

Regional Transit Feasibility Study

Public Meetings Round 2

October 2023



Agenda

- Project Overview and Schedule
- Public and Stakeholder Outreach Findings
- Potential Organizational Scenarios
- Conceptual Service Plans
- How Does Each Scenario Impact Your Travel?
- Tell Us What You Think

Project Overview and Schedule

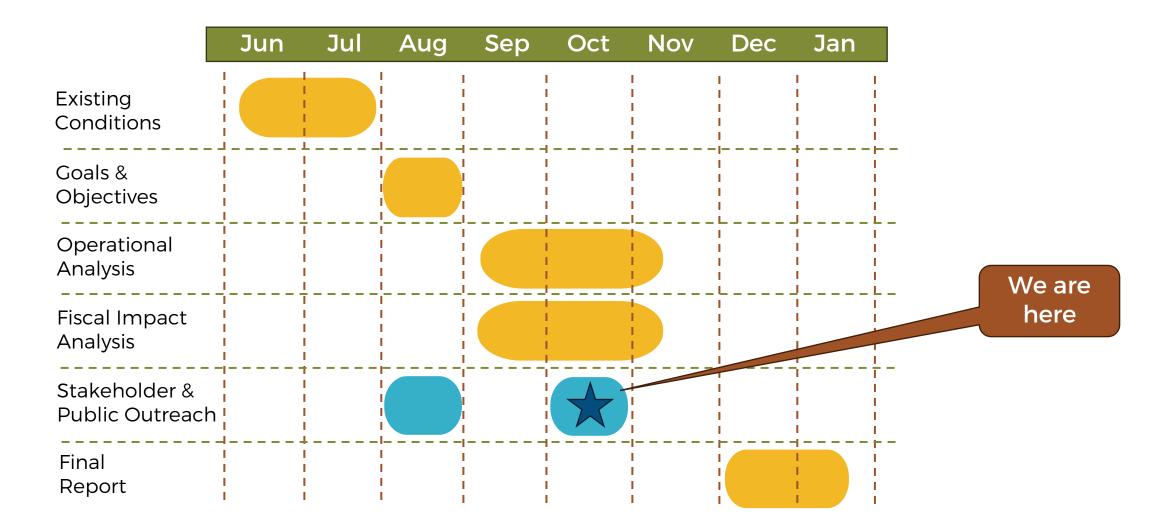
Project Overview

- Identify opportunities to
 - Better coordinate transit services
 - Expand transit service with improved frequencies and better connections
 - Identify potential future transit funding sources
- Study is looking at transit needs both within Alamance County and to nearby destinations outside of Alamance County

BURLINGTON-GRAHAM MPO AREA



Project Schedule: Where we're at



Existing Transit Service

Local Fixed Route Service

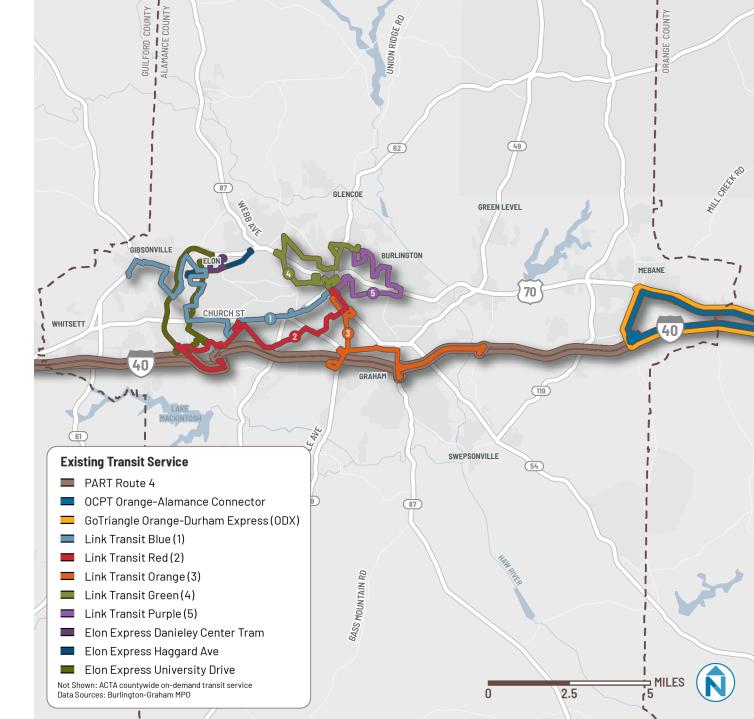
- Link Transit Blue (1)
- Link Transit Red (2)
- Link Transit Orange (3)
- Link Transit Green (4)
- Link Transit Purple (5)
- Elon Express Danieley Center Tram
- Elon Express Haggard Avenue
- Elon Express University Drive

Regional Service

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

On-Demand Service

- Link Transit Paratransit Service (¾ mile buffer of Link fixed routes)
- ACTA (countywide)



Public and Stakeholder Outreach Findings

REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Public Outreach Efforts

- Online and Paper Surveys
- Virtual and In-Person Events
- Mailing Lists
- Flyers
- Press Releases
- Social Media Posts
- Agency Website Posts
- Stakeholder Interviews

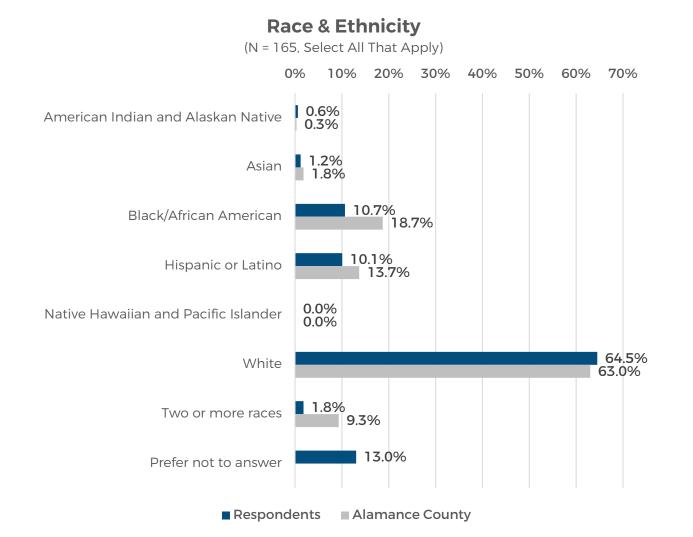
Detailed engagement summaries available at bgmpo.org/transitstudy



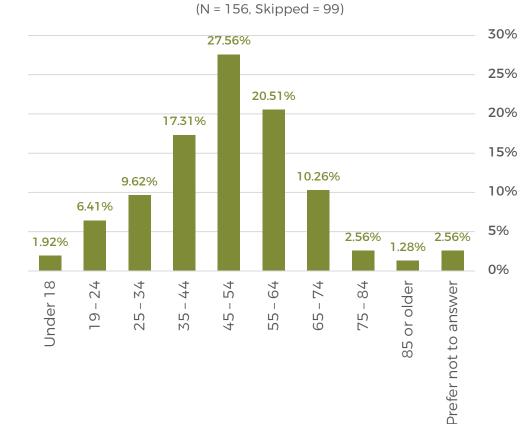
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	The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization is studying ways to	
	improve transit service through its Regional Transit Feasibility Study. The stud is being conducted by Nelson/Nygaard. As part of the planning process, the BGMPO	y
Take the survey surveymonkey.com/r/BGMPOTransit	is being conducted by Nelson (Nygaard, As part of the planning process, the BGATO is seeking community input on challenges using existing fixed route, express and on-	
surveymonkey.com/r/BGMPOnansic	demand transit services and identifying priorities for future improvements through a	n
	online survey and community meetings in August. The BGMPO region includes all of	
	Alamance County and portions of Guilford and Orange counties. Transit service in the BGMPO region is provided by multiple transit operators, including Link Transit,	8
g off its Regional Transit	Alamance County Transportation Authority, Piedmont Authority for Regional	
want to hear from you! What ir region more useful more	Transportation, Orange County Public Transportation and GoTriangle.	
	The BGMPO launched an online community survey to inform the study. The survey	
	will be live until Aug. 27 and is available at	
	surveymonkey.com/r/BGMPOTransit. Participants can respond to questions	
	about locations they would like to access by transit improvements that would enhance	r
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Timeframe	Activity
July 24 th to September 4 th	Survey questionnaire live on agency websites (267 responses, including 255 online and 12 paper)
August	Stakeholder interviews (virtual)
August 22 nd and 24 th	Public meetings (in-person and virtual)
October 24 th and 26 th (Planned)	Public meetings (in-person and virtual)
Throughout	Digital/traditional broad/direct outreach

Survey Results: Respondents



Respondent Age



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

Key Takeaways from Survey

- ✓ 31% of respondents had taken some form of transit this past year, with Link Transit and PART being the most popular
- The most common reasons respondents use transit include not having a car, sustainability, and affordability, as well as physical disabilities.
- ✓ Most respondents are using transit for work, errands, or medical appointments.
- Respondents generally have limited knowledge about existing available transit services in the region.
- Those that do have some knowledge of available transit services do not believe its coverage meets their travel needs and/or do not find service to be frequent enough.
- Respondents believe that better coordination is needed between the existing transit service providers.
- Respondents requested technology to order and track rides in an app and identified the importance of good pedestrian access to bus stops.

Top 3 Desired Improvements by Service Type

Local Fixed Route Bus Service

- Increase the frequency of existing fixed route bus service (buses coming more often than every 90 minutes as they do today) (2.69)
- 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)

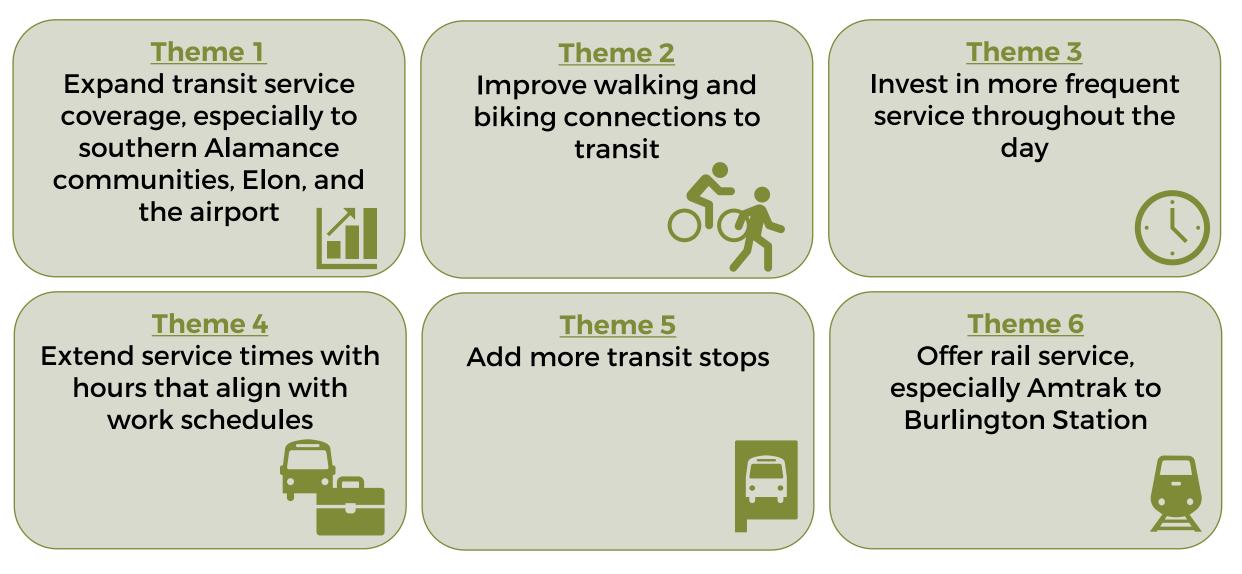
On-Demand Transit Service

- 1. Provide option to schedule trips by smart phone with the transit provider's mobile app (2.75)
- Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another (2.70)
- 3. Improve the accuracy of real-time vehicle arrival information (2.67)
- 4. Make the transit app more user-friendly (2.67)

Regional Express Transit Service

- Expand regional transit service to offer new connections from our area to additional destinations (2.77)
- 2. Increase the frequency of existing regional transit service (2.75)
- Improve coordination between transit providers so transfers are easy from one service to another (2.75)

Key Themes from Open-Ended Survey Responses



Stakeholder Interviews

- Invitations and follow ups sent to 24 stakeholders resulting in 9 interviews conducted virtually through MS Teams throughout August
- Stakeholders are from 5 primary types of organizations: Governmental, Educational, Business, Healthcare, Non-Profits

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 in Graham vs. local demand
- **Limited service:** span, lack of Sunday service, long headways
- **Perceived issues:** Graham city council and unhoused population in Graham
- Cutback of Amtrak service detrimental for regional access

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

Round 1 Public Open Houses

Virtual: August 22nd, In-Person Open House: August 24th

Topics: Review existing conditions analysis findings and give feedback on most important transit service improvements

How should the region invest in transit?

• Most participants preferred investment in local and ondemand transit services

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

Where is more <u>local</u> service needed?

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

Where is more <u>regional</u> service needed?

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





WHERE DO YOU WANT LOCAL SERVICE?

What additional destinations <u>within the BCM</u> area would you like to access by transit?





Potential Organizational Structures

Getting to a Regional Transit Plan

Current Challenges

- **Overlapping service** with Link Transit ADA and ACTA service
- Inadequate service coverage: Large areas of the urbanized area currently without fixed route service
- Inadequate service frequencies: 90minute local route frequencies and limited regional service trips are difficult to plan trips
- **Coordination challenges** with multiple service providers
- Poor access to stops and stop amenities: Lack of sidewalks and safe crosswalks
- Lack of central information source: transit options, schedules/general information, connections



Existing Governance & Transit Funding Constraints

Examples:

- Limited service area boundaries
- Insufficient funding
- Limits on which funding sources agencies are eligible for
- Not leveraging all legislatively available funding sources
- Duplicating administrative functions

Regional Transit Plan

- Better local access to destinations in urbanized area
- More local service: longer spans, Sunday service, increased frequencies
- **Expanded regional service:** More service, more destinations
- **Cohesive transit network** that accommodates travel throughout county
- Improve multimobility options, connections and transfers
- **Capital improvements**/facilities and shelters are needed
- Improved information/awareness of local and regional services

Service Plan Scenarios

Advancement of a Regional Transit Plan What that Could Look Like

We are evaluating and getting feedback on three scenarios for the future of transit in the BGMPO area.



Keep the current **transit agencies**' organizational and funding structures **separate** and focus on continued coordination efforts.

Form a Regional Transit Partnership to coordinate some transit agency functions that simplify rider experiences, 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.

Scenario Overview

Scenario Characteristic	Scenario 1: Stay the Course	Scenario 2: Umbrella Organization	Scenario 3: Consolidated Organization
Governance	 No change to existing transit organizational structures Service coordination and information sharing continues through MPO transit subcommittee 	 Create umbrella organization to guide regional transit decisions Existing transit organizations continue to operate independently 	 Consolidate local, and possibly regional services under one authority
Service	 Agencies continue to explore piecemeal transit service expansion opportunities 	 Exploration of transit service expansion opportunities coordinated under new umbrella organization 	 Opportunities for new local funding sources for county-wide transit service expansion Implement service expansion opportunities to address existing transit service gaps

Service Plan Scenarios

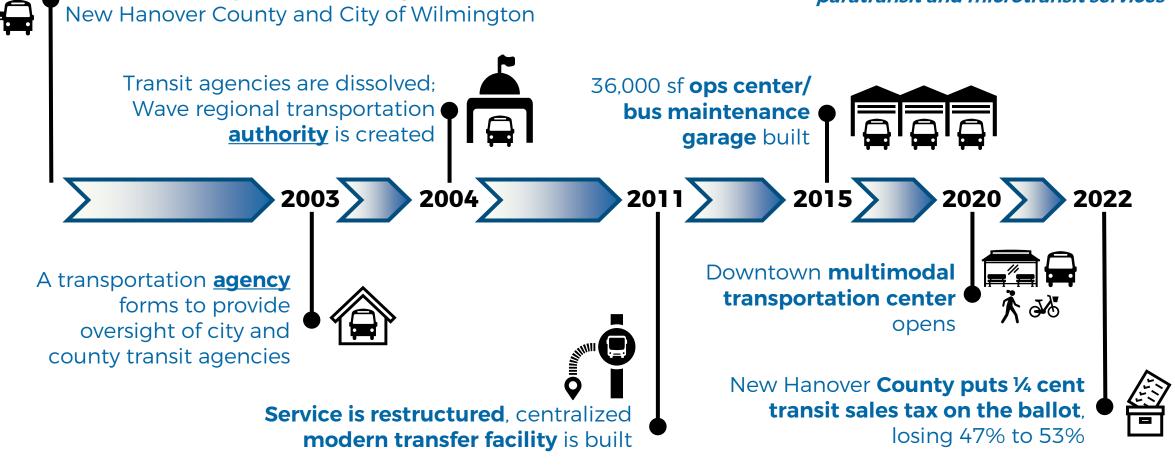
Case Study Example: Region Progresses to a Consolidated Organizational Structure

Prior to 2003, **separate transit agencies** served



CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Wave operates fixed route, paratransit and microtransit services





Ways to Get to a Consolidated Organizational Structure

Service Provider Scenarios	Advantages	Disadvantages	Feasible to Advance?
• A reconfigured ACTA takes over local and regional services in Alamance County	• All transit operations under one operator	 Legislation limits ACTA's ability to operate no more than 5 miles outside of county, restricting ability to provide regional service Still would require coordination with regional service providers 	
 PART operates Alamance County local services (urban and rural) and continues to operate regional service 	 All transit operations under one operator, resulting in more coordinated local and regional services 	 No direct local control for decision-making is by PART Board of Trustees Alamance County advisory committee suggested to provide input to PART's Board of Trustees 	
 A reconfigured ACTA takes over all Alamance County local services (urban and rural) PART continues to operate regional service 	• Full control of local transit decisions	 Regional services and any supplemental funding for regional service expansion will need to be coordinated with PART 	

Conceptual Service Plans

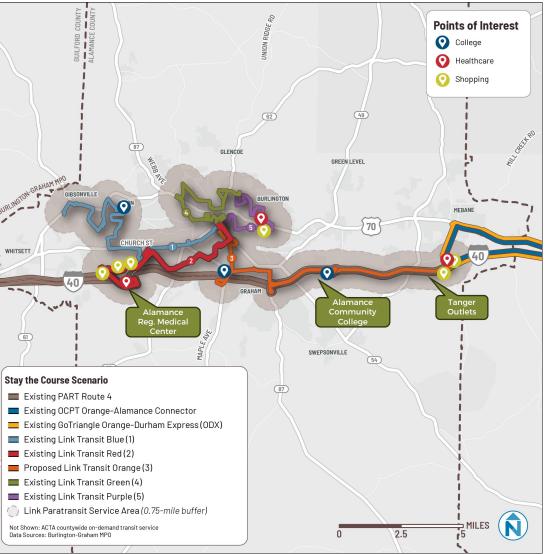
Service Plan Scenarios

Stay the Course: Potential Service Improvements

Incremental service improvements, as funding allows:

- Extend Link Transit Orange Line to Tanger Outlets in Mebane
- 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 ondemand 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 continues to work with local municipalities to fund service expansion.

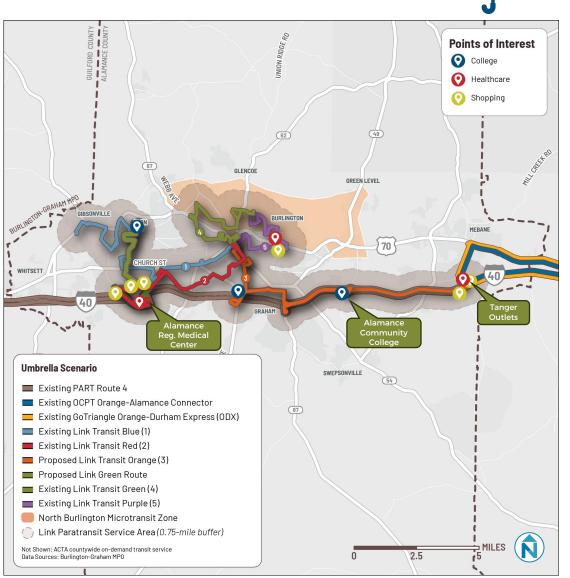


Umbrella Organization: Potential Service Improvements

More substantive service improvements with new local funding partners

All Stay the Course Improvements plus...

- 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

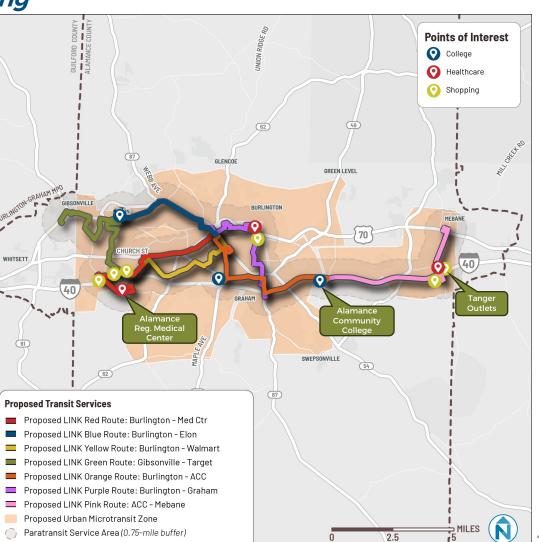
Service Plan Scenarios

Consolidated Organization: Potential Local Service Improvements

New transit organization with dedicated sales tax funding

- New fixed route service coverage to address service gaps with more direct route alignments
- Service frequency improvements:
 - 30-minute frequencies on key 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 expansion





Consolidated Organization: Potential Rural and Express/ Regional Improvements

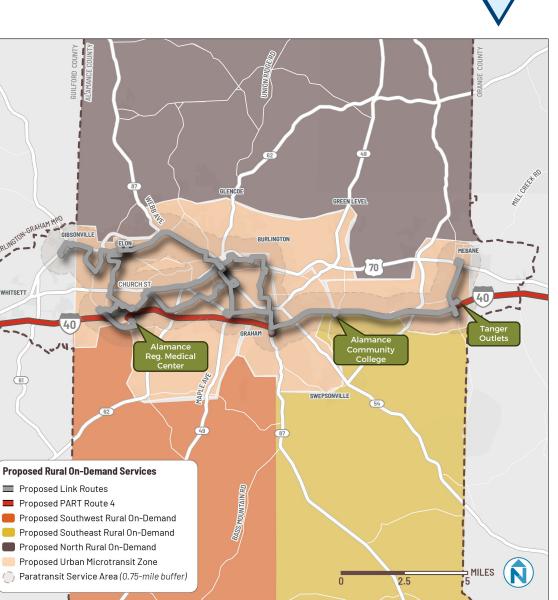
Rural Service

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

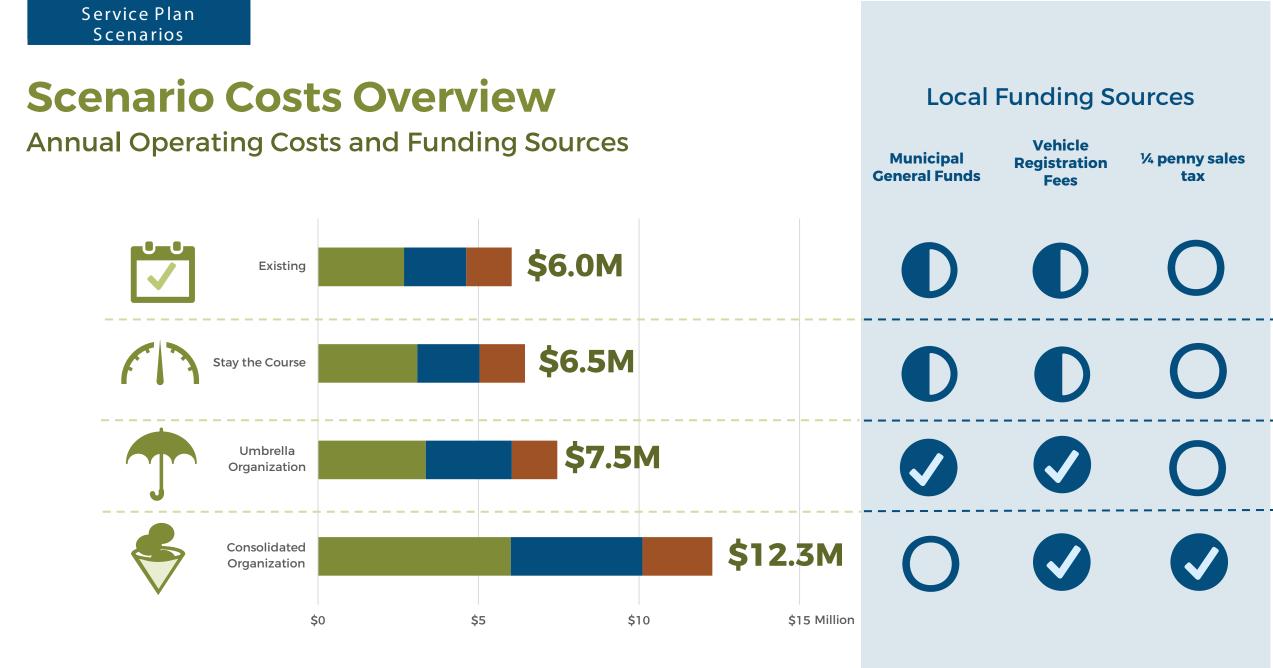
Express/Regional Service

- 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 1/4 cent sales tax to fund transit service expansion, with portion of revenues distributed to PART for Route 4 service expansion









Consolidated Organization Plan Highlights



Access/Coverage

- 83,550 are within ¾ 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/transit centers (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

How Does Each Scenario Impact <u>Your</u>Travel?

REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

These Personas Represent Several Transit Use Scenarios, Highlighting Transit's Challenges and Opportunities



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-athome 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

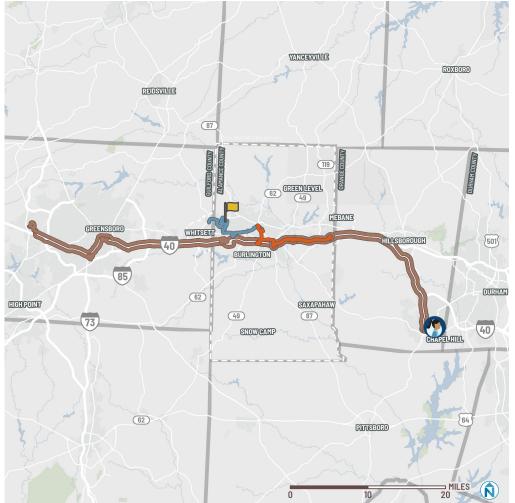
- Connie's first bus trip is on PART's Route 4, arriving at ACC at 8:30 am.
- Connie then takes the 8:41 am trip of Link Transit's Orange Route and transfers to the 9:30 am trip of Link Transit's Blue Route. Connie arrives at Elon University at 10:00, late for work.
- She cannot make the return trip 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 Park & Ride and catch new 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.

- PART's Route 4 expands to all-day hourly service, allowing Connie to travel to the Alamance Regional 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.



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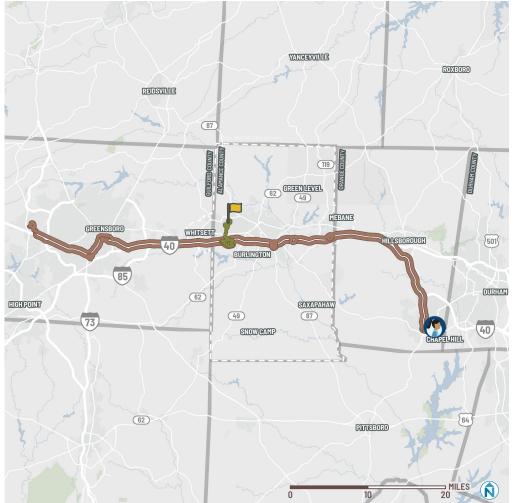
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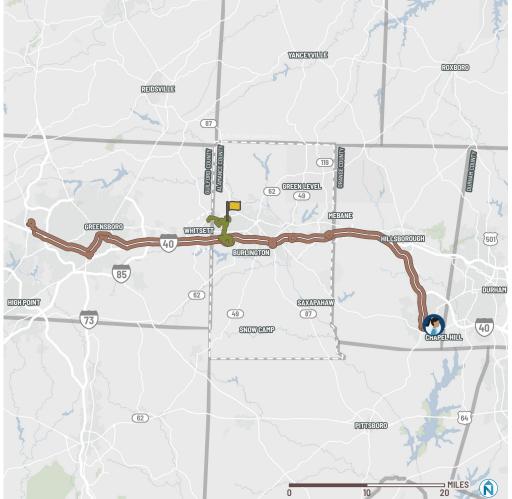
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Persona Scenario: New Job Janelle

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

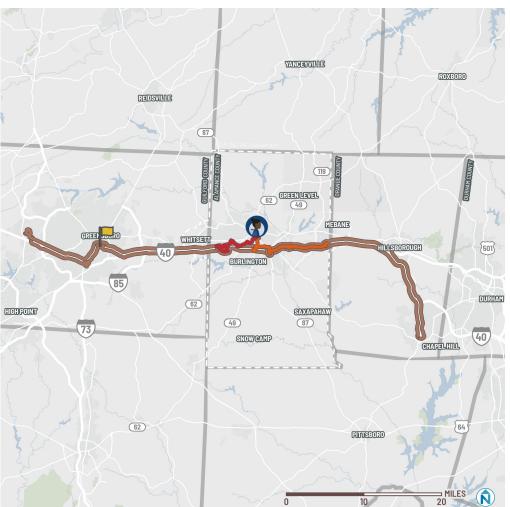
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- Janelle would need to catch either Link Transit's Orange Route to the Graham Park and Ride or the Red Route to the Alamance Regional Park and Ride. From there, she would catch PART's Route 4, getting to downtown Greensboro at 10:30 am, late for work.
- 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.

- 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.





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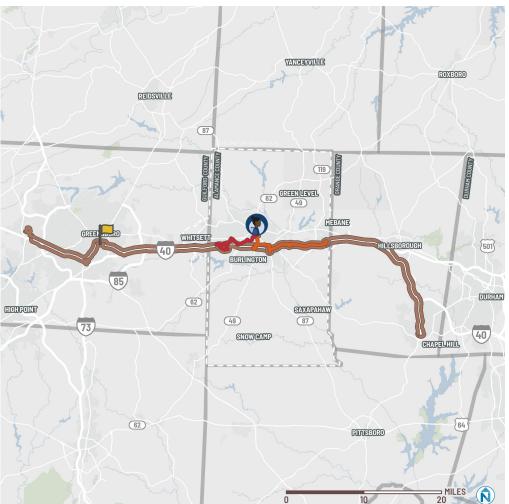
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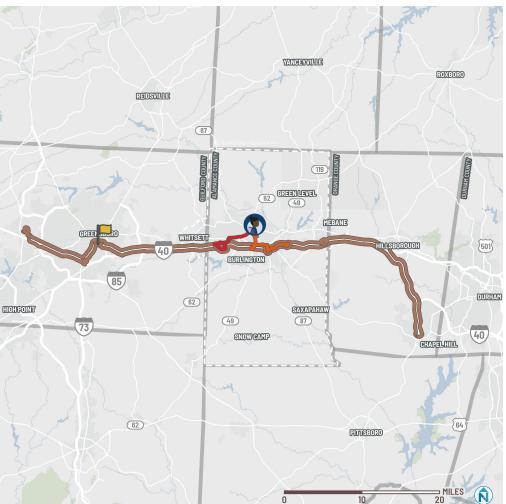
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Persona Scenario: Stay-at-Home Dad Raphael

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

Stay the Course Scenario

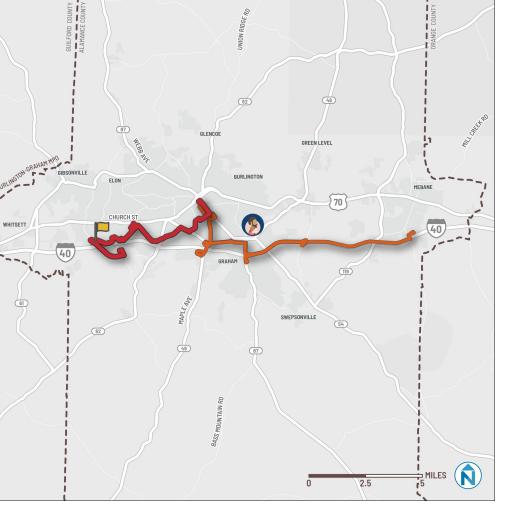
- Raphael must walk from his home to the Orange Route, which does not operate in North Graham. More stops have been added to the Orange Route between Burlington and Graham, but service is still far from home and operates at 90-minute frequencies. Once he gets to downtown Burlington, he must transfer 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.

- 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.





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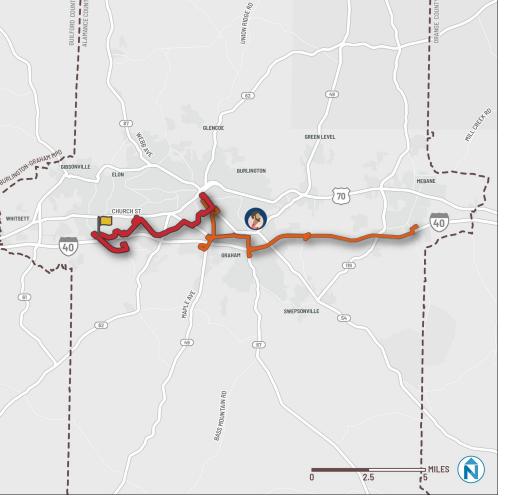
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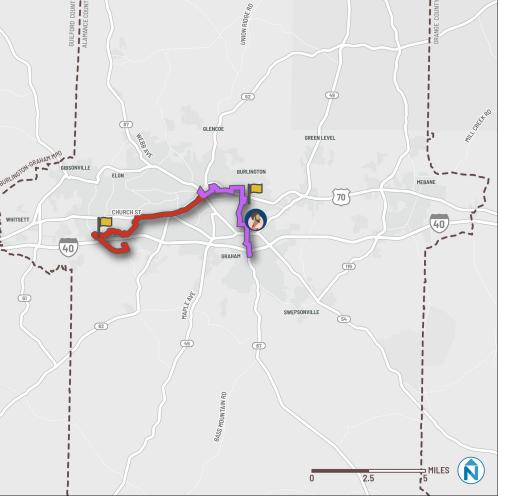


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Persona Scenario: East Burlington Betty

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

Stay the Course Scenario

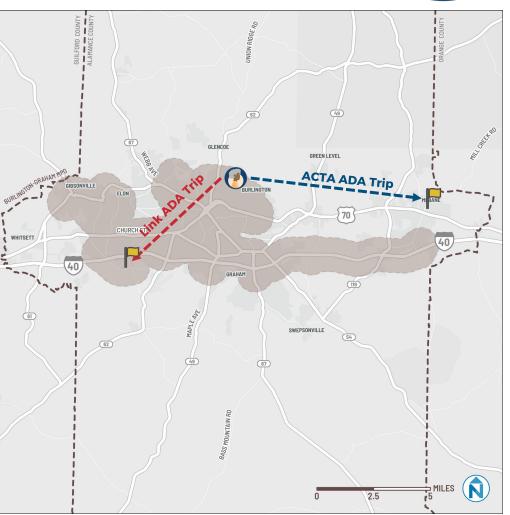
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- Betty must call ACTA when visiting her daughter in Mebane, ACTA has implemented same-day reservations in this scenario, so she can make trips closer to her desired trip time.
- It is important that Betty remember which agency to call when scheduling transportation to her medical appointments.

T 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: East Burlington Betty

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

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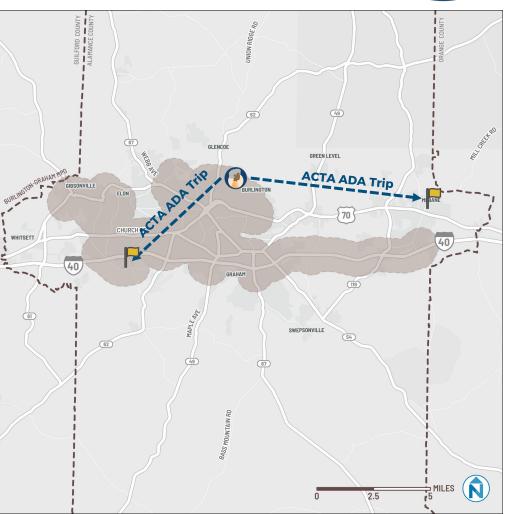
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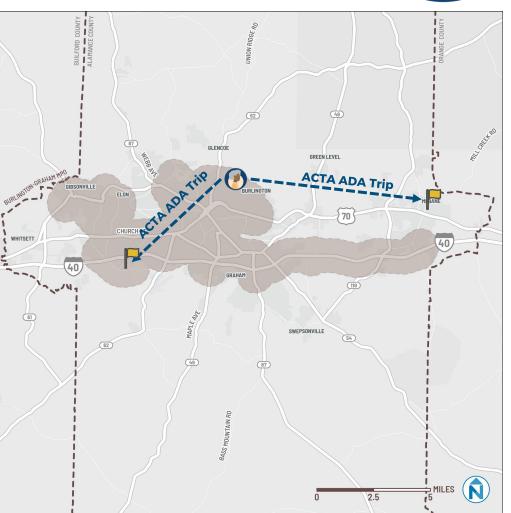
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Persona Scenario: College Student Tamara

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

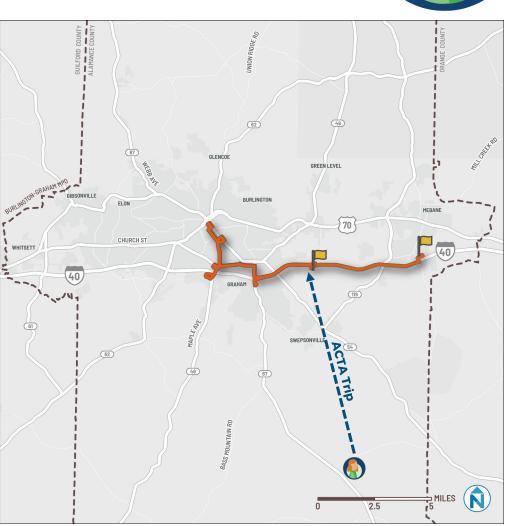
- Tamara schedules a trip with ACTA to travel to ACC with ACTA's improved same-day reservation system. After classes, Tamara can take Link Transit's extended Orange Route to Mebane's Tanger Outlets to her job. However, frequencies are at 90 minutes.
- Tamara is not able to return home by transit after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





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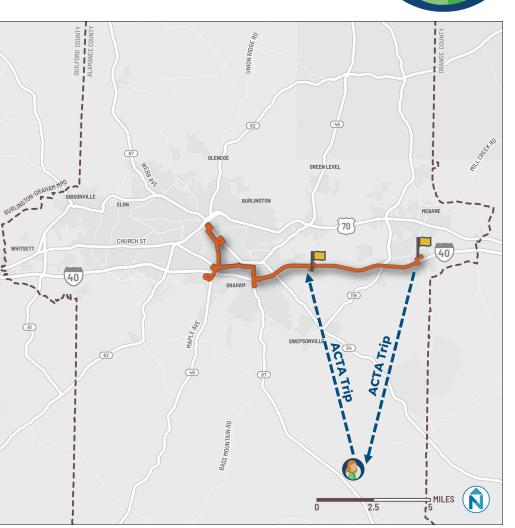
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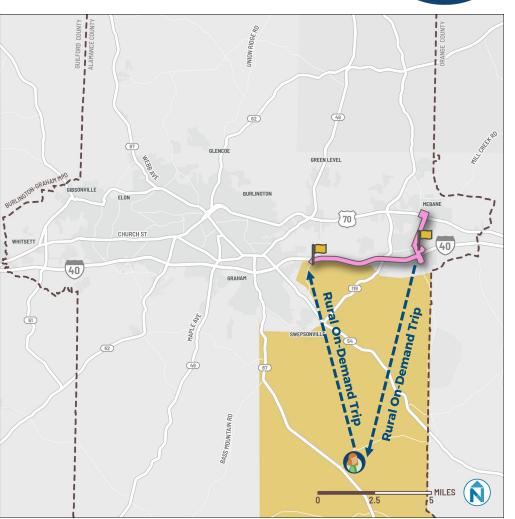
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Tell Us What You Think

REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

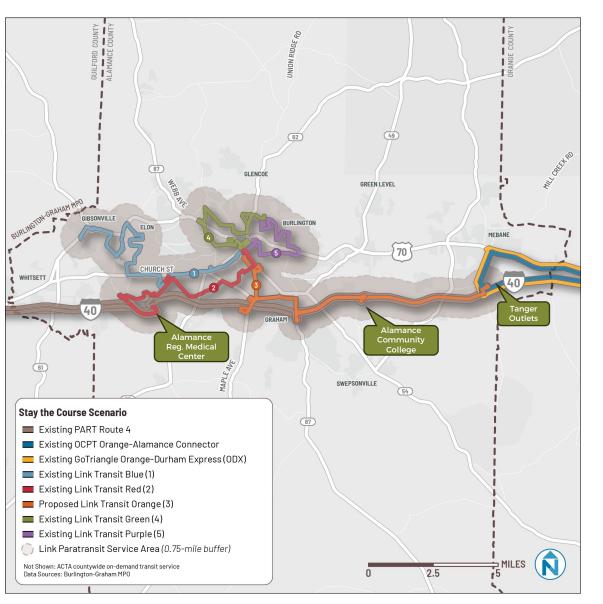
Service Plan Scenarios

Stay the Course: Potential Service Improvements

Are there different service improvements you'd like to see besides those listed below?

- Extend Link Transit Orange Line to Tanger Outlets in Mebane
- 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 ondemand service while implementing sameday trip reservation system
- No changes to PART Route 4
- Continued coordination efforts with GoTriangle and OCPT

Scenario assumes no significant changes in funding sources – Link Transit continues to work with local municipalities to fund service expansion





Service Plan Scenarios

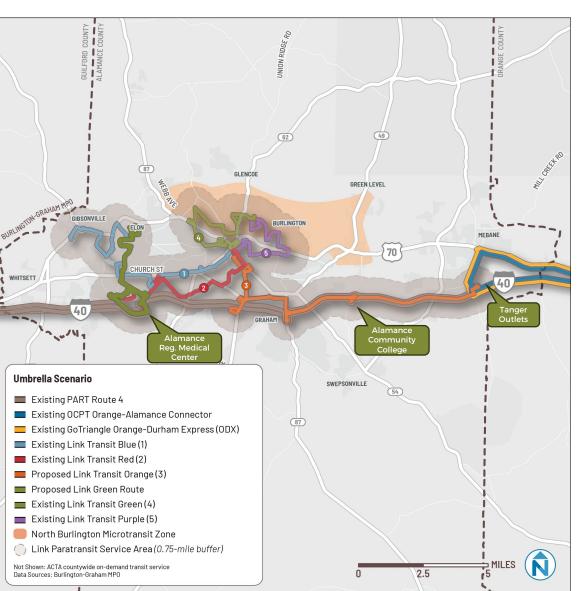
Umbrella Organization: Potential Service Improvements

Are there different service improvements you'd like to see besides those listed below?

All Stay the Course Improvements plus...

- 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
- On-line 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





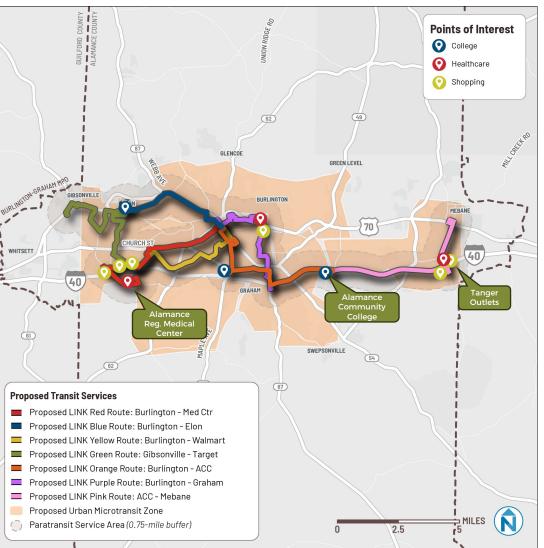
Service Plan Scenarios

Consolidated Organization: Potential Local Service Improvements

Are there different service improvements you'd like to see besides those listed below?

- New fixed route service coverage to address service gaps with more direct route alignments
- Service frequency improvements:
 - 30-minute frequencies on key routes on Red, Orange and Green routes
 - 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 expansion





Consolidated Organization: Potential Rural and Express/ Regional Improvements

Are there different service improvements you'd like to see besides those listed below?

Rural Service

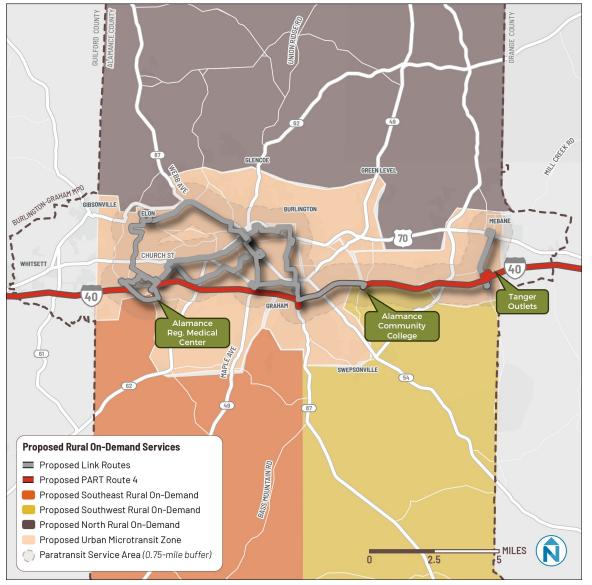
- Designated rural on-demand transit zones
- Defined connection points to local and regional fixed route transit services
- Monday through Saturday service

Express/Regional Service

- Expansion of I-40 express service to all-day to Chapel Hill <u>and</u> 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







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