Blueprint 2035
Chapel Hill Transit
Short Range Plan

Project Update

Carrboro Town Council

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TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

AGENDA

1. Project Background & Goals
2. Project Phases
3. Community Engagement
4. Route Proposals (Carrboro focus)
5. Next Steps

BLUEPRINT 2035: PURPOSE & NEED

Blueprint 2035
Chapel Hill Transit
Short Range Plan

***Blueprint 2035* will guide Chapel Hill Transit's service and investment decisions for the next ten years.**

PURPOSE:

- Update the adopted short range transit plan's pre-2020 assumptions (travel, land use, development, demographic, funding, etc.)
- Confirm the adopted plan's service recommendations are still feasible, useful, and high-priorities
- Prepare for NS RAPID's (bus rapid transit) FY30 launch

GROUND RULES:

- Update, not overhaul the adopted plan – improve what works, rethink what doesn't work
- Cost constrained (2027-35); unfunded improvements beyond 2035, *may* be considered
- Reduce duplicative/overlapping services and encourage route/service transfers to stretch limited resources
- Expand the impact of NS RAPID benefits by reconfiguring the corridor's local and regional routes

BLUEPRINT 2035: GOALS

Blueprint 2035
Chapel Hill Transit
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***Blueprint 2035* will guide Chapel Hill Transit's service and investment decisions for the next ten years.**

GOALS:

- Make Chapel Hill Transit the community's primary transportation choice
- Implement and integrate new high-capacity transit corridors in Chapel Hill Transit's service area.
- Equitably expand Chapel Hill Transit access and options for transit-reliant customers
- Provide consistent, reliable, and useful transit service

PROJECT PHASES & GOALS

Blueprint 2035
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January-February 2026

Phase 1

Goal: Define community's transit priorities and expectations.

Key Topics:

- Transit priorities (ex. frequency, reliability, information, connections)
- "Tradeoffs"
- Days/times when service is desired

Outcome: Findings guide preliminary service "concepts," proposal evaluation criteria, and "must-have" service characteristics.

April-June 2026

Phase 2

Goal: "Vet" and gather feedback on preliminary service concepts and their benefits and tradeoffs.

Key Topics:

- Groundtruth Phase 1 priorities reflected in prelim. service concepts
- Refine elements based on feedback.
- Confirm expectations re: access, equity, connectivity

Outcome: Findings guide creation of "preferred service concept" and implementation roadmap.

Up Next:

Phase 3

Goal: Review and confirm preferred service concept.

Key Topics:

- Community needs and values reflected in service concept
- Implementation and funding strategies are feasible
- Identify any implementation barriers and/or opportunities

Outcome: Refines preferred service concept and implementation plan; establishes performance metrics.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

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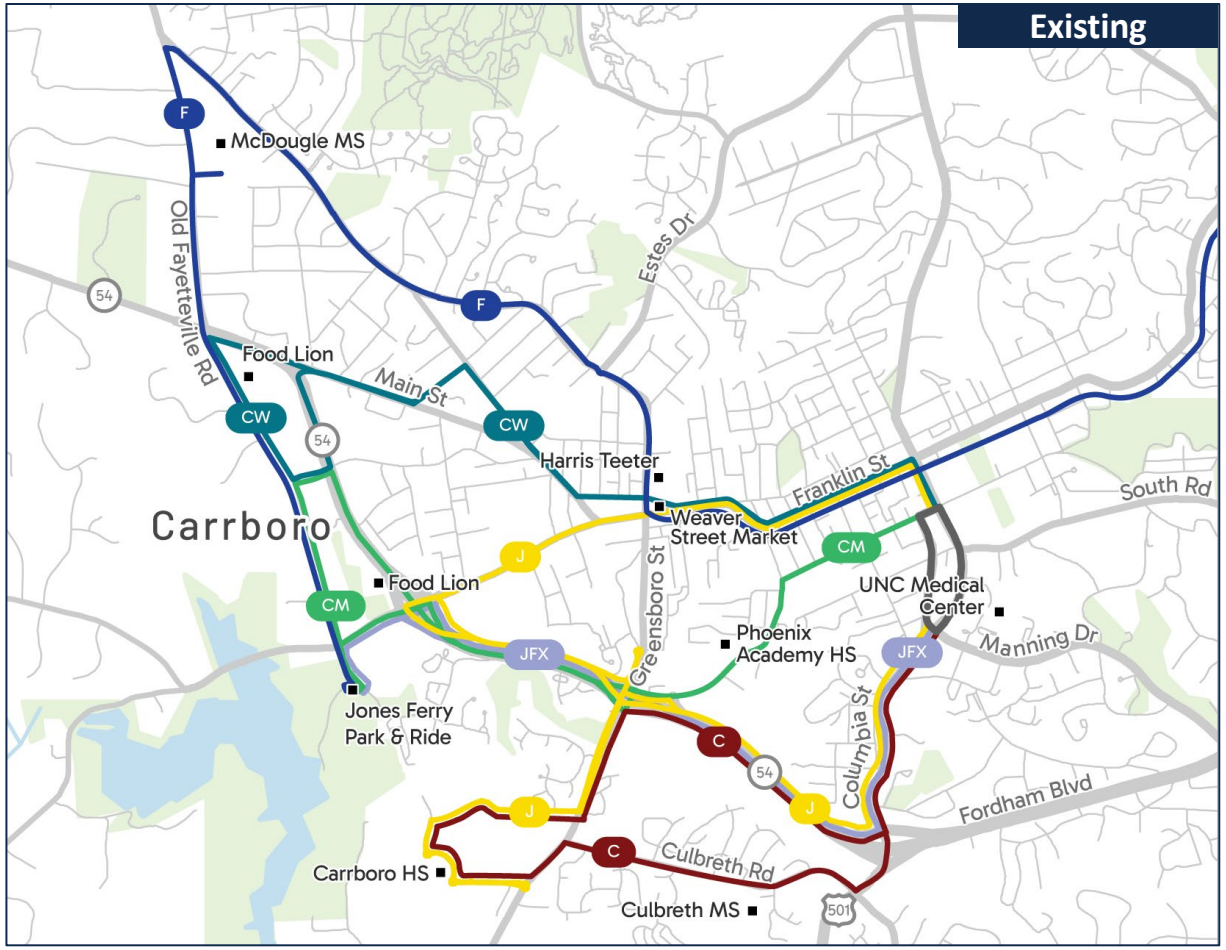
January-February 2026	April-June 2026	Up Next:
Phase 1 **APPROACHES:** • Online and paper surveys (English and Spanish) • Pop-up engagement at bus stops, community activity nodes, events • Project website, flyers, bus placards, bookmarks, door hangers, and Transit app ads	**Phase 2** **APPROACHES:** • Online and paper surveys (English and Spanish) • Pop-up engagement at bus stops, on buses, at community activity nodes, events • Project website, flyers, bus placards, bookmarks, door hangers, and Transit app ads • Focus groups (Arabic, Karen, Burmese, Spanish, Mandarin, frequent transit users, senior citizens, UNC students, staff, faculty, virtual group)	**Phase 3** • Launching in October 2026 **APPROACHES:** • Online and paper surveys (English and Spanish) • Pop-up engagement at bus stops, community activity nodes, events • Project website, flyers, bus placards, bookmarks, door hangers, and Transit app ads • Virtual focus group

CARRBORO ROUTES: EXISTING

C, CM, CW, F, JFX, & J

Issues and Opportunities Identified by Existing Conditions Analysis & Community Engagement:

- **F Route** length compounds impacts of minor delays and service disruptions; leaves no room for schedule recovery
- **CM and J Route's** outdated service and travel time assumptions are contributing to on time performance challenges
- **J Route's** current configuration is not intuitive and contributes to on time performance challenges
- Duplicative (overlapping) service on several routes reduces the "reach" of limited resources
- Limited weekend and evening service on all routes



PHASE 2 ROUTE CONCEPTS: CARRBORO

C, CM, CW, F, JFX, & J

Phase 2 concepts presented to the public:

CM: Add PM service; update speed assumptions for improved reliability

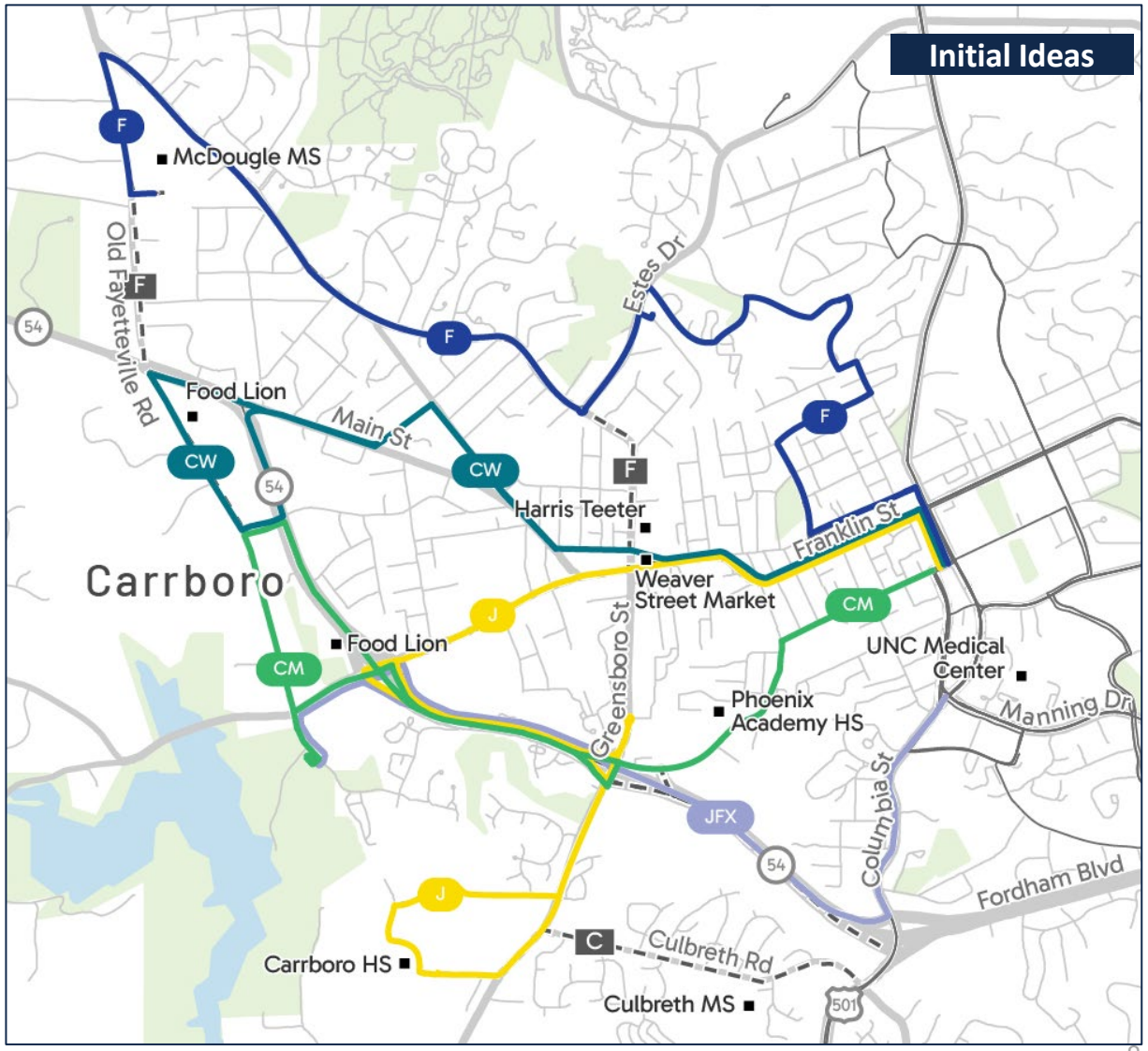
F: Shorten and reroute through Northside and adjacent neighborhoods

C: Retire to reduce duplicative service; reallocate hours to make service improvements on CM, J, and JFX

J: Eliminate segment between Carrboro HS and UNC Medical Center to improve performance and simplify

What we heard: customers value…

- **Connectivity** (ex. downtown Carrboro to UNC; Carrboro HS area to downtown Carrboro).
- **Faster, more direct connections to UNC.**
- Schedule changes improving **on-time performance and reliability.**



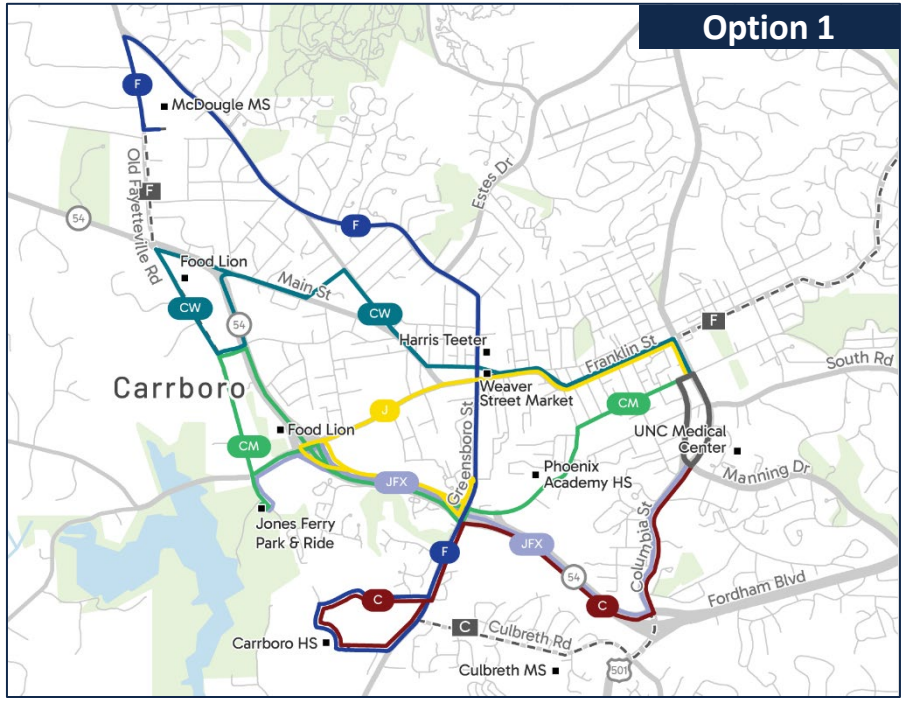
PHASE 3: CARRBORO ROUTES

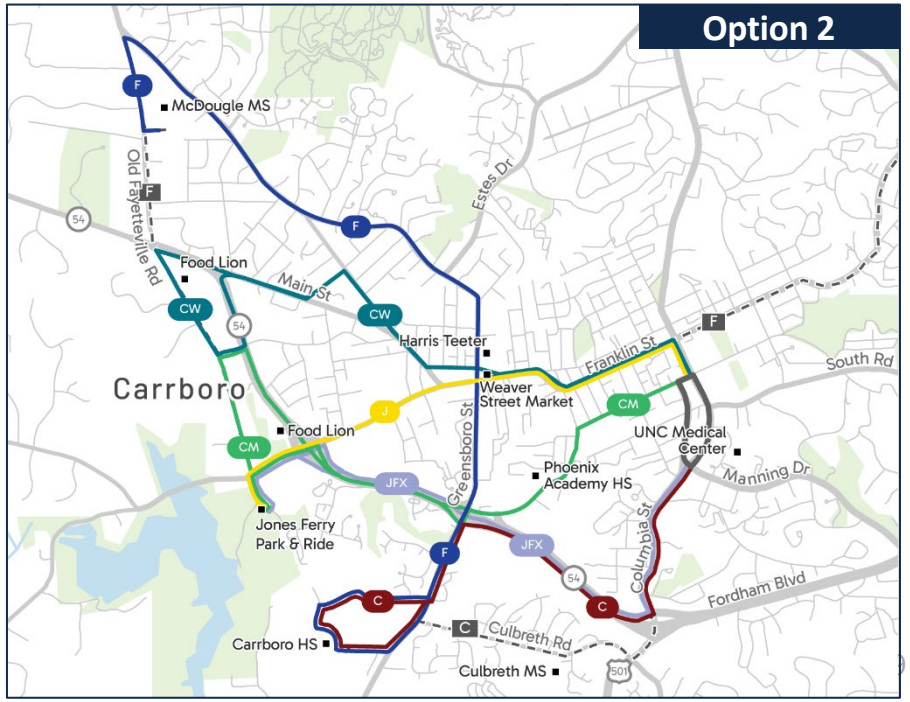
C, CM, CW, F, HS, JFX, & J

CW, JFX: No proposed changes.

PROPOSED CHANGES:

- **C:** Move route off Culbreth Rd and serve NC-54 in in both directions to **provide faster all-day connections to UNC**; **increase frequency and add weekend service** by reallocating hours from proposed (shorter) J Route
- **CM: Improve on-time performance** and **reliability** by adjust headways to 20-minutes (peak) and 40-minutes (off-peak); **add additional PM service**.
- **F: Improve performance** and **strengthen all-day direct connections** between McDougle MS, downtown Carrboro, S. Greensboro St., Smith Level Rd., and Carrboro HS by reducing route length.
- **J:** Shorten route to **reduce overlap** and provide **more direct and reliable** service; **two options**…





PHASE 3: CARRBORO ROUTES

J ROUTE: TWO OPTIONS

Both are **shorter** and **more direct** than current route and will help **reduce delays**; both free up resources to **increase frequency on the proposed C**, which **maintains direct UNC access for neighborhoods near Carrboro HS**; proposed F **maintains service between Smith Level Rd and downtown Carrboro**; C, CM, and JFX routes **maintain UNC connections for NC 54 neighborhoods.**

J ROUTE: OPTION 1

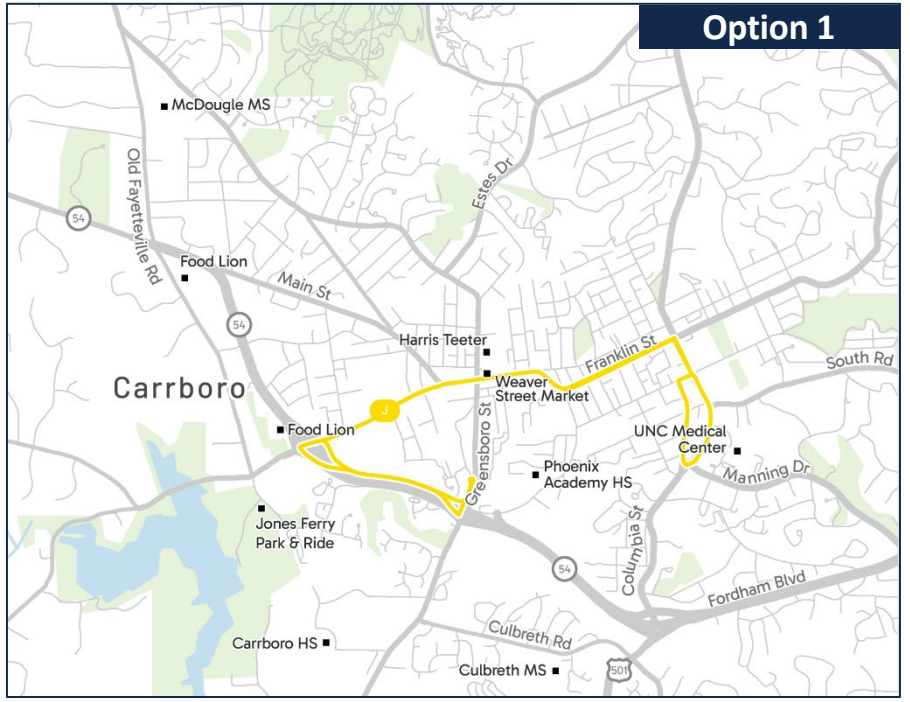
Operates between UNC and S. Greensboro St., via Franklin St., Main St. and NC 54

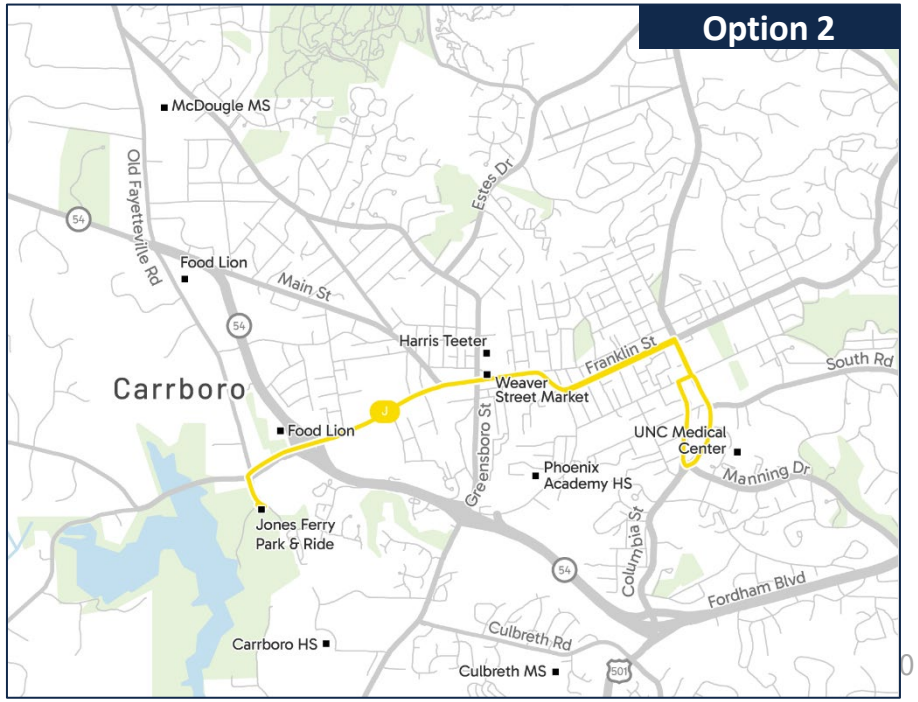
Benefits: Serves destinations (i.e., Rocky Brook Mobile Home Park, Carolina Apts., and Royal Park Apts.) not served by option 2; however, all three are served by the JFX and CM under both scenarios.

J ROUTE: OPTION 2

Operates between UNC and Jones Ferry P&R via Franklin St. and Main St.

Benefits: Serves Jones Ferry Park & Ride; improves connections with JFX and CM Routes; more frequent early AM and PM service; more schedule recovery time improving on time performance.





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PHASE 3: CARRBORO ROUTES

C, CM, CW, F, JFX, & J

Service Frequency and Span, Existing vs. Proposed Options

	Existing				J Option 1				J Option 2			
Period	AM/PM Peak	Weekday Midday	Weekday Evening	Weekends	AM/PM Peak	Weekday Midday	Weekday Evening	Weekends	AM/PM Peak	Weekday Midday	Weekday Evening	Weekends
C	30	30	-	-	**20**	**20**	**40**	**40**	**20**	**20**	**40**	**40**
CM	15	30	-	30	20	40	**40**	40	20	40	**40**	40
J	15	20	30	60	15	20	40	**40**	15	20	30	**40**

No proposed span or frequency changes for the CW, F, or JFX

Service to Key Destinations, Existing vs. Proposed Options

	Existing			J Option 1			J Option 2		
Period	Weekday Daytime	Weekday Evening	Weekends	Weekday Daytime	Weekday Evening	Weekends	Weekday Daytime	Weekday Evening	Weekends
Royal Park Apartments	CM, J, JFX	J, JFX	CM, J	CM, J, JFX	CM, J, JFX	CM, J	CM, JFX	CM, JFX	CM
Carrboro HS	C, J	J	J	C, F	C, F	C	C, F	C, F	C
Kingswood	C, J, JFX	J, JFX	J	C, JFX	C, JFX	C	C, JFX	C, JFX	C
Laurel Ridge	J, JFX	J, JFX	J	C, JFX	C, JFX	C	C, JFX	C, JFX	C

OTHER ROUTES SERVING CARRBORO

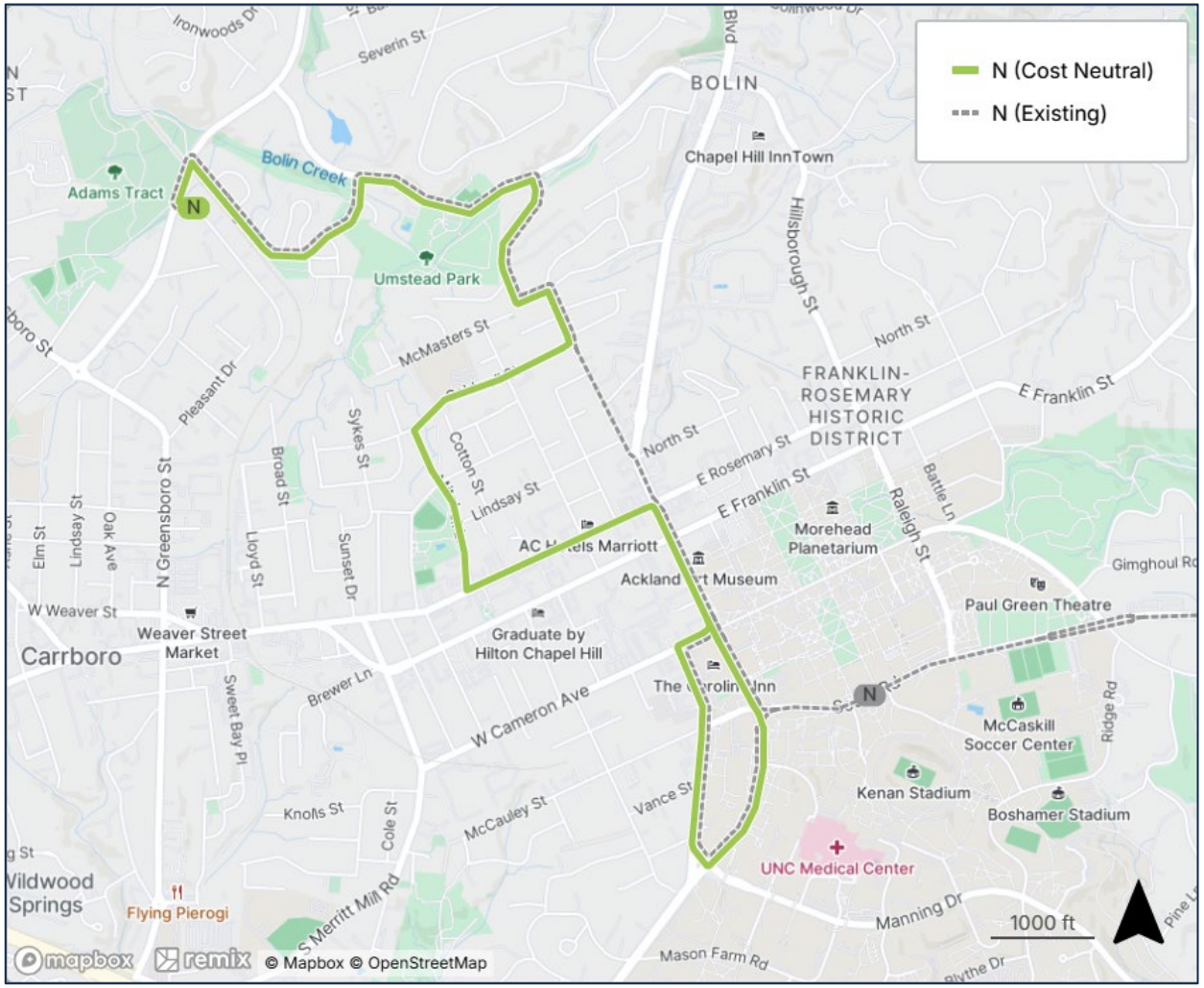
N ROUTE

EXISTING CHALLENGES:

- Duplicative service on South Rd. and Raleigh Rd.
- Low productivity on route segment east of UNC (indicates service is not useful)

PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES:

- Discontinue eastern route segment (proposed S route serves Meadowmont)
- Reroute to serve Caldwell St. and Mitchell Ln. (provides more frequent service than existing A)
- Increase frequency to every 45 minutes (currently 60 mins.)



OTHER ROUTES SERVING CARRBORO

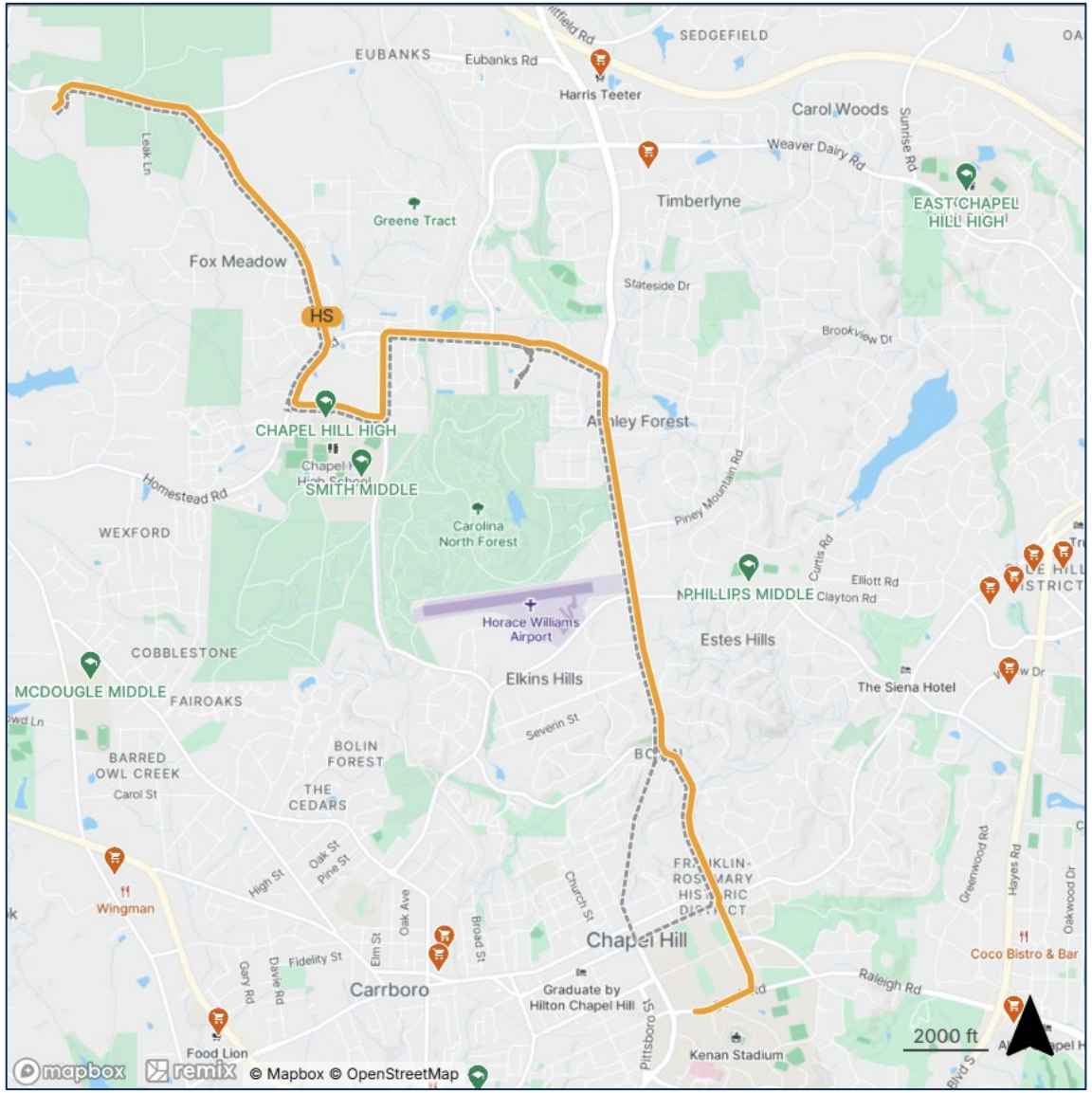
HS ROUTE (*PRE-* NS RAPID)

EXISTING CHALLENGES:

- Desire for more evening/weekend service
- No direct service to UNC

PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES:

- Provide direct service to UNC and bidirectional service on Hillsborough St.
- Build time for direct service to UNC by eliminating underutilized stop at Orange Social Services front door.
- Add more evening trips and implement weekend service



OTHER ROUTES SERVING CARRBORO

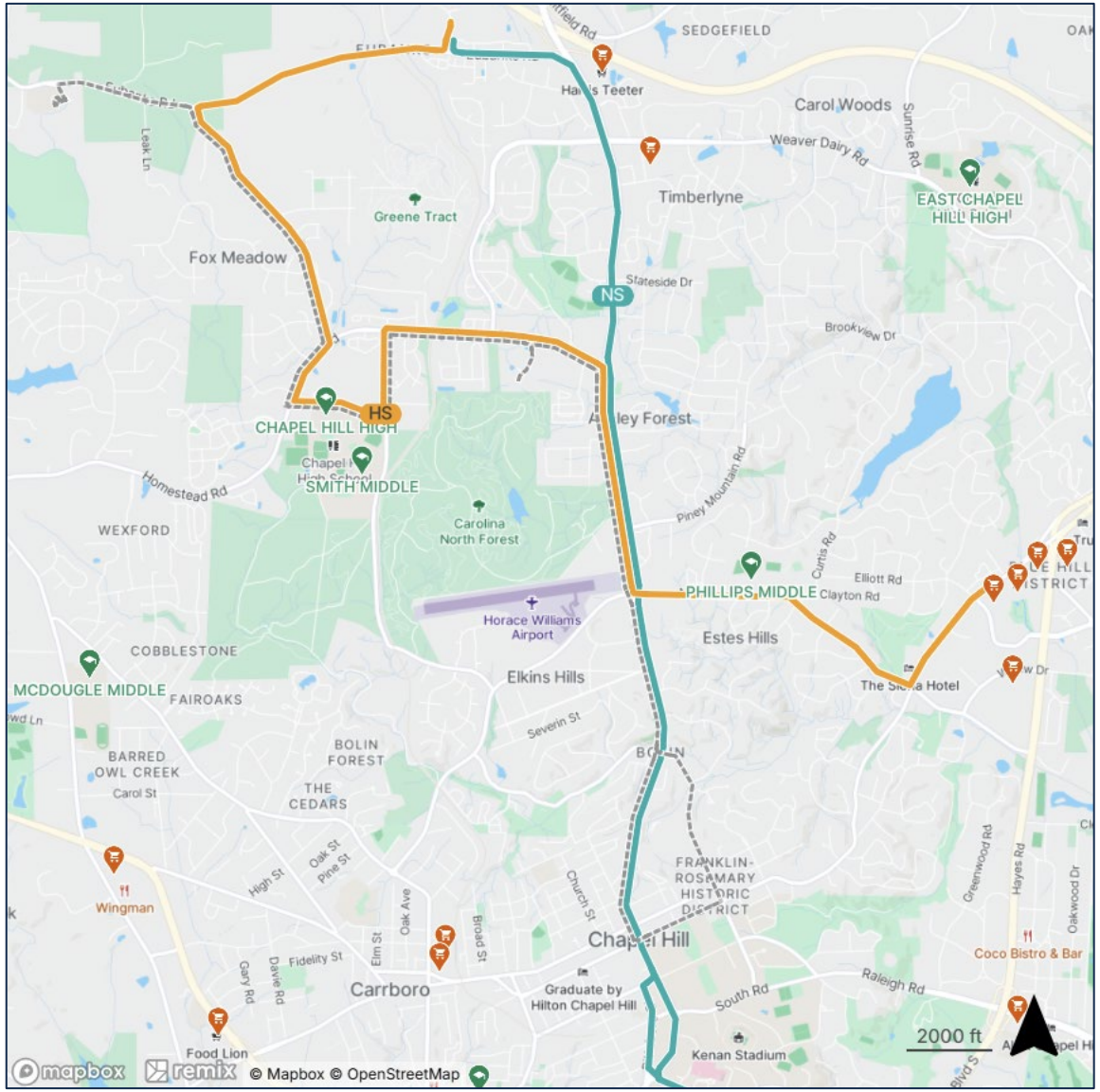
HS ROUTE (*POST*-NS RAPID)

PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES:

- **Relocate route's northern terminus** from underutilized Morris Grove stop to Eubanks Park & Ride;

BENEFITS:

- Improves service and connections for neighborhoods on Homestead Rd. and Rogers Rd. by connecting to NS RAPID (frequent service to UNC/UNC Health) and to proposed (post-BRT) T Route providing new cross-town service to Eastgate and other retail and employment centers



NEXT STEPS

Chapel Hill Transit staff and our consultant team are:

- Finalizing route and service proposals we will bring to the community for the last round of engagement and feedback.
- Preparing for Phase 3 outreach and engagement activities, which we expect to launch in mid-October, extending through mid-November.
- Following Phase 3 engagement, we will assess feedback and refine routes and service concepts, as needed to address any “critical red flags.”
- We will then draft the final *Blueprint 2035* plan, including a detailed implementation plan.
- Staff expect to return in late winter or early spring to request Carrboro’s Town Council adopt *Blueprint 2035*.

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THANK YOU!

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