



# DURHAM BIKE WALK PLAN 2026

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**Durham Board of County Commissioners Informational Update**

*February 2, 2026*





# Agenda

## 1. Draft Plan Overview

- Planning and Engagement Process
- County Priority Corridors
- County Policies

## 2. Phase 3 Engagement Update

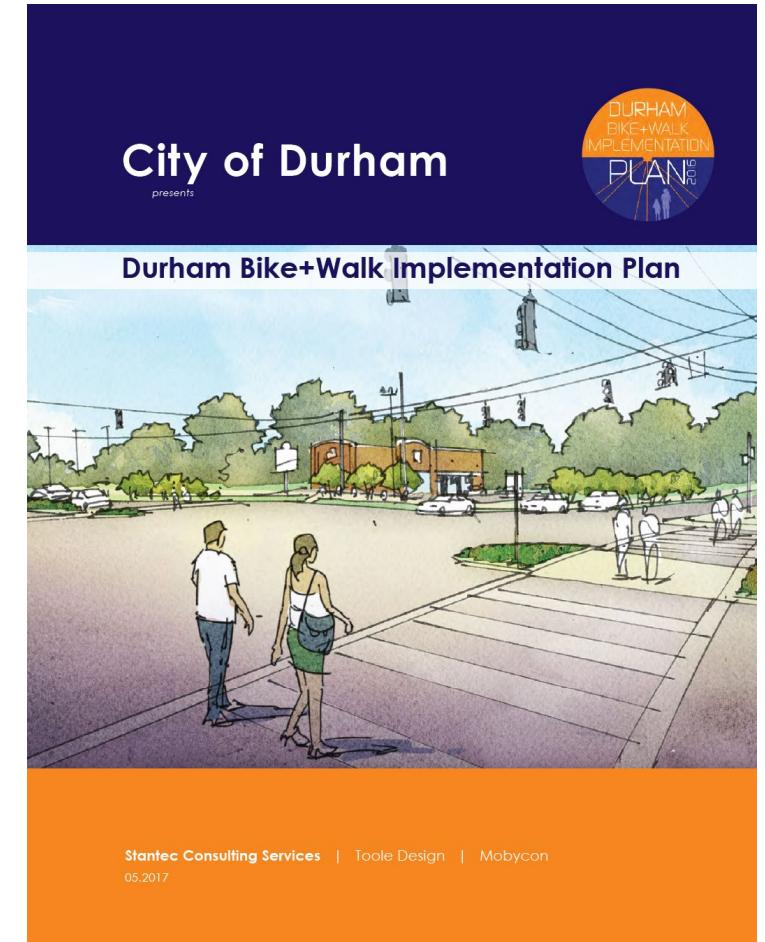
## 3. Next Steps





# Background and Context

- Update to the 2017 City Bike + Walk Plan
- First time the County has participated in the Bike + Walk Plan



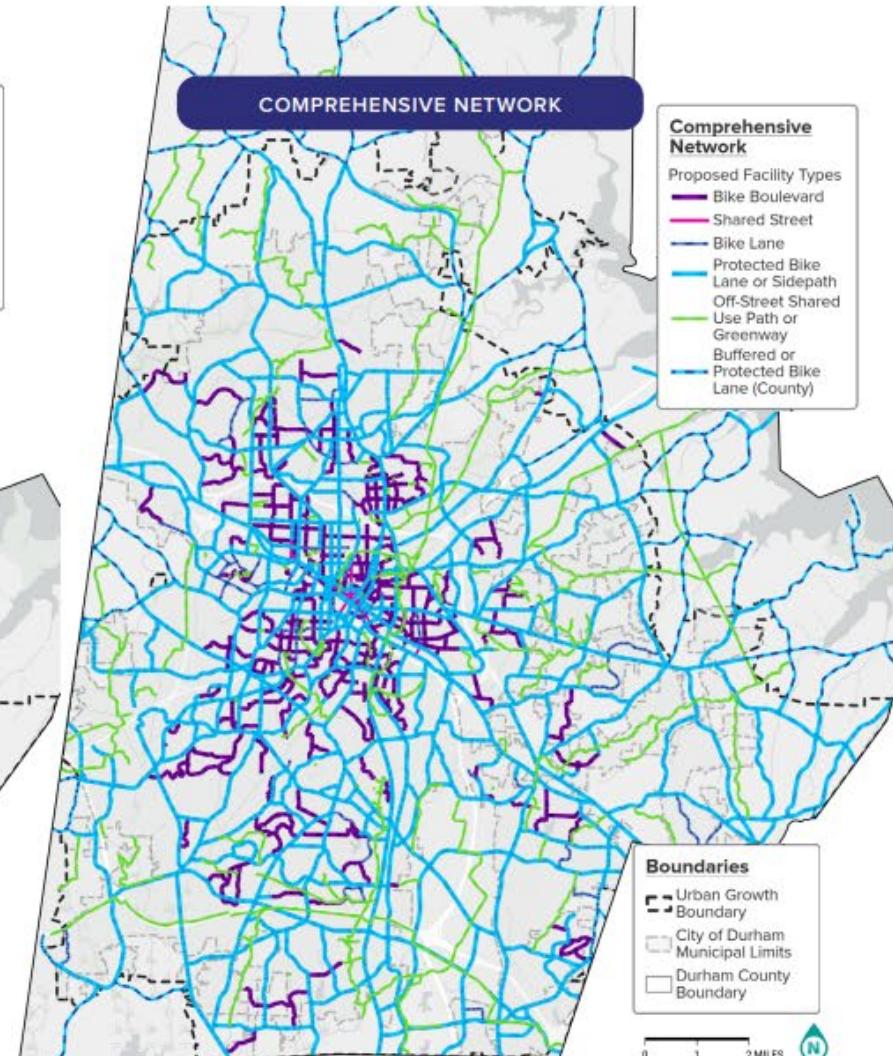
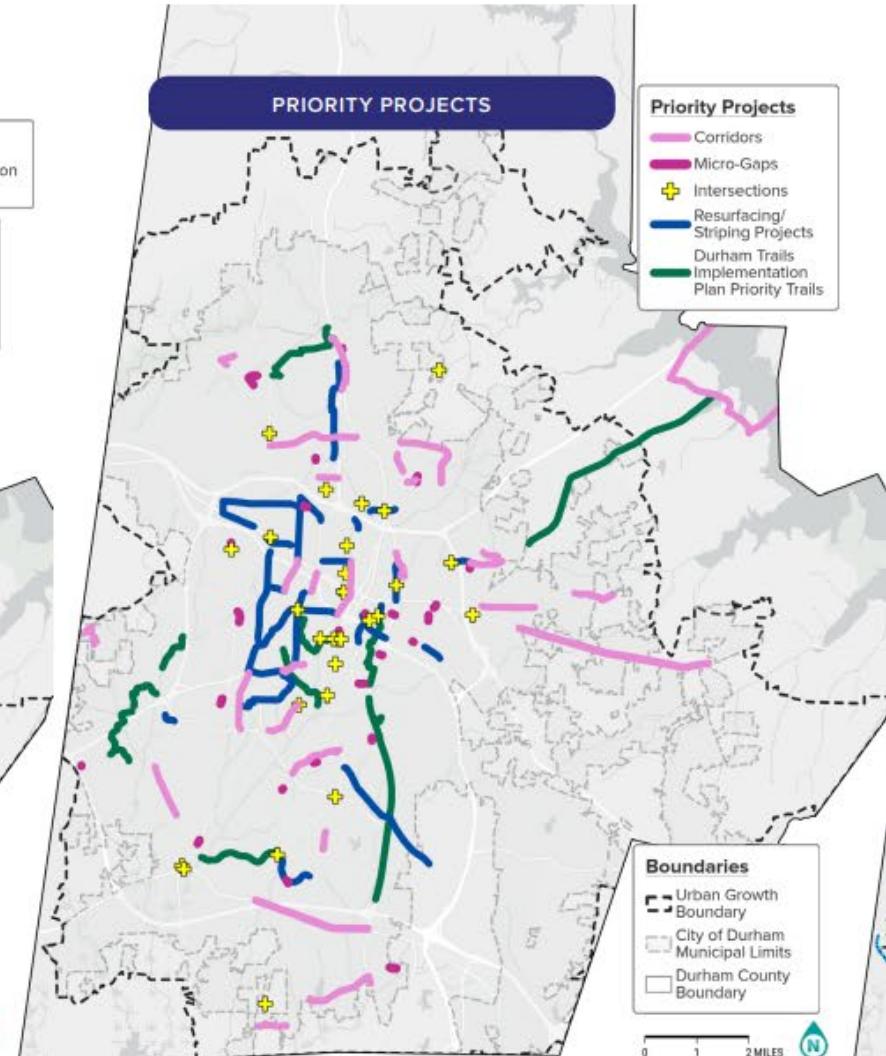
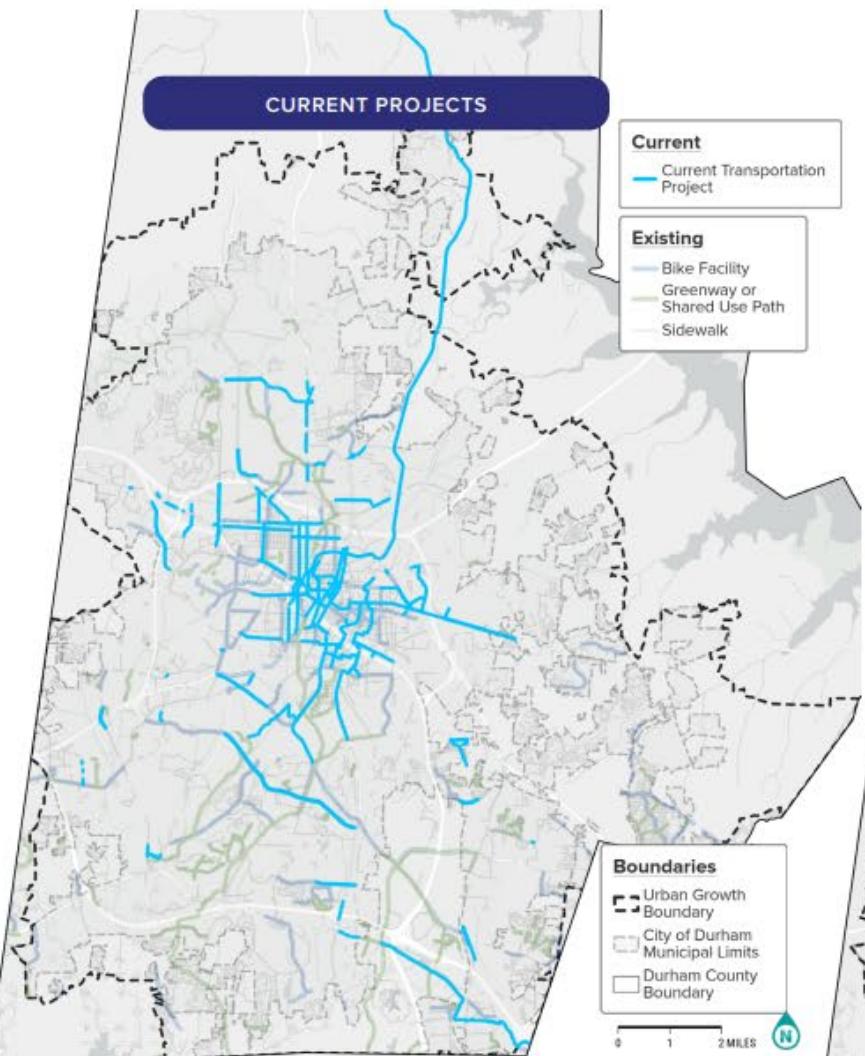


# Planning Process Timeline





# Network Approach



**Near-Term (~0-5 years)**

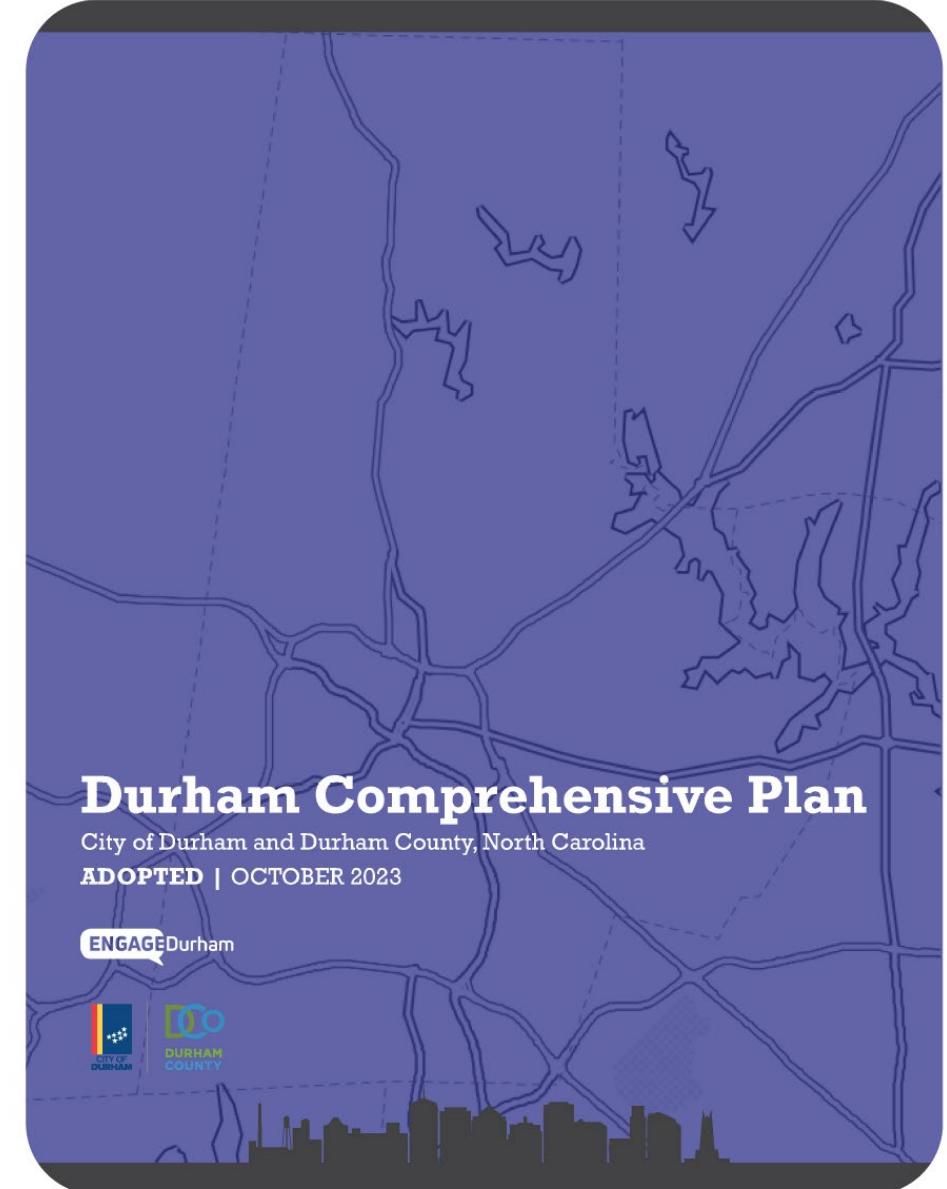
**Mid-Term (~1-15 years)**

**Near-Mid-Long-Term**



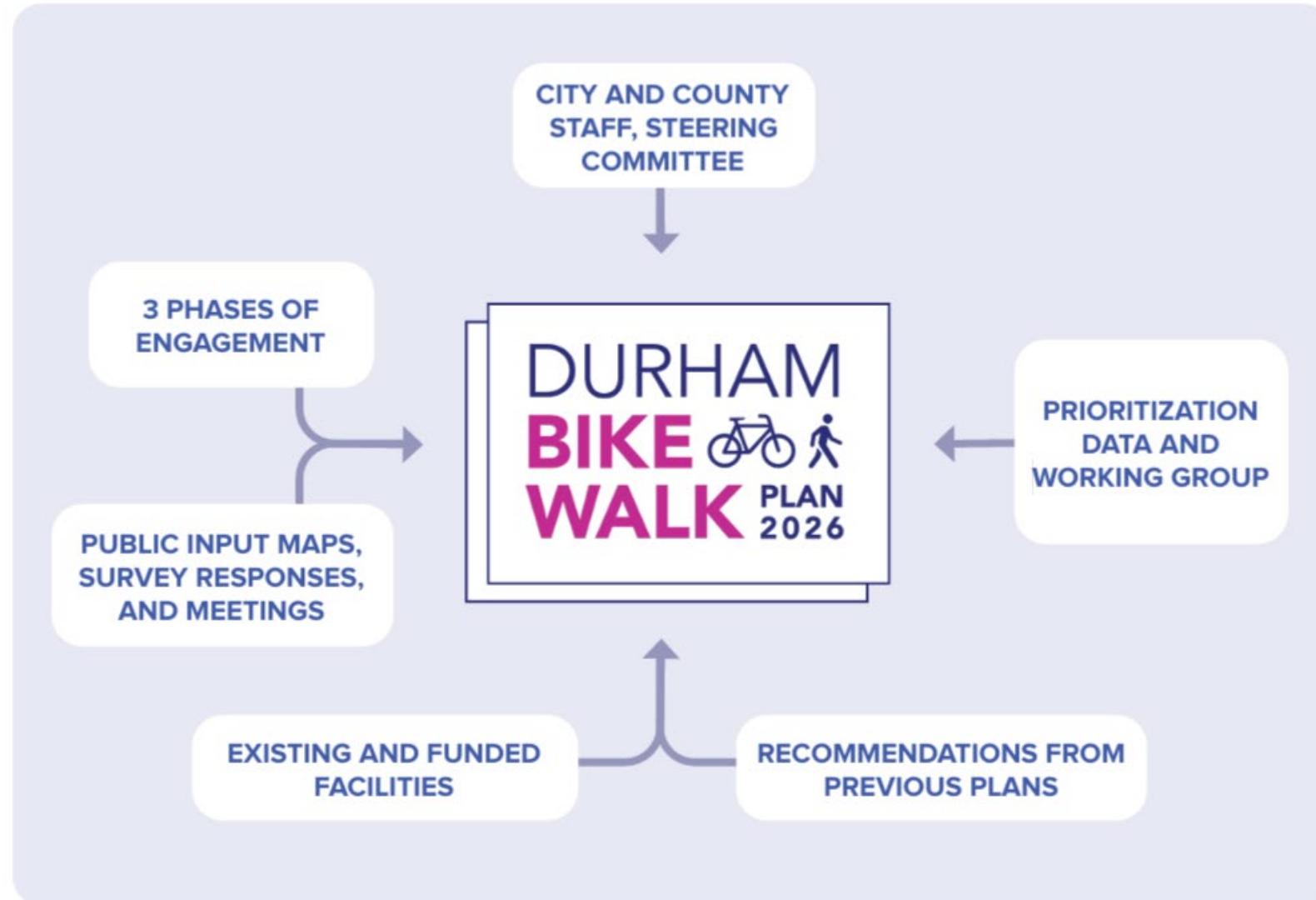
# Policy Support

- Sidewalk Maintenance Outside City Limits
- County Role in Regional Greenways
- City Sidewalk Delivery
- Building upon new UDO rewrite, Complete Streets, and Safe Routes to School efforts, and previous planning efforts





# What Informs the Plan?





# Community Engagement Overview

**Three Phases:** Existing conditions → Draft priority projects → Draft plan review

**Digital Engagement:** Project website on Engage Durham with surveys, maps, and draft materials

**Open Houses:** 4 public meetings with boards, input maps, and Q&A

**Pop-Up Events:** 16 community events with maps, comment forms, and project info

**Engagement Ambassadors:** 12 ambassadors supporting outreach and events

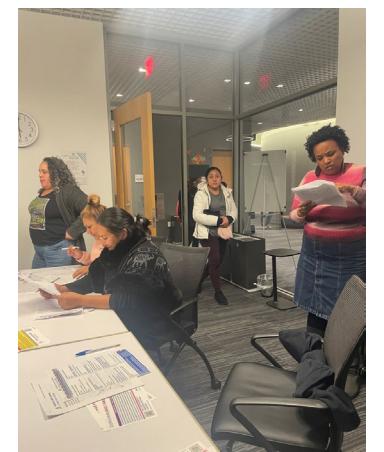
**Bilingual Engagement:** Outreach materials available in Spanish

**Prioritization Working Group:** 16 meetings guiding project selection

**Steering Committee:** 3 meetings with City, County, NCDOT, schools, and advocacy groups

**Stakeholder Outreach:** 11 presentations to community organizations

**Communications:** Press releases, emails to 40+ organizations, and social media outreach





# Phase 1 & Phase 2 Community Engagement

## Phase 1 Engagement: Opportunities & Challenges

December 2024 – January 2025

1,082 completed surveys (online + in-person)

### Tell us about walking and biking in Durham

Use the buttons below to draw lines and/or points to provide feedback on destinations, barriers, and opportunities for improving walking and biking.

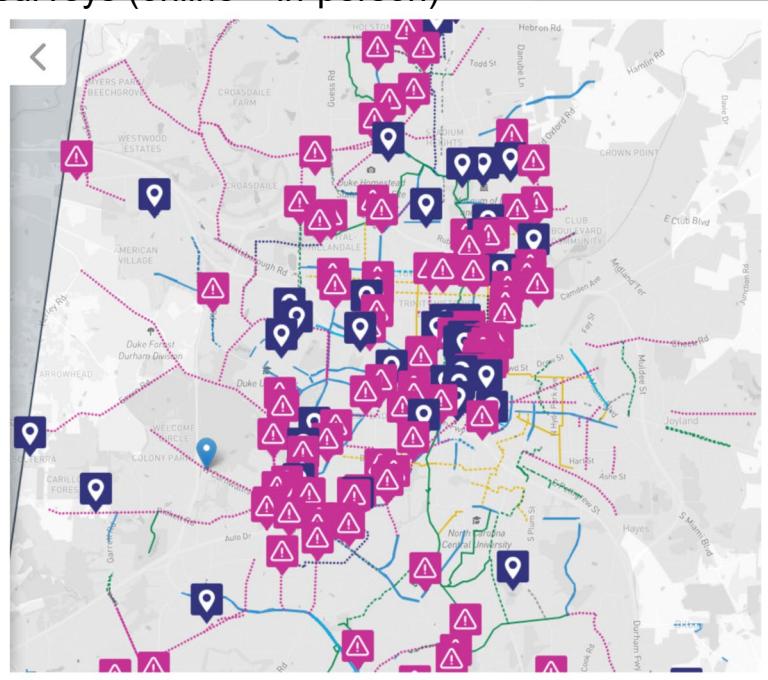
Draw a route that needs improvement or a route that works well

Identify the obstacles: Point out places where it's hard to walk or bike because of barriers like busy street crossings, sidewalk or bike facility gaps, or other reasons

Mark key destinations: Let us know about the spots you visit the most in Durham such as parks, schools, place of employment, or stores. Let us know if you can get to those places by walking or biking

Check out the map to see what other visitors have already suggested, and click or tap any point or route to see more details. Turn layers on and off in the map by clicking their corresponding icon in the map legend.

The basemap can be switched to a satellite view by clicking the "Satellite" button in the lower right hand corner.



### Zip code, n=1000

27707	283
27705	190
27701	182
27713	120
27703	85



Northern Durham/County representation:

\*69 submissions from 27704

\*26 submissions from 27712

\*1 submission from 27503 which is the most northern zip code.

## Phase 2 Engagement: Priority Project List Review

September 2025 – October 2025

2,330 location-specific comments from 823 unique respondents

### Recommendations Feedback

Thank you for commenting! The map is now closed for comments.

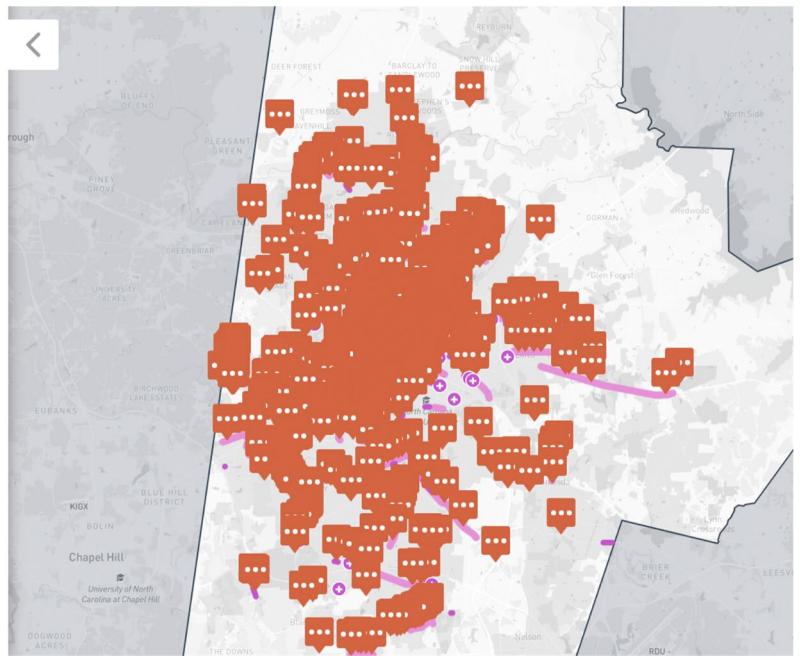
In the legend to the right of the map, click the layer symbol to turn a given layer on/off. The comprehensive network layers are turned off by default. Thank you!

### Draft Priority Projects

These include 50 corridor projects, 50 intersection projects, and 50 micro-gap projects that were selected by the project team. See a summary of the prioritization process and facility types [in the project website](#). The project team will review feasibility, public input, and strategic city/county plans/priorities to narrow down the project list and create project sheets and planning level cost estimates for 15 corridor and 25 intersection projects (25 micro-gap projects will also have cost estimates completed for them).

### Comprehensive Network

Although it focuses on the long term, the comprehensive network is important for identifying facilities that serve all ages and abilities along a corridor. This information helps guide site and roadway design as future development and transportation



## Demographics

### Race, n=983

747 identify as White  
98 identify as Black  
54 identify as Asian  
4 identify as American Indian  
80 identify as non-White

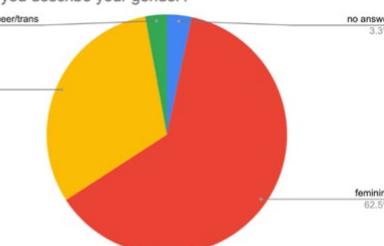
22% of participants are People of Color

9% identify as Latinx

69% of participants are White

### Gender, n=887

How do you describe your gender?





# Prioritization Process

*Who:* City & County staff working group developed a data-driven method aligned with Durham's goals

*What:* Scored the network using 14 criteria (safety, equity, connectivity, traffic, destinations)

*How:* Combined data analysis, staff expertise, and community input

Started with 150 candidate projects → refined to 25 corridors, 25 intersections, 25 micro-gaps

*County Role:* Used scoring, local knowledge, and community feedback to set priorities

## DATA USED FOR PRIORITIZATION SCORING





## Contents

### 1

#### Introduction and Process

page 1

### 2

#### Network Recommendations

page 12

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#### Implementation Recommendations for Select Priority Corridors and Intersections

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#### Policy Recommendations

page 68

## Appendices

- A. Comprehensive Network Maps
- B. Public Engagement
- C. Prioritization Process
- D. Planning Level Cost Estimates

# 1

## Introduction and Process

This chapter provides an overview of this plan and process, introducing the key building blocks for this plan.

### IN THIS CHAPTER

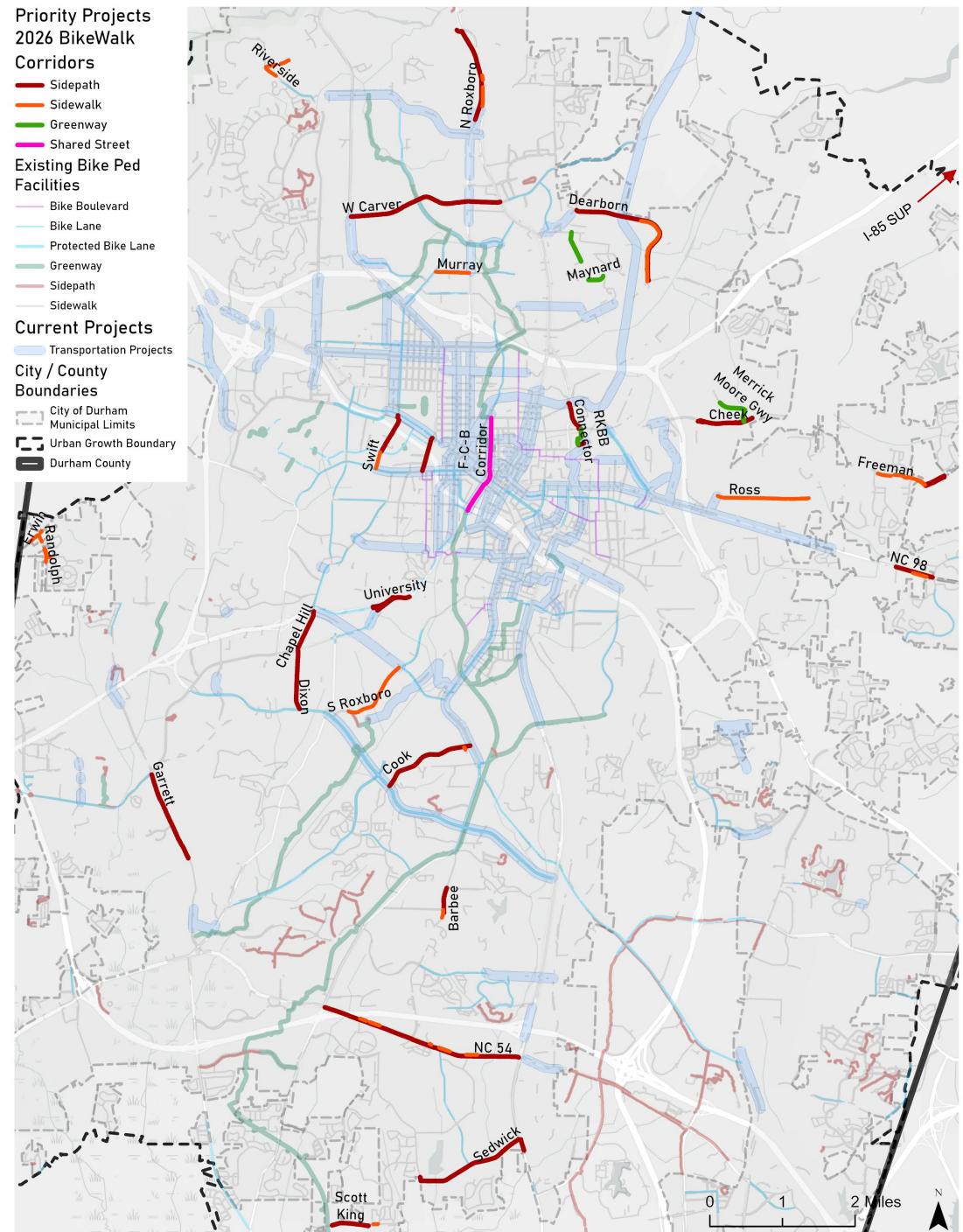
- What Is in this Plan?
- Existing Network
- What Informs the Plan?
- Planning Process Timeline
- Building on Previous Plans and Outreach
- 2026 Bike+Walk Plan Engagement





# Priority Projects: Corridors (Outside Curb)

- 5 County priority projects (p.49-52)
- Key Themes: proximity to schools, regional greenway connections, access to transit
- Most projects will require City and County collaboration
- Recommended improvements include Greenways, Sidepaths, Sidewalks, and Buffered or Protected Bike Lanes (Comprehensive Network)





# Facility Definitions

- Bike Boulevard** - These are generally lower traffic volume, lower speed neighborhood roads that allow bicyclists to avoid arterial and collector roadways that have higher traffic volumes and speeds.



- Shared Street** - Type of urban street design that prioritizes pedestrian activity and placemaking while still allowing limited vehicle access at low speeds. These streets are often found in downtowns or mixed-use districts where retail, dining, and entertainment uses are concentrated.



- Bike Lane** - Standard bike lanes or buffered bike lanes without vertical protection



- Protected Bike Lane\* or Sidepath** - High traffic volume, higher speed roadways that require some type of protected facility that separates bicyclists and pedestrians from motorist traffic (exact facility type is generally decided in the design phase).

\*Note: There are a variety of protected bike lane types such as on-street with curb, above curb, two-way cycle track, and parking protected bike lanes. See the following page for examples.



- Buffered Bike Lane or Protected Bike Lane (County)** - This category is reserved for recommendations in the County outside the Urban Growth Boundary. Like every county in North Carolina, both NCDOT and Durham County do not have the capacity and funding to maintain sidewalks and sidepaths in NCDOT rights-of-way beyond the Urban Growth Boundary. Durham County will prioritize the construction and maintenance of greenways that connect parks, schools, and neighborhoods in Durham County.



- Paper Streets and Paper Alleys** - Paper streets and alleys are rights-of-way dedicated to a city but never built or accepted by the city. Many paper streets and alleys offer opportunities to make many of Durham's established neighborhoods more walkable.





# Erwin Rd/Randolph Rd Sidewalk Gaps

**(Erwin Rd) From:** Kerley Rd **To:** Mt Sinai Rd

**Length:** Sidewalk gaps - 760 feet (95% of the project is outside the City of Durham boundary)

**WHY IT'S A PRIORITY:** This project would fill key sidewalk gaps linking adjacent neighborhoods (including approximately 54 elementary school students) to Forest View Elementary School, and fix a lingering existing sidewalk maintenance issue. Additionally, this project highlights implementation challenges due to current maintenance policy (see pages 69-75 for further detail).

## Description:

Fill sidewalk gaps along Erwin Rd and Randolph Rd, include intersection crossing improvements at Randolph Rd/Erwin Rd and Mt Sinai Rd/Lochnora Pkwy/Erwin Rd

## Connections and Destinations:

Forest View Elementary School, adjacent neighborhoods

## Safety Statistics:

- High Injury Network: No
- Est. traffic volume: 6,000-10,000 vehicles per day (Erwin Rd); 2,000-4,000 vehicles per day (Randolph Rd)
- Est. traffic speed (85th Percentile): > 40 mph (Erwin Rd); 25-40 mph (Randolph Rd)

## ROW Considerations:

Erwin Rd sidewalk - Kerley Rd to school sidewalk

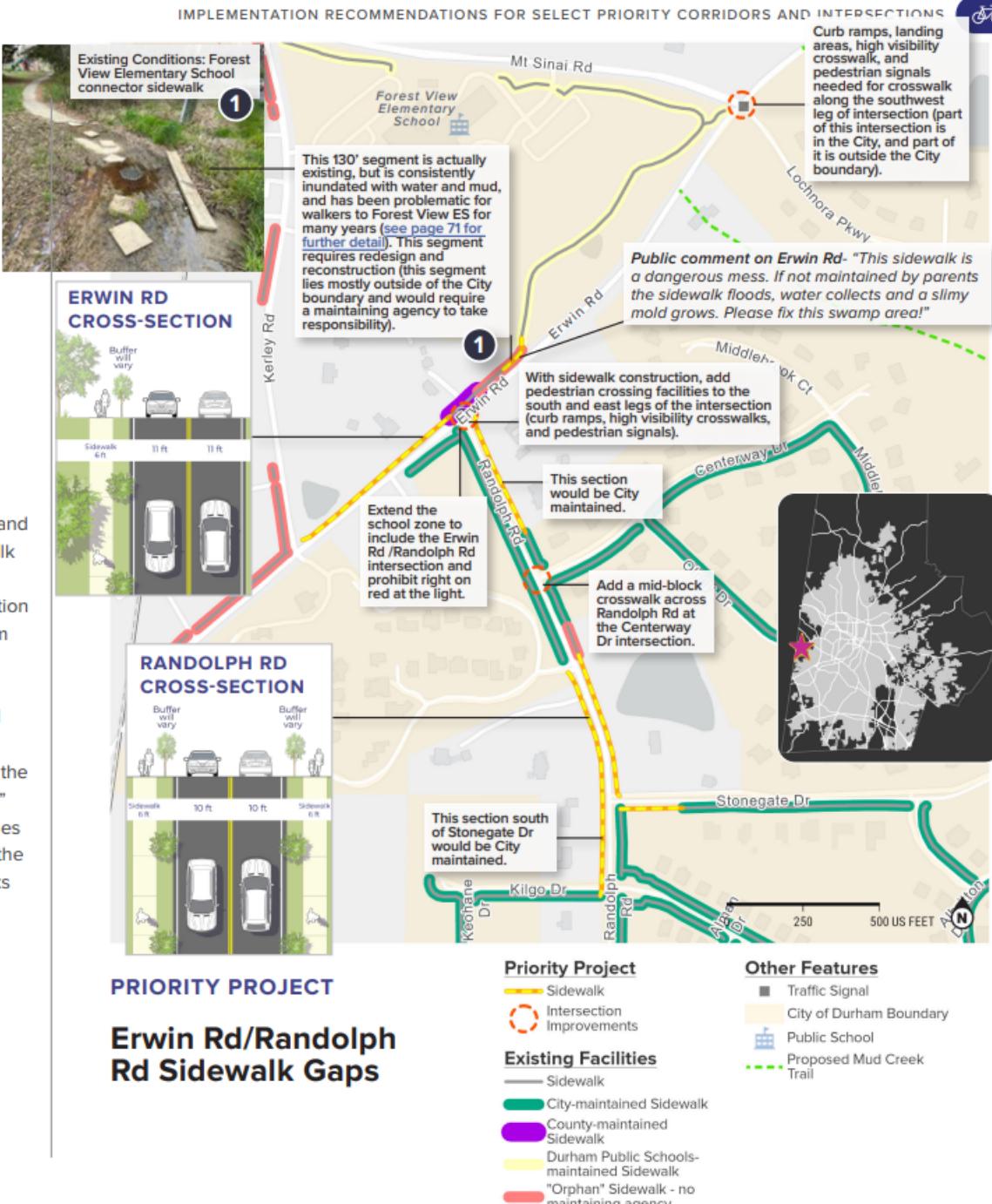
- ROW width: 75'
- Street width: 20'-30'
- Parcels: 6 on the north side
- Land use: residential, school
- Curb: no, drainage ditches (curb along section east of Randolph Rd intersection)
- Street maintenance: NCDOT

Randolph Rd sidewalk - Erwin Rd to Kilgo Dr

- ROW width: 58'-70'
- Street width: 18'-32'
- Parcels: 6 on the east side; 5 on the west side
- Land use: residential

**(Randolph Rd) From:** Erwin Rd **To:** Kilgo Dr

**Length:** Sidewalk gaps - 1,860 feet (50% of the project is outside the City of Durham boundary)





# Mineral Springs Rd Sidepath and Freeman Rd Sidewalk Gaps

**(Freeman Rd) From:** Southern High School  
**To:** Mineral Springs Rd

**Length:** Sidewalk gaps - 0.6 miles (18% of the project is outside the City of Durham boundary)

**WHY IT'S A PRIORITY:** Completing these sidewalk gaps and sidepath will provide better connectivity to Southern High School and multiple neighborhoods, improving connectivity for 120 students within two miles of Southern High School (DPS estimate). This would also improve connections to higher ridership bus stops and a future transit improvement project on the corner of Mineral Springs Rd and Freeman Rd.

## Description:

Fill the sidewalk gaps on both sides of Freeman Rd from Southern High School to Mineral Springs Rd; construct a sidepath along Mineral Springs Rd from Freeman Rd to Daniel Rd; four crossing improvements

## Connections and Destinations:

Southern High School, bus stops, multiple neighborhoods

## Safety Statistics:

- High Injury Network: No
- Est. traffic volume: 3,000-5,000 vehicles per day (Freeman Rd); 6,000-8,000 vehicles per day (Mineral Springs Rd)
- Est. traffic speed (85th Percentile): > 40 mph (Freeman Rd and Mineral Springs Rd)

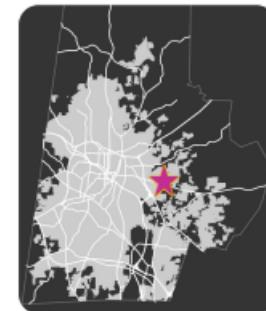
## ROW Considerations:

Freeman Rd sidewalks

- ROW width: 60'-80'
- Street width: 20'-40'
- Parcels: 22
- Land use: residential, school
- Curb: no, curb near Southern High School and two intersections
- Street maintenance: NCDOT

Mineral Springs Rd sidepaths

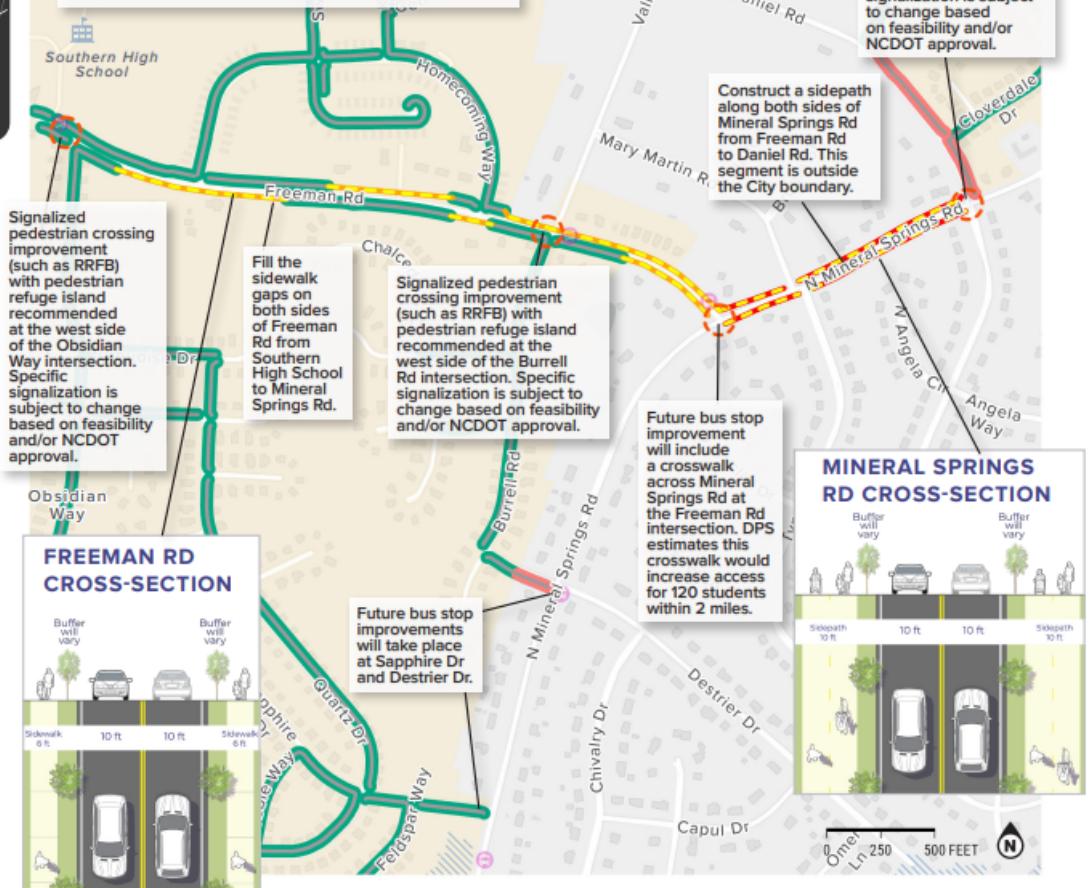
- ROW width: 60'



**(Mineral Springs Rd) From:** Freeman Rd  
**To:** Daniel Rd

**Length:** Sidepath - 0.4 miles (100% of the project is outside the City of Durham boundary)

**Public comment on Freeman Rd-** "I would like to see more connected sidewalks along Freeman Road and extending to Twin Lakes Park. There is a bus stop, a school, and a park, and sidewalks within neighborhoods, but it's difficult to walk from those neighborhoods to the school bus stop, or park because of disconnected sidewalks."



## PRIORITY PROJECT

# Mineral Springs Rd Sidepath and Freeman Rd Sidewalk Gaps

## Priority Project

- Sidepath
- Sidewalk
- Intersection Improvements

## Existing Facilities

- Sidewalk
- City-maintained Sidewalk
- "Orphan" Sidewalk - no maintaining agency

## Other Features

- City of Durham Boundary
- GoDurham Bus Stop
- Public School



# NC 98 Oak Grove Sidepath and Sidewalk

**From:** Mineral Springs Rd **To:** Oak Grove Pkwy/Nichols Farm Dr

**(Phase 1) Length:** Sidepath (north side) - 0.4 miles; sidewalk gap (south side) - ~850 feet (100% of the project is outside the City of Durham boundary)

**WHY IT'S A PRIORITY:** Oak Grove Elementary School, the Oak Crossings shopping center, the East Regional Library, bus stops along Mineral Springs Rd, and adjacent neighborhoods are disconnected. With high traffic volumes and speeds along the NC 98 corridor, sidepath/sidewalk design should include as much buffer space as possible between the path and road. DPS estimates this project would improve connectivity for 82 elementary school students and 58 middle school students. Additionally, this project highlights implementation challenges due to current maintenance policy (see pages 69-75 for further detail).

## Description:

**Phase 1:** Construct a sidepath on the north side of NC 98/Wake Forest Hwy from Mineral Springs Rd to Oak Grove Pkwy; fill the sidewalk gap along the south side; **Phases 2-5:** Complete sidepaths on both sides of NC 98 from Lynn Rd to Woodlawn Dr.

## Connections and Destinations:

Oak Grove Elementary School, East Regional Library, Oak Crossings shopping center, bus stops along Mineral Springs Rd, and adjacent neighborhoods

## Safety Statistics:

- High Injury Network: Yes (NC 98 corridor and NC 98/Mineral Springs Rd intersection)
- Est. traffic volume: 14,000-16,000 vehicles per day
- Est. traffic speed (85th Percentile): > 40 mph

## ROW Considerations:

NC 98:

- ROW width: ~60'; ~100' east of Valleydale Dr
- Street width: 40'-58'
- Adjacent parcels: ~18 on the north side, residential, 3 commercial; ~6 on south side, residential
- Drainage: existing curb and gutter
- Street maintenance: NCDOT

## Implementation Partners (County-led):

100% of the 0.4 mile proposed sidepath and 850' sidewalk segment is outside the City of Durham municipal boundary (all within the Urban Growth Boundary). Implementation partners include City of Durham, NCDOT, Durham Public Schools, and adjacent residents. For the segments outside of the City of Durham boundary, maintenance responsibilities will need to be established before these segments can be constructed. Several of the existing sidewalks in the area (~1 mile) are considered "Orphan Sidewalks" that do not have clear maintenance responsibilities identified. See pages 69-75 for further detail on the challenges for building and maintaining sidewalks outside municipal boundaries.

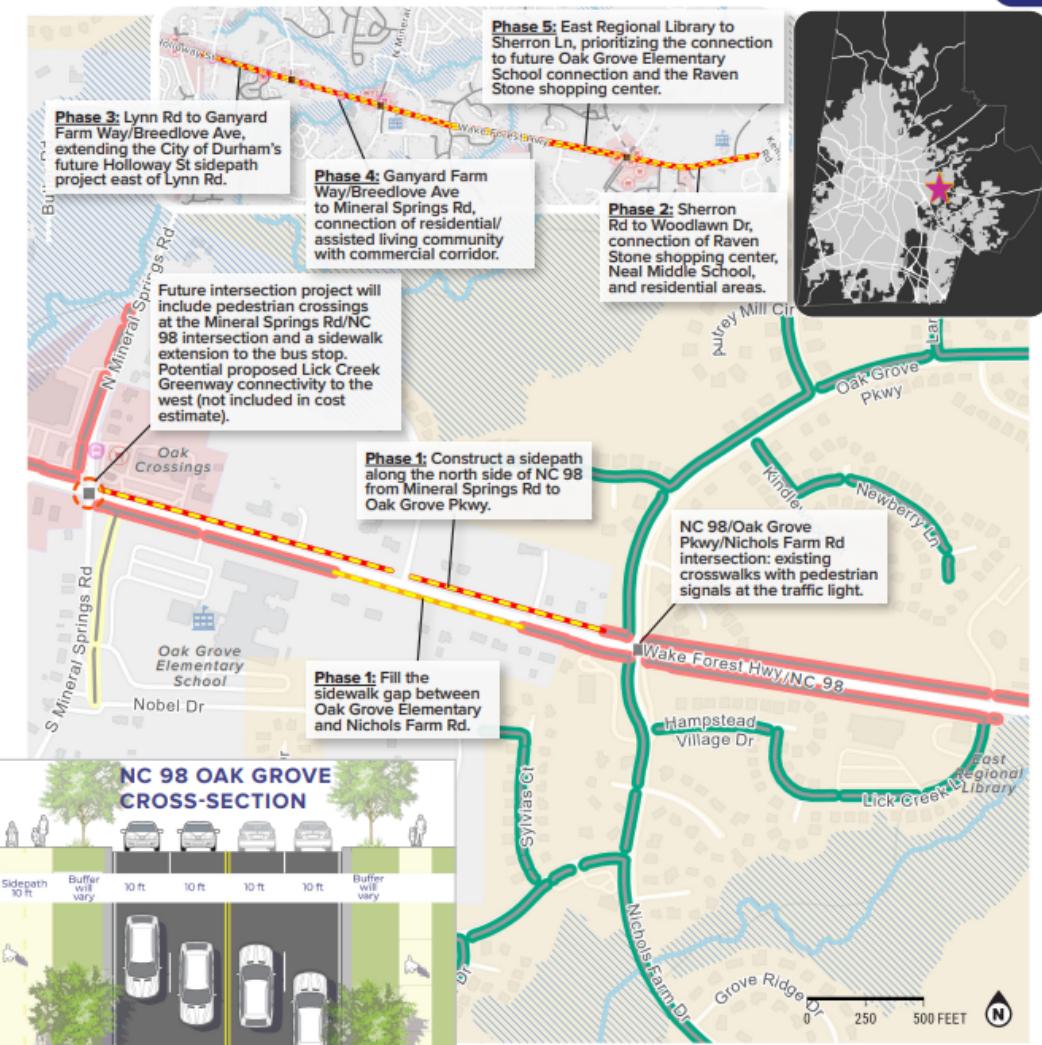
## Planning-Level Cost Estimate<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Estimate is not based on an engineering design and is for planning purposes only

\$TBD: Included in cost estimate - 0.4 mile sidepath on north side; ~850' sidewalk on south side (Mineral Springs Rd intersection not included, project is already in development) (see Appendix D for planning level cost estimate tables)

**Public comment on NC 98 - "Hwy 98 between Oak Grove Elementary and Nichols Farm Road, sidewalk is incomplete and doesn't allow families in our neighborhood to walk to school."**

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SELECT PRIORITY CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS



## PRIORITY PROJECT

# NC 98 Oak Grove Sidepath and Sidewalk

## Priority Project

Sidepath

Sidewalk

Intersection Improvements

## Existing Facilities

Sidewalk

City-maintained Sidewalk

Durham Public Schools-maintained Sidewalk

"Orphan" Sidewalk - no maintaining agency

## Other Features

Traffic Signal

City of Durham Boundary

Commercial Property

GoDurham Bus Stop

Groceries/Convenience Store/Pharmacy

Public School



# Scott King Rd Sidepath

From: American Tobacco Trail To: Lyons Farm Elementary School

**Length:** Sidepath - 0.4 miles (75% of the sidepath is outside the City of Durham boundary); 300' sidewalk (100% of the sidewalk is outside the City of Durham boundary)

**WHY IT'S A PRIORITY:** This project links Lyons Farm Elementary School and multiple neighborhoods (including approximately 192 elementary school students) with the American Tobacco Trail and CM Herndon Park.

## Description:

Construct a sidepath along the south side of Scott King Rd between the American Tobacco Trail and Lyons Farm Elementary School; construct 300 feet of sidewalk along the north side

## Connections and Destinations:

Lyons Farm Elementary School, CM Herndon Park, American Tobacco Trail, multiple neighborhoods

## Safety Statistics:

- High Injury Network: no
- Est. traffic volume: 2,000-3,000 vehicles per day
- Est. traffic speed (85th Percentile): > 40 mph

## ROW Considerations:

- Scott King Rd sidepath - Lyons Farm Elementary to ATT
  - ROW width: 60'-85'
  - Street width: 20'
  - Parcels: 6
  - Land use: residential, school
  - Curb: no
  - Street maintenance: NCDOT

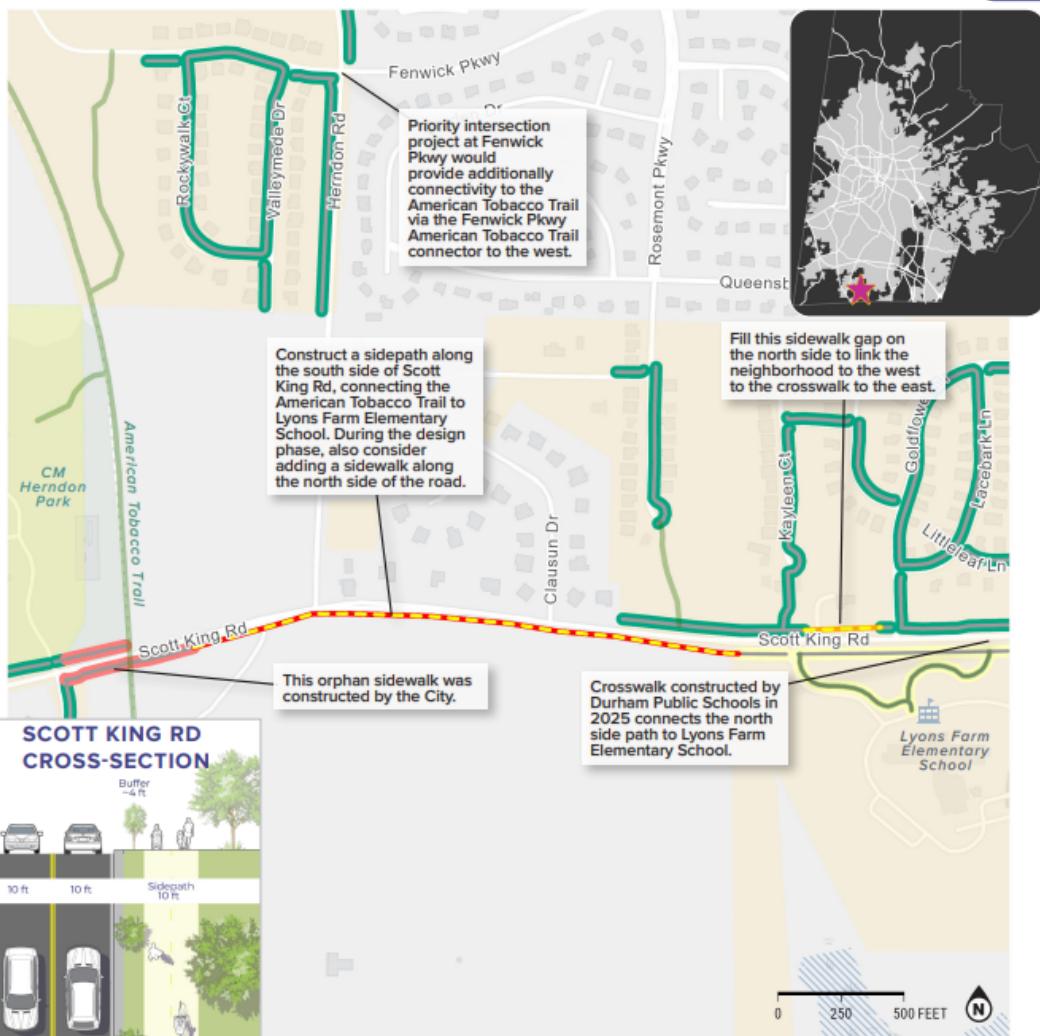
## Implementation Partners (County-led):

This project is partially within the City of Durham municipal boundary, and partially within unincorporated Durham County (all within the Urban Growth Boundary). Implementation partners include City of Durham, NCDOT, Durham Public Schools, and adjacent residents. For the segments outside of the City of Durham boundary, maintenance responsibilities will need to be established before these segments can be constructed. Several of the existing sidewalks in the area (~1,000') are considered "Orphan Sidewalks" that do not have clear maintenance responsibilities identified. [See pages 69-75](#) for further detail on the challenges for building and maintaining sidewalks outside municipal boundaries.

## Planning-Level Cost Estimate<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Estimate is not based on an engineering design and is for planning purposes only  
\$TBD: Included in cost estimate - 0.4 mile sidepath; 300' sidewalk (see Appendix D for planning level cost estimate tables)

**Public comment on Scott King Rd - "Yes! Connect schools to the ATT! Look at the success of Southwest Elementary. If you build it, people will bike and walk."**



## PRIORITY PROJECT

# Scott King Rd Sidepath

## Priority Project

- Sidepath
- Sidewalk

## Existing Facilities

- Sidewalk
- Greenway or Shared Use Path
- City-maintained Sidewalk
- Durham Public Schools-maintained Sidewalk
- "Orphan" Sidewalk - no maintaining agency

## Other Features

- City of Durham Boundary
- Parks
- Public School





# 4

# Policy Recommendations

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This plan's policy recommendations are grouped into three main themes, representing key issues that the City and/or County are actively working to address.

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## IN THIS CHAPTER

- City Sidewalk Delivery Process
- Maintenance of Sidewalks Outside of Municipal Limits
- Durham County Regional Greenways
- Additional Policy/Program Recommendations



# Maintenance of Sidewalks Outside Municipal Limits

Sidewalks are essential for safety, accessibility, and equity.

Responsibilities are fragmented:

- State law: Cities maintain sidewalks inside city limits
- NCDOT: Maintains roads, not sidewalks; requires local maintenance agreements for sidewalks in state right-of-way

UDO requires sidewalks inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and in strategic locations outside UGB.

About 6 miles of “orphan sidewalks” segments outside municipal limits with no clear maintaining agency.

Lack of maintenance leads to unsafe conditions (e.g., Forest View Sidewalk).



Orphan sidewalks (up to 5.9 miles) = sidewalks outside of municipal limits with ambiguous or unclear maintaining agency:

- Sidewalks outside of City of Durham limits with an NCDOT-City Maintenance Agreement. \*City confirming maintenance responsibility = 1.4 miles
- Sidewalks outside of the City of Durham Limits but known to have been built by the City = 0.09 miles
- Sidewalks immediately adjacent to annexed areas = 1.9 miles. \*Land surveys may be needed to confirm location within or outside of the City. Annexation of the right-of-way may address maintenance ambiguity
- Sidewalks outside the City, not immediately adjacent to annexed areas = 2.4 miles

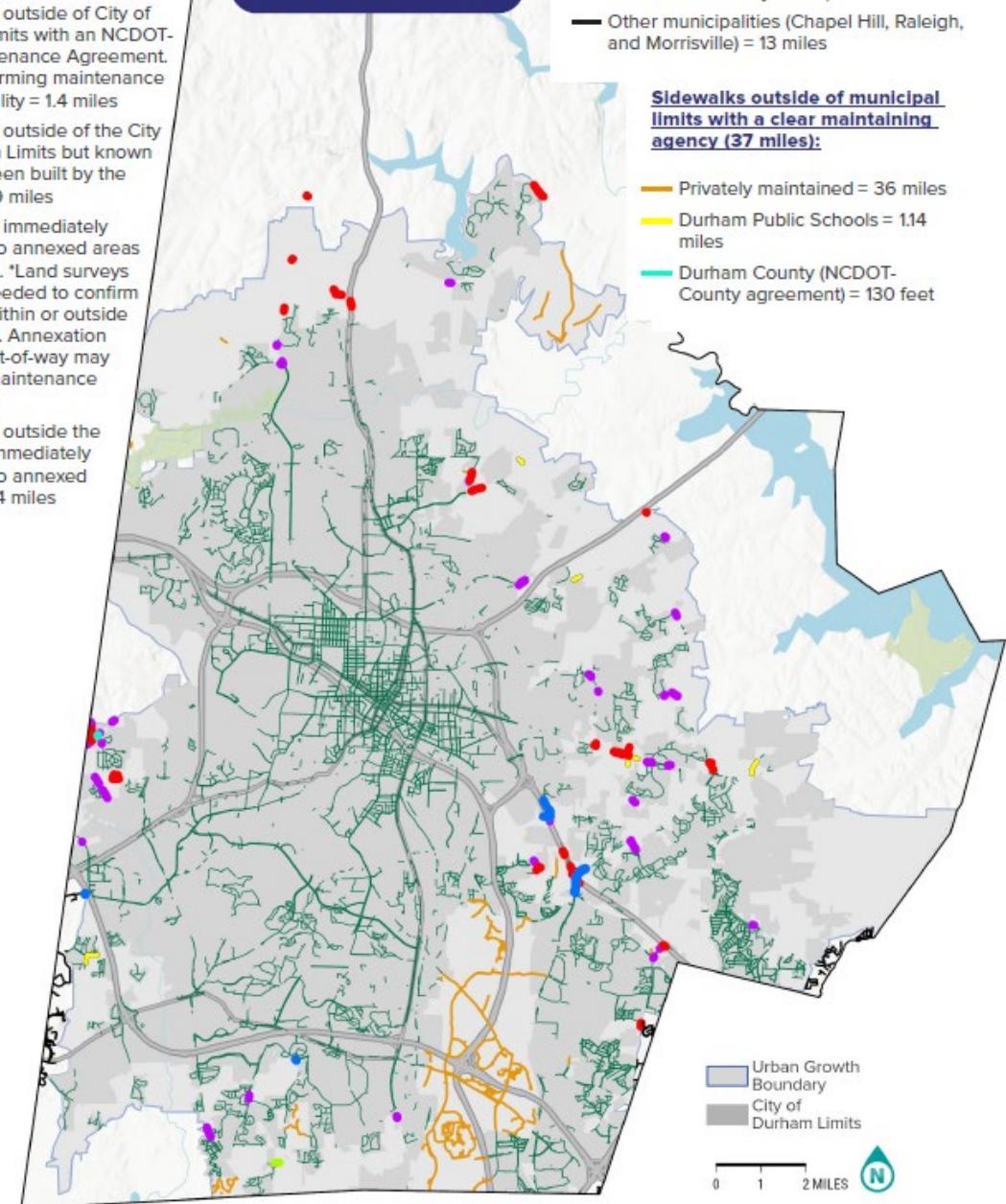
## SIDEWALKS OUTSIDE OF MUNICIPAL LIMITS

Sidewalks within municipal limits with a clear maintaining agency (732 miles):

- City of Durham = 719 miles (sidewalks within Durham City Limits)
- Other municipalities (Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Morrisville) = 13 miles

Sidewalks outside of municipal limits with a clear maintaining agency (37 miles):

- Privately maintained = 36 miles
- Durham Public Schools = 1.14 miles
- Durham County (NCDOT-County agreement) = 130 feet





# Durham County Proposed Approach to Sidewalk Maintenance and Development

Option	Key Actions	Benefits / Challenges
<b>Partner with City of Durham</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Countywide sidewalk inventory</li><li>- Assign maintenance responsibility between City and County</li><li>- Use City's ESS program with County contributions</li><li>- Explore UDO Tools: Payment-in-lieu program</li></ul>	<b>Benefits:</b> Leverages City prioritization and contracts. Avoids duplication of effort. Ensures equitable & ADA-compliant access across Durham <b>Challenge:</b> Not consistent with current City maintenance policy
<b>County-Only Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Develop independent maintenance program for County-required sidewalks</li><li>- Explore UDO Tools: Public access easements &amp; Payment-in-lieu program</li></ul>	<b>Benefits:</b> Ensures all sidewalks created by County policy are maintained <b>Challenge:</b> Leaves other orphan sidewalks (developed due to City actions) unmaintained
<b>Policy Change (If Partnership and County Program Not Feasible)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Modify UDO requirement to reduce/eliminate construction of orphan sidewalks</li><li>- Stop requesting NCDOT-built sidewalks</li><li>- Do not pursue recommended projects</li><li>- Explore UDO Tools: Public access easements</li></ul>	<b>Benefits:</b> Minimizes cost to Durham County <b>Challenges:</b> Not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or Durham County Strategic Plan. Will result in sidewalk network gaps.



# Durham County Regional Greenways

## NC County Trends:

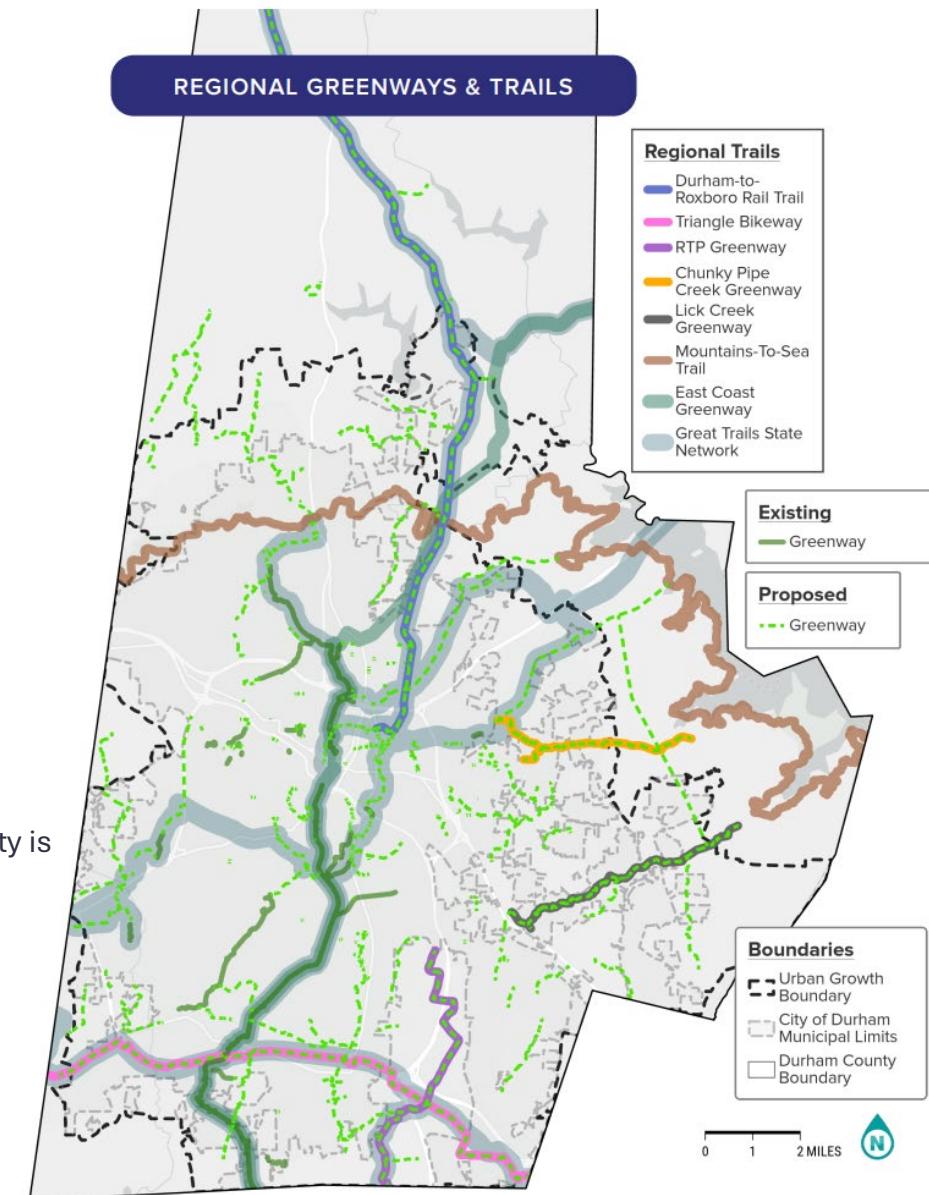
- Counties lead comprehensive planning & coordination, not maintenance
- Diverse funding strategy: local CIP, bonds, grants, and partnerships
- Clear, defined roles optimize resources and effort

## Wake County Model:

- Funding includes local budgets, bonds (\$120M in 2018), state/federal grants
- Competitive RFP for regional connections
- Maintenance handled by municipalities; County avoids long-term obligations

## Durham County Recommendations:

- Plan: Adopt countywide greenway plan and ID funding with public input (The County is recommending the extension of Chunky Pipe Creek and Lick Creek Greenways into the County)
- Coordinate: Formalize agreements with municipalities
- Fund, Design & Build: Phase projects by input, impact, and feasibility
- Maintain & Steward: Joint program with City; promote volunteer stewardship





# Next Steps

- **January 26<sup>th</sup> - February 9<sup>th</sup>:** Draft Plan open public comment period:
  - PDF of draft Bike+Walk Plan on [EngageDurham.com](http://EngageDurham.com) posted for input
  - Public & stakeholder outreach meetings
- **February 9<sup>th</sup> – end of February:** Final plan edits, Alta completes cost estimate for top 25 corridors, 25 intersections, and 25 micro-gaps
- **Spring 2026:** Adoption of 2026 Bike+Walk Plan



# Phase 3 Engagement

January 26 – February 9

## Draft Plan Document

The planning team is seeking input on the draft plan with 75 priority projects, along with key policy sections including a County greenway and sidewalk maintenance section and a City sidewalk delivery process section. The draft Bike + Walk Plan is available on the project website

(url - <https://engagedurham.com/221/Durham-BikeWalk-Plan-Update> or see QR code to the right).



*Thank you!*