



**D U R H A M**

**Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission**

Durham Transportation Division ▪ 101 City Hall Plaza ▪ Durham, NC 27701

22 October 2007

Subject: Comments on TIP Project No. U-4011, Improvements of SR 1959 (South Miami Boulevard) from South of SR 2112 (Methodist Street) to North of SR 1960 (Bethesda Avenue) in Durham

Mr. Jamille Robbins  
Human Environment Unit  
1583 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699

Dear Mr. Robbins,

In response to the Design Public Hearing on September 24, 2007, the Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission submits these comments for your consideration:

1. The adopted Durham Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan and the adopted the Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan both depict the proposed Page Branch Creek Trail along the east (northbound) side of South Miami Boulevard from approximately the south property line of the Bethesda Elementary School (approx. station 36+50) and continuing north through the end of the project. In accordance with the 1994 NCDOT Policy, "Administrative Action to Include Local Adopted Greenways Plans in the NCDOT Highway Planning Process", the NCDOT should include the design and construction of this portion of the proposed greenway in lieu of the 5' sidewalk currently depicted, to include provision of adequate right-of-way for the Trail. The greenway should be designed as a shared-use path in conformance with AASHTO standards and other requirements of the adopted Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan, the adopted DurhamWalks Pedestrian Plan, the adopted Durham Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan, the North Carolina Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Guidelines, and City of Durham standards.
2. NCDOT should design the Page Branch Creek Trail to maximize the safety of pedestrian and bicycle users and the security of adjoining properties with respect to location, visibility, and landscaping in conformance with Durham UDO 12.4.1.B. Special attention should be paid to providing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to this section of trail including but not limited to signalized pedestrian crossing(s) of South Miami Boulevard and existing and future traffic from the existing Bethesda Elementary School site (e.g., DR2 and DR3). A signalized mid-block pedestrian only crossing of South Miami is recommended at the southern trail terminus to allow pedestrians on the west side of the road to connect to the trail.
3. The adopted Durham Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan and adopted DCHC MPO Long Range Transportation Plan specifically include 4' bike lanes (both sides) along South

Miami Boulevard, which includes the entire length of this project. The proposed 14' WOLs should be revised to provide a 12' wide right-thru lane and 4' bike lane throughout. Bike lanes adjacent to right turn lanes should be designed per MUTCD and AASHTO guidelines.

4. The adopted Durham Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan and adopted DCHC MPO Long Range Transportation Plan specifically include 4' bike lanes (both sides) along Ellis Road. The section of this road included within this project should be widened to provide these bicycle facilities.

5. Proposed right turn only lanes on South Miami Boulevard are not supported by existing and project traffic counts at the following locations: southbound (SB) Longmont Drive (DR1); SB New Haven St.; northbound (NB) Ambassador Drive; NB DR3 (staff and visitor driveway to Bethesda Elementary School; and NB Bethesda Avenue. It is recommended that any future increase in traffic at the Longmont Drive (DR1) which may warrant a right-turn only lane be paid for by the private developer when and if such projected demand growth occurs. It is also noted that the Design Public Hearing Map does not include existing and projected traffic counts for the Bethesda Elementary School driveway entrances (DR2 and DR3) to support the proposed design elements.

6. Proposed extended radii, high-speed sweep curves at roadway and driveway intersections should be reduced, as they sacrifice pedestrian safety at the expense of only a marginal increase in “operational efficiency” for through motor vehicle traffic alone. Longer radii translate into excessive pedestrian crossing distances, in some cases double the length with tighter radii. The significantly higher motor vehicle turning speeds also endangers pedestrians by limiting driver and pedestrian reaction time, increasing the severity and likelihood of pedestrian death by motor vehicle collision, and displacing the pedestrian crossing out of the sight triangles. The wider pavement also unnecessarily increases ROW acquisition. The wide, sweep radii at the following locations should be tightened: SB Bethesda Baptist Church RIRO; SB Ellis Road; SB Longmont Drive; SB New Haven Street; NB Methodist Street; NB Ambassador Drive; NB DR3; and NB Bethesda Avenue.

7. Proposed typical 3' setback distance from face of curb to edge of sidewalk is too narrow for anticipated pedestrian use along this 50 mph design vehicle speed road, unless a guardrail or other fixed divider is installed. AASHTO and City of Durham standards should be followed, and sidewalk (including greenway section) should be moved back to the ROW.

8. Provide signalized pedestrian crossings at west and north legs of Longmont intersection and all three legs of Ellis intersection. These crossings are required to maximize pedestrian safety while crossing South Miami to the greenway, Bethesda Elementary School, and other destinations.

9. Install full school zone signs and pavement markings as recommended by MUTCD 7.B and 7.C and NCDOT Municipal and School Transportation Engineers.

10. Provide striped pedestrian crosswalks, with associated ADA compliant HC curb cuts, at all driveway and road intersections, regardless of signalization. This includes at-grade cut-throughs at all raised islands (e.g., Bethesda Baptist Church RIRO, Longmont Drive, and New Haven Street).

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 919-286-3827 (or [daclever@gmail.com](mailto:daclever@gmail.com)) if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Clever', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dan Clever, Chair  
Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory  
Commission

cc: Mr. Kenneth Spaulding, N.C. Board of Transportation  
Ms. Nina S. Szlosberg, N.C. Board of Transportation  
Mr. Mark Ahrendsen, City of Durham, Transportation Division