

October 11, 2021

Craig Benedict, AICP  
Orange County Transit Plan Project Administrator  
600 NC Highway 86 N  
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Dear Craig:

Please accept the following comments on behalf of the Regional Transportation Alliance, the voice of the regional business community on transportation, pertaining to the ongoing development of the Orange County Transit plan, and the development of a potential preferred option.

- RTA supports the ongoing development of a new Orange County transit plan, in concert with those in Durham and Wake counties, and complementary multimodal work in nearby counties including Chatham and Alamance
  - We encourage a focus on equity as a primary metric of success
  - We recommend placing the majority of the focus on Orange County needs – but we also urge a significant regional connectivity and opportunity emphasis; we call this a 2/3 “me” (Orange), 1/3 “we” (regional) framework
  - We support the implementation of Freeway And Street-based Transit (FAST) elements and treatments, including “transit advantage” infrastructure along streets and roadways, largely or exclusively funded during and by roadway improvement projects to maximize our transit and multimodal investment dollars
  
- As scenarios are developed, we recommend the incorporation of the following regional, scalable elements order to leverage and build on 55+ miles of bus rapid transit (BRT) being constructed across 4 counties by 2030, including the north-south BRT in Chapel Hill:
  - **Interstate 40**, in eastern Orange and Durham counties, via a new Transit Priority Shoulder (TPS) treatment near the median
  - **NC 54 and US 15-501**, between Chapel Hill and Durham, via BRT, FAST, TPS on the inside shoulder, and/or Bus On Shoulder System (BOSS) on the outside shoulder
  - **US 15-501**, between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro, via BRT, FAST, and/or BOSS treatments
  
- We encourage active, purposeful business community engagement to develop the plan
  - Transportation, housing, and economic and workforce mobility are inextricably linked
  - RTA and our founding chamber of commerce in the western Triangle, The Chamber For a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro, would be pleased to support and facilitate these efforts, to ensure that our regional community can realize an accelerated, shared transit vision

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Joe Milazzo II, PE  
Executive Director  
Regional Transportation Alliance