



D U R H A M

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

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

September 24, 2008

J. Bradley Wilson
Chairman
21st Century Transportation Committee
c/o Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina
P.O. Box 2291
Durham, NC 27702

Dear Chairman Wilson and Members of the 21st Century Transportation Committee:

The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) is a citizen's advisory commission that was created by the city and county of Durham. In addition to providing advice to the local governing bodies on questions relating to bicycle and pedestrian issues, BPAC is also charged with promoting full integration of bicycling and walking into community transportation policies and practices, as well as to promote funding for bicycle and pedestrian programs and facilities.

Since its inception, BPAC has promoted the construction of new sidewalk and bicycle facilities across the county of Durham. In 2006, local bicycle and pedestrian plans were adopted which identify corridors in the city and county that are in most need of sidewalk or on-road bike facilities. While advocating for the construction of these projects, we and other communities have learned that lack of suitable funding and policies at the state level make implementation of these plans very difficult.

We are committed to implementing these plans as there is growing demand for safe pedestrian and bicycle transportation in our state. As you know, fuel prices will continue to rise or remain unpredictable, and people are beginning to look for alternatives to the automobile. We also hear concerns about the growing obesity epidemic, air quality and livability.

In order to help North Carolina communities implement these plans, we request that the 21st Century Transportation Committee endorse and promote these items to the Legislature:

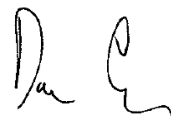
- More funding for independent bicycle and pedestrian projects- Currently the NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Division receives \$6 million annually to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects that are not part of a scheduled road project. Given the demand for bicycle and pedestrian facilities across the state, as well

as the rising cost of labor and construction materials, more money should be made available.

- Routine incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian elements into state road widening or enhancement projects- This is especially required for corridors that are identified in locally adopted bicycle and pedestrian plans. NCDOT should not only incorporate these items into designs, but help local governments fund their construction.
- More funding for road widening or milling on annual road maintenance projects- Maintenance budgets typically cover only the resurfacing of the existing road bed. Though ROW constraints may prevent widening, there are instances where another few feet of asphalt on either side of the road can be used as either a bike lane or wide outside lane. Another issue is the application of new pavement that is no longer flush with gutter pans, manhole covers or drain grates. This may sound like a minor problem, but depressions of pavement can be deadly for a cyclist. Milling the existing pavement along the edges of these impediments prior to application of new asphalt eases the transition between these.
- Encourage multi-modal transit by incorporating bicycle and pedestrian elements into existing and future rail stations- This would involve improving the pedestrian and bicycle connections to rail stations, which will also have the benefits of decreasing the need for auto parking and increasing the catchment area of these stations. In addition to incorporating bicycle storage into station designs, rail cars should be purchased that have room for bike racks or hooks. This would not only improve the multi-modal transit experience, but would also encourage bike tourism in the state.

Promoting and endorsing these items will give North Carolinians more travel options as they see gas prices consume more of their incomes. It will also send a clear signal that we want our state to more friendly and safe to walkers and cyclists, and that we value the quality of life that pedestrian and bicycle facilities foster.

Sincerely,



Dan Clever, Chair

cc: Mayor Bill Bell, City of Durham
Ellen Reckhow, Chairman, Durham County Board of Commissioners
Kenneth Spaulding, N.C. Board of Transportation
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