



CHAPEL HILL TRANSIT
Town of Chapel Hill
6900 Millhouse Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-2401

phone (919) 969-4900 *fax* (919) 968-2840
www.townofchapelhill.org/transit

CHAPEL HILL TRANSIT PUBLIC TRANSIT COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGENDA

JUNE 25, 2026 – 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

CHAPEL HILL TRANSIT – VIRTUAL

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6. Next Meeting – August 27 th , 2026 (10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – In-Person)	
7. Adjourn	



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CHAPEL HILL TRANSIT PUBLIC TRANSIT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 23, 2026

Present:

Camille Berry, Chapel Hill Town Council
Chris Dobek, UNC Transportation and Parking
Cristobal Palmer, Carrboro Town Council
Marie Parker, Town of Carrboro - Assistant Town Manager
Jason Merrill, Carrboro Town Council
Theodore Nollert, Town of Chapel Hill Council Member

Staff present:

Brian Litchfield, Transit Director
Caroline Dwyer, Transit Planning Manager
Emily Powell, Community Outreach Manager
Katy Fontaine, Transit Development Manager
Tim Schwarzauser, Business Services Manager

Absent:

Gordon Merklein, UNC Associate Vice Chancellor, Real Estate & Campus Enterprises
Jared Wright, UNC Associate Director of Transportation and Planning
Loryn Clark, Deputy Town Clerk
Nick Pittman, Assistant Director
Paris Miller-Foushee, Chapel Hill Town Council

1. Approval of March 26, 2026, Meeting Summary – Approved by Committee.
2. Consent Item
 - A. March Financial Report – Provided to the Committee
3. Discussion Item
 - A. NS Rapid Transit Project – Funding – Provided to Committee – Asked for formal action from Committee.

Committee member asked for an MOU for increase and credit back in addition to the minutes.

Staff clarified that this money will not be transferred. It is just documentation that it is available for FTA.

Committee member asked for more clarification about partners monetary contribution.

Staff clarified that the money is in the Town's Funds balance.

There has not been a project cost increase.

Committee Voted - Approved
 - B. FY 2026-27 Chapel Hill Transit Budget Development Update - Provided to the Committee
4. Information Item
 - A. Project Updates – Provided to Committee

Committee member said thanks for engagement at Three Oaks.

Committee member asked what the pedestrian updates NC DOT is making on 54.

Staff responded NCDOT are working on three spots with cross walks.

Staff spoke about looking at efficiency in spacing to improve schedules. Any work on legacy bus stops must be brought up to ADA standards. Sometimes it is easier to establish a new stop than to correct problems with a current stop.

Committee member expressed thanks for good communications.
 - B. March Ridership Report – Provided to Committee
5. Next Meeting – May 28th, 2026 (10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Virtual Meeting)
6. Adjourn

2A. May Financial Report

Staff Resource: Tim Schwarzauser, Business Services Manager

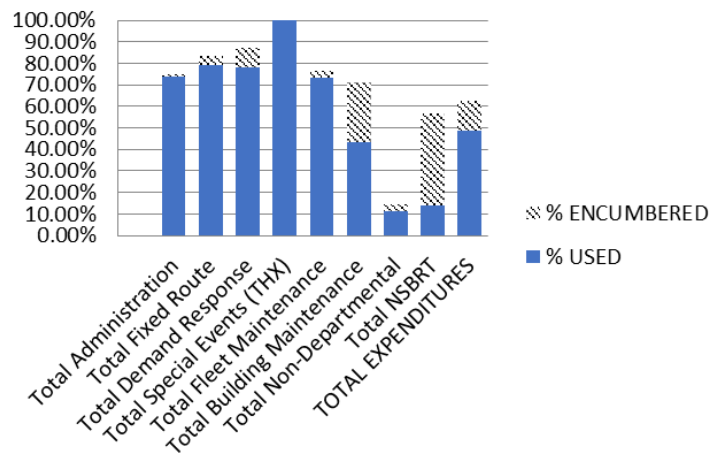
May 2026

- Expenses for the month of May were \$3,970,397.77. This aggregation of expenses and encumbrances is consistent with years past and is in line with what we would expect.
- The revised budget includes carryforward of projects from FY26. This includes building maintenance and NSBRT.
- Our expenditures and encumbrances at this point of the fiscal year are in line with budgeted expectations. We will see final year expenses paid out over the coming months.
- The attached data exhibits the financial information by divisions and should be a useful tool in monitoring our patterns as the year progresses and is a high-level representation of the data used by our division heads.

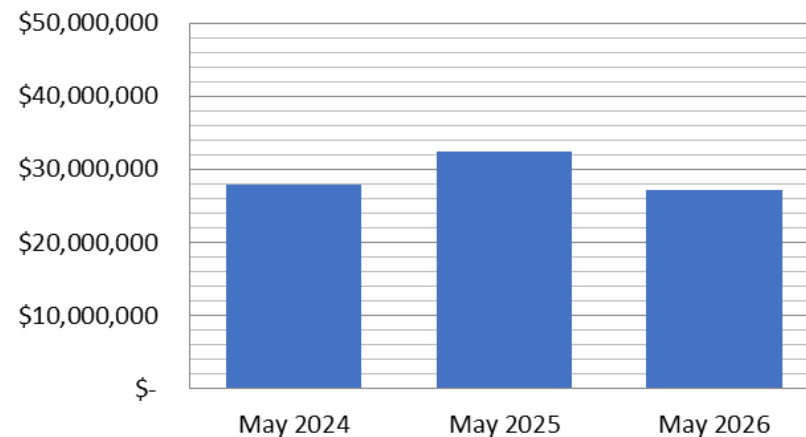
Transit 640 Fund Budget to Actual at end of May 2026

	ORIGINAL BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD EXPENSES	ACTUAL MONTH EXPENSES	CURRENT ENCUMBRANCES	BALANCE AVAILABLE	% USED OR ENCUMBERED May	% USED	% ENCUMB ERED
Total Administration	3,009,884	3,035,186	2,234,695.06	252,707.48	32,461.24	768,030	74.70	73.63%	1.07%
Total Fixed Route	16,494,122	17,275,768	13,630,689.14	1,836,590.93	792,078.14	2,853,001	83.50	78.90%	4.58%
Total Demand Response	2,775,328	3,403,016	2,659,604.61	279,506.42	307,726.20	435,685	87.20	78.15%	9.04%
Total Special Events (THX)	318,125	340,125	445,692.13	13,011.65	12,376.64	-117,944	134.70	131.04%	3.64%
Total Fleet Maintenance	5,968,547	5,896,245	4,306,197.53	429,915.99	204,080.50	1,385,967	76.50	73.03%	3.46%
Total Building Maintenance	900,446	1,783,324	774,503.94	105,961.16	493,938.58	514,881	71.10	43.43%	27.70%
Total Non-Departmental	3,015,523	8,783,862	971,145.27	-553,643.42	320,035.00	7,492,682	14.70	11.06%	3.64%
Total NSBRT	4,000,000	14,932,164	2,087,227.36	1,052,704.14	6,354,805.71	6,490,131	56.50	13.98%	42.56%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	36,481,975	55,407,440	27,109,755.04	3,970,397.77	7,512,443.96	25,694,781	53.60	48.93%	13.56%

CHT May 2026 YTD Expenses as % of Budget



CHT Total YTD Expenses - Previous Years Comparison



DISCUSSION ITEM

June 25, 2026

3A. FY 2026-27 Chapel Hill Transit Budget Development Update

Action: 1. Receive information and provide staff with feedback.

Staff Resource: Nick Pittman, Deputy Director
Tim Schwarzauer, Business Services Manager
Brian Litchfield, Director

The Chapel Hill Town Council adopted the FY2026-27 Budget.

<https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=8058834&GUID=AF51A8FA-58C4-43D8-9918-A1C6107660DC&Options=&Search=>

The budget includes the Transit budget as recommended by the Transit Partners Committee and the following contributions:

- Town of Chapel Hill: \$7,940,479
- Town of Carrboro: \$2,673,487
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: \$12,624,606

Staff is also finalizing contracts for the University and Carrboro and will be sending them for review.

Recommendation

That the Partners Committee receive the information and provide staff with feedback.

3B. Chapel Hill Transit Public Transit Committee Future Meeting Schedule

Action: Receive information presented by staff and provide guidance.

Staff Resource: Brian Litchfield, Director

- During the May 22, 2025, meeting, the Public Transit Committee (Partners) adopted a meeting schedule through June 2026 (generally the fourth Thursday of each month, unless otherwise noted). Staff is recommending the adoption of a similar schedule through June 2027. If approved the schedule will be posted on the Partners' webpage and the Town's meeting calendar.
- The meetings will continue in a virtual format, to provide Committee members and staff flexibility to join from a location that is convenient for them and provide easy access for customers and residents and help avoid interruptions from weather or other events, along with three (3) in-person meetings. The Partners can adjust between virtual and in-person as deemed necessary and reasonable by the Committee.

Chapel Hill Transit Public Transit Committee Meeting Schedule		
Date	Time	Location
July 2026	No Meeting	-
August 27, 2026	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	CHT - 1st Floor Conference Room
September 24, 2026	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
October 22, 2026	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
November 19, 2026	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
December 2026	No Meeting	-
January 28, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	CHT - 1st Floor Conference Room
February 25, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
March 25, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
April 22, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	CHT - 1st Floor Conference Room
May 27, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual
June 24, 2027	10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Virtual

Recommendation

- Staff recommends approval of the schedule, as presented, through June 24, 2027.

4A. High Capacity Transit (HCT) Corridor Feasibility Study Update

Staff Resources: Caroline Dwyer, Interim Assistant Director; Planning Manager

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Affordable, efficient, and diverse mobility options are a critical element of equitable and sustainable growth and development. As the region continues to grow, a network of high capacity transit services offers a way to meet increasing travel demand and maintain regional connections without constructing new (or wider) roadways.

WHAT IS HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT?

Public transportation networks designed to move large numbers of people more efficiently.

HCT features:

- Fewer stops
- Faster travel times
- Dedicated travel lanes/ rights of way
- Less time between trips
- Improved reliability
- Higher passenger capacity per vehicle
- Supportive infrastructure (ex. transit signal priority, “queue jumps” at intersections).

Examples you may be familiar with include:

- Light rail transit (LRT)
- Bus rapid transit (BRT)
- Limited stop/ express service
- Bus on shoulder service (BOSS)

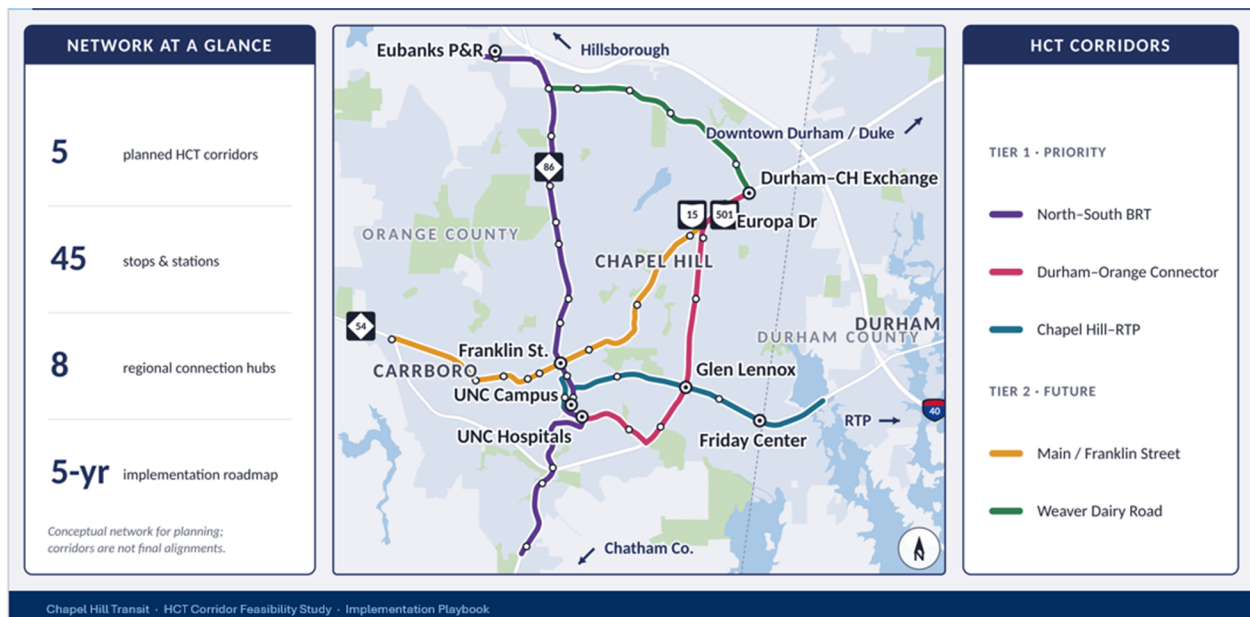
But HCT *also* includes things like:

- Route and/or stop consolidation
- Regional transit exchange hubs
- Larger vehicles (i.e., 60’ articulated buses)
- Service improvements (high frequency routes)
- Level boarding and multidoor boarding/alighting (reduces stop time)
- Fare elimination (speeds boarding and reduces trip times).

The **High Capacity Transit Corridor Feasibility Study** is jointly led by Chapel Hill Transit and Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization (TWTPO). It is a first step towards the regional collaboration required for successful regional transit projects. The Study has three primary goals: anticipate and plan for future transportation demands; leverage regional partnerships and resources; and identify actionable and “scalable” implementation pathways.

Three key deliverables advance these goals and form the foundation of the project's interactive digital dashboard and resource hub (*launching soon*).

1. A regional **High Capacity Transit Network concept**, pre-screened for feasibility, organized by priority tiers, and integrating the following:
 - *Regional Market Analysis*: Identifies activity centers and evaluates where and why people travel.
 - *Corridor-Level Evaluation*: Assesses housing and job density and integrates local and regional transportation plans and projects.
 - *Modal Assessment*: Evaluates various transit service models, infrastructure options and stop typologies based on travel demand, network structure, and congestion/saturation screening.



Regional High Capacity Transit Network Concept (does not reflect final alignments or fully-funded projects)

2. A scalable and iterative **High Capacity Transit Toolkit** built around four categories of high capacity transit treatments, including:
 - *Service Improvements*: route consolidation, express service, frequent local service.
 - *Corridor Improvements*: transit exclusive travel lanes, bus on shoulder, integrated packages of service, intersection, stop improvements.
 - *Intersection Improvements*: transit signal priority (TSP), "queue jumps."
 - *Stop Improvements*: Service and route transfer and exchange hubs, upgraded amenities.

3. A **Regional Implementation Playbook** establishing an actionable roadmap and market-ready framework, accelerating the implementation of regional high capacity transit service and infrastructure. Projects and actions adhere to the following **Core Principles**:

- Regional.
- Actionable.
- Feasible.
- Fundable.
- Scalable.
- Flexible.
- Incremental.



Next Steps

Completing this project is the first step of a long journey. While the Playbook transforms the conceptual HCT network into a feasible set of near-term actions, fully realizing the vision requires sustained regional coordination *and* early implementation of improvements on key corridors. Our immediate next steps are engaging local, regional, and state stakeholders to define lead and support roles; preserve critical rights of way; plan at the corridor-level; and position priority projects to compete for limited local, state, and federal funding. We will also encourage leaders, decision-makers, and influencers across the Triangle to align policies and funding in ways that support regional high capacity transit initiatives.

5A. Operations

Staff Resources: Joe McMiller, Deputy Operations Manager- Fixed Route
Nigel Frank, Interim Assistant Operations Manager – Demand Response
Michelle Sykes-Parker, Training Coordinator
Casey Jarosiewicz, Assistant Maintenance Manager
Mark Lowry, Safety Officer

Fixed Route

- Operator Ricky Hunter placed 19th out of 80 Operators at the International Rodeo in Salt Lake City, UT
- June 6th Transit bus in Pride Promenade Parade
- June 8th Orientation Trippers for UNC Sustainability
- June 19th Juneteenth (Sunday Service w/ weekday FCX and NS no NU/U or 420)
- June 26th Shuttles for 32nd Eric Montross Basketball Camp

Demand Response

- On time Performance 89.74%
- Full Staff – 15 FT Operators, 5 Program Support
- Implementing and training a new dispatch and reservation platform called Spare. Spare provides operational improvements and should enhance the EZ Rider customer experience by improving on-time performance and streamlining reservations.

Training

- Eleven New hires since March 30, 2026: 10 – Fixed Route and 1 Demand Response, 8 remain in the Training Program.
- Next Training Class – July 6, 2026

Maintenance

- Demand response ran 35,763 miles in May.
- Non-revenue Gas and Diesel vehicles ran 8,156 miles.
- Non-revenue Electric Cars ran 23,477 miles.
- Fixed route buses ran 146,853 miles.
- Battery Electric buses ran 37,213 miles.
- Maintenance performed 111 Preventive Maintenance Inspections (100% on-time).
- Maintenance performed 8 road calls - 23,008 miles between road calls for fixed route.
- Maintenance performed 0 road calls - 35,763 miles between road calls for demand response.

- Maintenance continued interior major cleaning / Stripping waxing floors previously completed by Vendor.
- DEF tanks at fuel island have been upgraded to a single use container inside bulk room.

Safety

Department	May-25	May-26
<u>Fixed Route</u>		
Preventable	1	4
Non-Preventable	4	3
<u>Demand Response</u>		
Preventable	0	0
Non-Preventable	0	0
<u>Maintenance</u>		
Preventable	0	0
Non-Preventable	0	0

5B. Community Outreach

Staff Resources: Emily Powell, Community Outreach Manager

Events

May was a busy month for our Transportation Demand Management program, Commute Solutions. May is **Bike Month**, so along with Town personnel from Office of Mobility and Greenways, Vision Zero, and Safe Routes to school, Nate Helms hit the streets, buses, greenways, sidewalks, parks, and affordable housing neighborhoods to outreach messages of multi-modal commuting.

**Train the Trainers**

We were asked by a non-profit to train their outreach coordinators who help pregnant or single mothers of young children. Along with GoDurham, the group was introduced to Chapel Hill Transit as a way for their clients to access jobs, education, family, and community resources.

Community Engagement

Our Short-Range Transit Plan Phase Two engagement work consisted of marketing the potential route concepts and survey, and conducting four focus groups aided by the Town's Community Engagement team. We met with community members from the Refugee Community Partners group in four languages using interpreters, Mandarin-speaking seniors at the Seymour Center using an interpreter, a group of mobile home residents using an interpreter, and transit users met with our engagement consultant, Three Oaks.



On Campus

We're working with the Office of Sustainability to conduct sustainability-focused campus tours using the U route. This is a nice way to work a transit experience into new student orientation after they learn about options at the UNC Transportation and Parking table inside. By the end of the Summer, we will conduct nearly 60 loops of the U route and share how public transit, including battery electric buses, are a good choice for getting around and the environment.

News Coverage

WCHL was interested in hearing from us recently and stay tuned for the "Our Town" segment featuring Keica Hargraves and recruiting talent -coming later in June.

Featured in a Bike Month
"Our Town" segment

[Listen to Bike Month](#)



Captured memories and told
our ROADEO story

[Listen to Roadeo](#)



A story about our running all
available service in May

[Read about Full Service](#)



5C. Planning

Staff Resource: Caroline Dwyer, Interim Assistant Director & Planning Manager

PLANNING & PROJECT UPDATES**NS RAPID Bus Rapid Transit**

NS RAPID's 90% design plans were completed and submitted to Chapel Hill Transit in May. Staff continue to work closely with our design, real estate services, and construction management services teams as we advance towards submitting NS RAPID's formal grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and towards completion of the project's construction bid package. Staff are also preparing for a comprehensive, multidisciplinary "page by page" review of NS RAPID'S 90% plan set at the end of June with our consultant teams, NCDOT, and other key stakeholders. FTA has also returned NS RAPID's final Project Rating following an exhaustive risk and readiness review process and we have met the threshold required of projects competing for FTA Capital Investment Grant funding. Staff anticipate submitting our formal grant agreement request to FTA in July and we hope to receive a funding notification from FTA in August.

Bus Stop Improvement Program

Staff have executed a contract with White Oak Construction Company to improve sixteen bus stops throughout our service area, including floating bus stop islands adjacent to the bike lanes on W. Franklin Street to meet ADA requirements. Work is currently paused, as we adjust several site designs to incorporate updated conditions, mitigate unanticipated utility conflicts, and finalize shelter installations. Chapel Hill Transit anticipates another round of improvements going out to bid in early Fall 2026, including stops on UNC's campus, additional stops on Franklin St., and improvements in coordination with NCDOT's pedestrian improvements on NC 54.

Staff continue to advance property acquisition and access agreements for several priority bus stop improvement sites in Carrboro. Several locations are construction-ready; others require additional coordination related to property acquisition. Further assistance may be required for specific sites.

Onboard Technology Updates

Chapel Hill Transit has issued a purchase order for information screens and 50 "bike on bus" rack sensors. This equipment was purchased with NCDOT Advanced Technology Grant funds awarded to Chapel Hill Transit. Delivery and installation of this equipment is expected in late summer or early fall. Once they are installed and activated, approximately 60% of the fixed route fleet will

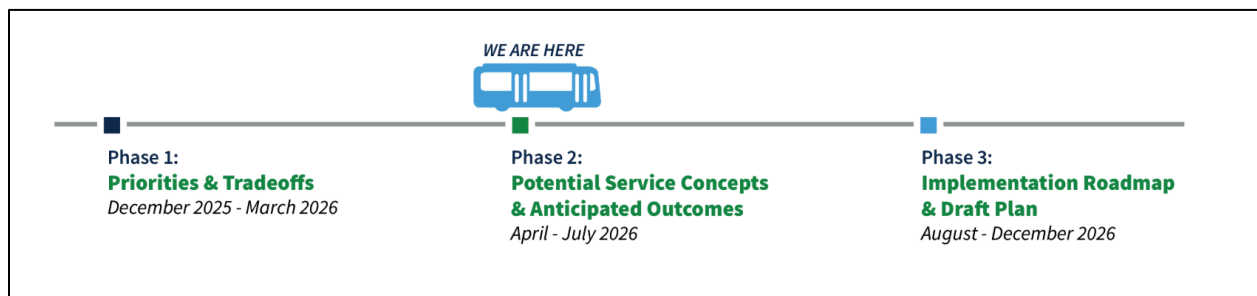
have information screens onboard and customers will also be able to use the mobile app to see if an equipped bike rack on the bus they're waiting for is free (green), partly full (yellow), or completely full (red). The bike rack sensors are also a rich source of data for Chapel Hill Transit, giving staff a window into bike rack usage and capacity data with a wide range of exciting applications.

Blueprint 2035: Short Range Transit Plan Update

Summary

Chapel Hill Transit staff and our consultant Nelson\Nygaard have successfully executed two of *Blueprint 2035's* three planned public engagement phases

Project Phases & Progress



Blueprint 2025 Project Phases

Phase 1: Priorities & Trade-offs (Fall 2025)

Initial community outreach established three clear priorities for the transit network:

- **Increased Service:** Greater frequency and expanded days/hours of operation.
- **Reduced Wait Times:** Direct routes and improved transfers.
- **Reliability:** Predictable on-time performance.

Phase 2: Service Possibilities (Spring 2026)

Concluding on June 3, 2026, this phase tested potential route and service configurations developed from Phase 1 feedback.

- **Engagement Strategies:** Utilized online/paper surveys, onboard and in-person pop-up events, and targeted focus groups with students, seniors, and existing riders.
- **Equity & Language Access:** Partnered with the Town's Community Connections and Language Access teams to host focus groups in **Karen, Burmese, Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish**. These sessions provided critical service feedback while strengthening transit communications with historically underserved populations.

Next Steps & Timeline

- **Summer 2026 (Data Synthesis & Modeling):** Staff and consultants are currently analyzing Phase 2 data to build a "preferred" system concept. All proposed changes are being rigorously evaluated against current fiscal, fleet, and operator constraints.
- **August 2026: (Transit Partners Committee status update):** Summary of feedback received in Phase 2.
- **September 2026 (Council Open House):** Transit staff are coordinating with the Manager's Office to host a Council Open House/poster session immediately prior to a weekly Council meeting. Similar engagement opportunities are being coordinated with UNC-Chapel Hill and Carrboro.
- **Fall 2026 (Phase 3 Engagement):** Staff will present the "preferred" service concept to the community for final feedback. This will include two distinct frameworks:
 1. Near-Term Concept: Targeted for implementation as early as August 2027.
 2. Post-Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Concept: Designed to seamlessly integrate local routes with the upcoming BRT launch (currently scheduled for 2029).
- **Winter 2026 – Spring 2027 (Finalization):** Finalize service recommendations, assess long-term operational capacity, update financial models, and deliver an actionable implementation plan.

Continuous project updates remain available at www.chapelhillnc.gov/short.