

2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Preferred Option – *Compilation of Comments* (as of 11/30/21)

Background

This document is a compilation of the comments received by Email (electronic mail), environment and natural resource agencies, and various social media platforms, as of November 15th, in response to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Preferred Option. The Preferred Option was released October 27th and the DCHC MPO will receive comments through December 7th. The email, agency, and social media comments start on pages 1, 15 and 16, respectively.

Electronic Mail

09/19/21

Dear Mr. Henry

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2050 MTP.

As a Hillsborough resident I am concerned about the increase in daily congestion in our town, Orange County and the surrounding areas. With the pending increase in large employers in Orange/Durham/Wake (RTP) counties it is critical that these metropolitan areas work together to address transportation needs and demands. Regardless of the listed goals and measures, without a comprehensive approach to transportation planning, problems in any goal area will persist and possibly worsen if unilateral metro-area planning is the primary approach.

My household is supportive of any and all goals to increase non-car modes of transportation that allow for the greatest number of area residents to find at least one mode that best suits their needs, including accessibility and cost. My household makes use of daily express bus service from downtown Hillsborough to Chapel Hill. This option should be seen as a primary approach across all communities, given that rail service seems to be an unlikely option in the near or distant future. My last comment, where is the Hillsborough Amtrak train station in the plan? The 2045 plan presented the station as being completed in 2020!

Respectfully submitted,

Will Lang

10/28/21

I like that the preferred option de-emphasizes highway widening... we have enough concrete and asphalt!

The one glaring deficit is rail... whether it be light rail, trams/trolleys, existing rail, heavy rail, elevated/ and or monorail, double tracking the NCRR, re-opening abandoned rail corridors, ALL should be explored and exploited.

Tad DeBerry

10/29/21

Hi Andrew,

Thanks so much for your work on this. I read through the preferred option and I have just a few comments:

1. I am absolutely thrilled with the inclusion of certain items:

- The two-way conversion of the downtown loop
- The downtown stretch of 147 converted into a boulevard
- The inclusion of bike boulevards
- The focus on sidewalk additions/repairs

I want to reiterate my support for keeping those items in the final plan. They have the potential to fundamentally change Durham for the better from a prosperity lens, and equity lens, and a sense of place for all lens.

2. For the two-way conversion of the downtown loop and the 147 boulevard conversion, there is no mention that I see of a timetable for that. There is not even a priority ranking for those projects. I would want to see that in the final plan and I would advocate for those two being at the top of the list of the expensive projects. Please do not widen the southern portion of 147 or really any widening projects before those. Even other bike/ped projects should occur after those two because they will help create a great node for a bike/ped network to radiate out from!

3. On a smaller scale, I would really like to see Chapel Hill Rd in Durham on the list of projects in terms of "modernization". Streets have the ability to cultivate great places if pedestrians are given priority. The stretch of Chapel Hill Rd between West Lakewood and Bivins has the potential to be one of the best village centers in Durham outside of downtown, but before that can happen, that stretch needs "modernization", specifically:

- A road diet - lanes are too wide
- Conversion of gigantic shoulder areas to bike lanes, parklets, on-street parking, and bulb outs for pedestrians at intersections.
- Street trees to give the sense that this is a slower street for cars.
- Lower speed limits to reflect the design changes outlined above

Thank you for considering my input. On point number 3, I have started a walkability study of that corridor and would be happy to talk further about it.

Best,
Dave

10/31/21

Hello,

I am writing in to say I am in full support of the Preferred Option and interested in deemphasizing highway widenings and encourage more support for public transportation as well as bicycle and pedestrian accommodation. The commuter rail is my biggest priority and hope that it receives the funding and schedule for building in the very near future.

Thank you,
Natalie

11/4/21

Good evening Andrew,

Please consider including Morehead Ave --> Cranford Rd. as a key bike and pedestrian thoroughfare in the Preferred Option. It is a direct shot from downtown --> Morehead Hill --> Lakewood --> Al Buehler trail. Hundreds of pedestrians and cyclists use it on a daily basis. In the absence of sidewalks and any other significant traffic control measures on Cranford Rd, there is too high of a chance of a significant accident or injury. This is entirely avoidable.

Gratefully,

Ari Medoff

11/4/21

Mr. Henry

As a Durham county resident who is hyper local, I live much of my life (work and social) in Durham city limits. I think we should definitely focus on better public transportation and less highway widening. We need to get the energy back for a train/light rail system sooner rather than later.

Thanks
Matt Herman

11/5/21

Hi Andy,

I saw you are compiling responses to the 2050 MTP. My two cents:

I read through the MTP, and while I appreciate that the report suggests that bike and ped facilities get built, I would disagree with the underlying assumption (pg. 21):

However, the 2050 MTP financial plan assumes that the majority of the NC First Commission recommended income, which is \$1.1 billion in each of the two later decades, i.e., 2040 and 2050, will be available for bicycle and pedestrian projects

As far as I can tell, the NC First Commission is just that--a commission. It made non-binding suggestions about how to raise and distribute funds. Their suggestions for increasing NCDT revenue involves pulling funds for the NCDOT from the General Fund and raising the state sales taxes, both of which I imagine are going to be politically unachievable.

Therefore, I think a more honest version of this MTP statement (pg 21):

As a result, there will be \$2.332 billion available to fund the \$2.679 billion of projects in the local plans. That funding covers 87% of the projects in the local plans would be:

As a result of the lack of prioritization and restricted funding for bike and pedestrian projects at the state level, there will be \$132 million available to fund the \$2.679 billion of projects in the local plans. That funding covers 4% of the projects in the local plans, unless the state shifts course and adopts the suggestions of the NC First Commission to dramatically change how transportation is funded in the state. In the meantime, local governments must rely upon and find alternative sources of funding to cover these projects.

I don't think it benefits anyone to pretend that state funding will suddenly be available for bike and pedestrian projects.

Emily

11/5/21

Hello. There is a real need for public transportation in the southern part of Orange County. Smith level Road, the last bit of 15 501 in orange county and the side roads that feed into them as well as northern Chatham county - see Mann's chapel road - are public transport waste lands. We don't need buses ... we need circulating vans. See Mexico for excellent cheap public van transport.

Thanks, Nancy Park

11/5/21

I am providing my comments on the Draft 2050 MTP.

1. As you are seeking comments, you should not encourage comments only from people who agree with the premise of the proposal, but rather seek input from everyone. This is a biased and non-inclusive way to seek public input. The first sentence of the email states: "If you're interested in deemphasizing

highway widenings and more support for public transportation as well as bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, now is the time to give your input on our region's future transportation system."

2. I completely support more funding for public transportation, bicycles, and pedestrians. It should not be done at the expense of car commuters though. We should increase funding to support all of our transportation needs, which is one of the most fundamental infrastructures to support a vital economy. We have already raised taxes for a decade to support mass transit... AND we have absolutely NOTHING to show for it due to failed and incompetent leadership. You won't fix the problem by now defunding highways. You will only make things worse.

3. I also COMPLETELY support WIDENING of certain highways, including the Durham Freeway (147) to 4 lanes each way between the new East End Connector and I-40. That road was already congested before the new connector started construction and will only get worse as more traffic easily travels north of Durham into the heart of the triangle. Having one of these new lanes be a bus / rapid transit / HOV lane makes a lot of sense.

4. I ABSOLUTELY OPPOSE reducing the flow of traffic through the heart of Durham along 147 by converting it from a freeway to a boulevard. After the East End Connector opens, that artery through Durham will remain essential to traffic flow as people still need to get to Duke and to Downtown. Most of the traffic clogging 147 during rush hour is going between Duke or Downtown and I-40. The East End Connector will not reduce that congestion along 147. Also important is the ability for emergency vehicles to quickly traverse through the heart of downtown as they can today. This is even more vital given the easy access to Duke University Hospital and Emergency Room along that route. I can't believe people want to increase the time it takes to get to the hospital; hopefully, they just need to be made aware. We cannot reduce capacity by removing this important highway.

5. I FULLY SUPPORT the commuter rail between Durham and Raleigh, and points east and west. It SHOULD go to the airport as well, but government officials have ignored this public feedback for 25+ years of the rail project going through multiple design phases with again NOTHING to show for it. But we need the rail, so I have to continue supporting it.

In conclusion, IMAGINE a TRIANGLE AREA with no congestion, where we drive our electric cars, take commuter rail, and bus rapid transit, and ride our bikes and walk safely. We can have it all if we dream that vision. We don't have to pit electric cars against buses. We can have it all. And it can all be carbon neutral.

Thank you.

11/5/21

Just FYI – the links on the congestion maps do not match the map that comes up.

Also, we have been told for years that there is a traffic light planned for the intersection of Garrett and Swarthmore Rd to ease people turning left out of the neighborhoods off Garrett and Swarthmore. Is

this still in the planning or are there plans to actually widen Garrett Rd to ease the congestion on the road and the ingress and egress from the neighborhoods ?

Thank you,

Adrienne

11/5/21

We have suggested for years and highly endorse a crosswalk at the intersection of Union Street and Churton Street in Hillsborough. I understand there is an issue because of NCDOT regulations concerning curb and handicap access. At this intersection, there are no sidewalks on East Union Street. We walk on the street. There is no need for handicap access on the east. What we need is a crosswalk on Churton Street, so cars will stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk. One day before I get run over there trying to cross the road at this intersection, I would be happy to go down to Dual Supply and buy a can of paint and paint a crosswalk, at no charge.

Please note, I am not the sole pedestrian here. Many visitors to the Burwell School Historic Site park on East Union and cross to the site at this intersection. In addition, West Union Street leads to Hillsborough Elementary School and Central Elementary School, and school buses and parents take East Union Street as a connector to RiverPark Elementary School. West Union is a major route for parishioners attending Mt. Bright Baptist Church. This is a busy intersection for turning traffic, which further impedes pedestrians attempting safe crossing.

If NCDOT rules disallow a pedestrian crossing, it would be helpful to paint SLOW across the road here. It would help to install a bucket of flags to carry across for pedestrian visibility (the only time in the last 50 years that a car ever stopped for me to cross, I was carrying a giant bird puppet).

At this crosswalk, the speed of traffic is irregular. Coming from the signals two blocks north and two blocks south, traffic hits top speed at this intersection. There either will be a five minute wait for traffic to clear or a thirty second window to cross with no traffic. Another possible solution would be a speed camera, a lower speed limit, or flashing light if a pedestrian is crossing.

But the best option would be a crosswalk, because the driving law recognizes crosswalks mean stop for pedestrians.

Betty and Jerry Eidenier
Keep calm and wash your hands

11/5/21

You have received this feedback from Jack Meredith < meredijr@wfu.edu > for the following page:

https://www.dchcmpo.org/what-we-do/programs-plans/transportation-plans/2050-metropolitan-transportation-plan?fbclid=IwAR3XWjqFYx3HAeF54C4-Q1_Xx85oIGCqXUlvmpPhW5LCYkcJlVPxl9rbPss

My concern is old Hwy 86/Churton St. through Hillsborough. About 4 pm, especially on Fridays, the traffic backs up for blocks, and that's before Collin's Ridge, entrance across from Orange Grove Road, fills up with hundreds of more houses. We need a way for traffic from Hwy's I-40 and I-85 to get around the town without going through the the 20mph downtown.

11/6/21

It is the opinion of me and my husband that roads and streets not be widened but that we strengthen public transportation, bicycles and sidewalks.

Thank you,
Marywinne Sherwood

11/8/21

Dear Committee,

Just one suggestion. Please be sure there is a good connection between the ground transportation hub and RDU airport. Having traveled in numerous countries, I can assure you that the cities that did not do this all regret it later.

Thanks,
Munsie Davis

11/8/21

Hello Andy,

I got the notice that DCHC MPO is seeking public input on the 2050 MTP Preferred Option. I'm planning to listen in on the virtual public hearing on Wed Nov 10 @ 9am. I think the Preferred Option is great, especially the parts pertaining to converting Hwy 147 into a boulevard. You and I corresponded about this in Sept 2020 and myself and a number of the Morehead Hill neighbors have been hoping that the Preferred Option would include a plan to repurpose the central Durham portion of Hwy 147 in a way that's equitable, inclusive, attempts to address past injustices and is sustainable for the long term. I read through the 2050 MTP Preferred Option and it looks like multiple projects are pointing us in this direction. Thanks for your leadership and ingenuity on this front. I have a few questions specifically about the Hwy 147 boulevard conversion, I'll list them here. I also see that the public can sign up to address the board during the virtual public hearing. I'm happy to follow up these questions via email, or If you'd like me to ask 1 or more of these questions during the hearing, I'm happy to request a speaking slot and do that as well.

- Is there a target date for having the Hwy 147 boulevard conversion work complete?

- Will conversion to a boulevard entail excavation and fill to return the Hwy 147 alignment to pre-1960 grade?
- More specifically, will the roadways that are currently traversed by Hwy 147 via overpasses and underpasses be reconnected to the new boulevard at their existing elevation?
- As part of the conversion to a boulevard, will parcels of land be made available for purchase and development
- There seems to be significant community support for this boulevard conversion idea, do you expect that this idea might meet with resistance and if so from where might that come?
- Myself and neighbors / residents that I've spoken with really want to see this project feature a strong equity component and I'm delighted to see this mentioned several times in the 2050 MTP Preferred Option. As I've discussed with neighbors, we think the approach should not just be to have black and brown voices present during the planning phases, but to actively seek out expertise and leadership from members of this community and demographic. We think that accomplishing this aspect is as important as actually getting the boulevard in place and operational. So is there a plan for making sure that the planning and oversight of this project is led and staffed by this demographic?
- For the broader 2050 MTP Preferred Option plan, do the population growth projections consider that DCHC will likely receive a large influx of climate refugees? Thanks also for ensuring that carbon reduction and sustainability feature prominently in this plan.

I'm sure I'll have additional questions, but that's good for now.

Thanks for thinking and planning as far into the future as you are. It's nice to know that someone is considering a longer time horizon and I hope these exciting long range plans give Durham's residents and leaders a clear objective to work toward!

Thanks for you time and have a great week,

- Ryan Moody, P.E.

11/9/21

Dear Sir,

We do not support the proposed 2050 MTP plan that goes before the Board tomorrow that does not include improvements to reduce congestions on our road, reduce delays, improve safety, and provide a better travel time/experience. We need the improvements or expansion that serve the area growing developments that they continue to approve.

We live and own land on Sherron Rd. Durham, NC. The traffic is so congested it is near impossible to get out of our driveway.

We all know US 70, I-40, I-85, NC 54, etc are already over capacity or congested. We need improvements for car travel.

Please do not support this 2050 MTP plan.

Michael and Debra Young

11/9/21

Good Morning, All,

I wanted you to know that me and my household of 3, do not support the proposed 2050 MTP plan that goes before the Board tomorrow that does not include improvements to reduce congestions on our road, reduce delays, improve safety, and provide a better travel time/experience. We need the improvements or expansion that serve the area growing developments that they continue to approve.

Hwy 70 is already so congested that it takes forever to get down 70 from Leesville to Cheek Rd where a member of our household works.

My sister lives on Sherron Rd. and traffic is backed up all the way to Holder Rd some mornings to go through the intersection at 70. I lived with her recently and could not believe what I saw.

Also, cars from 70 who don't want to wait at the 70 light going into Durham now come up Leesville Rd and go down Doc Nichols Rd to Olive Branch to avoid that intersection. And there is already congestion on Doc Nichols Rd due to new subdivisions. I live near the intersection on Leesville and Doc Nichols and watch about 3 to 5 cars turn from 70 to Leesville to Doc Nichols every 5 to 8 minutes and they are not locals.

We need large capacity roads.

Beverly Mills

11/9/21

Hello,

I would like to weigh in on the transportation future. I usually commute into Chapel Hill for work so I don't know if that makes me eligible or not but as someone who commutes- I will say Chapel Hill is better than most but that it would be so much nicer if the options available were quicker- often times the buses are overcrowded and in order to take one you have to wait for several and being they get stuck in traffic or broken down. Personally I think a train would make sense and be more direct and remove a lot of travelers from the roads which would help the buses. Obviously a subway seems like the best idea but I don't know if that is even possible with the current infrastructure in place and I didn't see it listed on the DCHC MPO website. Also walkways above roads where people can cross safely and not impact traffic flows as much are also better. Bus lines that have their own stops spots off the main road and buses that have their own designated roads work better.

When I drive my car it takes 25 minutes but when I have to factor in public transport it takes an hour or more and this is one way- so when I take public transport it steals more than an hour from my home life daily. That affects how I am able to interact with my kids and how I am able support my family's needs. I know this area is growing fast and I've lived in Charlotte where the roads are horrid and the traffic is a nightmare and buses are barely used so I know what this can turn into and I am hoping that you all will keep that from happening.

Best,

Billie Simonson

11/9/21

Hi Aaron/Andrew,

My concern with the change of Rt 70 sections from Lynn Rd to Miami Blvd and Miami Blvd to the Wake County is concerning for traffic flow from Durham into Raleigh and, significantly to RDU Airport. RDU is significantly dependent upon the road infrastructure surrounding the airport and the ability to access is key to the vitality of the airport.

While reducing the proposed lanes from 6 to 4 and to change the status to a more modernized street layout could be desirable, the change of the 2050 plan would reduce transportation funding approximately 85 million to Durham City and County in which road infrastructure is sorely needed.

My suggestion is to not reduce the funding for these projects in the 2050 plan until a more defined plan for the actual "modernization" be better defined.

Another concern is the that the City of Durham has approved a significant number of housing developments in SE Durham which will increase the traffic flow in this area. Thus, Rt 70 throughput is key as well as the extension of Aviation Parkway to Rt.70 and the improvements scheduled in Wake County need to sync up with the original Durham freeway plan.

Please hold off on releasing the funding and provide more opportunity for study and input from the community as well as NCDOT.

I will be in attendance tomorrow for the meeting and can speak, but I need more information and direction.

Thanks,
David Morgan
Raleigh / Durham Airport Authority Board Member

11/9/21

My husband and I do not support the proposed 2050 MTP plan that goes before the Board tomorrow that does not include improvements to reduce congestions on our road, reduce delays, improve safety,

and provide a better travel time/experience. We need the improvements or expansion that serve the area growing developments.

We live in the eastern part of Durham County and the current congestion and safety of Wake Forest Hwy, Stallings Rd., Sherron Road, Roxboro St., and Dearborn are just a few of our current concerns.

Sincerely,

Donna Stainback

Kerry Stainback

11/9/21

As the triangle continues to grow as resident of the triangle for 58 years and a business owner, I am against the 2050MTP plan. Our roadways are not keeping up with the development that is currently taking place. There is more congestion and more delays, and less alternate routes. Safety, congestion, flow, and a reasonable time to get to home, schools, and businesses are a necessity. If future development is desired our roads must keep up with the increased volume of traffic.

Thank you Bonnie Biggs

11/7/21

Mr. Henry,

I see the new call for public comments for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

I sent the comments below previously but got no acknowledgement (perhaps you cannot do that). But, I thought I would re-send them for consideration.

Again, my concern is the lack of any reference to "accessible pedestrian signals" (APS) in the proposal (at least none that I could find). I have raised the issue of adding APS systems to the bike/pedestrian paths that will be part of the NS-BRT project in Chapel Hill (I am on the citizen advisory committee for that as a representative of the EZ Rider paratransit system in Chapel Hill).

Thank you.

Bob Warren

919-418-7449

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:Feedback on long-range transportation plan

Date:Mon, 24 May 2021 15:07:35 -0400

From:Bob Warren <BobWarren@nc.rr.com>

To:andrew.henry@durhamnc.gov

Mr Henry,

I have some feedback to the long-range transportation plan from the point of view of someone with significant low vision and on behalf of others who are members of the "blindness community".

I read this in Amendment 3 on page 2:

"Complete Streets CTP Amendment #3 hereby incorporates the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Complete Streets policy(adopted by the Board of Transportation in 2019) and implementation guide.

On the basis of the policy, this amended CTP will provide the access, mobility, and safety needs of motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and *abilities*." (my emphasis)

However, in looking through the amendment as well as the document to which it is a part, I am unable to find any reference at all to "accessible pedestrian signal" (APS) systems.

It is vital that blind and low vision pedestrians are offered the same opportunity to cross streets safely as are sighted persons. APS systems are an important component to providing that opportunity.

The URL <https://www.acb.org/content/accessible-pedestrian-signals-aps> has an excellent discussion of the features of modern APS systems and how the blind/low vision should use APS systems effectively,

The ADA specifies "effective communication". In particular, if a traffic warrant analysis has determined that a pedestrian signal is necessary for a sighted pedestrian to safely cross a street, the same information must be effectively communicated to blind pedestrians in a way that they can understand and use to promote safety, avoid collisions and reduce or eliminate the greater risk of pedestrian injury or death the blindness community faces when crossing a street without an APS.

What the blindness community needs, and the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require:

- APSs should always be installed wherever and whenever new pedestrian signalization is installed in new construction or when a pedestrian signal is replaced at the end of its life cycle.
- An APS should always be installed when an existing pedestrian signal is being altered in a way that could affect its usability such as by adding a Leading Pedestrian Interval or an Exclusive Pedestrian Phase.

Additional desirable policies:

- Because of the unique challenges posed to blind pedestrians, require highest priority replacement of inaccessible pedestrian signals with APSs whenever a Leading Pedestrian Interval or an Exclusive Pedestrian Phase is planned for

or in use.

- A blind person's request for the installation of an APS should be granted on a highest priority basis.

- Alternative forms of pedestrian signalization such as in-roadway warning lighting, hybrid pedestrian beacons or a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon should be used only in conjunction with an APS..

For me, while I still have some central vision, I have low acuity, difficulties with distinguishing colors and issue with both dim and very bright light. Depending on the width of the street and the angle of the sun, brightness, etc. I cannot reliably determine when an inaccessible pedestrian signal has turned to the "Walk" state. (Example intersections are at Weaver Dairy road, near my ophthalmologist, the Medowmont crossing to the Friday Center, and at the main bus "hub" on Manning Drive near the UNC hospital. Having an APS at these locations would be a great benefit to me and many others (likely including many sighted people).

I understand there is no mandate to replace existing inaccessible pedestrian signals with an APS. However, my goal in providing this feedback is to urge the transportation plan be modified to acknowledge the requirement to provide an APS at any street crossing for a new (or enhanced) pedestrian and/or bike path where it is determined that a crossing signal is needed.

Thank you.

Bob Warren

11/7/21

I feel that more roundabouts are needed at currently very active intersections, along the Chapel Hill-Durham Blvd, as well as throughout our Triangle area communities and cities. I feel they will regulate traffic flow in a more measured and fairer way for all travelers on these routes. The geographical centers of these roundabouts could also be landscaped very nicely with native perennial and annual plants so as to increase the enjoyment of the travel experience along these routes.

Kevin S O'Donnell
Chapel Hill

11/10/21

Hi, I read and skimmed some of the preferred option report. I may have missed some details.

But my main concern in CH and Carrboro is safer pedestrian crossings on and near in town highways.

For instance, public transportation drop offs on Hwy 54 in CH/Carrboro leave pedestrians to cross 4 lanes of divided highway without even a cross walk, much less a light system. Similarly true on Jones Ferry Road near hwy 54 and one of the larger apartment complexes in Carrboro.

Allowing these pedestrians to cross safely seems an important equity as well as safety issue. Over the years, these locations near 54 in Carrboro have come to house more non white residents than north chapel hill where the flashing light crosswalks are already in place.

I would also like to see cyclists encouraged to follow traffic laws. And maybe they should even be enforced (!) so that our downtown intersections are safer and better flowing. I know they're encouraged to use bike paths but they often don't and end up in congested intersections or in crosswalks. I don't know if this is your area of concern. But as the parent of a new driver, I'm always looking for ways to reduce hazards and unpredictability. It seems related anyway.

Small town issues here—good luck with the cross town and inter town issues!

Thanks,
Ruth Newnam

11/13/21

Dear Sir:

I urge you to NOT SUPPORT the proposed 2050 MTP plan. Our roads, streets and highways need the improvements / modifications to reduce traffic congestion, reduce travel times and most of all to improve safety and save lives! Please consider my request. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Gary McLean

11/15/21

Dear Andrew Henry,

I am a resident of Chapel Hill. I'm writing in support of the Durham-Chapel Hill Carrboro MPO's preferred option for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Among other things, I am particularly encouraged by a rebalancing of spending on highway expansion and bus/bicycle improvements. This is badly needed, and will help our region address its connectivity and climate priorities.

However, I would love to see the MPO embrace a vision for connecting downtown Carrboro/Chapel hill and downtown Durham via a bicycle highway, which could be built along the same pathway intended for the light rail, or a similar route. With the growing popularity of electric bikes, people could live along this route and access schools, places of employment, and housing without driving or relying on a bus.

All the best,

Martin Johnson

11/16/21

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Preferred Option to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Thanks to the bold action the MPO Board took two months ago directing that the draft alternatives under consideration for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan be radically rethought and following two months of hard work by MPO and regional transportation staff, the Preferred Option is dramatically better than the three alternatives this board was presented in September. While it is not perfect, it is substantially more consistent with the values and preferences of our region. I recommend that the board approve the Preferred Option as the basis for the 2050 MTP.

When I provided public comment to the board at the public hearing on September 1, I paraphrased the Canadian city planner Brent Toderian when I said that not only do we need to do more good things, we need to do fewer bad things. I am pleased that a lot of the bad projects have been removed from this draft. The Preferred Option doesn't squander nearly a billion dollars on managed lanes. Out are unnecessary highway expansions and conversions. And there has been thoughtful discussion about which roadway projects should remain in the plan. All that is good and necessary, and what is left in the plan are a slate of projects that, mostly, are important to the growth of our region and the mobility of its residents and employees.

Now, the board needs to look to the future. The 2050 MTP needs to build on the solid foundation established by this Preferred Option to more fully support the region's transportation vision. In other words, the 2050 MTP needs more good things. The Preferred Option lists future roadway projects in detail, with configuration, number of lanes, and projected cost, and for the 2050 MTP these projects will be placed into 10-year buckets. Transit and bicycle projects are vaguely described and with little detail, except for the existing commuter rail and bus rapid transit projects.

With both counties' transit plans still under development, the lack of specificity with regards to transit projects is perhaps understandable. But we can do far better, today with regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian projects – even major regional facilities – are discussed only in aggregate, even though the jurisdictions in this region have developed comprehensive multimodal plans. This includes Chapel Hill with its Mobility and Connectivity Plan, Durham with its Bike+Walk Implementation Plan, and Carrboro's updated Bike Plan which was adopted just this year. Individual projects have received even more extensive study, including the Durham Belt Line and the Triangle Bikeway. Without more detail about the projects that should be implemented over the next 30 years, the MTP is not quite a vision of our transportation future and is more a better-than-it-could-be set of highway investments.

Therefore, following adoption of this MTP, the board should direct staff to move forward on developing amendments to the MTP that incorporate a comprehensive list of prioritized and scheduled multimodal

transportation investments. These amendments should include detailed information about all the proposed transportation infrastructure investments. An extensive list of projects and projected costs are already available for bicycle investments, and more information about transit investments should be available as the county transit plans near completion. The board should aim to incorporate these amendments in 2022 because, with the signing of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, it is critical that we establish our specific regional transportation priorities. By so doing, the 2050 MTP will truly be a regional transportation plan that sets forth our vision by investing appropriately in all modes of transportation infrastructure.

This will not be easy. It may require that that this board give staff additional resources so that it can do the work needed to analyze and cost out bicycle and transit investments, work that we rely on NCDOT to do for many roadway investments. But it is work that is necessary if we want to be true to the vision for our future transportation network.

Once again, I thank the board and MPO staff for their herculean efforts to develop an MTP option that more closely reflects the region's vision. I urge the board to support the Preferred Option as the basis for the initial version of the 2050 MTP.

Geoff Green

11/17/21

Good Morning, Andrew:

As I am working to close out my HOA's finances for the calendar/fiscal year, I don't have time to read the 34 page Preferred Option.

I did read the comments. Based on those comments, it seems the MPO is not even close to adopting a plan. I agree with the comments:

1. that the number one goal of transportation should not be climate change, but "transportation" - increasing reliable transportation choices.
2. Modifying current freeways to boulevards is counter-productive to reducing congestion
3. If the person who worked on the 2045 plan has doubts, certainly I do

Gwyn Silver

11/26/21

1.How will the commuter rail schedule fit into the existing schedule and still meet the need of the riders to get to and from on time?

2.To keep the commuter rail schedule, will additional tracks need to be added? Like the busses using the shoulder of the road.

3. These parking decks for cars to park and ride, how will the land be acquired? Domains right of way or paid market value?

Agency

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on agency on the draft of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO (DCHC MPO).

The NCNHP did a GIS comparison of the project areas shown on the DCHC MPO's 2050 Preferred Option Highway and Preferred Option Interchange shapefiles to the October 2021 Element Occurrences, Natural Heritage Natural Areas, and Managed Areas data sets maintained by the program. The NCNHP data are available for viewing or download through the NCNHP Data Explorer website (ncnhde.natureserve.org) and the Managed Areas and Natural Areas are available as GIS map services through the NC OneMap. Please note that this review should not be used in place of project-specific natural resource impact evaluations or deed restriction investigations.

The NCNHP has the following comments on the proposed Preferred Option Highway Projects:

I-85 from Orange Grove Road to Sparger Road (TIP I-0305):

- According to the NCNHP Managed Areas data layer, Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area Dedicated Nature Preserve is located on the north side of I-85 just east of the I-40 interchange and the Eno River State Park Dedicated Nature Preserve is located just west of the southern/eastern terminus of the project. Dedicated lands are in the public trust and any modification to their boundaries, such as acquisition of additional right-of-way, require public notice, a public hearing, and approval of the Governor and Council of State. For additional information please refer to General Statute § 143B-135.262 and 07 NCAC 13H .0306 AMENDMENTS of the NC Administrative Code. Advance coordination with the NC Natural Heritage Program is required if any impacts to the Dedicated Nature Preserves are anticipated.
- According to NCNHP Element Occurrences data layer, the project also crosses Cates Creek where *Villosa constricta*, a state threatened mussel, has been documented.

I-40 from Durham County line to NC 86 (TIP I-3306A):

- According to the NCNHP Managed Areas data layer, this project is adjacent to a property that received state funding from the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources - North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NC LWF). The property is located near the southern terminus of the project, in the northeast quadrant of the I-40/Erwin Road intersection on property owned by the Town of Chapel Hill. If additional right-of-way is needed in the area of this property and its acquisition will impact it, then coordination with the NC LWF is required. Impacts greater than one acre or 5% of the area that received funding also require approval from the NC LWF Board of Trustees.

- According to NCNHP Element Occurrences data layer, the project also crosses an unnamed tributary of Cates Creek, New Hope Creek, and Old Field Creek where state threatened and endangered mussels have been documented.

Fordham Blvd from NC 54 to NC 86 (TIP U-5304B):

- According to the NCNHP Managed Areas data layer, the area near the southern terminus of the project is adjacent to property on the south side of Fordham Blvd that is owned by the Town of Chapel Hill that is under a conservation easement held by the North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation. Advance coordination with the Town of Chapel Hill and the North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation is recommended if impacts are anticipated.

Roxboro Rd from Duke St to Goodwin Rd:

- According to the NCNHP Managed Areas data layer, the project crosses the Eno River, which has been identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as Critical Habitat for the Neuse River Waterdog and Carolina Madtom. The area adjacent to the river in this same area is also indicated as park and open space land owned by the City of Durham.

Suzanne Mason

Conservation Data Manager

[North Carolina Natural Heritage Program](#)

Office: 919-707-8637

suzanne.mason@ncdcr.gov

121 W. Jones Street, Nature Research Center

1651 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-1651

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 More info & ways to participate here:
dchcmpo.org/what-we-do/pro...



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Jessalee Landfried @JessaleeL · 11h

...

Replying to @CityofDurhamNC and @DCHCMPO

Wow yes please!!



Matt H @southerblue2 · 13h

...

Replying to @CityofDurhamNC and @DCHCMPO

Less highways. Bring back plans for a train. Don't let @DukeHealth ruin that. Rich people are ruining this city with big condos, political influence, and clogging up roads all while driving up housing. #gentrification needs to stop. #ClimateCrisis #HousingCrisis





Quote Tweets




Matt H @southerblue2 · 13h



More public transit!

 **CityofDurhamNC**  @CityofDurhamNC · 16h

If you're interested in deemphasizing highway widenings & more support for public transportation, give your input by Dec. 7 to the @DCHCMPO on their 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Preferred Option.

 More info & ways to participate here: dchcmo.org/what-we-do/pro

...





Charlie Reece GET VAXXED
@CharlieReece

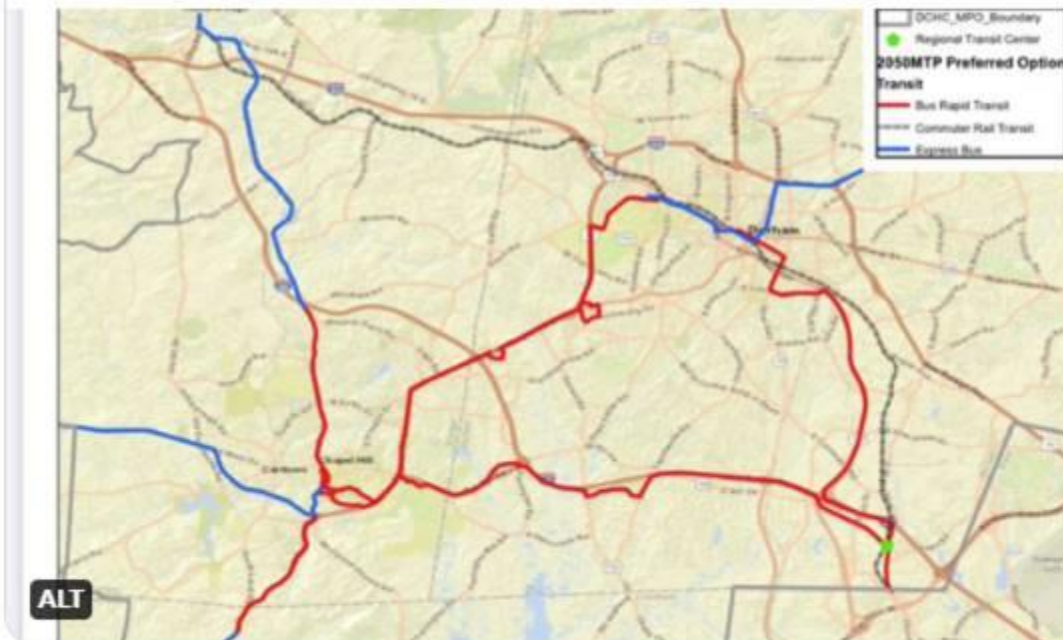
...

Please weigh in!

CityofDurhamNC @CityofDurhamNC · 16h

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More info & ways to participate here: dchcmpo.org/what-we-do/pro...



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Matt Roberts

You have been allegedly working on a public transportation project since I was born, yet you cannot even keep the roads in some areas driveable. I have great faith nothing will change.

Like · Reply · Hide · Message · 16h



Brad Hutchens

Matt Roberts you have to love how this post wasn't leading in the least... 😏 Perhaps they can finish the 147/70/85 connector in the next two years before they talk about this bullshit.

Like · Reply · Hide · Message · 13h