

Core Technical Team Meeting #2

July 9, 2015 – 2PM to 4PM

The Clayton Center, Rotary Room

111 East Second Street

Clayton, NC 27520

Notes

- ◆ Progress Update
 - ◆ Brief overview of project website
 - ◆ Kimley-Horn will send out subsequent tweets as the study progresses, but member agencies are free to come up with their own also.
 - ◆ The goal of this meeting is to generate information from which we can draft planning themes to bring to the SOT meeting in August.

- ◆ Community Snapshots
 - ◆ Archer Lodge
 - ◆ The town is 20-25 years old.
 - ◆ There is a strong interest in the preservation of local history and the desire to replicate the old masonic lodge downtown. They want to double the town hall in size.
 - ◆ The landscape is mostly agricultural and residential, with seven small businesses in town.
 - ◆ The town want to make sure growth does not happen too fast, too quickly.
 - ◆ They have been impressed by the amount of public involvement for such a small population (approximately 4,500 residents).
 - ◆ It is generally a quiet community with more development coming.
 - ◆ There is currently no post office or zip code, so they have Clayton and Wendell addresses for the time being. Archer Lodge addresses are coming soon.
 - ◆ They want to deal with growing traffic while maintaining their principles.
 - ◆ There is no public sewer in town with access, only private systems.
 - ◆ A park is what residents want most. Land has been acquired near the middle school.

◆ Clayton

- ◆ Clayton has a unique position on the border of Wake County but still within Johnston County. It is an entry community.
- ◆ Clayton schools are an asset.
- ◆ The recent comprehensive plan survey had about 1,000 respondents.
- ◆ Clayton is not bisected by major roadways, but the train tracks do cut through town.
- ◆ The arts are very important to the Town.
- ◆ They want to maintain the walkability of downtown.
- ◆ Steeplechase shows the demand for housing in and around Clayton.
- ◆ There are traffic bottlenecks.
- ◆ Sprawl is an issue in the 40/42 area and Flowers Plantation, in the ring surrounding Raleigh that happens to be in Johnston County.

◆ Garner

- ◆ Garner is a densely populated area in the context of this study.
- ◆ The Council has done a lot of establishing and documenting goals in the last couple of years.
- ◆ Garner has acclaimed amenities and schools, including a magnet school.
- ◆ There is a long, strong history tied to Garner High School that is unique.
- ◆ Garner is only six miles from downtown Raleigh, making it the closest community to downtown, followed by Knightdale.
- ◆ There is a strong sense of civic pride.
- ◆ The will to pursue the designations of All-America City and Playful City, USA, shows the value that residents place on their community.
- ◆ There is a lot of demand in the southeast, closer to the 40/42 area.
- ◆ Because of the proximity to Raleigh, the wastewater treatment plant is upstream, which poses challenges for a portion of the area.
- ◆ The area surrounding Jones Sausage Road and the NCRR is tightly developed with congestion.
- ◆ Garner is looking for the right tenants for the Garner Technology Center.

◆ Raleigh

- ◆ Visit www.raleigh4u.com for information about economic development in Raleigh. The site contains information about collaboration between residents and businesses.
- ◆ Raleigh has a lot of civic pride and is a great place to live. It is known as a good place to start a career or a business. It's a hotspot for small businesses like food trucks.
- ◆ Raleigh faces the challenge of providing the infrastructure and services that new residents expect, but with a smaller tax base than the newcomers may have moved from.
- ◆ Southeast Raleigh (in the SEAS study area) does not see the same rate of economic development as the rest of Raleigh.

- ◆ Selma
 - ◆ Selma is the midpoint on I-95 between New York and Florida.
 - ◆ There is a historic uptown with revitalization opportunities.
 - ◆ Shovel-ready sites include the Selma Crossing and Oak Tree.
 - ◆ Selma has a low tax rate.
 - ◆ Selma places a high value on partnership with other communities.
 - ◆ There are high poverty rates and low performing schools.
 - ◆ The Town wants to support existing businesses while attracting new businesses also. It is a challenge to recruit businesses, especially due to the high percentage of the population living below the poverty line.
- ◆ Smithfield
 - ◆ Smithfield is also around the New York-Florida midpoint on the I-95 corridor.
 - ◆ The population is approximately 12,000, but the daytime population can swell to 40,000 or 50,000 with traffic on I-95.
 - ◆ Smithfield is home to the county seat, the junior college, and Johnston Memorial Hospital.
 - ◆ The outlet mall brings in lots of traffic.
 - ◆ Phase I of the transportation plan is complete, with Phase II on its way.
 - ◆ There is a desire to protect the existing community and handle growth well.
 - ◆ There is an incomplete network around the outlet mall, leading to congestion and confusion weekends.
 - ◆ There is a high percentage of unoccupied housing and rental properties (up to 50% of housing). Smithfield needs policies that encourage property owners to maintain properties better.
 - ◆ The US 70 improvements include curb and gutter, sidewalks, two river crossings, and safety and redundancy.
 - ◆ Some multifamily developments are coming in at NC 210.
 - ◆ The JCC Master Plan involves relocating the main entrance. They want to connect I-95 to downtown with a 3-4 lane highway connector, in order to provide better access to downtown.
 - ◆ The downtown area is healthy, with the courthouse and legal offices.
- ◆ Wilson's Mills
 - ◆ Wilson's Mills has similar issues to Archer Lodge.
 - ◆ They are putting in infrastructure to prepare for development so it doesn't pass them by. They want to build larger neighborhoods.
 - ◆ It's a good place to live but there are not many places to work.
 - ◆ The two main employers are Bartlett Milling (which provides flour to Nabisco) and the Double Barley Brewing Company.
 - ◆ Wilson's Mills is preparing to become a "bedroom community," but will accept development if it comes their way.

- ◆ People are wanting to split their property into a couple of homes.
- ◆ They want their town to look like Mayberry but be close to the big city.
- ◆ It's a good location for grandparents to move out to retire and be close to their kids who work in Raleigh.
- ◆ There is only a transportation network for cars. It's not walkable or bikeable. They would like to see bike lanes and sidewalks in long term plans.
- ◆ They would also like grocery stores and banks in town for residents.
- ◆ Johnston County
 - ◆ I-40 changed Johnston County forever. Growth has come down I-40 and US 70 but has not yet made it to Benson.
 - ◆ Johnston County has one of the largest unincorporated populations in the state (70%), and the tenth largest planning jurisdiction.
 - ◆ It is unique to have two interstate in the same county (I-40 and I-95).
 - ◆ The county has two different worlds: urban west of I-95, and rural east of I-95.
 - ◆ It is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. Growth rates reached 30-50% in the 90s after I-40 opened.
 - ◆ It is one of the largest crop producing counties in the state, especially for tobacco and sweet potatoes.
 - ◆ There are no water quality issues. There is good coverage with utilities. They have bought a rock quarry for future water needs.
 - ◆ The sewer plant was expanded several years ago. There is not countywide service, but anything commercial qualifies for sewer service.
 - ◆ There are quality schools in the county. Many are new, built within the last 20-25 years. The county began replacing older schools systematically and strengthening existing ones. There has been a huge educational effort across the county. The school system as a whole has ample capacity, but some specific schools are overcrowded, and the county does not redistrict or re-bus. There is no interest on the school board in adjusting the imbalance.
 - ◆ 40/42 congestion is a big issue.
 - ◆ Solar farms are emerging, causing the county to face the issue of losing good farmland.
- ◆ Wake County
 - ◆ (No one present to represent Wake County)
 - ◆ The portion of Wake County in the study area is a rural setting that is close to urban amenities.
 - ◆ People are expecting the county to feel incorporated with the provision of infrastructure and services.

- ◆ NCDOT
 - ◆ There is a lot of vacant land, with room for growth along the corridors.
 - ◆ Commuter traffic on I-40 is an issue.
 - ◆ There is congestion on arterial routes.
 - ◆ NCDOT wants to see good communication in early stages of development – in the site plan stage.

- ◆ Upcoming Projects
 - ◆ Themes that have already emerged from this discussion:
 - ◆ Lack of sidewalks, bike lanes, and complete streets
 - ◆ Congestion
 - ◆ Traffic safety (has been implied)
 - ◆ Maintaining a rural perception
 - ◆ **Note:** It would be great to have access through NCDOT to TIAs in nearby areas.

 - ◆ Archer Lodge
 - ◆ The local foods movement has enabled a lot of farmers to keep farming.
 - ◆ Archer Lodge has working farms within municipal limits.
 - ◆ Maybe we could create subdivisions that incorporate community farms, like a golf community or HOA.
 - ◆ There is an idea of trying to assemble parcels for a recreational shooting complex, with indoor and outdoor facilities.
 - ◆ The town values a rural design. The Town Hall is attractive and only two years old. It is a good template for the community's desires for new developments because residents had so much input in the design of Town Hall.

 - ◆ Clayton
 - ◆ There are lots of roadway projects in the STIP.
 - ◆ NC 42 W Widening is 2 to 4 lanes.
 - ◆ Earp Property – Steeplechase (2000 homes)
 - ◆ The Clayton Community Center Pedestrian Connector will be the only pedestrian connection across US 70.
 - ◆ The Neuse River Park will have baseball diamonds and other facilities, maybe even a zip line.
 - ◆ The hospital is now a Rex hospital and added 50 beds.
 - ◆ A nursing home just went in with 100 beds.
 - ◆ Greenway plan
 - ◆ The Mountains-to-Sea Trail stretches all the way to Raleigh (26 miles), but it is currently unsafe to get into downtown Clayton.
 - ◆ The goal of the plan is to provide a walkable and bikeable community.

- ◆ Garner
 - ◆ NC 540 extension
 - ◆ The EIS is near completion. It should be released this summer for public comment.
 - ◆ The extension should be a stimulus for economic development.
 - ◆ We will assume the Orange Route for this study.
 - ◆ There are also sidewalk and greenway projects.
 - ◆ The Buffalo Road sidewalk/greenway will link 3 neighborhoods to schools and parks.
 - ◆ They are extending Timber Drive in South Garner (a long-term thoroughfare connection).
 - ◆ Viable long-term connection to take the pressure off of White Oak Road / US 70.
 - ◆ Garner hopes to identify corridors with transportation project needs.
 - ◆ Rural street designs need to be redone.
 - ◆ Garner anticipates new housing developments with the installation of a new high school and elementary school.
 - ◆ The southwest quadrant of White Oak is currently undeveloped. They expect major retail there in the future that will be double or triple the other quadrants.
 - ◆ Garner will update its comprehensive plan next year and would be very interested in studying the two 540 interchange locations.
 - ◆ The indoor recreation center is downtown.
- ◆ Raleigh
 - ◆ Some of these projects are high on the CIP list.
 - ◆ Huge tracts of land are already subdivided and could be developed anytime.
 - ◆ There is lots of potential upcoming growth in southeast Raleigh.
 - ◆ Design starts this year for Rock Quarry Rd. Part A (Old Birch to Sunnybrook)
 - ◆ Raleigh is not actively trying to promote growth in this area specifically. Lots of economic development is occurring in West Raleigh or downtown.
 - ◆ In the southern gateway area, neighborhood preservation is key. Raleigh also wants to figure out how to extend downtown to the beltline, along S. Saunders and Wilmington Streets. We need bike and pedestrian connections to that area and priority transit (especially on Wilmington Street). This area is not in the SEAS study area, but it is in the commute path for many people who reside in the study area.
 - ◆ There are paper subdivisions, especially near Rock Quarry and Tryon extension.
- ◆ Selma
 - ◆ Noble Street and Buffalo is an area of concern.
 - ◆ Lake Magnolia is a unique neighborhood – structured as a water skiing community.
 - ◆ From Booker Dairy to Ricks, the unloading of tankers is a challenge. It is a larger port area than Wilmington for shipping fuel. They are looking into building a line out there.
 - ◆ There is real potential with industrial sites.

- ◆ Smithfield
 - ◆ The bridge at US 70/I-95 is an older bridge. There is concern with the southbound segment. There is also room for improvement with the northbound lanes when exiting I-95. The bridge needs to be replaced sooner rather than later.
 - ◆ Smithfield would like US 70 by JCC to become a 4-lane road.
 - ◆ Smithfield would like to focus on developing east of I-95, but the bridge has to be fixed first. Water and sewer can be provided east of I-95. (The RPO has plans for a service road here.)
- ◆ Wilson's Mills
 - ◆ US 70 is the lifeline for the town.
 - ◆ Intersection improvements will help give an idea of what to expect for the town.
 - ◆ They are really excited about the new athletic complex that will be constructed over 30 acres in 3 or 4 phases. There might be a cross country track.
 - ◆ There is ample room for development in Wilson's Mills.
 - ◆ They too are navigating the solar farm game.
- ◆ Johnston County
 - ◆ New schools are currently under construction.
 - ◆ McGee's is just now getting its first multifamily development.
 - ◆ A 356-unit development was just constructed. A 300-unit will go in this month, and a 250-unit next month.
 - ◆ Benson would like to see the NC 242 project move forward to help with traffic in Benson.
 - ◆ There is a new school in Micro.
 - ◆ Kenly has a huge truck stop presence that can be testy sometimes.
 - ◆ No growth pressures in Micro, Kenly, Four Oaks, or Benson.
- ◆ Wake County
 - ◆ (No one present to represent Wake County)
 - ◆ Secondary roads need help in Wake County. STI does not fund these projects well.
- ◆ NCDOT
 - ◆ Notable projects include the widening of I-40 to 8 lanes and the I-40/NC 42 interchange. Stantec has developed 3 alternatives for the interchange, and a final alternative has not been chosen yet.
 - ◆ US 70 connectivity will be from Morehead City to Raleigh. They are trying to eliminate some signals and reduce drive time. The goal is for it to be designated as a future interstate. A bill has been introduced. The Wilson's Mills and Swift Creek intersections will be converted to interchanges.
 - ◆ The spot safety cap is at \$450k, but some of these projects are receiving federal funds.
 - ◆ High residential density along the US 70 corridor has been tough. A 4-lane divided with median has been the way to go. Right-of-way for 2 to 4-lane conversions has to accommodate utilities.
 - ◆ The Pine Level interchanges are under construction and should be completed in 2017.

- ◆ The Goldsboro Bypass has two sections. They are designating one as NC 44 until the other opens up.
- ◆ NCDOT is working on the completion of Fortify and widening for 40/42.
- ◆ CAMPO
 - ◆ CAMPO conducted a hotspot study for the NC 540 extension to investigate whether existing cross-streets would be adequate, assuming orange for the extension.
 - ◆ CAMPO wants to look at additional hotspots from NC 50 to 64, considering cross-streets and also stream crossings for greenways. This study does not delve into what the interchanges would look like.
 - ◆ SPOT-4 is coming up.
 - ◆ There should be an alternative for the NC 540 extension this summer, but future litigation could delay the timeline for construction.
- ◆ Additional questions
 - ◆ How does a local complete streets design fit into a regional corridor plan?
 - ◆ If money is assigned to the 540 extension project and the project is stalled, does that money become available for other projects?
 - ◆ How are we going to look ahead to secondary/private streets functioning well in the future and being maintained? How can we bridge the transition of residential/local roads converting to public maintenance?
 - ◆ What can we do from a policy side to prevent bottlenecks? Enhanced connectivity between subdivisions is supported by emergency services.