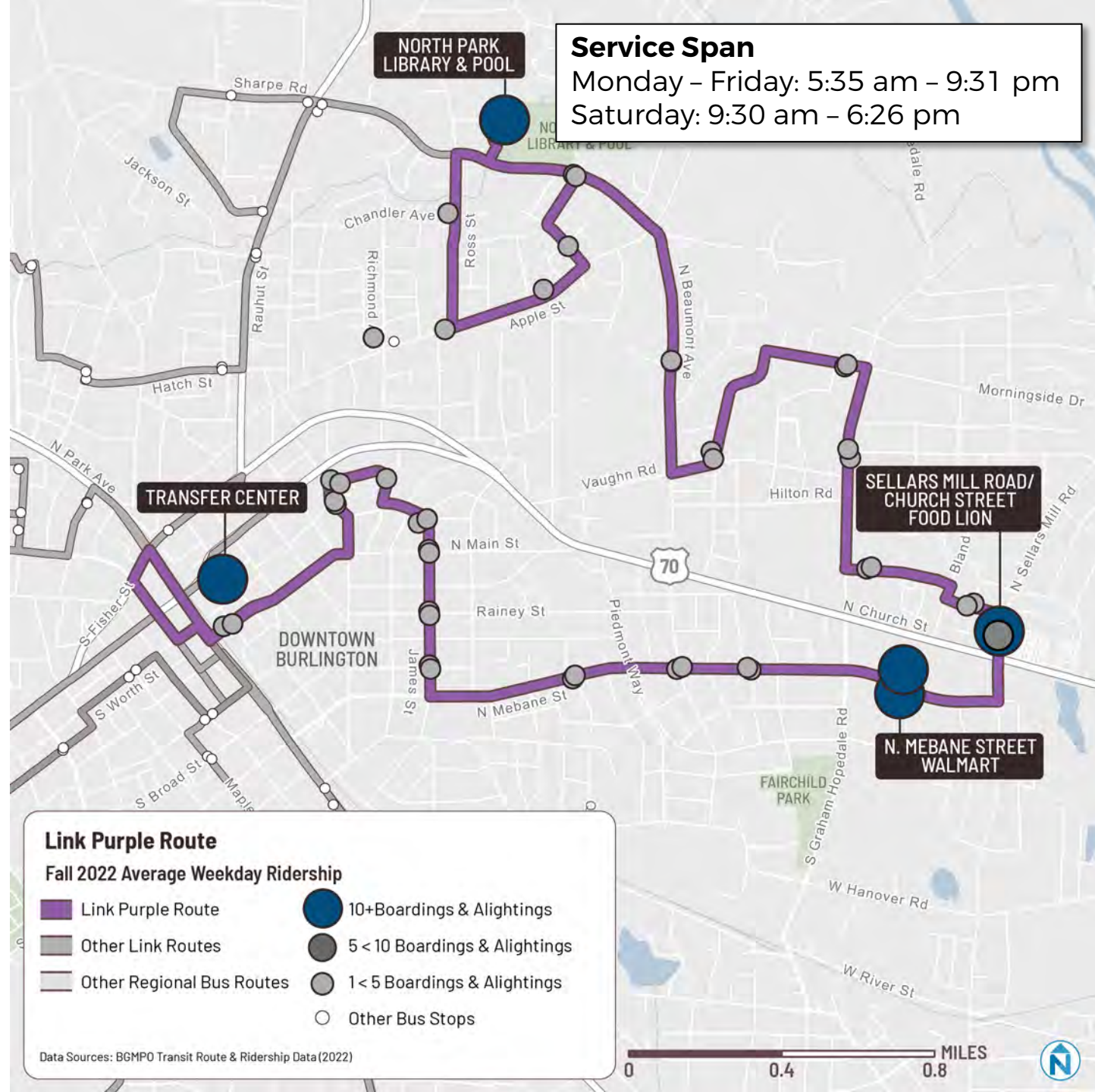
FIXED ROUTE

	2022 Avg. Daily Ridership	Revenue Hours	Riders per Rev. Hour
Weekday	116	13.5	8.6
Saturday	61	9.0	6.8
Sunday	No Sunday Service		



Major Ridership Hotspots (10+ boardings & alightings)

- Worth Street Transfer Hub - 96
- N. Mebane Street Walmart - 41
- Sellars Mills Church Street (Food Lion) - 24
- North Park Library Green - 21



PART Route 4

FIXED ROUTE

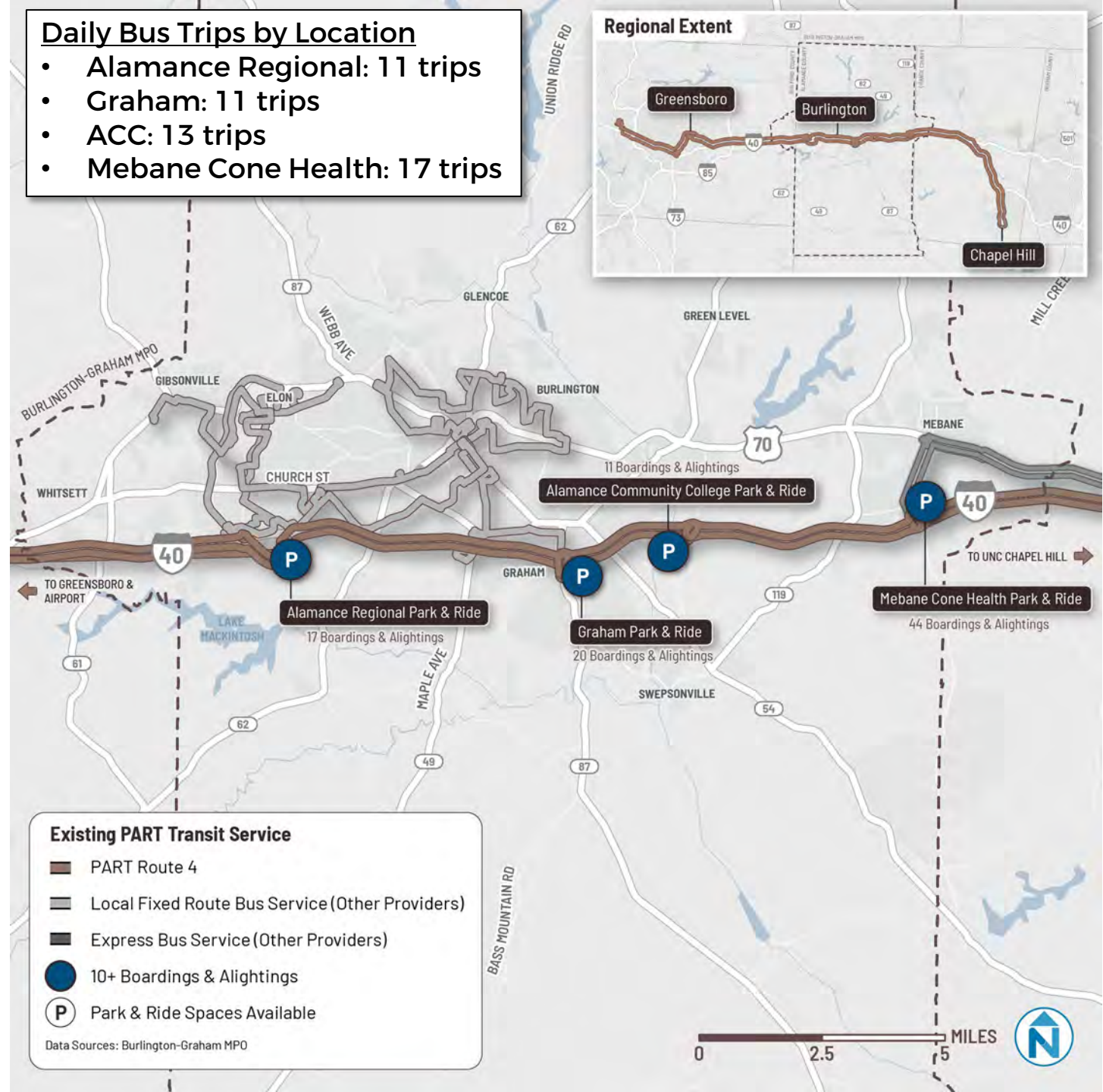
	2019 Daily Ridership	2022 Daily Ridership	Percent Change
Route Total	238	115	-54%
Alamance County	101	46	-52%

- Route 4 service between Greensboro and Chapel Hill is generally peak period-focused, with four stops within the study area
- Study area stops account for approximately 40% of total route ridership
- The highest ridership activity within the study area is at Mebane Cone Health Park & Ride (about half of total study area route ridership)

Daily Bus Trips by Location

- Alamance Regional: 11 trips
- Graham: 11 trips
- ACC: 13 trips
- Mebane Cone Health: 17 trips

Regional Extent



Existing PART Transit Service

- PART Route 4
- Local Fixed Route Bus Service (Other Providers)
- Express Bus Service (Other Providers)
- 10+ Boardings & Alightings
- Ⓟ Park & Ride Spaces Available

Data Sources: Burlington-Graham MPO

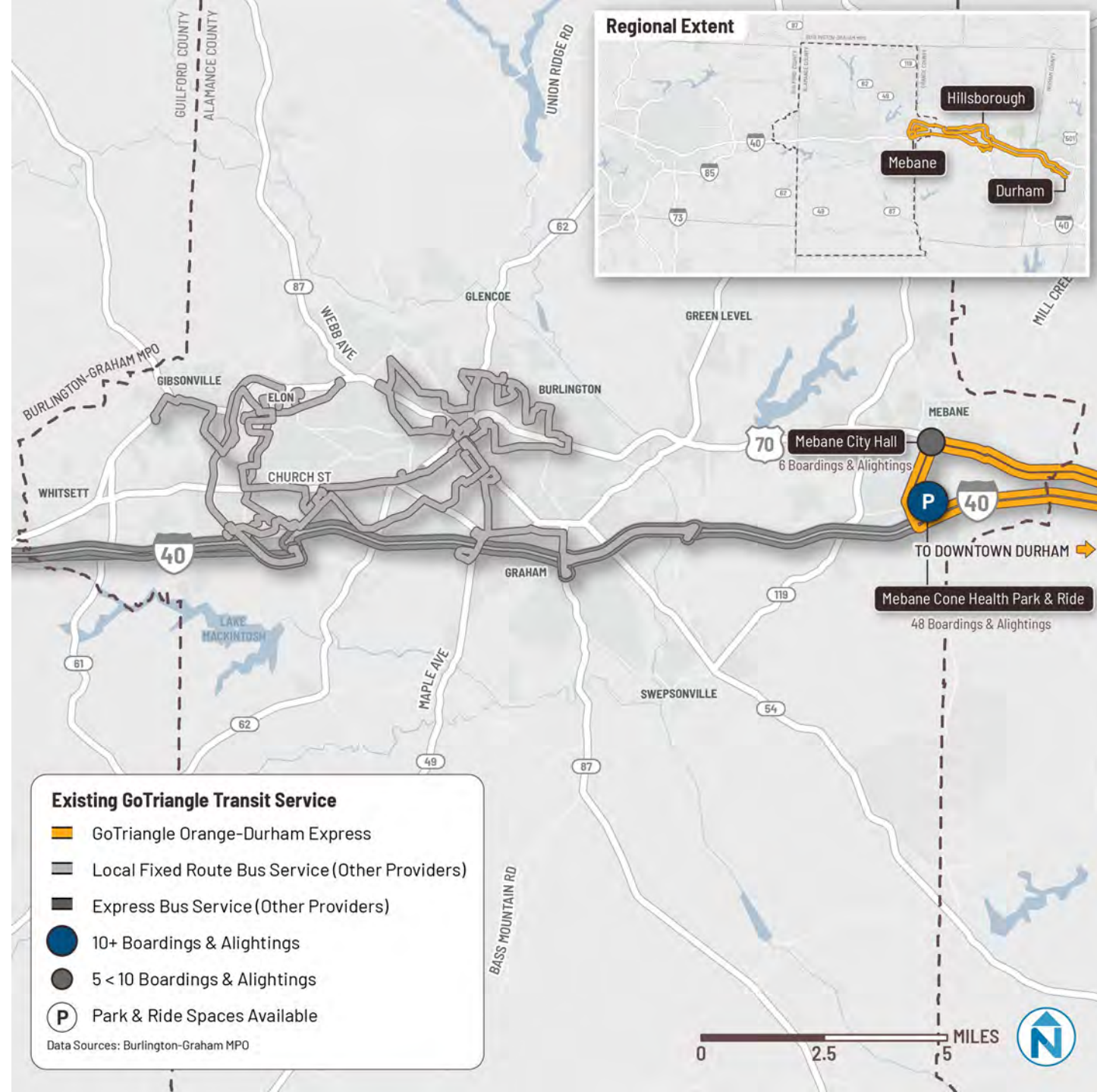


GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX)

FIXED ROUTE

	2019 Daily Ridership	2022 Daily Ridership	Percent Change
Route Total	192	63	-67%
Alamance County	81	26	-67%

- ODX service is peak period-focused connecting Mebane and Hillsborough with Durham
- The two stops in Mebane are at the Mebane City Hall and the Mebane Cone Health park-and-ride
- Mebane stops account for just over 40% of total route ridership, with higher ridership activity at the Mebane Cone Health park-and-ride

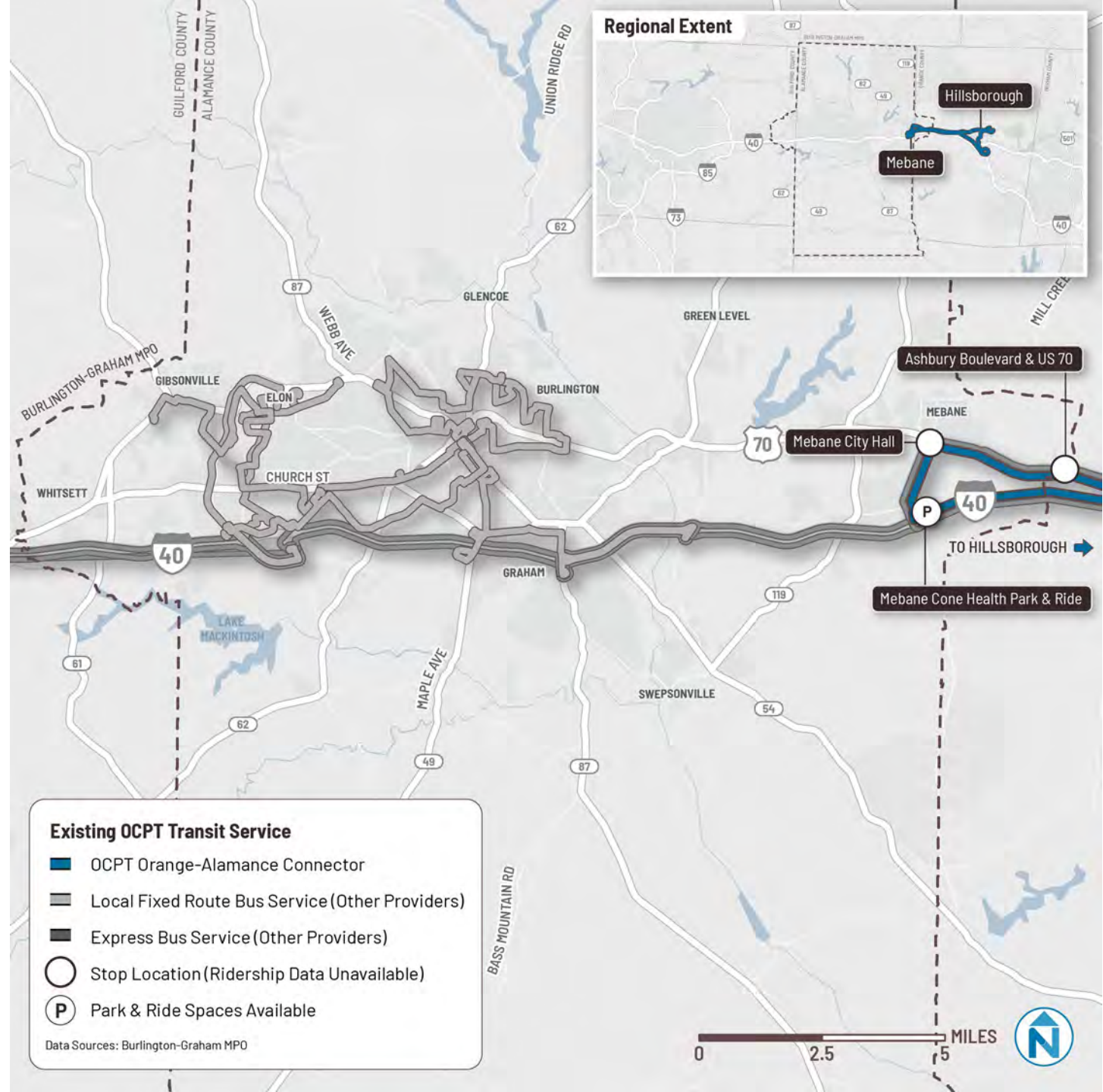


Orange-Alamance Connector (OCPT)

FIXED ROUTE

	2019 Daily Ridership	2022 Daily Ridership	Percent Change
Route Total	376	229	-39%
Alamance County	Unknown	Unknown	--

- The Orange-Alamance Connector provides hourly midday service between Mebane and Hillsborough. The route alignment in Mebane is the same as Go Triangle's Route ODX
- Three stops are located in Mebane:
 - Ashbury Blvd./US 70
 - Mebane City Hall
 - Mebane Cone Health Park-and-Ride
- Stop level ridership is not available for this route



ACTA On Demand

ON DEMAND SERVICE

ACTA provides on-demand transportation throughout Alamance County for all county residents. Service operates Monday to Friday between 5 am and 5:30 pm. Reservations must be made by phone no later than 11 am the working day before the requested trip.

ACTA strives to provide a ride time of no more than 60 minutes. Passengers must allow for potential variations in pick-up and drop-off times of up to 30 minutes. This allowance is needed to accommodate the scheduling of multiple passenger trips.

Within the Link Transit service area, ACTA can pick-up or drop-off passengers only if one end of the trip is outside of the Link Transit service area.



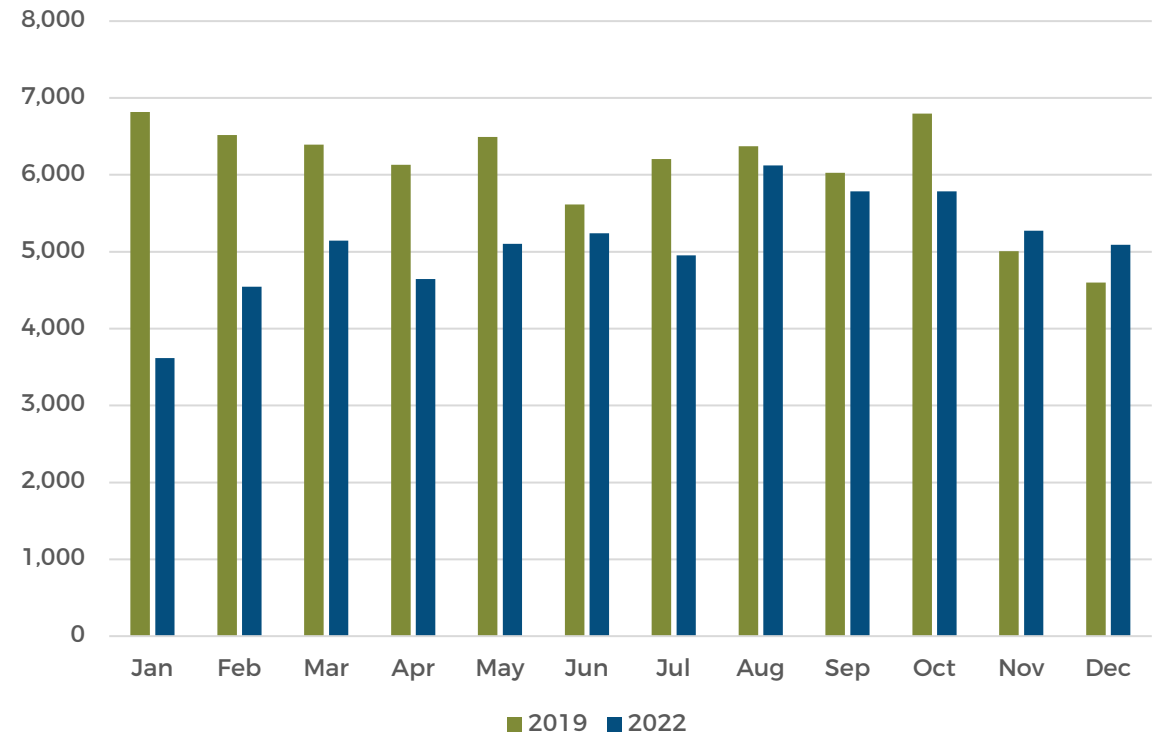
ACTA On Demand

ON DEMAND SERVICE

ACTA transported nearly 73,000 passenger trips in 2019 and 61,300 trips in 2022. As shown in the adjacent graph, 2022 monthly ridership was generally lower than 2019 ridership at the beginning of the year but is more comparable towards the end of the year, indicating that **ridership has returned to pre-COVID levels.**

In the Fall of 2022, ACTA was carrying approximately 300 passenger trips each weekday, an average of approximately 1.5 passenger trips per revenue-hour. Saturday ridership is much lower and is typically around 15 passenger trips each weekday.

ACTA Monthly Ridership



ACTA On Demand

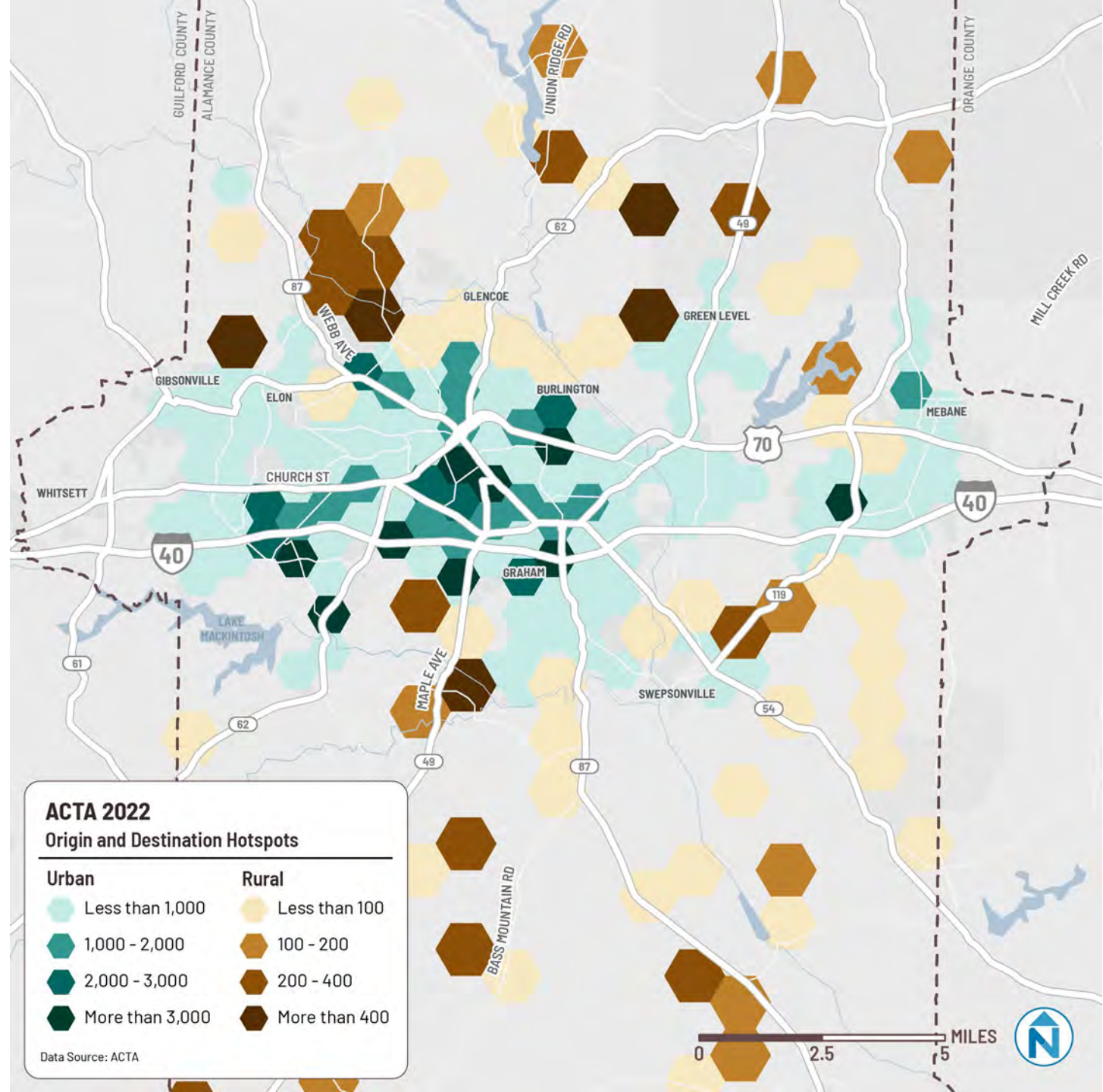
ON DEMAND SERVICE

2022 Trip Origins and Destinations

The adjacent map used 2022 ACTA ridership data to illustrate “hot spot” locations of significant pick-up/drop-off activity. Most ACTA trip activity occurs in the urbanized area (i.e., Burlington, Graham, Elon, Gibsonville and Mebane).

Over 60 percent of ACTA trips have both an origin and a destination within the urbanized area. Another 36 percent have one end of the trip (either origin or destination) in the urbanized area with the other end in a rural area.

Origin	Destination	Trips	% of Trips
Urban	Urban	33,692	61%
Urban	Rural	9,350	17%
Rural	Urban	10,788	19%
Rural	Rural	1,586	3%

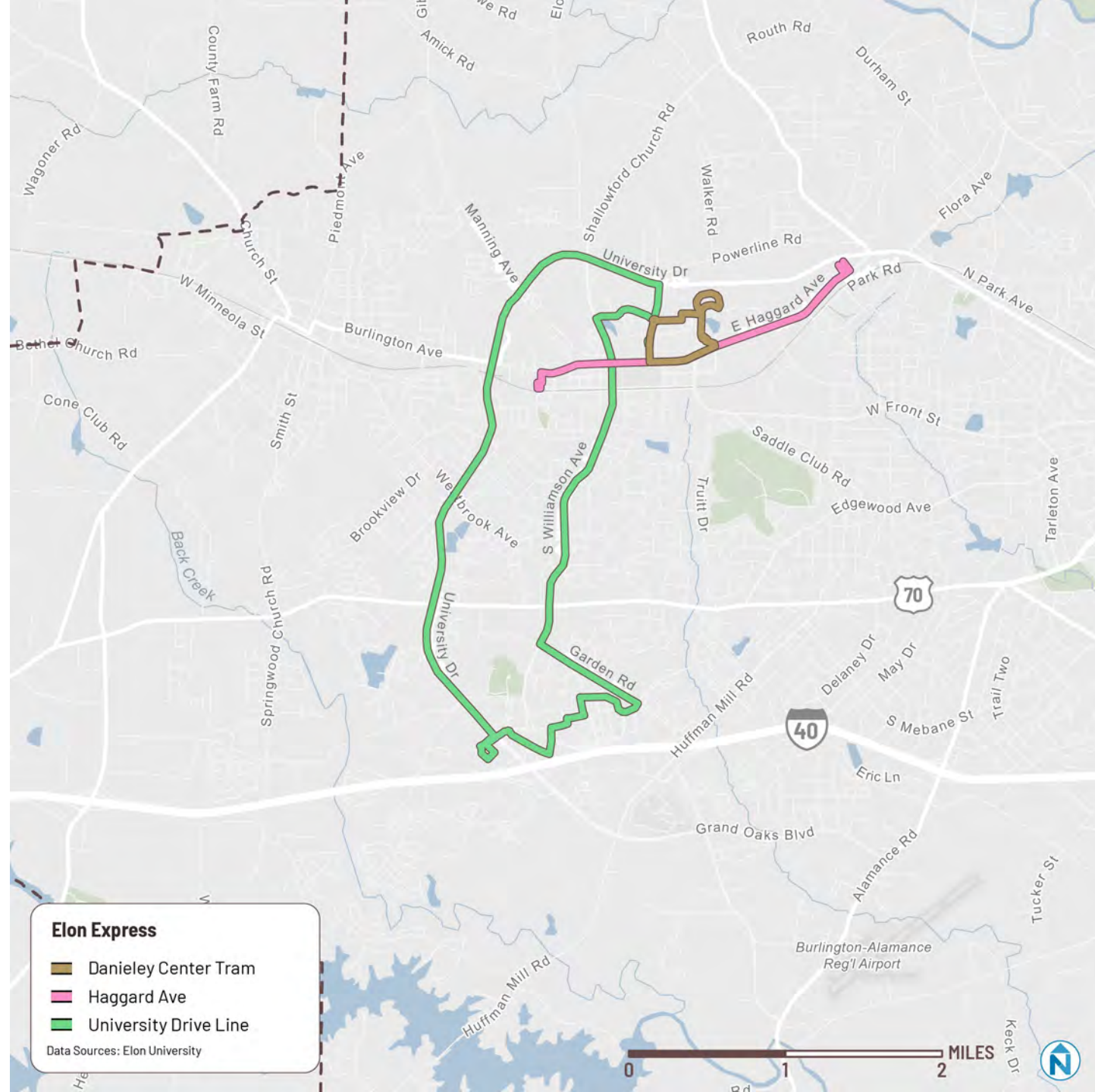


Elon Express

FIXED ROUTE

Elon Express provides free transportation to Elon University students, faculty, staff and is open to the public.

- The Danielely Center Tram operates every 10 minutes from 7 am to 2 am, seven days a week.
- The Haggard Avenue route operates every 15 minutes from 7 am to 6 pm and every 30 minutes from 6 pm to 10 pm, Mondays through Friday.
- The University Drive Line operates every 35 minutes Wednesday through Sunday and provides service to commercial areas that are off-campus. Service starts at 4 pm on Wednesdays through Fridays and at noon on weekends. Service ends at 10 pm on Wed., Thur., and Sunday and at midnight on Friday and Saturday.

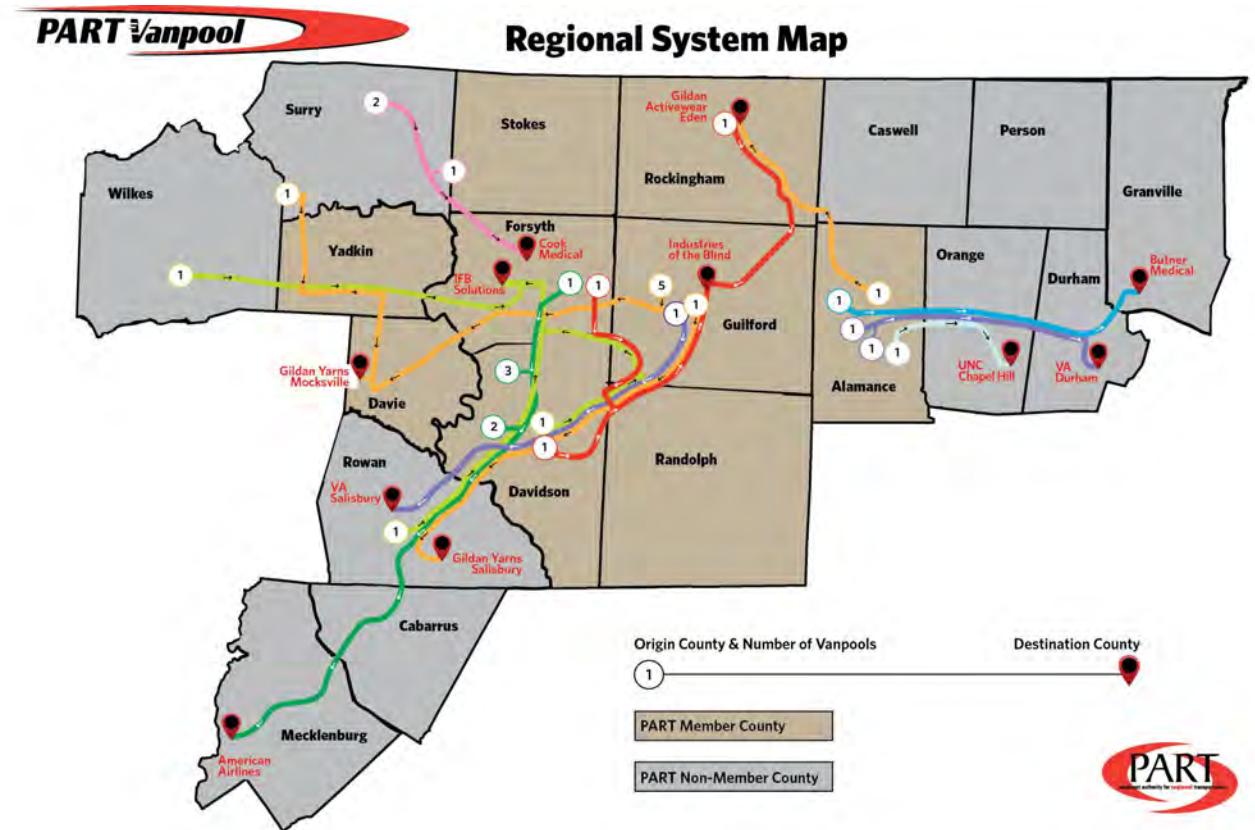


Vanpools

RIDESHARE PROGRAM

PART also provides regional vanpool service in the BGMPO service area. This program provides eligible groups of three or more commuters with a 7 or 15 passenger van to use for work commutes. Monthly leases include the vehicle, insurance, maintenance, gas and an Emergency Ride Home. Monthly fares are based on the average daily round trip miles with monthly costs divided among the riders.

PART's website identifies three active vanpools in the study area. One van operates between Graham and Chapel Hill. The second operates between Graham and Durham. The third vanpool operates between Burlington and Durham.



Share the Ride NC

RIDESHARE PROGRAM

Share the Ride is a statewide program that helps commuters find alternative transportation options. Their website includes a carpool match database, where commuters can find commuters with similar commuting patterns and form carpools. Commuters can search their database by employer or university. The website also includes an option to find one-time trip matching, such as to concerts and sporting events.



Welcome to Share the Ride NC!

This website will help you quickly and securely find commute partners anywhere in North Carolina! Using your home and work or school addresses, you will be matched to nearby commuters with similar schedules. Your home address will never appear on match lists.

When you receive your list of matches, you may choose who to contact. There are no obligations or requirements.

Get Started!

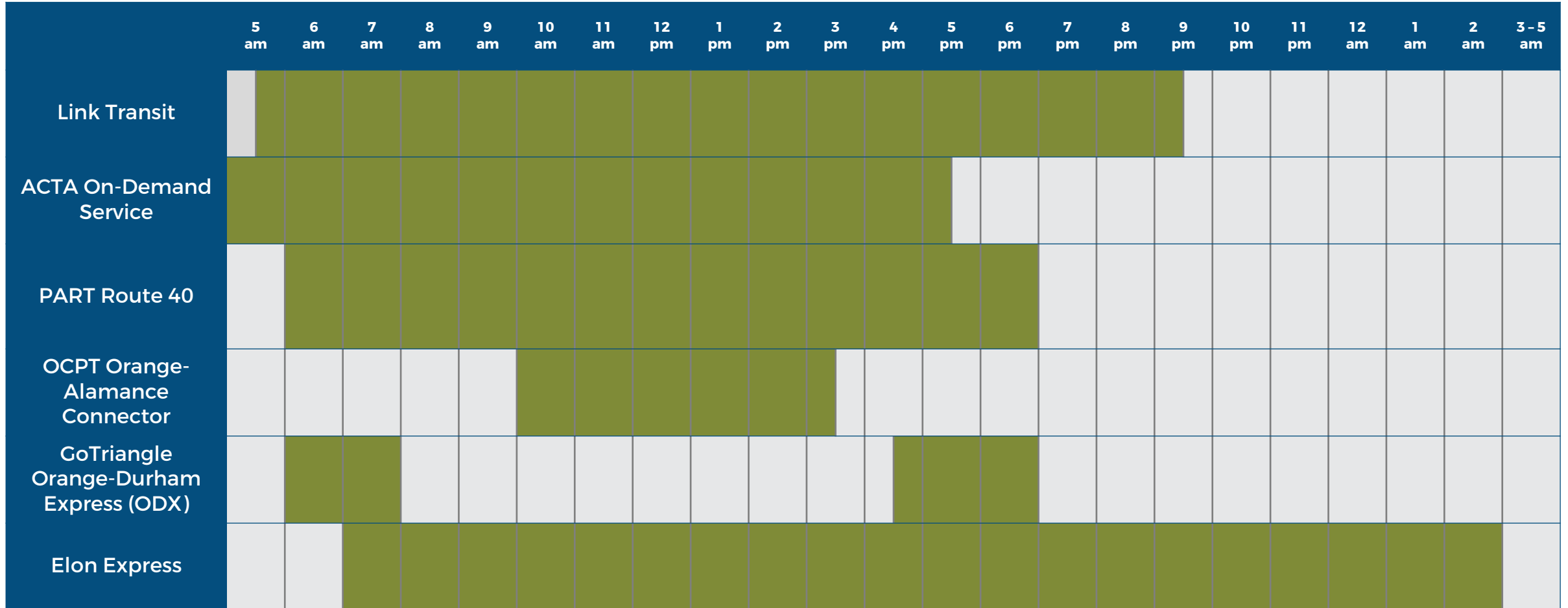


Current Fare Structure by Provider

Provider	One-Way Trip Fee
Link Transit	Free (fares to be reinstated Fall of 2023)
Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA)	\$5 for on-demand rides
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)	\$2.50 <i>Free for UNC employees and students with UNC Xpass</i>
Orange County Public Transportation (OCPT)	\$2 <i>Free for riders over age 60 or under age 6 and people with disabilities \$1 for children ages 6 - 17</i>
GoTriangle	Free through June 30th, 2024, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional: \$2.25 Express: \$3.00 <i>Free for riders over age 65 or under age 18 Discounted fees for people with Medicare or disabilities (Regional: \$1.00, Express: \$1.25) Various multi-day passes also available</i>
Elon Express	Free & open to the public

Current Time Coverage by Provider - Weekdays

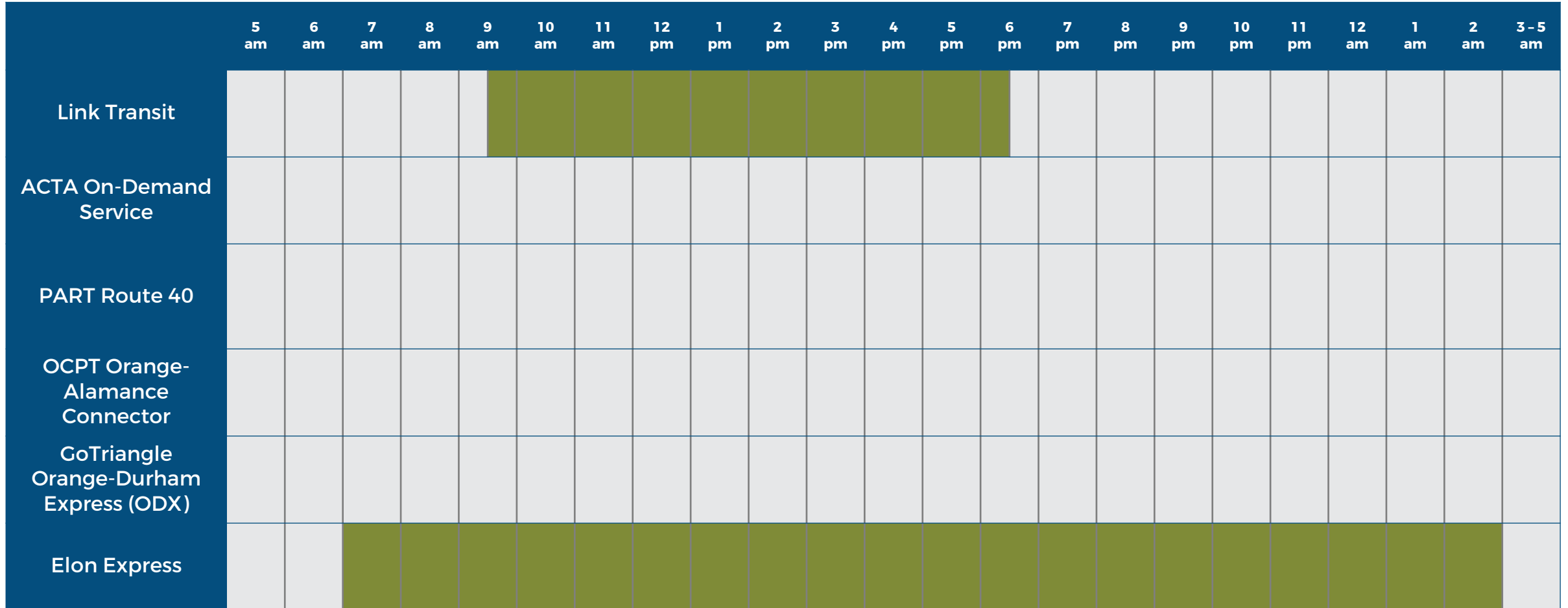
Service Operating*
 No Service Operating



Service spans shown reflect approximate service availability within BGMPO boundaries. Not all Elon Express routes operates the full service span shown in this table.

Current Time Coverage by Provider - Saturday

Service Operating*
 No Service Operating



Service spans shown reflect approximate service availability within BGMPO boundaries. Not all Elon Express routes operates the full service span shown in this table.

Current Time Coverage by Provider - Sunday

Service Operating*
 No Service Operating

	5 am	6 am	7 am	8 am	9 am	10 am	11 am	12 pm	1 pm	2 pm	3 pm	4 pm	5 pm	6 pm	7 pm	8 pm	9 pm	10 pm	11 pm	12 am	1 am	2 am	3-5 am
Link Transit	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service
ACTA On-Demand Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service
PART Route 40	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service
OCPT Orange-Alamance Connector	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service
GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX)	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service	No Service
Elon Express	No Service	No Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	Service	No Service

Service spans shown reflect approximate service availability within BGMPO boundaries. Not all Elon Express routes operates the full service span shown in this table.

EXISTING CONDITIONS
ASSESSMENT

Service Equity

Service Equity

Equity in the provision of transit services is a core consideration of the BGMPO. Populations of an equity focus include low-income households, zero-vehicle households, persons of color, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). These groups tend to use transit at higher rates than the public and have high overlap in the central BGMPO area.

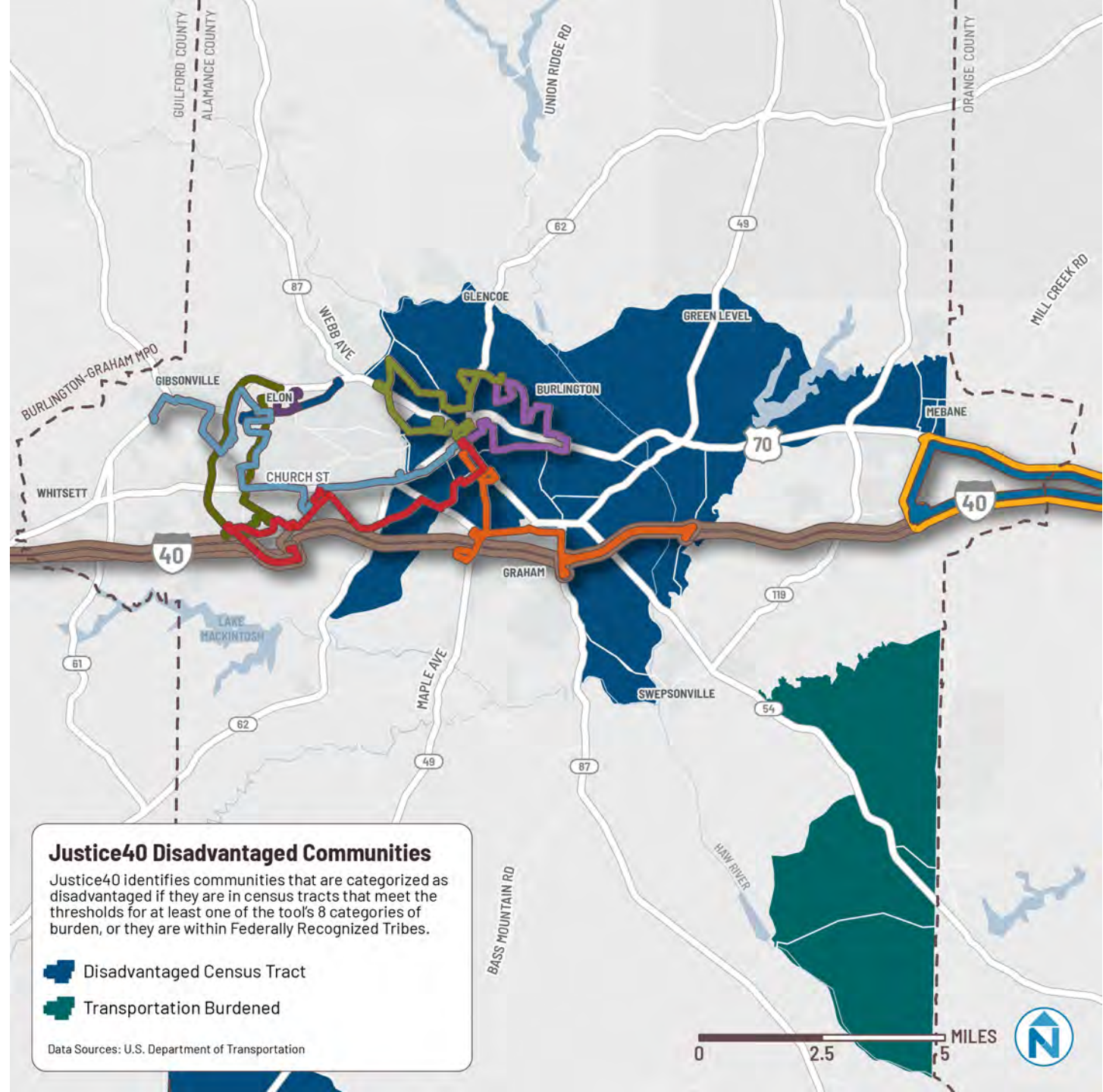
- Nearly one-third of BGMPO households are in poverty. These households, comprising 44% to over 65% of all households within some block groups, generally live in central Burlington and near Graham where population densities are highest as well as near Elon University and in less urbanized areas north of Burlington.
- About 1 in 10 BGMPO households do not have a car. Households without access to a car rely more on transit. These households have high overlap with low-income residents and tend to live centrally in Burlington.
- Residents of color are also centrally located in Burlington, with higher concentrations of Black and Hispanic residents to the north and east of Downtown Burlington as well as around Graham.
- Persons with LEP have overlap with Burlington's Hispanic population, comprising up to 1 in 4 people in some block groups in central and east Burlington.

Data Source: U.S. Census ACS 2021 5-year estimates

Justice40

The federal government has a recent initiative that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. The goal of this Justice40 Initiative is to **transform federal programs across the government to ensure that disadvantaged communities receive the benefits of new and existing federal investments.**

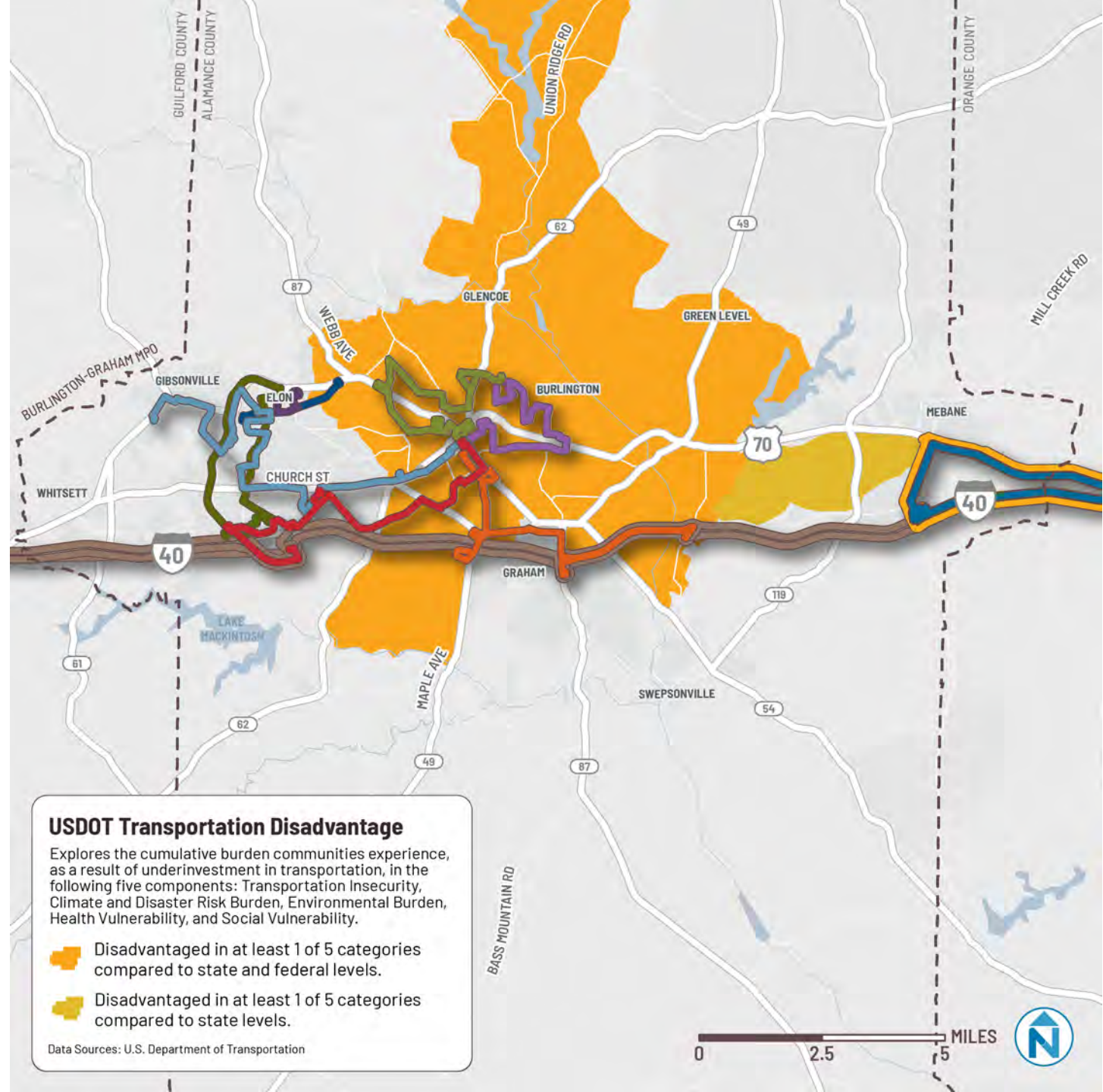
Several regions in the BGMPO study area are considered disadvantaged communities under Justice40 from Burlington to Mebane along the I-70 corridor, as well as areas in the southeast. Among the disadvantaged communities, only the census tracts along Hwy 54 were considered transportation burdened. Existing transit routes are overlaid on this map.



USDOT Transportation Disadvantaged Tracts

In addition to Justice40, USDOT has analyzed communities burdened by underinvestment in transportation through the dimensions of Transportation Insecurity, Climate and Disaster Risk Burden, Environmental Burden, Health Vulnerability, and Social Vulnerability. These metrics are then compared to other census tracts at both a federal and state level.

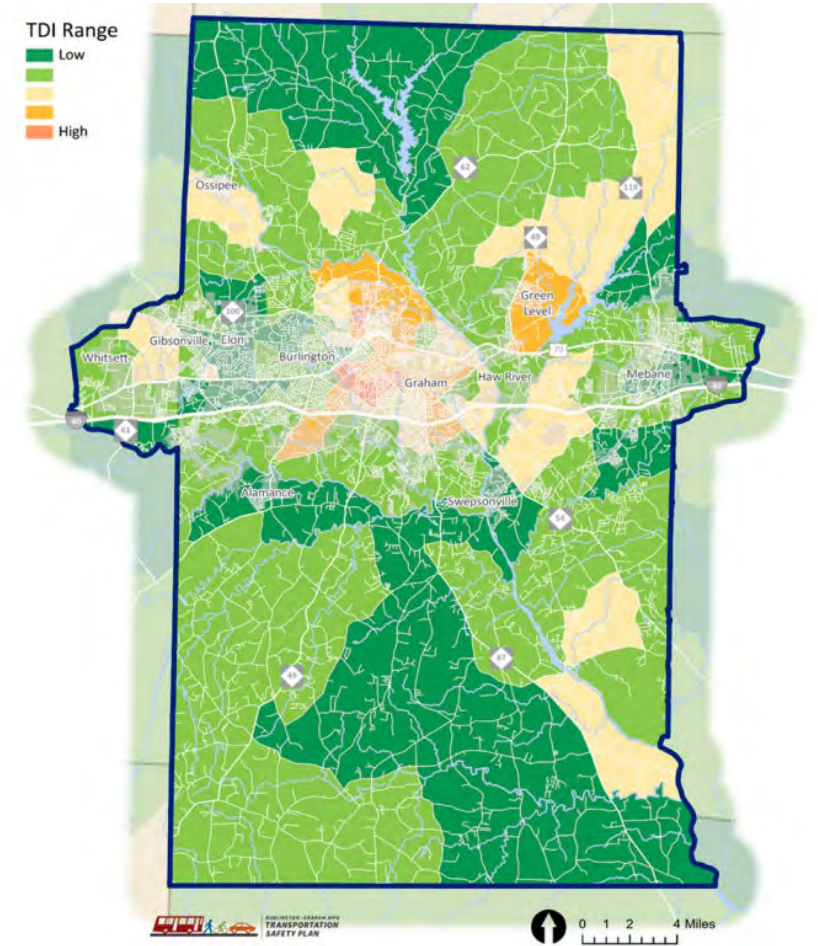
Areas considered disadvantaged in the BGMPO boundaries surround Burlington and reach north and east. Most of the disadvantaged areas are facing burdens related to Health Vulnerability, Social Vulnerability, and Transportation Insecurity, with people living in the disadvantaged areas around Webb Ave also facing disadvantage related to environmental, climate, and disaster burdens.



North Carolina DOT Transportation Disadvantaged Index

The recently-completed BGMPO Transportation Safety Plan includes findings from an equity analysis following methodology from the NCDOT. A Transportation Disadvantaged Index (TDI) is calculated for each census block by considering poverty and zero-vehicle households, and BIPOC, disability, senior and under 18 populations.

The adjacent map from the Transportation Safety Plan illustrates **several block groups with a high TDI factor on the east side of Burlington, in Graham and in Green Level**. Many of these block groups in Burlington have fixed route transit service with Link Transit, but only select block groups in Graham and no block groups in Green Level have fixed route transit service.



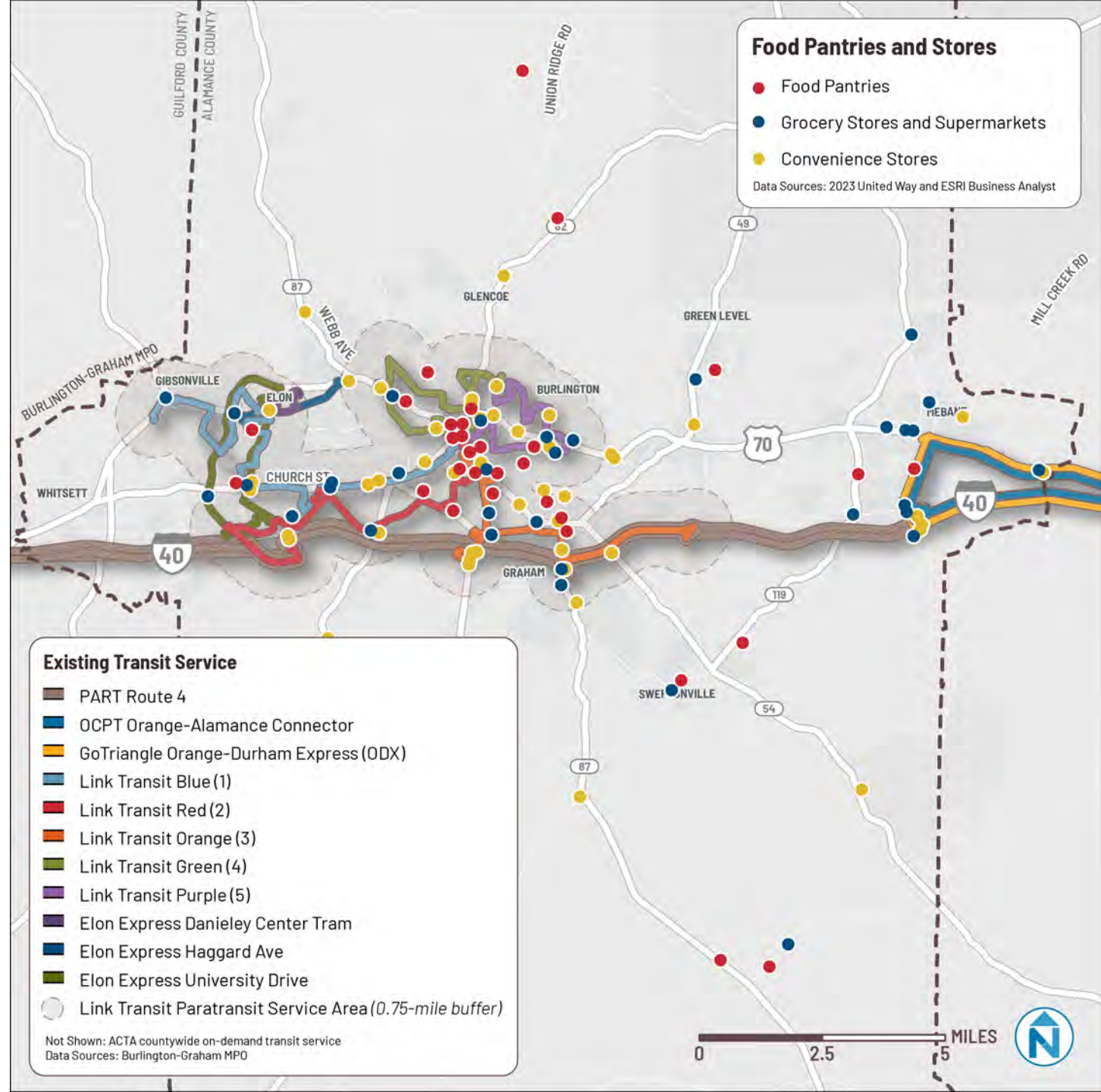
Source: NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit

From the BGMPO Transportation Safety Plan

Food Access

While locations providing food access cover most of the Burlington, Graham, and Mebane urbanized areas, many options for residents are convenience stores, which typically lack a large selection and variety of healthy foods. Food pantries provide relief to low-income and underserved communities and are primarily located in central areas with some rural locations.

Of all locations that offer food, 28% are food pantries, while 58% are convenience stores.



EXISTING CONDITIONS
ASSESSMENT

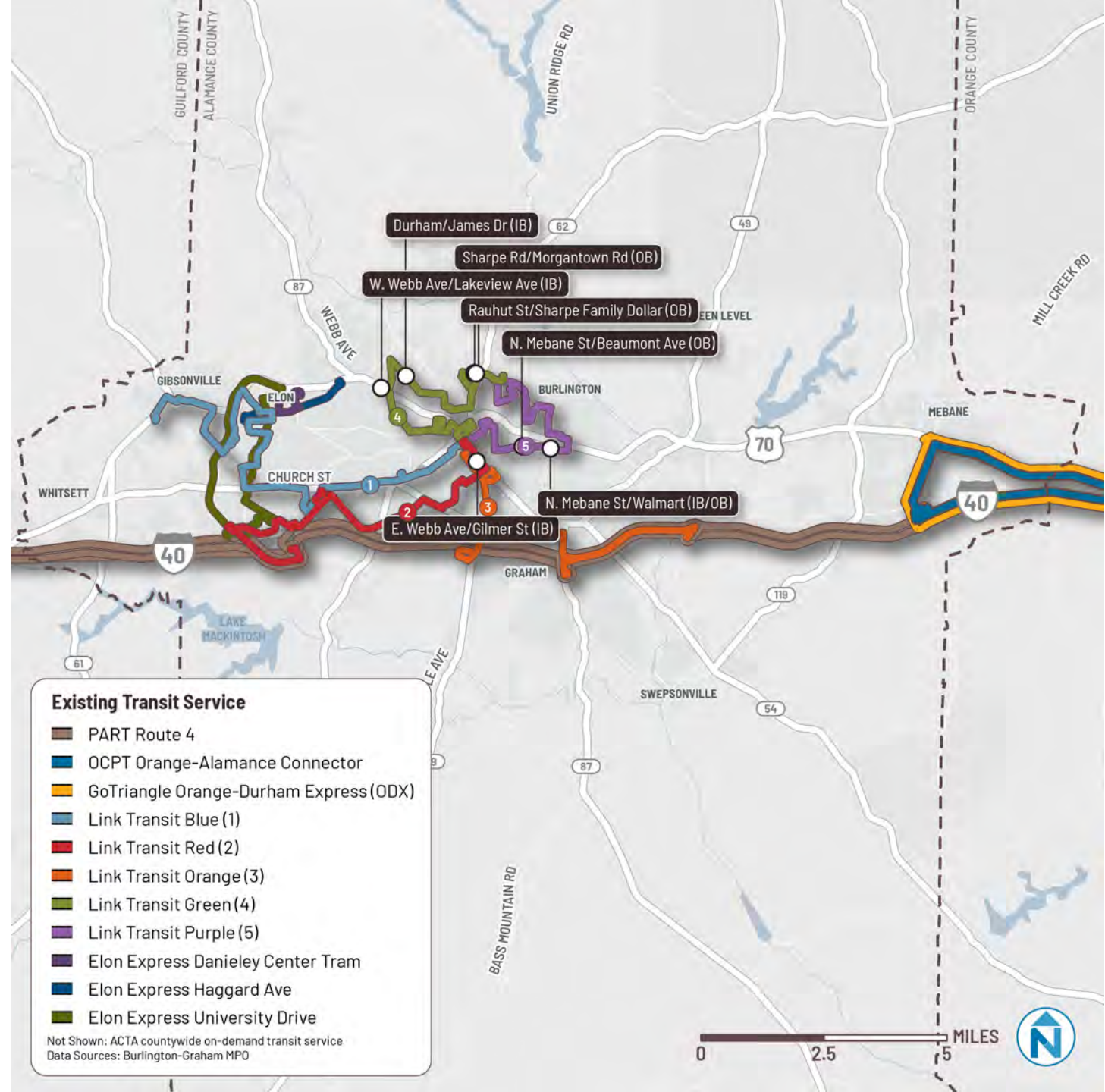
Safety

Safety

The BGMPO's Transportation Safety Plan includes an appendix identifying **existing bus stops with a high priority for safety improvements**. Criteria used to identify those bus stops were:

- Is the bus stop located along the project's defined High Injury Network?
- What is the crash history at that location?
- Do causes of crashes fall within any of the study's defined Emphasis Areas (e.g., alcohol, speed-related)?
- Is the bus stop within a defined equity area?
- What is the stop ridership?

Eight stop locations were identified as being a priority for safety improvements, as shown on the adjacent map. Potential countermeasure treatments identified in the report include sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks, HAWK signals and lighting.



EXISTING CONDITIONS
ASSESSMENT

Governance and Funding

Current Transit Funding Sources

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, supplemented with State funds, provide operating and capital assistance for area service providers
- Local funding sources used to fund transit service within the BGMPO study area include:
 - **Passenger fares**
 - **Vehicle registration tax** (e.g., Burlington has a \$5.00 per vehicle tax in place to help support Link Transit)
 - **Rental vehicle tax:** (e.g., PART has 5% rental vehicle tax in place to help support Express service)
 - **½ cent sales tax:** (e.g., Orange County has a ½ cent sales tax in place to support OCPT and GoTriangle service)
 - **Local government general funds** (e.g., Alamance County provides some support to ACTA through general funds)
 - **Other contracted service / funding agreements:** (e.g., Alamance Community College provides funds to support transit to their campuses)



Link Transit



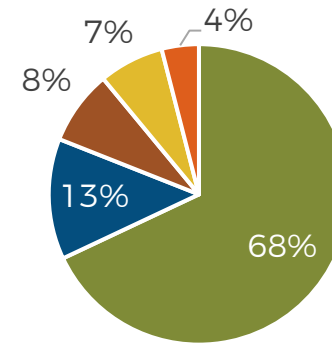
Governance

- Governed by Burlington City Council
- Advised by Public Transportation Advisory Commission with representation from:
 - Burlington
 - Gibsonville
 - Alamance County
 - Elon
- Operations administered by Burlington Department of Transportation
- Service contracted to Transdev



Budget/Funding

- FY 24 budget = \$3.4 million
 - \$2.69 million Operations
 - \$0.72 million Capital



Breakdown of FY 24 revenue sources

■ Federal ■ Burlington ■ Vehicle Regist. Tax ■ State ■ Partners

- Federal funding from FTA Section 5307 and 5339
- Local funding includes \$5.00 vehicle registration tax for vehicles registered in City of Burlington
- Additional local funding partners are Gibsonville, Alamance County, Elon & Alamance Community College

ACTA



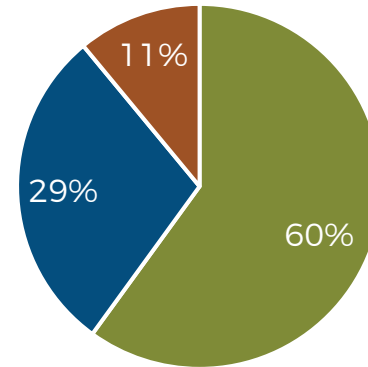
Governance

- Governed a 5-member Board of Trustees with representation from:
 - 3 members assigned by Alamance County
 - 1 member assigned by Burlington
 - 1 member assigned by Burlington-Graham MPO
- A Transportation Advisory Board meets quarterly to provide guidance
- Service is operated directly by ACTA staff



Budget/Funding

- FY 24 budgeted expenditures = \$2.5 million
 - \$1.96 million Operations
 - \$0.53 million Administrative



Breakdown of FY 24 revenue sources

■ Federal ■ Local/Other ■ State

- Federal funds include 5307, 5310, 5311, 5399
- Local funding sources include contracted services (e.g., DSS) and from Alamance County general funds
- Revenue from local contracted services eligible for use for federal match

PART



Governance

- PART is a regional government created under NCCGS 160A, Article 27
- Governed by a 22-member Board of Trustees with representation from:
 - A commissioner from 9 member counties
 - Representatives from four largest cities (Burlington, Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem)
 - Representatives of the four MPOs
 - Representatives of the two regional airports
 - Two representatives from NCDOT Board of Transportation
- Service contracted through National Express
- Also provides Regional Program Management to member agencies that includes vanpool, TDM, call center and custodian of the regional travel demand model



Budget/Funding

- FY 24 expenditures budget = \$7.38 million PART Express Operations
 - \$1.25 million – PART Route 4 operations costs
- Rental vehicle tax/vehicle registration taxes are collected for services provided in the territory PART Express operates across 9 member counties
- Alamance County vehicle registration tax generates about \$200,000
- Federal funding from FTA Section 5307

Orange County Public Transportation



Governance

- Governed by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners
- Advised by the Orange Unified Transportation Board (OUTBoard)
- Service is operated directly by Orange County



Budget/Funding

- FY 24 operating budget = \$1.3 million
- Majority of local funding through countywide ½ cent sales tax with additional funds from rental car tax and vehicle registration fee
- OCPT receives a portion of these funds, with other recipients being GoTriangle, Chapel Hill Transit and DCHC MPO
- Federal funds received by OCPT from FTA: Section 5307 and 5311

GoTriangle



Governance

- Governed a 13-member Board of Trustees with representation from:
 - Wake, Durham and Orange Counties
 - Cities of Raleigh, Durham and Cary
 - Town of Chapel Hill
 - NC Board of Transportation



Budget/Funding

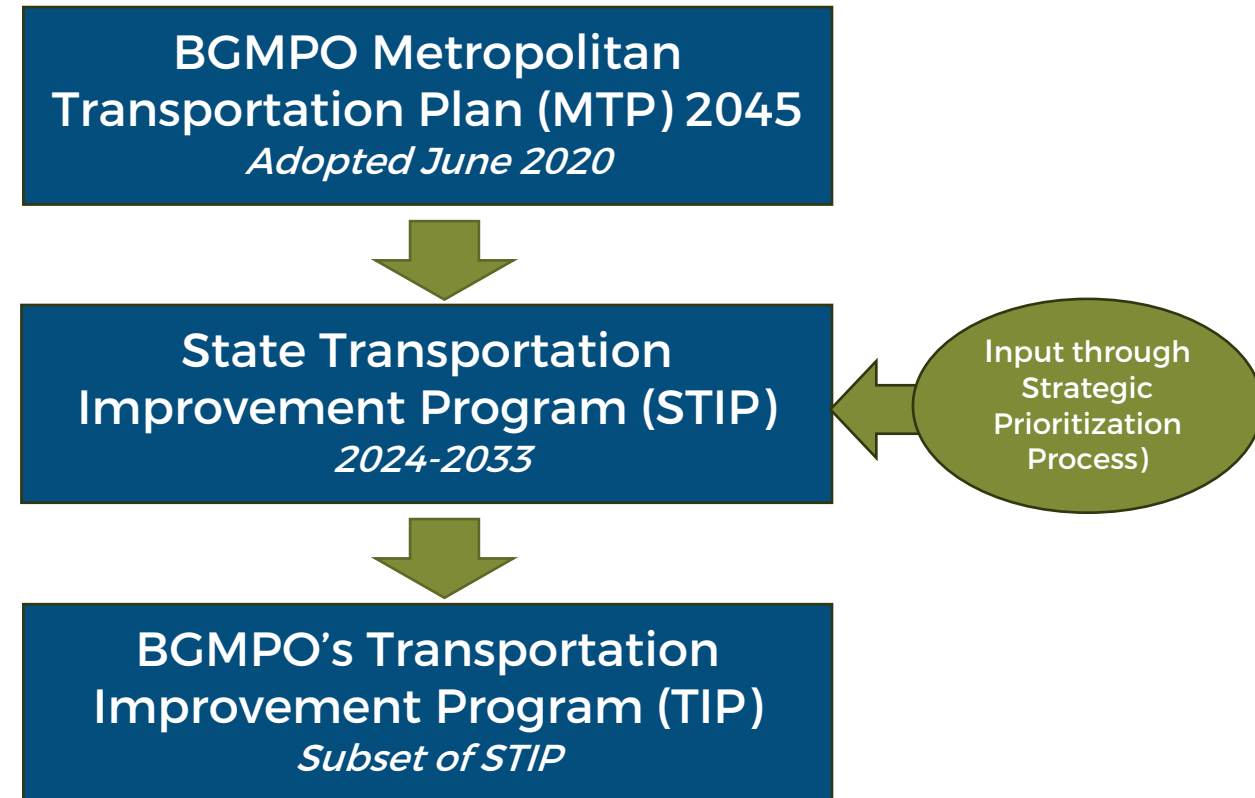
- FY 24 operating budget = \$37.7 million (for All GoTriangle services)
 - \$28.6 million towards transit operations
- Local funds generated from vehicle registration fees, rental car tax and ½ cent local sales tax in member counties
- Orange and Durham Transit Plan Funds provide local funding for Route ODX (50% each)
- Federal funds from FTA Section 5307

Transit Funding Process

The MTP is the Burlington-Graham's fiscally-constrained long-range transportation plan (LRTP). The STIP is a state plan that identifies projected funding for North Carolina transportation projects over a 10-year period. Projects identified in the TIP need to be in the MPO's long-range plan. The BGMPO TIP is a subset of the STIP.

BGMPO's FY 24 draft TIP identifies the following committed funding projections for the FY 2024-FY 2027 four years of the STIP for transit services within the BGMPO study area:

- \$47.4 million in operating assistance
- \$14.2 million in capital assistance
- \$3.3 million for preventative maintenance
- \$1.4 million for other projects/services



Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Allocation Process

- The City of Burlington, in partnership with the BGMPO, administers FTA Section 5307 funds apportioned to the Burlington-Graham Urbanized Area (UZA).
- Suballocation methodology follows data-driven approach based on each agency’s share of the UZA population, population density share, and UZA low-income population.

FY 2023 Section 5307 Suballocation Amounts

Transit Buffer Areas	UZA Population Buffer	Area (sq. mi.)	Population Density	Density Share	Weighted Population Density Allocation	TDI* Population	UZA Allocation < 200,000	Nov. 15, 2023 TC Approved Allocation	March 2023 Revised %	Revised Allocation
Link Transit	75,633	37.870	1,997.175	1,079.600	1,270.369	40,859	117,762.369	\$ 1,993,549.80	0.603	\$ 2,004,627.10
PART	29,225	16.210	1,802.899	376.584	400.022	n/a	29,625.022	\$ 4,319,935.79	0.152	\$ 504,296.26
ACTA	23,621	41.470	569.592	96.161	32.271	8,005	31,658.271	\$ 631,290.71	0.162	\$ 538,907.54
CoTriangle	5,718	3.225	1,773.023	72.459	75.694	2,277	8,070.194	\$ 132,903.32	0.041	\$ 137,376.05
OCPT	5,718	3.225	1,773.023	72.459	75.695	2,277	8,070.194	\$ 132,903.32	0.041	\$ 137,376.05
Transit Buffer Total	139,915	102.000	7,915.713	1,697.264			195,186.049	\$ 3,322,583.00		\$ 3,322,583.00
UZA Total Area	139,915	102.000	7,915.713	1,697.264			195,186.049			

*Transportation Disadvantaged Index

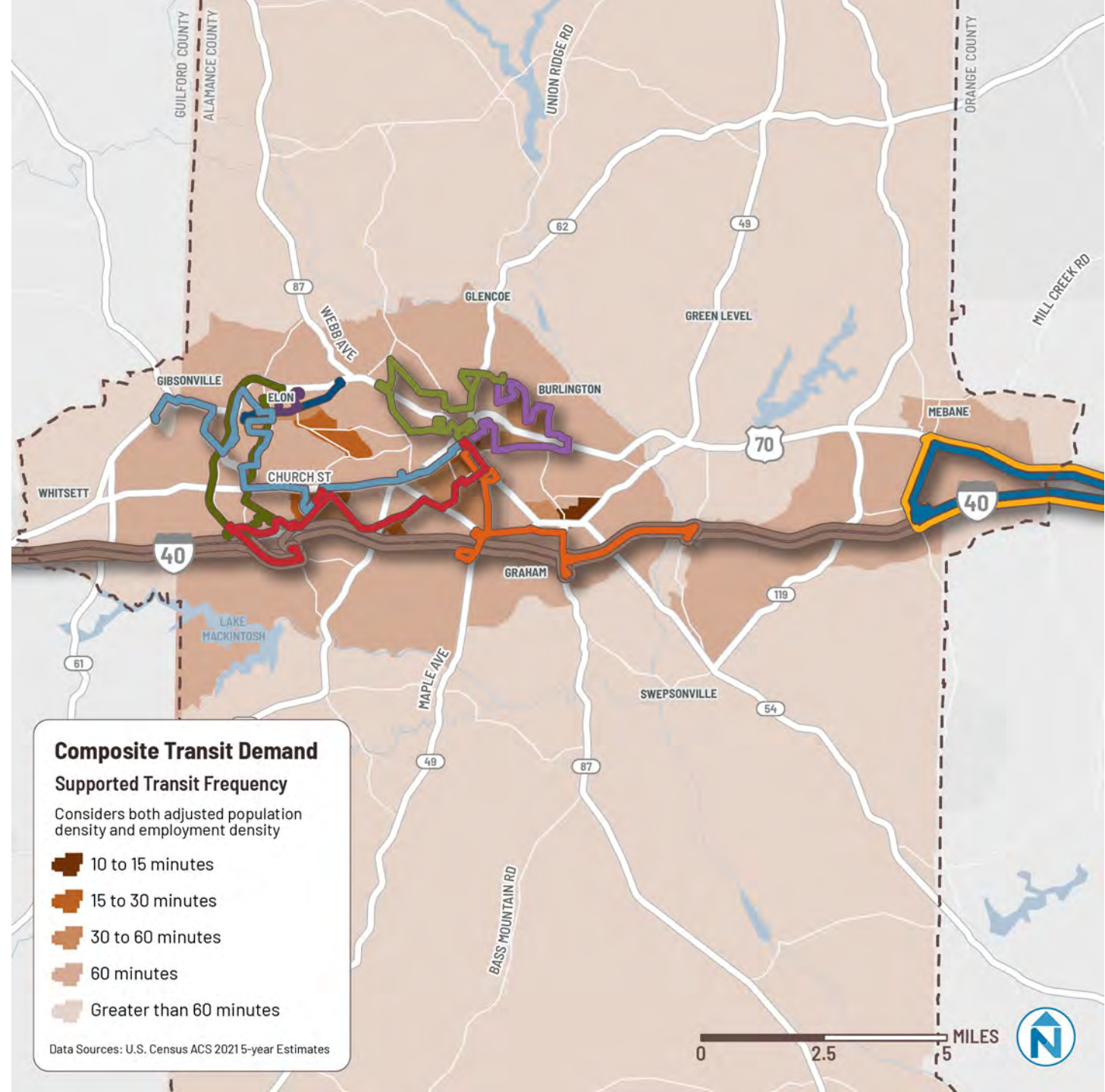
EXISTING CONDITIONS
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Conclusions

Market Analysis

A composite transit demand analysis indicates that **most of the Burlington-Graham urban area**, as well as Mebane, can support 60-minute local fixed route service, with some pockets exhibiting demand that might support 30-minute service (e.g., around Elon, the I-40 corridor, and central Burlington).

All Link Transit fixed routes operate at 90-minute service frequencies. Further, **there are areas that are likely supportive of 60-minute or better service frequencies that presently have little or no service**, such as areas within Graham and Mebane.

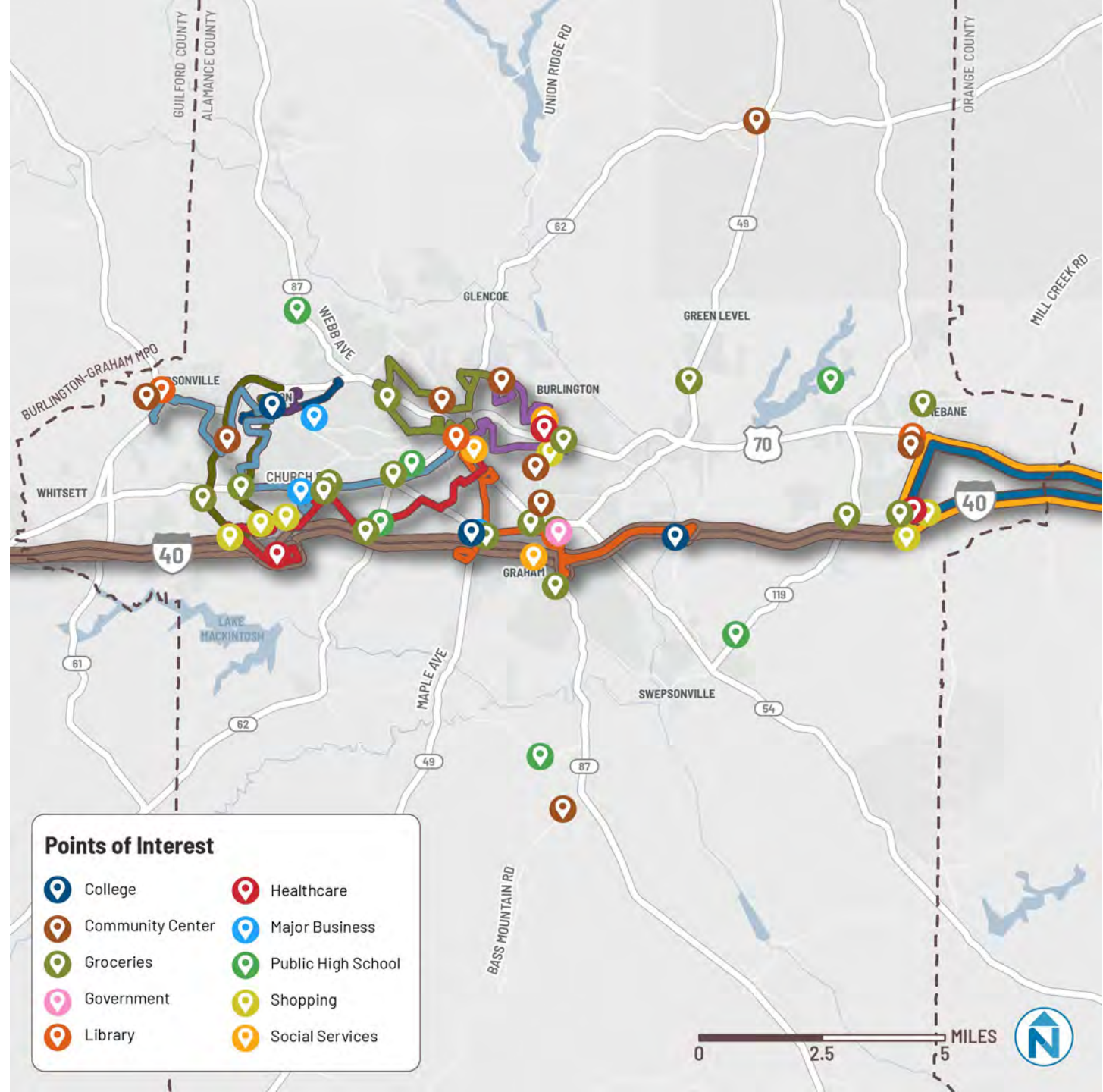


Service to Points of Interest

The adjacent map presents major points of interest in the BGMPO study area, overlaid with the existing transit network. Most major points of interest have some level of connection to fixed route transit. Notable service gaps include:

- Public high schools to the south including Southwest Alamance High School and Southern Alamance High School and Mt. Hermon Community Center
- Eastern Alamance High School, Pleasant Grove Community Center, and Food Lion to the northwest of Mebane
- Western Alamance High School to the northwest of Burlington

It is important to keep in mind that this map illustrates current fixed route service coverage in relation to major points of interest and does not indicate if current service frequencies and/or span are adequately addressing service needs at each point of interest.

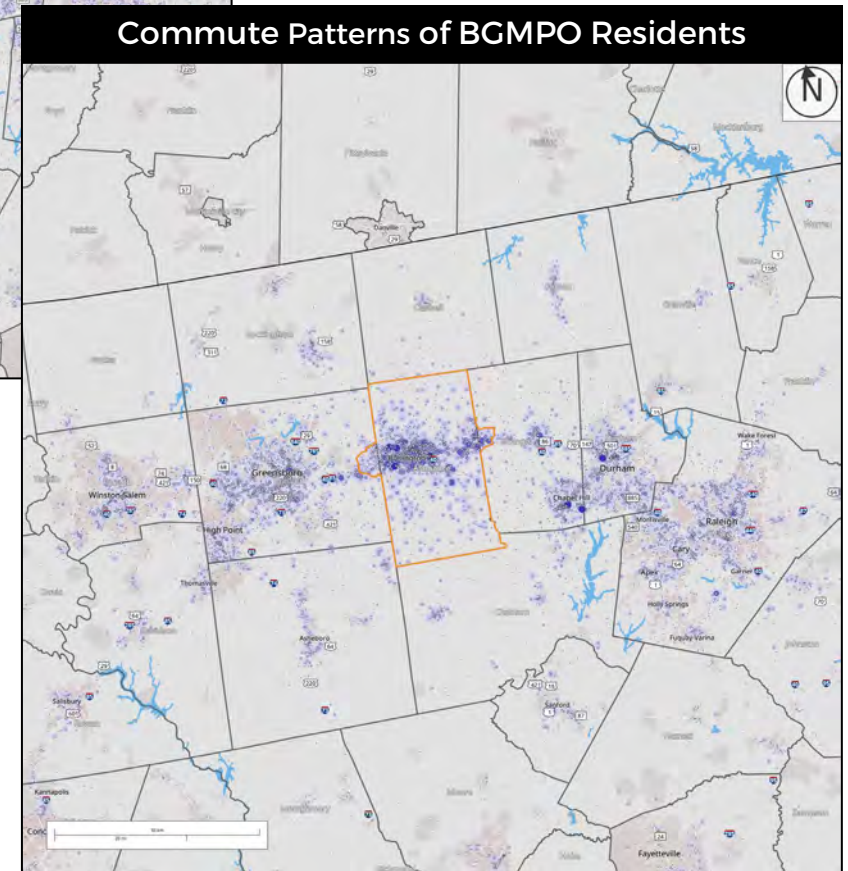
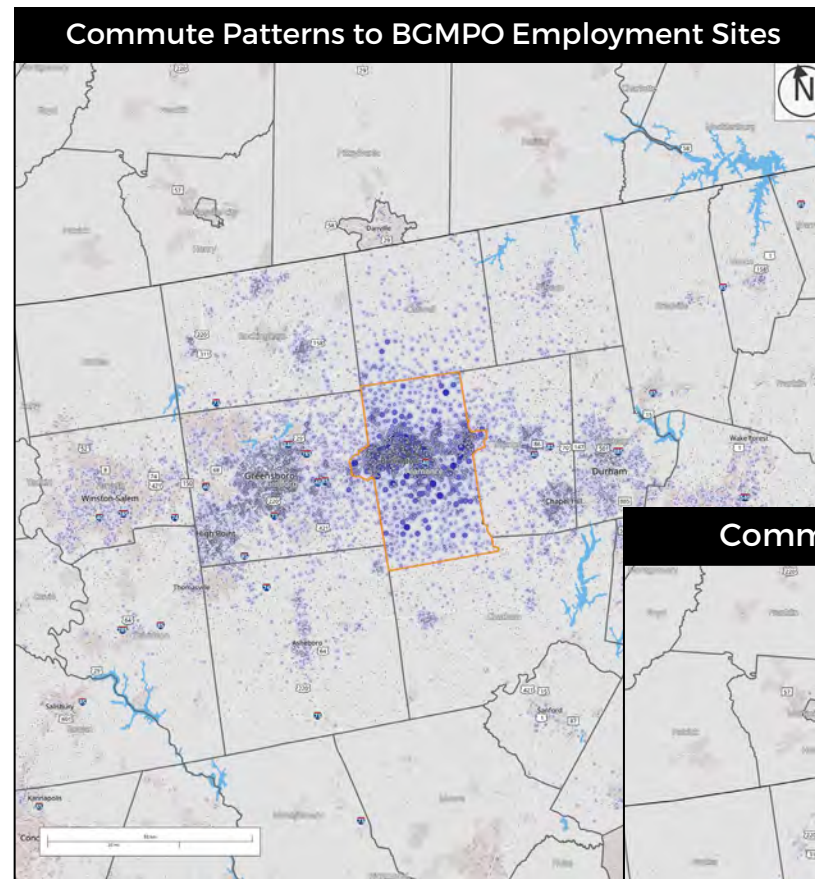


Travel Patterns

When analyzing total travel patterns, **most trips overall remain within the BGMPO study area boundaries.**

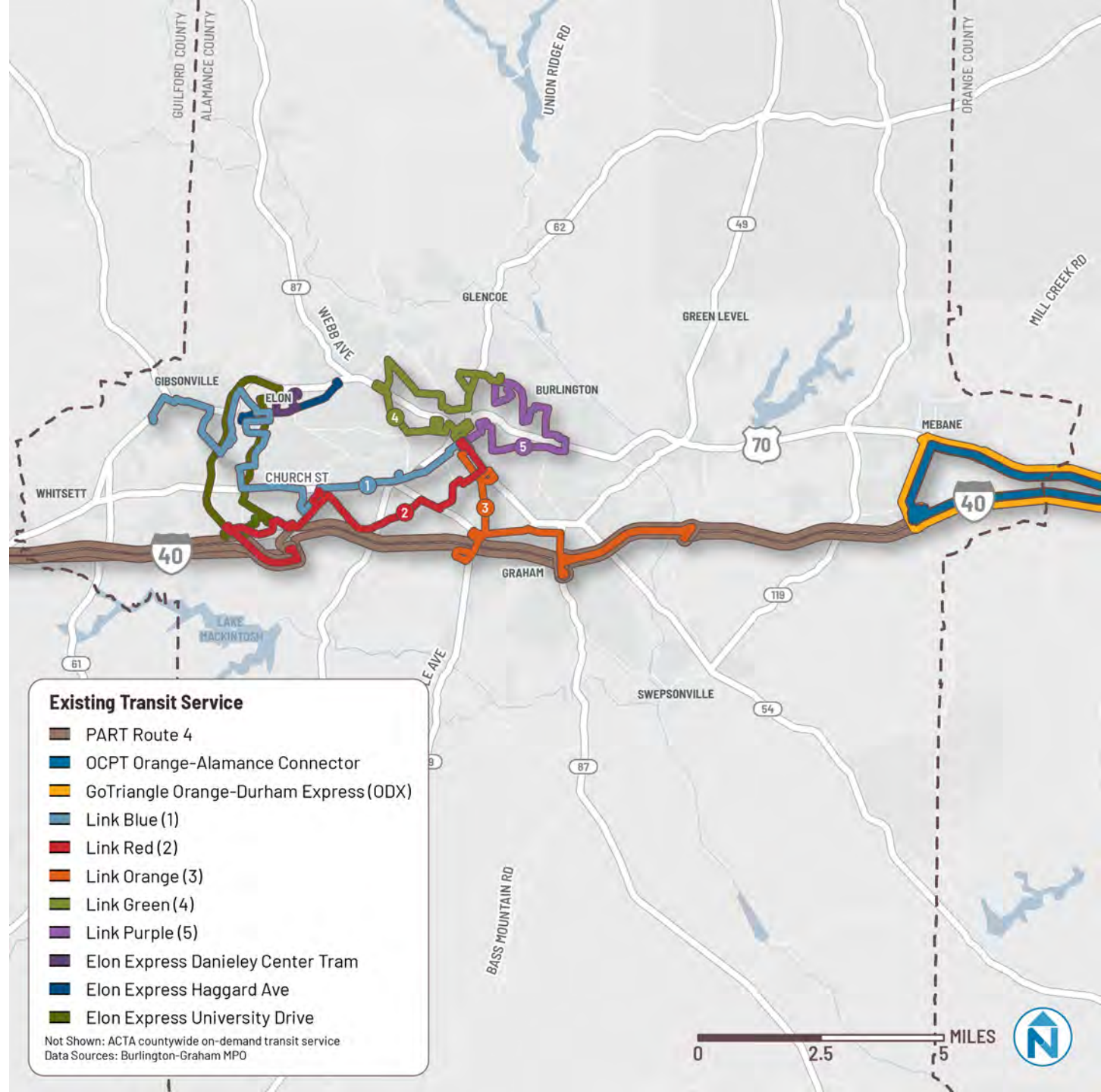
However, a closer review indicates **significant work trips to the west (Greensboro area) and to the east (Durham and Chapel Hill areas).**

About 58% of BGMPO area resident work trips travel outside of the area, with an approximate 43% split to the west and 46% split to the east.



Transit Service Assessment

- **Link Transit ridership has surpassed pre-pandemic levels** with approximately 500 passenger trips each weekday in 2022, an average of approximately 7.5 trips per revenue-hour.
- **ACTA's ridership has also returned to pre-pandemic levels**, averaging approximately 300 trips each weekday in 2022 (approximately 1.5 passenger trips per revenue-hour).
- **PART's Route 4 ridership has not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels**, averaging 115 passenger trips per weekday in 2022, of which 46 trips were boarding at the four stops within the study area.
- **OCPT's Orange-Alamance Connector and GoTriangle's Route ODX have also seen significant ridership declines** from pre-pandemic levels with low ridership activity at stops within the study area.

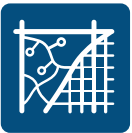


Transit Service Challenges

There are several challenges that a rider faces when trying to use transit within the BGMPO service area:



Frequency and Span. Current route service frequencies and span can limit a resident's ability to use existing available transit services. Local routes operate infrequently (every 90 minutes). Regional routes have limited hours of service that make use of transit difficult for people with non-traditional work hours.



Coverage. Existing local fixed route service is limited to Burlington, Elon and portions of Gibsonville and Graham. Regional transit services are focused on travel to the east, and not to Greensboro.



Route Design. Current fixed route design can result in lengthy trip times for travel that is relatively short in distance.



Advanced Service Reservation Requirements. Paratransit service is available for most residents within the BGMPO service area and on-demand service is available for most residents outside of the Link Transit service area. However, prior day reservations are required, and trip times can be lengthy.

Transit Service Challenges



Overlapping Service Areas. Paratransit service can be confusing for a rider within the Link Transit service area. Link Transit provides paratransit service for trips that begin and end within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of fixed route service. ACTA provides general purpose demand response service for trips that have only one end of the trip within the Link Transit service area and the other end outside of the Link Transit service area. A rider must know which agency to contact.



Multiple Service Providers. Riders must also be knowledgeable about multiple systems to address their local and regional travel needs. There is no single website to access information about all available services and to understand route alignments and schedules on a comprehensive basis.



Changing Commute Patterns. The transit service analysis indicates that ridership on routes operated by PART, GoTriangle and OCPT have not yet rebounded to pre-pandemic patterns, which correlates with changing post-pandemic work commute trends. Consideration needs to be given to regional service performance improvement approaches.



Transit-Supportive Densities. The market analysis identified the central portion of the study area as the only geographic area supportive of fixed route service. Within that area, there are a few pockets where there is sufficient density to support 30-minute or better transit service.

EXISTING CONDITIONS
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Appendix: Transit Market Analysis Methodology and Source Data

Data Sources

A market analysis of the BGMPO are and adjacent counties was conducted to guide the short- and long-term recommendations made by the project team for the Regional Transit Feasibility Study. Factors that influence the patterns of transit use, such as density, land development, and commute patterns were examined in the region using the data sources listed below. Resulting maps can be found in the full Market Analysis document.

Component	Year	Data Source	Scale
Population Density	2021	American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	Census Block Group
Transit Index Factor	2021	American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	Census Tract
Adjusted Population Density	2021	American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	Census Block Group
Employment Density	2020	Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics	Census Block Group
Composite Demand	-	Adjusted Population + (2 x Employment Density)	Census Block Group
Jobs	2020	Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics	Census Block
Travel Patterns	2022	Replica Places	Census Block Group

Population Density Calculations

Residents per acre was calculated by block group using the ACS 5-year estimates for Alamance County, as well as Orange, Guilford, and Durham Counties.

Based on industry best practices and research by Nelson\Nygaard, the following breaks were used to interpret the population density data and the corresponding levels of transit service.

Population Density (people/acre)	Appropriate Frequency (minutes)
2 or fewer	60 or more
2 to 10	60
10 to 15	30 to 60
15 to 30	15 to 30
Greater than 30	15 or fewer

Transit Index Factor and Adjusted Population Density

Different socioeconomic and demographic factors influence a person's likelihood of using transit. To account for this, an adjusted population density was calculated using a Transit Index Factor (TIF). A TIF demonstrates how much certain demographic groups are more or less likely than average to use transit. The TIFs used in this analysis were calculated specifically for the BGMPO area, as shown below.

$$\frac{131 \text{ 1 vehicle households that use transit in BGMPO}}{9,610 \text{ 1 vehicle households in BGMPO}} = 1.36\% \text{ Transit mode share for 1 vehicle households in BGMPO}$$
$$\frac{1.36\% \text{ Transit mode share of 1 vehicle households in BGMPO}}{1.05\% \text{ Total transit mode share in BGMPO}} = 1.30 \text{ Transit index factor for 1 vehicle households in BGMPO}$$

The TIFs were used to calculate an individual transit propensity score for each census tract based on its demographic makeup. This score is multiplied by the raw population count to calculate the adjusted population by tract. Adjusted population was applied to the block group by consolidating tracts within their block group.

The same modified land area used in the population density calculation was also used for adjusted population density. The same data breaks were used to interpret the adjusted population density data and the corresponding levels of transit service as used for the raw population density calculation.

Employment Density

The employment density metric measures the number of jobs located within a block group, rather than the number of employed residents who live in that block group. Jobs per acre was calculated using the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) for Alamance, Guilford, Orange, and Durham Counties.

As in the case of the population density measure, the land area used for the calculation was modified to exclude water bodies. Based on industry best practices and research by Nelson\Nygaard, the following breaks were used to interpret the employment density data and the corresponding levels of transit service.

Employment Density (jobs/acre)	Appropriate Frequency (minutes)
2 or fewer	60 or more
2 to 5	60
5 to 10	30 to 60
10 to 15	15 to 30
Greater than 15	15 or fewer

Composite Transit Demand

The number of people per acre and jobs per acre were combined to show an overall composite transit demand by block group. Employment density was weighted twice in this calculation to account for the fact that jobs represent more transit use because most trips on transit are work trips, and because many job types attract customer trips as well as employee trips.

Based on industry best practices and research by Nelson\Nygaard, the following breaks were used to interpret the employment density data and the corresponding levels of transit service.

Population Density (jobs/acre)	Appropriate Frequency (minutes)
2 or fewer	60 or more
2 to 5	60
5 to 10	30 to 60
10 to 15	15 to 30
Greater than 15	15 or fewer

Job Types and Low Wage Jobs

Job data was categorized by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code and mapped by company size and industry at the block level. The resulting concentrations of job types showed possible high activity transit generators.

Travel Patterns

Replica Places is an activity-based travel model that simulates where residents, visitors, and commercial vehicle travel happens in an area on a typical day. Replica data is grounded in multiple private and public source datasets, including data from personal mobile devices, demographic data from public and private sources, credit transaction data for consumer spending, and more. More information about their source methodology can be found on their website (<https://my.replicahq.com/>).

For the market analysis, Replica Places data was used at the census block group level for the BGMPO area. Total trips within a block group and total trips between two distinct block groups were combined to assess overall travel patterns in the region on a given weekday in 2019 and 2021.

For work travel patterns, LEHD's OnTheMap data was used, which analyzes 2020 work travel patterns at the block level and identifies origin-destination data for residents and jobs within a selected study area. This data also includes distance, direction, and wage thresholds.



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Regional Transit Feasibility Study

Community Engagement

December 2023



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REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

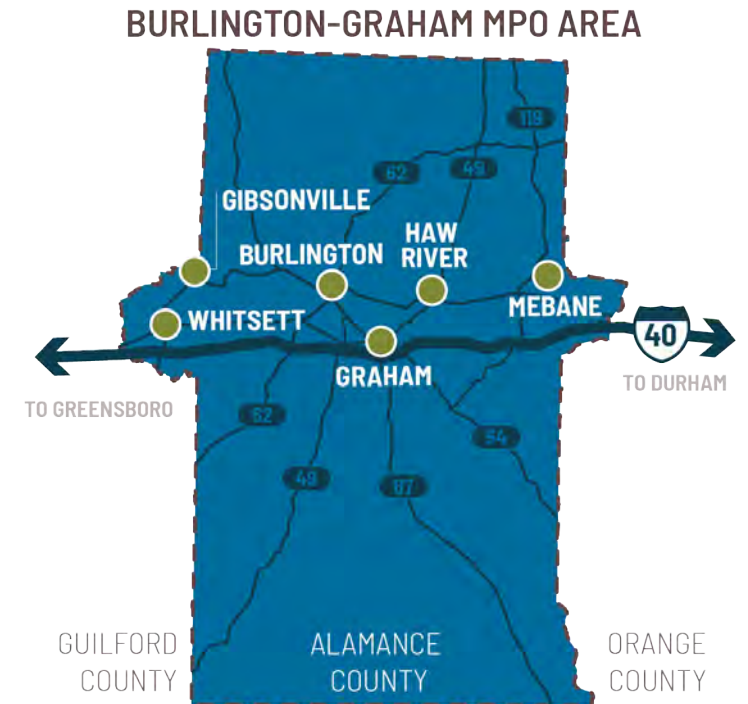
Project and Tech Memo Overview

About The Regional Transit Feasibility Study

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) is looking to improve regional transit access to nearby destinations like Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Equitable and innovative approaches are being considered to provide transit service, assess multimodal connections, reduce service overlap, determine cost-effective ways to enhance service, evaluate safety performance targets and measures, and develop funding recommendations. Because transit funding is limited, understanding the tradeoffs and priorities for service improvements is central to the project.

This study is being developed by the BGMPO with support from partners at GoTriangle, Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), Orange County Public Transportation, Link Transit, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). It is supported by funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division.

More information about the project is available at bgmpo.org/transitstudy.



About This Tech Memo

Community engagement has been an important element throughout this project, consisting of the following activities:

- At the beginning of the project an 18-question on-line survey was conducted to learn about priorities residents have regarding transit priorities in the region. This survey was available on-line and advertised via e-blasts, notices at bus stop shelters and various community events.
- Phone interviews were conducted with government and community agency stakeholders in the region.
- Two rounds of public meetings were held. The first public meeting shared findings on this project's existing conditions analysis and solicited input regarding transit investment priorities. The second public meeting shared project recommendations and solicited input regarding future service and funding scenario preferences.
- A second on-line community survey was also conducted at the end of this project to solicit input regarding future service and funding scenario preferences.

This Tech Memo presents key findings from these community engagement efforts.



Community Survey #1

Survey #1 Overview

Community Survey Overview

This survey was an opportunity for community members to give input on their priorities for potential transit improvements.

The 18-question survey took about 10 minutes to complete, with questions focused on:

- *Experience with and purposes for riding transit in the region (Q1 - Q6)*
- *Priority improvements for fixed route local bus service, on-demand transit service, regional express bus service, and vanpool/carpool (Q7-Q11)*
- *How to prioritize spending across different types of improvements (Q12)*
- *Open-ended comments about improvements (Q13)*
- *Respondent demographics/background (Q14-Q18)*

In addition to this survey, community members were invited to join an in-person or virtual meeting in August 2023 to share their input on key issues.



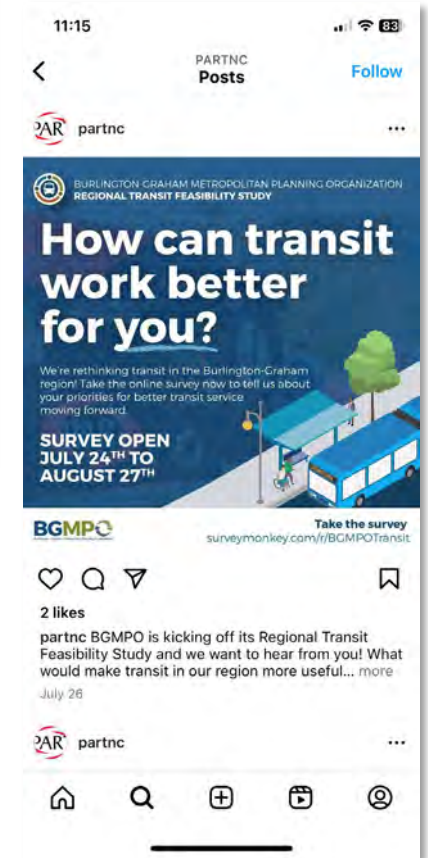
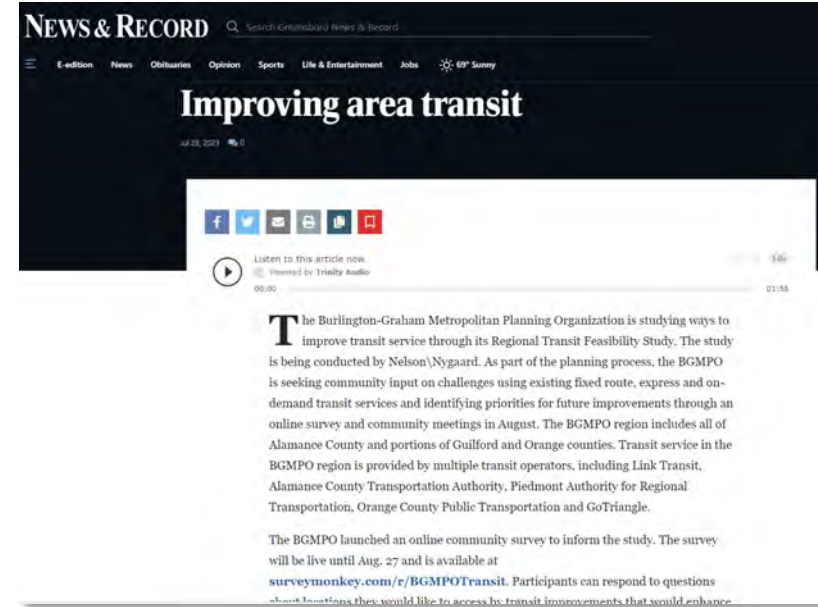
Survey Process & Responses

The on-line survey was available on-line for 5 weeks from July 24 to September 4, 2023 and was available in English and Spanish.

Survey promotional efforts included the following activities:

- Social media on BGMPO, partner transit agency, and city accounts
- Press release with articles in local publications
- Flyers and posters at bus stops
- Tabling at community events
- Direct outreach to community organizations
- Project mailing list
- Project website

Overall, we received **267 completed surveys**, of which 255 were received on-line and 12 via paper. Administrative requirements for Title VI reporting were considered in the survey content and process. The following pages present survey question responses.

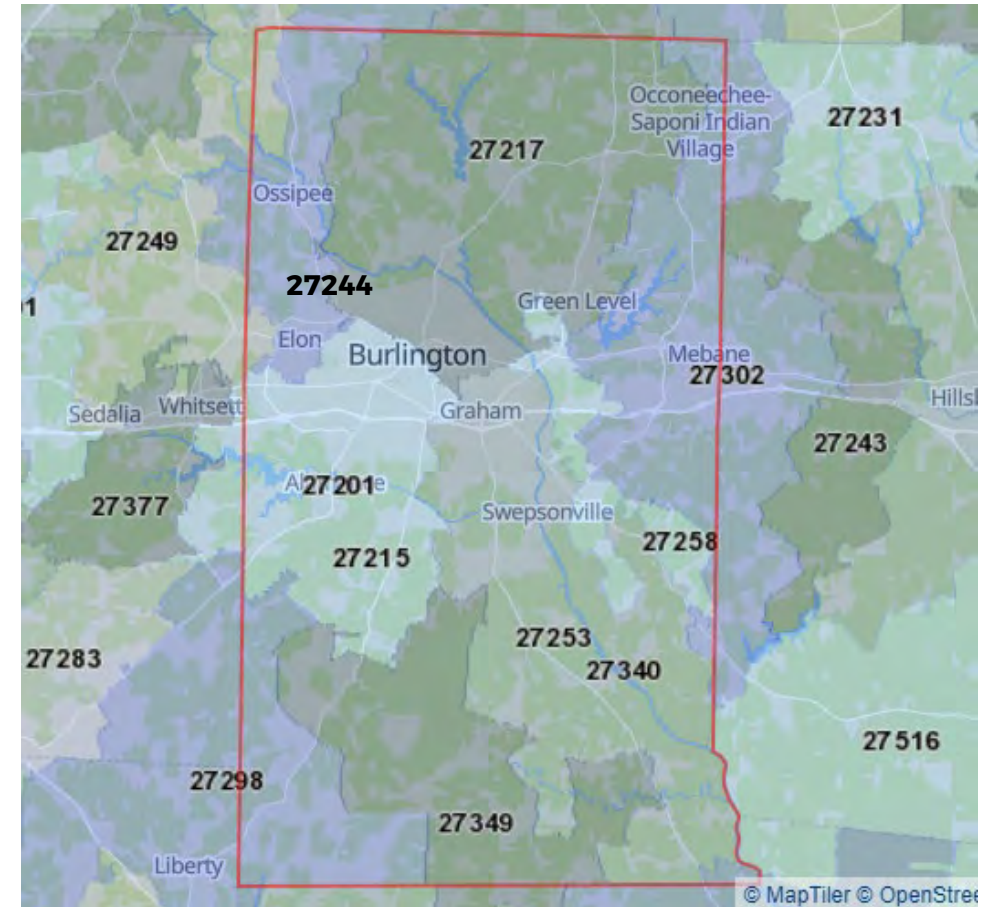
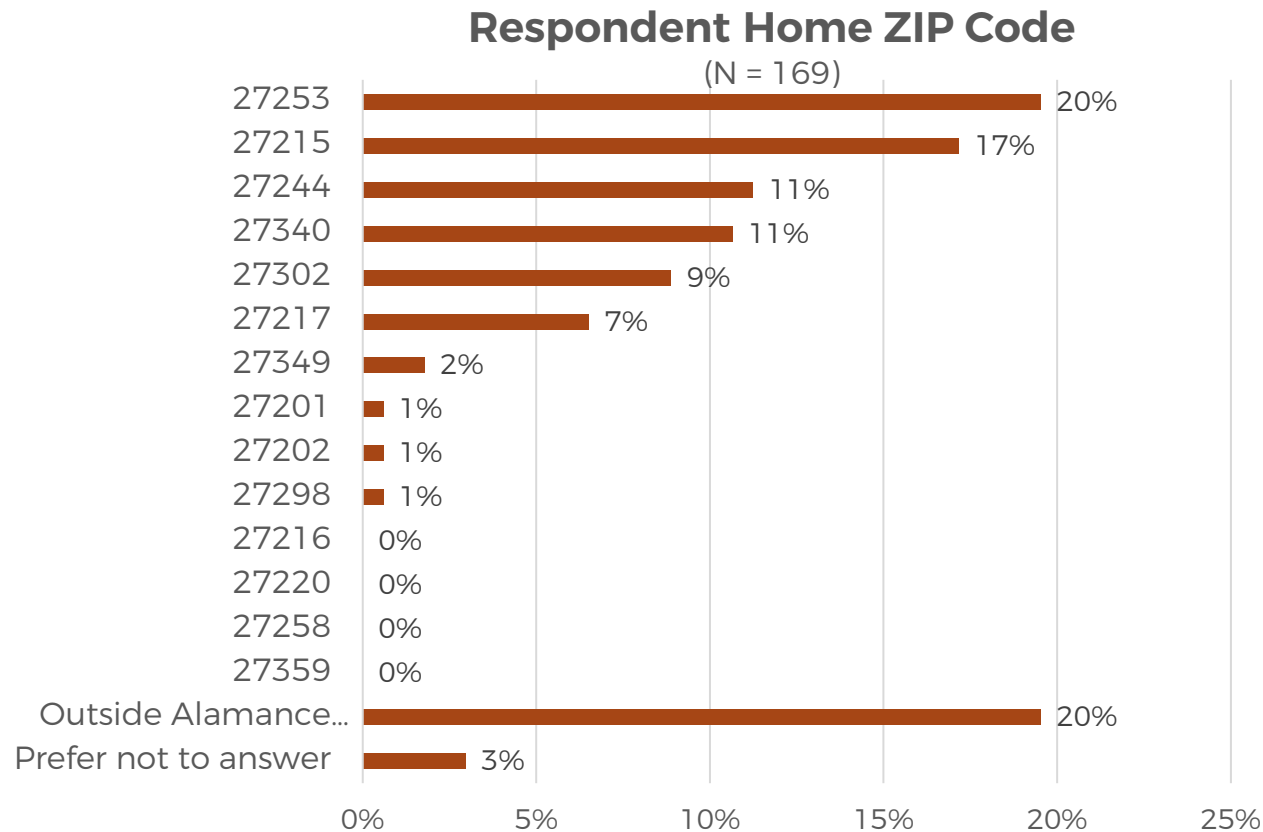


Respondent Overview

Demographic & Background Questions (Q14 – Q18)

Question 14: Which ZIP code do you live in?

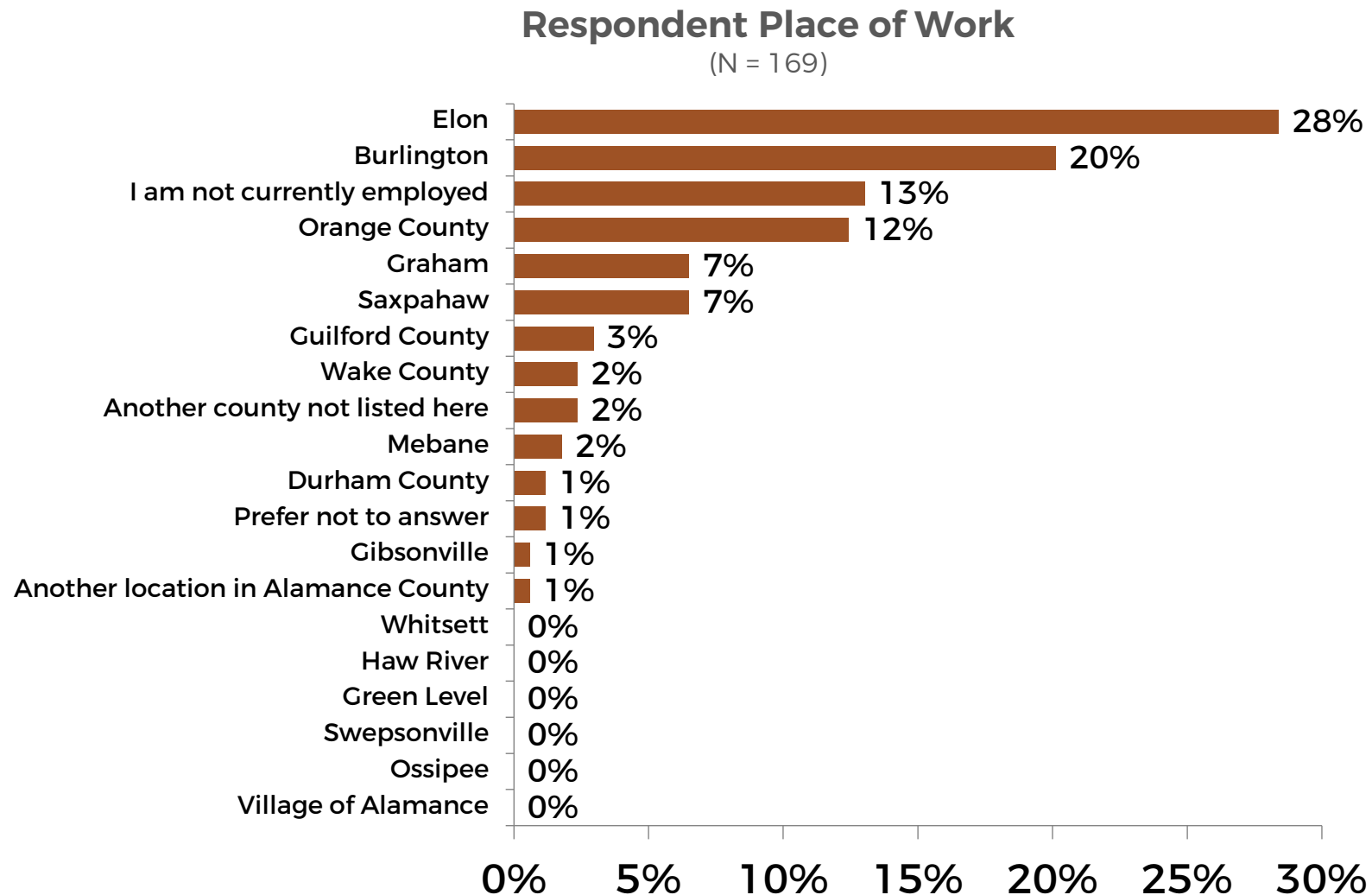
People who live across the study area were represented, including both urban and rural areas, as well as people who work in the study area but live elsewhere (20%).



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

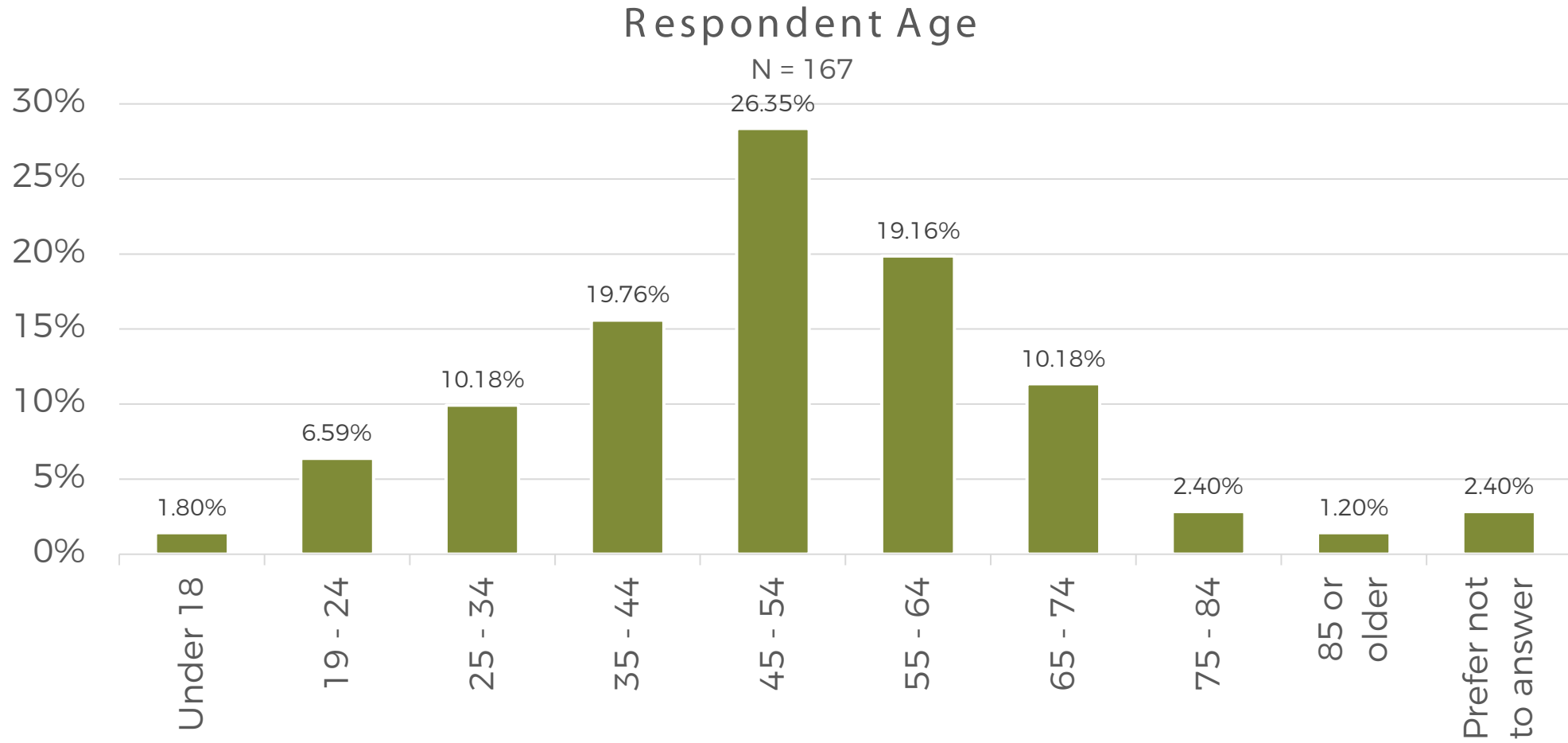
Q15: Where do you work?

- About half of respondents work in Elon (28%) or Burlington (20%).
- 13% of respondents are not currently employed.
- The most common place respondents worked outside of Alamance County was Orange County (12%).



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q16: How old are you?



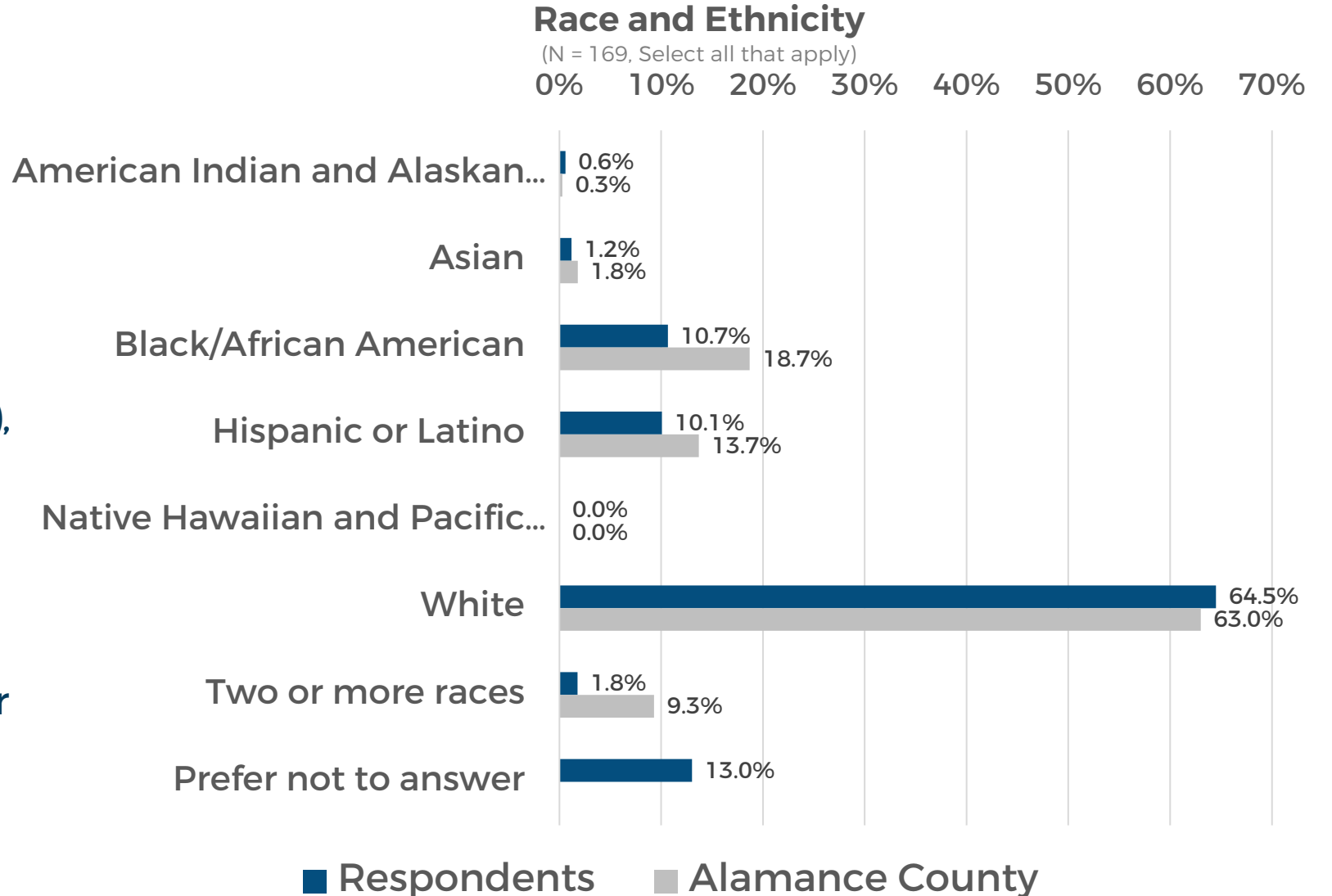
Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q17: How would you describe your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply.)

Compared to the Alamance County population as a benchmark, there were slightly more white respondents than the population overall (+1.5%).

There were fewer Black (-8%), Hispanic/Latino (-3.6%), or Asian (-0.6%) respondents than would be expected.

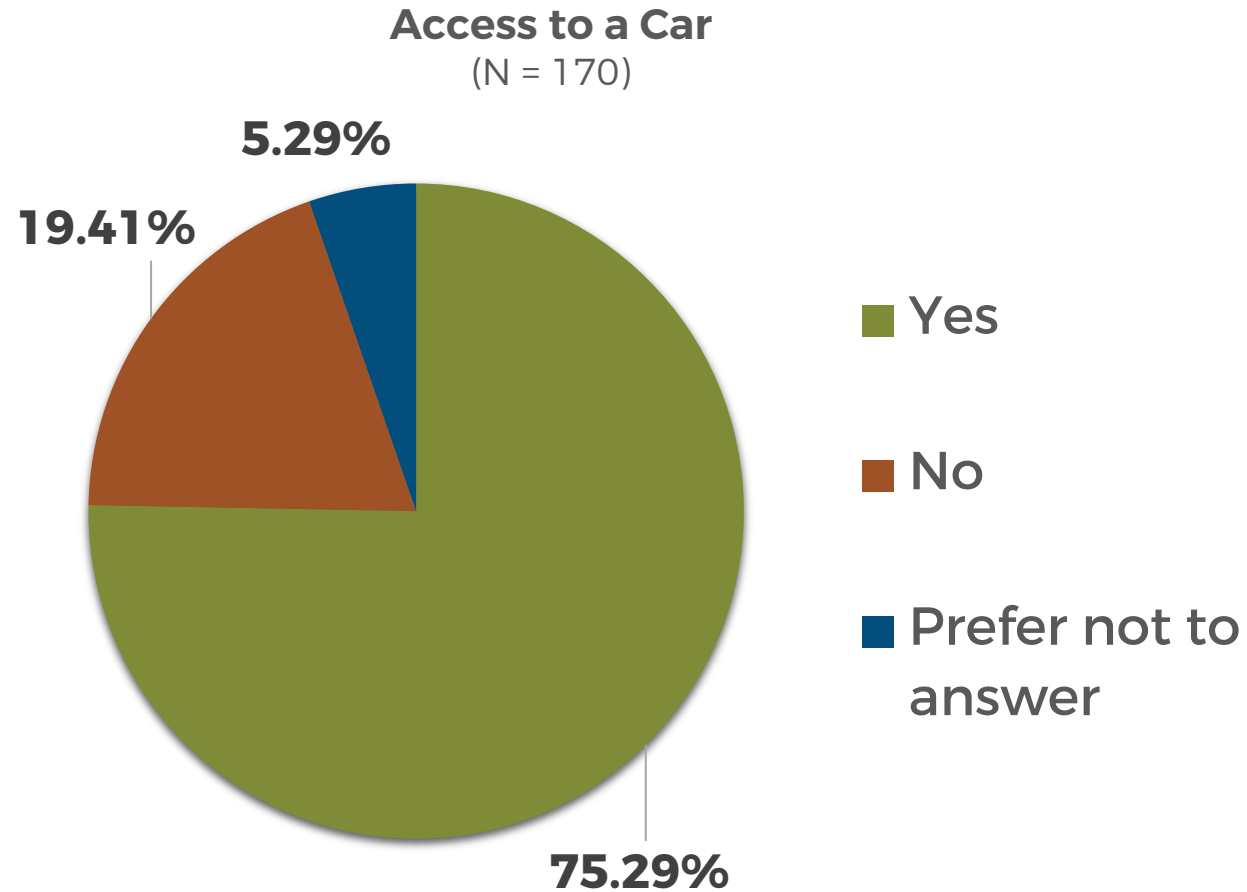
13% of respondents did not share information about their race or ethnicity.



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q18: Do you have reliable access to a car?

Most respondents (75%) have reliable access to a car and do not have to rely on transit to get around.



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Survey Results

Multiple Choice Questions (Q1 – Q12)

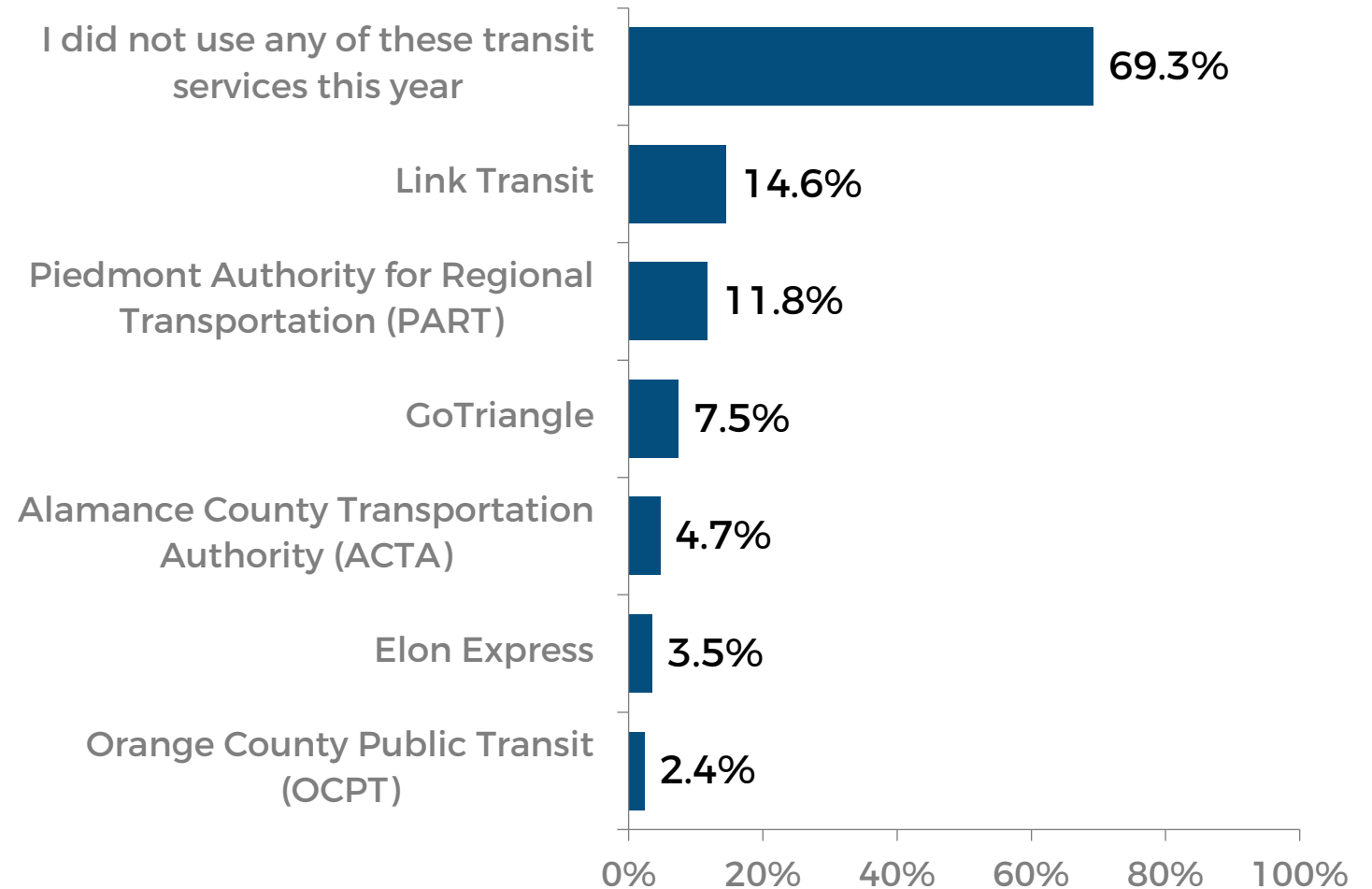
Q1: Which of the following transit services have you used in the past year? (Select all that apply) *Answered: 265 Skipped: 2*

30.7% of respondents used some form of transit this year.

Link Transit was most popular (14.6%), followed by PART (11.8%).

Of the people who responded they did not use transit this year:

- *About 29% of respondents do not get access to transit at the time when they need to travel.*
- *About 24% of respondents do not have transit as frequent enough to meet their needs*
- *About 41% of respondents do not know much about existing transit services in the area.*

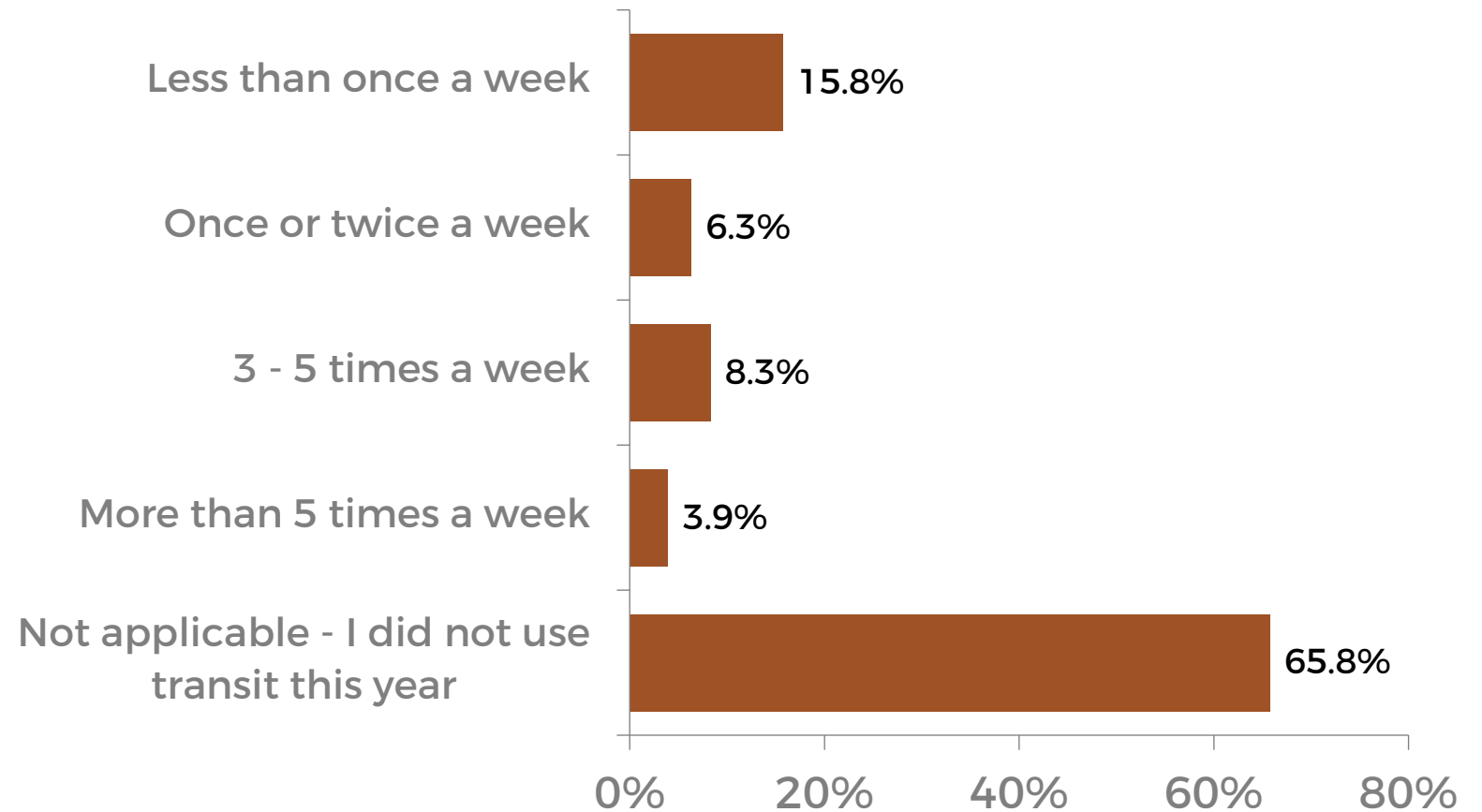


Q2: If you have used any of these transit services in the past year, how often do you typically use transit?

Answered: 254 Skipped: 1

Of the 12.2% of respondents use transit 3+ times per week...

- *Most use transit for work and running errands.*
- *Most were from ZIP codes 27215 and 27217, the two ZIP codes covering most of Burlington and the adjacent areas to the north and south.*



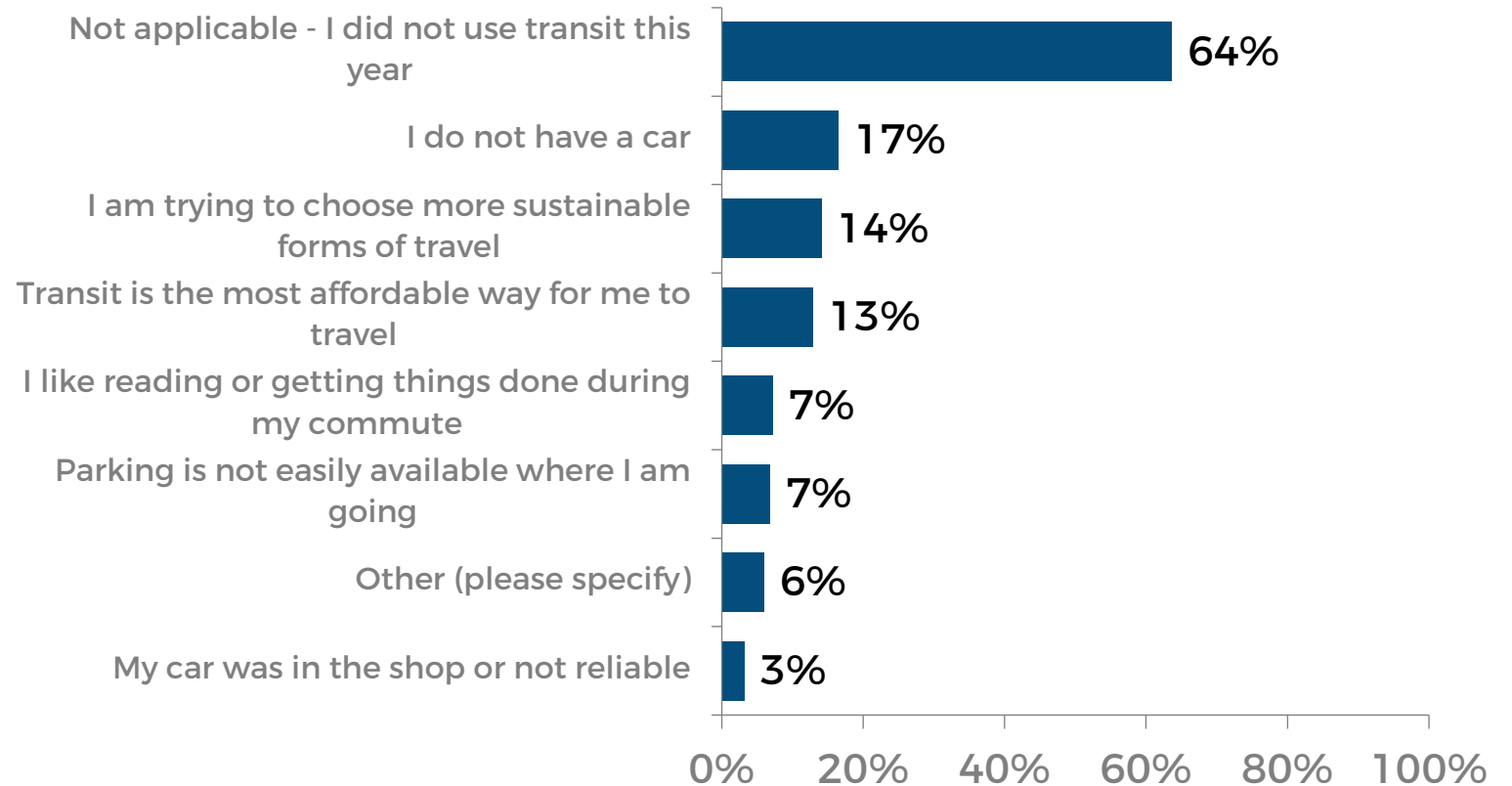
Q3: If you have used any of these transit services this year, why do you typically ride transit? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 248 Skipped: 19

The most common reasons people use transit are because they do not have a car (17%), sustainability (14%), or affordability (13%).

For respondents who selected “other,” many say they use transit because they cannot drive due to a disability.

About 22 respondents who take transit because they do not have a car say they would not make their trips if transit was not available.



Q3: If you have used any of these transit services this year, why do you typically ride transit? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 248 Skipped: 19

For respondents who selected “other,” unique responses included:

“Car centric infrastructure is expensive (and hence exclusionary), unsustainable, and antisocial. I do not have a car and believe I should have the right to choose how I move about the world, rather than be forced to depend on a car and all that supports.”

“Wanted to try it out.”

“I cannot drive due to medical reasons.”

“I need wheelchair transportation.”

“Low vision, no license.”

“Physical impairment, no NCDL.”

“Visits and integrating the bicycle into my travel.”

“Bad credit.”

Q4: If you have not used any of the above transit services this past year, why not? (Select all that apply)

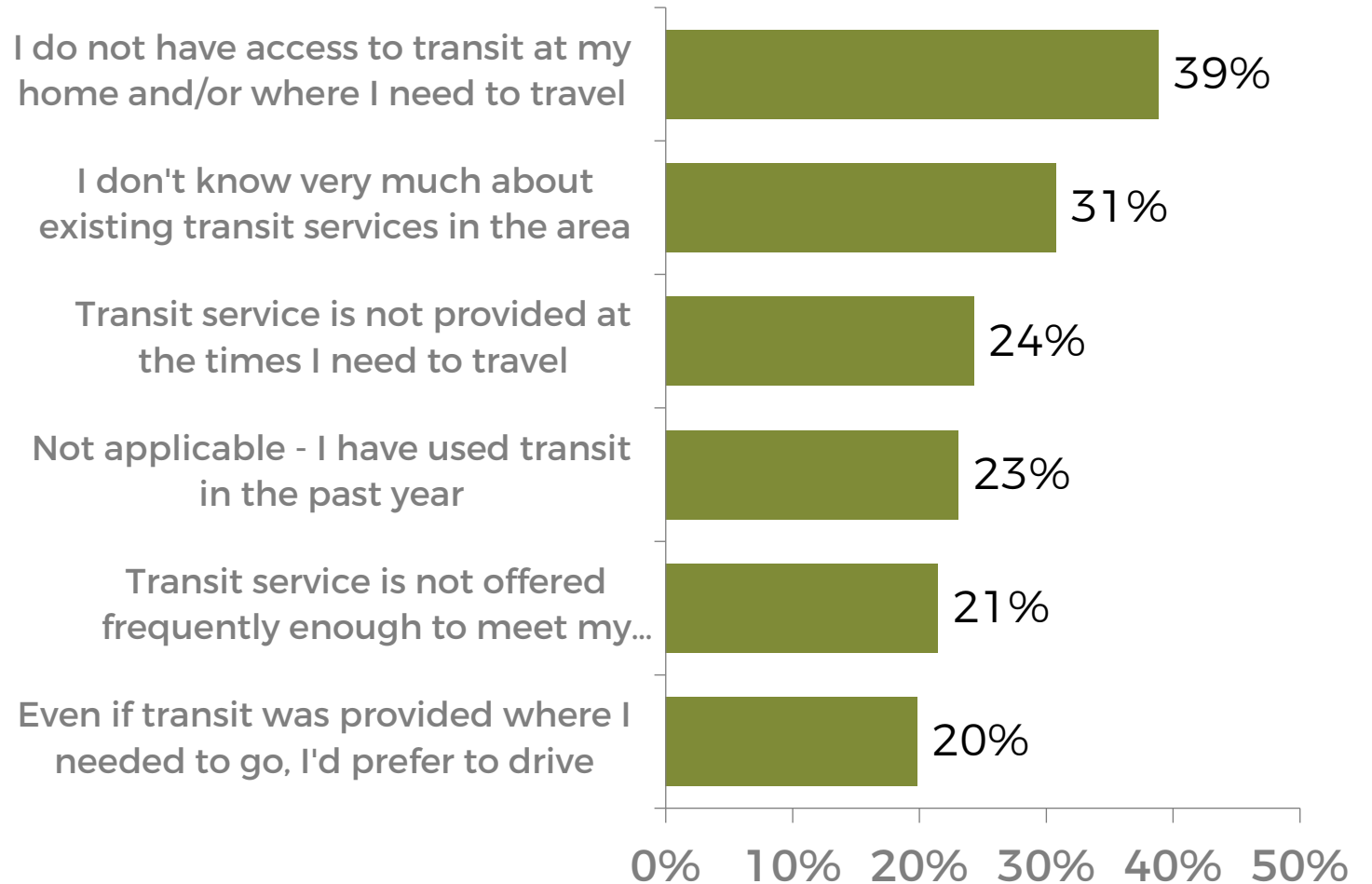
Answered: 247 Skipped: 20

Top reasons for not using transit were:

1. *No access near home/destination (39%)*
2. *Don't know much about transit service (31%)*

Majority of respondents who reported not knowing much about transit services in the area live in 27253 (Graham/Swepsonville/Saxapahaw area).

Most people living in 27215 (western Burlington and area to the SW) reported not having transit service as frequent enough to meet their travel needs.



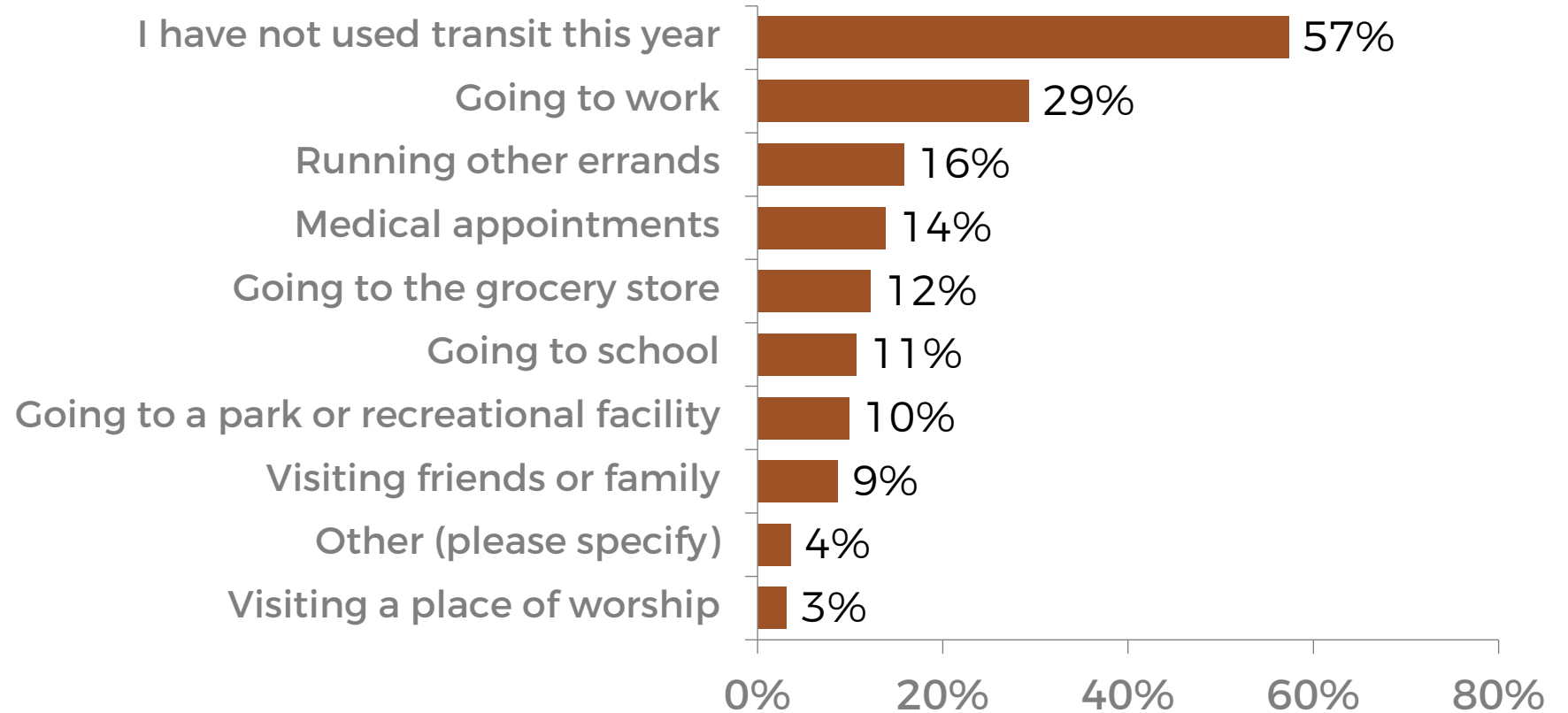
Q5: When you use transit, what kind(s) of trips are you typically taking? (Select all that apply) *Answered: 254 Skipped: 1*

Most popular reasons for using transit were:

1. *Going to work (29%)*

2. *Running other errands (16%)*

3. *Medical appointments (14%)*



Q5: When you use transit, what kind(s) of trips are you typically taking? (Select all that apply) *Answered: 254 Skipped: 1*

For respondents who selected “other,” unique responses included:

“I live about 1.3 miles from work, and when I need to get around downtown Elon from work, I walk.”

“Entertainment”

“Tourism”

“Going to a museum .”

“I do not have a car, which makes it difficult to do much. But surely I and so many other deserve the right to travel without depending on cars, right?”

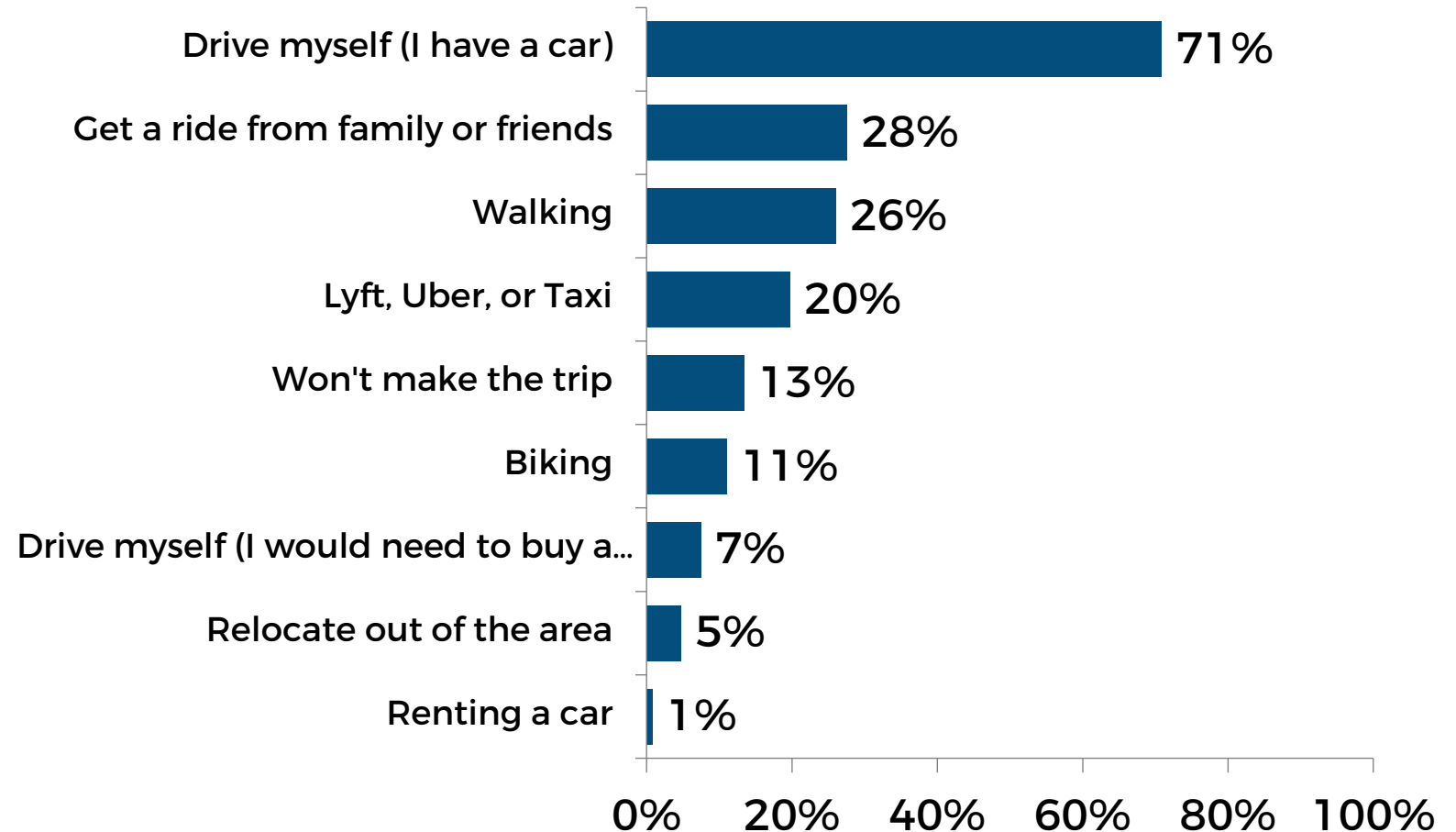
“Using it for work travel, not traveling to an office.”

Q6: If transit did not exist in our area, how would you get around? (Select all that apply) *Answered: 254 Skipped: 13*

Without transit access, most respondents would:

1. *Drive in a car they already own (71%)*
2. *Get a ride from family or friends (28%)*
3. *Walk (26%)*

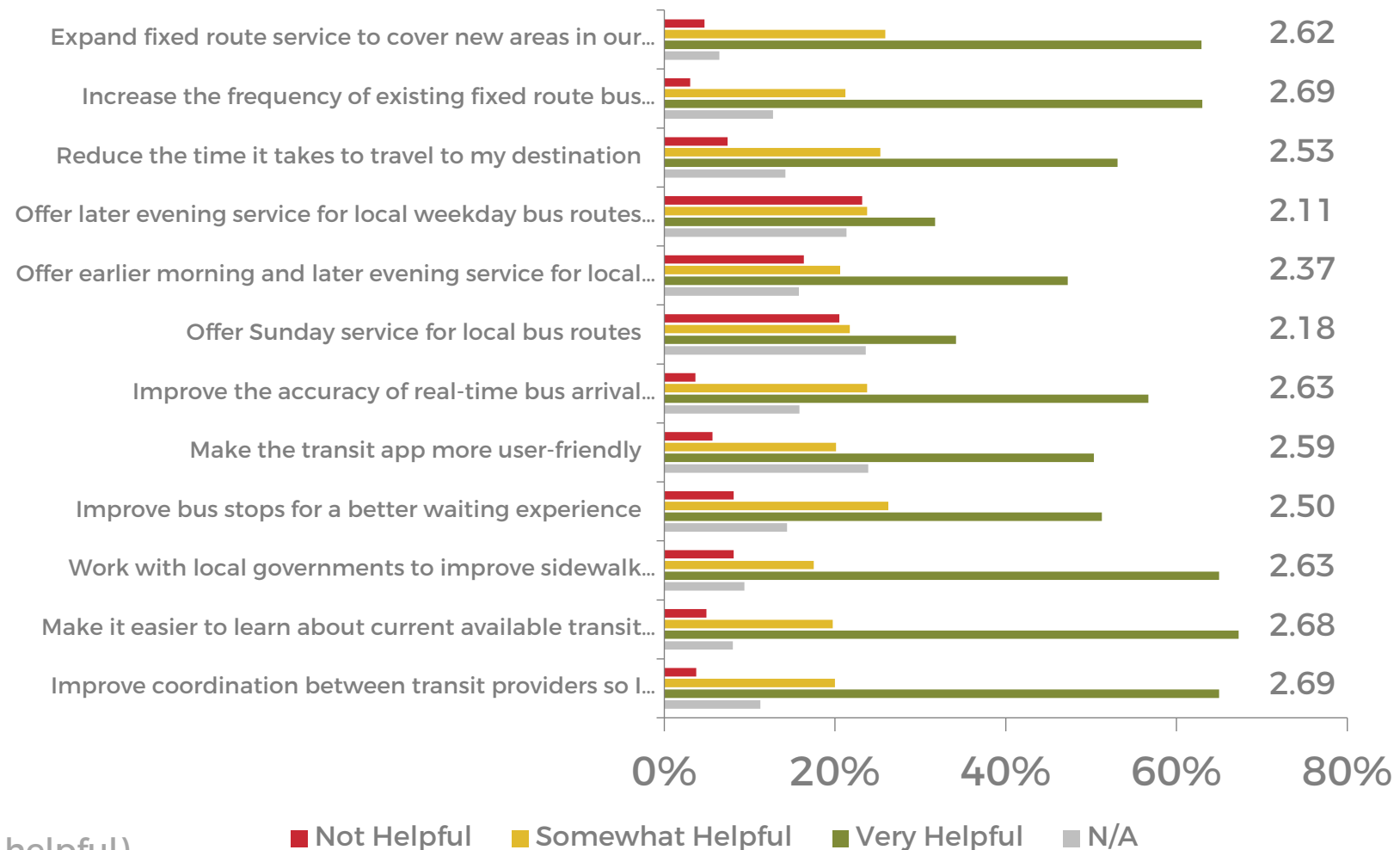
7% of respondents would have to buy a car and 5% would relocate from the area.



Q7: How helpful would each of the following potential improvements to enhance local fixed route bus service be for you? *Answered: 174 Skipped: 93*

Top rated potential improvements:

1. Increase the frequency of existing fixed route bus service (buses coming more often than every 90 minutes as they do today) (2.69)
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so I can easily transfer from one service to another (2.69)
3. Make it easier to learn about current available transit service (2.68)
4. Improve the accuracy of real-time bus arrival information (2.63)
5. Work with local government to improve sidewalk access to bus (2.63)

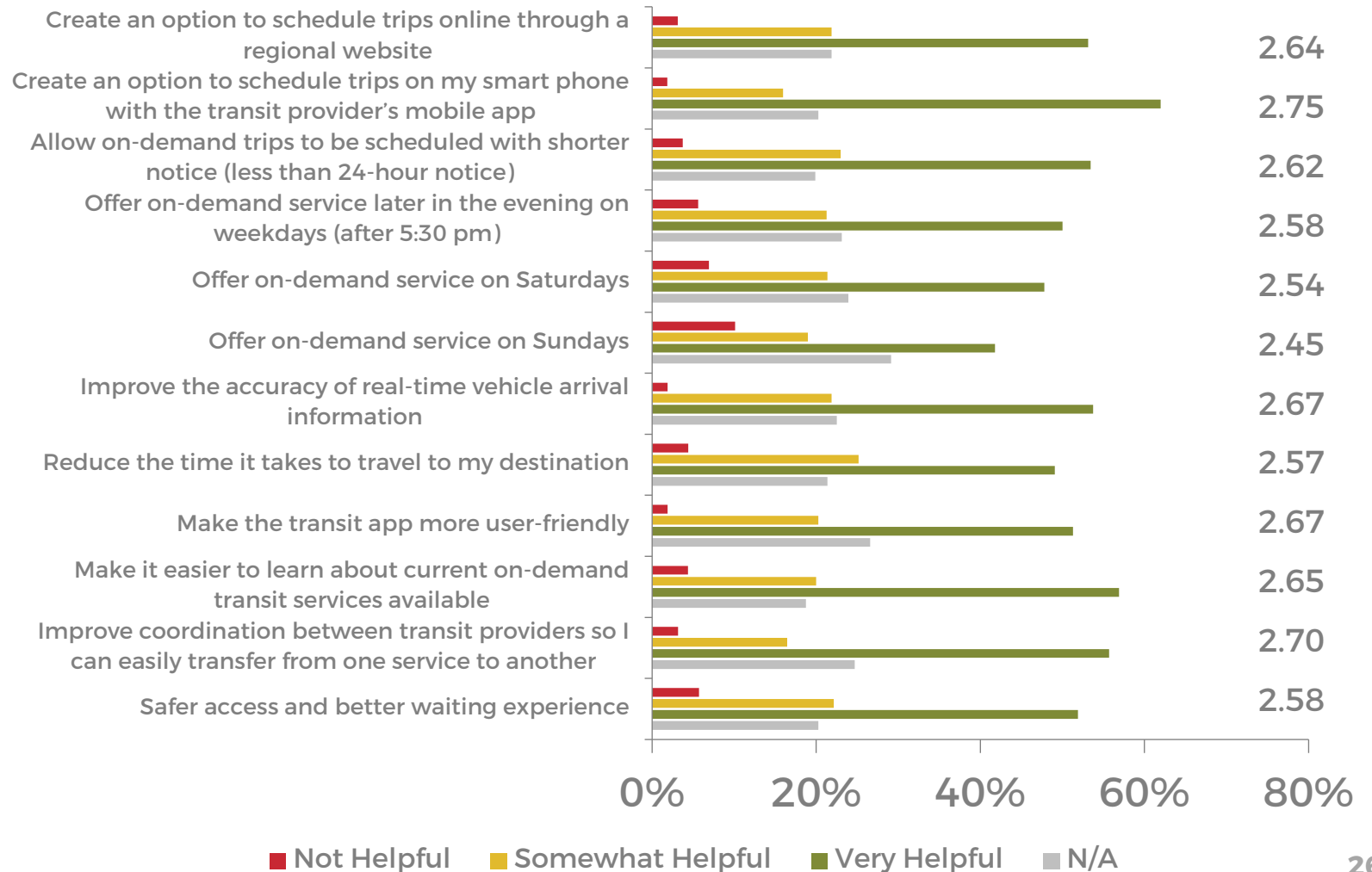


(Scores range from 1 - not helpful to 3 - very helpful)

Q8: How helpful would each of the following potential improvements to enhance on-demand transit service be for you? *Answered: 169 Skipped: 98*

Top rated potential improvements:

1. Create an option to schedule trips on my smart phone with the transit provider's mobile app (2.75)
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so I can easily transfer from one service to another (2.70)
3. Improve the accuracy of real-time arrival information (2.67)
4. Make the transit app more user-friendly (2.67)

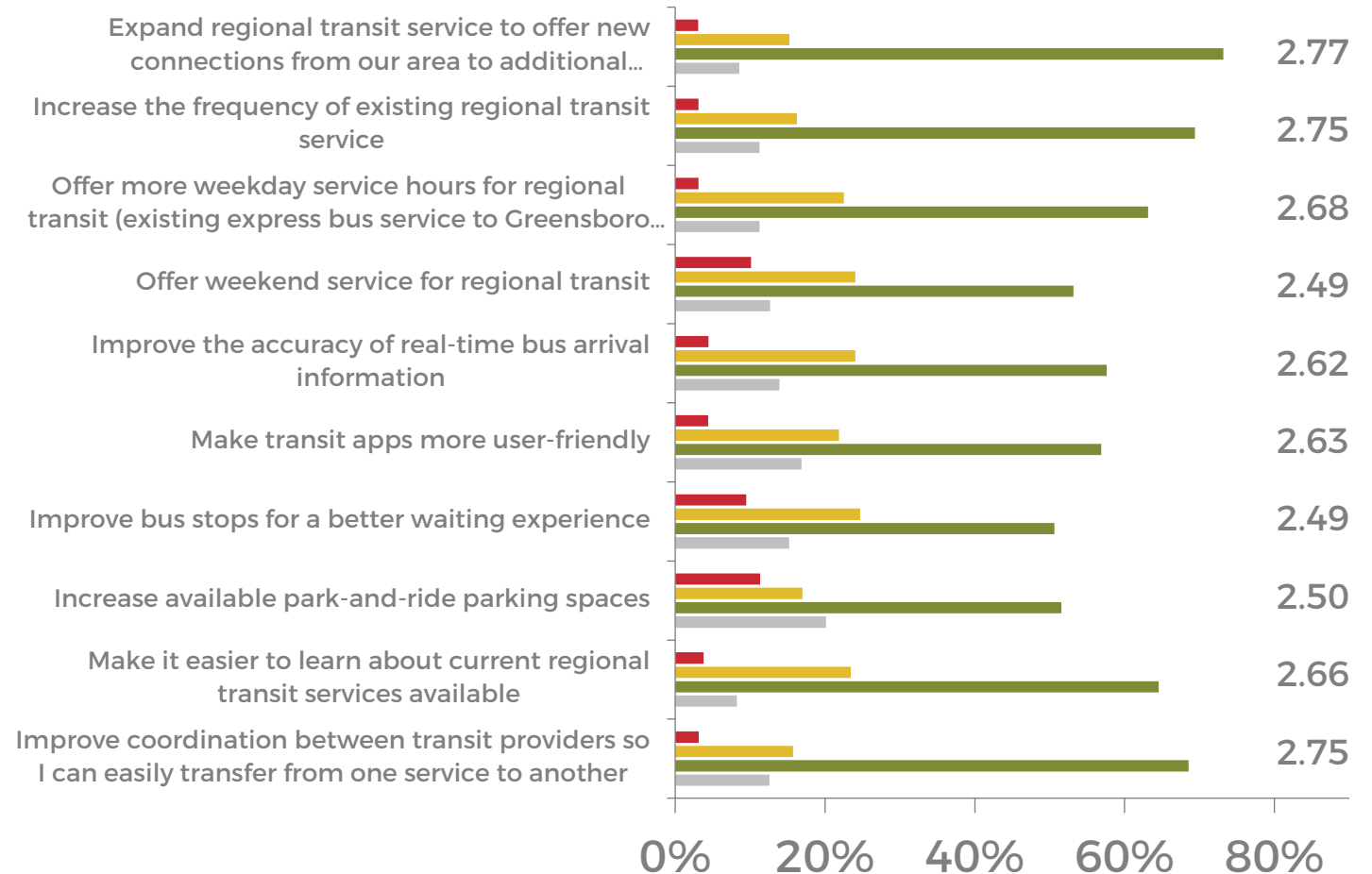


(Scores range from 1 - Not Helpful to 3 - Very Helpful)

Q9: How helpful would each of the following potential improvements to enhance regional transit service be for you? *Answered: 166 Skipped: 101*

Top rated potential improvements:

1. Expand regional transit service to offer new connections from our area to additional destinations in the Piedmont Triad and Triangle regions (2.77)
2. Increase the frequency of existing regional transit service (2.75)
3. Improve coordination between transit providers so I can easily transfer from one service to another (2.75)
4. Offer more weekday service hours for regional transit (existing express bus service to Greensboro and Chapel Hill) (2.68)
5. Make it easier to learn about current regional transit services available (2.66)



(Scores range from 1 - Not Helpful to 3 - Very Helpful)

■ Not Helpful ■ Somewhat Helpful ■ Very Helpful ■ N/A

Q10: Which additional destinations (if any) do you wish you could go to using regional transit service?

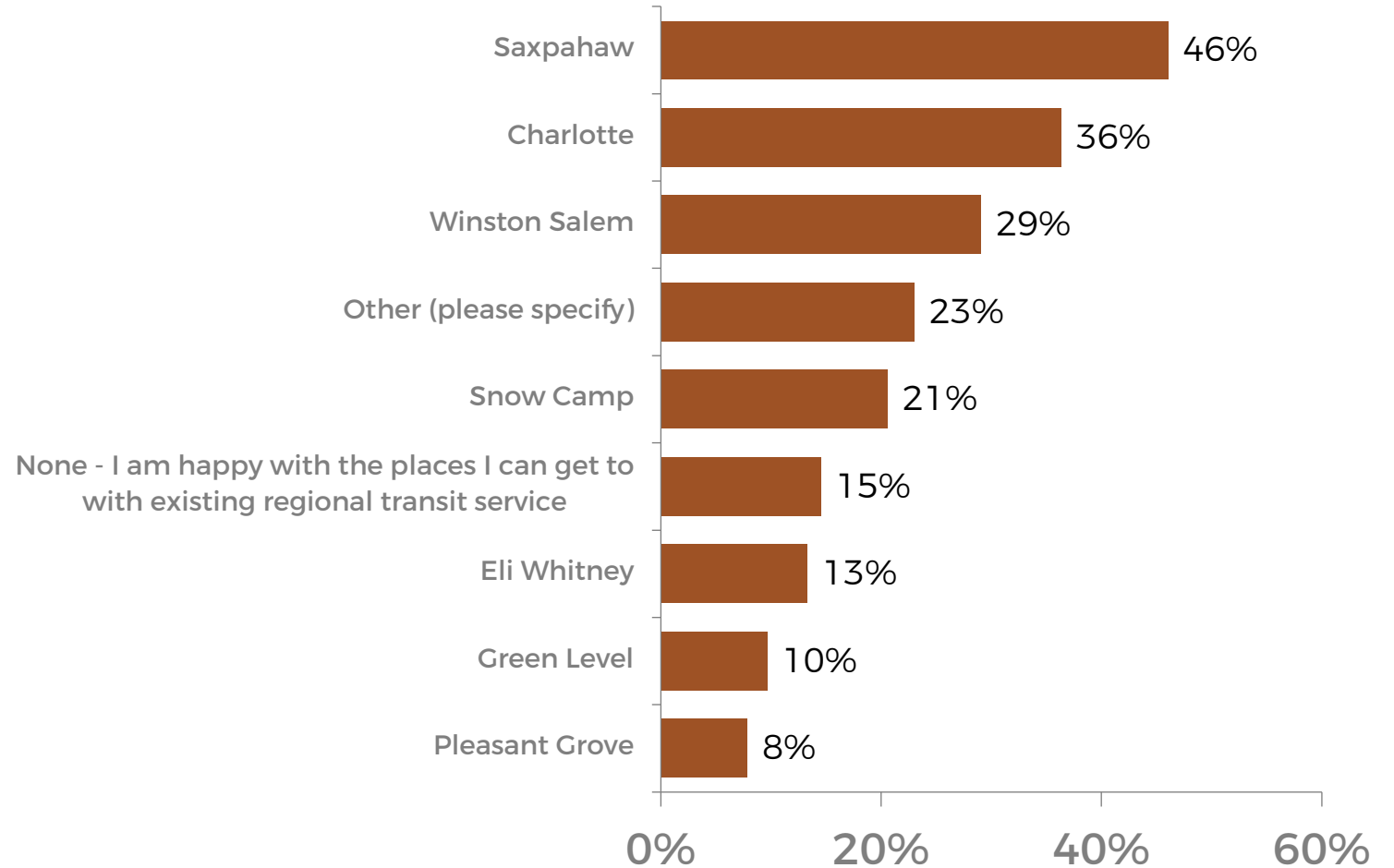
Answered: 254 Skipped: 1

Top requested destinations:

1. *Saxapahaw (46%)*
2. *Charlotte (36%)*
3. *Winston-Salem (29%)*

About 20 respondents would like to make work-related trips to/from Saxapahaw.

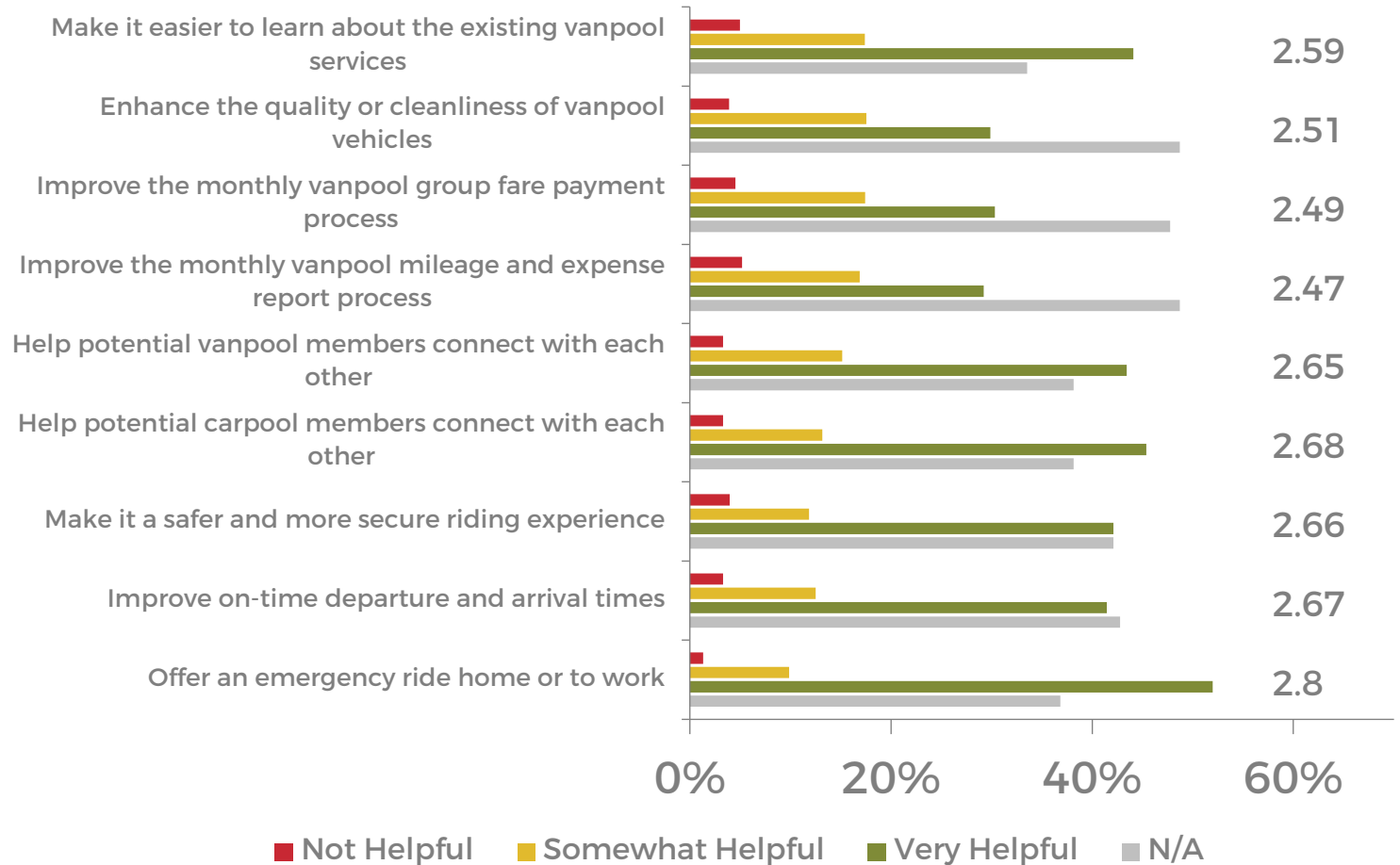
“Other” locations suggested by respondents are [Raleigh](#), [Elon](#), [Durham](#) and [Chapel Hill](#), notably places where there is existing service.



Q11: How helpful would each of the following potential improvements to enhance vanpool or carpool services be for you? *Answered: 162 Skipped: 105*

Top rated potential improvements:

1. Offer an emergency ride home or to work (2.80)
2. Help potential carpool members connect with each other (2.68)
3. Improve on-time departure and arrival times (2.67)
4. Make it a safer and more secure riding experience (2.66)
5. Help potential vanpool members connect with each other (2.65)

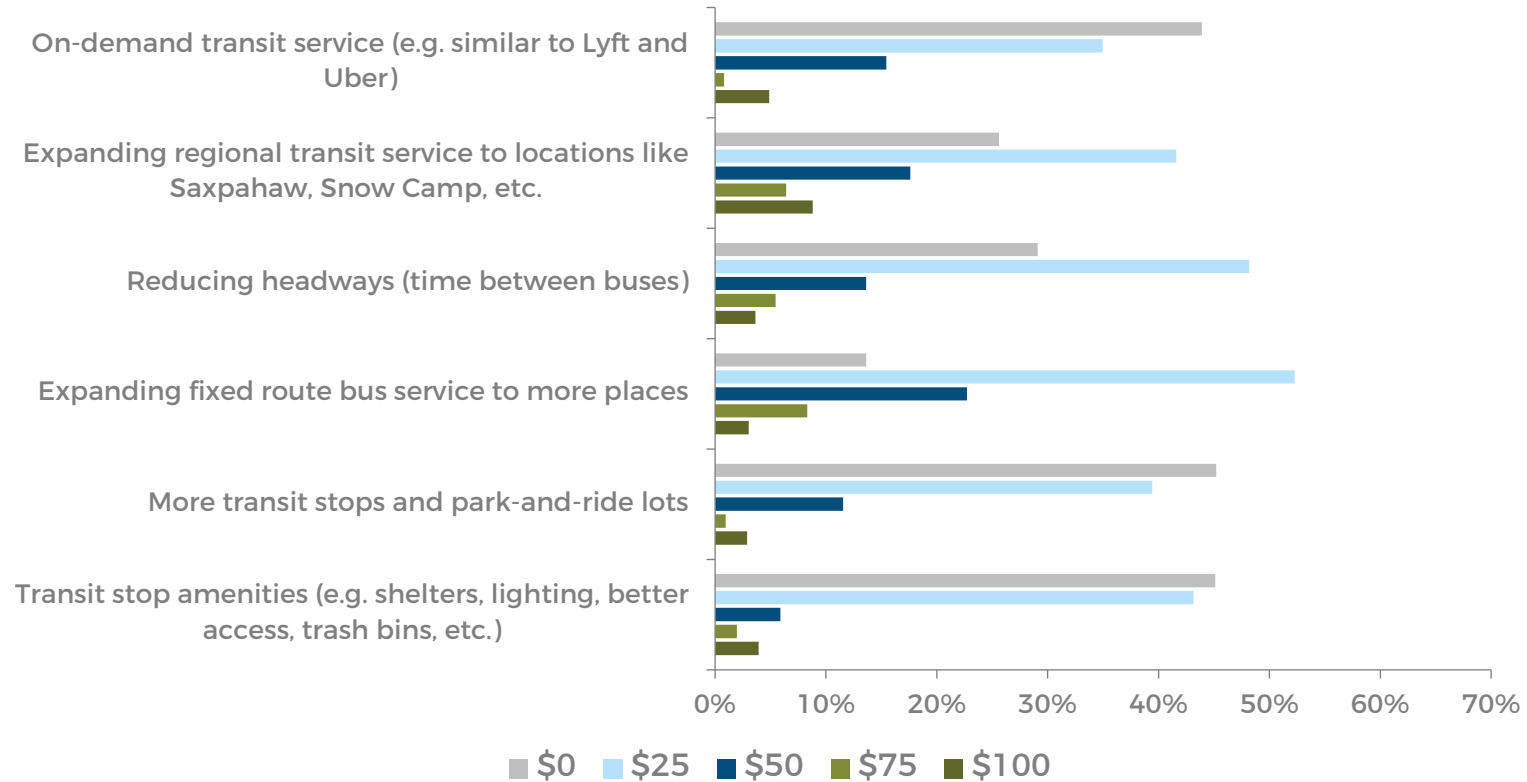


(Scores range from 1 - Not Helpful to 3 - Very Helpful)

Q12: With limited funds, transit service improvements must be prioritized. As an example, if you had \$100 to fund transit in our region, how would you allocate that money between the following transit service options? The total amount must add up to \$100 or less. *Answered: 160 Skipped: 107*

Overall, the categories to which respondents allocated the most funds were:

1. Expanding local fixed route bus service to more places (24.5%)
2. Expanding regional transit service to locations like Saxpahaw, Snow Camp, etc. (22.6%)
3. Reducing headways (time between buses) (16.1%)
4. On-demand transit service (e.g. similar to Lyft and Uber) (14.9%)



Survey Results

Free Response Questions (Q13)

Q13: Please share any additional comments about what would make transit service in our region more useful to you.

Responses received to this question can generally be categorized into the following six themes. The following slides provide specific examples of comments received under each theme category.

THEME 1

Expand transit service coverage area, especially to Southern Alamance communities, Elon, and the airport.

THEME 2

Improve walking & biking connections to stops.

THEME 3

Invest in more frequent service throughout the day

THEME 4

Extend service times, with hours that align with work schedules.

THEME 5

Add more transit stops.

THEME 6

Offer rail service, especially Amtrak to Burlington Station.

THEME 1

Expand transit service coverage area, especially to Southern Alamance communities, Elon, and the airport.

“Offer services to rural areas.”

“Include Saxapahaw, please, please, please.”

“Expand service to Haw River as well as Swepsonville and Greensboro.”

“It would be so helpful to have bus services in southern Alamance specifically Saxapahaw.”

“Residents in Southern Alamance need transportation to UNC Hospital and Duke Hospital for medical services.”

“The rural areas are in need of transportation some residents can attend classes at ACC or work jobs up in Graham or Burlington. Please consider adding routes in Saxapahaw, Eli Whitney, Snow Camp, etc.”

“We need more fixed routes between services and major work hubs.”

“I would use a transit service that connected Elon University to the Burlington Amtrak station.”

“If there were good public transit between Elon (where I work) and Chapel Hill (where I live), I would use it.”

“Express from Burlington to Durham, Raleigh, and/or RDU/GSO airports.”

“Transit to Elon's campus from Greensboro/Chapel Hill/Durham/etc or easy transit between PART stop at ARMC to Elon.”

“Should look into partnering with Elon to expand/create a bus service to RDU and GSO airports...”

Sample comments

THEME 2

Better walking & biking connections to stops

“Saxapahaw *really* needs sidewalks and better traffic control. Thank you!”

“Better ways for people who are walking to get to transit stops, safer sidewalks etc”!

“Public transit is useless if there is not a safe way to get from my home to a transit stop. I live in Elon and we need sidewalks or bike lanes to help us get to the bus stops. I don't mind walking a half a mile to a bus stop, but I need to be able to safely walk that half a mile.”

“Provision for multimodal and bicycle support / connections too.”

“Don't waste our tax-payer money. Invest on methods for crosswalks to travel safely on bike or foot. Buses are less essential.”

“We need more sidewalks and bike lanes. I live less than a mile from the park-and-ride lot where I catch my bus each morning, but walking or biking is not a safe option. There are no sidewalks leading to the park-and-ride lot from downtown Graham, or even a crosswalk to help you cross the road at the nearest intersection...”

“More sidewalks to get from place to place and bus stops would be outstanding. Sidewalks are needed everywhere, but I can speak to more suburban areas of Burlington.”

Sample comments

THEME 3

Invest in more frequent service throughout the day

“More buses and less wait time .”

“I will likely not become a transit user, as I live 1.3 miles from work, and frequently use my care during the day. Generally, more reliable/frequent times, easier transfers between LINK lines and more stops would benefit transit users...”

“I think we need to invest in reducing the headways, then increasing locations beyond the city.”

More morning and afternoon buses between GSO and Burlington/Elon

“I commute daily from Burlington to UNC on PART from Mebane. I would love a Burlington park-and-ride but really, my biggest issue is the huge gap of time in the middle of the day when there is no service between UNC and Mebane between 11:30am-ish and 4:30pm-ish. With two little kids in daycare back in Burlington, this is a big gap that is hard to overcome if something goes wrong and I need to get home ASAP...”

Sample comments

THEME 4

Extend service times, with times that better align with work schedules

“Burlington train station to Elon University Campus... before 8am, after 5pm, M-F.”

“Open Door Clinic and the hospital have many appointments set after 5 pm. It would be great to get to them, especially between Mebane, Graham, and Burlington.”

“The latest bus between these stops leaves at 4:19... why is that? No one gets off that early. There needs to be a bus that runs later in the evening. I literally cannot move to Chapel Hill because of this. I can't drive for medical reasons and Uber is unreliable and entirely too expensive to commute back and forth even just one way (if I was to just take the morning bus, which works for my schedule). It's \$30-\$35 plus a tip. There are NO other public transit systems that run this route, which I would imagine is mostly 54, and commonly used. I appreciate everything you guys do but would love for later buses.”

Sample comments

THEME 5

Add more transit stops

“We need more stops in Mebane on the south side of 40- Collington farms, the meadows etc.”

Lack of sidewalks and small shelters in areas where the bus picks up are the main reasons I won't use the bus now. I think the buses should pick-up riders who get a pass "any where" along the route who simply "wave" for pick-up.

“More bus stops are needed in Gibsonville. To make a connection with regional routes, Link Transit needs to begin services earlier. Currently, I must get a ride to ARMC to access the regional route to be at work on time.”

I'm a nonprofit employee working with formerly-incarcerated women in rural Graham, NC (on Hwy 87 between Graham and Saxapahaw). I regularly drive 100 miles or more every month to provide transportation for necessary trips our residents take (none of them have cars because they are just leaving prison). These trips usually include going to the probation department, grocery store, medical appointments, therapy appointments, court appointments, and sometimes taking them to their part-time jobs. Having more stops in the rural parts of our community would be an indescribably huge help to our organization, and I'm sure it would be hugely beneficial to other folks living around our farm. Since that area is not very walkable and necessary appointments are so far apart, having the transit out there would allow our residents a greater sense of independence and agency, as well as put less wear and tear on staff cars. Even just putting one bus stop on Thompson Mill Road would be infinitely helpful to us!

Sample comments

THEME 6

Offer rail service, especially Amtrak to Burlington Station

“You didn't ask about the train service, which should be an important element of regional transit. The reduction of the Burlington stop on the Amtrak line to/from Greensboro was an AWFUL decision. We used the train to get to/from work...”

“It would be helpful to have more services on the Amtrak from Durham to Elon with an easier transport from the Elon train station to campus.”

“We need a rail system. I will NOT use a bus for transportation! Having just been to the NY region, which has a fantastic rail system. I am amazed that we don't offer trains and light rail here in our state. So many European cities and US cities now offer light rail in addition to train service (both express and ones with many stops). It's terrible that we don't. No busses for me! Our friends and family want light rail and a more efficient train system”

NCDOT recently cut train stops at Burlington Station, which is devastating for so many of the commuters who have depended on this service for years. There are so many people who are now nearly ruined by this devastating decision. Just getting back the old routes is a must.

Sample comments

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Other unique comments from respondents included:

“Previously rode PART to commute to work; now work from home; was/is a valuable resource, would like to see its use increase.”

Leave the southern part of the county alone. We won't have any green space left at the rate we're going, and some of us enjoy a more rural home life.

The cost for van rental is too high to make economic sense. It is cheaper for 5 people to drive individually (factoring in gas and maintenance on separate cars) than to rent a van from you.”

“The reason I don't use transit is that it doesn't exist where I live in Sax. I will probably never use transit as much as someone living in a near city, I think it would enhancer visitor access for people coming from nearby cities to engage in recreational activities available in our larger area...”

“It would be great to create specific service to help people request rides within 48 hours to get to court in Graham. Many first appearances are set within 48 hours and yet there's no way to schedule a ride that fast, especially for folks in Southern Alamance.”

“Thank you for your expansion into Elon!”

“I would fund on-demand services for better access and service times for people with disabilities.”

Sample comments

Key Survey Takeaways

Key Community Survey Takeaways

- ✓ The most common **reasons respondents use transit** are **not having a car, sustainability, and affordability**. **Physical disabilities** were often cited as another reason respondents depend on transit.
- ✓ Most respondents are **using transit for work, errands, or medical appointments**.
- ✓ Respondents generally have **limited knowledge about existing available transit services** in the region, citing that as a reason they do not use transit.
- ✓ Those that are aware of available **transit services** say it **does not go to their key destinations** and/or **do not find service to be frequent enough** or **aligned with their work schedules**. For local bus service, **more frequent service was the top request**.
- ✓ Respondents believe that **better coordination is needed** between the existing transit service providers to **facilitate transfers**, rating it a top improvement needed for local bus service, on-demand transit, and regional express bus service.
- ✓ Top destinations requested for additional regional transit service were **Saxapahaw, Charlotte, and Winston-Salem**. Service to places that already have regional bus connections like **Raleigh and Durham were also requested, suggesting a lack of knowledge** of services or a desire for connections to different parts of the BGMPO area.
- ✓ To improve on-demand transit service, **top requests were for technology enhancements** to make it simple to **order and track your ride through an app**.
- ✓ Respondents requested **better pedestrian access to bus stops**.

Top 3 Desired Improvements by Service Type

Local Fixed Route Bus Service

1. Increase the frequency of existing fixed route bus service (buses coming more often than every 90 minutes as they do today)
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so I can easily transfer from one service to another
3. Make it easier to learn about current available transit service

On-Demand Transit Service

1. Provide option to schedule trips by smart phone with the transit provider's mobile app
2. Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another
3. Improve the accuracy of real-time vehicle arrival information
4. Make the transit app more user-friendly

Regional Express Transit Service

1. Expand regional transit service to offer new connections from our area to additional destinations
2. Increase the frequency of existing regional transit service
3. Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder Interviews

Invitations were sent to 24 stakeholders with follow up resulting in 9 interviews. The interviews were conducted virtually through MS Teams during month of August 2023. Stakeholders came from 5 primary types of organizations: Governmental, Educational, Business, Healthcare, Non-Profits. Participation from community organization/agency members included the following:

- Alamance Chamber of Commerce
- Alamance Wellness Collaborative
- City of Burlington
- Ebenezer Baptist Church
- United Way of Alamance County

Open ended questions covered during each interview included:

- Personal and constituent/community members' experience with transit usage
- Transit challenges
- Perceived/known current issues
- Existing state of local and regional services
- Suggested improvements

Following are key takeaways from the stakeholder interviews.

Stakeholder Interviews

Usage/Familiarity

- Most had little personal experience with transit but had experience using other regional services like Amtrak
- Many know of local community members taking advantage of transit, especially Burlington residents

Current Issues

- **Confusion:** System overall and high number of operators is confusing along with overlap issues
- **Lack of access:** childcare, food sources, public/senior housing, other communities (Graham), rural areas, workforce
- **Lack of information:** transit options, schedules/general information, connections, Elon Express
- **Lack of political support:** particularly in Graham
- **Limited service:** span, lack of Sunday service, long headways
- **Perceived issues:** Graham city council and unhoused population in Graham
- **Cutback of Amtrak service:** seen as detrimental for regional accessibility

Stakeholder Interviews

Existing Conditions

- Bike racks on buses are appreciated to augment travel
- Support for transit seems to be high, but awareness is low
- Elon was recently included but their service is relatively unused by the public due to lack of information/awareness
- East Burlington is high minority and low-income with high transit needs
- A 500-seat call center was located at Holly Hill Mall because of transit access
- Service for workforce population is lacking

Suggested Improvements

- **Better local access** to destinations (more stops, more coverage, more access in Graham)
- **Improved information/awareness** of local and regional services
- **More service:** longer spans, Sunday service, increased frequencies
- **Improve multimobility options**/connections and transfers
- **Improve governance;** include community members on advisory board
- **Capital improvements**/facilities and shelters are needed

Public Meetings

Round 1 Public Open Houses

Two public open houses were held after completion of the existing conditions assessment. The objective of these open houses were to share findings from the existing conditions analysis and to solicit feedback on desired transit improvements in the region.

The first open house was held virtually on August 22, 2023 via Zoom. In addition to participation from the general public, representatives of the BGMPO, ACTA and NC DOT attended this open house.

The second open house was held August 24, 2023 at the Paramount Theater in Burlington, NC. Attendees included:

- ACTA
- City of Burlington
- City of Graham
- Link Transit
- Town of Elon
- Interested residents of BGMPO area

Key takeaways from these two open house events are summarized on the following pages.



Round 1 Open House Input

- **When asked how the region should invest in transit...**
 - Most participants preferred investment in local and on-demand transit services
- **When asked which improvements matter most...**
 - Most participants preferred to see improvements in local bus service coverage, followed by coordination with local governments to improve access to bus stops

HOW SHOULD WE INVEST IN TRANSIT?

Improving transit in our region with a limited budget means prioritizing the services that will be most helpful. Different types of transit services also have different costs, ranging from the higher expenses of longer distance travel for express regional bus service (\$\$\$), to fixed route local bus service on a set schedule (\$\$), and flexible services like on-demand/microtransit (\$).

Imagine you had a budget of 5 \$ tokens. How would you divide it amongst these types of services?

- Place stickers in the boxes below to vote to prioritize spending on on-demand (\$), local bus (\$\$), or express bus (\$\$\$) services.
- Visit the "sticker bank" to get your 5 tokens. Each color has a different value: green = \$, blue = \$\$ and red = \$\$\$. You can choose whatever combination you like, as long as they total to 5 tokens (\$\$\$\$\$).
- You must use the number of \$ tokens that matches the symbol for the type of service you want to vote for. For example, a vote for express bus service costs 3 tokens (\$\$\$).
- If you want, you may spend multiple tokens on one category. For example, you could spend all your tokens on on-demand service by placing 5 green stickers there.

\$ ON-DEMAND	\$\$ LOCAL BUS	\$\$\$ EXPRESS BUS
		

BGMPO REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY
bgmpo.org/transitstudy

BGMPO

WHICH IMPROVEMENTS MATTER MOST?

There are many ways to improve transit, like increasing bus frequency, extending service hours, serving new destinations, enhancing bus stop amenities, or making it easier and safer to walk or bike to the bus. With a limited budget, we need to prioritize the improvements that people in the BGMPO area want the most. **Get up to 3 dot stickers and place them in the boxes below to vote for the improvements you want.**

LOCAL BUS Increase frequency of weekday local bus service	LOCAL BUS Provide more weekend local bus service	PARATRANSIT Offer same-day reservations for paratransit service	TECHNOLOGY Make the transit app more user-friendly
LOCAL BUS Offer later evening weekday local bus service	EXPRESS BUS Offer more frequent regional express bus service during peak morning and evening commute times	ON-DEMAND Offer same-day reservations for on-demand/microtransit service	INFRASTRUCTURE Improve bus stops for a better waiting experience
LOCAL BUS Expand local bus service to cover more areas	EXPRESS BUS Offer regional express bus service all day (including mid-day, not only peak commute hours)	EXPRESS BUS Offer regional express bus service to additional destinations	INFRASTRUCTURE Work with local governments to improve sidewalk and crossing access to bus stops

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BGMPO

Round 1 Open House Input

- **When asked about local transit service needs, requested locations included...**

- Mebane and Tanger Outlets
- Swepsonville
- Green Level
- Haw River
- Webb Avenue

- **When asked about regional transit service needs, requested locations included...**

- Downtown Durham
- Duke Hospital
- Chapel Hill/UNC
- Greensboro Airport
- Greensboro shopping areas

WHERE DO YOU WANT LOCAL SERVICE?

What additional destinations within the BGMPo area would you like to access by transit?

Place a dot sticker on the map to show where you would like to get to by transit in the BGMPo area. Add a comment on the line with the matching number to tell us more about where you want to go.

1	Mebane-Outlet	15	29
2	Swepsonville	16	30
3	Village of Alamance	17	31
4	Green Level	18	32
5	Haw River	19	33
6	Arden	20	34
7	Blaine Ave	21	35
8	Swepsonville	22	36
9	Lease	23	37
10	Webb Ave	24	38
11		25	39
12		26	40
13		27	41
14		28	42

I think the existing bus network connects to the right destinations within the BGMPo area. (Place your sticker in this box.)

Points of Interest

- College
- Community Center
- Healthcare
- Major Business
- Public High School
- Shopping
- Social Services

BGMPo REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY
bgmpo.org/transitstudy

WHERE DO YOU WANT REGIONAL SERVICE?

What additional destinations outside the BGMPo area would you like to access by transit?

Place a dot sticker on the map to show where you would like to get to by transit outside the BGMPo area. Add a comment on the line with the matching number to tell us more about where you want to go.

1	Downtown Durham	15	29
2	Greensboro Shopping	16	30
3	Greensboro Airport	17	31
4	Duke Hospital	18	32
5	Chapel Hill/UNC	19	33
6	Greensboro	20	34
7	Green Level	21	35
8	Hillsboro	22	36
9		23	37
10		24	38
11		25	39
12		26	40
13		27	41
14		28	42

I think the existing bus network connects to the right destinations within the BGMPo area. (Place your sticker in this box.)

Points of Interest

- Airport & Logistics
- College
- Community Center
- Healthcare
- Major Business
- Public High School
- Shopping
- Social Services

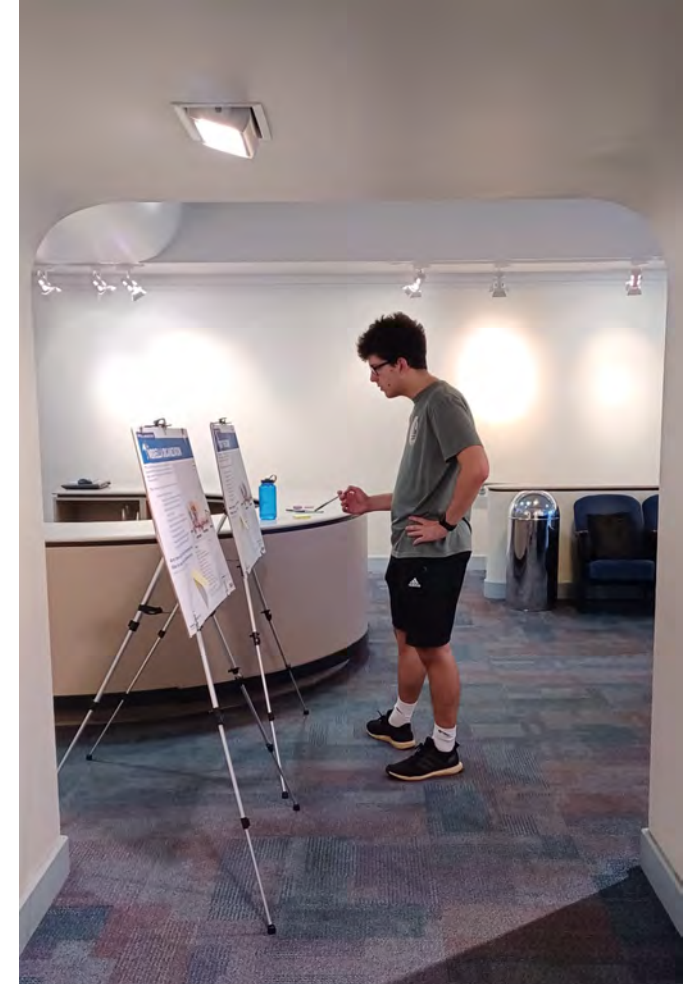
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bgmpo.org/transitstudy

Round 2 Public Open Houses

The second round of public open houses occurred in October. The first open house occurred virtually on October 24, 2023 via Zoom. The second occurred in-person on October 26, 2023 at the Paramount Theater in Burlington. Information shared at these open houses were as follows:

- Findings from this project's public and stakeholder outreach efforts
- Potential transit organizational structures for the region
- Conceptual transit service plans under each organizational structure option
- Information on how each potential service scenario could impact various travel patterns

Participants were asked to provide input regarding specific service improvements that were included within each service scenario.



Round 2 Public Open Input

A sampling of feedback heard during the second round of open houses around each potential organizational structure is as follows:

Stay the Course

- More clear schedules are needed on the Link Transit website as well as pdf versions of the schedules
- More shelters and sidewalks are needed for access to transit
- There is a need to improve access between Elon University and PART service.
- Can Red and Blue Link Transit lines be consolidated in this scenario?

Umbrella Organization

- This scenario still has 90-minute frequencies on Link Transit routes That is too long.
- Increased frequency and faster routes are needed between Elon University and PART. Make sure local routes connecting to PART are timed with PART departure times

Consolidated Organization

- The proposed Blue route change between Elon and Burlington would be great
- Supportive of a ¼ cent sales tax increase as a means to improve transit service throughout the region.



Community Survey #2

Survey #2 Overview

Community Survey #2 Overview

This survey was an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on three scenarios with varying levels of investment and improvements.

The 14-question survey took about 9 minutes to complete, with questions focused on:

- *Feedback for Scenario 1 (Q1-2)*
- *Feedback for Scenario 2 (Q3-Q4)*
- *Feedback for Scenario 3 (Q5-Q6)*
- *Additional comments and questions (Q7)*
- *Transit services used in the past year (Q8)*
- *Respondent demographics/background (Q10-Q14)*

50 people responded. In addition to this survey, community members were invited to join an in-person or virtual meeting in October 2023 to share their input on the draft scenarios.

The following pages present survey question responses.

 BURLINGTON-GRAHAM METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Which scenario do you want for our region's future transit?

Check out three draft scenarios for different ways we could operate and fund transit service in the Burlington-Graham region, along with the kinds of service improvements possible in each one. Take the survey to tell us what you want to see!

Survey live now to 12/4!



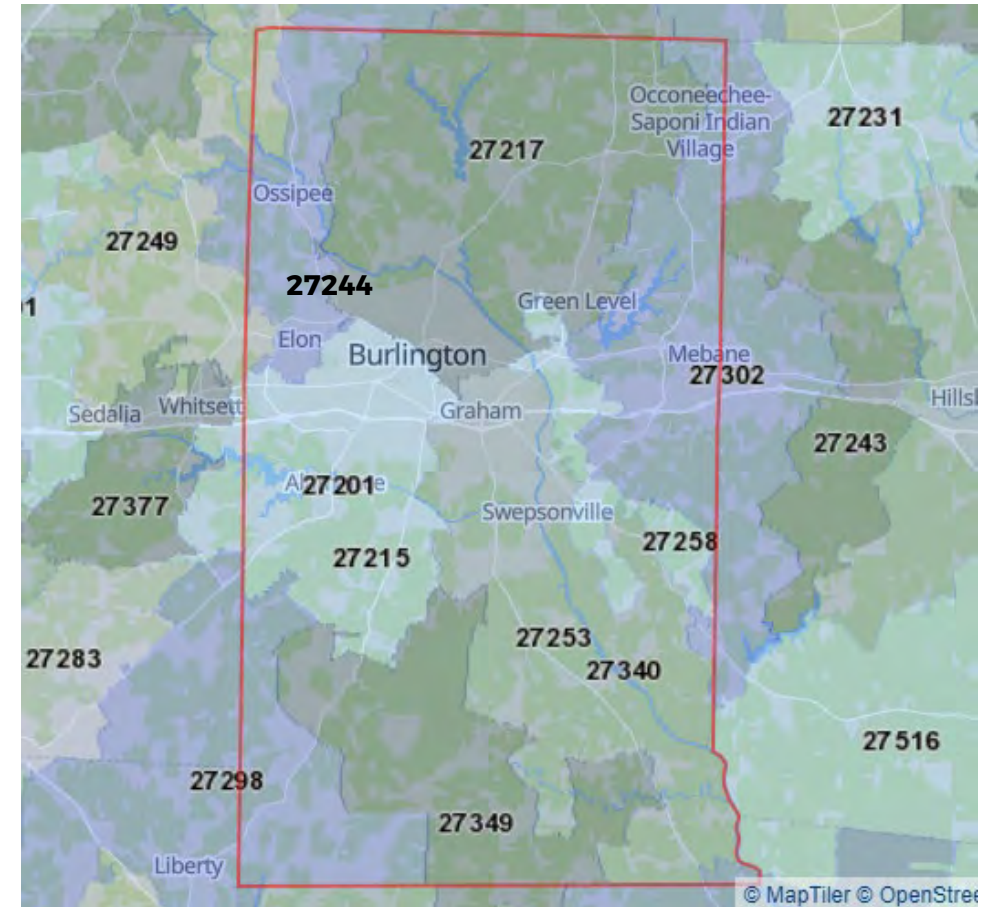
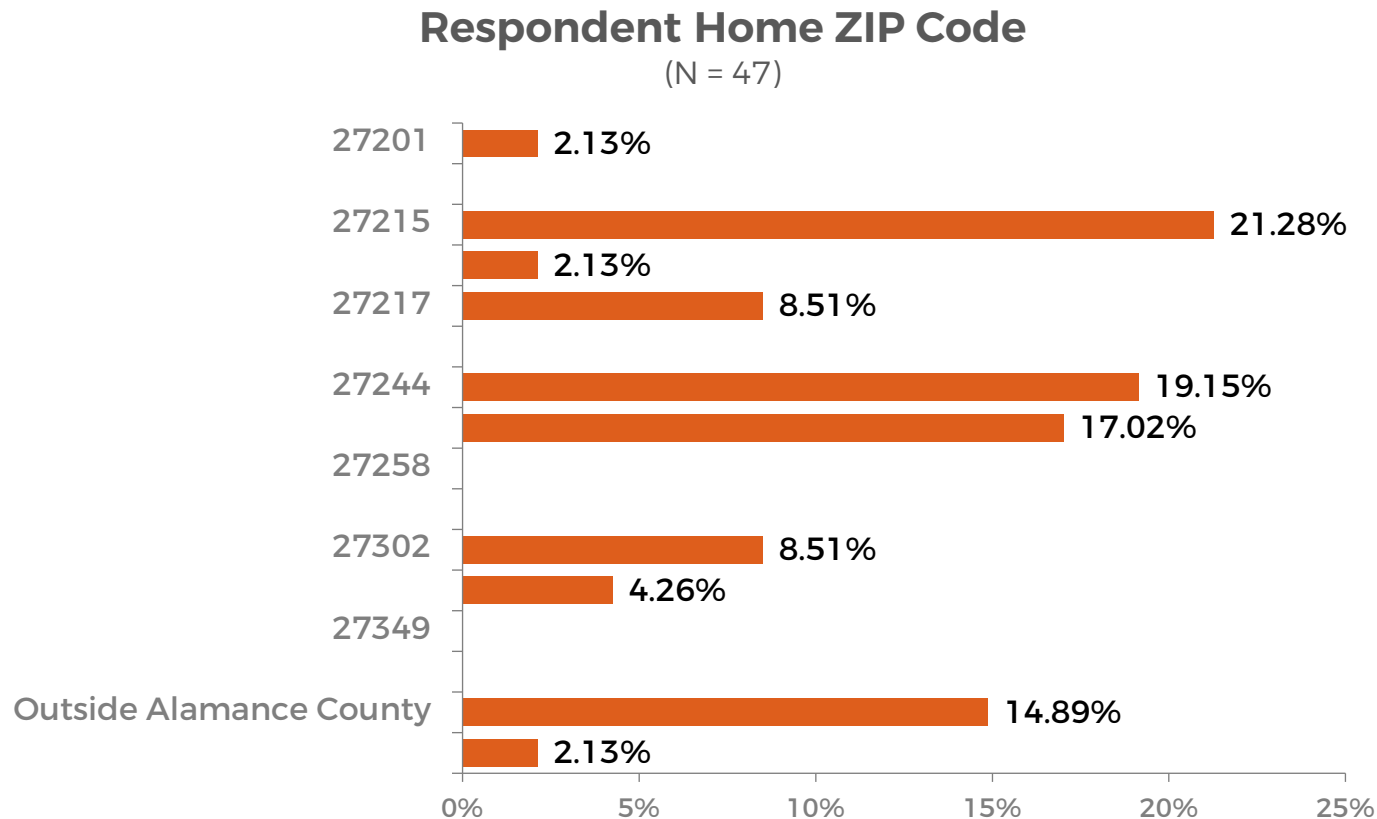
 **Take the survey**
surveymonkey.com/r/BGMPORTFS2

Respondent Overview

Demographic & Background Questions (Q10 – Q14)

Question 10: Which ZIP code do you live in?

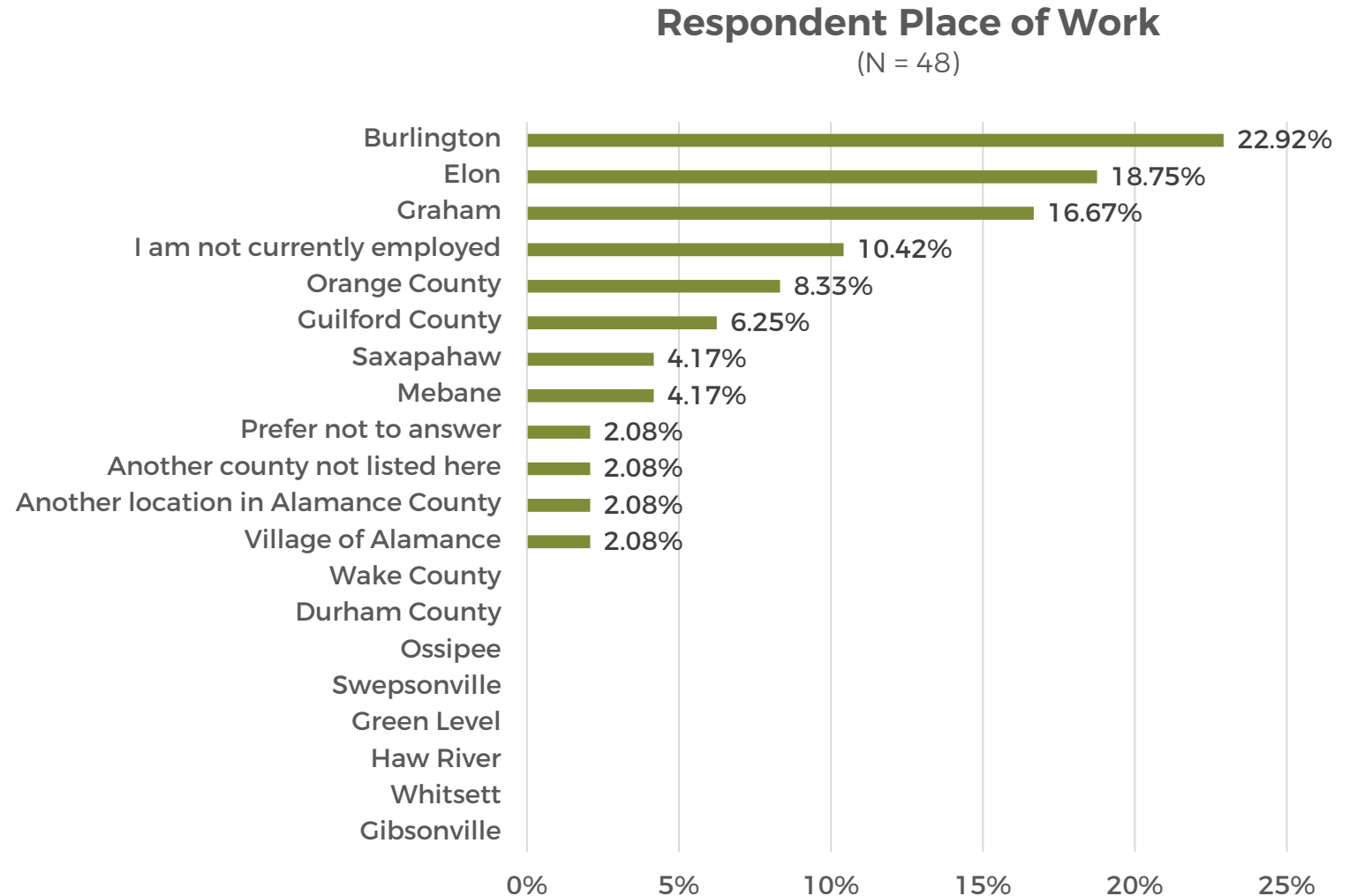
People who live across the study area were represented, including both urban and rural areas, as well as people who work in the study area but live elsewhere (15%).



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

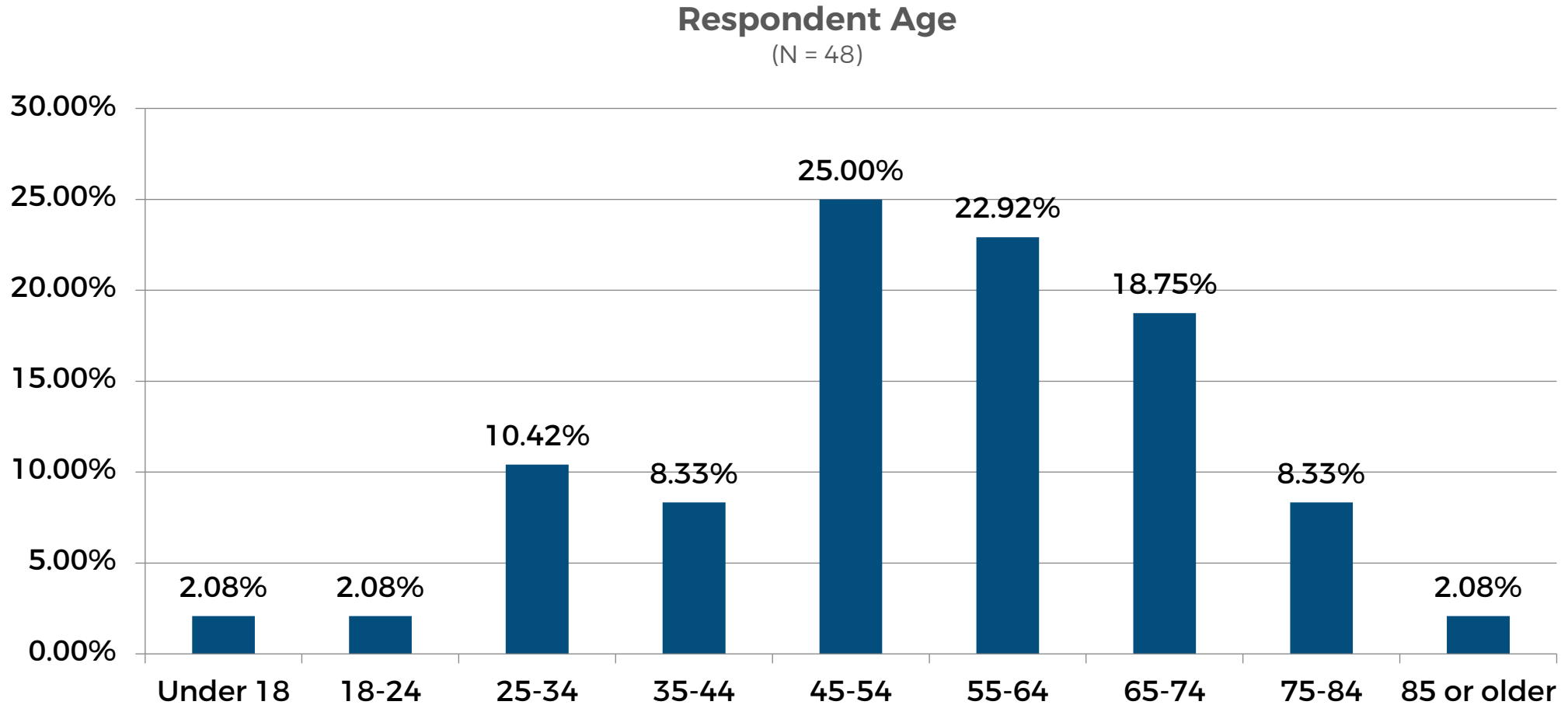
Q11: Where do you work?

- Almost 60% of respondents work in Burlington (23%), Elon (19%), or Graham (17%).
- 10% of respondents are not currently employed.
- The most common place respondents worked outside of Alamance County was Orange County (8%).



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q12: How old are you?



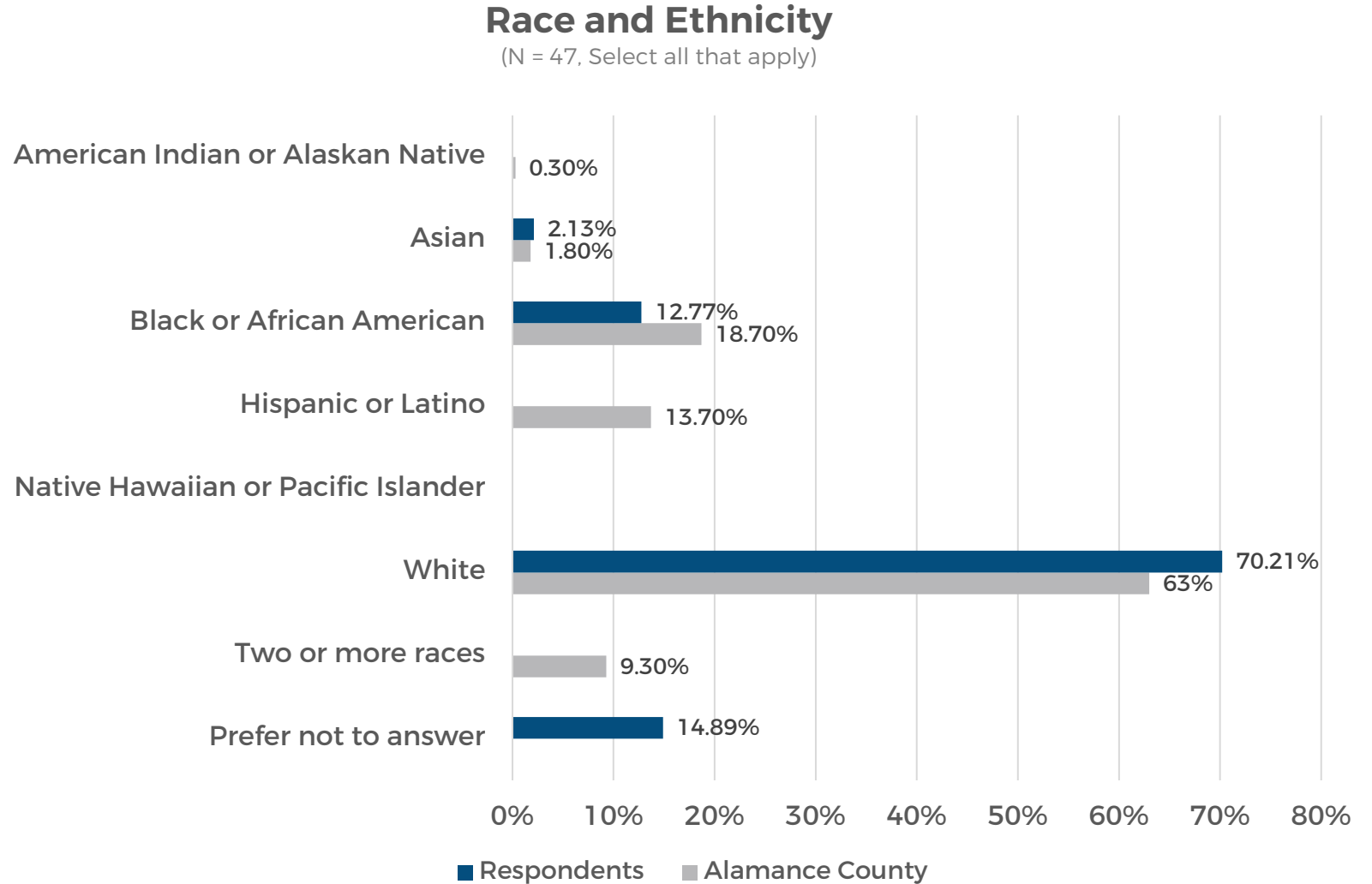
Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q13: How would you describe your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply.)

Compared to the Alamance County population as a benchmark, there were more white respondents (+7%) and Asian respondents (+.3%) than the population overall.

There were fewer Black (-6%), Hispanic/Latino (-14%), or Two or more races (-0.6%) respondents than would be expected.

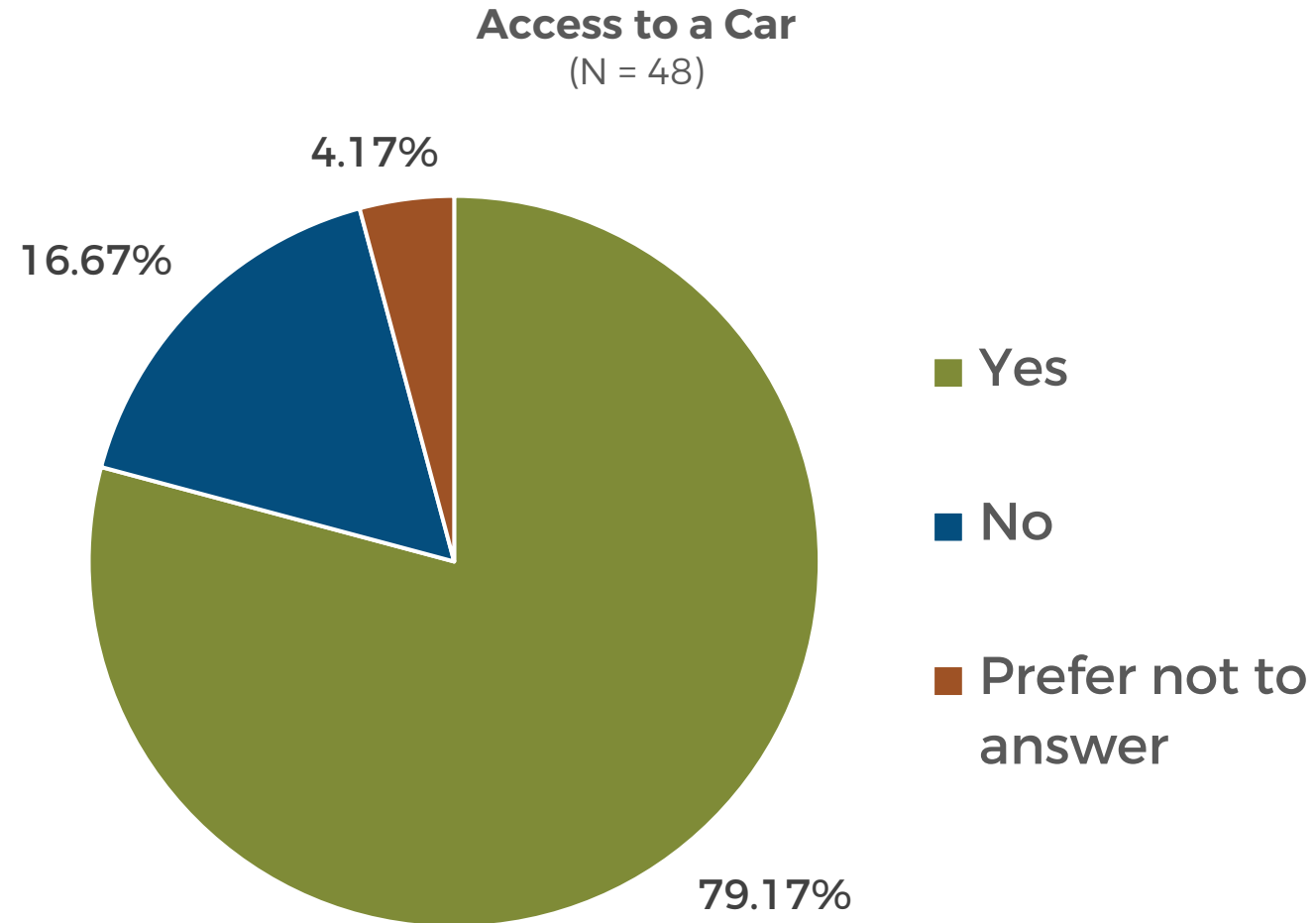
6% of respondents did not share information about their race or ethnicity.



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Q14: Do you have reliable access to a car?

Most respondents (79%) have reliable access to a car and do not have to rely on transit to get around.



Note: Demographic and personal questions were optional and not every respondent answered these questions.

Survey #2 Results

(Q1 – Q9)

Q2: Please share any other comments about Scenario 1 - Stay the Course.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 40

“Although the orange route would be a connecting service for Mebane, the drop off point is not a safe place for pedestrians and would deter me from taking it.”

“This is probably the best outcome for the coming decade and the options can be re-evaluated towards the end of that timeline.”

Stay the course isn't working. I have to drive to and from work, which is a headache and a huge personal cost. Divert funding from road construction to public transit.”

“Add more call-in service for South Burlington and Graham”

“Improve PART's service hours”

“If it includes a stop in Saxapahaw then that would be great.”

“But what about connecting with the train? NCDOT recently removed key stops at Burlington, which devastated many people's lives and jobs. As this is multi-modal transit, and the train is a key mode of transit across the area, restoring this stop must be at the heart of this plan. Additionally, cycling is a key, sustainable, healthy form of transit, and so this should also be considered.”

Sample comments

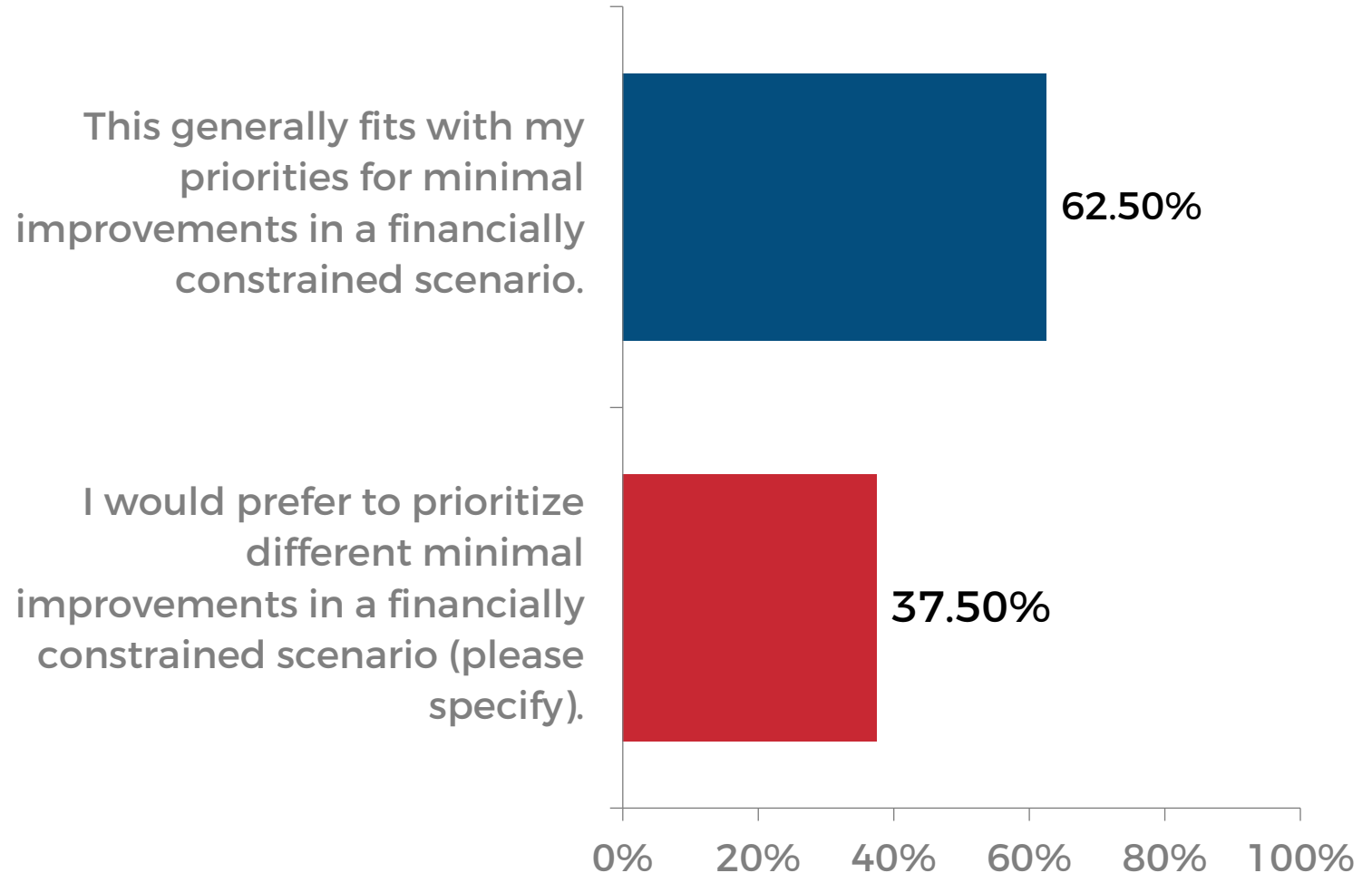
Q1: How do the proposed Scenario 1 service changes fit with your priorities for improvements, given the existing governance structure and financial constraints?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 10

63% of respondents felt that Scenario 1 service changes fit their priorities considering constraints.

Of the 37% who wanted different minimal improvements prioritized, specific responses included:

- *More transfers and connections, particularly to regional services (e.g. Durham Express, PART, Chapel Hill)*
- *More coverage to places of employment along the I-40*
- *Inclusion of a microtransit pilot program, if possible, in the minimal scenario*
- *Shorten Link Transit routes to increase bus frequencies*



Q3: How do the proposed Scenario 2 service changes fit with your priorities for improvements, given the moderate level of improvements possible with the umbrella organization and the level of funding available through a countywide vehicle registration fee and potential additional municipal contributions?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 11

74% of respondents felt that Scenario 2 service changes fit their *priorities considering constraints*.

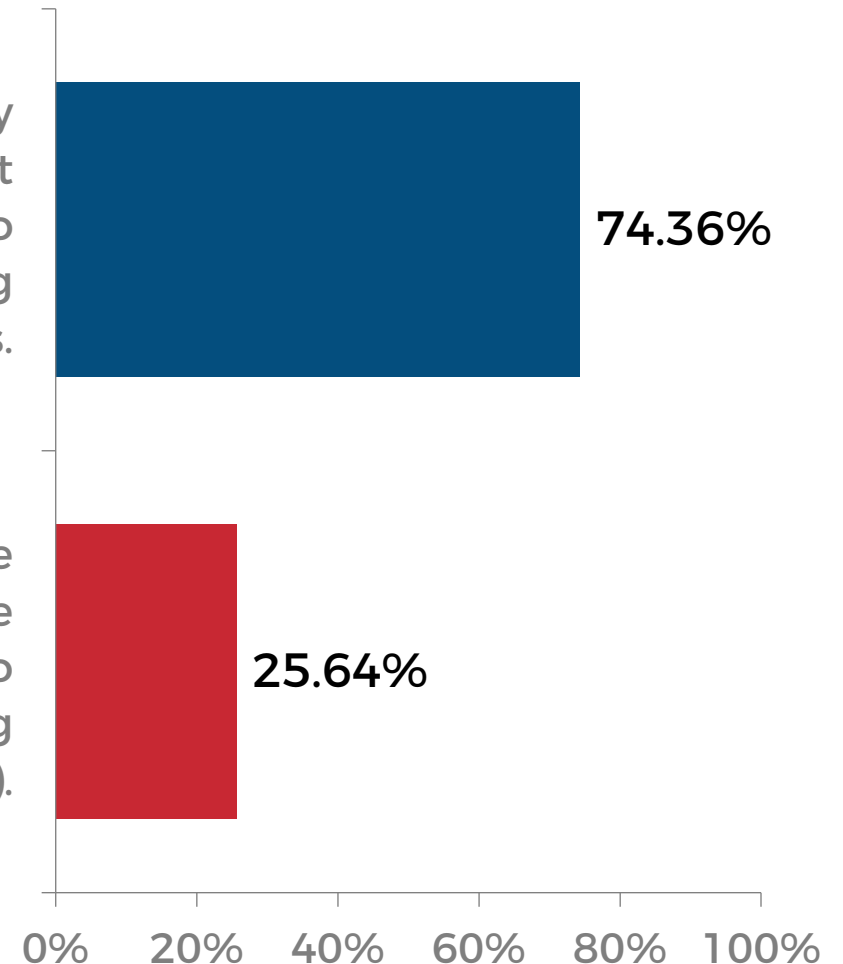
- *Like increase microtransit service*
- *Like online trip planning tool*
- *Like filling in the gaps of Elon’s seasonal shuttle*

Of the 26% who wanted different moderate improvements prioritized, specific responses included:

- *More consideration of cutting costs to students*
- *Resistance to additional fees or taxes*
- *Service to Saxapahaw and South Alamance*

This generally fits with my priorities for modest improvements in a scenario with modest funding increases.

I would prefer to prioritize different moderate improvements in a scenario with modest funding increases (please specify).



Q4: Please share any other comments about Scenario 2 - Umbrella Organization.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 38

“I think having this area served by three different entities - ACTA, Elon Express, LINK, does not make much sense. Better one entity - not controlled by Burlington - would provide better service and could be used to expand access within the existing service area.”

“This makes a lot of sense.”

“These improvements might make it possible for me to take the bus to work on certain days, which would free up the car to be used by others in my family.”

“I think we need to prioritize sidewalks and bike lanes. A person needs to be able to get to the bus safely in order to take the bus.”

“Combining Link Transit with ACTA seems to be a logical solution to reduce certain operational costs and coordination of overlapping services.”

“Would love to see the municipalities partner more and make decisions together on how to best enhance transportation services.”

“I like Scenario 3.”

“It’s an improvement, but not near enough.”

Sample comments

Q5: How do the proposed Scenario 3 service changes fit with your priorities for improvements, given the more substantial level of improvements possible with the level of funding available through a countywide vehicle registration fee and 1/4 penny sales tax?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 7

77% of respondents felt that Scenario 3 service changes fit their priorities.

Of the 23% who wanted different substantial improvements prioritized, specific responses included:

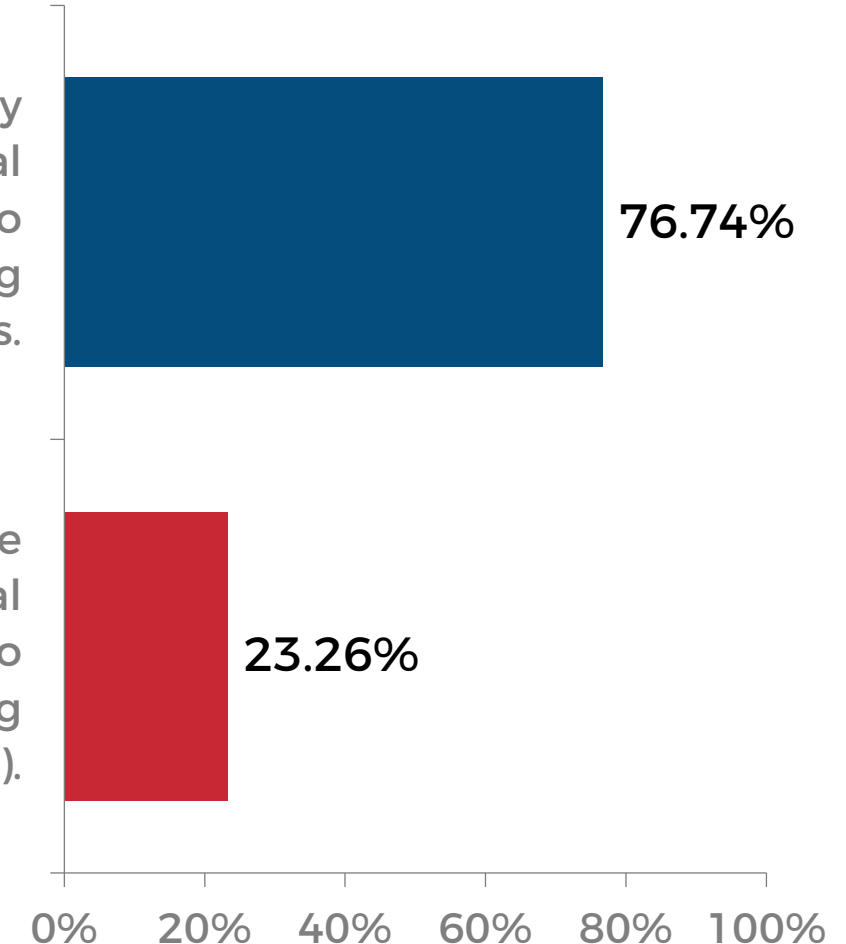
- *Concerns about higher costs and raising taxes*
- *Merging services under ACTA*
- *Better access to Mebane*
- *The Webb Ave route would still provide access to a grocery store for Elon residents*

This generally fits with my priorities for substantial improvements in a scenario with more significant funding increases.

76.74%

I would prefer to prioritize different substantial improvements in a scenario with more significant funding increases (please specify).

23.26%



Q6: Please share any other comments about Scenario 3 – Consolidated.

Answered: 21 Skipped: 29

“I like increasing the frequency of the buses on their routes.”

“PART 4 definitely needs expanded services.”

“Expansion of ACTA and micro transit options would help my elderly father who does not drive and cannot walk long distances to bus stops.”

“I think Link has proven its value to the community. Scenario 3 is the only one that will impact lives reaching beyond the current ridership. Scenario 2 might be an intermediate step to achieving Scenario 3.”

“Best fit for the future.”

“This is the way to go. The tax increase doesn’t bother me. I’m going to pay for transportation one way or another, and the tax increase will be cheaper than maintaining my car. With this plan, I can generally rely on the bus rather than on driving. Plus, if we have more buses going back and forth between Alamance County and Orange/Durham counties, maybe there will be fewer morning traffic jams on I-40 East (they’re horrible).”

“I know transportation continues to be a major issue voiced by residents that live in southern and northern parts of the county. Maybe the consolidation could alleviate this disparity?”

Sample comments

Q6: Please share any other comments about Scenario 3 – Consolidated.

Answered: 21 Skipped: 29

“I think we need to have a substantially more robust public transit system that ties together Greensboro to chapel Hill and even Durham. As the population ages, we need more ways for people to reach all the destinations mentioned without having to drive themselves. A small increase in taxes is well worth it to ensure this could happen.”

“Seems like the only plan that will create substantial improvement. However, I suspect the sales tax increase would be a hard sell to voters, sadly.”

“Scenario 3 sounds best. I have a car, but it would be easier to ride a bus to and from Chapel Hill. I live in Burlington. Parking at UNC is hard to find. I would like a reasonable bus option.”

“Alamance County has a history of voting down sales tax increases and, with the exception of the City of Burlington, not choosing vehicle registration fees [...] but Scenario 3 would be the best path forward if there were political will to do it.”

“Bigger is not better. Local in-county service for local people.”

“I am opposed to Scenario 3.”

Sample comments

Q6: Please share any other comments about Scenario 3 – Consolidated.

Answered: 21 Skipped: 29

“This seems like the best use of resources, but I don't know that the 1/4 penny tax will go over with voters unless there is a real campaign to get residents to see the benefits. So many in the county do not use or need public transit and do not understand the overall benefit to the area by having a decent system in place. I am also glad to see that fares are coming back. I think we need to contribute something if we are using the service, period.”

“Not sure I agree with the proposed funding mechanism. Targeting car owners, rather than the County taking the responsibility to raise funds and 'own' this benefit I think is the wrong approach. I will reiterate my concern noted above that this has to be more than a Burlington-centric system, particularly if funding is coming from the county residents.”

“If it is decided that an expedited consolidation will be approved then this alternative with an expanded ACTA Board being the coordinator for potential growth and direction is obviously the correct way to proceed.”

“Additional funding should come from Federal or State pools and should not be funded by the taxpayer. A registration tax may be acceptable but the Public Transit system should not be a drain to the General Fund of the City of Burlington.”

Sample comments

Survey #2 Results

Additional Comments and Questions (Q7)

Q7: Please share any additional comments or questions about the three draft scenarios.

Answered: 19 Skipped: 31

“I think the Umbrella option would allow the county to see if the demand is such that a Consolidated arrangement with additional services is warranted.”

“In these times of financial hardship for people, government should make do with less, not more.”

“Burlington/Alamance residents are burdened with too many taxes. Reduce taxes and gov’t services.”

“Consolidation and funding increases seems like the best overall option.”

“Adding more government levels will add to cost.”

“Don’t be afraid of bold solutions. I respect the desire to be fiscally conservative and responsible with taxpayers’ money, but also remember that people like good municipal services and forward-thinking leadership.”

“Light rail please!! Meanwhile, more efficient bus travel across the county would suffice.”

“I don’t currently use public transportation, but this map piques my interest in doing so. I could imagine using it to get to the Triangle if the routes were easy to access.”

“I like the plans for improvements to the website (trip planner and payment app) to make it more user friendly.”

Sample comments

Q7: Please share any additional comments or questions about the three draft scenarios.

Answered: 19 Skipped: 31

“The consolidatud plan is clearly the ideal scenario and should be adopted and fought for! I'd like to see more train service included. I'd also like to know more details of how expanded bus routes would affect villages in Alamance (I live in Saxapahaw and out traffic issues are already out of control, primarily due to large commerical vehicles. Here's where micro transit and smaller busses - like shuttles - could really help.)”

“I think the best course of action would be to combine Link and ACTA, and coordinate services with PART, with a coordinating app so that customers could have better ease of use.”

“Option 3 is the best solution along with Option 2.”

“Anything is better than nothing but why not do the best option for working people & students?”

“I like the plans for improvements to the website (trip planner and payment app) to make it more user friendly.”

Sample comments

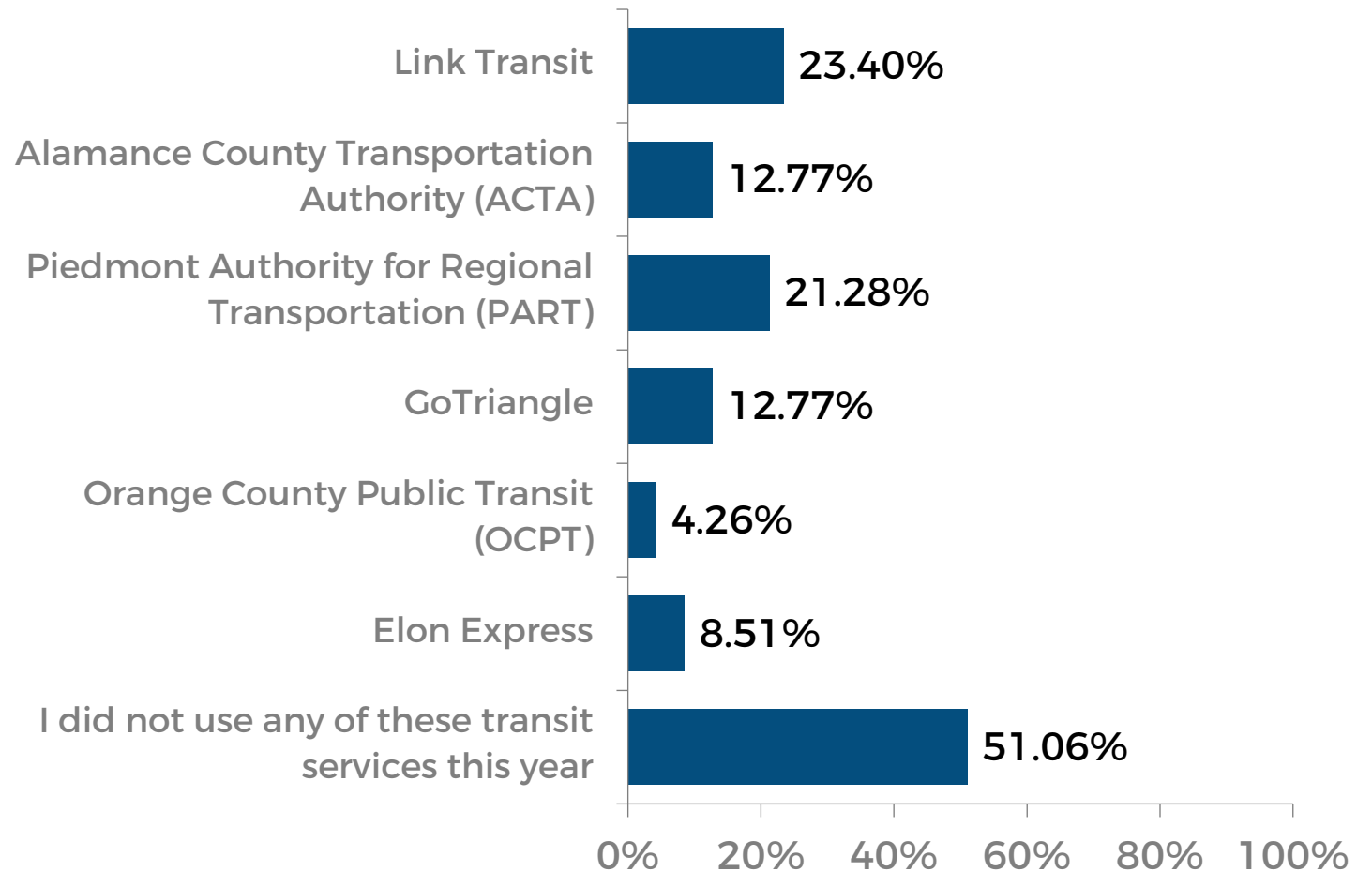
Q8: Which of the following transit services have you used in the past year? (Select all that apply.)

Answered: 47 Skipped: 3

The transit service most selected among respondents was Link Transit, closely followed by PART.

- *Among transit users over the past year, 30% of respondents used transit less than once a week. (Q9)*
- *7% of respondents who used transit in the past year use it more than 5 times per week. (Q9)*

51% of respondents did not use any transit services in the past year.



Key Survey Takeaways

Key Scenario Survey Takeaways

- ✓ The Consolidation Scenario had the most support and was the only scenario that respondents expressed that the increased fees or taxes would be worth the improvements.
- ✓ All scenarios had **most of the respondents' approval**, considering constraints.
- ✓ There is a tension between respondents who would prioritize enhancing the frequency of local bus service vs. more regional connections.
- ✓ Points of emphasis on service improvements focused on connections and transfers, service hours expansion, and service to Saxapahaw and South Alamance County.
- ✓ Respondents expressed **skepticism around passing legislation for increased taxes or fees.**
- ✓ Respondents who do not use transit services said **an improved website or app for coordination and improved services could be convincing** to take transit more.

Top 3 Feedback Themes by Scenario

Scenario 1: Stay the Course

1. Find ways in minimal improvements that can still facilitate connections and transfers with other services.
2. Improve service hours.
3. Coordinate safety of transfer points with existing infrastructure and environments.

Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization

1. Positive feedback around enhanced coordination and partnership.
2. Focusing on minimizing cost and tax increases.
3. Include additional service to Southern Alamance

Scenario 3: Consolidation

1. Increases in tax or fees is worth a scenario with substantial improvements.
2. Support for better connections to different transit services
3. Support for increased frequency.
4. Worry about feasibility of fee or tax increases.



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Regional Transit Feasibility Study

Operations and Fiscal Impact Analysis

December 2023



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REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

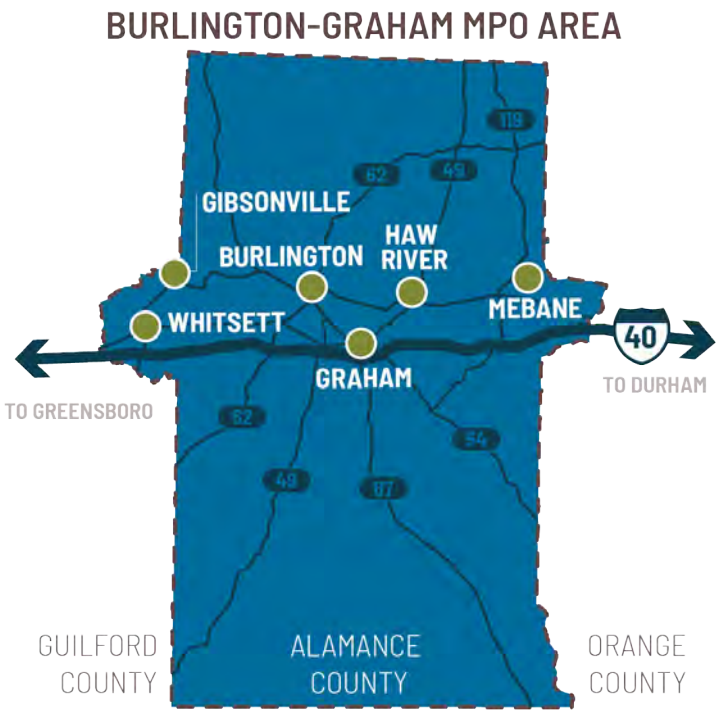
OPERATIONS AND FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Project and Tech Memo Overview

About The Regional Transit Feasibility Study

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) is looking to improve regional transit access to nearby destinations like Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Equitable and innovative approaches are being considered to provide transit service, assess multimodal connections, reduce service overlap, determine cost-effective ways to enhance service, evaluate safety performance targets and measures, and develop funding recommendations. Because transit funding is limited, understanding the tradeoffs and priorities for service improvements is central to the project.

This study is being developed by the BGMPO with support from partners at GoTriangle, Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), Orange County Public Transportation, Link Transit, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). It is supported by funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division.



More information about the project is available at bgmpo.org/transitstudy.

About This Tech Memo

This memo is focused on analyzing the options and impacts of different approaches to governance structures and funding sources that could be used to provide transit service in the BGMPO area. The next section has a summary of key memo takeaways. The memo includes background information about transit needs and the governance and funding options allowable under North Carolina law, as well as how these could be applied in the BGMPO area under three different governance and funding scenarios.

Potential service plan scenarios are provided along with each governance and funding scenario, describing which of the key issues identified by the community and technical analysis could be addressed in each one. To illustrate how these scenarios would impact everyday travel for people living and working in the BGMPO area, five example personas are described, outlining how the rider experience would change for typical trips under each scenario.

Key Questions

What types of transit agency governance structures are available?

Which governance scenarios are appropriate to consider for the BGMPO area?

What types of funding opportunities are available under each structure?

What service improvements are possible within the governance and funding constraints of each scenario?

Key Takeaways Summary

BGMPO Area Transit Service Needs Summary

A review of existing demographic and transit service data indicates that local demand in portions of the region's urbanized area could support more frequent service. Link Transit currently operates every 90 minutes and is primarily limited to Burlington and Elon and portions of Gibsonville and Graham with circuitous routing designed to maximize coverage rather than direct or frequent service. Further, current hours of operation are limited.

Significant work travel occurs regionally along the I-40 corridor to Greensboro and Durham, but regional service is limited in span and availability. Regional transit ridership has not yet recovered from the pandemic.

At least one end of most ACTA on-demand trips are tied to the region's urbanized area. Service must be scheduled far in advance of travel and wait times can be long on both ends of the trip. While service is available across Alamance County, few people are aware of its availability.

Challenges with current transit service includes multiple service providers operating in Alamance County and overlapping service provided by Link Transit and ACTA, requiring riders to understand in advance which provider can serve their needs.



Scenario Options

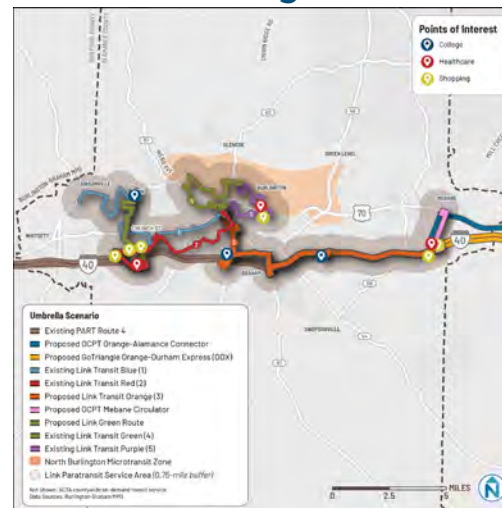
Three scenarios were developed to chart how transit serving the BGMPO area could evolve, ranging from minimal service expansion to a wholesale reinvention of the administrative and revenue systems supporting transit service. The scenarios were explored in terms of governance structures, how transit service could be improved, and what funding mechanisms might be available.

- Minimal service changes were included in a “**Stay the Course**” scenario. This scenario assumes no changes to existing transit agencies with continued coordination through the MPO’s Transit Subcommittee.
- An “**Umbrella Organization**” scenario assumes a new regional agency is established to better coordinate transit services and engage elected officials in the transit decision-making process, inclusive of clarification of service responsibilities. New countywide funding opportunities may be achievable under this scenario, resulting in modest service expansion.
- A “**Consolidated Organization**” scenario assumes local on-demand and fixed route services are consolidated and operated under one agency (either PART or ACTA). Additional funding opportunities may also be achievable with a consolidated Regional Transit Authority. Significant transit service expansion is possible if those new funding opportunities were put in place.

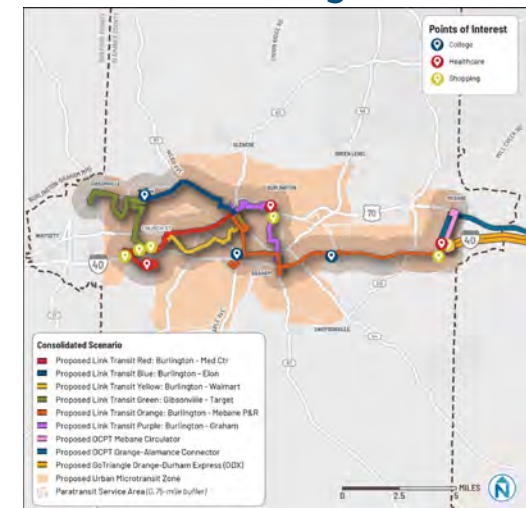
Stay the Course



Umbrella Organization



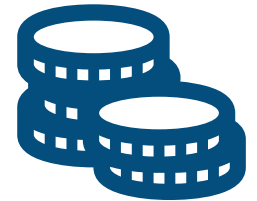
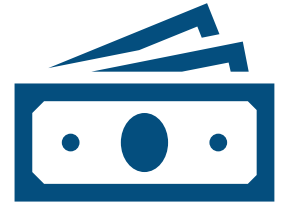
Consolidated Organization





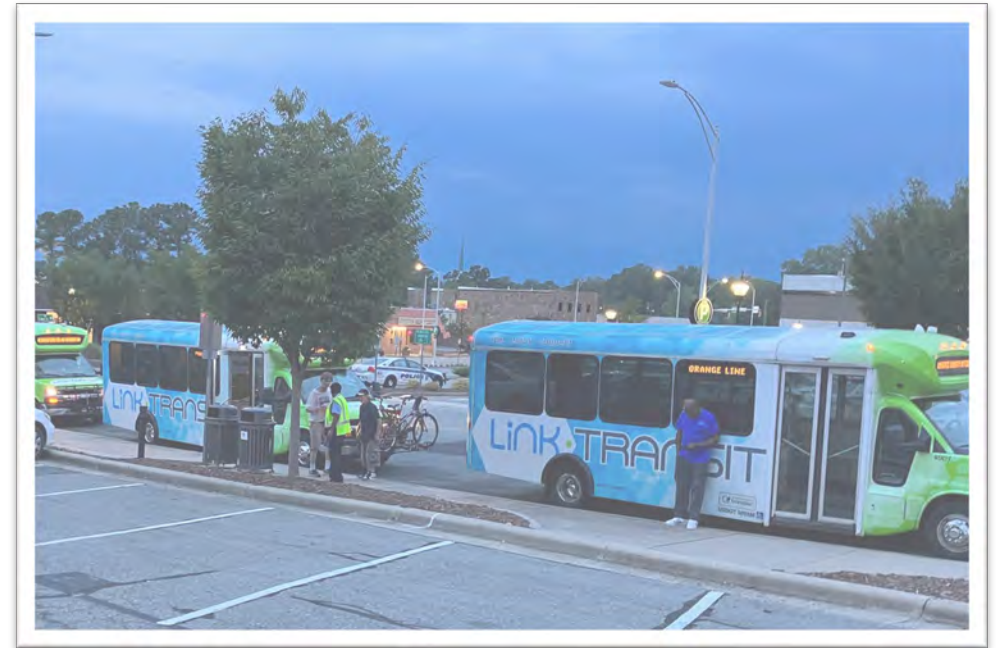
Funding Opportunities

- Transit services currently provided in Alamance County by Link Transit, PART and ACTA cost \$6 million annually to operate. PART's express service (Route 4) is partially funded through PART's vehicle rental tax. Link Transit is partially funded through a Burlington motor vehicle registration fee (\$5). All other local funding comes from local government general funds and service partnerships.
- Current PART legislation permits up to an \$8 countywide vehicle registration fee that could be collected and applied towards transit service. This fee is estimated to generate approximately at least \$1 million annually. This fee would require consent by the Alamance County Board of Commissioners.
- A ¼ cent sales tax could also be enacted by a RTA (Article 43 in NCGS 105). In addition to requiring consent by the Board of Commissioners, this would require approval by the general public in a referendum. This tax is estimated to generate at least \$8 million annually.
- Implementation of a countywide vehicle registration fee may be achievable under the Umbrella or Consolidated Organization scenarios. Implementation of a ¼ sales tax under Article 43 would most likely be required to advance the Consolidated Organization scenario's proposed service plan expansion.



Meeting Project-Defined Goals

- Service, governance and funding-related goals were established during an earlier phase of this study. When compared to the three potential scenarios, the Consolidated Organization scenario has been determined to best meet project goals.
- Progression to a Consolidated Organization can be incremental. The region could advance the Umbrella Organization scenario as an intermediate step to better facilitate service, governance and funding coordination efforts between the existing transit agencies. That umbrella organization can then work towards advancing the Consolidated Organization scenario.
- For purposes of identifying what service might look like under each scenario, this study has assumed implementation of a countywide vehicle registration fee under the Umbrella Organization scenario, and a $\frac{1}{4}$ sales tax under the Consolidated Organization scenario. **Both scenarios can be advanced without these additional funds, still providing the benefits of improved coordination of transit services and funding within the BGMPO region.**

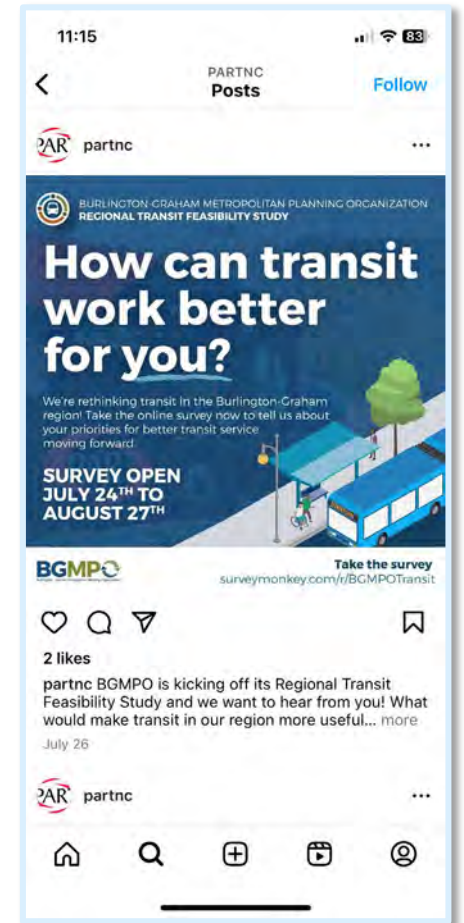


Transit Service Needs

Transit Service Needs Input Process

Prior tasks conducted for the project were designed to determine regional and local transit service needs within the BGMPO region. These efforts included:

- **Assessment of existing services:** an evaluation of existing transit service coverage and ridership, travel patterns, and identified areas with demographic and land use characteristics with a higher propensity to use transit
- **Online survey:** distributed to both riders and non-riders. There were 267 responses from the survey
- **Open houses:** Virtual and in-person sessions soliciting public input regarding transit service needs.
- **Stakeholder feedback:** interviews with representatives of governmental, educational, business, healthcare and non-profit organizations.



What We Heard from the Public

Key takeaways from the public outreach efforts included:

- Respondents generally have limited knowledge about existing available transit services.
- Those that are aware of transit services say there is not enough service coverage and service is not frequent enough.
- Technology enhancements were identified as a need to make it simple to order and track your ride through an app.
- Better service coordination between the existing transit service providers was identified as a high need.
- There was more interest in prioritizing local fixed route and on-demand service expansion over regional service expansion. Those that expressed interest in regional service expansion wanted to see service to more destinations outside of the BGMPO region.
- There was also a recognized need for better pedestrian access to bus stops.

Additional information about public outreach efforts can be found in this project's **Community Engagement Summary** Tech Memo.



What We Learned from our Existing Conditions Assessment

Key takeaways from the existing conditions assessment included:

- Route frequencies and service span limit the ability for residents to use existing transit services.
- Local fixed route service is limited to Burlington, Elon and portions of Gibsonville and Graham and are designed to maximize coverage, resulting in indirect routing and long travel times for a rider. Some urbanized areas could be more successful with fixed route transit services, but much of the BGMPO area has densities more suited for on-demand type services.
- Regional transit services are limited and focused on travel to the east and not to Greensboro.
- Existing paratransit and on-demand services require prior day reservations, which may be a limiting factor for potential riders.
- With multiple service providers, riders must be knowledgeable about which system to use to address their local and regional travel needs.

Additional information from this existing conditions can be found in this project's **Existing Conditions Assessment** Tech Memo.



Governance Structure



Governance Structures Overview



A regional transit plan for BGMPO requires a review of the current governance structures and consideration of potential alternatives. Governance structures for transit operations refer to the different types of entities that can build, operate, and maintain transit systems. Different types of governance structures can be used for smaller agencies that provide local service to a limited area compared to larger agencies with a regional reach.

Existing public transit services in the BGMPO area today are spread across five different agencies, which makes it challenging to deliver a comprehensive and coordinated transit network in the region. Service is provided by:

- Link Transit
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)
- Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA)
- GoTriangle
- Orange County Public Transportation (OCPT)

Why Governance Structure Matters

Finding the best fit for the type of agency or agencies that will provide transit service can address some of the top improvement requests from the community, like enhancing service coordination, better facilitating transfers, simplifying fare payments, and streamlining communications with riders. It can also help reduce overlapping service to maximize the use of available funds.



Current Governance Structures

The five agencies that serve the BGMPO area have the following governance structures today:

- **Link Transit** is governed by the City of Burlington and advised by a Public Transportation Advisory Commission with representation from Burlington, Gibsonville, Alamance County and Elon. Service is contracted to a private operator.
- **PART** is a Regional Transportation Authority with 9 member counties and was created under NCCGS 160A, Article 27. PART is governed by a 22-member Board of Trustees. Service is contracted to a private operator.
- **ACTA** is organized as Regional Transportation Authority created under NCCGS 160A, Article 25. ACTA is governed by a 5-member Board of Trustees with representation from Alamance County, Burlington and the Burlington-Graham MPO. A Transportation Advisory Board provides guidance to the Board of Trustees. Service is directly operated by ACTA staff.
- **GoTriangle** is organized as a Regional Transportation Authority with 3 member counties and was created under NCCGS 160A, Article 26. GoTriangle is governed by a 13-member Board of Trustees.
- **OCPT** is governed by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners and advised by the Orange Unified Transportation Board (OUTBoard). Service is directly operated by Orange County.



Current Agency Relationships and Coordination

Today, each of the five agencies operates independently. Some of the key interactions between them include:



Funding

FTA Section 5307 funding is a shared funding source, administered through the BGMPO, with funding distribution to the five agencies through a suballocation formula. Otherwise, funding is independent among the five agencies.



Agency Coordination

Current coordination efforts are through the BGMPO, with each agency's transit director participating in a transit subcommittee of the Technical Coordinating Committee.



Fare Payments

Riders pay a separate fare for each agency's service. Currently ACTA, Link Transit and GoTriangle service is fare free. However, Link Transit is reinstating its fare.



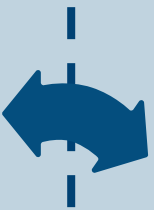
Limitations of Current Governance Structure

The existing governance structure has led to several challenges, including:



Service Overlap

ADA-eligible riders using on-demand services within the Link Transit service area must understand which agency to call if they are scheduling an ACTA on-demand or Link Transit ADA trip. Trips outside of the Link Transit service area are ACTA-eligible.



Agency Boundaries Don't Match Travel Patterns

Each agency has a defined service area. Yet travel patterns are not confined to each agency's service area boundaries. Traveling throughout the region with multiple service providers is challenging.



Fare Payments

Current transit agency governance structures do not coordinate fare payments nor have reciprocal fare agreements in place.



Governance Options

Delivery of a comprehensive and cohesive transit service for the region may be best accomplished through consolidation of two or more existing transit agencies. This can be accomplished in an incremental manner. This study has identified the following three scenarios for a future regional service plan that can be advanced over time. Potential timeframes for progressing to a consolidated organization have also been identified.



Keep the current transit agencies' organizational and funding structures separate and focus on continued coordination efforts among all operators through the MPO.

Form a Regional Transit Partnership to coordinate transit agency functions that simplify rider experiences and clarify agency service responsibilities, with all individual agencies continuing to operate separately.

Consider opportunities for transit agency consolidation and leveraging additional funding sources to more significantly expand transit service in the region.



Stay the Course

This scenario assumes **no changes** to the current governance structure of area transit agencies. Service coordination and information sharing continues to be conducted through the **BGMPO's Transit Subcommittee**, with representation by each agency's transit directors. Service expansion can certainly occur under this scenario but is likely to be **piecemeal and as funding allows**.



Umbrella Organization

This scenario assumes a new agency created for the region that is charged with advancing service coordination and expansion. Each agency will continue to **operate independently with a board of elected officials that will guide regional service delivery and funding decisions**. As an example, FTA Section 5307 sub-allocation funding decisions would be made by this board. **New transit funding opportunities** may be possible under this scenario, such as a countywide vehicle registration fee that is dedicated towards transit.



Consolidated Organization

This scenario assumes **consolidation of two or more transit agencies**. There are two viable consolidation scenarios that are presented later in this Tech Memo – consolidation of Link Transit and ACTA into a county-wide Regional Transit Authority, or having PART take over all local services in Alamance County. In both scenarios, service coordination will still be required with GoTriangle and OCPT. **Additional transit funding opportunities may be possible** under this scenario, such as a ¼ cent countywide sales tax that is dedicated towards transit.

Example: Umbrella Organization

Charlottesville (Virginia) Regional Transit Partnership (RTP)

The RTP is an official advisory board created by the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, JAUNT, University of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. This Board provides recommendations to decision-makers on transit-related matters. The RTP has four established primary goals:

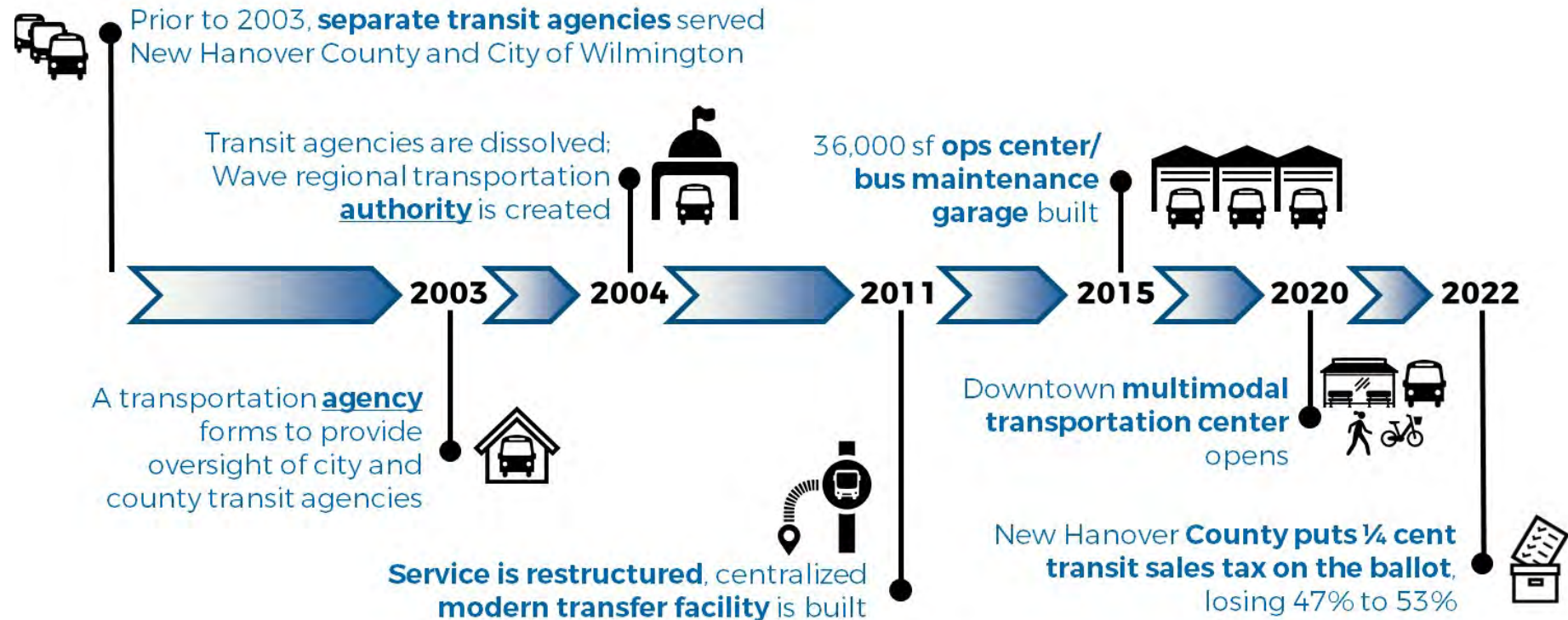
- Establish strong communications
- Ensure coordination between transit providers
- Set the region's transit goals and visions
- Identify opportunities for improved transit services and administration, including evaluation of a **Regional Transit Authority (RTA)**

The Board meets monthly and consists of 8 voting members from City, County, State and UVA (elected officials from the City and County), with several non-voting members. A major effort recently completed by RTP was a transit governance study, identifying a road map for getting to an RTA. The MPO is responsible for staffing and programming for the RTA and is supported with Section 5303 program funding from FTA and RTP funds.



Example: Consolidated Organization

In the Wilmington area, Wave operates fixed route, paratransit and microtransit services in New Hanover County and the City of Wilmington. This is an example of a region that evolved through the scenarios identified in this report. The two agencies were briefly governed by a transportation agency (umbrella organization), subsequently becoming a single Regional Transportation Authority (consolidated organization).





How could this region get to a Consolidated Organization?

The two most viable options for getting to a consolidated organization are as follows:

A **PART** operates Alamance County local services (urban and rural) and continues to operate regional service

PART is a Regional Transportation Authority with 9 member counties and was created under NCCGS 160A, Article 27. In addition to operating regional transit services, PART could operate local and on-demand services in Alamance County. Service delivery and funding decisions would be the responsibility of the PART Board of Trustees. However, a county transit advisory board could be established to provide county-focused recommendations to the PART Board. Service coordination will still be required with GoTriangle and OCPT.

B A reconfigured **ACTA** operates Alamance County local services (urban and rural). PART continues to operate regional service

ACTA is a Regional Transportation Authority that was created under NCCGS 160A, Article 25. ACTA could operate both fixed route and on-demand services throughout Alamance County. The Board of Trustees would need to be reconfigured to reflect city and countywide representation. This option maintains local control of transit service delivery and funding decisions. New funding sources would need to be coordinated with PART. Regional service would need to be coordinated with PART, GoTriangle and OCPT.

Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunities Overview

A regional transit plan for BGMPO requires consideration of new funding opportunities to pay for enhanced and expanded service and capital improvements.

A prerequisite to considering potential new funding sources is to first understand those currently in place. Because the alternative governance structures presented in the last section focus on Link Transit, PART, and ACTA, this section focuses on local funding sources just for those three agencies. Note that all three governance structure options under consideration would still require continued coordination with GoTriangle and Orange County Public Transportation.

Why Funding Opportunities Matter

Many of the community's requested improvements to transit service in the region cannot be realized within current funding constraints. As the region continues to grow, additional funding will be needed to serve more riders. Pursuing some of the additional funding sources available to the region will be necessary to implement transformative service enhancements.

Federal Funding Programs

Federal funds are available and used by all transit agencies that serve the BGMPO region. The primary federal funding programs available for transit agencies in the region are as follows:

- **Section 5307** is FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Program. These funds are available for transit agencies that operate within a census-designated urbanized area. Section 5307 funds can be used towards up to 80% of capital costs and 50% of operating costs. The BGMPO administers Section 5307 funds for the region. The MPO's allocation of 5307 funds were \$3.3 million in FY 2023, which was distributed to all five transit agencies that serve the region.
- **Section 5310** is formula funding targeted towards transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The federal share is up to 80% for capital projects and 50% for operating assistance. Example uses of eligible Section 5310-funded activities include the purchase of buses and vans, wheelchair lifts and ramps, mobility management programs, travel training and transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling, routing and one-call systems. ACTA is a recipient of Section 5310 funds. Link Transit is also eligible for these funds.
- **Section 5311** is a formula grant program for rural areas, providing capital, planning and operating assistance. The federal share is up to 80% for capital projects, 50% for operating assistance and 80% for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed route paratransit service. ACTA is a recipient of Section 5311 funds.
- **Section 5339** is FTA's Bus and Bus Facilities Program. This program funds replacement, rehabilitation and purchase of buses and related equipment, and construction of bus-related facilities. The federal share is not to exceed 80 percent of the net project cost. All federally-funded transit agencies serving the BGMPO region are eligible for these funds.
- The **Carbon Reduction Program** is a new funding source through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Funds are administered through the NCDOT. The program provides funds for projects that reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the transportation sector. These funds are a potential funding source for transit projects in the region.



Available State Funding Programs

The primary state-funded transportation funding programs include ROAP and SMAP with several subprograms:

Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP)

- A state-funded public transportation program administered by the North Carolina DOT's Integrated Mobility Division. Formula-based programs that fall under ROAP include:
 - Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP)
 - Employment and Transportation Assistance Program (EMPL)
 - Rural General Public Program (RGP)
- Local match is not required for EDTAP and EMPL, but a minimum 10% local match is required for RGP.
- ROAP funds can be used to leverage FTA Section 5310 and 5311 funds. ACTA is a recipient of ROAP funds.

State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP)

- Provides state funds designed to assist urban, small urban and regional transit service providers with funding the non-federal share of operational expenses.
- Funds are allocated annually through a formula. Funds can be used only for FTA Section 5307-eligible operating costs and cannot exceed the amount of the local fund match.

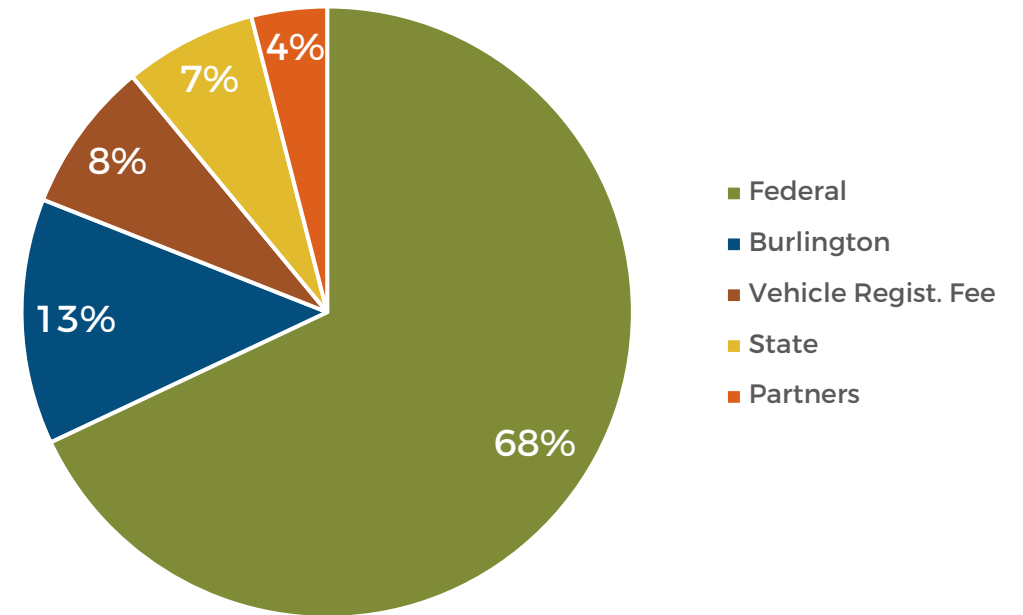


Link Transit Funding

Link Transit's FY 2024 budget is \$3.4 million, of which \$2.69 million is identified for operations (the rest is capital). Federal funds are a major source of Link Transit's funds, with 68% of Link Transit's budget coming from Section 5307 and 5339 funds.

Local funds are generated through a \$5.00 vehicle registration fee that is collected in the City of Burlington (through N.C. General Statute §20-97) and from additional funds provided by Burlington, Gibsonville, Alamance County, Elon and the Alamance Community College.

Breakdown of FY 24 Revenue Sources





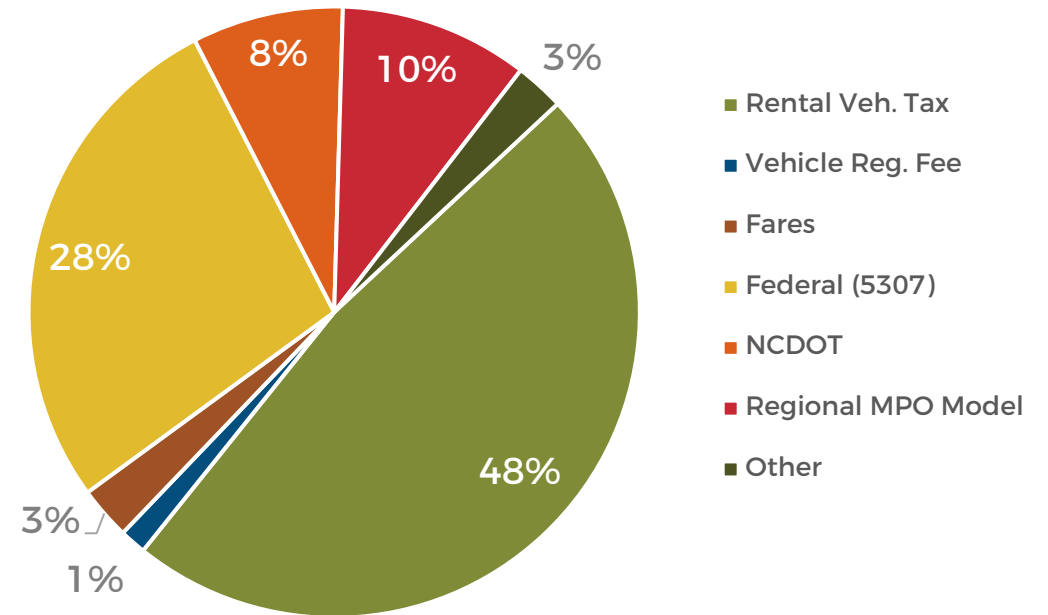
PART Transit Funding

PART's FY 2024 expenditures budget identifies \$7.38 million for current express operations. PART's Route 4 that operates through Alamance County accounts for \$1.25 million of this total.

A rental vehicle tax is the primary local funding source for PART transit services, with some additional funds generated through vehicle registration fees in select counties (vehicle registration fees are not collected in Alamance County for PART). The rental vehicle registration fee collected in Alamance County generates about \$200,000 each year.

Federal funds (28% of PART's budget) comes from Section 5307 funds.

Breakdown of FY 24 Revenue Sources

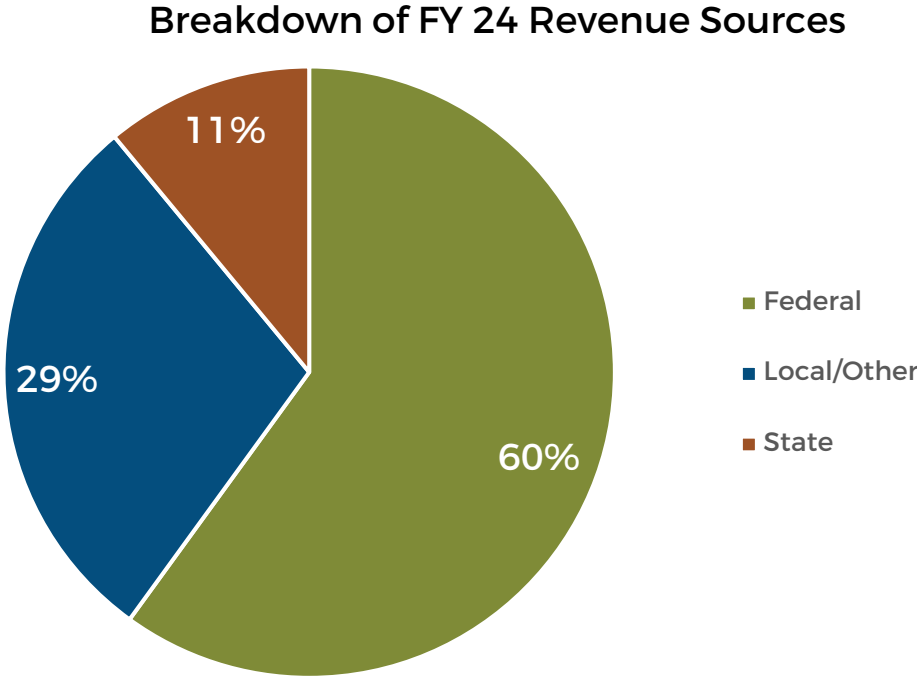




ACTA Transit Funding

ACTA's FY 2024 budget is \$2.5 million, of which \$1.96 million is identified for operations (the rest is capital). Local funding is provided by Alamance County and from contracted service fees such as from DSS. ACTA's 2024 budget also includes \$10,000 from municipal sources.

Federal funds (60% of ACTA's budget) come from Section 5307, 5310, 5311 and 5339 funds. Revenues collected from local contracted services are eligible for use for federal match.



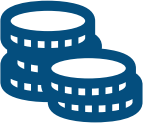


Potential New Local Funding Sources

As noted on the prior pages, Link Transit, PART and ACTA receive significant funds from federal and state programs. There is the potential to increase funding from many of those programs by increasing the required local match. The ability to increase local funding is limited. There are, however, two additional dedicated local transit funding sources that could be available for service expansion in Alamance County.



Vehicle Registration Fee: Link Transit is partially funded through a \$5 vehicle registration fee. Current legislation would allow PART to create a special district for Alamance County that can collect up to \$8 per vehicle in Alamance County (Article 51 in NCGS 105). This fee can be enacted with consent by the County Commission; no public referendum is required. A countywide fee is anticipated to generate at least **\$1 million** in revenues each year. An increase in local funding through a vehicle registration fee can also leverage additional federal funds to support operations.



¼ Cent Sales Tax: Article 43 in NCGS 105 permits a Regional Transit Authority to put a ¼ cent transit sales tax on the ballot for voter approval. It is anticipated this could generate at least **\$8 million** in revenues each year. An increase in local funding through a ¼ cent sales tax can also leverage additional federal funds to support operations.

Further information regarding these funding opportunities is provided in Appendix B. In addition to the funding opportunities identified above, additional local funding could be realized through expanded general fund contributions by municipalities.

Conceptual Service Plans by Scenario



Defining Service Plan Scenarios

Funding assumptions used to develop service plans for each organizational scenario are as follows:



Stay the Course: This scenario assumes transit agencies continue to explore service expansion with local governments, with local funding arrangements for service expansion that is targeted towards those communities. For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that additional local funding, combined with federal and state funding, is able to support up to **\$7 million** annually for transit operations.



Umbrella Organization: This scenario assumes the potential for implementing a \$8.00 county-wide vehicle registration fee through PART and Article 51 legislation. As previously noted, it is estimated that this fee could generate at least \$1 million annually. Additional local funds can be leveraged to increase federal, and possibly state operating assistance. For purposes of this analysis, an additional \$500,000 (50%) is conservatively assumed in matching federal and state funds for operations, resulting in the ability to fund **\$8 million** annually for transit operations. Current funding sources are assumed to remain in place in this scenario.



Consolidated Organization: This scenario assumes that there is the potential to eventually implement a ¼ cent sales tax in Alamance County through Article 43 legislation. As previously noted, a ¼ cent sales tax is possible through existing Transportation Authority legislation and requires voter approval. A sales tax is estimated to generate at least \$8 million annually. Combined with the vehicle registration fee and at least 50% matching federal/state supplemental funding for operations, it is possible to fund up to **\$13.5 million** annually for transit operations without additional local funding from local governments.

The Umbrella and Consolidated Organization scenarios assume additional dedicated local funds for transit. Both scenarios can be advanced without those funding arrangements. Service expansion opportunities would be limited if that were to occur, but other benefits would still be realized such as improved service and funding coordination.

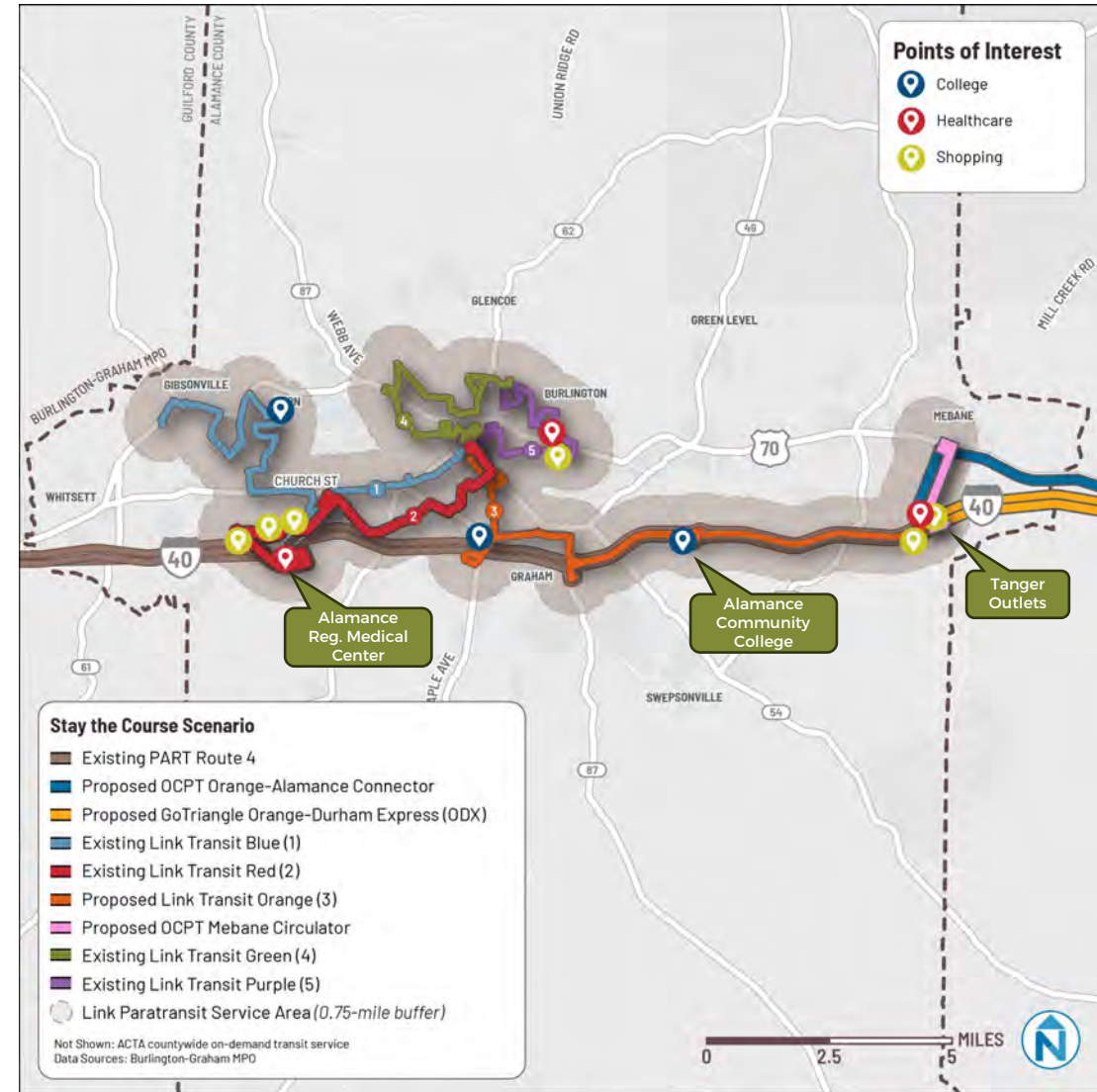


Stay the Course: Proposed Service Improvements

This scenario assumes incremental service improvements as funding allows, with a total of \$7 million available for annual operations costs. Priority improvements identified for this scenario are based on this project's existing service assessment and input received from this project's public outreach efforts. Proposed service improvements in this scenario are as follows:

- Extend Link Transit Orange Line to Tanger Outlets in Mebane
- Implementation of OCPT's planned Mebane Circulator
- Implementation of GoTriangle's planned Route ODX service changes
- Add bus stops along Orange Route between Burlington and Graham
- Expand Link Transit Saturday span of service hours (6:30 am to 9:00 pm)
- Improve Link Transit Red Route weekday frequencies to 45 minutes
- ACTA continues to provide county-wide on-demand service while implementing same-day trip reservation system
- No changes to PART Route 4
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT

Note: Link Transit has recently initiated a Transit Development Plan (TDP) effort that will guide Link Transit's service and facility investment plans over the next 5 years. Potential projects identified as part of this project effort should be considered as "placeholders"; until final recommendations come out of the TDP.

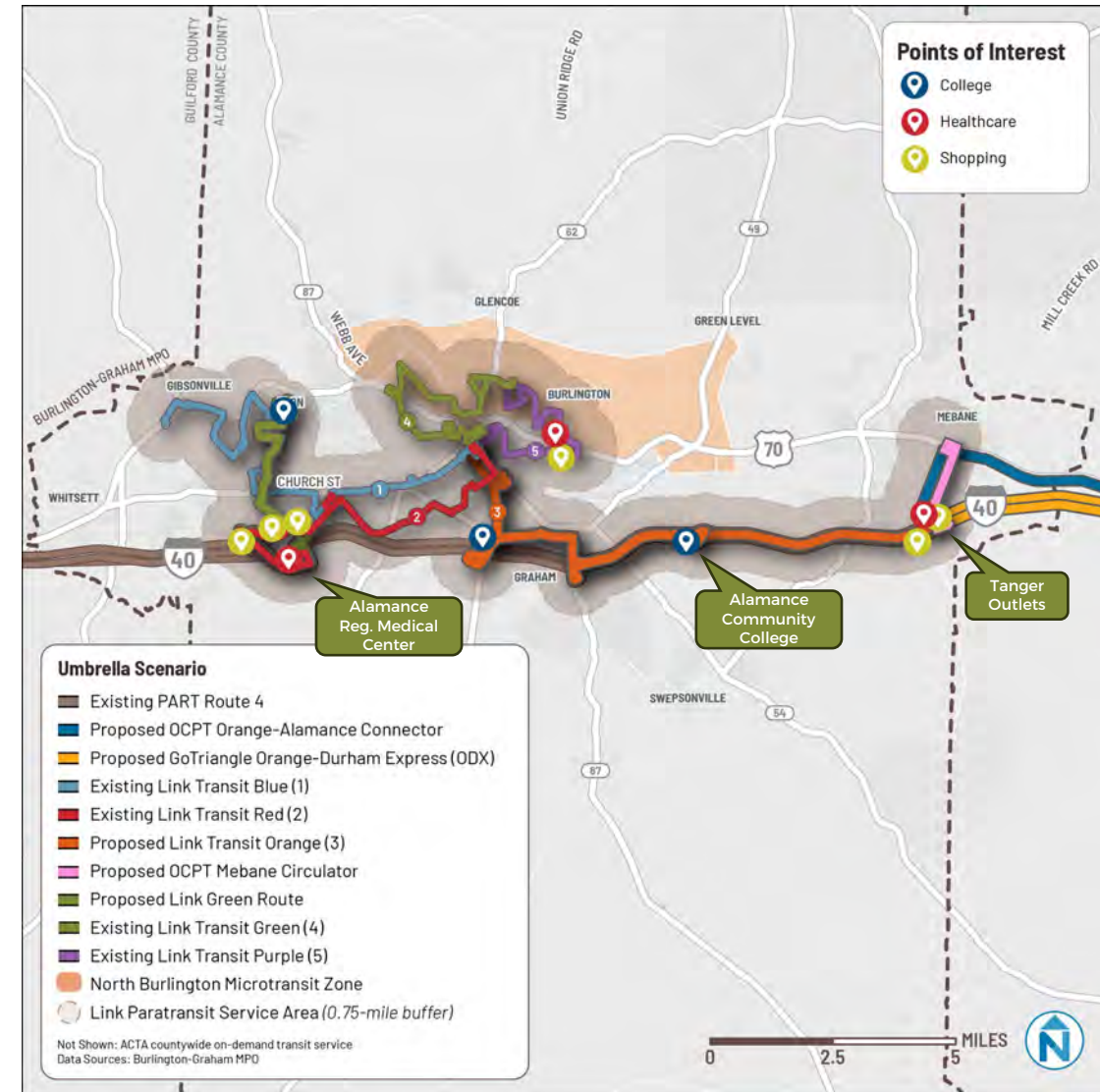


Scenario assumes no significant changes in governance structure or funding sources. Link Transit and ACTA continue to work with local municipalities to fund service expansion.

Umbrella Organization: Proposed Service Improvements

This scenario assumes more substantive service improvements. With an umbrella organization, it is assumed that a countywide vehicle registration fee (through Article 51), combined with current revenue resources can be put in place to allow for around \$8 million annually for transit operations. Priority improvements identified for this scenario include those identified for the Stay the Course, along with the following:

- Elon to University Commons / Alamance Regional Medical Center route (potential cost-sharing arrangement with Elon University)
- Pilot potential microtransit service in North Burlington with “Uber-like” trip scheduling
- Consolidate ACTA on-demand and Link Transit ADA services
- Expand ACTA on-demand hours to weekday evenings and Saturdays
- Online trip planner inclusive of ACTA
- Transit payment app for ACTA, Link, and PART
- Modest passenger facility improvements at major transfer points
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT



Scenario assumes county-wide vehicle registration fee to fund transit service expansion, with revenues distributed to Link Transit and ACTA

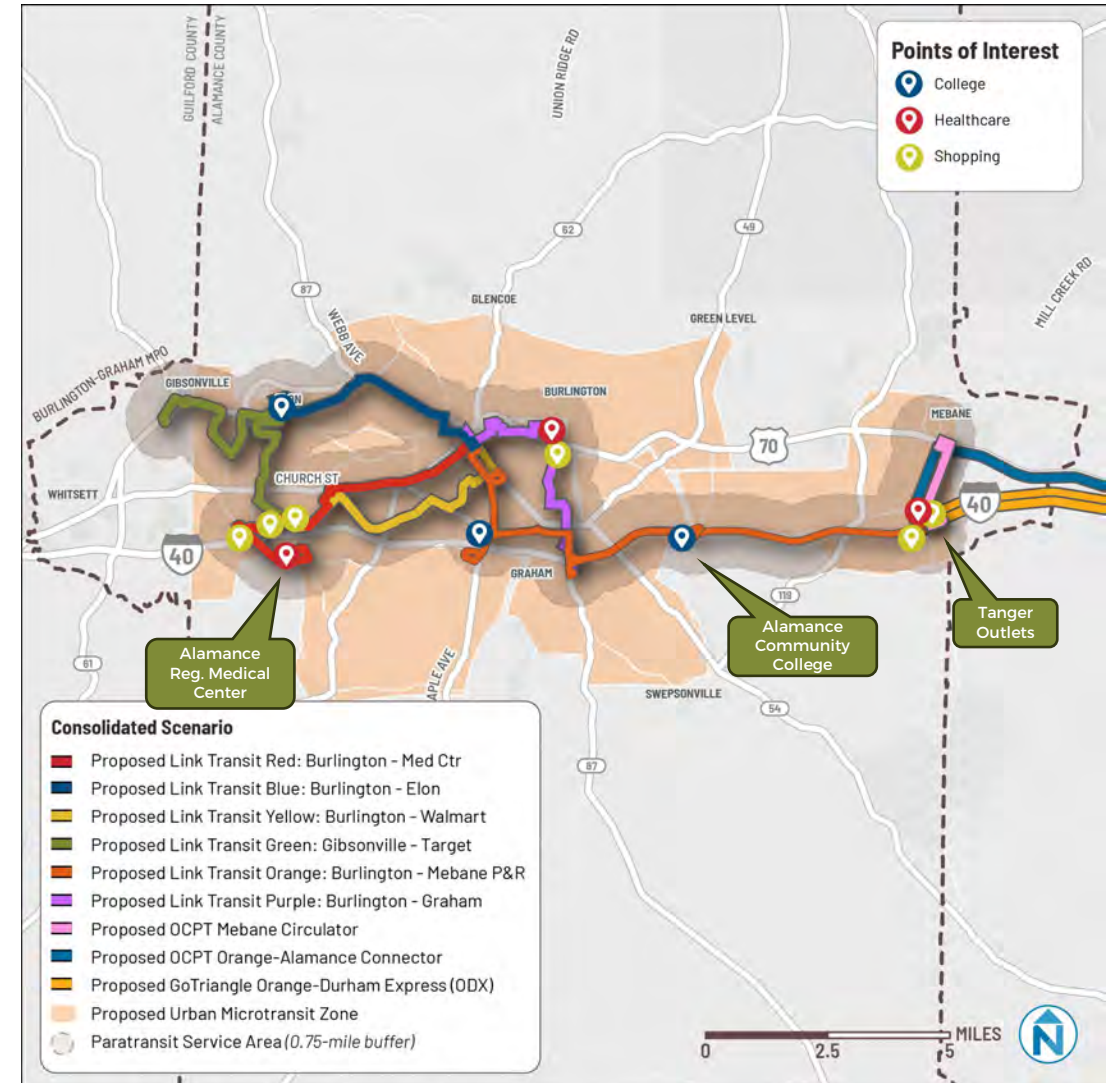


Consolidated Organization: Proposed Local Service Improvements

This scenario assumes a transformative expansion of transit service made possible with a ¼ cent sales tax that is dedicated towards transit (through Article 43). A consolidated organization with a sales tax, vehicle registration fees and federal and state funding sources can support at least \$13.5 million in annual transit operations. Priority local service improvements identified for this scenario are:

- New fixed route service coverage to address service gaps with more direct route alignments
- Service frequency improvements:
 - 30-minute frequencies on key local transit routes (Red, Orange and Green)
 - 60-minute frequencies on all other routes
- Expansion of weekend span of service
- New urban microtransit zones to expand coverage
- Coordinated service between fixed routes and microtransit zones with transfer connection points
- New transit super stops/facilities at key transfer stops
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT

Scenario assumes county-wide vehicle registration fee and ¼ cent sales tax to fund transit service expansion, with portion of funds distributed to PART for Route 4 service expansion





Consolidated Organization: Proposed Rural and Express/Regional Improvements

This scenario also assumes the following rural and express/regional service priority improvements are implemented.

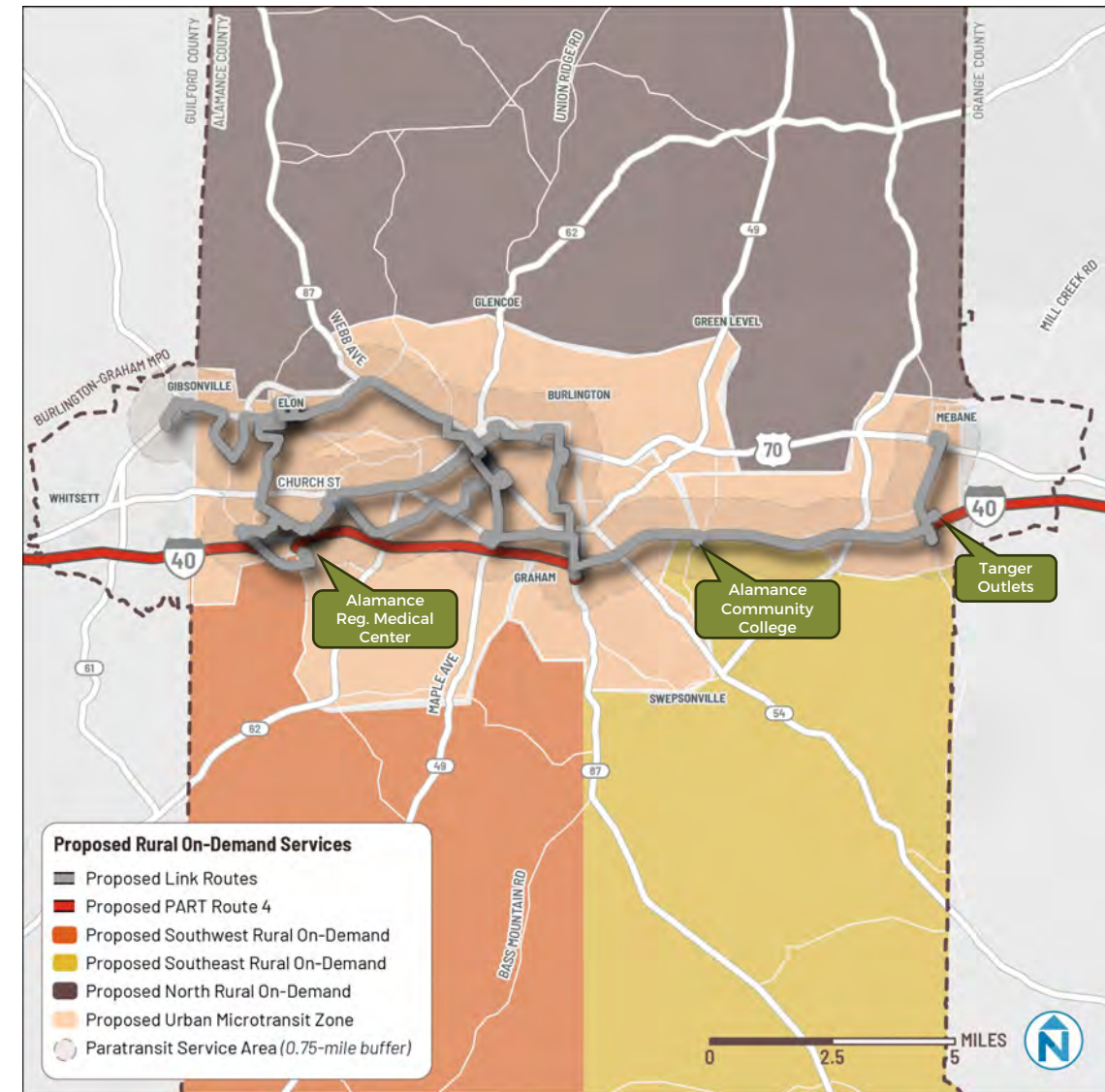
Rural Service

- Designated rural on-demand transit zones
- Defined connection points to local and regional fixed route transit services
- Monday through Saturday service

Express/Regional Service

- Expansion of I-40 express service to all-day to Chapel Hill and Greensboro
- Coordinated local service connections with regional transit services

Scenario assumes county-wide vehicle registration fee and ¼ cent sales tax to fund transit service expansion, with portion of revenues distributed to PART for Route 4 service expansion





Consolidated Organization Plan Highlights

A Consolidated Organization Scenario with dedicated transit funding greatly expands transit service access with improved coverage, better service frequencies and new facilities.



Access/Coverage

- 83,550 are within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile access to Alamance County fixed route transit (13% increase over existing)
- 74,250 have access to new urban microtransit zones
- 60,350 have access to restructured rural on-demand transit
- 96,700 within 3-mile access of regional service park-and-rides (no change from existing)



Frequencies and Span

- 30 to 60-minute frequencies on all fixed routes
- All-day regional transit service
- Expansion of weekend service



Facilities

- New transit centers to better facilitate route-to-route transfers
- Bus stop access improvements



Investment

- 100%+ increase in annual investment for transit services

Scenario Funding Analysis

Scenario Funding Needs

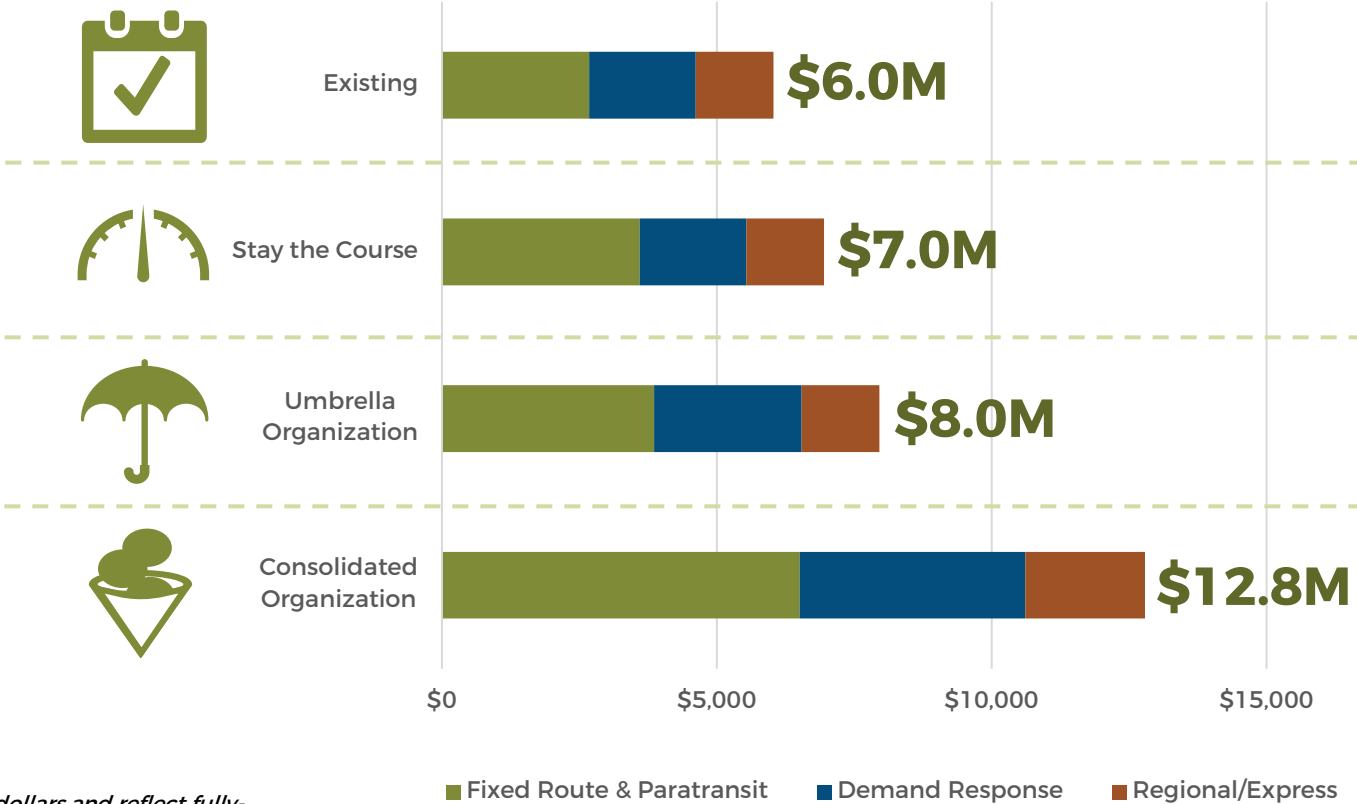
As noted earlier in this Tech Memo, local funds are needed to support transit, regardless of the governance scenario. An increase in local funds can be used to leverage additional federal and state funds. Assumed funding sources for each scenario are as follows:

- **Stay the Course** assumes no significant changes in local funding sources. Additional municipalities may choose to financially increase their support for transit over time, which can result in small increases in federal and state funds. Funding for significant service expansion and capital projects is unlikely.
- **Umbrella Organization** assumes the potential of implementing a county-wide vehicle registration fee to fund transit, with continued supplemental support from the county, municipalities and other entities such as Alamance Community College. Modest service expansion and capital projects are possible under this scenario with the additional funds.
- **Consolidated Organization** assumes the potential of implementing a county-wide vehicle registration fee and a ¼ cent tax to fund transit, allowing for significant service and transit facility expansion. Supplemental support from the county and municipalities would not be needed under this scenario.



Scenario O&M Costs and Funding

Projected annual operating costs are shown by local funding sources for each organizational structure option. Types of service comprising operating costs are shown in different colors. Estimates of service requirements are presented in this report's Appendix. Costs are based on \$115 per revenue-hour for fixed route and paratransit services, \$60 per revenue-hour for on-demand and microtransit services and \$177 per revenue-hour for express/regional services. These figures reflect fully-allocated unit costs and are based on current agency operating budgets.



Local Funding Sources		
Municipal General Funds	Vehicle Registration Fees	¼ penny sales tax
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Costs expressed as 2023 dollars and reflect fully-allocated unit costs.



Consolidated Organization Capital Requirements

In addition to annual operating costs, each scenario will require capital investments. Total vehicle requirements for the full-build Consolidated Organization scenario are:

- ✓ 13 peak/16 fleet buses for expanded fixed route service
- ✓ 4 peak/5 fleet buses for expanded express/regional service
- ✓ 17 peak/20 fleet buses for microtransit and rural on-demand service

The above bus numbers are inclusive of existing service requirements and a new circulator in the Mebane area that complements existing the existing Orange-Alamance route operated by OCPT.

New passenger transit facilities in the Consolidated Organizational scenario include a new regional transit center and transit hubs at various locations around the county. Potential transit hub locations include:

- The Huffman Mill Road Walmart,
- The Alamance Regional park-and-ride
- Alamance Community College,
- Mebane Cone Health Medical Center and
- Elon University

Other potential capital investments include a new operations / maintenance base and annual investments in bus stop access improvements.

Consolidated Organization Capital Requirements

Potential capital costs for these vehicles and facilities are as follows:

- Additional buses - \$6 million
- Transit Center/Transit Hubs - \$7.5-\$10 million
- New O&M Base - \$15 million
- Bus Stop Access Improvements - \$5 million

Total costs for capital investments could range from **\$30 to \$35 million**. Federal and State funding would be available to offset a substantial portion of these costs.

Buses purchases are typically funded through 80% federal funds, 10% state funds and 10% local funds. Funding for facilities and bus stop access improvements may require a greater share of local funds.

For purposes of this analysis, 25% local funding is assumed as an average local share for all capital requirements, resulting in a **total local share of less than \$10 million**. These costs would be incurred over time as service is incrementally expanded.

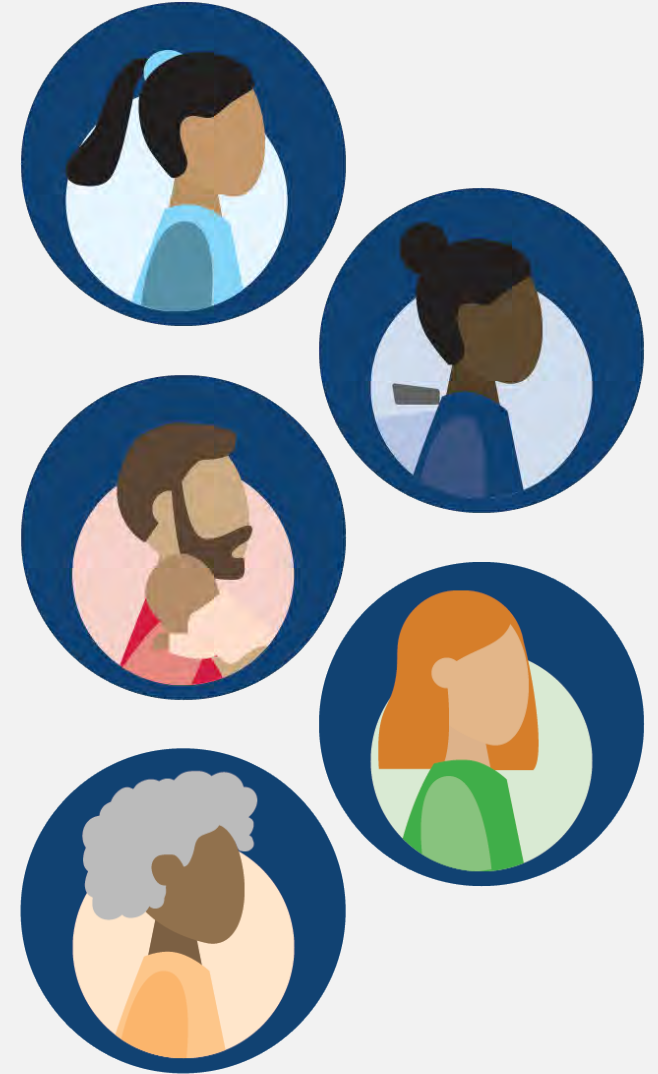
Service Plan Personas

Service Plan Personas

To illustrate how each service plan scenario would impact travel across the BGMPO area, five characters were created to personify changes to typical trips in each scenario.

These examples were based on input received from community members through the online survey and community meetings in August 2023. Their trips represented local and regional travel and highlighted changes with travel specific to time of day and location. Travel was from central and rural areas, early morning and late times, and for multiple travel needs.

Because the personas were based on people with different needs, improvements in each scenario could be shown relative to each of the different travel needs. These personas were used to solicit feedback at open house events in October 2023.



Service Plan Personas

These personas represent several transit use cases, highlighting transit challenges and opportunities in the region.



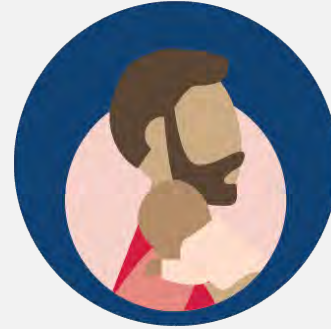
Connie is a commuter living in Chapel Hill.

She works at Elon University and would like to take transit. Her typical work hours are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays.



Janelle lives in Burlington and is looking for a new job.

She would like to accept an offer in downtown Greensboro but is trying to figure out if she can use transit for her potential work commute.



Raphael is a stay-at-home dad living in Graham.

He typically makes weekly shopping trips to Target and sometimes Walmart.



Betty lives in East Burlington and has weekly trips.

She cannot walk to her closest bus stop and qualifies for ADA service. She has a weekly appointment at Alamance Regional Medical Center and likes to visit her daughter in Mebane every week.



Tamara is a college student living in Saxapahaw.

She goes to Alamance Community College three days a week. She often travels from college to her part time job at Tanger Outlets in Mebane.

Persona Scenario: Reverse Commuter Connie



Connie's Trip: Chapel Hill to Elon University on weekdays, arriving at 8:30 am and departing around 5:00 pm.

Stay the Course Scenario

- Connie's first bus trip is on PART's Route 4, arriving at ACC at 8:30 am.
- Connie then takes the 8:41 am trip of Link Transit's Orange Route and transfers to the 9:30 am trip of Link Transit's Blue Route. Connie arrives at Elon University at 10:00, late for work.
- She cannot make the return trip to Chapel Hill by bus because of limited hours of service on PART's Route 4.



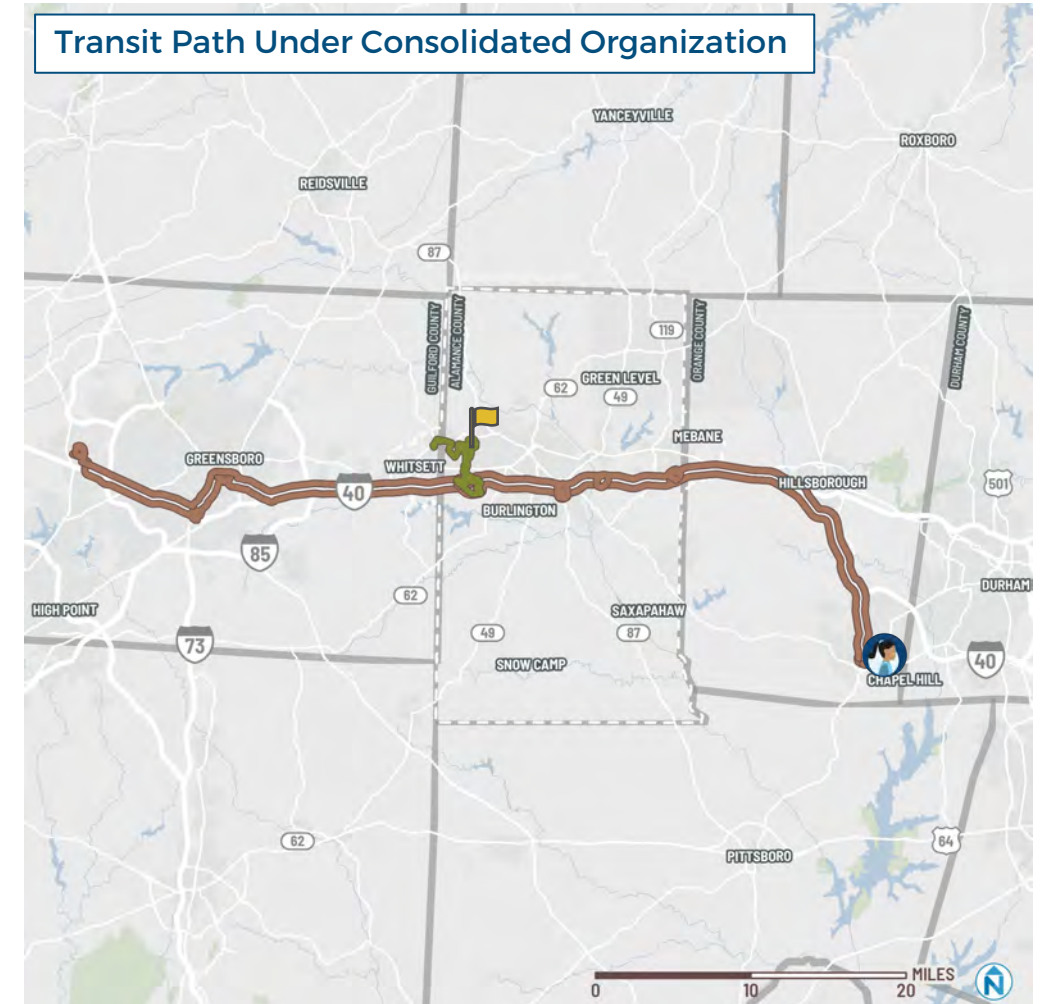
Umbrella Organization Scenario

- With expanded local fixed bus service, Connie would be able to ride Route 4 to the Alamance Regional Medical Center Park & Ride and catch new Green route service from there to Elon University, but PART's existing Route 4 schedule would result in a later arrival to work.
- Connie would still not be able to make the return to Chapel Hill by bus because of limited service on PART's Route 4.



Consolidated Organization Scenario

- PART's Route 4 expands to all-day hourly service, allowing Connie to travel to the Alamance Regional Medical Center Park & Ride and catching new service to Elon University. She can also return home by transit.
- Additionally, fares are restructured and consolidated so that she only pays once for the entire trip from home to work.



Persona Scenario: New Job Janelle



Janelle's Trip: Lives near downtown Burlington and considering a job in downtown Greensboro with 8:00 am to 4:00 pm work hours.

Stay the Course Scenario

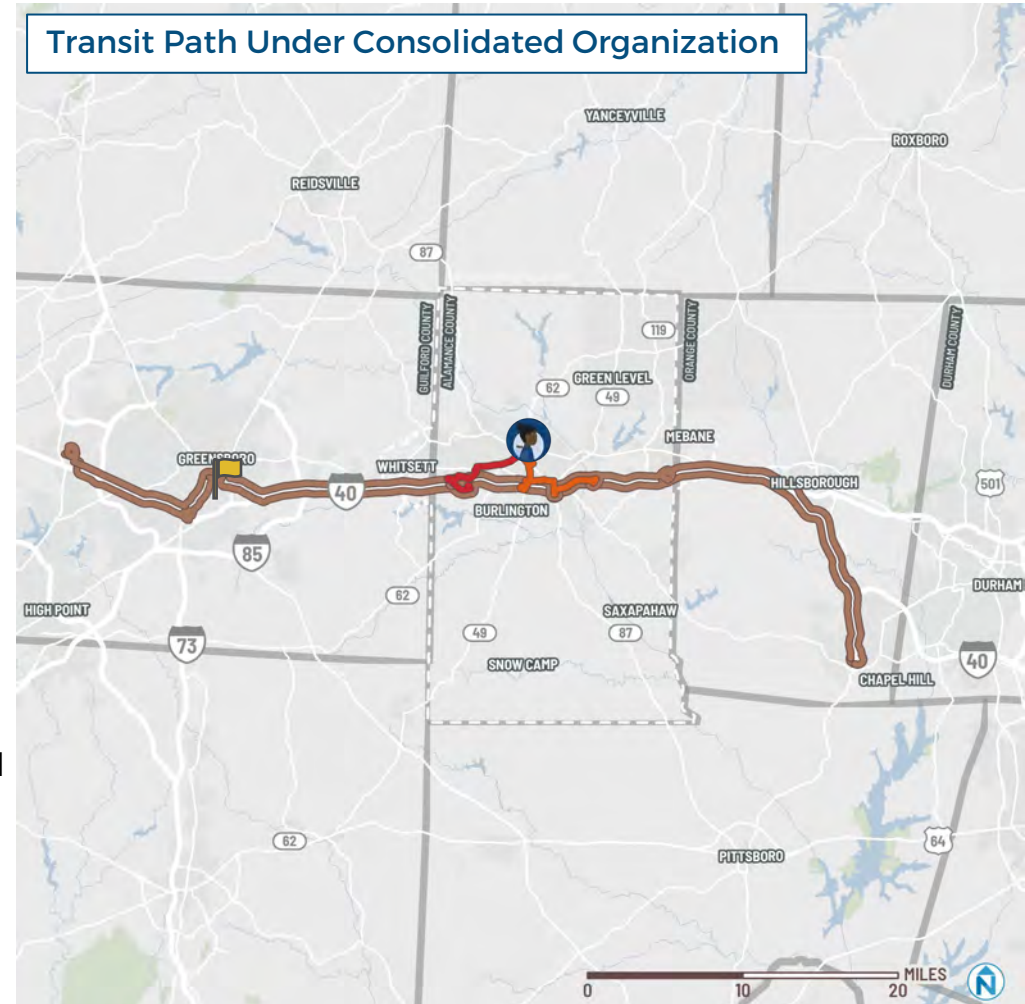
- Janelle would need to catch either Link Transit's Orange Route to the Graham Park and Ride or the Red Route to the Alamance Regional Medical Center Park and Ride. From there, she would catch PART's Route 4, getting to downtown Greensboro at 10:30 am, late for work.
- Janelle cannot make the return trip by transit, since the last trip on Route 4 from downtown Greensboro departs at 3:30 pm.

Umbrella Organization Scenario

- Janelle's travel experience remains the same as under the Stay the Course scenario.

Consolidated Organization Scenario

- Janelle can travel on Link Transit to either the Graham Park & Ride or the Alamance Regional Park & Ride with service every 30 minutes. From there, she catches hourly service to downtown Greensboro.
- Janelle is also able to make the return trip home on transit. With more frequent local service and expanded regional service, Janelle can make trips when she needs and spend less time waiting.



Persona Scenario: Stay-at-Home Dad Raphael



Raphael's Trip: Makes weekly shopping trips to Target, and sometimes Walmart during the midday.

Stay the Course Scenario

- Raphael must walk from his home to the Orange Route, which does not operate in North Graham. More stops have been added to the Orange Route between Burlington and Graham, but service is still far from home and operates at 90-minute frequencies. Once he gets to downtown Burlington, he must transfer to the Red Route to get to Target.
- Assuming a 20-minute walk to catch the Orange Route, Raphael's total travel time is approximately 90 minutes.



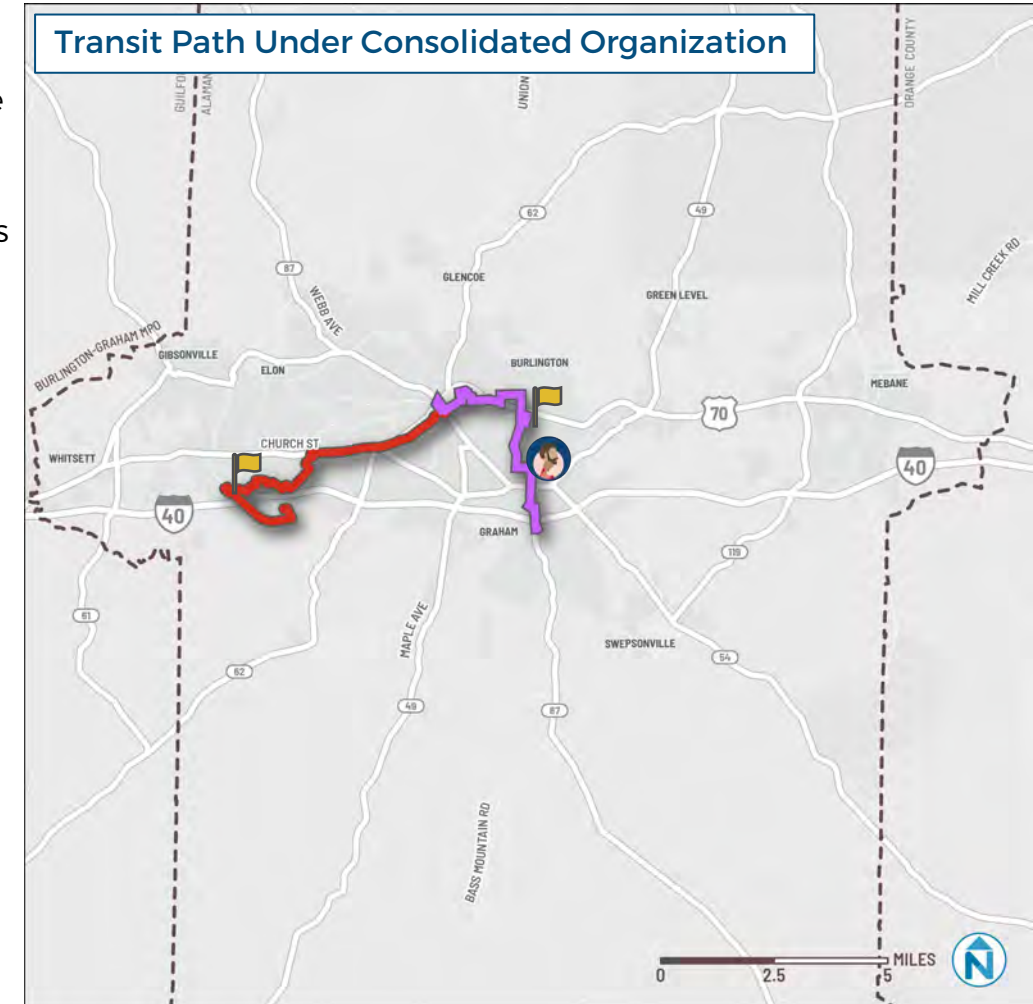
Umbrella Organization Scenario

- Raphael's trip does not change under the Umbrella scenario. He must still walk to the Orange Route and transfer to the Red Route to get to Target.



Consolidated Organization Scenario

- Raphael has bus service closer to his home, allowing him to catch a new route that takes him to downtown Burlington every 60 minutes. This new route also serves the Graham-Hopedale Road Walmart, should he wish to complete his shopping there.
- To continue to Target, Raphael can make a timed transfer to the Red route which now operates every 30 minutes and with a more direct alignment to Target.



Persona Scenario: East Burlington Betty



Betty's Trips: Weekly trips to Alamance Regional Medical Ctr. and to Mebane to visit her daughter.

Stay the Course Scenario

- Betty is qualified to use Link Transit's paratransit service for appointments to Alamance Regional Medical Center. She can make a reservation one day in advance with Link Transit's *My Transit Manager* app.
- Betty must call ACTA when visiting her daughter in Mebane, ACTA has implemented same-day reservations in this scenario, so she can make trips closer to her desired trip time.
- It is important that Betty remember which agency to call when scheduling transportation to her medical appointments.



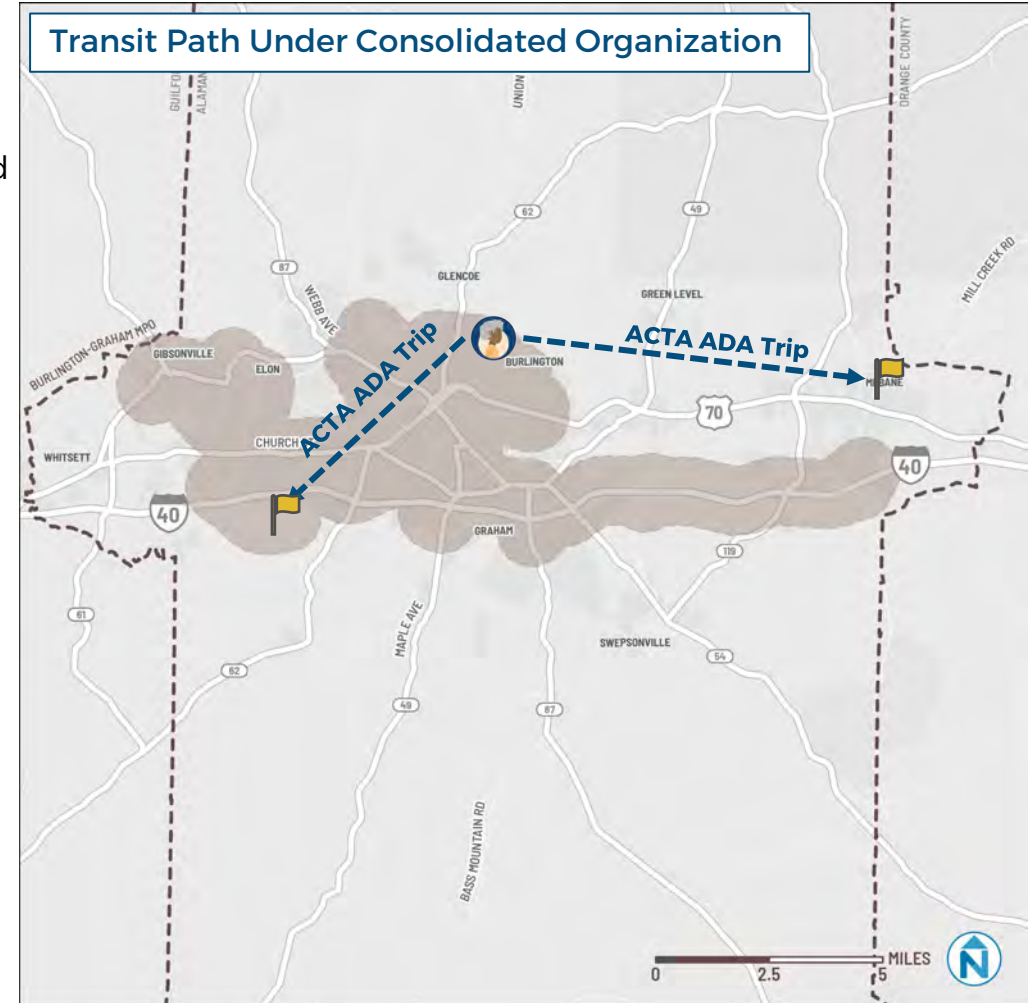
Umbrella Organization Scenario

- ACTA and Link Transit's on-demand service is consolidated, simplifying Betty's reservation and travel experience with one call or the use of one app.



Consolidated Organization Scenario

- Betty's travel experience to her medical appointment and her daughter's house is similar to the umbrella organization scenario, with both trips being scheduled with one phone call or the use of one app.



Persona Scenario: College Student Tamara



Tamara's Trips: Travels from Saxapahaw to ACC in the morning and from ACC to Tanger Outlets for a part-time job from 3:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

Stay the Course Scenario

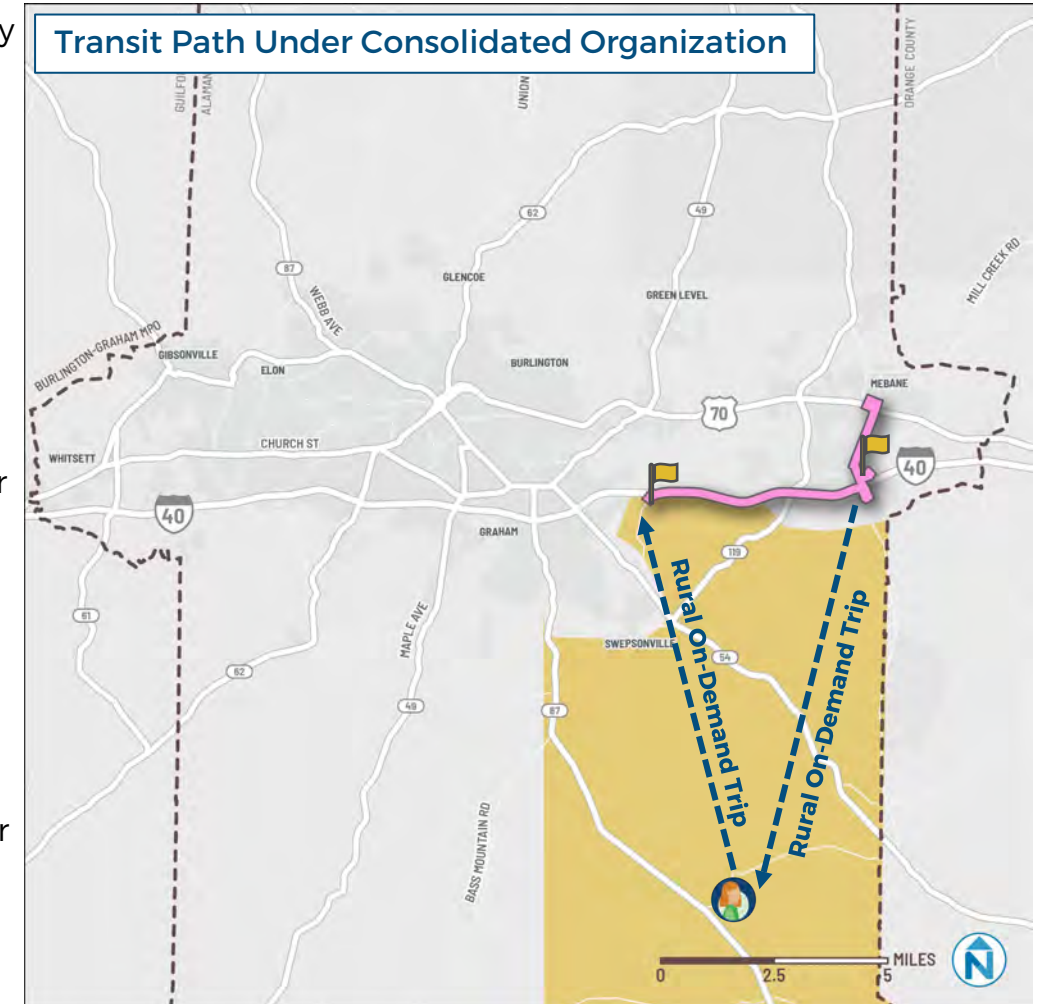
- Tamara schedules a trip with ACTA to travel to ACC with ACTA's improved same-day reservation system. After classes, Tamara can take Link Transit's extended Orange Route to Mebane's Tanger Outlets to her job. However, frequencies are at 90 minutes.
- Tamara is not able to return home by transit after her shift since ACTA does not operate in the evenings.

Umbrella Organization Scenario

- Tamara's trip to ACC and to her job is similar to her experience under the Stay the Course Scenario. For her return trip, ACTA service has been extended later into the evenings. Tamara can now schedule a trip on ACTA to return home at the end of her shift.
- Trip planning and fare payment for both Link Transit and ACTA can be done on a consolidated mobile app.

Consolidated Organization Scenario

- A new rural on-demand transit zone serves her home area, allowing her to use it for trips to and from ACC. A new local route also operates from ACC to her job at Tanger Outlets at more frequent (60-minute) service frequencies.
- Tamara can use the new rural on-demand transit zone to return home after her work shift.








Project Goal Assessment

Service Plan-Related Goals

Four service plan-related goals and objectives were established for this project after completion of the existing service assessment and public outreach efforts. Following is an assessment of how each potential scenario addresses each goal.









-  Minor action toward goal
-  Moderate action toward goal
-  Signification action toward goal
-  Goal largely achieved

Project Goals	Scenario 1: Stay the Course 	Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization 	Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization 
Maximize equitable access to transit services			
Make transit a viable mode choice option for residents and visitors			
Eliminate existing barriers for riders to travel throughout the entire region			
Improve transit service performance overall in the region			

Governance and Funding-Related Goals

Four governance and funding-related goals and objectives were also established after completion of the existing service assessment and public outreach efforts. Following is an assessment of how each potential scenario addresses each goal.

-  Minor action toward goal
-  Moderate action toward goal
-  Signification action toward goal
-  Goal largely achieved

Project Goals	Scenario 1: Stay the Course 	Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization 	Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization 
Identify opportunities to better coordinate and/or consolidate transit services			
Provide a regional transit decision-making forum			
Maximize transit funding opportunities for the region			
Encourage transit-supportive land uses and densities			

Appendix A: Consolidated Organization Scenario Service Plan

Local Fixed Route Service Statistics

Route	Name	Day	Span of Service	One-Way		Service Frequency				Vehicles		Daily		Annual	
				Time	Dist [mi.]	AM	Mid	PM	Eve	Peak	Total	Rev.-Miles	Rev.-Hrs.	Rev.-Miles	Rev.-Hrs.
1	Blue - Burlington/Elon	Wk	5:30 am - 9:00 pm	23	6.0	60	60	60	60	1		186	15.5	47,400	4,000
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	23	6.0	60	60	60	n/a			144	12.0	7,500	600
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													54,900	4,600	
2	Red - Burlington/ Alamance Crossing/Med. Ctr.	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	34	9.0	30	30	30	60	3		486	42.0	123,900	10,700
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	34	9.0	30	30	30	n/a			432	36.0	22,500	1,900
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													146,400	12,600	
3	Orange - Burlington/ Graham/Alamance Comm. College	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	25	8.9	30	30	30	60	2		480.6	27.0	122,600	6,900
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	25	8.9	60	60	60	n/a			213.6	12.0	11,100	600
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													133,700	7,500	
4	Purple - Burlington/Walmart/ Graham	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	25	6.7	60	60	60	60	1		201	15.0	51,300	3,800
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	25	6.7	60	60	60	n/a			160.8	12.0	8,400	600
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													59,700	4,400	
5	Lime - Gibsonsville/ Elon/Alamance Crossing	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	49	13.1	60	60	60	60	2		391.5	30.0	99,800	7,700
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	49	13.1	60	60	60	n/a			313.2	24.0	16,300	1,200
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													116,100	8,900	
6	Yellow - Burlington / Walmart	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	24	6.5	60	60	60	60	1		195	15.0	49,700	3,800
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	24	6.5	60	60	60	n/a			156	12.0	8,100	600
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													57,800	4,400	
7	Pink - Mebane/Alamance Community College	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	25	8.6	30	30	30	60	2		464.4	27.0	118,400	6,900
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	25	8.6	60	30	30	n/a			369.8	21.5	19,200	1,100
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													137,600	8,000	
TOTALS										12	15			706,200	50,400
												Existing Requirements:		301,800	22,100
												Net Change:		404,400	28,300
n/a	Mebance Circulator	Wk	6:00 am - 9:00 pm	12	2.3	30	30	30	30	1		138	15.0	35,200	3,800
		Sat	6:30 am - 6:30 pm	12	2.3	30	30	30	n/a			110.4	12.0	5,700	600
		Sun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			0	0.0	0	0
													40,900	4,400	

Microtransit and Rural On-Demand Service Statistics

Area	Microtransit Zone	Sq. Miles	Populaton	Replica Trips	Vehicles	Wkdy Hrs.	Sat. Hrs.	Annual Hrs.
Urban	North	15.3	18,543	18,768	2	31	24	9,200
	East	11.9	13,230	38,318	2	31	24	9,200
	West	11.8	16,873	24,780	2	31	24	9,200
	South	12.4	6,859	7,896	2	27.5	12	7,600
	Mebance	14	19,554	43,458	2	31	24	9,200
	Total					10	151.5	108
Rural	North	134	25368	39,586	3	34	24	9,900
	Southwest	81	20088	4,183	2	24	12	6,700
	Southeast	103	14294	19,149	2	24	24	7,400
	Total				7		60	24,000

PART Route 4 All-Day Schedule and Service Statistics


Bus #	Coble T.C. Tr. Ctr.	Greensboro Depot	Alamance P&R	Grahamomm. Collej P&R	Mebane P&R	Eubanks PNR	Eubanks Layver	Eubanks P&R	Mebane P&R	omm. Collej P&R	Graham P&R	Alamance P&R	Greensboro Depot	Coble T.C. Tr. Ctr.	Next Layover	In-Serv. Departure	In-Serv. Time
<i>Dist.</i>		13.5	17.5	6.75	3.25	5.5	15.7		15.7	5.5	3.25	6.75	17.5	13.5			
1	5:15	5:40	6:11	6:22	6:29	6:43	7:07	0:20	7:27	7:51	8:01	8:13	8:25	8:56	0:44	9:40	4.4
2	6:15	6:40	7:11	7:22	7:29	7:43	8:07	0:20	8:27	8:51	9:01	9:13	9:25	9:56	0:44	10:40	4.4
3	7:15	7:40	8:11	8:22	8:29	8:43	9:07	0:20	9:27	9:51	10:01	10:13	10:25	10:56	0:44	11:40	4.4
4	8:15	8:40	9:11	9:22	9:29	9:43	10:07	0:20	10:27	10:51	11:01	11:13	11:25	11:56	0:44	12:40	4.4
1		9:40	10:11	10:22	10:29	10:43	11:07	0:20	11:27	11:51	12:01	12:13	12:25	12:56	0:44	13:40	4.0
2		10:40	11:11	11:22	11:29	11:43	12:07	0:20	12:27	12:51	13:01	13:13	13:25	13:56	0:44	14:40	4.0
3		11:40	12:11	12:22	12:29	12:43	13:07	0:20	13:27	13:51	14:01	14:13	14:25	14:56	0:44	15:40	4.0
4		12:40	13:11	13:22	13:29	13:43	14:07	0:20	14:27	14:51	15:01	15:13	15:25	15:56	0:44	16:40	4.0
1		13:40	14:11	14:22	14:29	14:43	15:07	0:20	15:27	15:51	16:01	16:13	16:25	16:56		17:21	3.7
2		14:40	15:11	15:22	15:29	15:43	16:07	0:20	16:27	16:51	17:01	17:13	17:25	17:56		18:21	3.7
3		15:40	16:11	16:22	16:29	16:43	17:07	0:20	17:27	17:51	18:01	18:13	18:25	18:56		19:21	3.7
4		16:40	17:11	17:22	17:29	17:43	18:07	0:20	18:27	18:51	19:01	19:13	19:25	19:56		20:21	3.7
																	48.4

Proposed Annual Requirements: 12,342
Existing Annual Requirements: 8,000
Net Change: 4,342

Summary

Bus #	Start	End	Total (1)	Total (2)	Annual
1	5:15	17:21	12:06	12.10	
2	6:15	18:21	12:06	12.10	
3	7:15	19:21	12:06	12.10	
4	8:15	20:21	12:06	12.10	
Total Hours			48.40	12,300	

Appendix B: PART Public Transportation Funding Paper



Public Transportation Funding

Options and Opportunities for the Piedmont Triad

NOTE to Readers -

- This document has been prepared as a reference to elected officials, professional staff, and planning consultants.
- There are existing studies underway, those that have been completed in years past, and more that are on the horizon in our Region –
 - It is viewed that a clear understanding of the current laws in North Carolina may be helpful for the planning processes of consultants and decisions of policy makers to enhance our mobility systems in the Triad Region of NC.
- Additional details are available, and examples of successful transit investments in NC with policy, governance, steps taken, and investments made can be provide by PART to our member Agencies.



“What is the status of North Carolina’s public transportation sales and use tax, as provided for in N.C. Gen. Stat. Art. 43? Specifically, what is the public transportation sales and use tax available to counties and what counties are levying the tax? ”

Transit Sales Tax Revenue Options for Cities and Counties

Article 43 of the N.C. Gen. Stat. is titled the Local Government Public Transportation Sales Tax Act. Article 43 allows participating North Carolina counties and transportation authorities to levy a sales and use tax, the revenue of which must be used to fund local public transportation systems.

- Part 1: lays out the requirements for implementing the public transportation sales and use tax, with different requirements applying to different counties across the state.
- Part 2: applies to Mecklenburg County.
- Part 3: lays out requirements for Transportation Authorities
- Part 4: applies to the Triangle Regional Public Transportation Authority (consisting of Wake, Durham, and Orange Counties).
- Part 5: applies to Triad Regional Public Transportation Authority (but is limited to Forsyth and Guilford Counties).
- Part 6: applies to all other North Carolina counties.

Transit Sales Tax Revenue Options for Cities and Counties

- The sales price of food that is exempt from the transit sales tax pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13B or to the sales price of a bundled transaction
- A bundled transaction is a purchase of food and non-food together. If the price of the food is 10% or less of the total purchase, the food is not taxed. If the price of the food exceeds 10% of the total purchase the food is taxable.

ACTIVE Use of Transit Sales Tax in North Carolina

North Carolina counties currently levying the tax are Mecklenburg County in 1998, Durham County in 2011, Orange County in 2012 and Wake County in 2016.

“What is the status of North Carolina’s annual municipal vehicle tax, as provided for by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-97, which permits cities to use up to five dollars of the tax on public transportation? “

Municipal Vehicle Tax

State Taxes to Highway Fund.--All taxes levied under this Article are compensatory taxes for the use and privileges of the public highways of this State. The taxes collected shall be credited to the State Highway Fund. Except as provided in this section, no county or municipality shall levy any license or privilege tax upon any motor vehicle licensed by the State.

(b) Repealed by S.L. 2015-241, § 29.27A, eff. July 1, 2016.

(b1) Municipal Vehicle Tax.--A city or town may levy an annual municipal vehicle tax upon any vehicle resident in the city or town. The aggregate annual municipal vehicle tax levied, including any annual municipal vehicle tax authorized by local legislation, may not exceed thirty dollars (\$30.00) per vehicle. A city or town may use the net proceeds from the municipal vehicle tax as follows:

(1) General purpose.--Not more than five dollars (\$5.00) of the tax levied may be used for any lawful purpose.

(2) Public transportation.--Not more than five dollars (\$5.00) of the tax levied may be used for financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining local public transportation systems. This subdivision only applies to a city or town that operates a public transportation system as defined in G.S. 105-550.

(3) Public streets.--The remainder of the tax levied may be used for maintaining, repairing, constructing, reconstructing, widening, or improving public streets in the city or town that do not form a part of the State highway system.

“Has the North Carolina General Assembly passed any additional statutes that enable certain tax proceeds to fund public transportation?”

Revenue Options for Cities and Counties

- Chapter 20 Motor Vehicles. § 20-97: Max. \$30 per vehicle **with Max. \$5 for Transit**
- Article 39 First One-Cent (1 ¢) Local Government Sales and Use Tax: **1%**
- Article 40 First One-Half Cent (1/2 ¢) Local Government Sales and Use Tax: **0.5%**
- Article 42 Second One-Half Cent (1/2 ¢) Local Government Sales and Use Tax: **0.5%**
- **Article 43. Transit Tax Forsyth and Guilford ½ Cent / Alamance, Randolph, Davidson ¼ Cent: 0.25% to 0.5% (PART)**
- Article 46 One-Quarter Cent (1/4 ¢) County Sales and Use Tax: **0.25%**
- **Article 50 Regional Transit Authority Vehicle Rental Tax: 5% (max.) (PART)**
- **Article 51 Regional Vehicle Registration: max. \$8.00 (PART)**
- **Article 52 County Vehicle Registration: max. \$7.00**

Items highlighted in red are for public transportation only. All other items can be designated for public transportation.

Property taxes can be included in funding of public transportation, but they are not included in this discussion.

“What funding options are currently being used in the Piedmont Triad and which are available?”

Local Funding Options in Place and Available

What’s being used

- **Vehicle Rental Tax (PART Art. 50)**
 - Guilford (5%)
 - Forsyth (5%)
 - Alamance (5%)
 - Davidson (5%)
 - Davie (5%)
 - Surry (5%)
 - Yadkin (5%)
- **Vehicle Registration Tax (PART Art. 51)**
 - Randolph (\$1)
- **Municipal Vehicle Registration (Local Ch. 20)**
 - Greensboro (\$30)
 - High Point (\$30)
 - Jamestown (\$30)
 - Lexington (\$5)
 - Burlington (\$5)

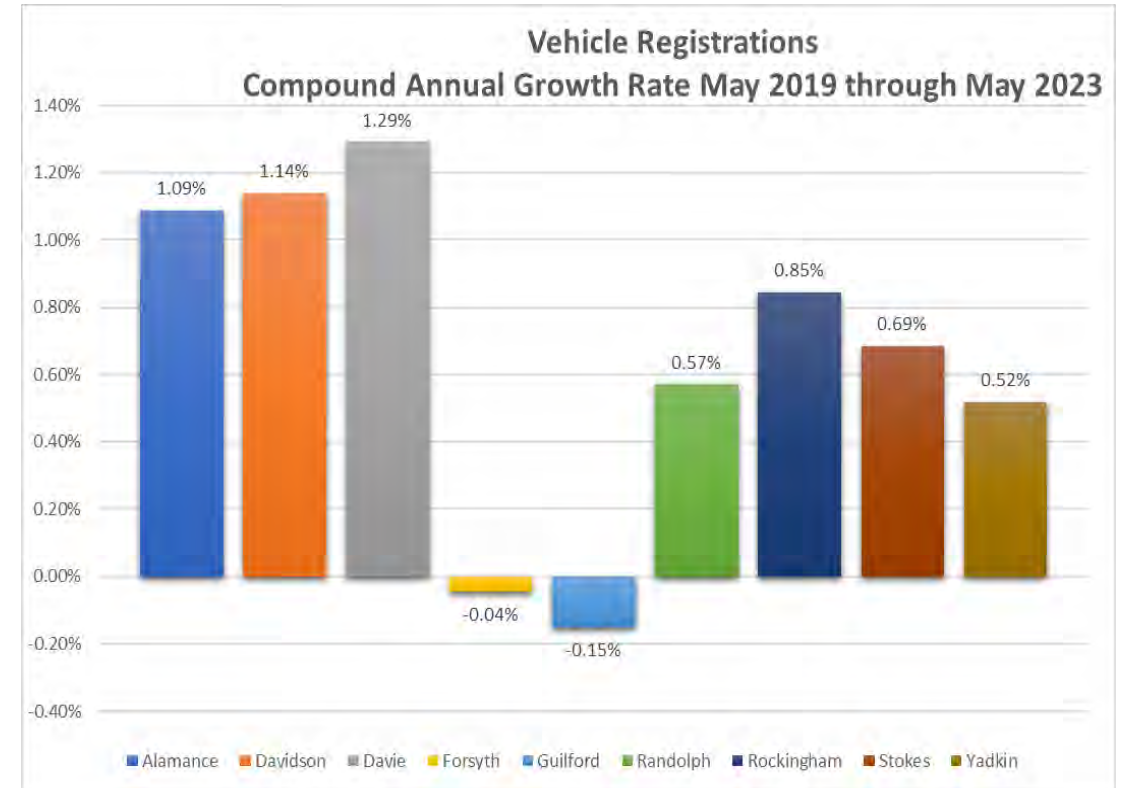
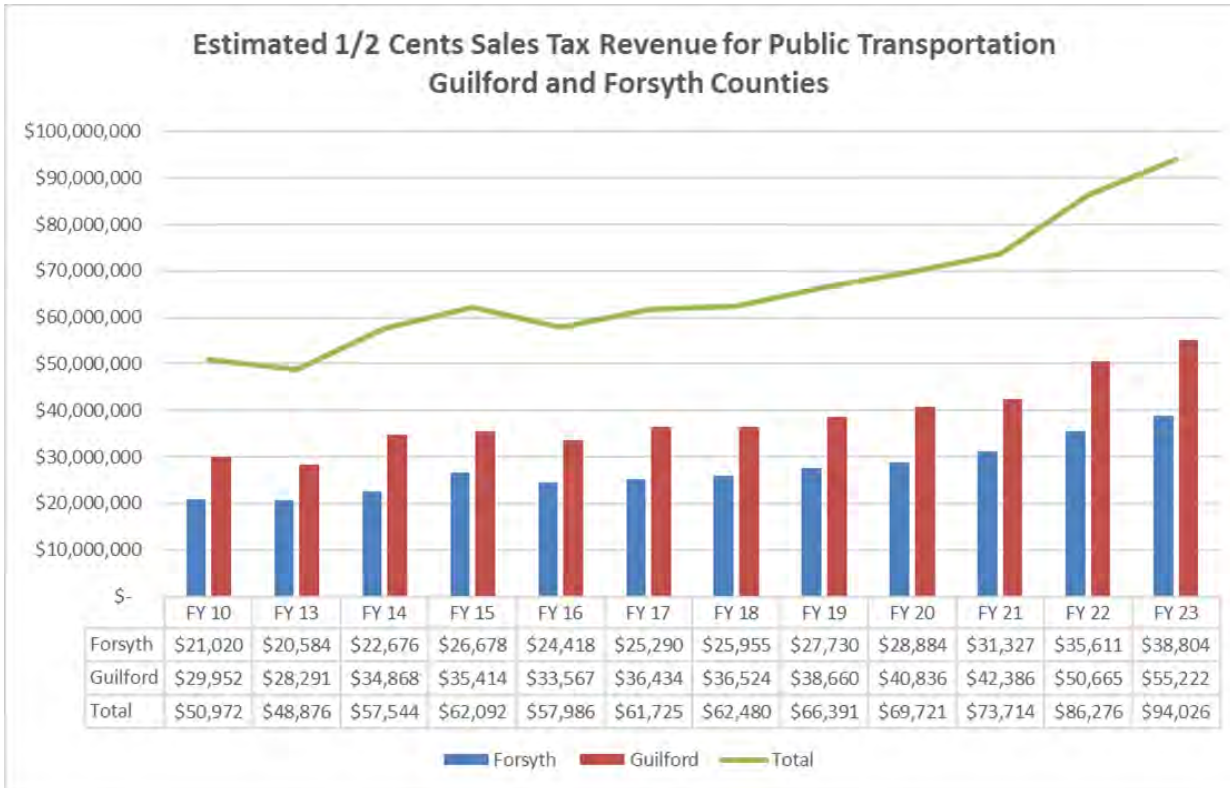
What’s available

- **½ and ¼ cent sales tax option available to all counties – subject to voter approval**
- **Regional Vehicle Registration – approval by County Commissioners**
- **County Vehicle Registration – approval by County Commissioners**
- **Municipal Vehicle Registration – approval by city council**

PART is the taxing authority.

“What is the current estimate of local funds that can be generated under N.C. General Statues for public transportation systems in the Piedmont Triad?”

First the numbers



Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue, North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles, PART

Revenue Calculator

Example #1: Using full Regional Sales Tax option and 100% of Regional Vehicle Registration Fee

		1/2 Cent Sales Tax	1/4 Cent Sales Tax	Municipal (\$5.00 max)	Regional (\$8.00 max)	County (\$7.00 max)		Number of Registered Vehicles	Municipal (\$5.00 max)	Regional (\$8.00 max)	County (\$7.00 max)
Guilford		\$ 55,222,420			\$ 3,436,000	\$ -		429,500		8	0
	Greensboro			in place (\$30)				151,572	0		
	High Point			in place (\$30)				51,785	0		
	Jamestown			in place (\$30)				9,520	0		
Forsyth		\$ 38,804,136			\$ 2,587,336	\$ -		323,417		8	0
	Winston-Salem			0				119,884	0		
	Kernersville			0				37,633	0		
Davidson		\$ 5,680,441			\$ 1,629,208	\$ -		203,651		8	0
	Lexington			in place (\$30)				71,639	0		
	Thomasville			0				36,135	0		
Randolph		\$ 4,988,410			\$ 1,333,680	\$ -		166,710		8	0
	Asheboro			0				47,824	0		
	Randleman			0				15,391	0		
Alamance		\$ 13,141,205			\$ 1,352,352	\$ -		169,044		8	0
	Burlington			in place (\$5)				53,108	0		
	Graham			0				23,305	0		
	Mebane			0							
		\$ 94,026,556	\$ 23,810,056		\$ 10,338,576		Total	16,400			
							\$ 128,175,188				

Revenue Calculator

Example #3: Using full Regional Sales Tax option and 100% of Municipal Vehicle Registration Fee

		1/2 Cent Sales Tax	1/4 Cent Sales Tax	Municipal (\$5.00 max)	Regional (\$8.00 max)	County (\$7.00 max)		Number of Registered Vehicles	Municipal (\$5.00 max)	Regional (\$8.00 max)	County (\$7.00 max)		
Guilford		\$ 55,222,420			\$ -	\$ -		429,500		0	0		
	Greensboro			\$ 757,860					151,572	5			
	High Point			\$ 258,925					51,785	5			
	Jamestown			\$ 47,600					9,520	5			
Forsyth		\$ 38,804,136			\$ -	\$ -		323,417		0	0		
	Winston-Salem			\$ 599,420					119,884	5			
	Kernersville			\$ 188,165					37,633	5			
Davidson			\$ 5,680,441		\$ -	\$ -		203,651		0	0		
	Lexington			\$ 358,195					71,639	5			
	Thomasville			\$ 180,675					36,135	5			
Randolph			\$ 4,988,410		\$ -	\$ -		166,710		0	0		
	Asheboro			\$ 239,120					47,824	5			
	Randleman			\$ 76,955					15,391	5			
Alamance			\$ 13,141,205		\$ -	\$ -		169,044		0	0		
	Burlington						\$ 265,540			53,108	5		
	Graham						\$ 116,525			23,305	5		
	Mebane						\$ 82,000						
		\$ 94,026,556	\$ 23,810,056	\$ 3,170,980	\$ -		Total	16,400	5				
							\$ 121,007,592						

What we have...

 <p>Express Bus</p>	 <p>Local Bus</p>	 <p>Micro Mobility</p>
 <p>Taxi</p>	 <p>TNCs (Ride Hailing)</p>	 <p>Single Occupancy Vehicle</p>
 <p>Paratransit</p>	 <p>Walking</p>	 <p>Vanpool / Carpool</p>
 <p>Biking</p>	 <p>Shuttle Bus</p>	

What could be added...

 <p>Dedicated Lanes and Signal Prioritization</p>	 <p>Mobility Hubs</p>	 <p>Bus Rapid Transit</p>
 <p>Microtransit</p>	 <p>Streetcar</p>	 <p>Self-Driving Vehicles</p>
 <p>Commuter Rail</p>	 <p>Light Rail</p>	 <p>Enhanced Bus</p>
 <p>FLEX Routes</p>	 <p>Carsharing</p>	

What we may never need



Ferry

2021 Expenditures in Transit in the Piedmont Triad

Agency	Operating	Capital	Total
ACTA	\$ 1,677,478	\$ 646,033	\$ 2,323,511
DCTS	\$ 1,385,388	\$ 252,528	\$ 1,637,916
GTA	\$ 21,616,804	\$ 1,618,895	\$ 23,235,699
Guilford County	\$ 1,071,871	----	\$ 1,071,871
HPT	\$ 4,417,763	----	\$ 4,417,763
LINK	\$ 2,184,790	\$ 407,056	\$ 2,591,846
PART	\$ 6,870,352	\$ 5,014,403	\$ 11,884,755
WSTA	\$ 19,356,912	\$ 9,714,388	\$ 29,071,300
	\$58,581,358	\$17,653,303	\$ 76,234,661

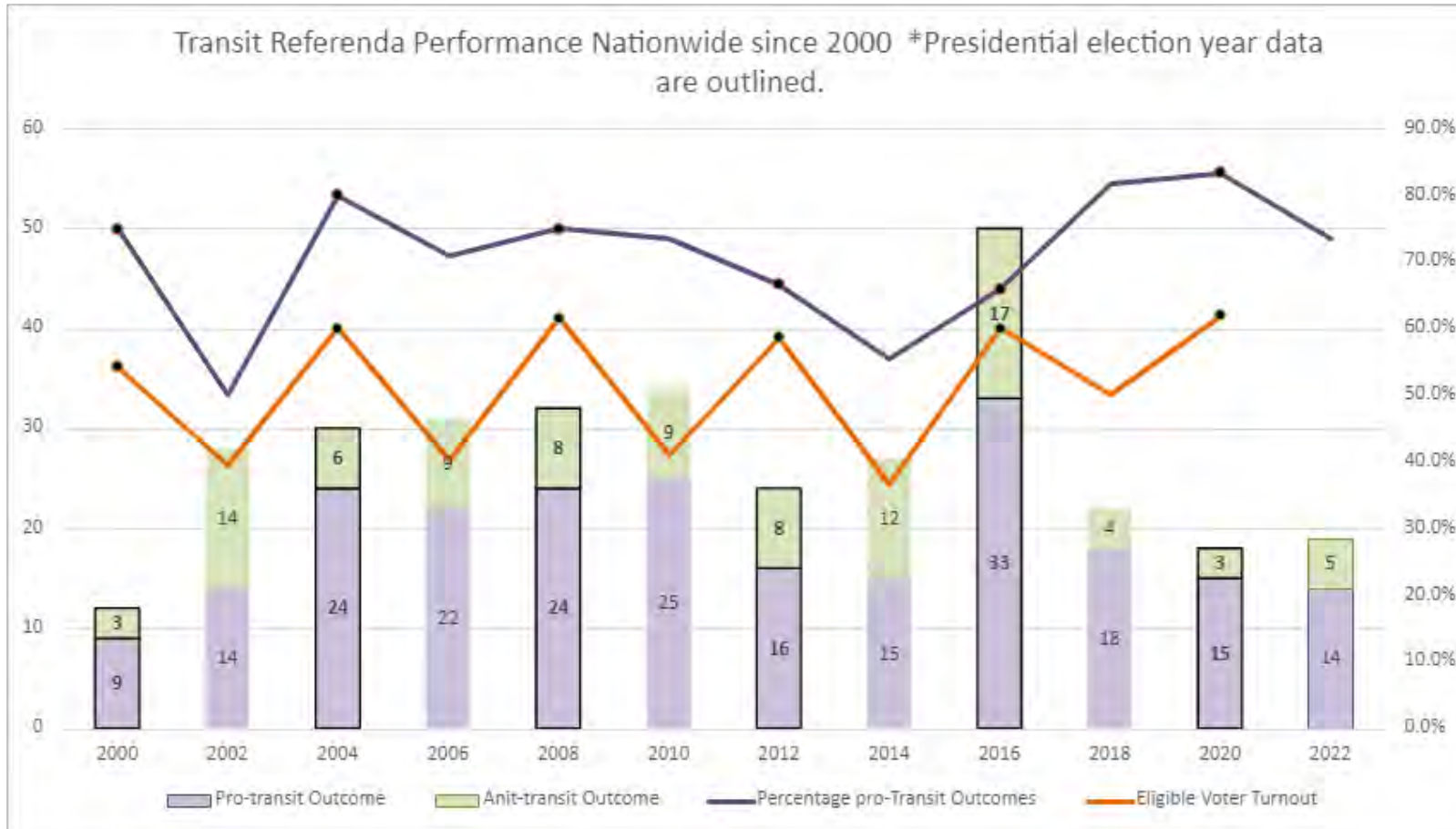
Source: NTD 2021

North Carolina compared to the other States

• Population	9th (10,453,948)
• Volume of Maximum Transit Service	13th
• Transit Fares and Other Directly Generated	19th
• Taxes and Fees Levied by Transit Agency	8th
• Local Transit Funding	12th
• State Transit Funding	24th
• Federal Transit Funding	19th
• Total Transit Funding	17th (\$812,038,726)
	Per Capital Spending = \$77.678

Source: NTD 2021

Historical Review of Transit Referenda



Source: PART



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