

## Key Message:

The NC 54 corridor is a gateway for our region, with both local and regional importance. The NC 54/I-40 interchange has consistently ranked as the top congested location in the region. Despite growing congestion within the corridor, this area continues to be attractive leading to on-going development pressures within the corridor. This development pressure coupled with growing mobility issues highlight the need to develop short and long-range land use and transportation strategies that will assist the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO), the City of Durham, Durham County, and the Town of Chapel Hill in shaping the growth within this corridor.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The purpose of the study is to analyze short-term and long-term land use issues and multi-modal transportation problems, evaluate opportunities and challenges, and recommend short and long-range land use and transportation solutions and strategies along the corridor.

### **Why is this study important?**

The NC 54 corridor serves as one of the major gateways between Chapel Hill and southwest Durham, its interchange with I-40 has consistently ranked as the top congested location in the region. Development pressures within the corridor coupled with mobility and capacity issues have illuminated the concern that the existing and planned transportation infrastructure in this area is insufficient to accommodate growth and to address land use and transportation problems. Short and long-range solutions are needed to preserve this important corridor.

### **Why is congestion so bad in this corridor?**

The NC 54 interchange with I-40 along with the accessibility that this corridor provides to various employment centers, housing developments, the University of North Carolina (UNC), UNC Hospitals, Duke University, Duke Medical Center, and Research Triangle Park contributes to the popularity of this corridor for economic development. This accessibility has fueled tremendous growth within and around the study area. Current transportation facilities are not keeping up with this demand and there are limited alternate routes for providing this accessibility. All of these factors contribute to the increasing congestion within this corridor.

### **What are the study objectives?**

The vision of the DCHC MPO is to develop and implement transportation plans that are multimodal and that fully integrate land use and transportation issues. To achieve this vision this study will:

1. Clearly define a realistic “blueprint” for an integrated growth and mobility strategy for the corridor

2. Establish a development framework that strengthens multimodal travel options and reduces vehicle miles of travel
3. Improve operations, safety, and travel time
4. Categorize strategies into near, mid-term, and long-term phases

### **What are the key work elements for the study?**

#### Study Steps:

1. Project Initiation/Public Outreach Plan
2. Prepare Corridor/Community Profile
3. Develop and Evaluate Scenarios
4. Develop a Preferred Scenario
5. Prepare the Land Use-Transportation Master Plan
6. Prepare the Corridor Master Plan Blueprint

Public Involvement  
Throughout Process

### **What are the desired outcomes?**

The desired outcome is an integrated vision for land use and transportation within the corridor, supported by local, regional and statewide policy boards and the public that will guide local officials in the preservation of community and mobility within the corridor.

### **How much will the study cost and who is paying for it?**

The total cost for the study is \$257,432, with 80% of the funding coming from Federal transportation planning funds and the remaining 20% funded jointly by the City of Durham, Durham County, and the Town of Chapel Hill.

### **When will it be completed?**

The study is anticipated to be complete in June 2010.

### **What is the final product and how will it be used?**

The final product will be a land use/transportation “Blueprint” for the corridor documenting short and long-range strategies. This “Blueprint” will assist the DCHC MPO, City of Durham, and Town of Chapel Hill in shaping this corridor in such a way that fulfills the integrated vision of the community.

### **After the study is finished, then what?**

Once the study is finished the final master plan or “Blueprint” will be presented to the local and regional policy boards. This “Blueprint” will be used to inform staff regarding transportation/traffic analysis, land use decisions, project planning, and funding priorities.

### **How will the implementation of the plan be funded?**

The implementation of the plan will be funded through federal and State funding associated with the Transportation Improvement Program, local Capital Improvement Programs and other private sector funding initiatives.

### **How will the public be involved?**

A critical component of this study is public outreach and public involvement. In addition to traditional methods for obtaining public input this study will utilize both focus group meetings and “hands-on” public workshops.

The focus groups will be used to gather information from specific topic areas ranging from policy, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, neighborhoods, environment, business, development, and commuters.

Three public workshops will be held as a part of this study. The first public workshop will present the community profile and will solicit input on issues, opportunities, and trends to guide the development of future scenarios. The second public workshop will be used to evaluate alternatives and to assist in the selection of the preferred scenario. The third and final workshop will give participants and opportunity to review and refine the corridor/subarea master plan/blueprint and to provide input on setting priorities for multimodal transportation and land use strategies, implementation strategies, and phasing.

Schedule:

- Workshop #1 – November 18.
- Workshop #2 – February/March 2010.
- Workshop #3 – April 2010.

### **How can I get involved?**

If you have an interest in the NC 54/I-40 corridor or actively participate in transportation and land use issues within the Durham and/or Chapel Hill communities and would like to be included on the list of citizen contacts for this study then please contact Leta Huntsinger, DCHC MPO at 919-560-4366 extension \*30423 or [leta.huntsinger@durhamnc.gov](mailto:leta.huntsinger@durhamnc.gov).

### **Where can I go to get more information?**

Please visit the project website at [www.nc54-I40corridorstudy.com](http://www.nc54-I40corridorstudy.com) or contact Leta Huntsinger with the DCHC MPO at [leta.huntsinger@durhamnc.gov](mailto:leta.huntsinger@durhamnc.gov) or 919-560-4366 extension\*30423.