

In the Matter Of:

RE: PROPOSED DURHAM-ORANGE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT Court

TWO HEARINGS.

October 01, 2015

LEGAL | MEDIA | EXPERTS

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TRIANGLE TRANSIT PUBLIC HEARING

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OCTOBER 1, 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: In any event, there are
2 some guidelines, and I'm going to
3 introduce you to Drew Joyner, who will be
4 moderating this program. I noticed one
5 thing at the meeting we had -- public
6 meeting we had in Chapel Hill. There were
7 too many out loud comments in -- as part
8 of the record. But if persons have
9 written comments, I think it would be good
10 if you could leave them with the clerk.
11 That wasn't said at the last meeting.
12 Some people didn't -- weren't able to
13 finish in two minutes. But if you have
14 written comments, certainly leave those as
15 part of the record.

16 So having said that, I'm going to
17 turn it over to Drew.

18 MR. JOYNER: Okay. Thank you so
19 much. Appreciate that. And that is a
20 very good point, and I'll reiterate that,
21 as well, as I go through here. Thank you.

22 I will say welcome to the
23 Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project
24 public hearing. My name is Drew Joyner.

1 I'm going to be the administrator for this
2 hearing.

3 We've had two public information
4 sessions held on September 15th and 19th,
5 so I hope if you had questions and needed
6 additional information you took that
7 opportunity to come out and talk with us.

8 If you were unable to attend
9 those, a copy of the Draft Environmental
10 Impact Statement and other information
11 that was provided during the sessions is
12 currently available for viewing out in the
13 lobby.

14 Tonight, as Mayor Bell mentioned,
15 is the second of two hearings. The first
16 hearing was held this past Tuesday,
17 September 29th, at the Friday Center in
18 Chapel Hill.

19 Tonight we're seeking comments on
20 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
21 for this project. There are several ways
22 to provide input. In addition to speaking
23 tonight at this hearing, written comments
24 are being collected this evening or you

1 may send comments via email, postal mail,
2 or using the project website.

3 A key thing to note is that verbal
4 and written comments carry the same
5 weight. So if you're uncomfortable
6 speaking in public or, as Mayor Bell
7 mentioned, two minutes is not enough to
8 get -- adequately get all of your comments
9 out, please feel free to use the other
10 methods of providing input because we
11 really would love to hear from you.

12 Written and verbal comments will
13 not receive a reply. However, responses
14 to substantive comments will be provided
15 in the combined Final Environmental Impact
16 Statement and Record of Decision. That's
17 the final planning document for the -- for
18 the project.

19 Another important note is that the
20 comment period ends on October 13, so
21 please try to have all your comments in by
22 October 13.

23 For those who wish to speak
24 tonight, I hope you took the opportunity

1 to sign up as you arrived. If not, you'll
2 have an opportunity until 7 p.m. to sign
3 up to speak. At that point, sign up will
4 conclude. However, we will stay until
5 everyone who has signed up prior to 7
6 o'clock has had a chance to speak.

7 Before we begin, I'd like to point
8 out the ground rules for the hearing, and
9 you'll note those on the screen above.
10 And I know that most everybody here can
11 read, so I don't want to insult anybody.
12 But, for the record, I am going to go
13 through the ground rules.

14 The purpose of the hearing is to
15 receive public comments on the project.
16 This is not a debate or a
17 question-and-answer session. Please help
18 maintain an atmosphere where everyone
19 feels comfortable and welcome, regardless
20 of his or her position on the project.

21 Please silence mobile phones or
22 devices or set them to vibrate, and I'll
23 check mine, too, because I had one go off
24 in the middle of a hearing before and it's

1 rather embarrassing. So let's all do the
2 same so you're -- don't be that person.

3 Please remain quiet so others and
4 the court reporter can hear. Please leave
5 the room for any side discussions. If you
6 need to have a side discussion, feel free
7 to, but please take that out in the hall,
8 if you don't mind.

9 Tonight's hearing is being
10 recorded. A transcript will be provided,
11 so it's important that our court reporters
12 are able to hear everything. So it is
13 important that you give our speakers that
14 opportunity to be heard.

15 Speakers should state their name
16 and address for the record prior to
17 speaking. Speakers must limit comments to
18 two minutes. Speakers cannot yield their
19 time to others.

20 Please refrain -- And this is for
21 the speakers. Please refrain from
22 addressing the audience or asking for
23 audience participation. And the
24 moderators will facilitate the hearing and

1 inform speakers when their time is up.

2 And I'll go through the logistics of that

3 in just a moment.

4 So for those who signed up to
5 speak, you will have been given a card
6 with a number on it. Periodically I'll
7 call out a number; and when I call that
8 number, everyone with that number, if it's
9 number 2 and you have 2A, B, C, D -- it
10 doesn't matter the letter that's on there,
11 just number 2, if you would come up to the
12 front and we'll line you up here. So
13 probably come around the back side and go
14 around the side here and we'll line you up
15 to speak here, and those folks waving
16 their hands will help direct you and make
17 sure everybody's in the correct order.

18 So when I call out a number
19 periodically, if you would go to the back
20 of the room and come around and they will
21 line you up here in the front, and you'll
22 be speaking from this microphone here on
23 the side that Mayor Bell was at a few
24 moments ago.

1 There's a timer, and you'll be
2 able to see that. When you stand at the
3 podium, you'll be able to see the timer.

4 And, Robert, can you kind of point
5 to where the timer is so that they'll be
6 able to see. There's a timer right here,
7 and when you get up, you'll see it and
8 it'll count down. We'll reset it each
9 time.

10 After you've stated your name and
11 address for the record, then we'll start
12 the timer so everybody gets a full two
13 minutes no matter how long your address or
14 how long your name is, and it will count
15 down from two minutes. At the end of two
16 minutes, we will ask you to conclude and
17 give others an opportunity to speak.

18 Please be sure to speak clearly
19 for the court reporter and try not to go
20 too fast. It's very important for them to
21 be able to hear and understand what you're
22 saying. So if you get up here and you're
23 speaking real fast -- I know folks get
24 nervous, I do the same thing, speak fast

1 when you get nervous -- take a deep breath
2 and try not to go too fast so they can
3 catch everything because it's important
4 for us to make sure we capture your
5 comments.

6 And, again, if you run out of
7 time, written comments carry the same
8 weight and we'd love to get those, as
9 well.

10 Also, as you'll notice, we have
11 American sign language available as well
12 as Spanish interpretation, and he's going
13 to --

14 THE INTERPRETER: Yes. We will be
15 making an announcement in Spanish just
16 explaining how Spanish speakers will be
17 able to participate.

18 (ANNOUNCEMENT IN SPANISH.)

19 THE INTERPRETER: Thank you.

20 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

21 And I guess one final thing -- can
22 everybody hear me okay? Am I loud enough?
23 It's hard to tell with the acoustics in
24 here. I just want to make sure the folks

1 in the back row can hear me. If not,
2 please wave your hand and let me know that
3 I need to speak a little louder or closer
4 to the microphone. And we'll try to do
5 the same for the speakers, as well, if
6 they're not able to be heard.

7 So with that, we'll go ahead and
8 begin. Any of our speakers that have the
9 number 1 on their card, if you would, walk
10 around to the back over to Jeffrey, who's
11 waving his hand or holding his hand up,
12 and we will get you lined up to speak.

13 And I failed to mention one piece
14 of logistics, as well. When the speakers
15 come up, the cards that you have, if you
16 would hand that to Robert, and he will
17 make sure that it gets to the court
18 reporter so that they'll have your name
19 and address.

20 With that, our first speaker, if
21 you would approach the microphone.

22 MR. JAMES CHAVIS: Good
23 afternoon. My name is James Chavis. I
24 stay at

1 in Durham, North Carolina, known
2 as the east Durham area and District I.

3 I'm here today to tell you all
4 that our area, along with me, are
5 dissatisfied with this light rail system.
6 And the reason why we're dissatisfied,
7 because we got lied to. You said to us
8 you was coming to our area and asked us to
9 vote for this. Well, we voted for it, and
10 in the meantime you've been having
11 meetings and asking different questions
12 and still some of them have not been
13 answered.

14 Then found out at the very end we
15 are no longer going to be a part of what
16 our taxpayer money that drives -- you
17 know, drivers are paying for this. Well,
18 I am a driver, and I just got through
19 paying this year for it, again. So how do
20 you think I feel about it? I am very
21 dissatisfied, and I hope you'll find a way
22 that we can discontinue this. Thank you.

23 MR. JOYNER: If you would, please,
24 hand your card to Robert. Thank you.

1 MR. MIKE SHIFLETT: Thank you. My
2 name is Mike Shiflett. I live at
 n Durham.

4 I've been an active citizen
5 participating in mass transit since the
6 mid '90s, the first studies by TTA that
7 actually included a monorail system.

8 In addition to that, I've been
9 involved with the Durham Comprehensive
10 Plan back in the '90s, the first
11 established compact neighborhoods for
12 pedestrian and transit coexistence.

13 I was honored to serve on the
14 year-long STAC program, which was a
15 collaborative study of transit and
16 regional growth for both Durham, Chapel
17 Hill, and Carrboro, along with the Capitol
18 Area Metropolitan Planning Organizations,
19 following 2011 with the successful sales
20 tax referendum for transit that brought
21 neighborhoods, civic organizations,
22 non-profits, political groups under the
23 leadership of the Durham Chamber of
24 Commerce which resulted in over a 60

1 percent positive voters support. This was
2 under the organization called DO Transit,
3 Durham-Orange County Friends of Transit.

4 More recently, I've been a member
5 of the Coalition for Affordable Housing
6 and Transit, and as somebody that's been
7 invested in housing and senior living
8 issues for most of my life here in Durham,
9 I support regional transportation by light
10 rail.

11 I believe that by extending the
12 project to Alston Avenue, as earlier
13 stated, it can never serve our
14 neighborhoods. It is my belief that these
15 credentials that I have with me
16 demonstrate a lifetime commitment to
17 public transportation spanning over two
18 decades of listening and understanding and
19 evaluating the needs of our region and
20 Durham in particular.

21 While others speak -- While other
22 speakers talk from the base of
23 understanding one or two years, I've been
24 involved over 20. My message to the FTA

1 is that this is just a draft document. It
2 is not perfect in any way, but it would be
3 my hope that the community and the
4 neighbors work together to solve the
5 problems that they still have.

6 I've included my copy of my
7 credentials, as I hope that's something
8 that encourages the FTA to support a
9 project that will provide our citizens of
10 need and engage the larger community in
11 working together and making a successful
12 project that we're worthy and proud of.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. If anyone
15 does have comments -- written comments
16 after you've spoken and you want to turn
17 those in, if you don't mind putting those
18 -- they can give them to you, Jeffrey?
19 Okay. That'll be fine. Okay. Thank you.
20 You may begin.

21 MR. DAN JEWELL: Good afternoon.
22 My name is Dan Jewell. I reside at
just about a five-minute
24 walk from the proposed Buchanan Avenue

1 station, so thank you for that.

2 I'm here tonight though
3 representing a group of concerned Durham
4 citizens called Durham Area Designers.

5 MR. JEFFREY: Sorry about that.
6 Hang on a second. We'll get the timer
7 set. Apologize for that.

8 MR. DAN JEWELL: That's okay. You
9 gave me extra time.

10 MR. JEFFREY: Sorry about that.

11 MR. DAN JEWELL: Great. Were my
12 previous comments on record then?

13 MR. JEFFREY: Yes, they were.

14 MR. DAN JEWELL: Okay. Very good,
15 then. Again, Dan Jewell with Durham Area
16 Designers. I'm here representing Durham
17 Area Designers, which is a group of 75
18 Durham-based design professionals,
19 architects, landscape architects, urban
20 planners, engineers, and we have been --
21 they've asked me to go on record saying
22 Durham Area Designers strongly supports
23 building the LRT.

24 In addition, we support the four

1 key decisions recommended by the Triangle
2 in the DEIS, the Duke VA Station, the New
3 Hope Creek Crossing, the Little Creek
4 Crossing, and the Rail Operations and
5 Maintenance Facility.

6 In addition, we would like to go
7 on record saying that there are some
8 design tweaks that we would strongly
9 suggest that GoTriangle try and
10 incorporate into this plan: Modifying
11 station locations and designs as part of
12 the FEIS to better serve a project purpose
13 and need. Those include better station
14 spacing and access for downtown Durham by
15 shifting the Buchanan station closer to
16 Buchanan Boulevard to increase visibility
17 and access to Birch Avenue, West End,
18 Trinity Park, and East Campus; restore the
19 downtown transit center station to the
20 original GoTriangle proposed location at
21 Duke Street; to add a city center station,
22 as recommended by all three Durham Area
23 Designer charrette teams in October 2014
24 to provide convenient access to Durham's

1 government buildings, including the
2 courthouse, detention center, and city
3 hall and better serve the Main Street
4 retail and offices to anchor the ballpark;
5 and, finally, we would also be supportive
6 of restoring the Alston Avenue station to
7 the original GoTriangle's own site east of
8 Alston Avenue to extend the reach of Light
9 Rail into east Durham and support that
10 community, as promised in years past.
11 That concludes my remarks. Thank you.

12 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

13 MS. MARCIA REA: My name is Marcia
14 Rae. I live at ,
15 otherwise known as ground zero ROMF.

16 I'm here today to inform you of
17 the happenings at ROMF zero. At the first
18 meeting I attended, I realized we were at
19 risk. I asked what we should do in the
20 meanwhile, and the response was just do
21 what you were doing as if it's not
22 happening.

23 One day a young man who said he
24 was with GoTriangle came to the door and

1 told me he wanted to look at the property.
2 He said it was for the ROMF but not to
3 worry because it would be crazy to put it
4 here. He said the obvious choice was
5 south Alston Avenue.

6 Around the time when I was at --
7 Around that time, I was out in the
8 backyard at dusk and found a man. I asked
9 what he was doing. His response was
10 surveying. I asked why. He says he
11 didn't know. I should have suspected what
12 now is obvious, the ROMF was coming.

13 When the Culp Arbor meeting
14 occurred was the first definite
15 verification of my fears. I want to tell
16 you despite the DEIS that claimed that
17 they had notified the
18 homeowners/stakeholders of their intent,
19 neither my daughter who owns our home or
20 the neighbors, the Bareilles family, have
21 received such contact.

22 Our family has a very complex
23 situation. My husband is a Marine Corps
24 Vet of 20 years, is disabled with a brain

1 tumor, and has many complicated health
2 problems. My adult son is profoundly
3 retarded and in full care. Both of my men
4 have seizures. I have breast cancer.

5 To be forced to move at this time
6 in our life will be difficult and
7 complicated. We have done much research
8 on light rail and feel it is currently --
9 as it is currently planned it is not going
10 to serve the people in the area it claims
11 to want to serve.

12 The area near central and south
13 Alston Avenue, already zoned industrial,
14 would be most beneficial and provide jobs
15 and transportation if the ROMF were
16 located there. Historically, light rail
17 has fewer riders than projected and costs
18 much more to build and maintain than
19 planners project. I doubt we will do any
20 better than the more populated areas that
21 have light rail. We do not support the
22 light rail.

23 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

24 MR. ANDREW JACOBSON: Good

1 afternoon. My name is Andrew Jacobson. I
2 live at Durham,
3 and I support the light rail project.

4 This is one of the fastest growing
5 regions in the country. I believe this
6 project provides an opportunity to focus
7 that growth and serves as a backbone to
8 our -- to our community for decades to
9 come.

10 This investment could centralize
11 growth along that corridor and improve the
12 efficiency of our land-use decisions and
13 transportation infrastructure.

14 Secondly, as an advocate for
15 bicycle and pedestrian issues, investments
16 in mass transit are always good
17 investments, are good -- and good
18 strategies. Mass transit can improve
19 participation rates in bicycling and
20 walking. Bicycling -- Bicycle and
21 pedestrian connections and safety should
22 be considered during the design and
23 construction of the -- of the light rail
24 line.

1 Finally and in that same thread, I
2 argue that a multipurpose trail should be
3 built in parallel along the outer T line
4 as it's seen in some other projects.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

7 MS. LISA BRACH: My name is Lisa
8 Brach, B-r-a-c-h, like the candy. My
9 address is

10 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27517,
11 and I am most assuredly a Durham taxpayer.

12 As I attended these public -- As I
13 have attended these public comment
14 meetings, I hear a recurring theme among
15 those who deal with the light rail is the
16 only answer to Durham and Orange County's
17 transportation problems.

18 First, that the light rail will
19 end the traffic congestion along 15/501
20 and 54 and, second, that it will provide
21 better transportation for those who are in
22 lower-income level jobs and situations.

23 To the first assumption of
24 reducing traffic, I would ask, how? On

1 15/501, only two stops are vaguely close.
2 On 54, the majority of eastbound traffic
3 is either attempting to access I-40 or
4 attempting to travel further east on 54 to
5 south parts -- parts of southeast Durham
6 or the RTP where the light rail does not
7 go.

8 The majority of the westbound
9 traffic is traveling to UNC Hospital from
10 I-40 or from southeast Durham. Again, no
11 tracks or stations.

12 As to the second and more
13 important false assumption that this
14 17-mile route will provide reliable and
15 affordable transportation for minorities
16 and lower-income families, I would ask
17 how? How will it do this when the closest
18 stations are so far away that they will
19 either need a car to get to a station or
20 they will have to pay for a bus to get to
21 a station to pay for a train ticket to get
22 to their job, which better be located at
23 Duke or UNC Hospitals where it means
24 another bus fare?

1 Add to all this the extreme tax
2 debt, which will be placed on the
3 shoulders of all Durham and Orange County
4 taxpayers from the poorest on up, and the
5 light rail becomes a slap in the face of
6 those who truly need good public
7 transportation.

8 Do not waste 400 million of
9 Durham's tax dollars just to build it. Do
10 not commit us to a debt which will take
11 generations to pay and still not solve our
12 public transportation problem for those
13 who need it most.

14 Where is the environmental justice
15 in this plan and method of
16 transportation?

17 MR. JOYNER: Anyone who has a
18 speaker card with the number 2 on it, if
19 you would please go on back and come over
20 to the side and Jeffrey will make sure
21 that you are in the correct order and
22 ready to speak.

23 Okay, ma'am. Thank you.

24 MS. NANCY GORDAN: Thank you. My

1 name is Nancy Gordan. I live at
in Durham. I've lived in
3 Durham for 35 years, and I love this
4 community.

5 I have gotten involved in the
6 discussions about the ROMF because one of
7 the proposed sites was Cornwallis Road. I
8 am an active member of the Judea Reform
9 Congregation. I am on the board at the
10 Jewish Federation which occupies the same
11 building that's used by the Jewish
12 Community Center.

13 Part of what I want to do is thank
14 the people at GoTransit and the elected
15 officials who listened and asked -- when
16 we said we own land that had not actually
17 been put in our name yet but that land not
18 to be taken by eminent domain to complete
19 the Cornwallis Road ROMF.

20 That would create a real problem,
21 both that eminent domain raises lawsuits
22 and, secondly, because that is the only
23 land that that entire campus has to
24 complete our business development plan.

1 So that was kind of critical to us. It's
2 two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half acres
3 of land.

4 The other thing is, is the moving
5 of Western Boulevard, which would, per the
6 plan, be moved closer to a charter school,
7 Lerner Day School and the Jewish Community
8 Center which has summer camps. But the
9 hazards that that raised -- that that
10 would raise are fairly clear. Everything
11 else that has been raised by our campus
12 has really fallen under the similar
13 complaints that other sites have raised,
14 construction won't be easy, there -- there
15 are concerns about light and vibration and
16 all of that.

17 What I'd like to do is thank the
18 people from GoTransit and our elected
19 officials for listening to us very
20 respectfully, and we hope that the respect
21 has been reciprocal, that our community
22 has addressed you all respectfully.

23 And many of the staff of GoTransit
24 that are here, thank you. You've been

1 great in terms of just listening. We
2 don't always agree, but that's how
3 politics work. So thank you very much.

4 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

5 MS. DEBBIE McCARTHY: Okay.

6 MR. JOYNER: Do you want to wait a
7 minute until everybody is seated so we
8 don't have a --

9 MS. DEBBIE McCARTHY: Oh. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. JOYNER: Yeah, let's wait just
12 a second and make sure everybody gets
13 seated.

14 MS. DEBBIE McCARTHY: Is it okay
15 to go?

16 Good afternoon. I'm Debbie
17 McCarthy, . When
18 Ms. Murdock made a presentation to the
19 City Council work session on September 10,
20 she left out a few things. She failed to
21 mention that the Farrington ROMF site
22 would require the highest number of
23 residential relocations, six, of any of
24 the sites.

1 She failed to mention that,
2 according to the DEIS, it had the worst
3 environmental score, the highest number of
4 estimated stream impacts, 638 feet, the
5 greatest impact on wetlands and the
6 largest riparian buffer required, 193,790
7 riparian buffer credits needed. This is
8 in appendix K2 of the DEIS.

9 She omitted from her chart of
10 impacted parks the amazing Leigh Farm
11 Park, an 86-acre nature preserve that took
12 ten years of public and private effort to
13 preserve, is the anchor of the trail
14 system, and it's the home of Piedmont
15 Wildlife where hundreds of children enjoy
16 nature camps. It includes wetlands,
17 slopes, hiking trails, hardwood forest,
18 and it's going to be inundated by the
19 purple monster ROMF, which is going to
20 bleed massive quantities of runoff through
21 two streams N and NN that have been
22 identified in the DEIS. They run directly
23 under I-40 and will flood Leigh Farm Park
24 and Trenton neighborhood.

1 There will also be toxicity in
2 that runoff from the chemicals involved at
3 the ROMF, and those of us who drink from
4 wells on Trenton Road are not happy about
5 that. It will not be easy to mitigate
6 because the geology beneath the ROMF site
7 is incredibly hard rock. Ask them about
8 that.

9 There were mapping errors evident
10 also in the presentation. I've shown on
11 my map the exact location of all the
12 things that can be confusing. There's the
13 park, there's the ROMF, there's the
14 transit station in a compact neighborhood.
15 The exact location of these things is
16 important, and we encourage you,
17 GoTriangle and elected officials, to come
18 and take a tour with us so we can show you
19 exactly where they are.

20 Ms. Murdock also included state
21 funding would probably be 25 percent when,
22 in fact, it's more likely to be 10 percent
23 or less. So the Durham citizens are going
24 to be left with a huge tax bill.

1 Many people who oppose the rail
2 are wearing red today. I am not wearing
3 red. I'm wearing black. I'm in mourning
4 for the loss of the Farrington corridor
5 which for generations has been a lovely
6 greenbelt between Durham and Chapel Hill.
7 It's now going to be lost. Its
8 environmental sensitivity, its history,
9 its beauty is going to be engulfed by
10 Chapel Hill, and it's going to be buried
11 in asphalt.

12 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

13 MS. MARGARET MILLER: My name is
14 Margaret Miller. I live at

 Chapel Hill, North Carolina, but
16 it's in Durham County and Durham City.

17 In her presentation to the
18 council, Ms. Murdock failed to mention the
19 proximity of Creekside Elementary School,
20 which is closer to the Farrington ROMF
21 site than the Levin School [sic] and the
22 Maureen Joy Charter School to the proposed
23 Cornwalis ROMF, both cited as reasons not
24 to select Cornwalis. Why the discrepancy?

1 Chapel Hill cited Rashkis Elementary as a
2 reason to move the light rail completely
3 out of Meadowmont. Why the double
4 standard?

5 Ms. Murdock made no mention of the
6 major transportation corridor which calls
7 for a 100-foot undisturbed buffer beyond
8 the interstate right-of-way as well as
9 50-foot stream buffers. DEIS shows
10 streams band and -- and wetland triple
11 band on the Farrington ROMF site to lie
12 within the MTC overlay.

13 Ms. Murdock failed to mention the
14 Durham planning director Steve Medlin,
15 that his writings about the Farrington
16 site are as follows: Planning staff would
17 be unable to support the planned amendment
18 needed to allow the ROMF to proceed.

19 We find an industrial use to be
20 incompatible with the existing land-use
21 pattern, low residential, and/or
22 designated future land uses. Potential
23 100-foot stream buffer requirements would
24 significantly alter the proposed footprint

1 of the ROMF.

2 No mention of the Epcon -- Epcon
3 Culp Arbor sewer easement, which traverses
4 the entire Farrington ROMF and is supposed
5 to remain undisturbed and fully accessible
6 for long-term maintenance.

7 Also, no mention of the underlying
8 geology, the need for the Farrington site,
9 which Epcon can readily provide from its
10 soil borings for the sewer. Underlying
11 rock would create technical difficulties
12 and considerable costs with respect to
13 digging cisterns for stormwater retention.

14 Already heavy stormwater runoff
15 from six lanes of interstate pavement
16 causes stream to overflow its banks and at
17 times cover Trenton Road. Additional
18 runoff from 26 impervious --

19 MR. JOYNER: Ma'am --

20 MS. MARGARET MILLER: -- acres --

21 MR. JOYNER: -- your time is up.

22 MS. MARGARET MILLER: -- is mind
23 boggling. Thank you.

24 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

1 MS. CATHY ABERNATHY: My name is
2 Cathy Abernathy. I live at

3 And, like my good friend Debbie
4 McCarthy, we have been noticing
5 environmental protection needs since the
6 1980s.

7 But at that council meeting when
8 the ROMFs were being discussed and the
9 routes, Councilman Schewel asked if a
10 document reporting to be a complicating
11 need, was it illegal for making Cornwallis
12 less possible as an alterative, making
13 Farrington Road the only choice.
14 GoTriangle representative Shirkey
15 (phonetic) said, fine, we're not going to
16 -- well, perhaps they need one.

17 And regarding the Lee Village
18 ROMF, have you looked that it's only a few
19 feet or yards different from the
20 Farrington Road ROMF, and that site was
21 eliminated because there's a potentially
22 historic site on the southern end? That
23 site was identified by T. Walker Robinson
24 in the 1980s during Durham inventories.

1 That was available to anybody who wanted
2 to see it.

3 Now let's talk about notification,
4 neighborhood involvement. Culp Arbor
5 residents never received in the mail
6 notifications of the meeting on June 24th.

7 On June 18th, Trenton Road found
8 out that they were, indeed, the
9 neighborhood that completely changes the
10 way development occurs along
11 transient-oriented corridors, despite
12 their closeness to the watershed and the
13 pollution routes for Lake Jordan that
14 we're paying for.

15 So in the neighbor -- in the
16 neighborhood involvement sections of the
17 DEIS, where is our opposition? Not very
18 much. We're at the end of this process.
19 Thank you very much.

20 MR. JOYNER: Our next speaker.

21 MR. DAVID McCARTHY: Good
22 afternoon. My name is David McCarthy. I
23 live in Durham County.

24 There are some additional items in

1 the light rail report that GoTriangle
2 misrepresented that I'd like to cover.

3 Tax burdens, we've heard about
4 them. The tax burden on Durham is going
5 to be significant. This is going to be an
6 inflexible, slow, antiquated system of
7 trollies, and the drive now, according to
8 Google, from Duke to UNC is a 17-minute
9 drive. The light rail system makes it a
10 44-minute, all-day adventure. The light
11 rail will actually add traffic congestion
12 because of the at-grade crossings.

13 Property values will certainly
14 fall, and the quality of life would suffer
15 in southwest Durham in the residential
16 neighborhoods sadly impacted by the 24/7
17 presence of noise and light pollution
18 coming from an industrial rail yard.

19 The ridership numbers have been
20 seriously overestimated. Charlotte has a
21 population greater than our area but yet
22 their numbers of boardings are
23 significantly less than what the light
24 rail people project.

1 GoTriangle's ridership projections
2 will require 20,000 people per square mile
3 along the rail line, but the reality is
4 the projection for 2035 is a little bit
5 over 4,000 people per square mile in this
6 area.

7 The fatality rates for light rail
8 accidents across the country are second
9 only to motorcycles. The light rail
10 leaves out minority and low-income
11 populations. Historically black NC
12 Central University doesn't make the cut.
13 Duke and UNC do.

14 The GoTriangle model presumes 40
15 percent zero vehicle households. The
16 reality is 10 percent in Durham and 7.4
17 percent in Orange County do not have
18 vehicles. And I thank you for your time.

19 MS. ANNETTE KRONMILLER: My name
20 is Annette Kronmiller. I live at

21

22 So as an alternative to light
23 rail, we think that bus rapid transit on
24 existing roads is more flexible and less

1 expensive than a new fixed right-of-way
2 for new tracks.

3 Also, you know, we've seen how
4 technology changes with the rising Uber,
5 driverless vehicles, and people working
6 from home. The extreme traffic congestion
7 so feared by elected officials is not
8 likely to materialize, and, in fact, this
9 light rail, as it's been stated, will be
10 made worse by all these at-grade crossings
11 where every vehicle will have to hit its
12 brakes umpteen times a transit to -- to
13 make way.

14 Also now that Raleigh has opted
15 out of light rail, this problematic,
16 costly mode of transportation doesn't even
17 provide access to RDU and RTP.

18 Some of us would like to offer an
19 alternative to the Farrington ROMF site,
20 not the Lee Village option in the DES
21 [sic] which simply slides the Farrington
22 site a few yards south, but the yet-to-be
23 created Lee Village compact neighborhood
24 surrounding the proposed Lee Village

1 Transit Station near NC-54 and Farrington.
2 There the expected land use, the sell-out
3 plan for the property owners, the quantity
4 of impervious surface and the density of
5 proposed development make an industrial
6 facility appropriate.

7 The Lee Village Transit Station
8 area is going to become the paved dumping
9 ground, literally a parking lot, for over
10 900 vehicles for Chapel Hill, specifically
11 for UNC Hospital.

12 Why Durham's elected officials
13 embrace this second-class treatment, we
14 don't know, nor do we know why they
15 allowed Chapel Hill's Meadowmont to dump
16 the rail line into Durham's Downing Creek,
17 but residents from the portion of
18 Farrington Road in southwest would like to
19 preserve this as the North Carolina we
20 came to and that we love. And we do know
21 that it makes sense to include an
22 industrial ROMF somewhere else where it
23 will become southwest Durham's New Jersey
24 jungle of asphalt and rail lines and

1 high-density apartments.

2 MR. JOHN MARTIN: Good afternoon.

3 My name is John Martin. I live at

4 in Old North Durham.

5 I strongly support public
6 transportation, but I do not support this
7 project, and the reason I say that is
8 because my first guiding principle for
9 public transportation is it ought to be
10 aimed at those people who have no other
11 alternative first of all but to use public
12 transportation.

13 And the irony of this project is
14 it most serves neighborhoods where public
15 transportation is less -- least used and
16 will ignore neighborhoods like east Durham
17 where public transportation is most
18 desperately needed.

19 I have lived east of Roxboro for
20 the last five years. I know something
21 about those neighborhoods.

22 But the question I want to have
23 GoTriangle answer very simply is, where is
24 the money going to come from? Forget the

1 -- maybe the legislature will take care
2 of that and get rid of it, but all the
3 state has appropriated, the Department of
4 Transportation through their new process,
5 is \$138 million. Your project calls for
6 the state to put up at least \$400 million.
7 So where is the other \$262 million coming
8 from?

9 It can't come from the taxpayers
10 of Durham and Orange County because we're
11 going to be covering 25 percent of the 400
12 million already. So where is it going to
13 come from?

14 I think it would be irresponsible
15 to go forward with this project without a
16 clear and definitive answer to that
17 question, and I haven't heard one yet.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. JOYNER: And before our next
20 speaker gets started, if anyone has a
21 speaker card with the number 3 on it, if
22 you would, please, come along this sort of
23 back wall here behind Jeffrey and he'll
24 get you set. And any of y'all that have

1 already spoken, if you wouldn't mind
2 clearing out the front row for us, please,
3 so we'll have an opportunity for those
4 additional speakers to come up.

5 And another quick announcement,
6 too. For those who have more recently
7 joined us, periodically I will call a
8 number. If you signed up to speak and you
9 have a speaker card, periodically I will
10 call up a number and ask the folks that
11 have that number on their card to come up
12 and line up to speak.

13 When you come up, if the speakers
14 would hand -- when it's time for you to
15 speak, those speakers would hand their
16 card to Robert there, and the speakers
17 should ask -- should state their name and
18 address for the record. Following that,
19 everyone will have two minutes to speak.
20 There is a timer that you can see that
21 will count down two minutes with a buzzer
22 that will let you know when your -- your
23 time is up.

24 So with that -- is everybody

1 settled? I wanted to give everybody a
2 chance to be settled so you wouldn't be
3 disturbed during your speaking.

4 Now, if you would like to go
5 ahead, sir.

6 MR. ROBERT HEALY: Good. My name
7 is Robert Healy. I live at
8 in the Trinity Heights neighborhood
9 of Durham. I've lived in the City of
10 Durham for 29 years.

11 I believe strongly that this LRT
12 project is far too costly and is only a
13 partial solution to our actual
14 transportation needs. Even if one accepts
15 GoTriangle's ridership estimates, this LRT
16 will reduce traffic on 15/501 by less than
17 5 percent.

18 The project does not serve NC
19 Central, nor Durham Tech, nor any of our
20 continuing care communities, nor even
21 downtown Chapel Hill. It serves only a
22 tiny fraction of the large low-income
23 population in northeast and southeast
24 Durham, not the low-income area of Chapel

1 Hill, not the large low-income population
2 in rural Orange County.

3 But can we rely on the ridership
4 estimates? As someone familiar with
5 transportation forecasting, I asked
6 GoTriangle for more than two years for
7 more details on their methods and
8 assumptions. I've been asked to wait for
9 the DEIS, but this information was not in
10 the DEIS.

11 I then made a formal request for
12 the information, citing North Carolina
13 Public Records Act, which clearly entitles
14 me to it. GoTriangle did not even reply.

15 Frankly, I think it quite likely
16 that the ridership estimates are
17 exaggerated by optimistic and hidden
18 assumptions.

19 Let me close with a personal view.
20 I live in Trinity Heights, about four
21 blocks from the proposed LRT station. I
22 can now take a bus from my street corner
23 to New Hope Commons, the Robertson bus to
24 downtown Chapel Hill, the Bull City

1 Connector to downtown Durham and eastward.

2 The LRT will probably eliminate
3 these routes. Even though I live very
4 close to a station and should be among the
5 people benefitted by it, the LRT service
6 will be inferior to what I now enjoy.
7 Spending \$1.6 billion on the LRT will make
8 me poor as a taxpayer and not one bit more
9 mobile. Thank you.

10 MR. JOYNER: The next speaker.

11 MR. ERIC SHYSELS: I'm Eric
12 Shysels. I live at

13 which is Chapel Hill, zip code --
14 it's part of Durham City, Durham County.

15 I strongly believe that efficient
16 and cost-effective public transportation
17 is key to any urban development. That is
18 why I oppose LRT. It is excessively
19 expensive and does not serve Southpoint
20 Mall, RTP, RDU Airport, or Raleigh.

21 Any economist will tell you that
22 an environment of rapid technological
23 change, as we are currently witnessing in
24 the transportation sector, it is important

1 to invest in a flexible and adaptable
2 transit system rather than putting huge
3 amounts of public money into a rigid
4 system like LRT that is extremely
5 expensive to build and maintain.

6 Obviously -- Objectively looking
7 at the facts prompted Wake County leaders
8 to walk away from light rail and sign in
9 favor of bus rapid transit. In my
10 opinion, they were wise to do so.

11 In my remaining time, I'd like to
12 talk as a professor and scholar of
13 research methods such as those used by
14 GoTriangle to predict ridership demands.

15 In my opinion, these numbers, such
16 as the 23,000 daily boardings, are vastly
17 inflated. My colleague, Bob Healy, just
18 talked, and I requested early September
19 details about those projections.

20 GoTriangle has refused to deliver
21 using the Civil Rights Act as an excuse.
22 I'm not a legal scholar, but I doubt the
23 validity of that argument.

24 Subsequently, we requested access

1 to the consultants' reports, which are, in
2 our opinion, public domain documents under
3 the North Carolina Public Records Act.
4 They have not been provided. I think the
5 ridership exaggeration and the lack of
6 transparency make this project even more
7 suspect. Thank you.

8 MR. PATRICK CURLEY: My name is
9 Patrick Curley. I live at
10 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27517.
11 It is in Durham County.

12 When a half-cent tax increase was
13 proposed from Durham County some years
14 ago, I voted for the temporary increase
15 because the funds were to be used to look
16 at providing a regional transportation
17 system solution, including a possible
18 light rail solution.

19 I oppose this particular light
20 rail project as outlined by GoTriangle.
21 The following seven reasons are most
22 compelling. First, this project is
23 fiscally unsound with a high annual
24 operating subsidy of almost \$14 million.

1 I did not vote for a permanent tax
2 increase.

3 Second, the noise pollution, light
4 pollution, and runoff pollution.

5 Third, the limited service area
6 provided by this particular route.

7 Fourth, safety concerns about the
8 proposed new at-grade crossings.

9 Fifth, adverse traffic impact to
10 already congested areas because of the
11 proposed at-grade crossings.

12 Six, the lack of coordination with
13 the North Carolina Department of
14 Transportation and their future plans for
15 the Highway 54 corridor.

16 Seventh, no connectivity with Wake
17 County or RDU.

18 I have three recommendations to
19 all of the deciding entities for the
20 Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit. First,
21 hold a voter referendum and ask the Durham
22 and Orange County residents if this
23 specific proposed light rail project is
24 what they expected and what they truly

1 want.

2 Second, if any light rail project
3 is approved and built, let the riders pay
4 for the full cost of ridership. That
5 means no subsidies from our tax dollars to
6 pay for the annual operating expenses.

7 And, third, if any light rail
8 project is approved and built, during the
9 course of the planning and the building of
10 the new tracks, no new at-grade crossings
11 should be built. Existing at-grade
12 crossings, where utilized, should be
13 upgraded to appropriate safety standards,
14 but no new at-grade crossings should be
15 built.

16 MR. DICK HAILS: Good afternoon.
17 My name is Dick Hails. I live at
18 Durham, NC
19 27701.

20 I've worked for 24 years in
21 leadership positions with the Durham
22 City-County Planning Department. I've
23 also worked as planning director of the
24 transit planner, consultant with other

1 North Carolina cities. In addition, I've
2 also served twice as president of the
3 North Carolina Chapter of the American
4 Planning Association. I've also visited
5 and studied a number of US and foreign
6 cities on transit-oriented development.

7 I want to speak today about four
8 reasons why I believe that the DEIS'
9 recommendations to develop Durham-Orange
10 LRT system are sound ones and essential to
11 the Durham and Chapel Hill communities.

12 First, environment. Much of the
13 area between Durham and Chapel Hill is
14 environmental constrained with water
15 quality-sensitive federally-owned wildlife
16 lands. If these communities are --
17 continue to grow and prosper in a
18 sustainable manner, they need to utilize
19 an LRT system as an effective way to
20 protect these important water and
21 open-space resources from the impacts of
22 widening multiple highways through the
23 area.

24 Traffic and cost. A recent report

1 from the US Federal Reserve notes that a
2 light rail transit system can
3 cost-effectively carry travel trips
4 equivalent to eight lanes of highway
5 traffic.

6 This area needs an LRT solution to
7 handle future traffic demands at
8 reasonable cost and without harming the
9 area's quality of life.

10 Third, job growth. The proposed
11 LRT would connect the three largest job
12 centers in the Durham-Chapel Hill area:
13 UNC, Duke, and downtown Durham. To
14 support strong, continued growth and
15 competitiveness in these essential
16 centers, there's a critical need for a
17 high-quality transportation system that
18 the LRT can help provide.

19 And, fourth, equity. There are
20 serious issues of housing affordability
21 and jobs access in both the Durham and
22 Chapel Hill communities, particularly for
23 lower-income citizens.

24 Development of the proposed LRT

1 system can greatly improve access to job
2 centers and to plan affordable housing at
3 transit stations.

4 In summary, I strongly support the
5 proposal to construct a light rail transit
6 system as recommended in the DEIS.

7 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

8 MR. DICK FORD: I'm Dick Ford. I
9 live at in
10 Durham, North Carolina.

11 I'm here today because I support
12 public transportation and I support
13 development and growth. Because I firmly
14 support these objectives, I cannot support
15 the current light rail scheme for Durham
16 and Chapel Hill. It does an inadequate
17 and overly expensive job at delivering
18 transit and growth.

19 I live in Downing Creek in
20 southwest Durham. Like many of my
21 neighbors, I was astounded when the light
22 rail line was moved to our doorstep from
23 Meadowmont, a community built for and
24 because of light rail.

1 But my dismay did not stop there.
2 The more I learned about this project, the
3 more I saw it would be a financial
4 albatross on Durham, always needing new
5 revenue, resources. It would deny us the
6 public transit we actually need while
7 delivering minimal benefits. Just look at
8 the map of the current scheme, 15 stations
9 in west Durham and Chapel Hill, 2 stations
10 in east Durham.

11 Light rail will deliver better air
12 quality, not so. It was to reduce
13 congestion, not so. But the cruelest joke
14 was the claim that light rail would
15 improve the lives of the transit-dependent
16 and create affordable housing. This light
17 rail scheme does not serve the
18 transit-dependent in luxury housing built
19 beside the light rail, not affordable
20 housing.

21 As Bob and Eric have mentioned,
22 the most vulnerable part of this light
23 rail scheme is the ridership projections.
24 That's what got the last iteration of this

1 scheme nixed by the feds.

2 They have spoken to you about
3 their attempts to run the GoTriangle
4 ridership numbers, only to get the brush
5 off from GoTriangle bureaucrats. They
6 refuse to share the data with them.

7 Why won't they let us check these
8 crucial ridership projections? Why this
9 lack of transparency on the key to the
10 scheme's success? Why hasn't this scheme
11 had an independent review like Wake
12 County? What are we left with?
13 Unexamined ridership estimates,
14 ever-increasing travel times, disruptions
15 for long-established neighborhoods.

16 Wake County's rejection of light
17 rail, lack of adequate state funding.
18 Public transit is too important to let the
19 present scheme be built.

20 For all of these reasons, I
21 recommend a no build option. Thank you.

22 MS. GAIL ABRAMS: Hi. My name is
23 Gail Abrams. I live at
24 in Durham, North Carolina. I am

1 here, however, as the executive director
2 of Piedmont Wildlife Center. We are
3 located in Leigh Farm Park, the park that
4 is directly across I-40 from the
5 Farrington ROMF, and we are here to say
6 that we are against that location.

7 The streams that run through the
8 Farrington ROMF location drain directly
9 under I-40 and into Leigh Farm Park.
10 Those streams and wetlands are already
11 extremely degraded from the normal runoff
12 that already occurs from I-40 and the
13 streams located on the other side of it.

14 If we add 26 acres of impervious
15 surface now draining into that park, it is
16 going to devastate the wildlife and the
17 environment in that park.

18 We serve over 1,700 children that
19 come to that park every year as they
20 explore the wetlands, the forest, and the
21 fields. They walk in those wetlands with
22 bare feet. They explore what wildlife and
23 nature is really all about, and this ROMF
24 situation is going to really, really mess

1 up that whole situation.

2 I would invite anyone who has the
3 power to really make a difference in this
4 project to actually visit Leigh Farm Park
5 anytime in the next four days, put your
6 rain gear on, come out to the park, and
7 look at the flooding that's going to
8 happen just from the rain that we are
9 going to get in the next four days that
10 are going to take place and then multiply
11 that times 26 acres of impervious surface,
12 and I think you will see that there's
13 going to be a major, major impact on Leigh
14 Farm Park and the Jordan Lake watershed
15 and the water that we drink. The children
16 are going to really be disadvantaged, as
17 will the wildlife.

18 We are in a long-term Eastern Box
19 Turtle study in that park. We have eight
20 turtles that have transmitters on them and
21 are monitored on a daily basis to look at
22 the places they travel. Adding flooding
23 and pollution to this park is going to
24 really devastate their wildlife habitat

1 and locations where they hibernate and
2 live and feed every day.

3 So please take wildlife and
4 children into account in this project.
5 Thank you.

6 MR. WAYLAND BURTON: Good
7 evening. My name is Wayland Burton. I
8 live at
9 North Carolina.

10 I've spent the past 36 years in
11 the service of my country with the
12 Department of Defense. That's given me an
13 opportunity to live in a lot of world and
14 a lot of world-class communities.

15 I am in support of the light rail
16 system. I also have the enthusiastic
17 opportunity to expound on how progressive
18 city and county, Durham and Durham County,
19 has always been.

20 I also was supportive of the light
21 rail system because I believe that without
22 it, there would be an increase and
23 expansion of various roads that we have
24 and also in those record commutes that

1 people have to -- have to endure in
2 traveling to their jobs or to commute to
3 Durham for either to shop or to visit or
4 to live.

5 Without the light rail system, I
6 can see the future of our community
7 disappearing. Do not let our future
8 down. Thank you.

9 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. As our
10 next speaker's coming up, I would like to
11 call anyone who has a speaker card with
12 the number 4. If you would, please, come
13 up and line up behind Jeffrey and he'll
14 make sure that you're in the correct
15 order.

16 And if our speaker will wait just
17 a moment until everybody has a chance to
18 be seated so that they won't disrupt you.

19 Okay. Thank you for your
20 patience. You can go ahead.

21 MR. CHARLIE GIBBS: Thank you. My
22 name is Charlie Gibbs. I live at
Durham
24 County.

1 And there have been a lot of good
2 comments made and there are a lot of
3 things to be considered and what -- and
4 this is -- to the -- to the people who are
5 in charge of designing this -- this light
6 rail system, there are some decisions to
7 be made.

8 I do support the regional rail --
9 light rail transit. I don't prefer the
10 way it's evolved, but I think that's
11 something that will come eventually, but
12 right now that's not an issue.

13 I'm also a member of the
14 City-County Planning Commission, and I'm
15 not speaking for that commission. I want
16 to make that plain. I'm speaking for
17 myself personally.

18 Being a member of the commission,
19 I have had access to long-range plans for
20 Durham and the downtown area, the Central
21 Park area, the changes in traffic pattern
22 downtown, and I think this light rail is
23 going to affect that. So it needs to be
24 in -- in part -- part of our plans, but if

1 this -- if this LRT is built, and I hope
2 it is, I'm speaking mainly in favor of the
3 new stop at -- the Center City stop. I
4 think this would be a good crossroads
5 between the east-west rail and north-south
6 traffic, and I -- and that's -- I would
7 like to see RTP included at some point and
8 the airport, and I think that will come,
9 but this is a good first step in getting
10 what we need to connect us all
11 regionally. Thank you.

12 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

13 MR. BRIAN RUSSELL: Hi. My name
14 is Brian Russell, and I live

Durham here in
16 downtown, and I fully support the
17 Durham-Orange Light Rail plan as it exits
18 now. And there are a lot of reasons why I
19 think it's a good idea, but I just want to
20 mention one.

21 My son, who's six years old, when
22 he's old enough to drive, about the time
23 this rail will be built, I would like to
24 encourage him to drive less. And I hope a

1 lot of us think more about decades and
2 centuries into the future when congestion
3 and other challenges that we have in this
4 community, what will they think? Will
5 they want to stay in a community that has
6 a poor public transportation system that
7 is as far behind as we are? Because let
8 me tell you, I think this community will
9 be a lot bigger in 10 years, in 20 years,
10 and 40 years, and we should think about
11 people that will be living then and how
12 this would benefit them and why they'd
13 want to be here. Thank you.

14 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

15 MR. GAREY COOKE: I may not -- I
16 may not need this. If I need it, let me
17 know.

18 MR. JOYNER: Sir, you will.

19 MR. GAREY COOKE: Okay.

20 My main reason for being here --
21 My name is Garey Cooke. I was born in
22 1951 in the old Watts Hospital, so I have
23 my roots in Durham. Went to Durham High
24 School. Graduated in 1969. I went to

1 Campbell College, which is now Campbell
2 University. Graduated from there. I got
3 my master's at Duke in 1974 -- no, I think
4 it was '75 because I did it at night
5 school.

6 I did it at night school because
7 it only cost a little bit. I think it
8 cost me \$2,000. We need to revert back to
9 looking at how much things cost. With me
10 having a master's in accounting, I have
11 several CPAs. I have a long list of
12 properties that I will be selling due to
13 return on investment.

14 When I no longer get a return on
15 investment, I -- I -- passed 65, I will
16 slowly divest. Now, what does that mean?
17 I give opportunities to young people that
18 want to learn how to invest in real
19 estate. I will owner finance. I will do
20 things to return Durham to a great city.

21 Now, putting in this type of rail
22 doesn't mean Durham is going to be a great
23 city. It just means that we're going to
24 change the traffic a little. My

1 alternative for this would be to have some
2 type of rail system starting from the Old
3 South Square running right into Franklin
4 Street and see how that works. Try that
5 and let's see how it works.

6 We know what it's like to run from
7 south -- the Southpoint Mall and try to
8 get to Franklin Street. We know that's
9 bad. Well, let's first put a monorail
10 like they have in Las Vegas. You ever
11 been to Las Vegas? They got that. Let's
12 try that and run the numbers on that. Gas
13 is pretty cheap. Gas being cheap, you're
14 going to get more cars on the road. Now,
15 that's going to make traffic worse.

16 Now, we do need something. Let's
17 try something at a lower cost. You put
18 the monorail up, you don't have railroad
19 tracks with runoff. You can even put this
20 system over --

21 MR. JOYNER: Sir, your time is up.

22 MR. GAREY COOKE: Okay. I'm
23 sorry. My reason -- I'm going to --
24 they're going to take my building. That's

1 job loss.

2 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

3 MR. JIM DOUGHTY: Hi. My name is
4 Jim Doughty. I live at
5 in Durham. And I call upon the Federal
6 Trades Administration to reject the Draft
7 Environmental Impact Statement. I move
8 for federal authorities to renew
9 consideration of a bus rapid transit or
10 BRT system instead.

11 In my opinion, the 2012
12 alternatives analysis report as a part of
13 the foundation of the DEIS was flawed in
14 its rejection of BRT. The AA states the
15 BRT was eliminated due to lower ridership
16 and lower potential to attract and shape
17 new development in the region. But the AA
18 report itself, BRT could connect 4,300
19 more than light rail. And a study from
20 the Orange County of California
21 Transportation Authority shows development
22 along light rail corridors are spurred by
23 tax incentives, not by light rail.

24 Meanwhile, the price cost estimate

1 of the BRT is \$20 million per mile cheaper
2 than the lowest cost estimate for light
3 rail. And changes in travel times in the
4 BRT wouldn't be any faster. I contend
5 that the failure to take into
6 consideration the potential of BRT is a
7 fatal flaw in this DEIS.

8 When we ask the FDA to reject the
9 DEIS, what we're really saying is,
10 administratively, please stop this
11 project. Why is that important? Because
12 this may be our last chance. They told us
13 to petition our elected officials. Our
14 elected officials told us they're trusting
15 the professionals.

16 The state legislature's funding
17 cap may look like another
18 (unintelligible). Let's look at what we
19 can't undo. What we can't undo is the
20 acceptance of the DEIS that should not be
21 accepted. Some supporters of the rail
22 plan says our region needs modern, updated
23 transit. Well, yes, it does. The people
24 who oppose light rail also agree. What we

1 want is the right transit. You may as
2 well try to sell me an old black-and-white
3 Philco by telling me how much I really
4 need a home entertainment system.

5 BRT system is flexible. The rails
6 that are pinned to the ground are not.
7 Wake County is going with BRT. Chapel
8 Hill believes BRT will pay for itself. We
9 get only one try. We should get this one
10 right, too. Thank you.

11 MS. ROSEMARY WENZEL: I'm Rosemary
12 Wenzel, Chapel
13 Hill, Durham County.

14 I'm vice president of the Oaks III
15 Homeowners' Association. Our HOA is
16 against the light rail project. It is
17 expensive, old technology. It is not
18 flexible and not useful.

19 It will cause terrible traffic
20 jams. It will not link RDU, Wake County,
21 or RTP. There are many examples of unused
22 buses in Chapel Hill and Durham. An
23 example, there are -- only five students
24 per bus are on the Roberts Bus Program.

1 Buses go empty all over Durham and
2 Chapel Hill. It is way too expensive,
3 especially in relationship to the number
4 of riders. How can you say 40 percent of
5 families are not going to have cars in 10
6 to 20 years? How can that be true when
7 car ownership is -- is constantly
8 increasing and gasoline prices have come
9 down?

10 Why not review, like Wake County
11 did, an independent organization before
12 proceeding? That's what Wake County did,
13 and they decided not to go ahead with the
14 light rail.

15 MS. PAMELA RANSOLOFT: I'm Pamela
16 Ransoloft. I live at
17 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I oppose
18 the light rail system for these reasons:
19 It is not fiscally responsible with almost
20 \$2 billion for a route that doesn't cover
21 the RDU, RTP, and Wake County. At this
22 point, the Robertson Scholar Bus between
23 UNC and Duke has an average of five
24 people. It is unnecessary.

1 People will not ride this because
2 it takes too long. The proposed plans
3 will take too long. Most parents drop off
4 their children to school. Many parents
5 drop off their children on their way to
6 school. So the time to drive, park, wait
7 for the train is going to take much longer
8 than it takes to drive.

9 The road congestion is going to be
10 increased, and vulnerable groups like The
11 Cedars, the schools, some of the schools,
12 for example, Creekside, will have delays,
13 and we have too small a population to
14 support this light rail system.

15 Charlotte has less rider -- has
16 less riders than our proposed 23,000.
17 They only have 16,000 riders, and it's a
18 much -- and that's high. It's a high
19 estimation, and they have a much bigger
20 city, as we all know.

21 Citizens have been misled about
22 the cost, the ridership, the locations,
23 and the goals. Thank you.

24 MR. MICHAEL WHITE: My name is

1 Michael White. I live on
2 Chapel Hill, near the Mason Farm
3 Road proposed stop.

4 I'd like to point out a few things
5 that haven't really been discussed. One
6 is that the main reason why Wake County
7 has not approved the system is because RDU
8 would not get on board, and RDU would not
9 get on board because they don't want to
10 lose their parking revenue.

11 Second -- and I just want to say
12 for myself that I honestly don't know
13 whether I'm for or against this yet.

14 I live in Chapel Hill. I like to
15 go to Franklin Street, and I think we all
16 can agree that people who go drinking in
17 bars are the people you don't want on the
18 road. The light rail system doesn't serve
19 them. That's a problem.

20 And, finally, I wanted to say that
21 the reason that this transit proposal
22 looks the way it does is because that is
23 the criteria that the federal government
24 has given them, and that is -- that is how

1 they're most likely to get funding. So if
2 you have a problem with the way it looks,
3 then you have to take it up with the FTA
4 as well because they're using that
5 criteria.

6 And I think if any community can
7 appreciate doing a proposal specifically
8 to receive grant money, it would be the
9 Research Triangle. Thank you.

10 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Next
11 speaker.

12 MS. CHERI HARDMAN: Hi. I'm Cheri
13 Hardman. I live at in
14 Chapel Hill. I am also president of the
15 Oaks III Homeowners' Association, and I
16 represent myself and the Oaks III Board,
17 which also opposes the light rail solution
18 as it's proposed.

19 I oppose the light rail because it
20 is just not cost effective. It's \$126
21 million per mile, if we use the figures
22 from Charlotte. So our actual costs are
23 going to be more like 2 billion or even
24 exceeding that, possibly even 2.3, 2.4

1 billion. And then you have the cost of
2 ownership of almost 10 percent a year for
3 a very few number of riders.

4 I mean, a number of people have
5 mentioned the bus usage already in Chapel
6 Hill and Durham. It's very limited.

7 If you look at the routes that
8 this particular light rail is taking,
9 they're also not the areas where people
10 have the most traffic, RDU, RTP, Wake
11 County. None of those areas are going to
12 be included in this light rail. So why
13 are we spending almost \$2 billion on
14 something that nobody hardly is going to
15 use?

16 Then it's old technology. If you
17 Google replacing light rail, cities like
18 Portland, Oregon, are already trying to
19 figure out how to get rid of it because
20 it's just not flexible. Once it's there,
21 you can't change it, and they're finding
22 there's newer technologies that are much
23 more flexible.

24 It's slow and it's going to take a

1 lot longer for anybody transporting
2 themselves from one part of Chapel Hill to
3 Durham. People just aren't going to do
4 it. It's not safe.

5 Also Google light rail accidents.
6 There's a lot of accidents, particularly
7 in places like Farrington Road where
8 you're looking at just stopping the
9 traffic with a flat road. That is going
10 to be very dangerous, especially around
11 places like Creekside School, which our
12 youngest are going to be right in the
13 middle of a 17-acre large facility that's
14 in charge of repair.

15 So, again, funding is -- I do not
16 support it.

17 MR. JOYNER: Before the next
18 speaker gets started, anyone with a
19 speaker card with the number 5, if you
20 would, please, come over and line up next
21 to Jeffrey, and he will make sure that you
22 are in the correct order.

23 And we'll wait just a moment until
24 everybody has a chance to sit down before

1 our next speaker.

2 While we're waiting, for those who
3 have joined us recently, I'll just run
4 through some of the rules that we've been
5 talking about in the hearing and sort of
6 the way that it's proceeding.

7 The hearing will run until --
8 well, folks will have an opportunity to
9 sign in to speak up until 7 o'clock.
10 Anyone that's signed up prior to 7 o'clock
11 to speak will be allowed to speak, and
12 we'll stay here as long as necessary to
13 allow everybody who has signed up by 7
14 o'clock to speak. So that's part of it.

15 I'll direct you to the ground
16 rules that we have posted above. I won't
17 go through those, again, but I want to
18 make sure that those -- that everybody's
19 following those. So far everybody's been
20 really great, and I really do appreciate
21 that, given that everybody's been giving
22 the speakers that opportunity to be heard.

23 As the speakers come up -- again,
24 I will -- I'll go through that real quick.

1 As you come up as a speaker, if you would
2 hand your card to Robert, the blue card to
3 Robert, and then state your name and
4 address for the record.

5 After you've done that, we will
6 start the timer. You will have two
7 minutes to speak. There is a timer that
8 you can see from the podium, and it will
9 count down your two minutes and then beep
10 at the end. We'll ask you to wrap up at
11 that point.

12 So is everyone set up? Next
13 speaker, please.

14 MS. MARY JANE FERRIS: My name's
15 Mary Jane Ferris. I live at
16 in Durham, North Carolina
17 27707.

18 I do not support the light rail
19 system. I substitute teach in Durham,
20 Chapel Hill, and Carrboro. The rail
21 system will affect Creekside Elementary
22 and other schools. It will cause a
23 terrible safety concern from delayed
24 emergency services to excessive traffic

1 and a large commercial enterprise within a
2 few feet of a school that serves our
3 youngest citizens.

4 17 acres of trucks, repairmen, and
5 rail workers, how can this be safe?

6 MR. ANDY SLAUGHTER: My name is
7 Andy Slaughter, and I live at

8
9 And I'm just here to speak quickly
10 about my support for the light rail
11 system, as demonstrated. Mainly just
12 because I think that without a dedicated
13 transit corridor that the light rail will
14 provide, we're basically investing in more
15 sprawl and we're basically investing in
16 more congestion as our region grows over
17 the next few decades, which it inevitably
18 will. So thank you, and I -- again, I
19 support light rail and let's not be Wake
20 County.

21 MR. TOM CLARK: I'm Tom Clark. I
22 live at in
23 Durham County.

24 I've lived in Durham and Orange

1 all of my 68 years, so I've had a lot of
2 opportunities to step back and watch what
3 goes on in the communities around here.

4 I heard a comment earlier about
5 the growth in the Triangle and that that
6 was one of the reasons we need this light
7 rail. Well, I disagree with that. Yes,
8 the Triangle is growing by leaps and
9 bounds, but it's not in Durham and Orange
10 County. It's in Wake County. Wake County
11 is not in the scope of what we're trying
12 to accomplish here.

13 We do have a transportation
14 problem, but we're trying to solve it with
15 the wrong solution. One of my colleagues
16 at Duke had a great saying, you don't need
17 a cannon to kill a rat, and I think that's
18 what we're trying to do now.

19 It's a very expensive, inflexible
20 approach to a problem that we do have. I
21 like something that Wake County's talking
22 about with dedicated bus routes, not buses
23 on the regular streets, because they are
24 subject to whatever's going on with the

1 traffic. You have a wreck, you can't stay
2 on schedule.

3 I think we need to do something
4 with a much more sophisticated bus -- bus
5 system that has dedicated lanes it can be
6 in so that it can stay on schedule and
7 provide service to our citizens.

8 I think this light rail has got
9 some very attractive destination points,
10 yes, Chapel Hill, UNC, and downtown here
11 and over at Duke, et cetera, but how are
12 you going to get the people into the
13 system to use it? People are not going to
14 drive their cars somewhere and park and
15 get on a train to go somewhere when they
16 can get there quicker without that, or
17 certainly people that don't have the
18 means, they're not going to hire a taxi to
19 take them to a train stop somewhere to get
20 on the train to get from point A to point
21 B.

22 It's not in our mindset to work
23 that way here. We don't have the
24 population density to support that way of

1 moving around. We're not Portland,
2 Oregon, or Norfolk or some of these other
3 places that have those densities, and I
4 really don't think we will because,
5 truthfully, I don't want us to have that
6 kind of density. I like the fact that
7 we're not overpopulated around here.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. LORISA SEIBEL: Hello. My
10 name is Lorisa Seibel. I live at
11 Durham, North Carolina 27705.
12 And I'm a member of the Durham People's
13 Alliance and also of Durham CAN, two local
14 groups that supported the referendum for
15 funding the light rail and improvements to
16 our bus system.

17 We are in support of improving
18 transit for all residents of Durham, and
19 we're also in support of making sure that
20 that transit is accessible and that
21 housing is affordable around each transit
22 station so that everyone in Durham, no
23 matter what their income, can benefit from
24 transit improvements to be able to get to

1 work, to school, to the doctors, and other
2 places.

3 As we move forward with the
4 Environmental Impact Statement and other
5 plans for the transit system, we ask that
6 GoTriangle include economic impact and
7 racial equity in the Environmental Impact
8 Statement for the Light Rail Transit
9 Project.

10 We expect the EIS to contain a
11 substantive and thorough analysis of the
12 economic impact and racial equity on all
13 residents, particularly residents who live
14 near the stations.

15 The EIS should address economic
16 impact and racial equity such as
17 gentrification and displacement that may
18 affect local residents, small businesses,
19 affordable housing, and transportation
20 costs. And this is the wording of a
21 petition that was signed by 115 People's
22 Alliance supporters. I want to read a
23 couple of the comments.

24 There's one that's about

1 sustainability of this and the -- that we
2 want in all of your plans to look at
3 vulnerable communities to guarantee the
4 overall success of this project. Let's do
5 it right in Durham.

6 Another person says she lives near
7 a proposed station and wants to make sure
8 there's affordable housing for all current
9 residents to keep the unique mix of our
10 neighborhood community. And I will submit
11 the petition with the 115 signatures.

12 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. You can
13 hand that to...

14 MR. WIB GULLEY: Hi. Good
15 afternoon. My name is Wib Gulley. I live
16 at Durham, North
17 Carolina. And I'm speaking today
18 representing CAN, the Congregations
19 Associations & Neighborhoods, a city-wide
20 organization here in Durham. It's a
21 non-profit. It's made up of approximately
22 15,000 households in Durham.

23 And CAN has gone on record solidly
24 in support of the Durham-Orange light rail

1 system, very happy to see the progress
2 it's been making and look forward to
3 seeing it built.

4 CAN also will be submitting for
5 the record later today a petition with
6 over 310 signatures of Durham residents in
7 support of this project.

8 I only have a few other comments
9 to share. One is that I understand these
10 projects having different views. If you
11 look around the country, you don't escape
12 that. There's always some discussion and
13 argument within communities about building
14 these. There always has been.

15 I am -- As I sit here and listen,
16 I'm very disappointed to hear the poor
17 information that's out there and the
18 things that are just wrong that people
19 have been somehow led into believing about
20 this. And it's too bad, and I can't
21 correct all that this afternoon,
22 particularly in two minutes. But I am
23 aware of the very careful study that's
24 been done by the GoTriangle staff and am

1 very appreciative of that hard work for
2 years that's gone into this.

3 Know that this route's going to
4 take the most heavily traveled corridors
5 in Durham and Orange County and provide an
6 answer to being in congestion all the
7 time.

8 I understand that BRT -- if you
9 know anything about BRT, running BRTs is
10 as expensive as light rail to build and
11 more expensive to operate. That's just
12 the facts. That's not an opinion.

13 But I do know this also, that
14 Durham County voted for this with
15 60-percent majority and Orange County did,
16 too, in the last couple of years, and I
17 want to assure all of those who are
18 working on this that a strong majority of
19 folks in Durham County and Orange County
20 still support this. Thank you all so
21 much.

22 MR. DAN HUDGINS: I'm Dan Hudgins,
23 and I live at here in
24 Durham. I've lived in Durham for 38

1 years. I'm a social worker by profession,
2 and I've spent most of my career in public
3 social services and most recently on the
4 faculty of the School of Social Work at
5 UNC where I taught courses in public
6 policy.

7 For 27 years, I was the director
8 of the Durham County Department of Social
9 Services where we struggled to assist
10 low-income Durham families meeting their
11 basic needs. We worked to help them
12 access education and training for job
13 opportunities that would provide a basic
14 living for them and their families.

15 For the vast majority of the
16 thousands of families we served,
17 transportation was a major barrier to
18 access jobs, education, and medical
19 appointments.

20 I've studied the Draft
21 Environmental Impact Statement and am
22 testifying here today in full support of
23 the project. The environmental justice
24 section of the impact statement is clear

1 about the concentration of low-income
2 residents that will be served.

3 While there's been criticism of
4 the time it will take for
5 transit-dependent persons to get from
6 Alston Avenue to UNC Hospital, it's much
7 quicker on the light rail than it would be
8 on buses because of connections, traffic,
9 and wait times. That's just the fact.

10 On the other part -- One other
11 part of the planning that excites me is
12 what our county commission and city
13 council here in Durham have done to
14 establish a goal of 15 percent of
15 affordable housing within distances of the
16 light rail stops.

17 The commitment tells us what our
18 local elected officials are doing to
19 support environmental justice and will
20 help to assure those who are most in need
21 will have access to the critical
22 resources. I'm also recommending that
23 GoTriangle adopt the same goal for the
24 light rail transit.

1 And I want to thank you for having
2 the opportunity to speak today, and I also
3 want to let you know I'm speaking on
4 behalf of Durham People's Alliance's
5 Affordable Housing Committee and its
6 700-plus members.

7 I'd also like to enter into the
8 record today a letter from another
9 organization I'm involved with, the
10 Coalition for Affordable Housing & Transit
11 that's also in support and lists all the
12 organizations that are a part of the
13 coalition. Thank you.

14 MR. JOYNER: You can hand that to
15 Jeffrey. Before our next speaker gets
16 started, if I can call up the folks that
17 have number 6 on their speaker card. And
18 if you would, if you have number 6 on your
19 speaker card, if you would line up here.
20 Jeffrey will make sure everybody's in
21 order.

22 And, again, for those who have
23 recently joined us, as the speakers come
24 up, please hand your speaker card to

1 Robert there and state your name and
2 address for the record. At that point,
3 your two-minute time will begin. There is
4 a timer at the podium that you can see as
5 your time counts down, and it will make a
6 tone at the end of that time period.

7 So if our speakers are settled,
8 you may proceed.

9 MR. MONTE BROWN: Hello. My name
10 is Monte Brown, and I live at
11 in Chapel Hill, North
12 Carolina, and the train does not affect
13 me. Therefore, I have no conflict of
14 interest, but I felt obligated to come
15 give my opinion.

16 I'm speaking today as a private
17 citizen, and I do not represent any group,
18 so I have no conflict, but I'm extremely
19 knowledgeable about the Erwin Road
20 corridor, including detailed knowledge of
21 the traffic, employee commute patterns,
22 and even the exact location of every
23 building. I also benefit from the
24 knowledge of a spouse who's dependent on a

1 bus system as she cannot drive.

2 So I support public
3 transportation, just not this one. I work
4 in Durham and live in Chapel Hill.
5 Supposedly I would be the target of the
6 ridership of the light rail, but, in fact,
7 I would never use it.

8 I come here today to say the
9 emperor has no clothes. The only ones
10 likely to benefit from the current plan
11 are the few developers who own land along
12 this circuitous route which makes no sense
13 and the consultants who are getting paid
14 to design the plan that does not work.
15 Where is the independent analysis?

16 We have totally lost sight of what
17 we're trying to achieve, but it is
18 politically incorrect to question the plan
19 because we're seen as NIMBY, I don't live
20 in their back yard; against the
21 environment; or an elitist.

22 When I met with the consultants
23 personally, they said the goal was to get
24 employees to work. When I pointed out

1 there was no park-and-rides, they then
2 changed the goal to say it was to get the
3 patients to Duke and UNC. What is the
4 goal?

5 We should not be talking about
6 routes 2A, 2B, 2C1. We should step back
7 and say, what do we need to do to better
8 connect our community and what's the best
9 method? Don't think that we've gone too
10 far down a road to turn now.

11 There is no clear objective. This
12 won't increase employment. There -- If
13 you're trying to connect Duke and UNC,
14 there is the Robertson Shuttle and Bull
15 City Connector, but they're not connected
16 and there's no park-and-ride. We can fix
17 that.

18 This thing does not connect to
19 Carolina North, the new RTP density plan;
20 the airport; and the downtown Raleigh,
21 where the highest density is planned in
22 Chapel Hill.

23 If we want to help the
24 environment, we'd be better using our

1 dollars to shut the coal plant at UNC and
2 convert it to natural gas. Yet we move
3 down this project as if we have blinders
4 on and no stopping.

5 So at this point we need to
6 realize the goal -- that we need to
7 realize that the goal is to justify the
8 light rail. There is no other goal. So
9 we -- But we're justifying the light rail,
10 so we look progressive rather than simply
11 becoming a progressive community. The
12 time is to stop the light rail to nowhere.

13 MS. JANE WAGSTAFF: My name is
14 Jane Wagstaff,
15 Durham, North Carolina 27707. I'm
16 following this gentleman. I, too, have no
17 dog in this fight. My area is not
18 affected by this particular project.

19 I will say that I am the mother of
20 a police academy candidate right now, so
21 I'm paying close attention to budgets. I
22 know what that young man is going to
23 make. I know what his future will look
24 like. I know the hazards and the dangers,

1 and it is not a big salary.

2 So from a fiscal standpoint, just
3 like the other gentleman, I wanted to be
4 here to voice a concern purely on economic
5 issues is why I've been watching and also
6 because my dear friend lives in the
7 Farrington ROMF area.

8 So I want you to pay close
9 attention to what I'm going to read now
10 because even though this project does not
11 affect my area right now and it might not
12 affect many people in here who are not
13 like directly affected by the project
14 right now -- I think most of you here
15 are -- it could be you next time.

16 So the GoTriangle website and the
17 DEIS public comment and media sections
18 failed to mention the intense opposition
19 to the Farrington ROMF site that has
20 erupted since the site became known to
21 residents on June 18th when a public
22 meeting was held to discuss the Leigh
23 Village compact neighborhood with
24 invitations mailed by the Durham Planning

1 Department.

2 Can it be a coincidence that the
3 DEIS states that the comment period on
4 scoping for the D-O LRT concluded on June
5 18th? Did you hear that, mailed and
6 concluded June 18th. It appears the
7 Farrington ROMF was unveiled to those
8 directly affected only when the GoTriangle
9 knew it was too late for them to
10 participate.

11 And speaking of elected officials,
12 is it appropriate for them to serve on the
13 board of GoTriangle and still take part in
14 discussions, much less to vote, on the
15 light rail plans? Should they not recuse
16 themselves under a conflict of interest
17 policy? Thank you.

18 MS. JACKIE WAGSTAFF: Good
19 evening. My name's Jackie Wagstaff. I
20 guess that's my sister right there.

21 MS. JANE WAGSTAFF: Separated at
22 birth.

23 MS. JACKIE WAGSTAFF: I'm here in
24 opposition of this light rail, been in

1 opposition of this light rail proposal
2 since the day of its conception, but I'm
3 going to bring a new twist to this.

4 Let's talk about the fares. I've
5 been sitting in these meetings for over a
6 couple of years either informal or formal,
7 and the one question that I've asked at
8 every meeting that has never been answered
9 is, what will be the price of the ride of
10 this fare?

11 When I look around this room, how
12 many people in this room ride a DATA bus
13 or Go Durham? How often do you ride it?
14 I mean, are you riding it now because now
15 we're trying to get the light rail, or do
16 you ride it out of a sense of necessity?
17 That's what we need to look at.

18 This is the price of a fare -- I
19 called Charlotte just before I got here
20 because I remember meeting with you and
21 you never could answer it. So I called
22 Charlotte to find out what the -- and I've
23 ridden the light rail in Charlotte and it
24 run through all the high rent districts.

1 It doesn't run in the hood. It runs in
2 the high rent districts. So let's be
3 clear where it will be going.

4 Meadowmont didn't want it and
5 several other people in Chapel Hill didn't
6 want it. So we know it's not going to go
7 through the hood, so the price of it is
8 going to more than that \$2 that it costs
9 you to get on a DATA bus or Go Durham and
10 ride all day long.

11 One way on the light rail in
12 Charlotte, \$2.20, one way, versus the \$1
13 we pay now to get on DATA bus. For a
14 round trip, \$4.40. That's just to get
15 from here to here to Southpoint and then
16 come back.

17 Now, if you ride all day where it
18 costs us \$2 to ride all day on DATA bus or
19 Go Durham, that will be \$6.60. We know
20 that poor people ride those light rails
21 and those buses. For seven days -- If you
22 want to get a pass for seven days, that's
23 \$22. How can we afford it? I don't see
24 the population even in this room that are

1 going to be affected by that light rail.

2 That light rail is not going to be put
3 there to accommodate the poorest of our
4 residents.

5 Our residents struggle to find \$2
6 to ride DATA bus every day, and they're
7 never in the conversation. So even though
8 Mr. Huggins said that that quick a ride
9 from Durham to Chapel Hill for poor people
10 to the hospital, it's going to be quicker,
11 it won't be cheaper, so they still won't
12 be getting on it.

13 So we have to understand the cost
14 that's going to be associated, that's
15 going to even stress our people that are
16 already stressed to the max. So while
17 we're sitting here talking about all this
18 other stuff, we need to think about the
19 cost of light rail and do -- and bring
20 that survey back of other cities that have
21 it and what they charge for you to ride
22 light rail. So adamantly oppose.

23 MS. ANITA FOUST: Good afternoon.

24 I'm Anita Keith Foust. I live in Durham.

1 I'm against the light rail. I follow
2 behind all the rest of them who are
3 against it, but I also come here to speak
4 for a disabled mother who lives over in
5 the Crest Street area which is right there
6 behind Veteran's Hospital, the Duke area.

7 She's already been damaged by the
8 construction that is going on on Erwin
9 Road. Prosperity is going on on Erwin
10 Road, but where she lives behind VA
11 Hospital, there's all kinds of
12 negative-type economic problems going on.

13 She is against the light rail. I
14 am, too. But her reason is because she
15 will be affected. I hear everyone talking
16 about the pie in the sky and how they're
17 going to look out for low-income people.
18 That's a promise that probably won't be
19 kept, so let's not have the light rail
20 until we have something in writing, in
21 concrete, to prove the point that we've
22 heard and -- the rest of them say, that
23 they are authorities on -- and I heard
24 people saying that people have conflicts

1 of interest that are coming down here. I
2 don't have a dog in the fight, either. I
3 can't drive. I can't catch the bus.
4 People have to take me where I need to go
5 as well as this mother who lives in the
6 Crest Street area, which is also called
7 Hicks Town.

8 This is going to negatively affect
9 poor neighborhoods, and I don't want to
10 hear all of that pie in the sky without
11 some proof. So I'm against the light
12 rail. Thank you.

13 MR. JOYNER: Before our next
14 speaker comes up, anybody who has a number
15 7 on their speaker card, do we have any
16 additional speakers? Say at this point,
17 do we have any additional speakers? Okay.
18 Go ahead and get started.

19 MS. RACHEL BERTHIAUME: Hi. My
20 name is Rachel Berthiaume, and I live at
21 I just wanted to come up
22 and share my point of view.

23 So I came into the Triangle for
24 grad school opportunities and for the

1 multiple options for employment in the
2 health sector that this area provides.

3 I've lived both in Raleigh and now
4 currently live in Durham, and during that
5 time, during the past seven years, I've
6 traveled across the Triangle daily from
7 either Raleigh or from Durham to Chapel
8 Hill for work and for school, and 90
9 percent of that travel for work and school
10 was on public transit, on Triangle Transit
11 buses.

12 And this opportunity would save me
13 thousands of dollars in car use and gas
14 and tons of stress that I would have
15 otherwise experienced by driving in the
16 traffic.

17 So I'm totally in support of this
18 light rail plan. I look forward to using
19 it. I would ask that more consideration
20 be taken to extend the light rail into
21 east Durham to ensure that these
22 neighborhoods have access to the
23 opportunities. And I appreciate the
24 comments that were just made about

1 inexpensive transit opportunities, and I
2 would like to see that happening in
3 tangent with the continuation of the light
4 rail pursuits. Thank you very much.

5 MR. JOYNER: Is there anybody that
6 has signed up to speak? Okay. If not,
7 we're going to take a break for a few
8 moments until someone else has an -- or
9 until some other speakers come in.

10 I will quickly go through, again,
11 for those who joined us recently -- this
12 looks like somebody -- ma'am, have you --
13 did you come in to speak? You look like
14 you have a speaker's card. You timed it
15 perfectly. If you would come over here to
16 the front, and we'll let you speak.

17 Okay. We're going to take a
18 five-minute break then until we get a
19 couple more speakers in at this point.
20 So, again, I'll talk a little bit about
21 how the hearing is set up. Folks will
22 have until 6 o'clock [sic] to sign up to
23 speak. And so when we don't have
24 speakers, we take a break for -- what'd I

1 say? 6? I was looking at the time.
2 Thank you. 7 o'clock. My mistake. Folks
3 will have until 7 o'clock to sign up to
4 speak. So we'll take a brief break right
5 now, and when we get more speakers in, we
6 will reconvene and give them an
7 opportunity to speak.

8 (RECESS.)

9 MR. JOYNER: At this time I'll go
10 ahead and reconvene so we can give our
11 other folks an opportunity to speak. I
12 will quickly go through the process for
13 those who have recently joined us.

14 Again, we will be allowing folks
15 to sign up to speak until 7 o'clock this
16 evening. So anybody who has signed up to
17 speak as of 7 o'clock, we'll stay as long
18 as it takes for those folks to finish up.

19 All speakers will have two minutes
20 to speak. I'll point out the ground rules
21 that we have here. I would ask that
22 everyone please continue to abide by
23 those. Everybody's done a great job so
24 far. I want to make sure that everyone

1 has an opportunity to speak and be heard.
2 So as the speakers are called to come up
3 to speak, if you would take your blue card
4 and hand it to Robert there in the blue,
5 and he'll make sure that the court
6 reporters have an opportunity to get that
7 card.

8 And then, if you would, state your
9 name and address for the record. You will
10 have two minutes to speak at the podium.
11 There's a countdown timer, and it will
12 count down. When it hits two, it'll make
13 a little beeping noise and then you'll
14 need to wrap it on up.

15 So, again, we have -- as
16 mentioned, we have court reporters that
17 will be taking -- providing a transcript
18 -- a written transcript of your comments.
19 So please be sure to speak clearly and not
20 too fast. I know folks get a little
21 nervous speaking in public, but if you
22 would make sure you speak clearly so that
23 everybody can be heard.

24 And, again, for the folks out in

1 the audience, I appreciate everybody
2 giving those folks an opportunity to
3 speak. So -- yeah, I was going to say
4 let's make sure those doors are closed
5 because it's a little loud in the hall.

6 Okay. With that, we'll start.
7 Ma'am, if you'd like to come up and hand
8 your card to Robert.

9 MS. GWYN SILVER: All right. Good
10 evening, everybody. I am Gwyn Silver, and
11 I'm a resident of Durham residing

13 Over the past year, I've attended
14 probably seven or more meetings or open
15 forums on the Durham-Orange Light Rail
16 Transit System. For district 1, community
17 support was firmly due to the proposed
18 station at Alston Avenue. I also
19 supported that, as well.

20 Many years ago up to Durham voting
21 for the sales tax to cover transit costs,
22 I anticipated the first rail would run
23 from Durham to RTP or Raleigh, as elected
24 officials often commented that the traffic

1 on the Durham Freeway would only get worse
2 in the coming years.

3 Ironically, I work for a company
4 out at RTP beginning in 1985 when Miami
5 Boulevard was a two-way street and the
6 extension of the highway -- of the Durham
7 Freeway into Raleigh was everybody --
8 everyone's dream.

9 Once they finished the highway, a
10 co-worker said, it's going to be traveling
11 to Raleigh as a freeway, an expressway.
12 Within about five years, the
13 bumper-to-bumper traffic started to slowly
14 return, and today it is truly
15 bumper-to-bumper.

16 At the first meeting I attended
17 when the Durham-Orange light rail was
18 proposed, I asked specifically, are you
19 sure there is enough space for the rail to
20 run along Pettigrew Street? And responses
21 convinced me that that was definitely
22 true.

23 It is sorely disappointing to me
24 and northeast central Durham community

1 that was counting on this stop to see the
2 plans change and the stop moved to Grant
3 Street.

4 With so much controversy and
5 especially no affordable housing planned
6 along the light rail, I propose that we
7 put this project on the back burner and
8 that we look at other alternatives,
9 specifically a light rail into Raleigh.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

12 MS. BONNIE HAUSER: Hi. I'm
13 Bonnie Hauser. I live at
14 Hillsborough, and I -- so I don't
15 have a dog in this fight.

16 The decision before the FTA is
17 build/no build, and many of us are saying
18 no build. To me and many others here
19 tonight, a no build decision is preferred
20 because the plan, the underlying commuter
21 projections, and the corridor line doesn't
22 make sense given the land-use plans and
23 expected growth in the area.

24 Millions of people are moving to

1 the Triangle, but nowhere near the
2 Durham-Orange light rail line. To us, no
3 build allows local leaders to put light
4 rail on the back burner and start planning
5 regional transportation. Light rail by
6 itself may have made sense 20 years ago,
7 but now we need to focus on integrating
8 transportation systems throughout the
9 Triangle, not between two employers.

10 The hub-and-spoke bus system that
11 operate in Durham and Chapel Hill need to
12 be enhanced with convenient point-to-point
13 service that connects local communities
14 with major employment centers in Wake,
15 RTP, and Chatham.

16 Simple service changes will
17 immediately reduce rush-hour congestion,
18 reduce emissions, and improve service for
19 low-income, transit-dependent communities.
20 No build allows local leaders to redirect
21 local funds to regional transportation,
22 complete streets with a bike/ped -- with
23 bike/ped amenities and other
24 transportation improvements, including

1 last-mile service.

2 Dedicated byways can also be used
3 for the densest corridors and over time,
4 if use warrants it, those corridors could
5 be converted to light rail. It's
6 evolutionary, but it makes more sense from
7 an investment risk and benefit to the
8 community perspective.

9 So for us, no build means yes to a
10 flexible, forward-looking transportation
11 system for Orange and Durham that can
12 evolve with accelerating growth throughout
13 the Triangle. Thank you.

14 MR. NORBERT MILDNER: I forgot my
15 glasses. I hope my arm is long enough.
16 So my name is Norbert Mildner. I live
17 in Chapel Hill and living
18 in the Downing Creek Subdivision.
19 Happened to be that the train goes right
20 in front of our subdivision, which means
21 it's going to be gridlocked and the
22 backside there's a body shop and also a
23 parking lot. So we and some other
24 surrounding communities, just gridlocked.

1 However, we agree that
2 transportion, of course, needs an
3 overhaul, but, of course, not light rail
4 at this point.

5 By the time the light rail is
6 going to be built, the technology is
7 already outdated. Just think about the
8 smart phone and how it's -- you know, how
9 quickly it's changed the world. Uber, a
10 car ride, but that's just the beginning.
11 Let's look also at the Charlotte facility
12 because they have some of the worst
13 traffic.

14 And the light rail has been
15 planned for many, many years, and I get
16 the feeling that they want to get it done
17 no matter what. So the light rail also
18 benefits just -- it's supposed to benefit
19 the public, but actually it just benefits
20 just a few. For instance, according to
21 the DEIS, the population around the
22 corridor is supposed to be in 2035 like 23
23 -- two thousand -- two thousand to thirty
24 one thousand. So the projected ridership

1 will be just 1,500, which equals to almost
2 5 percent. 5 percent for 1.6 billion is
3 quite a bit of money.

4 And then the next example is --
5 all this, in my opinion, is driven by just
6 plain greed because -- some of it's
7 builder that would like to have this done,
8 by the station -- right next to it is
9 called Meadowmont -- Meadow -- yeah,
10 Meadowmont Station, which is right next to
11 the Friday Center, quickly in walking
12 distance, and they would like to get it
13 built here, which is -- that makes no
14 sense, and, of course, there is no
15 parking, so they're going to park -- I
16 don't know where they're supposed to be
17 parking.

18 And then the light rail cannot
19 sustain itself because it's way expensive
20 and then there are also some other
21 implications like safety, railroad
22 crossing, and I just hope nobody loses --
23 one of their spouses, children get, you
24 know, hit by the train. And I guess

1 pretty much that's it. Thank you.

2 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Sir --
3 actually, ma'am, we need to finish getting
4 the folks on the aisle here, this row
5 here. So if you wouldn't mind. I know
6 you were being polite, but I want to make
7 sure to get everybody in the row.

8 REV. MARK ANTHONY MIDDLETON:
9 Absolutely. So good evening. My name is
10 Mark Anthony Middleton. I reside at
11 in Durham. I'm the pastor of
12 a wonderful Christian Church here in
13 Durham, and I'm also representing Durham
14 CANS, a clergy caucus, a caucus that
15 represents many of the folk who we've been
16 talking about.

17 Our congregations are associated
18 with neighborhoods, represent many
19 low-income and poor people here in our
20 city. Durham CAN wants to register our
21 support for the light rail transit system
22 for a number of reasons.

23 Firstly, for many of our people,
24 parking -- a park-and-ride situation is

1 not even an issue because they don't have
2 cars, which is why we supported 15 percent
3 affordable housing there, light rail
4 transit stops, so people can walk to these
5 stops.

6 Our secretary of transportation,
7 Anthony Fox, who served in Charlotte, made
8 a statement -- and I'm paraphrasing --
9 that the Civil Rights movement created
10 opportunities, but it's transportation
11 that connects us to those opportunities.
12 And Durham CAN believes that one of the
13 hallmarks of a great metropolis and,
14 indeed, a great nation is connectivity.

15 One of the things that makes
16 America a super power is our ability to
17 get from coast to coast by many means of
18 transportation, and we believe the growth
19 that's occurring in Durham is inevitable
20 and that the light rail transit system
21 will be just a part -- a part of a
22 strategic and comprehensive plan to help
23 people.

24 The poor people who will be served

1 by this light rail transit system, it's
2 not our intention that they remain poor.
3 We believe that this light rail transit
4 system will actually be a vehicle to raise
5 people out of poverty because of
6 connectivity to employment opportunities.
7 And, again, many of them won't have to
8 park a car because they don't have a car.

9 We believe that the growth that's
10 occurring in our Triangle and particularly
11 in Durham is inevitable, it will continue,
12 and we believe that it's not a bad thing,
13 that it's indicative of the great
14 metropolis that we are becoming. And one
15 of those hallmarks and signatures of a
16 great metropolis and nation is a transit
17 system that is multifaceted and that
18 serves many people. Thank you.

19 MS. RACHEL SAULS: Hi. My name is
20 Rachel Sauls. I live at
21 in Durham. I'm 16 years old, and
22 I'm a senior at Jordan High School. I am
23 in support of the light rail because I
24 believe that it will allow students like

1 myself to access opportunities throughout
2 the Triangle.

3 Currently, I am the leader of
4 several after-school organizations, and
5 one thing that I've noticed is that a lot
6 of students can't come and be a part of
7 these groups because they have no way of
8 getting home afterward because the bus is
9 only at 2:30 for my school.

10 Additionally, internships are a
11 great way to learn more about the
12 community, get involved, and they also
13 help with the college application process
14 tremendously, and that's something I've
15 noticed especially as I'm filling all of
16 these things out myself.

17 Right now, if a lot of the
18 students at my school wanted to do an
19 internship somewhere in the Durham-Chapel
20 Hill area, they would not be able to
21 simply because of transportation.

22 So I think the light rail is not
23 only a great economic and environmental
24 opportunity, it's also a great educational

1 opportunity, and I'm here to represent
2 myself and other students who I know would
3 benefit from this. Thank you.

4 MR. BLAIR POLLOCK: Good
5 afternoon. My name's Blair Pollock. I
6 live at Chapel
7 Hill. I've been a Triangle-Chapel Hill
8 area resident since 1976, and I initially
9 wasn't going to speak this evening, but I
10 support the light rail system. I won't be
11 an immediate beneficiary of it. I'm 64.
12 I hope by the time that I'm incapable of
13 driving I will be able to ride a train to
14 and from Chapel Hill and Durham and
15 further on into Raleigh and RTP and where
16 I need to go. We have to start somewhere.

17 This process has been fraught. I
18 came here to go to the planning school in
19 Chapel Hill in 1976, and some of my
20 cohorts were writing their transportation
21 master's theses about a rail system
22 starting then. So it's been a long slog.

23 I lived in San Francisco when the
24 BART was first getting started in 1975.

1 It took until 2005 to then have a line to
2 the airport.

3 I've been a supporter of transit
4 all my life, having grown up in New York.
5 It -- As the speaker before me said, it
6 frees up young people to not be dependent
7 on their parents, to not wait to have a
8 driver's license, to not be chained to a
9 car payment. And I hope that we look
10 forward instead of backwards or sideways
11 and support the rail system.

12 MS. SUSAN DUNLAP: My name is
13 Susan Dunlap. I live at

14 I teach on the faculty at Duke
15 Divinity School, and I'm also a chaplin at
16 Urban Ministries of Durham.

17 Working as a chaplin among
18 homeless people and people living in
19 extreme poverty has shown me how extremely
20 important access to transportation is for
21 people who are trying to get out of
22 homelessness or out of poverty. People
23 need buses to get an ID. They need buses
24 to get -- or some sort of transportation

1 to get to schools, to training programs,
2 to get to appointments, and finally to get
3 to a job.

4 I'm here to support the light rail
5 transit project, and I'm very glad to hear
6 from conversations with staff that the
7 fares will be comparable to bus fares.
8 There will not be an enormous gap between
9 what it costs to ride a bus and what it
10 costs to -- to ride light transit.

11 I waited to rise and say that
12 because for those of us who are committed
13 to people living in poverty being able to
14 leave poverty, this light rail transit
15 system will be accessible to them, and for
16 that reason, I will continue in my support
17 for the light rail transit system. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. JOYNER: Is there anybody else
20 who has signed up to speak? Yes, ma'am.
21 Before you do step up here, let me just
22 make sure, for those who have recently
23 joined us, again, I'll point to the ground
24 rules. Everybody's doing a great job.

1 I'm not pointing this out to chastise
2 anyone. I'm just pointing it out for
3 anybody that's recently joined us.

4 Again, folks will have a chance to
5 sign up to speak until 7 o'clock this
6 evening, and we'll stay until everyone who
7 has signed up prior to 7 has an
8 opportunity to speak. All our speakers
9 will have two minutes to speak. We'll
10 call folks up; and as they come to the
11 podium, the speakers will hand their blue
12 card to Robert, and then they will state
13 their name and address for the record. At
14 that point, the two-minute time limit will
15 begin. There's a timer on the podium that
16 will let them know sort of where they are
17 on the two-minute time limit, and it makes
18 a beep or whatever at the end of that two
19 minutes.

20 Again, speakers please be sure to
21 speak legibly so everybody here can hear
22 you as well as our court reporters who
23 will be providing a written transcript.
24 So I know folks get nervous when they

1 speak sometimes and go a little too fast,
2 so please try to make sure you're speaking
3 so everybody can hear you and not going
4 too fast. So with that, ma'am, if you'd
5 like to join us.

6 MS. SANDY OGBURN: My name is
7 Sandy Ogburn. I live at
8 in Durham. I am here to speak in
9 support of building the light rail transit
10 system. We have been planning a system --
11 a regional system for 25 years. Light
12 rail has not been a part of that for that
13 entire time.

14 If we stop this process now and
15 start over again, we will be another 20
16 years in the planning, and we simply don't
17 have that time. Our region cannot sustain
18 itself, nor can it continue to grow if we
19 don't do this now. And I have submitted a
20 written statement, as well. Thank you.

21 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there
22 anyone else that has signed up to speak?
23 Okay. Well, while we are waiting, I will
24 take a moment to just go over some of the

1 -- for anybody who joined us recently and
2 was not able to hear the very beginning, I
3 will take a quick moment to talk a little
4 bit about the fact that we are seeking
5 comments tonight on the Draft
6 Environmental Impact Statement for this
7 project, and then there are several ways
8 to provide comments.

9 In addition to speaking tonight,
10 written comments are being collected
11 tonight. You may send comments via email,
12 postal mail, or the project website.

13 It's important to know that verbal
14 and written comments carry the same
15 weight. So if you're uncomfortable
16 speaking in public, please feel free to
17 use other methods of providing input or
18 supplementing your input tonight since we
19 do have a two-minute time limit.

20 Written and verbal comments will
21 not receive a reply. However, responses
22 to substantive comments will be provided
23 in the combined Final Environmental Impact
24 Statement and the Record of Decision for

1 the project, which is the final plan
2 document for the project.

3 The comment period for this -- The
4 comment period for this document ends on
5 October 13, so we will need you to provide
6 your comments by October 13.

7 So, again, are there any -- is
8 there anyone that has signed up to speak,
9 that has already signed up to speak?

10 Okay. If not, then we will take a --

11 MS. BARBARA DICKINSON: I have a
12 card.

13 MR. JOYNER: Okay. Yes, that's
14 what -- come on down.

15 MS. BARABARA DICKINSON: I need --

16 MR. JOYNER: Yes, if you would
17 just come up to the podium, and if you
18 would hand your blue card to that
19 gentleman in the blue shirt. And please
20 state your name and address for the record
21 and you can begin.

22 MS. BARBARA DICKINSON: How do you
23 do. My name is Barbara Dickinson. I live
24 here in Durham. I've spoken to the board

1 on numerous occasions. None were
2 recordable. But now that this is a formal
3 complaint period, I would like to object
4 to the placement of the Farrington
5 location for the rail maintenance
6 facility.

7 So it's a quiet, peaceful
8 neighborhood. It's residential. It's
9 meant to be serene. It caters to a lot of
10 elderly. It caters to a lot of children.
11 It's not the right place to have an
12 industrial rail facility that runs 24
13 hours a day or even 18 hours a day.

14 Clearly there are better
15 locations. I understand from the senior
16 planning director of GoTransit that the
17 only reason the Cornwallis location has not
18 been selected is because the Jewish
19 Community Center, which is a commercial
20 business, cannot expand if they do so.

21 Well, it seems to me since so many
22 constituents live in our area -- and, in
23 fact, the Downing Creek facility would be
24 that passenger station -- we are a bigger

1 presence than a community -- than a
2 company, and so we should have higher
3 precedence than that.

4 Outside of that, there's two
5 schools right nearby that will be affected
6 by this. Traffic is already horrendous.
7 Those of you that have ever traveled in
8 that corridor know during regular school
9 times and especially at morning drop off
10 and afternoon pickup, we can't afford to
11 have a rail facility traveling across
12 those roads and stopping traffic every
13 five minutes.

14 So besides that, it's a wildlife
15 preserve area. There's many types of
16 wildlife. Those of you that live there
17 have seen it. You know how beautiful it
18 is. It'd be awful to have the toxic
19 runoff that's going to occur. And
20 whatever they put in these GoTransit
21 packets to make you think otherwise,
22 you're fooling yourself.

23 So I also have a question with the
24 ethics, that the mayor is the head of the

1 GoTransit pushing for this project, and
2 the ethics of having an internal
3 environmental impact report as opposed to
4 an external facility evaluated fairly. So
5 thank you very much.

6 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there
7 anyone else who has a blue card that
8 signed up to speak? Yes, sir. Yeah,
9 you're up next, if you're ready.

10 MR. JOE MILAZZO: All right. Give
11 me about one minute.

12 MR. JOYNER: Okay. That sounds
13 good. While he's -- While he's going,
14 I'll run through some of the information
15 that I was talking about earlier.

16 Again, I'll point to the ground
17 rules and thank everybody for following
18 those. I appreciate that.

19 And, again, this is -- we're
20 seeking comments on the Draft
21 Environmental Impact Statement for the
22 Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project
23 this evening. We are -- We will providing
24 a written transcript of all the verbal

1 comments for the record this evening.

2 There are several ways to provide
3 input for the project. In addition to
4 speaking tonight at the hearing, written
5 comments are being collected tonight or
6 you may send comments via email, postal
7 mail, or via the project website.

8 Again, verbal and written comments
9 bear the same weight, so if you're
10 uncomfortable speaking in public, please
11 feel free to use the other methods of
12 providing input or if you need to make
13 more comments than the two-minute time
14 limit will allow, that's another good
15 opportunity for you to provide those
16 comments.

17 Written and verbal comments will
18 not receive a reply, but the responses to
19 substantive comments will be provided in a
20 combined Final Environmental Impact
21 Statement and Record of Decision for the
22 project. The comment period for this
23 document will end on October 13th, so
24 please get your comments in by the 13th.

1 All right.

2 And are you -- sir, are you ready?

3 MR. JOE MILAZZO: Sure.

4 MR. JOYNER: Okay. If you'd like
5 to, please come on up to the podium and
6 hand your blue --

7 MR. JOE MILAZZO: Sure.

8 MR. JOYNER: -- sheet to Robert
9 there in the blue. And please state your
10 name and address for the record. You'll
11 have two minutes to speak. There is a
12 timer there that you can see.

13 MR. JOE MILAZZO: Okay.

14 MR. JOYNER: And begin whenever
15 you're ready.

16 MR. JOE MILAZZO: That sounds
17 great. Hi. Good day. My name's Joe
18 Milazzo. I'm the executive director of
19 Regional Transportation Alliance Business
20 Leadership Group. I want to speak about
21 supporting regional approach, and, of
22 course, optimizing the Durham-Chapel Hill
23 light rail transit corridor.

24 We're a business coalition. We've

1 consistently supported mass transit across
2 the market. Our past and ongoing support
3 has included the bus-on-shoulder system,
4 the referendum in Durham and Orange
5 Counties, a BRT-based approach in Wake
6 County, and the ongoing Wake Transit
7 initiative along with leadership tools and
8 so on.

9 Our position on the Wake Transit
10 plan, it has strong regional connections
11 serving as both now and as we grow in
12 leveraging funding support from all levels
13 of government.

14 Our organization is endorsing dual
15 use of portions of the proposed light rail
16 corridor by BRT to ensure and accelerate
17 strong regional conductivity and/or to
18 enhance operational efficiency. Sections
19 with dual use would operate as a transit
20 way similar to proposed dual-use guideway
21 segment east of Durham station.

22 These are in place, including
23 Seattle and Pittsburgh. One example would
24 be they enable buses to use all or

1 portions of the proposed light rail
2 corridor between the UNC Hospital station
3 and the Leigh Village station area and
4 I-40 and NC-54. Other examples could be
5 in southwest Durham near Little Creek and
6 downtown Durham to provide extended access
7 to NC Central and Durham Tech and, of
8 course, to points east.

9 So our expected benefits, optimize
10 use of the proposed corridor, increase
11 transit ridership along the guideway via
12 interline, higher transit frequency, to
13 minimize patron delays, and then regional
14 connections and reduce transfers allowing
15 more travel past to use the corridor and
16 leverage existing and future road
17 infrastructure and may enhance economic
18 development. Thank you very much.
19 That'll do it.

20 MR. JOYNER: Thank you.

21 MR. JOE MILAZZO: Okay.

22 MR. JOYNER: Is there anyone else
23 that has a speaker card and is ready to
24 speak? Anyone else?

1 Okay. Well, we will take a brief
2 break until someone else has signed up to
3 speak. Again, until -- folks will have
4 until 7 o'clock to sign up to speak, and
5 we will reconvene as we get additional
6 speakers this evening. So we'll take a
7 quick break. Thank you.

8 (RECESS.)

9 MR. JOYNER: If everyone would
10 please take your seat and end your
11 conversations or if you need to continue
12 conversations, feel free to step on out in
13 the hall, but we'll need everybody's
14 attention at this point, and I will
15 reconvene the hearing.

16 Again, I will ask everybody to
17 adhere to the ground rules that are shown
18 here, and thank you all for continuing to
19 do so.

20 For our speaker, again, I will ask
21 you to state your name and address for the
22 record, and following that we will start
23 the two-minute time. You'll have a
24 two-minute time limit. There's a timer

1 for ten years, it's exciting.

2 One of the communities I've lived
3 at in the last five -- ten years while I
4 was gone was Charlotte, and I've seen what
5 they've done along South Boulevard as well
6 as what they're doing in the northern part
7 of the city, not just with density but
8 also just attracting economic development
9 and development for students and
10 cohesiveness between the universities and
11 the hospitals.

12 I think that this project will
13 definitely be of benefit to this area. I
14 was stuck on the Durham Freeway this
15 evening coming here, and as I was stuck
16 between Swift and Chapel Hill, I saw a
17 train coming through and thought it must
18 be a great idea to be on the train versus
19 stuck on the Durham Freeway.

20 So that being said, I applaud the
21 leadership for investing and looking at
22 this type of technology. I think light
23 rail's a good thing for this community. I
24 think we are rapidly developing the

1 density to support this kind of
2 development, and I think it's a good
3 thing. So keep moving forward, and I
4 support it. Thank you.

5 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there
6 anyone else that has a blue comment card
7 and is ready to speak? Okay. Check --
8 She's going to check and just make sure
9 before we pause, see if anybody else has
10 had an opportunity to speak.

11 Again, tonight we are seeking
12 comments on the Draft Environmental Impact
13 Statement for the project. There's
14 several ways to provide input on the
15 project in addition to speaking at this
16 hearing. Written comments are being
17 collected tonight. You may send comments
18 via email, postal mail, and project
19 website. Verbal and written comments
20 carry the same weight, so feel free to use
21 other methods of providing input, if you'd
22 like.

23 Sounds like we don't have anybody
24 else to speak just yet. Again, we will be

1 allowing folks to sign up to speak up to 7
2 o'clock this evening, so we'll be here at
3 least until 7 to see if anybody else would
4 like to speak for the record about this
5 project. So until that time, we're going
6 to take another break.

7 (RECESS.)

8 MR. JOYNER: Okay. We've got a
9 couple more speakers that have arrived, so
10 if everyone would please take their seats.
11 And I will, again, point out the public
12 hearing ground rules. I thank everybody
13 that's been here for continuing to adhere
14 to those ground rules.

15 For our speakers, I will say we
16 are seeking comments tonight on the Draft
17 Environmental Impact Statement for this
18 project, for the Durham-Orange Light Rail
19 Transit Project.

20 There are several ways to provide
21 input on the project. In addition to
22 speaking tonight in this hearing, written
23 comments are being collected tonight. You
24 may send comments in via email, postal

1 mail, and the project websites. Verbal
2 and written comments carry the same
3 weight, so please feel free to use other
4 methods of providing input, if you'd like.

5 Written and verbal comments will
6 not receive a reply. However, responses
7 to substantive comments will be provided
8 in the combined Final Environmental Impact
9 Statement and Record of Decision. And the
10 comment period for this draft EIS ends on
11 October 13.

12 So for those folks wishing to
13 speak tonight, anyone that has signed up
14 prior to 7 o'clock will have an
15 opportunity to speak, and we'll stay here
16 until everyone that signed up prior to 7
17 has that opportunity to speak.

18 I will bring folks up. If you
19 haven't already, make sure -- when you
20 come up to speak, make sure to hand the
21 blue card that you have to Robert, and
22 he'll make sure that our court reporters
23 get -- get those.

24 Before you speak, please state

1 your name and address for the record, and
2 then you will have two minutes to speak.
3 There is a timer at the podium, so that'll
4 give you an idea of where you are
5 timewise. And at the end of two minutes,
6 a little buzzer will go off.

7 Please be sure to speak clearly
8 into the microphone so that our court
9 reporters will have an opportunity -- they
10 will be providing a written transcript so
11 that your comments can be part of the
12 public record on this project.

13 So with that, sir, if you would
14 like to go ahead and come up to the podium
15 and state your name and address.

16 MR. DIMITRI TREMBATH: Good
17 evening. Thank you for the opportunity to
18 speak tonight. My name is Dr. Dimitri
19 Trembath. I'm an associate professor in
20 the department of pathology and lab
21 medicine at the University of North
22 Carolina at Chapel Hill and a resident of
23 Durham, and the opinions expressed tonight
24 are obviously my own. They do not

1 represent those of UNC.

2 I am speaking tonight against
3 light rail and advocate a no build option
4 with any and all funds raised from local,
5 state, and federal sources used to improve
6 current transit options, explore and
7 develop bus rapid transit, and encourage
8 an independent review of the transit needs
9 of Durham and Orange County.

10 The case against light rail can be
11 made both against light rail in general
12 and even more so against proposed
13 Durham-Orange light rail plan put forth by
14 GoTriangle.

15 Light rail does not improve
16 congestion, as one can see from the
17 practical results in Charlotte, recently
18 determined to be the most congested city
19 in North Carolina, and more globally by
20 looking at cities that have made mass
21 transit a priority, such as Vancouver,
22 which, despite extensive investment in
23 mass transit, has been determined to be
24 the most congested city in North America.

1 This is due, in part, to what some
2 authors have called the principle triple
3 conversion, when you relieve coming --
4 from removing some riders from the road is
5 quickly negated by other riders taking
6 their place.

7 With the general transit time to
8 work in the US being approximately 20
9 minutes, light rail being at best half as
10 fast as automobiles, cannot literally keep
11 up.

12 Light rail is also, according to
13 data from Our Transit Future's own
14 website, one of, if not the most
15 expensive, forms of public transportation
16 with a capital cost of 8 million per mile
17 compared to 1 million per mile for
18 conventional bus transport.

19 With a recovery of 20 percent or
20 less, light rail places an increasing
21 burden on the taxpayer to fund both trips
22 on light rail and the maintenance of light
23 rail. The estimates for the Durham-Orange
24 Light Rail Plan say this will be, at

1 minimum, a \$12.8 million additional tax on
2 taxpayers annually.

3 Given the increasing cost of the
4 Durham-Orange Light Rail Plan, now 1.8
5 million, the decrease in promised travel
6 times, 42 to 44 minutes, the safety issues
7 created by at-grade crossings and the
8 other disruption of the Farrington Road
9 corridor and the homes of people who live
10 there by the proposed rail maintenance
11 facility, I propose that the Durham-Orange
12 Light Rail Plan be shelved and an
13 independent review, without the
14 involvement of GoTriangle, the Durham City
15 Council, and Chapel Hill Town Council, be
16 performed to determine the best options
17 for the Durham-Orange County corridor.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. And I
20 know everybody gets a little nervous
21 sometimes speaking, but -- quickly, but we
22 do need to make sure our court reporters
23 have an opportunity to hear all the words
24 so that we can get everything captured.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. CONNOR DRAKE: My name is
3 Connor Drake. I've lived in Chapel Hill
4 and Durham all my life. I commute via
5 bicycle and DATA buses. I've also
6 commuted with the Triangle Transit buses
7 from Chapel Hill to Raleigh on the CRX.

8 This issue's close to my heart,
9 and I'm here to voice my support for the
10 proposed light rail project. I currently
11 reside at 510 North Buchanan Boulevard.
12 And I just jotted down some notes quickly,
13 but I believe Chapel Hill and Durham is at
14 a crossroads. You know, our population's
15 growing rapidly, and, you know, we can
16 find all types of reasons not to do
17 anything, you know. For almost as long as
18 I've been alive, I think we've talked
19 about the idea of having light rail, and
20 it's, you know, maybe not in the formal
21 project form, but it's always been shelved
22 or there's been another environmental
23 impact assessment and it's -- and I think
24 we can find all types of reasons not to

1 move forward. I've heard noise.

2 But I think this is an amazing
3 opportunity, and I think it's an amazing
4 opportunity to develop sustainably during
5 what I see as a crossroads from the
6 development of the area.

7 I think the cost of doing nothing
8 and making modest incremental increases to
9 our bus system, which I love, I take the
10 bus, is -- will have a larger price tag in
11 the long run when we're looking at the
12 price of suburban sprawl.

13 I think this community is ready
14 for a multi-mobile public transportation
15 infrastructure. I can't wait to ride on
16 light rail. I can't wait to see future
17 generations, my family, my children in the
18 future, ride on light rail and benefit
19 from this investment and the economic
20 development outcome from it. So thank
21 you.

22 MR. JOYNER: Thank you. Is there
23 anyone else who has signed up or has a
24 blue speaker card that would like to

1 speak? It is after 7 o'clock, so if we
2 have no more speakers this evening, I'd
3 like to thank everybody for coming, and
4 we'll adjourn this hearing. Please drive
5 safely on your way home. Thank you.

6 (THE HEARING CONCLUDED AT 7:10 P.M.)

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