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3 **MINUTES**
4 **ORANGE UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION BOARD**
5 **MAY 20, 2015**
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8 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Paul Guthrie, Chair and Chapel Hill Township Representative; Alex Castro, Vice-Chair and
9 Bingham Township Representative; Brantley Wells, Hillsborough Township Representative; Heidi Perry, At-
10 Large Representative; Ted Triebel, Little River Township Representative; Art Menius, At-Large Representative;
11 Ed Vaughn, Cedar Grove Township Representative; Gary Saunders, At-Large Representative; David Laudicina,
12 At-Large Representative; Amy Cole, At-Large Representative, Tom Magnuson, At-Large Representative, John
13 Rubin, At-Large Representative

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15 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Eno Township Representative - Vacant;
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18 **PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT:** Abigaile Pittman, Transportation/Land Use Planner; Bret Martin,
19 Transportation Planner; Peter Murphy, OPT Transportation Administrator; Erica Gray, Administrative Assistant II;
20 Debra Graham, Administrative Assistant III.
21

22 **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/OPT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Lucina Munger (Library Dept.), Janice Tyler
23 (Aging Dept.), Donna King (Health Dept.), Robert Gilmore (Dept. of Social Services)
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25 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Matt Day, Triangle Area Regional Planning Organization (TARPO), Gail Alberti, Bonnie
26 Hauser, Jeff Charles, John Rees
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29 **AGENDA ITEM I: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL; INTRODUCTIONS**
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32 **AGENDA ITEM II: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MARCH 18, 2015 AND APRIL 15, 2015**
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34 March 18, 2015 Minutes
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36 Bret Martin: Line 171 should read, The NCDOT State Management Plan they developed to tell the FTA...".
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38 **MOTION** made to approve March 18, 2015 minutes by Art Menius. Seconded by Alex Castro.
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40 **Vote:** Unanimous
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42 April 15, 2015 Minutes
43

44 Alex Castro: Line 53 should read," We have a group of expert bicyclists which include Heidi, Jeff, John, Cliff,
45 Tom and another lady." Line 184 should read, "On Martin Luther King, north of Estes".
46

47 David Laudicina: Line 128 should read, "Aren't most car dealers in Durham County?"
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49 **MOTION** made to approve April 15, 2015 minutes with corrections by Alex Castro. Seconded by Heidi Perry.
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51 **Vote:** Unanimous
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54 **AGENDA ITEM III: CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONS OF THE AGENDA**

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56 No additions to the Agenda were made.

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59 **AGENDA ITEM IV: TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, ORANGE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (OPT)**

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A. TRANSPORTATION RELATED TECHNOLOGIES – Review of new transportation related technologies for promoting public transportation commuting alternative (Peter Murphy)

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Peter Murphy: Reviewed Power Point presentation on Transportation Related Technologies: Passenger callback systems; Mobile data terminals; Automated passenger counts; AVL route prediction software.

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Alex Castro: Do you have money for implementing new technologies or would you request additional funds?

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Peter Murphy: We would need to put in a request for additional funds. Continued presentation.

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Tom Magnuson: I suggest that you have the cost savings of these technologies as another aspect of the presentation.

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Alex Castro: Can these technologies tie into the trip planner? I understand that would cost an additional fee, is that right?

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Peter Murphy: I don't recall the numbers but we can certainly look into it.

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Art Menius: The interactive voice response and mobile data terminals, both on functionality and savings, seem like the top two priorities.

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Ted Triebel: Data for data sake is somewhat of information overload. I think you should be looking at what data is most usable for efficiency and effectiveness; i.e., how best do you use the resources that you have.

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Paul Guthrie: Find out what would build a platform of information so you can improve the system. You have to decide what will help you now and build a platform for the future.

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Robert Gilmore: From a perspective of a citizen, the data and transit systems are good, but what I have found is that they are not convenient for people who need to use it before 7:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. We also need be able to move people more quickly.

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Peter Murphy: We are talking about technology here. As far as the growth plan for OPT, absolutely, we are going to look at starting routes earlier in the morning.

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Robert Gilmore: With the transit system in our rural areas, it is not unusual for people to have to walk several miles to get to a bus stop. If a person is walking a long way, that is not really helpful. Will that change? Also, will shelters be provided?

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Heidi Perry: When they are ready to expand, perhaps there is some way to identify the places this would make the most sense. If they were living in higher density neighborhoods and working in high density places, we should make a list so that when the bus is ready to expand, you will know where it should expand.

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Bret Martin: Many of the services we have identified funding for that will be rolled out were designed to fill gaps. Most of our fixed route services are concentrated in the central part of the county where you have a lot more density. There are also services being extended to the rural services.

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107 Tom Magnuson: Could staff do layers from the GIS software showing where the low income housing, schools,
108 the retirement homes and all the potential users? If we can get that information then the ridership would
109 improve?

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111 Bret Martin: For transit, we did that by Census Block, and that went into the development of the routes to make
112 sure we are targeting the correct places.

113

114 Janice T: The passenger callback technology would be great for seniors. The mobile data terminals would be
115 helpful but if we are looking to access the boomers and others, the trip planner is a key piece of technology.

116

117 Janice T: I want to put in a plug for the volunteer driver program which would complement the OPT system.

118

119 Gail Alberti: Asked if people who don't have smart phones are taken into account.

120

121 Robert Gilmore: Thanked OPT for having been very supportive in working with DSS on employment job fairs for
122 Orange County. They have helped provide services to our community.

123

124 **OUTBoard Action:** Received and reviewed information, provided comments.

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127 **AGENDA ITEM 5: REGULAR AGENDA (ACTION ITEMS)**

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129 **A. ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PRIORITY LIST** – The Board of
130 County Commissioners (BOCC) transportation projects for the Burlington-
131 Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO), Durham-Chapel Hill-
132 Carrboro (DCHC) MPO, and the Triangle Rural Planning organization (TARPO to
133 be submitted for consideration of inclusion in the 2018-2027 Statewide
134 Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). (Bret Martin).

135

136 **OUTBoard Action:** Staff recommends that the Board consider and recommend
137 to the BOCC the list of priority transportation projects for each MPO/RPO to be
138 submitted for consideration of inclusion in the 2018-2027 State Transportation
139 Improvement Program (STIP).

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141 BGMPO List

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143 Bret Martin: Reviewed list of priority transportation projects.

144

145 Heidi Perry: Questioned rationale for submitting projects.

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147 Bret Martin: Explained submission selection and prioritization. BGMPO and TARPO each get 12 new projects,
148 and DCHC MPO get 14 new projects. The funding decisions are up to NCDOT scoring of the projects.

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150 Paul Guthrie: Even if we know they will score low, it is better to submit such projects so that we can have it on
151 the public record that they are a local priority.

152

153 Bret Martin: It is true that if you don't submit a project because it doesn't currently score well, it might be difficult
154 to include it in later years if it has not been previously included and it doesn't get carried forward.

155

156 Paul Guthrie: Also, there may be a tactical advantage because these low scoring projects are much less
157 expensive than most of the ones that scored well and are prioritized on the STIP. So if some of the expensive
158 ones don't happen for some reason, there could be an argument for letting one of these less expensive ones go
159 forward.

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Bret Martin: Answered general questions about the proposed BGMPO projects. He explained how the proposed Mattress Factory Road interchange is related to the planned improvements for Mebane Oaks Road to the west in Mebane. He explained that the focus of all the projects was economic development.

MOTION made) by Alex Castro to approve the recommended BGMPO list to the BOCC to submit to the MPOs and RPOs for consideration of inclusion in the 2018-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Seconded by Art Menius.

Vote: Unanimous

TARPO List

Bret Martin: Reviewed list of priority transportation projects.

Bonnie Hauser: Asked whether consideration has been given to improving the connection of Efland-Cedar Grove Road to US 70 and the interstate, which would improve economic development in Efland.

Heidi Perry: Asked about making adjustments to the scoring methodology to improve prioritization of bike and pedestrian projects.

Bret Martin: Explained that for SPOT 3.0 it had been allowed that Divisions and Regions come up with their own highway scoring criteria, which improved the scoring of some widening projects and allowed for bike lanes. This was done in the eastern portion of the state, but here we have to get 6 different MPOs and RPOs to approve this. It is possible but strategically complex.

Heidi Perry: I don't think I can support the NC 54 widening or alternative operational improvements project unless you take out the word 'widening' and use 'alternative operational improvements' because I feel like a four-lane divided highway is excessive.

Alex Castro: I agree. The simple answer for improvements on NC 54 in Carrboro is signals.

Bret Martin: The Town of Carrboro is support of that. That is the direction we are looking to see if we can address the problem with signals first. DOT is looking at the problem for a long term solution. If you add storage for left and right lanes, you have pretty much added a lane so that is an issue as well.

Paul Guthrie: One of the problems is the conflict between having this process where you put things on a list a long time in advance so they will be done, and the fact that in a very high growth area, that is not good enough. That road is in a high growth area. This process we have here hurts the ability to do long range planning in the sense you have to force this thing and you usually build the wrong thing as a temporary fix. The idea of traffic lights will work.

Art Menius: I'm not as confident that the growth is going to continue due to the land locked nature of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, considering the rural buffer. More importantly I am doubtful given the tenor of the state university that the university or hospital will be adding jobs at the rate they have in the last 20 years.

MOTION made by Alex Castro to approve recommendation with changes to 1 and 2 with no 'widening' and only alternative operational improvements' on the NC 54 projects. Seconded by Art Menius.

Vote: 1 opposed (David Laudicina).

MOTION made by Heidi Perry to validate the discussion about scoring with regard to highway projects in order to improve the scoring for bike/ped projects. Seconded by Amy Cole.

Vote: Unanimous.

213 Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro MPO list

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215 Bret Martin: Reviewed list of priority transportation projects.

216

217 Paul Guthrie: Does the STIP process allow you to articulate one of the reasons why there is such a problem
218 right above 15/501 on I-40 westbound? Namely, they lose a lane, it drops to two lanes and it backs up for miles.
219 I realize in this scoring game that doesn't play out, but that road is not adequate to receive the traffic coming into
220 it.

221

222 Bret Martin: Safety is a component of the scoring but that is only along the segment of the road that is
223 considered, not a segment remote from the project.

224

225 Heidi Perry: You said I-85's widening was taken off the STIP because traffic had not increased the way NCDOT
226 had predicted it would, so why do we expect the traffic on I-40 to increase? And NCDOT doesn't think the
227 building of the light rail will alleviate the traffic on I-40?

228

229 Bret Martin: Because traffic on I-40 has increased. On I-85, the traffic hasn't really increased. Who uses I-40?
230 It is Alamance County commuters, and on NC 54 it's Alamance County commuters and Western Orange County
231 going to Chapel Hill. They are using I-40 to go to RTP and south Durham, etc. Look at the major employment
232 destinations and look at the origins and growing residential origins in Orange County, explains a lot of it.
233 Downtown Durham and Duke are big employment hubs, and I-85 is the connection to that, but the traffic is not
234 really growing, but on I-40 it is. I-40 is pretty much at capacity from NC 86 to 15/501.

235

236 Heidi Perry: When you add more lanes, don't you bring more cars?

237

238 Bret Martin: That is something what happens. This is usually assessed with the cumulative impacts assessment
239 of NEPA environmental impact assessment for a STIP project. Chapel Hill and Carrboro are not accepting the
240 growth they were expected to accept but maybe should accept in order to bring people closer to their jobs.
241 Alamance County's growth is exploding, with a very strong commuting relationship with the Triangle. Some of
242 this has been absorbed by Chatham County, and north of Pittsboro.

243

244 Heidi Perry: When I read this, I see that the main scoring thing is that you are improving the level of service, and
245 the cost benefit looks good because you are improving the level of service, but you are really not, you're just
246 bringing more cars into the service and spreading it out more. It seems you are double scoring.

247

248 Bret Martin: But if it costs in congestion scores, it basically double counts congestion as a score.

249

250 Paul Guthrie: If a road becomes less usable, what happens? They go to another road. That puts pressure on
251 mass transit, utility systems, and all kinds of things that come off this. We are next door to one of the fastest
252 growing cities in America. We are at the crisis point of how we handle the future in transportation.

253

254 Amy Cole: I want to make sure I get my plug in for these projects. Numbers 13, 14 and 16. Numbers 13 and 16
255 are tied together as projects to help out with the Safe Routes to School program and scoring seems significantly
256 different. Item 14, this project was scoring much higher. I want to ensure that stays on the list so that at some
257 point it happens.

258

259 Alex Castro: I agree. I don't understand why 13, 14 and 16, particularly 13 and 14 which are in the Orange
260 County Safe Routes Action Plan aren't higher priority. They have higher scoring.

261

262 Bret Martin: This is not a scoring list, just a list that will be submitted to the BOCC. Because we are so limited
263 on the projects we can submit for scoring, we might be in the position of needing to prioritize before we submit
264 so that we can tell them which ones are more important to us locally. If the SPOT 4.0 committee determines that

265 pre-prioritization of projects will be necessary, we will return to the OUTBoard in August so that we can then
266 make the BOCC's calendar in September.

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268 **MOTION** made by Art Menius to recommend the DCHC MPO project list. Seconded by Ed Vaughn.

269 **Vote:** Unanimous.

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AGENDA ITEM 5, CONTINUED

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B. BICYCLE SAFETY – Continuation of the Board's April 15 discussion regarding the plan to address the Board of County Commissioners petition related to bicycle safety (Attachment 1). The Draft Bicycle Plan is provided as Attachment 2. (Heidi Perov, Abigaille Pittman).

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OUTBoard Action: Receive and review information, provide comments, and forward to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) with, or without a recommendation of endorsement.

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281 Heidi Perry: Stated that the goal is to have a draft document/resolution at the end of the meeting to present to
282 the BOCC.

283

284 Art Menius: I appreciate both Bonnie Hauser's concerns and the official report which does a wonderful job of
285 balancing the interest of bicyclists and motorists sharing safe driving responsibilities.

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287 Heidi Perry: Reviewed the document, several minor edits.

288

289 Bonnie Hauser: Submitted a written statement regarding the Report (copy attached to Minutes). She stated she
290 met with Lauren Blackburn, NCDOT, Bike/Pedestrian Division and discussed:

291

- Vocabulary for bikers and motorist and it being more urban based;
- Urban centers are the biggest problems;
- Secondary roads have higher speed with no bike lanes;
- Road designs or laws that support sharing the road safely and it will take a long time to fix.

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296 She stated that the bike problem has not been solved which is why this work has been done, to provide insight.
297 It is important for Commissioners understand the problem, and understand that if it is addressed just as a
298 Bike/Ped thing we will not fix the problem. It takes \$500,000/mile to add bike lanes and there are 900 miles of
299 road in rural Orange County. Much of this is not in county jurisdiction it is state jurisdiction. She stated that she
300 would like the OUTBoard to acknowledge rural roads separately from things done in urban areas and that rural
301 roads need special attention.

302

303 Paul Guthrie: Asked what kinds of things on rural roads would be useful short of barring bicycles.

304

305 Bonnie Hauser: 1) 2-foot shoulders are not helping. It is adding bicyclists to the road and not allowing motorists
306 to pass safely; 2) Many of the lines are not properly/evenly drawn and this really needs to be looked at; 3) Her
307 group asked Chuck Edwards, NCDOT, to look at five dangerous hills and curves, and he is going to consider 4-6
308 foot wide safety shoulders on the road where there is a poor line of sight and where motorists can pass safely
309 and bicyclists have somewhere to go; and 4) We could pilot a concept for a new kind of complete streets model
310 for secondary roads.

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312 Alex Castro: Referred to page 34, item 15 of the Draft Plan which specifically addresses this.

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314 **MOTION** made by Ted Triebel to approve this report, with the edits, and to forward it to the BOCC for their
315 information and endorsement. Seconded by Alex Castro.

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Vote: Unanimous

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AGENDA ITEM VI: STAFF UPDATES

A. MOUNTAINS TO SEA NORTH CAROLINA STATE TRAIL DRAFT MASTER PLAN
[HTTP://WWW.NCMOUNTAINSTSEA.ORG/](http://www.ncmountainstsea.org/)

Abigaile Pittman: Comments are being accepted on the Draft Master Plan for the Mountains to Sea North Carolina State Trail. They are accepting comments. I have provided a link but can also send a PDF file if any of you would like. There are approximately 600 miles already constructed with 400 in final planning stages to go to construction. Public meetings will continue until June.

B. ENO MOUNTAIN ROAD RELOCATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

Abigaile Pittman: Staff undertook a feasibility study via a consultant for a connectivity problem on Eno Mountain Road. The road is a connector between the south and western Hillsborough and carries about 3400 vehicles a day and intersects with Orange Grove Road.

AGENDA ITEM VII: BOARD COMMENTS

AGENDA ITEM VIII: ADJOURNMENT. THERE IS NO MEETING IN JUNE OR JULY.

MOTION was made by Alex Castro. Heidi Perry seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous

Paul Guthrie, Chair

Attachment to May 20, 2015 OUTBoard Minutes

Statement to OUTBoard on Bicycle Safety Plan May 20th, 2015

I am Bonnie Hauser, and I am speaking on behalf of the Rural Road Safety Coalition which is an active coalition of Orange County cyclists, motorists, and public safety leaders – including rural fire departments and emergency medical professionals. NC DOT and Highway Patrol work with us on an advisory basis. Gail Alberti, Bryant Dodson and I co-chair the coalition.

Our goal is to improve rural road safety, and our slogan is “Share the Road goes Two Ways”. Gail Alberti initially participated in OUTBoard’s meetings but was unable to continue due to personal issues. So we are providing comments for the record – to reflect our view of the issues that we believe are impacting the “culture of cooperation” on roads in unincorporated Orange County. Please include our comments in your report to the county commissioners.

Growing popularity of recreational cycling combined with situational factors contribute to growing tensions between cyclists and motorists in rural areas. Secondary road design and outdated motorist and cyclist laws impede the culture of sharing. Town models for “complete streets” and bike lanes are impractical, and more focus is needed on responsibilities for sharing the road safely. We have engaged with cyclists and motorists all over Orange County and find that there is strong interest in improving road safety for everyone.

The issues are complex and challenging. We appreciate the good work that OUTBoard has done, and hope our comments will help to add insight into the work that’s needed.

Thousands of cyclists from all over the Triangle use Orange County’s rural roads, primarily for recreational purposes. Cyclists share the road with cars, trucks and school buses running at speeds of 45 MPH or higher. Most of our roads have narrow shoulders or no shoulders at all.

Passing safely is the key issue. Impatient motorists are passing at unsafe times – increasing the risk of head on collisions with oncoming motorists. The recent addition of 2 foot shoulders have made matters worse by attracting more cyclists to our highest traffic roads – and are too narrow for motorists to safely pass a cyclist. Since full bike lanes are impractical for secondary roads, our coalition has been working with DOT to explore the option of wide safety shoulders at blind hills and curves.

Passing safely is a complex issue and will require careful planning. Options we are exploring include:

- Safety shoulders at blind hills and curves
- A county-wide speed limit of 45 MPH
- Maps and materials to encourage cyclists to use roads with less traffic
- Long term investment in alternative recreational greenway infrastructure for cyclists and other recreational users (hikers and equestrian) This could include off road trails, utility rights-of-way, or very wide road shoulders designed for recreational use.

Some of these ideas are noted in OUTBoard’s report.

Current laws for motorists and cyclists are outdated and contradictory when it comes to sharing the road safely. Impeding traffic is the biggest issue – and motorist law is insufficient. Other issues include running stop signs, failing to signal, stopping in the middle of the road, and failing to stop for emergency vehicles. These actions carry heavy penalties for motorists – but there are no consequences for cyclists. New laws may be needed governing licensing, tags, insurance, and allowing children on dangerous secondary roads. We are pursuing these topics with the NC legislature through HB 232 or an alternative – and welcome OUTBoard’s input and support.

The greatest irritant for motorists is pelotons – large groups of cyclists who span the entire width of the lane, prohibiting safe passage by cars. There is a perception of entitlement in these large groups and a lack of road etiquette that includes disregard of laws and other road users. These behaviors create unsafe conditions and undermine the “culture of sharing” that most road users would like to see.

Our coalition has started working with Highway Patrol to set up directed safety patrols – where citations will be issued to motorists and cyclists who violate current laws. For the long term, state laws need an update, which is the subject of HB 232.

The county’s maps are outdated and encourage cyclists to use high traffic roads. One area where OUTBoard can immediately help is updating the county bicycling maps in a way that encourages cyclists to use roads with less traffic. This in itself is a major initiative that can greatly improve the culture of cooperation in Orange County.

Education is needed if it’s simple and focused specifically on teaching motorists and cyclists how to improve rural road safety. General cyclist safety messages may be perceived as “glossing over important issues, and could inadvertently inflame motorists and cyclists further.

Orange County’s rural roads serve a community of people going to work, getting their kids to school, and taking care of business. We believe most cyclists and motorists are committed to share the roads with respect and shared responsibility for road safety, and that short and long term actions by the legislature and NC DOT will be needed to address limitations of roads and laws.

We believe that any efforts to improve rural road safety should distinguish these rural road safety issues from general cyclist advocacy. Our coalition intends to continue to work on these issues and welcome the help and support of OUTBoard.

Thank you