



Town of Apex Transit Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2022

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

(and broadcast on Town of Apex YouTube site)

Meeting Purpose

The main purposes of this meeting were to: (1) Receive updates on GoTriangle projects and plans; (2) Receive updates on the S-Line TOD Study; and (3) Receive brief updates on transit-related Town projects.

Meeting Outcomes

Town staff will: (1) continue coordination with partners on Route 305, the S-Line TOD Study, and the Wake Transit Bus Plan Update, (2) continue work on GoApex Route 1 for targeted Spring or Summer 2022 service launch, (3) continue work on projects including possible Art in Transit installation and transit access improvements.

Attendees

Committee members:

- Linda Barrett
- Amanda Bunce
- Nick Bryant
- Joanna Helms
- Kurt Pfeifer
- Angela Reincke
- Stuart Wagner
- Andrew Werking
- David Yokum

Staff support:

- Shannon Cox
- Katie Schwing

Guests:

- Liz Byrom (Kittelson & Associates, Inc.)
- Scott Curry (Kittelson & Associates, Inc.)
- Paige Dickerhoof (VHB for NCDOT)
- Brett Gantt (Apex Town Council)
- Jennifer Green (GoTriangle)
- Andrea Neri (GoTriangle)
- Caitlin Tobin (Kittelson & Associates, Inc.)

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Roll call attendance and a round of introductions was made on the virtual meeting for committee members and guests. Shannon Cox introduced Katie Schwing as the new senior transit planner for the Town who will support this committee in the future.



2. Meeting Minutes

(Action Item: Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

The committee reviewed the draft minutes from the September 1, 2021 meeting. Joanna Helms noted one correction, to add Joanna Helms as a committee member attendee as she was present at the meeting.

Requested Action: Approve meeting minutes from the September 1, 2021 meeting as corrected.

- Andrew Werking made a motion to approve the September 1, 2021 meeting minutes.
- Nick Bryant seconded the motion to approve the September 1, 2021 meeting minutes.
- Through a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Committee.

3. GoTriangle Project & Planning Updates

(Informational Item: Jennifer Green and Andrea Neri, GoTriangle)

- **Presentation Summary**

- Andrea Neri presented updates on several GoTriangle projects relevant to the Town of Apex, including the status of Route 305, new transfer areas in the Town, the Wake Transit Bus Plan update, Route 311, and current ridership trends in the Town.
- Andrea noted that the bus operator shortage continues to delay the expansion of Route 305 to all-day and weekend service. Andrea requested that the group consider any priorities for changes, such as expanding service to non-peak hours and weekend days, or expanding the service coverage area of the route as well, noting that a phased expansion may be needed. He also asked the group to consider the timing and order of any changes and he would be happy to hear the feedback as they continue to plan for future service.
- Andrea noted that the new stop at Salem and Moore Street could be a good candidate for public art, as a point for the committee to consider.
- Andrea noted that service remains suspended on Route 311. GoTriangle applied for an FTA grant to study the restoration of Route 311 and how that route and service may need to be modified.
- Andrea mentioned that the Wake Transit Bus Plan update is underway with the focus on aligning operating investments with bigger goals of the Wake Transit Plan. Each transit agency develops a short range transit plan as well. Public engagement is planned in Spring and GoTriangle is planning to coordinate with the Town for public outreach activities.

- **Discussion**

- David Yokum asked if Andrea had a sense of how aware residents in Apex are that the buses are running right now, and if awareness strategies like postcards in mailboxes for those who live along the route pointing out the route details, would boost ridership.
- Stuart Wagner asked if Andrea saw Route 1 as being a catalyst for more ridership, for example those in Apex who may take Route 1 to the 311 to Cary. Andrea agreed that it could help boost awareness and ridership.
- Andrea noted that both nationally and locally there is a need for more bus operators



and requested that the group spread the word to any relevant channels.

- Shannon Cox shared that Apex also has an affordable housing plan in process and stakeholder feedback for that process was clear that transit is needed as a part of the overall affordable housing strategy. For example, some of the funding available for affordable housing requires access to all-day transit.
- Brett Gantt mentioned that his hope is that the GoApex Route 1 could bring about the convenience needed to get people to try transit. BRT might be a game changer, but the local route can offer convenience.

- **Next Steps:**

- Town staff will continue to coordinate with GoTriangle on plans and projects, bringing information to the TAC as relevant and through the public engagement process.

4. S-Line Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study

(Informational Item: Caitlin Tobin, Scott Curry, Liz Byrom, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.; Paige Dickerhoff, NCDOT)

- **Presentation Summary**

- Caitlin Tobin presented an overview of the TOD study, which is separate from the actual S-Line development project. The project team is currently working on a TOD readiness report (existing conditions) and a market study, then will move on to a vision summary, with active planning workshops. They will then develop an implementation plan by the end of the year. For the Apex area, the team is looking at both downtown and the Veridea development area.
- Scott Curry provided a summary of the recent community engagement activities, including pop-up events held in Apex to build awareness and get feedback from the public. There is currently an online survey available through January 2022.

- **Discussion**

- Nick Bryant asked for more details of what the TOD study is, and what to expect from NCDOT as far as outcomes. For example, will this study make recommendations about land use in downtown Apex and the CSX land? Caitlin explained that the main goal is facilitating support for communities to get transit ready from a development and regulatory tools perspective, like where the Town would like to see development in light of the S-line work being done. This study may also be leveraged by NCDOT for some of those more engineering related decisions, which Paige mentioned is part of another study.
- Brett Gantt added that a recommendation from this study relating to some of those downtown land decisions would probably be helpful.
- Andrew Werking pointed out that his understanding is that transit, particularly commuter rail, weighs heavily in business decisions on locating new sites and campuses, and wondered if that is part of this discussion, or if it came up in the pop-up events.
- Joanna Helms added that those types of decisions are usually broken up by B2B (business-to-business) and B2C (business-to-consumer) types of firms. In her experience, B2B employees in this area typically don't rely on transit for their



employees.

- Brett added that the current perspective is that people think about going north into Raleigh, but that a future microchip maker in Moncure or other employers might lead to jobs and demand to go south. Caitlin said that could probably be accommodated in terms of different growth scenarios in the study.
 - Caitlin added that the project team will be coming back to do workshops in the spring and summer and wanted to make sure that the TAC members were aware and invited to attend.
 - Linda Barrett also wanted everyone to know that there is a community health needs assessment in process right now, focus groups are going on and transit can figure into those discussions.
- **Next Steps:**
 - Town staff will continue to coordinate with NCDOT on the S-Line TOD Study, bringing information to the TAC as relevant and through the public engagement process.

5. Project Updates

(Information Item: Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

- Art in Transit
 - Apex was not selected for the Bloomberg art in transit grant
 - Town staff will begin to draft a call for artists. Shannon requested a couple of volunteers to review and participate in the call, which will be completed in collaboration with the Public Art Committee. Nick Bryant, Andrew Werking, and Stuart Wagner volunteered.
- GoApex Route 1
 - Apex received construction authorization for the bus stop projects.
 - The paratransit service agreement with Wake County is getting closer to finalization.
 - The fixed route service agreement with Cary is still in review.
 - Brett brought up that the Beaver Creek Commons shopping center changed owners and wanted to know if the Town has reached out to them about the stop there. Shannon replied that a new stop cannot be included in the current project but there could be potential to add a stop later. Shannon will reach out to them.
 - Brett asked about the potential for electric buses, and he thought it could bring attention and potentially gain more ridership and wanted to know if there is flexibility to encourage that. Shannon said she has asked GoCary about alternative fuel vehicles, and will tell them we still have an interest in that.
 - Nick asked if there are studies that indicate younger generations are more mass transit ready and less likely to use cars, and would that increase ridership projections. Katie said she didn't have a particular study to cite but had seen studies showing that younger generations are getting drivers' licenses and owning cars as later ages compared to previous generations and young people are slightly more likely to take transit compared to the general population.
- Community Development Block Grant-funded bus stops
 - Shannon provided an update on the collaborative project with Wake County to enhance GoApex bus stops and complete a pedestrian connection at Williams Street



and James Street. She noted the project agreement has been approved, initial field work completed, a pre-application meeting was held, and the design is underway.

- Transit Pedestrian Enhancements
 - Shannon announced that a request for funding for the 2023 Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP) to complete pedestrian connections to local and regional bus stops in the downtown areas was recommended by the selection committee and that the final award decision was anticipated in February 2022.

6. Other Business

- Shannon asked about a previous request for a meeting with the Mayor in 2022. Andy said he was interested in knowing the Mayor's interest and vision for transit and it could also be an opportunity to give an overview of the work of the committee done in recent years. Stuart asked about the best conduit for making that a reality and Shannon said staff could work with the Town Manager to see if he can attend in April.
- Stuart Wagner thanked Brett Gantt for joining the meeting.
- Shannon reminded the TAC that the next meeting would be April 13th and would most likely discuss marketing for GoApex Route 1.
- The meeting was adjourned at 5:27pm.