

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 27, 2016

TO: Tom Bonfield, City Manager, City of Durham

FROM: Jennifer Green, Capital Projects Planner, GoTriangle

CC: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager, City of Durham
Bo Ferguson, Deputy City Manager, City of Durham
Harmon Crutchfield, Interim Director of Transportation, City of Durham
Marvin Williams, Director of Public Works, City of Durham
Jeff Mann, General Manager, GoTriangle
John Tallmadge, Director of Regional Services Development, GoTriangle

RE: GoDurham Better Bus Stops Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan identified local funding for bus capital projects including bus stop improvements, transit centers, transit emphasis corridors and park and rides. GoTriangle would like to update the City of Durham on the process to prioritize bus stop improvements for GoDurham bus stops.

The Better Bus Stops program will establish a vision for bus stop improvements that reflects the values and priorities of the community. Given the limited availability of funding, we want to ensure that the most critical community needs are addressed with the investments and that the investments match the values of the community. The Better Bus Stops vision, goals and objectives will be used to develop a process to prioritize which bus stops are improved and to determine what amenities are installed.

Public involvement will be very important in identifying community values and priorities. GoTriangle will seek public input over the next several months using a variety of methods such as public workshops, community meetings, local fairs, and festivals. We have reached out to Neighborhood Improvement Services to get suggestions on how to best engage the community on this effort. Finally, GoTriangle would like to provide the opportunity for comment to the City of Durham authority who will be responsible for reviewing and approving the final recommendation of the Better Bus Stops program. Once this has been determined, we will work with the City of Durham to determine the most effective involvement strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

GoTriangle recommends that the City Manager receive this informational item regarding the GoDurham Better Bus Stops program, which will prioritize improvements to GoDurham bus stops. GoTriangle will present a final recommendation to the City of Durham for review and approval in the fall 2016.

BACKGROUND

The Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan identified funding for bus capital projects including bus stop improvements, transit centers, transit emphasis corridors and park and rides. Funding for these projects comes from two local sources – the half cent sales tax and vehicle registration fee – as well as federal and state sources. The purpose of this memo is to update the City of Durham on the process to prioritize the bus stop improvements to GoDurham stops as identified in the plan.

GoTriangle is under contract with the City of Durham to provide the planning and management for the GoDurham bus system. As such, GoTriangle will manage the planning, design and construction of improvements to GoDurham bus stops on behalf of the City of Durham.

ISSUES/ANALYSIS

The Better Bus Stops program will establish a vision for bus stop improvements that reflects the values and priorities of the community. The program will define a methodology to prioritize bus stop improvements for GoDurham bus stops. Given the limited availability of funding for the bus stop improvements, we must ensure that the most critical community needs are being met with the investments and that the investments support the values of the community. *The Better Bus Stops Program will be the City of Durham's process to decide where new bus stop amenities will be installed.*

The Better Bus Stops program final recommendation will define the goals and objectives of the program and bus stop amenity standards. The standards will be used to determine when a bus shelter or bench is warranted and how far apart stops should be placed. The final recommendation will include an evaluation of the current condition of bus stop amenities in Durham and provide an evaluation of the anticipated outcome of the program.

The final recommendation will include a prioritized list of bus stop locations that GoTriangle will use to complete improvements.

GoTriangle has begun work with the City of Durham to procure design services for 30 GoDurham bus stops. The Better Bus Stops program will identify the bus stops to be improved beyond this initial set of projects. A list of the bus stops included in the design services contract is included as an attachment to this memo.

Bus stop amenities

Bus stop improvements include new or additional passenger amenities such as but not limited to bus shelters, benches, trash cans, digital information signs, lighting, bike racks and sidewalk connections. As required by the Federal Transit Administration, all bus stop improvement projects will comply with ADA guidelines.

Maintenance and enforcement

Operational activities related to bus stops such as maintenance and security enforcement are managed by GoTriangle Transit Amenities along with the City of Durham General Services, Public Works Transportation and Police Departments on an on-going and as-needed basis. Any concerns about maintenance and enforcement should be addressed as determined by those departments.

Other bus capital projects

In addition to bus stop improvements throughout the City of Durham, the Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan identified a need for improvements at high use bus stops and bus corridors. There are

four transit centers identified in the plan and three transit emphasis corridors. The Village Transit Center is a high priority project for GoTriangle and the City of Durham that was identified in the plan. Located at the intersection of Holloway Street and Miami Boulevard, the Village Shopping Center is the second highest ridership location in the GoDurham system after Durham Station. To further define the project needs and community benefits, GoTriangle will initiate meetings with City of Durham staff and the community this summer.

The Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan included three transit emphasis corridors. The Access to Transit Plan was completed by the City of Durham and NCDOT and provided some detail on the needs within the corridors. However, additional planning work for these projects still needs to be completed to further define the scope, goals and budget.

GoTriangle is coordinating with the City of Durham Public Works and Transportation departments to include bus stop improvements whenever roadway, intersection or sidewalk projects affect existing bus stops. GoTriangle, Transportation and Public Works are collaborating to identify an acceptable funding mechanism to complete these improvements.

The Better Bus Stops Program will include bus stop projects above and beyond those to be completed within any of the other bus capital projects such as transit centers, transit emphasis corridors or City-led roadway projects.

Public involvement

To ensure the development of a program that is responsive to community values, GoTriangle will develop a Public Involvement Plan for the Better Bus Stops program. The plan will outline all public involvement efforts, identify specific tools and techniques that will be used to engage impacted communities and designate opportunities for education and feedback. As the Better Bus Stops program will define how public resources are distributed within the community, it is critical that the program reflects the priorities of the community.

A variety of tools and techniques will be used to seek public input about the community values regarding bus stop improvements. The project team will host several public workshops to allow opportunities for the public to engage with staff and learn more about the bus stop improvement process. We will initiate or respond to requests for community meetings to reach more people. As a limited number of people attend formal meetings, the project team will seek out community events such as local fairs, farmers markets, shopping areas and festivals to talk about the Better Bus Stops program. GoTriangle has reached out to Neighborhood Improvement Services to get suggestions on ways to engage with the Durham community.

Based on who has approval authority of the program, GoTriangle would like to provide the opportunity for comment during the development of the Better Bus Stops program. Once the approval authority has been determined, we will work with the City of Durham to determine most effective involvement strategy.

GoTriangle has already begun the public outreach process. Two public meetings were held at Durham Station on March 23, 2016 and May 4, 2016 to discuss bus stop improvements. In addition, staff and GoDurham ambassadors have been surveying customers at Durham Station about their preferences for bus stop improvements. The purpose of the survey is to get feedback on customer preferences for bus stop amenities and to get information about where improvements are needed.

Finally, we will reach out to the public through rider alerts, social media, press releases, and presentations. There is a website to present information on the Better Bus Stops program: www.godurhamtransit.org/improve. GoTriangle will continue to update the webpage with upcoming meeting information and project materials.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the City of Durham budget. The Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan identified local funding for bus stop improvements. Additional federal and state funding sources may supplement the local funding as available. The Better Bus Stops program will define how the City of Durham will prioritize the spending of the new local revenue source for bus stop improvements.

SBDE

None.

ATTACHMENTS

1. GoDurham bus stop locations included in the design services contract