

**In the Matter Of:**

RE: PROPOSED DURHAM-ORANGE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT Court

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**TWO HEARINGS.**

*September 29, 2015*

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LEGAL | MEDIA | EXPERTS

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**TRIANGLE TRANSIT PUBLIC HEARING**

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**SEPTEMBER 29, 2015**

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**IN RE: PROPOSED DURHAM-ORANGE  
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT**

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**Court Reporters:  
Leslie Kujawa  
M. Dawn Eddinger  
Legal Media Experts**

1           MR. BELL: May I have your  
2 attention. Testing out the sound here.  
3 Don't get it too loud. I'm going to ask  
4 y'all's patience for a few minutes. Our  
5 court reporter is running a couple minutes  
6 late but she's on her way. So about ten  
7 minutes or so we'll get started. So I do  
8 appreciate your patience, and, again,  
9 we'll get started in about ten minutes or  
10 so. Thank you.

11   (PAUSE.)

12           MR. BELL: Good evening. My name  
13 is Bill Bell, and I have the honor of  
14 serving as the chair of GoTriangle board,  
15 and I want to welcome all of you out here  
16 this evening for this public meeting, the  
17 first of two public meetings. One is here  
18 at the Friday Center and the day after  
19 tomorrow it will be in Durham County, and  
20 the purpose of the Center, as all of you  
21 know, is to allow for public comments on  
22 the Draft Environmental Statement for the  
23 proposed Durham-Orange Light Rail  
24 Project.

1           We have some of our board members  
2 here this evening, as well, Allen and  
3 Bernadette and -- is anyone else from the  
4 -- okay. Why don't you guys stand up and  
5 say who you are.

6           MR. ALLEN: Will Allen from Wake  
7 County.

8           MS. PELISSIER: Bernadette  
9 Pelissier from Orange County. I am an  
10 Orange County Commissioner.

11           MR. BELL: All right. Thank you.  
12 So tonight you've probably had an  
13 opportunity to look at the screen in terms  
14 of what the ground rules are, and we have  
15 a gentleman who's going to moderate that,  
16 and when it's due, if you'll come forth  
17 and start the meeting. Thank you.

18           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. I would  
19 like to welcome you, as well, to the  
20 Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit public  
21 hearing. My name is Drew Joyner, and I'm  
22 going to be the administrator for this  
23 hearing. We had two public information  
24 sessions. They were held on September

1 15th and 19th. If you were unable to  
2 attend those earlier this month, a copy of  
3 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
4 and other information that was provided  
5 during those sessions is currently  
6 available in the lobby. Tonight is the  
7 first of two hearings. The second hearing  
8 will be this Thursday, October 1st, from 4  
9 to 7 p.m. at the Durham County Commission  
10 Chamber, 200 East Main Street, the Old  
11 Courthouse, Second Floor in Durham.

12           Tonight we're seeking comments, as  
13 Mayor Bell said, on the Draft  
14 Environmental Impact Statement for this  
15 project. There's several ways to provide  
16 input on this project. In addition to  
17 speaking at this hearing tonight, written  
18 comments are being collected tonight. You  
19 may send in comments via email, postal  
20 mail, or utilize our project website. An  
21 important thing to know is that verbal and  
22 written comments carry the same weight.  
23 So if you're uncomfortable speaking in  
24 public, please feel free to use the other

1 methods of providing input. Written and  
2 verbal comments will not receive a reply.  
3 However, responses to substantive comments  
4 will be provided in the combined Final  
5 Environmental Impact Statement and Record  
6 of Decision. That's the final documents  
7 for the planning part of this process.

8           The comment period -- and this is  
9 important to note, too, is the comment  
10 period ends on October 13th, so we would  
11 like all your comments in by that time.  
12 For those who do not wish to speak  
13 tonight, I hope you took the opportunity  
14 -- do wish to speak tonight -- I'm  
15 sorry. For those who do wish to speak  
16 tonight, I hope you took the opportunity  
17 to sign in as you arrived. If not, you  
18 will have until 7 -- 7 p.m. this evening  
19 to sign up to speak. At that point sign  
20 up will conclude. However, we will stay  
21 until everyone who has signed up prior to  
22 7 o'clock has a chance to speak.

23           Before we begin, I'd like to point  
24 out the ground rules for this hearing, and

1 you can see them up here. It's the  
2 biggest projector I've -- it's almost too  
3 big for me to read. So the purpose of the  
4 hearing is to receive public comments on  
5 the project. This is not a debate or  
6 question/answer session. We're here to  
7 receive comments tonight. And I -- I  
8 don't want to insult your intelligence. I  
9 know most everyone can read, but I am, for  
10 the record, going to go through the -- the  
11 ground rules, but don't feel insulted. I  
12 know -- I know that you can read.

13 Please help maintain an atmosphere  
14 where everyone feels comfortable and  
15 welcome regardless of his or her position  
16 on the project. Please silence mobile  
17 phones or devices or set them to vibrate,  
18 which reminds me -- I've actually had that  
19 happen before. Okay, we're off. So don't  
20 -- don't be that person. Please do not  
21 interrupt the moderator or the speakers.  
22 Please remain quiet so others and the  
23 court reporter can hear. Please leave the  
24 room for side discussions. Our court

1 reporter has not arrived, but we are  
2 recording this using a digital recorder  
3 until the court reporter does arrive, so  
4 we will have a written transcript of these  
5 proceedings available. So it is important  
6 that everybody speak and that everybody be  
7 allowed to be heard so that the recording  
8 can pick everything up and we can get all  
9 of the comments for the record.

10 Speakers should state their name  
11 and address for the record prior to  
12 speaking. Speakers must limit comments to  
13 two minutes. Speakers cannot yield their  
14 time to others. Please refrain from  
15 addressing the audience or asking for  
16 audience participation. Again, this is an  
17 opportunity for us to hear from the  
18 citizens about the -- the project. And,  
19 lastly, the moderator will facilitate the  
20 hearing and inform speakers when their  
21 time is up. So a little bit of logistics.  
22 The restrooms are back outside in the  
23 direction that you came. I believe the  
24 men's on one side, women's are on the



1 other side, and there's other sets of  
2 restrooms, as well.

3 For those who signed up to speak,  
4 you should have been given a number.  
5 You'll have a number and a letter.  
6 Periodically I'll call out the number. If  
7 you have that number, regardless of the  
8 letter, you will need to step outside,  
9 come down the hall, and enter here. What  
10 were going to do is, for instance, we'll  
11 -- in just a few moments, I will call the  
12 number one -- as a matter of fact, let's  
13 test this thing out. Anybody that has  
14 number one, 1A, B, C, D, or whatever, if  
15 you would step out and come around here --  
16 yeah. It's a little cumbersome there.  
17 And Jeffrey will make sure that everybody  
18 is in the appropriate order. She's going  
19 to follow -- She's going to follow the  
20 rules right here folks. Okay. And we'll  
21 make sure that everyone is in the correct  
22 order. As the line gets shorter, I will  
23 call the next number and we will bring all  
24 the 2s, for instance, later down and we

1 will go in order. Everyone, again, will  
2 have two minutes to speak. And -- And,  
3 again, Jeffrey will be here to help make  
4 sure everybody's in the correct order.  
5 You'll be speaking from the microphone  
6 here, and if we need to help you adjust,  
7 we can adjust the -- the height of the  
8 microphone, but it's sort of at an average  
9 height right now.

10 The timer -- And, Robert, would  
11 you stand up for just a second and let  
12 them see what you're -- what you've got  
13 there. For our timing, Robert's going to  
14 be sitting right there. And when you get  
15 started, he will have a sign that will  
16 give you sort of a count down, 1 minute  
17 remaining, 30 seconds remaining, wrap up,  
18 and then at the end of the 2 minutes,  
19 stop. So that'll give you a little bit of  
20 -- of warning at the end of your time  
21 period.

22 Timing -- So that everybody has  
23 the full two minutes, the timing will  
24 begin after each speaker's stated their

1 name and address for the record. So what  
2 you'll do is you will come up, you will  
3 hand your card to the -- to the court  
4 reporter so that she'll have your -- your  
5 name, and then you'll state your name and  
6 address and then we'll start the time at  
7 that point.

8 And, again, please be sure to  
9 speak clearly so that everybody can --  
10 everyone can hear and, in particular, we  
11 can make sure to get your comments for the  
12 record.

13 A couple of other notes. We do  
14 have, as you can see, American Sign  
15 Language available as well as a Spanish  
16 interpreter.

17 INTERPRETER: So we are offering  
18 simultaneous Spanish interpreting through  
19 the whole public hearing. And I'm going  
20 to make an announcement in Spanish in case  
21 we have missed anybody and not provided  
22 equipment for them.

23 (ANNOUNCEMENT IN SPANISH.)

24 MR. JOYNER: All right.

1 INTERPRETER: And I tested your  
2 mics.

3 MR. JOYNER: You did. It's a  
4 little -- Is it a little high? We can --  
5 We can adjust it, if we need to. I think  
6 the problem was we had Jeffrey testing it  
7 earlier, so, yeah, the other end of the  
8 spectrum altogether. Okay.

9 Is our court reporter -- are you  
10 ready, or do you need another --

11 THE COURT REPORTER: One of us is.

12 MR. JOYNER: One of you are, okay.  
13 Whenever you -- Whenever you are ready,  
14 let me know and we'll get started. You  
15 ready? Okay.

16 All right. Would the first  
17 speaker please come up. I think Jeffrey's  
18 going to adjust that for you.

19 MS. LISA BRACH: And I'm supposed  
20 to state my name --

21 MR. JOYNER: Please --

22 MS. LISA BRACH: -- and address.

23 MR. JOYNER: -- state your name  
24 and address for the record.

1 MS. LISA BRACH: Lisa Brach,  
2 B-r-a-c-h; and my address is  
Chapel Hill, North  
4 Carolina 27517, but I live in Durham  
5 County.

6 MR. JOYNER: Okay.

7 MS. LISA BRACH: I strongly  
8 support Regional Public Transportation,  
9 which is why I feel that we need to find  
10 safe, flexible, and cost-effective  
11 alternatives to the light rail. I have  
12 come before you today to object to the  
13 portion of the plan which would place the  
14 rail operations and maintenance facility,  
15 a ROMF, at the site on Farrington Road.  
16 For six years, I have lived in the Villas  
17 at Culp Arbor on the opposite side of  
18 Farrington Road from the proposed ROMF  
19 site. I vehemently oppose the selection  
20 of Farrington Road for the ROMF. This is,  
21 indeed, an industrial-type facility with  
22 all that's inherent, noise and light  
23 pollution. This facility will be open  
24 24/7 and have 110 to 175 employees. It

1 will have a rail yard where all the train  
2 cars will return each night after midnight  
3 to receive repairs, maintenance, cleaning,  
4 be stored for a few hours, and then depart  
5 at 5 a.m. each and every day.

6 Quoting the DEIS, this ROMF will  
7 be large enough to accommodate between 17  
8 and 26 train cars. It will have a  
9 three-story building, as well as an  
10 observation tower. It will have stadium  
11 lighting. The ROMF will require a  
12 security fence for protection. This is  
13 the epitome of the term industrial. All  
14 in a section of Durham which is zoned  
15 residential. Less than 400 yards away  
16 from the rail yard of this ROMF sits  
17 Creekside Elementary School with 906  
18 children, along with their teachers,  
19 workers, and principal. Think about the  
20 risk to -- to the children of Creekside  
21 Elementary by placing an industrial site  
22 that close to them. Only 50 yards away  
23 from the ROMF sits Culp Arbor, a  
24 Durham-designated 55-plus community. Over

1 half of our residents chose to move here  
2 because of Culp Arbor's beautiful, quiet,  
3 natural, and safe surroundings. Make the  
4 Patterson ROMF work or make this -- or  
5 move this ROMF to a new more appropriate  
6 location. Better yet, stop this train.

7 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Yeah, I  
8 guess. I'm trying to look at logistics.  
9 I think we were going to send folks back  
10 around that way, but that'll be fine --  
11 that's -- what you're doing is fine. That  
12 -- That's not a problem at all. But I  
13 think -- do you want to just leave it so  
14 folks can -- I think that's a quicker way  
15 to do it. Next speaker, please.

16 MR. WILLIAM PITTS: My name is  
17 William Pitts, and I live at  
18 Chapel Hill, which is in the  
19 Farrington Road area.

20 There are many reasons why  
21 building the ROMF on Farrington Road is  
22 not workable. There are also many reasons  
23 why the DOLRT is also not workable, only  
24 some of which will be listed here. It

1 will require the seizing by eminent domain  
2 of at least six properties, one of which  
3 has been in the same black family since  
4 1888. It will require the rezoning of an  
5 area, which is currently low-density  
6 residential, to industrial. This will  
7 totally alter the entire area for the  
8 worse. This would be incompatible with  
9 any and all future land-use plans for the  
10 area. It will create an environmental  
11 hazard for the New Hope Creek area. A  
12 number of homes in this area are dependent  
13 on wells for their drinking water. It  
14 will also produce significant storm water  
15 runoff into the surrounding area.

16 It will also create substantial  
17 noise in what is now a residential area.  
18 The ROMF will operate 24 hours a day 7  
19 days a week 365 days a year, not to  
20 mention the noise from the trains  
21 themselves. This would have a  
22 considerable impact on the area.

23 The ROMF and the DOLRT tracks will  
24 create a potential safety hazard for



1 Creekside Elementary School. It will  
2 decrease the property values in the area,  
3 especially for the homeowners in the  
4 Villas of Culp Arbor, which is a -- a  
5 retirement community that is almost across  
6 from the ROMF-proposed site. Traffic on  
7 Farrington Road during rush hour is bad  
8 enough as it is. The grade-level crossing  
9 on Farrington Road planned by GoTriangle  
10 will cause traffic to come to a stand  
11 still. It will make it much harder and  
12 take longer to get to and from NC 54.  
13 This will be only 1 of 42 grade-level  
14 crossings in the GoTriangle plan of the  
15 17-mile route. A BRT, bus rapid transit,  
16 system will serve the area much better  
17 with far less cost to tax payers who will  
18 have to support the project and will be  
19 flexible and be able to provide service  
20 where it is needed as conditions change  
21 over time.

22 I strongly urge not to support the  
23 DOLRT or the ROMF. Federal and state and  
24 local governments have much more pressing

1 needs for their tax dollars than this  
2 project.

3 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
4 speaker, please.

5 MR. DANIEL COLE: Daniel Cole,  
6 , Chapel Hill, North  
7 Carolina 27517.

8 Public transportation is something  
9 that we should all support. I live in  
10 Finley Forest. This is going to go right  
11 by where I would live. This is something  
12 that would cause me to have to make  
13 sacrifices. It would cause me to move --  
14 to make it harder for me to move into the  
15 Finley Forest neighborhood when I'm coming  
16 from 54 into Summerwalk Circle, but we all  
17 have to make sacrifices for the greater  
18 good. This would be for the greater good.

19 Traffic on 54 is absolutely  
20 terrible. It takes 30 minutes to go from  
21 Finley Forest to the Food Lion down on the  
22 other side of 40 at around 9 o'clock in  
23 the morning and around 5 o'clock in the  
24 afternoon. This is unacceptable. Buses

1 will not work as well because they also  
2 have to use the roads. Currently the  
3 buses that run, the Chapel Hill buses that  
4 run on 54, go around 54 because they  
5 cannot use that road because there's too  
6 many cars. They cannot go on 54 at 5  
7 o'clock because there are too many cars.  
8 The road will not work.

9 To help the environment, to help  
10 the community, we have to get cars off the  
11 road. Light rail is what does this. Yes,  
12 it will cost money. All things cost  
13 money. Development is going to happen.  
14 We have to control how it happens, but you  
15 cannot stop it.

16 If people don't use it, it is on  
17 themselves for not using it. It's not for  
18 us to make people use it, and it's not for  
19 us to worry about what is going to affect  
20 the cars on the road that there are  
21 already too many of. What we need to do  
22 is get the cars off the road, not build  
23 things that will put more cars on the road  
24 and affect and be good for the cars on the

1 road.

2 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

3 MS. CHERI HARDMAN: Cheri Hardman,  
4 , Chapel Hill, North  
5 Carolina 27517. That's Durham County.

6 I oppose the light rail project  
7 because -- because it is not cost  
8 effective. At \$126 million per mile and  
9 then approximately 200 million -- 160 to  
10 200 million per year annually, this is  
11 very expensive transportation, and the  
12 reality is it will probably be more like  
13 over 2 billion by the time it's  
14 completed.

15 It's so ineffective that Wake  
16 County just last year decided to oppose it  
17 because newer, more cost-effective  
18 strategies are now available. It does not  
19 connect key locations to the area. RDU  
20 airport, a lot of people think it connects  
21 the airport. It doesn't. Southpoint  
22 Mall, Wake County, no connections. So  
23 basically we have an old technology that's  
24 already being looked at to be replaced in

1 cities like Portland, Oregon. Go ahead  
2 and Google why get rid of light rail, and  
3 we haven't even started.

4 There's no way it's to be used to  
5 the extent here in Durham and Orange  
6 County because we're not an urban area  
7 like Charlotte or Houston or Minneapolis  
8 where -- the places where its being used  
9 today. We will not have 23,000 round  
10 trips between Durham and Chapel Hill.  
11 Right now in a population of over a  
12 million on Charlotte, there's only 16,000  
13 round trips a day.

14 As a matter of fact, my daughter  
15 lives on the light rail, right -- right in  
16 front of it, and I said, have you ever  
17 used it? She said no -- well once. I did  
18 use it once. And I said, why not? She  
19 said, well, Uber's so much more effective  
20 and easier to get and cheaper.

21 So for the young people, it's not  
22 really a positive right -- step, as well  
23 it's not safe. Again, Google light rail  
24 accidents, some of the worst accidents

1 you'll see in transportation, probably the  
2 -- the -- one of the most dangerous.  
3 Again, funding is in questions, as well.  
4 So I do not support light rail.

5 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
6 speaker, please. And while she's making  
7 her way, if there are any others that have  
8 the number one on their -- any speakers  
9 that have a number one, please exit, come  
10 down the hall, and meet Jeffrey on the  
11 outside of the hall here.

12 As well, if there are twos, please  
13 come down as well at this point. So if  
14 there's any ones or twos on your card,  
15 whether you have A, B, C, D, or E, and --  
16 please come on down. Exit out here and  
17 come down and see Jeffrey. Thank you.  
18 Yes, ma'am.

19 MS. SOFIA ALEJANDRA PALMER: My  
20 name is Sofia Alejandra Palmer. I live at  
21 Chapel Hill,  
22 North Carolina 27514. I'm a member of the  
23 Chapel Hill Town Council, and I'm proud to  
24 say Council passed a resolution in support

1 of light rail, a unanimous resolution, but  
2 I'm not here to speak for the council.  
3 I'm here as an individual who ran -- ran  
4 for town council and knocked on thousands  
5 of doors -- well, hundreds, probably over  
6 a thousand, I'm sure, in 2013 as a pro  
7 public transit pro light rail candidate,  
8 and I'm proud to say that Chapel Hill  
9 elected me and the other pro light rail  
10 candidate for the two empty seats.

11 Why I know Chapel Hill supports  
12 light rail, because we voted to raise our  
13 sales tax to finance it. People don't  
14 vote lightly to raise their own taxes, and  
15 I realize, as one of the speakers just  
16 said, some folks will make sacrifices, and  
17 -- and we have studied every option that  
18 is being recommended. It has been tough,  
19 and I realize that there are some things  
20 that we'd rather not face, but we cannot  
21 legislate how many babies people have, and  
22 we cannot legislate, in this country,  
23 against people who want to move and live  
24 in the Southern part of heaven and choose

1 to be part of this community.

2 So what we can do, as responsible  
3 public servants, is to make decisions that  
4 prepare the community so that we can have  
5 the least impact to our environment, the  
6 least pollution, the least traffic, and we  
7 can continue to grow it but in a way that  
8 makes us a forward-thinking, progressive  
9 community. So I'm here to express my  
10 support and the support of my constituents  
11 to this project and the recommendations  
12 that have been presented. Thank you.

13 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
14 speaker, please.

15 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: Good evening.  
16 My name is Susan Pierce, and I live at  
17 Chapel Hill, and that's  
18 27517 area code. That happens to be  
19 Durham City and Durham County.

20 I am here to ask GoTriangle to  
21 re-examine, given the safety and health  
22 concerns of both the location of the ROMF  
23 and the at-grade Farrington Road  
24 crossing.



1                   Both the ROMF site and that  
2   at-grade Farrington Road crossing will  
3   result in significant health and safety  
4   concerns to over 200 elderly and disabled  
5   residents, plus 906 school children. The  
6   ROMF and these vulnerable populations are  
7   north of the at-grade crossing on  
8   Farrington Road, while all of the first  
9   responders, fire stations, and police that  
10  serve this area are south of the at-grade  
11  crossing.

12                   With train gates going down every  
13  five minutes at peak time on the two-lane  
14  Farrington Road, which already backs up  
15  traffic, the ability to arrive with  
16  lifesaving treatment will be lost. All it  
17  will take is one heart attack, one stroke,  
18  one hazmat ROMF accident, a bee sting at  
19  the elementary school, a fall from the  
20  playground equipment, and all of these  
21  could be fatal incidents. So I ask  
22  GoTriangle to re-examine the ROMF location  
23  and that at-grade Farrington Road  
24  crossing. Thank you.

1           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
2 speaker, please.

3           MS. MARGARET MILLER: My name is  
4 Margaret Miller. I live at  
5 Chapel Hill 27517, also in Durham  
6 County, Durham City.

7           MR. JOYNER: Ms. Miller, can you  
8 -- you might want to turn the mic down  
9 just a little bit. Yeah, you can -- that  
10 will adjust. There you go. Thank you.

11          MS. MARGARET MILLER: The  
12 Farrington, Trenton, Prescott Place, and  
13 Culp Arbor neighborhood associations  
14 strongly oppose the Farrington Road ROMF  
15 location as wrong on every level; most  
16 notably, the incompatibility of land use  
17 in a low-density residential area and  
18 environmental concerns with storm water  
19 runoff.

20           If the ROMF comes to pass, the  
21 following mitigation steps are essential:

22           One, storm water retention pumps  
23 to maximize -- to minimize toxic runoff  
24 via streams, and an NN in the DIS Appendix

1 K22. This runoff goes beneath I-40 into  
2 Leigh Farm Park, New Hope River Waterfowl  
3 Impoundment, and Jordan Lake.

4 Two, reconstruct Trenton Road with  
5 a new larger culvert beneath it to handle  
6 increased flow from storm water runoff  
7 associated with the 26 acres of impervious  
8 surface. Currently, Trenton Road  
9 overflows and can become impassable with  
10 only I-40 impervious surface.

11 Three, provide a noise and visual  
12 abatement wall on the Farrington Road side  
13 of the ROMF in consultation with Culp  
14 Arbor. If the entire ROMF is wall, make  
15 certain a wall is also constructed on the  
16 other side of I-40, the entire length of  
17 the ROMF, to mitigate noise projection  
18 into Trenton and Prescott neighborhoods,  
19 minimize light pollution from the  
20 nighttime operation of the ROMF, and  
21 provide city water to the homes on Trenton  
22 Road that utilize wells. ROMF runoff is  
23 toxic. Connection to sanitary sewer is  
24 essential because putting chlorinated city

1 water into septic systems causes them to  
2 fail. GoTriangle should pay.

3 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
4 speaker, please.

5 MR. BILL FERRELL: My name is Bill  
6 Ferrell, manager, Meadowmont Community  
7 Association. Our office is  
8 Chapel Hill, North  
9 Carolina.

10 The board of directors of the  
11 Meadowmont Community Association supports  
12 the conclusion of the DEIS that the C2A  
13 route is the preferred route for the light  
14 rail transit proposal. This conclusion  
15 was based upon four main factors that were  
16 considered: Economics, we felt that the  
17 C2A route is the lowest investment;  
18 ridership, C2A route was the highest  
19 potential ridership; social, the C2A has  
20 the greatest potential development of  
21 low-income housing at the preferred route;  
22 and, environmental, the C2 Route has the  
23 least negative impact in the bottom creek  
24 wetlands. Thank you.

1           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
2 speaker, please.

3           MS. JUDITH SWASEY: Judith Swasey,  
4   Chapel Hill. I'm a  
5 resident of Downing Creek, the city and  
6 County of Durham.

7           My concern is the lack of public  
8 support. Over the past four years,  
9 multiple neighborhoods have voiced their  
10 opposition, organized community efforts,  
11 met with public officials, attended and  
12 spoke at public meetings, and sent many  
13 written comments. Yet GoTriangle has not  
14 changed anything to address our very real  
15 and specific concerns. In fact, the DEIS  
16 has been developed without including these  
17 concerns and persisted on offering the  
18 preferred alternative route of C2A, even  
19 though there was broad opposition to this  
20 route.

21           Specific concerns for the  
22 residents of the Cedars and Meadowmont  
23 Community were detailed in the DEIS, but  
24 those of Downing Creek and surrounding

1 neighborhoods, whose concerns were  
2 identical, do not appear in the DEIS.  
3 There have been numerous letters to the  
4 editor, public commentaries in newspapers  
5 and articles indicating a -- supporting a  
6 no build option or opposing the C2A route,  
7 yet these also are not included in the  
8 DEIS.

9           GoTriangle's own website, who post  
10 public comments, has August 2015 comments  
11 that are almost 100 percent in opposition  
12 to the route or parts of the route. Yet  
13 these are not included in the DEIS. I  
14 feel that GoTriangle has not demonstrated  
15 transparency or responsiveness throughout  
16 the process. I request an independent  
17 consultant review all the past and present  
18 public input and issue an unbiased  
19 statement of real public opinion, not what  
20 is -- has been issued as a broad  
21 acceptance of the project.

22           Since previous planning appears to  
23 be based on misinformation or omission of  
24 information and ignoring public opinion, I

1     urge the FTA, Federal Transit  
2     Administration, to support the no build  
3     option and not commit federal money to  
4     this project that will benefit few and  
5     potentially harm many. Thank you.

6             MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Folks, I  
7     appreciate the enthusiasm and applause is  
8     welcome, but let's keep the whistling down  
9     a little bit, please. Thank you.

10            MS. KELLY MASSENGALE: Kelly  
11     Massengale,                     Durham  
12     27707.

13            I have lived in the Triangle for  
14     nearly 30 years. In that time, the area  
15     has grown in many wonderful ways but so  
16     has traffic. We need alternate forms of  
17     transportation in our community. I live  
18     within walking distance of the Farrington  
19     Road Rail Operations and Maintenance  
20     Facility. There is currently no planned  
21     station at that location. If my  
22     neighborhood is to bare the burden of  
23     increased traffic, noise, and any  
24     environmental impact of the light rail and

1 its maintenance facility, please allow us  
2 to also benefit from light rail in  
3 increased economic development that will  
4 surround each station. Please add a  
5 station to the Farrington Road ROMF so  
6 that people who can walk to the facility  
7 can also walk onto a train.

8 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. I'll now  
9 ask folks that have the number three in  
10 their -- on their sign in to please step  
11 out in the hallway and come down the hall  
12 and Jeffrey will get everyone lined up.  
13 So if there's anyone one, two, or three  
14 that hasn't been called already, if you --  
15 if you can come on down and -- just for  
16 those that have recently stepped in,  
17 because this is kind of a rolling hearing  
18 and folks can come in at different times,  
19 I want to make sure that everybody notes  
20 the ground rules, although I'm sure it's  
21 hard to miss those, but I do -- do  
22 appreciate everybody being gracious and  
23 allowing folks to have an opportunity to  
24 speak. So, sir.



1           MR. JORDAN WILLIAMS: My name is  
2 Jordan Williams. I live at

3  
4           Currently the bus system in Durham  
5 is really backed up. I heard earlier it  
6 takes like 15 minutes to get to a  
7 45-minute stop. Sometimes it will take an  
8 hour. Currently for the other students  
9 who live in Durham, Chapel Hill,  
10 in-between areas, I feel like this would  
11 be an easier system for them because they  
12 can just go to direct lines between Durham  
13 and Chapel Hill, especially the ones that  
14 work at the hospital from -- from Durham  
15 and Chapel Hill to LaSalle Street,  
16 especially on LaSalle Street. There are a  
17 lot of Duke students that currently do  
18 live in Chapel Hill and vice versa, and  
19 this would just be a better benefit for  
20 them.

21           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. And we're  
22 ready for our next speakers. And if this  
23 is the only number -- do we have any  
24 fives? Any folks that have a five? Okay,

1 if you have a five -- oh, are there any  
2 fours left? Oh, did I skip the fours? My  
3 goodness. Y'all got to keep me on my  
4 toes. Fours first, please. Thank you.  
5 Anyone with a four, please step out and  
6 Jeffrey will get them in order. Thank you  
7 so much. Yes, sir.

8 MR. MORRIS WALLACK: My name is  
9 Morris Wallack. I live at  
10 in Chapel Hill in Durham County,  
11 27517.

12 I'm also a member of Judea Reform  
13 Congregation in Durham and Vice President  
14 of the Board of Directors for the Jewish  
15 Federation of Durham and Chapel Hill. I  
16 am speaking on behalf of myself as a  
17 citizen of Chapel Hill and Durham County.

18 First, I appreciate the  
19 opportunity for public comment. My second  
20 point would be that I am for the light  
21 rail due to the overall viability of the  
22 light rail idea as a well-conceived  
23 solution to the high-density traffic,  
24 employment, and usage patterns that have

1 already been identified in our present  
2 Durham-Orange County Corridor and what we  
3 foresee as continued growth in that area.  
4 I think this is an investment that will  
5 keep the area viable and vibrant for years  
6 to come. It's one that we should make  
7 today.

8           Second, I fully support the  
9 proposed DES option C2A for Little Creek.  
10 Living quite near Little Creek at the end  
11 of Meadowmont Lane, I've been close to  
12 this issue for many years, and considering  
13 the costs, the environmental impact, and  
14 the residential mix versus the viable  
15 alternatives on Route 54 and George King  
16 Road, I am for C2A.

17           Third, I support the ROMF  
18 alternative at Farrington and want to  
19 underscore the impact of alternatives,  
20 particularly on Cornwallis Road. That  
21 site in particular, the proposed  
22 reconfiguration of the western bypass,  
23 will move traffic very close to the Judea  
24 Reform Synagog, Lerner Elementary School,

1 and the Jewish Federations Community  
2 Center, all of which have high-density  
3 population, day and night, weekday and  
4 weekend.

5           Additionally, a ROMF at that site  
6 implies land taking, literally eminent  
7 domain taking of two to three acres of  
8 land that is owned by the Jewish  
9 Federation and slated for future  
10 development. Finally, a ROMF at that  
11 location would generate potential noise  
12 and other things where quiet religious  
13 activity occurs, and certainly during the  
14 construction period between 2019 and 2026  
15 and possibly thereafter. Thank you for  
16 your consideration.

17           MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir. Next  
18 speaker.

19           MS. CAROLINE CAMERON: My name is  
20 Caroline Cameron. I live at

21           Chapel Hill, NC 27517, Durham  
22 City/County. I pay taxes in both.

23           There are numerous good reasons to  
24 be opposed to the Durham-Chapel Hill Light

1 Rail. The one point I would like to  
2 address is that it is assumed by most that  
3 the light rail will at least be safe.  
4 This is a false assumption. The current  
5 proposal includes at least one  
6 intersection that will be extremely  
7 dangerous. This is not just because it is  
8 an intersection where the train runs at  
9 grade level, ground level, but the key  
10 danger is that there is not, nor will  
11 there be, a traffic light at this  
12 intersection. The intersection is Downing  
13 Creek Parkway and Highway 54. NCDOT has  
14 made it clear that there will -- they will  
15 not put a traffic light in there. As cars  
16 try to make their way onto the very busy  
17 Highway 54, they will be forced to stop on  
18 the tracks and run the real risk of the  
19 rail gate coming down behind their car,  
20 thus trapping them on the tracks.  
21 Stopping on the tracks may be illegal, but  
22 there will be no other way to get to  
23 Highway 54 during most hours since the  
24 track -- the track will come very close to

1 the highway and there will be two tracks  
2 side by side equaling a 30-foot span. A  
3 car will be hard pressed to get onto  
4 Highway 54 without stopping on the tracks  
5 in order to get close enough to 54 to make  
6 it into the traffic without a traffic  
7 light.

8 Please note that the train will be  
9 crossing this intersection 140 times every  
10 day. Recipe for disaster. The danger is  
11 not just to the people in the cars that  
12 use this intersection but also to the  
13 passengers on the train. Durham and  
14 Chapel Hill officials involved in this  
15 approval process, the NCDOT, and the  
16 Federal Transit Administration all need to  
17 take note and assume responsibility for  
18 this potentially dangerous situation  
19 they're proposing. I'm requesting the FTA  
20 flag the Downing Creek-54 intersection and  
21 research the safety of this intersection  
22 before the rail is approved with any  
23 federal monies. Thank you.

24 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

1 MR. THOMAS SWASEY: My name is  
2 Thomas Swasey, , Chapel  
3 Hill, North Carolina.

4 I'm a resident and tax payer in  
5 the City of Durham, and I reside in the  
6 Downing Creek Community.

7 I urge the Federal Transit  
8 Administration to support the no build  
9 option for the Durham-Orange Light Rail  
10 Transit Project. It is ludicrous to think  
11 that a fixed rail train will be able to  
12 serve the dynamic growing area of  
13 Durham-Chapel Hill with all its suburban  
14 sprawl. Most of the planned stations  
15 would require supplemental transportation  
16 to arrive at final destinations. In major  
17 area destinations like the airport; the  
18 main area job center, Research Triangle  
19 Park; and even our neighboring city  
20 Raleigh, the state capital, are not  
21 served.

22 The area is changing rapidly.  
23 When this project was first planned, the  
24 54 corridor was the center of development,

1 and now the current center of development  
2 is the 15/501 corridor between Durham,  
3 Chapel Hill, and Chatham County, and the  
4 developmental centers will continue to  
5 change in the future.

6           How do we move tracks? The  
7 project would waste local, state, and  
8 federal funds. It is a flawed design that  
9 will serve few and cost us all. I urge  
10 you to support the no build option and at  
11 the same time support more flexible mass  
12 transit solutions like bus rapid transit,  
13 which is a better fit for our area. Thank  
14 you.

15           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
16 speaker, please. You're welcome to do  
17 that.

18           MR. ALEX CABANES: Sorry whoever's  
19 behind me. My name is Alex Cabanes,  
20                           Chapel Hill, North  
21 Carolina.

22           I stand before you to recommend a  
23 no build option to the proposed light rail  
24 plan. The plan has numerous flawed



1 assumptions that impact the fiscal  
2 feasibility and sustainability of this  
3 project. One flawed project assumption is  
4 25 percent state funding that's already  
5 been -- brought fiscal feasibility into  
6 question and has been capped by the state  
7 at 10 percent.

8 The recent state budge  
9 negotiations have highlighted that even  
10 this assumption is highly questionable  
11 with the current \$500,000 budget cap. In  
12 addition, the projected 23,000 daily  
13 boardings is built on numerous flawed  
14 assumptions, such as the assumption that  
15 40 percent of the area households within  
16 the 57-square-mile corridor will be zero  
17 vehicle residences, according to K2-27 of  
18 the DEIS. Current zero vehicle households  
19 comprise 10.4 percent in Durham, 7.4  
20 percent in Chapel Hill, according to the  
21 census bureau.

22 As a matter of fact, material  
23 changes in the project, including travel  
24 times changing from 34 minutes in 2011 to

1 42 to 44 in the DIS, elimination of 700  
2 parking spaces, changes in alignments,  
3 such as C1 to C2A that was supposed to be  
4 a minute shorter and increase a thousand  
5 daily boardings, and all of the original  
6 estimated daily boardings have been pushed  
7 out five years to 2040, despite all of  
8 these changes, the daily boarding  
9 projections remain unchanged at 23,000  
10 daily boardings. For this reason, these  
11 are fatally flawed models and we recommend  
12 no build. Thank you.

13 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

14 MS. RAMONA McGEE: There we go.  
15 My name is Ramona McGee, and I'm an  
16 attorney with the Southern Environmental  
17 Law Center. Our address is  
18 Chapel Hill,  
19 North Carolina 27516.

20 The Southern Environmental Law  
21 Center or SELC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit  
22 organization working to protect the  
23 natural resources of the Southeast. In  
24 particular, we work with a wide range of

1 environmental groups across the state  
2 advocating on transportation issues. SELC  
3 is pleased to indicate our enthusiastic  
4 support for the Durham-Orange Light Rail  
5 Transit Project and the selected routes  
6 identified in the Draft Environmental  
7 Impact Statement. We see this project  
8 generating many benefits, including to the  
9 environment and to community health. The  
10 environmental benefits of light rail are  
11 well established. By reducing the number  
12 of cars on the road, the system will help  
13 improve air quality and reduce emissions  
14 of climate-changing greenhouse gases.

15 Further, we expect that a fixed  
16 transportation system such as the light  
17 rail line will help shape land use along  
18 the corridor as Orange and Durham Counties  
19 continue to grow. As to the positive  
20 effects on community health and quality of  
21 life, the light rail system will combat  
22 congestion, long commute times, and time  
23 wasted behind the wheel. Such an active  
24 transportation solution will also benefit

1 overall community physical and mental  
2 health.

3 While we are supportive of the  
4 project and the routes, we appreciate that  
5 some concerns remain regarding possible  
6 equity and accessibility impacts as a  
7 result of the project's location in  
8 Durham.

9 Nonetheless, we are pleased that  
10 GoTriangle has adopted a thoughtful  
11 approach to collaborating with the  
12 affected communities in resolving these  
13 issues, and we are hopeful that this  
14 collaboration will continue.

15 Again, SELC is happy to share our  
16 overall support for this project and the  
17 identified routes. We are carefully  
18 reviewing the DEIS and will be submitting  
19 more thorough written comments soon.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
22 speaker, please.

23 MR. KEITH CAMERON: My name is  
24 Keith Cameron. I live at -- My address is

1                   that's Chapel Hill,  
2 North Carolina 27517. I pay taxes to  
3 Durham City and County.

4                   I gotta start now. An article in  
5 the September 24th News & Observer quoted  
6 a Democrat legislator from Durham as  
7 saying Durham and Orange County voters  
8 endorsed light rail when they levied the  
9 local half cent sales tax to help pay for  
10 it, closed quote. That is incorrect. The  
11 tax was specified only for transportation  
12 systems and said nothing about light  
13 rail. I have a copy of the ballot right  
14 here. I will read verbatim the entire  
15 ballot. One-half percent local sales and  
16 use taxes in addition to the current local  
17 sales and use taxes to be used only for  
18 public transportation systems. I want to  
19 say again those last eight words, to be  
20 used only for public transportation  
21 systems.

22                   Buses are transportation, too, and  
23 a far more efficient use of tax money than  
24 any permanently fixed rail line. The

1 routes can be changed very quickly as  
2 needs change, whereas the rail lines  
3 cannot. Buses are senior friendly and can  
4 service the entire Durham-Orange area.  
5 The Durham-Orange Light Rail could not  
6 even help seniors get to a grocery store.  
7 The rail line would likely use way more  
8 than the funds allocated for  
9 transportation systems. Therefore, where  
10 will the money come from to assist with  
11 the transpiration needs of our aging  
12 population? I want to repeat, reemphasize  
13 that this will not -- that any local rail  
14 line will not get any cars off the road.  
15 It didn't in Charlotte and it won't here.

16 And as far as low ridership, every  
17 presentation I've ever seen by GoTriangle,  
18 they've made it clear -- unless they've  
19 changed, the ones I saw, they made it  
20 clear that they really don't care if  
21 nobody rides it apart from the ridiculous  
22 low ridership, which can be documented.  
23 They don't care if nobody rides it. They  
24 don't care about really anything else, the

1     egregious safety issues --

2             MR. JOYNER: Thank -- Thank you,  
3     sir. Your two minutes are up.

4             MR. KEITH CAMERON: They just want  
5     to force it through.

6             MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir.

7             MS. ROSEMARIE WENZEL: I'm  
8     Rosemarie Wenzel,                     ,  
9     Chapel Hill.

10            I wanted to state that my daughter  
11     lives in Houston, Texas, and the light  
12     rail is not working there. People are not  
13     riding it, and it's causing budget  
14     overrides, and Houston, Texas, is the  
15     fourth largest city in our state -- in our  
16     United States.

17            Also this light -- light rail goes  
18     through part of RTP that is not the growth  
19     area of our region. It does not connect  
20     to RDP [sic] and RDU in Wake County. It  
21     is also underestimated on cost. Based on  
22     Charlotte, 126 million per mile means over  
23     \$2 billion in funding from the state is  
24     questionable. 25 years ago, it was

1 estimated a hundred million dollars. Now  
2 we're not sure where it's going.

3 The Army Corps of Engineer and  
4 wetlands will say that it will disrupt the  
5 wetlands and the habitat of the wetlands  
6 and the aesthetics of Chapel Hill. Also,  
7 it is not needed. Not enough people to  
8 justify. In Charlotte, there are 16 --  
9 16,000 that ride it and in Durham it's  
10 projected to have 23,000, and I think that  
11 we need to reevaluate, like Raleigh did,  
12 where they decided to have an outside  
13 company come in and do an evaluation and  
14 they decided not to go ahead with it  
15 because it was not cost effective because  
16 people would not ride it.

17 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Oh, ma'am  
18 -- ma'am, we need your card, if you don't  
19 mind. And while we have a quick break,  
20 anybody that's a number five -- there's  
21 one, two, threes out there, but we're at  
22 number five now, so if you have a number  
23 five, if you would step out in the hall  
24 and come down and Jeffrey will get you



1 lined up.

2           And, again, for anybody that has  
3 just entered, periodically -- everyone  
4 that has requested to speak, you should  
5 have a number on your card. Periodically  
6 I will call the number on the card and ask  
7 everybody to step out into the hall and  
8 come down and we'll line you -- you up so  
9 that everybody will speak in order. And,  
10 again, the -- the ground rules are -- are  
11 posted here, and I really appreciate  
12 everybody's cooperation. It's been very  
13 good so far. Thank you. Yes, sir.

14           MR. TOM BOND: My name's Tom  
15 Bond. I live at                   in Chapel  
16 Hill 27517.

17           Some of which I am going to say  
18 has been repeated before, but if I  
19 understand the numbers that have been  
20 given out, this -- this project is going  
21 to be a disaster. I understand it's going  
22 to be around 1.7 billion to build 17  
23 miles, which is like \$100 million per  
24 mile. It's going to run around \$17

1 million a year to operate for 23,000  
2 rides, which comes to around about \$900  
3 per ride. So I just think the whole thing  
4 is -- is ridiculous. I think we ought to  
5 be looking at some sort of alternatives,  
6 but I don't think this is going to fly,  
7 and -- unless people are going to get  
8 taxed a lot. So I vote no build. Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

11 MR. PHILIP SINGER: My name is  
12 Philip Singer. I live at  
13 in Chapel Hill, 27514.

14 In addition to being a Chapel Hill  
15 resident, I'm also co-president elect of  
16 the Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel  
17 Hill.

18 One of the alternative sites for  
19 the rail operations and maintenance  
20 facility is the Cornwallis Road site, and  
21 that site backs up to a Jewish Community  
22 Center as well as to other institutions on  
23 our Jewish campus: Judea Reform  
24 Congregation and the Lerner Jewish Day

1 School. I want to first thank GoTriangle  
2 for their openness in sharing and  
3 communicating their light rail plans with  
4 us via the public information meetings,  
5 via their website, and via this public  
6 hearing. We are pleased that GoTriangle  
7 did not choose Cornwallis Road for the  
8 rail operation and maintenance facility.  
9 Their Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
10 does not recommend Cornwallis Road for  
11 further consideration as a need for  
12 preferred alternative for several reasons.  
13 Most important to us is the impact it  
14 would have on our development plans for  
15 land gifted to the Jewish Federation for  
16 future expansion. Accordingly, it has a  
17 major impact on our community resources.  
18 Equally as important is that the  
19 Cornwallis Road site would involve  
20 relocation of the western bypass to the  
21 back of the rail operations and  
22 maintenance facility. The road would  
23 bring it -- The relocation would bring it  
24 right alongside the back of our facility.

1 It will bring the road closer to our  
2 existing campus, it will create safety and  
3 security concerns for us, especially for  
4 children at the Lerner Jewish Day School  
5 and those in our Community Center swimming  
6 and play area.

7 We're also concerned about noise  
8 and vibrations during the construction  
9 period and thereafter that will interfere  
10 with prayer and meditation at Judea Reform  
11 Congregation Synagog and will interfere  
12 with learning at the Lerner Jewish Day  
13 School.

14 We have concern about light from  
15 the faculty that may affect the religious  
16 services and the fact that the facility  
17 will create more traffic, especially with  
18 a relocated western bypass will intersect  
19 Cornwallis Road at a point closer to our  
20 entryway off Cornwallis Road. Thank you.

21 MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. LARRY KATZ: My name is Larry  
23 Katz. I live at  
24 and I live along the 54 corridor.

1 I'd like to make two comments.

2 One comment is every single day at 7, 8,  
3 9, 10, 11, and in the afternoon, I watch  
4 the GoTriangle buses go by and I'm  
5 fascinated but they're almost completely  
6 empty. I think if GoTriangle wants to do  
7 something helpful for improving traffic  
8 flows, use the money and use this system  
9 that's already in place and make it  
10 efficient.

11 The other comment I'd like to make  
12 is that I'm an emergency -- thank you very  
13 much. I'm apologizing that I'm not in red  
14 today, which has a special meaning to us,  
15 but an emergency medicine physician. I'm  
16 also a paramedic that have worked in EMS  
17 for over 30 years, and the way the current  
18 system is designed, it's going to create  
19 delays in emergency response. One minute  
20 of delay can have a dramatic, disastrous  
21 outcome on patient's lives, and I do not  
22 support the build of this system, and I  
23 ask for your support, as well, and thank  
24 you for the opportunity.

1           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. And,  
2 folks, I will ask that you please hold --  
3 hold your applause during -- not -- during  
4 the speaking so that the speakers can be  
5 heard. It's important that you respect  
6 their opportunity and you give everybody  
7 that opportunity to speak, so please do  
8 hold your applause. Thank you. Yes,  
9 ma'am.

10           MS. BONNIE HAUSER: Hi. I'm  
11 Bonnie Hauser. I live at  
12 Hillsborough, so the light rail  
13 will not be in my backyard.

14           I'm here to support public  
15 transportation and the no build  
16 alternative for LRT. My concerns are  
17 about the plan and the DEIS. They include  
18 that light rail will not serve  
19 accelerating growth and committed land use  
20 planned for the Triangle.

21           Of the 2 to 3 million people who  
22 are coming to the area, GoTriangle reports  
23 that only about 27,000 will be coming to  
24 the proposed corridor. The rest will be

1 mostly going into massive new urban  
2 centers in Raleigh, RTP, and Chatham Park,  
3 which are no where near the Durham-Orange  
4 light rail corridor. Wake County, where  
5 most of the growth will -- will occur, has  
6 already abandoned light rail in favor of  
7 lower costs, more flexible solutions,  
8 including bus rapid transit.

9           The DEIS unrealistically -- The  
10 DEIS has projections that appear to be  
11 grossly exaggerated. They unrealistically  
12 assume that 40 percent of households will  
13 not have cars, plus students who live off  
14 campus artificially inflate the poverty  
15 roles and reduce the average income. The  
16 report regularly conflates current and  
17 future trends and ignores how growth in  
18 the Triangle dwarfs employment and  
19 population growth along the corridor.  
20 Route changes have made the route slower,  
21 less frequent, and more dangerous. An  
22 alternative, such as bus rapid transit,  
23 which were ruled out in the past, are now  
24 much more appealing than the current light

1 rail plan.

2 Even with the funding cap lifted,  
3 state funding is limited to a maximum of  
4 10 percent, which is woefully short of the  
5 funds needed. It's time to stop the  
6 project and redirect resources to  
7 Triangle-wide transportation.

8 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. At this  
9 time, we don't have any other speakers  
10 that are signed up to speak, so if there's  
11 -- I'm sorry? Oh, we got six -- oh, are  
12 you talking about -- bring the next ones  
13 up? I'm sorry. I misunderstood you. I'm  
14 sorry, I was confused. I'm sorry. I was  
15 very confused by the message that I was  
16 given earlier.

17 The folks that have a number six,  
18 please step outside and -- and come on  
19 down. I apologize for those that are  
20 sitting there and their cards and thought,  
21 well, I'm not going to get a chance to  
22 speak. And then, again, if there's others  
23 that wish to speak, feel free to step  
24 outside and sign up and -- and get your



1 card so that we can get you guys in order  
2 to speak. And, again, we have our ground  
3 rules here and periodically I will call  
4 numbers to -- for folks to come up and  
5 speak. You will exit the room, head down  
6 the hallway, and Jeffrey will get  
7 everybody lined up to speak. And, again,  
8 as you -- as we do speak, if you would  
9 hand your card to the court reporter and  
10 state your name and address for the record  
11 prior to speaking.

12 MS. LAURA WENZEL: My name is  
13 Laura Wenzel. I live at  
14 in Chapel Hill, but it's actually  
15 Carrboro.

16 I'm with Medical Advocates for  
17 Healthy Air, a statewide network of  
18 medical and health professionals concerned  
19 about the impact of air pollution and  
20 health, and we are in favor of the light  
21 rail project because of its implications  
22 for our projects -- population's health.

23 Currently there are scarce viable  
24 alternatives to driving for those who

1 commute between Durham and Chapel Hill.  
2 Driving individual automobiles creates  
3 toxic particular matter pollution that can  
4 have a wide range of adverse health  
5 effects. This is caused not only by  
6 burning fossil fuels but also by road  
7 ware, brake ware, and tire ware. The  
8 cleanest electric car will still cause  
9 particulate matter pollution because it  
10 can't avoid friction with the  
11 petroleum-based asphalt that our roads are  
12 made of.

13 A recent study published in the  
14 Journal of Nature suggests that  
15 particulate matter pollution is  
16 responsible for 3.3 million premature  
17 deaths worldwide in 2010. Particulate  
18 matter pollution exacerbates asthma, which  
19 is the leading medical cause for school  
20 absences in North Carolina. It's also  
21 linked to low birth weight, premature  
22 birth, autism, ADHD, stroke, liver  
23 disease, dementia, and a number of other  
24 problems. It degrades the visibility and

1 causes climate change. These impacts are  
2 often worse for people in low-income  
3 communities and communities of color,  
4 which are often located along heavily  
5 trafficked roads.

6 Over the next 16 years -- 15  
7 years, our population in the Triangle is  
8 expected to grow by 71 percent. Change to  
9 our area in way of life is inevitable, and  
10 we have a fleeting opportunity to guide  
11 what it will become. Unless we develop  
12 transportation alternatives now, this  
13 population growth will result in a massive  
14 increase in -- in car traffic.

15 To those concerned about costs and  
16 convenience, consider the cost and  
17 convenience of an increase of 50 percent  
18 or more cars on the road and the  
19 corresponding increase in accidents,  
20 frustrations of sitting in traffic, and  
21 particulate matter pollution.

22 To those who criticize the light  
23 rail program as limited, take the long  
24 view. We have a big problem that requires

1 multifaceted solutions. The light rail  
2 project is only one step, but it's an  
3 essential one that is long overdue.  
4 Please help the swift implementation of  
5 the light rail plan.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
7 speaker, please. And if there are any  
8 other speakers, you're -- you're welcome  
9 to come down -- exit the hall and come  
10 down, so any other speakers, depending on  
11 where their number is. Yes.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: It's really  
13 important that they not talk fast and that  
14 they talk clear because I'm actually  
15 typing every word they say and that's  
16 impossible and she is having to say  
17 everything they say, which is also  
18 impossible if you talk super fast. Then  
19 there's no way for us to get it all.

20 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. I'll  
21 reiterate that. So -- So, again, what --  
22 what we're asking is, again, speak very  
23 clearly and -- and slow enough that  
24 everybody can hear and understand,

1 particularly for our court reporters to  
2 understand what you're saying. So thank  
3 you.

4 MS. WALLIS COOPER: My name is  
5 Wallis Cooper. My address is  
6 in Chapel Hill,  
7 Durham County.

8 I have to apologize -- start by  
9 apologizing. I'm a native New Yorker and  
10 I naturally speak extremely fast, so I'm  
11 going to slow down too, only fast.

12 When I attended a recent  
13 information session here, I asked one of  
14 the GoTransit representatives what is  
15 better about light rail when the buses are  
16 now running less than half full? And he  
17 said, it's going to have lots of amenities  
18 and it's going to have really good  
19 branding. So in exchange for all the  
20 costs, noise, danger, and fierce  
21 objections, apparently what we are  
22 actually going to gain are amenities and  
23 branding. That's according to one of the  
24 representatives of GoTransit.

1           Now, there's something more  
2   disturbing to me, and that is a comment  
3   that one of the previous speakers that  
4   just left had said about students, which  
5   made me realize that when GoTransit is  
6   using a figure of 40 percent of no cars  
7   that there may be a deep deception there  
8   if they're including students, which then  
9   makes one wonder what other deceptions are  
10  involved. Thank you.

11           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
12  speaker, please.

13           MR. HENRY LISTER: Good  
14  afternoon. My name is Henry Lister. I  
15  live at                            in Chapel  
16  Hill, 27517, right down the street here.

17           When I came back from Italy last  
18  year, I was completely all in for light  
19  rail, having experienced it there.  
20  However, the more I learned about this  
21  project, the less enthused I became. As  
22  stated previously, I agree that the  
23  proposed light rail plan does not serve  
24  the most desirable destinations. So who

1 is it serving and why? I'm still not  
2 convinced. I'd be interested in knowing  
3 what the ridership is on any and all buses  
4 that mirror the proposed light rail line  
5 and if those ridership numbers justify the  
6 cost.

7 With regard to the Southern  
8 Environmental Law Center's support, I  
9 don't deny that light rail overall is  
10 environmentally sound and beneficial, but  
11 I believe that different routes would  
12 produce larger benefits than the proposed  
13 route.

14 And just as the Jewish Federation  
15 believes that light rail would disturb the  
16 peaceful use of their property, I believe  
17 the proximity of the line to Glenwood  
18 Elementary and St. Thomas More schools  
19 would have similar detriment. Thank you.

20 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

21 MR. MICHAEL WHITE: Okay. My name  
22 is Michael White.

23 MR. JOYNER: Sir, be sure -- I'm  
24 sorry. Excuse me. Be sure to hand your

1 -- to the -- thank you.

2 MR. MICHAEL WHITE: Sorry.

3 MR. JOYNER: That's okay.

4 MR. MICHAEL WHITE: My name is

5 Michael White. I live on

6 Chapel Hill, 27514, near the

7 proposed Mason Farm Road station.

8 I have lived in other cities, and,  
9 in general, I do support the principle of  
10 light rail systems in general. This  
11 specific plan does have issues that deeply  
12 concern me; however, traffic's not going  
13 to get any better with all the growth  
14 that's going to happen between now and  
15 2050. I think that the worst-case  
16 scenario is having 50 to 75 percent more  
17 cars on the road, and the proposed no  
18 build solutions that would increase the  
19 amount of road traffic capacity is only  
20 going to meet the demand that we already  
21 know is coming. So that concerns me  
22 deeply.

23 With regard to Wake County, one of  
24 the primary reasons why Wake County had



1 not been on board previously was RDU  
2 Airport's specific position on light rail,  
3 specifically that they did not want it  
4 because they feared it would reduce  
5 parking revenue.

6 Now, Wake County has a different  
7 -- since the 2014 elections, Wake County  
8 may be reconsidering its position that it  
9 had earlier, so do look out for that.

10 Now, I agree with the fact that  
11 Charlotte has low ridership, and we do not  
12 want to be making the same mistake that  
13 Charlotte has been making.

14 The other issue with the Charlotte  
15 light rail has been the issue of  
16 gentrification, that many of the people  
17 who would stand to benefit most from light  
18 rail have been basically muscled out  
19 because of economic concerns. And there  
20 -- there are many more people who will  
21 say the same things that I have said, but  
22 I just wanted to get that out. Thank you.

23 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. And if  
24 there are any other speakers with any

1 number, if you'd like to step out and --  
2 and -- step out into the hall and -- and  
3 come down and we'll get you lined up.  
4 And, again, for those speakers that have  
5 just joined us, please hand your card to  
6 the court reporter, please state your name  
7 and address for the record, and then we'll  
8 have a two-minute time limit and Robert  
9 there has the cards that will let you know  
10 sort of where the -- your timing is, so  
11 thank you.

12 MS. CATHY ABERNATHY: My name is  
13 Cathy Abernathy. I've lived at  
14 since November of 2012. I have  
15 an overview and two concerns.

16 The overview is this is a 20-year  
17 work-in-progress that is acting like an  
18 avalanche that can't be stopped. Elected  
19 officials and GoTriangle have the  
20 responsibility to provide for auto  
21 congestion, growth, and some form of  
22 transit in the year 2040, but this is not  
23 the best program. There have been many  
24 changes since the 1990s, and this was

1 considered a Triangle solution. Wake  
2 County, different routes, East Durham  
3 being eliminated, there are many problems.

4 My first impression is, gee,  
5 GoTriangle, you had to rely on the worst  
6 and the least worst options. Oh, it will  
7 be all right, Cathy, Wake County's going  
8 to come on board. Do we want DOLRT to be  
9 the lost leader in hopes that this will  
10 finally be a Triangle metropolitan transit  
11 system?

12 My two concerns are neighborhood  
13 involvement. I've been involved with  
14 local politics a long time. I first heard  
15 about the ROMF across the street from me  
16 June 24th, two days, no notice to a  
17 GoTriangle meeting. Great response, sure,  
18 get involved.

19 The second is North Carolina 54  
20 should never be a transit or a growth  
21 area. It is a required filtering open  
22 space for the wetlands of New Hope Creek  
23 and the Little River. Thank you very  
24 much.

1           MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
2 speaker, please.

3           MR. ROBERT FORNABY: Robert  
4 Fornaby,                           Chapel Hill  
5 27517.

6           I've been living in North Carolina  
7 for over 20 years. I've seen incredible  
8 growth. I kind of like the idea, but the  
9 execution, again, may have some finer  
10 points coming before any final decision is  
11 made. I think a lot of times you see the  
12 systems, they start off with high  
13 ridership and then the kind of novelty  
14 wears off, it drops down, we'll be back in  
15 cars, which are getting more fuel  
16 efficient, so maybe something in terms of  
17 expanding the roadways, bridges,  
18 connectors, something to get to the  
19 airport, something more holistic.

20           Obviously there's good points and  
21 bad points to anything, but this is  
22 something that's such a huge undertaking  
23 in terms of being a large project that's  
24 going to affect a lot of people and future

1 growth -- obviously no one has a crystal  
2 ball, but it would be nice to not just  
3 assume there is maybe two or three limited  
4 overall options in terms of the plan  
5 coming together in the future. Thank you.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next  
7 speaker, please. Ma'am, that's you.

8 MS. ELLEN MICHELSON: Ellen  
9 Michelson, Chapel Hill,  
10 Durham County, not the city but pay plenty  
11 of taxes.

12 I have lived within a mile or two  
13 of the 54/40 Farrington Road intersection  
14 for over 30 years. The appeal of this  
15 area is the expansive trees, wildlife, and  
16 low taxes. We all agree that we have a  
17 problem. We differ on the solution. The  
18 wait times as well as numerous accidents  
19 due to current congestion are not  
20 acceptable, neither is the proposed light  
21 rail. In addition, I'd like to point out  
22 that the proposed ROMF is a potential  
23 disaster for this location.

24 Just one example, I have a pond on

1 my property. I already have issues with  
2 runoff of pollution. I called the city.  
3 They don't want to hear it. They don't  
4 even call you back most of the time, and  
5 that's a fact. I back up onto the third  
6 fork of New Hope Creek. My property  
7 includes a couple of acres of waterfowl  
8 impoundment. I have witnessed coyote,  
9 fox, raccoon, bald eagles, even bobcat.  
10 There's no one that can tell me the light  
11 rail maintenance facility is not going to  
12 have an impact on that. With the train  
13 noise and the stadium lights and the  
14 asphalt, it's going to have an extremely  
15 negative impact on our community.

16 The people at Wildlife Center  
17 located between the proposed site and  
18 Highway 54 must also be taken into  
19 consideration. There are over 900  
20 school-aged children attending Creekside.  
21 The maintenance facility belongs in an  
22 industrial area, not among the trees.

23 This is one of the only places  
24 where it is truly green, not six-story

1 high-rises, which is what will need to be  
2 built in order to warrant the density  
3 necessary for the ridership numbers that  
4 have been estimated. I strongly support  
5 the no build option. Thank you.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. If  
7 there's anyone else that is signed up to  
8 speak, please step out in the hall and  
9 we'll get you lined up. So if there's  
10 anyone else that has signed up to speak,  
11 if there's anyone that would like to sign  
12 up, you can go back to the sign-in table  
13 and sign up to speak.

14 Is that it for now, I guess?  
15 Okay. All right. Well, if we don't have  
16 anybody else to speak right now, again,  
17 this is an open hearing that's going to  
18 continue until 7 o'clock today -- tonight,  
19 so as additional folks come to speak, they  
20 will have opportunities to come speak up  
21 until 7 o'clock -- come sign up to speak  
22 until 7 o'clock, so we will be here. We  
23 will basically take a break for a moment  
24 until we have someone else that wants to

1 speak, but we will be here until 7 for  
2 folks to sign up to speak and we will stay  
3 until everyone has -- signed up by 7  
4 o'clock has an opportunity to speak.

5 (RECESS.)

6 MR. JOYNER: Okay, we've got a few  
7 more speakers, so I'm going to call the  
8 hearing back to order. So if everyone  
9 that's in here, if you wouldn't mind,  
10 please, take a seat; and if you have  
11 conversations that you need to have, if  
12 you would take those back outside of the  
13 room, please.

14 All of our speakers, if they  
15 would, come up to the front and I will  
16 call you up. So folks that are having  
17 side conversations, if you would take this  
18 opportunity to slide out, please.

19 And, again, I'll -- for those  
20 folks that have just joined us and the  
21 speakers that are just joining us, we have  
22 court reporters that will be taking notes  
23 and providing a transcript for us, so  
24 please be sure to speak not too fast and



1 -- so that everybody can hear you and  
2 understand you. When you come up, if you  
3 would hand your -- your little sign-in  
4 sheet to the court reporter with the name  
5 on there, and then if you'll start with  
6 stating your name and address for the  
7 record, because we will -- we are doing a  
8 transcript of this hearing. And Robert,  
9 the gentleman right there, has the timer.  
10 You will have two minutes to speak. You  
11 can see the ground rules up here. He will  
12 have little signs that will note 1 minute  
13 and -- and 30 seconds and that sort of  
14 thing to give you an idea of -- of where  
15 you are there, but you will have 2 minutes  
16 to speak.

17 So with that, I'll ask the next  
18 speaker to come up to the microphone and,  
19 if you would, hand your sheet to the court  
20 reporter, please.

21 MR. RAYMOND JAMES: Good evening.  
22 My name is Raymond James. I live at  
23 in Raleigh, North Carolina.  
24 I'm a member of Duke Memorial United

1     Methodist Church, and I'm on the core team  
2     there working with Durham C.A.N. in  
3     support of the light rail.

4             That light rail would probably be  
5     a hundred yards from the back door of our  
6     church, but anyone driving in the Triangle  
7     in the last 15 years, especially on  
8     Highway 15/501 and 54 Highway, know how  
9     important it is to cut down the traffic on  
10    the roads and on the highways. Interstate  
11    40 is the same way. And light rail would  
12    take a lot of that traffic off the road,  
13    especially between UNC and Duke, UNC  
14    Memorial Hospital, Duke University  
15    Hospital. It would take so much traffic  
16    off the road and be a blessing in  
17    disguise. This is something that was  
18    considered 12 years ago and it was going  
19    to go from Carrboro to Knightdale. Well,  
20    now it's from Orange County to Durham  
21    County, so it's been cut down that much.

22             I drive it a lot. I go to  
23    Carolina Meadows and -- from Brier Creek,  
24    and it's a hassle almost all the time,

1 especially when school's in session, but  
2 I've been on the light rail in Charlotte  
3 and other cities and I've found that it's  
4 really nice and convenient to get to park  
5 -- park in a parking lot, get on that  
6 train, and ride and not have to drive and  
7 fight that traffic. So we at Duke  
8 Memorial United Methodist Church are in  
9 full support of light rail. Thank you.

10 MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir. And  
11 our next speaker. Sir, is that you?

12 MR. NORBERT MILDNER: My name is  
13 Norbert Mildner. I'm living in  
14 Chapel Hill, in the Downing Creek  
15 subdivision, and light rail is supposed to  
16 be going right in front of our  
17 subdivision, which we're going to be  
18 really, really land locked, and back door  
19 is Barbee Chapel Road, which is also like  
20 by now a parking lot. Then also the light  
21 rail itself -- we all agree that something  
22 has to be done for the better commute from  
23 Duke to UNC, but UNC and Duke, they're  
24 only outsourcing their facility, which

1 means there is no need from -- go from A  
2 to B and spending all this kind of money  
3 but then also it's cost prohibitive  
4 because the bus rapid light rail or  
5 transit system is much more flexible  
6 because it's steel lanes. Once it's  
7 built, you cannot change it. Then the bus  
8 rapid system is more flexible, you can  
9 alternate the route in days, not in years,  
10 then the -- the ridership is very, very  
11 overestimated from the Triangle -- you  
12 know, United whatever -- and then also --  
13 then the commuting time is also like way  
14 much longer. Right now it's up to 44  
15 minutes, not including the 10 minutes of  
16 waiting time already at the bus station.  
17 If you go by now by car, you would be much  
18 faster. Like the bus rapid system, if  
19 they would make a dedicated bus line to  
20 peak time, it would be much more efficient  
21 and less expensive and it would be kind of  
22 like more beneficial.

23 I personally from Europe used to  
24 this kind of light system, but they should

1 have built it like 30 years ago, not where  
2 everything is already built up and all  
3 they're putting on top of it -- it's like  
4 putting the horses in front of the  
5 carriage. Thank you.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir.

7 MS. ANN VON HOLLE: My name is Ann  
8 Von -- oops. Thank goodness. My name is  
9 Ann Von Holle, and I live at  
10 Chapel Hill, and I am a resident of  
11 Durham County, and I'm also a resident of  
12 Downing Creek.

13 After attending meetings with  
14 light rail representatives and a Chapel  
15 Hill town council representative in 2015,  
16 I understand the primary beneficiary --  
17 beneficiaries of this plan in southwest  
18 Durham will be developers building  
19 undeveloped land at the proposed light  
20 rail stations, meanwhile residents around  
21 the Woodmont -- proposed Woodmont station  
22 are collateral damage.

23 Developers will benefit greatly  
24 from this light rail project, while

1     successfully managing to shift the vast  
2     majority of the risk of the light rail  
3     tracks away from Chapel Hill to areas of  
4     low -- lower socioeconomic status and  
5     income compared to Chapel Hill.

6             In sponsoring this project, the  
7     federal government will be sponsoring  
8     inequity. Accidents are inevitable with  
9     so many at-grade tracks located in our  
10    neighborhood of Downing Creek. I'm a  
11    mother of two children, and 10 or 15 years  
12    from now, my -- my children would be  
13    driving, and I don't want to get a phone  
14    call that they were hit by a train, been  
15    stuck on a track because they're impulsive  
16    teenage drivers. It could happen.

17            Our community of Downing Creek  
18    will be adversely affected by the light  
19    rail in both traffic and safety domains,  
20    and for these reasons, I support the no  
21    build option.

22            MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Our next  
23    speaker. Are you...

24            MR. TOM FARMER: Okay. Good

1     afternoon. I'm Tom Farmer. I live at  
2                     Chapel Hill, and I'm a  
3     huge advocate for light rail and this  
4     regional transit plan.

5                     Interesting enough, for some of  
6     the same reasons that people give for  
7     opposing it -- yes, \$1.6 billion for 19  
8     miles of rail is a lot of money, yet we  
9     need to remember that all forms of public  
10    transit, from superhighways to sidewalks,  
11    are subsidized.

12                    We just spent over a billion  
13    dollars on 19 miles of Triangle  
14    Expressway, a roadway that serves fewer  
15    people, serves fewer destinations, and  
16    pollutes more than the Durham-Orange Light  
17    Rail would. We cannot pave our way out of  
18    our growing congestion, and we only need  
19    look at cities such as Columbus, Ohio,  
20    that have struggled with urban sprawl and  
21    are now solely attacking the problem with  
22    autos and buses. And, yes, I am throwing  
23    Columbus under the bus here.

24                    If you want more than an asphalt

1 Band-Aid for our growing traffic  
2 congestion, then this is your plan. There  
3 are those who would prefer that we divert  
4 more money towards regional buses, and I  
5 wholeheartedly embrace having a strong  
6 regional transit transportation network,  
7 but I would argue that there's no better  
8 way to achieve that than with a 19-mile  
9 light rail spine that increases the reach  
10 and frequency of our regional buses. If  
11 you want public transit that meets a  
12 growing regional need, this is your plan.

13 This plan is uniquely qualified to  
14 succeed among light rail lines in North  
15 America, and there are many successful  
16 light rail lines in North America. What  
17 sets -- sets this apart is the anchors on  
18 both ends. This connects the largest  
19 employer in the Triangle with the largest  
20 employer in Orange County, both of whom  
21 are running out of space for parking and  
22 are experiencing bus congestion. Few  
23 light rail lines have been so set up for  
24 success. If you want responsible growth



1 and not urban sprawl, if you don't want to  
2 wake up every morning and have to listen  
3 to the traffic and smog report, if you  
4 want to maintain the beautiful,  
5 accessible, and vibrant community we have  
6 now, then this is your transit plan.

7 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is -- Are  
8 there anyone -- any others that are --  
9 yes, ma'am. Please come forward.

10 MS. ALISON STUEBE: Good  
11 afternoon. My name is Alison Stuebe, and  
12 I live at in  
13 Meadowmont.

14 I was quite disappointed that the  
15 Meadowmont option was not possible for the  
16 light rail because I take the bus to UNC  
17 every day for my job as a physician. The  
18 View bus runs every 40 minutes, which is  
19 not the world's most efficient headway,  
20 and I welcome the possibility of an every  
21 10-minute rail option. However, I  
22 understand that routing through Meadowmont  
23 had environmental impact and lengthening  
24 the trip that made it the less practical

1 option.

2 I, therefore, wholeheartedly  
3 support the proposed alignment, and I know  
4 that I and others who work at UNC and at  
5 Duke will greatly benefit from the option  
6 to travel to work by light rail with  
7 10-minute headways and with convenient  
8 service.

9 I also am a mother. I'm a mother  
10 of three boys, one of whom will soon get  
11 his driver's permit. I am terrified of  
12 the prospect of my boys operating a motor  
13 vehicle, and I am very, very grateful that  
14 ten years from now they will be able to  
15 text freely while riding a light rail  
16 between Durham and Chapel Hill.

17 I think it's critical to  
18 understand that the most dangerous place  
19 for drivers of any kind is behind the  
20 wheel of a car and light rail is far safer  
21 and there are far fewer risks of  
22 accidents.

23 I understand that change is  
24 difficult and that those who have not

1 lived near light rail think that this is  
2 some menace to their community. I will  
3 tell you that I lived in Brooklyn,  
4 Massachusetts, for seven years before  
5 coming to Chapel Hill. And the three most  
6 valuable words in a Real Estate listing  
7 were "steps to train." I anticipate that  
8 those who live near light rail stops will  
9 see their property values increase, their  
10 convenience in ability to travel to  
11 increase, and their ability to reach some  
12 of the great destinations in our region to  
13 become more flexible and more available.

14 This past weekend, I went to a  
15 show at DPAC on Saturday night, and my  
16 date and I had to decide who was the  
17 designated driver because we were going to  
18 return by car. Ten years from now, we'll  
19 be able to go to DPAC and come home after  
20 having as many cocktails as we desire, and  
21 if we can walk from the Friday Center to  
22 our home reach there safely.

23 So I encourage all of you to  
24 support this very important improvement in

1 our community. Thank you.

2 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there  
3 anyone else that's signed up to speak?  
4 Yes, ma'am. If you would hand it -- yes.  
5 I'm sorry. And please state your name and  
6 address for the record.

7 MS. LYNN CULTON: My name is Lynn  
8 Culton. I live at  
9 Chapel Hill in Downing Creek.

10 I don't understand how 1.6, 1.8  
11 billion dollars can be spent on a project  
12 that covers only 17 miles and a limited  
13 portion of our county and serve a small  
14 population. The 17-mile route will not  
15 take riders with their baggage to the  
16 airport or a stress-free ride to work in  
17 Mebane or Carrboro or any of the other  
18 rapidly-growing surrounding areas. The  
19 rail serves a specific group of people  
20 traveling between UNC and Duke. It snakes  
21 through residential areas causing safety  
22 issues at its grade-level crossings. Bus  
23 rapid transit can provide the same service  
24 at a fraction of the cost. It can be

1 expanded to areas that were eliminated  
2 from the original deal -- the plan.

3 BRT is flexible in that it can be  
4 adjusted as ridership changes, and it can  
5 go -- grow with the growth in the areas.

6 Light rail does not offer this  
7 option. Once the tracks are in the  
8 ground, they're there and that's it,  
9 you're stuck with it. I believe this  
10 option is not sustainable. It leaves  
11 behind a significant tax burden. The  
12 project will be obsolete before it's  
13 complete. It can serve the same  
14 population -- BRT can serve the same  
15 population at a lower cost.

16 I believe the expense is  
17 irresponsible and frivolous, and I would  
18 hope that our taxpayer dollars would be  
19 spent more wisely.

20 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there  
21 anyone else that has signed up to speak?  
22 Okay. We'll take a quick break while we  
23 wait for others to come. We will be here  
24 until 7 o'clock -- at least 7 o'clock, so

1 anyone that wants to speak or comes  
2 between now and 7 o'clock will have an  
3 opportunity to sign up to speak, but we'll  
4 take a -- a quick break until we have  
5 others that will -- that come in to  
6 speak. Thank you.

7 (RECESS.)

8 MR. JOYNER: Okay. I'm going to  
9 bring us back to order. We've got a  
10 couple more speakers. If there's anyone  
11 else that has signed up to speak, if you  
12 want to come forward and -- and sit down,  
13 that would be fine. For those who have  
14 just joined us, our ground rules are here  
15 for the speakers. I'll call you up. You  
16 will hand your card to the court  
17 reporters. They will be doing a  
18 transcript of this public hearing. So  
19 you'll hand that, and then you'll stand at  
20 the microphone, state your name and  
21 address for the record. Once you've done  
22 that, your two minutes will start. You'll  
23 have two minutes to speak. Robert has a  
24 -- has signs that will help you tell when

1 you have a minute left, 30 seconds left,  
2 kind of give you a -- a sort of slow  
3 countdown to the end of the two minutes.  
4 Please speak into the microphone  
5 so that everybody can hear. Try not to  
6 go too fast so that our court reporters  
7 will have an opportunity to catch all--  
8 everything that you're saying. And,  
9 again, for -- for the folks in the  
10 audience, I appreciate your patience in --  
11 in adhering to the rules and allowing  
12 everybody that opportunity to speak, so I  
13 do appreciate that, as well. So with  
14 that, I will ask our first speaker -- I'm  
15 not sure who was here first or if it  
16 matters -- okay. If you would like to go  
17 first, sir. Thank you. And if you know  
18 -- if you would step -- sir, if you would  
19 go over here and hand -- actually hand the  
20 -- yeah, hand it to the court reporter  
21 there, and then -- is that -- okay. And  
22 you can adjust the microphone down. If  
23 you'll stand -- are you speaking? Yes,  
24 right there. There you go. If you adjust

1 -- There you go.

2 MR. GUSTAVO MONTANA: Gustavo

3 Montana. I'm a resident -- I've been a

4 resident of Chapel Hill since 1971. I

5 believe that the public -- public

6 transportation is one of the things that

7 helps to maintain the quality of a

8 community, and I have followed the

9 development of the light rail system, the

10 planning. I've been to many of the

11 meetings that have been held here, and I

12 am very satisfied with the degree of

13 planning, the thoroughness of the planning

14 that has gone on into this project. I

15 believe that, whether we like it or not,

16 this area is going to grow tremendously,

17 and even right now we experience very

18 heavy traffic load on Route 54, for

19 instance, and this is going to get worse.

20 I grew up in a city that went from about 6

21 or 7 hundred thousand people to about 9

22 million people in not too many years, and

23 the city failed to build an adequate --

24 plan for an adequate transportation



1 system, and the result has been  
2 disastrous. Thank you.

3 MR. JOYNER: Thank you, sir. Next  
4 speaker, please.

5 MS. EMILY BREWER: My name is  
6 Emily Brewer. I've been a resident of  
7 Orange County since 2003.

8 When I taught literature at UNC,  
9 teaching Victorian literature, I'd  
10 sometimes teach Elizabeth Gaskell.  
11 Writing during the Industrial Revolution,  
12 she was very much afraid of trains. She  
13 was afraid of the dirt. She was afraid of  
14 the danger, and she wrote of one of her  
15 characters dying by train. Thank God she  
16 was wrong, because when I was traveling  
17 around Europe in college and afterwards, I  
18 can't imagine how I would have gotten  
19 around without trains. I am not afraid of  
20 trains. I embrace them.

21 I'm here because I believe that a  
22 lot of people who are against this project  
23 have a great megaphone funded by free  
24 hours from retirement and personal

1 wealth. But a lot of the people who would  
2 benefit from this project are nurses and  
3 orderlies, people who need to work at the  
4 hospital, and this would help them, and  
5 they can't possibly be here and they don't  
6 have the means to speak for themselves, so  
7 I decided I would do it for them.

8 I encourage you to pass this  
9 project. Thank you.

10 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Has  
11 anyone else signed up to speak? Is there  
12 anyone else that has signed up to speak?  
13 Okay.

14 Well, we'll take another break  
15 until we have additional speakers. Again,  
16 we will be here until 7 o'clock -- at  
17 least 7 o'clock. Folks will have an  
18 opportunity to sign up to speak up to 7  
19 o'clock and then everyone that has signed  
20 up at that -- by that point will have that  
21 opportunity to speak. So we will take  
22 another break until we get a couple more  
23 speakers. Thank you very much.

24 (RECESS.)

1           MR. JOYNER: Okay. I'm going to  
2 call us back to order for a moment. We've  
3 got another speaker. So if -- if folks  
4 would please have a seat. And if you have  
5 conversations going on and -- and want to  
6 continue those, if you would just step  
7 outside and -- and down the hall because  
8 it does sort of echo in the hall a little  
9 bit.

10           Again, we'll -- we'll go over the  
11 ground -- I'm not going to go through the  
12 ground rules, but, again, we will adhere  
13 to the ground rules that are posted here  
14 for our speaker. When I -- When I'm  
15 ready, I will call you. If you will --  
16 When you come up, if you will hand your --  
17 if you will hand your card to the court  
18 reporter here, and then speak in the  
19 microphone, state your name and address  
20 for the record. You will have two minutes  
21 -- After you've spoken your name and  
22 address, you'll have two minutes to  
23 speak. Robert will have a timer -- sort  
24 of timers that will allow you to see when

1 you have a minute left, 30 seconds, and  
2 that sort of thing. Please do speak into  
3 the microphone and not too fast so that  
4 our court reporters can record  
5 everything. A written transcript of all  
6 of the comments that we've heard tonight  
7 will be put together. So if you would  
8 like to come up and provide us your  
9 comments.

10 MS. SUSAN SONBERG: Hi. My name  
11 is Susan Sonberg. I live at  
12 and I'm also a resident of Downing  
13 Creek subdivision.

14 I believe the promise of light  
15 rail solution for Durham-Orange is greatly  
16 overexaggerated. The proposed alignment  
17 will not mitigate the highly-congested  
18 traffic on NC 54, particularly at the  
19 Barbee interchange.

20 With the introduction of the  
21 at-grade crossings, it will have a  
22 detrimental impact on the ingress and  
23 egress of our neighborhood and obstructing  
24 the access for emergency vehicles,

1 residents, school buses, et cetera.

2 I have -- I'm a mother of a  
3 teenage driver who just got his license  
4 yesterday, and I am very concerned about  
5 at-grade crossings. If you Google light  
6 rail accidents, there are thousands that  
7 come up, and the train always win, and --  
8 and I'm very concerned about that.

9 I'm -- also have a lot of concerns  
10 about the overall design approach that's  
11 been taken. It doesn't appear that the  
12 Little Creek area has been looked at  
13 cohesively and coordinated with all of the  
14 NCDOT changes that are going to be  
15 happening between at-grade ramps,  
16 superstreets, widening of the road. The  
17 idea of being able to merge and access  
18 into the neighborhood is not feasible, and  
19 there are a lot of developments that seem  
20 to be taking over the spots that are  
21 planned for the construction. So once  
22 this is funded -- and there seems to be a  
23 rush to funding -- I don't think they're  
24 going to go back and fix what's broken,

1 and I think we're going to end up with a  
2 very costly mistake.

3 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Has  
4 anyone else come in that would like to  
5 speak that has signed up to speak? Okay.

6 If not, we will take another break  
7 until we have another speaker. And,  
8 again, we will stay here until at least 7  
9 o'clock. Anybody that has signed up to  
10 speak prior to 7 o'clock will have an  
11 opportunity to speak tonight before we  
12 adjourn. So we're going to take another  
13 break and -- until we get another speaker.  
14 Thank you.

15 (RECESS.)

16 MR. JOYNER: Okay. I'd like to  
17 bring us back to order for just a few  
18 moments. I don't believe anybody else has  
19 signed up. Is there anybody left in the  
20 room that has signed up to speak?

21 Okay. If that's the case, then I  
22 want to thank everybody for coming tonight  
23 and I would like to adjourn this hearing.

24 (HEARING ADJOURNED AT 7:01 P.M.)