

Appendix 7 – Public Comments

This appendix presents public comments that the CAMPO and the DCHC MPO received through the public involvement process for the draft 2035 LRTP, which occurred from March 2009 through early May 2009. In addition, there is a summary of public comments received by the DCHC MPO throughout the 2035 development process that occurred over the last two and one-half years, and a compilation of public comments received by CAMPO through the public workshop process.

CAMPO Public Comments

Compilation – From CAMPO Workshops

- “Is there an opportunity for light rail being located in Clayton? If so, would it be by 2035? If not, when?” “I feel the 4% inflation rate to be conservative. How was this arrived at or determined?” -- A citizen from Clayton, NC.
- “LRTP shows improvements to Pritchard Road in Johnston County in 2035. Without similar improvements to Smithfield Road in Wake County from the county line to US64 there is no real benefit to improving Pritchard Road. A better use of the funds would be to improve NC42 from US70 business to US70 (Clayton by-pass). This would tie in with the NC42 improvements in the LRTP from US70 (Clayton by-pass) to I40.” -- Robert Ahlert, Town of Clayton, NC.
- “Presentation appreciated. Suggest rail to be Selma and Raleigh-Durham Airport” -- Jim Lee, Town of Clayton.
- “Bus route from Wake Forest to Youngsville. Northern White Street to Youngsville, then US 1-A to Franklinton. Return by US 1 (divided highway)” “Need LRT to Raleigh-Durham Airport” -- Alex Corpening, Town of Youngsville, NC.
- “Enjoy the future of the metro link through Durant Road. But will love the opportunity to capitalize on the residents of Rolesville, Youngsville, and Franklinton by creating bus transit for the metro; with stop on Capital Boulevard for each city. Two (routes) in the morning and two (routes) at night. This will definitely serve the number of people of future clients for the metro link. I find it absurd not having the light rail transit to Raleigh-Durham Airport. This airport is in full expansion of international service.” -- Town of Youngsville resident.
- I recommend accelerating rail and mass transit to facilitate projected growth along the US 1 corridor. -- Town of Youngsville resident.

Comment on Draft 2035 LRTP

Comment #1

Please review the summary of "A Light Rail System for All" in the accompanying email. The system is both plausible and can be made ready for implementation right now. The proposed dual mode system, as outlined in the article, is only the beginning of a fully developed transportation system. The main focus of this plan is to offer a method that socializes the idea, tests the market and provides data needed to further develop the product.

If, by establishing this system, we provide the same or a similar service as current car travel, commuters are more likely to subscribe. Slight changes to personal lifestyles are tolerated and the system proposed is a way of demonstrating alternative travel to some customers and gauging market results. It is anticipated that once the system is up and running, market forces would take over and drive further system development.

Note that commute times will be longer at first but the trade off is that commuters can use their rail time for entertainment or personal enhancement. It should also be understood that there would be little or no economic or environmental advantages in the early stages. But, know that if we can build a popular system it will have implications far beyond the Triangle.

I believe this dual mode system meets many, if not all, of the regional transit requirements stated in "Revised Goals Regional Transit Vision Plan" dated February 8, 2008. Let us start this process of building the system now that can deliver people and their cars near their destination.

Thank you for your time. Please call me for additional information on this project.

Chuck Piratzky, PE, PLS

DCHC Public Comments

As discussed in section 5.2 (Stakeholder and Public Involvement Processes), detailed public comments were compiled at several key points during the last two and one-half years while the 2035 LRTP was being developed and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC – MPOs' policy board) received these detailed comments. The format of this report will not accommodate a complete presentation of these comments, which would exceed two hundred pages. The two summary sections below highlight the most significant and common comments received throughout the various development steps of the 2035 LRTP.

Summary -- Main Points

- MPO-wide support for bicycle facilities.
- MPO-wide support for bus service improvements – in particular reduced headways and express routes.
- MPO-wide support for the light rail transit option.
- MPO-wide support for building multi-modal facilities.
- Carrboro and Orange County support extending light rail to Carrboro.
- Carrboro and Orange County support commuter rail in addition to the light rail.
- Chapel Hill and many citizens expressed opposition to the I-40 Farrington Road interchange. One citizen was in favor of the interchange.
- Chapel Hill and citizens expressed opposition to the Mason Farm Road realignment.
- Citizens supported improving transportation options for the elderly and disabled.
- Citizens preferred connecting Southwest Durham Drive to George King Road before Southwest Durham Drive is connected to Meadowmont Lane.
- Chatham County residents expressed support for transit connections to Chapel Hill and RTP and for road widening to address growth.

Summary -- Additional Points

- Carrboro does not support any road widening except for transit and bicycle accommodations.
- Orange County supports including private transportation providers more in the process.
- Orange County supports concentrating congestion relief efforts at "hotspots" not general road widening.
- Chapel Hill opposes widening Fordham Boulevard and US 15-501.
- The Regional Transportation Alliance supports addressing congestion on I-40 and the Special Transit Advisory Commission's transit recommendations.
- Citizens expressed concern over publicity of the public hearing.
- A business-owner expressed opposition to limiting access at NC 54 and Farrington Road.
- A citizen expressed a concern that the socio-economic projections in the Fayetteville Street corridor were too low and that as a result the plan would not accommodate the growth in this corridor.

- A citizen expressed concern over the intersection of Roxboro Road / Latta Road / Infinity Road.
- A citizen wants a new interchange at Sparger Road and I-85.
- A citizen wants Northern Durham Parkway to be built as 4-lanes.
- A citizen expressed support for wide outside lanes and accommodations for cyclists on public transit.
- A citizen expressed support for improving bus service in the short-term to build ridership for rail when it is eventually built.
- Citizens expressed support for local revenue sources including the sales tax, vehicle fees, vehicle miles traveled taxes, and tax increment financing in a special tax district near rail lines.

Comments on Draft 2035 LRTP

Comment #1

While the LRTP appears to be a generally well considered document, I am utterly baffled by Durham's entries in the Bus Transit section. Herein, if I read it correctly, planners apparently believe that even in 2035, 30 minute head times for bus routes is remotely acceptable. I strongly believe that it is not; it is, I would say, embarrassing for a city which currently clamors for taxation rights to build a regional rail system (which I strongly support) to turn around and treat its bus system with such neglect.

Peak head times on any standard route should never be higher than 15 minutes, and should be as low as 10 minutes for the most used routes. Regular service routes should also never drop to head times higher than 30 minutes ideally, but 40 minutes should be an absolute maximum (I understand the need for higher times on circulators and express routes).

Durham's land use plans and UDO all call for higher residential density in various areas, and a move away from auto-centric transportation. That anyone believes that we can attain this with the pathetic investments in bus transit over the next 25 years demonstrates a breathtaking lack of foresight.

Michael Bacon

Comment #2

I applaud the efforts to integrate cycling into the transportation plan rather than keeping it as recreational only. It will go a long way to alleviating traffic growth in the area. How soon is it possible for these projects to happen and how will funding be achieved? Is this perhaps another project like the Durham Bicycle Plan which we spent money on for no real forward progress, or will sufficient funds be available? I personally commute on Morreene Rd and would love to see this as a priority. Getting to American Village is made difficult because of this, and the project is supposed to have been funded for a long time now with an original completion date of 2007. Also the section of Academy Rd before University Dr - I feel like I'm running the gauntlet when I cycle down here with many fast close passes from cars. Erwin Rd between Durham and Chapel Hill is also dangerous for cyclists and needs a high priority. I'm sure it would be a very used cycle lane, as would the section of 751. Per the plan: Morreene Road / Neal Road / Bennett Memorial Road / Old NC 10 / / Old NC 10 / NC 86. This is exactly what is needed, and soon. Many thanks, and I remain hopeful that with our climate and active population we can make cycling a viable transportation alternative.

Regards, Paul Smith

Response

Paul: Thanks again for your support of improving Durham's bicycling infrastructure. Please know that we have funding for the Morreene Road project that you and I have discussed in the past and are working with the City's Engineering Dept to bring that project to reality.

Dale McKeel, AICP

Comment #3

Roads should have 12 inches of paved shoulder, outside the white line.

I am a committed recreational cyclist and commuter. I realize that city streets have their own issues, with curbs and allowing for parking. But roads such as Cornwallis, that lead out of town, would be well served by 12 inches of paved shoulder.

The connector roads between towns (particularly between Durham and Chapel Hill) will see increased use even with improvements on the limited access roads. These connector roads (e.g. Erwin Road, Old Chapel Hill Road) would look, feel, and be much safer with 12 and preferably 24 inches of paved shoulder.

Why?

1. Room for cyclists to ride and for cars to pass.
2. Room for motorists. There are many times that I see a motorist run off the road to the right side of the white line. I observe this from my bike. They usually run off the road by the width of a tire. The drop off at the edge of the pavement is sometimes severe, often causing the car to go further off the road.
3. Appearance. A paved shoulder, outside the white line, gives a much cleaner appearance, and an appearance of spaciousness. This would contribute to a feeling of security for all vehicles, motorized or not. People feel less crowded when there is a paved shoulder. 24 inches would be super, but 12 inches would be a huge improvement.

That's my two cents. -- Thomas

Response

Mr. Pafford: The 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan calls for wide paved shoulders on most higher volume rural roads in the MPO area. We work with the NCDOT to try to get shoulder widenings during road widening and repaving projects. In addition, the MPO has funded a project to provide bicycle lanes on Old Durham-Chapel Hill Road between Garrett Road in Durham and 15-501 in Chapel Hill; this project is currently under design.

Andy Henry

Comment #4

The light attention paid to light rail in this report is very disappointing. All I see is an example and definition of one technology that could be used. There is no attempt to analyze the potential placement of light rail or any proposals to deal with the complex funding issues. By 2035, the Triangle will be long overdue for a public rail system, and with multiple municipalities involved the strategic planning needs serious attention as soon as possible.

Troy Revell