

PLANNING & INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT**Craig N. Benedict, AICP, Director**

Administration
(919) 245-2575
(919) 644-3002 (FAX)
www.orangecountync.gov



131 W. Margaret Lane
Suite 201
P. O. Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

MEMORANDUM

TO: Felix Nwoko, DCHC MPO Manager
FROM: Nishith Trivedi, Orange County Transportation Planner
CC: Craig Benedict, Orange County Planning Director
 Tom Altieri, Comprehensive Planning Supervisor
DATE: November 18, 2020
SUBJECT: US 70 West Multimodal Study
Attachment: US 70 West Multimodal Corridor Map

Orange County would like to request that the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization consider the US 70 West Multimodal Study as part of its FY 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program. This study would analyze the US 70 Corridor from NC-119 Bypass - Lake Latham Road intersection - in Mebane to the NC-751 intersection ([attachment 1](#)), evaluating for multi-modal accommodations, safety, access to and through the corridor, potential transit service and facilities, roadway connectivity and collector street plans, and planned and existing roads and interchanges in adopted plans.

The participants for this project would be the City of Mebane and Town of Hillsborough, Orange County, DCHC MPO and BG MPO, and NCDOT. Stakeholders include residents and businesses within the participating jurisdictions. This study can be done over the course of 18 months, which is comparable to the NC 98 Corridor Study timeline. If included in the FY 2022 UPWP, it is anticipated the study would begin early 2022 and end Summer 2023.

Currently, a portion of this corridor – from the I-40/I-85/US-70 Connector to Pleasant Green Road – is in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan with a recommendation for widening, and the study would determine other recommendations for the area between NC 119 Bypass - Lake Latham Road intersection - in the City of Mebane and the I-40/I-85/US-70 Connector. Connections for all modes of traffic across and along US 70 are not addressed in the current plans. Given the length and potential for development in the corridor, current recommendations may not provide adequate multimodal access to the area, resulting in high traffic volumes and auto-oriented roadway cross-sections throughout the corridor.

The future study would address wide variety of issues of equal importance among multiple jurisdictions such as but not limited to:

- Pedestrian safety at rail crossings, interchanges, and intersections
- Future conditions (e.g. growth, traffic patterns, economic development, etc.)
- Local priorities (e.g. climate change, utilities, land use, etc.)
- Multimodal recommendations (transit, freight, bike/ped, rail, and automobile)

- Multi-jurisdiction/Agency (Mebane, Hillsborough, Orange County, OCPT, Go Triangle, DCHC MPO, BG MPO, Link, ACTA, PART, NCRR, etc.)

The planning work done for this corridor has also not addressed a definitive plan for how traffic from local neighborhoods may access the corridor and how potential improvements can provide access for residents and businesses currently on US 70. Additionally, while there is not currently an emphasis on transit service in this corridor, there are potential opportunities for transit improvements, along with connections to other regional transit service extending to Durham, RTP, RDU or Raleigh, as a supplement to transit work done on I-40 and I-85. The Orange County Transit Plan Update should be completed in the spring 2021, and recommendations included in it for transit improvements along the corridor can help inform the study.

Please consider this study as we hope to better inform the CTP and MTP in planning the future of this corridor. Orange County staff is offering to manage this project while DCHC MPO locally administers it; this will allow coordination in solving multi-jurisdictional problems and providing desired outcomes to all participants. We can set up an additional meeting with all stakeholders involved to coordinate their desire in participating in this study.

Thank you. Sincerely,

Nishith Trivedi, Orange County Transportation Planner

