



## Legislation Text

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### North-South Bus Rapid Transit Traffic Analysis.

**Staff:**

Brian Litchfield, Director

Matt Cecil, Transit Development Manager

**Department:**

Transit

**Overview:** The North-South Bus Rapid Transit (NSBRT) project was initiated in January 2014 as one of the results of the Chapel Hill 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The study is managed by Chapel Hill Transit and guided by a Policy Committee, Technical Committee, Transit Partners Committee and a substantial public involvement process. During its [January 16, 2019 <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3838442&GUID=913FECA8-4404-458A-A486-EFF5EA2AE2C3&Options=&Search=>](https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3838442&GUID=913FECA8-4404-458A-A486-EFF5EA2AE2C3&Options=&Search=>) Council Meeting, the Council adopted an updated Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the NSBRT project and asked staff to conduct a traffic analysis to evaluate converting or constructing dedicated bus-only lanes between Eubanks Road and North Street along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The LPA is the transitway alternative that the project sponsor (Town of Chapel Hill) and stakeholders prefer and expect to be competitive and achieve support at the federal level. The LPA is a general description of the type of transit that will be used (mode), runningway (curb running, median, dedicated lane, mixed traffic, etc.) and the location (alignment and termini). The LPA definition is general; LPA design specifics and definition of additional elements of the project, including station locations, are decided during subsequent engineering and planning efforts.

Identification of an LPA is a critical step in pursuit of federal funding. The selection of an LPA tells the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) which alternative the local agency (Chapel Hill Transit) expects to be the most competitive in achieving support at the local, regional, and federal levels. It is expected that Chapel Hill Transit will pursue federal funding for the NSBRT project through the FTA Small Starts program.

Following a review of the January 16, 2019, LPA, the FTA notified Chapel Hill Transit that a final LPA, defining construct or convert for the section of the corridor between Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to North Street needed to be adopted in order for the project to stay in Project Development and move forward in the federal funding process.

During the [October 16, 2019 <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17065/113?curm=10&cury=2019>](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17065/113?curm=10&cury=2019>), Council Work Session, project staff presented the Council with the current traffic analysis information. Council requested additional traffic information, including potential mode shift data (note that NCDOT does not allow mode shift when considering traffic impacts of transit projects). Kimley-Horn will present the results of the additional analysis, which is consistent with NCDOT guidance and requirements, during the work session.

The Chapel Hill Transit Partners Committee endorsed the recommended LPA at their April 28, 2020 meeting.

**Next Steps:** To stay in the federal funding process, complete 30% design and the necessary

environmental evaluation required by FTA, , Council will need to adopt a final LPA, confirming the preferred bus running-way between Eubanks Road and North Street. Following tonight's work session, staff and its consultant will draft a final LPA for Council to consider at an upcoming meeting.



**Recommendation(s):**

That the Council receive the results of the traffic analysis, recommendation on a final LPA, and provide feedback.

**Background:**

- On [October 16, 2019](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17065/113?)  [<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17065/113? >](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17065/113?) the Council received preliminary results on the NSBRT traffic analysis.
- On [January 16, 2019](https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3838442&GUID=913FECA8-4404-458A-A486-EFF5EA2AE2C3&Options=&Search=>)  [<https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3838442&GUID=913FECA8-4404-458A-A486-EFF5EA2AE2C3&Options=&Search=> >](https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3838442&GUID=913FECA8-4404-458A-A486-EFF5EA2AE2C3&Options=&Search=>), the Council adopted an updated LPA for the NSBRT Project.
- On April 27, 2016  [<http://chapelhill.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=chapelhill\\_007789065cf9eb618e7bdb4fa7372a3b.pdf&view=1> >](http://chapelhill.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=chapelhill_007789065cf9eb618e7bdb4fa7372a3b.pdf&view=1), the Council adopted the LPA with three (3) running-way options for the northern section of the NSBRT Project.
- On November 9, 2015  [<http://chapelhill.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=7&event\\_id=440&meta\\_id=109516> >](http://chapelhill.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=7&event_id=440&meta_id=109516), the Council received an update on the NSBRT Project.

**Fiscal Impact/Resources:** The NSBRT is in the Federal Small Starts Program which will fund up to \$100M of project costs, non-Federal funds for this project are available through the Orange County Transit Plan funds.



**Attachments:**

- Draft Staff Presentation

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**The Agenda will reflect the text below and/or the motion text will be used during the meeting.**

PRESENTER: Matt Cecil, Transit Development Manager  
Representatives from Kimley-Horn and AECOM

The purpose of this item is for the North South Bus Rapid Transit (NSBRT) consultant team to present the results of a traffic analysis associated with the NSBRT project and provide a recommended LPA.