



Date: March 1, 2022

To: DCHC MPO Policy Board

From: GoTriangle Staff

Subject: Great Triangle Commuter Rail (GTCR) Study Update

Executive Summary

In March 2020, the Board of County Commissioners authorized the County Manager and Board Chair to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to express the roles, responsibilities, and cost share of the project management partners for the next phase of study for the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Project. This presentation will provide an update on the study activities that have occurred since the most recent update to the Board in April 2021.

Background

The Board last received an update on the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Study at its April 14, 2021 meeting.

For the project to proceed, additional work is required to further define the project including; engage community members, municipalities, and institutional partners; better understand key project risks; and build consensus among, and seek formal endorsements from, funding partners, municipalities, railroads, and institutional partners.

Phase I of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Study found that there are two potential scenarios that may be eligible for federal funding pending additional analysis including the Durham to Garner and the Durham to Clayton scenarios. This study also refined ridership estimates based on the STOPS model and the Triangle Regional Model and provided more definitive, but still planning-level, infrastructure assumptions and cost estimates for these scenarios.

The final results report for the Phase I study is online at the link below:

http://goforwardnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/0098D_RPT_GTCR-Phase-IResults_FINAL.pdf

In March 2020, The Board of County Commissioners authorized the County Manager and Board Chair to execute a MOU to express the roles, responsibilities, and cost share of the project management partners for the current phase of study for the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Project. The MOU was approved and executed by all seven other parties, including GoTriangle, Durham Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Capital Area MPO (CAMPO), Wake County, Johnston County, North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), and North Carolina Railroad Company.



The current phase of study, targeted for completion in the coming months includes the following activities:

- Facilitating proactive and comprehensive community engagement to share information and get feedback from the public.
- Refining what railroad infrastructure improvements and construction would be needed.
- Evaluating critical success factors to the project.
- Deciding, based on the findings of this study phase, whether to allocate additional local funding in Durham, Wake or Johnston counties to begin to implement the project and pursue federal funding. This decision-making process would take place following conclusion of the technical work and a final phase of public engagement.

Study activities are underway, with significant progress having been made on the majority of the tasks described in the MOU, including some nearing completion.

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Attachments

- Presentation