

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. E(2)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: October 15, 2002

TITLE: 2025 Regional Transportation Plan Update

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___NO__X__
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Map of Connector Roads and Streams C. Connector Roads Policy D. Comments by James Carnahan E. Triangle Transit Authority Routes	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Dale McKeel – 918-7329

PURPOSE

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization is currently updating the long-range transportation plan for the region. The Board of Aldermen received a report on the 2025 Plan at its meeting on October 1, and requested additional information on the plan. A report has been prepared. A resolution for the Board's adoption has been prepared (Attachment A).

INFORMATION

At the October 1 meeting, the Board of Aldermen requested additional information on these topics related to the 2025 regional long-range transportation plan:

1. Prepare map that shows connector roads that cross Bolin Creek
2. Provide population estimates for 2025.
3. Discuss the technology to be used for high-capacity transit routes in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.
4. Analyze comments made by James Carnahan
5. Discuss the feasibility of extending the proposed TTA "Phase II" transit line down NC 54 Bypass into Carrboro.

CONNECTOR ROADS THAT CROSS BOLIN CREEK

The October 1 report noted that the regional road network used for the 2025 Plan does not include several projects that are part of the Town of Carrboro's Connector Roads Policy, including the Seawell Connector, the connector between Lake Hogan Farm Road and Homestead Road, and the extensions of Pathway Drive, Tripp Farm Road, and Lake Hogan Farm Road. The report suggested that these roads be added to the regional road network in the 2025 Plan.

In discussing this recommendation, the Board of Aldermen requested a map showing the connector roads that cross Bolin Creek. Attachment B shows connector roads and streams in Carrboro. There are four connector roads that cross Bolin Creek:

- Pathway Drive
- Tripp Farm Road
- Seawell Connector
- Lake Hogan Farm Road (already constructed)

It should also be noted that the connector roads not only appear in the Connector Roads Policy (Attachment C) but were also incorporated into the Northern Study Area Plan. The Vision 2020 document also references the Connector Roads Policy.

POPULATION DATA

On October 1, the Board of Aldermen requested the population estimate for the year 2025 used in preparing the long-range transportation plan. However, the methodology for the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan does not use population data to estimate future travel. Therefore it was unavailable. Instead, dwelling units and employment are used to estimate the number of trips in the region in the year 2025. For the base year 1995, an inventory was made of dwelling units and employment, then projections of 2025 housing and employment were prepared. The following chart lists dwelling units and employment data for Orange County that have been used in preparing the 2025 Plan.

<i>Dwelling Units - 1995</i>	<i>Dwelling Units - 2025</i>	<i>Employment 1995</i>	<i>Employment 2025</i>
40,433	58,533	37,397	68,127

TECHNOLOGY FOR HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT ROUTES

At its October 1 meeting, the Board of Aldermen requested that Town staff provide additional information on the technology to be used for the proposed high-capacity transit routes in the 2025 Plan. As the 2025 Plan is long-range in nature, the technology is not specified and there are different technologies that would provide similar transportation services.

The type of technology could be bus or rail, with light rail being the highest form. The buses or light rail vehicles could travel in an exclusive right-of-way, or they could travel on streets in mixed traffic with other vehicles. If light rail is used, the vehicles could be similar to streetcars. If buses are used, the vehicles could look like streetcars but would have rubber tires.

COMMENTS BY JAMES CARNAHAN

At its October 1 meeting, the Board of Aldermen requested that Town staff analyze comments made by James Carnahan at that meeting (see Attachment D). Mr. Carnahan commented on two items in the 2025 Plan, as follows:

1. The 2025 Plan includes a high-capacity transit route along US 15-501/Franklin Street from I-40 to the Carr Mill Mall area. Mr. Carnahan suggests that this route be

extended into Carrboro. Town staff also suggests this, and it is incorporated into the proposed resolution. Staff originally suggested that the corridor be extended down South Greensboro Street and Smith Level Road, while Mr. Carnahan suggests that the corridor extend toward Old Fayetteville Road. Upon further consideration, Town staff believes that an extension through downtown Carrboro, Jones Ferry Road and NC 54 Bypass to Carrboro Plaza may be a more feasible route.

2. The 2025 Plan includes a fixed guideway route from the UNC campus through downtown Carrboro and the Horace Williams property to Eubanks Road. Mr. Carnahan also suggests that this route be extended to connect to the North Carolina Railroad at University Station. It is my understanding that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) has considered but not endorsed such an extension in the past due to the anticipated cost and because much of the property north of Eubanks is in the rural buffer. However, the Board of Aldermen may wish to amend the resolution to request that the TAC consider extending this corridor.

EXTENSION OF TTA'S "PHASE II" LINE INTO CARRBORO

At its October 1 meeting, the Board of Aldermen requested that Town staff discuss the feasibility of extending the proposed Triangle Transit Authority "Phase II" transit line down NC 54 Bypass into Carrboro. This line currently is proposed to end on the UNC Campus in the vicinity of UNC Hospitals.

The TTA Phase II transit system is proposed to run from Durham to Chapel Hill, following a route that begins at Duke Medical Center, then moves toward the South Square area, New Hope Commons vicinity, then to Meadowmont, and along NC 54 and NC 54 Bypass to Manning Drive to UNC Hospitals (see Attachment E).

This corridor was determined through a "major investment study" that began in 1993 and was just recently completed. The study was jointly sponsored by the NC Department of Transportation, the City of Durham, the Town of Chapel Hill, and TTA. The transit corridor alignment within the UNC campus awaits a decision by the Town of Chapel Hill and the University.

The Board of Aldermen may wish to amend the resolution to request that the TAC extend the Phase II corridor from Manning Drive down NC 54 Bypass into Carrboro.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the attached resolution providing recommendations on the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan to the Transportation Advisory Committee.