

**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

# Short Range Transit Plan

**2025 to 2030**

October 2024



**N NELSON**  
NYGAARD



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# 1 OVERVIEW

## Orange County Transportation Services

Orange County Transportation Services (OCTS) provides fixed-route bus, demand response, and microtransit services throughout Orange County, NC and to surrounding communities within 10 miles. OCTS is one of three main public transit providers in Orange County, primarily serving the municipalities of Hillsborough and Mebane and the unincorporated areas of the County. Chapel Hill Transit provides service in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, and GoTriangle connects the major regional destinations.

## Orange County Transit Plan

In 2012, voters in Orange County approved a half-cent sales tax to fund transit service and transit infrastructure improvements in the county. Revenues from the Transit Tax support transit services provided by OCTS, Chapel Hill Transit, and GoTriangle, and are allocated based on the needs, values, and priorities laid out in the Orange County Transit Plan and subsequent updates. The 2022 Orange County Transit Plan Update guides the allocation of revenue from the transit tax over the next 20 years. The Orange Transit Governing Boards include the Governance ILA parties, which consists of the Orange Board of County Commissioners, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC MPO) Executive Board, and the GoTriangle Board of Trustees.

## Short Range Transit Plan

The projects and priorities identified in the Orange County Transit Plan and its updates inform the short-term planning efforts of transit agencies that operate in Orange County, including OCTS. The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) guides the improvement of OCTS transit through 2030. The SRTP analyzes existing service performance and markets, evaluates strategies for improving transit, and recommends a year-by-year transit investment program through 2030. This SRTP document is accompanied by four appendices:

- Appendix A: Existing Conditions
- Appendix B: Strategies Evaluation
- Appendix C: Funding and Implementation Plan
- Appendix D: Public Engagement

Development of the SRTP was overseen by the Core Technical Team, a group of key technical experts meeting regularly to review and provide feedback throughout the SRTP process. Members of the Core Technical Team include representatives from municipalities in the service area, regional agencies, and the other transit providers in the county. Funding for identified projects is provided through multiple sources, in addition to the funding allocated through the Orange County Transit Plan.

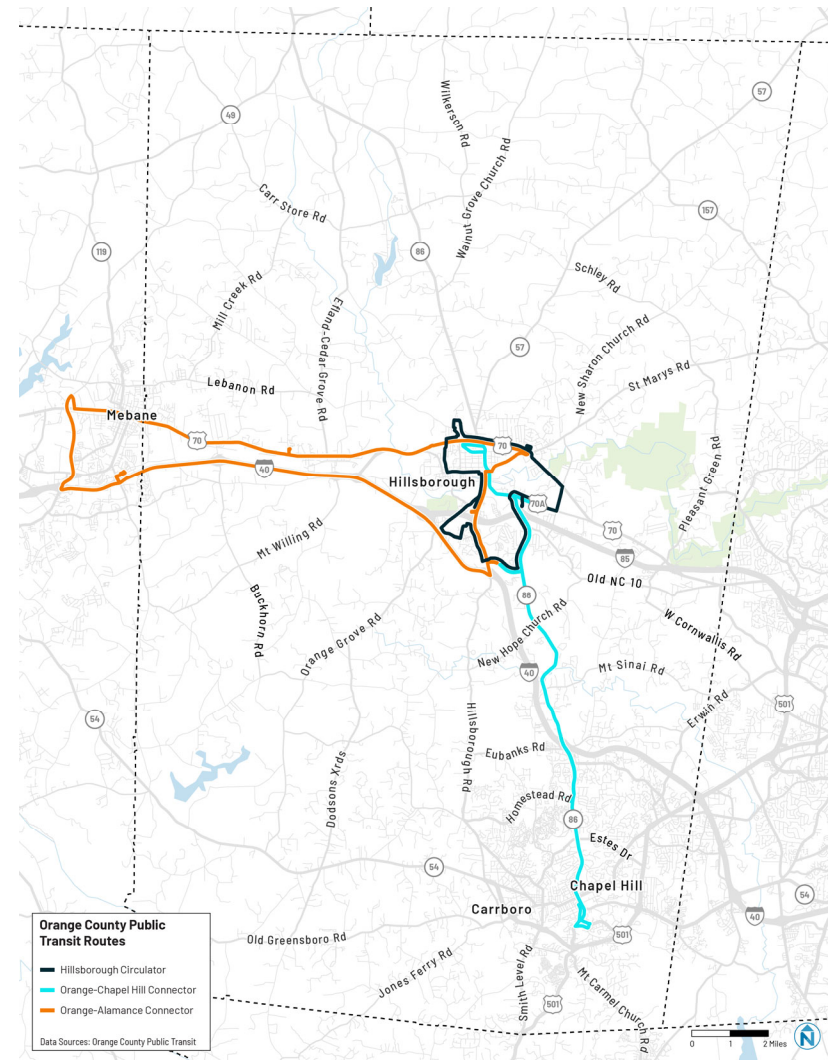
# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Current Service

OCTS provides both regional and local service with its fixed route buses, shown in Figure 1. The Hillsborough Circulator is a local route serving key destinations in Hillsborough. Two regional connector routes, the Orange-Alamance Connector and the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector, connect Hillsborough with other regional destinations and fill a midday gap for peak-only GoTriangle bus routes, with additional local service stops. Each OCTS route and service has different hours of operation, though all fixed route buses are scheduled to operate hourly throughout their service period.

Along with the paratransit provided within 3/4 mile of fixed route service as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, OCTS provides two types of non-fixed route service: program-based rural demand response service and a publicly available microtransit service called Orange County Mobility on Demand (MOD). Both service types operate throughout all of Orange County and serve key destinations in Mebane and Durham.

Figure 1: Current OCTS Fixed Route Service





## Demand for Transit

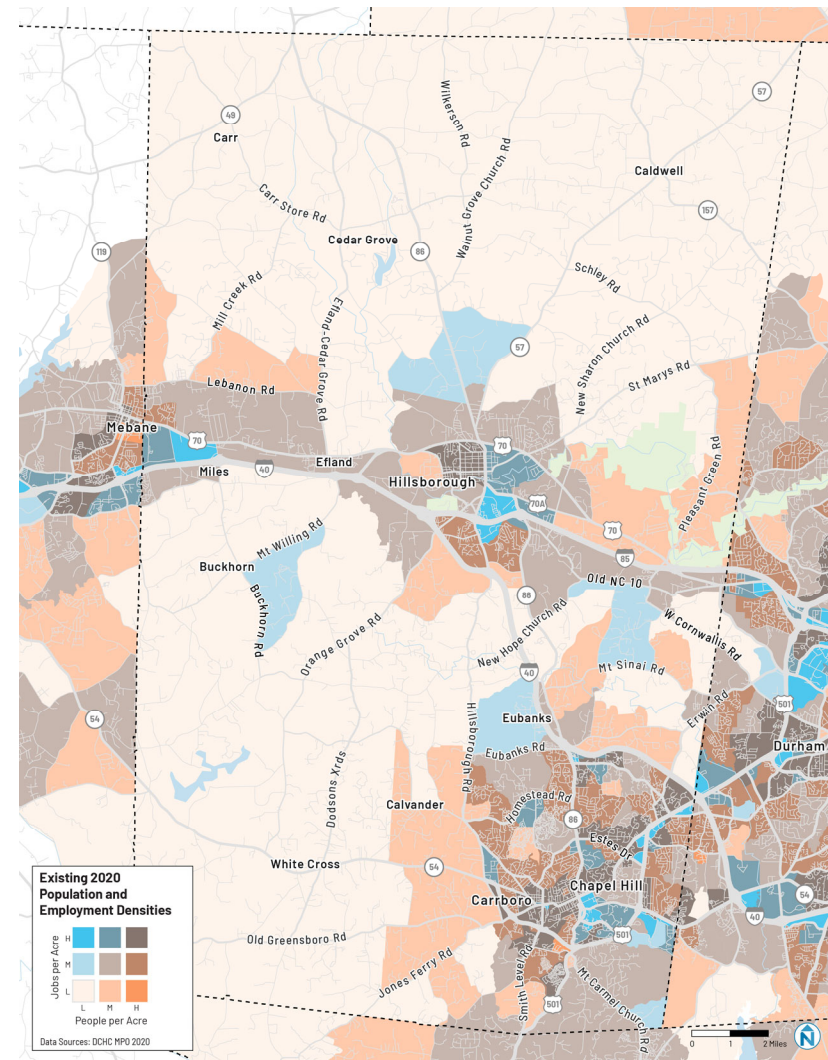
A major factor in determining the demand for transit is density: where people live and work, and how those areas are concentrated. Population and employment density may be used to indicate an appropriate level of transit service. Areas that are higher density may be able to support more frequent fixed route transit, while areas with lower density may be better suited for demand response or microtransit services.

Population density and transit demand is greatest in the Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane areas. The rest of the county is rural, where demand-response services may be more suitable than fixed-route transit. Most of the employment density is located within towns and cities and along major corridors. Service jobs make up the largest share of jobs in the county.

Together, population and employment density give a more complete picture of potential demand for transit. Figure 2 shows the combined population and employment densities by Traffic Analysis Zone. Blue areas on the map signify areas with high employment density but lower population density, while orange represents areas with higher population density and lower job density. Darker brown areas have high densities of both employment and population.

Based on an analysis of travel patterns amongst all modes of transportation, most trips take place within municipalities. There is also relatively strong travel demand along the Mebane-Hillsborough corridor.

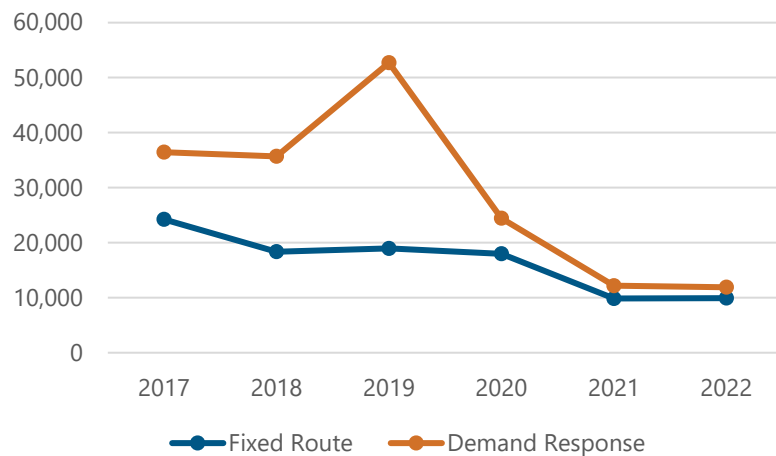
Figure 2: Population and Employment Densities



## Service Performance

Ridership on OCTS’s demand response services declined significantly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to decline in 2021. Fixed route ridership did not see the same steep decline in 2020 but decreased in 2018 and again in 2021 (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips by Service Type**



Source: FTA NTD

The pandemic and resulting changes to commute patterns, paired with vehicle and driver shortage challenges at the agency, have led to significant on-the-ground changes to the services being offered in recent years, including route suspensions and service hour changes. These challenges and changes make exact comparisons over time difficult on the level of an individual route or service. The Hillsborough Circulator is OCTS’s highest performing fixed-route service in both total ridership and

boardings per revenue hour, and it has recovered to approximately 78% of its pre-pandemic ridership. The Orange-Alamance Connector, on the other end of the spectrum, is currently partially suspended and covered by demand response service, and it had the lowest ridership of the three fixed routes before its suspension.

## Public Engagement Key Findings

### PHASE 1

The first phase of engagement for the plan took place from March 4 to March 31, 2024. Target audiences included transit riders, Orange County residents, traditionally underserved communities (both riders and non-riders), and other community stakeholders. The project team held a series of pop-ups at bus shelters, community centers, and community events across Orange County (Figure 4). Standalone polling boards featuring project details and simple questions were placed in transit shelters at key bus stops in Orange County. A short survey was distributed both online and in print form in English and Spanish to Orange County stakeholders and 13 community centers, libraries, and apartments. A total of 191 participants completed the survey.

Locations where participants were most interested in seeing better transit services included between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill, from unincorporated Orange County into the municipalities, and between Hillsborough and Mebane. Survey and pop-up

respondents favored midday weekday service the most, followed by Saturday service, while polling board respondents were most interested in peak commute service and expanded morning and evening hours.

Participants desired improvements to transit services, including reliability, frequency, extended coverage, on-demand options, and accessible information such as real-time tracking apps. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of improving access to public transit through facilities like park and ride facilities, bike lanes, and pedestrian infrastructure.

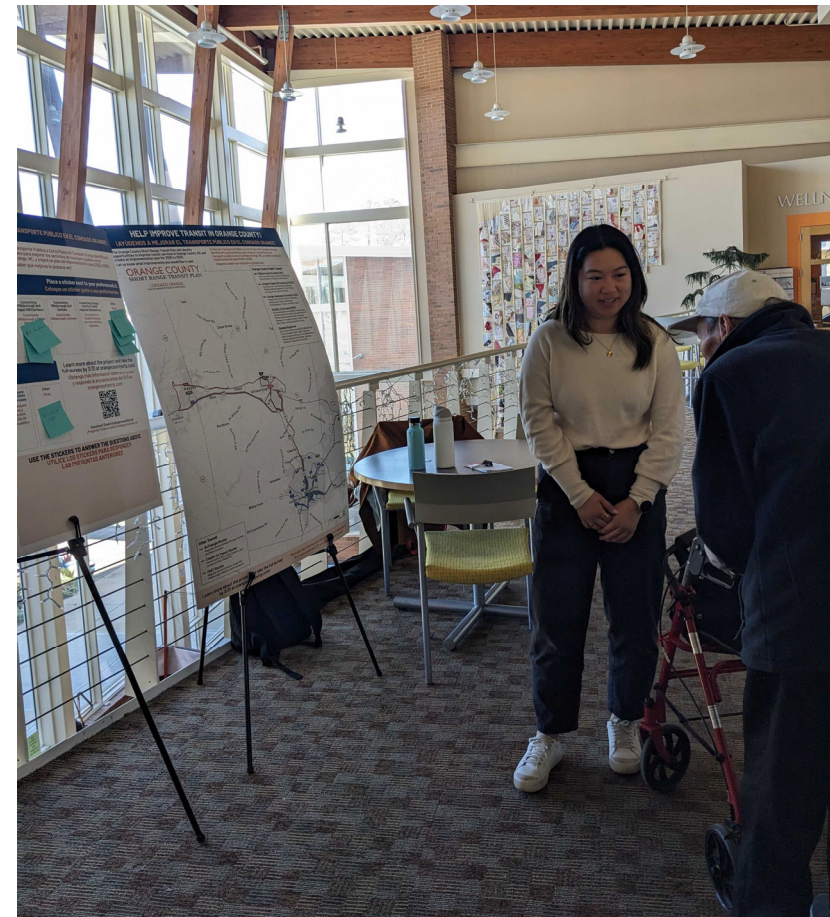
## PHASE 2

The second round of public engagement took place from August 19 to September 12, 2024, to gather feedback on the proposed strategies and implementation timeline, as well as continue to educate residents about Orange County's transportation options. The project team held a series of seven pop-up events at community centers, senior centers, shopping locations, and local events across the service area. A short survey and informational flier were distributed both online and in print form in English, Spanish, and Mandarin to Orange County stakeholders and 14 community centers, libraries, and apartments. 133 people completed the survey online or in person, and over 125 people participated in conversations with project staff at pop-up events and presentations.

Overall, engagement participants were supportive of the proposed changes and improvements in the SRTP. Beyond the specific proposals, reliability continues to be a major concern for

all services, including missed trips and lack of clear information, and there was strong support for proposals focused on improving reliability and communication. Feedback on how to communicate changes was also incorporated into the implementation steps for project proposals.

**Figure 4: Pop-Up Event at Seymour Senior Center**



### 3 PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND METRICS

An evaluation framework allows Orange County to prioritize recommendations and evaluate projects, policies, and programs for their ability to achieve the goals and values of the Orange County Transit Plan, Orange County Strategic Plan, and the Climate Action Plan.

#### SPOTLIGHT: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Transportation is the largest source of emissions in Orange County, accounting for 43% of total community emissions and 33% of County operations emissions, primarily from employee commutes. Therefore, reducing fossil fuel vehicle use is crucial. Key strategies to achieve this include expanding and diversifying public transportation options, accelerating the shift to electric vehicles, fostering walkable and bikeable communities, and adopting sustainable development policies.

One of the top 10 foundational items in Orange County's Climate Action Plan is to decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT) 30% from a 2019 baseline by 2050 and to transition all county and community vehicles away from fossil fuels.

*More details on the Climate Action Plan can be found in Appendix A: Existing Conditions.*

The Core Community Values from the Orange County Transit Plan Update provided the foundation for evaluating the proposed strategies, and objectives for each value were taken directly from either the Transit Plan Update or the multimodal transportation section of the Strategic Plan. The Core Values and related Objectives include:

- **Equity**
  - Prioritize the transit needs of underserved or transit-dependent residents; includes historically disinvested communities of color, lower-income neighborhoods, seniors, and rural communities
- **Economic Prosperity**
  - Prioritize increasing access to jobs and opportunities
- **Environmental Sustainability**
  - Prioritize accessible and convenient transit service in areas with existing or planned higher density development
  - Increase community awareness of all modes of transportation including transit, bike and pedestrian, vehicle, and all other modes
- **Transportation & Access for All**
  - Prioritize transit service that increases transit access for the most people to the most places
- **Affordable & Attainable Quality of Life**
  - Prioritize transit service connections to affordable housing, recreation, and arts and cultural opportunities



- Identify priorities and resources necessary to implement the Orange County Transit Plan

For evaluation purposes, metrics were created to measure how well a project supported each objective, with a total of nine final metrics in the evaluation framework. Each strategy was scored from one to three points per metric. Methods of measurement varied depending on the type of strategy, and both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. Final scores based on the evaluation framework helped to prioritize different strategies and spend Orange County's funds in accordance with their core values. Full methodology details and strategy scores are available in Appendix B: Strategies Evaluation.

# 4 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

## Strategy Types

A broad range of strategies for improving public transportation in Orange County were developed based on findings from the Existing Conditions report, the first round of public engagement, and other adopted transportation plans. Strategies were categorized into three types:

1. **Transit service strategies** – both new services and operational changes to existing services, including fixed-route, on-demand, and rural demand response services
2. **Policies and programs** – strategies that target agency policies or administrative activities
3. **Capital improvements** – physical infrastructure projects beyond basic bus stop signs.

All strategies were presented to the Core Technical Team and adjusted based on feedback before moving to evaluation. Strategies were slotted into the available budget and the 2025 to 2030 timeline before being reviewed by stakeholders and the public. The timeframe of the SRTP was broken into two key periods: short-term strategies that should be implemented starting in 2025 through 2027 and medium-term strategies that should be implemented from 2028 through the end of 2030. Long-term strategies are those that would be implemented in 2031 or later. Final strategies found in the Short Range Transit

Plan may differ slightly from those evaluated in Appendix B based on engagement feedback and technical considerations.

## Transit Service Strategies

**Short Term** projects should be implemented early in the SRTP timeframe, and resources are available within the current known budget. Short term transit service strategies include:

- Mobility on Demand Service Improvements
- Discontinue Orange-Alamance Connector
- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 1
- Mebane Circulator
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 1

**Medium Term** projects should be implemented later in the SRTP timeframe, and may require additional funding sources such as winning grant money. Medium term transit service strategies include:

- Demand Response Weekend Service

**Long Term** projects should be pursued after the SRTP timeframe ends, as funding is currently unavailable. Long term transit service strategies include:

- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 2
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 2
- Reinstate Updated Orange-Alamance Connector
- MOD Service Span Expansion

# MOBILITY ON DEMAND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

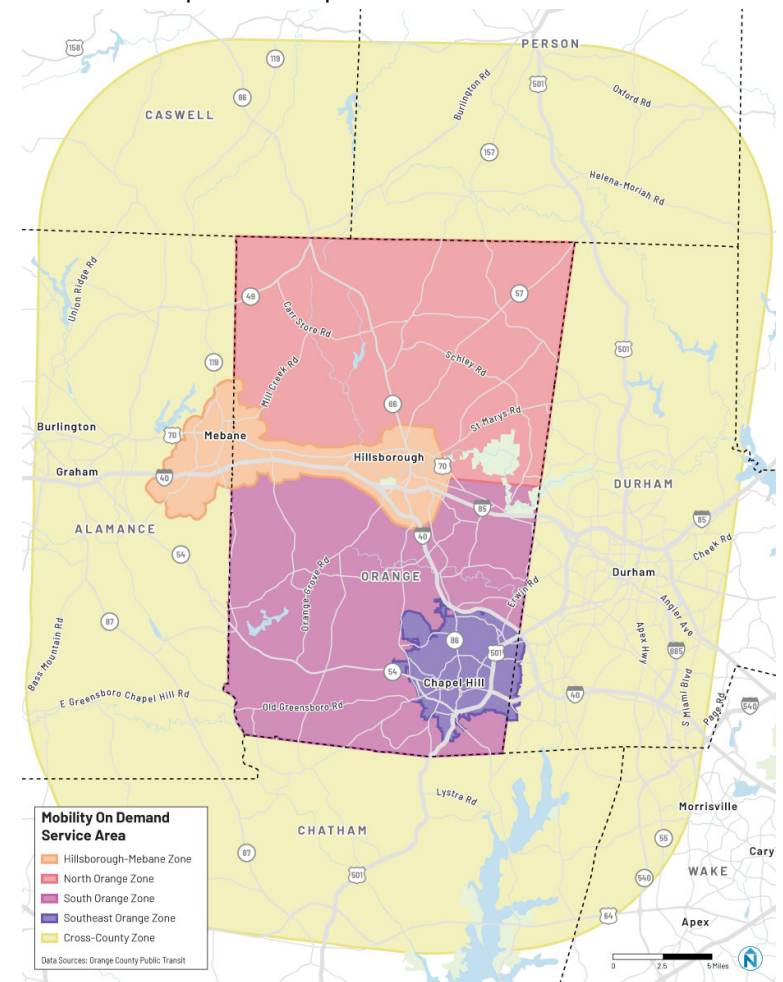
## Short Term

**Background:** Orange County MOD is underused, given the potential demand within the service area. Microtransit is well suited for the density of much of Orange County and can provide the public with high-quality and low-cost transportation options for those who cannot or choose not to drive.

**Strategy Overview:** Create zones for faster, cheaper trips within municipalities and consistent wait times for rural trips. The ability to book trips by making a phone call will also be added. No changes to hours of service are proposed within the S RTP timeframe.

- Hillsborough-Mebane Zone: Shorter wait times within this zone
- North and South Orange Zones: Dedicated vehicles for each zone to make wait times more consistent
- Southeast Zone: Trips cannot both start and end in this zone
- Cross-County: This zone will extend 10 miles out from the Orange County border, covering key rural and urban destinations in neighboring counties. Trips cannot both begin and end within this zone.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Thursday	8 AM – 5 PM	8 AM – 5 PM
Friday	8 AM – 9 PM	8 AM – 9 PM
Saturday	9 AM – 5 PM	9 AM – 5 PM



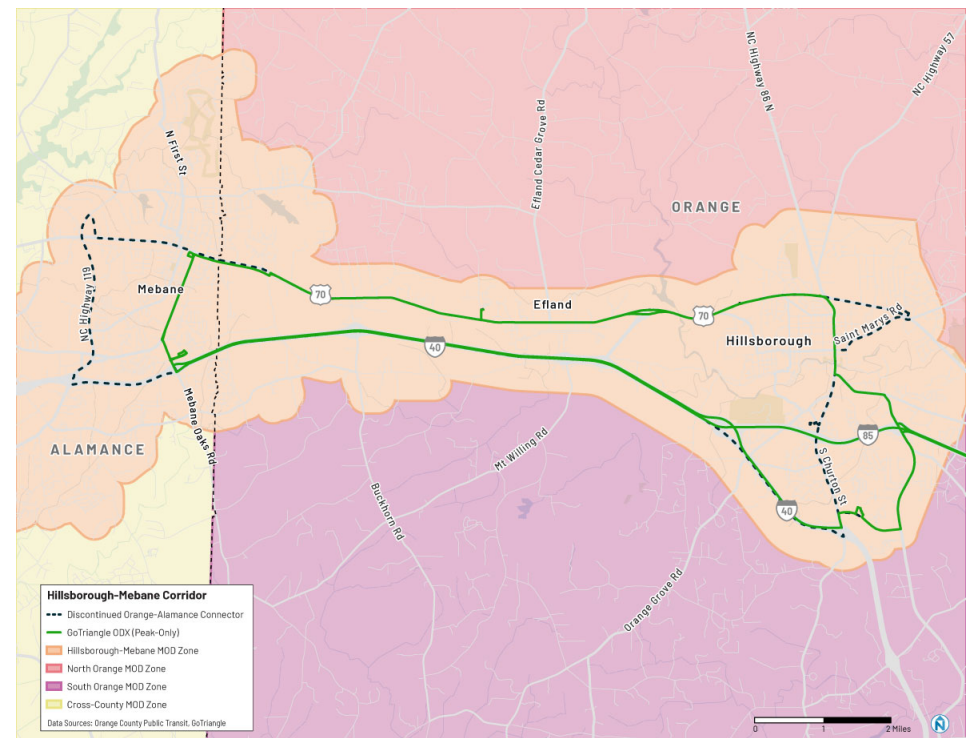
# DISCONTINUE ORANGE-ALAMANCE CONNECTOR

## Short Term

**Background:** The Orange-Alamance Connector is a low ridership route that offers redundant service with the GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX). The rider base of this route is likely better served by on-demand service zones, since they will have more direct access to destinations.

**Strategy Overview:** Formalize the elimination of the Orange-Alamance Connector and reinvest the resources into other transit service projects. With the improved MOD service zones, residents along the Mebane-Hillsborough corridor will still have access to transportation service, as well as continued service from the GoTriangle ODX during peak hours, the new Mebane Circulator, and improved Hillsborough Circulator.

	Existing	Proposed
<i>Span of Service</i>		
Monday to Friday	10 AM – 3 PM	-
<i>Frequency</i>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	-





# HILLSBOROUGH CIRCULATOR IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 1

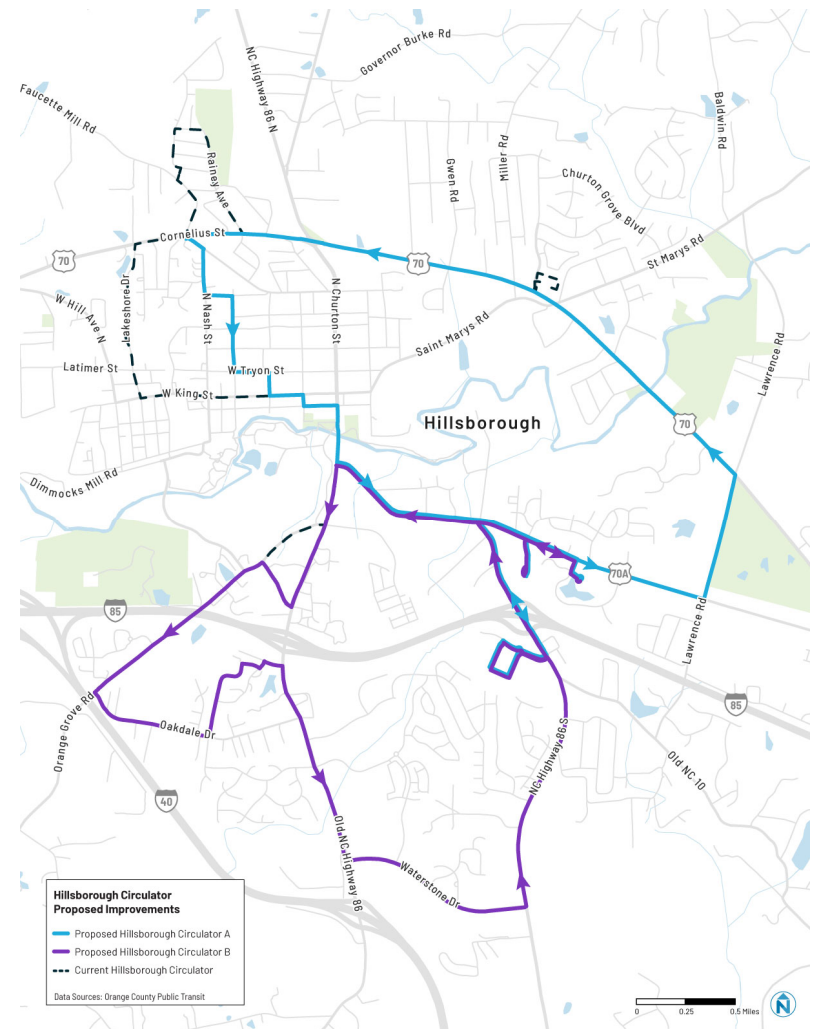
## Short Term

**Background:** The Hillsborough Circulator is the highest ridership OCTS route and is the primary option for Hillsborough residents to travel between key destinations in the town without a car. The route often runs behind schedule, as it takes approximately 60 minutes to complete one trip and it runs every hour. The Hillsborough Circulator also only runs in one direction, making residents ride the full loop, even if they only need to get to the stop before they board.

**Strategy Overview:** Create an improved Hillsborough Circulator service that is more efficient, on-time, and frequent. The improved service will be split into two separate routes, Hillsborough Circulator A and Hillsborough Circulator B.

- Reduce route deviations at Rainey Ave (Fairview Park), Orange Grove Road, and Scotswood Road (Food Lion) to improve schedule reliability by decreasing the running time.
- Split route into two patterns, which can both run in under 45 minutes per cycle.
- Expand the service hours and increase frequency of both routes.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	7 AM – 5 PM	6:30 AM – 6:30 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	45 minutes



# MEBANE CIRCULATOR

## Short Term

**Background:** The City of Mebane has planned to establish a local bus route, which will take place in the form of a circulator that serves key destinations throughout Mebane. The Orange-Alamance Connector currently serves Mebane, which provides Mebane connections to Hillsborough and other localities via route transfer.

**Strategy Overview:** Implement the Mebane Circulator as adopted in the Mebane Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the BGMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The Mebane Circulator will run every 60 minutes from 7 AM – 6 PM on Monday through Friday and will not initially offer weekend service.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	-	7 AM – 6 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	-	60 minutes



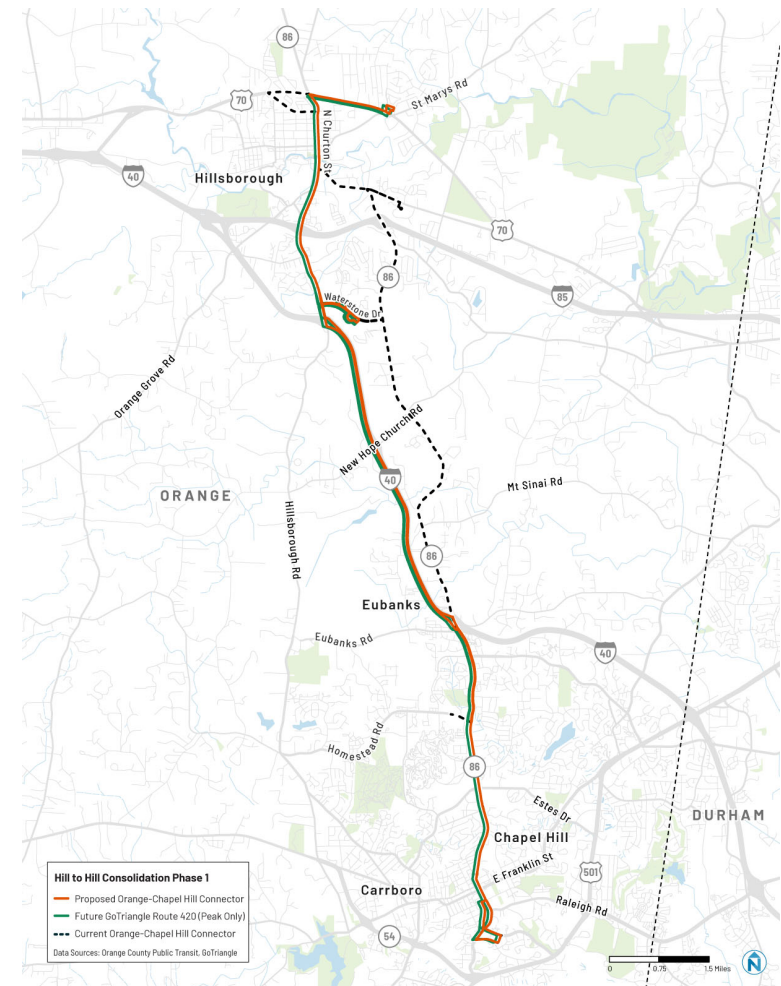
# HILL TO HILL CONSOLIDATION PHASE 1

## Short Term

**Background:** The Orange-Chapel Hill Connector provides midday and local coverage between Chapel Hill and Hillsborough, while GoTriangle Route 420 operates during the peak commute hours only and with fewer local stops. The similar but still deviating route patterns can confuse riders, and there is some service redundancy in the current schedule.

**Strategy Overview:** Adjust the route alignment of the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector to match the alignment and stops of Route 420, and continue conversations with GoTriangle on coordination and consolidation of the two routes. Local connections in Hillsborough can be made to both Hillsborough Circulator loops. This Phase does not fully consolidate the two routes, and rather focuses on running them along the same route pattern and to be less redundant, allowing for full consolidation in the future.

	Existing OCH	Proposed OCH
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	8:30 AM – 4:30 PM	8:30 AM – 3:30 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	60 minutes



## DEMAND RESPONSE WEEKEND SERVICE

### Medium Term

**Background:** Program-based demand response riders are not peak-oriented, and many riders use it to get to non-work destinations. Currently, hours on Saturday are limited and not clearly defined, and no service is offered on Sunday. This limits the types of medical trips that OCTS can provide, cutting off a potential funding source.

**Strategy Overview:** Operate program-based demand response services from 9 AM to 5 PM on both Saturdays and Sundays.

	Existing	Proposed
<b><i>Span of Service</i></b>		
Monday to Friday	8 AM – 5 PM	8 AM – 5 PM
Saturday	“Limited”	9 AM – 5 PM
Sunday	-	9 AM – 5 PM



## LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

### HILLSBOROUGH CIRCULATOR IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 2

**Background:** After the Hillsborough Circulator has been split into two routes, increasing and improving the service is necessary. Transit demand during the peak hours is not necessarily much higher than it is during the off-peak hours, and there are a lot of riders that utilize the service for running errands.

**Strategy Overview:** Implement Saturday service, which will have 9 AM – 5 PM spans with buses every 30 minutes. In addition, Monday through Friday will have spans from 6:30 AM – 6:30 PM and buses every 30 minutes.

### HILL TO HILL CONSOLIDATION PHASE 2

**Background:** After operating the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector and GoTriangle Route 420 with more coordination and reduced redundancy, service levels can be improved through full consolidation of the two routes. Public engagement also indicated strong interest in evening and weekend service between the municipalities.

**Strategy Overview:** Fully consolidate the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector with GoTriangle Route 420 along the Highway 40 alignment. Peak operation of the route will require three 40' buses to accommodate ridership demand and maintain frequency. The consolidated service should consider implementing Saturday service and operating later in the evening.

### REINSTATE UPDATED ORANGE-ALAMANCE CONNECTOR

**Background:** While the Orange-Alamance Connector has generated low ridership during its operation, existing conditions and public engagement reflected the demand for connections between Mebane and Hillsborough. The route has a long travel time and short span, limiting its potential for success. Density along the corridor is currently low, but residential, commercial, and industrial developments are underway and may drive demand for transit in the future.

**Strategy Overview:** Bring back a modified version of the Orange-Alamance Connector that runs bi-directionally on Highway 70, with connections at Mebane Cone Health Park and Ride and the Hillsborough Walmart. With the proposed alignment change of the GoTriangle ODX to improve travel times to Durham and less focus on serving local stops, run the Orange-Alamance Connector all day, matching the hours of the circulator routes.

### MOD SERVICE SPAN EXPANSION

**Background:** In conjunction with the expended MOD service zones that are part of the short-term strategies, MOD service hours should be expanded to adequately serve the riders of Orange County, as there is local transit demand for services outside traditional commuting windows.

**Strategy Overview:** Service hours will be expanded on all days of the week and Sunday service will be implemented. Service will run Monday to Friday 8 AM to 10 PM, Saturday 9 AM to 10 PM, and Sunday 9 AM to 8 PM.

## Policy and Program Strategies

**Short Term** recommended policies or programs that OCTS could implement in the early years of the SRTP with currently available administrative funding include:

- Alternative Fare Payment
- Transit Information Campaign
- Improve Demand Response Booking

**Medium Term** policies or programs that require OCTS to apply for additional funds include:

- Hire Mobility Manager
- Conduct Fare Study

## ALTERNATIVE FARE PAYMENT

### Short Term

**Background:** MOD and Orange-Chapel Hill Connector vehicles are not able to take cash as fare payment, which can create barriers for people without easy access to mobile banking. OCTS fares are also not integrated with other regional providers, such as GoTriangle.

**Strategy Overview:** Provide cash loading options for fare payment cards to better serve people with limited banking or smartphone access, and work to integrate with other transit agencies in the region that utilize UMO Pass.

## TRANSIT INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

### Short Term

**Background:** Many Orange County residents do not fully understand how to ride transit and what their transit options are. The transit information campaign would cover fixed routes, mobility on-demand, and ADA services. Through both rounds of public engagement, improving transit information was identified as a high priority.

**Strategy Overview:** The promotional campaign would provide information on services, their destinations, how to use each service, and other information that is relevant to the service. On-demand service would be a key focus, specifically around the expanded service zones and where they cover, and how to book trips would be the main emphasis.

Improving the availability of transit information is an additional component of the transit information campaign. Improving the available information about the transit system could include the publishing of real-time travel information using live GTFS publishing.

As funding and grants allow in the future, OCTS should consider hiring professional marketing services to design and implement this transit information campaign.

## IMPROVE DEMAND RESPONSE BOOKING

### Short Term

**Background:** Riders expressed confusion about how to book demand response trips during public feedback opportunities. Most of the confusion came around how and where to book trips—online, over phone, by app—and the application process. Additionally, the Medicaid reimbursement process will be improved, making it easier for OCTS to submit for reimbursement.

**Strategy Overview:** Ensuring the demand response application process is streamlined so that prospective riders are able to book services more quickly is one of the first steps. This streamlined application process will be simpler and quicker for applicants. This process is already underway at OCTS. This streamlined process will include implementing additional, to be determined, measures that will help OCTS submit for Medicaid reimbursement.

## HIRE A MOBILITY MANAGER

### Medium Term

**Background:** Orange County currently has a Mobility Manager role that is run through the Department of Aging and focuses solely on outreach to older adults and assisting with their transportation. However, Orange County could use a Mobility Manager that covers on-demand services, in addition to the role within the Department of Aging.

**Strategy Overview:** Create a new Mobility Manager position that has a wider focus, one covering the management of all information and travel training needs for on-demand services. This person would oversee the application process for on-demand services and would be the primary contact for anything on-demand related in Orange County. This role could continue to be funded through 5310 grant funds, but the funds from this grant do not sufficiently cover the cost of an increased role. Other grants could provide the necessary funding to implement this new position.

## CONDUCT FARE STUDY

### Medium Term

**Background:** Fare costs vary across agencies and modes in Orange County and can sometimes act as a barrier to transit access. There is interest from the public and key stakeholders to explore the viability of free or reduced fares for the different types of transit services in Orange County.

**Strategy Overview:** The fare study would cover each individual mode, including fixed route and on-demand. The potentiality for reduced MOD fares will be studied to determine if OCPT could provide the same level of service and continue to make improvements with decreased fare revenue. The viability of fare-free fixed route service will also be studied on a route-by-route basis. With reduced fares, it is important that OCPT will have enough funds to continue future planning efforts.

## Capital Improvement Strategies

Each capital improvement strategy represents a type of capital project with multiple locations recommended for each type. These strategies do not include capital projects that are required for basic operation of the transit service strategies, such as new bus stops for new services. Site locations were prioritized into medium and long term based on the evaluation matrix, inclusion of the projects in other adopted plans, and existing infrastructure at each site. While there are no short-term projects listed due to the nature of grant funding timelines, if capital funding is available sooner these projects may be implemented on a shorter timeline. The three types of capital improvement strategies include:

- Bus Stop Improvements
- Rural Transit Hubs
- Walking Access to Transit





# BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS

**Background:** Bus stop improvements are an effective way to improve transit experience for riders. Bus stop improvements include various amenities, such as shelters or benches, and can be paired with capital improvement strategies on walking access to transit. Bus stops that have high ridership are often the targets of bus stop improvements since more riders will benefit from the improvements.

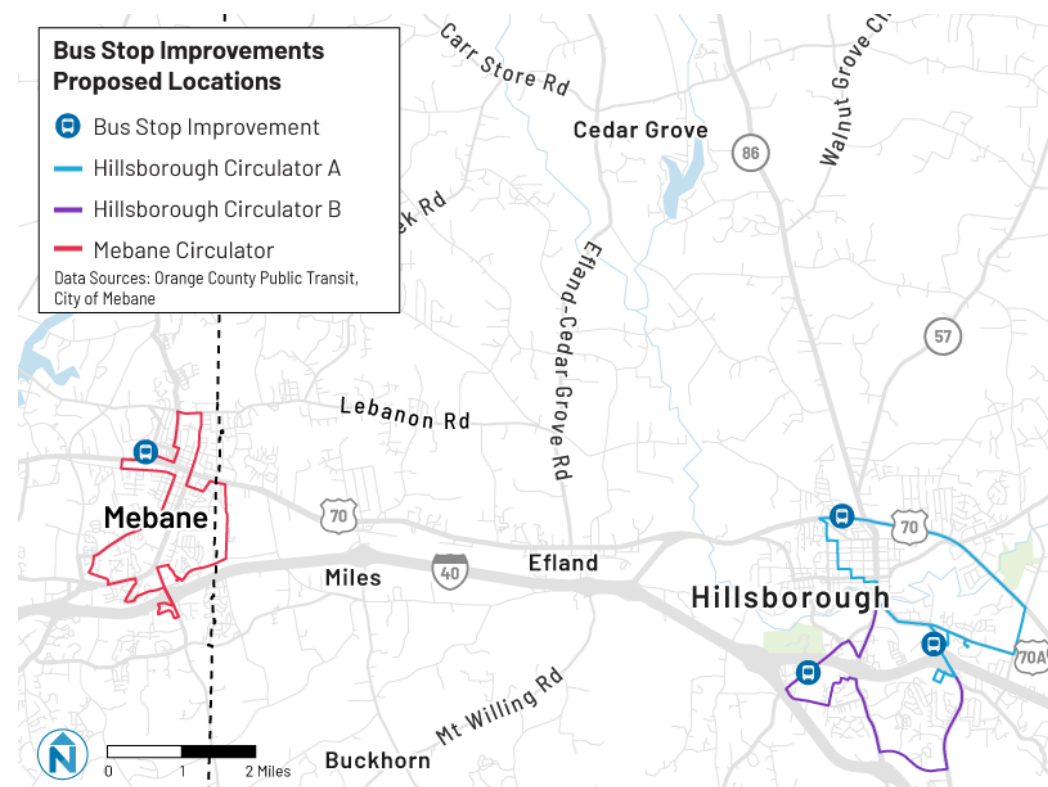
**Strategy Overview:** Upgrades to existing bus stops, including amenities like a shelter, bench, passenger information, ADA upgrades, or establishing a new physical stop where passengers are currently boarding and alighting without any infrastructure.

## Medium Term

- Mebane Community Park
- Cornelius St/Rainey Ave
- Orange Grove Road
- NC 86 Cornerstone Court



**Example of Improved Bus Stop**



## RURAL TRANSIT HUBS

**Background:** Rural transit hubs are an effective way to improve the transit experience for residents of rural areas who may not have a large stop or transit hub nearby. These transit hubs are intended for low-density areas that are within MOD zones. Residents in rural areas may not be as familiar with transit options, so having a place where additional information can be provided is useful for rider understanding of the system and service options.

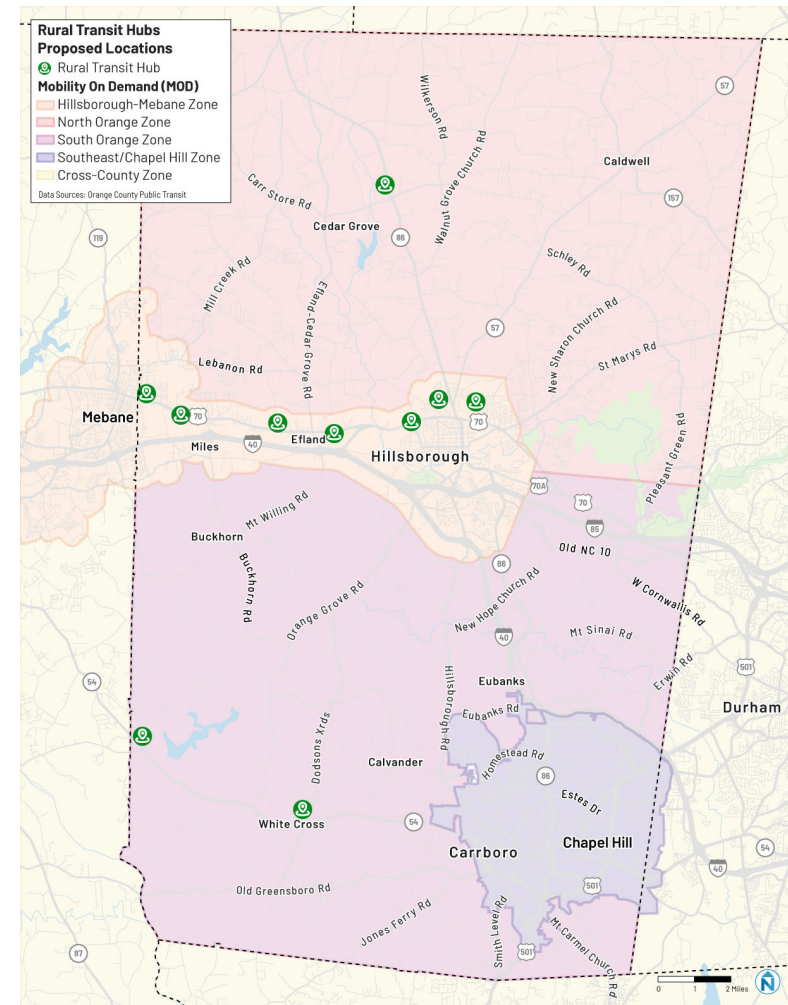
**Strategy Overview:** Locations in lower-density areas of Orange County with information on booking MOD rides and space to wait. Amenities include bench, shelter, and informational signage. Note that MOD is already available to anyone at any location throughout the OCTS service area, while these Rural Transit Hubs are an additional capital investment to help improve the transit experience.

### Medium Term

- Efland-Cheeks Community Center
- NC Driver's License Office
- Efland Hub
- Supper Club Blvd
- Cedar Grove Community Center

### Long Term

- Fairview Park/Dorothy Johnson Community Center
- Mebane Memorial Garden
- Orange High School
- NC 54/Mebane Oaks Road
- White Cross Hub





**Example of Rural Transit Hub**

## WALKING ACCESS TO TRANSIT

**Background:** For local services, transit riders typically walk between the bus stop and their home or final destination. Unsafe walking conditions can discourage transit use and limit the number of people or jobs accessible within the typical “walking distance” of a transit stop. Improving these walking conditions can help increase transit ridership and improve the safety of those traveling.

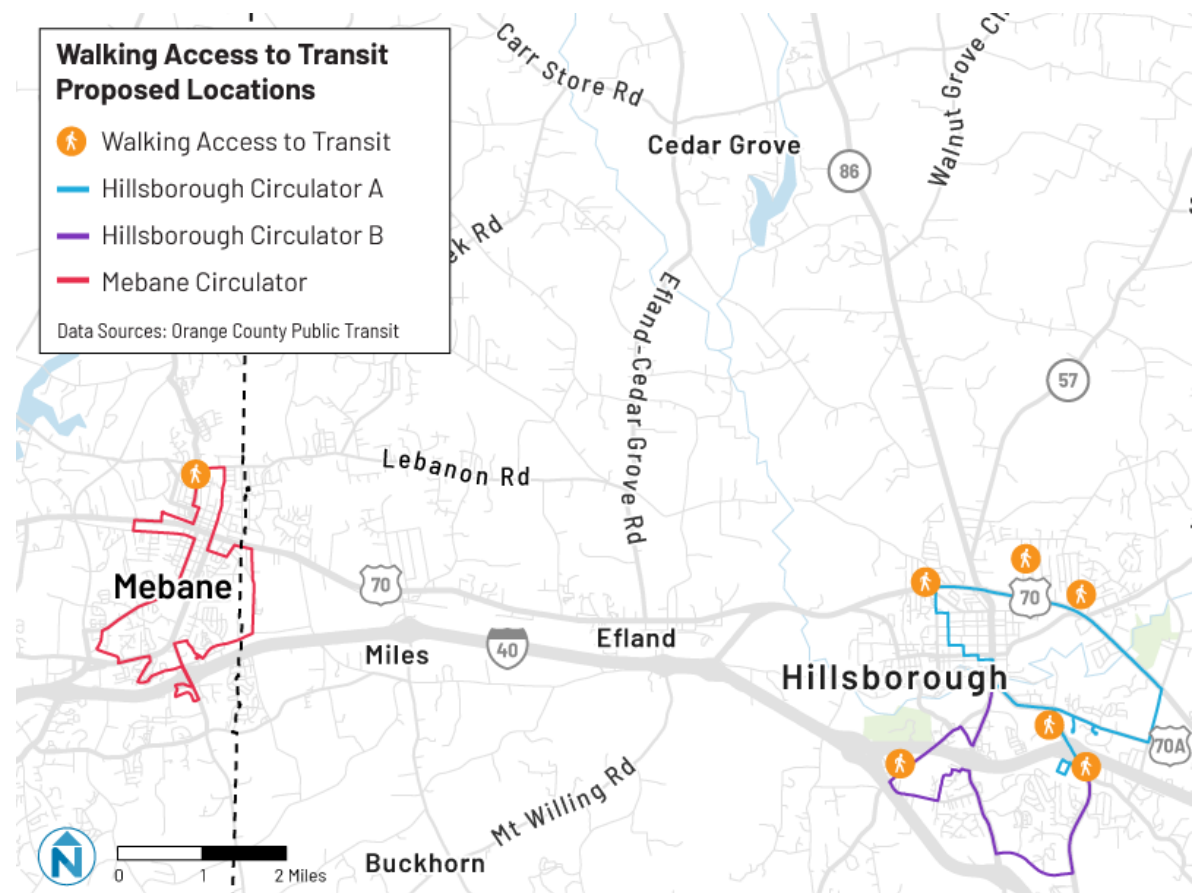
**Strategy Overview:** Improve access to bus stops with pedestrian improvements such as sidewalks, safe crossings, and ADA upgrades.

### Medium Term

- Faucette Mill Road/Cornelius Street
- NC 86 Aldi
- Orange Grove Rd
- Mebane Food Lion
- Orange High School

### Long Term

- N Scotswood Blvd (access to US 70/Food Lion stop)
- NC 86 Cornerstone Court



## 5 SUMMARY

The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan guides improvements to OCTS services and programs. Implementation on the following short-term projects is planned to start in 2025:

- Mobility on Demand Service Improvements
- Discontinue Orange-Alamance Connector
- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 1
- Mebane Circulator
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 1
- Alternative Fare Payment
- Transit Information Campaign
- Improve Demand Response Booking

Medium-term projects are planned for 2028 to 2030 and may require additional funding sources. These include:

- Demand Response Weekend Service
- Hire Mobility Manager
- Conduct Fare Study
- Bus Stop Improvements, at Mebane Community Park, Cornelius St/Rainey Ave, Orange Grove Road, and NC 86 Cornerstone Court
- Rural Transit Hubs, at Efland-Cheeks Community Center, NC Driver's License Office, Efland Hub, Supper Club Blvd, and Cedar Grove Community Center

- Walking Access to Transit, at Faucette Mill Road/Cornelius St, NC 86 Aldi, Orange Grove Rd, Mebane Food Lion, and Orange High School

Long-term projects are proposed for after the SRTP time frame and funding has not been identified:

- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 2
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 2
- Reinstate Updated Orange-Alamance Connector
- MOD Service Span Expansion
- Rural Transit Hubs, at Fairview/Dorothy Johnson Community Center, Mebane Memorial Garden, Orange High School, NC 54/Mebane Oaks Road, and White Cross Hub
- Walking Access to Transit, at N Scotswood Blvd (access to US 70/Food Lion stop), and NC 86 Cornerstone Court

These projects will help to inform future transit planning efforts, such as the next Orange County Transit Plan update.



**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**Appendix A:**  
**Existing Conditions**

October 2024



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) guides the improvement of transit services in Orange County through 2030.

Orange County Transportation Services (OCTS) provides fixed-route bus, demand response, and microtransit services throughout Orange County, NC. The changing conditions in the county—including new developments, rising population and jobs, and limited budgets—present an opportunity for OCTS to refine how transit investments are made. The SRTP will analyze existing service performance and markets, evaluate strategies for improving transit, and recommend a transit investment program through Fiscal Year (FY) 2030. The SRTP will also guide future long range planning efforts as the region continues to grow.

The Existing Conditions report is the first piece of the Orange County SRTP. The report consists of five key chapters:

1. A review of previous plans and projects that impact transportation in Orange County,
2. An analysis of the underlying market conditions in Orange County,
3. An analysis of the current services provided by OCTS,
4. A review of current and potential funding for OCTS services, and
5. A synthesis of the gaps and opportunities that can be addressed through the SRTP.

The focus of this Existing Conditions report is on the areas of Orange County outside of the municipalities of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, which are served by Chapel Hill Transit. The analysis will look at Hillsborough, Mebane, and the more rural areas of the county, identifying the opportunities and challenges in providing transportation services outside the Chapel Hill area. Analyses will also include up to 10 miles outside of the Orange County borders, which marks the fullest extent of OCTS's service area and includes destinations in Durham and other surrounding counties.

Key findings for the Existing Conditions include:

- Orange County is growing and is focused on ensuring planning efforts are inclusive of residents throughout the entirety of the county.
- There is potential demand for fixed route transit both within and between Hillsborough and Mebane.
- OCTS fixed route bus ridership has not fully recovered since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Program-based demand response service fills a critical need in connecting rural residents with medical, employment, and shopping opportunities, but is limited by eligibility requirements and high cost per rider.
- Microtransit expands access to transit for the general public but is currently underutilized.

There are opportunities to leverage existing funding sources more efficiently and identify new funding sources for improving transit.

## 2 REVIEW OF PAST PLANS AND PROJECTS

Past plans establish a baseline understanding of transit projects and programs considered or planned for Orange County and the region.

Reviewing past plans and projects is a critical first step to guiding existing conditions work. The previously published plans and policies reviewed included transit plans, climate plans, funding studies, and more, all of which focused on Orange County and/or the surrounding region. The review focused on both specific transit service recommendations and higher-level funding and goals.

This review sets the stage for the existing conditions analysis by providing a baseline and history of projects, changes, and future visions. The following section provides a brief overview of the plans reviewed and the information that is directly relevant to the SRTP effort. The full review can be found in Appendix A.

### **Orange County Transit Plan (2017) and Update (2022)**

The Orange County Transit Plan from 2017 and its subsequent update in 2022 provide an overview of the county's transit goals through a single funding source. It includes information on service improvements that are planned to be funded through the County's transit tax for OCTS, GoTriangle, and Chapel Hill Transit.

### **Burlington-Graham MPO (BGMPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2022)**

BGMPO's Comprehensive Transportation Plan is the MPO's long-range plan that identifies major transportation needs and solutions through 2050. The recommendations in this plan are not funded or fiscally constrained, unlike other regional comprehensive plans. The plan includes recommendations for transit infrastructure and service improvements for the Burlington, Graham, and Mebane areas, with a few recommendations for Orange County. These recommendations consist of creating a Mebane Connector; a Mebane to Hillsborough Commuter Rail; enhancing service on the Orange-Alamance Connector; and improving and adding new park and rides.

### **BGMPO 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2020)**

The BGMPO 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is the transportation plan for the Burlington-Graham region, which consists of the cities and towns of Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Elon, Gibsonville, Green Level, Haw River, Whitsett, Alamance; Alamance County; and parts of Guilford and Orange Counties. This plan identifies the transportation needs over the next two decades and provides multimodal recommendations for improvements.



### **BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study (2024)**

The BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study is an ongoing project that has recently completed its Operations and Fiscal Impact Analyses. This report contains recommendations and opportunities for transit funding at the local and consolidated level and an assessment of transit tax's government structure and funding.

### **Orange County Climate Action Plan (2023)**

The Orange County Climate Action Plan is the guiding document for county-wide greenhouse gas reduction. This document offers a comprehensive set of strategies that are in line with state regulations. Transit-specific strategies revolve around increased on-demand service and converting the existing vehicle fleet to an all-electric fleet.

### **Connect 2050: The Research Triangle Region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2022)**

Connect 2050 is the long-range transportation plan for the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO). The transit-related components of this plan focus on improvement of local and regional transit facilities and services and improving accessibility and ease of use of transit for all users.

### **Orange County's Complete Streets and Vision Zero Policies (2022)**

Orange County's Complete Streets and Vision Zero Policies were adopted in October 2022. The Vision Zero Policy states that the locality will aim to meet the state's safety targets of a 50% reduction of fatalities and serious injuries by 2035, and a 100% reduction by 2050. The Complete Streets Policy, which was adopted in tandem with the Vision Zero plan, strives to encourage the design and construction of safer and more equitable streets and shift towards multi-mobility.

### **Orange County Transportation Services Title VI Plan (2022)**

Orange County Transportation Services Title VI Plan overviews the Title VI standards and processes that OCTS must abide by. The document includes transit service standards for OCTS, including that all fixed-route services have between 30- and 45-minute headways with plans to reduce these to between 15- and 30-minutes.

### **Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan (2022)**

The Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan outlines the standards that OCTS must meet to provide sufficient ADA and paratransit services. OCTS currently exceeds the required service standards for coverage and abides by all federally mandated standards.

**GoTriangle Short-Range Transit Plan (2023)**

GoTriangle's SRTP recommends a series of transit service improvements for the Triangle region up to FY2028. The recommendations included simplification of routes (including the 420 and ODX) and expansion of 15-minute all-day routes.

**Chapel Hill Short-Range Transportation Plan (2020)**

Chapel Hill Transit's 2020 SRTP provides a roadmap for transit improvements in Chapel Hill and Carrboro for the next ten years. Recommendations include service expansion and demand-response zone additions.

**DCHC MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2017)**

The DCHC MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a long-range transportation plan that covers the region and outlines plans to be implemented through 2040. The modes that the plan covers are highway, public transportation, rail, bicycle, and

pedestrian changes. For Orange County, major public transportation recommendations include the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit and the North-South Corridor Bus Rapid Transit—a rapid transit route that runs along NC-86 and US 15-501 from Eubanks to Southern Village.

**City of Mebane Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2018)**

The City of Mebane's Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a multi-modal plan that covers roadway, public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian travel. The Plan recommends a circulator bus route for Mebane, which would run through the main part of the City, covering key destinations, such as parks, schools, community centers, and commercial destinations along the route. There is additional demand for service to Alamance Community College and to have connections to other regional routes.

### 3 MARKET ANALYSIS

This chapter explores the underlying demand for transit and transportation services in Orange County using the region’s geography, demographics, and built environment.

The Market Analysis consists of four components:

- **Transit Demand:** Looking at where people live and work, both currently and as the region grows
- **Equity and Transit Need:** Identifying the socioeconomic characteristics that influence transit use and where those characteristics are more common
- **Travel Flows:** Mapping how people travel to, from, and within Orange County
- **Activity Centers:** Identifying key destinations and trip generators for transit

Key takeaways from the Market Analysis include:














- Population density and transit demand is greatest in the Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane areas. The rest of the county is rural, where demand-response services may be more suitable than fixed-route transit.
- Most of the employment density is located within towns and cities and along major corridors. Service jobs make up the largest share of jobs in the county.

- Based on an analysis of travel patterns amongst all modes of transportation, most trips take place within municipalities. There is also relatively strong travel demand along the Mebane-Hillsborough corridor.

### TRANSIT DEMAND

A main factor in determining the demand for transit is density: where people live and work, and how those areas are concentrated. As shown in Figure 1, population and employment density may be used to indicate an appropriate level of transit service. Areas that are higher density may be able to support more frequent fixed route transit, while areas with lower density may be better suited for demand response services.

Figure 1: Transit Supportive Land Use Table

LAND USE			TRANSIT	
Land Use Type	Residents per Acre	Jobs per Acre	Appropriate Types of Transit	Frequency of Service
 Mixed Neighborhoods	10-15	5-10	  Local Bus    Micro-transit	 30-60 minutes
 Low Density	2-10	2-5	   Micro-transit    Rideshare Volunteer Driver Pgm	 60 mins or less or On Demand
 Rural	<2	<2	  Rideshare    Volunteer Driver Pgm	 On Demand

Source: Thresholds based on research by Nelson\Nygaard.

These densities broadly indicate demand across contiguous areas, and act cumulatively to drive demand for transit. Clusters of

density throughout an area or along a corridor are strong indicators of demand, while an isolated pocket of high density alone in a rural area would not produce sufficient demand itself. To represent the distribution of people and jobs more accurately, this analysis uses “developed acres” to calculate density, which is defined as the area within a quarter-mile buffer from roadways.

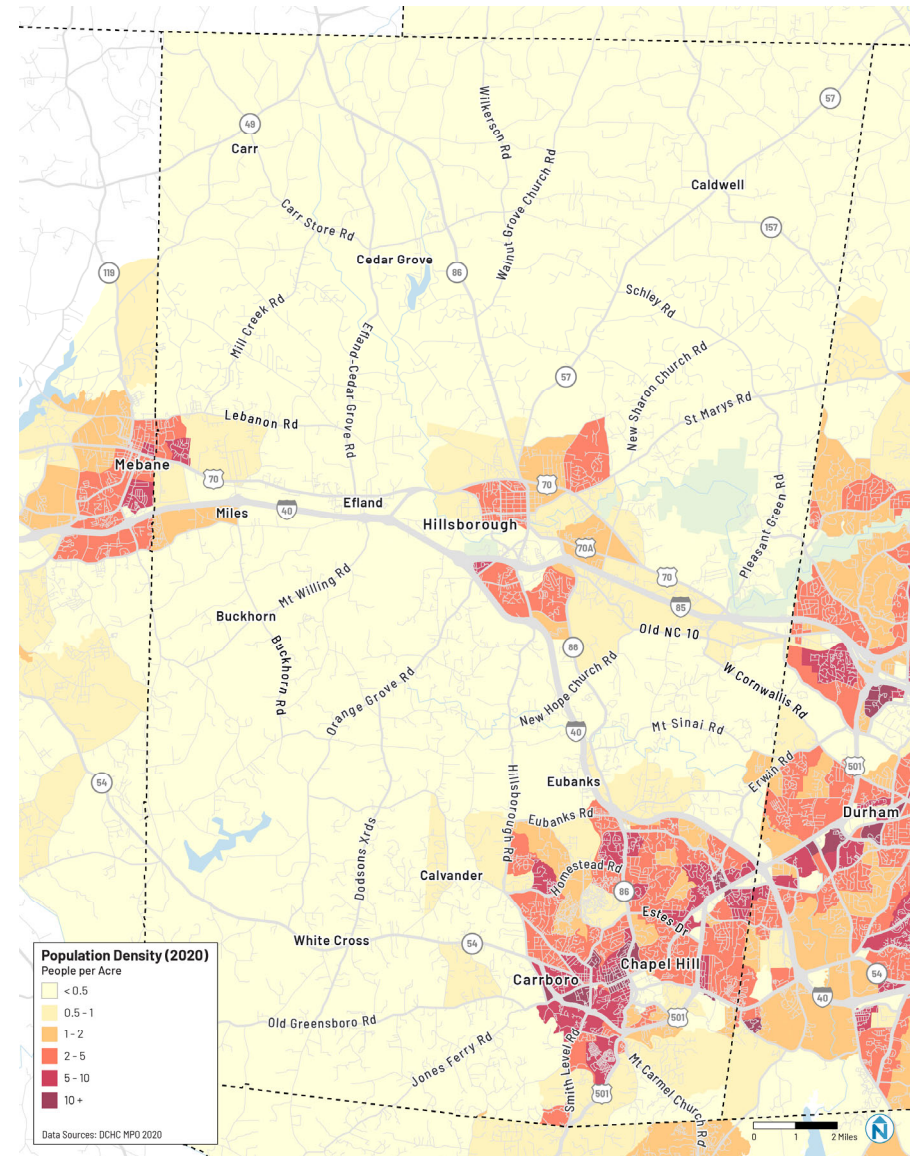
Data for transit demand was sourced mainly from DCHC MPO, which forecasted population and employment data as part of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), including estimates for the 2020 base year and 2030 interim year, at the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) level. However, more recent population data is available from the 2022 American Community Survey, which is used as a reference for growth. Additional data on development was provided by Orange County and Mebane agencies.

## Where People Live

As shown in Figure 2, population density in Orange County in 2020 was concentrated in the municipalities of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Mebane, and Hillsborough:

- In Hillsborough, denser areas are not clustered together, but located throughout the municipality with less dense areas between them.
- Mebane’s population density is mainly concentrated in Alamance County, with some higher density pockets in Orange County.
- Density changes sharply at the county border with Durham, likely due to differing zoning and development histories.

Figure 2: Population Density





## Where People Work

The geographic distribution of job density in Orange County in 2020 (Figure 4) is largely similar to population density, with the highest density areas in Mebane, Hillsborough, and Chapel Hill-Carrboro:

- Employment in Hillsborough is densest in the southeast area of the town.
- Mebane employment density is clustered along I-40, in the southern portion of the municipality. There are few jobs outside of these areas.

Jobs not only generate demand from the employees that travel there to work, but also from the potential customers, clients, and patients that visit a business. Jobs in the service and retail sectors tend to generate travel demand at higher rates than industry or office jobs. In 2020, 59% of Orange County jobs were in service and retail sectors (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Orange County Jobs by Sector

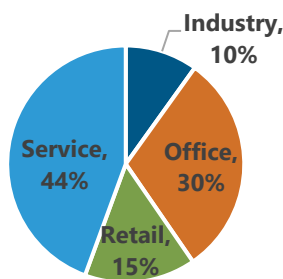
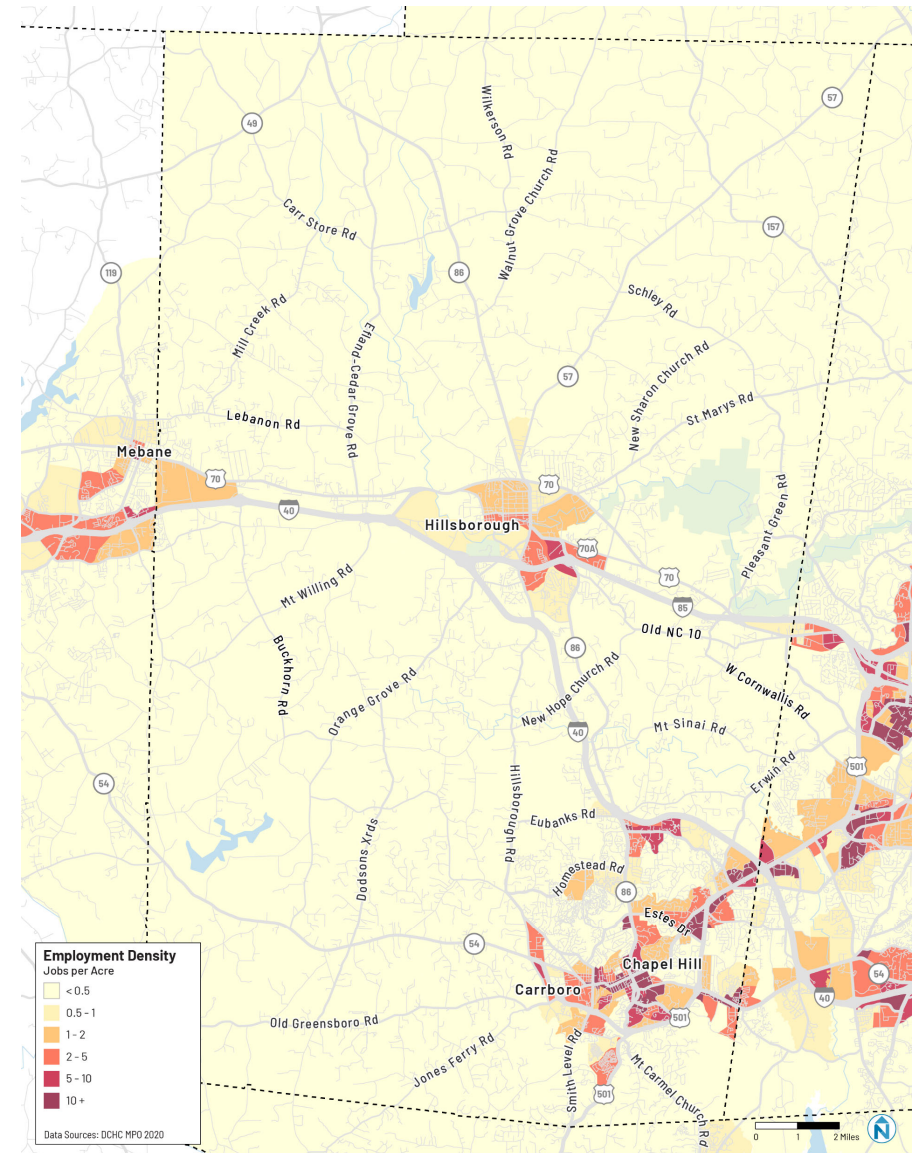


Figure 4: Employment Density





## Population and Employment Density Together

Together, population and employment density give a more complete picture of potential demand for transit. Figure 5 shows the combined population and employment densities by TAZ. Blue areas on the map signify areas with high employment density but lower population density, while orange represents areas with higher population density and lower job density. Darker brown areas have high densities of both employment and population.

Areas with both high population and employment density include:

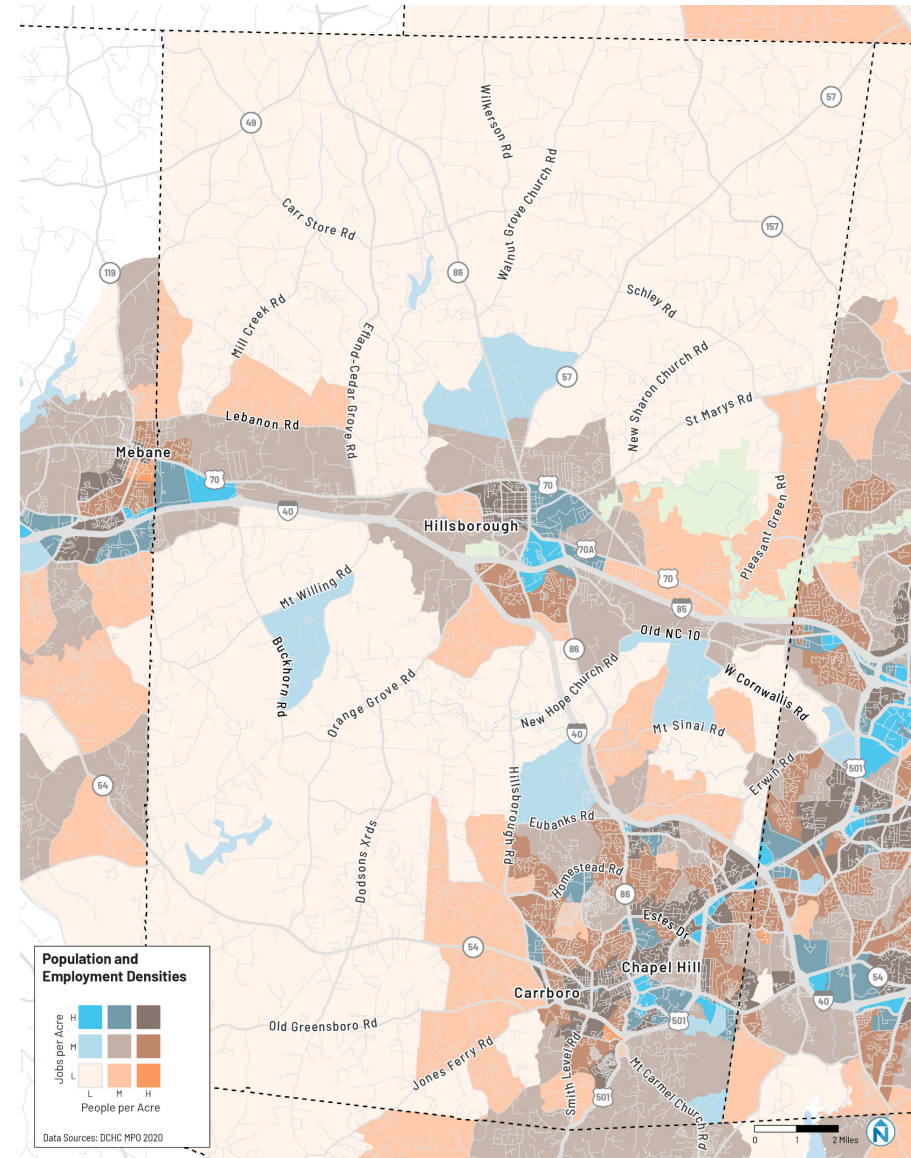
- Downtown Hillsborough
- Southwest Mebane
- I-40 and I-85 corridors

Areas of high employment and population density do not always align, with pockets of high employment density further from the downtown cores and some isolated areas of residential density.

Areas with mismatched densities include:

- Employment density in Hillsborough is concentrated in many of the pockets of lower population density.
- Downtown Mebane has greater population density, while employment is concentrated along I-40.

Figure 5: Population and Employment Densities



## Regional Growth

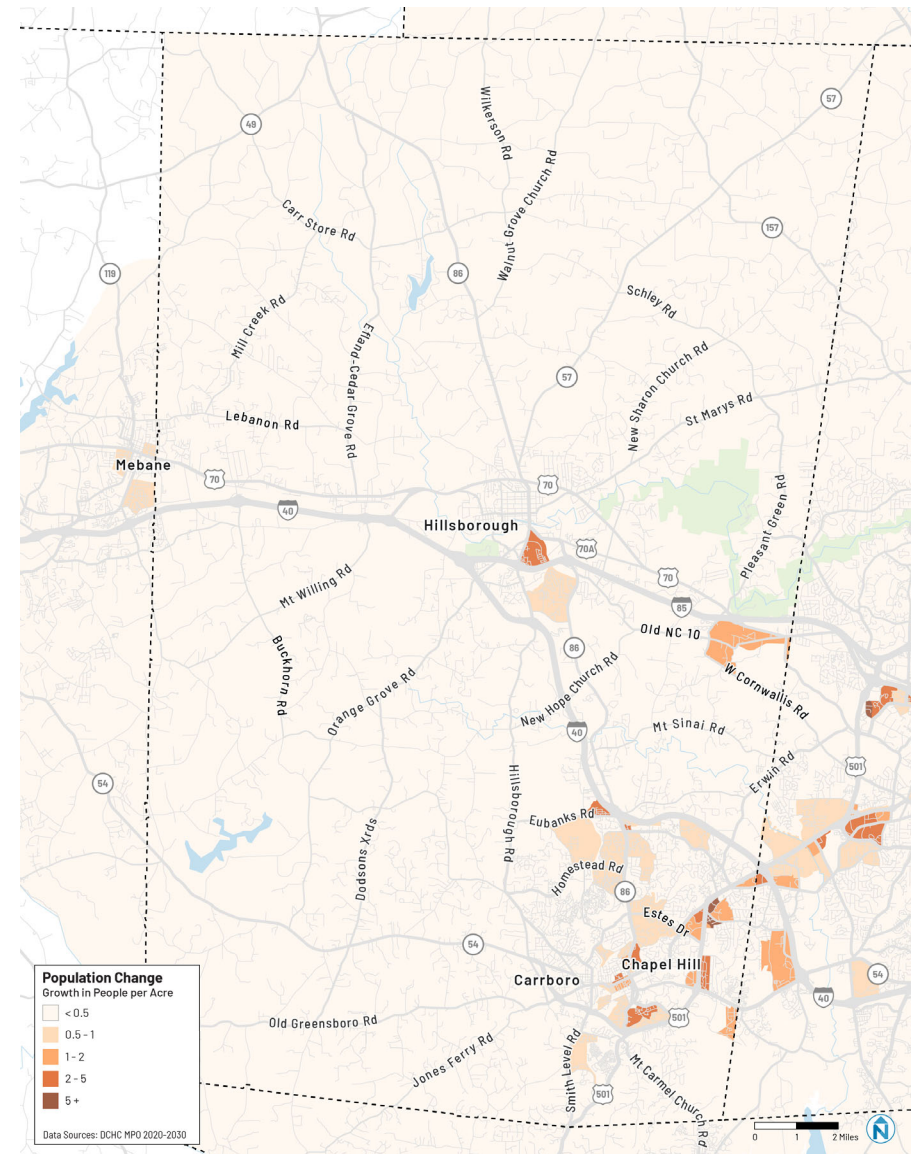
The Triangle Region is growing rapidly, with new housing, mixed-use developments, and job centers being planned and approved throughout Orange County. Using the Triangle Regional Model's 2030 projections, based on the 2020 base year, the Market Analysis can identify areas likely to see significant growth of demand for transit within the SRTP timeframe.

## Population Change

The Triangle Regional Model projected an 11% increase in population between 2020 and 2030 in Orange County, growing to just over 150,000 residents. According to 2022 American Community Survey Data, the population has already surpassed that number, with the county as a whole growing at a faster rate than the Chapel Hill municipality.

Figure 6 shows the growth in number of people per acre. Outside of Chapel Hill, there is growth of greater than 0.5 more people per acre in southern Hillsborough, downtown Mebane, and between Hillsborough and Durham along NC-10. Because this map reflects change in density, it does not reflect the rate of growth throughout the different regions of the county, and may obscure the impact of developments in large TAZs.

Figure 6: Population Density Change, 2020-2030

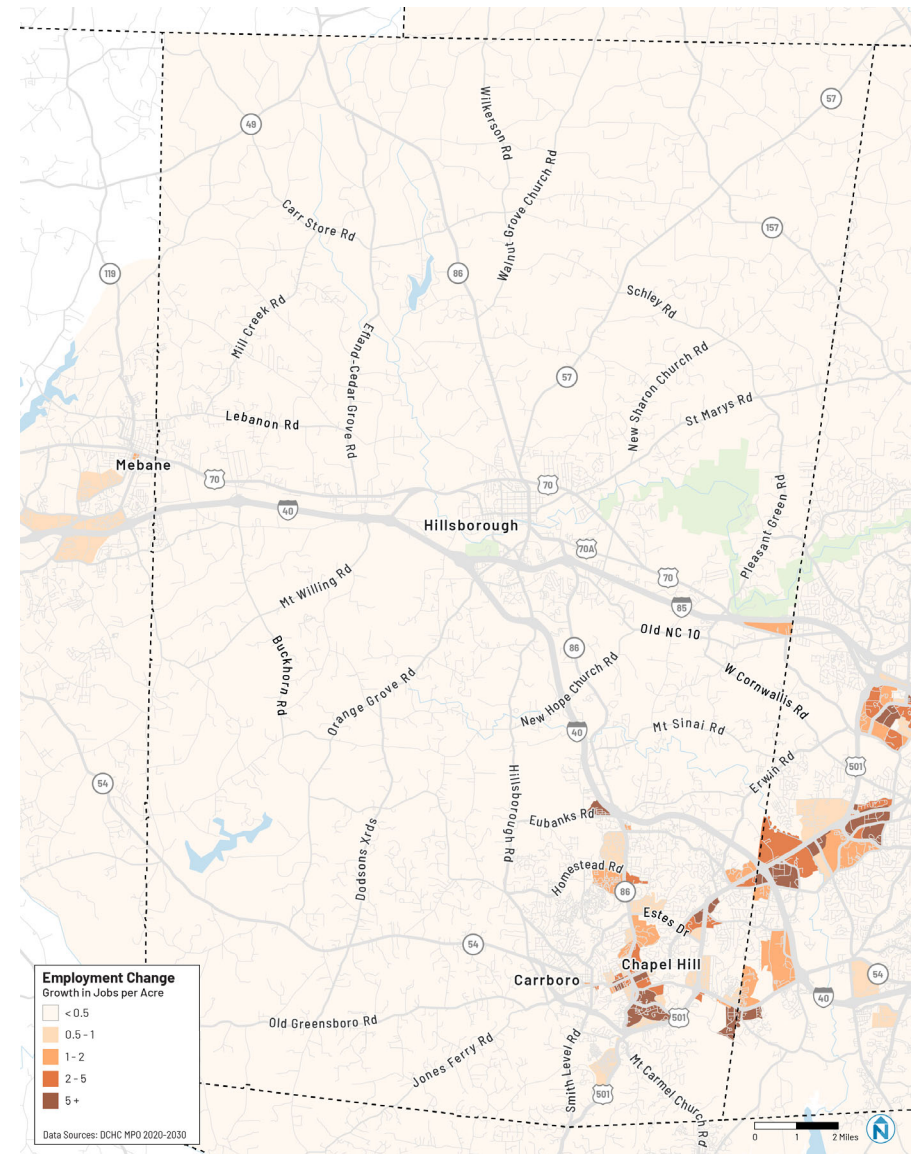


## Employment Change

Based on the Triangle Regional Model, employment is projected to increase at a greater rate than population, with a 19% increase in jobs in Orange County between 2020 and 2030 to about 89,000 jobs. Newer data from the US Census estimates a greater number of jobs than the Triangle Regional Model.

As seen in Figure 7, most of this growth is likely to be concentrated near the UNC Chapel Hill campus and hospitals, and between Chapel Hill and Durham. Southern Mebane is also expected to see an increase in employment density, while most of Orange County will likely not see a large increase in employment density. Similar to the population density change map, not all job growth is reflected in the density map.

Figure 7: Employment Density Change, 2020-2030



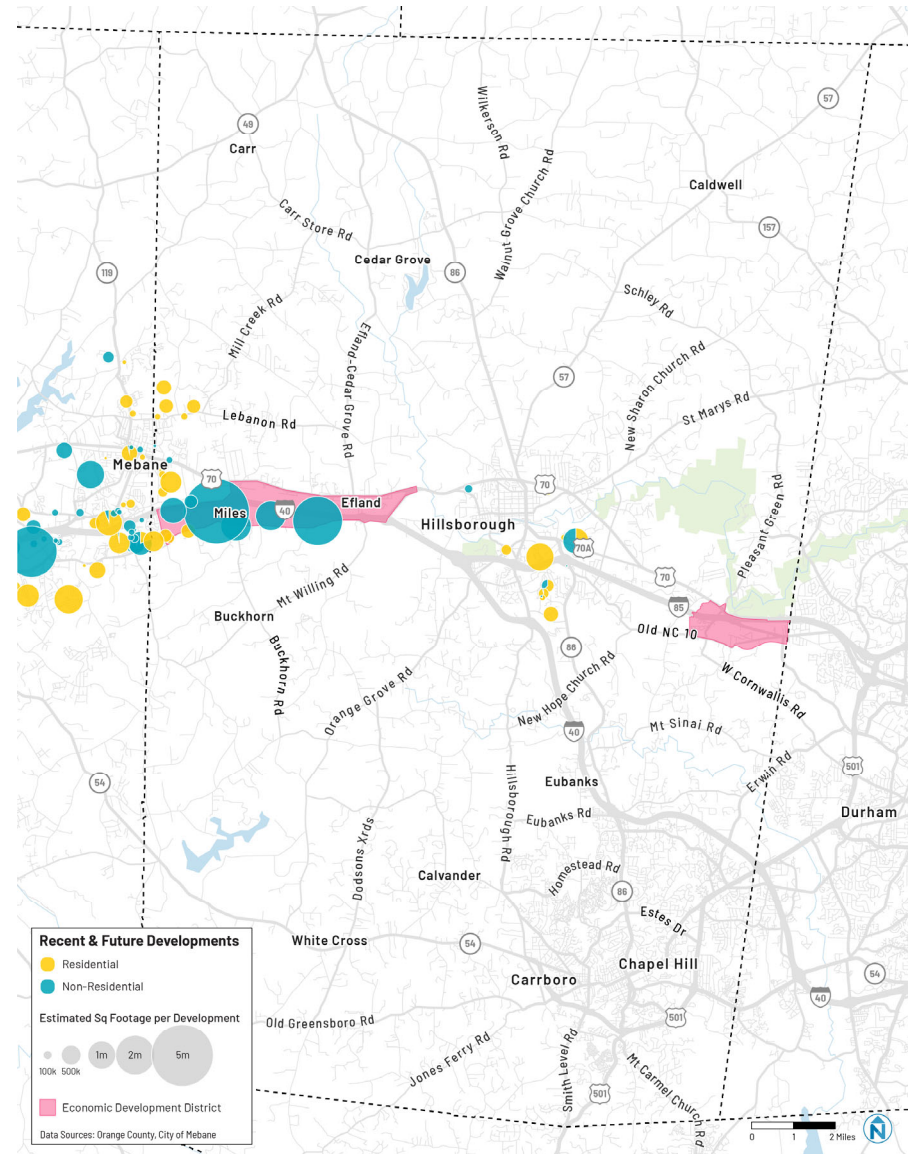


## Planned Developments

Along with the MPO and Census data, planned developments show where population and employment growth will likely occur over the course of the SRTP timeframe. Figure 8 shows the location and size of key economic and residential developments in Mebane and Orange County, including districts with economic development plans.

Mebane expects to see a high number of both residential and non-residential developments, and residential developments are planned for southern Hillsborough as well. The I-40 corridor between Hillsborough and Mebane is also likely to see large non-residential developments and is zoned to encourage continuing economic growth.

Figure 8: Recent & Future Developments



## EQUITY AND TRANSIT NEED

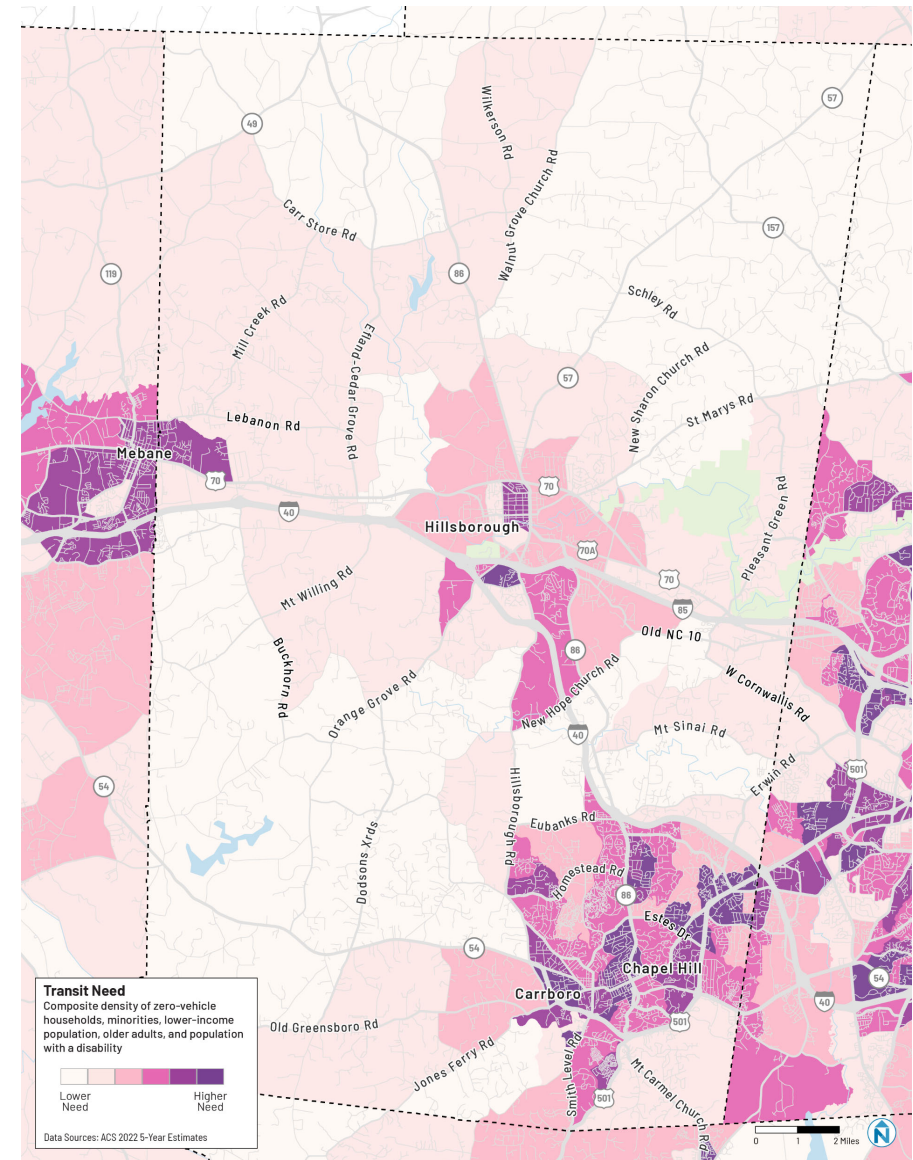
While total population and employment density are crucial to understanding transit demand, the demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of the population are also a key component in identifying the need for transit services. Many population groups, often those historically and currently marginalized, rely on transit more than the general public. To plan transit equitably, transit agencies should focus their investments on areas with high populations of these communities.

There are multiple ways to identify and measure equity needs for transit, and this report uses two distinct approaches: a Transit Needs Index and Environmental Justice Communities of Concern. The Transit Needs Index looks at the *population and density* of key demographic groups, while the Environmental Justice analysis looks at *percentages*, leading to different areas of emphasis in each analysis. In addition, the Environmental Justice analysis is based on an existing dataset from the DCHC MPO and focuses solely on Orange County, while the Transit Needs Index has a wider geographic focus and was calculated for the purpose of this Market Analysis.

### Transit Needs Index

The Transit Needs Index measures the density of socioeconomic groups that would most benefit from improved transit services for both fixed route and demand response. To calculate the index, census block groups are assigned a score of 1 to 5 for each of the following groups, based on the relative density of that group in Orange County, and summed for a final composite score:

Figure 9: Transit Need





- Zero vehicle households
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People with low incomes (below federal poverty level)
- Older adults (65+)
- People with disabilities

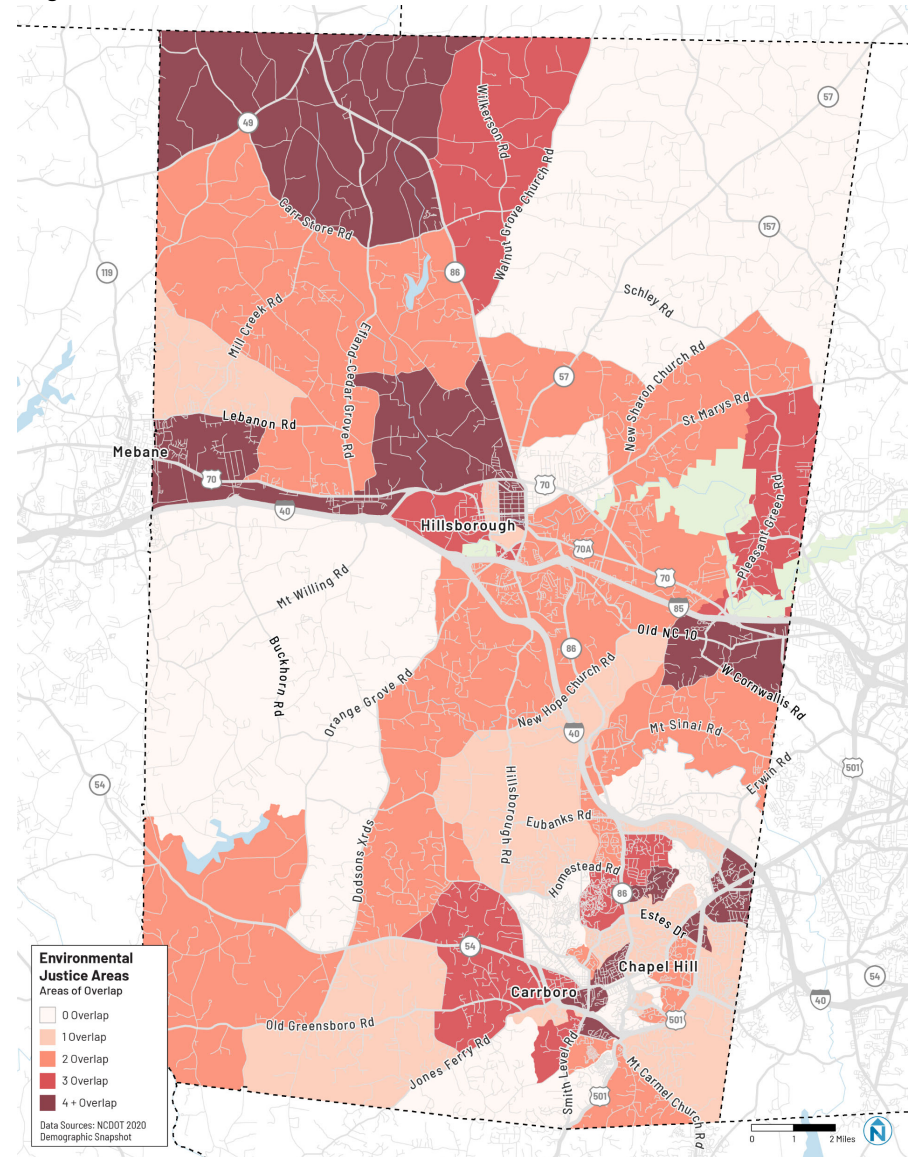
Figure 9 shows areas of high potential transit need, with darker colors indicating higher than average densities of multiple target populations. Areas with the highest transit need include most of Chapel Hill and parts of Carrboro, downtown and southern Hillsborough, and most of Mebane.

## Environmental Justice

The DCHC MPO incorporates Environmental Justice (EJ) into all aspects of its planning process, working to ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income.<sup>1</sup> The MPO identifies specific Environmental Justice Communities of Concern to target:

- Racial and Ethnic Minorities
  - Black Population
  - Hispanic Population
- People with Low Incomes (below Federal Poverty Level)
- Older Adults (65+)
- Zero Vehicle Households
- Population with Limited-English Proficiency

**Figure 10: Environmental Justice Communities of Concern**



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dchcmo.org/work-with-us/environmental-justice-ej>

The environmental justice analysis identifies Communities of Concern based on County thresholds for the percentage of certain socioeconomic groups within each area. These thresholds focus on percentage of a population, rather than density, highlighting the presence of environmental justice communities in the more rural areas of the county.

As shown in Figure 10, Communities of Concern are located throughout Orange County, especially in the northwest and east, as well as in the denser municipalities. While the rural areas may not have the density to support fixed route transit services, there are still communities that may need access to public transportation.

## TRAVEL FLOWS

Using data from Replica that models average daily traffic patterns of trips on all modes of transportation, the following maps show general flows of travel between census tracts in Spring 2023.

On an average weekday, the strongest travel flows were typically within the municipalities, with weaker flows across longer distances (Figure 11). Key travel flows outside the municipalities include:

- Trips to the center of Hillsborough from surrounding areas
- Thousands of trips occur each day from the communities between Mebane and Hillsborough (such as Efland and Buckhorn) into Mebane and Hillsborough, where much of the previously discussed developments are located

- Trips between Eubanks and Chapel Hill stand out during the peak commute times

As shown Figure 12, Saturday travel flows are slightly more locally contained than weekday, and lower overall, but follow similar patterns to the weekday travel flows. Strong travel flows occur between:

- Mebane and the tracts on the western edge of Orange County, including the communities of Buckhorn and Efland
- Northeast Orange County and Hillsborough
- Downtown Hillsborough and surrounding communities

Many of the existing transit services in Orange County, operated by both OCTS and GoTriangle, only operate for parts of the day. As shown in Figure 13 and Figure 14, travel patterns during the morning peak and mid-afternoon on weekdays differ only slightly.

During the morning peak, between 7 and 9 AM, travel patterns are mostly similar to the travel flows of the full day, with strong trip links within Chapel Hill and Hillsborough (Figure 13). Unlike full day travel patterns, there are some stronger long-distance connections, including Durham to Chapel Hill and Chatham County to Chapel Hill. Travel flows are slightly lower during the midday period (Figure 14) than in the morning. Mebane to Buckhorn continue to see strong travel flows. Trips to and from Durham are concentrated more in the north of Chapel Hill, rather than to and from UNC. Flows on the US 70 and I-40 corridor between Hillsborough and Mebane remain strong.

Figure 11: Weekday Trips, All Day

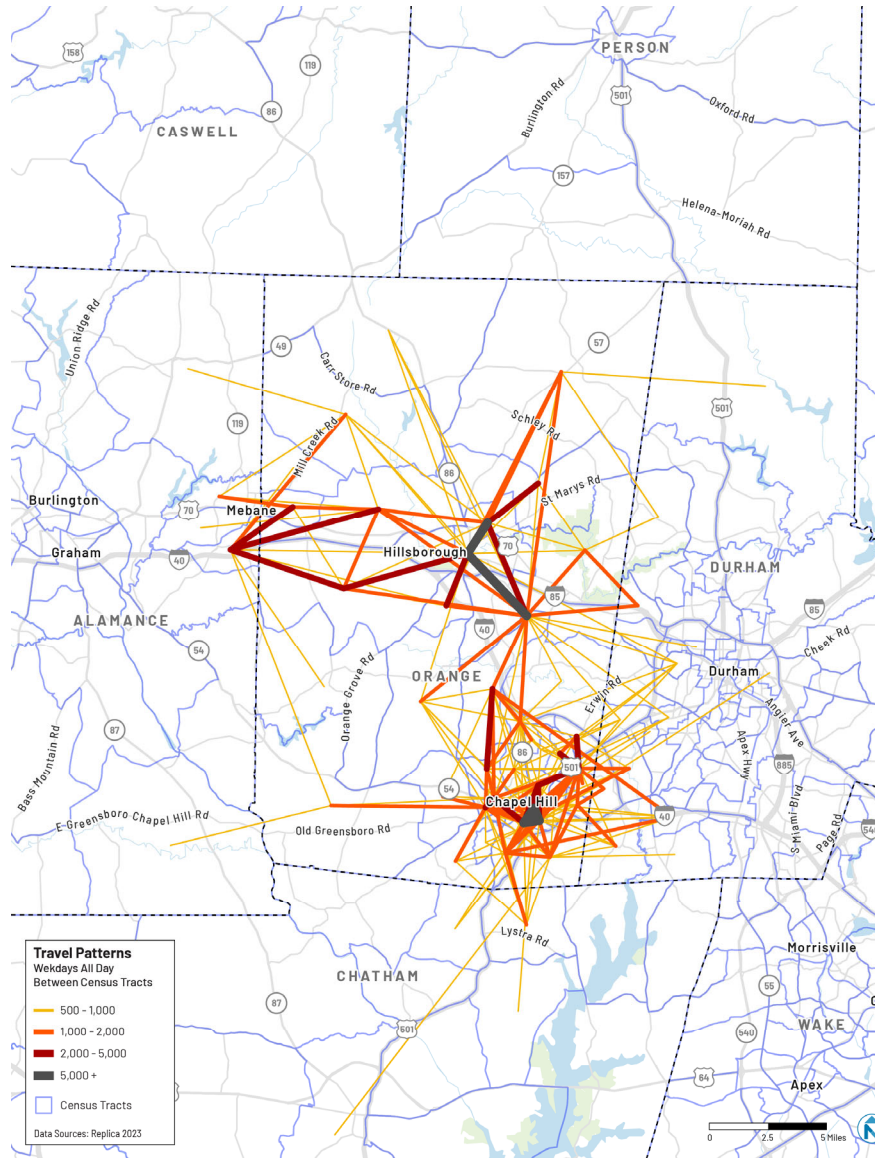


Figure 12: Saturday Trips, All Day

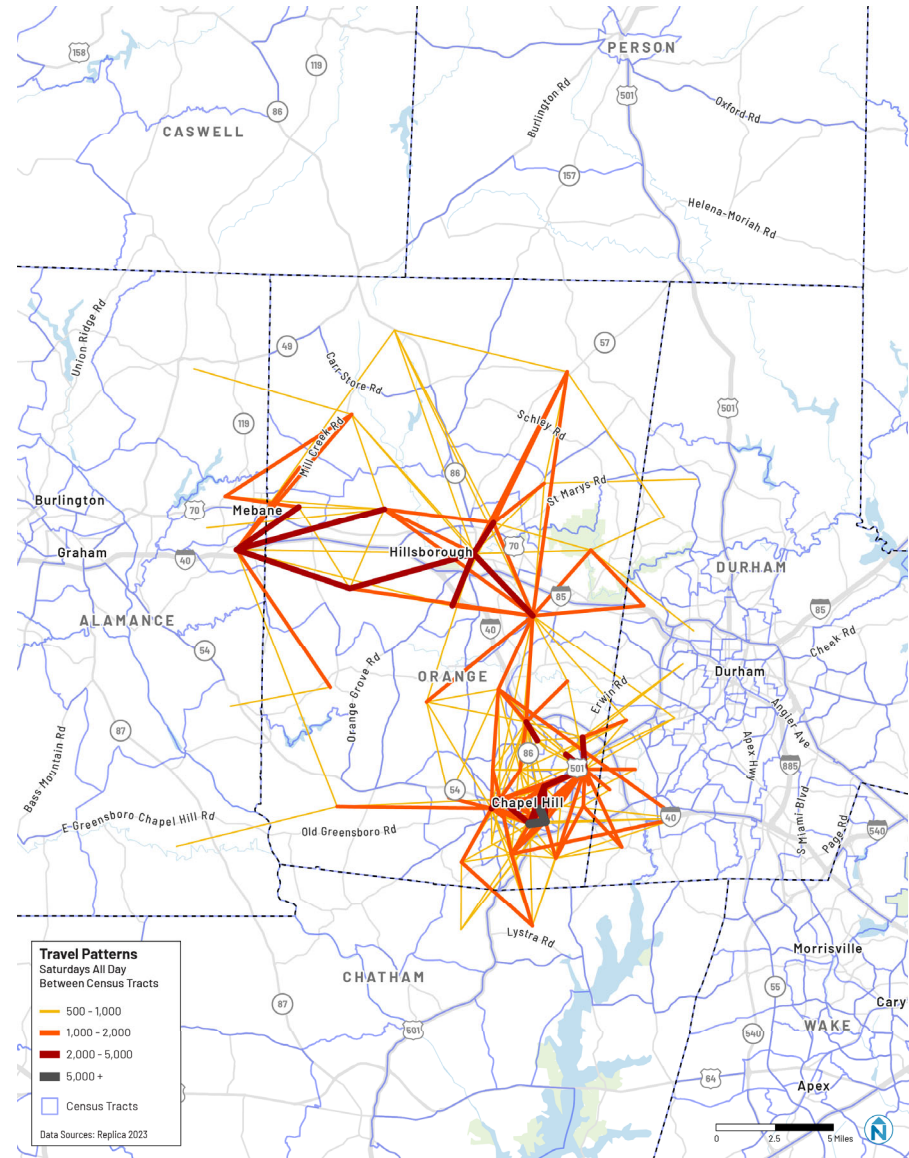




Figure 13: Weekday Trips, AM Peak

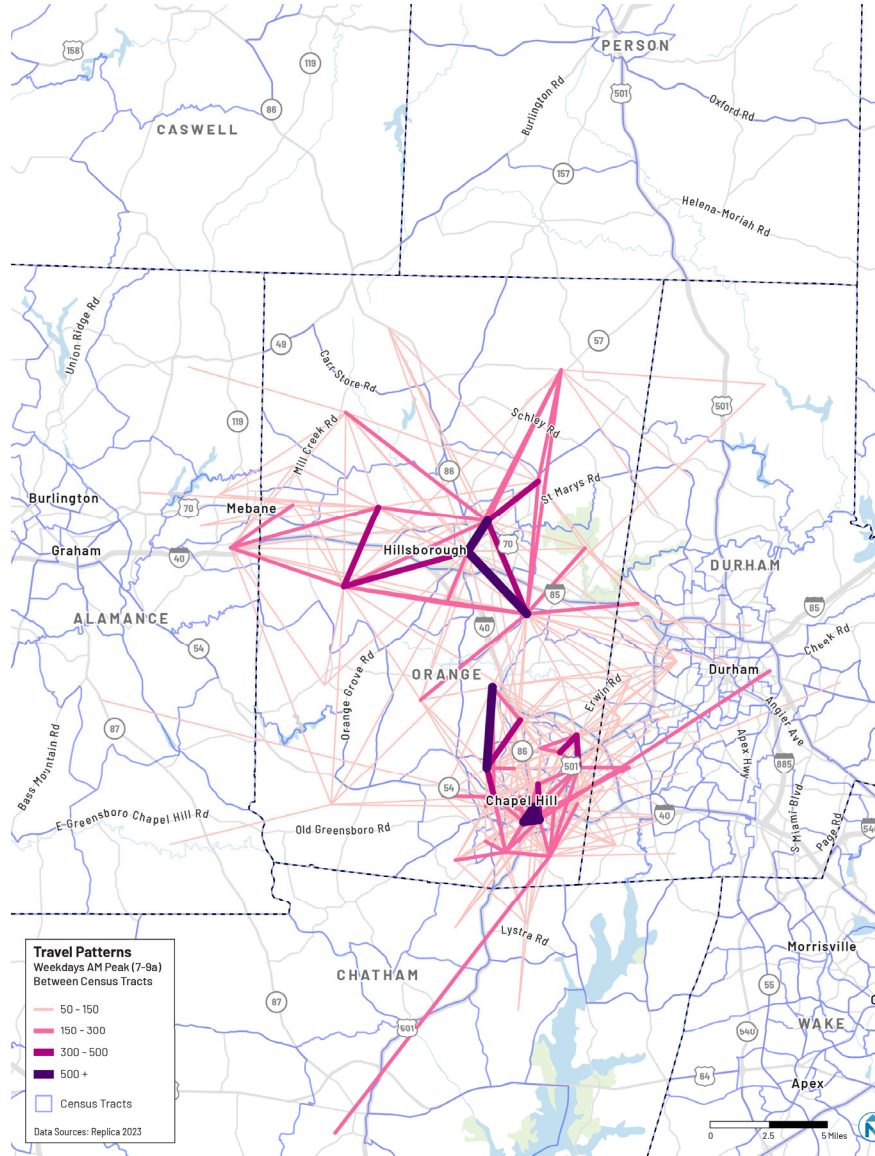
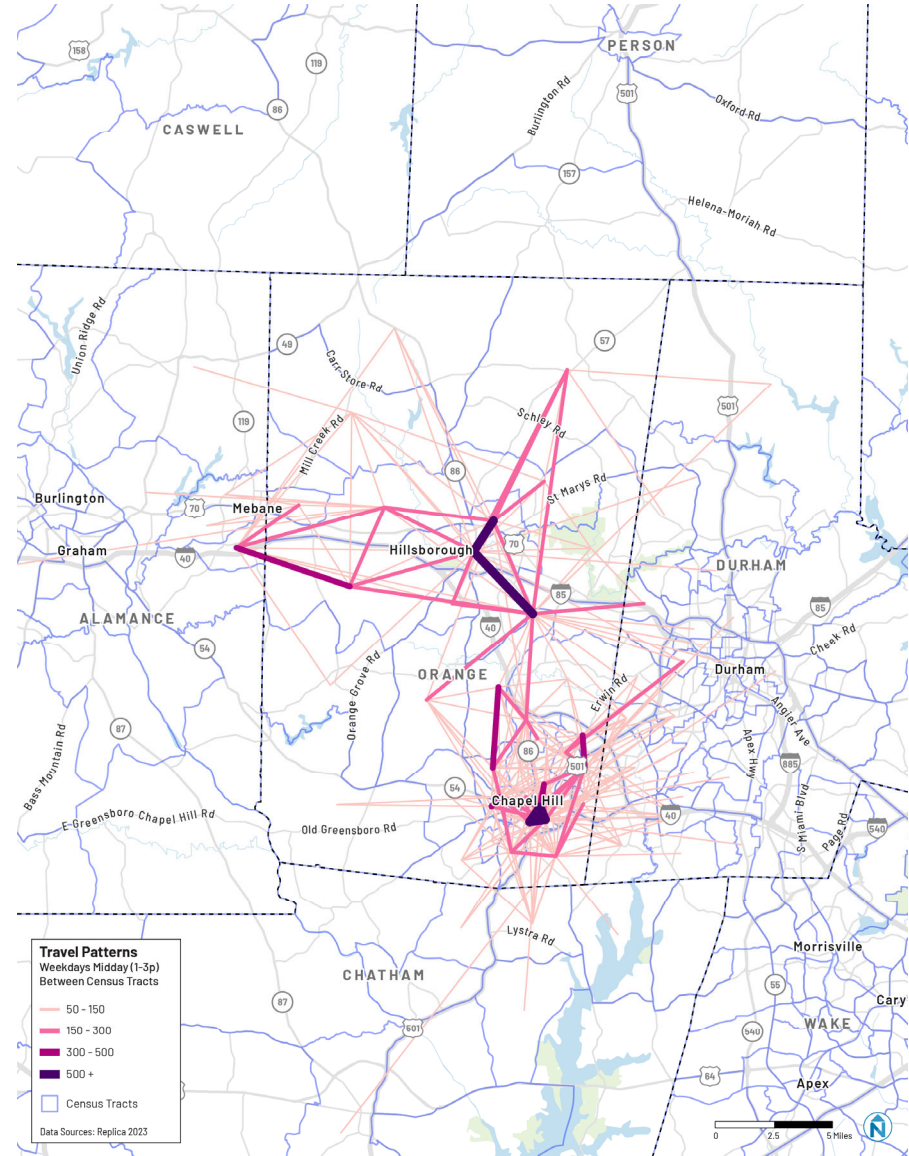


Figure 14: Weekday Trips, Mid-Afternoon



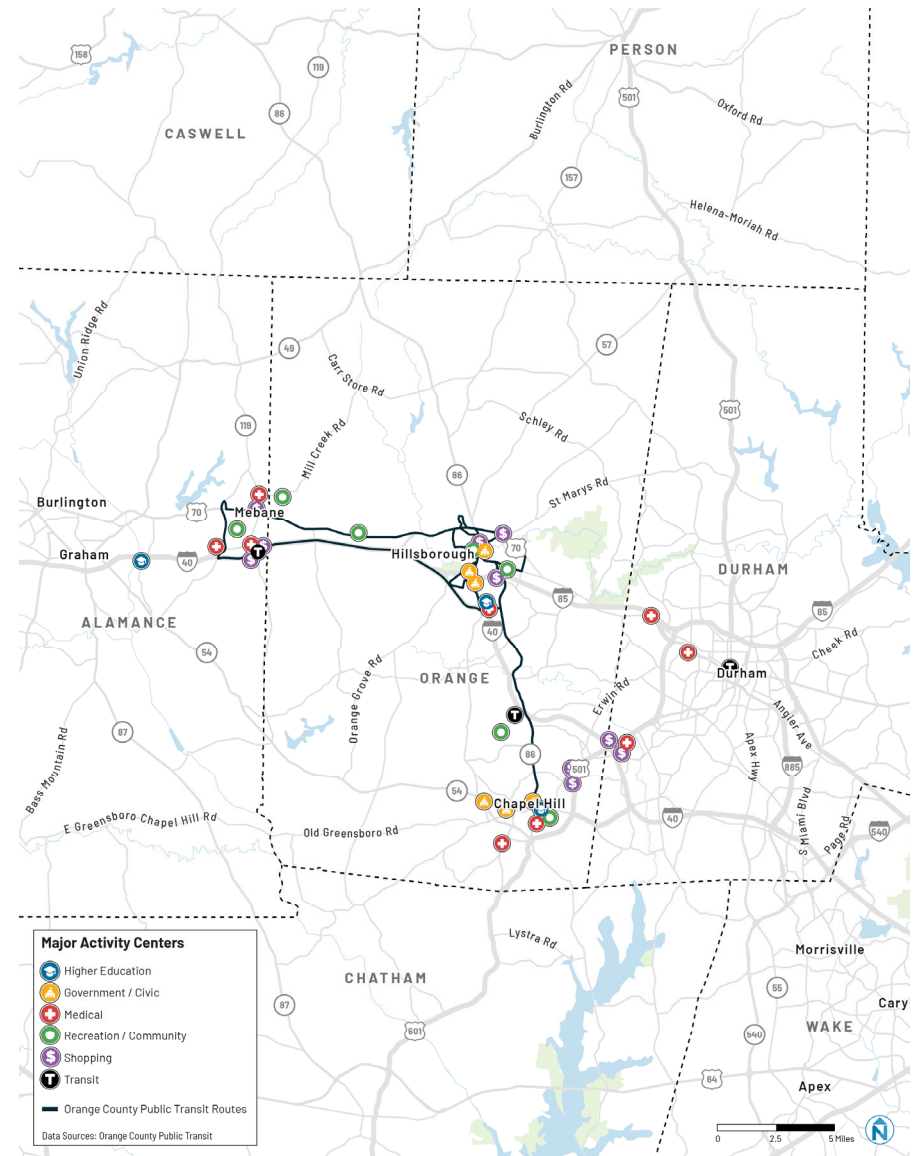
# ACTIVITY CENTERS

Some activity centers generate additional demand for transit that are not captured by the previous density analyses. As shown in Figure 15, major activity centers and points of interest in the Orange County service area include:

- **Higher Education** campuses, including UNC Chapel Hill and Durham Technical Community College in Hillsborough
- **Government/Civic** institutions, such as social services departments, town halls, and DMV locations
- **Hospitals and Dialysis**, including UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill and Hillsborough, and multiple dialysis centers
- **Recreation/Community** centers, including parks, stadiums, senior centers, and recreation centers, such as the Passmore Center
- **Shopping** destinations, including shopping centers such as Patterson Place and Tanger Outlets, as well as destinations like Walmart Supercenters
- **Transit** facilities, including the Eubanks Park and Ride

Many of these activity centers are clustered in more densely populated areas, such as downtown Hillsborough and Chapel Hill, or along key travel corridors. However, with the distributed rural population of Orange County, residents often need to travel longer distances from less dense areas to the areas of more concentrated activity to access healthcare, grocery stores, and social services.

Figure 15: Activity Centers





## 4 EXISTING SERVICE ASSESSMENT

The Existing Service Assessment looks at the current state of transportation services offered by OCTS, identifying trends in service delivery and usage.

This analysis consists of two key components, a System Overview, which explores OCTS's services as a holistic network, and Service Profiles, which delves deeper into each individual service offered by OCTS.

Some key takeaways from the existing service assessment are:

- OCTS offers service in the form of three fixed routes—Hillsborough Circulator, Orange-Alamance Connector, and Orange-Chapel Hill Connector—and demand response.
- Ridership on OCTS's fixed route and demand response services has not recovered from the decrease due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Hillsborough Circulator is OCTS's highest performing fixed route. Utilizing only one vehicle, the route runs hourly as that is the time it takes for the vehicle to complete the loop, ultimately resulting in the route frequently running late.
- The Orange-Alamance connector is currently partially suspended and covered by demand response service.

- The Orange-Chapel Hill Connector runs between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill during the middle of the day when Chapel Hill Transit's Route 420 is not running. There could be opportunities to improve efficiency by ensuring there is no duplicate service.
- OCTS's on-demand service is underutilized, possibly due to the rider registration process and lack of information available directly on OCTS's website.

## SYSTEM OVERVIEW

### Services Available

OCTS operates the following services:

- Three fixed routes: Hillsborough Circulator, Orange-Alamance Connector, Orange-Chapel Hill Connector
- Rural Demand Response Service
- Mobility on Demand microtransit service
- ADA Complementary Paratransit

Each OCTS route and service has different hours of operation, though all fixed route buses are scheduled to operate hourly throughout their service period. Figure 16 depicts the service span and frequency for the three fixed route services as well as the two demand response service types.

Figure 16: OCTS Service Span and Frequency

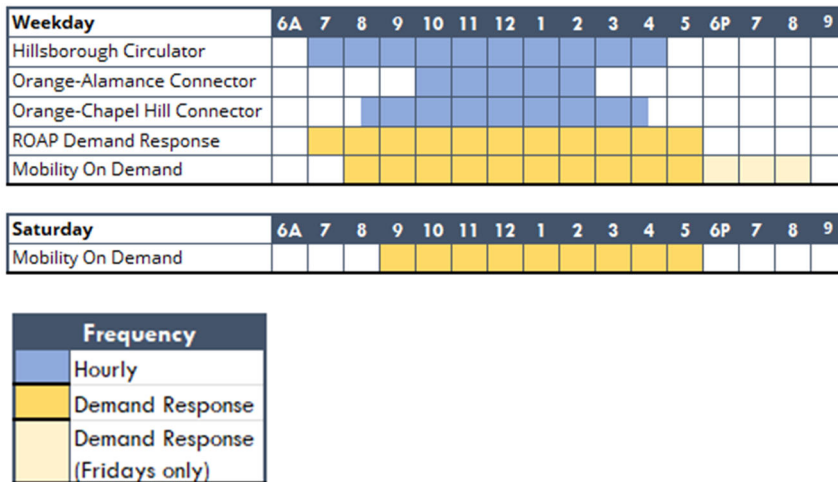
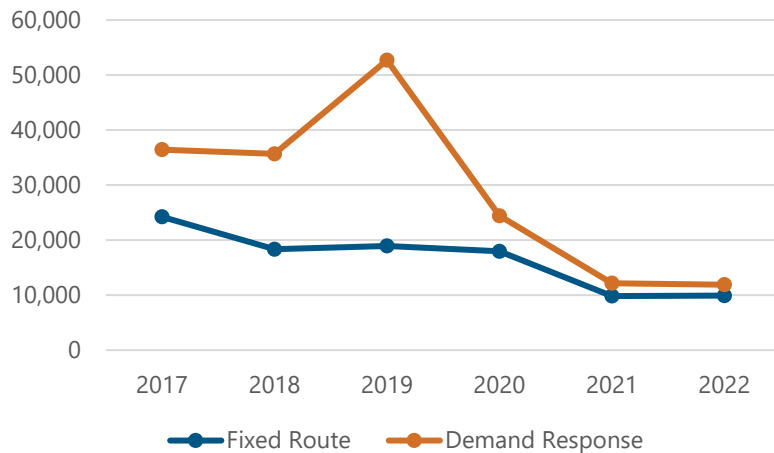


Figure 17: Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips by Service Type



Source: FTA NTD

## Service Performance

Ridership on OCTS’s demand response services declined significantly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to decline in 2021. Fixed route ridership did not see the same steep decline in 2020 but decreased in 2018 and again in 2021 (Figure 20).

The pandemic and resulting changes to commute patterns, paired with vehicle and driver shortage challenges at the agency, have led to significant on-the-ground changes to the services being offered in recent years. These changes include route suspensions and service hour changes, often without significant advertisement to the public. These challenges and changes make exact comparisons over time difficult on the level of an individual route or service.

## Neighboring Transit Services

Along with OCTS, three other transit agencies operate bus routes in Orange County: Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), GoTriangle, and Chapel Hill Transit. OCTS also operates in neighboring Alamance County, which is served primarily by Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA) and Link Transit.

PART operates transit service in the counties to the west of Orange and runs one route that extends into Orange County. PART Route 4 offers service from UNC Chapel Hill to Mebane Cone Health Park and Ride, and to Graham, Burlington, and Greensboro.

GoTriangle serves Durham, Orange, and Wake Counties with six all-week and all-day routes, four peak-only routes on weekdays, and 7 regional express routes that run during peak hours all week. Two routes serve similar corridors to OCTS routes: the ODX and the 420. The ODX is an express route that serves Hillsborough, Efland, Mebane, and Durham during mornings and evenings. This route runs hourly at peak times, with three trips in the morning and three in the afternoon. Route 420 is a peak-only regional route that runs from UNC Chapel Hill to Hillsborough.

Chapel Hill Transit is a fare-free radial transit service based around the UNC Chapel Hill campus. Chapel Hill Transit operates 20 fixed routes, 9 of which operate all week and the other 11 operate on weekdays only. These routes facilitate local travel within Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

## Transit Amenities and Facilities

OCTS's bus stop amenities vary based on the size of the bus stop and nearby amenities. Working with GoTriangle, the two transit providers have made stop improvements in Orange County and the greater region. GoTriangle actively updates their Stop Improvement Map on their website with completed and in-progress bus stop amenity improvements.

Shelters vary in size depending on the location, with larger shelters typically being placed at the end-of-line and park-and-rides and smaller shelters being placed at high volume ridership locations mid-route where space allows. The style of bench can also vary, with larger benches being placed inside of or nearby shelters and smaller seats located on the bus stop pole.

OCTS serves the Mebane Cone Health Park-and-Ride and the Durham Tech OCC Park-and-Ride on the Orange-Alamance Connector, and the Durham Tech OCC Park-and-Ride by the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector.

**Figure 18 Durham Tech OCC Park-and-Ride Bus Stop**



# SERVICE PROFILES

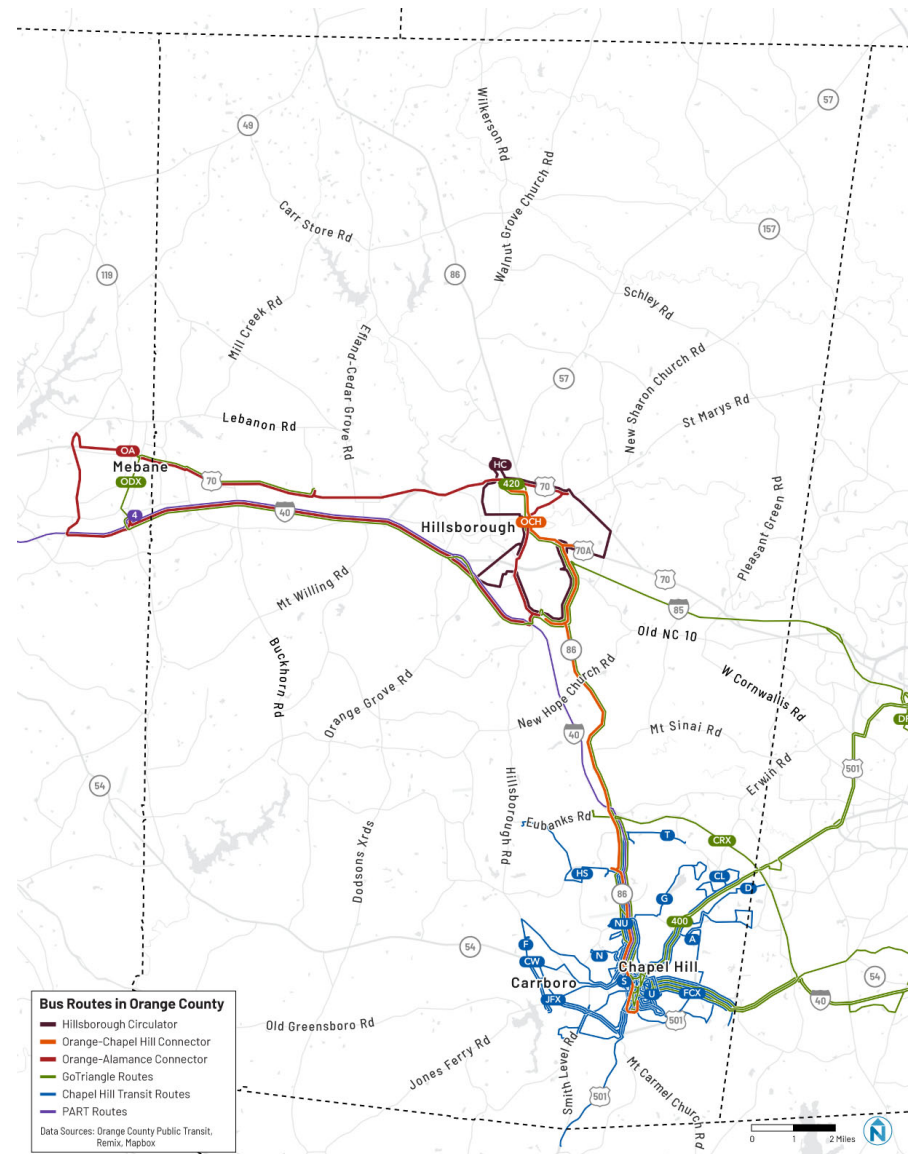
## Fixed Route

OCTS provides both regional and local service with its fixed route buses, shown in Figure 19. The Hillsborough Circulator is a local route serving key destinations in Hillsborough. Two regional connector routes, the Orange-Alamance Connector and the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector, connect Hillsborough with other regional destinations and fill a midday gap for peak-only GoTriangle bus routes, with additional local service stops.

Fares are charged for the two connector routes, at a cost of \$2.00 for the general public, \$1.00 for students between ages 6 and 17, and free for seniors (older than 60), children (younger than 5), persons with disabilities (ADA certified from OCTS or another transit agency). Fares must be paid using UMO Pass or a Passenger ID card. Cash is not an option for fare payment on OCTS routes. The Hillsborough Circulator is free to ride.

Analysis focuses on data from October 2019 and October 2023 where available, but technological and operational difficulties were limiting factors to the robustness of the ridership and trip data. On-time performance is only available as an estimate for the Hillsborough Circulator, and there is limited recent ridership data for the Connector routes. Improving data collection would support a more robust analysis in future studies.

Figure 19: OCTS and Regional Fixed Route Bus Service



# Hillsborough Circulator

## Route Description

The Hillsborough Circulator is a one-way loop that serves major destinations in the town of Hillsborough, operating hourly Monday through Friday from 7 am to 5 pm. The route operates with one vehicle, taking one hour to complete each loop. No fare is charged to ride the Hillsborough Circulator.

## Route Performance

Ridership on the circulator has recovered to approximately 78% of pre-pandemic levels, with 1,042 boardings in October 2023 compared to 1,342 boardings in October 2019. As seen in Figure 20, boardings in 2023 are more evenly distributed throughout the day, with higher activity in the midday, compared to a previous AM and afternoon peak in 2019.

Figure 20: Average Daily Boardings by Hour, October

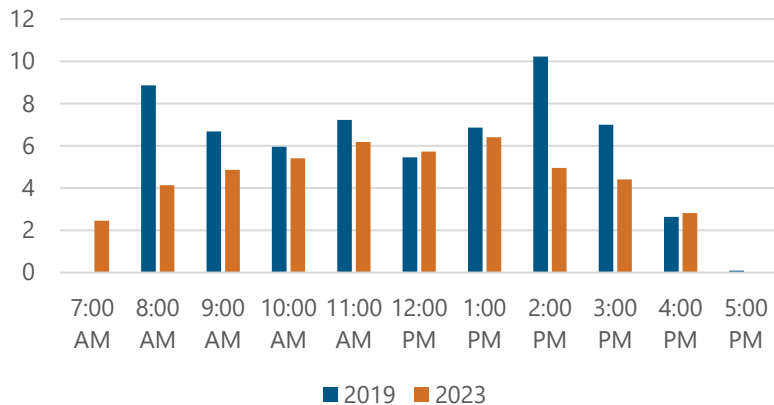


Figure 21: Hillsborough Circulator Boardings

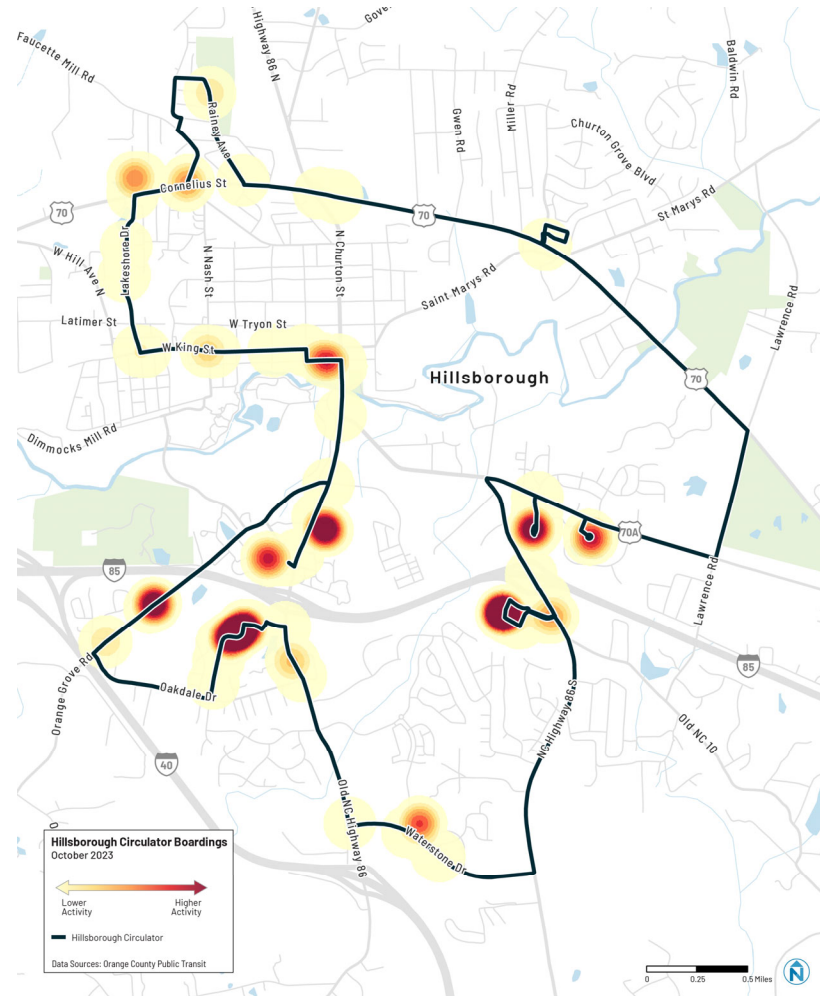




Figure 21 shows where boardings are concentrated along the Hillsborough Circulator. High ridership areas include:

- Large apartment complexes, including Gateway Village and Coachwood apartments on Cheshire Drive and Eno Haven Apartments
- Key shopping destinations, including the Hillsborough Walmart and Rebecca Drive Food Lion
- Triangle Sportsplex and Passmore Center

There are distributed boardings along the downtown portions of the route, and some limited ridership at other key stops. At key timepoint stops, 16% of trips arrived more than 5 minutes after their scheduled times.

## Opportunities

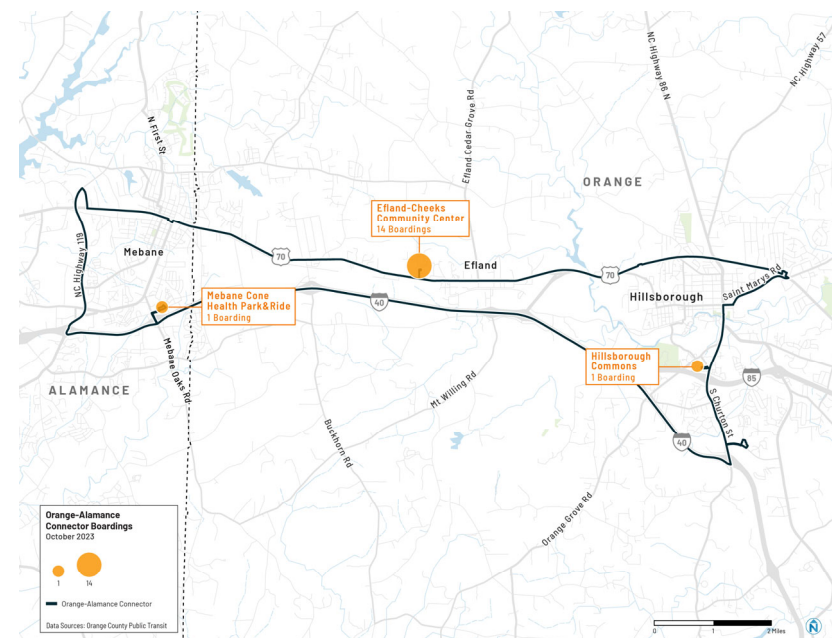
The Hillsborough Circulator connects the denser downtown environment, apartment complexes, and major shopping destinations, but operates in a challenging built environment outside of these main destinations. Ensuring the route takes the most direct path possible to the key ridership areas is essential in improving reliability and on-time performance. Return trips are made less direct by the nature of a one-way loop, especially when the route operates only hourly. A counter-loop with expanded service hours is planned for the upcoming fiscal year, providing shorter travel times and more flexibility.

## Orange-Alamance Connector

### Route Description

The Orange-Alamance Connector is a fixed-route service that connected activity centers in Hillsborough, Efland, and Mebane during the weekday midday period when the peak-only GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX) is not operating. Due to low ridership, the route is currently operating as an on-demand service, where riders would call the County to receive a ride along the fixed alignment. When in full operation, the Orange-Alamance Connector ran bi-directional hourly service between 10 AM and 3 PM Monday to Friday.

Figure 22: Orange-Alamance Connector Boardings, October 2023



## Route Performance

The Orange-Alamance Connector was the lowest performing OCTS fixed-route service pre-pandemic, with 45 total boardings in October 2019. In October 2023, operating as an on-demand service, 16 trips were attributed to the Orange-Alamance Connector. As shown in Figure 22, all but two of those boardings were at the Efland-Cheeks Community Center.

## Opportunities

The Orange-Alamance Connector has limited service hours, operating outside of core travel times, with potentially confusing differences from the peak-period service offered by the GoTriangle ODX. While the route is not operating on the ground, the OCTS website does not show it as suspended or replaced by demand response. Midday service along this corridor may be better served by demand response or microtransit service, integrating the trips into the already existing alternatives and better advertising the service to the public.

Mebane is a growing area with strong pockets of density that may be supportive of fixed route transit service, but even when the Orange-Alamance Connector is fully operational, there is limited bus service available locally.

## Orange-Chapel Hill Connector

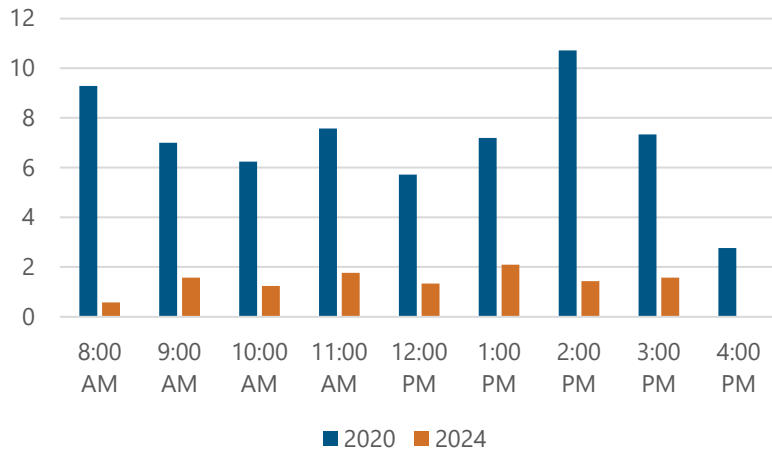
### Route Description

The Orange-Chapel Hill Midday Connector (OCH), also known as the "Hill to Hill", connects Hillsborough and Chapel Hill during the weekday AM peak and the midday period when the peak-only GoTriangle Route 420 is not operating. The OCH operates along Hwy 86, serving downtown Hillsborough, UNC Hospital Hillsborough Campus and Durham Tech Community College, Eubanks Park and Ride, and key destinations in Chapel Hill, as well as additional local stops. The route operates Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

### Route Performance

Due to data collection complications, accurate October 2023 ridership information is not available for the OCH, so the analysis looks at February data from 2020 and 2024. In February 2024, there were 243 boardings for the route total, compared to 546 boardings in February 2020. 64% of the recent boardings occurred on southbound trips, and northbound trips were more common in the late morning to early afternoon, whereas southbound trips were distributed evenly across the day. Figure 23 shows the distribution of average daily boardings by hour for the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector for February 2020 and February 2024.

Figure 23: Average Daily Boardings by Hour, February

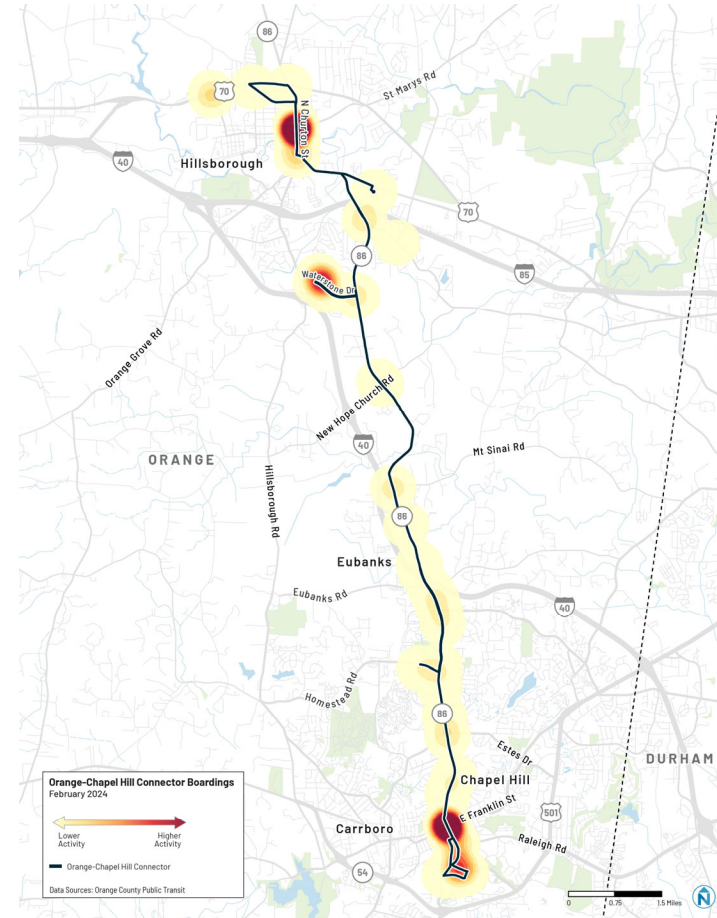


As seen in Figure 24, boardings are most common at UNC Chapel Hill, in downtown Hillsborough, and at UNC Hospital Hillsborough Campus, with low ridership along the rest of the route.

### Opportunities

The Orange-Chapel Hill Connector serves to fill the midday service gap of Route 420 as well as provide service to local stops during the AM period while the 420 is operating. Given the imbalance in northbound and southbound boardings, it is likely that riders are taking the OCH in one direction and the 420 in the other. Strong coordination between OCTS and GoTriangle is essential in serving those riders, as well as potential riders who may not know that is an available option. Identifying if there are unnecessary or duplicative trips between the OCH and 420 would also streamline service and potentially save money for either agency.

Figure 24: Orange-Chapel Hill Connector Boardings, February 2024



## Demand Response & Microtransit

Along with the paratransit provided within 3/4 mile of fixed route service as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, OCTS provides two types of non-fixed route service: program-based rural demand response service and a publicly available microtransit service called Orange County Mobility on Demand (MOD). Both service types operate throughout all of Orange County, and serve key destinations in Mebane and Durham. In addition, both Chapel Hill Transit and GoTriangle operate paratransit services within their respective service areas: EZ Rider and GoACCESS. A guide to the different service types from the Orange County Department of Aging is shown in Figure 25. The following sections will detail the programs under rural demand response as well as the MOD program.

Customers typically use these services roundtrip. Orange County records trips separately for each direction. For mapping purposes, trip origins are defined as residential locations or the starting point of a trip between two non-residential locations. Trip destinations are defined as non-residential locations or the end point of a trip between two non-residential locations.

Figure 25: Orange County Public Transit Options

### Public Transit in Orange County, NC



## Rural Demand Response

### Service Description

Rural Demand Response service in Orange County consists of multiple disparate programs that provide door-to-door service based on location and eligibility: the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP), the Employment Transportation Assistance Program (EMPL), the Department of Social Services Work First Program (DSS), and Rural General Public (RGP). These services are marketed to the public based on eligibility, not grouped together by funding as they are for the purposes of this analysis.

Demand Response service is available Monday through Friday from 7 AM until 5 PM, and trips must be booked two days in advance by 5 PM. Trip funding is based on the eligibility of the rider and trip purpose. EDTAP-eligible riders include Orange County elderly (60+) or disabled residents travelling for the following eligible trip purposes:

- Job interviews, job fairs, job readiness activities/ training, GED classes, transportation to work, Group field trips/ tours to community special events
- Human Services agency appointments, public hearings, committee meetings
- Medical appointments, pharmacy pick-ups, shopping, personal care, banking etc.

The Employment Transportation Assistance Program (EMPL) and DSS Work First Program provide trips for the following purposes:

- Transport to work or training for DSS clients transitioned off TANF or Work First within 12 months, Workforce Development Program participants, “disadvantaged public” and or general public.
- Job interviews, job fairs, job readiness activities/ training, GED classes, transportation to work (scheduled by passenger),
- Children of working parent transported to child care.

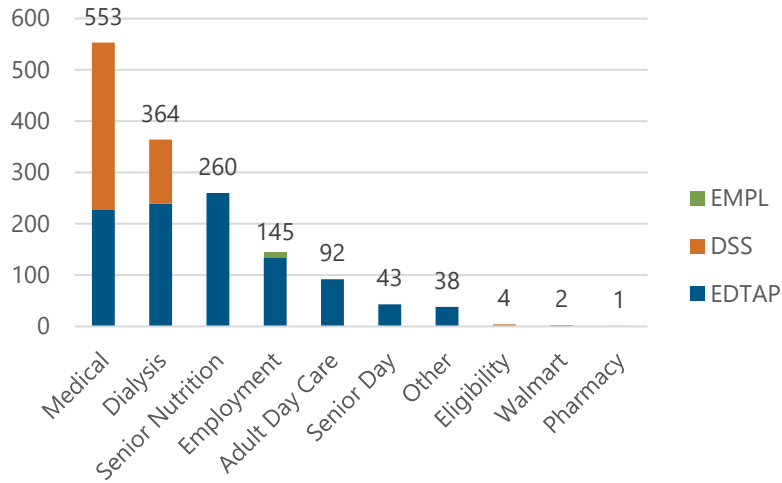
RGP services are available to any member of the public, and are advertised on the OCTS website, but no trips were taken via that program during the study period.

### Service Performance

In October 2023, OCTS provided 1,502 completed demand response trips through the project categories. EDTAP funded 1,035 of those trips, DSS was the funding source for 456 trips, and EMPL funded 11 trips. Due to the nature of eligibility-based services, each trip’s purpose is recorded, and Figure 26 shows the number of trips taken for each eligible purpose, broken down by funding source.



**Figure 26: Demand Response Trips by Purpose, October 2023**



**Figure 27: Demand Response Average Daily Trips Per Hour, October 2023**

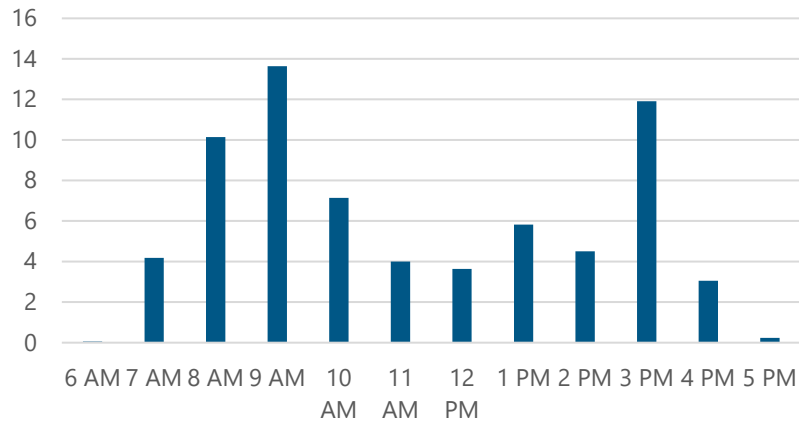


Figure 27 shows the average daily Demand Response trips per hour, with clear peaks in demand from 8 to 10 AM and from 3 to 4 PM. Figure 28 shows the home and destination locations of all

Demand Response trips in October 2023, with larger dots indicating more trips to or from that location. Demand Response riders tend to travel from disparate home locations in less dense areas to concentrated destinations in the municipalities, in particular:

- Carolina Dialysis, in Carrboro and Mebane
- Hillsborough Recovery Solutions
- Passmore Senior Center
- Downtown Hillsborough

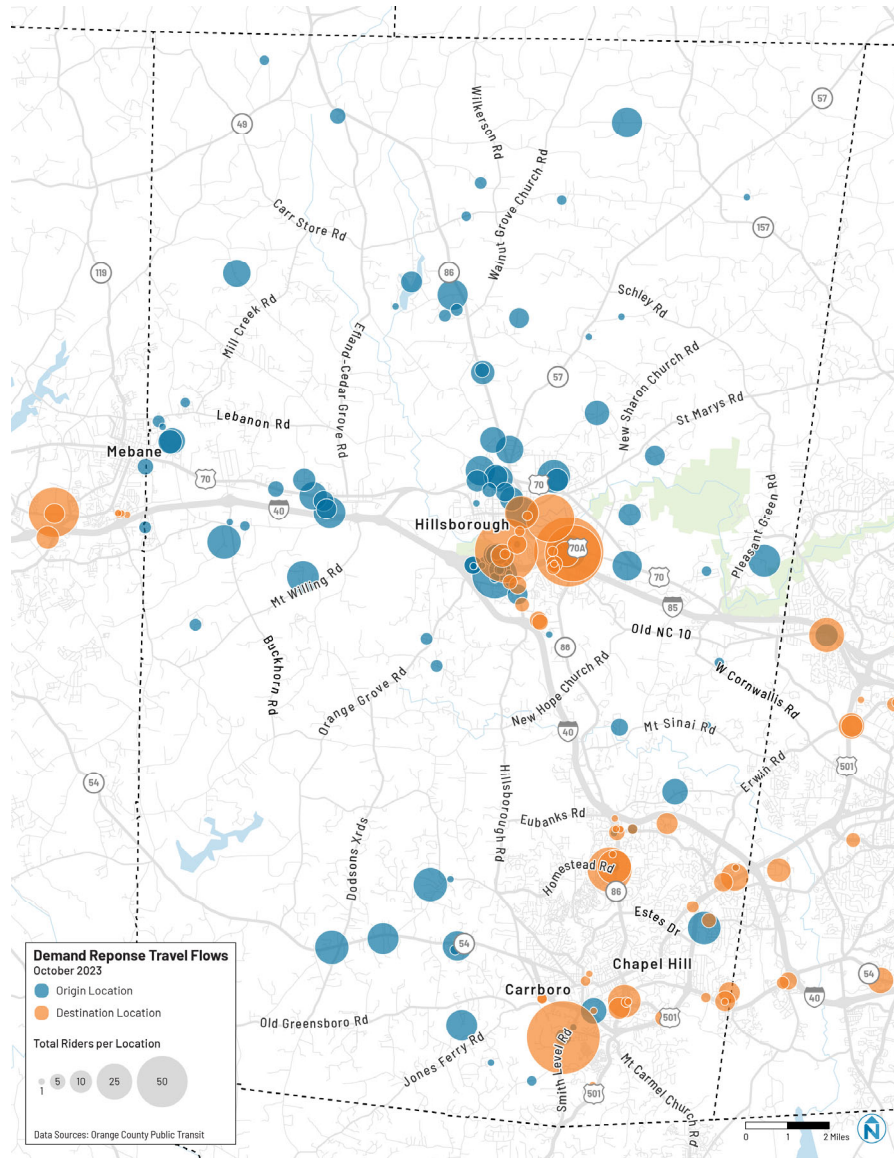
36% of Demand Response trips picked up their passengers within 10 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time.

### Opportunities

Demand Response services are fragmented, with multiple funding sources and different flows of customer information. It can be hard, especially for new riders, to identify which service they may be eligible for, where each one operates, or how to book a trip. The website, Rider’s Guide PDF, and backend data do not all match, and this could discourage potential users. This also complicates funding and reimbursement, in particular for Medicaid-eligible trips.

For current users, Demand Response services are not consistently on time, and require significant advance notice, lowering their convenience compared to traditional fixed-route transit or other transportation options. Improving response time and on-time performance could attract new users as well as improve the experience of current riders.

Figure 28: ROAP Demand Response Trips, October 2023



## Mobility on Demand

### Service Description

Orange County MOD (Mobility On Demand) is an on-demand microtransit service available to the general public within Orange County and with service extending to Mebane and downtown Durham. MOD service operates Monday to Thursday 8 am – 5 pm, Fridays 8 am – 9 pm, and Saturdays from 9 am – 5 pm. Trip fares are \$5 per zone travelled through, with the zones and service area shown in Figure 29.

### Service Performance

In October 2023, service was available on weekdays only, and 29 trips were completed with an average of fewer than 2 trips per day. Trips were most commonly taken during the AM peak and at noon (Figure 30).

Due to the limited number of home locations, only destinations are shown in the ridership map in (Figure 31). The Seymour Center on Homestead Road was the most popular MOD destination. 52% of MOD trips complete their pick-up within 10 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time.

Figure 29: MOD Service Area

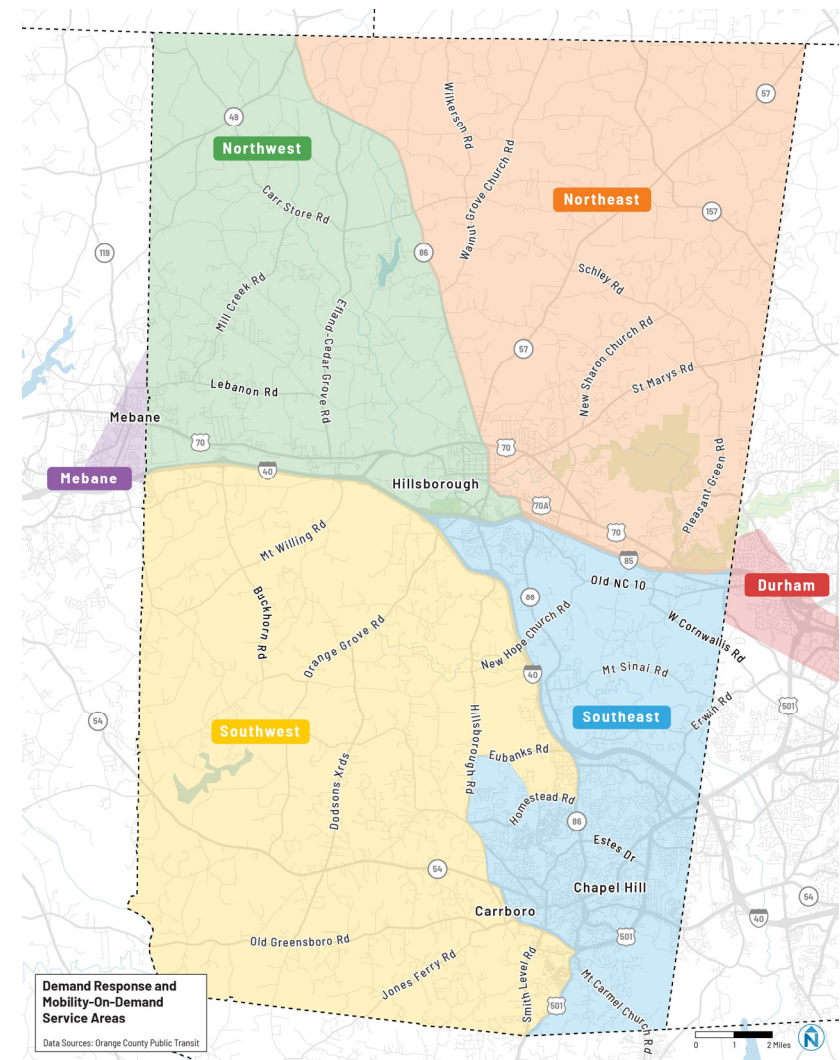
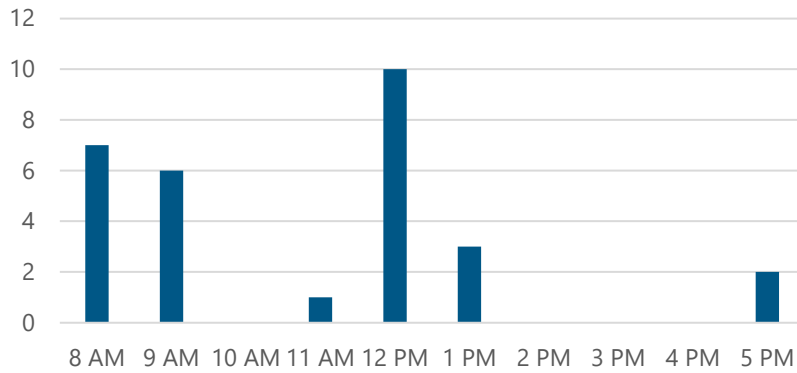


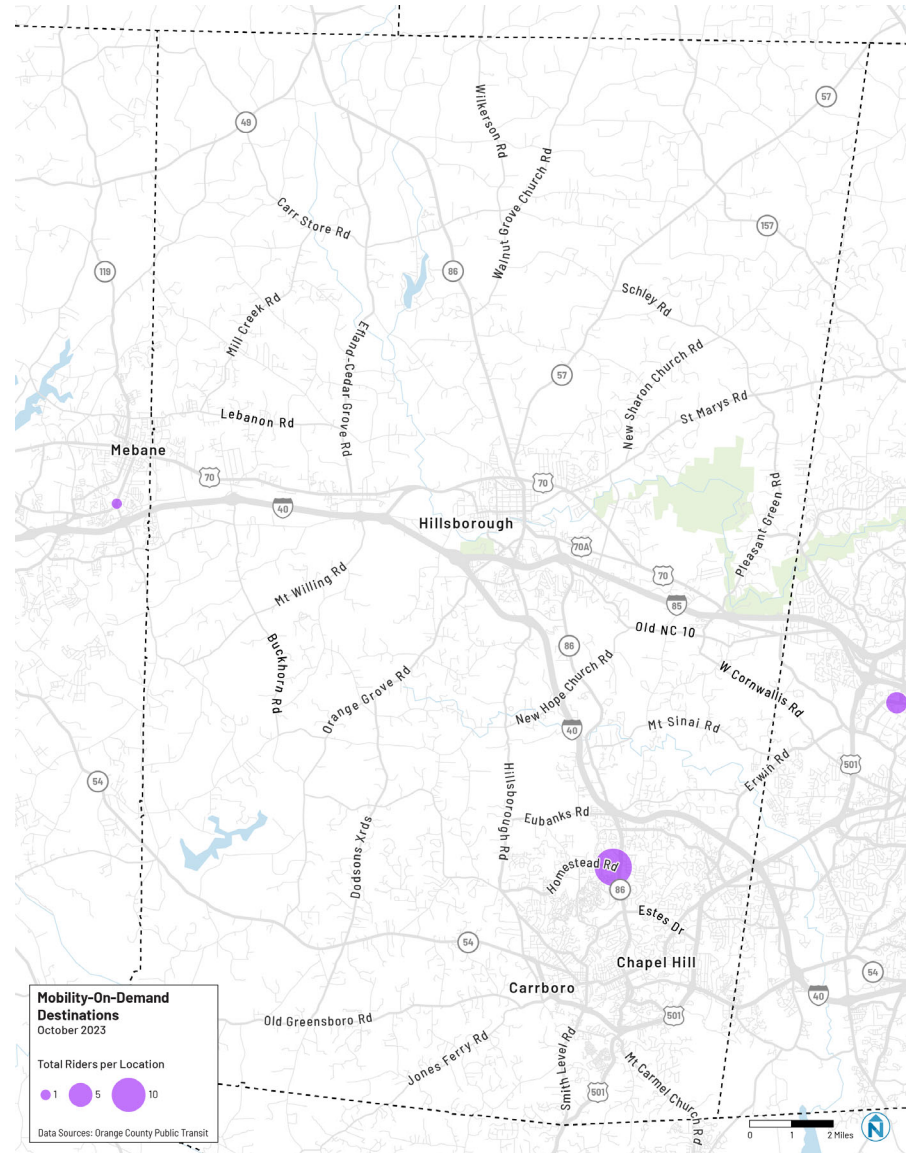
Figure 30: All Trips by Hour, October 2023



### Opportunities

Orange County MOD is significantly underused, given the potential demand within the service area. Much of Orange County is not suited to fixed-route transit, and demand response service requires longer waiting periods and can face eligibility constraints. There is not currently a service area map available on the OCTS website for MOD – a potential rider must first register online or via app with a third party to see the full extent of service offered through MOD, which adds an unnecessary barrier to ride. Cost and payment may also pose barriers to potential riders compared to the more subsidized Rural Demand Response services and the technology requirements for booking and payment. Identifying other barriers to use through public engagement will help shape the advertising and service characteristics of MOD to ensure that the funding is being put to the best use for Orange County.

Figure 31: Mobility On Demand Destinations, October 2023





## 5 TRANSIT FUNDING

Funding drives the amount of transit service and capital projects Orange County can provide its residents, workers, and visitors.

This chapter review OCTS's annual expenses and revenues, including a look at the agency's current federal, state, and local funding mechanisms. It also begins to explore other potential funding sources for future transit improvements. Key takeaways include:

- OCTS's expenses exceed revenues, creating a funding gap that makes it difficult to provide needed transit services.
- OCTS utilizes federal, state, and local funding sources. Over 75% of funds come from local sources, including the Orange County Transit Tax and other county funds.
- There are other federal, state, and local funds that OCTS can utilize to increase its revenues.

**Figure 32: FY2022 and FY2023 OCTS Expenses**

Category	FY2022			FY2023		
	Demand Response	Fixed Route	Total	Demand Response	Fixed Route	Total
Administrative	\$186,733	\$80,028	\$266,761	\$338,612	\$207,789	\$546,401
Operating	\$591,229	\$253,384	\$844,613	\$944,214	\$513,389	\$1,457,603
Capital	\$4,766	\$2,042	\$6,808	\$0	\$192,434	\$192,434
Personnel	\$978,338	\$244,585	\$1,222,923	\$1,184,426	\$296,106	\$1,480,532
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,761,066</b>	<b>\$335,454</b>	<b>\$2,341,105</b>	<b>\$1,282,826</b>	<b>\$913,612</b>	<b>\$3,676,970</b>

## EXPENSES AND REVENUES

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, OCTS spent approximately \$2.3 million on all its expenses, for both fixed route and demand response services (Figure 32). Partly due to inflation, expenses in FY2023 totaled approximately \$3.7 million. For both years, personnel costs were highest, followed by operating costs. Capital purchases made up the smallest proportion of the total expenses.

As shown in Figure 33, OCTS made approximately \$2.2 million in revenues in FY2022 and \$2.5 million in FY2023. About 13% of revenues came from the federal government, with a mix of 5307 and 5311 funds. Just under 10% came from North Carolina's Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP). Over 75% of funds came from local sources, including Orange County government funds, Orange County Transit Plan transit tax reimbursements, fares, and charges for services. Fares made up about 1% of OCTS revenues.

Figure 33: FY2022 and FY2023 OCTS Revenues

Source	FY2022		FY2023	
	Amount	% of Total	Amount	% of Total
<b>Federal</b>				
5307 Urbanized Area Formula	\$133,787	6.17%	\$141,102	5.60%
5311 CTP Funds	\$154,976	7.14%	\$184,580	7.33%
<b>Federal Total</b>	<b>\$288,763</b>	<b>13.31%</b>	<b>\$325,682</b>	<b>12.94%</b>
<b>State</b>				
ROAP Funds	\$197,845	9.12%	\$211,284	8.39%
<b>State Total</b>	<b>\$197,845</b>	<b>9.12%</b>	<b>\$211,284</b>	<b>8.39%</b>
<b>Local</b>				
Transit Tax*	\$765,987	35.31%	\$948,482	37.68%
Local Government Funds	\$767,112	35.37%	\$952,896	37.85%
Fares	\$12,419	0.74%	\$27,610	1.39%
Charge for Services	\$136,888	6.31%	\$51,493	2.05%
<b>Local Total</b>	<b>\$1,682,406</b>	<b>77.57%</b>	<b>\$1,980,481</b>	<b>78.67%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,169,014</b>		<b>\$2,517,447</b>	

\*Note: The Orange County Transit Tax is a reimbursement of Local Government Funds and does not include funds set aside for the Transit Plan Update process.

## FUNDING SOURCES

OCTS's annual expenses exceed its revenues, and additional investments are needed to fulfill the level of transit need identified in Orange County. To increase its revenues, OCTS can work to fully utilize existing funding sources, including the Orange County Transit Tax, and tap into new ones. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the funding sources available at the federal,

state, and local levels. This list builds upon work completed through the BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study.

## Federal Sources

### Section 5307

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. These funds are distributed through MPOs with a set allowance per transit agency.

### **Section 5310**

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. Section 5310 funds are reserved for agencies with locally coordinated human service plans.

### **Section 5311**

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.

### **Section 5339**

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.

### **Carbon Reduction Program**

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 (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the transportation sector.

### **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality**

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program is a long-standing source of grant funding for transportation programs that reduce air pollution and vehicle miles travelled. It is often used by transit agencies for upfront capital costs, like the acquisition of on-demand vehicles.

## **State Sources**

### **Rural Operating Assistance Program**

The Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) is 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)

A local match is not required for EDTAP and EMPL, but a minimum 10% local match is required for RGP. ROAP funds can also be used to leverage FTA Section 5310 and 5311 funds.

### **State Maintenance Assistance Program**

The 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.

### **Transportation Demand Management**

Public organizations responsible for the promotion of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) activities may apply for matching funds for strategies that promote the use of transportation options other than single-occupancy vehicles. The program funds up to 50% of the total expenses associated with TDM programs, including the creation of a new TDM Plan for an agency.

## **Local Sources**

### **Orange County Transit Plan**

Originally adopted in 2012 as the Bus and Rail Investment Plan, the Orange County Transit Plan was updated in 2017 and provides for funding to OCTS, GoTriangle, and Chapel Hill Transit for improvements to transit services. The Plan was updated again

in 2022, with funding for MOD and other transit services in Orange County.

The Plan is funded through a series of Orange County taxes and fees approved by voters:

- Half-Cent Sales and Use Tax
- 5% Vehicle Rental Tax
- \$3 increase to the GoTriangle Regional Vehicle Registration Fee
- \$7 County Vehicle Registration Fee

### **Medicaid Transportation**

Non-emergency medical transportation provided by OCTS is funded by Orange County's Department of Social Services, which gets reimbursed from the state's Medicaid program. North Carolina expanded access to Medicaid in December 2023, so OCTS may be able to provide more medical trips soon.

### **Fares**

OCTS charges a variety of fares for its services. For fixed routes, the Hillsborough Connector is free of charge, while the Orange-Alamance Connector and the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector are \$2 for the general public. Demand response services range from fare-free to \$12.75, depending on eligibility and type of service. The Mobility on Demand service is \$5 one way. Changes to the fare structure can influence the funding available for transit service in Orange County, though fares are a small piece of total revenue.



## 6 OPPORTUNITIES

OCTS serves essential transportation needs in Hillsborough and rural Orange County through a patchwork of fixed route, rural demand response, and MOD services, coordinated with multiple transit and human services agencies throughout the region, and connects rural residents to all urban areas in and around the county. The SRTP will build upon the identified gaps and opportunities when recommending improvements to transportation in Orange County.

Based upon the findings of the Existing Conditions report, OCTS can continue to improve transportation and grow alongside the communities of Orange County by focusing on making it easier to ride existing services, making it easier to pay for transportation, improving the operations of existing services, exploring the development of new services, and better leveraging currently available funding. Key opportunities under each of these improvement categories include:

### **Make Services Easier to Use**

- Communicate with the public about available services, including better advertising for all services, particularly MOD, and clarifying the on-demand status of the Orange-Alamance Connector
- Invest in better bus stop amenities
- Improve pedestrian and bike access to transit
- Coordinate services with regional providers, including GoTriangle, Chapel Hill Transit, PART, ACTA, and Link Transit

### **Improve Existing Services**

- Invest in Demand Response outside of main towns and corridors
- Strengthen the Hillsborough Circulator, focusing on on-time performance, travel time, and service hours
- Improve performance by expanding the fleet and continuing to recruit operators.

### **Explore New Service Opportunities**

- Explore options for free and low-cost service to grocery stores, social services, and senior centers
- Increased access to employment opportunities, including non-traditional work hours
- Invest in a Mebane circulator in partnership with other transit providers
- Identify potential capital improvements to improve speed and reliability, such as transit emphasis corridors.

### **Better Leverage Available Funding**

- Balance available resources to favor more productive and needed services
- Ensure Medicaid-eligible trips are being reimbursed to the fullest extent possible
- Explore ways to leverage additional transit tax and federal dollars

**Improve Fare Payment**

- Streamline fare payment methodology across services
- Explore possibility of subsidized passes for MOD

These findings will be supplemented by robust public outreach to understand what current and potential riders want most from OCTS, and integrated into proposals for further review at a later stage of the SRTP.

# APPENDIX A1: REVIEW OF PAST PLANS

Reviewing past plans and projects sets the stage for the existing conditions analysis by providing a baseline and history of projects, changes, and future visions. The project team reviewed plans and projects relevant to transit in Orange County and the surrounding region, including transit plans, climate plans, funding studies, and multimodal transportation plans. The plans reviewed are listed below.

- Orange County Transit Plan (2017) and Update (2022)
  - Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2022)
  - BGMPO 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2020)
  - BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study (2024)
  - Orange County Climate Action Plan (2023)
  - Connect 2050: The Research Triangle Region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2022)
  - Orange County's Complete Streets and Vision Zero Policies (2022)
  - Orange County Transportation Services Title VI Plan (2022)
  - Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan (2022)
  - GoTriangle Short Range Transit Plan (2023)
  - Chapel Hill Short Range Transit Plan (2020)
- Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2017)
  - City of Mebane Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2021)

The review of each plan focused on both transit-based elements such as routes, services, and corridors that have been identified for transit investments, along with higher level elements, such as funding and county-wide goals. A summary of each plan is as follows.

## Orange County Transit Plan Update (2022)

The Orange County Transit Plan Update (2022) allocates transit tax district revenues for the next 20 years based on community needs, values, and priorities, and includes both previously programmed and new projects. The Orange County transit tax is 1/2-cent sales tax that is also collected during vehicle rentals and registration. In 2022, revenues for this tax were nearly \$9M. These revenues go towards Orange County Public Transportation, Chapel Hill Transit, and GoTriangle, along with funding infrastructure-related transit improvements.

The plan's goals and values include promoting greater quality of life through facilitating travel in the region, easing access to the

region's wealth of colleges and universities, and ensuring transit service for as many residents as reasonably possible.

Relevant Findings:

- The 2012 Interlocal Agreement for Orange County distributes transit tax revenues to the three transit agencies: 64% for Chapel Hill Transit, 24% for GoTriangle, and 12% for Orange County Public Transportation
- Transit tax revenues make up 34% of OCPT's budget, compared to 13% for CHT and 4% for GoTriangle.
- Mobility On-Demand Service Expansion is funded through transit tax revenues. The expansion is slated to be completed in two phases—2022 and 2024—and will cost approximately 1.1M to complete.
- In addition to the On-Demand Service Expansion, transit tax revenues have been slated to fund projects from the 2012 or 2017 Orange County Transit Plans. For OCPT, these projects are 15 OCPT bus stop signs, Hillsborough Park-and-Ride, AVL, and Planning for the new OCPT Transit Plan.
- The revenue generated by the transit tax district is not enough to fund all projects, so OCPT has a list of seven identified 'unfunded priorities'. These are identified in the case of additional funding becoming available so that there is already a list of potential uses for such funds. OCPT's unfunded priorities do not include cost estimates.
  - Vanpool Subsidy Program
  - Improvements to the Hillsborough Circulator, including expanded hours and a counter-direction loop
  - Hillsborough-Durham Midday Connector
  - New peak-only fixed route services: a Cedar Grove Peak Connector and a White Cross Commuter Service
  - Transit amenities in Hillsborough, including a new transit center and park and ride facility



Figure A: OCPT MOD Project Sheet

58
05
projects.

# MOD

ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

**OCPT's Mobility-on-Demand (MOD) service provides life-line service in difficult to serve locations currently lacking transit options.**

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**Route:** Orange County Public Transportation MOD

**Improvements:** Two (2) phases extending service hours and coverage

**Description:**  
*Phase 1:* Expand hours of service and coverage area;  
*Phase 2:* Improve coverage area, expand hours and days of service

**Cost:** \$438,741 (*Phase 1*) increasing to \$650,588 (*Phase 2*)

**Net New Revenue Hours:** 4,400

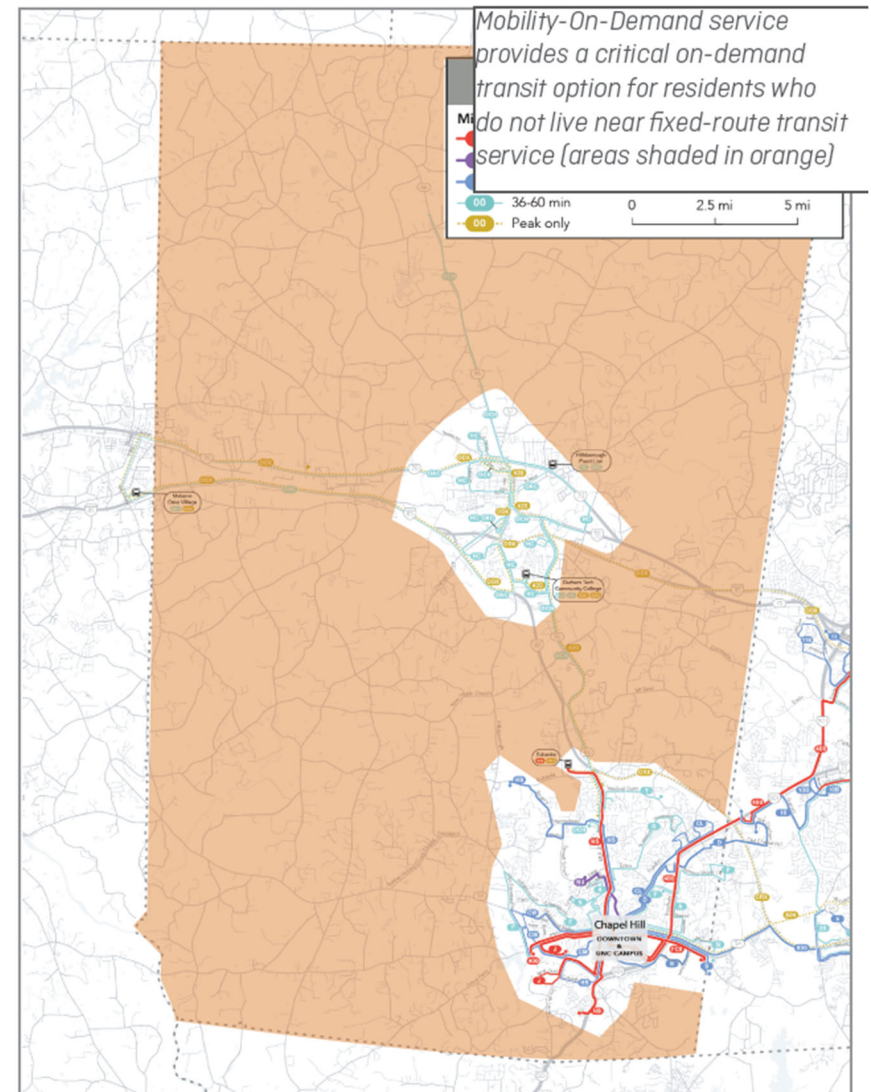
**Implementation Year:** 2024 (*Phase 1*), 2026 (*Phase 2*)

The Mobility-On-Demand service provides a critical on-demand transit option for Orange County residents living in areas that lack fixed-route transit service. This projects expands the days and hours when this affordable transportation option is available for ALL residents of Orange County in two phases.

**core values.**

- Equity:** Provides transit service in locations that currently have little to no service, including lower income, rural communities.
- Affordable and Attainable Quality of Life:** Provides an affordable life-line transportation option for all.
- Transportation and Access for All:** Provides a transit service option reaching all residents of Orange County.

Figure B: OCPT MOD Service Area



## **Burlington-Graham MPO (BGMPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2022)**

BGMPO's Comprehensive Transportation Plan is the MPO's long-range plan that identifies major transportation needs and solutions through 2050. The recommendations in this plan are not funded or fiscally constrained, unlike other regional comprehensive plans. The plan includes recommendations for transit infrastructure and service improvements for the Burlington, Graham, and Mebane areas, with a few recommendations for Orange County. The relevant recommendations consist of:

- A Mebane Connector, which would cover the City of Mebane and connect to the proposed Mebane - Hillsborough Commuter Rail via the Downtown Mebane rail station.
- A Mebane to Hillsborough Commuter Rail, which would run for 13 miles from Downtown Mebane Station to Hillsborough and potentially beyond.
- Enhanced service on the Orange-Alamance Connector by increasing headways
- Improving and adding new park and rides in Orange County, Graham, and Mebane.

Note that there are additional recommendations for Graham and Mebane that would not have any interaction with Orange County Public Transit that are not listed here. The fiscally unconstrained recommendations here would provide greater connectivity and

transit services in areas that either lack transit services today or would benefit from improvements to existing services.

## **BGMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2045 (2020)**

The BGMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2045 is the region's transportation plan, which consists of the cities and towns of Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Elon, Gibsonville, Green Level, Haw River, Whitsett, Alamance, and the counties of Alamance and parts of Guilford and Orange. This plan identifies the region's transportation needs over the next twenty years.

Relevant OCPT Findings:

- The Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA) recommended two fixed routes for Mebane: the Mebane Circulator and the ACC to Mebane Connector. These both fall under the MTP 2045 Unfunded List, which was compiled by transit agency staff and the Steering Committee. These were both classified as 'Medium' regarding the funding feasibility in the 2020-2045 timeframe. Both the Mebane Circulator and the ACC to Mebane Connector would have an estimated capital cost for vehicles during the first 10 years of operations of \$160,000, and each would have an annual operating cost of \$48,863 and \$48,878, respectively.
- Refers to the recommendation of other plans for improved on-demand service hours and vehicles across Orange County

Figure C: Mebane Connector Option 1

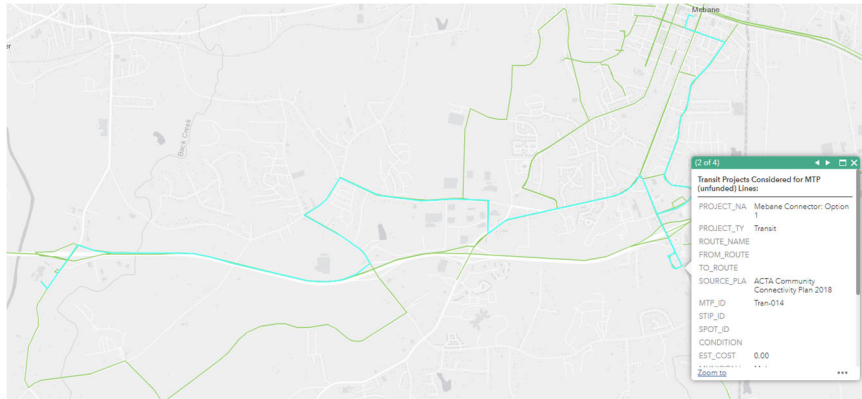


Figure E: Mebane Connector Option 3

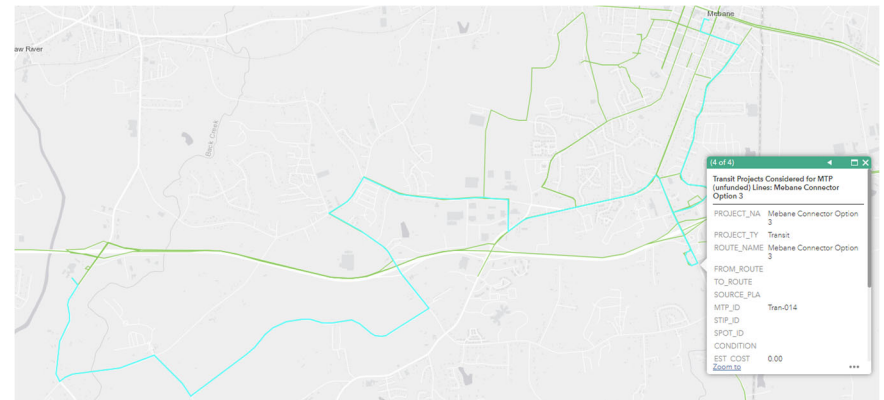
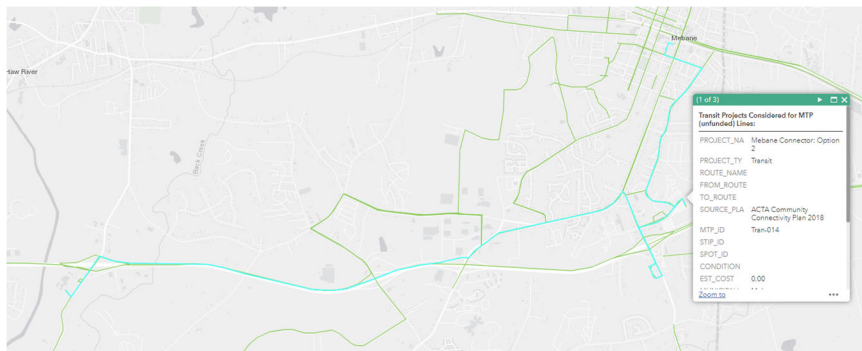


Figure D: Mebane Connector Option 2



## BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study (2024)

The BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study focused on identifying opportunities to better coordinate and expand transit service in the region. There are proposals that include agency consolidation or partnerships that do not include OCPT as an impacted/consolidated organization, but OCPT would be indirectly impacted as the agency would still coordinate with the larger agency on regional transit needs.

The study also presents an overview of funding available funding opportunities, including those that are currently utilized and potential local funding opportunities. Available federal funding programs include:

- Section 5307
- Section 5310
- Section 5311
- Section 5339
- The Carbon Reduction Program

Available state funding programs include:

- Rural Operating Assistance Program
- State Maintenance Assistance Program

Potential new local funding sources include:

- Vehicle registration fee
- 1/4 -cent sales tax

## Orange County Climate Action Plan (2023)

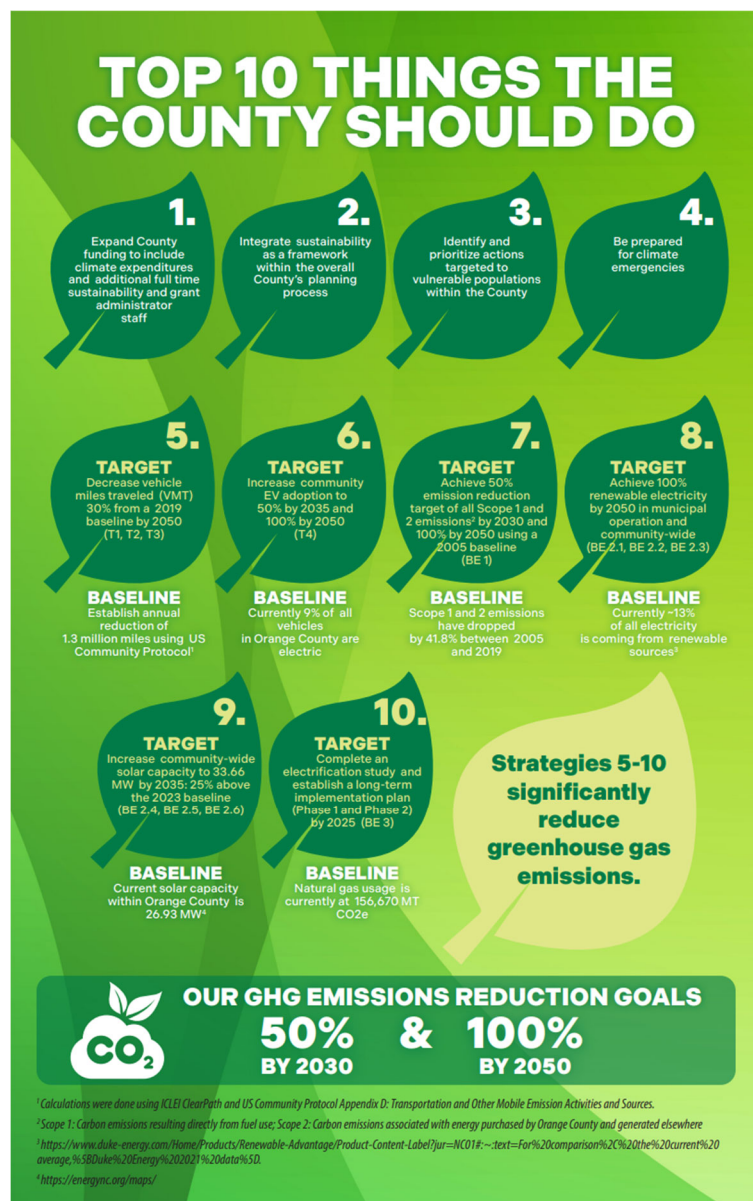
The Orange County Climate Action Plan (CAP) is the guiding document towards greenhouse gas reductions, looking to act as a comprehensive strategy guide that is in line with state regulations. As a holistic Climate Action Plan, transit strategies are just a subset of the outlined strategies for greenhouse gas reduction by 2030 and 2050. Transit-specific strategies revolve around increased on-demand service and converting to an electric fleet.

Relevant Findings:

- Extend service hours by 3% and coverage by 6% by 2030
- Implement changes to address gaps in Northern and Southern Orange County by 2030.
- OCTP's transit fleet accounts for just 1% of carbon emissions created by the county government and its operations
- Transitioning to smaller, energy-efficient buses or vans is a priority to make progress by 2050
- Expansion of Orange County mobility on Demand is a priority and part of the strategy of exploring innovative public transportation options
- Increase in registered zero-emission vehicles in North Carolina to be 1,250,000 by 2030, and 50% of new vehicle sales to be zero emissions.



Figure E: Climate Action Plan



## Connect 2050: The Research Triangle Region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2022)

Connect 2050 is the long-range transportation plan for the two organizations that oversee transportation planning in the Research Triangle Region: The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO). This plan describes analysis and public engagement that resulted in a set of planned investments. The transit-related components of this are: local and regional transit facilities and services, including rapid bus and rail lines; transportation demand management marketing and outreach efforts that increase the use of alternatives to peak period solo driving; technology-based transportation services and using advanced technology to make transit and road investments more effective.

- Adopted regional transit project for high frequency bus service on the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector by 2050 in the form of a High Capacity or Express Bus.
- Transit is an emphasis, but there is not much focus on OCPT-related transit.
- Points to the 2022 Orange County Transit Plan Update for more information regarding OCPT-specific transit plans.
- Summarizes funding, transit, demographics, and transit demand from other plans.

## **Orange County's Complete Streets and Vision Zero Policies (2022)**

Orange County's Complete Streets and Vision Zero Policies were adapted in October 2022. The Vision Zero Policy states that the locality will aim to meet the state's safety targets of a 50% reduction of fatalities and serious injuries by 2035, and a 100% reduction by 2050. To do so, Orange County strives to improve safety by developing a Transportation Safety Plan, create safer streets, and deliver equity-driven transportation projects.

This goes hand-in-hand with the Complete Streets Policy, which was adopted in tandem with the Vision Zero plan. The complete streets policy strives to encourage the design and construction of safer and more equitable streets.

## **Orange County Transportation Services Title VI Plan (2022)**

Orange County Transportation Services Title VI Plan overviews the Title VI standards and processes that OCTS must abide by. Included in this document are also transit service standards that OCTS has stated, including that all fixed-route services have between 30- and 45-minute headways with plans to reduce these to between 15 and 30 minutes.

This plan additionally includes guidelines surrounding Title VI analysis and Environmental Justice analysis prior to system

changes or new facility construction. This plan also provides guidelines on public engagement.

## **Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan (2022)**

The Orange County Transportation Services ADA Paratransit Plan outlines the standards that OCPT must meet to provide sufficient ADA and paratransit services. OCPT currently exceeds the required service standards for coverage and abides by all federally mandated standards. Orange County operates ADA service within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of each side of fixed route corridors 5 days a week from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Users must schedule their ride at least a day in advance in order to receive this service.

In addition to ADA service, OCTP offers MOD services, which do not require advanced scheduling, and can pick up a passenger as quickly as 30 minutes from the time of reservation.

## **GoTriangle Short Range Transit Plan (2023)**

GoTriangle's Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) provides a comprehensive assessment of the transit environment, service, and performance of regional transit in Durham, Orange, and Wake Counties, and offers a set of recommendations up to FY28. The recommendations included simplification of routes, strengthening all-day regional connections, and adjusting peak-

only services to reflect changing travel patterns. Relevant findings to Orange County are:

- Ridership on the ODX and 420 have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.
- ODX ridership is heavily peak oriented, with nearly all passengers riding to Durham in the morning and from Durham in the afternoon.
- To improve speed and reliability for riders, route alignment changes were recommended for both the ODX and 420, with the potential for future service frequency and span improvements beyond the time period of the SRTP.

## Chapel Hill Short-Range Transportation Plan (2020)

Chapel Hill Transit's 2020 SRTP provides a roadmap for transit improvements in Chapel Hill and Carrboro for the next ten years. Recommendations include service expansion and demand-response zone additions. Additionally, Chapel Hill Transit wants to ensure simple, direct, and consistent transit by minimizing route deviations, operating along more direct paths and utilizing major arterials, and simplifying passenger facing materials. Recommendations in this SRTP that are particularly relevant to OCPT is the consolidation of paratransit services where they overlap and continuing to look for effective ways to serve commuter demand between service areas.

## DCHC MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2017)

The DCHC MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a long-range transportation plan that covers the region and outlines plans to be implemented through 2040. The modes that the plan covers are highway, public transportation, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian changes. For Orange County, major public transportation recommendations include the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit and the North-South Corridor Bus Rapid Transit—a rapid transit route that runs along NC-86 and US 15-501 from Eubanks to Southern Village. Both of these routes would serve routes that have been identified as key commuter paths, relieving the need for automobile transit to job centers and other key destinations.

## City of Mebane Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2018)

The City of Mebane's Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a multi-modal plan that covers roadway, public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian travel. The City of Mebane does not currently run any form of local transit and is reliant on surrounding transit agencies to cover the needs of their residents. To change this, the plan recommends a circulator bus route for Mebane, which would run through the main part of the city, covering key destinations, such as parks, schools, community centers, and commercial destinations along the route. This route would provide a needed form of transit for Mebane residents to

travel within the city, as opposed to destinations outside of the city. Additionally, there is demand for service to Alamance Community College and to have connections to other regional routes.



**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**Appendix B:**  
**Strategies Evaluation**

October 2024



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<b>4 Prioritized Capital Projects.....</b>	<b>6</b>

# 1 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

A broad range of strategies for improving public transportation in Orange County were developed based on findings from the Existing Conditions report, the first round of public engagement, and other adopted transportation plans. Strategies were categorized into three types: 1) transit service, 2) policies and programs, and 3) capital improvement projects.

Transit service strategies included new services as well as operating improvements to existing services for all three types of transportation offered by OCTS: fixed-route buses, rural demand response, and Mobility On Demand (MOD). The following transit service strategies were brought forward for evaluation:

- Hillsborough Circulator Service Improvements
- Hillsborough Circulator Saturday Service
- Hillsborough Circulator US-70 Corridor Study Proposal
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 1: Orange-Chapel Hill Connector Alignment Change
- Hill to Hill Full Consolidation
- Orange-Alamance Conversion to Mobility On Demand
- Orange-Alamance Service Expansion
- Mebane Circulator
- Mobility On Demand Service Improvements
- Mobility On Demand Service Span Expansion
- Demand Response Weekend Service

Not all improvements to transit occur through changes to service operation. Transit is also improved through changes to an agency's policies or through administrative programs. The following strategies recommended policies or programs that OCTS could implement:

- Transit Information Campaign
- Improve Demand Response booking
- Mobility Manager
- Discount MOD Fares
- Fare Payment Improvements

The third category of strategies were capital improvement projects. Each strategy represented a type of capital improvement with multiple locations recommended for each type. These strategies do not include capital projects that are required for basic operation of the transit service strategies, such as new bus stops for new services. Capital improvement strategies brought forward for evaluation included:

- Walking Access to Transit (8 locations)
- Bus Stop Improvements (4 locations)
- Rural Mobility Hubs (10 locations)

All strategies were presented to the Core Technical Team and adjusted based on feedback before moving to evaluation.

## 2 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

An evaluation framework allows Orange County to prioritize recommendations and evaluate projects, policies, and programs for their ability to achieve the goals and values of the Orange County Transit Plan and Orange County Strategic Plan. The Core Community Values from the Orange County Transit Plan Update provided the foundation for evaluating the proposed strategies, and objectives for each value were taken directly from either the Transit Plan Update or the multimodal transportation section of

the Strategic Plan. For evaluation purposes, metrics were created to measure how well a project supported each objective. The metrics aim to balance qualitative and quantitative inputs for the wide variety of strategies to be evaluated. Figure 1 lists the five core values, seven objectives, and nine metrics.

Based on the methodology detailed in Figure 2, each strategy was scored from one to three points per metric. Methods of measurement varied depending on the type of strategy, and both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. Final scores based on the evaluation framework helped to prioritize different strategies and spend Orange County’s funds in accordance with their core values.

Figure 1 Evaluation Framework

Core Value	Objective	Metric
Equity	Prioritize the transit needs of underserved or transit-dependent residents; includes historically disinvested communities of color, lower-income neighborhoods, seniors, and rural communities.	Environmental Justice Communities of Concern served
Economic Prosperity	Prioritize increasing access to jobs and opportunities	Jobs served
Environmental Sustainability	Prioritize accessible and convenient transit service in areas with existing or planned higher density development.	People served
	Increase community awareness of all modes of transportation including transit, bike and pedestrian, vehicle, and all other modes	Does this make transit easier and safer to use?
Transportation & Access for All	Prioritize transit service that increases transit access for the most people to the most places	Does this improve regional connections?
		Does this improve local transit?



		Does this reduce duplication?
Affordable & Attainable Quality of Life	Prioritize transit service connections to affordable housing, recreation, and arts and cultural opportunities.	Activity centers served
	Identify priorities and resources necessary to implement the Orange County Transit Plan.	Strategy Cost

Figure 2 Evaluation Metrics

Metric	Policy/Program	Transit Service & Capital Improvements	Data Source
<b>Environmental Justice Communities of Concern</b>	High-Medium-Low: Does the project target these groups?	Average number of Communities of Concern in the block groups served by a project	<i>DCHC MPO 2020 Environmental Justice Report</i>
<b>Jobs Served</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of transit access to job opportunities	Sum of jobs within the project service area	<i>CAMPO 2020 Triangle Regional Model</i>
<b>People served</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of access to transit service for residents	Sum of people within the project service area	<i>CAMPO 2020 Triangle Regional Model</i>
<b>Does this make transit easier and safer to use?</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of service levels, access to information, or rider safety and comfort		-
<b>Does this improve regional connections?</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of connecting to other regional transit services or long distance trips		-
<b>Does this improve local transit?</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of transit within municipalities or for shorter, local trips		-
<b>Does this project reduce duplication?</b>	High: Reduces duplication, Medium: no impact, Low: duplicates service		-
<b>Activity Centers served</b>	High-Medium-Low improvement of transit access to activity centers	Number of key activity centers within the project service area	<i>Appendix A: Existing Conditions</i>
<b>Strategy Cost</b>	Estimate program cost, high-medium-low compared to other policies and programs; low cost scores the highest, while high cost strategies score lower	Difference in annual operating cost of proposal from existing as programmed Estimated project cost for strategy type	<i>Transit Service: OCTS Capital Improvements: Wake Bus Plan, 2022</i>

Project service area is defined as within ½ mile buffer of each stop for fixed route transit, ½ mile buffer of the capital improvement, or countywide for Mobility on Demand.

### 3 PRIORITIZED STRATEGIES

After finalizing the Evaluation Framework, all proposed strategies were evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively. Figure 3 lists all evaluated strategies in descending order based on the total score. The qualitative or quantitative result for each metric is listed with

**Figure 3 Prioritized Strategies with Detailed Scores**

Strategy Name	Communities of Concern	Jobs Served	People served	Easy and Safe	Regional Connections	Local Transit	Reduces Duplication	Activity Centers	Strategy Cost	Total Score
MOD Service Improvements	2 (2)	392,734 (3)	24,978 (3)	High (3)	Medium (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	16 (2)	\$0 (3)	<b>22</b>
Orange Alamance Conversion to MOD	2.13 (2)	31,586 (2)	16,375 (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	High (3)	47 (3)	-\$307,500 (3)	<b>21</b>
Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 1	1.93 (1)	256,691 (3)	86,670 (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	High (3)	12 (2)	-\$61,500 (3)	<b>20</b>
Hill to Hill Consolidation (Full)	1.93 (1)	256,691 (3)	86,670 (3)	High (3)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	12 (2)	\$738,000 (1)	<b>20</b>
MOD Service Span Expansion	2 (2)	392,734 (3)	24,978 (3)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	16 (2)	\$1,228,775 (1)	<b>18</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs*	2.5 (3)	391 (1)	1,262 (2)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	2 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>18</b>
Hillsborough Circulator Service Improvements	2.2 (2)	4,273 (2)	6,350 (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	16 (2)	\$1,168,500 (1)	<b>17</b>
Hillsborough Circulator Saturday Service	2.2 (2)	4,273 (2)	6,350 (2)	Low (1)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	16 (2)	\$204,672 (2)	<b>17</b>
Mebane Circulator	2.33 (3)	3,461 (2)	7,122 (2)	Low (1)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	16 (2)	\$338,250 (1)	<b>17</b>
Demand Response Weekend Service	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	\$92,078 (2)	<b>17</b>
Improve Demand Response Trip Booking	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Low cost (3)	<b>17</b>

the ordinal score from 1 to 3 in parentheses. The total score for each strategy is the sum of its ordinal scores.

After prioritization, strategies were slotted into the available budget and timeline and reviewed by stakeholders and the public. Final strategies found in the Short Range Transit Plan may differ slightly from those in the table based on engagement feedback and technical considerations.

Strategy Name	Communities of Concern	Jobs Served	People served	Easy and Safe	Regional Connections	Local Transit	Reduces Duplication	Activity Centers	Strategy Cost	Total Score
Mobility Manager	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	<b>17</b>
Transit Information Campaign	1 (1)	Low (1)	High (3)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	High cost (1)	<b>17</b>
Bus Stop Improvements*	1.58 (1)	1,363 (2)	1,579 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	1 (1)	\$45,360 (2)	<b>17</b>
Orange Alamance Service Expansion	2.36 (3)	3,341 (2)	6,137 (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Low (1)	19 (2)	\$184,500 (2)	<b>16</b>
Discount MOD Fares	High (3)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	<b>16</b>
Alternative Fare Payment	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Low cost (3)	<b>16</b>
Walking Access to Transit*	1.69 (1)	2,337 (2)	2,931 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	3 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>16</b>
Hillsborough Circulator US-70 Proposal	2.2 (2)	4,273 (2)	6,827 (2)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	Medium (2)	Low (1)	14 (2)	\$1,107,000 (1)	<b>15</b>

\* The scores for Capital Improvement strategies were calculated based on the quantitative metrics of the individual project locations for each type, which are listed in detail in the following section.

## 4 PRIORITIZED CAPITAL PROJECTS

Within the three overarching Capital Improvement strategies, there are multiple proposed project locations. Costs were estimated for each type of capital project based on data collected

on materials and construction costs from national and regional sources, such as the Wake Bus Plan, and adjusted for inflation. Site specific considerations, such as existing infrastructure and property ownership, were taken into account after initial prioritization when creating the implementation plan. Once these projects move into design and implementation phases, costs will be adjusted to meet location-specific needs.

**Figure 4** Prioritized Capital Projects with Detailed Scores

Project Type and Location	Communities of Concern	Jobs Served	People served	Easy and Safe	Regional Connections	Local Transit	Reduces Duplication	Activity Centers	Strategy Cost	Total Score
Walking Access to Transit: Faucette Mill Road/Cornelius Street	3 (3)	256 (2)	549 (3)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>19</b>
Bus Stop Improvements: Mebane Community Park	0 (1)	188.5 (2)	267.5 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	1 (2)	\$45,360 (3)	<b>19</b>
Bus Stop Improvements: Cornelius St/Rainey Ave	2.5 (2)	183.5 (2)	415 (3)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$45,360 (3)	<b>19</b>
Bus Stop Improvements: Orange Grove Rd	2.33 (2)	48 (1)	775 (3)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$45,360 (3)	<b>19</b>
Bus Stop Improvements: NC 86 Cornerstone Court	1.5 (1)	943 (3)	121 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$45,360 (3)	<b>19</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Supper Club Blvd	3 (3)	97 (1)	531 (3)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>19</b>
Walking Access to Transit: Mebane Food Lion	0 (1)	129 (2)	342 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	2 (3)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>18</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Fairview Park/Dorothy Johnson Community Center	4 (3)	22 (1)	127 (2)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>18</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: NC Driver's License Office	2.67 (2)	59 (1)	145 (2)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	1 (2)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>18</b>

Project Type and Location	Communities of Concern	Jobs Served	People served	Easy and Safe	Regional Connections	Local Transit	Reduces Duplication	Activity Centers	Strategy Cost	Total Score
Rural Mobility Hubs: Efland Hub	3 (3)	22 (1)	63 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	1 (2)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>18</b>
Walking Access to Transit: Lakeshore Drive	2.67 (2)	157 (2)	300 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>17</b>
Walking Access to Transit: Orange Grove Rd	2.33 (2)	34 (1)	851 (3)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>17</b>
Walking Access to Transit: NC 86 Aldi	1.5 (1)	681 (3)	223 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>17</b>
Walking Access to Transit: NC 86 Cornerstone Court	1.5 (1)	930 (3)	123 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>17</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Mebane Memorial Garden	3 (3)	90 (1)	35 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>17</b>
Walking Access to Transit: Scotswood Blvd	1.5 (1)	84 (1)	329 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	1 (2)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>16</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Efland-Cheeks Community Center	2 (2)	22 (1)	63 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>16</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Cedar Grove Community Center	2.67 (2)	1.7 (1)	12 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>16</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Orange High School	1 (1)	66 (1)	216 (2)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>16</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Mebane Oaks Rd	2 (2)	5.5 (1)	23 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>16</b>
Walking Access to Transit: Orange High School	1 (1)	66 (1)	214 (2)	High (3)	Low (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$254,470 (1)	<b>15</b>
Rural Mobility Hubs: Dodsons Crossroads	1.5 (1)	6 (1)	47 (1)	High (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	0 (1)	\$111,758 (2)	<b>15</b>



**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

# Appendix C: Funding and Implementation Plan

October 2024



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# 1 TRANSIT FUNDING

## SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN BUDGET

Public transportation in Orange County is funded by a variety of federal, state, and local sources. Figure 1 shows the estimated budget for the SRTP fiscal years, based on existing funding and conversations with different fiscal entities in the region. OCTS has just under \$4 million a year to maintain their existing services and implement SRTP strategies. This budget provides a foundation for what the SRTP can hope to achieve by FY2030, though each budget source is subject to change.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allocates formula funding for transit based on urbanized area and state, depending on type of funds. OCTS receives 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants for both the Durham and Burlington urbanized areas, and these amounts are determined through yearly split letters from the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) and the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO). OCTS also receives 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants through the DCHC MPO split letter. For estimating the budget for the SRTP, 5307 and 5339 funds from the FY2023 split letters are escalated by 2% each year until FY2026, after which the amounts remain constant, since the current federal funding authorization expires in FY2026.

FTA 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas are distributed through the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). In FY2025, NCDOT has allocated OCTS \$165,435 in 5311 funds, and the same amount is estimated for the following years.

At the state level, OCTS receives Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) funds from NCDOT. In FY2023, OCTS was allocated \$211,284, an amount estimated to remain the same throughout the SRTP period.

Locally, OCTS receives funding from the Orange County Transit Tax, with the budget for each year defined by the Orange County Transit Plan and its Annual Work Program. Orange County also allocates money for OCTS in its annual budget. This amount fluctuates each year, so the estimated amount for the SRTP is an average of the FY2023 to FY2025 county budgets. Lastly, OCTS also receives a small amount of revenue from fares and charges for services, which are not assumed to grow greatly from the FY2023 amount shown here.

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the SRTP strategies will require additional funding beyond the above budget to implement. Shown in Figure 2 is a non-exhaustive list of funding sources that OCTS can pursue to increase its budget, though each opportunity has its own requirements.

**Figure 1 Estimated Budget for S RTP**

Budget Source		FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
Federal	5307 (DCHC MPO)	\$308,488	\$308,488	\$308,488	\$308,488	\$308,488
	5307 (BG MPO)	\$146,390	\$146,390	\$146,390	\$146,390	\$146,390
	5339	\$29,850	\$29,850	\$29,850	\$29,850	\$29,850
	5311	\$165,435	\$165,435	\$165,435	\$165,435	\$165,435
State	ROAP	\$211,284	\$211,284	\$211,284	\$211,284	\$211,284
Local	Orange County Transit Plan	\$1,315,446	\$1,348,332	\$1,382,040	\$1,416,591	\$1,452,006
	Fares	\$27,610	\$27,610	\$27,610	\$27,610	\$27,610
	Charges for Services	\$51,493	\$51,493	\$51,493	\$51,493	\$51,493
	Local Government Funds	\$1,541,131	\$1,541,131	\$1,541,131	\$1,541,131	\$1,541,131
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>\$3,797,127</b>	<b>\$3,830,013</b>	<b>\$3,863,722</b>	<b>\$3,898,273</b>	<b>\$3,933,688</b>

**Figure 2 Potential Funding Opportunities**

Potential Funding	Administrator	Potential Strategy Types	Requirements
5310 Operating	NCDOT	Demand Response	50% Local Match
5310 Mobility Manager	NCDOT	Mobility Manager	New Staff or Job Description
Combined Capital Funds	NCDOT	Technology Improvements	Pre-award lead time
Purchase of Service	NCDOT	Demand Response, MOD	Coordinate with Departments of Social Services and Aging
Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation	DSS	Demand Response	Coordinate with Department of Social Services
Orange County Transit Plan	GoTriangle	Fixed Route, MOD, Demand Response	Adjust approved hourly rate for transit operations
5307 Urbanized Area	DCHC MPO	Capital Improvements	Report passenger-miles traveled
Regional Flexible Funding	DCHC MPO	Capital Improvements	Next cycle FY2028-2030
Mobility Innovation Grants	FTA	MOD, Technology Improvements	Discretionary Grant
Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A)	FTA	Walking Access to Transit	Discretionary Grant

NCDOT administers a series of state and federal grants that OCTS can apply for. FTA 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities funds can be used for demand response service operations—with a 50% local match—or to hire a mobility manager. NCDOT's Combined Capital Funds can be used for capital purchases, such as improving technology, though applications for these funds are released every few years. OCTS can also coordinate with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Aging to access funds from NCDOT allocated to purchasing service for older adults and people with disabilities. The Department of Social Services also coordinates non-emergency medical transportation, which can be reimbursed through Medicaid. OCTS can help DSS provide more of these trips and submit the required reimbursement documentation to receive additional funding.

Additionally, the operating cost per hour for OCTS services has increased over the last few years, and the amount approved by the Orange County Transit Plan is less than the amount to operate service. OCTS can work with GoTriangle and the Transit

Plan partners to update the approved costs and potentially increase funding for Transit Plan projects.

DCHC MPO also has a series of grants that OCTS can apply for. Through its Regional Flexible Funding Program, for which the next funding cycle is FY2028 to FY2030, OCTS can secure funds for capital projects that improve access to transit. OCTS may also be able to unlock more 5307 funds if it were to report additional metrics (such as passenger-miles travelled) to the FTA.

Lastly, the FTA has many discretionary grants designed to help fund capital improvement projects, pilot new technology, and other facets of operating a transit agency. Every few years, they typically unveil a mobility innovation grant program, which can be used to fund microtransit and other new technologies. The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program awards funds annually for the implementation of projects that improve traffic safety in accordance with a comprehensive safety action plan.



## 2 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN BY STRATEGY

### PROCESS OVERVIEW

After evaluating all proposed strategies, as described in Appendix B, projects were aligned with the projected budget for the Fiscal Year 2026 to 2030 period. Adjustments to the proposals were made as needed to fit the funding availability and technical considerations, such as availability of bus drivers. Not all strategies could fit within the budget or timeframe, but those that scored highly in the evaluation are included in this document to guide future planning efforts.

Additional funding sources were also identified and are tied to the strategies they could fund. As some of these are competitive grants, it is not guaranteed that the funding will be available for the strategies.

### TRANSIT SERVICE STRATEGIES

**Short Term** projects should be implemented early in the SRTP timeframe, and resources are available within the current known budget. Short term transit service strategies include:

- Mobility on Demand Service Improvements
- Discontinue Orange-Alamance Connector
- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 1
- Mebane Circulator
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 1

**Medium Term** projects should be implemented later in the SRTP timeframe, and may require additional funding sources such as winning grant money. Medium term transit service strategies include:

- Demand Response Weekend Service

**Long Term** projects should be pursued after the SRTP timeframe ends, as funding is currently unavailable. Long term transit service strategies include:

- Hillsborough Circulator Improvements Phase 2
- Hill to Hill Consolidation Phase 2
- Reinstate Updated Orange-Alamance Connector
- MOD Service Span Expansion

# MOBILITY ON DEMAND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

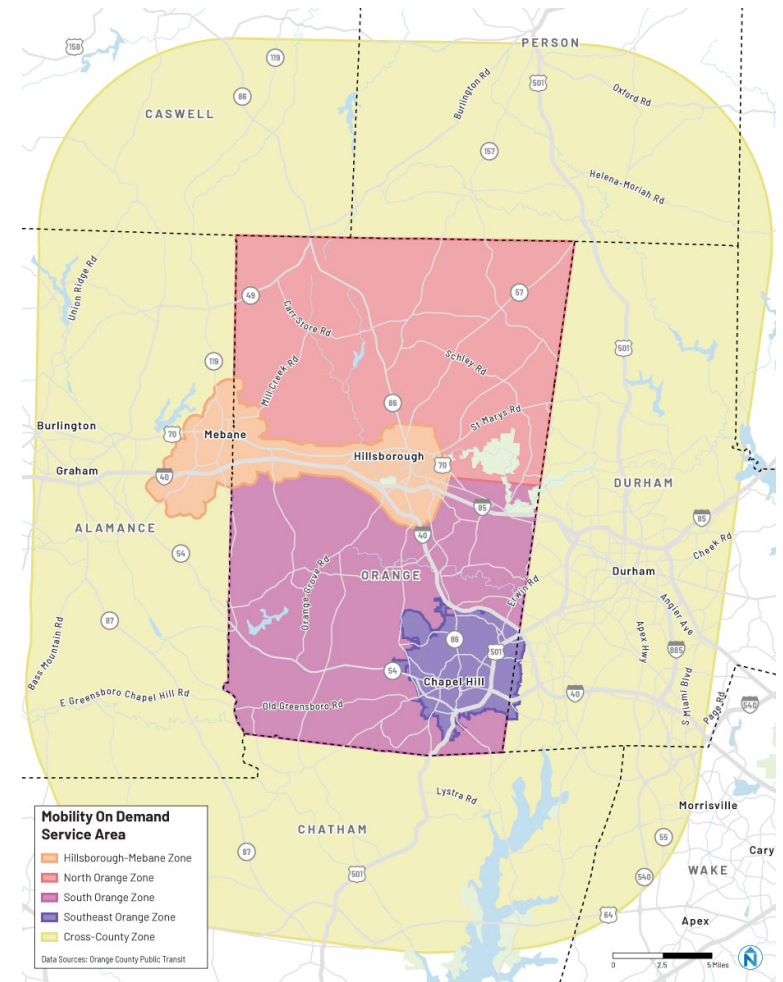
## Short Term

**Background:** Orange County MOD is underused, given the potential demand within the service area. Microtransit is well suited for the density of much of Orange County and can provide the public with high-quality and low-cost transportation options for those who cannot or choose not to drive.

**Strategy Overview:** Create zones for faster, cheaper trips within municipalities and consistent wait times for rural trips. The ability to book trips by making a phone call will also be added. No changes to hours of service are proposed within the SRTF timeframe.

- Hillsborough-Mebane Zone: Shorter wait times within this zone
- North and South Orange Zones: Dedicated vehicles for each zone to make wait times more consistent
- Southeast Zone: Trips cannot both start and end in this zone
- Cross-County: This zone will extend 10 miles out from the Orange County border, covering key rural and urban destinations in neighboring counties. Trips cannot both begin and end within this zone.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Thursday	8 AM – 5 PM	8 AM – 5 PM
Friday	8 AM – 9 PM	8 AM – 9 PM
Saturday	9 AM – 5 PM	9 AM – 5 PM



## MOBILITY ON DEMAND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Federal formula funds, fare revenue, local government funds

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Phase 1	7,144	\$842,099.00	-	-	-	-
Phase 2	11,466	-	\$1,385,343.62	\$1,419,977.21	\$1,455,476.64	\$1,491,863.56

### Implementation steps:

1. Work with technology vendor to implement zones
2. Update website to include:
  - a. Zone and service area map
  - b. Wait time information
  - c. Call-in number for phone booking
3. Phase in additional vehicles, per table below

	Monday to Friday			Saturday
	8 AM to 10 AM	10 AM to 4 PM	4 PM to 5 PM (9PM Fridays)	9 AM to 5 PM
<b>Phase 1</b>	2 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane and North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>	3 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane</li> <li>▪ 1 for North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>	2 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane and North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>	2 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane and North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2</b>	3 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane</li> <li>▪ 1 for North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>	5 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2 for Hillsborough-Mebane</li> <li>▪ 1 North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 floating/unassigned</li> </ul>	3 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane</li> <li>▪ 1 for North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>	3 Vehicles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 for Hillsborough-Mebane</li> <li>▪ 1 for North Orange</li> <li>▪ 1 for South and Southeast Orange</li> </ul>

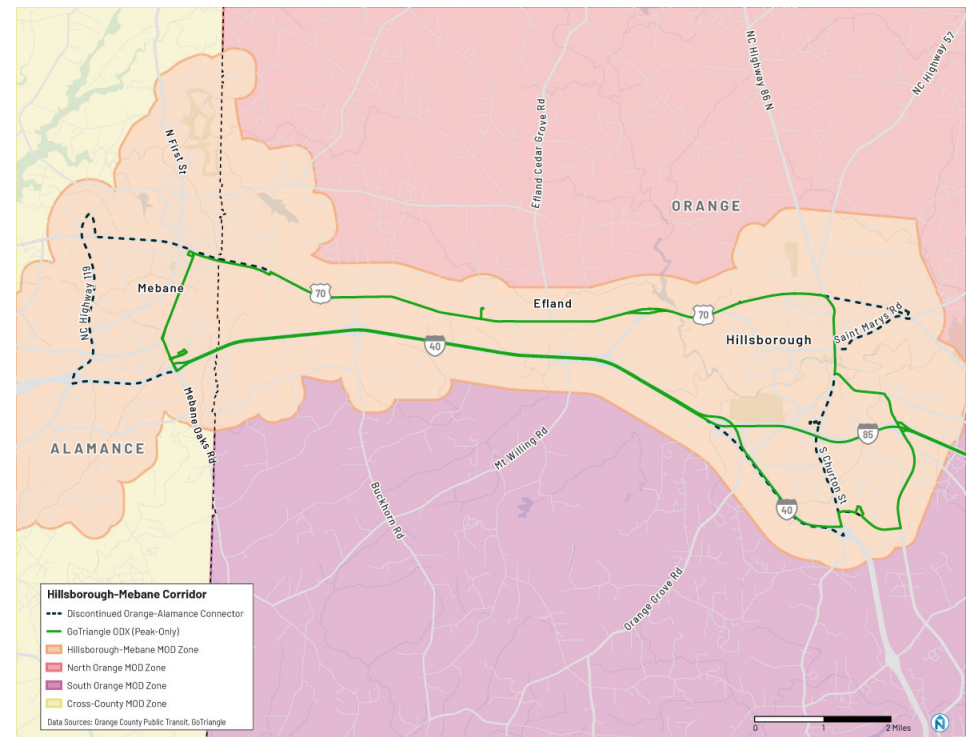
# DISCONTINUE ORANGE-ALAMANCE CONNECTOR

## Short Term

**Background:** The Orange-Alamance Connector is a low ridership route that offers redundant service with the GoTriangle Orange-Durham Express (ODX). The rider base of this route is likely better served by on-demand service zones, since they will have more direct access to destinations.

**Strategy Overview:** Formalize the elimination of the Orange-Alamance Connector and reinvest the resources into other transit service projects. With the improved MOD service zones, residents along the Mebane-Hillsborough corridor will still have access to transportation service, as well as continued service from the GoTriangle ODX during peak hours, the new Mebane Circulator, and improved Hillsborough Circulator.

	Existing	Proposed
<i>Span of Service</i>		
Monday to Friday	10 AM – 3 PM	-
<i>Frequency</i>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	-



## DISCONTINUE ORANGE-ALAMANCE CONNECTOR (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** This project does not require funding. Savings from this project can be used to support the operation of the Mebane Circulator.

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Existing	2,500	-	-	-	-	-
Proposal	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Implementation steps:**

1. Inform residents and riders of proposed service change through processes defined in OCTS’s Title VI Plan.
2. Place signage at existing Orange-Alamance Connector stops to notify riders of service change and provide information on other services along the corridor, including MOD.
3. Remove Orange-Alamance Connector from website and provide information on available alternatives for residents along the corridor, including MOD.
4. Use funds for other approved transit operating costs.



# HILLSBOROUGH CIRCULATOR IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 1

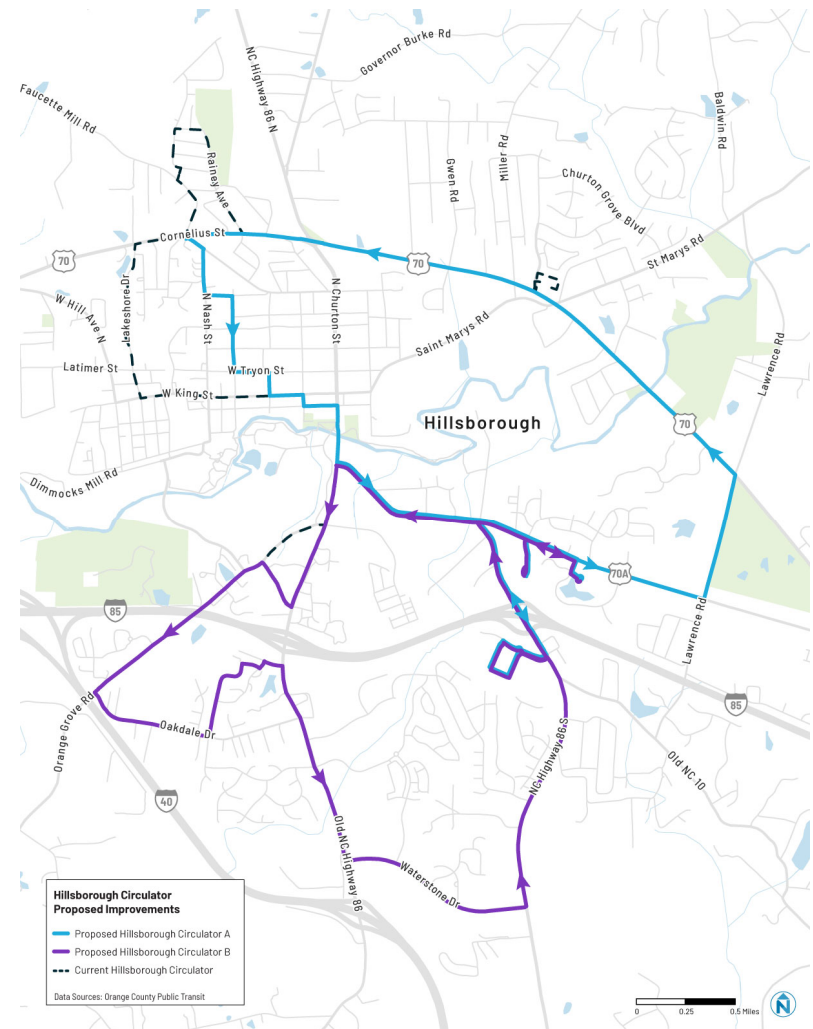
## Short Term

**Background:** The Hillsborough Circulator is the highest ridership OCTS route and is the primary option for Hillsborough residents to travel between key destinations in the town without a car. The route often runs behind schedule, as it takes approximately 60 minutes to complete one trip and it runs every hour. The Hillsborough Circulator also only runs in one direction, making residents ride the full loop, even if they only need to get to the stop before they board.

**Strategy Overview:** Create an improved Hillsborough Circulator service that is more efficient, on-time, and frequent. The improved service will be split into two separate routes, Hillsborough Circulator A and Hillsborough Circulator B.

- Reduce route deviations at Rainey Ave (Fairview Park), Orange Grove Road, and Scotswood Road (Food Lion) to improve schedule reliability by decreasing the running time.
- Split route into two patterns, which can both run in under 45 minutes per cycle.
- Expand the service hours and increase frequency of both routes.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	7 AM – 5 PM	6:30 AM – 6:30 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	45 minutes



## HILLSBOROUGH CIRCULATOR IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 1 (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Existing Transit Plan funds, federal formula funds, local government funds.

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Existing	2,500	-	-	-	-	-
Proposal	5,750	\$724,931.25	\$743,054.53	\$761,630.89	\$780,671.67	\$800,188.46

**Implementation steps:**

1. Inform residents and riders of proposed service change through processes defined in OCTS’s Title VI Plan.
2. Update bus stop signs, install new signs and new stops where needed.
3. Notify residents and riders of upcoming service change through updating the website, a social media campaign, signage at bus stops and key activity centers, and communications through partner organizations.
4. Implement route and schedule changes.
5. Apply for capital grants for bus stop improvements.
6. Continue upgrading bus stops and communicating changes.

# MEBANE CIRCULATOR

## Short Term

**Background:** The City of Mebane has planned to establish a local bus route, which will take place in the form of a circulator that serves key destinations throughout Mebane. The Orange-Alamance Connector currently serves Mebane, which provides Mebane connections to Hillsborough and other localities via route transfer.

**Strategy Overview:** Implement the Mebane Circulator as adopted in the Mebane Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the BGMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The Mebane Circulator will run every 60 minutes from 7 AM – 6 PM on Monday through Friday and will not initially offer weekend service.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	-	7 AM – 6 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	-	60 minutes



## MEBANE CIRCULATOR (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Existing Transit Plan funds, federal formula funds, local government funds.

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Proposal	2,750	\$346,706.25	\$355,373.91	\$364,258.25	\$373,364.71	\$382,698.83

**Implementation steps:**

1. Inform residents and riders of proposed service change through processes defined in OCTS’s Title VI Plan.
2. Install bus stop signs at new stops locations.
3. Notify residents and riders of upcoming new service through updating the website, a social media campaign, signage at bus stops and key activity centers, and communications through partner organizations.
4. Implement new route.
5. Apply for capital grants for bus stop improvements.
6. Continue upgrading bus stops and communicating changes.

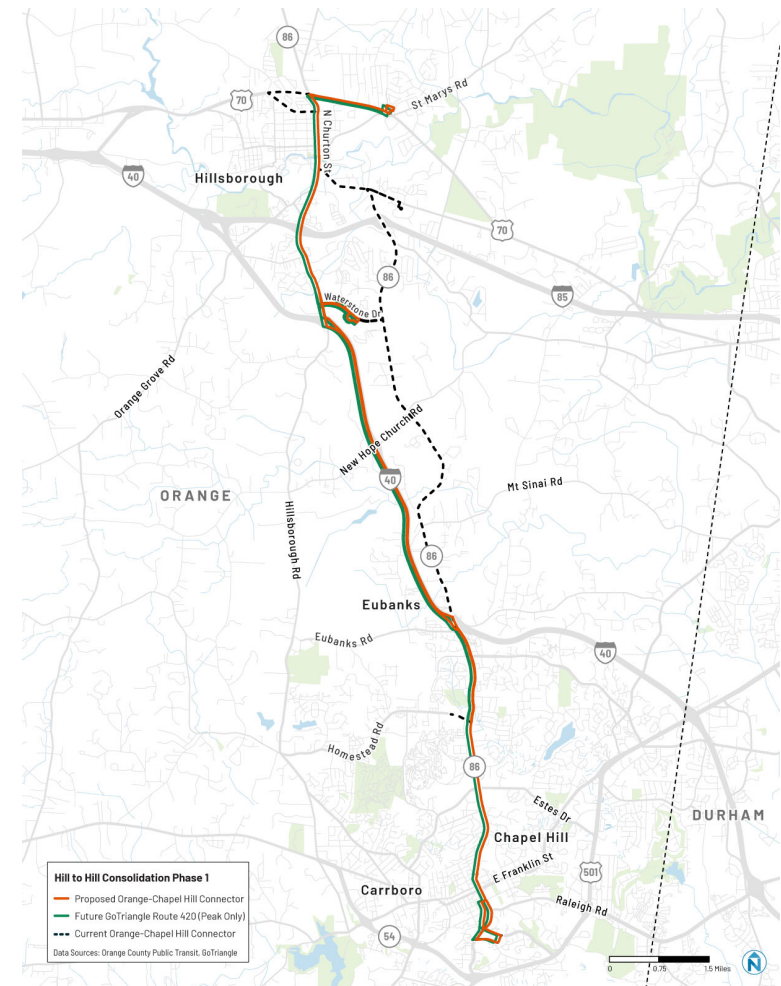
# HILL TO HILL CONSOLIDATION PHASE 1

## Short Term

**Background:** The Orange-Chapel Hill Connector provides midday and local coverage between Chapel Hill and Hillsborough, while GoTriangle Route 420 operates during the peak commute hours only and with fewer local stops. The similar but still deviating route patterns can confuse riders, and there is some service redundancy in the current schedule.

**Strategy Overview:** Adjust the route alignment of the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector to match the alignment and stops of Route 420, and continue conversations with GoTriangle on coordination and consolidation of the two routes. Local connections in Hillsborough can be made to both Hillsborough Circulator loops. This Phase does not fully consolidate the two routes, and rather focuses on running them along the same route pattern and to be less redundant, allowing for full consolidation in the future.

	Existing OCH	Proposed OCH
<b>Span of Service</b>		
Monday to Friday	8:30 AM – 4:30 PM	8:30 AM – 3:30 PM
<b>Frequency</b>		
Monday to Friday	60 minutes	60 minutes





## HILL TO HILL CONSOLIDATION PHASE 1 (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** This strategy provides some cost savings that can be used to cover increased costs due to inflation.

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Existing	4,000	\$504,300.00				
Proposal	3,500		\$452,294.06	\$463,601.41	\$475,191.45	\$487,071.24

### Implementation steps:

1. Continue conversations with GoTriangle on coordination and consolidation of Route 420 and the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector.
2. Inform residents and riders of proposed service change through processes defined in OCTS’s Title VI Plan.
3. Update bus stop signage along corridor
4. Notify residents and riders of upcoming service change through updating the website, a social media campaign, signage at bus stops and key activity centers, and communications through partner organizations.
5. Implement route and span changes at the same time as the alignment change to GoTriangle Route 420.
  - a. First trip: Chapel Hill to Hillsborough 8:30 AM, Hillsborough to Chapel Hill 9:30 AM
  - b. Last trip: Chapel Hill to Hillsborough 2:30 PM, Hillsborough to Chapel Hill 3:30 PM
6. Update online and print materials for both routes to reference each other.
7. Work with UNC to fully incorporate OCTS into student and worker transit pass programs.
8. If and when GoTriangle Route 420 is realigned to Highway 40 and away from the Hillsborough Walmart, ensure that rider outreach highlights alternative travel options, including Mobility On Demand and the future extension of Chapel Hill Transit Route D to Patterson Place.

# DEMAND RESPONSE WEEKEND SERVICE

## Medium Term

**Background:** Program-based demand response riders are not peak-oriented, and many riders use it to get to non-work destinations. Currently, hours on Saturday are limited and not clearly defined, and no service is offered on Sunday. This limits the types of medical trips that OCTS can provide, cutting off a potential funding source.

**Strategy Overview:** Operate program-based demand response services from 9 AM to 5 PM on both Saturdays and Sundays.

	Existing	Proposed
<b><i>Span of Service</i></b>		
Monday to Friday	8 AM – 5 PM	8 AM – 5 PM
Saturday	“Limited”	9 AM – 5 PM
Sunday	-	9 AM – 5 PM

## DEMAND RESPONSE WEEKEND SERVICE (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Existing Transit Plan funds, federal formula funds, local government funds.

Project Phase	Annual Revenue Hours	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030
Existing	8,836	\$1,032,486.60	\$1,058,298.77	-	-	-
Proposal	9,644	-	-	\$1,183,913.95	\$1,213,511.80	\$1,243,849.60

\*Weekend annual revenue hours and cost estimates are based on historical ridership and trip purpose trends

### Implementation steps:

1. Supplement current demand response funding sources.
  - a. Leverage 5310 operating funds with 50% local match for currently operating Demand Response service.
  - b. Work with the Department of Social Services and Department of Aging to purchase trips with a smaller local match.
  - c. Improve Medicaid reimbursement for currently operating trips.
2. Determine if funding levels are adequate for implementation of weekend service in the following fiscal year.
3. Begin hiring additional drivers for service expansion.
4. Inform residents and riders of proposed service change through processes defined in OCTS's Title VI Plan.
5. Implement changes, with clear hours on website and advertisement through partner departments.
6. Seek out additional Non-Emergency Medical Transportation funding options now available due to provision of Sunday service.

## LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

### HILLSBOROUGH CIRCULATOR IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 2

**Background:** After the Hillsborough Circulator has been split into two routes, increasing and improving the service is necessary. Transit demand during the peak hours is not necessarily much higher than it is during the off-peak hours, and there are a lot of riders that utilize the service for running errands.

**Strategy Overview:** Implement Saturday service, which will have 9 AM – 5 PM spans with buses every 30 minutes. In addition, Monday through Friday will have spans from 6:30 AM – 6:30 PM and buses every 30 minutes.

### HILL TO HILL CONSOLIDATION PHASE 2

**Background:** After operating the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector and GoTriangle Route 420 with more coordination and reduced redundancy, service levels can be improved through full consolidation of the two routes. Public engagement also indicated strong interest in evening and weekend service between the municipalities.

**Strategy Overview:** Fully consolidate the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector with GoTriangle Route 420 along the Highway 40 alignment. Peak operation of the route will require three 40' buses to accommodate ridership demand and maintain frequency. The consolidated service should consider implementing Saturday service and operating later in the evening.

### REINSTATE UPDATED ORANGE-ALAMANCE CONNECTOR

**Background:** While the Orange-Alamance Connector has generated low ridership during its operation, existing conditions and public engagement reflected the demand for connections between Mebane and Hillsborough. The route has a long travel time and short span, limiting its potential for success. Density along the corridor is currently low, but residential, commercial, and industrial developments are underway and may drive demand for transit in the future.

**Strategy Overview:** Bring back a modified version of the Orange-Alamance Connector that runs bi-directionally on Highway 70, with connections at Mebane Cone Health Park and Ride and the Hillsborough Walmart. With the proposed alignment change of the GoTriangle ODX to improve travel times to Durham and less focus on serving local stops, run the Orange-Alamance Connector all day, matching the hours of the circulator routes.

### MOD SERVICE SPAN EXPANSION

**Background:** In conjunction with the expended MOD service zones that are part of the short-term strategies, MOD service hours should be expanded to adequately serve the riders of Orange County, as there is local transit demand for services outside traditional commuting windows.

**Strategy Overview:** Service hours will be expanded on all days of the week and Sunday service will be implemented. Service will run Monday to Friday 8 AM to 10 PM, Saturday 9 AM to 10 PM, and Sunday 9 AM to 8 PM.

## POLICY AND PROGRAM STRATEGIES

**Short Term** recommended policies or programs that OCTS could implement in the early years of the SRTP with currently available administrative funding include:

- Alternative Fare Payment
- Transit Information Campaign
- Improve Demand Response Booking

**Medium Term** policies or programs that require OCTS to apply for additional funds include:

- Hire Mobility Manager
- Conduct Fare Study



## ALTERNATIVE FARE PAYMENT

### Short Term

**Background:** MOD and Orange-Chapel Hill Connector vehicles are not able to take cash as fare payment, which can create barriers for people without easy access to mobile banking. OCTS fares are also not integrated with other regional providers, such as GoTriangle.

**Strategy Overview:** Provide cash loading options for fare payment cards to better serve people with limited banking or smartphone access, and work to integrate with other transit agencies in the region that utilize UMO Pass.

**Funding Sources:** Cost neutral, requires staff time

#### Implementation Steps:

1. Continue ongoing conversations with UMO for cash purchase options at Food Lion
2. Add cash loading options at more locations, including the INCOM chain of retailers
3. During the next contract renewal for fare payment technology, update the contract to include Orange County as part of the same region as GoTriangle and GoRaleigh to allow for better fare integration. Also work with UNC to integrate OCTS services into their student and worker transit programs.

# TRANSIT INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

## Short Term

**Background:** Many Orange County residents do not fully understand how to ride transit and what their transit options are. The transit information campaign would cover fixed routes, mobility on-demand, and ADA services. Through both rounds of public engagement, improving transit information was identified as a high priority.

**Strategy Overview:** The promotional campaign would provide information on services, their destinations, how to use each service, and other information that is relevant to the service. On-demand service would be a key focus, specifically around the expanded service zones and where they cover, and how to book trips would be the main emphasis.

Improving the availability of transit information is an additional component of the transit information campaign. Improving the available information about the transit system could include the publishing of real-time travel information using live GTFS publishing.

As funding and grants allow in the future, OCTS should consider hiring professional marketing services to design and implement this transit information campaign.

**Funding Sources:** Administrative staff time within existing budget, limited advertising costs

### Implementation steps:

1. Publish live GTFS to Google Maps and Transit App to improve real-time information for existing transit riders
2. If funding allows, work with marketing firm to execute broad information campaign across multiple mediums
3. Plan and execute promotional campaign, recommended in Fiscal Year 2027. Components of the campaign should include:
  - a. Updates to the OCTS website and online information – ensuring clear, accurate, and consistent information that is easy to find
  - b. Development of transit information posters, fliers, and social media graphics
  - c. Partnerships with local governments, regional and local stakeholders, and other Orange County departments to help share information about transit services
  - d. Holding pop-up events and information sessions at key community destinations

# IMPROVE DEMAND RESPONSE BOOKING

## Short Term

**Background:** Riders expressed confusion about how to book demand response trips during public feedback opportunities. Most of the confusion came around how and where to book trips—online, over phone, by app—and the application process. Additionally, the Medicaid reimbursement process will be improved, making it easier for OCTS to submit for reimbursement.

**Strategy Overview:** Ensuring the demand response application process is streamlined so that prospective riders are able to book services more quickly is one of the first steps. This streamlined application process will be simpler and quicker for applicants. This process is already underway at OCTS. This streamlined process will include implementing additional, to be determined, measures that will help OCTS submit for Medicaid reimbursement.

**Funding Sources:** Administrative staff time within existing budget, potential for grant support from Combined Capital Funds; improved Medicaid reimbursement would free up additional funds after implementation.

### Implementation Steps:

1. Grant application: Combined Capital Funds for Technology Improvement
2. Implement changes, potentially under purview of Mobility Manager
3. Submit eligible rides for Medicaid reimbursement on an ongoing basis

# HIRE A MOBILITY MANAGER

## Medium Term

**Background:** Orange County currently has a Mobility Manager role that is run through the Department of Aging and focuses solely on outreach to older adults and assisting with their transportation. However, Orange County could use a Mobility Manager that covers on-demand services, in addition to the role within the Department of Aging.

**Strategy Overview:** Create a new Mobility Manager position that has a wider focus, one covering the management of all information and travel training needs for on-demand services. This person would oversee the application process for on-demand services and would be the primary contact for anything on-demand related in Orange County. This role could continue to be funded through 5310 grant funds, but the funds from this grant do not sufficiently cover the cost of an increased role. Other grants could provide the necessary funding to implement this new position.

**Funding Sources:** NCDOT Mobility Management Funds

### Implementation Steps:

1. Grant application: NCDOT Mobility Management Funds
2. Prepare for hiring process so funds can be used immediately upon start of grant
3. Hire for Mobility Manager position
4. Initial projects for the position may include:
  - a. Improve Demand Response trip booking
  - b. Coordinating service provision with DSS and Department of Aging to leverage federal matching funds
  - c. Travel Training program

## CONDUCT FARE STUDY

### Medium Term

**Background:** Fare costs vary across agencies and modes in Orange County and can sometimes act as a barrier to transit access. There is interest from the public and key stakeholders to explore the viability of free or reduced fares for the different types of transit services in Orange County.

**Strategy Overview:** The fare study would cover each individual mode, including fixed route and on-demand. The potentiality for reduced MOD fares will be studied to determine if OCPT could provide the same level of service and continue to make improvements with decreased fare revenue. The viability of fare-free fixed route service will also be studied on a route-by-route basis. With reduced fares, it is important that OCPT will have enough funds to continue future planning efforts.

**Funding Sources:** 5303 Metropolitan Planning & 5305 Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning formula funds

**Implementation Steps:**

1. Apply for pass-through planning funding from NCDOT and MPOs
2. Conduct fare study, including potential funding sources for discount fares and fare-free service
3. Implement fare changes as recommended by study



## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Each capital improvement strategy represents a type of capital project with multiple locations recommended for each type. These strategies do not include capital projects that are required for basic operation of the transit service strategies, such as new bus stops for new services. Site locations were prioritized into medium and long term based on the evaluation matrix, inclusion of the projects in other adopted plans, and existing infrastructure at each site. The three types of capital improvement strategies include:

- Bus Stop Improvements
- Rural Transit Hubs
- Walking Access to Transit

# BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS

**Background:** Bus stop improvements are an effective way to improve transit experience for riders. Bus stop improvements include various amenities, such as shelters or benches, and can be paired with capital improvement strategies on walking access to transit. Bus stops that have high ridership are often the targets of bus stop improvements since more riders will benefit from the improvements.

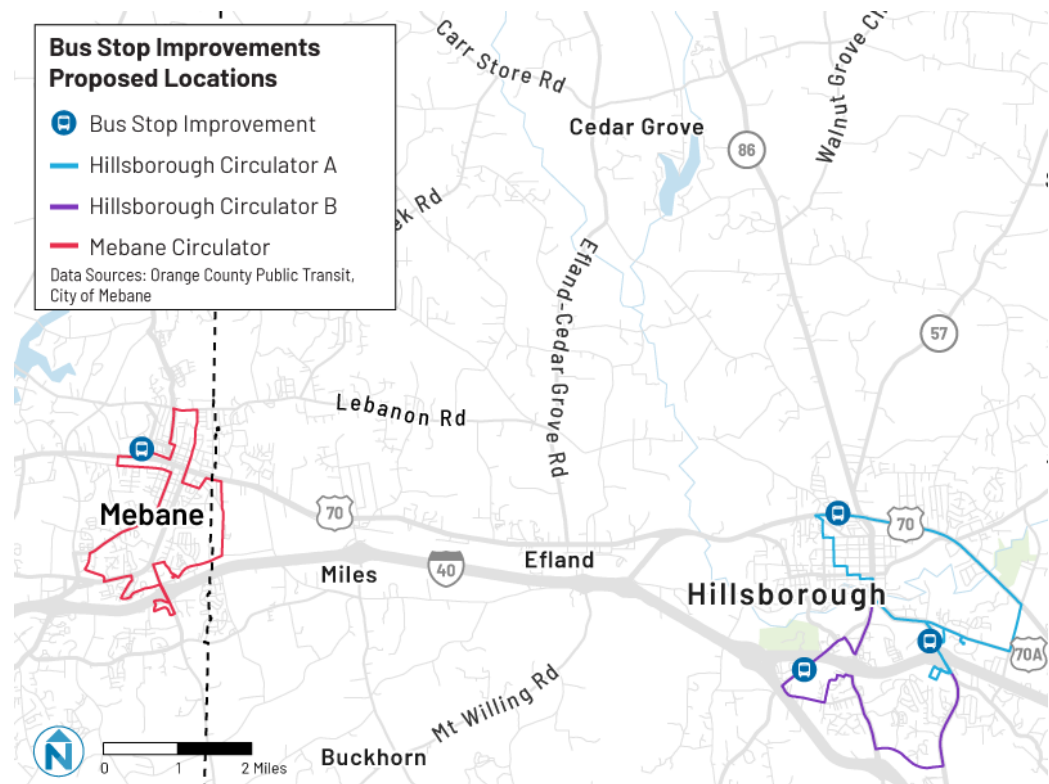
**Strategy Overview:** Upgrades to existing bus stops, including amenities like a shelter, bench, passenger information, ADA upgrades, or establishing a new physical stop where passengers are currently boarding and alighting without any infrastructure.

## Medium Term

- Mebane Community Park
- Cornelius St/Rainey Ave
- Orange Grove Road
- NC 86 Cornerstone Court



Example of Improved Bus Stop



## BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Formula funds, state funding, federal grants

Amenity	Cost Estimate, FY25 Dollars
Sidewalk	\$2,100
Curb and Gutter upgrades	\$12,150
Bus Stop Signage	\$850
Solar Lighting Kit & Post	\$2,500
ROW Easement Acquisition (Average)	\$11,100
Maps and cases	\$5,725
Trash Can (single bin, concrete mounted)	\$855
Standard Shelter with Bench	\$9,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>

\*Estimates include engineering costs and contingencies, and are based 2022 Wake Bus Plan capital estimates, adjusted for inflation

### Implementation steps:

1. Begin recording and reporting passenger miles travelled to unlock additional formula funding through 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds that can be used for capital improvements
2. Annually submit projects for state plan funding
  - a. NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Funding
  - b. NCDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Funding
3. Apply for TPM Bus and Bus Facility Grant Program for bus stop enhancements where low- and no-emission vehicles are operated

## RURAL TRANSIT HUBS

**Background:** Rural transit hubs are an effective way to improve the transit experience for residents of rural areas who may not have a large stop or transit hub nearby. These transit hubs are intended for low-density areas that are within MOD zones. Residents in rural areas may not be as familiar with transit options, so having a place where additional information can be provided is useful for rider understanding of the system and service options.

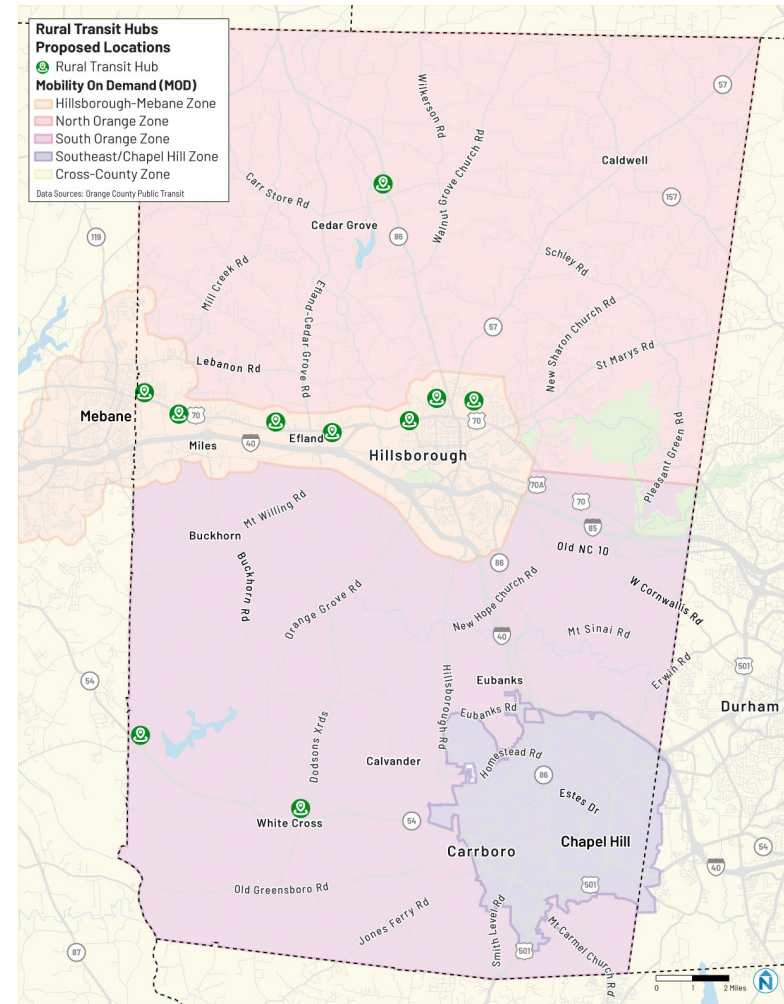
**Strategy Overview:** Locations in lower-density areas of Orange County with information on booking MOD rides and space to wait. Amenities include bench, shelter, and informational signage. Note that MOD is already available to anyone at any location throughout the OCTS service area, while these Rural Transit Hubs are an additional capital investment to help improve the transit experience.

### Medium Term

- Efland-Cheeks Community Center
- NC Driver’s License Office
- Efland Hub
- Supper Club Blvd
- Cedar Grove Community Center

### Long Term

- Fairview Park/Dorothy Johnson Community Center
- Mebane Memorial Garden
- Orange High School
- NC 54/Mebane Oaks Road
- White Cross Hub





**Example of Rural Transit Hub**



## RURAL TRANSIT HUBS (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Formula funds, state funding, federal grants

Amenity	Cost Estimate, FY25 Dollars
Sidewalk	\$9,225
Curb and Gutter upgrades	\$50,000
ADA curb cut & ramp	\$2,150
Crosswalk pavement markings	\$3,250
Bus Stop Signage	\$850
Solar Lighting Kit & Post	\$2,500
Site survey & design	\$11,100
Maps and cases	\$5,725
Trash Can (single bin, concrete mounted)	\$850
Bike Rack	\$550
Enhanced Shelter with bench, charger, lighting	\$23,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>

\*Estimates include engineering costs and contingencies, and are based 2022 Wake Bus Plan capital estimates, adjusted for inflation

### Implementation steps:

1. Begin recording and reporting passenger miles travelled to unlock additional formula funding through 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds that can be used for capital improvements
2. Annually submit projects for state plan funding
  - a. NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Funding
  - b. NCDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Funding
3. Apply for TPM Bus and Bus Facility Grant Program for bus stop enhancements where low- and no-emission vehicles are operated

## WALKING ACCESS TO TRANSIT

**Background:** For local services, transit riders typically walk between the bus stop and their home or final destination. Unsafe walking conditions can discourage transit use and limit the number of people or jobs accessible within the typical “walking distance” of a transit stop. Improving these walking conditions can help increase transit ridership and improve the safety of those traveling.

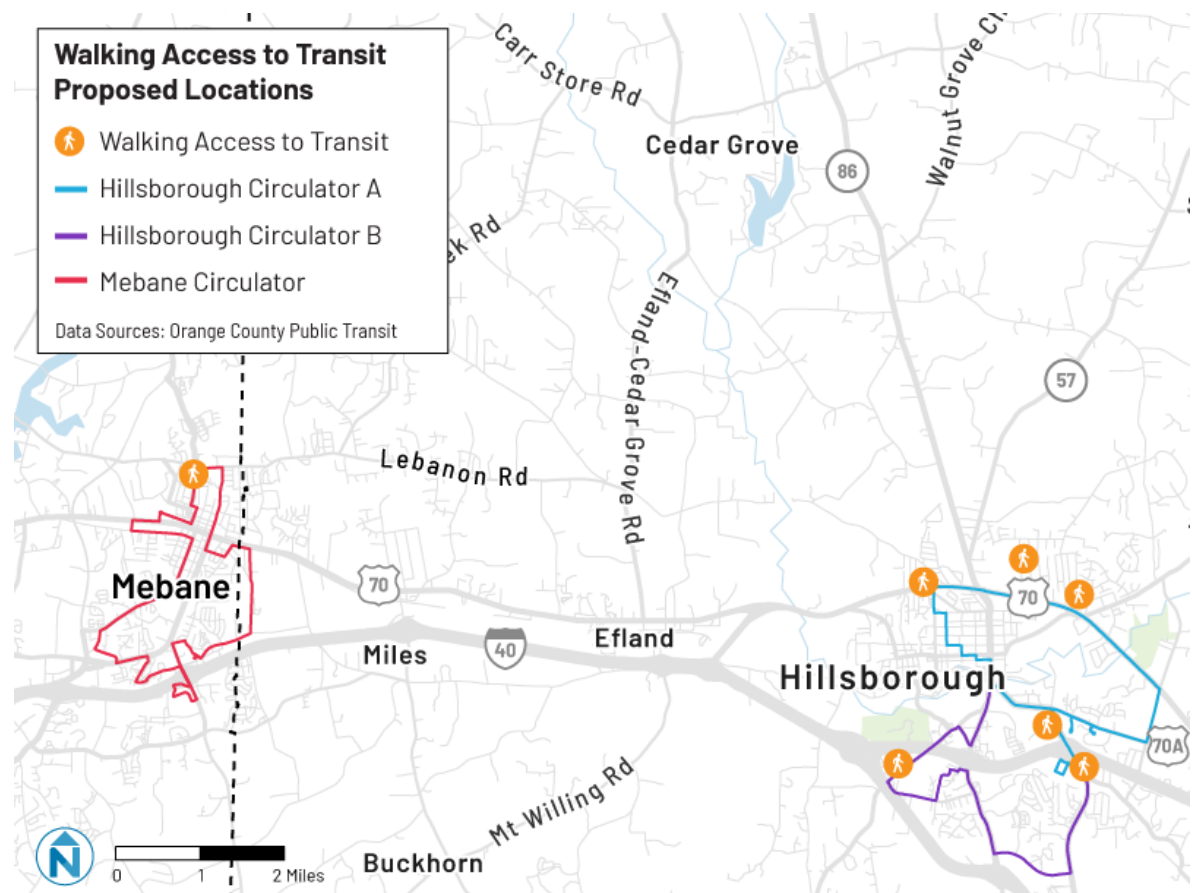
**Strategy Overview:** Improve access to bus stops with pedestrian improvements such as sidewalks, safe crossings, and ADA upgrades.

### Medium Term

- Faucette Mill Road/Cornelius Street
- NC 86 Aldi
- Orange Grove Rd
- Mebane Food Lion
- Orange High School

### Long Term

- N Scotswood Blvd (access to US 70/Food Lion stop)
- NC 86 Cornerstone Court



## WALKING ACCESS TO TRANSIT (CONT.)

**Funding sources:** Formula funds, state funding, federal grants

Amenity	Cost Estimate, FY25 Dollars
Sidewalk	\$37,000
Curb and Gutter upgrades	\$200,000
Crosswalk pavement markings	\$3,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$240,250</b>

\*Estimates include engineering costs and contingencies, and are based 2022 Wake Bus Plan capital estimates, adjusted for inflation

### Implementation steps:

1. Begin recording and reporting passenger miles travelled to unlock additional formula funding through 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds that can be used for capital improvements
2. Annually submit projects for state plan funding
  - a. NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Funding
  - b. NCDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Funding
3. Apply for SS4A grants for pedestrian safety projects within the Town of Hillsborough in collaboration with their Safety Action Plan
4. Coordinate with Safe Routes to School and other pedestrian safety plans to prioritize and pool resources where possible, especially for Orange High School location
5. Apply through DCHC MPO for Regional Flexible Funding, a series of federal funds that can be used for access to transit, with the next cycle of funding available for FY28-30

**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**Appendix D: Public  
Engagement**

October 2024



**N NELSON**  
NYGAARD



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# 1 PHASE 1 OVERVIEW

The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) will identify opportunities to improve transit services in Orange County, NC and create an implementation plan for 2025 to 2030. The first phase of engagement for the plan took place from March 4, 2024, to March 31, 2024.

**Table 1 – Orange County Demographics**

Demographic Group	Orange County Population
Total Population	146,354
White	75.2%
Black/African American	11.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.5%
Asian	7.9%
Two or More Races	3.6%
Hispanic/Latino	8.5%
Limited English Proficiency	5.1%
Disabled	8.4%
Annual Household Income Less than \$50,000	30.4%

Target audiences included transit riders, Orange County residents, traditionally underserved communities (both riders and non-riders), and other community stakeholders. Traditionally, transit riders disproportionately include disadvantaged populations, including racial minorities, non-native English-speaking individuals, individuals with low incomes, and individuals with

disabilities. Data shows that these individuals comprise a significant share of Orange County’s population (see Table 1).

The project team developed tactics, tools, and outreach methods designed to include these groups given the importance of their input. Specific goals of this engagement phase included obtaining feedback on desired areas of improved transit, the types of service improvements throughout Orange County, and identifying desired travel times throughout the day.

## PARTICIPATION DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey included optional questions about participants' demographic backgrounds. These questions had response rates ranging from 80 percent (zip code) to 86 percent (age). Overall,

- 76 percent of participants identified as white
- 68 percent were women
- 71 percent were 45 or older
- 41 percent had annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more
- 12 percent reported having a disability
- 91 percent speak English very well
- 58 percent of participants lived in the 27278 or 27516 zip codes
- 37 percent have access to one car, and 57 percent have access to more than one car.

## KEY FINDINGS

Participants desire improvements in transit services, including reliability, frequency, extended coverage, on-demand options, and accessible information such as real-time tracking apps. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of improving access to public transit through facilities like park and ride facilities, bike lanes, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Among participants without access to a car and those with disabilities, 60 percent expressed the importance of on-demand transit services. For those with limited car access, over 60 percent mentioned the significance of easy access to accurate and clear transit service information. Seventy-three (73) percent of participants with disabilities also want easy access to transit service information. Additionally, 67 percent of participants with access to at least two cars were more likely to prioritize scheduled, fixed routes over other types of improvements.

## Recommendations for Future Engagement

When comparing Phase 1 survey participants' demographics to Orange County demographics, participants were generally representative of Orange County residents. Survey participants exceeded Orange County demographic percentages in the following categories: disability (12 percent compared to 8 percent in Orange County), gender identity (68 percent women compared to 52 percent in Orange County), age (46 percent aged 65 and older compared to 14 percent in Orange County), race (76

percent white compared to 75 percent in Orange County; 12 percent Black/African American compared to 11 percent in Orange County), zero car households (6 percent compared to 4 in Orange County) and limited English proficiency (8 percent compared to 5 percent in Orange County). However, participation fell short of reaching Orange County demographics in reaching some minority groups including those who identify as Asian (2 percent compared to 8 percent in Orange County and Hispanic/Latino (5 percent compared to over 8 percent in Orange County); as well as residents with annual household incomes under \$50,000 (24 percent compared to over 30 percent in Orange County).

While the engagement was successful in attracting a broad range of opinions and ideas from diverse audiences, there are some lessons learned from the demographic analysis and engagement process that include:

- Pop-up events at transit centers and bus stops help create awareness and collect input from transit riders from all targeted demographic backgrounds.
- Future engagement should consider more ways to reach residents with incomes below \$75,000 and those under 30 years of age, like incentivizing participation.

## TACTICS AND TOOLS

The following activities were conducted to engage and gather feedback from residents and stakeholders during Phase 1.

## Pop-Up Events

The project team held a series of six (6) pop-ups at bus shelters, community centers, and community events across Orange County between March 18, 2024, and March 23, 2024. These events provided transit riders and residents an opportunity to learn about the project and to provide feedback. Pop-ups were conducted at different times of the day at the following locations:

- Hillsborough Walmart
- Seymour Center
- Passmore Center
- Durham Tech OC Campus Park and Ride
- UNC Health Care Hillsborough Campus
- Downtown Mebane Eggstravaganza and Bunny Hop

Each event included an informational board showing existing transit service and a polling board to collect participant feedback. Paper surveys were provided to collect feedback from participants, which included a link to complete it online should the participant wish to take it later. All information was made available in both English and Spanish. A list of pop-up events and their dates, locations, and times is included in Appendix A.

Near the end of the engagement phase, Orange County Transportation Services held an additional event at Cedar Grove Community Center where community members filled out paper surveys.

## Presentations

The project team also conducted presentations with community boards and commissions to introduce the project and collect feedback. Presentations were given to the following groups during their regularly scheduled meetings:

- Orange County Transportation Board Meeting
- Mebane Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission (BPAC) Meeting

## Polling Boards

Standalone polling boards featuring project details and simple questions were placed in transit shelters at six (6) key bus stops in Orange County. The aim was to engage transit riders directly and gather their feedback on the project at their convenience. Each board included a QR code and link to the project website to encourage participants to take the online survey. A full list of polling board locations can be found in Appendix A.

## Survey

A short survey was developed to collect feedback on transit improvements and usage. The survey was distributed both online and in print form in English and Spanish to Orange County stakeholders and 13 community centers, libraries, and apartments. The survey was conducted from March 4 to March 31, 2024.

## ADVERTISING METHODS

The following communication methods were used to inform the public and encourage participation in Phase 1 engagement activities:

### **Project Website**

A website was developed to share information and materials about the Orange County SRTP project including project and plan overviews, phase 1 engagement activities, and link to the online survey.

### **Email Campaigns and Social Media**

The project team worked with plan partners to promote Phase 1 activities and engagement opportunities via email and social media. A media kit, including a digital flyer, social media graphics, newsletter copy, and email content was created in English and Spanish and shared with stakeholders and agency partners to distribute through their communication channels. The media kit was also distributed to 50 community organizations in Orange County.

## 2 PHASE 1 FINDINGS

A summary of attendees' comments received during the in-person Phase 1 engagement activities is provided below.

### POP UP EVENTS

At each in-person pop-up event, attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts using sticky notes on a polling board or provide written feedback by completing a paper survey. A total of 105 responses were collected via the polling boards. For more details on the total number of stickers received for each question and response option, please see Appendix B. Below is a summary of comments received.

#### **Question 1: Where would you like to see better transit services? (42 total stickers)**

Residents expressed their desire for enhanced transit services, especially to Hillsborough and Cedar Grove. They would like improved transportation options to key destinations such as Eubanks Park and Ride and the new Aldi store. They mentioned easier connectivity between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill, particularly to get to Orange County Hospital and events at Passmore and Seymour. In addition to this, better transit services between Downtown Raleigh, Chapel Hill, and Durham, with a specific request for stops at the Zen Center along Highway 86.

Residents also would like to see infrastructure improvements, including more sidewalks for pedestrians along U.S. 70 and expanded bike lanes, particularly to accommodate mountain

bikes. There were suggestions for the addition of extra lanes for cars in downtown Mebane. Improved communication regarding buses and real-time updates was also mentioned.

It was suggested that the project team should communicate with the Orange County Reentry Council to discuss enhancing transit accessibility to job opportunities, especially those in the industrial sector with varying shift times. Additionally, residents have expressed interest in a Mebane circulator to foster better connections between Hillsborough and Mebane, coupled with the installation of bike racks on any new transit services within Mebane.

#### **Question 2: What type of transit service improvements would you like to see in Orange County? (34 total stickers)**

In response to improving transit services in Orange County, various suggestions were made to meet the community's needs and enhance accessibility. One suggestion was to increase the frequency of transit services and offer better on-demand options, preferably through user-friendly apps. Additionally, residents want easier access to transit information with recommendations such as organizing travel training events at senior centers and providing clearer directions on buses. Installing real-time information signs was also mentioned.

Affordability was a significant concern, with requests for making transit more affordable or even free for riders. There was a strong emphasis to include smaller communities in Mebane like West



End, East End, Buckhorn, Perry Hill, and White Level in transit planning discussions, as these areas tend to be often overlooked.

Lastly, a suggestion was made to add train stops in Mebane to increase connectivity.

### **Question 3: What times of day are most important to you for travel? (29 total stickers)**

When considering the most important times for travel, residents mentioned the midday hours on weekdays, particularly from 11 AM to 2 PM. They mentioned the importance of having reliable transportation options during these hours to meet diverse travel needs. To increase transit usage, there was a suggestion to make transit more affordable or even free.

## **POLLING BOARDS**

Transit riders were given the opportunity to share their thoughts on three questions by placing colored dot stickers on unstaffed polling boards placed in transit shelters. A total of 92 responses were collected. Below is a summary of comments received.

### **Question 1: Where would you like to see better transit services? (28 total stickers)**

In response to where riders would like to see better service, Cone Health transit riders are seeking improved services within Mebane and enhanced connectivity between Hillsborough and Mebane. Additionally, there is a desire for improved connectivity between

Hillsborough and Chapel Hill/Carrboro, as well as routes from unincorporated Orange County into Mebane.

UNC Hospital transit riders expressed interest in connectivity between Hillsborough and Chapel/Carrboro, as well as connections between Hillsborough and Durham.

Durham Tech transit riders also mentioned the importance of connecting Hillsborough and Chapel Hill/Carrboro.

Faucette Street transit riders prioritized connecting Hillsborough and Mebane, service from unincorporated Orange County into Durham, and better service within Hillsborough. Notably, none of the polling board responses mentioned the need to connect Orange County to other regional destinations.

### **Question 2: What type of transit service improvements would you like to see in Orange County? (32 total stickers)**

Transit riders across all locations would like increased scheduled bus service that follows a fixed route with designated stops. Riders mentioned the importance of shorter and more reliable wait times. Additionally, there were requests for enhancements to the comfort and amenities at bus stops.

### Question 3: What times of day are most important to you for travel? (32 total stickers)

Weekdays during peak commute times (7-9 AM and 4-6 PM) were mentioned as the most important travel times among all transit users. This was closely followed by weekdays before 7 AM, between 9 AM and 4 PM, and after 6 PM, as well as throughout the day on Saturdays and Sundays.

## SURVEY SUMMARY

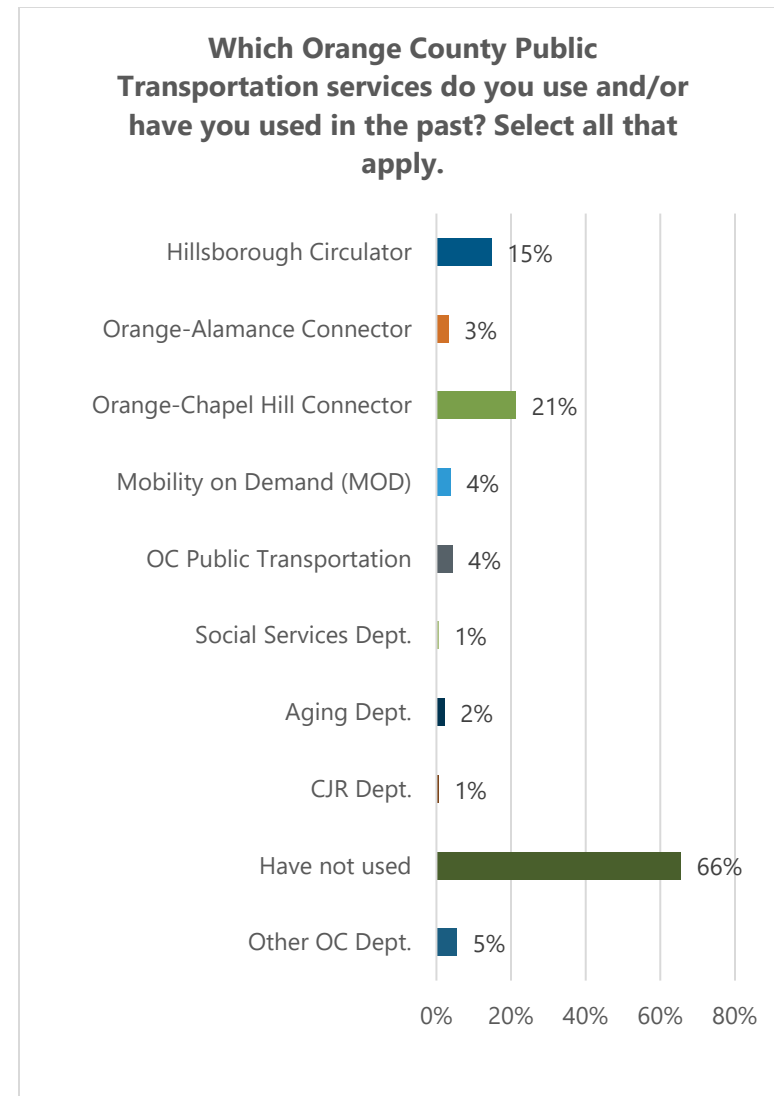
A total of 191 participants completed the online or paper survey.

## Survey Results

### Participant Transit Service Use

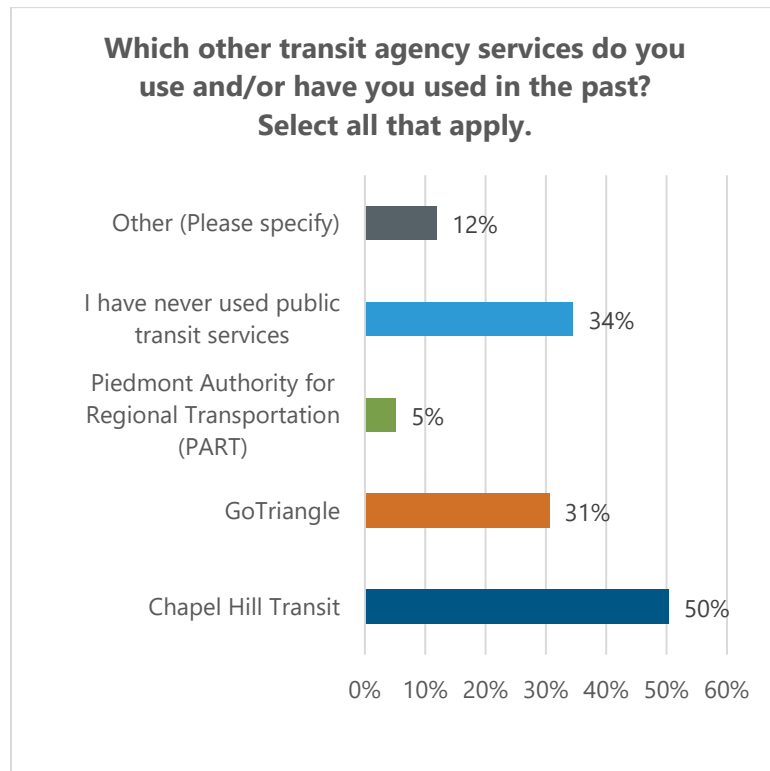
Participants were asked about their use of public transit services within and outside of Orange County.

Sixty-six (66) percent of survey participants have not used Orange County Public Transportation. Twenty-one (21) percent preferred the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector, while 15 percent used the Hillsborough Circulator. Nine (9) percent scheduled rides through an Orange County Department, and 5 percent use other Orange County departments to schedule their rides.



### Other Transit Agency Services

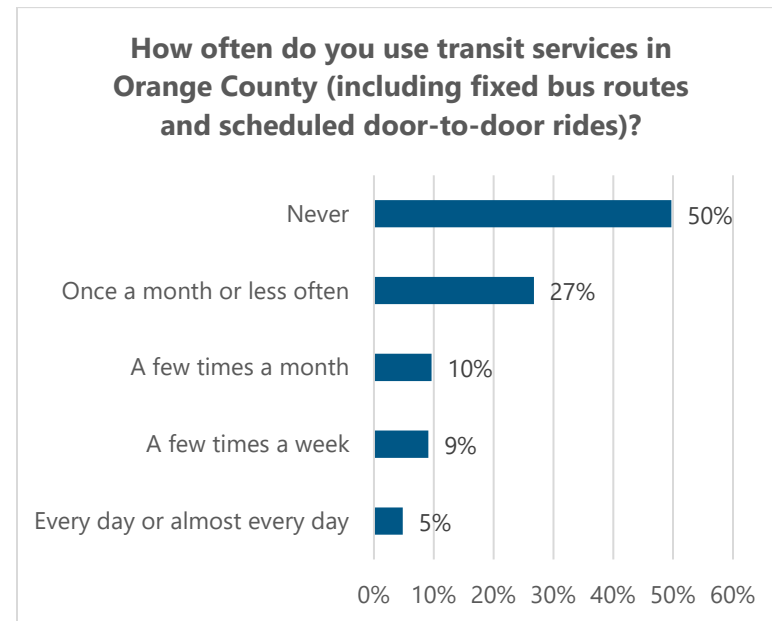
Respondents were also asked what transit services outside of Orange County they currently use or have used in the past.



Chapel Hill Transit was used by 50 percent of participants, followed by GoTriangle services at 31 percent. Additionally, 12 percent used public transit in cities such as Raleigh, Durham, New York, and Boston, while 34 percent reported that have never used public transit services.

### Frequency of Transit Use

Respondents were asked how often they used Orange County Public Transit services.



Twenty-seven (27) percent of participants used Orange County transit services once a month or less, with half (50 percent) saying they never use them. Only 5 percent of participants reported that they use Orange County transit services daily. Nine (9) percent reported that they used the services a few times a week.

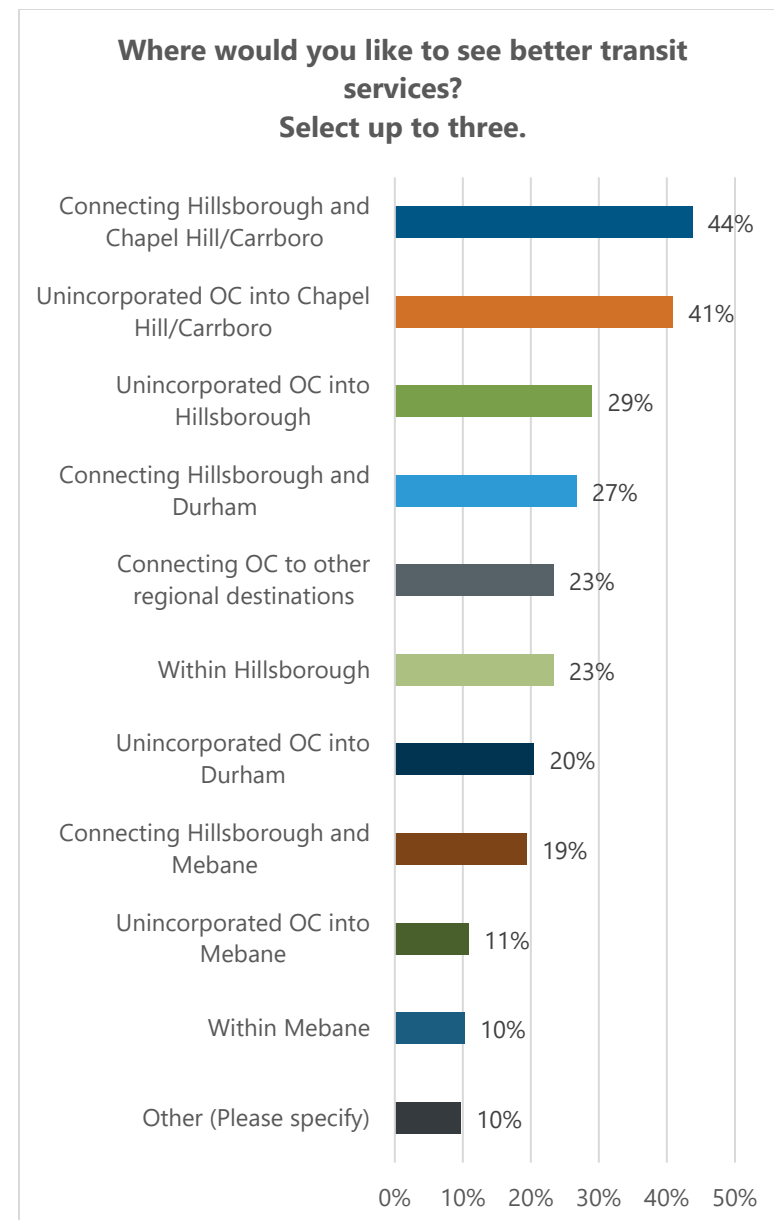
## Participant Preferences

Participants were asked to share their preferences and ideas for transit improvements, focusing particularly on service areas, hours of operation, and service quality.

### Service Area

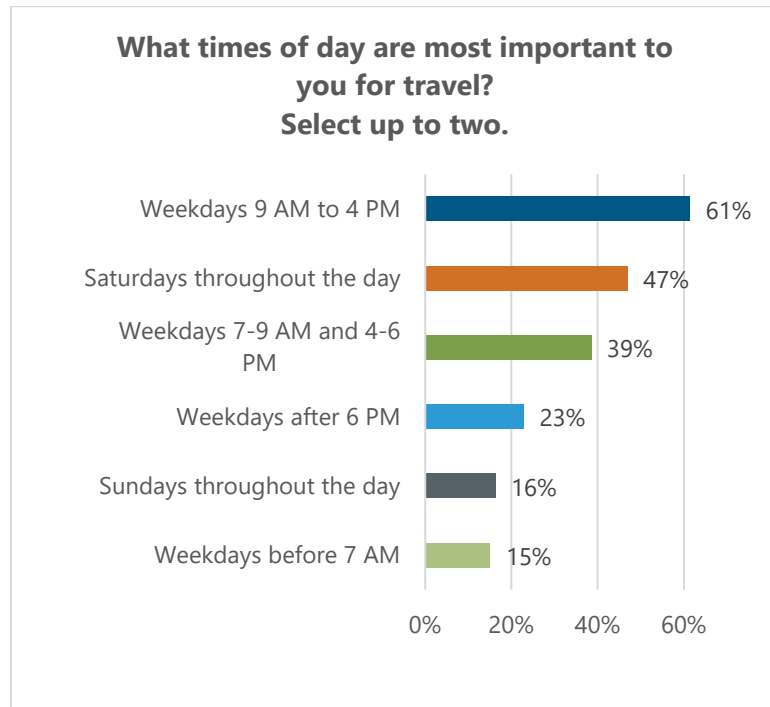
Participants were asked where they would like to see transit service improvements in Orange County.

Respondents were most interested in improving transit services connecting Chapel Hill to Carrboro and Hillsborough (44 percent) and to unincorporated areas of Orange County (41 percent). Additionally, 29 percent expressed interest in improvements connecting Hillsborough to unincorporated areas of Orange County, and 27 percent wanted transit connections from Hillsborough to Durham. Interest in transit improvements in Mebane varied from 10 percent to 19 percent, depending on destination.



### Transit Schedule

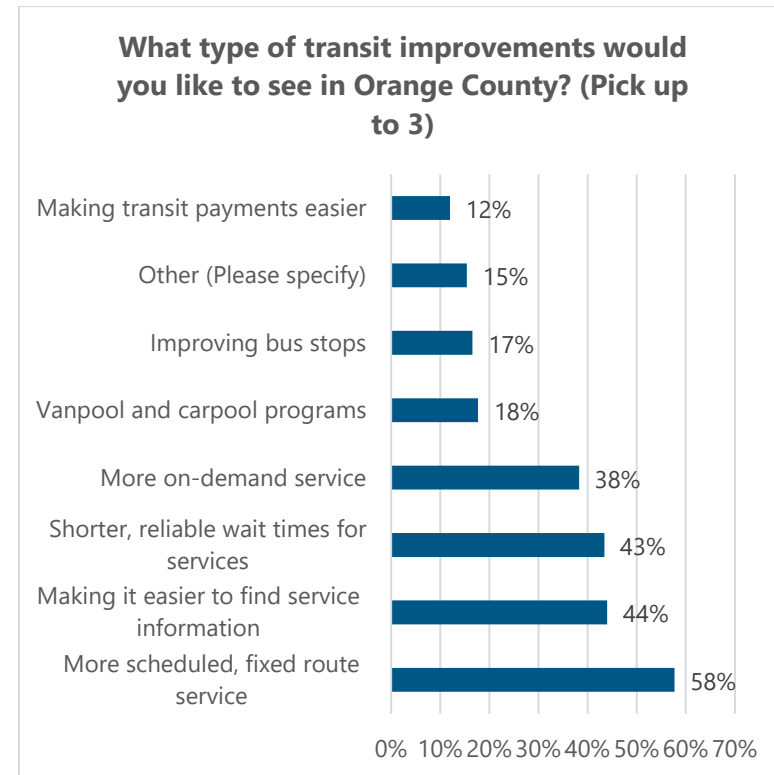
Participants were asked what days and times were most important for them to travel.



Participants are most likely to travel between 9 AM and 4 PM (61 percent), throughout the day on Saturdays (47 percent), and during typical weekday commuting times (39 percent)—defined as weekdays between 7 AM and 9 AM and 4 PM and 6 PM. Sixteen (16) percent of participants travel throughout the day on Sundays and 15 percent travel early mornings on weekdays before 7 AM.

### Transit Improvements

Participants were asked what type of transit improvements they would like to see in Orange County.



Fifty-eight (58) percent of participants expressed their primary interest in having more scheduled fixed bus routes. Additionally, 44 percent indicated interest in easier access to information about transit service, while 43 percent want shorter and more reliable wait times and 38 percent would like more on-demand transit services.



## 3 PHASE 2 OVERVIEW

The second phase of public engagement for the Orange County SRTP was conducted to gather feedback on the proposed strategies and implementation timeline, as well as continue to educate residents about Orange County's transportation options. The engagement period took place from August 19 to September 12, 2024. Target audiences were transit riders, Orange County residents, stakeholders, and both riders and non-riders from traditionally underserved communities. Similar engagement strategies were used as in Phase 1. 133 people completed the survey online or in person, and over 125 people participated in conversations with project staff at pop-up events and presentations.

## PARTICIPATION DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey included optional questions about participants' demographic backgrounds. These questions had response rates ranging from 83 percent (location) to 91 percent (age). Overall,

- 76 percent of participants identified as white
- 46 percent were 65 or older
- 36 percent had annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more
- 15 percent reported having a disability
- 45 percent lived in Hillsborough

## KEY FINDINGS

Overall, engagement participants were supportive of the proposed changes and improvements in the SRTP. The most common feedback themes on the proposals included:

- Service requests to where people live that were not served within the plan timeframe, including fixed route service to communities south of Carrboro and north of Hillsborough
- General support for changes to the Hillsborough Circulator
- Support for coordination of the 420 and Orange Chapel Hill Connector, although some riders preferred more walkable local stops to the express service
- A few comments were concerned about the lack of all-day fixed route service between Hillsborough and Mebane, but many respondents also expressed an understanding of the tradeoffs and supported the MOD improvements as an alternative
- Significant support for easier booking of MOD by phone
- Significant support for weekend demand response service
- Walkability improvements were popular, in particular on Orange Grove Road and near Walmart and Aldi.

Beyond the specific SRTP proposals, reliability continues to be a major concern for all services, including missed trips and lack of clear information, and there was strong support for proposals focused on improving reliability and communication.

## TACTICS AND TOOLS

The following activities were conducted to engage and collect feedback from residents and stakeholders during Phase 2 of the public engagement period.

### Pop-Up Events

The project team held a series of seven pop-up events at community centers, senior centers, shopping locations, and local events between August 20, 2024, and September 10, 2024. These events provided transit riders and residents an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed changes and learn about existing and future transit services. Pop-ups were conducted at various times of the day at the following locations, chosen based on Phase 1 engagement experience and stakeholder input:

- Passmore Center
- Seymour Center
- Hillsborough Walmart
- Efland Cheeks Community Center Food Distribution
- Eno Arts Mill First Fridays
- Mebane Farmer's Market
- Cedar Grove Community Center

At each event, the project team had an informational board that showed the proposed changes to transit services on a map and provided explanations about each of the services. Additionally, the project team had paper flyers that had the informational board on one side and a survey on the other. People were

encouraged to fill out the survey either online or on paper and submit their feedback prior to the end of the engagement period on September 12, 2024. All information was made available in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. A list of pop-up events, their dates, times, and locations are available in Appendix A.

### Presentations

The project team conducted presentations with the Orange Unified Transportation Board (OUTBoard) and the Mebane Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission (BPAC). The presentations consisted of project updates on the proposed changes in the plan, and opportunities for attendees to provide feedback were provided.

### Survey

The project team administered a brief survey seeking feedback on the proposed changes to transportation services. The survey was distributed both online and in print in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. The survey was open from August 19, 2024, to September 13, 2024. Analysis of the survey results can be found in Appendix D.

## ADVERTISING METHODS

### Project Website

The project website developed for Phase 1 of the public engagement process was updated to include the proposed transportation service changes and plan overviews, Phase 2

engagement activity locations and times, and a link to the online survey.

## Transit Posters

The project team hung up informational posters on bus stops throughout Orange County that provided a link to the online survey. The posters were hung up at the following bus shelter locations:

- Fulton St. at VA Hospital
- Erwin Rd. at Fulton St. (Duke University Hospital)
- UNC Hospital/Health Sciences Library
- Durham Tech, Orange County Campus
- Waterstone Dr. at UNC Health Care-Hillsborough Campus
- Faucette Mill Rd. at Cornelius St.
- Churton St. at Margaret Ln.
- Mebane Cone Health Park & Ride

## Project Flyers

In addition to the transit posters that were hung up across Orange County, project flyers were distributed to various locations throughout Orange County. These locations included residence complexes, libraries, community centers, schools, hospitals, and senior centers. The flyers included information on proposed changes to transportation services, along with a paper copy of the survey.

## Email Campaigns and Social Media

Building on the efforts from Phase 1, the project team collaborated with plan partners to promote Phase 2 public engagement activities through email campaigns and social media outreach. A comprehensive media kit, featuring a digital flyer, social media assets, newsletter text, and email templates, was prepared in both English and Spanish. This kit was shared with stakeholders and agency partners for dissemination through their respective channels. Additionally, the media kit was sent to various community organizations throughout Orange County.

## 4 PHASE 2 FINDINGS

### POP UP EVENTS

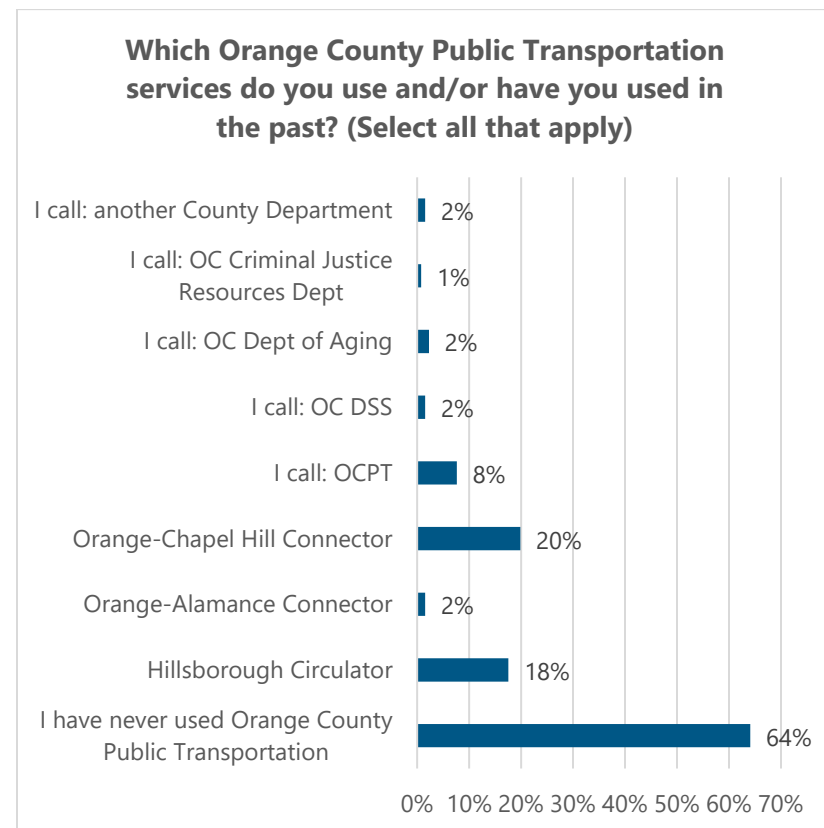
Unlike Phase 1, with unique polling boards for pop-ups, Phase 2 pop-up events focused on distributing the paper survey and informational sheet, answering questions, and making the public aware of the transportation options offered in Orange County. Specific feedback and comments were written down on paper surveys and entered into the survey result data. Where possible, project staff counted the conversations held at the following events:

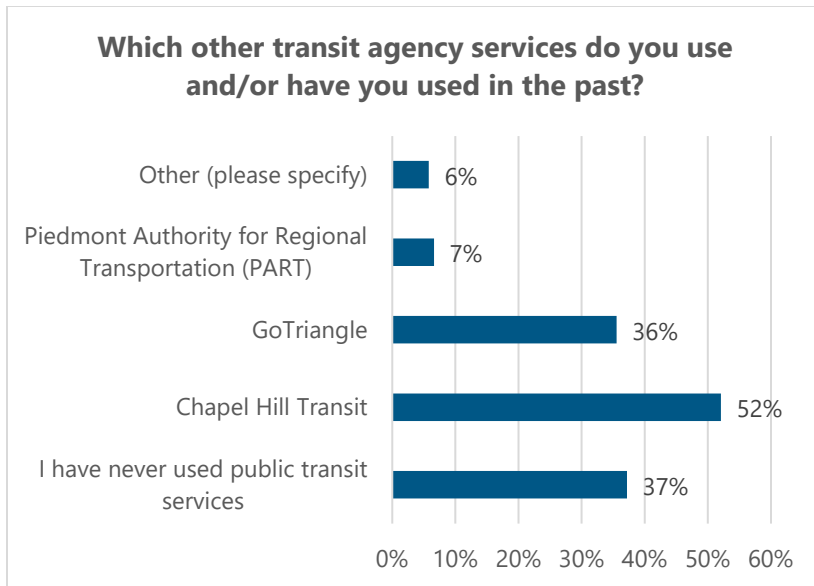
- Passmore Center: 18 conversations
- Seymour Center: 13 conversations
- Eno Arts Mill First Fridays: 25 conversations
- Mebane Farmer’s Market: 20 conversations

Other events focused on distributing information and gathering written feedback, and the number of specific conversations was not recorded.

## SURVEY RESULTS

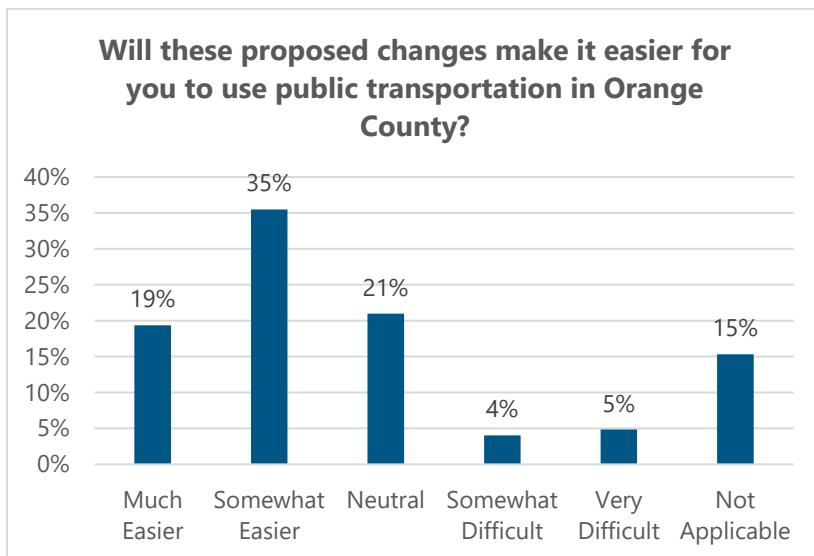
133 people submitted responses to the survey online or on paper. All submitted surveys were completed in English. Participants were asked about their transit use, both for Orange County Public Transportation services and in the region more widely. A majority of respondents have never used OCPT, but more than half have utilized at least some form of transit in the region.





Along with an open-ended comment box, the key question in the survey looked to gain feedback on the impact of the proposed changes on respondents. Over half of survey respondents said the proposals would make using transit at least somewhat easier for them.

Among those who said they have used OCTS services in the past, 70% responded that the changes would make it either somewhat or much easier to use.



# APPENDIX D1: OUTREACH LOCATIONS

## Pop Up Events

### Phase 1:

- Monday, 3/18, Hillsborough Walmart, 2 pm – 4 pm
- Tuesday, 3/19, Orange County Seymour Senior Center, 11 am – 1 pm
- Tuesday, 3/19, Passmore Center, 3 pm – 5 pm
- Wednesday, 3/20, Durham Tech OC Campus, 9 am – 11 am
- Wednesday, 3/20, UNC Health Care-Hillsborough Campus, 3 pm – 5 pm
- Saturday, 3/23, Downtown Mebane Eggstravaganza and Bunny Hop 11 am – 2 pm

### Phase 2:

- Tuesday, 8/20, Passmore Center, 9:30 am - 11:30 am
- Tuesday, 8/20, Hillsborough Walmart 2 pm – 4 pm
- Wednesday, 8/21, Orange County Seymour Senior Center 10 am - 12 pm
- Friday, 9/6, Efland Cheeks Community Center, 9:30 am - 11:30 am
- Friday, 9/6, First Fridays at Eno Arts Mill 6 pm to 9 pm

- Saturday, 9/7, Mebane Farmer’s Market, 8:30 am – 12 pm
- Tuesday, 9/10, Cedar Grove Community Center 11 am - 12 pm

## Polling Board Locations

### Phase 1:

- Churton Street at Margaret Lane (Hillsborough)
- Faucette Mill Road at Cornelius Street (Hillsborough)
- Durham Tech OCC Park-and-Ride (Hillsborough)
- UNC Hospital (Hillsborough)
- Cone Health Park and Ride (Mebane)

### Phase 2:

- None

## Transit Poster Locations

### Phase 1:

- None

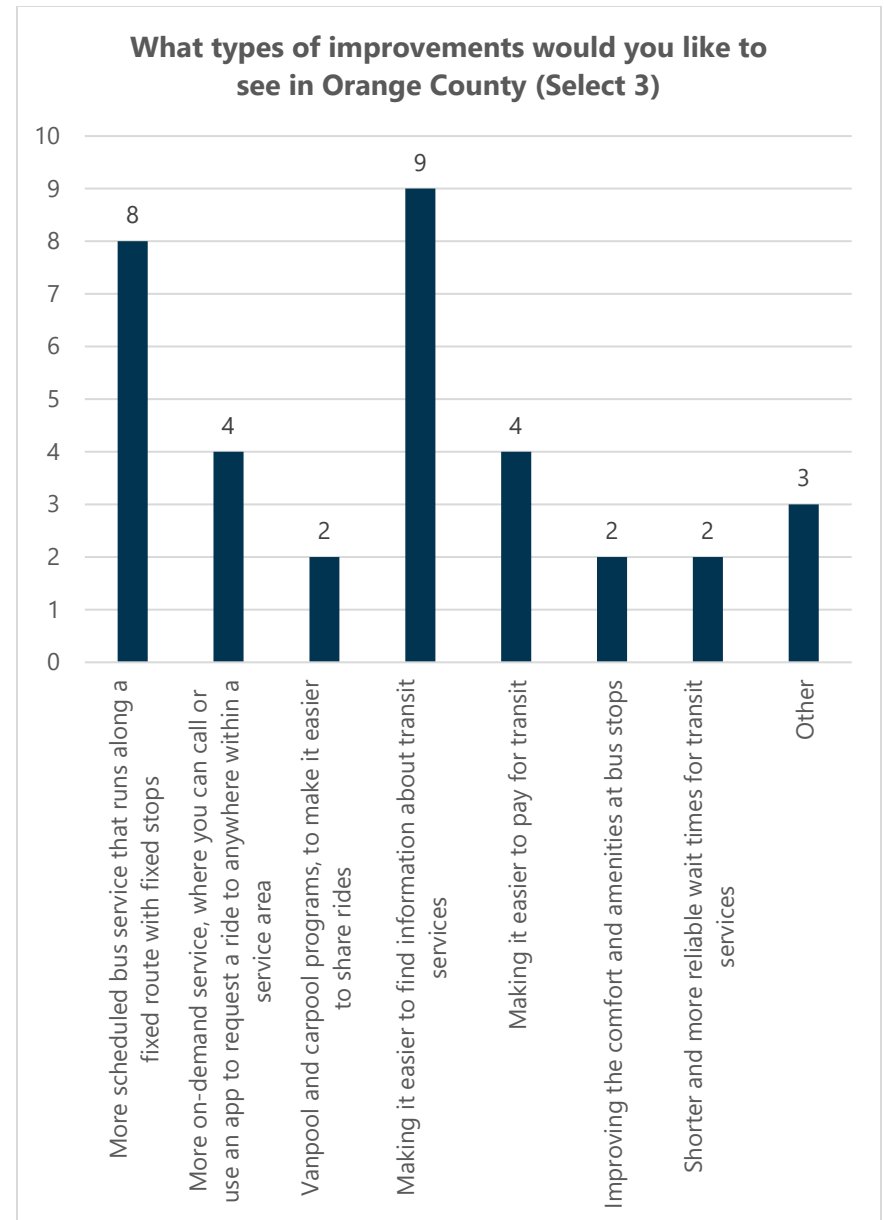
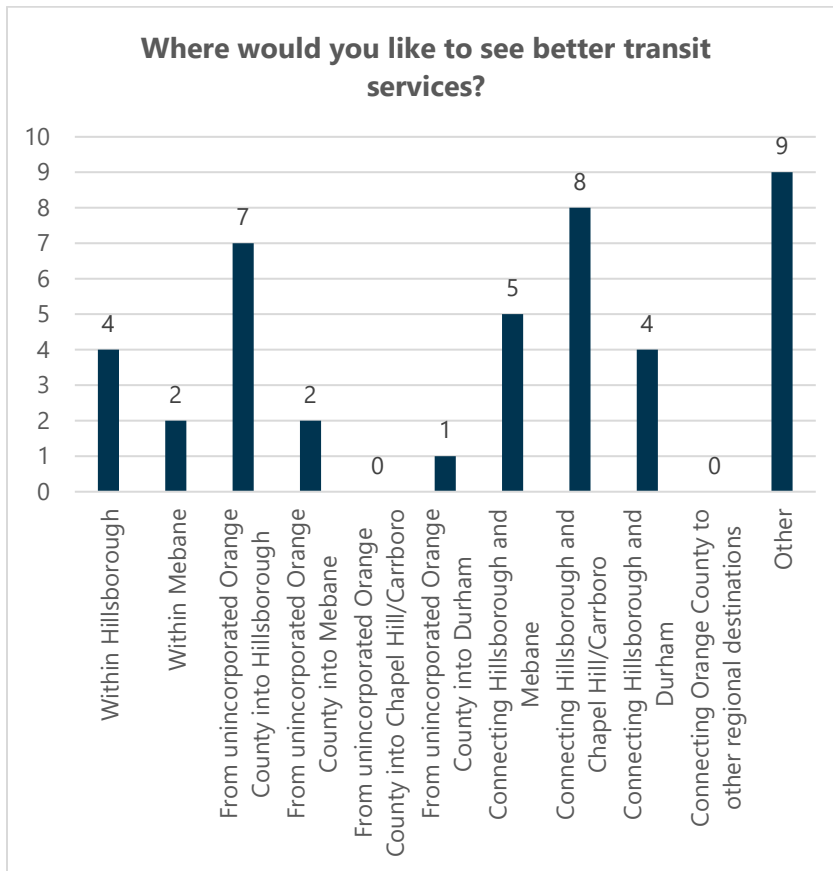
### Phase 2:

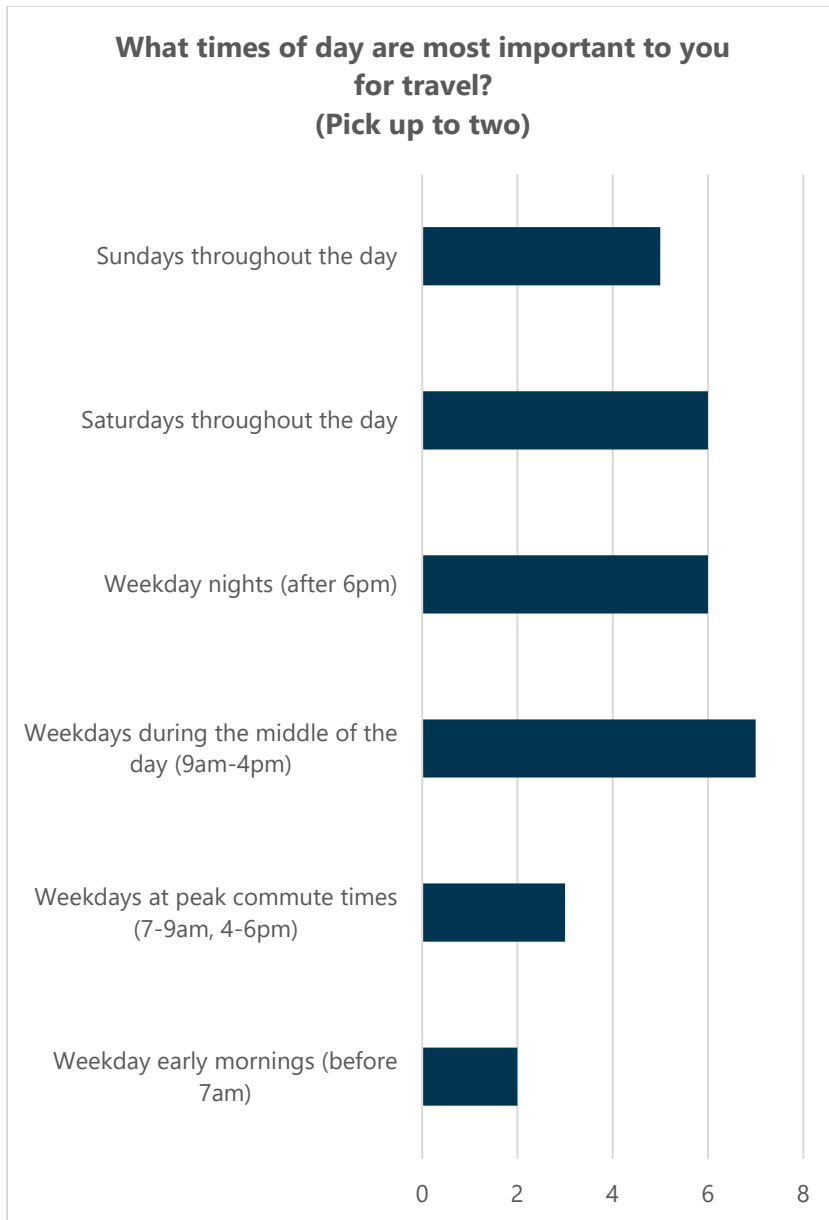
- Churton Street at Margaret Lane (Hillsborough)
- Faucette Mill Road at Cornelius Street (Hillsborough)
- Durham Tech OCC Park-and-Ride (Hillsborough)
- UNC Hospital (Hillsborough)
- Cone Health Park and Ride (Mebane)
- Erwin Rd at Fulton Street, Duke University Hospital (Durham)



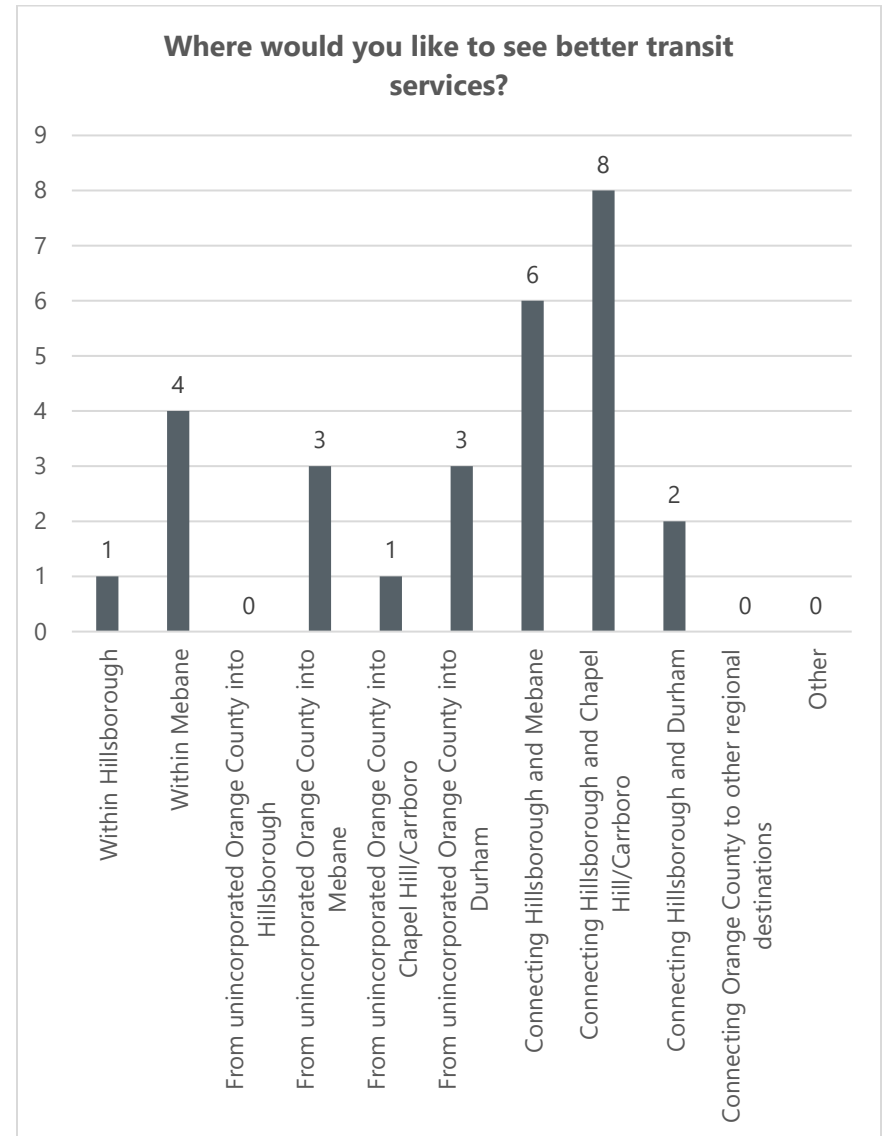
# APPENDIX D2: PHASE 1 POLLING BOARD COMMENTS

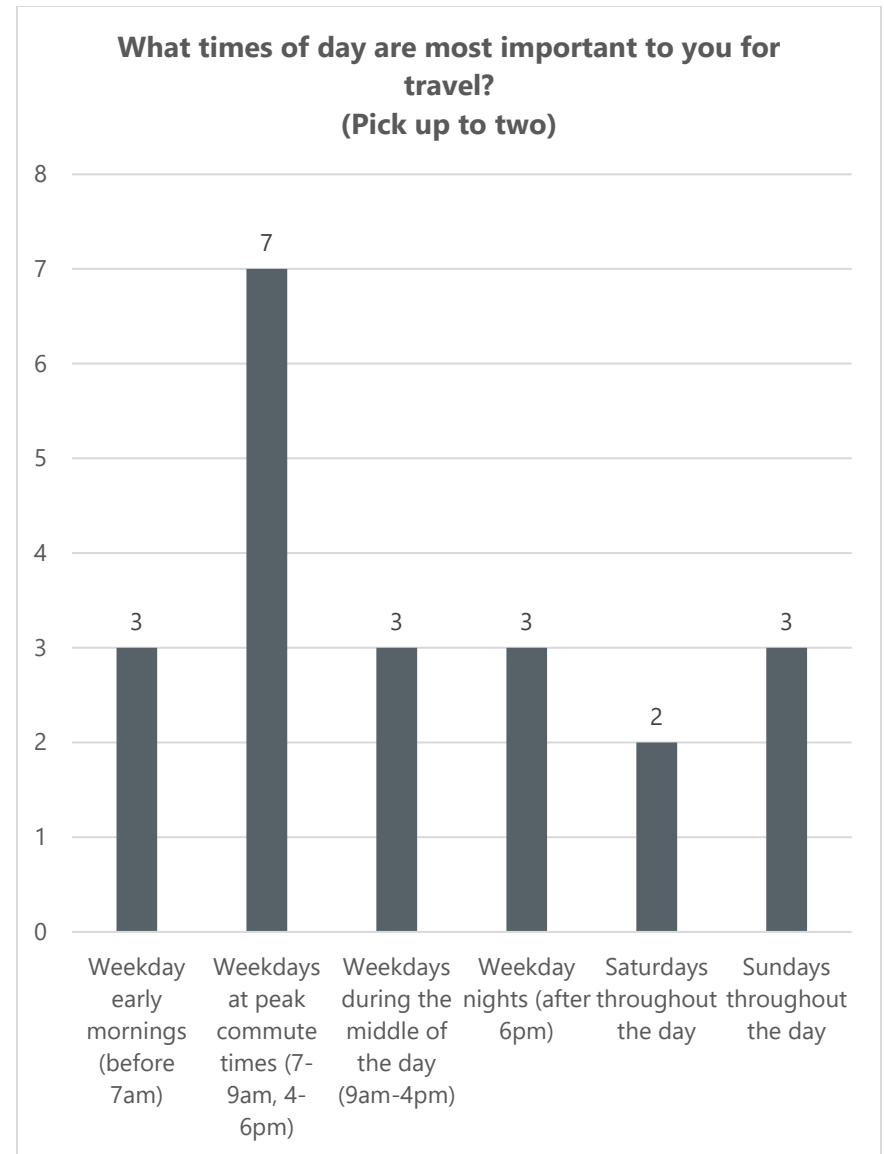
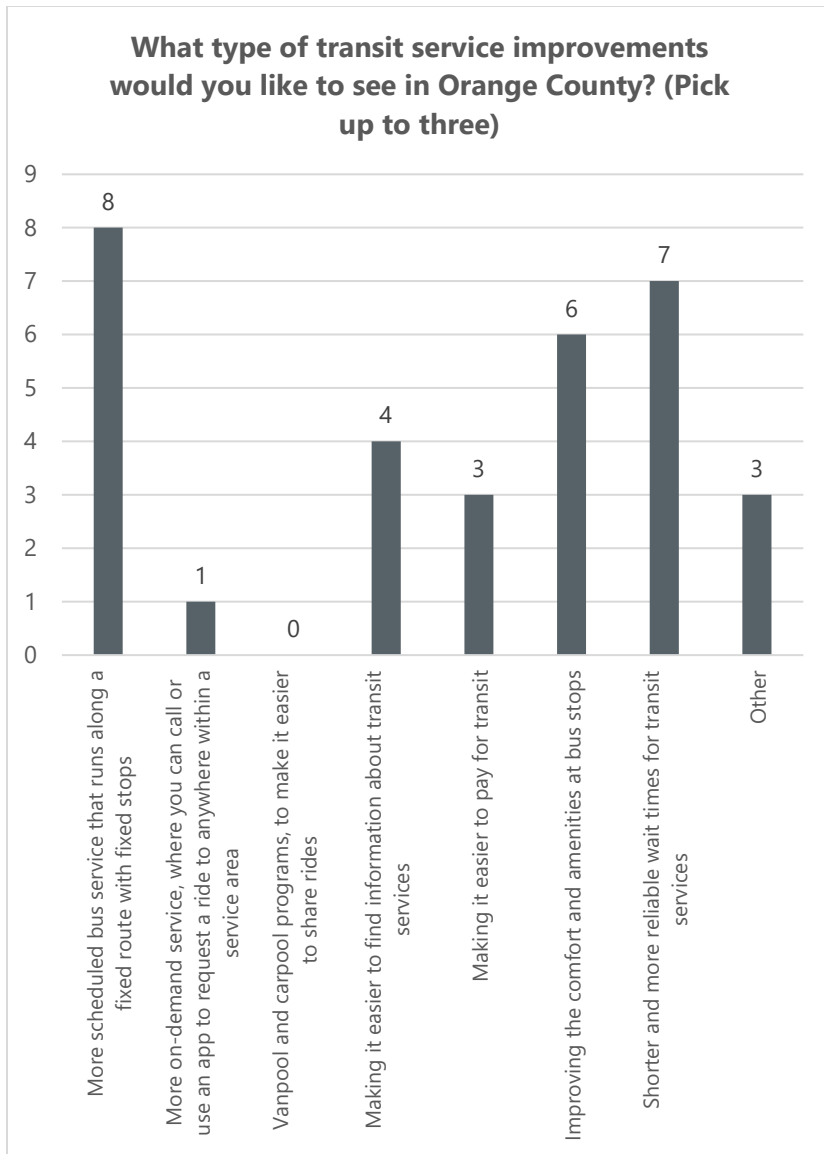
## Pop Up Events





## Polling Boards





# APPENDIX D3: PHASE 2 SURVEY COMMENTS

**What do you like or dislike about the proposed strategies? Please reference specific route or project names.**

Love the Mebane circulator. Great opportunity for older adults and people without cars to access shopping and Cone Health. Also expanding MOD seems helpful for affordability and accessibility. Will some of the vehicles be wheelchair-accessible? I hope eventually these services with run on weekends too.

I most likely the Mebane Circulator (I live in Mebane) and a connection to Alamance Community College, but also the prospect of more routes in general.

I like the on-demand services for rural areas in southern Orange county where I live.

All sounds great. Hopefully it will get done

When and if I can no longer drive, improving MOD will be critical; and increasing the frequency of the Hillsborough Circulator will also be a big help, IF it runs reasonably close to my house.

There are some strategies that I like, however others don't seem to be helpful, especially as a resident of Alamance County rather than Orange County. Tanger Outlets would be a good location for cash loading UMO cards.

Still doesn't at all serve me (heritage hills)

I like the expanded service hours and the mobility manager, but would like to see even more improvements in walking to transit

I have not been able to find the changes to the Hillsborough circulator bus on the plan. I don't know what they are.

This proposals are all addressing central and northern Orange County. For those of us in the southern part of the county, but outside the Chapel Hill-Carrboro city limits, we have very few options other than to drive to a park and ride for CH Transit. Walking and cycling are not safe options on our roads. I really thought this process would address our southern Orange County needs as well. I'm disappointed in this plan.

I wish the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector could come as far south as Southern Village.

May be assumed, but routes & times info. need to be readily available, individualized with prompts & easy to understand ie: where are you leaving from, where do you want to go & when do you need to be there, then take ... at. ... that you can get & Updated throughout day . As example, looking at proposed map of routes, I find them very difficult to read.

need southern route access

There is nothing for Heritage Hills

Need more transit between Chapel Hill and Carrboro and Durham. Need fewer walking distances for those who are disabled.

Orange-Chapel Hill Connector

We are in heritage hills at the southern end of Smith level Rd. I didn't see any public transport near us in the proposal.

I'm 85 and live in the stouthern rural part of the county and need transportation from dusk to dark. I don't understand how the on demand service works but it won't be of use to me when I need it because of the hours proposed.

local should make more quick stops in neighborhoods...Just a stop and go...I live in a development with no side walks to walk to a bus stop as so many do and I would use a bus much more often with a quick stop in my neighborhood, Yet, I wont risk walking on a highway to catch a bus...You dont even need a full stop unless you see a passenger waiting....thanks for allowing our input

I like the focus on helping people walk to transit stops and protecting them while waiting for their transit vehicles. I also like the focus on increasing the number of vehicles and frequency of buses.
North Orange County isn't being helped - an area that really needs additional transportation to access services, typically located in southern part of Orange Co
I live in Hillsborough and currently drive. But I am interested about public transit. Me and my wife are in our 70's.
While I like the expanded hours of service on the Hillsborough Circulator and two routes, it's not clear to me about having to transfer onto the second route as well as wait time.
"free" transportation really means that someone else pays. From experience in other jurisdictions, any free transport (even for a select group) is never enough. There is always clamor to add more people to the "free" group. The taxes in Orange County are already quite high; it does not make sense to plan to add more liabilities.
The cost to people on fixed incomes that are suffering from inflation due to government spending.
It doesn't make sense to offer the Orange-Chapel Hill Connector when GoTriangle serves the same route. You should give funds to GoTriangle to operate the 420 bus, and use the savings to extend the hours to 9 pm (which would make the service far more valuable for people traveling between Chapel Hill and Hillsborough for events)
Appreciate increased options w/ Hillsborough circulator split
Please, please make it so people can call for trips on MOD. Don't have a smartphone or computer access and I can't use MOD.
No service between Chatham county line and Carrboro
I like increasing walking access to transit.

I was hoping that the plan would address the future train station in Hillsborough. I have a vision disability, and so I use the part bus to travel back and forth between Chapel Hill and Greensboro, where I have family. The PART bus does not run on Saturdays and Sundays, and it is rather inconvenient to take the train to Durham, and then transfer to CH via bus. I am waiting for the train station to come in and it will be very important for the area to plan for that going forward.
I would use the 420/Circulator to go to Hillsborough, but the ridership pattern is a little confusing. Simplifying the relationship between the 420 and the Circulator will be helpful!
it won't help me drive less. It would be nice for the circular to run on weekends.
2X Hboro circulator, new Mebane circulator and eliminating under-utilized routes
(Eventual) consolidation of Hillsborough-Chapel Hill connector - but removing their redundancies and better integrating Orange County transit services to the rest of the Triangle's fare and tracking systems should be a much higher priority!
Like the addition of workability to the Transportation. Does that mean sidewalk improvements?
Need better weekend services & higher frequencies between Chapel Hill & Hillsborough during the week
Nothing seems to be expanding to the area where I live
Doesn't effectively address access for elderly in rural areas.
More access to MOD services when I can no longer drive a personal vehicle
We live at Gatemoore on Rhonda Rd in South Hillsborough. Hopefully the new stop shown at Cheshire Dr as close as possible to Oakdale Dr + improved frequency will finally allow us to get on the bus to go to Walmart of the Sportsplex - 45 min is still a lot though.

Don't like. We need a train and/or light rail. Not these connectors! I don't know anyone who uses them! Misallocation of resources. And lack of strategic vision.
I like the circulators
No service along 70 from Mebane to Hillsborough.
In the plan, there is reference to the one-way aspect of the Hillsborough Circulator that makes it difficult for passengers because they have to ride all the way around the route even if the stop they need is only 1 stop away. But the plans don't seem to address that issue at all, from what I can see, which I think they should.
possible on-demand rides in north-east of county
Mebane! More about Mebane Connectivity
I cannot ride from fairview neighborhood to the occ college, they need a stop in between to share if you're going to split it, otherwise some people will have to walk/run to the next stop
Support the advertising campaign, send a pamphlet with water/electric bill
Allow people to get senior rider card at Seymour Center instead of having to go to Transportation Center (very hard to get there without the card!)
Not enough MOD drivers, serious issues with MOD reliability; cancelled trips, hard to book, sometimes not operating
Need safety improvements at Aldi crossing
Like the new HC. Want OCPT to be more focused on transporting the general population
Like the improved H2H alignment and the ability to get from CH to Passmore
Wish it was two way to reduce walking or time on the bus; like the split loop idea
Bus is a good choice because parking is hard downtown

Excited about weekend demand response service; go to Walmart on the weekends; wish it would begin sooner
Moving the bus off 86 will make it impossible to take either the 420 or OCH; to get more people to ride it, add more stops along the corridor, it can be hard to walk to bus stops
Adding the proposed transit hub in Efland would increase the likelihood that I would use the public transportation system.
I am one of the many who have never used any of the transit methods.
expanding MOD route, please include making scheduling appointments easier for individuals who don't have access to internet or smart phones
I like making the Hillsborough Circulator 2-way. I like improving foot traffic routes to public transit. I like the public info campaign.
More service !
"Improve Bus Stops, build new Rural Transit Hubs, and improve Walking Access to Transit so that people can comfortably get to and wait for transit." THIS IS CRUCIAL FOR ORANGE COUNTY and should be a free service for senior citizens who live nowhere near CHC BUS TRANSIT that runs BUSES DAILY ALMOST EMPTY OF PEOPLE AND IT IS ALWAYS FREE OF CHARGE. THE RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR ORANGE COUNTY SENIORS IS A DISGRACE AND WOEFULLY INADEQUATE. THE SENIOR CENTERS DO THEIR BEST BUT CANNOT KEEP UP WITH DEMAND -- WHICH IS TO TRAVEL WITHOUT HAVING TO DRIVE OR UNABLE TO DRIVE. LET'S CHANGE THAT, PLEASE.
The shorter loops are an excellent idea. The problem is a lot of West Hillsborough is left out of the changes. Lakeshore Drive residents would have a very difficult time using the circulator.
The Hillsborough circulator routes eliminate easy access for the west Hillsborough neighborhoods. Having a stop at the intersection of west Hill and West King would allow widespread access for this area.



<p>Easy walking access to transport from Churton Grove neighborhood to downtown Hillsborough as well as Chapel Hill. Would have very much liked to continue being able to get to Mebane from Hillsborough as I consider future needs when old enough not to be able to drive (20-30 years from now) and desire to minimize driving now (ecological reasons).</p>
<p>Traveling from Alamance County, aka, the affordable community to Chapel Hill care appointments aka in the desired community will be difficult without the connector.</p>
<p>A fixed route parallel to the ODX needs to run all day. Towns with current populations well above 10,000 need to be connected.</p>
<p>I like having the Hillsborough circulator running every 45 minutes; expanded weekend service; improved walking access to transit; and the new Mebane circulator</p>
<p>Will there be any rural hub spots up 57 towards NE corner of Orange?</p>
<p>I live in a rural area between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill and there is no public bus stop or circulator zone that I can take. It would be nice to be able to take public transit but this would require the county to expand the zones further and add a route along Orange Grove Rd.</p>
<p>I like the proposed 2 Hillsborough circulator routes which will make going to downtown Hillsborough more convenient</p>
<p>I like the start time change to 6:30am</p>
<p>Please re-prioritize (to 2025-2027) your =&gt;Sunday&lt;= bus services within Chapel Hill/Carrboro city limits. Personally, I'd love to see a Sunday bus on the N route (from Harris Teeter/Meadowmont to downtown and connecting every half hour with the N/S lines, between Eubanks Rd and Southern Village....from 9 am to 2 pm Sundays.</p>


<p>Areas of focus, expanded hours, regular routes all great for planning and using.</p>
<p>It will expand services to older, disabled and/or low-income individuals. Much more should be done to help connect these isolated individuals to services, resources and engagement.</p>
<p>I like that there will be more hubs in the rural areas. We do not have transportation and cannot get to our appointments, doctor and pharmacy. My husband bikes 15 miles one way to get to the doctor/pharmacy.</p>
<p>Increasing frequency of Hillsborough Circulator would make it much more user friendly</p>
<p>The A loop of the Hillsborough Circulator has low ridership. Consider eliminating the portion along 70 and only have one loop. Transit Plan funds should not be used for Mebane Circulator as it is in Alamance County. Perhaps the two stops in Orange County can be funded but nothing more. Orange County has a mobility manager already. Confirm that there would still only be one but perhaps with an expanded role. Bus stops should be sufficient for passengers. Calling them transit hubs is confusing. Please clarify that funding sources other than the transit plan funds will be used for sidewalk projects unless directly adjacent to a bus stop. Begin OCH at 9:30, not 8:30 to further reduce overlap with the 420. The demand for transit maps are misleading. The range of density and colors used imply that there is similar demand in Hillsborough as there is at UNC. This should be corrected. Show raw data or more fairly illustrate the differences.</p>

# APPENDIX D4: ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS

## PHASE 1 MATERIALS

### Polling Board

**HELP IMPROVE TRANSIT IN ORANGE COUNTY! ¡AYÚDENOS A MEJORAR EL TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO EN EL CONDADO ORANGE!**



**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN  
CONDADO ORANGE  
PLAN DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO A CORTO PLAZO

The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan will identify opportunities to improve transit services in Orange County, NC and create an implementation plan for 2025 to 2030.  
Let us know what improvements you would like to see!

El Plan de Transporte Público a Corto Plazo del Condado Orange identificará oportunidades para mejorar los servicios de transporte público en el Condado Orange, NC, y creará un plan de implementación para 2025 a 2030.  
¡Háganos saber qué mejoras le gustaría ver!


**1 Where would you like to see better transit service? (Pick up to three)**  
¿Dónde le gustaría ver un mejor servicio de transporte público? (escoja hasta tres)

Place a sticker next to your preference(s).  
Coloque un sticker junto a sus preferencias.

<p style="color: #003366; font-weight: bold;">1</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">Within Hillsborough <i>Dentro de Hillsborough</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Within Mebane <i>Dentro de Mebane</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">From unincorporated Orange County into Hillsborough <i>Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Hillsborough</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">From unincorporated Orange County into Mebane <i>Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Mebane</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">From unincorporated Orange County into Chapel Hill/Carrboro <i>Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Chapel Hill/Carrboro</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">From unincorporated Orange County into Durham <i>Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Durham</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Connecting Hillsborough and Mebane <i>Conectando Hillsborough y Mebane</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Connecting Hillsborough and Chapel Hill/Carrboro <i>Conectando Hillsborough y Chapel Hill/Carrboro</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Connecting Hillsborough and Durham <i>Conectando Hillsborough y Durham</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Connecting Orange County to other regional destinations <i>Conectando el Condado Orange con otros destinos regionales</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Other <i>Otras</i></p>
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**2 What type of transit service improvements would you like to see in Orange County? (Pick up to three)**  
¿Qué tipo de mejoras al transporte público le gustaría ver en el Condado Orange? (escoja hasta tres)

Learn more about the project and take the full survey by 3/31 at [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)!  
¡Obtenga más información sobre el proyecto y responda la encuesta antes del 3/31 en [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)!



Questions? Email [info@pppconsulting.net](mailto:info@pppconsulting.net)  
¿Preguntas? Envíe un email a [info@pppconsulting.net](mailto:info@pppconsulting.net)

<p style="color: #003366; font-weight: bold;">2</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">More scheduled bus service that runs along a fixed route with fixed stops <i>Más servicio de autobuses programado que recorre una ruta fija con paradas fijas</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">More on-demand service, where you can call or use an app to request a ride to any where within a service area <i>Más servicio a pedido, donde puede llamar o usar una aplicación para solicitar un viaje a cualquier lugar dentro de un área de servicio</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Vanpool and carpool programs, to make it easier to share rides <i>Programas de vanpool y carpool, para que sea más fácil compartir viajes</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Making it easier to find information services <i>Facilitar la búsqueda de información sobre los servicios de transporte público</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Making it easier to pay for transit <i>Facilitar el pago del transporte público</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Improving the comfort and amenities at bus stops <i>Mejorar la comodidad y las amenidades en las paradas de autobuses</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Shorter and more reliable wait times for transit services <i>Tiempos de espera más cortos y confiables para los servicios de transporte público</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Other <i>Otras</i></p>
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**3 What times of day are most important to you for travel? (Pick up to two)**  
¿Qué momentos del día son más importantes para usted para trasladarse? (escoja hasta 2)

**USE THE STICKERS TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOVE**  
**UTILICE LOS STICKERS PARA RESPONDER LAS PREGUNTAS ANTERIORES**

<p style="font-size: 8px;">Weekday early mornings (before 7am) <i>Temprano por la mañana entre semana (antes de las 7 am)</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Weekdays at peak commute times (7-9am, 4-6pm) <i>Días laborables en horas pico (de 7 a 9 am, de 4 a 6 pm)</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Weekdays during the middle of the day (8am-4pm) <i>Días laborables durante el mediodía (8 am a 4 pm)</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Weekday nights (after 6pm) <i>Noches entre semana (después de las 6 pm)</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Saturdays throughout the day <i>Sabados durante todo el día</i></p>	<p style="font-size: 8px;">Sundays throughout the day <i>Domingos durante todo el día</i></p>
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# Survey (English)

## HELP US IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE!

The Orange County Short Range Transit Plan will identify opportunities to improve transit services in Orange County, NC and create an implementation plan for 2025 to 2030. Let us know what improvements you would like to see!

Please return this survey by March 31, 2024 through:

Take it online at [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)  
Email a scan or photo of each page to [info@pppconsulting.net](mailto:info@pppconsulting.net)

Mail to Public Participation Partners  
8502 Six Forks Rd, Ste. 102  
Raleigh, NC 27615



Scan the QR code to learn more about the project or visit [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

## ORANGE COUNTY SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

4) Which city, town, or community do you live in?  
(e.g., Hillsborough, Cedar Grove, Efland)

5) Where would you like to see better transit service?  
(Pick up to 3)

- Within Hillsborough
- Within Mebane
- From unincorporated Orange County into Hillsborough
- From unincorporated Orange County into Mebane
- From unincorporated Orange County into Chapel Hill/Carrboro
- From unincorporated Orange County into Durham
- Connecting Hillsborough and Mebane
- Connecting Hillsborough and Chapel Hill/Carrboro
- Connecting Hillsborough and Durham
- Connecting Orange County to other regional destinations
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Unincorporated Orange County refers to any area within the County outside of the town or city boundaries of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, and Mebane.

6) What times of day are most important to you for travel?  
(Pick up to 2)

- Weekday early mornings (before 7am)
- Weekdays at peak commute times (7-9am, 4-6pm)
- Weekdays during the middle of the day (9am-4pm)
- Weekday nights (after 6pm)
- Saturdays throughout the day
- Sundays throughout the day

7) What type of transit improvements would you like to see in Orange County? (Pick up to 3)

- More scheduled bus service that runs along a fixed route with fixed stops
- More on-demand service, where you can call or use an app to request a ride to anywhere within a service area
- Vanpool and carpool programs, to make it easier to share rides
- Making it easier to find information about transit services
- Making it easier to pay for transit
- Improving the comfort and amenities at bus stops
- Shorter and more reliable wait times for transit services
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## HELP US IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE!

## ORANGE COUNTY SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

8) How else would you like to see public transit improved in Orange County?

9) Subscribe for Project Updates: Would you like to be notified of project updates and opportunities to provide feedback? If so, please provide your email address below.

### Voluntary Demographic Questions

The following questions ask about you and your background. This information helps us work toward our goal of inclusive engagement. Please note that your responses will be used solely for data collection, will remain CONFIDENTIAL, and are OPTIONAL.

1) Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

2) What is your gender identity?

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

3) What is your age?

- Younger than 18
- 18-29
- 30-44
- 45-64
- 65 and older
- Prefer not to answer

4) How well do you speak English?

- Very well
- Well
- Okay
- Very little
- Not at all
- Prefer not to answer

5) What language do you speak at home?

6) Which of the following best describes you? (Choose all that apply)

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- White or Caucasian
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to answer

7) What is your approximate annual household income?

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$75,000
- \$75,000 and above
- Prefer not to answer

8) How many cars does your household have access to?

- None
- One
- Two
- Three or more

9) What is your home zip code?

# Survey (Spanish)

## ¡AYÚDENOS A MEJORAR EL SERVICIO DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO!

El Plan de Transporte Público a Corto Plazo del Condado Orange identificará oportunidades para mejorar los servicios de transporte público en el Condado Orange, NC, y creará un plan de implementación para 2025 a 2030. ¡Háganos saber qué mejoras le gustaría ver!

Responda esta encuesta antes del 31 de marzo de 2024:

Responda en línea en [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

Escanee o tome una foto de cada página y envíelas por email a [info@pppconsulting.net](mailto:info@pppconsulting.net)

Envíela por correo postal a  
Public Participation Partners  
8502 Six Forks Rd, Ste. 102  
Raleigh, NC 27615



Escanee el código QR para conocer más sobre el proyecto o visite [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

1) ¿Qué servicios de transporte público del Condado Orange utiliza o ha utilizado en el pasado? (seleccione todas las que correspondan)

- Hillsborough Circulator
  - Orange-Alamance Connector
  - Orange-Chapel Hill Connector
  - Servicio de movilidad bajo demanda (MOD)
- Llamo para programar un viaje con el Condado Orange:
- Transporte público
  - Departamento de Servicios Sociales
  - Departamento de Envejecimiento
  - Departamento de Recursos de Justicia Penal
  - Otro departamento del condado: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nunca he usado el transporte público del Condado Orange.

2) ¿Qué otros servicios de agencias de transporte utiliza o ha utilizado en el pasado? (seleccione todas las que correspondan)

- Chapel Hill Transit
  - GoTriangle
  - Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)
  - Otro: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nunca he usado los servicios de transporte público

3) ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los servicios de transporte público (autobuses de ruta fija y viajes programados puerta a puerta) en el Condado Orange?

- Todos los días o casi todos los días
- Algunas veces a la semana
- Algunas veces al mes
- Una vez al mes o menos
- Nunca

## CONDADO ORANGE PLAN DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO A CORTO PLAZO

4) ¿En qué ciudad, pueblo o comunidad vive? (por ejemplo, Hillsborough, Cedar Grove, Efland)

5) ¿Dónde le gustaría ver un mejor servicio de transporte público? (escoja hasta 3)

- Dentro de Hillsborough
- Dentro de Mebane
- Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Hillsborough
- Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Mebane
- Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Chapel Hill/Carrboro
- Desde áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange hasta Durham
- Conectando Hillsborough y Mebane
- Conectando Hillsborough y Chapel Hill/Carrboro
- Conectando Hillsborough y Durham
- Conectando el Condado Orange con otros destinos regionales
- Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Por áreas no incorporadas del Condado Orange nos referimos a cualquier área dentro del condado fuera de los límites urbanos de Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough y Mebane.

6) ¿Qué momentos del día son más importantes para usted para trasladarse? (escoja hasta 2)

- Temprano por la mañana entre semana (antes de las 7 am)
- Días laborables en horas pico (de 7 a 9 am, de 4 a 6 pm)
- Días laborables durante el mediodía (9 am a 4 pm)
- Noches entre semana (después de las 6 pm)
- Sábados durante todo el día
- Domingos durante todo el día

7) ¿Qué tipo de mejoras al transporte público le gustaría ver en el Condado Orange? (escoja hasta 3)

- Más servicio de autobús programado que recorra una ruta fije con paradas fijas
- Más servicio a pedido, donde puede llamar o usar una aplicación para solicitar un viaje a cualquier lugar dentro de un área de servicio
- Programas de vanpool y carpool, para que sea más fácil compartir viajes
- Facilitar la búsqueda de información sobre los servicios de transporte público
- Facilitar el pago del transporte público
- Mejorar la comodidad y las amenidades en las paradas de autobuses
- Tiempos de espera más cortos y confiables para los servicios de transporte público
- Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

## ¡AYÚDENOS A MEJORAR EL SERVICIO DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO!

## CONDADO ORANGE PLAN DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO A CORTO PLAZO

8) ¿De qué otra manera le gustaría que se mejorara el transporte público en el Condado Orange?

9) Suscríbase para recibir actualizaciones del proyecto: ¿le gustaría recibir notificaciones sobre las actualizaciones del proyecto y las oportunidades para brindar comentarios? Si es así, proporcione su dirección de email a continuación.

### Preguntas demográficas voluntarias

Las siguientes preguntas se refieren a usted y sus antecedentes. Esta información nos ayuda a trabajar hacia nuestro objetivo de participación inclusiva. Por favor tenga en cuenta que sus respuestas se utilizarán únicamente para la recopilación de datos, serán CONFIDENCIALES y son OPCIONALES.

1) ¿Tiene usted alguna discapacidad?

- Sí
- No
- Prefiero no responder

2) ¿Cuál es su identidad de género?

- Hombre
- Mujer
- Non-binario
- Prefiero no responder

3) ¿Cuál es su edad?

- Menor de 18 años
- 18-29
- 30-44
- 45-64
- 65 años o más
- Prefiero no responder

4) ¿Qué tan bien habla inglés?

- Muy bien
- Bien
- Más o menos
- Muy poco
- Nada
- Prefiero no responder

5) ¿Qué idioma habla en casa?

6) ¿Cuál de las siguientes opciones le describe mejor? (escoja todo lo que corresponda)

- Asiático o isleño del Pacífico
- Negro o afroamericano
- Hispano o latino
- Amerindio o nativo de Alaska
- Blanco o caucásico
- Otro: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefiero no responder

7) ¿Cuál es el ingreso anual aproximado de su hogar?

- Menos de \$15,000
- \$15,000 a \$25,000
- \$25,000 a \$50,000
- \$50,000 a \$75,000
- \$75,000 o más
- Prefiero no responder

8) ¿A cuántos automóviles tiene acceso su hogar?

- Ninguno
- Uno
- Dos
- Tres o más

9) ¿Cuál es el código postal de su hogar?




## Social Media Posts


### Facebook/ Instagram

#### Post Week 1


Help us improve transit service! Let us know what improvements you would like to see in Orange County by 2030. Attend a pop-up event throughout the month of March:

 Hillsborough Walmart – 501 Hampton Pointe B, Hillsborough, NC


March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.\*

 Seymour Center - 2551 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill, NC


March 19<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.\*

 Passmore Center - 103 Meadowlands Drive, Hillsborough, NC


March 19<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

 Durham Tech OC Campus - 525 College Park Road, Hillsborough, NC

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 p.m. – 11:00 a.m.

 UNC Hospital Hillsborough- 430 Waterstone Drive, Hillsborough, NC 27278

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

 Mebane Eggstravaganza – Downtown Mebane, Mebane, NC

March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Can't make it out? Learn more and take the survey by **March 31<sup>st</sup>**: [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com)

\*Weather Permitting. Please visit the website for updates.

#### Post Week 2

Reminder: Don't Miss Out on Your Chance to Improve Transit Service in Orange County!

Hey Orange County residents! We want to hear from you to shape the future of transit service in our community by 2030.

Can't decide what changes you'd like to see? Attend one of our pop-up events for more information. Learn more and take the survey by **March 31<sup>st</sup>**: [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com)

Your feedback is important to this process!

### Post Week 3

The Deadline for Comments is March 31, 2024

Don't miss the chance to share your thoughts on what transit improvements you'd like to see in Orange County for 2025 to 2030.

For more information and to take the survey, please visit [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com).

### X (Twitter)

#### Post Week 1

Help us improve transit service! Let us know what improvements you would like to see in Orange County by 2030. **Learn more and take the survey by March 31<sup>st</sup> at: [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com).**

#### Post Week 2

Reminder: Help Shape the Future of Transit Service in Orange County!

Help us improve transit service in Orange County! Your input is crucial in making improvements by 2030. Attend one of our pop-up events for more information and take the survey by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Visit the website at [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com) to take the survey see a full list of pop-ups.

### Post Week 3

The Last Chance to Take the Survey!

Don't miss the chance to share your thoughts on what transit improvements you'd like to see in Orange County for 2025 to 2030.

For more information and to take the survey by March 31<sup>st</sup>, please visit [www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com).

### Digital Ad

ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**HELP US IMPROVE  
TRANSIT SERVICE**

AYÚDENOS A MEJORAR EL SERVICIO  
DE TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO

**TAKE THE SURVEY BY MARCH 31<sup>st</sup>**  
To share your thoughts on potential transit  
service improvements for 2025 to 2030.

**RESPONDA LA ENCUESTA ANTES DEL 31 DE MARZO**  
Para compartir sus ideas sobre mejoras potenciales al transporte  
público entre 2025 y 20230

[www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com)



## Transit Flyer



**ORANGE COUNTY**  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**HELP US  
IMPROVE  
TRANSIT  
SERVICE**

**AYÚDENOS A  
MEJORAR EL SERVICIO  
DE TRANSPORTE  
PÚBLICO**

### TAKE THE SURVEY BY MARCH 31st

To share your thoughts on potential transit service improvements for 2025 to 2030



### RESPONDA LA ENCUESTA ANTES DEL 31 DE MARZO

Para compartir sus ideas sobre mejoras potenciales al transporte público entre 2025 y 2030

[www.orangecountysrtp.com](http://www.orangecountysrtp.com)

# PHASE 2 MATERIALS

## Informational Board

We have a plan to improve transit in Orange County— please tell us what you think!

*Tenemos un plan para mejorar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange, ¡díganos lo que piensa!*

Orange County Transportation Services is looking for input on the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan, which has transit improvements proposed for 2025 to 2030.

Los Servicios de Transporte del Condado de Orange están buscando opiniones sobre el borrador del Plan de Transporte Público a Corto Plazo del Condado de Orange, el cual propone mejoras en el transporte público para el periodo 2025 a 2030.

**PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR 2025 TO 2027 PROYECTOS PROPUESTOS PARA 2025 A 2027**

- **Improve Mobility on Demand (MOD) by adding more vehicles and creating five zones.**  
*Mejorar la Movilidad a Pedido (o Mobility on Demand [MOD] en inglés) mediante la incorporación de más vehículos y la creación de cinco zonas.*
- **Reroute Hillsborough Circulator into two routes that run every 45 minutes, 6:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m. on weekdays.**  
*Redirigir el "Hillsborough Circulator" en dos rutas que circulen cada 45 minutos, de 6:30 a.m. a 6:30 p.m. entre semana.*
- **Implement new Mebane Circulator, running hourly 7 a.m.–6 p.m. on weekdays.**  
*Implementar el nuevo "Mebane Circulator", que funcionará cada hora de 7 a.m. a 6 p.m. entre semana.*
- **Adjust Orange–Chapel Hill Connector to run express on I-40, to better align with GoTriangle 420.**  
*Ajustar el "Orange–Chapel Hill Connector" para que circule de manera expés por la I-40, para alinearse mejor con GoTriangle 420.*
- **Discontinue Orange–Alamance connector and reinvest funds into Mebane Circulator and improved MOD on the Hillsborough–Mebane corridor.**  
*Discontinuar el "Orange–Alamance Connector" y reinvertir los fondos en el "Mebane Circulator" y en la mejora de la Movilidad a Pedido (MOD por sus siglas en inglés) en el corredor Hillsborough–Mebane.*
- **Make it easier to book Demand Response, pay for transit, and learn about transit options.**  
*Facilitar la reservación de servicios de Respuesta a la Demanda (Demand Response en inglés), el pago del transporte público y la información sobre las opciones de transporte público.*

**PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR 2028 TO 2030 PROYECTOS PROPUESTOS PARA 2028 A 2030**

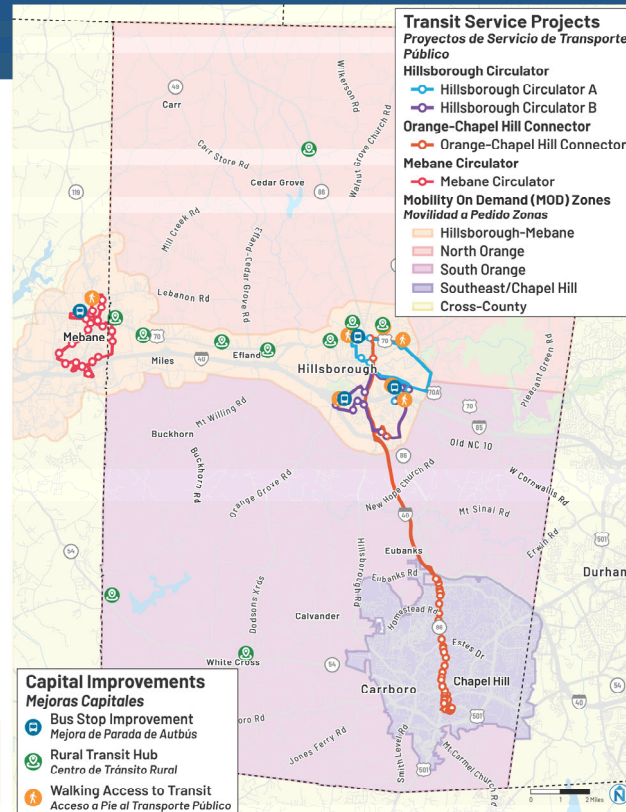
- **Expand Demand Response weekend service to better provide needed trips on Saturdays and Sundays.**  
*Expandir el servicio de Respuesta a la Demanda (Demand Response en inglés) los fines de semana para mejor proporcionar los viajes necesarios los sábados y domingos.*
- **Hire a Mobility Manager to help people learn about and use transit in Orange County.**  
*Contratar a un Gestor de Movilidad para ayudar a la gente a conocer y utilizar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange.*
- **Conduct a Fare Study to explore reduced or free fares.**  
*Realizar un Estudio de Tarifas para explorar tarifas reducidas o gratuitas.*
- **Improve Bus Stops, build new Rural Transit Hubs, and improve Walking Access to Transit so that people can comfortably get to and wait for transit.**  
*Mejorar las paradas de autobús, construir nuevos Centros de Tránsito Rurales y mejorar el acceso a pie al transporte público para que la gente pueda llegar a él y esperararlo cómodamente.*

Take our survey and learn more about the draft plan by September 11th, 2024 by scanning this QR Code, visiting orangecountysrtp.com, or calling (919) 245-2007.

Obtenga más información sobre el borrador del plan, responda a nuestra encuesta y envíe sus comentarios hasta el 11 de septiembre del 2024 en orangecountysrtp.com, escaneando este código QR o llamando al (919) 245-2007.



ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN



# Survey (English)

## Help us improve transit service!

ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

We want to hear your feedback on the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan, with proposals for improving transit services in Orange County, NC for 2025 to 2030. Review the full plan at [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com) or the summary on the other side of this survey page before giving us your thoughts below.

Please return this survey by September 11, 2024. You can:

- Take it online at [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)
- Email a scan or photo of each page to [OrangeSRTP@gmail.com](mailto:OrangeSRTP@gmail.com)
- Mail to  
Orange County Transportation Services  
600 NC-86, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
Phone: (919) 245-2007



Scan the QR code to learn more about the project or visit [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

Which Orange County Public Transportation services do you use and/or have you used in the past? (Select all that apply.)

- Hillsborough Circulator
- Orange-Alamance Connector
- Orange-Chapel Hill Connector
- Mobility on Demand (MOD) Service
- I call to schedule a ride with Orange County:
  - Public Transportation
  - Department of Social Services
  - Department of Aging
  - Criminal Justice Resources Department
  - Other County Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- I have never used Orange County Public Transportation

Which other transit agency services do you use and/or have you used in the past? (Select all that apply.)

- Chapel Hill Transit
- GoTriangle
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- I have never used public transit services

Will these proposed changes make it easier for you to use public transportation in Orange County?

- Much Easier
- Somewhat Easier
- Neutral
- Somewhat Difficult
- Very Difficult
- N/A

What do you like or dislike about the proposed strategies? Please reference specific route or project names.

### Voluntary Demographic Questions

The following questions ask about you and your background and help us work towards our goal of inclusive engagement. Please note that your responses will be used solely for data collection, and will remain confidential, and are optional.

What city, town, or community do you live in? (e.g., Hillsborough, Cedar Grove, Efland Grove, Efland)

Do you have a disability?  
 Yes  No  Prefer not to answer

What is your age?  
 Younger than 18  18-29  
 30-44  45-64  65 and older  
 Prefer not to answer

What language do you speak at home?

Which of the following best describes you? (Choose all that apply.)

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Native American or Alaska Native
- White or Caucasian
- Prefer not to answer

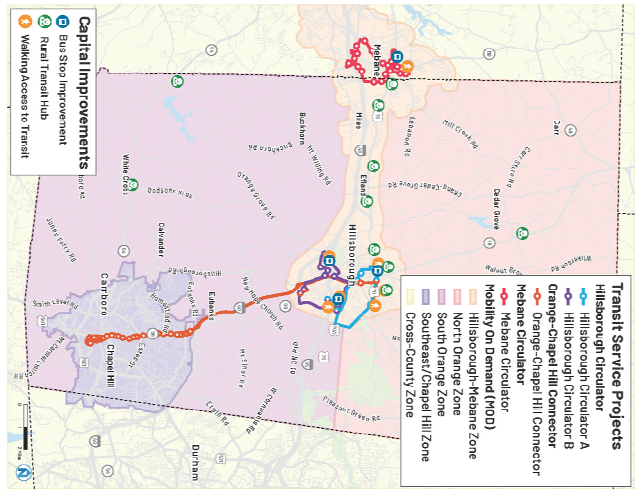
What is your approximate annual household income?

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$75,000
- \$75,000 and above
- Prefer not to answer



Take our survey and learn more about the draft plan by September 11th, 2024 by scanning this QR code visiting [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com), or calling (919) 245-2007.

- **Expand Demand Response**  
Weekend service to better provide needed trips on Saturdays and Sundays.
- **Hire a Mobility Manager** to help people learn about and use transit in Orange County.
- **Implement new Mebane Circulator**, running hourly 7 a.m.–6 p.m. on weekdays.
- **Adjust Orange-Chapel Hill Connector** to run express on I-40 to better align with GoTriangle 420.
- **Discontinue Orange-Alamance connector and reinvest funds** into Mebane Circulator and improved MOD on the Hillsborough-Mebane corridor.
- **Make it easier to book Demand Response**, pay for transit, and learn about transit options.
- **Conduct a Fare Study** to explore reduced or free fares.
- **Improve Bus Stops, and improve Walking Access to Transit** so that people can comfortably get to and wait for transit.



**We have a plan to improve transit in Orange County—  
 tell us what you think!**

**ORANGE COUNTY  
 SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN**



# Survey (Spanish)

## ¡Ayúdenos a mejorar el servicio de transporte público!

ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Queremos conocer su opinión sobre el borrador del Plan de Transporte Público a Corto Plazo del Condado de Orange, con propuestas para mejorar los servicios de transporte público en el Condado de Orange, NC para el periodo 2025-2030. Revise el plan completo en línea en [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com) o el resumen que se encuentra al reverso de esta página de la encuesta antes de darnos su opinión a continuación.

Por favor, devuelva esta encuesta a más tardar el 9 de septiembre del 2024:

- Respondiendo a la encuesta en línea en [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)
- Escaneando o tomando una foto de cada página y enviándolo por correo electrónico a [OrangeSRTP@gmail.com](mailto:OrangeSRTP@gmail.com)
- Enviándola por correo a:  
Orange County Transportation Services, 600 NC-86, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
Phone: (919) 245-2007



Escanee el código QR para obtener más información sobre el proyecto o visite [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

¿Qué servicios de transporte público del Condado de Orange utiliza y/o ha utilizado en el pasado (seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen)

- Hillsborough Circulator
- Orange-Alamance Connector
- Orange-Chapel Hill Connector
- Servicio de Movilidad a Pedido (o *Mobility on Demand [MOD] Service* en inglés)

Llamo para programar un viaje con el Condado de Orange:

- Transporte público
- Departamento de Servicios Sociales (*Department of Social Services* en inglés)
- Departamento de la Tercera Edad (*Department of Aging* en inglés)
- Departamento de Recursos de Justicia Penal (*Criminal Justice Resources Department* en inglés)
- Otro departamento del condado:

Nunca he utilizado el Transporte Público del Condado de Orange

### Preguntas demográficas voluntarias

Las siguientes preguntas se refieren a usted y a sus antecedentes. Esta información nos ayuda a avanzar hacia nuestro objetivo de participación inclusiva. Tenga en cuenta que sus respuestas se utilizarán únicamente para recopilar datos, se mantendrán confidenciales y son opcionales.

¿En qué ciudad, pueblo o comunidad vive? (Por ejemplo, Hillsborough, Cedar Grove, Efland Grove, Efland)

¿Tiene alguna discapacidad?  
 Sí  No  Prefiero no contestar

¿Cuál es su edad?  
 Menos de 18  18-29  30-44  45-64  
 65 años o más  Prefiero no contestar

¿Qué idioma habla en casa?

¿Qué otros servicios de agencias de transporte público utiliza y/o ha utilizado en el pasado? ((seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen)

- Chapel Hill Transit
- GoTriangle
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)
- Otro: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nunca he utilizado servicios de transporte público

¿Éstos cambios propuestos le harían más fácil utilizar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange?

- Mucho más fácil
- Algo más fácil
- Neutral
- Algo difícil
- Muy difícil
- N/A

¿Qué le gusta o no de las estrategias propuestas? Por favor, haga referencia a nombres concretos de rutas o proyectos.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

¿Cuál de las siguientes opciones le describe mejor? (seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen)

- Asiático(a) o de las Islas del Pacífico
- Indígena de las Américas o nativo(a) de Alaska
- Negro(a)/ afroamericano(a)
- Blanco(a)/Caucásico(a)
- Hispano(a)/Latino(a)
- Prefiero no contestar
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

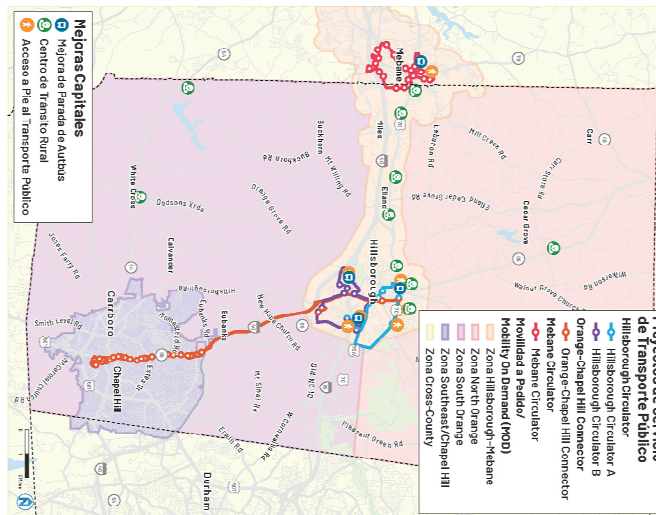
¿Cuál es el ingreso anual aproximado de su hogar?

- Menos de \$15,000
- \$15,000 a \$25,000
- \$25,000 a \$50,000
- \$50,000 a \$75,000
- \$75,000 o más
- Prefiero no contestar



Obtenga más información sobre el borrador del plan, responda a nuestra encuesta y envíe sus comentarios hasta el 11 de septiembre del 2024 en [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com), escaneando este código QR o llamando al (919) 245-2007.

- **Mejorar la Movilidad a Pedido (o Mobility on Demand [MOD] en inglés)** mediante la incorporación de más vehículos y la creación de cinco zonas de rutas que circulen en cada 45 minutos, de 6:30AM a 8:30PM entre semana.
- **Implementar el nuevo "Mebane Circulator"** que funcionará cada hora de 7AM a 8PM entre semana.
- **Ajustar el "Orange-Chapel Hill Connector"** para que circule de manera expres por la I-40, para alinearse mejor con GoTriangle 420.
- **Expandir el servicio de Respuesta a la Demanda (Demand Response en inglés) los fines de semana** para mejorar proporcionar los viajes en cesas los sábados y domingos.
- **Contratar a un Gestor de Movilidad** para ayudar a la gente a conocer y utilizar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange.
- **Realizar un Estudio de Tarifas** para explorar tarifas reducidas o gratuitas.
- **Mejorar las paradas de autobuses, construir nuevos Centros de Tránsito Rurales y mejorar el acceso a pe al transporte público** para que la gente pueda llegar a ellos con más facilidad.
- **Discontinuar el "Orange-Alamance Connector"** y reemplazar los fondos en el "Mebane Circulator" y en la mejora de la Movilidad a Pedido (MOD) por sus siglas en inglés en el corredor Hillsborough-Mebane.
- **Facilitar la reserva** en línea de servicios de Respuesta a la Demanda (Demand Response en inglés), el pago del transporte público y la información sobre las opciones de transporte público.



**Tenemos un plan para mejorar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange, ¡díganos lo que piensa!**  
**ORANGE COUNTY**  
 SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

# Survey (Mandarin)

## 帮助我们改善公交服务！

ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

我们希望听到您对Orange County短期公交计划草案的反馈，其中包括 2025 年至 2030 年改善北卡罗来纳州Orange County公共交通服务的建议。请在 [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com) 上查看完整计划或查看本调查背面的摘要，然后在下面告诉我们您的想法。

请在 2024 年 9 月 11 日之前完成此调查。您可以：

- 在 [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com) 上在线填写
- 将每页的扫描件或照片通过电子邮件发送至 [OrangeSRTP@gmail.com](mailto:OrangeSRTP@gmail.com)
- 邮寄至  
Orange County Transportation Services  
600 NC-86, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
电话：(919) 245-2007



扫描二维码了解有关该项目的更多信息或访问 [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com)

您现在或过去使用过哪些Orange County公共交通服务？  
(选择所有适用的选项。)

- Hillsborough 环线
- Orange-Alamance 连接线
- Orange-Chapel Hill连接线
- 按需出行服务 (MOD)
- 我打电话给Orange County预约乘车：
  - 公共交通
  - 社会服务部
  - 老年部
  - 刑事司法资源部
  - 其他县部门：\_\_\_\_\_

- 我从未使用过Orange County公共交通

您对所提议的策略有何喜欢或不喜欢之处？请提供具体路线或项目名称。

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### 人口统计问卷

以下问题将询问您的背景，并帮助我们实现包容性参与的目标。请注意您的回答将仅用于数据收集，并将保密，所有问题都是可选的。

您居住在哪个城市、城镇或社区？（例如 Hillsborough, Cedar Grove, Efland Grove, Efland）

您是否有残疾？  
 是  否  不想回答

您的年龄是多少？  
 18 岁以下  18-29 岁  
 30-44 岁  45-64 岁  65 岁及以上  
 不想回答

您在家说什么语言？

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您现在或过去使用过哪些其他公共交通机构的服务？  
(选择所有适用的选项。)

- Chapel Hill 公共交通
- GoTriangle
- 皮埃蒙特地区交通管理局 (PART)
- 其他：\_\_\_\_\_

- 我从未使用过公共交通服务

计划中的这些提议是否会让您更轻松地Orange County使用公共交通？

- 非常容易  比较困难
- 比较容易  非常困难
- 一般  不知道

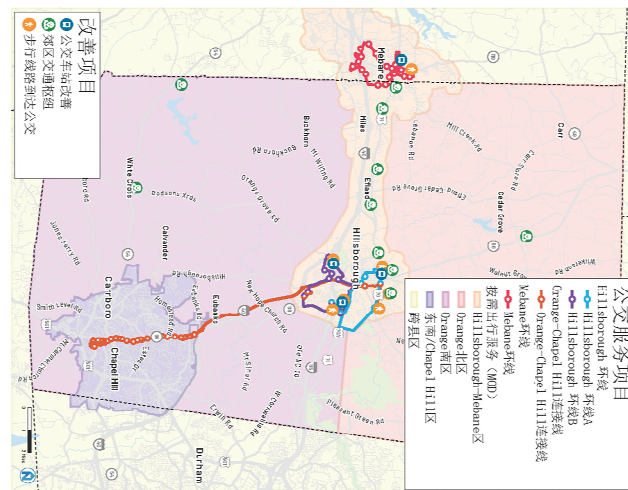
您家庭的年收入大约是多少？

- 少于 15,000 美元  50,000 至 75,000 美元
- 15,000 至 25,000 美元  75,000 美元及以上
- 25,000 至 50,000 美元  不想回答



请在 2024 年 9 月 11 日之前通过扫描此二维码、访问 [orangecountysrtp.com](http://orangecountysrtp.com) 或致电 (919) 245-2007 参加我们的调查并了解有关该计划草案的更多信息。

- 2025 年至 2027 年计划项目**
- 通过增加更多车管和创建五个区域来改善按需出行 (MOD) 服务
  - 将 Hillsborough 环线改为两条线路，每 45 分钟一班，工作日上午 6:30 至下午 5:30 运行，
  - 运行新的 Mebane 环线，工作日上午 7 点至下午 6 点每小时一班。
  - 调整 Orange-Chapel Hill 连接线路
- 2028 年至 2030 年计划项目**
- 进行一项票价研究，探索降低票价或免费乘坐公共交通的可行性。
  - 改善公交车站，建造新的郊区交通枢纽，改善步行交通，以便人们可以舒适地到达和等待公交。
- 2025 年至 2027 年计划项目**
- 在 I-40 上快速运行，从而更好地与 GoTriangle 420 保持一致。
  - 取消 Orange-Alamance 连接线和将资金重新投资到 Mebane 环线和改善 Hillsborough-Mebane 走廊的按需出行 (MOD) 服务。
  - 让预订需求响应、支付公交费用和了解交通选择变得更加容易。



我们有一个改善Orange County公共交通的计划——  
告诉我们您的想法！







ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN


## Social Media Posts

### Facebook/ Instagram

#### Post Week 1

We have a plan to improve transit in Orange County! Attend a pop-up event or take our survey at [orangecountysrtp.com](https://orangecountysrtp.com) to tell us what you think about the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan:

-  Passmore Center – 103 Meadowlands Dr, Hillsborough, NC
- August 20<sup>th</sup> 9:30-11:30am
-  Hillsborough Walmart – 501 Hampton Pointe B, Hillsborough, NC
- August 20<sup>th</sup> 2:00-4:00pm
-  Seymour Senior Center – 2551 Homestead Rd, Chapel Hill, NC
- August 21<sup>st</sup> 10:00am-12:00pm
-  Efland Cheeks Community Center – 117 Richmond Road, Mebane, NC
- September 6<sup>th</sup> 9:30-11:30am
-  First Fridays at Eno Arts Mill – 437 Dimmocks Mill Rd, #17, Hillsborough, NC
- September 6<sup>th</sup> 6:00-9:00pm
-  Mebane Farmer’s Market – 102 E Ruffin St, Mebane, NC

- September 7<sup>th</sup> 8:30am-12:00pm
-  Cedar Grove Community Center – 5800 NC HWY, NC-86, Hillsborough, NC
- September 10<sup>th</sup> 11:00am-12:00pm

Can’t make it out? Learn more and take the survey by September 11th: <https://orangecountysrtp.com/>

#### Post Week 2

**Reminder: Don't miss your chance to let us know your thoughts on the Orange County Short Range Transit Plan!**

Hey Orange County residents! We want to hear from you about the future of transit in Orange County. Attend one of our pop-up events or visit our website to learn more about the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan. Take the survey by September 11th: <https://orangecountysrtp.com/>

Your feedback is important to this process!

#### Post Week 3

**The Deadline for Comments is September 11, 2024**

Don’t miss the chance to share your thoughts on the plan to improve transit in Orange County for 2025 to 2030.

For more information and to take the survey, please visit <https://orangecountysrtp.com/>



## X (Twitter)

### Post Week 1

We have a plan to improve transit in Orange County, and we want to know what you think! **Learn more and take the survey by September 11<sup>th</sup> at: <https://orangecountysrtp.com/>**

### Post Week 2

**Reminder: Give us your thoughts on the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan!** Your input is crucial in making improvements by 2030. Attend one of our pop-up events for more information and take the survey by September 11<sup>th</sup>. Visit the website at <https://orangecountysrtp.com/> to learn more and take the survey.

### Post Week 3

The Last Chance to Take the Survey!

Don't miss the chance to share your thoughts on the draft Orange County Short Range Transit Plan for 2025 to 2030!

For more information and to take the survey by September 11<sup>th</sup>, please visit <https://orangecountysrtp.com/>.

## Digital Graphics

ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

**We have a plan to improve transit in Orange County!**

**¡Tenemos un plan para mejorar el transporte público en el Condado de Orange!**

**Tell us what you think!** **¡Díganos lo que piensa!**

TAKE THE SURVEY BY SEPTEMBER 11TH to share your thoughts on the draft Short Range Transit Plan (2025-2030)

RESPONDA A LA ENCUESTA A MÁS TARDAR EL 11 DE SEPTIEMBRE para compartir su opinión sobre el borrador del Plan de Transporte Público a Corto Plazo (2025 a 2030)

[www.orangecountysrtp.com](https://orangecountysrtp.com)

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# Upcoming pop-up events

## Próximos Eventos Pop-Up

### PASSMORE CENTER

Tuesday, August 20, 9:30–11:30 a.m.  
103 Meadowlands Dr, Hillsborough

### HILLSBOROUGH WALMART

Tuesday, August 20  
2:00–4:00 p.m.  
501 Hampton Pointe B, Hillsborough

### SEYMOUR SENIOR CENTER

Wednesday, August 21,  
10 a.m.–12 p.m.  
2551 Homestead Rd, Chapel Hill

### EFLAND CHEEKS COMMUNITY CENTER

Friday, September 6, 9:30–11:30 a.m.  
117 Richmond Road, Mebane

### FIRST FRIDAYS AT ENO ARTS MILL

Friday, September 6, 6–9 p.m.  
437 Dimmocks Mill Rd., #17, Hillsborough

### MEBANE FARMER'S MARKET

Saturday, September 7, 8:30 a.m.–12 p.m.  
102 E. Ruffin Street, Mebane

### CEDAR GROVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Tuesday, September 10, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.  
5800 NC HWY, NC-86, Hillsborough

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ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

## Transit Poster



ORANGE COUNTY  
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

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