

FY2020-2029

Transportation Improvement Program

APPENDIX D: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Public involvement for the FY2020-2029 MTIP involves efforts as set forth by the DCHC MPO's adopted Public Involvement Policy. The DCHC MPO facilitated the public involvement process to spread awareness of the MTIP and to ensure a variety of local perspectives containing essential insight were appropriately obtained and documented in the MTIP. Various mediums and resources were constructed so that all residents and stakeholders in DCHC MPO area had the opportunity to review the draft FY2020-2029 MTIP and provide input.

2. DCHC MPO'S PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY

2.1 Introduction

The DCHC MPO's Public Involvement Policy (PIP) is an umbrella policy, encompassing the plans and programs of the Urban Area's transportation planning process. Public involvement is an integral part of the DCHC MPO's planning efforts. The PIP is comprised of the public involvement programs for all major planning activities, including the MTP, MTIP, Air Quality Conformity Determination, Major Investment Study (MIS), UPWP, MPO provisions for the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ongoing transportation planning (3-C) process. The policy decision-making body, the MPO Board, also has a standing public process as part of its monthly meetings.

The DCHC MPO seeks public input through a menu of techniques, including public notices, comment periods, workshops, charrettes, public hearings, newsletters, surveys, media relations and input from committees and commissions that are appointed by local member governments. The techniques employed will vary depending on the specific planning task. DCHC MPO's PIP is consistent with the requirements of the FAST Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the FTA/FHWA Guidance and Proposed Rule Making (NRM) on Public Participation.

2.2 Purpose of the PIP

The purpose of the DCHC MPO PIP is to create an open decision-making process whereby citizens have the opportunity to be involved in all stages of transportation planning in the DCHC MPO area. The PIP is designed to ensure that transportation decisions will reflect public priorities.

2.3 Objectives of the PIP

1. Bring a broad crosssection of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
2. Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
3. Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the general public.

4. Determine the public's knowledge of the metropolitan transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
5. Educate citizens and elected officials in order to increase general understanding of transportation issues.
6. Make technical and other information available to the public using the MPO web site and other electronically accessible formats and means as practicable.
7. Employ visualization techniques to MPO metropolitan transportation plans, MTIPs, and other project planning activities.
8. Consult with federal and State agencies responsible for land management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation and economic development in the creation of MTPs, MTIPs, and project planning.
9. Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.
10. Evaluate the public involvement process and procedures to assess their success at meeting requirements specified in the FAST Act, NEPA, and the Interim FTA/FHWA Guidance on Public Participation.

2.4 General Policy Framework

It is the policy of the DCHC MPO to have a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to DCHC MPO activities at all key stages in the decision-making process. It is also DCHC MPO policy to involve the public early in the planning process, and to actively seek out the involvement of communities most affected by particular plans or projects. Furthermore, it is a goal of the PIP that the MPO's MTIP, UPWP, and transportation plans and programs be developed in a manner that assures that the public, and affected communities in particular, are afforded ample opportunity to participate in the development of such plans.

3. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP)

The MTIP is the document that describes the funding and scheduling of transportation improvement projects (highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit capital and operating assistance) using state and federal funds. The MTIP serves as the project selection document for transportation projects and is therefore

the implementation mechanism by which the objectives of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) are reached. The FAST Act, and the DCHC MPO PIP, mandate an opportunity for public review of the draft MTIP. The following is the public involvement procedure for the DCHC MPO MTIP.

3.1 Introduction

DCHC MPO will prepare an MTIP, which is consistent with the requirements of the FAST Act, and any implementing federal regulations. The MTIP will be developed based on:

1. Revenue estimates provided by the NCDOT;
2. Projects identified in the MTP; and
3. Regional and Local priorities as identified by DCHC MPO member jurisdictions.

Public Involvement Process

1. The DCHC MPO Technical Committee (TC) will develop a draft Regional Priority List from the Local Project Priorities of the MPO jurisdictions.
2. The MPO Technical Committee and Board reviewed the draft Regional Priority List. The Regional Priority list was published and public comment welcomed.
3. The DCHC MPO developed a draft MTIP from the approved Regional Priority List and from revenue estimates provided by the North Carolina

Department of Transportation. The TC will forward the draft MTIP to the MPO Board. The MPO Board will publish the draft MTIP for public review and comment.

4. Copies of a draft MTIP will be distributed to MPO Board members and the transportation-related committees of MPO member jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction will also have copies available for public review.
5. The public comments will be assembled and presented to the DCHC MPO Board. The MPO Board will hold a public hearing on the draft MTIP. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities and which is located on a transit route. Public comments will be addressed and considered in the adoption of the MTIP.
6. The DCHC MPO, as a maintenance area for air quality, will provide additional opportunity for public comment on the revision of the draft MTIP (if the final MTIP is significantly different and/or raises new material issues).
7. The process for updating and approving the MTIP will follow the sequence and procedure as described in Appendix E of this MTIP.
8. Amendments to MTIP will be available for public review and comment if the amendment makes a substantial change to the MTIP. A substantial change is classified as the addition or deletion of a project with an implementation cost exceeding \$1

million. Public comment on project additions or deletions of less than \$1 million may be sought at the discretion of the MPO Board by majority vote. As long as a project's description, scope, or expected environmental impact have not materially changed, the MPO Board may approve changes to project funding without a separate public meeting. More information on the MTIP amendment or modification process is available in Appendix E of this MTIP document.

9. Written public comments and their responses will be published as part of this appendix when the final MTIP document is adopted.

4. PUBLIC INPUT AND COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT MTIP

All public comments that were received by the DCHC MPO are presented in full on the following pages.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

FY2020-2029 DCHC MPO TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Dear Aaron,

I am writing to comment on public transportation in the Triangle. Focusing primarily on Orange County. I live just outside Hillsborough in Orange County. We have live here for 12 years now. During this time I have taken public transportation, car pooled for about 1.5 years, and now back to taking public transportation. I have grown up taking public transportation in Pittsburgh, PA from a small child to past graduate school. We lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for many years, I took Caltrain to work, and other public transportation to activities and events.

I have several suggestions based on my past experience.

The transit agencies need to promote public transit at multiple venues. Large employers, colleges/universities - GoTriangle already does this. They need promote transit to the general public at street fairs and other public events. These public events should include appropriate multiple agencies that service that area. (This was something I experienced in the SF Bay Area. Street fairs in the upper peninsula would have a transit booth with representatives for Caltrain, SamTrams, and BART, mid-peninsula would have Caltrain, SamTrams, and VTA, San Jose would have VTA and Caltrain. The appropriate agencies would have representatives based on the community. The transit reps would work together to assist a person to create a transit plan for their commute.) Have schedules for routes that would be of interest to the majority of that population. As an example transit agencies should have a booth at Hillsborough Last Friday's. GoTriangle and Orange County Transit should both be present to address transportation options. GoTriangle should have schedules for the 420, ODX, and CRX. Orange Co Transit have information about the circulator and their other transit options. Hog Day would also be a good opportunity for a transit booth for Hillsborough. This sort of promotion should be going on all over the Triangle, at as many events as possible. Go where there are people. You need to make the public aware transit is a viable option.

Transit agencies should plan transportation to special events to reduce traffic congestion and work with media for coverage to promote public transportation as an alternative. Some past examples could have been the teachers march in downtown Raleigh and the Dreamville concert in Dix Park. Make transit an alternative option, maybe have special runs or run buses later to accommodate the events. Think of events as an opportunity to get someone out of their car and then give them the idea of possibly thinking of public transportation for other events or perhaps their daily commute.

I had heard there are plans to get rid to the regular vs express fares. I highly agree that should be done. Since I ride the CRX, an express bus, the fare is higher then a regular route bus such as 100 or 105. There have been times when riders have a regular fare card and wonder why they are still being charged more money to ride the bus. I also think that discount cards should be promoted more widely as an option. The idea that weekly cards or monthly cards are the only option can be a turn-off if a person would only be able to ride transit a few days a week. I have heard this comment on sever occasions.

Promote the cost savings and stress reducing parts of public transportation. I am much less stressed riding the bus. I read a book on my Kindle app, read the news, or review emails /answer emails during the ride. I see many riders with WiFi connectors and they work the entire ride. I track my commute on Share the ride NC. Depending on the month and whether I ride the CRX, or drive to RTC and take the 105/100, according to Share the ride NC I save between \$250-\$350 a month. I'm on track to saving about \$3,000 this year. The monthly bus pass is much less than the monthly garage parking fee. The \$102 for the express monthly bus pass is an immediate savings just with that. If I only drive to Eubanks p&r I can get 3 weeks on a tank of gas. Less wear and tear on the car, less oil changes, tire rotations, too.

I have some specific route ideas.

For the CRX, adding a mid-day run for part-time students/ students with only morning classes/ students with afternoon classes, or workers that need to leave early for a medical appointment, parent-teacher conference, or other commitments. Now all workers have the luxury of being able to work from home if they need to work a shorter day. This could be another opportunity to give people an option to get out of their car, who would otherwise drive. It could also be an option so that workers who usually rider the bus who don't have remote option to work a partial day rather than taking a day off.

I strongly suggest that a new bus route should be started to give commuters in Orange County an option to get to RTC using I-40. I would suggest the route have stops at Cone Health p&r in Mebane, Orange Co Durham Tech p&r, Eubanks p&r, to RTC. Then riders can use the Lyft/Uber option to get to their office in RTP. Traffic on I-40 continues to get worse. It has been especially bad this Fall. I take the 7am CRX and the drivers have been consistently driving on the shoulder because traffic is backed u. The bus has been getting to Raleigh much later recently.

Starting in January 2020 the CRX will have a stop at MLK and Perkins. This will enable connecting with the 420 at the north end of Chapel Hill in addition to the current connection point at Franklin Street. (It will also be an option for riders living at the north end of Chapel Hill another stop, which might allow them to ditch the car and not have to drive to Eubanks park & ride lot. I already know of a rider who is looking forward to that new stop.) It would be nice if the Part 4 route would also have a stop at MLK and Perkins so there could be a north Chapel Hill connection stop. That would enable a rider to take the CRX from Raleigh and connect with the Part 4 route to Greensboro. I have been on several CRX buses with riders wanting to do just that, and I have heard from other riders who have seen similar situations. As it is right now the

connection at Franklin Street is very tight and if traffic is bad on I-40 the connection could be missed. If a connection was possible at MLK and Perkins, the rider could have a better chance making the connection to Greensboro.

Thank you for your attention to these suggestions.

Sincerely

Jayse Sessi

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To: Aaron Cain, Transportation Planner

From: Bike Durham

Date: December 10, 2019

Re: Public Comment on Draft FY2020-29 Transportation Improvement Program

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and thank you for the MPO's long-term dedication to prioritize projects that improve bicycling, walking, and riding transit in the region. We understand that there are significant obstacles to achieving the MPO's long-range plans due to policies at NCDOT and laws established by the General Assembly. Bike Durham seeks to be a partner in working to align those state policies and laws with a transportation vision that achieves safe streets for all users, reductions in vehicle miles traveled, and equitable access for our most transportation-disadvantaged residents who are predominantly low-income and people of color. In that spirit, Bike Durham has the following comments on this draft TIP:

1. We support and appreciate all the bicycle, pedestrian and transit projects that were submitted for scoring and funding. We also support and appreciate the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian elements in street and highway project definitions. We request that these project definitions be updated to specify that the projects are to include protected bike facilities, and not just paint.
2. We are concerned about the delays to improving unsafe conditions for people walking and biking on many Durham streets. Since few projects are funded with improvements that will improve the safety of people walking and biking, we request that the MPO communicate to NCDOT and the local municipal transportation departments that funds available for safety projects (W-5205, W-5705DIV, W-5705REG, W-5705SW, and the corresponding funds in Divisions 7 and 8) be prioritized to protect the safety of our most vulnerable users of our streets and highways. Improvements to NC 98 are not programmed to begin until FY2029. This segment of roadway has been the scene of multiple deaths from people hit by vehicles, the most recent on September 7th of this year. These improvements cannot wait 10 years.
3. We are concerned that the programmed projects include much greater spending on projects that will add highway-capacity, and thus increase vehicle miles traveled than spending on projects that will support shifts to biking, walking, and transit. We are aware that the untimely demise of the light rail project is a major contributor to this imbalance.

We also understand that NCDOT policy and state law are obstacles. We are also concerned about the inclusion of expensive projects to expand highway capacity on I-85 and the Durham Freeway. Due to the climate crisis, we want to communicate the urgency of investing in a safe network of bicycling and walking facilities throughout Durham and the region, and in a new vision for transit. There are limited funds available for transportation infrastructure, and Bike Durham intends to be active in advocating in the upcoming months and years for building out safe, high-quality networks for biking, walking, and transit in our region.

4. We are also concerned that there is no analysis included that indicates whether the implementation of this program of projects will lead to greater equity of access for transportation-disadvantaged individuals or communities, especially communities of color. We think that this is critical for achieving community goals, and request that the MPO Board direct the staff to work with the NCDOT to develop these analytical tools.
5. Finally, we appreciate the effort that the staff has undertaken to make this very dense material more accessible to the public. We have a few suggestions for improving the legibility of the next version of this document for the FY2022-31 draft TIP.
 - It would be helpful to see a table that summarizes the programmed spending by project type, for example highway capacity expansion, highway maintenance, complete street, independent bicycle or pedestrian facility, operational/ITS, transit infrastructure, transit vehicles, etc. This should be compared to a second table of the value of the submitted projects in the same categories so that it's clear what percentage of various project types are funded, and what the unfunded levels are for each project type.
 - The appendix C table is a good way of bringing transparency to the point allocation process. We recommend that future versions provide an explanation for projects that have not received funding even though they have scored higher than other funded projects. There were 8 regional projects and 4 divisional projects that fit this condition.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft TIP. You can count on Bike Durham to stay engaged.

Sincerely,

Bike Durham Advocacy Committee

Bike Durham Statement of Purpose

We believe that everyone should have access to safe and affordable transportation regardless of race, wealth, gender identity, ability or where they live. Biking and walking are the most healthy and sustainable ways to move. Bike Durham promotes policy, infrastructure, education, and community events to make Durham more equitable; empowering people of all ages to walk and bike more.