

Racial Equity Pocket Questions – Homestead Road-Chapel Hill High School Multiuse Path

Supplemental Agreement with NCDOT and Amended Project Ordinance for Homestead Road-Chapel Hill High School Multiuse Path Project. The purpose of this agenda item is for the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute a Supplemental Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to add \$201,116 of additional funds to the Homestead Road-Chapel Hill High School Multiuse Path (TIP# U-4726-DE) and to amend the project ordinance.

What are the racial impacts?

The racial impacts include increased accessibility to schools and the greenway network. Completing these close-out items will finish this phase of the greenway and ensure a safe and long-lasting greenway for all users. The greenway provides connectivity to the Claremont neighborhood which includes low-income housing and Chapel Hill High School, Smith Middle School, and Seawell Elementary School. This multi-use path may help in diminishing the transportation barriers experienced by community members in these areas.

Who is or will this experience burden?

There will be a burden to all users of the multi-use path while the bridge repairs are being completed. Town Staff may be burdened due to time involved in managing the project.

Who is or will this experience benefit?

All multi-use path users will experience the benefit of these repairs and closing out of this project. The additional federal funds will free-up Town funds to be used for other initiatives.

What are the root causes of inequity?

Root causes of inequality can include “historical racial segregation, governmental policies, a stagnating minimum wage, outsourcing, globalization, changes in technology, and the waning power of labor unions” (Johnson, 2022).

Communities of color have historically fared poorly in decisions relating to transportation improvements. Dedicated funding sources are used to enhance predominately white neighborhoods while communities of color remain without basic infrastructure and safe streets.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

Unintended consequences of the project may include temporary disruptions to access to the multi-use path. Noise and other disturbances from construction activities may temporarily affect individuals’ daily routines, work schedules or quality of life. There may be opportunity costs associated with funding these repairs instead of using the money to directly invest in racial equity measures.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

Greenways can benefit or harm land values and quality of life experiences for surrounding property owners and occupants. While greenways provide safe travel from vehicles, there may be other hazards associated with their use such as encounters with wildlife and interactions with other users. Local residents without access to off-road facilities may seek to use the school parking lots, particularly Chapel Hill High School and Smith Middle School as a trailhead to access the greenway, the residential streets in Claremont and the potential future connections to Homestead Road and the downtown area.