

Appendix D

Northern Corridor BRT
Downtown Alignments Discussion

City of Raleigh

Raleigh, North Carolina

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Raleigh

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Recommended Study Step for Next Project Phase: Downtown North-South Street Performance Comparison

During the study, while the primary scope of the study focused on the key choices among several alignment alternatives in both the Midtown and Triangle Town Center corridors, continued coordination among GoRaleigh, Raleigh Police, and NCDOT also raised questions about whether the alignment between GoRaleigh Station and Capital Boulevard could be optimized by changing the routing to reflect recent service planning improvements on GoRaleigh Route 1 and Route 2.

This section of the report discusses recent interagency coordination and recommends a way forward.

Safety Concerns Expressed by NCDOT and Raleigh Police Department (RPD)

Dawson St and McDowell St act as the primary north-south pair of streets for vehicular traffic through downtown. Both NCDOT and RPD have expressed concerns regarding observed near miss accidents from buses serving stops along these corridors. GoRaleigh operations has historically avoided adding stops along these corridors due to safety concerns around rear end collisions.

As of April 2025, all bus stops have been removed from Dawson due to safety concerns and only one or two legacy stops remain on McDowell in this stretch.

City of Raleigh staff is confident that NCDOT and RPD are likely to oppose placing articulated buses on Dawson/McDowell for BRT service and adding BRT stations where bus stops have recently been removed due to these safety concerns.

Downtown Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Success

On the positive side, the significant development at Smoky Hollow and Seaboard Station has brought new population densities north of Raleigh's central downtown core.

In response to this emergence of this TOD success, GoRaleigh has adjusted the routing of Routes 1 and 2 to put key stops within a shorter walk of these major growth clusters. This routing requires buses to use Wilmington St and Salisbury St to travel north-south between GoRaleigh Station and Peace St.

The new population at Smoky Hollow and Seaboard Station creates significant ridership opportunity that wasn't being captured with the alignment shown in this study. City Staff expects these areas to attract more riders given the proximity to downtown and TOD-style developments.

Potential Advantages of Wilmington and Salisbury

There are several potential advantages to a future BRT routing on Wilmington St. and Salisbury St. Those advantages include:

- Proximity to the most densely developed part of downtown
- Wilmington is already identified as a transit corridor in the downtown mobility study
- Potential for successful Transit Signal Priority (TSP) on Wilmington St is likely higher than on Dawson St and McDowell St
- Wilmington has been discussed for a potential road diet
- Extra right-of-way at Wilmington and North Street presents opportunities for BRT station placement
- Current service already uses pair of stops on Peace Street (one in right-turn lane approaching Capitol Boulevard, one on opposite side) to serve this area
- City Council has supported two routing changes already that take advantage of the TOD success at Smoky Hollow and Seaboard Station; there is time to examine the ridership response to these improvements
- AADT (annual average daily traffic) along the Salisbury/Wilmington St pair is approximately 18,000 fewer vehicles per day

Next Phase of Study: Take Advantage of BRT Design Flexibility to Study Both Dawson/McDowell and Wilmington/Salisbury for BRT Routing

One of the great advantages of BRT is that it can be deployed in a wide variety of urban street environments. This means that while the Wilmington/Salisbury concept was not present as this study began, it will be relatively easy and straightforward to compare the two pairs of north-south streets in the next phase of study.

Therefore, this study recommends that in addition to adopting the two LPAs of Triangle Town Center 3 and Midtown 6, that the next phase of engineering also consider an A/B approach to the downtown routing:

- **Option A:** Original Dawson/McDowell alignment presented to the public throughout this study. The originally proposed cross section for this alignment is shown in **Figure 1** below.
- **Option B:** New Salisbury/Wilmington alignment that reflects recent service planning changes and operational realities revealed through proactive inter-agency and inter-departmental cooperation within the City in support of safety. A proposed cross section for this alignment option can be seen in **Figure 2** below.

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Cross Section of Option A Roadway Configuration along Dawson St and McDowell St

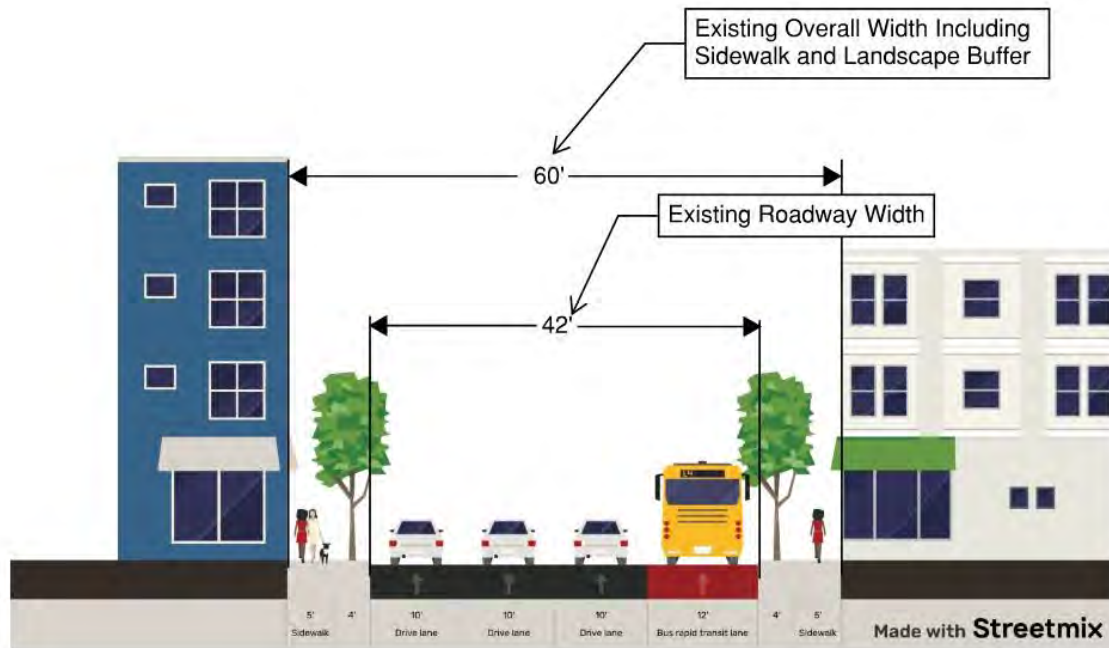


Figure 2. Proposed Conceptual Cross Section of Option B Roadway Configuration along Salisbury St and Wilmington St

