



Durham Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Durham Department of Transportation • 101 City Hall Plaza • Durham, NC 27701

May 23, 2011

TO: Laura Woods, City/County Planning Department
FROM: Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)
RE: Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Ms. Woods,

In addition to advising the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners on questions relating to bicycle and pedestrian issues, one of the key duties of the Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) is to promote the full integration of bicycling and walking into community transportation policies and practices. BPAC thanks you for the opportunity to do this by providing comments and suggestions to the Durham Comprehensive Plan (the “Plan”).

Key elements of the Plan’s vision include promoting the creation and enhancement of a livable, safe and beautiful community for all Durham citizens, promoting a range of choices in transportation, and providing opportunities for high quality growth and development. The current Plan includes many policies that have adequately encouraged this vision over the past six years. However, BPAC believes that the Plan should be updated to include suggested policies from the adopted DurhamWalks Pedestrian Plan, the adopted Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan, bicycle and pedestrian policies from other cities in North Carolina, as well as policies that encourage Complete Streets design concepts. By incorporating these updates and policies into the Plan, we strongly believe that Durham will lead the region in multi-modal transportation and providing a livable, safe and beautiful community.

Attached is a list of existing policies in the plan with suggested modifications (denoted by underline) and deletions (denoted by strikethrough). Recommendations for Chapter 8 are listed first, followed by recommendations for Chapters 4, 7, 10, 11, 15 and the glossary.

Please let us know if you have any comments or concerns about the recommended changes to the Plan.

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cc: Mike Woodard, Councilman, City of Durham
Steve Medlin, Director, City/County Planning Department
Mark Ahrendsen, Director, City Transportation Department
Dale McKeel, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, City of Durham/DCHC MPO

BPAC Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

Chapter 8

Goal 8.1, Durham’s Transportation System

Provide a safe, efficient, attractive, multi-modal transportation system, including pedestrians, bicycles and transit, in accordance with growth management objectives and policies.

Objective 8.1.1. Overall Transportation System

Provide a safe, efficient, attractive, multi-modal transportation system that supports local land use, accommodates trip-making choices, maintains mobility, connects adjacent and related land uses, protects the environment and neighborhoods, and improves the quality of life for Durham residents. The City-County Planning Department, and the City Transportation Department shall provide for the needs of drivers, public transportation vehicles and patrons, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities in all planning, programming, design, construction, reconstruction, retrofit, operations, and maintenance activities and products. These Departments shall view all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in Durham County and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system.

Policy 8.1.1a. Regional Transportation Model. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department, with the Metropolitan Planning Organization and other regional partners, shall develop and maintain a multi-modal regional transportation model for the purposes of long range planning and evaluating the impacts of proposed transportation investments on travel and land use patterns.

Policy 8.1.1b. Long-Range Transportation Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with long range transportation planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan,” as may be amended from time to time, including the Recommended Highways Map, the Recommended Transit Component, the Recommended Fixed-Guideway Component, and the Recommended Bicycle Component. In preparation of long range transportation plans, the City-County Planning Department and the City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall recommend transportation services and facilities to match the Tier designations and land uses identified in the Durham Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 8.1.1c. Transportation Improvements. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall recommend and program transportation projects that are consistent with the most recent Long Range Transportation Plan.

NEW POLICY - Complete Streets. Implement Complete Street design standards for city maintained roads that provide mobility for all types of transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, auto, transit) and support mutually-reinforcing land use and transportation decisions. Work with NCDOT to implement these design standards for state-maintained roads. Restructure planning, design, and construction procedures to accommodate the new Complete Streets approach in every project.

Objective 8.1.2. Road System

Construct and maintain an attractive street and highway system that allows multi-modal, safe, convenient and efficient movement of people and goods ~~to be moved safely, conveniently, and efficiently.~~

NEW POLICY- Designation of Complete Streets. Develop a framework for designating roadways under a Complete Streets classification. Create a hierarchy that accommodates multiple modes of travel serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, and motorists of all ages and abilities and that considers a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation network that allows users to choose between different modes of transportation.

Policy 8.1.2a. Transportation Level of Service Standards. The level of service standards for development tiers in Durham shall be as indicated in Table 8-1, Transportation Level of Service Standards.

Table 8-1, Transportation Level of Service Standards	
Application	Level of Service Standard
Downtown Tier	LOS E
Compact Neighborhood Tier	LOS E
Urban Tier	LOS D
Suburban Tier	LOS D
Rural Tier	LOS C

NEW POLICY- Multimodal Level of Service Standards. Adopt an integrated multimodal approach to the analysis and evaluation of urban streets from the point of view of automobile drivers, transit passengers, bicyclists and pedestrians, using the multimodal level of service methodology in the 2010 edition of the Highway Capacity Manual (and subsequent updates).

Policy 8.1.2b. Transportation Corridor Segment Level of Service Standards. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department and the City-County Planning Department shall evaluate and establish distinct transportation level of service standards for thoroughfare corridor segments. In undertaking this evaluation, give priority to the US 15-501 corridor and the NC 54/I-40 corridor.

Policy 8.1.2d. Transportation Facilities Plan. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall prepare an updated thoroughfare plan, to be called the Durham Transportation Facilities Plan and to show locations for long-range transportation facilities, including major

thoroughfares, collector streets, fixed-guideway transit routes, other transit routes, sidewalks, and bicycle routes. Upon adoption by the City and County, the Durham Transportation Facilities Plan shall be adopted and included by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan as the Official Map for purposes of right-of-way preservation. This Plan shall be updated to incorporate Complete Streets design standards.

Policy 8.1.2g. Typical Roadway Cross Sections. For development in the City, the ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall require right-of-way dedication ~~in accordance with the typical roadway cross sections adopted by the City Council sufficient for all users.~~ In absence of a set of cross-sections adopted by the City Council, the City Public Works Department shall use the typical roadway cross-sections indicated in the “Fiscally Constrained 2025 Long-Range Transportation Plan” (as may be amended from time to time). The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall require construction of residential streets in accordance with the “City of Durham Reference Guide For Development,” (as may be amended from time to time). The Reference Guide shall be updated to incorporate Complete Streets design standards. For development in the County, the City-County Planning Department shall require right-of-way dedication in accordance with the typical roadway cross section established by the NC Department of Transportation, including where appropriate the NC Department of Transportation “Traditional Neighborhood Development Design Guidelines.”

Policy 8.1.2h. Trees and Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Street Cross Sections. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department and the City-County Planning Department shall re-evaluate adopted street cross sections in order to promote bicycle and pedestrian travel and safety, minimize impervious surfaces, and allow for more tree planting within the right-of-way, with particular consideration to variable standards by Tier. Such street cross sections shall allow trees planted in medians and within the right-of-way, making appropriate provisions to minimize tree and utility conflicts, doing so in a manner that promotes tree planting opportunities rather than limiting them.

Policy 8.1.2j. Collector Street Plans. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department, in conjunction with the City-County Planning Department, shall prepare a collector street plans for portions of Durham that existing plans do not cover. In preparing collector street plans, priority shall be given to areas in southwest Durham County.

Policy 8.1.2n. Tracking Cumulative Road Impacts. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department and the City-County Planning Department shall develop tracking systems to quantify the cumulative impact of developments on road capacity in order to better maintain the adopted level of service for motorists, bicycling, walking and transit service on Durham roads.

Objective 8.1.3. Mass Transit

Provide a safe, convenient, accessible, competitive, and affordable mass transit system, provided by public and private operators, that enhances mobility, economic development, air quality and the development of compatible land uses along transit corridors.

NEW POLICY- Connectivity to Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. The City-County Planning Department shall ensure that, through the Unified Development Ordinance, bus and

fixed guideway transit stops are adequately integrated and connected with nearby pedestrian and bicycle facilities to complement bus and transit routes.

Objective 8.1.4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Provide a pedestrian and bicycle system that offers an alternative means of transportation, allows greater access to public transit, supports recreational opportunities, and connect adjacent and related land uses.

Policy 8.1.4b. Development Review and the Adopted Trails and Greenways Plan. The City-County Planning Department, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and the City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation, Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to the Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan and seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way or easements and construction of facilities in conformance with that Plan.

Policy 8.1.4c. Regional Bicycle Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with the regional bicycle planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “Regional Bicycle Plan, Durham and Orange Counties, NC” (as may be amended from time to time).

Replace with:

Policy 8.1.4c. 2006 Comprehensive Durham Bicycle Transportation Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with the regional bicycle planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “2006 Comprehensive Durham Bicycle Transportation Plan” (as may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.4d. Development Review and the Adopted Regional Bicycle Plans. The City-County Planning Department, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and the City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation and Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to the ~~Regional Bicycle Plan~~ 2006 Comprehensive Durham Bicycle Transportation Plan and the Bicycle Component of the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan, and seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way or easements and construction of facilities in conformance with that Plan and Complete Street design standards.

Policy 8.1.4e. Regional Bicycle Plan Update. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall participate with the Metropolitan Planning Organization and regional partners to update the ~~Regional Bicycle Plan~~ 2006 Comprehensive Durham Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Policy 8.1.4g. Public Education, Bicycling and Walking. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Commission shall increase efforts to educate the public about the benefits of walking and bicycling.

Policy 8.1.4h. Bicycle Facilities in New Development. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish standards for bicycle facilities in new developments, including the provision of bicycle parking facilities, as well as bicycle travel lanes, tailored to the unique character of each Tier and Complete Street design standards.

Policy 8.1.4j. City Sidewalks and Pedestrian Infrastructure. In order to promote pedestrian safety and access, the City Public Works Department shall prepare a plan to complete the sidewalk and pedestrian infrastructure in established neighborhoods and developed areas in the City where the sidewalk system is incomplete.

Replace with:

Policy 8.1.4j. 2006 Durham Walks Pedestrian Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with pedestrian infrastructure planning, the City hereby adopts and includes by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “2006 Durham Walks Pedestrian Plan” (as may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.4l. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities on Secondary Roads. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation and Public Works Department and the NC Department of Transportation should consider Complete Street design standards, including, facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel, ~~such as wide outer lanes and sidewalks,~~ when planning any projects related to widening or repaving of secondary roads.

Policy 8.1.4n. Bicycle-Friendly Community. Durham will participate in the League of American Bicyclists Bicycle Friendly Community Program with a goal of earning ~~official~~ Silver-Level designation within the next five years. The program provides a useful set of benchmarks for implementing a comprehensive bicycle plan.

NEW POLICY- Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity. Continuous pedestrian and bicycle networks should be provided within and between existing and new developments to facilitate safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel free of major barriers and impediments such as cul-de-sacs and large parking lots.

NEW POLICY- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Funding. Develop a funding strategy to provide dedicated annual funding for maintenance and new construction of sidewalks, on-road bicycle facilities and multi-use trail projects, including public/private partnerships.

NEW POLICY-Full-time Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. Provide dedicated annual funding for pedestrian and bicycle improvements to be administered by a full-time Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

NEW POLICY-New Bike Routes. Wherever possible, incorporate recommended bike lanes or wide shoulders during street resurfacing or reconstruction, and convert railroad corridors to bikeways.

NEW POLICY- Walk-Friendly Communities Designation. Durham will participate in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center’s “Walk-Friendly Communities” program with a goal of earning official designation within the next five years.

NEW POLICY-Workplace Facilities. Encourage bicycle facilities, such as secured bicycle racks, personal lockers, and showers for new and existing office developments to encourage bicycling as an alternative mode for work commutes.

Objective 8.1.6. Land Use and Transportation Integration

Maintain a long-range Transportation Plan that is integrated with local land use plans and development policies.

Policy 8.1.6d. Development Review and Adopted Transportation Plans. The City-County Planning Department and the City Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to all adopted transportation plans, and shall seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way along designated road and transit corridors in conformance with the those plans and Complete Streets design standards.

Policy 8.1.6f. External Connectivity. In order to ensure that streets function in an interdependent manner, provide a network for walking and bicycling, provide access for emergency and service vehicles, and provide a continuous and comprehensible street system that can operate within the adopted level of service and reduce demand on thoroughfares, the City and County shall generally require external connectivity in new developments.

i. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, the City and County shall require connectivity within new developments and between new developments and existing development, where feasible, with street connections to adjacent areas in each direction, where feasible, at appropriate spacing intervals.

ii. Connectivity requirements in new residential developments shall take into account the need for off-site improvements reasonably proximate to the new development, the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, and the mitigation of traffic impacts.

iii. Unless identified as a facility on the adopted Transportation Facilities Plan, the street connections shall include traffic calming measures, as appropriate.

iv. Street connections shall consider the specific topographic and hydrologic features of the area, existing development patterns, and the proximity of collector streets in the area that can serve the function of external connectivity among development projects.

v. The Unified Development Ordinance provisions shall make exceptions for small developments.

Policy 8.1.6g. Parking Requirements. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish motor vehicle and bicycle parking requirements, including location and arrangement, tailored to the unique character of each Tier.

Policy 8.1.6h. Regional Park-and-Ride System. The City ~~Public Works~~ Transportation Department shall participate with regional partners to develop a regional park and ride system for cars and bicycles to support transit services and encourage ridesharing.

Policy 8.1.6i. Travel Demand Management. In order to expand ridesharing, carpooling and vanpooling opportunities, walking, and bicycling, Durham County shall continue to implement its travel demand management efforts, including the Commute Trip Reduction Ordinance and programs to promote alternative travel options and improve air quality.

Policy 8.1.6m. Traffic Calming Standards and Practices. To encourage streets in new developments to be designed with traffic calming principles, the Public Works Department, in conjunction with the Planning Commission, the Inter-neighborhood Council and representatives of the development community, shall prepare a manual of acceptable traffic calming standards and practices that can be used in streets in new and existing development streets for traffic volume and speed control. These standards and practices should be consistent with adopted bicycle and pedestrian plans and Complete Streets design standards.

Chapter 4

Objective 4.2.4. Attractive and Efficient Parking

Encourage the design of attractive and efficient parking solutions, which are visually appealing, safe, and easy to use by ~~both~~ pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

Policy 4.2.4a. Parking Design Standards. The City-County Planning Department shall review, revise, and continue to enforce design standards in order to encourage the provision of well designed, efficient, and attractive parking facilities for motor vehicles and bicycles in connection with new development projects. Explore limiting street frontages, increasing landscaping, requiring pedestrian walkways throughout parking areas, and encouraging that large lots be designed as a series of smaller lots.

Policy 4.3.1e. NC Scenic Byways. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, protect Durham's Scenic Byways, through viewshed protection measures such as expanded rural frontage setback requirements. Include bicycle touring routes where appropriate. See Map 4-1, Scenic Byways.

Objective 4.4.1. Streetscape Appearance

Enhance the general appearance and unique visual character of Durham's streetscapes. Create an attractive visual image along major corridors and around prominent entryways. Design streets to be compatible with the character of the area they serve and to include a Complete Streets policy approach that integrates bicycle and pedestrian facilities into all roadway, transit and public works projects.

Policy 4.4.1e. Pedestrian and Cyclist Mobility. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, make walking and cycling easy by requiring internal pedestrian walkways and bikeways on sites with multiple buildings, courtyards, or other exterior on-site shared spaces. The Unified

Development Ordinance shall require bicycle and pedestrian lanes to connect cul-de-sacs and to provide access to open space areas

New Policy- Policy 4.5.2d. Transit-Oriented Parking. Include intermodal connections for pedestrians and bicyclists – such as bike stations /rental / repair locations, bicycle lockers, bike racks, transit shelters and amenities.

Chapter 7

New Policy- Policy 7.1.1b. Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts. The number of trips made by bicyclists and pedestrians is a fundamental benchmark of the quality of the City’s environment. Durham should participate annually in the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project to standardize a bicycle traffic count program

New Policy- 7.1.5f Energy Conservation. Quantify the number of gallons of gasoline saved by bicycling and walking in Durham.

Chapters 10 & 11

Objective 10.1.1. Parks and Recreation Level of Service Standards- Include having a bicycle facility within 1 mile of all residences in Durham.

New Policy- Policy 11.2.1b. Mode Share Data. Include mode share data for the number of children who walk, bike, ride the bus or are driven to school as part of the annual data collected for school transportation.

New Policy- Policy 11.2.2e. Accessibility for Biking and Walking- Also include the potential for children to walk or bike to school as a priority factor in school site location and design criteria.

Chapter 15

Policy 15.1.1b. Levels of Service Established. The City, County, and Durham Public Schools shall maintain Durham’s quality of life by maintaining the level of service standards, as defined in the elements of the Durham Comprehensive Plan and summarized in Table 15-2, Summary of Level of Service Standards.

Transportation

Provide road capacity at level of service “C” for the Rural Tier, “D” for the Suburban and Urban Tiers, and “E” for the Compact

Chapter 8, Transportation Element

Neighborhoods and Downtown Tiers.
Include level of service for bicycling
and walking

Appendix B- Glossary

New Definitions for Glossary- Appendix B

Complete Street- A street designed to be safe and comfortable for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and individuals of all ages and capabilities. A Complete Street generally include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, transit stops, appropriate street widths and speeds, and are well-integrated with surrounding land uses.

Complete Street Design Standard- a standard that emphasizes safety, mobility and accessibility for multiple modes that may include crosswalks, bus lanes, landscaping, lighting, signaling systems, and adequate separation between sidewalks and motor vehicles.