

EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Link Transit Five-Year Transit Development Plan and Transit
Facility Study

PREPARED FOR:

City of Burlington, North Carolina

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EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The Existing Conditions Assessment provides an overview of the City of Burlington's administered public transit system, Link Transit, including history, governance, organizational structure, financials, relevant planning documents, existing services (fixed-route and paratransit) and facilities, and public involvement efforts.

The assessment will be integrated into Link's Transit Development Plan (TDP) which will evaluate the current transit system's performance and provide recommendations for the future, including potential system expansions.

Background

SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Link Transit is a public transit provider operating in Alamance County and portions of Guilford County. Link serves areas including Burlington, Elon, Gibsonville, Alamance County Offices, Alamance Community College and destinations in between. Riders can also connect directly to the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) Route 4 and the Elon Express.

Link Transit currently operates five fixed-routes and paratransit service Monday through Friday, from 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., excluding major Holidays. Although Link Transit operated fare-free from June 2021 through 2023 to mitigate pandemic related ridership declines, the system reintroduced fares on December 18, 2023. The updated fare structure includes a 1-Day unlimited ride pass and a 31-Day pass for fixed-route passengers at both general and discounted rates, as well as a flat-fare for paratransit trips.

HISTORY

Starting in 2006, the Burlington Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) conducted a Public Transit Feasibility Study to evaluate the feasibility of operating a fixed-route transit system within the Burlington-Graham urban area. As a result of these planning efforts, a design for the new fixed-route transit system was proposed in 2014.¹ In 2016, the Burlington City Council voted to support the new transit system and Link Transit began operation with the goal of improving the quality of life for residents and visitors by providing a safe, reliable, and cost-effective mobility solution. Link Transit and the City of Burlington continue to participate with the BGMPO in transportation planning activities.

¹ Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. "2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update." August 18, 2015.

GOVERNANCE

Burlington City Council is the governing body responsible for decisions regarding Link Transit including services, routes, and fares with the Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC) advising the Council on those decisions. In addition, the Department of Transportation is responsible for transportation planning and management and Transdev is responsible for the day-to-day operations, maintenance, and customer service of the transit system.

The Public Transit Advisory Commission, established by ordinance, consists of seven members – five appointed by the Burlington City Council, one by the Gibsonville Town Council, and one by the Alamance County Board of Commissioners, with alternates from each governing body. The terms of PTAC membership dictate that all members of the Commission must reside within the jurisdiction of the participating governmental entity by which they were appointed and may not serve dual appointments with other appointed City board or commission. Following the Commission’s initial appointments, terms will be for a period of three years with a maximum of three consecutive terms.

City of Burlington Organizational Structure

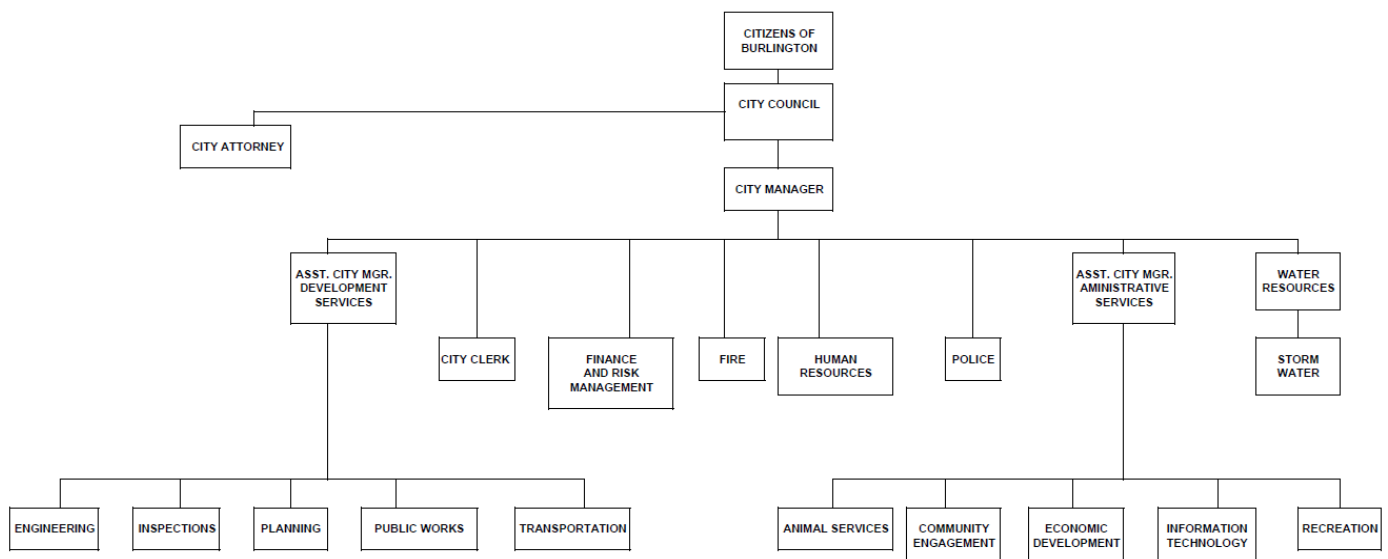


Figure 1: City of Burlington Organizational Structure

FINANCIALS

The City of Burlington receives funding for Link Transit through federal reimbursement, the North Carolina Department of Transportation State Maintenance Assistance Program, interlocal agreements with the Town of Gibsonville, the Town of Elon, and contributions from Alamance County and Alamance Community College. **Table 1**

summarizes Link Transit's revenue for FY 2023 as listed in the City of Burlington Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.²

Table 1: Link Transit FY 2023 Revenue

Operating Revenues	Budget	Actual
Alamance County Contribution	\$25,000	-
Alamance Community College Contribution	\$25,000	\$25,000
Transit Vehicle Tax	\$203,975	\$237,455
Federal Reimbursement	\$2,444,247	\$3,500,904
Gibsonville Reimbursement	\$35,000	\$35,103
State SMAP Funds	\$159,705	\$161,832
Total Operating Revenues	\$2,892,927	\$3,960,294

Total public transportation expenditures for FY 2023 were \$1,768,047 with revenues totaling \$2,192,247 over expenditures.

Interlocal Agreements

The City of Burlington and the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) conducted a Fixed-Route Feasibility and Implementation Study in 2013 that determined a fixed-route public transit system, Link Transit, was in the best interest of the City and its residents. To best service the area, the City decided to partner with neighboring jurisdictions to provide connected transit service and has adopted interlocal agreements with the Town of Elon and the Town of Gibsonville in 2023 and 2015 respectively. Although provided the opportunity, the City of Graham has opted not to partner with Link Transit for transit services.

In short, these interlocal agreements identify the City of Burlington as a provider of transit service to both Elon and Gibsonville residents as an extension of the preexisting Link Transit service. The Town of Elon and the Town of Gibsonville are responsible for acquiring easements needed within the Town for bus stops and for the local share of costs incurred for improvements. Both towns are also responsible for reimbursing the City of Burlington for their share of the operating costs associated with their local routes.

North Carolina State Maintenance Assistance Program

The City of Burlington receives a portion of Link Transit funding through the North Carolina State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP). The intent of the program is to provide operating assistance to urban, small-urban, and urban regional fixed route

² City of Burlington Finance Department. "Annual comprehensive Financial Report" City of Burlington. June 30, 2023.

and commuter bus systems with low overhead and paperwork. Eligible expenses include:

- Operating expenses as defined in the FTA C. 9030.1E circular for the Federal Section 5307 program
- Preventative maintenance and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) service costs – although defined for federal grants as capital expenses, both are still considered operating expense for the SMAP funds

Table 2 displays the City of Burlington SMAP claims from FY 2018 to FY 2023.

Table 2: City of Burlington SMAP Claims FY 2018 – FY 2022

Fiscal Year	SMAP Allocation
FY2018	\$133,899
FY2019	\$133,899
FY2020	\$158,128
FY2021*	N/A
FY2022	\$161,832
FY2023	\$161,832

* Note that the North Carolina General Assembly suspended SMAP funds in 2021.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

The following plans and reports guide the City of Burlington’s transportation planning:

[*Link Transit*](#)

TITLE VI PROGRAM

The Link Transit Title VI Program³ was adopted to establish compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as a condition of receiving Federal financial assistance. In short, the Title VI Policy states that “no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which Link Transit receives Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, including the Federal Transit Administration.” The policy also requires that any service and fare adjustments must be evaluated and documented under Title VI and the public must be provided advance notice and the opportunity to engage in a public hearing.

³ Link Transit. “Title VI Program Update 2023-2025.” City of Burlington Transportation Department. October, 2022.

Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization

BGMPO 2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan⁴ (MTP), adopted in 2020, is BGMPO's long-range transportation plan that outlines transportation goals, objectives, issues and impacts for the region as it continues to grow over the next 25 years. Five overarching goals, related to all modes of transportation including public transit, guide the plan:

- Goal 1: Provide a safe, secure, comprehensive, and effective transportation system to move people and goods within and through the area
- Goal 2: Provide a transportation system that enables mobility choices
- Goal 3: Seek to optimize the existing transportation system
- Goal 4: Promote equity and accessibility in transportation options for transportation-disadvantaged populations
- Integrate land use and transportation planning

Perhaps most relevant to Link Transit are Objectives 2B – develop an integrated public transportation system that supports multimodal transportation options – and 2E – support better coordination of integration of existing transit services in Alamance County. In addition, BGMPO established four recommended strategies to improve regional transit service:

- Fund and undertake a regional transit feasibility study
- Establish a task force to define transit needs within the BGMPO area and a sustainable, phased funding plan to support the need
- Implement steps to make available additional public transportation funding sources in BGMPO Region/Alamance County
- Plan for Additional Park and Ride Lots Across the Region

2024 – 2033 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), adopted in June of 2023, is a state and federally mandated plan that identifies regional transportation projects that will receive funding over the next 10 years. The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) is a subset of the STIP that identifies projects within BGMPO and is the “short range” component of the BGMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan discussed above. It identifies regional transportation projects that will receive funding over the next five years.

Per the 2024-2033 STIP, Link Transit is identified to receive the following:

⁴ Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. “2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.” June 16, 2020.

- \$1,081,000 for public transit improvements including for bus shelters, construction, engineering and design
- \$865,000 for planning a transit feasibility study and short-range transit plan
- \$1,550,000 for capital improvements to transit vehicles
- \$3,072,000 for preventative maintenance
- \$9,840,000 for operating assistance to maintain current level of service in addition to service expansion for weekend service
- \$1,356,000 for ADA service
- \$1,345,000 for planning for transit system management

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

BGMPO's Public Involvement Plan⁵, adopted in 2015 and amended in 2020, outlines public engagement processes and procedures for the area's transportation plans and programs including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Major Investment Studies, Program of Projects and the Unified Planning Work Program. The plan, in accordance with federal, state and local requirements, is meant to ensure transportation plans are accessible to the public and meaningfully influenced by community input and priorities. The plan is guided by five main objectives:

- Engage a broad cross-section of the public in the transportation planning decision making processes of the BGMPO
- Enhance the public's knowledge of the BGMPO multimodal transportation system, costs and funding
- Evaluate the BGMPO's public involvement procedures and its effectiveness for increasing public engagement and access to relevant information
- Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process

TITLE VI PLAN

As part of federal-aid requirements, BGMPO's works to ensures that an plans or programs do not exclude participation or discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, sex, age, disability, or low-income. The Title VI Plan⁶, adopted in 2019, outlines BGMPO's commitment to non-discrimination as well as compliance and enforcement procedures.

⁵ Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. "Public Involvement Plan." August 28, 2015 (amended May 19, 2020).

⁶ Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. "Title VI Program Plan." August 20, 2019.

ALAMANCE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY CONNECTIVITY PLAN

The Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA) is the Alamance County public transportation authority that provides general public transportation services as well as operates demand response transportation throughout the county, including some areas also served by Link Transit. The ACTA Community Connectivity Plan⁷, adopted in 2018, outlines ACTA services over the next five years, organizational recommendations, and additional plans including an asset management plan, five-year financial plan, and implementation plan (in coordination with BGMPO).

BGMPO REGIONAL TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) is studying opportunities to better coordinate and expand transit service through the Regional Transit Feasibility Study (RTFS). This study will also look at ways to improve regional transit access to nearby destinations like Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill. It will consider equitable and innovative approaches to providing transit service, assess multimodal connections, reduce service duplication, determine cost-effective ways to enhance service, evaluate safety performance targets and measures, and develop funding recommendations. With limited available transit funding, understanding tradeoffs and priorities for service improvements will be central to the project.

This study is being developed by the BGMPO with support from partners at GoTriangle, Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), Orange County Public Transportation, Link Transit, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). It is supported by funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division. As of February 2024, the draft study has been released for public comment.

Existing Conditions Assessment⁸

An Existing Conditions Assessment analyzing commuting trends, transit ridership trends, and other existing conditions of the regional transit system was created to support the development of the RTFS. The report arrived at the following conclusions:

- Most of the Link Transit service area can support 60-minute local fixed route bus service, with some areas near Elon, the I-40 corridor, and central Burlington that could support 30-minute service

⁷ Alamance County Transportation Authority. "Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA) Community Connectivity Plan." July 2018.

⁸ Burlington – Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. "BGMPO Regional Transit Feasibility Study – Existing Conditions Assessment." September 2023.

- Most points of interest in the Link Transit service area are served by fixed route bus service except some high schools in rural areas of Alamance County and a Food Lion and Pleasant Grove Community Center to the northwest of Mebane
- Most trips overall remain within the BGMPO study area while 58% of work trips travel outside of the area, especially to Greensboro, Durham, and Chapel Hill
- Link Transit ridership has surpassed pre-pandemic levels

October Public Meeting Update⁹

Common desired improvements from the public survey include:

- Increasing the frequency of fixed route bus service
- Improving coordination between transit providers to make transfers from one service to the other easier
- Make information about current available transit service more accessible
- Provide an option to schedule on-demand service via mobile app

Stakeholders expressed interest in:

- Improving local access to destinations by way of adding stops and coverage
- Improving information about and awareness of services
- Longer spans and higher frequency of service and addition of Sunday service
- Improving connections and transfers and incorporating multimodal facilities
- Adding capital improvements such as facilities and shelters

SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

This TDP focuses on the existing and anticipated mobility needs of specific populations and the general public within the Link Transit service area. The estimated population of the Burlington Urban Area in 2022 was 145,967, living in 57,049 households, according to the 2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate. The average population density of the Burlington Urban Area is approximately 1,586 people per square mile.

Certain socioeconomic and demographic characteristics can indicate where there may be a need for public transit service and/or where populations most likely to utilize transit are located—Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Hispanic people, seniors, individuals with household incomes below the poverty line, people with disabilities, and zero vehicle households.

Table 3 summarizes the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Burlington as well as North Carolina as a whole.

⁹ Burlington – Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. “Regional Transit Feasibility Study – Public Meetings Round 2.” October 2023.

Table 3: Demographic Overview of Alamance County compared to North Carolina

Demographic	Burlington City	Burlington Urban Area	North Carolina
Total Population	56,951	145,957	10,470,214
Population Density	1,790 (per square mile)	1,586 (per square mile)	196 (per square mile)
BIPOC Population	26,557 (46.6%)	58,878 (40.3%)	3,669,756 (35.0%)
Hispanic Population	9,989 (17.5%)	20,922 (14.3%)	1,051,008 (10.0%)
People 65 Years and Older	10,188 (17.9%)	23,048 (15.8%)	1,747,845 (16.7%)
Total Households	23,883	57,049	4,105,232
Households Living in Poverty	3,972 (16.6%)	8,431 (14.8%)	538,305 (13.1%)
Households With at Least One Person with a Disability	6,070 (25.4%)	13,316 (23.3%)	1,065,089 (25.9%)
Zero-Vehicle Households	1,742 (7.3%)	2,919 (5.1%)	220,103 (5.4%)

The demographic makeup of Alamance County has a consistently higher rate of demographics expected to be more reliant on public transit. **Figure 2** through **Figure 9** illustrate the spatial distribution of various populations with socioeconomic and demographic characteristics which are associated with a higher propensity for transit.

Areas with higher population densities tend to have higher rates of transit use. Burlington is the population center of Alamance County and has some of the most densely populated block groups in the area. Population densities are highest in downtown Burlington and along US-70.

Most of the areas with high population density are currently served by the existing bus system. However, there are some areas with medium to high population density in Graham south of I-40, west of Elon, and to the north of Elon and Burlington that are not served by public transit. **Figure 2** illustrates the areas with higher population densities.

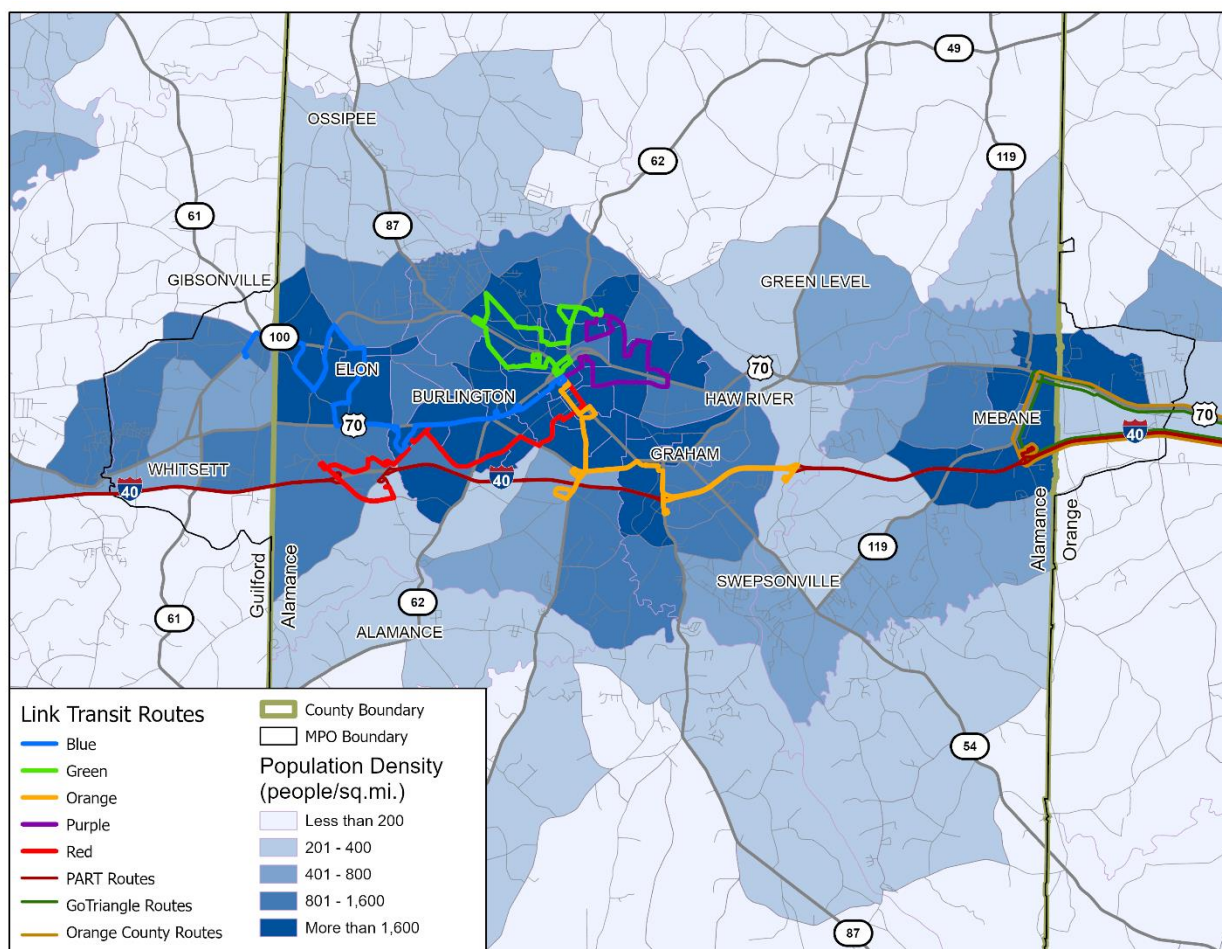


Figure 2: Population Density

BIPOC make up 46.6% of the total population of Burlington with the highest concentrations of these communities located in the central core and north of Burlington as well as in the central core of Graham. Most of the areas of high BIPOC density are currently well-served by the existing bus system, as shown in **Figure 3**.

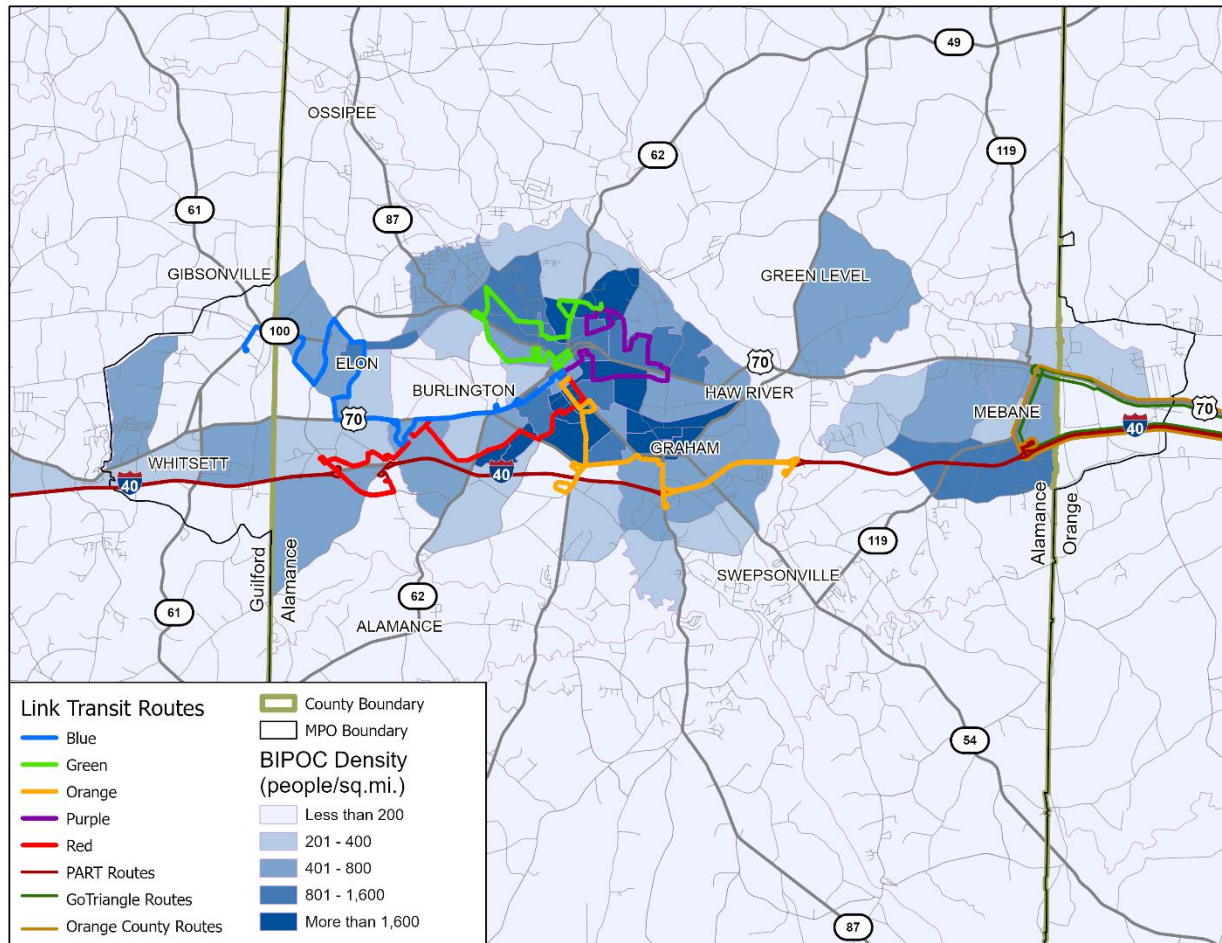


Figure 3: Density of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Population

In Burlington, Hispanic people make up 17.5% of the population. Population density of Hispanic people is concentrated in the south and east of Burlington and the north of Graham, as shown in **Figure 4**. There are very low concentrations of Hispanic people elsewhere in the county. An area of high Hispanic density in Graham is not currently served by an existing bus route.

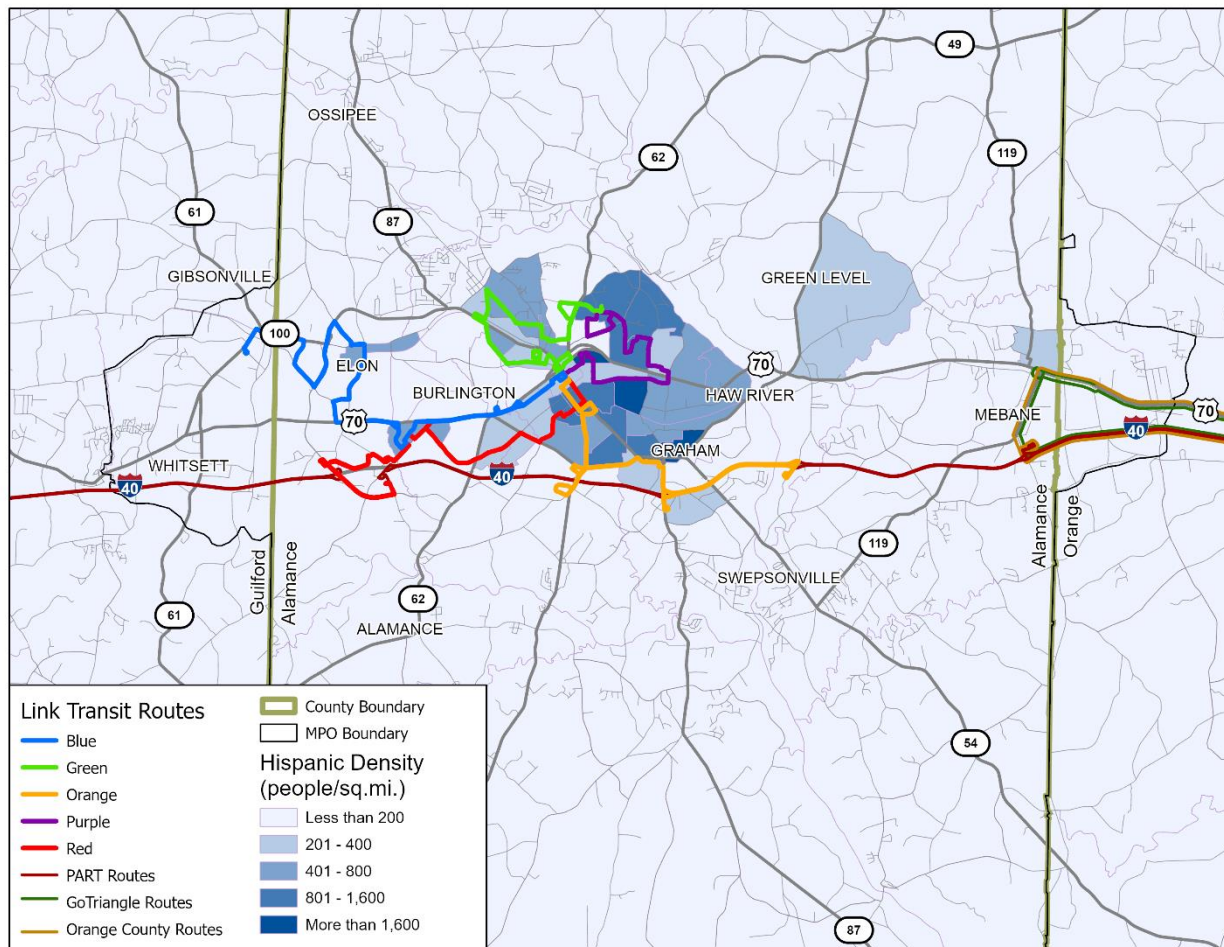


Figure 4: Density of Hispanic Population

People over 65 years of age make up 17.9% of the total population of Burlington. **Figure 5** shows areas of high senior population density spread across the Urban Area, though there appear to be relatively few seniors living close to the downtown cores. All areas with high senior population density are served by the existing bus system.

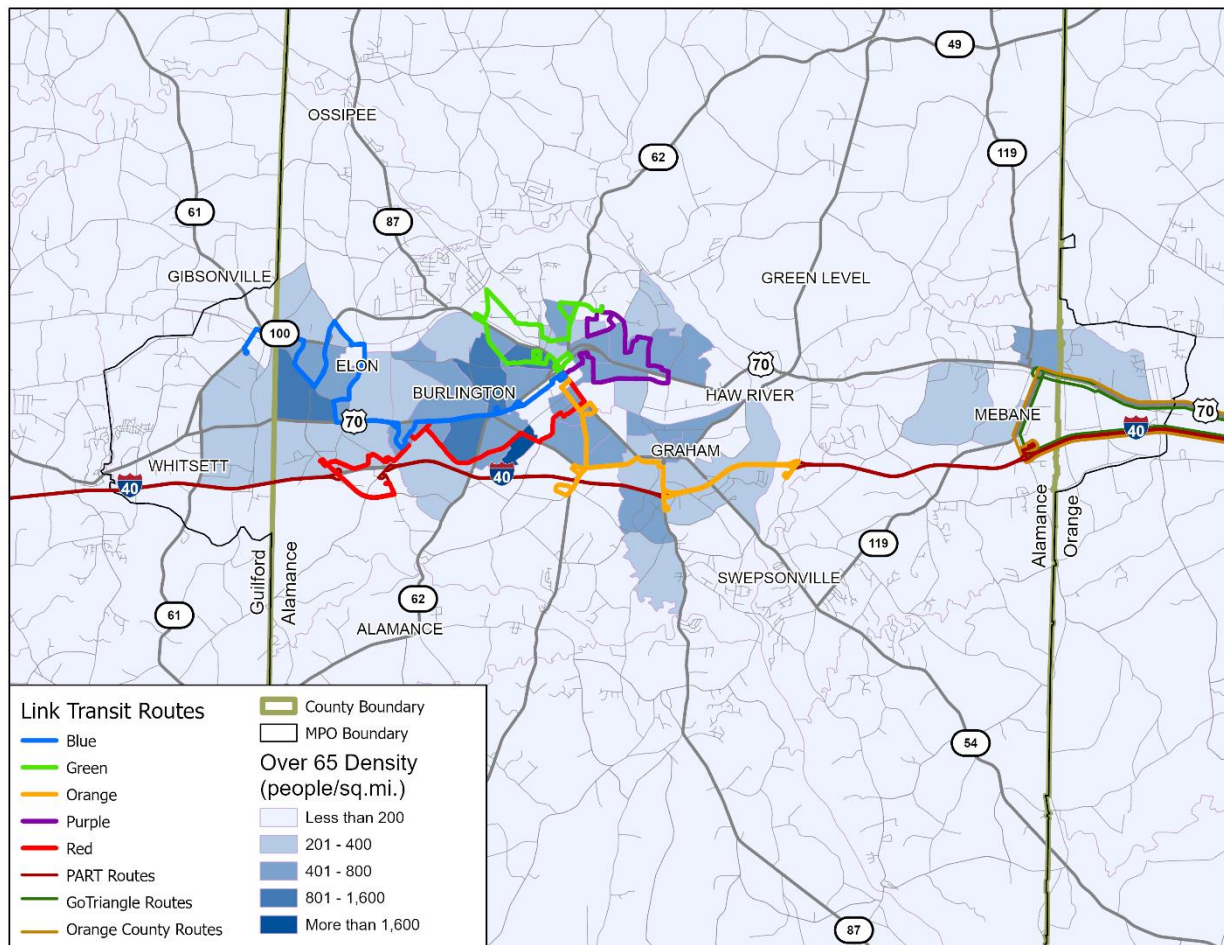


Figure 5: Density of People aged 65 and older

People below the poverty line are less likely to be able to afford personal transportation and are more likely to rely on public transit. In Burlington, 16.6% of households earn less than the poverty level. In **Figure 6**, concentrations of people living in poverty can be seen in the city centers of the Urban Area. All areas of high poverty density are served by existing bus routes.

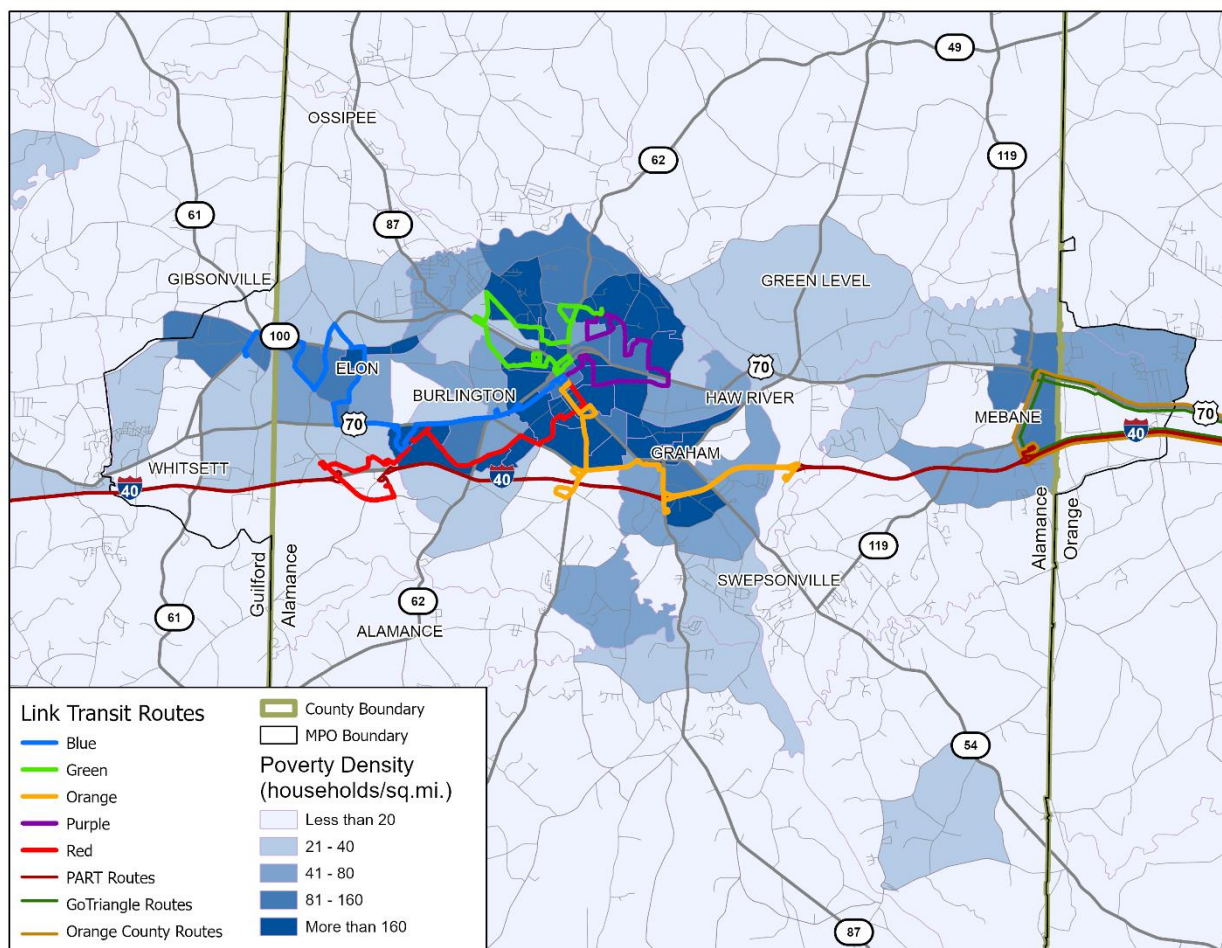


Figure 6: Density of Households Earning Below the Poverty Line

In Burlington, 25.4% of all households have at least one person with a disability. **Figure 7** shows the density of disabled people to reflect total population density. Most areas with significant disabled population densities are currently served by the bus system except for the area to the southwest of the junction of I-40 and NC-62 and the area to the east of the center of Burlington and areas surrounding Whitsett.

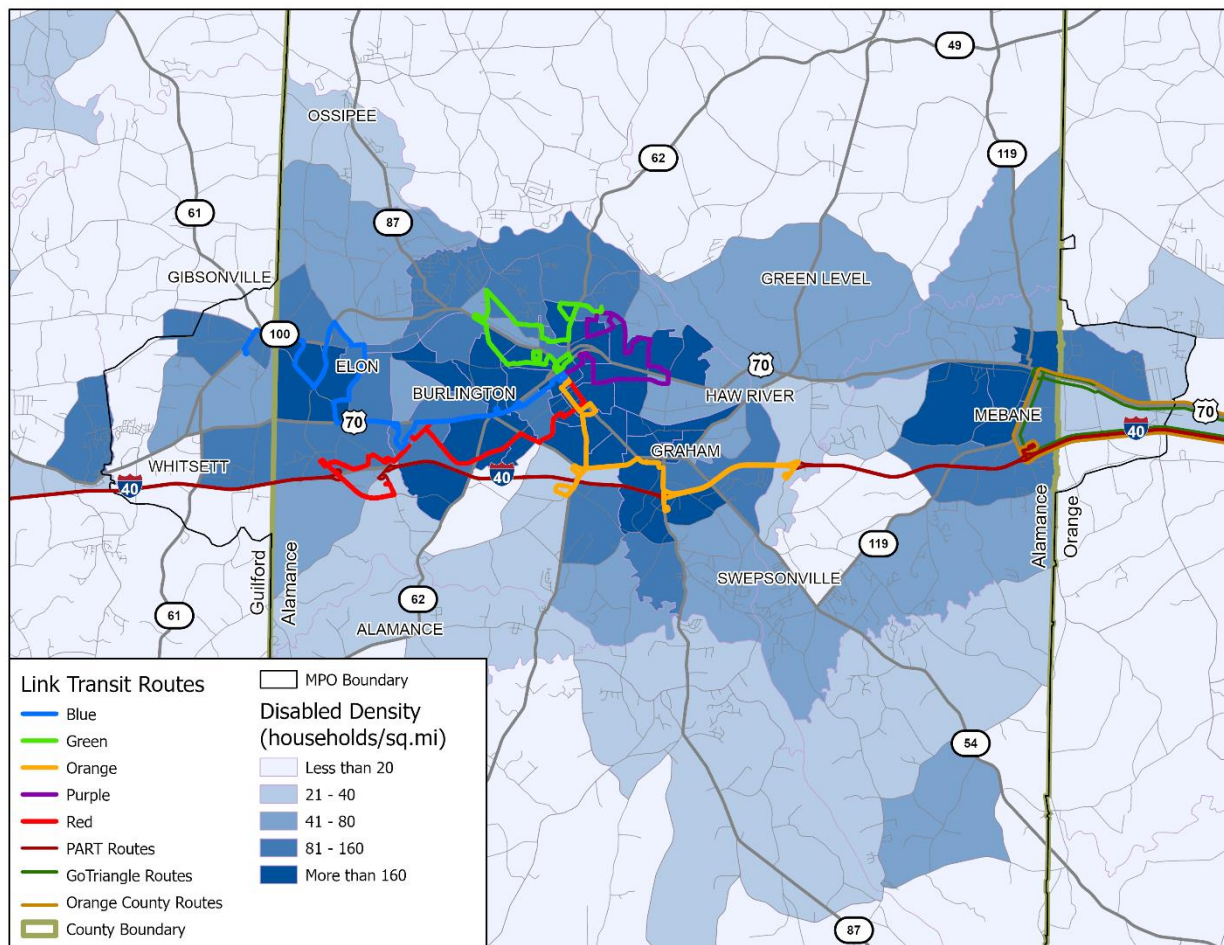


Figure 7: Density of Households with at Least One Person with a Disability

People living in households without access to a personal vehicle are more likely to use public transit. In Burlington, 7.3% of households do not have access to a personal vehicle. As shown in **Figure 8**, the centers of Burlington and Graham have areas of high concentrations of zero-vehicle households. There are some areas of medium to high zero-vehicle household density south of I-40 and to the west of Elon that are not served by existing bus routes.

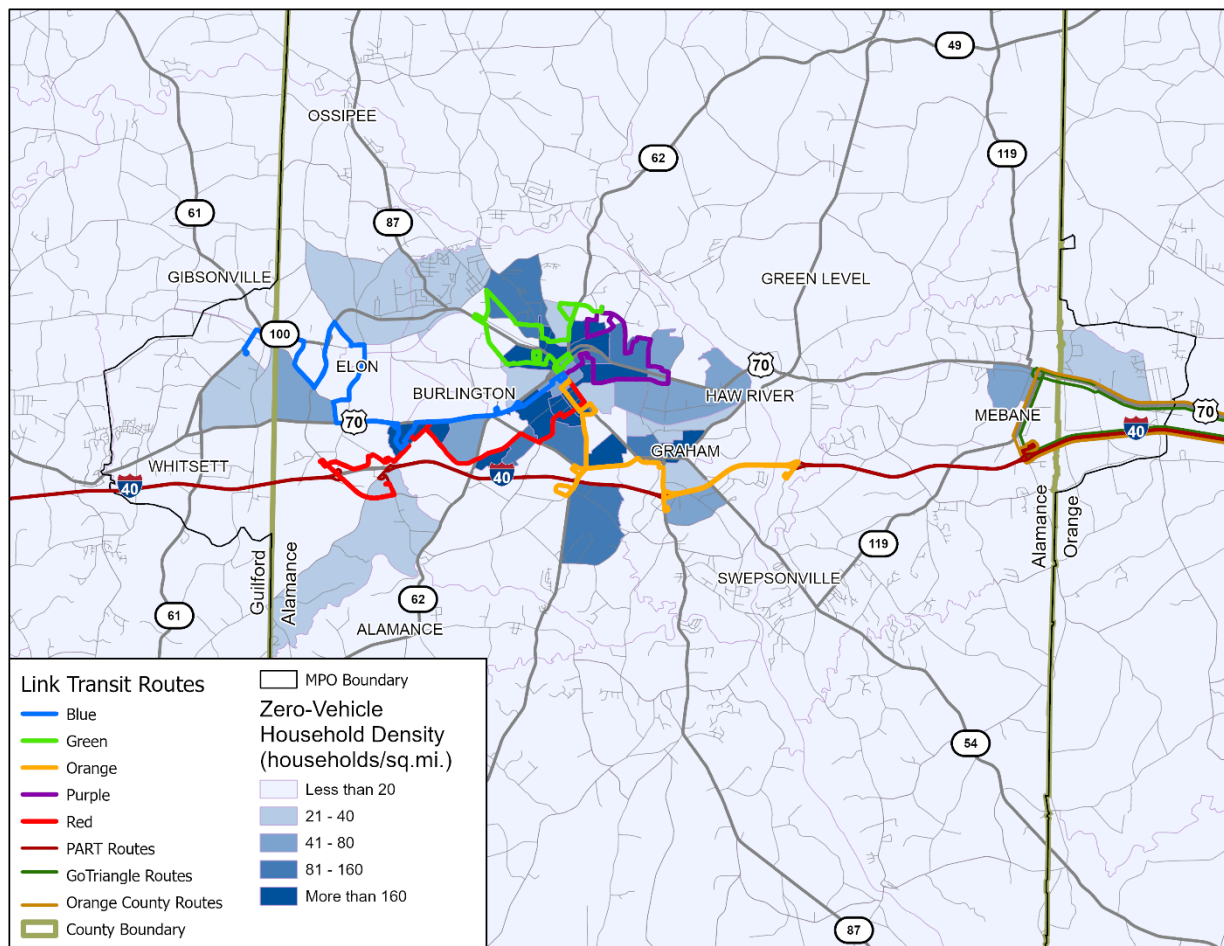


Figure 8: Density of Households without Access to a Personal Vehicle

The transit propensity map shown in **Figure 9** represents the density of the total combined demographic and socioeconomic groups shown above, assigning a transit propensity score for each census block group. The various demographic groups were not weighted, meaning a census block with a total population density of 100 people per square mile, a BIPOC density of 20 people per square mile, and a senior density of 10 people per square mile would score the same as a block group with 70 people per square mile, 40 BIPOC per square mile, and 20 seniors per square mile.

This method results in a map that correlates to population density more closely than the density of any of the other demographics, but this is desirable if the goal of a transit system is to benefit the most people. Including the demographics with higher transit reliance adjusts the map to show where demand for transit might be higher per person.

The areas close to the downtown cores of the Urban Area, especially along the US-70 corridor, show the highest transit propensity. There is also an area of high transit propensity to the northwest of Burlington. This reflects what was shown previously in the demographic maps. Most areas with high transit propensity are currently served by transit except for a gap to the north of the center of Graham.

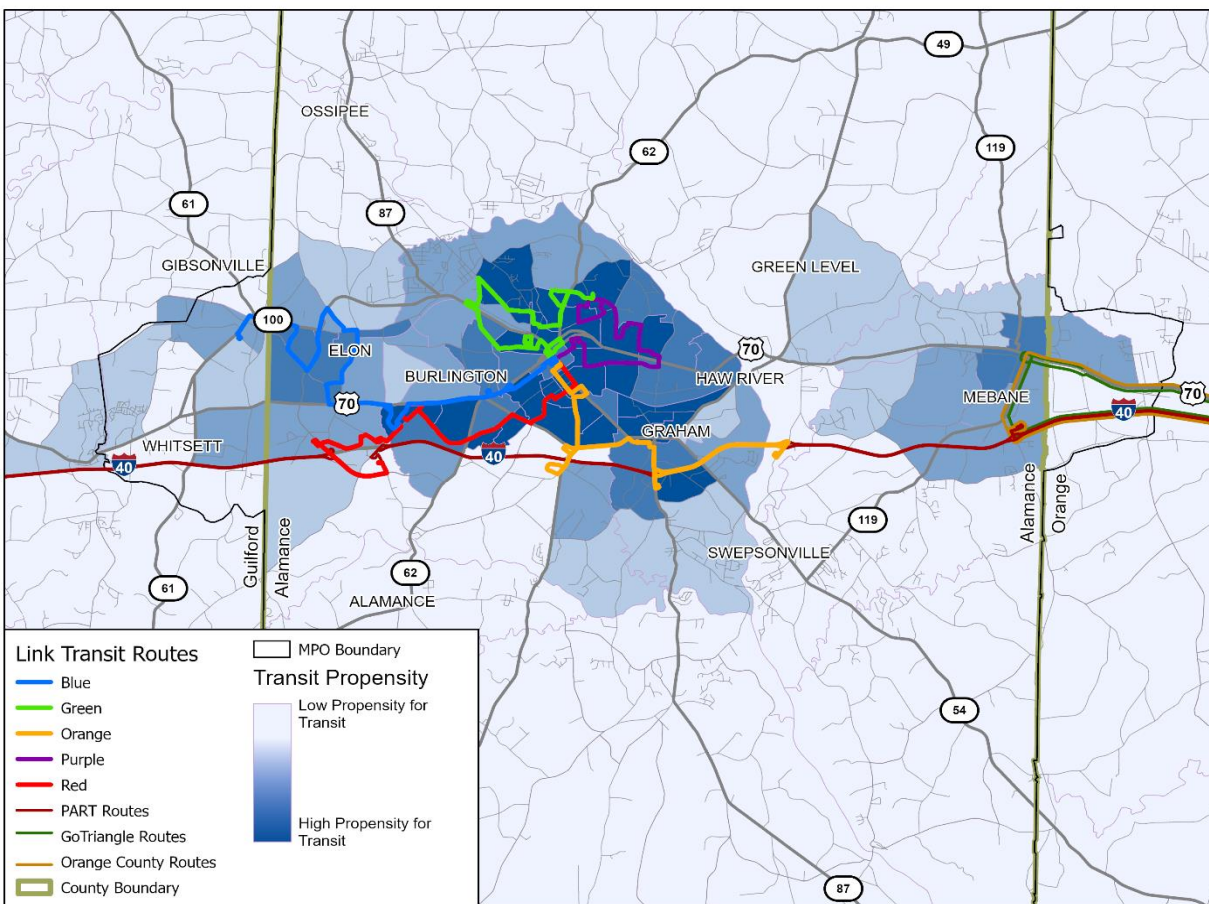


Figure 9: Transit Propensity

DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

The population of the BGMPO Planning Area – Alamance County and portions of Guilford and Orange Counties – is expected to grow by almost 37 percent from 2017 (176,711) to 2045 (241,734) according to the BGMPO 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Much of this growth is expected to occur in existing municipalities and along key travel corridors.¹⁰

Looking to demographics of the state as a whole, North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) estimates that 37 percent of growth in the state from 2019 to 2038 will be attributed to the non-Hispanic White population, 35 percent to the non-Hispanic non-White population, and 27 percent to the Hispanic population. During this same time period, there is expected to be a proportionally larger aging (age 65 and older) population.¹¹

The NCDOT concluded the following relevant demographic challenges for transportation as the population continues to grow and change:

- Challenges related to population growth: more drivers, increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and more demand on all modes of transportation
- Challenges related to an aging population: increased demand for alternative transportation modes

Existing Services Overview

The following sections provide an overview of Link Transit’s existing services and operations, including transit services, fare structure, revenue/support fleet, and facilities.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Link Transit’s current transit system, displayed in **Figure 10**, includes fixed-route bus service and paratransit services including demand response and subscription service for the City of Burlington and surrounding areas. As of 2022 Link Transit serves a population of over 66,000 people over 35 square miles.

¹⁰ Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization. “2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.” June 16, 2020.

¹¹ Cline, Mike. “Population Trends in North Carolina & Implications for Transportation.” North Carolina Department of Transportation, July 12, 2019

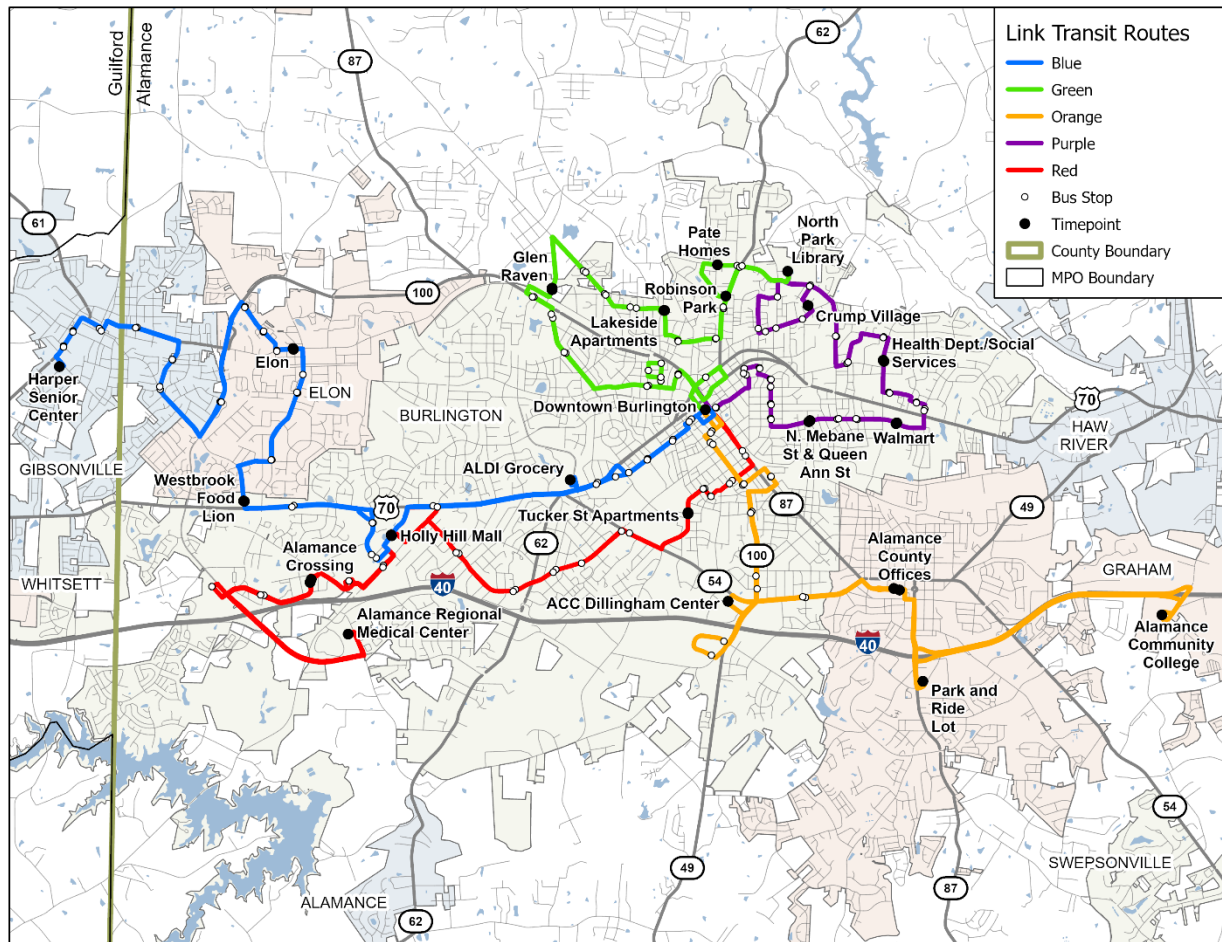


Figure 10: Link Transit System Map

Fixed-Route

Link Transit's fixed-route service includes five routes with a total of 185 stops including the main transfer point in Downtown Burlington. Routes operate in the City of Burlington with connections to Elon and Gibsonville as well as Alamance County Offices and Community College. Specific route destinations include:

- **Blue Route 3:** ALDI Grocery, Holy Hill Mall, Westbrook Food Lion, Elon, Gibsonville, Gibsonville/Harper Senior Center
- **Red Route 1:** Tucker Street Apartments, Holy Hill Mall, Alamance Crossing, Alamance Regional Medical Center (ARMC)
- **Orange Route 2:** Salvation Army, ACC – Dillingham Center, Alamance County Offices, Graham Park and Ride Lot, Alamance Community College (ACC)
- **Green Route 4:** Glen Raven, Lakeside Apartments, Pate Homes, Rauhut Street & Westmoreland Drive, North Park Library
- **Purple Route 5:** N Mebane Street & Queen Ann Street, Walmart, Health Department/Social Services, Crump Village, North Park Library

Figure 11 shows Link Transit’s fixed-route passenger trips from 2017 to 2022 according to Federal Transit Administration’s National Transit Database. Transit ridership dropped in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic but rebounded in 2022 to exceed pre-pandemic levels. Overall, Link Transit has seen ridership increase by almost 27 percent since 2017.

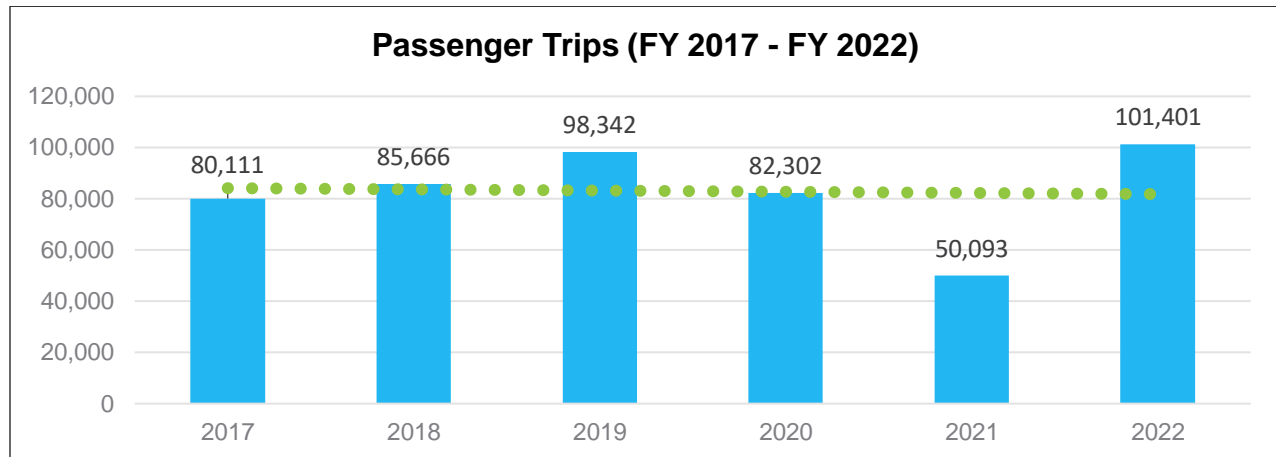


Figure 11: Link Transit Fixed-Route Passenger Trips FY 2017 to FY 2022

Figure 12 shows average monthly ridership by stop for Link Transit routes in 2022. This data predates the Elon extension of the Blue Route in May of 2023, so stops that were added as part of this extension are not included on this map. The stops with the highest ridership include:

- Transfer hubs such as the Worth Street Transfer Hub in Downtown Burlington and the North Park Library
- Shopping destinations such as the two Walmart locations on North Mebane Street and Garden Road
- Institutions such as Alamance Regional Medical Center and Alamance Community College

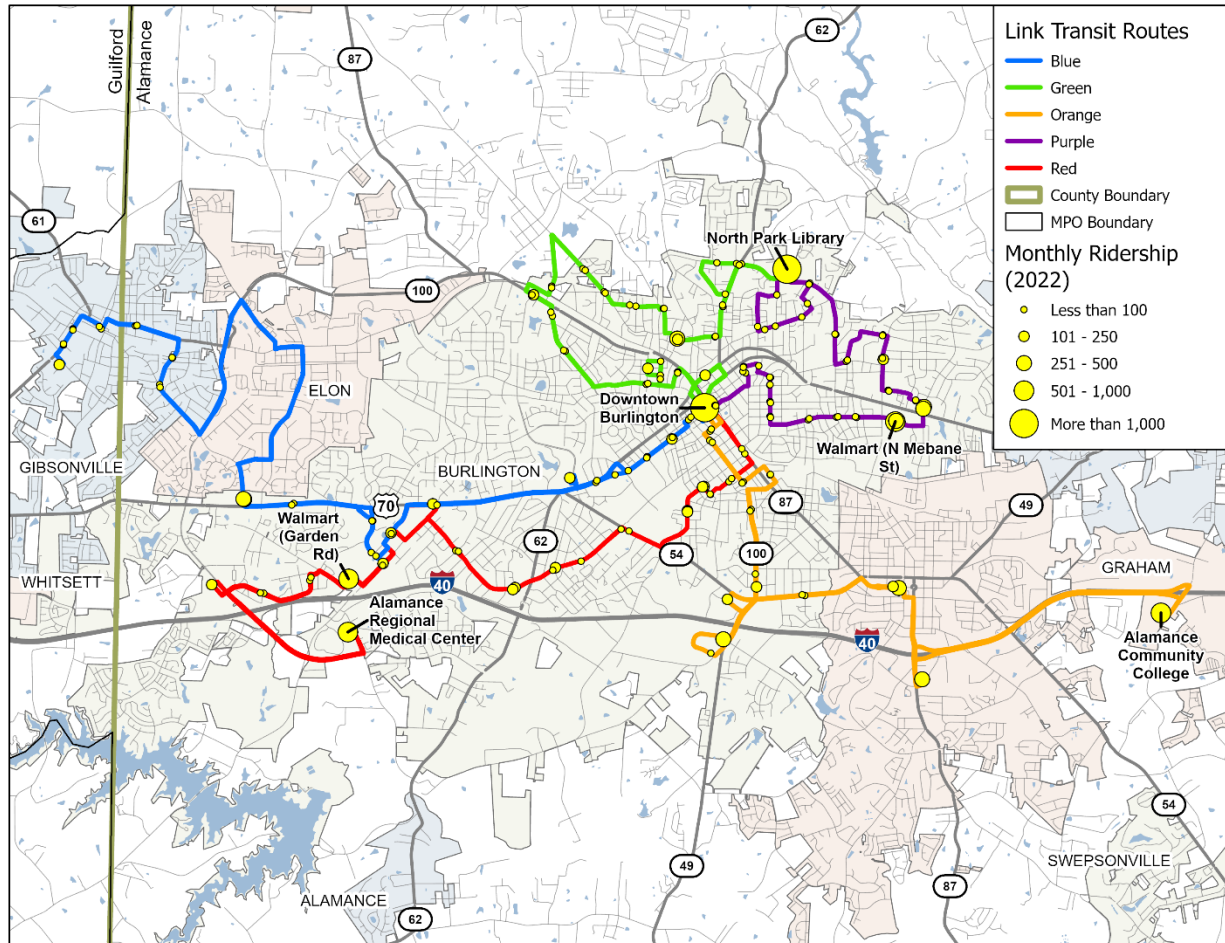


Figure 12: Monthly Ridership by Stop in 2022

Demand Response

Link Paratransit is a curb-to-curb demand response paratransit service that provides service in Burlington, Elon, Gibsonville and unincorporated Alamance County within ¾ mile radius of Link Transit routes. Paratransit service is available to persons that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that cannot navigate the fixed-route system. All Link Paratransit vehicles are fully equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp and a wheelchair securement area with space for two mobility devices. Reservations for next day service can be made up to seven days in advance by phone or by using the My Transit Manager app. Customers that have a regular travel pattern can also take advantage of subscription service on a limited basis.

Figure 13 shows Link Transit’s paratransit passenger trips from 2017 to 2022 according to Federal Transit Administration’s National Transit Database. Outside of a slight drop in ridership in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic, paratransit service has been increasing over time with a 157 percent increase from 2017 to 2022.

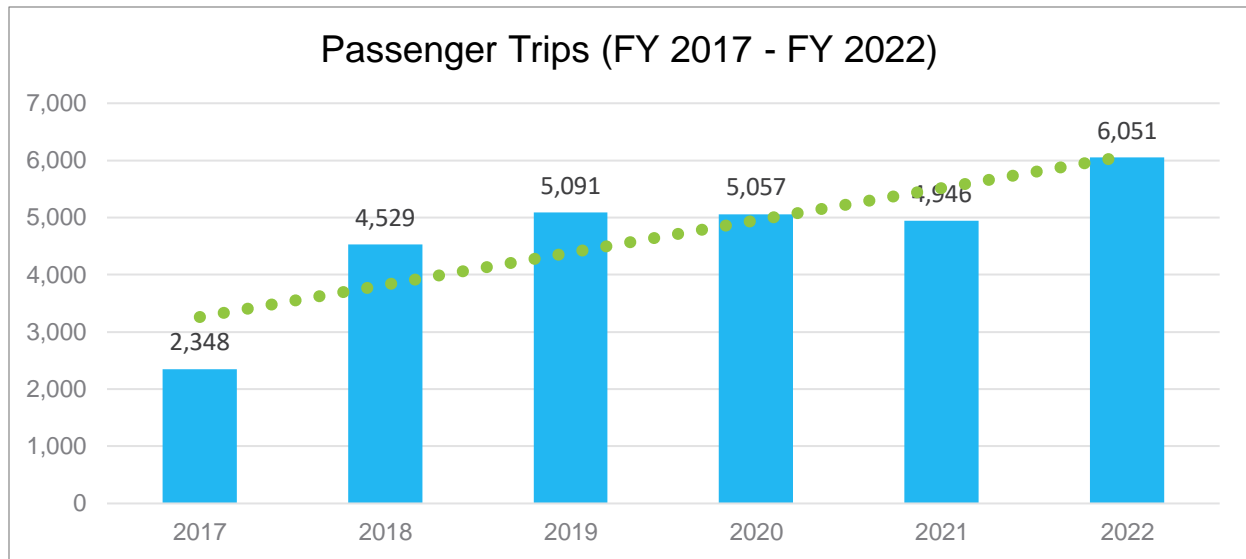


Figure 13: Link Transit Paratransit Passenger Trips from FY 17 to FY 22

Connecting Services

Link Transit connects with three other transit systems – Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), Elon Express, and Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA). See **Figure 14** for a system map.

The Link Transit Orange Route connects with PART Route 4 at the Alamance Regional Medical Center, Graham Park and Ride Lot, and Alamance Community College’s main campus. PART Route 4, Alamance Burlington Express, operates Monday through Friday from 5:40 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and provides service to Alamance Regional Park & Ride, Graham Park and Ride, Alamance Community College, Mebane Cone Health Park and Ride, UNC Hospitals, and Ambulatory Care Center. In addition to connections with Link Transit, the PART Route 4 also connects to additional PART routes, Go Triangle, Chapel Hill Transit, and Piedmont Triad International Airport shuttles.

Elon Express is a university operated and funded transit system that provides free service for Elon University students, faculty, staff and community members. The Link Transit Blue Route 3 connects with Elon Express’s Haggard Ave route at the West Haggard Avenue @ Holt Street stop. The Haggard Ave route operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and serves various university facilities and apartment complexes.

ACTA provides door to door transportation service within Alamance County for general purpose trips, medical trips, and almost any non-emergency trip destinations. ACTA operates Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

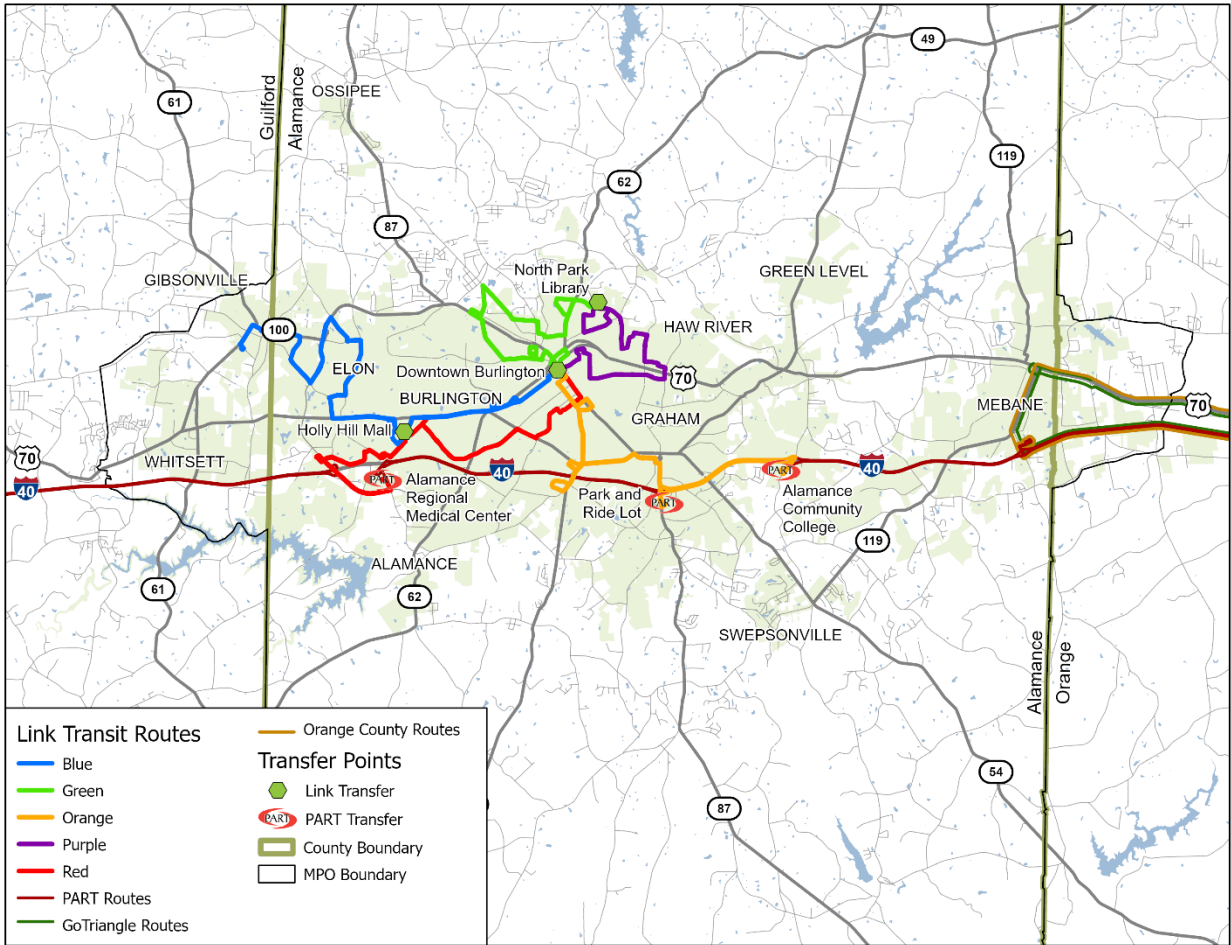


Figure 14: Map of all transit systems in Alamance County

FARE STRUCTURE

Although fare-free from June 2021 through 2023 to mitigate pandemic related ridership declines, Link Transit reintroduced fares as of December 18, 2024. **Table 4** displays Link Transit’s approved fare structure.

Table 4: Link Transit Fare Structure as of December 18, 2023

Fare Category	Single-ride Ticket	31-Day Pass
General	\$1.00	\$20.00
Discount	\$0.50	\$10.00
Paratransit	\$4.00	N/A

The discounted fare is available to seniors (age 65 and older), persons with disabilities, and Medicare card holders for fixed-route service only.

FLEET AND FACILITIES

The following section provides a current inventory of the Link Transit's fleet and facilities.

Service Fleet

Link operates a fleet of 12 vehicles including five Light Transit Vehicles (LTV) and two standard size electric buses for fixed-route service as well as four shuttles for paratransit service. All of Link Transit vehicles are ADA accessible and equipped to accommodate bicycles on the front of the vehicle. Vehicles are stored and serviced at a Transdev Facility. **Table 5** provides a full fleet inventory including vehicle type, age, ownership, and capacity.

Table 5: Link Transit Fixed-Route and Paratransit Fleet Inventory

Vehicle ID	Vehicle Type	Make/Model	Vehicle Year	Owner	Passenger Capacity
Fixed-Route Bus Fleet					
8001	LTV	Arboc Spirit of Mobility	2015	City of Burlington	25
8002	LTV	Arboc Spirit of Mobility	2015	City of Burlington	25
8003	LTV	Arboc Spirit of Mobility	2015	City of Burlington	25
8004	LTV	Arboc Spirit of Mobility	2015	City of Burlington	25
8005	LTV	Arboc Spirit of Mobility	2015	City of Burlington	25
8008	Electric Bus	RIDE K7M	2023	City of Burlington	29
8009	Electric Bus	RIDE K7M	2023	City of Burlington	29
Paratransit Fleet					
7002	Shuttle Bus	Ameritrans	2016	Transdev	14
7003	Shuttle Bus	Ameritrans	2016	Transdev	14
2101	Shuttle Bus	Goshen Impulse	2017	Transdev	25
2103	Shuttle Bus	Starcraft Allstar	2016	Transdev	16

Transfer Hubs

Burlington's Temporary Transfer Hub is located on S. Worth Street near the Historic Depot in downtown Burlington. All five fixed-routes start/terminate at this transfer hub. The transfer hub is an outside space that contains two small bus shelters with benches as well as bicycle racks. Other stops for transfers are the Holly Mill Mall and North Park Library.



Figure 15: Link Transit's Downtown Transfer Hub

Bus Stops

Link Transit serves 185 bus stops across the system. Bus stop signs are either mounted individually, on existing sign poles or on light posts.

Park-and-Ride Lots

Link Transit connects with two park-and-ride lots, including:

- Orange Route 2 at Graham Park & Ride (with connection to PART Route 4)
- Red Route 1 at Alamance Regional Medical Center Park & Ride (with connection to PART Route 4)

APPENDIX A. TREND ANALYSIS

Data from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD) for FY 2017 to 2022 was used to evaluate trends in service performance and cost efficiency. Evaluation measures include:

- **Passenger Trips** – the total number of riders. Although there was a decrease in ridership in 2021 due to the pandemic, ridership has increased by 27 percent from 2017 to 2022.
- **Revenue Hours** – the total number of service hours provided.
- **Operating Expenses** – total dollar amount required to operate transit services.
- **Fare Revenues** – total dollar amount collected from passenger fares.
- **Trips per Hour** – ratio of total passenger trips per revenue hour.
- **Cost per Trip** – ratio of total operating expenses per passenger trip.
- **Cost per Hour** – ratio of total operating expenses per revenue hour.
- **Farebox Recovery** – ratio of total operating expenses covered by fare revenue.

Fixed-Route Trend Analysis

Fixed-route evaluation measures for the system as a whole are summarized in **Table 6** and displayed in **Figure 16** through **Figure 25** below.

Table 6: KRT Fixed-Route Service Performance and Cost Efficiency Measures

Service Measure	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Passenger Trips	80,111	85,666	98,342	82,302	50,093	101,401
Revenue Hours	15,942	15,615	17,589	15,363	16,613	16,892
Operating Expenses (\$)	886,877	793,646	906,910	746,946	1,883,028	1,909,857
Fare Revenues (\$)	38,121	41,073	43,161	40,415	26,556	-
Trips per Hour	5.0	5.5	5.6	5.4	3.0	6.0
Cost per Trip (\$)	11.07	9.26	9.22	9.08	37.59	18.83
Cost per Hour (\$)	55.63	50.83	51.56	48.62	113.35	113.06
Farebox Recovery (%)	4.3	5.2	4.8	5.4	1.4	-

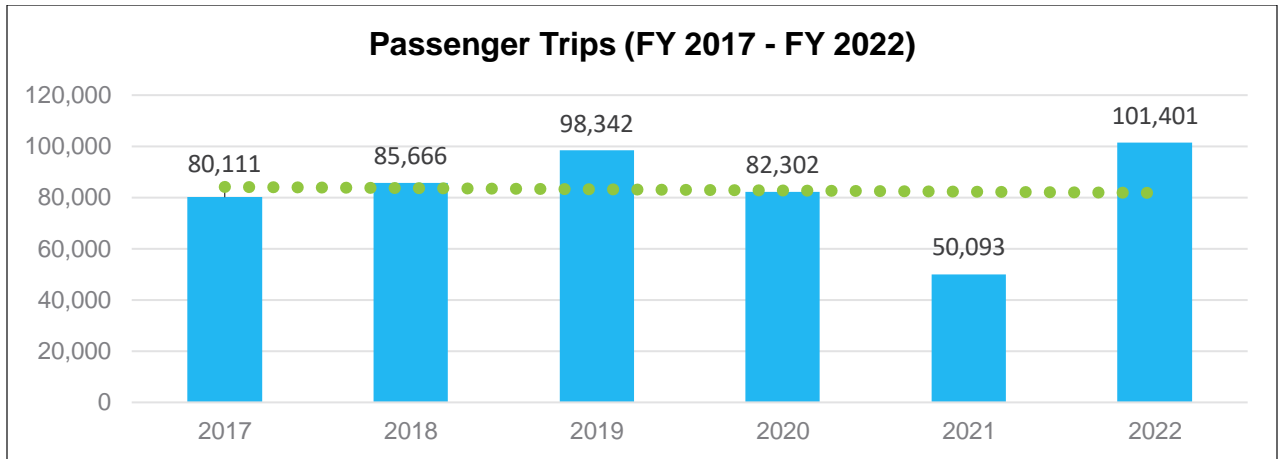


Figure 16: Link Transit Fixed-Route Passenger Trips FY 2017 to FY 2022

Although there was a decrease in ridership in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, Link Transit has seen ridership increase by 27 percent from 2017 to 2022

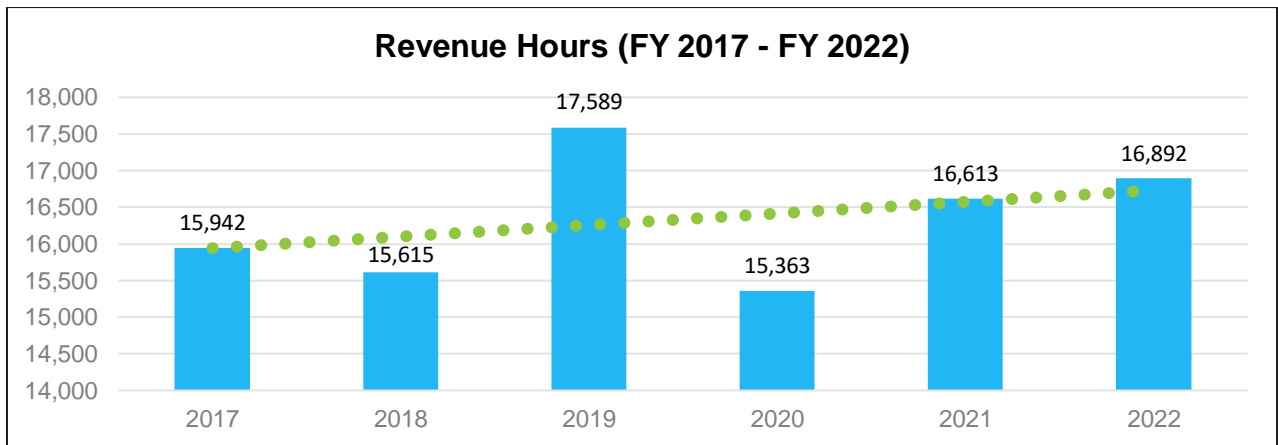


Figure 17: Link Transit Fixed-Route Revenue Hours FY 2017 to FY 2022

Despite seeing a brief spike in revenue hours in 2019, revenue hours have generally remained steady over time, seeing an increase of only 6 percent from 2017 to 2022.

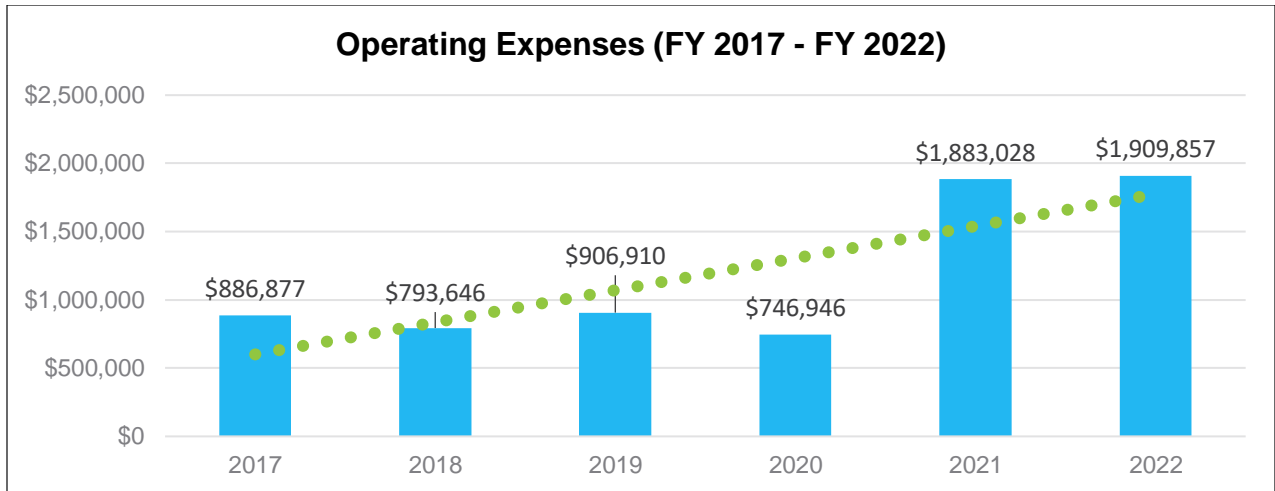


Figure 18: Link Transit Fixed-Route Operating Expenses FY 2017 to FY 2022

Operating expenses have significantly increased in recent years with a 115 percent increase from 2017 to 2022. However, the significant jump from 2020 to 2021 can largely be attributed to the fact that administrative costs were added to the calculation of operating expenses starting in 2021.

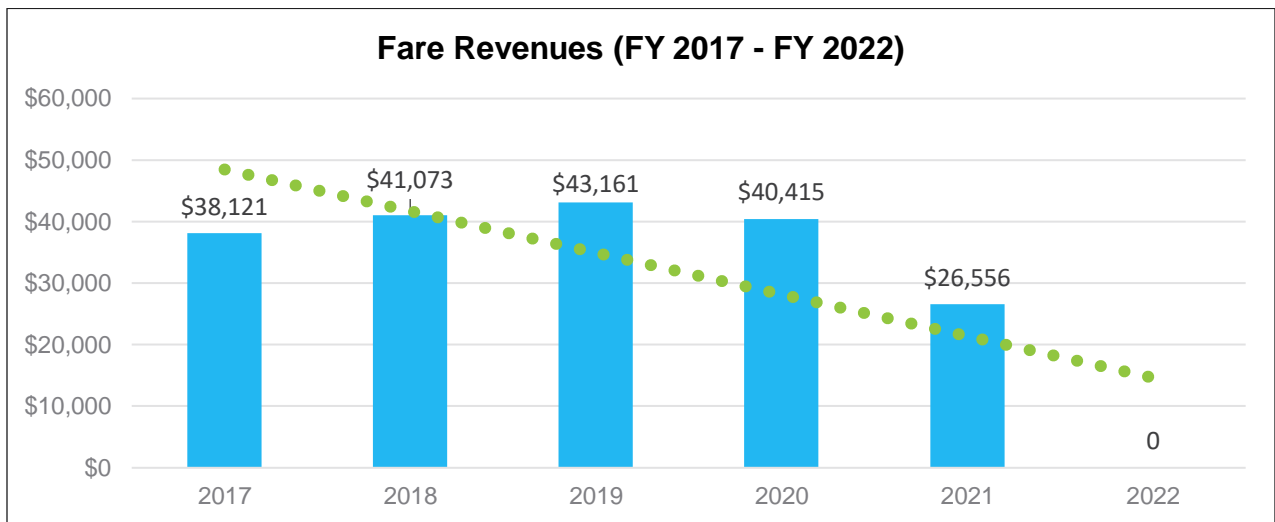


Figure 19: Link Transit Fixed-Route Fare Revenue FY 2017 to FY 2022

Fare revenues remained steady from 2017 to 2020 but saw a significant drop in 2021 due to the covid pandemic and the introduction of free fares in June 2021.

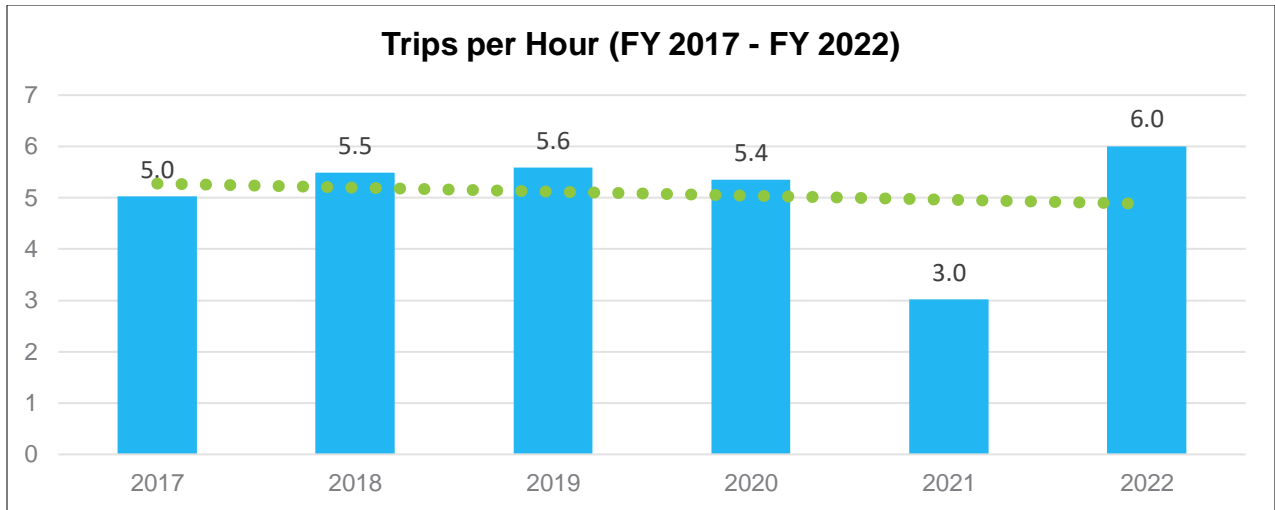


Figure 20: Link Transit Fixed-Route Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour FY 2017 to FY 2022

Passenger trips per revenue hour increased by 19 percent from 2017 to 2022. The decrease in 2021 corresponds with the decrease in ridership due to the pandemic.

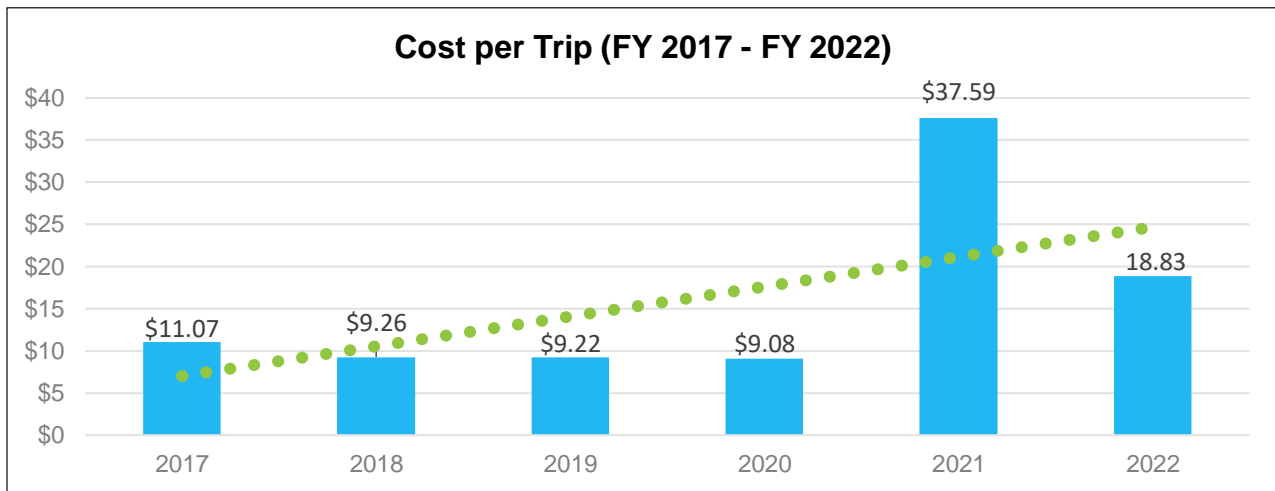


Figure 21: Link Transit Fixed-Route Operating Expenses per Passenger Trip FY 2017 to FY 2022

Operating expenses per passenger trips increased significantly in 2021; however, this can largely be attributed to the fact that fares were suspended, administrative costs were introduced to the calculation of operating expenses, and passenger trips decreased due to the pandemic.

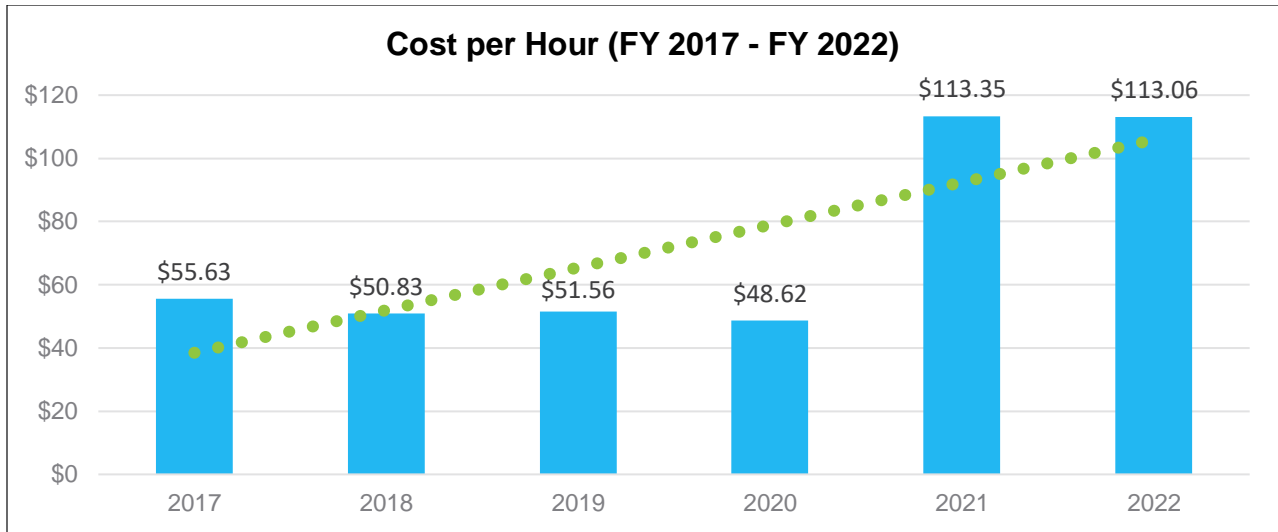


Figure 22: Link Transit Fixed-Route Operating Expenses per Revenue Hour FY 2017 to FY 2022

Operating expenses per revenue hour increased significantly in 2021; however, just like with cost per trip, this can largely be attributed the decrease in ridership due to the pandemic, suspended fares, and the introduction of administrative costs to the calculation of operating expenses.

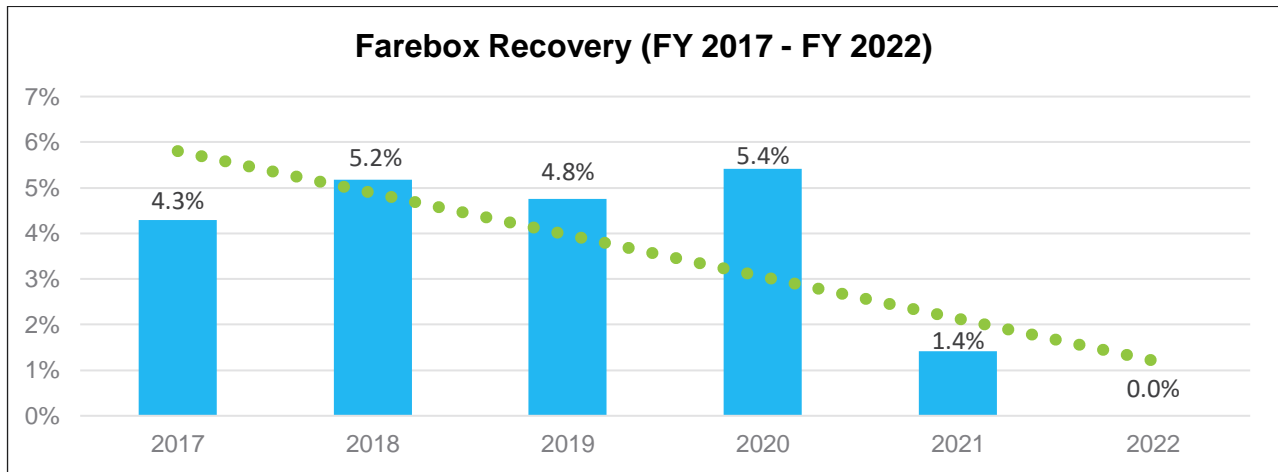


Figure 23: Link Transit Fixed-Route Farebox Recovery FY 2017 to FY 2022

Farebox recovery remained steady from 2017 to 2020 with a significant drop in 2021 due to the pandemic and free fares starting June 2021.

Figure 24 and **Figure 25** break down Passenger Trips and Operating Expenses per trip by route for FY 2022. The purple route has the highest ridership and therefore also has the lowest cost per trip. Conversely the Green Route has the lowest ridership and therefore has the highest cost per trip.

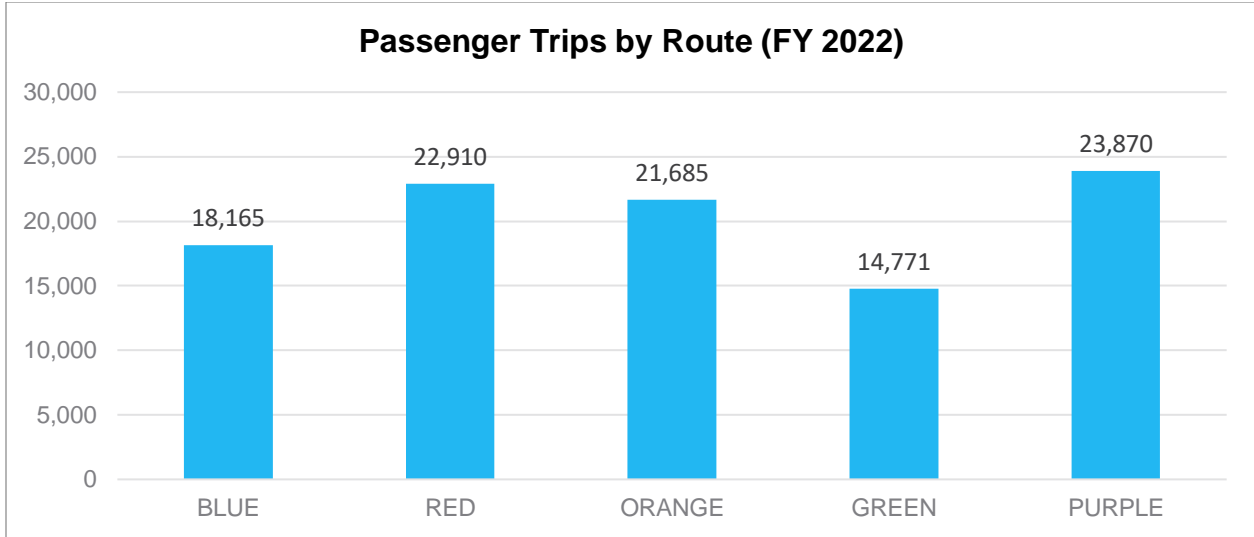


Figure 24: Link Transit Fixed-Route Passenger Trips by Route FY 2022

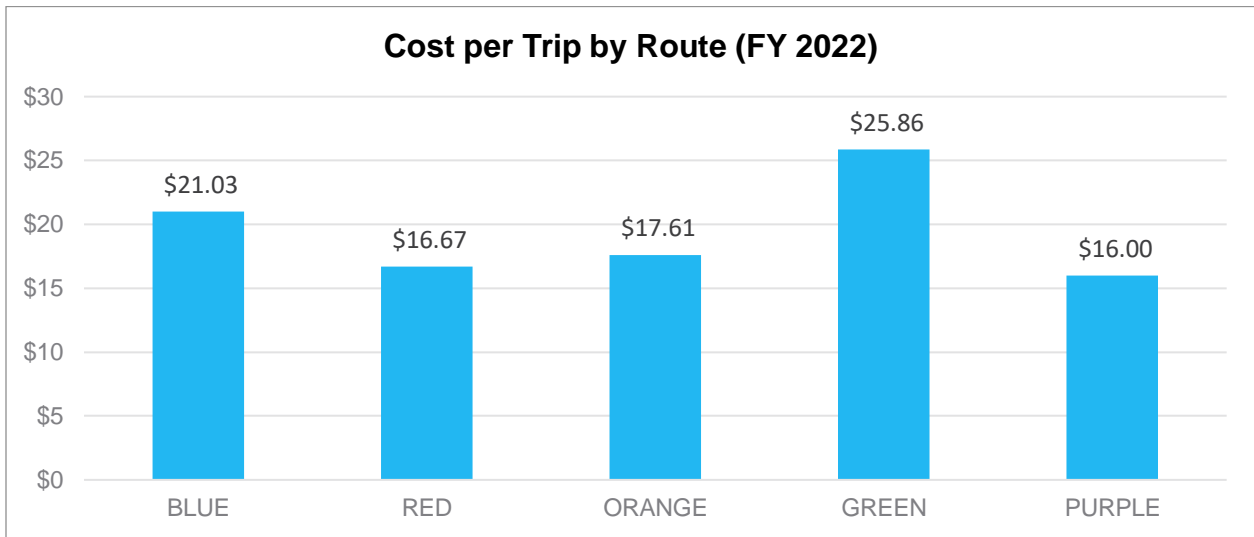


Figure 25: Link Transit Fixed-Route Operating Expenses per Trip by Route FY 2022

Paratransit Trend Analysis

Paratransit service was evaluated using the same measures as discussed above for fixed-route service. Paratransit evaluation measures are summarized in **Table 7**. In general, paratransit passenger trips increased steadily from FY 2017 to FY 2022 outside of a minimal drop during the pandemic.

Table 7: KRT Paratransit Service Performance and Cost Efficiency Measures

Service Measure	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Passenger Trips	2,348	4,529	5,091	5,057	4,946	6,051
Revenue Hours	1,761	3,397	3,603	3,493	1,204	4,279
Operating Expenses (\$)	75,869	224,946	284,647	228,848	155,004	323,790
Fare Revenues (\$)	4,696	9,378	9,790	9,963	9,058	-
Trips per Hour	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	4.1	1.4
Cost per Trip (\$)	32.3	49.7	55.9	45.3	31.3	53.5
Cost per Hour (\$)	43.08	66.22	79.00	65.52	128.74	75.67
Farebox Recovery (%)	6.2	4.2	3.4	4.4	5.8	-

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