

Norfolk Southern Comments on the GoTriangle Durham Orange LRT DEIS

Cochran, J. Lee [Lee.Cochran@nscorp.com]

Sent: 10/7/2015 4:02 PM

To: "info@ourtransitfuture.com" <info@ourtransitfuture.com>

Cc: "David Charters" <DCharters@gotriangle.org>, "Scott Saylor" <scottsaylor@ncrr.com>, "Jim Kessler (JimKessler@ncrr.com)" <JimKessler@ncrr.com>, "Mary Dillon" <Mary.Dillon@elliswinters.com>, "Edwards, John, V (Planning)" <John.Edwards@nscorp.com>




D-O LRT Project – DEIS
c/o GoTriangle
P.O. Box 530
Morrisville, NC 27560

Please find attached Norfolk Southern Corporation comments on the GoTriangle Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Regards,

J. Lee Cochran

Manager, Strategic Planning
Norfolk Southern Corporation | Three Commercial Place | Norfolk, Virginia 23510
Phone: 757.629.2735 | **Cell:** 757.274.2616 | <mailto:Lee.Cochran@nscorp.com>

Attachments:  [NS Comments GoTriangle DOLRT DEIS Oct 7-15.pdf](#)  [Attachment A NCRR Letter of Mar 2, 2015.pdf](#)
 [Attachment B. NCRR Letter of May 20, 2015.pdf](#)

Copyright © 2003-2015. All rights reserved.



Norfolk Southern Corporation
Strategic Planning
Three Commercial Place
Norfolk, VA 23510

John V. Edwards
General Director Passenger Policy
757-629-2838
757-533-4884 – Fax
John.Edwards@nscorp.com

October 7, 2015

Via email (info@ourtransitfuture.com)

D-O LRT Project – DEIS
c/o GoTriangle
P.O. Box 530
Morrisville, NC 27560

Re: GoTriangle Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Thank you for the opportunity for Norfolk Southern Railway Company (“Norfolk Southern”) to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project, dated August 20, 2015. Our comments are very limited.

Norfolk Southern appreciates the constructive manner in which GoTriangle worked with the City of Durham and NCRR to establish a proposed routing for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit project that allows for safe development of the light rail system as well as expansion of rail infrastructure on the North Carolina Railroad corridor (Attachment A). The NCRR rail corridor is a vital interstate freight rail transportation route, important not only for North Carolina but for the economy of the country. North Carolina Railroad and Norfolk Southern have a joint interest in the economic development of North Carolina. Norfolk Southern expects this corridor will see ever increasing levels of freight traffic. The routing described in the DEIS accommodates the future expanded freight service needs by protecting the footprint for future freight rail infrastructure.

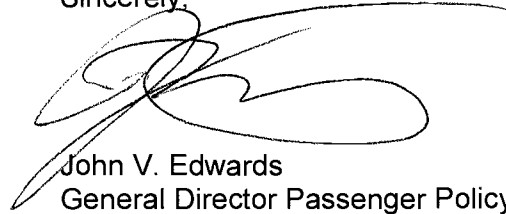
Norfolk Southern agrees with the NCRR comments (Attachment B) regarding the Alston Avenue Rail Operations & Maintenance Facility (ROMF) site alternative, specifically those concerning the Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. property located at 2000 E. Pettigrew St., Durham. Norfolk Southern supports the DEIS conclusion that this Alston Avenue ROMF site be eliminated from further consideration as the NEPA Preferred Alternative.

Should the project progress, Norfolk Southern anticipates that it will be given the opportunity to participate in plan reviews. We ask to be included in future planning sessions or planning correspondence along with NCRR and NCDOT. Proximity to current and future railroad infrastructure and railroad at-grade crossings are of special interest to Norfolk Southern.

GoTriangle
Page 2 of 2
October 7, 2015

Norfolk Southern again wishes to acknowledge the great amount of work that has been done to progress the planning for the Durham-Orange LRT project, and the effort to support the project goals without adversely affecting freight or intercity passenger rail operations. Norfolk Southern looks forward to working with GoTriangle and other involved parties in this effort.

Sincerely,



John V. Edwards
General Director Passenger Policy

cc: Scott Saylor, NCRR
Jim Kessler, P.E., NCRR
Mary Dillon, Ellis & Winters

Enclosures:
Attachment A, NCRR Letter of March 2, 2015
Attachment B, NCRR Letter of May 20, 2015



November 11, 2015

D-O LRT Project - DEIS
c/o Go Triangle
P.O. Box 530
Morrisville, NC 27560

Re: Durham – Orange Light Rail Transit
Draft Environmental Impact Statement comments

North Carolina Railroad Company appreciates the opportunity to be able to work constructively with Go Triangle to develop plans for the proposed Durham-Orange light rail project (D-O LRT) for the portion of the project located in or adjacent to the North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) Corridor between 9th Street/ Erwin Road and Alston in Durham. We are pleased to be able to collaborate with Go Triangle on this project which is planned to promote the economic development of the Durham/Orange County area including the City of Durham and to provide transit options to the citizens of the Triangle.

NCRR has had limited comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Those comments were provided in a separate previous communication to Go Triangle. Additionally, NCRR is currently reviewing preliminary plans furnished by Go Triangle. Any provisional approval of preliminary plans and documents for the D-O LRT project is subject to reaching an acceptable lease agreement, including compensation and liability/indemnity provisions, and the review and approval of final plans.

Any proposal that has the potential to impact the NCRR Corridor is of vital interest to the railroad since the NCRR rail corridor is an important freight and passenger link within the state of North Carolina. The NCRR corridor is a heavy main line freight railroad and Amtrak intercity passenger railroad route. This corridor is also being studied as a possible future commuter railroad route in the greater Raleigh/Durham Triangle area. The NCRR corridor is on the Department of Defense Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET), which requires that the ability for the railroad to handle oversized (high and/or wide) freight shipments for military and industrial customers must not be compromised.

To assist Go Triangle with the development of a preferred light rail alignment through downtown Durham, NCRR's Engineering Department staff has worked with both NCRR's consultants and Go Triangle to prepare a conceptual track alignment for the heavy railroad tracks. NCRR also prepared a document entitled "NCRR Engineering Safety Guidelines and Requirements for Potential Triangle Transit Proposed Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT) Occupancy Along and/or Within the NCRR Corridor in Durham, NC" which serves as a basis for a potential light rail system in or adjacent to the NCRR Corridor.

During the past several months alternatives were evaluated with the preferred D-O LRT alignment in or adjacent to the NCRR Corridor being generally within or south of Pettigrew Street. The result is a D-O

LRT alignment shown on Go Triangle's Segment F plan and profile drawings dated January 26, 2015. On March 2, 2015 NCRR provided a letter to Go Triangle approving the alignment shown on these drawings.

Additionally on May 21, 2015 the NCRR Board of Directors authorized NCRR management to enter into lease agreement negotiations with Go Triangle for the purpose of the construction, operation and maintenance of the D-O LRT in that portion of approximately two miles of the rail road corridor located generally along and within Pettigrew Street in Durham based upon the agreed conceptual plan.

NCRR looks forward to continuing our collaboration with Triangle Transit on this project that is expected to contribute to the economic development of the Triangle Region.

Sincerely,


Scott Saylor
President

cc: Jeff Mann, Triangle Transit
John Edwards, Norfolk Southern