



Legislation Text

File #: 15-0368, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Update on status of the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project (D-O LRT)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is for the Board of Aldermen to receive an update on the project, and provide comments for DCHC-MPO Transportation Board

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Patricia McGuire- 919-918-7327 - pmcguire@townofcarrboro.org

INFORMATION: Transportation and land use planning in support of public transit has been underway in the Research Triangle region for many years. Light Rail Transit has been identified as an improvement that could expand transit options, foster compact development and serve populations with a high propensity for transit use. The current project concept was formalized in 2012 when the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization endorsed the 17-mile LRT between the University of North Carolina (UNC) Hospitals and Alston Avenue in east Durham as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for inclusion in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Shortly thereafter, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for projects seeking federal action, including funds.

Notice of availability of the completed Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT) Project was published in the Federal Register on August 28th, 2015; a 45-day public comment period began on that date. Over 1,300 comments were received and participation was high at public information sessions and hearings held in Chapel Hill and Durham. Review of the comments is underway and all will be addressed in the combined Final EIS and Record of Decision, scheduled for completion in February 2016. The DEIS and all public comments may be found on the project website at <http://ourtransitfuture.com/>.

The Board of Aldermen received a report on the project on May 5th and a letter of support from the Town Manager for the preferred alternative was submitted on October 13th (*Attachment B*). Patrick McDonough, Go Triangle's Manager of Planning and Transit Oriented Development will provide an update for the Board of Aldermen on the review of the alternatives and public comments received. The DCHC-MPO is scheduled to vote on the D-O LRT NEPA Preferred Alternative at its regular meeting on November 11th; comments on the project may be conveyed to that meeting via Mayor Lavelle or Alderman Seils. Background information on the project including a recent project newsletter and the timeline/summary are included as *Attachments C and D*.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: None noted.

RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen receive the update and provide comments to the MPO as it determines is appropriate. A resolution to convey any comments to the MPO via Town representatives Mayor Lavelle and Alderman Seils is provided as *Attachment A*.