

Annual Report 2025



TRIANGLE WEST
Transportation Planning Organization

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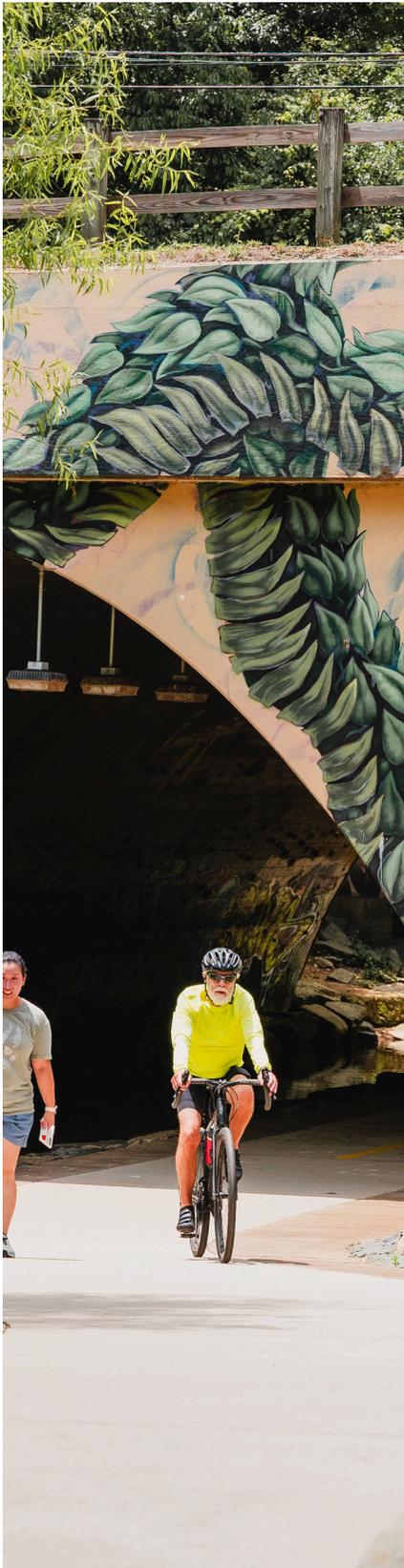
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Message from Executive Director



The fiscal year between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, continued Triangle West's intentional reinvention as a resilient and innovative regional transportation planning organization. 2025 also introduced dynamic federal transportation policy at a rate never anticipated; directions changed weekly. Triangle West practiced measured responses instead of jumping to reactions. Our cool and collected approach should reassure partners that we will confidently uphold our mutual values with candor, stability, and strategy.

Our team is especially proud to mention our accomplishments within the following work tasks, such as; Improving the Intensive Triangle Regional Model by including a script design that summarizes performance measurements directed by the Triangle West Board paired with the Civil Rights Act Title VI data analysis that compliments past practices with updated direction from the Federal Highway Administration. The team strengthened the Durham Roxboro Rail Trail feasibility study in advance of potential NCDOT corridor acquisition. The study featured extensive public outreach and technical analysis.

In addition, staff strengthened the agency's technical capacity by developing advanced applications and tool utilities, including expanded use of ArcGIS and improved documentation integrity for Triangle West's published online datasets. Safety planning capacity also continued to grow, with enhanced project development support and the elevation of the annual Regional Safety Summit into Triangle West's first regional signature event. The summit brought together allied professionals and members of the public to address rising traffic violence and advance shared safety goals.

Beyond these efforts, the team compiled a comprehensive sustainable transportation planning process for a deferred grant program and committed to advancing the work regardless of funding outcomes in support of long-term transportation resiliency. An updated Public Participation Plan was adopted in April 2025, reinforcing Title VI requirements while improving access and engagement opportunities for the region's most vulnerable communities. Triangle West also participated in regional public transportation planning initiatives, including high-capacity network visioning for Chapel Hill Transit and the Durham County Transit Tax Plan, while continuing to support Chapel Hill Transit's North-South bus rapid transit project development and GoDurham's Central bus rapid transit study initiation.

Building an ecosystem of trusted and strong working relationships exemplifies Triangle West's organizational values and is my proudest 2025 accomplishment. Please join us in comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation system planning in 2026 and beyond.

Sincerely Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Plachcinski". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Doug Plachcinski, CFM
Executive Director

Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization

Triangle West TPO's organizational structure supports collaborative, cross-disciplinary planning across the region. Led by the Executive Director, the agency includes three core units: Planning, Business Systems, and Modeling. Each unit contributes expertise to deliver multimodal planning, public engagement, data analysis, and financial administration.

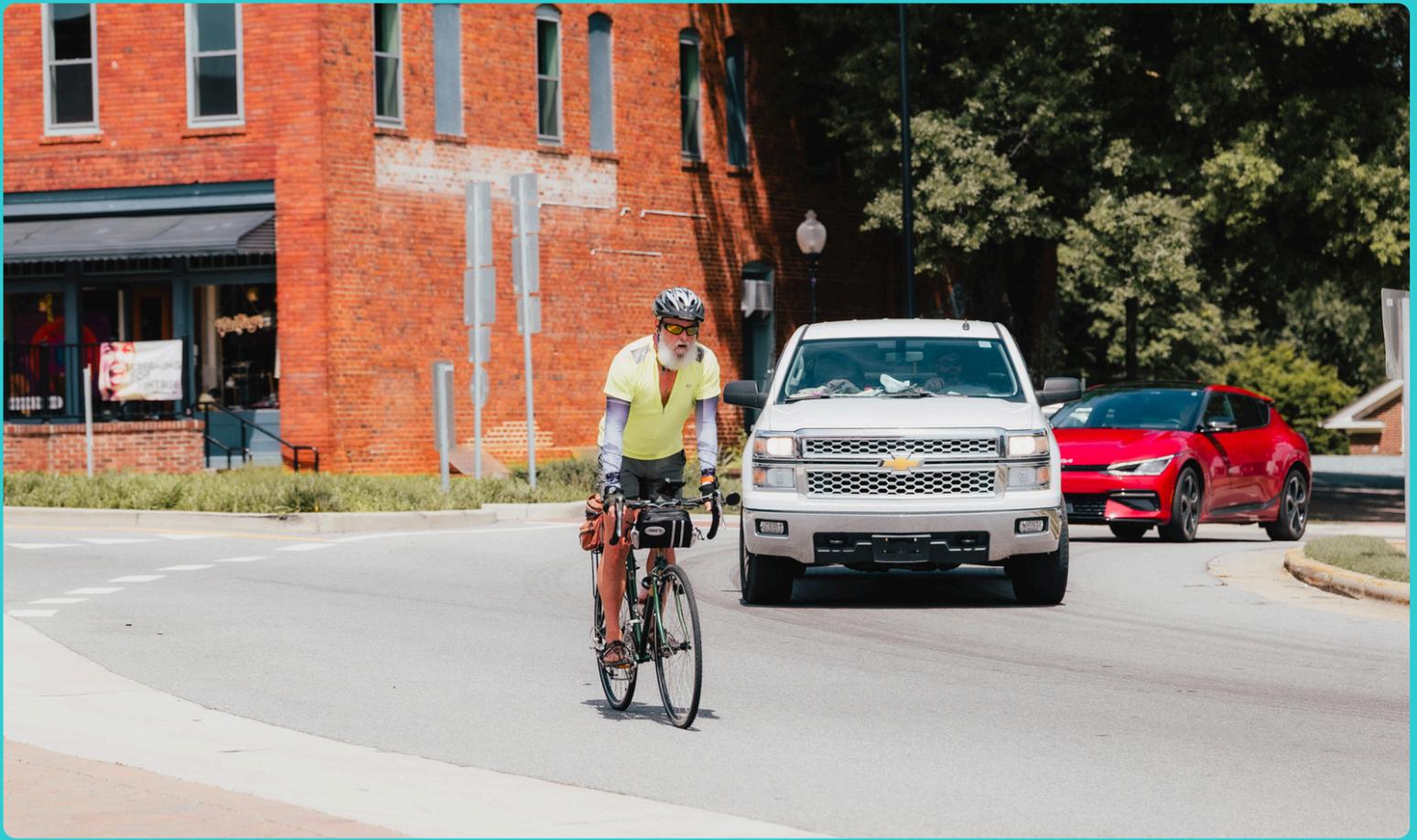


Year in Review - Highlights

Introducing Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization:

In January 2025, the MPO adopted a new name and look, transforming the organization from the Durham-Chapel Hill- Carrboro-Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) to Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization (Triangle West or Triangle West TPO). The Triangle West name and brand were selected after consulting with Carrboro Creative. Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization is a true representation of the region we serve, western portion of the Research Triangle, and the work we do, transportation planning. This rebranding effort included the adoption of brand guidelines featuring a brand strategy, new logo, and organizational colors.





Public Participation Plan

Triangle West TPO updated our [Public Participation Plan](#) as a commitment to continuously engaging the public using inclusive and accessible methods such as using Plain Language, increased digital accessibility, and data visualizations. The Public Participation Plan – an update to the previously adopted Public Input Plan – outlines strategies and methods for meaningful engagement. Meaningful engagement methods focus on building rapport with community members and including the public in transportation planning processes via public meetings, surveys, interactive mapping tools, and community events. Additionally, Triangle West successfully procured Public Input to expand our reach.

Vision Zero Safety Action Plan

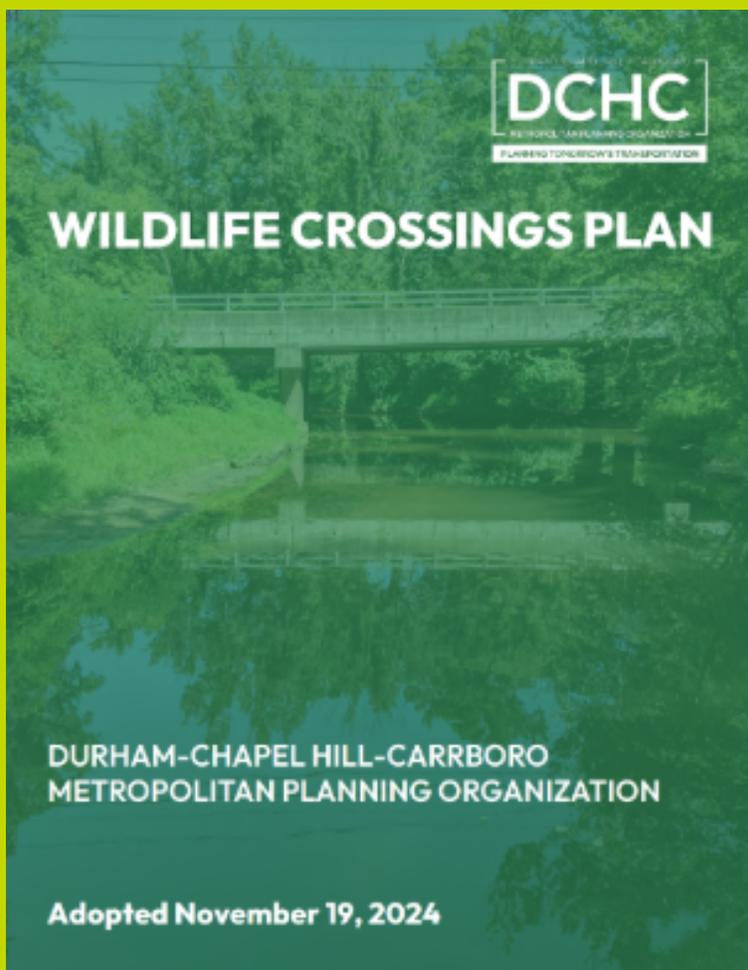
The TPO adopted our [Vision Zero Safety Action Plan](#) to advance the goal of eliminating traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. The plan provides a framework for data-driven safety strategies, prioritizes equity, and supports coordinated action among local governments, agencies, and community partners.

Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan

The Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan – or [ADA Transition Plan](#) – was updated to ensure that transportation facilities, programs, and communications are fully accessible to people with disabilities. The updated plan:

- provides guidance for member jurisdictions,
- highlights opportunities for improving pedestrian access, paratransit service, and transit-related amenities; and incorporates community feedback to strengthen accessibility across the region.

Key recommendations include expanding paratransit service hours, improving bus stop accessibility, installing audible pedestrian signals, enhancing sidewalk and curb ramp conditions, and integrating local ADA infrastructure inventories. The plan also outlines next steps such as hosting an annual ADA Summit, investigating regional single-seat paratransit, and supporting more coordinated ADA compliance efforts across planning teams and local partners.

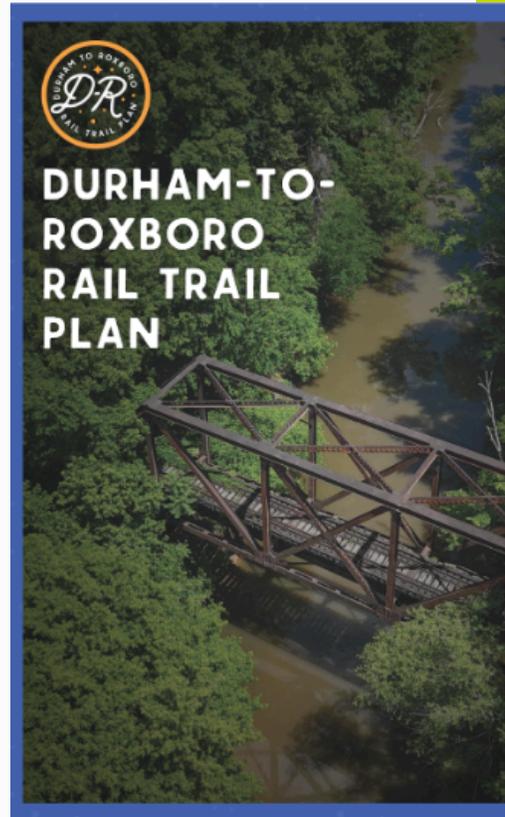


Wildlife Crossings Plan

One of the first in the state of North Carolina, our [Wildlife Crossings Plan](#) was adopted in November of 2024. The Wildlife Crossings Plan identified strategies to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and enhance habitat connectivity across the region. The study supports roadway safety, environmental stewardship, and multimodal planning goals. In 2025, Triangle West continued to partner with NCDOT and other stakeholders to implement the Wildlife Crossings Plan into bridge crossings across the region including Halls Mill Road over the Eno River Bridge.

Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail

The Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail Planning Study was completed on time and within budget, advancing a long-term vision to transform an approximately 18-mile inactive rail corridor from downtown Durham north through Bahama and Rougemont toward Roxboro into a regional multi-use trail. In addition to confirming the feasibility of a continuous trail along the former rail corridor, the project produced detailed conceptual designs, alignment alternatives, design standards, and a phased implementation strategy with planning-level cost estimates. Public engagement generated thousands of survey responses and shaped priorities for amenities, access points, and neighborhood connections, while the study also identified opportunities to integrate the corridor with broader regional trail networks and strengthen future funding and corridor acquisition efforts.

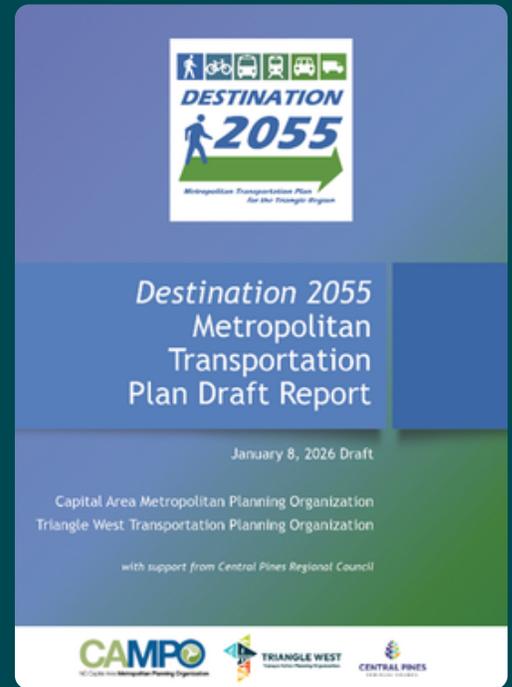


Language Access Plan

Updated in 2025, the Language Access Plan provides strategies to ensure that individuals with limited English proficiency can access information, participate in planning processes, and engage with TPO programs. The Language Access Plan identifies the most common spoken languages within our region (Spanish and Mandarin), guides multilingual communication, and training for staff.

Destination 2055

In 2025, Triangle West TPO, in partnership with the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and Central Pines Regional Council (CPRC), continued to develop Destination 2055, a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The development of Destination 2055 included the analysis of potential alternatives of the region's transportation system and the selection of key transportation projects to improve the region's connectivity and accessibility via all modes of transportation. Throughout the 2025-year, Triangle West TPO engaged the public via open houses, surveys, social media and attend community events to solicit input and provide educational materials.



Annual Safety Summit

In November of 2025, Triangle West TPO hosted the second annual Regional Safety Summit at the Chapel Hill Public Library. The annual Summit serves as a regional convening for planners, engineers, public health leaders, and community members to advance roadway safety. The event featured an inspiring keynote from **Veronica O. Davis, P.E.**, author of the book **Inclusive Transportation**. Following the keynote address, attendees participated in breakout sessions facilitated by Triangle West and UNC's Highway Safety Research Center and Injury Prevention Research Center. The Summit strengthened collaboration across the region and reaffirmed the TPO's commitment to creating a safer, more equitable transportation system.



Strategic Goals & Progress

In 2025, Triangle West TPO advanced its strategic goals by strengthening alignment between local transportation plans and long-range regional planning, supporting more coordinated decision making across the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Plan processes. Internal operations improved through clearer roles, stronger teamwork, and more efficient cross-department workflows, while the planning team increased capacity by becoming fully staffed and successfully delivering major regional events and studies. Organizational collaboration continued to grow as staff worked across planning, engagement, transit, and operations to leverage expertise, support shared goals, and respond effectively to evolving regional priorities.



Program & Service Updates

Throughout the 2025 year, Triangle West TPO:

- Migrated the organization’s website to a new platform, ensuring a seamless transition with updated content and improved accessibility.
- Created multimodal project lists, cost estimates, and funding strategies for the 2055 MTP, improving the region’s transit and roadway investment framework.
- Updated key equity and accessibility documents, including the ADA Transition Plan, Language Access Plan, Title VI and Environmental Justice updates.
- Continued supporting communities on major planning efforts such as the Durham Bike Walk Plan, Durham–Roxboro Rail Trail, Chapel Hill Transit High–Capacity Corridor Study, US 70 Phase II Study, Orange County Bike–Ped Plan, and Strategic Rail Study.

UPWP FY27

As a financial commitment, Triangle West adopted the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Fiscal Year 2027. The UPWP is a financial commitment that serves as the official budget document for Triangle West. As reflected in the document, Triangle West is committed to continuing transportation planning efforts that support the goals of building a reliable and safe transportation system for dynamic and growing community.

UPWP FY27 SPECIAL STUDIES & ALLOCATIONS

| SPECIAL STUDY | FEDERAL (80%) | LOCAL (20%) | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| NC 54 Study | \$120,000 | \$30,000 | \$150,000 |
| US 70 East Corridor – Phase II | \$64,000 | \$16,000 | \$80,000 |
| UNC Co-Gen Rail Corridor Study | \$400,000 | \$100,000 | \$500,000 |
| US 15-501 Corridor Study | \$400,000 | \$100,000 | \$500,000 |
| RTP Rail Platform Feasibility Study | \$160,000 | \$40,000 | \$200,000 |
| TOTAL | \$1,024,000 | \$256,000 | \$1,280,000 |

Acknowledgements & Partnerships

Partnerships and community engagement remained a central priority for Triangle West TPO in 2025, guiding planning efforts that reflect the needs, experiences, and priorities of residents across the region. Through expanded outreach tools, strengthened partnerships, and inclusive engagement strategies, the TPO worked to ensure that transportation planning was transparent, accessible, and responsive to the communities it serves.

In 2025, the TPO increased its engagement capacity through expanded use of the Public Input platform and by strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations across the region. The Public Input platform supports broader participation by enabling residents to engage with planning initiatives online, share location-specific feedback, and participate in surveys across multiple projects. This approach improved the TPO's ability to gather meaningful community input and incorporate it into safety planning, active transportation studies, and long-range planning efforts.

Community partners included:

- **Merrick-Moore Community Development Corporation**
- **Braggtown Community Association**
- **Bahama Ruritan Club**
- **UCAN**
- **Bike Durham**
- **SHIFT**
- **Triangle Disability Awareness Council**

These partnerships helped the TPO reach residents who are often underrepresented in traditional planning processes and supported more equitable and accessible engagement across multiple planning initiatives.

In 2025, Triangle West TPO advanced its outreach and engagement efforts by broadening its presence at community events and expanding opportunities for public participation. Staff engage residents through pop-up stations, neighborhood meetings, local festivals, and virtual platforms, providing updates on ongoing planning initiatives and gathering feedback to inform project development. The TPO also strengthened communication channels by coordinating with local governments and community organizations to increase awareness of regional planning activities and ensure that engagement opportunities were accessible to a wide range of residents. These efforts deepened relationships across the region, elevated perspectives from historically underrepresented communities, and reinforced the TPO's commitment to transparent, inclusive, and responsive planning.

Looking Ahead

Building on progress made in fiscal years 2025 and 2026, Triangle West TPO's strategic focus for fiscal year 2027 (starting in July 2026) centers on advancing major planning initiatives while strengthening long-term organizational sustainability. A key priority for FY2027 is the establishment of a formal fund balance. Creating financial reserves will enhance the TPO's fiscal stability, improve cash flow management, and protect service levels during periods of uncertainty. A fund balance will also position Triangle West to respond effectively to emergencies, support intergenerational equity by planning for future liabilities, and strengthen the organization's financial profile should borrowing tools be needed in the future. These efforts reflect a proactive approach to long-range financial stewardship and operational resilience.

In tandem with this effort, the TPO will update budget task codes within the Unified Planning Work Program to better reflect the full scope and complexity of Triangle West's work. Updated task codes will improve transparency, align budgeting with actual staff activities, and support clearer financial tracking across planning, modeling, engagement, and administrative functions.



Several major projects will move forward starting in 2026. The Mobility Forward (Project Prioritization Pilot Program Grant funded project), as well as the 15/501 Corridor Study and a joint Transportation Demand Management Plan update with CAMPO, NCDOT and CPRC are all scheduled to kick off in the coming year. The NC 54 Corridor Study in Research Triangle Park will advance a long-range, multimodal vision for a key regional corridor serving Research Triangle High School, Park Offices Drive, and future mobility investments. The study will include a safety and multimodal analysis and integrate future plans for the RTP mobility hub and planned bus rapid transit corridors.



Strategic planning efforts are also supported by anticipated staffing growth. Additionally, the organization anticipates hiring a Transportation Modeler in late FY2026. Triangle West TPO plans to add three new positions in FY2027: a Principal Planner with public information responsibilities, a Transportation Planner, and an administrative position. These staffing investments will strengthen capacity in strategic planning, public engagement, modeling, and internal operations, ensuring the TPO is well-positioned to manage increasingly complex regional planning efforts and deliver high-quality outcomes. Together, these FY2027 priorities reflect Triangle West TPO's continued commitment to strategic planning, financial sustainability, and organizational growth while advancing safe, equitable, and forward-looking transportation solutions for the region.

Governance & Leadership

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Governance & Leadership

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