

FAST_{2.0}

Freeway, Arterial, Street, and Tactical Transit

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH PLAN

January 2025

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Document

This Public Engagement and Outreach Plan (PEOP) defines the key goals and objectives for community engagement and outreach for the FAST 2.0 Study using NCDOT’s Public Involvement Plan as the foundation. This PEOP provides an overview of the study, summarizes the goals for public engagement and outreach, identifies project stakeholders, and outlines outreach tactics.

1.2 Study Overview

The regional Freeway, Arterial, Street and Tactical (FAST) 2.0 transit study is a follow up initiative to the original FAST study conducted in 2020-21. NCDOT’s Integrated Mobility Division is managing the study. The goals of the ongoing, follow-up FAST transit study initiative are to:

- **Coordinate Regional Transit Projects:** Improve connectivity across the region by coordinating transit projects.
- **Conduct Equity and Needs Assessment:** Assess the regional transportation network for efficiency and effectiveness
- **Assess Transportation Network:** Assess the regional transportation network for efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Develop Direct BRT Linkages:** Create direct Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) connections to RDU from Triangle downtowns.
- **Identify Freeway and Arterial Corridors for Transit Priority:** Choose one freeway and five arterial corridors for transit priority infrastructure enhancements
- **Evaluate Transit Priority Improvements:** Evaluate the application of various transit priority infrastructure improvements for the selected corridors.
- **Recommend Transit Infrastructure Projects:** Propose transit infrastructure projects and develop a sequenced implementation plan.
- **Recommend Institutional Practice Changes:** Suggest changes to local, regional, and NCDOT practices for integrating transit within highway planning and design
- **Regional Transit Working Group:** Leverage existing regional transit working groups to continue coordinating regional transit planning with NCDOT.

1.3 Study Milestones



Public Engagement and Outreach will primarily happen during the second two milestones of the study – as outlined further in section **4.0 Public Outreach**.

2.0 Goals for Engagement and Outreach

The PEOP for the FAST 2.0 Study will be in sync with NCDOT's five goals for public involvement. This plan will ensure that information about the study development is made available to the public in a timely and accessible manner and that stakeholder engagement will use effective participation strategies. This plan will adhere to the following goals:

- **Education:** Enhance awareness and understanding of the study to enable informed involvement and meaningful participation
- **Inclusion:** Engage stakeholders representing a full range of interest, values, and opinions
- **Transparency:** Provide information in a clear, open, and timely manner
- **Accountability:** Be visible and accessible to the public and stakeholders and incorporating their input
- **Responsiveness:** Respond to public inquiries in a timely manner.

2.1 Target Audience

There are several different audiences to reach, as study recommendations may impact those that work and travel to and through the corridors. The identified audiences are as follows:

- Federal, state, and local agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, and natural resources
- Local government staff
- Transportation agencies (freight, port, airports, transit, etc.)
- Business owners and employees
- Users of pedestrian and bicycle transportation
- Health and academic institutions
- Social service agencies
- Civic groups
- Local media

2.1.1 Key Stakeholders

The FAST 2.0 Study will incorporate a review of potential dynamic transit priority shoulders, key linkages with proposed BRT corridors and extensions, and other transit priority measures for several of the freeways and primary arterials in the core metropolitan Triangle area, including Wake, Durham, Orange, Johnston, and Chatham counties. There may also be an examination of potential connections in counties in the extended metropolitan area and environs, including Franklin, Nash, Wilson, Granville, Lee, Harnett, Alamance, Person, Wayne, and Moore.

There will be ongoing outreach with stakeholders on concepts, ideas, and express designs of proposed transit priority elements. This outreach will take the form of curated focus groups, presentations, and other engagement mechanisms. The study's Steering Committee will include representatives from:

- CAMPO
- Central Pines Regional Council
- DCHC-MPO
- GoTriangle
- Regional Transportation Alliance
- Research Triangle Foundation
- Chatham County
- Durham County
- Johnston County
- Orange County
- Wake County
- City of Raleigh (GoRaleigh)
- Town of Cary (GoCary)
- Town of Chapel Hill (Chapel Hill Transit)

- City of Durham (GoDurham)
- NCDOT Mobility and Safety
- NCDOT Highway Divisions 4, 5, 7, and 8
- NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division
- NCDOT Multimodal Transportation
- NCDOT Roadway Design Unit

3.0 Vision and Branding

An update to the previous FAST Study branding will maintain the existing FAST identity, indicating that the FAST 2.0 Study is additional work. The branding will be used on all deliverables, including outreach and engagement materials, and study documentation to provide a consistent look for study materials that is recognizable to the public.



The branding guidance document can be found in the Appendix.

4.0 Public Outreach

Residents, businesses, community organizations, and institutions form the foundation of public engagement. A successful public engagement program is measured by how well the public is informed on, aware of, and educated about the study, and enabled to participate in meaningful ways. Public outreach will focus on promoting an understanding of the study and garnering public support. During two of the study's milestones, promotion will occur:

- Selection of priority corridors
- Final study outcomes (i.e. implementation roadmap)

The following methods will be used to conduct outreach to the public to meet the engagement goals as set in section **2.0 Goals for Engagement and Outreach**.

4.1 Education Campaign

Education is key component of this PEOP to ensure target audiences are aware of opportunities to learn about the study and participate. Several outreach methods will be implemented to reach a diverse range of communities. Both physical and digital means are necessary to promote the study to the publics that use the corridor frequently and that may receive information mostly from digital sources.

Key messages help guide communications about the study and should use a consistent voice and tone. The following statements use simple and concise language that communicate why the study will be of interest to key stakeholders and members of the greater community. As the study develops, messages will be updated accordingly.

Introduction to FAST

- Managed by NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division, this initiative aims to enhance the Triangle region's transit infrastructure.
- The FAST 2.0 transit study is a follow-up to the original FAST study conducted in 2020-21.
- The outcomes of the initial FAST study led to NCDOT updating its Complete Streets policy to more fully incorporate public transportation, and revising the State Roadway Design Manual to include transit-supportive infrastructure elements supported by the results and objectives of the FAST study.

Vision of FAST 2.0

- **Enhance Quality of Life:** Improve the quality of life for all residents in the Triangle Region
- **Ensure Safe and Reliable Transit:** Provide safe, reliable, and high-quality transit services
- **Boost Bus Mobility and Access:** Enhance bus-based mobility and ensure equitable access to regional transit
- **Offer Competitive Transit Options:** Provide competitive transit choices to connect the community and economic opportunities
- **Meet Diverse Needs:** Address the diverse needs of residents
- **Address Local and Regional Connectivity:** Cater to both local needs and regional connectivity
- **Prioritize Buses and BRT:** Evaluate opportunities to prioritize buses and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) regionally

Benefits to the Community

- **Improved Transit Services:** Enhanced transit services will provide more reliable and efficient travel options.
- **Economic Growth:** Better transit infrastructure can lead to increased economic opportunities and growth.
- **Sustainability:** The initiative supports sustainable development by promoting efficient and eco-friendly transit solutions.

Specific tools that can be used as part of the Education Campaign include the following.

4.1.1. NCDOT webpage content

The study webpage (<https://www.ncdot.gov/divisions/integrated-mobility/multimodal-planning/Pages/fast-study.aspx>), hosted on NCDOT's existing website, will convey study information and facilitate gathering public input as necessary. The webpage will be updated during each milestone of engagement to keep the public informed of the study progress and opportunities to participate. Project branding will be integrated into webpage content to establish a strong study recognition. By centralizing study updates, the webpage provides a convenient hub for the public to access all educational materials. Content will include:

- A project overview
- Anticipated project schedule
- Announcements for public events
- Links to surveys (as they are available)
- Document library of education materials, technical information, and memos

4.1.2. Fact sheets

During both milestones of engagement visually engaging and branded fact sheets will be essential as a quick hitting resource to educate the community about the study objectives. Fact sheets will be posted online on the website document library and can sent electronically to stakeholders and to those who sign-up for study updates via email. The flyers may also be posted along the corridors at places such as community/government buildings and local businesses.

4.1.3. Press Releases

Press releases may be developed to promote study updates and engagement opportunities. Study materials will be made available when requested and accessible online for media use. Media contacts will be engaged through the NCDOT's standard media distribution list. Press releases will be sent out on an as-needed basis. Final versions of

press releases will be shared with stakeholders and partner agencies to distribute to their media contacts as appropriate.

4.1.4. Email Campaigns

To reach the general public, e-blasts, or mass email messages, may be distributed to share information with those who elect to receive updates through NCDOT's electronic subscription service. E-blasts can also be distributed to stakeholders and partner agencies to increase reach. E-blasts will be sent out on an as-needed basis.

4.2 Meeting in a Box Kit

To encourage the stakeholders to spread the word about the FAST 2.0 transit study and better involve their agency members and the public, a "Meeting in a Box" toolkit will be developed. This toolkit is designed for stakeholders and leaders from various agencies and institutions, such as municipal staff, MPOs, RPOs, and COGs, who want to engage their members in our outreach activities. A set of "Meeting in a Box" materials will be developed for both study milestones and will training for stakeholders will be provided as necessary.

Each "Meeting in a Box" toolkit will include:

- PowerPoint Slides: Ready-to-use slides to help you present key information about the FAST 2.0 study.
- Briefing Materials: Detailed documents that provide background and updates on the study's progress.
- Sample Outreach Content: Templates and examples of content you can use to share information with your community.

Stakeholder recipients will be encouraged to promote the following action items:

- Get Involved: Encourage your members to participate in the FAST 2.0 outreach activities.
- Stay Connected: Use the provided materials to facilitate discussions and gather feedback from your community.

5.0 Revisions to the PEOP

This plan is a working document and may be updated and/or revised as needed. As public involvement activities are conducted and evaluated, NCDOT, and/or WSP may modify the plan to increase effectiveness of public involvement activities.