

CTP Amendment #3

Compilation of Public Comments

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) released a 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Deficiency and Needs Analysis in June 2021 and asked the public to provide comments. This document is a compilation of the public comments received in June and July of 2021. All comments were received through email except the Bike Durham letter on the last two page.

6/2/21

MPO has placed a lot of emphasis on improving public transit and bicycle facilities. That is fine. However, the future is likely to bring a swarm of autonomous electric autos. Is the MPO anticipating that trend?

R Juliano

Chapel Hill

6/2/21

I would like to encourage the DCHC MPO to focus on:

1. Transit - improved bus transit and implementation of rail transit in the Triangle, including adding bus shelters and sidewalks connecting to transit stops.
2. Walkability - too many suburban neighborhoods only connect to minor thoroughfares with nothing but a ditch on either side. This makes walking not just inconvenient but dangerous. There are also many schools in Durham with little or no connection to sidewalk networks, meaning few kids can walk to school.
3. Small projects that make a big difference in traffic flow - left and right turn lanes, extended exit/entry ramps to freeways, smart traffic signals - the many minor projects that can help to keep traffic moving safely and reduce congestion at a minor cost.
4. No toll roads or reversible lanes - toll roads are an expensive boondoggle that the vast majority of people refuse to use, that poor and middle class families cannot afford to use, and the lanes take up valuable space that could be used for regular traffic lanes. Virginia DOT is adding miles of tolled, reversible lanes in the median of I-95 south of DC. VDOT has traded space for 2-3 free lanes in each direction for 2 reversible, tolled lanes that few people use - even when the free lanes are at a standstill. Please don't go down that route - it solves nothing.
5. US 15-501 @ I-40 - eliminate/reduce stop lights on 15-501 by adding either flyover ramps or cloverleaf ramps to enter/exit I-40. This will always be a bottleneck as long as there are stop lights on 15-501.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Todd Patton

6/3/21

Hi Andrew,

I wanted to provide public comment on transportation needs. I believe:

- We need zero-carbon transportation in Durham by 2030
- No government funds should be used to purchase any fossil fuel based transportation infrastructure starting tomorrow
- We should invest in public transportation including bike paths, buses, regional light rail
- We should invest in distributed clean energy and charging to power this transportation

Thanks,

Rishi

6/5/21

Good afternoon, Andrew!

I just went through the deficiency analysis and see that you all are working on the most important things for our RTP area! I am on the Transportation and Connectivity Board in Chapel Hill so I do try to keep abreast of DCHC efforts. From my perspective, living in Chapel Hill, I would like to see an emphasis on pedestrian safety and walkability. An area of concern for me is east Highway 54 between Chapel Hill and Carboro where there are dense student housing units on both sides of the highway and very few opportunities to cross safely. On your congestion map, it might be interesting to overlay statistics of pedestrian accidents as an additional means to prioritize project sections.

Thanks for your work,

Susanne Kjemtrup-Lovelace

6/15/21

Dear Honorable Sir;

The subject title explains it all because there is no plan in 2040, 2045, or 2050 for Northern Durham County.

Every map indicates openness, low commute time, great traffic flow where as Southern Durham County does not.

Maybe you need the congestion to plan growth projects but I believe you spread/direct growth to and into areas where no growth is happening but can occur. Thusly, relieving stress, creating more joy in a area, and greater appreciation. This inherently brings revenue and business.

Many a person knows little about the area north of Latta and Infinity Roads. A great introduction would be to mandate, advocate, and establish the building of bike lanes and sidewalks along US 501 at least from Latta and Infinity Roads to Orange Factory Road going north and south. Bike lanes running from the intersection of US 501 and Orange Factory Road to Stagville Road then northward to Bahama to Quail Roost Road to US 501 and ending there would greatly enhance the living pleasure of the area.

The revenue/taxes paid by these northern Durham residents would be send as a dollar well spent but not intrusive. This provides for those bicycle groups on the week and weekends to travel without fear.

I hope this will budgeted in present and all future planning. Hopefully we will see a Northern Durham County project listed.

Wayland Burton

6/18/21

Good morning,

Instead of having the buses travel in circles why not consider business that are actually hiring a great deal of our residents such as Fedex, Amazon, UPS , Walmart , Target etc. Use them as a base for the routs coming from different locations. Have smaller HUBs or Substations with possible park and ride to increase ridership as well. It would be helpful to have our yourh who need jobs at theses places but don't drive.

There is also so many new townhomes being built and ensuring that access to those same places and the. some is important since parking in limited in these communities therefore car usage is not as high either. Just a thought!

6/24/21

Get rid of all of the no turn right on red signs in downtown Chapel hill. It's going to be a nightmare on ball game Saturdays and weekends. Especially now that Franklin Street has gone from four lanes to two lanes. There's no reason to have those and having cars sit idling when they could move on. Backs up traffic for multiple light cycles.

Michael M. Norwood

6/27/21

Mr. Henry,

I live in SE Durham and am co-founder of the Leesville Coalition, a group of residents from Carolina Arbors, Fendol Farms, Brightleaf at the Park, the Courtyards at Andrews Chapel and Creekside at Bethpage. Our communities host over 4000 voters.

Our City Council is in the process of greenlighting 5000+ new homes in the area without any additional transportation and road infrastructure.

Using a 2017 NCDOT vehicle trip study, and combining that with the average number of vehicles per home in Durham plus the average number of trips per day per home, the area considered in the SE Durham Small Area study recently conducted by our City Planning Group will see an average of 44,000 vehicle trips per day once all the construction is complete in 2023 or so. This is madness to inflict that on 2 lane county roads especially since one of them has a fire station right in the middle of it!

The State Transportation Committee and NCDOT have told us there will not be any road adjustments until at least 2035 so it is up to the Transportation plan to develop and execute some form of area public transportation if we want those moving into the area to be able to get to work and take kids to school.

I wanted to make sure you have this information as you develop transportation plans.

As an area that was once much more rural, the sea change anticipated here needs to be much better planned than what is in evidence so far from all concerned. Hopefully your group can help.
Thank you.

Stephen Knill

[Staff note: this comment also relates to the CTP Amendment #3, which adds some new and modernized roadways in the area between US 70 and NC 98]

6/28/21

I was asked to submit ideas for transportation. Put metro card machines at local stations where customers can add money onto the card and refill it anytime instead of them having to go to the bank every day to get dollar bills for the bus. The bus should run every 30 minutes not every hour to accommodate people with all kinds of working schedule and for the convenience of elderly and disable people that may have a hard time seating in the sun for long periods of time.

The triangle is in desperate need of trains transportation which will attract a high volume of riders and increase the revenue of transit. The trains do not have to be fancy, as long as it runs properly it should be used. You can make updates for the trains as you go along.

6/28/21

Hi Andy,

Thanks for the response.

The challenge is that Durham City Council is greenlighting almost 5000 homes in the area long before the roads are modernized.

They seem to believe that people without cars will move out here from more Urban settings even though there is no transportation available.

The SE Durham Small Area Study utopian development of the future shows surban living which cannot exist without multiple forms of public transport.

There is no money for road infrastructure and we wasted millions on the aborted light rail project so I'm not sure there is a logical solution except to declare a moratorium on development here until they can match it all up.

The Mayor turned down that approach saying "we need the housing." I guess residents safety is secondary.

We're looking forward to the election this fall and expect our 6000 area voters to weigh in.

Best...

Stephen Knill

6/29/21

Hi Andy,

I was wondering whether the deficiency analysis and the model in general incorporate increases in delivery truck traffic. In our small neighborhood, I think I see at least 10 deliveries a day and could probably find news stories about the increase.

Thanks, Pat Carstensen, 919-490-1566

PS. These are separate from the Sierra Club comments, which I will send in later.

6/30/21

On behalf of the over 1000 households that are members of the Headwaters Group of the Sierra Club, we would like to make the following comments on the 2050 Deficiency Analysis.

We are glad to see that per capita vehicle miles traveled in Durham and in the study area are essentially flat; it seems we will accommodate significant population and job growth without increasing sprawl. Obviously if Durham is going to actually do what the model shows, we will need to follow up with our policies and choices, by adopting processes that integrate transportation and land-use instead of talking about it, for example.

We are disappointed that the "deficiencies" are all on roads, and there are no measures in areas the public has said are priorities. In particular, there is no indication of where bicycle traffic has no or inadequate infrastructure. Furthermore, if we are committed to equity, we need to develop measures of "equity deficiency" and perhaps make the model more granular in areas where equity is an issue to support these equity deficiency measures. Finally, we believe some thought should be put into a scenario of radical changes to meet the commitment elected officials have made to responding to climate change.

Thank you for all the work that went into this analysis.

Emmy Grace and Pat Carstensen, co-chairs, Headwaters Group of the Sierra Club

6/30/21

Dear DCHC MPO,

I am writing to give comments on the [goals and objectives](#) that the MPO has set forth for the 2050 MTP.

Some of the things missing from this are prioritizing non-car transportation modes, an integration of land use policy, and also safety and health beyond reduction in fatalities and injuries on our roads. Here are some objectives the DCHC MPO might want to consider. I am not sure I have put them in the right spots, but it seems these should be in there somewhere.

Goal I. Protect the Human and Natural Environment and Minimize Climate Change

(d) Prioritize projects that improve multimodal travel over car use.

I feel like the following should actually be goals, but listing them here as objectives

(e) Reduce total VMTs

(f) Increase transit and bicycle mode shares

Goal III. Connect People and Places

(c) Highlight areas to be considered for increased and improved housing choices near areas of jobs growth to reduce commute times and open up options for commuting.

Goal IV. Ensure That All People Have Access to Multimodal and Efficient and Affordable Transportation Choices *[query: does everyone need multimodal?]*

Insert new (c) improve bicycle and pedestrian path connectivity and improve connectivity to transit stops

Goal V. Promote Safety, Health and Well-being

Revised (a) Achieve zero deaths and serious injuries in our transportation system through a variety of strategies including design changes.

(b) Build/reallocate infrastructure for dedicated multimodal lanes

(c) Enhance and improve the safety and security of the transportation system for all users and workers

Goal VI. Improve Infrastructure Condition and Resilience

Replace (a) or add as (f) Prioritize maintenance of highways and highway assets over new construction

Goal VII. Manage Congestion & System Reliability

Revised (a) Allow people and goods to move with greater reliability and flexibility

Revised (b) Increase efficiency of existing transportation system through strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and improved Telecommuting options*

Add (c) Expand affordable broadband coverage statewide, including to rural areas

*corrected a typo

Thanks for considering, and for all you do,

Heidi

6/30/21

Hi Andrew!

Impressive work you've done to model employment and population growth, and mobility as it relates to VMT and VHT. Great stuff for the MPO and it's municipalities to start anticipating some dynamics which are going to cause some serious quality of life challenges and long commutes in a few decades.

I'm wondering if there's an opportunity here to add another dimension to planning and how you *measure* deficiencies. Specifically, VMT and VHT are measures of symptoms -- i.e. they measure the outcomes associated with planning for housing and employment that aren't accommodating people near where they will be working. But is there a way to directly measure the deficiency of housing and employment?

Is there an opportunity to add another metric in these deficiency analyses/plans, associated with the relationship between land-use housing decisions and those with land-use employment decisions. Can we begin to measure the ratio of housing built within 1.5 miles of new employment opportunities, for example? I recognize that you have to work with the data you have on hand and that it may not exist (or is standardized) across municipalities, but it seems to me we should strive to measure the inputs directly in addition to the modeled symptom of VMT and VHT.

In any case, thanks for the opportunity to provide public comment.

Best Regards,
Joe Hicken



June 29, 2021

Andrew Henry
DCHC MPO
101 City Hall Plaza
Durham, NC 27701

Re: Comments on DCHC 2050 MTP Deficiency Analysis

Dear Mr. Henry,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the 2050 MTP Deficiency Analysis. We look forward to reviewing the Alternatives Analysis, and we are excited about the additional equity measures and mode choice comparisons that will be included. We reviewed the Deficiency Analysis bearing in mind the upcoming Alternatives Analysis. We ask for you to consider the following questions of the Deficiency Analysis:


- Employment growth is outpacing population growth in all MPO counties. This places further strain on the transportation network and has implications for increased travel times, especially for those who cannot afford to live in close proximity to “mode-rich” areas.
 - How does the correlation of population growth to employment growth impact Goal 3.B (zero disparity of access to jobs, etc)?
 - How can the data better address demand and travel of employees using non-vehicular modes, specifically in support of Goal 8.A?
 - We are predicting a 20% increase in non-motorized commuting between 2016 and 2050. Which communities are benefiting from this?
 - We are predicting a 19% decrease in transit commuting. Which communities are harmed by this?
- An 84% predicted increase in bus ridership is predicted for the region while a 19% decrease is expected for transit commuting and a 1% decrease is expected in bus mode share overall.
 - Is this to indicate that regional bus routes will see the majority of this increase in ridership? Why or why not?
- The data measures in the Deficiency Analysis are vehicle-centric and do not address Goal 4.C (increase in non-auto travel modes). In addition, the results point decidedly against Goal 7.B

(more efficient transportation through TDM). There is minimal data showing the potential travel deficiencies across non-driving transportation modes, such as public transit. Vehicle-centric data metrics often fail to consider how changes in mode choice can increase capacity and improve travel times. Here we want to reiterate a previous concern of ours-- improvements for decreasing VHT generally point toward the need for measures to speed up traffic (i.e. capacity and speed). These vehicle-centric outcomes to decrease VHT are counter to Goals 1 and 4 of the 2050 MTP. We ask for similar measures in the Deficiency Analysis to be considered for other mode options, including bus, rail, and biking.

- For example, what are the 15-minute and 30-minute travel isochrones for bus service?
- What percentage of the projected population will be within ¼ mile of frequent transit or ½ mile of frequent fixed-route transit?
- How do the vehicle measures for VMT and congestion account for shifts in transportation mode choice away from driving in single-occupancy vehicles?
- Please consider using ITDP's *Indicators of Sustainable Mobility*. Two measures - block density and weighted population density - are good proxies for whether land use policies are resulting in outcomes that encourage walking, biking and using transit. This is especially important given the population projections for the region.

Thank you for considering our comments and questions on the 2050 MTP Deficiency Analysis.

Sincerely,



Carmen Kuan

Bike Durham, Board Member and Advocacy Chair