



NC Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Staff Report

One City Plaza
421 Fayetteville Street
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Raleigh, NC 27601

Agenda Date: 2/17/2021

Agenda Item: 5.6

To: Executive B

Locally Preferred Alternative for Downtown Cary Transit Center

Bret Martin, MPO Staff

In 2018, the Town of Cary initiated a feasibility study for a new downtown transit center to serve as a major multi-modal hub in western Wake County that will provide access to and connections among local and regional bus services, bus rapid transit service, and commuter and inter-city passenger rail services. The capacity of the current facility serving the Town's transit system, Cary Depot, is severely limited in its ability to accommodate the growth of service provision envisioned in the Wake County Transit Plan. The feasibility study assessed program requirements for a facility's future needs and involved a comprehensive assessment to determine the best location that can support the modes envisioned to be accommodated at an appropriate level of capacity to support the range of future services and needs for the facility.

Consideration of a locally preferred alternative (LPA) for a regionally significant multi-modal center involves three (3) characteristics of a proposed project: location/site, modes accommodated, and adequate capacity to support the future program requirements of the modes to be accommodated. In concert with these considerations, three (3) key requirements were identified for potential sites. The sites had to be adjacent to both the North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) and CSX rail lines (Amtrak intercity rail service is provided on both rail lines), have straight sections of rail track to allow for 800- to 1,000-foot passenger rail platforms, and the site had to be located in the Downtown Cary special planning area to provide centralized transit connections. Additionally, the site had to be large enough to accommodate the capacity needs of all future modes and associated services.

Given these parameters, the Town identified only one (1) feasible site for the transit center, which is being proposed by the Town as the LPA for the facility. This site is depicted in **Attachment 1**. Through the site evaluation process, it was determined that the site can accommodate:

- An adequate number of bus bays for current and future GoCary and GoTriangle fixed-route and paratransit services;
- A bus rapid transit station (BRT) for the Western Wake BRT Corridor;
- GoCary Road Supervisor space;
- Amtrak passenger rail boarding platforms;
- Amtrak baggage handling access and cart storage;
- Commuter rail passenger boarding platforms;
- Rideshare pick-up and drop-off space;
- Bicycle and scooter racks and staging areas;
- Parking for transit staff;
- General parking;
- An electric vehicle charging station;
- Rail and transit waiting areas, including customer service, ticketing and restrooms; and
- Driver amenities.

The preferred site involves a number of separately owned parcels that total approximately eight (8) acres that have direct access to both rail lines and have adequate sections of straight track for passenger rail platforms. A 'test fit' was performed to validate that the required functions of the new multi-modal center can be accommodated at the referenced site.

On February 20, 2020, the Cary Town Council recommended the proposed site as the LPA for the downtown transit

center. The LPA was proposed by the Town for concurrence by the Cooperating Agencies identified in the Downtown Cary Multi-Modal Transit Facility Concurrence Plan on December 17, 2020. Concurrence has been obtained from all of the designated Cooperating Agencies, including CAMPO, North Carolina Department of Transportation Highway and Rail Divisions, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, North Carolina Railroad, and the Federal Railroad Administration. The LPA was posted for public review and comment from January 6th to February 14th. No public comments have been received to date. The Executive Board held a public hearing on the proposed LPA at its January 20th regular meeting. No public comments were provided during the public hearing. The Executive Board will consider action on the LPA at its February 17th regular meeting.

Requested Action: Approve the proposed LPA for the Downtown Cary Transit Center.