



AIRPORT BOULEVARD EXTENSION PROJECT
STIP Project No. HL-0033
Town of Morrisville



PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

The Town of Morrisville and the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) held a virtual public meeting to present information on the proposed extension of Airport Boulevard (S.R. 3126) from Garden Square Lane to Chapel Hill Road (N.C. 54), in Morrisville. The meeting was held on Tuesday, April 20, at 7 p.m.

Representing the Town of Morrisville and NCDOT during the meeting were the following individuals

- Ben Howell, AICP – Town of Morrisville
- Zahid Baloch, P.E. – NCDOT, Division 5
- Diane Wilson – NCDOT, Public Involvement/Community Studies and Visualization Group
- Kenneth Smith, P.E. – NCDOT Engineering Consultant
- Jeffrey Schlotter, AICP – NCDOT Engineering Consultant

The meeting was an opportunity for the public to learn about the proposed project, to ask questions, and to provide comments, before the project's design plans are completed. The meeting was announced through distribution of a postcard to all property owners and addresses in the project area.* Announcements of the meeting were also published in the local edition of the *Raleigh News & Observer* newspaper.

Project information was made available on NCDOT's project website approximately two weeks prior the meeting. This information included a public meeting handout brochure, a detailed map of the proposed design concept, and a ten-minute video providing information about the proposed project.

The virtual public meeting began with introductions of the team members representing the Town and NCDOT. The meeting's agenda was then explained, including information about how those in attendance could make comments. Next, NCDOT's engineering consultant gave a brief PowerPoint presentation that summarized the longer website video.

* A total of 458 postcards were sent, via the U.S. Postal Service. The mailing list is on file at NCDOT, District 5.

Following the presentation, the team members responded to questions and comments submitted by members of the public. Once those questions and comments were addressed, the meeting was brought to a close.

Sixty-two individuals logged on to the meeting’s virtual platform.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Several individuals made comments or asked questions before, during, and after the meeting. The project team reviewed the content of all comments received and noted each separate issue raised or question asked. Those issues and questions were then grouped by subject to provide an overview of the nature of the comments and an organized way for the team to respond, by subject.

Approximately 60 unique issues or questions were identified, each of which could be assigned to one of 17 general topics:

General Topic	Comments
Long Range Planning	18
Need for the Project	15
Design Elements	12
Traffic Volumes	12
Environmental Impacts.....	12
Community Impacts	11
Safety	9
Property Impacts	8
Growth and Development	7
Greenways/Greenspace	7
Study Process	4
Funding Process	3
Noise Impacts	2
Air Quality.....	2
Climate Change	2
Environmental Design.....	2
Litter	2

The substance of each comment, and the project team’s responses, are presented below.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Comment *Just because the project is on the transportation plan doesn't mean it's relevant and necessary. A "Transportation Plan" is not a specific discussion on the proposed Airport Blvd. extension.*

Response The Town of Morrisville Comprehensive Plan comprises plans and policies adopted by Town Council to address Morrisville's growth and development—including its [2019 Transportation Plan](#). This and the other components of the Town's long range planning provide guidance on desired development in specific geographic areas and corridors.

In addition, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) conducts long range transportation planning for the Triangle region. These are generally updated every four to five years. CAMPO's [2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#) includes roadway, transit, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and other transportation projects to be implemented through the year 2045.

The process used by both the Town and CAMPO to develop these long range plans are structured to ensure that the projects identified are necessary to achieve the area's transportation objectives.

Comment *Prior plans for this project showed it as a two-lane road, not four lanes.*

Response Although proposed projects change from time to time, this section of Airport Boulevard has been shown as a 4-lane roadway in Town plans dating back to at least 2006, and in regional plans dating back to at least 2002.

Comment *Did the Town ask for everyone's input on the transportation plan? Was there a public hearing or vote on this? I'm attentive to Town activities and don't recall any targeted meeting on this issue.*

Response In developing its Transportation Plan, the Town held a wide variety of events to capture feedback from a cross-section of those who live, work, recreate, or have a stake in the Plan's recommendations, as shown below.

Community Outreach Event.....	May 14, 2016
Community Outreach Event.....	June 4, 2016
Online Survey	10/2016 through 12/2016
Public Workshops	October 6 and June 29, 2017
Public Open Houses	February 28 and August 22, 2017

Public Comment sessions were also held by the Town's Planning and Zoning Board during the adoption process in the fall of 2017 and spring of 2018, and a Public Hearing was held by the Town Council (continued over multiple meetings) prior to the adoption of the Plan in the fall of 2018. In addition, CAMPO held a public workshop on the current 2045 Plan in the fall of 2017.

Comment *What is the timing of Phase II relative to the grade separation of McCrimmon over the railroad?*

Response While Phase II of the Airport Boulevard is included in the long range transportation plans, it is currently unfunded for Right of Way and Construction. At this stage no funding has been allocated for Phase II.

Comment *Widening McCrimmon Parkway would be more useful. Widen existing roads.*

Response As noted on the [video](#) prepared in advance of the Airport Boulevard virtual public meeting, the NCDOT's [State Transportation Improvement Program](#), or STIP, includes the Airport Boulevard project along with several other projects in the area. While some of these projects are for new roadways, many are meant to widen or upgrade existing roads in the Airport Boulevard vicinity (including the widening of McCrimmon Parkway to four lanes from Louis Stephens Road to NC 54). Both types of improvements are needed to achieve the area's long range transportation objectives.

Comment *Is this road for local residents or for through-traffic?*

Response Connecting the gap in Airport Boulevard will improve mobility and connectivity for both local residents and others in the greater project area.

Comment *I think this project would provide great relief of McCrimmon Parkway and NC 54, and Aviation Parkway.*

Response Comment noted.

Comment *The project would add more cross-through traffic for Morrisville to the benefit of Cary. That's an unfair cost to Morrisville residents without an offsetting, tangible benefit.*

Response The project is included in local and regional plans. The benefits of improving the area roadway network are shared by all.

Comment *Chapel Hill Road (NC 54) issues will not be mitigated by the Airport Blvd extension.*

Response The Airport Boulevard project is one of several projects that are intended to improve conditions throughout the area (see NCDOT's [State Transportation Improvement Program](#) for more information about those projects).

THE NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Comment *The project is unnecessary/not needed. It is a solution in search of a problem. I'm against it.*

Response While it may seem that the project is unnecessary today, traffic volume forecasts show substantial increases in traffic throughout the area. By filling the gap in Airport Boulevard, the project would help ease congestion, providing an alternative route to McCrimmon Parkway and Morrisville-Carpenter Road.

Comment *Is this road intended to funnel more traffic to the Wegman's supermarket?*

Response It is intended to improve mobility and connectivity throughout the area.

Comment *Phase II makes more sense than Phase I.*

Response Thank you for your comment. The Town of Morrisville, CAMPO, and NCDOT have concluded that both phases are needed to accomplish area-wide transportation objectives.

Comment *There is a well-known and long-established effect known as "Induced Traffic." Adding a new road does not relieve congestion; rather, it will make traffic a lot worse. The correct plan is NOT to extend Airport Blvd.*

Response The level of traffic congestion on a roadway can be interpreted as the cost (in time, frustration, etc.) that a motorist is willing to pay to use the road: the greater the congestion, the higher the cost to each motorist. Expanding and improving a local roadway network reduces that cost. By the logic of the "Induced Traffic" effect

mentioned in the comment, if no improvements were made to a roadway network in a growing area, traffic congestion would increase until it reached the point of gridlock on all roads, at which point the price to additional motorists needing to move in and through the area would exceed the benefit of travel. All motorists on the gridlocked road would be paying the maximum cost before the tipping point is reached, meaning the network would be in a state of continuous gridlock. Allowing such conditions would be contrary to local and regional transportation planning objectives and would result in severe environmental, social, and economic impacts.

Comment *I live close to the project area and I am really tired of the congestion on adjacent roads to get to I-40 and it is about time that NCDOT/Town of Morrisville do something about it. Please consider funding Phase Two as well. I support this extension. This is very much needed in Morrisville area and will help alleviate traffic.*

Response Comments noted. As noted previously, Phase II is in both the Town's and the region's long range plans. Barring unexpected changes, it will receive funding at some point in the future.

PROJECT DESIGN ELEMENTS

Comment *The roadway's proposed size and speed is incompatible with a residential area. Most thoroughfares in Morrisville are 35 mph; why is this going to be 45 mph?*

Response As described by the Federal Highway Administration, most of our travel occurs on a network of interdependent roadways, with each roadway segment moving traffic through the system towards destinations. The concept of "functional classification" defines the role that a particular roadway segment plays in serving this flow of traffic through the network. Roadways are assigned to one of several possible functional classifications within a hierarchy according to the character of travel service each roadway provides. Planners and engineers use this hierarchy of roadways to properly channel transportation movements through a highway network efficiently and cost effectively (see [FHWA: Highway Functional Classifications](#)).

Airport Boulevard is classified as Minor Arterial, the primary purpose of which is to move traffic from collector and local roads to freeways or expressways. The Airport Boulevard project would have no driveway access and is designed to match the existing Airport Boulevard, which is posted at 45 mph. The Town and NCDOT will

continue to work together to determine if there are any other ways to mitigate potential traffic impacts.

Comment *Will the speed limit be lowered during school hours?*

Response Traffic safety is a fundamental objective for NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville when designing any new transportation project. NCDOT and the Town will consider all feasible options to make sure this project would be safe for all users. One such option may include lowering the speed limit during school's commuting hours.

Comment *If the project is posted at 35 mph, lanes should be 11 feet wide, not 12 feet.*

Response Twelve-foot lanes are the standard lane width, and while a reduction to eleven feet would be possible, this would be inconsistent with the adjoining section of Airport Boulevard, which is not a desirable condition on a Minor Arterial roadway.

Comment *Why is the section from Town Hall Drive to Church Street going to be two lanes? It will need to be widened at some point.*

Response The section of Airport Boulevard from Town Hall Drive to Church Street is being designed as a four-lane roadway.

Comment *The proposed widths of the travel lanes, median, and path make the road extremely wide; please consider narrowing those widths to reduce impact to property owners.*

Response As noted in a previous response, Airport Boulevard is classified as Minor Arterial, and is being designed to the standards associated with that classification. In addition, the Town of Morrisville is committed to providing for pedestrians and cyclists on its roadways, not just motorists. These factors require the widths shown on the public meeting materials. Although the project will generally fit within the right-of-way that was set aside for this project when the area was developed, NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville are attempting to minimize community and natural impacts in project area as much as possible.

Comment *Will Church Street be widened in Phase I? If so, which side will be widened?*

Response Based on direction the Town provided to NCDOT, the Church Street improvements will not be constructed as part of the Phase I project. The Town is, however, working with NCDOT on a separate sidewalk project that will construct a sidewalk on the east side of Church Street in this area. Design and engineering work is expected to begin for that sidewalk project this year, with construction expected to begin in 2022.

Comment *There should also be bike lanes in both directions built into the project.*

Response Thank you for your comment. NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville will review the project to see if this would be possible, given the right-of-way area available.

Comment *Simply developing a four-lane road with 45mph speed limit will only further slice up our town with the sole purpose of making it easier for residents of west Cary to move through Morrisville and onto their destination. I believe that we could make the Airport Blvd portion through Morrisville a distinct street that maintains or increases unity of Morrisville while providing for increased multi-modal mobility for its residents. I have included a link to a website (<http://rethinkingstreets.com/>) containing three evidence based case studies by city planners who have a special interest in street design for the 21st century, and I strongly believe that this should be considered for this project. This would benefit not only the Town of Morrisville, but also the region's goals for improving transportation infrastructure over the next decade.*

Response The realities of climate change and other environmental and socioeconomic factors are causing many to rethink the relationship between land use and transportation and to seek a shift in emphasis from a vehicular-dominated system to one that equally accommodates other types of uses. As an example, the design approach known as "Complete Streets" has become official policy of many state and local departments of transportation, including NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville. At NCDOT, this policy requires that NCDOT's planners and designers "consider and incorporate multimodal alternatives in the design and improvement of all appropriate transportation projects within a growth area of a town or city unless exceptional circumstances exist." The Town of Morrisville's policy is similar. The proposed project is being developed in accordance with both of those policies.

From a broader perspective, Airport Boulevard (S.R. 3126) is part of the North Carolina State Highway System and is classified as a Minor Arterial. As such, it is one element in a regional network of transportation corridors intended to serve the kind of vehicular traffic that the area's land uses generate. Because the Airport

Boulevard project would fill a short gap in longer existing State arterial highway, there aren't any viable options but to construct it as an arterial.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Comment *New roads equal more traffic. I am concerned about the increases in traffic at intersections.*

Response Forecasts of future traffic volumes show that more traffic will be using all area roads in the future. The proposed project is being designed to include all appropriate, modern safety features, including crosswalks at intersections.

Comment *What is the simulated traffic savings of the project?*

Response The proposed project's southern terminus is Garden Square Lane and its northern terminus is Chapel Hill Road (N.C. 54). Today, the shortest route between those two points is Garden Square Lane to Town Hall Drive to McCrimmon Parkway, to Chapel Hill Road—a distance of 1.9 miles. The average time to drive this route is roughly five minutes, depending on traffic levels and other factors. With the proposed project, the distance between the northern and southern termini would be reduced to 0.8 miles. This would take about a minute to drive, depending on traffic volumes, traffic signal timing, and other factors—a savings of roughly four minutes. It is important to note that these times are rough estimates, but they give a general picture of the magnitude of time savings.

Comment *The pandemic has lessened travel demand, and this effect will be permanent. Were the studies done pre-pandemic?*

Response The Airport Boulevard traffic study was prepared prior to COVID-19 pandemic; any permanent effects on regional projects is something NCDOT will be evaluating in future traffic models. Because both portions of the existing Airport Boulevard are multilane roads, it is unlikely that the connecting middle section (this project) would be designed with fewer than four lanes, regardless of any effect the pandemic might have on future traffic volumes.

Comment *How accurate are the traffic forecasts that justify the need for this project?*

Response The results of a national study published last year by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRC) showed that forecasts have tended to improve over time but are not, and have never been, 100 percent accurate. It is very important to understand, however, that planning agencies cannot and do not expect perfection to be achievable in the realm of traffic forecasting. Instead of perfection, the goal is to achieve forecasts that are good enough to make informed decisions about the project. As noted in the NCHRC study, a practical definition of a “good enough” forecast is a forecast that comes close enough to the project’s actual outcomes that project decisions would have remained the same if they had been made with perfect knowledge. The study findings showed that 95 percent of the forecasts made for projects used in the study met this threshold. (See: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2020. Traffic Forecasting Accuracy Assessment Research. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25637>).

Comment *Isn't Morrisville-Carpenter Road under construction? Does your modeling consider the interaction of these projects?*

Response The traffic modeling takes into account the entire roadway network, including all projects that are under construction or are programmed for future construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Comment *Morrisville is losing natural areas to development; this project will increase those losses. The project will be environmentally destructive.*

Response Morrisville—and the Triangle Region as a whole—is an extremely fast growing area, with this pace of growth expected to continue into the future (see [2019 Transportation Plan](#)). This growth will cause some undeveloped, “natural” areas to become developed. The Town recognizes this, and has developed a detailed parks and recreation plan to help offset these changes in land use (see the Town’s [2018 Parks + Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan](#)).

Comment *Current environmental information should guide decisions, not old plans that lack environmental impact information.*

Response See response above.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS

- Comment *The project will negatively affect the neighborhoods without any benefit.*
- Response The proposed project is intended to benefit the area by helping improve traffic movement, and accommodating pedestrians and cyclists, both now and in the future. The extent to which the project would affect neighborhoods is one of several factors that NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville are examining in the current environmental study. All of the project's expected benefits and impacts are reviewed before a final decision is made about moving forward with the project.
- Comment *My daily routine will be affected by this project.*
- Response In a fast-growing urban environment such as Morrisville, change is inevitable and, unfortunately, daily routines are sometimes affected. NCDOT and the Town understand that change can be difficult and are working to ensure that the inconvenience to local residents is minimized to the greatest practical extent.
- Comment *I find it troublesome that NCDOT and the Town cannot adequately answer questions and have no idea about what the impact actually is to community members.*
- Response One of the purposes of the April 20 virtual public meeting was to hear from those who live and work in the project area so that NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville can better understand how the project would affect the area. The goal is to be able to gather enough information so that by the end of the study, all questions can be answered.
- Comment *This project will funnel traffic directly into the Twin Lakes community and cross the community's pathway to the kids pool and playground. Is Twin Lakes included in the impact studies?*
- Response Yes, all communities surrounding the proposed project are included in the impact studies.
- Comment *With LED street lights (very bright), adjacent homes and neighborhoods will experience increased light pollution. That has detrimental effects on the quality of neighborhoods, sleeping, and nature.*

Response Comment noted. The proposed project would conform with all applicable local ordinances regarding the intensity of outdoor lighting.

Comment *Morrisville is a small town and we already have enough traffic going through our town.*

Response As noted previously, Morrisville—and the Triangle Region as a whole—is an extremely fast growing area, with this pace of growth expected to continue into the future (see [2019 Transportation Plan](#)). Forecasts of future traffic volumes show that more traffic will be using all area roads in the future. The Town of Morrisville

recognizes this growth and is planning to accommodate it, as documented in its currently adopted [Comprehensive Plan](#).

SAFETY

Comment *The project will be dangerous for children walking to the two elementary schools, and for children who play in the area. What safeguards would be put in place?*

Response Designing roadways that promote safe passage and provide flexibility for predicted traffic growth is one of the highest priorities on NCDOT projects. The design for this project is being developed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials formal policy on design standards. Those standards are meant to ensure safety, permanence, utility, and flexibility to provide for predicted traffic growth. This design is also in accordance with NCDOT's Roadway Design Manual and State and local Complete Streets policies. Regarding speed limits, the Town of Morrisville and NCDOT are examining whether to lower the speed limit on Airport Boulevard during a.m. and p.m. school hours.

Comment *I am concerned about pedestrian safety at all intersections associated with this project, including the greenway.*

Response As noted above, appropriate safety features are being incorporated into the design at the project's intersections with Town Hall Drive and Church Street. Likewise, NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville are conducting a study to see if the greenway's crosswalk across Airport Boulevard would meet the criteria for a traffic signal.

Comment *McCrimmon and Carpenter-Morrisville are both already terrible for pedestrian traffic. Do we really need a third east to west road in Morrisville with no considerations for pedestrians?*

Response As noted in several of the preceding responses, NCDOT and the Town are incorporating design elements to safely accommodate the needs of pedestrians.

PROPERTY IMPACTS

Comment *Will there be a barrier/fencing between the project's sidewalks and the schools, and between the project and residential backyards?*

Response NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville are looking at the feasibility for fencing at the school properties, outside of the proposed right of way limits as part of the right of way agreement. Any existing fencing that would be disturbed by the project would be replaced.

Comment *Will homeowners lose property? If so, will they be compensated?*

Response Narrow strips of land may need to be acquired near the project's intersections to accommodate turn lanes. The current design is preliminary and could change as the current study progresses. A detailed drawing of that design is available on the [project's website](#).

Comment *Will this project decrease the value of property adjacent to the project?*

Response There are many factors that contribute to the value of a property at any given time; is not possible to predict how a road project in itself would affect property value, given the interplay of those factors.

Comment *Will the Town remove any trees damaged by the project so they do not pose a threat to my house during a storm?*

Response The Town of Morrisville would be responsible for trees located within the right-of-way or a construction easement. NCDOT and the Town do not expect trees outside of these areas to be damaged by the project. If such damage is suspected, the Town would need to be contacted so that the situation could be assessed.

Comment *Please provide diagrams showing the areas where property would be acquired.*

Response A detailed map showing the current preliminary design is available on the [project's website](#). This map will be updated as the designs are further developed. Please contact NCDOT, as shown on the web site, for further details.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Comment *Infrastructure should not be an afterthought. The Town needs to stop building so many homes and businesses. High density housing and businesses is unhealthy, ugly, and a problem.*

Response The Town of Morrisville's infrastructure needs are an integral part of the Town's overall land use planning efforts, as seen in the currently adopted [Comprehensive Plan](#). Also, please be aware that the Town does not build homes and businesses. The Town plans for orderly, rational, and sustainable development in an environment of sustained high levels of demand. Areas of higher density are important in achieving a more environmentally sustainable future and in meeting the diverse needs of the Town's rapidly growing population.

Comment *I am so disappointed. I built my house in Morrisville because it was quiet; Town Hall Drive was a gravel road and stopped at Treybrooke.*

Response As noted previously, in a fast growing urban environment such as Morrisville, change is inevitable. NCDOT and the Town understand that this can be difficult to accept.

Comment *Development is greater in Cary.*

Response Regardless of how Cary is growing, Morrisville is expecting rapid, sustained growth into the future.

Comment *Regarding future growth, people count and our voices should be heard.*

Response As described previously, the Town is committed to hearing the voices of those who live and work here. In developing its Transportation Plan, the Town held a wide

variety of events to capture feedback from a cross-section of those who live, work, recreate, or have a stake in the Plan's recommendations, as shown below.

Community Event Outreach..... May 14, 2016
Community Event Outreach..... June 4, 2016
Online Survey 10/2016 through 12/2016
Public Workshops October 6 and June 29, 2017
Public Open Houses February 28 and August 22, 2017

Public Comment sessions were also held by the Town's Planning and Zoning Board during the adoption process in the fall of 2017 and spring of 2018, and a Public Hearing was held by the Town Council (continued over multiple meetings) prior to the adoption of the Plan in the fall of 2018. In addition, CAMPO held a public workshop on the current 2045 Plan in the fall of 2017.

GREENWAYS/GREENSPACE

Comment *The extension will cut the greenway. What will happen to the greenway in this location? The greenway should be grade separated. It should include accommodations for wildlife.*

Response The proposed project would include an at-grade crossing of the greenway. NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville have concluded that a grade separation is not warranted at this location, but are conducting a study to determine the at-grade crossing meets the criteria for a traffic signal.

Comment *There needs to be a plan for preserving green space and quality of life.*

Response As noted in previous responses, preserving, enhancing, and creating greenspace, and preserving and enhancing quality of life, are integral parts of the Town's overall planning efforts, as can be seen in the Town's current [Comprehensive Plan](#).

STUDY PROCESS

Comment *Be honest, is this a done deal? Are you just placating us? Is this just a required act to say that you received community input? Is this meeting is a waste of time?*

Response One purpose of the April virtual public meeting was to ensure that NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville better understand stakeholder concerns and do not overlook any potentially significant impacts. Although both Morrisville and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization have concluded that the project is needed, NCDOT and the Town of Morrisville have not ruled out the No Build Alternative and will not make a Build or No Build decision until after the environmental study is completed and after comments made by the public and state and federal agencies are assessed. Another purpose of the meeting was to explain the proposal to area stakeholders. This is an important objective in itself and also allows the Town and NCDOT to make adjustments to the design, when feasible, in response to stakeholder comments.

Comment *Why are you saying this road is going to happen when the studies are not completed?*

Response If during the meeting it was definitively stated that the project would be built, that would have been an error. As noted above, the No-Build Alternative will remain under consideration and the Build–No Build decision will not be made until the environmental study is completed and public and agency comments are assessed.

FUNDING PROCESS

Comment *Will the schools pay for barriers or the project?*

Response No, the schools will not be required to contribute to any element of the project's costs.

Comment *Will there be a public meeting when Phase II is funded?*

Response Yes.

Comment *Will eminent domain be considered for some properties in the Trolley Car Way area?*

Response Eminent domain is the process by which governments have the authority to purchase private property when it is needed for public projects. Although the

project's design is still being developed, it is possible that very narrow strips of land may need to be acquired from parcels on Trolley Car Way near Town Hall Drive.

NOISE IMPACTS

Comment *The project will increase general noise levels. Must consider all noise, not just traffic.*

Response NCDOT conducted a detailed analysis of traffic noise for the project to determine if any additional noise caused by the project would be great enough to trigger the need for abatement considerations. Noise from air traffic, train traffic, as well as background vehicular traffic and other noise-generating activities were all taken into consideration as part of the analysis.

AIR QUALITY

Comment *The project will increase air pollution. What is the air quality impact?*

Response While the project may result in traffic being closer to residences and schools, it is not expected create any instances in which air pollution levels exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards. In the broader area, the project would reduce travel distances and congestion, resulting in lower levels of total emissions.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Comment *The climate emergency we are facing will require lower CO₂ emissions and more green space. What is the climate impact of this project?*

Response While it is true that we are facing a climate emergency, actions needed to effectively address that emergency are beyond the scope of this project. Regarding the climate impact of this specific project, the project is not expected create any instances in which air pollution levels exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Comment *Will the project change the retention pond at the Garden Square Lane/Airport Blvd intersection? How can these ponds be retained?*

Response A detailed hydraulic analysis will be conducted during final design. Potential impacts to existing ponds will be evaluated and minimized to the extent practicable.

LITTER

Comment *The project will increase litter.*

Response Litter is a problem on all roadways. NCDOT's budget for litter clean-up on State roadways has been affected by COVID-related reductions in revenue, but NCDOT remains committed to keeping its roadways litter free to the greatest practical extent.

Comment *How can new roads be justified when NCDOT can't even pick up litter on existing roads?*

Response As noted above, NCDOT's budget for litter clean-up on State roadways has been affected by COVID-related reductions in revenue. It is not realistic, however, for NCDOT to suspend all highway projects until existing roadways are litter-free.

ATTACHMENT

Airport Boulevard Extension Project Virtual Public Meeting – April 20, 2021

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

No. of Mentions	General Topic	Paraphrased Summary of Each Unique Comment Made	Commentor*
18	Long Range Planning	Just because the project is on the transportation plan doesn't mean it's relevant and necessary. A "Transportation Plan" is not a specific discussion on the proposed Airport Blvd. extension.	2, 4, 5, 7, 9
		Prior plans for this project showed it as a two-lane road, not four lanes.	2, 3
		Did the Town ask for everyone's input on the transportation plan? Was there a public hearing or vote on this? I'm attentive to Town activities and don't recall any targeted meeting on this issue.	5, 14
		What is the timing of Phase II relative to the grade separation of McCrimmon over the railroad?	8
		Widening McCrimmon Parkway would be more useful. Widen existing roads.	6, 7, 11, 27
		Is this road for local residents or for through-traffic?	20
		I think this project would provide great relief of McCrimmon Parkway and NC 54, and Aviation Parkway.	25
		The project would add more cross-through traffic for Morrisville to the benefit of Cary. That's an unfair cost to Morrisville residents without an offsetting, tangible benefit.	5
		Chapel Hill Road (NC 54) issues will not be mitigated by the Airport Blvd extension.	5
15	Need	The project is unnecessary/not needed. It is a solution in search of a problem. I'm against it.	2, 4, 9, 14, 15, 27, 28, 29
		Is this road intended to funnel more traffic to the Wegman's supermarket?	1, 6, 9
		Phase II makes more sense than Phase I.	2

* Each person's set of comments was given an identifying number. The list of comments with their identifying numbers is on file at NCDOT, District 5, in Durham.

	Need (cont.)	There is a well-known and long-established effect known as “Induced Traffic.” Adding a new road does not relieve congestion; rather, it will make traffic a lot worse. The correct plan is NOT to extend Airport Blvd.	5
		I live close to the project area and I am really tired of the congestion on adjacent roads to get to I-40 and it about time that NCDOT/ Town of Morrisville do something about it. Please consider funding Phase Two as well. I support this extension. This is very much needed in Morrisville area and will help alleviate traffic.	31, 32
12	Design	The roadway’s proposed size and speed is incompatible with a residential area. Most thoroughfares in Morrisville are 35 mph; why is this going to be 45 mph?	4, 8, 12, 14, 19
		Will the speed limit be lowered during school hours?	17
		If the project is posted at 35 mph, lanes should be 11 feet wide, not 12 feet.	8
		Why is the section from Town Hall Drive to Church Street going to be two lanes? It will need to be widened at some point.	15
		The proposed widths of the travel lanes, median, and path make the road extremely wide; please consider narrowing those widths to reduce impact to property owners.	18
		Will Church Street be widened in Phase I? If so, which side will be widened?	21
		There should also be bike lanes in both directions built into the project.	24
		Simply developing a four lane road with 45mph speed limit will only further slice up our town with the sole purpose of making it easier for residents of west Cary to move through Morrisville and onto their destination. I believe that we could make the Airport Blvd portion through Morrisville a distinct street that maintains or increases unity of Morrisville while providing for increased multi-modal mobility for its residents. I have included a link to a website (http://rethinkingstreets.com/) containing three evidence based case studies by city planners who have a special interest in street design for the 21st century, and I strongly believe that this should be considered for this project. This would benefit not only the Town of Morrisville, but also the region’s goals for improving transportation infrastructure over the next decade.	33

12	Traffic	New roads equal more traffic. I am concerned about the increases in traffic at intersections.	5, 6, 14, 24, 30, 34
		What is the simulated traffic savings of the project?	6
		The pandemic has lessened travel demand, and this effect will be permanent. Were the [traffic] studies done pre-pandemic?	2, 5, 13
		How accurate are the traffic forecasts that justify the need for this project?	5
		Isn't Morrisville-Carpenter Road under construction? Does your modeling consider the interaction of these projects?	3
12	Environment	Morrisville is losing natural areas to development; this project will increase those losses. The project will be environmentally destructive.	2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 27, 34
		Current environmental information should guide decisions, not old plans that lack environmental impact information.	9
11	Community Impacts	The project will negatively affect the neighborhoods without any benefit.	5, 6, 11, 14, 29
		My daily routine will be affected by this project.	4, 24
		I find it troublesome that NCDOT and the Town cannot adequately answer questions and have no idea about what the impact actually is to community members.	9
		This project will funnel traffic directly into the Twin Lakes community and cross the community's pathway to the kids pool and playground. Is Twin Lakes included in the impact studies?	16
		With LED street lights (very bright), adjacent homes and neighborhoods will experience increased light pollution. That has detrimental effects on the quality of neighborhoods, sleeping, and nature.	5
		Morrisville is a small town and we already have enough traffic going through our town.	29
9	Safety	The project will be dangerous for children walking to the two elementary schools, and for children who play in the area. What safeguards would be put in place?	2, 3, 5, 9, 13, 29, 33
		I am concerned about pedestrian safety at all intersections associated with this project, including the greenway.	24
		McCrimmon and Carpenter-Morrisville are both already terrible for pedestrian traffic do we really need a third east to west road in Morrisville with no considerations for pedestrians?	24

8	Property Impacts	Will there be a barrier/fencing between the project's side-walks and the schools, and between the project and residential backyards?	1, 17
		Will homeowners lose property? If so, will they be compensated?	4, 17
		Will this project decrease the value of property adjacent to the project?	4, 9
		Will the Town remove any trees damaged by the project so they do not pose a threat to my house during a storm?	2
		Please provide diagrams showing the areas where property would be acquired.	18
7	Growth and Development	Infrastructure should not be an afterthought. The Town needs to stop building so many homes and businesses. High density housing and businesses is unhealthy, ugly, and a problem.	4, 9, 11, 27
		I am so disappointed. I built my house in Morrisville because it was quiet; Town Hall Drive was a gravel road and stopped at Treybrooke.	4
		Development is greater in Cary.	5
		Regarding future growth, people count and our voices should be heard.	9
7	Greenway and Greenspace	The extension will cut the greenway. What will happen to the greenway in this location? The greenway should be grade separated. It should include accommodations for wildlife.	6, 8, 13, 14, 25, 34
		There needs to be a plan for preserving green space and quality of life.	2
4	Study Process	Be honest, is this a done deal? Are you just placating us? Is this just a required act to say that you received community input? Is this meeting is a waste of time?	2, 5
		Why are you saying this road is going to happen when the studies are not completed?	2
		While I do think the extension of Airport Blvd is good for overall connectivity and mobility, I think that the Town of Morrisville should take a strong stance in influencing how the road is designed and developed.	33
3	Funding/ Process	Will the schools pay for barriers or the project?	1
		Will there be a public meeting when Phase II is funded?	22
		Will eminent domain be considered for some properties in the Trolley Car Way area?	26

2	Noise	The project will increase general noise levels. Must consider all noise, not just traffic.	2, 11
2	Air	The project will increase air pollution. What is the air quality impact?	2, 5
2	Climate Change	The climate emergency we are facing will require lower CO2 emissions and more green space. What is the climate impact of this project?	2, 5
2	Environmental Design	Will the project change the retention pond at the Garden Square Lane/Airport Blvd intersection? How can these ponds be retained?	13, 14
2	Litter Impacts	The project will increase litter.	2
		How can new roads be justified when NCDOT can't even pick up litter on existing roads?	5