

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

PHASE II

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

PREPARED FOR:

City of Burlington, North Carolina

PREPARED BY:

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Introduction

Link Transit is the urban fixed route and paratransit service in Burlington, Gibsonville, Elon, Mebane, to Alamance County Office Building, and Alamance Community College and has been in operation since 2016. The City of Burlington Department of Transportation administers Link Transit which provides service on five fixed routes and a supplemental ADA paratransit service.

Eight years into operation, the City of Burlington is evaluating efficiency and performance of the current transit system to make recommendations for the future. The Transit Development Plan (TDP), also involves the identification of a potential new site for an operations and maintenance facility and passenger transfer facility. The Transit Development Plan will evaluate the current system and services, develop operations, marketing and financial plans, and a capital improvement plan.

ABOUT LINK TRANSIT

Link Transit operates with policy oversight from Burlington City Council. The Link Transit Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC) includes representatives from all funding partners and serves as an advisory body for the service.

Services are operated by the third-party contractor, Transdev, which has operated fixed routes and ADA paratransit services for Link Transit since 2016.

Service is provided on five fixed routes radiating from downtown Burlington to Gibsonville, Elon, Mebane, and the Alamance County Government Office Building, Judge J.B. Allen Criminal Courthouse, Alamance County Courthouse, and Alamance Community College. Routes operate every 90 minutes, Monday-Friday from 5:30 am to 9:30 pm, and Saturday from 9:25 am to 6:30 pm.

Link Transit is supported by an interlocal funding agreement between the City of Burlington, the Town of Gibsonville, the Town of Elon, the City of Mebane, and additional funding contributions from Alamance County and Alamance Community College. The City of Burlington is the lead agency and grant administrator for the transit system.

Community Outreach Approach

The purpose of this Community Outreach Plan is to create an open and transparent process to meaningfully engage the public, particularly current transit riders, in the creation of the Transit Development Plan for Link Transit. This plan is designed to comply with the BGMPO Public Involvement Plan adopted in May 2020 as well as the Link Transit Title VI Program – Public Participation Plan adopted in December 2022.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH GOALS

1. Consult with key stakeholders to assess opportunities and challenges for the Link Transit system.
2. Share draft TDP recommendations and gather feedback from key stakeholders.
3. Involve elected officials and funding partners in discussion of recommendations and implementation plans.

Principles of Engagement

1. Input from transit riders is a priority in planning for the future. All public engagement for this project should prioritize reaching out to current Link Transit riders where they are.
2. All public engagement material should be offered in Spanish, in addition to English.

STAKEHOLDER CATEGORIES

Groups to be consulted through this process include:

Stakeholder Group	Methods of Engagement
Current Transit Riders	Online Survey, Flyers, Transit Rider Focus Group, Project Website, Pop-up Engagement
Link Transit Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC)	Focus Group, Meetings, E-mail Updates
Elected Officials	E-mail Updates, Focus Group, Updates from Consultant team and staff
Employers, Non-profits, Community-based Organizations, and Neighboring Communities	Online Survey, Project Website, Focus Group

FOCUS GROUPS - EMPLOYERS, NON-PROFIT AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Contact	E-mail Address
Employers and Non-Profits		
Alamance Community College	Kristen Sutherland	Kmsutherland239@alamancecc.edu
Cone Health	Marcy Green, Impact Alamance	Marcy.Green@conehealth.com

Organization	Contact	E-mail Address
Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Workforce and Economic Development	Wendy Walker-Fox, Workforce and Economic Development Director Jessica Raby, Assistant Director	jraby@ptrc.com 336-904-0300
Alamance Chamber	Reagan Gural, President & CEO	reagan@alamancechamber.com
Elon University	Scott Stevens	sstevens@elon.edu
Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO)	Eliud De Jesus	edejesus@burlingtonnc.gov
Alamance Community College	Brian Doward, James Armstrong	bddoward340@alamancecc.edu jearmstrong533@alamancecc.edu
Community-Based Organizations		
Alamance ElderCare	Angela Thompson, Executive Director	336-538-8080
Piedmont Triad Regional Council Area Agency on Aging	MaryLou White	agewell@ptrc.com
United Way of Alamance County	Heidi Norwick, President	hnorwick@uwalamance.org
Alamance County Community Services	Danielle Fields, Executive Director	dfields@alamanceservices.org
DSS	Candice Gobble, Director	Candice.Gobble@alamance-nc.com
Equity: indigenous perspective	Rose Watlington	Rose.watlington@alamance-nc.com
Equity: Hispanic/Latinx perspective	Maria Hernandez	Mhernandez9469@gmail.com
Equity: Health	Jess Landes Johnson	jessland@gmail.com
Neighboring Communities and Partner Agencies		
Town of Gibsonville	Ben Baxley	BBaxley@Gibsonville.net
Town of Haw River	Sean Tencer	stencer@townofhawriver.com

Organization	Contact	E-mail Address
Town of Whitsett	Elaine Garner	townhall@whitsettnc.com
Town of Elon	Isabell Cooper	icooper@elon.gov
City of Graham	Rene Ward	rward@cityofgraham.com
City of Mebane	Ashley Owensby	aownbey@cityofmebane.com
Town of Green Level	Barrett Brown	bbrown@greenlevelnc.com
Orange County	Nish Trivedi	ntrivedi@orangecountync.gov
Alamance County Transportation Authority	Peter Murphy	exec@acta-nc.com
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation	Kyle Laird	kylel@partnc.org

KEY OUTREACH STRATEGIES

All Outreach Opportunities will be designed to be focused, respectful of public time and interest, conscious of the project budget and to maximize effective engagement with key stakeholders.

Project Website - A webpage with project information will be added to the Link Transit Website. The webpage will include project overview, timeline, contact information, and relevant information related to the current phase of the project – such as a link to a public survey, draft recommendations, or final plan. A brief overview of the project and link to the project website will be provided to funding partners to add to their own website and communications channels.

Public Survey – An online and paper public survey will be developed and focused on the proposed service improvements and associated tradeoffs. This survey will be hosted online and marketed in the community using Link Transit and partner agencies’ social media channels, public service announcement e-mail blasts through partner agencies and key stakeholders, and flyers with scannable QR codes posted on Link Transit buses and at bus stops. The City of Burlington will also include a flyer about the study as an insert in the December water bill. In addition to the primary survey online, a printable version will be available and may be distributed at community centers.

Pop-up Engagement – Project Team members will use pop-up engagement strategies to meet current transit riders where they already are, and where there is potential for the largest impact if the draft recommendations are implemented. Potential locations for the pop-up events include: the Downtown Burlington Transfer Hub, Gibsonville Senior Center, Mebane St. Walmart, Elon University, Alamance Community College, and Garden Rd Walmart. Engagement strategies will

include tablet-based and printed survey collection and sharing handouts with survey links and high level summarized details of the draft recommendations.

Focus Group Engagement – Target outreach conducted with key stakeholder groups who may have a vested interest in the proposed recommendations and may include local employers, non-profit and community-based organizations, and neighboring communities (who are not already part of the PTAC). Targeted outreach could include the following: direct email to organization with survey link, paper survey, City Works Newsletter, and other informational materials, and/or an invitation to participate in a 60-minute focus group conversation to provide their perspective on potential service changes.

Project Update E-mails and Presentations – Project update e-mails and presentations will be prepared at key milestones, and can be shared as appropriate with key stakeholders, focus groups and project partners. A narrated, recorded presentation describing the proposed recommendations will be developed and posted on the project website.

Social Media – Project updates and survey links will be shared through social media including Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube.

PHASE TWO: FEEDBACK ON DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase Two of community outreach for this project will focus on sharing the draft recommendations for the TDP and Transit Facility Study and asking for reactions and feedback. Activities during Phase Two of community outreach will include:

- » Updates to the project website
- » Online and printed survey focused on collecting feedback on recommendations
- » Pop-up public engagement conversations at the Downtown Burlington Transfer Hub, North Park Library, Garden Rd Walmart, Gibsonville Senior Center, Elon University, Alamance Community College, and Mebane St. Walmart.
- » Presentation / Workshop with PTAC and decision-makers (in person or virtual, depending on preference of focus group members)
- » Presentation / Focus Group with other Key Stakeholders (virtual)

SCHEDULE MILESTONES

Date	Activity	Lead
Phase Two: Draft Service and Facility Recommendations		
2024		
Week of December 16th		Kimley-Horn
	Pop-up Engagement at Downtown Transfer Center	Kimley-Horn
	Pop-up Engagement at Library	Kimley-Horn
2025		
January 9th	Project Updates to Website	Kimley-Horn
	Distribution of Print Materials – flyers on board buses with scannable QR code leading to survey and flyers distributed to stakeholder partners for distribution	Kimley-Horn/Link Transit Staff
Week of January 13th	Online Survey Link Push to Stakeholder Groups	Kimley-Horn
	Employers & Non-Profits Focus Group	Kimley-Horn
	Community-Based Organizations Focus Group	Kimley-Horn
	Neighboring Communities Focus Group	Kimley-Horn
	PTAC Presentation (January 14 th)	Kimley-Horn to draft, Link Transit to coordinate Council briefings
Week of April 7th	Riding Routes/ Collecting Survey Engagement	Kimley-Horn