

DCHC MPO

Draft CTP Comments (as of 01/31/17)

Comments by Email

11/21/16

Bill Judge, City of Durham, Transportation Department, noticed that the draft CTP is missing a Wake-Durham Street System road. The Stallings extension to create a four-way intersection with Olive Branch is in the Wake-Durham but not in the draft CTP. There are no notes on a discussion of this roadway during the CTP highway review. Staff believes that this extension would have a difficult time being publicly funded or privately built.

12/31/17

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft CTP. Regarding Mount Carmel Church Road in Chapel Hill/Orange County, can you clarify the specific projects that are in the long range plan for this road? I am aware of the current roundabout plans for the intersection of Bennett Rd and Mt. Carmel Church Rd, and the plans for the bike lanes for Mt. Carmel Church Rd on the Chatham County side. However, in the past there were plans for sidewalks and bike lanes for Mt. Carmel Church Rd from 15-501 to the Orange County line. Are these plans still in place?

If not, I urge you to consider adding sidewalks and bike lanes to Mt. Carmel Church Rd because of the pending future growth in traffic in this region. Today this busy and dangerous road has no shoulders yet it is well-traveled with bikes heading to Jordan Lake or UNC. It is within walking distance to Southern Village, UNC, the Morgan Creek and Fan Branch trails, Merritt's pasture, and the future Obey Creek development, yet there are few pedestrians because there is no place to walk along the side of the road. Pedestrians can't access the nearby bus locations, so they must drive and park in the park and ride in Southern Village in order to take the bus into town-- time, parking space limitations, and carbon emissions that could be avoided with a safe walking route to the bus stop which is less than a mile away.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kirsten Rieth

12/31/17

In this urban area or 77 square miles, the population cited below is very well served by a mass transit system built over 100 years supported by major manufacturing and commercial industries. The density cited below is lower than it was when the systems were built. Systems interlock with suburban transit throughout the county. When the urban area was 6th in population in the US and had employment for

all, it could afford the transit types associated with cities. Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area is too large, density too small, governments too disassociated fiscally to handle such systems. Serving hinterlands (counties) with less population than one suburb in the previously mentioned urban area is financial folly. Promoting a transit line to one of the least populated counties in the state with a very low gross revenue is another bad idea, supported, I am sure, by political weight, but not common sense.

In short, no to plans as mapped and promoted at the websites below. Focus development efforts on improving existing systems in each town in the Triangle. Make them profitable before taking state money for losing propositions, without sustaining density, and riding entirely on a wave of ignorant bliss from a period of growth without stable, mature demographics and economies.

- Density 5,107.0/sq mi (1,971.8/km²)
- Urban 1,780,673 (US: 25th)
- Metro 2,064,725 (US: 31st)
- CSA 3,501,538 (US: 15th)

Tom Glendinning

formerly Triangle J committees, Chatham Planning Board, Chatham Tax Boards, etc.

01/01/17

I live at 109 Hunters Ridge Rd in Chapel Hill (off Parker Rd, which is off Mount Carmel Church Rd).

I was reviewing the Comprehensive Transit Plan on the DCHC MPO website, and noticed something odd about the current assessment of Mount Carmel Church Rd on the Pedestrian & Multiuse Path map. Screenshot below with a red circle around the segment of Mount Carmel Church Rd from Parker to the existing multiuse path at US 15 501).

I'm not sure if I'm reading this map correctly, but I believe this map says we recommend pedestrians walk along Mount Carmel Church Road. In my opinion, I would never walk along this fast, winding road, that has no shoulders, a high speed limit, and dozens of blind turns. I have also never seen anyone walking along this road, because most folks have the common sense to not walk along a very fast road with no shoulder. I actually laughed when I saw the classification of "On road, Recommended." Mount Carmel Church Rd is no place for pedestrians in its current state.

I would love to be able to walk or bike from my own home to the multi-use path at the intersection of Mount Carmel Church Road and US 15 501. However, under the current CTP, this will never be possible, because it appears you are mis-classifying Mount Carmel Church Rd. This road needs either a paved additional bike lane, or a trail/sidewalk added along one side. Otherwise, it is not safe to be on that road unless you are in a car.

Let me know if there is any additional way I can help advocate for a sidewalk or trail along this segment of road. I think it'd be beneficial to the health of our community and encourage more walking and biking into downtown Carrboro and downtown Chapel Hill from areas currently inaccessible that way.

Thanks,
Rosie St. Germain

01/03/17

I am a resident off of Mt. Carmel Church Road in Orange County and have comments on the plan. There are currently no sidewalks, bike lanes, or useable shoulder on this stretch of road. I cannot safely walk from my neighborhood (Hillside Drive) to the next street (Old Lystra Road, which is under a half mile). The easement is a ditch on one side and a poorly maintained dirt hill on the other. The only way to travel is in the road. When I say "in the road" I mean literally this - in the same space where cars are driving by upwards of 60mph, without regard to the speed limit. Additionally, there are blind spots due to the curves and hills on the road making the problem worse. Drivers do not help - I routinely get honked at or have headlights blinked to pull over, however there is nowhere to pull over to.

I travel this road by multiple means of "alternative" transportation - foot, bicycle, and moped, in addition to a standard vehicle. At least 10 times a week I travel this road on something other than a 4-wheeled vehicle. I know others in my neighborhood that have the same issues, particularly with those with teenage children who travel to high school. I would love to take my child out of the neighborhood without a car, but this would be anything but safe in the current condition. In an area where alternative transportation is prized, this should be addressed as a key component.

My recommendation would be to provide at least full shoulder with a curb and sidewalks. This is the only way to provide safety to pedestrians. If this is not possible (due to cost, space) I'm interested what other ideas there are in addition to a shoulder. Roundabouts, speed tables, flashing lights, etc?

Thank you for your consideration,

Chris Sherman, Crestwood Lane

Additionally, I love the Buck Branch Trail project!

01/03/17

I live in Orange County, at the intersection of Parker Rd and Hunter's Ridge Rd. I would like to voice my support for the Ashe Place Bridge Project. I see the current status is Recommended. This bridge will connect a large community to Chapel Hill. Currently no safe route for bicycle travel exists from my

house into Chapel Hill. Mt Carmel Church Road is the most direct route and is a very dangerous road for cyclists.

In addition to the Ashe Place Bridge Project, I would like to propose sidewalks and/or a separate, off-road bike lane or path along Mt Carmel Church Road. I drive on this road everyday and I feel very unsafe passing cyclists on this road. Traffic is often obstructed by the inability to safely pass a cyclist. I never ride my bike on this road, but I would love to be able to do that safely.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ben Redmon

01/20/17

Dear Mr. Henry,

My family and I reside near downtown Durham. We moved here from Atlanta and have been concerned by the rapid uptake in car traffic in Durham and the Triangle. We ardently support the Light Rail project and hope that you will too. Thank you.

sincerely,

Tammy Wells-Angerer
Durham, NC

01/20/17

Dear Andrew,

My name is Jeff Herrick and I live in Carrboro, NC in Orange County. I am writing in support of keeping the Light Rail project between Chapel Hill and Durham in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. I believe that this project will have many benefits to our community through time. First of all, it will take cars off the road lowering vehicle air pollution emissions, reducing traffic and take pressure off of expanding roads. It will also have the benefit linking 2 of the biggest employers and create opportunities for transit-friendly development along the route. Young people in the workforce will be attracted to our community with the light-rail available. I am very much looking forward to seeing the light rail project come to our community.

Thanks for your time,
Jeff Herrick
Carrboro, NC

01/21/17

I have heard that the CTP review period is open so I want to express my support for the Durham Orange Light Rail plan. I have followed this with excitement for several years.

I think the DOLRT will provide an important service for me and my family by giving us easy, car-free access from Carrboro (on the J bus!) to Chapel Hill and then on the LRT to Durham. It even opens up Amtrak service to the whole country. Please keep this a priority for NC state government.

Michael Adamson

01/21/17

Good morning,

I appreciate your time reading this message. I write to express my disappointment that for the past couple of years local and regional transportation departments have focused on the ill-advised "LRT" project, instead of on the services currently under their charge. For instance, the GoTriangle (or whatever it's called now- they're not exactly brilliant brand managers) website has not functioned correctly in two years- how is this in any way acceptable? Also, is there a difference between DATA and GoDurham? If not, why are there two different looking buses?

A few years ago, local marketing efforts for mass transit/alternative commuting were some of the best in the nation. I remember "It's Easy, Baby", "As the Bus Stops," and a super funny and engaging social media presence. The website worked great, getting people on the buses was the primary focus, and services were expanding, not dissipating. Despite several people having transferred from NCDOT to GoTriangle (with obscene and [unwarranted raises](#)) the quality of the services, resources, and output from that agency has frankly been abysmal. As a Durham taxpayer, I'm incensed that I may be called upon to shore up funding for a project that the current management at GoTriangle would, given their track record of letting bus services and branding activities decay on their watch, bungle completely. Please, do us all a favor, and reject the LRT. Further, do something about the abysmal performance of GoTriangle management, and their (to me at least) race-based preoccupation with light rail.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Beeker

01/21/17

Hi Mr. Henry

As a Durham Resident whom recently bought a home here and is here to stay, I think the LightRail project is essential to the Triangle Community! As a healthcare provider, I would absolutely love to use the lightrail to work at UNC or Duke in the near future! The Triangle community is severely lacking in public transportation and the roads are getting much too clogged (especially the 15-501 corridor). I do

everything I can to avoid going to Chapel Hill because it is an absolute nightmare. My hope is that the lightrail project will help ease the traffic burden and may even bring my business to Chapel Hill!

Please make sure that it remains on the "funded projects" list. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to ensure it come to fruition!

Thank you!

Tara Hanaway-Quinlan

Proud Durham Resident!

01/21/17

Hi Andrew. Thank you for your help. As I mention during this week's MPO CTP session, our local community has been unable to get traffic analysis / traffic count for Downing Creek Parkway (unsignalized) and Littlejohn Road (unsignalized). All of the studies to date have tended to end at Barbee Chapel (from Orange County) and Huntingridge / Falconbridge (from Durham County). We seem to fall thru the cracks between each of the counties.

We have repeatedly asked various organizations including NCDOT, Durham City / County, Orange County, Town of Chapel Hill and GoTriangle to assess traffic counts and traffic analysis for these two intersections. These are of particular concern due to the challenges of merging onto NC 54 highway, and we are concerned that this problem will only increase with the introduction of DOLRT at-grade crossings. It is anticipated that there will be 150 daily train crossings where the train will pre-empt other vehicles. With 40 to 60 seconds per train crossing, this will be 150 minutes (or 2.5 hours) of delay during the 18.5 hours of DOLRT daily operation, which we estimate will further constrict daily traffic flow at these intersections by 10%.

So would appreciate any help you could provide on traffic counts / traffic analysis for these two intersections.

Sincerely,

Alex Cabanes

01/21/17

Hi Andrew, I wanted to follow up on our earlier discussion and share a few items on anticipated impact of autonomous vehicles on traffic congestion.

Here is a nice short video that talks thru causes of traffic congestion, and then how autonomous vehicles could help address this issue.

- YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHzzSao6ypE>

- TED Talks: [What a driverless world could look like.](#)
- [What if Uber kills off public transport rather than cars?](#)
- [MIT: Carpooling services could replace most NYC cabs](#)
- [Mathematical study shows exactly how big an impact ride-sharing could have](#)
- [Self-driving taxis could signal the end of car parks](#)

Here are some articles and studies that also explore the impact of AV on traffic congestion.

- <https://smarttransitfuture.org/2015/08/28/future/>
- <https://twitter.com/NC54transit>

According to Philippe Crist, an economist with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *"Fleets of shared, self-driving vehicles could indeed remove nine out of every ten vehicles on city streets, eliminating the need for all on-street parking and 80% of off-street parking, according to a recent study by the group."* — [Urban Transit's Uncertain Future](#)

The rise of a "taxibot" may further reduce the need for car ownership and enable the sharing of vehicles that make shared, self-driving vehicles possible. According to Emilio Frazzoli, head of Future Urban Mobility for the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology *"You couldn't have imagined this ten years ago when people didn't have smart phones and mobile computing was not available. Now you have this ability to connect and book a car. You see it with Uber and the proliferation of taxi booking apps or public transportation schedule routing apps, and this is at the same time you have autonomous vehicle technology that is evolving. You can marry the two."* — [Urban Transit's Uncertain Future](#)

Also, the technology is quickly advancing as seen here:

Imagine a company like Uber or Lyft using self-driving cars and a mobile app to provide point-to-point transportation. So instead of your going to the transportation system (DOLRT station), the transportation system (Uber) comes to you! Just use your mobile app, select your destination, schedule your pick-up time and you will be taken from your front door directly (or even [carpooling](#)) to your destination. This would help eliminate the waste of unnecessary side trips, parking, platooned with coordinated traffic signals.

Uber and Gilt are selling passes for [unlimited uberPOOL](#) rides in New York City. *"The deal is being called a "commute card" and can only be used Monday through Friday during commuting hours (7-10am and 5-8pm) in Manhattan. These are the same hours during which Uber offers \$5 flat rate uberPOOL rides in NYC. As a refresher, [uberPOOL](#) is Uber's carpool product where the company matches you with riders headed the same direction ... this deal means commuting in an uberPOOL is cheaper than taking the subway."*

Uber and Lyft are looking beyond competition with traditional taxi services. They may be creating the first practical, affordable personal rapid transit (PRT) systems that will [compete with buses](#). In 2014, Uber launched [UberPool](#), enabling multiple parties to share a ride along similar routes. The following year, the company announced [uberCOMMUTE](#) in China, which they described as "carpooling at the press of a button." In the U.S., it's being tested in Chicago. Then, in December, Uber launched [uberHOP](#) in Seattle, which operates along pre-selected commuters routes.

Virtually all mass transit systems are publicly subsidized. Farebox revenues rarely cover more than 50 percent of expenses, which are labor and capital-intensive. In Pinellas Park, Florida—a Tampa suburb—has just replaced two bus lines with Uber service, subsidized to the tune of \$3 per ride. It's cheaper than running the buses. The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority budgeted \$40,000 a year. Running the two bus lines cost four times as much. — [Uber and Lyft Revolutionize Public Transit](#)

Alex Cabanes

01/22/17

The Durham-Orange Light Rail Project will have a positive long term impact on our community by reducing traffic, improving the environment, and providing affordable transportation options to all of our community members. This is an important aspect of the region's economic growth moving forward and is therefore an important aspect of community planning moving forward.

Please include the light rail in the CTP. Thank you.

Cindy Frantz

01/22/17

I would like to see the "light rail In the CTP" happen sooner rather than later. North Carolina is growing in leaps and bounds. Durham is becoming a popular community to live in and young people are moving here in the area. Our traffic situation is becoming a nightmare with our roads heavily traveled. The light rail would be so beneficial in our area and those towns close in proximity. Let's make it happen! Thank you for all your efforts.

Sandy Martin
Durham Resident

01/24/17

Hello,

I'm writing in support of the overall plan, with a request that particular attention be paid to pedestrian/bike crossings of 15-501 bypass at Morrene Road and Hillsborough Road/US 70 Business.

There appears to be a high concentration of pedestrians and bikers passing through the intersection of 15-501 and Morreen Road. The traffic light at the southbound offramp to Morrene deserves pedestrian controls and crosswalks, and a continuous sidewalk and/or bike lane from (at least) Campus Walk to (at

least) American Drive. In particular, just west of the traffic light at Morrene/15-501 SB ramp there are two factors that currently appear dangerous:

1. Morrene Road narrows just before American Drive, where many bike riders prepare to turn left while navigating a tighter squeeze into traffic, creating a dangerous situation where cars try to pass
2. A bus stop on the North side creates frequent pedestrian crossings away from the intersection.
3. There is little space to walk on the north side of Morrene between the edge of pavement and a drainage ditch.

There is frequent a confluence of pedestrians, bike riders, cars and buses all trying to pass through this section and daily near-misses.

Similarly, creating a continuous sidewalk on Hillsborough from Neal to the bridge over 15-501 would provide an alternate pedestrian path across the freeway. For the residents and workers west of 15-501, in and around American Village, there is no safe pedestrian or bike option for crossing 15-501.

I am also strongly in support of the continued development of the city-wide off-street multiuse path system, particularly completing the connection along Ellerbe Creek between Guess Road and Stadium Drive, and North of Horton Road to West Point on the Eno park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joe Fitzsimons

[Staff provided Mr. Fitzsimons with information on the TIP project that will construct bicycle lanes and sidewalks on Morrene Rd, from Neal Rd to Erwin Rd, in 2018]

01/25/17

I wanted to write to advocate for light rail here in the triangle and Durham!

I think we really need to have it to support our growing population. As more and more people move here we are going to need good, clean, public transportation alternatives.

They will lessen the traffic burdens, as well as the need for parking, and will make the area more attractive for tourists and businesses.

thank you!

Laura Ballance

01/27/17

This will follow up on some of the ideas we discussed at the session on Tuesday

1. Add at least one midday express bus esp between Durham and Raleigh
 2. Light rail on exiting rail line between Durham and Raleigh
 3. Realign the 4 bus route so it goes through downtown (turn left on Seminary then right on Mangum)
- Daniel F. Read
-

01/28/17

Hi Carrboro Planners,

I am a resident of Carrboro, and have a comment on the long-range transportation plan. We need to plan for, and add, more electric vehicle charging stations throughout Carrboro. I am a new EV driver, and strongly advocate everyone to get EVs for reduced emissions and lower car ownership fees. But our town needs MORE charging and parking spaces for EVs if we want to encourage and maximize the benefits that this new form of transportation can provide.

Besides the 4 charging spots in the one lot on Roberson St. Carrboro has ZERO electric vehicle charging stations. This is FAR behind Chapel Hill and Durham in their adoption and support for EV transportation.

Please add this to the long-range plan. Even if not building charging stations directly, at least some incentives for EV spots on private property would be an important component of our long-range transportation plan.

Thank you,

Nicholas Johnson

01/30/17

Hi,

Thanks for soliciting public comments on the long-range transportation plan. I like what I'm seeing in the draft plan! One thing that seems to be missing is a plan to set up more public charging stations for electric vehicles. Although this would not just be for public transit but also for private vehicles, I think adding more stations would really help to show our region's commitment to greener energy technologies. Bonus points if some of the charging stations can be powered with solar and/or wind!

Please let me know if you have any questions about my feedback.

Thanks,

Anne Johnson, Carrboro Resident

01/30/17

Dear Andy and Julie,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Durham-Orange LRT project and urge that it remain in the CTP. We have no other good option for dealing with our growing transportation demand between the Durham and Chapel Hill communities, and the DOLRT will promote wise land use and have significant environmental benefits.

Thanks for your work for our transportation challenges.

Wib Gulley

01/31/17

Hello, I'm a resident and business owner in Carrboro. I really support the multi-modal focus and the detailed effort that has gone into putting this plan together. However it seems invalid to call this a 25-30 year plan and not address in some way climate change and energy depletion. I would think at a minimum that you would want to show how priorities could change when if the focus shifts to reducing carbon and minimizing energy spent on construction and maintenance. Even in our university-heavy region of the state, people still have trouble translating what the science says into regional impacts and so showing the possibilities in a detailed plan like this could be very helpful. I've moved all my local cargo via utility trike and electric truck for years now and have learned something about the opportunities, but also the limitations of a reduced energy future.

Thanks for considering my comments,

--Abraham Palmer

Comments by Comment Form

Serious concerns that the proposed LRT, which would serve a very limited population, would use transportation dollars needed for the region. The BRT option would be more cost effective, serve more people, and be more flexible for future growth.

Downing Creek community is adjacent to NC 54. We have repeatedly asked Chapel hill, Durham MPO GoTriangle and others to please look at traffic counts for Little John and Downing Creek Parkway along NC 54 but all traffic analysis stops at Barbee Chapel in Orange and resumes at Huntingridge/Falconbridge in Durham ignoring Little John and Downing Creek. PLEASE do a proper study of these roads and publish publicly.

Alex Cabanes

[Staff forwarded this comment to GoTriangle and they sent manual traffic counts from April 2015 for the NC 54/Little John, Stancell Dr/Little John, and Stancell Dr/Downing Creek intersections. MPO staff forwarded these counts to Mr. Cabanes]

The light rail project, which only has 3 stops in OD, must be stopped and Orange County money that would have gone there needs to go to public transportation that will serve all of Orange County, including seniors, rural residents of OC, people who don't want to travel from UNC hospitals/campus to Duke/NCCU. Let UNC take on the cost requested from Orange County.

More bus rapid transit and subsidized projects (like uber for public transport) that are flexible (and not stationary) should be featured in the CTP.

We also need public transportation from various parts of Orange County to RDU.

The frequency, connections and time (evenings, weekends) of buses need to be expanded and improved.

High Priority Offroad Bike Paths

1—Connector from Merritts Pasture to Kings Mill Road in Morgan Creek, Chapel Hill. Needed to connect with Southern Village. This is a serious safety issue! Currently, bicyclist and pedestrian must travel on Fordham Blvd. A very dangerous road for bicycle and pedestrians.

2—Bridge from – Bayberry to NC botanical Gardens. This will connect this isolated neighborhood.

3—Offroad path from Merrit Mill to Fordham Blvd. with grade separation crossing. Many people cross Fordham Blvd. each day here and this is extremely dangerous. The off road path is needed to connect to downtown and Chapel Hill and Carrboro.
