

Regional Bus Service Feasibility Study

Danville Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting | January 14, 2025



Study Process

Task 1 – Stakeholder Outreach

Task 2 – Data and Surveys

Task 3 – Service Alternatives

Task 4 – Organizational and Funding Alternatives

Task 5 – Recommended Plan

Task 6 – Final Report and Presentations



Stakeholder Discussions

- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
- North Carolina Department of Transportation – Integrated Mobility Division
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART, NC)
- SKAT, Reidsville, NC
- Greensboro Transit Authority
- Greater Lynchburg Transit Authority
- RADAR (transit provider for the City of Martinsville)
- Caesar's Virginia
- Danville Office of Economic Development and Tourism
- Microporous
- Western Piedmont Planning District Commission



Survey Process

Survey Purpose

- To gain insight into some key questions that the study team has concerning the need and demand for regional bus service in the Danville area.

Survey Distribution

- On board the Danville Transit vehicles
- At the Danville Transit Center
- Online
- Survey open mid-September through October 2024

849 survey responses received

- 729 hard copies, completed primarily by Danville Transit customers
- 130 electronic surveys completed online by a variety of people



Survey Results

Which Service Areas are Most Desired?

Service Area	Average Raning	Percentage Ranked #1
Greensboro, NC to and from the Danville area via Reidsville, NC	1.71	62.78%
Martinsville to and from the Danville area	2.59	15.98%
Lynchburg to and from the Danville area via Altavista, Gretna, and Chatham	2.62	16.30%
South Boston to and from the Danville area	2.85	13.50%

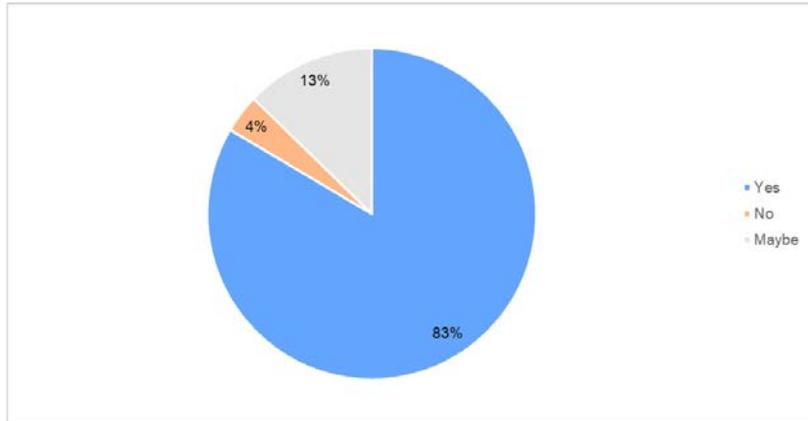
Survey Results

Service Location Rankings

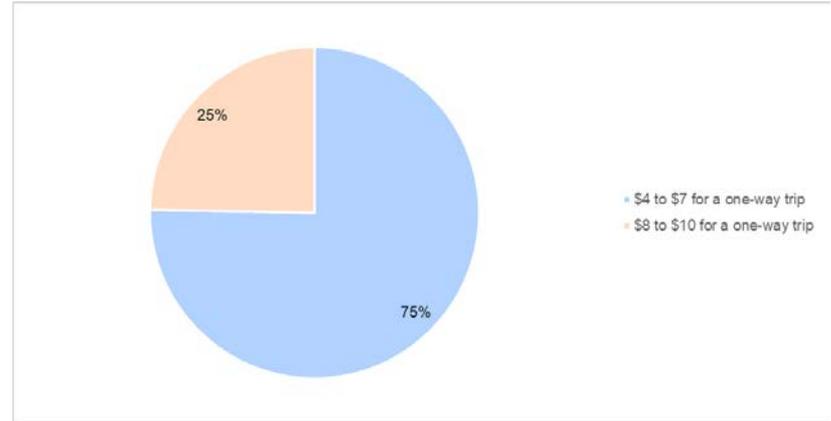
Service Area	Average Ranking	Percentage Ranked #1
Greensboro	1.97	54.76%
Martinsville	2.97	13.99%
Lynchburg	3.06	11.06%
Danville Transit hub to make connections to the Virginia Breeze and local routes	3.08	33.66%
South Boston	3.30	11.06%
Caesar's Virginia to access job and entertainment opportunities	3.64	18.09%
The Mega Site at Berry Hill to access job opportunities	3.75	15.79%

Survey Results

Would you use the service if it met your travel needs?



Reasonable Fare for Regional Bus Service



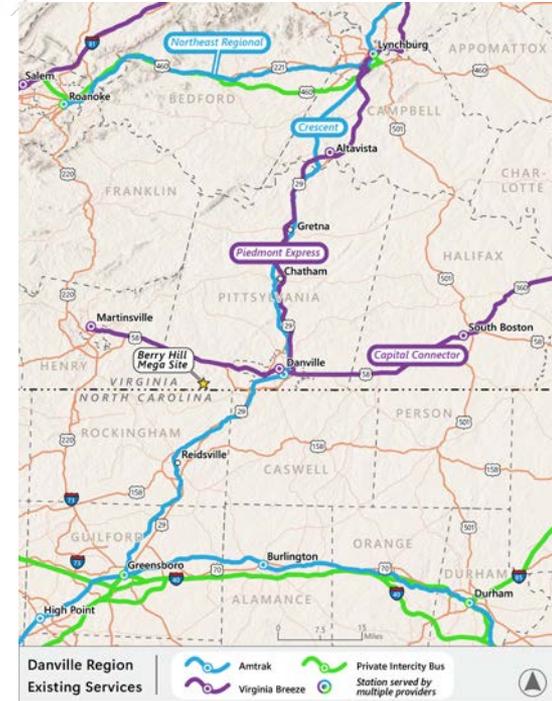
Alternatives Considered

Corridors:

- Greensboro (NC) – Reidsville (NC) – Danville
- Lynchburg – Altavista – Gretna – Chatham – Danville
- Martinsville – Danville
- South Boston – Danville

Transportation Providers Considered:

- Danville Transit
- PART (NC)
- Greater Lynchburg Transit Company
- Private Operators



Intercity Bus News

- **Outreach to NCDOT-IMD** indicated they are planning to operate an intercity bus route between Winston-Salem, Greensboro and Danville to re-instate intercity bus travel on the U.S. 29 Corridor.
- **NC intercity bus**, operated by Sunway Charters, will meet one morning and one afternoon/evening Virginia Breeze bus in Danville.
- The service will be called the Triad-Danville Connector.
- Tentative start date is January 15, 2025.
- This will be a useful supplement to any regional commuter service offered, as there will be one morning and one afternoon trip.

Intercity Bus News



**New
Service**

Triad-Danville Connector

Now connecting **Danville, VA** to
North Carolina 7 days a week

Get your ticket on
sunwaycharters.com



Southbound*

7:30am	7:15pm	▽	Danville, VA
8:10am	7:55pm	▽	Reidsville, NC
8:55am	8:40pm	▽	Greensboro, NC
9:30am (Arrives)	9:05pm (Arrives)	▽	Winston-Salem, NC

Northbound*

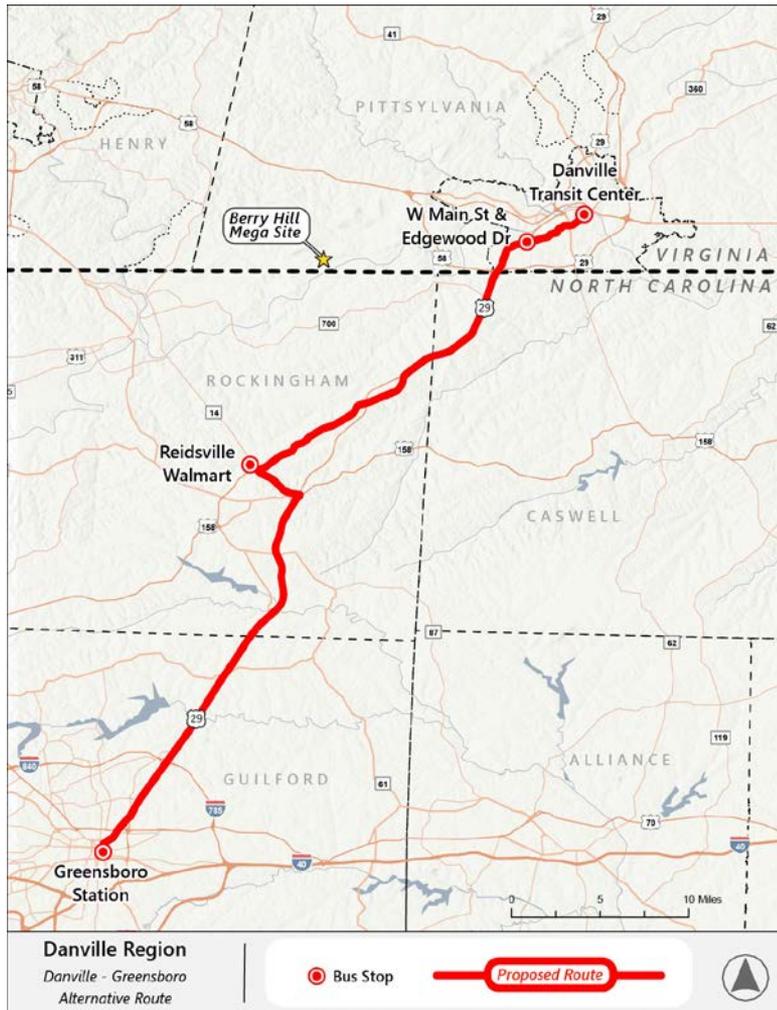
7:15am (Arrives)	6:20pm (Arrives)	△	
6:35am	5:40pm	△	
5:50am	4:50pm	△	
5:10am	4:00pm	△	

*All times are departure times unless otherwise noted.

Image: candy1812 - stock.adobe.com

Draft Service Recommendations

- Corridor service – Greensboro – Reidsville – Danville. This corridor reflects survey results and stakeholder input.
- **Start up:** one morning round trip; one afternoon/evening round trip. Service days TBD, either Monday through Friday or Monday through Saturday.
- **Scheduled to accommodate the 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** shift at the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill.
- Two vehicles – one in operation, one back-up.
- Microporous indicated a desire to have service begin in **January 2027.**
- Directly operated by **Danville Transit.**



Main route would provide service between the Greensboro Station and the Danville Transit Center, with a stop at the regional Walmart in Reidsville, NC.

Passengers who want to go to the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill could transfer to a Danville Transit vehicle at W. Main St. and Edgewood Drive at the existing bus shelter. The connecting vehicle would travel directly to the Megasite.

Draft Recommendations

- Estimated annual operating expenses: **\$94,669 for *Monday through Friday service* or \$113,231 for *Monday through Saturday service***, using Danville Transit's marginal operating costs, inflated to FY2027.
- Estimated capital – 2 heavy duty body on chassis vehicles. One in service, one back-up.
- Estimated capital cost – \$253,585 per vehicle (\$507,170 for both).
- Possible Ancillary capital costs – Bus stop shelters and signs. Note there are already sheltered passenger waiting areas at the Greensboro Station, the Danville Transit Center, and at West Main Street and Edgewood Drive.

Draft Recommendations

- Fare (per passenger trip) recommended to be consistent with the proposed Triad-Danville intercity bus fare. These fares are: **\$8.00 for the trips between Danville and Greensboro** and **\$4.00 for trips between Reidsville and Danville.**
- Once implemented - monitor ridership, sustainability, and cost over an 18-month period.
- Adjust schedules as needed to meet the needs of riders.
- Consider additional corridors if there is interest and funding.

Funding Unknowns

- **State Funding** - Service is primarily in NC. Study team has discussed potential for State Demonstration Funding with DRPT. It is a **possibility**. DRPT will need to evaluate the application when the time comes. State Demonstration funding requires a **20% local match** for operating. Capital funding requires a **4% local match**.
- **Federal Operating Funding** – Rural transit funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for programs in Virginia is currently completely programmed and near-term increases are unlikely.
- **Local Funding** may be needed to fund the majority of the service. Note that Microporous may have some funding to use to assist with employee mobility.

Next Steps

- By February 1, 2025, Danville Transit to submit a grant application to DRPT to purchase two 28-passenger expansion vehicles.
- If grant awarded, Danville Transit to order vehicles by July 2025, as vehicle delivery is at about 18 months.
- Danville Transit to continue to seek guidance from DRPT regarding the possibility of State Demonstration Program funding for FY2027.
- Continue communications with NCDOT and DRPT regarding the Triad-Danville intercity bus service.

Questions?

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