

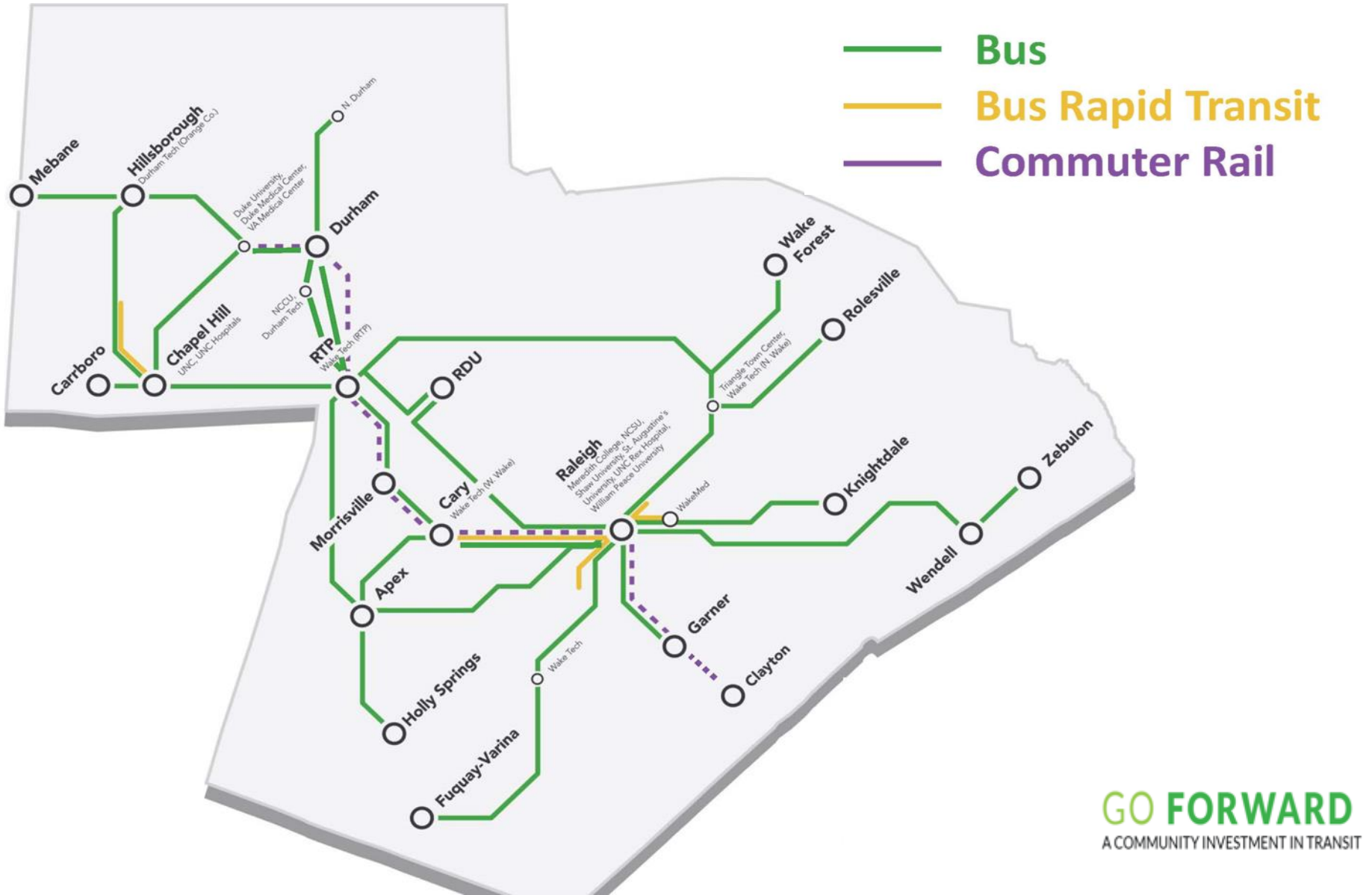
# *Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study Update*

**GO FORWARD**  
A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN TRANSIT

March 17, 2021

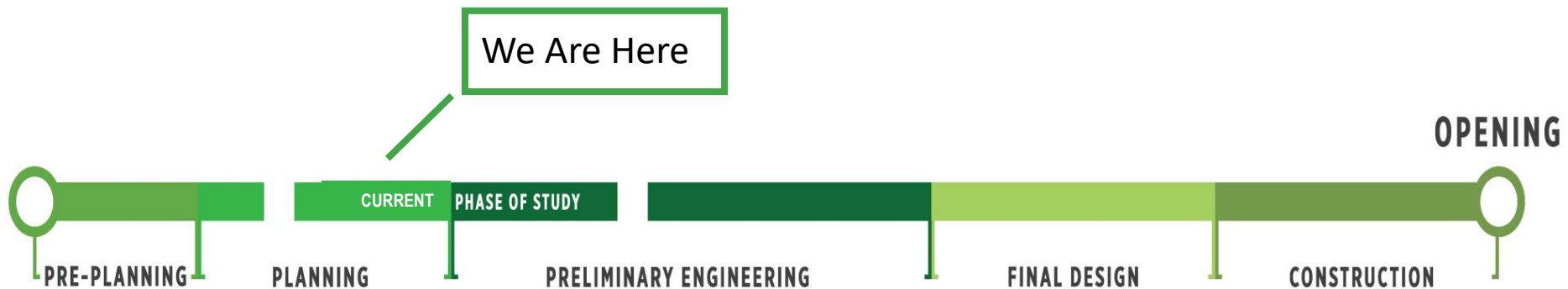
Chapel Hill Town Council Work Session

# County Transit Plan Investments



# Goal of Rail Feasibility Study

On behalf of the Durham and Wake County Transit Plans, provide detailed information to the community and elected officials to help reach a decision on whether or not to proceed with a rail project, and if so, how, and when.



# Phase 2 Feasibility Study Partners



Study funding partners

Oversee the Triangle's transportation planning and funding activities

Project sponsor

Sponsors intercity passenger rail on the corridor and has other rail-highway safety mandates

Owns and leases the rail corridor

# What Do We Know Now About Rail?



**Initial Service (2030):**  
West Durham to Garner  
currently assumed in  
county transit plans.

Studying possible inclusion  
of service to Clayton

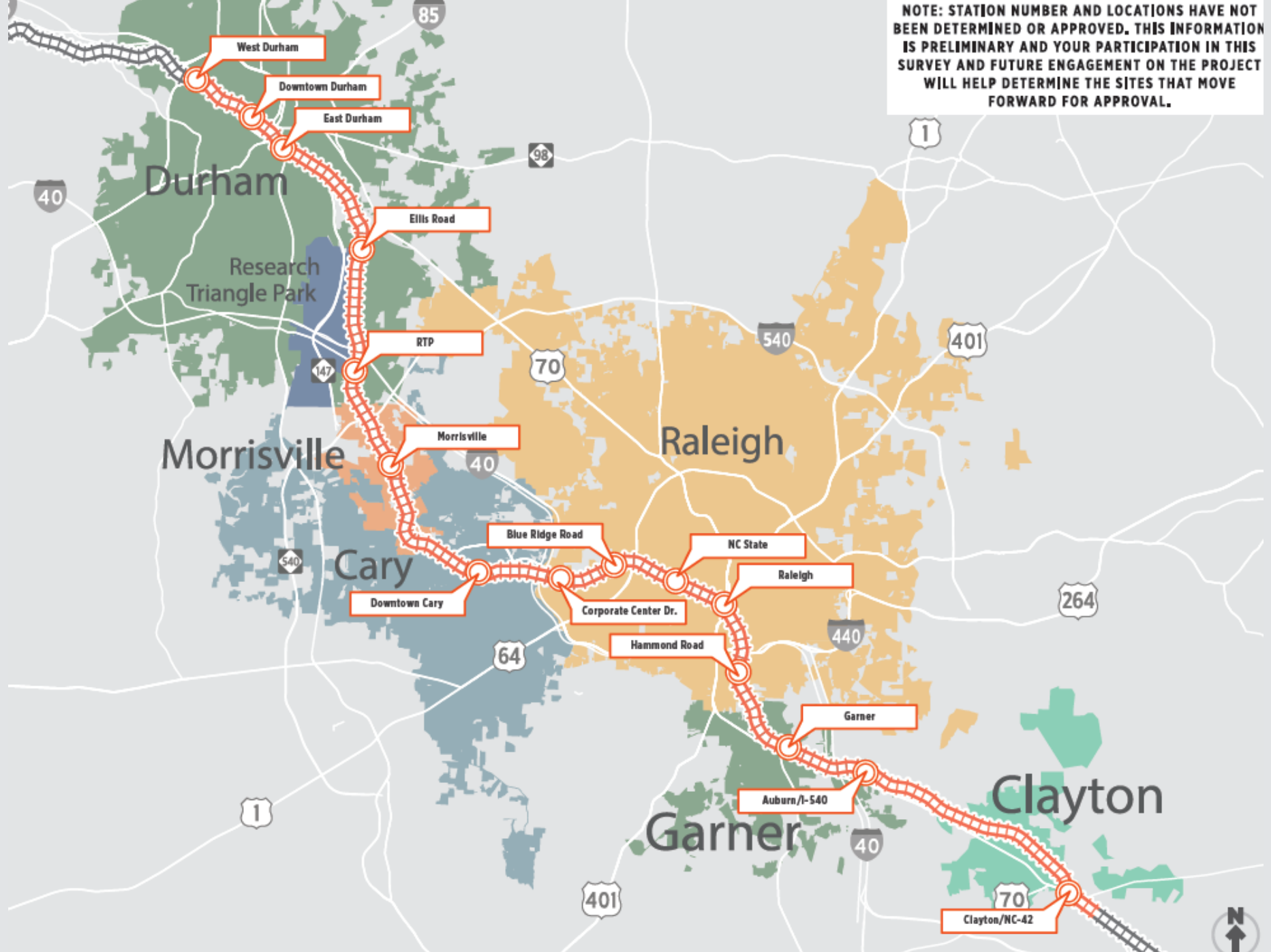
**8** round trips in morning  
**2** round trips midday  
**8** round trips in afternoon  
**2** round trips in evening

DRX = 18 round trips today

**GO FORWARD**  
A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN TRANSIT



**NOTE: STATION NUMBER AND LOCATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN DETERMINED OR APPROVED. THIS INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY AND FUTURE ENGAGEMENT ON THE PROJECT WILL HELP DETERMINE THE SITES THAT MOVE FORWARD FOR APPROVAL.**



# What Did We Learn From Previous Studies?

## High-level Planning Studies Completed to Date for Durham – Clayton CRT:

- Wake-Durham Commuter Rail Major Investment Study (2019)
- Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Phase 1 Feasibility Study (2020)
- All estimates preliminary and subject to change as additional studies completed

**7.5 – 10K**

Trips  
(FTA average)

**0:45 – 50**

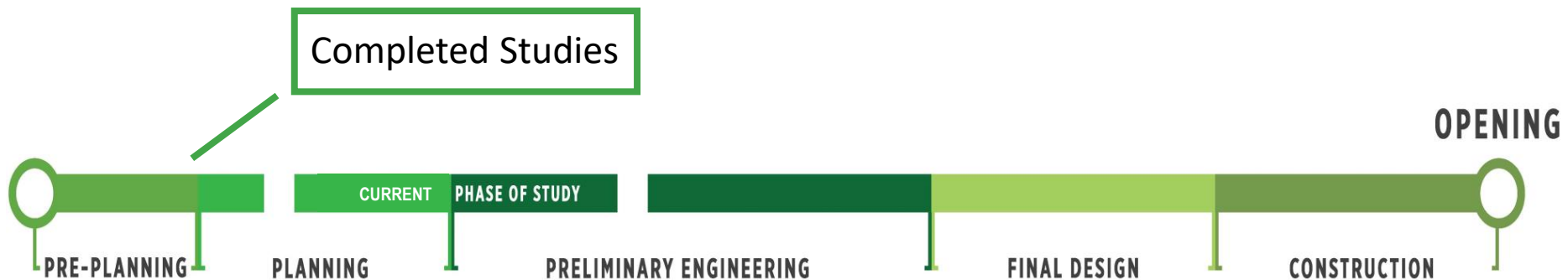
Durham to  
Raleigh

**\$1.8-2.1B**

Capital Cost  
(\$YOE)

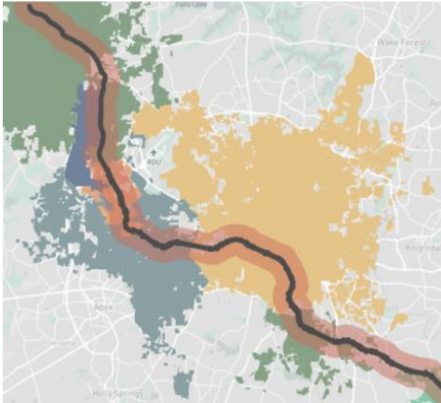
**\$29-37M**

Operating Cost  
(\$2019)



# What Are We Working on Now?

## Rail Analysis



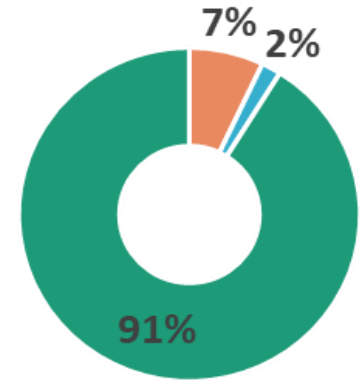
- Stop locations and schedules
- Rail infrastructure: track, bridges, vehicles
- Ridership and rail capacity modeling

## Opportunity Analysis



- Affordable housing
- Travel Markets
- Land Use
- Job Creation Potential

## Engagement



- Three rounds of public engagement
- Business + colleges
- Focus groups
- Local governments
- Railroads





# Downtown Durham Engineering Analysis

- Environmental Screening
- Track design, station siting, roadway/traffic, utilities, stormwater
- Stakeholder and community engagement



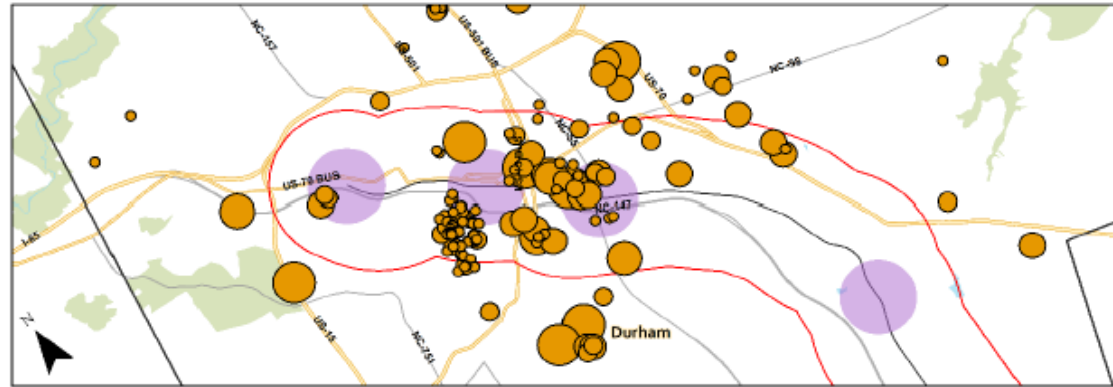
# Affordable Housing Analysis (Draft)

- **Existing types and locations:**
  - legally-binding/affordable-restricted
  - naturally occurring affordable housing

County	LBAR Units CRT Corridor	% of County LBAR in Corridor
Durham	2,758	37% (of 7,425)
Johnston	98	4% (of 2,446)
Wake	3,321	25% (of 13,211)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,177</b>	<b>27% (of 23,082)</b>

- Rail corridor boundary
- ½ mile radius station study area
- LBAR housing developments

Stations (left-to-right): W. Durham, Downtown Durham, East Durham, Ellis Rd



Stations (left-to-right): Ellis Rd, RTP, Morrisville, Downtown Cary



# Round I Engagement

## Methods

- Email campaigns
- Social media and geo-targeting
- Paper surveys
- Pop-ups
- Drive-through events
- Virtual meetings
- Virtual presentations
- Virtual focus groups

## Materials

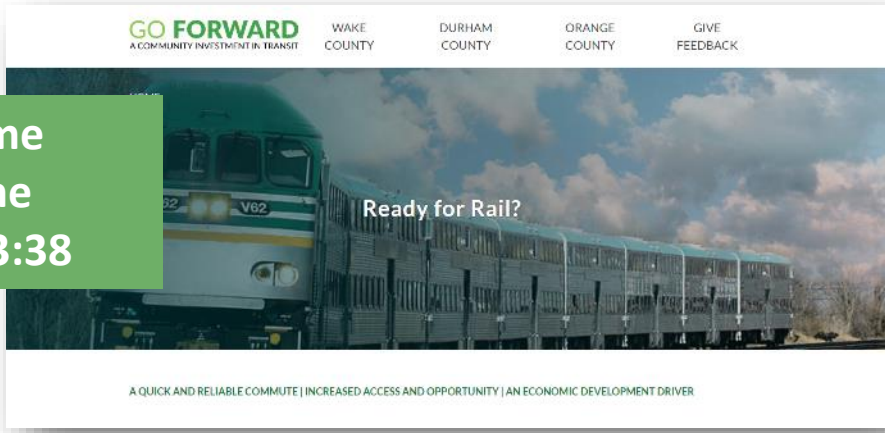
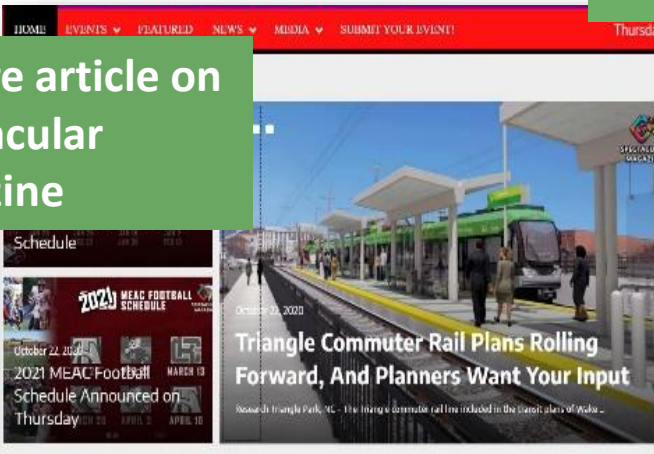
- Press Release
- Social Media
- Digital & Print
- Survey
- Video

## Results

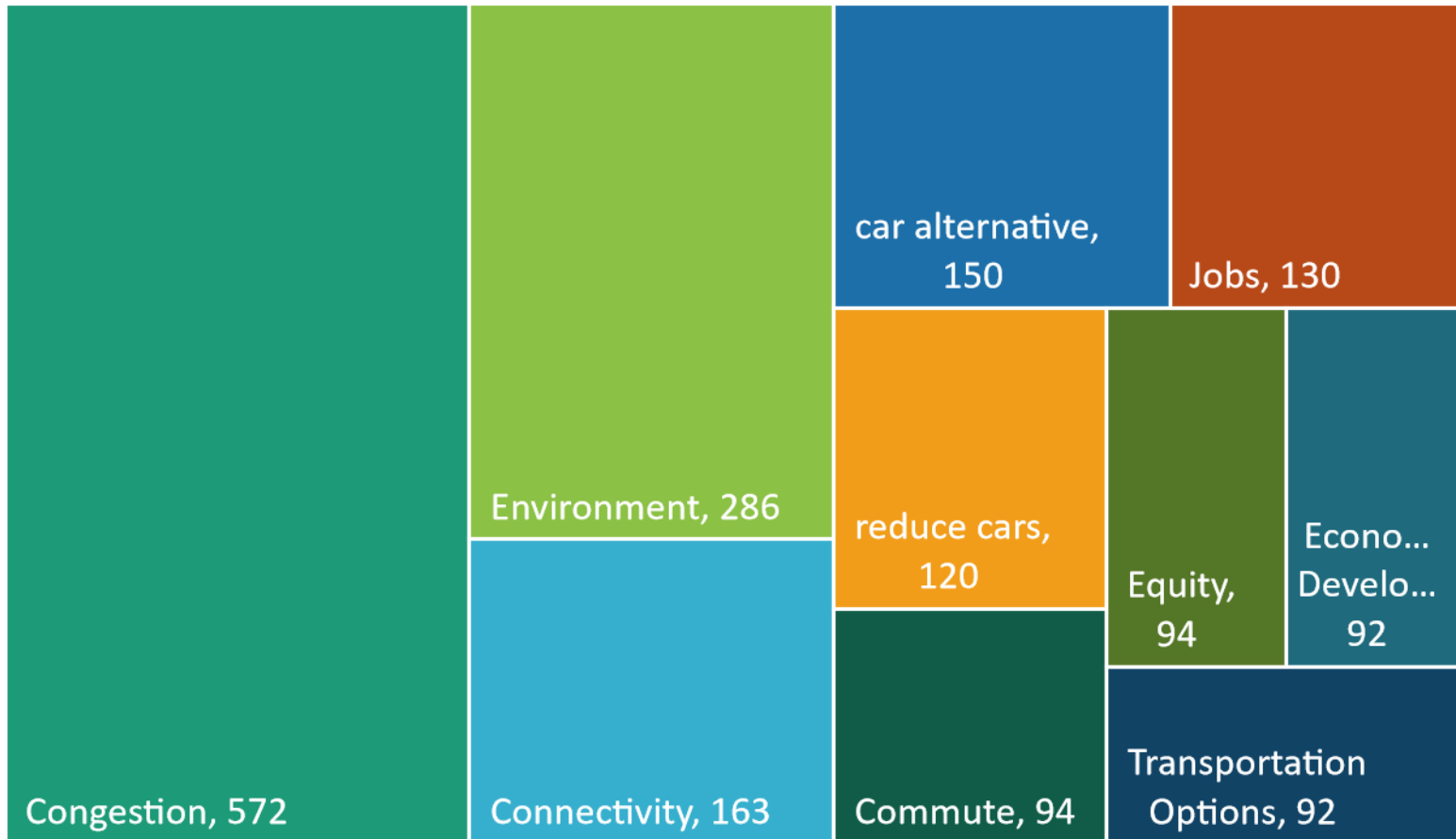
- 5,600 survey views
- 2,700 unique participants
- 500 participants in the first 3 days
- Nearly 5,000 project-related comments

Average time spent on the webpage: 3:38

Feature article on Spectacular Magazine



# What do you see the commuter rail train doing for your community?



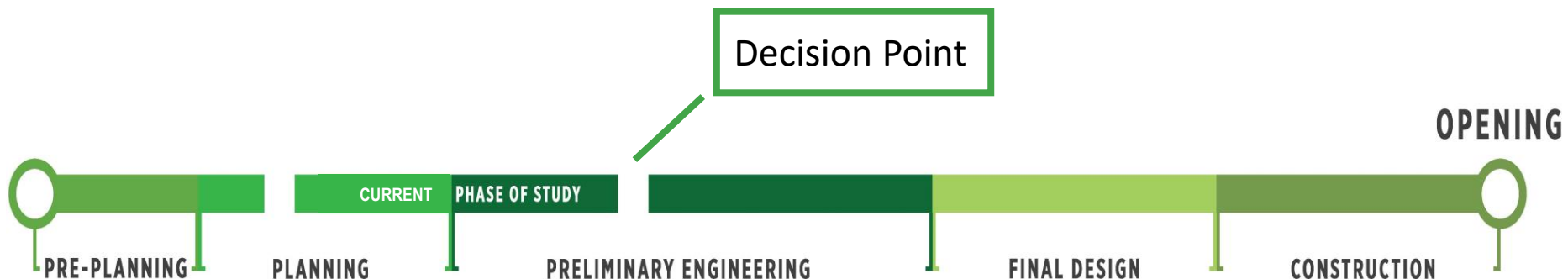
*“Easing congestion and pollution. Providing opportunities for all people to travel without a car. Be able to go to downtown Raleigh without dealing with parking.”*

# What Happens at the End of the Study?

## Achieve Regional Consensus on the Following:

- Project Concept (stations, service, infrastructure, etc...)
- Cost Share
- Community support of the project
- Support from railroads, local governments, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties

**Study Outcome:** Decision to undertake Engineering, Final Design, and Construction, including FTA New Starts and NEPA processes.



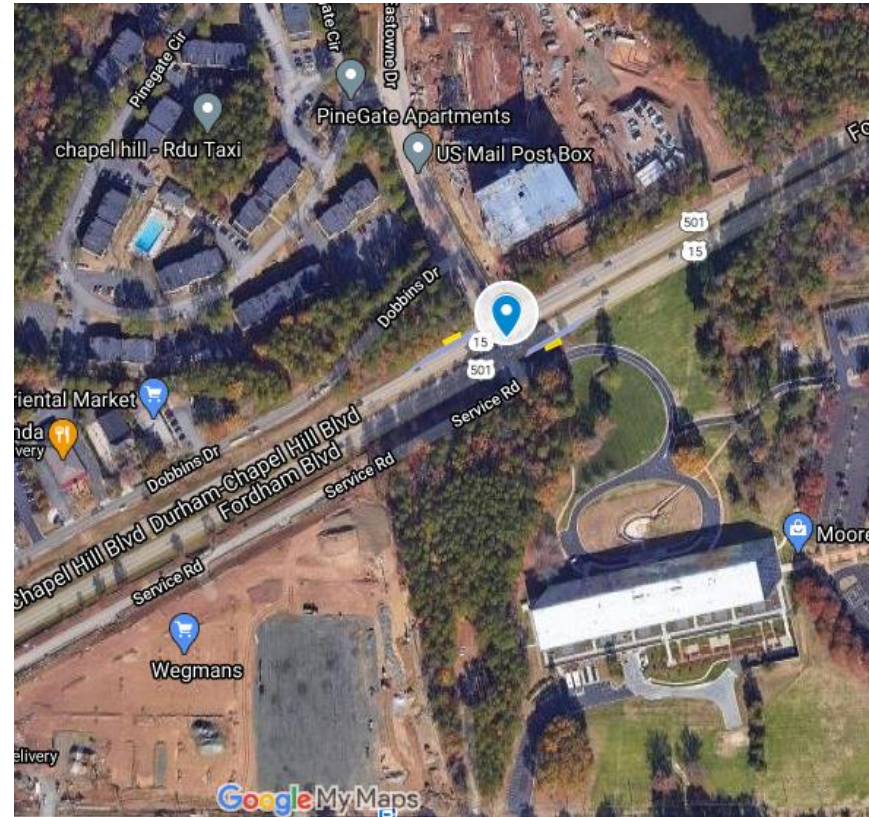


# Shorter-Term Regional Transit Improvements

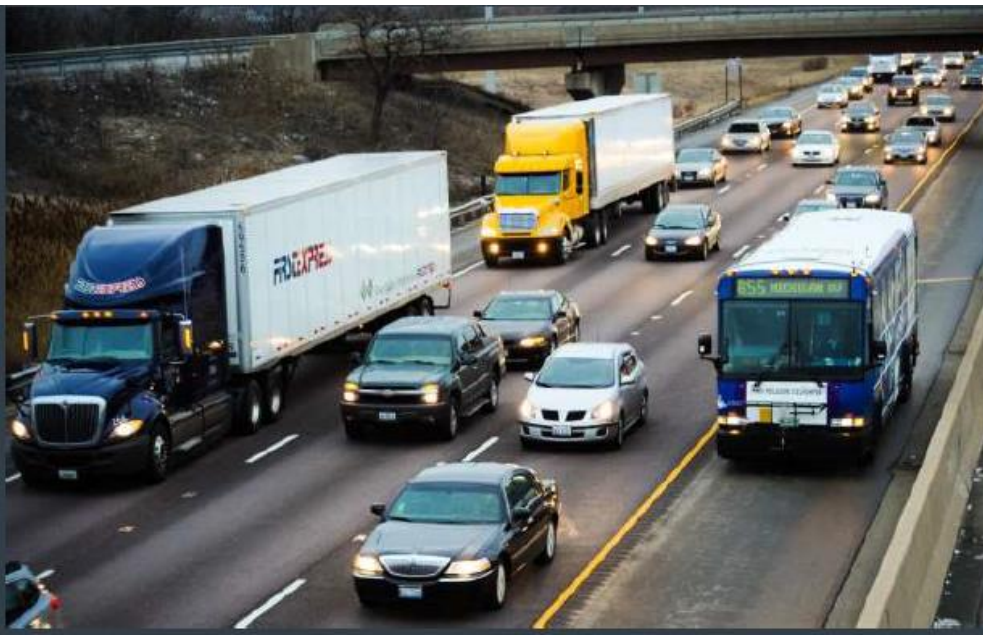
Extend D Route to Patterson Place;  
Create 15-minute service on the 400/405

Construct ten bus stop improvements

Eastowne / Wegman's transit access  
improvements for Routes 400/405



Pilot I-40 Transit Priority  
Shoulder for Route CRX





# *Questions*

**GO FORWARD**

A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN TRANSIT

# Major Takeaways & Next Steps

## Benefits

- Reducing congestion
- Environmental benefits
- Decreasing commute times
- Bringing the Triangle up to modern metropolitan standards
- Sense of connectivity throughout the Triangle

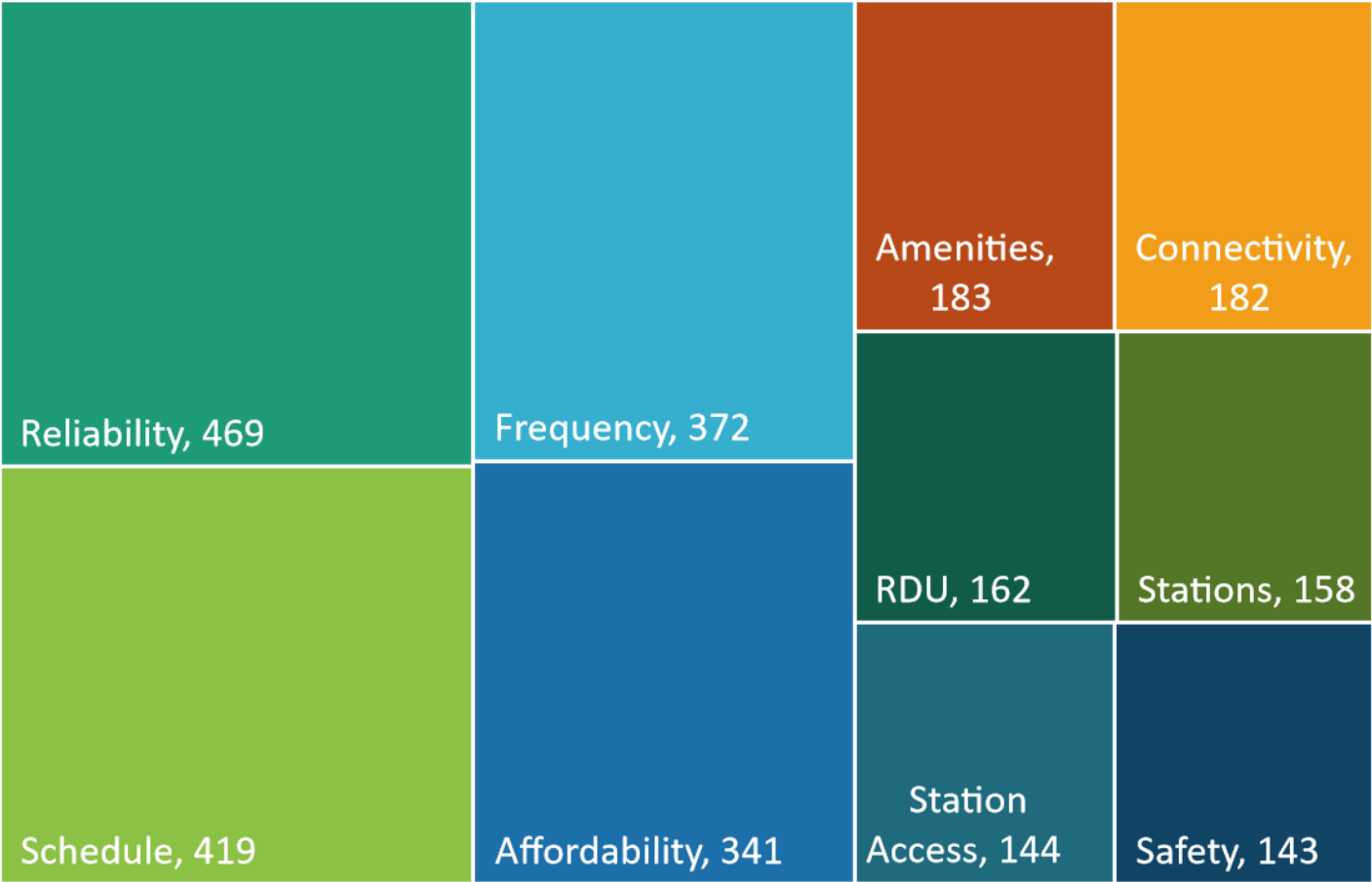
## Concerns

- Project cost and funding allocation
- Would it be effective?
- Would it serve the community equitably?
  - Serves only commuters
  - Doesn't serve those most in need (not equitable)
  - Some geographic areas left out

## Focus groups

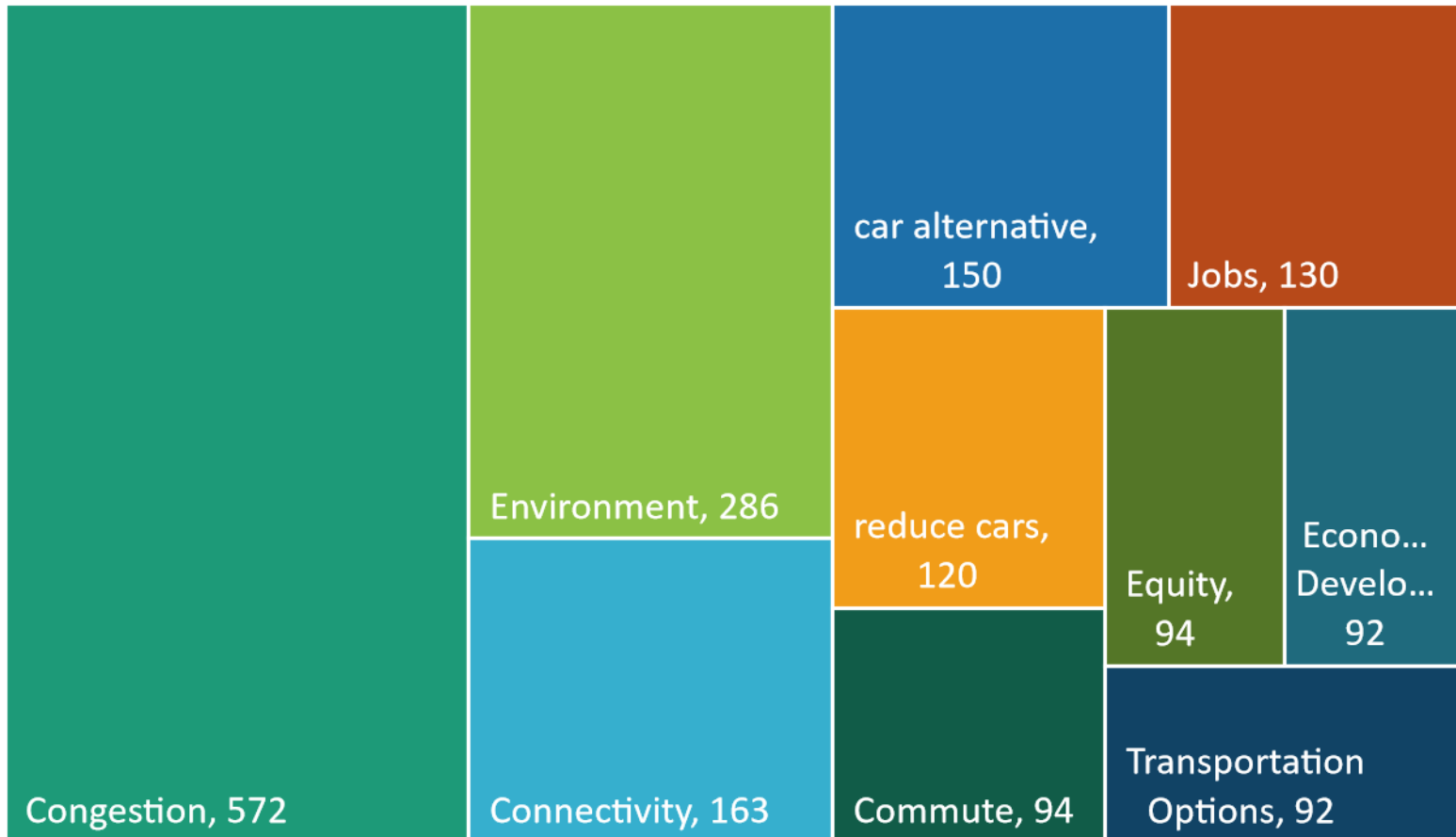
- Investigate themes raised with survey respondents
- Reduce demographic gaps
  - Understanding of the project
  - Costs and Affordability
  - Connecting to the train/last mile connections
  - Service needs
- Ongoing education and awareness
- Additional public comment periods

# 1. What would you like in a commuter rail train that connects Durham and Wake counties?



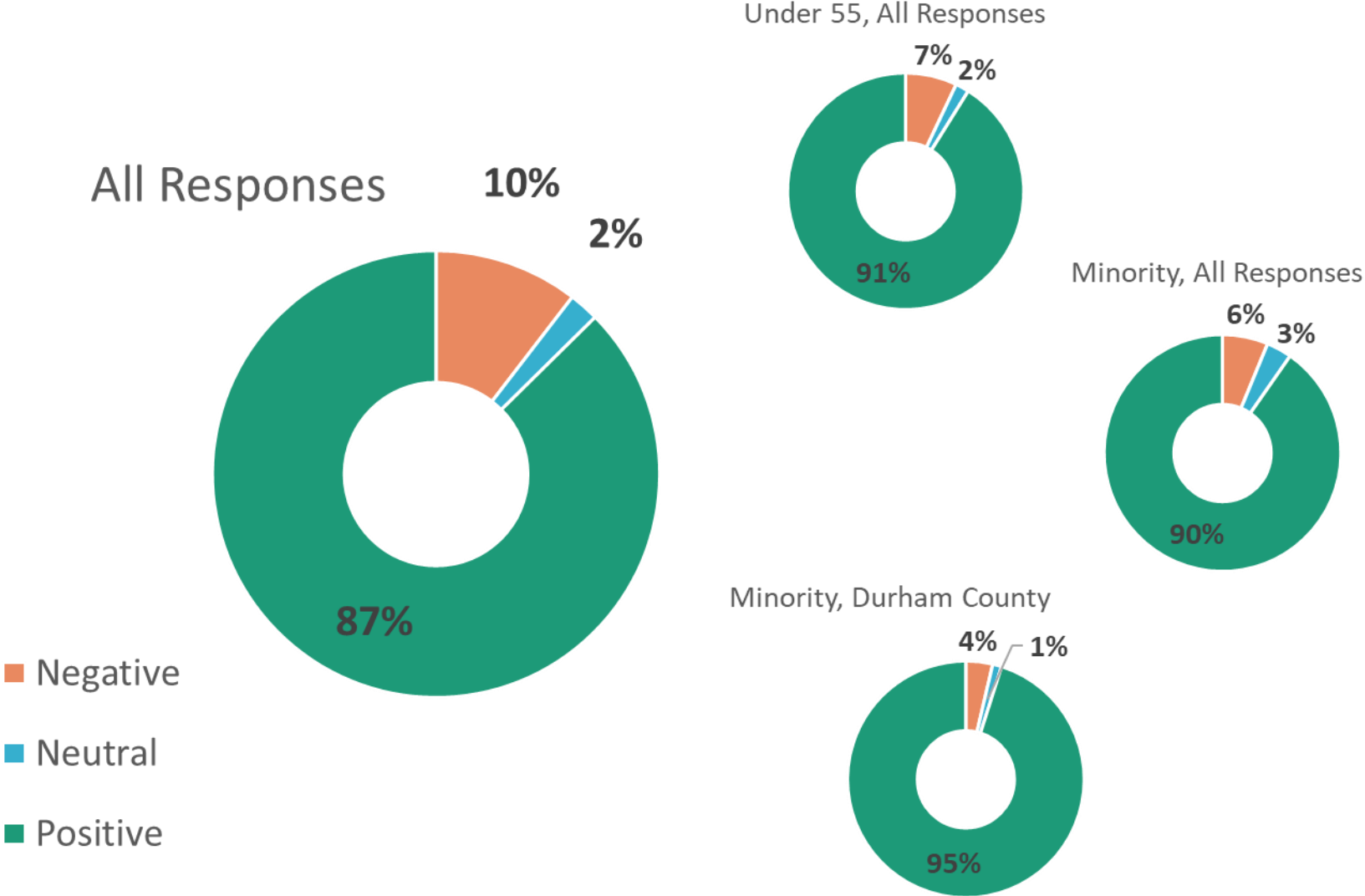
*“Frequency, reliability, accessibility, and affordability”*

## 2. What do you see the commuter rail train doing for your community?



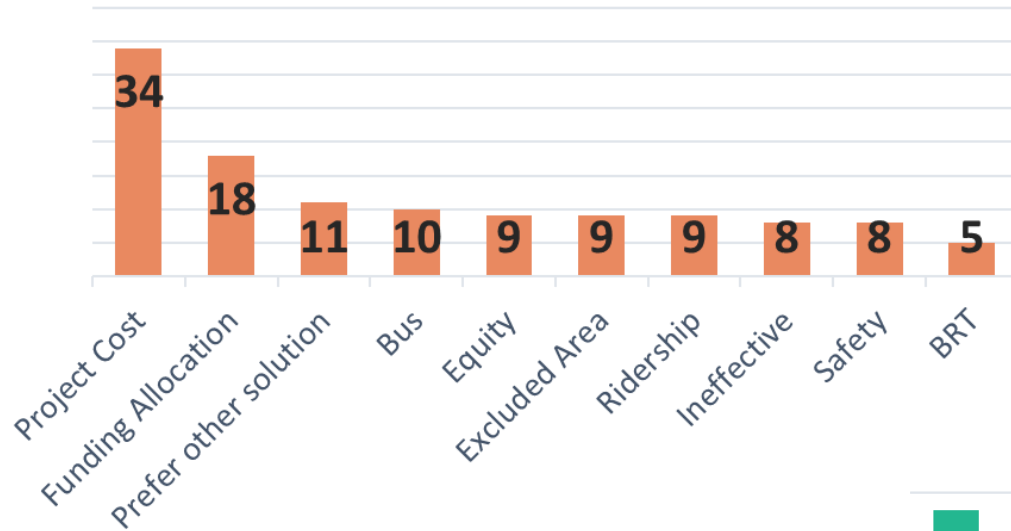
*“Easing congestion and pollution. Providing opportunities for all people to travel without a car. Be able to go to downtown Raleigh without dealing with parking.”*

# 2. What do you see the commuter rail train doing for your community? : Comment Sentiment



# What do you see the commuter rail train doing for your community? : Top Tags by Comment Sentiment

## Negative Comments

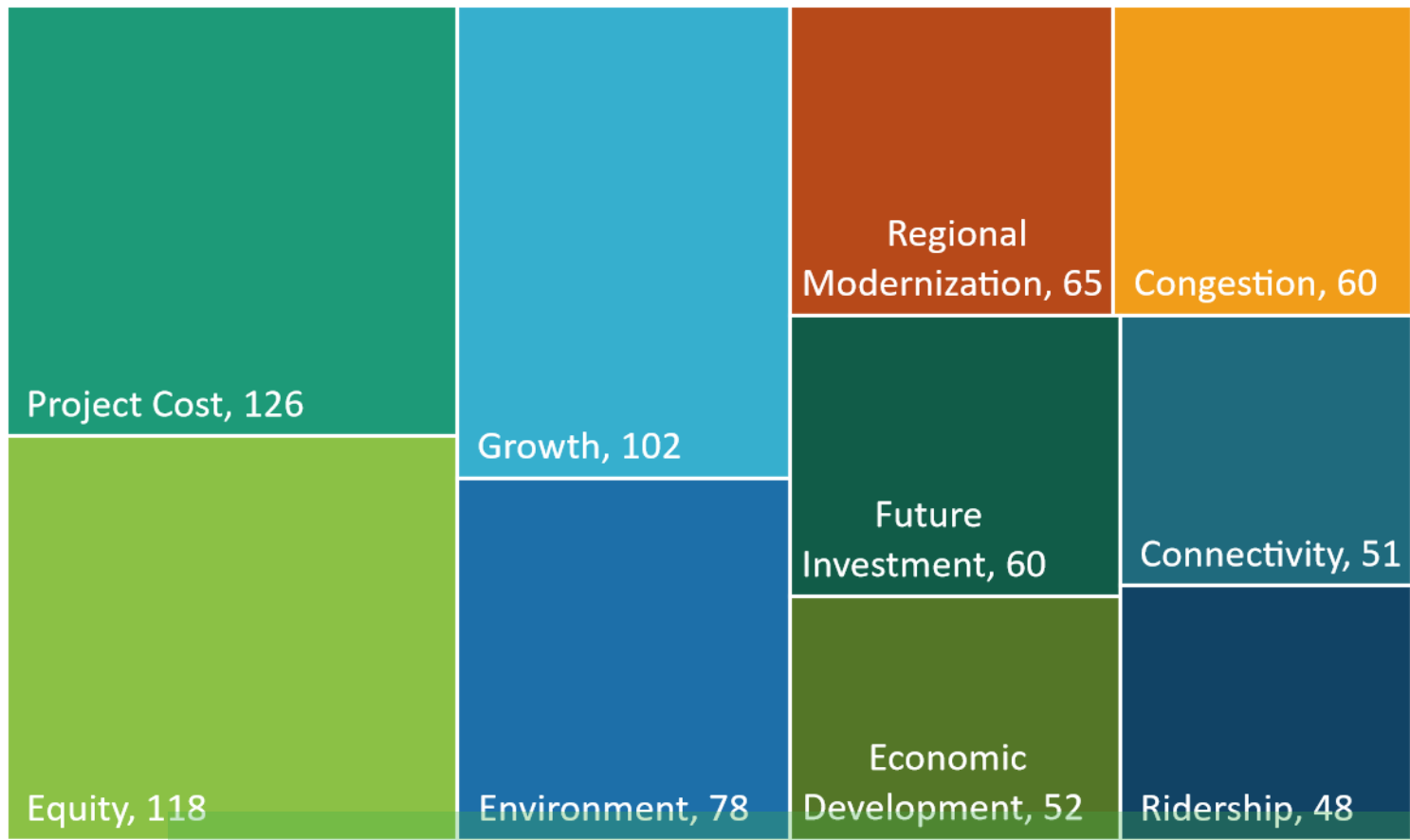


## Positive Comments





### 3. At the end of this study, local leaders will decide whether to move forward with the proposed commuter rail train. What else should they be considering to make that decision?



*“We need to catch up with other regional metropolitan areas like Charlotte and Atlanta to stay relevant for industries and businesses considering relocating to the Mid-Atlantic or Southeast US. Mass transit will be the way of the future and if not now then when? ....”*