



TOWN OF
CARRBORO
UPDATED
BIKE PLAN
2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the local residents, community leaders, and government staff that participated in the development of this Plan through meetings, workshops, events, comment forms, and plan review. Special thanks to those who participated as steering committee members, listed below.

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee was made up of local residents, government staff, and community members.

- Colleen Barclay, Carrboro Bicycle Coalition
- Lisa Brown, Carrboro Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee
- Becki Cleveland, Carrboro Recreation and Parks Commission
- Chris Colvin, Carrboro Resident
- Ray Enoch, Carrboro Fire-Rescue Department
- Barbara M Foushee, Carrboro Board of Alderman
- Lyndsay Gavin, Environmental Advisory Board
- Rachel Gaylord-Miles, Carrboro Planning Board
- Tyler Gilmore, Orange Literacy - ESOL Program Coordinator
- Linda Haac, Carrboro Transportation Advisory Board
- Kevin Hicks, Triangle Bikeworks
- Charlie Hileman, Carrboro Resident
- Brent Hobby, Carrboro Police Department
- Barbara Jessie-Black, PTA Thrift Shop
- Rachel Kelley, Carrboro Resident
- Dave Mabe, Carrboro Greenways Commission
- Dale McKeel, DCHC MPO
- Abigaile Pittman, Orange County Planning Department
- Nishith Trivedi, Orange County Planning Department
- Galen Poythress, Carrboro Recreation and Parks Department
- Donnie Rhoads, Chapel Hill Police Department
- Steve Rogers, NCICL (North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League)
- Tamara Sanders, Clean Machine Bike Shop
- Lee Schimmelfing, Orange County Resident
- Jon Scott, Carrboro Resident
- Daniel Snipes, Carrboro Public Works Department
- Kurt Stolka, UNC Chapel Hill Transportation and Parking
- John Vine-Hodge, NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
- Anahid Vrana, Carrboro Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee
- Josh D Worshofsky, Carrboro Resident
- Kathryn Zeringue, NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation



Division of
Bicycle &
Pedestrian
Transportation



Prepared for the Town of Carrboro, North Carolina

Project Contact: Zachary Hallock, Transportation Planner, Town of Carrboro
zhallock@townofcarrboro.org

Town Hall, Planning, Zoning, and Inspections Department, 301 W. Main St., Carrboro, NC 27510 | Phone 919-918-7329
www.townofcarrboro.org

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Prepared by Alta Planning + Design

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Photo Credit: Galen Poythress

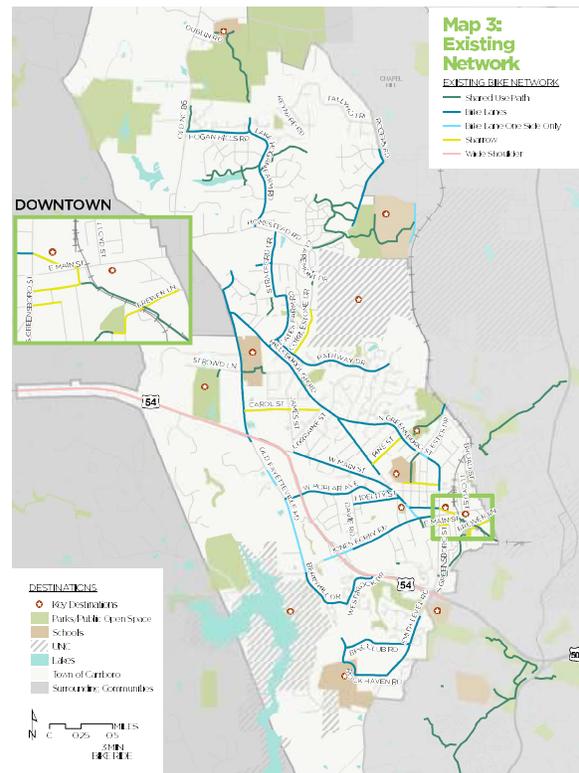
PROJECT VISION & INTRODUCTION

This 2021 Updated Bicycle Plan for the Town of Carrboro is based on the 2009 Bicycle Plan. A new vision statement, which was developed with input from the plan's Steering Committee reads:

“Envisioning Carrboro as a place where biking is accessible, safe, and convenient for everyone between the ages of 8 to 80.”

The process for this plan included engaging an active steering committee of local community members as well as other stakeholders; developing an equity framework to ensure all residents are considered; recommending projects that embrace the “8 to 80” vision; and presenting a final plan that is a reflection of community needs and best practices. The goals which underpin this vision include increasing ridership, enhancing connectivity, generating positive economic impact, protecting the environment, advancing equity, enhancing health, and increasing safety and livability.

Carrboro started with a bike network of about 3 miles in 1985, and has since grown to a network of 27 miles in 2020. About 11 miles of that growth (~50%) has occurred in the past 15 years. The current bicycle network is shown here. Further assessment of existing conditions through the planning process covered equity (race, poverty, vehicle access, English proficiency, education, and age), safety (crash data), and identification of key destinations and analysis of current on road conditions for cyclists through the use of the Level of Traffic Stress methodology.



There are a number of opportunities and constraints which affect the development of the bicycle network in Carrboro. While the majority of streets have moderate levels of traffic and speed, NC Hwy 54 poses a considerable physical barrier to travel by non-automobile modes both due to the size of the facility but also the speed and volume of traffic. Topography presents another challenge in Carrboro, even on the low-speed and low-volume residential streets, which can serve as low-stress bicycle routes. Despite these challenges, there are a number of regional connections both north and west into Orange County but also south into Chatham County. Because of these, Carrboro often serves as a popular staging area for long distance group rides. Carrboro also has a compact development pattern, which can help facilitate travel by bicycle.

COMMUNITY INPUT & SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

Community input was a continuous effort throughout the planning process. The steering committee was the first element, which included both local community members and regional transportation partners from other public agencies. A public input survey was developed and debuted at the 2019 Carrboro Open Streets event. Throughout the course of plan development, over four-hundred responses were received. Additional outreach was conducted to a wide array of groups including: local bike advocates, local middle school biking teams, long-time Carrboro residents, the Rogers Road community, the Karen and Burmese-speaking community (with translation). El Centro Hispano hosted a Spanish-language survey for a period of two months and received over 50 responses.

The survey and public outreach helped assess the confidence of local residents (from Strong and Fearless to No Way, No How) which, along with the LTS analysis, helps inform the types of facilities that are recommended in the bicycle network plan.



Support from our key partners as well as Town programs and policies are also needed to supplement the infrastructure projects recommended. Key local partners include the Town of Chapel Hill, as well as local Bike Advocacy Groups, local bike shops, the broader business community, as well as non-profit organizations.

A number of key strategic priorities have been identified to support the infrastructure project recommendations. These are:

- » **Expand Bike Parking** - High quality and convenient bike parking is needed to encourage ridership. Carrboro will work on expanding these requirements.
- » **Shared Mobility Policy** - Shared Mobility is a new topic including both bikeshare and scooters. A specific policy is needed in order to be able to regulate properly the operations of shared mobility providers within Carrboro.
- » **Tactical Urbanism** - A process should be developed to allow for the piloting of new infrastructure projects championed by local community members.
- » **Bicycle Wayfinding** - Enhancing wayfinding for bicycle routes is an efficient and effective way to designate bicycle routes and make it easier for people on bicycles to navigate around Carrboro.
- » **Safe Routes to School** - Carrboro should continue work from the 2012 SRTS plan with the aim of increasing the number of students who bike to school.



NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS & PRIORITIES

The culmination of the planning process is the set of network recommendations for improvements throughout Carrboro. These are based on a number of factors, including: previous plans, public input & survey results, staff input, guidance from NCDOT, input from the plan's Steering Committee, fieldwork, plus equity, safety and LTS analysis. Facility types in the recommended bike network include Shared Use Paths, Bike Lanes, Separated Bike Lanes, Neighborways, and Private Connections.

From the recommended bikeway network, the strategic priorities are identified based on crash data, network connectivity, demand, gap closures, racial equity, and low stress opportunities. These are:

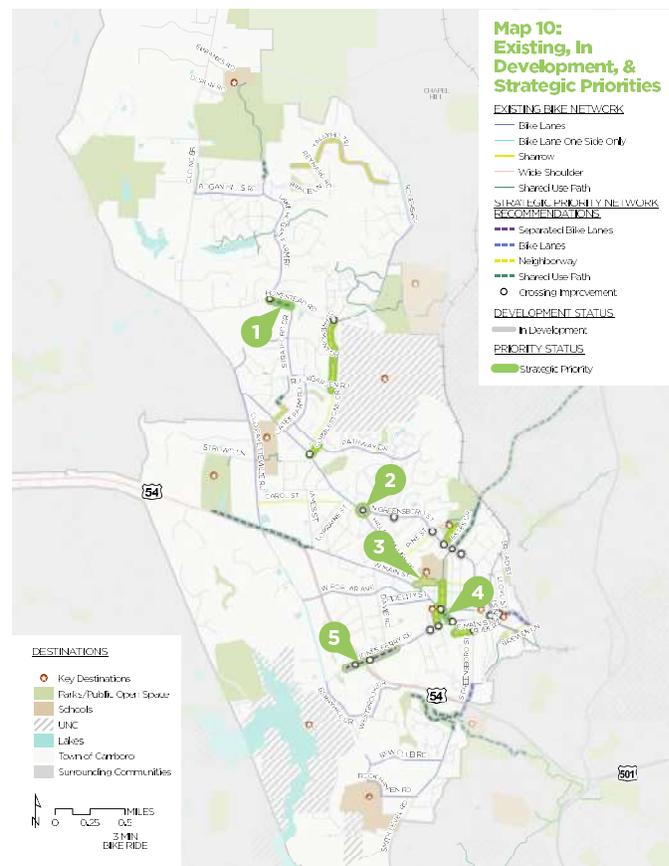
1. **Homestead Road** - A low stress facility, such as a sidepath, with crossing improvements is needed to connect the Lake Hogan Farms network with the central network. Long-term recommendations extend this path further east, into Chapel Hill.
2. **Hillsborough Road at N Greensboro Street** - Crossing improvements such as conflict markings, curb radii modification, marked crosswalk and signalization are needed.
3. **Shelton Street** - A contraflow lane can be used to provide connectivity from Hillsborough Road to Carrboro Elementary School. Long-term recommendations extend this connection eastward, to the Frances Shetley Bike Path.
4. **W Main Street between W Weaver Street and Jones Ferry Road** - There is a gap in the bike lane network that needs to be filled, and can be done by reallocating existing roadway space. Long-term recommendations

include additional improvements such as bike boxes, intersection conflict markings, and curb separated bike lanes.

5. **Jones Ferry Road** - Coordination with NCDOT on the installation of a protected bike lane here can help provide a framework for installation in other parts of Town. The long-term recommendation is curb separated bike lanes in both directions.

Five other strategic priorities (not ordered) are also identified due to their ease of implementation. All of these priority projects are neighborways.

- » **Cobblestone Drive-Colfax Road**
- » **Laurel Avenue**
- » **West Carr Street**
- » **Williams Street**
- » **Elm Street**



LOOKING TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

There is lots to be done in working to implement the plan. The Town's Transportation Advisory Board (in coordination with other Boards) will play a role in identifying local priorities beyond the strategic priorities. Town Staff should work with NCDOT and the DCHC MPO to help identify potential funding sources and programs, whether they be state or federal. Local residents can use the plan to understand what to look forward to and can even work among their neighbors to help champion projects they support. Potential funding sources or avenues to implementation are outlined below.

- » **Federal Sources for bicycle/pedestrian projects** such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), the Surface Transportation Program (STPDA), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HISP), and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).
- » **State prioritization is a data driven process** by which NCDOT evaluates and ranks projects to be considered for funding. NCDOT begins this process every two to three years to develop the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), a ten-year transportation investment plan. Since state DOTs administer federal funds, the STIP provides the main source of funding for local transportation projects. It is a multi-step competitive process.
- » **NCDOT's Complete Streets policy** can also be a route to implementation for bicycle projects along an existing roadway. It is crucial to note that the policy only applies to highway projects that receive funding through the State Transportation Improvement

Program (STIP). Carrboro should consider the tradeoffs of submitting a highway project, as the associated improvements are generally focused on enhancing the capacity of the roadway. Adding more lanes can both induce new driving demand and make for a less inviting experience for people biking and walking along the street.

- » **Grants from other organizations**, such as non-profits, can provide other smaller sources of funding for local projects.
- » The Town should use its **Capital Improvement Plan** and budget to fund local projects. Additional revenues may be found from development impact fees.
- » Local neighborhoods and other advocacy groups could look at organizing **fundraising campaigns** to help support implementation of projects.

The goals outlined in the first chapter of the plan are also reflect in the performance metrics. These metrics are bicycle counts, bicycle travel time, sales tax receipts, motor vehicle trips, housing & transportation index, % of children & adults who meet physical activity recommendations, crash data, and jobs accessible within 15 minutes by bike.

The plan ends with five key priorities to look towards as Carrboro moves into the implementation phase:

- 1. Keep momentum on projects that are underway;**
- 2. Use equity to inform local priorities;**
- 3. Focus on strategic priority projects;**
- 4. Build incrementally over time;**
- 5. Work with partners to implement new policies.**