

Carolina North: Don't Get Stuck in Traffic
May 3, 2009
Report-out

At the May 3 meeting, participants discussed traffic concerns and what to do about them in 5 discussion groups: (1) traffic and congestion; (2) defining our quality of life; (3) safe and green transportation; (4) public participation in transportation planning; and (5) the UNC-Chapel Hill Development Agreement.

We regrouped ideas into the following new categories which we used for the final report.

Neighborhood Safeguards

Discourage cut-through vehicle traffic

Need huge increase in police enforcement and manpower- Rogers Rd used a fast cut through, also Piney Mt, cedar Hills Drive, Homestead Rd, Seawell School, Hillsborough, N lakeshore and Stateside drive

Transit plan should focus attention on predictable "cut-through traffic" such as, Piney Mountain Road, Lakeshore Drive, Rogers Road, Hillsborough Road and Northwood Drive.

Sheltered well lit bus stop that have lights

Enforce against on street parking in neighborhoods. UNC employees will park in our neighborhood so they can walk or take bus to work

Ensure that alternative forms of transportation are provided, e.g. foot paths and significantly improved bike trails.

Public safety issues

pedestrian safety is compromised by crossing very wide busy streets;

Provide safe ways to cross wide streets

build public transit in ways kind to environment and natural areas

Make safe bike facilities

air quality will diminish with more traffic; monitor and report air quality

findings in annual report; position monitor at transit hub at Carolina North

Address light and noise pollution

School safety:

Make it safe for school kids

Plan CN so school bus routes are not disrupted

Pay more attention to planning for traffic around key times and places, especially around all public schools that will be affected by Carolina North school-time traffic.

Sewell School Rd heavily used by children and parents by traffic calming.
school busses will have difficult time serving their routes
kids and traffic don't mix – I won't encourage my child to walk to school
youth friendly way for youth to get to surrounding schools
school safety issues: walkers and pickups and drop-off
Concentrate or quarantine construction traffic as much as possible. Create very effective staging areas to minimize construction traffic. Require as much construction movement as possible to remain within Carolina North.

Moving people and methods of transport ***Plan and build infrastructure***

Build fixed guideway
We need quieter electric busses
Encourage walking and biking
Sidewalks all the way on MLK
Connect existing greenway to CN
Biking and connectivity from Estes to Greensboro in Carrboro
Don't build new car lanes – will discourage transit
Increase pedestrian and biking facilities
Need roadway crossings for bikes
Although it is expensive, expand use of park and ride alternatives.
Upgrade Bolin Creek Greenway to encourage foot travel in the Carolina North vicinity.
Consider alternative ways to get people over or under MLK Blvd and locate this access near the Transit Transfer Station.
Require developers to provide shuttle service similar to Blue Cross/Blue Shield and The Verge apartments.
Revisit policy for road connectivity

Plan holistically and include OC and Carrboro

All new housing planned within proximity to Carolina North should be included in transportation planning for Carolina North impact.

Plan should consider use of existing rails and use quiet, electric trains to Carolina North.

Could recently connected neighborhoods be disconnected for auto traffic?
Should be phases plan for law enforcement to match phased development
Need to make strategies to minimize "edge" impacts
200 units too low for housing

Widen Estes make it a fixed guideway for busses only

Build the proposed Transit Transfer Station as soon as possible.
include commerce in CN

Public transit can destroy natural areas

Essential to limit parking

Carolina Commons impact is not taken into consideration and should be part of this plan

Exclusive reliance on MLK is a weakness to plan

Public Participation

Appoint liaison officer to connect with neighborhoods. Could be appointed by Mayor and appointed each year subject to feedback from neighborhoods. Person would encourage neighborhoods to appoint a liaison to improve communication among for UNC/Town and public

Feedback loop that reacts to things that don't work as planned

Build public review into Development Agreement for key milestones to ensure public participation in trade-offs involved in transit decisions.

Meetings

- like meetings that focus on one thing

- make power points available in advance of public meetings

- Explore non-traditional formats for getting public input

- Recent meeting have shown that 3:30 works better than 7 pm- compare meeting v. town location??

- Explore ideas for a turnout by public – different meeting times

- Keep meetings focused on one issues

Make wider uses of electronic surveys to communicate public attitudes

Opportunities to re-visit transportation issues periodically

Include neighborhoods are included in the short range transit plan

Institute a method for data collection and make it transparent so citizens can see it

June 22 date looming but transit incomplete

When good ideas come up, how can Town take advantage of them? find better ways of testing and putting them into place?

Need more information earlier- need to know what the other options were that were considered in decision- public needs to know how to “twiddle” with assumptions- how do changing assumptions change impact

Make public key milestones for data collection which leads up to reports, TIA?
How will public give input?

How to tap into existing neighborhood networks?

Think outside the box for reaching people

Accountability

Paying more for personnel raises fiscal equity question

Development Agreement is coming out and transit plans are incomplete

Who pays for improvements?

No Carrboro officials showed up – where are they? Are they aware of what is happening? How will they participate in transit decisions?

Plan how Carrboro will be involved in transit decisions even though Chapel Hill is the regulatory body - need to make recommendations on the TIA, the short range transit plan

Decision points – involve public in decision on a rolling timeline to test assumptions

When gotcha happens who will pay for it?

Public need to understand the variable in a model assumption and how making changes can affect outcome

Regularly update Traffic Impact Analysis and tie to construction permits

Connect neighborhood needs to Development Agreement

Collect data to track safety and traffic over time

Ensure that new construction is supported by funding transit

We need to know how many employees we are talking about – UNC has not cited number for various phases

Need feedback loop going forward for when method does not work

Need triggers in DA to hold development static until problem is fixed

Have triggers that halt development if a benchmark is exceeded

Transit improvement done before occupancy

UNC need to pay for local police dept expansion



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