

November 8, 2018

Dear Triangle area partners in developing and initiating commuter rail,

The Regional Transportation Alliance business coalition supports the initiation of commuter rail service by 2027, consistent with the approved Wake Transit Plan and funded via voter-approved referendum in 2016.

We support the commuter rail study approach outlined in the approved Wake Transit Plan, which noted that: "The final service hours and frequencies will be determined during the future alternatives analysis," and that commuter rail is, "subject to funds from our partners and successful federal funding."

As various service and frequency options are evaluated, we request that the commuter rail market and feasibility study also consider the following to optimize costs, ridership, and equity across all transit investments:

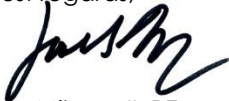
- Potential inclusion of stations in Johnston, Orange, and Alamance counties along the NCRR corridor, which could also create additional state funding opportunities
- Impact of more or fewer stations in Durham and Wake counties – including possible complementary rail service to Wake Forest – on ridership, railroad operations, and cost
- Leveraging and potentially expanding upon existing NCDOT intercity passenger rail service
- Frequencies from as few as 3 or 4 peak round-trip trains daily, up to every 30 minutes all-day each weekday
- Inclusion of intercounty express bus service and routing options that could serve as a bridge to the introduction of commuter rail service and/or as an ongoing complement
- Consideration of how enhanced bus service could link outlying areas to commuter rail and drive ridership
- Capital and operating costs per rider for commuter rail and complementary express bus/freeway BRT service, and how those costs compare with peer systems and communities
- The feasibility of a scalable implementation plan for rail service and associated capital improvements, prior to and beyond 2027, including the potential for appropriately partnering with NCDOT and/or NCRR on shared service, maintenance, and equipment to improve efficiency and/or reduce commuter rail costs

We recognize that safety in design, maintenance, and operations must be paramount, and that commuter rail shall not impede upon or negatively impact current and future freight and intercity passenger operations.

We also urge our regional partners to jointly develop an agreement regarding shared assumptions and requirements for 2027 commuter rail delivery before proceeding with the study.

Thank you for your focus and collaborative efforts to advance commuter rail in the Triangle!

Best regards,



Joe Milazzo II, PE
RTA Executive Director

cc Bruce Sargent, IBM, RTA chair
Geoff Lang, MetLife, RTA chair-elect

Recipients include:

Chris Lukasina, CAMPO; Felix Nwoko, DCHC MPO; Jeff Mann, GoTriangle; Scott Saylor, NC Railroad Company; Nicole Kreiser, Wake County; Patrick Young, Durham City/County; Jason Orthner, NCDOT; other key partners