

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager

FROM: Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Assistant Planning Director  
Bill Webster, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation  
Ryan Mickles, Planner II

SUBJECT: Campus to Campus Connector

DATE: May 9, 2011

### PURPOSE

Adoption of the attached resolution would authorize staff to include a portion of segment A3 of the recommended Campus to Campus Route A in the 2014-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as a local project for Chapel Hill.

### BACKGROUND

As part of the [Carolina North Development Agreement](#), Town and University staff worked together to develop a community process to identify a possible bicycle route between the proposed Carolina North Campus and the Main Campus. The Agreement required that the staffs report on a recommended route when the first Carolina North annual report was submitted to the Town.

After a series of public meetings and data-gathering steps, the participants recommended the report and Route A option to the Council via the [Campus to Campus Report](#), completing requirement [5.16.2](#) of the Development Agreement. The background materials, public presentations and data collection results were posted on the Town's website as the project evolved.

The Development Agreement requires bicycle and sidewalk improvements on both sides of Estes Drive between Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to Seawell School Road ([5.8.17](#) and [5.8.18](#)) that coincide with the recommended Route A; these improvements will be required regardless of any further action on the Campus to Campus route. The University will continue to be involved in the current discussions about design of a Campus to Campus connector.

On [October 11, 2010](#), after the recommended route was presented to the Council, the Council asked that the Town's advisory boards consider the recommended route in the context of the various bicycle and pedestrian plans developed by those boards. The report breaks the recommended Route A into segments with a description of the type of improvements each segment would need. [Campus to Campus Report](#) (Appendix to the Carolina North Development Agreement Annual report, September 1, 2010). We asked that boards share comments on the following questions:

1. What plans or guidelines do you oversee or are aware of that could include or affect the Campus to Campus route?
2. Where do you see this route's priority relative to other Town projects?
3. Are there specific projects that could include portions of the route or be replaced by the proposed route?
4. Do you have any general comments on Route A?
5. Do you have any comments or suggestions on the proposed implementation steps below? (from the Campus to Campus Report)
  - A. Identify design funding for Route A.
  - B. Establish and confirm a Right-of-Way and/or grant access.
  - C. Establish Route A design guidelines (main trunk, pedestrian/bike waysides & connections, landscape enhancements, lighting, safety, wayfinding etc.).
  - D. Prepare a design and cost estimate for Route A.
  - E. Identify an implementation strategy that addresses:
    - a. Management and maintenance of the pathway,
    - b. Identify appropriate construction funding mechanisms, and
    - c. Define and schedule implementation phases.

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

We collected comments from the Town's advisory boards, the Carrboro Transportation Advisory Committee and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen; the summary of comments follows:

### Chapel Hill Planning Board—January 18, 2011

- Support Route A
- Would like the other routes to be considered in the town-wide plans for bicycle and pedestrian amenities
- Asked if there was a way to determine the number of cyclists who would use the route (Carolina North TIA gives some bike/ped counts along Estes Drive Extension)
- Separation of cyclists from roadway is a good feature
- Improvements along Estes Drive will require NCDOT coordination
- "Build it and people will use it"
- It's a high priority but maybe not "the top priority" in the Town

### Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation – January 19, 2011

- Support Route A
- Supported the development of the Tanyard Branch Trail and the A/B connector as bicycle routes to provide a better access point from portions of Chapel Hill

- Noted that Route A shares a portion of the future Bolin Creek Trail connection to Carolina North. The shared portion is from Umstead Drive to Seawell School Road.

#### Carrboro Transportation Advisory Board – January 20, 2011

- Support Route A; Transportation Advisory Board asked the Carrboro Board of Aldermen to support the route during the study and the Board approved a resolution of support.
- Very supportive of building the route soon; suggested building the portion of segment A3 on Chapel Hill town-owned property to Broad Street in Carrboro, because the rest of the route is on already-paved streets and while not ideal, passable by bicycle today.
- Supported the continuation of discussions and collaboration between Carrboro, Chapel Hill and UNC to identify funding for the design phase and eventual construction
- Identified the Main Street crossing as an issue with NCDOT until the Arts Center redevelopment can occur.
- Asked if STPDA (Surface Transportation Program Direct Attributable) funds could be used for this project
- Suggested that a cost-effectiveness study would identify dollars saved through diversion of traffic from cars to path.

#### Chapel Hill Bicycle and Pedestrian Board - January 25, 2011

- Endorsed Route A
- Recommended Town work toward construction of Route A with highest priority independent of the state of development at UNC North
- Suggested the Town Council to engage with the Carrboro Board of Aldermen proactively to secure Carrboro's commitment to finance and implement segments A4, A5 and A6 on Carrboro jurisdiction; in the event that Carrboro rejects Route A and/or support for the construction of segments A4, A5 and A6 at the Board of Alderman meeting in February 2011 the Bicycle and Pedestrian Board will revisit the endorsement of Route A at a future meeting

#### Chapel Hill Greenways Commission - January 26, 2011

- Supports Route A as the first priority.
- Supports the development of the A/B connector to the Tanyard Branch greenway trail as a second priority in order to provide more connectivity for citizens.
- The Commission also supports the implementation plan identified by staff in the memorandum dated January 26th to the Commission; such implementation steps to include the A/B connector as a second priority.

#### Chapel Hill Transportation Advisory Board - January 27, 2011

- Endorsed Route A
- Consensus among Board members that Town of Chapel, Town of Carrboro, and UNC should have further discussions/work on Campus to Campus Connector- Project timeline, costs, design, etc

- Regarding Campus to Campus Connector Route versus other Town priorities-  
“prioritization is premature at this time”

Carrboro Board of Aldermen – February 15, 2011

- Endorsed Route A (August 19, 2010 Resolution in support of Route A and at February 15, 2011 meeting)
- Expressed concern that most expensive portion of the route may be in Carrboro, on Chapel Hill-owned property and a fair cost-sharing agreement would be necessary
- Supported inclusion of the route in the local list of TIP projects
- Requested that Carrboro staff coordinate with Carrboro Transportation Advisory Board and Chapel Hill staff to include project description in upcoming TIP

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the common support for Route A and the general recognition that although the connector is an important part of the bicycle and pedestrian network, it is not the highest priority at this time, we recommend that a segments A2 and A3 of Route A be included in the 2014-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as a local project for Chapel Hill.

By including the project between Seawell School Road/Estes Drive Extension intersection (Chapel Hill) and Broad Street (Carrboro), the portion of the route that is not on existing roadways would move forward. The remaining improvements could be incorporated into street improvement projects in each municipality as striping, signage, reconstruction and redevelopment projects in the vicinity of the route move forward.

Constructing the multi-use path as a single project provides the “missing link” for the route, making the access from North to South feasible for cyclists. Carrboro staff will likely include the same project in their recommended list of local projects for the TIP.

Adoption of the attached resolution would include a portion of the Campus to Campus route A in the 2014 – 2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as a local project for Chapel Hill.