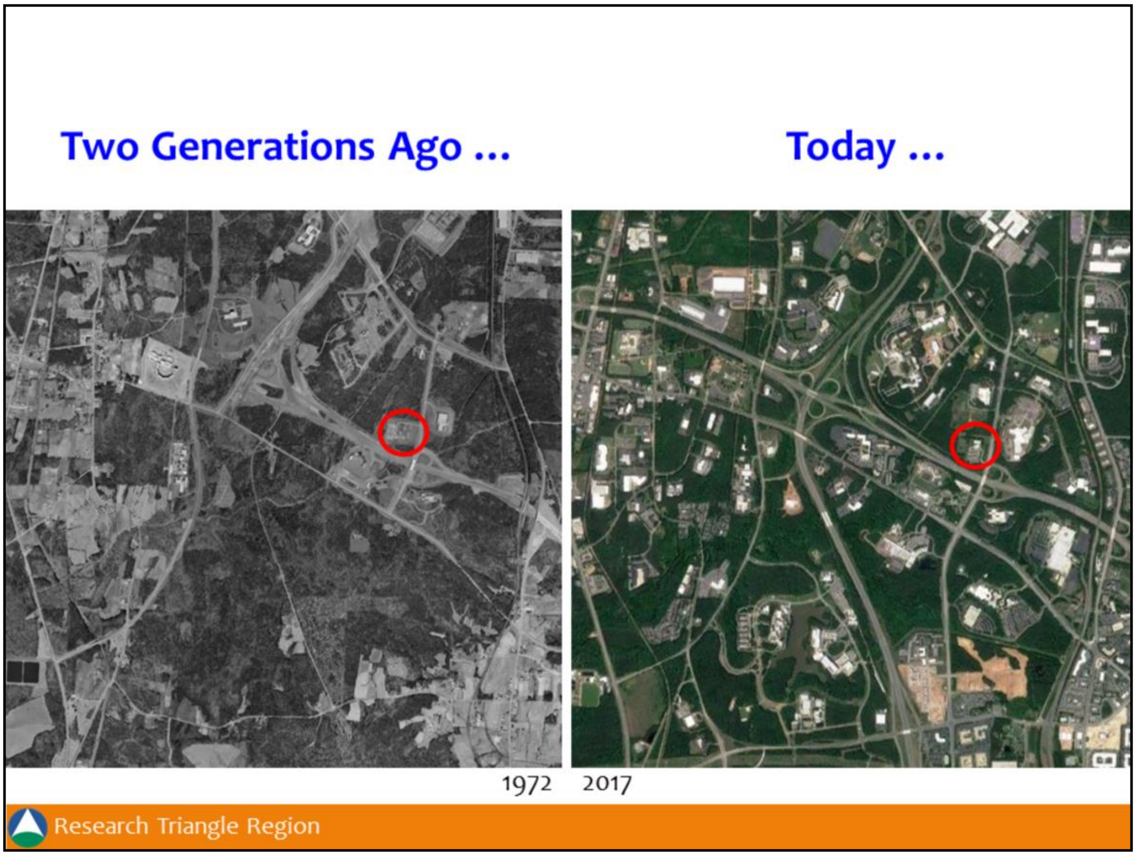
Good morning. At your last meeting in May, we started you off with a quick set of maps of planned major transit investments in the region, so that each MPO could see not only its own investments, but how they fit into a long range regional network.

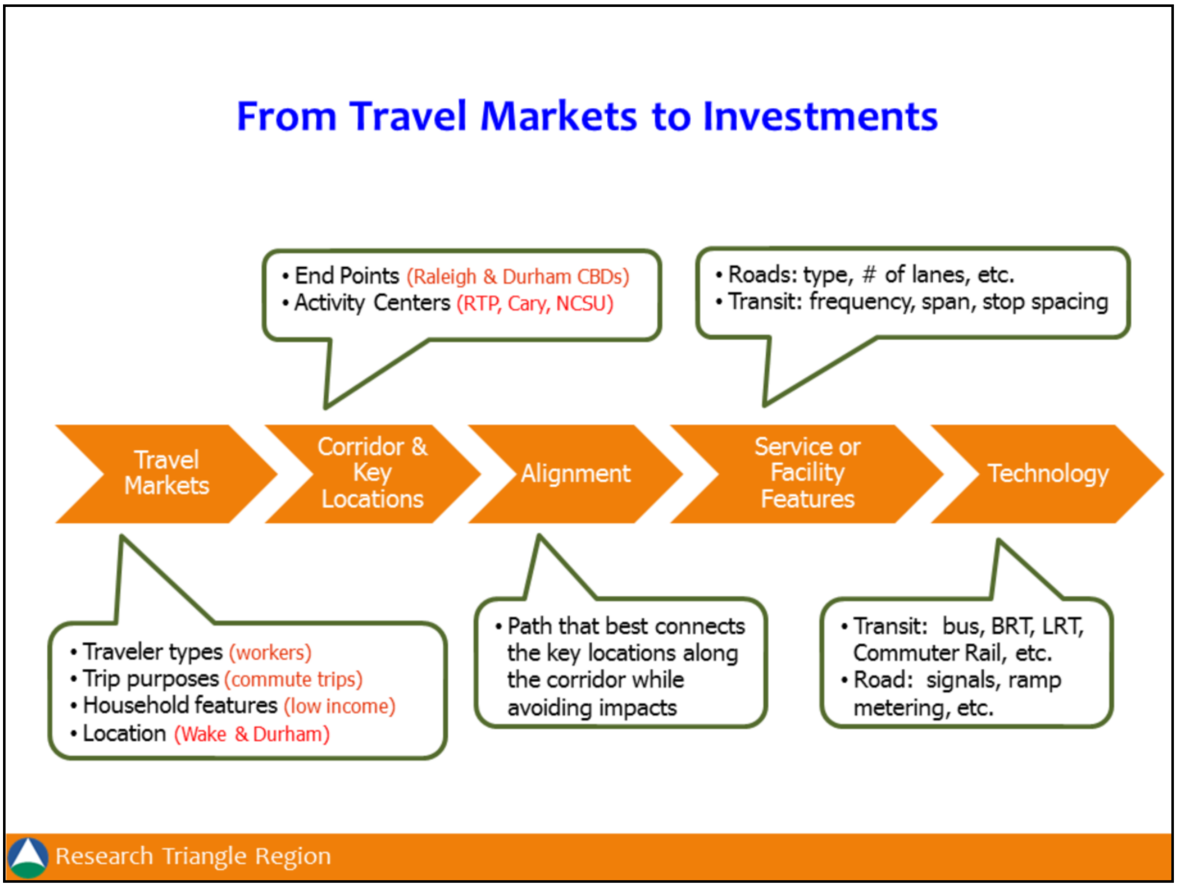
We're going to do a similar brief introduction at this meeting, but this time focusing on the concept of "travel markets," the other end of the spectrum from the specific investment decisions you are typically asked to make.



On the left is the RTP in 1972. On the right is the same scene today. This little red circle is where we are sitting, at the intersection of Davis Drive and I-40, which if you squint real hard at the image on the left, is under construction but not yet open.

I-40 was a seminal investment made by leaders two generations ago which has shaped and influenced what the Triangle has become, both physically and economically. Note where I-40 took this sharp turn towards the Durham Freeway – it didn't extend towards Chapel Hill – and wouldn't until 20 years later, but they have bought the land and designed the project to ensure that it would be easy to do so.

I use this as an illustration that the decisions we are making today will set the stage for what will come, just as the decision made by our predecessors to invest in this highway – and to make initial investments that set the course for future ones -- enabled the development which followed. Just as they had to think about the travel markets of a far-off future, so do we.



At its most simple, travel markets can be thought of as the flows of people and goods that travel within and across our region.

The investment decisions we then make:

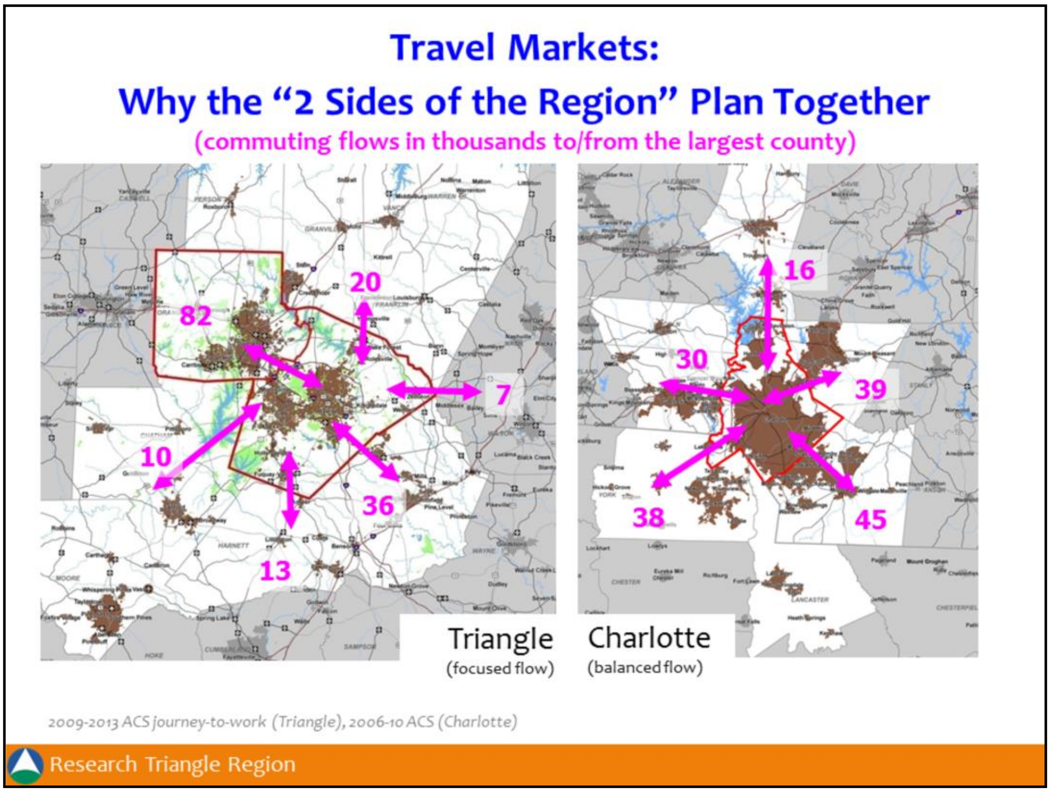
… on corridors,

… on alignments within corridors,

… on the services and facilities that use those alignments, and

… on the technologies that provide those facilities and services all benefit from being examined through the lens of the markets they serve.

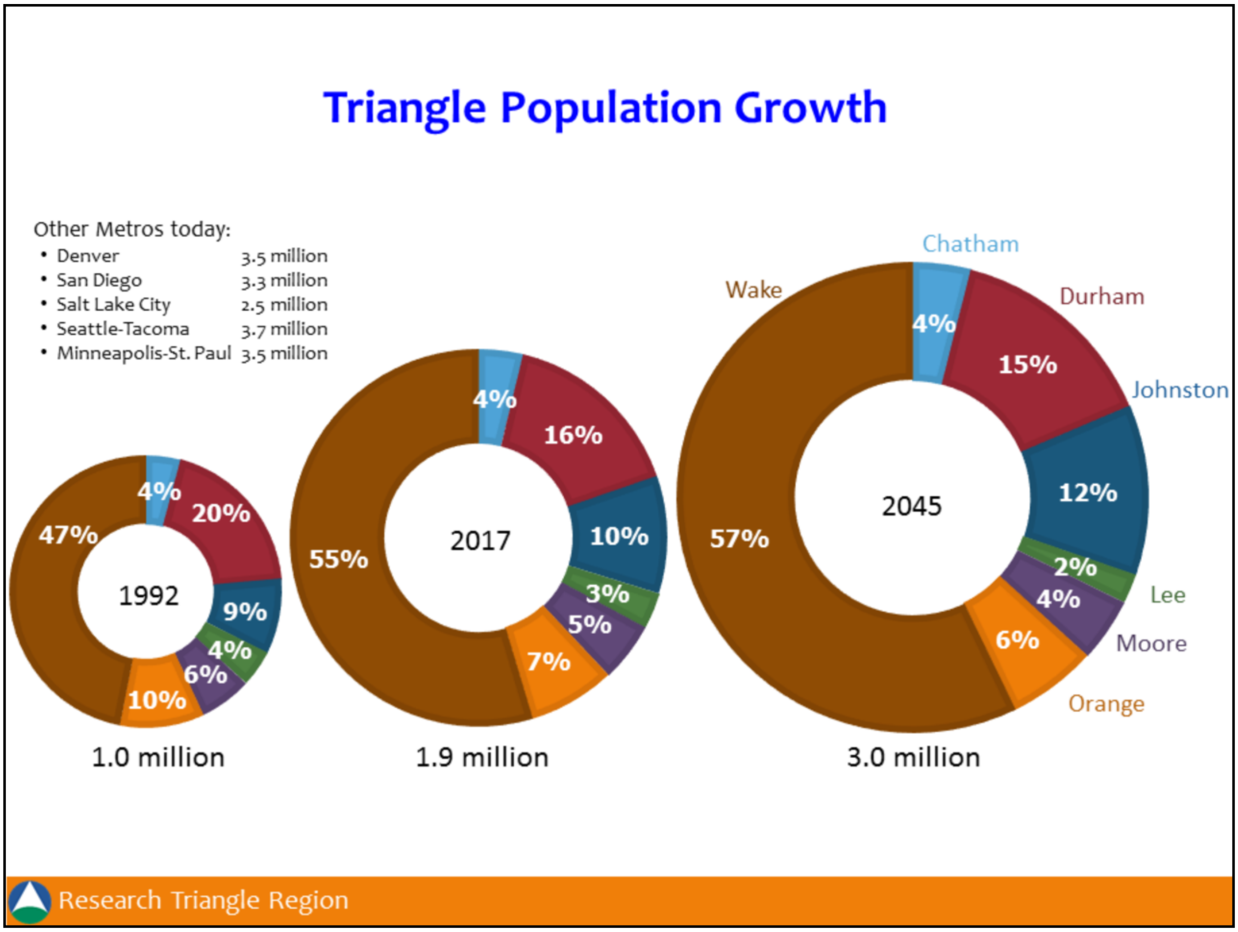
Looking at different segments of travel markets can help inform subsequent steps along our decision-making path…



So understanding these “**travel markets**:” these flows of people and how they might change over time, is an important basis for the decisions you are asked to make about services and facilities and technologies on the downstream end.

Mis-aligning investments with travel markets is probably the easiest way to either waste money or miss opportunities. The Triangle truly is different than most other places: region’s like Charlotte, with a dominant central city that imports commuters from all points of the compass each morning and exports them each afternoon.

In the Triangle, only Johnston County matches that typical pattern at a major scale today. Travel between Wake County and Durham & Orange Counties dwarfs all the other flows, and is heavy in both directions during peak periods. And that is one reason it is so important for the two MPOs to work together.

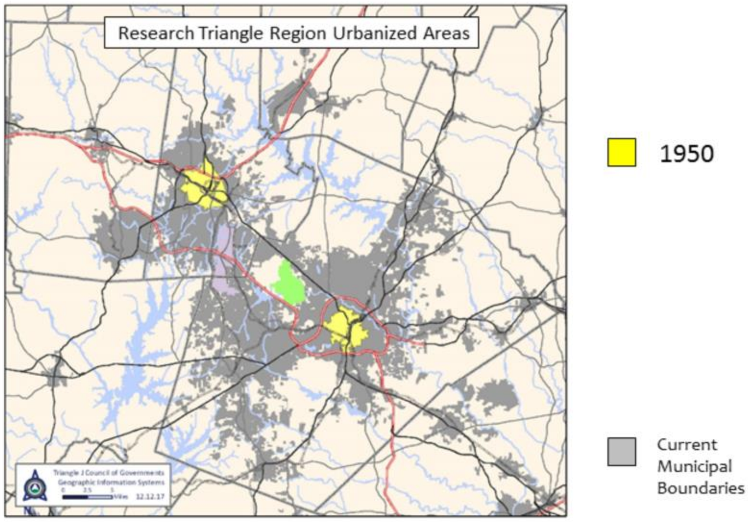


Travel Markets aren't static. They change, for example, in both size and behavior, and sometimes in unanticipated ways. In our region, we can be pretty confident that many components of our travel markets will grow, because our development markets are projected to grow, probably quite rapidly.

The state demographer released the 2017 population estimates last month. Sometime in 2019, the Triangle J Region will welcome its 2 millionth resident. Almost 100 people are added to our population each day.

We reached 1 million people a generation ago around 1992 and are projected to get to 3 million a generation from now. I think most people would say it was wise for us to prepare for the region we are today back in the early 1990s; and it makes sense that we ought to be preparing today for the 3 million-person region we will become – especially about long-term investment decisions such as transportation – when we will be the size that the other regions shown on the slide are today.

Changing Urban Character of Our Travel Markets



Census "urbanized" definition = 500 people per square mile

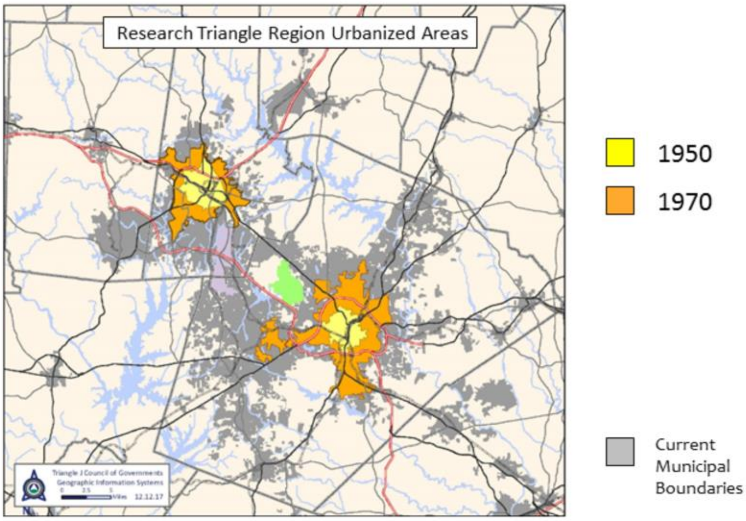
Research Triangle Region

Travel markets not only grow, but change. When the RTP was being dreamed up in the 1950s, here's how the leaders of that time would have understood the region and its travel needs.

To orient you, you can see I-40 and I-85 in red and Falls, Jordan and Harris Lakes in blue, but of course, none of those existed at that time. And the gray is today's municipal boundaries, with the light purple showing the RTP.

We had 2 sides to the region – the Raleigh urban area to the east and the Durham urban area to the west.

Changing Urban Character of Our Travel Markets

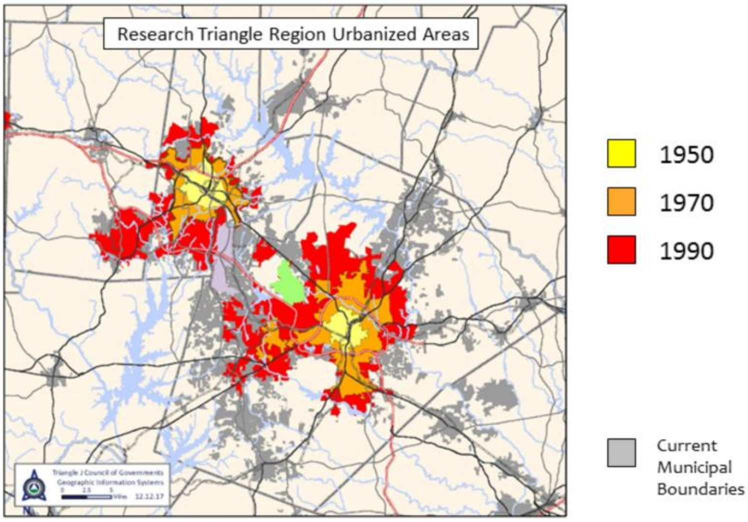


Census "urbanized" definition = 500 people per square mile

Research Triangle Region

Twenty years later, about the time of that RTP aerial I showed earlier, Raleigh and Durham were still pretty much separate places – so, although we appropriately brand ourselves as The Triangle, until relatively recently, we functionally have had "2 sides of the region."

Changing Urban Character of Our Travel Markets

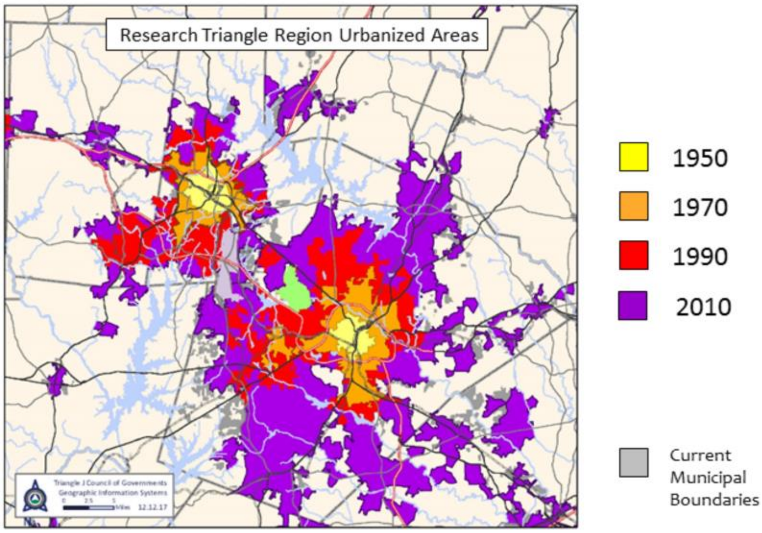


Census "urbanized" definition = 500 people per square mile

Research Triangle Region

One generation ago, in 1990, we looked like this – suburbanization spreading into North Raleigh, West Raleigh and Cary, and southern Durham; and with Chapel Hill getting big enough to qualify as part of Durham's "urban" area.

Changing Urban Character of Our Travel Markets



Census "urbanized" definition = 500 people per square mile

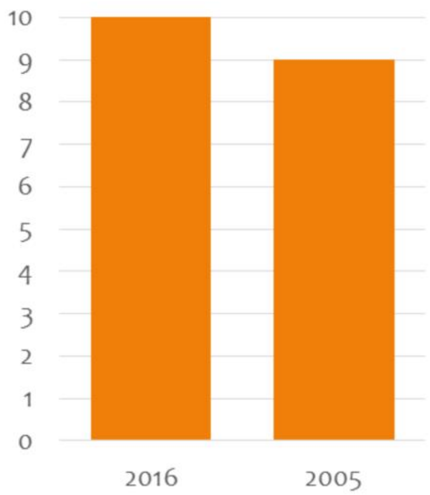
Research Triangle Region

And most recently, urbanization starting to extend into Johnston, Franklin and Chatham Counties.

So in little more than 2 generations from those little spots of yellow to the extensive region of today.

The travel markets we are planning for today are for the 2030's and 2040's, when we might anticipate that those cross-county commuting numbers we saw earlier will continue to increase.

Changing Travel Behavior in the Triangle



Average Daily Trips Per Household

Smaller household sizes …
fewer households with children …
more households with retirees …
all lead to fewer trips

3-Person household …	Trips per Day
… with retiree and no children	9.2
… with no retiree nor children	9.7
… with children and no retiree	10.9

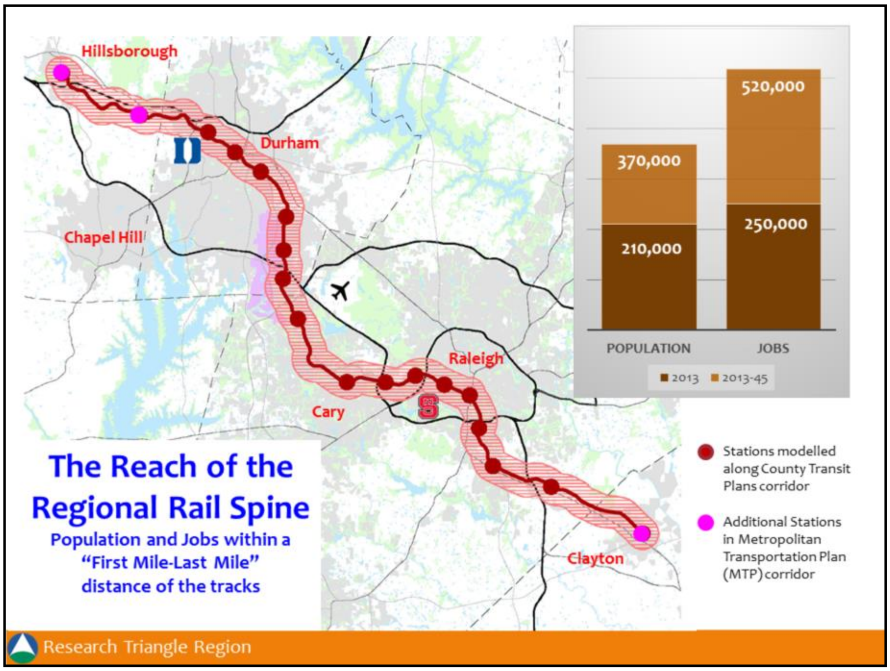
Household Size	Trips per Day
1 person	4.0
2 people	7.1
3 people	10.4

Research Triangle Region

But market size and composition are not the only things that can change. So can traveler behavior. Periodically the two MPOs sponsor a household travel behavior survey. The most recent one was for 2016; the prior one was for 2005. Over that decade, we are seeing some behavior change. This slide shows some examples of how travel behavior is changing, and in ways that are expected.

During the decade, the average number of daily trips each household made dropped from 10 to 9. But that is more a reflection of the changing nature of our households than because individual households are choosing to make fewer trips than they used to.

Smaller household sizes, fewer households with children and more households with retirees – all trends that are predicted to continue – lead to fewer trips per household.

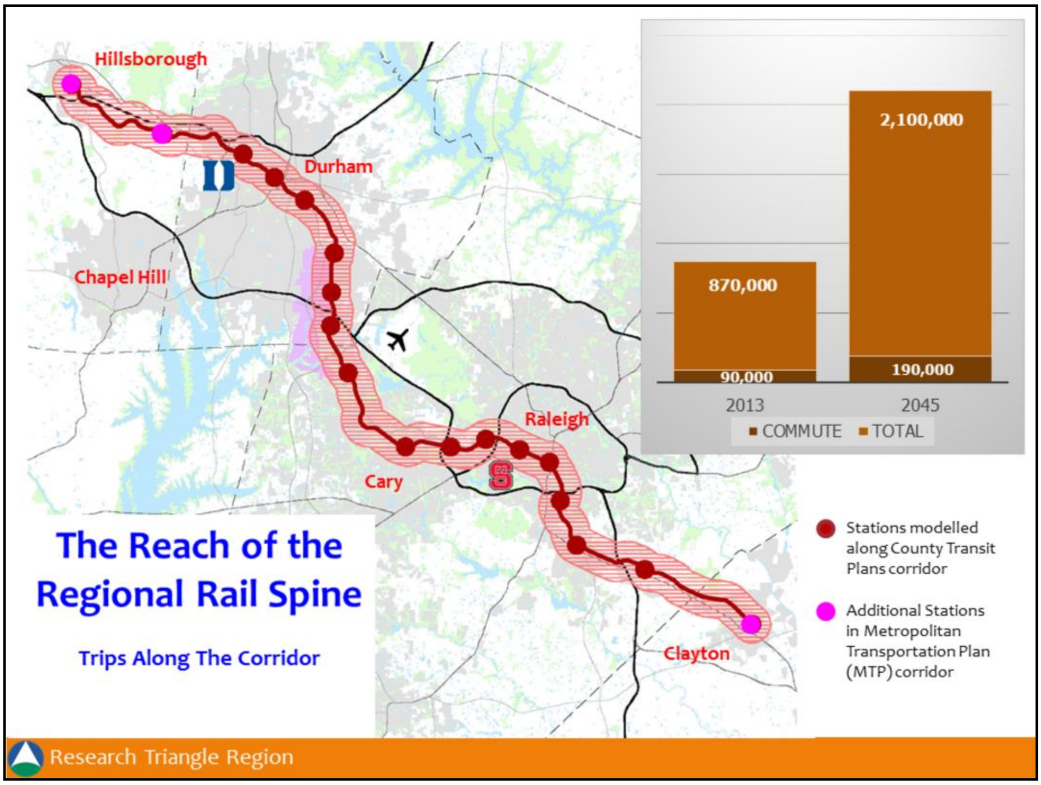


Let me wrap this up with an example. This corridor -- owned by the North Carolina Railroad Company and currently carrying both freight rail and intercity passenger rail traffic [2 travel markets!] -- is being studied for regional passenger rail service, and both the Wake and Durham transit sales tax votes included rail service linking Duke University and Medical Center, downtown Durham, the RTP, central Cary, NCSU, downtown Raleigh and Garner. The MPOs' 2045 Plan has an extended corridor reaching to Clayton in the east and Hillsborough in the west, shown here.

By 2045, there may be 370,000 people and 520,000 jobs located within a "first mile/last mile" ride of that rail line between Clayton and Hillsborough.

If we achieve those growth projections, the travel market for this connection may involve more than just commuters – inbound in the morning and outbound in the evening – and may include people who want a fast, frequent, reliable, convenient way to get back and forth for meetings, events, or other reasons.

Updated: October 30, 2018.



But remember, travel markets are more than just people and jobs – they are about travel flows – people (or goods) moving from one place to another for specific purposes.

Ignoring very important factors, such as trip lengths or the precise location of stations, a rough estimate is that in 2013 almost 900,000 trips each day had both their beginning and end within a mile of the rail line between Hillsborough and Clayton. By 2045, the forecast is that those totals would jump to 2.1 million.

But only a relatively small fraction of those trips are the traditional home-to-work commute and back.

So as you learn about project studies both today and in the future, and as you are asked to make decisions about investments, we hope you will think about the travel markets those investments are designed to serve.