



D U R H A M

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

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

March 31, 2008

Marc Hamel, Project Manager
NCDOT Rail Division
Environmental & Planning Branch
1553 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1553

RE: Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Comments on Hopson Road Grade Separation of NC Railroad/Norfolk Southern Track, TIP Project U-4716

Dear Mr. Hamel,

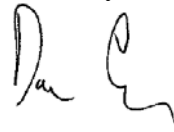
The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission offers the following comments on the proposed project for your consideration as you select the preferred alternative and prepare the design for this project:

1. The alternative which lowers Hopson Road to pass under the railroad is preferred. Please include appropriate lighting under the bridge span(s) to maximize the safety of pedestrians and other users of Hopson Road and to minimize the “tunnel effect” and maximize natural and artificial “daylighting”.
2. Please consider employing context sensitive design in the treatment of the bridge structure, as has been done very successfully for the railroad crossing of NC54 immediately to the north along the railroad line. This will add significantly to the aesthetic value of the project.
3. While we understand that the scope of this project does not include the actual widening of Hopson Road, please provide sufficient bridge span to accommodate 4-foot bike lanes and 5-foot sidewalks along both directions of the future 4-lane median separated Hopson Road. Hopson Road is identified in the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro MPO 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan for bike lanes, which must be included in the project scope. Note that 14-foot wide outer lanes are not acceptable in this section of widened Hopson Road with curb and gutter.
4. We request that the posted speed of Hopson Road not exceed 35 MPH to maximize compatibility of motor vehicle and bicycle traffic along this major bicycle commuter route serving RTP and the growing adjacent areas.

5. Please make every effort to keep Hopson Road open during the construction phase, as any temporary closing of Hopson Road will create a significant detour for bicycle traffic, which is of course unable to re-route to adjacent controlled-access roadways.
6. Please closely coordinate the design and construction of this project with the proposed relocation of Church Street, TIP Project Y-4805B, and the widening of Hopson Road incidental to the Davis Road widening, TIP Project U-4026, to maximize bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Note that, in accordance with City of Durham Unified Development Ordinance and adopted policies, 5-foot sidewalks shall be included on both sides of all major thoroughfares within City limits or urban growth boundaries. In addition, a minimum 3-foot wide planting strip should be provided between the back of curb and the sidewalk to provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these requests. We look forward to reviewing the design and participating in the public hearing in the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Clever". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent than the last name "Clever".

Dan Clever

cc: Wally Bowman, NCDOT Division 5 Engineer
Tom Norman, NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
Mark Ahrendsen, Transportation Manager, City of Durham
Dale McKeel, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, City of Durham/DCHC MPO