



Transportation Policy Priorities

FOR THE TRIANGLE METRO REGION

KEYS TO A MOBILE FUTURE

Transportation is big. But it is always part of something bigger: economic development opportunities or healthy, active neighborhoods or greater access to jobs and education. The Triangle Metro Region – urban, suburban and rural -- was home to 37% of the state’s growth from 2010-17, and is expected to add another million people over the next generation. A transportation policy that enables North Carolina to continue to compete effectively must focus on 3 key areas:



Economic Development & the Attraction of Diverse Talent



Healthy, Complete Communities Accessible to All Residents



Safety for All Travelers, From Youth to Seniors

REGIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES

Seven key priorities can result in fast-growing regions staying ahead of the growth curve, rural areas and small towns taking advantage of economic opportunities and every community providing complete streets and safe solutions tailored to local conditions.



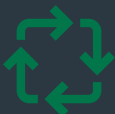
INVEST FOR SUCCESS

- ➔ Enable critical transportation infrastructure across all modes to be addressed sooner with a statewide transportation bond.
- ➔ Create a new funding source for multi-modal mobility investments tied to economic development projects in small towns, rural areas, and along major corridors in metro regions.

The BuildNC bond is a good start, but it needs to support major multi-modal investments, not just highways. While the bond would let us invest faster, it does not increase total investment; it lets us spend tomorrow's revenue today. The state needs an economic development-focused revenue source for investments that are not well suited to the long and constrained process of the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) program.



- Minnesota's Transportation Economic Development Program could be a model for a nimble, economic-based effort -



MAKE INVESTMENTS RELIABLE AND PREDICTABLE

- ➔ Remove caps and constraints on rail transit funding

The STI program distributes state and federal transportation dollars in a reasonable way with one exception: the caps and constraints on rail transit. Rail transit should be held to the same standards as other investments. Caps on state allocations and handcuffs on receiving state funding should be removed so that projects can compete on a level playing field and be funded on their merits. Businesses tell us that risks, uncertainties and changing rules stifle success - transportation investment is a key business for the state and its communities.



- \$1 million invested in transit generates 4,200 job-hours; \$1 million in roadway investment generates 2,400 job-hours -



ENABLE CRITICAL CORRIDOR INVESTMENTS TO BE MORE COST EFFECTIVE

→ Relax the cap on statewide tier funding within a corridor.

While the reasoning behind a cap is sound, its application can lead to inefficient, piece-meal spending which costs more in the long run and affects travelers throughout the state. The cap can also prevent investments on parallel reliever roadways that could be cost-effective and complimentary investments.



- 31% of vehicles on the Triangle's busiest stretch of I-40 - which is hampered by the corridor cap - are from areas outside Wake and Durham counties -



REMOVE FUNDING BARRIERS FOR SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS IN DIVISIONS WITH LARGE MPOS

→ Exempt Surface Transportation Block Grant-Direct Allocation Funding from the STI Allocation.

These funds are allocated from the federal government to MPOs to address additional mobility challenges of congested urban areas. Exempting these funds from the STI formula at the Division Tier would allow funding to be more evenly distributed and let small towns and rural counties better compete for funds.



- STI already exempts 8 other categories of transportation revenues -



MAKE NC A LEADER IN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS

→ Reinstate funds for economically beneficial and safety-focused bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Whether its a critical link to attract tourism on the East Coast Greenway, an important sidewalk connection to make travel to school safer, or a Main Street bike and pedestrian project to serve businesses, state funding provides crucial leverage for federal funds and local contributions.



- 16% of crash fatalities are pedestrian or cyclists; the state is a necessary partner in solutions -



STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR DEMAND-MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

→ Grow the state's investment in Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and technology applications such as ramp-metering and managed motorways.

The most cost-effective dollar spent is on efficiently managing the demand for the supply of roads we already have. Working with employers on ways to offer workers alternatives to peak-hour, drive-alone commuting and deploying technologies to maximize the roadway supply are key elements of the smart city movement.



- The Triangle TDM program has reduced vehicle miles traveled by nearly 280 million miles over the past 5 years -



RECOGNIZE STATEWIDE PROJECTS IN OTHER MODES, NOT SOLELY ROADWAYS AND FREIGHT RAIL

→ Establish standards and scoring criteria for designated statewide passenger rail and trail investments.

Just as major highways serve statewide interests, so do other modes. Passenger rail from Charlotte to Raleigh serves 5 NCDOT divisions and 3 NCDOT regions. Great trails also traverse the state - the East Coast Greenway stretches from VA to SC and the Mountains-to-Sea Trail runs 1,175 miles from the Great Smokey Mountains to the Outer Banks.



- Passenger rail between Charlotte and Raleigh contributes \$60 million to business output and \$30 million to GSP annually-



Strengthen Support for Demand Management & Technology

A Triangle Metro Region Transportation Priority

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The Triangle Metro Region can be a leader for the state in deploying emerging technologies and demand management solutions that optimize roadway and transit capital projects. Two initial focus areas can be

- Taking the already successful **Regional Transportation Demand Management Partnership** to the next level and
- A three-pronged approach to **Smart Cities Technology Applications** that optimizes how we travel and paves the way for automated, connected vehicles.

Regional Transportation Demand Management Partnership

What success looks like: NCDOT, the Triangle Metro's MPOs and other regions collaborate to recruit, recognize and reward employers and communities that implement Transportation Demand Management practices.

Employer Success



Key Ingredients

- A regional collaboration between NCDOT, both MPOs and Triangle J COG with a dozen service providers selected through a competitive process
- Employer-focused with emphasis on anchor institutions, city centers and the RTP
- Coordinated outreach and marketing efforts
- Baseline benefits through GoTriangle, including rideshare matching, emergency ride home and GoPerks reward program

Success Metrics (FY18)

- 5.7 million vehicle trips avoided
- 63 million commute miles reduced
- 2.6 million gallons of gas saved
- 31 designated Best Workplaces for Commuters

Smart City Technologies

What success looks like: Technology applications that don't let uncertainty keep us from taking evidence-based steps to better manage freeways, local streets and travel in our region's hubs.

Active Freeway Management



- Melds communications, controls and optimization strategies
- Reduces delay and increases reliability
- Provides as much as an additional lane of freeway capacity
- More cost-effective than traditional road projects
- Can be used with managed lanes and toll facilities

Traffic Signal Systems



- Integrated, community-wide network for maximum benefit
- Linked to a traffic management center.
- Efficient congestion management and faster incident response.
- Key element for connected & automated vehicle infrastructure.

Mobility in Regional Hubs



- City centers and anchor institutions like universities and medical centers are key destinations
- Combination of technology, pricing and parking strategies
- Actions that are people-friendly rather than vehicle-oriented
- Recent Bloomberg Mayors Challenge grant in Durham can be an early demonstration

Next Steps for the Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- Work with NCDOT to utilize unspent federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding on eligible TDM and technology projects.
- Work with NCDOT and other MPOs to create a tiered "best in class" statewide recognition program for employers and communities that institute TDM programs.
- Strengthen relationships with non-traditional partners involved in technology development and deployment that can benefit the region.
- Work with state officials to reinstate the ability of local communities to adopt TDM ordinances in places where criteria for travel alternatives can be met.

How to Support TDM and Technology in Your Community

- Engage large employers, including local government, on the merits of implementing a TDM program.
- Seek opportunities to establish or participate in pilot or demonstration programs for emerging technologies.
- Work with NCDOT and the MPO on signal system and active freeway management opportunities.



Make NC a Leader in **Active Transportation Investments**

A Triangle Metro Region Transportation Priority

Reinstate funds for economically beneficial and safety-focused bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs.

Whether it's a critical link to attract tourism on the East Coast Greenway, an important sidewalk connection to make travel to school safer, or a Main Street bike and pedestrian project to serve businesses, state funding provides crucial leverage for federal funds and local contributions.



- 16% of crash fatalities are either pedestrian or cyclists-

North Carolina and the Triangle Metro Region should prioritize active transportation investments that support healthy and safe communities. Two initial focus areas can be:

- Improved implementation of **Complete Streets** projects and
- **Active Routes to School** approaches that have demonstrated health and academic performance benefits.

Complete Streets

What success looks like: NCDOT Complete Streets policy implementation is based on the characteristics of corridors and the needs of users, not on the type of facility that is built or the community it is in. NCDOT, MPOs and local communities seamlessly blend federal, state and local funds to achieve results.

A Successful Complete Street



Key Policy Elements

- Restore state funding to independent active transportation projects, so all modes are on a level playing field.
- Create an easy method for facility maintenance.
- Lower the local match requirements to incentivize more investments.

Triangle Projects That Could Benefit

- NC 98 Corridor
- I-40 Bikeway

Active Routes to School

What success looks like: School systems and local communities – with support from the MPOs and NCDOT – continue to expand the reach of the Active Routes to School (AR2S) program, both at existing schools and in the earliest stages of planning for new schools.

A Successful Active School



Key Policy Considerations

- Physical activity has a proven positive impact on learning and health.
- Schools that participate see improvements in academic performance as well as classroom behavior.
- Working together, NCDOT and MPOs can emphasize the use of flexible funding for active routes to school investments.
- Each student who can walk or cycle can mean one fewer parking space or car in the pick-up line.

Next Steps for the Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- Track the progress of complete streets implementation on state and municipal road projects, including cost and design details.
- Work with NCDOT to propose modified procedures and standards that can make the design, funding, and maintenance of complete street elements easier to accomplish.
- Prioritize implementation of active transportation projects through existing programs, and focus recommendations for these projects when developing plans and studies.
- Work with legislators to restore the ability to use state funds for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian projects.

How to Support Active Transportation Investment in Your Community

- Local staff can reach out to school principals and PTAs to help organize 'walking and cycling school bus' efforts.
- Local staff and pedestrian and bicycle advisory boards can work with the school system to ensure the earliest stages of school siting and design include features that make walking and cycling to campuses safe and inviting."
- Make sure that active transportation investments and strategies are infused in all local land use and transportation planning efforts.

