

Northern Durham Parkway Alternative Evaluation

April 29, 2002



Purpose of the Meeting:

Present the alternative evaluation for the Northern Durham Parkway in response to the June 1999 Resolutions of the Durham City Council and the Durham Board of County Commissioners.

Northern Durham Parkway Alternative Evaluation

Presentation Agenda

I. History and Chronology

H. Wesley Parham, P.E.

City of Durham Transportation Division

II. Alternative Evaluation

A. Funding

Janet D'Ignazio

North Carolina Department of Transportation

Chief Planning and Environmental Officer

B. Environmental Issues

Roy Bruce, P.E.

H. W. Lochner, Inc. - Project Manager

C. Transportation Purpose and Need

Roy Bruce, P.E.

D. Findings

Janet D'Ignazio

III. Next Steps

Mark Ahrendsen, P.E.

City of Durham Transportation Division

History and Chronology

- **1967 – Durham Thoroughfare Plan developed to address future thoroughfare needs for the City of Durham**
- **Significant plan element is the proposed “Eno Drive/Gorman Road”**
- **Major plan updates in 1980 and 1991 re-evaluated and affirmed the purpose and need of the “Eno Drive” project**

History and Chronology

- **1967 to the Present**
 - **The identified corridor reserved and protected from development through zoning, site plan, and subdivision approvals**
 - **Land use plans developed and approved with an underlying transportation system plan**

History and Chronology

- **1989 -- NC General Assembly enacts Trust Fund legislation to increase State funding for improving primary transportation corridors**
- **Included in the legislation is funding for 7 urban loops in Raleigh, Durham, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Wilmington, Asheville, and Charlotte**

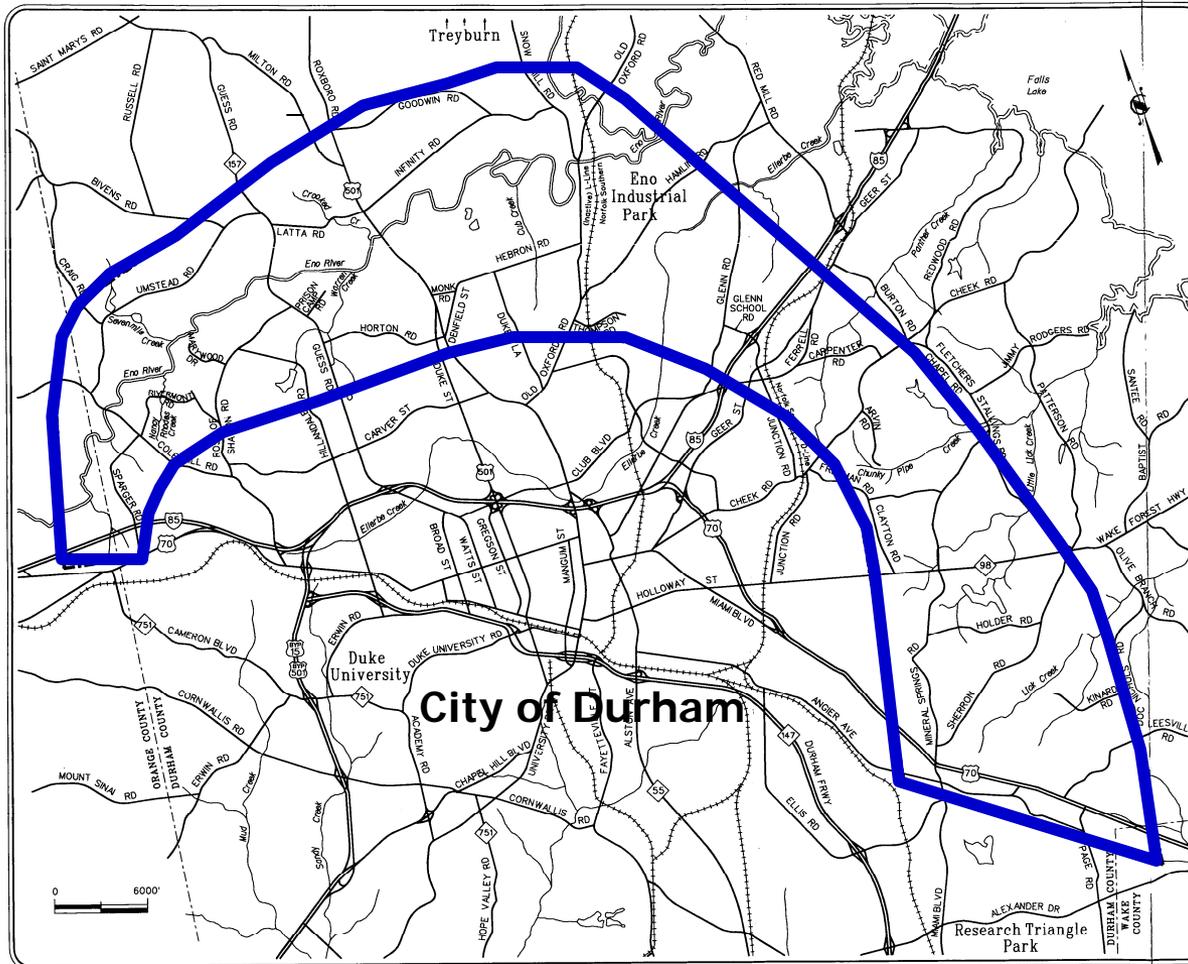
History and Chronology

- **“Funds allocated from the Trust Fund for urban loops may only be used for the urban loops”**
- **“Durham Northern Loop – Multilane facility on new location from I-85 west of Durham to US 70 east of Durham.”**
“Affected Counties Durham, Orange”

History and Chronology

- **1991 – NCDOT initiated corridor planning study and development of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**
- **22 Informational meetings/workshops (1991 – 1994)**
- **Study process encouraged suggestions for corridors to be studied**

History and Chronology



North Carolina
Department of
Transportation



Durham Northwest and Northeast Loop Corridor Study

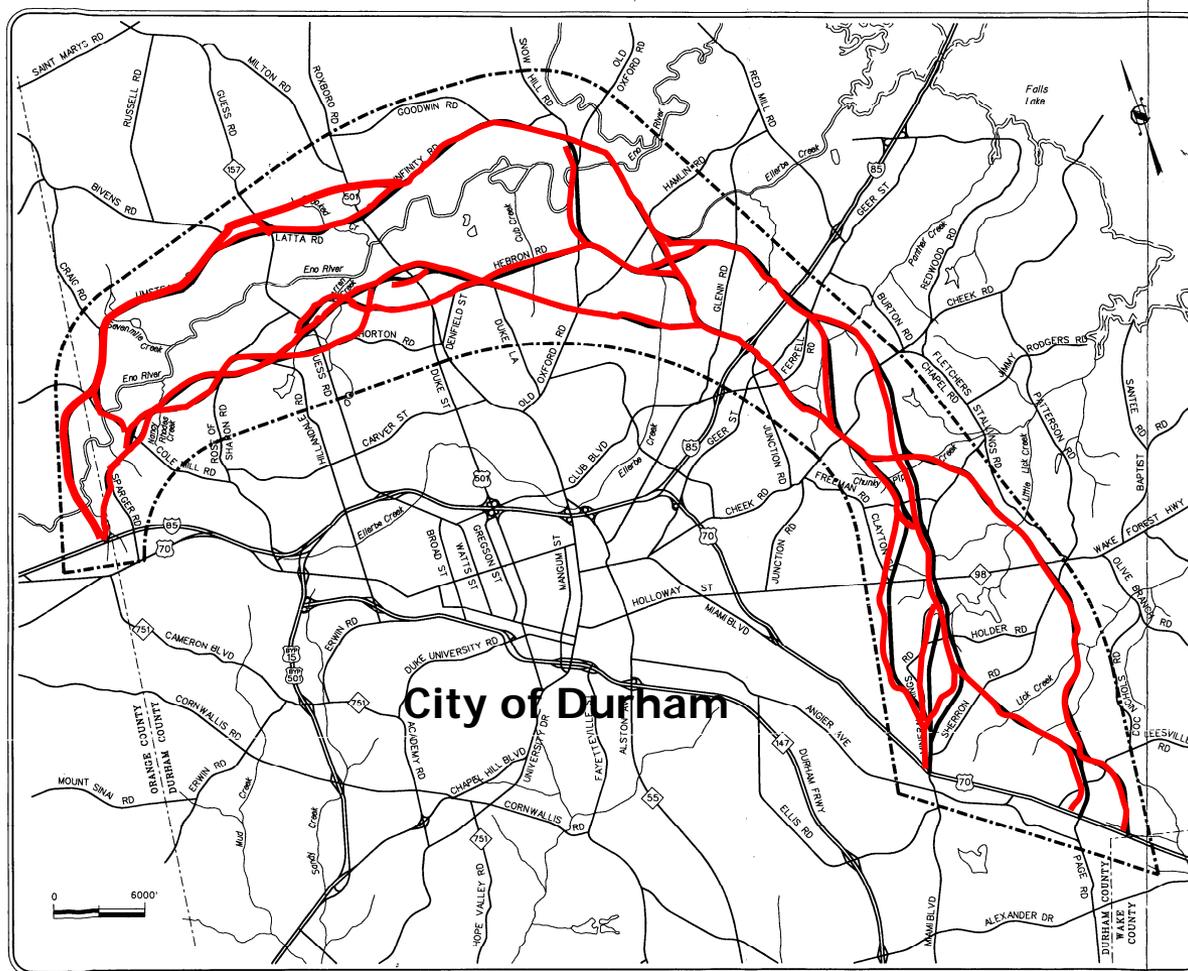
--- STUDY WINDOW
BOUNDARY

**Study
Window**

Project Study Window

Exhibit II-2

History and Chronology



North Carolina Department of Transportation 

Durham Northwest and Northeast Loop Corridor Study

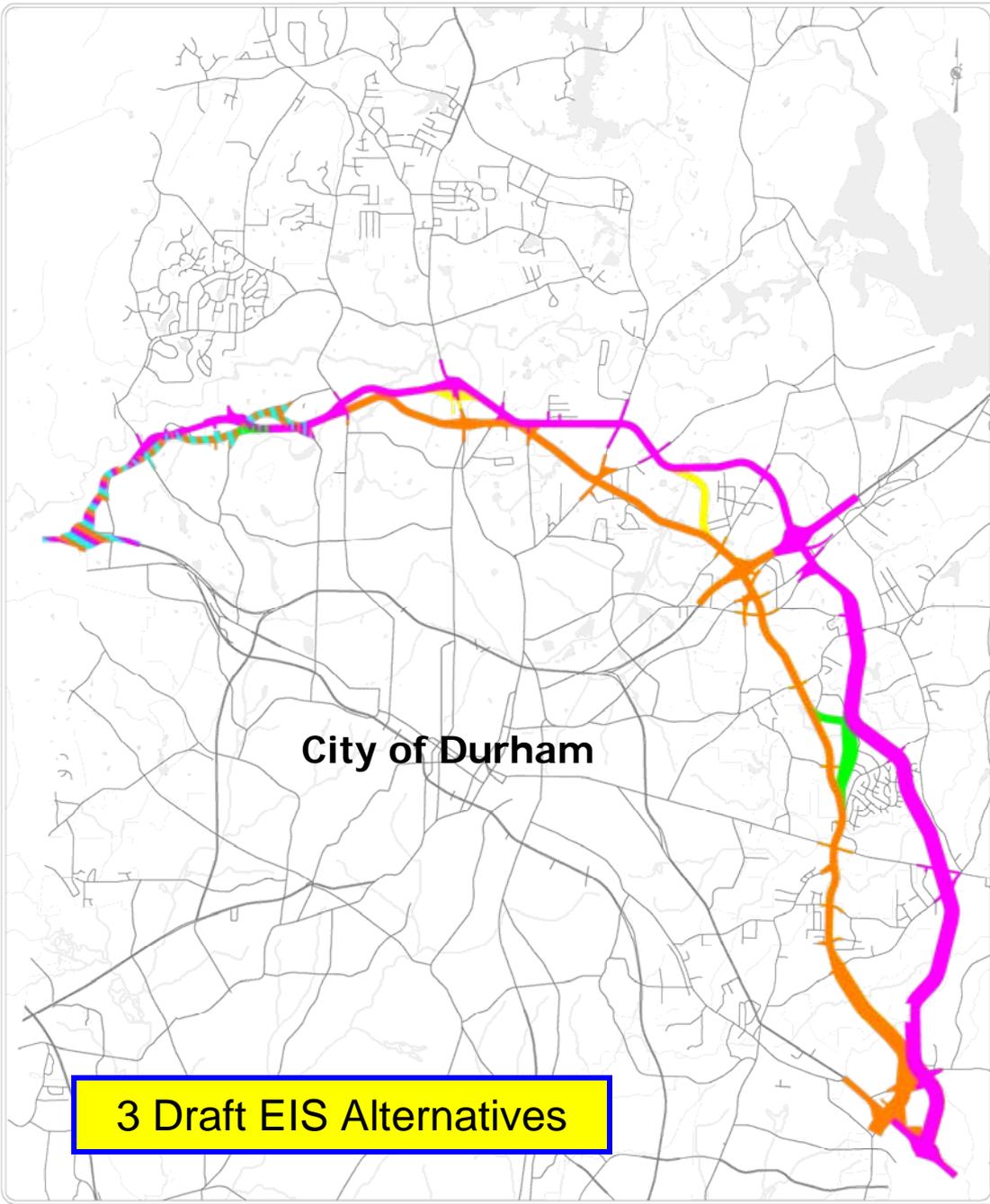
--- STUDY WINDOW BOUNDARY
— CORRIDORS

Over 1900 Alternates

Preliminary Corridor Segments

Exhibit II-3

Northern Durham Parkway



City of Durham

3 Draft EIS Alternatives

- ☐ CEMETERY
 - ▲ CHURCH
 - FIRE STATION
 - SCHOOL
 - HOSPITAL
 - LIBRARY
 - LANDFILL
 - ▲ SUPERFUND SITE
 - TRENCH BOUNDARY
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 - HISTORIC SITE ON STATE STUDY LIST
 - NH/HELAND BOUNDARY
 - LITTLE RIVER AND FALLS LAKE WATERSHED PROTECTION AREA
- NOTE: INFORMATION UPDATED ONLY WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA



- DURHAM ICCP
- NORTHERN DURHAM PARKWAY
- === MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- WATER BODIES

Environmental
Constraints Map

History and Chronology

- **1994 – Draft EIS report is released for public comment for three build alternates**
- **1995 NCDOT holds two public hearings on the studied corridors**

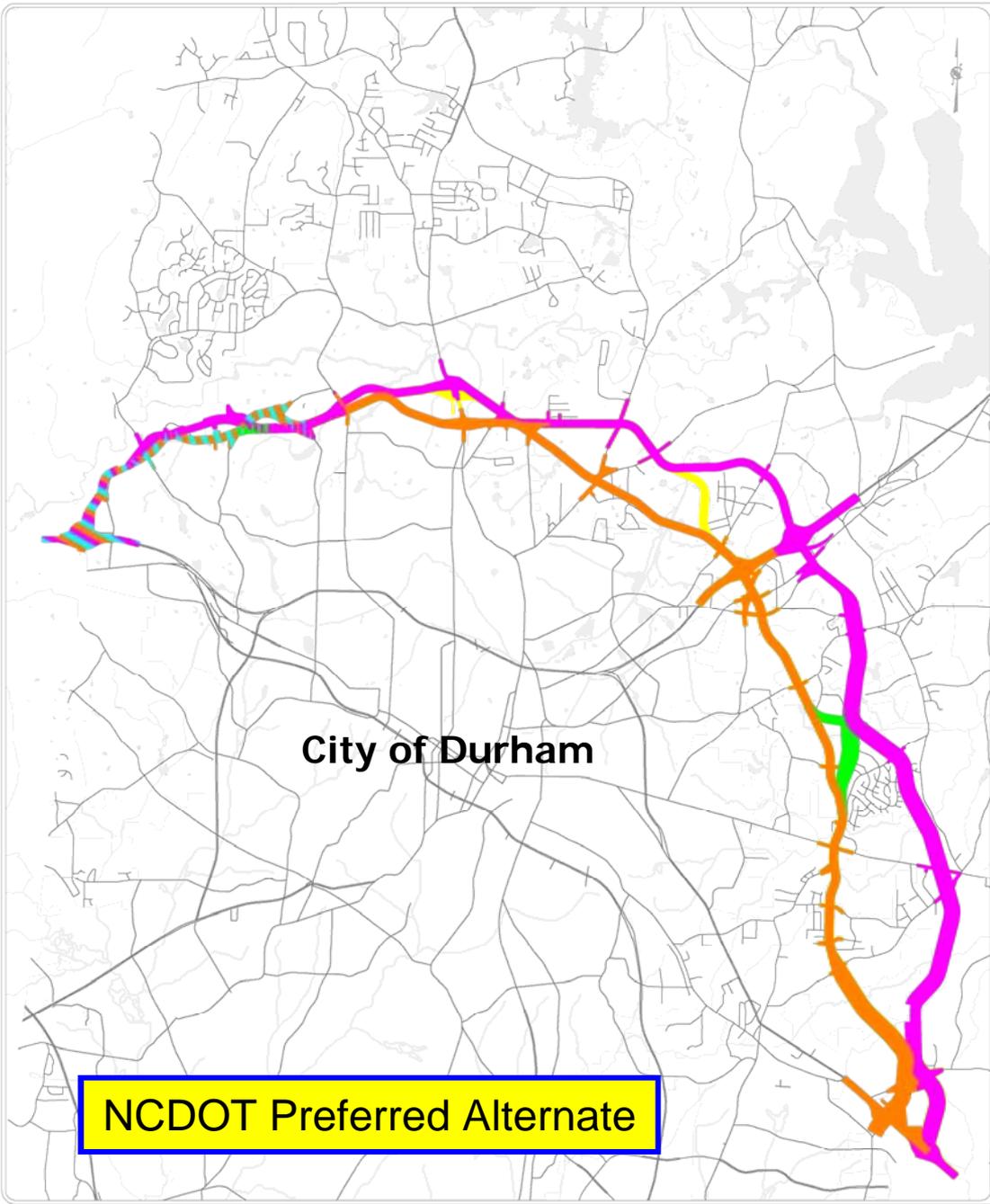
History and Chronology

- **1995 -- Durham City Council and Board of County Commissioners oppose all three alternates**
- **Endorse the establishment of a Joint City-County Committee to evaluate transportation alternatives to the Northeast/Northwest Loop**

History and Chronology

- **1996 – Alternative Committee Report completed by a locally appointed committee of business leaders, affected neighborhoods, and the Eno River Association**
- **1997 – NCDOT announced selection of Alternate 3 as the Preferred Alternative for the Northwest/Northeast Loop from US 70 to Guess Road and decided additional analysis required west of Guess Road**

Northern Durham Parkway



City of Durham

NCDOT Preferred Alternate

- ☐ CEMETERY
 - ▲ CHURCH
 - ⊙ FIRE STATION
 - ⊙ SCHOOL
 - ⊙ HOSPITAL
 - ⊙ LIBRARY
 - ⊙ LANDFILL
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Environmental
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History and Chronology

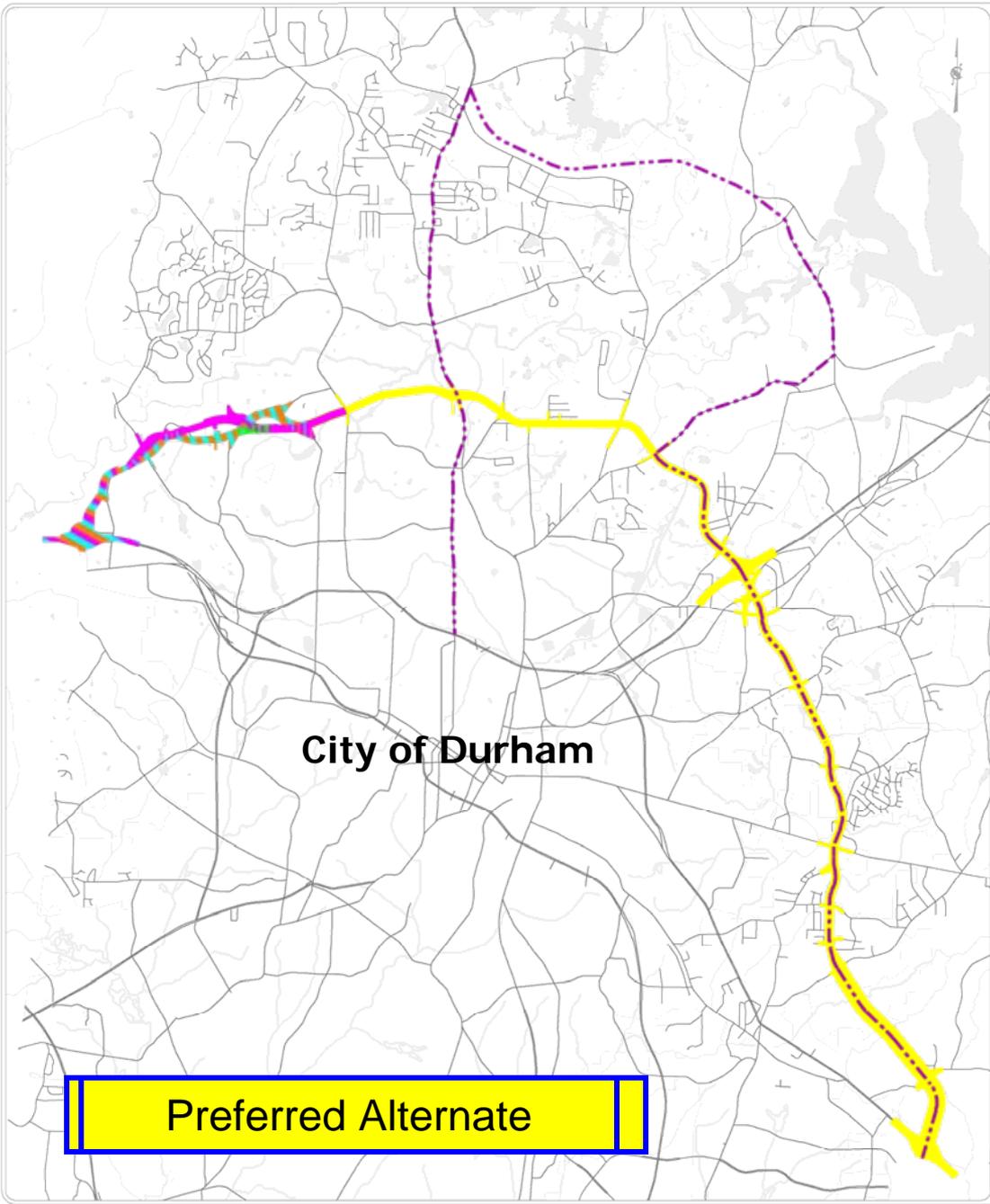
- **1998 -- In response to community opposition to the three build alternates, Secretary of Transportation Norris Tolson agreed to consider additional alternates which meet the legal requirements**
- **The Joint City-County Planning Committee conducted a year long review**
- **JCCPC recommended joint local endorsement of a preferred alternative.**

History and Chronology

- 1999 -- City Council and Board of County Commissioners endorsed the “Northern Durham Parkway and Innovative Measures...” resolution
- Alternative forwarded to NCDOT for study



Northern Durham Parkway



- ☐ CEMETERY
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Preferred Alternate

Environmental
Constraints Map

The Northern Durham Parkway was evaluated based on 3 key factors:



Is the Northern Durham Parkway eligible for funding by the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act as a “loop project”?



Is the Northern Durham Parkway supported by federal and state environmental regulatory and resource agencies?



Does the Northern Durham Parkway meet the purpose and need of reducing travel demand and relieving traffic congestion on the existing and planned arterial roadway network?



Is the Northern Durham Parkway eligible for funding by the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act as a “loop project”?

Funding

- ➔ **1989 Highway Trust Fund**
- ➔ **Urban Loops**
- ➔ **Attorney General**



Funding

➔ 1989 Highway Trust Fund

1989 Highway Trust Fund legislation allocates monies for Intrastate System, Urban Loops and other projects.



Funding

➡ Urban Loops

Urban Loops constitute 25.05% of Trust Fund monies. The Durham loop project is included as a "multilane facility on new location from I-85 west of Durham to US 70 east of Durham."



Funding

➡ Attorney General

North Carolina Special Deputy Attorney General issued an opinion that states “...the MPO proposal (Northern Durham Parkway)...is inconsistent with the legislative intent.”



Funding

➡ Attorney General

“The legislature intended that the Durham Northern Loop consist of a bypass around Durham on new location. Roxboro Road, Cole Mill Road, and Guess Road are existing roads that have traffic capacity problems.”



Funding

➡ Attorney General

“The legislature clearly did not intend Trust Fund loop money to be used to improve existing inner city streets. The Northern Loop was intended to alleviate congestion, not add to it by using existing streets as part of the loop facility.”

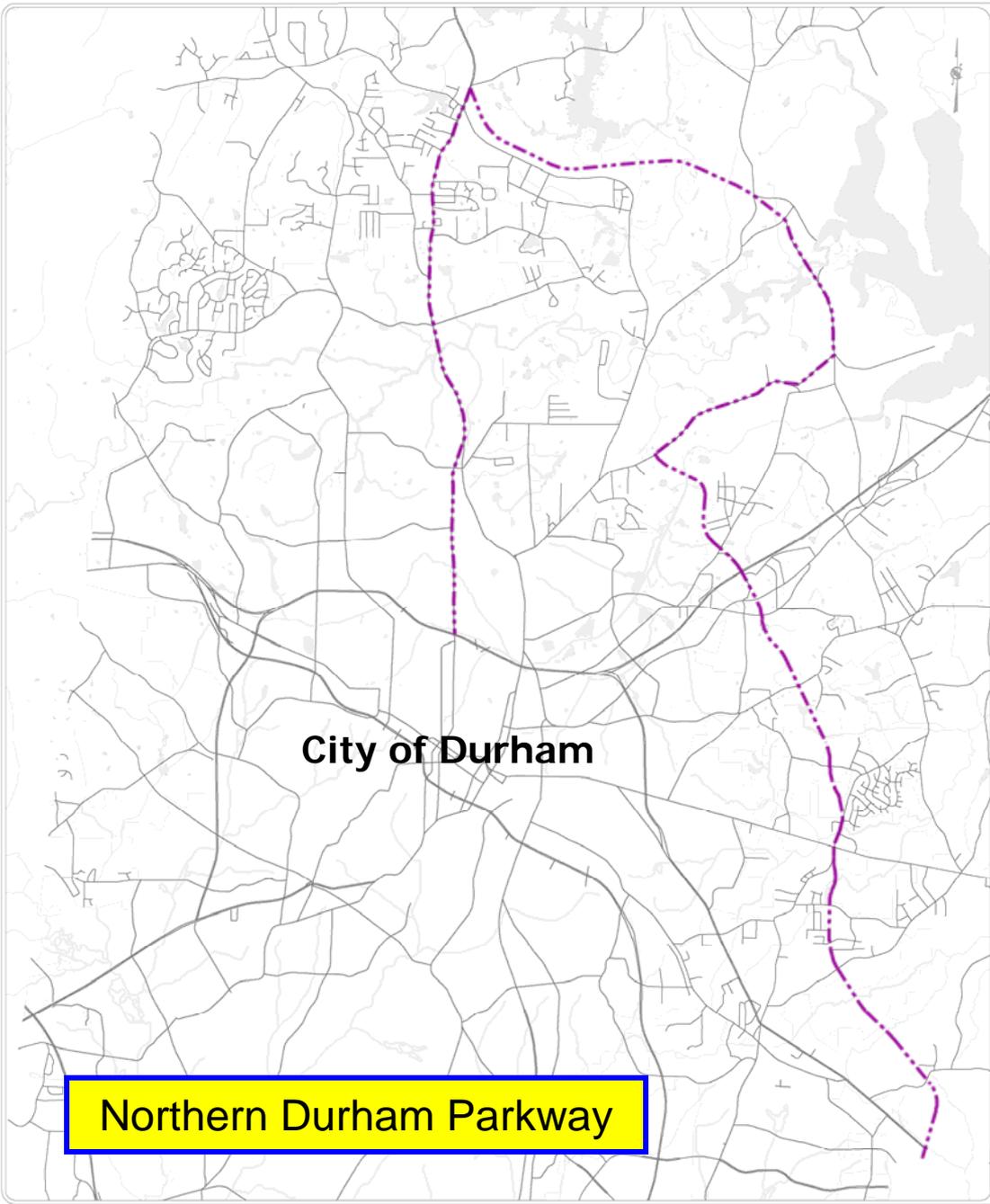




Is the Northern Durham Parkway eligible for funding by the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act as a “loop project”?

Based on the current legal definitions, the Northern Durham Parkway is not eligible for funding under the 1989 Highway Trust Fund Act as a Loop Project.

Northern Durham Parkway



City of Durham

Northern Durham Parkway

- ☐ CEMETERY
 - ▲ CHURCH
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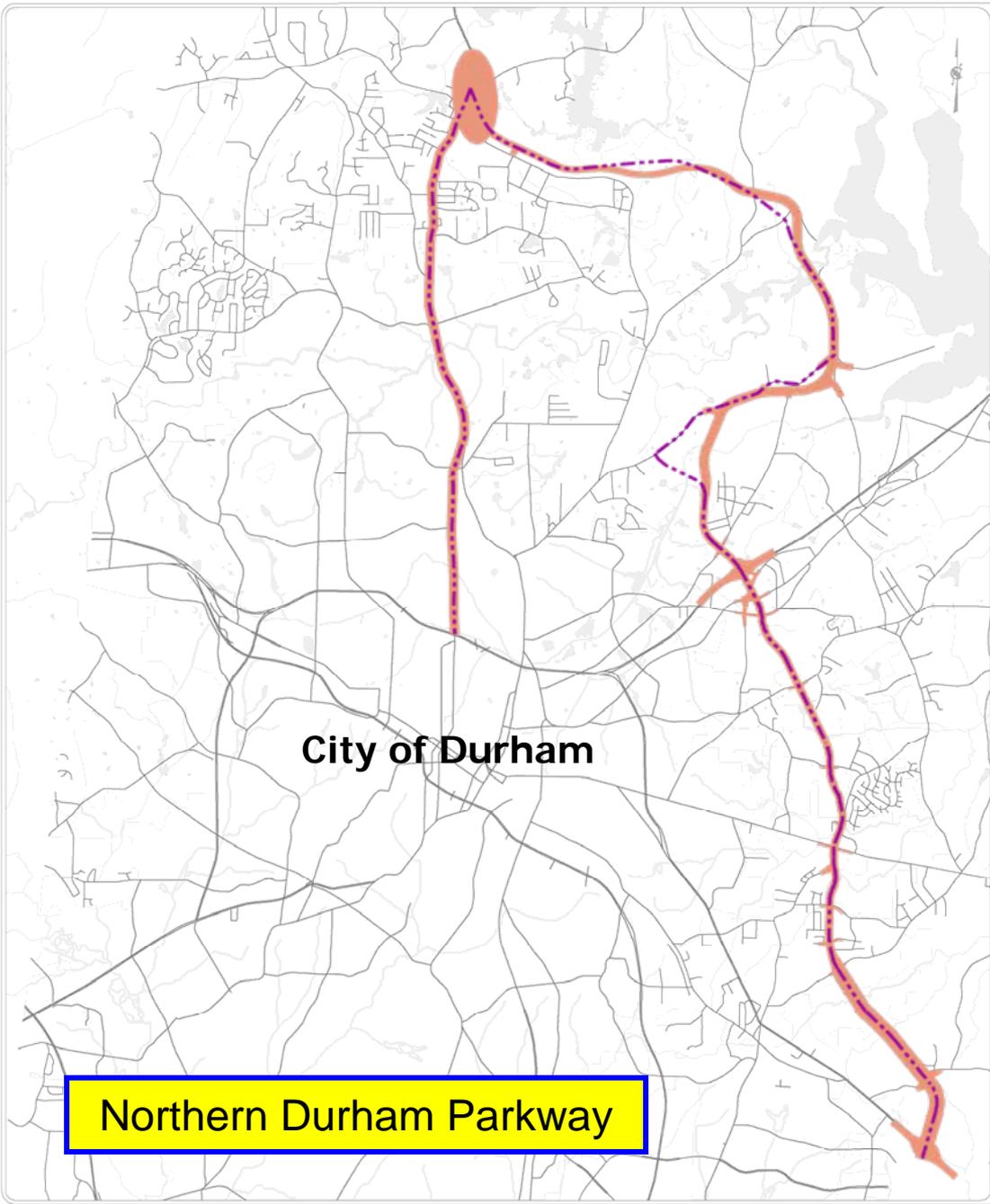


- DURHAM ICCP
- NORTHERN DURHAM PARKWAY
- NORTHERN DURHAM PARKWAY
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
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Northern Durham Parkway Modifications

- ➡ **Meet Arterial Design Standards**
- ➡ **Minimize Environmental Impacts**

Northern Durham Parkway



City of Durham

Northern Durham Parkway

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Is the Northern Durham Parkway supported by federal and state environmental regulatory and resource agencies?

Environmental Issues

- ➔ **NEPA/Section 404 Merger Process**
- ➔ **Environmental Impacts**
- ➔ **Permits**
- ➔ **Regulatory/Resource Agency Comments**

Environmental Issues

➡ NEPA/Section 404 Merger Process

- Integrated into the decision making process for transportation projects by NCDOT in 1997.
- Requires concurrence at five major stages from a Project Team consisting of members from local, state, and federal agencies.

Purpose and Need

Alternatives Selection for Detailed Study

Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative

Minimization of Impacts

Mitigation of Impacts

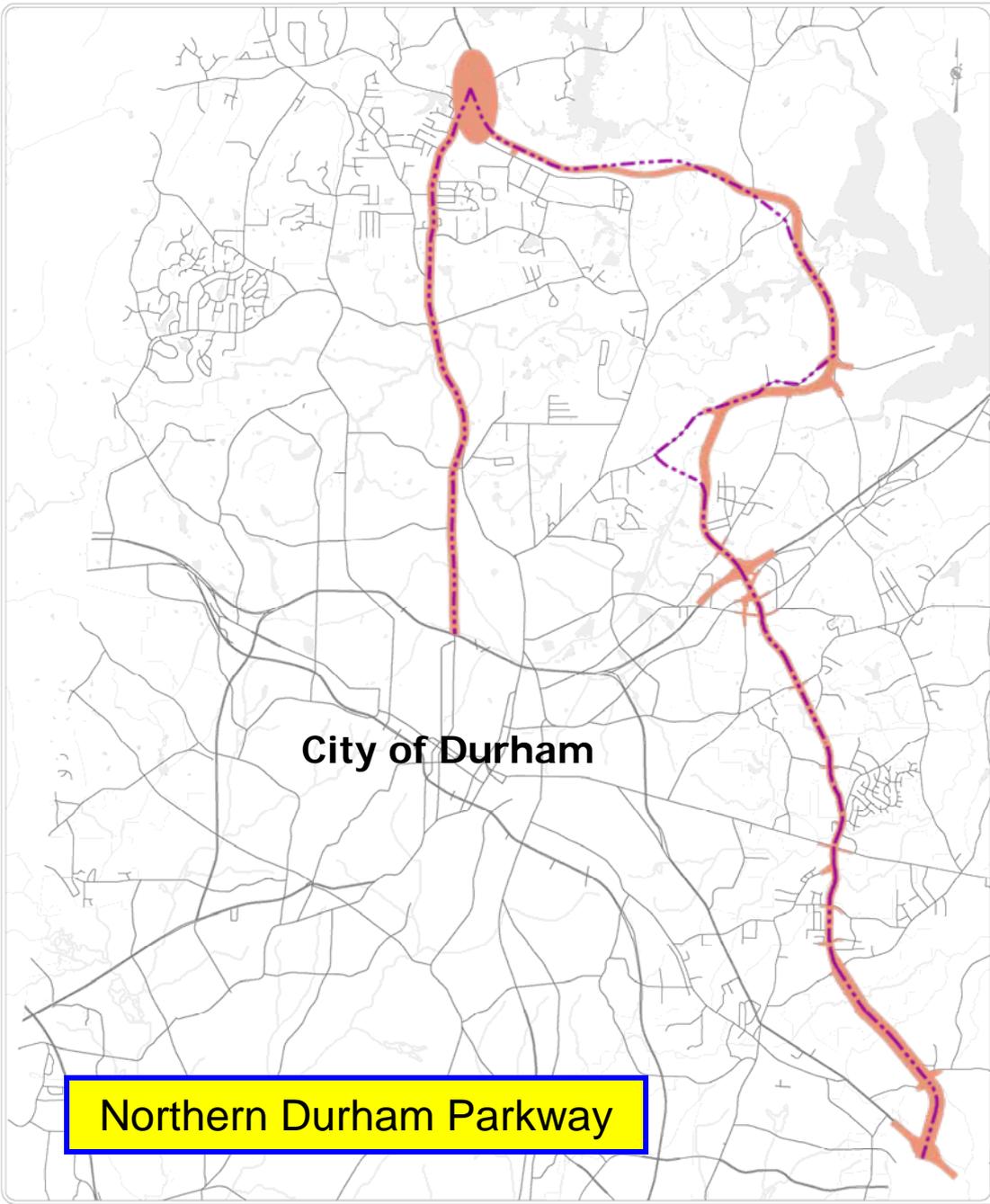
Environmental Issues

➡ Environmental Impacts

An inventory of environmental resources in the project area was developed to evaluate impacts of the Northern Durham Parkway and to determine permit requirements.

- Cultural Resource Impacts
- Natural Resource Impacts

Northern Durham Parkway



City of Durham

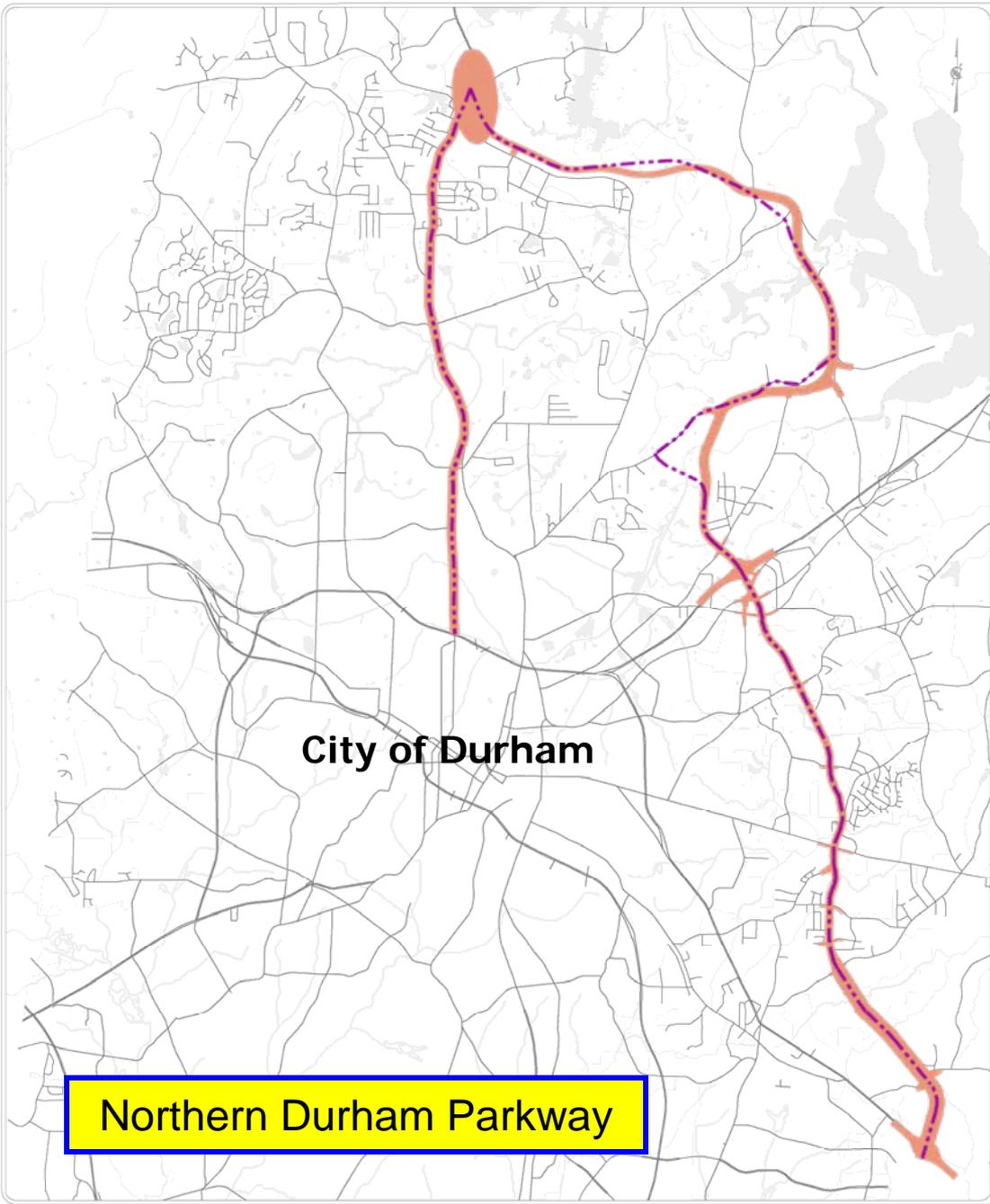
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Northern Durham Parkway



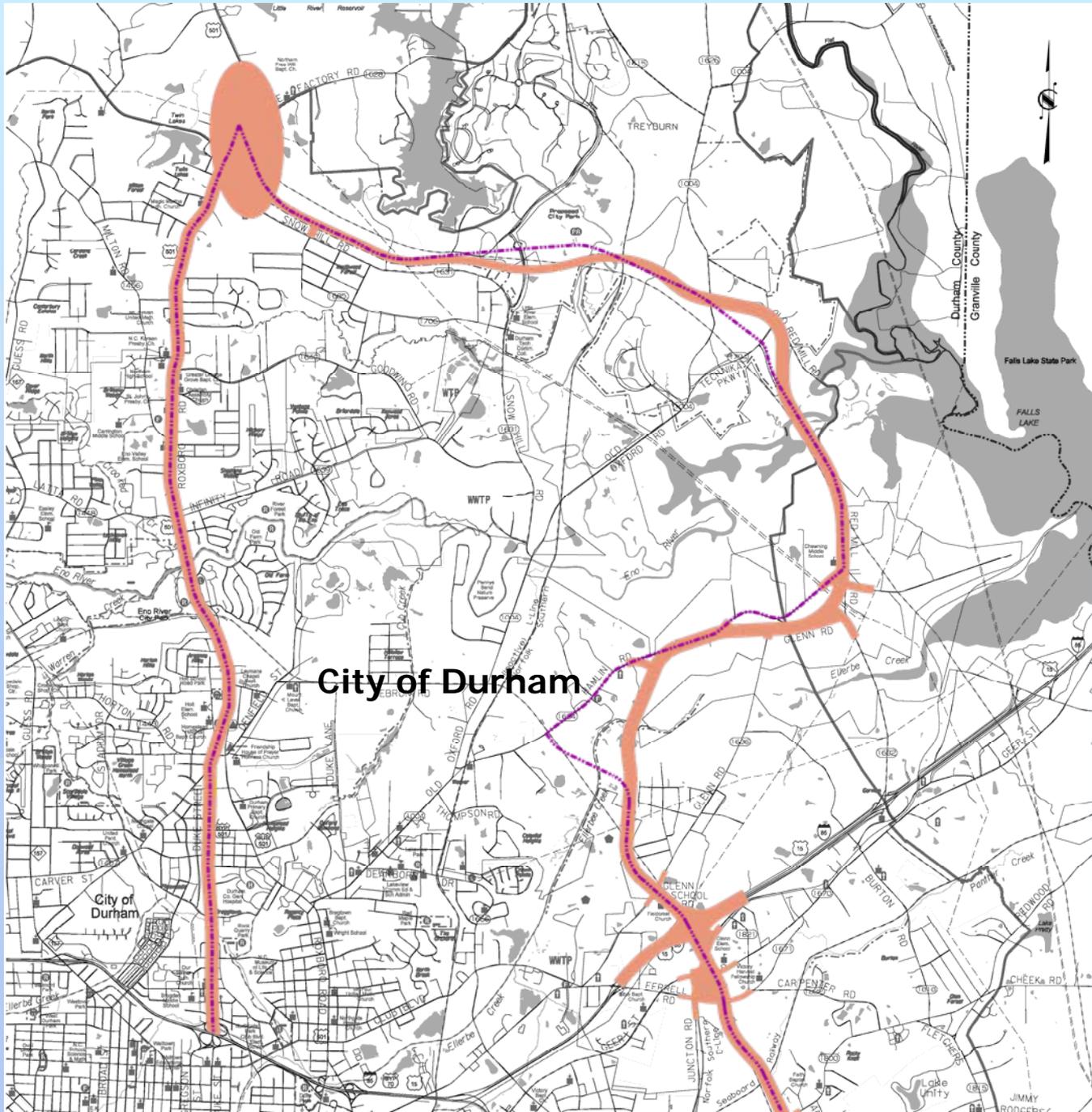
City of Durham

Northern Durham Parkway

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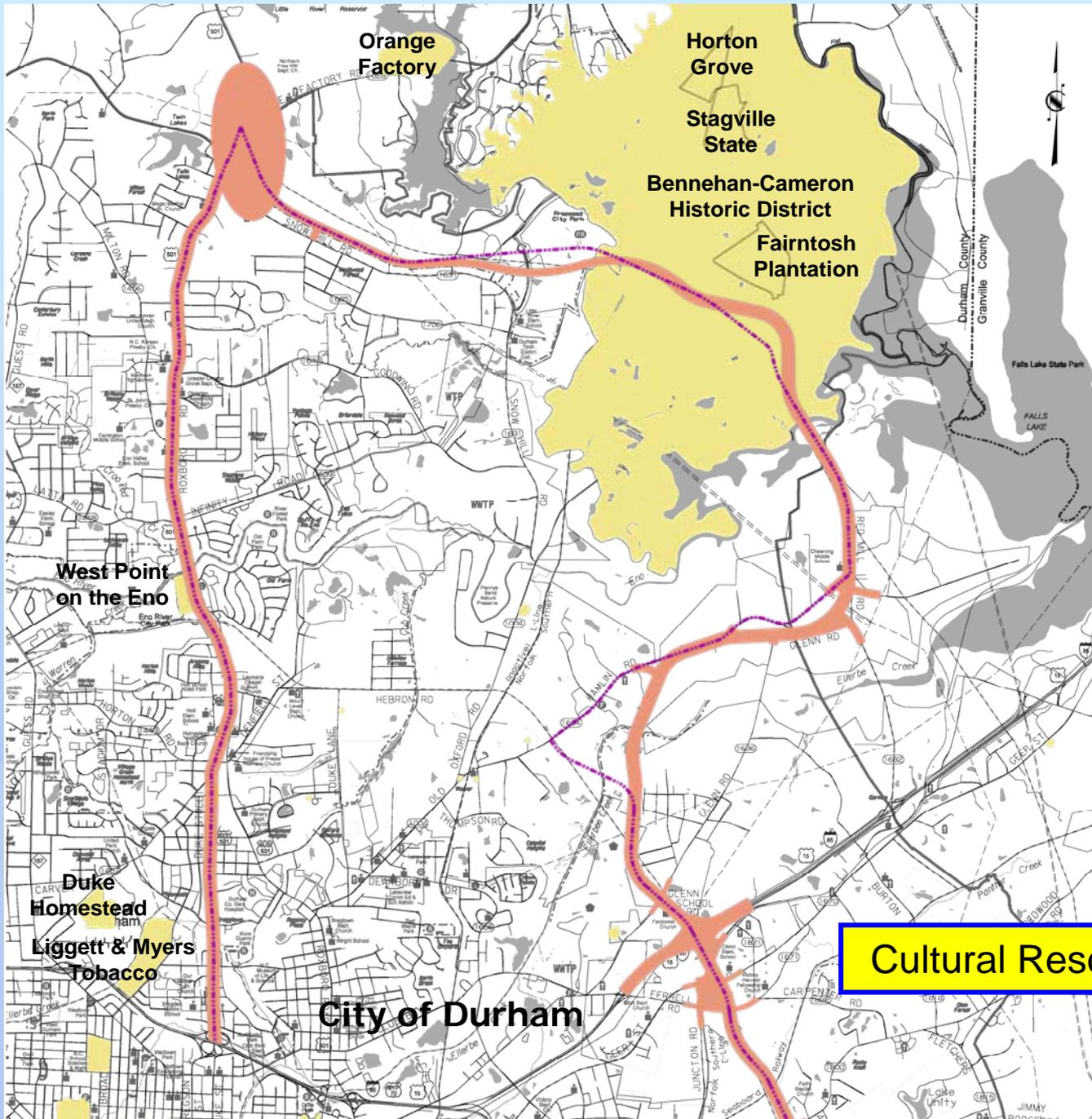


City of Durham

- **Cultural Resources**

- **Bennehan – Cameron Historic District**
- **Farintosh Plantation Historic Site**
- **Horton Grove Historic Complex**
- **Stagville Historic Site**
- **West Point on the Eno Historic District**
- **Multiple Archaeological Resources**



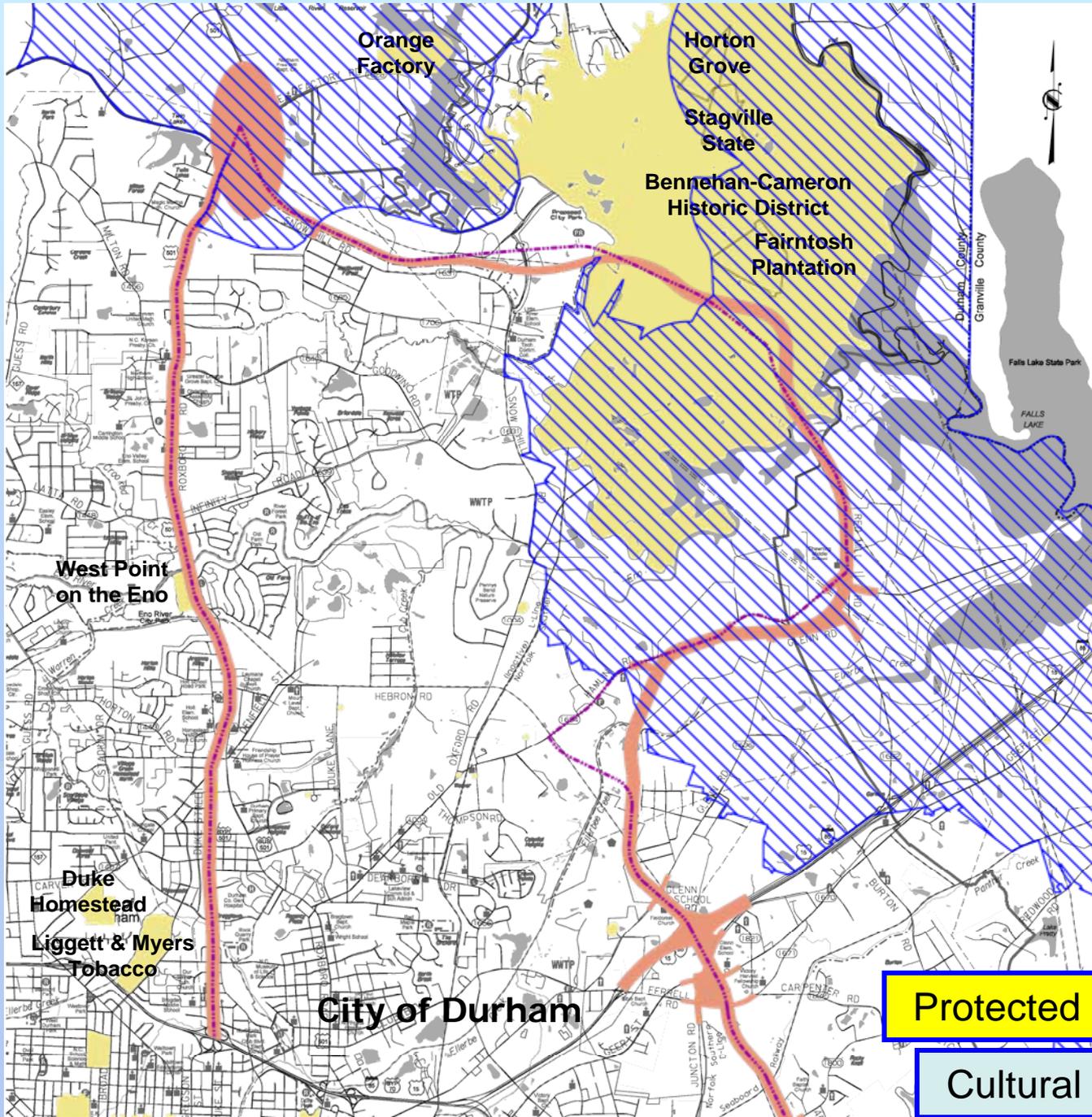


Cultural Resources

- **Natural Resources**



- **Eno River**
- **Little River**
- **Little River and Falls Lake Watersheds**
- **US Army Corps of Engineers property**
- **Wildlife Refuge**
- **Natural Heritage Areas**



Orange
Factory

Horton
Grove

Stagville
State

Bennehan-Cameron
Historic District

Fairtosh
Plantation

West Point
on the Eno

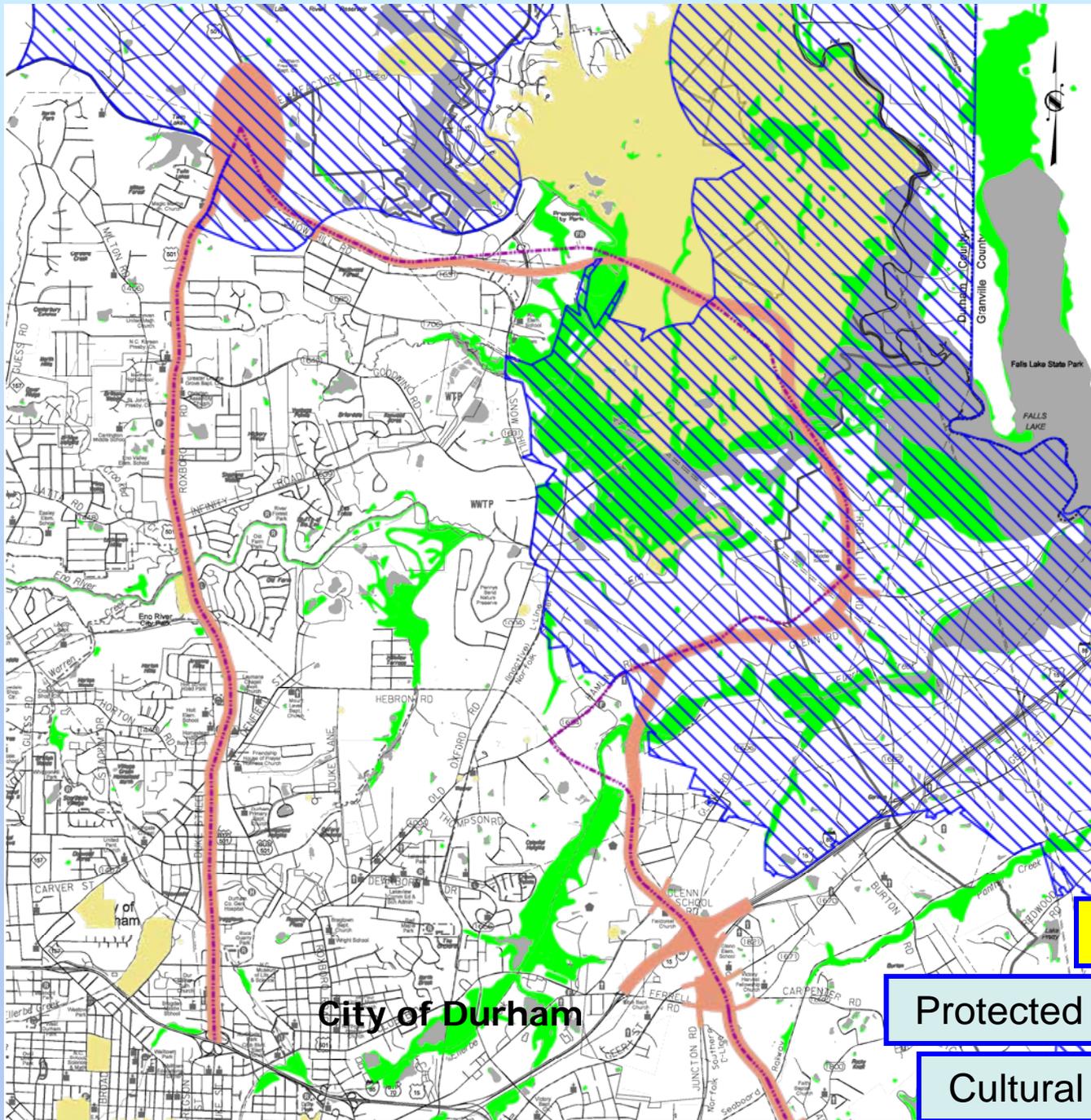
Duke
Homestead

Liggett & Myers
Tobacco

City of Durham

Protected Watershed

Cultural Resources

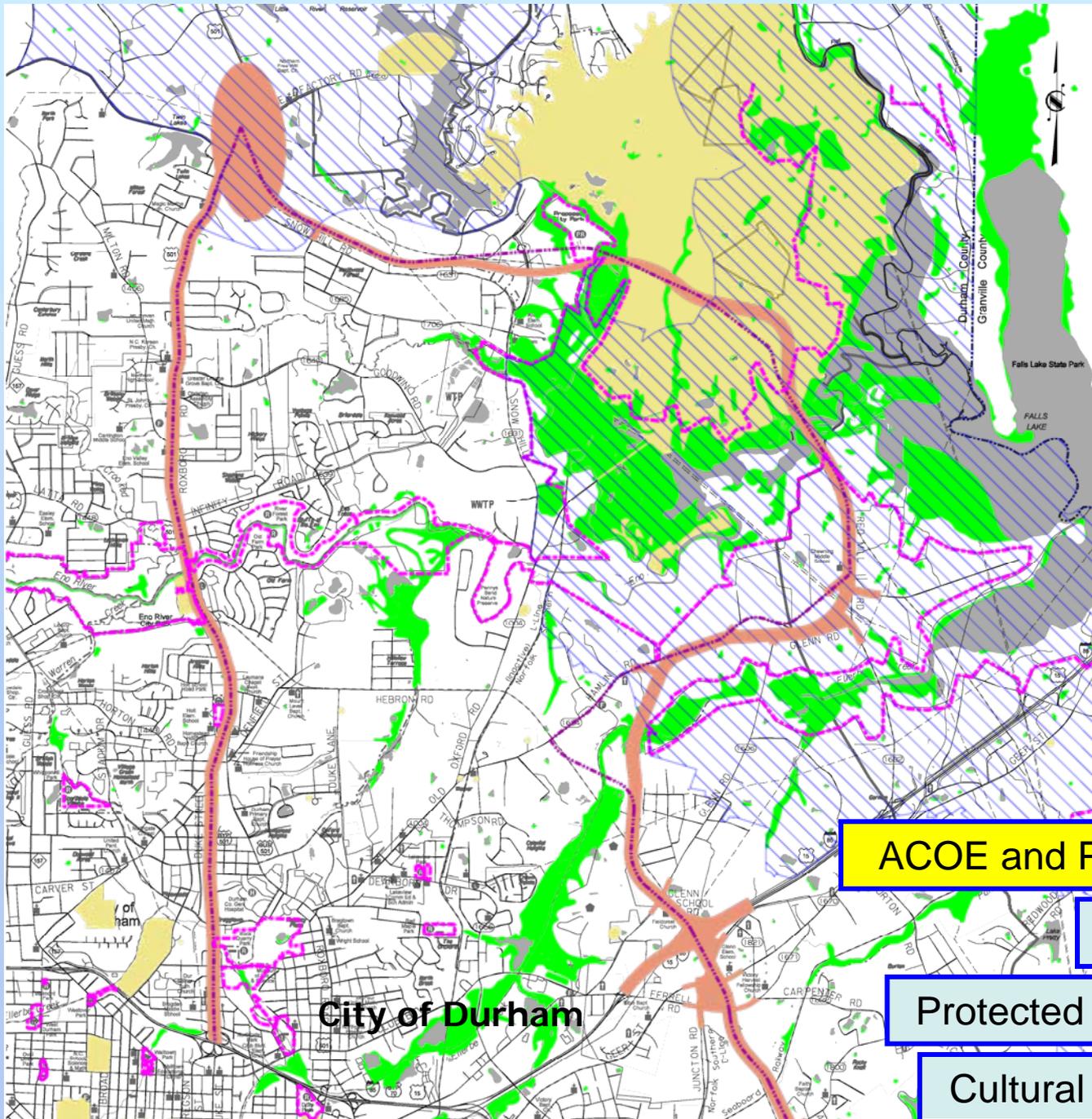


City of Durham

Wetlands

Protected Watershed

Cultural Resources



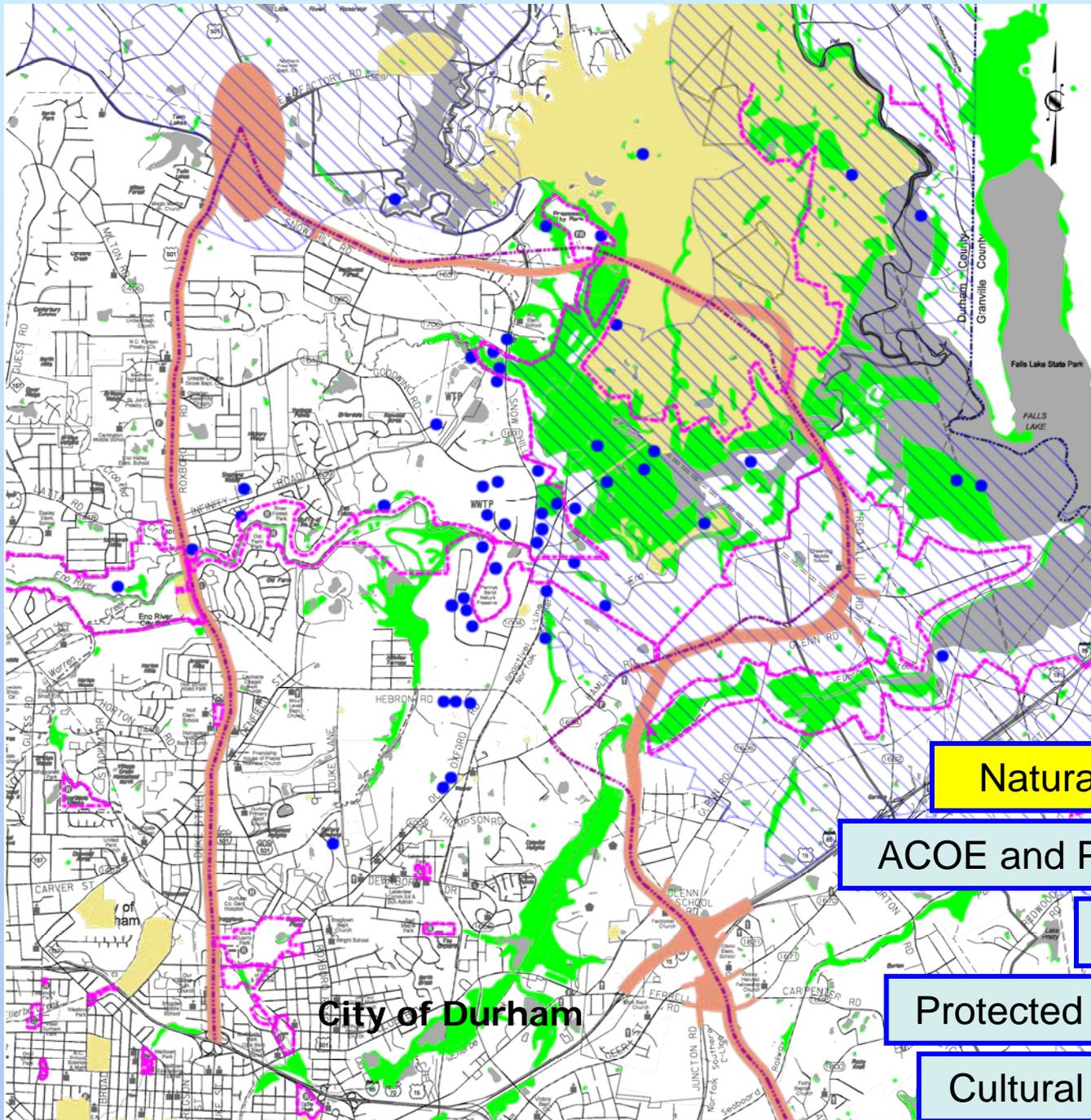
ACOE and Park Lands

Wetlands

Protected Watershed

Cultural Resources

City of Durham



Natural Heritage

ACOE and Park Lands

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Environmental Issues

Agency permits and coordination are required to construct the Northern Durham Parkway



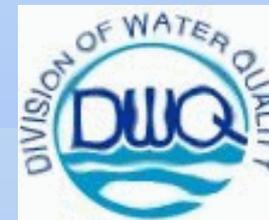
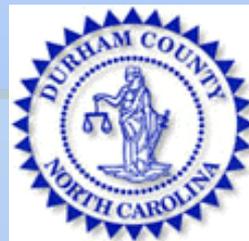
Environmental Issues

Agency permits and coordination are required to construct the Northern Durham Parkway

- **US Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit**
- **NC Section 401 Water Quality Certification Permit**
- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act Compliance**
- **Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act**
- **US Army Corps of Engineers Replacement Lands**

Environmental Issues

- ➔ As part of the project scoping process, a letter was sent to local officials and federal and state regulatory/resource agencies to request comments concerning the impacts of the Northern Durham Parkway.



US Army Corps
of Engineers® 47

Environmental Issues

- ➔ Falls Lake Office of the US Army Corps of Engineers, stated:

“...objections to the proposed alignment for the Northern Durham Parkway, and to any alternatives that cross the public lands and waters at Falls Lake...”



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Environmental Issues

- ➔ Falls Lake Office of the US Army Corps of Engineers, stated:

“...concerns regarding negative impacts that the proposed project would have to Falls Lake lands managed for wildlife habitat and public access, and to other resources on the Falls Lake property.”



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Environmental Issues

- ➔ Falls Lake Office of the US Army Corps of Engineers, stated:

“NCDOT will have to address the Falls Lake Office’s concerns and objections in any permit applications for alternatives that cross Falls lake property, and obtain all required real estate approvals from the Corps prior to completion of the Corps permit process.”



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Environmental Issues

- ➔ **The North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Division of Water Quality (DWQ), stated:**

“The alternative as presented does not appear to function in a manner consistent with the stated purpose and need...”



Environmental Issues

- ➔ **The North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Division of Water Quality (DWQ), stated:**

“Due to the circuitous route of the proposed project, the DWQ believes the project lacks independent utility.”



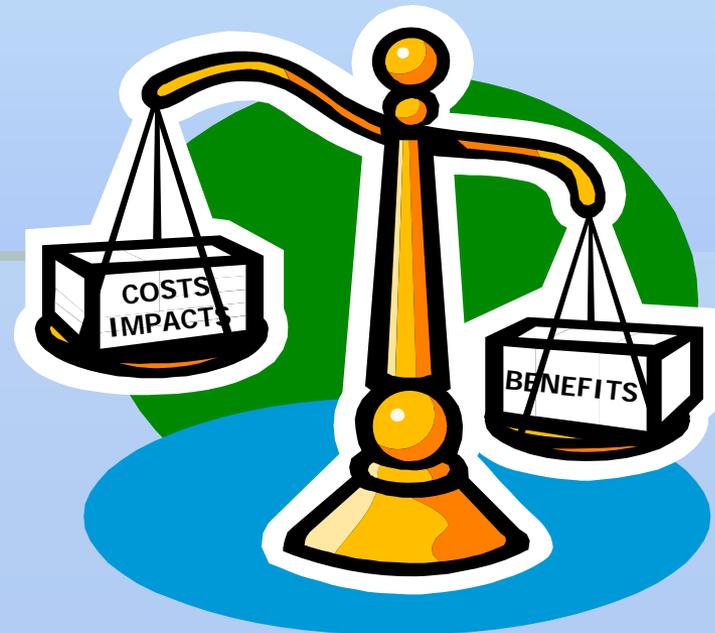


Is the Northern Durham Parkway supported by federal and state environmental regulatory and resource agencies?

Based on agency comments and environmental impacts, it is unlikely that the Northern Durham Parkway would be supported and permitted as the “Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative” for a loop project in northern Durham.

Transportation Purpose and Need

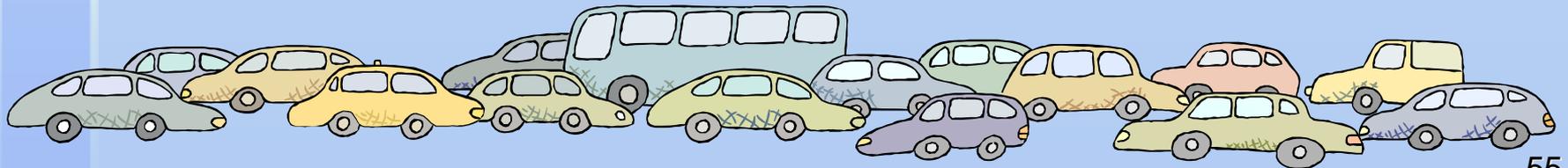
Transportation benefits of the project need to outweigh the expense and impacts associated with the commitment of resources.





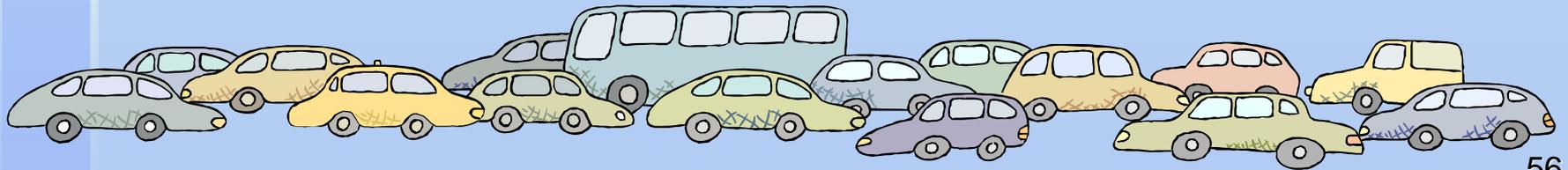
Does the Northern Durham Parkway meet the purpose and need of reducing travel demand and relieving traffic congestion on the existing and planned arterial roadway network including streets such as:

- Cole Mill Road**
- Roxboro Road**
- Hamlin Road**
- Guess Road**
- Old Oxford Road**



Transportation Purpose and Need

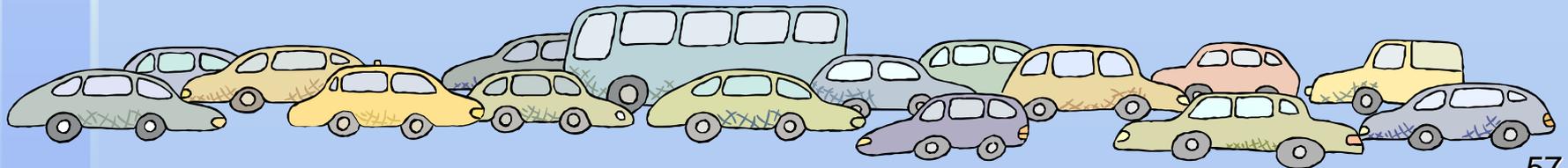
- ➡ **Durham–Chapel Hill–Carrboro Thoroughfare Plan**
- ➡ **Triangle Regional Traffic Model**
- ➡ **Traffic Reductions on Arterials**



Transportation Purpose and Need

➡ Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Thoroughfare Plan

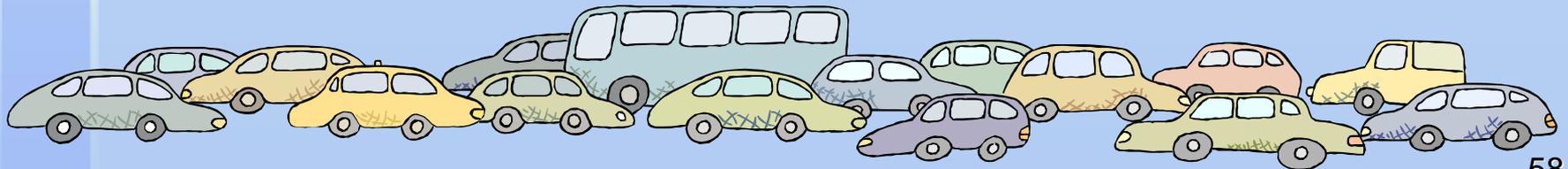
- The need to alleviate congestion was identified in the Durham–Chapel Hill–Carrboro Thoroughfare Plan.
- The Thoroughfare Plan was developed to manage congestion on these arterial routes and other existing and future transportation deficiencies.



Transportation Purpose and Need

➡ Triangle Regional Traffic Model

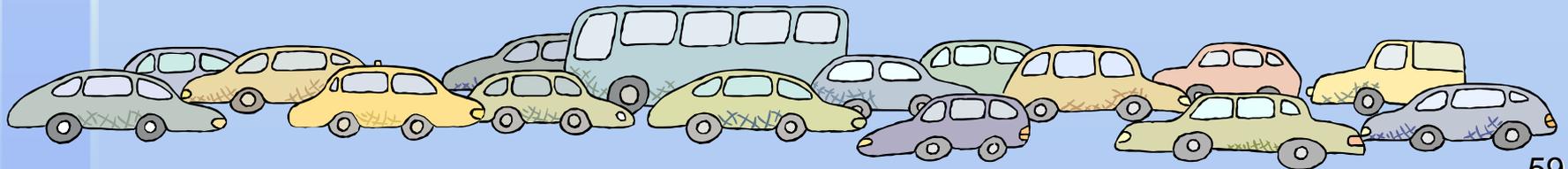
The future 2025 transportation demands were determined using the Triangle Regional Model.



Developed by:

➡ Triangle Regional Traffic Model

- North Carolina Department of Transportation**
- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**
- Durham–Chapel Hill–Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (City/County of Durham)**
- Triangle Transit Authority**
- Triangle – J Council of Governments**
- Federal Highway Administration**

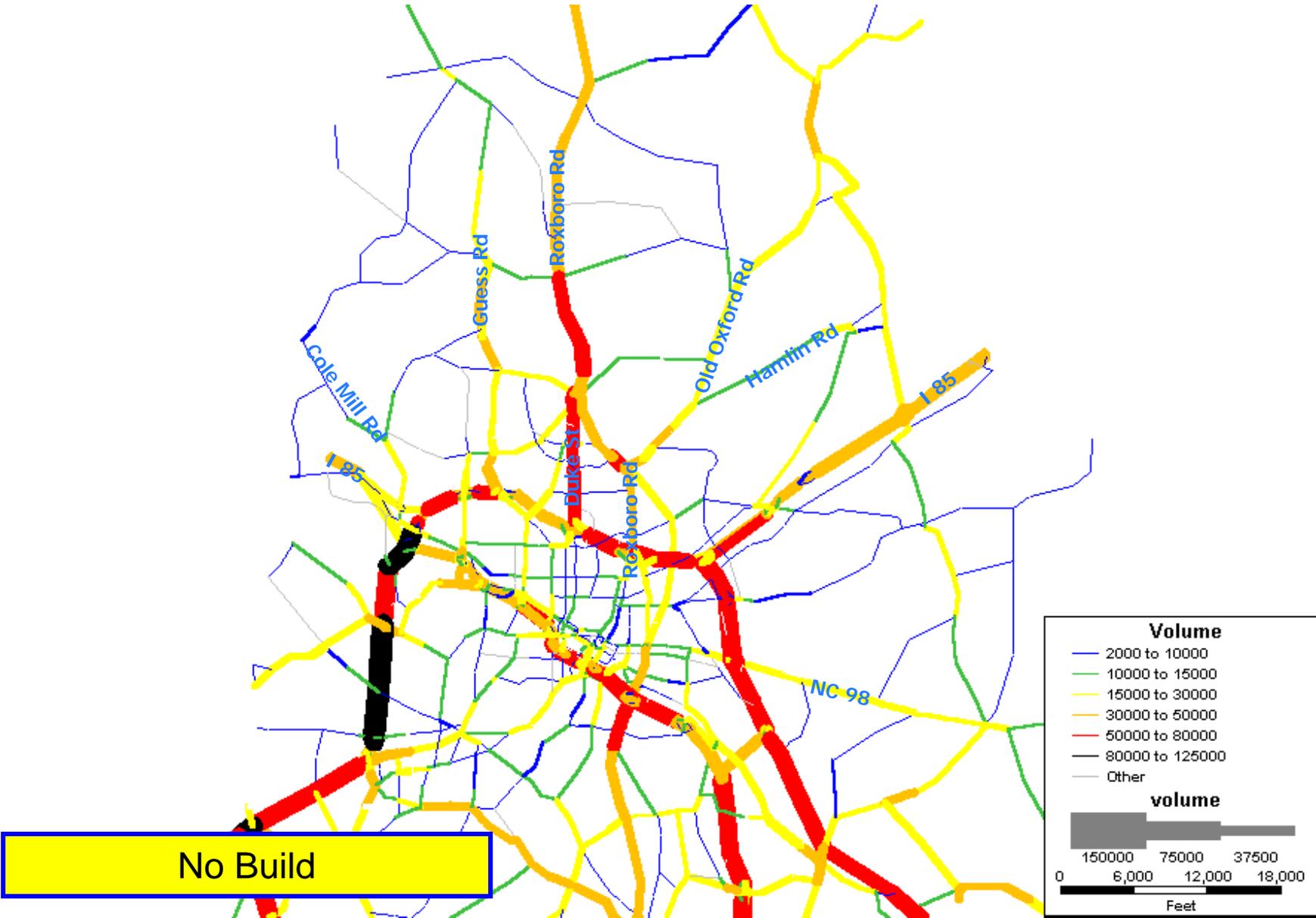


Triangle Regional Traffic Model

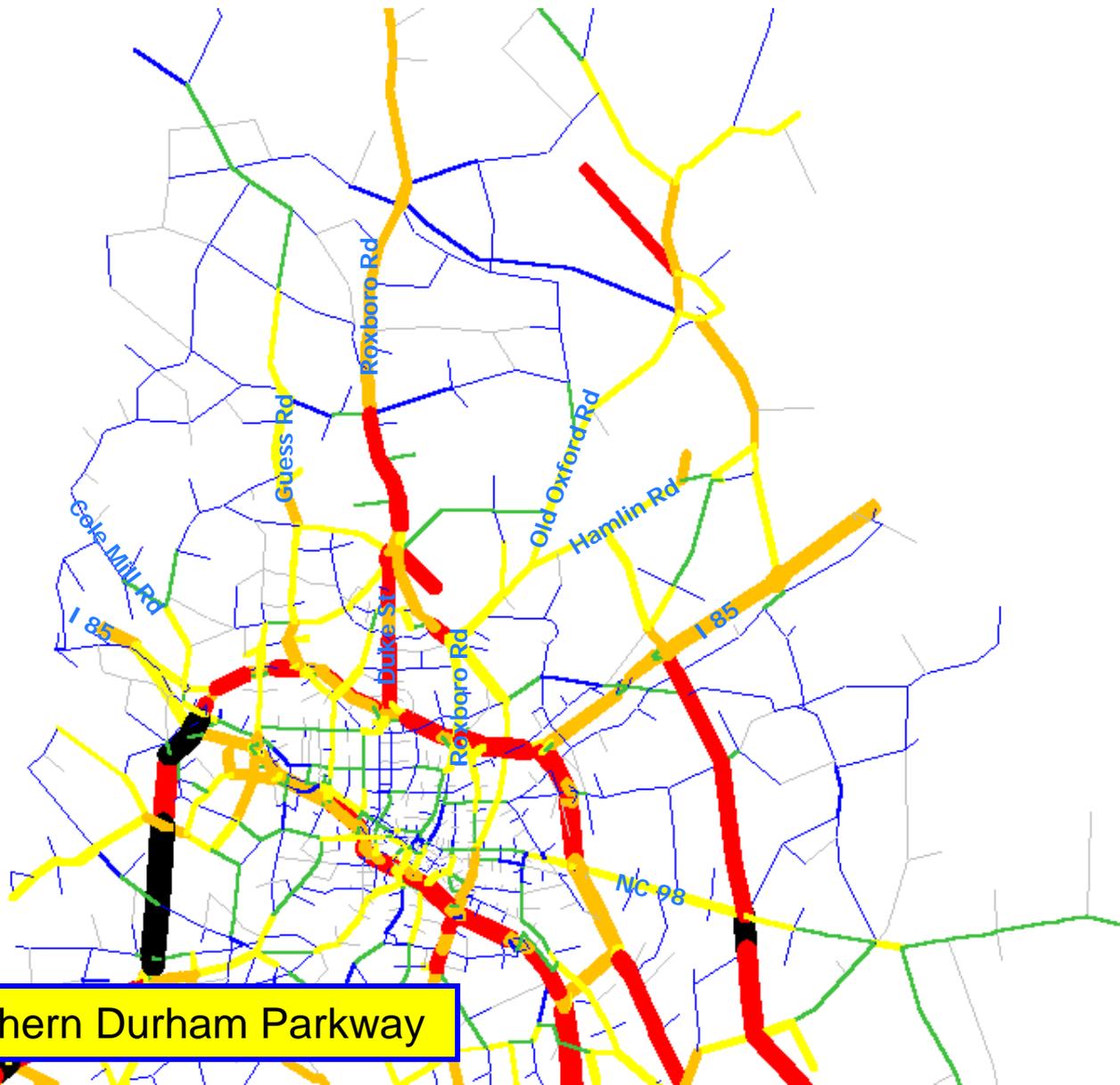
NCDOT and the City of Durham used this approved model to forecast 2025 traffic volumes on the local roadway networks under two scenarios

- The No-Build Alternative**
- The Northern Durham Parkway**

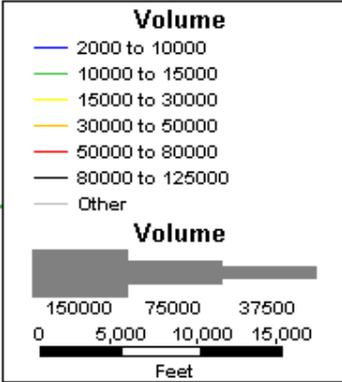
Traffic Volumes



Traffic Volumes



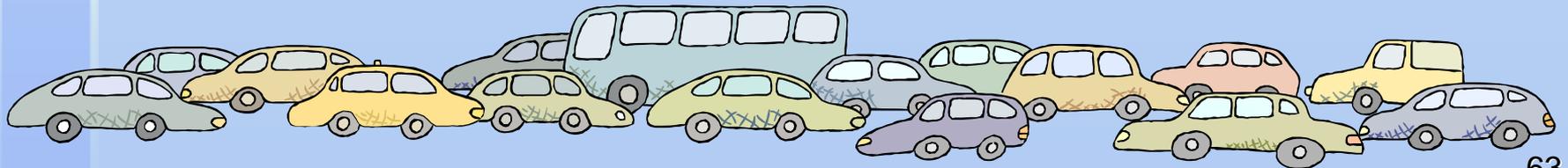
Northern Durham Parkway



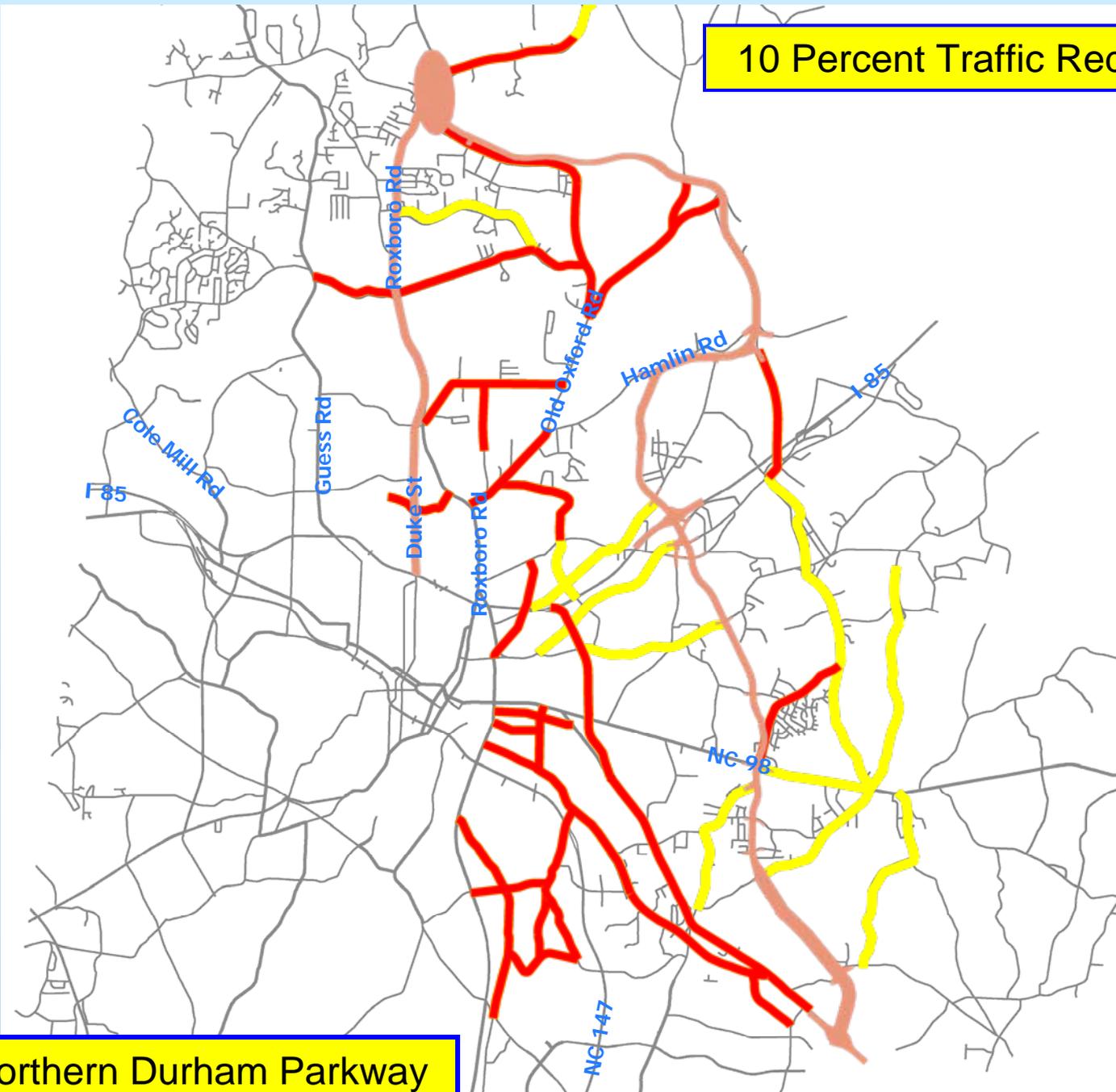
Transportation Purpose and Need

➡ Traffic Reductions on Arterials

- A forecast of how the Northern Durham Parkway would serve future traffic demands within the planned roadway network was studied.
- Volumes were compared between construction of the Northern Durham Parkway and the No-Build Alternative. This was done to determine which roadways would experience a reduction in traffic volumes.



10 Percent Traffic Reduction



Northern Durham Parkway



Does the Northern Durham Parkway meet the purpose and need of reducing travel demand and relieving traffic congestion on the existing and planned arterial roadway network?

The Northern Durham Parkway will not significantly reduce travel demand or relieve traffic congestion on existing and planned arterial routes. Therefore, the Northern Durham Parkway is inconsistent with the purpose and need for a loop roadway in northern Durham.

Findings from Northern Durham Parkway Alternative Evaluation

 **Funding**

 **Environmental Issues**

 **Transportation Purpose and Need**

Therefore:

**The Northern Durham Parkway
does not warrant detailed
environmental study.**

Unanswered Questions?

- Long Range Transportation Plan Update
- Funding Eligibility of the TIP Project (R-2630 & R-2631)



NCDOT's Continuing Participation



Respond to questions on the Northern Durham Parkway Study



Cooperate in the Long Range Transportation Planning Process



Advance a "loop project" that is part of the adopted Transportation Plan

Next Steps



Where Do We Go From Here?

- **Systems planning process**
- **Development of the 2025 Transportation Plan**
- **Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

Status of the 2025 Transportation Plan

- Five alternatives selected by the TAC for further study
- Alternatives include various combinations of highway and transit improvements
- All alternatives include intensive bike and pedestrian systems and aggressive TDM measures
- Four include the Northern Durham Parkway
- One includes the Northeast/Northwest Loop

2025 Transportation Plan Evaluation Criteria

- **Mobility/congestion**
- **Choice, safety, efficiency & system preservation**
- **Land use integration and intermodal connectivity**
- **Financial considerations**
- **Environmental and social impacts**
- **Air quality conformity**

2025 Transportation Plan Development Schedule

- Select preferred alternative (June)
- Detailed evaluation of preferred alternative (June/July)
- Refined funding and cost estimates - (June/July)
- Public input (May – July)
- Modifications to preferred alternative (June/July)
- Endorse 2025 Transportation Plan (August)

Plan Timeline



Critical Deadlines

- **Federal Air Quality Conformity Lapse
February 2003**
- **Endorse 2025 Transportation Plan
August 2002**
- **6 months for review agencies to approve
the plan**

2025 Transportation Plan Funding Implications

- Federal funding authority lapses in February 2003 if there is no approved plan in place by that date
- If there is no eligible “Loop Project” in the approved plan, no State loop funds can be in the TIP

2002-2008 TIP Funding

- **Northeast Loop**

2006: ROW (A)	\$ 10,000,000
2007: ROW (B)	\$ 4,500,000
2008: Cons (A)	\$ 11,300,000
Unfunded	\$ 54,000,000
- **Northwest Loop**

Unfunded	\$115,980,000
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- **Total Project** **\$195,780,000**

Recommendations

- 1. Receive the “Northern Durham Parkway Alternative Evaluation” report from NCDOT**
- 2. Refer the report to the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners for public input and discussion of transportation needs for northern Durham**
- 3. Develop a recommendation for TAC consideration in June**