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LOCAL

Moooving violation: NC transit system ‘udderly sorry’ after cow causes bus delays

BY JESSICA BANOV

MARCH 29, 2023 8:40 PM





This is a cow in Chapel Hill. But it is not the cow that wandered into the road and stopped a bus from traveling on March 29, 2023. SCOTT SHARPE ssharpe@newsobserver.com

Holy cow.

What happens when a suburban transit agency notices bus delays are being caused by a bovine in the road?

A social media account milks the encounter for all it's worth — and some Twitter users are over the moon to put their own cow puns out to pasture.

At 12:53 p.m. Wednesday, [Chapel Hill Transit tweeted](#): “We’ve been made aware of a cow in the road on Old Fayetteville. Your bus may not be moooving on time, but we suggest you take your beef up with the cow. We are udderly sorry for any delays.”

The [CM](#) and [F](#) routes were affected by the mooing violation, [as first reported by Chapelboro](#).

Old Fayetteville Road is in the western part of Carrboro. The CM route winds through town, with stops on South Merritt Mill Road. The F route starts at the Jones Ferry Park and Ride Lot before stopping on Old Fayetteville Road, eventually making its way through Downtown Carrboro and Chapel Hill and ending up near University Place.

While the steaks were high, at least for those on the bus who had places to go and people to see, Twitter beefed up its cattle calls.

“Couldn’t you just ask her to moooooove over?” a [user named Irina](#) asked.

“Are we moo U now?” TJ chimed in.

Another user noted the Carrboro road rural land on one side and dense apartments on the other, while [@BikeDurham confessed](#), “Not likely to see this happen in the Bull City!”

The whole episode was over by 1:20 p.m., when Chapel Hill Transit announced: “The cow is home safe.”

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools still jumped into the fray, retweeting the update with [“Have you herd?”](#)

But by then, it was like a cow’s opinion.

[It was moo.](#)

Chapel Hill Transit
 @chtransit · [Follow](#)



 CM & F: We've been made aware of a cow in the road on Old Fayetteville. Your bus may not be moooving on time, but we suggest you take your beef up with the cow. We are udderly sorry for any delays

12:53 PM · Mar 29, 2023
 

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JESSICA BANOV




 919-829-4831

Jessica Banov is a breaking news and features editor. She is the Mid-Day Breaking News Editor for McClatchy's Southeast region. She oversees coverage of entertainment, the arts, food and dining for The News & Observer and The Herald-Sun. She is the News & Observer's intern program coordinator.



FOOD & DRINK

Food Lion launches exclusive 'Roarin' Ranch' flavored Doritos. How do they taste?

BY KORIE DEAN AND DREW JACKSON

MARCH 31, 2023 2:13 PM



The chips -- which even have a cool lion on the bag -- are available at only Food Lion grocery stores while supplies last.

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WAKE COUNTY

DOT Allegedly Failed to Set Targets to Reduce Driving, Required as Part of Settlement Over Wake County Toll Road

The state's transportation department has failed to live up to the environmental protection mandates outlined in the settlement, attorneys say.

by **Lisa Sorg**
03/27/2023

This story originally published online at [NC Policy Watch](#).

The state Department of Transportation has not met its obligations under an [historic settlement agreement](#) over the [Complete 540 toll road](#), according to a letter from the Southern Environmental Law Center.

The letter to DOT, dated March 17, alleges the agency has failed to set targets to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled—known as VMTs—per North Carolina licensed driver. Those targets were supposed to be in place once the results of a VMT reduction study were distributed, which occurred two years ago. SELC asks the agency to issue the VMT targets no later than June 30.

The transportation sector is the largest emitter of greenhouse gasses, a major driver of climate change, in North Carolina. More than a year ago, Gov. Cooper issued [Executive Order 246](#), establishing goals to reduce transportation-related emissions. The goals included an increase in the number of electric vehicles, publication of a greenhouse gas inventory every two years, and the development of a Clean Transportation Plan.



Sections of the Complete 540 toll road are under construction in southern Wake County. This is a portion near Apex of Rhodes Road, at the edge of the Blue Skies mobile home park. Credit: Lisa Sorg

In turn, the Clean Transportation Plan calls for reducing VMTs with more robust public transit systems, among other strategies.

However, the **Complete 540 project** is not designed to reduce the number of VMTs; it could actually increase them in rapidly growing southern Wake County. In turn, it could be more difficult for North Carolina to meet its climate goals as laid out in the executive order.

When finished, the \$2.2 billion project will connect with the existing tollway near Highway 55 in Apex, then route 28 miles through southern Wake County before joining I-440 and U.S. 64 near Knightdale.

In 2019, SELC, representing Sound Rivers, CleanAIRE NC and the Center for Biological Diversity, sued DOT and several other state and federal agencies over the project.

The settlement agreement contained many environmental protections, worth \$10 million, including the requirement that DOT explore ways to reduce the number of VMTs.



Logen Hodges, director of marketing and communications for DOT's Turnpike Authority, told Policy Watch in an emailed statement that the agency "has fulfilled or will fulfill all the items agreed to" as part of the agreement. Of the 27 items agreed to, seven are complete, two are not possible until after construction and 18 are underway, Hodges said.

The VMT Reduction Toolkit has been developed and is available **online**. However, DOT has yet to set the VMT reduction targets. The agency "continues to collect sufficient data necessary" to do so, Hodges wrote.

In response, SELC Litigation Director Kym Meyer wrote that “we cannot possibly imagine what is meant by ‘NCDOT continues to collect sufficient data necessary to set targets for VMT reduction.’”

The settlement agreement, Meyer wrote, specifically requires those targets to be set already. Yet they are not included in the Clean Transportation Plan, released earlier this year.

Meyer applauded the VMT reduction tool kit, but added that “we are disappointed in how little work has been done to share it” with metropolitan planning organizations “or to work with communities to implement the strategies.”

A VMT task force has met eight times. But Meyer, who attended those meetings, said that at none of them “did it feel like meaningful progress was being made, or even expected. ... will continue to meet and look forward to participating and executing actions that force actual change.”

“We have yet to see any progress,” Meyer added, “and we are running out of time.”

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**DURHAM COUNTY**

Durham Advisory Commission Advocates for Safer Streets

The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission advises the City Council and Board of County Commissioners on bicycle and pedestrian issues.

by **Mele Buice**

03/30/2023



This story originally published online at the [**9th Street Journal**](#).

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission wants to make Durham more friendly for bicycles and pedestrians. How friendly? Just check its list of official acronyms.

APBP - Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
 BCA - Benefit-Cost Analysis
 BFB - Bicycle Friendly Business
 BFC - Bicycle Friendly Community
 BFS - Bicycle Friendly State
 BFU - Bicycle Friendly University
 BLOS - Bicycle Level of Service
 BOT – Board of Transportation
 BPAC – (Durham) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

On a recent Wednesday evening, the Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission gathered to talk about cul de sacs, bike paths, and sidewalks.

From the comfort of their Durham homes, committee members and residents met by Zoom, discussing pedestrian and cyclist safety. Starting with a general statement “affirming BPAC’s commitment to equity and racial justice,” the committee dove into updates and action plans.

The group advises the City Council and Board of County Commissioners on bicycle and pedestrian issues. Its 18 volunteer members are evenly divided between representatives from the city and county. The group advocates for more sidewalks and bike lanes, better trail maintenance, bike racks, lower speed limits and free bike helmets, among other things.

Committee members are passionate about biking, walking and maintaining the character of Durham neighborhoods.

As Tyler Dewey, the Duke liaison for the group, put it in a recent [**interview with Bike Durham**](#), “we must build for a people-centered future, rather than our car-dependent present.”

But that “people-centered future” is only attainable with some serious action by policymakers, which gives the committee’s work potential importance.

Although the board had a full agenda for this meeting, none of it was particularly controversial—roll call, safety lecture, infrastructure bonds descriptions, and the like. The most lively moment came at the beginning, when Durham resident Brittany Mosesso spoke during the citizen comment period.

Mosesso and her husband have two sons, 1 and 3 years old. She had come across the committee's website while seeking answers to concerns about the safety for children in her Hope Valley neighborhood. She said she wanted “nicer ways to move around [her] community that doesn't involve adding more cars on the street.”

Mosesso said she sometimes felt “trapped” in her cul de sac off of Dixon Road because of speeding cars. Most don't follow the 25 mph speed limit, and the road lacks a shoulder, sidewalk, and bike path.

Mosesso said when she thinks about the dangers, “that's where I really get the fire in me.”

She wondered if she should join the committee to represent other “complaining moms.” After the meeting, she was invited to a subcommittee meeting and given roughly an hour to discuss her concerns and potential solutions.

Joined by city representatives, the group gave her connections and recommendations. Although sidewalks are pricey and can take years, the group gave her ideas about establishing walking paths with property owners and connecting with other people in her neighborhood. With enough collective interest in her neighborhood in the future, the committee would then support the new neighborhood paths and endorse them to local authorities.

She said this less-formal approach consists of “a lot of smaller steps to get towards a future state,” that gives her flexibility to work with her neighbors and create a safer environment.

Mosesso described her goals as somewhat of a “selfish ulterior motive,” but committee Chair Deniz Aydemir said that approach is needed for the group to succeed.

Aydemir said people like Mosesso are crucial to making streets and sidewalks safer. He said, “you just gotta find that advocate.”

This story was published through a partnership between the INDY and [9th Street Journal](#), which is produced by journalism students at Duke University's DeWitt Wallace Center for Media & Democracy. Comment on this story at backtalk@indyweek.com.

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DURHAM COUNTY

‘Durham Must Do Better’: Cyclists Demand Safer Streets

“The City of Durham must do better. And we need to make sure that the city knows that we do not accept these deaths and injuries as a byproduct of our transportation system.”

by **Chase Pellegrini de Paur**

03/30/2023



Cyclists rallied ahead of a recent City Council meeting to demand safer streets. Photos by Chase Pellegrini de Paur — The 9th Street Journal

This story originally published online at the [9th Street Journal](#).

At 6 p.m. on March 20, about 30 cyclists gathered near the Shell station at the intersection of West Main, West Morgan, and Watts streets. The event, organized by the nonprofit advocacy group Bike Durham, was part rally, part vigil, and part bike ride to the City Council meeting.

“I’d like to actually start off with a moment of silence to honor those who have lost their lives to traffic violence, and to all those affected by traffic crashes here in Durham,” said Erik Landfreid, the transit equity campaign manager at Bike Durham.

One of those affected people was Noah Goyette, a Durham social worker who showed up to the rally bruised and limping with an arm in a cast.

On March 3, he was riding downhill on West Main Street near Duke University’s East Campus when he moved out of the bike lane to avoid the cars illegally parked outside Insomnia Cookies and Mr. Fries Man. He swerved to avoid a pothole, hit a second pothole, and hit the ground.

“I landed on my chin, my face, both hands, and then my neck folded and I flipped down the road,” he said in an interview with the *9th Street Journal*.

His injuries, listed extensively on his [gofundme](#) page, read like a laundry list of pain – including bruised ribs, a dislocated shoulder, and hyperextended shoulder blades. He was hospitalized and had reconstructive surgery on his face.

But the injuries didn’t exactly come as a surprise to Goyette. There are often cars parked in that bike lane.



In fact, Goyette had complained about the spot to city officials months before. In December, he posted an online request through Durham One Call to demand improvements to the bike lane in front of Mr. Fries Man: “Someone should not have to die or be injured here for the city to put in at least some flexible delineators against the entire street on the bike lane line in front of that business. DO something now before something terrible happens.”

Four months later, he hit the pavement in that exact spot.

At the rally, the moment of silence was briefly interrupted by the clacking of biking cleats on gravel as a cyclist arrived late. But the sound of automobile traffic was nonstop.

“On average a person walking or biking is killed or seriously injured in Durham traffic every 16 days,” said Landfried over the din. “These crashes and tragedies are often called accidents by some in the media, by some in the police, but they are not accidents. These are the result of a transportation system that prioritizes speed over safety, and prioritizes people in cars and trucks over people walking, biking and using the bus.”

One demand of the Bike Durham riders was the appointment of a Vision Zero coordinator.

Vision Zero is an international approach to reducing traffic deaths, based on strategies like adding protected bike lanes and traffic-calming infrastructure. The city adopted a Vision Zero resolution in 2017, but has done little to implement it, Landfried said.

“The City of Durham must do better. And we need to make sure that the city knows that we do not accept these deaths and injuries as a byproduct of our transportation system,” said Landfried.

After a few other speeches, the cyclists gathered where Goyette flew off his bike to prepare to ride together to the City Council meeting.

As they clustered, a food delivery service car pulled up in front of Insomnia Cookies and parked in the bike lane, right in front of the no parking sign. The man who got out to pick up a box of cookies was oblivious to the line of bikers next to his car.

“They’re protesting this,” a woman on foot told him. “Exactly what you’re doing.”

“I’m not mad at gig workers,” Goyette said, looking at the car parked in the same spot that resulted in his recent injuries. “If there were plastic tubes then we won’t have that argument.”

Goyette and others in Bike Durham want protected bike lanes, which use barriers like plastic tubing to separate the lane from automobile traffic.

“A painted line does not a bike lane make,” Goyette said.

Goyette sees changes like protected lanes as preventative care, reducing the amount of city money that needs to be spent later on emergency services when someone like him is injured. “Firefighters came, EMS came, police came, blocked this whole street at 9 p.m. on a Friday. Is that a good financial choice for the city?”

To Goyette, the infrastructure issue is bigger than just protected bike lanes. He couldn’t cycle from Mr. Fries Man to City Hall with the Bike Durham group because of his injuries. On his walk, he paused at the intersection of Chapel Hill Street, West Main Street, and Morris Street before crossing.

“How does anybody know what to do here?” he asked. “I don’t know how people don’t die here every single day.”

A passing driver honked for no clear reason.

One of the people killed in traffic last year was Matthew Simpson, who was hit by a car while biking with his wife and two children. At the City Council meeting, Allison Simpson, his wife, urged the council to listen to Bike Durham’s demands.

“I want to honor Matt’s life and turn my pain into something productive,” she said. “Based on data from the NCDOT 2021 report there has not been a reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injury in Durham since the city adopted Vision Zero. Today I ask that the Durham City Council’s budget reflect a stronger commitment to the Vision Zero in order to make progress toward the goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injury.”

The council thanked the cyclists for their comments and moved on to other business, including a proposed annexation and rezoning in southeast Durham that attracted strong criticism from some residents. The council approved the annexation and rezoning 4-3.

Afterward the vote, council member Leonardo Williams indicated that he was open to funding Vision Zero, but he wondered about the source of the money.

“We want to fund programs that we know are working,” he said. “We want to fix sidewalks, and we want to make sure we have protected bike lanes. But no one wants us to generate the revenue to get there.”

This story was published through a partnership between the INDY and [9th Street Journal](#), which is produced by journalism students at Duke University’s DeWitt Wallace Center for Media & Democracy. Comment on this story at backtalk@indyweek.com.



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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

NC lawmakers propose doubling the renewal period for most driver's licenses

BY RICHARD STRADLING

MARCH 30, 2023 5:23 PM





The budget proposed by the House this week would extend the expiration date for most driver's licenses from 8 years to 16.

RALEIGH

North Carolina residents would have to deal with the Division of Motor Vehicles less often under a provision in the House version of [the state budget released this week](#).

Instead of requiring drivers to renew their licenses every eight years, the House is proposing that licenses granted to drivers age 18 to 65 not expire for 16 years. Starting at age 66, drivers would still need to renew their licenses every five years, as they do now. The renewal period for commercial drivers licenses would remain at five years, or three years for school bus drivers.

The budget also proposes that drivers be able to renew their licenses online every time, rather than being required to visit to a DMV office every other renewal as they do now.

The changes are meant to benefit both drivers and the DMV, says Rep. Frank Iler, a Republican from Brunswick County who chairs the House Appropriations Committee for transportation. Drivers won't need to worry about renewing their licenses as often and would be less likely to need to visit a DMV office when they do.

Lengthening the renewal period would also mean less work for DMV, Iler said. In particular, reducing the number of times people are required to visit a DMV office would help the agency make the most of its limited supply of license examiners, he said.

About a [third of driver's license examiner jobs at DMV are vacant](#), as the agency struggles to hire and keep them.

It's not clear how much money the DMV would save under the changes. The DMV wasn't aware of the House's budget bill proposal until it was announced late Wednesday, said spokesman Marty Homan.

"DMV is currently reviewing the bill, analyzing potential impacts to customers, and clarifying the bill's intent," Homan wrote in an email.

If the proposal passes and is signed into law, North Carolina would have the longest renewal cycle for driver's licenses in the country, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, a research and education organization supported by the insurance industry. In only two states [are driver's licenses good for more than eight years](#), according to the institute. Arizona and Montana have 12-year-renewal periods; licenses in 22 states are good for six years or less.

North Carolina has increased the time between license renewals before. In 1993, as a cost-saving measure, lawmakers gave drivers an extra year, making renewals due every five years. They later increased the number to eight years for drivers age 18 to 53, then included drivers age 54 to 66 in 2010.

Iler said the idea of extending the renewal period originated with leaders in the House and Senate appropriations committees. They decided to keep the five-year renewal period for drivers age 66 and older because of "eyesight and other infirmities," he said, but don't see any reason not to let younger drivers go 16 years before renewing.

"There's not a safety issue that we're aware of or that's been mentioned by DMV or DOT," Iler said. "But I know that the next legislature can make a change if something doesn't seem right or if it's not working."

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an NC vanity license plate, DMV says

Which one is most popular with vehicle owners?

JANUARY 25, 2023 5:36 PM

DECEMBER 26, 2022 6:00 AM



RICHARD STRADLING



919-829-4739

Richard Stradling covers transportation for The News & Observer. Planes, trains and automobiles, plus ferries, bicycles, scooters and just plain walking. Also, hospitals during the coronavirus outbreak. He's been a reporter or editor for 35 years, including the last 23 at The N&O. 919-829-4739, rstradling@newsobserver.com.



POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

NC House eases the requirements to be a school nurse to deal with staffing shortage

BY T. KEUNG HUI

MARCH 31, 2023 1:10 PM



The bill says registered nurses don't have to be nationally certified to work in schools.

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LOCAL

When buses become de-facto homeless shelters, what can Triangle agencies do to help?

BY RICHARD STRADLING

UPDATED MARCH 25, 2023 8:59 AM





Bus riders line up outside a GoRaleigh bus at the Moore Square station in downtown Raleigh in February 2016. GoRaleigh and other Triangle transit agencies have seen an increase in “non-destination” riders since they stopped collecting fares during the COVID-19 pandemic. STAFF N&O file photo

DURHAM

When Triangle transit agencies stopped collecting fares during the COVID-19 pandemic, a growing number of people began riding buses simply to get out of the cold or heat or to have a comfortable place to sit or sleep.

Some of these non-destination riders are homeless or have substance abuse or mental health problems and make other passengers uncomfortable. Drivers report dealing with more abusive or disruptive passengers than they did before buses were free, says Jimmy Price, GoTriangle’s manager of safety, security and training.

“Public transportation systems are faced with significant increases in the number of people experiencing homelessness, including people using public transit services as shelters,” Price said Thursday.

Price was speaking at a meeting of people from transit and social service agencies who came to [GoTriangle’s headquarters](#) to talk about how they might better help non-destination riders and improve the riding experience for everyone. The goal is to prevent or diffuse problems that might otherwise involve a call to police, said

Seaira Green, chief program officer for [Triangle Family Services, which provides support for homeless people](#).

“There may be some substance-induced challenges going on — mental health, mental illness. They’re in crisis. They don’t have the resources,” Green said. “They don’t know where they’re going because they have nowhere to go.”

Since the onset of the pandemic, the homeless population in the Triangle has increased by up to 22%, Green said. But while Triangle Family Services has traditionally reached out to people in camps, shelters or on the street, it hasn’t gotten involved with buses unless law enforcement officers called the agency about a disruptive rider who needed help, she said.

That needs to change, she said.

“We need to be involved at the onset versus on the back end,” she said. “We now recognize that.”

NUMBER OF ‘SECURITY INCIDENTS’ ON BUSES HAS RISEN

Drivers could use the help, according to transit agencies. In 2019, when it still collected fares, GoTriangle had to call police 7 times because of problems on its buses or at its stations, Price said. Those numbers have risen steadily since rides became free, reaching 55 last year, he said.

The problems caused some drivers to quit, Price said.

“Some drivers started to feel like ‘OK, maybe I need to leave GoTriangle because I don’t want to have to address these concerns,’” he said. “Because they weren’t equipped to know how to deal with them.”

Price said GoTriangle drivers recently received training for conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques to help with troubled passengers.

But that’s just a start. On Thursday, people from the transit and social services agencies traded other ideas for how to deal with disruptive riders who may need help.

They included simple strategies, such as placing placards or brochures on buses with information about shelters and mental health and social service agencies. Someone suggested putting that information on bottles of water that transit agencies could hand out on hot days.

Gary Beasley of the [Durham Rescue Mission](#) suggested that drivers be able to give out maps that show which routes people can take to shelters and other places to get help. Triangle Family Services hands out such lists, with names, addresses and phone numbers, but looking it over on Thursday Green realized that it doesn't include information about how to get to them on the bus.

"That's a missing piece that would really be valuable for our non-destination riders," she said. "We hand these out all the time, but it's missing valuable information."

PERSONAL INTERACTION WITH PASSENGERS NEEDED AS WELL

There was also broad support for Triangle Family Services and other agencies putting outreach workers or "ambassadors" on buses and in stations — people who are trained to recognize someone who needs help and offer it to them.

Rikki Gardner of [Housing for New Hope](#) in Durham said simply posting phone numbers won't be enough.

"I don't think one phone call to someone is going to do it," Gardner said. "It's going to be that personal interaction of someone seeing that other person and engaging in dialogue with them on the bus."

Triangle transit agencies [stopped charging fares early in the pandemic](#), to try to curb spread of the coronavirus by reducing interactions between riders and drivers. Emergency federal money helped the agencies make up for the lost revenue.

That money will eventually run out, forcing local governments to [find alternatives, cut service or go back to collecting fares](#). GoTriangle is surveying its riders to see how they feel about the prospect of paying again, at gotriangle.org/faresurvey.

Meanwhile, Charles Lattuca, GoTriangle's president and CEO, said Thursday's meeting was just the start of an effort to better serve non-destination bus riders.

"This is not a conversation that is going to be done with today, tomorrow or even six months from now," he said. "We're going to have to keep working on this and show folks that we do have compassion and we do see that there is need out there and there are ways to serve that need in new ways that we haven't done before."

This story was originally published March 24, 2023, 1:27 PM.

RELATED STORIES FROM RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER

Walmart changing way employees get to work



TERRA FONDRIEST BLOOMBERG

Kourtney Barrett, Walmart's director of workplace mobility, in covered bicycle parking in front of the Layout Center, one of the first buildings to be completed and operational on the new Walmart campus in Bentonville, Arkansas.

**BY IRA BOUDWAY
BLOOMBERG**

In the spring of 2022, Walmart created a new position among the roughly 15,000 employees who work at its headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas. The job, called director of workplace mobility, comes with a very specific task: Figure out how to get 10% of the retailer's local workforce to commute by any means other than driving alone.

Walmart originally set the target in the summer of 2019, a couple months after unveiling plans for a new 350-acre corporate campus. The goal was to get 10% of the Bentonville staff commuting on bikes by this year, but reaching that mark has proved tougher than expected. So last year the company pushed the deadline back to 2025, when the new campus is set to open, and hired Kourtney Barrett to help hit it.

Barrett, 42, an entrepreneur and avid mountain biker who formerly led Bentonville's chamber of commerce, has been asked to change Walmart's home office from a workplace where the default mode is driving to one where thousands of employees choose active or public transit on a daily basis.

When Walmart reset its deadline, it also broadened the terms to include walking, riding a scooter, busing, carpooling or taking any other form of transit that isn't a single-occupancy automobile. To count toward the 10%, an employee must use alternative modes two or three times a week for a year. Less than 1% of the Bentonville workforce currently meets that standard, according to the company.

"We don't have a strong active-commuting culture at Walmart," says Cindi Marsiglio, senior vice president for corporate real estate, who manages Barrett and is overseeing the transition to the new offices. "We do not have the infrastructure, the programs or the incentives to encourage you to do that – even on the loveliest days and in the best weather."

The push toward biking and other forms of micromobility, Marsiglio says, is meant to help Walmart not only cut carbon emissions but also make employees healthier, happier and more productive, and alleviate congestion in Bentonville. It's also, like the new campus itself, part of an effort to make sure Walmart attracts the best talent with a lifestyle to match what tech companies on the coasts can offer.

In its push for 10%, Walmart has teamed up with People for Bikes, a nationwide trade association that lobbies on behalf of the industry and advocates for riders. In 2020 the Walton Family Foundation helped establish the group's Bentonville office, which works with the city and businesses to expand bike infrastructure and educate residents.

Last year, Bentonville completed its first 2 miles of protected bike lanes on city streets. It also recently passed a bond initiative to fund alterations to some major corridors to make them safer for cyclists.

"We've got the recreation side more or less dialed in," says John Paul Shaffer, Northwest Arkansas business innovation director at People for Bikes. "Now how do we start to look at bikes as part of the mobility network connecting people to where they need to go?"

When the new Walmart campus opens, roughly half its employees will live within 5 miles of their work. The plan is for every employee to have easy access to bike parking, showers and lockers. At the outset, Marsiglio says, there will probably be more spots than bikers, but the company is betting on reaching its 10% target.

That confidence has allowed it to cut back on space allocated to cars. "I was able to not build an entire parking garage," she says.