

DCHC MPO

2045 MTP *Final Plan* Comments

Introduction

This document compiles the public comments that the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) received during the Preferred Option and final plan and report phases of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The final plan and report comments start on page 1 and those for the Preferred Option start on page 34.

For comments, questions and additional information:

- Andy Henry, andrew.henry@durhamnc.gov, 919-560-4366, ext. 36419.
- DCHC MPO Web site: www.dchcmpo.org
- MTP Web page: www.bit.ly/DCHC-MTP

Final Plan and Report Comment Period

The MPO released the final plan and full report of the 2045 MTP on January 10, 2018 for a public comment that lasts through March 2, 2018.

Comments by Email

01/10/18

In general, the proposed plan makes senses except for a couple of key components.

The light rail system for Orange and Durham counties should really be called the UNC-Duke light rail system because it seems that these two institutions are the primary beneficiaries of this system. That said, the taxpayers of Orange and Durham counties are paying for a sizable portion of the bill, yet UNC and Duke, being tax-exempt organizations are paying nothing. What is even more upsetting it that taxpayers in most of Orange County and perhaps even in most of Durham County, i.e., rural residents, especially to the west and north of Chapel Hill, will most likely never use this system. I personally don't think light-rail is feasible considering the population displacement of Orange County commuters. An improved bus service that is adaptable to changes and is not as UNC focused is a smarter public transporation solution. If the planners are so sure of the success of the light rail system, then maybe they should consider making this system a fare-supported rather than a taxpayer supported system. This way, the actual users of the system will be paying the service that is benefiting them.

The other issue I have is with the delay in widening I-85 across Orange County. Besides current congestion issues, I think a primary reason for so many accidents along this stretch of roadway is because of the aggressive driving due to tractor-trailer trucks using the passing lane on those hills which gets drivers frustrated enough to start cutting people off to avoid getting stuck behind these trucks or trying to pass these same trucks on their blind side, i.e., the slower-speed lane. A third lane is much needed, however, while we are waiting for that third lane to be built, tractor-trailers should be restricted from driving in the passing lane if they are going slower than 65mph (the speed limit) and speeds for all vehicles should be enforced. Many cars are moving at speeds well over 75-mph while tailgating and weaving through lanes.

I-40 between 15/501 and New Hope Church Road should be widened asap. Merging three lanes of traffic to two at the same location as a very busy on-ramp and the beginning of a 2-mile long incline was a terrible design decision.

Thanks for the opportunity to send in comments.

A Leonard
Chapel Hill, NC

01/13/18

Hello Mr. Henry,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide public input. I live in the Northeast section of Chatham County and would like to provide the following comments for the 2015 Metropolitan Transportation Plan currently under public review:

Chatham County continues to experience significant growth in both tourism and residential development. I would like to see a high prioritization for a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path running parallel to US 64 over the Haw River. Such a multi-use path would provide safer network connections to pedestrian trails within the Lower Haw River State Natural Area along both sides of the Haw River and could also connect the Lower Haw River State Natural Area trail network to the East Coast Greenway network and the American Tobacco Trail. A Lower Haw Trails Master Plan is currently being developed for pedestrian and paddle trails within the Lower Haw River State Natural Area owned by State Parks, which consists of over 1,025 acres along both sides of the Haw River in Chatham County from above US 15-501 to below US 64. A significant residential and commercial development named Chatham Park is planned adjacent to this state natural area that will add 55,000+ residents to the nearby town of Pittsboro. There is the potential for miles of trails that could form a long loop if safe crossing of the Haw River along US 64 could be developed. The old Bynum Bridge closed to vehicular traffic by NC DOT provides a safe crossing of the Haw River at the Bynum location of the state natural area, but there is not a way to safely cross the river at the US 64 location which presents an obstacle to making a looped

hike along both sides of the river between Bynum and US 64. Both the 2016 Chatham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, the 2011 Chatham County Bicycle Plan, and the 2011 US 64 Corridor Study – Wake and Chatham Counties Corridor Study Report include a multi-use bicycle/pedestrian path parallel to US 64 over the Haw River as a desirable feature for both alternative transportation and recreational use reasons. Therefore, I would like to see this multi-use path parallel to US 64 over the Haw River included as a priority in the regional and statewide routes for bicycle and pedestrian projects. If possible, rather than making it a long term project waiting for a US 64 bridge replacement, I would like to see alternative options explored, such as the Orange County project that adds a fenced extension on the side of the Orange Grove Road bridge over I-40/84 in Hillsborough.

Gretchen Smith
Chatham County

01/19/18

I agree with the comments by Dr. Johnson that the plan way over-emphasizes automobiles over bicycles and pedestrians. The report is overwhelming, but of particular interest to me was p. 74 where it lists the amounts of money being spent on the different proposals. The only way to truly encourage bicycles and pedestrians over automobiles is to spend more money on bicycle and pedestrian paths. For me personally the ability to walk to town was a major factor in my decision to move from Durham to Hillsborough. I do often walk to town while my car sits in the driveway for days at a time. However, even more gas could be saved and less pollution created if there were a safe way to bike downtown from my home in West Hillsborough. The report deals with the issue of bicycle and pedestrian safety at several points. To give Old NC 10 as the way to bike between Hillsborough and Durham is to ignore the safety of bicyclists.

Jackie Stonehuerner

01/24/18

Hello Andrew,

After reviewing the 2045 MTP, I did not see major safety improvements to Mount Carmel Church Road in Chapel Hill. There appear to be modernization improvements from 15-501 to Bennett Rd, but nothing planned for the stretch from Bennett Rd to the Chatham County line. This stretch of road has no shoulders and is extremely hazardous for bikers and pedestrians. In the last two weeks alone there were two near-misses between joggers and cars. This road is a major connector between large neighborhoods in Chatham County (Governor's Club, Governor's Village, etc.) and UNC, and will only increase in traffic as Chatham Park is built. It is also part of the Mountains to the Sea trail and provides a direct connection to Jordan Lake for recreational bikers. The community has been asking for improvements for years (shoulders, bike lanes, sidewalks). Please consider adding this section to the improvements list of the plan.

Thank you,
Kirsten Rieth

01/27/18

Dear Andrew,

My name is Andy Bailey from Pittsboro, NC. I would like to offer my support for the US 15-501 moderation within Chatham County. As development has picked up in the past few years along this corridor, it's imperative that the integrity of traffic flow be maintained and enhanced. Access control, superstreet designs, among other innovative solutions must be implemented along this section for growing both the economy and quality of life in Northern Chatham County. My only comment beyond support is the desire to have this enhancement moved up in the MTP to at least the 2035 horizon year.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Andy Bailey

02/02/18

Dear Andy et al,

Thank you for giving the public an opportunity to see and comment on the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. I was hoping to read and respond to the plan before leaving the country a few weeks ago, so I wouldn't have to navigate the screen and the maps on my phone.

Unfortunately, that did not happen. As a result, I may have overlooked or not known where to look for some of the items I have mentioned.

I would like to start with the survey that was taken before this report was done. The public participants were asked how they would spend their money on infrastructure. The two highest scoring items were fixed commuter rail and bicycle projects. The two lowest scoring items were new roads and road widenings.

However, in looking at the plans, there are plenty of places where new roads and road widenings are included. It seems these have been justified by including in the goals quick movement of traffic.

On the other hand, in the measures of success, there does not seem to be a spot for the efficiency of transit compared to the efficiency of automobiles.

On page 17 of the report, it talks about enhancing and improving transit and bike, but it does not mention making either of these more efficient and more affordable than traveling by car. I know

that the members of the MPO are familiar with the term induced demand, and are aware that adding lanes will not take care of congestion except in a temporary way. Thus, I am confused why this seems to be such a large part of this plan. Is the goal of the plan to move cars or are we trying to move people? If the latter, wouldn't dedicated bus lanes (or even HOV lanes) make more sense?

Unless it is the wish of residents of the Triangle region to sit in traffic forever, it seems accommodating more cars should not be the largest part of this plan.

This was the first time I looked at all of the reports that were considered when this final report was compiled, and I noticed that a bicycle plan referred to as the CORE plan does not include Orange County. I don't know who paid for this plan, but to exclude Orange County, which draws thousands of cyclists every week to its roadways seems to have been an oversight in that report.

That oversight seems to have carried over into the 2045 MTP plan. I do not see any improvements for bicycles or even Road modernization along old 86 between Hillsborough and Carrboro. Nor do I see any improvements indicated for Orange Grove Road. Orange County is very deficient in separated facilities for bikes (or any sort of bike infrastructure) and it would be good to at least see that they were being planned for in the future. There is growing interest in trying to get a facility between Carrboro and Hillsborough, and also ideas to run some sort of a greenway along the RR tracks in CH and continuing into OC. Perhaps these are in the plan and I am just looking in the wrong places.

While I understand that some of the County roadways may not be part of the DCHCMPO, that brings another question to mind. I know that TARPO also has a bicycle plan, and it would be good to have some connectivity between the two plans.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice some of my concerns.

Best,

Heidi Perry
Carrboro, NC

02/02/18

For more than 40 years I've lived on Justice St. close to Horace Williams Airport and have used my bike for grocery shopping, Post Office and many other things. The following would make my bicycling much easier and safer:

1. Bike lanes along Estes Extension are fairly good now except for the last quarter mile. For many years, Estes was terrible for bicycling. It's better now, until one gets close to N.

Greensboro in Carrboro where the street is very narrow. That needs to be fixed.

2. Bolin Creek Greenway needs to be completed all the way to Homestead Rd. and beyond. The connection under MLK should be completed ASAP. This route has enormous potential for safe and efficient non-motorized transportation.

3. MLK north of Estes is pretty good except for a few places. Just south of Homestead, bike lanes disappear for 100 yards or so on each side of the road and cyclists are forced into the motor lane. A few years ago, a bus stop was installed on the west side of MLK opposite Harris Teeter and a perfectly good bike lane there was ruined for a short distance. MLK has bike lanes that cost the tax payer a lot of money, but they aren't continuous. That needs to be fixed.

4. The road just south of Calvander leading to Carrboro (don't know if it's called Old 86, Hillsborough, or Fayetteville) is very heavily used by recreational cyclists, and by motor vehicles. It needs to be widened.

Paul Killough

02/03/18

Dear Mr. Henry,

I'm a lifelong Triangle resident, born on the Chapel Hill/Durham border, school in Durham, college in Chapel Hill, now in Carrboro. I've seen the area change a lot and the car congestion increase disturbingly, particularly notable in coming back after 2 years away from 2010-2012. I am an avid cyclist and transport rider, and have lived in this area without a car for a few years in addition to enjoying the perks of a car. I want what we all want: for moving from place to place to be safer, less full of traffic, and more convenient. I've also been in two significant bike crashes, neither of which was my fault, and am chastened to reflect that I and other cyclists take our lives into our hands every time we choose to share the roads with vehicles.

My thoughts on what I have explored of the DCHC MPO are:

1. It's too bad bicycle projects are separated out. My understanding is that many of the obstacles to bicycle infrastructure improvement lie in the mixed jurisdiction of many of our local roads.

I'm glad to know jurisdictions are coordinating through the DCHC MPO, but would hope cycling were viewed as important enough to include in long-term regional goals. This area is growing so fast that cycling and foot traffic should be viewed as viable ways to link people together without overwhelming our roads. It will be easier to build the infrastructure while the area is expanding.

2. Reading Appendix 6. Complete Streets, I hope you will consider including in your mission statement an acknowledgement of the safety of dedicated bicycle lanes. This study and others have shown that dedicated bicycle lanes and—even better—protected cycling tracks have been shown to reduce the risk of injury to cyclists by about 50% and 90%, respectively.

3. Light Rail:

1. I am very glad the Light Rail plan now connects to NCCU. It would be great to see it connect from Carrboro to Hillsborough if the cargo track can ever be converted for passengers.
2. I would encourage you to explore including pedestrian bridges any time there needs to be a light rail bridge. For the University of North Carolina, one important connection would be to develop a safe crossing of Fordham Blvd at S. Columbia Street or thereabouts, hopefully similar to the American Tobacco Bridge near Southpoint.
3. Appendix 4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects: From my experience cycling, some of the bicycling projects I consider worth prioritizing are:
 1. Connection from Chapel Hill to Durham with as many protected bike lanes as possible. There are roadways where it should still be reasonable to take right-of-way for bicycle expansion. I am in favor of creating along Erwin Rd a protected bicycle lane (for instance raised, two-way), with connections to Cornwallis and Cameron Blvd.
 2. Old Chapel Hill Rd to University Drive is another important place protected bicycle lanes have been talked about for connecting Chapel Hill and Durham, but it strikes me as slightly more difficult to follow the whole length with reasonable bicycle protection.
 3. NC 54 / Barbee Chapel Road / Farrington Road / Stage Coach Road / NC 751 / Massey Chapel Road / Barbee Road / NC 54 is also a very good thoroughfare with bicycle potential, given the developments along Farrington Road and 751, the room for expansion along these roads, and the ability to link good bicycle paths on the Chapel Hill side of NC 54 with the American Tobacco Trail.
 4. Missing from the project list: A safe connection for bikes between Chapel Hill/Carrboro and the Chapel Hill public library. Better bike infrastructure along Estes Dr. would help this, or else a way to link from the Bolin Creek Greenway to the public library near Burlage Circle or Meadowbrook Drive. It's great that there are almost connections between the Northside District and the Chapel Hill Community Center.
 5. Missing from the project list: Safe bicycle lanes on Hillsborough Rd between Old Fayetteville Rd and the intersection with Dairyland Rd/Homestead Rd. So many cyclists use this area for recreation and this is such an incredibly dangerous passage (including precipitous drop-offs from the pavement with the last paving) in a place where the state should be able to take right of way. Improving this small section would make a huge difference.
 6. This is now outdated, but here is a crowd-sourced map showing different cyclists' commute routes to work/school at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Thank you for coordinating the feedback! Please let me know (or forward on) if there are other planners to whom it would be reasonable to offer these suggestions.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Saunders

02/09/18

(hope this is comment site for Feb 9 deadline)

The planned commuter rail w/ bus connectors is the more important, useful goal for effective mass transportation for Triangle area. Period. Charles Gibbs, Durham

Charlie Gibbs,

02/09/18

Hello!

When looking over the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro bicycle and pedestrian transportation plan, I noticed that it did not include very many off road connections. It focused mostly on bike lanes and sidewalks. What I believe is that greenways are just as important as on road solutions. Many people I know are unwilling to take their kids biking on roads, even if bike lanes are present. A system of greenways could encourage people to get outside and be active. What our area really needs is to build a system of greenways, like what Raleigh is so successfully doing.

The link below goes to a Google "My Map" of the trails that I believe would help people in Chapel Hill and Durham be most connected.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fGiV0LTB07SGhcTEPkqarinTgl8MM5lh&usp=sharing>

Please let me know if there is any way that I can improve the Google My Map.

Thank you,
Leif Rasmussen

02/26/18

Dear Mr. Henry and Carrboro Planners:

I am writing to oppose paving the greenway along Bolin Creek. Hardened structures in this forested area can only cause problems, from the construction itself as well as subsequent erosion. I support bike paths and pedestrian corridors, but they should be left as natural as possible. In the Bolin Creek area there are better alternatives for bike and pedestrian connections, which you should explore through open public discussions.

Sincerely,

Karl Petersen

02/26/18

Dear Mr. Henry,

I live in Highland Forest off Manns Chapel Road, 1/2 mile from 15 501. The first entrance to our neighborhood is on Tall Oaks. You need to go up a hill and around the curve and suddenly there is the entrance. It is dangerous leaving the neighborhood and can be dangerous returning. To make the return safer, I want to recommend a lane to the right of Mann's Chapel before Tall Oaks. This would enable drivers to drive off the main road and then turn right onto Tall Oaks. It would improve safety to have that exit lane. The Neighborhood before ours, Valley Meadow, has a ramp like that. The one before tall Oaks would need to be much shorter.

The traffic in our area has increased considerably. There are many new developments off of Manns Chapel Road and people tend to drive pretty fast. It's another story altogether to safely turn left off of Tall Oaks onto Manns Chapel Road. I will probably be exiting the neighborhood on Chatham Drive because of safety issues.

Thank you for inviting comments and suggestions. I hope an exit ramp can be arranged as noted above.

Kathy Putnam

02/26/18

Dear Board Members,

As an avid biker and commuter, I understand the desire to create more safe bike paths connecting Carrboro and Chapel Hill. However, I do not believe developing the land next to Bolin Creek for a bike path is the best way to do so. I think such development would prove detrimental to the landscape, watershed, and wildlife, and this damage would not be made up by commuters using the path. There are other more economical and less environmentally impactful ways to allow safe bike travel from areas of Carrboro to areas of Chapel Hill. Please heed public comment and avoid what may end up being a short-sighted mistake and allow greater public input on the project. By involving the community, we will be sure to encounter the best way to encourage safe walking and cycling in the area.

Thank You,

Walker Grimshaw

02/26/18

I'm writing to express my objections to the inclusion of the "Bolin Creek Trail" in the MTP. This approximately 400 acre forest valley and beautiful creek is used extensively by residents and visitors in the communities of Carrboro, Chapel Hill and others for hiking, running, biking, nature enjoyment, bird watching and serenity...part of its uniqueness is that it is not paved. There are alternatives for transportation corridors that will not permanently take away this treasured local natural resource.

I'm a retired UNC public health researcher and educator and have been running, hiking, and enjoying Bolin Creek and the forest for over 25 years. I have hiked in many wonderful places around the world including Italy, Costa Rica, England, the Great Smokey Mountains and many trails around our state and know from experience and research that hikers are looking for non paved, natural trails.

Respectfully,
Salli Benedict MPH

02/27/18

Dear Mr. Henry,

I am a resident of Carrboro, and I'm writing to express my strong opposition to any sort of paved path along Bolin Creek. I am all in favor of bike paths – but not at the expense of the ecology of Bolin Creek. I am asking you to remove the Creekside trail reference from Appendix 4 immediately. The connector trail over Bolin Creek by Homestead with its cost overruns, poor planning, and excessive creekside destruction is not an example of success. The takeaway is that we must avoid disturbances next to the creek, especially a paved greenway. The creek and the woodland around it is the jewel of our community, and we have an obligation to protect and preserve it as a natural area free of concrete. There are better alternatives to connect the high school complex to Carolina North and the towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill. A Seawell School greenway would provide connectivity and access while limiting impact on the ecosystem of the creek and the riparian zone.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Riek

02/27/18

Dear Mr. Henry,

I am contacting you to request that you remove the Creekside trail reference from Appendix 4 from the proposal to connect the Chapel Hill and Carrboro Greenways. While I am all in favor of bike paths, the alternative routes for connecting the Homestead section of the Greenway to the Umstead portion via the Seawell School greenway suit the needs of this community, and limit the impact on the Creek's

ecosystem and riparian zone. Excessive creekside destruction is not in the best long term interests of this community. As we have all heard in prior town meetings over the last 10 years, the paving of a trail adjacent Bolin Creek poses a serious threat to the ecological health of Bolin Creek through this section of forest. The creek and adjacent forest are unique and dwindling resources for this community. We should seek to protect and preserve this as a natural corridor free of concrete. I am a resident of Carrboro, and have enjoyed the creek for many years. I hope that this will be possible for others to do years from now free of a concrete pathway and associated runoff.

Sincerely,
Jim Riek

02/27/18

Hello Andrew Henry, Christina Moon and Cathy Dorando, I made the film "Bolin Creek Unpaved: Saving Carrboro's Last Forest" which probably gives you an idea of what my perspective is in terms of having Bolin Creek Forest or any of its environs on any Metro Transit Plan. My hat tip towards communication instead of wasting words is to ask you to watch the film before making any decisions. Most of the people involved in these decisions regarding the forest have never set foot there, never walked along the creek. My film is free to watch and is made for this situation exactly. I hope you enjoy the film and I hope you choose wisely.

peace,
Charlie Morris

02/27/18

Greetings- I am writing this message as a resident of Carrboro.

I have several comments on proposed projects:

1. I do not support widening of NC 54 from Old Fayetteville Rd in Carrboro to the MPO boundary. The "modernization" approach is much more appropriate and should be the goal. Ideally, there will be a fully separated-from-traffic greenway or protected cycle track on the side of NC 54 from Old Fayetteville Rd to Anderson Park.
2. On Homestead Rd to MLK Blvd, we are also in great need of separated low Level-of-Traffic-Stress bicycle facilities from Hillsborough Rd to MLK Blvd. These facilities should tie in effectively with the under-construction Chapel Hill High School-Homestead Rd section of the Bolin Creek Greenway.

3. I support the extension of Light Rail to Carrboro and I commend the staff for recommending an alignment on Franklin and Main Street, through the most intensely developed section of that corridor. This makes good sense. I encourage the MPO and municipalities to consider a potential station in front of Carolina Square and 140 West in the middle of Franklin Street in the future.

4. Since the Bike/Ped elements of the plan refer to local priorities, I want to say that I strongly support the full completion of the Bolin Creek and Morgan Creek Greenways in Carrboro. I would also like to see Carrboro do something about two bike-hostile intersections at Main/Weaver and West Main/Poplar. Both have way too much pavement dedicated to too little traffic. Back in 2001 Dan Burden suggested roundabouts for both, and I support further consideration of these ideas.

5. I would like to see further traffic calming approached through low-cost methods in neighborhoods. In particular, it would be great to see a small traffic circle used to slow traffic At Davie Rd and West Poplar Ave in Carrboro. NACTO has design standards for this type of improvement here:

<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersections/minor-intersections/mini-roundabout/>

Thank you,
Patrick McDonough
Carrboro

03/01/18

Hello, Carrboro Board of Alderman and Andy Henry.

My name is Emily Sutton, and I am the Haw Riverkeeper. I am concerned about the stream health and negative impacts the proposed transportation will have on Bolin Creek.

Haw River Assembly does not support the transportation plan for 2045, which includes a paved greenway along Bolin Creek in Chapel Hill. Bolin Creek is listed as impaired waterbodies for lack of benthic life, from just below Carolina North Forest to its confluence with Little Creek below Highway 501. Benthic macro invertebrates are the base of the food web, and therefore the ecosystem, in the creek.

Creating more impervious surface near the creek will not only speed up the movement of water by keeping the water from infiltrating to the soil, but this will erode the stream banks and create channels that further contribute to eroded, steep embankments.

The eroded banks slough sediment laden water into the creek, suffocating the macro invertebrates, mussels, and clams living in the streams. These animals provide valuable ecosystem services by filtering sediment and nutrients out of water, and by shredding organic, natural debris. A dramatic increase in

sediment can be destructive for these populations, and without the ecosystem services they provide, the problem will quickly worsen.

Sediment is not the only issue caused by impervious surfaces near the creek's edge. Rain water will not be able to slowly filter into the ground, but it will also be heated up by warm sidewalks that attract the sun's rays and hold in heat. Many sensitive macro invertebrates and amphibians cannot survive in warm water temperatures. Bolin Creek is a haven for wildlife in an urbanizing area. We not only find salamanders, many species of frogs and toads, and birds, but we also find larger mammals that are require more habitat protection, such as the American Mink.

We have seen the excessive erosion and creek destruction done on the connector trail over Bolin Creek by Homestead Road, and do not trust that the paved greenway will be done in a way to prevent further habitat and stream destruction.

Haw River Assembly does not support this proposed disturbance to Bolin Creek and recommends an alternative route to avoid negative impacts on this impaired stream.

Emily Sutton
Haw Riverkeeper
Haw River Assembly

03/01/18

From: OC Disability Awareness Council <ocdac@orangecountync.gov>

This council resolves that more attention needs to be given to those stuck in assisted living rest home with limited mobility this person's may live in the city where a para transit exist but cannot get services , why can't they? They can be less than a mile from a stop,!

More awareness trying to 'I' types of drivers we have driver refresher to offer aight guide assistance please reg fed.37.5

03/01/18

Hi Andy and Dale,

Thank you for your responses to my questions. I understand the CORE map and area better, and I asked our local rep to TJCOG to just be sure that the plan connects with other plans in the surrounding area. I also had a chance to look at the interactive bike ped map on the website and I see that a lot of the projects I was wondering about are listed there.

With that in mind, my points for consideration (in addition to my ongoing dismay at seeing our state try to solve congestion with outdated and failed road-widening projects) are as follows:

* See if a project with bike and ped improvements can qualify as a "highway" project under the Complete Streets Policy. It seems arguments could be made to that effect. If they don't, it doesn't mean that the MPO needs to fill every possible slot with projects, especially projects that have been proven to increase VMT and proven ineffective in long-term reduction to congestion, and that do nothing improve air quality or pollution. (Did I read that California road projects have to show a reduction in pollution before they are built? Can't remember exactly what the bill is, but that might be something to add to the NCDOT scoring process if you get an opportunity to comment on its revision.)

Under goals and performance

Goal 1. Performance measure 2. Is there a way to include in the "mobile energy consumption" the amount of energy being spent on charging electric vehicles? According to one article I read, the damage from electric cars can be greater than gas-powered cars if the energy used to charge the cars is included.

Goal IV. Add a Performance measure 4 that measures total VMT, not just per capita.

Goal VII. Measures 1,2, and 3. We are a vision zero state. Zero deaths is supposed to be our goal. Why are these goals not all ZERO? If it is because we don't think zero can be achieved, there is something wrong with NCDOT's scoring method and our implementation of road projects.

The other thing I wonder is if there is any discussion among the MPO partners to change some of the land use projections and policies to make denser nodes of development.

Thanks for all you do. And I am sure you have heard from others, so I really appreciate the time you have taken to listen to me.

Best,

Heidi Perov Perry

02/28/18

Good afternoon

Thanks for taking public input about the transportation priorities in our area. I am confused by the plan to widen roads in general. This priority works within the "if you build it, they will come" idea. Widen the roads and more cars will come. We should be looking to alternative solutions encourage less vehicles on

the road. If there aren't enough people traveling along a corridor to fill a bus, why are there enough to warrant an extra lane of traffic? It may be a well known fact that many folks from Carrboro/CH don't drive across the Triangle as much as those from Durham and Raleigh. These two towns have better alternative transportation options (with fare-free buses and more bike/ped infrastructure) and more local retail options that are access to a densely housed population. This is the example I'd like to see the MPO follow. It is proven that encouraging active transportation makes for healthier/happier citizens. To avoid adverse or unpredictable transportation options, people tend to live closer to their daily destinations/workplace. GoTriangle continues to provide better options for longer commutes and is also actively working on a project that addresses the last mile for people to be dropped off at their final destination. I'd also like to see the MPO work together with GoTriangle so that more goals of moving people efficiently can be planned and accomplished together. Again, more lanes = more cars = more traffic = more congestion = slower moving of people. Buses in the Triangle are able to use the shoulders to travel efficiently. Travel via bicycle and foot has very predictable timing. Sales of electric bicycles continue to expand in our area as these are addressing the longer trip ranges/times.

There has been increase discussion of a rail-with-trail multiuse path along the Southern Rail corridor in Carrboro and heading north toward Hillsborough. I did not see this on the CTP Bike-Ped layer.

With much of the funding for the MPT coming through NCDOT and prioritizing "highway" projects, has "highway" been precisely defined. I could see "complete streets" falling under this realm.

We are moving into an era where Millennials will make up the largest generation of living people. It has been shown that many folks from this generation are preferring to live in more accessible and urban areas with denser populations and shorter commutes and travel times for daily needs. Why not plan for this future instead of investing in the more expensive options that require more maintenance and more expensive land acquisitions?

Thank you again for this opportunity to weigh in to the future of our transportation.

Tamara Sanders

03/01/18

Hi, Regarding the Bolin Creek Greenway extension, I suggest locating the proposed paved section to be placed a little ways uphill from the Creek in the woods with a minimal of clearing & a very large margin of woods between the Creek & Greenway. A dirt trail along the Creek which is already present could remain in an unimproved state. This would provide a nice corridor & at the same time protect the Creek.

Thanks,

Suzy Lawrence

03/01/18

Dear Mr. Henry and Ms. Moon,

As a UNC student living in the MLK area, the Bolin Creek park and creek system has become a second home to me, a space where I can leave behind the pressures of the academic environment and enjoy the serenity offered by this cherished natural area. I am against the paving near Bolin Creek for this reason and am sad to see the promise of public process denied due to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. As seen by the failure of the connector trail over Bolin Creek by Homestead that led to excessive creekside destruction, there should not be disturbances and construction near Bolin Creek, especially a paved greenway. I am not against bicycle and pedestrian connections, but I am when it threatens the ecosystem of Bolin Creek and the cherished natural park area. There are better alternatives to connect the high school complex to Carolina North and the towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill such as a Seawell School greenway. Additionally, the forest is shrinking dramatically – as seen by construction along Homestead Road – and we need to protect it while we can. I am concerned that despite extensive public comment on this issue over the past three years specifically and large numbers of youth engaged as well in this issue, the Board has rebuffed their constituents and citizens and appears to be continuing to operate in a secretive manner. In conclusion, the Creekside trail reference from Appendix 4 should be removed immediately.

Sincerely,
Shelby Anderson

03/01/18

I just found out that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2045 includes paving the Bolin Creek Creekside Trail. Although 2045 seems far away, it is too close to ignore this item. As a homeowner in Chapel Hill, a longtime user of the trail, and a lifelong professional ecologist (including 20 years work with The Nature Conservancy), I must protest this. I have read the pros and cons, with the main pro being its accessibility to handicapped people, but that cannot outweigh the ecological damage paving this trail would do to the creek, for many reasons that I'm sure many people are reminding you. Please do not support this plan as it currently exists.

Sincerely,
Katherine Seaton

03/01/18

Thanks again for your responses.

RE: Highway projects: My question is why is it included with a broader road improvement rather than BEING the road improvement? And yes, thank you to the MPO for asking that the local match be eliminated!

RE: Electric cars. They are not as bad as gas cars, but they do contribute in a more indirect way, based on the source of their electricity such as coal or nuclear. One recent article and another with clear graphics

RE: Vision Zero. If our state has signed on to Vision Zero (which it has), its goal should be zero, too. We already know it is a challenge because our state ranks very poorly (3rd in number of rural road deaths; 11% increase in pedestrian deaths in 2016, etc.) But shouldn't the GOAL be zero, whether we can achieve it or not? Goals shouldn't be based on achievability, should they?

thanks,
Heidi

03/01/18

Dear Folks,
As a longtime Haw River lover and user, I ask you to please consider protecting it from ANYTHING that might compromise the water quality or health of the watershed. Every little thing you can do to conserve and preserve its wild and natural state will earn you a special place in my heart and the hearts of generations to come.

Thank you!
Bob Beerman

03/01/18

While we support the addition of alternative modes of transportation and greenways, we cannot put our streams at risk in order to do so.

We do not support the current edition of the Transportation Plan for 2045, which, in Appendix 4 for Town of Chapel Hill, includes a reference to Creekside trail, a paved greenway along Bolin Creek in Chapel Hill.

- Bolin Creek is listed as an impaired waterbody for lack of benthic life, from below Carolina North Forest to its confluence with Little Creek below Highway 501. Benthic macro invertebrates are the base of the food web, and therefore the ecosystem, in the creek.

- Creating more impervious surface near the creek will not only speed up the movement of water by keeping the water from infiltrating to the soil, but this will erode the stream banks and create channels that further contribute to eroded, steep embankments.

- The eroded banks will send muddy water into the creek, suffocating the macro invertebrates, mussels, and clams living in the streams. These animals provide valuable ecosystem services by filtering sediment and nutrients out of water, and by shredding organic, natural debris. A dramatic increase in sediment can be destructive for these populations, and without the ecosystem services they provide, the problem will quickly worsen.

- The increase of paved surfacd near the stream will increase the temperature of the water flowing into the stream after rain events. Many sensitive macro invertebrates and amphibians cannot survive in warm water temperatures. Bolin Creek is a haven for wildlife in an urbanizing area. We not only find salamanders, many species of frogs and toads, and birds, but we also find larger mammals that are require more habitat protection, such as the American Mink

- The forest is shrinking dramatically – as seen by construction along Homestead Road – we need to protect it while we can.

- We have seen the excessive erosion and creek destruction done on the connector trail over Bolin Creek by Homestead Road, and do not trust that the paved greenway will be done in a way to prevent further habitat and stream destruction.

Sincerely,
Ken & Karen Scheidler

03/01/18

Dear elected officials and Staff of Carrboro,

I want to voice my very strong support for a paved greenway along the entire length of Bolin Creek through the Town of Carrboro.

The paved greenway along Bolin Creek in Chapel Hill was vigorously opposed years ago and now it is much used and loved by adults and children and people with special needs. It is indeed accessible to all citizens and it protects the Creek from siltation and runoff. The badly erroded Carrboro Bolin Creek corridor, bare of vegetation along much of its length, allows excessive amounts of run off and siltation into the creek.

The notion that the Carrboro corridor is a pristine wildlife area where a paved greenway would destroy critical habitat needs to be further considered. Much of the Carrboro corridor is badly infested with extensive entanglements of exotic invasive species that are very detrimental to wildlife of all kinds.

In 2004 when I began writing the Flora column for our former Carrboro CITIZEN Weekly Newspaper I described many encounters with plants and animals observed along the Chapel Hill's paved Bolin Creek Greenway. Essentially all of the "Nature" that occurs along the so-call pristine Carrboro corridor, I have observed along Chapel Hill's paved greenway.

As the Triangle area moves forward with a very fine system of continuous and connecting Greenways, the Town of Carrboro seems to stand out as a missing link.

It is time now to take off the shelf that Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan, December 2009. That plan was not a final engineering document. It was a thoughtful and detailed beginning for considering improvements to an erroded utility easement for the health of the Creek and for the benefit of the entire community with access for all citizens.

Before further consideration for any action along the Carrboro Bolin Creek corridor moves forward I suggest that the decision makers take a walk along the creek accompanied by a group of scientists and engineers from both UNC and NC State University.

There is much to learn and much to be gained by a thoughtful hearing and understanding of all the factors and issues relative to this most unfortunate polarizing issue.

Ken Moore, retired Assistant Director, N. C. Botanical Garden

03/01/18

Dear Town of Carrboro –

I walk, run and bike on the trail by Bolin Creek regularly and it is truly one of my favorite things about living in Carrboro. The peaceful forested area provides much needed quiet, softer surfaces for footfall and lovely shade and habitat. While I understand that road bikers want their own roads through the forest, I believe that the benefits of the current, unpaved trail outweigh any plans to cut a wide swath of trees and pave yet more acres of our remaining forest land. For these reason, I do not support the current edition of the Transportation Plan for 2045, which in Appendix 4 for the Town of Chapel Hill, includes a reference to a paved greenway along Bolin Creek.

Already Bolin Creek is impacted by increased impervious surfaces, reflected the erosion on the creek and the regular flooding of downstream properties. Changes to the stream cause impacts to aquatic life, an indicator of stream health. Further paving the watershed, especially so near to the creek will only exacerbate these problems by increasing the flow of surface water into the stream. Development of recent paved paths in UNC North and the connector by Homestead Road illustrate the damage that these cause – they are essentially roads through the forest, clearing wide swaths of trees, causing erosion and then replacing the natural landscape with a wide amount of impermeable surface.

We can do better. There are alternative routes for a paved bikeway if one is absolutely needed that can stay upland and avoid the creek. Our shrinking forests are valuable for their aesthetic and recreational use but also for the benefits they provide downstream. Please do not move forward with paving the path alongside Bolin Creek.

Finally, I hope that you will consider truly taking public comment on this issue and actually provide public notice in and around the trail system so that people who use this area will know what is happening, what is at-risk, and have the opportunity to provide input.

Thank you
Sincerely

Katherine Baer

03/02/18

Opposition to Transportation Plan that includes paving adjacent to Bolin Creek

My name is Michael Paul, I am a PhD stream ecologist with more than 23 years of research, policy, teaching, and environmental consulting on issues related to water quality across the US and I live in Carrboro. I have authored more than 40 scientific papers, book chapters, and peer reviewed technical reports and guidance related to stream ecosystems and water quality and I have conducted applied aquatic ecological work in more than 40 states in the US. Urban stream ecology has long been an interest of mine and I am proud to say my most highly cited scientific paper and one of the more highly cited in the field of stream ecology is entitled “Streams in the urban landscape”, it is a comprehensive review of how urbanization affects streams (Paul and Meyer 2001). I am opposed to the 2045 Transportation Plan with Appendix 4 that includes paving next to Bolin Creek as an option.

More than 15 years ago, my field developed the concept of the Urban Stream Syndrome that describes the common responses of streams to urbanization, one the most common being that stream quality declines with impervious surface cover (roads are impervious because they do not allow water to infiltrate). Another, related observation is that stream quality declines in proportion to the length of roads and road crossings in a watershed. Simply put, paved surfaces are a grave threat to streams. They increase stormwater runoff, deliver a wide range of pollutants, increase temperatures, and increase rates of erosion,

among other effects. Another observation from several decades of research on urban streams is that one of the most powerful predictors of “better than expected” conditions in an urban watershed is an intact riparian zone (the riparian zone is the forest directly adjacent to a stream). Having an intact, undisturbed riparian forest adjacent to a stream can actually help protect the stream from the impacts of upstream development, and ongoing threat to Bolin Creek.

I have read with some chagrin, comments that suggest paving adjacent to a stream would “reduce erosion”, “help restore native plants”, or “improve habitat”. There is zero scientific evidence to support any of these statements. In fact, the opposite is true. Scientific evidence indicates increased watershed pavement and riparian forest disturbance leads to greater erosion, increased spread of invasives, reduced habitat quality, and reduced water quality. I do agree that improvements to the existing trail conditions to reduce existing erosion would help, but no one, professionally, would consider paving an appropriate remedy. A quick perusal of the NC State Erosion and Sediment Control Planning and Design Manual nowhere suggests pavement as a cure for erosion. It does, however, recommend a number of methods including protecting riparian vegetative buffers (See Chapter 6).

Much of my professional work is focused on supporting **evidence based decision making**. Only in Carrboro would an issue pit transportation interests against water quality interests. It’s crazy. I, myself, am a biker. I know the importance of safe bikeways. But I also have spent a career studying streams. Paving next to streams will have adverse, long-lasting effects on water quality. There are many options that can meet both interests – but paving next to a stream and threatening water quality and the fragile forest ecosystem cannot be one of them. All the evidence suggests this is a decision with very high risk of adverse environmental impacts.

I have offered on many occasions to speak to the Board on the state of the science related to the importance of riparian forests and impacts of pavement on streams. I once again extend that offer. I have presented similar science to a Chapel Hill board and would love the opportunity to speak to my own representatives.

Paul, M.J. and J.L. Meyer. 2001. Streams in the urban landscape. Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics 32:333-365.

03/02/18

Andrew,

Wanted to be sure you had all the information below in making any decision about the inclusion, or request for funding, for a paved roadway along Bolin Creek that I understand is part of the MPO plan. I am speaking on my own behalf and not as a representative as a member of Carrboro's Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). The trail will in all possibility not meet a commuter function, given lack of lighting by law in Carrboro during dawn and dusk hours, is redundant given the planned Seawell School Road bike lanes as well as wide bike lanes along Pathway Drive (both of which parallel the Bolin Creek route), and will disenfranchise large segments of our town and larger community that depend on the Bolin Creek forest for walking, nature study, jogging, mountain biking and just a respite from urban life. The area is truly our Central Park and should be preserved as such. All arguments related to transportation as well

as erosion, etc., have been questioned significantly by numerous authorities. Before any further advancement of this project, I urge you to consider Carrboro's TAB statement below, as well as conduct yourself feasibility studies about usage, safety, maintenance and cost. Much of the push for a paved path appears to be a desire to earn a Gold or Platinum Award from the League of American Bicyclists, but this should not be what drives public policy that affects the entirety of a town's citizens.

Carrboro's Transportation Advisory Board has taken the stance below in relation the the town's Energy and Climate Change Task Force report, recommending that Phases 3 and 4 of the forest (the proposed Bolin Creek paved bike roadway) needs to be reassessed as a transportation corridor, given most likely these sections will not function for commuting purposes. Specifically, as stated by our board:

"The TAB recommends the Town of Carrboro conduct an updated, comprehensive reassessment of the Bolin Creek bike-path plan in terms of the need, utility, function, appropriateness and viability of completing Phases 3 and 4. Such a reassessment should include sufficient technical information to address all related climate-change impacts from GHG-emission reduction to stream protection, and include an updated alternative-route assessment. The UNC-constructed bridge that crosses Bolin Creek, moreover, has changed the pattern of pedestrian behavior, thereby making the possibility of a paved Bolin Creek greenway at this point, it is noted, somewhat redundant."

" All current alignments, meanwhile, present practical difficulties, from topographical concerns to low-lighting in winter to issues of public safety to most likely limited commuter bike-ridership. The TAB, therefore, suggests the Town of Carrboro look at the entire Bolin Creek Watershed area, including land under the jurisdiction of its neighbors, Chapel Hill and UNC, with the intention of being complimentary with Chapel Hill's greenway plan."

"The TAB suggests the completion and possible paving of the Bolin Creek path appears to be overemphasized in the report and does not integrate that well with current and specific planning related to various segments of the Town's bike-pedestrian efforts as discussed and weighed in on by the TAB. The costs, moreover, have yet to be defined. Given the controversy surrounding this matter, the TAB believes it to be beyond its purview to resolve this matter without more substantive background information, and believes a facilitation process may be required once the needed reassessment is completed."

Thank you,
Linda Haac

03/02/18

Dear Carrboro Board,

I attended the meeting the other week about adding the paved Bolin Creek Trail to the MTP, and since there was not public comment, I am writing my thoughts here. Thank you for the opportunity!

There are three items to consider as you evaluate how you would like to proceed on a north-south bicycle connector. Science, transportation purpose and need, and community input. All three of those will guide you to pursue a Seawell School alignment and to abandon the extremely contentious creekside paved trail that has divided Carrboro for far too long. Accordingly, please remove that paved creek trail reference from the MTP's Appendix 4 since there has not been any public discussion of that item.

Science tells us there shouldn't be clearing and pavement next to riparian areas. Loss of tree canopy provides more sunlight, more invasives and warmer creek water which degrades an already severely impaired creek. Also, as evidenced by the greenway along Umstead, pavement adjacent to a creek will be severely flooded, even more so with climate change. With that flooding will come scouring and that greenway will perpetually need maintenance, as Chapel Hill has already experienced. Further, the wonderful community led efforts to remove invasives are focused in the Chapel Hill Greenway between Airport Road and the community – why? Because that tree canopy was removed.

The purpose of a greenway should connect important community hubs. The Chapel Hill School complex, Carolina North and Carrboro should be connected. Why is Carrboro building a greenway along the creek that will funnel users to Chapel Hill instead of supporting downtown Carrboro businesses? As your planner noted the other night, a greenway along the rail corridor would be accessible and drive traffic into downtown Carrboro. Not University Mall. A greenway alongside Seawell road is the first step. The more difficult task is how to connect from where the greenway would cross Seawell and then get into Carrboro. Given the success of the Libba Cotton trail, I believe it is doable. Talks with the University and the rail company could produce a win the town would be lauded for. A paved trail along the creek does not connect hubs and will be more expensive to build and maintain. Also, Carrboro neighborhoods along the creek go to Carrboro Elementary School and McDougle Elementary School and to McDougle Middle School. Students bike currently to those schools on the neighborhood roads that are wonderful bike corridors themselves. The students in these neighborhoods are not districted to Seawell Elementary as it seems the Board may suggest by saying that students will need a paved creek trail to bike to school on. A small handful of Carrboro kids in the Bolin Forest neighborhood are districted to Smith Middle School and some bike on the current creek trail. Kids are accustomed to using the dirt trail for recreation and the few who are districted for Smith get to school using the trail do so already as so many other bikers already are doing!

Finally, the more elusive community input issue. First off, baking a creekside trail into a transportation plan when you all said there would be a community process to decide the future of Bolin Creek does not reflect Carrboro values of inclusion and democratic process. The board pledged, after the 1B fiasco and cost overruns, that any further talks of a creekside paved trail would be only after an open community process. What changed? I frankly am still smarting that you all shut down our youth on that issue, despite a compromise route was in fact possible. Apparently, the threat of lost funding there was a red

herring as that project still labors on well beyond what was presented at the time. What other issue has brought that many kids to repeated BOA meetings speaking with such passion? Our youth need encouragement in dismal times for them (As I write, I just received a message of an air pistol at Chapel Hill High School). Please provide that for them by showing them their voices matter and not running roughshod over them as you did over the cross country course trail issue.

Given that PH Craig will be clearcutting a large portion his property, you are going to have a community fed up with environmental destruction – which will be exacerbated by deciding to pave along the creek. I urge you to not ignore science, sound transportation linkages and an outpouring of community opposition to a creekside paved route. Please remove the paved creek trail from Appendix 4.

Respectfully,

Tom Cors

03/02/18

I live in Carrboro and bike across Bolin Creek every day on my way to work at Seawell Elementary school. There is absolutely no need to make any further changes to the Bolin Creek trails, which are already plenty accessible. Whereas paving them will cause quite a bit of damage to the already fragile Bolin Creek ecosystem.

Please and thank you!

Ciaran Harris

03/02/18

Thank you all for providing this opportunity to voice my concern and opposition over the inclusion of a paved road (greenway) within the riparian zone of Bolin Creek in Carrboro's MTP. Baking in such a route, a paved road in the riparian zone would jeopardize the overall legitimacy of the MTP and other stated goals of the Town of Carrboro (contained in: Vision 2020 and the Community Climate Action Plan). The reason for this confusion was that the route for creating a non motorized path to connect the northern and southern sections of town were to be determined by a public process that has not yet occurred. To even consider the hypothetical inclusion of a paved road along Bolin Creek at this point would bring into question the transparency practiced by staff and the town government. It seems to be something that the Trump administration would carry out rather than the Town of Carrboro.

Secondly, the evidence that exists currently would indicate that any paving of the riparian zone will lead to further damage of the environment and could prove costly to the town in the future as it would have to bear at least some of the costs for mitigating the damage done by paving along the creek. Any sober consideration of the science and evidence will tell you that paving along the creek will lead to further impairment of water quality in the Jordan Lake Watershed. Paving along the creek in Chapel Hill has resulted in much of the stream being listed as 303 d impaired by the then NC DEQ in 2006. Thus, there is no question that such management practices do not lead to a stream's water quality improvement. Paving the riparian zone will only increase water velocity during flooding events and transfer kinetic energy of floodwaters down stream where it will cause greater erosion and negative impacts on the floodplain that already suffer during extreme weather events.

In addition Carrboro has stated that it intends to protect unique environmental habitat within town boundaries. This riparian zone represents the last significant riparian zone that is left with the Carrboro jurisdiction. To pave here would be in direct conflict with the town's stated goals to protect such habitat. This would lead to another confusing situation that would have to be clarified by a future town government.

In addition it is important to understand that there already exist practical alternatives to this route. It should also be noted that this does not impact the High School transportation issues as "Safe Route to Schools" does not consider High School students as part of its criteria. We do not have to pay millions of dollars for a redundant road in a riparian zone that serves no purpose.

As climate change progresses with little progress made at the local, state or national level it is the responsibility of individuals to assure that our natural resources are managed correctly and human activity that affects them undergoes rigorous review. Extreme weather events are predicted to increase in the future, both in frequency and intensity, and thus we need to manage our green infrastructure (riparian zones, lakes, urban forests, rivers, sounds and oceans) in such a way that they can mitigate the energy these extreme weather events. So I am very much opposed to any paving of the riparian zone along Bolin Creek.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

Regards,

Rob Crook

03/02/18

Dear Carrboro BOA,

I wanted to voice my concern for a recent addition to the MTP which references a paved creek trail. This has been a contentious issue in Carrboro for around ten years, and it alarms me that there was no community input or process before this addition was made.

I'm sure you remember back in the spring of 2016 when my cross country team and I made several appearances at Board of Aldermen meetings because of Plan 1B. We felt excluded from the process and felt very let down by the decision that was ultimately made which led to the rerouting and re-making of our cross country course.

This recent appearance of a plan to pave the creek trail in the Appendix of the MTP feels like just another exclusionary tactic. I know that my teammates, fellow high schoolers and I would appreciate a process for us to have more input and say in your decisions. I would urge you to reconsider this addition to the MTP and look forward to more communication about this issue in the future.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Mount-Cors

03/02/18

I am adding my voice to the countless others who wish to save our beautiful stream and woods from pavement. There are several reasons:

1. I support more bicycle and pedestrian connections, just not alongside our town's cherished natural area.
2. There are better alternatives to connect the high school complex to Carolina North and the towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill. A Seawell School greenway is the way to go. (this is the best option. Period).
3. A paved path in the riparian area along Bolin Creek would jeopardize the existence of numerous birds and animals who either live in our woods and creek or who migrate through the area.
4. Let's bring it to a vote! Let all the citizens of Carrboro and Chapel Hill have a chance to vote on whether or not to save this important wild area.
5. Instead of short sighted and short term solutions requiring pavement, let's look for alternatives, such as used in Battle Park, to protect this treasure.
6. I suggest that the North Carolina Botanical Gardens (who manage Battle Park) oversee the management of our woods and creek, all aspects of this beautiful park.

Debbie Bolas

03/02/18

Andy

Thanks for your prompt reply.

In my experience in Carrboro and Bolin Forest, small items that seem inconsequential have come back to bite the community and clarity and thoroughness in all aspects of environmental protection is needed. My concern is that Appendix 4 lists explicitly “Bolin Creek Trail (off road)” and while no specifications are included, I do not believe a trail option along a creek deserves to be included for the reasons I stated. I feel we should not be including any options in a transportation plan that even remotely suggest the use of a creek trail. I request the 2045 plan be amended to remove that language.

Thanks

MP

Michael J. Paul

03/02/18

1. As seen by the failure of the connector trail over Bolin Creek by Homestead (cost overruns, excessive creekside destruction due to poor planning), there should not be disturbances next to the creek, especially a paved greenway.
2. I support more bicycle and pedestrian connections, just not alongside our town’s cherished natural area.
3. There are better alternatives to connect the high school complex to Carolina North and the towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill. A Seawell School greenway is the way to go. (this is the best option. Period). See the map here.
4. The forest is shrinking dramatically – as seen by construction along Homestead Road – we need to protect it while we can.
5. I am concerned that despite extensive public comment on this issue over the past three years specifically and large numbers of youth engaged as well in this issue, the Board has rebuffed their constituents and citizens and appears to be continuing to operate in a secretive manner.
6. Constituents and large numbers of youth spoke out for a consensus around the greenway that intersected the CHHS XC course. The BOA said that their plans would not spare the XC course due to time and cost constraints. The BOA went ahead with their plans. That project is now well beyond the schedule quoted by the BOA and town staff. It was disingenuous to say there was no time to do the project right, and now it is worse than could ever be imagined.
7. When will the Carrboro BOA listen to their constituents and their citizens? We are concerned with this evasive process and demand transparency.
8. Remove the Creekside trail reference from Appendix 4 immediately.

Kelly Stack

03/02/18

Dear Carrboro Board, Here we go again. The majority of Carrboro residents. don't want paving on the Bolin Creek trail, and we have their signatures as proof. Stream ecologists all agree that pavement in a riparian zone is bad for the environment, and bad for water quality. Foresters have long agreed that it's bad forest management to pave trails in the riparian zone. Removing the protective vegetation around the creek is a disaster for wildlife, causes erosion, and damages water quality. This is science, not opinion.

Do any of you remember the reaction of the High School students when 1B destroyed the beautiful cross country trail? They trusted you to fix the error, but when they weren't in attendance, you went ahead with bad plans and ignored their wishes.

Now in this monomaniacal desire for your stretch of pavement, you've snuck the paving of Bolin Creek back into the transportation plan. You said there would be an open public process, a transparent public process to decide this issue; how is this a public process?

There are plenty of viable alternatives that have been put forth that would not damage the environment, and would provide bicycle access for a north/south corridor.

Please remove the paved creek trail from Appendix 4.

Sincerely,
Mary Parker Sonis

03/02/18

For transit purposes, it would be a waste of federal funds to place a bike path near Carrboro's Bolin Creek. Mr. Henry's 3/1/18 response to Shelby Anderson indicated that a paved "Bolin Creek Trail" was recently re-included in Appendix 4 of the 2045 MTP to potentially (if built) facilitate non-motorized travel as a regional connection between Carrboro and Chapel Hill.

Mr. Henry: Please include this email in the MPO/MTP Comments record.

Mayor Schewel: Congratulation on your recent election! At some level, all federal transit dollars are shared. You will be appointing the Durham representatives to the MPO, which will divvy up the DCHC

pot of transit funds. Your past ownership of the Indy indicates that you have an acute sense for environmental social justice, concern for protecting the environment, and an interest in proper government procedures. The oversight of the neutral Durham reps on the MPO can provide a valuable check on local misjudgements in Orange County.

I have commuted by bike daily for over 40 years. As an avid bike commuter and an analytic person (UNC math prof), for decades I have talked with co-workers and closely read articles concerning (non-)bike commuting: Why? Why not? In 1987 when I was hired here, I mail ordered the USGS topo map of Carrboro/Chapel Hill before choosing my residence. Since then, I have acquired 30 years of familiarity with the Seawell-Bolin vicinity and with the residential and workplace patterns in CH-C. The residential starting points along Homestead tend to be at +500 foot elevation, as is the entire UNC-Franklin-Main Street corridor of terminating workplaces. The longer a path would hug the creek, the deeper into a 100+ foot hole it will descend. This would make the four mile commute to campus infeasible in this climate .. Chapel *Hill* is aptly named!

Some years ago, Carrboro Parks and Rec staff casually sketched a bike path that hugged Bolin Creek from Estes to Homestead. Since then, a small group of Carrboro Town Hall people has been determined to maintain a "grandfathered pre-existing seniority bias" in favor of this crazy concept. But dozens of the most knowledgeable people have pointed out many defects in, and many negative impacts of, this plan over the years.

A valuable window to fully-democratically update Appendix 4 of the MTP was lost last month. The purpose of the Aldermen's review and re-submission process in February was to update this long term plan to reflect current knowledge and community viewpoints. The extent to which current public input failed to be solicited was "disappointing". One knowledgeable observer said that Chapel Hill would have never re-submitted the plan without first having provided for a public hearing. Some who attended the February 20 meeting of the Aldermen assumed that they could speak. In her presentation, the staff member did not give any indication of how citizens could comment. Then there was a slight delay in responding to my next-evening e-query of how to submit comments. Was this delay caused by internal emailing .. i.e. was the provision for public comments here cobbled together belatedly? There was no publicity that I know of.

The bias of the majority of the Aldermen was evidenced on the 20th: A motion to shift the language of Appendix 4 to a less-prejudicial wording was voted down 5-2 after an abrupt end to the discussion; this curt dismissal seemed to be based upon some mysterious "freeze" pretext. The language "Bolin Creek Trail" could have been replaced (if I could have spoken) with the more neutral "Seawell/Bolin North-South Bike Connector". This would have appropriately set a neutral stage for a community discussion later this year. Instead, the people who are concerned about routes along the creek are put into the defensive position of opposing a pre-existing plan whose provenance is illegitimate.

Over the years, the rationale for paving along the creek has continually shifted. First, it was to prevent erosion. Once this was debunked, the rationale was shifted to transit and to thereby reduce carbon

emissions. One of the largest global sources of carbon is the creation of portland cement. Given what a lousy commuting route this path would provide, it's impossible to imagine that the carbon generated during its construction would be amortized in the ten or so years between the completion of construction and the start of the era of solar and shared electric car-pods. Those new technologies will render the carbon angle moot. Now that superior alternate north-south routes (such as bike boulevards or a Seawell off-road plan) have been pointed out, the current reason d'jour appears to be playing the "access" card .. appropriating concern for wheelchair-using folks to this political end, perhaps without consulting them first to hear firsthand what their priorities for public funds are.

The two wheelchair users I know do not seek paving along the creek. At least one of them has no interest because of the potential for being stranded out in the middle of woods. She would rather see a tiny fraction of the funds spent to improve her daily access within town. The topography surrounding the creek and the paucity of level nearby roads would make getting onto the trail an expensive engineering challenge, with elaborate access roads and/or ramping. (It's crazy to contemplate any aspect of this project by drawing on a merely *2* dimensional map with a magic marker: Topography is Destiny!) The handicapped parking spots at the western end of the new Umstead portion are on Carrboro's doorstep, and they provide excellent quick level access to this new portion. The absence over 30 years of suitable handicapped parking for the original 1980's asphalt portion of Chapel Hill's Bolin path indicates a lack of interest from wheelchair users; had there been sufficient demand two such spaces could have been easily created off of Bolinwood decades ago.

Paving along the creek would be socially unjust: Putting two football fields' worth of pavement along the creek will increase the severity of the existing flooding of downstream affordable housing near University Mall. It would undercut the manifold efforts over the decades of Orange county jurisdictions for preserving downstream water quality, which have sacrificed sales tax revenues to neighboring counties.

Carrboro's Bolin Creek ecosystem is still vibrant. The presence of the apex species mink and beaver along the creek indicate that this portion of the creek is still healthy. As our metro area density increases, this land could continue to provide a valuable waystation for migratory birds. Two elementary schools are quite close to the creek. As people become more and more indoors-oriented, it will be valuable to have some robust nature close at hand for environmental educators. Carrboro purports to be a "Tree City USA", and the aldermen have fussed greatly over the losses of a few trees here or there from business activities. Construction of a bike path anywhere near Bolin Creek would likely destroy hundreds of trees.

Once the UNC power plant stops burning coal (Chancellor Thorpe was aiming for 2020), the Carrboro rail spur will become obsolete .. burning wood pellets would be economically infeasible and environmentally disastrous. Since rail routes are chosen for being level, re-purposing the rail bed to become a bike path would provide a superior north-south connection close to Bolin Creek.

The only possible rationale for paving a path along the creek would be to provide for the recreation of people who don't like to walk on dirt. But such a facility would be redundant with the adjacent new Umstead portion. Hundreds of people already enjoy this natural concrete-free environment inside our town, and many more would enjoy it as-is if the Town bothered to publicize it, promote it, and to provide visible parking. This would cost comparatively nothing. This natural space provides a welcome healing respite from our urban environment. It is far healthier long term to run on an irregular dirt surface with a bit of slippage, than to repeatedly pound the joints in a repetitive foot-stopping motion. In addition to joggers, mountain bikers already enjoy the dirt road as-is: For many years there have already been plenty of bikes in Bolin Woods .. those that have appropriately wide tires!

Sincerely yours,
Bob Proctor

03/02/18

Hello Andy, Thank you for getting back to me so quickly. Could you additionally let your executive board know that the proposed transportation corridor that they want to pave in an established stopover location for our migratory birds? In spring and Fall migrating species seek out stream corridor forests for rest and food breaks. The proposed road will eliminate the riparian zone where these birds travel. Bolin Creek forest is the last riparian forest in the area, which makes it the last local safety zone for dozens of threatened species, as they make their journeys north and south.

Thank you very much for listening to these concerns.
Sincerely,
Mary P Sonis

03/02/18

Mr Henry:

I want to express to the MPO for the record my opposition to the inclusion of a path along Bolin Creek. I understand that this a long range plan but it is wrong to fund a project that is harmful to water quality and destructive to the habitat of a 400+acre forest. Much of the forest owned by UNC will be protected from development because of decades of work by area elected officials and others. Another portion of the forest was purchased with Clean Water Trust funds and is publicly owned in perpetuity. As a former Chapel Hill elected official, I participated in some of the processes listed here which were joint town studies funded by DEQ and EPA in partnership with Friends of Bolin Creek.

Primary reasons why the MPO should not spend money on this project are:

* The 2009 Bike plan, upon which we must assume the inclusion is based, was developed with little public input and is out of date. Carrboro has requested addition funds from the MPO to develop a new plan which after wide community input should be the one included in the plan.

* Jordan Lake is a water supply water supply and Bolin Creek is an impaired stream. The Town has received Federal and state grants to restore the creek, but any MPO funds spent to pave along the creek would directly oppose and undermine these efforts.

* It is well known that pavement in riparian zones raise water temperatures and increases erosion problems when placed close to creek banks which is why state rules discourage pavement next to creeks.

* Much of the Bolin Creek valley is part of an old volcanic range and in some sections the valley is so narrow that any paved surface would remove all vegetation next to the creek.

* NC DEQ and the towns conducted a qualitative survey of community attitudes which established the need for community-based watershed actions. To date Carrboro has not followed up with planning efforts based on these recommendations.

* The Town of Carrboro and other Orange County jurisdictions participated in a base-line study for the upper Bolin creek sub-watershed which established the ecological significance of the affected area and recommended it for preservation.

Thank you.

Julie McClintock
President, Friends of Bolin Creek

03/01/18

Hi, Regarding the Bolin Creek Greenway extension, I suggest locating the proposed paved section to be laced a littleways uphill from the Creek in the woods with a minimal of clearing & a very large margin of woods between the Creek & Greenway. A dirt trail along the Creek which is already present could remain in an unimproved state. This would provide a nice corridor & at the same time protect the Creek.

Thanks,
Suzy Lawrence

03/01/18

Hello, I just need to weigh in with support for a paved path along Bolin Creek in Carrboro. There are myriad reasons to favor this and almost none to oppose paving a Greenway. It would reduce erosion and improve the health of the creek. The location is fantastic and would link numerous neighborhoods with several schools. A paved Greenway would also provide a viable, safe transportation corridor for

commuting and getting to many important destinations in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. Please keep and execute this plan.

Respectfully,

Bill Bracey

03/02/18

Dear Carrboro Board,

Science tells us we should not destroy natural habitat next to riparian areas--and in a time when science seems to be increasingly under attack, I would hope that the Carrboro Board would take the lead in following scientific guidance.

We should protect our natural environment, not destroy it. Please do not pave Bolin Creek.

Respectfully,

Ted Leinbaugh OBE PhD

DCHC MPO

2045 MTP *Preferred Option* Comments

Preferred Option

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) released the Preferred Option of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for public comment on November 1, 2017. The public comment period closed on December 12, 2017. The section below compiles the public comments that the MPO received.

Comments by Email

11/01/17

I have the following comments on the 2045 MTP:

- * I would like to see the project to widen US 15-501 Bypass between MLK and I-85 advanced from the 2045 MTP to an earlier date, or at least have interim safety improvements added at the Cameron Blvd and Cornwallis Rd interchanges to extend the merge lanes for safety. I see regular and growing congestion on this route on my daily commute.
 - * I would like to see improvements to the Durham Freeway (NC 147) through downtown advanced to address current and growing congestion.
 - * I would like to see widening of I-85 from Sparger Rd to I-40 advanced from the 2045 MTP to an earlier date.
 - * I would like to see the Wake-Durham CRT (2035 version) extended to LaSalle St. or Neal Rd rather than ending at Fulton St. to better serve west Durham.
- Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Todd Patton

11/04/17

Hi, please provide rail access directly to RDU airport and RTP work areas from Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Durham. Other sprawling cities do this, we can to!
Thanks

Matthew Barton

11/07/17

To whom it may concern.

Thank you for your willingness to hear from the public. I applaud much of your aims and goals. It seems you are working to do what is best for Durham and surrounding areas. I have only a few comments, which I hope will be received in the best possible light.

My main comment: stop prioritizing cars. For over half of a century, cars have dominated our landscape. So much of our local and state budget is spent on cars and infrastructure for cars -- hundreds of millions of dollars, if I am not mistaken. Yet car-culture never brings a good return on its investment. It contributes to pollution and hurts the environment, it allows people to sit in their cars and get sicker and fatter, it prevents people from being in public together by keeping us separated in our little tin boxes, and so many other terrible things. It is now time to turn things around, to make cities for people not cars. The reason why idealized cities like Paris, Amsterdam, NY, San Francisco, Barcelona, etc. are ideal is because they do not prioritize cars but people. But it all started with the will to put people first, machines last.

I am writing to encourage you to prioritize walking, biking, and public transit, especially trains. The highways in NC are packed. As more and more people come here, they are just going to be stuffed more and more. And they cannot get much bigger. How much space is wasted by roads and parking lots? Car-culture is far too expensive and unsustainable. The way to make cities sustainable, diverse, and democratic cities is to prioritize sustainable, diverse, and democratic forms of transit. Again, this means walking, biking, and public transit. Want to know why I never go to Raleigh? Because there is no reliable, easy transit running from early in the morning to late at night? The drive into Raleigh feels like a death trap. I avoid it at all costs. But I would love to see the NC Symphony, attend the Art museum (by the way, there is NO public transit to the state art museum; what an embarrassment!), and visit restaurants and shops. A solution: a commuter train.

I know much of this is in the long term plans for the area. But why is this long term? You have been spending billions on roads for cars for decades. How about other people get a chance for a while? How about we stuff funding entitled drivers and give hardworking people who cannot afford or do not want to use cars? How about a fair and equal transit system in 5 years, not 45 years. The will is there. We want trains, better buses, more walking and biking paths (and that means separated cycle-tracks, not deadly sharrows or painted lanes).

If you have any questions or responses, please let me know. The Triangle can be a beautiful place, but there is much that needs to happen. Let's not wait 45 years. Let's start this tomorrow.

Sincerely,
Dr. Ryan J. Johnson

11/07/17

The Triangle Area RPO has the following comments on the draft DCHC MPO 2045 MTP, with regard to projects that touch the MPO/RPO boundary:

* In Orange County, TARPO staff supports the idea of improvements on NC 54 approaching the DCHC/TARPO boundary west of Carrboro, and we would expect these improvements to ultimately be based on the recommendations of the currently-ongoing NC 54 corridor study. The 2013 Orange County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (RPO portion) shows a need for future improvements in this corridor extending west from the MPO/RPO boundary to Orange Grove Road (outside the DCHC boundary). Our current CTP shows a recommended four-lane facility in this corridor, but there is a good possibility this could change based on the results of the corridor study analysis. Even though the recommendation in the draft MTP would not match the recommendation shown in TARPO's adopted CTP, this recommendation does appear to be consistent with more recent thinking about the NC 54 corridor if it primarily serves as a placeholder for the future recommendations that arise from the corridor study.

* In Chatham County, TARPO staff supports the idea of improvements on NC 751 approaching the DCHC/TARPO boundary. Please note that the 2016 Chatham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (RPO portion) recommends a future four-lane cross-section for NC 751 from the MPO/RPO boundary southward to US 64. This is in contrast to the three-lane modernization improvements recommended in the draft MTP. While TARPO staff recognizes the fiscal constraints of the MTP process and the impact this has on the ability to include desired projects in the current plan, we would request that you continue to consider a four-lane widening possibility on this road in future planning and project development decisions, in order to match up with the desired intentions on the RPO side of the boundary.

* In Chatham County, the recommended improvements on US 15-501 appear to be consistent with the improvements recommended on the RPO side of the boundary, and TARPO staff supports their inclusion in the MTP.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Matt Day, AICP CTP
Principal Planner
Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization
Triangle J Council of Governments

11/27/17

Hi. I'm 42, and a Raleigh native. Do I read this map correctly that there are NO plans to widen Hopson Rd between 54/Miami to Davis Dr from 2 to 4 lanes (with center turn lane) between now and 2045?? Or will this fall on Town of Morrisville and is out of scope for CAMPO? If there are no plans to widen

Hopson, I highly protest! This (I think less than 1/2 mile) stretch of road is a MAJOR bottleneck to traffic flow.

thank you,
David