

Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Appendix G – Fare Policy Memorandum

GoTriangle Fare Policy

At the May 2019 meeting of the GoTriangle Board of Trustees, the board set a new fare policy summarized in the following table. The new policy is indicated in the proposed fare structure columns. The previous policy is indicated in the current fare structure columns.

Table 1

Current Fare Structure			Proposed Fare Structure	
Fares	Regional	Express	Fares	Regional
Single Ride	\$2.25	\$3.00	Single Ride	\$2.50
Day Pass	\$4.50	\$6.00	Day Pass	\$5.00
7-Day	\$16.50	\$22.00	*7-Day	\$20.00
31-Day	\$76.50	\$102.00	31-Day	\$80.00
Discount Single Ride	\$1.00	\$1.25	Discount Single Ride	\$1.25
Discount Day Pass	\$2.00	\$2.50	Discount Day Pass	\$2.50
Discount 7-Day	\$7.50	\$9.25	**Discount 7-Day	\$10.00
Discount 31-Day	\$34.00	\$42.50	Discount 31-Day	\$40.00

*reduced from previously proposed \$24.00

**reduced from previously proposed \$12.00

The Board of Trustees resolved that the fare changes be implemented in early 2020 commensurate with the implementation of mobile ticketing and free boarding for seniors. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, mobile ticketing and the new fare policy have not yet been implemented.

Primary Recommendation: Test the impact of the current fare policy, as summarized in the proposed fare structure columns in the table above, on GTCR ridership.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to implement rear-door boarding, transit agencies throughout the Triangle region, including GoTriangle, eliminated fares. At the May 2019 meeting of the GoTriangle Board of Trustees, the Board directed staff to research the potential for a fare-free system.

Recommendation A: Consider testing the impact of a fare-free fare policy on GTCR ridership.

Peer System Fare Policy

As part of Phase 1 of this study, the project management partners compared GTCR scenarios to peer systems that were originally identified in the commuter rail Major Investment Study. These peer systems included SunRail in Orlando, Florida and Capital MetroRail in Austin, Texas. Because of their similarity to GTCR scenarios being considered as part of Phase 2 of this study, especially in terms of annual operating cost as a proportion of annual passenger miles traveled, these two system fare policies are summarized in this memorandum for consideration.

SunRail (Orlando, FL)

SunRail is a commuter service operating over 49 miles with 16 stations through Volusia, Seminole, Orange, and Osceola counties in the Greater Orlando Area. SunRail has two main fare types: ticket fares, and SunCard pass fares. Ticket fares are zoned by County and summarized in the table below:

Table 2

Ticket Fares				
Number of Counties/Zones Traveled	1	2	3	4
One-Way	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$5.00
Reduced One-Way	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$2.50
Round-Trip	\$3.75	\$5.50	\$7.50	\$9.50
Reduced Round-Trip	\$1.75	\$2.75	\$3.75	\$4.75
Transfer Upgrade	\$0.00	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$3.00

Note: Add \$0.50 to each one-way fare and \$1.25 to each round-trip fare in the table above for the purposes of calculating modeled rail fares.

SunCard pass fares are zoned by County and summarized in the table below:

Table 3

SUNCARD	SUNCARD	SUNCARD
WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUAL
1-County/Zone: \$17.00	1-County/Zone: \$56.00	1-County/Zone: \$560.00
2-County/Zone: \$25.00	2-County/Zone: \$84.00	2-County/Zone: \$840.00
3-County/Zone: \$34.00	3-County/Zone: \$112.00	3-County/Zone: \$1,120.00
4-County/Zone: \$42.50	4-County/Zone: \$140.00	4-County/Zone: \$1,400.00

Recommendation B: Consider testing the impact of zoned fares, as summarized in Tables 2 and 3, on GTCR ridership, using Triangle county boundaries as zones in the same way SunRail uses county boundaries, with the assumption that GoTriangle regional bus service fares will be set by current policy, as summarized in Table 1.

Capital MetroRail (Austin, TX)

Capital MetroRail Red Line (Route 550) is a commuter service offered by Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority in Austin, Texas. This service operates over 32 miles with 9 stations between Leander, Texas in Williamson County and downtown Austin, Texas in Travis County. Capital Metro has two different fare structures according to service type. Local service fares include MetroBus, UT Shuttle, MetroRapid bus routes, high-frequency routes, and Pickup rideshare service. Commuter service fares include all local services, plus MetroExpress Routes and MetroRail. Commuter service fares are summarized in the table below:

Table 4

Commuter fares	
Single Ride	\$3.50
Single Ride, Reduced	\$1.75
Day Pass	\$7.00
Day Pass, Reduced	\$3.50
7-Day Pass	\$27.50
31-Day Pass	\$96.25
31-Day Pass, Reduced	\$48.10

Recommendation C: Consider testing the impact of commuter fares, as summarized in Table 4, on GTCR ridership, with the assumption that GoTriangle regional bus service fares will be set by current policy, as summarized in Table 1.

Summary

The primary recommendation is to **test the impact of the current fare policy, as summarized in the proposed fare structure columns in the table above, on GTCR ridership.** In addition to this primary recommendation, there are three other recommendations for consideration.

Recommendation A: Fare-free System

A-1: Test the impact of a fare-free fare policy on GTCR ridership. This fare policy would make commuter

rail service free for all, and it might reflect current conversations about the role of equity in transit fare policies.

Fare Product	Bus (GT)	Bus (GR/GC)	Bus (GD)	Rail (All)
One Ride, Full Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Day Pass, Full Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
31-Day Pass, Full Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
One Ride, Reduced Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
31-Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

A-2: Test the impact of a fare-free fare policy for local buses only on GTCR ridership. This fare policy would set commuter rail fares and regional bus according to GoTriangle Board policy but keep buses fare-free.

Fare Product	Bus (GT)	Bus (GR/GC)	Bus (GD)	Rail (All)
One Ride, Full Fare	\$2.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.50
Day Pass, Full Fare	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.00
31-Day Pass, Full Fare	\$80.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$80.00
One Ride, Reduced Fare	\$1.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.25
Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$2.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.50
31-Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$40.00

Recommendation B: Zone-based Fares

Test the impact of zoned fares on GTCR ridership. The zone boundaries will lie between East Durham and Ellis Road, between Morrisville and Downtown Cary, and between Hammond Rd and Garner. This would create four zones:

- West Durham, Downtown Durham, East Durham
- Ellis Rd, RTP, Morrisville
- Cary, Corporate Center Dr, Blue Ridge Rd, Raleigh, Hammond Rd
- Garner, Auburn, Clayton

Fare Product	Bus (GT)	Bus (GR/GC)	Bus (GD)	Rail (1-2)	Rail (3)	Rail (4)
One Ride, Full Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$3.50	\$4.50
Day Pass, Full Fare	\$5.00	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$7.00	\$9.00
31-Day Pass, Full Fare	\$80.00	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$80.00	\$95.00	\$110.00
One Ride, Reduced Fare	\$1.25	\$0.60	\$0.50	\$1.25	\$1.75	\$2.25
Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$3.50	\$4.50
31-Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$40.00	\$20.00	\$18.00	\$40.00	\$47.50	\$55.00

Recommendation C: Same Fares as Regional Bus

Test the impact of commuter fares, as if they were the same as regional bus, on GTCR ridership, with the assumption that GoTriangle regional bus service fares will be set by current policy, as summarized in Table 1. This fare policy would make travel by rail more expensive than travel by regional bus, and it would demonstrate the impact of reflecting in fare policy the consideration of commuter rail as a premium service. **Note that Recommendation C is the preferred scenario for limited testing across service plans.**

Fare Product	Bus (GT)	Bus (GR/GC)	Bus (GD)	Rail (All)
One Ride, Full Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$2.50
Day Pass, Full Fare	\$5.00	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$5.00
31-Day Pass, Full Fare	\$80.00	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$80.00

One Ride, Reduced Fare	\$1.25	\$0.60	\$0.50	\$1.25
Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$2.50
31-Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$40.00	\$20.00	\$18.00	\$40.00

Recommendation D: Premium Fare

Test the impact of commuter fares, as summarized in Table 4, on GTCR ridership, with the assumption that GoTriangle regional bus service fares will be set by current policy, as summarized in Table 1. This fare policy would make travel by rail more expensive than travel by regional bus, and it would demonstrate the impact of reflecting in fare policy the consideration of commuter rail as a premium service.

Fare Product	Bus (GT)	Bus (GR/GC)	Bus (GD)	Rail (All)
One Ride, Full Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$3.50
Day Pass, Full Fare	\$5.00	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$7.00
31-Day Pass, Full Fare	\$80.00	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$95.00
One Ride, Reduced Fare	\$1.25	\$0.60	\$0.50	\$1.75
Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$3.50
31-Day Pass, Reduced Fare	\$40.00	\$20.00	\$18.00	\$47.50

Note: The region has adopted coordinated fares and fare capping. This affects bus service providers and CRT in the following ways:

- GoTriangle/Regional daypass is good on all other systems.
- Local day passes on GoCary are also good on GoRaleigh
- GoDurham daypasses can be upgraded (for \$0.50) to a GoRaleigh / GoCary daypass
- All local daypasses can be upgraded to a Regional daypass (\$3.00 for GoDurham, \$2.50 for GoCary and GoRaleigh)
- GoDurham does not provide transfers – the cost of each trip is 1 dollar.
- All other systems provide one free transfer (to an equal service class)
- When transferring from a local service to a regional service, only the difference in fare is due
 - i.e. a one-way trip involving two GoRaleigh routes is \$1.25
 - A one-way trip involving one GoCary route and one GoRaleigh route is \$1.25
 - A one-way trip involving one GoGary/GoRaleigh/GoDurham route and one GoTriangle route is \$2.50
 - A one-way trip involving two GoDurham routes is \$2.00 (the same as a GoDurham Daypass)
- The maximum one-way bus fare is \$2.50. The maximum daily bus fare is \$5.00 (same is true, at reduced rates, for reduced fares).
- For Scenario B, the maximum one-way trip price with 4 zones is \$4.50, including any bus transfers and day pass would be \$9.00. For Scenario C and a rail trip with 3 zones, the daily max would be \$7.00 and the one-way trip max would be \$3.50
- Discrete trips add up over the course of a day until the daily maximum is reached, at which point the rider's fare is converted into a day pass.
- After riding 20 days in a month, a rider automatically receives a 31-day pass.