

Legislation Text

File #: 19-120, **Version:** 2

Chapel Hill North-South Bus Rapid Transit Update (5 minutes) **Matt Cecil, Chapel Hill Transit**

In January 2019, Chapel Hill Town Council adopted an update to the LPA for the North South Bus Rapid Transit Project, consistent with guidance from FTA, which eliminated the center running option and the extension to Durham Technical Community College, uses mixed traffic on Eubanks Road, and either construction of or a dedicated curb running BRT guideway between Eubanks Road and North Street.

The current cost estimates for the North-South Bus Rapid Transit project are \$123.2M - \$134.7 (YOE). The cost estimates will be better refined and updated as the project moves through Environmental and 30% Design over the next 12-15 months (FTA Project Development) and we will also determine if there is a reasonable plan for scaling the project.

The current financial plan assumes 80% (\$98.5M - \$100M) of project funding to come through federal sources (e.g. FTA Small Starts) and 20% (\$24.6M - \$34.1M) from non-federal sources. The FTA initially indicated that the project would need to demonstrate a commitment of at least half the non-federal share (\$12.3M - \$17M) by November 2019 to stay in a project Development and to be considered for moving into Project Design. At this time \$6.1M of non-federal funds are committed to the project through Orange County Transit Plan, leaving a gap of \$6.3 M - \$10.9M. There does not appear to be additional capacity within the Orange County Transit Plan over the next several years.

After the project was removed from the most recent STI process by the DCHC-MPO, to help ensure maximum scoring and funding for the DOLRT project, a working group of MPO, Town of Chapel Hill/Chapel Hill Transit and GoTriangle staff was developed to explore non-federal funding sources. Unfortunately, non-federal funding options outside of STI are very limited - most MPO or State programs are funded with federal resources and are not able to be used as non-federal match. While the working group believes that a share of the non-federal funding could potentially come from naming rights and fundraising and local road improvements (e.g. Eubanks Road redevelopment), these options need to be explored further and are not likely viable by November 2019.

Based on the findings of the working group and the current constraints of the Orange County Transit Plan, staff is recommending that we explore with FTA the possibility of extending the November 2019 deadline in order for the project to be considered in the next STI (2019) process (note that this is a competitive process and funding is not guaranteed), while continuing to work on other non-federal funding options.

Board Action: This item is for informational purposes only, no action is necessary.