



# Durham Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Durham Transportation Department · 101 City Hall Plaza · Durham, NC 27701

June 15, 2021  
7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
<https://zoom.us/j/98678891110>

## MINUTES

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Introductions, Excused Absences 7:00**
- Present: Aidil Ortiz, Michael Moorman, Deniz Aydemir, Susanne Schmal, Adam Pyburn, Amanda De Hoedt, Dan Clever, Tony Patterson, Mike Shepherd, David Fellerath, Emily Egge, and Ed Rizzuto
  - Staff and Guests: Dale McKeel, Aaron Cain (DCHC MPO), Ellen Beckmann (Durham County), Chi Vo (Environmental Affairs Board)
  - Absent: George Tait (unexcused), Idreese Foxworth (excused), Heidi Carter and Javiera Caballero (excused)
- II. Adjustments to the Agenda 7:15**
- none
- III. Approval of Minutes from May Meeting 7:17**
- no revisions, Emily moved to approve the minutes, Tony seconded. Passed unanimously.
- IV. Public Comments 7:18**
- none
- V. Presentations 7:19**
- Durham Transit Plan Update (Aaron Cain and Ellen Beckmann)
  - Ellen and Aaron are co-managing the update of the Transit Plan.
  - This plan guides the use of the transit tax. First county in the Triangle to approve this tax and it produces \$35 million annually. It included the light rail and commuter rail project. Light rail was cancelled in 2019 and we're updating the plan from the 2017 version. It can be amended as we go, but the plan is meant to guide the next 20 years of transit projects.
  - State law that allowed the tax and the plan is authorized by Go Triangle Board, DCHC MPO, and the County Commissioners. Represents regional interests.
  - We are in the scenario planning outreach and evaluation plan. Started outreach in the winter and looking at existing conditions. That focused on the needs and developing goals.
  - Phase 2 of outreach will be in summer and that analysis will be done over fall and winter.
  - Phase 1 of outreach happened during COVID-19 pandemic and it meant most outreach was digital (online survey, Engagement Ambassadors, online stakeholder meetings, etc.). The initial outreach was mostly white and wealthy. Recurring theme for the initial survey respondents was a preference for commuter rail, bus service, and BRT (bus rapid transit).
  - Engagement Ambassador efforts were successful in attracting Black, low income, and current transit users to the survey for the transit plan. The themes of this feedback preferred an investment on paratransit, crosswalks, and improved bus stops.
  - Overall, phase 1 emphasized a preference for 15-minute service, improved bus stops, sidewalks, crosstown service, access to jobs, commuter rail. Differences showed that EA's saw a need for more paratransit, access for strollers.

- REVIEW OF SCENARIOS. Each scenario includes the following at the same level: more frequent service, running service later at night, and improved bus stops. Varying levels of these are in each scenario: sidewalks, more routes to more places, etc.
- The transit tax began collection in 2013 and some improvements have already been done. Survey feedback will not change the projects that have been committed which use up about 50% of the funded.
- All the remaining scenarios that are proposed are feasible.
- Scenario A - doubles down on more buses, most money on sidewalk network to access transit, hires more operators and can make most improvements on front end, doesn't have option to leverage other funding from state or federal, no dedicated lanes
- Scenario B - increases bus infrastructure like dedicated bus ways or transit signal prioritization, but not as much money for paratransit and sidewalk improvements, but can leverage federal dollars for BRT
- Scenario C - mostly on commuter rail, to Wake and maybe Johnston county, a bit of money for sidewalks and paratransit, can leverage money from federal government for this project
- Four methods for outreach: online survey, some in person tabling, stakeholder interviews, and engagement ambassadors and will conclude in late July or early August
- Preferred scenario developed by September and final adoption in December.
- Scenario B or C require approval by federal government to get the extra funding support but that makes us have to take a risk in money spent to prepare. Small Starts Program can be a way to get more federal funding for things like BRT because it is more inexpensive. Aaron feels like state and federal funding is more likely for projects like BRT. BRT is also happening at Orange and Wake county for us to connect to if we chose that route. Projects are graded better if they are connected to existing projects. We can split it up in pieces too.
- Orange County has come to the realization that they can't afford being in the process of bringing commuter rail to the community any more. Not saying never but not for now.
- What kinds of improvements to paratransit are being considered? Needs to do a detailed follow up study to understand needs so they can specify what improvements would happen. This feedback will be derived from engagement and technical analysis.
- BRT route coincides with Freeway into RTP area and a BRT in that section would coincide with NC DOT project already underway which makes it more cost effective. BRT is 15-minute service all day and is not only running at peak times like a commuter rail. A downside to BRT is capacity.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

**8:21**

- Education, Encouragement and Engagement Committee Report (Susanne Schmal)
  - Didn't send out letter to Bike Walk NC because wasn't sure how ready it was.
  - Looked at roles in interlocal agreement and wanted to share with full commission. Emily made a motion that BPAC recommends the ILA be revised to reflect Commission positions outlined by EEE. Further, that the 3 designated positions for members of DOST, Planning, RAC be reallocated as at-large seats, 2 appointed by City, 1 by County (due to population density). Amanda seconds the motion. Passes unanimously.
  - We have 6 months to prepare ourselves for all the transition that the passed motion below could bring if the suggestions below are approved by a vote.
  - - City Council (6 positions)
      - (Move to County and modify) Bicycle Commuting
      - (combine) Recreation / Urban Trails and Greenways
      - (remove) University students/University Facilities
      - (keep) Transportation Planning Policy
      - (remove) Recreation/ Recreation Business
      - (remove) Inter-Neighborhood Council
      - (add) Walking/Running/Pedestrian Community for marginalized groups (e.g., Black

- Girls Run)
  - (add) Public Transit / Paratransit
  - (add) 1 at-large seat
  - (add) 1 youth representative

- County Commissioners (6)
  - (keep) Youth/Children Advocacy
  - (keep) Senior Advocacy
  - (add) Disabilities Advocacy
  - (remove) Education
  - (remove) Bicycle Club/Organization
  - (remove) Health/Physical Fitness
  - (remove) Business/Economic Development
  - (add) Bicycle Community
  - (add) 1 at-large seat
  - (add) 1 youth representative

\*\*Emily moved that we add ten minutes to the meeting tonight. Dan made a second and it passed unanimously. \*\*

- Development Review Committee Report (Dan Clever)
  - Alexander Cahill (Planning) came to the meeting to talk about the new Land Use Engagement Initiative website. We discussed how it could be shared with affected communities and how communities could contact us through the site. <https://durham.mysocialpinpoint.com/land-use>
  - Some of our comments for Southpoint were accepted (e.g. pedestrian crossing at Herndon, more connections to adjacent trails). We provided follow up requests.
  - There is a site plan for ATC and we need to make comments on trail connection through it.
- Bike & Pedestrian Plan Implementation / Evaluation Committee Report (Michael Moorman)
  - Brian Taylor explained the current strategies and issues for re-striping Erwin Rd. in conjunction with the NCDOT repaving.
  - Brian presented a summary of the current CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) and factors that determine priorities.
  - The 'Green and Equitable Bond' was discussed as a future source of project funding. Susanne is participating in the formation of a selection committee and will report on progress.
- Updates from Liaisons
  - Durham City Council (Javiera Caballero) - none
  - Durham Board of County Commissioners (Heidi Carter) - none
  - Duke University (George Tait) - none
  - NC Central University (Tony Patterson) - none
  - Recreation Advisory Commission (David Fellerath) - RAC has mentioned keeping the trail watch alive and wanted to know what history BPAC has with it. It is dwindling in numbers and want to recruit folks back to it.

\*\*Dan moved that we extend the meeting by 20 minutes. Second by Mike Moorman. Passed unanimously. \*\*

- Comprehensive Plan (Aidil Ortiz & Ed Rizzuto) - Ed mentioned that there is a joint city and county meeting of the City Council and County Commissioners tonight where goals and objectives are being presented.
- Other Community Updates (All) - none

**VII. Old Business 9:12**

- Review of Interlocal Agreement and Bylaws (Dale McKeel)

**VIII. New Business 9:13**

- Equity and Land Acknowledgement Statements (Aidil Ortiz) - requested this be made into old business

in August.

- Letter to BikeWalkNC (Susanne Schmal, Aidil Ortiz, Emily Egge) - will become old business at August meeting
- Budget / Bond Update (Javiera Caballero, Susanne Schmal) - none
  - Letter of Support – Durham RAISE Grant for Durham Belt Line Trail (Dale McKeel) - city is applying for a grant from the US Dept. of Transportation for construction of this trail and wants BPAC to write a letter of support. Belt line is an old railroad corridor and connects many other trails. This grant was called BUILD and is not called RAISE. City’s application received a higher score than any application submitted but it was not selected for funding last time. Grant is being submitted again and city has signed a contract for design and equitable community engagement. Our local reps have spoken to both of our senators last time we applied and they did provide input on the letters. David motioned that we approve the letter and Tony seconded it. Passed unanimously.

**IX. Announcements and Updates 9:19**

- Idreese is new member of BPAC although he could not attend tonight. He may qualify as a youth in the way we structure our membership in future.
- BPAC has been asked about plans to meet in person and we can take that up in August.
- A new guidance document for city appointed for commissioners that can apply to everyone. Dale shared it with everyone via email a few weeks ago for us to review.
- No meeting in July but committees can meet if they want to.

**X. Communication Priorities from Meeting and Committees 9:22**

- We can work on Bike Walk NC letter during the break
- look at the equity statements for feedback and land acknowledgements

**XI. Adjourn 9:24**

- Emily moved to adjourn and Dan seconded. Motion passed.