

April 23, 2024

Ms. Veronica Vanterpool
Acting Administrator
Office of the Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
United States

Dear Ms. Vanterpool:

I write this letter to express strong support for the City of Durham to receive funding under the FY2024 Low or No Emission and Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program. The city is submitting applications under this program to acquire Battery-Electric Buses and to make improvements to the GoDurham maintenance facility to enable charging of additional Battery-Electric Buses.

GoDurham provides residents and visitors with an affordable and reliable transportation option and is vital for riders, who are often essential workers, seniors, students, people of color, and low-wealth individuals. 80% of GoDurham riders are people of color and 72% of riders report incomes of less than \$25,000.

The City of Durham's GoDurham currently has eight battery-electric buses in revenue service, six of which were purchased with 100% local funding from the Durham County Transit Plan. The City has also approved the purchase of 18 additional battery-electric buses, bringing the expected 2026 total to 26 zero-emissions buses, more than 40% of the current fleet of 63 buses. Of these, 23 buses have met their federally defined useful life and are eligible for replacement. A successful funding award will continue to move the city towards providing transit services with clean, quiet zero emissions technology in line with the city's Strategic Goal of a Sustainable Natural and Built Environment. This move also responds to input from community engagement to improve air quality and reduce noise pollution, particularly for historically disadvantaged communities served by GoDurham.

The application also requests funding to convert two of Duke University's diesel buses to Zero Emissions Battery Electric Buses. As a non-profit institution that provides transit services open to all, Duke's transit services offer access to employment and healthcare for Durham residents. This conversion will reduce air and noise pollution in the City of Durham created by Duke's diesel-powered buses and demonstrates a community partnership to address the City's Carbon Neutrality goals.

Sincerely,

Karen Howard, Board Chair
Durham -Chapel Hill -Carrboro, Metropolitan Planning Organization