

APPENDIX B: Substantive Public Comments and Responses

Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project



December 2016

Substantive Public Comments and Responses

First Name	Last Name	Comment
Mary	Brinson	<p>First of all like the style of the meeting more personable & one on one.</p> <p>My concerns @ present are general concerns b/c I don't have specific info on exactly what the City of Durham is planning for the area/areas around the stations - in particular the Alston Avenue/NCCU station (shops, eatery, etc.) My property is located right @ the corner of Alston & Lawson on the end towards Durham Tech. I am very concerned about the direct & indirect impact the rail will have on the area. I experience the knowledge of a bus stop - now, not so great & experience the use of an unauthorized parking lot by students now, not so great either. I'd love to know more about the city's specific plans for the 1/4 to 1/2 to 1 mile area around the station.</p>

Comment ID	Substantive Comment	Comment Response
1-1	<p>My concerns @ present are general concerns b/c I don't have specific info on exactly what the City of Durham is planning for the area/areas around the stations - in particular the Alston Avenue/NCCU station (shops, eatery, etc.) My property is located [REDACTED].</p>	<p>As detailed in section 3.2 of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA), existing zoning and future land use in the vicinity of the NCCU Station Refinement are primarily medium density residential (six to 12 units per acre) and institutional (NCCU campus). These uses are transit-supportive but would not allow for higher density uses that would be expected to develop at other proposed stations along the D-O LRT Project. The Durham City-County Planning Department may choose to make updates to its future land use. The mitigation commitments identified in the Combined FEIS/ROD, including working with municipalities on rezonings, tax abatement, and affordable housing programs in station areas, would be applicable and appropriate for the NCCU Station Refinement.</p>

Comment ID	Substantive Comment	Comment Response
1-2	I am very concerned about the direct & indirect impact the rail will have on the area. I experience the knowledge of a bus stop - now, no so great & experience the use of an unauthorized parking lot by students now, not so great either.	<p>Parcels along the west side of Alston Avenue would be fully acquired as part of the NCCU Refinement. The residences and businesses on these parcels would be demolished and the parcels would be converted to transportation right of way. The acquisition and relocation process will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended.</p> <p>Section 3.1.3 of the Supplemental EA describes potential impacts to existing parking, including potential loss of up to 16 on-street parking spaces. Additional parking (approximately 1,200 spaces) would be available at the Alston Avenue Station and in a proposed parking garage east of Alston Avenue on Pettigrew Street. Mitigation commitments included in the D-O LRT Project Combined FEIS/ROD include monitoring station areas and investigating any complaints of spillover parking. GoTriangle will work with the municipalities to develop appropriate parking enforcement if spillover parking becomes a concern</p>

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1-3	I'd love to know more about the city's specific plans for the 1/4 to 1/2 to 1 mile area around the station.	Durham City-County Planning is responsible for land use planning, including future land use recommendations as part of its Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that if the NCCU Station Refinement is approved, the Durham City-County Planning Department will initiate a review of and potentially update its Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge the proposed NCCU Station and develop future land use recommendations for the area. GoTriangle will coordinate with the Durham City-County Planning Department to evaluate potential updates to their future land use plan and station area infrastructure needs in the NCCU Station Refinement area.

First Name	Last Name	Comment
Arthur	Alt	I don't see why light rail is needed when a) Chapel Hill is only a stone's throw from Durham (we also have bus service between the towns) and b) who is going to pay for it, except we the tax payers or the federal government which, too, is tax payer money.

Comment ID	Substantive Comment	Comment Response
12-1	I don't see why light rail is needed when a) Chapel Hill is only a stone's throw from Durham (we also have bus service between the towns)	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>As discussed in section 1.2.1 of the D-O LRT Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement, existing bus service is subject to roadway congestion. Continued population and employment growth in the region, and more specifically the Durham-Orange Corridor is straining the already congested roadway network. This results in increased travel times and reduced reliability of the transportation system between Chapel Hill and Durham.</p> <p>Previous environmental studies, white papers and reports identified the need for high-capacity transit in the region and defined light rail as the preferred solution for its ability to improve mobility, increase connectivity, and support future development plans within the Durham-Orange Corridor. These studies are summarized in section 2.1 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and section 1.2.1 of the Combined Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision.</p> <p>This Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA) incorporated the findings of the previous environmental studies by reference and specifically focuses on the NCCU Station refinement. As noted in section 2.1 of the Supplemental EA, the NCCU Station Refinement provides for enhanced mobility by providing a competitive reliable alternative for students, faculty, and visitors of NCCU and the surrounding neighborhoods. The NCCU Station Refinement continues to expand transit options between Durham and Chapel Hill by providing expanded service and a direct connection to NCCU and neighborhoods not previously served by the light rail project.</p>

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12-2	b) who is going to pay for it, except we the tax payers or the federal government which, too, is tax payer money.	It is anticipated that the FTA's New Starts program will provide approximately 50 percent of the D-O LRT Project's capital cost. The non-New Starts costs will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including sales tax revenue generated in Durham and Orange counties, funding from North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), and other local fees and taxes. GoTriangle will also pursue Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) credit assistance and possible alternative financing and value capture options.

First Name	Last Name	Comment
Elvis Wayne	Woody	<p>-Concerning the future of the Raleigh commuter rail, will it possibly use the light rails station at Pettigrew or the Amtrak Station in Durham?</p> <p>- Do you have any idea of what zoning changes would be for the area 2 blocks past the Pettigrew Station by the R Kelly Bryant Bridge section</p> <p>- What is the demographics for the proposed NCCU area and the area of Pettigrew towards Holton School area</p> <p>- Concerning the completion of the project what time frame would the collaboration between Durham Tech and the two high schools that teach automotive began to instruct students in maintenance of light rail so that Durham would be able to supply the skilled workers instead of bringing outside skilled workers. What would the projected starting salaries"</p>

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14-2	Do you have any idea of what zoning changes would be for the area 2 blocks past the Pettigrew Station by the R Kelly Bryant Bridge section	<p>As detailed in section 3.2 of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA), existing zoning and future land use in the vicinity of the NCCU Station Refinement are primarily medium density residential (six to 12 units per acre) and institutional (NCCU campus). These uses are transit-supportive but would not allow for higher density uses that would be expected to develop at other proposed stations along the D-O LRT Project.</p> <p>Durham City-County Planning is responsible for land use planning, including future land use recommendations as part of its Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that if the NCCU Station Refinement is approved, the Durham City-County Planning Department will initiate a review of and potentially update its Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge the proposed NCCU Station and develop future land use recommendations for the area. GoTriangle will coordinate with the Durham City-County Planning Department to evaluate potential updates to their future land use plan and station area infrastructure needs in the NCCU Station Refinement area</p>

Comment ID	Substantive Comment	Comment Response
14-3	What is the demographics for the proposed NCCU area and the area of Pettigrew towards Holton School area	Demographic data for the Alston Avenue Station area and NCCU Station area are described in section 3.3 of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA). Please note that there was an error in the employment data for 2010 as reported in Table 3-5 of the Supplemental EA. The East Durham Evaluation Area employment for 2010 should be 5,500, not 21,700 as reported in Table 3-5.

First Name	Last Name	Comment
Valeria	Nelson	<p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Property tax with the value of homes increasing what will it be?-Speed of cars on Alston with rail-Lighting; it's awfully dark on Alston - they need mre-Noise - even if electric-Development - how what are the development plans for the area - it needs upgrade; wants to make sure they are thinking of us when they're planning-Utility poles - how will the utilities tie in; will the utilities still be above ground-Sidewalks are very important-Student parking - it already overflows-Snack bar - there needs to be one on the train <p>Lived through the east-west connector promises were made; want to make sure promises aren't made that can't be kept</p>

Comment ID	Substantive Comment	Comment Response
15-1	Property tax with the value of homes increasing what will it be?	<p>The effect of the NCCU Station Refinement on property values and corresponding property taxes will vary depending on proximity to the station area. Properties in close proximity to transit stations tend to increase in taxable value, although there may be other factors that also influence the tax calculation.</p> <p>As identified in 3.15.1 of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA), Gentrification and reduction in affordable housing is a potential effect of the NCCU Station Refinement. GoTriangle has engaged in substantial public involvement regarding this issue, and is a participant in the Coalition for Affordable Housing and Transit, with the goal of protecting existing affordable housing and creating new affordable housing within station areas. For individuals who are concerned with affordable housing and being able to afford to stay in their home as housing values rise, the mitigation commitments identified in the Combined FEIS/ROD, including working with municipalities on rezonings, tax abatement, and affordable housing programs in station areas, would be applicable and appropriate for the NCCU Station Refinement.</p>

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15-2	Speed of cars on Alston with rail	The speed limit for the reconstructed portion of Alston Avenue will be determined during final design.

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15-3	Lighting; it's awfully dark on Alston - they need more	Lighting will be included on the light rail station platforms. Lighting design along Alston Avenue will be coordinated with NCDOT and the City of Durham during final design.

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15-4	Noise - even if electric	<p>The Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA) section 3.8 presents the noise, vibration, and ground-borne noise impacts anticipated for the NCCU Station Refinement. The NCCU Station Refinement would not result in noise impacts to the surrounding community. However, vibration and ground-borne noise impacts are anticipated.</p> <p>The primary vibration and ground-borne noise inducing elements of the light rail alignment along South Alston Avenue include the placement of crossover tracks between Price Avenue and Cox Avenue. Three of the receptors analyzed are projected to have ground-borne noise impacts and two of those three receptors would also have vibration impacts. These three receptor locations are shown on Figure 3-8 in the Supplemental EA; the receptors are representative of a total 26 residential properties that are projected to be impacted by either ground-borne noise or vibration as a result of the NCCU Station Refinement.</p> <p>Mitigation commitments from the Combined FEIS/ROD are applicable to the NCCU Station Refinement, including: conducting a detailed vibration analysis during the Engineering phase to further evaluate geotechnical conditions and more precisely predict the vibration effects of the proposed light rail system on area receptors, and implementing vibration mitigation measures, such as special track support systems, resilient fasteners, ballast mats, resiliently supported ties, and floating slabs. Implementation of these mitigation measures is anticipated to reduce the vibration and ground-borne noise impacts below the level of significant impact.</p>

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15-5	Development - how what are the development plans for the area - it needs upgrade; wants to make sure they are thinking of us when they're planning	<p>As detailed in section 3.2 of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Supplemental EA), existing zoning and future land use in the vicinity of the NCCU Station Refinement are primarily medium density residential (six to 12 units per acre) and institutional (NCCU campus). These uses are transit-supportive but would not allow for higher density uses that would be expected to develop at other proposed stations along the D-O LRT Project.</p> <p>Durham City-County Planning is responsible for land use planning, including future land use recommendations as part of its Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that if the NCCU Station Refinement is approved, the Durham City-County Planning Department will initiate a review of and potentially update its Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge the proposed NCCU Station and develop future land use recommendations for the area. GoTriangle will coordinate with the Durham City-County Planning Department to evaluate potential updates to their future land use plan and station area infrastructure needs in the NCCU Station Refinement area.</p>

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15-6	Utility poles - how will the utilities tie in; will the utilities still be above ground	GoTriangle will coordinate with utility owners during the Engineering phase of the project regarding relocation and replacement of utilities.

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15-7	Sidewalks are very important	As described in section 3.1.4 of the Supplemental EA, existing sidewalks would be reconstructed as part of the project, and additional pedestrian connections would be added at the proposed station locations at Alston Avenue and NCCU.

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15-8	Student parking - it already overflows	Section 3.1.3 of the Supplemental EA describes potential impacts to existing parking, including potential loss of up to 16 on-street parking spaces. Additional parking (approximately 1,200 spaces) would be available at the Alston Avenue Station and in a proposed parking garage east of Alston Avenue on Pettigrew Street. Mitigation commitments included in the D-O LRT Project Combined FEIS/ROD include monitoring station areas and investigating any complaints of spillover parking. GoTriangle will work with the municipalities to develop appropriate parking enforcement if spillover parking becomes a concern.

First Name	Last Name	Comment
Richard	Ellman	<p>Once again, a highly professional impact statement. However, I couldn't find in the document a summary of incremental cost to extend the light rail system to NCCU. So, please either direct me a the summary in the impact statement, or let me know the incremental costs, simply to extend the line. Also, what would be the annual change in operating costs vs expected revenue for the extension. Realize please, that I am asking only for the incremental numbers.</p> <p>If I remember properly, the costs to complete the light rail system to cover the original seventeen stations was about \$17 bil., which, I assume, was in 2015 dollars. Is that still the number that you are anticipating for the original proposal? And, how much of this is anticipated to be paid by the Federal Government?</p> <p>I see that Durham County would lose \$1.7 mil. A year from the property tax base. How would the resulting loss in income to the County be made up?</p> <p>Table 3-5 shows 2010 Employment to be 21,700, and 2040 Employment to be 10,400. Is that correct?</p>

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16-2	I couldn't find in the document a summary of incremental cost to extend the light rail system to NCCU. So, please either direct me a the summary in the impact statement, or let me know the incremental costs, simply to extend the line. Also, what would be the annual change in operating costs vs expected revenue for the extension. Realize please, that I am asking only for the incremental numbers	<p>The incremental capital cost in 2016 dollars of the NCCU Station Refinement is approximately \$100 to \$110 million in 2016 dollars. The incremental annual operating cost of the NCCU Station Refinement is \$790,000, in 2015 dollars.</p> <p>The anticipated revenues for the NCCU Station Refinement were not presented in the Supplemental EA or any prior environmental documents for the D-O LRT Project. Revenues are generally forecasted for the agency as a whole, as such it is not possible to provide an incremental figure for anticipated revenues.</p>

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16-4	I see that Durham County would lose \$1.7 mil. a year from the property tax base. How would the resulting loss in income to the County be made up?	<p>It should be noted that the calculation of property tax base loss is based on the value of all property anticipated to be acquired for the NCCU Station Refinement, as identified in section 3.12. The \$1.7 million is not per year; it is a one-time loss and represents the total estimated value of all property to be acquired for the NCCU Station Refinement in 2016 dollars.</p> <p>Measures to mitigate potential loss in property tax base were described in the D-O LRT Project Combined FEIS/ROD (Table ROD-1) and would apply, including: working with the municipalities to identify proactive policies to promote redevelopment, infill, and economic development opportunities around affected areas; and working with the municipalities to identify proactive policies to relocate businesses near their existing location.</p>

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16-5	Table 3-5 shows 2010 Employment to be 21,700, and 2040 Employment to be 10,400. Is that correct?	There was an error in the employment data for 2010 as reported in Table 3-5 of the Supplemental EA. The East Durham Evaluation Area employment for 2010 should be 5,500, not 21,700 as reported in Table 3-5. All other figures are correct.