

E Restructure Residential Traffic Management Plan (RTMP) and incorporate a Bike-Ped Safety Assessment Process.

The Town's Residential Traffic Management Plan has been a process by which residents can request traffic calming devices be installed by the Town and includes a petition-based process and data-driven assessment of the traffic conditions on the street. This process is piecemeal, in that it only responds to requests as they arise and does not take a systemic approach to assessing traffic calming and safety issues on Town-maintained, residential streets. The current process also has concerning implications for equity, as an update of the plan is needed to address the following issues:

1. Create a regular, annual timeline with a specific window during which requests and petitions can be submitted OR develop a systemic, town-wide approach to assessing traffic conditions (with associated data collection) and coordinate with neighbors at those locations where there are potential concerns identified.
2. Revise the process to collect data after a request is submitted (and prior to the petition phase).
3. Create processes for Town- and NCDOT-owned streets by which residents can request reducing the posted speed limits on residential streets. If desired, this could be a direct follow-up to a completed traffic calming project. If the follow-up data collection shows the operating speed (85th percentile) is at least 5 MPH below the posted speed, then a reduction in the posted speed limit can be considered.

Explanation of Federal and State Transportation Funding Process (MPO & SPOT Processes)

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) is the regional lead planning agency that coordinates federal and state transportation funds for projects within the urbanized areas of Durham, Orange and Chatham counties. The DCHC MPO works to develop long range transportation plans, identify transportation projects to receive federal funding, submit projects for state-administered funding prioritization, and assist with project implementation.

Federal Funds: Multiple sources of federal funding are distributed by NCDOT (North Carolina Department of Transportation) to the DCHC MPO that can be considered for transportation projects in Carrboro. These federal sources typically require a 20% local match of the total project cost (often referred to as an 80/20 split). The MPO works to prioritize projects for federal funding based on a number of different factors including connectivity, transit access, population/employment density, equity, environmental justice, safety, and emissions/VMT reduction. The MPO accepts applications for funds once per year. Due to requirements on minimum project cost, this is generally a better funding source for larger transportation projects. MPO projects approved for federal funding are programed into NCDOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

State-Administered Funds: The state administers and distributes both federal and state funds through a competitive process coordinated by NCDOT's Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) which occurs every two to three years. A project that scores well enough to receive funding is added to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The SPOT process involves scoring all roadway, public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, and aviation projects on a number of criteria. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and the NCDOT Division offices also contribute by submitting projects for consideration and assigning local priority to projects.

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law sets the distribution of funding between different modes of transportation. Additionally, highway projects (such as roadway capacity or other motor vehicle focused improvements) accepted into the STIP are fully funded by NCDOT but other projects for other modes (such as bicycle or pedestrian) require a local match of 20%.

Due to the competitiveness of this process and the timing of improvements in the STIP, it can be a lengthy process from initial submittal to project completion. Furthermore, it can be difficult to get some projects to score well in the process, so other avenues for implementation should be assessed. In addition to the SPOT process, NCDOT also reserves some funds for other projects/programs, such as safety improvements.

4. Create a process by which BIPOC or other underserved neighborhoods can bypass the labor-intensive petition process. The expectation of this would be that if data collected by Town Staff indicates a location meets the criteria for Stage 2, then staff can reach out to a neighborhood contact directly and gauge interest through a neighborhood meeting rather than the expectation of a formal petition process.
5. Incorporate into this process an assessment of bicycle/pedestrian facilities and sidewalk need. Potential guidance includes the FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal networks document (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/).
6. Update the list of traffic calming devices under consideration.

F Explore and implement engineering solutions to reduce motor vehicle speeds in downtown.

With respect to the areas identified on the Transportation Strategies Map for ‘safety improvements for speed reduction’, a framework is needed to assess existing conditions, make improvements, and measure progress. Conversations with NCDOT with regards to a downtown slow zone (and associated reduction of posted speed limits) have indicated that the operating speed needs to be reduced prior to considering a reduction of the posted speed limit. To impact the operating speed, engineering changes are needed to modify the roadway environment and encourage slower speeds.

Infrastructure Plans & Improvements

G Identify existing, needed, and poor-quality sidewalks to update the existing sidewalks plan, for the purpose of implementation alongside development projects to increase pedestrian safety and decrease traffic speed.

The Town has been actively adding and improving sidewalks through bond referenda, state transportation prioritization and ADA transition work. The Town should conduct a gap analysis/audit of existing sidewalk infrastructure, access for high priority populations (e.g., non-ambulatory residents, low-to-moderate income households), and existing and projected development patterns, and update its framework for prioritizing sidewalk projects accordingly. The installation of sidewalks can be designed to help increase drivers’ cautiousness around residents. Vehicle speeds can be managed by infrastructure, with most attention paid to arterial roads and the downtown.

H Continue to implement the Safe Routes to Schools Action (SRTS) plan in coordination with schools.

Implement plans that support safety for all age groups of children, especially those who have less opportunities due to location, ability, and income. Explore and develop partnerships with community organizations seeking to provide healthy and safe transportation options for youth and continue working to establish the SRTS Implementation Committee.



▲ Roberson Street, next to The 203 Project, would be a great opportunity for a shared street that can be used by pedestrians, micro mobility users, and drivers.