



Town of Apex Transit Advisory Committee

Special Meeting Minutes

July 22, 2020

Town Hall and Virtual Teams Meeting

Meeting Purpose

The purposes of this meeting were to: (1) approve meeting minutes from the April 22, 2020 meeting; (2) provide an informational presentation on autonomous shuttles; (3) present an approved Transit Plan map amendment to remove a future bus/rail transit center; (4) provide updates on GoApex Route 1; (5) present the Planning Committee of Town Council's interest in incorporating transit-supportive land uses into the Future Land Use Map; (6) present updates on the Wake Transit Vision Plan; (7) present updates on the Wayfinding Signage Program; (8) share brief updates on compensation for members, the new Long Range Planning position, and GoTriangle and GoCary service changes; and (9) discuss next steps in transit planning and service projects.

Meeting Outcomes

Town staff will: (1) follow up on autonomous shuttle questions raised during the meeting; (2) obtain GoCary ridership data since the start of COVID-19; (3) continue coordination with GoCary and GoTriangle on the Apex Cary Express and Route 305; (4) share opportunities for public input on the Wake Vision Plan and Town of Apex Affordable Housing Plan; (5) continue work on GoApex bus stop design and construction; and (6) gather updated information on Wake Transit tax revenue.

Committee members will complete the Wake Transit Vision Plan online survey and the Town of Apex Affordable Housing Plan online survey.

Attendees

Committee members:

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

Staff support:

- Shannon Cox (Town of Apex Planning)
- Russell Dalton (Town of Apex Public Works & Transportation)
- Jenna Shouse (Town of Apex Planning)
- Ann Stephens (Town of Apex Police)

Guest Speaker:

- Ashley Thompson (Stantec)

1. Meeting Minutes

(Action Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex)

- Nick Bryant made a motion to approve the April 22, 2020 meeting minutes.
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Committee.



2. Autonomous Shuttle Presentation

(Information Item: Ashley Thompson, Stantec)

- Ashley Thompson, an Urban Designer and Smart Mobility Specialist with Stantec's Smart Mobility gave a presentation on autonomous vehicles.
- *Committee Discussion:*
 - *Interest in integrating autonomous transit into our Transportation Plan.*
 - *Interest in possibly integrating this into the circulator, a service beyond downtown Apex.*
 - *Question of how the cost of autonomous vehicles compares to standard vehicles.*
 - *Guest Speaker noted that the cost between the two varies.*
 - *Question of whether there are standards or regulations for autonomous vehicles at the federal level.*
 - *Guest Speaker noted that the laws and policies vary and there is no federal regulation. She also noted that there is an industry-led effort to establish a standard.*

3. Approved Transit Plan Map Amendment: Removal of Future Bus/Rail Transit Center

(Information Item: Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

- Staff provided an update on the proceedings of the public hearings for a Transit Plan Map amendment to remove the future Rail and Bus Transit Center adjacent to South Salem Street between Apex Barbecue Road and NC 540.
- Staff recommended approval of the amendment for three key reasons:
 - The future rail stations shown on the Transit Plan Map were originally proposed for light rail and are too close together for commuter rail.
 - Both existing and planned future land use densities surrounding this proposed station do not support commuter rail.
 - There are substantial design constraints to constructing and operating a station in this location.
- Town Council unanimously approved the proposed amendment.

4. GoApex Route 1 Updates

(Information Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex)

- Staff provided an update that Town Council approved the proposed Transit Plan map amendment that was presented during the April 2020 Transit Advisory Committee meeting.
- The Transit Circulator Study, an implementation study for GoApex Route 1, is complete and available on the [Town of Apex](#) website.
- The Selection Committee for the Transportation Demand Grant recommended an award of approximately \$64,000. There are currently legislative restrictions on the funding. These funds will be used to market the new transit route and help fund the new Transit Planner position.
- Bus stop designs are close to complete and the environmental review process is in progress. Construction of bus stops may be delayed due to NCDOT cost control measures.



- Operations and capital funding was included in the Fiscal Year 2021 Wake Transit Work Plan.

5. Planning Committee of Town Council Future Land Use Map Discussion

(Information Item: Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

- Staff shared that the Planning Committee of Town Council is interested in analyzing land use in the vicinity of existing and planned transit routes.
- Staff have been tasked with recommending Future Land Use Map amendments for High-Density Residential or striped High-Density Residential/Commercial Services near planned transit routes.
- As Transit Plan map amendments move forward, staff will also consider Future Land Use Map amendments.

6. Wake Transit Vision Plan Update

(Information Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex and Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

- Staff shared that there is a regional effort to extend the Wake Transit Plan from 2027 to 2030.
- A public engagement period is running through the month of August. The goal of the public engagement period is to help confirm the priorities that were established in the Wake Transit Plan. Town staff will share a link to the online survey when it is released.
- As part of this process, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff are evaluating potential financial scenarios based on projected revenue impacts from COVID-19.

7. Wayfinding Signage Program Update

(Information Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex)

- Staff shared that the Town of Apex is preparing a Wayfinding Signage Program in partnership with MERJE a wayfinding design firm.
- The Wayfinding Signage program will include transit related recommendations including vehicular directional signage directing drivers to Park and Ride locations as well as information at bus stops to direct bus riders to downtown and other key destinations in Town.

8. Brief Updates

(Information Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex and Shannon Cox, Town of Apex)

- GoTriangle and GoCary Service Changes
 - GoTriangle Route 305 (Holly Springs to Raleigh)
 - Extension to Holly Springs anticipated in October 2020.
 - Route expansion anticipated in January 2021 pending reevaluation of Wake Transit tax revenue.
 - GoTriangle Route 311 (Apex to Research Triangle Park)
 - Service changes delayed until January 2021 to coincide with Route 305 expansion per Apex Town Council request.
 - GoCary Apex-Cary Express (ACX)
 - Start of service anticipated to begin in October 2020.



- *Committee discussion on starting ACX service in October 2020:*
 - *Consider the optics of starting during a time when ridership is low or non-existent.*
 - *Suggestion to look at GoCary ridership data when thinking about when to start the ACX and Route 305 extension.*
 - *Suggestion to start looking at starting these services when ridership starts to flatten or pick up.*
 - *Suggestion to move forward as planned. Starting the ACX and Route 305 extension early could encourage ridership along Route 1. People will see transit in Town and start getting used to it.*
- Compensation for Members
 - Committee members will receive a \$50 stipend per meeting unless they opt-out.
 - *Committee Discussion:*
 - *Question of the purpose of the compensation.*
 - *Staff noted that the purpose of the compensation is to account for child care and other costs associated with participation on the committee and is available to all members of Town committees.*
- A new Long Range Planning Position has been created. This position will focus on transit, specifically implementation and marketing of GoApex Route 1 and planning future transit routes.
- The Town of Apex has begun the process to establish an Affordable Housing Plan. This process will include extensive public outreach and address a variety of housing needs. An online survey has been released to inform the plan strategies and recommendations.

9. Next Steps

(Information Item: Jenna Shouse, Town of Apex)

- Committee members will complete the Wake Transit Plan online survey.
- Committee members will complete Town of Apex Housing Plan online survey.
- Town staff will gather updated information on Wake Transit tax revenue.
- Begin service to GoCary Apex-Cary Express – October 2020.
- Extend GoTriangle Route 305 to Holly Springs – October 2020.
- Begin GoApex Route 1 bus stop construction – Fall 2020.
- Begin GoApex Route 1 operations – Spring 2020.
- Next meeting on October 21st at 4pm (third Wednesday instead of second).