

SANFORD MOBILITY HUB

PUBLIC INPUT

SUMMARY



**DECEMBER
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Prepared by
**BRICK & STORY
STANTEC**

Prepared for
NCDOT





ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

In 2024, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) studied options for mobility hubs in several communities as part of the S-Line Project, including the City of Sanford. The goal of the study was to identify potential locations for a mobility hub in Sanford, and to understand the types of mobility hub services and amenities that would best serve the community.

In the summer and fall of 2024, a project team, led by NCDOT and Stantec, conducted public engagement for the S-Line Mobility Hub Study in Sanford, North Carolina. This engagement effort aimed to collect information about stakeholders'

- Experiences getting to and around Sanford,
- Preferences for amenities and transportation services at a future mobility hub,
- Concerns and questions about the project, and
- Thoughts on design ideas for the hub itself.

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

* ONLINE SURVEY

An 11-question online survey was designed to solicit feedback on stakeholders' experience of different modes of transportation, desired transit services and amenities at the Mobility Hub, facility design, and community needs. The questionnaire was made available online through the City of Sanford's CivilSpace page and hosted by Stantec. **210 stakeholders took the survey.**

* OPEN HOUSE

June's open house **engaged an audience of 28 regional leaders and decision-makers and was open to the public.** This 3-hour open house educated the public about mobility hubs and engaged participants in discussions of what services and design elements are important for the Mobility Hub, as well as associated economic development.

* POP-UP EVENTS

In later summer and early fall, the team traveled around Sanford **sharing information about the project and collecting feedback from a total of 207 people.** They visited Temple Park, the Farmers Market, Trinity UMC Fall Fest and an ESL Class at the Central Carolina Community College (CCCC).



535

People engaged



13

Outreach events

* STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In partnership with NCDOT and the City of Sanford, the Stantec team **interviewed 25 local stakeholders** in a series of seven small group conversations. Interviewees included key staff members, elected officials, and interest group members such as local business owners, sponsoring agencies, transportation providers, emergency response teams, and economic development organizations.

* DESIGN WORKSHOP

In November, the Stantec design team hosted a 3-day design workshop during which designers drafted 30% designs for the rail station and mobility hub. **65 people participated in the workshop**, either by visiting open design sessions, participating in a focus group, or attending nightly pin-up sessions.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

Open House

28+ Attendees

On June 28, 2024, the project team hosted an open house for the City of Sanford Mobility Hub Feasibility Study.

Based on feedback documented through the map annotation stations, a visual preference survey, a build-a-mobility hub activity, and exit surveys, **key themes emerged:**

- The strong desire for **paratransit services**
- General **concerns about connectivity to downtown amenities and first/last mile connections**
- The desire for safe, convenient **parking** in downtown Sanford
- The importance of **connections to lodging** (hotels) from the mobility hub/downtown
- **Favorability of transportation options such as microtransit/transit shuttle**, electric bike rentals, and ridehailing services



Mobility hub site discussion at the June 28 Open House

Top 5 Amenity/Facility Preferences Open House vs. Pop-up Events

| Open House | Pop-ups |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Microtransit/Transit Shuttle | Microtransit/Transit Shuttle |
| Outdoor Dining/Restaurants | Outdoor Dining/Restaurants |
| Seating Areas | Retail Shopping |
| Ridehailing Services | Wide Sidewalks |
| Street Furniture | Seating Areas |

Pop-up Events

207+ People Engaged



Temple Park
July 18



Sanford Farmers Market
July 19



ESL Class at CCCC
August 19



Trinity UMC Fall Fest
November 2

SURVEY & INTERVIEW RESULTS

Online Survey

The project team developed an 11-question survey to solicit feedback from the Sanford community about mobility challenges, desired amenities, facilities and transportation services at the mobility hub, design preferences, and concerns.

Mobility Challenges



Lack of Choices



Connectivity in Sanford



Lack of Bike/Ped Infrastructure

Combining Transportation Modes

84% Expressed interested in new modes of transportation

78% Agree that we should try to make fewer trips in cars

Top 3 Concerns



Safety & Security



Awareness of the Hub



First/Last Mile Issues

Top 3 Transportation Services Requested

- On-Demand Shuttle Services
- Rideshare (Uber, Lyft, Taxi)
- E-Scooters/Bikes

Top 3 Amenities Requested



Streets designed for people who walk



Transit service/stops



Real-time travel & trip-planning information

Stakeholder Interviews

The project team interviewed **25 local stakeholders** between May and August, 2024.

All stakeholders interviewed felt favorably about the project, with several stakeholders noting that they've "waited years for this project to get off the ground."

Mobility Challenges



First/Last Mile Options



Lack of Public Transportation



Walkability of Downtown

Interests Represented

- Lee County
- COLTS
- Central Carolina Hospital
- Central Carolina Community College
- Transportation
- Public Safety
- Elected Officials
- Town Administration
- Economic Development
- Local Businesses

Top 3 Amenities Requested



Food service/restaurants



Shaded seating areas



Multipurpose community space

DESIGN WORKSHOP

65+ Attendees

The project team hosted a three-day design workshop in Sanford on November 18-20, 2024 at the Sanford Buggy Building in which designers drafted 30% designs for the rail station and mobility hub.

Attendees were asked to **vote on precedent images** for the building facade, landscape architecture, and building interior. A few key trends emerged:



Building Facade:

- Attendees liked precedents that blended traditional and modern elements.
- The top precedent images featured heavy brick detailing and arched windows.



Landscape Architecture:

- Stakeholders chose precedent images that featured outdoor dining and recreation areas.
- They disliked images that featured amphitheaters and other passive outdoor elements.
- Residents reported the City's existing passive elements are not well programmed/utilized.



Building Interior:

- Attendees preferred precedent images that included cafe/lounge space. Residents wanted a station/mobility hub that served residents not taking the train - a third space for gathering with friends and family.
- A few stakeholders specifically asked that the building incorporate multipurpose space for events/meetings.

WHAT'S NEXT

CONCLUSION

Stakeholders are largely invested in this project, and excited to see it come to fruition. Feedback suggests that residents are most enthusiastic about the prospect of rail returning to Sanford, followed closely by the possibility of fixed route bus service. Currently, there are few ways to get around Sanford.

As part of the Mobility Hub, stakeholders are interested in facilities that could serve as a community gathering space, and provide wayfinding information for visitors. Residents are most wary of e-bikes and e-scooters.

There is a good momentum behind this project. The Mobility Hub represents, for many, a long-ago promise to reconnect Sanford to the greater North Carolina community. As one stakeholder said, "I've been waiting for this project for years."

NEXT STEPS

Currently, this project is funded through 30% design for the station and mobility hub. In the winter of 2024 (and early 2025), the project team will fine tune the designs produced during the 3-day design workshop before asking for feedback on the vertical design and infrastructure of the proposed Mobility Hub at a second design workshop to be scheduled in the spring of 2025.



STAY ENGAGED

Learn More

To learn more about the project and ways to stay engaged, visit the City of Sanford's project website:

www.sanfordnc.net/mobilityhub