

Chatham County Bicycle Plan

Changes Made Based on Public Comments

received April 28 to May 24, 2011

1. Alan Osborne

April 28, 2011 via email

I am in favor of your proposal to improve bicycling in Chatham County. I have been cycling for over 25 years and I really enjoy the beautiful scenery in your wonderful county. It is always wise to improve the roads especially since the cost of transportation has increased so much. Also there is a good possibility I will be working in Siler City in the real near future so I would love the opportunity to cycle from my home in Holly Springs in a safe and worry free manner. So you have my vote to go forward with the plans.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

2. Cathy Holt

April 28, 2011 via email

This would be fabulous!

The plan recommends about 90 miles of new shared roads, bike lanes and off-road trails that could be completed in the next few years, and nearly 200 miles that could be completed over the next thirty years.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

3. Dave Connelly

April 28, 2011 via email

Thanks for sending this out. Here are some notes:

Page 7. Chatham is an historically rural county. But, like most of NC, Chatham is rapidly urbanizing. It already has 3 of the Triangle's wealthiest zip codes. Plans should assume that Chatham's future will include much more residential and commercial land use. [NO CHANGES MADE]

Pages 9-10. You could add that the ATT is part of the East Coast Greenway, which will connect trails from ME to FL. <http://greenway.org/index.shtml> You might also thank the Town of Cary. Without their leadership, this would still be an abandoned rail corridor with 2 missing bridges. [ADDED SENTENCE ON EAST COAST GREENWAY]

Page 9, footnote 6. The organization's name is: Triangle Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. [MADE CHANGE]

General. The importance of the American Tobacco Trail (ATT) to Chatham's economic future cannot be overstated. I'm happy to see (p.28) that Cary and Chatham are both planning to offer more than parking

citations for ATT users. I still don't see any mention of water. The ATT runs 11.5 miles south of Durham's C.M. Herndon Park, which (seasonally) offers running water. Chatham, Cary and Wake need to accept responsibility that a 23+ mile round trip deserves more than Wake County's pit toilets. Chatham and its neighbors should also be investing in the formation of local businesses (drinks, eats, bike rentals, shuttles, inns, urgent care) as the ATT project nears its 2012 completion and becomes a tourism magnet. [ADDED SENTENCE TO SECTION 3.3, PROJECTS S25-26, ABOUT THE NEED FOR AMENITIES SUCH AS DRINKING WATER AT CAR PARKING AREAS]

In other parts of the county, Chatham should encourage any bike facility that connects to local B&B's (Celebrity Dairy), vineyards, and other possible tourism destinations. [NOTED; NO CHANGES MADE]

4. David Misenheimer

April 28, 2011 via email

Thanks so much for putting this plan together and for promoting safe biking in the county. I will definitely review and provide comments.

David Misenheimer
Chatham County Resident and bike rider

[NO CHANGES MADE]

5. Joshua Cohen

April 28, 2011 via email

I am fully in support of this project. If there are any meetings or petitions that would be helpful for me to be part of, please let me know!

[NO CHANGES MADE]

6. Phillip Armand

April 28, 2011 via email

I commend you and the balance of your Chatham County team on your proposal to support, promote, educate and enforce the laws for safer cycling throughout Chatham County. I have lived many places in the USA and the roadways of Chatham County have one of the highest number of cycling enthusiasts I have ever seen. Promoting this activity is only for the betterment of all.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

7. Sheila Tayrose

April 28, 2011 via email

It sounds like a good start.

Also, the population of Chatham Co has been growing, which means more development. There may be some turn lanes, but the new developments do not appear to be putting in shoulders (O'Kelly for an example). Also, where there is development, the trucks tend to wreck havoc on the roads. Who is responsible for filling these pot holes? Chip seal is not the way to go.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

8. Snow Roberts

April 28, 2011 via email

I'm a huge supporter of the proposed additional bike lanes that are in the works in Chatham County. I ride there frequently and hope for a future where motorists and cyclists can have shared use without conflict.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

9. Cliff Zinner

April 29, 2011 via email

I have reviewed the plan and find it a great step. While I am not currently developing in your county I have a subdivision close to the border in Chapel Hill.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

10. Daniel Bedard

April 29, 2011 via email

I just recently read through the Chatham County Bicycle Plan posted at <http://www.chathamnc.org/Index.aspx?page=1294> . Let me first say that as a cyclist, I am thoroughly impressed at how comprehensive and forward-leaning this plan is. Particularly as a mostly rural county, it seems to me that Chatham County is facing this issue head-on where other locations do not pay enough attention to it.

That said, one aspect which I thought could be improved in the plan would be the inclusion of economic impact data in the report. Perhaps the data don't exist. Or perhaps they exist and don't quite make the case. However, my suspicion is that making the county more attractive as a cycling tourism destination would bring additional income to Chatham County businesses. I know of a few businesses that seem to benefit from the surge of cycling traffic in the summer, for example the Exxon station at US-64 and Beaver Creek Rd. If you add in opportunities from special events, such as US Cycling race series and charity rides, as well as retail opportunities, serving the cycling community better could represent a non-trivial economic impact to county businesses. And finding ways to publicize the benefits of cycling to the community could improve the relationship between cyclists and the public at large. I think this should be considered in the report, as economics and quality of life--which the report handles well--are ultimately intertwined. [ADDED 'ECONOMIC IMPACT DATA' TO BULLET LIST IN SECTION 5.1.10]

11. Patricia Kerr

April 29, 2011 via email

Why would you want to spend money on something like this when people need food, electricity and a roof over their heads? A project like this needs to be postponed until the county is in a better place. We are loosing teachers at our schools because of no funds to pay them. Please....find a better use for the resources we have.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

12. Bob Steen

April 30, 2011 via email

Please note that the traffic light at Fearington Village (US 15/501 & Village Way Intersection) is not activated by bicycles. This is a heavily used intersection by bicycles since cyclists frequently stop at the coffee shop at Fearington Village. Also, Fearington Village has an active cycling club. [ADDED PROJECT]

13. Dan Graham

May 01, 2011 via email

I encourage Y'all to be pro-active in creating a bike-friendly set of policies for Chatham County-- especially here in NE Chatham (Big WoodsRd.) where we live.

We are already known as a county friendly to arts/music/organic farms, etc. Being known as bike-friendly can further diversify our local economy with cultural amenities.

Big Woods Rd. is used by many local bikers, and does have ample room for bike lanes along the shoulders. Please consider having bike lanes put in to connect to the new County Park on Big Woods Rd.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

14. Ray Albers

May 01, 2011 via email

First let me say that I'm delighted to learn that work is being done on this important issue!

That said, the first sour note for me was that I just sort of stumbled into a copy of the plan, and was surprised to learn that there had been a survey of some 500 cyclists, and that I wasn't one of them. I'm one of a group of a dozen or so old timers from Fearington Village who cycle several times a week, and none of us had ever heard of the survey. We're not members of organized clubs like the TarWheels, but many of us are on Chatham County listserves like the Sherriff's dept, etc so I would have thought that any attempt to get a really wide audience would have gotten to at least some of us. I'm afraid that you may have missed a big chunk of active cyclists in gathering this info. Ah, well.

I was also surprised to see the reference to bike routes – yes, from time to time I see a sign indicating a bike route, but they're all very mysterious and hard to figure out. I certainly wasn't aware that there were so many supposed bike routes. One example – your report showed a map indicating a bike route that goes east of Pittsboro via Thompson St, business 64 and Hanks Chapel road: I bet our little gang goes there once a week, or at least twice in every two weeks, but we kind of discovered it on our own, and certainly have never seen any signage indicating that we were riding an official bike route! Dunno how visitors are supposed to know. By the way, we almost always finish our rides by having coffee at the Belted Goat in Fearington (most of us live in Fearington) and frequently people who are visiting for weddings and such who brought their bikes see us sitting there in our sweaty bicycling togs and ask us for tips on where to ride – I bet we have provided more tourist info in this way than the county ever has!

One small nit: the report cited poor pavement on Andrews Chapel Rd – first, it's Andrews Store, not Andrews Chapel, and second, I'm delighted to be able to report that the whole road has recently been re-paved end-to-end and it's now smooth as silk – albeit still a bit hilly ! [CHANGED ROAD NAME; ADDED NOTE TO TABLE ABOUT SOURCE OF DATA]

Two other places where bikes can't trigger traffic signals are 15/501 and Village Way / Morris Rd (entrance to Fearington Village) and 64 at Pea Ridge / Mt Gilead. [ADDED VILLAGE WAY PROJECT; OTHER ALREADY IN PLAN]

Finally, I will say that although I agree that 64 Business west of downtown Pittsboro is hazardous / no shoulder, I think 64 to the east of P'boro is just fine – nice shoulders there, both directions. [REVIEWED MAP; NO CHANGES NEEDED]

15. Michael D. Resnik

May 02, 2011 via email

I used to be a very serious rider. I commuted 15 miles each way to UNC, I wrote most weekends, and I rode in "challenge centuries" in the mountains, e.g., The Blue Ridge Brutal 100. During that time I rode quite a bit in Chatham, Orange and Alamance Counties. Due to my advancing age and the demands on my time, regretfully, I ride much less.

I feel safest when I ride on Hwy 54 which has a wide marked and paved shoulder of 5'-6' and least safe on highly traveled roads like Jones Ferry where the long range visibility is often poor and there are narrow shoulders. I stopped commuting on it when one morning a car passed the car that was passing me! I added at least 5 miles to my commute by working my way up to 54.

I don't have anything to add to the Bike Plan, nor do I have any changes to recommend. I have not studied it in sufficient detail. I only want to thank you for the hard work that must have gone into it, and to say that I hope that something like it is adopted.

[NO CHANGES MADE]

16. James Scalise

May 03, 2011 via email

I am an active cyclist and frequently (3-5 times a week) ride on the roads of Chatham County. The draft plan, if fully enacted, will go a long way to increase the safety and enjoyment of the riding public. I am especially pleased to see proposed changes to the signal lights at key intersections. This, in my opinion, is critically important. The intersection at 64 and Beaver Creek is very dangerous and needs to be acted upon as soon as possible. I would also ask the intersection of 15/501/ Village Way/Morris Rd be added to list of signal lights to be modified to all activation by cyclist. It is not as high a priority as the other intersections but is needed. [BEAVER CREEK PROJECT ALREADY IN PLAN; ADDED VILLAGE WAY PROJECT]

17. Steven Goodridge

May 03, 2011 via email (with attachments)

From: Steven Goodridge,
Advocacy Officer, North Carolina Bicycle Club
LCI #1690
Re: Feedback on Draft Chatham County Bicycle Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft version of the Chatham County Bicycle Plan. I hope that my detailed comments and additional materials attached to this note will help you improve the Plan. It is very encouraging to see Chatham County giving quality attention to the desires, needs and legal rights of those who travel by bicycle on our public ways. Thank you for your efforts.

I have provided my comments as a .pdf file so that I could utilize text formatting and embedded images most effectively. Please let me know if you would like them in a different form. Also, I have included the source file for a chart in case you would like to use it in the plan; I hereby give you full permission to use it, without credit. The data came from NCDOT anyway.

I serve as Advocacy Officer for the North Carolina Bicycle Club, whose members frequently ride through Chatham County, and I am a board member of the North Carolina Active Transportation Alliance. I am also a League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructor (LCI) with a great interest in education and safety issues related to cycling. For over ten years I have been a volunteer citizen participant in bicycle transportation planning, enforcement, and education issues in Wake County through the Town of Cary Planning and Zoning Board, CAMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Stakeholders Group, and the City of Raleigh BPAC. I recently assisted the City of Raleigh in development of their police training program on bicyclist safety and law enforcement as the primary author of that product. I ride recreationally in Chatham County and am an avid bike commuter in Cary. I have a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from NCSU and work in a field unrelated to transportation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you think I can assist you in any way.

[ADDED TEXT CLARIFYING "EXISTING, DESIGNATED" BICYCLE FACILITIES TO THE BEGINNING OF SECTION 2.2]

[MODIFIED FIRST TWO PARAGRAPHS OF SECTION 3.1 TO REFLECT THAT ALL ROADS ARE PART OF THE BICYCLE NETWORK]

[BEEFED UP SECTION 2.3; ADDED MORE NARRATIVE AND DATA ON BIKE CRASHES COURTESY OF COMMENTER]

[ADDED SENTENCE TO SECTION 4.1 ON TWO TYPES OF PROGRAMS TO PRIORITIZE]

[ADDED SENTENCES TO SECTION 3.5 ON RUMBLE STRIPS AND DEBRIS ON ROADWAY]

18. Toby Berla

May 04, 2011 via email

Thanks for the notification. A couple of recommendations regarding the Plan and the Map:

- Given the impending construction of the ATT bridge over I-40, it might be good for us to try to coordinate/synchronize the various county bike maps with respect to standards for symbols, route colors, etc. To this end, would it be possible for the Chatham map group to take a look at Durham's Bike & Hike Map?: http://www.ci.durham.nc.us/departments/transportation/bike_hike_map.cfm

[ADDED SENTENCE TO SECTION 5.1.7]

- section 2.4.1 - Advisory Boards. In Durham, the Bike/Ped Advisory Commission and its associated Bike Plan Committee are the owners of the Plan and its implementation. If possible, Chatham County should create a BPAC, or at a minimum, create a Bike Plan Committee subordinate to the Transportation Advisory Board. (I recommend Transportation rather than Recreation, because the latter may be less equipped to work with NCDOT, which will be a key partner in many bike initiatives.) [ALREADY IN THE PLAN]

- Chapter 3. You may want to look at the public/private Triangle Commuter Bike Initiative being funded in part by the Davis Wealth Management Foundation, along with NCDOT: <http://www.dwmfoundation.org/>. This promises to add a lot of shoulder widening in a short amount of time. [NO CHANGE MADE]

19. Debbie Cox

May 10, 2011 via email (3 attempts)

Having lived on Lystra Road for nearly 30 years it still appals me when there are bikers on the road. It has been my experience that they travel in packs and do NOT obey traffic rules. I have personally seen them turn without indicating, cross US 64 on a red light, not look up and practically run in to my car as I was sitting in my driveway so I feel until they are licensed and taxed as is appropriate they should not be allowed to ride - especially those groups from out of county trying to be Lance Armstongs with their bike races Thanks you Debbie Cox

Having lived on Lystra Road for nearly 30 years I find it appalling that bikers are allowed to use this road and others like Lystra. The road is narrow, two lane, hilly, low shoulders, few places to pass for cars and

poor visibility on the best of days. I have personally seen bikers who do NOT follow the road rules, turn without indicating and cross US64 on a red light against all odds they survived. I particularly find it difficult when groups from out of county come by the 100's and block the road and access to it from my drive. I had the experience of one biker who refused to look up and nearly ran into me as I was sitting in my driveway. It has been difficult for us to take our youngest on his driver's lessons as a permit holder due to the bikers, mainly on a weekend. Until such time as you can guarantee they will follow the road rules, be taxed and licensed as appropriate I suggest that they stay off the road and quit trying to be Lance Armstrong wannabes. Sincerely Debbie Cox & Ken Bastow

I have attempted to send this message via the county weblinks but it failed to send so here it is again. I have lived on Lystra Road for nearly 30 years and I am still appalled that bikes are allowed to ride on it and others like Lystra. It is hilly, soft and low shoulders, no areas in which to pass, low visibility at best and crumbling concrete due to large numbers of dump trucks frequently on this road. I have personally seen bikers NOT follow the road rules, cross US64 against a red light, turn without indicating and even as I was sitting in my driveway the rider did not look up and nearly hit my car during one of the "bike races". I do think that until you can guarantee they will follow the road rules and live in this county not from neighboring CARY they should not be allowed to block access especially on weekends. My youngest son has difficulty getting in driving practice lessons due to bikes. Perhaps a licensing and tax would be helpful sincerely Debbie Cox & Ken Bastow

[NO CHANGES MADE]

20. Margaret Jordan Ellis

May 11, 2011 via phone

Comments:

- Biking great for Chatham
- Wants to see Bike Map reprinted as soon as possible
- Worked on Bike Map back in 1990s

[NO CHANGES MADE]

21. Edward McGurkin

May 18, 2011 via email

Comments on the Chatham county bicycle plan. I found the entire document to be very interesting, thanks to the county for assembling it, and asking the public to comment:

- Shared Road signs Projects S2-13 and S15-17. Please don't spend \$40K on signs that have no impact on drivers. The ones that need to heed the sign never are attentive enough to see it anyway. It would be better to spend \$40K on more police presence and speeding tickets on the same roads. [NOTED; NO CHANGES MADE]

- Bicycle lane in downtown: parking is already tight. Only the most experienced cyclists would go through downtown, everybody else rides around in the side streets. This seems like a no-go from the beginning. [BIKE LANE IS ONLY FOR ONE BLOCK, WITH PARKING RESTRIPED AS PARALLEL INSTEAD OF DIAGONAL]
- Bike lanes are great ideas, but the traffic on 15-501, US64 and Pittsboro-Moncure Rd is moving so fast that it just would not be safe for a family to ride these lanes It would not encourage any more usage of bicycles. A shared use lane on 64 would be great, but would be needed to be physically distinct and separated from the road. [NOTED; NO CHANGES MADE]

Things that could be done inexpensively and have an impact:

- Lower the speed limits on designated bicycle rural roads, from 55 to 45mph. Pittsboro-Moncure Rd is part of official bike route #4. Trucks going 65mph are riding that stretch and making it just plain dangerous to bike. [ADDED NOTE ON LOWERING THE SPEED LIMIT TO SECTION 5.1.2]
- Enforce speed limits in high bicycle corridors with added police presence and speeding tickets. [ADDED 'EXCESSIVE SPEEDING' TO TABLE 10]
- Add 12-18" of asphalt on the shoulder in certain rural corridors to give more room for bicyclists to get to the side of the road and be safely passed. We want to get out of the way, but not ride into a ditch. [ALREADY IN PLAN]
- with the expansion of the Lowes plaza at 15-501 and US64 there is more reason to go there – but no safe way to ride a bike there. How about a trail or path through the neighborhoods that exits by the carolina ale house, or a back way to get there from downtown without clogging up 15-501. [NOTED; NO CHANGES MADE]
- get a 15-501 bypass completed to decrease traffic in town. [NO CHANGES MADE]