

# BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. B(1)

## AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: May 24, 2011

**TITLE: Presentation of Orange and Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan**

<b>DEPARTMENT: Planning</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO _X_</b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b> A. Resolution B. Triangle Transit information	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b> Damien Graham, Triangle Transit – 485-7413 Patrick McDounough, Triangle Transit – 485-7455

### PURPOSE

The Board is asked to receive a presentation from Triangle Transit on the Orange and Durham County Bus and Rail Investment Plan, which details how revenues referenced in House Bill 148 – Congestion Relief/Intermodal Transportation Fund – will be utilized to invest in public transportation service and capital improvements in Orange and Durham Counties.

### INFORMATION

House Bill 148 was approved by the N.C. General Assembly in 2009. It authorized Orange, Durham, and Wake Counties to hold referendums for the approval of a ½-cent increase in the sales tax to invest in public transit service. Additional language in HB 148 authorized increases in vehicle registration fees to further support public transit service: \$7 for Wake, Durham, and Orange Counties and \$3 for the Triangle Transit Board of Trustees. These vehicle registration fee increases can be implemented without a referendum.

The ability to hold a referendum in any county is dependent on the respective boards of county commissioners approving a financial plan detailing how the aforementioned revenues will be spent. Elected officials from Orange County and its municipalities have been meeting over the past several months to develop a draft financial plan based on revenues projected by Triangle Transit's financial model. The draft plan includes bus service expansion and improvements, as well as local investment in a fixed guideway (i.e. light rail or bus rapid transit) connecting UNC and Durham. This fixed guideway corridor is based on the approved (2035) Long Range Transportation Plan for the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Area.

Proposed bus service investments relevant to Carrboro include:

- Extending Triangle Transit's 405 bus service into Carrboro, providing a regional express connection from downtown Carrboro to Duke, Duke Hospitals, and downtown Durham
- Expansion of Saturday Chapel Hill Transit service
- Introduction of Sunday Chapel Hill Transit service
- Financial support for the cost of existing services, to the extent permitted by HB 148.

The bus and rail investment plan is based on certain revenue assumptions in the financial model – such as state and federal funding participation, estimates of county sales tax growth, and capital

costs – that are subject to change. Implementation of the plan will entail an interlocal agreement between Orange County, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to outline administration and periodic review of the plan.

Orange County elected officials and elected officials from Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough concurred with the details of the bus and rail investment plan at a meeting on May 18. They are requesting that local governing boards review and comment on the bus and rail investment plan and consider requesting that the ½-cent sales tax referendum be placed on the ballot for the November 2011 election.

Triangle Transit representatives will be making the presentation. Stephen Spade, Director of Chapel Hill Transit, will also be available to answer questions. Additional information in *Attachment B* will be handed out at the meeting.

#### **FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT**

No fiscal and staff impacts accrue from receiving the presentation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

A draft resolution will be provided at the meeting. Staff recommend that the Board of Aldermen consider the resolution (*Attachment A*).